

## Tidewater Division

# CALLBOARD

Volume 2023, Issue 3

NMRA MEMBER

May 2023

### “Superintendent’s Desk”

**John Robey, Superintendent**

Summer is slowly making its mark. Train excursions, railfan trips and museum stops will be on the summer agenda! I for one, will be visiting the National Transportation Museum in St. Louis, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, the Strasburg Rail Road, the famous Horseshoe Curve and the Railroaders Memorial Museum in Altoona, PA. And some members will be going from Skagway, Alaska on the White Pass & Yukon Railway narrow gauge railway (an engineering marvel) completed in 1900 and know as “The Scenic Railway of the World”!

We just had an excellent meeting this past Saturday and we are well on the road to planning several new events for this fall. First, in September to sponsor a Train Show/Meet. This will be a “scaled down” version from our past endeavors (pre-covid lockdowns) but will once again sponsor a local train show/meet in our community. Our second public event will be at the

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### BILL OF LADING – MAY 2023

- 3** NS Heritage – Illinois Terminal
- 4** The Notorious Reno Bros
- 7** New Bern Train Show – Greg Warth
- 11** Rail Accidents in Locomotives Act Passed
- 16** MER Convention
- 18** May Business Meeting Minutes

### This Month in Rail History May 2023

May 1, 1971: National Passenger Railroad (Amtrak) a quasi-government corporation formed to takeover, maintain & operate virtually all inter-city passenger railroads, commences service.

May 6, 1994: *The Chunnel* opens between France and Great Britain.

May 7, 1960: Last Norfolk & Western Railway steam operation.

May 10, 1869: the transcontinental railroad was completed, linking the east with the west coast.

May 10: National Train Day

May 12, 1936: The Santa Fe railroad inaugurates the all-Pullman *Super Chief* between Chicago and Los Angeles.

May 17, 1958: Baltimore & Ohio’s last steam run...the Cleveland Railroad Club.

May 24, 1844 First successful use of Morse code sent from Washington to Baltimore. "What hath God wrought" was the first telegraph message sent by Samuel F.B. Morse from the Supreme Court chambers in the Capitol along wires placed on poles beside the B&O’s Washington branch.

May 26, 1934: CB&Q Pioneer Zephyr runs nonstop, Denver to Chicago.

“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)

## **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:

Electrical Engineering Achievement Certificate to Bill Wapples

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

## **Division Mtg & Contest**

### **July 15, 2023**

July 15, 2023 – the Division Business meeting. The contest is “Trackside Structures.” 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**

### **Board of Directors**

Superintendent: John Robey  
[jrobey2019@gmail.com](mailto:jrobey2019@gmail.com)

Asst Superintendent: Mark Nieting  
[marknieting@gmail.com](mailto:marknieting@gmail.com)

John Fallon – at Large  
[zzoxdoc@yahoo.com](mailto:zzoxdoc@yahoo.com)

John Cryderman – at Large  
([hjcryderman@cox.net](mailto:hjcryderman@cox.net))

Bob Cook – Timekeeper  
[Seadevil91@gmail.com](mailto:Seadevil91@gmail.com)

Greg Warth - Paymaster  
[gjwarth@mac.com](mailto:gjwarth@mac.com)

Achievement Program: Chuck Davis  
[chuck-davis@cox.net](mailto:chuck-davis@cox.net)

## Illinois Terminal Railroad

### Largest Interurban Railroad in the Country

The Illinois Terminal Railroad, known as the Illinois Traction System (ITS) until 1937, was a heavy duty interurban electric railroad with extensive passenger and freight business in central and southern Illinois from 1896 to 1982. When Depression era Illinois Traction was in financial distress and had to reorganize, the Illinois Terminal name was adopted to reflect the line's primary money making role as a freight interchange link to major steam railroads at its terminal ends Peoria, Danville, and St. Louis. Interurban passenger service slowly was reduced, and it ended in 1956.

ITS was a successor in interest to a series of interurban railroads that were consolidated in the early 1900s by businessman William B. McKinley into the *Illinois Traction System*, an affiliate of the Illinois Power and Light Company. The Illinois Traction System, at its height, provided electric passenger rail service to 550 miles of tracks in central and southern Illinois. The system's Y-shaped main line stretched from St. Louis to Springfield, Illinois, with branches onward from Springfield northwest to Peoria and eastward to Danville. A series of affiliated street-level city trolley lines provided local passenger service in many of the cities served by the main line.

With the Great Depression, the Illinois Traction System staggered. The ITS relinquished many of its city streetcar lines in the 1930s, and due to the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 it was forced to cut its ties with an affiliated firm that provided electrical utility services. The passenger railroad reorganized in 1937 as the *Illinois Terminal Railroad (ITR)* and continued to provide electric-powered interurban, long-distance multiple car passenger train service Peoria/Danville to St. Louis for almost another two decades.. In the 1950s, with the final dominance of the automobile, ITR's passenger service became hopelessly unprofitable.

Because the ITR had some very usable trackage and line side freight customers, it was acquired in June 1956 by nine Class I railroads. These collectively continued to operate ITR as a diesel-powered short line to carry freight to the acquiring railroads. The co-owned reorganized Illinois Terminal Railroad took down its trolley wire and abandoned much of its trackage, particularly the interurban street running in towns and villages. For the following 25 years (1956-1981) the ITR continued to operate diesel-powered trackage north and east of St. Louis, providing freight business for the railroads that owned it. The Norfolk and Western Railroad purchased its partners' interests in the Illinois Terminal Railroad on Sept 1, 1981, and ITR officially merged into the N&W on May 8, 1982.



### 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

# The Notorious “Reno Brothers” Strike

## Ohio & Mississippi RR Falls Victim

The world’s first Train Robbery took place in Indiana on October 6, 1866. The Reno Brothers, John, Simeon, Frank and William along with members of their gang nicknamed “The Jackson Thieves” robbed an Ohio and Mississippi Railway train about one-half mile east of Seymour, Indiana.



