



# BULLETIN

November/December 2015

Stay up to date on the Indy convention!



Open your calendar, advance to next year, and mark these dates: July 3rd through

July 10th, 2016. The location will be Indianapolis, Indiana, and the activity will be the

*Highball to Indy, 2016* NMRA National Convention and 2016 National Train Show. The convention and train show will be held in downtown Indianapolis where quite a few attractions, sports arenas, museums, shopping, and restaurants are within walking distance of the convention hotel. Let your family members know these opportunities exist -- they may wish to join you at the convention. Check out the

*Highball to Indy, 2016* website for further information at

[www.nmra2016.org/](http://www.nmra2016.org/)

We have recently added information about housing to the [NMRA2016.org](http://NMRA2016.org) website. Folks have been asking whether there will be a special room rate at the Westin Hotel and we are pleased to note the convention rate will be \$119 for a single/double room. As noted on the website, the

*A few words from the President*



Model Railroad Month in the 21st Century

November has traditionally been "Model Railroad Month." Not that you would notice, as our hobby has receded in the public mind. But that public disinterest is nothing new. Indeed, from the space race of the 1960's onward, model trains have been viewed by some as

"quaint" or hopelessly outdated.

We know better and slowly, so does the public. The September "Newsmax" magazine featured a major story on the technical advances in model railroading. From DCC to LCC and even Power on Board, the article covered the tech revolution that has occurred in our hobby over the past few decades. I recently screened a new documentary film, "[Model Citizens](#)," on model railroading produced by Sara Kelly. The film is well done and may re-awaken the public's interest in miniature trains. [Ed. note: the NMRA made a Kickstarter donation to the making and completion of this film.] Today's hobby is vastly different from the one I discovered in December 1961.

In those primitive days, my first engine, a tender-drive HO Tyco General 4-4-0, barely lurched around the circle of brass snap-track, powered by a rudimentary 12-volt transformer. The buildings were vacu-formed Blackman Wild West main street false fronts in garish colors. The scenery consisted of a combination of Life-Like trees and lichen bushes all on a grass mat. (You know, I can still smell that grass mat's distinctive odor.) *Model Trains* magazine opened my eyes to a world of possibilities beyond that beginner's train set and soon I was scratchbuilding a yard office out of Strathmore paper, and a grain elevator out of balsa wood. I still have that yard office. My first layout was inspired by an E.L. Moore article and built on a 5 foot by 9 foot ping pong table. It was horrible...but it was mine. And it ran, after a fashion, with primitive block wiring.

Since then, the hobby has changed remarkably and for the better. Today, advances only hinted at in the early 1960's such as "independent" train control are taken for granted. Digital sound and now the promise of Layout Command Control enhance the realism and ease of wiring. Each year it seems we enjoy some new advance

reservation process has not opened yet. Please watch for details to be posted closer to the end of calendar year 2015 for directions on reserving space in the beautiful Westin Hotel, Indianapolis. Continue to check back often to keep up-to-date with additions to the 2016 website.

If you use social media, there are other ways to keep current on planning for *Highball to Indy, 2016* (HTI, 2016). For those of you on Facebook, search for nmra2016 and "like" us. We also have a Twitter presence. Just search for @nmra2016.

Registration for *Highball to Indy, 2016* continues to be open. Instructions detailing the registration processes are available on the nmra2016 home page. Choose a method and click on the appropriate link printed below REGISTER TODAY!

Firm up your plans so you, too, can Highball to Indy!

Use eBay to help the NMRA by [Alan Anderson](#), NMRA Fundraising Department Chair



It's time for a refresher and update to the eBay program

mentioned in the June 2013

*NMRA Magazine*, "Buy and Sell on eBay." Some web addresses have changed, eBay and PayPal have become separate companies and they've made it easier to donate to your favorite charity not-for-profit such as the NMRA.

eBay has a program called GivingWorks that allows users to make charitable contributions to

increasing our enjoyment of the hobby and making our efforts more realistic. How ironic these advances come at a time when the hobby itself is threatened by changing social mores. Today, the competition for our attention has grown exponentially and any activity fights for attention. The internet has become omnipresent, and while it vastly improves our access to information, it also vastly occupies our limited time. I have written long and hard about the challenges we all face, so no more this time. Because, in spite of those challenges, we are all having a great time with the hobby and my only frustration lies in the fact more folks are not joining us.

