

THE WINNEBAGOLAND WHISTLE

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

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FALL 2015

I knew I was going to take the wrong train, so I left early. -- Yogi Berra (1925-2015)
(The eminently quotable baseball legend passed away late in September at the age of 90.)

COVER PHOTOS:

Some model contest entries from the Fall Meet. See Page 3 for full recap!

Top: IRT Elevated Station and subway car by Charles Valentine.

Left: Showcase British Coach by Paul Leow

Right: iPhone video capture car by John Leow



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Superintendent's Report

By James C. Cruthers

First, thanks to the members of the Green Bay Area Model Railroaders' Club for co-hosting the WinnebagoLand Division fall event held at the Kress Family Library at De Pere, WI Saturday, 9/26/15. They put together a nice schedule of clinics and speakers, had a club-sponsored lunch followed by tours of layouts at the club (Kress Family Library) where the event was held, as well as at the homes of John Grom and Luke Lemmens. We had a smaller turnout for the event than what we had hoped.

Second, thanks to Emory Luebke who has served on the Division Board for a number of years. Early on Emory became Clinic Chairman and compiled an updated list of people who have provided clinics for previous Division-sponsored events (and other groups) and a comprehensive list of clinic topics that have been presented. When the Division holds its spring and fall events, often the co-hosting group identifies the clinicians and clinics they want to offer at the events. Having a comprehensive list of clinicians and clinic topics maintained by the Clinic Chairman has been helpful when a group is either looking for a clinician to present on a specific topic or if they are having challenges filling clinic slots for an upcoming event. I know I will miss Emory's presence at the board meetings but am confident I will continue to see him at Division events.

On the other hand we'd like to welcome back Mary Eiden to the Board. Mary has served the Division in many capacities in the past, such as long time clerk and most recently co-

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Superintendent's Report

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webmaster along with Mike Eiden for the Division's site. She is also secretary for the Waupaca Area Model Railroaders. She usually attends our meetings so it wasn't a big step to consider her for a Board position.

In other news I am extending a welcome to two people many of you may know from the model railroading scene. First, thanks to Rich Hopfensperger who has agreed to step into a new role with the Division board as Hobby Shop/Model Railroad Club Liaison. It continues to be evident that the Division can do a better job of staying in contact with the hobby shops and model railroad clubs located within the boundaries of the Division. Rich will work to create a comprehensive list of both hobby shops and model RR clubs so the Division can work more cooperatively with them to promote this great hobby. It often seems that much of the Division activities are planned by a small group of people, namely the Board, and the reality is that this small group cannot be at all events within this large Division. We need more people, more Division members willing to promote the NMRA throughout the Division.

The second person I want to welcome is Phil Herman. Phil will be taking over Emory's responsibilities as Clinic Chairman. Very soon I will put Phil's name forward to the Division Board and request he be appointed to the Board. Rich's work schedule would not allow him to routinely attend Board meetings or his would be the other name I would be putting forward. Involvement on a committee does not require that a person be 'on' the Board.

We are working on a location for the spring 2016 Division event but this has not been finalized. Watch future editions of the Whistle and of course the Division website for details. It seems that we are on track for the fall 2016 event to be held at Marquette, Michigan. Also, please remember that the Division Operating Session is coming up very soon. The registration form is attached at the end of the Whistle, or visit the Division's website.

Until next time...

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Editor's Note

By Todd M. Bushmaker

Once again as autumn falls upon us (see what I did there?) and the weather encourages us to go downstairs and play with trains after a busy summer, I think to myself how easily that cliché comes to mind despite my own reality.

In late August my family decided to purchase a camper, our first. We've never been particularly "outdoorsy": hunting and participatory sports have not been a strong component in our lives, either individually in the past or as part of our families. But we enjoy activities outside when the weather's nice, and it's an easy way to get the kids to burn off energy so they can sleep quietly at night. We visited my brother-in-law's family and several friends over the summer at their respective campgrounds and the kids loved it, so we took the plunge with a small model our minivan could tow. We've been out twice already before needing to winterize and put it into storage for the season. We can definitely see using it as much as we can next year, and sometime down the line upsizing to accommodate the coming onslaught of teenagerdom.