They planned to rob their first train there because Seymour, at that time, was an important rail hub. On the evening of October 6, 1866, John Reno, Simeon Reno, and Frank Sparkes boarded the train as it started to leave the Seymour depot. They broke into the head end

Adams Express car, restrained the guard, and opened a safe containing approximately \$16,000. From the moving train, the three men pushed a larger safe over the side to where the rest of the gang was waiting. Unable to open the second safe, the gang fled when a large posse approached. After the robbery a number of the Reno gang were captured. Ten of the gangs members were lynched by vigilante mobs, but the brothers escaped and continued robbing trains until 1868.

The Reno Gang robbed its fourth train on May 22, 1868. Twelve of the gang boarded a Jeffersonville, Madison and Indianapolis Railroad train as it stopped at the train depot in Marshfield, Indiana, a now defunct community in Scott County, Indiana. As the train pulled away, the gang overpowered the engineer and uncoupled the passenger cars, allowing the engine to speed away. After breaking into the express car and throwing the express car messenger, Thomas Harkins, off the train to his death the gang broke open the safe. The train robbery netting the gang an estimated \$96,000. This robbery gained national attention and was published in the major newspapers of the day.



The railroad’s Pinkerton National Detective Agency pursued “The Jackson Thieves,” but the gang broke up and fled throughout the Midwest.

Eventually the Pinkertons caught up with three of the Reno brothers, Frank, William, and Simeon. However, they were hauled from jail by a group of local vigilantes and hanged at a nearby tree.

John, the remaining Reno brother was eventually caught and after serving time in the Missouri State prison, he returned to Seymour, Indiana where he died at his home on January 31, 1895.



## Tacoma Man Derails Train

A 65-year-old man is now behind bars after police said he intentionally tampered with railroad equipment. The incident happened just before 8 a.m. on May 10th. "It could have been a disaster, it could have been an environmental catastrophe," said Herb Krohn, a railroad conductor and the union's state legislative director. "There could have been a fire, any number of horrible things could have happened."

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway confirmed that only one car was derailed. BNSF also said the car stayed upright so there were no spills. No one was injured either. "This is not the first act of sabotage against oil trains in Washington state," Krohn said. He said intentional derailment has been an ongoing issue. "We have had situations with a homeless individual boarded a train armed with a machete. In the last couple of years there's just been a whole rash of incidents in that area involving public safety," Krohn said.

Other incidents include one from 2020 near Bellingham where a woman was convicted of placing a



shunt device that interferes with train signals on the tracks. Another in Whatcom County involved a train carrying thousands of gallons of crude oil. The train derailed, then caught fire in Custer, about 90 miles north of Seattle. "The railroads know these are dangerous commodities and yet they're not doing enough to protect the public and the environment and the workers," Krohn said.

## Railroad Glossary

**BLIZZARD LIGHTS:** Originally the lights on either side of the headlight that served in emergency when the oil-burning headlight blew out. Now they indicate the train is non-schedule or extra.

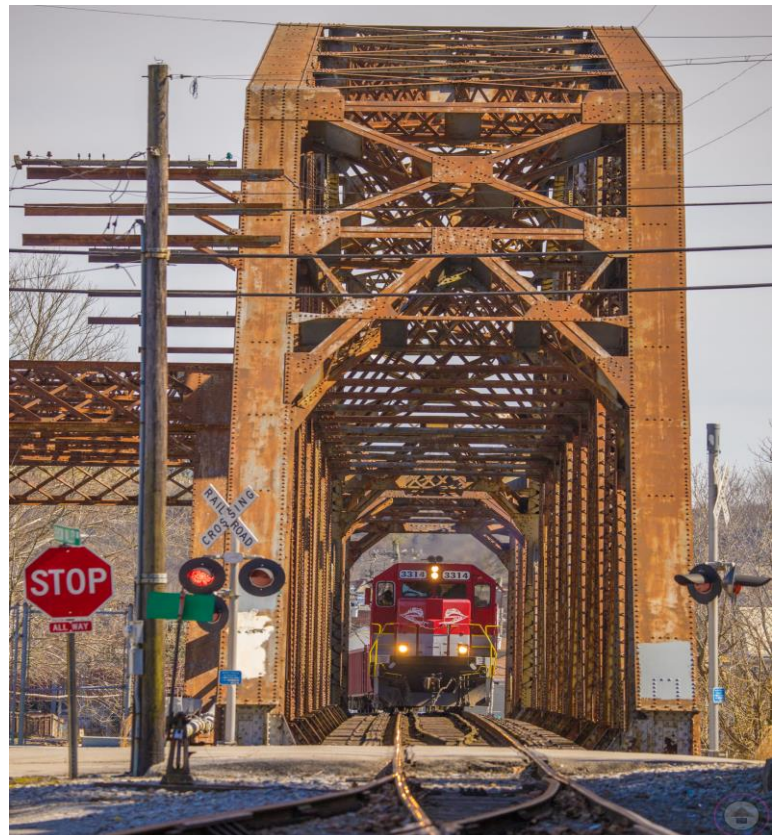
**CUT:** Several cars attached to an engine or coupled together by themselves. Also, that part of the right-of-way which is excavated out of a hill or mountain instead of running up over it or being tunneled through it.

**DUMMY:** Employees' train. *Dummy locomotive* is a switcher type having the boiler and running gear entirely housed, used occasionally for service in public streets.

**GREEN EYE:** Clear signal. (At the time Cy Warman wrote his celebrated poem, "I Hope the Lights Are White," the clear signal was white and green meant caution. This was changed years ago because when a red or green signal lens broke or fell out it exposed a white, thus giving a *clear board* to engineers even though the signal itself was set to stop or go slow).



