



THOUSAND LAKES REGION

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

The FUSEE



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Creating Station Signs for your Right of Way

Thomas Gasior, MMR
Photos by author

In more recent times, railroads have stopped using depots and stations at every town. The structures have been sold, repurposed, or even razed and removed. The physical location of the stations still remain on the employee timetable. The railroads put a sign in place of the former station to allow crews to know where the limits of train orders, track warrants and Form A, B and C's begin or end.

I wanted some station signs on my layout to show distance and identify locations to visiting crews. I looked to the prototype for examples of current station signs.

There are many versions of station signs, and I like double sided ones with dual posts. Black lettering on a white background makes them easier to see and read.

I started by figuring out all the locations along my railroad that could use a station sign. The farthest south point was the ore dock. The northern point is the town of Ely, MN. Picking locations such as sidings, junctions and crossings of other railroads is recommended as well.

Once I decided on the locations and their names, I set about creating decals to help me letter the signs. I didn't want to make them letter by letter using alphabet set of decals or trying to line up dry transfers. Using a blank sheet of clear decal pa-



Prototype yard sign.

per and a quality laser printer at a local copy shop. Lettering size and font were chosen in a program called Affinity.

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View from the Cab

President Jay Manning

WHY NOT BE A CLINICIAN ?

Have you ever considered doing a clinic at ANY model railroading event, even maybe a TLR sponsored event? You don't have to be a professional teacher, a noted speaker, leader in the model railroading community, a Master Model Railroader, or an expert at any aspect of the hobby. Do you have a unique way of accomplishing something related to the hobby? Do you like talking about it with one or two other people? Maybe, just maybe, you have an idea that will help somebody else with some aspect of their model railroading hobby that will add to their enjoyment of the hobby.

Let's learn from my experiences. My interest in the hobby grew when a local club member saw me watching and watching a layout at a mall. I was asked if I did N Scale, I responded yes, but I could not keep more than 3 or 4 cars to stay coupled while I ran on my small layout. The individual took the time to tell me to paint my couplers with Grimmy Black paint. I got invited to meet with the club, and at the first meeting was asked if I did woodworking—I answered yes and was immediately invited to build an N scale corner module with some wise coaching from a couple of the members, including how to do scenery. At the first train show I participated in with the club, Marion observed that the sceniced layout looked “dead”; there were no people or vehicles on it. One of the members heard her comment and stepped forward and did a clinic on mold making and casting vehicles—something he only did at home to save money on his layout. At the cost of an N scale vehicle at \$5 or more, casting costs about 4 cents, a little time, and some paint. At the same time, Marion had been painting figures and informally talked with members about her interest. Her first clinic was a short clinic on painting N scale figures for the club.

I attended a few NMRA gatherings on the East coast and occasionally sat in on a clinic. My focus was on N scale rolling stock and running trains, not on scenery and ways to make things more realistic. Then I attended a clinic done by Doctor Singer a noted model railroader in Richmond, Virginia who did circus modeling and was recognized by the NMRA for his scenery skills, including published in the annual calendar. His topic for the day was priming models before painting them. He advocated using cheap automobile primer paint on ALL models before you paint them. First, it keeps wood from warping when you use acrylic paints; and second it creates a surface on metal and plastic for

paint to adhere to. A can of primer paint was about a dollar if you looked around. I adopted what he advocated and still use it today and occasionally do informal talks about the process.

We returned to Sioux Falls after I retired from government service and got associated with the Dakota Southeastern Division of the NMRA. We attended our first TLR convention in Winnipeg, Canada and attended our first convention clinic. I remember the presentation dealt with the research that was done to support modeling a section of track on one of the Canadian railroads. The level of research including photos and measurements supported the construction of a module at a level I had never seen before. A scenery standard was planted that guided much of the work that resulted in both Marion and I receiving our Scenery Certificates.

The following year the convention was to be in Dubuque, Iowa. Gerry Miller sent out a call for clinics for the convention. I talked with Alan Saatkamp about doing a clinic on mold making and was encouraged to offer the clinic. I had never done a clinic at an NMRA event and had no idea what the standards were, but offered anyway. My 10 plus years of doing molds and making vehicles gave me the knowledge that I offered. A key point of the presentation was that I could make an N scale model of an automobile for about 4 cents. The offer was accepted and I built a topic outline for the presentation, and collected all of the training aids I thought ought to be shown. The time for the clinic came and I did not know what to expect, but had an audience that nearly filled the room, including a college professor who was Gerry's proctor to keep things on schedule. The presentation went very well with lots of discussion, including actually casting some vehicles—then the proctor called “time” and I had not made all the points I wanted to emphasize, but the schedule had to be met. During the convention several folks talked to me about what I was doing to save costs on my layout by making molds.

Marion and I started attending clinics at conventions and gatherings. We saw the level of effort that went into clinics, including handouts. As a generalization, there is NO NMRA textbook way for doing a clinic; it is up to the presenter to do what he/she does best. I like to talk from topic outlines; some just “free wheel it;” and others script their presentations. Some folks use projected slides and talk from them, others talk from handouts. The key thought here is “what am I the most comfortable doing?” I like to have models that illustrate what I am talking about, and if possible, have the audience do hands on activities. A key thought is to work to ensure that you can get across what you are talking about in the allotted time---doing so is being

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courteous to the presenter who follows you, or gets folks to the bus on time. I recommend that you either rehearse your clinic at home or do the presentation at a Division meeting.

Several years ago there was an article in Model Railroader discussing weathering using Pan Pastels, done by a highly respected model railroader where he weathered a steam engine in about 30 minutes using Pan Pastels. I had experimented with powders, air brushing, brush painting, and using my fingers to apply weathering combinations. I clearly am NOT an artist, just somebody who wanted to learn a new skill. I purchased a set of Pan Pastels for weathering and tried it. It was as easy as the article said. I did some research on the computer and found several good articles on the subject working from the Pan Pastels web site. A key point I learned early on is the statement "Pan Pastels are a professional art medium; I am the artist using them, when I am satisfied, I am the critic, if I like it, that is what counts. I weathered some railroad cars and buildings and became a fan of the technique, I learned as I went. I offered to do the clinic at the TLR convention in Thunder Bay. Once again I had no idea about the interest level—nearly filled the room again. I brought my Pan Pastels and tools, some old cars, and a couple of buildings for folks to try the technique. The clinic was a huge success; but it was only offered once—be available is a

second request comes. Working with Pan Pastels has an option, if you don't like what you see, wash off the Pan Pastels using plain water in a sink. Then start over—until you seal the product it washes off—you are the customer that has to be satisfied. In this clinic I always end with the statement that when you like it, that is all that counts.

Presenting clinics on things you have learned to do not only helps your fellow model railroaders, it also generates conversations that serve to build not only their skills but yours as well. Presenting clinics counts towards the hours you need to receive a Volunteer Certificate; and the handouts you use count towards your Author Certificate. Take a look at what you do and ask a simple question, "**Can I use my skills to help somebody else?**" It is through clinics that quality workmanship develops others and yours. Clinics clearly support growing the hobby.

Take a look at what and how you do it. Ask yourself if somebody else might benefit from you passing your knowledge on. There is no textbook on how to do a clinic, it is up to you to decide how to pass the knowledge on.

BECOME A REGULAR CLINICIAN AND HELP GROW THE HOBBY

Thoughts from the Pickle Barrel

We have several new authors on board for this edition! I have been looking for short article about how you do something— anything— and Rich Holtzapfel and Matthew Lentz both answered the call with short projects that are easy to do. Follow their lead and send me some articles! Note that neither article contains a lot of text— both authors let their photos do the talking!

There are a lot of folks that enjoy operations— is anyone willing to start a series of articles on operations? 2-3 articles per year is all we would need!

Mathew Lentz is the new TLR Historian and he is starting a Historians page, and a From the Archives series. He is determined to make the office a benefit to all of the members in the TLR, so take advantage of his intentions. Wondering about an article from a past Fusee? He has them. Wondering about an award winner in 1996? He can find out. He has reinstituted the Old Goat Award, and awarded that to Jim Moore in October. We will really benefit from his enthusiasm!

As an organization, we rely on volunteers for everything we do. Jay Manning has been trying to encourage starting a process of Succession, or grooming a replacement for your position. This will make transitions in the Board and other

offices much smoother. Please contact the current appointee of any office of you have interest in doing this yourself in the future. That will allow a smoother transition when the time comes.

Finally, SEND ME YOUR RAILROAD ADS. Effective the March Issue, the Fusee will run a 1/8 page ad for your railroad at no charge. That will allow you to advertise for visitors, op sessions etc. We need to get everyone back on board with getting their Railroads visible to each other.

Happy Holidays and Happy Rails!

Kevin

From page 1

It works on Apple products and is their version of Photoshop.

If you just need black lettering on a clear background, any print program will work such as Notebook or Pages. Make sure you change your saved decal sheet original into a PDF so the dimensions won't change from computer to printer if you go to an outside vendor rather than your own laser printer.

Not having enough station signs to fill an entire sheet, I added the names to a current sheet that contained many different projects I was working on. I used a simple font called arial, and 12 point size matched the scale of the sign size for HO.

MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE	VERMILLION	LOON LAKE MP 10.5
MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE	VERMILLION	LOON LAKE MP 10.5
MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE		VERMILLION JCT.	ORE DOCK
MINE SERVICE	MINE SERVICE		VERMILLION JCT.	ORE DOCK
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		SOUDAN	ELY DAHL RIVER
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		SOUDAN	ELY DAHL RIVER
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		GUNFLINT JCT	SAFETY FIRST
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		GUNFLINT JCT.	
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		SKIBO MP 28.6	SAFETY FIRST
SAFETY FIRST	SAFETY FIRST		SKIBO MP 28.6	SAFETY FIRST

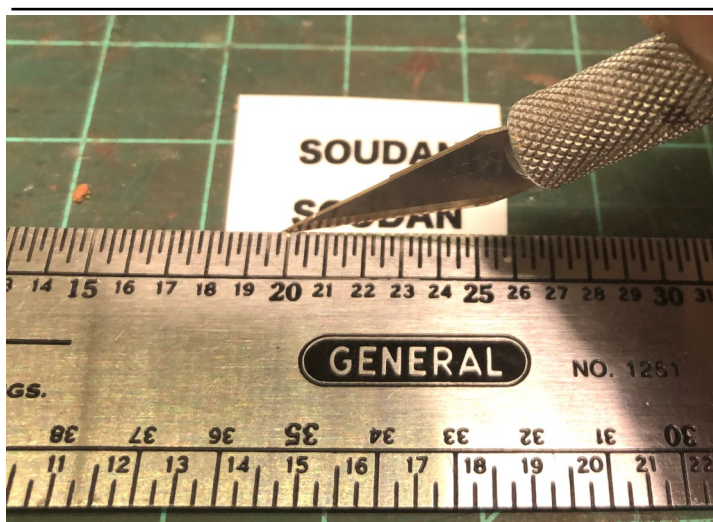
1. I created two of each name, because these would be double sided signs. Using blank decal paper from Bare Metal Foil company. I took my design to Kinko's/FedEx and had them load the decal paper into their high end color laser printer. I could then send my designs to them via email.



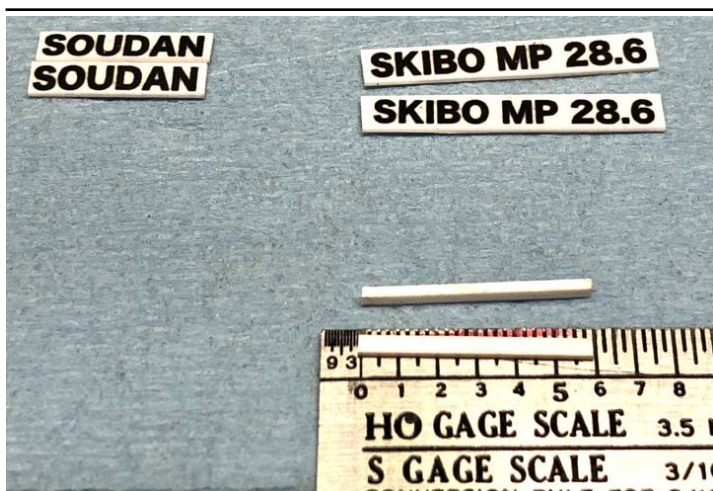
2. Scrap 0.020 styrene sheet and scale 4 x 6 inch styrene strips were used for the sign posts and board. Future floor polish was spread over a blank piece of scrap styrene using a flat paint brush. This gave the styrene a glossy and smooth surface for application.



3. Once the Future had dried, I cut the names to size from the decal sheet and applied them to the styrene using decal setting solution. When dry and no bubbles were left, a quick coating of dull coat spray was applied to remove the glossy sheen.



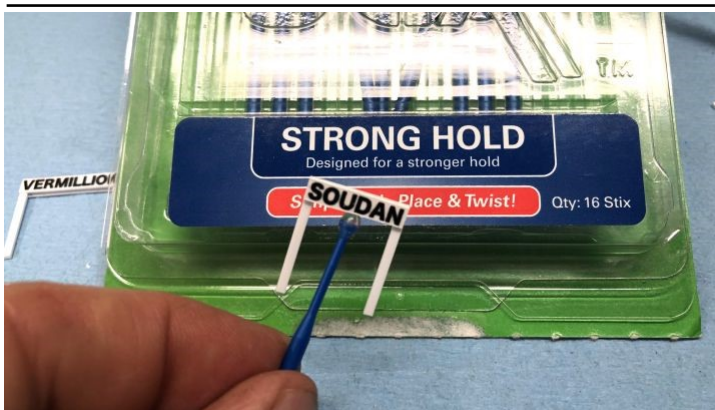
4. With a sharp blade in my hobby knife, I cut the sign names out off the styrene. Using the straight edge of a steel ruler to help make sure the sign edges were parallel.



5. Scale strip styrene was cut to six foot lengths.



6. The name boards were then attached to the 4" x 6" scale styrene strips used for the legs. I use a disposable brush and some MEK solvent I have poured into a small paint jar with a metal lid. This fits nicely into an old paint can top, so no chance of spilling. A square was used to make sure the legs were parallel and square to the sign.



7. The paint handle was a product called Micro Stix. It is a plastic toothpick with a sticky top. They are reusable and make a great tool for holding small parts while painting and applying adhesives. These held the signs while I painted the legs.

Parts & Tools

Bare Metal Foil Blank decal paper - clear for laser printers
Computer and laser printer
Future Floor Polish
Scrap 0.020 styrene sheet
4"x6" styrene strips evergreen #8406
Hobby Knife/steel ruler
MEK solution



8. Next came placing them into the scenery. Marking the location of the legs, then putting them into the scenery was easy due to my florist foam scenery base. Some locations needed a small drill to get the scenery to accept the styrene strip legs. Using a few drops of Titebond glue to hold the signs in place. It is my new favorite adhesive for materials of different types.



9. Now it's time to enjoy watching your trains roll by these specific points and take those location photos we always see in the train magazines.

Decal wetting and setting solutions
MicroMark Micro Stix
Black acrylic paint
Disposable brush/ paint brush
Dull coat spray
Various brushes for painting
Titebond quick & Thick

Installation of a Logic Rail Technologies Grade Crossing Pro

By Jared Seliger
Photos by author

Adding animated scenery is an effective technique to create an enhanced level of realism to a model railroad. A common encounter that people experience on a daily basis with railroads is a train at a grade crossing. Most modern grade crossings are protected by gates, flashing warning lights and/or warning bells. A few rural or isolated grade crossings are still protected by crossbucks with no audio/visual warnings. Grade crossings are prominent on most model railroads and the addition of animated grade crossing signals enhances prototypical operations.

The addition of animated grade crossing signals can be done through a variety of methods. Minimally, a crossing apparatus is needed that includes warning lights attached to some sort of flasher circuitry. Back when I first started in model railroading 30 years ago, I had a flashing crossing unit manually controlled by a toggle switch. From a realism standpoint, it accomplished the objective of causing the red warning lights to flash, but from a practicality standpoint, the crossing had to be manually turned on/off as the train progressed through the grade crossing and required the operator to be constantly focusing on the location of the train.

Today, a variety of options exist for modelers who want to create prototypical scenes at their grade crossings. Most commercially available flashing units are available with detection sensors that will automatically activate the crossing as the train approaches allowing the operator to focus on the controls of the locomotive. They also have outputs to control crossing arms (gates) and allow for adding a bell sound module/speaker.

After considerable research by all of the manufacturers that produce flasher units, the unit chosen for my layout was Logic Rail Technology's (<http://www.logicrailtech.com>) Grade Crossing Pro (GCP). The GCP is available with photo sensing (light) detection cells or infrared detection cells. The infrared cells are slightly more expensive than the photo cells; however, they are less sensitive to the ambient light in your layout room limiting accidental activation. I decided to use the infrared sensors for this project (image 1). For added realism, the bell sound module and speaker was purchased in addition to the GCP. For my warning signal, a Walther's SceneMaster 1960's style cantilever crossing with two sets of red LED warning lights (one set below the crossbucks and one set on the cantilever arm) was used.

The instructions provided with the GCP (also available online for review prior to purchase) are very detailed on how to get the unit operational. The first step in the installation process is to identify a suitable power source for the GCP. Per the instructions, the GCP cannot exceed neither 7-9 volts AC nor 9-12 volts DC. Logic Rail Technologies offers a power source, the 12 volt DC power source regulator. Being risk averse, I chose to use the manufacturer's recommended power source to avoid damage to the flasher circuit and/or the crossing signal itself. The other materials I used to complete this project were: a variety of terminal strips; bus strips; 470 ohm, ¼ watt resistors; and 22 gauge solid core wire.



Image 1: The Logic Rail Grade Crossing Pro is available multiple versions. Jared chose the infrared detection system.

Before installing the crossing signal and GCP, an appropriate layout location needs to be identified. The GCP comes equipped with 4 sets of sensors to wire a single-track grade crossing. Even though additional sensors are available for separate purchase, due to the nature of the circuit logic of the GCP, a single GCP cannot adequately be wired for a double-track grade crossing. Adding a flashing signal across a double set of tracks would require purchasing a second GCP and tethering them together so trains approaching on separate tracks from opposite directions will correctly activate the crossing signal (please refer to the online instructions for more information). Due to the nature of my layout, the installation occurred on a single-track grade crossing that is adjacent to a turnout providing access to the yard. Even though the grade crossing was a single track, trains could either come from the straight or diverging route from the turnout so an additional infrared sensor was purchased that allowed for activation of the signal if the train was coming from the mainline or the yard.

Because of fairly extensive wiring, I wanted to complete as much of the work as possible at my workbench before mounting it underneath my layout. This was accomplished by securing the GCP, bell circuit, and power source to a 6"x14" piece of 1/8" plywood purchased at a hobby store (image 2, next page). The circuit boards were secured to the plywood with ¼" wood screws. Once all of the modules were secured, the termi-

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nal strips and bus terminal were added and labeled (image 3). The use of the terminal strips was intended to simplify the connection of the crossing signal lights and the infrared detectors to the GCP during final installation. For the GCP to work, 4 sets of infrared sensors needed to be installed with each set containing an infrared emitter and detector (4 wires total). The placement of the sensors on the layout corresponded to the connection on the GCP. Two sets are placed on the “west” side of the crossing (one set near the crossing and one set far away) and two



Image 2: All the components were placed onto a piece of plywood at the workbench to allow easier access to the initial wiring.

ing ends. As the train progresses through the near east signal and continues west, the flashing sequence will continue until the train completely passes the near west signal when the flashing sequence ends. The same operation is true for trains travelling the opposite direction. The use of two sets of sensors allows the signal to start flashing well in advance of an approaching train (activating the far sensors) and then terminate the flashing sequence quickly after the train has passed through the crossing (clearing the near sensors).

