



# The FUSEE



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www.thousandlakesregion.org

Winter 2012

## Twin Rails, Twin Cities, shaping up as one incredible convention

by Tracy McKibben

The Twin Cities Division welcomes the TLR as it plays host to the 2013 convention

**Let's face it** - the bar has been raised pretty high by our recent conventions. Dubuque showed us that even first-timers can put on one whopper of a show, and the guys in Sioux Falls knocked our socks off with some amazing tours and a once-in-a-lifetime train ride. The spotlight now turns to the folks in the Twin Cities. With a population of over three million people, there should be something here to entertain a bunch of model railroaders, right?

Turns out, there is.

**Let's start with layouts.**

Lots and lots of layouts,

**some of which you've**

been seeing in magazines for years. Big layouts, small layouts, and some who-has-that-kind-of-time monster-sized layouts. As of this writing, there are 29 potential layouts on the tour schedule. Traditionally, layout tours are held on Sunday after the convention ends. Not so next year. Due to the number of layouts, and the logistical challenge of

being able to hit them all in one afternoon, the tours this year will be held every day of the convention. The final schedule has yet to be set, but there will be layouts to visit every day.

**Can't keep your hands off? Feel**

the urge to run a train on one of

**the layouts you're touring? You'll**

get your chance this year. Some

hours of clinics. Seventeen different presenters have stepped up to offer something. Many of the clinics will be offered multiple times, to allow attendees to participate in other activities without missing their favorite clinics.

When it comes to prototype tours, Sioux Falls set a new standard. The tours there were second-to-none.

It would be tough to top that event anywhere. Can it be done in the Twin Cities? Come visit us in May and find out. One of the prototype tours being pursued is a tour of the Progressive Rail facilities. Progressive is a large transloading operation in Lakeville, MN, just a few

minutes south of the Twin Cities. To see more about Progressive, visit their web site at <http://www.progressiverail.com>. Or see the June 2010 issue of Model Railroader magazine, featuring a **writeup of Alan Saatkamp's** model of the prototype.

**We're also hoping to pay a visit** to a local celebrity - Milwaukee Road #261, recently on the move



of the 29 layouts that are open for touring will also be hosting operating sessions! Space will be limited, so watch for sign-up information to be posted when registrations open.

No convention would be complete without clinics. Taking **things to "big city" scale, the 2013** convention will be offering 14

## View from the Cab

by TLR President Gerry Miller

My favorite time of the year is finally here. Yes, I do like snow and cold weather. There is nothing like photographing a fast moving freight in freshly fallen snow. Like many of you, I will be enjoying more time spent working on my model railroad. For many years I have been building models for my railroad from kits. This year I am going to try my hand at scratchbuilding a few freight cars and buildings for my AP certificates in these two categories. I also plan to enter these models in the contest at the TLR convention this May. The model contests that I have attended either as a spectator or a judge have provided me with many ideas on detailing models so a good model looks great! I encourage anyone that is constructing a building or freight car for their model railroad to bring them for the model contest at this year's convention in May. **The paperwork is not as scary as it seems! Who knows, your first merit award may be sitting on your layout!**

Planning for the May convention in Bloomington, Minnesota, is moving along very well. It will be a weekend full of activities for all. Ladies remember the Mall of America is just across the street from the convention hotel.

The TLR is looking for new webmaster. If anyone is interested and willing to serve in this position please contact me. My contact info can be found on page 11.

I'd like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. Hopefully Santa will bring you all your model railroading needs!

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From the Editor  
by Alan Saatkamp MMR

The expression “a picture is worth a thousand words.” is true. Instead of my usual column, below is an image of the covered hopper I received as a gift at the fall board meeting. It deserves explanation.

Thanks to the modeling skills and efforts of Gerry Miller, there's a classy looking new plastic pellet covered hopper gracing my soon-to-operate Twins Cities and Western layout. It's shown occupying a classification track at Glencoe yard. Some of you have operated here during the past seven years—others saw the Wisconsin Dakota Railroad during layout tours last May at the end of our TLR convention in Sioux Falls. No matter if and when you may have been here—I'm grateful and appreciative of Gerry's efforts and being awarded Master Model Railroader #492, just as it says on the sides of this car! 🚂



## Taking the E Train

Story and photo by Marg Ullrich

I got my first camera after I received my First Communion in 1957. The camera was a Kodak Brownie. No flash. The lens stayed in one spot. You aimed and shot.

