

RPO

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION - GATEWAY DIVISION



Volume 33, Issue 2 Summer/Fall 2025

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Bob Miller, Superintendent, Gateway Division

Wow what a fast year it been! In June the Division's board of directors started working and assisting in creating a new double Web page for the Gateway Division. The Division has secured both gatewaydivisionnmra.org and gatewaydivisionnmra.com as the domain names for the new website. Check it out when you get a chance.

The RPM meet was July 25 &26 in Collinsville, IL. There was hardly any time to catch one's breath after the National Convention, but Division members spent Friday and Saturday presenting clinics to the RPM visitors . Division members conducted Hands-on Clinics on Oil Paint Weathering, How to Build a City Block on, and Making Corn Stalks, as well as hosting the Division switching layout both days. It's a great time to help people attempt new techniques in modeling!

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Strings of refrigerator cars are spotted at the Van Zandt Produce and Cold Storage facility on K-10's massive layout. See more photos in this issue and the next issue of the RPO.

Photo by Jeff Cooper.

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

The month of August allowed us to catch our breath, but only briefly. The Division Free-Mo group has been very busy building Modules, laying roadbed and track their hope is to have the layout ready for a Christmas display in December. If you would like to participate in the Free MO group contact Greg Gramlich or Willie Richter.

September 3rd through the 6th was the 45th National Narrow Gauge Convention in Collinsville, IL. The Gateway Division was a co-sponsor of the event. It really was a nice event and I met a lot of great people. If I hadn't invested so much money in HO, I'd be tempted to branch out into HOn3. There were lots of great layouts to see and I was given the chance to vote in their contest room! It was inspiring to meet this great group of modelers.

All of this plus our monthly Division meetings and presentations makes for a great time. There is something for everyone, so be sure to attend some of these great events in the future.

Ron Gawedzinski Presented with Lifetime Achievement Award

By Bob Miller, Superintendent, Gateway Division

At the end of September, we learned that the long time Division member Ron Gawedzinski was leaving the St. Louis area to move to Texas by the end of November. Based on Ron's service to the Division and its members, it was agreed upon that Ron Gawedzinski be bestowed with the Henry "Hank" Kraichely Lifetime Achievement Award. Ron has been a dedicated member of the Division and most recently served as the Activities Coordinator. Ron was able to arrange for many tours that allowed members to visit industries, museums, and facilities and take excursions that otherwise would not have been available for them had it not been for being a member of the Division. Ron has been a loyal NMRA member for over 50 years. As Ron wasn't able to attend the Division meeting for the presentation of his award, Division Superintendent Bob Miller stopped by his home and presented Ron with his Lifetime Achievement Award. He was overwhelmed and very appreciative of the award! Congratulations, Ron! You've earned this award. Thank you for all that you have done for the Gateway Division and the NMRA. It is truly appreciated.



In Memoriam: Jeremy Janzen

By Jim Ables, Past Superintendent, Gateway Division



We are saddened to announce the passing of Jeremy Janzen. Jeremy was an active member of the Gateway Division and the St Louis area N-Scale N-Trak community. Jeremy supported Division activities, including our annual Fall Meets and National Model Railroad Association conventions. At the 2022 NMRA convention, held in St Louis, Jeremy was instrumental in organizing Operations training on his organization's Free-Mo layout. The Gateway Division offers our sincerest condolences to Jeremy's family and friends. May you find peace during this difficult time.

Obituary:

Jeremy Ryan Janzen

August 27, 1975 — October 31, 2025

St. Charles, Missouri

Jeremy Ryan Janzen of St. Charles, MO, passed away Friday, October 31, 2025, at the age of 50 years. He was the first-born son of Jay and Rachel Janzen. He is survived by his parents, his brother Ricky Janzen, his grandmother Alice Schmidt, and aunts, uncles and cousins. Jeremy is preceded in death by his grandparents Albert and Edna Schmidt, and Elmer and Rosie Janzen.

Jeremy's lifelong passion was model railroading. He found great joy in creating detailed buildings and scenery, and was well-known in the modeling community for his involvement in planning, organizing and attending model train shows across the country. Jeremy was also an avid reader, and he loved elephants, both live ones and his extensive collection.

Jeremy's elementary years were spent at Living Word Christian School. He was homeschooled for high school, and went on to graduate Magna Cum Laude from Missouri Baptist College (now University) in 1997 with bachelors degrees in Business and Communications.

His work experience included doing data entry for the Billy Graham Crusade when they came to St. Louis; cold-calling as a telemarketer; an intern in the district office of U.S. Congressman Jim Talent; and sales associate for both Mark Twain Hobby Shop and Radio Shack. After college graduation he worked at - Target for 20 years. In 2017 he was hired as an audio/visual technician with Aramark, later Waveguide, who contracted with Washington University in St. Louis. This was a dream job for him, and he loved it. In 2020 Jeremy passed his CTS (Certified Technology Specialist) certification. This was an important milestone.

Jeremy had a deep devotion and commitment to his church, where he faithfully served as head technician, overseeing the sound and lighting with a servant's heart.

We admired Jeremy's upbeat, positive outlook in life. He faced many challenges and disappointments, and yet he seldom complained and always had a smile. Jeremy was dearly loved, and will be missed by all who knew him.



Right: Photo of one of Jeremy's modules under construction in 2015. Photo by Jeremy Janzen

<https://janzentrains.wixsite.com/janzen-trains/free-mon-modeling>

Membership Update: January 2025 through June 2025

Membership Anniversaries

Thank You!

65 Years

Ronald Goldfeder

60 Years

Kerry Doyle

55 Years

Dale DeWitt

Lawrence Grzovic

Edwin Koening, Jr.

Ronald Rozewicz

Lloyd Taaffe

50 Years

Ron Gawedzinski

Kenneth Kroschwitz

40 Years

Hank Kraichely

35 Years

Robert Dick

30 Years

Kent Tallyn

20 Years

William Payne

Rick Ragsdale

Jeff Cooper

Kenneth Dickey

15 Years

St. Charles Model Railroad
Club

David Weidler

Thomas Gaffuri

Stephen Medler

10 Years

David Lowell MMR

Thomas Montgomery, Jr.

