



BULLETIN

July/August 2016

Indy Convention Banquet News



Unfortunately, our previously announced NMRA Banquet speaker had to cancel his

appearance. Fortunately, we have found another person to entertain and inform us on the manufacturing phase of model railroading. Here is an overview of his talk:

"Have you ever daydreamed about starting your own model railroad business and what it would be like? Or have you ever wondered how model train manufacturers decide which new product to make or how model trains are made?"

If so, you'll enjoy this year's NMRA Convention Banquet. Shane Wilson, President of ScaleTrains.com will provide an inside look at creating a new model train company from scratch. You'll learn why the founding four took a tremendous leap of faith to chase "The American Dream" of owning their business. You'll experience all phases of new product development and even a behind-the-scenes video tour of the factory in China. Shane will also share the many challenges the ScaleTrains.com crew overcame during their journey."

Tickets for the NMRA Banquet will

We're sending out this edition of the NMRA eBulletin a little early this time, in order to give you the specifics of the upcoming Board meeting, and to give Indy Convention attendees the latest info. -Editors

A few words from the President



The Youngster Challenge

I occasionally hear that the NMRA seems unresponsive and does not change quickly. The reality is that we do tend to be slow to change or adapt and seem almost paralyzed at times. The NMRA has never been fast moving nor does it embrace change quickly. Sometimes that can be good as it prevents over-reacting to flash-in-the-pan events but bad if it prevents us from adjusting to major shifts in demographics.

For example, what is our ability to adapt, change and appeal to younger generations? This issue poses challenges that can be difficult to meet. Part of the problem lies in the comfortable nature of doing what has historically worked well although there is ample evidence it no longer is effective. Holding "meets" and convening the same clique of now-seniors doing the same thing year after year may appeal to those in the clique or in their age group, but not to those outside the NMRA or in younger generations.

Here is the dilemma that is not easily resolved. As a member-driven hobby organization, to whom do we owe loyalty? *Do we owe loyalty to our existing members who are quite happy with our current programs and approach? Or do we owe loyalty to those younger nonmembers who represent our future and expect major changes in how we operate?* For unlike previous generations, the newest generations seem not interested in the NMRA as presently structured and formulated. That is not the opinion of me as a senior citizen; it is the opinion, as I interpret it, of almost all of the studies and articles done on the newest generations.

And this is not youngster bashing!! Far from it; the younger generations are our future. Also, not all of the younger generations are the same. Gen X/Y differ from Millennials but much of what we currently offer is of limited interest to some in those generations. So, we must discuss what we offer those younger generations realistically.

Just recently, I saw a story about a fraternal organization facing the same challenges as we do. That story related that younger generations did not want to join that fraternal organization, which they perceived a

be on sale at the convention. Check with Registration in room Senate 1. The cost will be \$69 for your choice of a beef or chicken entrée.

The Ladies Luncheon will be held in the Bistro Lounge at the Skyline Club on the 36th floor of the One America Building. The cost will be \$42 for a multiple-choice buffet. Entertainment will be provided by a local barbershop quartet.

The LDSIG Dinner will be held at The Rathskeller, set in the historic 19th century Athenaeum Building. The cost will be \$59 for the multiple-choice buffet. After-dinner entertainment and words of wisdom will be provided by Indiana native son, and hobby icon, Tony Koester.

Tickets for the Ladies Luncheon and LDSIG Dinner will also be available at Registration in Senate 1. Senate 1 is on the second floor of the Westin, near the escalators.

Registration News
Single day and weekend convention registrations are available for purchase on the NMRA website until it closes just prior to the opening of the convention. After the site closes, they will be able to be purchased at Registration. One-day convention registrations may be purchased for your choice of day, Sunday, July 3, through Thursday, July 7. The cost is \$40 for the one-day registration. A two-day, weekend convention registration is available for both Friday, July 8 and Saturday, July 9. The cost for the two days is \$50, and includes attendance at the National Train Show®.

It's time to Highball to Indy!

bunch of irrelevant older folks with whom they could not relate. Now think of your last Regional or Divisional meet/event. Same folks?

So what are we to do to reach out to them? Based on the studies, which we have reviewed, in many ways we know what changes must be made to our organization to make it appeal to a broader mass of those younger generations. First, the NMRA must substantially reduce its cost of membership. In fact, free would be ideal. Secondly, we must offer exclusive features and content appealing to those generations. Third, we must emphasize the hobby in ways that are very different than we are used to in practicing the hobby, especially in technical areas. It goes without saying that going digital is a must. The result would be a major change to the structure and function of the NMRA.

Some urge us to change to meet the expectations of those younger generations. But in so doing, we could alienate and lose a significant number of existing members. That is the dilemma. Do we make the changes we know would work and appeal to younger generations at the expense of alienating and losing a substantial percentage of existing members? That is the problem we face. I think it merits a heartfelt and soul-searching discussion by all of us.

