



Tidewater Division

CALLBOARD

Volume 2022, Issue 2

NMRA MEMBER

March 2022

“Superintendent’s Desk”

John Robey, Superintendent

Welcome to the new year of activities. We had a very quick and abbreviated January meeting and hopefully didn't create too much confusion with the election. The Board of Directors has formed and is in the process of creating the schedules and events that will benefit all of the Division. Gary Brown has been appointed as the Assistant Superintendent; Greg Warth as the Paymaster; Bob Cook as the Timekeeper; and Dale Ridgeway, Bill Miller and John Fallon as Directors At Large. John Fallon was selected to fill retiring John Cryderman's last term year. As a new initiative we have created an "official honorary position" for the Immediate Past Superintendent to sit as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. As always, though, any member is welcome to attend Board meetings.

Now that it appears that we are returning to our normal ability to conduct in-person meetings, the Board set our schedule to hold 6 meetings a year. They are

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Zoom Coming to Tidewater Process to Start May 2022

Superintendent John Robey and the division board of directors have decided to add "Zoom" capabilities to all division functions. The "alpha" test was conducted during the March 2022 meeting with a clinic provided by David Ackermann. The clinic was well received, and the decision was made to incorporate the process in all future Division endeavors.

When members receive notification of upcoming meetings, included in the reminder will be a link and instructions for logging in. This cost associated with this process was deemed well worth the investment, considering how the division can now reach its members and include them in future meetings.

This Month in Rail History

Mar 1, 1918: Congress passes Standard Time Act

Mar 16, 1957: The Milwaukee Railroad suspends steam locomotive operations.

Mar 19, 1920: the U.S. Government privatizes all railroads after WWI.

Mar 25, 1908: Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis Electric RR opens between Washington & Annapolis. Service opens to Baltimore Park Ave. terminal at 10: 15 AM

"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 (MMR) 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: Author Fred Humphrey: Official Mark Neiting: Master Builder-Scenery
Bob Cook: Master Builder-Scenery/Structures, Volunteer, Model Railroad Engineer-Civil

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

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.

Division Mtg/Contest 2022

May 21 - Prince of Peace Church - White Elephant Table – Structures (off-line)

July 16 – Prince of Peace Church – Favorite Photos

Sept 17 – Prince of Peace Church – Engines

Nov 5 – Virginia Beach Main Library – Favorite Car (National Model Train Month)

Nov 19 – Warrenton VA – Joint Mtg w/James River and Potomac Divisions

Tidewater Division

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Amtrak to increase speed in Illinois

Illinois increases speed on Amtrak trains. In mid-August, top speeds on much of Amtrak's Chicago to St. Louis Lincoln Service corridor increased from 79 to 90 miles per hour. With signal testing completed and certified for reliability by the Federal Railroad Administration, the higher speed is run between Laraway Road, south of Joliet and CP Wann, 2 miles south of Alton. According to a UPRR general order, trains can operate at the upper limit if Amtrak locomotives leading the train are equipped with both Incremental Train Control System (ITCS), to monitor the status of highway crossings, and the Interoperable Electronic Train Management System (I-ETMS), integrating new tech for train control and operating systems to enhance train-operation safety.

Since federal money for right-of-way and signaling improvements became available in the 1990's, Illinois has sought to shorten travel times on what had devolved from a Gulf, Mobile and Ohio 2-track speedway into a deteriorated single-track line, with slow speed or out-of-service passing sidings. More than \$2 billion spent to upgrade the Joliet-Alton segment to 110-mph operation.

The fastest Chicago-St. Louis schedule resuming in a few weeks is train #301, a 7am Chicago departure with limited stops that reaches St. Louis at 12.20pm. Travelers on the route still must contend with potential freight train interference delays in the Chicago-Joliet and Alton-St. Louis terminal areas.



Union Pacific Going “Green”

Union Pacific is looking to upgrade its rail yard infrastructure with the purchase of 10 FLX drive battery-electric locomotives from Wabtec.

The new locomotives will be manufactured in the United States with the first units being delivered to Union Pacific in late 2023. This marks the largest investment in battery technology by a North American railroad.

