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## Superintendent's Report

By Rich Pitter

### Enhancing Your Enjoyment

Ask yourself why you are a modeler and a member of NMRA. Please write down your answers before reading the rest of this article.

For myself, I am a model railroader because I have fun doing it. I joined NMRA because I figured to get even more enjoyment out of model railroading by rubbing elbows with others in the hobby. I've been a member of NMRA for over twenty years because I did indeed get more enjoyment by doing so, but understand a few things. First, I am an introvert; I don't by nature go around schmoozing with others. Second, I am deaf, relying on cochlear implants to understand speech. And third, I have learned that in order to get something out of NMRA, I have to put something in. Back in Boston, shortly after I joined, I volunteered to edit the division's newsletter. Why? Well, I could type and arrange text and photos on a page, but more important, by being Editor, I could ask people to provide me their information in writing, which is great if you have trouble hearing! And that kept me on top of the division's activities and gave me a way of learning about what others were doing (by asking them to write short, pictorial articles about their projects). I also read several model railroad magazines, watch online videos on scratch-building and craftsman kit building, and belong to a local model railroad club.

I have fun doing model railroading and I enjoy that several diverse skills are useful in the hobby. I also appreciate that I don't need to know everything, and that I can accomplish a lot and have a great deal of fun in the process.

You and I have a wonderful opportunity this April, to advance our enjoyment of model railroading, because First Division is hosting Pacific Northwest Region's annual convention on April 21-24 in Eugene. It's a big deal because the convention we host the convention once each seven years. PNR is the largest region, area-wise, in North America. Six years out of seven, to attend the convention, you would have to travel outside our region. (The past six PNR conventions have been held in Boise, Tacoma, Portland, Spokane, Salmon Arm, B.C., and Cranbrook, B.C.). Stated another way, this will be the closest PNR convention to you until 2028. You should not miss this opportunity if you can avoid doing so—for giving yourself the opportunity to enjoy model railroading more.

On Tuesday, April 21, we will have a PNR Board Meeting. All members are invited. After dinnertime, there will be an ice cream social to kick off things. Wednesday through Friday, there will be clinics on a variety of model railroading topics, the Umpqua Valley Model Railroad Club will be operating a free-mo modular layout, the non-rail group (spouses) will engage in a variety of crafts and local explorations, there will be a model contest and AP evaluations, several local layouts will hold open houses to convention goers, we will have a make & take session where you can learn how to build a laser-cut section house kit, and we will conclude the convention with a banquet and awards ceremony, with Campbell Scale Models owner, Duncan Campbell, featured as our guest speaker.

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The convention is scheduled rather early in the year because it dovetails with the 32nd Swap Meet and Train Show at the Lane County Fairgrounds in Eugene, hosted by the Willamette Cascade Model Railroad Club. The swap meet costs \$6 to enter, but convention goers will get in free by showing their convention name tags. The swap meet and train show is probably the largest such show in Oregon, and features a large number of dealers and vendors from throughout the West, plus train layouts in several scales and other train enthusiasts setting up booths to "swap" some of their equipment for cash so they can buy new things they need.

When I think about my many positive experiences as an NMRA member, I sometimes recall my son when he began playing organized sports. A coach once addressed his team, saying that it's much more fun playing when you learn how to do it well.

So how about it? Register for the convention, "Make Tracks to Eugene" and plan on spending a week immersed in model railroading. Bring along a notebook and camera. It's a good way to learn skills and ideas to propel your model railroading enjoyment to a new level.

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### **A Call for Articles** – by Charlie Hutto

What are you working on with your model railroad? Have you stumbled across any interesting blogs, websites, or YouTube videos? How about a trip report of a recent railfanning expedition?

Any of these would make a great article for a future edition of the Brakeman's Rag. Pictures are always appreciated, and truly help tell the story. It does not have to be a long article at all – if it is of interest to you, it will likely be of interest to others within the First Division.

Over the last few weeks on my layout, I have been ballasting the yard. To get some color, I added some ground foam between the tracks. Also, I am working on a diorama that I hope to complete in time for the mini meet in June.

Contact me, the Brakeman's Rag editor, with any ideas, questions, or submissions. My email address is [charliehutto@hotmail.com](mailto:charliehutto@hotmail.com).





### Make Tracks to Eugene

PNR Convention - April 21-24, 2020

Eugene, Oregon

The 2020 PNR Convention will be held in Eugene at the Valley River Inn, a great venue with large, comfortable clinic rooms, a contest room, and a layout room. The convention will run Tuesday – Friday, instead of the usual Wednesday – Saturday, to avoid programming collision with the WCMRC Swap Meet and Train Show, which will be held at the fairgrounds in Eugene on Saturday – Sunday. Full fare and non-rail registrants at the convention will enjoy free entry to the Swap Meet.

