



The FUSEE



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www.thousandlakesregion.org

Spring 2006

Our NorthStar '06 convention: Twin Cities means twice the fun

By Pat Walker
NorthStar '06 Convention Chair

In 1956 the TLR hosted its first NMRA Convention in Saint Paul, with the slogan "Back to the Sticks in '56". It was, apparently, a great success. I have some old NMRA Bulletins that talk about all that happened that weekend (maybe a historic article is called for?).



TLR members chow down at last year's convention banquet.

Well, in 2006 it's back to Saint Paul to see how things have progressed in fifty years. While some may still think this part of the country is 'The Sticks', we decided to go with NorthStar '06 instead.

On page 7 of this issue of THE FUSEE is the NorthStar '06 registration form, with some highlights of the convention. I'd like to hit a few more of the highlights here, along with some information that couldn't fit there. For the latest information, be sure to see the TLR website (www.thousandlakesregion.org) and the convention website (www.northstar06.org). There is a lot of information there, and more is being added regularly. Including a list of door prize donors.

We just heard from John Roberts, the NMRA President, that he is planning to attend. He'll be here all weekend, so be sure to introduce yourself. He'll be having a Meet the President on Saturday morning and I'm sure he'll have some comments to make at the banquet. We're glad he's going to be able to visit with us this year. By the way, we are still interested in adding to the slate of rail clinics. If you're interested, or know of a good one, please let us know at 2006@thousandlakesregion.org.

One of the parts of a convention that a lot of us look forward to every year is the contests. Have you ever entered one? Well, here's your chance. Take a look at the convention website and review the twenty plus categories available to you. In the past some categories have not had a lot of entries, which may make it easier for you to win. There's not much better than being able to hang that plaque on the wall for all your friends to see. There is nothing wrong with bragging rights! Don't forget this year's special contest: Modern Fallen Flags. Personally I'm hoping someone enters a light rail car painted in Twin City Rapid Transit colors. Or how about a Great Northern SD70MAC? Let your imagination run wild on this one. Remember the only rule: It must be fallen flag styled modern equipment.



John Hotvet's gas electric won the '05 Jack O'phant Award.

With the big push this year on non rail activities, we hope that the non rails will remember (or be told) that there is a full slate of contest categories for them as well. Again, check out the website and let the better half know that they, too, can win a prize worth bragging about. Additionally, there will be a luncheon on Saturday specially planned for non rails, with some surprises for all attending. Hopefully it will be well received and become something to look forward to every year. Also clinics, seminars, break outs - call 'em what you want - there will plenty for the non rails as well.

See you in The Sticks - Saint Paul!

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Jim Bernier's saga of how work on his Division multiplies

**NorthStar '06
Convention
Registration
Page 7!**

View from the cab *by TLR President Bruce Selb*

Yes, it is Convention time again. This year the convention is in St. Paul and at the beginning of May. This date should not conflict with Mother's Day, the Fishing Opener, State Fair Train Sale, Canadian Armistice Day or the United States Memorial Day observances.

There'll be a number of modeling clinics available, as well as a Special Friday night visit to the Jackson Street Roundhouse Museum. In addition, there will be the normal convention activities of contest model judging, layout tours and the Awards Banquet on Saturday. Don't forget the annual meeting Sunday morning plus more layout tours in the afternoon.

Speaking of the annual meeting, there will be some changes from previous years. In order to conform with National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) by laws and the changes to the Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) by laws passed at the October special meeting, all individuals attending the meeting must be members of the NMRA.

Expect to show proof of membership (NMRA membership card) to gain access to the meeting.

In addition, any non NMRA member registering for the convention will become an NMRA member. The non members registration fee includes a \$10 payment for "NMRA Rail Pass" membership. This six month NMRA membership assumes the individual has not been a member in the previous two years.

On this subject, a topic for discussion at the general membership meeting will be next year's registration fee for non NMRA members (\$45.00, including a year's subscription to *Scale Rails* magazine) as part of their registration fee. This will provide the individuals with NMRA member services for one year and the ability to attend all TLR events.

Another subject I would like to see discussed is that of all Divisions adopting an NMRA membership requirement to attend Division sponsored events. National, in the future, will probably raise this issue since the Division liability insurance falls under the National coverage plan. At this time it is only a subject for discussion.

Hope to see you at the Convention!

THE WORK TRAIN

by Editor Gerry Leone, MMR

Next year, there's no "hopping the fence"

One of the more significant things that happened at the TLR Board meeting last January actually happened before the meeting began. The Board discussed whether or not non NMRA members should be allowed to attend a TLR convention.

From my viewpoint it was a significant discussion. Countless people have asked me Why should I join the NMRA? What do I get out of it? If you're an NMRA member, I'm sure you know the drill. And the problem is, over the last few decades Divisions, Regions, and even the National organization have indeed allowed the value of an NMRA membership to erode, to the point where people really *don't* recognize the many benefits. They forget about things like access to the world's largest train library. Reduced rates on insurance for collections.

And the ability to attend an NMRA sponsored meet. Those are all things that should be reserved for members. Over the years, though, the fear of losing people and revenue won out and the gates were opened wide. Everybody got the benefits.

But the ability to attend conventions really is one thing that adds value to NMRA membership. Put another way, when the organization allows non members to attend even with a nominal additional fee it reduces the value of membership to its members. It's like turning a blind eye while the kids hop the fence to get in to the circus. No, the kids haven't done any real harm... *except* to turn everyone who's paid their regular admission into chumps. Why pay the price when

you can slide in for little or nothing at all?

In talking with editors from Division and Region newsletters all across the country, I found out that no other Region allows non NMRA members entry. None. And non members, to my knowledge, have never seen the inside of a National convention.

This was the informal discussion the Board had. And all agreed that, from now on, only NMRA members would be allowed to attend TLR conventions. This year, if you're a non NMRA member, the extra \$10 that's added to your registration fee will be buying you a 6 month NMRA Rail Pass membership—a great way to sample the NMRA's benefits.

