

## Tidewater Division

# CALLBOARD

Volume 2019, Issue 7

NMRA MEMBER

September, 2019

### “Tracks Ahead”

**Fred Humphrey, Superintendent**

I look forward to seeing everyone attending the next Tidewater Division meeting at 10AM, 21 Sep 2019 in the Suffolk Seaboard Station Railroad Museum, 236 North Main Street, Suffolk, VA 23434. This is our continued outreach program effort to bring model railroaders together as we move our meeting around the division. We have been working to bring speakers to these meetings to share their experiences, provide historical information and discuss specific topics to share knowledge regardless of scale. Our speaker will be Norm Garner to discuss how the Suffolk Seaboard Station Museum came about and interactions with the city of Suffolk in bring this effort to a conclusion.

Items of interest coming in the near future include the search for Board of Director candidates with election on 18 January 2020 meeting, review of the 2020 meeting schedule, legal issues related to sale taxes on white elephant sale items, as a non-profit organization

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### This Month in Rail History

Sep 1, 1935: NMRA organizes in Milwaukee, WI

Sep 2, 1919: Congress passes bill barring rail strikes.

Sep 3, 1930: Thomas Edison runs first experimental electric passenger train between Hoboken and Montclair, New Jersey.

Sep 7, 1958: Eckington-Mt. Rainier-Branchville (Washington) street car line is abandoned.

Sep 15, 1981 Smithsonian hosts a 150th grand celebration of the "John Bull" steam locomotive, with it operating on the B&O's Georgetown Branch

Sep 20, 1850: President Millard Fillmore signs first Railroad Land Grant Act.

Sep 20, 1984: Singer/Songwriter, Steve Goodman, who composed "City of New Orleans" died in Seattle.

Sep 21, 1856: Illinois Central Railroad connects Cairo, Illinois with 700 miles of track, making it the longest railroad in the country.

Sep 29, 1897: Capital Traction Co. cable car powerhouse bums on site of present Wilson/District Building and Ronald Reagan Building.

Sep 29, 1988: rededication of DC's Union Station after \$160 million spent in revitalization project.

### BILL OF LADING – SEP 2019

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“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](mailto:sorcerer54@cox.net)

## **Virginia Gets Green Light To Add Railway Tracks Between D.C. And Richmond**

By Jordan Pascale, WAMU – September 11, 2019

The federal government has signed off on Virginia's plans to expand the number of railway tracks between D.C. and Richmond, which will mean more passenger train capacity, increased reliability and a slight uptick in train speeds in the future. The DC2RVA high speed rail project would add a third track along the stretch between the two cities, and a fourth track from Alexandria to Long Bridge, which connects Virginia and D.C. over the Potomac River.

Construction on the project would begin with the additional tracks in Northern Virginia, said Jennifer Mitchell, the director of Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation. That project is fully funded and could mean a few more Amtrak and Virginia Railway Express slots for passengers. Those are incremental improvements while the bigger hurdle, the bottleneck at Long Bridge, makes its way through an environmental review period. Officials want to expand that bridge from two to four tracks, as it's at capacity and limits train travel through the region. "Every [Amtrak] train from Florida to D.C. is affected by that bridge," Mitchell said. "That's our highest transportation priority in the state right now."

The feds are on track to review that project by next summer. The \$1.9 billion project still needs funding and would take about five years to build. The federal "Record of Decision" on the DC2RVA project, released this week, means the state now has cleared the environmental hurdles and can start designing and constructing the new tracks between D.C. and Richmond. Mitchell said the project will take years to complete and be built as funding becomes available. But in coming decades, the extra tracks will go a long way in alleviating traffic on I-95, one of the most congested corridors in the country, she said. "It's cost-prohibitive to just keep expanding 95 and the impact on [nearby] communities is too great," Mitchell said. She noted that the number of passengers Virginia Railway Express trains already equate to "another lane" on the interstate.

