

**NMRA**  
THOUSAND  
LAKES  
REGION

# The FUSEE

**NMRA**



# Thousand Lakes Region Spring Fusee Edition

## Enjoy the Events & Activities Around the Region !

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#### **Cover Photo - by Joe Binish**



Nice shot taken by Joe of one of his custom painted Central of Minnesota F units running on his layout.

*Save the date...*

**2026 Thousand Lakes Region  
Convention (May 21-24)**  
Thunder Bay, Ontario CA





## View from the Cab

### President Art Suel

WOW, the week after President's Day was a blur. Temperatures in the fifties and then seven inches of snow in the Minneapolis area. The Weather personnel predicted one inch, up to three inches. Were they ever wrong? Oh well, it was model Railroading time.

Superior Rails Thunder Bay: This convention is lining to be a good convention to attend. The hotel is between the marina and the railroad tracks in Thunder Bay. The last time Thunder Bay hosted, it was fabulous. Come on and get registered and get your room at the Delta Hotel. I will be there and hope to see you all. Registration information is in this Fusee.

Succession: Every organization needs a succession plan. Thousand Lakes Region is no different. Each year we elect half of the board members. Some years, board members are term limited and need to be replaced. For sure this year, we need to fill the Treasurer's position. Tom Gay is leaving after 10 years in the position. If nobody steps up, I will be twisting an arm or two to get a new treasurer. None of our board positions require a large amount of time, unlike youth sports. Please think about getting involved.

Travel Info to Canada: Frank Gerry sent this to me, and it is especially important to disseminate to everyone.

As to the border, there are a couple of major things that you will need to know.

A) No firearms at all even if you have a permit. They will be confiscated and you will be in trouble.

B) you will need a valid Passport (one that is not expiring next month) as the Canadian border will let you cross but the American border will not let you back in.

C) I am not sure about this but not to take any chances. If you are bringing something for judging I would stop on the US side, bring it in, and get a slip describing it to take with you. When you return and you have any issues about the model you have the proof that it entered Canada and was not purchased here. Part of the reason for doing this is the present Administration has taken away the amount that you may bring into the State's duty free so they would charge you duty on your own model.

D) going back to the States even if you buy/win anything you will get a sizable discount as the US\$ is so much better than the CDN\$ right now.

I hope this helps and hope to see you all in May.

Time to go, as I have a high green.

Art Suel





### Neil's Nuggets - Spring Season is TLR Convention Time

The spring season will be with us soon, which means members are looking forward to being outside more and participating in other activities along with their favorite model railroading interests that this year might include taking an international trip to attend the TLR Convention in Thunder Bay Canada. 😊

The convention committee has put a tremendous amount of work into planning an outstanding convention for all of us to enjoy. I hope everyone considers making plans to attend. Personally for me, I have found our regional conventions to be loads of fun and a great chance to meet members modeling all aspects of our hobby. I'm always amazed at what you can learn regardless of how long you have been in the hobby and whatever skill level you may be! I get that this year's venue may present some logistical "challenges", however, I still encourage everyone to make plans to attend. I hope to see you there! (Check out the convention registration information on pages 33 – 34)

I really want everyone to know that their efforts are greatly appreciated! **(Keep up the great work, I will still need your help to continue bringing you the excellent content in the Fusee!)**. Remember, the Fusee is your newsletter, you need to let me know what you want to see in it!

Bottom line, if you have a picture, tip, technique, modeling or prototype topic that interests you, there are most likely other members in the region that would like to know about them too! I'd really like to encourage/challenge all of our

members to contribute some content to me to include in the Fusee.

A big thanks to all that have been sending me pictures of all the events and activities around the region! Keep up the good work, it's a great way to share all of the fun that takes place.

As Art has pointed out several of the region's leadership positions will need to be filled as many are reaching the end of their mandatory time limit they can hold the position. (See page 43) Think about getting uncomfortable and stepping out of your comfort zone and volunteer for one of the positions. You might be surprised at how rewarding it can be!

I assume most of you have seen the new branding scheme adopted by the NMRA, I have done my best to create and use the new branding logos in the Fusee.

Lastly, the board of directors has decided to **not send out** a snail mail version of the Fusee with the convention registration materials. (Printing and postage was very expensive) Please print out and share the Fusee and reach out to our members that you may know that don't use email or may need assistance with signing up for the convention. Since I have taken over editing the Fusee there are around 40 TLR members that don't have an email listed with the NMRA and typically around 20 of the email addresses are bad and can't be delivered. Everyone's help getting the word out would be appreciated!

Neil

612 940 0757 (Voice and Text ok)

[Fusee Editor](#)

Are you an old Goat? Have you been a NMRA TLR member for more than twenty years or more? Speaking of old goats, let one of the board members know as there is a Thousand Lakes Region "Old Goat" pin available to those that meet this requirement.



TLR Board - Left to right, Shadow Redington, Tom Gay, Neil Maldeis, Art Suel, Rich Holzapfel (Jimmy Anderson has taken over role of convention director), Fred Holzapfel, Ken Zieska (Dan Cohen has taken over role of secretary)

## The Call Board - VP Fred Holzapfel



### Words from the Vice President -

**Fred Holzapfel, Thousand Lakes Region, VP.**

Put your memory hat on your head. GOOD! Now put it to work. When did you join the Thousand Lakes Region (TLR)? Just the TLR. 1977 for me. Back then one did not need to join the National NMRA to join the TLR. There were no divisions either.

I stopped into a hobby shop (Remember those?) It was on Lake Street in Minneapolis - Woodcraft as it was known....I looked around a bit and I picked out a few HO Scale cars, a caboose and a Roundhouse Box Cab. It was the Alco/General Electric/Ingersoll-Rand 300 HP engine. Just perfect for a starter. I already had a power pack and some track.

Mannie (behind the counter) rang up the sale and we talked a bit. He handed me a small form and said "Join these folks - you will learn a lot from them". It was the TLR membership form. So I did. WOW - I folded up a few dollars (Did not have any checking account), filled out the form and mailed it. A while later a membership card showed up and eventually a newsletter "The Fusee" - all 8 pages. Best part was the list of events on the back page.

I went to my first fall meet. They did not call them rallies or conventions yet. It was in Winona, MN. Right there began my group of new friends. Some have passed away, some are still 'playing trains' with us and of course some just lost interest. Who can guess what the best part of that membership was, has been and is? Those people. Without doing that join up many of those I consider my best friends today would never have entered my life. I even got invited to operate the 'Tidewater Souther' at Doug Hogdons home. Operations entered into the hobby.

WOW such a really interesting VP column. NO..YES? MAYBE?

What sort of model work have you been doing of late? I am planning stages for a 'Square Foot Model'. Only a small (HUGE) problem I discovered about two weeks

ago. We have moved into a nice condominium, two bedrooms.

