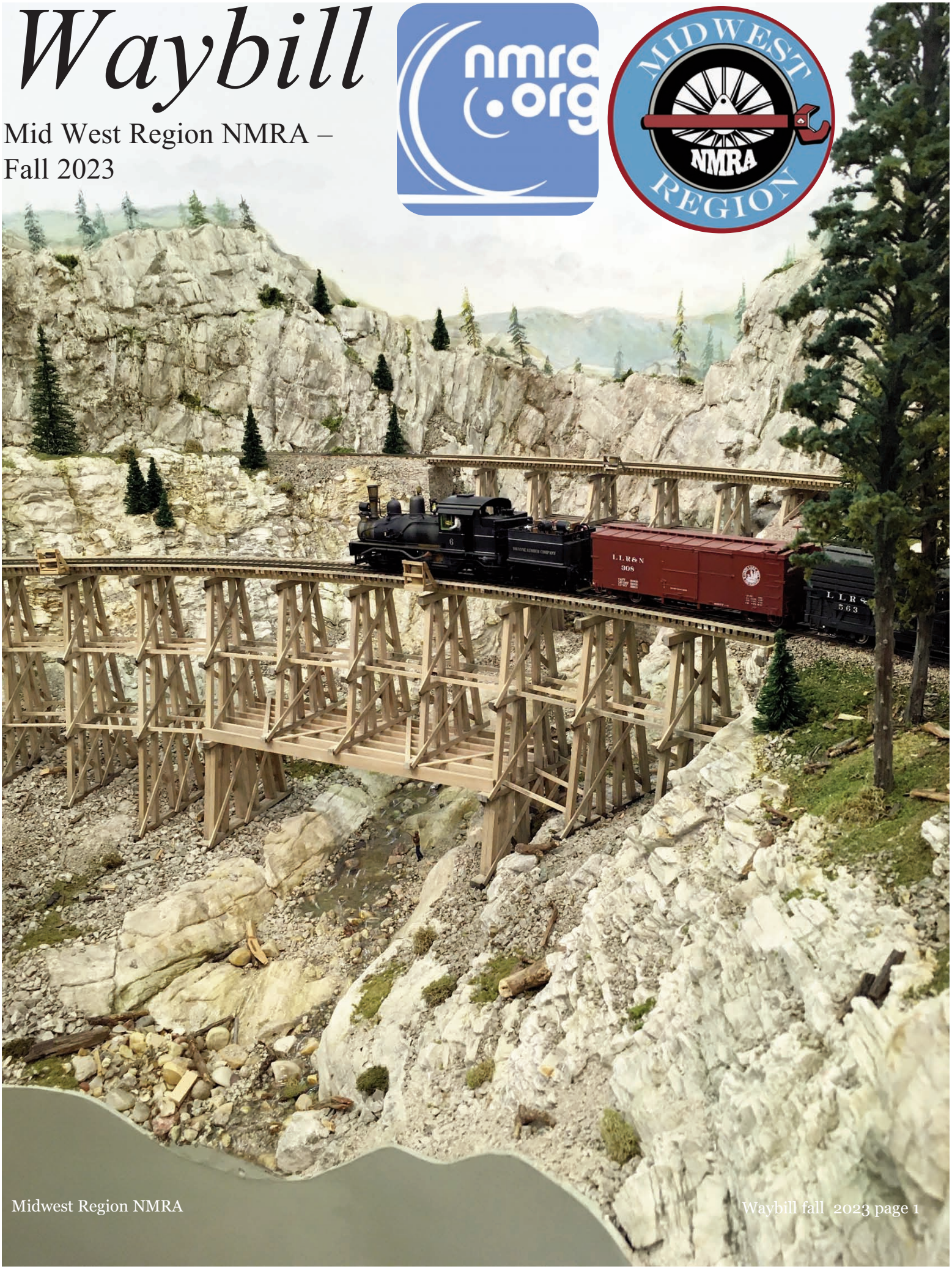
Waybill

Mid West Region NMRA –
Fall 2023



The *WAYBILL*

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Editor's Column

Congratulations go to Jim Osborn MMR™ for winning the NMRA's Presidents Award for Service to the Division. This award was started in 2017 and is awarded by the NMRA President to an individual in each Division in a Region who has done outstanding "beyond-the-call-of-duty" work to make his or her local Division effective, engaging and welcoming to members. Individuals are recommended to the NMRA President by the NMRA national; Board of Directors, National Officers, or Region Presidents, as appropriate and preferably always with the guidance of the region Officials.

