



The Yardmaster

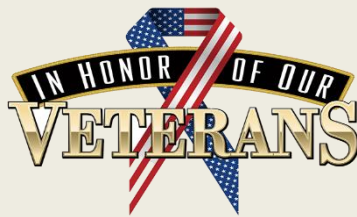
Southwestern Michigan Division



November 2025
 Website: <https://div9.ncnmra.org>

Division Nine Mission Statement

Our mission is to foster a welcoming community for model railroad enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels. We strive to share knowledge, inspire creativity, and promote the enjoyment of model railroading through collaboration, education, and hands-on activities. Together, we celebrate the rich history and artistry of railroading while building lasting friendships and memories.



Non-Train Related Holidays & Special Events –November 2025

Veteran’s Day 11/11

Thanksgiving 11/27

Black Friday 11/28

Cyber Monday 12/1



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Please take note that due to unforeseen circumstances the December Membership Meeting has been cancelled. The activities planned for December will be included in the January Meeting, including the Christmas Party.

Editor's Comments

Our new mission statement is now displayed above for your reference. Please review it thoroughly and share any feedback you may have.

Did you notice the new NMRA Logo appearing at the top left corner of this page?

Don't forget to participate in the modeling challenge at our February Membership Meeting. Every entry will be included in a drawing for a \$50 Hobby Recycling gift certificate in Grand Rapids. We've also provided additional ideas to help inspire your entry.

The complete set of Proposed Bylaws Changes is provided for your consideration. These changes will be thoroughly reviewed at our ~~December~~ January meeting, after which a vote for their approval will take place. Adoption of the proposed amendments requires approval by two-thirds of the members present.

Please remember that the donation match program is currently in progress, presenting an excellent opportunity to substantially grow our treasury. We are actively exploring ways these funds may be utilized to enhance the value and experience of Division 9 for all members.

Remember we have three outstanding local area layout tours on the schedule for later this month.

Rich's Travels has changed this month. Find out what's new and email me your answer by November 10th. Everyone who gets it right will have a chance to win a \$10 Gift Certificate to Rider's Hobby Shop.

Division 9 Board Members

Position	Board Member	Email address
Superintendent	Garry Johnson	elecsprk@gmail.com
Assistant Superintendent	Open	
Paymaster	Bob Lawrence	robertlawrence44@msn.com
Scribe	Greg Marvin	grmarvin@comcast.net
Newsletter Editor	Alan Bau	alanwbau@gmail.com
Website Manager	Tony Vacha	CKRHandler@aol.com
Trustee	Doug Van Meter	vanmeterda@gmail.com

Upcoming Division Nine Membership Meetings & Events:

Meetings & Events	Date	Location	Presenter & Topic
Membership Meeting	November 15 TH	Three locations	Local Area Layout Tours
Membership Meeting	December 13th	Cancelled	
Board Meeting	January 4 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Starts at 7:00 PM
Membership Meeting & Christmas Party	January 17 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Mark Tomlonson – RPO Cars & Railroad Post Office Operations
Membership Meeting	February 21 st	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Modeling Challenge & TBD
Membership Meeting	March	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Rich Mahaney – TBD

December Meeting Cancellation Notice: Owing to challenges in securing an appropriate venue, the December Meeting will not take place as originally scheduled. Instead, it will be combined with the January Meeting, which is set for January 17th at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club.

All Membership meetings held at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club start at 9:30AM, but coffee & donuts are available at 9:00AM.



Remember all board meetings start at 7:00 PM. Location varies between board member houses in April, July & October and the Kalamazoo Bridge Club in January.



The link to the Train Show List is displayed below:
[The Train Show List - Hobby and Train Event Clearinghouse](#)

Local Layout Tours in November

Our program for November is to visit three of our best local area layouts.

- Our first stop at 9:30 AM is at Rick Garthe's layout, located at 6737 TEXAS DR. Rick has a multi-scale HO and Lionel layout that is battery operated with wide aisles. (Note: this is a schedule change as Jim Fankhauser had a conflict in his schedule)
- Our next stop at approximately 10:30AM is at Greg Stonerock's located at 9344 S 8TH ST. Greg models the Duluth, Missabi & Iron Range, MN. in HO scale.
- Our final stop on the tour at approximately 11:30 AM is at Bill Nichol's layout located at 5746 West VW Ave, Schoolcraft, MI, (west of Schoolcraft on VW, off of 131). Kevin Kizer & Sheila Nichols will be our hosts when we tour Bill's Boston & Maine layout. This is rather large layout, that is signaled controlled by the Dispatcher's Desk. Operators must call into the Dispatcher for permission to move.

Each of these layouts is unique and interesting and will make for an enjoyable Saturday morning.

All layouts have plenty of parking spaces and are relatively close to one another.

Both Rick and Greg layouts are handicap accessible.

Thanks to Rick Garthe for taking Jim Fankhauser's place on the schedule.



[NMRA Michiana Division Main Page](#)

This link is from our friends from the Michiana Division. There are close to 200 videos covering a wide array of topics by many different model railroaders. Some of the presenter names that you may be familiar with include our own Joel Pyard, Maynard Mitchell, Clark Propst, Ron Christensen, Doug Harding & Greg Bueltmann along with many others.



[Vicksburg Train Depot](#)

The Vicksburg Train Depot during the month of December has open houses on Saturdays. Last year two of our members provided some assistance in helping man their train layouts. Would you be interested in giving them a hand this coming December? It is an opportunity to answer questions and talk trains to parents and their kids about the wonderful world of trains. Maybe we can interest a few people in joining our group and becoming members of the NMRA and Division 9?

If you would like to become a volunteer or have questions, please contact Garry Johnson.

Donation Matching Program \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

An anonymous donor has generously offered to match contributions from our members, dollar for dollar, up to a maximum of \$500.

