



Volume 31, Issue 2

Summer 2023

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Jimmy Ables, Superintendent, Gateway Division

Happy belated 4th of July. We're officially halfway through the year now. We've made some changes to the Division over the past six months, which I think have made our meetings more interesting and available to a wider audience including NMRA members outside of the Division. I'd like to thank Willie for taking over AV duties. He's doing a great job. Jeff Cooper has revitalized the RPO, be sure to tell him what a great job he's doing.

If you think about it, we've come a long way since the beginning of the pandemic. In the beginning, we couldn't meet at all. Several of us had serious battles with COVID and

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Cover Photo: Erie Lackawanna SDP45 #3637 sits along side Conrail's Dash 8-40B #5076 and C430 #2052 at the diesel facility on Curt Regensberger's Streator Connection. Photo Credit: Jeff Cooper

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

It thrilled me when we were able to get together in person again. I missed being able to talk to people in person.

thankfully came through ok. For months we had no meetings and the Division, like almost everything else in our lives, became stagnant. There was very little to no interaction with our model railroading friends. It was, to say the least, a gloomy time. When we started meeting via Zoom things began to improve, but the interaction and fellowship of our monthly meetings was still missing. It thrilled me when we were able to get together in person again. I missed being able to talk to people in person. I know younger generations are more comfortable talking and meeting using things like Zoom, Facetime, and other social media tools to communicate, but for me, there is nothing better than talking in person.

Our Saturday workshops are becoming very popular. May's make-and-take workshop at the West Alton city hall was well attended. David Lowell led us in putting together American Model Builder kits purchased by the Division. We're still nailing down final plans for the September workshop, if you have any thoughts contact David Lowell or myself.

David Ackman, put together a team of judges to visit two layouts for merit judging. David reports things went well, and merit certificates were awarded to both individuals. Check out David's article later in this edition of the RPO.

Dan Knipp has been working hard at establishing our Facebook and Instagram presence. Those of you that use Facebook please like and follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GatewayDivisionNMRA>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/gatewaydivisionnmra/>

Every time you like something on Facebook or Instagram it helps us. Facebook and Instagram use complicated algorithms to determine what shows up on your news feeds. The more likes and subscribers we get, the more likely someone with similar interests will see our post. So be sure to like our post.

Volunteers: The Division is a volunteer organization, without volunteers, we wouldn't exist. We need members to come forward and help. One of the most critical roles we need to fill right now is an assistant chairman for AV. It takes a lot to get Zoom up and running to broadcast our meetings. We usually have about a half hour to set up and it's a struggle to get everything done in the time allotted. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Willie. We also need volunteers to back up our Clerk and to do Publicity. If you're interested, please contact me.

I'm excited to get the Fall Meet/Train Show back on track, pun intended. Walter Beckman and team have moved out. Dale DeWitt has lined up volunteers to work during the event, thank you to all who have volunteered. We do need your help to get the word out to vendors and attendees. If you need copies of the vendor and attendee flyers/handouts contact Walter.

Well, that wraps it up for this quarter. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming meeting or on Zoom.

Jim Ables, Superintendent

Director's Reflections: Best Laid Plans of Mice and Men Often Go Awry Two Birds with One Stone I Love It When a Plan Comes Together

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

Y'all have probably figured out by now I like to use sayings. I enjoy them and I keep my ear tuned for news ones I like, and then I like to add them to my repertoire. Milton Berle once quipped, "When I hear a good joke, I steal it". I apply the same principal to sayings. Three examples of sayings that I am partial to are: best laid plans of mice and men often go awry, two birds with one stone, and I love it when a plan comes together.

Now you may be pondering what in the wild, wild world of sports does this have to do with model railroading and how in the world is he going to weave these three sayings together? Well... here it goes:

It seems that it is often the case for many of us that our best laid plans can go awry (that's one). It's not exactly verbatim to the old saying, but it still counts. It is routine for us to plan our days. Those of us still working spend copious hours laying plans to accomplish a multitude of tasks to reach our work goals in addition to personal plans. And, of course in a more enjoyable pursuit, many an hour is also set to planning our various model railroading endeavors. Whether it be to build a specific model, a small pike, or a basement empire. To plan a Division meet, a National convention, or a make and take workshop, however, the reality is that no matter how hard we work to plan something, many times despite our best efforts the plan falls apart on us (see first sentence above). Other times things do work out.

I am supposed to be writing two assignments for this issue of the RPO. One for The Director's Reflections column and a second piece that is a recap of the May 20th make & take workshop. I decided to combine them, to... kill two birds with one stone as it were (that's two). And that's a dally double because it was the second example and it matched the saying.

On May 20 at 9:30 AM at the West Alton City Hall, we had 14 participants of varying backgrounds and skill levels convene for a make & take hands on presentation. The subject of said event was to build a wood craftsman laser kit.

Before I delve into the details of the make and take itself, I want to set the stage on how and why we had the event. As the restrictions waned toward the end of COVID the Gateway Division Board of Directors (BOD) wanted to make sure that we provided activities of interest to the Division members so everyone would re-engaged. As a result, Asst. Superintendent Dan Knipp went through a large effort to research and create a survey to circulate. The feedback that we received from Division members in that survey indicated there was interest in meeting on days other than our usual third Monday of every month. The BOD came up with a plan to have a meeting on a Saturday each quarter. That was the easy part. The hard part was figuring out what to do. Again, we turned to the feedback from our Division members. In the survey there was also interest expressed in hands on activities. This seemed like a natural fit to combine the two to take advantage of the larger time window of a Saturday meeting to do some hands-on activities. It might also allow some members who have conflicts with Monday nights to attend. We had a plan. Now back to the future.

Our first Saturday hands on meeting was in February and the subject was decal application. We were able to do this event as a no cost activity for members for two main reasons. We had left over box car shells from a presentation at the National Convention last summer. The shells were provided

free of charge from National. There is an example of return on your dues. We also had a pile of decals that Don Ayers estate gave to the Division. The workshop went well.

More recently, as stated above, we convened on May 20 to build wood laser kits. This event was a little more complex than the first. It took the efforts of multiple people to set the plan into action. Willie Richter, our past Superintendent and also Mayor of West Alton, MO, arranged for us to use the West Alton City Hall at Hwy 367 & Hwy 94. Upon arrival that morning we were greeted by tables all set up with protective coverings. Thanks Willie! Jeff Cooper, our Clerk and RPO editor, put together a really nice flyer to send out and also donated an attendance prize. Bill Levin, our Paymaster paid me back for the kits (very important!). Dave Otte with American Model Builders (AMB) provided us with the kits at a very large discount. AMB is a local manufacturer of quality laser kits. They are located in Brentwood, MO and their website is <http://www.laserkit.com/>. If you are looking for wood kits try shopping local. Superintendent Jimmy Ables was the official event photographer for the group photo, and last, but certainly not least, there were the 14 individuals who participated. By the way, the division picked up the tab so this hands-on workshop was also provided at no cost to the participants.

For the workshop we selected the Lake Jct. Depot kit for several reasons. It was a simple kit that we thought we could get a good start on in our allotted time period. It was relatively inexpensive. It is also a station that was on the MOPAC where the Creve Coeur Lake Line split from the mainline at the very north edge of Webster Groves along Deer Creek just west of Hanley Road. Now that branch line is just a siding that ends at Forest Product Supply just across the street from the Train Wreck Saloon, By the way, AMB also makes a kit of the saloon.

Once everyone was there, the general remarks were kept short and we all dove into the kits. There was fun discussion about model building techniques and hints. There were as many different approaches to building the kits as there were participants. In all, everyone seemed to have a good time. We conducted a 50/50 raffle. In addition to the 50/50 raffle, Jeff Cooper, as mentioned above, donated a weathering set of Pan Pastels that was also raffled off and was won by Tom Manor.



Around noon time we wrapped up even though we had no completed structures. I have included a snapshot of mine and encourage those who completed theirs after the workshop to send me a snapshot of it. Before everyone left, we gathered for a group photo. I think that I can speak for all, we had a really fun time. I just love it when a plan comes together (that's three).

Our next make and take workshop will be Saturday September 9. Details can be found on page 12 of this issue of RPO. We are planning on making trees. All supplies are provided and there is no cost to you. We really hope you can join us. Stay tuned for more details.

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

Photos from the May 20th Make-and-Take Hands-on workshop. Participants got to experience building a laser-cut wood kit and a morning of fellowship with other Division members. The Gateway Division sponsored the event and there was no cost to participate. This is just one of the many free events we offer to you as a benefit of your membership in the Gateway Division. The next hands-on workshop will be held in September. Photos by Jimmy Ables.