My Aunt Helen had thought the gift pack - a camera and one roll of film - would make a nice present. My folks didn't care. Well, Pop said, "What the hell is that?" Ma thought I needed more clothes but, well, a gift's a gift.

I brought my camera on a school outing to Manhattan's Central Park Zoo and took pictures of the animals. Then the film hit the fan. Processing and printing cost money. There wasn't a gift certificate to cover that. So, muttering something about the quality of his sister's brains, Pop paid for the pictures and put the camera in a safe place.

I never saw it again.

Ten years later, when I was at Pratt Institute studying for my BA in Merchandising, Photography waltzed back into my life. The whole **j'ai ne sais quoi of Merchandising** is to convince people to buy things. We had to learn to take pictures that said, "Come and get me, Big Boy! Ya gotta have me! Buy me!"

Okay. Pop had seen pictures in ads in the *New York Daily News*, so learning Photography made sense to him. He didn't like buying me a camera, but he understood that I needed it for my homework. Pop was relieved when I told him that I'd process the film and print the pictures at

school. No extra charge.

Pratt Institute prided itself on having teachers who were professionals in their fields. Our Photography teacher, Mr. Freed, was also working on a project about his travels with his girlfriend for a *Life Magazine Library of Photography* book. His assignment consisted of pictures that had been taken in a string of dingy motels. They were not posed, beautifully lit or product oriented.

We saw his work and agreed. It was Life with a capital L. It was ugly. It was gritty. We wouldn't have gone near those motels if our lives depended on it.

It was the late 60s and the Photography class was heady stuff. Mr. Freed set us on fire. "Capture Life" was his motto. We didn't know if he meant "Capture Life" as we lived it or a nice fat *Life Magazine* contract. We just shot anything we saw and waited for Mr. Freed to tell us if we'd Caught Life the way he intended.

Mr. Freed introduced us to Capa's dramatic pictures from the Spanish Civil War, Brassai's frank revelations of Parisian life, Lange's wrenching scenes of the Depression and Cartier-Bresson's stirring reportages of Spain. If an ad was supposed to show hell on earth, we were learning how to do it.

**I didn't have time to go to**

Europe, and the Depression was over, so I had to Capture Life in New York. I shot everything: animal, vegetable, and mineral. Anybody who sat still within ten feet of me was in danger of being immortalized by my camera.

But, something was missing. I needed a theme. I needed something frightening, something awful. Yeah. So, I went to the New York Subway System.

Armed with a Honeywell Pentax H1A camera I tried to Capture Life. And for an hour, I did. I took pictures of people buying tokens, people running for trains, people squeezed together standing in the cars and people sleeping through their rides to work. I took pictures of trains entering and leaving the station. Then I noticed a Transit cop signaling me. So I waved, took his picture and ran off to Capture Life.



I ran and shot and waved to all caught between subway doors, the nice policemen who waved to me. Who said New Yorkers - especially New York City cops - were unfriendly? This was more of a welcome and reception than I expected.

*(continued on page nine)*

## LESSONS LEARNED, A SUCCESSFUL CONVENTION

by Jay Manning

The 2012 Thousand Lakes Region Model Railroad convention can be best described as the “perfect storm” from my perspective as Region Convention Director. This two part article is an attempt to capture the lessons from two perspectives, planning as well as conducting a successful convention.

### TIMING AND COMMITMENT

The first lesson is START EARLY. The Dakota Southeastern Division first considered sponsoring the 2012 convention at its February 2010 meeting. Review and comments by mem-

bers who had attended other such events, including manpower and resource issues were discussed. The division voted in favor. A theme of Rails to the Rocks was voted on, taking off on the reality of a major industry in the area served by two short line railroads. The Division also voted on the 50-50 split option, sharing profit or loss equally with the region.

