

The Pie Card

Volume 60, May 2026, Number 5

Division 8, Mid Central Region, National Model Railroad Association

NMRA

Division 8

MID CENTRAL
REGION



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

By Ron Ellison

You may have heard the adage *the world is created by those who show up*. That is also the case with Division 8. Those who show up make anything we've accomplished at Division 8 a reality. It's not one or two people, or your board – although your board does a lot. It's everyone showing up and working together. The Train Show and Sale is just such an example. So, thank you to all who showed up whether you volunteered, helped with a layout, provided the test track, or just purchased a ticket.

Total attendance was 1,030, our second highest attendance ever. We don't publish financials, but the spring show was our also our second highest profit to date. It's all possible because of those who showed up. So again, thank you!

And we have some new opportunities for you. Just look to the right of this column where *The Pie Card* Editor, Bob Dawson, lists some of the most important highlights of our Timetable every month. Besides our regular monthly membership meetings, which are always on the third Saturday of the month for the rest of this year, there are some extra opportunities to show up.

On May 5th from 9 to 5 there is La Grange Rail Fest 2026. Division 8 will be hosting multiple layouts including O, HO, and N scales at CityPlace Pavilion One. Plus, a small timesaver layout where you can learn the fundamentals of operations with a throttle in your hand.

In early June, Thursday the 4th through Sunday the 7th, the Mid-Central Region Convention Whistle-Stop Dayton. See the flyer later in this edition of *The Pie Card* for more information and a link to reserve. There's lots of non-rail activities in Dayton if any in your traveling party are not rail enthusiasts.

On Saturday July 18th we will gather for our annual summer picnic at the Depot Museum in Salem. This year, we will gather at 11:30 with a buffet lunch at 12:00. Following lunch, we will announce the 2025/2026 Contest Year winners, Third, Second and First Place and present the gift certificates, \$100, \$75 and \$50 dollars. We mention the dollars to remind you of another adage – Why was Rembrandt an impressionist painter? For the Monet. And note, entering and voting in the Monthly Model Contest counts as showing up.

It may seem like we were just at the Depot Museum in Salem, Indiana. But it's been 5 years since we last visited. You might remember. It was a costume party – we all wore masks. After the contest awards, there will be a short program on the history of the Monon Railroad. The Depot Museum opens at 10 AM and closes at 5 PM so come early or stay after the Picnic and have a look around. There's lots of Monon to see!

Advance tickets are just \$10.00 per person. You can click the link in the flyer later in this edition of *The Pie Card* to purchase your tickets. Advance tickets must be purchased by Sunday, July 12, 2026.

So, if you read the column all the way down here. And especially if you don't usually show up, you are always more than welcome to join us. We're a friendly bunch. And I'm told many join the Scale Model Railroad Hobby for the fellowship. Appearing at a membership meeting via ZOOM counts! We look forward to seeing you soon.

TIME TABLE

May 9, Sat 9AM-5PM, LaGrange, KY Railfest.

May 16, Sat 2PM, Div 8 Hybrid meeting, Jeffersontown Library and Zoom.

Jun 4-7, Mid Central Region Convention, Dayton, OH.

Jun 20, Sat 2PM, Div 8 Hybrid meeting, Jeffersontown Library and Zoom.

July 18, Sat, Div 8 Picnic, 11:30AM Meet & Greet, 12:00 Lunch, Salem, IN, Depot Museum.

For the complete Time Table, find it online here -
[Division 8 Timetable](#)

MAY 2026 CHARLIE KEELING HYBRID MODEL CONTEST*By Barry Christensen, Contest Chairman*

May	Cabooses
June	Open loads
July	NO CONTEST
August	MOW equipment
September	Photos (model) and photos (prototype)
October	Steam locomotives
November	Displays (no size limit)
December	Highway vehicles
January	Freight cars
February	Non-steam motive power
March	Structures
April	Passenger cars

For April, Division 8's Charlie Keeling Hybrid Model Contest category was passenger cars. There were seven entries in this very popular subject, continuing the trend of older models transformed into show pieces.

