

February 2026

MCR Div. 2

Vol. 68, Issue 02

Editor's Model of the Month



Rick Marshall brought in one of the most creative models this editor can remember: a 3-D printed toy train layout, with a train running around the lake and a boat upon the lake, the movement powered by a thumbwheel mechanism and magnet.

Meeting Schedule

February 15, 2026 - Division 2 Meeting, 1:30pm
Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum
144 Kruger Street
Weirton, WV 26003
Museum opens 9:30am; visit before the meeting!
Program: Ken Hanawalt, Scrap-Building

March 15, 2026 - Division 2 Meeting, 1:30pm
Mon Valley Railroad Historical Society
5000 Greenbag Road, Unit D-13
Morgantown, WV 26501
Program: Train Show (10am to 4pm)

Saturday, April 18, 2026 - Model RR Jamboree
CCAC Boyce Campus
595 Beatty Road
Monroeville, PA 15146

Bring'n'Brag Categories

- Jan 18 Anything Goes
Feb 15 Motive Power: Diesel / Electric / Traction
Mar 15 Motive Power: Steam
Apr 18 \*\* Jamboree \*\* | "Extra" Contests
May 17 Freight Cars
Jun 28 Non-Revenue Cars (incl. Cabooses)
July \*\* Picnic \*\* | Vehicles
Sep 20 Passenger Cars
Oct 18 Non-Railroad Structures
Nov 15 Photos: Model RR and Prototype

Submission Deadline for next Flyer: February 22, 2026

Visit us online at keystonedivision.org

Get the Color Version of the Keystone Flyer — as well as Online Extras — as soon as it comes out and other Division 2 news flashes and announcements via email. Contact Susan Werner:



## From the Super's Desk

It's the start of a new year. We look ahead to 12 months of something different than the last 12 months. Many of us make New Year's resolutions of things we'll do (or not do) in the new year.

Those that attended our first Membership meeting of the new year heard that we are making some changes to how the monthly Membership Meeting will be organized.

At the suggestion (and motivation) of George Pandelios, we gathered several of the past Superintendents to discuss ways to increase the opportunities for members to engage with each other at our monthly meetings. We've been holding meetings the same way for many years. During that time, the world, the hobby and our members have changed. It was time to review what our meetings are like and what changes might allow our members to engage with each other. This is at the core of what the Keystone Division is about.

First, I'd like to identify and thank the team that worked on this with George and myself; Mike Hohn, Susan Werner. and Ken Hanawalt. At no point did anyone say, "we've done it this way for years, so why change now!" In a two-hour in person meeting and one follow-up Zoom call, we agreed to a plan. Likely, not a final one, because we all acknowledged that making changes requires review to ensure we achieve our goal of increased member engagement at our meetings. So, here's what's changed.

First, our monthly meetings now officially start at 1:30pm and run until 3:30pm. We intend to fill this entire time with opportunities to engage with each other. We are encouraging our members to plan to be present for that entire time, which will have some new activities.

In some cases, our venues open earlier than our starting time. We'll make sure to post that with the meeting notifications so our members can enjoy what our hosts have to offer as well as participate in our activities.

The time from 1:30pm to 2:30pm will be dedicated to social time for our members. We want to encourage all attendees to have a chance to meet with their fellow modelers and share. We want to allow new members, or members that can't attend regularly, to have a chance to meet our members and find a friend.

To help this process, we're going to have someone at the door to welcome every member as they arrive. We'll also provide a name tag that will make it easier for new members to know the name of everyone attending. The hardest thing for anyone new walking into our group is not knowing anyone. We want (need) to make this easier.

Additionally, we'll encourage members to

... continued on page 6

### Executive Officers

Superintendent  
Dennis Coglianese

Assistant Superintendent  
George Pandelios

Chief Clerk  
Keith DeVault

Treasurer  
Jeff Gregg

### Line Officers & Committee Chairs

Webmaster  
Tom Gaus

Membership  
Ken Hanawalt

Company Store  
Susan Werner

Keystone Flyer Editor  
Patrick Altdorfer

Bring 'n' Brag  
Dominic Martinelli

Achievement Program  
Dennis Vaccaro, Chair Susan Werner, Asst. Chair

Model Railroad Jamboree  
Grier Kuehn Neal Schorr

Modular Layouts  
FreeMo (HO scale)  
Rick Montgomery T-Trak (N scale)  
Richie Jodon

S-Mod (S scale)  
Jim Whipple Jim Braum

Kevin Squire, Reg. Coord.

The *Keystone Flyer* is published ten times a year by Division Two of the National Model Railroad Association, Mid-Central Region. Subscription to the *Flyer* is included with your NMRA membership and sent via e-mail directly to each member who chooses to receive the newsletter in this format. Alternatively, you may also read the *Flyer* online, or download a copy onto your computer or mobile device by navigating to the link on the Division Two website [[www.keystonedivision.org](http://www.keystonedivision.org)]. Members without internet access or an e-mail address may request a printed copy from the Division; please send your name, address, and phone number to: Patrick Altdorfer, Editor, 6333 Morrowfield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217. **Pike ads** are available to publicize your home or club model rail empires for a \$15.00 yearly fee. You may supply artwork or have it produced by the editor for a nominal fee. Pike ads are also posted in full color on the Division website.

## January 18, 2025 Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi with 35 members in attendance at 2:30 pm at the Venetia Community Center in Venetia, PA. Pass the hat started around for the group.

