



GATEWAY
ST. LOUIS NMRA
MCoR

RPO

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION - GATEWAY DIVISION



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Winter 2024

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Jimmy Ables, Superintendent, Gateway Division

Happy New Year!!! This past year the Division returned to full operation, and I like to think we've recovered from COVID. Monthly meetings are back on track, we initiated once a quarter Saturday workshops, revitalized the RPO, held the first fall meet since 2019, and we're broadcasting meetings via Zoom. One of the things that excites me the most is seeing all of you at meetings. We went a long period during COVID without seeing each other to seeing each other on Zoom and finally back to in person meetings. I, as many of you have also expressed, missed talking to people in person. The fellowship which comes from meeting in person and talking face-to-face is one of the most important aspects of our meetings.

Continued on Page 2

In This Issue

Thank You, Dan!	3
Membership Update	3
Director's Reflections	4
2024 Gateway Division Calendar	6
Upcoming Events	7
Gateway Division Hands-on Workshop	8
Achievement Program Update	9
Layout Tour: Illinois Terminal	10
An Autumn Excursion	16
Painted On: Modeling Graffiti	23
2023 Fall Meet was a Success!	26
Trees: From Grapevine to West Alton	29
2023 Year in Review	33
Station to Station: Mt. Carmel, IL	37
Structural Elements: Herrin, IL	38
Editor's Observations	40
Meeting Minutes	42
Division Officers and Chairs	45
Help Wanted	45
Club Listings	46
Local Hobby Shop Directory	48

Cover Photo: Illinois Terminal RS-1 crosses Bethel Road on Steve Goaring's Illinois Terminal O'Fallon Branch Layout. See more photos of his layout in this issue. Photo: Jeff Cooper

From the Superintendent's Desk (continued from page 1)

I want to express my personnel thanks to Walter Beckman, Dale DeWitt, and everyone who volunteered to put the Fall Meet together, our first Fall Meet since 2019. Rich Velten, our previous paymaster, had almost single handedly put together Fall Meets in previous years so there was a huge void to be filled. Walter jumped in with both feet. When it became apparent the church was going to be too expensive, Walter started looking for alternatives. The VFW in Collinsville turned out to be the most economical. Facility size, accessibility, and free tables were key factors in selecting the site. Dale DeWitt canvassed the membership and signed up volunteers to support the Fall Meet. The volunteer team did everything asked of them and then some. It was a tremendous effort. Walter and I were both amazed at how smoothly everything went. In the end the Fall Meet was a great success and we pocketed over \$1,100. At best we thought we'd break even, but in the end, we made money.

I also want to shout to past superintendent, Willie Richter. Willie has done an excellent job refining our process for broadcasting our meetings. We fought a lot of Zoom audio problems in the beginning. Willie came up with some innovative ways to solve the problem. I really appreciate the effort Willie has put in. I encourage you all to give him a pat on the back when you see him.

I need to give David Lowell a shout out. Dave has organized our quarterly Saturday workshops. I'm sure those of you who have attended have found them interesting and expanded your modeling skills. We've now had three workshops and have another one coming up in February. I'm not spilling the beans yet but, we're lining up a much asked for workshop for May.

This past weekend I had the opportunity to go to the Great Train Show in St. Charles. It was good to see so many of you there. I really enjoyed talking with members at the event. As with any train show, I spent more money than I probably should have, but when you see a Baldwin VO-1000, switcher in Cotton Belt colors and an Athearn Genesis EMD F7 A/B set in Black Widow colors, you must bite the bullet and spend the money.

In the coming months, we want to get the Division back out at train shows. We still need someone to lead this effort. The lead is responsible for coordinating our attendance with the event organizer and lining up volunteers to work during the show. We've talked about changing a few things. In addition to having the display module, we'd like to have a member or two building something (assembling a

structure or car kit). In the past we've put a lot of focus on getting people to sign up for our email list as a means of trying to induce them to become members. While we've had a few sign ups join, overall, it hasn't been overly successful. Today we have around 200 non-members on our email list who've been there for years and haven't joined. I'm just not sure it's worth the effort. So, it's apparent we need to revisit our approach.

In the coming year let's all work together to move the Division forward and have more good times together. I look forward to seeing you at a future meeting.

Sincerely,

Jim Ables
Superintendent, Gateway Division

In the coming year let's all work together to move the Division forward and have more good times together. I look forward to seeing you at a future meeting.

Thank You, Dan!

By Jim Ables, Superintendent, Gateway Division



The Gateway Division would like to thank **Dan Knipp** for his service to the Division as Assistant Superintendent. In December Dan passed the torch to Walter Beckman. Dan was the heartbeat of the division as we dealt with the untimely passing of Paymaster Rich Velten and then the COVID pandemic. Our regulations state the Assistant Superintendent takes over in the event the Paymaster is unable to execute the duties of the office. That is exactly what happened and Dan didn't falter. He gathered the required records, transferred the bank accounts, and put our finances back in order. While doing this the pandemic broke out complicating Dan's efforts to right our financial ship. Dan held it all together until our new Paymaster, Bill Levin, could take over.

Dan took the lead on revising the Division's regulations, a much overdue undertaking. Changes to the regulations were overwhelmingly approved by the membership. Additionally, Dan took it upon himself to re-establish the Division's presence on social media. He re-established our Facebook page and added Instagram and Reddit accounts. These social media accounts give us additional

Membership Update: July through December 2023

Membership Anniversaries

Congratulations!

30 Years

William Birdsell

25 Years

Gary Hoover
Gary Hunley

10 Years

Thomas McHugh

5 Years

Bill Ahal
Walter Beckman
David Burlis
David Haloftis
Dennis Kettler
Richard Kling

New Members

Welcome!

John Crawford
Merrick Felder
Elmer Kellmann
James Lynch



avenues to communicate with members and interest non-members in joining. Even though Dan has stepped away from his official duties as Assistant Superintendent, he still maintains our social media presence.

During the pandemic Dan was instrumental in initiating virtual meetings. Dan found interesting presenters willing to give presentations via Zoom. His efforts were key to reestablishing some sense of normalcy for Division members. Again, even though Dan is no longer on the Board, he continues to help out the Division by coordinating our monthly presentations.

We will miss Dan as a board member, but we know he'll continue to contribute to the Division. Thank you, Dan, for your leadership and dedication to the Division. You've done an amazing job, and we are truly grateful.

Director's Reflections: The 2023 Year in Review

By David C. Lowell, Director, Gateway Division, Mid-continent Region

You know, having fun is hard work. Twice a year, as prescribed by the Mid-Continent Region (MCoR) by-laws, the Board of Directors (BOD) is required to meet. One meeting is held at the regional convention each summer and the second is usually held in KC in January. We meet in KC because it is geographically about the center of the MCoR area. In case you are not aware, there is a MCoR website <http://www.mcor-nmra.org/index.html>. Check it if you have not already and learn more about the Region. As a side note, three individuals will be representing the Gateway Division (GWD) at the MCoR BOD meeting: Jeff Cooper, who was just elected Secretary for MCoR, John Garavaglia who is legal counsel for MCoR, and myself as the GWD Director. We conduct the business of the Region as required and part of that business is for the Divisions to provide an update on their activities. I just finished up my annual report for the upcoming MCoR winter meeting.

Reviewing the year and completing my report made me realize that it's been a busy hobby year for us in the GWD. And that's a good thing. I think, I hope, we have all had fun. That fun however does require some hard work. For example, we are scheduled to have 12 monthly meetings for the year. Of those, we actually had 7. With three of the 12 being hands on events: decals, wood craftsman structures, and then trees. October was canceled due to most of the officers being sick. And November was the fall meet in lieu of a meeting. Each of the 7 meetings required each officer to prepare their reports for the Division and each meeting requires a presentation. Each meeting also requires the GWD roadies to haul in the AV equipment, set it up, operate it, strike it, and haul it back out. No small task. Each of the hands-on clinics require planning, securing a venue, procuring of material, notices, set up, clean-up, and a presenter.

Reviewing the year and completing my report made me realize that it is been a busy hobby year for us in the GWD.

We had the first fall meet since 2019. Restarting any annual event after a hiatus is challenging. It is almost like starting from scratch. When? Where? What? And many more basic questions have to be gone through. However, for those who attended the December meeting the report on the event was super exciting. Fall Meet Chairman Walter Beckman, your newly elected Assistant Superintendent, and Dale Dewitt answered the call, answered all the open questions, and pulled together a great event at the VFW hall in Collinsville. Sure, we had a few cobwebs to shake out and we have discussed a few items to tweak for next year. But overall, it was a success. Almost 200 paid attendees, a profit (bigger than our last few in the before times), on site food, and a solid celebration of models event with a number of merit awards issued. Next year Brad Joseph has agreed to take on the Chairmanship. He will be looking for helpers, so don't be shy. It was hard work, but it was fun.

As with the fall meet, our Outside Activities Coordinator, Ron Gawedzinski has begun scheduling prototype tours again. To wit; he set up a tour to Micro Engineering in May prior to their move from Fenton to Mexico, Missouri, a tour of the TRRA Madison Yard and facilities in Venice, Illinois, and a rail excursion event in Southeast Missouri.