Honorable mention goes to Bob Frankrone for Catskill Mountain Scenic railcar, Craig Hatter for Penn Central office car Jeffersonville, Eric Waggoner for L&N heavyweight sleeper, and Russ Weis for Onondaga Valley Pullman.

Third place goes to Steve Lasher for The Rolling Casino. Second place goes to David Mertz for City of New Orleans passenger car. First place goes to Ed Brennan MMR® for Norfolk & Western heavyweight diner. Congratulations to our modelers for presenting some wonderful and varied passenger rolling stock.

The revised point totals are now: Ed Brennan MMR® with 25, Bob Frankrone with 20, Steve Lasher with 17, Craig Hatter with 13, Randy Griggs with 11, Russ Weis with 9, Rudy Licandro with 6, Al Goodman, Scott Griggs, and John Helton with 5 each, John Gillespie, Bob Kuchler MMR®, David Mertz, and Fred Soward MMR® with 3 each, Chris Broughton MMR® and Eric Waggoner with 2 each, and Sean Britt, Ethan Davis, and Duke Green with 1 each.

The May Contest is **CABOOSES**



B&O Caboose
Jeffersonville,
IN, 1968.

*Photo by Charlie
Keeling*

(continued to column 2)

**MAY MEETING INFORMATION**

The May Division 8 meeting is 2 PM Saturday, May 16, 2026, at the Jeffersontown Library, 10635 Watterson Trail, Louisville, KY 40299. Craig Hatter is presenting: "Vehicles, who needs them?" To maintain the security of the meeting, the Zoom connection information will be sent directly to members by email about a week prior to the meeting and will not be published online.

CONTEST *(continued from column 1)*

We will send out a reminder but below is the Contest timeline for May:

- May 2nd - First day to submit entries
- May 9th - Last day to submit entries
- May 14th - Members will receive the Contest Ballot
- May 14th & 15th - Voting in the Contest Ballot ends @ 10:00 PM on the 15th
- May 16th - Winners announced at the meeting - 1st, 2nd and 3rd
- June 6th - First day to submit June contest entries **OPEN LOADS**

For complete Contest information, visit the Division 8 website here <https://div8-mcr-nmra.org/2463-2/>

To enter the May Contest, click <https://forms.gle/BRbXBcXChiRihBhL8> and follow the simple instructions in the form. Entering the Contest has never been easier.

See contest photos beginning on page 3.

MEMBER WELFARE

By Mike Berry Member Welfare Chairman

This month member Ed Brennan's wife Jo Ann had surgery and was hospitalized for a couple of days. She is home recuperating now. A get well card and a gift card were sent to her from the Division. And also in the Brennan family, Ed has sent a \$40 donation to the Member Welfare Fund. It stands now at \$140.

Please let us know if you hear of a member or their family with any issues.



FIRST PLACE

Left: Ed Brennan's HO "Norfolk & Western HO Scale Heavyweight Diner." Ed started with a brass heavyweight car by S. Soho & Co. The brass was tarnished. He stripped it with Scale Coat paint remover then primed it and painted in N&W Colors. He added air hoses, diaphragms, and other external details. He also added a detailed interior.

SECOND PLACE

David Mertz's HO "City of New Orleans Passenger Car"

Right: The detailing of David's model was inspired by a line from the song *The City of New Orleans*, "15 cars and 15 riders." David painted the interior and added fifteen riders. He added metal wheels and other details.

David hopes to eventually have fifteen cars to match the train in the song.



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APRIL CHARLIE KEELING MODEL CONTEST (continued from page 3)

THIRD PLACE (below)



Steve Lasher's HO "The Rolling Casino."

