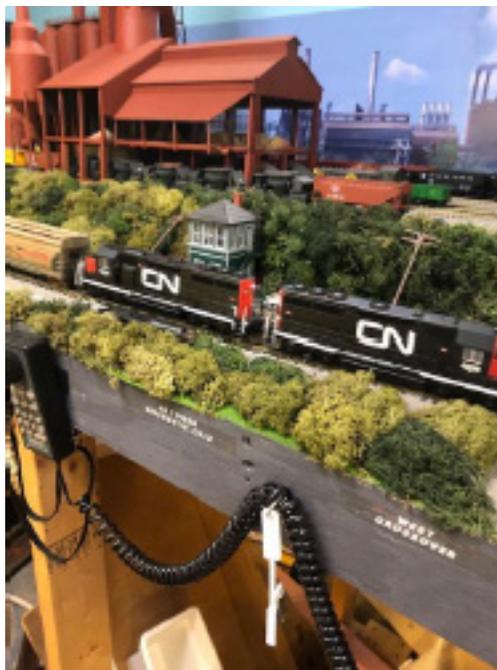




# The Kingpin

Newsletter of the  
**Mid Central Region**  
National Model Railroad Association  
February 2023



All photos: provided by convention committee.



## **Mid Central Regional Convention**

**Hosted by Division 2**

**May 4 - 7, 2023**

**at the Doubletree by Hilton in Mars PA  
(just north of Pittsburgh)**

**Details Inside!**

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# INVITATION TO



On behalf of the Rails to Pittsburgh 2023 committee, let me invite you to the Pittsburgh area to enjoy the 2023 Mid-Central Region convention. Pittsburgh and the surrounding areas are a railroad hobbyist's dream, and we hope you will take advantage of our many opportunities.

We have put together an extensive clinic schedule with top-notch presenters. Our tours offer the opportunity to experience the region's diverse attractions that interest the rail and industrial enthusiasts. Our self-guided layout tour will give everyone an opportunity to visit a number of fine model railroads on Sunday, no matter which direction you travel on your way home. The usual fare of Banquet, Contests, White Elephant Sale, Raffle, Operating Sessions, Non-Rail activities and the opportunity to meet other modelers will round out this exciting weekend.

Keith DeVault, Convention Chair

*For the latest updates and corrections, please be sure to visit [www.railstopittsburgh.com](http://www.railstopittsburgh.com)*

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 CONVENTION HOTEL

Doubletree by Hilton at Cranberry, 910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA, 16046

Our convention hotel, the Doubletree by Hilton at Cranberry, is conveniently located within easy access to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and Interstate-79 just north of Pittsburgh. You can visit the city, see Station Square, ride the Duquesne or Monongahela Inclines, railfan and enjoy the area. You are just 15 minutes from Norfolk Southern Mainline and 20 minutes from CSX Mainline.

The Hotel staff and management are eager to host this NMRA Regional Convention with a nightly room charge of \$ 114.00. All Convention activities will be held on the first floor of the hotel and the parking is free. The hotel has a restaurant inside the main lobby, and other eating establishments are nearby. When you arrive at the hotel you will be given a restaurant guide for the area.

To make reservation, visit <https://www.keystonedivision.org/convention/hotel.html> or call 1-800-222-8733 or 724-776-6900 and reference both the National Model Railroad Association and the DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh Cranberry.



Hotel exterior view



Double occupancy room with balcony



Area outside of the Clinic Rooms



Hotel interior atrium

# **RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023**

## **CLINIC DESCRIPTIONS – PARTIAL LISTING AS OF 12/2022**

### **Track Geometry – Andy Blenko**

An overview of track geometry principles used in the design of prototype railroads and their application to model railroads. Topics covered include track spacing, curve radius, turnouts, reverse curves, grades, vertical curves, spiral easements, and super elevation. An excellent resource (with handouts) for beginners and a good review for those with more experience.

### **Design of Pittsburgh Main Line – Andy Blenko**

This clinic tells the story of the concept and design of an HO scale Conrail layout serving the industries east of Pittsburgh, PA. The main line interchanges with three other railroads and has a heavy emphasis on steel and its related industries.

### **Summers as a Bridge Engineering Intern for Norfolk Southern and Transtar - Charlie Blenko**

Charlie Blenko spent two of his summers in college working for railroads as an intern in their engineering departments. This presentation features highlights from internships with both Norfolk Southern and Transtar (US Steel's former railroads). The photos and job sites span twelve states including a lot of views from hirail trucks, bridges, and even the geometry train. The presentation will include behind the scenes stories and photos of derailments, bridge inspections, and construction projects to show how railroad engineering departments keep trains running.

### **Auto Frames – John Brown, MMR**

### **Operations on the Rehoboth Valley Railroad – Kenton Colvin**

This is a medium size layout 10' x 17'. It is a freelance railroad operating in September 1966 that has five staging tracks with the Pennsylvania Railroad. It has engine facilities and two interchange tracks where the PRR drops off and picks up cars. The RVRR services five other towns with various industries. The railroad has a total 23 industry drops, some industries have multiple locations for different types of cars.

### **Love Those Loads – Bob Frankrone**

Bob's clinic features a variety of open load models that can be built from commercially available kits or easily scratch built from basic materials. Beginners and master modelers alike will enjoy learning how to create interesting and realistic open loads. With plenty of photos from both the prototype and HO scale models, Bob's clinic is a real crowd pleaser. Bob is the author of the "Love Those Loads" series featured regularly in the NMRA Magazine.

### **How to Add a Scene to a Layout in 15 Easy Steps - Bob Frankrone**

This clinic will demonstrate how easy it is to create a nice looking scene, regardless of one's skill level. Watch as Bob converts a three-square-foot area on his layout into a complete scene in 15 easy steps. A few simple tools and some readily available materials are all he used to create the scene. Whether you are a beginner or a master modeler, you will enjoy seeing a bare spot morph into a complete scene.

### **Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway – Jim Hill, Vice President Transportation**

## **Modeling the Lehigh Valley Railroad in NY and PA in the Period before 1905 – Michael Hohn, MMR**

This clinic describes the building of a model railroad representing two locations on the Lehigh Valley Railroad around the turn of the Twentieth Century: Auburn, NY, a small city with diverse industries and commercial enterprises, and Alderson, PA, a small town in north-central Pennsylvania supported by lumbering and tourism. Track layouts, structures, and rolling stock represent the prototype in these contrasting scenes with as much fidelity as possible, based on insurance and railroad maps, historic photographs, equipment diagrams and registers, and a large dose of conjecture.