If anyone deserves this award, it is Jim. I have known him for many years and he is always willing to pitch-in. Congratulations.

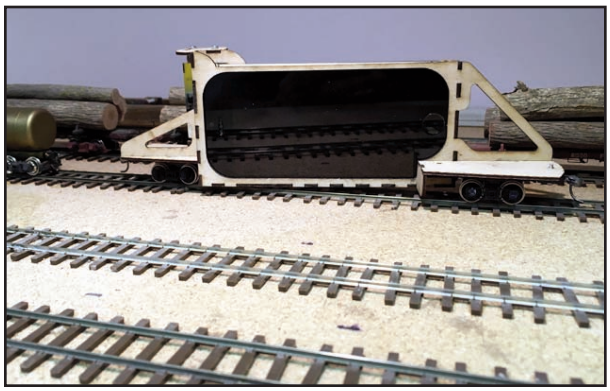
The Midwest Region 2024 Convention will be held at the Century Center, South Bend Indiana on May 2-4, 2024.The Century Center is located at 120 Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. South Bend, IN 46601.
The convention website is coming soon.

The Collinsville RPM is not only a great gathering of modelers, it is also a great market place. I was amazed at the number of 3-d printed modelers and companies selling just about any imaginable 3-d printed detail. I was especially eager to get the new Soo stockcar released by Yarmouth Model Works of Canada. I had held off purchasing it, but could not resist.

Resin stock cars are particularly tricky, as removing the flash between the boards is a long, painstaking process of sanding just the correct amount of flash. I had constructed a Milwaukee stockcar earlier, and was anxious to add a Soo car to my fleet.

The bottom two photos show the sides and underframe. The Milwaukee car also had a drop bottom, hence the extra detail. It needs to be dullcoated and weathered.

I always add all the piping and brake detail. The Soo car had K brakes the year I model, making the piping easier. The slats in the doorway of the Soo car are for rigidity during construction and will be removed.



Left: Cell phone mounted on a flatcar. I saw this at Peter Smith MMR's excellent Sn3 layout; The Loon Lake Railway & Navigation Co. in Shiloh, Il.

A photo of his layout graces the front cover. For more go to page 10.

Waybill

Mid West Region NMRA – Fall 2023

President's Report
Bob McGeever President, MWR

My last report focused on the current and future vacancies on the Midwest Region Board of Directors. We made some progress on some of the positions at the last BOD meeting. John Coy is the new chair of the Clinic Clearinghouse committee, Dan Banks is the new chair of the Convention committee, and Thomas Ose is the new chair of the Youth Fund committee. If you would like to pitch in on one of these committees, you will find the new chair's contact information on the MWR web site under the "Administration\Board of Directors" link.

We also put together a team to put on the 2024 MWR convention. It will be hosted by the Michiana Division with help from folks from all over the region. Greg Bueltmann, the superintendent of the Michiana Division is heading up the team.

The Youth Fund Committee:

The MWR has a dedicated fund for youth projects. It has been dormant for many years. I would like to change that. It was initially funded by the proceeds from an auction held at the 1997 National Convention held in Madison Wisconsin. We still have money in the fund. The purpose of the fund is to provide education and materials to introduce young people to the hobby of model railroading. Up to $500 per year per division can be used to subsidize Youth Group club activities, Rail School activities for kids, and Rail Show "Make and Take" projects. Things like kits, modeling materials, supplies and tools are eligible for this subsidy. Now that we have a new chair, the biggest problem is that we cannot find the application form we used to use! We will fix that and send an information packet to all the division superintendents real soon.

Regional Conventions:

A long time ago, working on a political campaign, I learned that when your staff is all volunteers, if you try to take more than the staff is willing to give to the cause, they will stop volunteering.

I spent years as a division super and the MWR Clerk without having any real experience in the management of a regional convention. They just happened like magic. I had a chance to get in real deep back in 2018 during my final year as superintendent of the South Central Wisconsin Division. We put on the Capital 400 in Madison. By all accounts, a rather successful convention. It was run by a committee of veterans from the 1997 National and other regional conventions. They seemed to know what they were doing. I volunteered to be the A/V guy for all the clinics and meetings. They were worried about it and I know how to do that stuff. That kept me out of most of the other details. But I did learn that a regional convention was not really a regional activity. The region kicked in some seed money and ran the contest room. The rest of it was pretty much up to the local divisional staff. I recall multiple times when folks declared that if they survived this convention, they are never volunteering to work on another convention in their life. And most of them are holding to that declaration. The volunteers have stopped volunteering.

