

The Pie Card

Volume 60, November 2026, Number 11

Division 8, Mid Central Region, National Model Railroad Association



MID CENTRAL
REGION



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

By Darcy Elliott

“Why Train Shows Are Important — And Why Your Voice Matters Too”

One thing I’ve learned from displaying at the Greentree Mall is this: almost everyone has a train story. It doesn’t matter if they’re eight or eighty — you mention trains, and a memory comes out. A train around the Christmas tree. A family member who worked for the railroad. Riding the Cardinal or the Floridian as a kid. Watching freights roll by on a summer night. Ninety-nine percent of the people who stop to talk aren’t just curious — they’re connected. They’re carrying a story, and they’re waiting for someone to listen.

That’s why our Train Show and Sale is so important.

It’s not just layouts, vendors, and crowds. It’s a gathering place for all those stories. It’s where people rediscover a piece of themselves. It’s where kids see a locomotive move and suddenly understand why their parents or grandparents loved trains. It’s where someone who hasn’t touched a model in decades feels that spark again.

But here’s something we all run into — especially this time of year. We get busy.

We focus on tasks, deadlines, checklists, and efficiency. We rush from one thing to the next, trying to keep everything moving. And when that happens, we sometimes forget the most important part of what we’re doing: the people. We forget to slow down long enough to relate, to connect, to hear someone’s story. We forget that the quality of our interactions matters far more than the number of tasks we check off.

Evangelism in our hobby isn’t about selling memberships or giving a pitch. It’s about remembering that every person who walks through the door has a story worth hearing. When you greet someone at the show, you’re not just helping them find a vendor or answering a question — you’re opening a door. When you ask, “Did you ever have trains growing up?” you’re inviting their story out into the open. When you listen — really listen — you’re giving them a reason to stay a little longer and feel a little more welcome.

We all have our strong points. Some of us build. Some of us organize. Some of us teach. Some of us troubleshoot. But the strength that matters most in November is the ability to connect. To slow down. To be present. To make someone feel seen.

And here’s the best part: those stories don’t end at the Train Show and Sale. Some newcomers will come back. Some will attend a meeting. Some will join the Division. And some will walk through the door at our December Christmas Dinner, where they’ll discover the second half of what makes Division 8 special — fellowship, warmth, and belonging.

The Train Show and Sale brings people in. Their stories keep them connected. Our hospitality helps them stay.

As we head into November, let’s be ambassadors of the hobby. Slow down. Listen. Share. Connect. That simple exchange is the most powerful outreach tool we have.

TIME TABLE

Nov 14, Sat 10AM-3PM, Div 8 Train Show and Sale, Safin Center, Holy Family Parish.

Nov 21, Sat 2PM, Div 8 Hybrid meeting, Jeffersontown Library and Zoom.

Dec 6, Sun 5PM, Div 8 Christmas Party Kingfish, River Road, Louisville.

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

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

Mar 13, Sat 2PM, Div 8 Hybrid meeting, Jeffersontown Library and Zoom.

Mar 20, Sat 10AM-3PM. Div 8 Train Show & Sale.

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

Darcy

NOVEMBER 2026 CHARLIE KEELING HYBRID MODEL CONTEST

By Barry Christensen, Contest Chairman

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

The October version of the 2026-2027 Charlie Keeling Hybrid Model Contest had five entries in the steam locomotives category. Some wonderful kit-bashed and scratch-built models were entered.

Honorable mention goes to Bob Frankrone for "Old Time Steam," and to Steve Lasher for "Carolina Royalty," both evoking colorful southern themes.

There was no third-place model due to having a tie for second place between Chris Broughton MMR for "HOn30 Sandy River Railroad Baldwin 2-6-0," and Russ Weis for "Shop Engine." First place went to Scott Griggs for the second year in a row for "Scratch-built S scale N&W J #600." Congratulations to each steam modeler!

A huge thank you to the Division 8 membership for casting a total of 46 ballots in the October model contest, a big increase! Voting in the monthly contest is an easy and effective way to encourage excellent modeling among our division friends.

The revised point totals are now: Chris Broughton MMR with 11, Russ Weis with 7, Bob Frankrone with 6, Scott Griggs with 5, Paul Downs, Craig Hatter, and Steve Lasher with 4 each, David Mertz with 3, and Al Goodman, Randy Griggs, and Eric Waggoner with 2 each.

