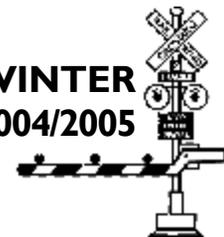


# The Crossing Gate

WINTER  
2004/2005



Newsletter of the Twin Cities Division, Thousand Lakes Region, National Model Railroad Association • [www.twincitiesdivision.org](http://www.twincitiesdivision.org)

## A steamy summer for the Grand Excursion 2004

by Tim Klevar

A beautiful summer day. Crowds of people. A bunch of passenger cars. A steam engine. What a great recipe for a train ride!

As part of the Grand Excursion 2004 festivities, the Friends of the 261 brought the locomotive out of the shed for a couple of weeks of riding up and down the rails along the Mississippi. Almost all of the scheduled rides were sold out.

On July 2, I was standing in a dusty parking lot off Jackson Street, assigned as part of the Grand Excursion to help board the 261 for its trip to Red Wing. When I arrived at 7:00, I found about 10 people already there. Eventually, the line of people snaked all over the parking lot. About 300 strong, there were people from as far away as New York who had come out to ride the rails on the 261.

One of the folks waiting had a scanner, and we listened as the dispatcher routed the train from the yard to our boarding point. When 8:00 rolled around, we

could hear the big 4-8-4 backing in over the wye. A huge puff of smoke over the hill, and then around the corner came the first of several coach cars, the *Hiawatha* observation car. When the train was backed in, everybody walked (orderly) to a car, and with a call of "all aboard," the 261 embarked on a leisure-

ly lunch trip to Red Wing and back.

I thought that was all for the day. I noticed some other people still in the parking lot. No sooner had the 261 cleared the

wye, when I saw more smoke over the hill. The CP had arranged for their own engine, the 2816, to follow the 261 to Red Wing.

Within a few minutes, there was another crowd of people, this time employees of Canadian Pacific, lining up for their own train ride. The 2816, a 4-6-4, has been converted to an oil burning engine, so the smoke from the stack was a little different from the 261. Shortly, everyone boarded, and this mechanical marvel, too, made its way to Red Wing. Later that day, the two engines were to be side-by-side for a photo op.

Continued on page 6



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**NMRA Contest Chairman**

position open

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.

Do I have to beg? Ok... PLEEEEEEEASE!! Articles, photos, tips, or ideas are heartily encouraged and will be enthusiastically accepted in any format (PC or Mac; Word, Simple Text, typed, handwritten, scribbled on the back of a bar napkin, etc.). Send it to your editor by regular mail to The Crossing Gate, 6459 Smithtown Road, Excelsior, MN, 55331, by email to editor@twincitiesdivision.org, or hand it to him (along with a \$5 bribe) at the next Division meeting.

Be part of the Division! If you're an NMRA member, become a Regular member of the Division (you get a year's subscription to THE CROSSING GATE, plus voting privileges) for only \$10 per year. If you're not an NMRA member, become a Subscriber (you get a year's subscription to THE CROSSING GATE) for only \$10 per year.



## From the Editor

While helping Assistant Super Bill Gisch hand out door prizes at our November meeting, I was really struck by both the quantity and quality of items and gift certificates we had. There were a lot! We all owe a debt of gratitude to the local hobby shops in the Twin Cities area who donate prizes out of their own pockets to support our Division. So, even if you didn't come home with a door prize, be sure to say "thanks for the support" next time you're in their stores. It only takes a second, and goes a long way toward the good will of our Division. And from me: thanks, hobby stores!



If you're a Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) member, you're seeing some news in this issue of THE CROSSING GATE that you've already seen: the TLR convention overview. For those who don't know, I'm now also editing the TLR's quarterly newsletter, THE FUSEE. From time to time I plan to pick up articles from THE FUSEE and publish them here, as well as the other way around. So I hope you don't mind a little redundancy. But the way I see it, good news is good news, no matter where – and how many times – it appears. And if you're not a TLR member, I encourage you to join!



If you're about to look through this issue of THE CROSSING GATE for the Winter layout tours, look no further. This year Layout Tour Coordinator Neil Maldeis gave us a choice of Winter and Spring tours, or two Spring tours. Membership at the November meeting voted for the latter. Good news, because Neil's having an understandably hard time finding layout owners who don't mind throngs of people tromping ice and snow through their houses in January. So watch for details in the next issue.