In addition to upgrading the rail yard infrastructure, the order will support the railroad's commitment to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Union Pacific has committed to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions 26% by 2030 and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.



Contract Talks Big 4 Affected

Contract talks between the biggest freight railroads and unions that represent 105,000 employees are headed to mediation after the unions declared an impasse following more than 2 years of negotiations.

Since 2017, the major rails have cut more than 20% of their staff and unions have said the widespread cuts have spread employees thin even during further during the pandemic and employees should not be penalized for missing work for any reason.

January, March, May, July, September, and November and stay with the 3rd Saturday of the month. Although, the meeting date may change due to coordination with host activities. We are also in the process of determining a location and date for a Division White Elephant sales/swap meet; re-instating our meeting contest schedule; continuing cash awards for contest winners; holding raffles & door prizes at the meetings and re-establishing a social hour before each meeting. During this social hour before meetings, we encourage members to meet-and-greet new or prospective members, display your interesting items of model railroading that you would like to share with others (i.e... manual switch control, kit bashing tools/materials, books, maps, etc...)

Another feature for meetings is to arrange for clinics, demonstrations, or NMRA feature clinics and workshops. We are happy to announce that the Division now has a Zoom license that will allow us to tap into networks of model railroad information videos, network with other divisions and clinics, and eventually have our scheduled meetings available on Zoom conferences. We have integrated the necessary assets together to present a telecommunications operation for any meeting no matter where the location! Gotta love technology!

That's it for now, but we have more initiatives coming, so stay tuned! Continue to enjoy the expansive hobby of model railroading....from arm-chair modeling to Master Model Railroader !

Record Set for Longest Crew & Engine Run

**Oelwein Register, Oelwein Iowa
May 10, 1899**

The longest run on record, with a single engine and the same engineer and fireman was made on the Chicago North Western road, from Chicago to Council Bluffs, last Monday.

The distance is 501 miles and was made in the remarkable time of thirteen hours, and that without change of either engineer, fireman or engine.

The train consisted of four Wagner cars with a private part of 24 persons on board.

NS Adopts Radical Experiment by Chuck Furst

The Norfolk Southern has undertaken a surprising and by today's standards, a rather radical experiment, resurrecting the concept of less-than-carload freight, long considered a poison pill by modern day railroads.

Unlike the old days, when such freight was delivered to every town on the line, the new NS service will have only three service points initially, Chicago, Atlanta, and Miami. The new service will be known as "Thoroughbred Freight Transfer". NS is betting that the larger capacity of boxcars compared to shipping containers will prove more economical for shipments to major hub cities. Cars will move on existing NS intermodal trains 215/216 and 209/214, then transfer to Florida East Coast at Jacksonville.



Amtrak Receives New Engines

Built by Siemens of CA

For years, critics have bashed Amtrak for the age and reliability concerns of their locomotives. Calls for have resulted in updating the fleet, with the first of the new engines now being delivered.

Built by Siemens Mobility in Sacramento, CA, these new ALC-42 diesel-electric units, designed and constructed with higher performance and lower emissions, will replace the long-distance engines. Capable of reaching speeds up to 125mph, 75 new locomotives will be added by the year 20. While not 200mph locomotives comparable to their foreign counterparts, the new engines are more environmentally friendly, reducing nitrogen oxides by 89% and particulate matter by 95% while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, more benefits for the environment of rail travel. Amtrak will be able to monitor over 800 of the engine's data points remotely, meaning less maintenance and more time in service. The new model has a multitude of upgrades over the earlier introduce Charger engine.



Mark Neiting was overheard asking Bob Cook the following question regarding an MMR requirement. "I understand this is what I have to model for Civil Engineering certificate, right?"



UNION PACIFIC EMPLOYS NEW LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE TO STOP RAIL CAR LOOTING

Railroad Lingo

BOOMER: Drifter who went from one railroad job to another, staying but a short time on each job or each road. This term dates back to pioneer days when men followed boom camps. The opposite is *home guard*. Boomers should not be confused with tramps, although they occasionally became tramps. *Boomers* were railroad workers often in big demand because of their wide experience, sometimes blackballed because their tenure of stay was uncertain. Their common practice was to follow the "rushes"-that is, to apply for seasonal jobs when and where they were most needed, when the movement of strawberry crops, watermelons, grain, etc., was making the railroads temporarily short-handed. There are virtually no *boomers* in North America today. When men are needed for seasonal jobs, they are called from the *extra board*.

