

## Tidewater Division

# CALLBOARD

Volume 2024, Issue 5

NMRA MEMBER

July 2024

### “Superintendent’s Desk”

**John Robey, Superintendent**

Greetings from the Superintendent. We had our July meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> and it was nice to see that it was fairly well attended. The July meetings can sometimes, be a bit sparse in attendance due to vacations and family plans. Our meeting was unique in a sense, because we held it outside!

The church facilities were tied up with a funeral and its arrangements. No problem, we were adaptable. We still enjoyed coffee and doughnuts served out of the back of my SUV and we really had a good fellowship session of members discussing their layouts, tortoise switch wiring difficulties, getting your AP paperwork completed, the museum progress and other model railroading subjects! Our Timekeeper had the sign in sheet to tell us exactly how many members showed up.

*continued on page 12*

### This Month in Rail History July

July 2, 1881: President James A. Garfield shot by Charles J. Guiteau, a disappointed office seeker at B&P (Wash DC) station. Garfield dies from blood poisoning September 19, 1881

July 4, 1828: the Baltimore & Ohio railroad lays first stone.

July 6, 1862: U.S. Congress passes the Pacific Railway Act.

July 15, 1853: Grand Trunk Railway (Canada) is formed.

July 29, 1896: First successful electric conduit operation for streetcars in Washington. Only Washington & New York City-Manhattan Island ever adopt this type of operation in the United States. Overhead wires permitted outside city limits (remember we had Washington CITY as well as Washington COUNTY until after the turn of century) necessitating 'plow pits' for changing from conduit to overhead trolley & vice-versa.

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### Milestone Reached

Division assistant superintendent John Fallon was recently recognized as having been a member of the National Model Railroad Association for 25 years.

When you see John, be sure to recognize this milestone in his model railroading career.

“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, 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:

Bill Fay – Master Builder Scenery

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 Sept 21, 2024**

Sept 21, 2024 – the Division Business meeting. The contest is “Gondola Loads.” 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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## Kalmbach Media Calls It Quits

### Trains Magazine, Trains Magazine Staff

*Trains* Magazine, the company's other rail magazines, and Trains.com are among assets that have been sold by Kalmbach Media to Chattanooga, Tenn.-based Firecrown Media, the two companies have announced today (May 1).

Other Kalmbach titles involved in the transaction are *Classic Trains*, *Model Railroader*, *Classic Toy Trains*, *Fine Scale Modeler*, and *Astronomy*, as well as Kalmbach's online stores. The publications involved will continue to be based in Wisconsin.

Firecrown Media owns a wide range of transportation brands including Flying, Plane & Pilot, Boating, Yachting, and the supply chain site Freight Waves. Kalmbach employees were informed of the sale this morning and told that most employees working on the brands will be offered positions with Firecrown after screening. Kalmbach CEO Dan Hickey called it "a difficult day in our storied history" in an email announcing the sale.

Firecrown CEO Craig Fuller said in a press release that "The rail titles fit perfectly into the Firecrown portfolio and the breadth of experience of our staff ... Kalmbach has deep ties in the railroad community, having published magazines and books about railroads and model trains for over 90 years. There isn't a deeper connection in the rail enthusiast community than the one that Kalmbach built. The Firecrown staff will work diligently to continue and build on that connection moving forward.

"Additionally, the rail and aviation communities have a great deal in common. Besides the obvious — both being transportation modes and having similarities in business models — the enthusiast audience is vast in both categories. We believe that 'railfans' and 'avgeeks' are kindred spirits.

"With the acquisition, Firecrown plans to invest significantly in *Trains'* business editorial coverage, increasing the cadence and depth of coverage of the rail industry. Freight Waves, one of Firecrown's brands, provides a playbook to help achieve this." Fuller and other members of the Firecrown staff met with staff members who will be making the transition to the new ownership this afternoon. A 60-day transition period is planned for the magazines and other properties. More information on Firecrown's plans and what they mean for employees and readers will be forthcoming.