The NMRA has just released a new book on modeling open loads, entitled, appropriately enough, "Modeling Open Loads" (*duh...!*). If you're not an NMRA member or don't receive the organization's monthly *Scale Rails*, you've missed a great series, which is now reprinted in the book's 110 pages. Inside you'll find ideas for flat cars, gons, and hoppers, as well as a photo gallery of prototype loads. Order from the NMRA website at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). It's \$17.95 for NMRA members, and \$24.95 for non-members.



Finally, we want to officially say "goodbye" and "thanks" to Tom Jackson, who retired from our Paymaster position, and officially welcome Tim Klevar, who's taken over those duties. Both of them are great guys and we sure appreciate their enthusiasm and willingness to help!



## TCD Timetable

**THURSDAY, Jan. 13, 2005 7:00 pm**

MODELING CLINIC - *Errors in Kit Design and Workmanship* (Dave Norman)  
MODELING CLINIC - *Layout Update* (Dave Zuhn)  
POPULAR VOTE MODEL CONTEST –  
*Maintenance of Way Cars*

**THURSDAY, Feb. 10, 2005 7:00 pm**

MODELING CLINIC - *Open\**  
PROTO PRESENTATION - *Slides of the Northern Pacific* (Gary Widung)  
POPULAR VOTE MODEL CONTEST –  
*Baldwin Locomotives*

*Contributors to this issue:*

**Tim Klevar, Carl Wessel, Al Dowd,  
Jim Bernier, Dave Norman, Neil Maldeis,  
Terry Davis, and Greg Smith. Thanks!**

*Deadline for next issue:*

**March 10, 2005**

**THURSDAY, Mar. 10, 2005 7:00 pm**

MODELING CLINIC - *Open\**  
PROTO PRESENTATION - *Subject TBA\** (Doug Harding)  
POPULAR VOTE MODEL CONTEST –  
*Tank Cars*

**THURSDAY, Apr. 14, 2005 7:00 pm**

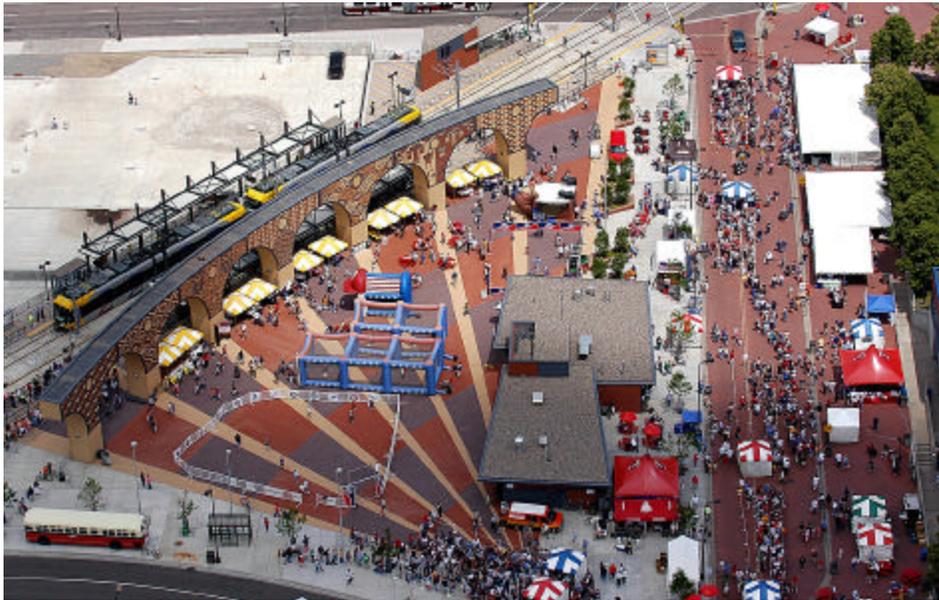
MODELING CLINIC - *Using "Adobe Photoshop Elements" in Model Railroad* (Gerry Leone)  
PROTO PRESENTATION - *Western Canada on VIA* (Bill Dredge)  
POPULAR VOTE MODEL CONTEST –  
*Whimsical Railroads & NMRA Merit Award Judging*

**THURSDAY, May 12, 2005 7:00 pm**

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING - *Agenda items will be posted on the web as they become available. We'll also be unveiling any submissions for a new Division logo (see story, page 3). Don't forget your old doorprize tickets for the big drawing!*

*\*See our website for updates*

# Light Rail's opening day is positively electrifying



By Carl Wessel

On June 26<sup>th</sup> of this year, rail transportation was reestablished in Minneapolis. Exactly 50 years and one week to the date of the last run



of streetcars in Minneapolis, the Hiawatha Light Rail Line started service. It came approximately three and a half years after a cold groundbreaking ceremony.