The "Rock River" is a Solarium Observation car from Walthers. The imaginary prototype operated on his Burlington, Cedar Rapids, and Northern road overnight from Chicago to Omaha and became quite popular with the gambling crowd. Steve added DCC controlled marker lights and lounge area lights. It also includes upgraded details such as rear air and signal hoses and steam lines and new Cal-Scale steam/vapor traps.

HONORABLE MENTION (four)



Left: Eric Waggoner's HO "L & N Heavyweight Sleeper."

This is a Walthers model with no modifications.

Right: Craig Hatter's HO "Penn Central Office Car JEFFERSONVILLE,"

A Kato NYC version model. He repainted and decaled the letter board and added the name "Jeffersonville" to the car.



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Left: Bob Frankrone’s HO “Catskill Mountain Scenic Railcar.”
Using an Athearn 40-foot flatcar as a base, Bob built this open-air passenger car like the ones used on the Catskill Mountain Scenic Railroad.

Right: Russ Weis’ HO “Onondaga Valley Pullman.”
Russ replaced the trucks and added body mounted couplers along with other modifications to this AHM/Rivarossi Pullman.



LIFE MEMBERSHPS

Bill Lynch with his NMRA Life Membership card at the 2026 Division 8 Spring Train Show and Sale. Bill said he had just “rediscovered his card” and brought it to the show for us to see.

The National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) no longer offers the standard Life Member category to new applicants. Existing Life Members retain benefits—including both print and digital NMRA Magazine and voting rights.

"Honorary Life Membership" is still awarded by NMRA. This is the highest honor bestowed for voluntary service.

Photo by Barbara Soward

ANOTHER DIVISION 8 LIFE MEMBER

CONGRATULATIONS to another Division 8 Life Member, **John Barbee**, for 50 years as a member of NMRA.



APRIL MEETING PHOTOS

Photos by Barbara Soward



Above: In his presentation at the April Meeting, “Open Loads Revisited”, Bob Frankrone described his inspirations for many of his open load models, and the materials he used to create them. Bob brought a selection of some of his models and displayed them on the “Show and Tell table” at the meeting.



Above: Steve Lasher brought this HO model of a Cotton Belt (SSW) L-1 Mountain Locomotive #815 for the “Show and Tell” table. The prototype was built at the Cotton Belt’s Pine Bluff Shops in 1942.

Right: Fred Soward gave a presentation about the 2026 Mid-Central Region Convention, *Whistle Stop, Dayton*. Convention dates are June 4 thru 7.

Information is found in this issue. You can also access Convention information at: <https://www.modelraildayton.com/>



APRIL MEETING REPORT

By Rick Maloney MMR® Division 8 Clerk

The Division 8 Membership meeting was held at the Jeffersontown branch of the Louisville Free Public Library on April 18, 2026. This was a hybrid meeting: Total attendance was thirty-eight, with twenty-three members and one spouse in person at the library and thirteen members and one spouse attending on Zoom. There were no guests.

Superintendent Ron Ellison called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. He reported that we have three new members Mikel Clark, Nicholas Kim, and Michael Paul who were not in attendance. We were pleased to have Joe Schwerer, Don Heath and Wilson Fryar who recently joined the Division with us today.

Mike Berry gave his Member Welfare Report. He reported that Jo Ann Brennan, wife of Ed Brennan had been hospitalized and is recovering at home. She has been sent a get-well card and a gift certificate. Mike reported that Eddie James, a dealer who has set up at every Division 8 Train Show and Sale except our last one, was home and recovering from a recent illness. Mike said he was sent a get-well card.

Barry Christensen gave the results of the monthly model contest. Check out the photos in the Pie Card. Barry reminded us that May's contest will be Cabooses.

Fred Soward reviewed the proposed changes to the Division 8 MCR NMRA Bylaws. After a motion and a second, the changes to the Bylaws were approved as presented by a vote of the membership.

Fred also gave an update on the 2026 Mid Central Region Convention which will be held in Dayton.