### INITIAL PRESENTATION

Who would prepare and make the presentation to the board and general membership during at Winnipeg convention? As

convention chair, I was provided a powerpoint presentation prepared by a member able to produce such a product. Lesson learned: know the skills of your members and take advantage of those skills. We were approved, and at Winnipeg, several TLR members offered to do clinics in Sioux Falls.

### STARTING THE PROCESS

At the June 2010 DSED meeting we seriously began exploring program content. The format is pretty well set in the Region. Clinics, contests, prototype tours, layout tours, banquet with Chinese auction, and two meetings—a board meeting and a general membership meeting, typically provide the agenda. We were now 23 months out and beginning the process of looking at options for tours. One thing that can be said at this point is that 23 months comes and goes in rapidly! The knowledge of individuals and activities that would support the effort becomes together critical. Members commitment was again stressed.

### CORE LEADERSHIP GROUP

A steering committee developed. Alan Saatkamp, Jim Krekelberg, and I took the lead. Jim and I were new members of the Division with no background in TLR organization and activities. Alan brought the historical perspective and penchant for organization to the group; Jim his accounting and budgeting background and computer skills; and my his experience with the organization of large N scale model railroad gatherings on the East Coast and service as Treasurer for a MidEast Region convention. Once again, know and take advantage of members’ knowledge, background, and skills.

(continued on page five)



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#### FINDING A LOCATION

The first big issue is a location for the convention. Shortly after the Winnipeg gathering, Jim Krekelberg suggested we hold the convention at the Jerstad Center on the campus of the Good Samaritan Society. The three of us toured the facilities and learned the standard Good Samaritan Society rates. Guest rooms for nearly 40 guests and a working relationship with local motels for overflow were determined. The conference rooms were fully equipped to support clinics and the modeling contest, with a large dining area for the



The Jerstad Retreat Center on the Good Samaritan Society campus provided a perfect venue— plenty of free parking, inexpensive room rates, clean and modern rooms, plus excellent conference space proximate to all activities

banquet. A continental breakfast was included in the Jerstad room rates and at the overflow facilities. Food service was not available, but the facility did allow caterers to support gatherings on the campus. There was no upfront monetary commitment required to reserve the facility.

#### LOCAL EXPERTISE AND ASSISTANCE

The Sioux Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau was contacted

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and registered our convention for 2012. They offer a full range of support activities including staff familiar with all of the potential activities for participants to enjoy in the Sioux Falls area. Based on experience with Chamber of Commerce activities that involved food services, contact was made with a catering company to support the convention and reserve the dates. Long range planning of activities ensures that support is available when needed.

#### HARDEST THINGS FIRST

During the year before Dubuque in 2011, the first scheduling issue addressed was building a tour schedule around the theme of the gathering. Contacts with the railroad industry in Sioux Falls yielded an outline of available tours. Tours must coincide with work and schedule requirements of the hosts. The caboose ride from Del Rapids to Sioux Falls over the falls came into play when

the Trainmaster from the Dakota and Iowa Railroad agreed handle the ride arrangements and building a cost arrangement. The Dakota and Iowa Railroad had conducted rides from the quarry in Del Rapids in the past so a precedent existed. A secondary issue emerged; we needed a tour schedule to offer to non-rail tour participants. Several ideas were floated and members stepped up to develop that schedule. Once again, **members' commitment, knowl-**

edge of the activities, and responsible parties available in the community is critical this phase of convention planning.

#### BUDGET REALISTICALLY

In January of 2011, the planning group met to discuss a notional budget that Jim Krekelberg had built. Based on past experience a base line number of 75 registered participants were developed. Two goals were set: the registration cost for the convention would not exceed \$110; and the participants would be provided a good value for their dollars spent at registration. At 75 registrants, based known costs for the train ride, bus support and caterer support, break even or a profit could be achieved.

