

# NMRA BULLETIN

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**Have you changed your address or  
other membership information?**

**Notify NMRA Headquarters**

**e-mail: [hq@nmra.org](mailto:hq@nmra.org)  
Phone: 423-892-2846 (8am–4pm ET)  
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2023 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:  
Dallas, Texas August 20 – 26, 2023 (<https://www.2023texasexpress.com/>)  
Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar - P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328  
423-892-2846 • [ntsreg@nmra.org](mailto:ntsreg@nmra.org)  
• 2024—Long Beach, California • 2025

rev3/29/2023

## ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

### NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT FEBRUARY 2023 GOLDEN SPIKE

#### Midwest Region

Jerry Wienandt, Chilton, Wisconsin

#### Northeastern Region

Robert Collins, Wrentham, Massachusetts  
Henry Kramer, Walden, New York

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Greg King, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

#### Rocky Mountain Region

Cameron LaFleur, Clearfield, Utah

#### Southeastern Region

John Stevens, Tyrone, Georgia

### MASTER BUILDER - CARS

#### Pacific Northwest Region

John Decker, Kennewick, Washington

#### Thousand Lakes Region

Richard Remiarz, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

### MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES

#### Mid-Central Region

Raymond Helster, Rostraver Twp., Pennsylvania

#### Southeastern Region

Wayman Humphrey, Atlanta, Georgia

#### Sunshine Region

Richard Segall, Hawthorne, Florida

#### Thousand Lakes Region

Richard Remiarz, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

### MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

#### North Central Region

Robert Scheizer, Berkley, Michigan

#### Pacific Northwest Region

John Decker, Kennewick, Washington

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Dennis Dreher, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

#### Sunshine Region

Chip Pecere, Vero Beach, Florida

### MASTER BUILDER - PROTOTYPE MODELS

#### Thousand Lakes Region

Richard Remiarz, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

### MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

#### North Central Region

Kenneth Scherer, Berkley, Michigan

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Dennis Dreher, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Rick Martin, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

### MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

#### North Central Region

Kenneth Scherer, Berkley, Michigan

#### Thousand Lakes Region

Kenneth Zieska, Plymouth, Minnesota

### CHIEF DISPATCHER

#### Mid-Central Region

Stan White, Louisville, Kentucky

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Rick Martin, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

### ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

#### Mid-Eastern Region

Timothy Himmelberger, Lebanon, Pennsylvania

### ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

#### Lone Star Region

Robert Secrest, Hideaway, Texas

#### Mid-Central Region

Barry Christensen, Louisville, Kentucky

#### Mid-Central Region

Stan White, Louisville, Kentucky

#### Mid-Continent Region

John Fales, Olathe, Kansas

#### Midwest Region

Joseph Rodenberg, Indianapolis, Indiana

#### North Central Region

David Zolnierek, Presque Isle, Michigan

#### Northeastern Region

Fergus Francey, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada

#### Pacific Northwest Region

Jim Hochstein, Bremerton, Washington  
Scott Surber, Bothell, Washington  
Tamara Whipple, Bremerton, Washington  
Nolan Woodward, Kennewick, Washington

#### Pacific Southwest Region

Marshall Wales, Peoria, Arizona

#### Southeastern Region

Paul Spilman, Clyde, North Carolina

### MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

#### Lone Star Region

John Romberger, Flower Mound, Texas

#### Thousand Lakes Region

Jay Manning, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

### MASTER MODEL RAILROADER®

MMR® #730 John Robert Coy, Avon, Indiana

MMR® #731 Rick Martin, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

MMR® #732 Richard Remiarz, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

MMR® #733 John Decker, Kennewick, 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](mailto:achiev@nmra.org).

**2023 NMRA ELECTION RESULTS:**

Canadian District Director: John Bate  
NMRA Canada President: Ed Molenkamp  
NMRA Canada Vice President: Steve Juranics  
Central District Director: Fred Soward

**NOTICE OF 2024 ELECTIONS**

Mike Cummings, NMRA Secretary

**THE FOLLOWING NMRA OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
POSITIONS ARE OPEN FOR ELECTION IN 2024:**

**PRESIDENT  
VICE PRESIDENT  
AT-LARGE NORTH AMERICAN DIRECTOR  
EASTERN DISTRICT DIRECTOR, AND  
PACIFIC DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

Please check Section E of the Corporate Policies & Procedures Manual for the extent of the districts affected. Candidate Statements are limited to 400 words.

