



Tidewater Division

CALLBOARD

Volume 2021, Issue 1

NMRA MEMBER

Jan, 2021

“Tracks Ahead”

Fred Humphrey, Superintendent

It's challenging to hold Tidewater Divisional meetings, social events, white elephant sales, and/or train show while Covid-19 restrictions continue to dampen our ability....

So the big question on everyone's mind is when will be able to gather again? That's up to Virginia's Governor. We're hopeful at the end of this month; Governor Northam will provide us with insight on whether or not restrictions will be reduced or changed to lock us even more or will we be allowed to move about more freely.

Hopefully, that will permit us to plan our next meeting and possibly the white elephant sale in Mar/Apr 2021 time frame. We have two possible locations that we believe can be turned on in short order and permit us to move forward. We wait to see what Governor Northam will tell us and how best we can react to that guidance.

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This Month In Railroad News

Jan 1, 1986: Milwaukee Railroad merges with the Soo Line.

January 2, 1935: Chicago & Northwestern begins “400” passenger train service between Chicago, IL, and St. Paul, MN; it was so named because the 400 mile trip was intended to take 400 minutes, though that pace wasn't quite reached until a few months later. Still, it was believed to be the fastest train in the world over a distance greater than 177 miles

Jan 6, 1893: Great Northern RR drives last spike at Scenic WA.

Jan 16, 1836 The Galena and Chicago Union Railroad, the oldest portion of what is to become the Chicago and North Western Railway, is chartered.

Jan 16, 1868: William Davis patents the refrigerator car.

Jan 17, 1871: Andrew Hallidie patents the first cable car.

Jan 17, 1957: Bay Area Rapid Transit (San Francisco, CA) is formed.

Jan 25, 1955: British Railways announces plans to end steam operations.

Jan 31, 1935: Union Pacific's M-10000 enters service as the “City of Salina (KS).”

“The Callboard” is the newsletter of the Tidewater Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The Tidewater Division, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please direct all questions or concerns to: sorcerer54@cox.net

Master Model Railroader Update

Tidewater Division Members

by Norm Garner

Most division members are aware of who within Tidewater holds the prestigious "MMR" rating. Currently John Spanagel, John Johnson, Chuck Davis, Norm Garner and Dale Ridgeway carry the coveted title of MMR. The "Callboard" would like to acknowledge the following member(s) for their most recent MMR Achievements:

Roger Bir - Association Volunteer

Qualifications for this ranking include choosing seven of the following eleven categories and successfully completing all the requirements. They are: Author, Official, Volunteer, Master Builder-Scenery, Master Builder-Cars, Master Builder-Motive Power, Master Builder-Structures, Master Builder-Prototype Models, Model Railroad Engineer-Civil, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical and Chief Dispatcher. For more details contact the Achievement Program chairman, Norm Garner at: nwgrail2@aol.com

Division Mtg/Contest Schedule 2021

Due to overwhelming concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, there are no firm Division Meeting/Contest meeting dates for 2021.

NMRA Benefits Information

As an NMRA member, are you aware of discounts on purchased merchandise? Yes, the NMRA partners with multiple manufacturers giving the membership varying discounts when you purchase an item.

For more details, click on [NMRA Partners](#)

Callboard Subscribers

The Callboard is available for free via e-mail or at the Tidewater Division web-site: <http://www.nmar-mer-tidewater.org/>. Printed copies in B/W are available on request, contact the Callboard editor at sorcerer54@cox.net for details.

Tidewater Div Awards - 2020

Modeler of the Year: Dale Ridgeway

Volunteer of the Year: due to the pandemic it was decided not to determine a winner.

Superintendent's Award: Roger Bir

Tidewater Division

Board of Directors

Superintendent: Fred Humphrey
(fredrickhumphrey@outlook.com)

Asst Superintendent: John Fallon
(zzoxdoc@yahoo.com)

Paymaster: John Robey
(jrobey2019@gmail.com)

Timekeeper: Roger Bir
(sorcerer54@cox.net)

Member at Large: John Cryderman
(hjcryderman@cox.net)

Member at Large: Jim Keiper
(eljek8952@gmail.com)

Member at Large: Dale Ridgeway
(ridgerail@aol.com)

Achievement Program: Norm Garner
(nwgrail2@aol.com)

"Strange" But True Railroad Facts

Before the adoption of standard time in 1883, some railroad stations had as many as six clocks mounted on their walls.

