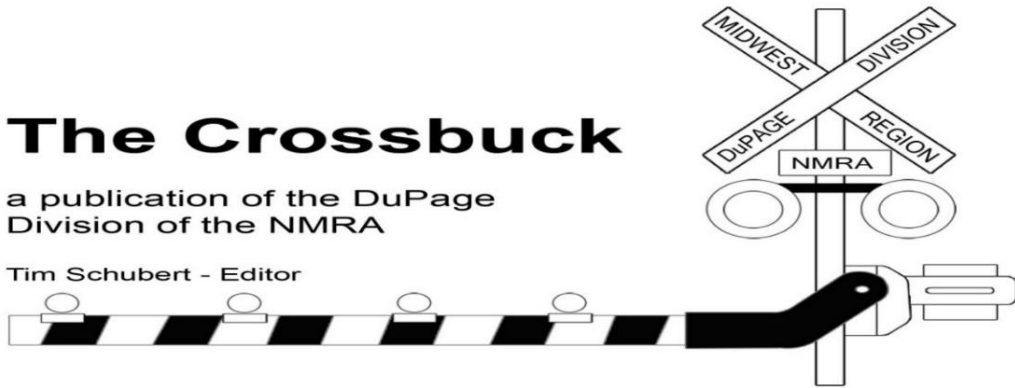


# The Crossbuck

a publication of the DuPage  
Division of the NMRA

Tim Schubert - Editor



## Fall/Winter 2023 Edition

### From The Superintendent's Desk by Alex Schneider

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer and that at least part of it related to our hobby. Although summer tends to be a lull in actual modeling it can be a great time to gain inspiration for your operations, your fleet, and the scenes you wish to represent.

My biggest modeling activity has been building a second NYC dining car from a Bethlehem Car Works kit, this time documenting the process to support a clinic I am giving at the Naperville RPM.

I have just returned from a short trip to central Pennsylvania, which combined photography at several tourist or scenic railroads with a regional convention held by the Mid-East Region in Altoona. That town is at the base of the famous Horseshoe Curve which is still a major mainline of the Norfolk Southern, and in half an hour four freight trains and Amtrak's Pennsylvanian passed. Unfortunately, the funicular railroad up to track level is not currently working.



Altoona also is home of the Railroader's Museum. While other museums have a larger collection of rolling stock, this one focuses on the life experiences of those who made the railroad work – machinists, engineers, track laborers. Well worth a stop if you are in the area.

A nighttime photo shoot at the East Broad Top involved recreating a famous O. Winston Link photo of a couple at a drive-in movie, with a passing steam locomotive in the background. It was the peak of a fun day.



At the MER convention I saw some things that worked and others that didn't, but I gained some insights we can put to use for our own regional convention. I hope you have "penciled in" the dates on May 2 thru 4 in South Bend, Indiana, and follow announcements at <http://2024roundthebend.com/>.

One thing that impressed me was the number of merit award quality models on display. I hope to see us regain that here, but to do that we need qualified judges who have the appropriate certificate in motive power, car building, structures or the like. We also need judges for dispatching, civil and electrical. If you have a certificate speak up, and we'll try to put you to work helping others attain it too. While this relates to contests at division meetings or the region, that's not the only opportunity for merit judging. And not all category winners qualify for merit awards. But judges' comments can help you improve and gain the confidence to try something more challenging.

Keep 'em rolling!

## MEETING LOCATION FOR 2023-24

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 – 55<sup>th</sup> Street/Maple & Dunham, South – 63<sup>rd</sup> Street & Dunham

## Division Officers For 2023-2024

Superintendent – Alex Schneider - Expires 5/31/25  
 Asst. Super. – Perry Sugerman - Expires 5/31/24  
 Chief Clerk – Jim Marciniak - Expires 5/31/25  
 Paymaster – Ron Scharping - Expires 5/31/24

### **Trainmasters** (All terms expire 5/31/24)

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

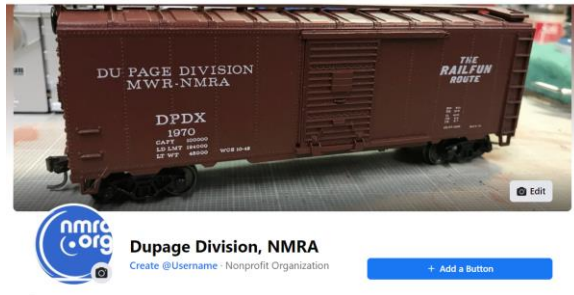
Contact Information is available on the Division website. Website: [www.mwr-nmra.org/dupage](http://www.mwr-nmra.org/dupage)

### **Division Address:**

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

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## 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.

