



Tidewater Division

CALLBOARD

Volume 2024, Issue 6

NMRA MEMBER

September 2024

“Superintendent’s Desk”

John Robey, Superintendent

Fall is here and time to prepare to attend the Mid East Region annual convention, the Piedmont Junction, hosted in Durham, NC this year. So far as we know at this writing, we have thirteen Tidewater members signed up to attend. That is a good turnout, based on some previous years. There are clinics, contests, op sessions, prototype tours and a host of other activities lined up. It should be an excellent convention and a great opportunity to meet up with old friends, and make some new friends with other model railroaders!

We have several Division related events coming up next month, starting with our November monthly meeting that will be held at the HobbyTown store’s meeting room on Saturday, the 9th. Division members should be able to get in around 930am since the store doesn’t open till 10am. We will have our November diorama contest/display and a feature program to celebrate National Model Railroad Month. The

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This Month in Rail History

Sep 1, 1935: NMRA organizes in Milwaukee, WI

Sept 1, 1922: The Great Railroad Strike of 1922 was effectively ended by a judicial injunction issued by Judge James Herbert Wilkerson

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

Sept 6, 1869: The first transcontinental rail passengers arrived at the Alameda Terminal in California, the original western terminus of the Pacific Railroad. The passengers then transferred to the steamer Alameda to cross the Bay to San Francisco.

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

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

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

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

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

BILL OF LADING – SEPT 2024

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“The Callboard” is the newsletter of the Tidewater Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The Tidewater Division, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please direct all questions or concerns to: sorcerer54@cox.net

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:

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

Division Mtg & Contest Nov 9, 2024

Nov 9, 2024 – the Division Business meeting. The contest is “Diorama.” Hobbytown, 4000, Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA. It is unknown at this time if coffee and donuts will be provided.

Tidewater Division

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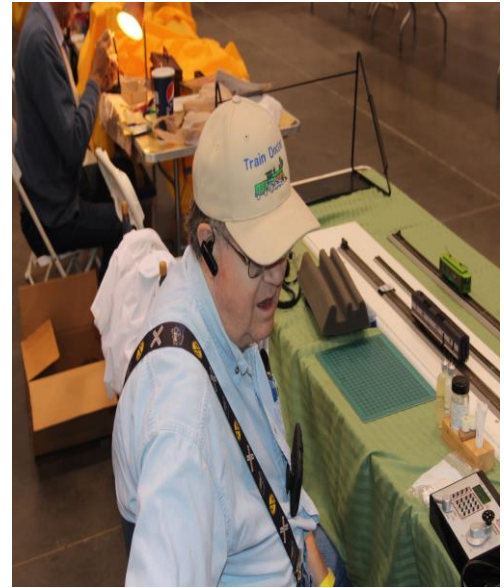
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The Passing of a Division Icon

Max Robbins Departs the Station for the Last Time

In September 2024, the Tidewater Division lost an icon. Max “Train Doctor” Robbins passed away after a brief illness. Every year that Tidewater held a train show, you could find Max, wearing a white doctor’s coat, checking over purchases from eager buyers. The only thing he was missing was a stethoscope. He’d take the engine, look carefully, and then walk over to his workbench, and the buyer was right behind him. I was amazed at his vision; not really need magnifying lenses, but he’d just look over his glasses and then grab a tool. After a few tweaks and a little cleaning on motor brushes and wheels, he headed to the test track. Within moments after putting the train on the track, power was applied, and the locomotive responded as ordered. He’d hand the finished product to the buyer, telling him how to avoid future operations problems. The person would offer to pay for the service, but Max would point them towards the tip jar on the table. The buyer was happy, and Max was off to his next challenge.



I met Max at the Tidewater Modular Railroad Club and soon learned this was someone who knew things about trains. I was new to the hobby, willing and ready to learn. Max, a retired Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer, worked in electronics during his entire career as a submariner. If it was electrical or train-related, Max was your “go-to person.” Anytime I had a problem putting in a decoder, a quick call to Max, followed up by a short drive to his home, resulted in a satisfactory installation. I always enjoyed visiting Max at his house and, before she passed, holding conversations with his wife, Celeste. At one point, my installation expertise became such that I decided to learn the “ins & outs” of JMRI and programming. Again, Max was my guidance. He supervised my download and told me what equipment would be needed. He even built a switching box to finish up my endeavor.

As my experience with decoders and wiring grew, I still asked Max about LEDs or the difference between AC/DC. He was always there, just a phone call away. The final years saw Max’s memory fade somewhat, but each time I’d stop by with a question or concern, his response was spot on with no hesitancy. His presence will be missed at the AJ Gator’s Wednesday luncheons. But his memory will be ever-present whenever I work with a decoder or wiring. Godspeed Max Robbins.

