

THE CROSSING GATE



Twin Cities Division ❖ Thousand Lakes Region ❖ National Model Railroad Association

Fall 2011

Vol. 30.3



*The
World's
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Hobby!*

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TCD Programs



IN OUR WILDEST DREAMS, HERE IS WHERE WE MIGHT ARRIVE

In some future time, we know not when, but after oil at long last will have begun to die out as our primary energy source, railroads -- this time, especially electric railroads-- will reassume their primacy in the transport of goods and people. It must be so; the question is: when?

These thoughts were stimulated by the scene in the above picture, shot in the Cologne, Germany, passenger station. Think about what it represents for a big station to devote valuable floor space to a coin-operated model railroad. Teenagers and Twenty-somethings lined up to deposit their 1-Euro coins (US\$1.40) in the slot so they could watch the trains go and actually run them with a joystick attached to the console. Girls and boys. They got about three minutes' running per coin. Pg. 3.

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THE CROSSING GATE

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THE CROSSING GATE is published quarterly by the Twin Cities Division of the Thousand Lakes Region of the National Model Railroad Association. Material may be reprinted with permission.

Articles, photos, tips, or ideas are heartily encouraged and will be enthusiastically accepted! The preferred format would be in Rich Text Format (RTF), with photos as JPEGs, but we will accept any format (from a PC or Mac; MS Word, Simple Text, typed, or handwritten). Send it to your editor by regular mail to THE CROSSING GATE, 1922 Christensen Ave, W. St. Paul, MN 55118, or by email to editor@tcdnmra.org.

From the Superintendent

It's time to think about the October 13 meeting. This year, we will get rolling with Dave Hamilton's review of the NMRA Achievement Program. The AP is an important part of the NMRA, and I hope many of our members will pursue certificates on their way to an MMR plaque. Don't overlook the Golden Spike Award as a step in the achievement process.

Many of our meetings have changed to free clinics this year giving you more content in our meetings. Check out the 2011-2012 schedule in this issue of *Crossing Gate*.

The Twin Cities Division website will be improved and is now in the capable hands of Tracy McKibben. Check it out to find out more information about the Division.

We now have a modular and can be included with GRVS group N gauge shows and demonstrations. We had our modular in the Minnesota State Fair last month. Thanks to Mike Wielenberg, Ron Brown, Steve Nitti and others for all your help. Our modular can be taken to the future shows and will bring us good publicity for our Division. We need a good-running N-scale switcher.

The Christmas auction is coming soon so please donate any of your unwanted stuff for the auction. If you need to, please contact either Neal Chapman or me for pick up of your donations.

This is the last year of my being superintendent for the Twin Cities Division, so think about stepping up in May to be nominated for the position.

Your Superintendent Ron Bodin

From the Editor

It is always enjoyable to see the temperature cool down and the colors start to change. Many of life's rituals that went on hiatus in June are coming back and shifting our attention to old friends and familiar, comfortable places and activities. Come October 13, we'll find ourselves back at the Jackson Street Roundhouse, beginning another season of NMRA Twin Cities Division clinics, videos, contests, and opportunities to talk and, perhaps, win something we need. This year's program looks like it will be full of excellent hands-on clinics that will help all of us improve as model railroaders. This is what the NMRA is all about and what makes the relatively small expenditure for annual dues worthwhile.

Especially exciting is the prospect that in about a year and a half we'll be part of the Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) 2013 convention here in the Twin Cities. NMRA members from Winnipeg to Dubuque will be here to enjoy our cities and our railroads. Many people are already hard at work on the arrangements, and they will need your help in putting on the convention. As you think about what you could do to help, why not contact Greg Smith at:

TLR2013@yahoo.com to offer a hand? Wayne Bjorlie, ed.

From Pg. 1.

Think about who built the layout. Not many of us model railroaders could do it. Think about why they built it. For such an enterprise to pay off, there must be sufficient people passing through the station who find railroads interesting and challenging, who are used to using railroads and who think about and wonder about their functioning regularly. There must be a lot of these people.

Look in the background. To the left, ticket dispensing machines take care of travelers who need not make advanced reservations. There are enough trains so that reservations are not necessary. It is like buying a ticket on some urban subway in the U.S. To the right are posted the scheduled arrivals and departures of trains from this station over a 24-hour period. (As we have heard, they run like clockwork.)