Dave Stanton of the D.A.R.E. Model Railroad Club and host for this meeting thanked everyone for attending. The kids of the club were so excited about the division meeting that some of them were here 4 hours before the building opened for us.

We have one guest who is a prospective new member, Scott Bart. Scott is in O Gauge and models Chessie and P&LE.

Dennis Vaccaro moved and Denny Lippert seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting as published in the Keystone Flyer. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

### Committee Reports

**Keystone Flyer:** Patrick Aldorfer reported that the deadline for the February Flyer will be January 25. The next article by Ken Hanawalt will appear in the next issue. If you would like to publish an article for the flyer, please contact him and he will help you with the process. Patrick reported that he will be unavailable to do the Keystone Flyer for June, and Dennis Lippert volunteered to do the flyer in his absence.

**Financial Report:** Jeff Gregg reported the division is solvent and able to meet its financial obligations. Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi spoke for Andy Blenko and stated that the convention account was also solvent.

**Programs:** Asst. Superintendent George Pandelios stated that the February Meeting will be at the Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum in Wheeling, WV and Bruce Lightcap will present the program. The March 15th meeting will be in Morgantown, with the local society holding a train show from 10am to 4pm in the center court of the Mall. The April 18th meeting will be held at CCAC Boyce Campus near Monroeville during our annual Jamboree. The May 17th meeting will be held at Ohio Valley Lines in Ambridge. The June 21st meeting will be held at the Marshall Township Municipal Building. Please try to attend these events. If you would like to do a program, please contact George, as he will be willing to help you in your presentation.

**Company Store:** Susan Werner announced that has lots of free items, please stop and pick up what you would like. She also has hand car sheds and NYC Box Cars for sale. She has posted the newest listing of book offerings on the website. Let her know if you wish to order a book.

**Membership:** Ken Hanawalt said that we have 183 active members on the roster, holding relatively steady over the past months.

**Financial Oversight Committee:** No report.

**Nominating Committee -** Tom Catalano, committee chair, announced that the following people have been nominated by his committee to run the division for the next term. George Pandelios as Superintendent, Dominic Martinelli as Assistant Superintendent, and Dennis Lippert as Chief Clerk. He also stated that each candidate must submit a bio to the Keystone Editor for the next

issue. February meeting will be nominations from the floor, and the March meeting will be the elections.

**Website:** Tom Gaus was not present but Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi reported that Tom has done an amazing job always keeping the website up to date.

**Social media:** Jimmy Braum reported that the Facebook page is now public so anyone can share information. He also said that he will start a podcast, so if you have any suggestions, please contact him.

**FreeMo:** Rick Montgomery announced that the group space for the January Show at Greenberg Show in Monroeville ran very well. They have been approved for the July Show at the Greenberg Show.

**T-Trak:** Richie Jodon spoke about his group, they have 3 shows coming up this next Sunday at New Eagle, March 15th in Morgantown, and March 21st at Monaca.

**Bring n Brag:** Dominic Martinelli announced that he had five entries for Anything Goes. First Place went to Neal Schorr for Weathered Freight Cars, Second Place to Rick Montgomery for his Ford Storage Tanks, and Third Place to Jimmy Braum for his SD40-2 Locomotive. Good Job by all, and next month's category will be Motive Power: Diesel, Electric, and Traction.

**Video Library:** Bud Brock had no report.

**Achievement Program:** Dennis Vaccaro announced that Jimmy Braum got a merit award for Civil Engineering and has qualified and got his certificate for Civil Engineering. This is Jimmy's 4th achievement certificate, and he has 3 to go for his MMR. Great Job.

Old Business - None.

New Business - None.

Concerns & Questions - None.

For the Good of the Division:

Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi announced that a committee of past Superintendents and the current Assistant Superintendent have met and are working on a new meeting agenda. He will publish the new agenda in the flyer.

The March meeting in Morgantown will be held in conjunction with a train show from 10am to 4pm at the mall. If you are interested in a table, please contact Keith DeVault, or check out the website MVRRH.S.ORG for more information.

What's on your Workbench?

- Dave Martinelli discussed that he is working on the yard module for the Free Mo group, overall, it ran well at the Greenberg Show. He will be taking the modules to the Timonium Show on January 31st with a space allotment of 38 x90.
- Jimmy Braum had his first operating session on his layout and found that he must redo lots of track.

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# Bring'n'Brag

# Dominic Martinelli

At the January meeting, the Bring'n'Brag category was **Anything Goes**. There were a total of five entries submitted.

Gathering the most votes and coming in at **first place** was **Neal Schorr**, who brought in three O-scale freight cars (3 photos, top right) from his home railroad, the PRR Middle Division, which he realistically weathered using powders, chinks, paint streaks, and on the flatcar staining the deck to create an impression of individual wooden boards. Well done, Neal!



**Rick Montgomery** entered two HO scale Bachmann storage tank models (replacing the blinking lights with medical syringe cover as caps), to which he added Ford Motor Company decals and figures to win **second place** (above).



In **third place** was **Jim Braum's** "What if" entry of a WLE SD40-2 painted up as an imagined Pittsburgh & West Virginia "heritage unit" (right). Jim stripped and repainted this Kato locomotive and is adding many details to finish this model.



There were two other entries this month. **Rick Marshall** entered his 3D printed toy railroad (cover photo this month), which he describes as a "child's toy." His creation includes a thumb-wheel and magnets to move the train along the track and also the boat around the lake!

