



# Ties and Rails

Official newsletter of the Crossville Model Railroad Club  
and Div. 16, Southeast Region, NMRA

August 2020

(931)210-5050

[www.crossvilletrains.org](http://www.crossvilletrains.org)

## ***The Prez. Sez:***

With our everchanging new world, every day becomes an adventure. The good news is, to date, none of our members, or anyone in their household, have become a victim of the Covid 19. That tells me all of us are taking the necessary precautions needed to stay safe. More and more of our visitors are wearing masks. Remember, many of them are from other states which are requiring a mask when in public.

Many people dislike being told to wear a mask and refuse to do so. In some states, and many local stores, are now requiring a mask. There have been violent physical confrontations over the requirement.

Please continue to be safe and wear a mask as it might save your, or someone you love, life. At present, we ask visitors to wear a mask if they have one. It is not mandatory in Tennessee so if they feel better without one, let it go at that.

It was announced at the meeting that donations from twenty-six members totaled over \$1,100. That indicates to me we have members who gladly give of their time and money in these trying times. Thanks to all who donated. Thanks to all members for your assistance and dedication in this trying time. Our visitor donations have also been far above average. The financial report indicated that we are averaging \$1.50 per visitor when, in the past, we were hoping for \$.50. There continues to be a debate over counting babies in strollers or children carried in arms. It helps our headcount, but it skews our per-person average.

At the July meeting, it was voted by the members present to postpone the annual picnic. We will continue to monitor the situation and hold off on that decision until we are confident attendees will be safe. It may be in a different format as well, so we are maintaining flexibility on that issue. With no picnic in August, we will have our regular membership meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> which is the second Monday.

We have three Board positions up for election. The Vice-President, Secre- *cont. on page 2*

## The Prez sez:

and the front of the house Board member. If you are interested in one of these positions, please contact any member of the nominating committee, which would be Paul, Art, or John McLeod. We have too many Johns not to be specific.

Thanks again for all your hard work and dedication to the Club.

## Which is your brain?



### Marketing Committee

### Art Landrigan

The Marketing Committee held their meeting on July 9, 2020 with 6 members in attendance.

Following some discussion, Paul F. and John C. volunteered to install the new Mall Parking Lot entrance signs on Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> with Pat T. agreeing to take pictures of the installation.

An order for an additional 1,000 CMRC Tri-folds was placed by Pat with a minor change concerning our contact info on the reverse side. Final cost was \$239.40 after shipping and they have been received in July. Thanks Pat.

Marketing currently has \$409.22 remaining in our 2020 budget following the Tri-fold expenditure.

The message on our telephone system was updated by Pat to reflect changes in our contact info,

primarily to use our website for any updated operating hours, etc.

The Committee spent considerable time in obtaining and reviewing advertising opportunities at the local 'Family Ties' and 'Beef and Barrel' tabletop systems, as requested by our President earlier. The Committee unanimously defeated the proposal due to the extremely high cost. The recommendation was also presented to our BOD during the July meeting. They concurred, as well.

Several event suggestions were discussed as to how we can better market our Club which the Marketing Committee will review and consider. One suggestion was for the month of November, which is National Model Railroading Month. Members were asked to bring additional suggestions to our next meeting.

The next Marketing Committee meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2020 at 4 PM.

If anyone has any suggestions, please E-mail Art at: [arcy22tn@gmail.com](mailto:arcy22tn@gmail.com).

## HO Scale News - Paul Falk

Due to the ongoing issues with engineers losing control of DCC locos, some changes have been incorporated in the HO layout's three wireless control systems.

First, the Digitrax UR92, that provides for the connection for Digitrax handhelds like a DT402D or DT500, has been physically relocated from Pier 2, near the tower, to the far end of Pier 1.

Second, the Digitrax LNWI, known as **Dtx1-CMRC\_HO1\_08B4-7**, that provides a wifi connection for cell phones and tablets has been physically from the tower to Pier 6. Additionally the *cont. on page 10*

## CMRC Now Accepting Nominations

To All CMRC Members

It is that time of year again when we take nominations for the various Club positions that are due for election. This year there are three positions to be elected in October. **Vice President, Secretary, and Director—Suite Front End.**

The Nominating Committee this year is **John McLeod, Art Landrigan and Paul Falk** (Chairman). Please contact anyone on the committee to place yourself or other Club member in nomination no later than the September 14, 2020 general meeting.

