



# The Yardmaster

Southwestern Michigan Division



July/August 2023

Website: [www.ncr-div9.com](http://www.ncr-div9.com)



## Featured Articles this Month:

## Pages

- Upcoming Div. 9 Events 2
- July Board Meeting Minutes 3
- Preview of next Membership Mtg. 4
- Upcoming Train Shows 5
- NCR Convention Flyer 6
- Ask Dave 8
- Maynard Mitchell Layout Tour 10
- Hosting an Op Session – Jim Glenn 11-12
- Basic Information on Tank Cars Part 1 13-21
- NMRA Interchange Program Info. 22
- Wrap Up Comments 22

## Non-Train Related Special Events

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Independence Day**



## **Division 9 Officers**

<b>Superintendent</b>	- Garry Johnson	<a href="mailto:elecsprk@gmail.com">elecsprk@gmail.com</a>
Assistant Superintendent	- Joel Pyard	<a href="mailto:pyardj@comcast.net">pyardj@comcast.net</a>
Paymaster	- Bob Lawrence	<a href="mailto:robertlawrence44@msn.com">robertlawrence44@msn.com</a>
<b>Scribe</b> & Newsletter Editor	- Alan Bau	<a href="mailto:alanwbau@gmail.com">alanwbau@gmail.com</a>
<b>Trustee</b>	- Doug Van Meter	<a href="mailto:vanmeterda@gmail.com">vanmeterda@gmail.com</a>
Trustee	- Casey Bartman	<a href="mailto:Casey@GR-MI.com">Casey@GR-MI.com</a>

Note: Elections are coming up in September. The positions in red are up for election.



## **Upcoming Division Nine Membership Meetings & Events:**

<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Presentation Subject</b>
Board Meeting In-person and zoom meeting.	July 9 <sup>th</sup> 2:00 pm	Kalamazoo Bridge Club 648 Maple Hill Drive, Kalamazoo, Mi.	Main topic is a discussion on the September Annual Membership Meeting
<b>No Membership Meeting Scheduled</b>	<b>July &amp; August</b>		<b>Enjoy the summer</b>
The agenda will be announced as more details become available.	<b>September 23<sup>rd</sup></b> <b>NEW Date</b>	Kalamazoo Bridge Club 648 Maple Hill Drive, Kalamazoo, Mi.	<b>Annual Business Meeting, Board Elections &amp; Other Activities</b>
Board Meeting	October 1 <sup>st</sup> 2:00 PM	TBD	
Membership Meeting	<b>October 28<sup>th</sup></b> <b>NEW DATE</b>	TBD	
Membership Meeting	November 18th	TBD	
Membership Meeting	December 16th	TBD	

## **July Board Meeting Minutes** -Not Approved Yet

Date & Time: July 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM

Location: Kalamazoo Bridge Club located at 648 Maple Hill Drive in Kalamazoo.

Attendance In-Person: Joel Pyard, Bob Lawrence, Alan Bau, Rich Mahaney  
Attending via Zoom: Casey Bartman, Dave Vinci, Doug VanMeter

As Garry Johnson was unable to attend the meeting, Joel Pyard called the meeting to order at 2:03PM.

Officer Reports: Bob Lawrence reported that our treasury balance remains unchanged. No other officer had anything new to report.

Rich Mahaney updated the board on possibilities for future clinics & layout tours for the balance of 2023 through June 2024. All activities and dates are tentative at this time. Watch for updates as things are firmed up.

Board Nominations Status: At this point all current board members whose terms expire have expressed a desire to run again. This includes **Superintendent Garry Johnson, Scribe Alan Bau, and Trustee Doug VanMeter**. Any other members wishing to run for any of these offices should contact any board member prior to the upcoming September Membership Meeting.

Due to several date conflicts, a motion was made by Casey Bartman and seconded by Bob Lawrence to move the meeting date for the Annual Membership Meeting from Saturday September 16<sup>th</sup> to Saturday September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The motion passed unanimously.

