



THE WINNEBAGOLAND WHISTLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WINNEBAGOLAND DIVISION
MIDWEST REGION – NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 50, ISSUE No. 2

SUMMER 2017

“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.” — Will Rogers

COVER PHOTO:

At the WLD Spring Meet in Plymouth, Superintendent John Leow presents Greg Condon with the 2017 annual Jerry Nichols award for meritorious service in the Division.

Thank you Greg for your contributions over the years and congratulations!

Read more about the Spring Meet inside, including model contest award winners.

Photo by John Leow.



IN THIS ISSUE:

Editor's Note	2
Spring Meet Model Contest	3-4
Whistle 1969	5-7
Whistle 1977	8-11
WLD Fall Op Session	12-13
On the Ready Track	14

Superintendent's Report

By John Leow

Well, I think summer might have actually arrived here in the UP. We've had a cool and rainy spring, but recently the weather has started to warm up and the sun has come out - although as I write this the thermometer reads 59 degrees.

Aahhh, summer – the season when model railroading hibernates..... or does it? This spring I had the opportunity to spend some time in the Copper Country to help with the cosmetic restoration of Quincy and Torch Lake #6, and it got me to thinking about prototype railroads. It was really enlightening to be able to get up-close-and-personal with a real (albeit cold) steam locomotive. Although #6 is the largest narrow-gauge locomotive to run in the Keweenaw, it is still small in comparison to its larger standard gauge cousins. That said, the parts are still massive and heavy. Being a member of the Quincy shop crew must have been a challenge in the best of times, and a nightmare at others. They were a very resourceful bunch.

Working on the real thing got me thinking about modelling the prototype. Some modelers strive to recreate their chosen prototype as closely as possible, while others are perfectly happy to run streamlined passenger cars behind an antique 4-4-0. Even the rivet counters are forced into some compromises, however. For example, although the Q&TL was only six miles long it still requires considerable compression to fit in an average layout room. (Six miles translates to over 350 feet in HO scale!) So reasonable expectations and some judicious editing are needed if the prototype is to be reproduced faithfully.

(Continued on page 2)



Superintendent's Report

(Continued from page 1)

To me, the goal is to produce a railroad that seems plausible. Picking an era and location are key, as they determine the type of equipment, industries, and scenery that the modeler needs to reproduce in miniature. We must resist the urge to include certain elements that we find pleasing, but don't fit our scheme. Everyone likes the drama of a high wooden trestle, but it might not be appropriate in Florida; likewise, an orange grove wouldn't be appropriate in Wisconsin. The railroads I find most pleasing are the ones that have equipment, industries, and terrain that support the scheme of the railroad.

But getting back to summer, and the question of whether modelling really hibernates for six months. There are a lot of ways to work on your modeling, without doing any modeling. We're all outside a lot more in the summer, and travel increases with vacation trips, camping, and other activities. Try to keep an eye out for modeling ideas as you travel – maybe a small building or industry. We recently ran into a small grain elevator operation in our travels that I photographed for a friend. Or just check out the scenery with a modeler's eye – what color and shape are the trees, really? How do they grow – singly, or in bunches? What about the underbrush? I find dead trees are really interesting. Notice the rock cuts along the road, and the color of the rocks. How does the vegetation grow on them? I'm always amazed at what grows out of a rock. What about debris at the base? On more modern cuts, the marks from the drills can still be seen, spaced evenly along the rock face. I don't think I've ever seen that modeled.

In the end, though, it really all comes down to modeling what pleases us, so go ahead and run those streamliners behind a 4-4-0 if it makes you happy. But if something just doesn't feel right, take a look at your railroad and see if there are just too many anachronisms for your comfort level.

Here's wishing you all a great summer. See you at the beach!

Editor's Note

By Todd M. Bushmaker

This issue continues to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Whistle by diving into the archives for past examples (thanks again to SLHTS for sharing their archives). Inside you'll find pages from 1969 after a first year of experimenting, and again in 1977 after ten years. Next issue we'll explore 1987 and 1997.

From a publisher's standpoint, I am grateful to be in the age where computers and software has made putting this together extremely simple, and when the internet has made distribution easy and essentially free. Looking back I don't envy the early editors who used typewriters for their text and had to "paste up" each page with homemade artwork. At least Xerox had been producing copy machines by then so they didn't have to go the newspaper route with typesetting on a press. That's not even to mention the effort put into maintaining a mailing list, buying stamps and sending the Whistle out thru the USPS.

