

# Meetings, Conventions, and Train Shows

*Regions, divisions, and clubs are outlets for the social and educational side of modeling. We get together to learn something, to compare notes, to smooze. If it wasn't for the need to be together, we could just subscribe to a magazine and be done with it.*

*Events are the heart and soul of the organization. They range from the big annual national gatherings with attendant train shows to some people arranging a three or four layout tour to stir up a little interest.*

*In between they provide weekly, monthly or quarterly accents to our modeling efforts, providing us with information and inspiration to continue on*

*We did start out to have a separate "Fundraising" section but found that most of our money making attempts involved putting on some sort of a meet or show that we really couldn't separate the two*

*In addition to the material presented here, there is more on the NMRA's*

*website and on the CD. The NMRA has quite a handbook for its national convention that probably deals with more than a region and division needs to worry about, but it is good and covers publicity on a national level well. The PNR has a one hundred and seventy plus page manual and the LD SIG Local Meeting Handbook runs about 35 pages.*

*In this section, you will find the British Region's guide to putting on a "meet", emails about various regions a divisions and their meets and conventions, the Rocky Mountain Region's Guidelines for convention planning, and a terrific article on publicity, free and otherwise.*

*Let us start with the responses that some regions and divisions made to a series of questions I asked.*

*First the questions:*

1. How often? Once, twice, three times a year?
2. When? Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter. Why did you chose that date?

3. How many days? two, three, four or five??

layout tours, modulars, train show, clinics, videos, prototype tours?

4. Venue? Club, hotel, convention center?

All of the above, depending on the year, the location, etc. Train shows seem to be going away in our area - space is too expensive, advertising to get the necessary crowds ditto, etc.

5. What do you do? Banquets, contests, layout tours, modulars, train show, clinics, videos, prototype tours?

6. Joint with anybody? SIG, Historical Society

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*Bill Kaufman*

## **Pacific Southwest Region Convention**

Ben Sevier, President

Trying to join with RPM this coming year, along with OpsSig and Layout Sig - would like to get Garden Railway and perhaps collectors involved.

How often? Once, twice, three times a year?

How big? 3 guys? ten thousand?

Once a year

Generally run between 170 and 200, counting Railettes (yes, we use that term - ladies beat us up when we tried to change it). Would like to get more - hoping RPM will add to the crowd.

When? Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter. Why did you chose that date?

Fall - came about after the PCR/PSR split, from what I understand

How big is your region.

How many days? two, three, four or five?

About 1,600

Four, basically, with a general membership meeting and layout tours on the fifth day (Sunday)

What do you do that is a bit innovative?

Venue? Club, hotel, convention center?

Hotel, generally, but the ones that fit call themselves "convention centers" because they have more facilities than other types of hotels. Real convention centers tend to be waaaaay too expensive

We try some non-rail oriented things - this year, we had bowling the first night, other years we've offered trips to shopping and interesting activities in the area.

What do you do? Banquets, contests,

## **Thousand Lakes Region convention**

By Gerry Leone, TLR "Fusee" editor  
and Publicity Chair

How often? Once, twice, three times a  
year?

The Thousand Lakes Region has  
one convention every year.

When? Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter.  
Why did you chose that date?

On or near the U.S. Memorial Day  
or Canadian Victoria Day. The  
date was chosen because of the  
holiday. US conventions are  
usually held near Victoria Day to  
give the Canadian members a free  
day to travel, and vice versa.

How many days? two, three, four or five?

Generally Friday, Saturday and  
part of Sunday, although two  
years ago we added an "optional  
Thursday" and offered several  
prototype tours that day.

Venue? Club, hotel, convention center?

In my experience, it's always been  
at a hotel.

What do you do? Banquets, contests,  
layout tours, modulars, train show,  
clinics, videos, prototype tours?

The convention isn't set up as an  
"either/or" thing -- it's pretty  
linear. Friday morning will  
usually be clinics -- we'll have 6 or  
8, with two running  
simultaneously. Friday afternoon

is one or two prototype tours (one  
after the other), and Saturday is  
more prototype tours. Saturday  
night is the banquet, awards, and  
a Chinese auction. Sunday  
morning is the General  
Membership meeting,  
and layout tours are always  
Sunday afternoon, when people  
can visit at their leisure on their  
way home.

Joint with anybody? SIG, Historical  
Society

Four years ago we did a joint  
convention with the Chicago &  
Northwestern Historical Society,  
and this coming year will be a  
joint convention with the  
Winnipeg Model Railroad Club.

How big? 3 guys? ten thousand?

We average about 80-90.

How big is your region.

Next to "Others," the TLR is the  
NMRA's smallest region in terms  
of population. Yet we're one of the  
largest in terms of geography. We  
have about 460 NMRA members,  
spread out from central Iowa to  
central Manitoba, from the  
Dakotas to western Wisconsin. As  
I once told someone, there are  
places in the Region where you  
can drive for 6 hours in one  
direction and never pass through  
a Division's territory.

What do you do that is a bit innovative?

Nothing. Frankly, we feel lucky if  
we have a group that volunteers

to host the convention every year, since it's not on a rotational schedule with Divisions.

## **NORTH CENTRAL REGION Convention**

By Jack Watson President / North Central Region

One Convention per year, used to hold two (Spring and Fall)

Usually Fall - October seems to be the prevailing choice

Used to be Friday - Saturday - Sunday, but adding activities Thursday is currently vogue

Venue - Almost always Hotels, have used other venues in the past (Community Colleges and Libraries in the past)

NMRA Sanctioned Contest

Layout Tours (Lots)

Clinics ( Again lots and with "famous" clinic givers)

Modular Layouts in both the Hotel (Lobby if possible) and in or near the Contest Room

Videos again yes, particularly where they can attract folks off the street

Prototype Tours - as many as and as varied as possible ( with some railroad connection)

Joint Conventions have not worked well in the past

Lately they seem to be hovering about one-fifty to two-hundred attendees

Current membership is about nine hundred-thirty in the Region

Availability of "early-bird" registration, which is usually about ten bucks cheaper

For 2010 they have an on-line registration available with PayPal

Unfortunately, we reside in an area very badly affected by the poor national economy, many folks wait to the last minute and decide whether to go or not. Many of our members are out of work and simply can no longer afford to attend, unless it is held locally. We rotate the Convention site among the active Divisions, who have enough members to properly host a full blown Convention. We ask the smaller less capable Divisions to host a one-day affair with lots of help, (clinic givers-modules and physical help) coming from other larger nearby Divisions. We used to focus on a Saturday evening Awards Banquet, but that has become cost prohibitive, and we have shifted to a Sunday morning Breakfast-Awards Banquet, usually at less than half the cost of the old dinner banquet.

## **SER Convention**

We have one convention a year in either May or June. For many years the convention was on Memorial Day weekend so folks would have an extra day to rest up from the activates or stay around the convention town if they wanted.

In the last several years we have moved it a weekend in May and June and it seems to have not caused any issues and allows us to get better rates depending on the area we are going to be in. It use to be Friday noon to Sunday noon. But we have been changing it over the last few years to start 9 AM Friday and go later in the day on Sunday. Since members will be traveling hundreds of miles to get there many come in on Thursday so we have made arrangements for rooms rates to start on Thursday and many of the host have planned Thursday night activities such as a few home layouts or operating sessions. Both have been well attended.

We move the convention to a different area of the region each year. We have about 10 cities we rotate between. A area division or train club serves as host. We average 200 to 250 attendees out of 1000 members in the region and normally do not hold joint conventions.

We used to have our conventions at large hotels where all activates could be held at the one site. Since 2004 we have been trying new things to help control the cost. We will many plans we now use.

1. We use a convention center and pick a nearby hotel to be the convention hotel
2. We give everyone a list of near by hotels and tell them to stay where they want and have clinics and meals one place and train show at another,
3. We go to a resort type place where

all activates are on the grounds but at different buildings.