Kalmbach  
Media



(Editor's Note) Fond memories as a "gandy-dancer" for the B&O, summer of 1971



"Will this look okay in John Robey's backyard near his Koi Pond?"

# Ten Locomotives that influenced U.S. Railroads

The American 4-4-0, invented in the 1830's proved to be the lynchpin in America's drive towards railroad dominance. An estimated 25,000 were built, with some still in service in the 1950's.



Considered the "genius" of all four-wheeling-truck steam locomotives, the Berkshire was the freight workhorse of the 1920's. Currently there are two Berkshires in operation. The Nickel Plate #765 and Piere Marquette #1225.



Electric Motor Division's FT was deemed "the Assassin" of the steam locomotive. In an era where technology was expensive and labor cheap, this diesel proved it could run continually without stopping for water and little or no maintenance.



The Pacific 4-6-2 was the personification of speed in America's railroad industry. Built by Baldwin in 1901 for New Zealand, the first delivery in the US went to Western Pacific in 1902. The locomotive remained in service until the early 1950's



The "Challenger" was deemed the pinnacle concept when a second set of pistons was added. The steam locomotive combined speed with complete brute strength. Ultimately 252 were built, with Union Pacific's #3985 still in service.



The Alco built RS1-switcher added the final nail to the coffin of steam locomotives. The 1,000hp road-switcher was the first mass-produced diesel for light duty performance. The RS1 holds the honor of having the longest production run in America.



The “one size fits all” Electric Motor Divisions GP7 wiped away the notion of buying different engines for different tasks. From 1949 to 1954 EMD produced more than 2,700 models until its near identical twin, GP9, replaced it.



Until 1959, EMD led the market in diesel production until General Electric unveiled the U25B. The almost “bullet-proof” 752-series traction motors kept customers coming back for more, thus making GE the leader in North American locomotive production.



Did every railroad own an SD-40-2? Probably not, but it quickly became railroads “superstar” with its 3,000hp motor. The Dash-2 series expanded the already exceptional features with a modular electrical control cabinet and standard parts which were easily “swappable.”



Should you buy GE’s ES44AC or ES44DC? If you chose the former, you’ll find it outsells its twin by a 3 to 1 margin. A 12-cylinder engine that is pollution friendly and delivers more horsepower than its 16-cylinder competitor. Options such as steerable trucks and self-diagnostics, this locomotive will continue to lead the diesel era.



## **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.

# Lee Hall Depot Diorama and the Tidewater Division

by Roger Bir (photos by Dave Greene)

For those of you who haven't had a chance to visit the Lee Hall Depot, this might pique your curiosity. Members of the division volunteered to build a diorama of the depot, circa 1920's. With several superb builders on hand, Dale Ridgeway's "Curtis House" was a masterful build. Right behind Dale was George Downer's preeminent build on the "Clement Store" and "Clement House." Former division superintendent Fred Humphrey added his master skill to the building of "Miss Lillian's home" and Gary Brown's excellent rendition of the Fleming Esso Station finished out the building. The final building proved to be the greatest challenge, the depot itself. The program manager was able to secure the services of HD Custom Design of North Carolina for the final build. Finally, a special thanks to John Cryderman and Greg Warth for their donation of scenery supplies

Once the buildings were completed, the next phase was building placement, scenery design and overall details of the diorama. The project was turned over to the Lee Hall Depot Historical Society in the fall of 2023. A grand thanks to those division members who donated scenery items to the project and to all the builders for lending their superlative building skills to the project.



Hey Charlie...did you remember to close that UPS trailer before we started?



Former New Mexico ATSF Machine Shop

# Yearbook of RR Info – 1944

By Mark Nieting

There were 1,773,049 freight-carrying cars in the service of the Class 1 railways at the end of 1944. This total showed the fifth consecutive annual gain after the reduction in freight car ownership which occurred between 1925 and 1939.