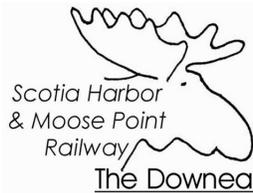
And **Vagel Keller** brought in two HO scale works-in-progress: the East Broad Top fueling station (below) and a "Train Show Junk Box Rehab" to represent the PRR Mechanicsburg "Diesel" Service Office (left).



Name	pts
Neal Schorr	3
Rick Montgomery	2
Jim Braum	1



The Bring'n'Brag contest this month is in the category **Motive Power: Diesel/Electric/Traction**. All entries must be presented to the Bring'n'Brag chair no later than 2pm in order to be considered.



Susan Werner, CEO  
292 Salem Church Rd.  
Belle Vernon, PA 15012  
swerner48@yahoo.com

## Cumberland and Lake Erie Railroad



"The Laurel Ridge Route"

D. E. Baker, V.P. of Operations  
118 Laurlis Lane, Johnstown, PA 15904 dbakerr@aol.com



## HUNTINGDON NORTHERN RAILWAY



"THE ALLEGHENY ROUTE"

R.J. Prehoda, Operations Manager

Serving Southwestern Pennsylvania with connections to:  
B&O, CP&W, Erie Lackawanna, N&W, NYC, P&WV, PRR, WM



## Turtle Creek Railroad

"The Hardshell Route"

Ken Hanawalt, MMR

email: TurtleCreekRailroad@gmail.com

Operators Welcome!

Snappy Service



## MIDWEST R&R

Where Switching & Local Freight is Our Business



Owner & Operator  
Bob DiBenedetto



rdemdsd40@yahoo.com



## PRR Panhandle Division



George Pandelios Chief Engineer  
Member: NMRA, TCA, PRRT & HS



The ASPEN SUB along the B&O  
from Morgantown to Keyser

Keith and Janet DeVault

546 Aspen Street, Morgantown, WV

The D-n-D LINE, trains at the Most Ut!

A "loose" part of the BLE RR

One Module: the road to Nowhere!

Many Modules: the road to Everywhere! Free-Mo!



## PATH VALLEY LINES

HO/HON3



South Penn Branch

Vagel Keller, Gen'l. Manager  
vckeller@comcast.net



## FREEPORT AND CONEMAUGH

The Yellowjacket Line

## SALTSBURG AND SLICKVILLE

Serving PA Coal Country

Robert Livrone, Owner/Operator Lower Burrell, PA



## PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD MIDDLE DIVISION

Hey kids, you too can be a fan of the  
great Standard Railroad of the World!

Neal A. Schorr - Owner & Chief Engineer



## MJC + LRR

RH Montgomery: Owner & Chief Engineer

Ohio River Northern Railway Club

Northern Division

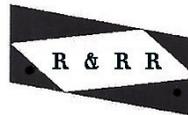
"The Route of Steel Country"



## BALTIMORE & OHIO WESTERN MARYLAND Consolidated Rail System

with connections to P&LE, PRR, C&O, EL, NYC

Chief Engineer John Bennett  
Phone: (814) 241-5547  
Johnstown, PA



## Rutland & Rock Ridge

232 Old Farm Road  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066

Haulin' Black Diamonds

Fred Roney, President  
fredron@zoominternet.net



## FORKS RIDGE RAILWAY

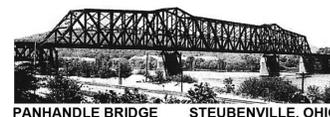
Gary P. Nastase - President & CEO  
Kathleen A. Nastase - Train Wifey ... R.I.P.  
207 State Street  
Woodbury, PA 16695

Route of the Whitetail



## THE O.R.N.Ry BUNCH

15 LAYOUTS AND GROWING  
N-HO-O-G



PANHANDLE BRIDGE STEUBENVILLE, OHIO

Contact:

Robert DeBenedetto  
rdemdsd40@yahoo.com  
(740) 381-4585

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

OHIO RIVER NORTHERN RAILWAY CLUB

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# DIVISION TWO NEWS

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## Minutes

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Jamboree: Neal Schorr reported that the event is on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at CCAC Boyce Campus in Monroeville. The Website is up to date, registration is now open, so please register to attend this event. Grier would like to see over 100 people attend the event this year. If you have any items to donate to the raffle, please give them to Rob Twigger, as this is a way to help pay for the event. Neil announced that the clinicians are on the website and some new ones from out of town will be speaking. The White Elephant tables will be operating again, so if you have items to sell, please bring them to the Jamboree. Please get online and fill out your form to the white elephant.

Grier Kuehn announced that the usual contests Motive Power, Cars, and Structures would be paired with a new one, Model Photos of any layout, NOT PROTOTYPE. Neal has lined up a luncheon speaker and a Banquet speaker. Please check the website for the write up of these two gentlemen.

Motion to adjourn by Ken Hanawalt and seconded by Richie Jodon. Meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

The program will be given by Bill Sartore of [Microlumina and Railroad Kits](#).



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## Super's Column

... continued from page 2

provide mini-clinics. These would be like the “What’s on your workbench?” and “What’s your problem?” segments of meetings, with one difference: We want members to take time to “share” this information with those attending. These won’t be formal presentations, but more like “I’d like to show you (tell you) about what I did (learned to do, can’t figure out). These are not formal presentations but conversational discussions like we all do with our friends.

