

Tidewater Division

CALLBOARD

Volume 2023, Issue 1

NMRA MEMBER

Jan 2023

“Superintendent’s Desk”

John Robey, Superintendent

As the year closes out for the Division, what a list of accomplishments that the membership has achieved. We have added a new Master Model Railroader, seen a member elevated to the Mid-Eastern Region Vice President, recognized the achievements of quite a few members working towards the awards of the Achievement Program on their route to Master Model Railroaders and participation in our meetings is improving and increasing. Fortunately, we have had a full year without the threat of the COVID lockdowns as we previously experienced!

One of the tenets of the NMRA By-Laws is to advance the hobby of scale model railroading wherever and whenever possible by publications, events, meetings and other practical means and to promote fellowship among model railroaders. Our Division members have lived up to these tenets thru the volunteer efforts of developing a plan for the Model Railroad Museum of

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BILL OF LADING – JAN 2023

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This Month in Rail History

Jan 1, 1986: the Milwaukee Railroad merged into the Soo Line.

Jan 6, 1893: Great Northern Railway drives the last spike at Scenic, Washington.

Jan 10, 1863: the London underground railway opens for business.

Jan 15, 1953: Pennsylvania RR "Federal Express" train wreck injures 43 at Washington DC's Union Station. There were no fatalities.

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

Jan 17, 1871: Andrew Smith Hallidie patents the first cable car system in San Francisco.

Jan 17, 1957: Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) forms in San Francisco.

Jan 24, 1874: B&O completes construction at Hyattsville on 12.4 mile long Alexandria Branch to Shepherd's Landing.

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

Jan 31, 1935: Union Pacific's M-10000 enters service as the "City of Salina."

2023 Board Results

John Robey
John Fallon
Dale Ridgeway

“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 Chuck Davis

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

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, Chuck Davis at chuck-davis@cox.net

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.nmarmer-tidewater.org/>. Printed copies in B/W are available on request, contact the Callboard editor at sorcerer54@cox.net for details.

Division Mtg/Contest 2023

March 18, 2023 – the Division Business meeting. The contest is “Railroad Memorabilia.” Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 424 Kings Grant Road, Virginia Beach VA 23452. Coffee and doughnuts, courtesy of the hospitality committee at 9am, meeting starts at 10am.

Tidewater Division

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Fred Humphrey – at Large
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Achievement Program: Chuck Davis
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Railroad News of "Yesteryear"

Crews To Run Longer Freights

Rockford (Iowa) Register, April 29, 1931

As giving an idea of changed conditions in railroading, J. F. Grawe of Waverly, Iowa, says that a west bound freight train on the Chicago Great Western Saturday forenoon carried 82 cars and was making fast time.

In looking over the old time news of 40 years ago recently there appeared an item which said that a train on the BCR&N passed through Shell Rock with 18 loaded cars, which at that time established a record for the road. Nowadays trains on different roads have carried upward of 100 cars.

With improved equipment of the present day the average train crew is carrying as much freight tonnage as four crews did a quarter of a century ago.

Trains Collide At Water Tank

WAVERLY (Iowa) REPUBLICAN, November 25, 1909

Two sections of a stock train experienced a collision at Hanlontown, Iowa. The second section, unable to see the first on account of a dense fog, plowed into the rear end of the first section and very seriously injured Corbett Melin, an Illinois man returning from the Dakotas.

The accident occurred as the first section was standing at the water tank taking water. A flagman had been sent back but did not get far enough to give the men on the second train enough warning.

All of the trainmen saw the danger in time and jumped, but Melin did not see the danger and as a result received a broken jaw and an injury to his right leg below the knee.

Shoot Out With Thieves

Great Western Magazine (March 1923)

About 2 a.m., February 22, 1923, Patrolman S. C. Curtis at Omaha encountered a gang of box car thieves attempting to enter cars standing at the Omaha freight house and opened fire on them, killing one, Marty Maher, and wounding two others of the gang.