So this month coming, enjoy the hobby and maybe, just maybe, see if you might find a friend or colleague who may be interested. The best way to grow the hobby is to show the hobby. That is what Model Railroad Month is all about. And yes, Model Railroading is fun! Those are my thoughts; what are yours?

[Charlie](#)

## Slate of candidates for the 2016 NMRA elections by [John Stevens, NMRA Secretary](#)

The 2016 Slate of Candidates is as follows:

Atlantic District Director

**Peter Bowen**  
**Kathy Millatt**

At Large Worldwide Director

**Mike Brestel**  
**Bob Ferguson**

Western District Director

**Steve Barkley**  
**Don Fowler**  
**Stephen Priest**

## 19th century model loco donated to the NMRA

A major donation was recently made by Reid Dennis to the NMRA museum collection. This donation consists of a Smithsonian-quality, scratchbuilt, 1-inch scale, 19th century live steam 4-4-0 locomotive originally built by Eli Whitney's grandson. Accompanying the model is an original 19th century lithograph of the prototype.

The model is a magnificent addition to the museum and is housed in a

a non-profit organization such as the NMRA. When you list something to sell, you can choose to donate from 10% to 100% of the selling price to the NMRA. eBay will then discount your final listing fees by the same percentage. So if you sell a locomotive for \$100 on eBay and donate 10% to the NMRA, your buyer pays \$100, you receive \$90 and the NMRA receives \$10. Then eBay will discount your final listing fees by 10%.

Just log in to your eBay account using, <http://givingworks.ebay.com> and select "For sellers" on the left column. If you haven't searched for and selected the NMRA as your favorite charity, and you should, you can do that the first time you log in and it will associate your account with the NMRA every time you log in. You can change it at any time...but why would you?

Sure you can sell train items. But

*anything* you sell - including cell phones, printer toner, and artwork - can benefit the NMRA.

Smile...Amazon purchases can benefit the NMRA by [Alan Anderson](#), NMRA Fundraising Department Chair



The holidays are near, which means much shopping. While some or most of your holiday shopping may be done online there is an opportunity to donate to the National Model Railroad Association when you shop at Amazon. Here's how it works.

When you shop on Amazon, visit the new Amazon portal: [smiles.amazon.com](http://smiles.amazon.com). It's the

Victorian wood and glass case. Reid has kindly agreed to maintain the model until we can transport it for our use.

The NMRA would like to publicly thank Reid for his generosity.

**Andy Sperandeo, longtime fixture at *Model Railroader*, dies**

**From *Model Railroader* editor Neil Besouglouff, October 3, 2015**

With a heavy heart, I'm sad to report that Andy Sperandeo, who has been a part of our lives at *Model Railroader* magazine for more than 30 years, has died.

As some of you know, Andy had been fighting cancer and other ailments, and the combination finally caught up with him earlier today.

Andy started work at *Model Railroader* in 1979, becoming editor in 1993. In time he became executive editor and upon retirement a few years ago became a contributing editor. Readers today are most familiar with Andy through his monthly "The Operators" column.

**DCC is still alive and well**  
by [Gerry Leone](#), HLM, MMR

There have been several questions and issues raised about Layout Command Control (LCC) in regard to the "Frequently Asked Questions" article I put together that ran in the September issue of NMRA Magazine." Apparently some of the more electronically knowledgeable members thought I was bashing the current DCC standard by saying it was somehow inadequate or antiquated.

It is not. DCC still remains an excellent choice for locomotive control on a layout. It was designed to control trains and continues to do that job admirably. No one should be concerned that DCC is about to become obsolete.

