

THE CROSSING GATE



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

Spring 2017

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TCD CELEBRATES THIRD ANNUAL MODELERS' RETREAT

By Ken Zieska

TCD's annual Modelers Retreat has become a popular date on the Division's yearly calendar. The Retreat is fashioned after Railroad Prototype Modelers

(RPM) meets that are held around the country. Like the RPM meets, the Retreat features a display area where modelers gather to display and discuss models they have built, modeling ideas and techniques. While many of these are completed models, there are also displays of work in process on projects to enjoy and discuss.



This year, some of the most talented modelers in the Division filled up 25 tables with displays of their projects. We also were offered a DCC programming help station.

Running all day was a series of 14 great presentations covering prototype operations, model railroad operations, layout construction, model building, lighting and DCC electronics. As a special treat,



Walt Thompson painted people. See Pg. 6.

of passenger trains working the east end of the St. Paul Union Depot.

More Retreat Pg 3.

the Retreat also featured video with shots taken between 1939 and 1941 showing railroad action in the Twin Cities area. Highlights of the film included a cab ride on the C&NW 400 to Eau Claire, a cab ride on a Zephyr southbound out of St. Paul, and action footage



Ken Zieska showed building kits by Monster Model.



Tom Gasior showed MOW cars.

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THE CROSSING GATE

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Wayne Bjorlie

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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 Wbjorlie4@yahoo.com

From the Superintendent

Spring is here, and I hope there is a spring in your step. Flea markets, club meetings, the Railroad Modelers Retreat, clinics. Everybody seems to be busy. Enjoy the mild weather. My order to you as your Superintendent is to enjoy the hobby and share that experience with a young person.

There will be opportunities for members to step up to the plate, as we will need nominations for future officers.

Thanks to Ron Olsen for his great presentation last month on WiFi throttles using JMRI. Your smart phone can take the place of a radio throttle.

On April 13 we will visit the Twin Cities Model Railroad Museum at 668 Transfer Road, St Paul.

On May 11 we will have our annual meeting and jackpot drawing for \$50.

What might we do to improve meeting attendance?

It was brought to my attention that a few people have trouble driving at night. My suggestion is proving a ride share for people wanting to either share a ride or drive someone to the meetings. At our April meeting, we will provide a sign-up sheet for those in need of a ride along with people willing to provide rides, as well as information on locations. I would like to talk to anyone willing to help with ideas.

Jim Buck, Superintendent

PRE-MEETING DINNER GET-TOGETHERS

McDonald's University Ave & Marion Street

GATHER ABOUT 5:30 PM ** EVERYONE IS WELCOME

** OR **

Keys Café and Bakery, 1682 Lexington Ave N, Roseville, MN 55113

5:15 on the day of TCD meetings. For those from the northern suburbs.

RAILGAP FILLER

Don't laugh! There comes a time in the construction of every model railroad layout when, despite the designer's best efforts, a little one-sixteenth- or even a one-eighth-inch gap is left in a rail, usually in an inaccessible location. One choice is to rip out the rails and start again. Another, however, is to install an adjustable RAILGAP FILLER. These are easily constructed using a piece of rail and a rail connector. Be sure to square up the rail piece.



From the Editor

I try to “cover” events that are of interest to TCD members for inclusion in the Crossing Gate. That means attending the event and taking pictures that accurately show what happened and for which I can concoct snappy captions to further illustrate what happened. The recent Modelers’ Retreat over the week-end of March 3-4 deserved a prominent place in the next CG, which it is receiving in this issue. Unfortunately, I wasn’t there.

Given the need for information and pictures about the retreat, I called on TCD members to record the event, and they came through in grand style. Ken Zieska wrote the cover piece for this issue, and Dave Hohle and Jim Buck supplied pictures. Without them, the participants in the retreat would not have received their due recognition in the Crossing Gate, and readers would not know what a great event the retreat has become in just three years. The retreat should be a source of pride for all TCD members. Many thanks to Ken, Dave and Jim.

In late January, in pursuit of a long-held goal, I took Amtrak out to Springfield, MA, to the Amherst Railway Society Model Hobby Show. It filled four large buildings and offered nearly everything anyone could want in the way of model railroad stuff. I was specifically after Rutland and Green Mountain engines and any other equipment relating to that area of Vermont. The show definitely had an eastern flavor, and I was able to get RS-1s for both railroads, as well as a rare Train Miniature reefer decorated for “Bellows Falls Co-operative Creamery.” After the show, I hopped Amtrak up to Bellows Falls, VT, to visit my daughter. Green Mountain’s RS-1 No. 405 is still running there. W. Bjorlie, ed.

TCD Modelers’ Retreat

Participants on Saturday, Mar. 4, enjoyed a full lunch followed by the awarding of door prizes provided by Fox Valley Models, Monster Models and the Twin Cities Division.

Planning for the 4th Annual Railroad Modelers Retreat is under way. If you would like to be involved with the Retreat, contact the event chair Ken Zieska mhry19@gmail.com.



John Niemeyer demonstrated techniques for wiring small items on the layout such as people and interior features of buildings. With today’s miniaturized electronics, virtually anything can be made to glow... or move. Just drill it out and install wires and LEDs or belts.

