



Thousand Lakes Region

National Model Railroad Association

# The FUSEE



Volume 57 Number 2

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

Winter 2010-2011

## Dubuque readies to host TLR 2011 convention

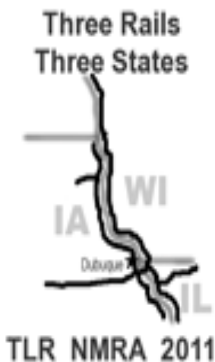
by Gerry Miller  
TLR President

The Southeastern Division looks forward to hosting "Three Rails-Three States," our regional convention on May 20, 21, and 22. Headquarters will be the Holiday Inn, 450 Main St. in downtown Dubuque. Here's the timetable of events:

**Thursday:** Early arrivals can register between 8-10 p.m. You can drop off your entries in the contest room. Feel free to railfan today and/or Friday morning (see info on page three).

**Friday:** Registration opens at 9:00 a.m. The contest room will also be open. Breakfast and lunch are on your own. Three prototype tours highlight our busy and informative afternoon schedule:

IEI Barge transloads coal, grain, river sand and rock. CN delivers coal onto barges for travel to four power plants on the Mississippi. Grain arrives by truck before it goes out by barge. Cement and construction firms use sand and aggregate dredged from the river for cement.



Rentex Chemical manufactures anhydrous ammonia. The East Dubuque plant produces a wide variety of chemicals.

Eagle Window and Door completes our trio of stops Friday afternoon. After supper on your own, join us for the dessert reception starting 6:30 pm at the Holiday Inn. We'll hear an expert describe in detail the history of railroading in Dubuque, as well as determine winners for a number of door prizes.

**Saturday:** The morning includes a series of clinic choices presented by our talented members. You can select from Les Breuer on modeling 50 ton offset side hoppers, Mike Engler's outstanding dioramas, Jay Manning on

casting plastic molds, Gerry Miller on painting and decaling Iowa Coop covered hoppers, and Alan Saatkamp on how to overcome fear of building bridges and the achievement program.

There's an optional river boat cruise with a lunch buffet aboard the paddle wheeler "Spirit of Dubuque." It departs at 11:30 a.m. The afternoon offers time to railfan too. Cocktails begin at 5:45 p.m., followed by buffet dinner. Contest awards will be presented this evening. The popular Chinese auction concludes our program.

**Sunday:** The Thousand Lakes Region general membership meeting convenes promptly at 9:00 a.m. Following breakfast on your own. Home layout tours around the Dubuque area follow during the afternoon.

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## View from the Cab

by TLR President Gerry Miller

### What's in a name?

The name for our convention this May is "Three Rails Three States." This is making a few people say, "HUH?"

I will give you a brief explanation! Three rails: three railroads serve the Dubuque area. They are the BNSF, Iowa Chicago & Eastern, and Canadian National. Three States: Dubuque is located where the states of Wisconsin and Illinois meet Iowa. The Dubuque area has been given the name "The Tri States." Although Illinois is not in the TLR, chances are many of us will spend time in the East Dubuque, Illinois area railfanning. Plus on Friday two of our tours take place in Illinois.

I hope this helps explain the name and theme for our 2011 convention. Please come to Dubuque and enjoy the Tri States hospitality.

The contest room this year will be open for a longer time to permit viewing of models and photos. Last year's convention in Winnipeg had 35 model entrants. As convention chairman, I'd like to challenge the membership this

year to have at least 40 models for judging. Bring your newest work to show off at the convention in Dubuque!

The geographic size of the TLR is showing up in our convention locations. Last May we were in Winnipeg, the northern part of the region. 2011 takes us to Dubuque, Iowa, the southeast part of the region. In 2012, we'll go west to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. At the fall board meeting in Fargo, a group from the Twin Cities received the go ahead to host convention in 2013. This is great! A few years ago it was a challenge to find a host for even the following year's convention, much less two to three years out.

I'd like to welcome Alan Saatkamp as our new editor. Alan is also the editor of Prairie Ponderings newsletter for his Wisconsin Dakota Railroad. I'm looking forward to working with Alan in his new capacity.

The holiday season is almost here. How about getting a rail pass for that youngster that loves trains or model railroading? This inexpensive gift could lead to a future MMR. Everyone have a safe and happy holiday season.



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## FRom the Editor (FRED—get it?)

by Editor Alan Saatkamp

When you read this Fusee and wonder why it looks different it's probably due to a new editor. Compiling this publication proved quite a challenge. Thank goodness for a wealth of solid material from talented contributors (you can find them listed on page 7.) Thanks also to Gerry Leone for all his pointers and patience. Gerry can bet I'll be using the lifeline regularly next year.

One new feature this issue comes as a direct result of a suggestion offered during the TLR general membership meeting last May in Winnipeg. It's called "Back Trackin." This first-time feature takes a look at events and activities in the TLR dating back 30, 20, and 10 years ago. Back Trackin' is featured on page 12. The familiar listing of train shows and events moved to page 9 for this issue.

