

# Susquehanna Sidetracks

Official Publication of the Susquehanna Division 11  
of the Mid-Eastern Region  
of the National Model Railroad Association

<http://www.susquehannanmra.org>

*"Serving the Susquehanna Valley"*

February 2009

VOL. 17 ISSUE 1

## Upcoming Division Events

We are pleased to announce the following events for the Susquehanna Division 11.

### **Saturday, March 7, 2009 – Elizabethtown Clinics and Club Visits**

Saturday, March 7, 2009 (inclement weather date of Saturday, March 21, 2009) at 10 AM. We will meet at the Masonic Village and Elizabethtown club for two clinics ("Scratchbuilding Structures" by Tony Segro and "Scenery Made Easy" by Barry Schmitt) and then visit three club layouts (Manheim, Ephrata, and Columbia) later in the day. **Non-NMRA members are invited.** You MUST RSVP for this event (RSVP info on page 6). More information can be found on page 6. Directions are found on page 9.

### **Saturday, April 18, 2009 – State College/Centre Hall Model Railroad Visits**

Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 10 AM. We will meet Saturday, April 18, 2009 at John Kocet's Norton Division model railroad in State College, PA at 10 AM. From there, we will travel as a group to 3 other layouts (Jere Herr's PRR Lancaster Area, Mike Redin's Stillhouse Hollow, and PSU's University Park & Eastern club layout. We will have lunch at a converted 1885 train station in Centre Hall. **Non-NMRA members are invited.** You must RSVP for this event to Jeff Warner at (717) 932-9929 (between 1 PM and 9 PM) or [jwarner@susquehannanmra.org](mailto:jwarner@susquehannanmra.org). More information can be found on page 10. Directions are on page 12.

### **Saturday, May 30, 2009 – Visit to Steamtown**

Saturday, May 30, 2009. We will visit Steamtown National Historical Site. We will take a short train ride (most likely behind steam power), and get a private shop tour NOT available to the public. More details will be posted on the division website when they become available. The details for this event are being finalized as this is being written.

## Susquehanna Sidetracks

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Visit us on the internet at:

<http://www.susquehannanmra.org>

For information about upcoming events, modeling in the Susquehanna Division, links to web pages for upcoming conventions, and for an electronic copy of this newsletter.

## Super's Corner

By Jeff Warner

This is a longer than usual column as there is a LOT of information I need to pass on to you. I urge you to read the entire column as there is a lot of different information hidden in here. I promise to try NOT to make this a habit.

First, I want to briefly discuss upcoming division events. The most common comments from the survey of the past year were that members would like to see more events (especially layout visits and museum visits) spread out over a wider area than the "core" membership area of York-Harrisburg-Lancaster. I will point out that 50% of our members live in the "core area", so we will continue to have the majority of our events centered in that area. However, I am trying to visit some other area of the division – including the Scranton area for Steamtown and the State College area for the layout visits announced in this newsletter. In order to best visit these areas, we will be sponsoring SIGNIFICANTLY MORE than 4 events this year. That's why you see about 1 per month in this newsletter. I can't promise that we will continue at that pace for the rest of the year, but I can promise that there are several more events already being planned around the division.

Second, I WELCOME your feedback. Do you want to see an event in your area? Let me know. Make a suggestion. I will follow up on it, but I need your help with suggestions of what would make good division events.

Third, a little bookkeeping... I am pleased to announce that new Asst Superintendent John Frantz reviewed the division's accounting books and found no irregularities. Per new NMRA guidelines, we will have a review of the books every two years from this point onward.

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## Super's Corner – continued.

Fourth, on page 4 of this newsletter, you will find a reprint of MER President Roger's Cason's column in "The Local" regarding attending NMRA events in other divisions or regions. There seems to be a BIG misunderstanding in this area. To summarize Roger's article, it's allowed...even encouraged. The best place to find information about events in other divisions/regions is on the websites. There are links to all neighboring divisions on our division website, and the MER website.