Filming the train scene in 'Back to the Future III, 1990



# The New Bern Train Show

by Greg Warth

John Robey, Roger Bir, and I recently visited the New Bern train show in North Carolina on a one-day trip from Virginia Beach. The show is a once-a-year event, very well attended, packed with vendors and visitors, many of whom I knew from attending other conventions. Mark Nieting of our Division was there as well. We all spent several hours (and several dollars) walking around, talking to people, and buying stuff. We also visited the North Raleigh Model Railroad Club layout next door where I took a few photos (shown below). After we had spent enough time and money, we then topped off the trip with a tour of the historic city and lunch at Morgan's, the best restaurant in town. It was a very enjoyable outing and we still got back to Virginia Beach in time for supper.

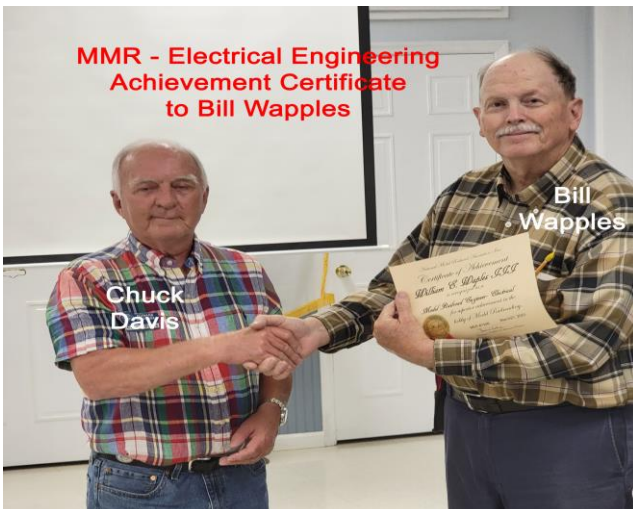


North Raleigh Model Railroad N-Trak Club Layout.

We did a similar one-day event when we went to the mini-con hosted by the James River Division and Potomac Division in Northern Virginia. Here we traveled through historic civil war country, and at the conference attended some clinics, picked up some door prizes, and went on a nice layout tour.

Over the past year, I have also been to the Mid-Eastern Region (MER) Convention in Charlotte, and the National NMRA Convention and Train Show in St. Louis. These have all been fantastic experiences. Of the multiple train show events that I have visited over the years, I have always been glad that I went and can't remember ever being disappointed. These shows, however big or small, are the lifeblood of model railroading. They bring everybody together to talk about trains and what they are doing in the hobby, and you don't have to have a business meeting along with it. Plus, it's a way for vendors to make a little profit and a way for buyers to find discounts that they would never see otherwise. The people are always friendly and eager to explain things.

So, if you haven't been to a train show lately, it's time to go back. You'll be glad you did. And I hope to see you there.



**WALTHERS IMPORT MOTORS  
KIT  
NOW AVAILABLE FOR \$10  
EACH**



**DIVISION NOVEMBER  
CONTEST**

## Division Photos



Canadian Pacific – Kansas City Southern' New Logo.

## Siemens to Open Facility in NC Will add 500 Jobs

Siemens Mobility, the largest manufacturer of passenger train cars in the U.S., will build a \$220 million advanced manufacturing and rail services facility here. The factory will create more than 500 new jobs.

With the increased production capacity, Siemens Mobility will meet the growing demand for passenger trains in the North America. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is enabling American rail and transit operators to make critically needed investments in infrastructure that will position the country to meet the needs of its citizens with rail networks designed for future generations.

"America is investing in rail, and we are investing in America," says Roland Busch, Ph.D., CEO of Siemens AG. "Siemens has invested \$3 billion in manufacturing expansions and M&A activities in the U.S. over the past four years alone, including nearly \$400 million to grow its U.S. manufacturing footprint."

Siemens has invested \$40 billion in the United States over the past two decades while serving the industries and infrastructure forming the backbone of the American economy. The company has some 45,000 U.S. employees and 21 U.S. manufacturing sites.

Siemens already operates a railcar manufacturing facility in Sacramento, CA. That facility, which derives 80 percent of its power from solar energy, has manufacturing locomotives and railcars for more than 30 years.





# Navajo Transitional Energy Takes BNSF to Court

## Failure to Provide Adequate Service is Charged

Navajo Transitional Energy Co. says BNSF Railway has violated its common carrier obligations by failing to provide adequate service for its Powder River Basin export coal trains. NTEC, in a complaint filed with the Surface Transportation Board (STB), says BNSF has failed to provide adequate service from the Spring Creek Mine in Montana to the Westshore Terminals at Roberts Bank in Delta, British Columbia, Canada.

The coal company, in a separate filing, also seeks an emergency service order from the STB that would require BNSF to handle 29 loaded trains per month beginning May 1. BNSF handled 17 NTEC trains in February and 22 in March, which NTEC says was below the 24 to 30 trains per month that the coal company sought as part of a Nov. 1, 2022, service request. The coal is exported to customers in Japan and South Korea.

The coal company's complaint with the STB asks the board to determine that BNSF has failed to provide adequate service; to define the scope of BNSF's common carrier obligation; to require restoration of adequate service; and seeks unspecified monetary damages. BNSF and NTEC have been trying to iron out their differences through the STB's Rail Customer Assistance Program.

BNSF told the STB it will formally reply to the NTEC complaints on April 19. "In our reply, BNSF will explain why there is no emergency situation necessitating immediate Board action and why the injunctive relief sought in the alternative would not only be unwarranted but would be harmful to the public interest," the railway told the board. "The reply will also detail BNSF's efforts to transparently communicate with NTEC over a long period of time regarding constraints on capacity and realistic projections of available resources, as well as BNSF's ongoing efforts to meet NTEC's transportation requests both when NTEC was tendering shipments pursuant to multiple transportation contracts with BNSF, and more recently as NTEC has chosen to tender shipments pursuant to BNSF's common carrier pricing authority."