4. At one convention the host contacted a local business that had a training center with classrooms and large meeting areas and they let us use the area for free. The banquet dinner and breakfast were held on city land next to an old train station under tent and everyone stayed at a hotel of their choice.

There are many other variations that can be used but that is some. With the cost of things going sky high and folks being more and more worried about the cost all versions have worked well. No one has ever complained about trying new things.

Our conventions have standard things every year.

Clinics - depends upon the host. Some have local and regional presenters, some have themes (this year the theme is Your Layout - Concept to Reality - Clinics will range from design, building bench work, laying track, Wiring, scenery, structures and operation. We will be bring "experts" from all over the US to speak.

Home Layout tours - based upon what is in the area. As few as 3 as many as 20. Spread over 3 days or all in one day. Depends

Contests - We have many categories with many different levels of prizes. Includes models, pictures and crafts that are train related. Mostly the ladies enter the craft category. At times we have a

whole room full of entries.

Banquet - on Saturday night. Have various program to many to list.

Breakfast - on Sunday morning. During breakfast we hold our annual membership meeting. Takes about 30 to 45 minutes.

Things that vary from convention to convention; We have a one, two or three day train shows. We have prototype tours depending upon what is in the area. We have a company store where members can bring things to be sold. The host takes a 10% selling fee on all items.

We have an auction following the banquet where members bring things to be sold. Again they pay a 10% selling fee.

We have some form of a non-rail (ladies) activities. This year we will have Friday night Sip and Snip program. You sip a little wine and learn how to do flower arranging. Saturday morning program on painting gourds and Saturday afternoon program on collecting antiques. These programs change year to year.

Saturday evening after the banquet the programs vary. We have the auctions, Square Dance program where the members are involved to mention a couple.

## **Pacific Northwest Region**

By Walt Huston, VP,

Different things work for different

divisions. For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> Division of PNR holds an annual Train Exhibit at The Pacific Science Center in Seattle. The group gets a set amount plus a certain cut of the admissions over a given number. That exhibit supports the 4<sup>th</sup> Division and some (not a lot more, but...). Not every Division has an opportunity like this. Some Divisions have successful Train Show/Swap Meets. Others have special run cars and/or decals made and sold. Maybe we could compile a list of what Divisions are doing and post it for all Divisions to see. That way Divisions can see what's working somewhere and decide if it will work where they are.

## **British Region**

I fund our division by running a public train show. We split the proceeds 50/50 with the region (British) but they take all the losses. We have over 500-550 paying guests. On average our division makes £400 per annum on our half. This is more than enough to cover anything we do and actually leaves us with an embarrassing surplus. I'd like to use this to encourage further exhibition modeling now we have 3 years under our belt.

It is a lot of work to organize - you can see our website on [www.ardenrail.co.uk](http://www.ardenrail.co.uk) to see what kind of thing it is. I am not sure if you have enough exhibition layouts in the US but it is a really common thing here in the UK.

## **Pacific Southwest Region— Arizona Division**

By Rick Watson, Arizona Division

Director

In the Arizona Division all meets have an entry fee. It's \$7.00. If you join the NRMA at the meet, the fee is waived. That is the only source of revenue for the division. Yes, we sell pins, patches, cars, etc., but those don't generate much revenue. All proceeds from meets fund the hardcopy version of our newsletter and misc. division expenses.

At each meet we also have a raffle for door prizes. If you pay with exact change, you get two raffle tickets rather than just one. It's amazing that 80%+ of paid attendees have exact change! All door prizes are donated.

To date, I've never heard a complaint about paying.

## **PCR/Coast Division**

By Pat LaTorres, V.P., PCR/NMRA

A good fundraiser (and house cleaner) which we in the PCR/Coast Division have been using for years (as in WELL before my time) is a quarterly auction as part of the meeting. There are some concerns about how these are run, but they can usually be worked with.

All participants need to be Division (therefore NMRA) members. This makes it a "Private" event and lets us get past the California sales tax issue. Any books, slides, videos and other copyright protected items must be the commercially available originals -- NOT member duplicated copies. This keeps us clear of any copyright law questions.

Obviously there needs to be table space to display all of the items prior to bidding (our auctions run anywhere from 300 to 600 items, especially if there's an estate being liquidated). The division takes in 10% of each sale -- rounded to the nearest nickel -- this helps cover the cost of the facility.

We generally donate approximately \$150.00 to the facilities that we use (these are schools, museums and other such non-profit organizations). Every member is assigned a bidder number, which they keep as long as they're a regular attendee (two of our members maintain a database which tracks all of this).

We also generally have two clinics, an open form "Modeler's Roundtable discussion, popular vote model and photo contests (the categories for each changing from meet to meet), and our quarterly business meeting all tied in with this.

I know that eBay has become major competition for this type of auction, but a lot of folks just don't want to deal with all of the hoops involved with the online auctions.

## **Division 9, North Central Region**

By David Simmons,

Our division is very small, covering just 1 county and having about 60 registered NMRA members total. We are in a rebuilding stage since the division went inactive in the mid 90s and was reformed about 4 years ago. The meeting

room can handle about 25 people, but we've seldom had attendance above 15. At this point, I would love to have an issue with too many attending!

On the subject of funding, our division's primary expense is our newsletter. We fund our activities purely by donation, with a 'pass the can' at each meeting. We've scraped by so far, but are planning to distribute the newsletter via email where possible starting this fall. We will only mail an annual newsletter covering business matters to all members.

## **MER—Central Indiana**

By Thomas Cain, Superintendent

The Central Indiana Division/Midwest Region had a train show with 9 Portable Layouts, 2 Clinics, Model judging, Popular model contests, and over 50 tables of vendors. We had over 200 people attend. We do three train shows a year where we charge admission and have dealers present. We also have 1 or 2 free train shows where we provide a venue for the set up of portable layouts and other model displays. We also attend the local Great Train Expo events to promote the NMRA. We try to have two layout tours a year. What has seemed to work best for us are the train shows. What seems the hardest, is to get folks interested in clinics. It may be that we have to separate our clinics from the train shows.

Someone a while back spoke in a pretty negative manner regarding Train Shows with dealers selling used or new trains. Seems like they felt it might hurt

the Local Hobby Shop. Our experience is some of the people at our train shows are the average guy selling their excess trains, some are folks that buy and sell used trains of varying value, and that a number are hobby shop owners who are selling stuff that they have had in the shop that hasn't been moving. I heard just yesterday that the hobby shop closest to this train show always does well when we have the train show. I'm guessing that if someone who came to the Train Show didn't see what they wanted at the train show, they take that cash they have been saving and stop by the hobby shop on the way home and spend that money.

Probably one of our most interesting projects was the building of a model railroad layout at the most recent Great Train Expo event. We built the layout to demonstrate how a simple portable layout could be built, and then we gave it to a 53 year old fellow who has a developmental disability but has a love of trains equal to most of us in the NMRA. The layout was built pretty much in the two 6 hour sessions of the GTE event. A little time was spent afterward doing a little clean-up before it was delivered to the group home where this fellow lives. We will have some photos and a description of the project coming soon to our website.

## **Maple Leaf Division Mid-Continent Region**

By Steve Marquess

If you've got six layouts running and popular vote contest but only 200 attending, you may want to investigate



some other advertising. Our club is now using cable TV, has had the local channel's weather guy do live broadcast evening before, set up displays in theatre lobbies, and provides \$1 off cards to any hobby shop that will hand them out. And lots of contact with the local papers and radio, reminding them to run our blurbs. We are not a big metro area, but besides maybe 200 modelers (just a guess) we get the general public. Over 2000 last year.

You have to get the people in your Sunday school class to bring their grandkids, the secretaries in your office to bring their kids, but hey, what an opportunity to recruit new modelers and eventually NMRA members. If we're only going to be a small percentage of the hobby, then let's expand the hobby.