The opening day dawned bright and clear as a large — if not huge — crowd of new and old commuters thronged to the new light rail system. Each station included various forms of entertainment, with each associated neighborhood providing support to all the various activities. MTC also provided volunteer staff to ride the rail cars, assisting with the safe



entrance and exit of all patrons. Volunteers from MTC and the Hiawatha Project Office manned the stations and coordinated the loading and unloading of the station platforms.

The weather on Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> was much the same with an equal number of people enjoying a free ride before the beginning of revenue service the following Monday.

The second segment of the light rail line down to the Mall of America includes the airport's Lindbergh MSP Terminal Station, and came on-line December 4.

Crowds line up for a free ride on Opening Day (above), as the TCDivision's own Carl Wessel, Head Traction Engineer for the Light Rail project, helps with crowd control (below).

# Looking for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century TCD logo

By Al Dowd

Just over twenty years ago (May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1982, according to the charter from the MN Dept. of State), the Twin Cities Division came into existence as a registered nonprofit corporation. By April 1985, there was a logo, designed by founding member De Smith-Lindeen, on letterhead.

A lot of water has flowed under the Stone Arch Bridge since then. In 1982, we were highlighting our position as an NMRA Division supporting the seven Metro counties. Today we have expanded our membership and our geographic scope to include members living all over the U.S.

Now we're looking at the possibility of creating a rolling stock model or a decal for the Division. We need to come up with a new design that will stand out in the classification yards of the 21<sup>st</sup> century model railroader layouts that serve the Division. And this is where you come in.

The Executive Committee is looking for logo ideas that will help take us forward into this century. We'd like a logo that we'll all be proud to display and one that will work well as a decal, printed directly on a model, or embroidered into a cap or shirt. Let your creativity run wild.

Send your ideas to "TCD Logo" at Twin Cities Division, PO Box 14470, St. Paul, MN 55114, or give them to an Officer at a TCD meeting. We'll present some of the ideas at the May business meeting.

**Join or renew NOW!**

Send \$10 for one year or \$18 for two years to: Twin Cities Division, PO Box 14470, St. Paul, MN 55114

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ year(s)  
 New [  ] Renewal [  ]  
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 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 If you belong to the NMRA, please include your membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

# TLR joins the C&NWHS for '05 Convention



By Terry Davis  
TLR Public Relations Chair



Thousand Lakes Region members who traveled to Winnipeg in May 2000 for the "Millennium Express" convention still talk about it.

After May 2005, TLR members will likely talk for years about "River City 2005," the region's first joint convention with the Chicago & North Western Historical Society. This unique event is set for May 19-22, 2005, at the Hanford Inn in Mason City, Iowa.

"River City 2005," is the brainchild of recent TLR President Gordy Miller. Miller and fellow TLR members belonging to the C&NWHS have long been torn over which organization's annual convention to attend, since they're usually on the same weekend!

The tentative schedule calls for check-in to begin 4 p.m. Thursday, May 19, with a special reception for early arrivals at Music Man Square at 6 p.m. The day concludes with an old timers reunion and members' open slide show.

Friday, May 20, is scheduled to be Tour Day, with bus visits being arranged to UP and IC&E yards, Iowa Traction's headquarters, the former Rock Island roundhouse at nearby Manly, Iowa, and local industries such as Holcim Cement and an alcohol plant. Annual general membership meetings for the groups are scheduled for that afternoon.

Train Day is Saturday, May 21. Tentative plans include a ride on a UP Operation Lifesaver train and the Iowa Traction RR for trolley rides. Modeling and prototype clinics will run simultaneously in opposite sides of the banquet room throughout the afternoon.

The joint banquet begins at 6:30 p.m. with a featured speaker, raffles and the C&NWHS auction. Slide shows will close out the night.

