



The Yardmaster

Southwestern Michigan Division



October 2025

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



This photo is the Pere Marquette Steam Engine # 1225, from the Steam Railroading Institute.

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Non-Train Related Holidays & Special Events – October 2025



Columbus Day – October 2nd
Halloween – October 31st



Editor's Comments

My apologies for getting this edition out a few days late, but I wanted to wait until after the October 5th board meeting.

Wow there are a lot of things happening in Division Nine, as we prepare for the Autumn Leaves, Winter Weather and the Christmas and New Years holidays.

First of all, Congratulations to Garry Johnson for being re-elected as our Superintendent and to Greg Marvin being elected as our new Scribe and I will continue in my role of Yardmaster Editor.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we finally have an updated set of bylaws for your review, and comment if you wish. The plan is to vote on the proposed changes at our December Membership Meeting, which will be held at The Rooster Call located on Shaver Road in Portage. In November, the plan is to show the old vs. the new bylaws in more detail.

You will find our new mission statement displayed below. Read it carefully and let us know what you think.

Don't forget the modeling challenge during our February Membership Meeting. We have added a few new wrinkles to the program that I hope will encourage you to participate in this new annual event.

We have scheduled two inaugural events: a Christmas Party in December and a family picnic in July 2026. Watch for more details as they become available.



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.



Division 9 Board Members

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

Updated Bylaws – Approved by the Board on 10/5/2025

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

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 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 projects 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

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.

- 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

6.1.1 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 _____

The following is a summary of the proposed changes

The following is a summary of the proposed changes to allow members to get a good idea of what is being proposed without having to go through the entire bylaws. A complete copy of the changes in more detail will be included in the November Yardmaster. The plan is to vote on the changes at the December 13th Membership Meeting. **The text that is in purple is for information purposes only and is not an actual part of the bylaws.**

Proposed Division Nine Bylaws Changes

Article II Membership 2.3 Guests. Deleted "Guests are limited to attend three Division activities per calendar years". Replaced with "Guests are required to comply with the NMRA Three Strike Policy".

Article IV Division Business 4.3.1.2.1 Added the following: "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."

Article V – Officers 5.1 Added the words marked in red. "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 Deleted the words in red. 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 Deleted the entire section related to terms of office for each officer. Replaced with the following:

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.

5.5 The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

This new section separates board members into elected and appointed members.

5.5.1 Elected Directors

Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Scribe

Newsletter Editor

Trustee (s)

5.5.2 Appointed Directors

Paymaster

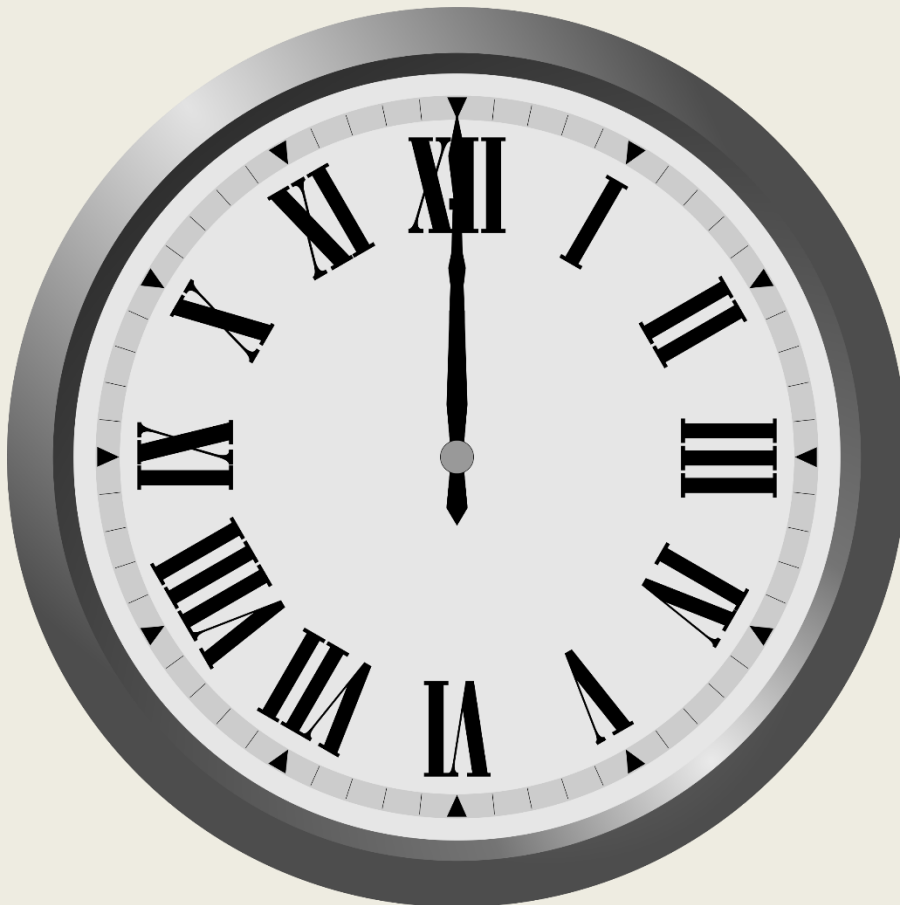
Website Manager

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.