We’ll also formally start the Bring ‘N Brag monthly contest and encourage members that bring entries to be around to discuss the work they are entering. We’ll allow voting on these up until 2:30pm.

From 2:30pm until 3:00pm we will hold our regular business meeting. We will work to make this more efficient and focused on the business of the division.

Lastly, we will hold the formal clinic from 3:00pm to 3:30pm.

This is the plan. It will be refined as we go along.

We ask that all of you recognize that we want all our members to participate in our activities as often as you can. If you haven’t been to a meeting recently, or have come and didn’t have a good experience, try it again. We want our regular attendees to seek out the new faces and include them in your conversations.

The welcome mat has been dusted off and is waiting for you.

... *Dennis Coglianese*

## “Baby It’s Cold Outside”

Not only is that the title of an old standard popular since 1949, it’s also true of today... January 25, 2026. As I look outside, Western PA is in the midst of the huge winter storm they’ve been predicting for days. So, what to do when the snow is going to end up a foot deep? You know the answer: model railroading.

Let’s take that a step further and narrow it down to preparing for the Jamboree on April 18th. Are there any models you have that can be spiffed up and entered in one of the four popular vote contests? Besides Motive Power, Rolling Stock, and Structures, the fourth contest this year is Model Photos. Do you have any special photos of your models or layout to enter?

How about good “stuff” you will never use? Consider selling it at the White Elephant Sale. Or how about donating new, quality items for the Raffle, to help generate raffle ticket sales.

Want to know more details? Go to the [Jamboree pages](#) on the division website [[www.keystonedivision.org](http://www.keystonedivision.org)]. It’s all there and continuously updated — the schedule, the clinics with presenters & descriptions, lunch & banquet speakers with descriptions, donors, and much more.

Last but certainly not least: Have you registered? If not, go online and do so. Invite your friends, whether they are members or not. The Jamboree is Division Two’s best recruiting tool!

### Raffle Donors

A week or so before January’s monthly meeting at the Dare Club, we put out an email blast asking for Jamboree Raffle donations. Well, a special thank you goes out to Keith DeVault, Vagel Keller, and Rick Reichenbach, who brought items to the meeting. Several other members said they would do likewise this month. Please consider doing so yourself to help make the Raffle successful. We will gladly accept your donations at the next two meetings. To see everyone who has already made donations, go to the website.

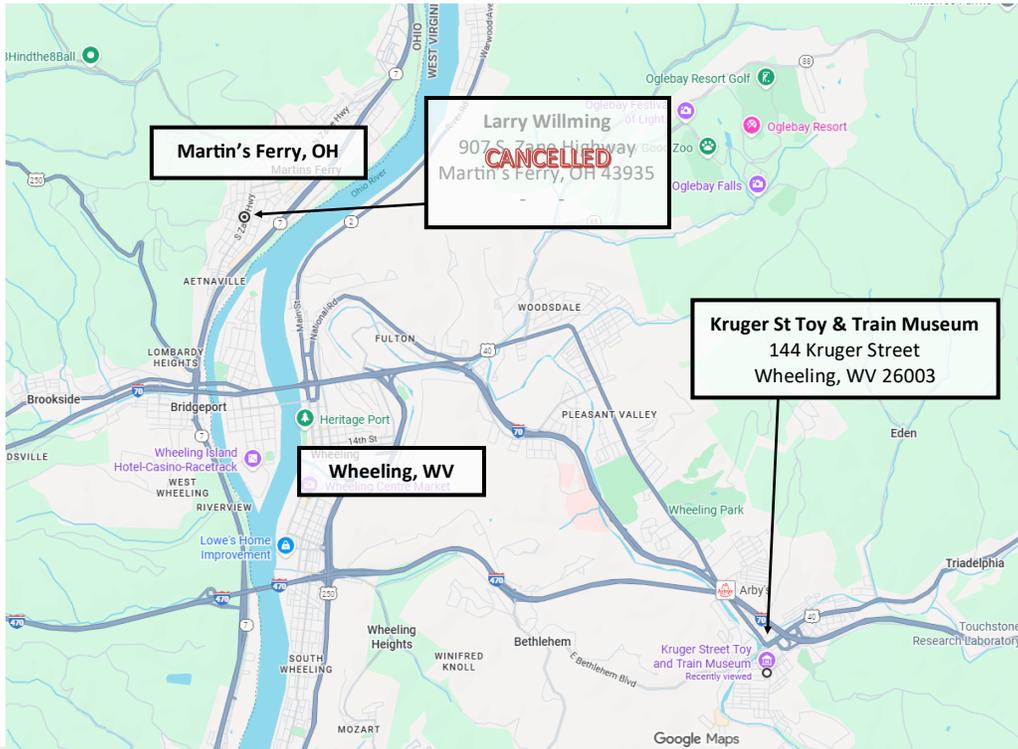
See everyone at CCAC Boyce Campus, Monroeville, PA on April 18th!

— Jamboree Co-Chairs Grier Kuehn & Neal Schorr

# MEETING TIMETABLE

## Sunday, February 15: Wheeling, WV

Our February meeting host is the [Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum](#), located at (144 Kruger Street, Wheeling, WV 26003), which will open for us at 9:30am! There are several layouts, as well as displays about collectible trains, dollhouse miniatures, board games, and more. Many thanks to Alden and Bob for their assistance in arranging this open house for us! Also, Larry Willming (907 S. Zane Hwy., Martin's Ferry, OH 43935; tel. 740 391 5752) will open his layouts for visitors before the meeting from 11am to 1pm and again after the meeting from 4-6pm. He is currently (re)building his N scale layout and is eager to hear comments and suggestions from visitors. He also has an N scale layout (you might call it "high rail" because it is elevated and runs around the ceiling of his house). Also, he will have his Inglenook set up and operating in the kitchen, in case visitors want to try their hand at this classic switching puzzle.