In addition to sensors, the lights from the crossing signal needed to be connected to the GCP so a

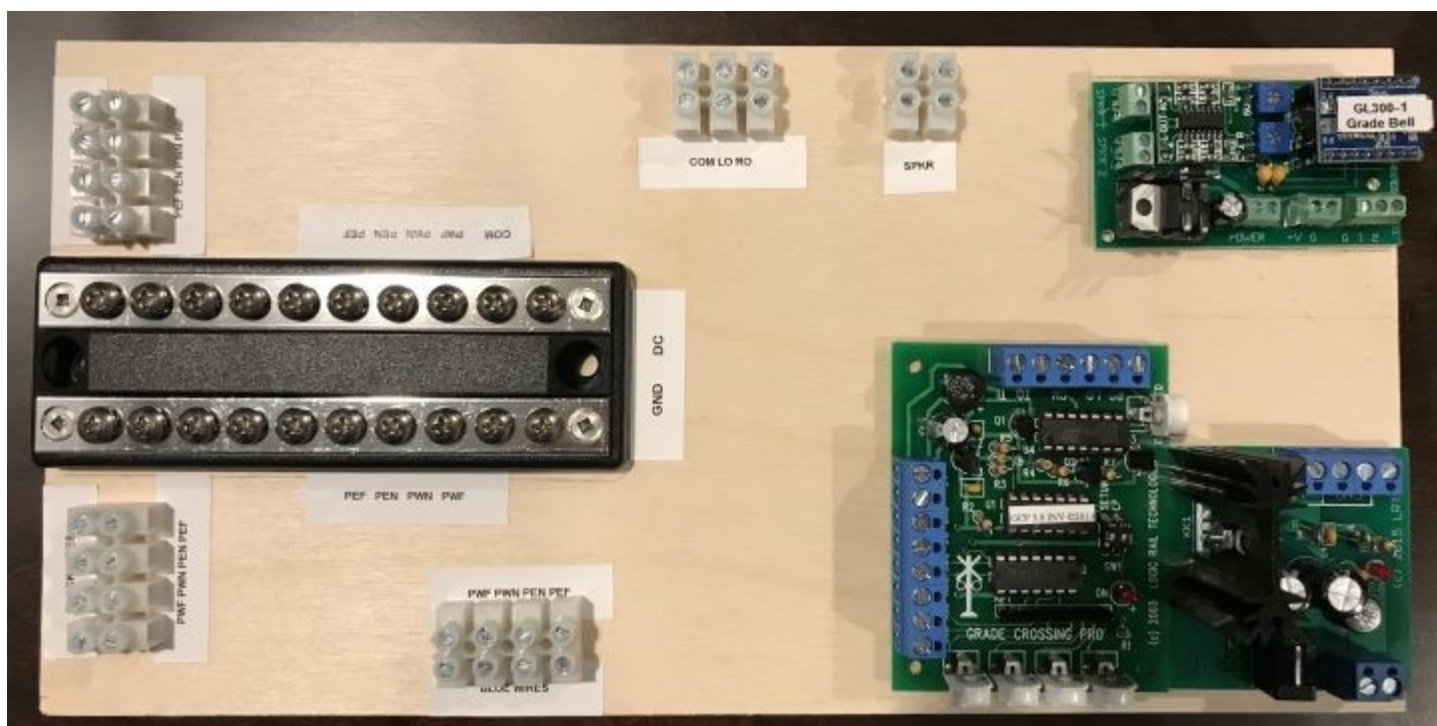


Image 3: The Grade Crossing Pro (GCP) is the large board, lower right. To the right of that is the 12V power converter board, and in the top right is the Grade Bell sound board. For the IR emitter/sensors, the directions are unclear on what the "P" means, but the other initials are EN= east near, EF=east far, WN=west near, WF=west far. For example, PEF is East Far. The top of the black power strip is positive and the lower is ground. The two left and single bottom, white terminal strips are for the emitters/sensors, and the top center is for the lights. The top right terminal strip is for the sound module.

The purpose for 4 sets of sensors allows the GCP to “see” the location of the train and activate and terminate the flashing signal to the crossing. For example, if a train is moving from east to west, as it approaches the far east sensor, the GCP activates the signal. The GCP has logic where if the train does not make it to the near east sensor within 30 seconds, the flash-

terminal strip was used for the signal as well. Each light has two wires, one that is used for a “common” feed and then one to connect to either the right or left output on the GCP to control which light flashes. Since both the lights and the infrared sensors needing to be connected to power and the sensors needing to be grounded, a bus terminal for both “ground” and “DC” were used to provide ample

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From page 7

space to make all of the necessary connections.

Once the components were all in place, the wiring could begin. The first step was to connect the GCP to the power supply followed by connecting the bell sound module to the power supply. The bus strip was then connected to the ground (GND) and DC outputs from the GCP. Next, the connections for the infrared sensors were completed. For each set of emitters and detectors, the black wires required connection to the ground (*Author used green, Ed.*), the white wire to the DC, the blue wire to the respective connection on the GCP (east far, east near, west far, west near), and the white wire to the DC power. To protect the emitters, a 180 ohm, 1 watt resistor (included with the GCP) must be placed between each white wire from sensors and the GCP. I placed the resistors between the bus terminal and the terminal strips (image 4).

Finally, the connections for the signal light and the GCP were made. A terminal strip connection from

minimal strip to protect the signal lights (please refer to the GCP instructions for the appropriate resistor for your type of crossing signal, different signals require different resistors). The final wiring scheme is shown in image 5.

With the wiring complete, the next task was to install the infrared sensors and the crossing signal on the layout. Using an 11/64" drill bit, a hole was drilled between the ties at approximately a 45 degree angle for each emitter and detector (image 6). This step requires precise handling of the drill as to not destroy your rail ties when drilling. The crossing signal was also placed in the appropriate location relative to the grade crossing. With all of the components in place, the sensors and signal were connected to the GCP using the terminal strips that were pre-wired (image 7). With everything now wired and in place, a test run was complete (image 8). The GCP has sensitivity settings for each set of infrared sensors and fine tune adjustments were made so a locomotive or rolling stock can activate the sensors to run the GCP. The GCP has been in operation on my layout for over a year without any major issues. I have noticed that about twice per year I have to fine tune

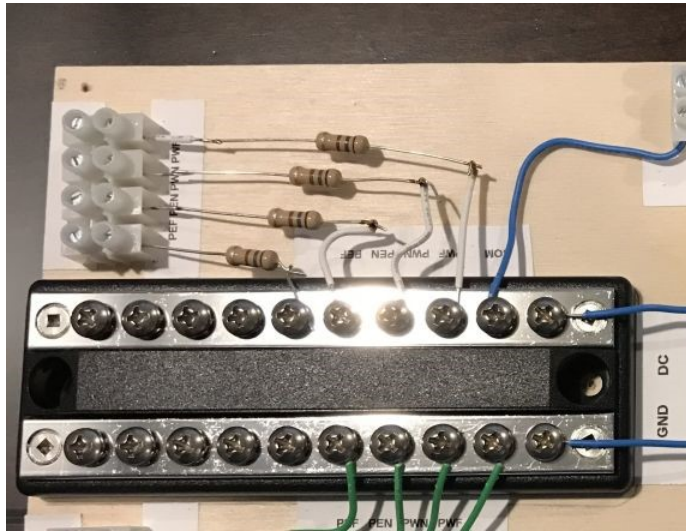


Image 4: The IR emitters use the white wire and require a 180 Ohm, 1 watt resistor.

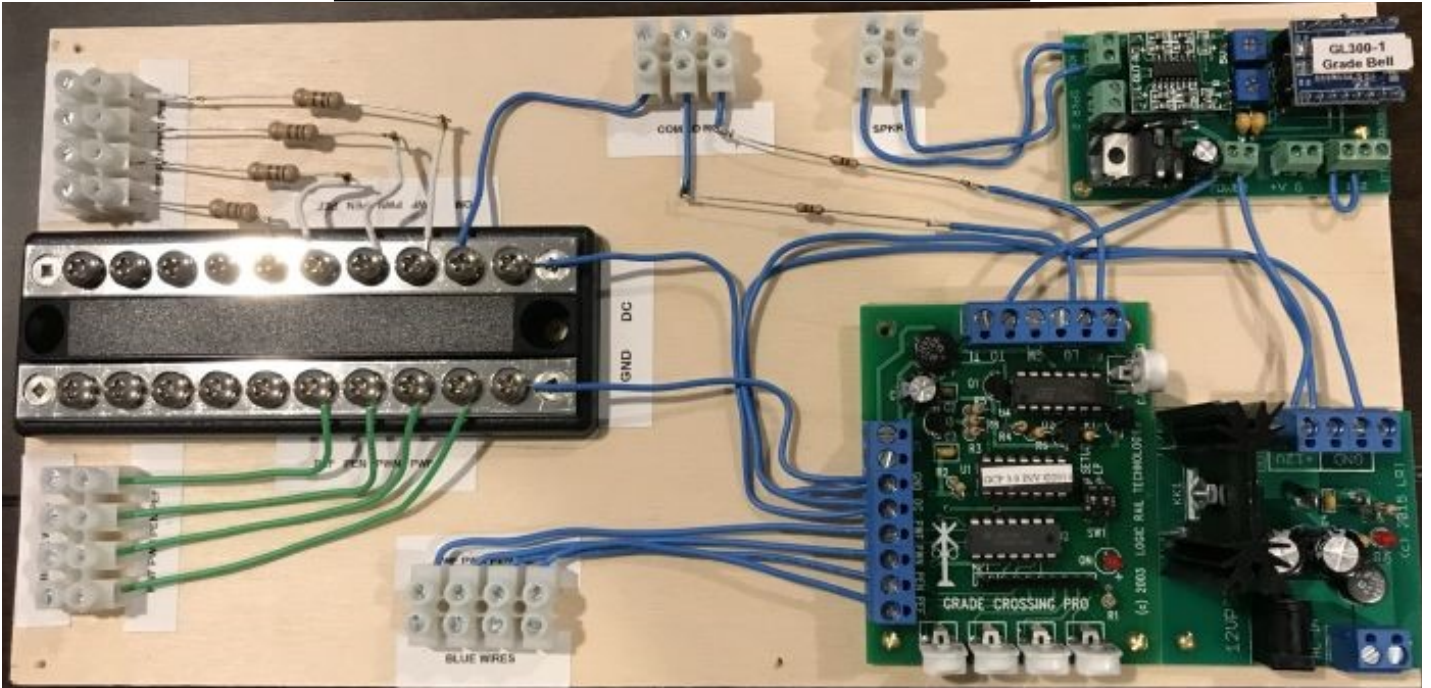


Image 5: The final wiring in place. The IR sensors and emitters share a common ground (green). The resistors for the crossing lights are seen at the top between the blue wires.

