

NMRA BULLETIN

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**Have you changed your address or
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2018 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:
2018—Kansas City, MO • August 5–12, 2018 • <http://kc2018.org>

Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar - P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
423-892-2846 • ntsreg@nmra.org

• 2019—Salt Lake City, UT • 2020—St. Louis, MO • 2021—Santa Clara, CA

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

JANUARY 2018

GOLDEN SPIKE

North Central Region

James Marquardt, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Northeastern Region

James DeMarco, Kendall, New York

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MASTER BUILDER - CARS

Lone Star Region

Robert Barnett, Houston, Texas

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

Mid-Central Region

Steve Zapytowski, Kent, Ohio

Pacific Northwest Region

Dan Figy, Spokane, Washington
Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

Mid-Central Region

Steve Zapytowski, Kent, Ohio

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

CHIEF DISPATCHER

Mid-Continent Region

David Lowell, Crestwood, Missouri

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Sunshine Region

William Jameson, Melbourne, Florida

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Mid-Continent Region

Laddie Henninger, West Chester, Ohio

Brad Jonas, Liberty Township, Ohio

Mid-Eastern Region

Adam Eyring, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Barry Schmitt, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

Southeastern Region

Joe Sullivan, Atlanta, Georgia

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

Mid-Central Region

Mark Underwood, Lexington, Kentucky

Northeastern Region

Malcolm Houck, Maynard, Massachusetts

Pacific Northwest Region

Richard Karnes, Mercer Island, Washington

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER

Robert Barnett MMR 605

Richard Karnes MMR 606

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 Koch at fkoch@hotmail.com. If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

MMRs: Master Model Railroader shirts and extra patches are available by contacting HQ in Soddy Daily, TN

Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's exactly what happens when you participate in the National Model Railroad Association's Achievement Program. One Merit Award here, another there, and pretty soon you're on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader. All the while learning and having a ton of fun.

The Achievement Program is modelers helping modelers become better modelers and get the most out of their hobby. And it's yet another benefit of NMRA membership.

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JOHN H. HEMSATH EARNS MMR #602

“Why would anyone want to subject themself to that?”

That was my reaction after listening to a clinic by Bruce Brintnall, MMR, on model judging using the NMRA criteria at one of my first Division meetings. It’s pretty obvious that my attitude changed, and I’ve had quite a few models judged since then. Not every model judged earned a Merit Award and, although they were disappointments, those were the learning experiences. Bruce, our AP Chairman, became my friend, coach, and mentor...encouraging me to pursue that seemingly impossible dream of becoming a Master Model Railroader.

Like so many of us, my introduction to model railroading came as a child playing with my father’s trains. Literally, my father’s trains. He had a couple of sets of pre-war Lionel. My two brothers and I pushed the locomotives on the carpet before we could assemble the track. I had no idea what the tenders were for. As far as I know, Dad never had a layout until he set up a 4x8-foot plywood sheet for us boys. We learned how to put together a loop of track, hook up the transformer, and assemble a train. Then we could crash the locomotives through Lincoln Log obstacles! Around my ninth birthday, I received my first Athearn train set: rubber band drive Pennsylvania F7s, the Hustler, and brass track. Boy, would those locomotives fly off the 18-inch radius curves! Then plastic models took my interest until one day when I was 14, I decided to return to model railroading. The school library carried *Railroad Model Craftsman*, but I was so shy that I didn’t feel I was qualified to read it. I did, however, start a subscription to *Model*

Railroader. Several small layouts followed one another during my high school years.

After college, and getting my working career started, I returned to plastic models, joined the IPMS, and won a number of awards. I built a small N-scale layout in my studio apartment. Then I joined the NMRA and went to my first meeting. I introduced myself to the superintendent, and his “Hello” was the first and last word I heard from anyone there. If that was NMRA, I’d go it alone. It would be more than a decade before I renewed my membership. In the meantime, Barbara and I got married, moved to the suburbs, and lacking a basement, we sacrificed our spare bedroom for a layout room.

I was a lone wolf. My influence was what I read in *MR* and the few precious issues of *Model Builder* my dad had from the early 1940s. Frank Ellison was a huge influence on me. I built many of the buildings he wrote about, and since my layout would be small and a solo operation, I wanted the theme to be “peddler freight.” My brother Tom was building an N-scale layout at the time. Perhaps it was our mutual, rekindled interest that spurred us to rejoin the NMRA in 2001. But now that same Division 4 of the Mid-Central Region was a different animal. The membership was welcoming. The late Harold Taylor, a generous gentleman beloved in the Division of 200-plus members, was the first to invite me to an operating session. The scales fell from my eyes. Now my fledgling layout would be an operating layout.

The masthead of our newsletter, *The Flatwheel*, reads, “Don’t just belong...participate.” I took that to heart, and when I was asked to chair the layout tour committee, I accepted and persuaded my brother to help me. We did that job for eight years, during which time I was also elected to Director-at-Large. All that activity led to my first AP Certificate, Association Volunteer, in 2014.

