

NMRA BULLETIN

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

rev 11/23/20

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
• 2022—St. Louis, MO • 2023—Dallas, Texas

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT
NOVEMBER 2020
GOLDEN SPIKE

Mid-Eastern Region
David Myers, Waxhaw, North Carolina

Pacific Coast Region
Phil Edholm, Pleasanton, California

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER
Lone Star Region
Larry Swigert, Dallas, Texas

Niagara Frontier Region
James Whatley, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

MASTER BUILDER - CARS
Mid-Eastern Region
Christopher Conaway, Moorestown, New Jersey

North Central Region
Scott Kremer, Northville, Michigan

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES
Northeastern Region
Joseph Kavanagh, Lake Luzerne, New York

Rocky Mountain Region
Lynn Daugherty, Silver City, New Mexico

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY
Mid-Continent Region
Craig Drenkow, Norfolk, Nebraska

Midwest Region
Connie Coy, Avon, Indiana

Pacific Cost Region
David Adams, San Jose, California

Thousand Lakes Region
Glenn Wolfe, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL
Pacific Coast Region
Robert Osborn, Rio Vista, California

Pacific Northwest Region
Burr Stewart, Seattle, Washington
Paul Vaughn, Graham, Washington

Pacific Southwest Region
Paul Buhrke, Tucson, Arizona
Harold Helland, Rancho Mission Viejo, California

Rocky Mountain Region
Kevin Anderson, North Salt Lake, Utah

Sunshine Region
Beverly Farnham, Palm Bay, Florida

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL
Lone Star Region
Robert Ashcraft, Pearland, Texas

Niagara Frontier Region
Walter Reid, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Pacific Southwest Region
Paul Buhrke, Tucson, Arizona

CHIEF DISPATCHER
Pacific Southwest Region
Bob Ginger, Phoenix, Arizona

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER
Lone Star Region
Mike Barrett, Bastrop, Texas

Mid-Continent Region
Cornell Barkhurst, Calamus, Iowa

Mid-Eastern Region
Roger Bir, Virginia Beach, Virginia

Northeastern Region
Geoffrey Anthony, Blue Hill, Maine
Ralph Brown, Portland, Maine

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR
Lone Star Region
Mike Barrett, Bastrop, Texas

Mid-Eastern Region
George Gaige, Palmyra, Virginia

Pacific Southwest Region
Richard Bale, Oceanside, California

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER
MMR® #665 Brook Qualman, Milford, Michigan
MMR® #666 Larry Swigert, Dallas, Texas
MMR® #667 Scott Kremer, Northville, Michigan
MMR® #668 George Gaige, Palmyra, Virginia
MMR® #669 Emory Luebke, Greenville, Wisconsin

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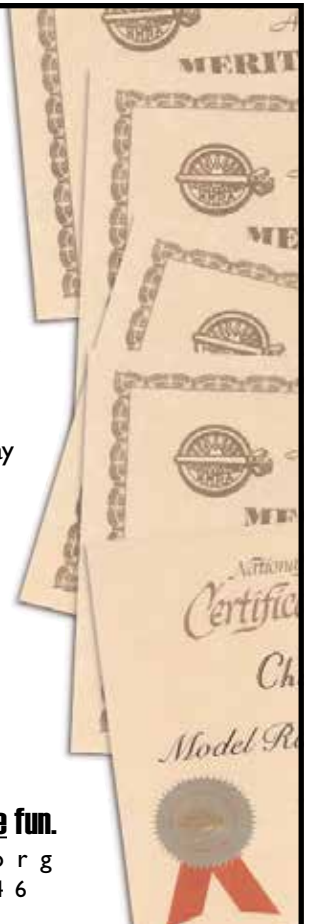
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**BROOK QUALMAN EARNS
MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #665**

Unlike most Master Model Railroaders®, there were no model trains in my childhood. When Jay and I married 53 years ago, we knew we'd have an HO layout one day. We didn't realize it would be 40 years before we got started — and no idea I'd become so involved.

We designed our retirement home around Jay's envisioned model railroad empire. We spent several vacations driving all over the country following rail lines and photographing iconic railroad sites, including Horseshoe Curve, Lackawanna Cutoff, Hudson River Valley, Harper's Ferry, Sherman Hill, Moffat Tunnel, Gore and Glenwood Canyons, Keddie Wye, Thompson River Canyon — and I could go on, trust me.

