

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 March 2026

March 17th St. Patrick's Day
March 20th 1st day of Spring
March 26th Baseball Opening Day



Featured Articles this Month:

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Editor Comments: Division Nine is undergoing several organizational changes aimed at increasing both membership and engagement in meetings and special events. A summary of key initiatives is provided below, with additional details included later in this edition.

- In February, we hosted a Modeling Challenge, which we plan to repeat in 2027 with a new theme.
- March will feature a hands-on session led by Norm Logan and Barry Hensel, focused on enhancing rolling stock performance.
- Starting in April, we will introduce a monthly program allowing modelers to collaboratively work on their rolling stock and apply techniques discussed during the March meeting.
- Our regular meeting has been rescheduled to May 9th so members can attend both the division meeting and participate in the NYC Bus ride and train trip on May 16th.
- We are pleased to announce that Division Nine will now cover the cost of the Rail Pass Program for all new NMRA and Division Nine members.
- For July and August, one month will be dedicated to Local Area Layout Tours and the other to a Family Picnic at a local park.
- In December, we will follow the successful format from 2025: a breakfast gathering at a local restaurant followed by a meeting at a member's home.

We welcome feedback regarding these initiatives and encourage members to share suggestions for future programs. Please feel free to reach out to any board member listed below with your ideas.



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>
<u>Newsletter Editor</u>	<u>Alan Bau</u>	<u>alanwbau@gmail.com</u>
<u>Website Manager</u>	Tony Vacha	<u>CKRHandler@aol.com</u>
<u>Trustee</u>	Doug Van Meter	<u>vanmeterda@gmail.com</u>

Last Minute Announcement:

If you would like to attend an Op Session on Bill Nichols layout, keep Saturday May 9th open on your calendar. The proposed start time is 6:00 PM and the Op Session is hosted by Sheila Nichols & Kevin Kizer, 5746 West VW Ave, Schoolcraft, MI, (west of Schoolcraft on VW, off of 131). Watch for more details.



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	March 21 st	Kalamazoo Bridge Club	Hands-on Clinic by Norm Logan 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	Meet at the Delta Hotel	
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	



The link to the Train Show List is displayed below:

[The Train Show List - Hobby and Train Event Clearinghouse](#)

Overview of upcoming events

March 21st – Kalamazoo Bridge Club – A two-hour presentation and **hands-on** opportunity to improve the operation of your rolling stock, presented by Norm Logan and 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. Look for more information later in this issue.



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 – A membership meeting will be held on May 9th, following members' requests for an alternative to the planned train excursion. Program details will be shared once 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.

March Membership Meeting

Hands-on Model Railroad Clinic: Preventive Maintenance for Rolling Stock

We are pleased to announce a Hands-on Model Railroad Clinic focused on “Preventive Maintenance for Rolling Stock.” This special clinic will be conducted by Norm Logan and Barry Hensel, both of whom are well-known, accomplished model railroaders and excellent teachers.

[Clinic Details](#)

This two-hour clinic is designed for both new and experienced model railroaders who are interested in upgrading the performance of their rolling stock.

[Schedule and Location](#)

There will be a short business meeting at 9:30 AM, and the clinic will start promptly at 10:00 AM on Saturday, March 21st, at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club.

[What to Bring](#)

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own tools and supplies. A list of recommended items is displayed on the following page. If you don't have every tool on the list, that's fine—there will be plenty available for borrowing. However, please ensure you bring all the listed supplies, as these are necessary for upgrading your rolling stock.

Preventive Maintenance for Rolling Stock

Suggested List of Tools

Jeweler Screwdriver Set
239 KD 5 Prong "Gripper"
237 KD Trip Pin pliers
241 KD Manual Uncoupling tool
Truck
Tuner 64129 The Tool # 50 Indust. Machine & Tool'
NMRA Gage "HO" or your scale
205 KD Coupler Height Gauge HO
Store Hand Mirror
Protractor
Wire Cutter Pliers
Pin Vise

There are a couple of choices if you need to buy the Drill & Tap Sets.
You only need to buy choice 1 or 2, not both

Choice # 1

A-Line Tap/Drill Set 1 Pack 11007
A-Line Drill Jig, Tap Jig, Tap & Screws
A-line #50 Drill #11001
#11005 Coupler Metal Covers

Choice# 2

A-Line Tap/Drill Set 1 Pack 11003
A-line Drill Jig, Tap Jig, Tap & Screws
A-line #50 Drill #11001
#11005 Coupler Metal Covers