Following the contest awards breakfast that begins at 7 a.m. Sunday, is a flea market at the hotel, which will open to the public at 10 a.m. and continue until 1 p.m. Local layouts will be open for tours until 3:30 p.m.

Non-rail events are also being planned for the convention.

All 70 rooms at the Hanford Inn have been reserved for the convention, as well as blocks of rooms at three nearby motels. Reservations must be made by April 15.

Also planned is a special three-pack of Bowser two-bay covered cement car kits lettered in HO scale for the C&NW, M&StL and CGW, all lines that served Mason City and covered by the C&NWHS. The three-pack will cost about \$30 and may be ordered when registering and picked up at the convention.

Convention registration is expected to be about \$100 for TLR or C&NWHS members, with additional fees for non-members.

Final schedule details, costs and registration materials will be published the Spring issue of THE FUSEE and C&NWHS's North Western Lines magazines, due about March 1. Information will also appear in the April issue of THE CROSSING GATE.

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## Wide variety of clinics scheduled for February's PMM meet

By Greg Smith

Here's a quick update the February 26th PMM meet in Rosemount, MN:

Dennis C. Henry will lead off the morning with "A Brief History of St. Paul Union Depot." Included will be some footage of passenger trains operating into the SPUD. Dennis is the owner of Brass Car Sides in St Peter, MN.

Mike Moore will be here from Iowa to give a clinic on modeling CGW Freight Cars. He gave this clinic in 2001 at the Naperville, IL PMM meet.

After lunch, Charles Derus from Chicago, will give a clinic on assembly techniques for the new Modelers Choice Kits. Chuck's work is often featured in the various model mags and tech and history publications.

Jeff Otto, who is building an incredible 40'x60' HO layout in suburban Minneapolis, is giving a clinic on modeling track, "About Track - Misunderstood Prototype, Underrated Model." I've had the pleasure of seeing Jeff's layout and can't say enough about the craftsmanship and work he puts into his trackwork - it's flawless. Bill Kuebler, who lives in the area, will be giving

a clinic on the the Northern Pacific North Coast Limited. Bill's book on the NCL was published last summer by Oso Publishing. If you have a copy, bring it along. Bill will be more-than-happy to give you a personal autograph.

Time permitting, I'll give a tongue-in-cheek look back at model railroad shows (and modelers) from years past. With the help of a few friends, I have accumulated quite a collection of photos dating back to the early 1970's.

There will also be classrooms for the new local HO-scale "Free-Mo" club. The layout runs on DCC and features single track operation with meets.

There are "standby" clinics lined up in case the out-of-towners get stuck in a blizzard, but the show will go on in spite of any bad weather.

Details can be found in the "Call Board" on page 7 of this issue. You can see photographs of last year's models on the web at: [http://greg7749.fotopic.net/show\\_collection.php?id=123358](http://greg7749.fotopic.net/show_collection.php?id=123358). There's also a Yahoo! discussion group which you can join about the meet at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Minnesota\\_RPM/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Minnesota_RPM/).

# Errors in kit design and workmanship can make for some interesting models...and modeling clinics!

By Dave Norman

Many of us encounter pieces of rolling stock that just don't operate or look right. Sometimes the problem is all too obvious. However, many times the piece of equipment may look all right to someone who is relatively new to the hobby, but to those of who have been in the hobby a while and have learned quite a bit about the prototype, we can see that something isn't right about it.

Many of the pieces of motive power that have come on to the market in recent years have high quality motors and good gearboxes driving properly contoured wheels. If most or all of your fleet is like that, you may be wondering why anyone would have any problems.

However if you got started in the hobby a long time ago or if you pick up some older equipment at a model railroad flea market, you may encounter noisy motors that draw a lot of current and don't start smoothly. Perhaps you'll see open gears that can pick up dust and grit, shortening their life considerably. They can also deposit lubricant on the track (we don't need to copy that aspect of the prototype!). Some otherwise high quality HO diesels pick up their power from two wheels on one truck and return it through two wheels on the other truck. Dirty wheels or dirty track or just an ordinary insulated frog switch can cause such engines to stall.

