



Thousand Lakes Region

National Model Railroad Association

# The FUSEE



Volume 61 Number 3

[www.thousandlakesregion.org](http://www.thousandlakesregion.org)

Spring 2015

## TLR Goes International! 2015 Convention in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada

It's that time of the year again to start thinking about the annual TLR Convention with this year it being held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. This year's convention will have something for everyone but the prototype railroading found around Thunder Bay will be front and center. Thunder Bay has had a long and rich history with the railroads from the founding of the Canadian transcontinental lines heading west to one of the largest grain ports in the world. Both Canadian Pacific and Canadian National have a major presence in Thunder Bay but industrial operations at Resolute Forrest Products are ongoing and, for those history buffs, traces of the Port Arthur and Duluth Railway can still be found in the area. The Port Arthur and Duluth Railway will in fact be featured at the Saturday Night Banquet with a speech from a local historian on the subject.



Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel & Suites



Great places to watch trains

Industry Tours will be front and center at the convention. Bombardier, maker of bi-level commuter cars and a perennial favorite, will be on hand as well as Resolute Forrest Products (formerly known as Abitibi and Bowater) although as of the publishing date the tour will be limited to the first 40 registrants due to limited tour guides (although we are still working on this). Rail to water service will also be featured with Keefer Terminals and Thunder Bay Terminals both on bus tours. Let's all keep our fingers crossed for good weather and a train in the port as well! One thing to remember is to bring closed toed shoes and if you have them, hard hats for the tours.

Railfanning will be big in Thunder Bay as well. So big in fact that an overview will be presented at the Friday Night Social so all the hot spots will be covered. A pedestrian overpass that spans a major yard, a road overpass that spans the yard throats of two yards belonging to two rail lines along with a very active diamond, and public roadways that abut the CP transcontinental mainline should make for some great photos. Don't forget to stop off at Duluth, MN to see the Lake Superior Transportation Museum along with the CN (ex-DMIR) ore

See Page Three

## View from the Cab

by TLR President Gerry Miller

### IT'S CONVENTION TIME AGAIN

This year we head north to Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Our hosts have a very busy weekend planned for us. There will be lots of clinics, tours, and layouts to visit. This year remember to get your registration in early to be eligible for the free night stay at **Northern Rail Train Car Inn in Two Harbors, Minnesota**. Also check to make sure that your passport or entry cards are up to date.

The TLR has entered the social media networking era. In January the TLR board had an informal meeting via Skype to tie up some loose ends on the upcoming convention. The meeting lasted about one hour and brought together people from Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Sioux Falls, Sioux City, Dubuque, and the Twin Cities. With one click 10 people attended a meeting with zero miles traveled. If this meeting would have been held in a neutral site, the total mileage traveled for these people would have been about 1,700 miles one way. Since this trial Skype meeting went so well we plan on having the fall board meeting using this format. Hopefully this will make it easier to attract new board members since they will be able to attend the fall meeting without leaving their home!

#### With that said:

The TLR is looking for a few volunteers for the board of directors. The Convention Director, Secretary, and President positions are up for election. Please see list of duties on page 4. Since we are a volunteer organization, we cannot operate without volunteers. Please give some serious thought to volunteering for a spot on the board. Our organization is only as strong as the people who run it.

Continued on Page 4

www.granitecitytrainshow.com

All Aboard!



**GRANITE CITY TRAIN SHOW**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2015**  
*Buy, sell, trade or just view hundreds of trains under one roof.*  
10am-3pm - National Guard Armory - 1710 Veteran's Drive - Saint Cloud, MN  
Admission \$6.00. Kids 10 and under FREE

**REGISTER TO WIN** WIN A LIONEL TRAIN SET -or- FSM HO STRUCTURE KIT **REGISTER TO WIN**

**FOOD & REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE** **COME SEE!** Model & Toy Trains (all scales), Accessories, Books, Videos, Railroad Collectibles and Memorabilia, Antique Toys, Hobby Items and More! **TEST TRACK ON SITE**

Operating Model and Toy Train Displays  
Childrens' Railway Play Area - Kids can help build a wooden train layout or run a model train.

