



Thousand Lakes Region

National Model Railroad Association

The FUSEE



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www.thousandlakesregion.org

Winter 2013

2014 TLR Convention

The 2014 convention is coming together with many great activities in store. So far we have arranged tours to an ethanol plant north of Sioux City, for Transco, a freight car repair facility, and a visit to the former Milwaukee Road roundhouse and shops at the Siouxland Historical Museum. Other possible industrial tours are still being proposed.

There are plenty of activities for the non-rail convention goers. Sioux City has much to offer like the garden and statue complex at Trinity Heights, Palmer Candy factory and museum, Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, The Sergeant Floyd Monument, which commemorates Sergeant Charles Floyd, Jr., the only member of the Corps of Discovery to die on the journey, the Sioux City Art Center (across the street from the convention hotel), the Sgt. Floyd museum, an Army Corps of Engineers vessel that is now grounded

and is part of the Sioux City, Iowa Welcome Center, and of course plenty of shopping opportunities.

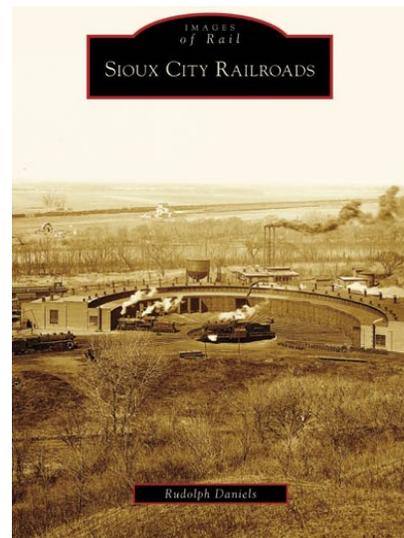
We have many great clinic presenters secured for the convention. The Sioux City area doesn't have a lot of home layouts like last year's Twin Cities convention, but we have secured five home layout tours. We have arranged for special entertainment for the Friday and Saturday night meals from Dr. Rudy Daniels, a college professor, writer, and Railroad Historian.

The convention will also feature a Sunday morning swap meet put on by the Prairie Lakes Division. The convention will feature the standard activities like the contest, board meetings, Saturday night Chinese Auction, and great times with old friends and new ones.

The Stoney Creek Inn is the convention hotel. It is a great modern facility located in downtown Sioux City.

The hotel is decorated in a rustic northern woods lodge theme with all the great amenities you would expect from a fine hotel. We have locked in a room rate of \$99 a night for the convention. The hotel features continental breakfast, on site pub, indoor/outdoor pool, fitness area, business center, great conference site and meeting area attached to the hotel.

Check the website and Spring Fusee for updates.



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View from the Cab

by TLR President Gerry Miller

WE HAVE A NEW EDITOR

When I started to write this Fusee column, I thought it would be the last. After the fall Board meeting we did not have an editor. I had spoken to many people about serving as the new editor but no one would step forward. The Fusee is a very important part of the TLR. It allows information to be passed onto the membership. Many people have provided articles and modeling tips I have used to make my railroad look and run better. I hated to see the Fusee come to an end. After a month of searching, I had given up all hope of finding a new editor. As luck would have it, I received an email from Wes Garcia, the TLR's new Public Relations Director, volunteering to be the editor of the Fusee! Welcome to the Board Wes and thank you for keeping the Fusee going. I am looking forward to working with you.

The TLR is still looking for a webmaster. As of now, with the help of Dave Hamilton, I have been trying to fill that position. We are in need of someone that is a little more computer savvy! If anyone out there is interested in this position please contact me.

Winter, more commonly known as model railroad season, is here! It's that time of year when most of us spend more time in the basement than above ground! I have many projects that I hope to finish on my layout this winter.

Don't forget to mark your new 2014 calendar for May 2nd- May 4th for the regional convention in Sioux City Iowa.

I'd like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. Hope Santa brings everything you want!



It's that time of year when we head down to the basement train room. What projects will you be working on? Consider taking some photos of your work, so we can showcase it in the Fusee.