But the back issues don't tell the whole story, only a snippet of what was going on at any given time. Dozens of editors and contributors over the years added their own color to the black-and-white pages, and that is something we've been somewhat lacking in recent times. This vast Division is full of talented modelers so let's hear from you! We'd love to hear what parts of the hobby interest you, see examples of great modeling, organized wiring and controls, or your experiences with operations.

Since we last chatted, the WLD had its Spring Meet in Plymouth and the model contest results are elsewhere in this issue. Also the WLD participated once again at TTS, with an auction of the N-scale layout we've been hanging onto for a while, a scenery demonstration on our new John-Leow-built diorama, and the introduction of some new promotional banners. And the Waupaca Area Model Railroaders hosted their annual model train show at Strawberry Fest with two gyms packed full.

Enjoy your summer; as John notes in his column you can integrate your hobby into the other activities we share over these short months, even as some of you continue to work on your basement pikes using respite from the heat and humidity as an excuse. We'll pick things back up in a few months with the Fall Meet and Fall Operating Session!

Until next time, *keep on trainin'!*
- Todd (tbushmaker@sbcglobal.net)



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Sheboygan, WI 53081
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E-bay e-store: [Marks Model Railservices](http://MarksModelRailservices.com)
Website: www.marksmodelrailroading.com

WLD Spring Meet Model Contest

By Dave Allen



Plymouth Arts Center, May 6th:

It was a good (but small) show - four models by three participants. But they were good models, all at the merit level. And there were four entries in the Model Display category.

MODEL CONTEST participants were: Rich Cooke; John Leow; and Emory Leubke. MODEL DISPLAY participants were: David Allen; John Leow; and Paul Leow.

RESULTS:

RICHARD EGGERT BEST-OF-SHOW (POINTS)

1st Place, Steam Loco

WR&N 46 2-8-2 Locomotive by Emory Leubke, 99 points.

DON STEFFEN BEST-OF-SHOW (POPULAR VOTE)

1st Place Freight Cars

B&O 23002 3-tub "P48" Hopper by Rich Cooke, 90 points



1st Place Non-Revenue Cars

Westside / Q&TL "HOn3" Snow Plow by John Leow, 92 Points

1st Place Structures

CN Scale House "O" by Rich Cooke, 91 Points



(Continued on page 4)

WLD Spring Meet Model Contest

...continued



(Continued from page 3)

COMMENTS:

There was plenty to look at. The contest had very good average quality with all four models being above the merit award cutoff level of 87.5 points. And there was something to learn from the four models. Obviously, skilled craftsmanship counts. The locomotive was quite accessible - Mantua running gear, Cary boiler, Bowser tender. And a slew of detail parts, many that Emory made himself. Rich's wife Laurie suggested that he should leave the hopper car unpainted and he did and only got but a few points for Finish and Lettering. But the only purchased parts were two wheel sets, the car was fully detailed, and the construction difficulties were so obvious. And the scale house had a lit up fully detailed interior. All models had category weaknesses countered by strengths in other area.

A final note - only a Contest Entry Form is needed for Popular Vote and for Model Showcase entries. Show off your models! Get something ready for the Model Contest in Sheboygan in the fall of 2017.

Until next time -- be well. Dave A.

All four were above the Merit Award level cutoff of 87.5 points. Models were judged by: David Allen

Model Display had two models by Dave Allen (GR&I 3612 XL boxcar and SPLA&SL 28015 S-40-1 stock car), two by Paul Leow (BR passenger cars) and two entries by John Leow (a flock of four sheds and a herd of four vehicles).



The Whistle at Fifty: 1969

So I picked 1969 looking back this time, to see how the *Whistle* would start gaining traction after one year. Then 1977 for the tenth anniversary. But first, the year of the moon landing and Woodstock! *Scans courtesy of SLHTS.*

8
It's too late for this year, but for those of you with budding engineers in the family, the Railway Clerks Magazine offered plans for building "Old #999". It's a sturdy, colorful, easy-to-build locomotive with drive rod attached to the wheels that slides back and forth realistically in the cylinder. The littlest engineer can steer it with ease and the track ahead is kept clear for the engine with a bell mounted just ahead of the cab. Detail it as much or as little as you want with your time and imagination the limit. The cost is small and just imagine the joy when your children or grandchildren are allowed to run their own engine. We all know how time flies, so perhaps now would be the best time to order the plans from: Steve Ellingson, Railway Clerks Pattern Dept P.O. Box 2383, Van Nuys, Calif. 91409. Include 75¢ for the easy-to-follow pattern #458 for building "Old #999".

