

NMRA

MER

DIVISION 11

# SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS

SUSQUEHANNA

DIVISION

NEWSLETTER

1996 NO. 1

## Mechanicsburg Is Next Stop

The Susquehanna Division 11 Spring 1996 Mini-Convention will be held on May 18th, 1996 from 9 am to 4 pm at the Keystone Model Railroad Historical Society in Mechanicsburg, PA. The club is located at 833 West Trindle Road. The society has once again volunteered to host one of our mini-conventions and we thank them very much. Progress has been made on the layout and this will give you a chance to check it out.

Activities include a morning and an afternoon clinic, Favorite Train and Favorite Model contests with AP Merit judging available. Also the election of officers will be held and results announced at the business meeting in the afternoon.

The afternoon clinic will be "Handlaying Track On Polyurethane Foam" by Terry Nesbit. Terry has been trying

different methods and has come up with one that really works.

After the meeting and clinic there will be home layouts open for those who would like to take a look at what some members of the club are doing at home.

Admission will be \$3 at the door which includes one year membership dues for Division 11. All current members of Division 11 will be admitted free of charge. You can renew your dues here too.

So come on out and join us in May in Mechanicsburg, PA. Meet some new friends and renew some old acquaintances. See you there.

**DIRECTIONS:** Trindle Road is Main Street through downtown Mechanicsburg. Head west out of downtown and watch for the club on the left side. It is in a 2 story brick building that was once a substation.

## Upcoming Events

**April 25, 26, 27, 28, 1996:** MCR/MER Joint Regional Convention, Monroeville, (Pittsburgh), PA

**March 31, 1996:** Hanover train and Toy Show, Parkville Fire Hall, Rt. 94, Hanover, PA. 9am, \$4, under 12 free.

**May 18, 1996:** Susquehanna Division 11 Spring 1996 Mini-Convention, at the Keystone Model Railroad Historical Society, 833 West Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg, PA. 9am to 4pm. Admission \$3 at the door.

**October 3, 4, 5, 6, 1996:** Jersey Limited '96, MER Fall Convention, Clarion Hotel, Mt. Laurel, NJ.

Did I miss any events? If so, drop me a line and I will include them in this section. Don

## Lancaster Mini-Convention

On December 2, 1995, Division 11 held its fall/winter mini-convention at the South Penn Model Railroad Club in Lancaster. The weather for this year's event at Lancaster turned out to be a lot better than the one 2 years ago when we had a very damp, dreary day. It was cold but the sun was on our side.

First of all, the South Penn Model RR Club deserves our thanks for being such gracious hosts. If you missed it, you missed the last

chance to see their old railroad. After the meet and the open houses the layout was coming down to make way for a new one. We all will be looking forward to seeing the new one and maybe a future event there.

The activities included two great clinics. The morning clinic was presented by Terry Nesbit. If there was anything you ever wanted to know about classification and signal lamps, Terry had the

information, what and when to use different colors on engines coaches, cabooses, switches, telegraph, hand held and more. The afternoon clinic was presented by Andy Albright. Andy's clinic was the perfect follow up to Terry's. Andy showed us how to make the classification lights work on HO engines. He had a number of examples and described how he ran the fiber optics through the body and out to the lights. The way the clinics fit together was great. Congratulations and thank

(Cont'd on Page 5)

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*Susquehanna Sidetracks* is the official publication of the Susquehanna Division 11 of the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Dues are \$2.00 per year payable to "Susquehanna Division 11". Remit dues to the Clerk/Paymaster. Dues include subscription to the Division newsletter.

Articles for publication in the *Susquehanna Sidetracks* may be submitted in any form including on disc and drawings may be in almost any IBM compatible format.

## New Members

John D. Mellinger III, Lancaster, PA

Mel Ange, Delta, PA

Bruce Guinn, New Holland, PA

Bradley L. Clauser, East Berlin, PA

Chris Cohan, Lancaster, PA

Warner R. Franklin, Harrisburg, PA

## Super's Corner

Well, here it is, February already. We made it through the Blizzard of '96 and the Floods of '96. Now I am sitting here writing this during the Cold Wave of '96. The last few weeks have been a real trial. I hope, above all that, everyone came through in good shape. I can't stop wondering though, how many of those flooded basements had model railroads in them.