5 Years

Richard Brandon

Miller Family

Michael Homewood

Fran Paskert

David Leach

New Members

Welcome!

Eric Andrews

Ron Boutell

Kerry Eaves

Nathan Glick

Kevin Heaney

Jack Hochmuth

Dezirae Ingles-Head

Kitty Lunare

Mark Smith

Vic Smith

J. Finn Terrill

Dave Wehner

Kenneth Wolff

Jackson Wolff



Activities Coordinator:

Coordinate outside activities and tours of local industries, rail related sites, museums, or other types of organizations and activities that may be of interest to our members.

Contact Bob Miller, Superintendent at: bobnjoanstimo@gmail.com if you are interested in helping out.



"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."
Arthur Ashe

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."
Theodore Roosevelt

**Gateway Division Southern Illinois Model Train Meet:
Marion, IL February 7, 2026**



**The Gateway Division
of the National Model
Railroad Association**



2026 Southern Illinois Model Train Meet

Saturday, February 7, 2026

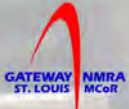
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Pavilion

1602 Sioux Drive, Marion, IL

Admission \$5, Kids 12 and Under are FREE

- ★ **Vendors**
- ★ **Operating Layouts**
- ★ **Model Displays**
- ★ **Presentations and Demonstrations**
- ★ **Door Prizes**
- ★ **Layout Tours**
- ★ **FREE Parking**
- ★ **On-Site Concessions**



The Gateway Division
of the National Model Railroad Association



2026 Southern Illinois Model Train Meet

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Pavilion, 1602 Sioux Drive, Marion, Illinois

Admission \$5 (Cash Only), Kids Under 12 are Free

Vendors
Operating Layouts
Model Contest and Displays
Presentations and Demonstrations

Achievement Program Evaluations
Door Prizes and Raffles
Layout Tours
FREE Parking

Are you a model train vendor on the train show circuit? Are you a modeler who just has too much stuff...or are you downsizing...or have your modeling interests changed...or you need cash for the latest and greatest model train release?

Reserve your tables NOW to sell your trains and put cash in your pocket. HURRY before it's too late!

SWAP TABLES (30" X 96") may be reserved for \$15.00 each. Please make checks payable to: "Gateway Division - MCOR - NMRA" and return with the information slip below to: Gateway Division, PO Box 7742, Chesterfield, MO 63006-7742. (CHECKS MUST ACCOMPANY TABLE ORDER.)

VENDOR SET UP: Friday, February 6, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. .

PLEASE PRINT **2026 Southern Illinois Model Train Meet**

Please reserve _____ table(s) for me. Electricity needed? (YES) (NO) Please circle one

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of table(s) _____ x \$15.00 = \$ _____

Total Enclosed _____ = \$ _____

Special Requests: _____

Vendor Table Information: Mail to Walter Beckman, c/o Gateway Division, PO Box 7742, Chesterfield, MO 63006-7742, or email to mogulfwestern@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Thanks to the Mississippi Valley N Scalers for Maintaining the Show Calendar

December 27, 2025 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: After the Storm Train Show: Arnolds Eagles Club, 1725 Jeffco Blvd., Arnold, MO

December 27, 2025 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. : Sierra Nevada & Indian River Railway Open House: 248 Pardella, St. Louis, MO

December 27, 2025 Noon to 4 p.m.: Lionel Club Open House: 8460 Watson Rd, Suite 120, St. Louis, MO

January 3, 2026 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: TrainFair 2026 presented by the St. Charles Model Railroad Club: St. Charles West High School, 3601 Droste Road, St. Charles, MO

January 24 - 25, 2026, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Great Train Show: St. Charles Convention Center, 1 Convention Center Blvd., St. Charles, MO

February 7, 2026, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Gateway Division NMRA Southern Illinois Train Meet: The Pavilion, 1602 Sioux Drive, Marion, IL

February 14, 2026, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Sons of the American Legion Train Show: Dupo American Legion Post #485, 200 S. 5th Street, Dupo, IL

March 7, 2026 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Boeing Employee's Railroad Club—St. Louis Railroad Swap Meet: Greensfelder Recreation Complex at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road, Ballwin, MO

March 15, 2026 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Springfield Train Fair: Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL

Check out the new Gateway Division website at:

**gatewaydivisionnmra.org
or
gatewaydivisionnmra.com**

Achievement Program Update: Round Thing

By Dave Ackmann, Achievement Program Chair, Gateway Division



Two things to learn here:

1) If you are serious about AP Structures, a 3D printer opens avenues that you might be unable to traverse otherwise; and 2) In model railroading, almost nothing is really impossible.

I took a new model to the Celebration event (aka: "Contest") at the July, 2025, annual NMRA Convention in Novi, Michigan. And other than its base, footings and ladder, there is hardly a flat surface on it.

Last November, at our annual Gateway Divisional meet, I made great progress toward the Achievement Program's (AP) award for Structures, and now I need just two more Merit Award winning buildings to qualify. Once I started down the Structures path, I began to see the world differently; not everything in the world is rectangular. And so it was that I came across a water tank in the village of Carpenter Illinois, just off exit 30 on I-55. Not much rectangular about a community water tank. The tank itself is a cylinder, and so are the legs and standpipe. On my model, the horizontal compression arms and diagonal tensioners are too, and let's not forget the cage around the ladder. The upper and lower domes are squashed hemi-spheres. And the catwalk is a whole different "roundish" challenge. Almost impossible to model using traditional methods, but I have a 3D printer, so I took up the challenge.

Using TinkerCAD, OpenSCAD, and custom software I wrote (two new "Generators" for Water Tanks and Ladders, available for free at <http://daackm.github.io>), the tank came to life. A custom decal and an Arduino microprocessor controlling a flashing LED at the top were "icing on the cake". Is this model complex enough to receive a Merit Award? Maybe. But it made me happy, and that's just as rewarding.