Model railroaders have known for a long time that there is a better way than to split the cargo, or us, into miniscule portions and pay \$3.799 for gas to carry it or to carry us. Oddly, millions of Americans, apparently, haven't recognized this yet, but it is done in some places.

Text & photo by Wayne Bjorlie

HERE COMES THE 2011 CHRISTMAS AUCTION DEC 8.

At our December 8th meeting, we will again hold our annual Christmas auction. That means it's time to gather together your forgotten treasures to let them become someone's newfound treasures. Then gather with your friends at TCD and get set for some fun.

The Auction is the main fund raiser for the Division. As the "Chinese Auction" format has been successful and popular, we will use it again this year. TCD members donate their unneeded and surplus model railroad items, in any scale, to the Division. At the December 8th meeting, participants will buy special auction tickets for the normal door prize price (6 for \$5, 15 for \$10). They can then put as many tickets as they choose into the "drawing cup" located next to each of the prizes. The more tickets a participant adds to any one cup, the better the chances of winning that item. The auctioneers will then draw a ticket out of each drawing cup, and the winner will take home that item. What could be simpler?

With your help, this year's prize list will be bountiful. Please be generous with your donations! You will have three chances to bring in your donations: October 13, November 10, and, of course, December 8, but please don't wait until the last minute though!

Photos by Wayne Bjorlie

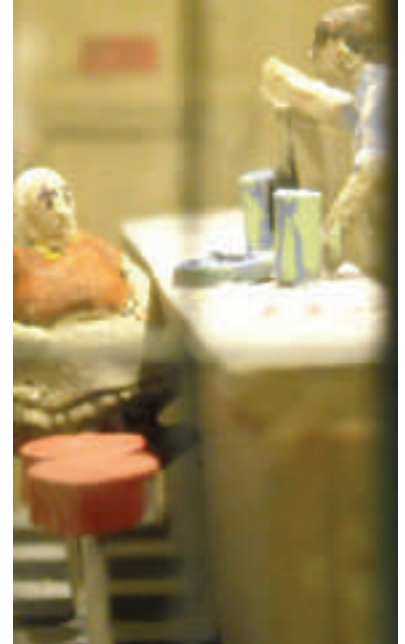


WIRING AL'S DINER FOR LIGHTING

BY JOHN EHRESMANN

For interior lighting I considered incandescent micro bulbs but thought I would try something different. Small LEDs are available in strips and that seemed to be the answer. They are low voltage (12v), small in size and give off quite a bit of light for their size. Heat generation is not an issue as with incandescent bulbs. I soldered stranded wires to the strip for power. The other end of the wires received a male mini plug. This is my standard connection for lighted structures on the layout. You can unplug the structure from the layout circuit and repair or clean the building without unsoldering any wires. I have one 12volt 1.6amp power supply dedicated to scenery and animation items. The LED strip was glued to the interior side of the roof and the wires run down the front wall. This makes them invisible when you peer through the window. The result was this well illuminated view of Al and his customer.

Photo: John Ehresmann



TCD Timetable

Schedule for Meetings at the Roundhouse 2011-2012 Season

<i>Month</i>	<i>First Clinic</i>	<i>Second Clinic</i>	<i>Contest</i>
Oct 13	NMRA Achievement Program	Elements of Model Judging	Cabooses
Nov 10	Module Building	Turnouts and Trackwork	Loads in Boxcars
Dec 8	Holiday Auction	Holiday Auction	No Contest
Jan 12	Laser Kit Start	Soldering and Latex Molds	Reefers
Feb 9	Laser Kit Finish Scratch Build Start	Weathering and Rock Castings	Buildings
Mar 8	Scratch Build Finish	Stain Rock Castings Ground Cover	Weathering
Apr 12	Scenic View Block Mirrors	Twin Cities Railfanning Then and Now	Dioramas
May 10	TCD Annual Meeting	Election of Officers	No Contest