There were 8 or 9 men in the gang and all of them were doing their utmost to locate Curtis, who was in hiding under a box car. He came out of the affair without a scratch.

It was splendid work on the part of Mr. Curtis and will materially check the efforts of the gangs entering our cars at Omaha. We might add that Mr. Curtis was at one time a ranger on a large ranch in Wyoming and it was there that he learned to shoot.

Runaway Locomotive Causes Calamity

May 9, 1895 – Rockford (IA) Gazette

A Chicago Great Western switch engine ran amuck Monday about noon at Gypsum when it left the track while rounding a curve, did some little damage and caused work for the wrecking crews.

No one was hurt and the escape all around was very fortunate.

About noon, either spreading rails, or a broken rail forced the engine from the track, causing it to demolish a big Western Union telegraph pole and the wires and to damage the end of the station platform somewhat. The engine lay flat on its side on one side of the track and the tender, in a similar position on the other side. Several cars behind did not leave the rails.

By Tuesday morning, all signs of the accident had disappeared as a result of the efforts of a wrecking crew sent out from this city.

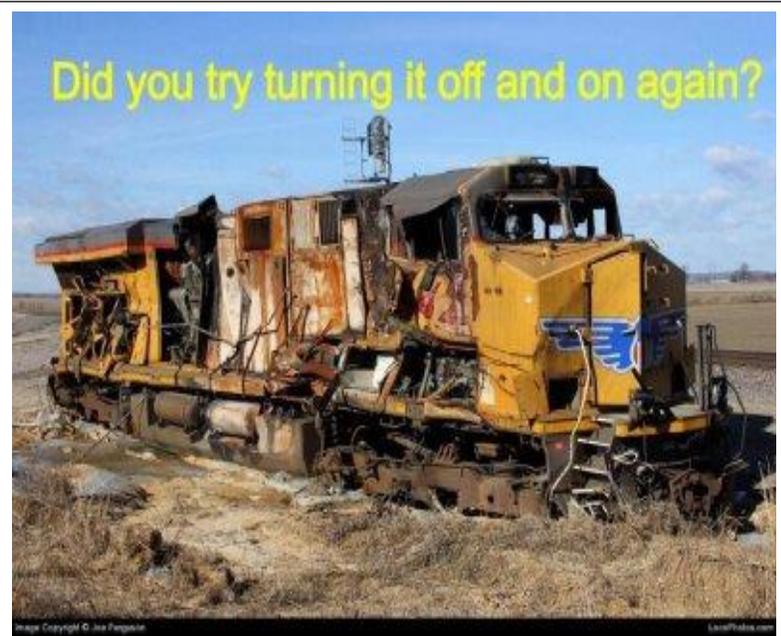
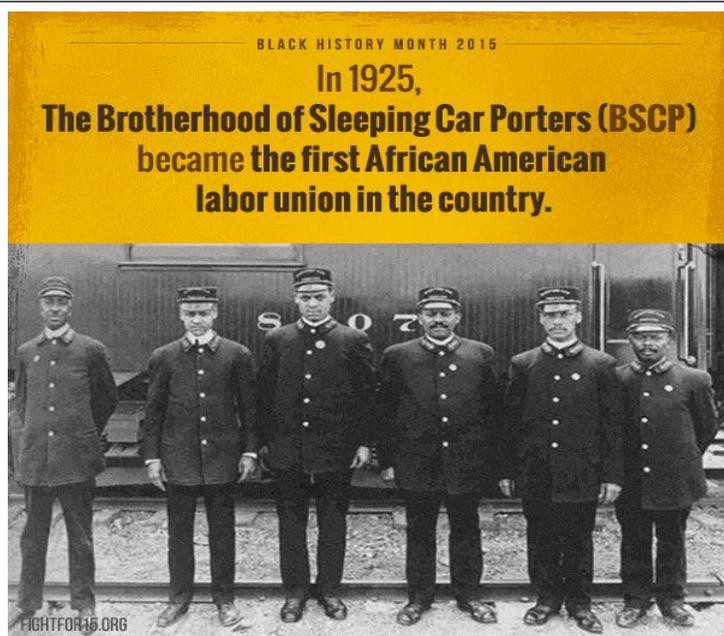
Division Contest in 2023

by John Robey, Dale Ridgeway & Bill Fay

This year we are going to change our Division Contests, as we have used the same contests for quite a few years. We have five more meetings for this year and have selected this order, in order for the membership to have time to work on their entries. Good luck and we are looking forward to some interesting and fantastic entries!