the DC bus terminal was made for the common wire and a connection was made to the terminal strip from both the right and left output from the GCP. Similar to the infrared sensors, a 470 ohm, ¼ watt resistor was placed between the GCP and the ter-

the sensitivity of the sensors, most likely due to the change

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From page 8

In temperature/humidity level in my train room depending on the time of year.

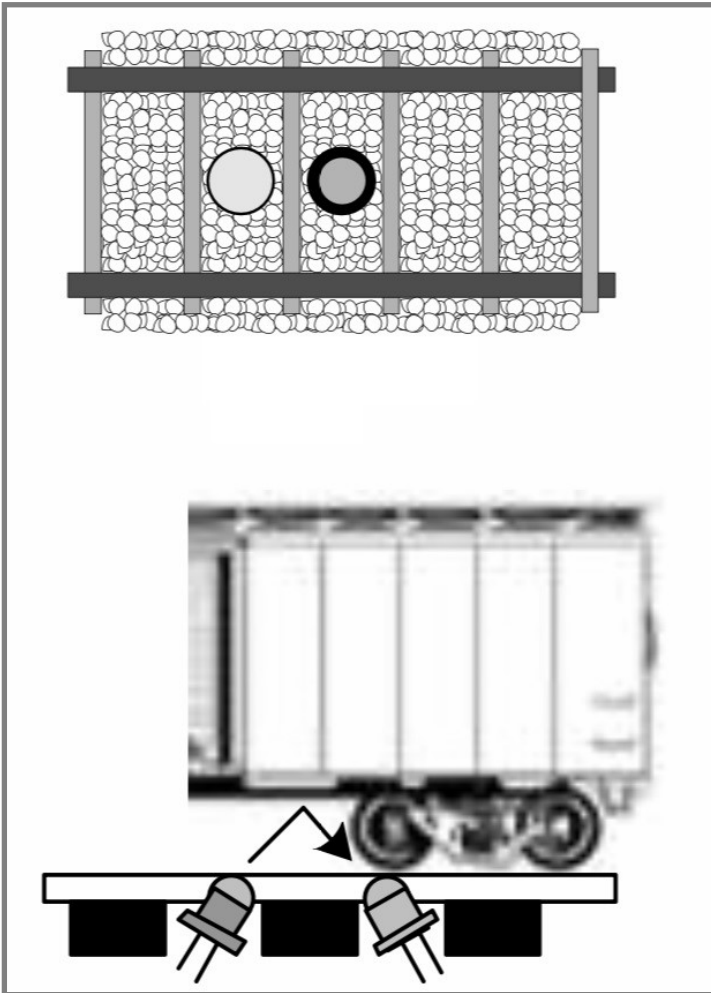


Image 6: This is the drawing from the directions showing the emitter /sensor placement. The emitter is on the left and sensor on the right.



Image 7: The completed , prewired board in place under the layout deck.

I would highly recommend the addition of animated grade crossings to your layout. I would estimate that this project required about 4-5 hours of time to complete with an overall investment of less than \$150. I have also produced a YouTube video of the GCP installation, please search for CK7813 on YouTube for more information.

Note: This article and the YouTube video are not meant to be replacements for reading and following the manufacturer's instructions for installing the GCP. The author is not responsible for any issues or damage caused by trying to replicate any of the techniques described. This author was not compensated nor endorsed in anyway by Logic Rail Technologies and the opinions expressed are solely that of the author.



Image 8: The test run was a success!

2020 TCD Model Railroaders Retreat

The Twin Cities Division will be hosting their annual Modeler's Retreat Friday March 13 and Saturday March 14. This would be a great place to bring any models you want to display at the TLR convention and get some feedback and suggestions from other modeler's!

Friday March 13- This year will feature a limited number of operating sessions Friday before the Retreat. More information to follow. Church doors open at 4:30 for set up, first presentation at 5:00.

Saturday March 14 8:00 A. M. until 4:30 P.M.- Doors for setup at 7:00, Coffee will be on. Doors open at 8:00 for viewing and conversation. 6 hours of Presentations begin at 8:30. The famous Modeler's Retreat Lunch served at 11:30.

Registration 20.00 (\$25 at the door), includes lunch. The display area has been enlarged so there is more room for YOU to bring modules, models and projects.

Location : Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth
12235 Old Rockford Rd. Plymouth, Mn. 55441

Registration and additional information:

Ken Zieska 11810 52nd Ave. N Plymouth, Mn 55442-1820 763-232-3455

mhry19@gmail.com, website: <http://www.tcdnmra.org/>

Making HO scale hanging flower pots

By Rich Holzapfel



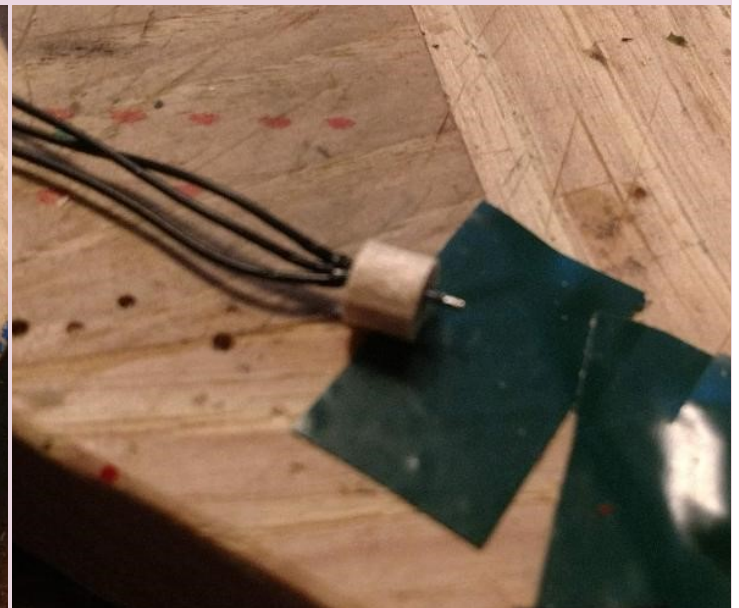
1. I start making the flower pots by drilling a small hole in the center of a 3/16 inch round dowel, you can make the hole as deep as you want depending on how many pots you want to make.



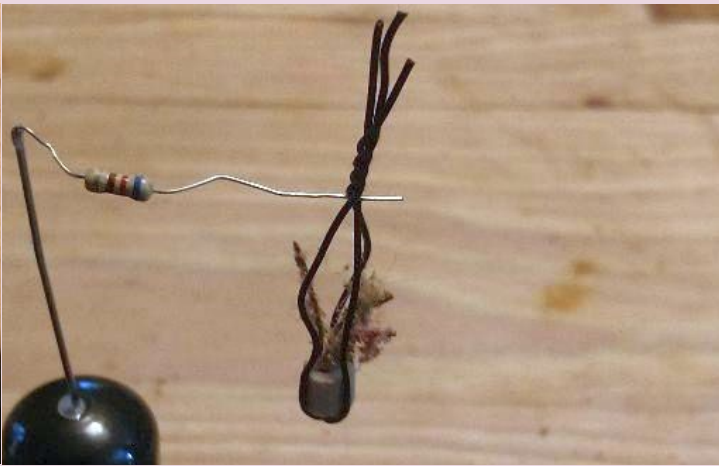
2. Now cut the dowel into 1/8 to 1/4 inch pieces depending on the size of pots you want, set the pots aside for now. Then I take some small gauge electrical wire leftover pieces, cut three wires into equal lengths, I cut them about 4 inches long to have plenty of wire to work with.



3. Strip the ends on each wire about a 1/4 inch or more, twist these ends together and solder them.



4. Then insert the soldered end wires into the hole in a pot, put a spot of glue on it to hold wires in place, I prefer a thick gel type glue for this such as shoe goo as it holds the wires in place while you can still work them before it sets permanently.



5. Once you have the wires secured in the center of the pot bend the wires up around the outside of the pot making them fairly equally split around the pot when you are satisfied with the wire placement put a dab of glue on each one to hold in place.

6. Now take your HO scale flower or plant and glue in the top of the pot, I then twist the wires together at the top just to clear the plant. You are now ready to hang them on your porch or pot hanger. Again I use Shoe goo because it holds right away, you can cut the wires down to the length you need as you install them.



7. It might take a couple of tries to get them just as you like but I've found this to be the easiest way to dress up a front porch so far. Also, a dog laying at the top of the stairs is a nice touch!