Suggested List of Supplies

Stick on Weights (Go to AC Car area) (1 Pack)
208 KD Washers (1 pack) 48 per pack
209 KD Washers (1 Pack) 48 per pack
622 KD Knuckle Springs (1 Pack)
#231 Greas-em (1 Pack)
KD # 5 couplers (regular) or Whisper) 1 Pack

New Program Announcement

Following the March 21st Hands-on Clinic on "Preventive Maintenance for Your Rolling Stock," participants should now have valuable insights into effectively upgrading and maintaining their rolling stock collections. The next step is to allocate time to implement these often-overlooked practices. In support of this goal, I have been collaborating with Garry Johnson to develop a new program designed specifically for modelers who either have substantial rolling stock inventories to upgrade or are newcomers to model railroading.

While the final details are being confirmed, the foundational concept of the program includes monthly gatherings at my residence in Hunter's Run, Comstock. These sessions will offer an engaging, collaborative environment focused on the enhancement of participants' rolling stock.

All necessary **HO** scale tools will be available for use during these meetings; however, attendees are required to bring their own rolling stock and any needed supplies such as couplers, wheels, washers, and related parts. Given workspace limitations, each session can accommodate up to four additional modelers, in addition to myself and Garry Johnson. As such, advance reservations are necessary to secure participation.

Those interested in joining these sessions are encouraged to reserve a spot. The anticipated program launch date is April 15th, with future meetings tentatively scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Additional details and updates will be shared as planning progresses.

For inquiries or to indicate your interest in participating, please contact me at 269-501-8999 or via email at alanwbau@gmail.com.

Modeling Challenge Review

The modeling challenge was quite successful as there were 7 dioramas submitted.

The winner of the \$50 random drawing was Greg Marvin.

Pictured below is Garry Johnsons diorama which depicts a scene of an old box car converted to a cabin.

This was mostly a learning curve as I haven't done a lot of landscaping on my past layouts.



Pictured above is Bob Lawrence and his grandson Jayden along with diorama the "Some railroad, somewhere in time and well used. The scene is set around the main line with remnants of what was a branch line heading up to a somewhere town. The line is long gone but the RR decided to sell the last of the rolling stock to a shipping transfer company who uses trucks to deliver their goods. The local constable was called to investigate a possible theft of company fixtures. The SS&WU RR employee is making a plan to dismantle the old hand car shed. We all know John Deere and he never breaks down, but maybe there is a problem today. The very old cattle car has been abandoned for decades.



Greg Stonerock diorama is a sleeper car and caboose that have been converted to a campground. This is a replica of the campground that Greg and his wife have stayed at while in Florida. Note the picture in the lower righthand corner.

Marv's Classic Cars

An old railroad boxcar was transformed into a showroom to display vintage automobiles. This scene depicts a rural area. A boxcar was modified by cutting open the side to install a large window to showcase an old vintage car. A resin foundation was modified to fit under the boxcar; a ramp was established to access inside and a separate building attached to act as an office and higher vantage point to view the area. The fenced in area was designated as storage for old parts and vehicles, etc. Fuel pumps were also on the property. Several older vintage cars were parked around the gravel lot. *Come buy a classic from Marv!*





Modeling Challenge:

The idea of this modeling challenge came from Rich Mahaney who has some experience with these programs in the past. The modeling challenge was a lot of fun and interesting to see what each of the modelers created.

Look for the modeling challenge to become an annual event, with different themes in the future.

I built a small diorama that reflected something I have seen across North America which involved the remodeling of cabooses into lodging for people to stay overnight. All of the cabooses have been remodeled inside with queen size beds, a small shower, small cooking facilities, a small heater/furnace and chairs and a table. More than adequate needs for people staying overnight or for longer time periods. The owner has a caboose converted into an office for this business and his other business ventures and activities. Check in and check out from lodging is through this office. The office is also where the supplies are kept for changing out and cleaning up when people "check out" from their lodging.



Bill Lauritsen is pictured here displaying his diorama of a tunnel alongside a rocky hill. This diorama was made by Bill with help of his son. The workmanship was really well done.

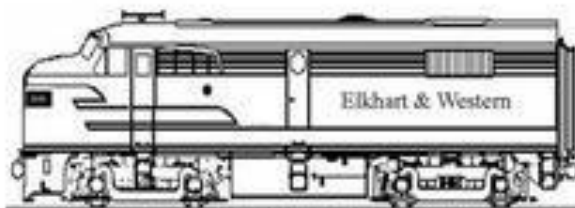
And finally, my submission is that of a Used Car lot of old very classy cars, hence the name J & M Klassy Kars, from a by gone era.