- MARCH 18: **Railroad Memorabilia:** Each participant will have 1/3 of a meeting room table to set up an interesting collection of your favorite railroad memorabilia. It can be any item (signs, paperwork, advertising, tools, antique or modern) not to exceed 50lbs. Judging will be by the membership with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places awarded.
- MAY 20: **Railcar Loads:** Build/assemble any railcar load that you wish. Your entry must be authentic representation of a railcar load. Your entry must be accompanied by a photo, magazine picture, internet photo/drawing of this load and railcar. Judging will be by the membership with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places awarded. Any scale entry.
- JULY 15: **Trackside Structures:** Build/assemble any type of building or structure that would be typical along the railroad. These can be equipment huts, interlocking towers, signal systems, yard or mainline, etc.... just to name a few. The structures must have been railroad owned. Any scale entry. Judging will be by the membership with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places awarded.
- SEPT 16: **Super Detailed Rail Car:** Entry will be a passenger car that **YOU** have super detailed. (Scale Trains Rivet Counter disqualified). Any scale entry. Judging will be by the membership with 1st, 2nd and 3rd places awarded.
- NOV 18: **Building Diorama Contest:** (again) Members compete with a diorama not to exceed 18"x18" and must use the Division Walther's Kit "Import Motors" (available for \$10 per kit). The rules are... 1. You must use one of the building fronts and one of the building sides; 2. It doesn't necessarily have to be railroad related (on-line or off-line). The finished diorama will be judged at **the November Tidewater meeting** celebrating National Model Train Month. 1st Place winner will receive \$75, Runner Up will receive \$50 and Fan's Favorite will receive \$50. Judging for the first two place winners will be based on modeling skills, innovation and creativeness. Fan Favorite will simply be that. (A panel of MMR'S will be the judges for the 1st Place and Runner Up; entire membership will vote for Fan Favorite). HO Scale entry.

Good luck and let's see some interesting and unique examples of your modeling skills in 2023!



Around the Bend – Member Photos



Sharon & Steve
Prescott

1st Place "Favorite Trains"



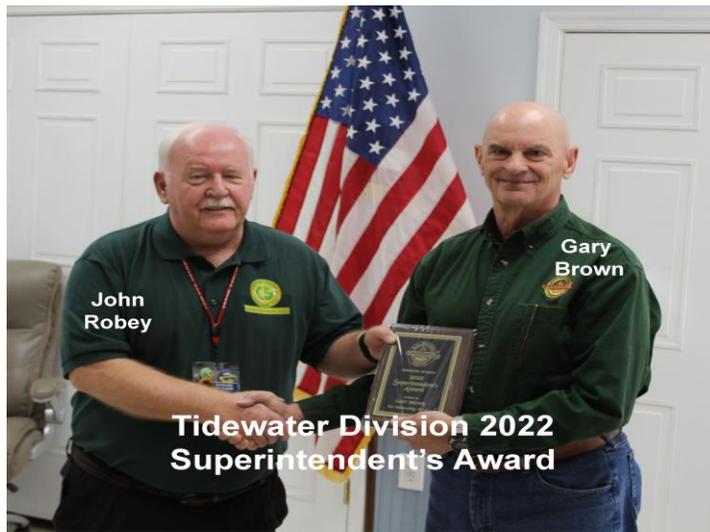
Tidewater Division
Master Modelers

Norm
Garner

Bob
Cook

Chuck
Davis

Dale
Ridgew



John
Robey

Gary
Brown

Tidewater Division 2022
Superintendent's Award



Mark Nieting Open House
December 2022



BNSF 3038 is now listed as GP25X and is seen here working the south end of the Kansas City yard last August 30th. The engine started out life as an ATSF GP40X pulling freight on the Transcon.