However, if you're running a layout that needs a control bus to handle signaling, automation, or animation, the better choice would be to use one of the dedicated layout control systems...like LCC. That's what it was designed for.

DCC and LCC will work hand-in-hand, with DCC handling loco control, and LCC handling everything else. LCC is a new standard that has the potential to make our layouts - and our hobby - even better.

**Boxcars...we have boxcars!**

By [John Stevens](#), NMRA Secretary and National Scout Coordinator

same Amazon that you know and love. The Smiles page is where you can shop like you normally do with Amazon, except a portion of the sales price will be directed toward a non-profit of your choosing. There's no additional cost to you. The sales price isn't increased and there are no other fees added to the price. Amazon merely takes ½-percent of the purchase price and submits that amount to the NMRA.

1. When you purchase online at Amazon, use <http://smiles.amazon.com> to visit the same website you already know and love.
2. Select the NMRA as your favorite non-profit. You can change it at any time and it will remember your selection each time you log in. This box is on your screen in the center beneath the search box. Type in "National Model Railroad Assn" and verify it is the Soddy Daisy, TN address.
3. Shop, buy, ship the Amazon way. You will know who your purchases support on their home page.

And best of all, AmazonPrime is supported for expedited shipping.

As you shop this holiday season, remember the NMRA as you shop at [smiles.amazon.com](http://smiles.amazon.com)

### Correction



The August/September 2015 NMRA eBulletin incorrectly identified

Mike Bartlett as the re-elected Australasian Region Director, when in fact he's the newly re-

Earlier this year, a member contacted the NMRA about donating a large quantity of undecorated Roundhouse HO AAR and Plug Door Box Car Shells. The shells were not complete kits, but included roof walks, trucks, and underbody detail. They didn't include wheels, couplers, and underframes. The donor wished to give them to the NMRA for use in Education Department clinics such as airbrushing, weathering, and decaling. I am employed as a B737 Captain by a major airline and had a trip already planned to the city where the donor lived, so I made arrangements to see exactly what he was offering.

The donor runs an eBay business out of his house and had a large supply of decorated and undecorated shells. He was in the process of moving from California to Oregon and didn't think it would be financially feasible to move the shells, so he contacted the NMRA about a donation. Not only would the shells be helpful in Education Department clinics, but with a little work, could probably be useful as make-and-takes for BSA Railroading Merit Badge Programs. After the Portland Convention I picked up the cars and drove them to my house. They are now safely stored in my basement.

The shells are now available to the membership through the NMRA Company Store - find them on the list on the left side. There are four choices available, based on four shipping box sizes I chose. The quantities are approximate. There are two styles of shells and each box contains some of both styles along with a corresponding number of roof walks. To get a box, you'll have to enter a credit card number, but there's no charge for the shells, and thus, no charges will be added to your card. Remember, these shells are meant for clinics about airbrushing, weathering, and decaling.

I'm still working on making the shells workable for make-and-takes. You'll hear more about this project as it progresses.

### Region and National Conventions

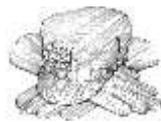
(Only those Regional conventions occurring in the next three months are listed)



Jul 3-10

[NMRA National Convention, Indianapolis, IN](#)

### Master Model Railroaders



566: Leon Bangma, LSR  
567: Rev. Dr. Vern Cracknell, AR  
568: David Latham, AR  
569: Gordon Geiger, PSR  
570: Paul Chandler, PSR

In Future Issues of NMRA Magazine

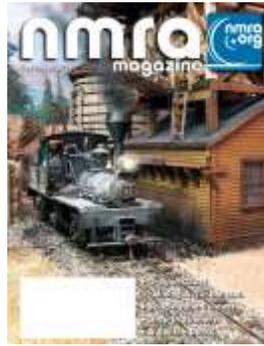
elected Pacific District Director.  
Sorry, Mike!