The nominations procedures are detailed in the Club by-laws. The relevant sections are 5.2 and 5.3 and are shown here for your convenience and can be found in the members only area of the Club web site, **Crossvilletrains.org**.

### **5.2 Nominations**

*Nominations for the office of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three At-Large Directors, as applicable, shall be accepted and verified by the Nominating Committee starting before the regular meeting in September and continuing through the start of the election meeting in October. Nominations from the floor shall be permitted in the September regular meeting.*

### **5.3 Candidate Eligibility**

*Candidates shall be Active Members or Life Members in good standing of the Club.*

*Candidates shall be permitted to run for one office only.*

Descriptions of the three (3) positions for this election are detailed below.

The Vice President position is described in the by-laws section 3.3

**3.3 Vice President** The Vice President shall act in the place of the President in the event of the latter's absence, or his or her inability or refusal to act. The Vice President shall immediately succeed to the office of the President in the event of resignation, death or disqualification of the President. The Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of the President's duties, and in conducting the Club's business.

The Secretary position is described in the by-laws section 3.4

**3.4 Secretary.** The Secretary shall conduct the correspondence pertaining to the business of the Club and keep the official records of the Club. The Secretary shall also give notice of all regular, additional, and election meetings of the Club, and keep and publish, within 10 calendar days, minutes of all meetings of the Club and the Board of Directors, as well as performing such other duties as the President from time to time request.

The At-Large Directors positions are described in the by-laws section 3.6

**3.6 At-Large Directors.** The At-Large Directors should consist of: Director of Scheduling and Attendance, Director of Suite Front End, and Director of Utility. A concise description of their duties is located in Policies of Crossville Model Railroad Club.

**The Director - Suite Front End Director** - Suite Front End position is described in the Club policies Attachment 12(2).

1. Being sure there is an adequate supply of Club tri-folds in the appropriate racks. Notify the Marketing Committee Chairman in the event the supply of the tri-folds is low.
2. Being sure there is an adequate supply of the scavenger hunt forms available. Notify Larry Lower if an additional supply must be acquired.
3. Be sure there is an adequate supply of kid's stickers. Notify the Marketing Committee Chairman if more need to be obtained.
4. Restock the front counter with hats and whistles as needed. Notify the UCRS President if the supply is running low.
5. Restock the map display with appropriate maps. Notify the Public Relations Chairman if the supply is running low.
6. Restock the Visitor's Log Book with forms as needed.
7. Put labels on donated magazines as needed. Restock counter with magazines as needed.
8. Periodically review items on the counter for disposal to the public. After coordinating with the Scale Coordinator, reduce donation prices on those items that have been on the counter for a long period (1+ month) to try to move them. Remove those items that are not moving and arrange for disposal (Train Show or dumpster).
9. Review any 'special items' secured for membership acquisition only. If they have been under the counter over a month, set on counter for the general public.
10. Arrange for an adequate supply of plastic bags under the counter for use by the general public.
11. Remove inappropriate items from under the counter that have been 'stored' there.

Respectfully presented by The Nominating Committee



**The DCC Shed @ CMRC**

**Paul Falk**

**Art Landrigan**

Welcome, nice and cool in here, come on in.

Last month we described the DCC data packet. This month we'll examine the user of these data packets, the DCC Decoder. Now, decoders come in two types, stationary and mobile. Both perform similar functions.

Stationary decoders most often to things like turnouts and signals. Think of any mechanical device and a stationary decoder can be employed. Maybe a roundtable or a drawbridge.

Mobile decoders, most often found in locomotives, range from the simple to the very talented. The function list can be very long. So simple forward and back are just the beginning. You can have headlights, both forward and rear, flashing, beacon, mars, rule 17 controls. Other lights too, cab light, ditch lights and more. Don't forget sound. Diesel sounds, steam sounds, bell sounds, air brake sounds, coupler sounds, radio communications, terminal announcements. All authentic, often recordings of real prototypical railroad equipment and people. Need more? Sure, smoke on/off and variable based on speed, throttle settings, and how hard the loco is working. Some have operating couplers that are controlled remotely via the DCC. Take off your loco's shell and you'll see all the wiring required for the functions. Or just checkout the picture of the decoder shown next to the dime for scale (see top of the right hand column).