There are also conflicts with the October date. A motion was made by Dave Vinci and seconded by Casey Bartman to move the October Membership Meeting date from October 21<sup>st</sup> to October 28<sup>th</sup>. This change was made to avoid conflicts with the NCR Ft. Wayne Convention. Motion passed unanimously.

The remaining time was devoted to the upcoming annual meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted.  
Alan Bau  
Division 9 Scribe

## **September Annual Meeting:**

Mark September 23rd on your calendar and plan to attend our Annual Membership Meeting to be held at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club 648 Maple Hill Drive in Kalamazoo. In addition to electing officers, we are considering the following programs.

- Show & Tell where modelers can bring in items they have modeled to share with other members. A display table will also be available.
- History of the formation of Division 9.
- Achievement Program review and an actual judging of a model to give members a better understanding of what is involved.
- A look into what is being considered for layout tours and clinics for October through the end of next year.
- Rich Mahaney will also be presenting one of his newer clinics.
- A sale table where members can bring in items they wish to sell.
- 50/50 Raffle
- Door Prizes
- Coffee & Donuts

Most likely the meeting will start around 9:00 AM and end around Noon?

Assuming we go ahead with all or most of the above programs we will need more space than is available at our normal meeting place. The Kalamazoo Bridge Club affords us this extra space as well as a more comfortable setting.

Since we will not be meeting between now and the Annual Meeting, watch your email for more details as programs are finalized.

If you plan to use GPS to find the Kalamazoo Bridge Center, you need to be aware that some GPS don't recognize Maple Hill Drive south of West Main St. Detailed driving instructions will be sent out as we get closer to the date of the meeting.

## **Upcoming Train Shows**

To encourage our members to support local area train shows the following shows are within reasonable driving distance from Kalamazoo.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Event Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
Aug. 26	Grand Rapids Model Railroad Historical Society Open House	4040 Leland Ave NW, Comstock Park, Mi. 49321
Sep. 16	Battle Creek Train Show	Calhoun Co. Fairgrounds, 720 Fair St., Marshall, MI.
Sep. 23	Mt. Clemens Train Show	Louis Social Hall 39140 Ormsby St., Mt. Clemens, Mi.
Oct. 14	Greater Grand Rapids Fall Train Show	Wyoming, Mi. HSB, Inc.
Oct. 15	32 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Chicago Railroadiana & Model Train Show & Sale	Kane County Fairgrounds, 525 Randall Rd., St. Charles, Il.
Oct. 19-21	<b>2023 NCR Convention</b>	Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave. Fort Wayne, In.  <a href="https://www.ncrmra.org">Fort Wayne Rails 2023 – 3 Rivers Division (ncrmra.org)</a>
Oct. 21	Fort Wayne Model Railroad Show and Swap	Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave. Fort Wayne, In.
Oct. 22	Taylor Town Train Show	Taylor Town Trade Center, 22525 Ecorse Rd. Taylor Mi.
Oct. 29	<b>KMRHS Show and Sale</b>	<b>Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds/Expo Center</b>
Nov. 5	Lansing Model Train Show & Sale	MSU Pavilion, 4301 Farm Lane, East Lansing, Mi.
Nov. 18	Grand Rapids Model Railroad Historical Society Open House	4040 Leland Ave NW, Comstock Park, Mi. 49321
Nov. 18	Maumee Valley Model Railroad Show & Swap	Classic Cafe Catering & Event Center, 4832 Hillegas Rd. Fort Wayne, In.

You can click on the above link for more information on the NCR Fort Wayne Convention. There is also a copy of the Convention flyer on the next page.

## NCR 2023 Convention in Fort Wayne, In.

Click on this link for more details.