Russ Weis welcomed Bob Frankrone, today's speaker. Bob gave his presentation "Open Loads Revisited." Next month's presenter will be Craig Hatter with "Vehicles, Who Needs Them?"

Ron reminded us that the Division 8 picnic will be held Saturday, July 18, 2026, at Salem Depot Museum, Salem, IN. After a short break Bob Frankrone gave his presentation after which the meeting was adjourned.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Stan White Membership Relations Chairman

As of the last report received from the Mid Central Region, we have 158 active members. We had two renewals: Carl and Rebecca Krull. We also have two thirty-day past-due members: Paul Downs and John Wesson. We have three new members: Michael Paul, Mikel Clark and Nicolas Kim.

FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

By Fred Soward MMR®, Division 8 Assistant Superintendent

I'm told that the Pennsylvania Southern equipment that went to Bob Weinheimer's local hobby shop is selling well. It's good to know that pieces of the railroad will live on as scattered bits on many home and club layouts.

If you've been reading this column over the past few months, you know we've been making steady progress to begin operating sessions on Rick Maloney's layout. Our planned mid-April session turned into an EARLY April run-through. It met all our expectations, so we're looking at another session in early May. We all learned some things to make it better and smoother next time. We'll keep y'all posted and hopefully start scheduling some regular operating sessions this summer.

While on a long overdue quick trip to visit friends & family in Wisconsin and Minnesota, Barbara took a few prototype railroad photos while I was driving. She was able to catch photos of the BNSF units that switch the yard in Duluth and she caught a photo of an interesting bulkhead flatcar open load in the Superior, WI, UP yard that went directly to Bob Frankrone. Our timing was excellent as we arrived a few days after a snowstorm and left the day before a storm that delivered nearly two feet of snow!

Once again, most of my month was focused on NMRA National, Region, and Division 8 work effort. The only thing that happened on our layout this month was some 3D printing while I was working on other tasks.

A TRIP ACROSS THE BORDER

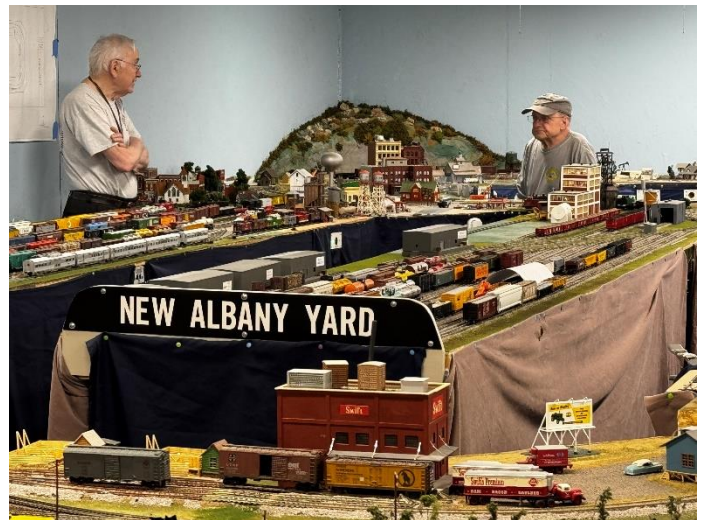
By Fred Soward MMR[®], photos by the author

With both the Southern Indiana Railroad Club and the K&I Model Railroad Club open on Saturday, April 11, Russ Weis and Fred Soward decided to make a border crossing (both clubs are located across the Ohio River from Louisville in Southern Indiana). It was great catching up on all the new things happening and with the people working at both Division 8 100% NMRA model railroad clubs.



Left: Duke Green dispatching trains on the Southern Indiana Railroad (SIR).

Right: Ken Petitt (l) and Russ Weis (r) having a very serious conversation about the SIR.



Left: Darcy Elliot's VIA TurboTrain, courtesy of a Rapido "Mystery Box" a few months ago, running on the SIR.

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A TRIP ACROSS THE BORDER (continued from page 8)



Above: David Mertz keeping a close watch on the newly reconditioned layout donated to the K&I by the family of Don Copley.

