



THOUSAND LAKES REGION

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

The FUSEE



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Achievement Program - Prototype Models Certificate Part 2 Prototype Scene Construction

Neil Maldies, MMR

Photos by author unless noted

Achievement Program - Prototype Models Certificate – Part 2 Prototype Scene Construction

Part two of a two-part series highlighting the planning and building process I used to complete the AP requirements for Prototype Models.

The first part of the series (In the Fall 2021 Fusee) concentrated on how to come up with a suitable prototype scene, how to plan it, the research process and where to find information. I also covered how all these areas applied to meeting the AP requirements for judging and getting your Prototype Model certificate.

In Part two I'll share how the prototype scene and models were constructed and items previously built were used to put together the finished prototype scene. I'll also share what I prepared for documentation and how the judging process went for me.

The Diorama/Module Foundation Construction: As I described in part one the diorama/module foundation itself is a simple box frame with a Homosote cover. The following photos shows laying out the structures and track and cutting the Homosote for the depot foundation and the coal loading area. I didn't even power the track so it is a static model. The rest of the terrain is flat so other than adding scenery textures construction was simple and straight forward.



View from the Cab

President Jay Manning

As we head into another winter season in the upper Midwest and Canada, it is time to step back and take a look at where we are, where we have been, and where we should be going in the hobby of model railroading. I see this as two priorities: what are my priorities, and what are the Division and Region priorities. Let's look at the hardest one first, my priorities. That question turns on sitting down without hands on tools or running trains, rather, what can I do to become a better model railroader? It is a simple principle- the more skills I have, the greater the enjoyment of the hobby.

If my first love is running trains, then I need to look at my layout and equipment and assess honestly what their status is. Nothing spoils fun more than equipment that does not run or causes headaches---derailments, uncoupling, poor continuous running, etc. When is the last time you seriously examined your track work? There are standards for track. Next, take a long look at your equipment- does your rolling stock meet standards? For example- wheels (including cleaning both engine wheels AND cars, couplers, weight, and power to the layout---DCC or DC. These seem to be little issues, but nothing spoils running trains like a poor running layout.

My next stop is a hard one. Do I need to expand my personal knowledge and skills in the hobby? The hobby is changing so fast that I often feel like a speed bump on a super-highway. With all the options now available for DCC operations, just how current is my knowledge? It may be time to make the effort to read and improve your knowledge in both electronics and the ever-changing capabilities of DCC. I remember when DCC first hit the market and we were operating with throttles that only changed the voltage in the track and thinking that this was only a passing fad---boy did I get that one wrong. Another example of not having done something, is that I have never scratch built a car. Maybe it is time for me to explore just how this done, including finding a blueprint to work from all the way to a completed model. This is a personal satisfaction area with many, many opportunities to learn and gain.

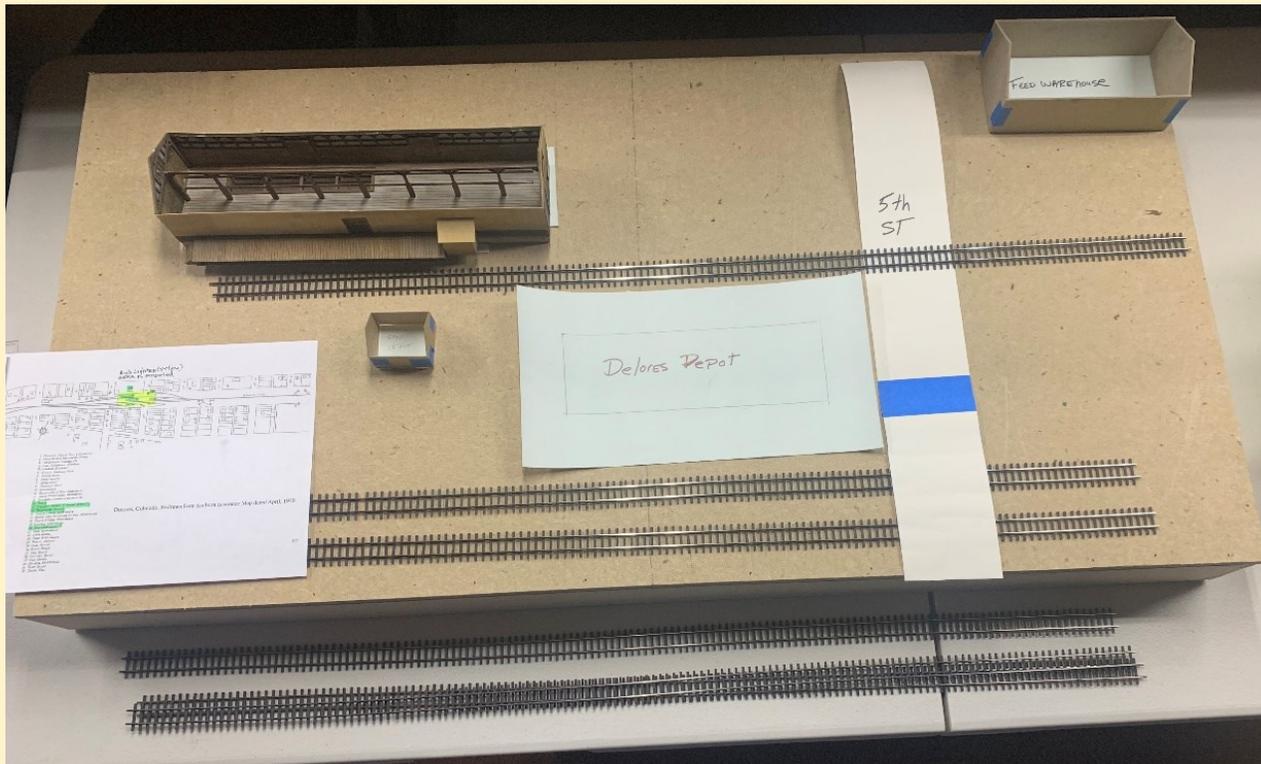
There is an obligation to pass on your knowledge and skills to individuals who may want to get into the hobby and to recognize that there are less skilled model railroaders in your circles of interest. Only by being willing to help others will you support growing the hobby. An individual who sees this as a very complex hobby will shy away from it unless "coached" or taught that is not that difficult to learn and enjoy the hobby. I am a perfect example of that- I had been involved on the edges of N scale for years, and never happy with what I was doing or seeing. At a public train show an individual saw me watching and asked if he could answer any questions. I had one, "how do you get more than 4 cars to stay coupled while the train is running; the simple answer was "paint the couplers with grimy black paint". That was a turning point in my model railroading enjoyment and got me seriously involved in the hobby.

Let's take this train of thought up a step, what is the status of our Division? Is the Division actively working to support its members and the hobby? After the past 20 months of "unusual circumstances" hopefully we are still working to keep the Division members engaged. Is the Division active in the community? Is the Division dormant or seeking areas where it can appear and promote the hobby along with helping the public? For example, the Community Education Division of the Sioux Falls school system asked the DSED to present an Adult Education class on model railroading. The Division opted to accept the request and developed a 4 session class on T Track module building. The first class sold out, and so did the second class. As a result Division membership increased. Train show season is upon us- is the Division being represented at train shows in your area---maybe as simple as a table with members discussing the hobby and opportunities to as complex as having 2 running layouts as part of the show. PUBLIC APPEARANCES are important.