In the process of moving the place I kept all my different model railroad spikes that managed to get turned upside down. Resulting in spikes of all brands, types, sizes and brands spilled into every single tray. AHHHH -- -CRUD. So now I need to get them sorted out and put back into their own tray. That is my current modeling project: SO MUCH FUN!..... Hope to see many of you in Thunder Bay at the TLR Annual Convention, Fred



## ***From the Desk of Matt Lentz - Simple Designs for Model Railroading Uses***



**Matt is taking a well deserved break this issue, however, he has something big planned for the next issue.**

**No pressure Matt! We will be looking forward to see what you come up with for the next issue of the Fusee!**

### **From the TLR Historian:**

Currently the archives is working the construction of a storage website that can include databases of photographs. I'm looking for a few volunteers to provide multiple photographs of a single subject, e.g., a single locomotive or building with photos of different angles or different times. Something like 10-20 pictures would be ideal for testing purposes. Ultimately the infrastructure built will allow for large collections to be indexed and searched and displayed at the highest of resolutions. If you have something that I can test, get hold of me and I'll give you instructions how to proceed!

### **Publishing Deadlines**

<b><u>Publishing Date</u></b>	<b><u>Submission Deadline</u></b>
<b>March Edition</b>	<b>February 28/29</b>
<b>July Edition</b>	<b>June 30</b>
<b>September Edition</b>	<b>August 31</b>
<b>December Edition</b>	<b>November 30</b>

## Modeling on a Dime - Modeling Gravel & Tar Roofs - By Dan Dossa



Welcome to impending spring. As we head into March and warmer weather ahead, I am penning a quick missive this quarter, one that I hope helps with your modeling efforts.

Maybe it's just me, but I have been interested in how best to model roof of larger industrial buildings. Perhaps it is because we are commonly looking a bit downwards on buildings so the roofs, although often neglected, become prominent visual features of the scenes we are modeling. I see the many rooftop details of the prototype and I have written before how I use various common objects to add vents and other details to add interest to our models' roofs. But this piece is about modeling the roof itself.

In the past I have seen articles on adding gravel like texture to roofs using materials like sandpaper and ballast. I, myself, used to use Chinchilla dusting powder which I sprinkled over freshly painted styrene. This technique worked well and I built numerous structures with their roofs constructed in exactly that manner. In truth, any of these techniques work just fine.

But there is, I discovered, an easier way to make gravel and tar roofs, and this is the technique I now use.

For this new technique I use a single product, a Rust-O-Leum rattle can of their Textured spray paint (Photo #1). This product comes in multiple colors and finishes, and when it is applied leaves an appearance akin to a tar and gravel roof.



Photo 1

The technique is so very simple. Cut a sheet of styrene for your roof, take it to a very well-ventilated area, and spray it with a very well-shaken can of this product. Wait for it to dry, and that's it, a realistic tar and gravel roof. Photos two and three show two buildings on my layout and how the finished roofs came out. Just add some vents, mechanicals and piping/ductwork and you've got a very credible roof for your industry. Simple, easy, inexpensive and nice looking.



Photo 2



Photo 3

Give it a try on your next project and, as always, happy modeling to you all.

Here's hoping for an early Spring,

Dan



# Region Round-up

## South Red River Valley Division – Matt Lenz

We're proud to announce that our very own Deputy Superintendent, Ben Tretter, was announced in the NMRA Magazine receiving the Golden Spike. He's worked years on a very nice and well built layout. Very much a job well done. Tom Gay is nearing the finish line for MMR with one more piece of rolling stock to go. If there is any interest in having a judged model pre-judged before convention, let us know because we can schedule 1 more AP event before May. Of special note, this month in March there are 3 operating sessions happening March 20 and 21st. Many of us are planning to get to Grand Forks to try out their completely rebuilt club layout. Those of you interested in that weekend, contact Tom Gay to see if there are openings. That's it for now!

## No 1 Northern Division - Ian Plett

The next event for the No 1 Northern division FreeMo Group will be at the Winnipeg Model railroad club's annual spring show in April weekend of the 18th and 19th at the Charleswood Legion in Winnipeg Manitoba. The FreeMo Group is limited to space so we will have a small L shaped layout present. Fred Headon will be doing some model building at this event as well.

The FreeMo Group is having Monthly get-togethers to work on a new bigger loop for the layout. The original two loops are seeing their age and will be replaced by the two new bigger loops for better operation. Hopefully we can get the second big loop built before the hobby Train show this fall first week of October at the red River EX grounds West side of Winnipeg Manitoba.

## Dakota Southeastern Division - Scott Nesbit

The DSED has been keeping ourselves busy since the beginning of the year with multiple projects going on. First, on January 24th and 25th we had our annual outing to the Downtown branch of the Sioux Falls public Library. All of our traveling layouts were on display for both days and were viewed by a large number of people. This is a great event that we all look forward to as a nice winter break. We've also kept busy with planning for our upcoming train show on March 21st and 22nd, The Greater Sioux Falls Model Train Show (see ad with details elsewhere in this issue). This is an exciting year for us with our show as it is our first time in a new location that we have been trying to get into for a while, The Sioux Falls Convention Center. A bigger space than in the past with an easier load in and great lighting that we are looking forward to filling up with

layouts and vendors. Please stop by and say hi if you are able. We have also been busy planning for the 2027 TLR Convention be held here in Sioux Falls. We are planning some fun activities so stay tuned! The weekend before our train show we will be taking our HO scale modular layout to the Nebraska Iowa Railroaders Annual Train and Toy Show, March 14 & 15 at the Papillion Landing Field House just outside Omaha, NE. If you're in the area, stop by. Many shows await us in May and June and we'll fill you in on all our fun in the next issue.

## Prairie Lakes Division - Jay Davis

It comes with great sadness the passing of our assistant superintendent Roger Sleezer from Cherrokee, Iowa. Roger passed away on January 14 at his home in Cherokee. He was an early member of the PLD, and former superintendent. He was heavily involved with the Cherokee Illinois Central depot restoration group and the model railroad display at the depot. Roger was a dealer for an early system for train control kind of like DCC called Dynatrol. Which at the time was pretty game changing. His favor railroad was definitely the Illinois Central. He will be missed. <https://www.boothbyfuneral.com/obituaries/roger-sleezer>

This spring the PLD will be going back to Fort Dodge, Iowa. It probably been 20 years since we have been down there. The last one we had was at the crossroads mall which is long gone now. We will be having our event on Saturday April 18 at the Webster County Fairgrounds. This is a fabulous facility. It is located on the south side of Fort Dodge just the west of Hiway 169 and north of Hiway 20. There will be food on site, provided by the 4-H club. So far, I have got Rev. Doug Harding to present on the clay industry in the Midwest. He has many photos of this industry in Fort Dodge itself. Hope to see you there!

## No Updates from the Following Division Superintendents:

- Southeastern
- Minnesota River Valley

# Region Round-up

## Twin Cities Division - Tom Gasior MMR© (Submitted by Greg Dahl for Tom Gasior MMR© )

We just finished up the operators retreat (a huge thank you goes out to all the hosts who opened up their railroad for this event). 17 operators participated and 7 layouts were open. Each participant was able to operate two layouts that day.

Right around the corner is the modelers meet. There promises to be a lot of neat stuff there. Check the TCD webpage for details and a preliminary schedule.

And if that wasn't enough, Wednesday, March 18th(\*) is the return of the in-person monthly TCD meeting at the Augsburg Park Library. 7100 Nicollet Ave in Richfield. Live Steam? S scale? You'll have to attend to find out what interesting combination this could be!!!