But Rail Pass memberships can't be renewed for two years after they expire. So next year the tune will change just a little. And if you decide an NMRA membership still has no value to you, you'll also be deciding that the TLR convention now has no value to you, either. Think about it. We'd sure hate to lose you. But next year, there's no hopping the fence.

THANKS!

Contributors to this issue:

Jim Bernier

Jay Davis

John Hotvet, MMR

Paul Ullrich

Pat Walker

Next issue's deadline:

May 20, 2006

More layouts you can visit at NorthStar '06

This year's May convention will feature several layouts on tour Saturday and Sunday. While the Saturday layout tours (three of which were featured in the Winter edition of THE FUSEE) will be close to the convention hotel, the Sunday layouts will be a little farther out in the metro area, so you'll be able to visit them on your way home. Here are overviews of more of the layouts that will be on tour. Please consult the Timetable, included in your Convention Packet, as to which layout tours are Saturday, and which are Sunday.

John Anibal John's railroad, the Burlington Northern La Bina Subdivision, is an HO scale layout in three rooms that measures 18x24 feet overall and is set in the 1970s. The setting is a large city with



Zieska's Minnesota Heartland Railway (above and center; photos by Neil Maldeis), and Leone's Bona Vista Railroad (bottom; photo by Gerry Leone).

seaport facilities. John uses a Zero 1 control system, and the layout features fully automated mainline operations with red and green signal indications. A small switching area uses hands on DC control.

Martin Hrabe Martin's HO scale 24x32 foot layout is housed in three rooms. The railroad is set in the 1950s and 1960s with Rock Island and Great Northern power. Scenery ranges from massive mountains to logging, mining,



and wharf scenes. Martin uses a combination of handlaid and flex track mounted on spline roadbed and Homasote on ply wood.


Gerry Leone, MMR Gerry Leone's HO scale Bona Vista Railroad is set in the Upper Midwest of the early 50s, when steam was still king. This 15 x 35 layout has about half of the scenery completed and features many superdetailed, scratch built, and kitbashed structures. Photos of the layout have appeared in various *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* articles as well as the NMRA's 2005 and 2006 calendars.

Michael Moormann Michael's N scale 1930's vintage Sogn Valley is set in the rolling country of southeastern Minnesota. It is located in a 12x16 foot room and is 100% scenicked. The layout is basically a shelf railroad with two switching modules that feature scratchbuilt structures and small towns. Michael passed away several years ago, but his widow Alice has agreed to open the layout for the TLR.

Ron Schutts Ron's Soo Line Wishek Subdivision is an HO scale 7x13 foot railroad set in the mid 1980's in southeastern North Dakota. Scenery is 100%



complete, and there are numerous mini scenes to be found. Some buildings have interiors and lighting.

Ken Zieska Ken's S scale Minnesota Heartland is an S scale railroad based on the Northern Pacific and Soo Line, and set in the 1960s and 1970s in Minnesota. The 40 x40 railroad is approximately 50% scenicked. Features include nicely done backdrops and many scratchbuilt structures. 

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

January 21, 2006, Excelsior, MN

By Jay Davis, TLR Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 P.M. CST. Present were Bruce Selb, John Hotvet, Terry Davis, Gordy Miller, Jim Wetzler, Gerry Leone, Jim Bernier, Pat Walker and Jay Davis.

The meeting opened with discussion on finding a site for the 2007 TLR convention. Bruce said he was going to contact the Duluth Historical Group and the LaCrosse 4000 Group. It is hoped that a local group would take the lead in hosting the 2007 convention.

Jim Wetzler added that there are thirty two NMRA members in the LaCrosse Winona area. Terry said he would contact the club in the Glenwood Alexandria area about hosting the 2007 or 2008 convention. Gordy reported he was still working with the CNWHS on getting the accounts straight from the joint convention back in

"Minutes" continued on page 9

Because there are Convention activities on Sunday morning, please don't arrive at any Sunday layout tours before 1:00pm!

My first train ride: a short trip on the Long Island

By Paul Ullrich

In August of 1957, my parents took me, their train happy six year old, on my first train ride. We were spending the summer in East Hampton, NY. This was before the Hamptons became such an exclusive and expensive getaway. Back then it was just a sleepy little fishing village, but it was a popular vacation spot for middle class families wanting to escape the city heat.

It was to be a short ride on the Long Island Railroad to the end of the line at Montauk. I was very excited about riding on a train that looked like one of the passenger sets in my beloved Lionel catalog. My only experience riding the rails was on New York City subways, which wasn't the same. Lionel didn't make subways, and if subways weren't good enough for Lionel, they weren't good enough for me. Subways didn't have F units pulling them. They were crowded, noisy and dirty. My mother never allowed me to touch the outside of a subway.

When we rode the subway, my mother always took me to the head car so I could look out the front window. Next to the window was the engineer's cab, which was often left open. When I peered into the cab, I could see that it had only three controls—a throttle, a brake pedal and a horn. It didn't look like much of a challenge to run. The transformer of my Lionel train set had just as many controls.

I grew up in Queens, NY, which was a lousy place for railfanning. Outside of the subways, there was only passenger and commuter rail traffic, and most of that was underground. Diesel and steam engines weren't allowed to operate within the city limits. I never saw a freight train until I was ten years old. But that summer we were out on Long Island, where trains ran above ground and the diesel was king!

My father drove us to the station on a Thursday afternoon, shortly before the last daily train to Montauk arrived. My mother took me inside the station and bought our tickets. I was very impressed by the well preserved, turn of the century

rural station, which looked exactly like the station in my Lionel catalog! It also had a well preserved, turn of the century rural Station Master, complete with visor and sleeve guards, who issued our tickets.