**Thinking of Running for an NMRA  
Director or Officer Position?**

Click "Organization and Structure" from the NMRA Resources section in the blue "footer" on each page.

Click "Board of Directors" listed in the blue "box" on the right side of the page.

Click "Thinking about running for an NMRA office"

**PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT**

Submission of candidates' names for consideration for the positions of President and Vice President shall be made to one of the following no later than July 1, 2023:

**National Nominating Committee Chair**  
Philip Taylor at [nominations@nmra.org](mailto:nominations@nmra.org)

**Atlantic District Nominating Committee Chair**  
Charles Hendy at [atlnominations@nmra.org](mailto:atlnominations@nmra.org)

**NMRA Canada Nominating Committee Chair**  
Brian Stokes at [cannominations@nmra.org](mailto:cannominations@nmra.org)

**Pacific District Nominating Committee**  
[pacnominations@nmra.org](mailto:pacnominations@nmra.org)

**AT-LARGE NORTH AMERICAN DIRECTOR**

Submission of candidates' names for consideration for the position of At-Large North American Director shall be made to one of the following no later than July 1, 2023:

**National Nominating Committee Chair**  
Philip Taylor at [nominations@nmra.org](mailto:nominations@nmra.org)  
**NMRA Canada Nominating Committee Chair**  
Brian Stokes at [cannominations@nmra.org](mailto:cannominations@nmra.org)

**EASTERN DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

Submission of candidates' names for consideration for the position of Eastern District Director shall be made to **National Nominating Committee Chair** Philip Taylor at [nominations@nmra.org](mailto:nominations@nmra.org) no later than July 1, 2023.

**PACIFIC DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

Submission of candidates' names for consideration for the position of Pacific District Director shall be made to the **Pacific District Nominating Committee** at [pacnominations@nmra.org](mailto:pacnominations@nmra.org) no later than July 1, 2023.

Candidates may wish to run for these positions by **petition** and not be subjected to the decisions of the appropriate nominations committees. Requirements for submitting by petition are contained in section D-3 of the Corporate Policies & Procedures Manual. **All submissions by petition shall be received by the NMRA Secretary no later than September 15, 2023.**

Members with questions about nominations or the election may contact Secretary Mike Cummings at [secy@nmra.org](mailto:secy@nmra.org).



## CARL SMEIGH, JR.

EARNs

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #726

**M**y first recollection is actually a photo of my dad and me with a Lionel set running around the Christmas tree in 1952. I was one year old, so they were my dad's trains. He loved trains, and living in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Railroad was all around us. His favorite locomotive was the GG-1.

Over the years, trains turned into a 4x8-foot plywood layout populated yearly by gifts from my grandparents. The track was just two loops with a connection to travel from one to the other, plus a reversing line. We moved that layout from Philadelphia to our new home in Glassboro, New Jersey. I was ten, and a neighbor had many HO-scale trains he wanted to sell.

Against my dad's recommendation, I sold the Lionel equipment and purchased my first collection of HO trains. A 5x9-foot sheet of plywood was the next layout, which was mine. Wood sawhorses held it up. The layout only came out at Christmas and was in the front living room. There was one simple rule: play with it often. After Christmas, if I did not play with it for two days, it was taken down and put away. I remember little about that layout. Then came Boy Scouts (I became an Eagle Scout) and high school (dating), so "playing with" trains took a back seat. College and a commission in the Navy came next. The Submarine Force took all my time until I was on a submarine in the shipyard in Charleston, South Carolina.

Modeling trains came back into my life. I found a few people who kindled my desire to start collecting and working on trains. Along came my first brass engine — a Northern painted in Union Pacific livery. The collection of Athearn cars began arriving at the door, and I was off to model railroading.