We get six to eight layouts of all scales running and have clinics that are hard to get folks into because there's so much going on. We have a waiting list for the 150 vendor tables, because despite the sales, the vendors enjoy the atmosphere and the way they are taken care of.

Don't leave out the garden railway folks, either. Folks love to watch their big stuff run (and vendors love to sell 'em that big stuff.) Folks can visualize having something like that in their garden as opposed to building a layout.

# Mid Eastern Region Convention

Observations by Eric Dervinis

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The South Mountain Division MER hit the cycle this past weekend. This small division based in Hagerstown, Maryland hosted the Mid-Eastern Region convention in 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009. Every convention was a winner, well planned and well executed. My thanks to the division for another masterpiece. Registration was around 180 and even included someone from Germany. The only 'complaint' was the constant rain from Thursday to Saturday ending in a beautiful Sunday afternoon.

Home base was the Plaza Hotel, an independent property that was most accommodating. The meeting rooms were set up and reset quickly. Changes (i.e. more tables) were quickly executed. The guest rooms were nice and included a free breakfast. Their restaurant served good food and was very busy all weekend long thanks to the discount coupons they provided. Many enjoyed the crab cakes, a local delicacy. The hotel lobby had live birds and a fish tank -- an 'old fashioned' touch.

The registration table was in the middle of the lobby. The registrar P.J. Mattson is noted for his speed and ability to make changes on the fly. I had my packet before getting to the table. The convention chair Jane Clarke had an adjacent table staying on top of every 'issue' that needed addressing.

The set-up was a contest room, door

prize room, auction / white elephant room combined with a modular railroad and three clinic rooms. Earl Hackett obtained over 50 door prizes, and the ticket system ensures that everyone wins something they can use. The Modular Railroad was courtesy of the James River Division, MER.

The operations oriented had six layouts to pick from and one could operate four times in two days all coordinated by Harvey Heyser. That was the major SIG involvement, although the convention was heavy on the Western Maryland RR, the local favorite.

Two tours were offered. Friday, a group traveled by bus to a quarry with a visit to the bottom and timed so the group could see the daily 'blast'. Next was the Western Maryland HS RR Museum, lunch on your own and a tour of a local cement plant. Saturday 45 attendees caravanned north in the rain to the East Broad Top RR. Surprise, it was snowing in the mountains and they arrived in Rockhill Furnace to find three inches of snow on the ground and more on the way. They rode the Rockhill trolley line to Shade Gap first and the EBT next. Finally, the EBT expert Lee Rainey guided a tour of the historic shops. The Friends of the EBT have made great progress restoring the buildings and the equipment. The tours were arranged by Don Florwick and Pete

Clarke.

Layouts were open all four days. From 25 model railroads, you could choose every scale, two museum railroads and zero to fully scened. The layout book was a real treat. Each layout was described in detail with pictures and a custom drawn map with explicit directions from the hotel. Each map was a work of art. GPS is a great tool, but it can be fooled. With these maps, it was near impossible to get lost. Kudos to Bob Johnson and Richard Lind for the layout tours.

Three clinic rooms were perfectly suited to our needs. The clinics chair Ray Price was checking on the details and introduced each clinician. The MER has its own version of MWTM, with instructors Clint Hyde and Martin Brechbiel teaching laser kit construction.

Saturday night, the clinic rooms were broken down at 5 PM to convert for the banquet. At 6 PM the hotel opened the doors, the tables were set and the cash bar was open. The social hour ended just after seven when the banquet buffet opened up. At eight, MER President Roger Cason was introduced. He thanked all of the volunteers, while the local Superintendent Pete Clarke emceed the program. The MER AP Chair Charlie Flichman handed out Merit Awards and AP certificates

The MER General Contest Chair Martin Brechbiel used a PowerPoint presentation to present the winners. After the awards, Linn Moedinger CMO of the Strasburg RR discussed rebuilding steam engines, his own model railroad

and the pictures his father took in the 1940's. After a ten minute break, the MER auction began. This is a signature event of the MER with our very own Bob Charles as auctioneer. It is funny, fast and always brings in money to the region from members that donate items.

Sunday morning, two clinics were presented as an alternative to the annual business meeting. The meeting was over in less than an hour, a record for the MER. Layouts were open from 1-5 to visit on the way home.

What made the "Western Maryland Transfer" so great:

- A through convention program book
- Superb planning by the local division
- The 'best' Layout Tour Guide ever produced - the maps were terrific
- An excellent facility, the Plaza Hotel, well managed and sized for our needs
- A great selection of tours, clinics, op sessions and non rail activities
- The traditional MER Saturday night: social hr, dinner, awards, speaker, auction
- Bright yellow signs at the layouts and extra signs at crucial corners
- Extra fun - door prizes, white elephant tables and the On30 Modular Railroad
- Flexible management team making changes to enhance the convention experience
- Keeping everything in perspective, laughing at the minor glitches

While the South Mountain Division had no control over the weather, they put on a clinic' on how to run a regional convention. Extra thanks to every volunteer involved.

# PUTTING ON A REGION MEET

## British Region Style

By Nobby Clark

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### Some guide lines you need to consider before you start!

An NMRA meet is something special. Everyone attending has a common interest. This is model railways, and specifically American model railroading. Putting on an NMRA meet can seem daunting. This document is intended to make that task easier, less stressful and more enjoyable.

### Make a check list, before you start.

This is best done when you are considering a venue or thinking about putting a meet on.

### Have a date in mind.

The meets officer will help you here as you may well be asked to run one of the following:-

- the winter meet; any time from January to end of March or
- the spring meet again from April to the end of May.

Check and make sure your meet will not clash with other shows/NMRA group meets within say an 80 mile area.

### Find a suitable hall

- If you have to go up a lot of stairs or the main display area is on the first floor, even if there is a lift, look again!

- cost of hire.
- is the hall easy to get into, layouts need space to be turned etc.
- the size of the hall, is it big enough.
- is there plenty of parking near by,
- is it easy to find.
- Unloading - is there easy access to the hall so that traders/layouts can be easily unloaded.
- are there enough power points (you will need cables if not)
- is there any place for food and drinks to be served or is the venue near a pub/shops etc.
- how long can you have access to the hall i.e. what is the earliest you can start set up and what time does the hall have to be cleared by. You will need to allow at least two hours before and after the meet opens/closes to set up and break down layouts /traders.
- you will need help organising the meet so make sure there are at least three of you for the planning stage, and you will need a small team on the day!

Make a detailed floor plan so you know just how much room you have include all plugs sockets. This will be invaluable later on!

## **When you have found a suitable hall, what next?**

### **Getting the go ahead**

Before you get the go ahead to run a Region meet, you will need to show the meets officer the venue is suitable.

This is not as terrible as it sounds, you can do this with a close to scale drawing of the hall which clearly shows the rooms/hall sizes you are intending to use, along with parking and unloading areas and distance from the hall along with public access and if at all possible some photos. We ask you to do this because some halls in the past have been clearly unsuitable for a meet

### **Insurance**

**You will need to have insurance arranged before the meet can take place,**

All you need to do at first is get in touch with the Regions Secretary who will explain what is needed, make sure you do this at least a full two months before the meet. *(American Regions should contact Jenny Hendricks at HQ regarding insurance questions. Bill)*

One of the questions you will be asked are insurance costs of all the layouts attending (the layout owners will tell you this)

### **Traders**

**It is up to you who you invite, you are not obliged to have anyone, it's your choice!!**

They should be members of the NMRA. Do not over do the trade as you can only have so many traders selling the same thing. Some traders **WILL** try and bully you into coming, don't let them, it's your meet.

Make sure they also know that they will be expected to provide a good raffle prize (at least £25 worth) as we do not charge them to come!

### **Layouts:**

#### **This again is your choice:**

Remember you have to pay them reasonable petrol cost, so it's a good idea to keep a tight rein on this as a meet will soon be out of pocket if you have too many layouts from long distances. Try and keep them local. If you need any help with finding layouts always ask the Meets Officer who will gladly help.