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### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

- Joel VanderWee, Palos Heights

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

Some upcoming model railroading events for your calendar:

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

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

**Weds & Fri – Midwest N' Pioneer MRRC –** 2000 S 25<sup>th</sup> Ave. Broadview, IL 6:30-9pm *Come out and support some of our Division members*

**Nov 4-5 – Lake Co. Model Railroad Club Fall Open House** – 107 S. Main Street, Waconda, IL. 11am to 4pm Free & Raffle Prizes

**Nov 18 – Ridge Model RR Club Open House** – SE corner of Ridge & Colfax, Griffith, IN. 10am to 4pm. Free

**Nov 19 – Peoria Train Fair** – Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL 10am to 3pm, Admission \$3 under 12 free

**Dec 2 – Central Illinois Train Xchange** – White Oak Community Center, 200 Lincoln St. Carlock, IL 9am to 1pm, Admission \$5

**Dec 2 – Model Railroad Swap Meet** – Will County MRRC, Stone City VFW 124 Stone City Drive, Joliet. 9am to 1pm Admission \$5

**Feb 17-18 – Mad City Show & Sale** – Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI, 9am to 5pm (Sunday 4pm), See

**Jul 19-20, 2024 – St. Louis RPM Meet** – Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL. [www.stlrpm.com](http://www.stlrpm.com)

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

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### 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>

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## DuPage Division 2023-24 Calendar of Events

Month	Presentation	Contest
<b>September 10, 2023</b>	<i>Railroad Art Potpourri – by Patrick Golden</i>	What I have been working on lately
<b>October 1, 2023</b>	<i>Layout Command Control (LCC) by Brian Barndt</i>	Railroad Buildings
<b>November 5, 2023</b>	<i>CAD Based Tools &amp; Modeling Signs by Dave Lull</i>	Boxcars – By Popular Vote
<b>December 3, 2023</b>	<i>Annual Holiday Luncheon</i>	Favorite Train – By Popular Vote
<b>January 7, 2024</b>	<i>Grain Processing &amp; Resulting Traffic by Mark Vaughn</i>	What's on your workbench? – No voting
<b>February 4, 2024</b>	<i>tbd</i>	Caboose or any EOT device – By Popular Vote
<b>March 3, 2024</b>	<i>tbd</i>	Any & all types of Loads on Rolling Stock – by Popular Vote
<b>March 23, 2024</b>	<b>All American Railroad Show – 41st Annual</b> at Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, IL	9am to 5pm Admission \$5
<b>April 7, 2024</b>	<b>Layout Tours</b>	No Contest
<b>May 2-4, 2024</b>	<b>Around the Bend Midwest Regional Convention – South Bend, IN</b>	Regional Contests <a href="http://2024roundthebend.com/">http://2024roundthebend.com/</a>
<b>May 5, 2024</b>	<i>TBA</i>	tbd
<b>June XX, 2024</b>	<b>Division Outing</b>	<i>Let us know some things you want to see</i>
<b>August 4-11, 2024</b>	<b>Surfliner National Convention Long Beach, CA</b>	National Contests <a href="https://surfliner2024.org/">https://surfliner2024.org/</a>

## Report on the 2023 All American Railroad Show by Patrick Golden

The Division had an extremely successful All-American Railroad Show this past March and was able to generate a grand total profit to the Division of \$3,195.59. This amount marks the best profit amount we have ever experienced and establishes a new high-water mark. In comparison, our three previous years in which we've had shows (remember we missed 2020 and 2021) generated profits of \$2,353.64 in 2022, \$2,519.91 in 2019 and \$2,149.57 in 2018.

Looking back over the last ten shows, dating back to 2011, our previous high was \$2,906.06 in 2017 while our lowest profit was \$1,801.18 in 2012. Being that the 2020 show was cancelled one week prior to the show, we do show a loss of \$1,055.34 for that year which included the printing, postage, office supplies and insurance fee National charges the Division to process the coverage under the NMRA umbrella. The amounts showing as profit for each year include admission profit after expenses, concessions profit after expenses, both amounts split 50/50 with the school per our contract, and coffee/lunch donations which are not split. Factoring in the loss experienced in 2020, our average profit since 2011 calculates to \$2,012.39.

