

# Call Board

Volume 61 Issue 5

JANUARY 2021

Superintendent's Report for January, 2021

I'm writing this report just a few days before Christmas, but I know you will not be reading it until after the holidays. I hope everyone had a good holiday season and stayed safe. Hopefully things will return to a more normal status and we can all resume to in-person meetings and train shows in this New Year. One of the few upsides to all this has been I've completed more in the basement in the past several months than I've ever done in the same amount of time.

There are a couple of big changes for the Division starting in the New Year. First, The Callboard is going electronic. I went over the changes in the Dec. Callboard, but briefly here are a few benefits. One, the Callboard should be coming out in a timelier manner. It will also cost the Division less, and I understand color will now be possible. Most of the rest of the divisions our Region sent their newsletters out electronically.

Second, the contest schedule will now align with the calendar year. In the past, the Jan. contest was the last contest of the year. Now, this month's contest will be the first and the yearlong contest will end in December.

New MCR Board of Directors officers were elected by acclamation because there were only single candidates for each position. Starting in May 2021 Dave Neff will become President, Jerry Doyle will be Vice- President, Fred Soward will be Secretary, and John Shields will be the Treasurer.

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## **Virtual Contest**

The virtual contest for January is Structures.

Deadline for entries is 12 noon, Sunday, January 10, 2021.

Deadline for voting is 12 midnight, Friday, January 15, 2021.

All entries will be emailed to the Webmaster. (Webmaster@modelraildayton.com) The date/time stamp of the webmaster's email will determine if the entry was received in time. The deadline for voting will be 12 midnight (EDT) the Friday before the general meeting. All votes will be emailed to the Webmaster. (Webmaster@modelraildayton.com) The date/time stamp of the webmaster's email will determine if the vote was received in time.

**Entries will be displayed on the Division 3 website.**

**Division 3 Website: [www.modelraildayton.com](http://www.modelraildayton.com)**

## Contests

We have three categories each month. You can enter Scratch Built, Kit Bashed, or just plain Kit built. This allows anyone to enter anything they are proud of and at any skill level. Judging is by popular vote but if you wish to have your model judged by NMRA rules for the Achievement Program, we will make arrangements for you “on the spot”

### The coming contest schedule ...

#### January - Open Loads

January - Open Loads

February - Non-Revenue Cars

March - Freight Cars

April - Passenger Cars

May - Diesel Locomotives

June - Steam Locomotives

July - No Contest

August -

September - Make it cheap (1-3-5 Dollar)

October - Caboose

November - Weathering

December - Structures.

### December - Structures

#### MODEL

Kit

First Place Mark Stiver

KitBashed

First Place Eric Zimmerman

Gordon Carlson

Third Place Wil Davis

ScratchBuilt

First Place Chris Stilson

#### PHOTO

First Place Dana Yarnall

REMINDER: Change to the monthly contest. Starting in January we are starting a new year for the contest cycle. January’s contest category is Open Loads. The Auction has been moved to July, and February’s contest will be Non-Revenue. See the new schedule on the web site.

SECOND REMINDER: Please take the time to review and vote for the contest applicants and get involved in the contest. Keep in mind that during the pandemic, pictures are the the way to enter and you do not have build a new entry, but you can enter a prized model instead. But, VOTE - Virtual pictures are due the Sunday before the meeting and the votes must be cast by Friday at 1200. We need everyone’s support.

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I also want to pass on a few bits of info I got from other division newsletters. If you are looking to buy or sell HO train items, you may want to look at the following site - <https://groups.10/g/HOswap> I don’t know how well it works, I just went to the site to see if it exists. Apparently it only deals in HO, maybe there is something similar for other scales.

Also, if you go on YouTube, there is a series called “New Track Meetup” that has interviews with various modelers. It’s not unlike the NMREx programs. Some may be of more interest to you than others, but each can decide for themselves. I know I’ve be surprised with how much model railroading content there is online. I am careful, otherwise I'll spend too much time on the computer and not at the workbench.