Using a Bridge Rectifier with LED Lighting

Matthew Lentz

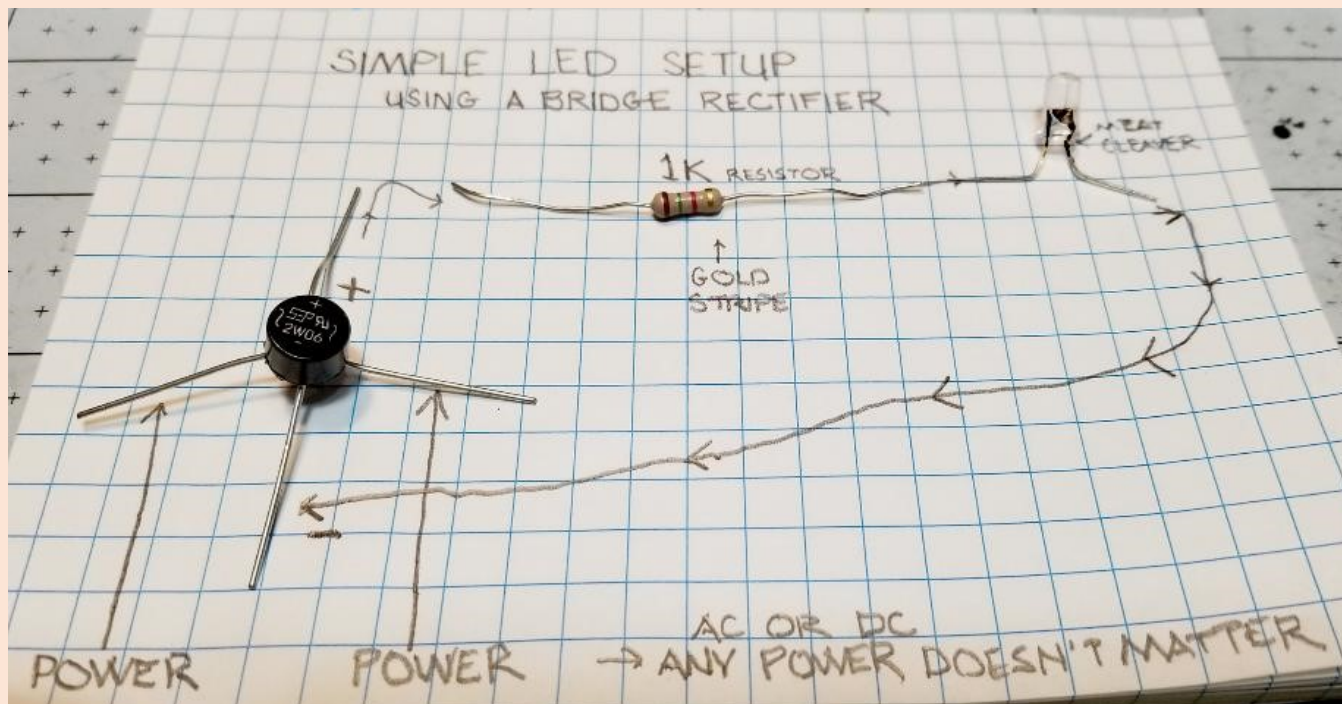
South Red River Valley Division

This is a quick guide to using a bridge rectifier with LED lights. I plan on having more detailed articles in the upcoming issues, so I am skipping many details right now. Essentially, a bridge rectifier takes power in from either DC or AC power and makes it into DC power that goes in one direction. The bridge rectifier has 4 leads on it (black object, left in photo). Two inputs, a + lead and a -lead. You connect the incoming power to either unmarked lead and then you go out from the + to a 1K resistor to a LED and back to the - lead.

I keep a simple loop that has these three components so I have a reference guide when I want to use LED lights for a project. This is a good tool have around so you can check your work against a known good installation.

The things that are hardest to remember are the orientation of the resistor and the LED. A resistor has a gold stripe on one end that marks the output end. The LED (upper right in photo) has a small spike inside and a large piece that looks like a meat cleaver. The small spike is the input and the meat cleaver is the output.

Once you have everything lined up in the correct order you're ready to go. Remembering this simple order will help you make more complex arrangements later.



Save the Date!

May 20-23, 2021

The 2021 TLR Convention will be in Bismarck, ND from May 20-23. Bismarck is the ND Capital and an easy 3 hours west of Fargo, on Interstate 94. The NP had its Yellowstone Division Headquarters in nearby Mandan, which the BNSF operates today. Mandan is also home to the North Dakota Railroad Museum. Keep an eye out for further updates. The convention hotel is the Ramada Inn—room rates will be posted soon!

Seeking Clinicians for 2020 Convention (May 14-17) in Sioux Falls:

We are looking for clinicians for our 2020 convention for a range of topics, including for general arts and crafts for the non-rail participants. Please contact Richard Dahl (clinic coordinator) at richdahl@gmail.com, if you have clinic you'd be willing to present.

Thousand Lakes Region 2020 Sioux Falls Convention

The 2020 TLR Regional Convention will be held in Sioux Falls, SD. The Dakota Southeastern Division looks forward to hosting you for the "Sioux Empire Special", May 14-17, 2020 to be held at The Best Western Plus Ramkota Hotel.

Right now the plan is to make this another "all inclusive" convention which means lunch and dinner on both Friday and Saturday of the convention will be included with the full fare registration.

The tentative plans start on Thursday with early registrations, Celebration Room entries, some clinics, and possibly operating sessions and layout tours on Thursday evening.

Friday continues with registration, Celebration Room entries, and a day full of clinics (both rail and non rail), non rail

activities and (hopefully) a special speaker at our Friday evening meal. Saturday will start with clinics or an early prototype tour and then we will proceed to our featured activity a trip to Prairie Village in Madison, SD for an after-

noon of fun. Featured at Prairie Village are a 2 mile train ride hopefully with steam power, a rare, beautifully restored Chapel Car, a 100 year old restored carousel, and a lot of other historic rail and non rail buildings and railroad equipment at our disposal. Saturday evening will conclude back at our hotel with the traditional banquet, awards, and Chinese auction. Sunday will bring the convention to a close with the annual



Prairie Village has several locomotives, including this 0-4-0T hauling their varnish. These run on a closed 2 mile loop.

general membership meeting and many layouts to tour on your way home. Watch in future Fusee's and on the TLR website for updates and when registration will be available.

Model Railroad-related events in and around the TLR 2020

Jan 5-6	Red Cedar Train Show	Cancelled
Jan 12	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Jan 18	Newport Model RR Show	Woodbury High School, Woodbury, MN
Jan 25	Great Tri-State Rail Sale	LaCrosse Center, LaCrosse, WI
Feb 1	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show	Century College West Campus, White Bear Lake, MN
Feb 1-2	Arctic Run Train Show	Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
Feb 9	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Feb 15-16	Mad City Train Show	Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI
Feb 22	Model Railroad Garage Sale	Holy Trinity Church, Dubuque, IA
Feb 29-Mar1	World's Greatest Hobby on Tour	River Centre, St. Paul, MN
Mar 7	North Metro RR Club Flea Market	Coon Rapids VFW, Coon Rapids, MN
Mar 8	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Mar 21-22	LaCrosse and 3 Rivers RR Club Train Show	The Omni Center, Onalaska, WI
Mar 13-14	Twin Cities Division Spring Modeler's Retreat	Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth. 12235 Old Rockford Rd, Plymouth, MN 55441
April 4	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show	Century College West Campus, White Bear Lake, MN
May 14-17	TLR/Convention	Sioux Falls, SD
July 12-18	NMRA National Convention,	St. Louis, MO



This is my first report as the new Historian of the Thousand Lakes Region. I received the archives and what you see in the picture is how it is right now. There are 5 boxes of various records. My initial survey of the collection confirms that past historians have done a very good job in organizing and preserving the history of the region. There is an extensive collection of the Fusee that is well organized. I was able to get a professional museum archivist to examine the collection and the findings were that there are a few tasks to be accomplished. The primary issue facing the archives is the removal of all the staples, paper clips and rubber bands. Then the collection needs to be placed into file boxes that don't contain any acid that causes deterioration. I will be asking the board to approve the acquisition of some storage supplies. There is a very extensive collection of correspondence in one box. There's also a number of important documents regarding the founding of the Region. There's a good collection of NMRA yearbooks in one box. Also lists of award recipients and information about the requirements for several awards along with some blank certificates were found in another box.

My tentative plan is to make the archives available in digital format to the membership. Using a high resolution camera, I'm able to rapidly turn paper documents into digital photos that are currently better than any scanner. I use an assembly line technique that produces about 200 pages per hour. With a few helpers, it would be possible to achieve 500 pages or more per hour. However, this is a physically demanding task. So what I intend is that the most useful and interesting things will be done first. At the top of that list is the Region History document that was created by Les Breuer. Next would be some of the official guidance documents like the convention guidance that was prepared by Jay Manning. Back issues of the Fusee will also be in this group. Then there are the lists of awards and related items. Certain official establishment documents will be preserved separately. There are many folders containing old bank statements that are going to be examined and preserved only if something important is revealed, otherwise old statements are going to be destroyed since they serve no purpose. If there are any objections, just let me know and the document will be saved.

As things begin to be cataloged I'll be placing them on a restricted private webserver with an index. The index has been created so now it needs to be filled. I use a MySQL database served up by php webpages, for those of you curious about the programming aspects. This also means I will accept additions to the archives that can be made on a simple excel spreadsheet. If you want to make something for the archives, I'll give you a simple structure that I can directly import to the database. Think about the stories of the past you tell when sitting around with friends – those stories can be typed in to an email and included in the archive. The archives is all about memories.

I will also try to answer requests. As I become more familiar with the contents I'll be better able to find information that members want.

Building Mountains or Bringing the Mountain to Mohammed's House

by Gene Hickey

Since no one has done anything about the prairie scenery of which I wrote before, we'll try you on mountains this time. I've read the books and articles by the experts on the creation of mountain scenery. I've seen pictures of their layouts and they are indeed experts to be able to duplicate mother nature so well.