Vendors and hobbyists welcome!  
Call 320-255-0033 or visit [www.granitecitytrainshow.com](http://www.granitecitytrainshow.com)  
email: [edwardolson@cloudnet.com](mailto:edwardolson@cloudnet.com)

Map & Directions: [www.granitecitytrainshow.com/GCTS\\_map.pdf](http://www.granitecitytrainshow.com/GCTS_map.pdf)

#### From the Keyboard

by Wes Garcia

You will find on page 14 and article on how you too can become an author for the Fusee or any other publication. I encourage you to take a look at it. Before you know it, your name will appear in the Fusee. Plus you get points for Author AP.

What to see your layout in print, I know there are some really outstanding layouts that need to be shared. Some of the information that would be of interest would be how you got started, how long you have been building your current layout, some key points about your layout, and some tips on how you have done certain things on your layout. If your article happens to be larger than you thought, we can cut it up and run it in several issues of the Fusee.



#### Deadline

February 1

June 1

August 1

November 1

#### Publishing Date

March 1

July 1

September 1

December 1

operations in Two Harbours MN and the Reserve Mining Operations in Silver Bay MN on your way up (if you're coming up from the Twin Cities of course).



Resolute Forrest Products

Accommodations will be at the Prince Arthur Hotel in Thunder Bay. An ex-railroad hotel right next to the tracks is also situated in the heart of the Entertainment District of Thunder Bay. Local shops, art galleries and great places to eat are all within an easy few block walking distance from the hotel. Not to mention direct access via a pedestrian overpass to the Marina Park on the shores of Lake Superior where more dining, art and walking trails await all with a great view of the Sleeping Giant in the bay.

Non-rail activities will be diverse as well and hopefully mother nature will play fair! (If she doesn't play fair indoor activities will be arranged). Thunder Oaks Cheese Farm features a world class cow to cheese operation set in the scenic Slate River Valley and is a

must see. Kakabeka Falls is always a favorite as well and transportation will be provided to both these sites. Around the hotel and convention center is both the

Marina and the Entertainment District. The Marina features an art gallery, long walking paths, and local food with a great view of the harbour and the Sleeping Giant. The Entertainment District is full of local shops, art studios, and small independent restaurants that feature everything from breakfast to lunch to dinner and varies from ethnic foods like Tai Kitchen to steakhouses like The Prospector. Maps and driving instructions for self guided tours will be in the registration package.

Please make sure to bring your models for the contest room, just make sure that they are well labelled as such for border crossings. As well as the traditional contest there will also be a place to show off models that are not contest ready (sometimes seeing a work in progress is the most exciting and inspirational part!) or for those of you not interested in filling out all those pesky contest forms.

Big news for all you early birds as well. For those getting your registration before

the early bird deadline a draw will be made for a one night stay at the Northern Rail Traincar Inn in Two Harbours, MN. Sleep in a real 50' plug door boxcar just hours away from Thunder Bay on the scenic north shore. More information on the Inn can be found at their website at <http://www.northernrail.net/>

Welcome all to the 2015 Convention in Thunder Bay, Ontario Canada. And a reminder to our friends south of the boarder, please have your government approved ID ready so that you can get home, I've been informed by my wife that we don't have room for a lot of houseguests! Plus, once you change all that bland green money into something with a little colour to it you'll get an automatic cash bonus, and your money will go farther than expected! (As of the publishing of this article the Lonie was at 0.79 cents to the American Dollar) A big reminder as well that Thunder Bay is on a DIFFERENT TIME ZONE then the rest of the region, 1 hr will be lost as soon as you cross the border from the US to Canada or get within about an hour from Thunder Bay coming from the West so plan accordingly. See you here!

Paul Gerry, 2015 TLR Convention



Great Home layouts to visit

If you are interested in running for one of these positions Please contact me.

All good things must come to an end. This is my last "View From The Cab" article. My term is up and I will be rotating off the board at the convention this May. I have had the privilege of serving on the TLR board for 6 years. I have made many new friends during this time. Serving as a member of the TLR board was not as scary as I thought it would be! I recommend it to everyone, please give it a try!!!  
See you all in Thunder Bay



## The Duties of the Three TLR Board Positions up for Election This May

As chief executive officer, the President is responsible to the membership and the Board of Directors for the effective administration of Region affairs, and exercises authority over all other officers and staff members.

### The duties and responsibilities of the President include the following items:

1. The President is responsible for the adherence of the region to NMRA policies.
2. Chairing all TLR business meetings and caucuses.
3. Calling mid-year meetings.

4. Appointing the first superintendent of a new division on the recommendation of the Vice-President.

5. Appointing committee chairpersons.

6. Appointing the Assistant Treasurer if requested.

7. The President shall appoint a nomination chairman for each business year. (Traditionally this is the immediate Past President who serves until there is a new past president).