Feel free to let me know what you think of BT and whether it's worthwhile. If so, I'll include more TLR history in future issues. Feel free to drop me a line at [saatkamp@iw.net](mailto:saatkamp@iw.net)—and certainly offer suggestions for future issues. This is your publication, and I promise my best effort each and every issue.



(continued from page 1)

### FOR THE NON-RAILS

Friday: Cable Car Square/Bluff Street is three blocks from the Holiday Inn. This charming section of Dubuque features the Fenelon Place Elevator, quaint shops, boutiques, and restaurants. A Dubuque Arboretum and Botanical Gardens tour is pending at press time.

Saturday: There will be a craft fair two blocks away in Washington Park. The Dubuque Old Home Enthusiasts will be holding their tour of Victorian homes the weekend of our convention. Tickets can be purchased on Saturday at Washington Park.

One of the biggest attractions in Dubuque is the Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium. Housed in the old CB&Q freight house and 1910 restored depot. The Museum and Aquarium feature dynamic aquariums, historical exhibits, a wetlands area, and boatyard.

Las Vegas style gambling is available at the Diamond Jo Casino and the Mystique Casino.

Dubuque Fest provides yet another option for you to enjoy the weekend of our convention. Activities for Dubuque Fest are held under the town clock and in Washington Park at 6th and Bluff Streets, just a short walk from the Holiday Inn.

The Fenelon Place Elevator at 4th and Bluff Streets is the shortest and steepest scenic railway, elevating passengers 189 feet to Fenelon Place, and a panorama of three states. Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois can all be seen from this vantage point.

If you like to railfan, Dubuque is the place to visit. Three class 1 railroads run through the area, including the ICE/DME (purchased by CPR), and CN. It's not unusual to see several SD40's pulling a train. The

and CN. It's not unusual to see IC SD70's, EJE SD38's and a CN cowl unit on the same train.

The BNSF double track is across the river. Up to 35 trains a day can be seen from both sides of the river — providing great photo opportunities. Railfan maps will be provided.

In order to keep the cost down, we offer a base price of \$60. This includes the clinics, Friday social, ride to the top of the elevator and back, plus the banquet. There will be an ala carte menu for all other activities. This way you can select from the variety of offerings to fit your budget.

This is the first time the TLR convention will be held in eastern Iowa. The Southeastern Division looks forward to hosting and providing you the hospitality of the Tri State area.

Reservations at the Holiday Inn can be made NOW! The room rate is \$109 per night plus tax. Their phone is 563 556 2000. A hard copy registration form will also be included in the spring issue of The Fusee.



Fenelon Place Elevator offers spectacular views of three states

Want to see the action in store for us in Dubuque this May? Watch our TLR convention video on YouTube! Visit the TLR website at: [www.thousandlakesregion.org](http://www.thousandlakesregion.org) and click on the link.

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## DAKOTA SOUTHEASTERN AND PRAIRIE LAKES DIVISIONS PROMOTE MODEL RAILROADING WITH FALL EVENTS

Annual open house layout tour, fall meet, clinics, Trains at Christmas, and SiouxRail10 provide fun and plenty of activities for area enthusiasts

Story and photo by Alan Saatkamp

Dakota Southeastern and Prairie Lakes members pooled their talents during the past several months, sponsoring a variety of model railroad activities. The busy schedule allowed hundreds of fans to experience and enjoy model train programs in Iowa and South Dakota.

A late summer weekend of HO scale model railroad operating sessions, SiouxRail10, kicked off a busy timetable of DSED sponsored activities. The third time event brought 20 model railroad operators from five states to Everly, Iowa, as well as Garretson and Harrisburg South Dakota for four operating sessions.

Just two weeks later, DSED hosted its third annual Saturday at the Sioux Falls Ronning Library. Modeling clinics and displays highlighted the four hour event which attracted a large audience of all ages. Youngsters enjoyed hands-on experience building mountains, "driving the train" on an industrial switching layout, and enjoying the sight and consists on a beautifully landscaped and scenery-filled N gauge layout.

Early October found the Prairie Lakes Division hosting their annual fall meet, this year in Sibley, Iowa. Over 80 attendees enjoyed a Saturday morning filled with model judging contest, clinics, layout displays, and bargains among numerous vendor tables.

The following weekend, DSED hosted its fifth annual open house layout tour. Sparked by excellent advance publicity in the local newspaper, record

attendance of nearly 100 fans had their boarding passes punched during self-directed driving tours to six layouts, including Z, N, HO, and S scales. Train fans from Iowa, Min-

nesota, as well as South Dakota made this the most successful event of its kind for the DSED during the past five years of open house layout tours.

November continued the busy fall schedule. DSED members were active either as portable layout hosts or staffing the DSED club modular layout during Trains at Christmas. The premier holiday event at the



DSED's third annual visit to the Ronning Library again drew 200 guests this year. Here railfans enjoy the outstanding landscape on Gary Johnson's portable layout.

in Sioux Falls drew hundreds of model train fans from throughout the region.