Do you have a tip you would like to pass on to other modelers? Send the tip to the Fusee, include some artwork and we can dress up your line drawings. You never know who you might be helping with your tip.



Greeting from the New Editor

by Wes Garcia

As the new editor of the Fusee, I have my task already laid out before me. We have had two really capable individuals serve as past editors.

I want to remind all the readers that the Fusee belongs to you. So I encourage you to submit articles, news and happenings within the region, and photographs.

If you're not sure about how to get started, or if you think the topic you want to present may not be of interest to the members of the region, give me a call at 605-310-0124, or via e-mail at wesgarcia@sio.midco.net. We can work together to get article done for the Fusee.

I really need your articles and photos at this time!



<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Publishing Date</u>
February 1	March 1
June 1	July 1
August 1	September 1
November 1	December 1

Help me, Help you!

Hi, I am the new kid on the block, Wes Garcia. I have just taken on the position as PR director and editor of “The Fusee” for the TLR. I see this position as a team effort. I will help support your activities at the division and regional levels, but you as division members need to keep me informed well in advance of planned, public events. As you prepare information to send to me, remember what you learned in grade school about news, we want the following:

Who:

What:

When:

Why:

How:

If you provide that information, then I can help get the word out to the general public, as well as all the members of the TLR and the NMRA.

When I talk about advance planning on your part, if I plan to place announcements in free publications in your area, most have a four to six week lead time. (This does not include newspapers). So, once again, I must stress – PLAN AHEAD!

One of the great things about the wonderful world of media today, is there are great magazines and website where you can place up coming events for free. We need to take advantage of those avenues.

As you start planning activities for the new year, and are not sure what to say, send me your ideas, and I will look them over and ask you a lot of questions to find out the most important facts about your event.

We want to put our best foot forward, when we have public events. With your help, working as a team, we can do it.

We should always be using the “Club Car” in the NMRA Magazine. There is a three month lead time to get it in the NMRA Magazine.

Another free site is “Model Railroad Hobbyist Magazine” at <http://model-railroad-hobbyist.com>. If you’re not familiar with this fine, free on-line magazine, check it out. It comes out once a month and has a readership of over 90,000 unique readers. In other words, they are not counting readers more than once.

We have some great tools at our disposal, let’s use them!

If you want to contact me, I can be reached at wesgarcia@sio.midco.net or at 605-310-0124.

For those who like snail-mail send it to:

Wes Garcia
2212 S. Sherman Avenue
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57105-4130

Happy Railroading, and
Merry Christmas
Wes Garcia

Minutes for Sept 14th 2013 BOD Meeting

Present at the meeting were:
Gerry Miller, Paul Gerry, Jim Bernier, Jim Krekelberg, Jay Manning, Gerry Leone, Alan Saatkamp, Ron Olson, Paul Ullrich, Margaret Ullrich, Fred Headon, Richard Dahl, Frank Gerry, Miles Rohan, John Schneider

The meeting started at 10:00am

Gerry Miller started the meeting off with the Presidents Welcome. Again the TLR as a whole is doing well with a stable membership base and a good financial footing. Volunteers are needed though to fill important roles within the Divisions and Region and Gerry hopes that more people step forward and become involved in the Region this year. This need for Volunteers is especially pressing with the sudden resignation of the multi talented Tracy McKibbon due to circumstances beyond his control. This loss leaves the position of Public Relations, TLR Website and Fusee Editor open which will be addressed later in the meeting

A Motion was then made by Paul Ullrich to accept the minutes from the last meeting as posted in the Fusee. The motion was seconded by Margaret Ullrich and was passed unanimously.

Jim Krekelberg then gave the Treasures report. The TLR is again on a solid financial footing although our overall cash reserves have dropped over the last 5 yrs. A five year summary was provided which encompassed Jim's term as Treasurer. This

will be addressed later in the meeting.

There was no report to be made by our Vice President Paul Ullrich.