Note: Previously 5.5.1 through 5.5.7 related to Board Positions and Responsibilities. All of these have been deleted. The new 5.5.3 assigns the responsibility to the board to create and maintain job descriptions and responsibilities. Previously the bylaws required the general membership to approve any changes to job descriptions and responsibilities. The new approach no longer requires the members to approve such changes, as it now the responsibility of the board to approve them.

This completes the list of proposed changes.



Remember to set your clocks back one hour on November 1st.

Upcoming Division Nine Membership Meetings & Events:

Meetings & Events	Date	Location	Presenter & Topic
Membership Meeting	October 18 th	Rooster Call – Shaver Road Location	Presentation on GR&I By Jim Winslow
Membership Meeting	November 15 TH	Three locations	Local Area Layout Tours
Membership Meeting	December 13 th	Rooster Call – Shaver Road Location	Rich Mahaney – Five Busy Locations on your layout
Board Meeting	January 4 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Starts at 7:00 PM
Membership Meeting	January 17 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Mark Tomlonson – RPO Cars & Railroad Post Office Operations

Note: We will be meeting at The Rooster Call Restaurant located on Shaver Road in Portage, for both the October and December meetings. If you care to join us for an informal breakfast, you're your own, around 8:30AM.

Also note that the December meeting date has been changed to the 2nd Saturday of December 13th.

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

Three local area layout tours are scheduled for Saturday, November 15th. The first tour will be at Jim Fankhauser's, followed by a tour of Jim Nichols' layout hosted by Kevin Kizer and Sheila Nichols and we will wrap up the day with a tour of Greg Stonerock's layout.

Addresses for each of the three layouts are listed below:

Jim Fankhauser – 15545 S 2nd Street, Schoolcraft

Bill Nichols - 5746 West VW Ave, Schoolcraft, MI, (west of Schoolcraft on VW, off of 131)

Greg Stonerock - 9344 S 8th St, Schoolcraft



[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.

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 Gift Certificate to Hobby Recycling.

The date for the Modeling Challenge has been set for the Membership Meeting scheduled on 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 aahs" 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.

A few more examples of ideas for the modeling challenge.

These railroad cars are part of this business and are part of the businesses inside and used for storage. It is even part of the theme for the business and the shops.



Second life of a railroad car

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

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

Whatever money we raise from this program presents us with opportunities to do more as an organization – such as:

- Recruiting new members
- Increasing participation in group activities like Christmas parties and family picnics and other special events
- Offering incentive programs for events like the Re-Purpose Modeling Challenge
- Improving our audio/visual equipment
- Etc.

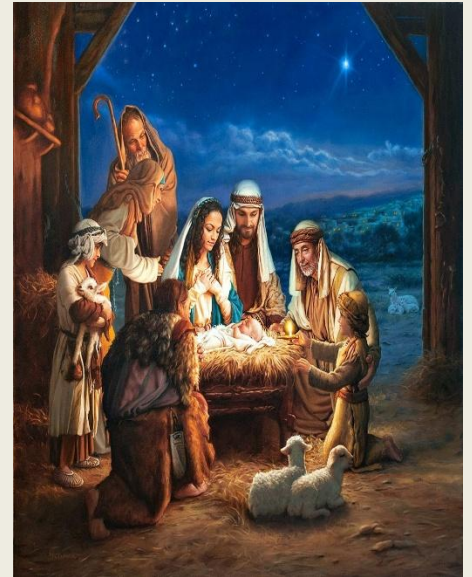
This program most likely won't come by again, so it is in everyone's best interest to get behind this project.

Please consider making your donation soon so we can take full advantage of this generous offer. Every contribution makes a difference. Thank you for your support!

Any donations should be directed to our Paymaster Bob Lawrence at any of our future meetings or you can mail a check to Bob Lawrence. Please contact Bob Lawrence or Alan Bau for his mailing address.