Could I have done this without a 3D printer? Possibly. There are pipe shapes available in styrene from your hobby shop, and a 3" piece of PVC pipe could be used for the tank. Plastruct makes a ladder and cage in several scales. One might be able to use a ball as a

form and construct domes using plaster sheet from Woodland Scenics. I'm not so sure about the catwalk, and certainly I could not have matched all my desired dimensions for a 50K gallon tank in HO. But as 21st century modelers, why must we limit ourselves to 18th century tools?

Two things to learn here: 1) If you are serious about AP Structures, a 3D printer opens avenues that you might be unable to traverse otherwise; and 2) In model railroading, almost nothing is really impossible.

Hands-on Workshop Recap: Low Profile Scenery

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division, Photos by Don Perry

On August 16, 2025, the Gateway Division held its Hands-on Workshop for making low profile scenery.

Greg Gramlich, MMR demonstrated different scenery creation and application techniques specifically designed to be low profile in nature. This type of scenery is designed for modular type layouts in which transportation creates issues for anything of height located on the layout; however, these techniques can be used on permanent home layouts, too. From applying static grass to creating shrubs and brush, these lessons can be applied across the board.

A special thanks to Willie Richter and the City of West Alton for the use of their City Hall.

The Gateway Division hosts hands on workshops the third Saturday in February, May, and August beginning at 9 a.m. If you have ideas for possible topics for a hands-on workshop, or for hands-on session at our regular meetings, please reach out to Bob Miller at:

bobnjoanstlmo@gmail.com



Photo Tour of Ken Kroschwitz's K-10 Layout: Part 1

Layout Description from the Gateway 2022 National Convention Time Table and by Richard Schumacher on the Gateway Division Website. Photos by Jeff Cooper

Ken Kroschwitz's K-10 HO scale layout was started in March 1998 in a 60-ft by 81-ft room located next to a hobby shop inside a warehouse. The purpose of the layout is to demonstrate new products and techniques. The layout includes three major railroads, the Santa Fe, Union Pacific, and Southern Pacific, that all interchange with each other. There are also two shortlines and five major industries.



The Santa Fe includes a 255-ft double track mainline and a 19-track yard with an average storage track length of 23-ft. Each mainline loop has nine blocks with each block having its own throttle. Four operators control both loops while radio controlled throttles are used for the East end yard, West end yard, North local, South local, oil refinery, and both shortlines.



The Union Pacific and Southern Pacific loops are usually combined into a 550-ft single track loop and use DCC. The Union Pacific operation includes a 9-track yard with an average storage track length of 14-ft. The Union Pacific also includes a steel mill, ore mine, and coal mine.

The Southern Pacific operation includes a 15-track yard with average storage track length of 19-ft. The Southern Pacific also serves a large back-in station, an ore dock, and a paper mill.

All three major railroads have an intermodal yard, fruit growers express warehouse, numerous grain elevators, and an interchange track/yard with both of the other railroads. Since the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific are single track mainlines with passing sidings, dispatchers are necessary and give instructions via radio to engineers with radio controlled DCC throttles.

Part 2 of the tour will appear in the next issue of the RPO.











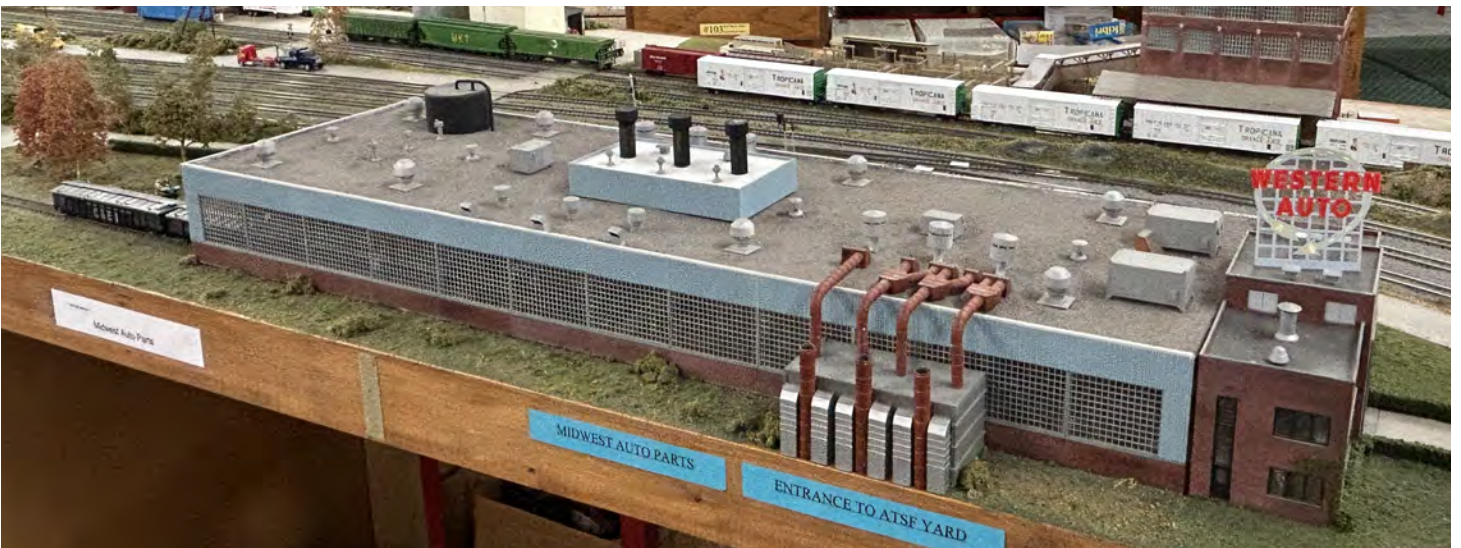












2025 St. Louis RPM Wrap-up

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

The annual St. Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet returned to Collinsville on July 24th through the 26th and once again demonstrated why it is the largest annual RPM event in the U.S.

There were over 2,500 models on display, a full slate of presentations, hands-on demonstrations, modular layouts, vendors, historical societies, five home layout tours, and four operating sessions. Add in the hard work of the staff and volunteers and all of it results in the premier Prototype Modelers Meet in the country.