[Fort Wayne Rails 2023 – 3 Rivers Division \(ncrnmra.org\)](https://www.ncrnmra.org/fort-wayne-rails-2023)

**ANNOUNCING**  
**NCR 2023 Convention**  
**Oct. 19 – 22, 2023**



Make plans to attend the 2023 NMRA North Central Region Convention that will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The convention, hosted by the Three Rivers Division will include events for the whole family as well as access to the [2023 Fort Wayne Model Railroad Show and Swap](#) which will be held on Saturday 21 October at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum (conveniently located across the street from the convention hotel). Hope you can join us for this fun filled weekend!

Bob Jones, Div. 3 Superintendent

### CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

[CLINICS](#)

[OP SESSIONS](#)

[MODEL DISPLAYS](#)

[PROTOTYPE TOURS](#)

### SPECIAL EVENTS

[2023 Fort Wayne Model Railroad Show & Swap](#)

Visit [www//div3.ncrnmra.org/fort-wayne-rails-2023](https://www.div3.ncrnmra.org/fort-wayne-rails-2023) for additional details and updates

**For Sale Items** Do you have an excess inventory of cars, supplies, etc. which are just taking up space and most likely will never be used? You can list these items here and try to sell them, so you can buy more train stuff.



To list your for-sale items here, send your list of items along with a picture if one is available, a description of your item(s) along with your asking price and contact information. If you wish your item(s) to be listed in the upcoming newsletter, you need to submit them along with needed information no later than the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Send your information to [alanwbau@gmail.com](mailto:alanwbau@gmail.com).



**Achievement Program Information** – the Achievement Program Coordinator for Division 9 is Dorman Wilson. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Dorman for assistance.

You can also follow along as NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest continues along her journey to achieve MMR status. See Part Five Titled “The Association Official Certificate, on pages 20-28 in the ~~May~~ 2023 edition. (Editor’s Note: This article actually appeared in the June edition. Sorry for any confusion.)

Part Six titled “The Prototype Models Certificate” on pages 28-39 in the July issue.



### **Question of the Month – June Results**

Do you plan to attend the Division 9 Annual Membership Meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup> ? Come alone or bring a friend or two, maybe three?

### **Question of the Month for July/August**

Results will be published in the September Newsletter.

## **Ask Dave – July-August 2023**

**“Question for Dave: Can coal loads be changed to coke by painting, maybe grey?”**

**Thank you. – Bob Provot”**

The simple answer is yes you can. Coal tends to be shiny where Coke is nearly 100% pure Carbon and it is flat black or very dark grey. The chunks of Coke may be a bit larger than coal so you could coat the plastic hopper car coal insert with white glue and then sprinkle mine run coal into the wet glue. Follow that with a few drops of diluted white glue (50% glue + 50% water + a few drops of dish soap to break the surface tension) and let it dry overnight. Then the next day, you can clean the edges of the load by rubbing the edges on a piece of 100 grit sandpaper to ensure a easy fit into the hopper car. I frequently clip one of the corners off the load to make a hole that you can insert a small screwdriver to pop out the load. Some folks glue a piece of steel on the underside of the load and remove the load with a magnet. After it fits and you can easily insert and remove the load, paint it FLAT black (or very dark grey). If you have hopper cars from different manufacturers you may want to write the Car reporting Marks and car number on the bottom of the load.

If your load insert is a Bowser part, it will have 4 tiny pins on the bottom which are there to elevate the load slightly. Remove those pins so the load will sit lower in the car. Some Coke plants kept the load of coke below the top chord of the hopper car to prevent loss of material during transport. Coke is significantly lighter than Coal so it can get blown around a bit.

Also, many companies kept the coke in the hopper cars it was delivered in instead of unloading it into piles. The more the coke is handled the more it breaks into dust making it difficult to handle. Piling it on the ground will help it to absorb moisture which is also undesirable. That’s why you will see Coke hoppers on the High Line of the Blast Furnace so they can dispense the Coke from the hopper into the scale car and then into the Skip hoist to the top of the Blast Furnace. Some Steel Companies used their own hoppers to haul the coke to avoid per diem charges. You can also see why the coke ovens were part of the steel plant so the hoppers were captive on Steel Company property and there would be less transportation handling and so less fines would be created.