### **The Venue**

**This again, is down to you but keep the following in mind.**

Traders and layout owners have heavy things to carry and will not be pleased to have to carry them up stairs or for long distances so make sure the hall has easy access i.e. parking is close by, and there is plenty of it.

**When you have set the date make sure you have the hire agreement in writing. Double booking does happen.**

### **Cost of Hire**

**The cost of the hall is a big factor in putting on a meet**

This is apart from considering whether the hall big enough. You can expect anything from 60 to 150 members to attend, so allow for this in your budget.

### **Entry fee:**

This depends on the hall hire costs, but as a guide we suggest you charge, members £2.50 to £3.00 non members £3.50 to £4.00. You should not charge for a member's spouse or children under the age of sixteen as an act of good will.

### **Raffle**

It is a very good idea to hold a raffle as it can make over a £100 which can mean the difference between making a profit or not. Suggested charge £1.00 for a strip of five tickets.

Most of the prizes will come from the traders who are attending so it's important that they give you reasonable prizes not rubbish.

### **Food/Drinks**

Again this is up to you and how much things have cost you to buy. But try to keep prices reasonable i.e. Tea 50 to 60p per cup

### **Bring + buy tables**

Charge £5.00 per 4x2 space. NO traders are allowed in the B+B area. You may have a limited amount of space for B+B so make sure you let members know the tables are on a "first come bases"

### **What to do now!**

- set a date, if you have not already done so!
- invite traders (this is totally your choice and yours alone) when you write inviting them, make sure to let them know the latest you are prepared to wait for them to confirm is?. This way you are not left hanging around not knowing if a trader is coming or not! Also let them know they will be asked to give a reasonable raffle prize to at least the value of £25.00.
- invite layouts (try and use local ones to keep costs down) same rules as above! (Apart from the raffle)
- think about having some modelling demos.
- ask the AP or contest reps if they could arrange something.

you will need to allow for bring + buy tables, you will have to use your desecration on this as it depends on hall size, but about ten tables of 4x2 or split a 6x2 in half this will be fine. They should be on a first come first served bases. No traders on B+B tables.

### **Advertising.**

**This is VERY important.**

- Get the Marketing Coordinator involved as soon as possible.
- Let the Editor of RH know as soon as you can and try and get the meet into RH for at least two issues before the event.
- Give the Marketing Coordinator all the details as soon as you have them finalised so that adverts can be placed in suitable publications nearer

the date and he will try and get something into Continental Modeller near the date of the meet This will help not only remind members but also anyone who is interested in joining.

- Make sure the details go on the regions web sites.

## **On the day.**

**You will need help on the day for such things as**

marking out the hall, This is when your floor plan comes in to its own. Mark out the floor so you can easily identify who and what goes where. Something like duct tape with an A4 sheet of paper clearly marked with the trader/layout name on it placed in the middle of the marked out area will assist

you will need people to:

- man the door,
- stewards to help people in + out with layouts and traders,
- someone to sell raffle tickets

## **Catering**

**You will need a team for this.**

Try and keep this in house then the meet gets the profit. If you have to ask an outsider to do this, then get a clear list of charges before you give them the go ahead?

Do not forget the meet does not end when everyone starts packing away, you will need help clearing up when they have all gone!

**Catering tips: suggestions on what to sale and suggested prices.**

- Hot drinks Tea + coffee 50p to 60p per cup
- Hot dogs £1.00 to £1.50 these sell very well.
- Sandwiches: here are some suggestions. The main thing is to keep them simple: Ham, ham + tomato, ham and cucumber, cheese, Cheese and pickle/tomato.
- Cake: a mixture of cakes sell well, but do not over do it as it all comes out of your profit in the end.

**Last but not least PROFIT**

**The idea of a region meet is to make a small profit, for you the organising group and the Region.**

- Any profit made is split 50/50 between you and the region.
- Don't forget the insurance cost is met in full by the region.
- You should send the regions part of any profit to the regions treasurer as soon as possible after the end of the meet, with cheque made payable to the "NMRA British region"

If the meet makes a small loss the region will cover this BUT if you are careful with you expenses this should not be a problem.

We hope that gets you off and running, please connect the Meets Officers as soon as possible to talk about the meet.

Author: Nobby Clarke, NMRA  
Atlantic Director

# International Railfair A Fundraiser that Works

By Dick Witzens

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For many NMRA Regions and Divisions, funding is a chronic problem, especially in these economic times.

The Sierra Division of the Pacific Coast Region is fortunate. Our members do not have to pay dues, newsletter costs, or anything else of that nature. This is made possible by our participation in International Railfair (IRF). This information is provided in hopes that other groups may see a possible way to improve their incomes.

International Railfair ([www.internationalrailfair.com](http://www.internationalrailfair.com)) is a successful annual model railroad show. (It's about to have its 33<sup>rd</sup> year in 2009, so they must be doing something right!) IRF currently features more than a dozen operating layouts in various scales and layout sizes and over 150 vendor tables, in three adjacent fairgrounds buildings. The Placer County fairgrounds, in Roseville, CA is the venue used each year, and the show is always on the second weekend of November. Our regular visitors and vendors always know when and where to go. Roseville is a suburb of Sacramento, so there is a large potential audience. IRF draws people from several hundred miles away, including the San Francisco

Bay area.

IRF is sponsored by four model railroad organizations. These sponsors are the Sierra Division, the Sacramento Modular Railroaders, the Roseville Roundhouse Model Railroad Club, and the Sacramento area chapter of European Train Enthusiasts. The sponsors share the responsibility and work involved. They make all the arrangements for putting on the show, provide all the front money, do most of the work in presenting the show, take all the financial risk, and divide any income to provide most, or all, of their annual budgets.

The actual running of the show is done by the IRF committee with members from each sponsor. Each sponsor provides two IRF Directors, who are the only people with voting power. There are four non-Director officers elected from among the committee members. Other committee members are selected for or volunteer for specific tasks.

Besides the four sponsoring organizations, other groups benefit as well. For example, a local Rainbow Girls group provides IRF's food concession, including daily pre-show breakfasts for show participants and vendors. They



handle their own finances and workers. The local Moose Lodge provides the annual Saturday dinner for show participants. They provide three dinner choices for a flat rate. A highlight of the dinner is the door prize drawing. Prizes are solicited from the vendors, and drawing tickets are sold to those at the dinner, with the proceeds going to IRF.

Each sponsor shares things that need to be done during the show. Three sponsors show and staff their own modular layouts. Sierra Division does not have a modular layout, but has an NMRA information booth, and also a small toddlers' wooden train layout that is always popular and gives parents a chance to sit and relax. There are also other things that need to be done during the show, like staffing the ticket booths, running Train Mart (a consignment sales operation), setting up outside décor, and the like. These tasks are shared among the four sponsors.

The major expense is the fairground rental. Other venues in the area charge far more for the same amount of space. The next largest expense is insurance. IRF's budget does not allow for buying TV advertising, or ads in the large local area daily newspaper. IRF's major advertising is distributing flyers to hobby shops within a wide radius around Sacramento. They also buy some ads in small area weekly papers, and do submissions to all the appropriate free event calendars in papers, magazines and the like. The major incomes are from public admissions, and vendor table sales.

IRF has been fortunate in having money left each year, after expenses,

though it is sometimes touch and go. The leftover money is distributed equally among the sponsoring organizations.

# Hosting and Conducting a Train Show as an NMRA Division Fund-raising event

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The Central Indiana Division of the Midwest Region, NMRA, has maintained a strong treasury for over a decade. Even before it was decided that the Divisions could not charge dues, or before the Regions had the option of forwarding funds to the Divisions, we have been able to financially support all of our activities by hosting Train Shows in our division area. I have seen recently some pros and cons to hosting Train Shows, but our Division Train Shows generally solicit a combination of fellows who are selling trains to thin their inventory, folks who buy trains at estates and then need a place to sell their trains, or Local Storefront Hobby Shops that bring parts of their inventories to the Train Show to sell. All Train Shows also provide clinics on Model Railroading, NMRA model judging, NMRA photo judging, Favorite/Popular judging and modular portable layouts.

