The Crossbuck

a publication of the DuPage Division of the NMRA

Tim Schubert - Editor

Fall 2026 Edition

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK by Alex Schneider, Superintendent

This first letter comes later in the year than usual, and I hope you have picked up your tools for the model railroading season. We broke our usual pattern by hosting an outing in early October. We had heard that Rapido, the Canadian importer of locomotives and freight cars, would be having an open house at Illinois Railway Museum. The museum was also having its final operation of their Shay steam locomotive for the season, so it seemed like a good fit. Although Rapido cancelled their appearance for unannounced reasons, it was still an enjoyable excursion for those who came.



The Naperville RPM was held this weekend at the NIU campus. Excellent clinics on a lot of subjects and two extensive modular layouts. I saw a number of DuPage Division members there and I hope you were inspired and motivated. I know I found one clinic on "The Joy of Scenery" a reminder that I need to rebalance my efforts.



Our division meetings resume in November on the SECOND Sunday of the month. We hope to see you at St. Paul's at that time.

This is my final term as your Superintendent. Elections will be held in March for Superintendent and Chief Clerk.

The new Superintendent will then appoint the Trainmasters who, with your elected officers, comprise the Division board. If you would like to help and influence the direction your Division follows, put your name in.

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MEETING LOCATION FOR 2026-27

The Division meetings will be held at:

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
5729 Dunham Road
Downers Grove, IL 60516

The church is at the intersection of Dunham and Jefferson. There is plenty of parking and it is ADA accessible. Nearest major intersections: North – 55th Street/Maple & Dunham, South – 63rd Street & Dunham

Division Officers For 2026-2027

Officers (Terms expire as shown)

Superintendent	Alex Schneider	(5/31/27)
Asst. Super	Jim Marciniak	(5/31/28)
Chief Clerk	Ken Valentine	(5/31/27)
Paymaster	Kim Schlytter	(5/31/28)

Trainmasters (All terms expire 8/1/27)

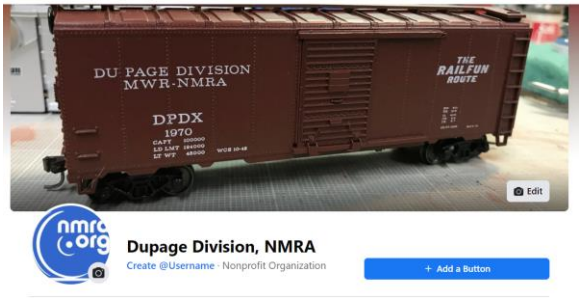
Jeff Geisler	*At Large Trainmaster*
Patrick Golden	*All American Railroad Show*
Fred Henize	*Contest Chairman*
Ron Scharping	*Membership Chairman*
Rob Schiavone	*Achievement Program*
Tom Schneider	*Name Tags*
Tim Schubert	*Crossbuck Editor*

Contact Information is available on the Division website. Website: www.mwr-nmra.org/dupage

Division Address:

DuPage Division – MWR – NMRA
1278 Oxford Lane
Wheaton, IL 60189

Like us on Facebook!



If you are on Facebook, find us at DuPage Division, NMRA. We are looking to grow our presence in this area and use it to promote our annual show. We also have a Division members only closed group as well. Our hobby is not dying; it has just moved to the digital world like many other things.

REPORT OF THE 2026 ALL AMERICAN RAILROAD SHOW by Patrick Golden, All American Railroad Show Coordinator

The Division had yet another very successful All-American Railroad Show this past March and was able to generate a grand total profit to the Division of $2,765.90. In comparison, our three previous years, 2023 through 2025, generated profits of $2,847.75 in 2025, $3,581.79 in 2024 and $3,197.96 in 2023. The amounts showing as profit for each year include admission profit after expenses (the "gate"), concessions profit after expenses, both split 50/50 with the school per our contract, and coffee/lunch donations which are not split.

Our net gate (the take at the door after the money used to make change is deducted) was $6,219.00 compared with $6,231.00 in 2025, $6,584.00 in 2024 and $6,970.00 in 2023.

Paid attendance at this year's show was estimated at 1,244 (those age five and older) compared with 1,246 in 2025, 1,317 in 2024 and 1,394 in 2023. Add those under five and you can see we had a rather good show. Adding in passes redeemed brings the total attendance to 1,351 compared with 1,350 in 2025, 1,413 in 2024 and 1,510 in 2023.

The attendance numbers show the public looks forward to our show each year. Many families attend the show as a yearly early spring ritual. I try to speak with those families attending and find this to be the case. I also find a handful who are attending for the first time, having heard about the show via the flyers we distribute, word of mouth or any number of social media platforms. They all comment favorably on the show and remark it's one of the best $5.00 values out there. After the demanding work the Division put into this show, it's great to hear these comments.