Which is to say that life is busy! For many of us in a certain age range with families, model railroading competes for time and dollars with other activities and hobbies, work, church, date nights, school functions, piano, swim, and dance lessons, that glowing smartphone/TV/computer screen, now camping, you name it. With a certain amount of discipline and drive one can certainly find time for trains, and so much the better if the next generation shows an interest and participates with you; I have a couple friends in this category and to a degree I envy them.

When I was younger and single with a like-minded roommate, we spent most of our free hours it seems elbows-deep in trains, and spent profligately in creating those worlds and building up collections, going to train shows and hanging out at the hobby shop. Now after I come home from work, have dinner and clean up, play with the kids, perhaps catch up on my news and social media feeds, I often don't have enough ambition or energy to hole up in the basement for an hour before bed!

The bookend to this is that when we become empty nesters I'll have all KINDS of time and money to pursue my hobby again, right?

On a different topic, STILL LOOKING FOR CONTENT! I have several 12"=1'-0" articles this quarter but really need modeling articles, layout profiles, goings-on in the Division, etc. to fill these pages. Some of you are authors, so please feel free to type something up, send in some photos, or even dust off old articles you published elsewhere in the past. Let's get some quality stuff in here!

On that note, *keep on trainin'!*

WLD Fall Meet Model Contest

By Dave Allen

DE PERE — It was a good (but small) show: four good quality models and three models in the Model Showcase. Three models were at the Merit Award level.

MODEL CONTEST participants included:

Rich Cooke
Charles Valentine

MODEL SHOWCASE participants included:

David Allen
John Leow
Paul Leow

Bruce Schimel's IC Electric

Results

Merit - above the Merit Award level cutoff of 87.5 points
Models were evaluated by David Allen and John Leow.*

DON STEFFEN BEST-OF-SHOW (POPULAR VOTE)

RICHARD EGGERT BEST-OF-SHOW (POINTS)

1st Place Scratch, Structures

Oil Depot, "O", by Richard Cooke - Earned 94 points
(Merit Level)

2nd Place Scratch, Structures

IRT Elevated Station, "HO", by Charles Valentine - Earned 88 points - (Merit Level)

1st Place Scratch, Freight Car

PRR G22 #589017 Gondola, "N", by Richard Cooke - Earned 88 points (Merit Level)

1st Place, Kit, Passenger Car

IRT Subway Car, "HO", by Charles Valentine

Modeler's Showcase Models included:

Two outfit cars (NP and UP) rigged up as track slider cars by David Allen

A British passenger car under construction by Paul Leow

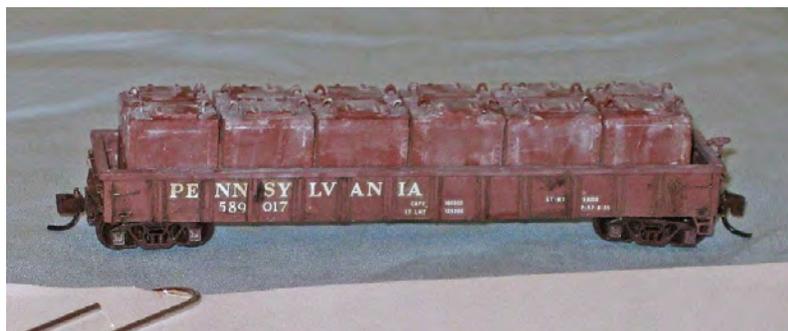
An I-phone video car by John Leow

The contest had very good average quality with three of the four models being above the merit award cutoff level of 87.5 points. And the IRT subway car was a Walthers car, which limited the points that could be earned.

Charles Valentine's IRT station model was constructed of cardboard - complete with compound curves, odd shapes and what not. It was a learning experience for me.

A final note - only a Contest Entry Form is needed for Popular Vote and for Model Showcase entries. These categories are very easy to enter.

Until next time -- be well. Dave A.