DSED and PLD members again demonstrated their enthusiasm and commitment to helping area model train fans experience a variety of entertaining fall events as we prepare to enter the long Midwestern winter season.



**SIoux VALLEY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY**  
PRESENTS  
**TRAINS AT CHRISTMAS 2011**  
SIoux FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA  
WH LYON FAIRGROUNDS  
EXPO BUILDING  
Saturday November 19 - 10am - 5pm  
Sunday November 20 - 11am - 4pm

Come see this premier model railroad event in South Dakota. We will have traveling layouts from the regional area. We will also have vendors on hand selling model and toy trains, as well as railroad videos, clothing and memorabilia.

Contact Wayne at 605-373-0222 or [svmes@sio.midco.net](mailto:svmes@sio.midco.net)  
<http://www.svmes.net>

# Minutes of the Thousand Lakes Region Board of Directors Mid-year Meeting September 25, 2010

The following are the minutes for the TLR board meeting held in Fargo Saturday 25 2010. In attendance at the meeting were Dennis Rietze, Paul Ullrich, Paul Gerry, Frank Gerry, Greg Smith, Mike Engler, John Hotvet, Alan Saatkamp, Gerry Miller, Gerry Leone, Les Breuer, Jim Moore and Dave Hamilton. The meeting was brought to order on time at 11:05am by President Gerry Miller. Gerry thanked all those in attendance for their work over the last few months and especially to Dennis Rietze and Paul Ullrich from the No.1 Northern Division for putting on a great convention in Winnipeg. The agenda was slightly rearranged to bring the presentation of the plaques won at the Winnipeg convention and the proposal for the 2013 convention to the forefront to allow Contest Director Mike Engler and Greg Smith of the Twin Cities Division to drive back to Minneapolis the same day.

### New Business

Contest Director Mike Engler presented the plaques and awards to the winners of the 2010 Winnipeg Convention Contest who were present and to those who would be seeing the absentee winners soon. Mike Engler and Greg Smith made a presentation in favour of having the 2013 TLR convention in the Twin Cities hosted in part by the Minneapolis Society of Model Engineers (MSME). Highlights of the convention would include rail attractions like Minneapolis Light rail and the Northstar commuter line and off-rail attractions like Mall of America. The proposed convention hotel would be the Hilton Minneapolis and Embassy Suites. As well, the Scale Model Builders Convention would be held at the same time and would focus purely on model building and would include a trade show. Questions were raised regarding how to share expenses between the conventions if they were to be put on jointly and what insurance would be needed to keep the convention NMRA compliant. As well, the convention date could be moved from its traditional time in May to an earlier time in late April to allow the two conventions to occur. A motion was made by Paul Ullrich and seconded by Paul Gerry to accept the bid with the caveat that the above issues be resolved. The vote was unanimous in favour of the bid for the 2013 Convention to be held in Minneapolis.

### Old Business

Secretary Paul Gerry presented the minutes from the last meeting for the board's approval. Gerry Leone motioned for the board to accept the minutes as posted in the Fusee and was seconded by Dave Hamilton. The vote was unanimous for the motion. Treasurer Dave Hamilton submitted the treasures' report of the regions finances to the board. He informed the board that the region still has 8 Certificates of Deposit through Wells Fargo. Dave Hamilton then made a proposal that the role-over CDs be placed into a Business Savings Account to help them earn a little more interest with little risk to losses. A motion to accept the Treasure's report and to look into the Business Savings account was made by Mike Engler and seconded by Gerry Leone. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

The Fusee report was contributed to by both the outgoing editor Gerry Leone and the incoming editor Alan Saatkamp. Gerry Leone stated that he thoroughly enjoyed working as editor for the Fusee during his tenure and wished to thank all past contributors for their submissions and for making the Fusee what it is today. Advertising space was again being filled by long time advertisers and as usual the number of members subscribing to the Fusee has stayed relatively unchanged over the years. Alan Saatkamp thanked the board for the new and updated editorial software to edit the Fusee with and said that the learning curve for the new software is finally levelling out. The Public relations/National reports were presented by Gerry Leone. Many comments were received stating how well the Winnipeg convention went and that it was one of the largest and most successful conventions in recent history. The Winnipeg promotional video was viewed over 400 times and a Du- buque video is in the works by President Gerry Miller for the upcoming spring convention. The NMRA's Diamond Club has reached \$75000 raised in the effort to digitise the library to make it more accessible for members and the website will be beta tested in October. Cleveland has won the bid for the 2014 National Convention! The 2010 National in Milwaukee was a great success although the train show was not. This was most likely due to low advertising for the event as well as having multiple events going on at the same time as the train show. The Achievement Program update was presented by John Hotvet MMR. The last 6 months have been busy with 6 AP certificates awarded and 1 Golden Spike. The inquiries regarding the AP program continue to come in and more AP certificates are expected to be awarded in the near future. The limiting factor with people entering into the AP program still seems to be the misconception that the paperwork is hard to fill out and not with the skills of the individual members.

