

October 2020

[www.nmra-scwd.org](http://www.nmra-scwd.org)

Volume 52 No. 2

## Super's Report

Phil Hottmann  
Division Superintendent

Our first virtual general membership meeting is now complete. Overall, I think we did quite well although the meeting went a little longer than we expected and we may want to keep them a little shorter in future. Bob McGeever's presentation on JMRI shipping software was very well done. There was a lot of vital information regarding the use of this tool.

Someday I hope to utilize this as well. I think for everyone that is starting or developing their layout knowing the required movements will be essential for your layout design. The real benefit of having one of our members versed in the use of this software is they can potentially answer a few questions if we get stuck.

One of the questions we had was, what is the best way to present a layout tour. Bill and Kathy Clancy first attempted to present a live feed using their iPhone. This presented a number of issues with clarity so we decided to do play pre-recorded video instead. While this did work out quite well, there were still some issues with lag in the presentation. The video lagged behind the audio and sometimes the audio broke up. To prevent this in the future it was suggested that the videos be placed in a PowerPoint presentation. Apparently, this format compresses the file. Thanks again to Bill & Kathy for being the guinea pigs in working out the kinks in doing presentations this way.

Our attendance was a little lower than we would have expected for an in-person meeting. We don't know if some people are uncomfortable with the technology or

### Next SCWD Meet

October 4, 2020 at 1:00 pm

ZOOM Meeting

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### Next BOD Meeting:

October 12, 2020 at 7:00 pm

ZOOM Meeting



are missing the usual comradery that we all get attending a meeting in-person. If anyone needs some assistance getting their "Zoom" meeting set up, I am willing to setup a test meeting with them.

In the future I am hoping to setup more two-way communications during the meeting. During our Happy Hour sessions, we did a couple of short presentations that led to several interesting conversations. Participants seemed to find this very enjoyable.

Some of you are probably wondering about the Rail School and Train Show. The BOD decided to cancel the Rail School this year. We plan on conducting a general membership meeting instead. As for the Train Show we still have a little time to plan. We expect to have a decision before the November meeting.

Phil



## Clinic Corner

Mike Vivion, Clinic Chair

On behalf of the Clinics Committee, I want to thank Past Superintendent Bob McGeever for presenting our first clinic of the year, "Operations as a Pull System using JMRI OperationsPro". As many of you are aware, the JMRI (which an acronym for A Java Model Railroad Interface) software for model railroading, is free software developed by fellow modelers and members of the NMRA. If you are interested in obtaining this software, go to [www.JMRI.org](http://www.JMRI.org) to learn more about the software and get free downloads of it. While I have personally used the Decoder Pro part of JMRI to aid me in programming DCC locomotives, I confess to having had limited knowledge of the remainder of JMRI. Bob's clinic clearly showed that there is a lot more available in this software. I encourage all of you to learn more about JMRI, and hopefully you will contact me about presenting a clinic on other parts of the JMRI package in the future.

I will be presenting a clinic titled "Kit-bashing Cornerstones" on October 4th to show some of the ways I have kit-bashed (i.e., built and modified) several of the popular HO Walther's Cornerstone Models for a customer/friend. He models the Wisconsin Central Railroad as it existed previously within our state. I know that many of you may have purchased structures in the Cornerstone series, and perhaps have yet to build them, so I hope this clinic will give you ideas for constructing and modifying these kits to suit the needs of your layout. While these models I built were done in HO, I hope that you will see that many of the things I will present can also be applied to the Cornerstone N scale models as well.

As I mentioned in last month's column, I already have an excellent clinic lined up for November by someone outside the SCWD. Steve Miazga, of the WISE Division, from Waukesha will be presenting on November 1st. Steve models in N scale, has had two excellent articles on his layout published in *Model Railroader* within the past year, is current Editor of the WISE Division's "Owl Car" newsletter and a member of their Board of Directors, and has allowed several SCWD members, including myself, to experience the fun of operating on his layout. While I don't want to give the exact title of Steve's clinic now, I know it is a new one and that is not specific to N scale. (I will reveal the title in the November column.) So I hope everyone will "zoom in" to enjoy Steve's clinic in November.

As I wrote last month, if you are interested in presenting a clinic or have someone to recommend, please contact Bill Clancy, Ken Hojnacki or, so we can start working on getting those clinics lined up for the rest of

the 2020-2021 season. And we welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have to improve our clinics, following our October and subsequent meetings. See you virtually on October 4th!

Mike

## Layout Tours

Phil Hottmann

I would like to thank Bill and Kathy Clancy for all their efforts in producing their presentation during the September meeting. Being the first ones to present led to quite a bit of extra work to ensure it would go smoothly. Of course, this layout is impressive. I do not think anyone puts in the amount of time that Bill does. The fact that this operating layout was built in not that many years is impressive.