It's important to remember all of this talent is



contained in the mobile decoder. Last month we spoke of the command station, aka "Brain Box". Well the decoder is another brainy device. A little sce-

nario. You have an SD9 heading down the track, road crossing coming up, you press the button on your controller to sound the horn. Command station issues a DCC packet to make it so.

Remember the DCC data packet consists of a *preamble*, the *address* and *instruction*, followed by the *postamble*. All the decoders "listen" to the DCC signals from the command station. Preamble says wake up, command coming. The address says the command is for a specific decoder, maybe address 1831. The command instructs the decoder with address 1831 to sound the horn. The decoder (with its computer like processor) interprets the instruction, uses its memory of functions to now find the audio file, also in memory, turns on the sound system contained in the decoder and outputs the sound of the horn appropriate for an EMD SD9 to the speaker wires. Why an SD9?

The decoder was programmed to think it is an SD9. Meanwhile the decoder is also still routing power to the drive system at the speed you have asked for and flashing the headlight to resemble a Mars light. Lots going on in such a little package.

This is a very simple explanation of DCC decoders. If you want more detailed information, just a quick look at a web site like <https://dccwiki.com/>

*Cont. on page 6*

Decoder will start you on the path to greater appreciation of our little brainy decoders.

Remember, one-on-one DCC training is always available, so let us know. We are here to help. We welcome your interest and comments. Feel free to contact either Paul Falk (pfalk1@gmail.com) or Art Landrigan (arcy22tn@gmail.com) with questions, comments or ideas.



## N Scale News - Jan Novack

Work has started on a modification to the track layout for the main and freight lines around the control panel. The revision was presented to the N scalers at a recent meeting with a favorable response. The redesign will provide two longer passing sidings for the main line, and an eventual design of the yard off the freight line. The connecting line to the mountain line will be removed (it turns out there was no power to that connection anyway). We have started with cleaning up some of the wiring under the area and removing the scenery and landscaping and preparing the table top for new roadbed and track.

The freight line will be taken down and redone first. Once the revision is operational, we will take down the main line and complete its change. So while this project is underway, N scale will have only two lines operating. The project is being undertaken to improve operations for bi-directional running of the trains.

## Did You Know . . . .

Surviving Tennessee Central Stations

Brush Creek

Carthage Junction

Clarksville

Cookeville—used as a museum

Crossville—used as a business

Emory Gap

Lebanon—used by the Nashville & Eastern

Mayland—Used as a restaurant in Crossville

## Check out 6,000 train books.

Or 100,000 train photos. Or 50,000 train magazines. In fact, there are a lot of things you should be checking out at the National Model Railroad Association's Kalmbach Memorial Library. You'll find everything from prototype railroad periodicals to vintage model kit instructions.

As an NMRA member, you have easy access to everything – it's all just a phone call, letter, or email away. Our staff will even help you do research about virtually any train topic, whether it's model or prototype.

Visit one of the world's largest train libraries at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). You'll find that the NMRA has a lot to offer modelers. Check it all out!



We make it even more fun.  
[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)  
423-892-2846

## Breaking News!

Many of you are aware that, in recent years, we have had different problems with the heating/air conditioning in the suite.

The new Mall owner has indicated that he will be making upgrades to the Mall. On Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, the first of the new heating units (see below) were delivered.

This is the first part of the new NVAC units and all new roof to be installed on our wing before the end of August.



## News from the NMRA

On July 27<sup>th</sup> the Plateau Division held their quarterly meeting in the Community Room at the Crossville Outlet Center.

After receiving reports from the Chief Clerk and the Paymaster, Superintendent Shallcross requested volunteers to serve on the annual Nominating Committee. This year we will be holding elections for the Superintendent, Chief Clerk, and one Directors positions. Vince D'Alessandro volunteered to serve as the Chairman of the committee and will be assisted by Art Landrigan and Mike Durnwald.

Art raised the question as to whether the members were interested in sponsoring another Mini-Meet during the latter part of 2021. With the understanding that we did not know what effect the Covid 19 would have on our operations, the general feeling was that we should start thinking about it and the different aspects of the Meet including the possibility of Clinics and inviting the Miami Valley Modelers (from Ohio) to participate. We would have a combination of Mini-Meet and Operations Weekend. There will be further discussion in the quarterly meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Paul presented a short clinic and demonstration on the installation and operation of the BLI Go-Pack keep alive in a 4-6-2 and a SD9.