The November Contest is **DISPLAYS**. A display may be of any size, including a diorama or a module, and built separately from any layout it later may have been added to.

(continued to column 2)



NOVEMBER MEETING INFORMATION

The November Division 8 meeting is 2 PM Saturday, November 21, 2026, at the Jeffersontown Library, 10635 Watterson Trail, Louisville, KY 40299. Al Goodman is presenting "The White Train." 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 are some of the Contest timeline dates for November:

- November 7th - First day to submit entries
- November 14th - Last day to submit entries
- November 19th - Members will receive the Contest Ballot
- November 19th & 20th - Voting in the Contest Ballot ends @ 10:00 PM on the 20th
- November 21st - Winners announced at the meeting - 1st, 2nd and 3rd
- December 5th - First day to submit December contest entries **HIGHWAY VEHICLES**

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

To enter the November Contest, click <https://forms.gle/BRbXBcXChRihBhL8> and follow the simple instructions in the form. Entering the Contest has never been easier.

See the October contest photos on page 3.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Stan White Membership Relations Chairman

As of the last report received from Mid Central Region, we have 157 active members. No new members. We had four expired: Mark Norman, Tom Guenther, Harold Tacket, Joe Williams. We also had eight renewals: Wilson and Kate Fryar, Kevin Gilman, CJ Raven, Jacob Schiess, Paul and Debora Sturgeon, and Mike Wingfield,

Remember, when you renew your NMRA Basic membership, there is a new reduced price of \$50.00 annually, which includes the digital magazine.

OCTOBER CHARLIE KEELING MODEL CONTEST-STEAM LOCOMOTIVES (photos by the modelers)

**FIRST PLACE (left)**

Scott Griggs: Scratchbuilt S scale N&W J #600.

Scott designed it in *Autodesk Fusion* to use the running gear and electronics from a Lionel American Flyer Berkshire donor locomotive. Scale drawings from Kalmbach's *Steam Locomotive Cyclopedia* as well as prototype photos were used during the design work. The model required 20 custom-designed parts such as the boiler, cab, steam chest, tender, etc. He intentionally designed this model so that others could build their own and published the necessary files and instructions on *Thingiverse*.

TIED FOR SECOND PLACE (right)

Chris Broughton MMR: HO_n30 Sandy River Railroad Baldwin 2-6-0

Christ built the locomotive from a 3D-printed resin kit. Modifications / additions beyond the kit included hand-bent wire details, bell cord, working LED headlight, clear acetate windows, crew, coal load, tungsten putty weight in boiler, and Micro-Trains couplers. The locomotive was custom-painted, decaled, weathered, and sealed with Tamiya TS-80 matte clear.

**TIED FOR SECOND PLACE (left)**

Russ Weis: HO Shop Engine

This is a hybrid (die cast & brass) model made by *Sakura*. The body may look familiar as it was used by Varney and others. However, the Sakura mold had more detail.

Russ detailed his model with front and rear operating headlights, a bell, whistle, steam generator, cab awnings, and grabs for boiler hatches.

A sound decoder with a keep-alive was installed and the model was finished with NYC lettering and weathered.

(continued on page 4)

OCTOBER CHARLIE KEELING MODEL CONTEST-STEAM LOCOMOTIVES (continued from page 3)

HONORABLE MENTION (Per Model Contest rules, since there was a tie for second place, Third Place was not awarded).



Left:

Bob Frankrone: G Scale Old Time Steam

This is a Bachmann G-scale Big Hauler steam locomotive that Bob purchased 38 years ago. It is battery powered (dead rail) and still runs great.



Above:

Steve Lasher: HO Carolina Royalty

Steve began with a basic *Overland* ACL R-1 4-8-4 model. He added details, paint, and weathering, along with hand painting the engineer and fireman.

MEETING PHOTOS by Bob Dawson



Left: Dave Ackmann, visiting us from the Gateway Division, Mid-Continent Region presented "Round Things." Dave described how to design round objects for 3D printing. Below are examples he brought for inspection.



Left: An unexpected treat, Ramona Johnson sent some of her home made brownies for us to enjoy at the meeting. Bob Johnson was her designated delivery person.

FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

By Fred Soward MMR®, Division 8 Assistant Superintendent

It's been a busy month for Fred & Barbara. Several operating sessions in and around the L'ville area. Five days away attending the North Central Region Convention in Zeeland (Grand Rapids), Michigan. Attending an operating session on Bob Bartizek's O Scale layout near Cincinnati as part of SWOOPS (Southwest Ohio Operations Weekend) with Ron Ellison and Bob Kuchler. Hosting a visit with fellow model railroader Brad Joseph from the St Louis area. And all the usual Division 8, Mid Central Region, and NMRA National Stuph.