Anyway, I am running two weeks behind on my schedule for this issue of the *Susquehanna Sidetracks* (again). Part of the reason is: I am doing this on a new computer. For all you "computer nerds" out there, I graduated from a 286 with a 40 Meg hard drive and 5 Meg of ram to a 486DX33 with a 540Meg hard drive and 8Meg of ram. I am running Softram '95 and Virtual Memory giving me 35Meg of ram in Windows. "Windows" is new to me along with the Microsoft Works and Microsoft Publisher. So I am learning again.

One plug I have to make is about the NMRA and the MER. If you are not a member of either, please consider joining. If you are now or were at one time, please consider "re-upping". Enough said.

Tony Segro submitted an article on "Poles", as in electric, telephone, etc. His article appears in this issue of the newsletter. Some time ago, before White Rose '95, Charlie Potter started a series of articles on layout planning. The first installment was printed and that is

where it stopped. I will be prevailing upon Charlie to dust off his computer and continue the series in future issues. (hint, hint Charlie).

I also need to mention that we have another celebrity on our membership roster, Mr. William T. Nesbit, better know to us as Terry. I received the following announcement in the mail: "The National Reference Institute is pleased to announce the inclusion of William T. Nesbit in the Fiftieth Edition of Who's Who in America 1996. I believe a big handshake and a round of applause are in order. Congratulations Terry!!!

We are currently working on setting up the Spring mini-convention. As usual, the election of officers will take place at this meet. We are looking for people to run for office. I do not have plans to run for any office. I feel you have seen me and my name enough times up front and new faces are needed to run and propel the Division forward. We will be starting the two-year terms with this election as per MER guidelines. I will stay on as newsletter editor and keeping the membership records. So please, please consider taking a shot at it. We need some "new blood" on the Board.

One last thing before I close. Some interest has been shown for a membership roster to be printed. It will happen in the near future. For now I will keep you posted as new members come on board.

Happy Railroading, Don

Michael Tice, Thomasville, PA

John Balogh, State College, PA

Robert H. Secrist, York, PA

Michael Yingling, Harrisburg, PA

Donald I. Gross, York, PA

Kermit W. Kissinger, Duncannon, PA

Thomas R. Long, Spring Grove, PA

Walter E. Morse, Baltimore, MD

Jeff Pyott, Marietta, PA

Nicholas K. Silk, Enola, PA

## Bring Ma Bell to Your Layout *by Tony Segro*

Many layouts have well detailed and weathered buildings, some of which have interior lighting. Yet we seem to neglect the means by which the buildings are lit. That is, power lines. Most places still have above ground phone and power lines.

In this, my first attempt at writing an article, I will share with you some ideas on building utility poles. I wanted to point out that I have been fortunate to be in the same model railroad club with one of our Division's (*and Region's, Ed.*) top superdetailing modelers, Tom Lowry. Many of the ideas I have learned on structure building and detailing came from picking Tom's brain and several visits to his home.

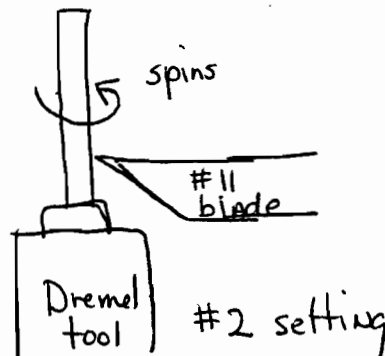
The first thing you need to do in building realistic utility poles is to get out and study, photograph, or even sketch various types of poles along country roads. Many downtown areas today are wired by underground cable, but if you're modeling that transitional 1950's era, this was not the case. Streets were lined with wires. Today, most rural roads have utility poles.

These poles may be as simple as a pole with an insulator and one wire or as complex as a pole with multiple crossarms, transformers, and several cables and insulators. Most poles range from 25' to 35' high, but mine are generally 30' high. I use either 1/8" wood dowels or bamboo skewers for poles. You can buy a bag of 100 skewers at the supermarket for just about a buck. Some skewers are long enough to provide two poles.

Next, I'll buy a pack or two of scale 2"x6" and 2"x4" stripwood. The 2"x6" strips will be used for crossbars and the

2"x4" strips will be used for braces. The crossbars are cut in to lengths of 6 to 10 scale feet.