Greg Gramlich, our GWD Operations Coordinator also continues to set up pertains sessions. He typically announces event at monthly meetings. Also, the Tuesday night operations group continues to chug along coordinated by Mike Thomas. That being said, Mike is always looking for layouts to operate on and operators to sign up. Anyone interested in either contact Mike or myself.

Once again, this summer we co-sponsored the St Louis RPM meet and provided volunteers to assist on event days. The event is the premier RPM event in the country. It kicks off with the two primer events on Thursday evening with the BBQ gathering at Bandana's adjacent to the Collinsville Convention Center and then the Nightcap at the adjacent Double Tree Hilton. Friday and Saturday offer 38,000 square feet of model railroading largess consisting of more than 3,000 attendee displayed models, 47 premium vendors including major manufacturers, 16 historical societies, 22 clinics, and 6 learning stations all for one reasonable entry fee that is less than smaller RPMs in Chicago IL, San Francisco CA, or Cocoa FL. This year RPM attendance was just shy of 800. Next year the event will be held Friday July 19th and Saturday July 20th. Come, bring your favorite models and immerse yourself in a fantastic model railroading experience.

I also want to assign a few lines to two individuals who must be having fun because they have been working really hard for the rest of us. I want to make sure that everyone is aware of all that Dan Knipp has done for the GWD over the last few years as Assistant Superintendent. Dan has exemplified service to the hobby. Let me give some examples. Once he took office he immediately took on the challenging job of lining up monthly presentations. It's a lot harder than it sounds, and he has done a fantastic job. Dan also spearheaded a review of the bylaws which lead to several updates presented to the membership for ratification. In doing his review he became intimately familiar with the bylaws making him able to advise us on the BOD of our obligations as a board and ensure our conduct has been in keeping with the by-laws approved by the membership. When Rich Velten, long time GWD Treasurer, unexpectedly passed away, Dan stepped in and carried the weight of that office as well for quite a while until a replacement was elected. That was a herculean effort to obtain, review, and sort the existing records without the luxury of a transition period or the ability to question the previous officer to answer any open questions. I think both Willie and Jimmy will tell you that he has been the consummate Assistant Superintendent, always there to pick up the slack, always reliable, and always looking out for the best interest of the GWD. So next time you see Dan, take a minute to thank him for all he has done for the last few years. He is a major reason we all get tired having fun.

Another person I believe needs some additional recognition as we close out the year is Jeff Cooper. Jeff became active in the GWD during COVID with the advent of our virtual connection (fun begets fun), making his home base of Marion IL much closer than it actually is. He has taken over the job of Clerk and Editor of the RPO and become an active member in general. With both jobs, he dove right in and put his own unique mark on them building on the strong foundations laid by others. In addition to being a valuable addition to the GWD, Jeff is now applying his enthusiasm on to the MCoR Region office of Secretary. I think he will be a strong addition to the already competent core of folks working at that level. And it is always better to have GWD represented on the MCoR BOD than not. As with Dan, I think both Willie and Jimmy will tell you that he has been a great addition to the officer's group here at GWD.

Now I'm tired from the hard work of writing about the hard work of having fun. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season celebrating your appropriate holiday(s) around this time of year.

I will always be available, as well as the great team of officers we have, to receive any comments or suggestions you may have. You can reach me at LowellCoMotive@gmail.com

Happy Rails!

David C. Lowell, Director, Gateway Division, Mid-Continent Region
National Model Railroad Association

2024 Gateway Division Event Calendar



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

January 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

Trinity Lutheran Church
14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO

February 24, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Hands-on Workshop - Making Trees

West Alton City Hall
111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO

March 18, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

Trinity Lutheran Church
14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO

April 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

VFW Post 805
223 West 1st Street, O'Fallon, IL

May 18, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Hands-on Workshop

West Alton City Hall
111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO

June 17, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

VFW Post 805
223 West 1st Street, O'Fallon, IL

July 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

Trinity Lutheran Church
14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO

August 17, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Hands-on Workshop

West Alton City Hall
111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO

September 16, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

Trinity Lutheran Church
14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO

October 19, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

VFW Post 805
223 West 1st Street, O'Fallon, IL

November 2, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

Fall Meet

VFW Post 5691
1234 Vandalia St, Collinsville, IL

December 16, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Meeting with Presentation

VFW Post 805
223 West 1st Street, O'Fallon, IL

Once you achieve one goal, you should be looking forward to trying to build onto the next thing, and not just getting comfortable with what you're doing.

LL Cool J

Upcoming Events

February 4, March 3, and April 2, 2024, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Chicago Great Midwest Train Show: DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, IL

February 24, 2024, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Pacific Eagles Train Show:
707 West Congress Street, Pacific, MO

March 9, 2024, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Boeing Employees' Railroad Club - St. Louis Railroad Swap Meet: Greensfelder Recreation Complex at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road, Ballwin, MO

March 10, 2024, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Springfield Train Fair: Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL; Early Bird entrance at 9 a.m. with additional admission fee

March 22, 2024, 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.: National Museum of Transportation Evening Model Train Swap Meet: Museum of Transportation, Earl C. Lindburg Automobile Center, Upper Parking Lot Entrance #2, 2933 Barrett Station Road, Kirkwood, MO

March 23, 2024 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and March 24, 2024 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.: 40th Urbana Model Railroad Show: Lincoln Square Village, 100 W. High Street, Urbana, IL

April 13, 2024, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: 4th Sons of the American Legion Spring Train Show: Dupo American Legion Post #485, 200 South 5th Street, Dupo, IL

April 13, 2024 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and April 14, 2024 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Festival of Trains: OKC Fairgrounds, The Pavilion, 3212 Wichita Walk, Oklahoma City, OK

April 27, 2024 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Iron Spike 8th Anniversary Train Show: City Auditorium, 211 High Street, Washington, MO

April 27, 2024 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and April 28, 2024 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Herington Railroad Days, Herington Community Building, 810 S. Broadway, Herington, KS



National Model Railroad Association Gateway Division Hands-on Workshop

Making Trees With Greg Gramlich



Saturday, February 24, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

West Alton City Hall

111 Richard Drive, West Alton, Missouri

All materials provided **FREE of charge**

**Please sign-up by sending an e-mail to Greg Gramlich at
headbigbear@yahoo.com**

Achievement Program Update:

What Do You Want To Learn To Do *(and how are you going to learn to do it)?*

By Dave Ackmann, Achievement Program Chair, Gateway Division

Improving your model railroading skills is all about learning how to do something new. Perhaps you want to learn how to scratch build your first freight car, but where do you start? Or perhaps you want to add an interior to a caboose; you know you will probably need to do some research, but where do you begin? Or maybe you want to learn how to add realistic interiors to basic buildings, but the task seems overwhelming. It's all about learning something new.

Last fall I found myself in such a quandary. I wanted to learn how to apply colored mortar to brick walls for my structures. Not just gray-white on red brick, but brown mortar on yellow bricks. I've tried some of the paste products before, but they washed away on me, so I was missing something. Through trial and error, I got the hang of it, but I know it might have been a few less trials and a few less errors had I just asked someone in the Division for advice..

And I wanted to learn how to carve abutments for bridges. There are quite a few YouTube videos on how to carve blue foam blocks into realistic stone shapes. Military modelers and Fantasy modelers are pretty good at this aspect of modeling, so sometimes it pays to look at work in slightly different domains than trains.

How about you? Have you attended a Make-And-Take session from the Division? Did it get you thinking about your next steps into more sophisticated decals, structures, or trees? Or maybe you are ready to take that first tentative step into operations. If you are finding yourself in that "teachable moment", many area modelers are open to help you get you started,

There is such a thing as "Writer's Block". Maybe you have "Modeler's Block" and don't know what new thing you would like to try, particularly if you are a very experienced modeler. Well, the NMRAX team produces new virtual videos on a monthly basis, so perhaps you might tune in some Saturday and just watch clinics which you might otherwise have no particular interest (or pull past presentations out of the archives). Your imagination just might be piqued to try something totally out of your comfort zone

Some of my favorite resources are the newsletters of other Divisions. During COVID, I presented many virtual clinics for other Divisions, and many of them added me to their newsletter's distribution list. It's always a good day when I get a new copy of "The Pie Card" from the Louisville club or "The Semaphore" from Fox Valley near Chicago. But you don't even need to be on a distribution list to check them out; just visit NMRA.ORG, click on the Regions tab, then on Regions and Division, scroll down past the map and select a Division at random and see what their newsletter is covering at the moment. If something strikes your fancy, well, making a connection with the author is probably just a click away.

The point is, there is always something new to learn, particularly for those of us who are interested in the NMRA Achievement Program, and there are many ways to learn. So until the next RPO, think about what you might want to learn, and what resources you can tap to take that next step. If you need a mentor, drop me a note at ACKMANN@CHARTER.NET and I'll see if I can make a learning connection for you. Who knows, you might even have an opportunity to share your expertise with someone else. After all, an "expert" is just someone who is one mile ahead of you down the track.