Achievement Program Update: There's No Place Like Home

By Dave Ackmann, Achievement Program Chair, Gateway Division

No, the NMRA's Gateway Division will not be reviewing "The Wizard of Oz" today, but there are many similarities. Keep on reading, as we tell the story of a recent journey of seven members of the Gateway Division surrounding St. Louis on our own Yellow Brick Road.

Over the years, many members have created expansive layouts in their homes. Empires worthy of a museum collection in the Emerald City and scenes and structures so attractive that they just beg for admiration from even the most experienced modelers. But like a visit to Oz, we sometimes must leave our own "Kansas" to take a look. And so, it was on June 3rd, 2023 when Dave Roeder, MMR, Brad Joseph, MMR, Bob Miller, Willie Richter and Dave Ackmann were welcomed into the homes of Glenn Koproske and Greg Gramlich to see their layouts and review their creations as candidates for the NMRA's Achievement Program (AP) recognition for Scenery and Structures.



Left to Right: Willie Richter, Brad Joseph, MMR, Dave Roeder, MMR, and Bob Miller take a moment to smile for the camera while judging scenery and structures on Glenn Koproske's layout.

There are eleven different categories in the Achievement Program, several of which require "judging", and while there are occasional opportunities to evaluate modeling excellence for the two categories of Motive Power and Cars, the two categories of Structures and Scenery are often almost impossible to bring to a judging event, since they may not be designed to be mobile. This means that an evaluation team must visit the layout site. And for many reasons, particularly COVID, no such visits had taken place in the Gateway Division for many years. But on that Saturday in early June, things changed.

No tornados were involved, but it still took a lot of energy to coordinate the event. There were no maps or instructions for how to get things done, so Dave Ackmann, AP Chairman for the Gateway Division, made up plans along the way. For several months prior, Glenn, Greg and Dave reviewed the requirements for the Scenery and Structures certificates (you can visit NMRA.ORG for the details). To receive a "Merit Award", scenery and individual structures must receive 87.5 points out of a total 125; other requirements, including documentation, must be completed. Pre-event visits were made and forms were filled out. Decisions were made on the best aspects of the layout to be judged. Dave contacted seven potential judges, two experienced MMRs and five rookies, inviting their participation. All agreed to serve, but three deferred to later opportunities due to scheduling

conflicts. The two remaining rookies completed a virtual clinic which covered the judging procedure. And at 9:30 AM that Saturday, all met in the parking lot of Trinity Lutheran Church, where the Division meets on odd-numbered months, and set out for Fenton to review the work of Glenn Koproske.

Two hours were spent evaluating Glenn's N-scale basement model of the area around southwestern St Louis County, before the team "broke for beans" and headed to Wentzville to view Greg's HO re-creation of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Judging takes time, and it was seven hours after we gathered that we returned to the church, having awarded both members Merit Awards for scenery, and did the same for many structures. Judging is intense and tiring. It takes a lot of courage for a modeler to submit their work for review, brains to create and review such works of art, and after reviewing the day's work, the experience must have touched the hearts of the judges because all four agreed to be contest judges at the upcoming Divisional meet in November.

Our story is a happy one, but is never really over. We continue to learn and invite you to join in the journey. Bring models to the contest in November. Agree to be a judge in November or at more home visits in the upcoming months. And remember you are among friends willing to leave their comfort zones to walk with you along your path. Have a great trip.



Left to Right: Bob Miller, Dave Roeder, MMR, Willie Richter, and Brad Joseph, MMR, get back to work judging scenery and structures on Glenn Koproske's layout.



A picture of a saw mill scene on Greg Gramlich's layout. Greg's layout was one of two layouts that Dave Ackmann, Brad Joseph, MMR, Bob Miller, Willie Richter, and Dave Roeder visited in May to conduct judging for scenery and structures.

"Back where I come from there are men who do nothing all day but good deeds. They are called phila... er, phila... er, yes, er, Good Deed Doers."

The Wizard of Oz

Dan Knipp Earns AP Certificate

By Dave Ackmann, Achievement Program Chair, Gateway Division

Dan Knipp of the Gateway Division received his AP certificate for Association Volunteer at the April 17, 2023 Division meeting. Dan serves as the Assistant Superintendent and also as the Clinics Chair for the Division. Before, during, and after COVID, Dan has been a constant presence, helping to keep interesting programs and ideas flowing through our Division. Dan was a stabilizing force when the Division had to contend with unexpected vacancies in the officer positions and then through the hardships created by COVID. Dan's contributions to the Division are immeasurable and this recognition is well deserved. Thanks for all you do, Dan. It is greatly appreciated.



Left to Right: Dan Knipp receives his Achievement Program certificate for Association Volunteer from Dave Ackmann, AP Chair



A concrete arch bridge on Illinois Central's Charter Line just north of Patoka, Illinois is being overtaken by nature. The segment of the line from Junction, Illinois (Centralia) north to Assumption, Illinois was abandoned in the early 1980's. Patoka is a small village in Marion County and is located approximately 17 miles north of Centralia on US Route 51.

Photo credit: Jeff Cooper

Tour of Micro Engineering Co. in Fenton, Missouri

By Ron Gawedzinski, Activities Coordinator, Gateway Division

On Wednesday morning, May 10, 2023, 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.

MEC was started in 1964 under the original name of "Rail Craft Products." MEC manufactures a wide assortment of model railroad products, from tracks to turnouts, bridges, viaducts, structures, detail parts and vehicles, under a variety of scales and gauges.

Our group was split into three smaller groups, with the Dwiggins family members – Jack, Jon and Reece, owners of MEC, as our tour guides. They gave us an extensive tour of the plant on a weekday, under actual working conditions. They provided excellent explanations of what went on at each manufacturing step; for example, creating the metal dies for the products, to inserting rails and parts into the dies, injecting plastic into the dies, and releasing the finished product. We saw and learned a lot more details and appreciation for what special expertise it takes to fabricate the numerous model railroad products. We viewed and gained a better insight into the specialized equipment and labor used in the production of the parts, from inception to final product.

We were allowed to take pictures. We asked questions and Jack, Jon and Reece were patient and informative with their answers. Thanks to Jack, Jon and Reece, the tour was a great success! And a special thanks to Mrs. Darla Dwiggins for the delicious chocolate chip cookies she made!

Tour arranged by Ron Gawedzinski, Activities Coordinator, Gateway Division and St. Louis Chapter NRHS.



Gateway Division NMRA and St. Louis Chapter NRHS tour attendees.



A worker at an injection molder press making a turnout.



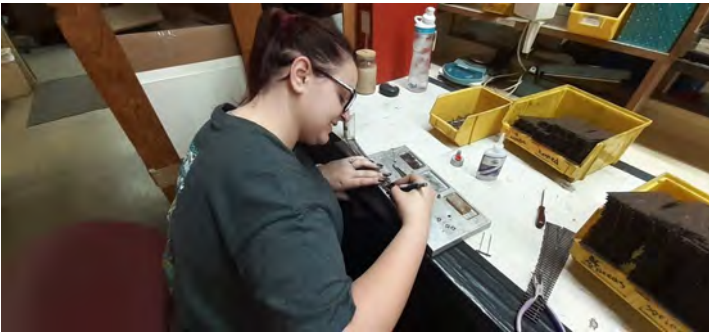
Closer view of work on the turnout.



Jon explaining the injection molder press.



Examples of turnouts made in injection molder press.



Working on a metal die.



Examples of turnout dies.



Injection molder press for flex track.



Ready to sell flex track.



Specialized equipment.



Jon explaining how the specialized equipment works.

ME Micro Engineering Company
Fenton, MO 63026

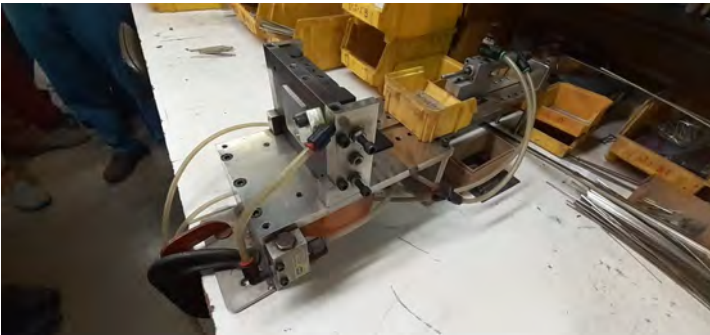
1 800 462 6975



The big Mini Mill equipment.



Jon explaining the Mini Mill operation.



A special cutting machine.