You’re Hired

In 1853 Cornelius Vanderbilt was riding between Albany and New York on the Hudson River Railroad. He went to the car to smoke a cigar, even though smoking was permitted only on the platform. The conductor, Allen Conrey, informed Vanderbilt of the rules, but Vanderbilt kept right on smoking. The conductor stuck to his guns and insisted that Vanderbilt refrain from smoking the baggage care. Vanderbilt so liked Conrey’s manner and persistence that he bought the entire railroad just to have Conrey work for him.

Former Amtrak “F” Units

Driving by the Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum, one may see an unusual sight. Amidst the vintage diesels sitting on outside turntable tracks, rest two former Amtrak passenger diesels.

The units here were modified for freight service on the former Canadian American Railroad in the 1990's. Among modifications, were those made to the front of the locomotives to add steps, a platform and an entry door in the engines' noses. Seeing them reminds me of two different memories. That first experience included my only encounter with Amtrak service. I know that it may be hard for some to believe that I've only seen or experienced Amtrak service once in my life, since I've been intrigued by railroads for several decades.

You see, Amtrak made its exit from this area when I was very young. My only recollection of one of the carrier's trains was when I accompanied my father as a young boy to the Canton, Ohio station to pick up relatives of some Amish co-workers of his. The train arrived in the early morning hours – before four, I believe. For a young boy of about seven or eight, I don't know if I was more excited about being up in the “middle of the night”, or seeing a train. But I do remember the thrill of walking through a tunnel to reach the platform sitting between two sets of tracks.

My other memory is more specific to one of the units at the Age of Steam roundhouse.

I encountered one of them in a power consist that was leading an Ohio Central System freight train. It was traveling across the former Pennsylvania Railroad Panhandle Division east of Dennison, Ohio perhaps a year before Genesee & Wyoming acquired the company.

Unique power lash-ups have often been a hallmark of many new short line and regional railroads. The Ohio Central was no different. Even as the company matured, its power pool often seemed to be more varied than most other roads, with a wider selection of builders and models to choose from. The Buckeye Route's equipment pool, perhaps gave it a late 1970's feel. It was during that time when Conrail still dispatched trains over the Panhandle line with a large, varied selection of power.

Former Amtrak passenger units may seem out of place at a roundhouse dedicated to late steam-era railroading. Yet, they help to tell the story of passengers traveling across America by rail. Further, they help to shed light on another unique facet of the Ohio Central story – and how the Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum came into being.



For all Chicago and Northwestern Fans.



Investment Per Mile - 1944

By Mark Nieting

The investment in road and equipment per mile of railway line in the United States amount to \$117,500. This figure includes not only the investment in roadway and tracks, but also the investment in equipment stations, engine houses, shops, signals and all other physical facilities of the railroads.

In 1916, the average was \$74,465. By 1930, it had increased to \$105,661. At the start of World War II (1941) the cost had risen to \$111,352.

In the Baggage Coach Ahead

In the 1890's, the narrow, back-streets of New York City were home to a flourishing song publishing industry known as Tin-Pan Alley. Hopeful songwriters trooped from one publisher to another with dreams of having their newest tear-filled ballads accepted for publication.

Among those facing rejection at every door was a black composer by the name of Gussie L. Davis. Some years before, he had worked as a Pullman porter and heard a true story from another porter that made his heart sink. A father aboard a passenger car was trying in vain to quiet his crying infant. When passengers objected to the noise, they learned that the baby's deceased mother was in the baggage coach. Davis later turned his story into a ballad and tried desperately to get it published. After meeting rejections after rejection, Davis finally arrived at the publishing house of Howley, Haviland & Co. meeting again with rejection, Davis offered to sell the song for a mere pittance, and they reluctantly agreed to purchase all the rights. To their surprise, "In the Baggage Coach Ahead" soon became a hit by Imogene Comer, the "Queen Regent of Song," on her tour with Harry Williams "Own Company." Gussie L. Davis, though deprived of any royalty for his song, did get composed credit, and he eventually became one of the most well known song writers of the 1890's kind.

Not for Sissies

Rail Exceeds Steel Industry in Casualties

Railroad work was second only to steel mills in the number of casualties of its workers. In 1900 alone, there were 2,675 killed and another 41,142 injured.

This was about equal to the British army losses during the three-year Boer War.

