

NMRA BULLETIN

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**Region Secretaries: send all
changes in Region officer infor-
mation to the NMRA Secretary:
secy@nmra.org.**

rev 10/9/20

2021 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:
2021 Rails by the Bay • July 4 – 11, 2021 • Santa Clara, California • <https://www.nmra2021.com>
Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar • P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
423-892-2846 • ntsreg@nmra.org
• 2022—St. Louis, MO • 2023—Dallas, Texas

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2020
GOLDEN SPIKE

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Pacific Southwest Region
 Michael Aller, Apple Valley, California
 Sandy Butts, Huntington Beach, California

Rocky Mountain Region
 David Dane, Franktown, Colorado
 Michael McIntire, Holladay, Utah
 Mike Nelson, Orem, Utah

Southeastern Region
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North Eastern Region
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Pacific Northwest Region
 Tyler Whitcomb, Tacoma, Washington

Southeastern Region
 Michael Cummings, Alpharetta, Georgia

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES
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 Tom Greco, Duncanville, Texas

Midwest Region
 Emory Luebke, Greenville, Wisconsin

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Pacific Southwest Region
 Bob Ginger, Phoenix, Arizona

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North Eastern Region
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Pacific Southwest Region
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Thousand Lakes Region
 David Hamilton, Plymouth, Minnesota

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Pacific Northwest Region
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Thousand Lakes Region
 Neil Maldeis, Ely, Minnesota

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 James Murphy, Cary, North Carolina

Northeastern Region
 David Insley, Townsend, Massachusetts

Pacific Southwest Region
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Pacific Southwest Region
 Bob Ginger, Phoenix, Arizona

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER
 MMR® #663 Tyler Whitcomb, Tacoma, Washington

AP QUESTIONS: If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager.

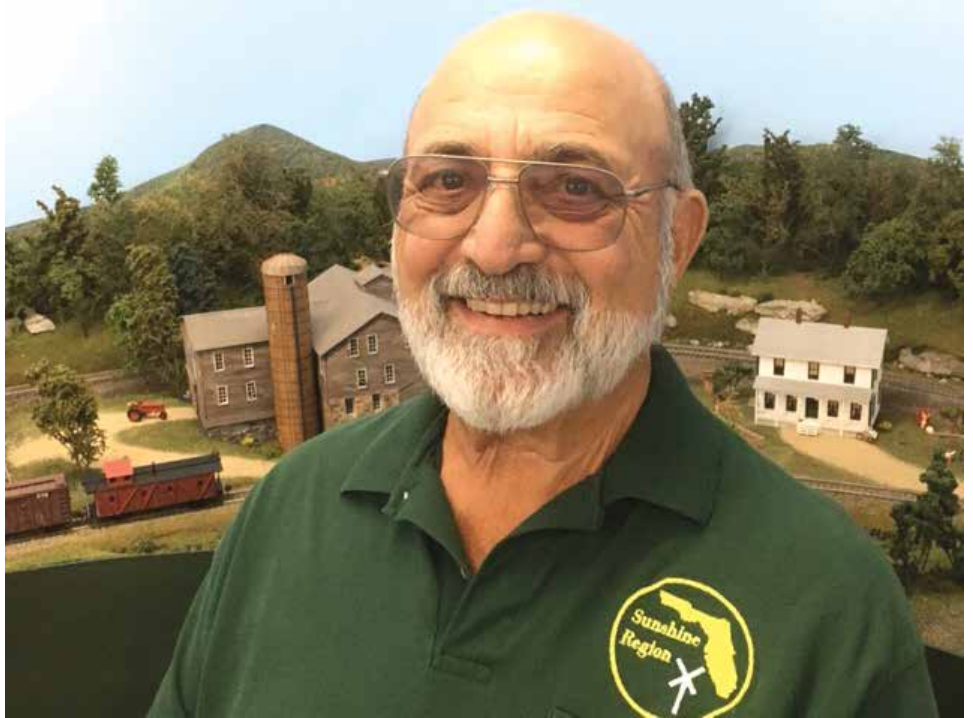
If you still have questions, contact Frank Koch at achiev@nmra.org