Not that we are without tools within the present structure. The NMRA is the proper organization to encourage and train beginners to our hobby. We decided we have a role to play in this area but also decided not to compete with Kalmbach or WGH, organizations doing a wonderful job of both attracting and educating beginners. Another possible approach is the Maker Faires that have become increasingly popular with younger generations. Maker Faires are events where a range of technical fields are demonstrated often with hands-on examples for audience participation. I think the NMRA must become more involved in Maker Faires and sponsor a program allowing us to participate in those Faires on an organized basis.

A proposal with great merit is to establish a mentoring program for interested youngsters. Of course, a mentor program can be a most effective way to get younger members to into our organization. But it is also an approach that must be carefully structured in an era of paranoia about older adults interacting with youngsters. One approach, as done in other parts of the world, is to pair a mentor with a close relative of the youngster to ensure the mentoring is done within family boundaries. Some regions have taken this approach and have successfully mentored youngsters. Finally, we could start a new parallel digital organization affiliated with the NMRA that meets the needs of the younger generations. However, are we the right group to do so and why wouldn't someone of that generation start their own group if there were really a need for one?

We all agree that we need to do as much as we can without losing existing members, to reach out to the younger generations and I believe we can do so. Your help and ideas are crucial to this process, so please share them with us.

Well, those are my thoughts; what are yours?

Education Services at the Division Level

By [Bruce De Young](#), MMR
Education Department Manager

As you probably know, the NMRA is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit educational organization. Clearly the various programs and services that fall under the Education Department are essential to earning and keeping this designation. Let me quickly summarize those programs and services that fall under the umbrella of the Education Department. In no particular order they are: the Contest Program; the Achievement Program, the Modeling with the Masters Program; the EduTRAIN® Clinic Program; the Boy Scout Merit Badge Program; the SIG Program; the Data Sheet Program and finally, the beginners section of the NMRA website. That is a rather large umbrella!

The actual implementation of these Educational Programs occurs in various ways at the National, Regional, and Divisional levels of our three-tiered organization. But the focus of this particular column is what these educational services might actually look like at the Division level. As you look around at all the Divisions, you will see a lot of variability. Some Divisions have an active Boy Scout Program while others do not. Many incorporate one or more clinics into every event they schedule, while others might only do that at what they call "Mini-Conventions". The Achievement Program certainly depends heavily on active promotion at the Division level

[Charlie](#)

Board of Directors meeting in Indianapolis

The portion of the NMRA Board of Directors meeting that is open to all members will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 2, at the Westin Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. The meeting will most likely last all day and the Board will also meet on Sunday to discuss the Long Range Plan. Any NMRA member is welcome to attend, but please remember that there will only be room at the table for Board members and officers. Please see the hotel directory for the exact room location of the meeting.

The Annual NMRA Business Meeting (including "Ask the President") will be held on Wednesday, July 6, at 7:00pm in Grand Ballrooms 4 & 5, on the second floor of the hotel.

What are these "Special Promotional Messages" I'm getting in email?

By [Gerry Leone](#), MMR
Vice President / Special Projects

Last May you received a special promotional message from the NMRA. Maybe you wondered what's going on, or questioned whether it really did come from the NMRA.

Rest assured, it was a legitimate message from a company who genuinely supports and appreciates the NMRA's work.

Did we sell our emailing list? No, we did not. Instead we traded use of our email list to certain companies in exchange for things that we consider valuable member benefits and resources.

So, for example, the Model Railroad Academy email was a result of that company donating their 68-minute "What goes on at a national model railroad convention" video to us for use on our website. The NMRA Leadership Team felt the video was a great tool to both promote our national conventions to members and to let non-members know about one of the most important benefits of NMRA membership. In exchange, we agreed to send quarterly Model Railroad Academy announcements to our members for one year about things NMRA members may be interested in. The NMRA Board and Officers felt this was a very equitable trade.

Can these "supporters" now use the NMRA mailing list on their own?

No. These mailings were engineered through me and our NMRA IT team. The supporters send us their message and we send it out through Constant Contact, the email company we use to send out this *NMRA eBulletin*. Our NMRA mailing list remains confidential and never leaves our hands.

and most Divisions make provisions at their event to both evaluate models and publicly present earned certificates within the AP Program. Although most Divisions do not regularly schedule formal Model Contests, many do incorporate Popular Vote Contests as a regular feature of their events. And on it goes.



Up until now, the only way one Division might learn what other Divisions are doing was by perusin

g the on-line newsletters of other Divisions, most of which are available through links under the Regions & Divisions tab on the NMRA's website, or by actually attending the events of neighboring Divisions. Now there is another way. The Officers and Board of Directors asked for the development of a Division Superintendents' Handbook. This Handbook was presented to them in February at their Mid-Year Meeting in Atlanta.