The common carrier dispute is the second currently before the STB. Sanimax, a small shipper in the Twin Cities, claims that Union Pacific violated its common carrier obligation by unilaterally reducing its local service. The common carrier obligation requires railroads to provide service upon reasonable request.



## Concerns Raised Over DOT-111 Cars

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), on March 22 released a safety advisory, which it said was to “re-emphasize previously raised concerns about the survivability of DOT-111 tank cars and encourage tank car owners and shippers of flammable liquids to voluntarily upgrade their tank car fleets to the newest, and safest, available tank car design authorized for flammable liquid service—the DOT-117 specification tank car.”



**“I’ve been working on the railroad...all the live long day.”**

## PA Rail Project Sidelined Exceeding Costs Sited

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is sidelining the King of Prussia Rail Project, citing its “further review of rising costs, which have been exacerbated by inflation and high interest rates.” This follows the transit authority’s approval last month of a final-design contract.

KOP Rail would have extended the existing Norristown High Speed Line (NHSL) four miles into King of Prussia, providing a “one-seat” ride from any station along the NHSL, including 69th Street Transportation Center in Upper Darby and Norristown Transportation Center.

SEPTA on March 17 reported that with each year of delay, the cost of the project increases by some \$100 million. From August 2020 to August 2022, the estimate rose from \$2.08 billion to \$2.6 billion. The price tag now stands at \$3.02 billion.



# Rail Accidents in Locomotive Act Passed

## Citing NS Derailment as Motivating Factor

U.S. Representatives Bill Johnson (R-OH) and Emilia Strong Sykes (D-OH) introduced the bipartisan Reducing Accidents in Locomotives (RAIL) Act. According to Representatives “Public safety transcends politics and district boundaries, which is why I am proud to work with Rep. Johnson on bipartisan, commonsense legislation to prevent future train derailment disasters like we have seen in East Palestine and across the United States,” said Rep. Emilia Sykes.

“The RAIL Act will implement effective measures to keep our communities safe, hold railroad corporations accountable, and ensure that no American living close to our 140,000 miles of railroad track has to worry about the threat of a toxic derailment in their backyard. This is a good first step towards better rail infrastructure, but we know there is still more to be done to protect our communities.”



The *RAIL Act* would improve railway safety and operations by:

1. Directing the Federal Rail Administration (FRA), in conjunction with the findings of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation, to recommend changes to how our nation’s rail system operates – from train length, weight to speed, and track standards.
2. Increasing funding for Hazardous Materials Training for first responders
3. Increasing maximum penalties for violations of rail safety regulations
4. Increasing inspections on all trains, including those carrying hazardous materials
5. Auditing federal rail inspection programs.

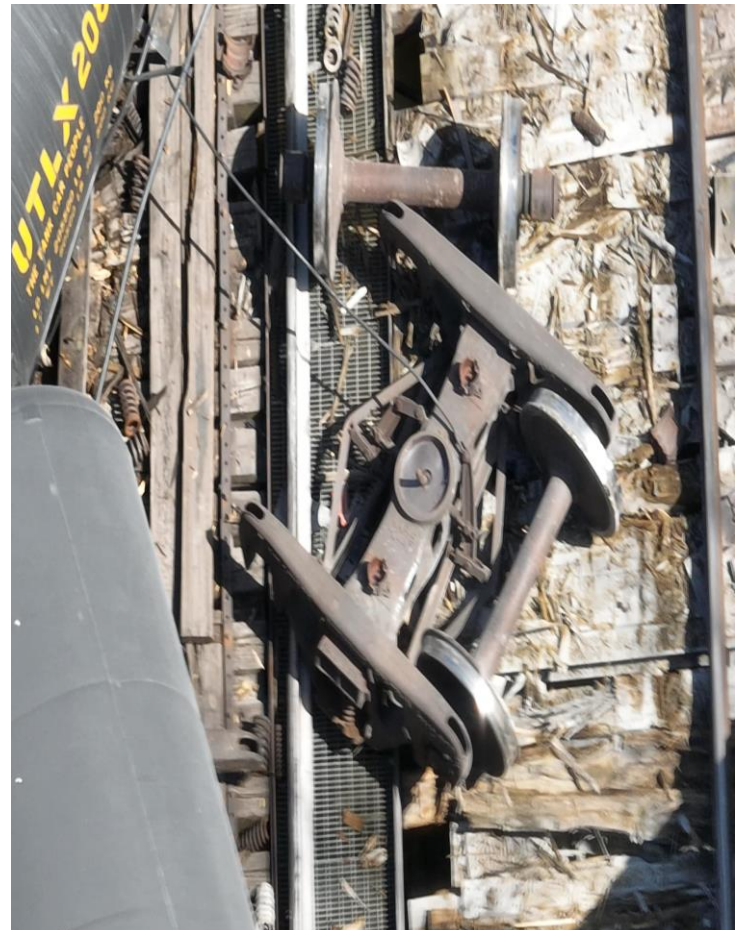
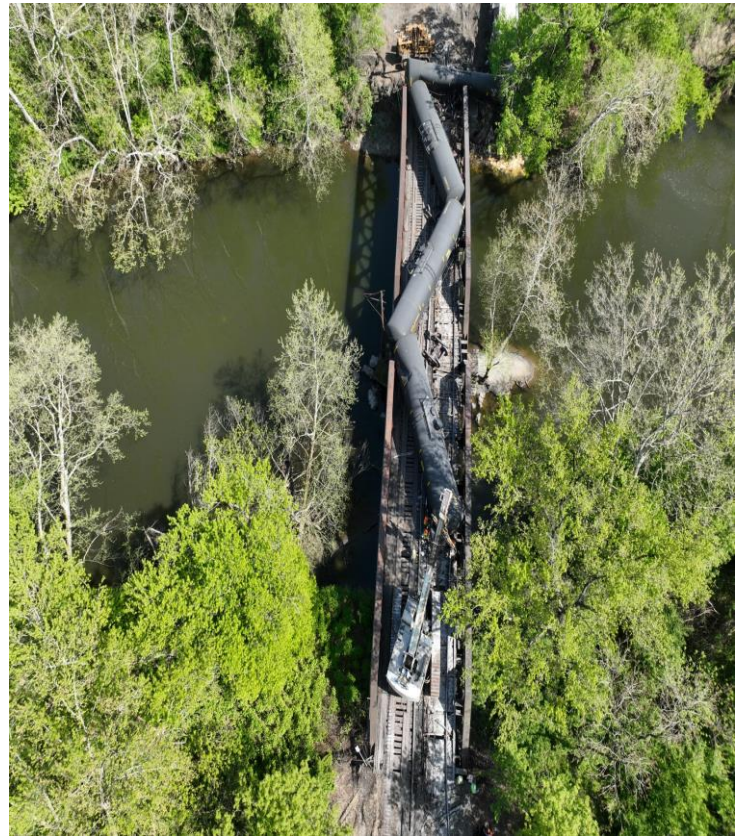
Ohio, which has one of the country’s largest railroad networks, ranks fourth in the nation for serious train accident accidents and hazardous materials spills. From 2019 through November 2022, 281 train accidents occurred within the state. 11 members of the Ohio delegation are co-sponsors of the *RAIL Act*, including 6 Republicans and 5 Democrats.



