

February 2026
 Website: <https://div9.ncnmra.org>

Division Nine Mission Statement

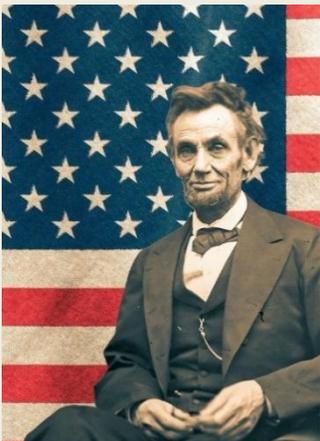
Our mission is to foster a welcoming community for model railroad enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels. We strive to share knowledge, inspire creativity, and promote the enjoyment of model railroading through collaboration, education, and hands-on activities. Together, we celebrate the rich history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

Non-Train Related Holidays & Special February 2026

- Feb 2nd – Ground Hog’s Day
- Feb. 8th – Super Bowl
- Feb. 12th – Lincoln’s Birthday
- Feb. 14th - Valentine’s Day
- Feb. 20th – President’s Day



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Editor's Comments

This may be somewhat redundant, but the \$500 Donation Challenge exceeded our wildest expectations. Thank you to everyone that participated. **We raised close to \$2,000.**

There are some exciting programs coming up over the next several months, which are explained in more detail in the Upcoming Events section.

The Modeling Challenge is coming in a few weeks. Time is getting short if you want to participate in this fun project. Remember, everyone entering a model will have a chance to win a \$50 Gift Certificate from Hobby Recycling. Also, everyone submitting an entry will be given \$10 to help offset some of their cost in preparing their entry.

Check out the details on the upcoming March event which will be a two-hour program presented by Norm Logan on improving the performance of your rolling stock.

The May membership meeting has been put back on the schedule for May 9th. The NYC Train ride is still on the schedule for May 16th.



Division 9 Board Members

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



NEW RECRUITING PROGRAM

NMRA Rail Pass Want to "test drive" the NMRA for a little while?

Sign up for our [9-month Rail Pass trial membership](#) for only \$19.95! This Includes 9 months of the *Digital NMRA Magazine*.

The Rail Pass offer is good in the U.S. only and is for new members and those who have not been NMRA members for two years or more. Individuals can join at the Rail Pass rate only once. Rail Pass members can attend conventions and participate in contests, but cannot hold office or vote in NMRA events. Membership will renew at the regular membership rate.

To encourage model railroad fans to join the NMRA, Division Nine will pay the fee for the 9-Month Rail Pass Trial Membership for any new Division Nine member.

Upcoming Division Nine Membership Meetings & Events:

Meetings & Events	Date	Location	Presenter & Topic
Membership Meeting	February 21 st	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	2 nd Life Modeling Challenge & Intermodal 101 Clinic by Rich Mahaney
Membership Meeting	March 21 st	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Hands-on Clinic by Norm Logan & Barry Hensel, on Upgrading Rolling Stock
Board Meeting	April 12 th	Bob Lawrence's House	
Membership Meeting	April 18 th	Kalamazoo Historical Society	Operating Session
Membership Meeting	May 9 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	TBD
NY Central Train Ride	May 16 th		
TBD	June 20 th	TBD	TBD
Local Layout Tours - Tentative	July 18 th	TBD	
Family Picnic - Tentative	August 22 nd	TBD	
Annual Meeting	September 19 th	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	

Overview of upcoming events.

February 21st Kalamazoo Bridge Club– 2nd lives of Railroad Cars Model Challenge displays followed by a clinic presented by Rich Mahaney on “Intermodal 101, a look at the world of Intermodal Railroading” and how to model it on your layout.

March 21st – Kalamazoo Bridge Club – A two-hour presentation and **hands-on** opportunity to improve the operation of your layout rolling stock, presented by Norm Logan & Barry Hensel from Division 6. Members can bring up to 6 cars from your collection of rolling stock, to check them out during this clinic. Emphasis will be on wheels, couplers, weights, and other facets affecting the performance of your railroad rolling stock.



April 18th - Kalamazoo Model Railroad Club has invited Division 9 members to participate in an operating session on their new layout. Join them in moving freight cars on their layout in trains to communities and industries. See their signaling system operate other special features on their new layout.