(\*) - Note the monthly meeting had to be moved to the 3rd Wednesday of the month due to room conflicts

The TCD webpage ([TCDNMRA.org](http://TCDNMRA.org)) is full of updates so make sure to check the calendar sections for TCD events, meetings, and other train shows in our area. All of it is on the webpage if you want further details.



### TCD Spring Calendar:

- March 14th, 2026 – TCD Modelers Meet (updated 01-08-26)
- March 18th, 2026 – Wednesday – Member Meeting
- April 15th, 2026 – Wednesday – Member Meeting (updated 01-18-26)
- April 18th – Saturday – TCD Spring Layout Tours (updated 02-12-26)
- May 20th, 2026 – Wednesday – Member Meeting
- May 21-24, 2026, Thousand Lakes Region Convention

**Editor's Comment:** I apologize upfront if I haven't given proper credit and/or haven't correctly identified events/locations/spellings, etc.. I try to do my best, but, realize that I may get something wrong. Please let me know if I do so I can correct in the next issue of the Fusee.



## Additional tips for traveling to Canada & back to the US - Fred Holzapfel, Thousand Lakes Re- gion, VP

Are you thinking about or planning on going to the TLR Annual Convention in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada?

WOW, crossing out of the USA and then coming back. Do you have a current USA Passport? At one time all we needed to visit friends in Canada and then drive home was our Driver's License. NO LONGER!

Here is nice link to quickly get your passport or update and expired one

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/have-passport/renew-online.html>

To apply for and get your first passport use this link:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/need-passport/apply-in-person.html>

There you go. Please make sure you have a PASSPORT for this convention in Thunder Bay, ON, Canada.

I am planning on making the trip. Checked my passport yesterday 3/1/2026. Darn, expired. So I will follow my own advice and take care of this small problem this week. PLEASE make certain you have a passport.

Taking any models, craft items or other things that will be coming home with you? There is also a form you can fill out where you will list those items so you have going to Canada and back so you have little or no issues taking them to the convention and back home. I need to find that form too. You can 'GOOGLE' or "BING" to find it. Again, please use that form. Really reduces issues.



## Activities Happening Around the Twin Cities Division Holiday Party 12/14/25



### Announcement from Greg Dahl:

This year, at each of the monthly TCD meetings, we're going to have (what I am calling) a "mini-clinic" - a 15 minute presentation on something interesting that other members would find interesting or may not know about.

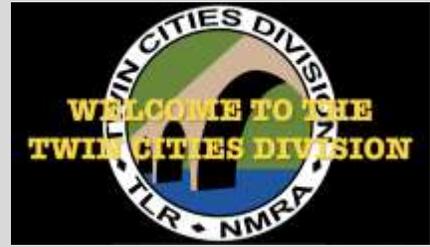
For example, I have Andrew lined up to talk about his metal benchwork. In September, we have Ken B. and Jimmy talking about the conventions they went to this summer.

I'm looking to line up future presenters. If you have something you've discovered or have been working on - consider putting something together.

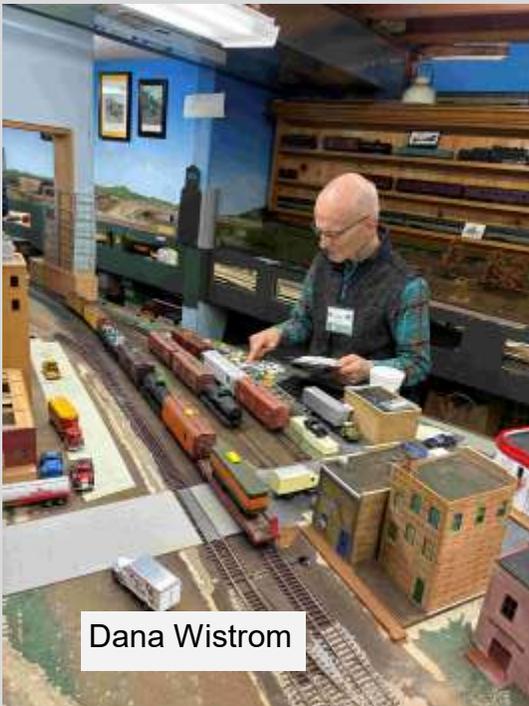
Better yet, if you know of someone who is doing something interesting, volunteer them and I'll track them down! All sources will remain confidential.

It doesn't have to be a massive, formal presentation. It can be really simple if it sparks a good conversation. I can guide you more what I'm looking for.

Activities Happening Around the Twin Cities Division  
Operations Retreat 2/28/26 (Photos by Ken Zieska & Ken Borowski)



Tom Christfield operating The Minnesota Heartland

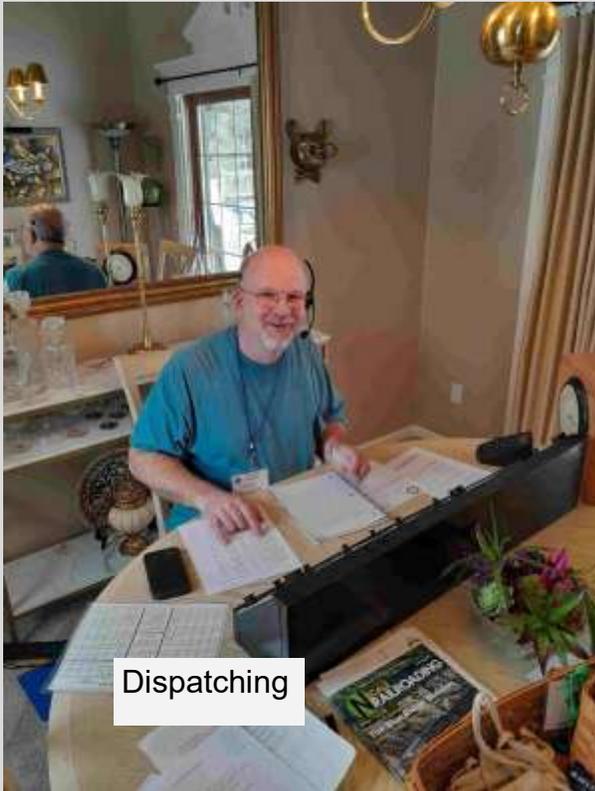


Dana Wistrom

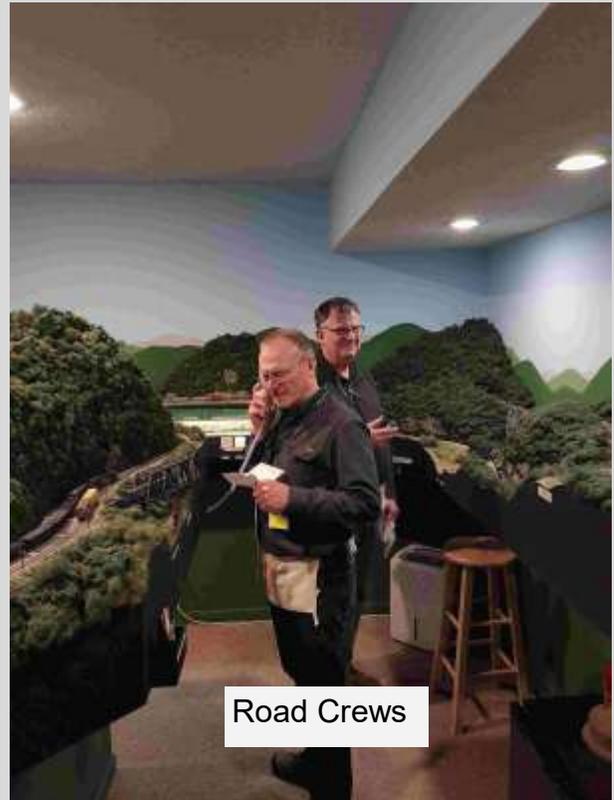


Jay Bickford and Dana Wistrom tackle the downtown switch

Activities Happening Around the Twin Cities Division  
Operations Retreat 2/28/26



Dispatching



Road Crews



Yard Operations



Road Crews

Prototype Railfan Action Around the Region - Photos by Jim Peterson



While in the Duluth area Jim captured some great rail action on a cold winter day!