As a co-sponsor of the event, the Gateway Division was able to provide a large number of volunteers to help with the meet. As a sign of appreciation, the staff of the STL RPM presented the Division a donation of \$1,000 at the September membership meeting. The Gateway Division sincerely appreciates the donation and the opportunity to co-sponsor this great event.

The accompanying photos is just a sampling of the models on display. For hundreds and hundreds more photos, visit the STL RPM website at stlrpm.com.

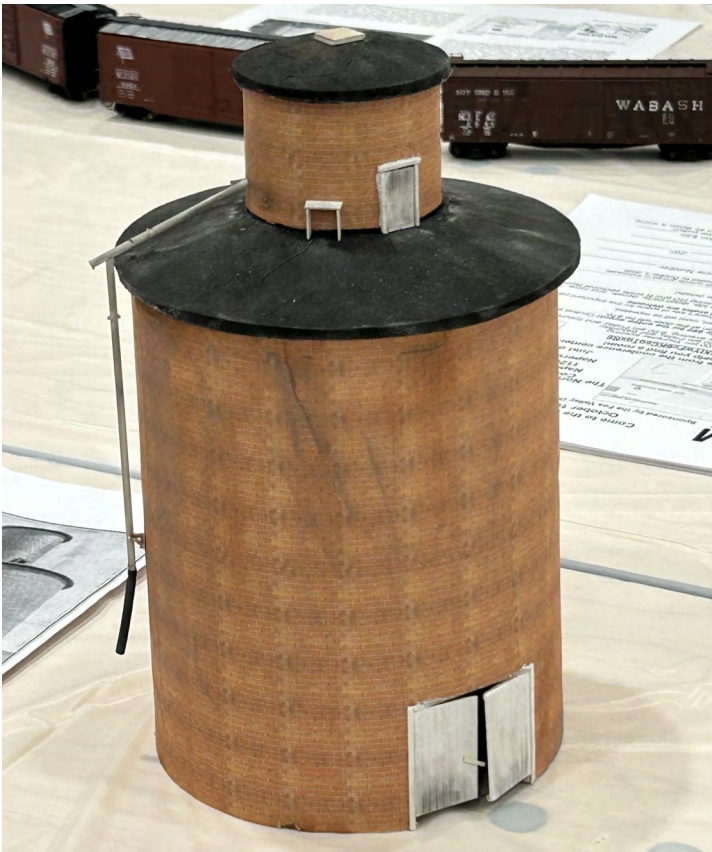
The next STL RPM will be held at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville, Illinois on July 23 - 25, 2026.



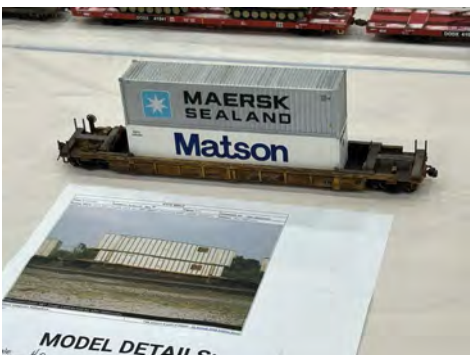
Save the Dates for the next St. Louis RPM
July 23 - 25, 2026
Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL
Visit stlrpm.com for all things STL RPM