Don’t forget the Jan. contest, it’s open loads. And don’t forget the Zoom meeting. Gail makes it really easy.

Mark Stiver, Supt., Div. 3

First Place - Kit

Mark Stiver



First Place - Kit Bashed

Eric Zimmerman



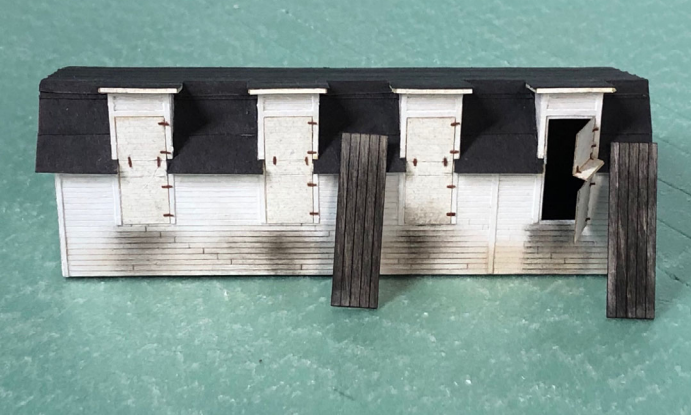
First Place - Kit Bashed

Gordon Carlson



Third Place - Kit Bashed

Wil Davis



First Place - Scratch-built

Chris Stilson



First Place - Photo

Dana Yarnall



## **A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE CALL BOARD**

Welcome to the first month of our e-Call Board. Remember that if you want to receive the Call Board by email, we need your email address. Also remember that if you want a printed copy, you can print it yourself on your printer. To get your email address to us, email [NMRA.Div.@gmail.com](mailto:NMRA.Div.@gmail.com) or you can call us at 937-301-0746 and leave a message.

One of the great opportunities we have by doing the e-Call Board is color pictures. The printed Call Board will still have black and white pictures, but you may submit color pictures to the Call Board and they will be color in the e-Call Board. Another advantage is our space is not limited. There is room for more in-depth articles and illustrations. Finally, you have the advantage of taking the Call Board with you. You can read it when you are waiting for an appointment or any time you are out using a tablet or phone. Note that it will be easier to read if you use the landscape option of the phone.

For those who do not have email, the Callboard will remain unchanged. Thanks to J's hard work we have an exceptional newsletter that is now flexible between printed version and e-version. If you have any questions, please feel free to email us at [NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com](mailto:NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com). Happy New Year!!!

## **OUR ZOOM MEETINGS INTO 2021—JOIN US!!!**

Our Zoom meetings have been very successful. There are many advantages to meeting by Zoom. For example:

- You can attend in casual clothing (I won't suggest pj's but it could happen), however bear in mind this is NOT clothing optional.
- You can attend even if you don't have a camera or microphone. Attendance can be by phone, tablet or computer. Both the camera and mic are sold to be added to your computer independently but if you don't have them, you can see the whole meeting and comment using the Zoom Chat. One of us will see your chat messages and read them to the group unless you designate them as private. You can choose whether the Chat is for the whole group or private, and you can make a different choice for each message.
- It allows us to bring in speakers from all over the county and even from all over the world. The options are unlimited. There is no transportation cost or hotel cost for those who are out of our area. We can have home bound speakers as well. So, start looking at all kinds of speakers and contact Mike Mereness if you find a possible topic.
- Show and Tell. If you would like to show the group your layout, and talk about your experience, we have the ability to do that. Note that this does have to be arranged in advance. And it can be done without a bunch of people wandering through your house and without having to provide refreshments or cleaning for company.
- More flexible clinics. Zoom gives you the option to do a clinic from your home where all the proper tools are already set up and where you have everything you need. It means you don't have to pack everything up and transport it all to another site. That helps when you are showing how to build something, or even showing new tools and tricks to model RR building. The scope of this option is huge. The clinic can be live, can use Powerpoint, or can be recorded.
- Ability to do a dry-run. I always offer clinicians and members the opportunity to do a dry run. This is especially helpful for those not familiar with Zoom, those who want to test out our Zoom con-

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nection or those doing a clinic on Zoom for the first time. All you need is a phone and your computer. Check with me for computer requirements. We schedule a personal meeting—generally just the person requesting the dry-run and myself, although there could be more people. Then I walk you through the process. If we hit a bump, we may learn something new together. So far, the dry-runs have helped both members and clinicians.

