



The Yardmaster

Southwestern Michigan Division



May 2022

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The Yardmaster is the newsletter published monthly by Division 9, North Central Region of the National Model Railroad Association.

Submissions: Please send articles, news items, inquiries, photos and comments to the Editor of **The Yardmaster**, **Dave Vinci** dj.vinci@frontier.com, **by the 1st of the month** for inclusion in the current month's edition.

Editor's Comments

Greetings from your newsletter editor. If any of you would like to try your hand at creating an article for the newsletter, please try and write one. It can be of any size or maybe just a photo of your latest project. How about a tip that you think other modelers could benefit from? This newsletter will only be as informative and entertaining as you, the membership, make it.

Achievement Program

To see the requirements for AP awards see the NMRA website, or talk about the program, contact our Division AP coordinator, Dorman Wilson at N8YNW@charter.net

May Membership Activity

The May 2022 membership activity is a visit to Rick Garthe's layout in Texas Corners area (see directions below) on **Saturday, May 28th**.

We will meet for breakfast at **The Colonial Kitchen Pancake House**, 330 N. Drake Rd., Kalamazoo. The back room is reserved beginning at **nine o'clock** for informal breakfast. The Colonial Kitchen is in the same building as AT&T and Art Van's Pure Sleep on the east side of Drake Road in the block south of Main Street. The restaurant faces south in that building.

We will begin with an informal breakfast (on your own) with business meeting to follow at **9:30 o'clock** then, we will travel to Rick Garthe's home to view his layout.

Greetings from Rick Garthe

Hi all! On May 28th Division 9 of the NMRA and guests are invited to my home/polebarn layout. I thought I would provide some information of the layout and a list of events for the visit.

I plan on having signs at my driveway entrance to aid people in finding my house at **6737 Texas Drive, in Kalamazoo, MI 49009**. It is near Texas Corners. Sometimes GPS will guide you to the house across the street. My house is on the same side of the street as Texas Drive Park. My house is white with gray trim, with a two rail fence on the road boundary, and a wind mill in the yard. Feel free to park on the grass of the right loop of my drive. My layout is in the green polebarn behind the white garage. If you have mobility issues feel free to drive on the yard right up to the polebarn entrance. I will have a red lantern at the entrance.

Some notes about the building are as follows; it is 36' x 72' x 10' tall insulated polebarn building, heated and cooled with an open loop geothermal system. The layout room is 34'5" x 47' x 10' tall, with the balance of the building being my woodworking shop. Access is through one of three (3) entry doors or a garage door.

The layout is on short nap carpet, most of the carpet is repurposed or remnants, which explains the four (4) different carpets colors/patterns.

The theme is agriculture with no prototypical modeling, except generally in the Great Lake/Mid-West, or by accident.

The layout has five (5) different scales; Lionel, O gauge, S gauge, HON3, and is mostly HO gauge. The following items/specifications are on the HO part of the layout. The bench work is single deck, 37" to 39" tall, that has 1 x 3 white pine boards made into 30" x 48" rectangles with 1" or 2" foam insulation glued on with liquid nails adhesive to the 1 x 3's. The switch count is as follows: 77 switches, which 48 are #6 Fast Tracks, four (4) 3-way switches, three (3) double

slip switches, one (1) double crossover, one (1) single crossover, six (6) wye, eight (8) curved of which three (3) are Fast Tracks. There are also five crossovers. The track is code 100. I use mostly Atlas flex track and some fixed radius Atlas track. The track is mostly silver-nickle, but there is some brasses mixed in too. The count of these items was not confirmed, which means the numbers are close to correct but most likely off a bit. The layout is under construction so the numbers could change.

Currently there are about 155 structures and bridges on the layout. Most are Walters plastic kits. There are some kit bashed, custom, and craftsman kits.

Some of the features are a dinosaur ranch, ferry boat that will list if loaded incorrectly, a hump yard, open pit mine, a small drone that will fly out of the Area 53 mountain, drive-in movie, a pink submarine in a pond, and a CNW passenger car mural incorporating a glass window that use to be in a CNW car. Please remember, the layout is a work in progress, not all of these features are working as planned, yet.

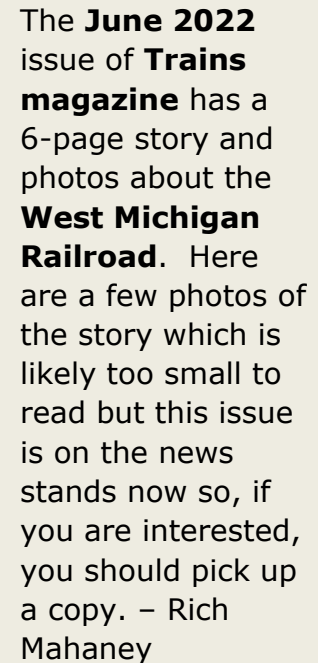
Each engine is battery powered with the following specifications; a 250ma, 11.1v, lithium polymer (LiPo), which lasts about 1.5 hours per charge. I place the battery and the switch in an ore car with an extension cord going between the engine and ore car. Each battery kit is \$75 from Deadrail Installs. Once you contact the owner he is very helpful, but he is very difficult to connect with. (<http://deadrailinstalls.com/dead-rail-installation-kits/>)