The Navy moved me to Saratoga Springs, New York, to the prototype reactor plant for the Trident submarine. I now had some free time, and one day at a barber shop, I asked if the barber knew any guys who modeled trains. He quickly said yes, but would not give me a name and number, so I left my information and asked him to



give it to the model railroaders. About three weeks later, Robert Hamm called. We chatted, and then he invited me to his house to view and operate his narrow-gauge layout in his basement. The year was 1978. I was introduced to the NMRA and became a member.

At the time, I was still well into Southern Pacific and UP in HO and had started a layout in the basement of my house featuring California's famed Tehachapi Loop. Bob and a few others showed me how to use L-girder frames and Homasote to build the subroadbed. I was interested in building a throttle I had seen in a magazine. With the help of another member of Bob Hamm's group, I built a throttle that would simulate momentum and some other new features short of a Pacific Sound System. Our group met twice a month using a round-robin method. The host provided a treat and drink, and we worked on the layout at the host's house. For those without a layout, we brought a model to work on at a table. It was truly a great time, and four of the eight group members decided to meet on the off weeks. It did not take long before the entire group met weekly.

The more I worked with Bob and his narrow-gauge layout, the more I became interested in the three-foot track. The bug finally bit, and I had the Narrow-Gauge

disease — and I was going all in. (Thanks, Bob.) I started selling my HO standard gauge and collecting HOn3 Denver & Rio Grande Western equipment. I believe the first engine came from Bob.

In 1980, the Navy moved me to Groton, and I started to build Malcolm Furlow's San Juan Central layout. I had the book, and I was off. I had left Bob Hamm and the group in Saratoga Springs and found myself alone modeling in my basement. The NMRA's membership magazine and Data Sheets were my companions for a while. I worked on the San Juan Central for several years and started looking at this small layout in a huge basement. Having read about O-scale in the NMRA's membership magazine and thinking about what I would do, I made another leap. I sold the HOn3 layout and the equipment and started collecting On3 equipment.

The Navy moved me again to Bremerton, Washington, for a year without the family. I lived in the bachelor officers' quarters. I had a desk and my essential tools. Bob Hamm was again an influence teaching me what tools a modeler needed for working on the move. Speaking of Bob, during the transit to Bremerton, the ship stopped in San Diego, California, where I bumped into him on the dock. He was working on another submarine as a contractor. I found a small group of

modelers with a similar meeting program to the one I was in with Bob. They were another influential group for me in digging deeper into the narrow-gauge world. They modeled in On3, and one had a small business (you may know it as Cloverleaf). I got up to a model railroad store in Everett, Washington, and before I knew it, I had three brass engines in On3. That year ended, and it was back to Groton, Connecticut, for a couple of years. My Navy career hampered work on a layout. Model railroading got put on the back burner, but I realized that modeling was what I wanted to do in retirement, so the models were carefully boxed and stored.

After retirement from the Navy, a move to Florida, and several years of working in county government, my wife and I retired and went sailing (another passion of mine). We lived on a 47-foot sailboat, traveled up and down the East Coast, and spent a winter in the Bahamas. We decided to end boating life. My wife found a local train club (Real Rail) in Palmetto, Florida, and pushed me to visit. She came along to see the trains. We were looking at the train layout when guess who walked up — Bob Hamm, MMR®. Seeing him was great, and our friendship from 1980 was reborn 32 years later. In 2012, my wife and I moved off the boat into a house that met our needs, specifically a room for me to model trains.

With only a 12x12-foot layout room, I had to make another decision. On3 would not fit, so I sold the On3 and started collecting HOn3. Working with Bob, I decided to build a small part of the Rio Grande Southern. Plans were drawn, and the work started. I wanted a two- or three-deck layout. The northern terminus of the RGS was Ridgway, Colorado. From there, the line ran south over Dallas Divide along Leopard Creek and through a water tank stop called Brown. The line then crossed and followed the San Miguel River. The next significant town was Placerville, Colorado, which included a depot. The railroad continued east and south through several small towns and mills. My layout would not be large enough to model each area along the road. Vance Junction was the first place to get coal and had a Clifton Coal Pocket and depot. From there, the road would continue south or loop around the valley and run back up to Telluride, Colorado. There was a lone water tank at Ames and then on to Ophir Loop — the centerpiece of my layout. The road contin-

ued south through Matterhorn, up to Trout Lake, and finally to the highest point of the line, Lizard Head at 10,250 feet above sea level and the last stop on my layout where the train would enter the large helix and spiral back down to Ridgway.

