



## Twin Cities Division News Update November 4, 2023

Welcome to National Model Railroad Month! Yes, the Halloween decorations are put away and you are resisting putting on Christmas Music. What a perfect month to celebrate the greatest hobby in the world, MODEL RAILROADING! Your Twin Cities Division continues a busy schedule of activities to support the modeling community in person, “hands on” and via the marvel of the internet.

Speaking of the internets, the Twin Cities Division, “Crossing Gate Live” begins again November 3!

### CROSSING GATE LIVE 7:00 PM

Begin November 3rd and running Friday evenings through February, the Crossing Gate Live returns for your Friday entertainment. Each week will feature an assortment of layout tours, special guests and lively discussion. Consider this a potpourri for your eyes and ears. We are videoing local layouts, lining up special guests and still open to hearing your ideas for topics. If you live out in the vast yonder of the Thousand Lakes Region, consider sending us your video and we will interview you. Fill your Friday with news and entertainment from your Twin Cities Division. TCDNMRAMEDIA on youtube.

### The NMRA Golden Spike Award

#### Dave Hamilton MMR

This year, seven TCD members have earned Golden Spike Awards. We would like to maintain that momentum and add more to the list. If you have already started building or if you are working on your current model RR, chances are you have already met the GS requirements. Remember, this award is designed to demonstrate familiarity with different areas of the hobby, rather than expertise in a particular area. Specifics are listed on the NMRA website : [Golden Spike Award | National Model Railroad Association \(nmra.org\)](https://www.nmra.org/golden-spike-award)

The application form is on the NMRA website. It's easy to fill out -just your name/address info and a 3 point checklist. No other fancy paperwork -no photos, blueprints, track diagrams bill of materials, etc. As a matter of fact, the division AP person can fill it out for you. All we have to do is schedule a visit at your convenience

and we'll take care of the rest. If you would like to talk to Dave about reviewing your Railroad, just drop him a note via [info@tcdnmra.org](mailto:info@tcdnmra.org)

Before we get into the schedule, we have an editorial from the Assistant Superintendent of the Twin Cities Division, Rand Relander.

## Pushing Your Limits

### How to Grow as a Model Railroader

Model railroading is a hobby enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds, offering "endless possibilities for creativity, learning, and "fun". As great as that sounds, sometimes I avoid taking on new challenges. I'm not always convinced that I have the time, skills, or resources. Every project is perfect until you start it, right? I guess it could be a matter of getting too comfortable with what I have done already. Maybe I don't feel like spending money on supplies and messing something up. Maybe I'm just concerned about what others think or how my feeble attempts compare to their latest masterpiece. But you need to push your limits if you want to grow as a model railroader. Challenge yourself to learn new things, try new techniques, explore. Embrace your mistakes as opportunities for improvement. Share your work with others and seek feedback and advice from those who have more (or different) experience. Try to keep an open mind, be curious, and, like we used to tell our scout troop, don't be afraid to "burn the bacon". The great part about pushing our limits as model railroaders is that it feeds on itself in a positive way, allowing us to discover new aspects of the hobby. Developing new skills and knowledge enhances our modeling abilities. We gain more confidence and satisfaction in our work, increasing our enjoyment. Best of all, we end up inspiring others to push their limits, creating an even more vibrant and diverse model railroading community.

### So how do you push your limits as a model railroader?

First, set a goal for yourself that is realistic but challenging. Finish that project that has been sitting in one of your blue tubs for the past year(s). Find an article in an old magazine and put your own spin on it, something different than the last three projects you started. Improve a specific aspect of your modeling, such as scenery, weathering, or scratch building. Go through your equipment list and try to take something from "worst to first".

Next, learn from other people in the Twin Cities Division and elsewhere. Attend model railroad conventions and retreats, join a local model railroad club, attend a clinic, watch a video, read an article, or listen to podcasts like "The Crossing Gate" that teach you

something new about model railroading. Ask other model railroaders questions and seek their feedback. Most of them don't bite.

Finally, as we continue to emphasize in the meetings and podcasts, share your work with others. Post photos or videos of your work online and display your projects at shows, events, or public places where people can see them. Don't just show us the finished product either, share how you did it. You don't have to throw yourself under the modeling bus but tell us what went wrong along the way. Answer people's questions and offer to teach or mentor someone who is interested in learning from you.