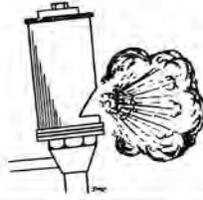
I'm sure that some of you realize that we have one more "passing" to regret. After January 1, 1969, Pullman Company service ended on all railroads in the U.S. The individual roads will now be responsible for operation of the sleeping cars. This will mean an even larger decline in the service available on our passenger trains.

D. F. Wiener
Rt. 30
2410 Lakeshore Drive
Fond du Lac, Wis. 54935



TO:

Ralph Wehltz
1405 E. Eighth Street
Norrill, Wis. 54452



WINNEBAGOLAND WHISTLE

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January 1969

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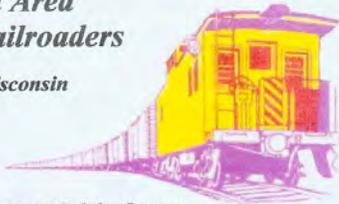
The first year of the Winnebagoland Whistle has passed as the steam whistle. Gone, but not forgotten, silent, but remembered. The editors are very pleased with the response to this newsletter and we have met many interesting people as a result of our efforts. This has not been an undertaking by the two of us alone. There have been many others without whom this paper would not have even been started. For those who have been such a help we send our thanks--in print--. If we have been of help, interest or if we have failed, we would appreciate hearing from you in the future.

Something new has been added to the Whistle. Hoping to help pay the "freight", hobby shops in the Division have taken out ads in the Whistle. We do appreciate their help and when you patronize them be sure to tell them you saw their ad in the Whistle. By mutual cooperation we all profit.

How would you like to see a Union Pacific 4-8-8-4 all steamed up and ready to roll at the 1969 Midwest Region Spring Convention? The Winnebagoland Division of the MWR doubts that it will be ready, however, they do promise you a chance to inspect the #4017 from pilot to tender while visiting the National Railroad Museum as part of the Green Bay Convention. Registration fees include an unlimited pass to the Museum for Saturday and Sunday, June 7 and 8. The convention will start Friday, June 6, with a tour of the Green Bay & Western's enginehouse, yard, and shop facilities. GB&W equipment will be spotted for picture taking. Home layout tours, including HO, HO₂, and a back-yard live steam operation will be offered on Friday evening. Saturday will start with demonstration clinics, and an auction in the morning. Saturday afternoon will feature clinics by MODEL RAILROADER authors Joe Kunzelmann and Bill Gardner. The participation clinic will deal with "How to Weather a Boxcar."

Waupaca Area Model Railroaders

Waupaca, Wisconsin



Home of

- Award winning Modular Layout
- Strawberry Fest Train Show & Model Contest
- Model Railroading Fun
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Todd M. Bushmaker AIA, LEED[®] AP
Project Architect | BIM-IT Support

122 East College Avenue, Suite 1G, Appleton, WI 54911
P.O. Box 8034, Appleton, WI 54912
920.380.2132 direct | 920.475.2881 mobile
920.731.2322 main | 920.380.2190 fax

tbushmaker@hoffman.net

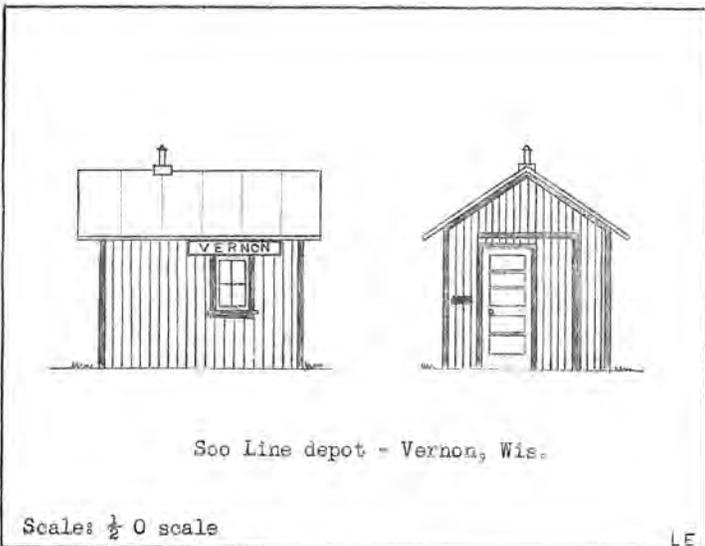
The Whistle at Fifty: 1969

One D.E. Wiener was apparently still the fledgling editor. And it looks like Larry Easton contributed a scaled drawing of a tiny Soo Line depot building for the intrepid scratchbuilders of the day.