8. The nomination chairman must have served a minimum of two years on the board.

### Secretary:

It is the Secretary's duty to inform the appropriate persons of the particulars of upcoming meetings.

1. Formulate an agenda for all Regional meetings.
2. Record minutes from all Regional meetings.
3. Prepare Minutes of the Regional meetings to be published in the Fusee.

### Convention Director:

1. The Convention Director shall be a representative of the President working with convention chairmen.
2. The Convention Director should determine feasible sites for future conventions and approach appropriate persons to bid for conventions.

3. The Convention Direc-

tor should be in contact with all active convention chairmen, to ensure that planned conventions are financially sound and all aspects are properly planned and executed.

4. The Convention Director should maintain a list of clinicians willing to present clinics at annual conventions

5. The Convention Director should report to the BOD on convention business including financial reports.

6. The Convention Director shall ensure fair rotation of conventions throughout the Region.

7.A written report must be provided to the Fusee once a year

**If anyone is interested in running for one of these positions or have any questions please contact me. My contact information is on the last page.**

**Gerry Miller**



Reviews are always interesting to read. If you have tried a new product, or new vender, tell us what you think of it

Tell us if a kit your working on went together without problems, or did you have to re-write the instructions to be able to finish the kit.

Provide some photos, and you have a great article for the Fusee!



# **EARLY BIRD PRIZE FOR REGISTRATION! ONE NIGHT STAY AT THE NORTHERN RAILS TRAINCAR INN!!**

A one night stay (weekday only) at the Northern Rails Traincar Inn is available to be won by any early bird registrant to the 2015 TLR Convention in Thunder Bay this May 22-24. Any registration postmarked before April 11th 2015 will be considered.

Stay in a converted 50' Plug Door Boxcar just outside beautiful Two Harbours, MN.



Just hours away from Thunder Bay on the scenic North Shore, savour the drive instead of rushing through it!

See <http://www.northernrail.net/> for more information on the Inn and the Porter Room available to be won!

**GET YOUR  
REGISTRATION  
IN  
BY  
APRIL 11, 2015  
YOU MIGHT  
BE THE  
WINNER!**



# Itinerary for the 2015 Convention

\*\*Please Note: Preliminary Itinerary only, may change by convention

## Thursday:

- 5:00 - 10:00 pm - Registration
- 
- 6:00 - 9:00 pm - Bull session/slide show
- 

## Friday:

- 8:00am - 5:00 pm - Registration
- 
- 9:00 am - Noon - Clinics
- 
- Noon - 1:00pm - Lunch
- 
- 1pm - 4pm - Non-rails Tour (self guided or Cheese Farm + Kakabeka Falls depending on weather)
- 
- 1pm - 2pm - Clinics
- 
- 2:30pm - 4pm - Resolute Forrest Products Tours
- 
- 2:30pm - 4pm - Layout Tours
- 
- 6pm - 9pm - Friday Night Social @ Thunder Bay Museum
- 
- 8pm - whenever - Board meeting @ Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel and Suites
- 

## Saturday:

- 8:00 am - Noon - Registration
- 
- 9 am - 4pm - Industry tours via bus (lunch on tour)
- 
- 1pm - 4pm - Non-rails Tour (self guided or Cheese Farm + Kekabeka Falls depending on weather)
- 
- 6pm - 10pm (or later) - Banquet + Awards
- 

## Sunday:

- 8:30 am - AGM Meeting
- 
- 9:00 am - Layout tours (staggard)



## FIRST CLASS TICKET - REGISTRATION FORM

TLR NORTHWOOD RAILS 2015  
Thunder Bay ON  
MAY 22-24, 2015

*Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel*  
17 North Cumberland Street  
Thunder Bay ON P7A 4K8  
Room Reservations- \$95.00 CDN  
1 800 267 2675

Ask for TLR Convention  
<http://www.princearthurwaterfront.com/>

Note: You must be a member of the National Model Railroad Association to attend. Membership will be checked!

Spouses or significant others need not be NMRA members to attend the Friday Social and Saturday night banquet meals and non-rail events.

If you have ever received an NMRA 'RailPass' membership to attend a previous TLR convention, you cannot use that again. You must sign up for full NMRA membership to attend again this year.