May 9th – Initially, a membership meeting was not scheduled for May due to the planned train excursion. However, at the January membership meeting, several members indicated their preference to hold a membership meeting on May 9th. Program details will be provided as they become available.

May 16th – Participate with the New York Central Railroad Historical Society train ride day along with other activities.

June 20th – TBD

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](#)



Holiday Party

Our inaugural Christmas Party, now known as the Holiday Party, was a great success. Guests enjoyed plenty of delicious food, games, door prizes, a 50/50 raffle, gift bags for everyone, the briefest business meeting in Division Nine's history, and an excellent presentation by Mark Tomlonson.

Everybody received a gift bag containing a wooden train whistle, candy canes, bag of Dot's pretzels and a \$5.00 gift certificate to Bigby's Coffee shop.

Thanks to Mary Lawrence for assisting Bob with the 50/50 raffle, distributing door prizes, and providing table centerpieces. Thanks also to Kathleen Marvin for supplying food, organizing games and puzzles, and photographing the event.

We would like to express our gratitude to Mark Tomlonson (pictured below) for presenting the informative and engaging session entitled "The Railway Post Office 1861 - 1977."



Puzzle Game



We were split into groups of two and handed a puzzle to assemble. The first ones to finish their puzzle were given bragging rights.

Pictured upper left, Mary & Bob Lawrence, Jim Fankhauser & Frank Zajac.

Pictured lower left Rich Mahaney & Mark Tomlinson, Garry Johnson & Alan Bau, Greg Stonerock & Bob Kline.

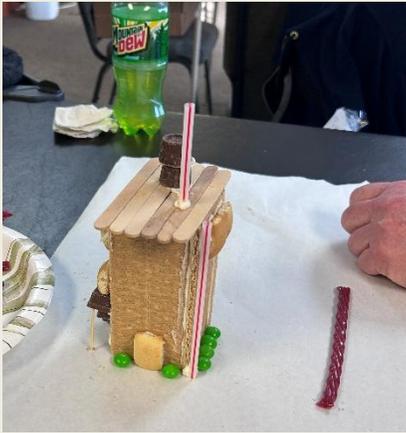
Modeling Prowess



The Modeling Test turned out to be quite entertaining. Each group of three received a mix of crackers, candy, straws, and frosting (used in place of glue). We had 15 minutes to create something that looked like it belonged on a railroad. You can decide for yourself if any of our creations, shown on the Finished Products page of this article, met the challenge. The leftover treats didn't go to waste—we enjoyed eating them, especially the Twizzlers.



Finished Products



Modeling Challenge Updates

Time is running out!

Division 9 Is Hosting A Modeling Challenge For Its Members!

February 21, 2026 is approaching fast. Now is the time for everyone to get their models completed and ready to display at our first ever "Division 9 Modeling Challenge". **At the January Board Meeting, the Board decided to offer a \$10 incentive to each person who submits an entry, as a way to help cover supply costs and related expenses.**

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.

Remember to be eligible to win the \$50 Gift Certificate, all you need to do is submit an entry for the modeling challenge.

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 were in the Division 9 newsletters from October 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".

Thanks for participating! Rich Mahaney

This is a preliminary flyer for the NCR Division 4 3-day convention in 2026



**NORTH CENTRAL REGION, DIVISION 4
Grand Rails 2026
3-day convention**

Open to ALL model railroaders! You do NOT have to be An NMRA member to attend!

BASIC NMRA MEMBER REGISTRATION (PRIOR TO SEPT 1, 2026)	\$60.00
BASIC NON NMRA REGISTRATION (PRIOR TO SEPT 1, 2026)	\$80.00
YOUTH RATE (17 AND UNDER W/PARENT OR GUARDIAN)	\$5.00
YOUTH 18-25	\$20.00

There will be layout tours, railroad operating sessions, clinics, railroad displays, and more!

**OCTOBER 8-9-10, 2026
HOWARD MILLER COMMUNITY CENTER
14 SOUTH CHURCH STREET
ZEELAND, MI 49464**

**CHECK THE DIVISION 4 WEBSITE FOR UPDATES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION
www.grandrailsdiv4.com**

Save the dates AND come join us for some great days of model railroading, learning and fun!