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Editors:

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

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- Judging the contest
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- Drop-in Scenery
- 
- A switch derail
- 
- Oregon Coast Mining & Timber RR

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## Welcome to the NMRA InfoNet News (Infoblast) For October, 2015

### A message from VP of Administration, Clark Kooning

Well as fall comes upon us in the Northern Hemisphere, most of us turn to our hobby indoors. Some model, all year round, because the climates where we live. However for the majority of us we are dusting off the layout and dreaming of the new modeling season ahead. As the new VP (Admin) of the NMRA I have the same thoughts you do, maybe I should build a new layout and where did I last leave my throttle? I also think how we at the NMRA can promote the hobby and encourage other modelers to participate with us in a very rewarding hobby and the fellowship that provides. If you're a member and know another modeler who is not a member, next time your local Division or Region has an event why don't you take him or her along. This simple introduction to the NMRA can be the start of great lifelong friendships and, of course, our love for the hobby. I know the value in our organization starts with the sole member and those in local divisions and in the fact it is the fellowship and fun that we share at all levels that make us strong.

As I begin to take on my role as the VP (Admin) there are several challenges ahead of us which the NMRA will need to move forward. With good solid leadership from both your executive team and one of the most dynamic group of Board of Directors, I can think of, I will be working with the Headquarters' staff as needed. I have been asked by President Getz to work on some projects along with Gerry Leone our other VP. I hope to have some interesting new initiatives you will like in the very near future.

A big "Thank You" to all the members who directly put on NMRA Portland National Convention and those who volunteered their time and effort during the convention to make this year's convention a lot of fun.

If you have any questions, I happy to hear from any member

Umm has anyone seen my throttle?  
Clark Kooning, MMR HLM  
NMRA VP (Admin)

## **In memoriam – G. William Hammer 1922 - 2015**

From Mike Brestel – At Large Worldwide Director

I just learned that Bill Hammer died on Sept. 17 in Lexington, Ky. I found his obituary online and have pasted it below. Many of you knew Bill as a major volunteer for the NMRA for a long, long time, serving in a myriad of positions of the years, most notably as VP and for over 25 years as Legal Counsel. He received an HLM, MMR, DSA, and two PAs over his many years of service to the NMRA.

He moved from Virginia to Lexington, Ky. around ten or twelve years ago, and as a fellow MCR member I was able to connect with him several times before his health deteriorated. I had not seen or talked to him over the past five years or so.

The funeral was on September 24 in Lexington, but unfortunately I just heard about his death today. Given Lexington's proximity to Cincinnati, I would probably have been able to represent the NMRA at the visitation and funeral had I known in time. At this point I don't know whether anyone from the NMRA was able to attend.

Mike

### **G. William Hammer 1922 – 2015 Obituary**

**HAMMER G. William, 92, of Lexington, KY (formerly of Centreville, VA ) and husband of Imogene Murray Hammer, died Sept. 17, 2015.**

He was born Dec. 5, 1922 in Wyandotte, MI. to the late Reverends Ernest A. and Jane S. Higley. When he was three weeks old his family moved south to West Virginia and Ohio. He became a Great Lakes sailor and earned his Able Bodied Seaman's certificate in Sept. 1942. He was drafted into the army March 1, 1943. His basic training was a combat engineer and transferred into the Army Corp in the Aviation Cadet program. In early 1944 the Air Corp terminated the program for all of those who transferred from other branches in the army. At that time he volunteered for the paratroops and received his wings in July 1944. He was sent overseas and served in the Philippine Islands and received an honorable discharge with the rank of Sergeant March 10, 1946.

He graduated from Edgewood High School in Ashtabula, Ohio in 1944. In the fall of 1947 he enrolled at Ball State University, Muncie, IN , on a pre-law curriculum. He graduated with BA honors in March 1950. While at Ball State he was a member of Theta Chi Fraternity and Sigma Zeta National Science Honorary. He was Ball State's nominee for a Rhoades Scholarship in 1950. In the fall of 1950 he entered George Washington Law School, Washington, D.C. and graduated with a JD degree with honors in May 1953. He served on the Student Board of Editors of the George Washington University Law Review and a member of Phi Delta Phi Legal Fraternity.