Total show expenses, which includes mailings, postage, office supplies, printing, copying and insurance came to $1,328.32 compared with $1,267.83 in 2025, $1,070.32 in 2024 and $2,112.30 in 2023.

Again, this year, and since we have done since 2012, the Division operated the concession, as we have done ever since the senior class students whose task it used to be to operate the concession opted to do a less than stellar job. Concession sales totaled $1,786.00 against total expenses of $1,714.89, generating a gross profit of $71.11 and when split with the school, netting the Division a profit of $35.55. Concessions typically operate at or near a break-even point since the Division uses the concession to provide free lunches to the exhibitors, asking only that they remember to patronize the donation jar. In addition, many of the people who attend the show look for a light lunch or snack during their visit.

Our contractual 50/50 split arrangement with the school resulted in a payment to the school of $2,480.90 compared with $2,621.75 in 2025, $3,096.88 in 2024 and $2,722.85 in 2023. A donation jar set out for coffee, donuts and lunches netted the Division an additional $285.00 bringing the Division's total profit from the gate, concessions and donations to $2,765.90.

Our Division had a table at the show and I need to send a heartfelt thank you to those who staffed it throughout the day. The Illinois Railway Museum again donated four family five-pack passes to the museum. Other door prizes were donated by Lombard Hobbies and the Burlington Route Historical Society. All prizes were awarded at the end of the day.

I need to send a sincere thank you to all the individuals who showed up on Friday evening to assist with measuring and floor layout for the exhibitors and to assist with the setup of tables and chairs in the concession area. A thank you also goes out to Kim Schlytter who picked up cases of pop and water at my house and transported them to the fieldhouse on Friday evening and Tim Schubert who coordinated the rental, pickup and transport of the coffee makers and popcorn machine. Thanks also go out to those who stepped up on the day of the show to collect money, stamp hands, man tables, keep the concession stocked with cold drinks, count money and do any number of other tasks that I called upon

them to do. Your willingness to help is very much appreciated.

My goal has always been to put on the best show we can and one the public looks forward to and comes back to year after year. And I certainly believe we impress them as they walk through the door and see the trains, sights, sounds and exhibits waiting for them. I heard nothing but positive comments about our show this year. Thank you everyone!

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2027 ALL AMERICAN RAILROAD SHOW by Patrick Golden, All American Railroad Show Coordinator

Mark your calendars. The DuPage Division, in conjunction with Lyons Township High School, will hold the 2027 All American Railroad Show, our 44th annual, on Saturday, April 3, 2027. The show location remains the same, the Lyons Township High School North Campus Fieldhouse at 100 S. Brainard Avenue in LaGrange, just a stone's throw from the Burlington/Metra Stone Avenue commuter station.

The 2027 show falls a week or two later than what we would normally expect. The date of the show usually coincides with the school's spring break, either as spring break begins or as it concludes. Perhaps because Easter weekend is the last weekend in March, the school's spring break is scheduled later and that dictates when the show can be scheduled.

I have the contract paperwork from the school in hand, and I have sent "Save the Date" postcards to the exhibitors and will soon follow up with the required paperwork. Other planning that I do for the show is already well underway.

There is a possibility, maybe a slim possibility at this point, that the free lunch option the Division offers to the exhibitors may change. At the last minute before last year's show, the school student council asked if they could manage the concessions. It was too late to make any changes so none were made and the free lunch to exhibitors went off as it had been for many years.

You may remember the senior class students managed concessions for many years until one year when no one stepped up to do the job. The Division scrambled on Friday evening to provide some degree of concessions and then took concessions over from that point on.

The school's staff person who reached out to me with last year's student council request retired at the end of the school year and although I have been told who the new person is I have yet to be contacted by that individual. I'm guessing too that with a new school year underway there is a new student council in place so with all the changes I'll take a wait and see position for the time being.

Being the show is the Division's only fundraiser, we do rather well with it and there's no doubt the community enjoys the show and the school enjoys having us there. Thank you to all who regularly step up to help with the show. Let's have a good 2027 show!