Most of the layout mimics the real line with a grade between 0 and 3.5 percent, with a majority at 3 percent. I incorporated seven of the trestles on the line. I traveled with Bob Hamm, MMR® and Bill Brown, MMR® to the area in Colorado where the line existed until 1951. That trip gave me a deep appreciation for the effort expended to build and operate that little railroad. I collected photos, dirt, and small artifacts along the railroad route. I used the photos to create my backdrop; the dirt is on the layout. No one can argue with the color of the dirt; it's from the actual location I modeled.

Bob, now the NMRA National Contest Chairman, had an opening and asked me if I wanted to join his staff. Bob convinced me to enter an On3 drop-bottom D&RGW car I built from a kit and super-detailed. At the end of the week, I had my first Merit award, marking the start of my journey toward MMR®. AP Volunteer was completed with participation on the National Contest Staff. Bob asked me to write the yearly articles about the contest for the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, so AP Author followed not long after Volunteer. My layout had reached about 60 percent built. All the benchwork was in place, and the small (three-turn) and tall (ten-turn) helices were in place.

I had chosen the CVP system for my DCC system, and it was now installed and operational. I started looking at the Civil and Electrical AP areas for my next goal. It took time to gain the skills to scratch-build turnouts, but by the time I was proficient, I had built a stub switch, a 19-degree crossing, and a transition used to move a narrow-gauge car in a dual-gauge track from one set of tracks to the opposite side. As part of the learning process, I also scratchbuilt three No. 8 curved turnouts for the layout. Electrical was a similar learning process. I had three separate power districts, a reversing wye, and the train traveling over the large helix transitioned through a large reversing loop. I obtained a brass "Goose" (a gas-powered car used to transport mail, minor commodities, and passengers at a much lower cost than running a steam engine). It needed lights and a DCC decoder. That would be the electri-

cal project. I completed the requirements for Civil and Electrical at the same time. Without the help of Jim Gore, MMR®, I would not have made it this far. I was now at four of seven AP certificates and decided that Cars, Structures, and Scenery would be the last to achieve MMR®. There was a lot of structure-building and entering contests or getting them evaluated. At the same time, I started building the cars I would need to complete the program. Mike Evans MMR® was a great help in my finishing the AP for Cars. As a distraction from sitting at the bench, I would work on scenery, build trees, and work on the backdrop. I completed Structures followed by Cars, leaving Scenery. With the 22 feet of photographic backdrop in place, it was time to turn up the heat and get Scenery done. As it came together, I realized that not only had I completed Scenery, but my rendition of Ophir Loop, Colorado, was so close that by positioning a train matching a photo, I had achieved Prototype Model as well — an added bonus. A layout is never "finished," so I will continue to challenge myself to build more and to help others like those who have helped me.

The final evaluation for both Scenery and Prototype Model AP Certificates occurred, and before I knew it, I had completed the requirements for Master Model Railroader®. MMRs® Jim Gore, Peter Youngblood, and Clark Kooning have asked me to join the "Modeling With the Masters®" team at the next annual NMRA convention in Texas. Look for me in the MWIM® room and say, "Hi." Better yet, sign up for a session! I will see you at the convention!

### **Certificates Earned** **Carl Smeigh, Jr., MMR® #726**

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



## RICK MARTIN

EARNs

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #731

My interest in model railroading, or rather trains, began with the arrival of my Marx train set at Christmas. I was around 8 or 9 years old. Like many such sets in the early 1950s, it was just a loop of track, a power pack, and a steam train. Round and round it went on my dad's piece of plywood. We had a small house with no garage, so the track got beat up after repeatedly playing with the train. Eventually, I wore it out, and the train went somewhere. Because the track was 3-rail, it was turned into a marble roll track (I created a new toy since the train was gone). That toy did not last long, as I recall, but putting pieces of track together in various curves and straights to roll my marbles was fun.