Funds raised through this initiative will enable the organization to pursue several enhancements, including:

- Recruiting additional members
- Encouraging greater participation in group activities such as Christmas parties, family picnics, and other special events
- Introducing incentive programs for events like the Re-Purpose Modeling Challenge
- Upgrading audio/visual equipment
- And more

As this opportunity may not be repeated, we encourage all members to support this matching program. Timely donations will help us maximize the benefit of this generous offer, and every contribution is impactful. Thank you for your continued support.

If you would like to make a donation or pledge, please submit it to our Paymaster, Bob Lawrence, at any upcoming meeting, or mail a check directly to him. For mailing details, please contact Bob Lawrence or Alan Bau.

Month	Donations & Pledges to Date	Accum Total
Oct	\$50	\$50
Nov	\$50	\$100
Dec		
Jan		
Feb		
Mar		
Apr		
May		

Modeling Challenge Updates

Division 9 Is Hosting A Modeling Challenge For Its Members!

Division 9 Model Railroaders it is time to get going on your "Division 9 Modeling Challenge" project. It is time to decide on a railroad car that you want to model into a "second life and use". If you don't have a spare railroad car, there are lots of train shows going on in MI for you to shop at. Come up with some ideas, create a base to build your display on (12 inch by 12 inch up to 24 inches by 24 inches). Think about how the railroad car that you have chosen could be used in a "second life or use". The Division 9 newsletter will continue to have photo ideas and examples. The display can be in any scale of car, electricity and lighting can be used. Remember the Division 9 meeting in February 21, 2026 will be the date that the displays will be shown at our meeting. Don't be left out, the display date will be here before you know.

Rich Mahaney

Modeling Challenge Incentive Program

To provide a little incentive for members to participate in the Division Nine Modeling Challenge, everyone that enters a display will have their name entered into a drawing. At the end of the day one name will be drawn with the winner receiving a **\$50.00 Gift Certificate for Hobby Recycling in Grand Rapids.**

The date for the Modeling Challenge has been set for the Membership Meeting scheduled for February 21, 2026.

This modeling challenge is very simple. Select a model railroad car or cars from your collection (or purchase cars at a future train sale or by some other method) so that you can create a scene with it, in its new use and life.

This can be a railroad car in any scale and any type of railroad car. The key part of the modeling challenge is the railroad car is now being used in a different use, as compared to its original purchased use.

It should be built on a display that is one foot by one foot up to two feet by two feet. Foam or wood or something else is your choice for the display base.

There are no rules for this modeling challenge, only recommendations.

1. Base size for the display, so it can be shown at a Division 9 meeting at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club.
 - 2, Any scale of railroad car can be used. More than one railroad car can be used in the display.
 3. The railroad car(s) in the display are in a new use as to what it was originally purchased for.
 4. Type of railroad car chosen, can be any type. Caboose, open hopper, covered hopper, box car, refrigerator car, passenger car, flat car, stock car, intermodal well car, engine (steam or diesel), tank car (low pressure or high pressure or cryogenic), as examples.
 5. Photos of examples - real railroad car examples and model railroad cars examples will be in the Division 9 newsletters through December 2025.
 6. Be creative and use your imagination! Nothing is unacceptable!
 7. Electrical lighting and electricity can be used in the display.
 8. You can enter more than one display in the challenge.
 9. There will be no judging of the displays, just the sound of "oohs and aaahs" when people look at the displays!
 10. Maybe you can find a permanent home or place on your layout for your car(s) on your layout to get more use out of your display ideas.
 11. Again, have fun! Be creative, use your imagination! If you look around in the real world, railroad cars are found in all kinds of "second uses or lives".
- Watch for further announcements as to exhibition dates. Examples of 2nd use lives appear on the next few pages.

Thanks for participating! Rich Mahaney

The June and July/August Yardmaster issues contain ideas that may be useful for consideration.

Here are some more examples of 2nd use railroad cars to help get your creative juices flowing:

Page 1

This GN caboose is along US 2 in Washington. Unfortunately, bad people have been spray painting it. It is near a monument and park area for where people can hike back to see the old tunnel and train route.



Park sign, where the GN caboose is located at

A BN caboose in a city park along US 2 in WA



Two cabooses side by side which are a part of a bar business outside of Vancouver, BC, Canada



old Milwaukee Road caboose next to the Rochelle, IL Diamond Crossing. At one time it could be rented out by railfans to stay in.



An old refrigerator car being used for store at a business on a layout.



old box cars used for storage next to an engine house in Cadillac, MI



Here is the visitors center caboose at the "Iron Triangle Park", in Fostoria, OH.



An old tank car on a stand to store some type of liquid



Build an old railroad cars and engines



An old locomotive and caboose in a park



Frankie's Restaurant, just north of Three Rivers, MI at US 131



Caboose on display outside of a model railroad club in OH



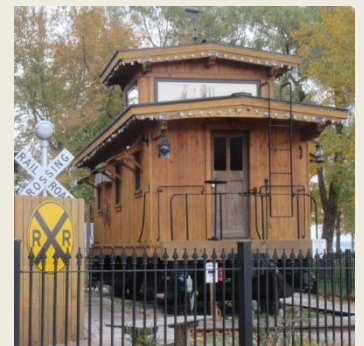
Caboose Motel in WI, model this for our "Second Lives" contest



Food caboose in the city of Wisconsin Dells, WI



Caboose remodeled in Northport, MI for an office in a 2nd life - all remodeled on the outside and the inside, sits behind the old train station



Here are some other examples to build for the modeling challenge.