This made me feel that it would be pretty hard to improve on the native materials mother nature produces. I have had occasion to travel quite a bit and one day when driving through a highway cut where there was ledge rock exposed, I decided to pick up a few pieces and try them out. My arrival home with a trunk full of rock and two low tires encouraged my wife to add one more doubt to her growing list. Making general allowances for the oddities of modellers, she let me in with this mess of stuff. I dragged out my book on the Denver & South Park and others on the Rocky Mountain railroads to see what the pictures showed. I found that the boulder and rocks along the right-of-way on them were enormous pieces of ledge rock and granite. I figured that I could do this too, and what could be easier, or cheaper, or more real, or cheaper, or quicker, or cheaper, than to use these rocks.

My benchwork was pretty sturdy so I tore up about two-thirds of my layout and rebuilt it. (This is not recommended to you unless absolutely necessary, but the remainder of this article is.)

No need for me to describe benchwork, trackwork, turn-outs, signalling, wiring, etc., 'cause all you guys are experts on this stuff anyway. So with all these things done in one easy sentence I come back to the mountains. Let's see what happened.

Quite a few of you fellows who have had the opportunity of seeing my layout showed you good manners and said that I had done real well. Of course this went to my head, so here we are. If I don't see you again after this, I'll understand. I loaned one of my books to Paul Wegner because of this sort of baloney. He was real nice. Wonder if I'll ever see him again. Where were we - oh yes, mountains! Well, here is the way you (I) go about this sort of thing.

You begin with a load of rocks, assorted sizes, about a half ton or less. Do not use the cobblestone variety in any size - use only the broken limestone or granite type. These are free. Add to this a few buckets or bushel baskets of ballast borrowed from the nearest railroad right-of-way. This, too, is free. Get a 25 lb. bag of Red Top Patching Plaster. This is not free unless you know something I don't. Finally get a free pail or three of sand of varying fineness. Using a screen, sift this sand to separate the fine from the next size. Save both and store in coffee cans or similar. Steal a spoon from your wife and a small putty knife from your best friend. You are now in business??? If you have read this far, you must surely want to build the damn mountains, so here is how we do it.

Set the large rocks on wood risers, flat boards or whatever you have for your base. Pile these up and against each other in a line. Fill in the holes between with the ballast rocks. Fit them as tight as you can and in as big an area as you like. Make the rocks wedge against each other projecting out, in, flat, on edge and any other way. Remember that even on a mountainside you will have large rocks extending above the track on the downhill side. This means that the cars will pass behind these rocks as they climb or descend the grade. These can be spire rocks, rocks with holes, or smaller ones, etc. As you set your rocks, be sure you use your new NMRA clearance plate to be sure the cars will not hit any of the rocks. On curves use your longest passenger car to be sure the overhang doesn't hit the rocks. After you've stacked all these rocks and stuff and

it seems fairly well arranged and reasonably solid, mix three heaping spoons of patching plaster, one spoon of the fine sand I told you to save, and water. Spoon or knife this mix into all the interstices (cracks and joints to you) between the rocks to bond them together and to fill in all the holes between pieces. You may wish to get just the main units tied first and then go back and fill in the rest of the holes when these larger pieces have set. I recommend the small quantity of the mixture because it sets fairly fast. It will set up in five to ten minutes and be very hard in about 30 minutes. If you slop any of the mix on your track or the faces of the rocks, don't fret, 'cause you can pop it off after about 15 or 20 minutes with a knife.

Actually, you can do a large area in one evening. Don't accept the first arrangement without trying a couple of others. Obviously this rearrangement had better be done before you do any cementing. If you have a depot and/or other structures to go in, be sure enough space has been left in a flat area to receive them. Bridges add a terrific punch to this type of scenery. They don't go in very easily after your rocks are cemented, so plan AHEAD. Tunnels also make for good realism and are easy to do, using rock cut portals or wood frame timbers. You will have to play these things by ear, fellas, because I can't possibly describe all the possibilities. You will see right away where certain things are needed to give it the "sock" you desire. This is the cheapest possible way to get a very realistic type of right-of-way and one for real enjoyment. For those of you who have seen my layout, I can assure you that it was all done in a very short time with a minimum of effort and expense.

The painting is easy, too. Get some brown, tan, black, gray and pink colors of flat paint. You probably have them kicking around the house now. If not, Woolworth's have 1/4 pint cans for about a quarter, plenty to do all you will need. DO NOT use or mix any enamel paints in this work. Dip your brush into one can and paint on color over the plaster surfaces; dip directly into another can and daub over this color to mix the two right on the surface. This gives variety and intermixing necessary to shading and variation. Use the black very sparingly but USE it. Just a touch of it strengthens certain spots. You play this by ear too, but you will find that with the tops off all the cans you can vary the colors a lot and match exactly the shade of the adjoining rocks you have set. Some of the paint will get on the rocks and this adds contrast, but keep this to a minimum. Remember that you painting the areas of the plaster which holds the rocks in place and fills in between them and that you wish to get some paint on this plaster to reasonably match the rock faces. For those just beginning, try doing this on a simple rock cut first to see how it goes. You'll be surprised and delighted with the results.

Remember that these rocks have veining in them and this will give you all the scale you need. I have colored slides to prove this. Just because one rock may be twice the size of your largest locomotive does not mean a thing. In place it will come into scale just fine with the other rocks being smaller.

Finally - add lichen, telegraph poles, tell-tales, trees, etc. afterward. The pebbles I told you to save go at the base of all rock faces that are vertical, all places where a valley may be, all places where you get ledges at an upper level, and especially down near and next to the track. A pile of them will not hurt a bit. Add some of the fine sand to this treatment, along with trees. Trees grow anywhere there is a level spot to collect soil to support root structures.

If all this seems like too much work - **FORGET IT** - and do it the way you like, or better yet, bring your equipment over to my house and run it.

I wish to thank each of you who has been so nice with your compliments about my layout, and it just proves you can't beat people such as we have in our hobby. It sure makes it a rock load of fun! **SEE YOU SOON.**

THE FUSEE

3500 Rhode Island Ave., South
MINNEAPOLIS 26, MINNESOTA

From the Archives..... July 1960

From the Archives: 1976

(cont. next page)

Prototype to Model

by Les Breur



The original in Lydia, Minnesota.

photo by Breur



The model in Little Chicago, Minnesota.

photo by Vanden Plas

One component I use to create a realistic railroad atmosphere on my HO scale Minneapolis and Northland is prototype structures. Various prototype structures I choose are available in kit form. However, if no kit exists I build a model of the prototype from scratch. Scratch built structures help to make the M.[N.] distinctive.

Upon seeing my layout many visitors once knowing a structure is scratch built ask the question, "What method did you use to copy the prototype?" The answer to the question is, "Published plan, photograph, sketch with actual measurements, scale drawing or a combination of these."

Published plans, which are available in various books and periodicals, are the easiest method. After choosing a structure, I review the NMRA Periodical Index and Volume Index to back issues of the various periodicals I have. If a plan is available I locate the necessary back issue and begin construction.

When no satisfactory plan is available, I use the photograph and sketch with actual measurements methods. These methods require that I locate a prototype structure within reasonable distance of my home and make a railfan trip to its location.

To obtain the photographs I desire I carry one camera loaded with black and white film and a Polaroid camera loaded with color film. I take a minimum of five pictures. One picture of each side is taken in black and white. One color picture, usually of the front side, is taken to provide a painting reference. Additional black and white close-up photographs may be taken of details. Note: if you own a 35mm camera with a 50mm lens, the photo becomes a HO scale drawing if when taking the picture — you stand 14.5 feet or 4.36 meters from the prototype.

Once I finish taking pictures, I proceed to take measurements of the structure. The tools I carry for this purpose are: pencil, sketch pad, 10 foot tape and 100 foot tape. Obviously a quick sketch of the structure is made and actual measurements as taken are recorded on the sketch.

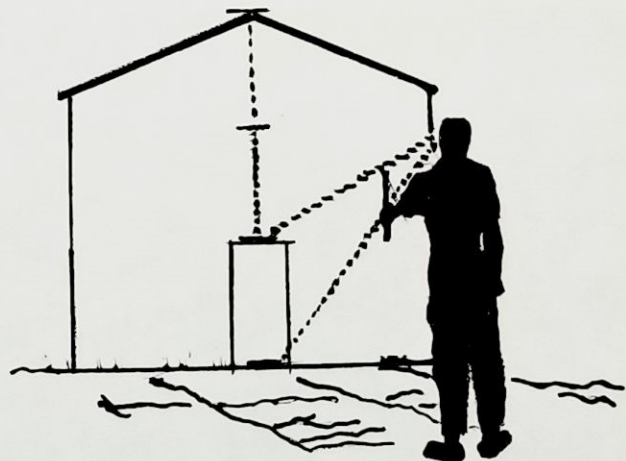
In taking measurements, the height of the structure is usually not taken with a tape. Instead, I use the pencil method.

To use the pencil method one must use part of the structure whose length is known. I use the door of the structure. Then hold a pencil at arm's length, sight across the top of it to the top of the door. At the same time move your thumb on the pencil until you sight across it to the base of the door. Then raise your

arm and the pencil, until your line of sight over your thumb hits the top of the door. Note where your line of vision across the top of the pencil cuts the structure. Move your arm up again, and repeat the process (see diagram). Thus you find out the number of many times higher the structure is, than the known height (the door). Multiply that number by the known height to find the height of the structure.

If time is against your taking actual measurements, the following procedure is recommended. When taking photographs of the prototype, you place a white yard stick against it. At a later date the yard stick in the photograph is used to determine dimensions for the model. If your railroad budget allows, you can get the photographs blown-up to the point where the white yard stick matches your scale rule. Such a photograph is a full size plan in your scale.