Photo Tour of Steve Goaring's HO Scale Illinois Terminal O'Fallon Branch Layout

Layout Description from the Gateway 2022 National Convention Time Table
Photos by Jeff Cooper



Steve Goaring's HO scale layout is modeled on the Illinois Terminal's O'Fallon branch from Troy Jct. near Troy, Illinois south through O'Fallon, Illinois to Peabody Coal Company's St. Ellen Mine in 1960. In his version, the mine gains new customers, finds a new seam of coal, and is prosperous. Besides the IT hauling coal to their river dock in Alton (in staging), the St. Ellen Mine provides coal to Springfield's City Water, Light & Power via the Illinois Central that comes from Springfield, gets on the IT at Mont (in staging), and goes to the mine. The IT also runs a daily Alton Yard & Road job that leaves



Federal Yard in Alton (in staging) and brings cars to the PRR interchange at PAIT and the B&O Interchange at O'Fallon, as well as the local lumber yard. With the purchase of the Peabody Short Line by IC, Peabody has begun hauling coal with former PSL equipment from the St. Ellen Mine to their Mississippi River dock in East St. Louis via IT's McKinley Yard and the TRRA (in staging).











An Autumn Excursion

Article and Photos By Ron Gawedzinski, Activities Coordinator, Gateway Division

On Saturday, October 21, 2023, a group of 33 members of the Gateway Division of the National Model Railroad Association, the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, and guests took a one-day bus trip to Jackson, Missouri, to ride a special charter train on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway followed by lunch at The Depot Café in Fredericktown, Missouri. The café is located in the restored Iron Mountain/Missouri Pacific depot.

Our train was pulled by an E8 diesel in Pennsylvania RR colors, followed by three coaches and three cabooses. The weather was great. The scenery was neat. The lunch was delicious.

The St. Louis, Iron Mountain, & Southern Railway travels from Jackson, Missouri to Gordonville, Missouri on closed tracks of approximately 5 to 6 miles. Train excursions last approximately 2 hours and the train is run entirely by volunteers. Throughout the year there are many themed excursions including dinosaurs, magic, James Gang robberies, Junior Engineers and Conductors, a Chocolate Express, and a Santa train just to name a few. When weather permits, the excursion will stop at the Iron Mountain Junction Village for campfires, s'mores, games, and music.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Rick Sprung and David Huelsing of the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society for arranging the tour.



The billboard that greets all visitors



We are ready for our trip!



The depot grounds and their family friendly amenities



The power leading the excursion: A Pennsylvania Railroad E8 #5898



St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railway coach #1345



Former New York Central coach #3135



Interior of one of the coaches



Interior of a second coach



The full train. The E8, three coaches, and three cabooses



Upper Left: Missouri Pacific Caboose #12102

Above: An industrial diesel switcher and a Southern bay window caboose on a side track

Lower Left: All Aboard!



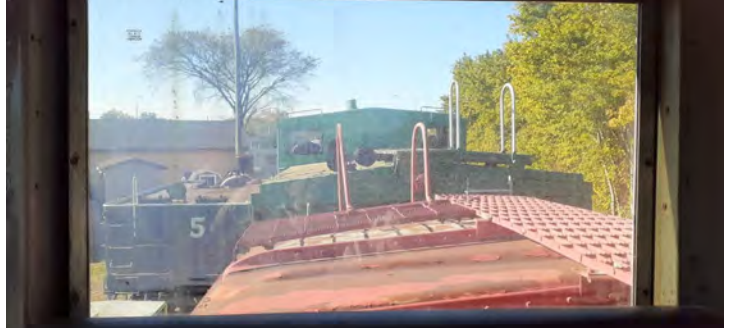
Will the steam loco ever be put back together again?



...But the tender looks good



OK, Here's the parts, but where are the instructions?



Looking forward from the last caboose



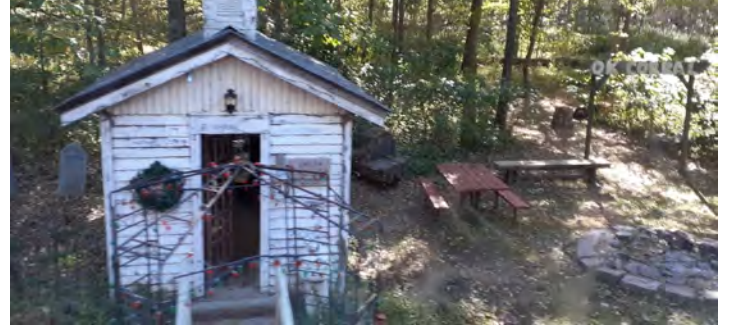
Looking behind us from the last caboose



Enjoying the ride in the cupola



One of the scenes along the way



Passing by Old Town



The trees have not yet turned in color for our autumn excursion



A stop at Old Town with the Pennsy E8 posing for pictures



Getting ready for the run-by!



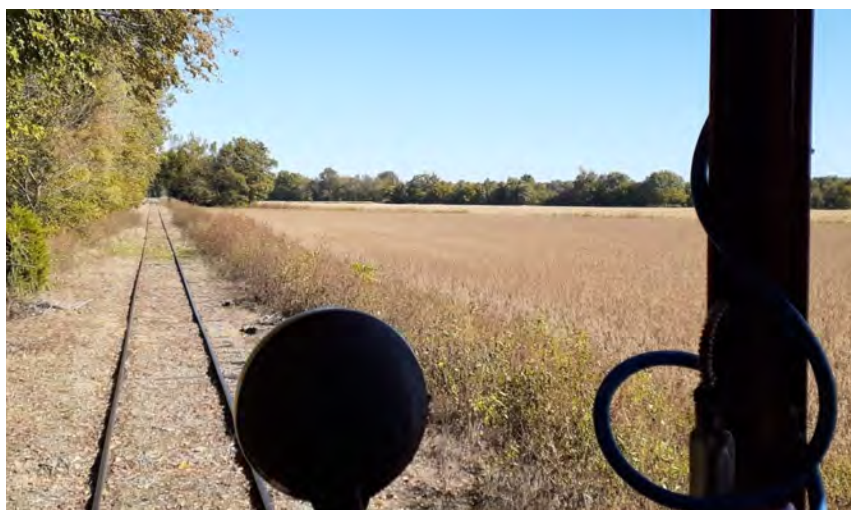
Left: Snack time with s'mores Right: Are these modern plumbing facilities?



Conductor blowing the air horn



Another happy cupola rider



Passing by a field awaiting its harvest



Wrapping up
after the snacks
and the run-by



It is harvest time
in Missouri



The group of happy riders after the excursion and getting ready to head for the Depot Cafe

Painted On: Modeling Graffiti

Article and Photos By Steven Hamilton, Gateway Division Member



Graffiti: the words and drawings in public spaces and on privately owned property that you love to hate, hate to love, simply enjoy or admire or feel completely indifferent towards. Whatever your personal feeling, we aren't here to debate its place in society. The simple fact is that it exists and some modelers choose to incorporate it while others choose to avoid it.

It is your miniature world so you get to decide how you want to follow your passion. This article simply shows you one way of including graffiti on your models if you choose to do so. Love it or hate it, graffiti is a part of contemporary railroading, and modeling it is a personal preference. For me, there is no right or wrong in my book when it comes down to including or excluding graffiti on the layout.

Check out Steven's YouTube Channel and Facebook page *Signal Up Productions* for more local prototype and modeling information.

While there are plenty of graffiti decal sets out there that work perfectly fine and look great when properly finished, there are times when painting the graffiti directly on the model has certain advantages. The biggest advantage is that painting your own graffiti allows you to have unique and authentic tags that you are unlikely to see on anyone else's layout.



Step 1: My method to do this starts with LOTS of railfanning to find and photograph ideas from the prototype. Next, sketch out the design on painter's tape with a fine tip permanent marker. Then, using a SHARP hobby knife, carefully cut out the tape for separate sections of the overall tag and the individual letters.



Step 2: I stick the overall outline tape on the car body, and airbrush a base coat of white. Then I stick on the tape to mask off the background of the tag so only the letter area is showing and airbrush my color of choice.



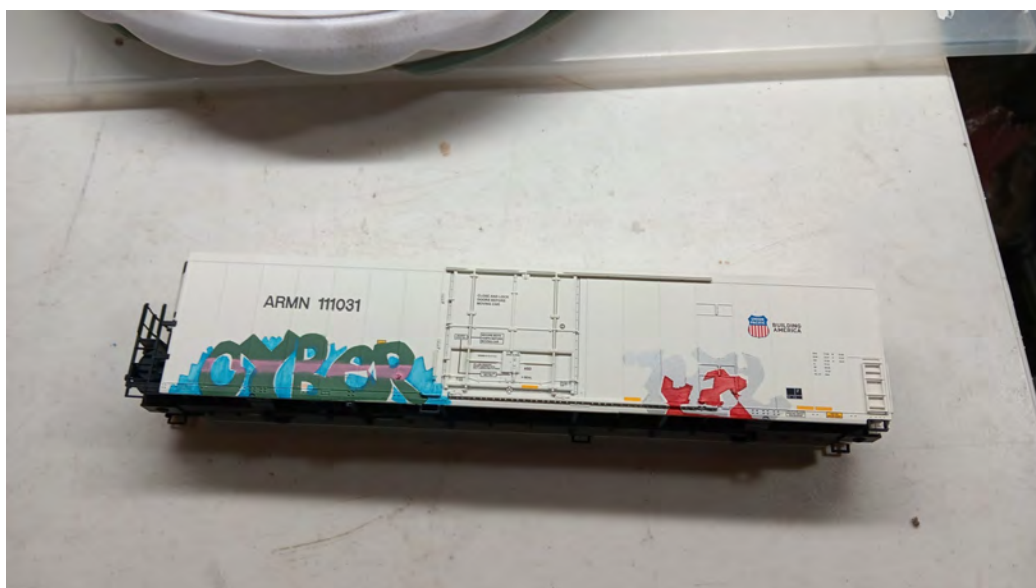
Step 3: Brighter colors are more common. If you want to replicate older faded tags, then spray on a light coat of paint. But for newer tags, make a couple of passes and build the layers up evenly.