How about building a layout bridge model with three different Walthers bridge Build a small railroad museum



Build a small railroad museum display on a layout



Backyard caboose - could be a playhouse or office or guest bedroom



Old train station in Green Bay, WI which became the "Title Town Brewery", also a restaurant with an old passenger car sitting next to it. 2nd life for the passenger car



Page 6 More Ideas to consider

Caboose used as a ticket office at an IN fair grounds



Trail information booth on the bike trail between Traverse City, MI to Suttons Bay, M



Decorated caboose for the Christmas/Holiday season, 2nd life Infront of a restaurant



How about building a firefighter training prop from tank cars, yes, they light the pooled liquids on fire



The next few pages detail the proposed changes to the Division 9 bylaws. The plan is to review these in detail during the December 2025 Membership Meeting. If you have any questions or comments, please share them prior to this meeting.

Comments on the bylaws displayed below:

- **Red** text that is crossed off, represent text that is being deleted.
- **Bold Purple** text, represents the text that is being proposed.
- Section 5.5.1 through 5.5.7 discusses job descriptions. These entire sections are being deleted. However, more detailed job descriptions have been created separately and will not be included in the bylaws going forward. Job descriptions can change frequently to meet the demands of Division Nine. It doesn't make sense to present updated job descriptions to the entire membership each time there are changes. It is our intent to make these available to the membership as they will be posted on our website.

**Amended by NCR Division 9 BOD on June 1, 2014
and Amended Section 5.7 in September 2016
and Amended in November 2021
and Amended December 13, 2025**

**Bylaws
Division Nine
North Central Region
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.**

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This organization shall be known as Division Nine, of the North Central Region (NCR) of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. (NMRA), and is established in accordance with their constitutions.
- 1.2 As a sub-chapter of the NMRA, Division Nine shall be included under the 501(c)(3)(a non-profit, tax-deductible status) issued to the NMRA by the Internal Revenue Service.
- 1.3 The purposes of Division Nine are: (a)to further the purpose of the NCR and NMRA as set forth in their constitutions. (b) To further the hobby through education and shared modeling practices, and the interchange of ideas among individual model railroader and club organizations within the divisional area.
- 1.4 No part of the net earnings of the Division shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons, except that the Division shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purpose set forth herein.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Any person who is a member in good standing of the NMRA and lives within the area of the North Central Region served by Division Nine, or any member living outside the Division Nine boundaries that is granted approval from the NMRA to transfer into Division Nine, may be a regular member of this organization and be entitled to participate in all activities and elections of the Division.

2.2 The served area of Division Nine shall be Southwestern Michigan, comprising the counties of Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren.

2.3 Guests and non-members may be allowed to attend meetings as observers or speakers, in furtherance of Division Nine goals and purposes. Guests or non-members may not vote or hold office in Division Nine. ~~Guests are limited to attend three Division activities per calendar year.~~ **Guests are required to comply with the NMRA Three Strike Policy.**

2.4 Membership shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, religion, gender, political belief, or other protected group as prescribed by law.

ARTICLE III – DISCIPLINE

3.1 All members, including Board members, shall be subject to the same standards and penalties.

3.2 Members who by their actions and behaviors become disruptive to the purposes of Division 9 can be refused attendance at Division Nine activities by the Division 9 Board of Directors.

3.3 It is the policy of this Division to, whenever possible, initiate corrective measures before resorting to more serious steps to include probation, censure, removal from office (in the instance of a Board member) up to and including termination of membership in the Division, at the discretion of the Board of Directors

3.4 All disciplinary actions will be held in a closed meeting with only the Board of Directors, the accused present, with witnesses in attendance only to testify.

3.5 All records of disciplinary meetings are sealed and may not be released to anyone outside the Board of Directors, except to the accused and to the NCR Board if requested.

ARTICLE IV – DIVISION BUSINESS

4.1 Meeting of the Division shall fall under one of the following types.

4.1.1 Annual Meetings – September

Setting of the annual budget

Election and Installation of Directors

Open to all members and visitors

4.1.2 Additional meetings may be called by the Superintendent as necessary.

4.1.3 Closed door planning and strategy meetings of the Board of Directors. Plans prepared may not be acted upon until presented to and approved by the general membership.

4.1.4 Emergency Board of Director Meetings.

May be held and action taken without prior notification to the general membership in a situation where immediate action must be taken on behalf of the Division or its membership, provided that full disclosure is made to the membership at the next regular meeting.

- a. Valid only when attended by at least two thirds of the Board of Directors
- b. All members of the Board of Directors must receive prior notice of the meeting.

4.2 Notice of meetings shall be mailed, either via the U.S. Postal Service or via e-mail to all regular members. Notification shall be received by the members no less than eleven days, nor more than ninety days prior to the meeting.

4.3 Board Member Elections

4.3.1 Voting Rules

4.3.1.1 Eligible Voters - Each member of NMRA NCR Division Nine in good standing, as of the annual election of Board Members, has the right to vote, whether in-person or virtual real-time. Proxies nor absentee voting is not permitted.

4.3.1.2 Nominating Committee –

- Consists of Board Members that are not up for election in the current year.
- Responsibilities
 - Develop a slate of candidates for each Board Position that is up for election.
 - Provide the slate of candidates to the Scribe to provide this list to the general membership at least 30 days prior to the date of the election.
 - Ask for additional nominees from the floor.
 - Distribute ballots
 - Prepare list of Virtual Real-Time voters
 - Count the votes

- Announce the winners.
- Turn over the voting documentation, including votes to the Scribe for archiving.

4.3.1.2.1 One Nominee for one or more positions.

- **In the event there is only one nominee for one or more positions, a motion can be made from the floor to unanimously elect the member(s) to the position for which they are nominated.**

4.3.1.2.2 In-person Voting

- Each member in good standing will be given a paper ballot with a list of nominees for each position. Members will make their choices and hand in their ballot to the nominating committee.

4.3.1.2.3 Virtual Real-Time Voting – Each member intending to vote real-time virtually. Virtual Real-time Voting Process allows members to cast their votes by sending a text or email to a member of the nominating committee at the start of the voting process.