Paul Ullrich presented an E-mail from Terry Davis who could not attend the meeting regarding the Minnesota River Valley. The MRVD usually takes the summer off so little has changed over the past months although big plans are in the works. An Oct 9 meeting will focus on getting people more involved in the division as officers as well as encouraging members to fill out AP forms to get them started on their MMR certificate requirements. Applications for AP certificates for various members are expected to be filed in the upcoming months. September also marked the Divisions first digital newsletter edition that was emailed to approximately 15 members. A snail mail version was also sent out. The annual meeting in Olivia Minn. is also in track for April. Jim Moore presented his report from the Red River Valley Division. Not much has changed in the Red River Valley with a small but loyal following within the division. Jim expressed his concern that it was very hard to encourage people to get involved past the division level in the area.

Alan Saatkamp presented the report for the Dakota Southeastern Division. A recent Sioux-Rail ops weekend was a success. An open house with layout tours is scheduled for October and this year it has local newspaper coverage BEFORE the event takes place, including a photo op, and not just the usual post event

story. This change in coverage is hopefully going to get more people out to see the layouts and get interested in the hobby. In November an expo is planned "Trains for Christmas" to promote the hobby and raise funds for local activities.

Dave Hamilton presented his report for the Twin Cities Division. The big things on the schedule include layout tours in the fall (Oct. 30) and the Division's newsletter, the Crossing Gate, being sent out in an electronic format. Dave also reports up to 40 people coming out for each Division meeting.

Gerry Miller presented his report for the South eastern Division. The Division is now up and running and looking forward to hosting the convention in Dubuque this spring. Elections have been held among the six current members and by-laws have been voted on and accepted. It is hoped that the convention will inspire more members to join.

Dennis Reitze presented his report for the Number 1 Northern Division. It should be noted that Ron Einarson has stepped down as Superintendent of the Number 1 Northern after 10 years of service! Although the "Steam on the Prairies" convention was a huge success registration wise it did come up short financially for the division. Bad weather causing sudden venue changes and a smaller than expected turnout from Manitoba residents contributed to the shortfall. In an effort not to "double up" the modeling organizations in Winnipeg, the Division is now responsible for the Monthly Model Display formerly put on by the WMRC in an effort encourage membership in both the WMRC and TLR as well as advertising in the WMRC's monthly newsletter.

A motion to accept all division reports was made by Gerry Leone and seconded by David Hamilton. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

### New Business

Paul Ullrich and Dennis Reitze made a combined presentation of the 2010 Convention Report. Overall attendance was 146 with 1/3 coming from the USA, 1/3 coming from Winnipeg and 1/3 from the rest of Canada. A big thank you goes out to the US members who had to obtain a passport to attend the convention. The Prairie Dog Central was the highlight, or wetlight, of the trip but even the rain could not stop the action or the high level of attendance to the special events and the layout tours the following day. Although well attended the financial report shows a loss on the records if the seed money donated by the TLR is returned. Under the preconvention agreement any financial losses or gains will be taken on by the Region and not the Division hosting the convention. A motion to accept the financial report, to return any profits to the TLR and to have any specific requests for funding processed through the Board of the TLR instead of a separate Canadian bank account was put forth by Gerry Leone and seconded by Greg Smith. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion. A proposal was also made to remove the Chinese auction expense line from the financial report to better reflect the actual expense/credits.

Members qualified for The Bob Dew Award (5 years of Board service or 1 year as the Fusee Editor) was presented and a secret ballot was

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taken. President Gerry Miller will announce the next recipient at the spring convention in Dubuque.

Frank Gerry presented a proposal to reactivate the Kashibowie Division (Northwest Ontario, Canada). A mass emailing will be going out to all NMRA members in the Division to assess interest and the Number 1 Northern's By-laws will be the new basis for the Kashibowie by-laws. There will also be a biannual train show the weekend of Oct 23-24 2010 in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada where a booth promoting the NMRA and TLR will be set up. A motion to continue discussion regarding the reactivation of the Kashibowie Division at the Spring Board Meeting was made by Paul Gerry and seconded by Dave Hamilton. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

Paul Gerry presented a proposal to reactivate the "Old Goat Award" under new qualifications since there is currently no award for long term interest by general membership at this time. Years subscribing to the Fusee or Number of Conventions attended were both submitted as ways to qualify a person for the award. A motion to table the discussion until the next general meeting was made by Mike Engler and seconded by Paul Ullrich. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

President Gerry Miller proposed a rewording of the Regions handbook regarding the duties of the Contest Director to aid in creating a quicker turn-around time for plaques and awards after a convention. Handbook changes (not by-law changes) are to be made governing how quickly a contest director must have the contest results published, plaques awarded and AP merit results forwarded to the AP director. As well it was proposed that the budget for the plaques/awards come out of the TLR budget and not the conventions and the method of finding a source for the plaques/awards be clarified. A motion to amend the handbook to reflect the changes discussed at the meeting regarding the Contest Director's duties was made by Mike Engler and seconded by Gerry Leone. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