The caboose was converted into an office for the car lot, and the flat car was used to display a particularly neat look old vehicle. In the back of the diorama was a small hill with a retaining wall that was made using old railroad car wheels.



21st Annual **TRAIN SHOW**

Presented by
The Elkhart Model Railroad Club



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

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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



Kalamazoo Model Railroad Historical Society



Southwest Michigan Train Show

Saturday, Apr 4th, 2026

10AM - 3PM

Kalamazoo County Expo Center

Admission \$5 • Kids 12 & Under Free With Adult

KMRHS.ORG

Southwest Michigan Train Show

Presented by Kalamazoo Model Railroad Historical Society

Saturday, April 4th, 2026, between 10AM – 3PM

Kalamazoo County Expo Center

2900 Lake St. Kalamazoo MI

Admission: Adults \$5, Kids 12 & under Free with Adult

Event Description

The Southwest Michigan Train Show is rolling back into town at the Kalamazoo Expo Center on April 4th from 10AM to 3PM. Whether you are adding to your layout, or just starting in the hobby, this is the place to be. Search all of the vendors to find that great deal, or that rare item. With over 150 vendor tables there are many bargains to be found! There will be running layouts to view from local clubs. This is your chance to see the beautiful layouts that these clubs spend many hours crafting. They would be happy to discuss model railroading, and current trends with you. This could be your one stop trip for model railroading supplies, toy trains, railroading memorabilia, and collectibles.

This is a preliminary Convention Flyer



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](#)

Per Alex Schneider. President of the NYCRHS, the registration links are on the NYCRHS website. The process is for members of the society and others that would like to attend the entire convention at the Delta Hotel, west of 131 in Kalamazoo.

People that just want to go on the May 16th train ride will find a line on the registration form. The cost is \$60 which includes the train ride, bus ride and the lunch in Hillsdale. Everybody going on the train ride has to go on the bus ride. The bus will leave the Delta Hotel for the ride to Pleasant Lake, IN. to board the passenger train. The Train will then go to Hillsdale for a group lunch at the Hillsdale Brewing Company. Then back on the train for the ride to Coldwater. Then the buses will pick everyone up at Coldwater for a ride to Mid-Michigan Railroad Club and see the live steam engines there near Turkeyville. Then the buses will transport everybody back to the Delta Hotel by dinnertime.

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.

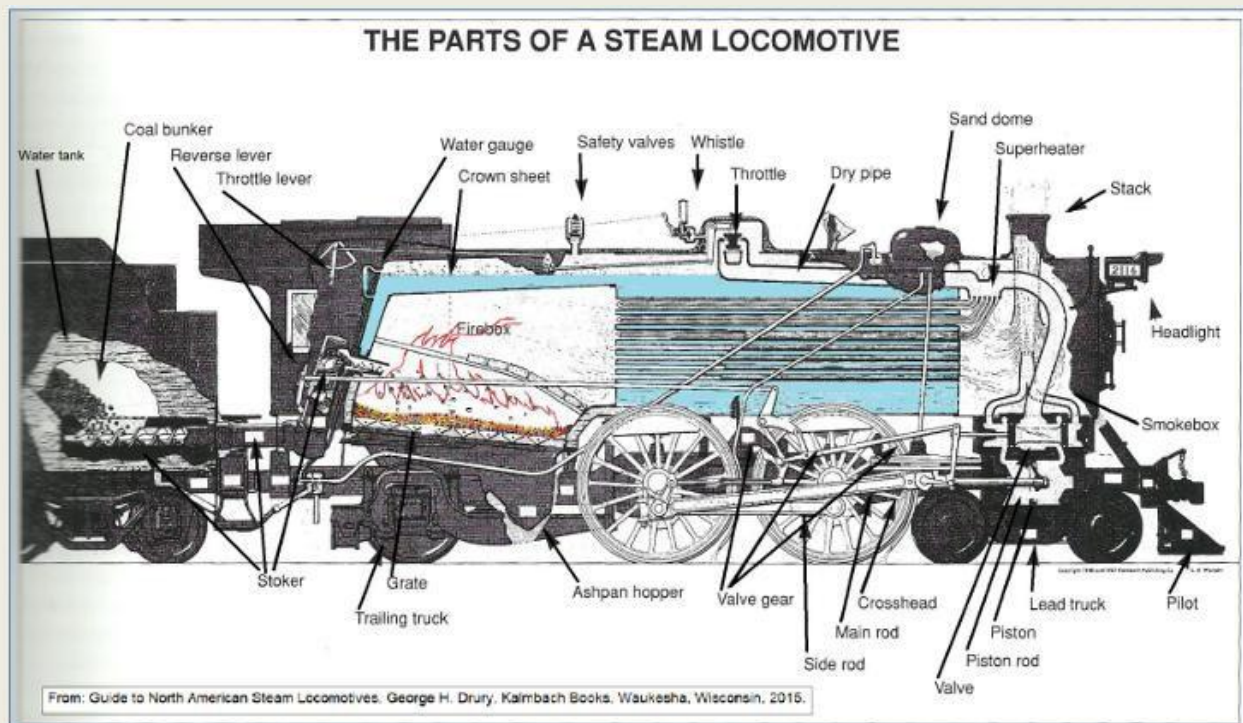
To list your for-sale items here, send your list of items along with a picture if one is available, a description of your item(s) along with your asking price and contact information. Send your information to alanwbau@gmail.com.