4.4 Conflict of Interest

4.4.1 Any member, whether on the Board or not, must publicly identify any involvement with any company or agency that is making a presentation to the Division, or is in any way seeking to do business with the Division.

4.4.2 Any member involved in such conflict of interest may speak to the proposal but must refrain from voting on the issue.

4.5 All regular members in good standing shall be entitled to vote.

4.6 All matters, except where specified elsewhere in this document, shall be decided by simple majority vote of the of members present.

4.7 Acquisition of real and personal property by the Division.

4.7.1 The acquisition of property may be authorized at any meeting provided said expenditure does not exceed the budget set at the annual meeting.

4.8 Holding personal property by the Division

4.8.1 The Pay Master shall cause each non-consumable item purchased to be marked and inventoried.

4.9 Disposal of Real and Personal Property

4.9.1 The board may authorize the disposal of damaged or obsolete property in a manner consistent with local disposal regulations.

4.10 Donations

4.10.1 Unless otherwise designated, all donations received by the Division shall become the property of the Division general fund.

4.10.2 Receipts – Non-anonymous donations / grants of any size shall receive a receipt showing the full name and mailing address of the Division, and the exact amount of funds donated. In the event of a non-cash donation, a similar receipt describing the property without a value amount shall be issued. It shall be the responsibility of the donor to obtain an independent valuation for their tax purposes.

4.10.3 Letter of Appreciation. Donations / grants over \$100 shall also receive a letter of appreciation from the Division. Paymaster is responsible to provide sufficient details to the Scribe (Name, address, amount & date of donation) so the subject letter can be issued on a timely basis.

4.11 Special Funds. The Board of Directors, at their discretion, may establish funding accounts for special project and request donations from the membership and outside sources to achieve the goal for which special fund was created.

4.12 Standing Committees

4.12.1 The Board of Directors may establish those standing committees they deem necessary to assist the Board in conducting the business of the Division.

4.12.2 Each elected Director may appoint volunteers from the membership to assist them in the performance of their duties.

4.12.3 Ad Hoc committees. Division members may form informal associations for the purpose for researching and preparing presentations for consideration at a regular meeting. No prior Board approval is required for these committees provided they do not invoke the name or reputation of the Division in their inquiries.

4.13 In the event of the dissolution of NCR Division Nine, after payment of all outstanding debts, all property and monies will be forwarded to the NCR.

4.13.1 Dissolution will be upon successful vote by a three fourths majority of the Board Members by secret ballot.

Article V – Officers

5.1 All officers and directors shall be elected from the Division Nine general membership **who are in good standing at the time of the election.**

5.2 Election of the Officers and Board of Directors shall be at the annual meeting. ~~held each September, except for the initial election to be held at the organization meeting.~~

~~5.3 The term of office of officers and directors shall be two years, with the exception of the Paymaster and Website Manager, which shall be ongoing as long as these members remain in good standing in Division Nine, and as long as they wish to serve.~~

~~5.3.1 The Paymaster and the Website Manager will be appointed by the other members of the Board.~~

~~5.3.2 To provide for continuity of leadership the Board shall serve on a rotating term.~~

~~5.3.1.1 Upon adoption of these by laws a special election shall be held for all officers.~~

~~The inaugural Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Scribe, and one the two Trustees shall hold office for two years. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent will be elected on alternate years, the same applies to the Two Trustees. Starting in 2025 the Superintendent, the Scribe and one of Trustee will be elected, then in 2026 the Assistant Superintendent and the other Trustee will be elected. This rotation will then apply to subsequent years. The Inaugural Assistant Superintendent, Paymaster, and one Trustee shall hold office for one year.~~

5.3 Term of Office

5.3.1 The term of office for all elected board members will be two years.

5.3.2 the term of office for all appointed board members will be as long as they remain members of Division Nine in good standing and they wish to remain in their appointed positions on the board.

5.4 The Board of Directors shall consist of no fewer than three members. In addition to the Directors herein listed the Board of Directors may, at the Board's Discretion, create additional Director's positions, either temporary or permanent to fulfill the Division's evolving needs. These positions shall be filled by the general Division membership at a special election.

5.5 The Board of Directors shall consist of the following

5.5.1 Elected Directors

Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Scribe

Newsletter Editor

Trustee (s)

5.5.2 Appointed Directors

Paymaster

Website Manager

5.5.3 Board Member Job Descriptions and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board to create and maintain job descriptions, including a list of responsibilities for each position on the board and to provide a copy to all board members.

~~5.5.1 Superintendent~~

~~a. shall be responsible for the administrative and business functions of the Division.~~

~~b. shall serve as liaison to the NCR, the NMRA, and other NCR divisions, modeling clubs, museums, and the non-modeling members of the community. As said liaison, shall work with the Scribe in publishing information about the Division.~~

~~c. the Superintendent shall be the only one authorized to make public statements without the approval of the Board.~~

~~d. shall serve as legal compliance officer, ensuring Division compliance with all Federal, State, Municipal, NMRA and NCR laws, rules and regulations.~~

~~e. shall serve as chair of Division functions, conducting all meetings in adherence with The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, Fourth Edition.~~

~~5.5.2 Assistant Superintendent~~

~~a. shall design, plan and execute Division activities~~

~~b. shall conduct official Division functions in the absence, or by special request of the Superintendent, conducting meetings in adherence to The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, Fourth Edition.~~

~~5.5.3 Scribe~~

~~a. shall take and distribute meeting minutes.~~

~~b. shall maintain an archive of all official records for the Division.~~

- ~~c. shall work with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent in preparing and distributing information to the general membership, other Divisions, NCR North Central Region, the general public, and others as needed.~~
- ~~d. shall provide information on candidates for the available Directorships to the general membership no less than thirty days prior to the election.~~
- ~~e. shall notify members of meetings and activities~~
- ~~f. shall maintain the membership list for the Division~~