Video Feature by Roger Bir

Starting with this issue and carrying over to the division's web site, I want to feature video's that are either recommended or seen on YouTube. Some of these maybe instructional in nature and others will be just for plain viewing. If you come across a video and want to share...just forward to me at: sorcerer54@cox.net and I'll make sure you're given credit for the find. It's just as easy as "clicking."

This first video is via a referral from NMRA and is 25 minutes in length and shows a computer rendition of how a diesel locomotive works. I watched it...and it was well worth the time. ENJOY.

[\(15\) How a Diesel-Electric Locomotive Works - YouTube](#)

Hampton Roads, creating a very thoughtful charity of model railroad sets for children at Christmas time, members sharing their model railroad layouts and opening their home for layout tours, and working to share the model railroading hobby through fellowship and sharing of information and assistance.

Good job, everybody! We are off to a really good start for the year and I am confident that we will have another banner year with many accomplishments and having a good time doing it through our Fellowship!

John Robey

Superintendent

South Mountain Division Get-Together

Blue Ridge Summit, PA – 8 April 2023

NMRA, MER South Mountain Division and Mainline Hobby Supply hosts its 9th annual Mini Con at the Blue Ridge Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214. Come enjoy from 9 AM to 3PM, this one-day free event one block north of Main Line Hobby Supply, consisting of prototype and modeling presentations, formal and informal clinics, modular displays, interaction with your fellow hobbyists and beginners plus a 10% discount at Mainline Hobby Supply.

This no admission charge, wheelchair accessible, educational event is open to the public for promotion of the hobby of Model Railroading.

For additional details contact Don Florwick, DJFlorwick@comcast.net, Phone 717-414-0660 for the South Mountain Division, Mid Eastern Region, <http://www.smdnmra.org/>

Railroad Lingo

BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAINS: Hobo's paradise, as described in song by Harry K. McClintock. (See *Indian Valley Line*)

DOODLEBUG: Rail motorcar used by section men, linemen, etc. Also called *ding dong*.

HOT WORKER: Boilermaker who repairs leaks in the firebox or flue sheet while there is pressure in the boiler

Our Tidewater Division Goals

by John Robey, Superintendent

As we start into our new year of activities for the Tidewater Division, I would like to set our "goal posts" to provide guidance for our direction.

The one single group of purposes that will guide our actions and accomplishments should and will be the "Purposes of the NMRA" as outlined in the National NMRA By-Laws:

- **Educate** persons engaged in scale model railroading in methods of building and operating model railroad equipment following the prototype practices of railroads
- **Educate** persons about all aspects of prototype subjects so that models of equipment, engines, structures, and scenery are as accurate as possible
- **Develop** the technical skills of persons engaged in the art and craft of scale model railroading
- **Develop** technical standards to promote consistent and reliable inter-operability between equipment of various manufacturers
- **Promote** fellowship among model railroaders
- **Advance** the hobby of scale model railroading wherever and whenever possible by publications, events, meetings and other practical means.

These six tenets of the NMRA certainly provide us with goals, and if you want, the term "Mission Statements" for our Division. Here's to our achievements to promote "The World's Greatest Hobby!"

John Robey
Superintendent

Meeting of the Tidewater Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA on January 21, 2023

The Meeting was called to order by Superintendent John Robey at 10:10 AM.

28 members were present and there one guest present, Greg Leiphart of Virginia Beach.

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

Timekeeper reported that the minutes of the meeting would be included in the Callboard.

Membership Report: Sign in lists are on the table at the entry. They will be used to document visitors and to help with membership involvement. Tidewater Division has 122 members.