"The NS conductor saw the vehicle with its light off on the tracks, and was able to activate the brakes in time to stop just feet away from the car’s bumper."

## CSX Locomotive 1 Semi-Tractor 0

# It's Always Tank Cars



Virginia Beach Central Library in November to kick off “National Model Train Month”. The month-long recognition of the modeling hobby has been a mainstay, but this year we would like to present an “open house” event all day on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. And speaking of “Open House” events, one of Virginia’s largest HO model railroad clubs, the Chesapeake Bay & Western (CB&W) located in Grafton, VA, is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary with an open house weekend of July 22-23. Several members of the Tidewater Division are CB&W members. Come help them celebrate the event! In addition, don’t forget to consider attending the Mid-Eastern Region Convention, this year held in Altoona, PA. The registration website is [www.mer2023.org](http://www.mer2023.org). The convention is from Thursday October 19 thru Sunday October 22. There are some great railfan tours, excursions, museum guided tours, clinics, judging contests, and (of course) sightseeing such as world-famous Horseshoe Curve! October in that part of Pennsylvania should be good autumn weather.

Our next meeting contest will be “Trackside Structures” on July 15 at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will be “Super Detailed Passenger Car”, and November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting will be the big award winning “Creative Building Diorama” contest featuring our Import Motors kit or kits, available from the Division for \$10 a kit.

Enjoy the hobby and see you at the next meeting!