Jack explaining a step in manufacturing process.



Jon explaining "lost wax casting" process for tiny parts.



Molds used in the "lost wax casting" process.



Tiny parts made by "lost wax casting."



Reece explaining the inventory process.



Micro Engineering Company
Fenton, MO 63026

1 800 462 6975

Upcoming Events

Gateway Division Hands-on Workshop

“Trees that you learn how to make for **FREE at the Gateway Division Hands-on Workshop are the best kinds of trees.”**

Gateway Division NMRA

“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.” *John Muir*

“The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.”

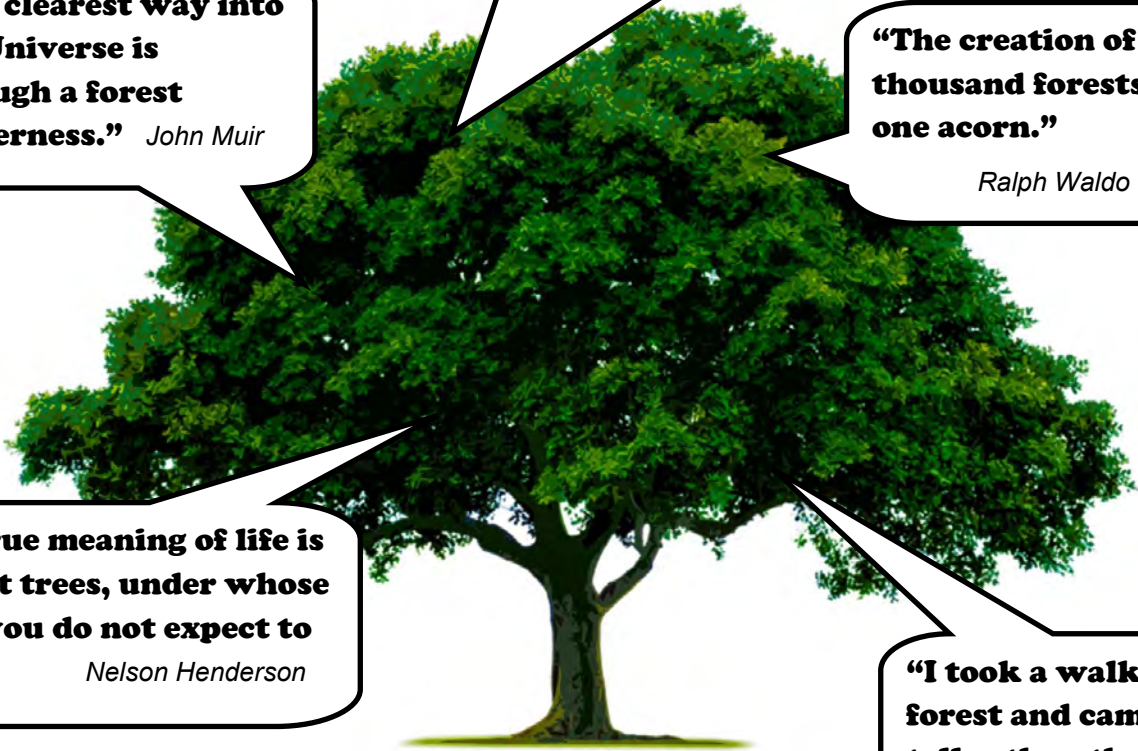
Ralph Waldo Emerson

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”

Nelson Henderson

“I took a walk in the forest and came out taller than the trees.”

Henry David Thoreau



When: Saturday, September 9, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Where: City Hall, 111 Richard Dr. West Alton, MO

What: Learn how to make trees at this Gateway Division Hands-on Workshop. No registration required. All materials will be provided (tree material, paint, glue, flocking, etc...) This could get a little messy, so don't wear your Sunday best...which is OK as we are doing this on a Saturday.

Cost: **FREE!**

Plus: Refreshments will be provided. You also have a chance to WIN a 50/50 drawing OR a SuperTrees Starter Kit! The SuperTrees Starter Kit is kindly being donated to the Division. Must be present to win.

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NATIONAL TRAIN SHOW
FREEMO-N OPERATIONS
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Train Shows and Events

August 8, 2023

Christmas in August Train Theme Day

Grand Glaize Library, 1010 Meramec Station Road, Manchester, MO; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

August 19, September 16, October 21

Iron Spike Model Train Market

Iron Spike Model Train Museum, 1498 High St., Washington, MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

August 26, 2023

Model Train Tailgate Swap Meet

National Museum of Transportation, Outdoors Lower Level Parking Lot, 2933 Barrett Station Road, St. Louis, MO; 8 a.m. to noon

May 13, 2023

Boeing Employees RR Club Swap Meet

Greensfelder Recreation Complex at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road, St. Louis, MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

September 23, 2023

Pacific Eagles Train Show

Pacific Eagles Hall, 707 Congress, Pacific MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

September 30, 2023

Military Theme Train Day

Grant's View Library, 9700 Musick Avenue, St. Louis, MO ; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

October 14-15, 2023

32nd Annual Greater St. Louis Metro Area Train Show (NEW LOCATION)

Meramec Community College Gym, Big Bend & Geyer Road, Kirkwood, MO ;
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday

October 22, 2023

5th Annual Sherman Scale Train Show

300 S. First Street, Sherman, IL ; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

October 28, 2023

Halloween Theme Train Day

Daniel Boone Library, 300 Clarkson Road, Ellisville, MO ; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



The Gateway Division of the National Model Railroad Association **Fall Model Train Meet**

Saturday, November 11, 2023

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

VFW Post 5691, 1234 Vandalia, Collinsville, Illinois

**Model Railroad Layout Displays
Presentations
Model Railroad Vendors
Swap Tables**

**Model Contest
(Popular Vote/Merit Judging on Request)
Door Prizes
Layout Tours in the Evening
(Maps Available at the Meet)**

Admission \$8.00, Children Under 12 Free

**Contact Walter Beckman, Fall Meet Chair, at mogulfwestern@gmail.com for more
information or to display your layout**

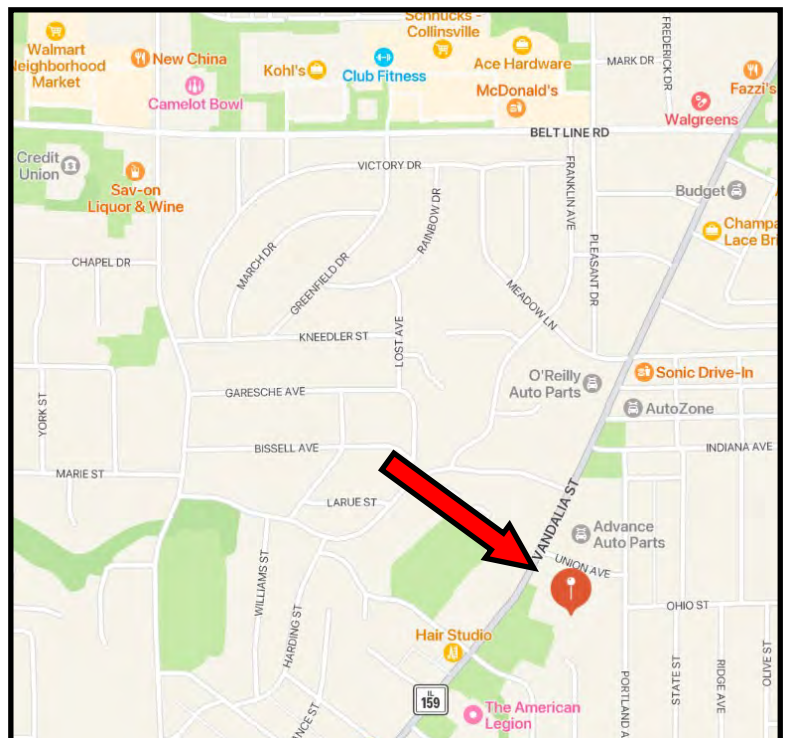
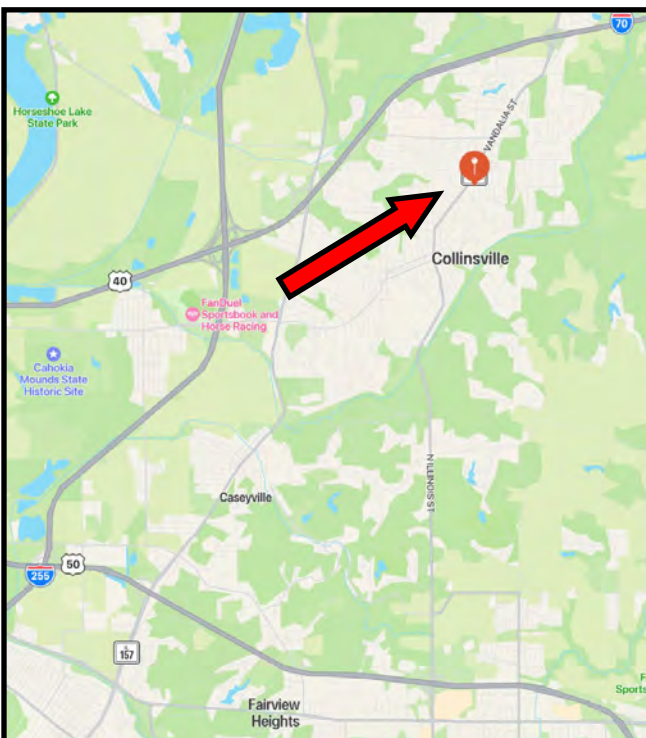


