

# NMRA BULLETIN

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**Have you changed your address or  
other membership information?**

**Notify Headquarters**

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**Region Secretaries: send all  
changes in Region officer infor-  
mation to the NMRA Secretary:  
[secy@nmra.org](mailto:secy@nmra.org).**

rev 9/4/20

2021 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:  
2021 Rails by the Bay • July 4 – 11, 2021 • Santa Clara, California • <https://www.nmra2021.com>  
Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar • P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328  
423-892-2846 • [ntsreg@nmra.org](mailto:ntsreg@nmra.org)  
• 2022—St. Louis, MO • 2023—Dallas, Texas

## ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

### NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT AUGUST 2020 GOLDEN SPIKE

**Mid-Central Region**  
Jim Braum, Monongahela, Pennsylvania

**North Eastern Region**  
Doug Dederick, Rensselaer, New York

**Pacific Southwest Region**  
Paul Buhrke, Tucson, Arizona

**MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER  
Lone Star Region**  
Gerald Schoenberg, Carrollton, Texas

**MASTER BUILDER - CARS  
Mid-Continent Region**  
J. Mark Juett, Smithville, Missouri

**Northeastern Region**  
James DeMarco, Kendall, New York

**MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES  
Lone Star Region**  
Gerald Schoenberg, Carrollton, Texas

**Pacific Southwest Region**  
Jeffrey Liedl, Gold Canyon, Arizona  
John Lovely, Flagstaff, Arizona

**MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY  
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Ken Mason, Kenner, Louisiana

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Ray Helster, Rostrauer, Pennsylvania

**North Central Region**  
Jim Macino, Columbia City, Indiana

**Northeastern Region**  
Doug Dederick, Rensselaer, New York  
Alexis Nawotka, Budd Lake, New Jersey

**Pacific Northwest Region**  
Lee Marsh, Issaquah, Washington  
Ray Wheeler, Lynnwood, Washington

**MASTER BUILDER - PROTOTYPE MODELS  
Lone Star Region**  
Gerald Schoenberg, Carrollton, Texas

**MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL  
Mid-Eastern Region**  
Jerry Britton, Etters, Pennsylvania

**Northeastern Region**  
Alexis Nawotka, Budd Lake, New Jersey

**Pacific Northwest Region**  
Ray Wheeler, Lynnwood, Washington

**MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER -  
ELECTRICAL**

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Alexis Nawotka, Budd Lake, New Jersey

**Pacific Northwest Region**  
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Ray Wheeler, Lynnwood, Washington

**CHIEF DISPATCHER  
Lone Star Region**  
C. Randall Wilson, Kingwood, Texas

**Pacific Coast Region**  
Robert Osborn, Rio Vista, California

**Pacific Southwest Region**  
Paul Buhrke, Tucson, Arizona

**ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL  
Thousand Lakes Region**  
John Bate, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

**ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER  
Mid-Central Region**  
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**Midwest Region**  
Eric Smith, Fishers, Indiana

**Pacific Coast Region**  
Robert Osborn, Rio Vista, California

**Southeastern Region**  
David Carlton, Huntsville, Alabama

**MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR  
Lone Star Region**  
James W. Kelly, Houston, Texas

**Northeastern Region**  
Ed O'Connell, Rochester, New York

**MASTER MODEL RAILROADER  
MMR® #660 J. Mark Juett, Smithville,  
Missouri**

**MMR® #661 Jim Macino, Columbia City,  
Indiana**

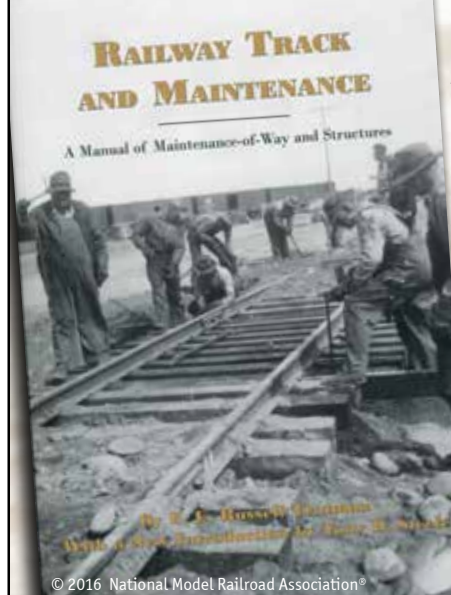
**MMR® #662 John Lovely, Flagstaff,  
Arizona**