Fifth, the MER website has moved. Please update your bookmarks. The new address is:  
<http://mer.nmra.org/>

Sixth, the MER has a program where they will pick up the \$9.95 required for the 6 month introductory railpass offer, making it FREE for new members that have not been NMRA members in the previous 30 months. This form requires a signature of a division officer. I would be happy to sign it for any of your friends that would like to join us. Just have them contact me. Note that this program is only good until the allocated funds are spent. The form is found on page 19.

Seventh, the NMRA has joined the Federal CFC (Combined Federal Campaign). If you are a federal employee, you can help the NMRA by look at the announcement on page 8.

Eighth, the division has been asked and tentatively agreed to host the 2010 MER convention. We are currently in the process of working with the MER to find a suitable hotel (available space and reasonable pricing). We prefer the Harrisburg/Camp Hill area, but will consider other areas in the core area should a suitable hotel not be found. The 2010 MER convention will be October 14-18, 2010. I will need several volunteers to help with the event, and I will make a further announcement when more information is available. If you would like to "sign up" to help, please send me an e-mail and I'll make sure your name gets added to the list. I hope to have the first organizational meeting early this summer. More information is on page 12.

Ninth, you may have read in the MER newsletter that 2 petitions were received to change the boundaries of this division. Both were done with Division 11 BOD approval. The status is that the transfer of Clinton County to the I-80 Group of the MCR is proceeding at the National level (it is a transfer between regions and needs national approval). The petition to add several Maryland counties has been tabled by the MER BOD at my request as several people have come forward to re-start the dormant Mt. Clare division in its entirety. That was always my first choice, but several previous attempts the past few years have failed. We wish our neighbors to the south the best and offer any help that we can provide. If the division is a success, we will HAPPILY drop our petition.

Finally, the division held an event last year at Art Dum's live steam railroad which was an overwhelming success. We have been invited back for any of four dates in 2009. These are June 6<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup>, August 15<sup>th</sup>, and November 7<sup>th</sup>. We will not be going as a group, but any interested individual may attend by RSVPing to WAYNE GODSHALL at (717)582-4405 Home or (717)215-7776 Cell. YOU MUST "SIGN UP" BY CALLING WAYNE IN ADVANCE OF THE EVENT. There is no fee to attend, but Wayne would like a list of names of everyone attending. Art Dum's railroad is located at 57 Pischgah Road, Shermansdale, PA. Directions can be found using Mapquest or a GPS.

Thanks for reading this far -- Jeff Warner (NMRA MER Susquehanna Division 11 Superintendent)

## **A Note from the President - Boundaries, Territory, and Location**

By: Roger L. Cason MMR

Many of the questions we get on the MER Board of Directors concern boundaries, territory, and location as they relate to your membership. Let's review a few general principles. Then – via Q. & A. – let's see how they might impact on your personal situation in NMRA, the MER, and your Division.

With NMRA, you join the national organization, but you get a “package deal” of privileges, many of which apply principally at the regional and divisional level. Here are some general principles that apply below the national level, taken from national and regional Bylaws:

- Each NMRA member shall be a member of the region, if one exists, and the division, if one exists, in which territory the member has an address of record.
- As an NMRA member, you have the right to participate in all NMRA activities, including those administered through a region or division, but subject to user fees imposed on members (of the host organization).
- Regional boundaries are established by the national organization, and are listed in the national Regulations (a.k.a. Bylaws).
- When chartered, divisions in the MER are assigned boundaries by the MER Board of Directors.

This “package deal” approach is relatively new for NMRA, but is quite common in other hobby organizations – for example, United States Power Squadrons and the American Contract Bridge League - organizations to which I also belong.

Now, let's look at some specifics via Q&A.

Q. I live in the territory in the XX Division, but it would be more convenient for me to participate in the meets of the neighboring YY Division. Can I do this?

A. Yes, as an NMRA member you have the right to participate in all NMRA activities.

Q. Will there be any fee?

A. The fee, if any, will be the same as the members of YY Division would pay.

Q. Would this be true even if the YY Division were in another region?

A. Yes

Q. Again in the case above, could I receive the newsletter from the YY Division?

A. Probably yes. Work this out with the appropriate people in the YY Division. There may be a nominal charge, particularly if you elect to receive a paper rather than an electronic newsletter.

