

Below you will find the March 2015 issue of the NMRA InfoNet News and the March / April 2015 issue of the eBulletin

Welcome to the InfoNet News (Infoblast) For March, 2015

From Ben Sevier, NMRA Information Technology Department Manager:

The NMRA website relies, just like the Region websites, on input from MEMBERS (both POM and officials) to have anything new to post. People who send in corrections and postings see them posted pretty quickly. However, JUST like a region website, the VOLUNTEER team does NOT have time to go out searching for things to post. If you don't see something you think should be on the site, let us know. You can reach the web team at web@nmra.org.

I've found it interesting that a number of the corrections we've been sent are on items that were on the OLD website for up to 15 years, and nobody apparently noticed. At least people ARE looking at the new one, and letting us know - and we fix. Have news to send out? If it's appropriate, and of interest to the general membership, we'll put up in the "In The News" section (yeah, I get bored of official announcements too).

The NMRA website belongs to YOU; the NMRA member - if you aren't willing to contribute, then you won't get a lot. We have had some constructive suggestions on some changes, and they've been made. I'm sure there is more that needs to be done.

In Memoriam:

Jim Scribbins (1928-2014)

Railroader, author and photographer Jim Scribbins, 86, died November 27 in West Bend, IN. Jim became a Milwaukee Road ticket agent in 1948 and remained in the passenger department until 1971, then held other MILW jobs before retiring in 1985. The author of dozens of articles for *Trains* (and two for *Classic Trains*), he is best known for his books *The Hiawatha Story* and *The 400 Story*. Jim also volunteered hundreds of hours cataloging the MILW corporate archives at the Milwaukee Public Library, and donating his extensive photo collection to the Milwaukee Road Historical Association.

From Classic Trains

Summary of the Winter Board of Directors meeting

The NMRA Board of Directors conducted their Winter meeting in Scottsdale, AZ, on February 20-22 at the Chaparral Suites and Hotel. Here are a few highlights from that meeting. (Note that the official minutes of the meeting will be posted to www.nmra.org in the near future.)

- The Board of Directors has agreed to adopt **standards for Layout Command Control (LCC)**, formerly known as NMRANet. LCC is an operating system protocol which will work hand-in-hand with DCC, handling all "non-motive power"-related functions on a model railroad layout, such as signaling. In essence, LCC is DCC for the rest of your layout. LCC was developed over the past several years by the OpenLCB Group, a large group of volunteers with expertise in electronics, networking, programming and model railroading, similar to the group that developed the Java Model Railroad Interface (JMRI). The final draft of the LCC protocols and specification documents have been

published for comment on www.nmra.org. Look for an article describing all the benefits of LCC in an upcoming issue of *NMRA Magazine*.

- While plans for the NMRA **Member Discount Program** have moved more slowly than anticipated, the Board discussed new ways of speeding up the concept.
- NMRA General Counsel Bob Amsler reported that NMRA **vertical integration** is continuing to be tested in one NMRA Region. He hopes to add a Division to the test in the near future. Amsler once again stressed that under this plan Regions and Divisions will remain in full control of all their assets and programs, contrary to rumors which continue to proliferate on the internet.
- The Board approved a motion creating a **policy that limits guest visits** to Division or Region events to three times. This policy will help Divisions and Regions remain in compliance with NMRA insurance regulations which mandate that all regular attendees be NMRA members.
- The Board discussed the future of the NMRA **Pike Registry**, which has, in recent years, been relatively inactive. The idea of a "Layout Registry," in which members voluntarily agree to allow visitors to contact them for layout visits, is being investigated and a report will be made at the Portland convention in August. This directory would help members find layouts and other NMRA members in their own area, or in areas which they're visiting.
- Larry Swigert of the Lone Star Region has been named chairperson of the **Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee**. The committee is tasked with compiling a list of successful strategies for attracting and keeping new members. The committee will report on their progress at the Portland Convention in August.
- A "**Code of Conduct**" was discussed by the Board and is being investigated further. The Code would help everyone in the NMRA understand what level of courtesy and common behavior is expected of members.
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Housing availability in Portland

On Tuesday, February 17, housing opened for Portland convention attendees. By the end of the first weekend, the convention hotel, the DoubleTree Portland, was sold out. We expected that was going to happen, but were surprised by the speed at which it did. Especially since the total number of room nights reserved in Portland already exceeds the total room night pickup for each of the past three years' NMRA national conventions.