He was admitted to the bar of District of Columbia in Sept. 1953 and was admitted to the bar of the state of Virginia in Feb. 1954. At that time he opened a law office in private practice in the City of Falls Church, VA. He served as prosecuting attorney for the City of Falls Church on a part-time basis from 1959 to 1961. He was appointed to a part-time judgeship in Falls Church in Jan. 1969 and to a like position in Fairfax County on July 1, 1974. He was elected to a full-time judgeship to the 10th District Court in Virginia on July 1, 1976. He continued to serve in that capacity until he retired on July 1, 1985. While on the bench he authored an article on Preliminary Hearings in Virginia which was published in 1980. From 1981 to 1985 he served on the Committee on District Courts who set policy for the entire District Court system for the state.

He was an avid model railroader and was a life member of the National Model Railroad Association. He served on several groups including as Legal Counsel from 1963 to 1976 and again from 1985 until 1998, the regional trustee for the Mid-East region on the National Board of Trustees, Eastern Vice President of the association from 1969 to 1971 and later as the Executive Vice President of the association. He was awarded the three highest awards from the association, the President's Award, Distinguished Service Award and the Honorary Life Member, the highest award and designated as a Master Model Railroader.

Other interests included being a member of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans for over 50 years, Commander of the Robert E. Lee camp of the SCV in Alexandria, VA. Military Order of the Stars and Bars as commander of the Samuel Cooper chapter in Alexandria, VA. He is survived by a daughter Jane Hammer of Lexington, KY from a previous marriage. Gene's son Craig Smith (Hellie) from Paris, IL and daughter Suzanne Adair (Ken) of Lexington, KY and numerous nephews and nieces of Ashtabula County, OH.

Funeral service will be 12pm Wednesday at Kerr Brothers Funeral Home-Main St. Burial will be in Lexington Cemetery. Visitation will be from 11am-12pm Wednesday. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the G. William Memorial Scholarship Fund, Ball State University Foundation, PO Box 672, Muncie , IN 47308 , account number 30095.

Published in Lexington Herald-Leader on Sept. 20, 2015

## **In memoriam – Andy Sperandeo**

### **Andy Sperandeo, former Model Railroader editor, dies**

By Kevin P. Keefe October 5, 2015

RELATED TOPICS: GENERAL NEWS

**WAUKESHA, Wis. – Longtime Model Railroader editor Andy Sperandeo died Oct. 3, in Brookfield, after a long illness. He was 70. Sperandeo joined the Model Railroader staff in 1979. Over the years he worked his way up through the ranks, becoming editor in 1993 and, later, executive editor. Most recently he was editor of Model Railroader's annual Great Model Railroads issue. He was also a prolific author for Kalmbach Books.**

**Sperandeo's expertise extended to all facets of the model-railroad hobby, but he was especially known for his command of realistic train operations, as reflected in his popular column in the magazine, "The Operators."**

**"Andy was an excellent model builder, a diligent researcher, and a meticulous editor," says Model Railroader Editor Neil Besouglouff. "We will remember all of that, but mostly we remember that Andy was our close friend."**

**A renowned expert on the Santa Fe , Sperandeo was active in the Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society, as well as the National Model Railroad Association. His home layout is a faithful interpretation of the Santa Fe 's main line through California 's Cajon Pass in the late 1940s.**

**Sperandeo was a native of New Orleans . He earned his B.A. in English from Loyola of the South, an M.A. from Louisiana State University , and was working on his Ph.D. in English from the University of Texas when Model Railroader lured him to Milwaukee in 1979.**

**A burial ceremony is planned for Saturday, with funeral details pending.**

From Trains Magazine

## **Amtrak Derailment**

**An Amtrak train bound for Washington, D.C., derailed in central Vermont on October 5 after hitting a rock slide, injuring seven of the 102 people aboard, one seriously. The incident, which was at least the 17<sup>th</sup> Amtrak derailment so far in 2015, raised fresh concerns about rail safety less than five months after a derailment in Philadelphia killed eight people.**