- Renewing friendships. For me the best part of Zoom is being able to see my friends. We always allow time before and after the meeting for people to talk. I am working on the ability to do break out groups so that after the meeting you and some of your Div 3 friends can have your own room to talk trains, family or whatever. The only restriction so far is I must know ahead of time that you want this option and for how long. I will announce when this option is available.
- Easier for guests to attend and experience our meeting. We welcome guests who would like to have some experience with our group and this is a safe, friendly way to do it. They don't have to travel to a strange place and meeting with strange people (some of us are stranger than others). From the comfort of their home, they can find out who we are and what we are about. I hope that this option will encourage visitors to become members.

There are many more advantages to Zoom. It's easy to use and we can meet together during this difficult time. The BOG has decided to keep Zoom after social distancing and group restrictions are over. The advantages of obvious for travelers, those who work on Sunday but could make it to the meeting if they could do it from home, those who are home bound and those who live too far away to travel to the meeting. If you have any questions about our Zoom meetings, feel free to contact me. You can email me at [NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com](mailto:NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com) or call at 937-301-0746 and leave a message. Gail

## **WHAT ARE YOU DOING 'AT HOME?' SHARE ON OUR FACEBOOK GROUP**

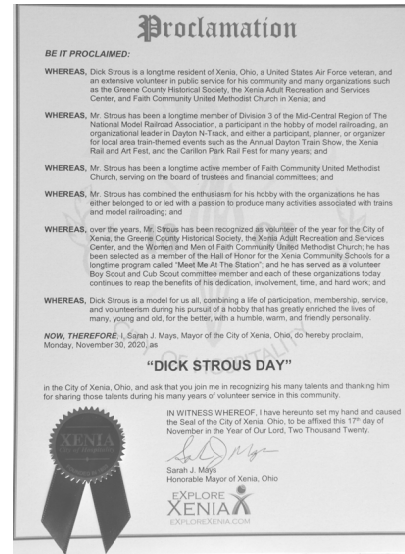
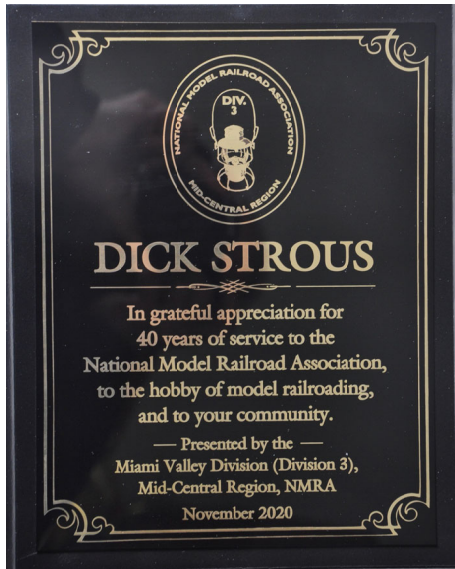
We have had some wonderful posts on our Div 3 Facebook group, **NMRA Miami Valley Division 3 At Home**. If you have not posted your Model Railroad or Prototype Railroad ideas and activities, please do. You can post videos or links, photos, and other information. Please only post items that are either original to you or that are authorized to be shared ("Share on the Facebook item indicates it can be shared, or check with the originator). And take some time to look at the previous posts. There are some very interesting posts from our members and friends. Just go to Facebook and search **NMRA Miami Valley Division 3 At Home**. If you have questions, email to [NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com](mailto:NMRA.Div.3@gmail.com) or call 937-301-0746 and leave a message.