If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

**JOHN GIAMMASI EARNS
MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #656**
How I Got to this Point!

Relecting on how I arrived at my current hobby position, put simply, is nothing more than a combination of what transpired a long time past with whatever I picked up “along the way.” That common-sense statement shows the route we all traveled and makes all of us the modelers we are. No news there! For me, new experiences are combined with memories that are very hard to shake. Case in point: I remember being held in my grandfather’s arms when very small and being told to watch the train go in its house. This took place from a third-floor window of a tenement home on Atwells Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, around 1947 or so. When I brought this memory up to my father one day, he said he wasn’t surprised Grandpa would say that. He added, “...that’s because Grandpa made wheels.” Later I learned that my grandfather, fresh from Italy in 1906, worked as a laborer for the Providence Iron Works located a few streets behind this house. Later, I learned of the connection between Providence Iron Works and Alco in Schenectady.

“Where do I begin? To tell the story of how great a love (of a hobby) can be?” Christmas, 1950. When I was about seven years old, a beautiful steam locomotive appeared on the floor of the living room, with three freight cars and a caboose surrounding our Christmas tree. At the time, the name “American Flyer” wasn’t part of my vocabulary. I just assumed that because it appeared so large, made some terrific sounds, and maybe blew smoke out of the top (I don’t remember exactly), it had to have been the most wonderful toy in the world. Perhaps it was at the time; I wouldn’t have known otherwise then. Dad plugged it in, and it began traveling round and round the Christmas tree in front of the fireplace on the living room floor. *Wow!* A train set for Christmas, for me! Suddenly, however, I was made aware that it wasn’t a Christmas gift at all but rather a decoration. As would happen so often, like all other decorations, it would disappear as suddenly as it appeared, without explanation, and be put away with the rest of the Christmas decorations at the end of the



holiday. This event happened time and again, becoming the norm.

When my son was about 8 or 9, “we” decided to have a train set on top of a ping-pong table. Sound familiar? I remember buying a Jupiter steam locomotive, a Mantua perhaps (I don’t remember), a few boxcars, and numerous bits and pieces that, when assembled, amounted to an old-fashioned, Western-themed layout, which lasted for about four months. It, too, disappeared, having lost its attraction for the little guy. I didn’t pursue it further, what with grad school, holding down three jobs, and being responsible for a young family cutting into my free time.

After my career as an educator ended in 1999, I cajoled my wife into moving to Florida. I thought about model railroading but didn’t make the leap right away. Then, an epiphany! While reading the local newspaper, an ad appeared for a local club’s monthly meeting, giving the program on the agenda, and a name and number to call for further information. I immediately made the call and was told by the person on the other end that he couldn’t help me right away as he was going on vacation and would be out of the country for a while. My immediate reaction, of course, was, “Here we go again!”

However, he returned, as promised, and the rest is history.

My involvement in model railroading “steamed” along toward the level of involvement it now holds. Yes, that’s right, I love steam. My railroad is the Moosup Valley Railroad, a proto-fantasy railroad depicting the rural farming communities of southeastern Connecticut and vicinity during the early 1920s. I love the appearance of the vehicles and fashions of that time. My communities are involved in fruit and produce retail and preparation; a commercial bakery; a cheese producer; a dairy; general foods; and various supporting activities, ice houses, etc. It’s a point-to-point railroad stretching from Long Island Sound to its connection with the New Haven Railroad and is based on the previously existing Central Connecticut Railroad started in 1869. It also incorporates two interchanges: one for transporting foods to distant locations like Boston and New York, and one for incoming coal and oil from Pennsylvania supporting my location.