**AP QUESTIONS:** If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager.

If you still have questions, contact Frank Koch at [achiev@nmra.org](mailto:achiev@nmra.org)

If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

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**KENNETH E. FARNHAM EARNS  
MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #658**

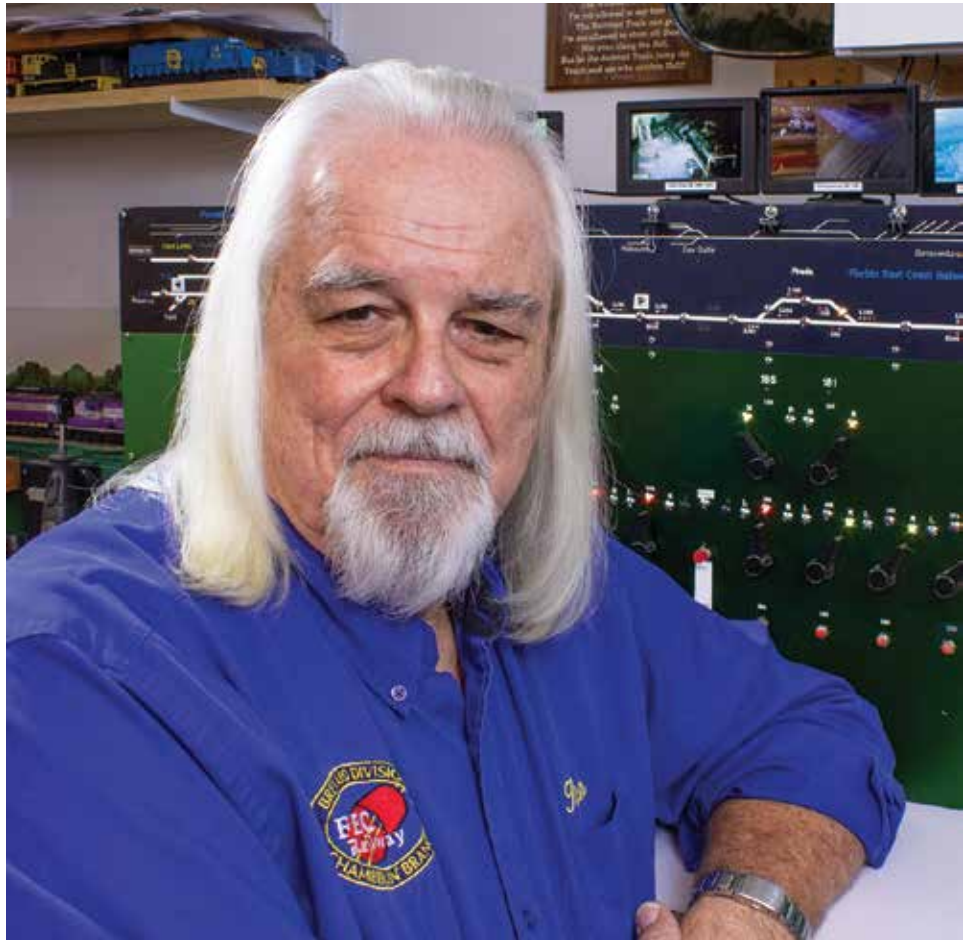
I must admit the journey to MMR® wasn't a trip but an adventure. When I first joined the NMRA, new members were issued a membership certificate. That document and my military DD214 form are about the only two old transcripts I have.

As with many modelers, I was introduced to trains at an early age. Every Christmas, my uncle would set up his Lionel railroad in his living room, and I would beg my parents to visit. I even was able to ride on a BL2 one Christmas with my uncle, who was the yardmaster on the Florida East Coast railroad in Florida.

My membership was intermittent from my first joining. I worked in the construction industry as an electrician, joined the military, and then owned three businesses, which were full commitments of my time. I had a family with kids to feed, so the membership took a back seat to life.