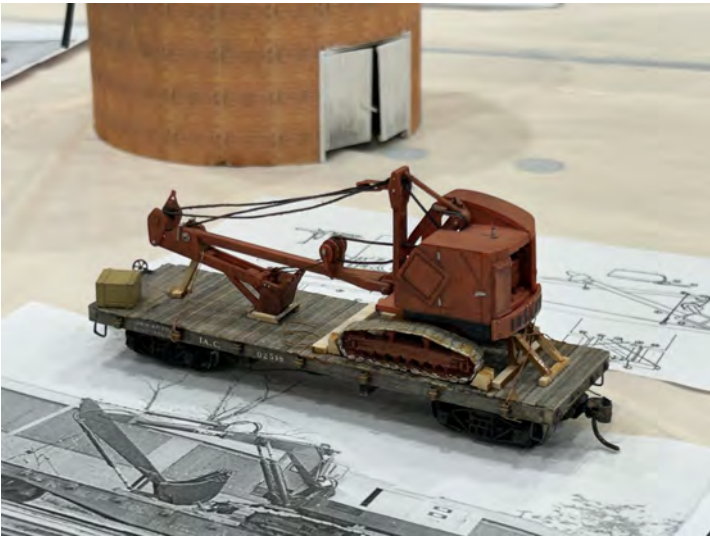














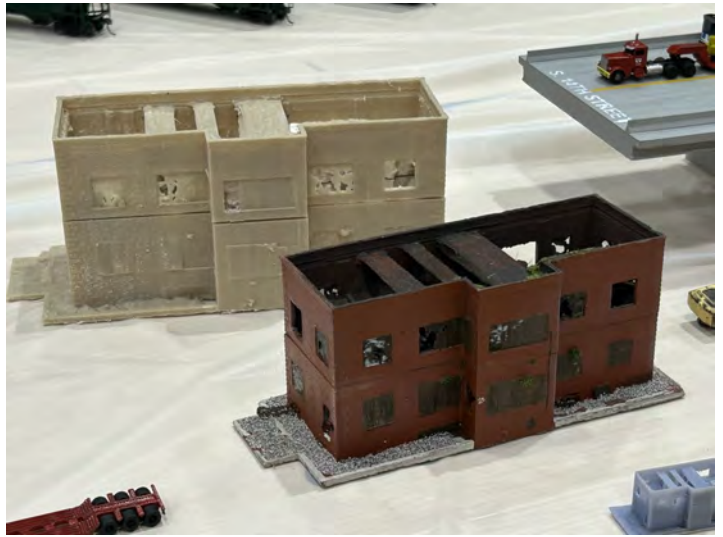


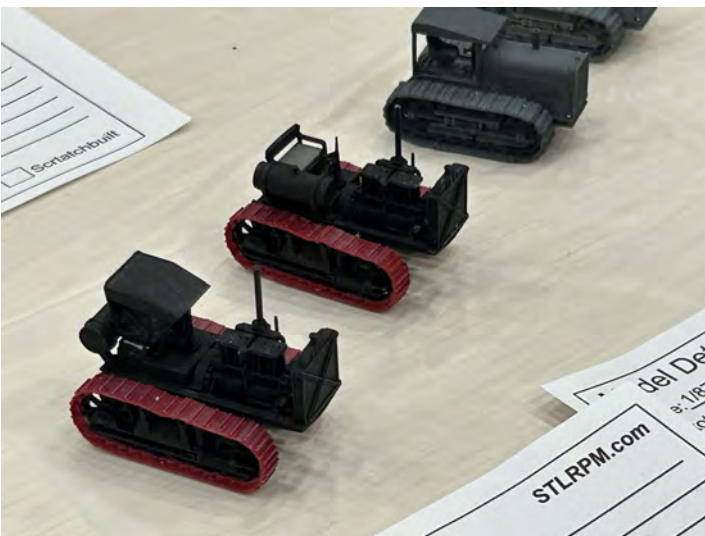
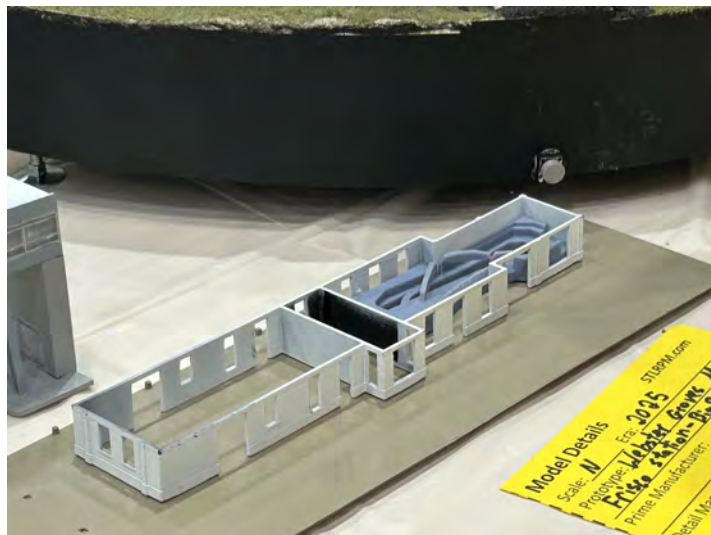














*Atlas 4650 covered hopper (factory)
*Various artists used as general guide to
*Watercolor paint

2025 National Convention Scrapbook

By Bob Miller, Walter Beckman, Dave Wehner, and Heff Cooper

Bob Miller

The NMRA Convention in Novi, Michigan was. July 14-19th. What a long trip up and back but what a great time. For those who have never attended a Convention before, you're missing out on a wealth of information in clinics. You chose your clinics and if you lucky enough to register in the Modeling with Master's clinics, you have a chance to follow 2 - MMR guidance to complete 2 or more project kits. The 2026 NMRA Convention is going to be in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Walter Beckman

A short review of this year's NMRA Convention "Station No. VI" held in Novi, Michigan. I always enjoy the National Conventions for a number of reasons. The fellowship with other model railroaders, the opportunity to learn new things about our hobby, and the adventure associated with travel.

The clinics were quite good and the rooms were large enough to seat everyone who attended.

The Rail Yard Sale was a feature that was new to the National Convention. Attendees brought items that they could sell at the convention. Talking to the club that ran the event, they did quite well, taking home 10% of the \$15,000 in gross sales. I picked up a nice locomotive and sold a bunch of coal car loads that I did not need.

The banquet was well attended and we members of the Gateway Division took over a table for our own. The food was good and the company was great.



The venue was excellent for the convention, although the hotel was short staffed when checking everyone in at the start of the convention. The location was nice in that it was an 8-hour drive from home and there were good restaurants and shops nearby.

Dave Wehner

I joined the NMRA in early 2025 and quickly registered for the 2025 NMRA Convention not knowing exactly what to expect. I've been attending the MoPac Historical Society's conventions for several years so that's all I had been exposed to and they were ok. As far as the NMRA Convention 2025 was in comparison, all I can say is WOW. There were attendees from across the globe. The clinics were nonstop, from morning till night. Anything you wanted to know about the hobby and then some was demonstrated. A couple of the electronic clinics just went over my head but the rest all had ideas I could take with me and use at home.

All the presenters, except for 1, were personable, informative and many times funny with stories and examples of what to do or not to do. My only complaint was that by the end of the week, I had so much information swimming around in my head, it was hard to remember what I learned in any specific clinic. Taking notes and pictures during the presentations is a must for these clinics. There were no "dumb" questions asked as the presenters were willing to answer anything that was thrown at them.

The staff running the convention did an excellent job of making sure everything ran smoothly and on time



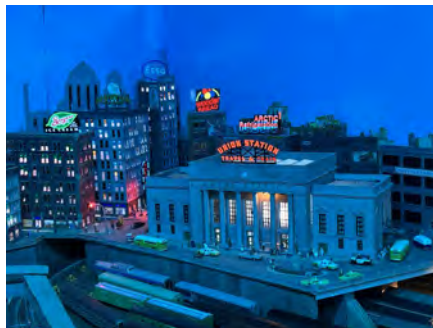
keeping the presenters punctual so no clinic was shorted time. In short, the week, ending with the National Train Show, went by too quickly but was a blast of information and comradery with fellow modelers.

I'm registered for the 2026 Convention in Chattanooga looking forward to the clinics and planned excursions while Tacoma 2027 and Rochester 2028 are already on the calendar.

Jeff Cooper

As I sat at the table at the closing banquet of the 2025 NMRA National Convention in Novi, Michigan, it struck me that just a few short years ago I did not know any of these fine folks (with the exception of my wife, of course). Here I am, after a week of being fully immersed in model railroading, having a delicious meal with the Ackmanns, the Beckmans, Bob Miller, and Dave Wehner, none of whom I would have ever met if it hadn't been for the Gateway Division. To me, the week of the National Convention encapsulated all that is good with the NMRA. A full week of model railroading combined with fellowship. Real fellowship. The kind that you can only experience in-person with handshakes and looking someone in the eyes. The kind that where you enjoy their company and talk about more than trains (although the subject of trains did come up alot.) The kind that is lasting. Online and virtual gatherings may work in certain scenarios, but they will never replace the real deal of in-person interaction.