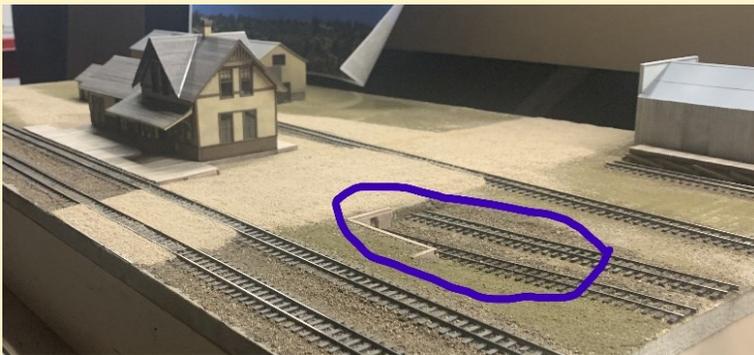
Now let us take a look at the THOUSAND LAKES REGION. Where have we been in the past 20 months? Yes, we cancelled the convention in 2020 and lots of activities within the Region were cancelled. We never shut down the leadership of the Region, just slowed down. We undertook a rewrite of the Region handbook and had it the halfway point when COVID hit, but it is still on the list of things to finish. We held a Region convention in 2021, it was a success. Tours and clinics were planned and held and Region business, including presentation of leadership and contest room awards was accomplished. We have a 2022 convention on the schedule in Brainerd, Minnesota. There will be an election of a new Region President and other officers to take the leadership of the Region. **With a minimum of 5 differing sets of state COVID regulations applying within the Region, the Region did not lose its viability and is getting healthier by the day.**

As I wrap this up, there will be a fall Board meeting. Grants are still available to assist with Division activities; voting will occur for 2 of the Region's most prestigious awards, Lifetime Support to the Region, and a second for a minimum of 5 years of support to the Region. I encourage each Division's leadership to review the 2 lists of eligible individuals so that at the Board meeting we can accomplish this prestigious task. I also encourage each Division to sit down and discuss issues that it believes the TLR needs to address and provide them to Ron Olsen for inclusion on the agenda.

2022 is coming fast, plan personal and Division activities for the coming year that will support your personal enjoyment of the hobby and promote the hobby in the eyes of the public.



Layout of structures, road and track (Based on Sanborn Map)



Cut and retaining wall for coal unloading tracks



Cardboard shim under mainline track to add slight roadbed height per pictures

Scenery Construction: Nothing fancy here, I used the basic tried and true water-soluble techniques with latex/acrylic paints and a variety of ground foam from various manufacturers. For the roads I used Monster Modelworks Diorama dirt. Monster Modelworks closed its doors for a few years and is back now, however, I don't see on their website that they are currently selling Diorama dirt. (I really like this scenery material) The only custom material I used was dirt I brought back from Colorado for the ballast and some ground cover. I sifted it and glued it down with diluted matte medium along with the other materials.

Motive power and rolling stock: These models were relatively easy for me to prepare for the prototype scene since I already had scratch-built cars that were suitable for the scene and the engine and gose models I had could also be used for the prototype scene with some simple decorating changes.



Photo credit - Robert W Richardson

The goose model I had wasn't the exact one in the photos, however, it was one that records show ran through Dolores regularly, so it was acceptable to use. I just added some light weathering to age it appropriately.



Photo credit – Otto Perry

I already had a Blackstone RGS 2-8-0 model that was numbered 40 and with a little research I found it was used in Dolores, however the picture I found had updated lettering to the newer RGS markings. I was able to remove the factory markings and paint over the tender and cab locations with some gloss black and replace the markings with new decals matching the photo. With a little light weathering my motive power models were good to go!

Similar to the motive power requirements I had 4 scratch built rolling stock models (Completed for the cars AP certificate) that also fit the bill for the prototype scene. Having completed models was fantastic as it saved me the additional work of finding and/or building suitable rolling stock.



I did create some additional work for myself since I liked the work car and how it looked in the west end view picture and decided to include it in the prototype scene. I was able to find a kit offered by Narrow Gauge Colorado that matched up well with the car that was in the picture. I scratch built the step detail in the prototype picture to get into the car to finish out the scene.

Structure Construction:

The Depot Structure is the main structure and the focus of the prototype scene and is where I spent most of the getting the details right. Most of the photos available are of the depot and are able to provide a lot more detail information of the structure than what was available for the other structures in the scene.

The depot is a kit produced by AMB, it is a laser cut kit made of mostly wood and some card stock. While construction of the model is not terribly complex, there are a lot of parts that are required to make up the walls. The structure has a lot of doors and windows that required patience to get made and placed in the wall correctly. The kit also required most of the parts to be pre painted as it would have been very difficult to paint otherwise. The color scheme I followed was the typical cream/buff with brown trim that most of all the RGS depot were painted



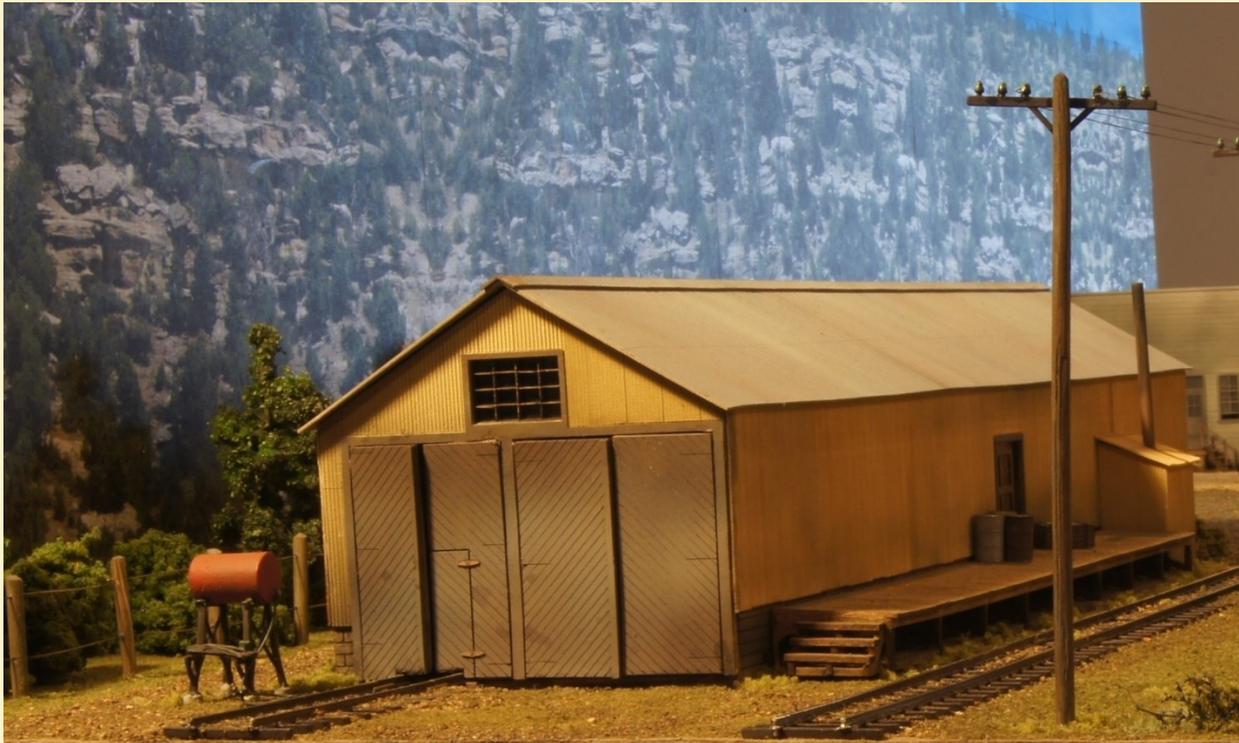
I constructed a timber foundation for the depot based on the photos and platforms around the depot based on the photos. Some of the drawings from 1910 show a much more extensive platform around the depot which I read was removed at some point prior to the period I am modeling. The platforms and foundation are scratch built using strip wood that has been roughened with a wire brush and weathered appropriately. I added some nail holes to the platform boards to give a finished look.