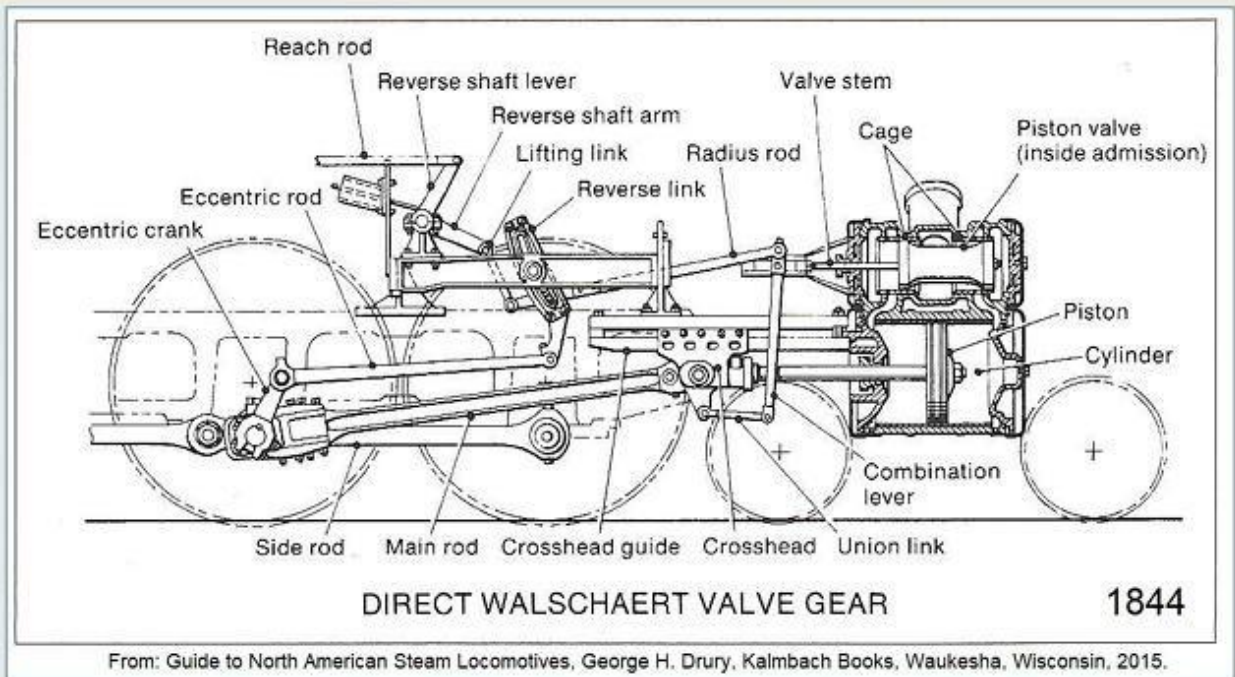
Blast from the Past

This article appeared in the March 2019 Yardmaster and was written by Dave Vinci on the Care and Feeding of Steam Engines.