Annual election: 36 members voted. John Robey, John Fallon, and Dale Ridgeway were elected. The slate of 2023 officers is Superintendent John Robey, Vice Superintendent Mark Nieting, Paymaster Greg Warth, Timekeeper Bob Cook and Directors Dale Ridgeway, John Fallon and Fred Humphrey.

The following Certificates of Appreciation were awarded:

Hospitality – Barry Cruthers

Callboard/Web – Roger Bir

Lee Hall Diorama – Roger Bir, George Downer, Fred Humphrey, Dale Ridgeway

Open House – Chuck Davis, Fred Humphrey, Bob Cook, Mark Nieting

The Division Volunteer of the Year was given to Fred Humphrey, Gary Brown, Pat Mahoney, Greg Warth, and Jim Keiper for their work on the Model Railroad Museum of Hampton Roads.

The Division Modeler of the Year was given to Roger Bir.

The Superintendent's Award was given to Gary Brown in recognition of his work to provide model railroad sets to children around Christmas time.

A Lifetime Achievement award was given to Norm Garner, recognizing all of his effort for the division and the hobby of model railroading over many decades of effort.

Roger Bir reported that the Callboard will include a "video of the month" with a model railroad theme. Members are asked to provide inputs to Dale Ridgeway for categories for contests. He can be reached at ridgerail@aol.com.

The winners of the raffles were:

Tote bag – John Fallon

Ore cars – Dale Ridgeway

50/50 – Greg Leiphart

The superintendent reported he has requested two tables at the 4/5 February Greenberg show in Hampton. The next meeting will be on March 18th at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Virginia Beach. The superintendent has a key for access.

Pat Mahoney reported on the Model Railroad Museum of Hampton Roads. They had met with officials in Virginia Beach to discuss possible locations. The building that housed Circuit City is not available, but the officials are involved in looking for a location.

The Adult Learning Center is looking for someone to provide several model railroading clinics. CHKD is looking for a small portable layout that could be used to roll around children wards.

Steve and Sharon Prescott won the model contest for favorite train.

The meeting was adjourned and white elephant table business was conducted.

UP Profits +13%

CEO Reports Economy Slowing

The UP reported 13% more profit in the 3rd quarter but predicted that increase in shipments would be more realistic at 3% than the 5% indicated earlier. The rail reported \$1.9 billion profit, or \$3.05 per share, in the quarter which is up from \$1.67 billion, or \$2.57 per share a year ago. This year's results were weighed down because the new contracts the railroads agreed to with their 12 unions cost \$114 million more than UP had planned. Without that one-time charge for the new contracts, which only half the unions have approved, the company would have reported earnings per share of \$3.10. Nonetheless, the results exceeded 7 Wall Street analysts surveyed who suggested earnings of \$3.06 per share.

The railroad said its revenue grew 18% to \$6.37 billion because fuel surcharges and the rates it charges customers were up. CEO Fritz said the railroad continued to reduce the delays that shippers have been complaining about this year but performance still lagged behind last year as freight car velocity and locomotive productivity were both down about 2% from last year.

It was mentioned that the railroad has continued to hire more workers to help improve service. It didn't say how many were called back to work or had retired or quit but said so far this year, for example, 890 new conductors have started working and another 518 are in training.

Tall Tales of the Rails

Two Shots

A robber was standing in irons in front of a judge. "You are accused of stealing a purse from a traveler at the train depot. How do you plead?" "Innocent, judge," answered the prisoner. "I was merely taking a stroll when I heard two shots." "Two shots?" asked the judge. "The policeman who apprehended you said he only fired one shot." "No," answered the prisoner. "I distinctly remember hearing two shots. The first one was when the bullet passed me and the second was when I passed it."

If the Shoe Fits

A retired shoe salesman was taking a trip by train. At nightfall, he climbed in his berth and began snoring loudly. Unable to stand the noise, another passenger picked up a shoe and threw it at him. The snoring man awoke with jolt. He picked up the shoe, looked it over carefully and said, "I'm sorry; we are all out of your size."