To make the insulators, I insert a wooden round Q-tip into a 5-speed Dremel tool. I insert the cotton end or just use a razor blade to cut the cotton swab off. I turn the Dremel on to setting #2 and the wooden Q-tip dowel spins like wood in a



Before

lathe. (*Note: Wear eye protection when doing the insulators.*) With a sharp #11 X-Acto blade, I hold it against the wood and shape the insulators. (See Fig. 1)

If you go too deep, you'll cut your Q-tip insulators in half. If you don't cut deep enough or the dremel RPM's are too slow, you will be cutting in the same place all the time and won't have a good cut all the way around the dowel. This will also happen if your Q-tip isn't perfectly round. You need to work with this, shutting off the Dremel after each insulator you do and check that the cut went the whole way around. Also, the farther out from the Dremel you go, the more the dowel seems to revolve rather than rotate. I haven't found an answer to that except, don't go more than 1/2" or so from the motor tool. Once you get about 1/2" out from the Dremel, shut the tool off, and, with a razor blade, remove the insulators you have

made. Insert the remaining dowel and go another 1/2".

If the process seems long to you, you can visit a local craft shop and purchase 5mm sequins and a pack of Mill Hill Glass Seed Beads #00283 to make the insulators. These have holes and wire can pass through. When doing your insulators, you alternate a sequin,



After

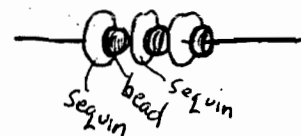


Figure #2

then a bead, sequin, bead, sequin, bead (See fig. 2).

The next part of the process is to construct the pole itself. Suppose we want to build a pole like the one in Figure 3. You will need two 2" x 6" crossarms, 6' long for this project. They can be 6, 8, or 10 feet long depending on the pole's use. You will also need four 2" x 4" braces and 2 small eyelet loops. The loops can be bought as locomotive detail parts or hand made with a jig. First find the center of your 2" x 6" crossarms (1" from the top and 3 feet from the end, 4 feet for 8 foot arms and 5 feet for 10 foot arms). With a .020" drill bit (#76) in a pin vise, drill a hole through both crossarms. Drill two more holes in each of the 2" x 6" crossarms

(Cont'd on Page 4)

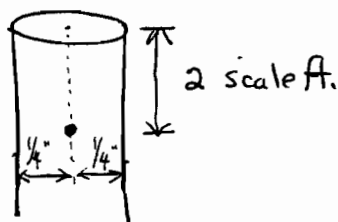
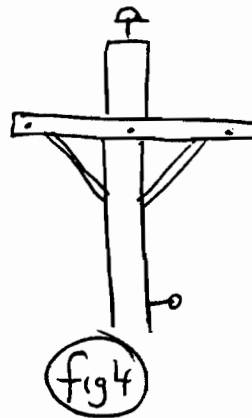
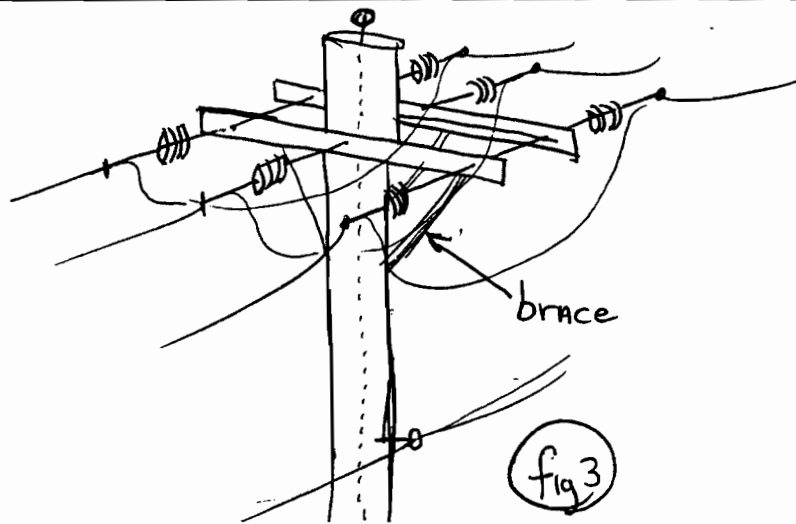