We notified the earliest registrants first, as we promised we would when they registered. There were over 900 convention registrants when we sent the first notification.

We are now hearing concerns from some members that housing sold out before they were notified, or they were not notified at all.

We apologize for this as we know it has caused inconveniences for many people.

But not to fret, there is another block of rooms at a different downtown hotel going online (it may already be online when this *NMRA eBulletin* arrives). As of this writing (Thursday afternoon Feb 26.), we are just awaiting signatures on the contract. We have a second backup hotel that needs to have a contract issued also. But that may take a week or more.

To all convention registrants: please be aware that we are working to get more rooms. There may be some delays, but we are going to have more housing available. And if those sell out, we will look for more rooms. It may not be downtown (we know one or two hotels will be near the Expo Center where the National Train Show is to be held), but all will have close access to the MAX Light Rail, which will take you right to the door of the convention hotel.

Again, we apologize for any inconvenience, but keep in mind that the convention is still six months away.

From Trains Magazine:

National Park Service to manage Pullman site

By John Gruber

Alex Mayes

CHICAGO — President Obama is coming to Chicago Feb. 19 to designate the Pullman Historic District as a national monument. Pullman would join Steamtown and Golden Spike national historic sites as rail history locations managed by the National Park Service. The district, 13 miles south of downtown Chicago, is the location of George M. Pullman's railroad car factory and planned community, established in 1881. Its association with labor and civil rights history and a bitter 1894 strike enhance the site's significance.

"Pullman's role in advancing the American labor movement and in giving rise to the first African American labor union is an important chapter in our country's history that deserves to be told, says U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly, whose district includes Pullman. "That a monument will be established at Pullman is a testament not only to the American laborer but to the many residents of Pullman who have worked tirelessly for years to keep its history alive. Their passion to preserve Pullman's legacy is what made this monument possible." Rep. Kelly and Illinois Senators Dick Durbin and Mark Kirk have been pushing for the park for some time.

Michael A. Shymanski, president of the Historic Pullman Foundation, adds, "The designation of Pullman as a National Monument culminates a five- decade grassroots effort of the Pullman Civic Organization and the Historic Pullman Foundation to preserve and restore the Pullman Historic District's place in American history and to attract the national and international attention that this important landmark deserves."

The Pullman State Historic Site was established in 1991 when the state of Illinois purchased the 12.66-acre Clock Tower and Administration Building. After nearly being destroyed by a fire in 1998, the state stabilized the North Factory and reconstructed the shell of the tower but progress has been slow. The national park status would provide needed resources for full restoration and interpretation. The site has been a national historic landmark since 1970.

Many groups have endorsed the site's historic importance. The National Trust for Historical Preservation designated the site as a National Treasure. A National Park Service study concluded that the Pullman community should be seriously considered as a national park. "In addition to a broader understanding of Pullman in labor history, the district is potentially also significant for its role in the history of industry, commerce, and transportation," the feasibility study says.

The study says that while the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters had its offices elsewhere, the Pullman district is an appropriate place to tell about the brotherhood. The African American union, organized in 1925 and recognized by Pullman in 1937, had an important role in the civil rights movement. "Both the 1894 Pullman strike and the quest for recognition by the [Brotherhood] can be seen as part of a larger trajectory of the struggle between companies and a workforce often wracked by social, gender, and racial divisions," according to the study. Another African American group, the Joint Council of Dining Car Employees, also had offices nearby.

The Pullman site's new designation demonstrates Obama's commitment to protect places that reflect the nation's diverse history and create opportunities for all Americans to access outdoor spaces, a White House official says.

If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You'll find those addresses at www.nmra.org or in the NMRA Magazine

Regards,

Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA
Director – Support Services



March/April 2015

Portland Daylight Express



Portland Daylight Express Convention to be held August 23 - 29, 2015 is our next National Convention. This is the 80th NMRA National Convention.

Prototype, Layout and General Interest tours will soon be open for sign-up.