~~5.5.4 Paymaster~~

- ~~a. shall oversee financial business of the Division, to include, but not limited to, collection of monies, distribution of monies as approved by the Board.~~
- ~~b. shall maintain the financial records of the Division, which include but not limited to the following:
 - ~~i. reimburse members for their out-of-pocket expenses that have been pre-approved by the Board of Directors and make payments to outside concerns for items that have been pre-approved by the Board of Directors. In the event an expense has been submitted for reimbursement that exceeds the amount approved by the Board of Directors by \$25 or more, the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent must approve the item for payment in writing.~~
 - ~~ii. maintain the Division Nine books of account and provide a financial statement to the Board of Directors at each Board Meeting.~~
 - ~~iii. submit a financial report for the monthly Division Nine Newsletter.~~
 - ~~iv. The Paymaster is authorized to sign checks for approved expenditures. In the event the Paymaster is absent or unable to sign a check, the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent is authorized to sign checks.~~
 - ~~v. The Paymaster is the primary contact between Division Nine and any approved Financial Institution that is or may be doing business with Division Nine.~~~~
- ~~c. shall ensure all financial reporting paperwork is filed with State, Municipal, and Federal agencies as required by law.~~

~~d. in the event that the Division needs a checking account, the treasurer shall establish such account, and each check must be signed by the Paymaster and the Superintendent to be valid. One additional Director shall be on the account to sign checks in the event that either the Superintendent or Paymaster is unable to sign a required check.~~

~~5.5.5 Trustees — Two Trustees will serve on the Board of Directors~~

~~a. shall serve as representative at large on behalf of the membership~~

~~b. shall assist any other Director as needed~~

~~5.5.6 Website Manager~~

~~a. shall be responsible for creating and maintaining the Division Nine website.~~

~~b. shall be responsible for maintaining communication links for all Division Nine meetings when appropriate.~~

~~5.5.7 Newsletter Editor~~

~~a. shall be responsible for creating, editing and publishing the Yardmaster Newsletter.~~

- a. 5.6 In the event that an elected Director must withdraw from any office, the Superintendent with the approval of the Board may appoint a replacement until the next annual meeting.

5.7 Deleted (Scribe Note: This was previously deleted. Eliminated the clause regarding term limits)

5.8 Terms of office for officers and directors shall run from the date of the election.

5.9 In the event that an election is delayed, terms of office of existing offices and board members are extended to the date that the election is completed.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDING THE BYLAWS

Amendments to these bylaws may take two forms:

6.1 MINOR CHANGES

6.11 Changes to the bylaws to comply with State, Municipal or Federal Laws, rules or regulations may be made by the Board of Directors without notification to the general membership, provided that the changes are published at the next business meeting and included in the minutes of said meeting.

6.2 ALL OTHER CHANGES

6.2.1 Motions to change the bylaws must be presented in printed form and include:

- a. The exact wording of the section of the bylaws that will be changed.
 - b. The exact wording of the newly proposed section.
- 6.2.2 A motion to change the bylaws must be made and seconded and the presented form read out aloud to the membership.
- 6.2.3 Following the discussion of the issue, the Superintendent shall call for a vote.
- a. A two thirds majority of those voting is required to pass the amendment.

ARTICLE VII- RATIFIICATION

7.1 The bylaws will be considered as passed with a two thirds vote of the membership at a pre-announced meeting for this purpose.

7.2 The ratifying meeting will then conduct an election of a Board of Directors for the Division. This shall not be construed to indicate that the ratifying members are prohibited to submit their name for office.

7.3 The elected Board will then authorize the acceptance with their signatures.

We the undersigned do hereby attest and acknowledge that these bylaws have been duly adopted:

Superintendent _____ Date_____

Assistant Superintendent_____ Date_____

Paymaster _____ Date _____

Scribe_____ Date _____

Trustee _____ Date _____

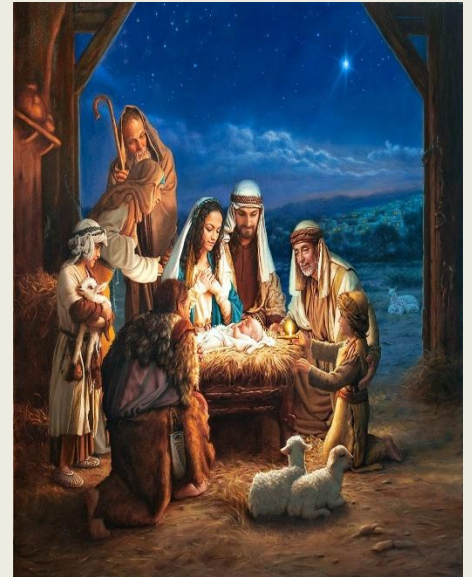
Trustee _____ Date_____

Website Manager _____ Date_____

Newsletter Editor _____Date_____

Merry Christmas

We are having our first annual Christmas Party during our January Membership Meeting, **spouses invited**, on January 17th at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club.



Because our October membership meeting faced significant issues with noise and space, we decided to seek an alternative venue. However, the only available location could accommodate us for just two hours. After consulting with other board members, we chose to cancel the December meeting and merge it with the January 17th gathering at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club.

Kindly let us know if you'll be attending by January 10th to help us plan how many Gift Bags to prepare. You're welcome to bring along a dessert or appetizer to share with everyone.

We apologize for cancelling the December Membership Meeting but given the circumstances the board feels it was the appropriate thing to do.



Gift Bags for everyone!!!!



Door Prizes & 50/50 Raffle

Steam Train Pictures on its way to Steam Festival By Garry Johnson

Photos Date 18 July 2009

Steam Festival Date 23-26 July 2009

I had a heads up on its movement from the west coast to its destination of Owosso MI

It was quite the sight that brought back memories of steamers in Kalamazoo and Vicksburg.