UP Freight vs 68 Mercury Cougar "Who Won This Classic Battle?"

Submitted by Dick Wilson

A Union Pacific freight was cruising through Louisville at 40mph when it encountered a 1968 green Mercury Cougar stuck on the tracks. Fortunately no one was in the vehicle at the time of the accident. Deputies eventually made contact with the driver, William Hay of Louisville. Hay claimed he had high centered the vehicle on the railroad tracks and had walked to the neighbors to get assistance. Deputies performed a roadside sobriety test on Hay. Hay failed the test...the findings indicated that he was twice over the legal limit of .08. Hay was lodged in the Cass County Correction and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol. The classic 1968 Mercury Cougar is likewise confined but at the salvage yard.

BNSF Officer Critical Condition After Arrest

by Daryl Achenback

A BNSF Railway police officer shot and killed a suspect after the man stabbed the officer multiple times during an arrest. Shortly before 9 a.m., the railway officer contacted an individual trespassing near East 46th Avenue and National Western Drive near the National Western Complex, Denver police Division Chief Ron Thomas said in a news conference.

The officer ran the suspect's name and found that he had a felony warrant out for his arrest, Thomas said. As he attempted to take the man into custody, the individual accessed a knife and began stabbing the officer. The officer got his own gun and shot the suspect, killing him, Thomas said.

The area where the shooting occurred is BNSF Railway property, and the company has its own law enforcement personnel. BNSF operates one of the largest railroad networks in North America, with 32,500 miles rail across the western two-thirds of the country.

The incident marks the 42nd police shooting in Colorado for 2020, and the first for the BNSF Railway. Twenty-nine people have been killed, and an additional 14 wounded.

BNSF Adds New Terminal Minot, ND - Service Started in Oct

BNSF has another new intermodal terminal in service as of Mid October. This is at Minot, ND and is a special use terminal such as the intermodal terminals that load grain (especially soybeans) in containers at Omaha and Fremont, NE. Rail Modal Group is operating the facility and they also operate the intermodal facility at Fremont, NE and Amarillo, TX. (Amarillo is primarily for cotton and cow hides.) The facility at Minot is shipping grain products in containers to the Pacific ports in the northwest, especially the port at Seattle.

The first train into Minot was on Oct 13th when train B-LPCMIN4-11 arrived there from Logistics Park Chicago. The first train out of Minot was the S-MINSEP1-30 that departed Minot on Oct 31st. The train had 67 loaded cars with 190 40' containers all headed for the Seattle Pier One. The containers were all loaded with grain products.

BNSF has put a schedule in the Transportation Service Plan for a train to run once per week departing Minot on Saturday. The train is actually due out of Minot at 17:00 on Saturday with arrival in Seattle on Monday at 11:29 for a 44 hour and 29 minute trip via Havre, Whitefish, Spokane and Wenatchee. Of course, the train can run at any time they need to run one. As of Nov 6th, only one train has been ran so far. There will be several trains of empty containers moving to Minot from various places to fill the needs.

Amherst Virtual Train Show

Submitted by Pat Mahoney

You can view the Amherst Model Railroad Club virtual train show that will take place on January 30th & 31st. If you are not able to attend it live, there will be a replay available online. To learn more, go to the Amherst website for information on how to view this great model railroad experience: www.railroadhobbyshow.com

This is an excellent opportunity to get up-to-date information from many of the model railroad manufacturers.

Railroad News of "Yesteryear"

Bombs and Burglary

Oelwein Register, Oelwein, IA, Oct1, 1896

Conductor Aldrich on the Chicago Great Western short line between Cedar Falls and Wilson Junction, is alone in the Cedar Falls depot at night and has charge of the ticket selling.

