

# Train Orders

Official Newsletter of the New Jersey Division,  
Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association



May 2024

Volume 35 Number 1

## Head south to Millville for the September Meet


John V. Gallagher, Superintendent

### Welcome Back for the New Jersey Division 2024 – 2025 Meet Season

We end this summer that set new records for humidity and temperature. Now, we gather to renew our friendships and enjoy the first division meet of the season. Our program includes a short business meeting to report the results of our election and to vote for officers of the board up for election. That election in public will renew or replace officers from board members where vacancies exist due to term limits.


After some announcements and other business items, Ralph Deblasi of our division will present part 1 of his two clinics on model railroad signals. Ralph's beautiful home layout has operating signals. Many have signals on their layouts, me included, but they do not operate nor function. Ralph will describe the functions of signals and in part 2, after the mid-meet break, tell us how we can put functioning signals on your layout.

We plan to have door prizes, a raffle, the free table and a display activity. See the description inside.

We **will not** have coffee or donuts so BYOB. There is a division vacancy for a refreshments volunteer. How about you? 

### Election Results

The final count is in for the New Jersey Division Board of Directors.

Incumbents Jack Menaker, Joe Zebrowski and Geert Marian are all re-elected to serve another two years as Directors for our organization. 

### Next Division Meet

Saturday September 14, 2024

9 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Cumberland County

Community Church

1800 E Broad St, Millville NJ 08332

Model Display News

Passenger Car

Clinics:

Model Railroad Signaling



Our 56th Year and counting!

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## Train Orders

Official Newsletter of the New Jersey Division. NMRA  
P.O. Box 276

Crosswicks, NJ 08515-0276

<https://njdivnmra.org>

Train Orders is published 5 times per year for the NMRA members and friends of the New Jersey Division. Online newsletters are always available at the NJ Division website.

Mailed hardcopy newsletter is \$20.00 per year.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Division. Products and publications mentioned in Train Orders in no way constitute an endorsement by the Division.

Train Orders welcomes contributions from the New Jersey Division membership and . Letters, articles, photos and other items may be submitted to the editor, Fritz Plenefisch, at [fplen3@verizon.net](mailto:fplen3@verizon.net) or to 327 Sharps Lane, Hamilton, NJ 08610-1334. Please include return postage if you would like materials returned.

Cutoff Date for submittal to the November issue is TBD.

Items received after this date may appear in the next issue

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and Director of Clinics**

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Visit us at <https://njdivnmra.org> and join us on  
Groups at <https://groups.io/g/NJDivNMRA>

## NJD Information Page

**September Division Meet**  
Saturday September 14, 2022  
Cumberland County Community Church,  
1800 E Broad St, Millville NJ 08332

**Next Board Meeting**  
Host – Jack Menaker  
Saturday October 5, 2024, noon  
Please let us know if you plan to attend  
[njdiv.super@gmail.com](mailto:njdiv.super@gmail.com)

**November Joint Division Meet  
With the Philadelphia Division**  
Saturday, November 9, 2024  
Brandywine Town Center  
4050 Brandywine Parkway  
Wilmington, DE 19803

**Piedmont Junction**  
MER Convention October 17-20, 2024  
Raleigh-Durham-Marriott at  
Research Triangle Park 4700 Guardian Dr.,  
Durham, NC 27703, NC 27703  
Information: [PiedmontJunction.org](http://PiedmontJunction.org)  
Also see TO page 11

**Special N J Division  
Summer Meet August 2025  
at Switlik Park in Yardville**

## NJ Division Area Hobby Shops

\* **AAA Hobbies & Crafts**  
706 N. Whitehorse Pike,  
Magnolia, NJ 08049  
(856) 435-7645  
[www.AAAHobbiesandCrafts.com](http://www.AAAHobbiesandCrafts.com)

\* **Sattler's Hobby Shop**  
14 Haddon Ave.  
Westmont, NJ 08108  
(856) 854-7136

\* **The Train Room Online Store**  
[www.thetrainroomNJ.com](http://www.thetrainroomNJ.com)  
e-mail [thetrainroomnj@msn.com](mailto:thetrainroomnj@msn.com)

\* **Yankee Dabbler - Track 33**  
101 W. Kings Hwy, Bellmawr, NJ  
08031

\* **Offers discount to NMRA members.  
Must show Current Membership Card**

**Membership Information**  
Any person who is a member of the NMRA and lives within the boundaries of the NJ Division as defined by the NMRA is also a member of the division. Non member guests are welcome to attend three of our meets, after which they will be asked to join the NMRA.  
NJ Division Annual Activity Fee: \$10.00 (optional and includes 5 meets) or individual meets \$5 at the door.  
First time guests, no charge!