Step 4: Pull off the background mask, place the mask on for the letters, then drybrush a background color that has good complement and contrast to the letter color.



Step 5: Remove all remaining masking tape.



Step 6: Using an ultra fine tip black paint marker, slowly and carefully outline the tag, background, and letters to match prototype tags. I found these particular markers at Hobby Lobby. This step completes the process and you are now ready to put your tagged cars on the rails.



Gateway Division's 2023 Fall Meet Was a Huge Success!

By Walter Beckman, Assist. Superintendent and 2023 Fall Meet Chair

Photos by Jimmy Ables, Superintendent, Gateway Division (unless otherwise noted)

After a four-year absence due to COVID uncertainties, as well as other factors, the Gateway Division's annual Fall Meet returned on November 11, 2023 at the VFW Post 5691 in Collinsville, Illinois.

In addition to COVID, there were a number of issues with getting the Fall Meet restarted. First and foremost, we lost Rich Velton, a long-time active Division member who organized the meet for many years. In addition, the economic factors of the venue where we previously held the Fall Meet changed which necessitated the need for a new venue.

After reviewing a number of locations, we selected VFW Post 5691 as the best option for the Fall Meet. The post's location, rental price, available space for multiple activities, as well as the fact that tables in the quantity we needed for the meet were on site made Post 5691 the obvious choice.

What made the post an even better venue than first imagined is that the post sponsored a Cub Scout pack that sold food during the duration of the meet that served as a fundraiser for the Cub Scouts while also providing a much-needed service for the vendors, layout operators, and guests.

The Fall Meet featured over thirty vendors, four layouts, 50/50 raffles, merchandise raffles, attendance prizes, presentations, layout tours, and a contest room. Post 5691 had never seen anything like it before but supported the event well. In fact, they asked us to come back for our next meet before this meet was over.



The Fall Meet could not have happened without our volunteers. Walter Beckman volunteered as the Fall Meet Chair and was instrumental in its success. Dale DeWitt organized the volunteers. Each activity, from the entry table, to the raffles, to the attendance prizes, simply put, everything, required volunteers plus "floaters" to cover any unanticipated needs, fill-in, or just plain help out. The expression "many hands make light work" was apropos for the day as we had over 25 volunteers making the meet a success. As if arranging all of the volunteers for the day wasn't enough, Dale also organized all the raffles at the meet.

Other facets of the meet required volunteers to make the event a success. Bill Levin helped out by managing the entry tickets, money, and the drawings for the attendance prizes. Dave Roeder MMR organized the layout tours to two very nice layouts: Curt Regensbeger's HO Scale Streator Connection and Steve Goaring's HO Scale Illinois Terminal. Dave recruited the layout owners and created the maps and directions that we handed out at the meet. Dave also provided the table diagram for the vendors and layouts after measuring the spaces in the VFW Post. Greg Gramlich and David Lowell conducted excellent presentations that were well attended. Additional presentations are expected to be added to the Fall Meet in 2024. Dave Ackmann and Chris Oestreich were responsible for the Contest Room. Dave oversaw the activities related to the Achievement Program while Willie Richter, Dave Roeder MMR, Brad Joseph MMR, and Bob Miller handled the Achievement Program judging duties, and Chris served as the Division's Contest Chair. Brad Joseph MMR and Jim Ables both provided a lot of additional support for the contest room.



There were many more volunteers who helped out by handling the drawings, handing out the prizes, collecting the money at the entrance, and helping out the vendors and guests. A special "thank you" goes out to all of the volunteers who helped make the Fall Meet a success and to those who donated items for the raffle and attendance prizes.

The Fall Meet 2023 was well attended and a great success. Dirk Reynolds of Dirk's Trains put out a podcast about the meet on YouTube at https://youtu.be/TdSeEbWryuw?si=E_OGWcVlaBnacgDD and Division member, Steven Hamilton also posted a video about the Fall Meet on YouTube under his Signal Up Productions channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DizLuCvjmb0>.

As we give thanks to all of the volunteers, the VFW post for being gracious hosts, the Cub Scouts who served food and drinks, and all the volunteers who donated time and merchandise, we are now looking forward to Fall Meet 2024 and are happy to announce that Brad Joseph MMR is the chair for this year's meet. It will be held on November 2, 2024 at VFW Post 5691 at 1234 Vandalia Street, Collinsville, IL 62234. If you have any interest in donating items or volunteering, please contact Brad Joseph MMR at bradjoseph3985@gmail.com. We hope to see you there!



Photos of Contest Entries
by Jeff Cooper



Trees: From Grapevine to West Alton

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

There are many aspects of National conventions I really enjoy. From getting to tour prototype facilities that I would never have a chance of touring on my own to visiting layouts and marveling at the outstanding work by the owners. I also really enjoy attending the presentations (clinics) so that I can learn something new that I can apply to my modeling repertoire. The 2023 National convention in Grapevine, Texas, the Texas Express, fulfilled all of those aspects I enjoy.

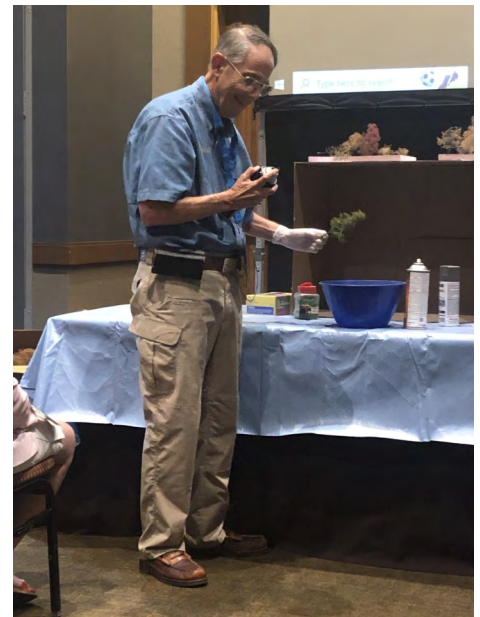
One presentation was about making deciduous trees. I've been to quite a few sessions on making trees and they have been useful, but they just have not been "the one" that I've been looking for. I thought to myself, do I really want to go to another "how to make a tree" clinic. After a moment of pondering, I decided to take a shot as I never know when that one nugget of information will show itself.

In this case, the presentation was given by Mike Ross, MMR. The description of the session was as follows: "Modeling Eastern deciduous forests

is a challenge, especially in the fall with all it's amazing color. For his Virginian Railway, Michael Ross has made literally hundreds of trees. His goal was to mass produce believable deciduous forests trees at a cost not exceeding one dollar per tree. Michael will demonstrate the various techniques he used. A few random attendees will walk away from the clinic with one of Michael's realistic trees." Several words and phrases caught my eye: dollar per tree, mass produce, and various techniques. It was enough to give this "one more tree clinic" a chance.

Mike went through demonstrations on his various techniques and then he finally got to one that was "the one" I had been waiting for. Many (most) of us are familiar with two different products. The first is the brown, plastic, flat molded tree armature that you have to bend the limbs to fill out the tree and then figure out how to either put clump foliage on it to make it look like leaves or figure out how to string around the ground foam netting material that gives it a reasonable tree look.

The other product is Super Trees. This dried plant material has a natural structure that lends itself to look like a full tree with branches. Add paint, adhesive, and leaf material and you have a tree. Well, it isn't that simple. You have to pick off the leaves that grow in the material. For many of the "trees" you have to soak them and straighten them out before you can use them. Even with those additional steps, they still make some good trees albeit with smaller, thinner trunks that do not lend themselves to larger trees.



Mike Ross, MMR gives a live demonstration on his deciduous tree making techniques at the 2023 Texas Express National Convention in Grapevine, Texas

Lo and behold, in Mike's session he combined these two products together in a process to make a tree that left me telling myself that "it can't be that easy." Jump forward to September at the Gateway Division Hand-on Workshop on making trees whereby all materials were provided free of charge. As luck would have it, those free materials included both the flat plastic tree armature and Super Trees material. Here is my chance to try out this technique I learned in Grapevine, Texas and even better, I didn't have to "waste" my own money if it didn't work out. Well, let me tell you. It worked out and yes, it is that simple. What follows are my steps in making these trees. I take no credit for these ideas as I learned them from Mike Ross, MMR and the credit belongs to him.



Step 1: Start with the ubiquitous plastic tree armature. I've stared at and fiddled with these things for years trying to figure out how to turn them into decent looking trees.