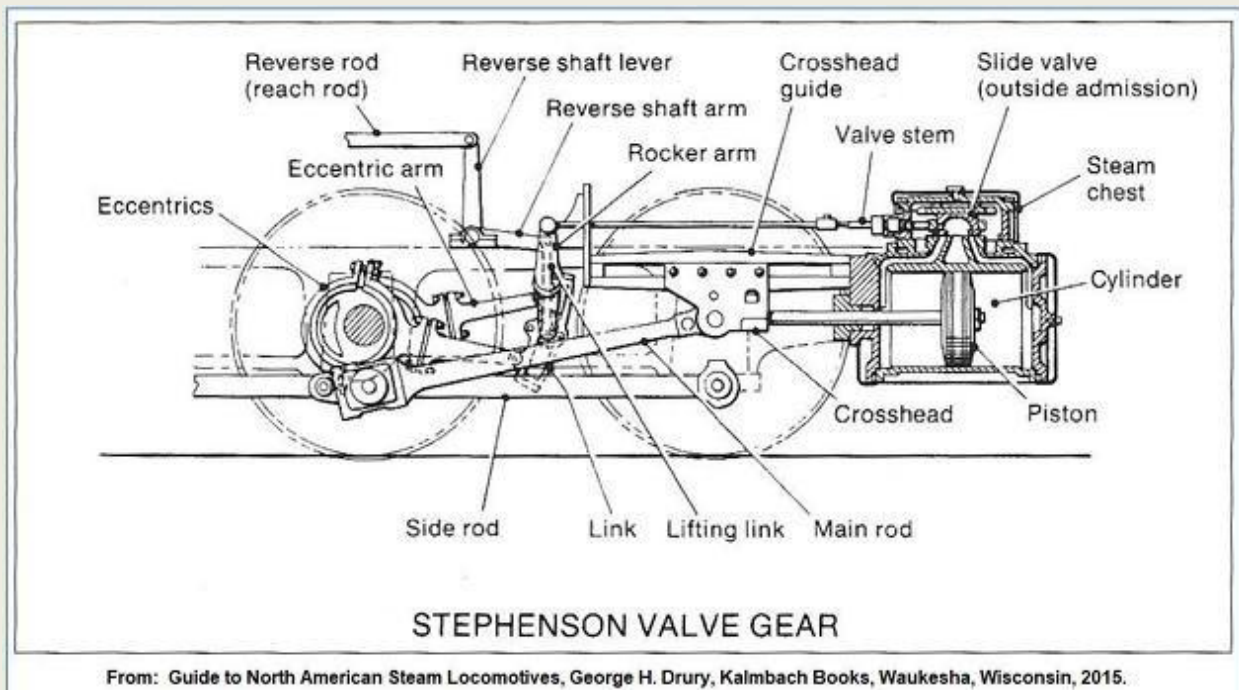
Care and Feeding of Steam Engines

Here are a few of the Illustrations from Dave Vinci's:

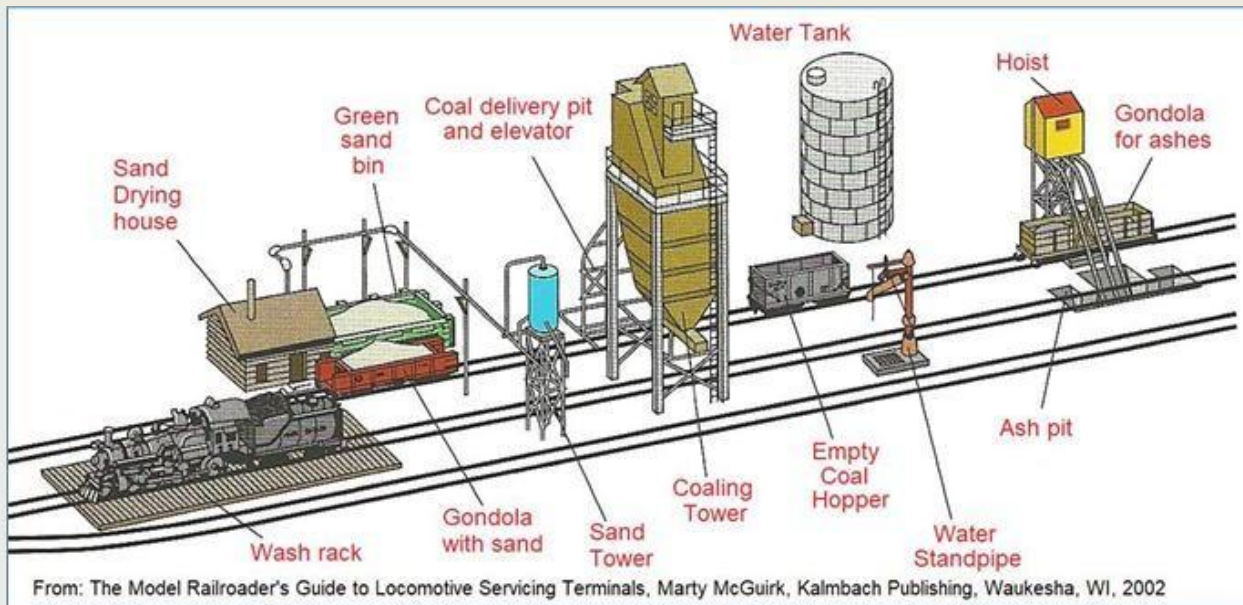




Here is a good illustration of a locomotive service facility that I re-labeled:



The three tracks shown above are the Service track (top) that allows for delivery of sand and coal and removal of ashes; The Incoming Track (middle); The Outgoing Track (bottom). The middle and bottom tracks lead to the turntable & Engine house. Note that Coal, Sand and Water can be supplied to locos on both incoming and outgoing tracks.



Here is the locomotive service area on my model railroad:



Here is the Ash pit on my model railroad. A bit primitive but not unusual for a branch line or a short line in the 1920s, which is the period I model.



At right is the Sand house and the water plug. The service track is behind the sand house and the sand delivery tower and the water plug are between the incoming and outgoing tracks so that both may be serviced.



Other structures that might

be present: ♦ Oil Storage or Mixing houses (here is mine)



❖ Machine Shop ❖ Boiler house for the Engine house to provide steam for heat, steam for charging the boilers and to run machines in the machine shop. ❖ Yard office with crew locker rooms

❖ RIP track for Car Repairs (Repair In Place)



A Back-shop building for major locomotive repairs

Here is the Wash Rack I modeled. Note the doors in the concrete platforms that cover the pits containing the Steam Cleaning equipment.

Wash racks are easy to model as they are composed of sidewalks figures, ladders and a few trash barrels.



Some Activities to consider adding to your Operation session

- Have an operator assigned to handling locomotives as a Hostler
- Engineers could pick up their locomotives and do the pre-run service stops before picking up their train.
- Engineers could do the service stops at the end of the run and report any maintenance needs to the Hostler.
- Make sure there are deliveries of the freight cars to the Coal tower, sand house, ash pit, etc. Good job for the yard switcher and adds traffic.
- Make sure there are water tanks out along the main line.

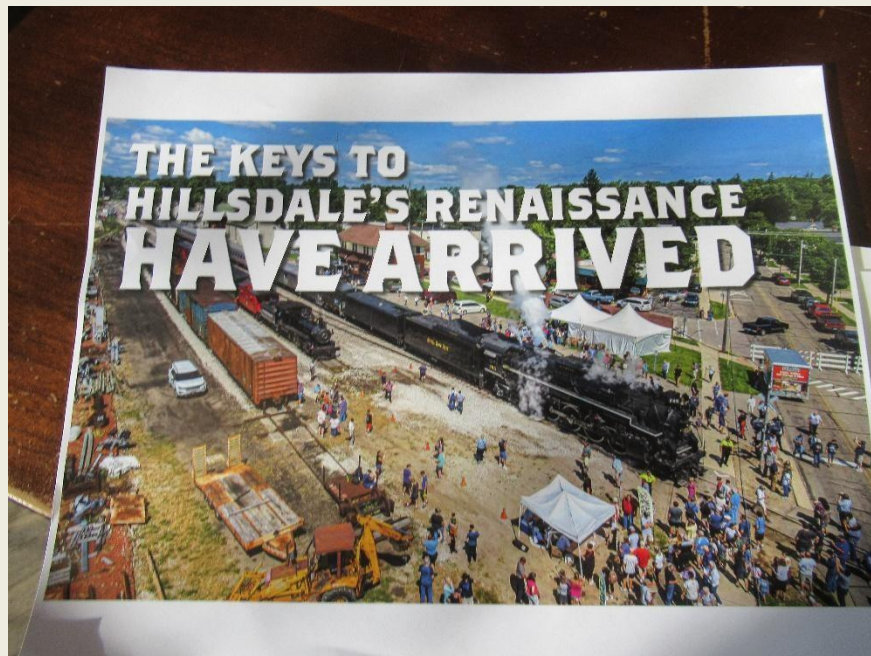
Rich's Travels



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

I had an assignment for the New York Central

Railroad Historical Society to go check out the Hillsdale Brewing Company in Hillsdale, MI on Friday. The restaurant and bar are right at the east of the downtown railroad and old train station and offices. There is a lot of work being planned and done to rebuild the railroad yard area into a cultural experience, with restaurants, lodging, railroad events and other parties. The Indiana and Northeastern Railroad is a major player in this, since a lot of their train rides come through Hillsdale. The Fort Wayne Railroad Museum is also involved. We did have lunch at the Hillsdale Brewing Company