The big surprise with this kit is the roofing, it comes with peel and stick shingles (which are nice), however, between getting the backing off the shingles and the angles that needed to be cut on the main roof were tedious. I would estimate I easily spent 10 or more hours shingling the structure. I am very pleased how it turned out. I also pre painted the shingles so they had random colors and weren't all the same color. (I have approx. 8 hrs into the foundation and platforms and 40 hrs into the depot structure)



The Goose Barn is a kit I purchased from Narrow Gauge Colorado, it is a laser cut kit that uses card stock and wood materials for construction. The kit was fairly easy to build and is a very nice representation of the prototype structure. There was an article in the Narrow Gauge Gazette that was helpful as it gave the color scheme for the building. The prototype structure is very basic and there isn't much extra detailing needed. I only needed to add a chimney pipe. (20 hrs. to build).



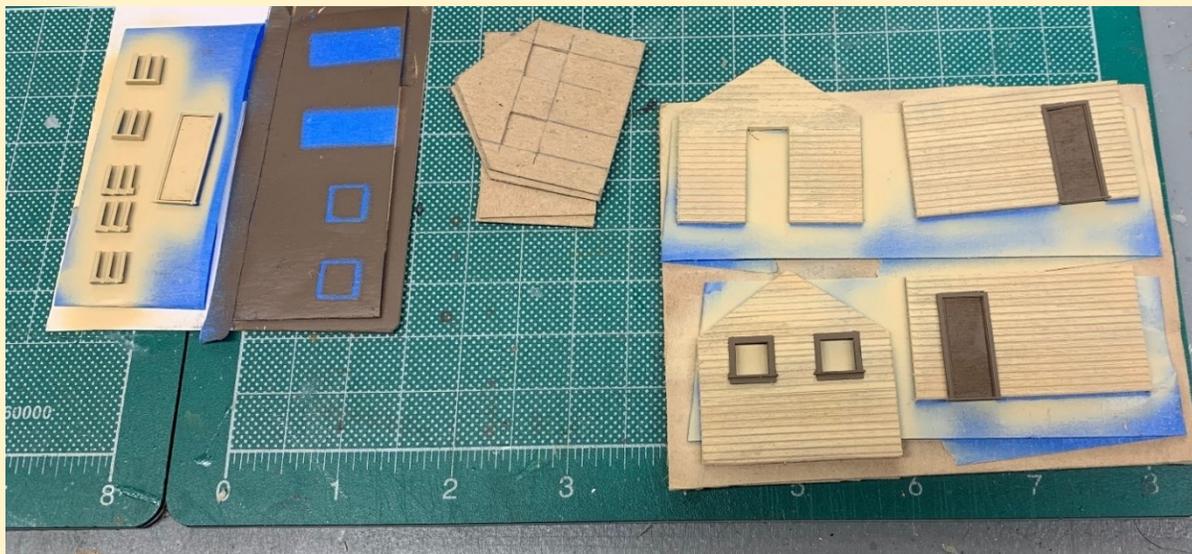
The Feed Warehouse was scratch built based on what the construction type looked like in the photos and scaled approximately from the photos compared to buildings with known dimensions. It was also compressed in size to fit on the diorama/module as the prototype building is roughly 100 feet long.

The construction type is basic board and batten with a tongue and groove wood false front. Roofing appears to be corrugated metal. Strip wood was used to construct the board and batten walls over a scale cardboard base that was cut out of some sheet cardboard material. The false front was made from left over siding material which looked close to what was in the pictures. I took some liberty with the door(s) and windows as none of the photos had a clear image of them. Door/window locations were placed roughly to resemble the pictures as best as possible since the building was being compressed in size. The doors and windows used in all the scratch-built structures are various leftover Grandt Line parts that I had in my parts bins.

Campbell corrugated metal roofing material was used to complete the model. The structure appears to be a weathered white or gray color, I could not find anything to confirm, but based on building colors used in that time frame it seemed a reasonable choice. (30 hrs to build)



The Small Shed associated with the depot was constructed the same way as the feed warehouse, except shingles were used for roofing material. I constructed the vented windows from some left-over plastic steps I cut down and pieced together to fit inside the window frames (10 hrs. to build).



Structure Finishing Technique: All of the structures were air brush painted over the raw wood walls weathered first with a base coat of alcohol-based stain (driftwood). The color coat is then sprayed on (Tru-Color brand) and being a solvent based paint, it reacts a little with the alcohol stain and gives a nice mottled and slightly worn off/peeled paint finish. Aging details are done with

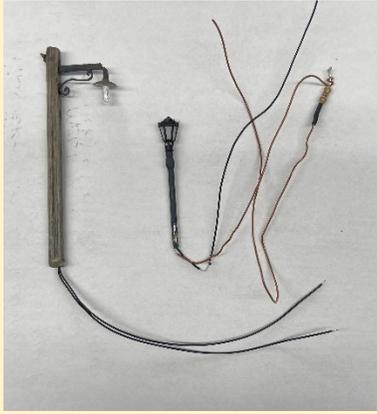
light air brush weathering colors to finish off the models. I found a set of Vallejo "Model Air" weathering colors and really like the results using them. I have been able to get a very light weathering affect with the paint straight out of the bottle and cleanup of my air brush is also quick and easy. I find this method works best for me as I am not great with using weathering chalks/pigments and tend to over weather surfaces with them.

The Park Area: The fence is a combination of posts (scratch made) from bamboo skewers or dowels. I mixed up the posts with the different materials so they wouldn't all look the same. I couldn't tell exactly from the photos how many wires were between the post, I just went with 2 runs as to not make it look too busy. The fencing between the posts is 28-gauge wire. The trees and bushes were made from foam "clump" material I had on hand from Woodland Scenics and spruced them up with additional ground foam materials and Noch leaves to add texture and color variety. (4 hrs. to build)



Power Poles and Lines: The poles were scratch built or kit bashed from various lights and plastic telephone pole materials I had available. Figuring out power pole placement was a challenge as they appeared in the different photos, the placement changed quite a bit over the years. I decided to go with the locations that looked like they were there the longest over time and/or what I could confirm in the pictures. The Aerial photo showed a consistent row of them following the track as I modeled. Power lines were done with EZ Line super stretch material. (8 hrs. to build)





Lighting: The only outdoor lighting that appeared to be present was one by the station and one by the corner of the park Both of these were scratch built from various street light parts I had available. (4 hrs. to build)

Background: The background was created using a current photo of the hill that sits behind the town where the depot is located (Thanks to Scott McLeod). My daughter helped me out and we photo shopped a poster from the single picture. The poster came out relatively well and shows what is actually the scenery at the location. There is some repetition in the picture, however, works well to give a prototype look to the background. The main downside I had was with the limitations of my printer, I was only able to print it out in 10 pieces that I had to glue to the piece of Masonite I used. Unfortunately, it was hard to hide the seams, especially on the sky portions. In hindsight I probably should have tried to find a place that could print it out on one sheet of paper. I think it looks ok and understand I may lose some points, but I am ok with that. (8 hrs. to make)

