



NMRA BULLETIN

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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT
*Indicates first Certificate of Achievement
OCTOBER 2009
GOLDEN SPIKE

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Monte Hofmann, Chadron, Nebraska

Mid-Eastern Region
Steve August, Charlotte, North Carolina

Midwest Region
William Zeter, Bloomington, Illinois

Niagra Frontier Region
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Niagra Frontier Region
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Graham MacDonald, Baden, Ontario

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — CIVIL
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Niagra Frontier Region
John Brown, Waubashene, Ontario
Ronald Colpitts, Orillia, Ontario

Sunshine Region
Richard Dobler, Lake Wales, Florida

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Mid-Eastern Region
Steve August, Charlotte, North Carolina

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Niagra Frontier Region
Allan Crisp, Severn Bridge, Ontario

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Steve August, Charlotte, North Carolina
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Chris Widmaier*, Delanco, New Jersey

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Howard Dyer*, Farmingville, New York

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR
Mid-Contient Region
Ben Merta, Marion, Iowa
Nelson Moyer*, Iowa City, Iowa
Tom Stolte, McLouth, Kansas

Northeastern Region
Leonard Amrhein*, Rome, New York

MMR GROUP: All MMRs are invited to work with other MMRs by contacting Rick Shoup, MMR, at ricshoup@verizon.net.

If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Frank Koch at fjkoch@hotmail.com. If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Dr., Batavia, OH 45103.

MMR EARNED



R. BROOKS STOVER EARNS MMR #428

I am one of those rare modelers who, while raised on American Flyer in the 1950s

like many kids of my era, actually stayed with the scale throughout the intervening half century! My brother and I had a reasonably sized tinplate Flyer layout. As nice as

the equipment was, even in my early teen years I improved the appearance by adding extra ties and dulling down the plastic sheen wherever and however I could. I guess the die was cast for me to be an "S" modeler way back then.

After the usual time away for college, marriage, and starting a family, I returned to my love of trains by building a small under-the-tree layout using the American Flyer from my childhood. But reading modeling magazines and seeing photos of some of the great layouts being built in the 1970s, I wanted to build a "real" model railroad. I was introduced to the Buffalo Creek & Gauley, a West Virginia coal-hauling short-line by my brother who lived for a brief time in the town where the coal mine that the BC&G served had been located many years earlier. To make a long story short, I have been collecting information on the BC&G and its parent Elk River Coal & Lumber Company for more than 30 years and have built three "S" layouts depicting it. Each layout has moved farther from my tinplate heritage and closer to a true scale model.

I was fortunate to operate on a several quality layouts as I was beginning the design

and construction of my current layout. I not only learned the joys of operations but also got tips on what was needed to build a layout that was as fun to operate as it is to look at. I now find one of the most satisfying aspects of the hobby to be watching a group of fellow modelers bring my BC&G layout to life during an operating session.

In early 2008, with the encouragement of Dan Lewis and Jim Clements, two MMRs who are in the round robin group of which I am a part, I embarked on the NMRA Achievement Program. Encouragement also came from fellow BC&G modeler Phil Bonzon (see MMR earned in the December 2009 issue of *SCALE RAILS*), whom I came to know through the wonder of the Internet and the website I built to share prototype information on the BC&G, www.buffalocreekandgauley.com. Phil and I pursued the goal of becoming an MMR simultaneously providing encouragement to one another along the way. I'd also like to thank Larry Wolohon, MMR, and Larry Smith, MMR for their support and advice through the process.

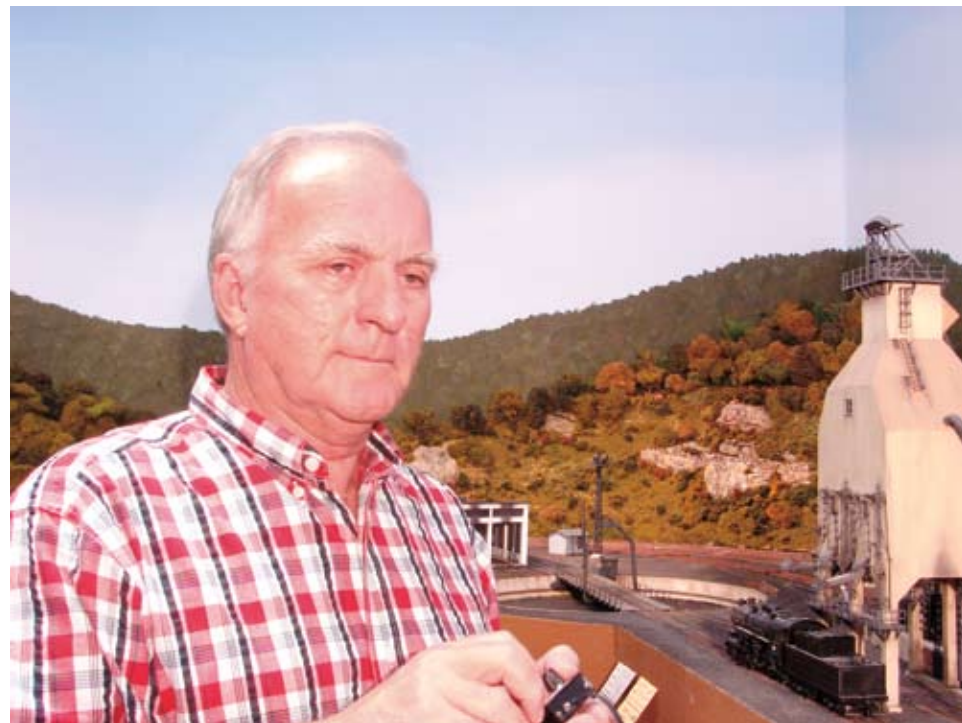
I am a member of a large "S" club located in southeast Michigan and enjoy