Below: Mike Berry checking out a very old Southern Railway Rule Book. Mike & Fred Soward were using the big K&I layout as a background while shooting video for an upcoming NMRA online course that's planned to be released this summer.



Russ Weis had a great time visiting the K&I team members running the layouts.

TRACKSIDE WITH FRED AND BARBARA

By Fred Soward MMR[®], photos by Barbara Soward

On the way home from visiting family in Northern Minnesota, our path almost always takes us through Duluth, MN, and Superior, WI. There's usually a quick catch of something on the rails. This time, there wasn't time to stop and cruise around the industrial areas, but Barbara was quick with her phone while I focused on the traffic on the road.



Left: BNSF 2607 & BNSF 2753 work together in the Duluth yard and industrial areas. This is the first time we've seen them in a location where we could get 'em both in a photo. BNSF 2607 started life as a GP35 and is now a rebuilt GP39-3 while BNSF 2753 was originally built as a Southern Railroad GP30 is now a GP39E.

Right: Just a zoom on BNSF 2753.



Left: An open load! Those are telephone/utility poles on the bulkhead flatcar in the UP yard on the west end of Superior, WI.

Right: Empty CN (formerly DM&IR) taconite ore cars lined up below the ore trestles in Duluth, MN, waiting to return to iron ore processing plants across Minnesota.