With the final dimension recorded, the visit to the prototype is complete. All that remains before construction of the model begins is a scale drawing.



The pencil method was adapted from *Handbook for Boys* (New Jersey, 1948), p. 270.

From the Archives: 1976 (cont.)

Armed with photos, sketch, T square, right triangle, and scale rule, I draw a full size HO scale plan. The scale plan is not necessary to build the model. However, the scale plan does help me to make up a Bill of Materials. I also prefer to work from a plan in proportion rather than a sketch which is not.

Now you have my methods for copying a prototype. Let's assume you have decided to put these procedures to use. When do you start? Just remember that old expression, "Here today, gone tomorrow." It applies to structures, too, so plan a railfan trip to a favorite prototype soon.

The prototype, pictured here, stands next to Highway 13 in Lydia, Minnesota. The gas station, built before 1920, still serves the community today.

On my layout, the model stands next to Highway 13 in Little Chicago, Minnesota. Like the prototype, it is the only gas station in the community.



TLR patch shown actual size.

TLR PATCHES BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND . . .

TLR cloth patches (crests to our Canadian cousins) have been reordered as a result of many requests. These are approximately three inches in diameter, feature the TLR emblem in three colors and will be available by the time you read this.

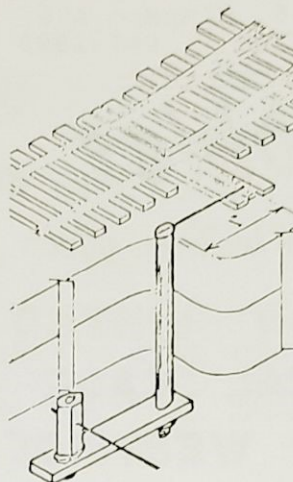
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2020 TLR Convention Contest Categories

The following categories will be available at the 2020 TLR convention held in Sioux Falls. Please plan to participate.

For models in this section submit NMRA Forms 901, 902 and supplemental information.

- Steam Locomotives
- Diesel and other locomotives
- Traction
- Passenger Cars
- Freight Cars
- Cabooses
- Non-Revenue Cars
- Structures
- On-line
- Off-line
- Display
- On-line
- Off-line

(Note that scenery guidelines apply: <https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/education/achievement/pdf/2019-scen-eval.pdf>)

Individual Module for Merit Evaluation (treated as display)

Note: Any model in Section 1, above, earning 87½ points during the model contest judging will automatically be awarded the appropriate AP credit.

Railroad Pass Form 901, ranking by judges

Photography (Form 901, special photography guidelines apply : <https://nmra.org/national-photo-contest-judging-guidelines>)

- Model B&W Print
- Model Color Print
- Prototype B&W Print
- Prototype Color Print

Popular Vote Categories by Convention Attendees (Form 901 required for all; does NOT include Merit Award – Judged items, #1, above)

- Rail Related
 - Favorite Train
 - Locomotives (all types)
 - Rolling Stock (all types)
 - Caboose
 - Structures
 - Display
 - Module
 - Thumbs (Humorous)
 - Photo Match Model

A special TLR popular vote category will be added by summer and announced separately.

Non-Rail Related (need not be prepared now for this Celebration event. Items made earlier than the 2019-2020 period remain eligible).

- General
- Needlework
- Railroadiana
- Photographs
- Model Print
- Color Print

There will be Best of Show selected from the following categories:

- Merit Award-Evaluated entries;
- Judged Photography Entries;
- Popular Vote Rail Entries;
- Arts and Crafts (i.e., Non-Rail) Entries;

First place winners in the categories will be awarded plaques. Second and Third Place winners in the categories will receive certificates. Novices (i.e., people who are participating the Celebration Room for the first time), will be acknowledged at the Banquet, Saturday evening.

One aspect of the 2020 convention that we are seeking is greater participation in the Arts and Crafts categories. These categories may be railroad or train related; however, this is not required. Also, if one has an item that they have prepared in the past and would like to include it in the popular vote at the 2020 convention in Sioux Falls, this is encouraged. This category serves to encourage participation by the non-railroader parts of the family – spouses and children are encouraged to submit entries.

A number of individuals have asked for examples of Arts and Crafts items that one can consider. **Included on the next 2 pages are photographs of examples.** It should be noted that a number of these items serve a dual role as Arts and Crafts and as items donated for community service. While this is not a requirement, it is certainly acceptable. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive or the only types of items for consideration. The intent is to whet the creative juices of all model railroad families.

Beyond these examples, quilts and cross stitch are options, as is Railroadiana.

Please participate.

Sincerely,
Kennedy Gauger
TLR Contest Director

Cont. page 19

Railroad Themed Arts and Crafts from 2019 Joint Convention in La Crosse, WI



Figure 1. Christmas Ornament by Marion Manning - DSED



Figure 2. Rock Island Railroad Map on Coasters by Matt Lentz -- SRRD

Other Artis and Crafts Ideas



Figure 3. Sewn Baby Bibs Donated to Hospitals



Figure 4. Knitted Premies Hats Donated to Hospitals



Figure 5. Knitted Cat Carrier Blankets Donated to Local Humane Societies



Figure 6. Poured Paint Art on Canvas



Figure 7. Poured Paint Hearts Donated to Veterans



Figure 8. Poured Paint Hearts Donated to Nursing/Assisted Living Residents



Figure 9. Vase Containing Color-Themed Craft Flowers (e.g., Local Universities, High Schools, Local Railroads, etc.)



Figure 10. Headbands with Designs and Bling for Gifts or Donation

Publishing Deadlines

<u>Publishing Date</u>	<u>Submission Deadline</u>
March 1 Edition	February 1
July 1 Edition	June 1
September 1 Edition	August 1
December 1 Edition	November 1

**Thousand Lakes Region NMRA
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting (by conference
Call)**

September 24, 2019 7PM

1: Call Order - President Jay Manning called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

2: Roll Call – Secretary Art Suel conducted the roll call. Officers present were Manning (President), Caleb Van der Brink (Vice President), Suel, Kevin Dill (Public Relations Director and Fusee Editor), Scott Nesbit (Convention Director) and Kennedy Gauger (Contest Director). Superintendents present were Ian Plant (No. 1 Northern), Terry Davis (Minnesota River Valley), Gerry Miller (Southeastern), Ron Olsen (Twin City), Matt Lentz (South Red River) and Jay Davis (Prairie Lakes).

3: Approval of Minutes

A: Minutes of May 17, 2019 - Dill moved, seconded by Miller to approve the minutes as written. Passed on a voice vote with no dissension.

4: Treasurer's Report - No report, Treasurer Tom Gay was absent. If a member would like to see the financials, contact Gay. His contact info is in the Fusee or on the web site.

5: Directors Reports

A: Convention

1: 2020 Convention Update - Director Nesbitt reported that the 2020 convention is progressing well. Hotel locked in at \$101.99 per night. Hotel will once again be the Ramkota in Sioux Falls. Convention registration is \$120.00 which includes the bus trip, two lunches and 2 dinners. Both evening meals will be at the hotel. The bus trip is to Madison South Dakota to tour the Prairie Village which includes three locomotives. Rich Dahl is looking for clinicians for the clinics. Friday will be all clinics and Modeling with the Masters.

2: Convention Checking Account- Dill reported that Treasurer Gay would like the board to consider setting up a permanent checking account for the convention. Miller reported that one problem is that there is no Wells Fargo in some cities. Nearest Wells Fargo for Dubuque Iowa is 40 minutes away. Nesbit said that DSED can handle paying small bills and getting reimbursed by the region.

3: 2021 Convention Update- Nesbit reported that the hotel is locked in for the Bismarck/Mandan convention.

B: Contest Director- Gauger recapped the 2019 contest. Over 100 entries from the two regions, split very close to 50/50. He considered this an excellent outcome from the emails that were sent to promote the celebration/contest room. After the convention, a review of the activity was took by Manning, Headon and himself to look for improvements for future contests. Among one change will be a table outside the room staff with an experience modeler judge to answer questions. This will also ease the congestion in the room when contest entries arrive. Terry Davis agreed that it is hard for attendees to get in room to view entries. Davis commented that the NMRA magazine this year had photos of non-rail activities at Salt Lake City. He is also planning on constructing a photo display stands for the photo portion.

C: Public Relations Director

1: update on PR in region- Dill said he will be commencing public relations efforts around the region in the coming weeks.

2: Fusee update – Dill sent the Fusee out by direct email to members from the email listed on the national membership reports from national. He asked division superintendents to review the list of emails that were returned undelivered and contact their members to get the correct email.

Terry Davis asked if anyone knew where the old trifold display board of the region went. Nesbit believes DSED has it. T. Davis said it would be a good idea for each division to have one. Dill moved to supply each division with a tri-fold display board. Second by Miller. Motion passed. Miller said that divisions should find a source to purchase board. Send receipt to the treasurer for reimbursement. Jay Davis stated the boards should look similar. Dill will come up with a spec and send it to the superintendents.

6: National Officers reports

A: NMRA Canadian Director- Fred Headon, MMR gave an update on national activities. National elections will take place in 2020. The Canada NMRA director is among the offices on the ballot. The current incumbent (Headon) is term limited and will not be on the ballot. The California State Railroad Museum is scheduled to open October 19th. The NMRA has moved 7000 books from Tennessee to the museum. Part of the agreement with CSRM is that NMRA members will have access to services provided by CSRM.

VP Special Projects Leone MMR is leading the redesign of the NMRA website. Matter is on hold till content managers for the website are found. Dues increase of \$3.00 effective January 1, 2020 for US members was approved in Salt Lake City. He said that Manning needs to nominate a member to work on the long-range planning committee. Headon suggested Manning, Gerry Miller or Terry Davis would be an excellent choice.