As I grew up, my dad knew a man (a friend from his school days) who owned a hobby shop less than two miles from the house. I went with my dad one day, and lo and behold, the shop had an HO-scale layout. I was fixated on these trains, but it would be another 20 years before I could do anything about my interest. I guess I had to get elementary school, junior and senior high school, and college out of the way first. Another interesting family story is that my dad's friend convinced him to build a coal car to enter a train show contest the hobby shop owner would attend in Chicago. While the details aren't clear, I did know the car won an award. The coal car had *real coal* in the hopper, which could have added to the reality of the entry. My dad built three other cars that he gave me many years ago. Some years later, I decided to surprise my dad. I made a display case to showcase the rolling stock along with an engine and caboose. I gave it to him on Father's Day one year. After his passing, it returned to me and is proudly displayed in our lower level, where my current layout exists.

I graduated from college and served in the U.S. Navy. I took a civil engineer position in Chicago in 1970. Fast-forward to 1973, and I had to move due to a job change. One day I was sitting around my apartment doing whatever when I had a mental flash about a hobby shop to buy something to build. While at the shop, I noticed a magazine rack with several issues of



different model train monthly magazines. I bought a copy of *Model Railroader* and took it home. After reading the magazine over the next several days, I returned to that hobby shop and looked around. After several minutes, I made my first model railroad purchase: an Indiana Harbor Belt 0-8-0 switcher, a few freight cars, a caboose, an MRC power pack, and some brass track. I paid less than \$100 for all that. That purchase also included an O-scale IHB kit as a sales incentive. So, with all that at home in my humble apartment, I assembled the brass track, connected the power pack, and ran my little train for hours...well, maybe minutes since the oval was about 15 to 20 feet of track. Some people get bored easily, and this oval wore me out sooner rather than later. So, I turned to the O-scale kit and started to put it together. I don't recall what I did with that model, but I likely gave it to someone. Despite that purchase, my activity in modeling didn't get into forward gear for about three to four years.

I proposed to a really nice lady in 1975, whom I met while serving in the Navy stationed at Naval Station Long Beach, California (I moved from Chicago and now lived in Southern California). We were married in 1976. Eventually, I became involved in a train club after visiting hobby shops to get more information on model railroading. The club was initially called the "Roundhouse Gang" because mem-

bers traveled from house to house. When I joined, the club met in San Bernardino, California, where they were building two layouts (HO and N). I learned some new skills, including hand-laying rail on the HO layout — an experience I have not ever considered again for my layout. I made many friends at the club and learned many skills that I used on my layout.

My wife and I bought a new house where I could think about my first home layout, where I built my out-and-back railroad. I designed the model railroad so I could still park my new TR-7 sports car under the layout. I did not know how to properly design a model railroad, but I gave it a good ol' college try. The plan included a stub yard where trains would, or could, start. As I recall, the track plan went out and made two loops around the garage stall and then back to the stub yard. While this layout was a good learning tool, progress stopped when we learned we had to relocate to Portland, Oregon. To not waste the layout (and some money), I broke down the benchwork and moved it to Oregon.

In Oregon, I ran a franchise pre-cut cedar home business. I found my second model railroad club in Portland: Mount Hood Model Engineers. I found a new club home and made many new modeler friends. I am fortunate that my new friends let me learn new techniques and methods in the hobby. While at the club, I

took on new projects while learning. Early in my club membership, they decided to make some significant alterations to the layout, including a hidden staging track, a narrow-gauge extension, and adding a new town area in an adjoining room. Like many members, I took on many new projects, learned new track techniques, and did some scene-making chores. Club members were encouraged to take on tasks to help the club improve. I gave a lot in my 15-plus years with Mount Hood, as many others did. We held open houses during National Model Railroad Month in November. This club in the 1980s and 1990s was a DC club. It wasn't until after the 1994 National NMRA Convention in Portland, Oregon, that DCC became more popular. I moved on from the club in the late 1990s after a change in residence took me farther away. I know the club converted to DCC some years later.