6

For those of you planning your years' vacation, don't forget the National NMRA Convention will be held in Minneapolis, Minn. on August 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. This is close enough so that those who always wanted to attend should be able to do so. Start saving your money. This looks like a very busy railroad year. Your wives will feel much better about your attending these functions if you remember to include her in your plans. She may become an even more enthusiastic rail than you thought possible.

Were you among those lucky enough to obtain photos of the special 20 axle flatcar that carried the 540 ton nuclear reactor to Two Creeks? The Soo Line reported that it was one of the largest railfreight shipments in the midwest. The shipment weighed 1,243,000 lbs. gross, was 12 ft. 6 in. wide, and more than 100 ft. long. It was only allowed to travel during daylight hours, had a 10 mph restriction. The car had it's own gas operated engine to operate the hydraulic system that could expand or contract the car from 117 ft. to 140 ft. It had hydraulic stabilizers to balance and center the load. For a free picture of this car, write to the editors. Be sure to include any news that could be published in the Whistle. Lets hear from some of you!



3

Also on Saturday there will be home layout tours for those that were unable to go on Friday night. Model and Photo contest entries will be accepted until 1:00 pm when the judging will begin. Only NMRA members are eligible to enter the contests, but everyone is welcome to attend the Spring Meet. Saturday evening will be the banquet, awarding of the contest ribbons and prizes, and perhaps the auction will continue later in the evening.

Saturday will also feature a Rallette program with a tentative appearance on a local TV program being scheduled in the afternoon.

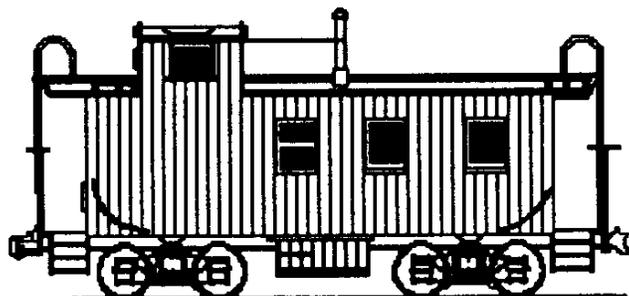
Sunday morning the annual business meeting will be held with the convention winding up its activities with a steam locomotive ride behind the Brillion Pioneer, an O-4-OT, at the National Railroad Museum. Plans are also afoot to have several home layouts available for viewing in Neenah, Appleton, and Oshkosh on your way home Sunday afternoon.

This promises to be a very well organized and run Convention. Come up and introduce yourself. Tell us how you like the Whistle. We'll be there looking for you. That's at Green Bay, June 6,7, and 8, 1969. Watch for future issues of the Whistle for more information.

The National Railroad Museum in Green Bay is acquiring two historic British Railways cars. The cars are "The Isle of Thanet" which was part of Winston Churchill's funeral train, and the "Bayonet", used by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower as his mobile headquarters in England prior to D Day and on the continent after the invasion. Two other previously acquired cars will also be shipped. Harold E. Fuller, a director of the Museum, attended the ceremony when Prince Phillip presented the cars to the U.S. Ambassador, David Bruce. Wes Foshay, also a director of the Museum, has expressed hope that the cars will arrive in Green Bay in time for the Midwest Region Convention. Wes has promised to keep the Whistle informed of the cars status.

A brief note to those of you interested in perpetuating the Morse Code aspects of railroading. The Heart of America Dots-and-Dashes Telegraphers Chapter (HADD) of the Morse Telegraph Club has been chartered to keep alive the memories of that romantic age; to collect and exhibit tools of the profession, and foster the tradition of telegraphy in other ways. The chairman is Estell Arthur Owens, 5221 East 51, Kansas City, Mo.

