

# NMRA BULLETIN

## Changed your address or other membership information?

Notify headquarters by email:  
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by phone: 423-892-2846 (9am – 4:30pm, ET)  
or by mail to the address listed under “Administration Department Manager” below.

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### ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

#### NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT JULY 2011

##### GOLDEN SPIKE

##### Lone Star Region

Marc LaChey, Richardson, Texas

##### Mid-Eastern Region

Dave Draxler, Charlotte, North Carolina  
Joe Howard, Cornelius, North Carolina

##### Midwest Region

James Baker, Rockford, Illinois

##### Northeastern Region

Ralph Deblasi, Sicklerville, New Jersey  
Thomas Oxnard, Exeter, New Hampshire

##### Pacific Coast Region

Terry Taylor, San Luis Obispo, California

##### Southeastern Region

Ken Austin, Birmingham, Alabama  
Clinton Smoke, Jr., Arden, North Carolina

##### MASTER BUILDER — CARS

##### Southeastern Region

Bill Zawacki, Woodstock, Georgia

##### MASTER BUILDER — STRUCTURES

##### Mid-Eastern Region

John Siegle, Lynchburg, Virginia

##### MASTER BUILDER — SCENERY

##### Mid-Central Region

Bruce Bowie, Milan, Ohio

##### Southeastern Region

Clinton Smoke, Jr., Arden, North Carolina

##### MASTER BUILDER — PROTOTYPE MODELS

##### Mid-Central Region

Georgia Dahlberg, Williamstown, Kentucky

##### MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — CIVIL

##### Southeastern Region

Carey Jenkins, Hoover, Alabama

##### MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — ELECTRICAL

##### Mid-Central Region

Benjamin Lanza, North Royalton, Ohio

##### Mid-Eastern Region

Gareth Quale, Lynchburg, Virginia

##### Midwest Region

Paul Wussow, Glen Ellyn, Illinois

##### Pacific Southwest Region

Bob Libbey, Surprise, Arizona

##### CHIEF DISPATCHER

##### Mid-Eastern Region

Charles Hladik, Rustburg, Virginia  
Gareth Quale, Lynchburg, Virginia  
John Siegle, Lynchburg, Virginia

##### Midwest Region

Donald Lewis, Dixon, Illinois  
Ray Meyer, Port Washington, Wisconsin

##### Pacific Southwest Region

Bob Libbey, Surprise, Arizona

##### ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

##### Lone Star Region

Tom Crosthwait, San Antonio, Texas  
Chuck Lind, MMR, College Station, Texas

##### Niagara Frontier Region

John Moseley, London, Ontario

##### Pacific Coast Region

Pat LaTorres, San Leandro, California

##### ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

##### Lone Star Region

Joe Batson, Ft. Worth, Texas

##### Mid-Continent Region

Philip Bonzon, MMR, St. Louis, Missouri

##### Mid-Central Region

Philip Gliebe, Waynesville, Ohio

##### Midwest Region

James Baker, Rockford, Illinois

##### Northeastern Region

Daniel Fretz, Franklin, Massachusetts

##### Niagara Frontier Region

Richard Senges, Victor, New York

##### MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

##### Mid-Eastern Region

James Dalberg, Paoli, Pennsylvania  
Gareth Quale, Lynchburg, Virginia

### MMR EARNED



ROBERT G. MINNIS MMR #462

My interest in trains began prior to kindergarten, when my mother and I traveled to Nova Scotia by train to visit Canadian relatives. I recall waking up in the morning and watching the country scenery roll by the train window. The summer before elementary school, my family moved to the

South Shore in Weymouth, Massachusetts. As luck would have it, the new house was located about 300 yards from New Haven's Old Colony Branch. I was able to watch freight and passenger trains all day long. Since my dad used to commute into Boston via the train, I quickly learned the schedule so I was always home when Dad arrived from work. Also, the train was used for the

periodic visits to Dad's office and to view the large train displays in the department stores during the holidays.

The usual Lionel train set arrived one Christmas a year or two later. My younger brother and I (with Dad's help) built a large (five plywood sheets) table to set up and operate our railroad. A mountain occupied one corner of the table while roads were painted directly on the plywood. Plasticville structures filled the spaces between the tracks. A large remodeling project in the house led to the table's demise. The train set was packed away into its box where it remains today. My modeling interests then shifted to plastic ships and planes. One day, I was in the hobby shop looking for my next "plastic" venture when I spotted a metal (Globe or Athearn) boxcar kit. I have been in HO scale ever since.

Since my dad rode the train every day, he became friends with the crossing guards (remember them?) and station attendant. The station had a team track for local business. During school breaks and summer vacations — thanks to these railroad employees — I was able to meet the contractors who unloaded the freight cars. For my

assistance in running errands (coffee, juice, or donuts) for these contractors, I was allowed to "clean" out the empty boxcars of salvage and/or usable materials. We built a lot of projects around the house and yard with these commandeered materials.

During high school, I continued to build car kits and box them for future use. The college years saw much less activity. Upon graduation, the Army occupied most of my time for the next ten years. Marriage and the purchase of a house allowed me to open up those boxes and resume modeling activities. Within six months, I was reassigned to Fort Devens, Massachusetts (now closed). While there, a group of active military formed the Fort Devens Model Railroad Club. The Recreation Services Office assigned the club an old, two-story barracks building for our use. We built a layout that filled the entire first floor. Unfortunately, the layout was dismantled when the installation closed.

The next stop was Fort Richardson, Alaska, where I joined the Northern Lights Model Railroad Club. The club was a modular operation at the time, and we set up at various public events in Anchorage. I con-

tinued to build and box both cars and small structures. A small group of military officers wanted to form its own modular group, so we built ten module frames. Shortly after completing construction of these frames, we all received orders for our next assignments. I ended up with the blank module frames since I was the last to leave.

Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, was my next duty station. I continued to build small structures and freight cars for a "future" layout. Upon retirement, I moved to Springfield, Virginia, bought a house, and adjusted to civilian life. I joined the local Potomac Division (MER) and started to attend meetings. The Superintendent heard about my modules and asked if I was interested in doing a show for the Children's Museum in Washington, D.C. I supplied the module frames to the six people who signed up for the group. We decided on the name of Potomac Module Crew since that was as formal as we wanted to go — no dues, no officials. We did decide to have a coordinator (I was volunteered) to take care of the administrative details. I have displayed my modules more than 125 times during the 20-plus years I have been part of the "crew." Today, the PMC has more than 25 members and approximately 70 modules.

I had heard of the Achievement Program early in my association with the NMRA, but it wasn't until I joined the Potomac Division that I took an active interest. The monthly layout tours and mini-conventions exposed me to the modeling efforts of several dozen craftsmen, including several MMRs. After observing these other modelers' work, I decided I could do just as well. Slowly, I began to accumulate Merit Certificates. The various jobs that I found myself in (Division Paymaster, Division Superintendent, and Region Director) added other AP Certificates. I have thoroughly enjoyed my association with the Achievement Program and encourage you to give it a try.

I am currently in the process of designing and building a layout in the basement of my new home near Charlottesville, Virginia. I am looking forward to many more years of model railroading.

The Achievement Program is not that difficult. Just read and follow the requirements for each certificate.

*Robert has earned the following certificates: Volunteer, Official, Author, Cars, Structures, Civil, and Scenery.*



## 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.

Then, get that popcorn ready.



**We make it even more fun.**

www.nmra.org