



# The Relay

A publication of the Chesapeake Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA

Volume 8 Issue 2

## View from the Cupola

Fall 2018

Rick Uskert



October 24, 2018

Only now does “View from the Cupola” have a more apt meaning to myself, with just a couple months as Superintendent remaining, and the last Board of Directors (BoD) member to progress through the three-year leadership progression. The officially approved changes

to our bylaws provides a shorter office tenure and a more flexible one regarding the BoD. The new policy allows any member to be nominated and elected to the general BoD for a two-year period, bringing us inline with the tenures of other Mid-Eastern Region Divisions. Once there, all sitting members of the BoD will decide among themselves who will hold each of the available positions annually. Our current Assistant Superintendent, Clerk and Paymaster’s tenure this year will count toward their first of two years of service, which will allow for a 50% BoD membership exchange each year, retaining at least half of the Board to assist the incoming Board members in getting settled and up to speed.

If you have been hesitant to join the BoD and guiding the Division due to a three-year commitment, we hope this shorter period will be more appealing to you, and the flexibility in BoD positions will allow one to function in one or two positions during your tenure, for example, as the Clerk the first year and Assistant Superintendent the second, or Director at Large for two years, as desired. The choice becomes yours.

The Division has a long-term project ahead of us, recently being accepted to host the 2021 MER Convention. Although we will not be able to begin promoting our event until the 2020 Convention is happening, there is much leg work to be done behind the scenes. A number of members have stepped up to support and play a part in making this happen, but we can always use more. Participation can be as small as contributing a few hours, once, to joining the forthcoming Local Convention Committee. This opportunity will allow us to showcase the resources we have here in Maryland and focus on what we can offer the railroad hobbyist.

Before that event gets underway, the Chesapeake and Potomac Divisions are joining forces to pull together a Mini-Con in March 2019. If you would like a bit of practice with hosting a convention without a significant commitment, March 2019 is the place to learn it. Please contact David Arday at [paymaster@chesdiv-nmra.org](mailto:paymaster@chesdiv-nmra.org) to ask how you can help. Even if you can’t help, please attend!

Finally, the 2019 BoD is formulating the activities for next year. See the 2019 calendar in this issue of the newsletter (page 4) and watch the Division web site and your email for updates on each of these events. Not yet scheduled, but in the works, is a Modeler’s Day In event and visits to Custom Model Railroads and the Baltimore Street Car Museum.

*Rick Uskert*

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## From the Editor

**Kirk Bateman**

**I**t has been almost a year since the last issue of this newsletter was published, and it has been a busy and exciting year in the Division. You'll read about some of the Division news and activities here — and perhaps you will be inspired to join us at the next planned event, to work on your own layout, or to otherwise spend some time in our hobby.

As Rick mentioned in his column, the Division Board of Directors has been busy planning activities for 2019. I encourage you to participate, as I very much enjoyed the activities in which I participated this past year. Sharing our hobby with friends, and making new friends along the way, makes for a very enjoyable experience. A few highlights of my year in model railroading include the following activities: our Division Modeler's Day In (see the article on page 14), the South Mountain Division MiniCon, the O Scale National Convention, and the MER Convention. The two conventions provided several opportunities to visit some beautiful layouts and meet their creators. And, of course, the conventions provided opportunities to make new friends and learn from others.

The Division held its Annual General Meeting November 3 at the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Historical Society's headquarters in Eldersburg. I drive by their building almost daily, and therefore can attest that they have greatly improved the exterior of the building since purchasing it. And, as their president, Greg Smith, has been a gracious host to our division on a couple of occasions, I can state that the interior is just as impressive. So, if you're a B&O RR fan, I encourage you to join the society and visit their facility. If you prefer another railroad, I encourage you to join their historical society (unfortunately, not every prototype railroad has an associated historical society). They can be a valuable resource!

Since I do not have a layout of my own, I live vicariously through others, reading a lot about model railroading, as well as about prototype railroading. In my never-ending quest for books, I occasionally pick through the "for sale" books at my local public library for books that I don't need and don't have time to read. (I plan to do a lot of reading during my retirement years.) On one of these visits, I found a book titled *The White Cascade: The Great Northern Railway Disaster and America's Deadliest Avalanche*, by Gary Krist. This book leaped to the top of my reading list, as it com-

bines my two favorite topics: trains and history. It is about a February 1910 blizzard and ensuing avalanche that trapped a couple of passenger trains in the Cascade Mountains. It was a quick read that I highly recommend.