Q. Can I be a member of more than one Division?

A. No. But you can attend meets in any Division.

Q. How else might I find out about events in another division?

A. We have asked divisions to send their calendar information to the MER Webmaster for posting on the MER website. In addition, you might contact the division superintendent directly (contact information is in The Local).

Continued on page 5.

## Division boundary discussion, continued

Q. I live in Pennsylvania, but spend two months a year in Florida. Can I be a member of a division in both locations?

A. No, your principal residence (in your case, Pennsylvania) is the one that counts. But, when you're in Florida you can attend local division meets, and otherwise participate in the local division's activities.

Q. Is everyone in the MER in a division?

A. No. MER division boundaries are described in detail on the MER website. As you will see, there are a lot of locations (counties) that are not included within any division's boundaries.

Q. For the individual member, are there any advantages to being in an area that is not within any division's boundaries?

A. None that I can think of.

Q. Are division boundaries ever actually changed in the MER?

A. Yes. In practice, the process is pretty straightforward (see below). For example, the boundaries of the Philadelphia Division were recently changed to include New Castle County, DE (where I live). Before the change, New Castle County was not within the boundaries of any division.

Q. A group of us in the XX Division would like to change the divisional boundary, and become a part of the YY Division. Can this be done?

A. Yes. Per the MER Bylaws (Article X-8), you can start the process to change a boundary by writing a letter to the MER Secretary. (It would also be a good idea to send copies to the MER President and any Division Superintendents who might be involved or interested.) Your proposal will be published in The Local. Depending on the comments received and the nature of the request, the MER Board of Directors may poll the individuals in the area involved before voting on the proposal. (Current examples of proposed changes appear elsewhere in this issue of The Local.)

Q. What's the smallest geographical unit that's practical when specifying division boundaries?

A. Based on past experience, the smallest practical geographical unit is the county.

Q. Suppose a group of us want to start a new local division. Where do we begin?

A. Start by contacting the MER Secretary. He/she will send you copies of several guidance documents from the MER Executive Handbook. The process involves (among other things) a minimum number of people, someone to be in charge, and creation of a set of bylaws. Depending on the situation, a notice may need to be published in The Local.

Q. Will it matter if part of the territory we have in mind is covered by an existing division?

A. No, the process will be about the same. However, a favorable vote from the MER Board of Directors is more likely if the board of the existing division involved agrees with the action.

Q. So far, we've talked mainly about division boundaries. How about regional boundaries? Can they be changed?

A. Yes. That process is covered in the national Regulations (a.k.a. Bylaws) and is beyond the scope of this note.

## **Masonic Village and Elizabethtown Club**

1 Masonic Way, Elizabethtown, PA

**SATURDAY, March 7, 2009, 10:00 AM**



We will meet Saturday, March 7, 2009 at the Masonic Village and Elizabethtown club. In case of inclement weather, the meet will be rescheduled for March 21, 2009 at 10 AM. Non-NMRA members are welcome. Because of the possibility of bad weather, we ask that you sign up in advance by contacting Bob Martin at 717-848-3640 or email [cprboss@comcast.net](mailto:cprboss@comcast.net) with your contact information in case we need to postpone this event.

The Masonic Village and Elizabethtown Club is located in the Masonic Village at 1 Masonic Way, Elizabethtown, PA. The club will open its doors at 9:30 AM to view their Z, N, HO, and O scale layouts. At 10 AM, a brief presentation will be made by Roger Cason, MER Superintendent. This will be followed by 2 clinics. Tony Segro will present "Scratchbuilding Structures" (examples of Tony's work can be found at <http://www.tonysegro.com/model.html>) and Barry Schmitt will present "Scenery Made Easy" (the above scene from the Elizabethtown club is an example of Barry's work). You will be able to attend both clinics.

Directions to the Masonic Village club can be found on page 9.