These travels often took us to some unsavory parts of town or resulted in unexpected experiences. While disconcerting at the time, these events fueled stories humorous in the retelling. One of the most memorable was our stay with the other railfans at the Station Inn in Cresson, Pennsylvania, overlooking the Pennsylvania Railroad main line. Then there was the Dale Creek Bridge fiasco. Built in southeastern Wyoming as part of the transcontinental railroad in 1868, the 650-foot-long, 150-foot-tall structure was famous for being the longest bridge on the Union Pacific. While attending the 2000 Union Pacific Historical Society convention in Cheyenne, we had the rare opportunity to visit the Dale Creek bridge. Impressively, the society had obtained special permission to access the site, which is now on private land. We jungle-cruised across some rancher's fields. Upon arrival, Jay pulled boots out of the car's trunk in case of snakes, which he failed to mention to me. (I was wearing sandals.) I realized partway along the trackless cut that there probably wasn't a bridge at the end of this hot, dusty, possibly snake-filled walk. Jay admitted this was true, but he'd brought a photo for me. This adventure had followed a trip in a bus full of men to a dirty old roundhouse. Unknown to me, the other wives had gone by luxury coach to the capitol building, governor's mansion, train station, and lunch. Jay mistakenly



thought I'd prefer the old school bus and a hard hat.

During this time, we also enjoyed riding on the *California Zephyr*, *Coast Starlight*, *Southwest Chief*, *Lake Shore Limited*, *Pennsylvanian/Capitol Limited*, *Texas Eagle*, *Wolverine*, and the *Via Rail Ambassador*. I had ridden the *Phoebe Snow* a few times as a child. We also rode the White Pass & Yukon, Durango & Silverton, and several other tourist railroads.

After considerable research and memberships in the pertinent railroad historical societies, Jay realized — *finally!* — the space required to model even a few of these famous locations was beyond what our 3,000-foot lower level could accommodate. Further, since most of the sites had already been modeled effectively by others, the iconic location concept precluded the unique model railroad Jay was seeking.

Jay then hit on a big idea. Use our model railroad to bring to life our family histories. He was the historian for his family, as I was for mine. Our layout would be Michigan-based since the state was central to both our families, and Jay and I had lived here most of our lives. My earlier family history goes back to eastern New Jersey and the Philadelphia Main Line. And, surprisingly, we even figured out how to integrate this history into our Michigan-oriented layout. Our family his-

stories come alive through the scratchbuilt modeling of family homes, businesses, and churches attended. Structures also represent favorite stores, restaurants, theaters, and parks. Importantly, this approach brings alive homes and businesses which no longer exist to be experienced anew by those not seeing them firsthand. In the process, portions of 22 communities will also have their histories preserved.

The plural nature of our layout's name, Michigan Lines, derives from the multiple rail lines represented. There are four primary railroads with considerable trackage, yards, structures, locomotives, and rolling stock: Pere Marquette, New York Central, Grand Trunk Western, and Wabash. Our secondary railroads, Canadian National; Canadian Pacific; Ann Arbor; Detroit, Toledo & Shoreline; Baltimore & Ohio; PRR; and Chesapeake & Ohio are represented mostly by locomotives and rolling stock. The B&O operates principally via trackage rights into and out of Detroit's Michigan Central Station. The PRR and C&O use Fort Street Union Station.

The small retirement home I had imagined had grown to become a large lid for our model railroad.

After completing our home, we attended the 2007 NMRA National Convention in Detroit, where I became

aware of how extensive the hobby is and the opportunities available to model railroaders. Knowing little, I attended lots of clinics and layout tours. The layout tours were beyond anything I'd envisioned. It opened my eyes to what Jay was planning.

I have always been fascinated with miniatures. I started a dollhouse when I was 50 years old and spent five summers completing it. It still needs a couple of needlepoint rugs, but the railroad has put that on hold. Jay encouraged my interest in modeling by suggesting I create replicas of family homes. He handed me a Walthers Milwaukee Station kit and a picture of the Potter Street Station in Saginaw and said, "Build this first." If I'd had any idea what I was doing, I probably would have handed it back to him. I did not use a single piece "out of the box." After that, I finally did get to build houses.

