

NMRA BULLETIN

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2015 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:

2015—Portland, Oregon • August 23–30 • www.nmra2015portland.org

Train Show Booth Reservations—Susan Straub, Registrar • P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328

423-892-2846 • nmrrants@yahoo.com

• 2016—Indianapolis, IN • 2017—Orlando, FL • 2018—Kansas City, MO

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2014

GOLDEN SPIKE

Mid-Eastern Region

Lee Kass, Sterling, Virginia

Northeastern Region

Erich Whitney, Derry, New Hampshire

Southeastern Region

Ann Lundin, Newnan, Georgia

MASTER BUILDER — MOTIVE POWER

Mid-Central Region

Sam Swanson, Cincinnati, Ohio

MASTER BUILDER — CARS

Pacific Southwest Region

Gary Butts, Huntington Beach, California

MASTER BUILDER — SCENERY

Northeastern Region

Steve Perry, Rocky Point, New York

Pacific Northwest Region

Greg Price, Puyallup, Washington

Southeastern Region

Joseph Surowiec, Stone Mountain, Georgia

MASTER BUILDER — STRUCTURES

Pacific Northwest Region

Greg Price, Puyallup, Washington

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — ELECTRICAL

North Central Region

Tim Verburg, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Pacific Northwest Region

Greg Price, Puyallup, Washington

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Midwest Region

Robert Blake, Sawyer, Michigan

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER

Steve Perry, Rocky Point, New York, MMR 547

MMR GROUP

All Master Model Railroaders (MMR) are invited to work with other MMRs by contacting C.J. Riley, MMR, at cjriley42@yahoo.com

AP QUESTIONS

If you have questions about the Achievement Program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have

questions, contact Frank Koch at fkoch@hotmail.com If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

MMRs

MMR shirts and additional patches may be purchased by contacting HQ in Soddy Daisy, TN.

Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's exactly what happens when you participate in the National Model Railroad Association's Achievement Program. One Merit Award here, another there, and pretty soon you're on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader. All the while learning and having a ton of fun.

The Achievement Program is modelers helping modelers become better modelers and get the most out of their hobby. And it's yet another benefit of NMRA membership.



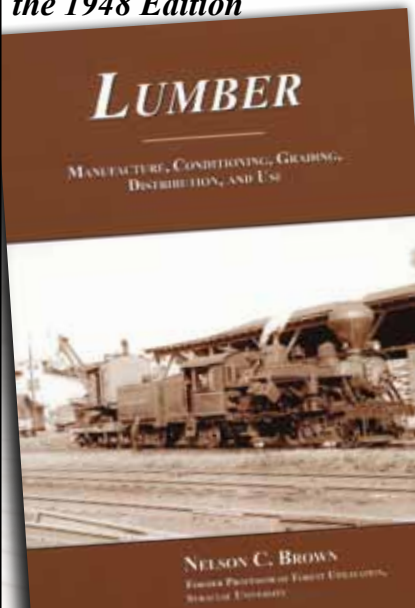
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CHARLIE FACKLER MMR # 539

Like so many others, my model railroad days started with a Lionel train around the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve when I was six years old. According to my parents, my dad inadvertently tried the whistle while setting it up. They said I literally flew down the stairs when I heard that whistle. That's all it took to get me started.

Although I never worked for the railroad, I definitely come from a Louisiana & Northern railroad family. Dad worked in the South Louisville shops as a car repairman; mom worked at the L&N main office at 9th & Broadway; uncle Joe was a traveling auditor; grandfather Alexander Bergkessel was a coach carpenter at South Louisville; and grandfather Charles Fackler was a blacksmith foreman for American Car & Foundry in Jeffersonville, Indiana.

At about the same age, I was introduced to train watching. We lived close to the South Louisville shops, so Mom would take Dad to work and drop him off at the walk-over bridge at the foot of Central Avenue (and also pick him up at the end of the day). If I was up, I would ride along. Somehow, I learned that if we delayed leaving the shops until a little after dropping off Dad, a passenger train would fly by heading south already at full speed (at least to me). The shops were only a mile or so from Union Station, so it was a thrill and a fascination to see it pass by already going so fast. After dropping off Dad, Mom drove down about a block to a clear space next to the tracks to

allow me to watch the train. We could go home only the after the train disappeared.

At some point in time later on, Dad built the typical plywood table for the Lionel set upstairs — my first train layout. I spent many a cold winter's day playing with it for years. If nothing was happening in the neighborhood, that's where I was.

Then came school, meeting and marrying my future wife at the University of Louisville (Go Cards), Army, work, and kids. While I had other interests and hobbies along the way, my real interest always remained model railroading. Although I didn't have the time or money for model trains, I never outgrew my love of train watching. I'm one of those people who will drive out of their way to see if a train is coming. There is no better place to read a book than beside the tracks while waiting for the next train.

Finally, about ten years ago, I had the time for getting into model trains for good. I joined the NMRA, and started meeting the members who would help me get going. It was definitely my wisest move. It was tough at first since I was the stranger at the meetings, sometimes not knowing what they were talking about, but over the years I have formed some great friendships through the Division members. Because I want to model L&N in the 1950s, I joined the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Historical Society to learn more about how a real railroad worked and to learn more about L&N's history. That provided an invaluable source for ideas, scratch-built models, coal operations,

and visits to places I would have never been on my own. If you are going to try to model a particular railroad, or operation, or era, a historical society is a must-use source for a wealth of information.