The banquet will be held on Friday, April 24, and feature Duncan Campbell as speaker. Duncan is the owner of Campbell Scale Models, which is located near Medford, OR.

The non-rail group will occupy a comfortable room during the convention. The program will feature make & takes, crafts, presentations, and refreshments. A tour of the historic Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House in Eugene is also planned.

At the convention venue, you may enjoy the dining area adjacent to the river.

### Registration

Registration may be made either online or by mail. Online registration at <http://www.MakeTracksToEugene.com>. Registration forms for mail-in submission are available by contacting Rich Pitter at 2430 Northampton, Eugene, OR 97404. Send mail-in Registration to: Make Tracks to Eugene, c/o Lori Sebelley, 44694 Ashbury Place, Chilliwack, BC Canada V2R 2Y6.

## Venue

The PNR Convention will be held at the Valley River Inn, 1000 Valley River Drive, Eugene, OR. For online reservations go to <http://www.MakeTracksToEugene.com>. Alternatively, call the hotel at (541) 743-1000 or toll free 1-800-543-8266 and use the convention group code: Make Tracks to Eugene. Rooms have two queen or one king bed, at a rate of \$109/day, not including taxes and room fees.

## Eugene Swap Meet and Train Show

The Willamette Cascade Model Railroad Club is 50 years old and has hosted annual swap meets and train shows in Eugene for 32 years. The show, held after the convention on Saturday and Sunday, April 25-26, 2020, presents vendors and model railroad clubs from the region. Admission to the swap meet and train show is included with full or non-rail registration to the PNR Convention.

## About Eugene

Eugene, Oregon is located at the southern end of the Willamette Valley, a long, broad valley between the coastal range and the Cascades in northwestern Oregon. The valley produces diverse agricultural products including filberts (hazelnuts), lavender, berries, wineries, and hops. Oregon forests produce wood and lumber products, and the Willamette Valley holds Interstate-5, a principal highway that extends from Vancouver, Canada, to San Diego, California, the Union Pacific mainline from Portland to California, and several local railroad companies.

The University of Oregon is was founded in Eugene in 1876 and provides a resource for educating students as well as opportunities for research, and fine arts performances and exhibits. Eugene has an international airport and an Amtrak station, for which Valley River Inn provides shuttles. A Greyhound Bus Station is located nearby in Springfield, and local bus service provides convenient access to downtown Eugene and Springfield. Across the street from Valley River Inn, the Valley River Center has shopping, movie-going, and dining opportunities.



*The Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House in Eugene*

## About Oregon

Oregon has no sales tax.

## October 2019 Mini-Meet

The First Division Fall Mini-Meet was held on October 19 in Tangent. About 10 people attended from locations throughout the First Division.

After a discussion of the upcoming Regional Convention in Eugene, Charlie demonstrated how to use FastTracks jigs to create hand-made turnouts. He walked the group through the process, all the way from purchasing the right tools and equipment, to making and powering the actual turnout.

### Model Contest Winners:



Locomotive - Nick Lehrbach



Rolling Stock - Charlie Hutto



Structure - Dean Seehawer



Miscellaneous - Nick Lehrbach

Overall Favorite - Nick Lehrbach - HO Inspection Car

Congratulations to Nick and all the other entries. This being my (Christopher Jones) last contest to run, thanks to Gary Decker who will perform the duties of contest chair. Many thanks to all!

Due to the Regional Convention in April, our next mini-meet will be in June in Myrtle Point. Next fall, we will meet in Klamath Falls. More details about these meets will be provided in the next few months – check our website for additional information:

<http://pnr.nmra.org/1div/>

If you would like to host a mini-meet in the future, please contact Rich Pitter.

## How Can We Improve Our AP?

By Rich Pitter

There are a lot of good things about NMRA's Achievement Program. It provides a framework each of us can use to improve our modeling ability and to receive recognition for such. It can attract model railroaders into joining NMRA. It works (over 600 MMR's to date), but it is not working as well as it should in First Division.

In the NMRA Achievement Program, AP Certificates are awarded in 11 categories arranged into four groups. A person who earns seven Certificates, including at least one from each group, earns the Master Model Railroader award. The Golden Spike, although not one of the 11 AP Certificates, encourages modelers to participate in the program. The AP categories of cars (4), motive power (3), and structures (6) require that some models earn Merit Awards. Merit Awards are awarded for earning 87.5 of 125 possible points during an evaluation (at any time) or judging at an NMRA Regional or National contest. Other AP categories (civil engineering, scenery, and prototype models) each require the equivalent of one Merit Award, where the evaluators certify the quality of the work that went into the project.

