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2012 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:
2012—Grand Rapids, MI July 29–August 4, 2012 www.gr2012.org
Train Show Booth Reservations—Debbie Draper, HLM, Registrar • 10837 N. 34th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85028-3310 • (602) 569-9072 • nathtrainshow@aol.com

2013—Atlanta, GA •2014—Cleveland, OH •2015—Portland, OR

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT **JULY 2011** GOLDEN SPIKE

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MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER -

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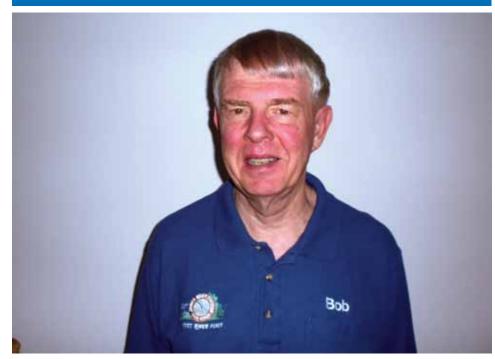
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MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

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MMR EARNED



ROBERT G. MINNIS MMR #462

y interest in trains began prior to y interest in trains began product kindergarten, when my mother and I traveled to Nova Scotia by train to visit Canadian relatives. I recall waking up in the morning and watching the country scenery roll by the train window. The summer before elementary school, my family moved to the

South Shore in Weymouth, Massachusetts. As luck would have it, the new house was located about 300 vards from New Haven's Old Colony Branch. I was able to watch freight and passenger trains all day long. Since my dad used to commute into Boston via the train, I quickly learned the schedule so I was always home when Dad arrived from work. Also, the train was used for the

NMRA Magazine 51 periodic visits to Dad's office and to view the large train displays in the department or donuts) for these contractors, I was alstores during the holidays.

The usual Lionel train set arrived one Christmas a year or two later. My younger brother and I (with Dad's help) built a large (five plywood sheets) table to set up and operate our railroad. A mountain occupied one corner of the table while roads were painted directly on the plywood. Plasticville structures filled the spaces between the tracks. A large remodeling project in the house led to the table's demise. The train set was packed away into its box where it remains today. My modeling interests then shifted to plastic ships and planes. One day, "plastic" venture when I spotted a metal (Globe or Athearn) boxcar kit. I have been in HO scale ever since.

he became friends with the crossing guards (remember them?) and station attendant. The station had a team track for local business. During school breaks and summer vacations — thanks to these railroad employees — I was able to meet the contrac-

assistance in running errands (coffee, juice, lowed to "clean" out the empty boxcars of salvage and/or usable materials. We built a lot of projects around the house and yard with these commandeered materials.

During high school, I continued to build car kits and box them for future use. The college years saw much less activity. Upon graduation, the Army occupied most of my time for the next ten years. Marriage and the purchase of a house allowed me to open up those boxes and resume modeling activities. Within six months, I was reassigned to Fort Devens, Massachusetts (now closed). While there, a group of active I was in the hobby shop looking for my next military formed the Fort Devens Model Railroad Club. The Recreation Services Office assigned the club an old, two-story barracks building for our use. We built Since my dad rode the train every day, a layout that filled the entire first floor. Unfortunately, the layout was dismantled when the installation closed.

The next stop was Fort Richardson, Alaska, where I joined the Northern Lights Model Railroad Club. The club was a modular operation at the time, and we set up at tors who unloaded the freight cars. For my various public events in Anchorage. I con-

tinued to build and box both cars and small structures. A small group of military officers wanted to form its own modular group, so we built ten module frames. Shortly after completing construction of these frames, we all received orders for our next assignments. I ended up with the blank module frames since I was the last to leave.

Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, was my next duty station. I continued to build small structures and freight cars for a "future" layout. Upon retirement, I moved to Springfield, Virginia, bought a house, and adjusted to civilian life. I joined the local Potomac Division (MER) and started to attend meetings. The Superintendent heard about my modules and asked if I was interested in doing a show for the Children's Museum in Washington, D.C. I supplied the module frames to the six people who signed up for the group. We decided on the name of Potomac Module Crew since that was as formal as we wanted to go — no dues, no officials. We did decide to have a coordinator (I was volunteered) to take care of the administrative details. I have displayed my modules more than 125 times during the 20-plus years I have been part of the "crew." Today, the PMC has more than 25 members and approximately 70 modules.

I had heard of the Achievement Program early in my association with the NMRA, but it wasn't until I joined the Potomac Division that I took an active interest. The monthly layout tours and miniconventions exposed me to the modeling efforts of several dozen craftsmen, including several MMRs. After observing these other modelers' work, I decided I could do just as well. Slowly, I began to accumulate Merit Certificates. The various jobs that I found myself in (Division Paymaster, Division Superintendent, and Region Director) added other AP Certificates. I have thoroughly enjoyed my association with the Achievement Program and encourage you to give it a try.

I am currently in the process of designing and building a layout in the basement of my new home near Charlottesville, Virginia. I am looking forward to many more years of model railroading.

The Achievement Program is not that difficult. Just read and follow the requirements for each certificate.

Robert has earned the following certificates: Volunteer, Official, Author, Cars, Structures, Civil, and Scenery.



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lust because you can't make it to a national convention doesn't mean you have to miss out. Right now the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library has over 50 DVDs of clinics presented at national conventions from 2002 to 2010. Each is available for NMRA members to borrow for the cost of processing and postage.

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Then, get that popcorn ready.



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