Merry Christmas

We are having our first annual Christmas Party at our December Membership Meeting, spouses invited, on December 13th at The Rooster Call Restaurant located at 9136 Shaver Rd. Portage, Mi.



Gift Bags for everyone!!!!



Door Prizes & 50/50 Raffle

RSVP no later than December 5th as space is limited and we need to know how many gift bags to prepare.

The plan is to eat from the menu, at your own expense.

If you want to get a peak at their menu, click on the link below:

Website = [The Roosters Call](#)



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 over-think 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?

1

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



**Happy
Halloween!**

IT'S GONE

By Garry Johnson

Recently a trackside coaling tower near Augusta MI was torn down based on safety concerns. It was constructed in 1923 and was active for many years during the steam era. For me it is sad to see this landmark gone. Growing up my folks would travel what was US-12 from Kalamazoo to Detroit. I was in awe of that tower as I was beginning to show interest in trains. There in plain view was the tower this would be in the 50's. Later as an adult traveling to Battle Creek doing construction work there that tower stood. By this time, I was a train chaser and modeler. Moving to Battle Creek MI five years ago I traveled back and forth between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo almost daily. There it stood tall and proud. It was like looking forward to seeing the tower and imaging what it must have been like to see a steamer coaling up. The other day looking down the track where the tower used to stand an Amtrak train was passing through in a cloud of dust. That's all that's left of a mighty coaling tower. One word sums up my feeling nostalgia and memories.

I've provided a picture of the coaling tower. You might see an engine in the picture. More information on this engine stay tuned.



Rich's Travels

Saw this on Tuesday (9/30) morning on my way to work in Holland, MI. Another tank car full of acetone (UN 1090) for Sherman Williams. Short freight train. This will require a "run around" by the engine to be able to access the plant spur to pull out cars and push in cars (they may need to use the box car or the gondola as "idler cars" in the moves), so they can remove a tank car or two from the plant and put another tank car into the plant spur. Sorry, I did not get to watch "the move", because I had to go to work.



All photos displayed in Rich's Travels were taken by Rich Mahaney

Note on the DOT 120 tank car, there is protective housing over the valves and fittings, and there is a protective housing over the manway filling location on the top.

DOT 120 High Pressure



More photos of DOT 117 tank cars

DOT 117R (retrofit) Low Pressure



UN 1230
Methanol
FP 52 deg F

North American Tank Cars

Low Pressure/General Service Tank Cars

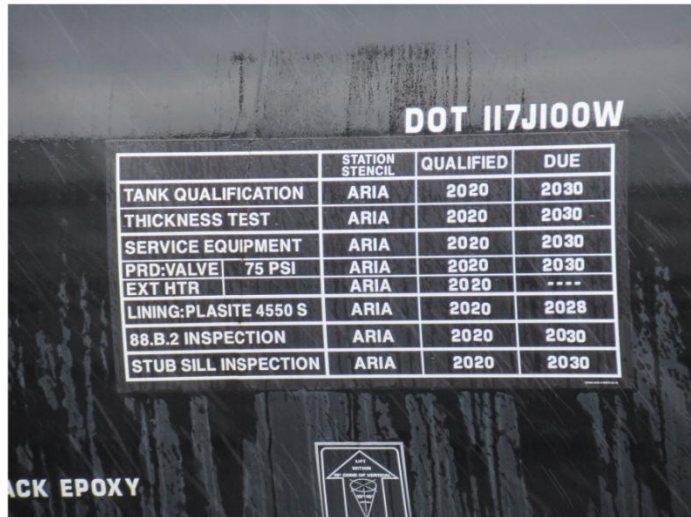
- DOT 111, AAR 211
- DOT 111-CPC 1232
- DOT 115
- DOT 117
- DOT 117R/DOT 117P

High Pressure Tank Cars

- DOT 112
- DOT 114
- DOT 105
- DOT 120

Cryogenic Tank Cars

- DOT 113
- AAR 204



North American Tank Cars

What do the letters mean on tank cars?