Last night he closed the office at about 12 o'clock and took his train out. When he returned, Aldrich noticed the door of the office was open. Upon entering he was confronted with a pile of debris and fragments from the large safe which stands in one corner. An examination showed the safe had been drilled and the door blown off.

The burglars secured \$20 in cash and a check for \$60. Agent Gralton telegraphed that the robbery must have taken place at 12:30 o'clock. The office clock stopped at just 12:25 and he thinks it was stopped by the explosion.

No clues have been found.

Drives a Six-Penny...With His Hands **Evening Times-Republican, Marshalltown, IA,** **Oct 3, 1902**

Frank Wilson, a railroad laborer who drifted into the city from near Clarion, where he had been working for the Chicago Great Western, has a specialty. It is driving nails through boards with his own hand. Wilson performed this feat in the presence of the city marshal, Mr. Larson and an interested company of spectators this morning.

Wilson states that he prefers a six-penny nail, and this having been provided, he borrowed a handkerchief and wrapped it around his hand so as to save it from being cut. Then he chose a substantial box which was in the city hall, grasped the nail firmly with the head resting on the calloused palm of his hand and the end protruding between his fingers, and with one strong blow, drove it through the box. He was not satisfied, because the resistance was not great enough.

Mr. Wilson said that his favorite pastime was driving nails through beer kegs, and there are several of these about the city which bear traces of his skill.

After his performance, Wilson bent the heavy nail so that the two ends met and presented to the Marshall as a souvenir of the occasion.

Faster Than Usual

A fireman on the Illinois Central told this story. He was the fireman on the Hawkeye. They left Storm Lake, Iowa. He was looking out the window, thought they were going a little faster than usual. The old Engineer was about 80 years old, the Fireman was 57. The old man said, "Come over here, kid and take a look." So, he crossed the cab of the E8 to look and the speedometer was pointing at 117. The old man said that was all he could get out of her.

Working On Your Seniority

One morning I came to work there were a lot of crew members standing around talking and telling stories and there sat old John in the Yardmaster's chair with sunglasses on and his wrists were bandaged and cut up. Well, John had been to the smoke shop the night before, got into a fight, and the cops had handcuffed him so he tried to fight them but by morning they let him out of jail so he could go to work. He was sitting there cussing the cops, blaming them for his two black eyes and in the same breath saying he was going to quit drinking and become a Baptist preacher. I thought, "Great, I can gain one in seniority." And I am still waiting.

Insanity Mans A Locomotive

Wright Cty Monitor, Clarion, IA, Jan 20, 1892

On Friday of last week, Oscar Anderson, of Iowa township became violently insane. Going to Rowan, Iowa, he mounted a BCR&N engine that chanced to be standing on the track and informed the engineer that he owned that line of road and proposed to run the engine. Suiting the action to the word he reached for the throttle and pulled it wide open and but for the presence of mind of the engineer there would speedily have been a bad accident.

He saw what the trouble was at a glance, and remarked to Anderson; "That's alright but we can't start without orders," after which he induced him to take a seat in the cab. On reaching Belmond it required five men to remove him from the locomotive without doing him bodily harm. They took him in charge, brought him to Clarion and turned him over to Sheriff, who, acting under instructions of the insane commissioners, the day following conveyed him to the asylum at Independence. Anderson is about thirty years of age, is married and has several small children. His insanity is said to be the result of religious excitement.

Pikes Peak Railway Receive New Snow Blower

The Broadmoor Manitou & Pikes Peak Railway has ordered a new snow blower as part of its \$100 million renovation project. The new snow blower, produced by Zaugg in Eggiwil, Switzerland, will have the capability of cutting through snow drifts up to 10 feet tall and 20 feet wide. The 47.2-inch-diameter cutting reels can cut through 4,200 tons of snow per hour and have the ability to blow snow 50 to 100 feet off the line. Stadler and Zaugg officials will perform the final inspection in Zaugg's facility on Nov. 26.

The new snowblower will become Unit 30 on the railroad's equipment roster when delivered in Spring 2021 with the first new train set. The complete renovation (track, rail cars and depot) and renaissance of the famed Colorado Cog Railway, which reaches up to 14,115 feet and is the highest railway in America, has less than 1 mile of track left to complete. The Railway is still on track for a-May 2021 reopening.