A 6-month 'RailPass' membership is available for new members for \$10. See below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA # (Required) \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse/Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA Membership Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

EVENTS AND PRICING:	Price	Total
<b>Early-bird Member Basic Registration (Postmarked before APRIL 11<sup>th</sup> 2015)</b> Includes all clinics, rail tours, Friday and Saturday lunches, Friday desert social, Saturday night banquet. Meals included when attending rail events.	<b>\$95</b>	
<b>Spouse or Guest Early-bird Registration (Postmarked before ) APRIL 11<sup>th</sup> 2015</b> Includes all clinics, rail tours, Friday and Saturday lunches, Friday desert social, Saturday night banquet Meals included when attending rail events.	<b>\$95</b>	
<b>Registrations postmarked APRIL 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 or later</b>	<b>\$110</b>	
<b>Friday evening social and Saturday Prime Rib Banquet only</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>6-month Rail Pass NMRA Membership for non-NMRA members</b>	<b>\$10</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	

LET US KNOW WHICH EVENTS YOU ARE PLANNING ON ATTENDING:									
	Member		Spouse			Member		Spouse	
	Y	N	Y	N		Y	N	Y	N
FRIDAY EVENTS					SATURDAY EVENTS				
Paper mill tour ( limited to first 40 registrants)					Saturday prototype tours and lunch				
## non rail tours					## non rail tours & lunch				
Friday PM desert reception					Saturday Banquet – 6:00 pm				

List any special dietary needs (we will do our best to accommodate):

##Non-rail tours subject to changes in weather

MAKE Canadian CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Northwood Rails	
Make US checks payable to: Thousand Lakes Region	
Mail completed US form and payment to:	Mail completed CDN form and payment to:
Jim Krekelberg Registrar	Frank Gerry
6305 W Westminster Drive	526 Dalhousie Dr.
Sioux Falls, SD 57106	Thunder Bay ON P7C 5P8
	<a href="mailto:northwoodrails@gmail.com">northwoodrails@gmail.com</a> 807 577 5616

## SPRING 2015 TWIN CITIES DIVISION REPORT

The May 2014 Business meeting of the Twin Cities Division concluded with a new look in leadership, with elected and appointed positions able to be filled. We have a new Superintendent, Chief Clerk, Publicity Director, Model Contest Director, Home Tour Coordinator, and two Audio/Visual crew. The Paymaster and Crossing Gate Editor agreed to another term. We have monthly clinic meetings, which are held the second Thursday from October through May at the Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul. This is also an active historical building and houses many displays of artifacts and railcars.

The monthly clinic features a presentation of interest to model railroaders, from slide shows to hands-on weathering, tree making, rock molding to building a module, specialized tools and much more. We also sell tickets for drawings of donations or gift certificates from local hobby shops, and have a model contest with a different theme each month. The current year's schedule of events are included on a TCD flyer that is distributed to the local hobby shops and some train shows, and can be found on our website.

Other activities include home model tours, where we visit three closely located homes about three or four times a year, and a

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quarterly published newsletter called the Crossing Gate. The website has just been upgraded for a fresh look, and with current information! It may need a tweak yet, so be patient.

We are happy to report the long awaited opening of the Green Line Light Rail connecting St. Paul and Minneapolis, and Amtrak rail service to the St. Paul Depot. This has brought a renewed public interest in trains and all things railroad in general. So the Twin Cities is now home to three commuter rail lines, and a fourth line has received approval to begin construction plans.

David Hohle, Superintendent  
Twin Cities Division



## SOUTHEASTERN DIVISION REPORT

The Southeastern Division has continued with our round robin meeting at member's homes. Last month's meeting we covered computer software to print building walls on paper using Even Designs software. It will make a good looking building depending on the quality of your printer.

The Divisions switching module has been displayed at two train shows this year. We have had many youngsters switching cars. Some interest in making a module like ours into a shelf layout that can be hinged up to a wall when not in use.

Our module has been invited to attend a train show in Davenport Iowa this March. This show is out of our Region but we have decided to attend any way to help pro-

### Subscribe to The Fusee

If you're an NMRA member residing within the boundaries of the Thousand Lakes Region, you're automatically a TLR member. So why not keep up with what's happening in the Region? Use this form to subscribe to The Fusee. If your subscription has lapsed, use this form to renew.

I'm enclosing payment for:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 for one year \_\_\_\_\_ New subscription  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 for two years \_\_\_\_\_ Subscription renewal  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Returning member

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Scale(s) modeled: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA #: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to Thousand Lakes Region**  
**Mail to: Jim Krekelberg, Treasurer**  
**6305 W. Westminster Dr. Sioux Falls, SD 57106**



mote the NMRA.