Hillsdale Trip Part 1

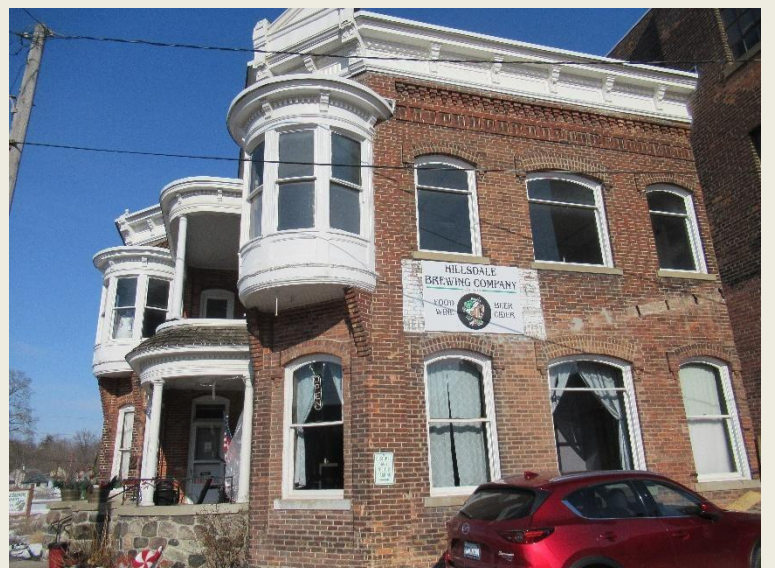
Hillsdale Trip Part 1 – continued



Hillsdale Trip Part 2

The Hillsdale Brewing Company, good food in an interesting old building with lots of history. They serve a lot of food to people that ride the tourist train rides to Hillsdale.

They will do well when the new Rail Center opens in downtown Hillsdale. They will be feeding all of the people on the New York Central Railroad Historical Society tourist train ride from Pleasant Lake, IN to Coldwater, MI on May 16, 2026.



Hillsdale Trip Part 3

A NS scale weight car

No engines were in town

The manager of the brewery told me the railroad wants to build a new yard between Hillsdale and Jonesville in the industrial park.



Hillsdale Part 4

New gondolas

Gondolas and tank cars

The very old freight house will be getting lots of work on it for the new rail park.
This freight house looks like it should be a Walthers kit.



Blissfield, Mi.

Drove through Blissfield, MI on my way from Hillsdale, MI to Toledo, Oh for a Division 1 meeting.

The old Blissfield Dinner Train is sitting there. A friend of mine had run the dinner train for a while. Then Adrian and Blissfield Railroad indicated that the train was a problem for them and their operations. So, my friend started the process to purchase the cars and move them up to the Owosso area where he could run a dinner train operation. He told me on Friday, that the A and B Railroad suddenly backed out of the deal and discussions and basically is not talking to him. He is still interested in buying the dinner train cars.

That is an Adrian and Blissfield switch engine. There is a big ethanol plant on the east side of Blissfield off of highway 223.

In Toledo, OH we sat at the busy NS mainline tracks for 45 minutes, no trains came by, bumner, but we will go back in April.



Member Layouts: This month we feature Greg Marvin's layout, which is the 3rd in a series of articles prepared by other modelers on the progress of their layout.