## John



Tidewater Division - May 2023  
1st Place



Tidewater Division - May 2023  
2nd Place



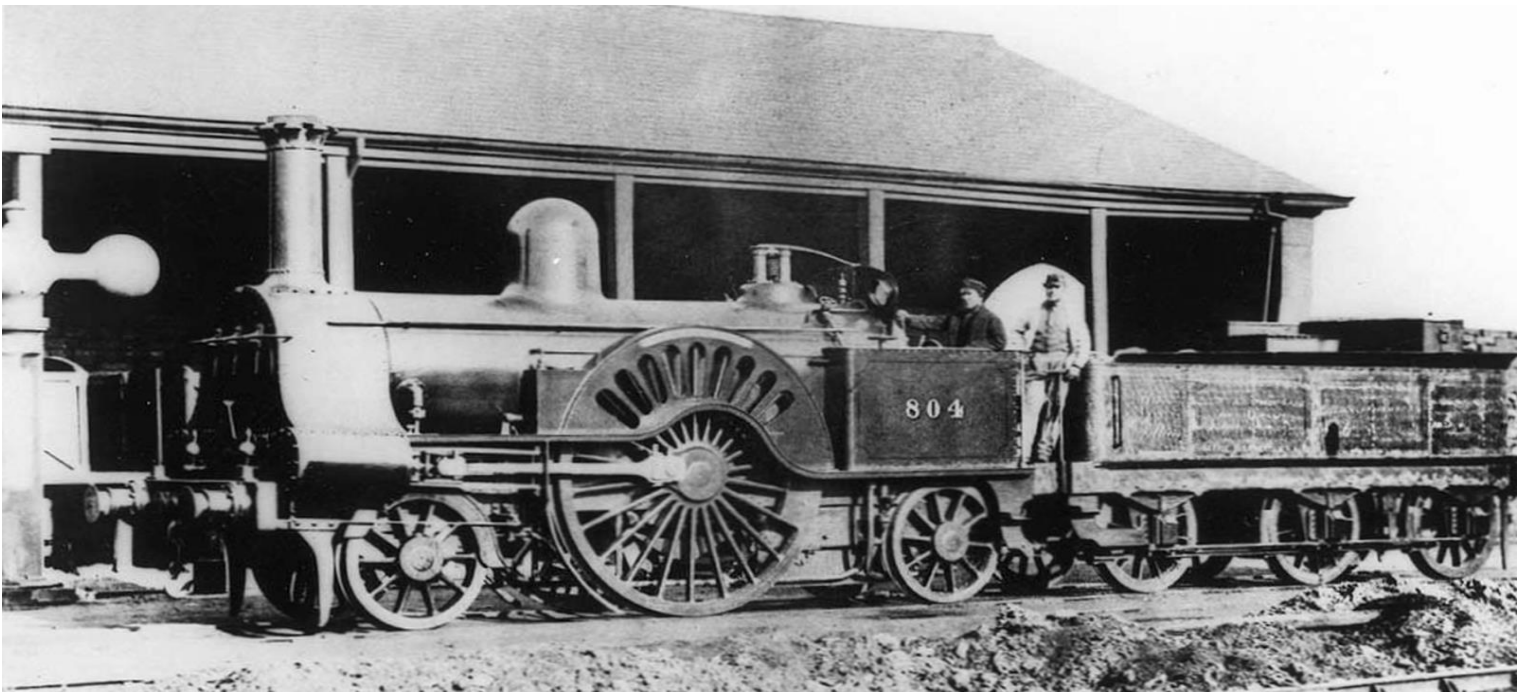
May 2023 Business Mtg  
1st & 2nd Place

John Robey

John Cryderman

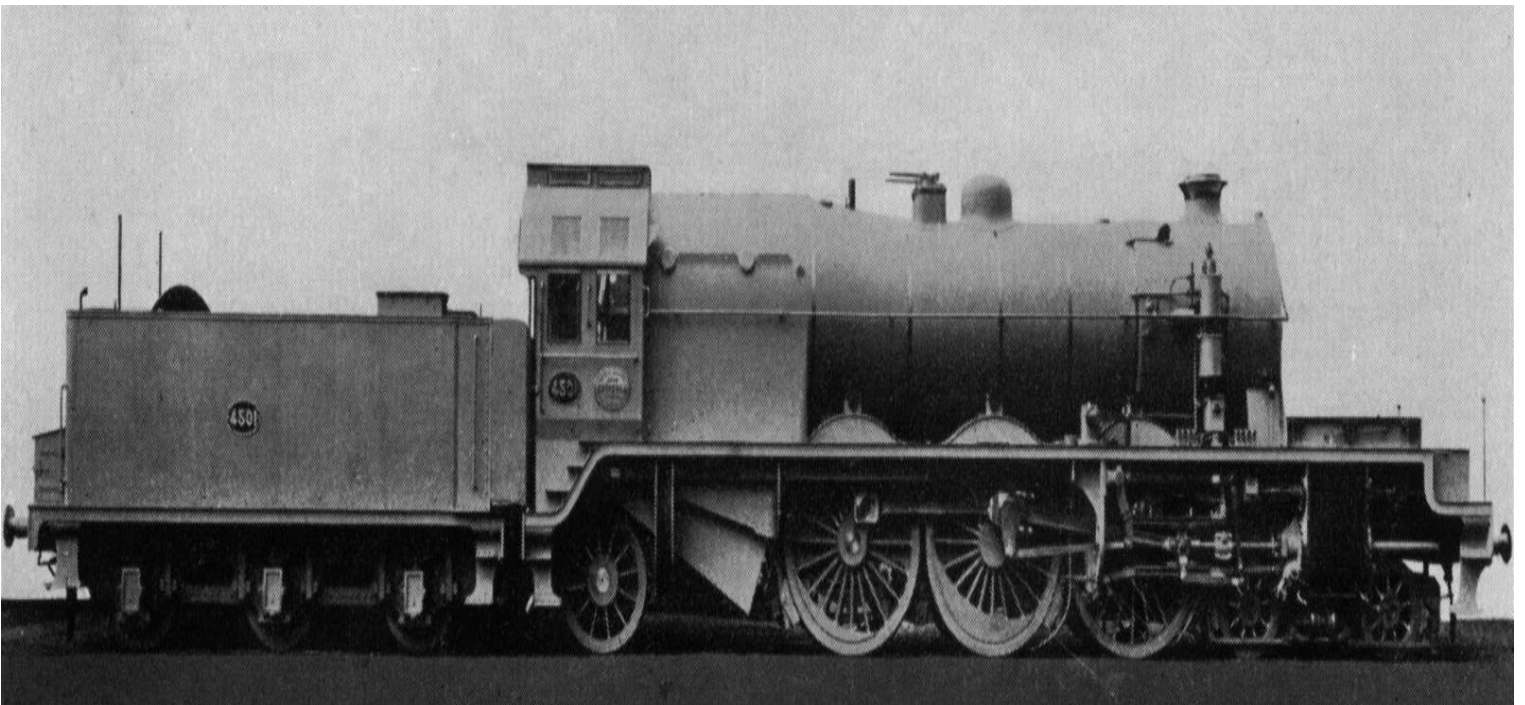


Tidewater Division - May 2023  
3rd Place



The London & North Western "Problem" or "Lady of the Lake" class, of which 60 were built from 1859 onwards. It was distinguished not only by the driving wheel diameter of more than seven and a half feet (2.32 m), but also by the use of a tender with a scoop device for the first time.

This meant that the water could be refilled from troughs in the middle of the track, even at full speed. This made high average speeds possible, which was used by the locomotive named "Watt" during the Trent affair.



A few years before the First World War, Jean-Baptiste Flamme developed a very powerful boiler that was to be installed in a freight locomotive and an express locomotive at the same time. So from 1909 the type 36 with the 2-10-0 wheel arrangement and from 1910 the type 10 Pacific were built. Since the boiler was relatively short with a large diameter and the chassis of the Pacific naturally had a long overall wheelbase, the appearance of the Locomotive somewhat unusual with a long overhang in front of the smoke box.

# Union Pacific's Turbine Engine

Although the conversion from steam to other types of traction in the United States had begun before World War II, there were still no single diesel locomotives to replace the large steam locomotives. Since the diesel engines at that time did not yet produce 2,000 hp and there were steam locomotives with more than 5,000 hp to be replaced, experiments were carried out with other energy sources. There were also other attempts with gas turbines, in which the power was transmitted electrically, just like with diesel locomotives. However, Union Pacific was the only railroad company that purchased an entire series of gas turbine-electric locomotives and used them profitably on a large scale. The turbines, generators and traction motors came from General Electric, while ALCO manufactured the mechanical part.