I hope you find this helpful.

Dave Vinci

## Maynard Mitchell Layout Tour

The following members and guests attended Maynard's layout on Saturday June 17<sup>th</sup>: Alan Bau, Jim Fankhauser, Roy Haeusler, Bob & Mary Lawrence, Rich Mahaney, Greg Marvin (guest), Chuck Peterson, Greg Stonerock, Frank Zajac.

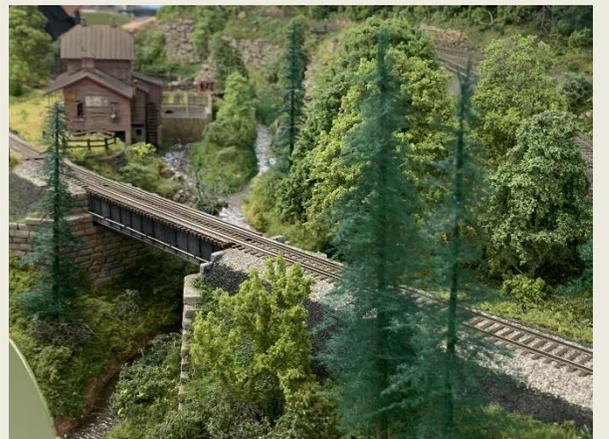
The tour didn't disappoint as the level of detail and workmanship is top notch as these pictures will confirm.

What follows is a small sample of pictures taken during our visit.



Maynard is pictured here explaining how he makes trees.





# Hosting an Operating Session

Jim Glenn

Once you have an operations system in place, it is time to think about hosting an op session. You have used your system by yourself and found most of the problems that needed to be fixed. You have cleaned the track and engine wheels, and checked all the turnouts. Now is the time to give the railroad a test with guest operators. When I first hosted an op session, I found out that I missed several items that needed to be fixed. My guests found problems that I missed. Keep a clipboard handy to make a record of problems to fix before the next session. (If a car derails twice, the car is removed from the layout and the problem is noted on the car maintenance form. Thank you Dave Vinci. Start slow and invite a few friends that will be supportive, not too critical, and honest. Have fun.

## Prepare the Crew

As my guests arrive, I invite them to look over the layout as we wait for everyone to get there. When everyone arrives, we sit down at a table in the family room for a **briefing**. I explain that I model a fictional railroad based on the Conrail Shared Assets Area between Ecorse, Michigan, and Toledo, Ohio. It is a double track main line with **main one** being closest to the aisle. The staging yard represents both ends of the railroad. All, but two, trains start in staging, and the trains are blocked before the session by destination with the correct cars and ready to go. One end of the staging is Toledo and the other end is Ecorse. Trains leave Toledo and end in Ecorse, or they leave Ecorse and end in Toledo. North is to your right hand as you face the layout, and south is to the left. Since all but two of the trains are running from staging to staging, almost every train will have cars that do not switch at a local industry but travel to the other end of the railroad. These cars are blocked at the end of each train.



I explain how to use the controllers, the train orders, and switch lists. All trains do switching at local industries and towns, and using picks or fingers are all right with me to use to switch cars. I encourage operators to ask questions! If the operators are first time operators, I have them run one of the trains as a through train to get use to the throttle and railroad. That train runs later as a local. All the turnouts on the railroad have ground throws, and are **always to be left in the through position** when an operator leaves an industry or uses a crossover. All engines have sound, and I encourage operators to use proper horn and bells to signal congested areas, train meets, and road crossings. This is not an enforced rule, but adds to the challenge and adds fun.



## Jobs

I act as dispatcher. There is one yardmaster, and I ask if there is a volunteer to do that job. If none of the guests are comfortable being the yardmaster, I will do that job.