The way we did regional conventions seemed to be working until Covid hit and we had to cancel some conventions. During the hiatus we lost what little regional staff we had to support conventions. Plus, the divisions seemed to become hesitant to bid on the "privilege" of hosting a regional convention. The volunteers have stopped volunteering.

The new convention team is trying to make the regional convention a real regional activity. And make it more rewarding for the local divisional staff to put on a convention. These days, a successful convention is more than a single division can handle. Just the deposit needed to hold the venue is more than the annual budget of many of our divisions!

Under our old way of doing things, every division had to re-invent all the wheels needed for a convention. Things like on-line ticketing and credit card processing had to be worked out (or not worked out) for each new convention. The team is defining things like the financing, the ticketing, and the credit card processing to be services the region should supply for all the regional conventions. As we work our way through it, I expect we will identify some other tasks

that should be elevated to the region because they are needed by all the conventions.

If you would like to become a member of the team planning this convention, reach out to Greg. His contact info is on the MWR website.

I am already signed up to be the A/V guy. I suspect it will become a regional service to provide A/V equipment for all the conventions. The rental costs are just crazy these days but the purchase of the equipment for a single convention is more than a single division should have to handle. Once we have a fleet of A/V equipment sufficient to cover this convention, it can be used for the next convention.
By working out these kinds of issues for the 2024 convention, it should be a lot easier to put on the 2025 convention. Any volunteers?

Bob McGeever

Region News

Midwest Region Achievement Program Report

by Jim Landwehr- MWR AP Manager

I am happy to report that there has been some activity from our members. They continue to take part in the Achievement Program all over the Midwest Region.
The following member received an award:

Michael Roderick Greenwood, IN Official

As always, work with your division Achievement Program Manager first, and if there is a problem, feel free to contact me.
Thanks, Jim

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2024 MWR Board of Directors Directors-at-Large Election

In 2024 the Midwest Region (MWR) will elect four (4) Directors-at-Large (DAL). These positions have a term of two-years, with a two consecutive term (four years) limit. If you are interested in applying for a position as a DAL on the MWR Board of Directors, or have questions about the position, please contact MWR Nominations Chair Steve Studley. Contact information is supplied below.

The Board meets twice a year, in the spring during the MWR Convention and in the fall at a location somewhere in the Region. Meetings are about two hours in length. Being a Board member is a great way to learn more about the operations of the region and to help manage the future of the region. The region is currently in the process of enhancing assistance to the divisions, especially regarding hosting Midwest Regional conventions. DALs will be instrumental in this expansion.

If you are working on Achievement Program (AP) certificates, three years of service on the Board earns the AP Association Official certificate.

If you have some time to spare and a willingness to work with others, consider becoming a nominee for DAL. It's a great way to serve the members of the Midwest Region.

Steve Studley
sastudley@gmail.com

Nominations Committee:
Steve Studley
Paul Mangan

The Frugal Modeler

by Dave Nelson

To "cooper" is to make watertight wood barrels and other containers and involves the precise cutting and joining of the wood staves as well as the sizing of the hoops that hold them in place. It is one of those ancient trades that over time actually became a last name. From a railcar standpoint, "coopering" is the process of sealing up holes and gaps that would cause powdered loads to leak out or that could admit

moisture, dirt, or vermin that could damage or contaminate the load or its packaging. Coopering is often an expedient that quickly makes a boxcar (or trailer or container) worthy for at least the next load. Truly specialized cars such as XF boxcars in food service and "clean" boxcars in newsprint and paper service might call for something more thorough than mere everyday coopering. As with other forms of light repair, coopering needs a track where the workers can be protected against car movements by the blue flag rules. While most forms of light repairs cannot really be modeled (although some layouts realistically move cars to a "RIP" [repair in place] track during operating sessions), in some cases the "coopering" of freight cars

CNW 31668 showing remains of tape that had been used to seal boxcar doors.

can be modeled.