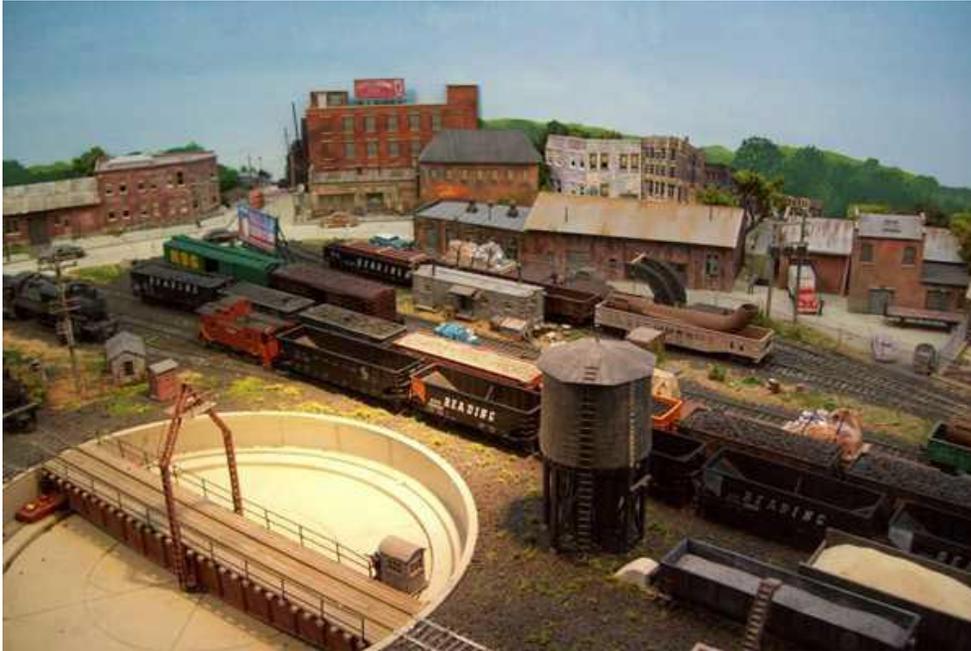
Following a break for lunch, three club layouts will be open for visitations. Directions to the clubs will be provided at Elizabethtown and provided on the website 2 weeks in advance of the event. You may visit the club layouts in any order and stay as long as you wish.

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## Stiegel Valley Model Railroad

230 South Charlotte Street, Manheim, PA

**Saturday, March 7, 2009, 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM**



The Stiegel Valley Model Railroad represents the Reading and Columbia branch of the Reading Railroad, including Dillerville Yard, Lancaster Junction, and Manheim set in the 1940's and 1950's. Also modeled is the Mount Hope branch running north from Manheim to a connection with the Cornwall Railroad at Mount Hope. HO Scale, Digitrax

## The Short Line Model Railroad Club

11 South Main Street, Ephrata, PA

**Saturday, March 7, 2009, 1:30 PM until 4:00 PM**



The Short Line Model Railroad Club is representative of northeastern PA. The HO scale model railroad features a 200+ foot double tracked main line, and a 75 foot branch line and uses Digitrax DCC. Be taken back to the days when coal was king and railroads were starting to switch to modern diesel power, while still running steam locomotives.

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## Columbia Historical Preservation Society Model Railroad

21 North Second Street, Columbia, PA

March 7, 2009, 1:30 PM until 4:00 PM



The Columbia Historical Preservation Society Model Railroad is a 1000 sq ft HO model railroad with nearly 1000 feet of track and is a "work in progress". For what is built, scenery is about 60% completed and all track work is in place. At present, two freight yards and one passenger yard is modeled. Most structures are scratchbuilt. HO Scale, Digitrax.

**NMRA National Convention**  
**Hartford, CT**  
**July 5-11, 2009**



<http://www.hn2009.org>



**CFC 12286**

**Federal Employees!** For the first time, the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) will be included in your annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) to be conducted at your workplace. To offer the NMRA your support please designate #12286 on your CFC contribution form.