Figure #5

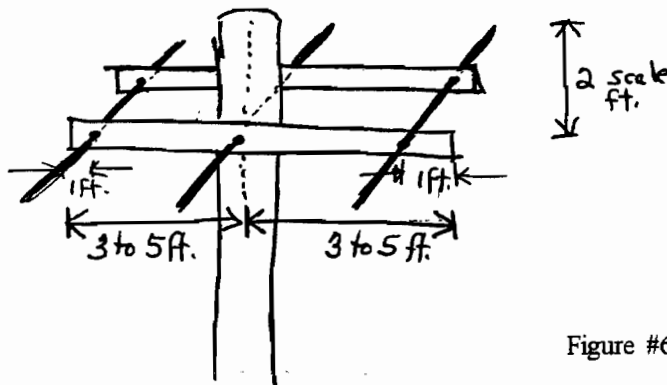


Figure #6

about 1 scale foot from each end. Next, find a point about 1/16" from the side of the pole and 2 scale feet from the top (Fig. 5). Again use the #76 drill bit and drill a hole straight through the pole. This can be tricky if your bit is not exactly straight going in or if the pole moves. It may not be centered coming out the other side of the pole. If you have some sort of drill press and vise that can guarantee a perfectly perpendicular hole, great. If you don't, then you're like me. Just take your time, eyeball it and drill as straight as possible.

Next, cut 3 pieces of .020" (24 gauge) wire to a length long enough to extend through both crossarms and the pole and stick out about 3 scale feet on either end (about 7 1/2 to 8 scale feet). If the wire was on a spool, try to straighten it as much as possible. If you can buy it in straight pieces, all the better.

Drill two more holes in each of the 2x6 crossarms about one scale foot from each end.

Take a piece of the wire and pass it through the center hole of one crossarm, then the pole, then the center hole of the other crossarm. See Fig. 6. Center the wire allowing it to extend about 3 scale feet on either side. Next insert a second piece of wire through an end hole of one crossarm and the corresponding end hole on the other arm. Do the same with the last piece of wire to the other end holes. The pole should look like Fig 6.

Next comes the insulators. Your



Figure #7

dowels of insulators should be slightly longer than 1/2". Carefully cut two or three insulators off the

dowel. Altogether you will need 6 pieces just like the one in Fig. 7. Very carefully, drill lengthwise with the #76 through the center of these 3 insulators. Then insert one set on each of the six pieces of wire on both crossarms. If you use the sequins and beads for insulators, put on sequin first and glue it with super glue, then put on bead (Refer to Fig.2). This forms one insulator. You need 3 insulators on each wire.

For the 2"x4" braces, I use the same method as the crossarms. These braces need to be cut to lengths depending on the length of the crossarms. The longer the crossarm, the longer the brace. The longer the brace, the farther down the pole and

the farther out from the center the brace needs to be. The distance down the pole is the same as the distance out along the crossarm. (Fig. 8) This allows you to miter cut the ends of the brace at 45 degree angles. These should be glued with white or wood glue to the pole and flush with the

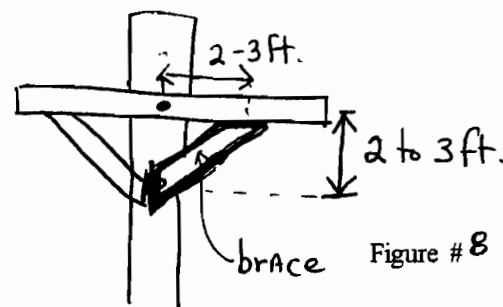


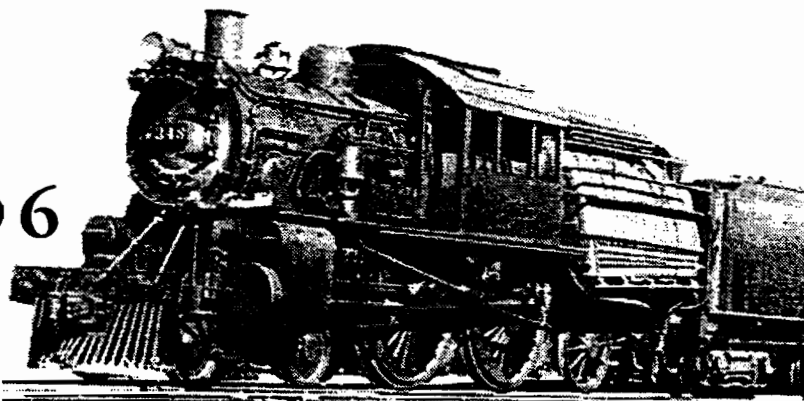
Figure #8

crossarm. You could even build a jig to glue your braces to the crossarms and then install the assembly to the pole and drill you're holes. Of you do, use glass as your base since white glue will (Cont'd on Page 5)