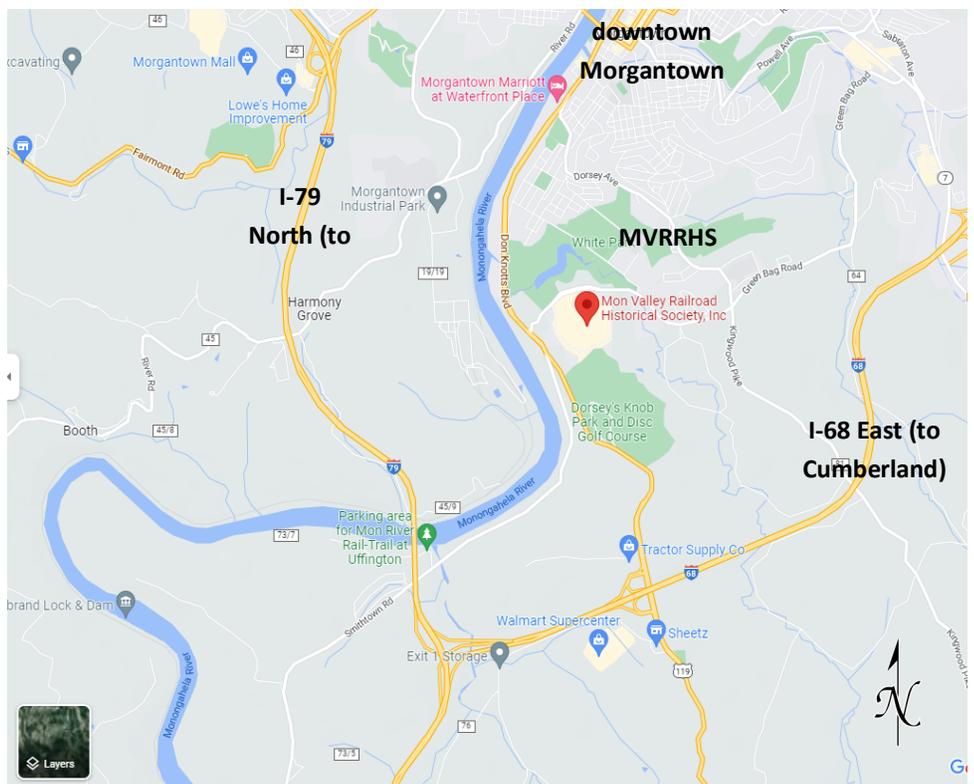


Ken Hanawalt will present a program on "Scrap-Building," showing how he used scraps and junk from under his layout to kit-bash an N scale freight station based on Kato 2-stall wooden engine house kits. The clinic will include some suggestions for solving model building problems, including the problem of a spouse who might ask, "Why are you keeping all these boxes of stuff down here?"

The maps provided are for general orientation; as always, please use a real map (or GPS) to plan your trip.

## March 15: Morgantown, WV

Our March meeting also returns to familiar territory, to the Mon Valley Railroad Historical Society, located in the former Mountaineer Mall (5000 Greenbag Road Unit D-13, Morgantown, WV 26501). Simultaneously with the meeting, the Society is hosting a Train Show from 10am to 4pm, so come early, and bring cash!



**The Keystone Flyer**  
 Division Two, NMRA, MCR  
 P.O. Box 223  
 Gastonville, PA 15336



NEXT MEETING:  
 Weirton, WV: Kruger Street Toy & Train Museum, February 15

<p><b>Montour Railroad</b></p> <p>FAST FREIGHT SERVICE        EMPLOYEE OWNED        SINCE 1985        JEFF GREGG - PRESIDENT        Phone 724-348-5855        Finleyville, PA</p> 	<p><b>ERIE Connecting Railroad Company</b></p>  <p>Richard Reichenbach - Operations Manager        162 Clearwater Drive, Ellwood City, PA 16117  <a href="mailto:Ricky759@outlook.com">Ricky759@outlook.com</a></p>
 <p><b>Mon Valley Railroad Historical Society</b>        5000 Greenbag Road, Unit D-13        Morgantown, WV 26501</p> <p>Meeting Thursdays at 7:00 PM</p> <p><a href="http://www.MVRRHS.org">www.MVRRHS.org</a>        Call Rich Henderson (304) 276-1046 for more info</p>	 <p><b>MID-MON VALLEY        MODEL RAILROAD        CLUB</b></p>  <p><b>159 Main Street, New Eagle, PA</b>  <b>Meetings: Fridays 7:30 pm</b></p>
 <p><b>Visitors Welcome        MEMBERSHIP OPEN</b></p> <p>FRIDAYS 7pm-2am        SUNDAYS 1pm-7pm</p> <p>2209 Walnut St. McKeesport. PA  <a href="http://mckeesportmodelrr.com">mckeesportmodelrr.com</a></p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HO &amp; N Scale Layouts</li> <li>• T-TRAK Modular Display Layout</li> <li>• Extensive Library &amp; Video Collection</li> </ul> <p><b>OHIO VALLEY LINES</b>        1225 MERCHANT ST AMBRIDGE PA 15003</p> <p><a href="http://www.ohiovalleylines.org">www.ohiovalleylines.org</a> info@ohiovalleylines.org        Open Every Monday 7:30PM – 10:00PM Memberships available!!</p>
<p><b>All aspects of "S":</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale • Narrow Gauge</li> <li>• Hirail • American Flyer</li> </ul> <p>Monthly meetings    Two portable layouts  <b>Membership open</b>    Contact: Jon Knox 724-287-6829</p> 	 <p><b>BEAVER COUNTY        MODEL RAILROAD and HISTORICAL SOCIETY</b></p>  <p>416 6th St.        Monaca, PA 15061 Visitors Welcome</p> <p>Worknights: Tuesdays 7:30  <a href="http://www.bcmrr.railfan.net">www.bcmrr.railfan.net</a></p> 

