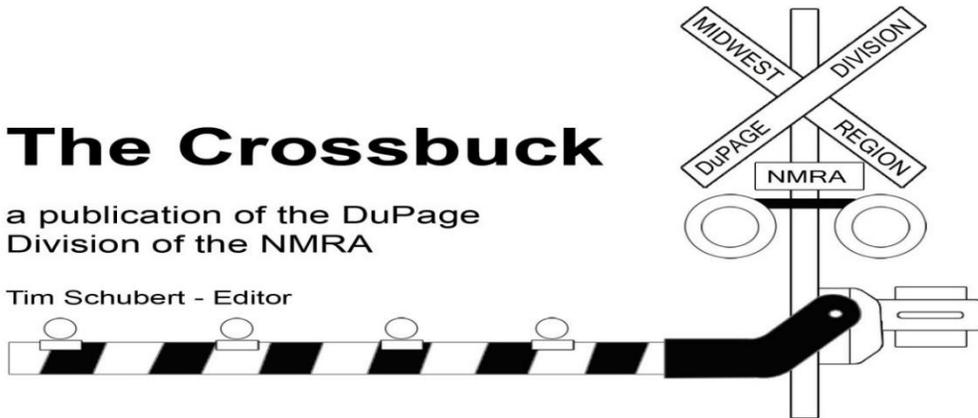


The Crossbuck

a publication of the DuPage
Division of the NMRA

Tim Schubert - Editor



REVISED MEETING DATES

Fall-Winter 2021 Edition

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK By Patrick Golden

We are back! Let that sink in for a moment.
We are back!

Until our in-person meeting this past September, it had been since March 2020 that we last had met in person. The Covid-19 pandemic sidelined our activities, as it did with virtually every other Division and in fact worldwide. Following the lead of many other Divisions we resorted to Zoom meetings just so we'd be doing "something" and continuing to roll down the track so to speak.

Thank you to Tim Schubert and others who are much more technically savvy than I am, we were very successful at conducting Zoom meetings and experienced some very interesting clinics presented from as far away as Florida I believe.

We are back, as I said, but we are also keeping our fingers crossed as to how long we can continue to meet in person. The church where we meet had taken all the necessary precautions during the pandemic and I had remained in touch with my contact at the church to gauge when we could return. The signal in front of us changed from red to green in August so we are back to meeting in person, complete with live presentations, popular vote contests and the overall camaraderie that is part of any live gathering. The church does reserve the right to drop the signal in front of us to red again should the Covid-19 virus, or whatever iteration of it exists at the time, experiences an uptick again. I'm hoping that is not the case and we can return to our normal routine.

Our usual Christmas luncheon at the church during our December meeting, currently scheduled for December 5, 2021, could be in jeopardy as the jury is still out regarding bring food into the building.

Additional good news is that it looks as though the 2022 All American Railroad Show is back too! Our 2020 show was cancelled

one week before the show, and with the pandemic raging last October when I would typically start the planning process, it was simply too risky to embark on something that had a slim chance of going forward. When attending the Midwest Region Board of Directors meetings, again via Zoom, I was hearing every other Division in the Region was in the same situation we were.

As coordinator of the show, I reached out to Lyons Township High School in early September asking about a show date in 2022 and was pleasantly surprised when they responded in a very positive manner saying they look forward to our return and their hosting the show. Again, their approval carries the caveat that should Covid-19 upend the world again the decision to host the show could change. Once again though I'm thinking positive thoughts. As I write this column, I have mailed out 31 invitations to our exhibitors.

Finally, as always, the Division looks to our members for clinics/presentations so if you are willing to speak to the group about "just about anything railroad or model railroad related" we'd love to have you. The Division will conduct elections next March for the positions of Assistant Superintendent and Paymaster so if you're inclined to take on a leadership role in the Division, again, we'd love to have you. In the meantime, come on out to a meeting and meet and visit with other modelers and members of the Division.

Happy railroading all!