DuPage Division 2026-27 Calendar of Events

Month	Presentation	Contest
September 13, 2026	*Memories of an Old Railroader by Fred Henize*	Show & Tell - What did you do all summer?
October 4, 2026	*Outing to the Illinois Railway Museum*	No Contest
November 8, 2026	*Developing Buildable Track Plans for Santa Fe Industrial Areas by Jim Marciniak*	Railcar Graffiti
December 13, 2026	*Holiday Luncheon @ St. Paul UCC*	Photo Contest
January 10, 2027	*Detailing Modern Industries by James Gorski*	Open Loads
February 14, 2027	*A Q Man's Look at the C&NW by Jim Singer*	MOW Equipment
March 14, 2027	*Railroad Research and/or Dissecting a 1965 Burlington Route Steam Fantrip – by Patrick Golden*	Lineside Structures
April 3, 2027	**All American Railroad Show – 44th Annual** at Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, IL	9am to 5pm Admission $5
April 11, 2027	*Open*	"Thumbs"
May 2, 2027	Layout Tours	No Contest
August 10-15, 2027	***2027 Puget Sound Express - NMRA National Convention, Tacoma, WA***	https://2027.nmra.org/

In Memory of Wayne Pelke – by Bill Drzal



Wayne passed away on September 1, 2026

I was friends with Wayne for over forty-five years. I had a lot of fun adventures and experiences with Wayne. These adventures included going to NMRA Conventions, layout tours, RITS gatherings, DuPage Division meetings, and riding steam excursions.

I met Wayne when he was working part time at the Hobbycraft Train shop in Darien, IL. Wayne is the person responsible for getting me into layout building, highly detailed rolling stock and engines when “blue box” models were the norm. Wayne got me involved with the DuPage Division. I was privileged to work on and learn on building two of Wayne’s Great Northern layouts. Wayne was an innovator, he used an analog locomotive control system on his Darien layout and switched to DCC when he started building his final, 90% completed layout, in North Aurora. He was an early adapter of DCC.

Wayne was a builder and excellent craftsmen of building and rolling stock kits and would scratch build when the opportunity presented itself. Back when the DuPage Division Modular layout would move to shows and shopping centers, Wayne was the “official” truck driver due to backing expertise. While the Great Northern Railroad was his true love, he did have a soft spot for Colorado narrow gauge railroads. At different times, he modeled in On30 and HOn30 gauges.

Wayne was employed by International Harvester (IH) in the Engineering Department at Hinsdale for many years. Due to his employment at IH, there was no “green” farm equipment on his model layouts. I uphold this tradition on my own layouts.

He was a great guy and will be missed by many of us.

https://www.mossfuneral.com/obituaries/Wayne-A-Pelke?obId=49460365

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In Memory of Rich Strebendt – by Alan Busic



Rich passed away on April 23, 2026.

When I came to my first meeting of the DuPage Division, the Superintendent asked if there were any new guests or members. I raised my hand and was asked to stand, give my name, where I lived, and my favorite railroad. I announced that I was a

fan of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. I was thanked and sat back down.
When the break in the presentation came, I was sitting alone when I saw a person standing next to me. It was Rich Strebendt. He introduced himself and said he, too, was a B&O modeler, and a friendship was immediately formed.

Over the years I've known Rich, he helped on my model railroad and encouraged my modeling efforts. His assistance on electrical projects and overall help with any other project was without equal. I never would have had anything but a circle of track without his expertise and humor.

In addition, he was a valuable member of the Division Board while I was Superintendent. He will be missed by the Division but especially by me.

https://www.williams-kampp.com/obituaries/Richard-E-Strebendt?obId=48200954

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Short Blasts

Some upcoming model railroading events for your calendar:

The Lake Shore Model Railroad Assn., located in the basement of the Calumet Park Fieldhouse at 95th and Lake Michigan, is having their 80th open house on Saturday, November 14 from 11am to 4pm.

Lake County Model Railroad Club, located at 107 S. Main St. Wauconda, IL is having an open house on Nov. 14 & 15 from 11am to 4pm. Free admission & raffle prizes

Northwestern Illinois Model Railroad Club, located at 101 Main St., Chadwick, IL is having an open house on Nov. 21 & 22 from 10am to 4pm. Suggested donation of $1 for admission.

Tech Tip by Bill Drzal

Having problems holding tank cars for painting or weathering and don't want to dirty up your foam cradle?

Cut two V cuts into the opposite sides of a used toilet paper tube. Place the tank car into the V cutouts.

You can now paint and weather your model and have two hands available.

See the following photos:



Cut two V's in the tube



The tube holds the tank securely



Even upside down!

Please Note:
Our division meetings resume in November on the SECOND Sunday of the month and will be on the second Sunday, except for May, for the rest of the season! This change is being made to avoid conflict with the Great Midwest Train Show on the first Sunday of the month.

Photos from the Naperville RPM 2026







The Crossbuck *is the official publication of the DuPage Division of the National Model Railroad Association. Subscription is free to all NMRA members that reside within the boundaries of the DuPage Division. The DuPage Division does not offer any liability from the information contained within this publication.*

NOTE: THIS PUBLICATION IS NOTIFICATION OF THE DIVISION MEETING ON 11/8/26

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