Adding another track would also improve reliability because trains could bypass disabled trains on the other track. As of now, they have to wait until the problem is cleared. The extra track also means Amtrak and VRE can add more trains throughout the day. Virginia rail officials estimate nine additional daily Amtrak round-trip trains. Five would originate in Norfolk and Newport News, and would travel through Richmond and on to Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, and end in Boston. Four would come from North Carolina through Virginia and continue on to Boston. It will also bring "higher-speed" rail — ; up to 90 mph. Most trains average about 50 mph, but they currently can't go above 79 mph. The additional speed won't save a lot of time, but Mitchell said the main focus is increasing capacity and reliability.

A public meeting on the Long Bridge expansion is set for Oct. 22 from 4 to 7 p.m. at 1100 Fourth St. SW in D.C.

(a special thanks to John Robey for forwarding this article.)

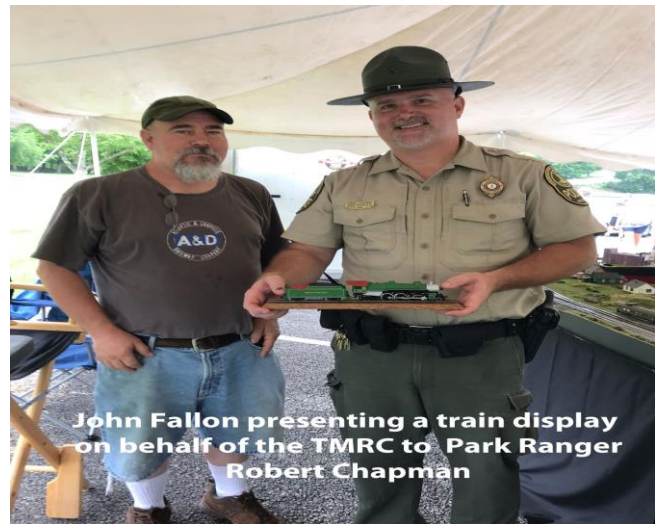


# Through “the Lens”

## Division Member Photos

### “Natural Tunnel – Train Day”

by John Cryderman and John Fallon



## MER “Hands On” Clinic Update

The start for the Liberty Bell Special 2019 is rapidly approaching. The Liberty Bell Special offers the opportunity to expand



Expand your modeling skills in wood bridge construction, resin car building or T-Trak module assembly. Hands-on clinics have proven more popular each year and tend to sell out, so register for the convention now or add this to your registration by going back to the web site. (<http://merregistrar.coffeecup.com/forms/2019%20Online%20Registration/>)

We will provide you a list of tools to bring along and the clinicians provide everything else. Each participant will be able to build at their own speed with the clinicians providing direct one on one feedback. Your fellow modelers adjacent to you will be both inspiration and great sounding boards. We learn from each other.

### 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](mailto:sorcerer54@cox.net) for details.

### Division Mtg/Contest Schedule

Sept 21, 2019: 10am, Suffolk Seaboard Station Rail Museum, 326 N. Main St, Suffolk VA, Guest Speaker: Norm Garner – Contest: Engines (Steam vs Diesel)

Nov 16, 2019: 10am-Portsmouth Children’s Museum of Virginia, 221 High St, Portsmouth VA, Guest Speaker: Skip Novac – Contest: Your Favorite Car

Jan 18, 2020: Annual Meeting & White Elephant Table: 10am, Lee Hall Depot, Elmhurst St, Newport News, VA – Contest: Favorite Train.



## THE DISPATCHER

*Your current issue of the PhillyNMRA newsletter has arrived!*

Greetings NMRA Members,

We are pleased to inform you that the electronic version of the August 2019 edition of THE DISPATCHER, our Division newsletter is available now at the following link:

<http://www.phillynmra.org/wp-content/uploads/Disp2019-08.pdf>

Unlike the printed version of THE DISPATCHER, the online version is in color and contains much more content. Please be patient as it may take a while to download depending upon your connection speed. If the link does not work, try copying and pasting the link into your browser. You will need a PDF reader installed on your computer to display it. There are many such programs available for free on the Internet, but the most well-known is Adobe Reader DC, which can be downloaded at: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

If you wish to save a copy of THE DISPATCHER on your computer for future reference, use the PDF reader's controls to save it to the location of your choice. If you need any help, or for any issues with this email please don't hesitate to contact us at [howard@phillynmra.org](mailto:howard@phillynmra.org).