If you are not now receiving the Whistle, just send your name and address to the editors for a subscription.



The Whistle at Fifty: 1969

Below is a schedule of events for the 1969 Spring Meet. Might we start thinking about including an Auction again in our present-day meets? (Not to mention an official "happy hour"!)

4

SPRING MEET 1969

WinnebagoLand Division - MWR - NMRA
Oshkosh Model Railroad Club's Twelfth Annual Contest

March 29, 1969 Holiday Inn Oshkosh - U.S 41

Schedule:

- 8:30 am. Registration begins in the lobby.
- 9:30 am. Clinics. (Several walk-by types are planned on basic techniques.)
- 10:30 am. Auction. (The item you have been seeking may be one that is on the block. This may be your opportunity to get it at your price.)
- 12:00 am. Lunch. (Make your own plans - dining room at Holiday Inn will be open.)
- 1:00 pm. Special Feature Clinics. (Get the help you need from those with experience. One clinic will be a demonstration type and will run continuously.)
- 3:00 pm. WLD Business Meeting. (Anyone is welcome to sit in and learn more about the organization. Just introduce yourself to the one sitting next to you. Perhaps he or she will be the one to give you some help.)
- 3:45 pm. Home Layout Tour.
- 5:30 pm. "Happy Hour."
- 6:30 pm. Awards Banquet. Contest winners will be announced. Guest speaker.

For further information, contact:

Mr. Jerry Nichols
Route 4, Box 21
Waupaca, Wis. 54981

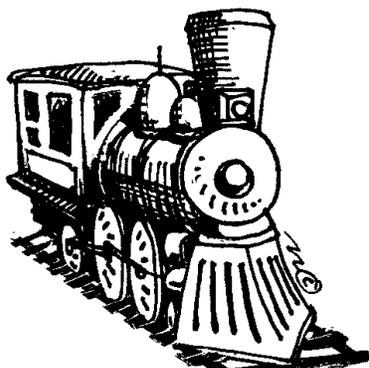
5

Our apologies to the person who sent the postcard offering to donate five dollars to the Whistle if fifteen or more members of the Oshkosh Model Railroad Club, including four selected names, showed up for the field trip to the Laona & Northern RR in August. We are sorry to report the number was not that great. Would our Mystery Man care to make the same offer for a field trip this year? Perhaps with a little more time to contact members and a way of letting them know what is at stake, they will respond with more enthusiasm.

This is the 100th. anniversary of the completion of the first transcontinental rail line. On May 10, 1869, the last spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah, joining the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific. To celebrate this historic occasion, medallions, designed by Frank Gasparro and authorized by Congress, were struck at the U.S Mint in Philadelphia. There are two sizes available. A 1 5/16" dia. and a 2 1/2" dia. are available in bronze for \$2.50 and \$7.50 each. The larger size is also available in silver alloy for \$25.00. One side of the coin shows the Jupiter and #119 nosing together against a mountain backdrop. The inscription reads, "The Pacific Railway is Completed. The Central Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads Linking the Nation. Promontory Summit, Utah. May 10, 1869." The opposite side shows a section of rail with a spike separating the dates 1869 and 1969. The inscription around the edge reads, "The Oceans United by Railway. Golden Spike Centennial Celebration Commission." Included with each medallion is a small brochure. All orders for the medal should be addressed to:

Field Headquarters
Golden Spike Centennial Celebration
Commission
Room 2419 Federal Building
Ogden, Utah 84400

This is when your editors wish they were equipped to show photographs. We have a picture of a trailer that looks like the office-on-wheels so familiar to trainmen. It features accommodations for six with an expandable end platform. There is nothing "crummie" about this crummie. For a brochure, write to: K-Boose, Inc., Room 256, American National Bank Building, St. Paul, Minn. 55101. Put a drawbar on it and perhaps you could hitch a ride behind your favorite engine!



The Whistle at Fifty: 1977

Here we look at the Division in 1977: bellbottoms, BeeGees, and Star Wars. Apparently Bruce Walthers of the namesake model railroad distributor was the distinguished guest speaker at that year's Spring Meet, and there was knitting for the "ladies"!



WINNEBAGOLAND

WHISTLE



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Volume 10

1977

Number 1

BRUCE WALTHERS OF WALTHERS INC TO BE GUEST SPEAKER APRIL 23RD

The 20th Annual Oshkosh Model Railroad Club's Model Building Contest and Winnebagoland Division Spring Meet will be held April 23, 1977 at the Holiday Inn, Oshkosh.