I am using LocoFi to deliverer instructions between the router, controller, and engine. The LocoFi board installs like a DCC board. The LocoFi board includes a speaker with a generic diesel engine sound. The sound can be changed, but I am too lazy to do this and the sound is good enough for me. LocoFi uses an Android phone for a controller. A person can go to the Google Play store and download the LocoFi app for free, updates are also free. I was able to do this correctly the first time. Which is very unusual for me. The LocoFi board is \$112 or lower if you use your NMRA discount, buy more than one (1) at a time, and send them the DCC board you replaced the LocoFi board with. (<https://www.wifimodelrailroad.com/>) Service and help from LocoFi has been GREAT!

So. my plan on Saturday is to have a mini scavenger hunt to fill in the time for the different arrivals and for people to explore the layout. Then I will give a lecture (including Q & A) about the layout – it's history, design concept, general guiding principles, and tour. I will have chairs and hopefully the lecture will not be too painful. Sorry, no quiz after the lecture. For those that wish we can run trains. Smoke stack dispatch, just run trains from one place to another and do some switching. I currently have four (4) running engines, hopefully more by the time of the tour.

I will have a variety of soft drinks, along with bottle water. I figured most of the members and guests will have just eaten so no "treats" will be provided. You are welcome to bring some treats if you so desire.

West Michigan Railroad Story



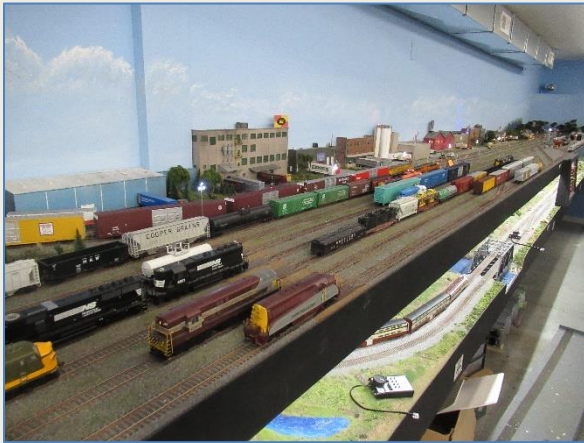
Membership Meeting Minutes

In April we met for breakfast at the Club Car Grill with 21 people attending. Great crowd, it appeared everybody enjoyed it based on the conversations and the laughing! Photos by Rich Mahaney



After breakfast we went to the Kalamazoo Model Railroad Historical Society layout for a tour.





All enjoyed the tour and the hospitality of the KMRHS and we thank them for the opportunity to view their layout.

Prototype Photos



Cloudy, rainy day late in the afternoon at the NS yard in Jackson, MI. April 15, 2022. Photo by : Rich Mahaney



Cloudy, rainy day late in the afternoon at the NS yard in Jackson, MI. April 15, 2022. photo by: Rich Mahaney



Cloudy, rainy day late in the afternoon at the NS yard in Jackson, MI. April 15, 2022. photo by: Rich Mahaney



Crew change on the CN for an EB freight during the noon hour last Friday April 15, 2022. Crew change was made just southwest of Battle Creek, MI. photo by Rich Mahaney



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Crew change on the CN for an EB freight during the noon hour last Friday April 15, 2022. Crew change was made just southwest of Battle Creek, MI. photo by Rich Mahaney



power unit in the center of the EB CN train on Friday April 15, 2022
photo by: Rich Mahaney



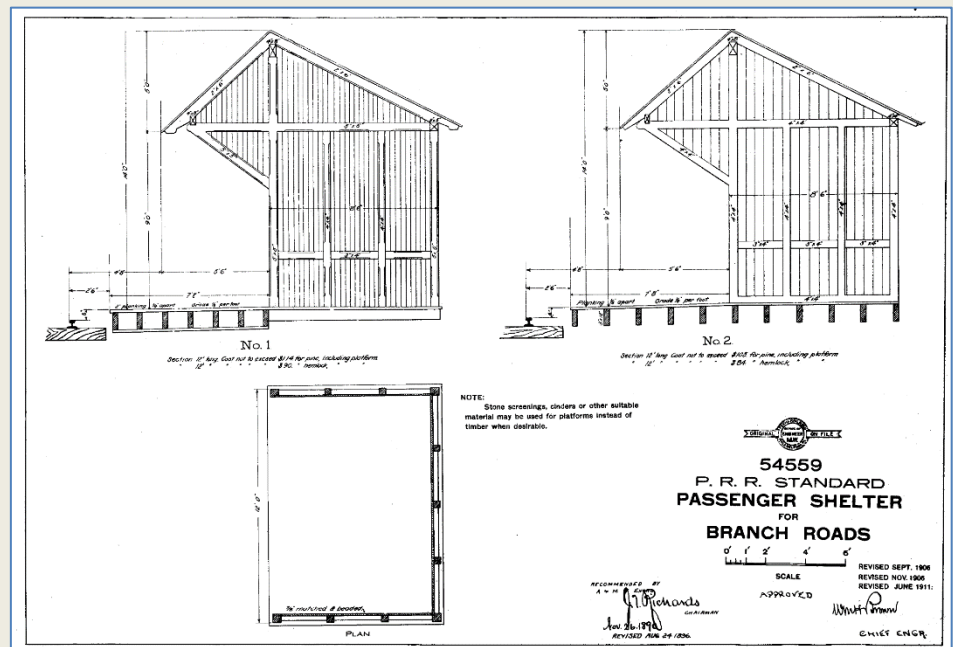
EB CN train on Friday April 15, 2022 Battle Creek, MI with a flat car wheel load.
photo by Rich Mahaney