*“Tracks Ahead” continued from page 1*

on whether or not non-NMRA individual can sale items at our white elephant sale per IRS rule 501.3(c) and will we be involved in the MER 2022 convention.

Best regards,

*Fred*





A Callboard "Thanks" to John Robey for this picture

## Home Layout Tours by Bob Cook, Timekeeper

The Division would like to get back in the habit of promoting tours of home layouts. The idea would be to have a couple of layouts that are relatively closed together, not far from the location of the meeting. We do not expect the layout to be completed. We would like to the visit to be an opportunity to gather friends together to observe and learn more about model railroading. We would like to see all scales possible. If we get a large number of layouts, we can increase the number, or, possibly, have the layout tour on a non-division meeting day.

If you would like to host a visit or have some comments or recommendations, contact Bob Cook at [seadevil8@verizon.net](mailto:seadevil8@verizon.net) or contact him at 757.312.9112.

## Railroad Lingo

BELL RINGER: Locomotive fireman

CLOWN: Switchman or yard brakeman. Clown wagon is caboose.

DIRTY CAR: Storage car containing a varied assortment of mail and parcels that demand extra work in separating



## Grand Trunk GP-7/9 Mt Home, ID

## 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](#)

## Tidewater Division Board of Directors

Superintendent: Fred Humphrey  
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Member at Large: Roger Bir  
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Member at Large: Norm Garner  
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**From "The Timekeeper"  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
11 September 2019**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:40pm at TMRC Virginia Beach, VA

**BOD Attending:** Fred Humphrey, John Fallon, John Cryderman, John Robey, Bob Cook, Roger Bir and Gary Brown.

**No Announcements**

**Reports:**

Membership: 151 active members in the division.

Paymaster's Report: Read without issue. Received a \$71 rebate from the Mid-East Region.

**Division Business:**

1. Proposed Show Replacement: Due to two shows (World's Greatest Hobby and Greenberg) occurring in the spring of 2020, the show coordinator (John Fallon) is looking at the fall of 2020 for a show. The goal is to find a less expensive venue.
2. Gary Brown and John Fallon plan to attend a meeting in Charlottesville on Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> concerning co-hosting the 2022 MER convention in Richmond.
3. For the September meeting in Suffolk, the format will be presentation, business, contest.

**New Business:**

1. The Superintendent discussed a proposed article for the MER Local promoting our January meeting in hopes of expanding the participation. Several issues were discussed and the submission will be delayed until the Treasurer talks to our lawyer and John Fallon talks to Debbie about how Newport News deals with sales tax at shows.
2. The drawing at the January meeting will be for \$300/\$200/\$100 with the option to buy additional tickets for \$1. Each attendee will receive one ticket without cost.
3. Bob Cook provided an announcement for the Callboard that will ask for volunteers to open the layouts for viewing. The goal will be to offer a couple of layouts that could be visited after meetings.

**Next BOD Meeting:** 9 October 2019, 6:30PM at TMRC. The additional meeting is to:

- Resolve the January meeting "white elephant" status,
- Schedule for 2020,
- Results from the 2022 MER convention meeting,
- Board of Directors Election.

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:45PM**

**Charges Dropped vs Amtrak Engineer**

Eight people died when the Washington-to-New York train rounded a curve at more than twice the 50 mph speed limit and hurdled off the tracks in Philadelphia in May 2015. Involuntary manslaughter and reckless endangerment charges have once again been dropped against the Amtrak engineer at the controls during a deadly 2015 derailment in Philadelphia.

The Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office, which has been handling the case against Amtrak 188 engineer Brandon Bostian, and his attorney confirmed the charges were dropped Tuesday.

**Human Error In SC Amtrak Crash**

Federal safety officials ruled Tuesday yet another fatal train crash in the United States has been caused by easy-to-fix human errors. The National Transportation Safety Board determined the crash of an Amtrak train into a parked train on a side track near Columbia, South Carolina, in February 2018 was CSX's fault. The board blamed the company for failing to implement a safety plan during track upgrades and its engineer for not following specific steps including filling out paperwork to make sure he flipped a switch after parking the train to shift the tracks back to the main line.