**National Model Railroad  
Association P.O. Box 1328  
Soddy Daisy TN 37384-1328**

## View From the Cab

### John V. Gallagher, Superintendent

#### Ron Baile, MMR #496

One of the great rewards of NMRA membership is the people we meet and the friendships and relationships we develop. Ron met those characteristics that stood him apart from his peers. I felt that when I met Ron, I knew that I wanted to develop that friendship. It was easy. Whether it was a joke, his view or opinion about the division or NMRA, or knowledge about railroading, Ron delivered. He offered fair and honest advice. When I needed a clinician, Ron signed up. For me, he was a trusted mentor.

Ron's shared an extensive knowledge of railroading built on his experience with the prototype doing maintenance on locomotives and working in the cab as an engineer. In addition to stories of operating on the road and knowledge from his studies of railroad history, he shared the relationships in operations and in skillful modeling. His layout was beautiful and his models of locomotives and rolling stock demonstrated his attention to detail and a continuing quest to improve. We saw that in the clinics he presented and the models he displayed at meets and in contests. He was a lifelong learner.

What I didn't know about Ron was his broad knowledge and other activities he did in his life. The obituary described his other contributions to the community outside of model railroading. Ron served in the US Army. He lived a full life.

In addition to the above, I decided to check some documents about the New Jersey Division. To my surprise, I learned that Ron served as the sixth superintendent and held the office from 1975 [He was 27!] through 1979, four terms. During his last term, the NJD celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Now I know how he gave me valued advice on being a superintendent!

The last time I spoke to Ron, I asked him if he could offer his clinic on building resin kits. He asked the location of the meet [which was Monmouth County] and he declined because of the distance. I offered to pick him up and drive him. He declined and wasn't up to the trip. Ron had serious medical challenges earlier this year. I understood and encouraged him. Rest in peace, Ron.

#### William [Bill] Birchall

Bill passed away on April 30, 2024 at age 84. Bill, a Life Member of the NMRA, was a founding member of the New Jersey Division in 1968 with service on the developing committees during the previous year. Bill built a beautiful layout that was open for meet open houses. What made his home visits by members special was the opportunity to visit a restored prototype caboose on a short railed roadbed that Bill had in his back yard! Bill was a regular attendee of division meets as late as 2023. I learned at the service that the caboose was removed several years ago.

Rest in peace, Bill.


#### Recruitment of New Members

NMRA Gordy Robinson wrote in a recent issue of the NMRA Magazine that the average age of members worldwide was 69. We don't know the average age of our members but suspect that our gray hair indicates a similar average age. You can do something about it by bringing an interested model railroader to a meet as a guest. The guest can model railroads in any gauge and even on "tinplate" track. There is no restriction on the type of modeling track in NMRA. Do you participate in an ops group? Find out if members of the group are NMRA members. Encourage the members to attend meets in person. Invite one or two non-members to a meet as guests. If you need assistance, contact our membership director, Geert Marien. His email

address and phone number are listed on page 2 of the Train Orders

#### Did You Know that there are Podcasts on Model Railroading?

I recently began selective listening to podcasts on a few topics using my iPhone [works on Android phones too]. I found the free podcast app on the phone and signed on. There are numerous podcasts on many topics. What I understand is that a podcast is an online broadcast. It is not interactive. If you find one of interest, you can connect and listen at any time convenient to you. You can listen on your cell phone or on your computer. There may be other platforms. Listen through your car radio if it has the technology to connect with your phone. My hearing aids connect to my iPhone so I can listen to a podcast privately. [I STRONGLY recommend you not use this feature when your spouse is talking to you!] When listening through my car radio and navigating using the phone-based GPS app, the two programs "cooperate." GPS instructions interrupt the podcast to give navigation instructions and when finished, automatically returns to the podcast, repeating a few words so the listener has continuity of the podcast subject. I recommend you try the podcast of the Twin Cities Division of the NMRA called the "TCD CROSSING GATE Podcast" with the name on a crossing gate cross-bucks in a light orange square. They are now at podcast #70. Each is about 45 minutes to an hour. The first one is dated January 2021 and are generally once or twice a month. Enjoy.

