

NMRA BULLETIN

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**Have you changed your address or
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Notify NMRA Headquarters

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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
• 2024—Long Beach, California • 2025 Novi, Michigan

rev3/29/2023

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

APRIL 2023

GOLDEN SPIKE

Northeastern Region

Chris Oliver, Rochester, New Hampshire

Pacific Northwest Region

Bernie Dansereau, Summerland, British Columbia, Canada

Doug Hicks, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Sunshine Region

Henry Doden, Apple River, Illinois
Karl Johnson, N. Fort Myers, Florida
Bruce Lauerman, Galesburg, Illinois
Elizabeth MacRae, Bonita Springs, Florida
Patrick Flash, Cape Coral, Florida

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER

Northeastern Region

James Fairbanks, Canandaigua, New York

Pacific Northwest Region

Robert Ray, Meridian, Idaho

MASTER BUILDER - CARS

Mid-Central Region

Scott Eastburn, Amherst, Ohio

Pacific Northwest Region

Robert Jekel, Kennewick, Washington

Sunshine Region

Beverly Farnham, Palm Bay, Florida

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES

Lone Star Region

Ezequiel Duran, San Luis Potosi, Mexico

Pacific Northwest Region

Warren Smith, Meridian, Idaho
Richard St. Clair, Twin Falls, Idaho

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

Northeastern Region

Ron Grant, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

Pacific Northwest Region

Warren Smith, Meridian, Idaho

Southeastern Region

Randall Watson, Suwanee, Georgia

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

Mid-Central Region

Scott Eastburn, Amherst, Ohio

CHIEF DISPATCHER

Pacific Northwest Region

Daniel Figy, Spokane, Washington

Sunshine Region

Richard Paul, Jacksonville, Florida

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Lone Star Region

Robert Thiele, Liberty Hill, Texas

Sunshine Region

Andy Zimmerman, Tallahassee, Florida

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

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Robert Thiele, Liberty Hill, Texas

Mid-Eastern Region

Kirk Bateman, Sykesville, Maryland
Joseph Zebrowski, Shamong Twp, New Jersey

North Central Region

Michael Finkler, Holland, Ohio

Northeastern Region

David Kiley, Swansea, Massachusetts
Ron Pelletier, West Hartford, Connecticut

Southeastern Region

Scott Dunlap, Roswell, Georgia

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

Lone Star Region

Steven Crise, Grand Prairie, Texas
Steven Jackobs, Austin, Texas

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER®

MMR® #736 James Fairbanks, Canandaigua, New York
MMR® #737 George Landow, Providence, Rhode Island
MMR® #738 Robert Jekel, Kennewick, Washington
MMR® #739 Warren Smith, Meridian, Idaho

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.

THREE BIG BENEFITS OF NMRA MEMBERSHIP:

15%
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Those are the discounts that manufacturers and hobby shops in our Partnership Program are giving us right now. Partners like Micro-Mark®, Model Rectifier Corporation®, Badger Airbrush®, Unreal Details®, Hot Wire Foam Factory®, Logic Rail™ Technologies. And over 30 more companies. It's savings that can actually pay for your membership!

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If you haven't visited www.nmra.org lately, you're missing out on some really great stuff. Starting with a boatload of discounts!



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TOM PERSOON

EARNS

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #735

I've never lived more than a mile from an active rail line. When I was born, my parents lived across the street from the east side streetcar barn in St. Paul, Minnesota, and the Chicago & North Western "Route of the 400" main line was on the other side. Later, we lived in the upper half of my grandparents' duplex. My grandfather was a carman for Northern Pacific, and he would tell me stories about working on the railroad. Trains have always been a part of my life.

Like many of my generation, my first model train was a Lionel set I received for Christmas when I was six. Soon after, my father bought some tables at auction and moved them into a room in the basement, which became the "train room." Dad helped me build my first layout. By the time I was 10, I had started "kitbashing." I disassembled one of my Lionel cars to harvest the trucks, which I used to build a special flatcar to haul U-Haul trailers that were included as toys in a breakfast cereal box. This project foreshadowed what would become one of my main modeling interests — interesting loads moved by trains.