If you read the reviews in the model railroad magazines carefully, you'll see that many of the



newest engines copy the dimensions of their prototypes very precisely, except for "fudging" a little bit on wheel diameter and spacing of steam engine drivers to allow for the oversized flanges that our models use. However, it hasn't always been this way. Some older diesels had hoods wider than they should be to accommodate standard motors. Sometimes a manufacturer would create a diesel based on a chassis originally designed for another engine, so the truck centers or overall length would be wrong for the new engine.

It's expensive to create the tooling for a model

locomotive, so it's tempting for manufacturers to try to sell as many as they can by offering the models in many different road names. This can result in models being offered for railroads that never actually had that particular engine. Okay, sometimes people will knowingly purchase such an engine even though they know it isn't right because they can imagine that's what it would have looked like if their favorite railroad had actually purchased such an engine. But what about those who don't know any better at the time, but after getting deeper into the hobby realize they've got something as genuine as a three dollar bill?

Even though it happened many years ago, I still remember some people writing unhappy letters to the editor of *Model Railroader* after a decal-maker (name withheld to protect the guilty) came out with a set of decals for a Penn Central steam locomotive. (For those who may wonder what the fuss was about, the Penn Central was formed some years after steam locomotives had become history on American railroads, except for the few survivors in excursion service, so there never was even one PC steamer.)



Similar things can happen with passenger and freight cars. To many in the hobby, "a boxcar is a boxcar." If it's lettered for their favorite railroad or just has an interesting color scheme or lettering, that's good enough for them. Yet, judging by some of the magazine articles and many of the new models on the market, there are many in the hobby who want higher fidelity to actual prototypes. Even those of us who aren't always that fussy or knowledgeable notice little errors like brake cylinders that don't point toward a logical connection to the brake wheel, unnaturally shiny or way-too-thick handrails, bolsters that aren't the right distance back from the end of the car, etc.

Even a simple thing like wheels can have problems. I've seen wheels with flanges almost sharp enough to shave with or the opposite extreme, square-edged flanges. Years ago, some of the firms making HO trains were claiming that flanges needed to be deeper than the NMRA standard in effect at the time to keep trains on the track reliably. Instead, the RP25

standard showed that flanges didn't have to be supersized as long as they were properly contoured. Some wheels wobble or are out of round. Traction tires can dramatically increase the pulling power of a locomotive, but sometimes they have thick spots that make the engine move up and down in an unrealistic way.

What material should wheels be made of? You can get quite a debate going on that subject. Materials that work well on one person's layout may not give good results for someone else. I've never met a plastic wheel I really like, but others get good results with them. (In fairness to the makers of plastic wheels, I should mention that I have very sharp curves and switches on my layout - I wonder if the reason I get better results with metal wheels is that they are harder, so they follow my tight curves and slide off rough spots in the track better than the plastic ones.)

Wheels used for electrical pickup are a special case. Brass is easy for the manufacturer to machine, but when the oxygen in the air attacks the surface of the wheel, it forms a film that doesn't conduct electricity. Nickel silver doesn't have that problem and it has a nicer color than brass, but it can be a little slippery. I work in O-scale, where chemically blackened wheels made of real steel are common, but they can rust. I had one piece of equipment whose power and trailing trucks had wheels cast of pot metal. I could turn out the lights in my basement and watch it run around my layout with sparks coming from the wheels!

Kit instruction sheets can sometimes have their faults. I encountered one that was all in capital letters - not good for readability. A more serious problem is when important information is either described in ambiguous terms or omitted altogether. For example, I'm sure that if the instruction sheet for that auto parts boxcar had told me to recess the door castings so that the front of each door was flush with the sides, I would have done it. (Lesson learned the hard



Continued on page 7

“Grand Excursion” continued from page 1

Unfortunately, Saturday was not as sunny. This was the day for which a lot of people had been waiting. Both the 261 and the 2816 were to be double-headed for a trip down the Mississippi to La Crescent. While the day was gray, nobody’s mood matched that of the weather. With a wonderful lunch planned along the way, the train departed promptly at 8:30 for its trip downriver. Several hours later, both engines, horns blowing, made

their way back to St. Paul.

All-in-all, the 261 spent a very busy two weeks. As part of the Grand Excursion, she made trips through Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. For a while, the Monarch of the Milwaukee Road was, again, Queen of the Rails.

Other pictures from the excursion may be found at the 261 website, <http://www.261.com/gallery.html>.