MEETING LOCATION FOR 2019-20

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 2021-2022

Superintendent – Patrick Golden
Expires 5/31/23
Asst. Super. – Ray Gerlich
Expires 5/31/22
Chief Clerk – Tim Schubert
Expires 5/31/23
Paymaster – Kim Schlytter
Expires 5/31/22

Trainmasters (All terms expire 5/31/22)

Tim Schubert - *Crossback Editor*
Patrick Golden - *All American Railroad Show*
Ron Scharping - *Membership Chairman*
Rob Schiavone - *Achievement Program*
Charlie Lewis - *Contest Chairman*
Dave Koch – *Social Media*
Dave Angus – *Name Tags*
Jerry Howard – *Division Outreach*
Alan Busic – *Division Outreach*
Fred Henize – *At Large Trainmaster*
Perry Sugerman – *At Large Trainmaster*

Additional Trainmaster positions are available, if you are interested in volunteering, please see the Superintendent.

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.

Easy Steel Coil Cradles for Gondolas – by Tim Schubert

Like many, I was looking for projects to do during the early part of the pandemic. I had wanted to put together a steel coil train after watching the Virtual Railfan camera from Elkhart, IN on YouTube. There was an almost constant stream of steel coil cars headed east on the Norfolk Southern (ex. NYC) line.

After doing some Google research and finding a variety of good to poor images, I was at a point of “paralysis by analysis”. I wanted to try to emulate the various angled racks that are found in gondolas, but just could not settle on a good design that would be easy to produce and reproduce.

An answer came when I unboxed an Athearn EJE gondola with steel coils. The included cradles for holding the steel coils were a simple rod and cross bar assembly which could easily be reproduced.

After taking a few measurements, I was off to the Evergreen Plastics website to determine what pieces I would need. The best options were:

- Crossbar - #147 – Strip
- Cradle - #214 – Rod

Thanks to curbside pick up at a local hobby shop during the shutdown, I was able to pick up several packs of each and get started.

Additional measurements and fitment resulted in the following dimensions for several manufactures

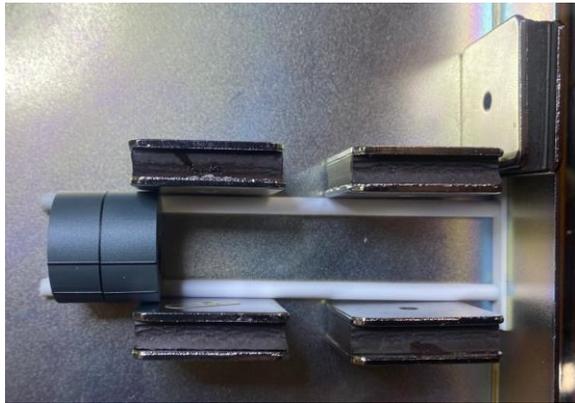
Mfg.	Crossbar length	Rod length
Athearn/Round-house 53'	1.167"	3.193
Atlas Trainman	1.32"	3.51"
Scale Trains Havelock	1.15"	3.52"

To production line the process, I worked to produce enough racks for cover all of each manufacturer's cars I had on hand. Making square cuts is important and the use of a Xacto Miter Box was essential. I set up the box with a stop at the right length and then cut all the cross bars and then all the rods.



The assembly is straight forward and is greatly aided by using a Micro Mark Magnetic Gluing Jig (#60304).

Moving to the gluing jig, I set up the magnets to make a support system to place the cross bars and rods in to glue them. A light dip into fast setting super glue with rod and then carefully placing it on the crossbar resulted in a quick set up and only a few pieces glued to the jig.



Once all cradles are glued up, a quick coat of Rustoleum Satin Black and the cradles are ready for service.



BECOME A MASTER MODEL RAILROADER!