The Central Indiana Division/ Midwest Region also hosts a number of other model railroad related events that are provided at no cost to local NMRA members and in some cases the general public. Layout Tours are provided to local NMRA members. Some Train shows with operating layouts are provided at a local library or other community events.

We have historically hosted three revenue Train Shows per year in three different geographic areas of our division. For a number of years, our January Train Show in Noblesville, Indiana has been our most successful show in attendance and in income. Our Bedford, Indiana Train Show, co-sponsored with the local Kiwanis, has routinely done well and almost always has generated income. Our Danville, Indiana Train Show has usually financially covered its costs but attendance has been less than hoped for.

It appears that the primary factor for success has been having someone who is close to the area who knows how to focus on both the Train Show audience and the local folks. The perfect example for this was in regard to our Danville, Indiana Train Show. We had done this Train Show for a decade and its attendance had been slipping for several years. A couple of years ago we lost our local contact for this train show but tried to keep the Train Show going. The Train Show was held for a couple of years but it really wasn't working. We then had a new fellow on our CID Board, who lived in the area and said that he would gladly head up the Train Show. He worked with a local fellow who sells trains at the train shows and they contacted dealers and really did the job on the publicity. Oh, I forgot to mention,

our new Board member suggested that we make this Train Show free to the public to see if people would come to a Train Show in the Danville area if it was well organized, publicized, and had something to offer. Our only income to cover the rental of the meeting hall would be the income from the sale of the tables to the dealers. No income from the door. We had several hundred folks come to this most recent Train Show and we came close to meeting costs. The Board has decided that since our Mission is to promote the hobby of model railroading, we will do this Train Show again in Danville and that it again will be a Free Train Show.

Here, though, is the formula that we use to conduct an income producing Train Show such as the one done at Noblesville, Indiana in January of each year.

**Recruit a local CID Board member who will be responsible for organizing the Train Show. He/she will ultimately be responsible for publicity and recruiting, or securing someone to recruit, the dealers for the Train Show.**

### **Facility related tasks:**

- Confirm with the event facility the availability of the preferred date of the Train Show.
- Determine the cost of the facility and specifically what Deposit will be required to secure the facility for that date.
- Secure the NMRA insurance certificate for the facility where the Train Show will be held.

- Arrange for the set up and clean up after the Train Show. In years past the CID Board members did this ourselves but we eventually came to the realization that following the long day of the train show, it was worth paying someone to do this task. We have a church group that does this now as a money maker for them, but at another Train Show, it is done by Boy Scouts who get paid to do this task.

### **Publicity Tasks:**

- Design a Flier to advertise the Train Show (A consistent design of a flier seems to work well as everyone always knows our CID Train Shows by our flier. A steam loco silhouette is a good eye catcher.)
- Send announcements to National magazines such as Model Railroader, Railroad Model Craftsman, and Scale Rails. All of these are now online.
- Announcements can also be made on other Railroad or Model Railroad venues, both online and otherwise.
- Place Fliers in Local Hobby Shops.
- Distribute Fliers at local Great Train Expo and other local Train Shows.
- Send press release or announcements to local newspapers in the month preceding the Train Show.

### **Recruit Train Show Event activities:**

- We have a CID Board Member who has developed a list of local fellows who like to display their portable operating train layouts for Train Shows.

- Layout Exhibitors are not reimbursed for travel expenses, but they are given the opportunity to have one table at no cost to sell some of their trains or anything else that they want to sell.
- Having a nice variety of Train layouts at Train Shows is a must as some of the public who come to the Train Shows are more interested in seeing trains run than wanting to shop at Dealer Tables.
- A CID Board Member or CID volunteer will recruit several persons to conduct clinics on improving model railroading skills or interests.
- A CID Board Member or CID volunteer will judge or recruit judges for model and photo judging. This person will generally also coordinate “popular judging” of “Favorite Trains or Favorite model category” chosen for each Train Show.
- CID Board Members also are secured to take admission at the Door. Admission is \$5 for adults and children 12 and younger are free when accompanied by an adult who has paid for their own admission. The exception to this is now our Danville, Indiana Train Show which is a free show. Fortunately, the cost of this event facility is less than our Noblesville event facility.

### **Recruit Dealers for the Train Show:**

- One person will be responsible for coordination of recruiting Train Show Dealers.
- Letters are written to describe the Train Show, indicate the date of the

Train Show and inform the Dealers of the size and cost of Dealer Tables. The CID currently charges \$10 for six foot tables and \$12 for eight foot tables.

- This letter provides information on who to contact to reserve the tables and requests payment in advance.
- Any funds received for Dealer Tables is forwarded to the CID Treasurer/ Paymaster as soon as possible.
- Another CID Board member takes the Dealer List and creates an arrangement for the tables to fit into the facility hall.
- Regarding Dealer set up, The Train Show hours are from 10 to 4. Dealers are told that they can come into the Train Show facility and set up at 8 AM. Dealers who request 8 or more tables are individually contacted and informed that they can come to the facility at 7 AM for their set up. This staggering of set up helps to avoid congestion as everyone arrives for set up.
- Our Noblesville, Indiana Train Show has been a sellout for Dealers in the last 4 years and a waiting list is kept in case someone calls to cancel.

### **On the Day of the Train Show:**

- Train Show Coordinator arrives at the facility at 6AM to make sure that the facility is ready to go.
- Signs directing traffic to the Train Show facility are placed on nearby roads and highways. (Last year the ground was so cold, none of the signs could be pushed into the soil, so some creative placement was required and

used.)

- An Easel is placed at the entrance of the Train Show to indicate clinic titles and times.
- Door Prize drawings are held each hour of the Train Show. Each Door Prize is a coupon for \$15 that can be spent at any dealer table. The Dealer brings the coupon to the CID for reimbursement.
- Clinics, Judging, and Portable layouts go into action.
- At the close of the Train Show, the Train Show coordinator stays at the facility until the last Train Show Dealer has left the building.

### **Food:**

- A provider for food and refreshments is secured for the Train Show.
- A local church likes to sell sandwiches, meals and desserts as a fundraiser for their church.
- Another Food Concession fellow likes to sell food at another of our Train Shows. He gives the CID a percentage of his profits.

### **Special:**

- Our Noblesville, Indiana Train Show also has a special draw in that we hold an auction of donated model trains and other railroad related items which often includes some unique Railroadiana items. We once had a lighted grade crossing crossbuck, and once a brake wheel and gear from a freight car.
- All items are donated to the CID with no expectation of receiving any return.

- The auction is held in the last two hours of the Train Show.
- A professional Auctioneer has been secured at a bargain rate for the last 4 years.
- CID Board Members and volunteers are recruited to hold and interpret items being auctioned.
- CID Board Members and volunteers are recruited as spotters for the auction.
- Bid numbers for people who will participate in the Auction are distributed as people come to the Train Show. People who plan to participate in the auction have to provide their phone number when agreeing to participate in the auction in case they bid on something and leave before paying for their item.
- Participants who pay out for their items prior to the end of the auction are not allowed to continue bidding for other items. (Payouts in the middle of the Auction are very distracting.)
- CID Board Members and volunteers are recruited to record winning bids and the amount of the bid.
- Auction monies received are given directly to the CID Treasurer/ Paymaster.

### **Financial Reconciliation:**

- Following the Train Show the Treasurer/Paymaster will record receipts of the Train Show which include: Dealer Table Receipts, Door Admission, and Auction Receipts.
- Expenses are forwarded to the Treasurer/Paymaster such as Facility

Rental, Set up/Clean up costs,  
Publicity expenses (flier printing,  
newspaper ads).