I am looking to fill out the season and don't have a tour set for October yet. I am hoping we can get to see some layouts that are outside of our usual driving distance. I know there are some layouts we just don't get to or rarely get to that the members would love to see. I do think that we need to have videos, and photographs put into a PowerPoint presentation would work as well. Please contact me if you can present a virtual tour of your layout over the next few months.

Phil

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**Join us next summer in**  
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Visit [www.nmra2021.com](http://www.nmra2021.com) for initial information.

## SCWD listserv starts a new area: The OPS Corner

Steve Lanphear

Model Railroad Operation (frequently called OPS) is a fun and interesting role playing game where the players (operators) use model trains to simulate the movements of real trains and the actions of real railroad employees. Many of our SCWD members participate each month at multiple layouts to enjoy this fun and stimulating practice of critical thinking and problem solving in the context on railroad operations!

Last month, a group of SCWD members started a project to introduce more of our members to the enjoyment of, as our wives call it, playing trains. We have been engaged in operating sessions for as many as 20 years or more and would like to get more of you interested.

We are beginning by introducing interested members to the basics of operations by using a series of lessons revolving around a set of puzzles. The first few lessons are using the **Inglenook Puzzle layout** and as you complete the basic skills needed, the layouts and the puzzles will become more complex. You will learn the method of **solution notation** that will be used throughout the puzzles to come, to show your solution to each puzzle.

It's not too late to check it out... so, join us as we embark on this new and exciting project!

Just send your email to Steve Lanphear at:

[scwdmemberlist@frontier.com](mailto:scwdmemberlist@frontier.com)

and ask to join the SCWD listserv and get the starting emails for the OPS Corner.

### OPS Puzzle Development Group

- Jim Feldman
- John Kosobucki
- Don Mayo
- Steve Lanphear

### Resource Group

- Al Potts
- John Schaffer
- Bill Weber
- Bob Wundrock



**Enjoy receiving  
interesting rail photos,  
model railroad tips and  
challenging  
Mystery Photos??**

Join The 75+ SCWD members and members from other Midwest Regional Divisions who are participating in the SCWD listserv. You can expect 4 - 6 photos of railfan photos or model railroad photos per week on average, as well as SCWD announcements, and a monthly Mystery Photo contest. The listserv has been running this since April 2012 ( that will be 7 years this coming April), and it has been quite popular.

The listserv is a one-way email broadcast to you, not a social media type service. The emails are sent in bulk, but as a BCC: type email, so no one knows the identity or email addresses of the participants. Once a month, I send out a Mystery Photo, and then if you know the answer or do a little research , you send an email back to [scwdmemberlist@frontier.com](mailto:scwdmemberlist@frontier.com) . About a week later, I post the answer and a list of the names of those who sent in answers that month. The answer often includes parts of the best correct answers received.

Please save this email so you know how to get a hold of me. So, if you would like to try out this FREE member service, just send me your **Name** and **email address** to the address below. You may drop out at any time by sending an email stating such to the same address below.

Steve Lanphear  
SCWD listserv Coordinator  
[scwdmemberlist@frontier.com](mailto:scwdmemberlist@frontier.com)

The below picture is a follow up to Jim Feldman's September Bad Order Article on "The Evolution of Rail".

Thanks to  
**Fred Robinson**  
for sending in  
this photo  
of a  
Panama Railroad rail,  
dated 1869!

He states he got the  
bookends when he  
lived in Panama.







**Minutes SCWD Board Meeting  
7:00 pm, August 10, 2020  
via Zoom meeting**



The meeting of the South Central Wisconsin Division Board of Directors was called to order at 7:39 pm by Superintendent Phil Hottmann. Phil Hottmann, Bob McGeever, Dr. Bill Clancy, Jim Feldman, Dave Dingman, Steve Preston, and Bill Mitchell were present. David Down was unable to join the meeting.

**Minutes:**

Motion by Dr. Clancy, second by Dingman, to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2020 meeting. Motion carried.

**Paymaster Report & Update on the Concerns for the Annual February 2021 Model Railroad Show and Sale**

Bob McGeever presented the 2019 - 2020 SCWD Annual Financial Summary Report for the fiscal year August 1 to July 31. The discussion was then focused on the 2020 - 2021 budget. The unknown factor for the 2020 - 2021 year is the annual February 2021 Madison Model Railroad Show and Sale. Vendor invitations have been sent out. Bob is determining if exhibitors are interested in participating in the show. The maintenance of the mailing list is an expense. A number of different budget options were discussed. The decision date to hold the February train show and sale is October 31, 2020. The proposed budget for 2020 - 2021 does not include the February train show. The budget will include the rail school, annual SCWD excursion, banquet, and picnic. If the train show is scheduled, the 2020 - 2021 annual budget will be revised. One cost that will be incurred this year will be for the maintenance of the train show mailing list. Bob is continuing discussions with the Dane County Exposition Center on the feasibility of the facility becoming available for February and also monitoring the COVID-19 rules that are imposed on public gatherings in Dane County. Currently, the Exposition Center is still designated as an alternative hospital site in the event.