Oil Depot (below) and Gondola (above) by Richard Cooke





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Positive Train Control (PTC) Deadline

Compiled by Trains Magazine

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has sent its Status of Positive Train Control Implementation report to Congress. The report is mandated by the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee and shows that after seven years and significant assistance from FRA, most railroads will miss the Dec. 31, 2015 positive train control (PTC) implementation deadline that Congress established in 2008.

"Positive Train Control is the most significant advancement in rail safety technology in more than a century. Simply put: it prevents accidents and saves lives, which is exactly what we seek to do at The Department of Transportation every single day. We will continue to do everything in our power to help railroads install this technology," U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said.



The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) began calling for train control systems like PTC in 1969, and FRA was involved in establishing PTC standards with stakeholders for more than a decade before the 2008 mandate.

Three years before Congress passed the PTC mandate, FRA issued its final rule that established uniform PTC standards for railroads willing to voluntarily install the technology.

PTC prevents train-to-train collisions, over-speed derailments, incursions into established work zone limits and a train going to the wrong track because a switch was left in the wrong position.

In 2008, Congress passed the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA), requiring all Class I railroads transporting poisonous-by-inhalation hazardous (PIH) or toxic-by-inhalation hazardous (TIH) materials and all railroads providing passenger service to implement Positive Train Control by Dec. 31, 2015.

FRA has provided significant assistance and support to railroads in order to help them become PTC compliant. Those efforts include:

- Providing more than \$650 million to passenger railroads, including nearly \$400 million in Recovery Act funding.
- Issuing a nearly \$1 billion loan to the Metropolitan

Transportation Authority to implement PTC on the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North.

- Building a PTC testbed in Pueblo, Colorado.
- Working directly with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to resolve issues related to spectrum use and improve the approval process for PTC communication towers.
- Dedicating staff to continue work on PTC implementation in March 2010, including establishing a PTC task force.

"The Federal Railroad Administration will continue to use its resources and expertise to help railroads achieve the critical goal to have Positive Train Control implemented," FRA Acting Administrator Sarah Feinberg said.



Government regulators will fine railroads that are out of compliance with positive train control laws after Dec. 31.

Federal Railroad Administration officials say on page 14 of a 19-page report to Congress that they will fine railroads per violation, per day, if the railroads fail to have positive train control systems operating after the current deadline of Dec. 31. The report was sent to Capitol Hill recently and has been released to the media.

Report writers also include a list of the possible violations and fines railroads could face.

Type of PTC violation / Fine for violation / Fine for 'willful' violation:

- "Failure of PTC system to perform a safety-critical function" / \$5,000 / \$7,500
- "Operation of PTC system prior to certification" / \$16,000 / \$25,000
- "Failure to request modification of (plan documents) when required" / \$11,000 / \$16,000
- "Failure to maintain required supporting documentation" / \$2,500 / \$5,000
- "Failure to update (safety plan) when required" / \$5,000 / \$7,500

"In the instance of the expected widespread PTC non-compliance on Jan. 1, 2016, and the railroads' admission

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BNSF: “We will shut down”

By Fred Frailey, *Trains Magazine*

In a candid letter to a U.S. senator, BNSF Railway’s chief executive, Carl Ice, said September 9 that BNSF would in effect shut down most of its network rather than violate a federal law mandating that positive train control be operational by December 31. CSX Transportation has said it, too, questions whether it should violate federal laws, and other Class I carriers are likely to follow suit. This set up the real possibility of a national transportation crisis at the beginning of 2016. The public may be unaware of how closely the U.S. economy is tied to railroads, but the reality is that without railroads, this country will quickly cease to function normally. Imagine, for instance, no electricity to heat homes.



In his letter to Senator John Thune (R-South Dakota), chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Ice says that the railroad has already spent \$1.5 billion to deploy PTC and will likely spend another \$500 million. Ultimately, this new technology will be deployed on half of BNSF’s network, the portion that handles 80 percent of its traffic.