Toledo yard at the start of an op session. To help things move along, before the session I block the cars in order of a train's arrival to visit the yard, and leave cars that will not move to the rear of the yard tracks where they are out of the way for this op session.

Some of the trains are more difficult than others. For example, the train that switches Downtown Toledo has five spurs with facing pickups and set outs requiring run arounds. It also must clear the main from time to time to allow other trains to pass. It will take an experienced operator at least 30 minutes to complete the train's jobs. Some of the other jobs have special moves requiring crossing from Main One to Main Two or vice versa. When that train is assigned to an operator, I show the operator those moves. Once a train is cleared to do their work and they finish the work, they are required to ask dispatch permission to move to the next job.



### Switching downtown

During the op session I answer questions and help operators to find the best way to run their trains. I make notes about problems, and I try to make sure that everyone is having fun and not being so frustrated that they decide that they do not like operations. If they become frustrated and decide that operations are not for them, they will end up missing one of the great parts of this hobby.

Greg Stonerock acts as hostler to start the op session on Jerry Hall's layout.

This completes the articles on operations. Have fun and OPERATE YOUR LAYOUT!

Questions? 269 290 2800

btrailroad@sbcglobal.net



## **Basic Information On Tank Cars Discussion Part 1.**

**By Rich Mahaney, NCR President And Division 9 Member.**

Photo #1 – Tank cars described by looking at the brake wheel end of the car. This is known as the “B” end of the car. Standing facing the brake wheel (B end of the car) the axles and wheels would be counted from that end. Axle #1, right wheel and left wheel, Axle #2, Right wheel and left wheel, extra to the other end of the tank car. The other end of the tank car is known or identified as the “A end” of the car.

Photo #2 – I have discussed in earlier articles about general service/low pressure tank cars, high pressure tank cars and cryogenic tank cars and how you might recognize these kinds of tank cars as you see them in trains. The DOT and AAR specifications, looking at the top of the tank car for equipment and protective covers on top, bottom outlet valves.



**#1 “B” end of the**

### **# 2 Low Pressure/High Pressure**



#### **Low Pressure (General Service)**

DOT 111, DOT 111-CPC 1232, DOT 117, DOT 117R, AAR 211, DOT 115

#### **High Pressure**

DOT 105, DOT 112, DOT 114, DOT 120

#### **Cryogenic Liquid**

DOT 113, AAR 204

Photos #3, #4, #5 and #6 – show low pressure, high pressure, and cryogenic tank car examples.

**So what is it – high or low pressure?  
Photos 3 & 4**



**Low Pressure / High Pressure  
Photo**



**Photo # 6 Cryogenic Tank Cars**



Photos #7, #8, #9 and #10 – show on the left side as you face the tank car the “reporting marks” or “letters and numbers” that are specific for that car. On the right side as you face the tank car you will find the “specifications plate” or important details for the tank car relating to construction, testing and certain parts.

**# 7 Specifications Reporting Marks**



**# 9 Specifications**



**# 8 Specifications**



**# 10 Built Date**

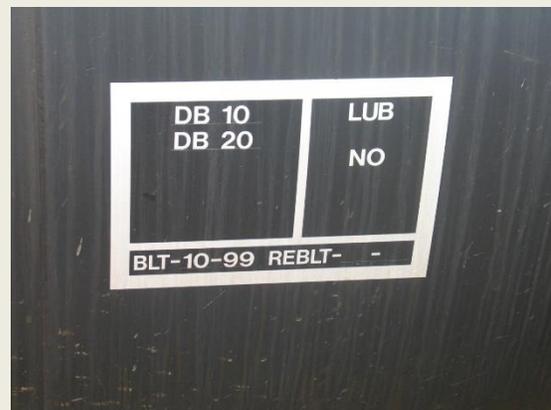


Photo # 10 shows an example of a “built date” on a tank car. This is when this car was constructed, which is important relating to the type of steel was used.