In a sense I've already touched on two forms of coopering. The Fall 2011 Waybill dealt with modeling the prototype's use of plastic sheeting in covered hopper hatches to prevent contamination by water, dirt or vermin. And the Spring 2022 Waybill had my article on building wood grain doors that were nailed across the door opening to prevent grain loads from leaking out of 6-foot boxcar doors. Those wood grain doors were later replaced with reinforced paper doors, and in HO such paper grain doors are available from Jaeger. Those paper doors were used to contain loads other than grain such as wood chips and could also be employed when sliding-type boxcar doors could admit water or dirt. Taping up the door edges is also a form of coopering.

The era of wood cars saw the most intense need for coopering, but much of it was purely interior coopering that cannot normally be modeled: tar paper, paper lining, or tar impregnated string would cover the gaps that appeared in the horizontal boards of single-sheathed (the so-called "outside braced") wood boxcars. An exterior coopering that can be modeled was the use of tar paper patches on a cemented or tar-papered wood roof. Wood boxcar ends were especially prone to splintering and bulging from shifting loads (which is why steel ends were used before steel sides and roofs were introduced). Until the end could be repaired or replaced, small gaps could be closed with putty.

One would think the advent of all-steel boxcars would have largely ended the need for coopering. But sliding steel doors leave gaps that can admit water, dirt or vermin. Over time the separate and soldered or interlocked parts of a steel roof can work loose enough to create gaps. But one big issue is that the advent of steel cars was also the advent of

Above and Below: Door of boxcar at Sioux City showing damage probably caused by a forklift. Forklifts of shippers and receivers damage roofs, punture doors and sides. They are often used to open or close stubborn doors.

Model of door sealed with tape.

the forklift truck. Operator error results in many dents and even punctures of steel car sides, ends, and doors, and accidentally raising the forklift carriage too much can dent or puncture a boxcar roof (dents are commonly seen). Even more damage is done when a forklift jockey tries to open or close a stubborn boxcar door with the blades.

So let's look at a few prototype photos of current day coopering and some frugal ways to model the visual effects.

A C&NW waffle-sided boxcar at the Sioux City (Iowa) railroad museum shows holes in the car door that were coopered with a putty or filler that looks like, and perhaps is, Bondo. This is likely forklift damage. A boxcar door shows remaining fragments of a prior application of a heavy-duty sealing tape along the door edge. I modeled the door holes with dabs of acrylic paint applied with a small micro-sponge brush; using the end of a toothpick might have been more correct. In larger scales the actual hole could be modeled and then filled. I modeled the sealing tape fragments using thin strips of paper of the same light tan color cut from a Micro-Mark catalog, then aged/weathered with a scratch brush (see the Fall 2019 Waybill's Frugal Modeler). Note that for both these examples of door coopering I used a vintage Athearn metal boxcar. I like the scale thickness of their stamped steel doors.

On a modern steel boxcar, the interlocking seams between roof panels must have leaked and were sealed with a thick caulk or sealant. Rather thick acrylic paint applied with a micro-sponge brush captures the effect (clearly neatness does NOT count) on a plastic boxcar roof but using a toothpick tip might have given me even more control but would be more time consuming. A similar caulking or sealing that

Above: Boxcar with the seams caulked

Left:
Model done by applying acrylic paint with a toothpick to the roof seams.

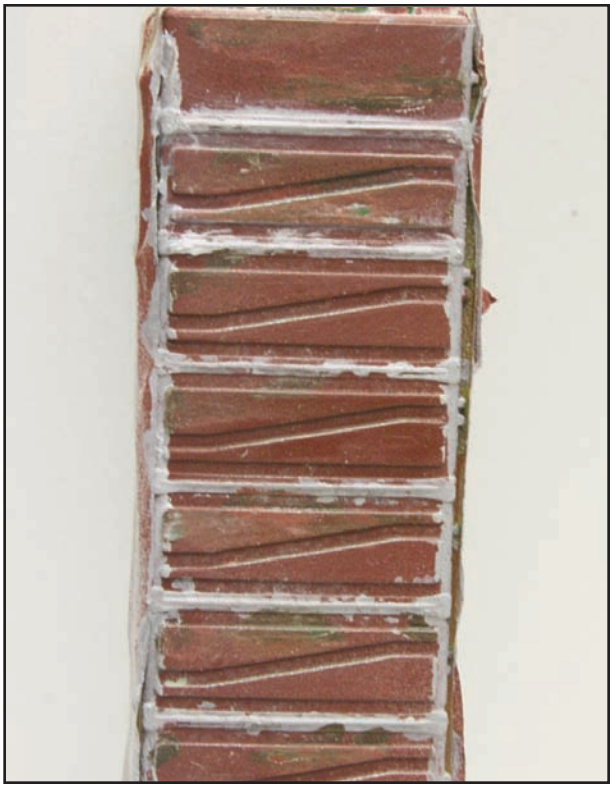
addresses both the seams between panels but also where the roof panels meet the car sides was similarly modeled using rather thick acrylic paint applied with a micro-sponge brush from Testors. Again, neatness did not count on the prototype nor on my model.