## Membership

John Conor

Well, once again there are no new membership applications pending yet for the upcoming August meeting. I'm not sure if our limited hours are having an impact or not, but it's more likely that folks don't want to be put in high contact situations yet.

Please don't be discouraged. Our Club has a place in the here and now for hobbyists, train lovers, railroad historians and just ol' train geeks!

Your efforts to display our Club in its best light will pay dividends sooner or later so just keep up the effort. Besides there is still time for a person or persons to submit applications before the next meeting.

Hope to see you there to find out.

## Important Dates in Railroad History

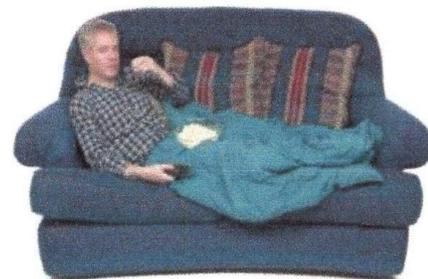
*From NMRA calendar*

8/8/1829—Stourbridge Lion first run, Honesdale, PA

8/25/1877—Joshua Lionel Cohen is born

8/28/1864—First permanent RPO route established

8/28/1830—First Baltimore & Ohio steam run, Tom Thumb



## HAVE 50 MODEL RAILROADING CLINICS RIGHT IN YOUR LIVING ROOM.

Just because you can't make it to a national convention doesn't mean you have to miss out. Right now the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library has over 50 DVDs of clinics presented at national conventions from 2002 to 2010. Each is available for NMRA members to borrow for the cost of processing and postage.

So you can see clinics on everything from decoders to design, tools to techniques, helixes to highways, and research to resin casting.

All from the comfort of your very own couch.

Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) and go to the Kalmbach Memorial Library page for a complete listing. Or call the Library at 423-894-8144.



**We make it even more fun.**

[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)

Then, get that popcorn ready.



**Plateau Division**  
**Southeastern Region**  
**National Model Railroad Assoc.**

In the August 2020 issue of the nmra magazine, there was an article in the Division Business Car column under the heading **A Club that's also a Division?** This article is copied below.

### **Division News by Jim Zinser, MMR**

"Now you know something about 100% NMRA Member clubs, but what about a club that's also an NMRA Division? Well, it turns out the club in question actually isn't, but the story sheds some light on a problem many Divisions have: the distance between members. And I don't mean social distancing in feet; I mean distances requiring an hour-and-half drive to get close enough to be six feet apart!

One of the newer additions to the roster of newsletters I receive is called *Ties and Rails*. According to its masthead, it is "the official publication of the Crossville Model Railroad Club and Division 16 of the Southeastern Region, NMRA." How can this be? I was curious, so I shot an email off to the Division's Superintendent, Tom Shallcross. Here, in part, is what he had to say.

"Our situation here in the Crossville, Tennessee, area was that we were far removed from the rest of our Division members. Most Division activities were centered in the Chattanooga area because that's where approximately 80-plus percent of the members lived. It got to the point that members in the Crossville area in the Crossville area didn't want to travel an hour and a half, one way, for a one hour

meeting.

When we approached the Region about splitting off and forming a Division, we first did it pretty much on an informal basis. We created two "semi-divisions" called Headquarters-North (Crossville Area) and Headquarters-South (Chattanooga area).

"After a fair amount of selling of the idea, mostly to the Crossville Model Railroad Club (approximately 60 members at the time) we recruited additional active members for the "North Division." At this point we indicated to the Region we would like to rename our subdivision, thus actually forming a new full Division called the Plateau Division (numerically Division 16.)

"Our newest Division members were all members of the Crossville Model Railroad Club (or their spouses). Rather than write two separate newsletters each month, we combined them.

"The club is unique in that it has five scales and is open to the general public six days a week (of course, this has been suspended temporarily due to the virus).

"However, we have separate Division activities (meetings, mini-meets, Ops weekends, etc.). And we have our own officers and by-laws. Our membership is open to all model railroaders, even if they are not members of the CMRC. Conversely all members of the CMRC are not members of the Divi-

sion, and they have their own officers, etc. - two completely separate entities.”