Clinicians Needed

October 2021

To the Tidewater Division,

We've got the place, the date and the logo, but we need you and your Division. The 2021 Local Convention Committee is charging forward with planning of the Mount Clare Junction model railroader convention, to be held 21 through 24 October, 2021. Hosting this event will be at the Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley in scenic Hunt Valley, Maryland.

We are looking for clinicians, with a preference towards attendee participation hands-on projects, and those willing to offer "on the way home" layout tours. In the interest of providing ease of access and greater likelihood of visitors, we encourage those within a reasonable distance of the major interstates (195, I70, I83) participate in the layout tour.

An online form has been created to indicate your interest in participating, and it's easy to use; just click on the word "JotForm" to be taken there. Should you prefer a more traditional form, we can provide a fillable PDF upon email request.

Regards,

Rick Uskert
2021 Local Convention Committee Chair
2021 Mid-Eastern Region Convention
2021lcc.chair@chesdiv-nmra.org

"Head End Revenue"

Division Web Site – Member Sales

The recent pandemic, which has plagued our great nation, has taken a terrible toll on fellow citizens. Adding insult to injury...we haven't had a train show since February 2020. At the January Board of Directors meeting, the following concept was proposed. Use the division website as a marquee for members to sell those train items, either gathering dust on the shelf or something you no longer want in your railroad inventory.

The basic premise is this. Division members will take a couple of pictures of the item they wish to sell. They will then describe the item, set an asking price, and finally provide pertinent contact information.

There are some out there who are ardent followers of E-Bay and other services available on the internet. While "Head End Revenue" won't give you the "thrill" in submitting a winning bid, it will free both the buyer and seller the hassles of collecting any fees or applicable taxes.

Should there be enough interest within the division, your Board of Directors will set up guidelines for all members to follow.

If you're interested, the Division POC is Roger Bir. He can be reached via e-mail at: sorcerer54@cox.net.

NS Receives “F” From Amtrak Over On-Time Performance Stds

CP Earns An “A” - Union Pacific Receives A “B”

The FRA has published a rule establishing minimum on-time standards between Amtrak and host railroads. Amtrak owns about 3% of the track it operates over, mostly in the Northeast Corridor. Most of the track Amtrak operates over is owned by freight railroads (host railroads). Amtrak pays a fee to use these tracks and the tracks are maintained and dispatched by the host railroads. The final rule requires Amtrak and its host railroads to certify Amtrak schedules and sets an on-time performance minimum standard of 80% for any two consecutive calendar quarters. A train arriving within 15 minutes of its published arrival time is considered on time. Other metrics that FRA defines in the final rule include ridership, train delays, station performance and host running time.

“This final rule is a major accomplishment for this administration and a huge victory for the traveling public,” FRA administrator Batory said. “When I personally met with the leaders of Amtrak and the nation’s largest freight railroads earlier this year, I impressed upon them the need for the traveling public to have reliable passenger rail service, and the administration’s final rule reflects a commitment to improving Amtrak’s performance in the modern-day freight rail environment.”

Amtrak compiles an annual report card for the six Class 1 freight railroads and assigns a letter grade based on the number of delays caused to Amtrak trains. In 2019, the average grade for all host railroads was a “C” with Canadian Pacific receiving an “A,” CSX, BNSF and Union Pacific receiving sliding “B” scale grades, Canadian National receiving a “D” and Norfolk Southern receiving an “F.” The 2019 Report Card found all 15 long-distance trains failed to achieve an 80% on time standard, while 19 of 27 state-supported trains failed to achieve the standard.

As part of the economic analysis of the final rule, FRA stated Amtrak could see reduced labor and fuel costs, as well as reduced expenses related to passenger inconvenience because of improved on time performance. The rule goes into effect on Dec. 16, 2020.



25 Years...Crash Remains A Mystery Conductor Dies, Several Injured

This past October marks the 25th anniversary of one of the most bizarre events in American railroad history, the wreck of the Amtrak Sunset Limited in the desert west of Phoenix, Arizona.