Get credit for the work you have done! See Rob Schiavone at one of our meetings to get guidance on the Achievement Program for the NMRA. You may be surprised that some of your work or volunteering counts towards this program. See details at <https://www.nmra.org/education/achievement-program>

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

- Tony Frankowski – Frankfort
- John Judd – Plainfield
- James Kirby - Chicago

Welcome to the NMRA and the DuPage Division – we hope to see you at a meeting!

Candidates Needed for Two Division Positions

In April 2022, the Assistant Superintendent and Paymaster positions will be up for election. Both current holders of these positions have reached their limits to hold office per our bylaws. We have one candidate for Paymaster. We could use more for both positions!

If you have interest in helping keep our strong Division going and growing, please see Patrick and let him know you are interested.

In 2023, both the Superintendent and Chief Clerk positions will also reach their limit per the bylaws. Start making your plans to run for one of those positions – your help is needed!

DuPage Division 2021-22 Calendar of Events

Month	Presentation	Contest
September 12, 2021	<i>Operations on A&IR and Applying Yard Management Systems by Perry Sugerman</i>	Anything You Worked on Recently
October 3, 2021	<i>An HO Traction Micro-layout by Dave Lull</i>	Structures
November 7, 2021	<i>Operations on the N Scale Apple Valley Route by Fred Henize</i>	Supporting Characters
December 5, 2021	Division Christmas Party – pending	Annual Holiday Season Photo Contest
January 9, 2022	TBA	TBA
February 6, 2022	TBA	Open Loads
March 6, 2022	TBA	Annual All NRMA Categories Contest
March 26, 2022	All American Railroad Show – 39th Annual at Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, IL	9am to 5pm Admission \$5
April 3, 2022	Layout Tours	No Contest
May 1, 2022	TBA	Favorite Train
May 18-22, 2022	Midwest Region Convention The Indy Junction Indianapolis, IN	<i>Regional Contests</i>
June XX, 2022	Division Outing	<i>Let us know some things you want to see or places you may want to go.</i>
August 7-13, 2022	National Convention at St. Louis, MO.	<i>National Contests</i>

Short Blasts

Some upcoming model railroading events for your calendar:

Fri & Sun – Elmhurst Model Railroad Club Open House 111 E. 1st St. Elmhurst, IL Friday – 7-10pm, Sun – 1-4pm *Come out and support some of our Division members*

Weds & Fri – Prairie Scale Model Railroaders Open House 3 E. Ash St Lombard, IL 7:30-9:30pm *Come out and support some of our Division members*

Nov 13 & 14 – Lake County Model Railroad Club Open House – 11am to 4pm, free admission. www.lcmrr.org

Nov 21 – Peoria Train Show – Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL 10am to 3pm, \$3 admission.

Dec 4 – Model Railroad Swap Meet – Will County MRRC – Stone City VFW Joliet, IL 9am to 2pm. \$5 admission.

Jan 14 – Scale Model Swap Meet – Elmhurst MRRC – Elmhurst Christian Reform Center, Elmhurst, IL. 6pm to 9pm, \$5 admission

Jan 22 – Model Railroad Swap Meet – St. John Lutheran Church, Darien, IL. 9am to 3pm, \$5 admission

March 26 – All American Railroad Show – 39th Annual – Lyons Township HS, La Grange, IL 9am to 5pm \$5, 4 and under free

If you know of any other events or are sponsoring an event, please let us know and we'll post it on the Division website or Facebook page.

Keep your eye on our Facebook page as we will promote any upcoming model railroading or prototype events as we are notified.

CROSSING FLASHER CIRCUIT By Patrick Golden

My introduction to model railroading followed along the same path as many others in that it all began with one of Lionel's higher-end train sets at Christmas 1961. My late father insisted he bought it for his children but years later I would realize it was his and us kids simply played with it. It was only set up at Christmas, on the floor, and each year brought an additional freight car, more track, remote control switches, operating accessories, etc. I don't believe my father ever fully realized the dreams he had but that initial exposure to model trains gave me the start in the hobby I enjoy today.