We hope that this information might  
be helpful to others in deciding if parts  
of what we do might be helpful in  
conducting either a successful train  
show activity or fundraiser.

Thomas Cain, CID Superintendent

Steve Studley, CID Assistant  
Superintendent

December 26, 2009

# Midwest Region Auction Subcommittee Policies & Procedures

## Article I – Authority and Purpose

1. These Policies & Procedures are established pursuant to Article IV, Section 1, Subsection c(4)(c) and Article IX, Section 1 of the Bylaws of the Midwest Region (hereinafter the “Region”). The Region’s Constitution, Bylaws and Policies & Procedures set forth rules regulating the affairs of the Region. Collectively these organizational documents constitute the Executive Handbook.

2. The purpose of these Policies & Procedures is to facilitate implementation of the Auction Subcommittee’s responsibilities.

## Article II – Policy

1. Although the auction is routinely held in conjunction with a convention or meet, it is wholly a function of the Region. The Region is responsible for managing the auction and all profits are the sole property of the Region.

a. The Region Auction Chair is responsible for the entire auction proceedings, except for handling monetary transactions.

b. The Region Treasurer is responsible for the handling of monetary transactions, including both receipt at the auction and payout later.

2. The following items are established as a matter of policy, and will be incorporated into the auction rules made available to participants.

a. The auction is open only to members of the NMRA.

b. A standard commission will be charged to sellers.

1. The normal commission rate will be 15%.

2. The Region will, as a service to terminally ill or deceased members, allow liquidation of the deceased members’ estate (subject to normal rules regarding the types of items allowed in the auction) free of commission.

3. The official auction rules shall be made available to all participants – sellers and buyers. The rules may be amended from time to time by the Auction Chairman, as long as the provisions of Section 2 of this policy are adhered to. Significant changes which may affect participation should be published as far in advance as possible. Updates shall be provided to the Region Secretary for inclusion in the Executive Handbook. Posting of a current copy of the Auction Rules on a table or bulletin board in the Auction Room, shall meet the require-

ment that the rules be available to all participants

### Article III – Procedures

The Auction rules and regulations are set forth on the following pages.

## **Midwest Region Auction**

### **Rules and Regulations**

1. The auction is open only to members of the NMRA.
2. The auction staff reserves the right to limit the number of items submitted by any one seller if, in their opinion, the auction is getting too large. When quantities are limited, entries will be accepted according to the following priorities:
  - a. Model railroad equipment
  - b. Other items directly related to model railroading (e.g., books and magazines)
  - c. Prototype railroad equipment and other items directly related to prototype railroading
  - d. Non-railroad items with a railroad theme
3. A standard commission of 15% will be charged for all items sold. Items that are part of an estate, being carried in accordance with the Region Auction Policy, will be sold without commission, as a service to terminally ill or deceased members.
4. Sellers must deliver their merchandise to the auction during the hours specified for the event. Items will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Receipts will be given for the merchandise delivered.
5. Sellers are responsible for providing sufficient descriptions of their items to allow evaluation by purchasers. This description will be included on the tag displayed with the merchandise.
6. Buyers must pick up their merchandise and pay for it immediately following the auction. The auction staff is not equipped to store purchases.
7. Sellers will be paid by check within 6 weeks of the auction.
8. The NMRA, Region, host group, and auction staff assume no responsibility for any item. All merchandise is sold as is, where is.
9. There may be both silent and/or live components of the auction. Sellers may stipulate that their items will be included only in the silent auction or the live auction; such items will not enter the other auction. All other lots will be included in both portions of the auction; items that do not sell in the Silent auction will be placed in the Live Auction. Items being included in one auction will be so noted on their bidding tags.
10. The minimum bid for any item is one dollar. All bid amounts must be in multiples of one dollar.
11. The following rules apply to the silent auction if one is offered:



- a. The silent auction will commence upon the receipt of the first item entered into the silent auction.
- b. Bidding is accomplished by writing one's registration number and the bid amount on the bid sheet accompanying the item.
- c. The silent auction will terminate at the start of the layout tours on the day the live auction is scheduled.
- d. Bids posted that are below any specified minimum bid will not be accepted. Likewise, illegible bids will not be accepted.
- e. At the end of the silent auction, lots with a bid on them will be considered sold.
- f. Winning bidders on items being included in only the silent auction must pick up and pay for their items at the time specified by the auction staff, and in no event later than the start of the live auction. Failure to do so will result in the sale being cancelled and the item offered to the next highest bidder (in either the silent or live auction), if possible, or ultimately being returned to the seller

12. The following rules apply to the live auction:

- a. Unsold items in the silent auction are automatically placed in the live auction as well as items that are specifically indicated "live auction only" will be placed in the live auction.

- b. Each item will be sold to the highest bidder, subject only to the seller's minimum bid.
- c. Time is provided before the auction for buyers to view the available items. Buyers are responsible for acquainting themselves with the items. It is not the responsibility of the auctioneer to provide detailed descriptions or analyses of the items, beyond what description has been provided by the seller.
- d. Winning bidders in the live auction must settle up with the Auction Treasurer immediately following the auction.

13. Payment for Auction Items

- a. Winning bidders must pay in US Funds by cash, personal check, or travelers check. Credit cards and debit cards will not be accepted in payment of winning bids.
- b. The Auction Chairman has the sole authority to allow a winning live auction bidder to cash out before the live auction is over. Any bidder who cashes out before the live auction is over, his or her identification number will be closed out and, he/she will be barred from making any bid on subsequently auctioned merchandise.

# Advertising and Publicity On The Cheap and Not So Cheap

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The only effective way to bring new people to clinics, activities, and events is through public advertising. Word of mouth by current participants has value but does not result in the kind of attendance that most efforts need to achieve a “break even” revenue point. If the event includes swap tables or vendors, they will rely on you to bring the “traffic” that will allow them to earn money. The issue is how to advertise without breaking the bank and still reach the audience you want.

## The Obvious?

The use of Region, Division, Club, and other group web sites and email lists to advertise is the first step in making sure existing members “get the word.” Don’t just rely on advertising or an announcement in the newsletter (they are important, of course). Make a special posting to the site with email alert to the entire list and then send a reminder to the list shortly before the event as a reminder. The price for the effort is zero dollars and some time. You may reach your entire membership.

Regions, Division, Clubs and Clinics that are more into technology will also have a Facebook account and have as many model railroad interested “friends” as possible. Facebook allows contacts that have been developed over time outside NMRA membership, or developed as a natural course through the account. Facebook may also be

complemented by YouTube videos that advertise or otherwise announce and explain activities. The price for the effort is zero dollars and some time. You may reach a wider population of those interested in the hobby.

## The Less Obvious.

Local newspapers (those that remain in print) normally have some sort of Community Calendar or Activities section that allows groups to advertise or announce events. The announcements are normally limited to 100 words or less and are text only. The paper may require monthly resubmission for recurring events and may only run an announcement for a set period of time. A typical announcement might read as follows:

Hobbies or Crafts Category  
Model Railroad Clinic  
Monday March 15, 2010  
Sylvan Library  
512 Sylvan Way, Bremerton  
“Building wood structures”  
Public Invited  
Contact Mary 360-555-5555

The paper will format the entry to fit the space allowable and then list it in the proper category. Person-to-person with the paper editor will establish the appropriate relationship and provide best end results. Live with the rules the paper established for best success. The

price is zero dollars and some time. You will have an opportunity to reach a wider section of the local community.

Local newspapers are also interested in community interest stories. The key is to talk to the editor (face-to-face) about an event or activity and have sufficient information at hand (including good pictures) to interest the editor in a possible story. The editor may assign a reporter to the event but what you really want is a story before the event. The editor may ask you to write an article and provide pictures. This is a great opportunity that needs careful attention and effort. The story is not about how great the presenting activity is but about what is being offered to the public. Five hundred words is a long article for something of this nature when just one picture is included. A sample of a proposed article is at the end of this section.