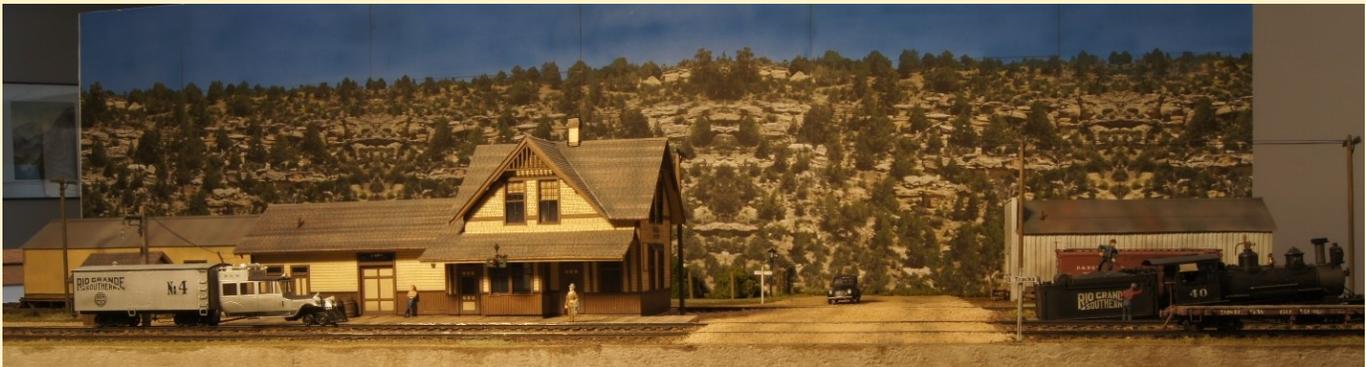


Prototype picture the background was made from.

(Scott McLeod)



Finished photo shopped background installed on diorama/module



Completed Prototype Scene

Finishing the prototype scene:

The devil is in the details! Once I had all the model elements complete and the diorama/module itself done it was time to add all the details. I studied the pictures and worked on adding as many of the subtle details I could see and recreate. Patches of grass, weeds, wear/dirt marks on roads, junk/debris and anything else that stood out in the pictures.

I ended up spending quite a bit of time agonizing over getting the details right until I had to just tell myself it's done, stop!

The next step was to set up the prototype scene with the motive power and rolling stock to look like the pictures. I was pleased with how it looked and worked on getting the finished prototype scene ready to take pictures. Once I was happy with placement of all the modeling elements and any last-minute touch ups to the models or scenery, I was ready to start documenting it with pictures.

I estimate the time to complete the entire prototype scene (diorama/module and buildings) was 225-250 hours. The rolling stock and motive power (because I had previously completed most of them) only needed minor details and weathering took about 10 hours. The additional work car took about 10 hrs. to complete. I was able to complete the entire process in about 3 months.

Documenting my work:

The following pairs of photos compare the modeled scene from the three different views matching (as best as I could) with the prototype pictures. I spent the better part of a day setting the prototype scene up and taking pictures. I also made a 10-minute video describing the prototype scene and the why and how it was constructed. (More on this later).

Judging Pictures: Modeled scene compared to prototype



Dolores Colorado, view of the railroad depot station c1940

Prototype Scene View 1 (East View)

(Unknown)



Prototype Scene View 2 (West View)

(R Jackson)



Prototype Scene View 3 (Depot View)

(J Best)

When it was all said and done, I was very happy with the results and I felt like I did a good job of recreating what was shown in the pictures. You might be thinking “holy cow” that was a lot of work to build a prototype scene, however take into consideration that your prototype scene doesn’t have to involve as many model elements as mine. You only need 6 total models (only 2 need to be scratch built) in the 4 model categories to build a Prototype Scene.

AP Documentation

I get that this might be the part of the process that many of you hate, but it is necessary if you want to get your Prototype Scene judged and hopefully earn the AP certificate. I might be a little crazy as I really enjoy completing the AP forms and additional documentation. Preparing the materials for me is a time to think back and reflect on all your hard work and pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

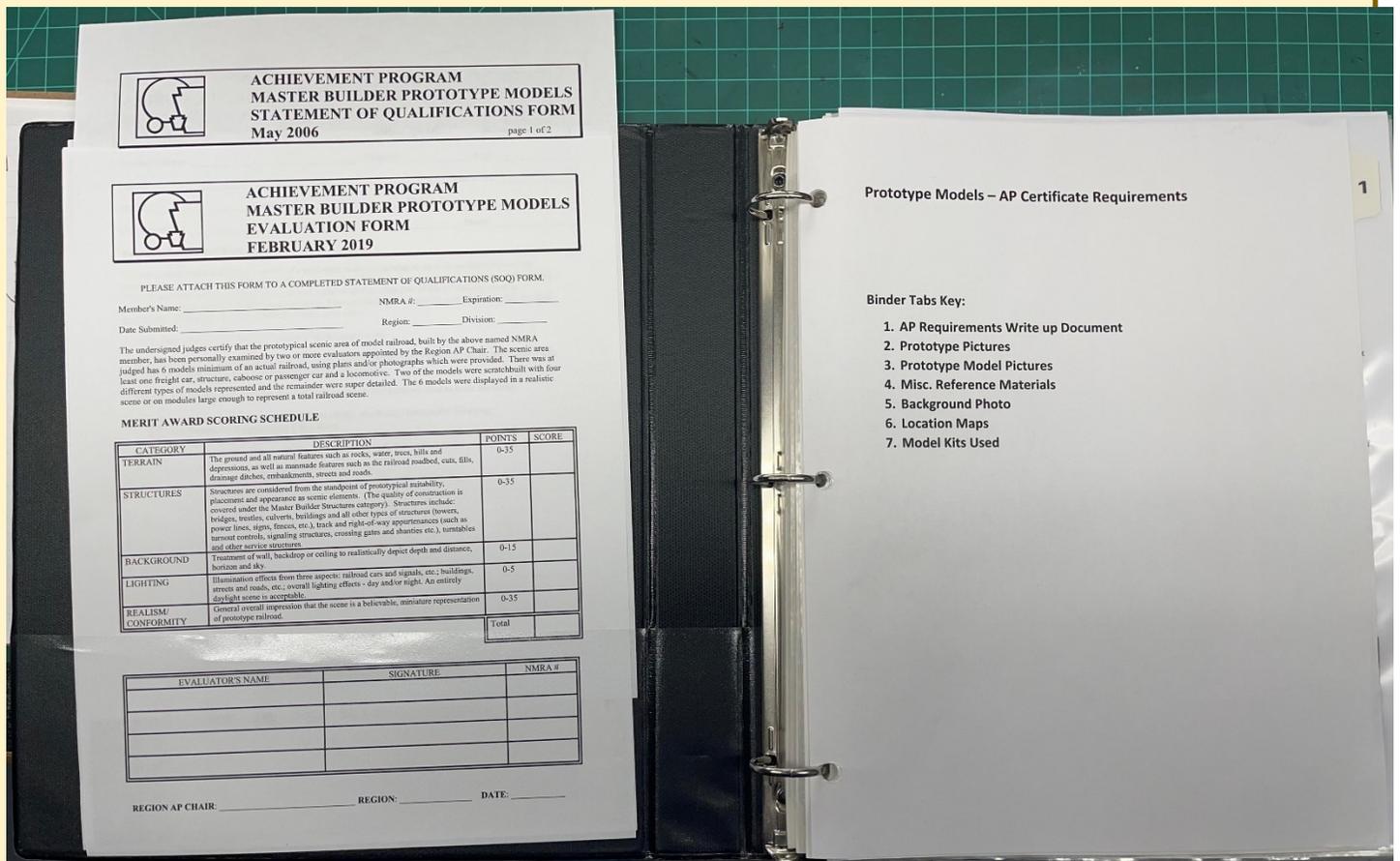
Fortunately for this certificate most, if not all, of the research you did can be used to describe the why and how of your efforts to

complete your prototype scene.