Thank you to those who provided articles for this issue. I encourage all of our Division members to contribute. If you've been planning, building, maintaining, repairing, or operating a layout, reading about or otherwise conducting research on a favorite prototype, have visited a railroad museum, layout, or prototype railroad, or have had any other model-railroading experience you would like to share, I would enjoy hearing from you. I am certain our fellow Division members will, as well. If you have an idea for an article and perhaps need some help solidifying it, or some encouragement, please contact me.

*Kirk Bateman*

Editor

newsletter@chesdiv-nmra.org

## Membership, Subscriptions and Article Submissions

To become a member of the Chesapeake Division of the NMRA, please contact any Board Member.

You may download an electronic version of *The Relay* at the Division web site:

<http://www.chesdiv-nmra.org/Relay.html>

If you would prefer to receive printed copies, please send a check for \$6 (payable to the Chesapeake Division, MER, NMRA)

Dave Arday

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To submit an article for the next edition of *The Relay*, please send it to the editor, at the following email address, by March 8, 2019.

[newsletter@chesdiv-nmra.org](mailto:newsletter@chesdiv-nmra.org)

## 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the Annual General Meeting held November 3. Tom Casey and Travers Stavac were elected to serve on the Division Board of Directors (BoD). Subsequently, at the Board meeting of December 9, the Board members organized themselves as follows, effective January 1, 2019:

- Superintendent Mike Zitzmann
- Asst Superintendent Tom Casey
- Director at Large Travers Stavac
- Director at Large Rick Uskert
- Paymaster David Arday
- Clerk Tim Beaty

In addition, Rick Uskert volunteered to chair the 2021 Local Convention Committee.

Therefore, supporting the Board of Directors are:

- Achievement Program Chair Kurt Thompson
- Newsletter Editor Kirk Bateman
- 2021 Local Convention Committee Chair Rick Uskert
- Webmasters Rick Uskert, Kirk Bateman

## CHESAPEAKE DIVISION TO HOST 2021 MER CONVENTION

As the Division prepares to host the 2021 Mid-Eastern Region Convention, Rick will be sending an email in January soliciting volunteers. While hosting the MER Convention in 2021 is an exciting proposition, it will take a team working together to make it happen. So, if you are able to lend any help, from planning to executing to even just a few hours assisting during the convention itself, please volunteer your time. Again, Rick will be getting in touch directly, but if you want to volunteer early or get in touch with him about the 2021 MER Convention, please contact him at:

[2021LCC.Chair@chesdiv-nmra.org](mailto:2021LCC.Chair@chesdiv-nmra.org)

# 2019 CALENDAR

The Board of Directors is organizing the following activities for 2019. If a date is not provided, it means the date has not been finalized. Other activities are in the works, but not yet firm enough to publicize. Stay abreast of the latest via the monthly email blasts you receive from our clerk, Tim Beaty. If you aren't receiving the monthly blast, please contact Tim at [tsbeaty@verizon.net](mailto:tsbeaty@verizon.net) to be added to the email list.

January 20  
Baltimore Society of Model Engineers  
225 W Saratoga Street  
Baltimore, MD

February TBD  
Modeler's Day In  
Location TBD

March 16  
MiniCon -- Potomac & Chesapeake Divisions  
Emmanuel United Methodist Church  
10755 Scaggsville Road  
Laurel, MD 20723

April 13  
South Mountain MiniCon  
Blue Ridge Summit Fire Hall  
13063 Monterey Ln  
Blue Ridge Summit, PA  
[www.smdnmra.org](http://www.smdnmra.org)

May 4  
Layout Visit  
Andrew Dodge's *Colorado Midland*

June TBD  
Baltimore Street Car Museum

July 7-13  
NMRA National Convention  
Salt Lake City, UT  
[www.nmra2019slc.org](http://www.nmra2019slc.org)

September  
Mid-Atlantic RPM

October 10-13  
MER Convention: *Liberty Bell Special*  
Crowne Plaza Philadelphia—King of Prussia  
260 Mall Blvd  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
[www.phillynmra.org](http://www.phillynmra.org)

## SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION MINICON

Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania, April 13, 2019

NMRA, MER South Mountain Division and Mainline Hobby Supply host it's 7th annual Mini Con at the Blue Ridge Summit Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Come enjoy from 9 AM to 4 PM, this one-day free event one block north of Main Line Hobby Supply, consisting of prototype and modeling presentations, formal and informal clinics, modular displays, and interaction with your fellow hobbyists and beginners. This year we explore Modern Modeling when we look at 3D Printing and Laser Cutting Technology. This no-admission charge, educational event is for the promotion of the hobby of Model Railroading, open to the public and wheelchair accessible. <http://www.smdnmra.org/>

## MODEL RAILROADING ON THE INTERNET

Our organizational goals include educating and informing our members about railroading and model railroading. Therefore, if you operate a blog about any railroading related subject, we would like to let others know about it.

Please contact Rick Uskert at [webmaster@chesdiv-nmra.org](mailto:webmaster@chesdiv-nmra.org) to share your blog with others in the NMRA.

# Liberty Bell Special

## 2019 MER Convention

Sponsored by The Philadelphia Division – NMRA

October 10-13, 2019

Come celebrate trains in the cradle of liberty! The Philadelphia Division, NMRA welcomes you and yours to Liberty Bell Special 2019! The next Convention will be October 10 through October 13, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in King of Prussia, PA. After much deliberation, our committee chose the name Liberty Bell over such other favorites as Cheese Steak Special and some lesser titles. For those of you not familiar with King of Prussia, it is located 20 miles northwest of downtown Philadelphia adjacent to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and many nearby highways. In southeast Pennsylvania, all highways lead to Valley Forge.

Since Monday, October 14 is a Federal Holiday, the hotel has agreed to extend the room rates for the convention for an additional three days before and into the week following the convention. The hotel is within walking distance to the second largest shopping mall in the United States with shops and dining to meet any tastes. Also, within driving distance are the Valley Forge National Park (accommodations during the winters of the American Revolution were not as luxurious as our hotel), Longwood Gardens, the gardens of the Dupont family and many more places of interest. There is an activity for every member of your family, so bring them along. More about the area can be found on the hotel's website, [www.cpvalleyforge.com](http://www.cpvalleyforge.com).

To whet your appetite, we suggest you visit the following website for starters: [www.valleyforge.org](http://www.valleyforge.org). This is the website for the area's tourism and vacation planning guide. You may also be interested in visiting historic Philadelphia, home of Independence Hall, the world-class Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Franklin Institute, America's oldest Zoo, and much more: [www.discoverphl.com](http://www.discoverphl.com). If you have school-age children studying the history of the United States, you won't want to miss the Constitution Center, home of the Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross House, and the new Museum of the American Revolution. Karen Confer, one of our volunteers and a local, has offered to clarify information or answer questions which you may have during your trip planning. Please feel free to contact her for that personal touch: [rcths.kconfer@aol.com](mailto:rcths.kconfer@aol.com).

October will be here before you know it. We hope you will take advantage of our offers, bring your family, and make the convention weekend a family affair. We are looking forward to seeing you!

For those of you who collect hotel stay points, Crowne Plaza

is part of the IHG hotel group. Registration forms for the Convention and hotel reservation information will be published soon.

At this time, we have one prototype tour on the Colebrookdale Railroad. The Colebrookdale is part of the former Reading Barto branch in nearby Boyertown PA that is a short 50-minute drive from the hotel. In addition to the autumn foliage that occurs in early October, there will be the train ride, lunch, and a tour of the railroad's shops. The committee is working hard on additional tours and will announce them through the Region and Division newsletters as well as on the websites [www.libertybellspecial.org](http://www.libertybellspecial.org) or [www.mer2019.org](http://www.mer2019.org).

Currently we have the first four layout tours scheduled, three HO layouts and a traction layout. Efforts are underway to add to the list both with individual and club layouts. We are attempting to keep all tours and open houses to drives of 30 minutes or less. We would also like to hear from owners and superintendents who are willing to open their layouts to those making the trip to Valley Forge, keeping in mind again that Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup> is a holiday. Those willing should notify Bill Fagan ([bfagan777@hotmail.com](mailto:bfagan777@hotmail.com)) of ability to host. Remember, those Open Houses count toward AP Volunteer points.