Tom Ford, Superintendent



## SOUTH RED RIVER VALLEY DIVISION

The Spud Valley Model Railroad Club was again the big attraction at the annual Christmas on the Prairie celebration at Bonanzaville USA Pioneer Village in West Fargo, ND, December 6, 2014. Spud had two different layouts running and was as big a hit as Santa Clause. With nice weather this year, large crowds came out to see Santa, listen to the carolers, see an actual reindeer, ride a horse drawn wagon (no snow for a sleigh) and watch model trains. The n-scale layout was set up in Santa's workshop near the entrance to Bonanzaville while the club's permanent HO layout was open in the Kathryn, ND depot. A steady crowd enjoyed both layouts. The highlight was when a news team from KVRR TV Fox News showed up to do a story on Christmas on the Prairie. They were so impressed with the model trains that they dedicated most of their story to Spud Valley. A Bonanzaville em-

ployee commented later that he talked to two different people who said they came out just to see the trains.

Spud Valley members are busy this winter doing maintenance on the layout ahead of Bonanzaville's May 1st season opening.

Spud Valley is now on Facebook. Check us out at Spud Valley Model Railroad Club. Like us and leave a comment. Also, let us know about any upcoming event that we can post for you.

The 2015 Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association convention will be held in Fargo, July 14 - 19. The South Red River Valley Division and Spud Valley will be helping out with some of the activities including clinics, swap meet, a visit to Bonanzaville and the Spud Valley Club, the Saturday night banquet and there is a good chance we will be collecting rare mileage on a train ride over a former NP branch line in southeastern North Dakota. Go to NPRHA.org for more information.



A mother and son watch trains on the n-scale layout in Santa's workshop at Bonanzaville's Christmas on the Prairie

Planning continues for "Live Steam in 2016" TLR convention to be held in Fargo May 26 - 29, 2016. We have several layouts lined up already with others pending and, of course, a visit

to Rollage, MN to see former Soo Line 0-6-0 Locomotive 353 fired up and running for us. The name of our headquarters hotel

has changed to Baymont Inn and Suites. Same building and owners just a different name. Look for our presentation at the Rails Thru The Northwoods, 2015 TLR Convention in Thunder Bay this May.

Thanks,  
Don Radeck  
"Live Steam in 2016" Convention Chairman



## No 1 Northern Division of the NMRA

### Activities Since the Last Convention

The No 1 Northern Division covers a large area but has a small membership. The executive has felt that there was not enough members in the division to have more than one Meet per year. After several years of poor attendance by members at the Meets we decided to make a change. We would attempt to change it from a member's only Meet to open to the public for the November 2014 Meet. The theme of the Meet was to have several different scales displayed to represent the hobby. We succeeded in having a G scale, N scale, Lionel plus our HO Free-mo modular group at the Meet. Besides the displays of various scales we set up our John Allen "Time Saver" module. The general public was invited to try out the Time Saver module. Also included were several displays of model construction and new features in the hobby such as using your smart phone as a throttle.

The weather was perfect for a Meet, the attendance was in the

area of 250 people. We didn't have any entry fee but left a jar on the table for donations. We had indicated at the entrance that a portion of the proceeds would be given to a charity. We were thrilled to find donations were far above our expectation which allowed us to make a substantial contribution to our charity of choice.

Now that our meet is over we are planning to attend the Thunder Bay convention in May of 2015. We have offered to help the Thunder Bay group. Our Free-mo Group will be coming down to Thunder Bay and set up at the conference for people to bring some of their locomotives to run on the layout.

Submitted:  
Dennis Rietze  
Superintendent



## Prairie Lakes Division Report

On October 13, 2014 we had our fall meet in St. James, Minnesota. The St. James Model Railroad Club was our host group for the event. They did an excellent job from start to finish with putting the meet together. Including booking the great venue- the armory to getting publicity for the meet.

The local TV station out of Mankato publicized the meet the week before, which led to approximately two hundred people coming through the doors. We had a good showing for the popular vote contest.

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We had three great clinic presenters that were lined up by the hosts. It was a great day of fun which ended with a tour of the St. James Model Railroad club and adjoining Depot Museum. The club has come a long way from the last time I was there for St. James Railroad Days a couple of years ago! The layout is far from done, but the work they have completed is phenomenal.