A key consideration when using gas turbines was the high fuel consumption, which was about twice as high compared to diesel-electric locomotives. The solution was to use heavy fuel oil, which was a waste product from refineries in large quantities and therefore cheap to obtain. However, there were problems with the very high viscosity and the dirt particles it

contained, which could be avoided by heating the oil to around 200 degrees Fahrenheit and filtering it accordingly.

The 1948 prototype stood on four two-axle bogies and had a 4,800 hp turbine, of which 4,500 hp was available for traction. The engine had two driver's cabs, which on the outside had a streamlined shape similar to that of ALCO's FA locomotives. For starting the turbine, a 250 hp Cummins diesel was used, which itself had a generator and used the electricity generated to turn the generator connected to the turbine, thus causing the turbine to rotate. The turbine was initially powered by diesel until a steam generator had heated the heavy oil to the required temperature. The turbine ran constantly at nominal speed during operation, while a change in power setting only resulted in a change in the turbine and generator load.

With the introduction of a new turbine with 8,500 hp, the third generation was created, which was delivered 30 times between 1958 and 1961 and replaced the locomotives of the first and second generation. Now a locomotive consisted of two six-axle parts. In the front part, besides the driver's cab, there was the now 850 hp auxiliary diesel and other machinery, while the second part housed the turbine and its generator. Now the 24,000-gallon tender was used from the start, and it was now insulated to allow it to be loaded with preheated and filtered oil to avoid warming up on the loco.

The turbine was designed to achieve rated power at 6,000 feet and in very hot temperatures so as not to suffer performance losses. Attempts were made to use the higher turbine output possible at sea level and at lower temperatures by also equipping the tender with traction motors. Since this effort was not worthwhile, the project was not pursued further.

The locomotives were used so intensively that the Union Pacific stated at times that ten percent of its freight traffic was handled by turbine locomotives. On routes with a ruling grade of 1.14 percent, the permissible train weight was set at 5,180 short tons. The locomotives were phased out in 1969, when the price of heavy oil had risen sharply due to increased uses. The practice of having heavy trains pulled by several diesel locomotives in multiple was then continued. By then all locomotives had clocked up more than a million miles. Today there are only two pieces of the third generation remaining that are on static display.

# Round the Curve to Altoona 2023

Mid-Eastern Region Convention  
October 19-22, 2023  
Altoona Grand Hotel  
Hosted by the Susquehanna Division 11





# Norfolk & Western

## Y6 Class

The last generation in their series of 2-8-8-2-wheel arrangement Mallets, begun in 1910, was built by Norfolk & Western from 1930. While most other North American railroads had long since abandoned real Mallets and introduced ones with simple steam expansion instead the last series still had a compound engine. They were all made in the Roanoke workshops of Norfolk & Western and it all started with the Y4a as a development of the Y4 with an enlarged grate and significantly higher boiler pressure. Some optimizations were made to the internal piping that increased efficiency.

The first eight Y4a left the factory in 1930 and still had forged frames. On the ten Y5s from 1931, the frames were cast in one piece. The Y4as were also fitted with the new frames in 1940 and 1941. Also in 1940, 35 Y6s followed, in which the cylinders were now manufactured together with the frame as a cast part and had roller bearings on all axles. These were followed by another 15 Y6as, delivered in 1942.

Between 1948 and 1952, 30 examples of the Y6b followed, which would become the most modern Mallet locomotives in North America. They featured a larger firebox and a special mechanism that allowed them to run at all speeds with single steam expansion, increasing tractive effort at the expense of efficiency. The front bogie with the low-pressure cylinders was weighed down with several tons of lead to increase the adhesive weight. The diameter of the coupled wheels was one inch larger, and these were also retrofitted to the predecessors. In the last few years of service, the locomotives were equipped with technical aids that increased the starting tractive effort to almost 170,000 pounds.

All in all, the locomotives are considered to be the most powerful, commercially successful steam locomotives ever. Some earlier prototypes could muster even higher starting tractive effort, but the boiler no longer provided sufficient steam as the speed increased. However, the Y4a to Y6b could also haul heavy trains at up to 50 mph and at 25 mph with 13,500 tons on the hook achieved a drawbar power of 5,500 hp. Although this was surpassed by the Big Boy, this was designed for higher speeds and therefore had a lower starting tractive effort than the locomotives described here with single steam expansion. These large Mallets were retired by 1960 and today only Y6a number 2156 survives. It belongs to the Saint Louis Museum of Transportation and is not roadworthy.



# Meeting of the Tidewater Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA on May 20, 2023

The Meeting was called to order by Superintendent John Robey at 10:13 AM. 18 members signed in. Not all members signed the attendance roster. There were three guests present, Rich Kessman, Paul Vestano and David Benn.

Paymaster Report: Greg Warth reported the status of the savings, checking and cash accounts. Membership Report: No change in division membership noted.

Bill Waples received Electrical Engineer Achievement Certificate. It's his third certificate. Dale Ridgeway resigned from the Board of Directors. John Cryderman will take his position for the remainder of Dale's term.

Registration is open for the annual MER convention in Altoona, PA from 19 to 22 October, 2023. Hotel availability at convention rates may be limited so members are advised to book their stays. The slide show group will be meeting after the division meeting today, after lunch. This may become a regular event depending on the location of the division meeting. The group can show slides, and use a laptop hooked up to a projector. Slides of layouts and model railroading are acceptable.

Tom Trumbauer announced the formation of the Cape Henry Model Railroad Club as the HO scale club that will be participating in the Model Railroad Museum of Hampton Roads. John Cryderman and John Fallon are looking for volunteers to help with the setup, operation and break down of the modular layout. The next event is at the Chesapeake Public Library on July 1, 2, with setup on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Contest Awards (Flat car loads)  
1<sup>st</sup> – John Cryderman Military Tank  
2<sup>nd</sup> – John Cryderman Military gun  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Paul Vestano – Lego transformer

Raffle winners: 50/50 Brian Dykas

The option to use the Tidewater Community College location for a train show no longer exists as the room is reserved every Saturday. The Board of Directors is considering a one-day Train show at St Matthews at the cost of \$750, including tables. Tables will be available for rent. The Superintendent is looking for volunteers for a committee to organize the event. The proposed date is September 23<sup>rd</sup>, a week after the September division business meeting.