## **DIVISION 3, MID CENTRAL REGION, HONORS DICK STROUS**

On November 21, 2020 Division 3, MCR (the Miami Valley Division) honored long time NMRA and Division 3 member Dick Strous with a plaque for over 40 years of service to his local community, the hobby of model railroading, and to Division 3 and the NMRA. Dick has combined his love of model trains with a lifetime of volunteering. Over the years, he has been honored as the Volunteer of the Year for the City of Xenia, OH, the Greene County Historical Society, the Xenia Adult Recreation and Services Center, and the Men and the Women of the Faith Community United Methodist Church in Xenia. He has also been selected as a member of the Hall of Honor in the Xenia Community School System for a program called "Meet Me at the Station" in which he taught the railroad heritage of Xenia to over 4000 children over a 14 year span. The Mayor Sarah Mays of Xenia read a proclamation and declared November 30, 2020 as Dick Strous Day in Xenia, Ohio for his enthusiasm in combining his love of trains and model railroading with his love of his community. Dick has

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also taken Dayton N-Track to various train shows and events over the years, including our own Dayton Train Show. Dick was cited for his work by Bob Weinheimer, President of the Mid Central Region, Alex Heckman, Vice President of Dayton History and Carillon Park, and Pastor Andy Wagner, Pastor of the Faith Community United Methodist Church in Xenia. This special presentation was conducted on Zoom in a separate ceremony hosted by Division 3 and emceed by Mark Stiver, Superintendent of Division 3 and attended by nearly 40 people virtually. Congratulations to Dick Strous.



Graphics for Model Builders (Part 1)  
Doug Campbell  
2020

When I did workshops for church newsletter editors, I had a spiel about directing eyeballs. It was stuff I had learned in my courses, reading and experience: Capture the readers' eyes with a focal point, then direct them to a headline or title, then lead them into a text – and keep the eyeballs moving forward by using the active voice, especially in lead sentences. (To use the passive voice is to cast eyeballs back to the beginning of the sentence.)

All really gripping stuff; but essential.

It occurred to me as I constructed my latest display, “Gnaw Bone Junction”, that model building, too, is an exercise in directing eyeballs.

Ours is a three dimensional medium; and not a static one. Anything moving is automatically a focal point – it's that hunter-prey thing baked into our psyches. Model railroad pioneer Frank Ellison was spot-on likening the model railroad to theater, where the trains are the actors and the layout the stage.

In model railroading these moving parts are more concentrated than in real life. Unless one is doing an “Our Town” railroad (no scenery except a couple of step ladders) our eyeballs stay busy. None-the-less, scenery and setting play a vital role in playing up the “actors” to best advantage.

Back to Gnaw Bone Junction...

Four feet by four feet is a very small area and if one does not exercise care, it will seem as small as it really is. (In HO, 350 feet square – smaller than a city block.) Much has been written over the decades about “selective compression”, “forced perspective” and other *tromp l'oeil* modelers use.

Some other “tricks” might be defined that we will find useful. Some of them we do, I think, by instinct; others would help us create models and scenes that will seem much larger and cohesive than the meager areas

we are forced to assign them.

## Asymmetry and “dynamic balance”

Nothing occurring in nature is perfectly symmetrical. Even human faces are different left to right. What nature does is “balance”. Balance is also what, for instance, the old Speedball Pen Point books used to instruct us to achieve on posters, showcards and ads.

Rather than balancing one element with an identical one on the other side of a centerline, offset a large element on one side with several smaller ones, equal in “mass”, on the other. The larger item is the focal point and leads the eyes to the smaller, offsetting items.