Mike Engler then presented the Contest Directors report minus the previous award and Winnipeg contest results presented at the beginning of the meeting. A proposal for a new style of plaques was made that would be lithographed instead of engraved was made and examples of both styles of plaques were displayed. A proposal to reinstitute the Honourable Mention Certificates was also made. Next a discussion regarding who gets what and who judges the contest ensued. A change in who gets a plaque was proposed with plaques given out to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finished in ALL categories (including crafts) and a Best-in-Show plaque being the most accepted. Changes in judging are also to be made with 1 judge for each model category and hopefully a professional photographer to judge the picture contest. It is hoped that the Model Contest Room will be open during the entire convention to allow more people to view the models in Dubuque. A motion to have plaques for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finished in ALL categories (including crafts) and a Best-in-Show plaque was made by Mike Engler and seconded by Paul Ullrich. The vote was 6 for and 1 against with the motion passing. The following discussions

started after the vote and were left open at this time: if a budget should be set for how much a contest director can spend on plaques, if the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place plaques should differ in size from the 1<sup>st</sup> place plaques, what constitutes a "contest" (i.e. is only one entry needed to make a category) and should there be a People's Choice and Youth award.

Dave Hamilton presented an analysis of the Regions Cash Flow which showed it to be in equilibrium and that the savings are safe. As in the Treasures report the idea of placing some of the Wells Fargo CDs into a Business Savings Account to earn more interest was discussed. A discussion was started on how to use the wealth of the region to benefit all the members. Promotion of TLR/NMRA events along with a free Fusee mass mailed to all members once a year and a partially TLR funded convention were all brought to the table. A motion to have the Divisions submit proposals in a business plan format (i.e. not as a scrap piece of paper) was made by John Hotvet and seconded by Paul Gerry. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

The travel grant for conventions was discussed and found to be ineffective and promoting the conventions and was not serving its intended purpose. A motion to repeal the travel grant was made by Paul Ullrich and seconded by Gerry Leone. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

John Hotvet started a discussion on how to better promote the AP program in the Region. Misconceptions on how difficult the paperwork is and a general apathy towards filling out said paperwork were both cited as the main cause for the TLR being one of the lowest for annual AP certificate earners in the NMRA. A motion for a "Wanted: Dead or Alive, \$50 Reward for the FIRST AP Certificate Earned" program was made by Paul Ullrich and seconded by Dave Hamilton. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

Gerry Miller then presented the 2011 Convention report. The convention will be called "3 Rails in 3 States" and will feature bus tours of a chemical plant, a window and door plant and a barge tranship facility on the Friday starting in the morning. The bus tour will start at this time as the businesses in question will be closed on Saturday and Sunday. As well for those interested in off-rail fun, the Dubuque Fest! is on and will feature a wide array of events, markets and shows. Lunch aboard a paddle wheeler is also on the table. A motion to spend \$500 on the Chinese auction was made by Paul Ullrich and seconded by Paul Gerry. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.

Gerry Miller then presented the 2012 convention report prepared by Jay Manning who was unable to attend. The Sioux Falls "Rock on the Rails" convention planning is on schedule.

There will be a guest speaker from Model Railroader along with a tour of the Midwest Railcar Repair Facility have been confirmed. A work in progress is an excursion on the D and I railroad to the quarry in Dell Rapids. A core convention committee is currently being established. Archiving the Fusee into a digital format as tabled until the next Board Meeting.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 3:45pm by Paul Ullrich and seconded by Paul Gerry. The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion.



Convention grant gone:  
board encourages divisions  
to apply for funding to  
locally promote hobby

by Gerry Leone, MMR  
TLR Public Relations Director

Lengthy discussion and a vote by the Thousand Lakes Region Board at its fall meeting, held in Fargo, ND, on September 25, provides divisions a new means to support local initiatives. The discussion began with an agenda item relating to the two-year-old Convention Attendance Grant. The Grant was originally designed to be a \$200 "gift" to each of the TLR's Divisions to be used to offset the expenses for one of the Division's members to attend the Region's annual convention.

The Grant's original goals were two-fold. First, it was hoped that the Grant recipient would return to his/her Division, report on the convention activities, and encourage more members to attend following year. Second, the Board saw the Grant as a potential fundraiser for the Divisions. The Division could hold an auction or raffle for the Grant, and ticket sales would put some money into the Division's coffers.

Upon discussion, the Board discovered that neither of the goals were being met. Few attendees reported convention activities back to their Divisions, and none of the Divisions was using the Grant as a fundraiser. Instead, Divisions were just handing out the grant with little fanfare, or having a drawing for those planning to attend the convention anyway.

