

# NMRA BULLETIN

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## ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

**NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT**  
\*Indicates first Certificate of Achievement  
**AUGUST 2010**  
**GOLDEN SPIKE**  
**Lone Star Region**  
Thomas White IV, Houghton, Louisiana

**Mid-Continent Region**  
Jim Zeren, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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William E. Carey, Xenia, Ohio

**Mid-Eastern Region**  
John Fallon, Portsmouth, Virginia

**Midwest Region**  
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Daniel Blau, Waukesha, Wisconsin  
Donald Czerniejewski, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
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John A. Kosma, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
David Lee, Indianapolis, Indianapolis  
Gary Lester, New Lisbon, Wisconsin  
Robert Schiavone, Carol Stream, Illinois  
Keith Schmidt, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Roberet Smoczyaski, Muskego, Wisconsin  
Roman Urbanski, Oakwood Hills, Illinois

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Michael A. Orlando, Paw Paw, Michigan  
Don Stokes, Battle Creek, Michigan

**Northeastern Region**  
Matthew Rorke, West Babylon, New York

**Niagara Frontier Region**  
Nick Masney, Dorchester, Ontario

**Pacific Northwest Region**  
Bill Barker, Hamilton, Montana  
Rider Cheyne, Williams Lake, BC  
William Messecar, Covington, Washington  
John Nash, Corvallis, Montana  
Bill Taylor, Missoula, Montana

**Southeastern Region**  
Milton Burge, Snellville, Georgia  
Thomas Roskelly, Murphy, North Carolina  
Pete Silcox, Kennesaw, Georgia

**Thousand Lakes Region**  
Dick Christianson, Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
Janelle R. Hinrichs, Elk Mound, Wisconsin

**MASTER BUILDER — CARS**  
**Lone Star Region**

Steve Blackson, Austin, Texas

**Mid-Continent Region**  
Brad Morneau, Overland Park, Kansas  
Vance Reed, Lee's Summit, Missouri

**Niagara Frontier Region**  
John Brown, Waubaushe, Ontario

**MASTER BUILDER — STRUCTURES**  
**Mid-Continent Region**  
Sheldon Levy, Lexexa, Kansas  
Nelson Moyer, Iowa City, Iowa

**MASTER BUILDER — SCENERY**  
**Mid-Continent Region**  
Sheldon Levy, Lexexa, Kansas

**Mid-Central Region**  
Ron Blessing, Charleston, West Virginia  
Dave Stout, Parkersburg, West Virginia

**MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — CIVIL**  
**Mid-Central Region**  
Larry K. Smith, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky

**Northeastern Region**  
Vincent Gallogly, Trumbull, Connecticut

**MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER — ELECTRICAL**  
**Mid-Central Region**  
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Larry K. Smith, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky



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**Mid-Eastern Region**  
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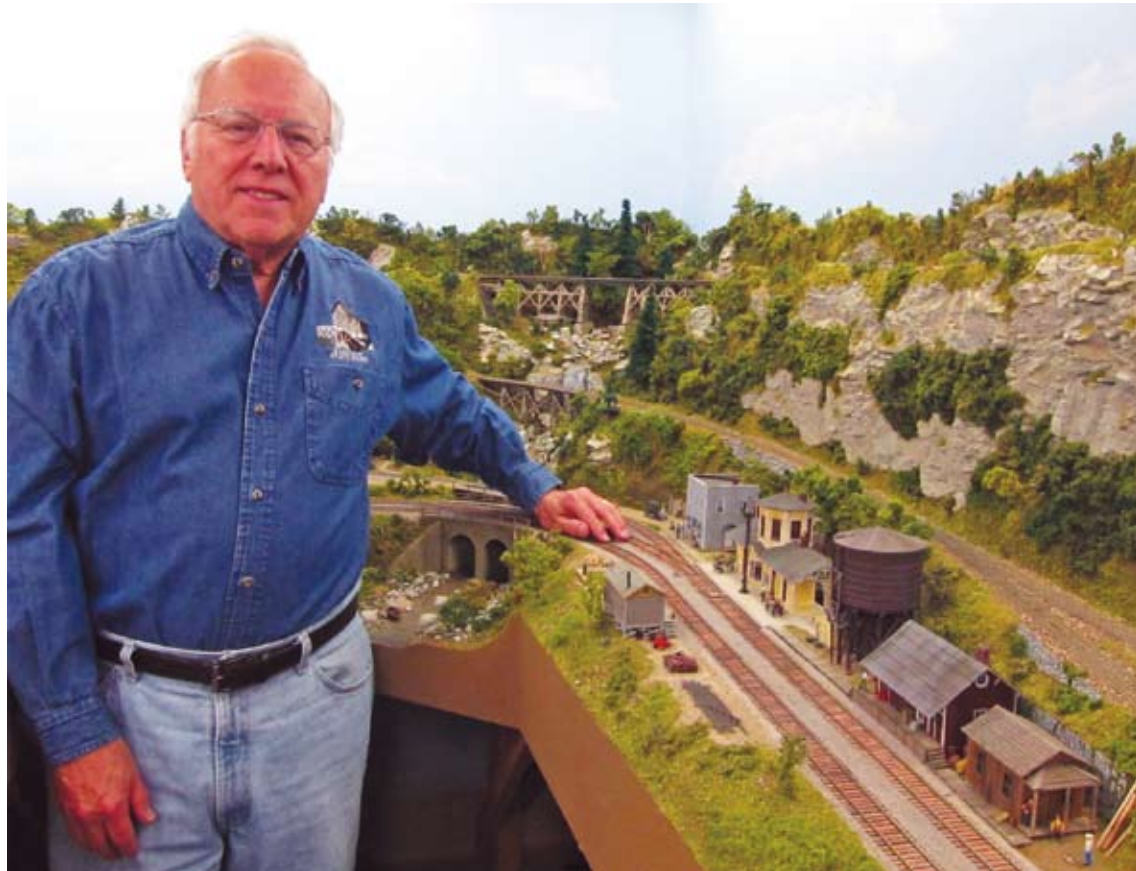
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Christopher Stickney, Virginia Beach, Virginia

**MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR**  
**Pacific Coast Region**  
Mark Schutzer, Redwood City, California

**MMR GROUP:** All MMRs are invited to work with other MMRs by contacting Rick Shoup, MMR, at ricshoup@verizon.net. If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Frank Koch at fjkoch@hotmail.com. If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Dr., Batavia, OH 45103.





RON LANE EARNS MMR # 447

I was introduced to trains at a very early age, while living near the Erie Railroad in Wellsville, New York, in the late 1930s. An entry in my mother's diary when I was two years old states: "After his nap, we went up to see the train come and leave." And, the Christmas after I turned three, an entry reads, "Claude (my father) put Ronald's train tracks onto a board..." Although I do not remember these two, and several other, duly recorded events, these early childhood experiences must have started me on the path of a lifelong passion for trains and model railroading.

As a teenager, I enjoyed my American Flyer "Royal Blue" train set, with cardboard buildings and green grass colored on scrap plywood. This was dismantled when I entered Cornell in 1954 to pursue engineering. To satisfy some required Arts credits, I selected a course in American Folklore. Much of each class was spent singing folk-music, including many railroad folksongs. Instructor Peter Yarrow led us, just before he formed the folk trio, Peter, Paul, and Mary! This kindled my interest in both folk and bluegrass music.

After graduation, marriage, and a move to Alliance, Ohio, I spent several years researching railroad folkmusic, including many Chesapeake & Ohio wreck songs. Also, in early 1961 I bought a booklet, "Complete Guidebook to Model Railroading" by David Sutton. That did it! Orders to AHM and E&H Hobbies, visits to Blums in Cleveland, and subscriptions to *MR* and *RMC* got me started, and on May 27, 1961, I sent in \$3.00 dues to join the NMRA. The NMRA headquarters was in Canton, Ohio, and manager Bob Bast was in our local Division of the Mid-Central Region. Also, the Achievement Program was adopted at the 1961 NMRA convention in Cleveland.

Our Division held monthly model contests, and awarded a plaque to the person earning the most points in a calendar year. This, and the emerging love of scratch-building, led me to enter Divisional and Regional contests. After winning several awards, Bob Bast encouraged me to consider the brand new Achievement Program, and I received my first certificate, Master Builder—Structures in August 1962, followed by Master Builder—Cars in June 1964. I was "on my way."

My wife, Peggy, and I, and three very young daughters moved to Ann Arbor in August 1964, where I earned an MSME degree from the University of Michigan, then joined Cummins Engine Company in Columbus, Indiana, in January 1966. Resuming my folkmusic research, I focused on the C&O through the New River Gorge in West Virginia, and made the decision to model this area in HO scale. I became a charter member of the C&O Historical Society in 1969, and wrote a series of 22 articles for our newsletter on *Folksongs of the C&O*. Meanwhile, we purchased our first (and only) home in 1968, and I completed handlaying a dogbone loop of track in 1973.

By that time, one particular C&O folksong, "The Wreck on the C&O", had been recorded by Joan Baez, Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs, and several other contemporary folk and bluegrass artists. A specific reference in one variant of the song led me to discover the narrow gauge Mann's Creek Railway, which ran from the C&O at Sewell in the New River Gorge nine miles "up the mountain" to coal mines at Clifftop from 1886 to 1955. With beehive coke ovens at Sewell, and a large logging/lumber operation on the mountain, I had found my prototype railroad to model! There followed 20 years of research, with 25 on-site visits to Mann's Creek territory, 216 personal interviews, and collecting over 1,000 photographs as a combined effort with fellow modeler Ted Schnepf — a long period where little modeling was done.

Following my retirement from Cummins at the end of 1995, we agreed to finally write a book based on our years of research, and *West Virginia Narrow Gauge—Mann's Creek Railway* was published in 1999. This book, along with several articles, allowed me to receive my third AP certificate, Model Railroad Author, in 2001. It was now time to concentrate on my model

railroad, which had "barely advanced" in those 26 years between 1973 and 1999.