When I was in high school, the Lionel set got boxed up in favor of HO-scale trains. One of my brothers was into HO-scale race cars, and we built a combined car and train layout on the same tables. During this time, I also started experimenting with scratchbuilding in wood and plastic. My mom would later say that when I was a teenager, she never had to worry about where I was — I was in the basement working on my trains.

During my college years, there wasn't any space in my dorm room for modeling, but trains were still part of my life. I rode the *Hiamatha*, or sometimes the *Zephyr*, between college and St. Paul when I went home for a weekend. I spent much of my leisure time courting Ann, and she even helped me wheedle a cab ride in a switcher one day. After graduation, we married, moved to Iowa, and settled into an apartment within sight of the Rock Island main line.

In 1971, I joined the NMRA with the goal of improving my modeling skills.

We also moved to a different apartment, again with a view of the railroad. It had a second bedroom that became our hobby room, and I built a small layout. I started attending NMRA area meets in Des Moines and admired the work of fellow modelers who entered the contests, including MMRs Al Warren (great C&NW diesels) and Rich Yungclas. Rich and I became friends and exchanged modeling ideas until he passed. I still have the John Deere combine he scratchbuilt for me in brass.

I continued my focus on freight cars, and my first contest "win" was second place in Scratchbuilt Freight Cars in 1975. I earned several more awards in the cars category, but it would take me several decades to complete my Cars Certificate.

When a new housing development started nearby, we bought a lot and plunged into home ownership. The basement was initially unfinished, and it became the home of a modular layout constructed by members of the Iowa City Society of Model Railroad Engineers, a group I had joined. When our children reached their teens, that layout was moved out in favor of a teen hangout space. That didn't stop me from modeling. I continued to build things, mostly freight cars.

Writing was another of my avocations, and in the early 1980s, I submitted an article to *THE NMRA BULLETIN* that became the first of a series called "Rip Track." Later, *BULLETIN* editor Mike Carlson asked if I would consider writing another regular series called "Open Loads." The first "Open Loads" article appeared in the *BULLETIN* in January 1986, and the series continued until 2005.

My participation in writing "Open Loads" was driven in part by a drive for a creative outlet and, in part, out of frustration. One of the things that bugged me was that I would see a photo of a locomotive, and behind it would be a car with an interesting load, but the photographer ignored the loaded car. Most photographers focused on the locomotives, and few



bothered to photograph the loads, even though the loads were what caused the railroad to exist. This pet peeve continues to this day.

I started carrying a camera in the car in case I encountered an interesting freight car load. The pictures I took inspired many models and the "Open Loads" series. If you are a railfan or rail photographer, don't put down your camera after the train's power passes. The same locomotives will be pulling another train tomorrow. The load you see might be a one-of-a-kind. The interesting things are in the train's cargo consist.

Through the "Open Loads" series and some Region NMRA meets in Illinois and Wisconsin, I met several other modelers interested in freight car loads, including MMR® Gary Loiselle, who kindly agreed to contribute a few articles himself. Dean Freytag, MMR®, the "King of Steel Mill Modelers," also contributed ideas through our correspondence. My "Open Loads" writing experience earned me the Author and Volunteer certificates.

In 2006, I joined a group of modelers in eastern Iowa in forming the Hawkeye Model Railroad Club to acquire a space and build a "permanent" layout. Among the other founding members was Peter Jaynes, MMR®. Peter became a good friend and mentored me in the art of scenery

modeling, resulting in my earning the Scenery Certificate at HMRC.

Some other longtime friends invited us to visit some home layouts in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where I became acquainted with the joy of operating model railroads, leading to my Chief Dispatcher certificate. Around this time, the Eastern Iowa Division became more active, and I started attending their quarterly meetings. There I met MMR's Allen Merta and Tony Bowen. Allen was Division AP Chair and encouraged me to keep working on my AP certificates. My kids had married and moved out, and our basement was (mostly) mine again, so I started building my seventh layout and earned the Model Railroad Engineer – Civil and Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical certificates.