Liberty Bell Special will begin on Thursday night with clinics which will continue through Sunday morning. We have one tentative, hands-on clinic planned with a noted presenter, as well as many more sessions tentatively planned. Again, check the website for additional or new clinics. If you want to present a clinic, please email John Seibert ([johnhseibert@comcast.net](mailto:johnhseibert@comcast.net)) with your topic.

As usual, Saturday will include the Contest Room. Plan now to bring your latest modeling efforts for sharing with other MER members. More AP credits may be available for your efforts.

Sprinkled among all these activities will be opportunities to operate on some truly spectacular individual and club layouts. We're keeping those AP Dispatcher hours in mind.

All roads lead to King of Prussia, PA. We hope you and yours will take advantage of this opportunity to visit the convention for a truly memorable experience.



# Chesapeake Division

## Achievement Program Update

### Kurt Thompson

**F**riday night, April 27th, Don Marvel, Jack Keene and I descended into Tom Casey's basement to do some AP judging. Tom had asked me a few weeks earlier if we could schedule an AP judging session on his layout. He also mentioned that he and his wife were considering moving sometime and now would be better than later to get some judging done.

Tom was interested in having three AP certificates judged. Since he had an operational layout, he wanted to see about getting the Electrical and Civil Engineering certificates, as well as the Scenery certificate.

Jack, Don, and I arrived with printed copies of the requirements for each of the three certificates. Tom was also prepared by having printed out the same judging matrices and Statement of Qualification forms.

We started with the requirements for Civil Engineering. Tom's layout had enough components to meet the requirements. Tom also had hand-laid several switches. We broke out the NMRA HO track gauge and went over the first switch. After seeing one of his Western Maryland GP9s run through all routes in the turnout, we used the judging matrix and that switch scored above 87.5. Since the switch was hand-built with scratch-built frog and points and met the NMRA gauge requirements and the locomotive ran through both branches of the switch, the switch automatically received a minimum of 95 points and therefore earned a Merit Award. Tom's switch actually earned 105 points in all.

Tom showed us another pair of switches set up as a crossover. Unfortunately, Tom did not have the two switches operating together as one switch unit. The switches were each manually operated and did so independently. This made them two switches, not one crossover. Tom is considering putting in two switch machines operating from a single electrical switch. We'll be revisiting that component at a later date.

That leaves Tom needing to scratch-build one more track component. He's considering a section of gauntlet track.

We then moved onto the Electrical certificate requirements. Since the AP Civil and Electrical certificates are similar, judging for one certificate will often be a near completion of the second one. In Tom's case, the layout met all the requirements of Section A of the requirements. Tom now needs to complete and submit his wiring diagrams to complete his Electrical certificate.

With the work done on the Civil and Electrical certificates, Jack, Don and I broke out the tape measure to see if Tom had 32 square feet of completed scenery. We found that he didn't have it all in one completed scene, but that's OK since he had a total of 32 square feet in three separate areas. Remember, the requirements say the minimum size area for HO can be down to 8 square feet (module size).

The judging team went over each area and judged that area on its own merits. Once we had each area judged, we took the raw scores and calculated a weighted average in each of the five categories. When we were done, Tom's scenes had garnered enough points to earn the Scenery certificate.

Tom had previously submitted his Volunteer certificate application but it was returned to him. He had used the outdated Record and Validation (R&V) paperwork to document his volunteer time. I had submitted that to Dave Chance, our MER AP Chairman, who promptly returned it to me with a note that Tom needed to use the correct form (Statement of Qualification). Surprisingly, the signature validating most of his volunteer work was mine. See, Tom accrued most of his 60 time units while serving as a member of the Chesapeake Division Board of Directors.

Tom's Scenery and Volunteer Statements of Qualification were turned back over to Dave Chance on Saturday, April 28th. Dave was at the MER BOD meeting in Rockville the day after the inspection party at Tom's house.

On Thursday evening, August 30th, Tom Casey was presented with his latest two Achievement Program certificates: one for Association Volunteer and the second for Scenery.

Tom's list of volunteer service included many months of leadership to our Division, from start-up through Assistant Superintendent to Superintendent. He also earned some of his volunteer points working on the 2013 C&P Junction MER Convention. Tom's list of service easily surpassed the 60 Time Units (TU) required.

Tom is continuing to work toward completing the Electrical Engineering and Civil Engineering certificates.

Next time you see Tom, congratulate him.

*(Continued on page 7)*



Tom Casey (*right*) receives his AP Scenery and Association Volunteer certificates from Kurt Thompson.