## **Build Your Own T-Trak Module (Build & Take Clinic) - Richie & Laura Jodon presenting**

Friday 10:30am for T-trak module assembly, break for lunch then 1pm & 2:30pm (2 sessions). Building a 1x single module (12" x 12") from a kit. Adding track then decorating it with grass, trees, and other items to make it uniquely yours. After class, modules will be added to the T-trak layout displayed at the convention. Price \$40, 10-20 participants MAX.

## **Modeling Realistic Vehicles - Grier Kuehn**

For some, model vehicles are as serious a hobby as model railroading. To the rest of us they may not be the main characters on our layouts, but play important roles. This clinic will focus on how some simple and fun steps can make vehicles of all price ranges more realistic to insure they enhance rather than detract. Although centered on HO, the theme carries over to all scales. A handout is included.

## **Modeling the Central Pennsylvania Scotia Iron Ore Works in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century - Jerry Lauchle, MMR**

In the early 1800s rich iron ore deposits were mined in the Nittany Valley of central Pennsylvania, particularly in the area known as the Barrens; pig iron was produced locally. In 1881-82, Andrew Carnegie purchased the Barrens and built the Scotia Iron Works. Over 200 tons of ore were mined and washed per day by the 250+ employees who lived in the company town of Scotia. Ore was transported on the Lewisburg & Tyrone RR to Tyrone where it continued on to the Pittsburgh steel factories on the PRR main line. The Centre County Historical Society has a crew of model railroaders building a re-creation of the Scotia Iron Works in HO scale. I have been assigned the building of two Otis-designed steam shovels. This clinic describes this undertaking.

## **Pour Me a River – George Pandelios**

The presenter will discuss the planning, preparation, and mechanics of accurately representing and pouring a large body of water (roughly 8' x 25") – the Ohio River – on his layout, the PRR Panhandle Division. The topic was recently the focus of a 6-part series in *O Scale Trains* magazine. An easy foam-based scenery technique will also be discussed, as well as lessons learned and future plans for the layout.

## **Classic Farm Tractors and Models 1917-1970 – Stephen Ross**

This clinic starts with a brief history of farm tractor production. Many examples of tractor transportation by rail are shown. Prototype and available tractor models are illustrated. Most prototype photos are restored examples seen at Pennsylvania antique tractor shows.

## **Tank Cars for the Natural Gas Industry – Stephen Ross**

This clinic presents the production of natural gas from around 1900 up until today. Currently most natural gas is transported by pipelines, so the focus will be on natural gas byproducts that are carried by railroad tank cars. These include natural gasoline and LP gas (propane and butane). Prototype

photos of processing plants are shown along with a number of different tank cars. Available models of the cars for use or as starting points for kitbashes will be discussed.

### **Backdrop Painting, 3 Part Clinic – Neal Schorr**

#### **Capturing the Commonwealth: How I Recreated Pennsy's Middle Division – Neal Schorr**

Inspired by a trip to Pennsylvania's Juniata River Valley in 1975, Neal has attempted to capture the scenic beauty of that area on his model railroad depicting PRR's Middle Division. He will identify the critical geologic and scenic features of central Pennsylvania as well as those of the railroad's physical plant that are necessary to create a highly accurate model of that railroad. The layout has appeared numerous times in the model railroad press including MRP and Kalmbach's "How To" series.

#### **Two Prototypes, Two Models - Sam Swanson and Steve Zapytowski**

More details to follow.

# **RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 MODELING WITH THE MASTERS ®**

## **Painting and Weathering with Inexpensive Craft Acrylic Paint**

**MMRs Fred Soward, Sam Swanson, Bob Weinheimer, Steve Zapytowski**

This hands-on clinic is focused on developing skills in painting and weathering models using a three-step process, including base-color painting, staining for shadows, and drybrushing for highlights. Each of these steps will be undertaken using common brushes and craft-style acrylic paints. Attendees should bring their small structures (built or unbuilt), details or figures, or rolling stock (preferably with wood sheathing, such as a boxcar or stock car) to be painted. Three models maximum are recommended. Each model or components to be painted should be primed with a flat overcoat (paint or Dullcoat), particularly if the model is plastic, to facilitate adherence of the craft acrylics. Brushes and paints will be provided, but attendees can bring their own as well, should guidance on various brush and paints be desired. Practice models will also be available. The cost of the clinic is \$20, which includes all work-station materials. We'll meet over a 3-hour period to thoroughly cover the basic techniques and as time allows, any advanced techniques attendees are interested in can be worked on as well.

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 MANUFACTURER'S / DEALER ROOM

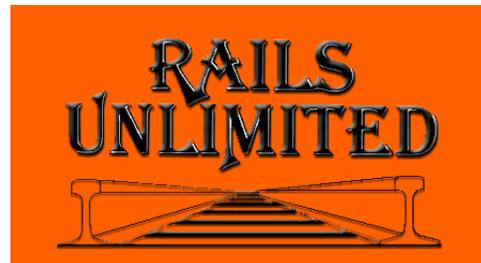
The 2023 MCR Regional convention is planning to have a room for manufacturers and local train dealers to display and sell their goods. It will be at the front of the T-TRAK display and open throughout the convention. This is in addition to the White Elephant sale where you can bring your items to sell. Manufacturers invited include, but are not limited to,:



Dwarvin Lighting Systems



Train Control Systems



Caboose Industries

Make time to visit these folks (and spend LOTS of money) while at the convention.

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 PROTOTYPE TOURS (PROPOSED)

## PENNSYLVANIA TROLLEY MUSEUM



Pennsylvania Trolley Museum is a museum dedicated to the operation and presentation of streetcars and trolleys. Come spend some time with us as we ride back in history just like your parents did growing up.

## CARRIE FURNACE

Carrie Furnace is a former blast furnace located along the Monongahela River in the industrial area of Pittsburgh. It was part of the Homestead Steel Works built in 1884. If you like to model the steel industry this tour is for you. Please check our website for up to date information on this tour.



## RIVERS OF STEEL EXPLORER RIVERBOAT



Rivers of Steel Explorer Riverboat, take the 90 minute river tour on the Monongahela River, See the Point, experience the unparalleled opportunity to become immersed in Pittsburgh's rich history while being surrounded by its natural beauty. Check our website for up to date information when this tour will leave the hotel.