Continued from page 1

Division is welcome to display model railroad items in the display cases at the Central Library for the entire month of November, as we have done in the past. Contact Pat Mahoney to get your name on the access list to load displays in the locked show cases. Our next function is the TCA/NMRA train show/swap meet on Friday and Saturday, November 15-16, at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, where our usual meetings are held. There will be 50 tables of vendors (members) selling! Look for lots of bargains that you just can't pass up! Don't forget about the annual Trains, Planes, and Santa at the Military Aviation Museum the weekend after Thanksgiving (Nov 29-Dec 01)! As you can see, there is a lot going on!

John Robey

Superintendent

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In 1853 Cornelius Vanderbilt was riding between Albany and New York on the Hudson River Railroad. He went to the car to smoke a cigar, even though smoking was permitted only on the platform. The conductor, Allen Conrey, informed Vanderbilt of the rules, but Vanderbilt kept right on smoking. The conductor stuck to his guns and insisted that Vanderbilt refrain from smoking the baggage care. Vanderbilt so liked Conrey's manner and persistence that he bought the entire railroad just to have Conrey work for him.



"Around the Bend" Business Mtg & Member Photos



MEETING NMRA TIDEWATER DIVISION

SEPTEMBER 21, 2024

1. Paymaster Report
2. Timekeeper Report
3. Membership Roster August 2024 latest (109 Active Members)
4. Contests: combine September (Unique Gondola Loads) with July contest (Unique M-O-W rail equipment) since we weren't able to facilitate at last meeting.
5. AP Awards – Chuck
6. Update on MER Fall Convention
Not including registrations from beyond MER or the 34 spouses, here is what the Division registration snapshot looks like.
Totals to date:
 7. New Jersey - 7
 8. Potomac - 17
 9. Philadelphia - 14
 10. Tidewater - 13
 11. James River - 9
 12. South Mountain - 2
 13. Susquehanna - 7
 14. Carolina Southern - 15
 15. Carolina Piedmont - 45
 16. Chesapeake - 9
17. Our own 2026 Convention: So Far

Theme and Title:

Coordinator & Co-Coordinator

Budget/Finance:

Clinics: Matt Thompson – Lead Scott Lull -volunteered to assist

Layout Tours: Fred Humphrey

Operations Sessions: Mark Neiting

White Elephant Room & Contest Room coordinator: Greg Leiphart

AP/Judging etc: Chuck Davis

Hotel: Rooms / Signage / Clinic facilities

Kansas Derailment

On Sept 14th, train H-KCKBEL1-13 derailed 18 cars starting at line 71 of the train just west of Mayfield, KS. The railroad tried to blame the engineer for the derailment as they thought he went to full dynamic braking too quick. They have also decided that the train make up had much to do with the derailment as there was too much weight behind the auto racks. The railroad has changed operating practices due to this derailment with limiting the number of cars with end of car cushioning or making sure there are DP units behind them. The same derailment is seen below. Both main tracks were out of service for about 18 hours. There was not any haz-mat involved in this derailment



Prototype Tours:
Convention Booklet and Graphics:
Local Color/Activities:
Advertising:
Webpage (specific to convention/not Division)
Transportation:
Banquet / Judges Luncheon / Superintendent's Breakfast
Guest Speaker:

18. November Logistics:

November 9th (Saturday): Tidewater Division Meeting at HobbyTown meeting room 10am-12Noon. Open to public, celebrating National Model Train Month, having the Diorama contest, and a presentation about the NMRA. Free magazine give away (please with courtesy stickers)

November 15 & 16 (Friday afternoon and Saturday): NMRA & TCA Model Train Sale (all scales) at the Prince of Peace Church. Up to 50 tables of sales and displays. We have a table for Division.

A poster announcing both of these events will be at HobbyTown starting in October.

November 29-December 1: Planes & Trains. Would like to have a Division Table set up with all-scales, free magazines, brochures, etc... staffed during show hours.

19. Nominations Committee for annual election. Do MailChimp same as last year.

20. Museum Updates

21. Contest Awards, Auction for metal wheels, door prizes

September Clinic presentation by John Cryderman on Weathering Buildings.

Railroad Glossary

DYNAMITER: Car on which defective mechanism sends the brakes into full emergency when only a service application is made by the engineer. Also, a quick-action triple valve.