John Stralka (*left*) receives his AP Association Volunteer certificate from Kurt Thompson.

Also on Thursday, August 30th, two of my structures underwent AP judging. I'm happy to say that my drive-through corn crib earned a merit award. Having these two structures judged, I have now met the requirements for AP Structures. My paperwork has been forwarded to Dave Chance, the MER AP Coordinator. Hopefully I'll hear back soon that my certificate is on its way.

On Friday, August 31st, John Stralka's AP Volunteer certificate arrived. John logged more than the necessary TUs for his volunteer certificate. Most of his time was spent servicing the hobby by serving as a Boy Scout Railroading Merit Badge volunteer.

When you see John at the next meeting, be sure to congratulate him as well.

If you want to start work on any of your certificates, please contact me. As your Division AP Chairman, I'm here to help you. If you have questions, we'll find the answer. If I don't know it, we'll kick it up the chain to Dave Chance, MER AP Chairman. If Dave doesn't know, he will find out and get a ruling from the National AP Chairman.

Remember the AP is for you to be recognized for your modeling efforts and your support of this hobby we all enjoy.

The next person I'm going to be helping will be Jeff Mutter for his Civil and Electrical certificates, possibly his Scenery as well. Also in the mix for nearly ready is Don Marvel for his Scenery. They just don't know it yet.

*Kurt*

Achievement Program



## Kurt Thompson Receives MMR, Elected MER President

**Kirk Bateman**



**O**ur very own Kurt Thompson (*shown on the right in the accompanying photo*), the founding Superintendent of the Chesapeake Division and, more recently, serving as the Division AP Chair, was recognized as a Master Model Railroader at the MER Convention this past October. Kurt received MMR #619. Congratulations Kurt!

Also announced at the 2018 MER Convention, and effective October 7, 2018, Kurt was elected as the MER President.

If you haven't already done so, congratulate Kurt for both accomplishments when you next see him.

*Kirk*



## Annual Paymaster Report November 2017 - October 2018

**David Arday**

**A**s of October 31, Chesapeake Division had current assets of \$2,517.88, a pending dues sharing deposit of \$58.50, and \$145.91 in liabilities for recently incurred expenses. These expenses were for web site maintenance fees and the most recent postcard mailing to members. Previously recorded expenses amounted to \$72.76, which was for the spring '18 postcard mailing.

There was only one source of income for the Division, this year, our annual NMRA membership dues sharing allocation from the MER, which is paid at 50 cents per active NMRA member, twice per year. This amounted to \$62.00 for the first payment and \$58.50 for the second, totaling \$120.50. As the number of active members in the Chesapeake Division has been declining, our dues sharing allocation has also been dropping, down about \$20 per year over the past 3 years.

*David Arday*

Paymaster  
Chesapeake Division, MER, NMRA

### Balance Sheet as of 10/31/18

Current Assets	
Severna Savings Bank	\$2,455.55
Petty Cash	62.33
Pending deposit	58.50
Subtotal	\$2,576.38
Current Liabilities	
Fall '18 postcard mailing	\$54.36
Website hosting charges	91.05
Subtotal	\$145.41
Net Worth	\$2,410.97
Income and Expenses Accrued for Past Year	
Income	
MER dues split	\$120.50
Expenses	
Postage & mailing expenses	\$126.13
Website maintenance	91.05
Miscellaneous postage	0.99
Subtotal	\$218.17
Net income	(\$97.67)





## European Travel

Tom Casey

**B**eth and I traveled to Europe this summer, the first time we've been able to really travel overseas. We started in Paris, then flew to Barcelona, traveled to Pamplona by train, traveled the Camino pilgrimage route with a group to Santiago di Compostela, and from there by train to Madrid before flying home. We also had a side trip to Chartres by train from Paris along with travel on the Paris Metro and suburban line from the airport.

We arrived at the airport in Paris only to discover that there was a railway strike on, however we were assured by an agent at the Tourist Information Desk at the airport that "it is only a strike" and that we could get a train. We never discovered exactly what impact the strike was having, by US standards everything appeared to be functioning just fine.

The Paris Metro is all rubber-tired vehicles. The trains run frequently, and the system covers the entire city. The rubber tires keep the noise level down but give the trains a rather high boxy look. The fare is 1.90 Euros with free transfer. Some of the system is elevated (out by the Eiffel Tower), most of what we traveled was underground.