This is also the 40th Anniversary of the Oshkosh Model Railroad Club, a special reason to come and celebrate.

Activities will begin at 8 AM with registration, coffee & rolls. Contest and auction items may also be registered at this time. Note that the contest and auction registration closes at noon so be sure to get your items in before then.

Cost of attending the meet only is \$2.50 per person while the meet and banquet is \$8.00 per person and \$15.00 a couple. The banquet only is \$6.00.

Persons joining the NMRA for the first time will be admitted to the meet free. They will have to buy a banquet ticket however.

8-11:30 is the time to see the table top clinics. This year Dick Eggert, Cully Kowal, Ronald Griem and Donald Manlick will show you how-they-do-it.

Several hobby shops will have displays and Bruce Rehm will have his N scale layout there.

KNITTING MACHINE DEMONSTRATION FOR LADIES -- HOSPITALITY ROOM

There will also be slides shown in the morning and ladies (and gents who are interested) will be able to see a demonstration of a knitting machine.

The Winnebagoland Division will hold its Annual Business Meeting and Election of Officers at 11 AM. Be sure you attend to vote and find out how your Division is being run.

At 11:30: Lunch on your own at the Holiday Inn or one of the many nearby restaurants.

The auction will begin at 12:30 PM with many items being bought and sold. See the rules elsewhere in this issue. Note that CASH ONLY is needed for the auction.

Home layout tours will also begin at 12:30 and maps will be provided. The HO layouts of Bob Wildish, Phil Hathaway and Ken Marth will be open as will John Franzen's fine HO N3 layout. Of course no tour would be complete without a visit to Oshkosh's famous O scale layout and railroad and a salvage yard operated by Wes Foshay. Tours end at 5 PM. Please observe the closing time so those that are gracious enough to be open can get back to the Holiday Inn for Attitude Adjustment Hour.

The banquet will be served at 6:30 pm with roast beef and ham family style. Toastmaster Bob Wildish will preside for the evenings entertainment and our special guest speaker will be Bruce Walthers from Walthers Inc., Milwaukee.

The Whistle at Fifty: 1977

What struck me most about this issue was the amount of advertising. At first it was mostly for local model railroad clubs to announce their presence and solicit members, but how many are still around? How many of the shops on these pages do you remember? Maybe this jogs some memories; feel free to share some!

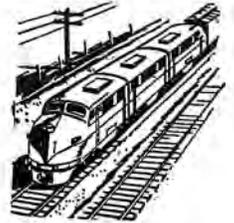
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1403 E. EIGHTH STREET
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NEW EDITOR STILL NEEDED.
The Whistle is still looking for a new editor.
The editor's job is an interesting one to have because it keeps a person in contact with other model railroaders in the area. It requires a person to obtain information in advance on Division meets, and afterwards, to cover the meets, which one would probably attend anyway.



AUCTION RULES

Each seller is responsible for marking his own items with his registration number and minimum bid. Unmarked items will not be auctioned. No items will be accepted with a minimum bid of less than \$1.00. **ONCE ITEMS ARE REGISTERED THEY MAY NOT BE REMOVED AND SOLD BEFOREHAND.** No selling by individuals will be allowed during the auction. When the bid is \$5.00 or less bids will be in 10% increments. When the bid is over \$5.00, in 25% increments. To receive an item you have purchased, show your registration card to the clerk and pay the purchase price. **CASH ONLY PLEASE!** Items may be picked up during or after the auction. Items not picked up within 15 minutes of the close of the auction will be returned to the seller. To obtain the money for items you have sold, give the registration card to the clerk. The Winnebago Division will not be responsible for the loss of any items placed in the auction. The Winnebago Division will take 10% of all sales.

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The actual preparation and typing of the material for the Whistle takes about 3-4 hours. Either Phill Sues or Joe Follmar may be contacted by anyone who is interested in taking the editors job.