My heart beat with excitement when I saw its headlight from the distance as it came toward us, and I squealed with glee when the horn blew. But the approaching train wasn't an brightly colored F unit pulling a string of fluted, shiny stainless steel passenger cars...like in my Lionel catalog. Instead, there was a humble SW 8 switcher hauling a baggage car and three flat sided steel coaches. The locomotive and its cars were painted a drab medium gray with the words Long Island Railroad across its sides in white. There were no flashy stripes or logos. It was as generic a passenger train as you could get. My heart sunk as I realized that what I saw in my Lionel catalog wasn't an exact depiction of real life railroading.

The Long Island Railroad washed their trains as infrequently as possible, and gray paint does an excellent job of hiding dirt. Every train in my Lionel catalog was clean and shiny, but the outside of this train was just as filthy as any subway. I wasn't allowed to touch the outside of this train, either.

But this wasn't going to be any thing like a subway ride. The conductor placed a small wooden step in front of the door and helped us board. This never happened on the subway, where boarding was a frantic, and often dangerous, every man for himself affair.

The inside of the train was as gray as the outside, but it was clean, quiet, and had comfortable padded corduroy seats. Compared to the hard wicker seats of a subway, it was the lap of luxury! It was also very empty, with only a handful of passengers traveling to the end of the line.

My mother and I were the only ones who boarded at the station. Weekday passenger rail travel was sparse. The LIRR's only money maker at this remote location were the weekend daddy trains that carried fathers from the city to their vacationing families.

My mother let me hand the ticket over to the conductor, an awesome responsibility for a six year old. I studied him carefully as he punched the ticket and inserted it into a small metal slot on top of our seat.

The train started moving with the slightest jolt as the slack in the couplers was taken up. It moved slowly and sedately, picking up speed so gradually it was hardly noticeable. Even when it reached top speed, it felt like we were gliding on air.

This again was in sharp contrast to my only two sources of reference, Lionel trains and New York City subways, which both start and stop with a jolt and travel at breakneck speeds. I've often suspected that subway trainmen (they are not called engineers, nor do they deserve to be) practice their trade with Lionel layouts before being unleashed upon the public.

My mother gave me permission to get up on my knees and look out the window. She never allowed me to do this on a subway. If I was standing on my knees on a subway seat, a hairpin turn at top speed would've sent me flying across the car.



We had often drove from East Hampton to Montauk, but going by rail was an entirely different experience. The tracks didn't follow the main road. We traveled beyond the town, passing through forests and fields that were

unknown to me. It was a great novelty to watch drivers wait for us to pass at the same level crossings that we had to stop at when a train passed by.

Most of the passengers got off at Amagansett, the only stop between East Hampton and Montauk. My mother and I had the whole car to ourselves. The tracks ran parallel to the beach for several miles,

“Train ride” continued on page 10

Twin Cities Division's "Triple Whammy Auction" turns a big fund raiser into a huge fun raiser



Twin Cities Division members could choose from over 90 Chinese Auction prizes. Almost everyone who attended won something.

*By Editor Gerry Leone, MMR
Photos by Dennis Rogers
Editor, THE CROSSING GATE*

There were over 90 items, almost 25 White Elephant gifts, and about a million laughs as the Twin Cities Division held its first Triple Whammy Auction at the December 8 meeting. This event, a special fund raiser, was attended by about 50 members and raised a whopping \$751 for the Division.

In the end, an informal survey showed that almost everyone went home with at least one item, many went home with piles of items, and all had a good time.

The auction was suggested and organized by former CROSSING GATE editor and current FUSEE editor Gerry Leone, MMR, who'd read about similar events that the Pacific Southwest Region's Cajon Division had sponsored for their meets.

The Triple Whammy Auction consisted of three parts. First was a Chinese auction in which TCD members donated brand

new or slightly used items from their model railroad stashes. Auction participants bought special tickets at the usual normal door prize price (6 for \$5, 15 for \$10) and could put as many tickets as they wanted into the drawing cups for any prize or prizes of their choosing. Prizes included several brand new HO scale engines, structure and car kits, craft paints, railroad t shirts, vintage *Model Railroader* magazines, an NMRA Rail Pass membership (won by Jim Chinquist) and much more. A total of over 90 Chinese auction items

were donated by Division members Dennis Mills, Tim Klevar, Gerry Leone, Neil Maldeis, Greg Smith, Les Breuer, Dennis Rogers, and Bill Gisch. The Division owes a special thanks to Al Dowd, whose newly cleaned attic donated fully one third of the prizes.

To keep things moving, the comedy team of Gerry Leone, Bruce Notman, and Taylor Peterson (who is the Division's youngest member at just 10 years old) made quick work of drawing the tickets, handing out prizes, and getting some laughs.

Part Two was the White Elephant open outcry auction. Generous TCD members brought in more than 20 wrapped

hobby items (for which they received free Chinese Auction tickets), which the crowd bid on sight unseen. As with the Chinese auction, there were many deals to be had, and no one was disappointed.

The third part of the Triple Whammy was the silent auction, with items donated by local hobby shops and other Division sponsors. Here members could bid on everything from railroad DVDs to luncheon rides on the Osceola & St. Croix railroad. Special thanks goes to PR Director Don Smith for obtaining these prizes. In addition, our scale changing member, Bill Schimmelman, gave the Division a generous percentage of the proceeds from silent auction items which he brought in and sold.

The Division officers and Gerry Leone would like to thank everyone for their enthusiasm and generosity. Based on dozens of positive comments, it appears that the Triple Whammy Auction will become an annual Division event. Twin Cities Division members are urged to start saving up their extra model items and spare change. December is only 10 months away! **T**



The Division's youngest member, Taylor Peterson, drew the numbers as FUSEE Editor Gerry Leone handed out the prizes. Member at Large Bruce Notman (in back) kept the evening moving at a fast clip.

Want your Division or club featured in THE FUSEE? Write up an article and send it in! See Page 11 for details.