You can review all the tours in the March *NMRA Magazine* and on our website, or download and read our registration package, then make the orders for your selections on the website.

There will be 23 tours to 15 unique prototype facilities, 77 layout tours, and 16 general interest tours to 15 unique activities. Many of these locations are rarely open to the public. There are capacity limitations, so early sign-up will

A few words from the President



Back from Mid-Year

I just recently returned from a very productive BOD meeting, one of two held each year. Below you'll read a summary of what we did and I will write about it in much more detail in the May *NMRA Magazine*. Suffice to say, the leadership team did some good things for the NMRA and for the hobby. We have a great team in place.

Recently, I received another of the occasional notes complaining about solicitation letters we send seeking contributions. I share my edited response here in case you share the feelings expressed in these letters. Here is what I wrote:

Thanks for your note and the comments made therein. You ask why a first year member receiving three solicitations for funds would wish to remain a member. Fair question. I would point out that at least one of those solicitations came with the NMRA calendar, which is a member benefit. But the simple answer to your inquiry is these letters save you money. A funny response perhaps, but true nonetheless.

secure your place on popular tours. Note that tours which don't fill up to cover their costs will be cancelled a month before the convention. So if the tour looks interesting, put your name on a seat now!

Sign up for one or more of the popular "Modeling with the Masters" sessions. Beginners and experienced modelers alike will benefit from the tips and techniques. There'll be 8 sessions featuring 6 different projects. It's the largest MWTM program ever offered.

Check out our website
<http://www.nmra2015portland.org/>

Registrations are open!

Housing availability in Portland



[Ray deBlieck](#)
Convention Manager

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"Dues money accounts for about 80% of the actual operating costs of the organization. The rest is raised by sales and donations. Thus the donations are a "necessary evil," if you will, in order to keep dues costs down. And they are voluntary. You are free to throw the requests away.

"You are no doubt sent a lot of such solicitations for charities and organizations, and I suspect you have no problem recycling those. If, like me, you watch PBS you probably get annoyed at the interminable pledge breaks that seem to happen every other week. Yet that is how PBS survives.

"As a non-profit, we also rely on our members to support what we do. Dues alone are not enough. So like all other non-profits, we fund-raise. Would you prefer we add \$11 to the dues to reflect the true cost of what we do? While you may argue that we should just "cut costs," there are no more costs to cut. We have done so and run a lean organization. So what would you have us do?

"Above all, thanks for being a member and please consider renewing to support the good we do together for the hobby. And just throw out any fundraising letters; we'd rather have you as a member."

The NMRA does good for the hobby so if you can contribute, fine. But if you cannot or chose not to do so, your membership is support enough and we deeply appreciate it.

Those are my thoughts; what are yours?

Charlie

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Now online at www.nmra.org

- The first three EduTRAIN® clinic presentations have been posted to the members' section on our website. To download these presentations, log in to the NMRA website as a member, click on "EDUCATION" at the top of the screen. Click on "EduTRAIN" on the drop-down menu, and then "EduTRAIN Clinics" in the blue box on the right side of the screen. The clinics include scenery strategy, modeling slate roofs, and signals.
- The *NMRA Bulletin* section of *NMRA Magazine* is being posted on our website for the benefit of those members who don't subscribe to the magazine. To view the latest and previous issues, go to <http://www.nmra.org/nmra-bulletin>

I have an AP question...what's the answer?

of LCC in an upcoming issue of *NMRA Magazine*.

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The NMRA Board of Directors, officers, and department heads took an

[Frank Koch](#)

NMRA Achievement Program

I'm going to address common questions that come up every once in a while. I answer them the same way every time, but this will increase the number of members who actually see them. I'm working on adding these explanations to the website over time.

Q: What's the difference between the two AP forms (Records and Validation versus SOQ)? It appears they are more or less identical. Should I advise members to simply fill them out simultaneously?

A: They actually serve separate functions, and they may overlap in some cases. For Motive Power, Cars, Structures, and Official, the SOQ is sufficient as the number of items to be recorded and verified is small. There is no need to complete the R&V form for these categories and they will be taken off the website when I have some free time, and the overall requirements will reflect this. For now, take this message as the official statement. All the Region AP Managers have been advised of this change. Just remember that the information and the verification are the requirement, the forms are for convenience and consistency.