The 261 is owned, maintained, and operated by a volunteer group called Friends of the 261. Housed at Harrison Street in Minneapolis, the 261 has been the subject of several other articles, most notably in *Trains* magazine. This article is also reprinted on the web site. For full details, see the 261 web site at <http://www.261.com>.



Photos by Tim Klevar

## "Errors" continued from page 5

way: if you can, find one or more good photos of the prototype and study them as you go along instead assuming the instructions alone will tell you everything you need to know to make a perfect model.)

Another broad area where things can go wrong falls under the the heading of workmanship (either your own or somebody else's.) From the time in the early 1900s when the location of safety equipment (grab irons, ladders, brake wheels, roof walks, etc.) on freight cars was standardized, until 1966 when they took another look at the situation and decided that it wasn't really safe for switchmen and brakemen to be up on the roof of a freight car, an experienced modeler would simply know where those parts should be mounted. Some years ago, I picked up a partly built boxcar with the crosswalks on the roof pointing to the wrong corners.

Exactly what color is Boxcar Red? It could be a deep brown, a faded red, or even a rich burgundy. One of my early scratchbuilding projects was a model of a Pacific Electric boxcar. I painted it Boxcar Red with a jar of paint I had on hand. It came out a deep brown. Some years later, on my first visit to southern California, I visited a railroad museum that had one or more actual P.E. boxcars. Oops! The prototype cars were faded red, not brown like my model.

Okay, so maybe some of the worst offenders among commercial products aren't on the market anymore. Today's modelers, at least in the most popular gauges, have so many high quality products to choose from that the manufacturers of lower quality products have had to either improve their products to remain competitive or just take them off the market altogether. Trying to save a few bucks by buying a lower quality item may be false economy for the modeler if it doesn't look right or if it runs so poorly that it spends most of its time

buried in the yard.

What can go wrong with decal application? Most decal sets have more material than you would want to use on any one car. Yet I've seen a freight car where it appears that someone used all the numbers on the decal sheet. Even the Pennsylvania Railroad, which probably had the biggest fleet of its era, didn't need a car number 25 or 30 digits long! People sometimes don't know that they can get rid of air bubbles in decals by pricking them with a pin or the tip

of an X-acto knife. They then should use one or more applications of decal solvent to make sure that the decal is softened enough to lay down tightly on the surface that it's applied to.

For the clinic I'll be giving on Thursday, January 13th, I'll bring in some examples from my own collection, but I would also like to have others bring in some examples of errors. I'll also talk a little bit about what can be done about errors.

## Railfan & Hobby Show CALL BOARD

COMPILED BY AL DOWD (WITH JIM BERNIER)

**Saturday, January 22, 2005 - Newport Club Flea Market**, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury, MN. For more information email [dsblume@compuserve.com](mailto:dsblume@compuserve.com)

**Saturday, January 29, 2005 - Great Tri-State Rail Sale** 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, La Crosse Center, La Crosse, WI. \$3 admission, \$20 tables. For more information call (608) 784-0036 or (608) 582-4761, or email [trainmaster@lacrosseshortlinerr.org](mailto:trainmaster@lacrosseshortlinerr.org)

**Saturday, February 5, 2005 - Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale**, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm, Century College West Campus, 3300 Century Ave North, White Bear Lake, MN. \$4, under 12 free. For more information, contact Tom Jefferson at (651) 429-2885

**Saturday, February 5, 2005 - Minnesota River Valley Division Model Railroad Open House**, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Willmar Public Library, 410 5th St. S.W., Willmar, MN. Free admission. For more information, contact MRVD Superintendent Del Sheets at (320) 967-4782.

**Saturday, February 26, 2005 - Minnesota PMM**, Rosemount Community Center, 13885 S. Robert Trail (Hwy 3), Rosemount, MN (one mile north of Co. 42 and Hwy 3). \$10, families \$15, under 16 free when accompanied by paid adult. For more information contact Greg Smith at (952) 891-1013 or email [smithavmn@juno.com](mailto:smithavmn@juno.com). Also see the article on page 4 of this issue.

**Saturday & Sunday, March 12-23 - LaCrosse & Three Rivers Railroad Show**, 10:00am - 6:00pm Sat., 10:00am - 4:00pm Sun. LaCrosse Center, 2nd and Pearl St., LaCrosse, WI. Adults: \$4. For more information, call (507) 894-4787 or visit <http://www.l3club.rrdepot.com/>.