I joined the military in 1966 and served in Vietnam for a year's tour, and upon returning to the states I completed my service stationed on an island off the coast of California. Returning to Florida after military separation, I went to college and graduated with a degree in industrial photography. In the early 1970s, I returned to California and began working for the Union Pacific Railroad on the Electrical Road Gang, servicing buildings and facilities on the UP from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, Nevada. I returned to Florida and began to work in the space industry. At this time, my model railroad began to flourish.

As the saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention, which was the case for starting Hobby Gauge Electronics. In 1993, I sought a train detection method so I could run signals. Having the background in the electrical trade, equipment controls were moving into the electronic era, and I kept abreast of the advancements. Soon, I developed a train detection method used in individual electrical blocks and began to market the unit. For 20 years, I designed and sold electronics for model railroads and designed systems for customers.



Modeling in HO scale, I am currently recreating the Florida East Coast Railway in the County of Brevard, a 60-mile stretch on Florida's east coast. Rail-supported businesses in the 1970s was the time period I chose to emulate. I say I model from "Rocks to Rockets."

Throughout my marriages and times when I was single, I always had some form of a model railroad and was active with the Sunshine Region. I got to know many modelers around the state. I had periodic membership throughout my working career, but since the late 1990s, my NMRA membership has continued without lapsing.

From the very first time I joined, I have felt the NMRA provides a great resource to improve the quality of our hobby. Ideas the members offer to a fellow modeler allow personal improvement, and even your own ideas infuse many of the modelers and MMR®s with whom you interact. This interaction and learning makes everyone a better modeler.

In 1999, I received my first AP Certificate (Electrical), which was a breeze

for me. It then took a couple of years before I received another Certificate. Since my retirement and closure of my business, I have had more time to pursue the balance of the Certificates. Currently, I am the Treasurer of the Sunshine Region and have regular operating sessions at my layout ([fecbrevard.com](http://fecbrevard.com)). My wife Beverly, an active modeler, and I have many regular operators. We also host groups and clubs for operations and always welcome new guests.

I encourage everyone to join the NMRA — the many benefits far exceed your expectations.

**Certificates Earned  
Kenneth E. Farnham MMR® 658**

**Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical  
Chief Dispatcher  
Master Builder – Motive Power  
Model Railroad – Author  
Association Volunteer  
Master Builder – Cars  
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil  
Master Builder – Structures  
Master Builder – Scenery**

CHARLES W. RAUSCH EARNS  
 MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #659

Most model railroad biographies start with the Lionel, American Flyer, or Marx trains around the Christmas tree. However, I remember trains earlier on. In 1944, my parents bought a small house in Astoria, Queens, New York, adjacent to New Haven's approach to the Hell Gate bridge. I clearly remember the boxcab electrics pulling both freight and passenger trains on that stretch of track. My mom told me she would put me in the highchair by the kitchen window, and I would watch trains all day. I even remember the little New Haven 2-6-0 that pulled the wire train, a MofW for catenary work. The other thing I remember was the little wooden trains and tracks (now Brio and Thomas the Tank Engine.) Yes, they had them then, although they were just plain wood colors.

At age 7, my father bought my younger brother and me a Lionel set: Pennsy Steam Turbine with searchlight car and wrecking crane. He built a little 3x6-foot layout for Christmastime only. However, through the rest of the year, my father would take us around the New York City locale to spot trains, car float operations in Long Island City, Sunnyside yards, steam on the Long Island in Morris Park, Mineola, Greenport, and a once-a-year trek to Asbury Park, New Jersey, to watch for the big Pennsy K4s. Those early years set a standard for the hobby to come.

At ages 10 and 7, my brother and I came back from a walk to the Sunnyside Yards to watch the giant GG1s and the little B3 0-6-0 electric boxcab switchers work. We passed the front of Mekay's Hobby Shop and in the window was a small HO layout decorated with card structures by Ideal: factories, station, switch tower, diner, and small houses. The train was pulled by a Famoco B3 0-6-0 boxcab electric, exactly like the ones we just saw. We went inside and asked hundreds of questions to the shopkeeper, and I knew right then and there, Lionel 3-rail was *out!* I saved a little money from gifts and my small job. At age 10, I would dress up as a cowboy and bring my guitar to a daycare facility across the street to entertain the kids. I would do this weekly,



and the caretaker always gave me a buck or two. So, my first engine was a Mantua Booster — all of \$8.50 — and a train of Comet and Megow card and basswood car kits.