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 OPERATING LAYOUTS

## Andy and Charlie Blenko's Conrail Pittsburgh Mainline – 40 minutes from Convention Hotel

Operator Slots Available: 5

Parking: On Street

Layout Scale: HO

Layout description: 600 square foot HO Scale layout set in the early 1980s depicting Conrail's double-track Pittsburgh Line from Johnstown to Pittsburgh with a lower deck for staging. This layout features a 280 foot two-track mainline as well as interchanges with Chessie, Union Railroad, and AVR. Scenery has just been started, but track on Conrail is 100% complete to the point that operations are well-developed.

Layout control: NCE DCC provides layout control. A central dispatcher directs operations through JMRI block detection and remote turnout control.

Physical Requirements: Stairs to reach basement, standing on concrete floor, no duck-unders.

Handicap Accessibility: No

Operations: Moderate (car card and waybill system, train orders, operating signals, two-way radios for communication)



## Don Coulter's Norfolk Southern Pittsburgh Southern – 18 minutes from Convention Hotel

Operator Slots Available: 6

Parking: On Street

Layout Scale: HO

Layout description: The Pittsburgh Southern is a modern, freelanced route of the Norfolk Southern running south out of Pittsburgh towards the mid-Atlantic. Traffic consists of a mix of locals, transfers, and mainline through trains. The trackwork is completed to allow for operating sessions. The 240-foot mainline runs point-to-point between two becks with several branches for switching. There is minimal scenery completed at this time, however the layout is now fully signaled.

Layout Control: DCC with NCE

Physical Requirements: Stairs, concrete floor, no duck-unders, walk-around operation

Handicap Accessibility: No

Operations: Moderate, fully signaled, dispatcher, yard limits



## Ken Hanawalt's Turtle Creek Railroad – 30 minutes from Convention Hotel

Operator Slots Available: 6

Parking: Parking on street - take care not to park directly across from driveways.

Layout Scale: HO

Layout description: The Turtle Creek Railroad is a two-level layout in a room about 34 feet by 27 feet. There are 30 towns, about 300 turnouts, and 900 freight cars. The scenery is mostly complete. We are just starting to install signals. The Turtle Creek Railroad is a free-lance switching layout, representing local freight traffic running from McKees Rocks, PA south to Brownsville, PA. There are no through freight or passenger trains. The motive power is a mix of steam and diesel with sound. Staging is distributed around the layout so that several trains can start at once.

Layout Control: DCC using NCE radio throttles

Physical Requirements: Standing to operate is required due to the layout height. There is a level entry to the layout from behind the house, but the driveway is sloped down from the street. A drop down bridge provides access to the layout, but no duck under is necessary during operations. Stairs are required to reach the rest room.

Handicap Accessibility: No

Operations: Moderate – The operation is moderately complex but easy to learn, low pressure and not sensitive to errors. Two person crews are used for each train. New operators have an experienced partner. Operation is based on intensive switching using car cards. There are a few signals, but not dispatcher. Crews must negotiate meets and passes. A key objective is to minimize waiting on the layout. Most crews will be busy during the entire session. We are easy going and friendly.



## Arly Mitchell's CL&W – 55 minutes from Convention Hotel

Operator Slots Available: 6

Parking: Parking on street

Layout Scale: HO

Layout description: The CL&W is a 576 square foot freelanced layout based on the Chessie System. Scenery is about 15% complete.

Layout Control: DCC using NCE

Physical Requirements: Standing with one duck under

Handicap Accessibility: No

Operations, Moderate with track warrants



## **Bob Prehoda's Huntingdon Northern Railroad – 37 minutes from Convention Hotel**

Operator Slots Available: 6

Parking: Driveway (4 cars) and street parking

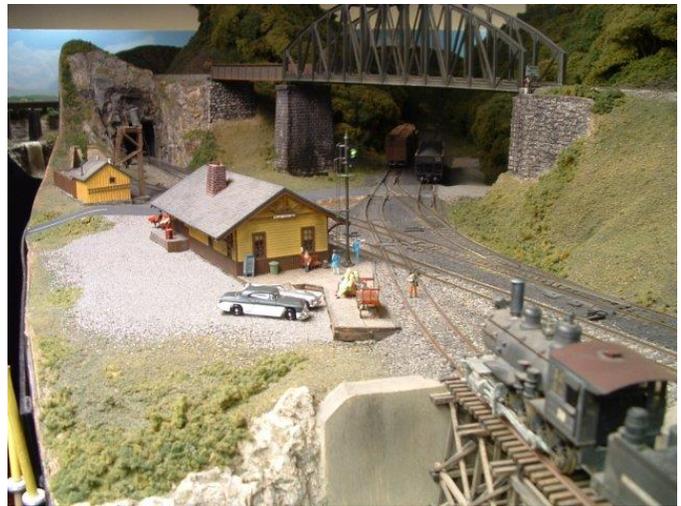
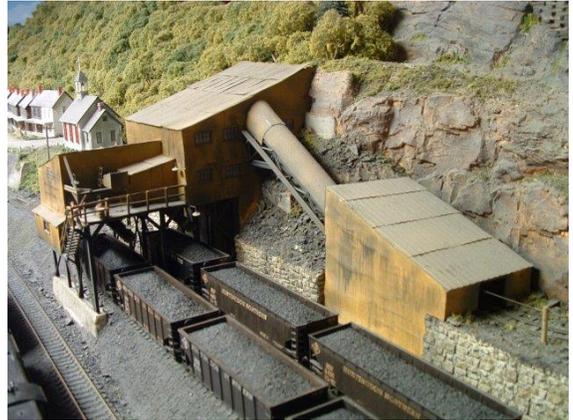
Layout Scale: HO

Layout description: The Huntingdon Northern is a freelanced medium-sized layout (24ft x 26ft) with 100% of it's scenery finished. The railroad is operated as a bridge route, set in Southwestern Pennsylvania between Pittsburgh and Cumberland, MD in 1957. The railroad uses a centralized Dispatcher that controls train movements by issuing train orders to crews and also used the train order signals as manual block signals. The Huntingdon Northern was featured in the November 1998 issue of Railroad Model Craftsman.

Layout Control: DCC with NCE and radio throttles

Physical Requirements: No stairs to reach basement, standing with aisle ways narrowing to 2 feet in width, no duck-unders. Not handicap accessible.