Photo Tour of Curt Regensberger's Streator Connection

Layout Description from the Gateway 2022 National Convention Time Table

Photos by Jeff Cooper



Curt Regensberger's Streator Connection layout features Santa Fe and Conrail in the late 1970's. Streator, Illinois is where the two roads have a connection. The layout is single track with two separate mainlines representing each road. The layout has a main yard with a 100 car capacity and a smaller yard in Streator. There is a large passenger station with a large freight house district. A large steel mill is the center of the layout with many industries receiving finished products from the mill. The minimum radius is 32-inches. The layout system utilizes the Digitrax DCC system.

















The Chatham Railroad Museum

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

The Chicago & Illinois Midland chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society founded the Chatham Railroad Museum in 1999 in Chatham, IL to preserve local railroad history. Located in a depot built in 1902 by the Chicago & Alton, the restored depot contains thousands of railroad artifacts including photos, blueprints, maps, news clippings, timetables, tools, correspondence, books, and other railroad equipment. The current depot that houses the museum was built to replace an earlier station built in 1852 that was destroyed by fire.

The three primary railroads represented at the museum are the Chicago & Alton, the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, and the Illinois Terminal. The focus on the three railroads is due to the C&A constructing the depot, the many years the GM&O owned the depot, and the Illinois Terminal as it's line paralleled the C&A through Chatham, although they had a separate depot. The museum also houses a large number of items related to the C&IM because of how the museum came to exist.

To see how we got to the museum today, let's go back to the 1830's before the railroad even existed in Chatham. Shipping goods and commodities on the Sangamon River was limited to flat bottom boats due to the shallowness of the river. Politicians began to propose that a railroad be built



Looking out the bay window of the agent's office of the Chicago & Alton depot built in 1902 in Chatham, Illinois

to link Springfield with the Mississippi River. In the initial proposal, the route was to run from Danville, Illinois to Quincy, Illinois. The proposed route suffered under accusations that it was only to increase the chances of Springfield becoming the new state capitol. In another turn of events, Abraham Lincoln favored dredging the Sangamon River to improve the ability to transport goods from Springfield down the Sangamon River to the Illinois River and then to the Mississippi River; however, he did not dismiss the idea of connecting Springfield to the Mississippi River with a railroad. He just had a different route in mind. In a letter published in Springfield's Sangamo Journal,

Lincoln wrote: " A railroad from Springfield to Alton would do ten times more toward building up the latter town, than the seat of government, the national road, the loan office and the state prison added together. If Alton could be made the depot of the productions of the Sangamon Country, she would of necessity become an important town, and in our opinion she cannot be without it."

In 1835 a group gathered to determine how a railroad could be built along the Springfield to Alton route. After several failed financing attempts occurred between 1836 and 1846, the State of

Illinois chartered the Alton & Sangamon Railroad to connect Alton with the Northern Cross Railroad (later the Wabash/N&W/NS) at New Berlin to gain entry into Springfield. Construction on the line from Alton to Springfield began in 1850. In 1851, legislators approved an extension of the railroad to Bloomington with the intention of reaching Chicago. As a result, it was necessary to relocate the proposed line away from New Berlin with a more direct route into Springfield resulting in the line passing through Chatham. The first train passed through Chatham in 1852 but by then, the line was named the Chicago & Mississippi Railroad. It was then reorganized in 1858 as the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis and then in 1862 became the Chicago & Alton. In 1931, the Baltimore & Ohio purchased the Chicago & Alton which became a subsidiary of the B&O named the Alton Route. In 1947, the Alton Route was sold to the Mobile & Ohio, later the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio. Illinois Central owned the line from the time of the GM&O merger in 1972 until 1987 when the line was sold to the Chicago, Missouri and Western. Being financially unstable during its 2 year existence, the CM&W ended up selling their lines piecemeal and Chicago to St. Louis line was sold to a subsidiary of Southern Pacific which then became part of the Union Pacific in 1996. Today, Union Pacific and Amtrak continue to use the tracks adjacent to the depot.

The last passenger train to stop at the depot was on January 31, 1952. An agent was still assigned to Chatham to handle freight shipments until the depot closed after the Illinois Central and Gulf, Mobile & Ohio merger in 1972. Illinois Central Gulf sold the depot and the new owners planned to convert the structure into offices and stores. Plans did not materialize and major renovations never occurred, although the old depot housed an architect's office for a while. After the office closed, the depot was left to deteriorate. In the late 1980's, a group of local residents formed the Friends of the Depot and convinced the Village of Chatham to buy the property. Renovations on the deteriorated depot began in 1991 and in 1993, the Village of Chatham dedicated the newly renovated depot. At that time there were discussions to put a small museum in the station agent's office but that plan did not coalesce. The depot was used temporarily as a meeting place for the village board and other local organizations. It then became storage for the village and also a



Artifacts from the C&A/Alton Route, the C&IM, GM&O, and Illinois Terminal



food pantry along with a few groups continuing to use it as a meeting place. The Chicago & Illinois Midland chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society first met at the depot in 1996 and thought it would be a good site for a museum. An agreement was signed by the chapter and the village in 1999 that founded the museum.

Today, the Chatham Railroad Museum Association operates the museum. It consists of members who have a love and passion for local railroad history. The Association operates and maintains its artifacts and displays under an agreement with the Village of Chatham. Operating funds for the Association come from donations, fundraising events, and membership dues. The museum is open the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month except for holidays. The museum is also open for special events and by appointment. There is no admission charge. The museum is located at 100 N. State Street in Chatham, Illinois.

Sources of Information:

Chatham Illinois Railroad Museum brochure

The Village of Chatham website:

Home>Community>Railroad Museum
<https://www.chathamil.gov/railroadmuseum>

SangamonLink: History of Sangamon County, Illinois website:

Contributor: Bill Shannon, president of the Chicago & Illinois Midland chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society. Posted on October 5, 2014 by editor Chatham Railroad History:
<https://sangamoncountyhistory.org/wp/?p=6192>



Above and Below: A sampling of the books, documents, and photos housed at the museum





The museum houses many artifacts and the beginnings of an HO scale layout



The depot is located at 100 N. State Street in Chatham, Illinois

Sprucing Up a Classic Kit

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division



If you have been around this hobby long enough, there are just some kits that transcend time. One of those kits is the venerable old kit, Ma's Place. What many modelers do not know is how the Ma's Place kit came into existence. From the mid 1950's through the late 1970's, a modeler and author named E.L. Moore wrote a considerable amount of articles for many model railroad publications. Many of these articles were regarding structures that could easily be constructed at a very low cost. Associated Hobby Manufacturers of Philadelphia (AHM) took note of these

structures and decided they wanted to mass produce them as kits. Ultimately AHM produced nine structure kits based on E.L. Moore Articles,

one of which was Ma's Place. The original "Build Ma's Place" article appeared in the January 1967 issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman*.



AHM began work in 1968 to release Ma's Place as a kit. I did not find the exact release date of the kit. Ma's place was subsequently released by several other companies including Tyco, IHC, Con-Cor, and Model Power.

Kits such as Ma's Place are still around today and can be found on the secondary market. These kits make great starting points for kitbashing or detailing that will improve their looks and, somewhat or completely, disguise their origins. Also, by making upgrades to the details, the model will blend in better with today's more refined offerings.

Ma's place has been the source of many kitbashing projects including:

- Railroad Modeler, October 1972: "The Holiday Inn It's Not"
- 1001 Model Railroading Ideas, Fall 1972: "Ma's Station"
- Railroad Model Craftsman, March 1974: "Qinnimont – with a Difference"
- Model Railroader, August 1980: "Star Printers: An Introductory Kitbash" and "Kitbashing Structures" which revisited three kitbash projects using the kit.