Jay Manning then gave the Convention Directors Report. Overall the 2014 Convention is on track with its planning. Hotel and Guest Speaker are all set with the final tours and clinics being planned. More on this to follow.

There was no report to be made by our Contest Director Ron Olson.

Jim Bernier then gave the Historian report. There have been no new requests for material from the archives over the last 6 months. The conversion from Floppy and Hard Disc mediums to something more modern continues on track. The NMRA has not yet set a standard format for digital scans of text for its website so the conversion of most of the TLR text files are waiting on this decision.

Gerry Miller presented the AP Chair's report for John Hotvet. There are currently 3 AP certificates being awarded since the Convention last May. This low lumber is most likely attributable to the "summer lull".

The Dakota South Eastern Division report was then made by Richard Dahl. The funds from last May's grant have been put to good use and a projector and portable screen have been purchased for the division. The modular layout continues to ex-

pand with the addition of a member funded yard which will hopefully be finished for the annual Trains at Christmas show in Sioux Falls.

The DSED modular layout continues to get a workout with trips to Russell MN for their annual town celebrations, Railroad Days at Prairie Village in Madison SD, and the Granite Threshing Bee in Granite IA, all of which got the DSED and the layout rave reviews. The future includes more clinics, demonstrations and presentation at a meeting at the end of Sept in Sioux Falls, the annual open house event on Oct 19th, the DSED Business Meeting on Nov 7th, and the Trains at Christmas Show at the WH Lyons Fairgrounds in Sioux Falls Nov 23rd- 24th.

Next Paul Ullrich presented the #1 Northern Minutes for Dennis Rietze. The grand based end loops for the modular layout are coming along well. I is almost complete and the second one is coming along slowly. Plexiglass will be added to the loops to prevent accidental mishaps with trains falling off the module at shows. A train show in October as well a Division meet in November are upcoming big events within the Division. The Division meet is coming together nicely and costs are being kept at a minimum by the generously low rent set by a local church for use of the basement. Clinics and a "Time Saver" switching contest will be highlights of the meet.

The Southeast Division report was given by Gerry Miller. The partially finished switching mod-

ule, also a grant based endeavour, is a great hit with the younger crowd at meets and shows and has attracted new members already. The round robin layout building sessions are ready to start back up in the fall now that cooler weather has returned.

A final message from outgoing Fusee Editor, Alan Saatkamp was then delivered. A big Thank You to all who contributed to the Fusee over the years was sent out, they made the job an enjoyable and very satisfying experience. The subscriptions have remained constant at around 225 subscribers and there is a loyal following of advertisers as well. The Fusee is self sufficient with the revenue from advertisers and the subscribers which is fantastic. Best of luck to the new Fusee editor (whomever they may be).

Next was an update from our representatives from the NMRA, Fred Headon, Candian Director, and Gerry Leone, Vice President of Projects. The Atlanta convention was a success with over 1200 registrants even though the weather was wet and humid. The contest room was a little low on the numbers of entrants but the quality of those models present was excellent. Out of the BOD meeting came some important

points. The first one is that any NMRA executive or Board member who is invited to speak at an event **outside** their own Region must be reimbursed for the expenses involved in travel and lodging. Second, is an appeal is going out to all Divisions to look inside their ranks for anyone wanting to be part of the NMRA leadership ranks. A special mentoring / training program is being set up for those who wish to volunteer their time as part of the NMRA with current NMRA executives and board members being paired with the new recruits. The goal is to get more people at the grassroots level involved directly with the NMRA so it's not some boogymon that only asks for dues and never does anything else. Third, update your email often if you use multiple accounts, it's the only way for you to get the E-Bulletin and other email offerings from home office. Fourth, we need a new TLR Director as Stephen Priest has indicated that he will not serve another term. Fifth, is a new program called the EDUTRAIN which is to be used to help prepare clinicians to run clinics with a template to help organise the material. The template is in no way mandated to be used by the NMRA but it is copyrighted. The NMRA website has