I was participating in training at Ft Custer Training Center but slipped out for a few hours to catch it eastbound. Pictures in Comstock, and Battle Creek Westbound caught it passing under the coal tower quite the sight

Caught train in Battle Creek passing by old Grand Trunk Western passenger station which was a division point center

Steamer 1449 on way to Owosso MI Steam show (12)

Pictures under tower





Division Nine Board Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2025

Alan Bau's 2441 Hunters Run- Kalamazoo

Officer Reports:

Superintendent Garry Johnson opened meeting at 7PM. He offered his thanks and appreciation to the board members for their support and involvement in our division. He attended a train show in Burlingame and had some good purchase success there. He also shared some diecast models he had purchased at Menards at a really good price.

Paymaster Bob Lawrence shared the checkbook balances with us. \$125.00 check issued to Rich for purchase of gift certificates from Ryders Hobby for the annual meeting. September bank balance was \$961.72, we have \$25 cash on hand and \$50.00 deposited from the annual meeting on Oct 1. Total is \$1036.72.

Membership Meeting Locations:

Rich Mahaney covered our upcoming meeting dates and agendas.

- Oct 18 – Roosters Call on Shaver Rd. Jim Winslow presenting info about GR&I.
- Nov 15- Local layout tours. Jim Fankhauser, Bill Nichols, Greg Stonerock
- Dec 6 – Operations session at Dave Vinci home
- Dec 13- Rooster Call- Much discussion about the possibility of having a Christmas party even, inviting spouses, family members, etc. What type of event...grab bag ideas, gift certificates, prizes, etc. Rich M. could do clinic on 5 busy locations on your layout. It was decided that only spouses would be invited this year. Gift bags, 50/50 and door prizes would be given. Breakfast would be off the menu at each members own expense.
- January 17-Bridge Club – Mark Tomlonson Clinic on (Postal ops?)
- Open discussion on upcoming 2026 meetings. February is model challenge. It was decided that everyone who enters the challenge will be eligible for a \$50 gift certificate drawn from a hat. March or April could be Michiana Layout tours. May is New York Central convention. On the New York Central convention, people might be able to participate in their Sat train ride. Bus ride from the Kalamazoo Delta Hotel to the Coldwater, MI train depot. Train ride is from Coldwater, MI to Hillsdale, MI to Pleasant Lake, IN. Then a bus ride back the Delta Hotel near Kalamazoo, MI. No price has been determined for yet for non-member of the NYC historical organization.
-

Other Possible Events:

Family Picnic July 18- Vicksburg Historical area. Garry will check into options of picnic area to be utilized.

Christmas party perhaps at Roosters Call in December 2026. This could be a more planned event, and we would like to know how this year's event went over.

Board Meeting Schedule – 2026

Jan 4 – Bridge Club. April 5 @ Bob Lawrence's. July 12 & Oct 4th TBD.

Other Discussions:

Alan Bau presented Bylaws Update & Review. Job descriptions shared and a new Mission Statement.

By Laws: 2.3 includes NMRA Three Strike Policy.

4.3.1.2 Wording added in the event of only one nominee...

5.1 added nominees who are in good standing at time of election.

5.3 Deleted this section and added "term of office"

5.5.1 & 2 Section now separates nominated candidates and appointed directors

5.5.3 Board Member Job Descriptions & Responsibilities

Mission Statement: Adopted. Will be added to website.

"Our mission is to foster a welcoming community for model railroad enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels. We strive to share knowledge, inspire creativity, and promote the enjoyment of model railroading through collaboration, education, and hands on activities. Together, we celebrate the rich history and artistry of railroading while building lasting friendships and memories.

Rich shared information about Div 4 convention next October 8-11 to be held at Zeeland Public Library. He also shared information about the NCR and ongoing discussions there. There is a strong possibility that the Divisions will share in profits from Novi Convention to the tune of \$500-\$1000.

There is an opportunity for a matching gift of up to \$500 for Div 9, no matter what amount we raise. This challenge will take place Dec 2025- May 2026.

We determined Div 9 was officially started November 16, 2013.

The meeting concluded at 9:30pm.

In Attendance: Garry Johnson, Alan Bau, Bob Lawrence, Greg Marvin, Rich Mahaney.



NMRA Three Strikes Policy:

There have been a few questions concerning the NMRA Three Strike Policy, which is reprinted below for your information. All NMRA Division are expected to follow this policy. We discussed this during the July board meeting and will be putting this policy into effect starting with the September Annual Meeting.

Common sense talk about the three strikes policy: What is it and what does it mean?

We've been getting a lot of questions about the Visitor Policy that the NMRA Board reaffirmed and publicized in February of 2015, limiting visitors to NMRA meetings to three visits during their lifetime.

This isn't really a new policy, since it was first adopted in 2007 and explained in the "President's Car" column in the November 2007 issue of Scale Rails (now called the NMRA Magazine). Then, as now, the needs of our insurance provider played a large part in the adoption of this policy, but there are also issues of basic fairness, as well as tax issues in the United States.

Here's the policy: Visitors are allowed three visits to an NMRA meeting IN THEIR LIFETIME. If they don't join by their third visit, they cannot attend any more meetings.

A lot of the questions we've been getting are from members trying to overthink the policy, worrying about this or that exception and making up complicated what-ifs. The policy does not apply to members' spouses who come along to the meetings so that they can go to dinner afterwards. It does not apply to non-member caregivers who aren't modelers, but who provide a ride to a member who cannot drive himself. It does not apply to events that are organized for the general public, like mall shows, swap meets, beginner clinic series, and the like, nor does it apply to things like joint meetings with another non-NMRA group or to family picnics or outings.