Somehow, I did get some work completed on the layout in our basement. Pretty much all the flat space (aka plywood) on the Santa Cruz & Felton is now painted a sand color. That was always the plan and it now looks pretty close to the basic prototype ground in that area. I was surprised by how much better that little bit of work made things look. I started working on building turnouts for the Watsonville Junction Yard, but didn't get very far. Maybe next month. Or December. There's always 2027. . .

We talk a lot about how we want to get new members, especially younger ones, into the hobby and into Division 8 and our clubs. I often hear NMRA members ask what "national" is doing to get more members into the organization. It's actually you and me, the local folk, who can most effectively make that happen. We are the people who most often have the opportunity to have face-to-face interactions with the public.

I'm always encouraged when I see youngsters and especially families showing up to watch model railroads in action. I'm even more encouraged when I see model railroaders stop what they're doing at a train show or an open house or anytime someone visits so they can spend a few moments actively speaking and listening to those visitors. If you're wondering how to encourage more people to join the model railroad community, that, my friends, is the answer. At our next Division 8 Train Show & Sale, remember the door is open to the public. Step on through to get involved in making it happen.

OCTOBER MEETING REPORT

By Rick Maloney MMR®, Division 8 Clerk

The October Division 8 Meeting was held at The Jeffersontown branch of the Louisville Free Public Library at 2:00 PM on Saturday, October 17, 2026. This was a hybrid meeting with 18 members and 1 guest present at the library and 9 on Zoom.

In the absence of Superintendent Darcy Elliott, Assistant Superintendent Fred Soward MMR called the meeting to order. Fred welcomed David Ackmann from the Gateway Division, Mid-Continent Region, today's presenter.

Barry Christensen announced the results of the October Charlie Keeling Model Contest, "Steam Locomotives." Winners and photos are elsewhere in *The Pie Card*.

Program Chairman Russ Weis reported that Dave Ackmann will be presenting today's program, "Round Things." He said Al Goodman will be next month's speaker. Al will give a presentation titled "The White Train."

Russ thanked the volunteers who participated in the "Great Freight Car Deconstruction." He asked for four volunteers to build small dioramas using provided materials, for the November 14th Train Show & Sale Table. This will be part of an Apprentice Conductor Display (K&I/SIR hand-on activities / actions).

Russ next reported on the Division 8 Christmas Party. It will be Sunday, December 6, 2026, at the Kingfish Restaurant, 3201 River Road in Louisville. We will gather at 5 PM and eat at 6 PM. The tickets are on sale and cost \$15.00 per person. RSVP online by Monday, November 23.

Fred Soward, MMR - Presented a Back-to-Basics segment about Blue Flags, their use on prototype and model railroads.

Fred acknowledged Jackson Thomas for his article that appeared in the NMRA November edition of the NMRA Magazine. Be sure to check it out.

After a short break, Fred introduced our presenter, David Ackmann. If you didn't see it, it can be found on YouTube, check it out.

The meeting ended at 4:00 PM.

MEMBER WELFARE

By Mike Berry Member Welfare Chairman

This month we must sadly report the passing of Katie Tipton, wife of NMRA life member Rick Tipton. Katie herself had also been a member of Division 8 in the past. A donation was made in Katie's name to the family's charity of choice.

As always, if you hear of anyone hospitalized or worse, please let me or one of the Board members know.

ANSWERING THE CALL: WHY I JOINED THE NMRA – AND WHY I STAY

By Stan White



Returning to model railroading after a 35-year break was both exciting and overwhelming. The hobby I remembered from my younger days had transformed. New technology, new methods, new standards, and an entirely new level of craftsmanship had emerged while I was away. I knew I wanted to dive back in, but I also knew I needed guidance to navigate everything that had changed.

My reintroduction to the NMRA came at the 2017 Mid-Central Region Convention, hosted by Division 8. I walked in expecting a train show. What I found instead was a community. The people I met weren't just hobbyists — they were mentors, teachers, and ambassadors for model railroading. They carried decades of experience, yet they shared it freely and enthusiastically. That generosity made a lasting impression on me. It

reminded me that the NMRA isn't just an organization; it's a network of people who genuinely want to help others grow.