a new host which means its larger, faster, has increased storage and will hopefully experience less downtime. Sixth, on the list is the new marketing strategies which involved RailPass' now being available at US railway museums and the Home Depot (at least 6 centers) will have a "Build a Model Railway" project this November. You can also donate to the NMRA through E-Bay by designating a certain percentage of your sale price go to them. Seventh, was a topic close to the TLRs heart with the continuing effort to grant all Divisions and Regions 501 c 3 Status under the umbrella of the NMRA. This is an effort to increase the vertical integration of the whole NMRA structure but will in no way impact the day-to-day operations of individual Regions or Divisions. Finally, a new format to encourage participation in the Achievement Program is being tried out. It's called the "Blitz" approach and works as follows; enough NMRA sanctioned judges (see Regional AP Chairs for names) show up at someone's house (most likely during a convention) and see how many AP requirements they can check off for that person in that one session. The proto blitz had one member go from 0 AP certificates to 5 AP certificates in only a few hours.

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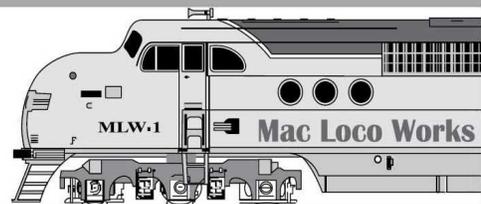
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hours. Both judging and the paperwork were done at the same time, the only thing the targeted member had to do was answer questions and sign on the bottom line. Another AP Certificate plan involves judging from afar via internet if the prospective member lives somewhere remote (for the TLRs case the North Pole would qualify!) but this method has yet to be approved by the NMRA Board.

Miles Rohan presented the Prairie Lakes Division report for Jay Davis. A fall meet is planned for mid October that will feature a train show, a Museum tour, some clinics and a local model railroad club. The summer Division meeting was held in the same hotel as the TLR Convention will be held and the facilities are great and this allowed for the PLD board to get an idea for the site first hand. Looking forward to the Spring TLR Convention in Sioux City!

The 2013 Convention update was presented by Gerry Miller. There was a warm welcome to the new concept of having something going on all the time and the individual choosing what to attend and the model building seminars in the main room were a big hit. The convention did make a small profit.

The 2014 Convention update was presented by Miles Rohan for Jay Davis. The hotel, the Stoney Creek Inn, is booked for May 2-4 2014 and ready to go. Four clinicians have signed up with more wanted. Contact Jay Davis, if you are interested. The big industry tour will be an Ethanol plant and more tours are

being looked into even though the local industries are not very open to tours at this time. Three layouts are on the tour as well as the Otter Creek Club in Sibley which is on the way north for those of you returning that way on Sunday. There will be plenty of non-rail tours as the area has many great attractions. A Swap Meet on Sunday is in the works with local vendors having signed on already. The guest speaker is Rudy Daniels who is a published railroad author, historian and college professor. Hope to see you all there for the 2014 Convention in Sioux City Iowa!

The 2015 Convention update was made by Frank Gerry. So far there will be tours from both Bombardier (makers of the bi-level commuter cars for most of North America) and a large paper mill (who's ownership seems to change with the seasons). Both sites have hosted tours before and were fantastic, just make sure you have long pants and closed toe shoes or you won't be allowed on the tour. HO, N, HOn3 and two G scale outdoor layouts are all on the table for tours. The area is a hub of both Canadian Pacific and Canadian National activity so bring your camera. Hotel accommodations are up in the air since there are currently 3 convention centres being build in Thunder Bay at this time so the options are many. Hope to have more details at the May convention.

Jay Manning, as Convention Director, started the discussion around convention Standard Of Protocol (SOPs). Currently there are certain expectations that come with any convention, like clinics, layout tours and a banquet but no

real manual for how to go about doing these things. Question becomes how strict things have to be for the convention chair and should things be incorporated into the TLR handbook or just be general policies that need to be followed. Are we vague in what we want or does there have to be a checklist involved. A debate followed regarding exactly what these SOPs would look like and how to make sure that each convention runs smoothly and hopefully makes a profit versus stifling creativity in what makes a good convention. The thought that all funds should be TLR based and the TLR Treasurer should also be the registrar was also brought up. The discussion was tabled with further talks to be held at the next BOD meeting and any changes to the handbook or a general request for input to be made at the AGM after the convention.