With the usual respite from toy trains by college, music, cars, and girls, it wasn't until the Christmas of 1965, when setting up our first Christmas tree, I thought of dragging out the HO that was put away seven or eight years before. That event was the “restart.” Thanks to my wife Lucy's encouragement, I got the okay to do the Christmas train and expand it to a little layout in our garden apartment's basement. Working in New York City allowed me to visit the wonderful hobby shops there, like Carmen Webster's renowned Model Railroad Equip. Co., and many others. The modeling activity continued in building cars, structures, and engines.

I became fascinated by the excellent details of the Japanese brass imports from PFM and others where exact prototype versions of models became available. At first, I collected every Pennsy steamer class available. Since some of

these models were not the greatest runners, I started improving the operating characteristics and then the details. At a train meet some 80-plus miles away from home, I ran into an older modeler who ironically lived within a Tiger Woods' drive from me in central New Jersey. We became fast friends, and he played a significant role in improving my skills. That friend, the late Charlie White, taught me that “Good enough is just *not* good enough”: let's get those details right, no paint holidays, make sure the corners are square, reliability, reliability, and reliability.

I became friendly with another two excellent modelers and builders of brass engines: John Hutnick and the late Joe Borrick. They both helped me hone my skills in working with model locomotives. Again, the motto was always, “Good enough is just not good enough!” This discipline helps create excellent models and model railroads. Even so, I still loved operating and building structures and cars.

In the early 2000s, I met a group of fellows from the central Jersey area who introduced me to the wonderful social

aspect of the hobby with weekly round-robin operating sessions on various layouts in that area. As members of NMRA, they introduced me to the organization, DCC, prototypical operating procedures, and I helped them with their brass engines and working on standards for reliable running.

Then came the move to North Carolina in 2007. I was already in On3 and started building the current layout in our new “downsized” home. In early 2011, I was approached by Vic Bitleris of the Carolina Piedmont Division about having an open house for the upcoming Mid-Eastern Region Convention planned for Raleigh, North Carolina. Vic had heard about me from the local train meets in Raleigh and from an open house I hosted for the Narrow Gauge Convention in Hickory, North Carolina, that year. As an incentive, he mentioned the NMRA startup program called Rail Pass and convinced me to join and meet with the local Division CPD13.

I started attending meetings and was very uplifted with a great group of guys. Soon, I was entering models in the popular vote contest, volunteering at the shows, doing clinic presentations,

working on the yearly raffle layout and Trains for Kids projects. Around the 2016 MER Convention in Durham, Vic Bitleris and Jack Dziadul convinced me to get the Golden Spike. From there, they knew I had already written a few articles published in *Mainline Modeler*. So, they convinced me to submit more articles to both the CPD-13 newsletter, the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, and other publications. Those articles led me to my first AP Certificate for Author. With the help of those friends, Jack, Vic, and Gene Sing, MMR®, more paperwork, and contests led to completing the required seven awards. Currently, I have been the assistant superintendent for the Division for the past four years. In February 2018, the editor of our Division newsletter, *The Herald*, had to make an unexpected move to Arizona, so I also volunteered to take on that role.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings and train shows have been canceled or postponed in North Carolina. I started a new program for monthly internet popular vote contests. Here, members submit photos and details of models based on a pre-determined program. In turn, I publish voting sheets with photos

and details of the submitted models and distribute these to the membership via the internet. The members then email me with their choice. I tabulate the votes and post the winners and photos of the contest in the *Herald*.

With the help of a few members, we have successfully conducted two virtual board meetings using Zoom. Now we are planning our first full-member virtual meeting in September.

I may have started as a “lone-wolf” model railroader, but now I am part of a great organization, helping our members, recruiting new members, and bringing joy to kids of all ages at the events and Trains for Kids program.

Other outside interests include working on two of my grandson’s layouts, golf with Lucy, and music.

### Certificates Earned Charles W. Rausch MMR® 659

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

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