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# DIVISION TWO NEWS

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICER ELECTIONS

By Dennis Coglianese, Superintendent

At the January meeting, the Nominating Committee presented their slate for the upcoming elections:

Superintendent:	George Pandelios
Assistant Superintendent:	Dominic Martinelli
Company Clerk:	Denny Lippert

This is the slate provided to the membership to ensure that there is at least one candidate for each position. The bios for each of these candidates is published below.

**IT DOES NOT MEAN THESE ARE THE NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM!** The floor will be opened at the February meeting for nominations for each position from the attendees at the February meeting. Nominations for each position will be taken from the floor. No members can be nominated without their approval.

If nominations for any position are made from the floor, the nominees must provide their bio for publication in the March Keystone Flyer along with a ballot that must be mailed to the Division prior to the March meeting. Those ballots will be counted at the March meeting and the winner announced at that time.

Per the constitution as amended:

*If, after a diligent effort/search, only one candidate is nominated for any Division Officer position, the sole nominee may be elected by a motion to have an Election by Acclimation. In instances where the entire slate of candidates for Division Officers are running unopposed, mailing of ballots will not be necessary if a motion to have an Election by Acclimation is proposed and passed.*

**George Pandelios** has been a member of the Keystone Division since 1998. He models the Pennsylvania Railroad in O Scale (3-rail). In addition to volunteering for Jamboree and recruitment events, he has served as Chief Clerk (4 years) and Assistant Superintendent (4 years). He is retired after a 45-year career in computer science during which he has been a software developer, process and risk management consultant, project manager, VP of Software Development, and an adjunct professor of computer science. Among his achievements is the implementation of E-Z-Pass for the Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia Turnpikes.

**Denny Lippert** is a lifelong model railroader and 35-year Division 2 member. He has spent time as an officer in two other rail-related groups in the past, and he looks forward to the chance to bring the meetings to you via the minutes in the monthly Keystone Flyer! His modeling passion is where it's always been: as a teen in the 80's, his modelling and railfan friends convinced him to model what he knew: modern-day Conrail. Although 80's Conrail is not so much "modern" these days, it is a fallen flag that he still waves proudly! He plays a central role in keeping the electrons flowing properly in the Division Two HO scale FreeMo group, and while he has always been focused on rolling stock, he does still dream of a great home layout someday. Until then, he will keep expanding the fleet!

**Dominic Martinelli** is returning to the hobby and the NMRA after a 20+ year break but he grabbed the reins of the Bring'n'Brag Chairmanship almost two years ago with gusto and has run that contest at the monthly meetings, as well as oversaw the model contest at the last Jamboree. Although his career in sales keeps him for the moment away from building a layout, he enjoys working as an operator on the Pittsburgh Mainline of Andy Blenko and sometimes helps to run the Division Two FreeMo layout. He looks forward to working to keep Keystone Division a successful, educational, and enjoyable group to belong to.

## Reimagining the Business Meeting

By George Pandelios, Assistant Superintendent

Back in November of last year, I wondered if the format of the business meeting couldn't be improved to promote more fun, learning, and socializing rather than just discussing division business. To that end, and with Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi's enthusiastic support, a working group consisting of Dennis, Keith DeVault, Ken Hanawalt, Mike Hohn, Susan Werner, and myself was formed to change the focus of the business meeting.

We came up with a format that shortens the business part and sandwiches it between social activities and the main program / clinic. Here's the new format, which is a work in progress. We fully expect to tweak it as we learn more:

Timeframe	Activity
Building/venue opens	Explore the museum or other on-site attractions (the goal is 1-1.5 hours ahead of the business meeting)
1:30 pm	Social Hour: this is a time to socialize, catch up with old friends, make new ones.
1:45-2:00	Mini-Clinic(s): this is a short (15 minute) demo or talk by a division member about a problem he/she solved, a technique of interest, or Show-and-Tell. Also, Bring-N-Brag voting begins at this time.
2:30-3:00	Bring-N-Brag voting ends at this time. Business Meeting – this is a streamlined meeting format with emphasis on concise discussion of truly important items. Committee chairs will be encouraged to make their normal status reports in the Flyer. The goal is to keep the Business Meeting to 30 minutes unless some larger issue has been placed on the agenda in advance of the meeting.
3:00-4:00	Main Program / Clinic

We see the new meeting format providing more opportunities for members, visitors, and prospective new members to enjoy the social aspects of model railroading. And the mini-clinics would give more of us a chance to learn about little fixes, tricks, improvements, or new things coming down the pike.