When my wife and I moved to Oregon, we rented a house for a time before settling. My California layout parts were set in a room in the basement where I could ply my hobby efforts. I bought an airbrush and learned a new skill. I wouldn't say I became an expert at airbrushing, but I could do well enough for my satisfaction. Being the owner of many Athearn blue-box cars, I decided to paint a couple. I selected some of my passenger cars as the first effort. At this time, I had not yet decided on a name for my eventual layout, but I did know I wanted to establish a paint scheme. After looking at many colors, I selected silver and Pullman green (silver on the roof and green on the body). Those three cars still exist in my hobby room today. After almost three years in the rental, we found a new home and moved over Thanksgiving in 1992.

The new tri-level home had finished rooms throughout, so I was relegated to a vacant 10x10-foot (plus a closet) bedroom on the lower level. Given the small space, the layout was again another out-and-back, and I was able to incorporate some of the pieces from layout number one. While the layout did move forward, we discussed buying a new home one day. Fast-forward six years, and construction on layout number three began in the third bay of our three-car garage in our newly constructed home. I built this layout to run on DC and wired it as such. Along the way, as I mentioned earlier, DCC was becoming popular. After much time and research, I finally bought a Lenz DCC system.

I devoted many hours of day and night to this layout. It was progressing nicely until

my company made me an offer to move into a new leadership position. So after almost 30 years in Oregon, we moved to North Idaho in 2006. My new job demanded a lot of time, so modeling was put on the side burner. Sadly, the economy turned sour in 2007-08, and I retired in May 2008. I then had much time to turn my interest back to my hobby. I joined a local club and made new modeling friends. And since our house had a full unfinished basement, I had the perfect opportunity to plan layout number four. I started fresh since I decided to trash the benchwork of layout number three (save some of the turnouts and other salvageable items).

I knew I wanted to create a railroad name for my layout. After moving to Oregon in 1979, I learned of the current railroads in the state, essentially Southern Pacific and Union Pacific; however, other local roads caused me to name my layout the Sierra Cascade & Northern. The SC&N bridge route connects to SP and UP (along with other railroads). The layout has a mining branch and a logging branch. The staging area has four tracks: three for staging and one through track. The yard has a roundhouse, freight yard tracks, an engine shop, and a power plant. The main line is about 70 feet or so and will allow continuous running. The operation scheme, however, is out-and-back freight movement.

A branch line exits the main yard and runs up to a small town named Lizzy Valley. Along the way to LV is a logging branch that serves the timber industry. Another branch out of Lizzy Valley goes up to the Ole Irwin Mine. I was still working on how to operate the layout and to what extent I needed to detail the freight car movements. While I had done some scenicking on significant parts of the layout, there was much more to do.

One of my model railroad friends asked me, "Do you want to be a Master Model Railroader<sup>®</sup>?" My first reaction, not knowing anything about that question, was, what is an MMR<sup>®</sup>? We talked, and I was told in a very crude way what an MMR<sup>®</sup> is. He could not give me more details when I asked about it. So that issue was quickly dropped and not given further thought. That is, until many, many, many years later when I read an article on scratchbuilding in one of the hobby magazines. I don't recall the scratchbuilt item, but the storyline caught my attention. So, I researched online and found a story on building flatcars from styrene. I thought that could be fun and fill

my empty hours now and then. While I did start to build a flatcar with styrene, it turned out to be rather time-consuming. So, what do I do now? I looked online and found another flatcar article on scratchbuilding wooden flatcars. Now, these looked easy. Well, at least easier than styrene. When I mentioned this to one of my club members, I was asked, "So are you going to be an MMR<sup>®</sup>?" My mind thought and thought before answering, and I said, "Maybe." Of course, I wasn't sure I wanted to take on that effort. But the more I thought about it, the more some said, "Why not try?" I printed off the AP requirements from the NMRA website. It looked ominous, and I wasn't sure I wanted to take on the effort added to my layout building, but the more it came to mind, the more it started to make some sense. And here I am, MMR<sup>®</sup> #731.