Our net gate (the take at the door after the money used to make change is deducted) was \$6,970.00 compared with \$5,673.00 in 2022, \$6,564.00 in 2019 and \$6,032.25 in 2018. Paid attendance at this year's show was estimated at 1,510 (those age five and older) compared with 1,227 in 2022, 1,431 in 2019 and 1,322 in 2018. Add in those under five and you can see we had a rather good show.

Total expenses, which includes postage, office supplies, printing, insurance and coffee and donuts for exhibitors came to

\$2,112.30 compared with \$1,464.93 in 2022, \$1,914.33 in 2019 and \$2,061.42 in 2018.

For the tenth year now, since 2012, the Division operated the concession, as we have done ever since the senior class school kids whose task it used to be to operate the concession opted to do a less than stellar job. Concession sales totaled \$1,921.45 against total expenses of \$1,333.45, generating a gross profit of \$588.00 and when split with the school netting the Division a profit of \$294.00. 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 \$2,720.48 compared with \$2,236.66 in 2022, \$2,471.80 in 2019 and \$2,088.69 in 2018. A donation jar set out for coffee, donuts and lunches netted the Division an additional \$475.11 bringing the Division's total profit from the gate, concessions and donations to \$3,195.59.

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 fine folks at the Illinois Railway Museum donated family four-pack passes to the museum which were awarded as door prizes 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 set-up. 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 for a great show!

## **Resurrecting My Railroad by Kim Schlytter**

An NMRA friend of mine told me, "Operate, operate, operate!" So, as many Tuesday nights as I can, I fire up my railroad and run some trains. My railroad occupies a 13' x 22' room and is currently one level with aspirations of two. I've divided my railroad into two power districts and have Digitrax equipment. I've been enjoying trouble-free operation save the occasional derailment for one (stupid?) reason or another.

One night this summer I was again humming along and had just finished switching up the next train and parked the switch engine. I reached for another throttle to pick up the road power when my DB150 announced a dead short with its customary five beeps. Whaaaat? What just happened?

I took a quick look around for a derailment or perhaps something that had fallen across the tracks. Nothing. It was getting late, so I decided to call it a night and try again the next night. Wednesday night I fired up the railroad and again the DB150 announced a dead short. Hmm. So, I started down the list of "most-likelies". I looked for derailments or something on the track again. I set off the switch engine I had been using. I unplugged all the throttles, each time trying to restart the railroad. Each time

getting the dead short beeps. I reviewed my wiring at the engine terminal but determined I would either have an unintentional live track or a dead track rather than a short if anything there was wrong.

Now, I hadn't made any track or wiring changes to the railroad in months and it exhausted me to even think about having to check for crossed wires or who-knows-what underneath. After all, I had been meticulous in setting up all that wiring and could not conceive something like that could be the problem. And, I was going along just fine last night. I shut it all down and decided to think about how I was going to find this dead short.

A few days went by and having had the experience of a car causing a dead short because an axle lost the insulation at one of the wheels, I decided I would remove all the cars one group at a time to eliminate this potential cause. There were about 105 cars on the railroad at this point. After setting cars in the ditch or wherever I could (and trying to maintain their order to stay in tune with my paperwork), I would fire up the railroad. SHORT! Grrrr. What next?

A couple years ago, I had finally obtained some new locomotives and wanted to use 4-number addressing using the locomotives' numbers. Studying what I would have to do to accomplish this with my equipment made me think: "How old is this stuff?" Turned out it was already over 20 years old. Surely some new equipment would make this easier, so with a little research and a conversation with Digitrax via their website's Help Desk, I decided to buy a starter kit that gave me a new command station, power supply and throttle. Sure enough, this all made programming the decoders for the locomotive's number a breeze.

When I installed the new equipment, I replaced the DB150 that was my command station with the new DCS210+ in the starter kit and kept the other DB150 as the slave

running the second power district. I was starting to think that the older DB150 could be to blame. So, next I decided to swap the one I was using with the one I had removed and stored when I installed the new DCS210+. SHORT! AAAAH! Another thing occurred to me and that was, if the DB150 is complaining, shouldn't the district controlled by the DCS210+ be alive? NO!

After about two weeks of pondering and trying things, I decided to again go to the Help Desk at Digitrax. As best I could and in as few words as possible, I explained what I was experiencing and that I was starting to suspect my DCS210+. I also attached a photo of my control system so they could see how it was set up. I asked if there could possibly be a way to "reboot" or "reset" the DCS210+? This was on Sunday night.

