

Contest Rules for the Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) Celebration Room

This document summarizes the rules for entries made to the Celebration Room during TLR conventions or for judging conducted within the TLR independent of conventions. The TLR rules follow those of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), are adapted from rules established by the Mid-Continent Region (MCoR) of the NMRA, and include TLR-specific additions.

All entries require the specified form, in addition to the “Entrant’s Intent Form”, which specifies in which contest category the entrant wants her/his entry placed.

Judging is closed to the public but “Shadow Judges” (those learning about the judging process by following the judges during contest judging) are allowed and encouraged to participate. Shadow judges also serve as scribes by recording notes for each of the entries submitted. These should be shared with the entrant after judging. Judging is closed to the public to ensure that the Contest Room is quiet and to allow judging teams to concentrate. However, entrants seeking AP Evaluation may be in the Celebration Room to observe the process BUT they are not allowed to speak. This allows those who desire to have their entry evaluated by judges to learn from the process. Any disputes among judges or during entry of models will be resolved by the Contest Director who is the final authority.

Submission by proxy. When an TLR NMRA member is unable to attend a convention or other TLR event where model contest judging is occurring, the individual may submit the entry by proxy, whereby another person who is attending the event can submit the entry on the member’s behalf. The TLR member is responsible for completing the entry paperwork as if she/he were attending the event in person.

Events –

1. Judged Model Contest -- For models in this section (Section 1) submit NMRA Forms 901, 902 and supplemental information.
 - 1.1. Definition - Competitive events for models: all entries are technically judged by teams of experienced judges using a point scoring system based on a standardized matrix.
 - 1.2. Scale - All models shall be judged separately in each classification and category without regard to scale.
 - 1.3. The model must have been made by the entrant and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.
 - 1.4. Classifications
 - 1.4.1. Scratch Built - This class is intended for models built largely from basic or scratch materials. However, any model may be included in this classification. The decision is up to the entrant. Entries in the scratch built class are eligible for full point scores on all factors including scratch built which has a maximum score of 15 points for a

total of 125 points. The focus in judging is the model, not the tools to build the model. For example, the term "scratch built" carries the implication that the builder alone has accomplished all of the necessary layout and fabrication, which establish the final dimensions, appearance, and operating qualities of the scale model. This definition does not prevent the use of any tools or jigs as long as the builder alone has done the work necessary for the tool to make the part. This would include drawings or computer files to run computer numerical control (CNC) machining, automatic lathes, laser cutting machines, 3-D printers, and other tools. If a third party changes the builder's inputs, then the parts are not considered to be scratch built.

1.4.2. Kit Built - This classification is intended for models comprised of more than 50% kit or largely commercial parts to allow them to compete with similarly built models rather than typically higher scoring scratch built models. However, any model may be included in this classification. The decision is up to the entrant. *Entries in this classification are eligible for full point scores on all factors except scratch built which is limited to 8 points for a total of 118 points.*

1.4.3. Merit Evaluation -- (Form 901, Form 902, and supplemental information, required for all)

1.4.3.1. Definition – Entrant seeks input from Judges regarding entry placed in Categories 1,2, 3, or 4 of these TLR Celebration Rules. The intent of the modeler is to obtain feedback from evaluators regarding aspects of the submitted entry. Specifically, what is good about the entry and what might be done to improve the entry (or documentation). This allows a modeler to “get their feet wet” in the contest room with the goal being to have the modeler go through the merit evaluation process and subsequently getting a merit award for their model when improvements are incorporated.

1.4.4. Categories

1.4.4.1. Steam Locomotives - All types of locomotives powered by steam. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category

1.4.4.2. Diesel & Other Locomotives - All other types of locomotives except those powered by steam and passenger revenue carrying types. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category. In the case of multiple joined locomotives, at least one of the units must be powered.

1.4.4.3. Passenger Cars - All types of passenger revenue carrying equipment, including coaches, observation, mail/RPO, baggage cars as well as powered rail buses and RDC cars. Express reefers and Drover Cabooses are included.

1.4.4.4. Freight Cars - All types of freight revenue carrying cars, not including express reefers.

- 1.4.4.5. Caboose - All types, including traditional, bobbers, and transfers type (not Drover, see Passenger Cars, above).
- 1.4.4.6. Non-Revenue - Right-of-way, track maintenance vehicles, rail and inspection cars, railroad cranes and others not considered directly involved in revenue service.
- 1.4.4.7. Traction - All equipment associated with urban, suburban and interurban electrically powered railroads.
- 1.4.4.8. Structures - This category is intended for all individual structures or buildings either on-line or off-line; however, it also includes non-powered locomotives, ship models, freight car loads, cars and trucks, track components such as switches and diamonds and other unusual models that do not fit within other categories at the discretion of the Contest Director. Multiple structures such as a house and garage must be physically connected to be considered a single structure. Likewise, only a detail or details in, on, or otherwise connected to the single structure will be considered during the judging. Any detail not connected to the single structure, will **not** be considered during the judging. A single structure contained within a display may be entered in the structure category in which case only that structure will be judged.
- 1.4.4.9. Display – A display constitutes scenes or dioramas which may include multiple structures, locomotives, rolling stock, scenery elements and other detail. All elements will be judged as a part of the entire scene. (Note that scenery guidelines apply: <https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/education/achievement/pdf/2019-scen-eval.pdf>)