Gerry Miller then started a discussion about bringing back convention surveys. A sample survey was handed out and had questions like; Did you enjoy the food? Did you enjoy/attend the industry tours? Did you attend the AGM?, and so on. Finding out what the top problems and top positives about each convention could go a long ways to improving conventions overall. The big stumbling block was how to get people to fill it out and get it back to the BOD or Convention Director. Thoughts included making a special draw at the banquet only for people who returned surveys, handing them out in the convention packet or just starting random verbal questionnaires were brought up. The discussion was tabled for further meeting in May.

Gerry Miller then started a discussion on what the TLR website is and what we want it to be. A new webmaster is needed with the departure of Tracy McKibbin and a clear directive for whoever takes over the position needs to be in place. What is on it? What links should be included (ie links to Division websites, private layout websites, model railroad websites, etc)? And who will use it and for what purpose (ie membership renewal, info on activities within the TLR itself or as a portal for outside links)? The discussion was tabled for further discussion.

Finally Gerry Miller brought up the importance of financial responsibility when it came to spending the TLRs hard earned money. There has been a decrease in the overall funds of the TLR over the last 2 years. Most of these funds have gone towards the AP Bounty and Grant programs started by the current BOD. The question becomes how to tone down the spending or stop the spending all together. The following ideas were all put forward; eliminate the grants, raise the cap on grant money or make the gap between reapplication for grants longer, scrap the AP Bounty program, cut the spending when the overall treasury drops to a predetermined level, all conventions are for profit and all profits go to the TLR directly. Each point was solidly debated. Is the AP Bounty program was actually doing what it was meant to do? Get people started towards their MMR and bring in contest room entries. It was determined that it was not living up to all its hype but was important. The main issue is that most people stopped after getting the first AP Certificate (and mon-

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ey) and didn't go on to finish their MMR, and that the contest room was still not drawing a crowd. The suggestion was made to have a bounty placed on the second AP Certificate and a non-judging table being placed in the contest room so people could enter but not feel intimidated. The Grant program was found to be fulfilling its role but how or when to stop/slow down the funding was in the air. Jim Krekelberg made a motion to keep the grant program as is for now and was seconded by Paul Ullrich. It passed unanimously. Paul Gerry then made a motion to maintain the AP Bounty program as is pending a review by the AP Chair and was seconded by Ron Olsen. It passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Krekelberg and seconded by Jay Manning. It passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 1:08pm. Respectfully submitted by the TLR Secretary Paul Gerry.

New GN Side Sets Planned

HO & N brass sides for GN 308-313 rebuilt 6-axle 82' Baggage-Express-Mail Storage cars, GN 1215 PS 48-seat Coach w/full skirts and GN 1105-07 ACF Mail-Baggage are planned for fall release. Reserve these and other potential side sets. Commission a new item for as little as \$350-400 for 4 HO or 7 N sets. Most discontinued sets may be obtained by special order. info@brasscarsides.com.

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Easy Turnout Control

by Ron Einarson

While visiting the Selkirk Model Railroad Association during one of their Open Houses, I noticed their easy method of turnout control. Not only does it throw the points but it provides electrical contacts for powering rail as well as power for their future signal system. A single or double pole double throw switch is used for power routing and a wire rod is used to throw the points. Their layout is a walk around follow your train type of operation so these switches are located close to the edge of the layout. Rather than using Caboose Hobbies throws or wiring up Tortoise style switch motors and having to crawl underneath to mount and align them, this slide switch method is easy to install, align and operate. A hole drilled in the slide switch fitted with a wire control to the turnout plus a few slices out of the landscape with a knife and you have the start of the mounting. A hole for the wiring to run down and up to the turnout and two screws mount the switch with a short piece then wire into the throw bar on turnout and you are done. The picture really shows off what is required. The group has used this method for all their turnouts on the new layout which has been in operation for around five years now.