Division Superintendent Dennis Coglianesi discussed the changes at the January meeting. We will be trying out this format starting with the February meeting. We welcome the membership's thoughts and suggestions for improving the business meeting to make it more fun for all involved. Please call, talk to me at the meeting, or send e-mail.

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# DIVISION TWO NEWS

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## Membership Survey

By Dennis Coglianese, Superintendent

Early last year, Membership Chairman Ken Hanawalt distributed a questionnaire for our members to complete. We wanted to collect information about the modeling interests of our members so that we could develop activities reflecting our members' interests. This was also in support of our plan to have New Member Ambassadors and Mentors to provide opportunities for our members to get together more informally between our formal meetings.

We recognized that passing these out at meetings would not reach all of our members, so we developed an online version. A link to the questionnaire was sent out to all members that hadn't already submitted a printed questionnaire.

We received a total of 81 responses, which is a bit less than half our members. All members that hadn't submitted an in-person questionnaire have been sent a link so that they can complete it from home. If you can't find the e-mail with the link, send an email to \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll send you the link. Let's take a look at what our members have told us so far about their modeling interests.

Of the responses we received, 72.5% have a **layout** and another 6.25% are planning on one. **Operating sessions** are held by 17.5% and 23.75% are planning to do so in the future. Additionally, 35% would like to participate in Operating Sessions on other layouts and 15% would like to do so in the future. A couple of conclusions I could make: we have many layouts that could be open before Division events and available to participate in layout tours. Note that it is not a requirement to have a finished layout. For **types of control systems**, the majority (80%) responded that they use DCC, while 21.25% cited DC; Live Rail was 38.75%, and Dead Rail was at 1.25%.

In terms of **modeling scales**, most of our members (83.75%) are interested in HO scale; about equal numbers cited an interest in N and O scales (25% and 23.75%, respectively); both S scale and G scale were mentioned by 5% of the respondents, and 3.75% mentioned Z scale. Another 7.5% mentioned Live Steam as an interest. If you do math, that's more than 100% so many of you are interested in more than one scale. And in terms of **modeling interests**, the following results emerged:

Modeling Interest	%	Modeling Interest	%	Modeling Interest	%
Structures	67.50	Scratch-Building	48.75	Signals	28.75
Scenery	62.50	Kit-Building	46.25	Weathering	21.25
Operating	57.50	Trackwork	46.25	Dioramas	18.75
Rolling Stock	52.50	Electronics	40.00	Photography	17.50
Engines	51.25	Layout Design	38.75	3D Printing	12.50
		Kit-Bashing	35.00	Animation	06.25

What does this mean and what's the plan?

It's safe to say that our members share a lot of interests. There are some interests that have wide acceptance and others that have narrower acceptance.

Our goal is to create small groups that can meet outside of our formal meetings and either share their knowledge or learn something new by meeting with other members that have a similar interest. This is the essence of the Mentor program we are working to develop.

This is not a sprint, but a marathon. We are currently working on two topics that will have clinics in the home of our first mentors. Since we haven't had any of our members volunteer to be mentors, some of our Committee heads and Division Leaders will break the ice and be our first mentors.

Details will be announced in late February.

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# COMPANY STORE

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## Expand your Bookshelf

By Susan Werner, MMR

This is a listing of new and older books available for order. If you see a book that you would like to buy, email me your order.

Double K Publishing:

**Batten Kill Country – Seasons of Change - \$75.00**

Garbely Publishing:

**The Canadian – \$50.00**

**From the Great Lakes to the Mississippi: Railroads of the Northern Midwest, 1972 – 1999 - \$50.00**

**Dining Aboard the Route of the Zephyrs: Dining Car Recipes of the Burlington Route, April 1, 1948 - \$60.00**

Silverlake Images:

**Midwest Powerhouse: Exploring the I&M Rail Link in Iowa - \$50.00**

**Exploring the Milwaukee Road in Iowa and Illinois with Randy J. Williams - \$50.00**

**Unique Views of Northeast Railroading, Vol. 2: NYC and the Metro Area - \$50.00**

**MCA Vol. #73: Alco Locomotives, Vol. 3: General Parts Catalog - \$35.00**

White River Productions:

**Gateway Western: A Regional in Transition - \$74.95**

**Structures for Model Railroads - \$34.95**

Coming Soon:

**Capitol Region Rails, Vol. 2: South and West of Albany, 1960 -1990s - due 4-15-26**

**Trackside in Eastern Canada with the Plants - due 6-15-26**

**The Lackawanna Electrics: New Jersey's Famous MU Cars - due 8-15-26**

The titles which will be dropped when current inventory is depleted are:

- **New York, Susquehanna & Western, Volume 1: Jersey City to Passaic Jct. - \$45/each**
- **New York, Susquehanna & Western, Volume 2: Elmwood Park to Butler - \$45/each**
- **New York, Susquehanna & Western, Volume 3: Smiths Mills to Hainesburg Jct. - \$50/each**
- **Oh, What a Magnificent New Dawn on the East Broad Top Railroad! - \$50/each**
- **One of Six: The Lehigh Valley Railroad as a Case Study for Conrail - \$30/each**
- **The Railroads of Port Jervis, Volume 1: The Erie Railroad and its Predecessors \$45/each**
- **The Railroads of Port Jervis, Volume 2: The Erie Lackawanna Years - \$45/each**
- **The Railroads of Port Jervis, Volume 3: The Conrail Era, 1976-1999 - \$50/each**
- **Twilight and Dawn on the East Broad Top Railroad, 1945-1965 - \$50/each**

## On Operation, Part 3: Layout Dimensions

by Ken Hanawalt, MMR

This is one of a series of monthly columns about layout and operating system design. It is a mix of facts, opinions, and observations gathered during model railroad operation on my layout and many others. This column discusses some possible objectives for height, width, and access space.