Lee Hall is having a show from 10 to 3 on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

November is National Model Train Month. The division has reserved a large meeting room on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Display cases are available all month long. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, the "Open House" may include: Traveling layout.

- Train and How-to modeling videos
- Displays from local scale clubs to promote their club
- NMRA table with brochures
- Model Railroad Museum of Hampton Roads Table
- Train Doctor
- Module under construction display
- Any single module any scale
- Free magazines and books

Mark Nieting presented a clinic on "Operating 101", operating my trains without cards or computers. He provided handouts to the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 1215.

# 30 Tons of Nitrates Vanish in Union Pacific Shipment (oops)

by Nina Golgowski

Roughly 30 tons of ammonium nitrate, a chemical used as fertilizer and to make explosives, vanished during railway transport last month. A Union Pacific freight train is seen in Texas. Investigations are underway after approximately 60,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate, a chemical used as fertilizer and to make explosives, seemingly vanished during railway transport last month.

A rail car carrying 30 tons of the pellets left Cheyenne, Wyoming, on April 12 and arrived two weeks later in Saltdale, California, empty but still sealed shut, a spokesperson for explosive manufacturing company Dyno Nobel told HuffPost in a statement Monday.



“Our review will be exhaustive to understand what led to this situation, but there is no indication of any danger to the public and no indication the pellets were intentionally taken by anyone,” the spokesperson said. “Every indication is the pellets fell from the rail car onto the tracks in small quantities throughout the long trip.” Pellets of ammonium-nitrate fertilizer are seen here ready to be sprayed on barley crops in Spain. The chemical, which is used as fertilizer, is not believed to be a risk to public health or the environment, Union Pacific Railroad and Dyno Noble said.

This might have happened due to a leak through the rail car’s bottom discharge gate, which could have developed in transit, the spokesperson said. If the fertilizer did leak throughout its journey, it should pose no risk to public health or the environment, a representative for Union Pacific Railroad, which is assisting in the investigation, told HuffPost. “The fertilizer is designed for ground application and quick soil absorption,” said spokesperson Kristen South, who added that no criminal or malicious activity is suspected.

The Federal Railroad Administration and the California Public Utilities Commission are also investigating the incident, San Francisco station KQED reported.

Though the fertilizer, which is water soluble, is capable of detonation, it requires a strong initiating source or it must be heated under confinement before initiation, according to a hazardous materials database shared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

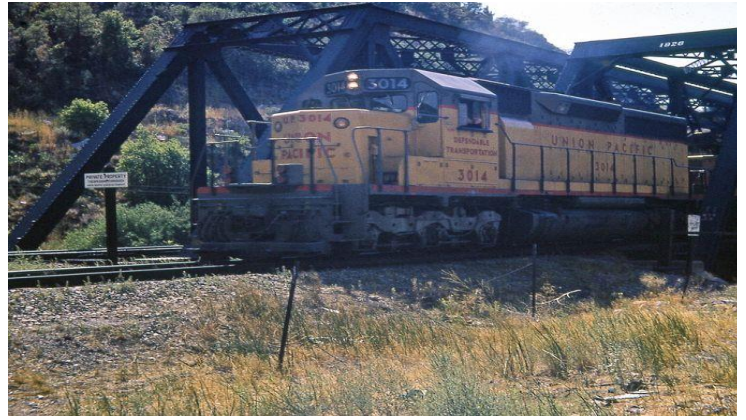
The sale and transfer of ammonium nitrate is federally regulated to prevent its use in an act of terrorism. The chemical was famously used in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, which was the largest act of U.S. domestic terrorism since the Jim Crow era. In 2020, nearly 3,000 tons of the chemical exploded in Beirut while being improperly stored in a port. It was one of the largest non-nuclear blasts ever recorded.



## From a “Facebook” Post

There's job opportunities near me to work for Union Pacific as train crew. Starting pay is around 71,000 to 81,000 depending on experience with a 30,000 bonus if you stay for a full year. I have no experience with the railroad. I've been working in the oilfield for the past year while going to college.

Does anybody know if it's a good job to get into? If I'm honest I'm not a fan of college and was already thinking of taking up a trade instead. Any advice is appreciated.



## NC Road Trip – A Surprise Find

Mark Nieting and fellow group of railroaders made an unexpected stop during a recent road trip to Raleigh North Carolina for a train show. After seizing up multiple deals at the train show, on their road trip back to Hampton Roads, the group stopped at Nick's Trains, Inc. of Raleigh.

The stop proved to be a travel trove of great railroad related finds. According to Mark, several of those on the trip...spent more at Nick's than at the train show.

Nick's is located at 5201 Oak Park Road, Raleigh. They are open Mon to Saturday, 10am to 6pm. You can check out their website at [www.nicks-trains.com](http://www.nicks-trains.com) or by email at [nick@nicks-trains.com](mailto:nick@nicks-trains.com)

...ah, maybe we should rethink this?

## Runaway UP Train Reaches 118mph – Derails (UP again?)

Two locomotives and 55 cars of a runaway Union Pacific train carrying iron ore derailed near the Mojave Desert community of Kelso officials from the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District reported. Union Pacific spokesman Mike Jaixen has confirmed that there was “uncontrolled train movement” of the southbound train and that “the crew was not in the cab at the time of the derailment.” Social media reports had indicated a runaway incident, although other details of those initial reports remain unconfirmed.

Prior to the derailment, speeds were reported to have reached 118mph. No injuries were reported; the fire department said hazardous materials teams are dealing with a minor fuel leak from one of the locomotives.