DESD outing at the downtown branch of the Sioux Falls Public Library. (Jan 24th - 25th)



## A Little Change of Scenery - Ken Zieska (Photos by Author)

While I have many outstanding projects on my railroad, just every now and then I feel the need for a change of scenery. Two years ago, this resulted in taring out 12 feet of my Rumansota River Valley bluffs and replacing them with a scene that reminded me of the Oak Savana terrain I recall seeing as I traveled up Highway 94 paralleling the now abandon Northern Pacific Railroad tracks from St. Cloud to Dilworth. I was pleased with how that brightened up my railroad room and packed away my scenery materials.

This fall, the “change of scenery” bug hit me again and against the sage counsel of friends, I took a hammer and saws all to another corner of the scenery. My goal was to soften up the rocky crags that had led to the bluffs I had removed two years earlier. Then to create a earthen “cut” similar to what the SOO Line\* runs through behind my house and finally to round the corner of the benchwork for a little feng shui for the railroad room.

In photo one, I show the destruction portion of my work. The benchwork and facia have been modified and I am now ready to contour the scene. The support for the bridge will be shortened as the stream running next to the tracks will be eliminated to be replaced by the berm of the new cut.



In photo two, I have roughed in the new counter with pink foam to give me a feel for what the scene might look like. Satisfied with the rough look, I attacked the foam I glued it in place and attacked it with a rasp, creating a great deal of dust and the final contour.

My next step was to mix up sculpt mold and create the final shape of the landscape. When I am mixing the sculpt mold, I use brown latex paint in the mixture. This gives me a landscape base with an earthen color. If I drill into the landscape or break a piece off, it will not be the stark white color of the sculpt mold. I believe this process makes the drying time of the sculpt mold longer. Because the sculpt mold is laid on rather thick in some areas, that may also be the reason.



Photo 2



Photo 3

The next step was to add static grass. This helped my scene come to life. When I stepped back, I thought the color was too uniform and bright so before adding trees, I lightly and not uniformly “sprayed” the grass with Camouflage Green. This was not a scientific process, I sprayed a small amount, stepped back and sprayed a bit more until I was satisfied.



Photo 4



Photo 5

I have added some trees and shrubs, (Photo 5) not nearly enough however I am happy with the scene I am creating. I find it reminds me of the railroad cut behind the house, I like the way the train will appear around the curve when I get myself into a “railfan posture” relaxing on a chair near the fascia. I also like the sound the train makes as it approaches coming down the valley behind it and curving into the scene.



## Ten Minute Trees - Greg Terhaar (Photos by Author)

Last winter while working on the first round of scenery for my 7mm O Gauge layout, Kirsten Road, I was digging through a box of Christmas decorations when I found some wire/paper tree armatures that my brother had gifted me.

At first glance I didn't think much of them but then realized that with a little help from SuperTrees sprigs, some paint, and some Superleaf, I could quickly convert these relatively cheap and easily accessible armatures into respectable trees.

Here's a quick photo breakdown of my process. I call them Ten Minute Trees, depending on your level of patience, and what material you have readily on hand, it might be plus or minus a few minutes!



Off the shelf holiday display tree.



SuperTrees from Scenic Express



**Take individual SuperTrees branches and glue to armature.**

**After gluing a half dozen of the SuperTrees branches, the rest of the sprigs are added without glue. (Picture below)**





Spray entire tree with flat black, followed immediately by flat brown.



Before paint is dry, I sprinkle on Woodland Scenics fine ground foam



Throughout the ground foam application use diluted white glue to secure the foam.



Finish the tree with an application of Scenic Express Superleaf to create additional texture.



Kirsten Road Station



Sophia's Black Horse Inn



At home on the layout

## Model Railroading Primer - Hairspray Technique - Dan Cohen (Photos by Author)

There are many ways to show rust or wear and tear structures and cars. There are tons of products you can buy to get this done. Sometimes desired results drive your choice of technique, sometimes repeated success or failure drive your choice of technique, and sometimes cost drives your choice of techniques. To give some of my structures and equipment age, I focus on “success” and “cost” which brings me to the Hairspray Technique.

Recently I featured this technique in the Twin Cities Division and other Facebook group pages. I was surprised how many people didn't know about the hairspray chipping technique and thought this would be a great Model Railroading Primer topic.

### The Tools:

I recently picked up a steal at Ron's Mundelein Hobbies in Mundelein, IL. Regularly an \$80 Campbell's kit, they had the complete kit for just \$10. A perfect investment for my first attempt at a “box of sticks.” The shop is old school with hobbyists that want to sit and talk, still do repairs for folks, and just really enjoy the hobby. If you are in the Chicagoland area, the shop is a short Route 66 style ride away. A must see.



You will use at least two paints. One will be used as a base coat that you will see come through in the final result. Your top coat will be the original paint that has chipped away over time. I used a primer as well for this project. To protect the work you will want to choose your favorite clear coat or varnish. While this project is a box of sticks, it comes with plastic windows and doors. I wanted to make them look like wood with age, against the rusty corrugated sides, so I chose a tan paint for the wood color base coat. I then chose a white grey color for the painted windows and doors as the top coat. Both are from Vallejo and pre-formulated for use in an airbrush. I had some varnish from Vallejo on hand from a paint set so I thought I would try it for this project.

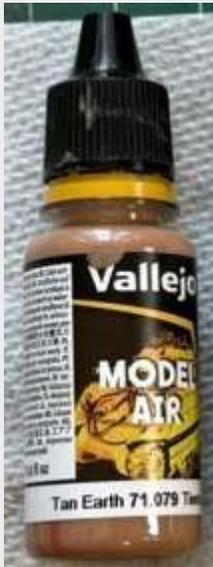
Watching several videos on YouTube about this technique, the most suggested hairspray has been Suave Max Hold level 8, so I purchased a bottle. Over the last few years I had practiced with this spray and technique, and felt ready to really use it for this Campell kit.

You will need some water, generally lukewarm or warm works well. I used faucet water. My other tools were my dual action airbrush and two paint brushes. I used one soft brush to add the water and one with short stiff bristles that I often use with my pigment powders.

### The Steps:

I laid out a piece of cardboard and attached some painters tape. I added all of the windows and the one door to the tape.