EB CN train on Friday April 15, 2022 Battle Creek, MI with a flat car wheel load.
photo by Rich Mahaney

Details at Trooper by Dave Vinci

Small areas of your layout can become a whole lot more interesting with just a few added details. In this case, I added a flag stop on an outside curve where there would have been no activity. All it took was a platform, a passenger shelter, a grade crossing, a watch box, and a handful of figures.



(Drawing source: <http://pr.railfan.net/standards/standards.cgi?plan=54559-B>)

This drawing is of a typical Passenger Shelter used by the Pennsylvania Railroad. It is available on-line in several locations but I used this one as a reference.



Passenger shelter at Trooper. Model & photo by D. Vinci



Passenger Shelter at Trooper. Model and photo by D. Vinci



Model & photo by D. Vinci

The platform is made from 0.040" thick sheet styrene and painted a concrete color. The watchman's box was scratchbuilt from the scrapbox. The grade crossing sign looks like the illustration at right. You can keep it interesting by changing the vehicles and figures from time to time.



OCTOBER 2022 MODEL RAILROADING CONVENTION – KALAMAZOO/BATTLE CREEK, MI AREA

The NMRA NCR Division 9 is hosting a Model Railroad Convention over two days (OCT 28/29, 2022) which will include layout tours, clinics, a special dinner and hopefully some operating session, all of this is over a Friday afternoon through Saturday time frame. The location is in the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek area of Michigan. The Kalamazoo Model Railroad Club will be hosting their annual fall train show and sale on the Sunday (Oct 30) of that weekend if you would like to attend that also. A weekend of railroading activities. Hotel selection in the area is on your own.

Registration location(s) on Friday will be announced after you register, registration on Saturday will be at the location where the clinics are being held from 7:30am to 12:30pm. **The Saturday registration location and the clinics will be at a facility called The River Church, which located at 517 Walbridge, in downtown Kalamazoo. The building is northeast of the Kalamazoo Amtrak Station and backs up to the train tracks.**

Oct 28, Friday afternoon, there will be layout open houses from 4pm to 6:30pm. You must have a paid registration and convention badge to see the layouts. Registration for the convention will occur at the first layout on the tour.

Oct 28, Friday evening, there will be a gathering of model railroaders for dinner at Clara's Restaurant in downtown Battle Creek starting at 6:30pm. You need to reserve a spot for this event and dinner will be ordered off the menu with individual bills. Who knows what might be scheduled for education, entertainment and fun!

Oct 29, Saturday, at the River Church, registration from 7:30am to 8:30am and time to visit with other model railroaders. **Free donuts, coffee, and soft drinks!**

Oct 29, Saturday, 8:30am, 9:45am and 11am. 12 clinics will be presented between four different rooms.

Oct 29, Saturday, Lunch on your own. Then more model railroad layout viewing 1:00pm to 4:30pm, maybe operating sessions on Saturday evening.

More information will all be posted on The NMRA NCR Division 9 website, including information about paying with credit cards for registration and Friday registration sites. The Division 9 website address is -

<http://ncr-div9.com/conventionForm.php>

Registrations at this time can be check or money order made out to NMRA, NCR, Division 9. Cut off the registration form below and mail it to Division 9 Superintendent and Convention Registrar Garry Johnson, 371 32nd Street N, Springfield, MI 49037.

Registration fees in US Dollars only: Pre-registration of \$25, late registration fee is \$30 on or after September 1, 2022. Yup, send them in now and save some money!

For more information or question contact Rich Mahaney at 269-214-4221 or rcmahaney@gmail.com.

-----REGISTRATION FORM/Cut off and send to Garry, at the address above-----

NAME _____ NMRA Number _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

Are you interested or planning to attend the Friday, Oct 29, 2022 dinner at Clara's in Battle Creek, the cost of dinner will be on your own YES _____ NO _____

Are you interested in attending operation sessions on Saturday evening? YES _____ NO _____ More information will follow in the future as these get set up.

Division 9 Calendar for May 2022

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 BOD zoom meeting for Oct 2- day conv. 2:00 pm	16	17	18 Indy Junction Conventio n	19 Indy Junction Conven.	20 Indy Junction Conven.	21 Indy Junction Conven.
22 Indy Junction Conven.	23	24	25	26	27	28 Div 9 Meeting & layout tour
29	30	31				

Division 9 Calendar for June 2022

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 BOD zoom meeting for Oct 2- day conv. 2:00 pm	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Div 9 Zoom Meeting
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		