HUMP: Artificial knoll at end of classification yard over which cars are pushed so that they can roll on their own momentum to separate tracks. (See *drop*.) Also the summit of a hill division or the top of a prominent grade. *Boomers* generally referred to the Continental Divide as the Hump

JITNEY: Four-wheel electric truck that carries baggage around inside a terminal. Also unregulated private automobile that carried passengers on public highways for 5-cent fare in direct competition with trolley cars

MEET ORDER: Train order specifying a definite location where two or more trains will meet on a single track, one on a siding, and the others on the *high iron*

Rail-Fanning in Nebraska

by Roger Bir

My schedule was such, that I would coincide my high school reunion (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) with a trip to North Platte, Nebraska to visit my sister, cousin, nieces & nephews. After a six-hour car ride from Des Moines to Holdrege Nebraska, I was braced to be inundated with “wall to wall” Union Pacific. After dinner Sunday evening, I was up the next morning to have breakfast with my cousin. Once concluded, I headed north on Nebraska state route 183. A call from my sister alerted me to every railfan’s curiosity. Instead of taking I-80 once off SR 183, my sister said to take state route 30. Instantly I knew why. Union Pacific’s 4 mainline east out of North Platte ran parallel to route 30. She also said there was a derailment east of Gothenburg which had stopped my nephew’s eastbound morning freight train.

Every Viking knows he who dies in battle goes to Valhalla. Well, I’m not a Viking...but I was pretty close to Valhalla. I stopped my car at least six times to photo eastbound and westbound Union Pacific consists. I was westbound on route 30 when I passed through the small town of Overton. The town didn’t have a stop light, just a sign reducing speed. On the west side of Overton, I came across an EMD SW1500 switcher. It was stenciled for “Kaapa Ethanol” but after a look it turns out the engine started out working for Southern Pacific.



As I traveled through Lexington, this town was large enough to have a stop light. At the light, to my left at a grain elevator I saw an I&M Raillink EMD SD-9 sitting next to several auto carrier cars. Lucky traffic wasn’t busy, so a quick turn around was accomplished. I checked traffic in the area to make sure I wasn’t supposed to not be there. Access was such that a quick departure from the car resulted in several great photos.

I continued westward to North Platte and eventually the derailment. I had multiple stops to take pictures, but finally I came upon the accident...in all it’s glory. Most of the derailed cars looked like aluminum coal cars. Really shiny and nice, but on this day, they looked like a big dog had grabbed ahold and started shaking. I found out later the cause of the derailment was a broken wheel. I came about this information during a stop near Grand Island where I parked next to...a Union Pacific crew van. The person I spoke with said the derailment “had a member of his group” involved and that a broken wheel was the cause. He added later, “too bad they don’t take better care of the rolling stock.”



I took numerous pictures of the derailment. Union Pacific had flat cars there with already assembled tie & rail pieces just waiting to be inserted. The setup looked like you were replacing pieces of track on your layout. I continued taking pictures, trying to take in as much as possible. It came time to leave, and I wasn’t 500 yards from the site when I came across a rare site...a locomotive with graffiti on it. After parking the car, I took several pictures with my telephoto lens



I moved towards an embankment trying to figure what angles were best to photo, when I changed to a smaller lens and started down the embankment. What I didn't mention it was a typical Nebraska September, winds putting flags straight out and gusts at +30mph. As luck would have it, just as I stepped, a gust hit me, knocking me down the embankment. I'm sure the crew on the locomotive that I wanted to shoot had a good chuckle. As I started to stand, my left hand was covered in blood. A quick look showed a deep, wide gash in my hand webbing between the thumb and index finger. Luckily, I had a handkerchief. It was wrapped around the wound, I held with my thumb and managed to take the pictures.



At this point, my railfanning for the day was done. I called my sister and found the address of an urgent care center. Found the center and after checking in, was called back. The center was an all-female crew and my nurse practitioner, I was later to find out she attended college on a rodeo scholarship. Two deep stitches and seven across the top and multiple bandages and I headed out the door. The center sent the information to my doctor, and I asked about my ego. The nurse was unsure as to how long it would take for my ego to recover.

I had dinner that evening with my family. As conversations went on, my niece's husband (I call him my nephew) told me a behind the scenes tour of Bailey Yard was set for the next day. Bailey Yard...this is Valhalla. We were set to meet at 2pm. Before that, my sister told me I might enjoy Cody Park. As it turns out, the Park has two static locomotives, both Union Pacific. A Challenger and a DD-40 with a passenger car behind each locomotive. The Challenger looked like you could steam it the next day. The DD-40 had the engine panels removed, so you could look at both 3,300hp engines.