# Masonic Village and Elizabethtown Club DIRECTIONS

## 1. From North of Harrisburg:

FROM I-81, take I-83 South to I-283 South. Take the last 283 exit before PA Turnpike onto 283 East towards Lancaster. Follow I-283 East about 11-miles and take the Hershey/Elizabethtown Exit onto 743 South.

a. Follow Route 743 South into the center of Elizabethtown which is the 4th traffic light after exiting I-283 - Barry's Train Store will be on opposite S.E. corner. Turn right onto High Street, travel about 1 mile, pass under the stone Amtrak railroad bridge, and then make an immediate left turn onto Masonic Village Drive. After about 0.1 mile, turn right into the Masonic Village entrance which is Free Mason Drive.

b. Proceed about 0.7 miles on Free Mason Drive – club parking lot entrance will be on your left at flashing cross buck railroad sign.

## 2. From Hershey:

Take Route 743 South from Hershey. After passing under I-283, follow the directions at 1a and 1b above.

## 3. From PA Turnpike Traveling East or West:

Take Exit 247. After passing through toll booth, make immediate right turn onto I-283 entry ramp towards Lancaster. Follow 283 East about 11 miles and take the Hershey/Elizabethtown Exit onto Route 743 South. Then follow the directions at 1a and 1b above.

## 4. From Lancaster:

Take I-283 West to Elizabethtown/Rheems Exit. Turn left onto Cloverleaf Road and then turn right onto Route 230 West. Travel approximately 3-miles to Bainbridge Street which is 5th traffic light after turning onto Route 230. Turn left onto Bainbridge Street, continue about 1-mile, pass under the Amtrak railroad bridge, and then turn right onto Masonic Village Drive. After approximately 0.2 miles, turn left into the Masonic Village entrance which is Free Mason Drive. Then follow the directions at 1b above.

## 5. From York and Columbia:

Take Route 30 East to Columbia Exit. Take Route 441 North to Bainbridge. Turn right onto Route 241 and go approximately 4-miles. Then turn left onto Masonic Village Drive which is just before the stone Amtrak railroad bridge. After approximately 0.2 miles, turn left into the Masonic Village entrance which is Free Mason Drive. Then follow the directions at 1b above.

## 6. FOR GPS NAVIGATION:

Use intersection of Masonic Village Drive and Free Mason Drive in Elizabethtown PA.

## John Kocet's Norton Division

623 Portsmouth Road, State College, PA

Saturday, April 18, 2009, 10:00 AM



John Kocet's Norton Division is a 30' x 40' HO scale model railroad. It is freelanced, but set in the coal hauling portion of West Virginia in the steam-diesel transition era. Scenery has not yet been started. It features a 320' double track mainline with a 35" minimum radius. Control is NCE DCC. All benchwork and trackwork are complete. Visitors may bring along DCC equipped locomotives to run.

## Jere Herr's PRR Lancaster Area

Saturday April 18, 2009



Jere Herr's PRR Lancaster area is an HO model railroad. It represents the PRR in the Lancaster, PA railroad set in the early 1960's. Scenery is 80% complete. Control is DC block control from a single CTC panel. The model railroad was built with operations in mind and has operating sessions twice per month.

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## Mike Redin's Stillhouse Hollow RR

Saturday, April 18, 2009



Mike Redin's Stillhouse Hollow Railroad is a freelanced 25' x 31' HO model railroad. It is set in Seven Mountains, PA, and connects the PRR Millroy Branch in Mifflin county with the PRR Tyrone Branch in Centre County. The railroad is set in 1958 and features a

185' mainline. Scenery is complete. Control is Digitrax radio DCC. This operating model railroad uses Time Table & Train Order, a manual CTC dispatching board, a fast clock, and 4-cycle waybills.

## PSU's University Park & Eastern

Saturday April 18, 2009



Penn State University's University Park & Eastern is a freelanced HO scale model railroad set in PA's central mountains in the 1950's. There are nearly 2400 linear feet of track in a 20' x 65' room. This version was started in 2001, although the club has existed since 1955. PRR, UP&E, WM, and LV steam and diesel locomotives are used. Control is Digitrax radio DCC. Scenery is 70% complete.