Step 2: Twist and turn the plastic branches of the armature to give it a fuller, non-flat shape. The plastic is pliable and holds its shape. Once you are satisfied with the overall shape, paint the armature in your choice of color. At the hands-on workshop, we had a can of dark gray spraypaint at our disposal, so that was my "chosen" color.



Step 3: Take the Super Tree material and break it into small pieces. This also assists with getting rid of the large leaves. In the case of Mike, he had a large amount of broken Super Tree material left over from making trees. He used the pieces for these types of trees and also for bushes and undergrowth. Nothing goes to waste.



Step 4: Spray the painted armature with cheap hairspray or spray adhesive and dip it into your pile of Super Tree pieces. Roll it around and add additional Super tree pieces and parts until you get the general shape you are looking for. Spray it again with your hairspray or adhesive to set all of the material and let it dry.



Step 5: Spray the entire tree with your choice of color of paint. I used the dark gray and dark brown spraypaint we had on hand at the workshop. Let the paint dry. At this point, you can go on to the next step to add leaves or you can stop here and have a leafless tree to represent a dead tree or one at home in a late fall or winter scene. A little lighter gray color would likely look better.



Step 6: Spray the tree once again with hairspray or spray adhesive and apply your choice of leaf material. You have multitudes of types and colors to choose from. At the hands-on workshop we had ground foam available, so that is what I used on this tree. Mix in different colors to give it an improved look as nothing in nature is just one color. Once you are satisfied with the look, give it one more spray with your hairspray or adhesive and let it dry. You are now ready to plant that tree.

For me, this process seemed to be “just that easy.” A bonus was to finally figure out a use for those flat plastic tree armatures. In addition, this entire process took me probably ten minutes or possibly 15 minutes per tree. The longest part of the process was waiting for paint and glue to dry (and getting distracted with good conversations with others at the workshop!)

By attending a national convention, I was able to learn a new technique from a fellow modeler, try it out at a Division event, share this technique with other modelers at the event, and now write an article for the newsletter about it. This tree technique has traveled a lot of miles from Grapevine, Texas to West Alton, Missouri and then on to the pages of this newsletter. Give this technique a try and if you like it, be sure to share it with someone else.

2023 Gateway Division Year in Review

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

JANUARY

Jim Ables started off the year as the new Superintendent while Bill Levin began another term as Paymaster. Glenn Koproske agreed to be the new Membership Chair, John Kelly agreed to be the new Assistant Paymaster, and Roger Cady agreed to be the Model Railroading 101/201 Chair.

Ricky Keil of the Gateway Division presented: Introduction to Free-Mo. Ricky provided insight into Free-Mo modular railroading including the standard, benefits and limitations, organization, and examples of modules and layouts over the years.

RPO Volume 30, Issue 4 was issued. The newsletter covered Division events and activities, plus articles on Hank Kraichely receiving his Lifetime Achievement Award, Free-Mo layouts, an online railroad magazine index, photo tours of Bill Wehmeier's Katy and Hank Kraichely's Burlington layouts, and the usual recurring columns and features.



FEBRUARY

The Division held their first hands-on workshop of the year: "Decals and Their Application." The workshop consisted of an instructional presentation by David Lowell followed by hands-on decal application by all attendees. We reviewed the steps required to provide a properly prepared surface, tips and techniques for the application of decals, as well as the tools and supplies required for decal application. The Division provided all materials at no cost to the participants.

We had Ricky Keil repeat his presentation on Free-Mo due to unexpected technical difficulties encountered by those who joined virtually in January. The second presentation was just as good as the first.



MARCH

Dave Roeder, MMR, of the Gateway Division presented "Planning for Operations" as a follow-up to his October 2022 presentation. This presentation covered planning model railroad operations as well as benchwork, trackwork, paperwork, graphics, crew size, and hosting operations.

In his duties as Fall Meet Chair, Walter Beckman begins work on organizing the first Fall Meet since 2019.



APRIL

Bob Miller, of the Gateway Division, presented "Using Animation to Bring your Scenes Alive." Bob discussed how he did the animations on the Jefferson County and Southern MRRC Club layout that was awarded Best of Show at the National Train Show in 2022 and was invited to display at the 2023 NMRA National Convention.

Dan Knipp earned his Achievement Program certificate for Volunteer.

RPO Volume 31, Issue 1 was issued. The newsletter covered Division events and activities, plus articles on operations on Greg Gramlich's Bear Creek layout, modeling C&M caboose #63, connecting with fellow NMRA members on the new NMRA Interchange, and a photo layout tour of Steve Medler's Wabash layout .



MAY

The Division conducted the second hands-on workshop of 2023. The workshop gave participants a hands-on opportunity to build a laser cut wooden kit. The structure was American Model Builders Lake Junction Station which is based on a St. Louis area prototype. The Division provided the kit and all materials no cost to participants.

A team of 5 judges visited the homes of Greg Gramlich and Glenn Koproske in May to evaluate scenery and structures on their layouts for merit awards. The team of judges consisted of Brad Joseph, MMR, Dave Roeder, MMR, Bob Miller, Willie Richter, and Dave Ackmann.

Greg Gramlich, Operations Chair, hosted an operations session for Division members on his home layout.

A joint group of 17 members and guests from the Gateway Division NMRA and the St. Louis Chapter NRHS toured Micro Engineering Co. (MEC) manufacturing plant in Fenton, Missouri. The tour was organized by the Division's Activities Coordinator, Ron Gawedzinski.



JUNE

Edward M. Koehler of the Sunrise Trail Division presented "Firefighting and Your Model Railroad." This presentation looked at how firefighting is portrayed on model railroad layouts. It started with a historical review of firehouses and then looked briefly at the history of fire trucks. It concluded with some scenes of live fire ground action and a discussion of some points to keep in mind when attempting to model these buildings, vehicles, and incidents.



JULY

Greg Gramlich presented the "Yellowstone Layout Research and Build". The layout was built as a prototypical structure of the Yellowstone National Park - South Entrance in 1925. At that time period a number of different railroads were serving the park with thousands of tourists. There was a lot of research done on the park's attractions, the surrounding town and the terrain surrounding the park. After months of working on the layout it was ready for the NMRA Layout Contest. After the judging, the layout won third place in the scratchbuilt layout category.

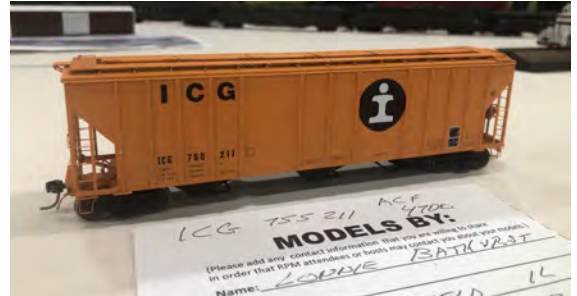
Glenn Koproske earned his Achievement Program certificate for scenery.

Jeff Cooper was elected Secretary for the NMRA Mid-Continent region.

RPO Volume 31, Issue 2 was issued. The newsletter covered Division events and activities, plus articles on the tour of Micro Engineering, the Chatham Illinois Railroad Museum, improving and detailing Ma's Place, and photo layout tours of Curt Regensberger's Streator Connection layout and Dick Morgan's freelance craftsman layout along with the usual recurring columns and features.

A joint group of 27 members and guests from the NMRA Gateway Division, the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society (NRHS), and the Intramotev Company (Intern guests of St Louis Chapter) toured the Terminal Railroad Association's (TRRA) Madison Yard in Venice, Illinois. The tour was organized by the Division's Activities Coordinator, Ron Gawedzinski.

The Division once again supported our long-time co-sponsorship of the St. Louis RPM Meet. With attendance of almost 800 and over of 3,000 models on display, it was another great success.



AUGUST

Gary Hoover presented a virtual tour of his new layout. This is his 6th layout and is all new due to moving into a new home in early 2021. The layout is fully operational, the signal system is functional and the scenery is about 75% complete. The layout is prototype/freelance and models the Norfolk and Western in the 1956/1957 era. The "prototype" aspect means that rolling stock, locos, signals and buildings follow the N&W practices. While the geographic location is Virginia/West Virginia, the specific

towns modeled are freelanced. Both steam and first-generation diesels are used. The layout has been designed for both day and night operations with most structures illuminated via LEDs. The majority of the structures are either scratch built or heavily modified kits. The program explained the planning and construction of the new layout along with "railfan" photos taken at each of the completed scenes.

Greg Gramlich, Operations Chair, hosted an operations session for Division members on his home layout.

SEPTEMBER

The Division conducted the third hands-on workshop of 2023. The workshop was on how to make trees. Participants got to try their hand at making trees out of a wide variety of materials and share different techniques with their fellow modelers.

RPO Volume 31, Issue 3 was issued. The newsletter covered Division events and activities, plus articles on the tour of TRRA's Madison Yard, the St. Louis RPM, a recap of the September hands-on workshop, and a photo tour of Pete Smith's Loon Lake Railway and Navigation Company layout along with the usual recurring columns and features.

OCTOBER

A group of 33 members of the Gateway Division of the National Model Railroad Association, the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, and guests took a one-day bus trip to Jackson, Missouri, to ride a special charter train on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway followed by lunch at The Depot Café in Fredericktown, Missouri. The café is located in the restored Iron Mountain/Missouri Pacific depot. The tour was organized by the Division's Activities Coordinator, Ron Gawedzinski.