#### THE FORMAL PRESENTATION FOR THE MEMBERS

As the Dubuque Convention came closer and closer, the briefing for the Sioux Falls convention in 2012 took form. We had a facility, room reservation system, firm room rates, tour commitments, and a registration fee to present. A PowerPoint presentation was made to the membership in Dubuque, including photos of activities. This is the real first chance to generate interest and show off your convention.

#### LEARN FROM OTHERS

During the summer of 2011, I attended the MidContinent Region Convention in Norfolk, Nebraska, to observe how they organized their convention and attend clinics. Several differences in approach were noted, foremost being that they have a train show with vendors at their conventions. Their other fund raising activity is a large Silent Auction. (continued on page eight)

## Fall 2012 Board of Director Meeting Minutes

Present at the meeting held at Cooper Pub in St. Louis Park, MN, were: Paul Gerry, Gerry Miller, Tracy McKibben, Miles Rohan, Jim Krekelberg, Jay Manning, Alan Saatkamp, Frank Gerry, Les Breuer, Paul Ullrich, John Hotvet, Mike Engler, Jim Bernier, Ken Zieska, and Margaret Ullrich.

Call to order was at 10:05 a.m. by President Gerry Miller.

President Gerry Miller opened the meeting with a welcome and a quick introduction of all the members present. Overall the region is doing well financially and still has ~500 active members. The recent response to the call for volunteers for everything from division officers to convention judges and speakers has been overwhelming with many people getting more involved for the first time and enjoying the experience.

Secretary Paul Gerry then made a motion to accept the minutes from the Spring BOD and GM meetings as printed in The Fusee. Paul Ullrich seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Treasurer Jim Krekelberg then presented **his report. Overall the region's finances** are holding steady. Income included a rebate from the 2011 convention, the 2012 convention income, and the Fusee subscriptions. Expenses included the PLD grant, AP rewards program, Division Banner purchases and a cash ad-

vance for the 2013 convention for down payments on facilities and such. Paul Ullrich made a motion to accept the report, Tracy McKibben seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Relations Director Tracy McKibben relayed a plan to send out proactive welcome emails to new members in an effort to make them feel welcome. He will also be posting more advertisements for conventions and meeting that are occurring both in the TLR and in the neighboring regions in an effort to promote events and increase attendance.

Historian Jim Bernier presented the **historian's report. So for there have been** No requests for historical documents made. Jim does have the capability to scan and produce PDF copies of publications that can be sent out electronically or send out hard copy requests as long as the requester pays for the postage. Jim can be contacted at [jrbernier@hotmail.com](mailto:jrbernier@hotmail.com)

Achievement Program Director John Hotvet MMR updated us on the program. Six AP certificates were awarded over the last six months. Recipients include Alan Saatkamp, Don Dawkins, Dave Hamilton, John Hotvet and Tracy McKibben. Alan Saatkamp earned his MMR with his most recent AP certificate! Golden Spikes were awarded to Eric Carlson and Jay Manning as well.

Editor Alan Saatkamp MMR stated that this will be his third and final year as Fusee editor. There was a slight increase

in printing costs. He is checking on this.

Website Director Dave Hamilton could not be at the meeting but did forward the fact that there will be a new webmaster on board in May 2013 and that the convention info will be posted as it comes in.

Alan Saatkamp MMR presented the DSED report. The last few months for the DSED have been extremely busy. Nearly 300 people attended the annual Ronning Library event. The trip to the Prairie Village Threshing Bee Jamboree in Madison, SD was also well attended. A trifold handout has been developed by member Eric Carlson to better promote the division and hobby. The major annual fundraiser for the year, the model layout open house tour, will occur October 6 and will have a planned media blitz to help increase attendance. With the funds earned from the very successful 2012 Sioux Falls Convention the DSED will purchase a Digitrax DCC system for the sectional layout so **that they don't have to rely on individual members to bring their own DCC components from home.** Membership improved to nearly 30 members which is a recent high water mark for the division. Alan will also step down as the DSED superintendent after spending the last five of seven years in that position.