Pecatonica Division: Saga of an HO Empire - Part 2

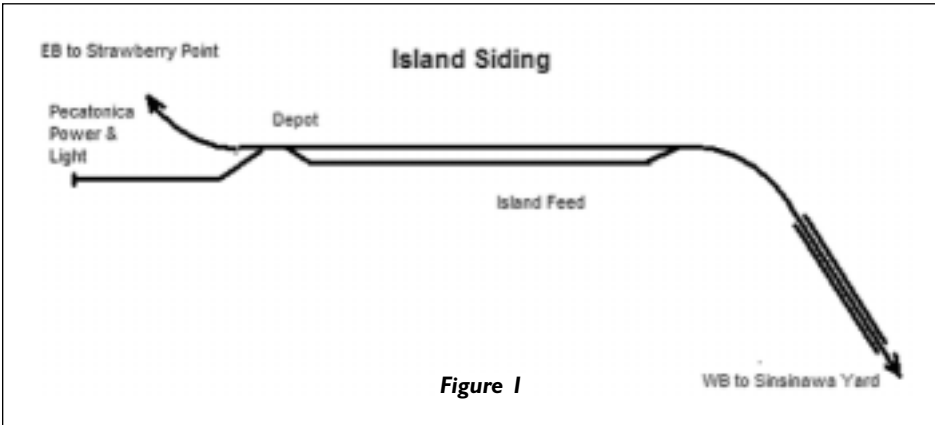


Figure 1

Text and drawings by Jim Bernier
TLR Contest Director

In the last installment I got the town of Strawberry Point put back together (still no scenery), but I wanted to get the heavy duty construction out of the way. With that said, I started planning on fixing up the Island Siding area. At first all I planned was to adjust/level the power plant spur, and patch up the scenery from the staging area extension above and behind Island Siding. Figure 1 is what it looked like in June of 2005.

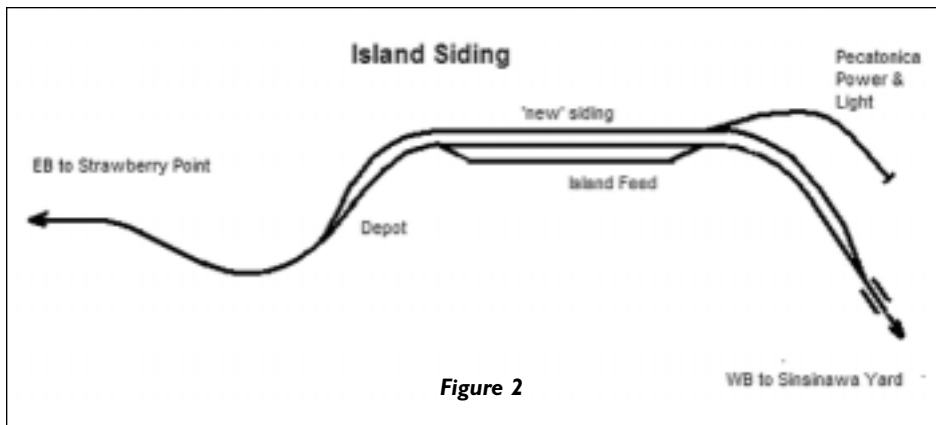


Figure 2

After completing the above modification to the power plant spur (leveling), I cleaned off the area and started packing for my trip to the NMRA National Convention. While at the convention I did a lot of talking with the Layout Design SIG and OpSIG groups about my plans. Everyone told me to get a passing track worked into Island Siding. Charged up to do some modeling after the convention, I started sketching/measuring for the new passing track. Figure 2 is the eventual track layout:

the siding, and moved the power plant to the opposite side of town. A large hill/cliff had to be cut back, and on the west end I had to build a new shorter bridge (and remove more scenery). This took over a week, and plaster dust was being vacuumed up several times each work session.

Now the tough part! As you can see, I moved the trackage leaving town on the east end. My plan was to connect to

the original trackage about 18" into the tunnel. Now remember those Tortoise motors that I had not installed below the Janesville Staging area? The Tortoise motors are so long, they interfere with the trackage under the Strawberry Point/Janesville Staging area! I now had to figure out a way to build about 8 feet of S curving roadbed/track on a 2.7% grade that is completely covered up.

It took about two weeks of measuring and cutting and fitting to get this to fit. I then took off the rest of the last week to let my knuckles heal up. I even broke down and went out to dinner with my girlfriend. I needed to relax. Figure 3 is a diagram of the problem:

Walking back into the layout area after that week was a shock so much of the scenery had been removed so I could get the work done! (A lot of refreshing of the scenery will be needed). Since I had to chop up the Pecatonica River

valley for that shorter bridge, I also built a new High Bridge (27") on the upper level. That project may be a story in itself.

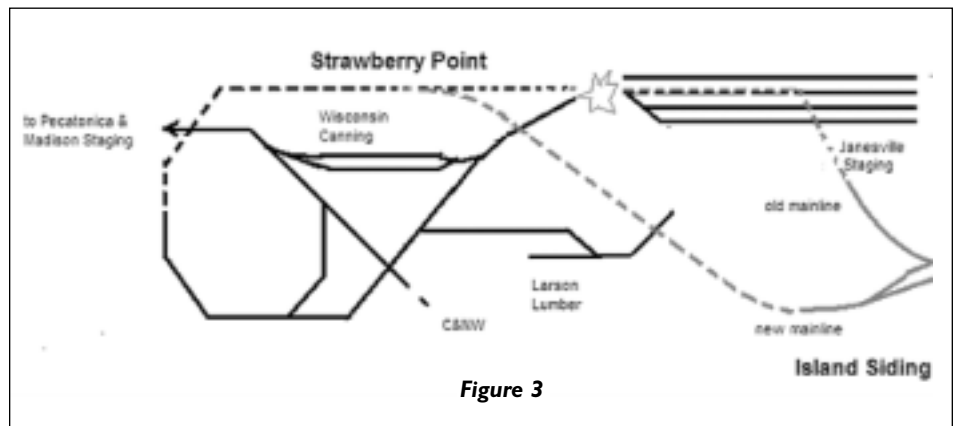


Figure 3

I used #6 turnouts for the entrance to



Join Us for
NorthStar '06
May 5 7, 2006



in
Saint Paul, Minnesota

The 2006 Thousand Lakes Region, NMRA, Convention will be hosted by the Twin Cities Division (TCD) of the NMRA at the Holiday Inn East, located on Burns Avenue at McKnight Road in Saint Paul (easily accessible from I 94).