Operations: Moderate (car card and waybill system, train orders with manual block and telephones)



## **The Pittsburgh S-Gauger's Penn Creek Valley – 1 hour 4 minutes from Convention Hotel**

Operator Slots Available: 6

Parking: Street parking

Layout Scale: S

Layout description: Built by the late Sam Powell, this S SCALE (not American Flyer) layout depicts a fictional line running through the South Hills of Pittsburgh set between 1950 and 1953. The 27x26' layout has complete scenery and features several impressive scratch-built & kit-bashed structures as well as having all turnouts and much of the track hand laid. Equipment is a mix of Steam & Early Diesel and 40' cars and heavyweight coaches are still the order of the day. The railroad was gifted to the Dawson Historical Society upon Sam's passing, and has been graciously re-assembled by the Pittsburgh S Guager's and some friends of the Society.

Layout Control: Digitrax DCC w/ Duplex Radio & Wi-Fi Throttles

Physical Requirements: Standing required for operations and a duck under used for quick access.

Handicap Accessibility: Layout is wheelchair accessible, however bathrooms are not.

Operations: Moderate, Single track, Train order and switch lists. Operators will be paired and all will start as road crews with the possibility of advancement to yardmaster later in the session.

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023

## ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM – ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

The Regional convention is a great opportunity to start or reach the goal of a Volunteer Certificate. This is one of the easiest, if not the easiest, Certificate to accomplish. It's just keeping track of your time as you do things for the Convention. The points for these experiences never expire. If you volunteered for something in 1990, or 1970, or this year, they all count as long as you were a NMRA member at the time. Give yourself credit for your good works.

To qualify for the Association Volunteer certificate, you must participate in one or some of the following:

Just about any office or function that isn't covered under Association Official. Conventions (at all levels) are chock full of committees (Only the convention General Manager receives "Committee Manager" points - all others receive "Committee Member" points, even if their title includes the word "Manager"). Individuals who work just on a day of the event (for example at the convention registration desk) receive credit for one month's work as committee members. *NOTE:* There is generally a maximum of 24 time units credited for any one Regional event.

Serve actively on one or more NMRA committees, in this case Region, to accumulate or add twenty four (24) certified time units (TUs). The TUs you receive for various types of service are:

Active satisfactory service as a Region committee Chair/Manager committee member: 2 TUs per month.

Active satisfactory service as a Region committee member: 1 TU per month.

Official judges at NMRA sponsored model contests (including non-rail) shall be given time units for such service at the contest only (not monthly), as a one-time service credit per contest as follows: Region Contest Judge 2 Time Units

This credit is in addition to any credit that you may receive for being on the committee that works to set up the contest event.

Individuals (and their crews) who open their home or club layout for layout tours or operating sessions in conjunction with NMRA conventions or other NMRA sponsored events earn credit as follows for each day that the layout is open for viewing. Region Event 3 Time Units / day (6 TUs maximum per event)

This credit is in addition to any credit that they may receive for being on the committee that works to set up the event.

Individuals who participate in modular layouts in conjunction with NMRA events, or at NMRA sponsored events, earn credit as follows for each day the layout is open for viewing at the event. Region Event 3 Time Units / day (6 TUs maximum per event)

This credit is in addition to any credit that they may receive for being on the committee that works to set up the event.

A live clinic that is presented more than once earns Association Volunteer credits for each additional (the first presentation is credited toward Author unless the person already holds the Author certificate) presentation at the following schedule: Regional Clinic - 2 Time Units

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR SERVICE AS YOU DO IT: Obtain the record form from your local, or Regional, AP Manager, or online at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org), then fill it out and have it signed at the time of service. This is much easier than going back and collecting signatures later when you're ready to apply for your certificate. Must submit a completed Statement of Qualification (SOQ) itemizing evidence of completion of the above requirements, along with the signed record of service.

# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023

## SELF-GUIDED LAYOUT TOURS SUNDAY, MAY 7

### Monongahela Division of the Penn Central - Rob Enrico

Rob's magnificent O scale layout portrays the Monongahela Division of the Penn Central (ex-PRR) as it appeared in 1970. The layout is approximately 600 sq. feet and most of the scenery is completed. The track is handlaid and many of the structures are scratchbuilt. A notable feature is the assemblage of fully wired telegraph poles along the right of way. The layout has been featured in *Great Model Railroads*, *Model Railroad Planning*, and *O Scale Trains*.



### Huntingdon Northern Railway - Bob Prehoda

The freelanced HO Huntingdon Northern Railway depicts a railroad connecting those two cities in the year 1962. This 24' X 26' layout depicts prototypical operations and is typically run by 8 to 11 operators. Scenery is fully completed.



## Pennsylvania Railroad Panhandle Division - George Pandelios

This O scale layout depicts the [Pennsylvania Railroad's Panhandle Division](#) circa 1952. The centerpiece is the 12' double track cantilever through truss bridge across the Ohio River between Steubenville, OH and Weirton, WV. Although under construction, the bridge, backdrop, 40% of the benchwork, and some scenery have been installed. The track plan is a folded dog bone that features the cities of Steubenville and Weirton as well as a staging yard. Additional features planned are Weirton Steel, Weirton Junction, and Standard Slag. Motive power is mainly Pennsy steam (M1a, I1s, K4s, L1s). Signals are PRR style position lights. The layout is designed for operations using Trainmaster Command Control (TMCC).



## Pennsylvania Railroad Middle Division - Neal Schorr

Neal's O scale layout portrays the Middle Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its successor railroads between Harrisburg and Altoona as it appeared between the 1930's through today. The layout "ages" as it progresses from east to west allowing for the depiction of many eras. The highpoints of the layout are the highly realistic scenery and backdrop, signal system, and close adherence to civil engineering practices. The layout has frequently appeared in the model railroad press, including *Great Model Railroads 2022*, *Model Road Planning*, and Kalmbach's "How To" series.



## Rochester Area Heritage Society Museum and Model Railroad

The museum and model railroad features five different displays in five different scales (HO, N, O, Z, and G). The main display is an HO scale layout set in the early 1900's. It depicts the busy waterfront industries, hotels, and houses that lined the banks of the Ohio and Beaver Rivers near Rochester, PA. The HO layout features steam era locomotives of the Pennsylvania Railroad and many structures representative of the prototype including a highly detailed model of the H. C. Fry Glass Company. The model actually features authentic 110 year old glass produced by the company.