Thanks, Tom. Even though the club and the Division are two separate entities, they work together to promote model railroading, principally via the public outreach the club’s layout makes possible. But with so many shared members, there could come a day when the non-NMRA members of the club become NMRA members too. So some day the club could end up actually being the first 100% NMRA Division Club...or the first 100% NMRA Club Division...or something like that.

*Editor’s Note:* For those of you that are not familiar with the NMRA and/or the *nmra magazine*, the NMRA is a membership organization of Model Railroaders world wide and the *nmra magazine* goes to those NMRA members that subscribe.

Exposure in the magazine may cause some NMRA members that are traveling through the area to plan on stopping in Crossville or may encourage some to use the CMRC display as a destination.

**HO Scale News** (*cont. from page 2*) LNWI WiFi has been configured to use only WiFi channel 8.

Third, the JMRI WiFi source, known as **CMRC-HO** that provides a WiFi connection for cell phones and tablets has been configured to use only WiFi channel 11.

The relocation and changes to these items is in an effort to reduce the interference and cross-talk possibilities of having the three transmitters co-located at the tower.

Please note that no changes to passwords have been made.

Please report any issues with DCC wireless

control methods to Paul at [pfalk1@gmail.com](mailto:pfalk1@gmail.com). Include as much detail as you can to help with troubleshooting.

Weekly maintenance on the HO command station has shown that many operators are not dispatching/releasing their locos. Please remember to do so, as this can be a reason for some controllers asking to “steal” a cab number.

Work continues on the installation of the signal system. It is going a little slower than anticipated as we have had to upgrade some of the wiring on the turnouts and the safety zones. So far, everything that has been installed is operating as expected.

## Public Relations

**Bill Bly**

Members of the Public Relations Committee had an impromptu meeting at the Club. Ann G., Jim G., and Bill B. were in attendance.

We reviewed our recent outreach campaigns for the Club reopening and the 4th of July which were well received.

As the Covid 19 issue remains a threat to the area, we are limited in activities. We will continue to work with strategic partners as possible. In addition we will be initiating new activities to promote the Club and attract visitors as we continue to raise awareness.

A new focus will be to push out information making more use of the website to share articles, news and a calendar of events. For now we are focusing on several key events to attract visitors using promotional campaigns. We will continue to develop media to support these events and share press releases. We have ideas for several articles to submit to publications.

# Ties and Rails Calendar

Tennessee Central Railway Museum, 220 Willow Street, Nashville, TN has numerous excursions throughout the year as listed in the calendar. Contact them at 615-241-0436 for specific information regarding any trip.

<b>August 2020</b>	<b>Clean Up</b>	<b>Club</b>	<b>HO/N/Z Scales</b>
8/6/20	Marketing Mtg.	Club	4:00 PM
8/10/20	BOD Meeting	Club	4:30 PM
8/10/20	Member Mtg.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	6:00 PM
8/15/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	DelMonaco Winery Trip to Baxter
8/29-30/20	Train Show	NC Transportation Museum 1 Samuel Spencer Drive, Spencer, NC	Sat. 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. Noon to 5:00 PM
<b>Sept. 2020</b>	<b>Clean Up</b>	<b>Club</b>	<b>O/G Scales</b>
9/5/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Fall Festival Excursion to Watertown
9/7/20	HO Meeting	Suite 112. Crossville Outlet Center	10:00 AM
9/10/20	Marketing Mtg.	Club	4:00 PM
9/14/20	BOD Meeting	Club	4:30 PM
9/14/20	Member Mtg.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	6:00 PM
9/12/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	DelMonaco Winery Excursion to Baxter
9/26/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Train Robbery Excursion to Watertown
<b>October 2020</b>	<b>Clean Up</b>	<b>Club</b>	<b>HO/N/Z Scales</b>
10/3/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Fall Festival Excursion to Baxter
10/5/20	Ops Session	Club	4:00 PM
10/8/20	Marketing Mtg.	Club	4:00 PM
10/10/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Yard Sale Excursion to Watertown
10/12/20	BOD Meeting	Club	4:30 PM
10/12/20	Member Mtg.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	6:00 PM
10/17/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	DelMonaco Winery Excursion to Baxter
10/26/20	Plateau Div.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	10:00 AM