

NMRA BULLETIN

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2016 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:
2016—Indianapolis, Indiana • July 3-10 • www.nmra2015portland.org
Train Show Booth Reservations—Susan Straub, Registrar - P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
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• 2017—Orlando, FL • 2018—Kansas City, MO • 2019—Salt Lake City, UT

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT
AUGUST 2015
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Boyd Patterson, Richardson, Texas

Mid-Continent Region
Larry Gulick, Wichita, Kansas
Bob Neill, Wichita, Kansas
Terry Ross, Wichita, Kansas
Carl Savage, Wichita, Kansas

Mid-Eastern Region
Rodney Vance, Farmville, Virginia

MASTER BUILDER — MOTIVE POWER
Pacific Northwest Region
Bob Parrish, Boise, Idaho

MASTER BUILDER — CARS
Mid-Continent Region
Steve Morrison, Claremore, Oklahoma

Mid-Central Region
Steve Zapytowski, Kent, Ohio

MASTER BUILDER — STRUCTURES
Mid-Eastern Region
Rodney Vance, Farmville, Virginia

Pacific Northwest Region
J.J. Johnston, Bellevue, Washington

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Mid-Central Region
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Chuck Davis, Norfolk, Virginia
Dale Ridgeway, Bishopville, Maryland
Rodney Vance, Farmville, Virginia

Pacific Northwest Region
J.J. Johnston, Bellevue, Washington

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Mid-Eastern Region
Rodney Vance, Farmville, Virginia

Midwestern Region
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Northeastern Region
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Massachusetts

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Mid-Eastern Region
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Dale Ridgeway, Bishopville, Maryland

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Southeastern Region
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Albert Churella, Acworth, Georgia

AP QUESTIONS
If you have questions about the
Achievement Program or requirements,
start with your local or Region AP manager.
If you still have questions, contact Frank
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to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood
Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

2016 ELECTION

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

John Stevens
NMRA Secretary

GORDON H. GEIGER EARNS MMR #569

Like so many Master Model Railroaders before me, I was lucky enough to have a father who loved trains. When I was three years old, I received a Lionel Scale New York Central Hudson for Christmas, along with a transformer, several cars, and enough track to make a circle on the living room rug. The following year, along came a Lionel 0-6-0 Pennsylvania switcher with slope-back tender, a Flying Yankee, and more cars and track. A year later, we moved to a house with an attic and serious construction started. The resulting layout is described in an article that my father wrote, edited by Keith Wills and me, in the October 2014 issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman*, along with photos of that layout. Four years later we moved to another house with a better attic and recreated that layout. However, by now, the HO bug had attacked, and so the Lionel went, and we started construction of an HO layout.

That HO layout lasted until after I went to college. While Dad, who was a gifted artist as well as a metallurgist, did most of the scenery and soldered the wires, I learned to build some buildings and car kits, culminating with the scratch construction of the coaling tower described in *Model Railroader* in 1950 and the diesel shop described in *MR* in 1951. These two buildings, along with some kitbuilt ones, ultimately ended up traveling with me for the next four decades with some being used as part of my MMR Structures offerings (after some repairs and modifications). Some of the 1950s cars are on my present layout, with new couplers and trucks, as well as other details added to satisfy MMR judges! In particular, the shorty Varney Union Pacific streamliners and the extruded aluminum Sampson *California Zephyr* cars all look much better on 36-inch radius curves than do the modern 85-foot versions.

Following college and graduate school, I worked for the iron ore and steel industry in various positions in research and development, and then returned to academia in professorial positions at three public research universities, culminating as a department head of Metallurgical Engineering at Arizona. In all those positions, I was busy teaching, writing textbooks, and supervising graduate students, many of whom went on to good careers in industry. We



conducted research in industrial plants, as well as in the laboratory, including research supported by the UP, Southern Pacific, and Santa Fe on the properties of thermite field welds of rails. During that time, I joined the American Railway Engineering Association, becoming a member of the Rail Committee and helped rewrite the specifications for rail steel to cover the use of continuous cast steel, which the European and Japanese companies were supplying to the American railroads. Unfortunately, model railroading took a back seat, although I did attempt to start to construct a layout several times without much success due to time constraints. However, I kept the structures, cars, locomotives, and some track from the attic layout at my parents' home in boxes that faithfully followed me wherever I went. I also kept up with *MR* and *RMC* and what was happening to the hobby as time went on.