**Saturday, April 2, 2005 - Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale**, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm, Century College West Campus, 3300 Century Ave North, White Bear Lake, MN. \$4, under 12 free. For more information, contact Tom Jefferson at (651) 429-2885

**Saturday, April 23, 2005 - Newport Club Flea Market**, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury, MN. For more information email [dsblume@compuserve.com](mailto:dsblume@compuserve.com)

**Saturday, April 30 & Sunday May 1, 2005 - Luce Line Club, Inc.'s Spring Rail Fest** 10:00 am - 6:00 pm Sat., noon - 6:00 pm Sun., Hutchinson Mall, 1060 State Highway 15 S., Hutchinson, MN. Free admission. Flea market and operating railroads. For more information email Terry Davis at [davis@hutchinsonleader.com](mailto:davis@hutchinsonleader.com)

**Thursday-Sunday, May 19-22, 2005 - Thousand Lakes Region / Chicago & Northwestern Historical Society Joint Convention**, Hanford Inn, Mason City, IA. Attendees must be TLR and NMRA members. See article in this issue for details. For more information, contact Gordy Miller at [gmliller@bevcomm.net](mailto:gmliller@bevcomm.net)

## Modeling Tips & Tricks



All of this issue's tips were contributed by Neil Maldeis.

An old shot glass with a dimpled bottom turned upside down works great to hold small amounts of glue (e.g. CA) which you can then pick up with a toothpick. It's much easier and neater than using glue straight from the tube.

Another window glazing tip: to create great frosted or translucent windows, spray Testor's "Dullcote" on the back side of the clear styrene or acetate after you've glued it in the frame.

Did you know they make an accelerant for Super Glue and other CA-types? [One brand is "Zip Kicker" - Ed] Rather than

wasting a lot of accelerant by using the built-in spray, dip a piece of wire in the accelerant and lightly touch it to the glue joint. It will instantly "cure" the glue. This works especially well in cases where your joint isn't completely tight and the CA is slow to set up. But be careful not to use too much, since heat is generated during the curing process.

Have a tip, hint, trick or technique you think is the greatest... or at least pretty good? Share it! We don't care if it's original, someone told it to you, or you read it somewhere, let us hear about it!

# THE CROSSING GATE

Twin Cities Division, TLR, NMRA

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St. Paul, MN 55114

## Inside:

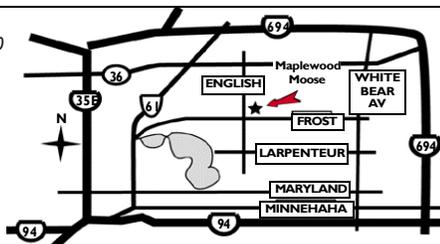
- ◆ Photos of The Grand Excursion
- ◆ Light Rail's Opening Day
- ◆ Preview of the TLR's '05 Convention

### Next meetings:

Jan. 13, Feb. 10 and Mar. 10  
at 7:00 pm. (Check our  
website for any last minute  
changes.)

### Where:

Maplewood Moose Lodge  
1946 English Street  
Maplewood, MN



Check the mailing label to see when  
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## Local Twin Cities hobby shops & sponsors

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Dad's Trains  
2647 Co Rd 22 NW  
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**Hub Hobby Center**  
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Little Canada, MN 55117  
(651) 490-1675  
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Ill Rail Trains  
535 Northdale Blvd. NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55448  
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**KDC Model Trains**  
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Hopkins, MN 55343  
(952) 938-5456  
<http://www.kdc-trains.com/>

Minnesota Transportation Museum  
193 Pennsylvania Ave. E.  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 228-0263  
<http://www.mtmuseum.org>

**The N Shop**  
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Minneapolis, MN 55412  
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Northern Scale Models  
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Minneapolis, MN 55427  
(763) 475-0647  
<http://www.northerscale.com/>

Only Trains  
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Osceola, WI 54020  
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<http://www.trainride.org>

Osseo Train World  
340 Central Avenue  
Osseo, MN 55369  
(763) 425-7171

Prairie Works Productions  
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Eden Prairie, MN 55346  
<http://www.prairie-works.com>

**Scale Model Supplies**  
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Saint Paul, MN 55104  
(651) 646-7781  
<http://www.scalemodelsupplies.com>

Steve's Train City  
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