As a result, by unanimous vote of the six attending Directors, the TLR Board agreed to discontinue the Convention Attendance Grant. However, further discussion by the Board centered on making sure Divisions had the funding they needed to promote themselves and the NMRA. Money given to divisions is not meant to cover normal operating expenses

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(continued from page 6)

such as meeting room rent or replacing broken equipment. But if a Division wants to promote itself and the NMRA with flyers, posters, or handouts, or even has more aggressive plans (for example, a series of traveling clinics, or renting space at swap meets), the Division should put its plans in writing and include an estimated cost. Send your plan to a Board member—electronically or on paper, using the addresses found on page 11 of THE FUSEE.

The board will consider each plan individually. If approved, the Division will receive funding if the project is determined to be worthwhile. ✎

My heartfelt thanks to this issue's Fusee contributors, including: Eric Carlson, Terry Davis, Paul Gerry, John Hotvet, Gerry Leone, Gerry Miller, and Paul Ullrich. It wouldn't have happened without your input.

## Winnipeg to Vancouver and back, via Via

Story and photos by Dennis Rietze, No. 1 Northern Division Superintendent

The year 2010 came far too fast in our lives. It just seemed yesterday that we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and here now, we were getting ready to celebrate our fortieth. We had talked about doing something special for our anniversary and during one of our discussions we came up with the idea of a train trip.

It had been a long time since either of us had travelled by train. My father had worked for the CPR for some 38 years and in the days when free passes were given to the employees. I had travelled about 8 times to Vancouver before I turned 16 and then lost the opportunity to use the free pass. LuElla had travelled to BC with her mother to visit relatives back during her early years. We started to

“train trip,” with our stay in Vancouver only to connect for return home. June 26<sup>th</sup> came very fast and before we knew it we were boarding our train to experience Canada's Classic



Train Journey, the “Canadian” to Vancouver BC and back to Winnipeg MB. Our Vancouver stop would be no longer than required to connect with the next train scheduled for return to Winnipeg. We looked forward to the sights along the route, as well as the experience of sleeping in a berth and enjoying the great meals we had heard so much about.

The route would be similar to the highway, known as the Yellowhead Route, through Melville SK, up through Saskatoon SK then toward Edmonton AB and on to Jasper AB. We would continue south through the Rocky Mountains on to Hope BC and through the BC lower mainland to Vancouver. After clearing Winnipeg we got up to speed quickly but found that our trip the next few days would be controlled by traffic on the rails.

Due to the heavy rains in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta there had been some serious rail line wash outs. CP was now rerouting their traffic over CN's northern line which meant delays. We wound up on a network of passing sidings located at designated points on the route, not double track main. Many times we would slow down to allow the freight trains to pass us in the siding or pass them while waiting in the siding. Several times these waits took up to half an hour. This proved a problem for

## 33rd Annual Spud Valley Hobby Show

Sunday,  
October 16, 2011  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Admission: \$5  
(under 12 free with paid adult)

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Fargo, ND

For information, call Don, 701-234-9351

- ◆ 17th annual “Plastics on the Prairie” model contest
- ◆ Large and small operating model railroads
- ◆ Vendors selling farm toys, plastic models, model railroad items, die cast vehicles, old toys, railroad collectibles and more
- ◆ Door prizes—no need to be present to win
- ◆ Valley RC Flyers display their planes

check out Via Rail's website, searching for costs and schedules for their trains.

Thanks to a tip from our son, we were able to obtain 60% discounts on our summer trip. We purchased the “Sleeper Touring” class package which included all meals. The trip would be purely a

(continued from page 7)

Via Rail, as by the time we reached Jasper we were three and one half hours behind schedule. Our porter told us that they build time into the schedule to allow for normal delays in traffic but this time that was not enough. Whenever our engineer received the green signal he did not take long to have us cruising along at top speed trying to make up for lost time.

Getting back on track, no pun intended, not long after we started to roll out of Winnipeg we were called for lunch. You are assigned a "call" for lunch or dinner usually "1<sup>st</sup> call" or "2<sup>nd</sup> call" separated by about an hour and a half. This enables them to serve meals in an orderly fashion. Service was excellent with very friendly and capable staff. When you were seated at the table you were given a menu with at least four or five different items to choose from. One was amazed at how fast they served the meals. When you are seated at the table all chairs are filled and you are seated with people you may not know. This however, proved to be a highlight as throughout the trip we had the privilege to meet some wonderful people and to our surprise most of them were foreigners. Our first couple, June and Glen, were from Rochester NY and, believe it or not he loved model trains too; we had some good conversation about HO gauge model trains.

At dinner that night we had our meal with a couple from Quebec. The next day, being Sunday, we had



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brunch with a couple from Sacramento California, a retired couple who had been involved in the food services business. Monday we were greeted by a cloudy day but breakfast with Marion and Mick from Australia made the day brighter. Again to my surprise, Mick was a model railroader and again an HO modeler. We chatted about the usual things model railroaders talk about—trains! In addition to this couple we met people from South Africa, another couple from Australia and two more from the USA during our various meals.