Margaret Ullrich presented the #1 Northern report on behalf of Dennis Rietze. The Free-Mo group continues to grow with about 14 members at last count. The next coming together of the modules will be at the clubs fall show in October with the hopes that about 24 modules will be present. Another meet is planned and will include clinics, a silent auction and the Free-Mo group again showing off its modules. The divisions close relations with the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club continue. The Division has also just taken delivery of the new NMRA banner which looks great.

Miles Rohan presented the Prairie Lakes Division report. The fall meet is back on for October and will include clinics, vendors, operating layouts and layout tours. The grant money has been put to good use with the purchase of the digital projector for the clinics that have made following along with the presenters a lot easier. The PLD also took the TLR up on its offer to buy the division a promotional banner which has now been customized for the Prairie Lakes Division.

Superintendent Ken Zieska presented the Twin Cities Division report. The digital projector continues to work great, especially for hands-on clinics.

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**TRAINS AT CHRISTMAS**  
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(continued from page six)

Operations clinics are planned so that novice operators can get a taste for it on fully functional layouts without the pressure of being thrown into the middle of a normal operating session. Convention planning is taking up most of the divisions time and energy with more to come on that later.

Gerry Miller presented the Southeast Division report. Round robin layout building continues amongst the members and a divisional modular layout is also being looked into. The division is holding strong at 15 members even though two were lost on the reorganization of the regional boundaries. The Southwest Division has also received its banner.

#### Old Business

So far all the divisions except three, the Twin Cities, Dakota Southeastern, and Red River Valley have their NMRA promotional banners.

Going back to the 2011 Dubuque Convention, there was a \$130 refund on the bus rentals that was given back to the TLR. This refund is due to the bus driver being a member of the Southwest Division and donating his time to drive the attendees around.

Jim Krekelberg then gave the 2012 Sioux Falls Convention report. The convention was a huge success on many fronts. A large profit occurred that was split 50:50 with the TLR as per the agreement that was set out at the beginning of convention planning. Most of the profits came from the fact that a lot of DSED contacts in various organizations were used to get the best deals or to have actual DSED members donate their time to make the convention what it was. There were a total of 104 paying participants at the convention. Everybody had a great time

and enjoyed both the rail tours and non-rail activities offered.

The PLD grant money used towards the purchase of the audiovisual equipment was not totally used up and a check for the leftover grant money has been written as a refund to the TLR.

#### New Business

Mike Engler gave the 2013 convention report. Space has been contracted for at the convention center from May 16 - 19 2013 and the deposit has been paid. The convention logo has been made up and is now up on the TLR website. There will be a wine and cheese evening on the Friday and the Banquet will occur on the Saturday as usual. New concepts for the raffle are also being discussed to make it go quicker including pre-drawing everything and having everything either picked up before or after the actual meal. So far there are about 28 layout tours and op sessions available that will hopefully be open throughout the convention. As well there are about 13 clinics already on board with more being recruited as we speak. Self guided tours are in the works and include the Lego Land layout, Mall of America, Friends of 261 and a guide to the best railfan and rail photography spots in the Twin Cities.

As an adjunct to the 2013 Convention, a general motion was made to advance the TCD an additional \$1000 to cover the costs of the deposits for the various sites and locations during the convention. Any unused funds are to be returned to the TLR post convention. The motion was seconded by Paul Ullrich and was passed unanimously. The TLR will assume full financial responsibility for the convention profits or losses.

Two new potential divisions may be starting up in the TLR. A free mo club in the La

Crosse area is currently looking into forming a division. As well as a group of modelers in the Eau Claire area is also looking into what it takes to make a division happen. Anyone in either area is encouraged to contact the TLR board for more information or to help answer any questions that they may have.

Gerry Miller then brought up the topic for ideas for the 2014 convention. Possible ideas floated around the room were Thunder Bay (with help from the No. One Northern) and Sioux City in the PLD. No consensus was reached as both above sites have their own bugs that need to be worked out. If any division is interested in hosting the 2014 Convention, please contact Convention Director Jay Manning (email available on website or on Fusee page 11).

Gerry Miller then updated us on the proposed new regional and divisional boundaries based on county borders instead of the old zip code method. Although a few members of the TLR were lost to other regions, more people may have unknowingly been switched from one division to another. The division superintendents will get a full summary of all changes. Please check with your division super to verify whether or not you are still a member of that division or not.