For Dispatcher, Volunteer, and Author, many members use the R&V form to record, document, and get verification of individual items over a period of years and from many different locations. This large amount of data is then briefly summarized on the SOQ. Many members find it very useful to carry one new sheet to a new operating session rather than carry a notebook of sheets that might be misplaced. For example, when I was working toward Chief Dispatcher, I actually made myself a log book like a RR engineer would have used to record individual operating sessions. Each page had a short description of the key elements and a signature of a witness. When I was done, it was altogether and I could easily summarize it on the SOQ. The same is

hour out of their meeting schedule to visit the spectacular layouts at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park in Scottsdale, AZ. Here, president Charlie Getz and crew stand amidst the Scottsdale Model Railroad Club's HO layout to thank members for opening the layouts after hours.

Smile. The NMRA is now on Amazon.com

[Alan Anderson](#)

Manager, Development and Fundraising Department



Thousands of people shop on Amazon.com, including model railroaders. But did you know that when you, your family members and friends make purchases there, Amazon could make a donation to your favorite non-profit charity such as the NMRA? Did you also know that the NMRA qualifies as your favorite non-profit (I hope you do!)

Amazon has introduced a program called "AmazonSmile" to help community non-profits such as the National Model Railroad Association. Simply log in to your regular Amazon account using the website <http://smile.amazon.com> and then select National Model Railroad Association, Inc. as your chosen Non-profit. It's that easy. Then just shop as you normally do.

Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You'll see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. For those products, Amazon will donate .05% of the purchase price to the NMRA. What's great is that the donation is not added to your final purchase price or added to the seller's cost. And item prices are exactly the same as Amazon.com.

So remember to sign up at smile.amazon.com. You only have to sign up once and all future AmazonSmile purchases will benefit the NMRA helping us continue to develop programs that benefit model railroaders.

Region and National Conventions

(Only those conventions occurring in the next three months are listed)



[Aug 23-29: NMRA National Convention, Portland, OR](#)

[Apr 17-19: Midwest Region, Manitowoc, WI](#)

[May 13-17: Pacific Coast Region, Newark, CA](#)

[May 14-17: Mid-Central Region, Lexington, KY](#)

[May 15-17: Niagara Frontier Region, Rochester, NY](#)

May 22-24: Thousand Lakes Region, Thunder Bay, Ontario

Master Model Railroaders

true of Volunteer and Author - some folks have 40-50 entries with different verifications.

Q: My module/display earned 90 points in a contest. Why don't I get a Merit Award and AP credits for it?

A: The contest and AP are separate events and don't always overlap. The contest has several categories (displays and modules) that have separate judging criteria and they are not part of the AP categories. However, there are two ways modules and displays can earn credits toward AP. First, if the item is at least eight square feet, it can be evaluated as part of the Scenery requirement. Second, elements of the item (structures, for example) can be individually evaluated for AP Structures credits.

Frank will answer two more common AP questions in the next edition of the NMRA eBulletin.

Editors:

[Gerry Leone](#), MMR, HLM, and [Chuck Diljak](#)

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The NMRA eBulletin is an official bi-monthly production of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Publishing Department ([Don Phillips](#), Manager). Its purpose is to keep every NMRA member informed about organization news and events. If you know of an NMRA member who is not receiving this mailing, please direct them to [here](#) to update their email address. If you no longer wish to receive these mailings, please don't mark them as SPAM. Instead, click the Safe Unsubscribe link at the bottom of this page. ©2015 National Model Railroad Association, Inc., P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy TN 37384.



550: Howard Garner, SER
551: Dave Connery, PCR

In



Future Issues of NMRA Magazine

- Switch heaters
- Using On30 as a basis for S scale
- 1990s mechanical department truck

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald J. Pelletier nmranutmegmembership@comcast.net
Communication Manager / Membership Promotion Manager / Newsletter Editor

If you need talk with me, please call 860-977-5573 any evening between 7:30 PM and 11:00 PM. This is the time period that I am usually near my computer. If you are unable to call during

this time period please send me an e-mail so that we can arrange some other form of communication.

Nutmeg Division <http://www.nutmegdivision.com>

Northeastern Region <http://www.nernmra.org>

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