I encourage all model railroaders to consider their support of the hobby. Let me explain. If you are into the hobby, like many of us, get involved. When I say that, I mean get involved in a club, a Region, or Division. I have done many things in this light. I have been president of a club, a lead in a major project at a club, and am currently involved with the Pacific Northwest Region. While I should have taken this road sooner in my hobby, there are reasons why I did not. Many of us have more than one hobby or activity we get involved with, and we choose to give our time to the one (or ones) we like the most. As mentioned earlier, I spent my post-college professional career as a civil engineer. I also had a second career as a reserve Naval Officer, spending 27 years in the Civil Engineer Corps and retiring in 2001. You might think, why did I do this? The easy answer is, I enjoyed the camaraderie, the challenge, and the mission. What little spare time I had during those years gave me little to spend on my hobby.

As an engineer, my big focus is always to build. Over the past 50 years in the hobby, I have had the great opportunity to meet many talented modelers. They have shown me how to improve my skills and share them with others. I have built many kits of structures like trestle bridges, laser-made buildings, and old-style wood kits from Campbell Company, as well as others. I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to participate in such a diversely talented hobby community. I hope I have left an impression on some and shared my limited talents with those who have asked. I feel proud to have achieved this level in this hobby.

And lastly, but certainly not least, is the support of my wife of nearly 47 years. She supported my hobby as I did hers. When planning my layout in our current house, she weighed in on how much space I could have in our unfinished basement. She let me “carve out” a 23x16-foot space for the layout — adequate to build the new empire for my then one-man show. Thanks to my love for the new home of the Sierra Cascade & Northern.

**Certificates Earned  
Rick Martin, MMR® #731**

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

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**MMR EARNED**

**SUSAN WERNER**

**EARNs**

**MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #729**

I did not come to this hobby as a child, as most NMRA members have. When I asked my father for a train set at age 12, he said “no” in a very stern voice, and I knew that answer was final. That put my interest in model railroading on the back burner until my early 20s. I have been building models of many kinds since my early teens, learning construction techniques, the concept of scale, and attention to detail. By my early 20s, I was an Army 1st Lieutenant with my own income and living quarters. A trip down the “wrong” aisle at the local hobby shop rekindled my model railroading interest (addiction). I was there looking for another ship model kit when I spotted a selection of brass locomotives. One look at those golden beauties with their extraordinary detail, smooth running capabilities, and near-prototype appearance ignited that still-smoldering ember in my heart to leap into flame. I became drawn to craftsman kits with so many pieces of wood and details that I could advance my skills as I spent more time with them.

I joined the NMRA (MCR Division 2) in 1982. My passion for this hobby was not shared so much by my husband, Hans, but to his credit, he tolerated and supported my efforts in the hobby. He also liked to see the trains run around the track and enjoyed seeing the latest fruits of my labors.

Raising a family took precedence, so building a layout was put on the back burner. Once we were empty-nesters, my husband and I added to the house and made room for a layout. I am currently building a model railroad set in Down East Maine around 1918. I really like the



diminutive size of the locomotives and rolling stock, to say nothing of the look of truss rods on the cars. It also allows me to establish a logging line and run my favorite geared locomotives. The layout is a 21x14-foot island on the third floor of my home. I enjoy the challenge of building craftsman kits, and I am learning the art of scratchbuilding.

I have been an active member of the Keystone Division of the Mid-Central Region since the late 1980s. I served in many capacities, including Division Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, Bring-N-Brag chair, keeper of the Company Store, and MCR Regional Convention Chair in 2012. I am also an Achievement Program Judge and have worked in Division, Regional, and National contests. Because of this, my modeling skills have significantly improved. Additionally, I have presented many clinics on various topics at all convention levels. I have made many friends along the way, both locally and nationally, and challenged my modeling skills with every great model I see. I am also one of the founding members of the Mid-Mon Valley Model Railroad Club, currently lo-

cated in New Eagle, Pennsylvania, where I have served as President and am now the Secretary and Treasurer.

**Certificates Earned  
Susan Werner, MMR® #729**

- Association Volunteer**
- Model Railroad – Author**
- Association Official**
- Master Builder – Scenery**
- Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical**
- Model Railroad Engineer – Civil**
- Master Builder – Cars**

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