Most of us have our “Walter Mitty” moments where we want to work on a full-size railroad. I had my chance in 2006 when the University of Iowa Athletic Department and the Iowa Northern and

Iowa Interstate Railroads combined forces to create the *Hawkeye Express*. The *Express* moved football fans from remote parking lots to Kinnick Stadium for Hawkeye football games. A call went out for volunteers to serve as car attendants, and I answered it. I was selected as one of the regular crew members and served all 16 seasons the *Express* operated. That experience prompted me to create a model of the *Hawkeye Express* passenger cars and fill in the missing requirement for my Cars certificate. It only took me 40 years to get it. Never give up.

After 16 years in its original location, the Hawkeye Model Railroad Club lost its lease and decided to build a new home (which it owns) on the Johnson County Fairgrounds. The new building means a new layout, which is being designed as I write this. I'll have a role in building it — my eighth layout.

Because HMRC has a physical presence in the community, it draws many

people interested in model railroads who come to see the layout. This has proven to be a great opportunity to share the joy of model railroading with others. I plan to continue to participate in sharing that joy for as long as I am able.

Professionally, I retired from the University of Iowa, where I was senior quality engineer in the healthcare enterprise and adjunct faculty in the College of Public Health. My grandchildren enjoy coming to grandpa's house and “playing trains,” which warms my heart.

Certificates Earned Tom Persoon, MMR® #735

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

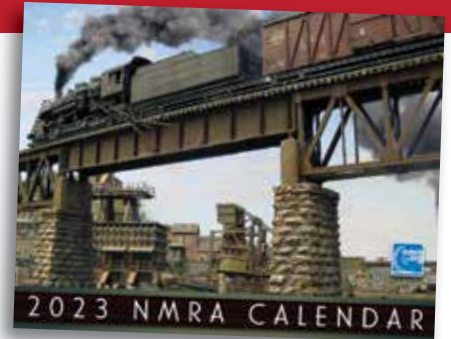
We're looking for a few good layouts...

...12 to be exact! You're proud of your model railroad. Why not share it by submitting a photo or two for the **2024** edition of the NMRA Model Railroad Calendar? The calendar is distributed to every U.S. member as a fundraising project. To have your layout photo considered for inclusion, just follow these easy steps:

- Take a horizontal (landscape) format photo of your layout.
- Submit your photo as a digital file. Files must be at least 300 pixels per inch and 8" x 12" (minimum size of 8.6 megapixels – larger is better). Accepted file types are **tiff** (preferred) or **jpg** (highest quality only).
- Write a **caption** describing the action in your shot, the scale, the builder, and the photographer. Include that information as a text or .doc file.
- Include your name, address, phone number and email address.
- Please limit your entries to no more than your four best scenes.
- Submit your photo and text files for free at: **www.wetransfer.com**.

NOTE: By submitting images for the 2024 NMRA Calendar, you are giving permission to the editors to alter them as needed (cropping, smoke and lighting effects, etc). Please indicate specifically if you do **NOT** give permission to alter your images.

Photos must be submitted by
July 15, 2023 for consideration.



Photography and HO scale modeling by Richard Walz, Northampton, Massachusetts.

To submit your photo and text files go to **www.wetransfer.com**. If you don't see the “Upload files” box (shown below) click on the “I just want to send files” link at the bottom of the page. *Follow these steps:*

	1	Click Upload files. Locate and add your files
<input type="text" value="Email to"/>	2	Email to: scwd.email@gmail.com
<input type="text" value="Your email"/>	3	Add your email address
<input type="text" value="Title"/>	4	Add the title: 2024 Calendar
<input type="text" value="Message"/>	5	Add your name, address & phone number
	6	Click the Transfer button

You will receive a confirmation email.

Questions? Contact Mike Brestel at 513-481-0185 or mbrestel@zoomtown.com