Some general guidelines to consider when preparing your documentation (These would apply to all AP certificates):

- Read and understand the requirements
- Only do what you have to do (Don't over complicate the process)
- Take your time and prepare a complete and comprehensive documentation package
- Take and include work in progress pictures (Especially helpful for Cars, Motive Power and Structure certificates)
- Explain your research and why you chose to model the way you did
- Note/describe any parts/pieces you made from scratch (No matter how small)
- Organize your documentation to follow the specific AP requirements outline

I like to put all of my AP paper work into a 3-ring binder and organize the NMRA forms and the documentation I am providing with an index and tabs. I put the completed NMRA AP SOQ requirements and judging forms in the pocket for the judge(s) to use and keep.



The main document (other than pictures) called out in the SOQ is for written documentation of the who, what, why and how for your prototype scene. Take your time and in your own words write up how you came with your prototype scene and the prototype information (pictures and documents) you are using to support your story. Once you have established your story write up (describe) the construction/modeling process you used to complete your prototype scene. Also be sure to list out in your documentation all the items you scratch built or fabricated for the scene and the materials you used. Every piece of information you provide gives additional insight helping the judge(s) understand what you did and possibly earn you more points.

As an example, here is what I did listing out the scratch-built items and materials I used to create my Prototype Scene:

Scratch Built Items:

Feed Warehouse Structure

Dock @ Feed Warehouse
Utility shed with Depot
Shed - Tar paper storage box
Utility shed by depot platform
Depot Platforms and foundation
Light in park
Platform pole and light
Depot name/elevation decals (I spent a few hours messing with this)
Background
Fencing in park
Rolling stock
 Boxcar
 Flatcar
 Gondola
Brown scenery dirt (From Colorado)

Materials Used:

Strip wood (Various sizes and manufacturers)
Card Stock
Dowels
Bamboo Skewers
Micro engineering track
Woodland Scenics turf and grass
Real dirt from Colorado (Ballast around track)
Monster Modelworks Diorama Dirt
Various paint (Tru Scale, Vallejo, Tamiya, Floquil)
Homosote©
Masonite (Background)
Noch (Leaves for trees)
Prieser (people)
Corrugated roofing (Campbell)
Stains (Hunterline)

Judging:

Lastly let's finish up the discussion with how the judging process took place. Due to Covid 19, I discussed with John Hotvet about how best to get my scene to him to judge and we decided to do it virtually. I offered to do a live presentation (I.E Zoom), but John suggested I do a video and take many of pictures of the finished scene to use for judging. I created a video tour and took pictures that I put on a USB drive and sent it off to John with the documentation materials. John acknowledged he received the package in the mail and he said he would be enlisting Dave Hamilton to help with the judging. Having the option to get judging done virtually these days for some of the AP categories is outstanding as it eliminates some of the barriers for those of us that live in remote areas of the region.

Now it was just time to wait! I assume John must have been happy with what I provided him as he didn't have any questions and after a couple of weeks, he sent me a congratulatory email saying I had earned the certificate! Whoo hoo!

Despite what might seem like a lot of work and many steps to build a Prototype Scene I would encourage anyone who enjoys building models along with doing research to consider the Prototype Models category on your journey to MMR©

Photo sources:

Otto Perry, Robert W Richardson, R. Jackson, J Best, Scott McLeod and Un-credited by Author

Using Florist Foam for scenery

Thomas Gasior, MMR
Photos by author

I have been using Florist Foam for over 5 years now. It has many advantages for the modeler who wants to create hills and mountains. I purchase my foam at the local craft store. I make sure I purchase the correct type. There are two types of foam and you want the dark green, heavy type. The light green foam will turn to dust when you try to cut or carve it.

This project involves creating a small hill next to my ore dock approach. The foam will form the hill shape. Starting by measuring the area on the layout, I transferred that to a piece of foam about two inches thick. A hobby knife with an extendable blade works great for cutting out specific sizes from the original piece.



Hobby knife with an extendable blade for cutting the piece from the foam block

A small knife with a sedated blade is a great tool for starting to shape the foam. I have an old bread knife and it works great. The next tool in the process is a rasp. I have a handheld rasp with a square working area. This is where the foam shines. All of this cutting and removing of excess areas can be done on the workbench. All the mess is away from the layout. Most of the scenery material can be added to this hill on my workbench. This allows all the glue, static grass, and foliage to stay off the layout. All that is needed at the end is some blending into the current scene.



Rough cut and shaped foam using a serrated knife.

Once I have my final shape, I use lightweight sheetrock spackle to coat the foam. This makes a smooth finish for the application of static grass. I paint the coated foam with a basic spray can of earth color. I like Krylon camouflage in dark colors. Basic wood glue is applied with a craft brush in a thin coat, then I use 2MM static grass in a few different shades. I add more glue and put 4mm static grass in a few pots to create layering. My best advice for any scenery is to add as many layers as possible.



Foam block after finishing with a rasp and the container of spackle. The application spatula is in the upper left.

The addition of tall bushes is next. These I make from SuperTree pieces that cannot be used as a tree. I attach a small pin to these with hot glue. After paint and leaf material are added, I can stick these right into the foam. The foam takes trees and bushes relatively easy. Scenic Express super turf is then added. I use multiple shades and scatter this around the hill to fill in between the bushes and static grass. The final portion for the workbench phase is adding a few trees. Another great point about building scenery on the bench is you can easily reach all areas of the foam. No reaching into the layout to stick a pine tree against the backdrop.



After the spackle has dried and been painted, static grass, ground foam, bushes and trees are added.

The layout area is prepared by painting the base and some shading on the wall behind the hill. This helps when looking into the trees. Makes the scene look deeper than it is.



The area is painted prior to placing the foam to give added depth to the area.

Being happy with the fit, I attach the hill to the layout using Liquid nails adhesive caulk. I like this on the foam. It holds and is easy to spread with a spatula.



The scenery block is glued in place with Liquid Nails adhesive caulk. Not all adhesives are foam friendly.

Woodland Scenics scenic cement is spread around the base of the hill and fine turf is spread on top of it. Medium turf is also added and more glue is applied with a pipette. Now I can work on blending the foam hill into the layout.



Blending the foam block was done by adding large clump foliage to break up the contact line.

Using large clump foliage in a few colors makes this an easy task. Use what you can to break up the dividing line between the hill and the layout. Adding additional bushes and other scenery items help make this odd shape of real estate look so much better than a plain fascia board. I hope you give florist foam a try. I have found it to be most helpful by working on the bench for applying scenery and rock molds. Clean up is easy and the results are wonderful.



The finished product!

Minneapolis & Northland Railroad Company

I enjoy model railroading and want to share my experiences with you! You can see my build of kits, how-to's, painting information and much more on my internet blog. Check out <http://mnrailroadcab100.blogspot.com>.

Lester Breuer, MMR

How to make an HO or N campfire

By Rich Holzapfel
Photos by author

What you will need to make your campfires: I get my fire lights from Evan Designs out of Colorado, they make a 3 light system they just call Fire. It comes in 3 sizes for HO- I use the 3mm lights. For N scale, I use the 1.8mm.



Evans Designs Fire 3 LED system. It has solid orange, blinking orange and red LEDs.