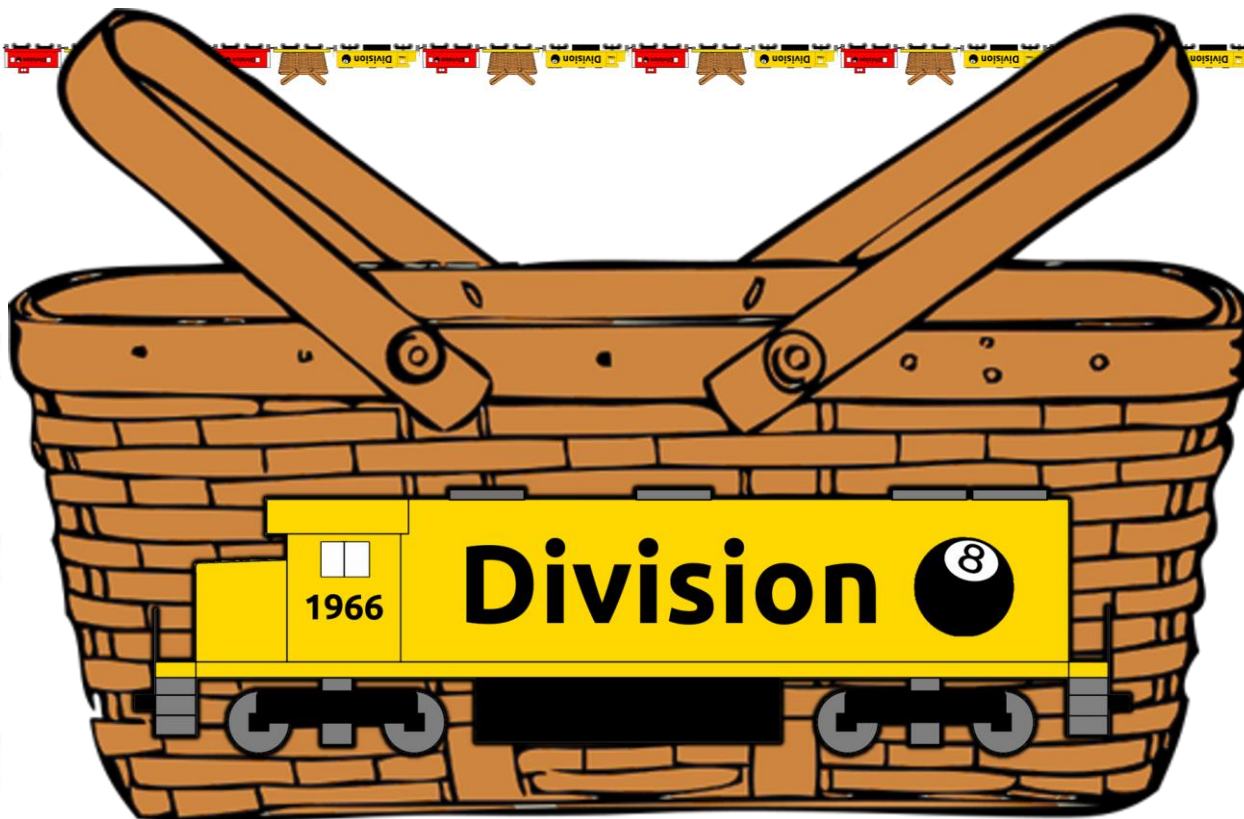


MORE PHOTOS FROM THE SPRING TRAIN SHOW AND SALE

Photos by Fred Soward MMR®

As always, the train show depends on volunteers and train layouts. Among those are the members who help with the dealer move-in early in the morning of the show. Bottom right: T-TRAK setting up.





DIVISION 8 PICNIC

SATURDAY JULY 18, 2026

DEPOT MUSEUM
206 SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE
SALEM, IN 47167

[MAP LINK TO SALEM DEPOT](#)

ANNUAL AWARDS FOR THE MODEL CONTEST WILL BE PRESENTED
AND CATERED LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED
FOLLOWED BY A BRIEF PROGRAM

YOU'LL HAVE SOME FREE TIME TO SEE THE MUSEUM

ADVANCE TICKETS ARE \$10

[CLICK TO BUY NOW](#)

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the
date!**

LA GRANGE, KY
RAIL FEST

**may
9
2026**

Get ready for a weekend you won't want to miss!
Rail Fest is on the way, and its full steam ahead!

Friday, May 8th: 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Kick things off with live entertainment.

Saturday, May 9th: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, enjoy vendors, food, trains, and plenty of family fun -be sure to stroll through the Farmers Market, open all day. Then grab a seat for a concert on Main from 5:00 –7:00 PM!

Bring the family, invite your friends, and come celebrate La Grange with us. It's going to be a fantastic day.

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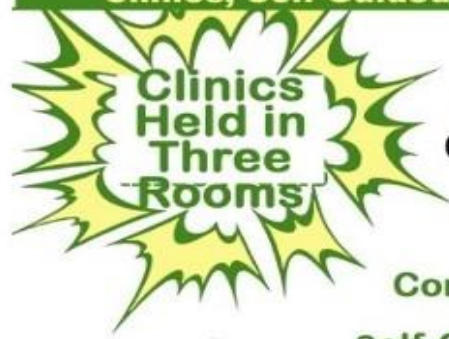
IF YOU SUBSCRIBE, You'll receive an updated list every Sunday morning

Whistle Stop Dayton MID-CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION

June 4 - 7, 2026
DAYTON, OHIO



**Layout Tours and Op Sessions
Model Contest, /Celebration, Displays,
Clinics, Self-Guided Tours, Consignment Sales & Banquet**



Clinics Morning, Afternoon and Evening
-Topics include: Prototype and Models that Followed,
Growing Up with the V & O plus Dayton & Troy Electric Railroad
Model Contests/Celebration:
Models Judged by AP

Company Store: Will be offering Convention Cars

Self-Guided Local Attractions:
Rail Tours, Non-rail Activities, including area Museums and Historical sites

Layout Tours & OP Sessions: Self Guided Friday, Saturday & Sunday

Evening Displays: T-Trak

Consignment Sales: Sell your excess items



Banquet Speake: Otto M. Vondrak
Clinic Topic
The Impact of Allen McClelland's
Virginia & Ohio
Banquet Topic:
90 Years of the RMC History



For More Information and Reservations

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Code



Host Hotel - Marriott University of Dayton

2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Roy Masterson, Chairman, 2026 Convention



Have you registered for the 2026 NMRA National Convention being held in Chattanooga, Tennessee from **July 27 to August 2**. At the end of February over 800 NMRA members had registered. And we are still 5 months away from the start of the convention! Rooms are still available at the Chattanooga Marriott Downtown Hotel connected to the Chattanooga Convention Center.