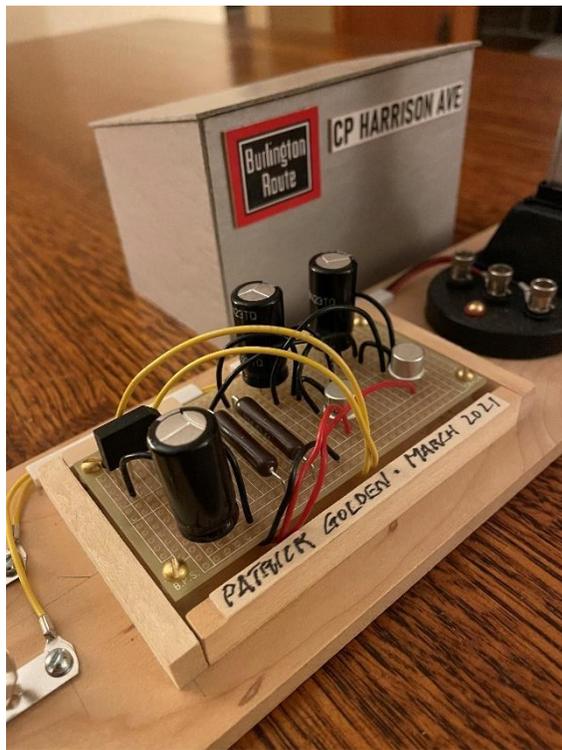
I have what could be called an HO scale museum collection (a little of everything) and I operate on a local club layout. In 2008, I inherited my dad's Lionel and continue the tradition of setting it up every Christmas holiday for the enjoyment of friends and family. I have made significant additions to it, with both new and vintage components, to the point where I now describe the layout as Lionel on steroids.

In the past year I bought from Tim Schubert, a 1950s vintage Lionel #154 crossing flasher complete with Lionel's contact device that clipped to the rails and activated the flasher lamps as the train's wheels rolled across the contacts. This provided a very erratic flashing sequence and I had no intention of using it.

Instead, I had found on the internet a design for an electronic circuit called an astable multivibrator, or oscillator. After powering up the crossing flasher to make sure the wiring was intact and the lamps still worked, I went to work purchasing the necessary components, mocking up the circuit on a breadboard and testing it. I will admit that before powering it up I donned safety glasses and stood back about three feet. Nothing blew apart, no magic smoke escaped and all worked well although the flashing rate was much too fast but that was corrected later on.

The oscillator circuit consists of two 2N3904 power transistors that act as switches and two 3,300-ohm resistor-1,000 microfarad capacitor combinations, whose values function to control the timing of the flasher. Increasing the value of the capacitors corrected the timing issue and flashing rate. 12 to 14 volts AC power is provided through a Fahnestock spring clip terminals to a full-wave bridge rectifier on the circuit board and the rectifier converts the AC to a full-wave DC voltage.

A 1,000-microfarad filter capacitor, connected in parallel with the rectifier output, smooths out the DC sine wave to essentially provide a constant 12–14-volt DC input to the circuit.



Applying power to the circuit starts the oscillation. First one transistor turns on (closes its “switch”) and illuminates the lamp connected to it.

The charging and discharging of the resistor-capacitor timing circuits turns the first transistor off and the other one on. The first lamp turns off and the other one is illuminated. Each lamp is

illuminated for just under a second and the oscillation continues until power to the circuit is interrupted.

The wiring is routed through Evergreen polystyrene rectangular tube to keep everything neat and the circuit board is mounted to ¼” cabinet grade plywood, left over from a kitchen project, using nylon standoffs and #4 brass wood screws available at Ace Hardware.

A lift-off shed enclosure constructed from heavy gauge cardstock complete with a “CP Harrison Ave” sign and Burlington Route logo courtesy of the mailings from the Burlington Route Historical Society conceal the circuit board and finish the project.



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**This is your notification of the November 7,
2021 meeting**

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