Then you will need the shrink tubing to fit whichever size light you are using. You will also need some good, flexible glue, I use E6000, it stays flexible and you can remove it if you need to change things.

You will also need some strands of fiber optic line. For HO I use 0.50mm or 0.75mm end, light emitting fiber optic. For N scale I use 0.25mm. So far, the only place I have found the 0.25mm at is Evan Designs.

Other modelling tools are: tweezers, small needle nose pliers, sharp Exacto knife, and sharp scissors to cut the fibers.



The top of the LED is domed, so flattening it leaves more area for the fibers to sit on.

I start by filing the dome off the lights themselves so you have a flat surface to attach the fiber too. As you flatten the LED light, make sure you don't get to the metal inside the bulb since that will ruin the light and you'll have to start over.

Next take the appropriate sized shrink tubing that fits snug over each bulb, put a little of your glue on the bulb and slide the bulb inside the tube, and

cut the tube off so you have about one inch of empty tube on top of the light. Now you have at least 10 minutes to install the fibers before the glue will get too hard to push the fibers into. You can put as many fibers in each tube as you want, although if you don't fill the tube up you have to seal the rest of the tube so you don't let any light escape. For HO with the 0.75mm fibers, I can usually fit in 5 to 7 fibers. With the 0.25mm I'm using for N scale I can fit in 9 or 10. After you have all your fibers in your light tubes let the glue dry for an hour or more.



The LED's are in the bottom of the black shrink tubing. The tube has been filled with E6000 glue and the fibers pushed all the way down to the LED. They are held upright in a wire spool to dry.

Once you are satisfied that the fibers are all solid and the glue is dry, do a quick shrink on your tubes, be careful to not melt the fibers. Now you are ready to assemble your campfire.

If you have shrink tubing large enough to put all three light tubes in, use that, otherwise you can just tape them together with electrical tape.

Once you have the light tubes together you can start intertwining the fibers, once you have the fibers distributed you can put a spot of CA glue on them to keep them in place, now if you have a 9 volt battery you can test your campfire

before you install it in your layout.

I have learned by doing that the easiest way to install your campfire is before you put in the surrounding details. I have also learned that a thin slice of shrink tubing makes a good fire ring for your campfire.

The last thing you need to do before installing your campfire is use your sharp scissor to clip off the fibers at a 45 to 75 degree angle, as this will expose that much more of the light emitting fiber end. A little experimentation and you'll figure out what works best for your situation. If you work with fibers that are a little long to start with then you can trim them at different angles until you get the effect you like.



The hole is the same size as the large tube for a snug fit. The fire is placed before the surrounding scenery.



The three small tubes are placed into the large shrink tube and then heated to shrink everything together. The Fiber Optic fibers are now trimmed short in this view. The small tubing is visible lower right and the large tubing upper right.



The campfire will be surrounded by a shrink tubing ring and blackened tooth picks will be the firewood.

For firewood to add to your fire I just use toothpicks and burn them a little first then cut them up and stack around your fire for more realism.

CONGRATULATIONS!

NMRA Awards and Honors 2021

Honorary Life Member: Honorary Life Membership is the highest honor the NMRA can bestow upon one of its present or past members. It shall be given only in recognition of outstanding elective or voluntary service to the NMRA.

Fred Headon MMR®, No. 1 Northern Division

Fellow of the NMRA

The Fellow of the NMRA Award is granted to those in the NMRA who have fostered the organization and the hobby and have increased or advanced social interaction and the social benefits of the hobby.

Gerry Leone, HLM, MMR®, Twin Cities Division

President's Award

The President's Award is given by the NMRA President for outstanding service to the NMRA.

Gerry Leone, HLM, MMR®, Twin Cities Division

TLR Convention in Brainerd

May 19th thru the 22nd of 2022 the annual convention will be happening in Brainerd Minnesota at the Arrowwood Lodge. What is going on?

Clinics
Visit to the Northern Minnesota Railroad Heritage Association
Celebration of Modeling
Saturday Night Banquet
Lucky Number Auction
Considerable number of quaint shops and cafes

The best reason is to see friends that you have not seen due to the pandemic. The border is open and our Canadian modelers and friends can attend this year. See you in Brainerd. Hosted by the Twin City Division.

Registration forms, schedule and details will be in the March Fusee!

Custom Cars Available from the Cincinnati Division

Dear NMRA TLR Division,

The purpose of this email is to make you aware of Limited-Edition, HO scale freight cars that Cincinnati Division 7 still has available for sale/purchase. We currently have two runs still in inventory:

* Virginian & Ohio 36' Wooden Boxcar Kits. Four different cars, liveries and road numbers are available
* Chesapeake & Ohio 40' USRA Single-sheathed Boxcar Kits. Four car numbers are offered, two rebuilt in 1931 (1153 and 1191) and two rebuilt in 1948 (1501 and 1505).

The following link provides details about the cars as well as pricing, shipping and ordering information.
<https://www.cincy-div7.org/projects.html>

It would be greatly appreciated if you would circulate this information to your membership throughout your Region and Divisions via your (digital/print) newsletter or web page.
We are working on a new, limited-edition freight car but would like to clear the shelves of what we have remaining on-hand.
There is limited inventory remaining and once they are gone, they are gone. As such, it is suggested that anyone interested contact me first via the link on the webpage, or at car-projects@cincy-div7.org to confirm availability.

We thank you in advance for your support!

Paul Maciulewicz

NMRA; MCR; Cincinnati Division 7
Car Projects Chairman



Gateway 2022
NMRA Annual Convention
St Louis, MO, August 7-13, 2022

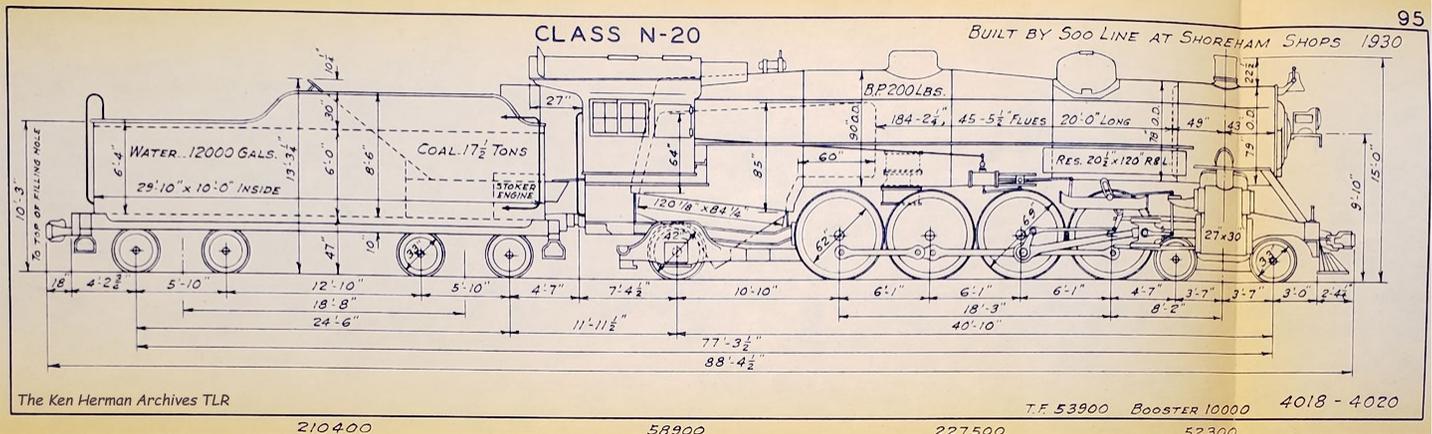
Convention Headquarters: St Louis Marriott Grand
Layout Tours Self Driving Tours Prototype Tours Clinics
Modeling With the Masters Non-Rail Activities Project Linus
Banquet Keynote Speaker Michael Gross

Information/Registration: www.gateway2022.org

Great selection of Layouts for OPSIG Sessions!