NOVEMBER

After a four-year absence due to Covid uncertainties, The Gateway Division of the NMRA held its annual Fall Meet at VFW Post 5691 in Collinsville, Illinois. The Fall Meet featured over thirty vendors, four layouts, 50/50 raffles, prize raffles, attendance prizes, presentations, and two layout tours. The contest room had over 40 entries with room for more. The meet was well attended and plans are in the works for an even better Fall Meet in 2024.

DECEMBER

The Division held its Bring and Brag and Swap Meet in place of a presentation. Members brought projects and collections to display, as well as items to swap and sell.

By acclamation, Walter Beckman became the Division's new Assistant Superintendent and Jeff Cooper received a second term as Clerk with terms beginning January 1, 2024.



Station to Station: Mt. Carmel, Illinois

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

Station to Station is a regular feature that highlights depots and stations in the Gateway Division whether they still exist or have since faded into history.



This is the former Big Four (Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis) depot in Mt. Carmel, Illinois. Mt. Carmel is located in Wabash County and is 150 miles east-southeast of St. Louis. The line began as the Cairo and Vincennes in 1874. Through bankruptcies and mergers it eventually became part of the Big Four and ultimately the New York Central. This structure once served as Division headquarters. The last passenger train stopped here in 1957. The line survived the NYC/PC/Conrail eras and then the Southern Railway purchased the Mt. Carmel to Cairo segment in 1982. They continued to operate it until the mid to late 1980s.



Structural Elements: Illinois Central Freight House, Herrin, Illinois

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

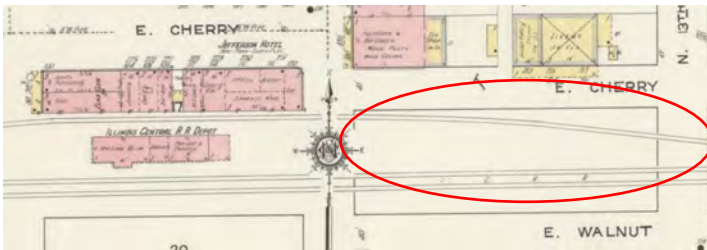
Structural Elements is a regular feature where we will examine both rail and non-rail structures and scenes to bring attention to the details that you can incorporate into your models and layout. **Mundane details tend to be overlooked** as our eyes are looking for the unusual or interesting. **Through this feature, we want to highlight the ordinary and often overlooked details.**

The Illinois Central built this brick freight house in Herrin, Illinois sometime between 1913 and 1922. Herrin is located in Williamson County ten miles northwest of Marion and 117 miles southeast of St. Louis. The freight house is at the corner of Cherry and 14th Streets. It is approximately 30-ft in width and 255-ft in length. The structure saw use as a warehouse in its later years. It is currently vacant and has developed structural issues. The building suffered fire damage in April 2021.

The freight house office was located on the west end of the building. According to the Sanborn maps, two tracks serviced the freight house and there was once a dock on the east end of the building.

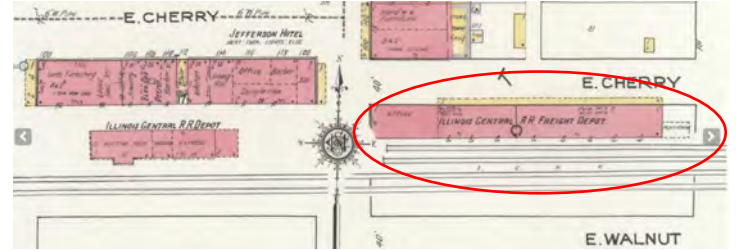
Herrin is located on what was Illinois Central's Johnston City District. The Crab Orchard and Egyptian took over the Johnston City District after the IC abandoned it in 1987. According to chicagorailfan.com, the last passenger train ran on the Johnston City District in the 1930s.





Sanborn Map Company, January 1913.

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Herrin, Williamson County, Illinois. Digital ID: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4104hm.g019211913>



Sanborn Map Company, January 1922.

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Herrin, Williamson County, Illinois. Digital ID: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4104hm.g019211922>



Editor's Observations: Exponential

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

It's the start of a new year with endless possibilities. As we look forward to what can be, it is also a time to reflect on what was. Over the past year, the Division conducted presentations, hands-on workshops, and tours. 2023 also marked the return of the Fall Meet, the first once since 2019. Not only did these events provide for education and entertainment, they also provided time with others who share an interest in trains. We expanded our activities in the Achievement Program and also had multiple opportunities for our members to operate on a layout whether they were brand-new to operations or grizzled operations veterans. I think the Division had a pretty good year.

As the English poet William Cowper wrote "Variety's the very spice of life, That gives it all its flavour."

Throughout the year, the Division tries to bring value to our members in whatever we do. We try to offer a wide variety of topics, activities, and events as we know that not everyone like the same thing. As the English poet William Cowper wrote "Variety's the very spice of life, That gives it all its flavour." From the 2023 presentations on Free-Mo to operations to layout design to prototype information, we wanted to bring you this variety and all at no cost to you other than your time. We held three hands-on workshops in 2023 that covered decaling, building laser-cut wood structures, and making trees. These workshops plus all materials were also provided at no cost to you. Along with the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, there were tours of

Micro-Engineering and the Terminal Railroad Association railyard and facilities, again, both at no cost to participants. The two organizations also took a train ride and had a nice lunch in southeast Missouri that did have a cost associated with it as sometimes we just can't make it work for free.

Last year saw the Division continue its relationship as a co-sponsor of the St. Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers meet. Not only is the Division a co-sponsor, but we have many members who volunteer to help out, plus all of the people behind the St. Louis RPM are also members of our Division.

Last year also saw several members earn certificates in the Achievement Program. The Achievement Program also implemented home visits, work groups, and saw some members who became new judges for the program.

If operations is something that interests you, we had multiple opportunities in 2023 for members to sign up for operating sessions on a layout on the west side of St. Louis. The Division is looking for someone to volunteer on the Illinois side to arrange for operating sessions so that we have opportunities on both sides of the river for our members.

This newsletter also came out 4 times in the past year and we certainly think it provides value to our members. We try to publish a variety of articles and we always include a layout located in our Division. We certainly have talented modelers in the Gateway Division.

Lastly, what brings some of the best value at no cost other than your time, is the people you get to meet at Division events, whether virtually or in-person. To me, it is a pretty good way to spend an evening (or a morning at one of our workshops): hanging around a fine group of folks, talking about trains, both the real things and the models, and drinking an ice cold beverage (ice tea or RC Cola for me, thanks.)

Ultimately, in one way or another, we are trying to bring value to you by sharing. Our officers and volunteers take time out of their lives to try to make this a better Division and to share our passion for this hobby. We don't get any compensation or perks for what we do. The benefits to us are a sense of satisfaction, sharing a hobby that we are passionate about, getting to spend time with people whose company we enjoy, and getting to learn new things.

A really good example of how sharing pays multiple dividends is the article in this issue about making trees. This all started because one NMRA member shared his technique for making trees at a session at the National convention in Grapevine, Texas. I took his technique and tried it at our hands-on workshop that we had in September. I got to try this new technique with materials provided at no cost by the Division. If it didn't work out I wasn't going to be on the hook for wasted materials or money. By trying this new technique at the Division hands-on workshop, I was able to share it with a larger group of modelers. In the last issue of the RPO, there was an article on the workshop itself, and in this issue of the RPO there is the article on how to actually make the trees. By including it in the RPO, it is now reaching a wider audience. So, by the simple act of a modeler who was willing to share his tree making technique at the National convention, it turned into me learning a technique from this person willing to share it with others, to trying this technique at a Division workshop, to sharing this technique at the Division workshop, to me writing this article for the RPO and sharing it with you. That one act of sharing has now spread throughout our Division. Multiply that times the number of people who originally attended the session at National and then multiply that times the number of people that all of those people shared it with and the impact is exponential. And it all started with just one person. Now, imagine if each of you shared just one thing with our members and they, in turn, shared it with a group of people small or large. What an impressive sight that would be.

Thank you to all of you who volunteer your time for the Division and thank you to those of you who come out to our events whether in-person or virtually, read our e-mails, follow us on social media, and otherwise participate however you see fit. We have a lot of things in motion for 2024. It will be another great year for our Division. Stop by or logon sometime. We think you will be glad you did.



Containers being loaded at the BNSF Intermodal Yard in Alliance, Texas on August 21, 2023

Photos by Jeff Cooper

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2023

Call to Order

Superintendent Jimmy Ables called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Meeting Etiquette

Mr. Ables welcomed in-person and Zoom attendees. Mr. Ables reminded all participants to silence their cell phones, speak one at a time, limit side conversations, and state their name when speaking. Zoom attendees were reminded to mute their lines. Finally, Mr. Ables noted that the business meeting is being recorded.

New Members/Visitors Recognition

Mr. Ables asked if there were any new members or visitors attending the meeting. There was one new visitor.

Minutes from the August 21, 2023 Meeting

Mr. Ables presented the minutes from the August 21, 2023 meeting. Mr. Ables noted that these were the most recent meeting minutes as the hands-on workshop was in September, the October meeting was cancelled, and we held the Fall Meet in November.