Jay joined the NMRA, with me as a family member, and Division 6 in the North Central Region. We started modeling Saginaw, home to Jay's family. I enjoyed recreating the family homes and businesses and learning the history behind them. We reconnected with cousins. At the Saginaw Library, we discovered Sanborn maps and phone directories from 1950 — the era we were modeling. We held open houses as we progressed. As a result, Mark Ellis asked me to do a clinic on modeling houses for Division 6 in 2010. It was intimidating speaking to a room full of men who were more expert at building railroads. But they were supportive and encouraging. It was also my first PowerPoint.

We became frequent attendees at train shows and conventions during this time. I was entering contests and getting structures judged, earning my Structures AP award in 2014. I also created and presented two more clinics and was the keynote speaker at the 2019 NCR Convention.



Thanks to Jay's excellent photography, many of my structures have appeared in major publications, including *Model Railroader*, the *Walthers Catalog*, and the NMRA calendar for the past several years.

When our layout became operational, Jay joined the Midnight Pocatello Yardmasters operating group. Before his operating sessions, I would run switchlists for Jay to see if they functioned as intended. It was painful for both of us at the beginning. During the sessions, I would find a freight yard away from the group and practice switching. I got to know the guys over dessert after the sessions, and soon they started partnering with me. Scott Kremer, MMR®, was instrumental in teaching me better switching strategies and how to read the turnouts. Eventually, group members invited me to attend sessions at other Pocatello layouts. In 2018, the "no-girls-allowed" policy was rescinded, and I became a member. I joined Division 6 and became a full NMRA member with my own NMRA number.

There are now seven MMR®s in the Pocatello group, so we're talking high achievers with outstanding layouts. Fortunately, they share their expertise willingly and are very encouraging. Ken Chick, MMR®, our Division 6 AP Chairman, strongly encouraged me to work toward my MMR®. I received my Golden Spike Award in 2018 and looked seriously at the requirements for various AP awards. I realized that Volunteer was within my grasp and started on Scenery.

John Bussard, model railroader extraordinaire, works with us several months a year and has taught me much about landscaping, making trees, backgrounds, glues, and paints. He's knowledgeable about the details needed to make a realistic industrial scene (not my forté) and providing guidance. Jay gave me only 120 square feet to model my early hometowns. It was not nearly enough, especially since Jay insisted on including trackside industries. What girl notices those when growing up? So, I had to downsize my plans considerably. As I was modeling this section, I wrote up the steps involved and forwarded them to Cinthia Priest at the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. She published them in a series of six articles, which completed the qualifications for my Author AP award. At this point, I realized achieving MMR® might be possible.

I started working on the Dispatcher AP, a challenge for me because I was clueless about how dispatching worked. Bill Neale, MMR®, taught me several ways to dispatch on the different Pocatello layouts. The entire group was incredibly supportive, especially on the nights Bill wasn't there to guide me.

Ken Chick, MMR®, suggested going for the Prototype AP award since many of my structures were scratchbuilt to match the actual buildings. It was a challenge getting all the parts together. Once we realized all the elements didn't need to be in the same photo (impossible to find for 1950) but could be in multiple pictures, I qualified for the award. I applied for five Awards in 2019. Author and Volunteer covered several years. It was just a matter of filling out the paperwork on what I'd already accomplished. My suggestion: look at the requirements for all the categories. It may just be a matter of collecting the proof of what you've done and sending it in. Jay was able to qualify for three AP awards this way.

Motive Power was last. The biggest challenge was that locomotive kits suitable for our layout are no longer being produced. I wound up building a Detroit River Tunnel R-1 electric from scratch, highly detailing a Pere Marquette 2-8-2 Mikado with a unique kit-bashed tender, and turning resin components into the Fort Street Union Depot No. 2, an unusual NW5 diesel switcher. Fritz Milhaupt contributed the essential and long-out-of-production decals for this locomotive. Jay helped by explaining the function of the components involved and assisting me in locating and ordering parts. Joe Bliss helped with decoder and sound installation.

As the country saying goes, "When you see a turtle on a fence post, you know it didn't get there by itself." I couldn't have achieved my MMR® without the help and encouragement of my fellow model railroaders.

Certificates Earned
Brook Qualman MMR® 665
Master Builder – Structures
Master Builder – Scenery
Master Builder – Prototype Models
Chief Dispatcher
Master Builder – Motive Power
Model Railroad Author
Association Volunteer