This new Handbook contains a wealth of information useful to Division Superintendents/Presidents and others in leadership positions at the Division level. Included in that information is a collection of 'best practices' from Divisions around the NMRA and many of those best practices focus on the delivery of the educational services and programs mentioned above.

And incidentally, we've rewritten the protocol for our supporters to further ensure the safety of NMRA members' email.

Will we do this with all manufacturers? **No.** We're limiting these mailings to subscription companies producing model railroad videos that help educate NMRA members about the hobby. Again, the NMRA is receiving what we consider valuable member benefits and educational resources in exchange for these mailings.

Will we be getting more of these mailings? **Yes.** We're talking to several other model railroad video production companies about providing special membership discounts to NMRA members, as well as videos for our library that our members can watch and learn from. We feel that the discounts and videos are wonderful member benefits and are well worth the minor inconvenience of receiving promotional email.

If you decide you don't want to receive these mailings, you can certainly unsubscribe from them, using the link at the bottom of each mailing. This won't affect your subscription to the *NMRA eBulletin*.

I hope this clears up any confusion about these mailings. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

The Handbook will soon be emailed to all Region Superintendents by Steve August, our RAC Director. He will ask that the Regions forward the Handbook to all their Division Superintendents.

The Handbook will also be available on the NMRA website in the Member's Only side of the site.

Hopefully this Handbook will prove helpful to Divisions as they help the NMRA deliver its educational programs at the local level.

Last call for photos for the 2017 NMRA calendar!

By [Mike Brestel](#), Calendar Project Chair

You're proud of your model railroad. Why not share it by submitting a photo or two for the 2017 edition of the NMRA Model Railroad Calendar? The calendar is distributed to every U.S. member as a fundraising project. To have your layout photo considered for inclusion, just follow these easy steps:

1. Take a horizontal (landscape) format photo of your layout.
2. Submit your photo as a digital file, as a 35mm or medium format slide (100 ISO or slower), or as a 35mm or medium format color negative (200 ISO or slower). Digital files must be at least 300 pixels per inch and 8" x 10" (minimum size of 7.2 megapixels - larger is better). Accepted file types are tiff (preferred) or jpg (highest quality only).
3. Write a caption describing the action in your shot, the scale, the

Two exciting new NMRA t-shirts available!

By [Jenny Hendricks](#)
Chief Administrative Officer



We're pleased to announce two new NMRA t-shirts will be available at the Indianapolis convention, and following that, in the NMRA Company Store.



The t-shirts come in S, M, L, XL, and XXL and are gray with "NMRA blue" printing.

The first design features the phrase, "Ask me about model railroading!" on the front, with the NMRA logo and "We make it more fun" slogan on the back.



The second shirt features the NMRA logo and "National Model Railroad Association" type on the front, and, on the back, the NMRA logo and the words, "It's where real model railroaders belong."



The shirts are priced at \$12 each or two for \$20 (one of each or two of the same). Shipping from headquarters will be an additional \$6.

Show the world you're an NMRA member with one of these brand new shirts!

Region and National Conventions

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



Jul 3-10
Sep 15-18
Sep 21-24
Sep 29-Oct 2
Sep 30-Oct 3

[NMRA National Convention, Indianapolis, IN](#)
[Northeastern Region, Albany, NY](#)
[Pacific Southwest Region, Culver City, CA](#)
[Sunshine Region, Orlando, FL](#)
[Australasian Region, Sydney, Australia](#)

Master Model Railroaders



575 - John Travis, SER
576 - David Capron, NCR
577 - Jerry Wilson, LSR

builder, and the photographer. Include that information on a separate piece of paper, or as a text or .doc file on your submission CD or DVD.

4. Please limit your entries to no more than your four best scenes.

5. Be sure to include your address, phone number, and email with your submissions.

Send to : NMRA - ATTN:
Calendar Project, PO Box 1328,
Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328

UPS/FedEx address: 8414 Gulf
View Dr. Suite A, Soddy Daisy,
TN 37379

Photos must be received by July
15, 2016 for consideration.

Questions? contact Mike Brestel
at 513-661-2141 or 513-481-0185.

By submitting images for the
NMRA Calendar, you are giving
permission to the editors to alter
them as needed (cropping,
smoke and lighting effects, etc.).
Be sure to indicate specifically if
you do NOT give permission to
alter your images.

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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.
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- Remodeling St. Paul
- Building Automatic Stops at Track Openings
- Installing a Steam Sound Decoder
- Building Tower Lumber Company Boxcab Gas Mechanical Locomotive #3
- Diamond Point Railways