Paul Gerry then brought forward the new secretaries file folder holder to allow the old holder to become a purely **storage case since it's broken (handle and one latch)**. File folder accepted.

Next was a grant request brought forward by the DSED. In summary the DSED is looking to gain a non-profit status under the US IRS laws to provide legal protection to its board members in case of legal action, to convention and (continued on page eight)

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(continued from page seven)  
subsequent meets, and to be able to accept donations from members and the public. The DSED requests \$700 in a matching grant to cover the estimated \$1400 expense making the division non-profit. This grant proposal generated a lot of debate on a few key points: does it serve to promote the hobby (i.e. fulfill the spirit of the grant program), is this a good use of TLR funds, and does it actually need to be done? After much debate, Paul Gerry made a motion to vote on the grant as written and it was seconded by Tracy McKibben. A roll call vote resulted in the motion passing with three in favor, one against, and two abstaining (the two DSED members were not eligible to vote on this issue, as it pertains to DSED).

Next was the vote for the Bob Dew award to be given out at the 2013 Convention. The ballot was a secret one. Votes will be tabulated by the president and results announced at convention.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Hotvet MMR and seconded by Jim Krekelberg. It passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Gerry, Secretary 

**(continued from page five)**

Organization and timing of events is critical. Tours must be of a length that all the attendees can take advantage of the offerings. With little past experience with past TLR conventions, I brought questions back and sought guidance from the TLR leadership before committing to courses of action that could either adversely affect attendance, or the budget. For example, I learned that a train show had been attempted in the past with minimal good results and that running one requires a lot of extra manpower.

The Mid-East Convention allows participants to sell things in their hotel rooms. When I asked about that, I learned that the Region had not supported such an approach in the past, and the host institution might not ap-  
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prove of the idea—so it was dropped from consideration.

**CLINICS COUNT**

**Spend time listening to members'** concerns and suggestions for clinics. One clinic request heard several times at the two TLR conventions I attended was for a clinic on judging the modeling contest in accordance with the NMRA standards—including the contestants entry paperwork. After attending several excellent clinics at the MidContinent Region Convention, I invited several presenters to come to Sioux Falls and do their clinics at the TLR convention. I found a great willingness to come to Sioux Falls and got names and e-mail addresses for future formal invitations. I also sought guidance from the leadership of the TLR for the names of clinicians and topics they thought would be of interest to the membership. Formal invitations were sent to several individuals based on those recommendations. The response to invitations was tremendous. Variety of clinicians and topics will increase clinic value and promote larger attendance.

**FIRST SCHEDULING CUT**

The clinic schedule needs to be built around the tour schedule and other activities at the TLR convention. The facilities chosen for the convention provided the opportunity to conduct 2 clinics simultaneously, and if participants wanted to meet one on one with a presenter, break out facilities were available. The issue becomes balancing clinicians time—**don't run a clinician back to back** with clinics without their approval. Spread what you think to be the highlight clinics out and balance the schedule. Once the notional schedule of clinics was

completed, it was sent to the clinicians for their comment and to the DSED executive committee. Additionally, two clinics were set up to be done on short notice by DSED members if a clinic became unavailable. As fall approached in 2011, the DSED developed an article for inclusion in the winter edition of the Fusee with an outline of the planned activities for the convention. The convention outline had form and substance; it was time to generate interest in coming to Sioux Falls for the 2012 TLR Convention. This included offering non-rail activities to attract and include spouses.



**St. Joseph Cathedral's** multi-million dollar restoration made it a great attraction for touring

**NEXT ISSUE TOPICS**

Part two begins five months from opening the convention door. The lessons thus far include: early commitment to running a convention; commitment of the members to hosting; learning and knowing the capabilities of the members make use of their **knowledge; listening to members'** concerns from experiences at previous conventions; learning **from other Region's conventions;** asking members of the division and region for advice and guidance; and taking full advantage of the community support. Our communities like putting their best foot forward for your guests. Start early; avoid a rush at the end.