Struck on Amtrak

Passengers on two Amtrak trains had a nightmare of an experience Saturday traveling Michigan to Chicago. Several issues occurred and this turned a normal 3-4 hour trip into 19 hours. One train was without heat and water for hours. A number of passengers couldn't even wait any longer and fled the trains onto a busy road. Jason Abrams, Amtrak's Public Relations Manager told the media that the train was delayed due to a problem with the power needed for the train's engine.

One passenger explained they were going to tow one train and push another. They had to shut the power to both trains, so with connecting the trains and then restoring power to both trains, that was about a 3-hour delay just outside Ann Arbor. The toilet started overflowing and the whole train smelled like a porta-potty and everything was like moving and sloshing around. It was so disgusting, so unsanitary.

Then on the train between Chelsea, MI and Jackson, MI, someone got sick and called 911. After the responders came, the person stayed on board. One person who had spent nearly 9 hours on the train, said she was done with it and got off at an earlier stop.

More delays occurred in Indiana when Amtrak had to send out a new crew since the earlier crew is only allowed to work a 12-hour shift. And even then, there were more mechanical issues with the train.

Once passengers had enough, they forced open the doors as they were near East Chicago. They grabbed their luggage off the train and waited for family members and ubers to pick them up and get to their destinations.



NS Heritage Series “The Virginian Railway”

“Richest Little Railroad in the World”

The Virginian Railway (VGN) was a Class I railroad located in Virginia and West Virginia in the United States. The VGN was created to transport high quality "smokeless" bituminous coal from southern West Virginia to port at Hampton Roads. Early in the 20th century, William Nelson Page a civil engineer and coal mining manager, joined forces with a silent partner, industrialist financier Henry Huttleston Rogers (a principal of Standard Oil and one of the wealthiest men in the world), to develop the Deepwater Railway, a modest 85-mile long short line railroad to access untapped bituminous coal reserves in some of the most rugged sections of southern West Virginia. When Page was blocked by collusion of the bigger railroads, who refused to grant reasonable rates to interchange the coal traffic, he did not give up as they no doubt had anticipated. As he continued building the original project, to provide their own link, using Rogers' resources and attorneys they quietly incorporated another intrastate railroad in Virginia, the Tidewater Railway. In this name, they secured the right-of-way needed all the way across Virginia to reach Hampton Roads, where a new coal pier was erected at Sewell's Point. The two projects were legally joined and renamed the Virginian Railway in early 1907. Despite efforts to stop them, they then built the "Mountains to Sea" railroad right under the noses of the big railroads and the elite group of a few industrialists (so-called "robber barons") who controlled them. Completed in 1909, the Virginian Railway was largely financed through Rogers' personal fortune. It was a modern well-engineered railroad with all-new infrastructure and could operate more efficiently than its larger competitors.

Throughout a profitable 50-year history, the VGN continued the Page-Rogers philosophy of "paying up front for the best". It achieved best efficiencies in the mountains, rolling piedmont, and flat tidewater terrain. The Virginian was considered a folly at the time of construction, as so much capital was spent on making the railroad as flat and straight as possible, "As though the Virginia hills did not exist". In the long run this proved to be a very profitable route as operating costs were low due to the relative lack of grades and little curvature of track.

Merged into the Norfolk and Western Railway in 1959, a large portion of the former VGN remains in service in the 21st century for the Norfolk Southern Railway, a Class I railroad headquartered in Norfolk, a few blocks from the former Virginian Railway offices in Norfolk Terminal Station.

Today, major portions of the VGN low-gradient route are the preferred eastbound coal path for the N&W's successor, the Norfolk Southern Railway. Other portions of VGN right-of-way in eastern Virginia now transport fresh water and are under study for future high speed passenger rail service to South Hampton Roads from Richmond and Petersburg.