**Sponsored by
NMRA, NORTH CENTRAL REGION**



The New York Central is coming to Kalamazoo

The New York Central Railroad System Historical Society is hosting their 2026 annual convention in Kalamazoo, MI between May 14 and 17, 2026. The headquarters hotel is the Marriott Delta Hotel on the west side of Kalamazoo, just off US 131. Besides the standard activities of a railroad convention, they are planning a train ride from Pleasant Lake, IN to Coldwater, MI on Saturday May 16th. They are allowing non-NYCSHS people to register and sign up for the convention train ride and lunch to help increase the attendance at the convention and to help fill the train. More information, registration and pricing will be available at the NYCSHS website. For more information click on the links below:

[**New York Central System Historical Society**](#)

[**NYCSHS 2026 Annual | NYCS Historical Society**](#)

The NYCSHS Board has removed the requirement to be a Society member to attend the convention.

The train ride will start with everybody getting on a bus at the Delta Hotel on the west side of Kalamazoo and highway 131. Then the bus will head to Pleasant Lake, IN to board the train. The train will go up to Hillside for a lunch stop at the Hillside Brewing Company, lunch is included in the train ride ticket price. From Hillside, the train will head to Coldwater. At Coldwater everyone will get on the buses to ride to the Turkeyville area to visit the Mid-Michigan Train Club to see the steam engines and other trains operating. Then back on the buses to return to Kalamazoo and the Delta Hotel.

Train ride tickets will be available soon on the NYC Convention website.

For Sale Items



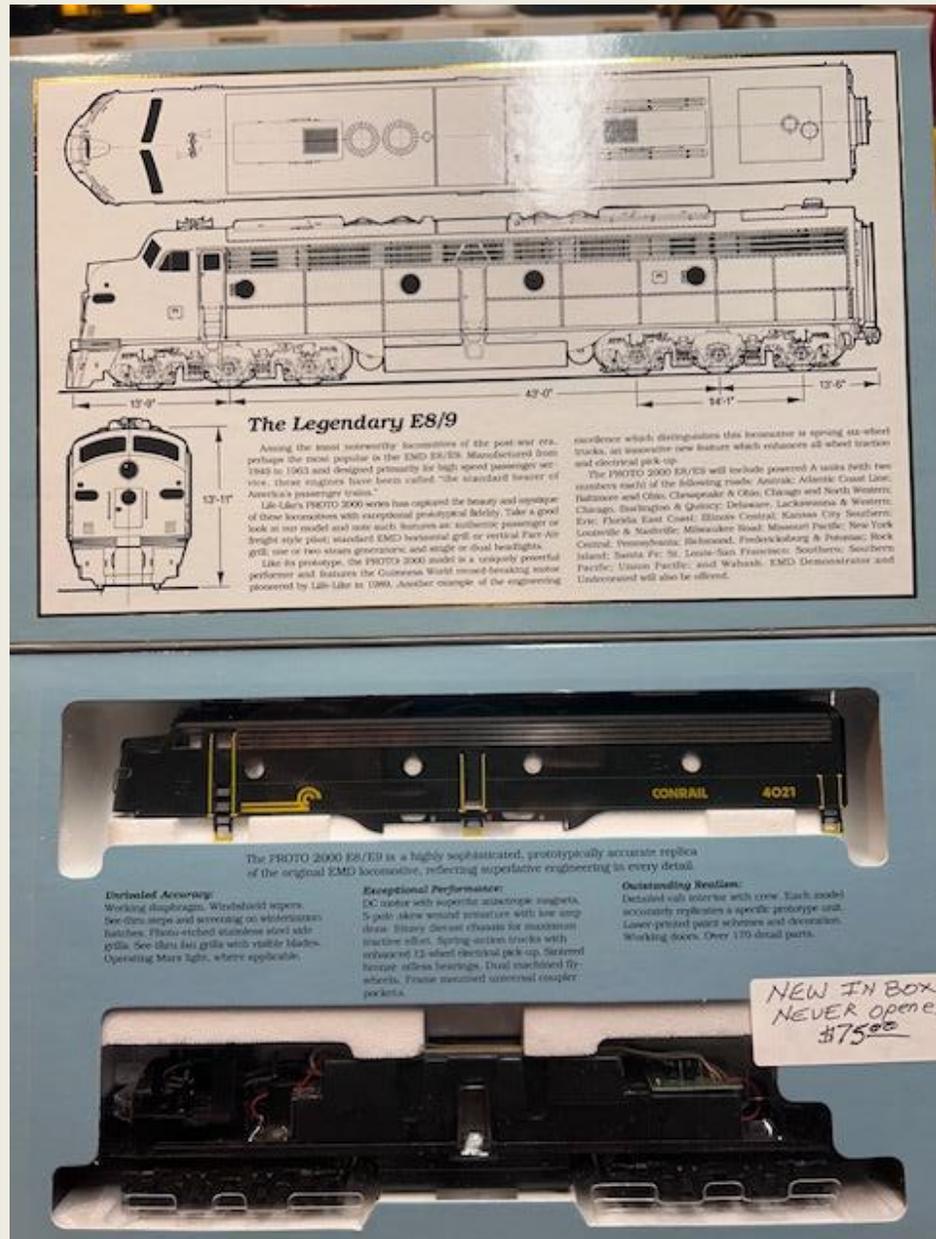
Do you have an excess inventory of cars, supplies, etc. which are just taking up space and most likely will never be used? You can list these items here and try to sell them, so you can buy more train stuff.