2. Module Contest (NMRA Form 901 required for all; does NOT include Merit Award – Judged items, #1, above)

- 2.1. Definition - Competitive Event for modules: all entries are judged by a team of experienced judges using a simple ranking system.
- 2.2. The module must have been made by the entrant (s) and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.
- 2.3. Module Definition - A small model railway which includes supplemental scenery and track work which is designed to attach to and operate with other similar modules.
- 2.4. Scale - All scales shall be combined in each of two classifications.
 - 2.4.1. Classifications
 - 2.4.1.1. Module - Individual - A module entry built by an individual person.
 - 2.4.1.2. Module - Group - A module built by a group of people.

3. Photo Contest -- (Form 901 required for all; special photography guidelines apply: <https://nmra.org/national-photo-contest-judging-guidelines>)

- 3.1. Definition - Competitive event for photographs, exclusive of slides which are not permitted.

- 3.2. Photos produced using either film or digital cameras are permitted.
- 3.3. Each entrant shall be limited to a maximum of ten (10) entries with a maximum of five (5) entries in one category.
- 3.4. Prints shall be mounted on flat, rigid board or matted with similar material. No folders or glass frames are allowed. Photo and mount shall not exceed 12" x 16" (30cm x 40cm) in size. Minimum mount size is 8" x 10" (20cm x 25cm) and minimum print size is 5" x 7" (13cm x 18cm).
- 3.5. Prints shall have entrant's name on the back. Prints may be titled on the front. Prints with entrant's name on the front will not be accepted.
- 3.6. Exposure of the original slide or photo must have been made by the entrant and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.
- 3.7. Categories - Each entry shall be placed in one of the following categories:
 - 3.7.1. Model - Black & White Print
 - 3.7.2. Model - Color Print
 - 3.7.3. Prototype - Black & White Print
 - 3.7.4. Prototype – Color Print
4. Pass Contest -- (Form 901 required for all; does NOT include Merit Award – Judged items, #1, above)
 - 4.1. Definition - Competitive event for entrant-made railroad passes: all entries are judged by a team of experienced judges using a simple ranking system.
 - 4.2. Two (2) entries are required in order to show both sides of each pass entered.
 - 4.3. Any type of railroad pass is eligible in the form of a business card or flash card size. All other forms, letters, documents, stock certificates, etc. will not be allowed and will only be accepted as display-only (non-contest) entries.
5. Model Showcase. (Form 901 required for all)
 - 5.1. Definition - Non-competitive display events for models, photos, Arts & Craft or any railroad-oriented display, complete or in process.
6. People's Choice (Popular Vote) -- (Form 901 required for all)
 - 6.1. Definition - Competitive event for models, photos and arts & crafts including direct entries (i.e., People's Choice only) and those also entered in the judged model and photo competitions as well as those entered solely for AP evaluation.
 - 6.2. Entries shall be displayed for evaluation and selection by popular vote by convention attendees. Selection and ranking of the winning entries for all awards shall be determined by the number of votes received. Convention attendees shall be permitted to submit one ballot voting for one entry in each category and for each special award.
 - 6.3. Entries from Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, above.
 - 6.4. Rail Related
 - 6.4.1. Favorite Train
An assembly which must include one or more locomotives(s) and at least one piece of rolling stock and/or at least one caboose.

- 6.4.2. Locomotives
All types of locomotives including those powered by steam, diesel, electric and other means. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category.
- 6.4.3. Rolling Stock (all types)
All types including passenger, freight, non-revenue cars and powered rail buses and RDC cars. Cabooses are not included in this category.
- 6.4.4. Caboose
All types including traditional, bobbers, drovers and transfers types.
- 6.4.5. Structures
All types of structures. No detached detail or scenery or other scenery material shall be allowed.
- 6.4.6. Display/Module
Modeled scenes which may include structures, detached detail and other scenery elements.
- 6.4.7. Most Humorous (Thumbs)
This comprises a special category open to all types of humorous models and whimsical creations (Subject to availability of award). First, second and third places are awarded in this event.
- 6.4.8. Photo Match Model
This comprises a special category that selects the model which most closely matches the supplied photograph. All categories of models are permitted.
- 6.4.9. Special Category
Often, special categories are indicated in advance with special requirements. Like the other categories in the People's Choice component of the Celebration Room, these are voted on by convention attendees.

6.5. Non-Rail Related (except for Railroadiana)

- 6.5.1. Definition – these items need not be prepared for the upcoming Celebration event. Items made earlier, that have not been competitively submitted elsewhere, are eligible for submission.
- 6.5.2. General
General craft entry of any theme
- 6.5.3. Needlework
Needlework of any theme
- 6.5.4. Railroadiana
Craft entry (General, Needlework, or other creation) with railroad motif

6.6. Photographs

6.6.1. Model Print

All photographic prints of models.

6.6.2. Prototype Print

All photographic prints of prototypes.