Adolph Frank, a frequent contributor to the *Flyer* in the 1970's, built his layout 24 inches high, so his grandchildren could easily see the trains. But of course, adult visitors had to sit on the floor to view or operate it. It was beautiful and included fascinating automation projects, but it was too low for the kind of operation that many of us do today. When Carl Volkwein and I started the Dagus Mines layout many years ago in his living and dining rooms, we built the layout using 36-inch high N-Track modules. It wasn't long before we realized that 36 inches was too low for us to operate without back pain, so with lots of effort, we raised the layout to 48 inches. When we started building the current Turtle Creek Layout (TCR) we set the lowest elevation to 55 inches so we could just see each other over the top of the backdrop while we switched cars on both sides of the layout. When we moved the layout to its current location we had a few operators who couldn't quite see or reach the upper level, so we brought the lower level back down to 50 inches.

So what is the correct height? Well, how tall are you and your operators? I may have mentioned this before, but you should visit operating sessions and see what works best for you before you start to build (and rebuild and rebuild the rebuilds etc.). OK, I like 50 inches because it is high enough that I can sit under it to work on the wiring; high enough so I can see the car reporting marks when I am operating; low enough so I can easily work on it. I prefer to operate while standing, rather than sitting, because I like to walk around and follow my train. However, the TCR layout is still a little high for some operators, so I have step stools in every aisle.



Consider cabinets on wheels for under-layout storage to facilitate maintenance.

It may be very tempting to build fixed shelves under the layout. We all have

tools, supplies, parts, and other valuables to store somewhere. My back advises you to built cabinets with wheels for storage under the layout, so you can roll them out in the aisle if you need to make a wiring change under the layout later. My current layout is almost 40 years old and it has been at least a week since I have had to twist around and stretch under the layout to perform some maintenance.

And how deep should the layout be? Well, how long are your arms? I like my layout to be no more than 24 inches deep because I can reach that far when the table top is at 50 inches. The main peninsula is composed of two 24 inch deep tables back to back with a backdrop board between them. This gives a 48 inch peninsula for a maximum track radius of about 22 Inches. If I wanted broader curves, I would use the same two rows of tables but leave some space between their backs. In a few places I put a bulge at the very end of a peninsula where operators can still get around each other.



Layout depth is an important consideration.

There is always a trade off. If you make the peninsulas wider for broader radius curves, then you

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# KEN HANAWALT (CONT'D)

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may not have as much room for aisle width as you would like. In a recent clinic, the presenter advocated 24 inch wide aisles. I have 36 inch wide aisles, and I would like them to be wider. For some reason, there is a time in every operating session where everyone ends up in the same aisle, and some of us get a little rounder as we get older. Operators need to get past each other while following their trains. I really think that 24 inch aisles are too small.

And it also really helps if your operators do not have to backtrack in the aisle while following their trains. A primary source of backtrack congestion is track that goes through the backdrop or perhaps worse, through a wall into another room. The worst design error on the first version of my TCR was a track that went around the end of a peninsula from the front aisle to the middle aisle, ran a few feet to service a siding, then went through the backdrop to the front again, ran a few more feet, and finally went through another time to continue in the middle aisle. So the operator had to walk around from the front side to the back to operate the train, then stop the train while walking back to the front side, operate a little more, then stop again while going back around the peninsula again to the middle aisle. With other operators in both aisles, this was just unworkable. Dr. Murphy, the guy who makes everything fail and fail in the most inconvenient way possible, will surely cause a derailment on the side of the peninsula away from the operator.



Fear not the duck-under!

And of course, if you are just starting out, you may think that you will not get older or less flexible in the future, so that you won't have to worry about having duck-unders. No, really, I think that building drop down (fold up, lift



Fitting ceiling boards may be a tedious task but this can conceal distractions where your “sky” should be, like joists, wiring, and pipes.

out, or other configuration) benchwork access to avoid having to crawl under the layout is not too difficult and is worth the up-front effort.

Look up! The ceiling seemed high enough in the basement when I moved. Except where it wasn't. The main beams and furnace vents are 6 feet, 6 inches high — enough for me and most of my friends, but to keep the ceiling from being oppressive, I fitted ceiling boards up between the curving vents — lots of measuring and cutting required. Also, one beam part way down the steps is only 5 feet, 6 inches — low enough

to knock me down if I forget to duck. So if you are looking for a house to hold a new layout, remember “The sky may be the limit.”

Oh yes. The floor in my basement is not level. Basements frequently have drains and may be built with sloping floors to ensure that water runs toward the drains. When I moved the TCR, I started on the high side of the basement without realizing this fact and used a laser to ensure that the table tops would be level. So my ideal 50 inch high table became 52+ inches on the low side of the basement. My advice again, when visiting layouts, ask the owner what mistakes were made. Try to make only new mistakes.

If you have questions, or if you would like to try operation on the TCR, you may send a message to me by email at \_\_\_\_\_.