(information for this article was compiled from Wikipedia)



Heritage Engine: SD70ACe

Builder: Electro Motive Division
Truck Type: 6-Wheel
Weight: 408,000 lbs
Horsepower: 4300
Speed: 70 mph
Tractive Effort (starting) 191,000 lbs
Tractive Effort (continuous) 157,000 lbs
Total Length: 74' 03"
Dates: 1992 to Present, +4,000 units

(Data Sheet Compiled by R. Craig)

Berkshire 2-8-4

C&O Called Them "Kanawhas"

The development of the 2-8-4 wheel arrangement for steam locomotives was a result of an effort by the Lima Locomotive Works to improve on the speed and horse power of the USRA Mikado (2-8-2) locomotive, which was designed by the United States Railroad Administration during World War I. The USRA design had difficulty keeping up steam over long periods and often experienced wheel slippage.



Lima Locomotive Works' engineer William E. Woodward started with a New York Central Class H-7 "Mikado" type locomotive and added a larger firebox, creating an experimental Class H-10 "Mikado". He then went one step further and designed a locomotive with a 100 square foot firebox. This larger firebox required a four-wheel trailing truck to support it. The resulting locomotive was designated Class A-1, and it was the first 2-8-4.

This new 2-8-4 locomotive was sent to the Boston & Albany Railroad by Lima in the early spring of 1925 for tests on that railroad. In several test runs over a division of the railroad that crossed the Berkshire Hills, the demonstration locomotive, which carried road number "1" hauled up to 2500 tons. The most dramatic test occurred on April 14, 1925. A Class H-10, 2-8-2 "Mikado" type steamed eastbound from the Selkirk Yard pulling a 46 car, 1691 ton, train. About 47 minutes later the Class A-1 demonstrator led a 54 car, 2296 ton, in the same direction. The demonstrator Class A-1 arrived at North Adams Junction ten minutes ahead of the Class H-10. Soon after these impressive tests, the Boston & Albany ordered forty-five of these new locomotives. Being the first railroad to use this new wheel arrangement the B&A chose to call them "Berkshire" type.



Lima put its Class A-1 demonstrator on the road and sent it across the country to sell this new class of locomotive. Wherever it went the Class A-1 established new records. This locomotive was later shipped to the Illinois Central Railroad as part of its order for fifty "Berkshires" and became Illinois Central road number 7049.

After its debut in 1925, the "Berkshire" type locomotive continued to be improved by locomotive builders and the various railroads that used them. These heavy-duty main line locomotives were used by many railroads. Notably among them were the Boston & Albany Railroad, the Chesapeake & Ohio, the Erie Railroad, the Illinois Central Railroad, the Nickel Plate Road and the Pere Marquette Railroad.

Twenty of the "Berkshire" type locomotives exist today: 2 from the Pere Marquette, 6 from the Nickel Plate Road and 12 of the C & O's 2-8-4 locomotives, which they called "Kanawhas".

There are also two tenders that were used on "Berkshire" type locomotives that have survived. They are both from the L&N. One was the tender from L&N number 1966 and it is now at the Southern Railway Museum in Duluth, GA and the other is the tender from L&N number 1985 and it is now at the Kentucky Railway Museum in New Haven.

(Editor's Note: NKP's #765 was a static display engine in Ft. Wayne, IN where I grew up, before going operational. My first railroad experience at age five was watching an NKP Berkshire)

Train Struck by Ballast Boom

A BNSF train was struck by the ballast boom on a Loram undercutter between Attica and Harper Kansas. The undercutter was working the main and the train had been cleared through the limits. While the train was passing, the operator of the undercutter was swinging the ballast that has a conveyor belt to dump the ballast. He had been dumping ballast to the north side of the two main lines and swung the boom to center to clear some crossing signals. The boom was supposed to stop at the center but didn't, striking the double stacks and the mid-train DP units. Several of the containers were ripped open or at least creased badly. Many of the tank cars had the top rails bent and twisted. The total train was 74 loads, 94 empties weighing 10,297 tons and was 12,641 feet long. Fortunately, there were no injuries.