Motion by Dr. Clancy, second by Dingman, to approve the 2019 - 2020 Annual Financial Report, proposed 2020 - 2021 Budget that does not include the Madison Model Railroad Show and Sale, and the Paymaster's Report for the month ending July 31. Motion carried.

**Committee Reports:**

There were no committee reports for August. Our standing committees have been somewhat inactive due to the COVID-19 situation.

**Old and New Business - Topics of Discussion:**

**Virtual Meeting Agenda for September:** The September 13 Monthly Meeting of the SCWD will be a "ZOOM" meeting. At least one clinic and one virtual layout tour has been scheduled. Clinics and layout tours need to be scheduled for the rest of our monthly meetings. A clinic has been scheduled for the November meeting.

**Monthly Membership Meeting:** A "Virtual Meeting Survey" will be sent out to the membership to determine what types of clinics and layout tours would be of interest. Steve Brist will be contacted to determine how to include our past SCWD Youth Group members. A possible invitation may be sent "To the Parents of past SCWD Youth Group Members". National Model Railroad Association youth participation guidelines are still being formulated. Clinics and layout tours need to be scheduled for the rest of our monthly meetings. A clinic has been scheduled for the November meeting.

**Test Meeting included with August ZOOM "Happy Hour":** Instructions will be sent to the membership that will include how to use "ZOOM": how to download and the application to a personal device, how to open up the link to the meeting, how to turn on "Video" and "Microphone" if the device has video and microphone capabilities. This "Test Meeting" will be in conjunction with the Friday, August 28 virtual "Happy Hour" that will start at 5:00 pm. All members will be encouraged to participate in this "Test" and "Happy Hour" event so that joining the September 13 "Virtual" monthly should keep technical problems at minimum.

**Special Interest Groups - Operations:** Steve Lanphear has started sending out "Inglenook" switching puzzles to people who are interested in solving these switching puzzles. Steve sending out "Modelers Corner" updates that are sent to him by SCWD members. If a person wants to receive the "Inglenook" puzzles and/or "Modelers Corner" communications, that person should contact Steve directly. His contact information is in the RED BOOK.

**September 14 SCWD Board of Directors Meeting:** Invitations will be extended to Mike Vivion and Ken Hojnacki to join our September meeting. Other members of the SCWD may also join the meetings. Contact Phil Hottmann (in the RED BOOK) for an invitation.

### **Support of Small Businesses:**

Our local hobby shops are being affected by the Dane County COVID-19 changing rules. Many of us are working on our layouts and do need supplies. Most hobby shops are now open with limited hours and occupancy limits. These hobby shops offer gift certificates or gift cards for later purchases. Call ahead for store hours and guidelines for each hobby shop.

### **Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Preston, second by McGeever, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Bill Mitchell, Clerk

## **SCWD listserv starts a new idea for “stuck at home” model railroaders**

“I know that these are difficult times for all of us, but if we could pull together as model railroaders and share what we have been working on in our basement train rooms now that we have more time, perhaps we can all get some inspiration from our fellow SCWD members” said Steve Lanphear who manages the SCWD listserv.

I proposed a **Modelers Corner**, where we could post photos of work in progress or work completed on your layouts. I figured that since we aren't having photo and modeling contests, clinics or layout visits, maybe we could share progress or ideas that we are working on.

Here's how it could work: you send me a photo along with a brief description and I post it on the listserv for all to see. If you would like feedback from the group, let me know and I will include your email in the post, but that is **optional**. That way if one of you has a question they can contact you directly.

And from that day on March 29 to the present, we have had upwards of 80 posts from our modelers. We hope to continue this for as long as it is of interest to our members.

Steve Lanphear  
SCWD listserv Coordinator  
[scwdmemberlist@frontier.com](mailto:scwdmemberlist@frontier.com)

## *A few words from the NMRA president*



### **Harvest Potpourri**

Labor Day is upon us soon and that marks the traditional "end of summer" in the United States. Yes, the calendar has things differently, but by Labor Day the boat is just about done for the season, the gardens need to be tidied up, the shrubbery needs to be readied for winter, the children are, for the most part, back in school for another year of learning and the crops are being gathered in the fields. This also marks the beginning of "model railroad season" here in North America, and that is good.