Since we work in three dimensions instead of two, this can be a bit dicey; but, notice how in reality the more interesting scenes have a major item of interest as a focal point, and smaller, but asymmetrical elements that balance the scene. Think a large hotel or store on a corner and a string of smaller shops stretching out toward the opposite corner. Two structures of the same size would compete for attention.

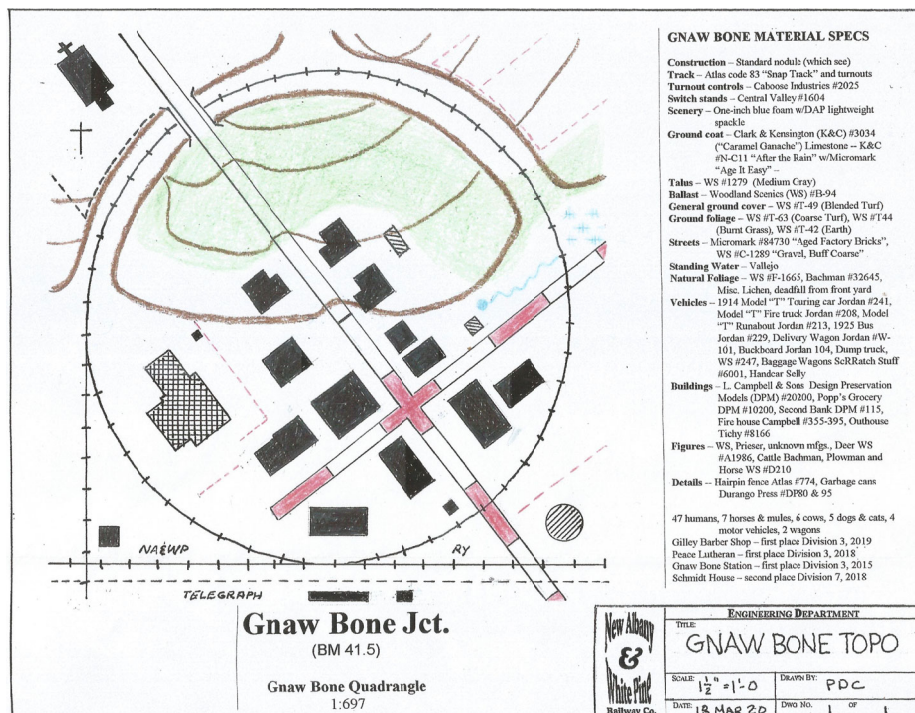
## Lines of sight

Nothing is more impressive than a long stretch of tangent track; but how many of us have the luxury of that kind of space? No, to create the feeling of distance, as well as by physical necessity, we introduce curves that would be anathema to any civil engineer. We have learned the same lesson as 18<sup>th</sup> century park and cemetery designers: Meandering drives and paths enhance the illusion of expansiveness.

None-the-less straight lines can work to our advantage. Take the small, square or 4-by-8 layout. The temptation might be to run roads or streets at right angles to the sides or parallel to the tracks. For short distances this might be necessary or desirable. Mostly it’s better to run roads, long lines of structures, etc. at angles to both the track and the edges of the layout.

On the Gnow Bone piece, there is one street/road that traverses the layout. It is straight, but at an angle to the edges, making it 450 feet long (62”) rather than 350 (48”). It helps that it runs uphill.

Other straight lines are placed to draw the eyes into the scene and then stop them.



<b>Board of Governors</b>	<h1>Points of Contact</h1>					
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**Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors usually meets the first Monday of the month to conduct the business of the Division. Meetings will be conducted online until further notice. Any member may attend and participate in the meeting. Please contact a board member to verify date and time.

**Next Crew Call**

<b>When:</b>	<b>JANUARY 17, 2pm</b>
<b>Where:</b>	<b>Zoom</b>
<b>Program:</b>	<b>Kit bashing and Scratch building Narrow Gauge Locomotives by Phil Gliebe</b>
<b>Contest:</b>	<b>Open Loads</b>

**Visitors and Guests Always Welcome**