The policy does apply to non-members who continually show up at meetings at make themselves at home, month after month, year after year. Allowing freeloaders to participate as if they were members is unfair because it takes advantage of our members who HAVE paid up. We members are all paying to keep the organization going – what are the freeloaders doing, besides getting a free ride on our backs?

Tolerating permanent freeloaders can give our insurance providers a reason to cancel an NMRA group's coverage if there's an incident, leaving individual officers and members responsible for paying the claim. The IRS has rules about giving benefits of membership to non-members, too – they say don't do it, and there are tax consequences if you do.

Now, if your Division and Region are already following the rules (which would be a really good idea if you want the protection of our NMRA Liability Insurance policy), this policy is not the big deal you might think it is. We all know that if someone comes and tries us out three times and still doesn't join, he or she is not going to join. So after the third turn-down, don't worry about it – just move on to the next prospect.

If you're still wondering whether your group is in compliance, just ask yourself: are you allowing people who aren't members to come to your meetings month after month, year after year, and participate as if they'd paid their dues? If the answer is no, then fine, just keep doing what you're doing. If the answer is yes, then you have some changes to make.

If you have additional questions about this policy or how to implement it, please feel free to contact an NMRA officer, director, or NMRA HQ. We'll get your question to the right person.

Mike Brestel NMRA
Insurance Coordinator
At-Large Worldwide Director

Rich's Travels



All the photos in Rich's Travels were taken by Rich Mahaney. Our many thanks go out to Rich for his many contributions to the Yardmaster Newsletter and to the NCR and Division9

New York Central RR Historical Society

Information for all of you, I just got off a zoom call with the planning team for the 2026 New York Central RR Historical Society. They are hosting their annual convention in Kalamazoo, MI May 14 to 17, 2026, at the Delta Hotel (west of 131). That is the same weekend as our Sat Division 9 meeting. They are looking for a few layouts to tour in the area on Friday night. On Sunday, they will be heading to Grand Rapids to see Bruce Chubb's layout and maybe some layouts in the GR area.

Division 9 is invited to participate with their convention, I don't know what the price will be. They are sponsoring a passenger train ride from Coldwater to Fort Wayne. That weekend I am supposed to be teaching at a railroad convention in the Portland, OR area at this time.

More information to come.

Rich Mahaney

Mason, Mi. Yesterday, I stopped in Mason, MI on my way to Lansing to hopefully take some railroad engine photos of the Adrain and Blissfield Railroad with the sun on the right side, but nope nothing was sitting outside the barn. But there was a string of tank cars on the tracks to photograph. Many of you would not find this of interest, but I did, so some education time again.

These were an interesting mix of construction specifications relating to modern tank cars.

Rich Mahaney

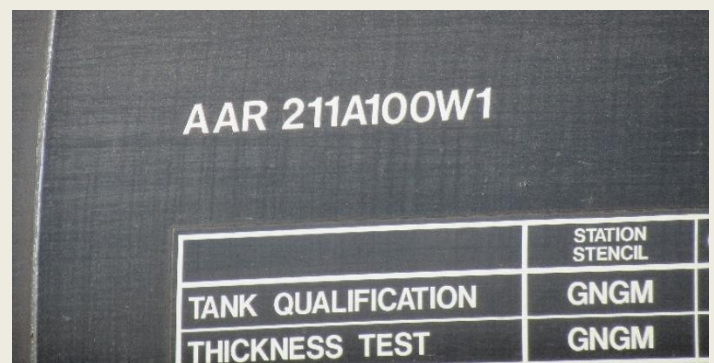
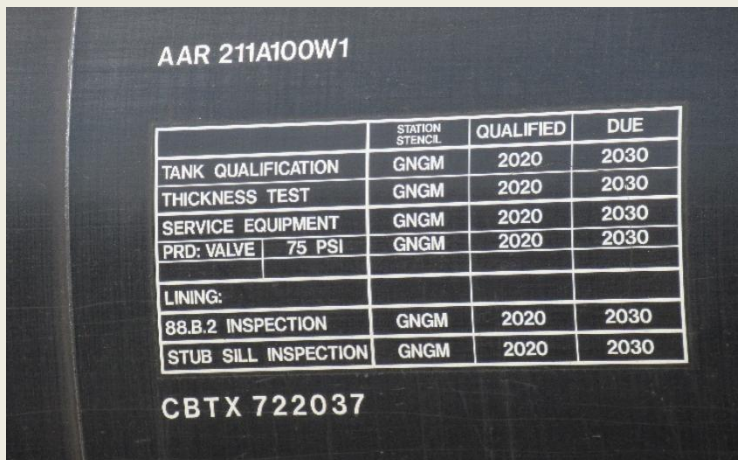


Mason # 2

This tank car was built to the specifications of an AAR 211 tank car. The specifications are very similar to a DOT 111 but typically transport class 9 materials or maybe combustible liquids (flash points over 141 degrees F), like corn syrup and other farm used materials.

The AAR 211 A 100 W1 shows an "A" for shelf couplers, but all tank cars have shelf couplers. 100 is the tank test pressure, W1 is a construction style involving outlets, valving, etc. There are 7 styles - W1 through W7. This is a general service or low-pressure tank car.

It has a pressure relief device set at 75psi.



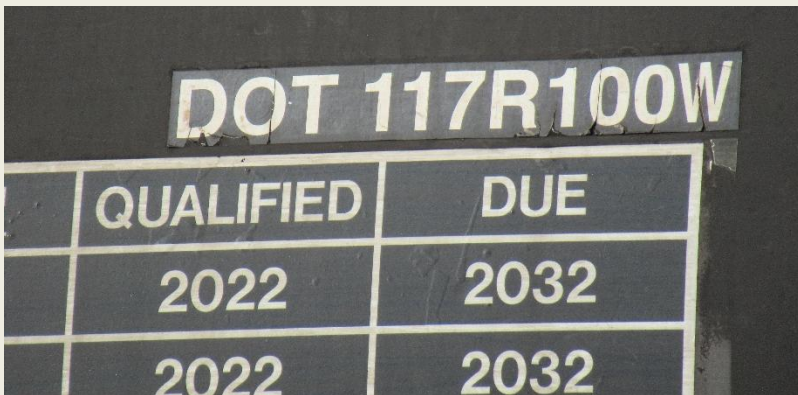
Mason # 3

This was the next car in the line as I walked south.