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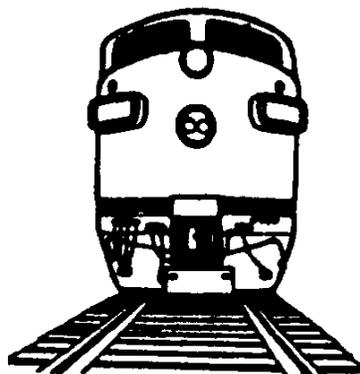
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553 Western Avenue
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Ship and Travel

The EJ&E

East Jockstrap & Elsewhere



The Whistle at Fifty: 1977

Bill Oeder actually sent in a letter to the editor with praise backed by a donation. Remember letters? You can still send in your thoughts to me, though you can use email or messenger nowadays if you don't want to pay for a stamp!

LETTERS:

Enclosed is a donation for the WHISTLE. I really like the paper. I want to thank all the WHISTLE staff for the swell write-up on the Fall Meet here, you did a very good job on it. One person you forgot to mention is Tom Bornfleth. So much credit goes to him. He did all our printing for the meet. Tom has a swell HO pike and also collects old toy trains.

Bill Oeder.

NEW ADVERTISERS

Bobby's Hobbies, Manitowoc, and Model RR Shop, Oshkosh are two of our newest advertisers. We hope you will visit them in the near future for your model railroading needs. Mention the Whistle when you do!

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Best's Hobby Center has moved to their new address at 790 Winneconne Avenue. Their new store is much larger and they offer an excellent variety of model railroad items. Stop in soon and say hello.



MODEL RR SHOP

148 West 9th Avenue Oshkosh

BUY SELL TRADE
TRAINS

Same building as The House of Wood

At least 20% off retail or more on all lines carried
INCLUDING BRASS

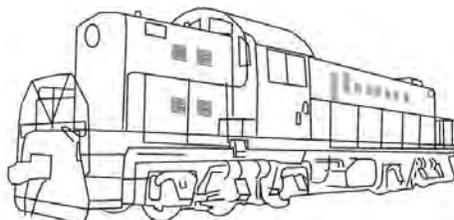
We are Lionel Factory Authorized Service Center
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LARGEST TRAIN SHOP IN THE VALLEY

We stock and sell at "discount" prices.
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We carry PFM, Key, Sunset, Westside, Alco, Hallmark, Lambert, Atlas, Athern, Con-Cor, Walthers, Lionel, American Flyer, Rapido, M.R.C., A.H.M., and many more.

233-1180



The Whistle at Fifty: 1977

Last page looking back this month. I see that subscriptions for the *Whistle* to non-members were \$1 per year! One dollar! I'll be someone still thought it was too much. More ads too; we could use more of those for our modern-day publication. They're only \$10-\$25/year depending on size, and you can reach hundreds of modelers!

SHEBOYGAN
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Deadline for material that is to appear in the next issue is June 1, 1977. Send all items for publication to the Editor, Joe Follmar, Route 2, Box 82, Amherst, Wisconsin 54406.

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE
Persons who have trophies from the Oshkosh Model Railroad Club Contest, please see that the trophies are returned to the contest committee on or before April 23, 1977.
Jerry Nichols Contest Chairman

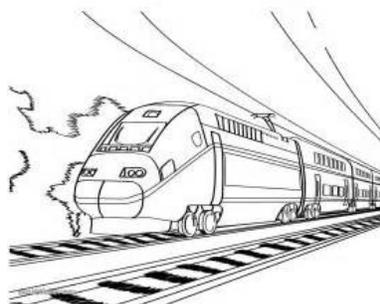
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BULLETIN CAR SIDE CONTEST
This year the WinnebagoLand Division will sponsor the NMRA Bulletin car sides contest. A permanent trophy will be awarded to the first place model. This special contest will be judged separately from the Oshkosh contest and only NMRA members may enter. Models may be built in any scale using the car sides that were printed in the December 1976 NMRA Bulletin.

Next issue we'll look back at 1987 and 1997, though because the formatting switched to full-page 8.5x11 I'll only publish a few select pages from each. You'll probably recognize the editors too! —Todd



WLD Fall Operating Session

By Scott Payne

The 2017 Fall Op Session will be held Saturday, November 4th in the Fox River area. Joel Weeks has offered to host a session. We only have one layout host at this time, we usually have two layouts. We are still looking for a second layout to be opposite Joel's. If you would like to do it and your layout is within 30 minutes or so of Joel's layout, please email me, Scott Payne, WLD Fall Operating Session coordinator at: s_payne@charter.net.

So that brings me to the heart of the matter for today's open letter to the WLD membership.