Hobby Shows & Railfanning Events

Sat Oct 15	Woodbury Flea Market Location: Woodbury Senior High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive Woodbury, MN 10AM-3PM
Sat & Sun Oct 29-30	St. Alphonsus Charity Train Show Sat:10am-5pm Sun:9am-3pm At St. Alphonsus School, 7031 Halifax Ave, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429 For information contact: C.J. Pappas 763-535-2646 or email: cooltrainguy@gmail.com
Sat Nov 12	Granite City Train Show National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans Dr. St Cloud, MN 10am-4pm Adm: \$5 Under 12 Free For information, call 320-255-0033 or email: edwardolson@cloudnet.com. See granitecitytrainshow.com
Sat Nov 19	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show Location: Century College, White Bear Lake, MN , 9am-2pm Adm: \$5, 12 & under free. Information contact: Tom Jefferson at 651-429-2885 (home) or 651-429-4463 (fax)
Sat Jan 28, 2012	Great Tri-State Rail Sale, Civic Center, LaCrosse, WI 9am-3pm Adm \$5, Under 12 free For information, call: 608-780-2543 or email 4000foundation@gmail.com
Fri-Sun May 18-20.	TLR Convention Sioux Falls, SD Check TLR website for more information.
Sun-Sat Jul 29-Aug 4	National Model Railroad Association National Convention Grand Rapids, Michigan. See NMRA website for more information.

PRE-MEETING DINNER GET-TOGETHERS AT KEY'S RESTAURANT.

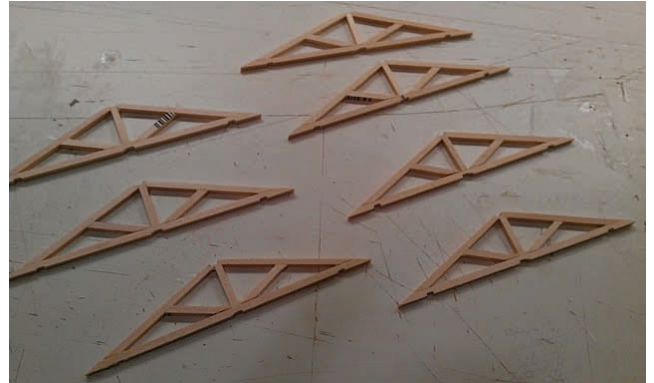
TCD members have a standing plan to meet at Keys Restaurant at 504 North Robert Street, just a few blocks from the Jackson Street Roundhouse. They meet for dinner at 5:30 on TCD meeting nights and then proceed to the TCD meeting.

You are welcome.

OVER THE TOP

Potato Warehouse (cont.) by Tracy McKibben

You've seen how I built the floor of my produce warehouse, and you've seen how the walls were built. Let's move higher, and talk about rafters. Up to this point, I had been cutting each piece of wood individually, using my Xacto knife. This proved to be a problem when it came to the rafters. The first rafter was easy. Building a second one identical to it turned out to be quite a challenge. Cutting new pieces exactly the same as the first rafter, using the hobby knife, was nearly impossible. I spent two full evenings trying to build that second rafter, without success. Then I discovered The Chopper. I've always held to the "right tool for the job" philosophy, I just didn't know what the right tool was in this case. Now that I own a Chopper, I'll never again try to mass-produce pieces using a knife. Using the Chopper, I was able to finish the remaining six rafters in about 4 hours.