The trend in the average capacity per freight car reached a new peak in 1944 with an average of 50.9 tons per car. As a result, the present-day car is the equivalent in capacity to about 1 ¼ cars of the 1916 variety. The increased capacity of the cars has been an important factor in increased efficiency of operations and has been an adjunct in operations during the war.

The total capacity of all the freight-carrying cars owned or leased by the Class 1 railways amounted to 90,205,485 tons at the end of 1944. This is the fifth year to show an increase in total capacity since 1939.

## CSX Unveils Hydrogen Locomotive

### The CSX Web Site

CSX has unveiled its first hydrogen-powered locomotive, marking a significant milestone in sustainable freight transportation. This pioneering achievement is the result of a successful partnership between CSX and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) and demonstrates the company's commitment to innovation and environmental stewardship.

The hydrogen locomotive was converted from an existing diesel locomotive using a hydrogen conversion kit developed by CPKC. The transformation took place at the CSX locomotive shop in Huntington, W.Va. "The successful debut of our first hydrogen-powered locomotive stands as a testament to the exceptional skill and dedication of our employees at the CSX Huntington locomotive shop," said CSX President and Chief Executive Officer Joe Hinrichs. "CSX's commitment to sustainability in our operations is exemplified by the outstanding efforts of these employees, who, through their craftsmanship, are helping advance our collaboration with CPKC. We are proud to work with CPKC to scale this hydrogen technology and help pave the way for meaningful sustainable solutions for the future." Converting an existing unit into a next-generation locomotive further extends the useful life of the asset. The conversion team reused several components, including the frame, cab, traction motors, and trucks.

This groundbreaking locomotive makes its debut less than 12 months after the collaboration between CSX and CPKC was announced in the summer of 2023. Hydrogen presents a promising alternative to fossil fuels, offering greater efficiency and zero emissions. Unlike traditional diesel engines, hydrogen-powered locomotives emit only water vapor, contributing to cleaner air and the environment.

As the next step, CSX will deploy the new hydrogen-powered locomotive for field testing and further evaluate its performance and operational feasibility. This initiative marks a significant stride forward in CSX's ongoing commitment to innovation and sustainability.



# “Around the Bend” Member Photos

John Cryderman Op’s Session (Jun 2024) – photos by Mark Nieting





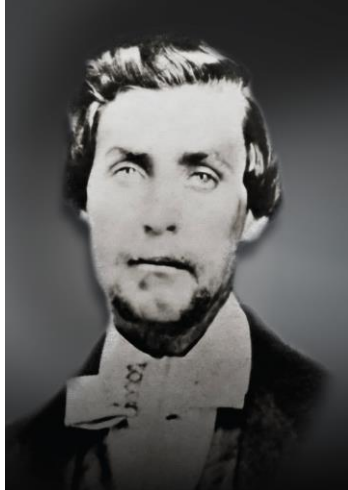
# Train Theft that Led to a Medal of Honor

## POTUS Honors Civil War Heroes

Two Union soldiers, who 162 years ago took part in one of America's first special operations were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on Wednesday. "Today we right that wrong. Today they finally receive the recognition they deserve," President Joe Biden said at a White House ceremony. Descendants of Pvt. George Wilson and Pvt. Shadrach had received a long-awaited call from the White House telling them the Civil War heroes would be awarded the nation's highest military honor for "gallantry and intrepidity" in defense of the Union.