The hotel features many amenities, including an indoor pool, sauna, and whirlpool, exercise facility, game room, laundry, business center, and in room high speed internet connections. We have blocked rooms at the hotel with room rates at \$79/night. For reservations call 651 731 2220, and be sure to ask for the NMRA rate. (The Region's costs at the hotel are based on the number of rooms we fill.) Reservations must be made by April 5th. After that date rooms may not be available.

The Convention will start out with the traditional Friday Social, at the historic Great Northern Jackson Street Shops, now a museum owned by the Minnesota Transportation Museum. We'll have tours of some of the normally non-accessible areas, including the restoration and painting areas.

Saturday morning brings an array of clinics, both model and prototype related, and some non-railroad at all! New this year is a non-rail Luncheon (although rails will certainly be allowed as long as they watch their topics of discussion). We're planning some special surprises, so this will be something the non-modelers will not want to miss!

Saturday afternoon is layout tours. Our focus is quality not quantity. The crew is hard at work setting up the tours, and is hoping most will be a reasonable distance from the hotel. We're also looking at ideas for the non-rails, and non-layout tour interested folks. There will (probably) be video clinics available for those rails not interested in touring.

Saturday evening will be the banquet, awards and door prizes. 'Nuff said!

Sunday morning will be the TLR Board and General Membership meetings (believe it or not, these are the main reason for the whole weekend!). In the afternoon will be more layout tours, this time a bit farther afield from the hotel... places to stop at on your way home.

For updated information before the convention, visit www.NorthStar06.org. Complete timetables will be in your registration packets at the door.

All in all a fun and busy weekend is being planned so that everyone will enjoy the TLR's return to the Twin Cities!

Tentative Timetable:

Friday	2:00	8:00	Registration
	5:00	8:00	Contest Room Open
	6:00	9:00	Social
Saturday	Morning		Clinics
	Noon		Non Rail Luncheon
	Afternoon		Clinics
	Afternoon		Tours
	Evening		Banquet
Sunday	Morning		Meetings
	Morning		Clinics
	Afternoon		Layout Tours



NorthStar '06 Registration
May 5 7
The Thousand Lakes Region Annual Convention
Saint Paul/Minneapolis, Minnesota

Name: _____

Have you ever attended a TLR Convention before? Yes _____ No _____

Additional Names: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State/Prov: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____ NMRA # _____

	Postmarked by April 1, 2006	Postmarked after April 1, 2006*	Number of People	Total
Rail Registration NMRA Member**	\$65	\$80	x _____ =	\$ _____
Rail Registration Non NMRA Member**	\$75	\$90	x _____ =	\$ _____
Non Rail Registration**	\$55	\$65	x _____ =	\$ _____
Youth Registration (under 18)***	\$10	\$20	x _____ =	\$ _____
Saturday Luncheon	\$15	\$25	x _____ =	\$ _____
Additional Friday Social Tickets	\$15	\$25	x _____ =	\$ _____
Additional Banquet Tickets	\$45	\$55	x _____ =	\$ _____
Total Registration:				\$ _____

Notes: **Rail Registration includes one admission to the Friday Night Social, all tours and clinics, and one banquet meal.**
 Banquet, Social, and Luncheon Tickets MAY NOT be available for on site registrants. Please register in advance.
 Non NMRA Member fee includes a six month Rail Pass membership in the NMRA.
 * Must be postmarked by April 1, 2006. If not, please plan on registering at the door.
 ** There must be at least one Rail Registration per family.
 *** Youth Registration does not include Friday Social or Banquet.

Enclosed is check number _____, made payable to the Twin Cities Division, for the Total Registration amount shown above.

Banquet Choices:	Number
Chicken Marsala	_____
Prime Rib	_____
Vegetarian (Pasta)	_____

Mail completed form and payment to:
 Pat Walker
 NorthStar '06 Registration
 1116 Randolph Ave #16
 Saint Paul, MN 55105 2516

You will receive a registration acknowledgement by mail or email. **See you in the Twin Cities!**

"Minutes" continued from page 2

2005 in Mason City. He thought the TLR would receive around \$400 to \$500.

Pat Walker reported that the convention details for the most part were finalized and gave the board copies of the North Star 2006 registration form. A discussion on having a Chinese auction was held. Also an update was given on Saturday's non rail activities. A clinic on researching genealogy using railroad records, quilting and beading clinics may be scheduled.

It was decided that the President's Awards and Bob Dew Awards need to get back on track. A list of eligible candidates for the Bob Dew Award was passed and a hidden ballot vote was taken.

The minutes from the last meeting as printed in THE FUSEE were amended with the following changes. In the Treasurer's report it was reported that the region would receive \$350.00. It should have been \$650.00. Also in the Public Relations report it was printed that Terry had attended a meeting of the Barron County Modelers. He didn't attend the meeting but made contact by phone. Gordy Miller made a motion to accept the minutes and revisions and a second was offered by John Hotvet.

Another change in the bylaws is needed. Bruce said he would write an article for THE FUSEE on the changes. The bylaw changes need to be published so they can be voted on at the next meeting. A discussion was held on the confusion over the subscriber vs. member issue. Gerry commented that the NMRA Rail Pass is good for six months and couldn't be re applied for for another two years. He also commented that National may not continue the Rail Pass program.

Public Relations Director Terry Davis reported he was going to attend the train show at White Bear Lake on February 4, 2006 with the TLR tri fold and copies of the TLR convention registration sheets.

New Business

Webmaster Pat Walker wanted to setup links in the TLR website for each board member so mail could be routed much easier to the board members. Also, when a new board member joined, mail could be sent to that person much easier. The board agreed that this would be a great idea.