Union Pacific Derails in California

A Union Pacific freight train derailed in Victorville early Tuesday morning, shutting down one of the two main railroad routes into and out of Southern California. A Union Pacific spokesperson said approximately two dozen cars derailed in the Mojave Narrows Regional Park near the Kemper Campbell Ranch, about one mile south of Outer Highway 18.

A ranch manager said it happened around 8 a.m., and she said railroad officials told her they hoped to have everything cleaned up within 36 hours. Union Pacific reported no injuries to anyone onboard the train. The cars that derailed were carrying iron ore, but it's not been classified as a hazardous materials situation. The tracks are operated by BNSF Railway. A spokesperson for BNSF said they hope to have one set of tracks reopened by



An In-depth Look at the At-Risk Persons Policy

by Kurt Thompson, MMR

When I was 15, my parents were going to let me take the train from Lafayette up to Chicago for the NMRA National (summer of 76) to attend by myself. At not quite 16. Times have changed. I hate to talk about matters involving abuse in this newsletter, as much as I would prefer it not have to be mentioned at all, including in the NMRA Magazine. That's not the case.

Some members have asked why NMRA has put in place the At-Risk Persons Policy. The bottom line is just that "times have changed" and protection of minors and other at-risk persons must be addressed, and



"The requirements are that when an adult person attends an NMRA function with (1) a child under age 18 or (2) with an adult under disability (an At-Risk Person) for whom the adult is the legal guardian, the adult must be near the at-risk person at all times. Protection of the at-risk person is the responsibility of the aforementioned adult solely. A child under age 18 may attend ONLY with an adult attendee. A legal guardian for a minor child for this purpose is (1) A parent (by parentage or adoption or (2) an adult who has been appointed by court order as guardian. The following are not automatically a legal guardian for a minor child: (1) a minor child's brother or sister (even if that person is an adult) (2) a grandparent, or (3) an aunt or uncle.

If the visiting child or other at-risk person is attending with an adult attendee who is not the legal guardian, the NMRA requires that the legal guardian execute and have notarized the At-Risk Persons Affidavit:

(https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/nmraorg/bod/EHB/legal_guardian_designation_affidavit_june_2022.pdf).

This affidavit MUST be received by the event officials no later than when the supervising adult attendee and minor child (or other at-risk person) come to the registration desk to check in. The adult who has been designated by the legal guardian MUST also show a valid photo ID card to verify that he or she is the person whose name is on the affidavit. The supervising adult may now bring the child or other at-risk person to the NMRA event. And then the NMRA adult attendee acts in the same manner as in the prior paragraph starting with "The requirements are..."

If the adult attendee does not have the signed and notarized affidavit, or it has not been received previously by the NMRA hosting group, and/or if the adult is not able to show a valid photo ID card verifying that he or she is the supervising adult mentioned on the affidavit, the NMRA hosting group is required to refuse entry to the at-risk person. This may result in the adult also not entering the event."

I know that sounds very draconian. It is. Here is some background. In the last two years the Boy Scouts of America found themselves in deep legal troubles over lawsuits about sexual and physical abuse of scouts at the hands of adults within the BSA organization. So large are the lawsuit awards that BSA had to mortgage the Philmont Ranch facility, and BSA had to go into Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The Bankruptcy Court recently confirmed the reorganization plan requiring the payment of \$2.4 Billion to claimants by BSA, local Councils, the Methodist Church, and various insurers. Numerous other similar organizations have or are facing similar liability.

The NMRA does not have the financial depth of pockets that the BSA has (or had). Therefore, the solution is to place and keep responsibility for minors and other at-risk persons with the legal guardian or the designated temporary guardian. This is very black and white without room for equivocations. Sadly, it has to be this way for the foreseeable future.

I don't like it any more than most of the rest of the NMRA. I have to accept that this is where we are today. The times have indeed changed.

Kurt