Source for the history of the AHM Ma's Place kit:

E. L. Moore's Legacy in the 21st Century: Origins of AHM's E. L. Moore Designed Kits, J.D. Lowe, 10-23-2020;
<https://30squaresofontario.blogspot.com/2020/10/the-origins-of-ahms-e-l-moore-designed.html>



Left: Ma's Place made it's debut as a scratchbuilding article by E.L. Moore in the January 1967 *Railroad Model Craftsman*
Right: A sampling of articles that used the Ma's Place kit as the basis for kitbashing projects.

Parts and Materials List

Ma's Place HO scale structure kit

1/4" x 1/4" stripwood

Walthers dark red brick sheet; Part 933-3523

Tichy 2-lite, 2-panel doors; Part 8050

Tichy 52" x 56" 2/2 double window; Part 8063

Tichy 2/2 double hung window; Part 8062

Tichy 4-panel door; Part 8049

Tichy 30" x 47" 2/2 double hung window; Part 8105

Tichy lattice trim; Part 8110

Tichy porch railing; Part 8093

Tichy turned porch posts; Part 8092

Evergreen V-groove sheet styrene; .80 spacing, .020 thick; Part 2080

Evergreen clear sheet styrene, .010 thick; Part 9006

Evergreen plain sheet styrene; .080 thick; Part 9080

Evergreen plain sheet styrene, .020 thick; Part 9020

Evergreen .020 x .100 styrene strip; Part 125

Evergreen .040 x .060 styrene strip; Part 143

Evergreen .060 x .060 styrene strip; Part 153

Evergreen .100 x .100 styrene strip; Part 175

Northeastern Scale Lumber 2" x 8"; Part HOSCAL2811

K&S Engineering 1/16" round aluminum tube; Part 5100

Walthers SceneMaster picnic tables; Part 949-4190

Presier tableware/food for tables; Part 17220

Woodland Scenics various seated figures

Woodland Scenics clump foliage

Woodland Scenics flowers

Various wooden crates

Copy paper for curtains, tablecloths, and roof sign

Cardstock for patching blank area on false front wall and "Eat Here" wall sign

Modeling Gloria's Diner

Gloria's Diner is not a kitbash of Ma's Place, but an upgrade to the detailing of the kit to improve its appearance. My first step in the upgrade in Ma's place was to change out the doors and windows. It improves the looks of an older kit as many of the old parts are thick, heavy, or out of scale. For this upgrade, I changed the single windows to double windows with the exception of the windows on either side of the front door and one window on the back. The double windows are Tichy 52 x 56 2/2 Double Hung Windows (Part #8063) and the single windows are Tichy 2/2 Double Hung Windows (Part #8062). The single window on the back is Tichy 2/2 Double Hung Window 30 x 47 (Part # 8105). The front doors are Tichy 2-Lite 2-Panel Doors (Part #8050) and the back door is a Tichy 4-Panel Door (Part #8049). I measured the new parts and adjusted the openings on the kit walls as necessary. I painted the parts a dark green prior to assembly and set them aside. Once dry, I installed clear styrene in the windows and front doors and set them aside again to dry. After modifying the window and door openings to receive the Tichy parts, I assembled the walls per the kit instructions. On the front false-front wall, the kit has a blank area for mounting a sign. I filled in the blank area



The components are ready to assemble after painting,

with strips of cardstock (business cards) to replicate the clapboard siding on the building. Once the glue cured, I painted the shell with a flat white spray paint. Once dry, I installed the previously painted doors and windows. I painted the roof at this time as I wanted to make sure the underneath of the eaves received the same white color. I considered covering the roof with corrugated panels, but I painted it first to see if I liked it. Since the kit roof represents a wooden shake roof, I started with a dark brown spray paint for the base coat. After allowing time for it to dry, I then drybrushed the roof with multiple shades of browns and grays. I was satisfied with its appearance so I set the roof aside to attach in a later step.

Going back to the windows, I

made the red and white checkered curtains in Microsoft Excel. I resized an area of columns and rows to make squares. I filled in alternating cells in one row with red and then copied the cells to the other rows by shifting back and forth to make the checkered pattern. I reduced the print area in print settings to compress the size when it printed. I printed out the sheet on regular white copy paper on an inkjet printer. It took a couple of tries to get the compression to a point where the output looked right. I cut strips and attached them behind the windows with tape.

This kit comes with a plastic base with piers on which to mount the structure. I did not like the appearance, so I built a brick foundation to go

underneath the building. I built the foundation with 1/4" x 1/4" stripwood to the shape and size but slightly smaller than the assembled shell to allow room for the brick. I also added small pieces of the same stripwood to top of the foundation to give it a good gluing surface to the inside of the walls. I cut 1/4" strips of brick from Walthers Dark Red Brick Sheet (Part #933-3523) and then cut them to length. I beveled the corners of the strips to create a 45-degree miter on the corners. I glued the brick to the strip wood with Loctite Gel and clamped it off to dry. Once the glue cured, I painted the brick foundation a mortar color and let it dry. I came back with a brick red acrylic color and used a make-up sponge to dab the paint onto the brick surfaces until I was satisfied with the coverage. I painted both chimneys at this time using the same methods.

At this time I glued them building shell to the foundation. Now it was time to move on to the new front porch and dining area. The kit had two separate porches but I wanted a larger area so that I could have picnic tables for outside dining. I built the porch as a freestanding unit to be installed as a completed piece when done. I cut Evergreen V-groove styrene sheet .020 thick with .80



The roof has been painted and weathered.



The red and white checkered curtains were made in Excel.

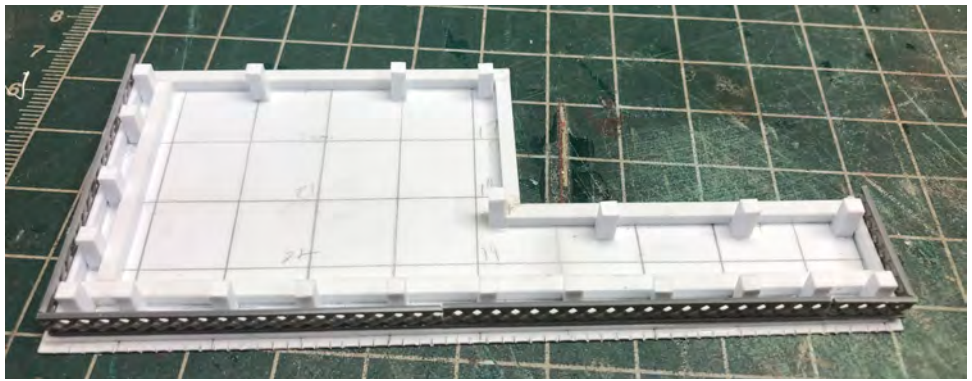
spacing (Part #2080) to size. I notched the ends of the styrene with a hobby knife at every groove to give the appearance of separate boards when looking at the edge. It is a small detail but it improves the appearance. I built a frame on the bottom of

the styrene with .100 x .100 Evergreen strip (Part #175). I also cut legs for the porch with the same strip. I then installed the lattice around the porch (Tichy Lattice Trim Part #8110). I planned on installing lattice over the legs so I cut and installed them spaced out on

the frame. In retrospect, I did not need that many legs as you really can't see them through the lattice.

The next step was to build the porch roof and install the railings. I used six Tichy Turned Porch Posts (Part #8092) trimmed to the appropriate height and angled to the planned pitch of the porch roof. I then installed Tichy Turned Spindle Porch Rail (Part #8093) to connect the tall posts. Finally, I built a frame at the top of the porch posts with Northeastern Scale Lumber 2 x 8 stripwood. This created trim to give it a finished look and also give me a good gluing surface for the porch roof. Next, I installed the porch railing around the rest of the porch making sure the spacing looked appropriate. I painted the porch unit white with the same spray paint used for the walls. I then hand painted the porch deck with a light gray acrylic paint, let it dry, and then weathered it. I installed the porch roof which was made from a piece of wood shake roofing leftover from a previous kitbashing project. I painted it the same way I painted the roof for the structure. Finally, I installed the roof on the structure along with the large chimney on the side.

Now on to the signs. I created the "Eat" sign on the front of



The underside of the porch with the framing, posts, and lattice installed.



Test fitting the porch on the building.