My greatest satisfaction comes from scratchbuilding wooden structures. I have offered clinics locally to members of my Citrus Model Railroad Club, as well as other local groups, also at our Sunshine Region conventions, and nationally when

the convention was held here in Orlando in 2017. I have produced structures for modelers from out of state as well. I have learned many tips and techniques from wonderful modelers far and wide who are always willing to share.

As we all have strengths, I've fallen into place with mine. The transition from onlooker to busy and involved modeler takes place in small steps, and gathering knowledge usually comes along in small doses. The Achievement Program is a school in itself, and, if applied diligently, can reap tremendous benefits for you. I've also surrounded myself with those who possess a great deal of experience and knowledge, and I gleaned all I could from them and continue to do so. I attached myself to one mentor in particular, to whom I will always be indebted, but who unfortunately is no longer with us. We do this, from time to time, to and for each other.

Joining the Citrus Model Railroad Club was the biggest boost I could have given myself. Within this group, as with all groups, you find historians, wood modelers, styrene gurus, electronics aficionados, computer geeks, prototype followers, col-

lectors, and others with enormous talent, a massive collection of interests and abilities, and the willingness to share. And because of them, we can't help but grow in the hobby. We become more proficient, more satisfied with our own efforts as we progress, and act as avid spokespersons for the hobby. What they gave us, we are now expected to give to others. Then, of course, there is the constant support of my wonderful wife, Elaine, pushing me along and picking me up when I faltered.

**Certificates Earned
John Giammasi MMR® 656**

**Master Builder – Cars
Master Builder – Scenery
Association Volunteer
Master Builder – Structures
Chief Dispatcher**

**Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Master Builder – Prototype Models**

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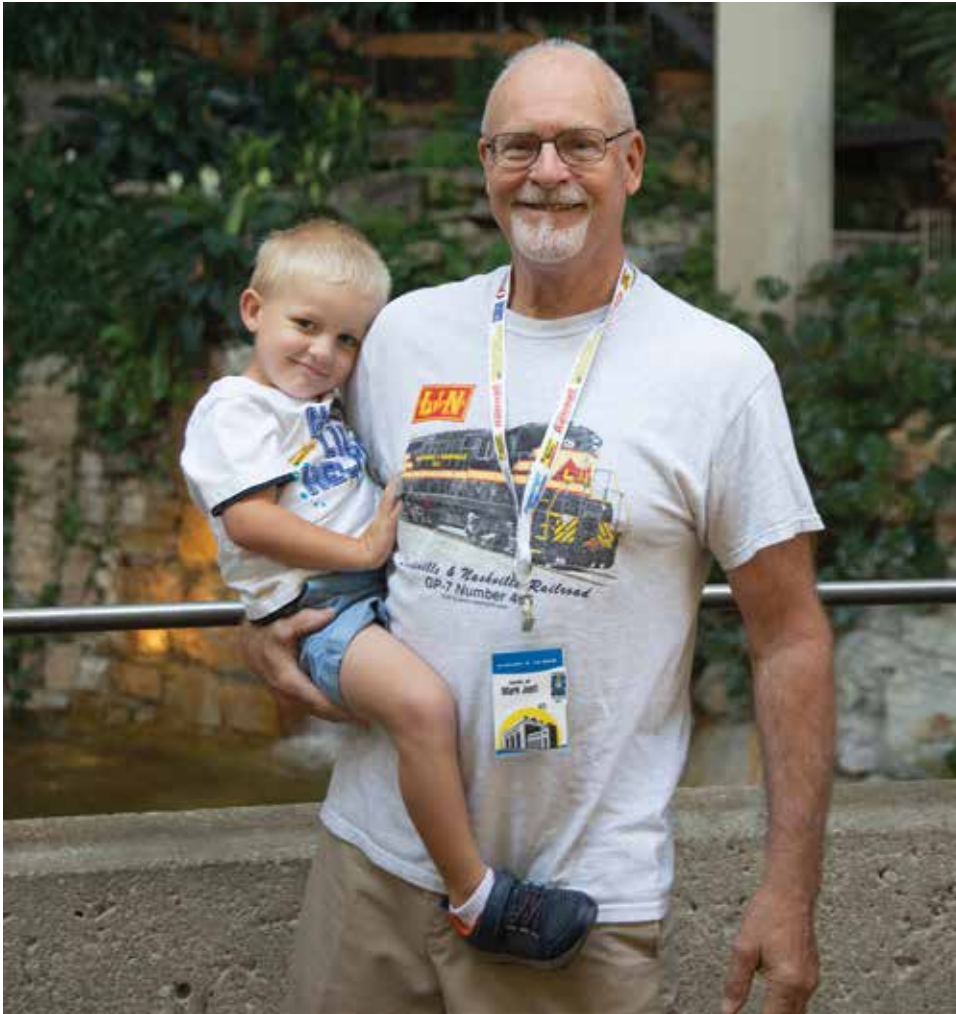
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**MARK JUETT EARNS
MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #660**