The filling of upcoming vacancies of Lynn McCall and John Hotvet was discussed. A nominee was found for one position but, one more is needed to fill out the board. Bruce wanted a list of NRMA members in the TLR region for contacting possible nominees.

The postage rate increase was looked at by the board to see if the subscription rate was covering costs. It was also discussed that the U.S. Postal Service has already announced a rate increase for 2007. John Hotvet ran some numbers and said we were ok for now. The board talked about emailing THE FUSEE to subscribers but decided against it. This discussion did lead to putting a list at the registration table for convention goers to update their email addresses.

Convention Director Gordy Miller received a letter from the Rochester visitors and convention bureau. It asked if the TLR would like to have a convention in the future in Rochester. Gordy had written a reply letter but had not sent it yet. He wanted the board to hear his draft and see if the tone he was using was the feeling of the board also. He told the board that in light of the City of Rochester's negative campaign against the DM&E, that the board should oppose the City of Rochester's railroad agenda. The board agreed and told Gordy to send the draft.

Bruce Selb made a motion to adjourn and Terry Davis seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm CST.



APRIL 29
10am to 6pm
APRIL 30
Noon to 5pm
at the Hutchinson Mall
Highway 15 South
Hutchinson, MN

3 operating Luce Line Railroad Club layouts... plus others!

Dozens of vendor tables in the Mall!

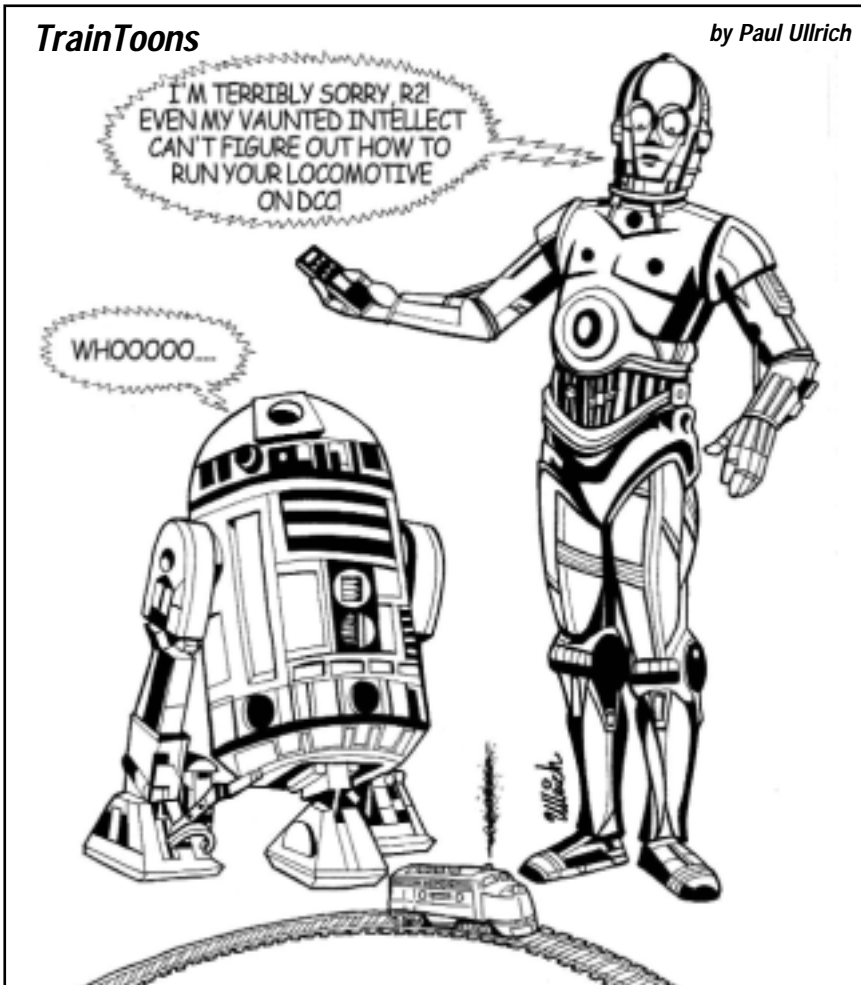
Sponsored by
The Luce Line Railroad Club

For information contact
Bruce Crosby
(320) 587-8073
Tables welcomed! \$10 ea.



TrainToons

by Paul Ullrich



“Train Ride” continued from page 4

giving us a spectacular view of the Atlantic Ocean. The train veered away from shore, but we weren't away from the water for very long. Within moments we were rolling past the placid waters of Gardiner's Bay on the north shore. We came uncomfortably close to a fish processing plant. The pungent stench of thousands of dead fish stung our nostrils. The train scooted behind Montauk and hugged the north shore until we reached the terminal at the docks of Montauk Harbor.

Would you like to meet the engineer?
asked my mother.

I stared at her wide eyed and slack jawed for several moments. Can mothers really do that? What magical powers did they have? I nodded my head and sputtered out a yes.

The conductor was heading to the front of the train. My mother asked him if I could meet the engineer.

Sure! he said, smiling. Follow me!

My mother took me by the hand as we followed the conductor through the darkness of the empty baggage car. That in itself was a thrill for me, for it was off limits to passengers. We went through the doors and faced the switcher's cab in all its glory. The conductor chatted with the engineer and the brakeman, then hopped off the train. The engineer and the brakeman turned to face us.

My son would like to see your engine,
said my mother.

Yeah, sure! C mon aboard! said the engineer, waving his hand towards me.

It was actually better for us that an F unit wasn't pulling this train, for the open cab of a switcher offered us much easier access. We might not have been granted permission to walk inside an F unit and visit the crew.

I carefully stepped from the vestibule of the baggage car to the switcher and was ushered inside the tiny cab. I was very impressed that they were wearing honest to goodness, genuine pinstriped railroad overalls.