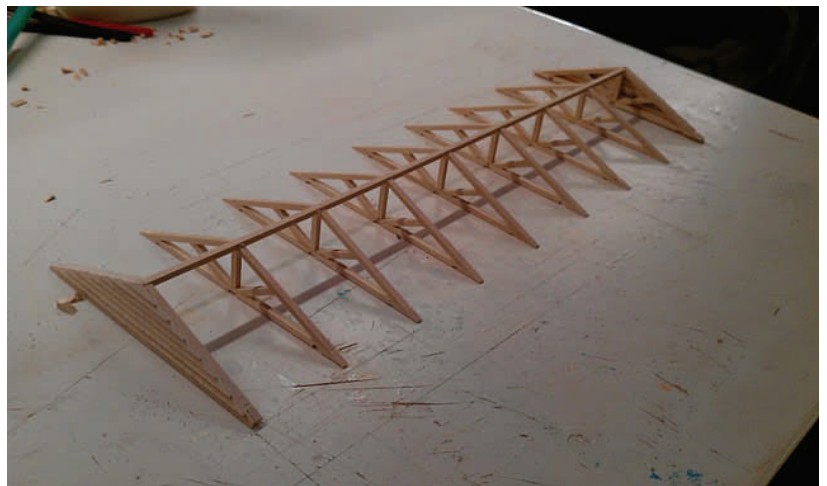


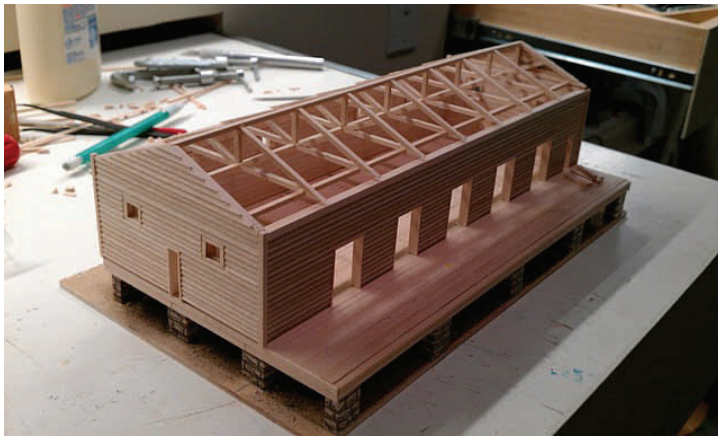
(All photos by Tracy McKibben)



With the rafters assembled, I was able to move on to the rest of the roof substructure. Four beams were cut, with notches placed 15 scale feet apart.

This completed substructure sits squarely on top of the building walls, and is easily lifted off to reveal the interior. Two pieces of balsa sheeting complete the roof assembly





In my next article, I'll talk about how I weathered and painted the structure. As always, you can see several more photos, and read more about the produce warehouse, by visiting <http://dmirhillcitysub.blogspot.com/>

NOV. 12 1-5PM FALL LAYOUT TOUR

3 PIKES, 3 STYLES, 3 PHILOSOPHIES

By Art Hill.

Richard Rameriz's Great Northern is a two-deck layout with great track work and timetable operations. It's set in Northern Minnesota with familiar places including a fine quarry scene near St Cloud. The yards are huge and prototypical. There is good scenery and a long main line that winds through many rooms, giving the feeling of long distances between stations. This layout was designed and built for timetable and train order operations.

Art Hill's "Wormhole and Timewarp Division of the Sublime to Redikulas Railroad" is more of a model world with a train running through than a model railroad. This layout features scenery from Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona and Yellowstone Canyon. The prototype is the collection of Art's memories and covers a lot of ground in a small space. There are more than 25 sheets of "dumpster foam" carved into floor-to-ceiling canyons and Hoo-doo covered mountains. There will be an opportunity to discuss carved foam scenery and homemade trees using material from the garden.

Don Stewart's new table top layout is three years old and is a great example of what a table top layout can be. There are great scenes, including an intermodal scene, a busy lake with sailboats, and a harbor with cabin cruisers. There are some nice electronic signals and a great sense of whimsy. There is a large logging scene and more vehicles and people than can be counted. This really demonstrates how much fun a table top layout can be.

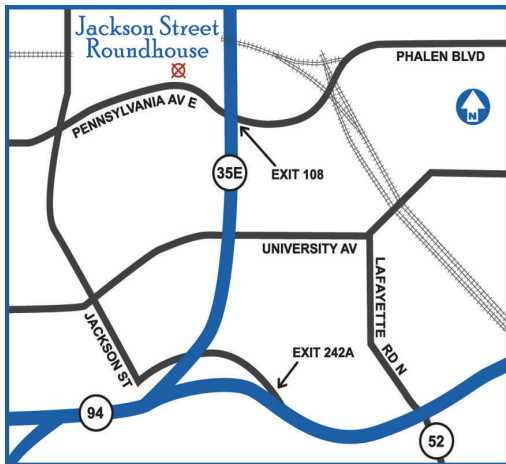
Art will mail out an announcement of these visits and their addresses to TCD members. Visits will be limited to TCD members and one guest. ed.

THE CROSSING GATE

Twin Cities Division, TLR, NMRA
4476 Mason Ave NE
St. Michael, MN 55376

Next Three Meetings:

Oct 13, Nov 10, and Dec 8 .at 7 PM
Jackson Street Roundhouse
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651.291.7588



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NMRA Convention

Jul 29-Aug 4

Grand Rapids

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