The porch posts, railings, and framing for the porch roof have been installed. At this point the porch is still a separate unit.

the building by finding and sizing a picture from the internet of this particular sign. I used Microsoft Publisher to make all the signs. To make it two-sided I had to flip the image and then copy the lettering from the original image since flipping the image reverses the letters. As I wanted to create some texture on the sign, I printed out two copies of each side on heavy cardstock. I cut one each of both sides of the sign. I then cut out the arrow and the yellow oval on the second sign and attached them to the first sign to make it layered. I inserted scrap wire in between the 2 sides of the sign before final gluing. I used Sharpie markers to color the edges of the sign.

I made the long rectangle roof sign in Microsoft Publisher. I found an image of an RC Cola sign on the internet, sized it, and copied it for each end of the sign. I filled the box between the two signs with a complementary color and settled on the fonts for the lettering. I printed the sign on regular copy paper with an inkjet printer. I now needed a frame to attach the sign to. I used .020 plain styrene to create the backer for the sign. I then wrapped the styrene backer with .020 x .100 styrene strip. I made the posts on the back with .060 x .060 styrene

strip with one end cut at the angle of the pitch of the roof. I glued the components together and let cure. I painted the sign gray and then attached the paper sign using an Elmer's gluestick. I glued the sign to the roof and then added the braces made from .040 x .060 strip styrene and painted them to match.

I made steps for both the front and back with .080 scraps of sheet styrene. Once the glue cured, I painted them with an acrylic concrete color and then dry brushed with lighter colors, washed with India ink and alcohol, and then rubbed down with light gray and white chalks.

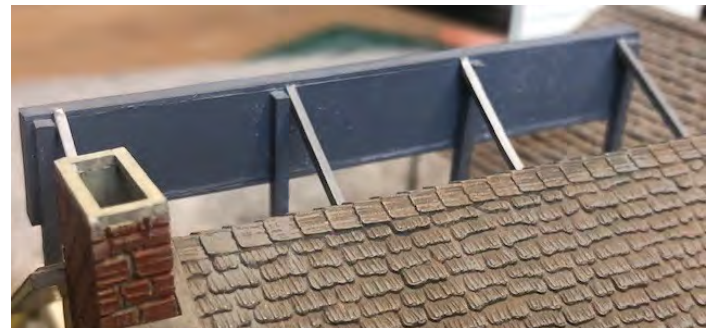
The final detailing consisted of adding picnic tables, figures, and flower boxes. The picnic tables are Walthers SceneMaster (Part #949-4190).



The Eat Here sign was made from photos from the internet, edited for a new name, and constructed in multiple layers.



The front and back of the roof sign. The sign was made with styrene sheet, styrene strip, and the sign printed on copy paper.



I had to glue 2 tables together to get the width of one table. I painted the tables with the white and green colors from the building. I used the same curtain material to make table cloths and glued them to the tables. I added various seated figures from Woodland Scenics and glued them to the benches. I added drinking glasses from a Presier Tableware Accessories (Part# 3523) to the picnic tables. Finally, I made the flower boxes from 3 crates from my detail stash, added clump foliage to them, sprayed them with hairspray, and sprinkled Woodland Scenic Flowers foam on them. Lastly, I installed plumbing vent pipes through the roof. I used K&S Engineering 1/16" aluminum tubing painted black to represent the vents. Lastly, I installed the small chimney on the roof.

That completes my upgrading and detailing of Ma's Place. I actually named mine after my mom in keeping in line with the spirit of the model. This is a versatile kit whether you detail it or use it for kitbashing. With a little time and work, you can make your Ma's Place look like something other than the Ma's place we all know.

A view of the back showing the different window sizes, the panel door, the steps, and roof vents.



Walthers picnic tables painted and covered with a table cloth



A view of the front steps and the flowers on the porch.



Photo Layout Tour - Dick Morgan's Craftsman Layout

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division



Richard "Dick" Morgan's layout is inspired by George Sellios' Franklin & South Manchester. In fact, he based his track plan on the FS&M but then put his own touch on the layout with the scenery and structures. This layout is his 3rd layout in the past 25 years and he has been working on this one for the past 11 years. His 23 x 25 freelance HO layout is mostly complete but there are always projects to work on. The layout features craftsman kits by Fine Scale Miniatures, SierraWest, Fos Scale Models, and South River Model Works. In fact, his layout has several structures built by the owners of the craftsman kit companies, including the actual prototype of the South River Model Works Delabarre Tap & Die built by Mr. Van Gelder himself before it went into production. He has other structures on the layout built by Brett Gallant of SierraWest, Doug Foscale of Fos Scale Models, and Howard Zane. The layout also has an HOn3 logging line, a 9-ft long wooden truss bridge, and a 8-ft long steel arch bridge with approaching steel deck girder bridges. He uses code 83 track, NCE DCC, and tortoise switch machines. Dick is a lifetime member of the NMRA.













Station to Station: Bone Gap, 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 small depot is located in Bone Gap, Illinois, a village of 181 residents that is located in Edwards County. According to the Bone Gap History Facebook page, the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville railroad arrived in Bone Gap in 1880 and the depot was built soon thereafter. The Illinois Central acquired the PD&E in 1900. The depot remained in use until the 1950s. The last train ran through Bone Gap in the early 1970s with the tracks being removed a few years later. In 1974, this depot was moved from its original location. In 2001, it was moved once again to its current location.



Structural Elements: The Corner Block, Hillsboro, 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 Corner Block building is located at the intersection of South Main and West Wood Streets in Hillsboro, Illinois. Hillsboro is located in Montgomery County is 65 miles northeast of St. Louis.

Built in 1894, the building combines the elements of Queen Anne, Romanesque, and Dutch Colonial Revival architectural features. The most notable feature is the full-story, cross-gambrel roof which is commonly associated with Dutch building traditions. Iron clad bays adorn the second floor; however, one bay on the southeast corner has been removed. Additionally, the third floor once had an inset balcony but it was later enclosed.

The building originally housed Hillsboro's first library and reading room. Subsequently, Evans Brothers Furniture and a dentist office occupied the first floor, residences were on the second floor, and the Knights of Pythias Lodge was on the third floor. In later years, the building was home to other furniture stores, an undertaker, a hardware store, and a Sherman's Department Store. Today, the building is vacant; however, it has new owners who are working on stabilizing and restoring the building.

Photo Credits: Jeff Cooper



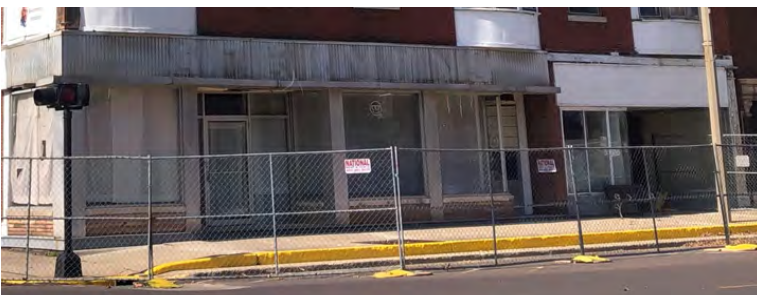


How the Corner Block appeared prior to 1920. Of note is the open balcony on the third floor and the original storefronts.

Photo Credit:
<https://corner-block.square.site/home>

This photo is considered to be in the public domain as it was taken and published in the U.S. more than 95 years ago. The age of the photo pre-dates 1920 as the Orpheum Theater that abuts this building opened in 1920. In this photo the theater has yet to be built.

From the balcony being open or closed, the bay being present or not, and the changing storefronts, you can set the era in which you model or mark the passage of time.



Editor's Observations: Inspiration

By Jeff Cooper, Clerk and RPO Editor, Gateway Division

My two primary goals for each issue of RPO is to report the happenings of the Division and our members and to provide inspiration to the members of the Division. The definition of inspiration is "the process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something, especially creative." Maybe the inspiration I am after is to inspire you to take part in a Division activity or to inspire you to meet some of the friendly, talented, and knowledgeable members in our Division or other Divisions. The amount of knowledge and expertise held by our members is staggering and on a wide array of topics and interests. I promise you that if you take the time to meet our fellow members, you will find someone that shares the same interests that you do. After all, if I can find someone who shares the same interest and passion in the Chicago and Illinois Midland, I'm sure you can find a fellow modeler or member that you can relate to. In recent issues, the happenings in the Division have been varied, from achievement program activities, awards and AP certificates earned by our members, reports on our Saturday hands-on workshops, and recaps of tours taken by our members. The goal of the Board is to provide a variety of activities to inspire you to join in and enjoy the benefits of being a member of the Gateway Division.