From the Archives of the Thousand Lakes....

Matt Lentz, Historian



Soo Line Class N-20 4-8-2 Mountain Type diagram from the Ken Herman Collection. This series of three (4018-4020) was built by the Soo Shoreham Shops in 1930. The first 18 were Alco built in 1926 and 1928.

1020 Minneapolis May 31st, 1947

The Ken Herman Collection TLR Archives



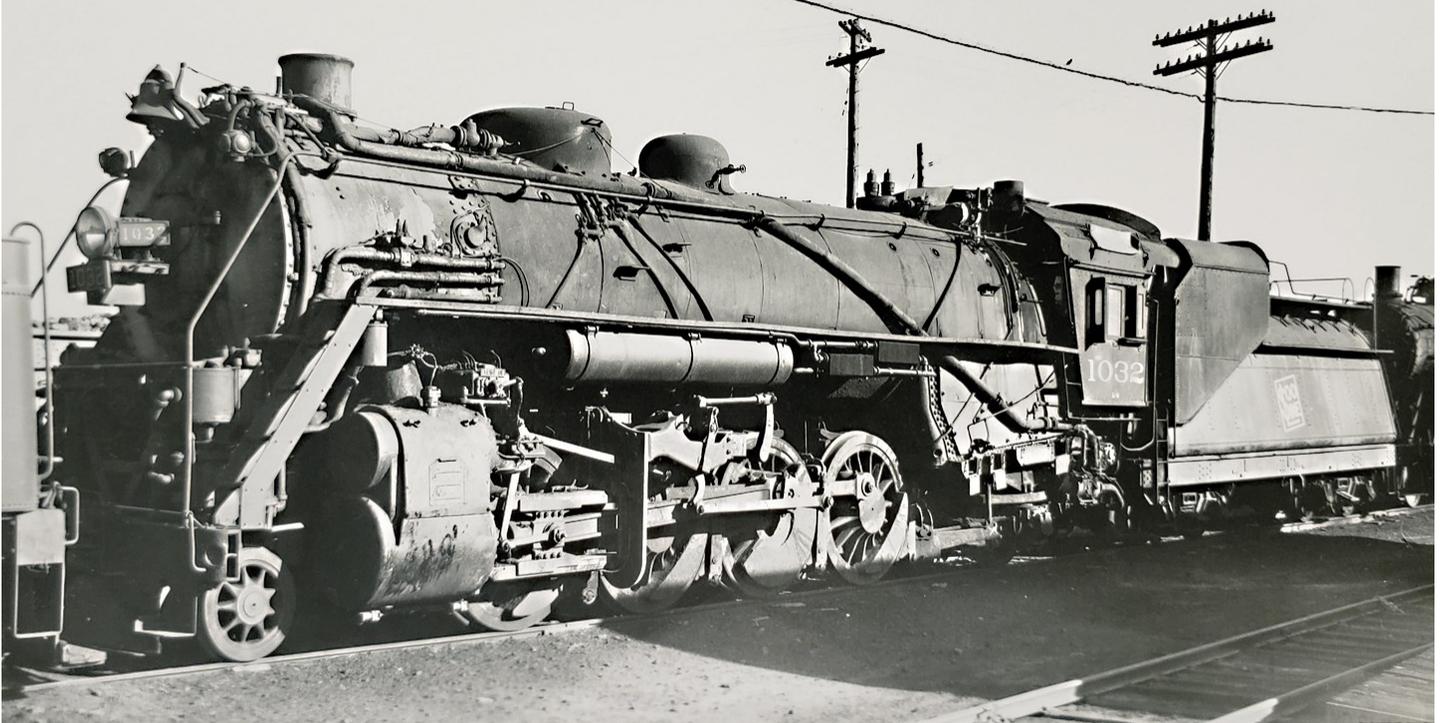
Soo #1020 is an Alco-Brooks 2-8-2, Class L-2, Mikado. Built in 1920, this was a group of 13 (1011-1023) and #1020 is seen in Minneapolis in 1947. This group was retired by 1955.

From the Archives of the Thousand Lakes....

Matt Lentz, Historian

1032 Minneapolis June 5th, 1949

The Ken Herman Collection TLR Archives



Soo Line 1032 was an L-3 2-8-2 Mikado that was in a group of 4 locomotives (1030-1033) built by Baldwin in 1913. All were retired in 1956.

Region Roundup—model railroad-related events in and around the TLR

Dec 4	Great Train Show	Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, IA
Jan 2	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Jan 15	Newport Model RR Show	Woodbury High School, Woodbury, MN
Jan 25	Great Tri-State Rail Sale	LaCrosse Center, LaCrosse, WI
Feb 6	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Feb 19-20	Mad City Train Show	Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI
Mar 5	North Metro RR Club Flea Market	Coon Rapids VFW, Coon Rapids, MN
Mar 6	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Mar 19-20	LaCrosse and 3 Rivers RR Club Train Show	The Omni Center, Onalaska, WI
April 9	Newport Model RR Show	Woodbury High School, Woodbury, MN
May 19-22	TLR/Convention	Brainerd, MN
August 7-13	NMRA National Convention,	St. Louis, MO

Region Round-up

No. 1 Northern Division

Ian Plett, Supt.

The No1 Northern Freemo group is looking at a space to have the modules set up between shows. Some work is required to get the space ready. So hopefully by the new year the space will be ready and we can move the modules in, not all members modules will be there. The space is not free, we will be charging the members to be able to run train and use the space. By having this location our membership might grow. A win-win. At some point this winter season some of the no1 Northern division members will be attending a zoom clinic on Arduinos.

Minnesota River Valley Division

Brian Wordes

Superintendent, MRVD

The Minnesota River Valley Division had a NMRA/MRVD information table at the Granite City Model Railroad show, November 13th in St. Cloud. Master model railroader, Gerry Leone, developed a promotional newsletter, that was handed out at our table. Barry Rockvam, Terry Davis, and Gerry, greeted dozens of people who stopped by to chat and learn more about the NMRA/MRVD.

MRVD members continue to work on the Milwaukee Road Heritage Center's HO scale model Railroad in Montevideo, MN. The layout and the Museum are open weekend afternoons from Father's Day weekend through Labor Day. In early July MRVD members greeted the motorcar (speeders) group that came through Montevideo on their excursion on the TCW RR.

The division had an operating session of John Givan's HO scale Great Northern Railroad in September.

Division plans for the winter are for continued work on the MRHC layout. We are to the point where we are beginning to replace the stand-in structures with scale models of businesses on the line in Montevideo in the early 1950's. It is a challenge as few pictures exist of the RR's customers on the line. We'd like to try some limited operating sessions someday soon.

South Red River Valley Division

Matthew Lentz, Supt.