1. Prime: Using my airbrush I added some light grey primer from Vallejo and let that dry for a short time.
2. Base Coat: I thought about using both a brown and a tan to give it a saturated wood look, but decided to stick with Tan Earth as there may not have been inclement weather and would be so little exposed wood. I added this with my airbrush.



Vallejo Tan Earth 71.079

3. Protect: After the base coat dried I added the Varnish to protect the layer from being wiped away during the later steps. I let the varnish fully dry before moving to the next step.
4. Hairspray: amount hitting the surface you can help control the final result.



Suave Hairspray - Max Hold

- If you spray the whole surface, that is fine too. You can control your result by the amount of water, how you apply it, and how much you brush away.

5. Top Coat: Now add your top coat(s). I only used one color for the trim and sill as this was a functional, not aesthetic building. I use acrylic paints so they dry quickly, or if you wish you can speed up drying with a hair dryer.



Vallejo White Grey 71.119

6. Water: Once the top coat dried, I added water over the whole surface of each item. I did a few windows at a time. I used a small paintbrush to spread the water as the surface area was rather small on each window.
- I got up and walked away for a short time to let the water “activate” the hairspray
  - Because the top coat is acrylic it allows the water to both activate it and the hairspray below it
7. Chipping: Using the stiff bristle brush I began to lightly stipple the surface of the windows. Make sure to use a very light touch as you start. It's better to take off less at first and build up the aging look. Ask me how I know!
- At times I moved back to the soft bristle brush to get a different look
  - I wanted some areas with more paint removed, so I moved back to those spots additional times with a light stipple to build up the chipping



8. The final step is the hardest in my opinion. It's time to decide when you have done enough. Walk away for a few minutes, then come back and take some photos.
- If you are happy with the photos then it's time to seal the work.
  - Using your favorite clear coat or varnish seal your







I hope this inspires you to #justjumpin and try aging or weathering your models.

If you have any questions about the technique shown here, any other model railroading questions, or have ideas for future Model Railroading Primer articles, feel free to reach out on Facebook, or email me at [shaunadan94@gmail.com](mailto:shaunadan94@gmail.com). Use the subject line: Model Railroading Primer Question. You can view other videos and connect through our Friday Night live stream at <https://www.youtube.com/@dmrj>, or search @dmrj on YouTube.



## Using 3-D printing for replacement gears

Neil Carleton    Photos by Author

I bought a brass Samhonga gas electric combine from the estate of Morgan Turney.

It was sold as "needing work" but it was such a well-made model I had to buy it.

On the track it would go about 3 inches and stop, when reversed, 3 inches back.

The model has one powered truck with a universal connected to the motor. When disconnected the motor ran smoothly with no issues.

On removal of the bottom cover plate and opening the gear tower I found three plastic gears meshing to brass gears. On close inspection all three were cracked so jammed when the crack rolled around.



The gears are quite small and two different sized axels.

Northwest Shortline has hundreds of replacement gears and some they recommended, but would not let me send the damaged ones to make sure. Each new gear was over US\$30 and not easily returnable.

A friend who is not an active model railroader wondered if 3-D printing was a solution.

I contacted Darrell Brownlee who has printed some vehicles and some other items for me. He said he knew what to do, so I got the cracked gears to him. In short order he returned new gears, with lots of spares.



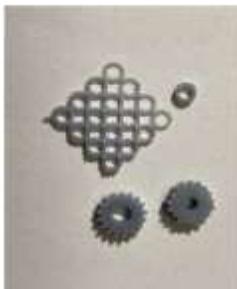
I fit them in and they worked!

Then I realized I could not tighten the gear tower sufficiently to remove some gear slop when going forward, causing excess noise.

It appeared that the machine screws were bottoming out so I spoke to Darrell and with the measurements I sent him, he was able to print extremely small washers.

The washers were various thicknesses but the winner was two about the thickness of paper.

Gas electric now runs smoothly in both directions.



Final step is to add DCC and then paint and decal the model!



**“Cheap & Nothing Wasted” - Jimmy Anderson**

**Plastic Bottle Caps (Photos by Author)**

We have a nearly inexhaustible supply of bottle caps and I've found a way to expand their utility at the workbench. I keep a large tub of these at the ready for holding small dabs of paint and glue. Once the paint or glue has dried, they are disposed of.



## What's on Your Workbench?

Ok...I am not trying to be overly critical, however, I just got to believe there are a bunch of members out there that have something on their work bench that they are working on!

Fred can't be the only one in the region that has something going on. (See Fred's column)

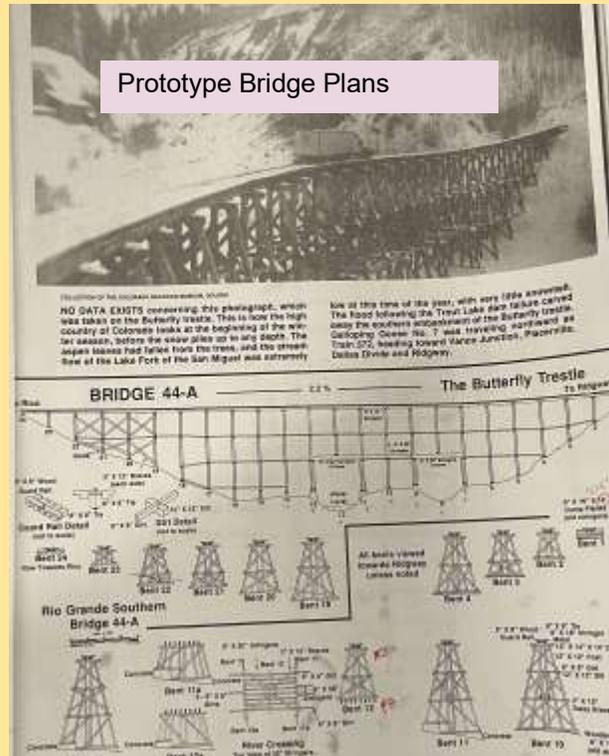
If you have anything on your work bench just take a quick picture and send it to me with a brief description and I'll be happy to publish here. Sharing your projects is a great way to inspire others and it can help you stay focused on getting it done too.

Consider sending me something for the next issue of the Fusee! [Fusee Editor](#)

Bridge Location Prepped on Layout.



Prototype Bridge Plans



Completed Bents for Bridge



Weathered Rolling Stock

*I have been working on a couple of projects while I am out here in California, the first project is getting the bents built for a bridge I will be installing on my narrow gauge layout. I'm not able to get the entire bridge length as in the drawing, but can fit in about 2/3rds of it. I have the bents complete, now I just need to get it installed on the layout. I have also been able to get most of the cars I run on the club layout I belong to out here weathered .*

## Superior Rails Convention 2026 Schedule



### Thursday

Registration: 5:00pm - 9:00pm @ Registration Desk.  
Meet & Greet: 5:00pm - 9:00pm @ Falls Boardroom  
Contest Submissions: 5:00pm - 9:00pm @ Falls Boardroom.  
Lakehead Models, 262 Bay Street, open 10:00am - 4:00pm.