Prairie Lake Division Superintendent's Report

By Jay Davis

The Prairie Lakes Division recently had its fall meet on Saturday, October 19th in Le Mars, Iowa at the Plymouth County Museum. We had an excellent turn out with over a hundred NMRA members and general public attending the meet. PLD members were treated to a sneak peak of some of the clinic presenters that will be presenting at the TLR convention in Sioux City. The day was also made by the great number of vendors to choose from, with over twenty tables sold. Also, the Floyd Valley Model Railroad Club had its lay-

out open for viewing. The club's layout is located in the basement of the museum.

The Otter Valley Model Railroad Club will be having its holiday open house Saturday, December 7. The club is located in Sibley, Iowa at the Osceola County Fairgrounds. The club will be open from 10-3.

The PLD is excited to be hosting the TLR convention this coming spring and working hard on making another spectacular convention that members have come to expect.

What are you wishing for, and hope to find under your Christmas Tree this year?



Prairie Lake Division's train meet in La Mars Iowa

No. 1 Northern Division's Active Fall Season

By Paul Ullrich

The No. 1 Northern Division ran their free-mo modular layout at the second annual Manitoba Mega Train Show, which was held on October 19 and 20 at the CanLan Ice Sports Centre in Winnipeg. The Manitoba Mega Train Show is the largest train show in the province. This year, it attracted over 1700 visitors.

The No. 1 Northern Division's free-mo layout was the largest display in the show, covering 50' x 40'. Signs acknowledging the generous support of the TLR were prominently displayed along the layout. Opposite the layout was a display table promoting the NMRA, complete with the portable banner supplied by the TLR. LuElla Rietze, wife of No.1 Northern Superintendent Denis Rietze, sat at the display table and handed out informational brochures to interested persons.

The Division held their third annual train meet on Saturday, November 1 at Whyte Ridge Baptist Church in Winnipeg. This year, the group focused on "hands-on" clinics and demonstrations. Winnipeg Model Railroad Club President Larry Leavens showed how to make static grass by using an improvised hand held bug zapper that you could buy at any home improvement store for under ten dollars (genuine static grass makers usually sell for well over ten times that much).

WMRC acting program director and Canadian Railway Modeller publisher Morgan Turney demonstrated how to make realistic rock faces with ceiling tile. No. 1 Northern superintendent Dennis Rietze conducted a clinic on DCC. A workshop on how to ballast a track was supervised by NMRA Canada Director Fred

Headon, MMR, with a prize of a gift certificate from a local hobby shop for who did the best job.

Members could also compete for a hobby shop gift certificate using a John Allen Style "time-saver" module to see who could shunt freight cars to their assigned destination the fastest. The winner was the No.1 Northern's youngest member, 10 year old Michael Leader, who beat most of our veteran members by a very wide margin!

The No. 1 Northern Division continues to conduct the monthly model display at every WMRC meeting. Members are encouraged to display whatever they're working on, and a gift certificate for a local hobby shop is awarded at random to one of the entrants.



The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

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What's Inside?

TLR Convention, Exploring the Rails

BOD fall meeting minutes

Ron Einarson's easy turnout control

**Paul Ullrich shares some activities of the
No 1 Northern Division**

**Jay Davis updates us on the Prairie Lake
Division**

Check your expiration date! If you have questions (or a change of address) email Jim Krekelberg at: jkrekelberg@sio.midco.net

Region Roundup—model railroad-related events in and around the TLR

Friday, May 2 through Sunday, May 4 2014 Thousand Lakes Region Convention. Exploring the Rails. Sioux City, Iowa.

Having checked out the websites for the Divisions within the TLR, all seems quiet for January and February 2013 except for:

Saturday, February 8 and Sunday, February 9, 2014. The DSED will be displaying their modular layout at Great Trains Expo in Council Bluffs, Iowa.