But portions of both transcontinental routes will not be operational by the December 31 deadline set by Congress in 2008. Nor will commuter zones in Chicago, Seattle and Minneapolis. Ice says that to avoid operating on PTC-mandated subdivisions where PTC will not be installed before the deadline would force traffic on secondary routes unequipped to handle it and lead to a paralysis of the railroad.

Ice goes on to explain the railroad’s position. First, BNSF reads the law as saying no train can legally operate on a PTC-mandated line if PTC is not in service by December 31, rather than no train carrying hazardous substances. Then he goes on to say: “BNSF, as a matter of law, corporate policy and principle, does not willfully violate

safety statues or regulations or ask our employees to do so. The announced enforcement policy by the [Federal Railroad Administration] of imposing fines for non-performance puts BNSF in a position that will be difficult to reconcile with our aforementioned unwillingness to willfully violate safety laws or regulations. BNSF does not believe that it can pick and choose which safety rules must be followed.” Ice adds that were his railroad to operate over lines where PTC is not in place and an accident occurs, the exposure to legal claims and punitive damages would be significant.

Ice is careful in his letter not to say BNSF *will* refuse to run trains in violation of the law, only that it doesn’t see how it can. But any reasonable interpretation of his language is that the railroad will either coagulate to paralysis or operate at a fraction of its capacity.

The Surface Transportation Board, which regulates railroads, in effect came to the aid of BNSF and other railroads this past week. Its chairman, Daniel Elliott, wrote to Thune to say that railroads can “lawfully suspend service for various reasons, including safety.” In other words, Elliott is saying that the common carrier obligation of railroads is not absolute. Elliott added that CSX has expressed sentiments similar to those of BNSF.



So what does this all mean? I take railroads at their word that they have diligently tried to install PTC by the deadline. Six years ago Congress thought it was giving railroads enough time to do this, and railroads did not object then to that deadline. But implementation has been a disaster. The technology being put in place is largely new. FRA was slow to issue necessary rules. Signal engineers able to put all the pieces together have been in short supply. And then for more than a year everything ground to a halt because the Federal Communications Commission would not issue permits for construction of radio towers and antennae.

Further, as Ice points out to Thune, PTC is full of bugs as railroads roll it out on their networks. Says Ice: “We are seeing the PTC system trigger unnecessary braking events in which trains are stopped with a full-service brake application. This means that significant work has to occur before the train can re-start. These kinds of de-

(Continued on page 6)

BNSF cont'd...

(Continued from page 5)

lays are numerous and cumulatively consume railroad capacity.”

What railroads have sought is an extension of the deadline, something that Congress has thus far refused to act upon because the votes to permit an extension aren't there. Now the industry is beginning to say fine, we will not disobey the law and as a result we will be able to offer only a fraction of the service our customers depend upon.

My wife Cathie, who spent her corporate career dealing with political life in Washington, calls this “classic DC gamesmanship.” She says the fact that Carl Ice has now publicly laid out a disastrous outcome that neither voters nor shippers can countenance means that the problem will be resolved either by a suspension of the law or an amendment to it pushing back the deadline. Or maybe not. Who knows?

Our political system is full of hypocrites who pass laws yet will not deal with the consequences of those laws. This situation cries for clarity and level-headedness, and we're seeing little of it in Washington. You wonder why Republicans are flocking to The Donald. This is why. Everyone is hiding from reality—everyone, that is, except a few brave souls such as Carl Ice, who is unafraid to say the ball is in Washington's court and that we as citizens may end up burning our furniture in the fireplace to stay warm.

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New Train Service?

From the Superior Telegram

HUDSON, Wis. -- A passenger train with four roundtrips daily between St. Paul and Eau Claire is in a Minnesota Department of Transportation plan to be implemented within the next 20 years.

But the planned passenger line won't happen without local and area support and involvement, according to the St. Croix Valley Rail Group, which advocates for the restoration of passenger rail service to St. Croix County.

The nonpartisan group comprised of 50 citizens from Hudson, River Falls and New Richmond had scheduled two public programs on Minnesota's plan that took place on Wednesday, Sept. 23. The featured speakers were Minnesota transportation planner Dave Christianson and Scott Rogers of Eau Claire, director of the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce and chair of the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition.