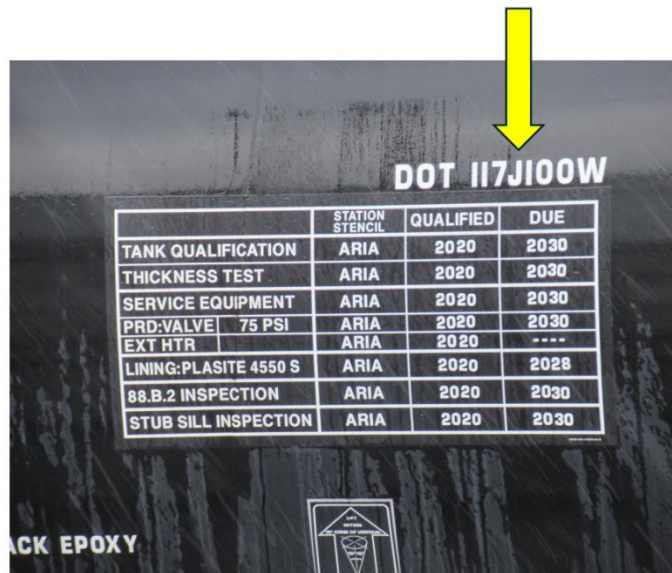
A – spacer and shelf couplers

S – full head shields, no credit for half head shield and shelf couplers

T – spray on thermal protection, shelf couplers, and full head shields

J – jacketed tank, fire resistant insulation under the jacket, full head shields and shelf couplers

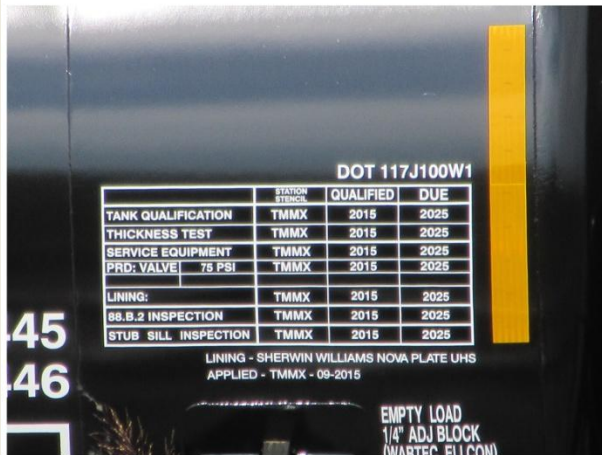
P – Performance based, meets DOT 117 standards



DOT 117 Low Pressure/General Service



DOT 117 Low Pressure/General Service



History Lead To This

1. F.A.S.T. Act (Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act) (2015) – Under the DOT Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, requires all tank cars that transport crude oil, and other hazardous liquids meet the new, safer tank car specifications outlined in the DOT’s High Hazard Flammable Train Final Rule. Tank cars must meet the new specifications of the DOT – 117, DOT – 117R and DOT – 117P tank cars. This rule also started to phase out the use of DOT – 111 and DOT – 111 CPC 1232 for flammable liquid use.
2. DOT – 117 R (Retrofitted) and DOT – 117 P (Performance-Based)

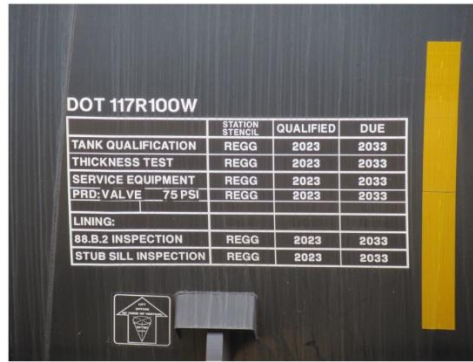
FAST Act Tank Car Phase Out

US FAST Act Deadlines	CRUDE OIL	ETHANOL	OTHER FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS, PACKING GROUP I	OTHER FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS, PACKING GROUP II - III
DOT-111 Non-jacketed	Jan. 1, 2018 ¹	May 1, 2023	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2029 ²
DOT-111 Jacketed	Mar. 1, 2018 ¹	May 1, 2023	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2029 ²
CPC-1232 Non-jacketed	Apr. 1, 2020 ³	Jul. 1, 2023	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2029 ²
CPC-1232 Jacketed	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2025	May 1, 2029 ²

1) Nov. 1, 2016 in Canada
 2) May 1, 2025 in Canada
 3) Nov. 1, 2018 in Canada

Note: Condensates in Canada can no longer be shipped in DOT-111s or CPC-1232 non-jacketed tanks after 11/01/2018.

DOT 117J and DOT 117 R (retrofit)



DOT 117 - Low Pressure



DOT 117R (retrofit) Low Pressure



On Sept 10, we were in Hyannis, MA for a luncheon train ride, a few photos of equipment in the yard area. Lunch was very good on the 40 mile, 3-hour train ride. They also do dinner trains. 200 people on the train for lunch, my cost for the two of us was about \$170.00. Three course meal. They did a nice job.



Some equipment in the yard.

I am now in Concord, NH where I am teaching 4 clinics all day on Sat for the NMRA NER Region Convention.

Rich



More Cars in the Yard



Buzzards Bay, Ma.