## Ohio River Southern Railway - Larry Willming

Larry's railroad, the "OHIO RIVER SOUTHERN RAILWAY" does not represent any particular railroad or time period, although the theme is basically modern railroading. There are no steam engines. The ORSRy is a 10' x 6' N scale layout built using KATO track and turnouts and is controlled using Digitrax DCC. The railroad goes through and around a wall between my living room and dining room. One side of the wall represents a big city and the other side is more country. Operation is mostly main line running although I have built in a yard and some industry to allow for some switching operations. My main interest is being able to create a scene that people will say, "That looks so real."



## Glyndale and Davidton Railroad - Gary Deavers

The Glyndale and Davidton Railroad dates to 1982 (formerly the Garysburgh and Davidton Railroad). Originally envisioned as a backwoods shortline, the G&D evolved into a heavy-duty branch borrowing heavily from B&O practices. The railroad underwent a major rebuilding beginning in 2013 that continues to this day. "Subterranean" staging and a simulated mainline between Connellsville, PA and Charleston, WV provide traffic for the G&D, set somewhere in Tucker County, WV. Traffic from the mainline feeds Glyndale Yard. From there, trains run up the G&D main to the town of Davidton. There are several industries and two large mines that require frequent switching.



## Pacific Central - Dennis Coglianese

The Pacific Central is an HO proto-freelanced railroad located in Northern California during the 1950's. The concept is that the Central Pacific didn't acquire the Southern Pacific and the Western Division was built by the Pacific Central instead. Operational features will include many SP trains interchanging with Pacific Central traffic. There is significant passenger traffic to keep the operators on their toes. The layout was started just over 6 years ago and we celebrated our Golden Spike in November 2019. The layout uses Digitrax DCC for control and RR Circuits products for block detection, signals and switch controls.



## Arel and Jolene Railroad - Joel Everly

Joel's HO Arel and Jolene Railroad is a large, double decked, point to point layout. A helix connects the two decks. The mainline is 300 feet long and 85% of the scenery is completed.



## Plum Creek Railroad - Tom Gaus

The [Plum Creek Railroad](#) is an HO scale 12' x 16' "C" shaped fictional freelance short line model railroad set in 1968. A 2.8 scale mile single track mainline connects North Bessemer and Saltsburg through Export, and a branch line runs from Murrysville, through Export to Jeanette. The layout is built and designed for the operations and running of trains, servicing industries located along the main and branch lines. Along with car cards and way bills, a block system using DC controllers power the trains. Scenery on the layout is about 85% complete, with operations for 1 to 5 operators that began in February 2004.



## Santa Fe - Galveston TX - Joe Yakubisin

Joe's railroad is N Scale, in the shape of a large "E." Operations are point to point and it is basically a switching layout with 4 areas of interest. It is loosely based on the Santa Fe, with mid-western scenery and Galveston TX as one of the end points. The scenery is complete with lots of industry. Joe uses a card system to move cars, and Digitrax radio to control operations.



## Blacklog & Shade Gap Eastern - Vagel Keller

Vagel's HO<sub>N3</sub> Blacklog & Shade Gap Eastern is an historically freelanced extension of the prototype East Broad Top set in southcentral Pennsylvania during peak Fall foliage sometime during the pre-World War Two years. It occupies most of a 17x11x21-ft U-shape layout, which it shares with an abridged version of the Pennsylvania Railroad's Cumberland Valley Branch in a first-floor studio-type apartment. Operations center on a small blast furnace served by both railroads, with a long branch line to mountain-top iron ore mines, daily coal turns for the coke ovens, and mixed freight and passenger service. Colorado prototype steam powers the narrow gauge, while the standard gauge sees Pennsy power typical for pre-WW2 branch lines and occasional steam-to-diesel era "time machine" trains in all their Pennsy glory. Trackwork is complete, scenery - with hand-painted mountain backdrops - is about half done, and train control is wireless Digitrax.



Rails to Pittsburgh – May 4-7, 2023 – [www.railstopittsburgh.com](http://www.railstopittsburgh.com)

## Anthony Kulfan

Anthony's O scale layout is intended as a depiction of Conrail in the Western Pennsylvania-Eastern Ohio region. Motive power is mainly Conrail diesel power, with incursions of Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, Buffalo & Pittsburgh, and CSX locomotives. The track design is a folded dog bone including a seven track yard on the main level, and a hidden staging yard. The layout features a realistic signal system with PRR-style position light signals governing the double-track mainline and interlockings. The layout is designed for operation using command control.



## Ohio Valley Lines - Model Railroad Club

The [Ohio Valley Lines](#) is located in Ambridge, a few short blocks from Old Economy Village in the Ambridge Historic District. We have two scale model railroads, a library of railroad materials (by appointment only) and a museum of prototype railroad items. The HO and N Scale model railroads depict industry and life in the upper Ohio River Valley in a period from 1940 to 1965. The members provide most of the motive power and rolling stock, hence the broad era. The HO scale railroad has been under construction since 2000 and is virtually complete. The N scale railroad has been under construction for approximately 8 years and is also essentially finished.



## CL&W - Arley Mitchell

Arley's railroad is named the CL&W. It is based on a real subdivision of the B&O that ran out of Wheeling to and headed to Cleveland. In real life it cut around Beech City Ohio. The coal business is alive and well on the railroad and there are 2 active mines. Steel is also a big generator of traffic on the CL&W. There is also a refinery to switch and a slag plant that takes the waste product out of the blast furnace. The railroad also features a hidden helix. The features point to point operation and a double track mainline. Scenery is about 30% complete. Control is NCE DCC. Operations utilize a dispatcher and a tower operator when there are enough people to fill all of the positions.



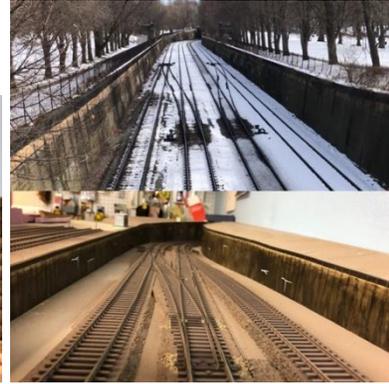
## Pittsburgh Southern - Don Coulter

The Pittsburgh Southern is a modern, freelanced route of the Norfolk Southern, running south out of Pittsburgh towards the mid-Atlantic. Traffic consists of a mix of locals, transfers, and mainline through trains. Most of the trackwork is completed to allow for operating sessions, and there are plans to extend the second deck in the future. The 240-foot mainline runs point-to-point with several branches for switching. There is minimal scenery completed at this time, however the layout is now fully signaled. Layout control is via DCC with NCE.