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.

The items on pages 16-19 are offered by Greg Marvin



This locomotive new in the original box, never been opened. Asking Price is \$75



Any interest in the items on this page and the next two pages , make an offer!

I have a whole set of B&O passenger cars.

The Mantua and Atlas engines are basically new old stock-never used.
Thanks again.

Greg Marvin, Sr.







The following items on this and the next page are offered for sale by Dave Landis from Division 2.

Contact Information

Dave Landis
anydaysailor@hotmail.com
 810-845-4959
 2959 Crown Pointe Dr
 Traverse City Mi
 49685

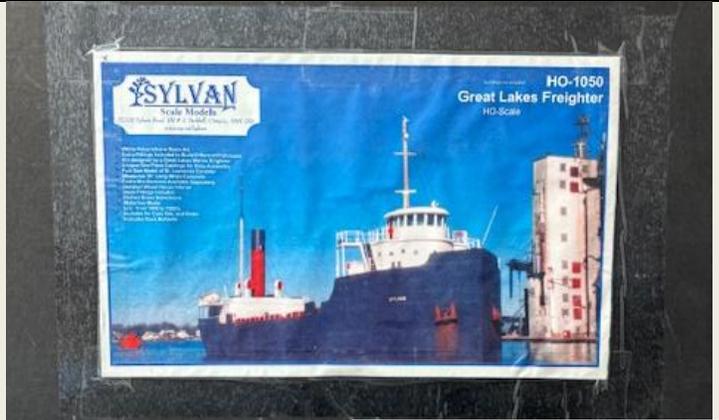
Prices and shipping costs may be negotiable and buying multiple items may also result in lowering prices.

Current Price	Kit Desc.	Kit Number	Manufacturer	Walther's Catalog/Internet Price
\$100	Ore Dock	933-3065	Walthers	\$144
\$75	Single track bascule bridge with motor	933-3070	Walthers	\$90 to \$171 +shipping
\$50	Railroad tug	933-3153	Walthers	\$70
\$20	Prairie star elevator – See picture on next page.	933-2927	Walthers	\$35
\$50	Prairie star milling	933-2914	Walthers	\$65
\$45	City Station	933-2904	Walthers	\$60
\$70	Union Station	933-3094	Walthers	\$90
	Farmer's Co-op	933-3036	Walthers	\$45
\$65	Pier & traveling crane	933-3067	Walthers	\$85
\$45	Rail way Express (REA)	933-3095	Walthers	\$55

460	Bridge Crane	933-2906	Walthers	\$75
\$210	Great Lakes ore boat	HO 1050	Sylvan	\$295
\$140	Langell Boys lumber boat	HO 1115	Sylvan	\$232 + shipping
\$225	Hulett Unloader	933-2966	Walters	\$549 + shipping (Note: this is a discontinued item.)