Public Access TV is available to almost every area served by cable TV. The public access channel and the associated facilities are normally supported by public funding (that means tax dollars) and offer an opportunity for the members of the public to broadcast material free of charge (just the right price for model railroaders).

The use of PATV, where available, is subject to a set of regulations and requirements that must be understood and followed. They will vary from organization to organization but, in general, will be reasonably common across the PATV spectrum. A set of the notes to users from the PATV service in one division are included in this section to provide a reasonable understanding of

service and service use. In addition to providing a major public relations and marketing opportunity, working in the PATV arena should also result in Achievement Program credit in either Author or Volunteer or both.

There are a number of opportunities available and they will vary with each Public Access service. Below are three opportunities that are available in most areas.

1. Public Access TV “announcements” are simple single frame text or graphic messages that are used as “filler” and are on screen for about 15 to 30 seconds each airing. The idea is to broadcast your message repeatedly over a short period of time. It is common for the service to limit air time for a message to not more than two weeks and to specify time and format of submission. This service is best supported by a message in Word or similar text format, Power Point, or Publisher and submitted on a CD as a “ready to go” single page item. Some samples of “announcements” are provided at the end of this discussion. A copy of the standard announcement form used by the PATV service in one division is provided as an example of how the process works.

Sample PATV "advertisement" form

# Public Access TV Bulletin Board

TV Bulletin Board Message to appear on screen. (Please note, space is limited)

ORGANIZATION:

EVENT:

DAY & DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

COMMENT:

(additional comments):

PHONE CONTACT:

Text messages are displayed on Public Access Television (PATV) in between scheduled programs. The PATV Reader Board is a free public service available ONLY to non-profit organizations, Government agencies and Schools in Kitsap County. Direct solicitations for financial contributions, commercial or political advertisements are not accepted. PATV reserves the right to screen the PATV Reader Board messages and to air selected announcements on a time available basis.

Messages run for two weeks maximum. By granting your approval below, you agree to hold harmless

PATV, the City of Wonderland and Railroad County from any and all liability, damages or losses incurred

because of actions, errors or omissions related to your use of the PATV Reader Board. This form MUST be completely filled out and signed or the message will not run.

**All messages must be turned in before 3:00pm on Thursdays.**

. Non-Profit Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**(REQUIRED)** NPO Tax ID # \_\_\_\_\_

. Government: ( ) City of \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) County ( ) Other

Department or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

. School: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Department: \_\_\_\_\_

. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

. Title: \_\_\_\_\_

. Address: \_\_\_\_\_

. City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

. Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

. Email: \_\_\_\_\_

. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date to start this message \_\_\_\_\_ (messages begin Mondays)

Please Fax or mail the completed PATV Reader Board form to:

**Address:** PATV • 1234 Caboose Rd. NW • Wonderland, WA. 55555 • **Fax:** (360) 555-5555

If you have any questions, please call the PATV office at (360) 555-5555

2. Public Access TV “special” shows are one time limited length video productions. These can either be taped in studio (varies with PATV service and facilities) or may be produced by the organization making the video at some other location. Most PATV services have either equipment that may be loaned to “qualified” (PATV training courses normally required) or they provide in-house filming opportunities. Current technology also puts high quality equipment in the hands of much of the public and reasonable quality productions may be achieved with that equipment. First talk to the PATV staff to find out what is acceptable, what format is required and how the material is delivered to PATV, and the parameters of a “special” production for air time. This will require a certain amount of detailed planning, “story boarding” and scripting to make sure the requirements for editing are reduced and the quality of the end product is appropriate for airing. Some subject matter that might be appropriate for a “special” are a story on model railroading that is really an advertisement for a major event or show or a continuing effort such as local clinics. Normally the PATV staff will be very helpful in getting your project completed and on the air.

3. Public Access TV “series” are as close to a normal TV show as you can get. Unlike the one time special, the series will fill a dedicated time slot, feature a different show each week, and provide a significant opportunity to get model railroading in front of the public. The production effort is much the same as for the “special” but is repetitive, has

very firm deadlines, and requires a greater effort of coordination. However, if a local clinic or division routinely video tapes the live clinics they sponsor, and if the taping is of proper quality, the opportunity for a “series” may already exist. Once again, working with the local PATV staff before embarking on a “series” project is well advised.

## **Introduction to a Sample of Public Access TV (PATV)**

### *What is PATV?*

XXAT stands for XX Access Television. XXAT is a division of the City of Wonderland. We are an Access Station that airs all three versions of PEG.

### *What is PEG?*

Programming that is divided into Public, Education, & Government. The specific designation for a video or text message all depends on where the video/message is coming from, not what it is about. A video could be instructional, such as teaching cooking, but the designation would be Public (from the individual). Typically all individuals are Public first. Education comes from some local High Schools and the local Community College because they have a regular series or programming that airs on PATV. Education status also is given to other schools and/or districts and teachers, not students. Government status is from PATV’s productions for various cities and the County through contract agreements with them and from military branches of service. An example of this: PATV airs Army Newswatch, a Government video program.

### *What is PATV in relation to PEG?*

PATV is an Access station airing all three of the PEG.

*Who is PATV available to?*

Any cable subscriber to Wonderland based Comcast or Other City based Wave Broadband can watch PATV. Even though some viewers are also in Outside County, only our County Residents can utilize PATV. Cable subscribers can view PATV on Wave cable channel 3 or Comcast cable channel 12. PATV is the public forum for airing your views/ programs/announcements to reach more than 50,000 cable subscribing households in YY County over those cable companies whether you currently subscribe to cable or not.

*How is PATV funded?*

Through the “pass through” fees on the cable bills from Wonderland and unincorporated Our County and through the Government service agreements PATV has with the Cities

*What is PATV's responsibility?*

- Provide airtime for Our County residents/members to share their talents, thoughts, meetings, information, etc. either on video or through the Reader Board.
- Provide equipment, free of charge, to the public so they can provide programming to PATV.
- Keep members up to date.
- Provide the members with quality training.

*What is membership at PATV?*

Membership is agreeing to the PATV policies and adhering to them. You become a member by filling out the proper PATV forms. There is no charge for membership. Forms are for

Individuals or Organizations.

*What is member's responsibility?*

- Watch!
- Provide programming.
- Properly sign up and properly use equipment.
- Provide PATV with proper ID.
- Keep PATV informed of any changes (address, phone, status, etc.)

*How can I utilize PATV if I live in Our County?*

*\* Use the Readerboard*

Announce your non-profit organization message (meetings, service times, upcoming events, general reminders, etc). Rules and more info are on the Readerboard Form. Messages have a 2-week maximum run for Non-profit, Education and Government organizations. PATV membership is not required.

*\* Have your video played back on PATV*

PATV airs a wide variety of videos that cover all topics, ideas and thoughts. Only Our County residents may air videos on PATV regardless of whether they subscribe to cable or not. Videos are either created in Our County (local) or outside of the County (imported). Everyone who gives us a video must sign a Playback Request Form and have a Membership Form on file. Because PATV stands by the First Amendment and your right to Free Speech, we do not pre-screen any video for content. The only “restriction” of playback is the playback time: if the box on the Playback Request Form is checked (by the person submitting the video) that says this video contains excessive swearing, excessive violence and/or

nudity the video will be aired after midnight. All videos that contain copyrighted material must be accompanied by a letter that says you have permission to air the video. See the Policy Handbook for specific wording on that subject. PATV membership is required.

Single program:

Will air no more than four times in various timeslots in a single season (6-months). Allow two-three weeks once program is dropped off to be on schedule.

Series programs:

Air in regular timeslots on regular days (ex: Tuesdays at 10pm). Must apply for regular timeslot through Series Lottery held in February & August. Seasons are April 1 through September 30 & October 1 through March 31. You can also apply for open slots after the lottery is held and have a time slot until that season ends. Shows can be either weekly or monthly.