Fourth Division, PNR (western Washington and Alaska) has a strong AP presence, and doesn't regard Merit Award evaluations as though they were Ph.D. examinations. The modeler presents the model to the evaluation committee and is asked what he or she attempted to do with the model. The committee members individually score the categories (construction, detail, conformity, finish and lettering, and scratchbuilding) based on "points to ponder" that are provided by NMRA. Each evaluator may question the modeler during this period. The evaluators then confer to assign scores and to tally the total score, which is either pass or fail (87.5 points). The process may take 15 minutes or less.

Fourth Division also has a crew of dedicated evaluators that travels to modelers who request evaluations. Sometimes the modelers live in remote regions, and sometimes the models that need evaluation, such as for civil engineering and scenery, are intrinsic to layouts and are not portable.

First Division is not very active in AP for two reasons. One reason is that our evaluations take place after Mini-Meets and are so long that many modelers don't want to stick around to get their models evaluated. The other is that most modelers don't have an idea of where the pass/fail threshold is. On a fundamental level, First Division isn't active because we don't have a solid nucleus of modelers who are interested in the program.

Our former AP Chair, Glenn Edmison, prepared a series of articles for our newsletter a few years ago, which presented the requirements for each Achievement Certificate and which deciphered the Merit Award evaluation process. I think it is time to reprint those articles. Look for those in future version of the *Brakeman's Rag*.

**First Division Officers**

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Education Chair - Open

Favorite Model Contest Chair - Gary Decker - garyandbeckyd@gmail.com

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Webmaster - Charlie Hutto - charliehutto@hotmail.com

Membership Chair - Open

Office Manager - Jim Van Delden - genjvan@msn.com

## Local Railroad Clubs

These clubs hold meetings and other events within the First Division boundaries. If a club wants to post meeting or event information, it may contact the Editor at [charliehutto@hotmail.com](mailto:charliehutto@hotmail.com).

The **Atlantic & Pacific N-gineers** meet near downtown Junction City. For information, contact Mike Adams at [mdadams006@aol.com](mailto:mdadams006@aol.com) or 541-913-5865.

The **Corvallis Society of Model Engineers** meets in Adair Village, about 6 miles north of downtown Corvallis on Highway 99W. For information, visit club website at [www.csme1959.org](http://www.csme1959.org).

The **Eastern Cascades Model Railroad Club** and the associated Live Steamers meet in Bend. Info: [www.ecmrr.org](http://www.ecmrr.org) or (541) 317-1545.

The **Crooked River Railroad Club** meets in the Crook County Fairgrounds, Prineville. Contact Jim Davis at (503) 396-0160 or Jim Van Voorhees (541) 408-4526

The **Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club** meets in Medford. For information, contact Ron Harten at [sprucerr@hughes.net](mailto:sprucerr@hughes.net) or Bruce Kelly at [wilmingtonnorthern@sprynet.com](mailto:wilmingtonnorthern@sprynet.com).

The **South Coast Train Club** holds meetings in Coos Bay. It is a 100% NMRA club. Contact Peter Brandt at [pcb904@gmail.com](mailto:pcb904@gmail.com).

The **Umpqua Valley Model Railroad Club** meets in Roseburg, OR. It is a 100% MMRA club. For information, contact Nick Lehrbach at [lehrbach@rosenet.net](mailto:lehrbach@rosenet.net).

The **Willamette Cascade Model Railroad Club** meets in Springfield. For information, contact Lee Temple at [tandt@ram-mail.com](mailto:tandt@ram-mail.com).

The **Yaquina Northern Railroad Club** meets every Wednesday evening at 6:30pm in Newport, in the basement of the local radio station where their permanent layout is located. The address is adjacent to 517 SW 9th St, across the street from the Pig-N-Pancake restaurant. For information, contact Bill Bain at (541) 961-0600.



The Brakeman's Rag is the newsletter of First Division, Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association. The newsletter is published quarterly. All NMRA members residing within the counties of Benton, Coos, Crook, Curry, Deschutes, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn in Oregon are considered to be First Division members.

The Brakeman's Rag is transmitted by email and posted on our web page. Members who do not have email service receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail. First Division members who want to write articles are welcome to contact the Editor and discuss matters. You may also send a photo and caption of something you built or detailed to the Editor. Material from outside the Division is selected to fill empty space and to advance model railroading for our readers.

Leaders of model railroad groups who want free advertisement of their activities, should send info for the following four months two weeks prior to the beginning of every third month of the calendar year.

<b>Advertising rates for one year are:</b>			
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