So, this is the train station and other railroad buildings Buzzards Bay, MA. Our lunch train almost made it to the bridge to cross the river to this old train station. Kind of a neat old station. Other train events do come to this station. Pretty neat train bridge. The height of the bridge is due to the ships passing underneath it on the Cape Cod Canal. I did not know there is/was a Cape Cod Canal. The Canal was dug/built so that ships did not need to sail all of the way around the Cape Cod peninsula. We stop by here earlier in the morning on our way back to Hyannis to catch the dinner train. We did go inside the old station for a look around, pretty neat!

Rich



**Photos taken at our Annual September Meeting
At the Kalamazoo Bridge Club**



Pictured above Garry Johnson, Mary & Bob Lawrence, Greg Stonerock, Jim Fankhauser, Greg Marvin (seated) and Merrick Wilson.



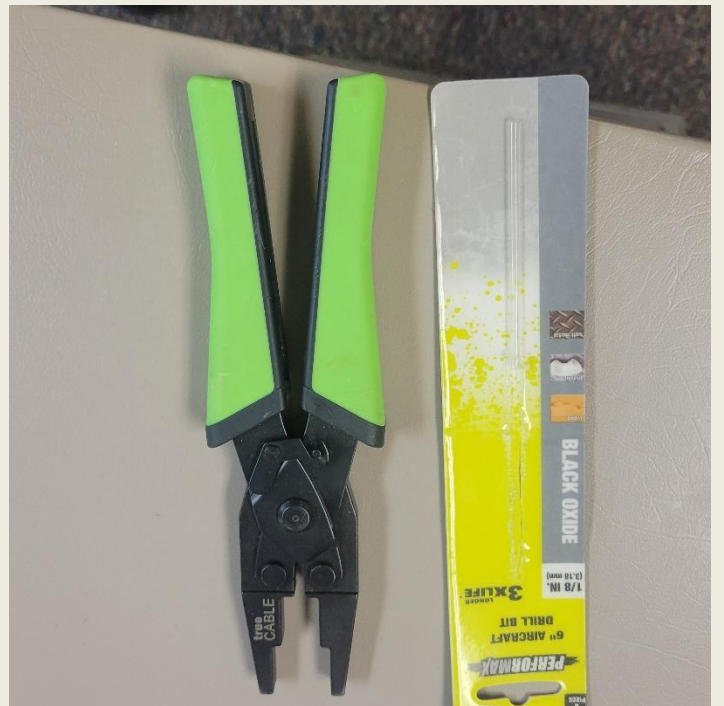
Pictures taken of Alan Bau demonstrating the Proxxon Foam Cutting Machine. Others in the picture from Left to right: Garry Johnson (seated) Mary Lawrence, Merrick Wilson, Jim Fankhauser, Greg Marvin, Greg Stonerock & Bob Kline.



To Alan's left, Bob Lawrence, Garry Johnson, Mary Lawrence & Merrick Wilson



Garry Johnson (Pictured here) presented a review of how he wired his train layout, along with some of his tools and parts that he used.



Rich Mahaney wrapped up the clinic presentations with an overview of the lack of availability of certain types of tank cars both in real life and in modeling.



DOT 111 tank car with flammable liquid load, no headshield of any kind.

DOT 111 - CPC 1232 tank car with a flammable liquid load, tank car has a "half headshield".

The F.A.S.T. Law requires all flammable liquids be transported in the new DOT 117 tank cars, DOT 117R tank cars or the DOT 120 tank cars as of May 2025.

Rich Mahaney

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



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.

Family Picnic

Set aside July 18, 2026 for our First Annual Family Picnic

Along with some good food and family fun.

There are lots of details to be worked out, but we wanted to let you know what we are planning.

Bring your spouse your kids & grandkids.

We are considering Saturday July 18, 2026.

Location to be announced and a confirmation on the date & time and other details.



Wrap-up

Remember we are meeting at The Rooster Call Restaurant on Shaver Road in Portage in both October and December, as the Bridge Club is not available.

This edition of the Yardmaster is 37 pages and has lots of announcements and information, including:

- Our new mission statement
- Updated list of board members
- Updated bylaws
- Local Layout tour schedule in November
- Important Update to the Modeling Challenge Program
- Announcement of a new Donation Matching Program
- 1st Annual Christmas Party
- 1st Annual Family Picnic in 2026
- Lots of other normal stuff.

One final point don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday Evening November 1st.

As always, we welcome your comments, suggestions, criticisms, photos, articles related to model railroading, maybe even some funny stories.

The Link to our new website is <https://div9.ncrnmra.org>.

Alan Bau

Divisions 9 Scribe & Newsletter Editor
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