The engineer was a big, beefy man with ruddy, reddened cheeks and a crew cut. The brakeman was a tall, lanky fellow with a full head of oily, jet black hair.

I stared at the cab's many controls and levers in amazement. This wasn't anything like the cab of a New York City subway or a Lionel locomotive. I couldn't imagine what all those dials and levers in the switcher were for.

He let me crawl up on his seat to get the view from the cab. I couldn't have been more than eight feet above the ground, but I felt like I was on top of the world! I knelt on the cracked black leather seat and peered through the grimy cab window, pretending that I was the engineer himself, ready to run this 1000 horsepower beast back to the City.


I couldn't have been more thrilled than if I'd just paid a visit to Santa Claus at the North Pole. But this was far better than visiting Santa! Compared to them, Santa was a mean spirited fat guy who threatened to cut off my annual supply of Lionel trains if I didn't eat my peas. I wasn't even sure if he existed anymore!

But these men were real. They had a real train, not a toy one, and they let me sit in it. Best of all, no consumption of vegetables was involved. They couldn't have cared less if I ate my peas.

We got off the train, and to my surprise, I saw my dad driving into the parking lot. I was so excited about taking this trip that I hadn't given any thought as to how we were going to get back home! My father had raced the train to Montauk, barreling down the winding, roller coaster turns of Montauk Highway.

Twenty years later, he told me that if we took that trip again, he could take his time. The roadbed had deteriorated so much that a kid on a scooter with a loose wheel could beat the local train from East Hampton to Montauk.

Those two hoppers we met became a regular sight. We saw them several times as we waited for their train to pass at a level crossing. I always waved at them, and they always waved back and gave their horn an extra honk for me.

I still played with my Lionel trains after that, but I no longer raced them around so fast that they almost flew off the track. I eased up on the throttle and guided my trains around the track with the utmost care, just like my buddies, the real engineers, would do. 



TLR people in the press

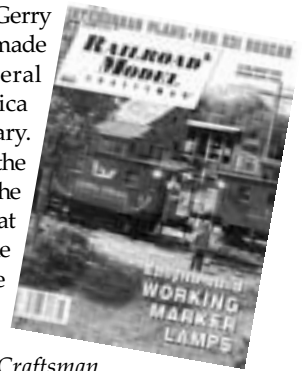
Two of our very own Thousand Lakers were recently featured in national train publications.



FUSEE cartoonist extraordinaire Paul Ullrich had a wonderful, humorous story published in the February, 2006 issue of *Trains* magazine. His story, *Riding the Hippie*

Train, is about how CN's Supercontinental got its nickname, and is based on real incidents in his life. Very notably, the story features a huge two page spread of Paul's distinctive artwork. Congrats, Paul!

And your very own FUSEE Editor Gerry Leone, MMR, made it into several national publications in January. He wrote the cover story, *The Marker Lights at the End of the Tunnel* in the January 2006 issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman*.




The magazine also featured a shot of his layout, the Bona Vista, on the cover.

The January issue of the monthly NMRA publication, *Scale Rails*, included a 4 page Leone story entitled *The Top 10 Most Overlooked Model Railroading Tools*.



And, if you're an NMRA member and received the 2006 calendar, you'll find that Leone's layout is

the pin up for the month of May. It's the second year in a row one of his photos has been chosen for the calendar. The photo also appears in the 2006 Walther's HO catalog. 

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THE FUSEE is a quarterly publication of the Thousand Lakes Region of the National Model Railroad Association and is mailed to all subscribers. The subscription year runs from June 1 through May 31. A subscription costs \$10.00 per year, and should be mailed to the Treasurer.

Permission is granted to reproduce any portion of THE FUSEE for use in other non profit publications as long as proper credit is given and a copy is sent to the editor.

All contributions except advertising are considered donations. Submissions, including photos, can be made by floppy disk, email, CD ROM or hard copy, either PC or Mac. Typed or handwritten manuscripts are fine, too! (Photo prints will be returned.) Send materials to: fusee@thousandlakesregion.org or Gerry Leone, 6459 Smithtown Road, Excelsior, MN 55331. C mon now, you haven t really read all this stuff so far, have you?

If you re moving, please mail a change of address form to the Treasurer.

Note our new email!

Webdude Pat Walker made a change to the TLR s email system. From now on writing email to an officer or department head is as easy as putting the person s title and adding @thousandlakesregion.org after it.

So go ahead and drop us a line. Say hi. Tell us what you like. Tell us what you don t like. Give us some suggestions. Tell us our hair looks nice. Tell us we look like we ve lost weight. Just write us. We re lonely.

* add thousandlakesregion.org

FUSEE Advertising

Commercial advertising from hobby shops, manufacturers, and other businesses with a model railroading interest is accepted. Pike ads are for individual layouts, model railroad clubs, or other non commercial groups. All ads can be run in a single issue at the rate of 35% of the annual rate.

Ad size (HxW)	Annual Commer. rate	Annual Pike ad rate
Full pg 9 ⁷ / ₈ x 7 ¹ / ₈	\$145.00	\$90.00
1/2 pg 4 ³ / ₄ x 7 ¹ / ₈	90.00	45.00
1/4 pg 4 ³ / ₄ x 3 ¹ / ₂	45.00	25.00
1/6 pg 4 ³ / ₄ x 2 ¹ / ₄	35.00	18.50
1/8 pg 2 ³ / ₈ x 2 ¹ / ₄	25.00	15.00
1/8 pg 3 ³ / ₄ x 2 ¹ / ₄	25.00	15.00
1/12 pg 2 ³ / ₈ x 2 ¹ / ₄	18.50	10.00
1/16 pg 1 ¹ / ₈ x 3 ¹ / ₂	15.00	7.50

All advertising should be mailed (not emailed) to THE FUSEE Editor as camera ready artwork or electronic files (jpeg, tiff, gif, or EPS with outlined fonts). Payment must be enclosed and should be in U.S. funds, international money order, or by check drawn on U.S. Banks. Questions? Contact the Editor!