The second type of inspiration that I try to incorporate in the RPO is on the creative side of the equation. That is the purpose of the layout tours, the articles on operations and rolling stock, the prototype photos scattered throughout each issue, the regular features regarding depots and other structures, and in this issue, the article on upgrading a classic kit and visiting a museum. The articles range from instructional to informational to, hopefully, inspirational. You do not have to model what is being presented in the pages of the RPO to be inspired. Maybe the inspiration is seeing details in a structure or prototype railroad photo that had gone unnoticed. Maybe the inspiration is motivating you to check out a museum that has been on your to-do list for way too long. Maybe the inspiration is seeing layout photos, that while may not directly related to your modeling, may provide an inspiration to incorporate into your layout. Maybe the inspiration is seeing how one of our members researched and built a caboose complete with detailed interior.

All of this talk of inspiration got me to thinking about who has inspired me over the years. So, in delving into my memories, who has provided inspiration to me and who has influenced my modeling style? First and foremost, my family is where it

starts. It was my grandpa who recognized my love for trains at a very early age and took me down to the Norfolk & Western tracks to watch the trains and count the cars. Little did I know that the true purpose in counting those cars was him teaching me how to count. Also, it was my grandpa who helped me build my first layout in his basement. It was a 4 x 8 Lionel "empire." By having it in his basement, it also ensured that he and grandma got to see me on a regular basis. I see what he did there. It is my dad who encouraged me to pursue model trains and who also took me places, such as the Monticello Railway Museum, to keep the passion growing. He is also the person who introduced me to *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. He bought me four back issues and to this day they are my most treasured issues. It was also my dad who "let" me expand my 4 x 8 Lionel empire into a 5 x 16 masterpiece, or at least I thought so at the time. It was my grandma who made sure that she was the one who bought me my first train set. It was my mom and both grandmas who took me to hobby shops and train shows and who also bought me more trains for Christmas (sorry, Santa, I give credit to my family for that!). It was my mom who helped me by getting supplies or giving me feedback on my latest

creation. All of them are responsible for recognizing my deep interest in trains and doing their best to feed that passion. They inspired me to keep going, to learn more, and to better my skills.

My inspiration also came from the pages of the hobby press online resources, and at my LHS. Some of those who influenced and inspired me are:

Art Curren: I fell in love with his kitbashes. His buildings didn't look like anyone else's and I liked it. Because of him, I can't look at a structure kit without thinking about how I can change it through kitbashing, detailing, or both. While the Ma's Place article in this issue is not a kitbash, Art's influence regarding structures is a cornerstone of my modeling.

Wayne Wesolowski: He had an article in the very first issue *Railroad Model Craftsman* that I owned on how to scratchbuild an octagonal crossing tower. My young mind lapped up every ounce of that article even though I had not yet developed the skills to build such a fine model.

John Allen and Malcom

Furrow: I found their work to be astounding. I know there are many who are not fans of their modeling style, but their talent is undeniable even though what they do is not my modeling style. You have to think of it from a perspective of being on the verge of my teenage years and getting a hold of magazines that I had no idea existed. Up until that point, I had a Lionel layout on

plywood. It had scenery and some small grades with a tunnel and buildings and streets. When I saw those layouts and saw floor to ceiling mountains and trestles and so on, it opened my eyes to a whole new world of possibilities.

Allen McClelland: his approach to layouts and realism were very inspirational to a young modeler. Even though John Allen and Malcom Furrow fascinated me with their larger than life scenery, I gravitated to Allen McClelland's style as it looked believable. His modeling philosophy of "good enough" is something I still carry with me today.

Tom Johnson and Jason

Klocke: Tom Johnson's Logansport and Indiana Northern and Jason Klocke's Chicago Great Western layouts have the rural look that I am striving for. It not only looks right, but it feels right.

Per Laursen and Pelle Soeberg:

Even though I will be modeling a different prototype in a different era in a different region, both modelers inspire me as their layouts, like Tom Johnson's, look and feel right. Their attention to realistic detail is something to strive for. They capture the essence of the ordinary world around us and model it very well.

Vic Smith: his urban modeling on his City Edge layout is truly inspirational. While I am not planning on a true urban area on my future layout, his modeling style serves as an inspiration for my plans on

incorporating the commercial and industrial districts of my planned representation of Decatur, Illinois. Decatur is not in the same class as his urban setting, but his ability to get the details right in a populous area is the inspiration.

Fred Lagno: his book *Changes: A Model Railroad Comes to Life* serves as an inspiration on scenery, detailing, and accurately capturing the nostalgia of days gone by.

Chuck McCabe: Chuck owns Chuck's Depot in Marion and I befriended him over 20 years ago, if by no other way than sheer persistence. He has taught me as much about building a layout than anyone else ever has. The gang of regulars, some of whom have since passed away and many who've become close friends, are a great inspiration. There is a lot of knowledge and talent (along with constructive feedback) that can be had just hanging out at the hobby shop. There is nothing else like hanging out at a LHS, whether you buy anything or not, to have good conversations about almost anything related to trains.

*Have you thought
about who inspires
you and why?*

*Or you never know,
you just may be the
person who
inspires someone*

Gateway Division Members:

I'm not including this last one to be patronizing. It is true that many members of the Division inspire me. It is why I decided to become the Clerk and then the editor of this newsletter. The members and officers inspire me to grow my circle of friends and to be more involved in this hobby. It seems that there is at least one person who has an answer for almost any question. Each member has their own area of expertise and they are more than happy to share their wisdom, whether it be DCC, prototype information, operations, modeling, or almost anything else related to trains and model railroading.

Have you thought about who inspires you and why? If you've never participated in any of the Division events, or if has been a while since you've joined us, why not stop by or logon and see if you get inspired. Or you never know, you just may be the person who inspires someone else.



The former Illinois Central Charter Line in Macon, Illinois on February 12, 2023. Photo credit: Jeff Cooper

RPO Content Needed

Why not consider making a contribution to the RPO to inspire others? You can make a contribution as small or large as you want. We are always needing single photographs to fill-in white space throughout the newsletter. Or you could submit an article on almost any subject related to modeling or railroading. If you need assistance writing the article, just reach out and we will lend you a helping hand. Whatever you need, all you have to do is ask and we will try our best to make it happen. If you have photos or articles you would like to contribute or you would like assistance with photos and/or writing an article, just drop an e-mail to rpoeditor@outlook.com and let's see what we can do to make it happen.

Help Wanted

The Division is looking for a member who can help by serving as a backup to the Clerk. We are also looking for members to serve as our Publicity Chair, Holiday Party Chair, and IT Assistant. Contact Superintendent Jimmy Ables at jim.d.ables@gmail.com if you are interested.

Meeting Minutes for April 17, 2023

Call to Order

Superintendent Jim Ables called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Meeting Etiquette

Jimmy 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

Jimmy Ables asked if there were any new members or visitors attending the meeting. Two Division members were in attendance after extended absences from attending in-person. Mr. Ables thanked them for their attendance.

Minutes from the March 20, 2023 Meeting

Jimmy Ables presented the minutes from the March 20, 2023 meeting. A member in attendance asked the Board what the final decision was for the amount to be transferred to the Schwab One Account. Mr. Ables reported that the Board unanimously agreed that \$18,000 will be transferred to the investment account to ensure we leave enough cash in the bank account for operations. *The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.*

Financial Reports

Bill Levin presented the March 2023 financial statement. Mr. Levin reported that there were only 3 transactions on the March financial statements and the current cash balance stands at \$24,717.30. Willie Richter noted that he has one bill to turn in to the Division for reimbursement for equipment for the online portion of the meetings. If all goes well, he is done buying equipment.

Open Positions

Jimmy Ables requested a volunteer to serve as the Refreshments Coordinator for the meetings at the church. This person would be responsible for bringing soda and cookies to the meeting. The Division pays for the refreshments. Mr. Ables also requested volunteers for the Publicity Chair, Holiday Party Chair, and IT Assistant. If anyone is interested in any of these positions, please contact Mr. Ables.

Preliminary Proposed Changes to Election Regulations

Jimmy Ables reported that the Board will be recommending to the membership some changes in the election regulations. Dan Knipp outlined the preliminary proposed changes which include incorporating language regarding electronic voting, combining the Nominations and Elections committees, adding acclamation language for candidates running unopposed, updating ballot certification requirements, and updating Paymaster duties. Ballots will continue to be electronic except for those members without an e-mail address and those members will receive a paper ballot. These changes will be formalized and presented to membership for consideration at a future date.