The PLD spring meet is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2015 in Algona, Iowa. It will be held in the Museum of Motorsports and Agricultural building at the Kossuth County Fairgrounds. The main feature is the large O-scale layout housed there. The layout, built in a 60' x 80' room, was just begun a few years ago, but it is on its way to becoming a fabulous layout.

The meet will feature vendors, operating layouts, popular vote contest, clinics and more! For more information, go to [www.prairielakesdivision.org](http://www.prairielakesdivision.org) for future updates, details and a full schedule of events.

PLD Superintendent  
Jay Davis



## Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel & Suites

[www.princearthurwaterfront.com](http://www.princearthurwaterfront.com)

1-800-267-2675  
Local  
1-807-345-5411

## Ever been to another Region's convention? Here's how we stack up against the NER.

Part 2

By Gerry Leone, MMR, HLM  
NMRA Vice President of Special Projects

It wouldn't be a convention without a contest, and the NER had an impressive one. The quality of the modeling was exceptional – almost as good as that seen at TLR conventions. (Ok, I'm joking -- the models were every bit as good as ours.) Just like the TLR, the folks who run the NER contest are concerned that the number of entries seems to be decreasing. At this particular convention, there were 26 models entered in the judged contest, and six entered in the Model Showcase (non-judged). There were 40 photos entered in the photography contest.

Something that really caught my eye was the interesting way the NER handles its modeling contest: there are two categories of entries, one for modelers who've never entered a contest before, and one for modelers who have. This way the novice modelers don't have to go up against the seasoned veterans. I thought that was a great way to give newer modelers the confidence to enter a contest.

And that was the convention. All in all, a fun time. In many ways it was eye-opening to me to see how closely the TLR's and NER's conventions follow the same general format.

As a postscript, I'll add that I ventured out to the East Coast several days early to visit my good

friend Chuck Diljak. In that time we were fortunate enough to be able to visit Tony Koester's NKP layout, along with Tony's friend Perry Squire's Shawmut layout. And NMRA Director Pete Magoun managed to schedule us a tour of Dick Elwell's Hoosac Valley Railroad, a layout that graced the cover of "Great Model Railroads 2008," and has now edged out George Sellios's FSM as my all-time favorite. Dick is an incredibly gracious host, and has an absolutely beautiful layout.



## The Achievement Program Volunteer Certificate

By  
John Hotvet, MMR

It has been several years since I have reviewed the requirements to receive the eleven Achievement Program (AP) certificates.

There have been changes in several certificate requirements over time. These are all listed on the NMRA website ([www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)), and I strongly encourage those with access to the internet to visit the website and read about the requirements firsthand. The Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) forms are also available on the website for downloading.

I'll start with the Association Volunteer. This is the most awarded certificate because there are so many opportunities to acquire the required time units toward the certificate.

At least sixty (60) time units (TU) from NMRA activities are re-

quired to qualify for the AP certificate. These TUs can be acquired from National, Regional, and Division level activities, and you need to note on the SOQ for which level you are earning the TUs for each activity.

I won't review the National level TUs since you are savvy enough to know about the AP if you are involved at the National level.

People who serve at the Regional level as a committee manager earn two TUs per month, and members of the committee earn one TU per month of service. For example the region convention chair would earn two TUs per month, committee members would earn one TU per month and someone staffing the registration desk at the convention would earn one TU for the event.

At the Division level the rate of accrual is one half as much (one TU for a manager and ½ TU for a committee member). Members of 100% NMRA clubs also earn credits at this rate.

Members who open their layouts for NMRA sponsored tours also earn TUs on a per event basis. Regional open houses earn three TUs per day of opening and Division tours also earn three TUs per day. Modular layouts at NMRA sponsored events would also earn points at the same rate. The accrual is maxed out at 12 TUs for a National event, 6 TUs for a Regional event, and three TUs at the Division level.

Editors of regional NMRA publications (Yes this is you Wes) earn TUs at the same rate as a regional committee manager, i.e. two TUs per month.

Contest judges can earn TUs on a per event basis – three at the Na-

tional level, two at the Regional level, and one at the Division level.

A Boy Scout Merit Badge Counselor can earn one TU per month of service and one TU per qualified scout.

Presenters of live clinics can also earn volunteer TUs. The first presentation earns points towards the Author certificate, but any additional presentations of the clinic can earn TUs towards the Volunteer certificate – two TUs at the Region and one TU at the Division.