During this time, Bruce Brintnall, MMR, and I became friends. I regularly operated on his layout and those of Harold Taylor, Joe Filipiak, John Puch, Jim Peters, and Dave Bitte. I learned what I had only read about...that the most valuable thing you get out of model railroading is the friendship of fellow modelers. I also learned that I enjoyed complex switching, yard work, and road engineer. I learned I enjoyed DCC and sound. And, I learned what I liked about each layout I visited or operated and tried to incorporate that into my own. And all this time, Bruce was

encouraging me to work toward the MMR — just a distant dream.

Then, in May 2008, our Division hosted the MCR Regional convention. Bruce encouraged me to enter a couple of cars for judging. One was a scratchbuilt express refrigerator car that took 2nd place. The other was an Ambroid Watermelon car to which I added some details. It garnered 92 points but just as important to me was the comment Bob Weinheimer, MMR, wrote on the judge’s sheet, “We loved the crates!” There was also a popular vote contest for cabooses. On a whim, I entered a bobber I had modified following an article by Don Spiro in *RMC* (I now felt I was worthy enough to subscribe). My caboose won the popular vote and the Chairman’s Award. Well, okay, maybe I can be an MMR. Seven years later, I got my Cars Certificate.

My layout was coming along. It’s a free-lanced urban industrial switching layout set in September 1946. Frank Ellison had Delta Lines. Bruce has Memphis Ridge Lines, and since I live in Bay Village, Ohio, I have Bay Lines (no relation to Bay Line in Florida). I hosted operating sessions. My friends offered consultations and helpful suggestions, which led to many changes to improve the layout.

In 2015, I got my Scenery Certificate. The next year saw certificates for Engineer Civil, Engineer Electrical, and Chief Dispatcher. Finally, in 2017, Structures. Some of those structures were models I had built 40 years ago. One was a Frank Ellison design. And my bridge? It was a scratchbuilt trestle that came from the N-scale layout in my studio apartment so many years ago.

When I look at the dates of issue on my AP certificates, I see that only three years went by, but my journey started more than 60 years ago. I’m so grateful to all who influenced, guided, taught, helped, and encouraged me. Now I try to avoid crashing locomotives into things...but I have just as much fun as that 8-year-old.

Certificates Earned
John H Hemsath, MMR #602
Master Builder – Cars
Master Builder – Structures
Master Builder – Scenery
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
Model Railroad Engineer –
Electrical
Chief Dispatcher
Association Volunteer



MMR EARNED

RONALD CHRISTENSEN EARNS MMR 608

Raised in the corn belt of Iowa on a farm traversed by both the Milwaukee and Chicago & North Western railroads, it is not a surprise that I became interested in railroads at an early age. Several uncles worked for the railroads and that helped cement my interest. I remember well the steam engines on the fast North Western passenger trains and seeing the *Hiawatha* pulled by steam. What a time that was!

My first model railroad was an American Flyer layout in the attic with Plasticville buildings and paper-mache mountains.

Fast-forward several years, and I was installing telephone switching equipment, getting married, starting a family, and settling down in Illinois. Good times were had operating at the Rantoul Air Force Base and the Okaw Valley Model Railroad club in Champaign.

The Air Base club started me on car cards and prototypical operation. While I was a member of the Okaw club, we built a modular layout with hand-laid track and switches that became part of my present layout, which is now more than 50 years old.

The 1970s saw a move to Michigan where I live now. Several layouts were built, with many buildings and railroad cars constructed, both kit and scratchbuilt. Early scenery was made using Styrofoam.

I am an active member of the Chicago & North Western Historical Society and the Milwaukee Road Historical Association. I edited the *CNWS Modeler* for the last 10 years and authored several magazine articles for both societies. Through the CNWS,

I have been active in the model contests and working with manufacturers building Chicago & North Western cars and structures.

I have a small layout that has several modules, noted before, with the bulk constructed 12 years ago. Presently, some areas are being improved; meaning layouts are never really done. The theme of the layout is the Milwaukee Railroad and the Chicago & North Western Railroad crossing Iowa, although space limits me to only a couple of towns. All tracks start and finish at the staging yard. A waybill system, train clearance orders, and a modified timetable keep the engineers operating in a manner similar to the prototype.

I am a member of the Michiana Division of the Midwest Region. My membership history in the NMRA is somewhat checkered; I have been a member several times, dropping out because of the distance to travel for meetings. When this Division was established, I became interested again and rejoined. We have a long, narrow Division, and I can see the traveling prob-

lem as I had in the past. I hope I can help establish meetings in more than one area to encourage new and old members to become active. There are very good modelers in this Division, and I would like to work with them on the Achievement Program.

Retired from the telephone business after 44 years, my age and physical conditions have brought my modeling to a crawl. However, I still enjoy doing small projects. My interests now have moved more to operations and continuing to contribute to our hobby by helping others with modeling and layout problems.

Certificates Earned Ronald Christensen, MMR #608

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

Meet a bunch of modelers in your backyard.



When you're a National Model Railroad Association member, you're never very far away from fellow model railroaders because you're automatically a member of your local Division. There are over 150 of them all across the country! Some hold monthly or quarterly meetings. Some sponsor swap meets. Some take tours to factories and prototype facilities. Some do it all and more.

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