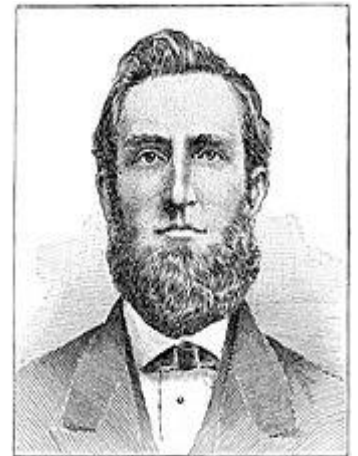
Pvt George Wilson



Pvt Philip Shadrach

The Andrews Raid of April 12, 1862, brought the first Union soldiers into north Georgia and led to an exciting locomotive chase, the only one of the Civil War (1861-65). The adventure lasted just seven hours, involved about two dozen men, and as a military operation, ended in failure. In early spring 1862 Northern forces advanced on Huntsville, Alabama, heading for Chattanooga, Tennessee. Union general Ormsby Mitchel accepted the offer of a civilian spy, James J. Andrews, a contraband merchant and trader between the lines, to lead a raiding party behind Confederate lines to Atlanta, steal a locomotive, and race northward, destroying track, telegraph lines, and maybe bridges toward Chattanooga. The raid thus aimed to knock out the Western and Atlantic Railroad, which supplied Confederate forces at Chattanooga, just as Mitchel's army advanced.

James J. Andrews was a Kentucky-born civilian serving as a secret agent and scout in Tennessee, for Major General Don Carlos Buell in the spring of 1862. Sometime before Buell departed Nashville in late March, Andrews presented him with a plan to take eight men to steal a train in Georgia, and drive it north. Buell would later confirm in August 1863 that he authorized this expedition. According to Andrews, a train engineer in Atlanta was willing to defect to the Union with his train, if Andrews could supply a volunteer train crew to assist running the train, tearing up track, and burning bridges. The main target was the railway bridge at Bridgeport, Alabama, although future Andrews Raider William Pittenger believed Andrews also intended to target several other bridges in Georgia and Tennessee. The volunteers for this first raid all came from General Mitchel's division, which was encamped at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Moving south forty miles on foot to the Confederate railhead at Tullahoma, the raiders were then able to travel by train down to Marietta, Georgia. There, Andrews discovered the engineer had been pressed into service elsewhere. Andrews asked if any of the raiders knew how to operate a locomotive; when none did, he called the raid off.