Keeping in mind the various AP requirements, I completed my trackwork, wired the layout, and have scenicked most of it. Several of the structures built in the early 1960s for contests are on the layout, including a coal mine complex that won first place-displays at the 1966 Cincinnati National Convention. Since "finding" the Mann's Creek Railway, my goal has been to closely replicate various prototype structures and scenes from pictures in our book. After earning the Electrical certificate in 2007, I set my sights on the Civil and Scenery certificates, receiving these in 2009.

I then set myself yet another goal — to achieve MMR status during the tenure of my friend and fellow C&O Historical Society member Mike Brestel as President of the NMRA, and if possible, achieve this in NMRA's 75th year. In our research, we had acquired a specific Mann's Creek Railway prototype photograph that I felt perfect for the seventh certificate, Prototype Models. This modeling was finally completed to my satisfaction, and successfully judged in June 2010.

I wish to especially recognize and thank two of my "cheerleaders" — Larry Smith, MMR 185 and Ron Morse, MMR 159, for their encouragement and advice in completing the requirements for Master Model Railroader. Valuable advice, techniques, and progress were shared over the past several years with Tom Maule, who is also modeling the Mann's Creek Railway in fine detail. And, I was certainly honored to have Francis Hughes, MMR 29, as one of the four judges for the seventh certificate.

I may have earned the dubious distinction of having the longest elapsed time between my first AP certificate and MMR, 48 years, just one year short of the 49-year history of the Achievement Program! An evocative railroad-theme poster with the words "Life is a journey, not a destination" has been taped on my layout room door for many years, and this is certainly true for my "life" long love of trains and model railroading — and, my quest for MMR.

Ron has earned the following certificates: *Master Builder—Structures, Master Builder—Cars, Model Railroad Author, Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical, Model Railroad Engineer—Civil, Master Builder—Scenery, and Master Builder—Prototype Models.*



BRAD SLONE EARNS MMR # 437

I've had an interest in trains as far back as I can remember. My mother still recalls how I would have her set an old wind up steam engine on the floor and watch it light up and run around my crib. As I got a little older and it came time for me to learn to read, my parents use to bribe me by allowing me to purchase model railroading magazines only if I would read the articles and not just look at the photos — tough deal!

My entrance into the world of model railroading began early with my parents purchase of a Tycos Chattanooga choo-choo set for Christmas. Today, I model the St. Louis San Francisco's eastern division during the early 1940s. As one can imagine, model railroading is not a common pastime in rural Missouri, but my grandfather always took me to various shows and museums around the area. I can vividly remember to this day as a youngster grandpa taking me up to the tracks to watch the trains go by most every Friday afternoon. He did everything he could to cultivate my interest of railroading, I think he was a closet railfan/model railroader at heart. It is for this reason that I have to dedicate my MMR to my grandpa, William H. Jones.

Fortunately for me, my love for trains never really faded through my adoles-

cent and college years as it has for many. Throughout my life it would seem as though there has always been a constant of trains. Oh, I've taken spells where I will take a break for a period of time, but never a complete absence from the hobby. The one big change that took place was during college when I decided to change from modeling the late 1970s to modeling the 1940s. A change that was largely brought on by witnessing the St. Louis Steam Association's efforts of running No. 1522 up and down the Frisco's former eastern division. Even though I have changed eras, I've never had a desire to model anything other than my favorite railroad (Frisco) and over my favorite portion the middle of the eastern division. Although it has only been recently that space for a full-size layout has become available, I have been working on building a fleet of rolling stock and motive power to fill a layout. It is my intent to have most of this work complete by the time I start work on a layout.

A friend of mine once said that achieving MMR status was a journey, for myself it ended up being a 15-year long journey. Back then, a non-NMRA member (Dean Smith) told me since I enjoyed building contest models so much why didn't I get involved with the NMRA Achievement Program — that's when it all started. Now that I have acquired my MMR, I'm trying to persuade him that he should do the same! Although



I have taken my time, I have learned a lot and enjoyed the trip a great deal. I would have to say probably the best part has been all the new friends I have made along the way, for that matter I would say that about the hobby as a whole.

Throughout the process I have received a great deal of encouragement from many NMRA members, Ron Williams and Rick McClellan come to mind just to name a few. I must also mention the sacrifice my wife, Gwen, has made during the hours I spent at the workbench preparing for the next contest.

Model railroading is such a wonderful hobby and encompasses so many aspects of other hobbies. What other hobby can you combine so many other hobbies in one: construction of models, the operation of them once they are complete, photography, and history, just to name but a few. The great thing about clubs and organizations such as the NMRA is that if you are not familiar with one aspect you can lean on fellow modelers for the help you need. Or if someone really enjoys the element of the hobby that you don't, sometimes they might even pitch in and help you do it. With the help of modern technology and the knowledge of fellow members within the NMRA there is no reason not to jump on board and enjoy the hobby to it's fullest!

*Brad lives in Dixon Missouri with his wife Gwen. He is employed by the Army Corps of Engineers and is a government certified track inspector. Among his current projects is the replacement of a number of 1940s era timber trestles.*

*Brad has earned the following certificates:*

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