So let's go over some "harvesting" of summer "crops" here in the NMRA. We've concluded several virtual events on-line, and they have proven highly popular in this COVID-19 era. NMRAX events are likely to continue to add joy to life.

We held a "Meet the Leadership Team" event through Facebook and YouTube a couple of weeks ago; questions were asked, collated, and the answers will be posted on the website shortly. Remember that all of this sort of work is done by volunteers who are donating their time to help make the NMRA function.

We have an Annual General Meeting coming up on September 13, so please get your questions to VP-Administration John Stevens at [VPAdmin@nmra.org](mailto:VPAdmin@nmra.org), and contact him for a formal invitation to the GoToMeeting gathering. Normally the AGM is held in conjunction with the National Convention, but this year it's in September. For more details, see the story in this *NMRA eBulletin* issue.

Your Board of Directors also held its Summer Board Meeting in July; minutes will be posted on the NMRA website shortly, and you'll find an "unofficial summary below. The auditors have come and gone; their report for 2019 was a "clean" audit, applauding the NMRA for excellent accounting and management procedures.

And right now your Board is in the process of discussion Layout Command Control issues with the OpenLCB team, the group who developed LCC.

So that's a quick potpourri of items of interest to members; it's been a busy summer despite the COVID-19 issues that have plagued us for months. We look forward to the day when we can gather together to run trains, learn, talk trains and revel in the fellowship we all treasure. Until then, stay safe!

High Green!

### **Highlights of the July Annual Board of Directors Meeting**

The Winter Board of Directors meeting was held virtually, using GoToMeeting software, in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 11, 2020. These are some highlights of the meeting.

Please note that this is an unofficial summary of what took place at the meeting. The official minutes, authored by NMRA Secretary Rick Coble, will be posted on the NMRA website, [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) shortly.

- Although COVID-19 delayed the annual audit report, it was completed in August and once again there were no problems identified.
- The St. Louis group who had organized this year's cancelled annual convention agreed to organize the 2022 annual convention. They take over for the Birmingham, England, convention which was cancelled due to major sporting events in that city.

- The NMRA Board confirmed that the 2023 convention will be held in Dallas, TX.
- At-Large Worldwide Director Jack Hamilton announced that there will be a series of virtual Region Leadership Seminars this Fall for representatives from each Region. Dates for the meetings are currently being selected by the Board and the Regions. Major issues and topics will be discussed. Region presidents have been asked to select representatives from their Region to attend. A newly penned "Region Presidents' Handbook will be distributed during the opening session and discussed in detail in later sessions.
- The Board accepted a motion to adjust the borders of the Niagara Frontier Region, transferring the following counties to the Northeastern Region: New York: Broome, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Tioga and Tompkins. Pennsylvania: Bradford and Tioga.
- The Board voted to rescind a motion it approved last Winter to create a separate Membership Department. The Board felt the motion was in direct conflict with the existing organization structure.
- NMRA Canada Director John Bate agreed to take over the editorship of the *NMRA eBulletin* when Vice President/Special Projects Gerry Leone ends his term next July. The Board also voted to eliminate the Vice President/Special Projects position at that time.
- The Board voted to extend the deadline for National office nominations to October 31, and that the petition process will run until November 30. Electronic petitions will be allowed.
- The Board adopted a policy that for all online presentations sponsored by the NMRA, an intellectual properties agreement shall be executed by the presenter prior to their presentation.
- The Board approved a resolution thanking the NMRAX team, the 2020 Convention team, and the 2022 convention team for their efforts.



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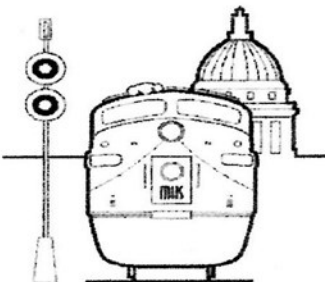
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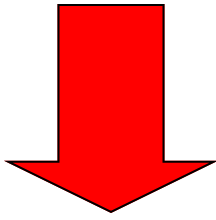
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\* = Train Show Ticket advance sales

**SCWD 2020-2021 Meeting Schedule**

**Regular Meeting**

**BOD**

**Train Show TBD**

Oct 4, 2020

Oct 12, 2020

Nov 1, 2020

Nov 9, 2020

Dec 6, 2020

Dec 14, 2020

Jan 10, 2021

Jan 11, 2021

Feb 7, 2021

Feb 8, 2021

March 7, 2021

March 8, 2021

April 11, 2021

April 12, 2021

May 2, 2021

May 10, 2021

June 14, 2021