I recommend not listening to the "Wiley's Scale Modeling." If you happen to listen to one, you will know why. 

## Clinics for the September Meet

### John V. Gallagher, Director of Clinics

Do you control your trains on the layout in a prototype manner? Is your layout “Dark Territory?” Mine is but my layout is still under construction. For me, I eliminate Dark Territory by turning on the room lights.

Several years ago, Bruce Chubb wrote a long series of articles in *Railroad Model Craftsman* that told the reader everything there was to know about signals and signaling. About halfway through the series of articles, very well written, my brain crashed. My humble interurban traction line, single track with passing sidings, didn’t need signaling used on Amtrak’s northeast corridor nor the approach to New York’s Pennsylvania Station.

There must be a simpler solution for most model railroaders.


Member Ralph Deblasi will present two clinics at the September meet on signaling for model railroaders. Ralph has signals on his great layout. His dispatcher’s panel and controls plus the communications are located in a room on the house’s first floor for his basement layout. It is beyond shouting distance, truly remote.

We decided to offer both connected clinics at one meet rather than two meets where some members would miss one thereby not getting the connected information. So, come to Millville and get the what is signaling plus how to do it on your layout.

Maybe my interurban line requires signals. It would make cornfields less likely.

### Clinicians Needed for NJD Meets

Have you an idea for a clinic you might offer? We generally need full 45 minute to one hour clinics for future meets and 30 minute clinics for the Works in Progress clinics program in March, 2025. If you are working on a modeling project, bring your camera or cell phone to your work station or workbench and take photos of Worksteps]. Have a notebook where you can list the steps for your project. Also, on a separate page of your notes, create a materials list of the parts needed plus materials. Also list the tools and any tooling [fixtures and jigs]. Don’t forget your finishing such as paints and weathering materials. I am available to assist you in putting together a clinic. If new, keep it simple. Let me know your ideas.

Thanks. 



**Ralph Deblasi**

### For future Planning of Layout Open Houses



39th ANNUAL  
**OPEN HOUSE**

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**PATCONG VALLEY  
MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

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November 16 - 17, 2024  
 December 7 - 8, 2024  
 December 14 - 15, 2024  
 December 21 - 22, 2024  
 January 4 - 5, 2025  
 January 11 - 12, 2025

10:00 am to 3:00 pm Saturday  
 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm Sunday

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**ADMISSION FREE**

DONATIONS WELCOME  
We are located at:

1308 Harding Highway (US Rt 40), Richland, NJ  
 Face Book: [www.facebook.com/patcongvalleyrr](http://www.facebook.com/patcongvalleyrr)  
 Website: [www.patcongvalleyrailroad.com](http://www.patcongvalleyrailroad.com)

## **Model Display News**

**By Jack Menaker, Model Display Chairman**

I would like to apologize for not having a Model Display at the last Meet.  
 There was some confusion due the Meet being a Joint Meet.

The Model Display for this meet is to show us your favorite  
**PASSENGER CAR**

**The model qualifies if it would carry human riders!**

**The model that gets the most votes for the topic will get,  
 A Framed Certificate and  
 a Voucher to cover our yearly fee.**

**Please remember to vote for the Best in Show**

| <b>Scheduled Meet</b> | <b>Display Topic</b>        | <b>Special Notes</b>         |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>September 2024</b> | <b>Passenger Cars</b>       | <b>Show your favorite</b>    |
| <b>November 2024</b>  | <b>Steam Locomotives</b>    | <b>Show your favorite</b>    |
| <b>January 2025</b>   | <b>Layout Structure</b>     | <b>Built from a kit</b>      |
| <b>March 2025</b>     | <b>Diesel/Electric Loco</b> | <b>Not Steam</b>             |
| <b>May 2025</b>       | <b>Open Loads</b>           | <b>Flat Car or Gondola</b>   |
| <b>August 2025</b>    | <b>Non-Revenue</b>          | <b>Used for Track Repair</b> |

I am always looking for interesting topics.