AP Update

Dave Ackmann reported that Dan Knipp received his Association Volunteer certificate. Mr. Ackmann further updated that 5 judges will be evaluating two home layouts for scenery and structures on Saturday, June 3. If any member is interested in learning more about being a judge or actually becoming a judge, Mr. Ackmann will be holding a virtual workshop in Hangout Room 5 on the NMRA Interchange on May 6th. Mr. Ackmann went on to explain that judging models is not relative to other modelers, but judging the models according to a scoring matrix. The goal is to award points, not take them away. As an example, Mr. Ackmann discussed that structures are judged on 5 categories: details, finish, construction, scratchbuilding, and weathering (although weathering is not required). There are 125 points available and to get a merit award, you have to score at least 70% (or 87.5 points). To get the Structures Certificate, you have to earn 6 merit awards and also present 6 additional structures, one of which has to be a bridge. Finally, Mr. Ackmann discussed the required paperwork that describes construction techniques, details, conformity, fit and finish, and scratchbuilding. Mr. Ables noted that prior to COVID, judging occurred at the modelers homes so he is pleased that we are able to return to doing that again.

Club Updates

Bob Miller gave an update on the Jefferson County & Southern. Mr. Miller reported that the work day in May will be on the 21st.

Glenn Koproske reported that MVNS is looking for some modelers to finish some N Scale modules.

Jimmy Ables reported that the Metro East Club meets on Thursday nights.

Upcoming Events

Jimmy Ables announced upcoming events:

- **April 29, 2023: 6th Annual Railroad Swap Meet**, Iron Spike Model Train Museum, Washington City Auditorium, 211 High Street, Washington MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **May 13, 2023: After the Storm Train Show**, Arnold Eagles Hall, 1725 Jeffco Blvd. Arnold, MO; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Other Business

Roger Cady reported that he discussed the Model Railroading 101 course with Mark Twain Hobbies but unfortunately all of their space is currently occupied. Mr. Cady noted that in the past the course has been presented at Mark Twain Hobbies and the National Museum of Transportation. He stated that it is up to us to design the course. He feels that five hours is too long and that it should be presented in 1 to 2-hour self-contained segments that span several weeks so that participants can come and go. The course should be also be advertised to non-members. Mr. Cady further reported that Mark Twain Hobbies will offer discounts to NMRA members, but they require the customer's name to be on the list to be provided by the Division. Mr. Ables indicated that any Division member interested in receiving the discount to e-mail him your name and he will update the list.

David Lowell, MCoR Director and Saturday Workshop Coordinator, gave more information about the upcoming Make and Take Workshop on May 20th at 9:30 a.m. The workshop will give participants a hands-on opportunity to build a laser cut wooden kit. The structure will be American Model Builders Lake Junction Station which is based on a St. Louis area prototype. There is no cost to members of the Division and we are allowing members a plus one. It will be held at the West Alton, Missouri, City Hall and there will be a limit of 40 people. Participants are encouraged to bring their own tools, but there will be a limited amount of tools on-hand to share. The last day to sign up is April 21st. If any members are interested in attending, all they have to do is send an e-mail to Mr. Lowell at lowellcomotive@gmail.com.

Ron Gawedzinski, Activities Coordinator, reported that he has an event set up with Intramotev, a new start-up that builds autonomous railcars. The presentation will occur at the National Museum of Transportation on May 3, 2023 at 7 p.m. Mr. Gawedzinski also announced a joint group tour with the St. Louis chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society of Micro Engineering on May 10 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. This will be the last chance to tour the facility as the company has new owners and they are relocating to Macon, MO around the end of May.

Jim Ables noted that John Kelly has volunteered to serve as Assistant Paymaster.

50/50 Drawing

Brad Joseph won the 50/50 drawing.

Presentation

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 MRRRC Club layout that was awarded Best of Show at the National Train Show in 2022 and was invited to display at the Texas Express 2023 NMRA National Convention.

Next Meeting

Jim Ables announced that the next Division event will be the Make and Take Workshop at West Alton City Hall, 111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO on May 20, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Adjourn

Jim Ables adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Cooper, Clerk
Gateway Division



A BNSF freight train passes over Main Street (Old Route 13) in Marion, Illinois on July 12, 2023.

Photo credit:
Jeff Cooper

Meeting Minutes for June 19, 2023

Call to Order

Superintendent Jimmy Ables called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

Meeting Etiquette

Jimmy 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

Jimmy Ables asked if there were any new members or visitors attending the meeting. There were two guests present at the meeting. Mr. Ables thanked them for their attendance.

Minutes from the April 17, 2023 Meeting

Jimmy Ables presented the minutes from the April 17, 2023 meeting.
The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Financial Reports

Bill Levin presented the May 2023 financial statement. Mr. Levin reported that the Division spent approximately \$300 on equipment for virtual meetings and also reported on the 50/50 drawing sales. At the end of May the bank account balance stands at \$24,441.88 and there is \$134.85 of cash on hand that will be needed for the Fall meet.

AP Update

Dave Ackmann reported that 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. Mr. Ackmann noted that more members have expressed an interest in judging.

Membership Report

Glenn Koproske reported that mailings to past due members are going out this week. It appears some of the lapsed memberships are related to those who joined because of the layout tours during the National convention.

Club Updates

Bob Miller gave an update on the Jefferson County & Southern. Mr. Miller reported that the work day in June will be on the 24th. They are working with new materials in an effort to make the modules lighter.

Glenn Koproske reported that the Kirkwood Community Center is undergoing renovations and the Meramec Valley College will be the new location for the 32nd Annual Metro St. Louis Train Show on October 14th and 15th. Mr. Koproske also updated membership on the module rehab project and reported that 5 modules have been rewired and are ready to go.

Jimmy Ables reported that hasn't received any updates on the Mexico, MO club.

Upcoming Events

Jimmy Ables announced upcoming events:

- **July 28 - 29, 2023: St. Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet**, Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, Illinois; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. both days
- **July 27 - 29, 2023: NMRA Mid-Continent Region Convention**, Holiday Inn and Suites, 8787 Reeder St., Overland Park, KS

Activities Update

Ron Gawedzinski, Activities Coordinator, updated the membership on a new tour that has been arranged. The tour will be of the Terminal Railroad Association Yard in Venice, IL on July 13th from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The tour will be conducted in small groups and will visit the dispatching center, yard tower, and locomotive shop. Visitors will experience actual working conditions so safety glasses/lenses are required. The tour is not fully ADA accessible and children must be accompanied by an adult. Send an e-mail to Mr. Gawedzinski to sign up. There is a limit of 36 attendees. Mr. Gawedzinski will send an e-mail to those who sign up with details regarding parking. The tour is being done in conjunction with the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society.

Mr. Gawedzinski also reported that a tour of Continental Fabricators is tentatively scheduled for October 28th.

Mr. Gawedzinski thanked the members who attended the tour of Micro Engineering.

Other Business

Jimmy Ables noted that the deadline for submissions for the next issue of RPO is July 1st.

Chris Oestreich noted that the Annual Train Show "Best of Show" plaque is filled up and there is no room for any new names to be added this year. Membership discussed multiple alternatives including getting a new plaque or removing past winners to make room for new winners. The plaque is currently a traveling plaque and is transferred to the new winner each year. The decision was tabled until the next meeting.

Bill Levin announced that he had wheelsets available at the meeting for anyone wishing to purchase some.

50/50 Drawing

Dan Knipp won the 50/50 drawing.

Presentation

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.

Next Meeting

Jimmy Ables announced that the next Division July 17, 2023 meeting will be in-person at Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road Town and Country, MO and also accessible via Zoom (link will be sent by e-mail).

Adjourn

Jimmy Ables adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Cooper, Clerk, Gateway Division



**Summer 2023:
Volume 31, Number 2**

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

Editor: Jeff Cooper

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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

Hard copy submissions can be mailed to:

**Jeff Cooper
818 W. Concord St
Marion, IL 62959**

Submission deadlines:

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

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Dave Ackmann

Activities

Ron Gawedzinski

Presentations

Roger Cady

Contests

Chris Oestreich

Fall Meet

Walter Beckman

IT

Willie Richter

Layout Tours

Dave Roeder

Membership

Glenn Koproske

Operations

Greg Gramlich

Publicity

Jimmy Ables

Webmaster

Richard Schumaker



Division Calendar

August 21, 2023, 7.p.m.: In-Person and Zoom

Meeting and Presentation: VFW, 221 W. 1st Street, O'Fallon, IL and via Zoom

September 9 2023, 9:30 a.m.: Hands-on Workshop:

Making Trees: West Alton City Hall, 111 Richard Drive, West Alton, MO

October 16, 2023, 7 p.m.: In-Person and Zoom

Meeting and Presentation: Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Rd, Town and Country, MO and via Zoom

Club Directory



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 **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 **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 **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.

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!