James Andrews

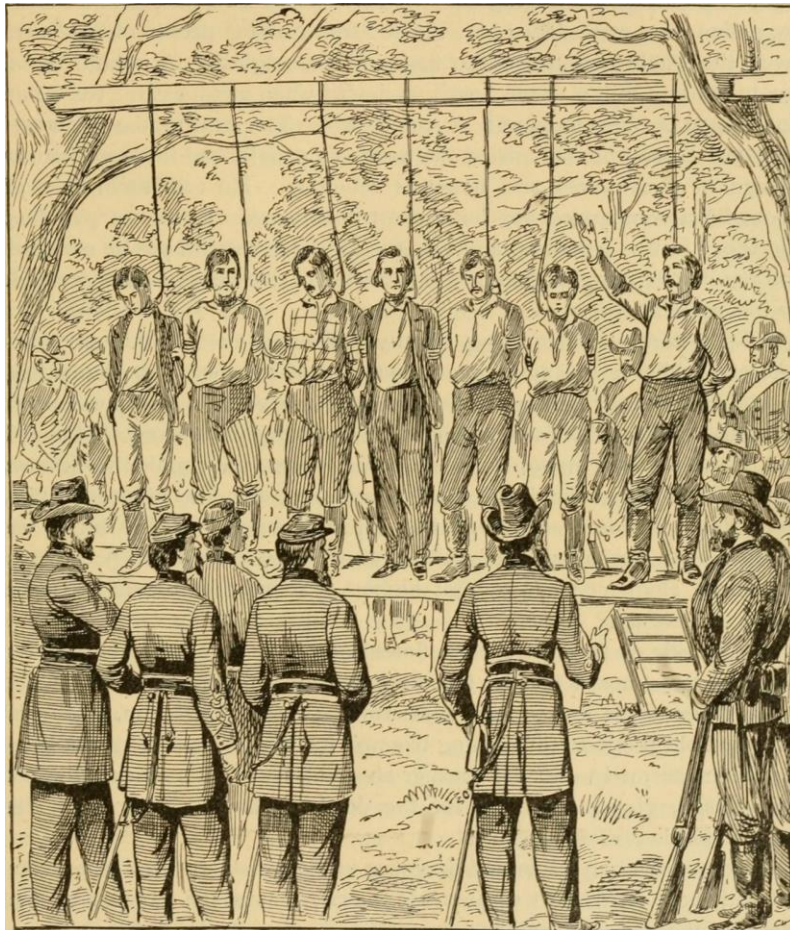


On April 7 Andrews chose twenty-two volunteers from three Ohio infantry regiments, plus one civilian. In plain clothes they slipped through the lines to Chattanooga and entrained to Marietta; two men were caught on the way. Two more overslept on the morning of April 12, when Andrews's party boarded the northbound train. They traveled eight miles to Big Shanty (present-day Kennesaw), chosen for the train jacking because it had no telegraph. While crew and passengers ate breakfast, the raiders uncoupled most of the cars. At about 6 a.m. they steamed out of Big Shanty aboard the locomotive *General*, a tender, and three empty boxcars.

Pursuit began immediately, when three railroad men ran after the locomotive, eventually commandeering a platform car. Two of them, Anthony Murphy and William Fuller, persisted in their chase for the next seven hours and more than

eighty-seven miles. First suspecting the train thieves to be Confederate deserters, the pursuers acquired a locomotive at Etowah Station. Aware they were being chased, Andrews's men cut the telegraph lines and pried up rails. Murphy and Fuller switched locomotives—they used three that day—picked up more men and kept up the chase. The train thieves tried to burn the bridge at the Oostanaula River near Resaca, but the pursuers were too close behind, so close that at Tilton the *General* could take on only a little water and wood. At about 1 p.m. it ran out of steam two miles north of Ringgold, with the Southerners, aboard the *Texas*, fast upon them. The Confederates rounded up all the raiders. Only eight of the twenty (Andrews among them) were tried as spies and executed in Atlanta. The rest either escaped or were exchanged.

Though it created a sensation at the time, the Andrews Raid had no military effect. General Mitchel's forces captured Huntsville on April 11 but did not move on to Chattanooga. The cut telegraph lines and pried rails were quickly repaired. Nevertheless, the train thieves were hailed in the North as heroes. The soldier-raiders received the Medal of Honor; one, Jacob Parrott, was its very first recipient. Neither Andrews nor the other civilian was eligible.



### **Signalman Paid 20 cents a day Plus Half a Beer per Week**

**A** monkey named Jack worked as a signalman on the South African Railways from 1881 to 1890. He was paid twenty cents a day and half a beer a week. Jack never made a single mistake in his entire railway career of nine years.

Jack helped a paralyzed railway signalman named James Wide, known as 'Jumper' Wide, after he lost his legs in a railway accident. James Wide trained Jack to assist him with his daily chores, and over time, Jack learned to operate railroad signals under supervision, requiring care and precision.

Jack became famous for his reliability and accuracy in railway signal operation. During the nine years he worked for the railways, Jack never did anything wrong. He died in 1890. His skull is kept at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, South Africa, in memory of Jack's unique contribution to the South African Railways.

# The German Rail Network

German rail network. Most rail lines are mixed use lines with both freight trains and passenger trains (local, regional to long distance, high-speed and international trains).

Only few lines are only used by passenger trains (with some exceptions for few freight trains) and only few lines are only used by freight trains (with some exceptions for few passenger trains)



The German passenger and freight network

## “In My Early Years”

by Rocky Myrtle

In my early years I worked for a Track-supervisor named Glen Michael. We called him Bull Dog. He was from the old times and was pretty rough, but a good man to work for. He helped me a couple times starting out loaning me money until I got on my feet. Those weeks waiting on the first check is hard. Glen always carried a billfold with a bunch of hundred-dollar bills. When he loaned money, it was always a hundred dollars. He also wanted paid back a hundred dollar bill. I asked him late one night how much he carried and was told at least a thousand dollars.