Sylvan HO 1050

Sylvan freighter is 250-260 ft in length as built from kit. 36 inches long.

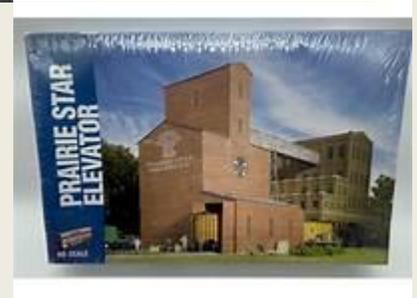


Sylvan HO 1115

Sylvan lumber boat is 160-165 ft in length. As built from kit. 22 inches long.



Walthers 933-2927
Prairie Star Elevator



[Blast from the Past](#)

This article appeared in the February 2020 Yardmaster and was written by Dorman Wilson the Division 9 AP Coordinator. This was the first in a series of articles on the Achievement Program sponsored by the NMRA.

Achievement Program From the AP desk:

The Golden Spike Award

This is probably the easiest award to qualify for, but is not available to all NMRA members.

Wait...Wait....WAIT!!

What do you mean not available to ALL members!?!?!?

Yep that is correct.

This award is not available to someone who holds a Master Model Railroader award. That's right. An MMR is not eligible for The Golden Spike Award. So if you want one, get it before you apply for your MMR.

Let's go over the requirements together shall we.

1) Display six (6) units of rolling stock.

Of course there is a little bit more.

They may be scratchbuilt, craftsman style kits or modified kits.

They may be all the same type of cars.

They may be all the same scale, or any combination of scales.

Standard kits are a great place to start. A

dd grab irons, brake lines.

Paint and/or decal the car(s).

Weather it. Make them better than they were.

No point judging. No competition. That's it.

2) Structures and scenery.

An operating layout of eight (8) square feet.(HO scale. Each scale has different requirements)

A two by four foot module qualifies.

But wait! There's more!

A loop of track, on green painted plywood. Don't call me.

You need more effort to make it at least look like you understand the concept of scenery. But it does not need to be museum quality.

You will also need five (5) structures.

Just like the cars, any starting point.

A plastic kit, add some details, add paint and/or weathering, signs are good. Make it is better than it was.

Structures are not just buildings. They include bridges and trestles.

3) **Civil and electrical engineering.**

Three (3) types of track.

Turnouts, curves, tangent, change in grade crossings, etc.

Commercial track components are acceptable.

A small yard with three turnouts will qualify.

But of course, you know there is more.

This track must have a roadbed, cork anyone? And must be properly ballasted.

If you are modeling say, 1924, where you can document that your railroad did not use ballast or raised roadbed, then there had better be grass and weeds between the rails.

And wired to be able to run trains on the tracks. May be DCC or straight DC.

You must demonstrate that you can run two trains on the trackage at one time.

Example: run one train, park in on a siding, run train 2 into another siding, the pull train one back onto the main.

Remember a locomotive can be a train, or something much longer.

Must include one additional powered electrical system. Powered turnout, signal, turnout indicator, light up a building.

Hint. There do not need to be all in the same scale.

Rolling stock in G scale.

Scenery in N scale.

Tracks and equipment in HO.

It's all good.

Oh, one more thing. Let me know so I can come out and validate it all.

Easy wasn't it? Next month: Master Builder – Cars Any questions? Need help? Want to apply for an award? Call me at 269-312-2496, please leave a message if I don't happen to answer. Or Drop me an email at

NCR9AP@YAHOO.COM

Dorman Wilson

Division 9 AP corrodinator.

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

Part 2 This is a continuation of Rich's trip to Washington, Part 1 was in the January edition.

I was on my way home to Gobles from Holland and saw lots of tank car movement at the Hamilton Ag Facility. So, I turned in to get a couple of photos and then went down to the river level below the trestle to get the train on the bridge, north of the ag facility. It looks like the West MI Railroad maybe starting a trans loading operation involving tank cars either at Hamilton or north at their transload spur at Fillmore. They load greases and oils at their transload yard in Hartford for recycling from trucks.