DEADHEAD: Employee riding on a pass; any nonpaying passenger. Also, fireman's derisive term for head brakeman who rides engine cab. Also, a locomotive being hauled "dead" on a train.

FUSEE: Red flare used for flagging purposes. Its sharp point is driven into the right-of-way and no following train may pass as long as it is burning, although on some roads it is permissible to stop, extinguish the *fusee*, and proceed with caution in automatic block-signal limits.

HIGHBALL: Signal made by waving hand or lamp in a high, wide semicircle, meaning "Come ahead" or "Leave town" or "Pick up full speed." Verb *highball* or phrase *'ball the jack* means to make a fast run. Word *highball* originated from old-time ball signal on post, raised aloft by pulley when track was clear. A very few of these are still in service, in New England and elsewhere.

JERK A DRINK: Take water from track pan without stopping train. From this came the word *jerkwater*, which usually means a locality serving only to supply water to the engines of passing trains, a Place other than a regular stop, hence of minor importance as *jerkwater town*, *jerkwater college*, etc.

**Meeting of the
Tidewater Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA
on March 19, 2022**

The Meeting was called to order by Superintendent John Robey at 10:05.
20 members were present and two guests, Dave and Michelle Chance from North Carolina.

Membership Report: Gary Brown reported that he was getting a turnover from John Fallon.

Paymaster Report: Greg Warth reported the status of the savings, checking and cash accounts.

Achievement Program – the following Merit Awards were presented:

- Bob Cook – Civil Engineer, Structures, Scenery, and Association Volunteer
- Mark Nieting – Scenery
- Fred Humphrey – Official
- Roger Bir – Author

Fred Humphrey reported on Project Endeavor, a proposal for a Model Railroad museum in the Tidewater area. The group has completed a business plan, has bylaws in draft, and plans to submit an application for 501 tax status in April. After briefing the mayor of Chesapeake, the mayor said that he would like to have it situated in South Norfolk. There are plans to brief officials in VA Beach and Norfolk.

Roger Bir reported on efforts to support the Lee Hall Depot. Several model structures are complete with the depot still to be complete. They are looking for HO scale vehicles from the 1920s.

Roger Bir reported that the website is being upgraded. He also noted that articles in the MER Local and Tidewater Callboard earn authors credit towards their Author Certificate in the Achievement Program.

John Robey reported that Suffolk Station is looking for help with their HO layout. Several engines have been cleaned. One issue with the layout is coal dust from the passing trains. The curators would like the layout to have the ability for visitors to start trains that would run for an interval. John Fallon volunteered to look at the layout. The station is looking for donations. Mark Nieting gave them a signal head that used to be at the junction of the Virginian and Seaboard Railroads.

There will be six meetings this year; January, March, May, July, September, and November. Plans are to have the meetings at the Prince of Peace Church as the status of Train Day in Denbigh is unknown. Plans are to hold clinics during meeting and schedule layout tours afterwards. The division has bought a license for Zoom and will broadcast meetings over Zoom in the future. A survey of members to learn of their desires for meetings is planned.

Dave Ackman presented a clinic on Creating Custom Decals via Zoom. A video of the clinic is available on the web at <http://daackm.github.io>.

Dave Chance presented a clinic on the Achievement Program Merit Award Judging.

Meeting adjourned around 1 PM.

Bob Cook, Timekeeper

“Around the Bend” Division Photos



Several members were awarded certificates towards their Master Modeler. Leading the division list was Bob Cook. Bob was awarded certificates for Civil Engineer, Structures, Scenery and Volunteer. Former superintendent, Fred Humphrey received his certificate for Official. Mark Neiting accepted his for Scenery and Roger Bir for Author.

March Business Meeting – Contest “Favorite Loads”