Retreat photos by Jim Buck and Dave Hohle.



N.M.R. Wray says:
“So long ‘til next year!”



Lester Breuer, MMR, has long been a fixture at TCD events where modeling skills are shown and taught. This year, he brought exquisitely finished cars for which he had meticulously recorded every extra part installed and every subtle change made to enhance the car’s appearance.

TOOL SHED KIT, ANOTHER TWO-EVENING PROJECT

BY THOMAS GASIOR

American Model Builders laser kit #163 simulates a CB&Q standard tool shed. It makes a great one- or two-evening project. One night to paint the parts and allow to dry, and then the second evening at the work bench for the assembly.



started by getting the tools ready. Instant glue, hobby knife with new sharp blades, square, magnetic holders, disposable paint brushes for applying glue, cutting mat and paint. Brown by Vallejo and some Pullman green or dark green acrylic paints work well.

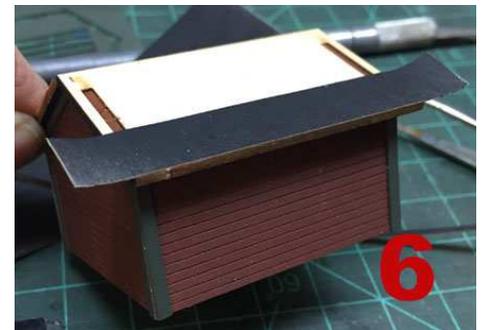


I opened the package and separated the components. I painted them in my spray booth and set them aside for the next day. The sides are brown and the details and trim are paper stick on. I used dark green for

those and black for the roof tar paper. After the parts are dry, I set the sides in my magnetic holders and glued them together. Tools such as these help modelers like me keep sides square. These laser kits are well designed and just need a little encouraging to keep everything square.

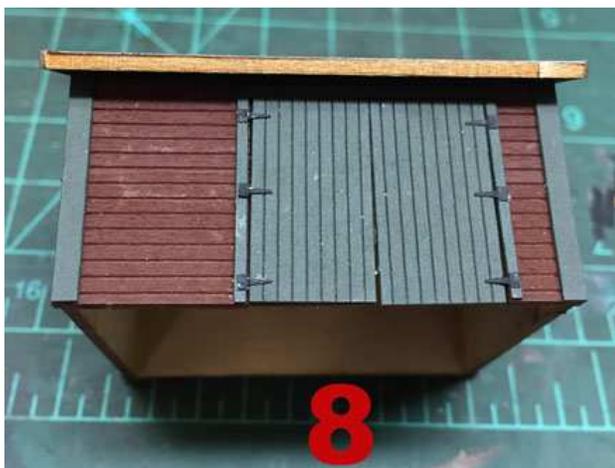


Now comes the roof. It uses the traditional tab and slot connection to create perfect joints. The wood roof is covered by a simulated tar paper coating. There is extra material for this, so I overlapped it on the edges and cut it to size with my hobby knife, using the edge of the roofline as my guide.



Now onto the doors and trim. The trim is all applied using the adhesive backing that AMB puts on all their detail parts. The base piece was glued onto the bottom of the shed, and then the doors were placed into the opening. Small details like the hinges were then applied. The roof angles were then placed in position and the shed is ready for layout installation. It also comes with wooden boards for the use of a speeder, or putt-putt machine. You can place the boards across the ties to simulate the rolling location of placing the speeder onto the mainline.

Great little kit and an enjoyable build. I know my friend who models the CB&Q will enjoy this kit on their modules.



CONDOLAS AND MORE CONDOLAS LOADED WITH (MODEL RAILROAD) JUNK

In the process of railroad modeling, a lot of junk accumulates. Some modelers have a small tolerance for piles of junk and throw it out. However, many just let them grow. They might need the stuff someday. One way to justify the pile is to actually use the junk on the layout.

In the days before we had to pay 25 or 35 dollars for a ready-to-run car with very little junk attached to it, some of us old-timers paid \$3.50 for a car WITH junk attached, i.e., sprues and extra parts that were cheaper for the manufacturer to include in the box than not.

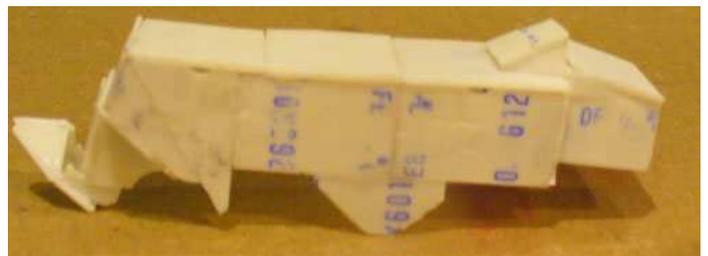
The Midland Continental RR conglomerate, headquartered in my basement, found a way to use some of this junk: haul it around the circuit. W.Bjorlie



SCRATCH-BUILT HO-SCALE THRESHER

Driving around in the countryside, one can still see rusted old threshing machines, half hidden by grass and weeds, along the roads at the edge of fields. Farmers who acquired newer harvesters merely parked the old threshers out of the way, where they have stayed for about 70 years. What probably saved these old beauties was that there hasn't been a need for a scrap drive since WWII, and they were likely still in operation at that time. And, most have not been convenient to steal in more recent times.