B: NMRA VP Special Projects - no report

7: Superintendents Reports

A: South Red River Valley – Matt Lentz reported that division lost one member due to death. October 20th the 41st annual SPUD Valley train show will occur. Division is planning to roll out their first T-Trak sections at the show. Division is assisting members in achieving AP certificates. Lentz inform the board that members can enter contests such as the national by proxy (having another member bring the contest entry and the necessary paperwork to the contest).

B: Dakota Southeastern – Manning delivered the report. New trailer is now in use. By close of year, DSED will have taken their modular railroad to 9 shows. Membership is growing.

C: Prairie Lakes – Jay Davis inform the board that the PLD fall meet will be December 7th at the train show in Albert Lea Minnesota. The division will use a vacant storefront in the Mall for their meeting. The Train show is December 7th and 8th at the Mall in Albert Lea. He mentioned that Miles Rohn was awarded the Presidents Award at the Salt Lake Nation Convention. Rohn is one of the founders of the Prairie Lakes Division.

D: Southeastern - Gerry Miller told the board that the division is working on a train show for the Dubuque area. The date will be February 22, 2020. They are also in the process of designing a modular railroad that can be taken to shows. Division is working to get the word out in their area about the NMRA.

E: Twin City - Ron Olsen reported that the division is changing their meeting approach. Will be having bi-monthly meetings on Saturday or Thursday in different locations to try to reach more members. The meetings will have about 3 hours of programming each time. The Annual Modeler's Retreat will be held March 13th and 14th at the usual location of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Plymouth Mn.

F: Minnesota River Valley – Terry Davis reported that there is 5 active members out of the division 19 members. The division continues to work on the model railroad at the Milwaukee Road Heritage Center in Montevideo MN once a month. A couple of members might have their layouts open for tours the Sunday of the C&NW Heritage Society annual meeting in Mankato May 28-31, 2020.

G: No 1 Northern - The Mega Train Show in Winnipeg is September 29, 2019. The division will be there with their modular railroad. Other plans are to have operating sessions on member's railroad thru the winter.

8: Chair Reports

A: Achievement Program – no report, Manning comment that the region needs to get more members working on their AP certificates.

B: Webmaster- Caleb Van Der Brink is working on a free website for the 2020 convention.

C: Membership – Suel reported that the regional membership is down 8 members since April. He continues to send welcome letters out to the new members.

D: Social Media – no report

E: Historian – no report

9: Old Business

Gerry Miller reported that the 2019 convention has been wrapped up and the profit was split with the Midwest Region. Manning informed the board he awarded an additional President's Award to Gerry and Peg Miller for their convention efforts.

10: New Business

A: Appointment of Historian- Manning appointed Matt Lentz historian. Miller/Dill moved the motion ratifying the appointment. Motion passed.

B: Grant Requests

1: Southeastern Division – Miller presented the division request for \$350.00 to assist in getting their train show off the ground. Nesbit moved to approve, second by Gauger. Motion passed.

C: Computer, printer, windows office for contest room – Gauger requested funds to purchase a laptop and printer, plus miscellaneous supplies for the celebration/contest room. At this time, the board also discuss the next item on the agenda, photo display materials. Gauger would construction display easels for displaying photo entries instead of using tables. Lentz recommend getting a laptop that isHDM1 compatible with a DVD player. Nesbit moved that \$700.00 be allocated for the items. Miller seconded and the motion passed.

D: Materials for contest photo display – see above agenda item

E: Awards Nominations

1: Bob Dew Sr Award- Two nominations were received. After some discussions, the item was tabled till the next meeting.

2: Stafford Swain Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award- Two nominations were received. Manning inform the board to send their vote to him by email. Manning also inform the board that nominations for the Service to Division award given to one recipient in each region by national is coming up. Will need it in February. Miller suggested he write about this in his Fusee column.

F: Update on nominations for board in May – Five board positions will be up for election in May, two individuals are term limited, Suel and Nesbit. Nesbit has a candidate for his position on the board.

11: Other Business- Manning needs 3 individuals to go thru the regional handbook to look for areas that need revisions. Gauger, Miller and Dill volunteered.

At this point a grant request was received from Jay Davis of the Prairie Lakes Division. Division would like to purchase a portable tripod screen for their meets. Sometimes the facility the division is using lacks projection equipment. Nesbit moved the allocation of \$150.00 for this purpose. Gauger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

12: Adjournment- Miller moved to adjourn, second by Nesbit. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm

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Lester Breuer, MMR

Region Round-up

No. 1 Northern Division

Ian Plett, Supt.

Back in October we had a division get together at Rob Goertzen's place. Members brought their own trains to run on his basement empire. We also discussed our future plans for the course of the year. Which shows we will try to attend, how we can get more new members and how to keep them.

November 24 is our second division get together. We are meeting at Simon Duggan's place to set up the Free-Mo Group's reverse loops so we can fix it up over the winter months. We will also have a show, tell brag show and Fred Headon will explain his layout operating scheme.

Sometime in January, and again in February, we will have a operating session on Fred Headon's layout.

Minnesota River Valley Division

Terry Davis, Supt.

A few members of the Minnesota River Valley Division have continued to work on the HO scale model railroad of the Milwaukee Road Heritage Center in Montevideo, Minn. The two-level model depicts the Milwaukee in Montevideo circa 1953. It is about 85 percent to 90 percent completed with only a small area of basic scenery left to do. Additionally, several placeholder buildings need scratchbuilt replacements. The members measured the Watson depot in early summer and will build a model from professional architectural drawings one member produced from those measurements.

Operating sessions on members' railroads have been hindered by weather, illness, fall harvest and snowbird trips. It is hoped a couple sessions can take place this winter.

The annual meeting will take place sometime in April or May, likely in Montevideo. Members should watch for notice of it. Members may contact me at my contact information elsewhere in the FUSEE.

South Red River Valley Division

Matthew Lentz, Supt.

We've got a lot of things to celebrate going into the New Year. First up are the two awards of the Golden Spike. Kevin Dill, Editor of the Fusee and Andrew Merkel, Division Secretary both earned the Golden Spike in October. The awards were presented by Jay Manning at the Spud Valley show. Both of them were also present the Division Award for Merit by Deputy Superintendent Ben Tretter. Jim Moore was presented the Old Goat award by Jay Manning at the show. This is the first Old Goat since 2008. Now that the award has been found again, I'd expect there will be a bunch of "New Old Goats" in the Region in the next year. Something I noticed at the show was the attention of people who aren't members – they were wondering what was going on with the certificates and photos. That attention is something to think about. The other thing that happened was these awards were presented by the Region President. Things like that matter. Its one thing to receive an award at a Division meeting, but it's more meaningful when you get an award from the leadership in front of the public. I'm a firm believer in recognizing even small things. It tells the members that what they do matters, but more importantly, they are recognized as they do things, not years later after the fact.

The Spud Valley show was another excellent train show. Past Superintendent Don Radeck was once again in charge of organizing the show and with some help from Duane Durr; the show was a huge success. For those of you that haven't been to the show I would compare it to Granite City in size. The venue is the Marriot Hotel ballroom which is really nice.

Jim Moore, John Goroski and Shadow Reddington were there with the Red River Modular Club and their outstanding HO

sale modular layout. That layout is the thing that convinced me to join the NMRA. In 2016 my daughter and I were at the show looking at all the animals on the layout in the farm scenes. She loved the barn with the horses and the cows coming up the hill. She loved the scene with the camper and bearskin and knocked over trash can. That layout is something I look forward to seeing every year and had motivated me for a long time to do modeling. I'd been modeling since 1976 and going to train shows several times a year, but this was the first time anyone from the NMRA ever asked me if I was interested. Tom Gay and Kevin Dill had a table with a banner and actually asked me if I was interested, so I joined. Those of you in sales know that if you ask people to buy, some of them will actually do it.

The Region leadership came up for the show. Jay, Kennedy, Rich, Jeff and Art were here. After the show we went over to the Drecker Brewing Company which is located in the old Northern Pacific car repair shops. The interior has been preserved and is all exposed so you can see down to the nuts and bolts what the interior of the shop looks like. We made a stop at one of the local hobby shops and got to see some new products for scenery, once of which was a huge rubber back scenery mat that was just incredible. They got to see Andrew Merkel's portable layouts at the, for which he received the Golden Spike. Then they got to see Kevin Dill's fabulous O Scale layout and run a couple Great Northern diesel locomotives with the most incredible sound I've ever heard. An O scale horn sounds mighty real. Then they got a preview of Tom Gay's new ore dock that is getting close to becoming operational.

All in all, we achieved one of my goals, which was to get a visit from the Region leadership at a time when we were doing something big. It's important that members, especially those who don't go to the convention, get to know who the leadership is. As I like to say, this is a social club so we should do some things that are social.

Deputy Superintendent Ben Tretter has been doing a lot of heavy lifting on the T-Trak project. The T-Trak skeleton was on display at the Spud Valley show. He's been doing some arm-chair operations and working on a plan that gets kids to be able to run a train and receive some kind of license to drive trains. This is a very important idea. A man at church asked me if what we were doing was for kids. I've thought about that for a couple years. It was important to him. The same thing came up in a raucous meeting of members at my AMVETS club. This meeting had 65 voting members present compared to normal meeting with less than 15. At issue was purchasing a building that has a 300 seat hall and the reason for doing so was to have family events. It has been determined that veterans clubs that have events that geared towards families with children are much more successful than those that are just a bar. Building on their costly research, when we display trains that attract kids to play we will attract the parents. The T-Trak is a great tool to do just that. We're still hoping that some of you out there have some N scale stuff that you'd be willing to either donate or offer up for sale. We have a small budget that we can use towards our project.

At our December meeting we'll be having a presentation from Tom Gay about his implementation of the card system used to operate his SOO Line layout. This should be a fascinating look at what it takes to put together an operating session for a large layout. All members are welcome to attend.

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