

Welcome to the April edition of 'Sidetracks Express' - a quick update newsletter to remind our membership of near-term events and important Division business.

Ron Smith

Happy Spring to All!

According to the calendar Spring arrived on March 20 but my white front yard says otherwise. Oh well, more modeling time, and warmth will eventually arrive – right?!

This special issue is dedicated to four upcoming projects – our June BOD elections and three planned 2015 events. Articles about each are included in this issue.

In our January Sidetracks we presented outlines about each planned 2015 event, their locations, and dates. However, Event 5, titled “September? – Lancaster”, identified the location (Grandview United Methodist Church in Lancaster) and provided a rough event schedule, but no date was set. That event will now occur on September 12, the clinics will run from 9AM to 4PM, and a special late afternoon operations session is planned from 3:30-6:30PM. However, the planned Sunday (9/13) layout open houses have been cancelled due to the Mainline Hobby weekend layout open house program scheduled for September 19-20.

By now you should have received by either email or USPS our Division Survey. We want to know your thoughts and suggestions as to how we're doing, where we can improve our service, and your recommended future events. We also would like you to tell us what events you would be willing to help develop, if you would volunteer to help with some minor Division administrative tasks, and any other comments.

Out of 260+ members we still have 44 with no email address. The survey mailing to those members cost the Division just under \$50 from a treasury of less than \$1500. We know several members do not have internet service so we offer them home delivery subscription service of Sidetracks and other important correspondence. For those concerned about privacy be assured we follow strict NMRA privacy policies that prohibit us from providing any personal information to any commercial party. If you know any members with email capability but have not provided their email address to us, please have them forward it to Membership Chairman, Howard Oakes, at 717-632-5990 or [hoakes@susquehannanmra.org](mailto:hoakes@susquehannanmra.org). We want to keep all members informed about their Division activities but we cannot afford home delivery services to those without either an email address or pay the small annual \$11 home delivery subscription fee.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our live steam day on May 9 and all our remaining 2015 events!



**FINAL ANNOUNCEMENT****MAY 9 LIVE STEAM DAY IN PERRY COUNTY**

**NOTE:** Our January Sidetracks article incorrectly listed 10 AM as the start time – *the correct event start time is 9AM.* (Ed.)

Our day begins at 9 AM with a visit to Wayne Godshall's 5000 square foot custom machine shop in Shermans Dale, PA. Godshall's Custom Machining is a full-service machine shop that specializes in both general machine services and the Live Steam hobby. One major product offered by Wayne is an almost ready-to-run PRR H-10 kit in 1.6" scale, and several H-10 projects will be seen during our tour. And for those who believe size matters you will see a live steam Big Boy locomotive under construction.

After lunch on your own, we will re-assemble at 1 PM at Don Sweger's Tuscarora Valley Railroad (TVR) in Ickesburg, PA. Don built and operates a 1.5" scale railroad consisting of a yard, engine steam-up facility, and approximately 6200 feet of mainline track. He and a friend also built and operate a 1.5" scale PRR K-4 along with matching passenger cars. As many as 6 different classes of Pennsy steam locomotives have operated on Don's railroad during a single event so if you want to see and hear PRR live steam in operation, this is the place. Don has invited several friends to bring and operate their locomotives during our visit. After a railroad introduction train rides will be available.

Wayne Godshall's Custom Machining is located at 4614 Valley Road, Shermans Dale, PA. Valley Road is also PA Route 850 that runs between Marysville and Shermans Dale. Don's Tuscarora Railroad is located in Ickesburg, next to the firehouse, on PA Route 17. The firehouse is located just north of the intersection of PA Routes 17 and 74. Turning west onto Railroad Lane off of PA 17 takes you right to the railroad. Maps to each will be provided by email to all registered attendees.

For lunch there is the Bear's Den Pizza Shop on the outskirts of Ickesburg. Also, if you wish to picnic, there is Little Buffalo State Park just outside of Newport. The Newport and Sherman's Valley Railroad passed through this area in the early 1900's on its route from New Germantown to Newport where it connected with the PRR. There are picnic tables and a short walking trail on the old Newport and Sherman's Valley roadbed. For more information about the park visit the Little Buffalo State Park website.

This event is mostly outside so dress accordingly. Also, because it includes rides behind live steam locomotives, suggest you not wear your Sunday best.

For insurance purposes attendance is by pre-registration only. The registration form, costs, and mailing instructions are on the following page. Regretfully, we will not be able to accept "drop-in" visitors. The forms are due **May 4<sup>th</sup>**.

We look forward to seeing you at this great Susquehanna Division outing!

*Dan Horting and Barry Schmitt*



## Electric Railroads & Coal

Our second summer excursion this year occurs on June 27 and begins in Scranton PA where we'll visit several museums related to electric traction railroading and coal mines, and the event is centrally located in the northern portion of our Division. The event is divided into three unique tours and they all start at the Electric City Museum which shares a parking lot with Steamtown in downtown Scranton. Also look for signs in the parking lot that read "Trolley Museum."