Someone, to this day unidentified, removed 29 spikes from the rails on the curve leading to a bridge over Quail Spring Wash, bypassed the break in the rails with wires to ensure that the signals would indicate a clear track, and pushed one of the rails out of alignment.

Around 1:00 a.m. the train arrived at the sabotaged bridge. Both locomotives somehow made it across, but four cars of the 12 car train rolled into the wash on their sides. A sleeping car attendant was the only death, but 78 of the 248 passengers and 20 crew were injured, many critically.

This is a very remote area and it took 45 minutes before the first rescuers arrived. The only clues ever found were four notes under rocks that claimed to be from an antigovernment group called “Sons of Gestapo”, saying the action was to avenge the Ruby Ridge, Idaho and Waco, Texas sieges by the FBI against what were considered domestic terrorist groups.

However, no group of that name has ever surfaced before or since. It took someone with considerable railroad knowledge to pull off this sabotage. The FBI swarmed the area in the weeks after the crash with no good leads, and continues to investigate this case to the present.



The BOD has discussed the possibility of holding a small event somewhere, which will permit us to control the flow of traffic during the white elephant sale. This is only in the discussion stage for the moment. In the event restriction are continued for some time in the future, we'll see if there's a possibility of arranging that small event.

I would like to thank the membership in response to our annual BODs voting. The turnout was impressive compared to the previous voting by mail, with between 20 – 30 percent responses. This time it was closer to 50%—well-done members of the Tidewater Division.

We received an email from NMRA soliciting comments on the proposed DCC Recommended Practices and Standards. NMRA is asking NMRA members to review proposed DCC RPs & S and submit comments or recommendations. Here is the hyperlink: <http://www.nmra.org/dcc-rp.standard>. I requested this be forwarded to the membership should you desire to review and provide comments back to NMRA. Our involvement will ensure the standard covers appropriate areas to help manufacture developing products to maintain this standard for universal use.

Best regards in 2021

Fred



Timeline On Railroad Regulations Imposed

Guidelines Could Limit Railfanning

The new regulations require freight railroads, passenger railroads and designated "higher risk" transit systems to submit plans on how they will comply by Dec. 21, 2020. The new rules build on existing regulations. All Class I railroads and any freight railroad that acts as a host railroad for a Class I carrier or passenger operator are subject to this regulation, as well as hazardous materials shippers and those operating within a designated "high threat urban area." The TSA lists 46 such areas in 28 states and the District of Columbia. Amtrak and Metra are among the passenger railroads that must comply, as well as 46 specific transit systems. The TSA estimates the total cost to the freight railroad industry at \$35.2 million over a 10-year period. For all affected passenger rail and transit operators, the total is estimated at \$23.8 million over the same period.

Some train-watching and rail photography could be considered security threats under new TSA regulations. Railfans should note that watching railroad or transit operations, or taking photographs, may in some instances be considered a security threat. Part 1570 of the regulations includes as examples "taking photographs or video of infrequently used access points, personnel performing security functions (for example, patrols, badge/vehicle checking), or security-related equipment (for example, perimeter fencing, security cameras)."

"Loitering near conveyances, railcar routing appliances or any potentially critical infrastructure" may also trigger the interest of security officials. "Observation through binoculars, taking notes, or attempting to measure distances" are cited in the regulation as suspicious activities.

Santa Fe Icon Razed

Kansas City Landmark Deemed Unsafe

BNSF demolished another former Santa Fe icon. The control tower at the east end of Argentine yard in Kansas City was demolished. Apparently, the tower that was steel with metal covering was demolished due increasing concerns towards structural reliability.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Argentine facility is the classification yard, the largest yard on the BNSF system.

(editors note: Our condolences to Jim Curth on this untimely action)



**Tidewater Division
National Model Railroad Association/Mid-eastern Region**

“Advancing the worldwide scale model railroad community through education and standards as well as advocacy and fellowship.”