writing articles for modeling publications, something I've been doing since the mid-1970s. Besides model railroading, I enjoy traveling with my wife, Carol, visiting with our two daughters and their families, including our four grandchildren. I also enjoy photography and "flying" Microsoft's Flight Simulator on my home computer.

There's no question that pursuit of the various AP certificates has improved my modeling skills. I now approach modeling a structure, a piece of rolling stock or a scene differently than before, even if the model will not be judged. My layout is better because of the AP program, and I believe that is the value of participating in it. I look forward to many more years of satisfaction from this wonderful hobby and to helping others work their way through the AP program!

Brooks has earned the following certificates: Master Builder-Cars, Master Builder-Structures, Master Builder-Scenery, Master Builder-Prototype Models, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical, Chief Dispatcher, and Model Railroad Author.

MMR EARNED



CHUCK DAVIS EARNS MMR #425

Railroads were pretty much a daily part of my life growing up. My wife, Kathy, and I were both raised in

Wilkes-Barre in northeast Pennsylvania. Located in the Wyoming Valley along the Susquehanna River, Wilkes-Barre was a center for anthracite coal. Coal mines, railroads, churches, and bars were located

everywhere throughout this once-bustling area. Several members of our family worked in the mines or for the railroads which hauled the coal.

I grew up within three blocks of the South Wilkes-Barre mine, which was serviced by Jersey Central and many of our neighbors worked there. The four tracks of the Lehigh Valley and CNJ mainlines passed within two blocks, and there was nearly a constant procession of trains to hear and watch. My grandfather, Davis, was a car inspector for Lehigh Valley at its yard in Wilkes-Barre. I got to ride in one of the yard engines which I never forgot, and rode on the *Black Diamond* with him. That started my love for the Valley.

I always enjoyed modeling, and my room was filled with models of planes, ships, and cars. By the time I reached high school, I had expanded my 4x8 Lionel layout into an L-shaped moveable layout with a 26-foot branchline that covered most of our attic. *Toy Train* magazine articles had opened up a different train modeling perspective for me.

After graduating from college, I was commissioned in the Navy. We moved to Norfolk, Virginia, in 1970, and I have

spent most of my military and high school math teaching careers here. Shortly after our daughter, Christina, and son, Sean, were born, I bought them an HO Tyco train set. That got me hooked on HO and back into modeling. Fortunately, there was a large HO club layout in Norfolk about that time that I joined. Learning from them, including MMR Dave Spanagel, kept me in HO at a time when engines were notoriously poor runners.

My first real exposure to the NMRA was at a MER Convention in Richmond in 1975 and then at the National Convention in Washington around 1980 when I was stationed there. The tours and clinics really impressed me. After retiring from the Navy and returning to Norfolk, I joined the Tidewater Division, and finally the NMRA in 1997. With a lot of encouragement from Linda Coski, Norm Garner, and MMR John "JJ" Johnson, I started entering contests and working toward earning AP certificates. The best way I can describe my modeling is that

my father was a millwright by profession, and I feel like I followed him in that respect: a jack of all trades and master of none.

Managing my tutoring business now keeps me occupied, but provides enough time for making progress on my layout. I like to think of model railroads as an animated, three-dimensional art form. Within artist's license, my layout (<http://members.cox.net/mylvrr>) depicts several scenes from my youth, and some of the historical and geographical features of the Wyoming Valley area. I really enjoy operating it, and with members from the Tidewater Division have periodic op sessions. Our first little engineer, Harper Ann, and our newest little engineer, Reese Kennedy, also enjoy running it with Pop Pop when they come to visit.

Chuck has earned the following AP Certificates, Master Builder-Cars, Master Builder-Structures, Model Railroad Engineer-Civil, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical, Chief Dispatcher, Association Volunteer, and Model Railroad Author.

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