This tank car was built in June of 2014 probably as a DOT 111, but has been upgraded/rebuilt to the new DOT 117 specifications for transporting flammable liquids (Flash points below 141 degrees F), so it is now listed as a DOT 117R (r is for rebuilt or retrofitted) and now has a head shield to reduce the chance of a puncture by a coupler. The pressure relief device is set for 75psi.

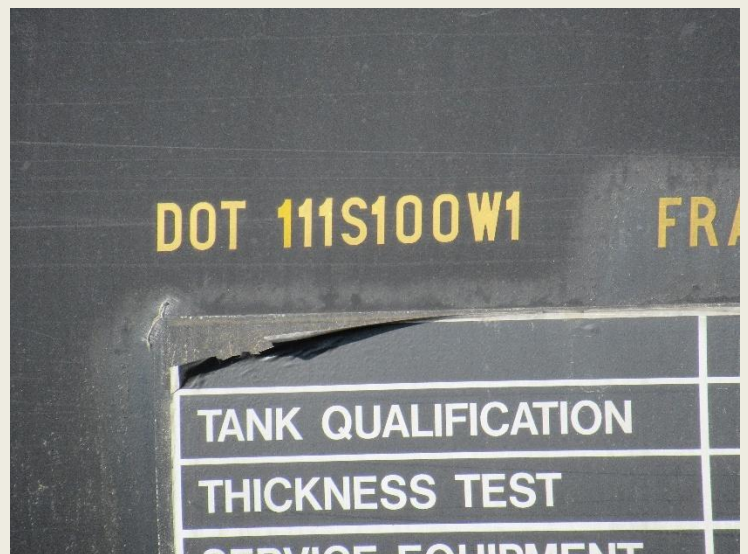
This tank car under the new F. A.S.T. rules can now transport flammable liquids like crude oil and ethanol.

Under the new protective housing are the valves for liquid and vapor, the pressure relief device and maybe some other things. The manway for filling, sits next to the protective housing and there is a bottom outlet under the tank car for unloading.



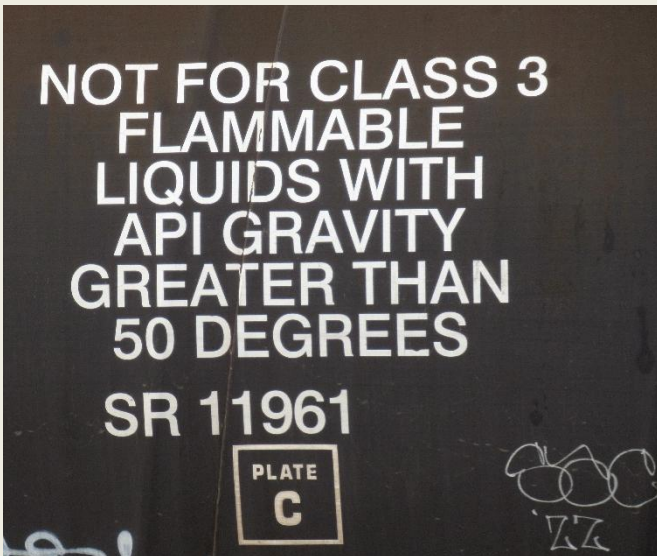
Mason # 4

The next tank car in the line is also a low-pressure tank car and is built to the DOT 100 S 100 W1 specifications. It is not qualified to transport flammable liquids (only combustible liquids) under the new F.A.S.T. rules. So, it is a traditional DOT 100 tank car. The S indicates it has a "full head shield" on the tank car ends, which could be unusual. It is built to the W 1 features.



Mason # 5

This tank car has some interesting stenciling/labeling about the types of products it can transport. It is also a DOT 117R specification tank car. This tank car was built in September of 2013 and has been upgraded to the new DOT 117R (R for retrofit) design. It also has the new signage about how to secure and operate the bottom outlet valve. It has a pressure relief device set for 75 psi and is built to the DOT 117 R 100 W1 specifications. It can transport flammable liquids per the new F.A.S.T. rules of May 2025.



Basement rebuild for the Bloomingdale, MI train station between Gobles and South Haven, MI, on the Kalhaven Trail, currently going on, maybe something will happen to the old CNW caboose in the future also.



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. Send your information to alanwbau@gmail.com.



Achievement Program

Do you have any interest in the NMRA-NCR Achievement Program. If you want more information or have any specific questions, contact our Division 9 Achievement Program Coordinator - Dorman Wilson N8YNW@Charter.net.



Wrap-up

Did you remember to turn your clocks back on November 1st?

During the last few weeks, I had some time to work on my layout. Here is a picture of area I have been spending most of my time on. Lots of fun things to do. Pictured are the UPS building, the Champion Packing Company and Stockyard and the Capital Printing Company. In the center is a small park area and in the far back the beginning of a mountain area. I hope to add the Cash Mine Works on my layout soon.



If you have news or updates about railroad events, upcoming train shows, or community gatherings related to railroading, please share them for inclusion in future newsletters. Contributions from members help keep our community informed and engaged.

Final reminder that the December Meeting has been cancelled and the activities scheduled for December will be added to the January Agenda, including the Christmas Party.

Alan Bau

Divisions 9 Scribe & Newsletter Editor
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