From Time Magazine

# Railroads finding hidden freight car trackers

By [Justin Franz](#) September 24, 2015

RELATED TOPICS: [CLASS 1 FREIGHT RAILROADS](#) | [SUPPLIERS](#)

What's in a picture? In this one a brown-painted automatic equipment identification, or AEI, reader barely pokes out of a slope along a Conrail right-of-way in New Jersey. Railroads are alarmed that the AEI readers might be spread throughout the country, gathering and sharing information on freight moves without their knowledge.

Two images: [An Association of American Railroads Railway Alert Network bulletin](#)

A close-up photo of an automatic equipment identification reader found in New Jersey.

**METUCHEN, N.J.** — Railroads are uncovering hidden freight car tracking devices near rights-of-way around the country. The discoveries began earlier this month when a Metuchen, N.J., resident found two people installing boxes near a Conrail Shared Assets Operation right-of-way. Unsatisfied with those persons' answers and the local police response, the person called Norfolk Southern railroad police who investigated and found an automatic equipment identification or AEI reader, used to track freight cars by monitoring their built-in radio beacons. On Sept. 15, the Association of American Railroads' Railway Alert Network issued a security warning to members to keep an eye out for the unauthorized devices. *Trains NewsWire* obtained a copy of the security alert earlier this week.

According to the eight-page report, railroad police investigated further and found that a company called ClipperData had installed the reader. ClipperData was formed about two years ago and sells comprehensive data regarding the energy industry, including the movement of crude oil and other commodities. According to the report, Norfolk Southern police say they have a copy of a "lease agreement" between a homeowner near the right-of-way and ClipperData which gave the homeowner \$500 to use a nearby electrical outlet to power the equipment reader.

In an interview with *Trains News Wire* on Wednesday, ClipperData CEO Sterling Lapinski confirmed that his company installed the first AEI reader discovered in New Jersey. He says his company's work is legal and that ClipperData is currently looking at trying to sell data to and about the railroad industry, which is why it installed the AEI reader. Lapinski says his company sells data and information to government agencies, trading groups, and energy companies.

"We do have devices installed but the network isn't operational yet," Lapinski tells *Trains News Wire*. "We're not currently selling data, we're just trying to see if it's feasible."

Railroads around the world use similar equipment reader technology that uses radio waves to automatically identify freight cars at speed. Railroads typically gather the information to update their own records before sharing it with other shippers, such as trucking companies, railroads, or steamship lines, and customers.

Sources close to Class I railroad corporate offices say executives are upset and are ready to take a "scorched earth" approach to dealing with ClipperData and other companies that may have installed readers throughout the country. A second security alert dated Sept. 22, says railroaders have uncovered at least one other equipment reader in New Jersey and one in Sheridan, Wyo. The one in Wyoming reportedly interfered with BNSF Railway track equipment.

The Railway Alert Network report raised concerns that the people who installed the equipment readers trespassed on railroad property to do so. It also raises concerns about selling data on the movement of specific types of rail cars, arguing that the information could be used to "disrupt rail operations through intentional, and potentially destructive, acts." The security alert asks railroads that find similar AEI readers to inform the alert network immediately so that it can consolidate all of the reports.

In a statement to *Trains News Wire*, AAR spokesperson Ed Greenberg says the organization is keeping a close eye on the developing situation.

"The AAR was aware of this situation and pleased that local law enforcement and railroad police took steps to address the situation as quickly as possible," Greenberg says.

Norfolk Southern declined to comment on this topic. *Trains* is waiting for a response from BNSF.

From *Trains Magazine*

*If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You will find those addresses at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) or in the NMRA Magazine*

*If the person holding a region or division office changes, or their email address changes, please contact me at [tcraider@aol.com](mailto:tcraider@aol.com) with the corrected information.*

Regards,

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald J. Pelletier [nmranutmegmembership@comcast.net](mailto: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.

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