Directions on page 12

## **John Kocet Directions**

Coming into State College from the east, stay on 322 West -- DO NOT TAKE 322 BUSINESS. About 4 miles onto the bypass, you will come to the interchange maze at the football stadium. Stay on the highway which is I-99 South and 322 West. Do NOT go toward Bellefonte! Four miles past the stadium, take the "Valley Vista/Park Forest" exit. At the end of the ramp, there is a stop light. Go straight across (Sheetz convenience store will be on the immediate left). This is now Valley Vista Drive. Stay on Valley Vista Drive for 1.4 miles. You will go up a fairly large hill. A few hundred yards beyond the top of the hill go left at the first opportunity onto Devonshire (you are now in Park Forecast). Follow Devonshire 0.4 miles to the second stop sign (at bottom of big hill). Take a left onto Brittany at this stop sign. Go 400 yards on Brittany and take the first left onto Portsmouth. John's house is third on the right (counting the one on the corner). It is a Cape Cod with a brick front.

Street address is 623 Portsmouth Road, State College, PA 16803. John's phone is (814) 234-2645. Mapquest and GPS are correct for this address.

ADDITIONAL PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE DIVISION WEBSITE FOR ALL FOUR OF THESE LAYOUTS. Lunch will be at The Whistle Stop Restaurant in Centre Hall, PA. This is a converted 1885 small town train station!!!

## **2010 MER Convention**

The responsibilities for hosting a MER convention are split between the Division and Region. I will be chairing the convention committee myself. The division is responsible for the following areas. If you would be interested in helping with one or more of them, please let me know.

Convention Website, Prototype tours, Model Railroad Tours, OPSIG sessions, Program Book, and Item(s) to sell to make money for the division.

The following are jointly administered by the Division and Region:

Clinics and Advertising

We also have the option of providing a vendor room and modular displays, depending on available room and cost (this will be determined at a later time). The rest is taken care of by the region.

# Susquehanna Division Prototype Roundup

## By John Frantz



(ED NOTE: The following was submitted last fall when I started work on this issue. Problems with finalizing the events postponed the release until now. That's why this article is slightly out of date. – JW)

With the summer finally over and leaves starting to change and fall, winter will soon be upon the Division and the railroads that operate within it. While true that railroads are

gearing up for an increase in traffic for the holidays and also whatever weather that might have a chance of appearing on its mainlines, most are also already thinking forward to work that will be done in the coming spring and summer.

Maintenance projects are always occurring along the corridors of railroads, whether it is something small, such as trimming trees and brush to improve the sight lines of grade crossings, to the more labor intensive rebuilding of a mainline track or extension of a branch line. During the summer and very early fall, railroads across the Division are actually figuring out which projects they want to conquer next year, what kind of money and how much they will need to finance it. As explained in my previous column, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is one of the most railroad-friendly states in the Union. Along with that, the Commonwealth also provides a number of funding options for railroads to improve their infrastructure.

Residing in York County, I'll cite from there since I'm familiar with their system. As an example, Norfolk Southern would like to replace ties along a one mile stretch of their railroad heading towards the power plant at Brunner's Island. They now look at the current price of a new railroad tie and calculate the numbers needed to fund this project including material, labor, etc. Now that they have the amount, they write a proposal for why they need the ties and how it will help them improve their infrastructure and sustain high levels of traffic with minimal out of service time to perform

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maintenance. With that proposal in hand, the regional contact for Norfolk Southern starts at the bottom of the money ladder to seek funding. In this case, it's the County Planning Commission. A presentation is made to the Transportation Sub-Committee of the York County Planning Commission. If the YCPC supports the project, they will write a letter of support and forward the proposal on to PennDOT. Now, the same person makes a presentation to PennDOT officials with the Bureau of Rail-Freight. PennDOT, through its Pennsylvania Infrastructure bank, issues grants

for transportation improvements which will benefit the Commonwealth. These grants have a typical cap amount of \$500,000. Knowing this, Norfolk Southern would probably choose not to seek any further funding. However, the Federal Railroad Administration also has grants and loan programs set up that provide funding for projects with a scope that runs into the hundred million dollar range.