That's why I joined.

But joining was only the beginning. What kept me involved — and what keeps me here today — are the opportunities the NMRA and Division 8 provide to learn, participate, and connect. Monthly meetings, clinics, workshops, operating sessions, train shows, layout tours, and online discussions all offer ways to deepen my skills and stay engaged. Every event brings something new: a technique I hadn't tried, a tool I hadn't seen, or a perspective I hadn't considered.

Most importantly, it brought friendships.

Over the years, I've come to appreciate that the greatest strength of Division 8 is its people. The willingness of members to help one another, answer questions, share ideas, and encourage newcomers is what makes this Division special. The relationships I've built — the conversations, the laughter, the shared problem-solving — have made my return to the hobby far more rewarding than I ever expected.

So when I'm asked why I joined the NMRA, the answer is simple: I needed help finding my way back.

When I'm asked why I stay, the answer is even simpler: the people.

Division 8 is a place where modelers of all skill levels can learn, grow, and belong. I'm grateful to be part of it, and I look forward to helping others find the same sense of connection and inspiration that welcomed me in 2017.

**The White Train**
It's nuclear story

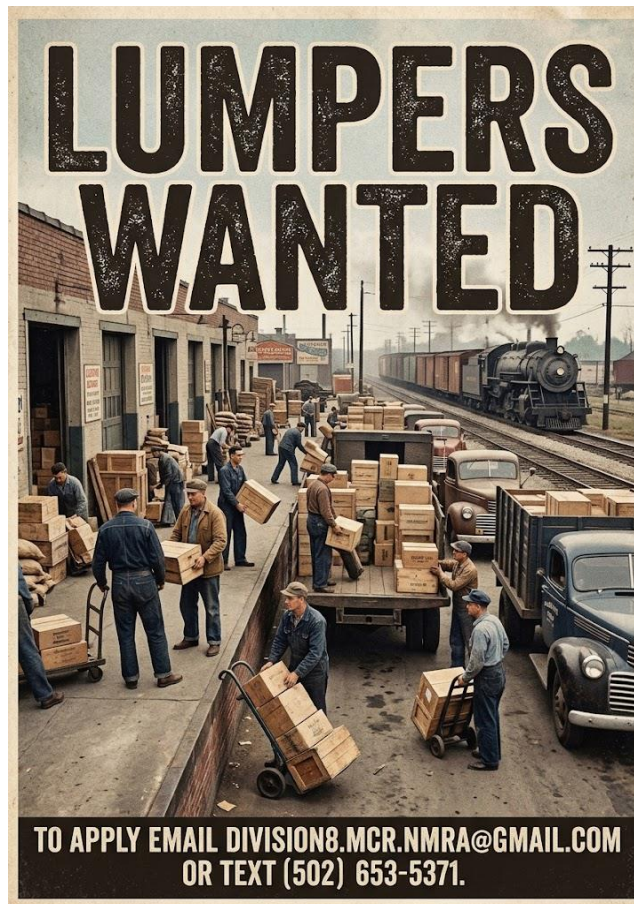
NMRA Division 8
November 2026

Presented by:

Al Goodman
Pekin, IN
goodmanaw4738@outlook.com

NOVEMBER MEETING PRESENTATION

The White Train by Al Goodman



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NORTH CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION VISIT—OCTOBER 8-11, 2026

By Fred Soward MMR®, photos by the author unless noted otherwise

Ms Barbara and I traveled to Zeeland, Michigan, last month to attend the North Central Region Convention. I was there primarily in my capacity as the NMRA Central District Director. It's a bit less than a six-hour drive from L'ville, so although the convention started Thursday afternoon, we took all of Wednesday to make the trip. The convention ended Saturday evening, with just a few layouts open for visits Sunday, so once again, a fairly leisurely drive home Sunday. By arriving Wednesday nite, we were able to be at Bruce Chubb's MMR world famous HO scale Sunset Valley Oregon System layout at 8:00 AM. Surprisingly, we were the only two guests that morning. During my solo 2017 visit, there were a dozen guests waiting to run trains at 8:00 AM the day I was there. There was a skeleton crew of four including Bruce. It was pretty awesome having the run of the massive layout to ourselves. Barbara got in 3 1/2 hours of engineer time running a passenger train, a through freight, a local, and a way freight while I handled the car cards for her. Later in the week, she was talked into an operating session at Tim Verburg's C&O Chessie System layout. She worked with another guest operator for 3 hours on just one very long way freight while I worked a complex industrial area and helped with the primary yard on the layout. We visited just two other layouts during our time in Michigan. I did my usual "What's Happening at National" presentation and, in addition to attending several other presentations, we both participated in hands-on clinics. Mine was an hour-long session about checking in rolling stock while Barbara's was an entire afternoon of tree-building. The HO scale modular Pullman Train Club and the N scale Four Pointes T-Trak modular club had layouts running at the convention venue for both convention attendees and the public to visit.