Conventions are good at bring like-minded people together. They are also good and providing experiences and opening doors that you would



otherwise not get. The 2025 Convention had hundreds of clinics, on-site layouts, a celebration of models room, the operations road show, an on-site "yard sale", Modeling with the Masters, over 50 home layout tours, several on-rail tours, and the National Train Show I'm sure I am leaving out something, but one thing is for sure, if anyone was bored, it was their own fault.

I visited over 20 layouts, but it came with the price of missing some really great clinics. I also went on off-site tours that took me to Detroit's restored Michigan Central Station, Motown, and a boat cruise past the once mighty Detroit industrial riverfront and also past downtown Detroit. None of these would have been possible without the NMRA National Convention. The greater Detroit area was not on my radar as a vacation destination so I am sure I wouldn't have seen any of this without the National Convention calling me into town.

If you like model railroading, and if you are reading this, I am sure you do, then you will love going to a National convention. Some say that you can get all of this online. I disagree. You can't get the true experience of a layout through a video, you can't walk through the halls of a restored, grand structure online, and there is nothing virtual about the friends you will meet. If you've never gone to a National convention, give it a try. The 2026 Convention is in Chattanooga, TN, and it looks like it will be outstanding. The 2027 National Convention is already on the books for Tacoma, WA if you have an opportunity to travel to the Pacific Northwest. Happy conventioning!



Station to Station: Salem, 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 Baltimore & Ohio/ Chessie/CSX depot is located in Salem, Illinois. Salem is located in Marion County and is approximately 75 miles due east of St. Louis.

History of this structure is scarce, but it is estimated that it was built in the late 1800's to early 1900's. The line, originally built by the Ohio & Mississippi in 1855, later directly connected Cincinnati, OH to St. Louis, MO in 1857.

In 1893, the Baltimore & Ohio Southwestern acquired the Ohio & Mississippi. It later transitioned into the Baltimore & Ohio in 1900. The line represented the western end of the Baltimore & Ohio. The line was an important route for freight and passenger traffic from the east heading for St. Louis.



View of the Salem, Illinois B&O/Chessie/CSX depot as it appeared in September 2025. Photo by Jeff Cooper



View of the northeast corner of the Salem, Illinois B&O/Chessie/CSX depot as it appeared in September 2025.



CSX has slated the depot for demolition. Photo by Jeff Cooper

The line remained busy into the 1990's and 2000's with autoracks, containers, and grain running between Louisville, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. In the mid-2000's, CSX began diverting trains off this line and onto a former Conrail line to its north. In 2008, CSX began upgrading the line with new signals and grade crossing equipment in anticipation of additional coal traffic. Until 2010, the line saw frequent coal traffic coming off of the Union Pacific interchange with CSX in St. Louis; however, declines in the coal industry eliminated the hopes for the extra coal traffic.

Without the extra coal traffic materializing and the shifting of the CSX trains to the former Conrail route, the Illinois subdivision dwindled down to 4 daily freight trains by 2015. In August 2015, CSX announced the Illinois Subdivision would be shut down. Rails were cut at Caseyville and Flora, crossing gates removed, crossing lights turned 90 degrees, and "out of service" signs appeared.

The depot in Salem is slated for demolition. The structure appears compromised with significant roof decay present. The Salem depot is similar to B&O depots constructed in Carlyle, Illinois, Fairfield, Illinois, and Shoals, Indiana. As of today, only the Salem and Carlyle depots remain standing with time running out on the Salem depot.

Source of Information:

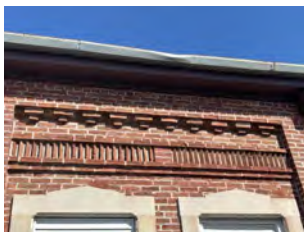
CSX Illinois Subdivision: History of an Iconic Railroad Line
<https://ilsubdivisionrailroad.wordpress.com/>



Instrument sheds located west of the Salem, Illinois B&O/ Chessie/CSX depot as they appeared in September 2025.



Looking west at what remains of the old brick platform.



A closer look at some of the detailing incorporated into the brick masonry of the Salem depot. The B&O constructed very similar depots in Carlyle IL, Salem IL, Fairfield, IL, and Shoals, IN.

Structural Elements: F. H. Henshie Bank Building, Blue Mound, 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 F. H. Henshie Bank building in Blue Mound, Illinois has undergone multiple transformations since its construction. Blue Mound is located in Macon County and is 14 miles southwest of Decatur and 104 miles northeast of St. Louis.

The structure, located at 204 N.

Railroad Avenue, started as the F. H. Henshie bank in 1881 and was the first bank in town. In 1894, the bank assets were sold and it became the Brownback Bank. In 1896, the bank added the second story and changed its name to the Brown, Ayars and Company Bank. Later, it became the State Bank of Blue Mound.

The bank vacated the building and a new business, Paul T. Damery's Trading Post, opened in the space. Fire destroyed most of the second floor of the bank building and the new owners reduced the height at that time.



Photo: Jeff Cooper



Photo: Greg Thiele Collection

Source of Information: Thiele, G, 2024/10/05. Blue Mound has two banks. In 1881, our first bank was known as, F. H. Henshie Bank. Then in 1894,... Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1001175715079754/posts/1110837660780225/>



Photo: Greg Thiele Collection

Over the following years, multiple businesses have occupied the building along with more changes to the structure. The building still stands today and retains elements of its continued transformation over the passing years.

From a modeling perspective, the structure, regardless of era, has interesting lines and elements. From its original window arrangements and corner turret to the 1960s ground floor storefront and awning to today's shortened building with multiple textures and lines, this would create an interesting model regardless of your modeling time period.