It is my distinct pleasure to report to you that the South Red River Valley Division is having a very successful year and is enjoying the strength of our membership. We have climbed many mountains and conquered undiscovered country this year. There were 22 NMRA members in our physical area and of these, our division had 7 - before the convention. The division itself gained 4 new members and the 100% NMRA club Spud Valley gained 1 new member. Five is a big number for a single year. The keys to our success are the Achievement Program and our T-Track layout. But it goes much deeper than that since any division can do those 2 things. What we have done is become a much more social group. We've spent more time together this year as friends than NMRA members than we did in the past. This is the secret to our success. It takes time to develop a great social group, and it's so totally worth it because it has helped us make new friends. For each new member, there is still another friend that we know who may want to join in the future. We can't ask people to join us unless there is some substantial benefit to becoming a member. We've already made friends with fellow model railroaders who will need to see something real before believing that joining is worth the money. To me, the convention is the thing that's worth it but to others we must demonstrate value right here at home. The

Achievement Program, more importantly, the spirit of the program is what really makes membership worth it. The spirit of the program is what motivates a modeler once they have been given a taste of the feast that it is.

We've had considerable success in the achievement program. Before the convention, we implemented a workshop for scratch-building trackwork. In this workshop we scratchbuilt turnouts. As a result, Kevin Dill and Tom Gay both entered scratchbuilt trackwork into the contest room in Bismarck. Both of them received merit awards at the banquet for their excellent work. These merit awards counted toward the civil achievement program certificate. As most of you know, in the civil achievement program requirements, trackwork is a pass fail event. Having these workshops, generated interest from the members. These workshops are something we plan to sustain in the future.

The division was tasked with providing judges for the contest room in Bismarck. Kevin Dill judged photography and Amy Meader judged arts and crafts. In our division, we consider judging to be an important skill and an opportunity to learn new skills. Over the last couple years, our members have had great success in the achievement program and a majority of our members have participated in judging events. We have begun to develop a real depth chart of judging achievement program and contest entries among our members. These are the types of events that we celebrate as not just evaluations but also social events. We have been building a very strong foundation around the opportunities to conduct judging and evaluation in the achievement program. We've been fortunate to have our region contest director, Kennedy Gauger, guide us closely in our efforts to build experience and skill in this area.

This fall, Tom Gay and Kevin Dill have each completed their 6th achievement program certificate. We expect that our small division will shortly have two Master Model Railroaders. Since the convention, Tom gay has completed chief dispatcher, civil, and scenery certificates. For those of you not familiar with Tom's layout, it is one of the premier operating layouts in our region. Over the course of 25 years, Tom has built a SOO Line layout that is set in the 1990s. This layout normally runs with about 10 operators. Tom's monthly operating sessions are essentially the cornerstone of our division and one of the primary reasons we enjoy the success we have been having. These operating sessions bring together more of our division members than any other event. Because of Tom's dedication and these operating sessions, our division has recruited three of our new members who have a great deal of interest in operating trains. Tom's operating layout attracts model railroaders who are not yet members, but excellent prospects to become future members. The achievement program itself is the most useful tool to convert model railroaders into members. Our current policy is not to ask prospects to become members, rather demonstrate that it is worthwhile to become a member, and this has been very successful.

Since the convention in Bismarck, Kevin Dill has completed the civil and scenery achievement program certificates. Again, for those of you not familiar with Kevin's fabulous O scale layout, this layout feels like a Friday night in 1955, or at least that is the way I

Region Round-up (cont.)

view it when the lights go out. Thanks to Kennedy Gauger, we had great success in having four judges conduct the scenery evaluation and all four judges scored within three points of each other in each category. Under Kennedy's supervision, we had Amy Meader and Shadow Redington judge for the very first time a scenery achievement program certificate. The training and guidance we received was of such an exceptional nature that we were able to give a perfect rendering of the achievement program guidance in judging scenery. A couple months earlier members of the division conducted judging for Kevin's civil achievement program certificate. Naturally most of us have seen his layout many times before, but during the civil judging we got to experience the back story just like a superhero comic book. The tremendous amount of people, animals, places and things of great interest were brought out Anne explained how they worked to the judging group. Kevin's layout is one of the most amazing O scale layouts you could ever see. There is a Main Street scene along the tracks that has a great many 1950s cars of which most are lit with lights. The interesting thing is cars that are parked are not lit and cars in the streets are lit. There are people and animals everywhere including the inside of every building you can see. The building interiors are second to none. The trains themselves, are amazing, because in O scale, they are larger than most of us are usually accustomed to seeing. After the civil evaluation, it was only a couple months until we assembled a team to judge scenery. Led by Kennedy Gauger, our team of judges, which numbered 4 (one more than required) were able to conduct a scenery evaluation with extensive commenting on this exceptional layout. Again, thanks to our training, the judges individually achieved a difference in points that was no more than three. Because of this during our judge's conference, we were able to reach an excellent consensus by simply splitting the difference. We feel that this represents the very best of the spirit of the achievement program. This is another success that we intend to sustain in the future.

The Spud Valley Model Railroad Club, a 100% NMRA club, put on the annual trainshow in Fargo back in October. The show was fantastic as always. Thanks to Tom Gay, the division gained 3 new members – Cody Wangen, Austin Wangen and Troy Anderson. Prior to the show, Spud Valley gained new member Jorgen, who is a young guy modeling N-scale and ran the division t-track layout at the show. Cody, Austin and Troy have an HO scale layout the acquired from the estate of Gary Stewart that includes a massive roundhouse engine facility and they have installed Digitrax DCC. Austin Wangen cut his teeth right off the bat, along with Amy Meader, in learning to use the NMRA gauge to officially judge Kennedy Gauger's amazing HO scale module with all handlaid track. This judging session resulting in Kennedy passing all tests and qualifying for merit awards sufficient to meet the standards of the civil achievement program certificate. Once again, the achievement program was the vehicle used to gain skill and socialize as members of the NMRA. The division has now adopted a policy of giving new members an NMRA gauge in the scale they model and soon we will be presenting these gauges to our new members.

Our 5 new members are at the oldest 50 and youngest 20. Amy Meader has judged in the contest room for Arts & Crafts, AP

scenery and Civil trackwork. Austin Wangen has judged Civil trackwork. In addition, Jim Moore (Certified Official Region Old Goat) and Shadow Redington judged Civil and Scenery just to shake off the rust. These events are very big wins for us.

We have recognized seven individuals with the division's Award for Merit. This award is given to members who actually do something that brings credit upon themselves which brings credit upon the division, region and NMRA as a whole. Tom Gay – 2 AP certificates and trackwork merit awards, Kevin Dill – 2 AP certificates and trackwork merit awards plus a contest room judged model that received a merit award, Jim Moore OG – AP judging, Shadow Redington – AP judging, Amy Meader – contest room and AP judging, Ben Tretter – T-Track excellence and our Region Contest Director Kennedy Gauger – mentorship & AP judging. These awards are engraved wood blocks with 3 holes to hold paint brushes while working on models. This is probably my most favorite thing to do in giving awards to members who do the things that make our hobby most fun.

For 2022, I anticipate that we will continue to grow our membership according to the principle of demonstrating that joining is worthwhile rather than asking people to join. This has so far proven to be the best way. The division members have many friends who are not NMRA members, but we include them in social events. Social events are by far the most important thing we do to promote ourselves. I can't stress enough how important it is to make friends before trying to get members. Some of these social friends will want to join and others will prefer to just remain social friends. This is the way it should be – the division should have many friends that we just hang out with and happen to enjoy trains. It's like having a firm foundation. Doing things both model train related, and plain social related, are the key to success. We don't need a huge number of members, rather we need a firm foundation and from that we get friends - some of whom become members and others just keep us on firm footing. Enjoy the holidays and get out there and see some friends!

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To your next
Club meeting!**

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Enclose payment in U.S. funds, international money order, or by check drawn on U.S. banks. Checks should be made out to **TLR**. Contact the editor if you have questions.

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