### Friday

Registration: 9:00am - 9:00pm @ Registration Desk.  
Contest Submissions: 9:00am - 9:00pm @ Falls Boardroom.  
Clinics: 9:00am - Noon @ Superior Ballroom Talk limited to 45 min. to allow turn over.  
Clinics: 1:30pm - 5:30pm @ Superior Ballroom. Talk limited to 45 min. to allow turn over. AV equipment available.  
Platform: Start time TBD @ Superior Ballroom. Everyone is invited to present a ten minute talk on your latest project, photos you have taken, places you have been. Must be railroad or model railroad associated. Allotted time based on number of participants. Time will be closely monitored! No AV equipment allowed.  
Rail Tour: 2:00pm - 5:00pm, Alexander Henry Ice Breaker - CN Caboose. Walking distance from hotel.  
Sail Superior Waterfront Tour: 6:00pm - 8:00pm. (Bring warm Clothes!!). Pier is within walking distance from the hotel. \$130.00/person. Max 32 persons on a first come basis.  
Local Layout Tours: Days, times and locations will be provided in the Superior Rails Convention 2026 Handbook to be distributed to all registrants.  
Non-Rail Tours: if you have free time through-out the day, we will provide a list of recommendations and a map to local venues such as Terry Fox Monument, Fort William Historical Park, Intercity Shopping Centre and many more.  
Lakehead Models, 262 Bay Street, open 10:00am - 4:00pm.

### Saturday

Contest Judging: 9:00am - 5:00pm @ Falls Boardroom. These rooms will be closed to all but the judges. Awards will be presented at the banquet.  
Rail Tour: Industrial Site A: 9:30am - 12:00 noon (Bused to site).  
Rail Tour: Industrial Site B: 1:30pm - 4:00pm. (Bused to site).  
Duration of Rail Tours will be dependant on number of participants.  
Local Layout Tours: Days, times and locations will be provided in the Superior Rails Convention 2026 Handbook to be distributed to all registrants.  
Non-Rail Tours: if you have free time through-out the day, we will provide a list of recommendations and a map to local venues such as Centennial Botanical Conservatory, Oliver Paipoonge Heritage Park, Waterfront District BIA and many more.  
Lakehead Models, 262 Bay Street, open 10:00am - 4:00

Banquet: 6:00pm - 10:00pm @ Main Ball Room. Speakers, Contest Awards and Penny Auction table.

### Sunday

Annual General Meeting: 9:00am - Noon @ Falls Boardroom.  
Women in Model Railroading: 10:00am - Noon. @ TBMR Club, 1109 Victoria Ave. E.  
Local Layout Tours: Days, times and locations will be provided in the Superior Rails Convention 2026 Handbook to be distributed to all registrants.

***Make plans to attend the TLR Convention in Thunder Bay,  
Ontario CA in 2026***





## 2026 Thousand Lakes Region Convention

### Superior Rails Thunder Bay

### May 21 – 24 2026

Eleven years have slipped by since our 2015 convention. Welcome back to Thunder Bay! The Planning Committee has an exciting line up of clinics, prototype, and layout tours along with non rail activities. Plus, a fine banquet with auction and awards on Saturday evening.

**Hotel Information:** Delta Hotels by Marriot. 2240 Sleeping Giant Parkway, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada

**Reservations:** Phone 807-285-9336 or toll free 844-294-7325 and ask for sales and the Superior Rails 2026 Convention rate:  
 2 queens \$219 CDN or 1 king \$229 CDN per night

Note that the hotel is located adjacent to Marina Park. Lakeside rooms offer a stunning vista of the pleasure crafts moored at the marina, the inner harbour, sailies and lakers outside the breakwall and of course, the Sleeping Giant snug between the lake and the sky. Alternatively, the other side is trackside with an endless parade of CKPC and CN trains.

**Registration:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA Member: # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/ Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees:**

Registration		Cost per Person	# People	Total Costs
Member	Includes clinics, tours, contests	\$65.00		
Non-member	Includes 1-time Railpass, clinics, tours, contests	\$85.00		
Saturday banquet		\$65.00		
<b>Total Fees</b>				

In the interest of **Women in Model Railroading** we will have an operating session at the TBMR layout Sunday Morning 10am-12 noon. Please check if you or your spouse is interested \_\_\_\_\_ (intended for a spouse or person never having run a model locomotive). Attendee First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contacts:**

Canadian Attendees: Don Hupe, 436 Brock Street East, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7E4H7  
 Email: [donhupe@tbaytel.net](mailto:donhupe@tbaytel.net) text/call: 807 621 1592

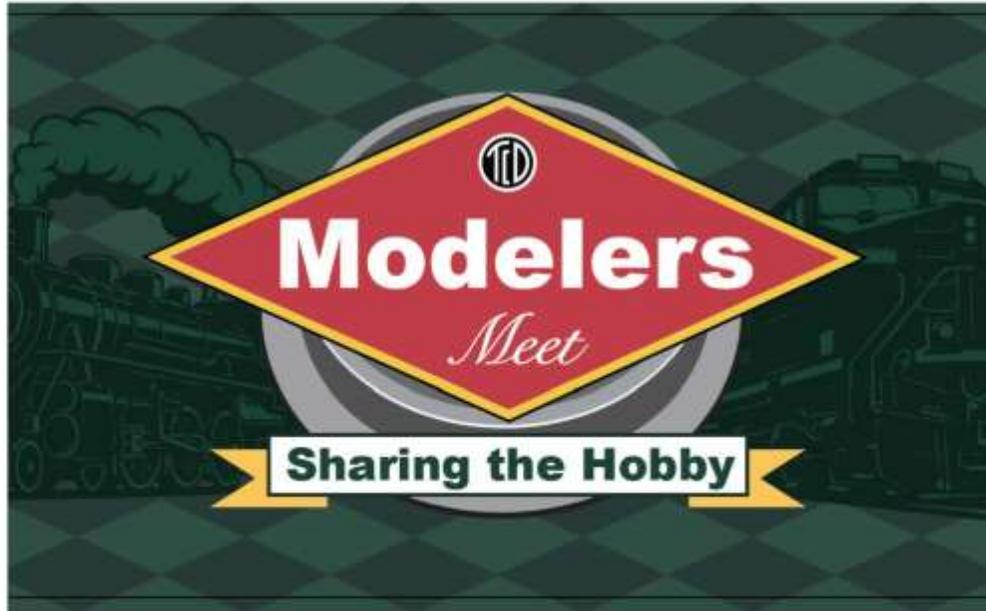
Make cheques payable to Superior Rails 2026

Or E-Transfer to [thubaymrr@tbaytel.net](mailto:thubaymrr@tbaytel.net)

US Attendees: Gerry Miller 1040 Hawkeye Drive, Dubuque IA 52001  
 Email: [millerg20@gmail.com](mailto:millerg20@gmail.com)

**Non-Rail: (extra activity, separate cost)**

Superior Sails – 2 hour inner harbour tour – minimum 12 - \$130 per person. If interested, please check and add number attending: \_\_\_\_\_



**Save The Date**  
**Ninth Annual Twin Cities Division Modelers Meet**  
**March 14, 2026**  
**8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

DoubleTree by Hilton  
2540 N. Cleveland Ave.  
Roseville, MN 55113

The Twin Cities Division Modelers meet is a full-on RPM type event with everything you'd expect – multiple clinics, model and prototype topics, modelers displays and hands on skills sharing tables.