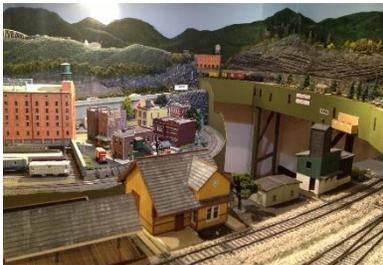
## Pittsburgh Mainline - Andy and Charlie Blenko

The "[Pittsburgh Mainline](#)" is an HO scale layout representing Conrail's Pittsburgh Division between Pittsburgh and Johnstown and is set in the early 1980's. It features a 160 foot long two track mainline with two hidden "through" staging yards to allow continuous loop operation. Benchwork is 90% complete and scenery is 5% finished. It interchanges with the Chessie System, Union Railroad, and the Allegheny Valley Railroad. Major industries include the USS Edgar Thompson Works, Clairton Coke Works, the USS Irvin Works, Pennelec's Conemaugh generation station, and Westinghouse Electric's East Pittsburgh plant. Several highly accurate models of railroad overpasses are featured on the layout. The layout occupies two rooms; one is 13' X 25' and the other is 16' X 20'.



## Penn Creek Valley Railroad - Pittsburgh S Gaugers

Curated by the Pittsburgh S Gaugers, the Penn Creek Valley is a large freelanced layout designed to suggest the landscapes and industries of southwestern Pennsylvania in the approximate era of 1950-1962. Built by the late Sam Powell of Gaithersburg, Maryland, the layout was disassembled and moved to Dawson in 2016 after Mr. Powell's premature death. This is a fully scale (not hirail) layout in S scale and features a variety of commercial, kit, and scratchbuilt locomotives, rolling stock, and structures. It operates on a Digitrax command control system. The layout has been featured in Model Railroader and Classic Toy Trains.



## Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad - Larry Caniff

This spectacular and highly unusual indoor G scale layout portrays the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad and highlights the steel industry. The railroad is 55' X 75' and has 1400 feet of track and roughly 45 switches. The layout is fully scened and features many scratchbuilt structures. Because the future of the layout is uncertain, now is the time to see this one of a kind model railroad.



## Beaver County Model Railroad and Historical Society

The Beaver County Model Railroad is an HO scale layout. While it doesn't model any particular prototype, it is designed to represent much of Western Pennsylvania's rich railroading history and associated industries. The layout features both conventional DC and Digitrax DCC and is located in a former Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad station.



## Turtle Creek Railroad - Ken Hanawalt

Ken's Turtle Creek Railroad is a freelanced HO layout with three branch lines and features lots of local switching with an incredible 189 industrial spurs in 800 sq. feet. Train control is by DCC. The layout is fully signaled and has about 900 freight cars.



## Midwest Railroad - Bob DiBenedetto

The name of Bob's railroad is The Midwest RR. It is a switching layout that has a continuous run and includes a branch line which serves about a dozen industries. It is approximately 6'x20' and is fully scened. One of the walls in the layout room includes a large display of Bob's rolling stock.



## Baltimore and Ohio Railroad - Alden McBee

This HO layout models the B&O between Grafton and Terra Alta, WV, 1977-1978. It has 4 scale miles of double track main line with three grades, the steepest being Cranberry grade at 2.5% and requiring helpers. The towns of Grafton, Irontown, Hardman, Independence, Newburg, West End, Tunnelton, Rowlesburg and Terra Alta are currently or will be modeled. The layout is double decked and point to point with a staging yard at each end. Trackwork is a combination of handlaid, Central Valley, and Micro Engineering track laid on Homabed and composite roadbed.



## East Broad Top - Brian Budeit

Brian's HOn3 layout depicts a mythical connection between the East Broad Top and Tuscarora Valley Railroads. The layout is set near the town of East Waterford in the heart of Pennsylvania's Appalachian Mountains. This 15' X 20' layout is set in the early 1900's.



## Mon Yough Valley Railroad - McKeesport Model Railroad Club

The McKeesport Model Railroad Club, home of the 2200 sq. feet Mon Yough Valley RR., recently celebrated its 70th anniversary. The MYV is a fictional bridge route from Cumberland, Md. to Erie, Pa. The layout includes a branch line, industrial, steel mill, narrow gauge, and logging railroads, as well as a street car line. Scenery is about 50% finished. The control system is still in a "tweaking" mode as the club experiments with a hybrid DC/DCC control system based on Digitrax. Some areas are already DCC controlled, but the mainline is DC.



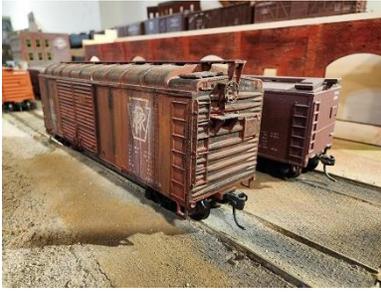
## D.A.R.E. Club

The D.A.R.E. Club features layouts in HO, N, O, and G scales. There are three 3 HO layouts. Two are mainly for the student members of the club and are DC operated. One sits inside of the "donut hole" of a modular HO layout. A third HO layout replicates the Montour Railroad and is DCC operated. It is a point to point layout, representing the prototype as it existed in the 1970's. The O scale layout features Lionel and MTH trains and is operated with DCS. It has 3 loops and several yards and sidings. There are 2 additional small O scale layouts. The G scale layout consists of two loops with a siding and a separate track with a doodlebug that runs point to point. Finally, the Montour Railroad Historical Society displays photographs and artifacts of the Montour RR on the second floor of the school.



## Delaware Ave, Philadelphia - Rick Bennet

Rick's layout is built off of plans that were drawn by Bill Neale. The plans were featured in the 2017 issue of Model Railroad Planning. It is called Delaware Ave and is based in Philadelphia in 1942. The motive power is all steam except for an elevated track section that will be powered by an electric engine that will bring cars out of staging.



## Union Pacific - Dave Neumann

Dave's highly entertaining O gauge layout features Union Pacific big steam, early diesels, and long trains. The layout measures 28' by 32', and the scenery is fully completed. Some of the highlights of the layout are several large trestles, a 28' long commercial district, and an 8 track yard. The layout has been featured in the model railroad press.