To get to Chartres we had to negotiate the Gare Montparnasse, an enormous three level station with no signage and vast numbers of people heading in all directions – on a Saturday. Once we purchased our tickets and found our train, a set of electric bi-level coaches not unlike MARC, we had a swift and comfortable ride out through the French countryside. Oddly, no one ever asked to see our tickets.

Returning from Chartres the train was delayed, and I got to see some varied equipment, including a single unit rail diesel car (Fig. 1). The trip was further delayed by trackwork. Trains on this line run roughly every hour.

We flew to Barcelona; I had read somewhere that the train was 13 hours; I have since found that the high-speed train takes about six, so I'll be looking forward to the train on our next trip.

In Barcelona we stayed next to the Estacio de Franca (Figs. 2 and 3). This is not the main station, but it is quite a gem. We took the train from Estacio Sants, a large and very busy station.



The modern RDC on the left was moved from a rear track to the platform while we were waiting, then shut off.



Estacio Franca is the smaller station in Barcelona, it's beautiful and very well maintained. Our hotel was next door.

*(Continued on page 10)*



The train shed at Estacio Franca.

Spain is building a high-speed rail network; a good deal of the country is now served by it and more is being constructed. Both our journeys were partially on the new high-speed track, with the remainder on older track. The equipment is all by Talgo, our coaches were very reminiscent of the train we took last summer from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, only much faster (up to 155 mph versus 75 mph).

The train from Barcelona to Pamplona was on high speed track as far as Zaragoza. We travelled at up to 250 km/hr, about 155 mph. The trip was very smooth, with no worries as I carried my Café con Leche from the snack bar to our seat. Along with the track upgrades RENFE is building new stations. Zaragoza has a terrific new train shed (Fig. 4). From Zaragoza on we were on an older line and restricted



The roof of the new train shed at Zaragosa, taken from the train during our stop. This is where the line to Pamplona branches off the main line to Madrid. From here on the speeds were a good deal lower.

to 150 km/hr; the track was a bit rougher and felt very much like travel on Amtrak's northeast corridor.

Pamplona has a VW assembly plant so there were lots of small bi-level rack cars here and there. I was not able to get a good picture. At Pamplona we met our group and traveled by bus and on foot for the next eight days along the Camino. I saw some train traffic (Figs. 5 to 6), but not much as we were mostly in rural country.



We walked into town past the old rail yard in Sagahun.

At the end of our journey we were dropped at the Santiago train station. At the station there is a display of two pieces of old equipment and various other items, including an Alco diesel with a rear cab and an old passenger car lettered for the "Asociacion Compostelana de Amigos do Ferrocarril," apparently the local railfan group (Figs 7 to 9). If you google the association, there are pictures from several years ago that are better than mine. With three-and-a-half hours until we were to meet our train to Madrid, I was able to do some railfanning (Figs 10 to 15) while eating a lunch from the station café (Figure 16); not exactly Amtrak fare! (Yes, that is a real wine glass, not plastic.)

The trip from Santiago to Madrid is almost five hours, crossing some rugged mountain terrain with 74 tunnels. From Santiago to Orense the trip is under wire, at Orense we changed to a diesel locomotive, something that became apparent as we started spending time in long tunnels. This part is single track; we lost time and ended up in a siding waiting for another train; while there I was able to get a picture of some more modern freight equipment (Fig. 17).

Along the trip through the mountains we could see the construction of the new high speed line (Fig. 18). I expect it will cut the trip time in half, at least. At Zamora we changed engines again back to electric for the final run to Madrid at 250 km/hr, including two tunnels at

*(Continued on page 11)*

that speed (ears popping). One tunnel took almost 8 minutes to traverse.

The trains in France and Spain were frequent, fast, comfortable, and affordable. The stations in Spain were very clean and the food was good. With the current investment, the principal cities will all be within 2-1/2 to 3 hours from Madrid. What's not to like? We certainly did.



Just past the yard, visible in the distance on the left, we crossed the line. A passenger train went by as we walked up to this point (of course!).



The local railfan society has this display at the station in Santiago. The Alco was a bit of a surprise after a steady diet of European equipment.



There is a passenger car that is their headquarters. I'm not sure how active they are. Things look a bit run down and abandoned.