FUSEE Subscription / Subscription Renewal

Please note: Because of the NMRA's new "one dues" policy, as of September 1, 2005 all NMRA members residing within the Thousand Lakes Region are automatically TLR members. If you previously were a TLR member, your membership fee automatically became a "FUSEE subscription." If you're a new TLR member or had let your TLR membership lapse and would like a subscription to THE FUSEE, please use this form.

I'm enclosing payment for: _____ New subscription
 _____ \$10 for one year _____ Subscription renewal
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Name: _____ Scale(s): _____

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Mail to: **John Hotvet, Treasurer**
5100 Nicollet Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55419



Spring 2006

THE FUSEE

P.O. Box 1113
Burnsville, MN 55337

INSIDE:

**NorthStar '06 Convention
Info and Sign-up**

Layout Tour Previews

My First Train Ride

Train shows & events in and near the Region

Compiled by Gerry Leone, Jim Bernier, and Terry Davis

Saturday-Sunday, 3/11-12/06, 9 AM-5PM (Sat), 11 AM-5PM (Sun), The 5th annual Missouri Valley Model Railroad Club's show and swap meet, Best Western Kelly Inn, Yankton, S.D. Adults \$3, 12 and younger free. N, HO and Lionel layouts. For seller table information, call Steve Lewis, (605) 260 9196 or Don Hopf (605) 664 1628.

Saturday - Sunday, 3/18-19/06, 10 AM-6PM (Sat) 10 AM-4 PM (Sun) La Crosse & Three Rivers MRRC 25th Annual Show La Crosse Center, 2nd & Pearl St, La Crosse, WI. Adults \$4.75, \$4.25 with a non perishable food item; children under 12 free with adult. For more information: www.l3rclur.rrdepot.com or (507) 894 4787

Saturday, 04/01/06, 9 AM-2 PM, Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale Century College West Campus, 3300 Century Avenue North, White Bear Lake, MN (Two blocks north of I 694 and Highway 120 [Century Avenue]) Adults \$4.00; children 12 and under free. Show Contact: Tom Jefferson; (651)429 2885

Friday, 04/07/06, An Evening with the Assiniboine Valley Railway 3001 Robin Blvd., Winnipeg, MB. Free. Full switching operation, tours of all buildings with demos on large car building in their machine shop and enginehouse. Learn about their operation in the station. Weather permitting. For more information contact Ron Einarson at ron.einarson@pwgsc.gc.ca

Saturday, 04/08/06, 10 AM-5:30 PM, Kandi-Railers Model Railroad Show Kandi Mall, Willmar, MN. Layouts and flea marketers (tables: \$10). For more information contact Kevin at (320) 235 7962 or raatz5@charter.net

Saturday - Sunday, 04/08-09/06, 9 AM-5 PM (Sat), 10 AM - 4 PM (Sun), Happy Grandparents Model Railroaders Model Train Show Menomonee High School Fieldhouse, Menomonee, WI. Admission \$5 (50 cents off with an item for the food shelf). For info: caboose@wvtnet.or (715) 235 0456. Layouts and flea market.

Saturday, 04/15/06, 8:30 AM-3 PM, Prairie Lakes Division Spring Meet Lower level of the Cherokee Community Center, 530 W. Bluff St, Cherokee, IA. Admission \$3; children under 12 free. Clinics, layout tours, dealer tables, popular vote contests, door prizes, color print contests, tour of newly renovated Illinois Central depot. Food available at the com

munity center. More info: PR Chair Ron Peterson, (712) 225 4780, or e mail pete31545@yahoo.com

Saturday - Sunday, 04/22-23/06, 12 PM-4PM, Annual Winnipeg Model Railroad Club Open House In conjunction with the Midwest Rail Museum, 123 Main St., Winnipeg, MB. Recommended donations: Individuals \$2 3, families \$5 6. Modeling demonstrations, judged model and photo contests. For more information contact Ron Einarson at ron.einarson@pwgsc.gc.ca

Saturday, 04/22/06, 10 AM-3PM, Newport Model Railroad Club Flea Market Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury, MN. \$4, under 11 free. For more information, call 952 200 9729 or <http://newportclub.us>

Saturday-Sunday, 04/29-30/06, 10 AM-6PM (Sat), 12 PM-5 PM (Sun) Luce Line Railroad Club's Spring Rail Fest Hutchinson Mall, Hutchinson, MN. Free admission. Layouts wanted, contact zachmeyer@mac.com, (320) 587 8641. Flea market tables \$10, contact mkbraun@hutchtel.net, (320) 587 2279

Friday-Sunday, 05/5-7/06, NorthStar '06: The Thousand Lakes Region's Annual Convention St. Paul, MN. Holiday Inn East, Burns Ave. and McKnight Road (just off I 94). Clinics, con tests, tours, raffles... the works! *See registration information in this issue for costs and details.* For more information, contact Pat Walker at 651 699 5245, or visit www.NorthStar06.org

Friday, 05/12/06, 6 PM, Winnipeg Model Railroad Club Annual Banquet and Awards Night, Canads Inn, 2100 McPhillips St., Winnipeg, MB. Cocktails: 6pm., dinner 7pm., awards 8pm. For more information, contact Ron Einarson at ron.einarson@pwgsc.gc.ca

Saturday, 05/13/06, 9 AM-2:30 PM, Great River Rail Society Train and RR Collectible Sale and Show, St. Cloud Armory, 1710 8th St. N, \$2, layouts and flea market. For more information call Randy Laabs, (320) 398 3046.

Thursday-Sunday, 05/18-21/06, The 2006 CNWHS Annual Meet Hickory Grove Banquet Center, Rochelle, IL. Visit www.cnwhs.org for more info.

If you're in the Thousand Lakes Region and would like your train show, swap meet, Division meeting, club meeting or other railroad/model railroad related event listed in our calendar, please send it to Jim Bernier at jbernier@hotmail.com by the deadline listed inside.