If you have an idea, please let me know and I will try to add it to the list of Display topics.

Thank You – Jack Menaker Model Display Chairman

# Photos Welcome by Mike Prokop


A little while ago Thom Radice committed to being our official division photographer. A noble position that should produce some fine images for our newsletter and website.

However, at the last board of directors meeting it was suggested that we give all of you an opportunity to take and send photos of division activities to our photo coordinator. These photos could be used for official publications such as the Train Orders newsletter, the NJD website and other possible publications. They would supplement and give a different perspective on the photos Thom would be generating.

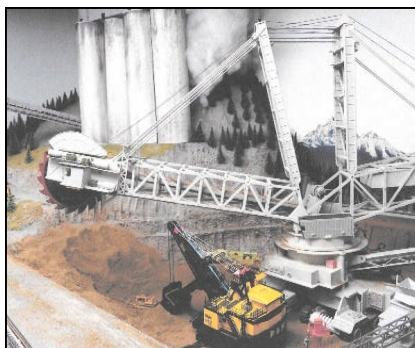
Everyone these days has an iPhone or Android device and is “clicking” away at our meets and while out visiting layouts in the afternoons after the meet. We’d especially like to get candid photos with our members in the shots to highlight everyone’s participation in our division’s activities.

Some of the photos on our website homepage are out of date and we need to have images of current members attending meets and visiting layouts. Ideally these photos could be updated and changed periodically to show and include a wide variety of members, venues, layouts and division activities. We’ll collect and archive your photos and use them with your permission. AP credit can be earned for having your photo published in an official NMRA publication, in this case one of the New Jersey Divisions publications.

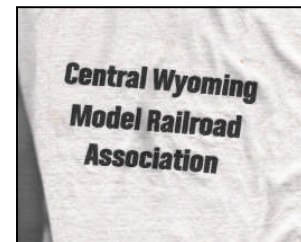
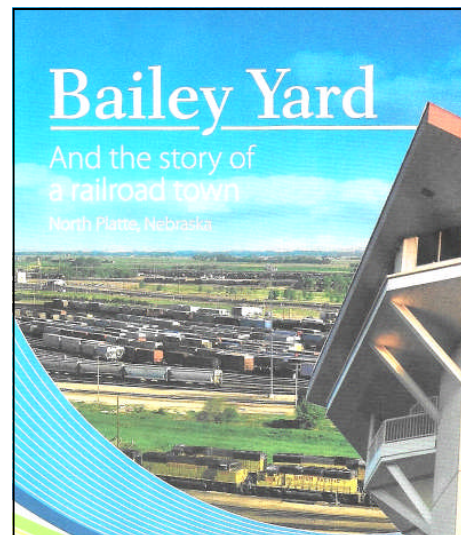
So, help us update our website and contribute photos of our division activities. Email your photos to our Photo Coordinator, Thom Radice at thomradice@gmail.com. Include your name and, if possible, any details or notes about the photo you’re submitting. If no details, just the photo would be fine. We’ll know who to credit the photo to from your email. This could definitely be a fun thing to not only have your photos published but for our members to see themselves participating in division activities. Identify those in photos. Consider interesting locations you visited, such as model railroads, prototype locations, museums, etc. Photos of locomotives, rolling stock, structures, or other rail related items.

“Last but not Least” your own layout or club layout! We sure could use home layouts, a picture or two along with a description. We need a picture or two along with a description. We intend to use submittals in future issues of the Train Orders. 