If you look closely, you'll notice the cab at the rear of the locomotive. This unit must have been used on a branch without means to turn it.

*(Continued on page 12)*



10

Train arriving at Santiago. There were numerous trains in the three hours we were there.



13

They have trash trains in Spain, as easily identifiable as here. This one pulled in while we waited, stunk up the place a bit, then, thankfully, pulled out.



11

What appears to be a weed-spraying train with two locomotives was parked in the station.



14

Multiple trains would arrive at the same time.



12

One of the cars in the weed-spraying train, converted from an old four-wheel box car. Note the diaphragms connecting the cars.



15

Close up of one train.

(Continued on page 13)



My lunch: cured ham and cheese on a crusty roll, heated (not in a microwave) with a 250ml bottle of vino tinto. At checkout the clerk produced the wine glass.



Covered hopper in a siding along the way to Madrid.



The terrain between Santiago and Madrid. In the distance is a new bridge on the high-speed line being constructed. Very impressive work.

*Tom*



## Modeler's Day In Kirk Bateman

**T**he Division held a Modeler's Day In (MDI) on Saturday March 31 at the Glen Burnie Branch of the Ann Arundel County Public Library. About 20 Division members and several guests had a wonderful time sharing the hobby of model railroading at this event.

In addition to those Division members present, a few guests joined us from out of town: David Chance (MER AP Chair) and Michele Chance (MER Director), Brian Kampschroer (MER Treasurer), and Martin Brechbiel (MER Secretary). While visiting, they judged several of Kurt Thompson's structures as he worked toward his AP Structures certificate.

Several members brought kits and other model railroading projects to share, discuss, and work on, while others worked on the Division's project layout, the Chesapeake City Railway and Dock.

Rick Uskert (Division Superintendent) discussed his experiences and experiments with 3D printing. He brought several samples of model railroad parts he designed using Computer-Aided Design (CAD) software. Very cool! He talked to us about the software available to design model railroad items (detail parts, freight cars, locomotive cabs, hoods, and the list goes on) and the different materials available for

3D printing. Rick sends the designs to a 3D-printing house to print the parts, which they will then ship to your front door. This is a fascinating technology that is bringing new capability, challenges, and fun to our hobby.

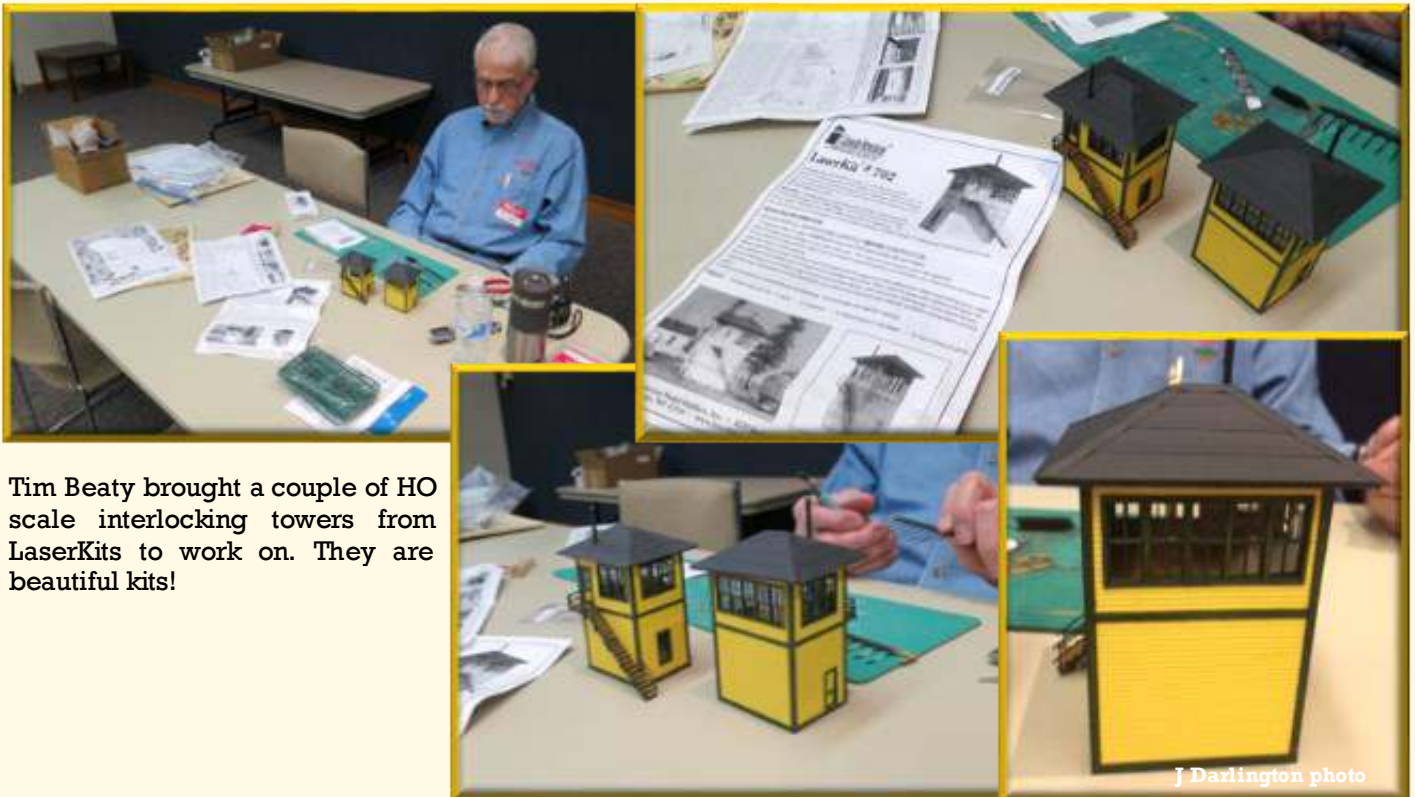
As indicated above, Kurt Thompson was able to take advantage of the MDI to have several structures he built subjected to AP judging. As a result, he received a Merit Award for one of the structures he built. Note that Kurt, as our Division AP Chair, can arrange for your builds (cars, structures, etc., ...) to be judged. Be sure to contact him about this.