The final example of coopering on a modern-era freight car roof suggests that a large portion of the roof was "painted" with a thick rubbery-looking gray caulk or sealant (best modeled with thick acrylic paint, applied not very carefully). And in this particular case we also know how it was applied: NOT with a caulking gun or a squeezed tube but with extra-wide paint brushes. Presumably the sealant came in a can or pot. My railfan buddy that day (in fact it was no less than NMRA President Gordy Robinson) called my attention to the fact that this car not only had a thick coat of sealant on much of the roof, but several of the paint brushes were stuck in the sealant. Paint brushes as a form of coopering? Now there is a modeling challenge (at least in HO) that I happily leave to others!

Sources for this article include Papers Presented at the Conference on Railroad Car

Boxcar at Sioux City showing extensive patching of roof and sides.

Oops! I've been looking for that brush!



Left:
Roof of model done by applying acrylic paint with a toothpick to the roof seams.

Sanitation, Food Drug Cosmetic Law Journal Vol. 29 No. 10 (CCH Oct 1974); Car Builder's Cyclopedia (Simmons-Boardman, various editions); and Instruction Manual for Inspecting Over, Short, or Damaged Freight (AAR May 1971).

All photos by the author.

Collinsville RPM Meet
by David J. Leider MMR ™

The 16th St Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet was held in Collinsville, Il on Friday and Saturday, July 28 and 29. There were over 3,000 models on the display tables, including a large number of dioramas, not all railroad related. The attendance was 787.

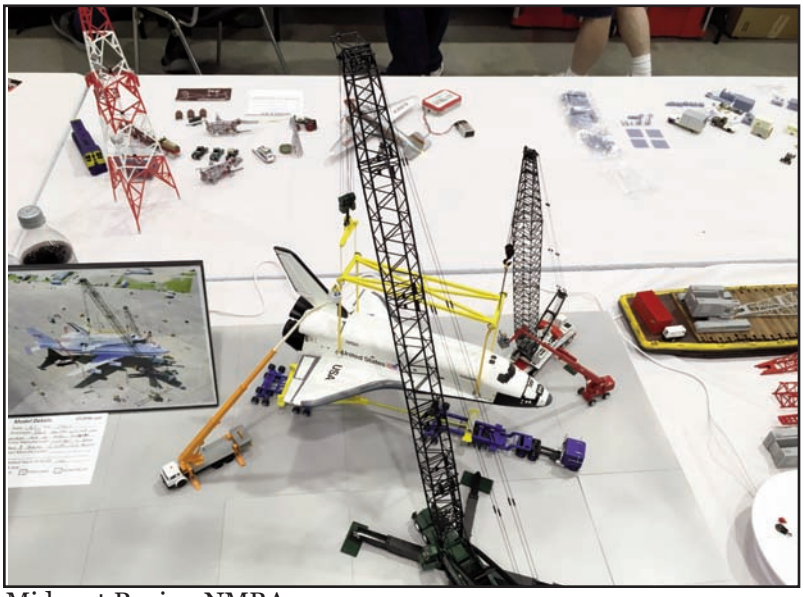
Here are just a few of the photographs I took.

Above: Vendor sales area at Collinsville.

Above: a large diorama with a lot of BIG models. 3-d printed parts were everwhere and show the diversity that can be obtained.

Right: Tom Dowling HO scale cabooses and peek-a-boo pulp gondolas.

Above: Repairing the street, taken from a drone. (actually my cellphone)
Below: Trevor Hinze had several models on display. The 737 fuselage is in HO scale. The Cat D9R Bulldozer was in 1/48 scale.



Left: HO Space shuttle lift from 1984 at Mobile, Alabama. The Link-Belt is brass, crane and Demag is Kibri, with 3-d printed parts.

Loon Lake Railway & Navigation Co. by David J. Leider MMR ™

This excellent Sn3 layout is the work of Peter B. Smith MMR ™.There is a lot of detail in his scenes. I especially like how the models and room are bathed in light, resulting in no dark spots and making viewing and photography easy.