# NMRA MIDEASTERN REGION FALL '96 CONVENTION

**JERSEY  
L·I·M·I·T·E·D '96**

**OCTOBER 3 - 6**



**CLARION HOTEL • MT. LAUREL, NEW JERSEY**

## **Prototype Tours • Clinics • Non-Rail Tours Train Show • Open House Layouts**

- Visits to Conrail Dispatching Center, PATCO Shops, Southern Railroad of New Jersey, Philadelphia Intermodal Terminal
- Over 30 Open Home Layouts
- Nationally-known Clinicians—David Barrow, Lou Sassi, Andy Sperandio, Mike Tylic, Jim Hertzog, Tony Koester, Allen McClelland
- 4600 Sq. Ft. Train Show, Scale and Memorabilia only
- Clinics for the Advanced and the Novice Modeler

### ***EXTRA SECTION***

A limited number of lucky folks will have the opportunity to participate in an operating session at one of our six designated layouts.  
***Register early since space is limited.***

**REGISTER NOW.**

*See early registration form on other side*

**P. O. Box 517, Swedesboro, NJ 08085 • (609) 467-3385**

# Registration Form

## Mid East Region, NMRA Fall Convention

October 3-6, 1996



**L · I · M · I · T · E · D ' 9 6**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA # \_\_\_\_\_ MER # \_\_\_\_\_

Full Registration	_____ @ \$34.00 _____	SRNJ Fantrip (Sat.)	_____ @ \$28.00 _____
Non-NMRA member	_____ @ \$39.00 _____	PATCO Shops (Fri. AM)	_____ @ \$15.00 _____
Spouse	_____ @ \$10.00 _____	Conrail Control Ctr. (Thur. PM)	_____ @ \$ 5.00 _____
Children (6-16)	_____ @ \$ 5.00 _____	Holt Cargo Term. (Fri. PM)	_____ @ \$17.00 _____
Saturday Night Social	_____ @ \$ 5.00 _____	Historic Phila. Tour (Fri.)	_____ @ \$18.00 _____
Awards Breakfast (Sun.)	_____ @ \$11.00 _____	Aquarium/Art Mus. (Sat.)	_____ @ \$22.00 _____
Convention Car	_____ @ \$15.00 _____	Wine Tasting Clinic	_____ @ \$12.00 _____
Layout Lottery*	\$12.00 _____	<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	_____

Make Checks payable to: **Jersey Limited '96, P.O. Box 517, Swedesboro, NJ 08085**  
**For Convention information call 609-467-3385**

\*Note: Layout Lottery is limited to 1 per Full Registration.

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 Detach and return this portion to Hotel

### The Clarion Hotel at Mount Laurel

915 Route 73 at I-295  
 Mount Laurel, NJ 08054  
 609-234-7300

For: National Model Railroad Association, October 3-6, 1996      Cut off date: Sept. 14, 1996  
 Rate: \$59.00 + tax (Single/Double)    \$79.00 (Quad)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Arrive on \_\_\_\_\_ Depart on \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ No. of rooms for \_\_\_\_\_ people.

Check or Money Order enclosed       Diners Club       Carte Blanche  
 American Express       Visa       Master Card  
 Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Should I fail to honor my reservation and not cancel 24 hours prior to my expected arrival, I authorize the Clarion to charge my account for one nights deposit and all applicable taxes. Check-out time is 11:00am. Rooms may not be available for Check-in until after 3:00pm.

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 For Train Show Dealer Information please write to "Jersey Limited '96"

**P. O. BOX 517 • SWEDESBORO, NJ 08085 • (609) 467-3385**

not stick to glass.

Next, insert the two eye loops shown in Fig. 4. One eye loop is at the very top of the pole. The other is about 8 scale feet down the pole below the crossarm and inserted on the side of the pole, not the front.

For utility cable I use monofilament fishing line spray painted black. Wire routing can

very from pole to pole and even on the same pole. As I mentioned before, it is best to look at prototype utility poles to see how the wires are routed. The fishing line can be superglued to the 24 gauge wires extending through the crossarms or even looped, tied and then glued to the 24 gauge wires.