# RAILS TO PITTSBURGH 2023 Mid Central NMRA Regional Convention! May 4-7, 2023

**EVERYTHING YOU WANT IN A GREAT CONVENTION, AND MORE!**  
**Clinics – Tours – Contests – Non-Rail Activities – Layout Tours**  
**Banquet – White Elephant Tables – Door Prizes – Railfanning**

Our convention hotel, the Doubletree by Hilton at Cranberry is conveniently located within easy access to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and Interstate-79 just north of Pittsburgh. You can visit the city, see Station Square, ride the Duquesne or Monongahela Inclines, railfan and enjoy the area. You are just 15 minutes from Norfolk Southern Mainline and 20 minutes from CSX Mainline.

Here are some of the **POTENTIAL** activities available at the **RAILS TO PITTSBURGH** Convention!

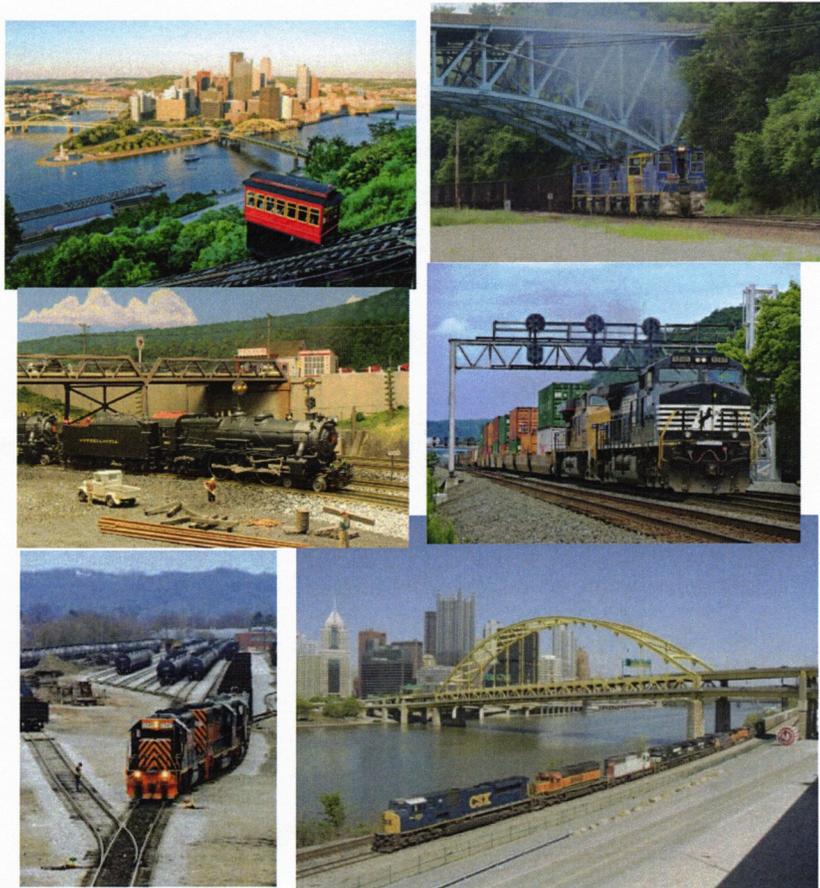
**A Variety of Rail Tours**  
 Steel Industry History  
 The Bridges of Pittsburgh  
 Port Authority Light Rail Shops  
 The Pennsylvania Trolley Museum

**Excellent Clinics**  
 Western Pennsylvania Railroads  
 Steel and Other Industries  
 Operations: Real and Simulated  
 Modern Railroad Practices  
 Modeling Structures, Rolling Stock and Scenery

**Non-Rail Tours and Clinics**  
 Pittsburgh Glass Factory Tour,  
 Card making, Jewelry,

**Local Attractions**  
 Carnegie Science Center – National Aviary  
 Heinz History Center – Duquesne Incline  
 Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium  
 Phipps Conservatory – The Andy Warhol Museum

**Railfanning**  
 NS & CSX Mainline Action  
 W & LE & Union Railroad  
 Variety of Local Short lines



For more information, check our website frequently for updates: [www.keystonedivision.org](http://www.keystonedivision.org)



**RAILS TO PITTSBURGH**  
**Early Registration Form**  
**May 4-7, 2023**  
[RailsToPittsburgh.com](http://RailsToPittsburgh.com)



Primary Registrant Badge Name \_\_\_\_\_ (must be NMRA member)

NMRA No. \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons attending \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Others \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Quantity	Price	Amount
Basic Registration (\$95 until 3/15, \$105 after )			
Family Members (per person, spouse or child) (\$35 until 3/15, \$40 after)			
Saturday Only Registration (\$35 until 3/15, \$40 after)			
Banquet: (select menu options) <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Vegan <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian <input type="checkbox"/> Gluten Free		\$55.00	
One Year Full NMRA Membership (with print magazine subscription)		\$92.00	
One Year NMRA Membership (without print magazine subscription)		\$68.00	
NMRA RAILPASS 9-month* includes digital magazine- *One-time only, new members or members dormant for 2 or more years		\$19.95	
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>			<b>\$</b>

See [www.RailsToPittsburgh.com](http://www.RailsToPittsburgh.com) for complete registration details.

Sign-up form for extra fare items will be available at a later date.

Activity assignment will be based on the order that the applications are received.

Make check payable to: **NMRA, Keystone Div 2, Mid-Central Region**

Mail to: **Convention Registrar, Tom Gaus**

**3357 New Texas Road**

**Pittsburgh, PA 15239**

**e-mail: registrar@RailsToPittsburgh.com**

Room reservations are made directly with the convention hotel at \$114.00 per night.

Mention **National Model Railroad Assn.** to get this price when making reservations!

**Doubletree by Hilton at Cranberry**

**910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, Pa 16046**

**724-776-6900**

**Cancellation Policy Summary:**

- See [www.RailsToPittsburgh.com/registration.html#cancel](http://www.RailsToPittsburgh.com/registration.html#cancel) for complete cancellation details.
- All requests for cancellation refunds shall be made prior to the beginning of the convention.
- If a cancellation is made prior to April 1, 2023, a full refund will be permitted, less applicable fees.
- No refund will be granted on unused Banquet tickets unless a registration fee refund is also granted.



## T-TRAK Call for Modules

This Call for Modules is intended for those T-TRAK modelers that might be interested in attending the “Rails to Pittsburgh”, NMRA Mid Central Regional Convention hosted by the Keystone Division.

The convention will be presented at The Doubletree by Hilton at Cranberry in a suburb of Pittsburgh on May 4-7, 2023.