A new storefront, awning, turret base, and removal of the round window are the notable changes



Photo: Greg Thiele Collection



Photo: Jeff Cooper

A fire destroyed most of the second floor. It was partially removed but created interesting site lines and textures. Note the coated blocks where the second story was closed off, the wooden structure added to the roof, and the concrete blocks used to fill in the top of the front façade.



Photo: Jeff Cooper



The building shares a triangle shaped parcel with other buildings which adds to the visual interest of the scene.

Photo source: <https://duckduckgo.com/?q=blue+mound+illinois&t=ffab&iaxm=maps&source=maps>

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes for June 16, 2025

Call to Order

Superintendent Bob Miller called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Etiquette

Mr. Miller welcomed in-person and Zoom attendees. Mr. Miller 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. Miller noted that the business meeting is being recorded.

New Members/Visitors Recognition

There were no new members or visitors to recognize.

Minutes from the April 21, 2025 Meeting

Mr. Miller presented the minutes from the April 21, 2025 meeting. Jim Ables motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Ron Gawedzinski seconded the motion. *The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.*

Financial Reports

John Kelly presented the April and May 2025 financial statements and reported the balances in the bank account and CDs. Mr. Kelly reported on the dues rebate from the Region, 50/50 receipts, the amount left in the budget for the Division project layout, and the receipt of a donation towards the project layout.

Website

Mr. Miller presented costs for developing and hosting the new website. The developer is not charging the Division for the design. The cost of the two new domain names will be approximately \$120 for three years. The cost for hosting will be approximately \$1,584 for three years. The Board approved the expenditure for the domain names and is recommending to membership for approval of the proposed three-year hosting fees. By paying for three years now guarantees the price and prevents any increases over that period. A member asked why we would purchase two domain names. Mr. Miller responded that it is to prevent someone from buying a similar name and causing confusion. The two domain names can be linked to the same website. Mr. Miller further noted that the Division will be able to update the site ourselves while the developer will conduct software updates and maintenance for the website. Additionally, the Division will be taking steps to have the old website taken down. To prevent any disputes over copyrights, we will not be transferring anything from the old website other than the mission of the Division, logos, and links to recent RPOs. Dale DeWitt offered his photos of layout to be used on the website. David Lowell, MMR, motioned to enter into the three-year website developing and hosting agreement. Jim Ables seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Fall Meet Update

Walter Beckman reported that he is working on scheduling layouts to be set up at the Fall Meet.

Division Modular Layout Update

Greg Gramlich, MMR, updated membership on the Division Modular Layout Project. Mr. Gramlich reported that 10 of the 14 modules have been wired, 8 modules have the cork roadbed installed, and 1 module has the track installed. The group is currently working on the 2 turnround modules with 1 having cork roadbed installed with work on track installation beginning. Mr. Gramlich noted that the group is accepting donations of Atlas code 83 track and Peco code 83 #6 Unifrog turnouts. Finally, Mr. Gramlich noted that the work group meets every third Saturday of the month through November at the West Alton City Hall at 9:30 a.m. and invited members to attend the work sessions if they are interested in helping.

Region Director Special Election

Mr. Miller reported that as the current Region Director, Jim Ables, will be elected as Vice-President of the Region and he will have to step down as the Division's Region Director when he officially takes over as Region Vice-President. A special election will be necessary to fill the vacancy. Glenn Koproske, Jim Ables, and Dale DeWitt volunteered to be on the Nominations Committee and the Elections Committee.

Club Updates

Mr. Miller gave an update on the Jefferson County & Southern.

Ask Us Anything

There were no questions posed to the membership.

Other Business

Mr. Cooper that the Division will be hosting a second meet on February 7, 2026 at The Pavilion in Marion, Illinois. Planning is in the early stages but the facility has been secured. We will have access Friday evening so vendors and layouts can be set up and the facility will also be available until at least 9 p.m. the day of the meet for layout operations time after the meet closes at 3 p.m. and to allow extra time for vendor and layout load-out.

Mr. Gawedzinski noted that he brought models and other railroad related items to the meeting and is giving them away for free. Members were encouraged to check out his offerings.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Miller announced the following upcoming events:

- **June 24th-29th, 2025: National N Scale Convention:** Sheraton Overland Park, 6100 College Boulevard, Overland Park, Kansas
- **June 28, 2025 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Patriotic Theme Train Day at the Library:** Grants View Library, 9700 Musick Ave, St. Louis, MO
- **July 14th-19th, 2025: NMRA National Convention:** Sheraton Hotel, 2111 Haggerty Road, Novi, MI
- **July 19, 2025 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Trains at the Library:** Meramec Valley Branch, 1501 San Simeon Way, Fenton, MO

50/50 Drawing

Dave Wehner won the 50/50 drawing.

Presentation

John Schindler gave a virtual tour of his layout.

Next Meetings/Events

Mr. Miller announced the following upcoming Division event:

- **July 21, 2025, 7:30 p.m.** Member Meeting with Presentation by Fred Wilke on Building a Town Block

Adjourn

Mr. Miller adjourned the business meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Cooper, Clerk, Gateway Division

Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2025

Call to Order

Superintendent Bob Miller called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Etiquette

Mr. Miller welcomed in-person and Zoom attendees. Mr. Miller 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. Miller noted that the business meeting is being recorded.

New Members/Visitors Recognition

Mr. Miller recognized a new member and visitors.

Minutes from the July 21, 2025 Meeting

Mr. Miller presented the minutes from the July 21, 2025 meeting. Jim Ables motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Dave Roeder seconded the motion. *The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.*

Financial Reports

John Kelly presented the June 2025 financial statements and reported the balances in the bank account and CDs. Mr. Kelly reported on the receipt of \$200 from National used towards the modular layout project, 50/50 receipts, and expenditures for the modular layout project, the website project, Zoom, and DropBox. Mr. Kelly noted that the website costs are for 3 years and also include a reimbursement of expenses related to the old website.