Left: Barbara is on the phone, talking to the dispatcher on Bruce Chubb's layout, requesting permission to leave the yard with her SP&S train at Pakelso Junction on the lower deck of the layout. You can see three of the four decks of the layout behind her in this photo. By the time she finished running trains on this visit, she'd covered almost every inch of the 1,400 foot long mainline.

Right: Barbara's fourth and final train of the session on Bruce Chubb's layout is returning from Grants Pass, on its way back to the yard. In this photo, the lead locomotive is passing over Cow Creek with the John Allen Memorial Trestle in the background.



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Left: Barbara is anxiously looking for her train to come out of the tunnel behind Sonke Mill in Riddle on Bruce Chubb's layout. I've been told that the rockwork in this area was done by our good friend Dan Hinel MMR from the Indianapolis area when he lived in Grand Rapids. After you're finished checking out the structures and scenery in this photo, be sure to check out those N scale earrings!



Right: Barbara running her train on Tim Verburg's HO scale C&O Chessie System layout with her conductor, Terry Merriman. Tim's not big on scenery, but he is big on operations, so not a lot to look at on the layout. His locomotives are either battery-on-board (true dead rail) or BluNami-equipped. And he runs LONG trains. It's not unusual to see trains with over 60 freight cars being pulled by a six-unit SD35/40/45 lashup - all in Chessie System Yellow.



Left: One of the many spectacular scenes on Skip Luyk's MMR HO scale Arcadia & Betsey River Railway logging railroad. Fred & Barbara visited Skip's freelance layout during the convention.

(continued to page 10)



Left: Everywhere you look on Don Bergman's MMR HOn3 Rio Grande Southern layout you see mountains, aspens, and bridges. Lots of long spindly bridges. Fred & Barbara visited the layout during the convention.

Right: The NCR does not usually hold a contest in conjunction with their conventions. They do, however, encourage modelers to bring their work for display or for Achievement Program evaluations. This is one of Dave Capron's MMR amazingly detailed (a level above super detailed) craftsman kits. There were more than a dozen similar structures and dioramas displayed. Not too bad for a convention that had less than 80 people attending.



Left: Barbara was totally focused on trimming her super trees during her hands-on tree making clinic.

(continued to page 1)



Left: One of the more unique modules on the HO scale modular Pullman Train Club layout.

Right: That's something you don't see every day - a marching band with soldiers, baton twirlers, and a drum majorette on an HO scale layout. This module was part of the Pullman Train Club layout at the convention venue.



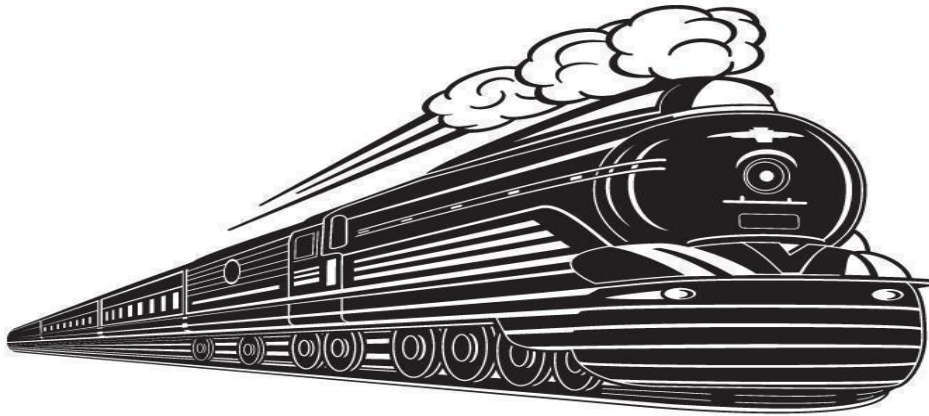
Left: Getting ready to do the "What's New at National" presentation.

Photo by Barbara Soward



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\$15 per person

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THE PIE CARD

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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.

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