After the presentation is made however, it is up to the granting authority to choose which projects receive funding and how much they would be awarded. The awards will be announced in the spring of the following year and given to the railroad in need. After being awarded the money, the railroad may implement its proposed maintenance at any time, but the money awarded can only be used for the project it was awarded and for nothing else, or the money would have to be repaid to the granting authority.

As modelers and rail fans within the Commonwealth, we pay taxes which help contribute towards this program. Some may complain due to the amount the government is receiving from them. However, without this financial boost railroads throughout the Commonwealth and the country would not be able to make critical improvements to its infrastructure that would otherwise cause the line to have the potential of a catastrophic failure of some kind. The improvements of today will help improve the economy of tomorrow.

Links of interest:

PennDOT Bureau of Rail Freight, Ports, and Waterways:

<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdBRF.nsf/RailFreightHomepage>

Federal Railroad Administration Financial Assistance: <http://www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/26>

Photo credits (both by John Frantz):

Page 15 - NS SD50 5401 at Lucknow, PA heading Eastbound. Date Taken is 10/26/2008.

Page 16 - historical lineup at the 100th Anniversary of Washington Union Station being open to the public. Left to right are PRR E8a 5711, ACL E3a 501, PRR GG1 4935, SOU E8a 6900, and C&O F3a 8016. Date Taken is 10/5/2008.

# On The AP Trail

By Alan Frame

The AP (Achievement Program) Trail will start you on the way to (MMR Master Model Railroader).

With the installation of the new administration – Superintendent, newsletter editor, webmaster and a director - who are all volunteers, this will be an opportune time to review the Association Volunteer Certificate. This certificate is one in the “Service to the Hobby” category. The other two are Official and Author. Most anything you do, as opposed to just participating, can count for this certificate. The accounting for this certificate is based on Time Units (TU’s). Depending on the event you can earn a TU for that day or a time period such as a month in office. The November 2008 issue of Scale Rails covers the requirements for Volunteer.

The information about the Association Volunteer certificate is available on the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association) web site [http://www.nmra.org/education/achievement/ap\\_volunteer.html](http://www.nmra.org/education/achievement/ap_volunteer.html). I would suggest printing out the Record and Validation Forms, especially page two. Start listing the activities you have volunteered for on page two and which position, dates from and dates to, make sure you get an official to sign to verify your work and their NMRA number. While in the NMRA site open up the “The Masters” articles for more information on the certificate.

I will concentrate on the division level for some examples. The Division Officers – Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Chief Clerk would earn 1 TU per month (the new officers started in July, 2008 so start counting). Directors would earn 1 TU per month. The newsletter editor and webmaster will be the committee manager for those respective jobs and would earn 1 TU per month for each of those jobs. The AP Chairman is a regional committee member and earns 1 TU per month. Layout open houses that were sponsored by the Division earn 3 TU’s per day for the individual who opens up the layout and each of the operators per day. Did you work at a convention – registration, bus captain, set up tables, etc – you would earn the same number of TU’s as a committee member. Have an interesting way to build a switch, detail a locomotive then give a clinic at a division meeting. The first time you give it the clinic it would count for the Author certificate, the next time you offer the same clinic it would count for volunteer at 2 TU’s. Active in the Boy Scouts, become a Railroading Merit Badge counselor. Being the counselor earns 1 TU a month and each Scout that qualifies for the Merit Badge earns you 1 TU. Other things you can do to earn Time Units – judge at model railroad contests, operate a modular railroad at an NMRA, MER or division meet, if you organize a division sponsored event like the Live Steam tour you can earn TU’s.

To help our membership apply for the Volunteer Certificate I reviewed the issues of our newsletter the Susquehanna Sidetracks. Listed next to your name is the amount of Time Units (TU’s) I’ve found that you have earned. I did this during the Penn State / Ohio State game and some of the amounts may be off a little depending who was winning! You will have to check the issues of the newsletter so you can enter the dates you earned the TU’s on the Record and Validation Forms. The dates entered on the form will be checked against the newsletter dates and then the form can be verified and signed. Warner 48, Frantz 6, Tice 192, Oaks 60, Martin 90 also author, clinician, convention chairman, Trone 3, Turner 180, Brandt 150, Agne 120, Atkinson 90, Nesbit 96, Yingling 96, Krepps 26

Please review the newsletter for the dates and print out the forms from the NMRA web site. You can contact me if you need help and when you are ready to start. My phone number and Email address is listed on page 2 of the Susquehanna Sidetracks newsletter. Good luck.