The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Financial Reports

Bill Levin presented the November financial report. Mr. Levin reported on the financial activity from the Fall Meet. The Fall Meet was a success and generated approximately \$2,400 in revenue and approximately \$1,200 in expenses resulting in a profit of about \$1,200. By choosing the VFW in Collinsville, it saved \$500 to \$600 in table rental costs as the VFW provided them at no cost to us. There are a few wrap up expenses that will be paid in December. The previous Fall Meet (2019) generated an approximate \$800 profit as a comparison. Additionally, interest revenue is up in November. The bank account balance stands at \$25,752.67.

Directors and Officers (D&O) Liability Insurance

Mr. Levin discussed the topic of D&O Insurance. This insurance protects the Officers and Directors of the organization in the event someone files a lawsuit. If the insurance is not procured, and someone files a lawsuit, the officers would have pay attorney fees out of their own pocket. In this day and age with the number of frivolous lawsuits, the Officers feel it is important to procure this coverage. Additionally, National NMRA D&O insurance policies do not extend to cover the Divisions like their liability insurance. Mr. Levin obtained 3 bids and the low bid is from The Hartford for approximately \$522 per year. A member asked the policy limits. Mr. Levin reported that the policy limits are \$1,000,000.

The procurement and annual renewal of the D&O policy was approved by unanimous vote.

Elections

Dale DeWitt reviewed the election process for 2023. He reported that the Elections and Nominations Committee consisted of himself, Don Head, and Glenn Koproske. The committee sent out notices to members indicating that there were 2 positions open for nominations: Assistant Superintendent and Clerk. There were 2 to 3 members interested in Assistant Superintendent; however, all but one dropped out. There was one nomination for Clerk. The nominee for Assistant

Superintendent is Walter Beckman and the nominee for Clerk is Jeff Cooper, the current officeholder. Since there is only one nominee for each position, the recommendation to the Board was to approve the nominees by acclamation rather than the formal election process. The Board agreed with the recommendation and are now recommending to the membership that they approve Walter Beckman as Assistant Superintendent and Jeff Cooper for Clerk for the upcoming terms of office.

It was motioned and seconded that the position of Assistant Superintendent be filled for the next term of office by Walter Beckman and the position of Clerk be filled for the next term of office by Jeff Cooper. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Fall Meet

Walter Beckman reported on the Fall Meet. Mr. Beckman noted that there were a few changes from previous years. The Cub Scouts provided food for both vendors and attendees as part of a fundraiser for them. We did not have as many vendors as we budgeted, but the ones that were there did really well. Mr. Beckman reported that a group of Board members and volunteers met to discuss improvements for 2024. Mr. Ables noted that he and the rest of the Board feel the Fall Meet was a huge success and thanked Walter Beckman and Dale Dewitt, as well as, all of the volunteers for a job well done. Mr. Ables announced that Brad Joseph is the Fall Meet Chair for 2024 and that flyers are already done and ready for distribution. The next Fall Meet will be the first Saturday in November (11/2/2024) at the VFW in Collinsville. A member asked if there were any items in particular that were problematic. Mr. Ables noted that some issues that we will resolve for the next meet include having a backup for the PA system, improving the space for the presentations/hands-on demonstrations, and improving the exterior signage. A member asked if the setup schedule was an issue. Mr. Ables reported that the new setup schedule worked out fine. The layouts were able to be set up the evening before and the vendors were able to set up the morning of the meet. In checking with the vendors, there were no reports of problems with this arrangement.

AP Updates

Dave Ackmann reported that Glenn Koproske's SOQ for Volunteer was misplaced by the Region. Mr. Ackmann resubmitted it and is waiting for it to be processed. This will be certificate #5 for Mr. Koproske. David Lowell inquired on the status of the paperwork from the AP judging at the Fall Meet. Mr. Ackmann reported that he needs to work with Chris Oestreich to finalize everything. A member recommended that the Division streamline the process for the 2024 Fall Meet. Mr. Ables reported that there are improvements planned such as starting the judging earlier and taking care of paperwork ahead of time. He also noted that there were a lot of good entries this year.

Volunteers Needed

Mr. Ables reported that volunteers are needed for Assistant Clerk and Operations Assistant. Greg Gramlich is the Operations Chair and handles operations on the west side of the Division. It would be helpful to have someone volunteer to set up operating sessions on layouts on the Illinois side of the river. If anyone is interested in either position, please reach out to Mr. Ables.

Club Updates

Mr. Koproske reported that the "fun run" at the public libraries have been a huge success and often result in the doubling the number of attendees in comparison to other library events.

RPO

Mr. Cooper reported that the deadline for submissions to the newsletter is January 1st, but that date is flexible if someone has something in the works. Mr. Ables thanked Mr. Cooper for his work on the RPO.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Ables announced upcoming events:

- **December 30, 2023, Sierra Nevada & Indian River Railway Open House**, 248 Pardella, St. Louis, MO; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Green colored house; Use side door and go down the basement; No need to knock; Bring Digitrax throttle if you have one; You can run your engines or cars; Engines must have a decoder and cars must have metal wheels
- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **January 6, 2024, Train Fair Presented by the St. Charles Model Railroad Club**, St. Charles West High School, 3601 Droste Road, St. Charles, MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **January 27 and 28, 2024, Great Train Show**, St. Charles Convention Center, St. Charles, MO; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Other Business/Announcements

- Mr. Koproske, Membership Chair, noted that the membership roster has 78 blanks when it comes to birthdate so we cannot get an accurate analysis of the age of our members. He noted the Division had 234 members in January but only 202 by the end of November. Mr. Ables noted that this is due, in large part, to a temporary membership bump caused by the National convention in 2022. This same phenomenon occurred during the last National convention in St. Louis in 2001. Membership numbers typically hover around 200.
- Mr. Koproske remarked that there is no link on the Division website to join the NMRA. Mr. Ables reported that the website needs to be updated and he has been in contact with the webmaster.
- Dan Knipp, outgoing Assistant Superintendent and Presentations Chair noted that he has the presentation scheduled for January, which will be by Mr. Ackmann giving an 18-month update to his 3D printing process and presentation. Discussion ensued if Mr. Knipp is to continue as the Presentations Chair. Mr. Ables noted that another member has volunteered but has been out of the area for several months and has not been able to take over. Mr. Ables requested that Mr. Knipp continue until the new Chair returns to the area.
- Mr. Lowell reported that Mr. Cooper has been elected Secretary of the Mid-Continent Region
- Mr. Koproske noted that we will have a N scale article appear in the National NMRA magazine, possibly in the February 2024 issue.

50/50 Drawing

Dan Knipp won the 50/50 drawing.

Presentation

After a short break, attendees showed off and discussed the models they brought to the "Bring and Brag." Attendees also had an opportunity to buy or trade items at a member swap meet.

Next Meetings/Events

Mr. Ables announced that the following upcoming Division events:

- **January 15, 2024:** Membership Meeting with Presentation: Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO, 7 p.m.
- **February 24, 2024:** Hands-on Workshop, West Alton City Hall, 111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO, 9:30 a.m.
- **March 18, 2024:** Membership Meeting with Presentation: Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road, Town and Country, MO, 7 p.m.

Adjourn

Mr. Ables adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Jeff Cooper, Clerk, Gateway Division



**Winter 2024:
Volume 31, Number 4**

The RPO is the official publication of the Gateway Division of the National Model Railroad Association

Editor: Jeff Cooper

Articles, photos and any other materials for publication are to be sent to the Editor. No payment can be made for publication of any materials. Regular issues are published quarterly: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. Distribution of the RPO are available to members of the NMRA as a service provided by members of the Gateway Division.

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Articles may be submitted as handwritten, typed, plain unformatted text on paper, USB flash drive, or via email to the editor. Photo submissions may be made as digital files or as prints. Submissions can be e-mailed to the editor at:

rpoeditor@outlook.com

If your submission will be by a method other than e-mail, please contact Jeff Cooper at 618-889-8907 by call or text.

Submission deadlines:

Spring: April 1
Summer: July 1
Fall: October 1
Winter: January 1

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Visit our website at:
www.gatewaynmra.org

Division Officers

Superintendent

Jim Ables
Mascoutah, IL

Assistant Superintendent

Walter Beckman
St. Louis, MO

Clerk (Secretary)

Jeff Cooper
Marion, IL

Paymaster (Treasurer)

Bill Levin
Chesterfield, MO

Division Director

David Lowell
St. Louis, MO

Past-Superintendent

Willie Richter
W. Alton, MO

Congratulations!