We are offering three tour options to allow as much travel flexibility for attendees as possible. While Scranton is not right around the corner from many members it is conveniently located just west of I-81 which makes it easily accessible from most Division areas. We also are offering two coal mine visit locations to offer maximum driving efficiency for those members traveling from the south. For example, our northern, eastern, and western members might find both the Electric City Museum and Lackawanna Coal Mine locations in Scranton most convenient for their travels while those from the south might find the Ashland Pioneer Coal Mine an ideal stop on the way home from Electric City since Ashland is roughly halfway between Scranton and Harrisburg. To help you select the tour options best suited for your location a broad area map is included with this article.

Due to entry fees and head count requirements this will be a pre-registration only event. The registration form follows this article, along with an area map. Please complete your form and send it to Project Officer John Wissinger by **June 6** – his contact information is at the bottom of the registration form.

The approximate travel time and distances from selected Division cities to Scranton are: Allentown, 1 hour/15 minutes and 77 miles; Harrisburg, 2 hours & 122 miles; Lancaster, 2 hours/30 minutes and 134 miles; Lebanon, 1 hour/50 minutes and 106 miles; and State College, 2 hours/30 minutes and 150 miles. The addresses for the three event locations are:

Electric City 300 Cliff St. Scranton, PA 18503	Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour McDade Park, Bald Mountain Rd. Scranton, PA 18504	Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine 19 <sup>th</sup> & Oak Streets Ashland, PA 17921
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There are three possible tours, **Tours #1, #2 and #3** all start at the **Electric City Museum** which shares a parking lot with Steamtown in downtown Scranton. We will meet at the parking lot outside of Electric City at 10:00 AM sharp. When the entire group has arrived we will enter the Electric City Museum.

**Electric City Museum** is devoted to the history of electric traction (interurban railroads and streetcars). The industry had a short history starting in the mid-1890s and lasting until WW II (most interurban lines were abandoned in the early '30s) although some city streetcar and interurban lines lasted into the '60s or later. Today we have a resurgence of the industry, but are called "light rail" now.

In the museum are displays of various phases of electric railroads from the trolleys that ran on city streets to the electric railroads that ran between towns. These were called interurbans and ran high speed cars on private rights of way. Many of these lines had box motors that handled LCL freight and steeple cab locomotives that handled standard railroad freight cars. There is a description of how the high voltage AC power was distributed to the intermediate substations and changed to the 600 V DC that the electric cars ran on. Interestingly, the technology that was developed in the 1890s is still being used on many diesel locomotives today. There is a full sized cutaway of a streetcar in the museum showing the various parts of the car and drive train.

There are approximately 20 electric cars on the property in various states of restoration. We will be taking a one hour (10 mile) round trip ride on an interurban car on the former Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Railroad (The Laurel Line) ROW. The line passes many interesting sights and through a 4,700' tunnel. We will visit the restoration shops where volunteers restore vintage electric interurban and trolley cars.

**Lunch** The Electric City tour ends at 12:30, lunch will be on your own. There is a food court in the Steamtown Mall which is accessible by a foot bridge that goes over the Steamtown outdoor storage yard. There are other restaurants in Scranton or lunch counters at the coal mine museum. There are also parks across from the mine museum where you can eat a picnic lunch. If you plan on eating at the coal mine lunch counters, please let John know at least a week before the trip so the museums are prepared.

**Tour #1 (continued) The Lackawanna Coal Mine and Anthracite Heritage Museum Tour. Note: The mine temperature is 53 Degrees so dress accordingly.** Originally opened in 1860, you will descend into the mine on a cable mine railway. At the bottom of the shaft you will go on a guided walking tour of the various underground passages. The guide will explain the ways miners worked the anthracite coal seams, what tools they used and the various jobs in the mine. The tour is approximately one hour long.

Anthracite Heritage Museum Tour is in the same park as the coal mine. A 15 minute movie introducing the life of miners and a one hour guided tour of the museum follows.

**Tour # 2 (continued) The Pioneer Tunnel and train ride. The mine temperature is 53 Degrees so dress accordingly.** The pioneer mine is a horizontal drift mine which runs 1800' into the mountain. You will ride in converted mine cars pulled by a battery powered mine motor (locomotive). A guide will conduct the walking tour of the mine explaining how anthracite coal was mined, the various jobs in the mine and the coal seams.

After the mine tour, we will walk across the parking lot to take a ride on the narrow gauge RR in converted mine cars pulled by an 0-4-0T steam locomotive. The railroad is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile long going around the mountain to a strip mine where that process will be explained.