John Darlington was presented his AP Association Volunteer certificate, awarded for his dedicated efforts as the editor of this newsletter for many years. You may recall this editor took the baton from John in late 2017.

We all had a very enjoyable day sharing the hobby of model railroading. I hope you will join us at the next MDI (see *the 2019 calendar on page 4*).

*The author wishes to thank John Darlington for sharing his photos for publication in this article. All photos not otherwise indicated are by the author.*

*(Continued on page 15)*



Tim Beaty brought a couple of HO scale interlocking towers from LaserKits to work on. They are beautiful kits!



Arthur Boyd works on plans for a smaller model railroad layout that is likely in his future as he prepares for moving to a smaller home.



J Darlington photo



J Darlington photo

The author and Michele Chance (r) discuss model railroading.



J Darlington photo

Arthur Boyd (l) and Tom Casey catch up.



J Darlington photo

Rick Uskert (r) and a visitor from Potomac Division.



Jack Keene works on a wooden O scale structure.



J Darlington photo

From left, David Pugh, Travers Stavac, Tim Beaty, and Jack Keene.

(Continued on page 16)



J Darlington photo



Kurt Thompson (*left*) receives a Merit Award, presented by David Chance (MER AP Chair), for the structure he built (and that he is holding in his left hand).



J Darlington photo



Martin Brechbiel (*3rd from left*) discusses one of Kurt Thompson's (*l*) structure models during the AP judging, as David Chance (*2nd from left*) and Brian Kampschroer (*r*) look on.



J Darlington photo



J Darlington photo



J Darlington photo



(Continued on page 17)





J Darlington photo

David Arday (*front*) and David Pugh (*center*) begin setting up the Division's project railroad, the Chesapeake City Railway and Dock.



Greg Meeks (*l*), David Pugh (*center*), and David Arday work on the Division's project railroad.



Scenes from the Chesapeake City Railway and Dock.

(Continued on page 18)



John Darlington (*center*) is awarded his AP Association Volunteer certificate by Kurt Thompson (*l*) as Rick Uskert (*r*) prepares to offer his congratulations.



The author brought several locomotives and cars and a few car kits to share. The gondola and the tank car, purchased about 40 years ago, have the original horn hook couplers. (They don't get out of the box often!)



J Darlington photo



Martin Brechbiel brought this beautiful O scale structure to share.



J Darlington photo



J Darlington photo

A visitor from Potomac Division brought these models of a water tower and a cooling tower.

*Kirk*

## **The Relay**

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