- Weekly: One new program each week (26 new episodes or 13 new with 13 repeat episodes)

- Monthly: One new program each month airs either on 1st/3rd or 2nd/4th week.(6 new shows total)

There are no LIVE programming spaces available at this time for any programming.

\* Check out Equipment/Edit if available - Certification is required first. PATV has video equipment that can be checked out on a first come-first served basis. Individuals will be certified after they either demonstrate working knowledge of the camera equipment and/or edit bay or they can receive individual

training that is by appointment with either Tech Manager. He is more than happy to train you on camera use and edit bay use as the schedule allows.

Please note:

All finished productions done on PATV equipment MUST air on PATV before any other use. Also: Individuals under 18 must have a parent or a legal guardian present to check out and return equipment. Individuals under 14 are not allowed to use PATV equipment either on site or in the field.

*I have an idea for a show, but no crew what do I do?*

If it's a 30-minute show you can do an Instant Television with PATV.

\* What is Instant Television and how is it different?

Instant Television (ITV) is when you have a show that you can do that is 28 minutes or under, don't have a crew and you don't have equipment. ITV's are done in the PATV Studio with PATV Staff and PATV volunteers operating all production equipment. It is a show that is done start to finish, there is no editing or adding things later. If you choose to do an Instant Television you must observe one before signing up.

\* Instant Television Guidelines:

- Orientation first (observation of an ITV)
- Sign up is first come - first served
- Location is the PATV Studio in the Comcast Building at 1225 Sylvan Way in Bremerton.
- Frequency of use is quarterly (ex: first use in January, second April or after)
- The crew is provided by PATV, there is no cost for production.

- All productions are done in under half-an-hour, talk format or band, and is done "live to tape."
- Instant Television is held on the first Thursday of each month at 5-6pm or 6-7pm slots for "talk" format programs; the third Thursday at 6pm is for a band or variety program. The third Thursday is 6pm - 8pm to allow for the band to set up in one hour, perform for half-an-hour and take down equipment in the final half-hour.

*PATV Policy Handbook*

This covers the general policies of PATV, please read it in its entirety.

*This "Orientation" should answer the general questions you might have about PATV. If you do have any further questions, please contact PATV. We will be more than happy to answer any questions you have or direct you to the person who can best help you.*

**Cable TV paid advertising**

may provide the opportunity to inform the public of your event in a very effective manner at a reasonable cost. Local Cable TV operators have a significant amount of air time available to them for advertising. That is a major source of revenue for the operator and they are anxious to fill the air time with paid advertising (even at low cost) as opposed to running self- commercials or overrunning public service announcements that generate no revenue. Thus, the opportunity for reasonable exposure at reasonable cost. Before you go off the deep end with this idea however, it is best to visit your cable TV marketing department to see what is available, at what cost, and what

must be provided to get on the air.

Much of the discussion above about preparation and production of materials for PATV is also applicable to paid advertising. The big difference is that the paid ad will be about 30 seconds to one minute long and be in a video format. While this may some additional time and talent (especially in editing) the end product may provide better than local print media when it comes to "telling the story" and reaching the proper audience. It may even be cost effective to deal with a professional video production firm to create your ad. It will certainly result in higher quality and, if properly edited, may be reusable for future events with minor editing.

With respect to air time, the best option is to deal with the cable marketing staff. They can advise you of what shows and time slots will best reach the demographics that you want to target and work out an air schedule that best fits your target audience and your budget. For some shows (guys shows) the cost may be very low while History Channel or sports channel time slots might be more expensive. Prime time costs more than afternoon or late night. It may be possible to gat on the air at certain times and channels for about a buck a minute. That is the very low end. To reach your targets may cost more. The Marketing staff can help. One of the reasons the advice is to talk to them up front is to avoid spending money on a production that you cannot afford to air. If you are concerned about how difficult the creation of an advertisement is and if you can afford to get it on the air, just remember that every two years



politicians fill the TV hours with their messages. If a politician can pull it off so can a model railroader.

Radio Public Service Announcements are normally available on local radio stations. Much like your work with commercial TV or Public Access TV announcements, you will be responsible to prepared the script, and perhaps even record the announcement. A high quality recording of the message, not longer than 30 seconds in length produced on a CD will normally work. Some stations use a telephone recording system that simplifies the effort. Remember to get in the WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHO, and WHY in you message. Contact your local stations to find out their policies and procedures. Once again the **price is free** if you are willing to do the necessary work

Example PATV “announcement”

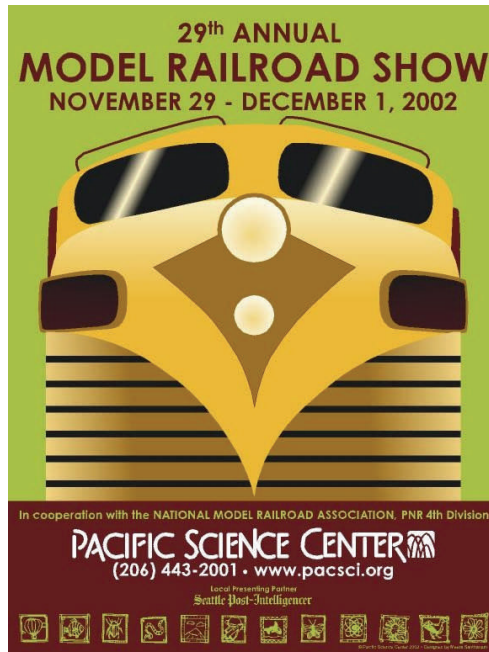
**Model Railroad Clinic  
Presented by National Model Railroad  
Association**

**Basic Soldering Techniques  
(Solid Joints without the Pain)  
HANDS ON CLINIC**

**Saturday March 13, 2010 10:30 AM  
United Way Community Center  
457<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bremerton**

**VISITORS WELCOME  
Contact Marion 360-555-5555**

Example PATV “Announcement”



Example PATV “Announcement”



**The Wonderland Model Railway Club presents**

**TRAINS. TRAINS, AND MORE TRAINS!**

**A MODEL RAILROADING EXTRAVAGANZA FOR THE  
ENTIRE FAMILY**

**See operation model train layouts in all scales and sizes**

Participate in and enjoy demonstrations and “Hands On” clinics  
featuring skilled modeling craftsmen who take the magic out of  
modeling

Friday, Saturday and Sunday March 12-14 9AM to  
7PM

Fairgrounds Center 555 Fairgrounds Road,  
Wonderland

Admission – Adults \$7, Youth 6-12 \$4, 5 and under  
FREE

Contact “Conductor” Bill – (555) 555-5555

## Example Newspaper Article

### Remember When – Trains Come Back to Kitsap

We can all remember the times in our childhood when we pulled the box of electric trains from the closet and created our own railroad empire on the floor or table. The opportunity to revisit those memories and enjoy the fun of model trains is with us once again. Over the weekend of January 15, 16, 17 the Kitsap Model Railroaders will present a train show open to the public. The show will be at the Kitsap Pavilion on Fairgrounds Road and will be open from 8:30AM until 7:00 PM each of the three days.

The show will include layouts of various scales and eras. The Model Railroaders will also present “How-To” clinics and “Make-and-Take” clinics to help those interested in the hobby learn more. Clinics will be presented starting hourly and will last about 30 minutes. The Kitsap Railroad Modelers are also offering a “Fix-it” booth where models will be cleaned and minor repairs made at no cost. The public is invited to bring their trains for repair. An opportunity to operate your trains will be available on some of the layouts so get them out of the closet, get them tuned up and bring them along. Please, no more than one engine and three cars per individual or family. The show will also feature a number of Swap Meet tables.

Daily admission for the show is \$7.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children 5 to 12, and children under 5 are free. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information about the show or Kitsap Model Railroaders please visit [www.KMR.org](http://www.KMR.org) or call Marion at 360-555-5555