**Tour #3 Electric City only.** After the conclusion of the Electric City tour, you are free to visit Steamtown on your own. Steamtown admission is \$7 or free with a Senior Pass or Golden Age Passport.

We hope to see you on this great June 27<sup>th</sup> outing. And we look for a strong showing from all our northern members who rarely have an event located right in the middle of their area.

*John Wissinger*

THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
MID-EASTERN REGION      SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION

Presents:

**“ELECTRIC RAILROADS AND COAL”**

**A TRIP TO ELECTRIC CITY & ANTHRACITE COAL MINE AND MUSEUM**

**Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**The program begins at Scranton, PA**

**REGISTRATION**

**Name (print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Contact** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

NMRA Member – Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Member # \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Member \_\_\_\_\_ # Attending \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SELECT FROM THE FOLLOWING

\_\_\_\_ **Tour # 1      Electric City, Lackawanna County Coal mine Tour & Museum**  
**Scranton, PA - Tour Starts at 10:00 AM sharp!**  
**NMRA cost per person \$23.00\* -- Non-member \$25.00**

\*Same rate for each family member

\_\_\_\_ **Tour # 2      Electric City, Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine and Train Ride**  
**Scranton and Ashland, PA – Tour Starts at 10:0 AM Sharp!**  
**NMRA cost per person \$24.00\* -- Non-member \$26.00**

\*Same rate for each family member

\_\_\_\_ **Tour # 3      Electric City Only**  
**Scranton, PA – Tour Starts at 10:00 AM Sharp!**  
**NMRA cost per person \$8.00\* -- Non-Member \$9.00**

\*Same rate for each family member

**TOTAL COST** \_\_\_\_\_

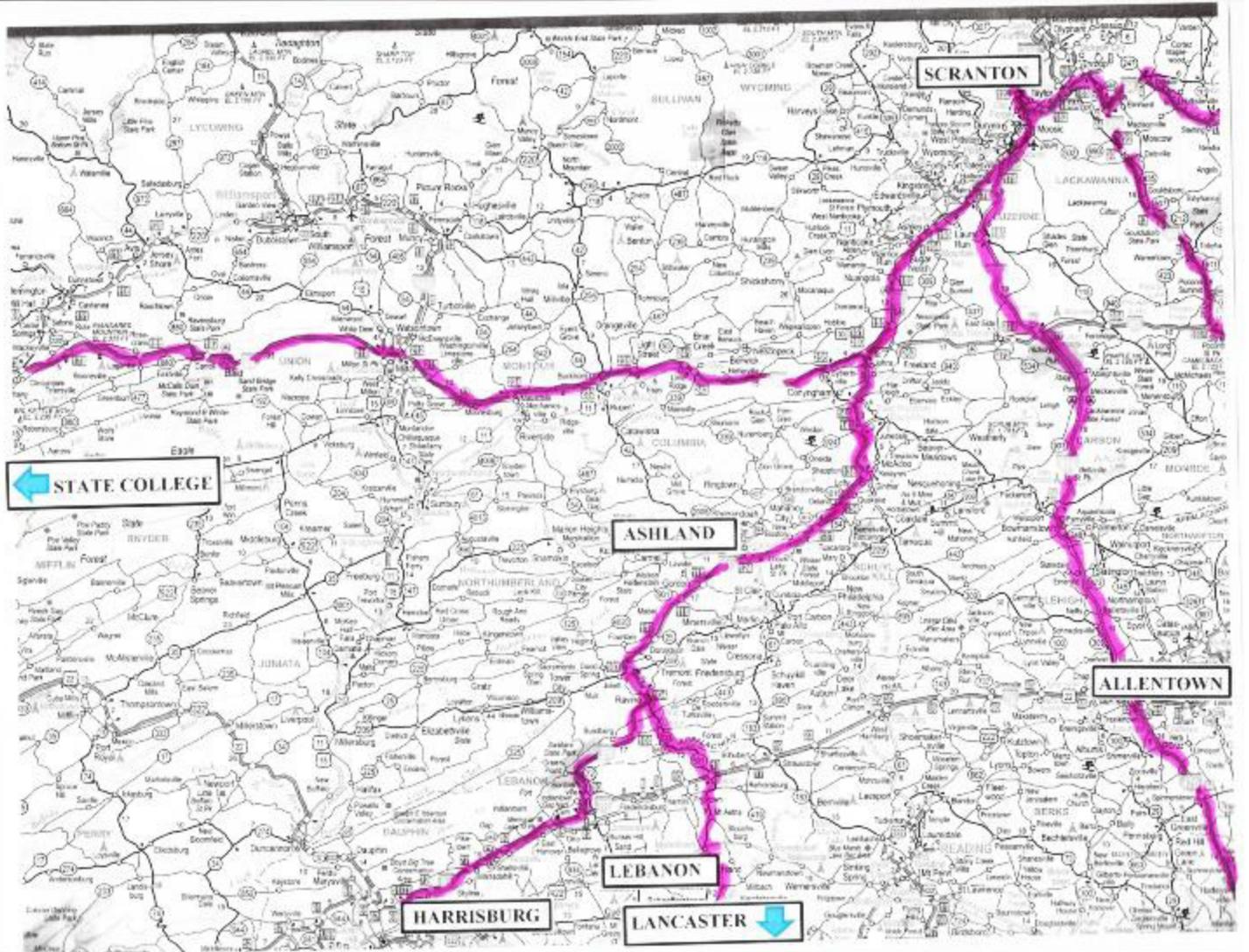
Submit cash, check or money order (payable to Susquehanna Div. NMRA) **no later than Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>** to:

John Wissinger, c/o NMRA  
23 Thorndale Drive, Myerstown, PA 17067

For more information contact John Wissinger at: [jwissinger@susquehannanmra.org](mailto:jwissinger@susquehannanmra.org) or (717) 628-1767

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THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
MID-EASTERN REGION SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION



## **September 12 Clinics & Operations Program**

Our September program is now set for the 12<sup>th</sup> at the Grandview United Methodist Church in Lancaster. Our program will present a series of very interesting clinics in a somewhat nontraditional two-segment format – Operations and Interesting Modeling Topics.

A map to the Grandview Methodist Church, complete program schedule, descriptions about each clinic, and a list of clinicians will be presented in a detailed July Sidetracks article. Because of the limited number of available crew positions during the Operations Session sub-segment, pre-registration will be necessary. However, there will be no such restrictions on the number attending any of the clinics.

So grab your calendar and block out September 12 now so you won't miss joining us for this most interesting and informative model railroading experience! And plan to bring a friend who might be interested in joining our great hobby.



## **Division Director Nominations**

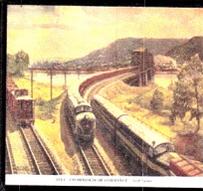
It's once again time to ask for nominations for our four Division Director positions. Each will be elected for a two year term from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017. To be a Director, you must be a member of the NMRA, reside in the Susquehanna Division 11 area, and be at least 21 years of age. You may nominate yourself or another member you feel is qualified; however, in fairness to that individual please verify they would be willing to serve. If we receive more than four nominees each will be asked to provide a short (200 words or less) bio-sketch that will then be provided to all members during the June voting process.

Three of our four Directors have expressed interest in running for reelection. However, like any other election, all four positions are open for election. So please be positive, get your name placed on the ballot, and make your case for election.

The timeline for the 2015 Director voting program is:

- May 1, 2015: Submit nominations to Barry Schmitt, Superintendent, either by phone at 717-877-1810 or email at [bschmitt@susquehannanmra.org](mailto:bschmitt@susquehannanmra.org).
- May 20, 2015: Candidate bio-sketches due either to Barry by email (see above address) or USPS (405 Ford Drive, Elizabethtown PA 17022). Short bio-sketches (200 words or less) required only if there are more than four candidates.
- June 1: Ballots and nominee bio-sketches (only if we receive more than four candidates) sent to members for vote.
- June 20, 2015: Ballots received by either email or USPS.
- July 2015: Vote announced in July Sidetracks.

Please seriously consider running for a Division Director position. Our annual programs are developed under the leadership of your Board of Directors (BOD) and all Division policies are approved by your BOD. Therefore, this is your opportunity to get involved in deciding the future direction of your NMRA Division. I know many members are plenty busy with job, family, hobby projects, and other community programs and therefore believe serving on our BOD would simply require too much time. On the contrary, our BOD only meets in person twice per year – all other matters are handled by either email or phone. So once again, please give this important request your most thoughtful consideration. This is an excellent opportunity for you to have a direct say in how your Division is managed, and it does not require a great deal of your valuable free time. Please give me a call or send me an email if you have questions about the elections or our BOD operations at [bschmitt@susquehannanmra.org](mailto:bschmitt@susquehannanmra.org) or 717-877-1810.



**PRR Panhandle Division**

**George Pandelios** Chief Engineer  
Member: NMRA, TCA, PRRT&HS  
717.503.3192 [gpandelios@verizon.net](mailto:gpandelios@verizon.net)

NATHAN M. KLINE



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Gary P. Nastase-President & CEO  
Kathleen A. Nastase-Train Wifey  
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[gpnastase@aol.com](mailto:gpnastase@aol.com)

*Route of the Whitetail*



**B&O WESTON SUBDIVISION**

Barry W. Schmitt, Superintendent  
1313 Mockingbird Lane  
The Gates of Hell, PA 66666  
(717) 877-1810 [sbschmitt@comcast.net](mailto:sbschmitt@comcast.net)

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

138 Old School House Lane  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

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Make checks payable to "Susquehanna Division 11"

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