Poles are usually set 50 to 100 feet apart. Again, pay a visit to some

poles and walk the distance between them. Wires can also be strung pole to pole through the eye loops on the side of the pole. Wires extend from poles to the sides of buildings to power lights. Last, but not least, you can even glue a squirrel to the wire since they seem to love walking the wires. Happy Modelling.

## Jersey Limited Offers Mini-NMRA in October

If you've been thinking it's a long trip to Long Beach, California, the "Jersey Limited", on October 3 to 6, 1996, is the perfect East Coast alternative. The Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA, offers a mini-national convention closer to home at the Clarion Hotel in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey.

With an emphasis on operations, Jersey Limited offers over 30 open house layouts and a host of nationally-known clinicians including David Barrow, Jim Hertzog, Tony Koester, Allen McClelland, Lou Sassi, and Andy

Sperandeo.

Special features include a layout lottery in which early registrants will get the chance to attend "hands on" operating sessions on one of six home layouts, with operators giving individual attention; an auction of rolling stock from the celebrity layouts of David Barrow, Tony Koester, Allen McClelland and Andy Sperandeo; and a special modeling contest to honor the interlocking tower. And there's the usual NMRA contest with the normal categories.

The Jersey Limited has prototype tours on the Southern Railroad of New Jersey, Patco Shops, Philadelphia Inter-Modal Terminal, and the Conrail Dispatching Center; a 4600 square foot Train Show, and non-rail tours to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the historic sites of Philadelphia. The convention car, an Atlas PS-2 two-bay covered hopper, a CNJ prototype in sand service, will be available.

For Jersey Limited registration, write to: Registrar P. J. Mattson, Box 517, Swedesboro, NJ 08085. Phone: 609-467-3385. Hotel reservations are available from the Clarion Hotel, 915 Route 73 North, Mt. Laurel, NJ 0-8054. Phone: 609-234-7300.

## Lancaster Meet

(Cont'd from Page 1)

you to Terry and Andy for a job well done!

There were nine entries all together in the Favorite Train and Favorite Model contests. Andy Albright won the Favorite Model contest with his Pennsylvania Railroad Snow Plow, and Rick Gantz was second with his Delaware and Hudson GP-38 #7314. The Favorite Train contest was won by Mike Tice with his Central of New Jersey/Reading Powered Train and Rick Gantz was second with his

Norfolk Southern Roadrailer Train.

The afternoon session started off with the business meeting. Paul Tice, Clerk/Paymaster, gave the financial report (we are in the black). Terry Nesbit, Asst. Super, gave his report including what's going on in the AP Program. Layout suggestions were then discussed for the South Penn Club. The members present were then informed of plans for future Division 11 activities and what they would like and not like to see and do. Topics covered included a spring/summer picnic, where to hold meets like at fire halls and monthly meets at Division 11

members homes. Also the possibility of the division having modules to set up at shows or a group representing the division. Those present were also informed of the division's plans for expanding to some other counties where there is interest but no division covers them. Another item discussed was the coming election of officers in the spring. The terms will be for two years to put us in line with MER guidelines. Any interested parties were asked to considering running for office.

A raffle was held at the end of the meeting and three lucky winners each went home with a freight car.

# Susquehanna Division

*Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.*

## Membership Application

The Susquehanna Division is located in the central portion of Pennsylvania. Counties covered are: Adams, Berks, Clinton, Cumberland, Dauphin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union, and York. Anyone interested in the hobby may become a member of the Division regardless of their place of residence. You do not have to be a member of the Mid-Eastern Region or the National Model Railroad Association to be a Division member.

Annual dues for the Susquehanna Division are **\$2.00** which includes the quarterly newsletter. Amongst the activities of the Division are the semi-annual mini-conventions held in the spring and fall. A quarterly newsletter, the *Susquehanna Sidetracks*, is published with the Division schedule of events and other model railroad news.

Type of application: New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Change of Address \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Scale: \_\_\_\_\_ Layout? \_\_\_\_\_ Interests: Modules \_\_\_\_\_ Narrow Gauge \_\_\_\_\_ Traction \_\_\_\_\_ SIG \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (optional) Home: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed application, with a check payable to **Susquehanna Division**, to:

Susquehanna Division, 1709 West Market Street, York, PA 17404