### sample ideas



See  
sample  
ideas



## Second Section

### Layouts open for viewing at the September Meet

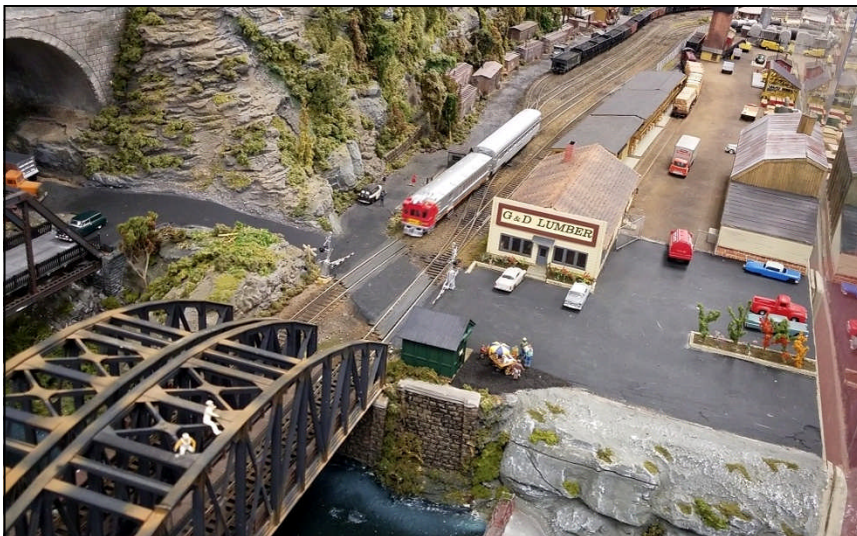
We have four layouts to visit at the time this TO is issued.  
Maps listing them along with directions and the time they will be open are available at the meet.  
Please contact a Board member if you would like to host an open house for your railroad when we are close to your area.



**This is a frelanced MKT (Missouri, Kansas and Texas) railroad on a 40x8 main and then going around side and back wall ending in a 4x24 classification yard (not yet built). The layout is still under construction and any suggestions will be appreciated. Track layout not finalized.**



HO Scale Reading PA area, late steam and early diesel era.  
City and mountain scenes, two track mainline.



A museum quality layout modeling a railroad operating between  
Scranton, PA and Weehawken, NJ in the 1940 to late 1950s era.



A highly detailed layout based on the Pennsylvania Railroad.  
Includes many structures, bridges and stations seen on the Pennsy.



# Initials Only for the Railroad Name

## By Fritz Plenefisch

Over the years many railroads stopped painting the full name of the line and replaced that with their initials. In some cases this was an effort to cut costs or to create a new image. Usually designing new paint schemes for their equipment.

BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE  
became BNSF.

CANADIAN NATIONAL and affiliates  
are now CN

Various Chessie System lines  
became CSX

PENN CENTRAL  
Became PC

As a demonstration on lettering the GP7 with initials only we will start with our South Jersey short line the

### Salem Pitman And Mantua

Using only the first letter of the words shown Proceed to apply the capital letters only. and see what you find. 🚂



Two CSX Units, Same initials, Different paint job.



New Haven EMD switcher



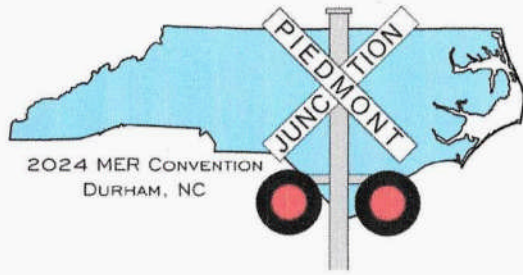
Trio of Baltimore & Ohio Freight units



Penn Central EMD Passenger unit



Missouri, Kansas & Texas (Katy) Freight unit



**25 Layout Tours**  
**41 Clinics**  
**10 Operations Sessions**  
**3 Prototype Tours**  
**Model Contest, Company Store and More!**

## **Piedmont Junction**

**October 17-20, 2024**

Raleigh - Durham Marriott at Research Triangle Park  
4700 Guardian Dr., Durham, NC 27703

*Hotel Rate is \$79 USD per night*

*Subject to Availability: Rate Ends 9/17/24*

Phone: +1-919-941-6200 or:

Go to convention website below for the registration link on the "Location/Hotel" tab.

Website: [PiedmontJunction.org](https://PiedmontJunction.org)

Convention website for registration and all information



This information was supplied by the Convention Committee

# HOLLIDAY SALE EXTENDED

**\$20 PER CAR! WHILE QUANTITIES LAST , ALL CARS ARE NOW PRICED AT \$20 PER CAR UNTIL SOLD OUT! MAIL ORDER OF CARS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE BELOW POSTED SHIPPING RATES .**

## New Jersey Division 50th Anniversary Gondola

### 75th Anniversary Gondola

A review of the cars. They are \$35 each, or a set of two for \$65. Car numbers are 1968 and 2018, which was the year that the New Jersey Division was founded and the year we celebrated our 50th anniversary. The model is from Tangent Models and is a superb model of a 52'6" Riveted Drop End Gondola with 70 ton trucks. The placement of the brake wheel on the side is an identifying feature of a drop end Gondola. They're ready to run and come with Kadee couplers.