“Historically, transportation availability determines economic prosperity,” the St. Croix Valley Rail Group said in announcing the meetings. “A passenger train is critical to our future economic viability, including business prosperity, housing values and population growth.”

The group cites a Washington Post story saying that mass transit is now considered an economic development tool to attract millennials, along with their employers.

The group says it believes the Eau Claire line is likely to happen because it is in the interest of the Twin Cities and Minnesota to connect with its biggest regional economic partner.

“There are many cities in both Minnesota and Iowa that want MinnDOT's attention and inclusion in passenger rail. It is unlikely MinnDOT would spend time and money on a passenger rail line that is a long shot to happen,” the group said in its meeting announcement.

The group also is advocating for a train station in the Hudson area.

FRA cont'd...

(Continued from page 4)

that it may take up to five years for them to come into full compliance, the potential civil penalties that FRA could assess are substantial,” the report says.

The agency says it has discretion to mete penalties to increase compliance with the PTC law and safety generally, and specifically outlines seven points on issuing fines, based on level of compliance, history with complying with the agency, actual harm or potential harm to humans, and the seriousness of a violation.

Team Track

Division Officers

James C. Cruthers	Superintendent
Mike Wadinski	Asst. Superintendent
Scott Payne	Paymaster
Vern Ehlke	Chief Clerk
James C. Cruthers	Division Director

Board of Directors

Dave Allen	thru 10/16
Wally Rogers	thru 04/17
Roger Wurtzel	thru 04/17
Joe Lallensack	thru 05/17
Dave Nitsch	thru 05/17
Todd Bushmaker	thru 06/17
John Leow	thru 06/18
Mary Eiden	thru 09/19



Note: There are three (3) open spots for anyone interested!

Committee Chairs

Todd Bushmaker	Whistle Editor, Ads, Circulation, Subscriptions
Marv Preussler	AP Chairman
Wally Rogers	Membership Chairman
Phil Herman (new)	Clinic Chairman
James C. Cruthers	501(c)3 Committee Chairman
Lynn Jasch	Convention Registrar
Vacant	Convention Co-Chairman
Vacant	Convention Co-Chairman
Vacant	Company Store Chairman
David Allen	Model Contest Chairman
Joe Lallensack	Photo Contest Chairman
Mary & Michael Eiden	Co-Webmasters
Rich Hopfensperger (new)	Hobby Shop/Model Club Liaison
Vacant	Scout Coordinator

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

Classifieds

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On the Ready Track

November 7 WLD Operating Session

November 14-15 Trainfest:
<http://www.trainfest.com/>

Nov 27-Dec 30 (Weekends) Green Bay Botanical Garden of Lights feat. the Green Bay G-scalers:
<http://www.gbbg.org/things-to-do/garden-events/id/35>

Nov-Dec (see dates) Polar Express at the National RR Museum:
<http://www.nationalrrmuseum.org/special-events/public-events-calendar/>

January 9 WLD Board of Directors Meeting
Soo Line Archives, Appleton

January 16-17 Arctic Run Model RR Show
Stevens Point: www.arcticrun.com

February 20-21 Mad City Train Show
http://nmra-scwd.org/Rail_Show_Info.php



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Registration for the WLD's Annual Operating Session

Saturday, November 7, 2015 -

**Randy Williamson - Larson
Roger Hildebrandt - Waupaca**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Notes:

Interested in dining afterwards? (Dining costs on your own - not included): Yes No

DO NOT ENCLOSE the \$5.00 registration fee with this form. You'll be notified by mail where you are scheduled to operate with payment collected by your host at your first layout assignment on the day of the event. Openings will be filled on a first come/first served basis by using the earliest post-marked dates on this reply sheet. The exact number of openings is not known at this time. If you are carpooling or desire to operate with a certain person or group, please note that information above in the "Notes" section. We will try to accommodate.

Please return this form postmarked NO LATER THAN October 23, 2015.

Send this form to:

**Roger Hildebrandt
7693 Evergreen Dr. E.
Waupaca, WI 54981-9628**