### **Ultimately, just have fun.**

Enjoy the process and remember that model railroading is a hobby that is supposed to bring you joy and fulfillment versus fear, doubt, and frustration. Embrace the challenge of trying something new as an opportunity to gain experience and improve as a model railroader. Your friends at the Twin Cities Division are here to help!

Randi Relander

Assistant Superintendent

Twin Cities Division

Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

### **GET YOUR "HANDS ON" MODEL RAILROADING FUN!**

**Saturday November 11th from 1:00 until 4:00**, the Twin Cities Division is hosting an afternoon of model railroading skills demonstrations except you may be part of the demonstration. Ken Borowski and Paul Butkowski will be sharing weathering techniques and you may bring your model to practice on. Joe Binish will demonstrate his tricks and techniques for applying water slide decals and you're invited to bring along a model you want to decal and learn at the side of one of our local masters. Finally, Ken and Marilyn Zieska have secured a big supply of scenic supplies from Scenic Express in Delta Colorado to demonstrate "Static Grass" and making shrubs and trees. Again, you can go home with examples you have made yourself and begin your scenery journey. A 10.00 fee will be collected at the door to help cover material costs. All of this excitement will happen at 155 Hardman Ave. S. in S. St. Paul! Bring a folding chair. RSVP [info@tcdnmra.org](mailto:info@tcdnmra.org).

### **Hands on Modeling Checklist**

Here are some things you should bring to the Modeling Skills Clinic:

If you want to weather a freight car, make sure it is dull coated. We will supply many weathering materials but you are welcome to bring along supplies you have and want to experiment with or share your technique. Make sure you bring a container also to transport your finished work home.

We will have car bodies and decals to learn on however, if you want to decal one of your cars make sure it has a glossy finish. We will have sharp modeling knives and scissors, metal straight edges, soft brushes, decal setting and solvent fluids for the demonstration. If you have a favorite “solution” or recalling tools you want to show us, bring them with you. Remember if you are going to do decal work, you should have a safe way to transport your model home. For scenery demonstrations, we will have many supplies but if you have found some great techniques or tools you would like to share, bring them along. Bring a large bag to take your work home with you so nothing gets ruined in transportation. Come have fun, learn and share your modeling ideas.

### TUESDAY NOVEMBER 14 TCD MONTHLY MEETING

This month, the Twin Cities Division meeting will be held at the Union 32 Craft House, 2864 Hwy 55, Eagan, MN 55121. The Division has been moving our monthly meetings to make it more convenient for members to gather near their homes. November will see us in Eagan where we will gather about 6:00 for social, dinner and if you like, to sample one of the 155 craft brews on tap. After a short meeting, Mike Engler will let us in on plans to bring the National Narrow Gauge Convention to the Twin Cities in 2026 including volunteer opportunities. Then, we will look at prototype and modeling scenes to discuss small details that make a scene, discuss how to recreate them and plan future clinic demonstrations we would like to see techniques to create unique scenes. We call this honing our “modelers eye”.

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 9TH TCD HOLIDAY SOCIAL

This is another of the new and exciting ideas we have for TCD members. Dave Jasper has invited us to meet at the Model Railway Institute & Museum 1515 South 5th Street in Hopkins. This building is right across from the second Hopkins Station on the infamous light rail. If you want to ride the light rail to the meeting, you will be very late but it is easily accessible via automobile via 11th Ave. This will be a fun social event, suitable for your spouse or friends to attend with you. We will have snacks and beverages available. We will celebrate TCD milestones, recognize long time NMRA members and finish the afternoon with a presentation from Dave Jasper on his Sail and Rail journey

from New York to China across Europe and Russia. Dan Dossa and Jimmy Anderson are our TCD hosts.

### JANUARY 11 AND FEBRUARY 8 ZOOM MEETINGS

We found that many of our members did not like traveling about on cold winter nights to attend meetings. For January and February, we will conduct our meetings via zoom. However, if you are hardy and like to get out and brave the elements, we are looking for a hospitable space with strong internet. Each zoom will have a short information meeting time and then a modeling program.

### FEBRUARY 24TH TWIN CITIES DIVISION OPERATIONS RETREAT

This will be our third TCD Operations event. The Division has helped over 35 TCD members get into the operations scene. Not only have all the participants expressed their enjoyment with the event but additional layout owners have requested to be hosts for this year. This is a great opportunity to try your hands at operations, meet other TCD members who share that interest and experience great operations on local railroads. With the increase in layouts available, we will be able to host more operators. Greg Dahl is heading up this event and registration will open up January 1, 2024.