The large layout will be hosted by the convention as an invitational layout and will be open to all modelers attending the convention.

The layout will occupy half of one of the hotel’s Banquet Halls, in a room 64’ by 60’ and tentatively will be a three branch E shaped layout. The layout plan will support 80 double equivalent modules.

This Call for Modules is particularly directed at T-TRAKers residing in western Pennsylvania, western New York and northern Ohio areas.

If you are interested in participating in this invitational Layout, please send an email to [bdemaeyer@att.net](mailto:bdemaeyer@att.net)

Information about the Convention can be found at

[www.keystonedivision.org](http://www.keystonedivision.org)

Find additional T-Trak information at

<https://www.ntrak.org/T-TRAK>



**TEXAS EXPRESS**    

**AUGUST 20-26**  
**Dallas/Fort Worth**  
**GAYLORD RESORT, GRAPEVINE**

**SUPERCHARGED - HIGH SPEED - STREAMLINED**

# NATIONAL TRAIN SHOW

August 25-27

# SPENCER CHRISTIAN

Banquet Speaker

# GAYLORD RESORT

4-star Hotel and Water Park

# BNSF HQ TOUR

Dispatching Center and Intermodal Yard

# CLINICS

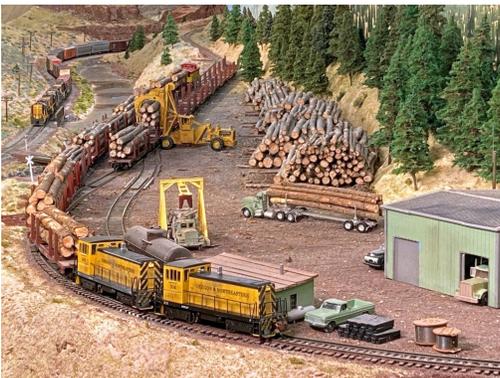
# SIG ACTIVITIES

# LAYOUT TOURS

# OPERATION SESSIONS

# CONTEST AND DISPLAY

# FREEMO-N OPERATIONS



## RAIL TOURS

- Texo Grain Mill
- Private Railcars
- TexRail Back Shop
- Texas State Railroad
- Trinity Rail Car Plant
- BNSF Intermodal Yard
- Six Flags Railroad Shop
- Grapevine Vintage Railroad
- McKinney Ave Trolley Shops
- Trinity Tank Car Cleaning Plant
- BNSF National Operations Center
- Museum of the American Railroad
- BNSF Private Western Art Collection
- T&P, Santa Fe, & Dallas Union Stations
- Fort Worth & Western Railroad Back Shop
- Union Pacific Dallas International Terminal
- Light Rail & Commuter Shops (DART & TRE)

## GENERAL INTEREST

- George W Bush Library
- Fort Worth Stockyards
- Grapevine Wine Tour
- Sixth Floor Museum
- Fort Worth Modern
- Holocost Museum
- Kimbell Museum
- Globe Life Park
- AT&T Stadium
- Dealey Plaza

**nmra** *National Convention*  
**2023 TEXAS EXPRESS.COM**

# Events

(MCR Convention and National appear elsewhere in this issue.)

Information copied “as is” from various sources. Not necessarily all-inclusive.

Double-check for cancellations and time changes before venturing forth.

Date March 11, 2023, Saturday 10 am to 3 pm

## **Spring Flea Market and Trade Show**

Admission \$7, free kids under 10, youth (11-15) \$3

Location Lakota West Freshman Campus, 5050 Tylersville Rd, West Chester, OH

March 16 - 18, 2023

## **29th Annual Midwest Narrow Gauge Show**

All Scales and Gauges Welcome: HOn30, HOn3, Sn2, Sn3, On2, On30, On3

Show Location: 7600 W. South Range Rd, (State Route 165), Salem, OH 44460

Vendors, Clinics, Modular Layouts, Displays, Model Contest

March 18, 2023

## **Division 8 Train Show**

Holy Family Parish Saffin Center, 3938 Poplar Level Rd, Louisville, KY 40213

10:00am to 3:00pm (9:00am for members)

(continued on next page)

March 18-19, 2023

**Div. 5 Railfest - Model Railroad Show**

Lakeland Community College

7700 Clocktower Dr., Kirtland, Ohio 44094

10 am to 4 pm

Adm. \$8.00

March 24, 2023

**Independence Train Show - KD Trains LLC**

The Independence High School Fieldhouse

6001 Archwood Rd.

Independence, Oh 44131

10 am - 3 pm

Adm. \$7.00

October 19-22, 2023

**Round the Curve to Altoona, 2023 MER Regional Convention**

Where: Altoona Grand Hotel

Hosted by the Susquehanna Division 11

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Fred Soward MMR®  
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## From the editor

Division 7's Oilcan mentions that **Frank Koch** is recovering from heart surgery. Frank is a volunteer's volunteer in the NMRA and has a long history of successfully taking on jobs at division, region and national levels. As an example, he's the man in charge of the Achievement Program at all three levels. Frank has helped resolve a few questions for me (as editor and elsewhere in the organization). We join everyone else in wishing Frank a fast recovery.

In YouTubes:

Our region's own **That Train Couple** continue to make videos that always seem to promote the NMRA. Their most recent efforts have covered a **Division 05** trip to *Age of Steam Roundhouse*, and their recent visit to the *Amherst Society (Springfield MA) Show*. If you want to show your support, please consider subscribing to their channel and hitting the Like button if you can.

**Blondihack's** channel is starting a live steam locomotive build. While she posts almost religiously on Saturday afternoons, the locomotive build will only be covered occasionally since it'll be a long project - so far it seems to be every third video. As a tie-in, I believe that Frank Koch started on this locomotive many years ago. It's one of those where just starting says a lot about skill - most of us just read the book and shake our heads.

**Boomer Diorama.** Good grief!, this guy is giving a master class in converting art supplies and plastic sheets into museum quality models. He's also very prolific. I've probably watched 15 hours and barely seem to have scratched the surface.

**Chandwell:** an English modeler who scratchbuilds a lot of structures from cardstock. His concerns about perspective are rocket science to me but may be of usable interest to others.

**DIY and Digital Railroad** - I don't need this channel but the hobby does, so I'm a Patreon. Lots of beginner friendly advice that does a good job of avoiding higher cost solutions. I think he's doing a good job of keeping people in the hobby.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Pittsburgh. I've got my reservations in for Texas as well.

Dave Wms