To my knowledge, no model railroad manufacturer has put out a threshing machine kit. I needed one for a farm diorama, so I had to make it from scratch. I used thin styrene from bread bag clips for the shell and sprue material for the pipes. It's 35 scale feet long. From a distance, it doesn't look too bad. W. Bjorlie



HOBBY SHOWS & RAILFANNING EVENTS

Sat Apr 8	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show, Century College, White Bear Lake, MN 9am-2pm. Adm \$5, under 13 free. Info: Tom Jefferson 651-429-2885
Sat Apr 29	Newport Model RR Club Train Show & Sale. 9:30am-3:00pm. Woodbury High School 2665 Woodlane Dr. Woodbury, MN 55125 Adm. \$5, under 12 free. Info: 952-200-9729.
Sat May 6	St Paul Union Depot Train Day. 10am—5 pm. Hustle Muscle, TC&W and UP engines. Speeders. NP post office combo. GN & RI coaches. 2 layouts. Lectures on RPOs & RR photography.
Sat May 13	Twin Cities Model Railroad Museum Train Show. Minnesota State Fairgrounds Education Building. 9am-3pm Adm: \$6 under 8 free
Thur –Sun May 18-21	TLR Convention Jointly with Mid-Continent Region. Ames, IA Quality Inn I-35&13th St. Tour limestone mine. Train ride. Contest. Clinics. Train show. See The Fusee for more info.
Sat Jun 17 & Sun Jun 18	Annual Strawberry Fest RR Show & Model Contest at 407 School Street, Waupaca, WI. Soo. CN. Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 10am-3pm Info: 715-258-8218

WALT ("REMBRANDT") THOMPSON'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAINTING PEOPLE

Cut wine corks in half and use a drop of "Gel Super Glue" on the bottom of a figure who needs painting to glue the figure to the cork. Nice, small brushes used for nail polish can be found at beauty shops. (While you are there, check out the make-up Q-tips, sponges, etc.) I use a very light coat of armory white primer. Let the primer dry, then detail the figures, holding onto the cork with one hand. When they dry, just snap the little folks off the corks.

Care for paint brushes:

Clean with solvent for the type of paint, then with water. Bring to a lather with dish washer liquid soap and water. Rinse with water. Repeat until rinse is clean. Apply hair conditioner and rinse with warm water. Smooth bristles and allow to dry before storing.



TCD Timetable

2017

	All regular meetings begin at 7 PM.	CONTEST
Apr 13	TCD will visit Twin Cities Model RR Museum at 668 Transfer Road, St. Paul. North of Univ. Ave. & Cretin Ave. intersection.	Produce Shipping and/or Handling
May 11	Annual Meeting. Election of Officers. Annual \$50 drawing. At Jackson Street Roundhouse.	Dioramas

TCD CONTEST WINNERS



The contest in November was for Open Loads. The winner was Wayne Bjorlie with a Canadian Pacific gondola loaded with automobile hulks. The cars were mostly rejects from a model caster in Wisconsin, with some additional “damage” inflicted by Wayne.



Fittingly, the December contest was for a Wintry Scene. Wayne Bjorlie’s mini-diorama of a 1930s rural mail carrier’s rig at a track crossing was the sole entry. Chalk rubbed against a tea strainer produced a passable “snowfall.”



The January contest was for steam-era boxcars. That contest was won by Dennis Loudon with his CB&Q 40-footer very well weathered. (Larry Vanden Plas photo.)

In the February contest for Livestock Shipping and Handling, Ken Zieska took home the blue ribbon with his stock car, which he says was built from a 1960s box of sticks from Wisc. Central Supply.



The March contest, for Maintenance of Way, was again won by Ken Zieska with his flatcar carrying a tool shed and bulldozer. The dozer is unloaded by simply removing a truck and letting it drive on down, no doubt easier said than done... (Both Zieska photos by Jim Buck.)

THE CROSSING GATE

NMRA National Convention



Orlando, Florida
July 30-Aug 7

In accordance with stated NMRA policy, to participate in almost any regular Twin Cities Division activity, you must be a member of NMRA or become a member of NMRA after three visits as a non-member during your lifetime.

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

Next 2 Meetings:
Apr 13 at TCMRM 7 PM
May 11 at Jackson St
Roundhouse 7:00 PM
193 Pennsylvania Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55130

NMRA

Thousand Lakes Region

Mid-Continent Region

Joint Convention

Ames, Iowa

May 18-21, 2017

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Tom Gasior, Walt Thompson, Jim Buck, Dave Hohle, Ken Zieska, Larry Vanden Plas

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Saint Paul, MN 55104
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Richfield, MN 55423
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Blick Art Materials (Roseville)

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Roseville, MN 55113

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4777 Menard Dr
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway

P.O. Box 176
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Osceola, WI 54020
715.755.3570
<http://www.trainride.org>

Scale Model Supplies

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<http://www.scalemodelsupplies.com>

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