I have liked trains and train models as long as I can remember. The closest rail line to our farm was 13 miles away. However, when we would visit my Uncle John and Aunt Nancy, my older cousin Jimmy would run with me down to the station in Cynthiana, Kentucky, to greet the Louisville & Nashville crews as they came through. This activity started my love for L&N, which has grown over the years. Jimmy also had Lionel 3-rail trains. On my 8th Christmas, I got my own Lionel train, which expanded over the years.

Just before second grade, we moved to the farm where my brother and his family still live and work. There was only a cellar, and space for trains seemed to be nonexistent. However, as I got older, I managed to build a 4x8-foot HO railroad in my bedroom.

By the time I was 16, other things such as school, football, cars, and motorcycles beckoned my time and attention. Later, working my way through college, there was little spare time. After college, I took up the hobby again in HO. A small house (four rooms and 900 square feet) with no basement meant a 4x4 twice around, up-and-over stored under the bed was as much railroad as I had space to build. I still have those locomotives and rolling stock from back then. I also joined the NMRA on January 1, 1979, and have been a member continuously.

I was interested in the Achievement Program early on, but I lived in a remote area. The club to which I belonged was not a 100% NMRA club, and no one talked about the AP. In 1979, I built my first house with a basement and started constructing a railroad. Three years later, a move, starting a new career, and raising a family took some time, but I managed to build a small switching railroad in our

family room, taken from a portion of the railroad begun in 1979. After my move, I was busy with graduate school, my career, and family, so I did not attend the local Division meets for many years.

When I did start attending Division meets and became more active, our Division and Regional AP Chairs encouraged me to get involved. My friends, the late Paul Myers MMR® and Paul Richardson MMR® (then National AP Chair), encouraged me to take the first steps. I felt confident I could do some of the work and meet the requirements. I had previously completed the required work for several AP categories, but not being involved in the Division, I never had it judged, and none of it was still in my possession.

My current railroad (started in 2007) has many hand-built switches, crossovers, yard ladders, etc. I just needed to build a crossing, which I did, and it met the specification to earn me Model Railroad Engineer – Civil. I also completed the wiring and design requirements for Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical. So that was two Certificates earned in 2014.

Next enters my friend, Stephen Priest MMR® (then editor of *SCALE RAILS*), who offered me the opportunity to author the monthly “The Pulse of DCC” column. The Model Railroad Author certificate can be challenging to obtain, but it was pretty easy for me thanks to this opportunity. So that made three Certificates earned in 2014.

I did not finish much the next year but was working on Dispatcher, operating on several local railroads, building structures, and had some detailed craftsman cars judged. In 2016, I was building a custom model railroad for a client in Texas. By this time, half of my work was in model railroads. I made sure I did all of the scenery by myself to satisfy Master Builder – Scenery. I started dispatching for the late Floyd Britton MMR® on his Midland Railroad a year earlier. He moved, and we helped him dismantle the railroad. I had been operating on numerous other railroads and accumulating hours over several areas. Jim EuDaly MMR® let me start dispatching on his large O-scale Chesapeake & Ohio railroad with two dispatchers on a USSS CTC machine. I finally got a grip

on it and still dispatch there. So that made Scenery and Dispatcher completed in 2016 for a total of five Certificates.