We have moved the event to the beautiful Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Roseville, Minnesota. This location is easily accessible by freeway, surrounded by great dining options in every price range. We have a block of rooms reserved for our traveling guests, Contact the Doubletree directly at 651-636-4567 book under the TCDNMRA block.

Admission is \$10.00 please register in advance, we will try to accomodate walk-ins. TCDNMRA.ORG for more details and updates

**Model RR Sale – Dubuque, IA March 7th 2026**

Dubuque County Fairgrounds, 14569 Old Highway Rd;

\$5, 12 & under free with paid adult; 9a-2p; an event for Model Railroaders to buy, swap and sell to fellow hobbyists; food available. Free parking; sponsored by **TLR Southeastern Division**.

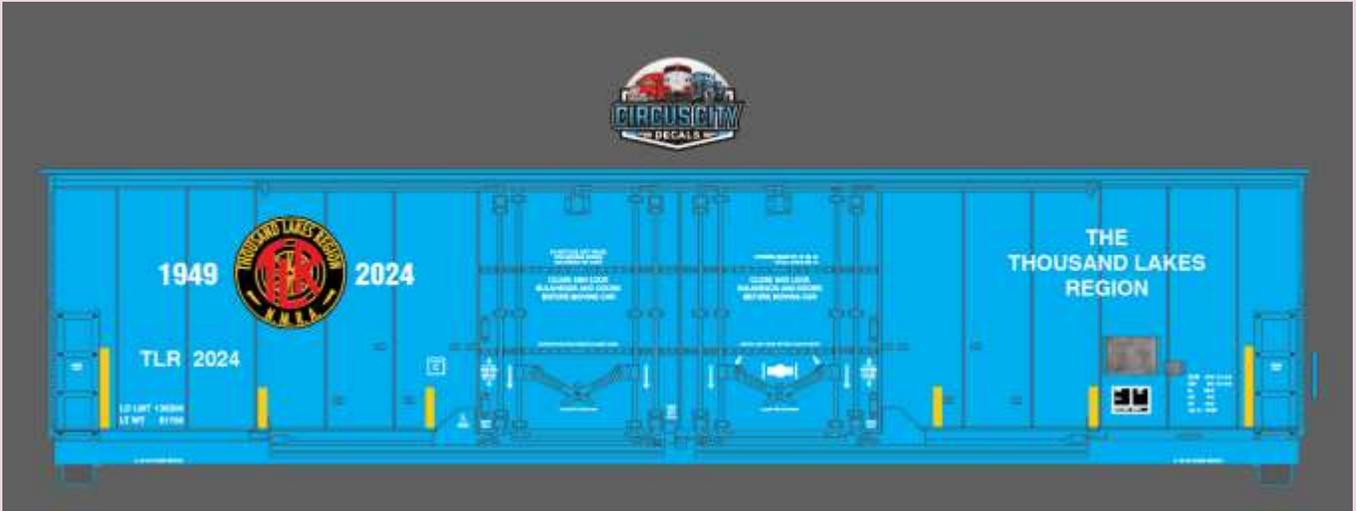
## TLR Celebrates 75 Years

The TLR is celebrating 75 years by issuing a set of commemorative decals.

Decal sets are still available in N, HO, S and O scales.

Decals are \$6.00 which includes postage.

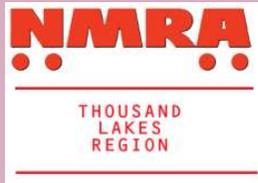
Contact Ken Zieska at ([mhry19@gmail.com](mailto:mhry19@gmail.com)) if you would like to purchase a set.



Set of HO scale decals

Don't Forget to Check out the Twin Cities Division Podcast

<https://tcdnmra.org/>



Be Sure to Check Out the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club Website

[Winnipeg Model Railroad Club](#)

**Minneapolis & Northland**



**Railroad Company**

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

**2025 - 2026 Region Roundup - model railroad-related events in and around the TLR**

Mar 7	North Metro MRR Club	VFW Post 9625, Coon Rapids, MN
Mar 14	La Crosse & 3 Rivers MRR Show	Omni Ctr, La Crosse, WI
Mar 14	TCD Modelers Meet	DoubleTree Hotel, Roseville, MN
Mar 21	Newport Train Club Train Show	Woodbury HS, Woodbury, MN
Mar 21-22	Greater Sioux Falls Model Train Show	Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD
Mar 28	Randolph Railroad Days	Randolph Schools, Randolph, MN
Apr 11	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show	Century College, Oakdale, MN
Apr 18	Prairie Lakes Division Show	Webster Cty Fair Grds, Fort Dodge, IA
May 9	Twin Cities MRR Museum Show	MN Fairgrounds, St Paul, MN
May 21-24	2026 TLR Convention	Thunder Bay, Ontario Canada
July 27- Aug 2	NMRA National Convention (2026)	Chattanooga, TN
Sept 2-5 2026	National Narrow Gauge Convention	Doubletree Hotel, Bloomington, MN

## Offer From Northern Utah Division - Still Looks Like This Is Available To Purchase



Add this superb, one of a kind, historical tank car to your collection. The Northern Utah Division of the NMRA is selling a series of HO scale Utah Oil Company (UTOCO) tank cars manufactured by Intermountain Railway. The cars feature a build date of 8/45 and a test date of 9/28/51.

Originally intended to be the convention cars for the 2019 NMRA convention in Salt Lake City, supply chain issues prevented the cars from arriving on time. Offered in six road numbers, the cars have metal wheelsets and Kadee couplers. Priced at \$45.00 each with free shipping, you can get your very own historical tank car before this limited edition is sold out, go to either:

[www.northernutahnmra.org/club-car](http://www.northernutahnmra.org/club-car) or  
<http://northern-utah-division-nmra.square.site/>



Geoffrey K Carter, Manager  
Northern Utah Division Company Store  
1903 S 2065 W  
Woods Cross, UT 84087  
801-815-6028



2026 NMRA National Convention – Chattanooga, TN

July 27 to August 2, 2026

<https://www.nmra2026.org/>



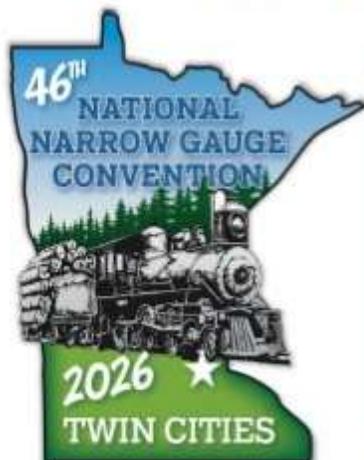
**Early Bird Gets  
The Worm Promo!**



**Register as an Early Bird and attend the  
46<sup>th</sup> National Narrow Gauge Convention and have  
a chance to win a free hotel night at the convention hotel!!!**



**RGS 455 digging for worms the hard way**  
Photo used courtesy of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad



**Live Drawing to be held at the  
46<sup>th</sup> National Narrow Gauge Convention  
Must be registered and attending the  
Convention**

**Grand Prize – 4 Free Nights**

**Runner-Up Prizes – 1 Free Night**

**Early Bird Registration \$139  
Until 2026-05-31**

# GREATER SIOUX FALLS MODEL TRAIN SHOW

Saturday, March 21, 2026 hours: 10am to 5pm

Sunday, March 22, 2026 hours: 10am to 4pm

**NEW LOCATION! SIOUX FALLS CONVENTION CENTER  
1201 N West Ave - Sioux Falls SD**

**\$10 Adult admission, good for both days  
children 12 and under are free with paid adult.**



MN FreeMo - FIRST CALL FOR MODULES, DULUTH 2026

May 15-17 2026 in Duluth, MN.