# The Case for Interchange

By Jim Hertzog



In its simplest terms, interchange is one railroad delivering and/or receiving freight cars from another railroad. In the course of delivering a freight car(s) to a destination several railroads might be involved in car forwarding. It can as complex as hundreds of cars passing through the Belt Railway in Chicago to connecting railroads, or as simple as a car of freight being passed off to the Penn Central in Ansonia, PA by the Wellsville, Addison, and Galetton railroad. Both scenarios serve the same purpose albeit on a different scale.

On the prototype carloads of freight and returning empties needed to be delivered as quickly as possible in order to avoid extra charges. Generally cars were to be interchanged before midnight in order to avoid these extra charges. As modeler railroaders we can borrow the idea of interchange and incorporate into our layout designs and ultimately for use in an operating session.

On our model layouts interchange can be quite visible or it can be implied through the use of staging. For example, on my Reading Railroad-Shamokin Division I have three interchange connections. First and most important is the connection with the Lehigh and New England railroad at Tamaqua, PA. I modeled the area as accurately as possible even including the wye connections between the RDG and the LNE. During an op session the LNE will make two appearances. This duplicates the morning

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and evening transfer runs that the prototype would have made. Even the freight handled is representative of the prototype. Although most of the cars delivered are loads of anthracite, an occasional covered hopper of cement or an empty returning to the Reading show up. Likewise the Reading yard crew at Tamaqua is busy gathering cars routed via the LNE for the LNE crew to pick up. Even more important however is the need for these cars to be delivered to the Reading in time for them to make a connection on an assigned train.

For example the LNE generally makes a mid-session delivery of 8-10 hopper cars laden with anthracite. Train TN-3 (Tamaqua to Newberry) is its connection and leaves later in the session. It is therefore imperative that the yardmaster gets these cars on TN-3 and also have ready any cars destined for the LNE. TN-3 needs to leave on time from Tamaqua so it makes its connection in time with the PRR and NYC at Newberry Junction.

I also have similar situation at Shamokin, PA between the RDG and the PRR. While not as extensive as at Tamaqua, the PRR makes a daily run to the RDG's Shamokin yard and returns back into staging. While the LNE may deliver 12-15 cars a session at Tamaqua, the PRR usually has no more than 5 cars. The RDG and PRR did not carry on a tremendous amount of interchange, so my session reflects this.

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I also practice what I call an “implied interchange” at Haucks, PA. Here the prototype CNJ and the RDG carried on a healthy interchange. Unfortunately I did not have enough room to model the yard and connections there. Instead I have a hidden two track staging yard that represents Haucks. I run two of the several symbol freights that serviced this important connection. Trains JN-5, and its counterpart NJ-4 , run between this hidden area and the end of the line at Newberry Junction. The cars reflect the miscellaneous freight, as well as blocks of CNJ coal that would have been seen on the freights. Occasionally if there is a power shortage I can even run CNJ power. On our model layouts interchange not only provides us with lots of operation, but also gives a side benefit of running power from other favorite railroads we might have. So although I no longer model the LNE as my primary railroad, I still get a taste of it when the transfer runs show up. Having always been a fan of the CNJ I now have a reason to run its power onto Reading rails as well. I do not think it a coincidence that the best layouts that I have the privilege to operate on all incorporate interchange into the operationally scheme.

Photo credit – all photos for this article were taken by Mike Rikunas

ED NOTE: this is the first in what will hopefully be a long series of modeling articles with one in every issue. Each will focus on some area of model railroading or some way to improve your layout. Jim is a well known author and we thank him for providing the first article in this series. – JW

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Official publication of the Susquehanna Division 11  
of the National Model Railroad Association

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