We acquired equal amounts of the two car numbers. Cash or check will consummate the deal and you'll be hauling stuff around your layout in no time!

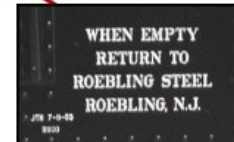
These are excellent looking and beautifully running cars, but, a car not decorated for a prototypical railroad, they do have the look of a gondola that you might see in any train consist from the 1930's to the 1980's.

To order cars Contact Mike Prokop at njwrr@aol.com or by mail use the Order Sheet. USPS

Priority Mail postage is: \$9 for one car and \$10.75 for two cars.



The Reporting Marks "NJDX" for this car identify the owner as the New Jersey Division and the "X" designates a Private or Non-railroad owner.



This Stencil indicates the Gondola is in Assigned Service to Roebling Steel. It must be returned to Roebling after its load has been delivered.

COME TO THE MARCH MEET TO PURCHASE THESE CARS WHILE QUANTITIES LAST. EVEN IF YOU ALREADY OWN A CAR OR TWO, THEY ARE EXCELLECT CARS TO ADD MORE TO YOUR MODEL RAILROAD. IT'S VERY EASY WITH A BLACK BODY TO PAINT OR BLANK OUT THE CAR NUMBER AND CHANGE IT SO IT WILL FIT IN WITH YOUR OPERATING FLEET OF GONDOLA CARS.

THIS SPECIAL SALE IS BEING OFFERED TO NMRA MEMBERS ONLY, NO DEALERS. WHILE QUANTITIES LAST! QUESTIONS- CONTACT MIKE PROKOP AT NJWRR@AOL.COM

The car body is black with white lettering and data conforming to the 1950s

The cost is \$35.00 for one car or a set of both numbers for \$65.00

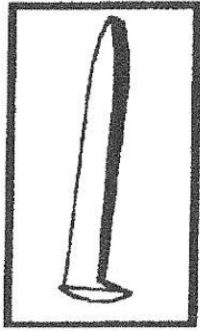
A check made payable to the NJ Division must be included with your order.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

See Tangent website for more information support@tangentscalemodels.com

Return this form to NJ Division NMRA;

PO Box 276, Crosswicks, NJ 08515-0276



# ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD APPLICATION FORM APRIL 2019

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FORM AND SEND TO YOUR DIVISION OR REGION AP MANAGER

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA#: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

- The Golden Spike Award (GSA) will be awarded to any NMRA member who completes the Qualifications Checklist, obtains the necessary signatures (Division AP Manager or some local NMRA member approved by the Division AP Manager), and if the applicant does not already hold MMR status.
- The GSA will be administered by the Division and Region AP Managers.
- AP requirements and definitions apply for scratch building and super-detailing.
- The Division AP Manager will submit the signed form to the Region AP Manager who will issue the Golden Spike Award certificate.
- The Region AP Manager will then forward the completed form to the National AP Manager so that an announcement can be made in the NMRA Magazine.

## GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD QUALIFICATIONS CHECKLIST:

### 1. Rolling Stock (Motive Power & Cars):

- Display six units of rolling stock either scratchbuilt, craftsman kits or superdetailed commercial kits.

### 2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures & Scenery)

- Construct a minimum of eight square feet of model railroad or module(s) including scenery in any scale.
- Construct five structures either scratchbuilt, craftsman kits or superdetailed commercial kits. If a module has less than five structures, additional structures separate from the scene may be presented.

### 3. Engineering (Civil & Electrical)

- Three types of track are required (e.g. turnout, crossing, crossover, etc.). All must be properly ballasted and installed on proper roadbed. Commercial track may be used.
- All installed track must be properly wired so that two trains can be operated simultaneously (e.g. double track main, single track main with sidings, and block or command or other form of control).
- Provide any one additional electrical feature such as power operated turnouts, signaling, turnout indication, lighted buildings, etc.

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA #: \_\_\_\_\_

Region AP Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_