This meet will be at the Great Hall of the Duluth Depot, located adjacent to the Lake Superior Railroad Museum and the North Shore Scenic Railroad. The 70x60 space is on the ground floor with easy carry in and out. The museum is a gracious host, providing us with lots of free food, free admission, and free rides on their tourist trains. Their collection of 1:1 trains is truly impressive. Duluth is a family-friendly city and an attractive tourist destination. Make your housing arrangements early.

**New modules are very welcome.** Completed scenery won't be required, but please, no bare foam or plywood. Put some earthy paint on it if you have to. New modules will get a thorough electrical check before attaching them to the layout. There will be a guest run policy announced later for those interested in Free-no but not yet "with module".

**Unloading and set up** will be Friday beginning at 9 AM. We need modules to be on legs no later than noon, so plan your travel accordingly. Tear down will begin on Sunday at 3 PM so everyone can get home at a reasonable time. AJ will be DCC Chief. Tom Chrisfield will be Ops Chief.

To keep me from losing track of anything, I will want **all communications about the event to take place on** <https://groups.io/g/MNFreeMo>, but public calls like this one should be shared far and wide. By all means, help spread the word by forwarding this announcement anywhere you think makes sense to. Just don't count on seeing everything unless you are watching [groups.io](https://groups.io/g/MNFreeMo).

For this first call, if you plan to make it just drop me a line and tell me what modules you would like to bring. For anything that hasn't been to Duluth before I'll eventually need photos and dimensions and a CAD drawing if you have it, but in the meantime, a simple description will enable me to start [the module list](#) (click the link to view - not edit - the current version). Please tell me the MSS status of any modules you are offering and whether or not there is detection or signals.

I'm looking forward to another great Free-mo layout, renewing with many old friends and making some new ones.

Bob Sterner

# Model Railroad Advertising

Advertise your railroad here! Send me a photo, business card or whatever contact info you want to provide. This a service for the TLR and there is no charge for the ad.

Great Northern  
O Scale  
Kevin Dill  
3920 15th St S  
Fargo, ND 58104  
701-298-0132



**CB&Q – Chicago/Aurora/C&I  
Model Railroad**

**Scott & Nancy Stearns**  
Scott: 507-358-0126 scott\_b\_stearns@hotmail.com  
Nancy: 612-308-4468 nancy\_stearns@hotmail.com  
Facebook: CB&Q Chicago-Aurora-C&I Model Railroad  
20379 County 4 Blvd, Zumbrota, MN 55992

**Dakota Division of Soo Line Railway**  
Thomas Day

2015 Rose Creek Drive  
Fargo, ND 58104  
701-219-0300  
tomandkat@hotmail.com

**Burlington Northern  
Yellowstone Division**

An HO scale model railroad in Bismarck, ND  
representing the Bismarck-Mandan area  
and branchline to Kildeer in the 1975-1980 timeframe.  
Regular operating sessions using computerized switchlists.

Contact us for a schedule and like our page!  
[www.facebook.com/yellowstonedivision](http://www.facebook.com/yellowstonedivision)  
[mfarley@midco.net](mailto:mfarley@midco.net)

**White Iron & Northern RR  
Logging Division 2.0 (HO<sub>n3</sub> Narrow Gauge)**

Neil Maldeis      NMRA # 072482  
[nsmalde@yahoo.com](mailto:nsmalde@yahoo.com)  
612 940 0757

**HO<sub>n3</sub> RGS/D&RGW**  
Scott McLeod  
[rgmodeler@comcast.net](mailto:rgmodeler@comcast.net)

**Dan's  
Model Railroading Journey**

[YOUTUBE.COM/@DMRJ](http://YOUTUBE.COM/@DMRJ)  
**Live Streaming Fridays at 8 PM CT**  
[#JUSTJUMPIN](https://twitter.com/justjumpin)

# The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA



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**Bring a friend  
To your next  
Club meeting!**

Advertising should be mailed to THE FUSEE editor as camera-ready artwork or electronic files (jpeg, tiff, gif, or EPS with outlined fonts).

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

## Fusee Advertising

Commercial advertising from hobby shops, manufacturers, and businesses associated with model railroading interests are accepted. All ads can be run in a single issue at 35% of the annual rate.

**Railroad ads are for individual layouts, model railroad clubs,**

<u>Ad size (HxW)</u>	<u>Annual Business Rate</u>	<u>One-Time Business Rate</u>	<u>Annual Railroad Ad Rate</u>
Full pg 9 5/8 x 7 1/8"	\$145.00	\$50.75	N/A
1/2 pg 4 3/4 x 7 1/8"	\$90.00	\$31.50	N/A
1/4 pg 4 3/4 x 3 1/2"	\$45.00	\$15.75	N/A
1/6 pg 4 3/4 x 2 1/4"	\$35.00	\$12.25	N/A
1/8 pg 3 3/4 x 2 1/4"	\$25.00	\$8.75	Free
1/12 pg 2 3/8 x 2 1/4"	\$18.50	\$6.50	Free
1/16 pg 1 1/8 x 3 1/2"	\$15.00	\$5.25	Free

**THE FOLLOWING TLR BOARD POSITIONS ARE UP FOR ELECTION AND RE-ELECTION. At the Annual Meeting May 24, 2026 in Thunder Bay Ontario**

**Jay Manning, Election Chair**

**The positions up for reelection this year President Art Suel, Vice President Fred Holzapfel, Treasurer Tom Gay, and Convention Director Jimmy Anderson.**

**The TLR is a volunteer origination and without volunteers we will not exist. Serving on the Board of Directors will qualify you for the AP incentive. Once you earn your first AP certificate you will receive \$50. If you are interested in running or have questions about one of these positions, please contact TLR President Art Suel ([artsuel1956@gmail.com](mailto:artsuel1956@gmail.com)) or TLR Nominations Chair Jay Manning ([chessie@manningperry.com](mailto:chessie@manningperry.com)). The list of duties for the positions up for election are listed below-**

- President - The President shall:
  - Preside at all meetings of the Region and of the Board of Directors
  - Be an ex-officio member of all committees
  - Perform such other duties as, by custom, devolve upon a President or are conferred upon him by the Region or the Board of Directors
- Vice-President - The Vice-President shall be:
  - The aid and assistant to the President and shall assume the duties of the President in his absence or at his request
  - The Chairman of the Advisory Council.
- Treasurer - The Treasurer shall:
  - Have charge of the Region finances.
  - Keep accurate records reflecting monies received, monies disbursed and balance on hand.
  - Collect all Region dues and revenues from any Region sponsored activity.
  - Ensure that the books are ready and available for audit.
  - Provide a report and financial statement at the General Business Meeting.
- Convention Director - The Convention Director shall:
  - Be the representative of the President in working with the Convention Chairpersons.
  - Establish a convention schedule to ensure rotation throughout the Region.