By 1980, academia was no longer an attractive place to make a living, so I returned to the steel industry and spent some time in the banking industry as an internal consultant to the lending officers dealing with the worldwide steel industry. I traveled to China in 1981 as a delegate to the First ASM-CSM Metallurgical Conference, during which I toured the last steam locomotive factory operating in Datung and rode on a brand-new 4-8-4 on the test track. I rode on European rails and on the Shinkansen (Bullet) Train in Japan

in 1982. What a contrast to the passenger trains in the U.S! Since joining NMRA AZ Division. I have given clinics on the Chinese factory and steam locomotives, circa 1981, and on the High Speed Rail situation worldwide, in 2012.

I left banking in 1983 to join North Star Steel Co. — a division of Cargill, Inc. — as a VP and spent the next decade working with the six mini-mills we owned and operated. Again, I started a layout but never got it running. I belonged to a club, which kept moving, resulting in a less than satisfactory activity. During that time, my wife and I attended several National Conventions and enjoyed the layout visits, which were inspiring. In 1993, I left to start a new mini-mill, spending a lot of time over the next few years raising the finances for this project, which started construction in 1996. I retired as CEO in 1999, returning to Arizona to get a chance to build my dream layout.

By 2000, the Internet had chat rooms on layout design, which I followed daily for ideas. I ordered and watched VHS tapes of various layouts. By then, I knew I wanted a linear design, with engineers having the ability to follow their trains, instead of the spaghetti bowl designs I had grown up with. DCC was really just becoming popular, so I wanted that system, even though I had no locomotives equipped with it yet. It appeared that many of the well-known modelers were using EasyDCC, so I opted for that system. I had had enough of block controls!

I had joined NMRA in 1999 and so I attended some local meetings to meet some local modelers, where I met Ron Kuykendall, whose articles in *MR* I had read, and he kindly showed me his layouts with their beautiful models. Because of a similar name, I contacted Doug Geiger and visited his layout described in magazines I had read years earlier. As a result of that visit, I was invited to attend RockyOps in 2001, which was my first introduction to model railroad operations. Not long after that, I was invited to operate on Carl Winkler's O-scale layout in Tucson and continued to enjoy those sessions until the demise of the layout. Since then, I have attended many Ops sessions, learning something every time and enjoying meeting other modelers.

My layout design was heavily influenced by Lee Nicholas' layout, with its long peninsulas, as well as by the second version of David Barrow's Cat Mountain & Santa Fe, with its open staging yards. I wanted a long main line run, so I opted for a double deck, which has worked out well, although my wife complains that she can't see the upper level. Luckily, I have several tall operators who can. I also wanted signals

for the engineers to pay attention to, but I did not want to have the signal system tied to the track power, so my good EE friend Bill Schaper offered to put together a system using IR detectors, communicating through Bruce Chubb's C/MRI boards to track trains and change signals as needed. Eventually, we built a modified CTC panel to watch what was happening and allow the Dispatcher to throw switches to control siding occupancy. The website RCWRR.com was put together in 2007 by my son, where the layout can be viewed.

My pursuit of the MMR started in 2010, when I submitted the paperwork for the Chief Dispatcher Certificate, having completed serving as dispatcher on various layouts during operating sessions. With the layout approaching completion, I submitted the Electrical and Scenery applications in 2011 and the Structures and Author in 2012. At that point, we started operating sessions on an irregular schedule, and I had to decide if I really wanted to finish this process or not. I finally bit the bullet and bought Fast Tracks equipment to build the necessary turnouts for the Civil Engineer Certificate, which I earned in 2015. Then I was left with Cars.

A word to the wise to all older MMR candidates: *do not wait* until your hands shake before trying to attach air hoses on scratch-built model cars! I finally did it!

Many thanks go to my friends Bill Schaper and Joe Duda for help on the construction and wiring of the layout, and to the operating crew, who keep it fun and maintained. My wife Ann deserves the most thanks for encouraging me along the process, from constructing the building (with a roof deck for her), to convincing me to add a bath/crew room to the train building, so I would not have to dodge rattlesnakes to come to the bathroom in the main house at night, and for never complaining when I spent long hours in "the train barn." It is a good thing she likes trains too.

AP Certificates Gordon H. Geiger

Chief Dispatcher
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Master Builder – Scenery
Master Builder – Structures
Model Railroad – Author
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
Master Builder – Cars

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