When we arrived in Edmonton, the train added a panorama car to the


consist which would allow passengers to have greater view of the Rockies. With high back seats and air conditioning it was a very comfortable place to be watching the scenery pass by. We had four dome observation cars including the Park car. On the return trip the panorama car would be removed from the consist at Edmonton. At Jasper, Via Rail removed the lead locomotive number 6405 to be replaced with number 6452 which was in the new Via paint scheme.

When we stopped in Jasper we were able to detrain and take pictures. Via got us rolling again with a 60 minute stop, not the usual 90 minutes. It



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Despite all the extra traffic on the rails during the trip west, the crew was able to get us to Vancouver station within about 30 minutes of the scheduled arrival time. The trip could have been a bad experience had the pending strike of all Via workers, other than engineers, taken place. That could have put a very sour note on our trip, but we were fortunate to have the strike settled before reaching Vancouver.

The trip went far too fast, and our only consolation was that tomorrow we would again be boarding the "Canadian" to take us back to Winnipeg. The whole crew does try to make it a memorable event for you. Our trip had been an experience that will remain in our memories and photo album. 


## Achievement Program update

by John Hotvet, MMR, AP Chair

The board approved an AP incentive during the fall meeting. The goal is to promote the AP and encourage modelers to give it a try—which will keep me busy next year as AP chair.

Each person who earns their first AP certificate now will receive \$50 (sorry, folks, its not retroactive for those with certificates already!) It does not apply to the Golden Spike, —rather the 11 certificates toward Master Model Railroader. Here's how it works:


The modeler completes and sends a Statement of Qualification with any required attachments to me for processing. (The forms are available for download at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) or from me.) I review the SOQ. If all is in order, I forward it to the national official to complete action.

When the certificate is approved and issued, I notify the TLR President and Treasurer, who will issue a check to the modeler. 

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## MEET OUR NEWEST DIVISION

story and photo by Gerry Miller,  
TLR President

Thursday September 16<sup>th</sup> the Southeastern Division held its first official meeting. Tom Ford was elected superintendent, and Dick Klawitter secretary-treasurer. The division meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month—for now at a local pizza place until another location can be found. 



left to right (seated) Don McGovern, Tom Ford, Dick Klawitter (standing) Brian Prober, Aaron Fagan, and Gerry Miller

## Train shows and events in and near the region

Saturday –Sunday 12/4-12/5 Sioux Valley Model Engineers Society open house 11 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sioux Empire Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD. Learn about model railroads from behind the scenes. Visit [svmes.net](http://svmes.net) or contact Eric Carlson at 605 940 9612.

Saturday 12/11 Granite City Train Show. 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. National Guard Armory, 1710 Veteran's Drive, St. Cloud, MN. Admission: \$5, kids 12 and under free. Model and toy trains, accessories, books, videos, collectibles, antique toys, more. Operating displays. Call 320 255 0033, email [edwardolson@cloudnet.com](mailto:edwardolson@cloudnet.com), or visit our website at [www.granitecitytrainshow.com](http://www.granitecitytrainshow.com).

Saturday –Sunday 12/18-12/19 Sioux Valley Model Engineers Society Christmas open house. 11a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sioux Empire Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD. Another opportunity to learn about model railroads from behind the scenes. Visit [svmes.net](http://svmes.net) or contact Eric Carlson at 605 940 9612.

Saturday-Sunday January 15-16 World's Greatest Hobby on Tour at the Qwest Center 455 S. 10th Street, Omaha, NE. Visit <http://www.wghshow.com> for more information.

Saturday 1/29 Great Tri-State Rail Sale 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 300 Harborview Plaza, LaCrosse, WI. All scale equipment and accessories, books, magazines, memorabilia and more. Call 608 582 4761.

Saturday 4/9 Minnesota River Valley Division (MRVD) annual meeting 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Pizza Ranch, 114 9th St. S., Olivia, MN. Meeting at 11:00 followed by silent auction, clinics, railfan videos/slides, model show-and-tell, door prizes and a visit to a large HO layout depicting NP's Yellowstone Division in 1955 (located in nearby Bird Island, MN). Contact Superintendent Terry Davis 320 587 7820 or [ptdavis@hutchtel.net](mailto:ptdavis@hutchtel.net)

# SIMPLE, CHEAP, and EASY GREAT LOOKING PINE TREES

Text and photos by Eric Carlson

Tools and miscellaneous supplies:

Electric drill with a hook of sorts (I made one from a coat hanger)  
Wire cutters  
Scissors  
Waxed paper

Shopping list:

Sisal twine  
18 gauge wire  
Cheap gray or black spray paints  
Hairspray-Aqua-Net Extra Hold, unscented—cheaper is better  
Fine turf—weeds (shaker) Woodland Scenics  
Other colors of fin turf, if desired  
Glue—Walthers Goo and gluing tips or Sticky Bond  
Brown floral tape

Instructions:

1. Prepare the twine a few days before you want to make trees.
  - a. Boil the twine in water for 30 minutes to soften and straighten the fibers
  - b. Dry the twine by hanging it over a pipe or somewhere it can drip-dry
  - c. Weight one end of the twine while drying to promote straightening the fibers
2. Once the twine has dried, cut and sort the twine to length. For HO scale, cut several strands approximately three lengths—2, 1 ¼, and ¼ inch each. Sort in piles
3. Decide what height you want. Take that figure times two and add about 4-6 inches. Cut this length of wire and fold it into a V shape. Try to make sure the arms of the V are in a plane.
4. Apply adhesive to one arm of the V. Start and stop around two inches either end of the arm of the V. If

you choose the Sticky Bond, then allow around 10 minutes for the glue to dry.