Years later when I was running the Tie gang and money was not so tight I started carrying a thousand dollars, all in hundreds. Back in 1980 we did not have plastic cards. I was spending my own money to keep the gang running. I would turn in my expense sheet every couple weeks for three to four hundred dollars I had spent keeping the gang running. I also was paying cash for the motel and my food, but that was also reimbursed. It took a lot of cash. This was before cards you shipped for payment.

I never stopped the practice of carrying ten-hundred-dollar bills even years after I did not need to. We were still getting paper checks in the mail when I decided it was time to stop carrying that much cash. I had my first debit card and it was much easier than paying with cash. The biggest difference was when getting fuel. Swipe, no line to wait in behind some person who just decided to buy lottery tickets. My paper checks started mounting up and then I wanted to see how long I could go. I was depleting my cash in my billfold and my checking account as the checks were mailed. I had no bills other than utilities at the time.

I had five payroll checks that were uncashed. I came to work one morning and the Roadmaster said payroll had called him. He said they told him to tell me to cash the checks. They also highly suggested I enroll in electronic payroll. I did cash the checks; I was almost to the place where I was going to anyway. I still wanted that paper check until one Friday night. I had worked late and was sitting in line at the back waiting to cash my check. It closed at 6pm and I just made it.

**Minutes of the NMRA/MER Tidewater Division Business Meeting  
20 July 2024**

1. The July Business Meeting was held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church on Kings Grant Road in Virginia Beach, VA. Superintendent John Robey called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. He announced that the meeting would be very short because our meeting venue was not available due to an unexpected funeral.
2. Paymaster Fred Humphrey reported the status of Division accounts including savings, checking, and cash on hand.
3. Timekeeper Pat Mahoney reported that 17 members were in attendance. Division members are reminded that they must keep their contact information current. Failure to do that results in not receiving the Callboard newsletter, MER newsletter, meeting schedules, contest information, and special announcement.
4. Superintendent John Robey presented several potential sites for the MER Convention which will be hosted by the Tidewater Division, and identified several criteria that should be met during site selection. The criteria include meeting rooms, meals, plenty of parking, ease of access for travel, and others. He has already visited several potential sites in Hampton Roads. He reminds members that our Division will be the host. Please volunteer to help our Division be a truly successful host.
5. The Favorite Train Contest (MOW) was postponed.
6. The next meeting will be September 21, 2024. The Contest will be "Gondola Loads." Entries should be a unique load in a gondola and can be a typical load or very imaginative.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35.

*continued from page 1*

We did not have a number of agenda items for this month, so mainly to discuss any updates on our future MER convention planning (2026). I showed the group the book that I found on eBay, titled "Tidewater Triangle" that was published in 30-40 years ago that covers the extensive history of all the railroads that served the Tidewater area of Virginia and North Carolina (triangle is Norfolk, Richmond and Raleigh). I made the suggestion that this may serve as our logo and theme for the convention. Celebrating the rich history of this area! There are about 12 railroads included in this history, with about only 3 remaining today (Norfolk Southern, CSX and NPBL)! We also discussed hotel ideas. We extensively discussed the pros and cons of Chesapeake, Virginia Beach and Suffolk areas, and again emphasized the desire to have all the meeting rooms, clinics, and banquet in the residential hotel verses separated hotel and meeting facilities. Thanks also to John Hammond for supplying documentation from our last convention.

As I close out, I received an email from the Museum committee announcing a "walk-thru" of the space in Macarther Mall on the 27<sup>th</sup>. This is good news, and we will send out a separate email announcement. Enjoy the hobby,

John Robey,  
Superintendent