(continued from page three)  
Then I turned a corner and nearly ran into four New York City Transit policemen. They also waved at me. Neat! I'd get a group shot of four of New York's finest. I aimed my camera.

Then one of them yelled at me, "What the hell do you think you're doing?"

"I am Capturing Life."

One officer bellowed, "Get your **butt over here. Now!**"

Ah, the gritty vernacular of real life. I got my butt over. "Where's your permit?"

Permit? Mr. Freed never mentioned a permit. Did Capa, Brassai, Lange or Cartier-Bresson have a permit? I didn't need no stinking permit.

I just smiled and repeated, "I am Capturing Life."

Slowly, as if speaking to an idiot, the bellow explained that I needed a permit.

I explained that I was doing my college assignment. He rolled his eyes. Great. A college kid. Knowing he was speaking to an idiot, he said I could go to jail.

I was thrilled. Cool! What a theme! I'd ace the course and get a spread in *Life Magazine!*

"Wow! Thank you! I can Capture Life in Jail!"

**"You can't Capture Life in jail.**

I'm saying, now listen very carefully, we can throw you into jail. Without your camera."

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Now, I had my priorities. I had a non-refundable ticket for an upcoming rock concert. I'd just about used up a whole roll of film. And I had to turn in my assignment that morning.

Well! It was the 60s. I knew my rights. I wailed. I blubbered. I apologized. I swore I wouldn't take any more train pictures. I guess they had kids in college.

"Shaddup, already. Take your camera and get your butt to school now."

I got my butt to school. Mr. Freed, my teacher, said I had Captured Life. As planned, I went to the concert.

It was better than going to jail.



## Achievement Program Update

by John R. Hotvet MMR

Six AP certificates have been approved in the last six months, as follow:

Alan Saatkamp MMR, Sioux Falls, SD – Master Builder – Cars, Master Model Railroader  
Don Dawkins, Plymouth, MN – Chief Dispatcher

Dave Hamilton, Plymouth, MN – Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

John Hotvet MMR, Minneapolis, MN – Master Builder – Motive Power

Tracy McKibben, Eden Prairie, MN – Association Volunteer

Paperwork for two AP certificates is in process.

Finally, two Golden Spikes were awarded, to Eric Carlson, Crooks, SD, and Jay Manning, Sioux Falls, SD.



### Subscribe to The Fusee

If you're an NMRA member residing within the boundaries of the Thousand Lakes Region, you're automatically a TLR member. So why not keep up with what's happening in the Region? Use this form to subscribe to The Fusee. If your subscription has lapsed, use this form to renew.

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(continued from page one)  
and rebuild after her 15 year inspection. See more at [www.http://261.com](http://261.com).

Not to be outdone by Sioux Falls, **we're also planning to offer a train ride, sort of.** Ok, some **might argue that it's not a "real" train,** but hey, it runs on two **rails. It's a train, and lots of people ride it every single day.** I'm referring, of course, to the light-rail system that is rapidly spreading throughout the Twin Cities metro. Potential plans include an outing of some sort, riding the light-rail train to Target Field downtown, then catching the NorthStar commuter train for a ride into the northwest suburbs. **No, we can't arrange for a stop on the bridge like they did in Sioux Falls, but we can offer you a brand new, first-class baseball stadium along with an incredible city skyline.**

I've saved the most vital bit of information for last. Guys, we all know, if your wife isn't on-board, you're probably not going to attend the convention. She has veto power, after all. If you really want to attend the 2013 convention, and you want her to be as excited about it as you are, I have the magic words for you to say.



TLR Fusee Winter 2012 page 10

Repeat these words after me: **"Mall Of America"**

**That's it. That's all you have to say.** The convention hotel is located right across the street from the Mall Of America, that love-it-or-hate-it stadium-sized shopping center that we're famous for. The room rate at the Best Western plus Bloomington Mall of America is \$105 plus tax per night, which includes a complimentary hot breakfast each morning, free wi-fi, along with complimentary transportation to **the Mall and airport. It's literally across the street from MOA, less than a block walk, with over 40 restaurants conveniently located nearby.**

You can spend the four days, May 15-19, immersed in the joys of railroading; she can spend four



days lost in MOA. Heck, why not make it a family vacation? Did I forget to mention that MOA has a fully enclosed amusement park inside? Complete with roller coasters? Or that there is a huge Lego store there? That reminds me - one of the tours being planned is to the Greater Midwest Lego Train Club (<http://gmltc.org/>), home of a MASSIVE operating Lego train layout.