While attending meetings, I watched other members earn Achievement awards, whatever those were. That piqued my interest, so I checked out the NMRA Achievement Program and realized that if you build an operating layout, you automatically meet many of the various requirements. Having been a Cub Scout den leader and assistant scoutmaster for more than 25 years, the program has many similarities to earning the Eagle Scout badge through the Boy Scouts of America. Having helped a number of Scouts earn their Eagle rank, including my two sons, I decided that earning my MMR was something I would like to do. To earn the various Achievement awards, I found that it's not so easy. While I earned Associate Volunteer by teaching Railroad merit badge, it got tougher after that. The Achievement Program really makes you stretch your knowledge into areas you didn't even know about. I'm happy with "blue box" cars, but build cars from scratch, and what's a gauntlet track? I enjoy building kits, six building from scratch? Earning merit awards is not so easy; however, I enjoyed the work and am amazed at the knowledge I have acquired along the way.

My best move was to join a local club: the Kentucky and Indiana Model Railroad Club. While Division meetings are fine, this gave me a chance to really get to know fellow NMRA members interested in HO modeling and operations. This is where I have formed friendships while learning a lot. I know that I wouldn't have earned my MMR without their help and some prodding along the way. I especially thank Jerry Ashley, MMR; Ed Brennan, MMR; and my "twin brother" Jim Fackler for their help, encouragement, and prodding.

And I still have that Lionel train. It's in the attic waiting for my grandson Charlie to be introduced to trains.

AP Certificates - Charlie Fackler

Association Volunteer
 Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
 Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
 Master Builder – Scenery
 Master Builder – Structures
 Master Builder – Cars
 Master Builder – Prototype Model



HARLEY "SKIP" LUYK EARNS MMR #541

My road to Master Model Railroader **U**nlike so many model railroaders, I never got that Lionel train set that would have started me on the long journey to where I am today. However, I had two cousins who did, and whenever I got to visit them, we always ended up playing with their trains.

Though both of them eventually lost their interest, mine continued to grow. I began my first HO home layout in our basement when I was 12 years old and became "President" of a "model railroad club" that built an HO layout in the basement of a local hobby shop at the ripe old age of 13. The club, unfortunately, came to an end when George Young, the elderly shop owner passed away.

While in the Air Force in the early 1960s, I built a few models and drew track plans for the dream layout I hoped to build someday, but never got too serious. After the leaving the service, my wife and I spent the next 40 years in apartments, condos, and homes without basements, so any layout I had was small.

When N-scale came on the scene, I tried a couple layouts in that scale, but they ran poorly and just didn't "hit the spot." In the late 1980s, we moved into a house that had a spare bedroom large enough to build a small HO layout, and the flame began to burn again.

It was then that I joined the NMRA and got active with a local group of modelers interested in forming a new club. In 1992, the Grand Rapids Model Railroad

Historical Society was born and in pursuit of a place to call home. The search took two years, but we found an incredible building with an interesting history that we have called home ever since.

Late in 2002, Tim Fisher, then President of the North Central Region, contacted me to see if I would be interested in trying to resurrect Div. 4 of the NCR; it had been inactive since the mid-1980s. When I called him back to say that I would do it, he pointed out that the Division that was supposed to host the 2003 Regional convention had backed out and wondered if Div. 4 would be interested in taking that on as well.

After talking it over with the members of the club, we decided to do it. We did it again in 2006 and then hosted Grand Rails 2012, the 2012 NMRA National Convention. It was just before the National that our club became a 100% NMRA club. We now include NMRA membership with the magazine as part of our membership dues structure.

Just before the 2003 regional convention, my wife and I moved into a new home, this time with a dedicated space for a layout. The layout is focused on logging operations in the Pacific Northwest, and by 2012 convention time, it was about 75 percent complete.

During that same time, I was also part of the work and Ops group helping to build Bruce Chubb's new Sunset Valley. While working with Bruce, he continually urged me to participate in the Achievement Program to earn my MMR, but I always thought it would be too complicated and

too time-consuming to get involved. Once the 2012 convention was over, I decided to take another look.

I was quite surprised to find that in building my new layout I had already completed the requirements for many of the Certificates I would need. The layout met all of the requirements for the Electrical Certificate, but I needed to complete the diagram portion — something that I should have done anyway. The layout also had what was needed for the Civil Engineering, Scenery, and Prototype model Certificates, though I needed to complete all of the documentation.

By this time, I had contributed more than enough time to earn the Volunteer Certificate, and because I had written several articles for the *NMRA MAGAZINE* and the NCR *Hot Box*, I had earned enough points for the Author Certificate.

The last Certificate I needed was one from the Builder category: Cars or Motive Power. Since I had all of the motive power I needed, I decided to take on the Car Certificate. To complete the requirements, I scratchbuilt a wood flatcar, a low-side wood gondola, a wood tank car with firefighting equipment on board, and a crew car to meet the passenger car needed. I super-detailed four Bachmann Bobber cabooses to meet the remaining requirements for the Cars Certificate.

My journey to MMR has seen many ups and downs, but it has always been interesting, informative, and filled with great people offering support and encouragement. It's without a doubt the best part of the hobby and the organization called the NMRA.

AP Certificates - Skip Luyk

Association Volunteer

Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

Model Railroad Author

Master Builder – Cars

Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical

Master Builder – Scenery

Master Builder – Prototype Models