Monday came and went and I hadn't heard anything which I found unusual given my prior experience. On Tuesday I thought I would go back to the website and check the "ticket" I had created. And, I had an answer! The Help Desk person had given me a few steps to take and asked that I get back to him once I had tried that. (I found the email in my spam later.) Sure enough, I completed the sequence and hallelujah the railroad was resurrected. I got back to the Help Desk and thanked him for this wonderful development and asked if he had any idea why this had happened? All he could say was maybe the DB150 hiccupped. Oh, well. Don't care now.

So, if you happen to have Digitrax equipment and a DCS210+ command station, the following sequence may bring your layout back to life someday. But, regardless, if you have Digitrax equipment or are considering what kind of DCC equipment to get, I highly recommend utilizing Digitrax's Help Desk. This was the third issue I've had and each time I got a quick response and I got beyond my issue successfully.

Here's the sequence that was provided:

1. Make sure the railroad is set up the way it was when it was operated successfully.
2. Disconnect Rail A and Rail B from the front of the DCS210+.
3. Disconnect LocoNet from the front of the DCS210+.
4. Power up the DCS210+.
5. On the DCS210+, set the MODE switch to center OP position. The PWR and PROG LED's will pulse alternatively.
6. Plug the DT602 throttle into LocoNet in the front of DCS210+.
7. On the DT602, press the Switch (S) key.
8. Press the 4 key, then the 0 key.
9. Press the soft menu key "Closed".
10. Press the X key.
11. Move the MODE switch down to the Sleep position and back to Run.
12. Shut down the DCS210+.
13. Reconnect Rail A and Rail B.
14. Reconnect LocoNet.
15. Power up DCS210+. (should get one beep for system OK)
16. Power the system down and back on. Should be back to normal.

It was for me!

Model railroading is fun again.

## **Summer 2023 Outing by Patrick Golden**

Several members of the DuPage Division, along with spouses, children and grandchildren joined with members of the Illinois Live Steamers organization on Saturday, June 3, 2023 for an outing at the ILS site in Homer Glen.

We were able to ride on the 1-1/2" scale trains, watch some of the members fire up their steam locomotives from a cold start



and enjoyed a delicious catered barbeque lunch.

It had been many years since the Division closed out the meeting season with an outing such as this. Previous efforts to schedule with the ILS organization were started too late and their schedule was already full. Emails requesting a date for a 2023 outing began as early as October of 2022.

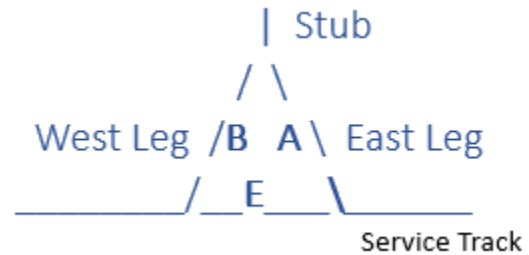
Approximately fifty DuPage Division folks joined with twenty or so ILS members for an enjoyable outing on a warm sunny day.

Our sincere thanks go out to DuPage Division and ILS member Mike Gardner for acting as our liaison and making sure every detail was addressed so all would run smoothly during our visit. Mike even placed traffic cones at the driveway entrance to the ILS site since it is not marked with any type of sign.

Sincere thanks are also in order for DuPage Division member Tim Schubert who arranged for the catered lunch provided by Uncle Bub's Barbeque. Tim's an expert at the catering part of events and regularly handles the catering at our holiday parties too.

Thank you very much Mike and Tim for the work you did to make for such an enjoyable day at the Illinois Live Steamers.

## A Railroad Switching Puzzle by Perry Sugerman



### Problem

The Wye is on the service track for two industries on the legs. **A** is a car on the East Leg and **B** is a car on the West Leg. **E** is an engine on the Service Track.

The Stub is long enough to hold one car clear of the Wye Switch.

The Engine on the stub will not clear the Wye Switch.

The problem is to use the engine to switch the cars so that **A** is on the West Leg and **B** is on the East Leg and E is returned to its starting position.

Try and solve it.

The solution will be available at the **December** meeting – attend the meeting to pick up a copy of the solution.



For sale - HO layout



21' x 24', Fully scened, Digitrax DCC, tortoise controlled turnouts, 14 locomotives, 110 cars, 45 structures, some signaling. Contact Ron Scharping at [trainron@gmail.com](mailto:trainron@gmail.com) or (630) 968-0157 for more information.

Photos from the RPM Naperville



Midwest Mod-U-Trak



RPM vendors room #1

**This is your notification of the November 5,  
2023 meeting**

***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.

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