That pretty much covers the highlights. The convention planners keep giving us a variety of

activities, learning opportunities, and entertainment. This one is shaping up to continue that trend. You can also keep up with new information, as it becomes available, on the TLR website or on Facebook:

Web site: <http://www.thousandlakesregion.org/>  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/TLRNMRA>

I hope you can join us! 



Find us on  
**Facebook**

The TLR is on Facebook!  
Come visit us at  
<http://www.facebook.com/TLRNMRA>

### Planned GN and MILW Sets

Planned new items for 2012-13 include HO and N brass sides for the GN 1950 *Red River & International Streamliners* as well as Milwaukee Road 85' baggage-dorm rebuilds 1350-52, 1354 and Coffee Shop Tap Lounges 168-169. Or you may commission a new item for as little as \$350 for 4 HO or 7 N sets. See our website for details. Most discontinued sets may be obtained by special order.

Our brass sides make cars for GN, NP, SP&S, CB&Q, BN, MILW, UP, PRR, NYC, SP, C&NW, IC, RI, B&O, C&E, L&N, KCS, ATSF, MP, CN, VIA & Amtrak. Use HO sides with TSP, Rivarossi, Con-Cor, ECW, Bachmann, Kato, Walthers, our HO Basic Body Kit. N use the ALM core kits or plastic dome car overlays. Available through hobby shops or direct from us. See our website for bulletin, illustrated catalog, photos of models from our customers, closeout items, reservation form, tech sheets and Two-DVD "Indiana, Minnesota and Early Amtrak Railroad Memories: 1964-72". Shipping \$4.50 for side orders. Add 6.875% sales tax for MN orders. [www.brasscarsides.com](http://www.brasscarsides.com) 507-931-2784

**Brass Car Sides, 715 S. 7th St.  
St. Peter, MN 56082-1435**

# The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

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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. Contact the editor if questions.

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Winter 2012  
The Fusee  
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### What's Inside?

Twin Rails to the Twin Cities convention  
**preview of what's in store May 2013**

Who wants to be our webmaster?

**"Capturing life" on a NY subway**—or not

Tips for hosting a successful convention

Fall TLR board meeting minutes

Achievement Program update

Check your expiration date! If you have questions (or a change of address) email Jim Krekelberg at: [jkrekelberg@sio.midco.net](mailto:jkrekelberg@sio.midco.net)

### Region Roundup

Model railroad-related events coming up this winter in and around the TLR

November 23 through December 31 Trees and Trains Exhibit at South Dakota State Railroad Museum, 222 Railroad Avenue, Hill City, South Dakota. Admission is \$5 for adults, free for children 12 and under when accompanied by adult. Contact Director Rick Mills, 605 574-9000 or visit [www.sdsrm.org](http://www.sdsrm.org) for details.

December 13 Twin Cities Division meeting at Jackson Street Roundhouse, 7:00 p.m. Holiday meeting with auction.

December 15 Dakota Southeastern Division annual business meeting and dinner. Business meeting at 4:30, dinner 5:00. Royal Fork restaurant, Sioux Falls Empire Mall.

January 10 TCD meeting at Jackson Street Roundhouse, 7:00 p.m. Clinics include scenic water and LEDs for lighting as well as signals.

February 2-3 **Great Train Expo at Council Bluffs, Iowa.** DSED's modular layout will again be on display during the model train show. Go to [www.greattrainexpo.com](http://www.greattrainexpo.com) for details.

February 14 TCD meeting at Jackson Street Roundhouse, 7:00 p.m. Clinics include making latex molds and casting with latex molds.

### TrainToons

by Paul Ullrich