Every fall, on the first Saturday in November, the WLD holds an operating session open to members and non-members. I don't know when the first WLD Fall Operating Session started, but it has been a "point" on the calendar: Fall is here, the Op Session, Trainfest follows on the next weekend, and soon we will be in our basements working hard on our layouts. When the Fall Op Session was started, there were fewer operating layouts and fewer people into operations. So it was a good idea to find layout owners who were amenable to opening their layouts for operations. It has been well received over the years. The sessions encourage camaraderie and friendship, learning and sharing.

So where are we now? Over the last few years, attendance has dropped, it is getting somewhat more difficult to find people willing to open their layouts, and the location of the Op Sessions is fairly limited to the central and southeastern part of the Division. To recap, we have typically the same few people attending, a limited number of layouts open, and we aren't covering the majority of the Division.

As the WLD coordinator for the Fall Op Session, I have firsthand knowledge of how many people attend, who regularly attends, who volunteers to open their layouts and where the participation for both hosting the sessions and attending the

sessions comes from. With limited participation, fewer hosts, and a limited geographic area, we need to find ways to increase attendance and participation and expand to other parts of the Division. If we don't, I guess we can just trudge along like we are currently doing. Does that sound good to you? It doesn't to me or the Board of Directors.

Are we at a turning point? I believe so. That doesn't mean we should drop the session. No, I believe we should keep it going forward, but we should probably rethink it and come up with new ideas and alternatives that address the three problems outlined above. At the WLD Board of Directors meeting on June 6th, 2017, we discussed this topic and several ideas were tossed out.

- 1) We could link the session with the Spring or Fall Meets. The Op sessions could be done on the Friday before the Meet or after the Meet on Saturday. We believe this would have the dual benefit of increasing participation at both events. It could help justify the travel and

(Continued on page 13)

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(Continued from page 12)

expenses of attending a Meet outside of your local area.

- 2) We could open up the Op Session to different days of the week. Currently we always hold it on a Saturday. Why not a Sunday? Lots of our members work on Saturdays or have obligations with their children. Yes, there might be some conflict with religious services, but the alternative day would not have to be every year. We could alternate if people like the idea. I know of several of our members who would like to be hosts, but they work on Saturdays, so having it on Sunday could open up new layouts and new participants.
- 3) We could have the Op Session on Saturday or Sunday and combine it with a picnic at a local park or some other activity.

- 4) We could encourage participation by using the buddy system: "old hands/participants" of the sessions would be encouraged to find a new participant and then they could be teamed up at the session. This would relieve some of the stress or anxiety of newbies who want to do it, but are anxious about how to do it, etc. It would also build teamwork and friendships. These suggestions don't really address the "regionality" of the sessions, so we need to come up with ways to spread the sessions around the Division.

I'm sure there are other great ideas out there. The BOD is asking you to help find new answers to making the Fall Op Session a thriving, fun, and well attended event each year. So, send your suggestions to me, Scott Payne at: s_payne@charter.net, and I will gather the ideas and work with the BOD to determine our way forward. Looking forward to your ideas and help, thanks, Scott.

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Please note the vacant positions and let the Superintendent know of any possible interested parties!



www.wld-nmra.com

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On the Ready Track

- July 22** 27th Annual LaCrosse Rail Fair
www.4000foundationltd.com
- July 22-23** Sheboygan Society of Scale Open House
www.sssmre.org
- July 30 - Aug 6** NMRA National Convention Orlando, FL
www.nmra2017orlando.org
- Sept 7 - 10** SHLTS Annual Convention Minot, ND
www.sooline.org/events/conventions
- Sept 24** WLD BOD meeting, 10:30am
SLHTS Archives, Appleton
- Oct 7** WLD Fall Meet
Sheboygan Senior Activity Center
See info in this issue
- Nov 4** WLD Fall Operation Session
Joel Weeks GNR layout
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- Nov 11-12** Trainfest
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www.trainfest.com

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SAVE THIS DATE!!!

The WinnebagoLand Division will hold its 2017 Fall Meet in Sheboygan on October 7th.

It will be an all-day event with a dinner and a featured speaker.

It will be held at the Senior Acitivity Center of Sheboygan.

The meet will feature the dinner and speaker, clinics, layout tours, a large group of railroad historical societies, swap meet and a catered lunch available on site.

See you there,

Fall Meet Committee: Dale Kuhn, Mark Preussler, and
Scott Payne