The [Convention Registration website](#) now has all the current extra-fare items available with more to come.

These extra-fare items will be popular attractions, and many could sell out. Head over to the convention website to lock in the ones you want:

- Layout Tours
- Prototype Tours
- Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Bus tour for 50 attendees.
- Modeling with the Masters®
- TVRM Missionary Ridge Local with Backshop Tour on Wednesday pulled by the 4501 for 150 attendees
- TVRM Dinner Trains on Tuesday and Wednesday for 102 attendees
- TVRM Homefront Tea Room Experience with 2 seatings for 50 attendees each
- TVRM Night Photo Shoot Wednesday night for 100 attendees
- TVRM Hiwassee Loop Excursion Train on Friday for 193 attendees
- TVRM Summerville Steam Special on Thursday (chartered by ScaleTrains) and pulled by the 4501 with room for 300 attendees.

Instead of having a banquet at this year's convention the following extra-fare social events are available for convention attendees at the Chattanooga Marriott Downtown tailgate Party & Welcome Reception – Monday 7:00 PM

- Tailgate Party & Welcome Reception – Monday 7:00 PM
- Rooftop Garden Ice Cream Social – Wednesday 7:00 PM
- Pizza Party – Friday 7:00 PM

Convention registration is open at nmra2026.org. After you register for the convention, you will receive an email with the code to register at the Marriott at the special convention rate



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[UpScale Hobbies](#)



SCALE REPRODUCTIONS
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HO Scale
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Shop the Online Store
[R & J Details](#)

**THE DEPOT RAILROAD
 MUSEUM**

Part of the John Hay Center
 206 S College Ave
 Salem, IN 47167
 (812) 883-1884

CLICK FOR HOURS & MORE INFORMATION
[The Depot Railroad Museum](#)

OFFICERS

Superintendent:	Ron Ellison
Asst. Supt:	Fred Soward
Clerk:	Rick Maloney
Treasurer:	Mike Berry

TRUSTEES

Stan White
Darcy Elliott
Russ Weis

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Contests	Barry Christensen
Tool Room Manager	Mike Berry
Member Relations	Stan White
Member Welfare	Mike Berry
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Pie Card	Bob Dawson
Train Show and Sale	Ron Ellison
T-Trak	Bruce DeMaeyer
Webmaster	Rob Toler

MID CENTRAL REGION OFFICERS

President:	Jerry Doyle
Vice-president:	Frank Trocchia
Secretary:	Bruce DeMaeyer
Treasurer:	Barbara Soward

To contact a Division 8 board member or committee director call or text (502) 653-5371 and tell us your needs. We'll get back to you. To contact Division 8 or any board member or committee director by email use - division8.mcr.nmra@gmail.com

THE PIE CARD

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Please address all correspondence to Bob Dawson, Editor, 7305 Ticonderoga Dr., Louisville, KY 40214, or email: dawsobl@aol.com.

Deadline for submission of articles is the 20th day of the previous month. The Pie Card goes to press by the first of each month. Photos are preferred to be a JPEG format. Documents should be submitted as a Word or similar format. No PDF's please.

DIVISION 8 COMPANY STORE IS TEMPORARILY CLOSED

The Company Store is closed. Not only are we on holiday but if you have not heard, there is a new NMRA logo. The Division 8 logo will also be changing to be co-branded with the NMRA logo. The Company Store is currently working with our vendor to develop the new designs. And there will be some new items along with all the current items with the NEW logo. As soon as new items are available, we will update the Company Store link and let you know.