They are still using BN coal cars



Extra power on the rear to give a push



Another north bound passenger train with a different color design on the outside. There are lots of passenger trains in WA running up and down the coastline.



Interesting colors and design



BNSF south bound freight train



North bound Amtrak was passing behind the BNSF freight train.

Just a couple of hours in Centralia, WA watching trains go by!

This is a place I would go back to for train watching, if I was in the area with no plans. The city is between Seattle/Tacoma and Vancouver, WA/Portland, OR. One the busiest and best places to watch trains is still the Vancouver, WA Amtrak station south of here.

A block away from the train station is the downtown area for some shopping and eating places.



Street side of train station

Another type of WA passenger train passing



East bound garbage train

Probably smells on summer days

Something maybe to model.



This concludes the photo display from Rich's trip to Centralia, WA.

Nice pics Rich, thanks

The next three pages are photos taken by Rich Mahaney on a trip he took in May 2025.

One of BNSF foam and water trains at a yard along the Columbia River. They now have a number of these foam trains like this "staged" throughout their system for flammable liquid fires and spills. The water could be used to protect structures and bridges and also wildland firefighting.

The foam concentrate is stored in what are called "totes". See the next series of photos.

These photos were taken when I was in WA during May 2025



They use both new and old low pressure tank cars



The caboose is used as a command post and office.

Some tank cars come with pumping equipment and nozzles or maybe just transport water. (several photos and angles of this tank car)

This kind of train could be fun to model and scratchbuild.

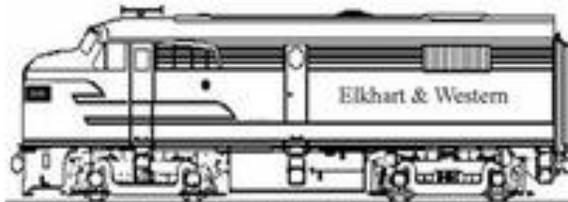


21st Annual

TRAIN SHOW

Presented by
The Elkhart Model Railroad Club

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SATURDAY

MARCH 21st, 2026

10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. (E.D.T.)

Claywood Event Center

13924 N 1100 W (County Line Rd.)
Nappanee, Indiana 46550



Operating layouts

150 vendor tables, all scales

Admission \$5.00

Ages 12 & under free with paid adult



For show & club information visit
www.emrrc.com

Or see us on Facebook

For vendor information contact
Ken Prager 574-300-5151/call or text
Email: trainshow@emrrc.com



Local Layout Update: I would like to include a short overview along with some photos of one or more Division Nine members' layout each month. Last month, we highlighted Greg Stonerock's layout; this month, I'll be featuring my layout, with a focus on the mountain I'm working on. Currently, the mountain will measure about 18 feet long, 2 feet deep, and stand around 30 inches tall. It will feature a point-to-point mixed train carrying both timber and passengers. Alongside the trestle bridge shown in the photo below, there will be a curved trestle and an additional bridge, connecting the three sections of the mountain. There's still plenty of work to do on the first section. I've temporarily placed trees and scenery items to visualize the finished look. The next steps involve laying track, adding more trees, rearranging some existing ones, and incorporating ground cover, various scenic materials, steps, guardrails, more animals, and a couple of structures. The photo on the lower left displays a campground and the photo on the right displays a much smaller mountain.



Wrap-up

We extend our appreciation to Greg Stonerock for serving as the inaugural feature in our new "Layout of the Month" section. All members are encouraged to submit photographs accompanied by a brief description of their layouts for consideration.

We invite members to submit news, updates on railroad events, upcoming train shows, or information about community gatherings related to railroading for consideration in future newsletters. Member contributions are essential to ensuring our community remains well-informed and actively engaged.

Typically, I aim to publish the Yardmaster Newsletter one or two days prior to the beginning of each month. However, in months when a board meeting occurs within a few days of the start of the new month, the newsletter will be released one or two days after the meeting to ensure timely and comprehensive updates for our readers.

We value input on a range of topics and encourage your participation at the upcoming meeting. If you are unable to attend but wish to share suggestions or ideas, please feel free to contact any board member via email, text, or phone.

Hope to see you at our next meeting.

Alan Bau

Division Nine Newsletter Editor

alanwbau@gmail.com