Walter Beckman
for being elected
Assistant Superintendent
and
Jeff Cooper
for being re-elected Clerk

**Both will serve 2 year terms
beginning January 1, 2024.**

Division Chairs

Achievement Program

Dave Ackmann

Activities

Ron Gawedzinski

Presentations

Dan Knipp

Contests

Chris Oestreich

Fall Meet

Brad Joseph, MMR

IT

Willie Richter

Layout Tours

Dave Roeder, MMR

Membership

Glenn Koproske

Operations

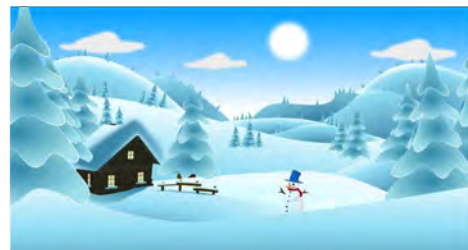
Greg Gramlich

Publicity

Jim Ables

Webmaster

Richard Schumacher



HELP WANTED

We are looking are a few volunteers. We need fellow members who are interested in assisting us with the following positions:

Publicity Chair: Send notices and e-mails to members, coordinate our attendance at train shows and line up volunteers to work during the show, assist with publicity for the Fall Meet, and other publicity types of activities.

Assistant Clerk: Assist with preparing or proofreading agendas and minutes, assist with proofreading the RPO, and fill-in when the Clerk is unable to attend meetings.

Holiday Party Chair: organize our once a year holiday party.

Operations Assistant (Illinois): Coordinating operating sessions on member layouts located on the Illinois side of the river.

Club Directory



Mississippi Valley N Scalpers

The **Mississippi Valley N Scalpers** LLC model railroad club was founded in April of 1990. It is

the oldest exclusive N scale club in the St. Louis Metro area. The club owns both fixed and modular (NTRAK and T-TRAK) layouts. Their members come from both sides of the Mississippi river. They share a common love of model railroading and a sincere interest in sharing their knowledge and expertise with fellow members. If you would like to join, you can attend a meeting or visit <http://mvns.railfan.net/> for more information.



The **Big Bend Railroad Club** is a 2-Rail O Scale model railroad club that started in 1938 and is located at the Frisco depot at 8833 Big Bend Boulevard in Webster Groves, MO. The club

operates for the public on the first Tuesday of the month (Except holidays) from 7:00 PM until around 8:30 PM, with extra nights in December, and other days for special occasions. They meet each Tuesday at the station. The public is welcome to drop by on any Tuesday evening and have a look around, but be aware that there may not be any activity on the layout other than the ongoing repair work. For more information, visit <http://www.bigbendrclub.org>



The **Mudhens** are a club promoting narrow gauge railroading modeled in HO scale. They are dedicated to high quality modeling, improving skills,

and enhancing others enjoyment of model railroading. New members and visitors are always welcome. A featured sectional group of tables exists in St. Louis, MO and consists of an eight-table loop plus one table for connecting a branch line. Other fine modular and sectional groups exist in Arizona, Illinois, Texas, and Colorado. If you are interested in learning more about The Mudhens or becoming a member, visit <https://www.themudhens.org/>



Do you like to operate, collect, or just want to learn more about Lionel and other types of O-Gauge Model Trains? The **Lionel Railroad Club of St. Louis** may be the club for you! The Club has two portable layouts that they display at various

venues throughout the year. As a member you can work on and operate your trains on any of these layouts. Membership benefits also include access to train related DVDs, books, and magazines, programs on railroads of today and yesterday, and exclusive club products such as die cast vehicles, shirts, hats, mugs, and Club Lionel Licensed Cars. For more information visit <http://www.lionelrrclubstl.com>



Gateway Free-Mo is a group of model railroaders in the Midwest centered around the St. Louis, MO area (100-200 mile radius). The group consists of

model railroaders that are interested in prototypical modeling using the Free-Mo modular concept to build, assemble, and operate a model railroad. Midwest railroad prototypes, such as MP, RI SLSF, Wabash, C&NW, L&N, and GM&O, as well as the modern empires such as NS, UP, and BNSF are emphasized and Midwest scenes are featured on the layout. The group has a Facebook Group called Gateway Free-Mo. For more information, contact Ricky Keil at 314-591-0152, message through the Facebook Group or e-mail rkeil6721@hotmail.com



The **St. Louis Live Steamers** is an organization interested in the construction of large scale model railroads, in steam railroad history and operations, and in steam technology generally. The SLLS seeks to share these interests with

the general public and provide opportunities in the community for everyone to learn about steam railroad history and technology. Their trains are 1/8 scale, also known as 1.5 inches to the foot. The rails are spaced 7.5 inches apart and a section of the railroad has an additional rail spacing of 4.75 inches to accommodate one-inch scale equipment.

For more information visit <http://www.stlouislivesteamers.org/>

Club Directory



The purpose of the **St. Charles Model Railroad Club** is to enjoy the hobby of Model Railroading in a group setting and promoting the hobby to the general public. It is their goal to enhance the enjoyment of the hobby for the members through the discussion of history and current events in the hobby, through the study of prototype railroads so that the members may apply that knowledge to their modeling, and to provide a forum where new ideas and techniques in modeling may be explored. The current club layout is the traditional permanent type. For more information visit <https://www.stcharlesrailroadclub.org/>.



The **Gateway Garden Railroad Club** continues to grow and includes the entire St. Louis area. There are even several out-of-town members. The club participates in many shows and special events each year. Also, the club currently maintains the

Large Scale Railroad that is suspended from the ceiling in the crossover from the garage entrance to Children's Hospital on Kingshighway in St. Louis. All big train enthusiasts are encouraged to join: Collectors, rivet counters, garden railroaders, indoor railroaders, live steamers, etc. We are an equal opportunity club; just bring your love of big trains. For more information visit <http://ggrrc.com/>.



The **Metro East Model Railroad Club** is located in Glen Carbon, IL. The HO scale layout is 18'6" wide by 27'6" long and has roughly 1000' of track on several levels. It includes a freight yard, a passenger yard, and a staging yard. The upper level features a depiction of the Glen Carbon area in the 1940's. The lower levels feature the club's fictitious 'Glen Carbon Central' Railroad, a large steel mill, and a coal mine. The club holds regular business meetings in the Glen Carbon Library on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. In addition, work/play sessions are held every non-1st Thursday at 6:30 p.m. For more information visit <http://www.trainweb.org/memrc/>.



The **Jefferson County and Southern Model Railroad Club** is an HO scale model railroad club that models the Bonne Terre Railroad (Missouri-Illinois/Missouri Pacific). The club's display layout is a 14-by-44-foot section of a larger layout. It features a dual main line and Jefferson County and Ozark-type scenery. They typically have monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. Modelers interested in joining may become provisional members for a year and then may be promoted to club member. For more information, check out the club Facebook page. Those interested in joining can send an email to Bob Miller at bobnjoanstimo@gmail.com.

K-10's Model Trains Maryville, Illinois

K-10's Model Trains is a hobby shop with a 60' x 81' layout attached to the shop. The purpose of the layout is to demonstrate new products and techniques. The layout room includes a dispatcher and observation platform that is handicapped accessible. The layout includes three major railroads (ATSF, UP & SP) that all interchange with each other, two short lines, and five major industries. Adult train running will start at 7 p.m. every Thursday night with the third Thursday night being "OPS" night. Saturday adult volunteer train running will start about 1 p.m. 2023 Sunday Kids Train Running is TBA depending on better local Covid and Flu conditions. For more information visit <https://www.k-10smodeltrains.com/>

Don't see your club listed? Send us your club information to rpoeditor@outlook.com and we will include it in the next issue!

Local Hobby Shop Directory

Castle Trains and Treasures

4782 Old Jacksonville Road
Springfield, IL 62711
(217) 793-0407

Mark Twain Hobby Center

2793 W Clay Street
St. Charles, MO 63301
(636) 946-2816
hobby1.com

Red Board Hobbies

2331 Old Collinsville Rd #C
Belleville, IL 62221
(618) 233-3618
redboardhobbies.com

Checkered Flag Hobby Country

3847 Lemay Ferry Road
St. Louis, MO 63125
(314) 843-7800
checkeredflaghobby.com

Meadow Ridge Trains & Hobbies

520 E State Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101
(573) 395-4910
Follow on Facebook

Rodney's Trains & Toys

9622 Gravois Road
St. Louis, MO 63123
(314) 638-8250
Follow on Facebook

Chuck's Depot

1913 West Rendleman
Marion, IL 62959
(618) 993-9179

Please Support Your Hobby Shop

Don't see your shop listed?
Send us your information to
rpoeditor@outlook.com and
we will include it in the next
issue!

Shop Local

Schaefer's Hobby Shop

11659 Gravois Road
St. Louis, MO 63126
(314) 729-7077
schaeferhobby.com

Frisco Train & Toy Store

24 Front Street
Valley Park, MO 63088
(636) 529-1660
friscotrainstore.com

Switch Stand Train Shop

9120 Lackland Road
Overland, MO 63114
(314) 733-1029
switchstandtrainshop.com

K-10's Model Trains

19 Schiber Court
Maryville, IL 62062
(618) 288-9720
k-10smodeltrains.com

Neal's N-Gauging Trains

100 W Main Street
Staunton, IL 62088
(618) 635-2525
nealsngauge.com

TAG Trains

Flora, IL
Visit tagtrains.net or follow
on Facebook to see their
train show schedule or to
submit an inquiry

Mainline Model Railroad Products

2436 Denver Drive
Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 679-1945
Follow on Facebook

North Central Hobbies

9630 Lackland Road
Overland, MO 63114
(314) 426-0031
nchobby.net

Train Town

9832 Manchester Road
St. Louis, MO 63119
(314) 716-2755
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