5. Take one piece of twine and begin to separate it into



6. strands and flatten it out.
6. Place the strands onto the adhesive so that the wire intersects the strands at about mid-point at a right angle.
7. Repeat step 6 until you have covered the sticky part of the wire with strands.
8. Place the open ends of the V into a vice or clamp. The top of the wire forms a loop. Put the hook on the drill through the loop and gently twist the tree together.
9. Cut off the wire near the crown of the tree where



10. there is no more twine. Grasp the tree by the trunk and turn it while pausing occasionally to trim excess twine
11. Spray the tree with gray paint to hide the wire trunk and light strands that form its branches.
12. Spray the tree with hair-spray and immediately dust with the turf material over some waxed paper. Dust away from where you painted and spray hairspray so that the excess ground cover remains dry and can be recovered for reuse.
13. Re-coat the tree with hair-spray and a Dullcote if desired.
14. For trees that will appear in the foreground, use floral tape to treat the exposed trunk.



## New and Planned Sides Sets

GN/CB&Q/SP&S PS 8-4-4 "Pass" sleeper  
HO #173-68 \$33.75, N 173-568 \$23.75  
UP/C&NW/Wab ACF 12-4 "Western" slpr  
HO #173-69 \$33.75, N 173-569 \$23.75  
Milw Road Coach—"Touralux" in HO in Nov.  
UP/C&NW 5200-11 1937 *Challenger* 56-  
seat chair car w/nurse room in HO in Nov.  
Reserve for January in HO and N: GN  
1120-series PS 48-seat coach; GN 1170-  
79 PS 16-4 "Glacier" both with full skirts.

See our website or write us for catalog with closeout-priced items for GN, NP, SP&S, CB&Q, BN, MILW, UP, PRR, NYC, SP, C&NW, IC, RI, B&O, C&EI, L&N, KCS, N&W, ERIE, ATSF, MP, CN, CP, VIA & Amtrak. Use HO sides with TSP, Rivarossi, Con-Cor, ECW, Bachmann, Kato, Walthers, our HO Basic Body Kit, or in N the ALM core kits or plastic dome car overlays. Send 2-oz. S\$AE for catalog and bulletin. Available through hobby shops or direct from us (\$4.50 for shipping, plus \$0.50 per ALM core kit if ordered.) Add 6.875% MN sales tax for MN orders. See our website for current information sheets, bulletins, 1964-72 DVD, and CV trucks.  
[www.brasscarsides.com](http://www.brasscarsides.com)

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# The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

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Send changes of address to the treasurer.

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<b>One time Ad size (HxW)</b>	<b>Annul commercial rate</b>	<b>Annual</b>	
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Winter 2010-2011  
**The Fusee**  
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What's Inside?

Dubuque 2011 convention offerings

DSED/PLD combine talents for fall fun

TLR board midyear meeting highlights from Fargo— including funding sources available to support division initiatives and incentives for new first time AP certificate recipients

Travel Canada—by rail

Tips for making great trees

Plus ... lots more!

Check your expiration date!  
Questions? Email Dave Hamilton  
at [mzz64@yahoo.com](mailto:mzz64@yahoo.com)



## Back Trackin' Excerpts from 1980, 1990, and 2000 Fusees

compiled by Alan Saatkamp

### 1980

- TLR membership stood at 640
- Hibbing, Minnesota, hosted TLR convention
- TLR comprised of North Dakota, Twin Cities Area, and No. 1 Northern divisions
- Announcement that Winnipeg to host 1983 nationals
- First No. 1 Northern Division meeting held in Brandon, Manitoba.

### 1990

- Membership stood at 665, TLR had 10 divisions
- President Stafford Swain concluded his "Head End" column with "the state of the hobby is excellent."
- Downtown Minneapolis Holiday Inn Town Square convention site announces on Friday April 13 it was closing its doors. Committee scrambled to move everything to NCR corporate headquarters in St. Paul
- Spring Fusee issue boasted 30 pages
- President Bill McKean's column ended with this quote: "May your paint bottles stay upright, your rolling stock on the rails, and all projects bring you pleasure."

### 2000

- President Jim Wetzler's column reflected our changing society, called "From the Computer of the President"
- Editor Vern Gibson reported "From the Crummie"
- Spring "Millennium Express" touted Winnipeg for May TLR convention
- TLR included nearly 300 members and 10 divisions
- TLR board of directors meeting mentioned a "stagnant NMRA membership" concern
- Passing of Jock Oliphant (1922-2000) noted by Hilt Friesen