In an ideal world you will maintain a record of your TUs earned on an SOQ form and get the necessary verification and signature from your supervisor as the TUs are earned. In the event many years have passed and people have passed away, you can still have the Region President, Secretary, or Historian go through their files and verify the period of service where you have earned TUs.

If after you have reviewed the information on the NMRA website you still have questions about the TUs you are accruing towards the volunteer certificate, you can contact me using the information in the Fusee masthead. In the event there is a discrepancy between the above information and the NMRA website, the website governs.



# Plan to attend

**We're working hard to bring you a great  
National Convention  
August 23 – 29, 2015**

**Hosted by the Columbia Gorge Model Railroad Club  
The event is to be held at the Doubletree Hotel at Lloyd Center, near downtown Portland.  
Bring the family to explore and enjoy  
the Great Pacific Northwest.**

**Check out our website <http://www.nmra2015portland.org/>  
and follow us on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/NMRA2015Portland>**



## **Meet Thomas Gasior: Our New Social Media Director**

Hello everyone, my name is Thomas Gasior. I am the new TLR social media director. I will be in charge of the TLR Facebook page and Twitter account. We are hoping to add Google+ and someday be able to have board meetings and even clinics over Skype.

I model in HO scale and have a 14 x 19 foot, double deck HO scale layout. I model a northern Minnesota ore line similar to Erie

and Reserve mining. I have DCC control and use Digitrax system. I am also a member of Minnesota FreeMo. I am looking forward to using social media to spread the word about the TLR across our vast region, and hopefully the rest of the nation and world of model railroading. They say pictures are worth a thousand words. That is our hope and goal with social media to use the easy ways to post photos of your work online. I am also looking forward to getting the TLR into podcasting so we can hear what some of the Modelers in our region have to say about the hobby, their layouts, models and techniques used to achieve great results.

I have a beautiful wife who sup-

ports my endeavors. We have three grown children and three grand children who love playing trains with papa Choo-Choo. I work for the Union Pacific railroad as an engineer out of South St. Paul, working the yard and routes east on the former CNW "400" line to Chicago. Other interests include traveling and bike riding.

I hope to meet all of you at a meet, convention, layout tour or clinic. Follow the region on Twitter @TLR\_NMRA

Please post your model pictures for all to share.



# Backdrop Mounting

By

Lester "Les" Breuer, MMR

Scenery is one of the major reasons visitors come to see our layouts. On the new Minneapolis & Northland Railroad Company (M&N) one important component of scenery is the backdrops. Backdrops help set the period scene for the trains. Backdrops are also wonderful to have on the railroad for photography.



Mounting the Backdrop

The backdrops on my railroad are cut from 4 x 8 sheets of hardboard purchased at the home improvement store. Before mounting, the hardboard backdrop is cut to the desired length and height. On the Minneapolis & Northland Railroad Company the hardboard is cut to a fifteen (15") inch height of which fourteen ( 14" ) inches shows above the bench work and one inch (1") sits in a L-channel below the edge of the bench work. Once cut to correct size, the hardboard backdrop is painted a sky blue color purchased at the local home improvement store. I used a roller to apply the sky blue water base paint.

To create a distant look at the horizon, you can add a light white haze at the horizon at the same time you do the blue without waiting for the blue to dry or you can add the horizon haze after the blue is dry. I have used a roller, brush, sponge, or an air brush to add the horizon haze. Once all paint applied is dry you are ready for mounting.

On my railroad I wanted a mounting system that would allow the backdrop to be removed without the use of tools to allow me to work on the railroad with the backdrop removed. To accomplish

easy removal, I thought it would be best if the backdrop was mounted in a slot that would hold it in place without fasteners such as screws. I finally decided an L-channel, each leg being 3/4" wide, would do. One leg of the L-channel mounts to the bench work and the other leg of the L-channel

and bench work side/edge creates the slot for holding the hardboard backdrop. After looking around the home improvement store, I decided the best L-channel for the mount was that used for holding suspended ceiling panels. The L-channel is used on the walls of the room to hold ceiling panels and the T-channel that holds the suspended ceiling panels. The suspended ceiling L-channel which comes in eight foot lengths is made of light gauge metal, easy to cut with tin snips, easy to drill, and the price is

inexpensive.