Website

Mr. Miller presented an update on the new Division website. Robyn Yates of RKY is designing the new website. Mr. Miller noted that several officers and members are trying to wrap up the issues with the old website and get it taken down but the prior webmaster has been nonresponsive. Mr. DeWitt noted that he took many of the layout photos hosted on the old website. Mr. Miller noted that space is being set aside on the new website that will allow for advertising by model railroading related entities that will hopefully offset some of the costs of the website. A definitive date has not been set for bringing up the new website but Mr. Ables will send out an e-mail when it is ready.

Division Modular Layout Update

Greg Gramlich, MMR, updated membership on the Division Modular Layout Project. Mr. Gramlich reported that all module base units are complete and all of the cork roadbed has been installed. The wiring is also complete and the track is being installed. The group is looking for donations of code 83 atlas flex track. Finally, Mr. Gramlich noted that the work group meets every third Saturday of the month through November at the West Alton City Hall at 9:30 a.m. and invited members to attend the work sessions if they are interested in helping.

St. Louis RPM

Mr. Miller reported that the list of volunteers from the Division for the RPM has been submitted and reminded the volunteers to pick up their badges at the check-in table at the RPM.

Region Director Report

Mr. Ables noted that there isn't much happening at the moment with the Region. He reminded members the Region Convention will be in August in Overland Park, KS. Mr. Ables reported he is running for Vice President of the Region. He further noted that if he is elected that the Division's Region Director position will come open.

Region Director Special Election

Mr. Miller reported that since the Region Board does not meet until January, the election to fill the position currently held by Mr. Ables will be pushed out to the regular election cycle instead of holding a special election.

Achievement Program Update

Mr. Ackmann reported that member Fred Wilke has completed the requirements to earn the Chief Dispatcher certificate and that the paperwork has been submitted for final review by the Region and National. Mr. Ackmann announced that Ray Pershing is the new National AP chair. Mr. Ackmann reported that he submitted five models for evaluation at National and they scored lower than they did at the Division level. Finally, Mr. Ackmann noted that is attending the Region Convention and plans on connecting with the AP Chair for the Turkey Creek Division.

2025 Fall Meet Update

Mr. Beckman reported that he is working on recruiting volunteers to assist with the Meet as well as conduct presentations. Mr. Beckman further noted that he continues to work on securing layouts for the Meet. Finally, he reported that as of July there has not been many vendor tables sold.

2026 Southern Illinois Meet Update

Mr. Beckman reported that he has been working to recruit vendors for the 2026 Southern Illinois Meet in Marion.

Club Updates

None

Ask Us Anything

Members discussed the different ways to stain ballast. A member asked if there will be a holiday party. Mr. Beckman reported that the date and location are being worked on now. Mr. Ackmann reported that he gave his presentation on 3D printing at the National convention, and will be giving it at the National Narrow Gauge Convention.

Other Business

Mr. Miller gave an updated members on the recently completed National convention in Novi, MI. He noted that National will be re-branding in the 4th quarter 2025 which also will include a new logo. He noted that the new logo will be used by National, all Regions, and all Divisions. Mr. Miller reported that the 2025 National Convention had the best attendance since 2018 with 950 attendees. Finally, Mr. Miller noted that the 2026 National Convention will be held in Chattanooga, TN and encouraged members to attend.

Mr. Ables noted that the Board is accepting nominations for the Henry "Hank" Kraichely Lifetime Achievement Award. The award goes to someone who has provided exceptional service to the Gateway Division. Mr. Ables requested that if anyone has someone they would like to nominate to submit a write-up to the Board.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Miller announced the following upcoming events:

- **July 24th-26th, 2025: 2025 St. Louis RPM, Gateway Center, Collinsville, IL**
- **August 16, 2025: Model Train Market at the Iron Spike Model Train Museum, 1498 High Street, Washington, MO**
- **August 22nd-23rd, 2025.: 2025 MCoR Region Convention, Lenexa, KS**
- **August 23, 2025 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Western Railroads Theme Train Day at the Library, Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes Avenue, St. Louis, MO**

50/50 Drawing

Walter Beckman won the 50/50 drawing.

Presentation

Fred Wilke presented "Building a Town Block" and the step by step process he used to build a block of buildings.

Next Meetings/Events

Mr. Miller announced the following upcoming Division event:

- **August 16, 2025, 9:30 a.m. Hands-on Workshop and Division Modular Work Session, West Alton City Hall, 111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO. The hands-on workshop will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a work session on the Division Modular layout immediately following them workshop.**

Adjourn

Mr. Miller adjourned the business meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Cooper, Clerk, Gateway Division

**Check out the new Gateway Division
website at:**

gatewaydivisionnmra.com



**Summer/Fall 2025:
Volume 33, Number 2**

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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Division Officers

Superintendent

Bob Miller
Festus, MO

Assistant Superintendent

Walter Beckman
St. Louis, MO

Clerk (Secretary)

Jeff Cooper
Marion, IL

Paymaster (Treasurer)

John Kelly
Fenton, MO

Division Director

Jim Ables
Mascoutah, IL

Past-Superintendent

Willie Richter
W. Alton, MO



Division Chairs

Achievement Program

Dave Ackmann

Activities

Vacant

Presentations

Dan Knipp

Contests

David Lowell, MMR

Fall and Spring Meets

Walter Beckman

IT

Willie Richter

Layout Tours

Dave Roeder, MMR

Membership

Glenn Koproske

Operations

Greg Gramlich, MMR

Publicity

Greg Gramlich, MMR

Modular Layout

Greg Gramlich, MMR

Webmaster

Robyn Yates, RKY Services

Congratulations!

**The Gateway Division is Pleased to
Announce that the following Division
members have been elected to the NMRA
Mid-Continent Region Board of Directors:**

**Jim Ables, Vice President
Jeff Cooper, Secretary**

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>



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 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>



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/>.

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/>



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 bobnjoanstlmo@gmail.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

Meadow Ridge Trains & Hobbies

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

Neal's N-Gauging Trains

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

Chuck's Depot

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

Please Support Your Local 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!

Red Board Hobbies

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

Frisco Train & Toy Store

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

Rodney's Trains & Toys

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

K-10's Model Trains

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



Schaefer's Hobby Shop

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

Mainline Model Railroad Products

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

TAG Trains

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

Mark Twain Hobby Center

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



Train Town

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