After a flurry of pictures and conversations with two retired UP engineers who oversaw the exhibit, I headed to my nephew's. We loaded up and in 10 minutes were at Bailey Yard. First stop was the 40-acre maintenance facility. Unfortunately, I couldn't take pictures, but what I saw inside is firmly entrenched in my memory. Chris told me while walking I needed to stay on the green "safety" pathway. Everywhere you looked there were UP engines in different phases of maintenance. We went to the offices overlooking the floor and I could see at least six locomotive engines, sitting on either chocks or open framing. According to my nephew, some were new while others had been rebuilt off site and ready for installation. Along side the engines there was a single generator. I asked if they're repaired/rewired there and was told all are sent to Little Rock, Arkansas for repairs. I met several of my nephew's leadership group and after introductions all went back to their offices, only to return with some kind of Union Pacific memorabilia. It was like Christmas in September.



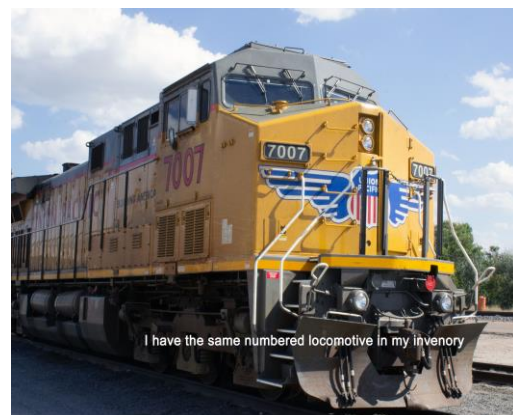
We concluded our facility tour and Chris took me out to see all aspects of Bailey Yard. I saw everything. One area dedicated to car repair, another...a ghost yard of engines. There must have been +30 engines, all connected and sitting dormant. Union Pacific saves money when these engines are "furloughed." We headed out and got a firsthand look at west hump yard. What a concept. As my nephew pointed out, there was a single operator running the locomotive and guiding cars to be sorted. A truly fantastic feat to watch firsthand. All of the time we were driving

my camera was at the ready snapping pictures. We stopped and looked at an on-site maintenance of way train, which brought back memories of my days as a gandy-dancer on the B&O.

At one point I asked to stop and get out as I saw an UP engine with the same number scheme as one I have at home. As I was taking pictures, my nephew was chatting with a co-worker when he called out. Apparently, I had wondered too close to the locomotive without the necessary safety gear on (hard hat, reflective vest, steel-toed shoes). I was in shorts and sneakers, so I quickly retreated...still taking pictures.

Chris took me on a Bailey Yard tour of the ages. Over two hours I was able to either see or photograph all aspects of the yard. I put this tour akin to a White House journey and meeting the President. He took me to every area imaginable, leaving nothing to chance. Another plus, each time I met a UP supervisor, they in turn went to their office and returned with much valued memorabilia. As I said before, Christmas in September.

The day ended with dinner at my niece's. My sister was there, so the conversation was grand and the food superb. Granted, this was not your typical rail-fanning experience. Luckily for me, I had an "inside" connection which translated into one of the best rail related experiences of my life.



Chicago Police Arrest Six in Rail Heist

Thieves were caught stealing from box cars



At least six people were arrested after a chaotic scene erupted on Metra's Union Pacific-West line in Chicago, with video showing people reportedly stealing boxes from freight trains, authorities said.

Video from a news chopper showed what appeared to be nearly a dozen people taking boxes off freight trains in the area of Lake Street and Lockwood Avenue in the Austin neighborhood. Groups were seen carrying boxes from the trains, loading the items into vans and cars and driving away from the scene. Debris was seen strewn across the tracks as the incident unfolded. What was inside the trains wasn't immediately clear.

According to Chicago police, at around 2:40 p.m., officers responded to the 4700 block of West Kinzie regarding a theft in progress at a railroad. One person attempted to flee after taking property from a train car, police said. That person and a second individual were taken into custody, authorities said.

Union Pacific, which operates the line, said late Friday a total of six people were arrested, and some of the stolen merchandise had been recovered.

Union Pacific Confirms Sulfuric Acid Release in Derailment

Car Carrying Acid Ruptures

The Union Pacific Railroad has said sulfuric acid was released from one of the derailed train cars. The railroad said efforts are underway to neutralize the acid.

"No waterways have been impacted," the Union Pacific spokesperson said. "And air monitoring conducted at the site shows no safety concerns relevant to air quality." According to a spokesperson with Union Pacific Railroad, 24 train cars derailed Friday in Green Valley, south of Continental Road and east of I-19.

The railroad said the incident happened at "around 10:30 a.m. "No one was injured," the railroad said. "The (Santa Rita) Fire Department is on scene, along with other local fire departments." The fire department responded in case a train car contained hazardous material, however, none has been found as of now. The fire department said TEP sent a crew due to concern over a downed power line.