**Board of Directors (BOD) Conference Call Agenda for
10:00PM, 16 January 2021**

1. **Call to Order.** the meeting was called to order by the superintendent at 9:58 a.m. Those present were: Fred Humphrey, John Robey, Norm Garner and Roger Bir. Attending via conference call were: John Cryderman and Dale Ridgeway. Absent: Jim Keiper
2. **Announcements.**
 - Meeting was conducted using teleconference.
3. **Reports.**
 - Membership –John Fallon: it was reported the division has 134 members.
 - Finance – John Robey: the division’s current finances were provided. The superintendent asked if there were any questions/comments regarding the report. A motion was made and seconded to accept as written.
4. **Division Business.**
 - a. Meeting status changed to Board of Directors conference call due to Covid-19 restrictions imposed by Commonwealth of Virginia – the 16 January 2021 business meeting was cancelled.
 - b. Nomination committee update. The committee chairs (John Fallon and Roger Bir) reported that 55 ballots were received and counted. The new board members are: John Cryderman, John Robey and Dale Ridgeway.
 - i. After further discussion, the following positions were decided. Superintendent: Fred Humphrey, Assistant Superintendent: John Fallon, Paymaster: John Robey, Timekeeper: Roger Bir, Members at Large: John Cryderman, Jim Keiper and Dale Ridgeway
 - c. Tidewater Division Awards:
 - i. Modeler of the Year 2020: Dale Ridgeway
 - ii. Volunteer of the Year: due to the pandemic and the fact the division did not meet as a group in 2020, it was decided not to determine a winner.
 - iii. Superintendent’s Award: Roger Bir
5. **New Business:**
 - a. Identify Achievement Program certificates: the board discussed recognizing those members who were successful in pursuing their MMR. Norm Garner (committee chair) told those present, once a scheduled division meeting is established, formal recognition will be conducted, and all awards will be given.

- b. Division Certification of Board of Directors to MER by 26 Feb 2021: once the new board positions were determined, Fred asked Dale Ridgeway for a photo and resume to be included in his annual report to the MER.
 - c. Annual Business meeting: the most recent direction from Richmond is scheduled to be updated on 31 January 2021. The current edict limits the number of person(s) to gather at 10. Should this number be changed, the BoD will hold a teleconference call to set a new date. The board hopes to be able to conduct the annual business meeting and white elephant table at the previously scheduled Lee Hall Depot and Museum in Newport News. Once new information becomes available, it will be shared with division members.
 - d. Next Callboard issue to include BOD voting results and assignment, Tidewater Division Award winners, and Achievement Program certificates earned.
 - e. Discussion centered around whether or not the division should set up a "Member's Only Sale" on the division web page. An article will appear in The Callboard to see if there's any interest in creating such a page. Should the interest be there, guidelines will be established and published to the division.
6. **Next BOD Meeting.** 6:30PM, 10 March 2021 at the superintendent's residence.
7. **Adjoin Meeting.** 11: 15 a.m.

Santa Clara 2021 NMRA National Convention

July 2021 Event Cancelled

The NMRA has cancelled the NMRA 2021 Santa Clara "Rails By the Bay" Convention, scheduled for the Santa Clara Marriott Hotel & Conference Center on July 4-11, 2021.

We did not reach this decision lightly but felt it was the best for anyone who would want to attend given the current status of the pandemic, the disbursement of the vaccine, and the fact that people were waiting to see what would happen before they registered. Moreover, local prototype facilities were not open and, understandably, home owners were reluctant to allow people in their homes.

However, St. Louis will host the 2022 convention and it is expected that all contracts for that convention will be signed shortly, if not by the time you read this. See you all in St. Louis August 4-15, 2022.

Please see the "Rails by the Bay" convention website at <https://www.nmra2021.com/> for further details.

[Bob Amsler](#)

Meetings and Trade Show Department Chair



BNSF's 25 Years Commemorative Paint Scheme.

Railroad Lingo

BATTING 'EM OUT: Used generally by switchmen when a *yard* engine is switching a *string* of cars.

COAL HEAVER: Fireman, sometimes called stoker.

FISHTAIL: Semaphore blade, so called from its peculiar shape

GREASE THE PIG: Oil the engine