Photo #11 – shows the thickness of the steel used for the tank on the tank car based the product that it will be transporting. The more dangerous the product, the thicker the steel. This photo also shows the fire-resistant insulation place between the tank and the jacket, and the thickness of the tank car jacket. The insulation is to help stop flame impingement against the tank and the product in the tank.

**# 11 Tank Car Shell Thickness**

- **7/16 inch for sulfuric acid**
  - **9/16 inch for new DOT 120 cars**
  - **9/16 to 11/16 inch for pressure cars**
  - **11/16 inch for LPG/AA**
  - **3/4 inch for chlorine**
  - **1 and 1/8 inch for hydrogen cyanide**
- 
- **1/8 inch for jackets**



Photos #12 and #13 – show the differences between a “jacketed” and “non jacketed” tank car. You can see in one case how the bolster is welded to the tank. In the other photo that is covered up by the “Jacket”.



**# 12 Non-jacketed tank car**



**# 13 Jacketed Tank Car**

Photos #14 and #15 – show exposed a “half head shield” to protect the end of tank car from puncture by a coupler. The other shows that the “full head shield” is now built into the end of the tank car jacket to protect the end of the tank car from damage and punctures.

**#14 Half Head Shields**



**# 15 Full Head Shields**



Photos #16 – show safety equipment on the top of tank cars. The left photos a “Pressure Relief Device” or “PRD”. The right is a “Vent” which has a frangible disc that fails or breaks open under pressure from the product. Slashing product in the tank car can also cause one these discs to fail or break open. The PRD opens when the pressure builds up to a specific pressure to help protect the tank car from failing.

**# 16 Pressure Relief Device**



**Vent Pictured Right**



Photos #18, #19 and #20 – show colors of tank cars, the manufacturer and/or the tank car owner decide what color the tank car or cars will be painted. In photo #20, the lessee or industry owner of the tank cars have decided what color they want the protective housing to colored or painted

related to the product service the tank car is in. I have seen the protective housings colored or painted a variety over the years.

**Photo # 18 Tank Car Shell Colors**



**Photo # 19 Black & White**



**Photo # 20 Protective Housing Color**



Photo #21 – shows equipment and valving on top of a low-pressure tank car used in the unloading and loading of a tank car.

**Low Pressure Tank Car – Top  
Liquid line, vapor line, vacuum breaker, sample line, manway, top operated  
bottom outlet valve (TOPOV)**



Photo #22 – shows a “Top Operated Bottom Outlet Valve” on a low-pressure tank car. It is also known as a “TOBOV” valve. It works to open a valve or drain on the bottom on a the bottom of a tank car.



### **Tank Car Valves - TOBOV Top Operated Bottom Outlet Valve**



Photo #23 – shows the equipment used for loading and unloading a tank car transporting corrosive liquids. The safety relief equipment is also shown.



Photo #24 – shows an example of “shelf couplers” that are placed on all tank cars at this time.

- **Double shelf couplers are installed on all tank cars**
- **It helps prevent separation and puncture of other tank cars or other railroad cars**