Once the L-channel is cut to the length of the backdrop section to be mounted, I drilled holes in one side of L-channel for mounting screws used to attach it to the bench work. I mounted one side of the L-channel to the underside of my L-girder bench work with sheetrock screws using the predrilled holes, leaving the other side of the L-channel away from the bench work the thickness of the hardboard, thereby, creating the slot for holding the hardboard ( see photo).

The above method works great for straight sections; however, what about curved areas? The same L-channel works just as well. Rather than one piece of L-channel running the entire backdrop section, the L-channel is cut into smaller straight sections allowing the hardboard backdrop section to bend around curves. ( see photo) Another method to bend the L-channel for curves is to cut our triangle notches or larger rectangle areas on the mounting side of the L-channel to allow it to



Another View of the Backdrop

bend when mounted.

With the L-channel mounted you place the hardboard backdrop in the slot on the edge of the layout



Backdrop is up and ready for painting

created. The work is done. You can go back to the real fun, running trains and enjoy seeing the trains with the backdrop you have created.

Maybe after a time you may want to enhance your mounted backdrop with other scenery features including clouds, hills, trees and buildings. With the mounting method I have presented here, the backdrop can easily be removed for adding these additional scenery features if you choose. Of course, the real benefit of this mounting method is easy removal of the backdrop at any time to work on railroad itself.

Remember, "Model Railroading, no matter what facet, is fun."



## Want to Write an Article for the Fusee

By  
Wes Garcia

We have some fine articles in the spring edition of the Fusee. I want to encourage you to consider writing or providing photographs for the Fusee. I am here to help you develop an idea into an article. Where to start.

1. Organize your

thoughts, make an outline of what should be in an article. Think about the steps needed to make you point clear to others reading your article.

2. Take your out-line and start adding details for each point in your out-line.

3. Get a friend, family member, or send it to me so I can proof-read it. Working together we can take care of any rough spots. It is now

The Sioux Valley Model Engineers Society and the Dakota Southeastern Division invites you to the 1<sup>st</sup> annual:

## Greater Sioux Falls Model Railroad Swap Meet and Vendor Show

April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Saturday, 10am – 5pm  
Sunday, 10am – 4pm

Located in the Expo Building at the W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, SIOUX FALLS, SD

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Come buy, sell or trade your model train items  
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Wayne Hanson 605-373-0222  
or  
Dakota Southeastern Division  
[www.dakotasoutheastern.org](http://www.dakotasoutheastern.org)  
Jim Krekelberg 605-595-2634

ready to be put in the Fusee. It sounds easy, because it is easy.

What about photographs? If you can take a basic picture with a camera, most likely it can be used. Don't use you cell phone camera. You may need extra light to get a good photo, but it can still be done. Give me a photo showing the main subject of you article and I can do some software editing to make that photo shine.

Talking about photographs, I would like to start a group of photographers, one or two from each division who would be willing to cover division activities. If your interested drop me a line, and lets talk.



# The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

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**Bring a friend  
To your next  
Club meeting!**

Advertising should be mailed to THE FUSEE editor as camera-ready artwork or electronic files (jpeg, tiff, gif, or EPS with outlined fonts). Enclose payment in U.S. funds, international money order, or by check drawn on U.S. banks. Contact the editor if questions.

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Commercial advertising from hobby shops, manufacturers, and businesses associated with model railroading interests are accepted. Pike ads are for individual layouts, model railroad clubs, or other non-commercial groups. All ads can be run in a single issue at 35% of the annual rate.

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Spring 2015  
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### **What's Inside?**

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- **Duties of Board Members**
- **Agenda and Registration**
- **Division Reports**
- **Ever been to Another Region's Convention? Part 2**
- **AP Volunteer Certificate**
- **Meet Tom Gasior**
- **Backdrop Mounting**
- **How to Write an Article**

Check your expiration date! If you have questions (or a change of address) email Jim Krekelberg at: [jkrekelberg@sio.midco.net](mailto:jkrekelberg@sio.midco.net)

### **Region Roundup—model railroad-related events in and around the TLR**

Sioux City Cosmopolitan Club Train Show, Sioux City, IA (Sergeant Bluffs Event Center) February 28-March 1, 2015. For more information contact John Koskovich at 712-898-6935

Granite City Train Show: Saturday, April 18, 2015. (More details inside)

Greater Sioux Falls Model Railroad Swap Meet and Vendor Show April 18-19, 2015. W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building. For more information go to [www.svmes.net](http://www.svmes.net)

North Woods Rails: TLR Convention May 22-24, 2015. (More details inside)