### MARCH 14TH TCD MONTHLY MEETING PERKINS BLOOMINGTON

Yes, this is PI day and where better to hold our meeting than at the Perkins in Bloomington. Come for a great dinner and a piece (or two) of your favorite pi then stay for a fun presentation.

### MARCH 16TH ANNUAL TCD MODELERS MEET

Joe Binish is organizing the Annual Modelers Meet. This is a great event where area modelers show off their models and share their modeling techniques. Joe is already lining up clinics including operating, railroad history and realistic trackwork. Joe has several spots open if you want to share. Contact Joe through [info@tcdnmra.org](mailto:info@tcdnmra.org). We have a great supply of tables and at least one fun little operating display so you can grab a throttle. More information will follow in our next update on the TCD Live Friday Shows, on Facebook and the TLR Füsse.

### APRIL 11 TCD MONTHLY MEETING PARK TAVERN, ST. LOUIS PARK

We are returning to one of our popular meeting spots for the April meeting. The food is great, we will enjoy a fun presentation and get information on the address' for the April layout Tours.

### APRIL TCD SPRING LAYOUT TOUR NE AND SW METRO AREA

The Twin Cities Division will visit more great model railroad over two weekends in April. Rich Remariz is organizing the NE railroads and we are looking for an organizer for the SW. This tour will be south of Crosstown and west of 35W. Interested in helping out? [info@tcdnmra.org](mailto:info@tcdnmra.org)

### MAY 7 TCD ANNUAL MEETING

Come join us for a fun recap of the modeling year's activities and help plan for the next season. We will be electing two board positions and signing up volunteers to help run the Division.

### MAY 16-20 2024 The SAWDUST CITY HAULER THOUSAND LAKES REGION CONVENTION

The Thousand Lakes Region stretches from the North Pole to Northern Iowa and from the Montana boarder to Eau Claire Wisconsin! Next May, we are traveling to Eau Claire for a great weekend of Model Railroad fun and adventure. The Convention Committee is planning a great convention full of activities and fellowship. Entries for the Celebration Room will be accepted beginning Thursday afternoon. Clinics begin that evening. Friday there will be morning clinics and then we travel to Durand Wisconsin to ride with the Chippewa Motor Car Association on the old Milwaukee Railroad main. Saturday will be more clinics a ride behind live steam at Carson Park then back to the hotel for happy hour and a banquet. Sunday morning will be the ever popular TLR Annual Meeting then layout tours on the way home. The Sleep Inn and Conference Center/29 Pines Restaurant will be our home base. The hotel is offering a special rate of 85.00 per night for TLR guests. Registration materials will be in the next Füsse as well as Hotel Registration codes.

### AUGUST 4-11 SURFLINER CONVENTION NMRA NATIONAL LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

There is nothing quite like an NMRA National to connect with model railroading friends across the world. Check out the convention webpage link on the [NMRA.ORG](http://NMRA.ORG) website.

Connect with us on Facebook, on the NMRA Discord site the NMRA Interchange and TCDNMRA MEDIA YouTube.

Check with your friends,. If they didn't receive the update, we need to update their email. Help us and them. Contact with us at [info@tcdnmra.org](mailto:info@tcdnmra.org).

Other fun Model Railroad Dates in the Region.

**November 11**

Minnesota FreeMo opens in Store Display at the Burnsville mall.  
Layout will be open during Mall Hours.

**November 11**

Granite City Train Show 9:00 - 3:00  
River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud

**November 18**

Greater Upper Midwest Train Show 9:00 - 2:00  
Century College

**November 18**

FreeMoN Layout Open House 10:00 - 4:00  
400 10th St  
Waconia, Mn (door faces water tower)

**NOVEMBER 18- 19**

Trains at Christmas, Dakota SE Division  
Expo Building, Sioux Falls SD ([dakotasoutheastern.org](http://dakotasoutheastern.org))

**November 19**

Hennepin Overland Open House and Operations 1:00 - 4:00  
2501 E 38th St, Minneapolis, MN 55406

**December 2**

North Metro Model RR Club Train Show and Open House  
1919 Coon Rapids Blvd. Coon Rapids

**December 17**

North Metro Operations Day