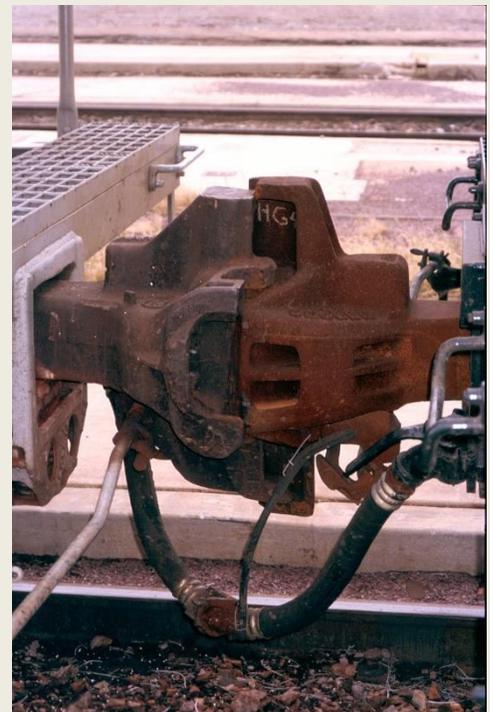


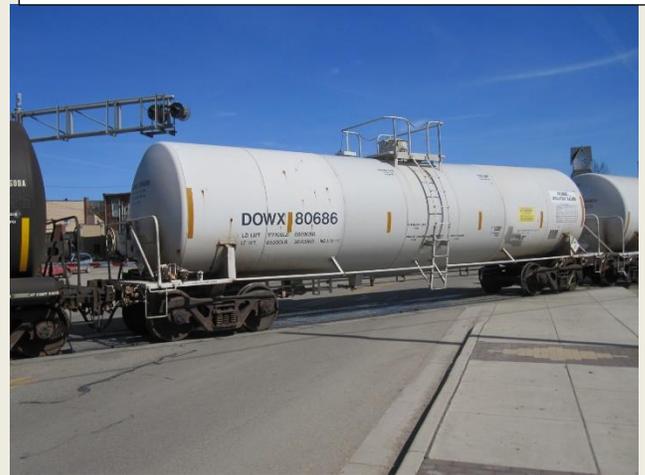
Photo #25 – Shows the “pin” that sticks into the bottom of a rail car (in this case a tank car) that keeps the wheel set “attached” to the rail cars. The weight of the cars keeps the wheel set attached to the rail car.

**Trucks (wheels) are not “permanently” attached and will come off during derailments**



**Photo # 26 GPS**

Photos #26 and #27 – show the modern GPS systems that are now attached to tank cars by a variety of companies, which involve a variety of products in transportation.



**Photo # 27 GPS Since 9/11**



I will write up another of one these presentations about some other tank car features in the future, before we end our look at tank cars.

The following article on the NMRA Interchange appeared in the NMRA/NCR/Division 6 April Newsletter. The information gives a good overview of the NMRA Interchange Program.

**NMRA INTERCHANGE** By now you have seen or heard about the announcement of the NMRA Interchange. The Interchange will provide an online space for our members to collaborate, learn, exchange ideas and information, and chat about all things model railroading. The NMRA Interchange will connect you with members from across the NMRA using voice and text chat. The "Hangout Rooms" are available for video conversations anytime without the need to pre-schedule. The NMRA Interchange uses the Discord platform, which is available through a web browser like Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome. You can also download the Discord desktop application or the Discord mobile app for your smartphone and/or tablet. The software works on iOS, MacOS, Windows, Linux, and Android. You can download the Discord application from here: <https://discord.com/download>. You can register for Discord and the NMRA Interchange at:

<https://discord.com/download>

<https://www.nmra.org/nmra/interchange>

### **Wrap-up for another month**

- The article by Jim Glenn titled "Hosting An Operating Session" wraps up this series of articles on Operations. I would like to thank Jim for his outstanding work on the articles appearing in this newsletter over the last several months. I am pleased to announce that Jim will be starting a new series of articles describing a new scene that he will be adding to his layout.
- We have a full slate of candidates for the upcoming election of Board Members, but it isn't much of an election if there is only one candidate running for each office. It isn't too late to throw your hat in the ring.
- If you have any suggestions for the upcoming September Membership Meeting, please forward them to [alanwbau@gmail.com](mailto:alanwbau@gmail.com) at your earliest convenience. We are looking for ideas to make this a truly memorable event.
- Finally, if you have any suggestions, comments, criticisms, etc. concerning the Yardmaster, I would really like to hear them.

**Remember to mark Saturday September 23rd for our annual Membership Meeting and election of officers.**

Our next edition of the Yardmaster will be in early September. Watch your email for more information on the Annual Membership Meeting.

Alan Bau