The next year, I worked on more structures to be used on my railroad and planning what I might do with cars to satisfy that requirement. Enter Stephen Priest again in 2017, who asked if I would be interested in joining the DCC Working Group as a volunteer to help test decoders and equipment. I did, and I also joined his team for the 2018 NMRA National Convention in Kansas City, recruiting and organizing the clinics. Long before the convention arrived, I had enough hours to satisfy the Volunteer requirements and kept working to the successful end of a great convention. Late in the year, I had Paul Myers and Paul Richardson judge more structures and satisfied the Master Builder – Structures requirements. That made two more earned in 2018 for a total of seven Certificates.

However, I still needed something in railroad equipment. I had previously received merit awards for super-detailed cars. Our Regional AP Chair held a couple of workshops on scratchbuilding cars, which I attended. For some reason, I dragged my feet on finishing this last task.

I always found something else I “needed” to do. With a lot of prodding by the “brothers” Paul, I finally constructed a couple of scratchbuilt cars, which made the grade.

Continuing to write the monthly column, volunteering with the DCC WG as manager, building model railroads for others, making decoder installations for others, constructing my layout, and holding regular op sessions delayed my completion of building the last two cars required. A visit to my wife’s family for the Fourth of July in 2020 allowed me to take materials and tools to build the next two scratch cars and complete the Cars requirement. In past visits, I have completed several projects while visiting there. From the above account, it seems I only complete things during even-numbered years.

I also have some work completed on Master Builder – Motive Power, plans for replicating a prototype scene, and may run again for an elected office to complete more areas of the Achievement Program.

Over my life, I have been awarded Bachelor of Science and Master’s degrees and several professional certifications in

many areas, but none give me any more satisfaction than completing the requirements for Master Model Railroader®. I thank all those who gave me opportunities and encouraged me: Paul Myers MMR®, Paul Richardson MMR®, Stephen Priest MMR®, Joe Robertson MMR®, Brad Morneau MMR®, Bob Myers, Kelley Lloyd MMR®, and countless others.

The Achievement Program will make you a better modeler because it encourages you to work in areas you may normally avoid. It is not highly difficult, and many modelers could do it if they set the goal to work on one area at a time and attempt to learn some new skills. It is also a learning experience getting feedback from those evaluating your work. You will also make new friends — and have fun.

Certificates Earned
Mark Juett, MMR® 660

Master Builder – Scenery
Model Railroad Engineer - Civil
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Model Railroad Author
Chief Dispatcher
Master Builder – Structures
Association Volunteer
Master Builder – Cars

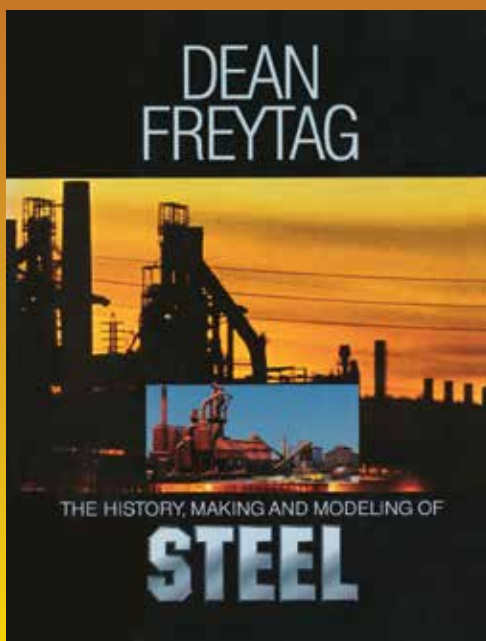
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