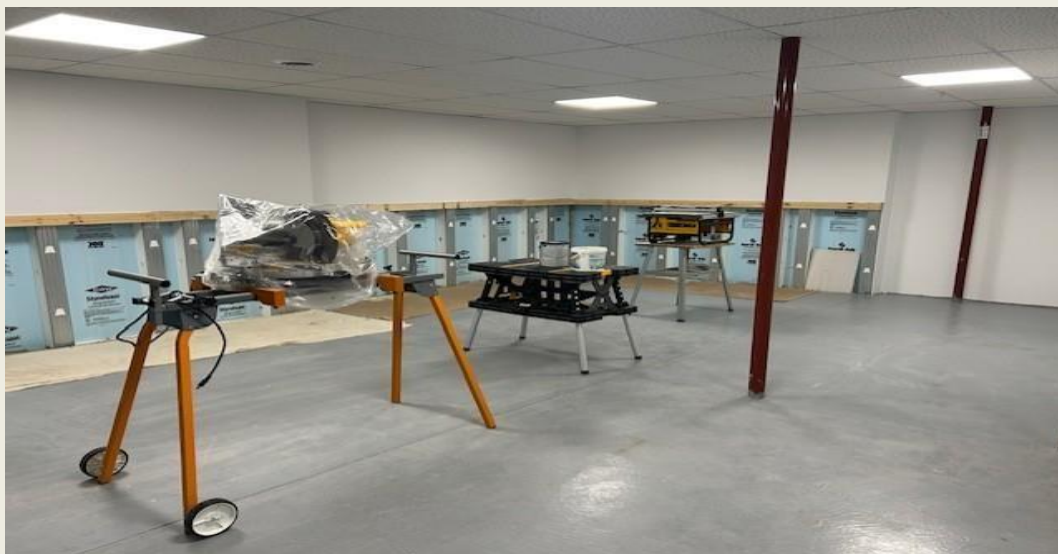
Greg Marvin's Railroad Build

January 28, 2024

This is the main area where the train room will be. At this point I'm only concerned with getting a finished room. I have no real concept of what my layout will be other than I want to model the New England area. Drywall, ceiling, lighting and floor covering will need to be accomplished here.

12-23-2024 - 11 months have gone by. The room is basically done (as well as the other part of the non-train room basement). Benchwork can begin after the holidays!

1-19-2025 - first section of benchwork started. I basically thought wrapping the room with a 24" wide bench and then a larger peninsula in the middle of the room would work. I began attempting to hand draw ideas for a track plan based on the room and benchwork.





3-7-2025 – Almost all of the benchwork is installed minus the tops as I'm still undecided if I will use $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood, foam or a combination of both. Still working on hand drawing track plans. I start playing around with a computer cad program. Nothing like our landscape software programs we use at work. I end up using $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood and 2" to 3" foam on top.



From March 2025November 2025:
This is an active time period- A granddaughter's wedding (2nd one in a year) , we sell our business, I attend my first

NMRA national convention in Novi where I see way too many awesome layouts and get way too many ideas, we both adjust to retirement, our chicken farm grows, a greenhouse is added to our collection. Whew. I give up on hand drawing as nothing seems to work; the computer program certainly doesn't work for me, so I find a company that can help design the railroad I think I want with the benchwork I have built, and provide track templates.





12-16-2025 – Ginger Bear. My trusty helper who would rather be on the layout supervising over on the floor where most dogs should be.

New Year- January 2026. The company that provides design help and templates can also custom design photographic backdrops for me. (I'm all in now). They design the backdrops to match the track plan. This almost seems like plug and play; little do we know...



These panels are 8 feet long by 36" tall and require two people to install. We quickly learn that this isn't an easy task and would be better if done before the benchwork and if the drywall installation was PERFECT. I enlist the expert help of fellow modeler Greg Stonerock (photo on next page) who makes this all possible!





75% of the back drops are installed before Greg S. heads for Florida! A great task accomplished!



Wrap-up

I encountered several technical difficulties while preparing the March Newsletter. As a result, there may be minor alignment issues, and one line is missing from the Feature Article Block on Page 1.

Additionally, a last-minute update has been included on page 2 regarding a potential Operating Session on Bill Nichol's layout. Further details will be provided as they become available. Please note that we require a minimum of 10 participants to proceed with the Operating Session.

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.

Don't forget to check out the new program announcement on page 7.

We're also inviting members to send in a brief article with some photos showcasing their layout activities. It's enjoyable and inspiring to learn about fellow modelers' projects, and it might spark some fresh ideas for others' layouts.

The Division Nine Board Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 12th at 7:00 PM at Bob Lawrence's residence. All members are invited to attend. Should you wish to share any information with the board but are unable to be present, please reach out to a board member directly.

A final reminder: There will be a hands-on meeting at the Kalamazoo Bridge Club on Saturday, March 21st, where you'll learn how to improve your rolling stock. This event is perfect for anyone new to model railroading or those who want to know more about maintaining rolling stock, it's a great opportunity you won't want to miss.



Lastly, remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on March 8th.

Hope to see you at our next meeting.

Alan Bau

Division Nine Newsletter Editor alanwbau@gmail.com