

# Super's Signal

A publication of Division 6, Mid Central Region of The National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

August 2020

## Superintendent's Report

Matt Goodman, Division 6 Super

Hello fellow modelers, from your new Superintendent. I'm starting my first full report by giving a tip of the hat to our former Super, Greg Short.

Greg started his six-year term by stepping into an unexpected Superintendent vacancy from his Assistant Superintendent position. He concluded those six years with various significant accomplishments. The top two, from my point of view, were:

1. The return of our Division 6 NMRA information table to local train shows.
2. The establishment of the new Cambridge Train Show sponsored by Division 6. Greg was definitely the driving force in the latter example. Not only did he get it established, but he is making it bigger each year, with the third year approaching.

Greg has certainly left his mark. I have learned a lot from him and intend to turn to him (and other past Superintendents) as I learn this role. The next time you see him, be sure to thank him for his leadership and service to our division and hobby.

Talking about Greg's legacy to the division is a good segue to some of the items I will focus on during my time in office. The top two are Continuity and Website. In some ways, these two are intertwined.

### Continuity

We need to ensure we have people and plans in place to replace any of the division's leaders in case of emergency (accident, resignation, illness,

**Super's Signal Deadline  
13 August**

## 8 August (Saturday) Marion Union Station Marion

9:00: Clinic: *East Broad Top Railroad*, Butch Sage

9:55: Contest entries open

10:00: Clinic: *EEC+F*, Richard Matejovic  
11:30: Lunch

12:30: Contest entries closes, voting begins

12:50: Contest voting ends

1:00: Division 6 Meeting begins, Contest Results, Raffle

2:30: Clinic: *Weathering Techniques*, Dave Hurt

All Day: Train Watching

All Day: Sale items (Bring your own table)

Model Contest: Thumbyz (Humorous Whimsical stuff)

Photography Contest: Railroad Derelicts/Wrecks

OR

## 9 August Zoom Video Call

1:00: Zoom Room opens

1:30: Business Meeting starts

2:30: (estimate) Clinic: *East Broad Top Railroad*, Butch Sage

Virtual Photo Contest #4: Railroad Derelicts/Wrecks

Watch your email, or the Web Site for details, or contact Matt at [Super@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org](mailto:Super@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org)

etc.). So we are not left scrambling when the unexpected happens. The need for this has come up twice in my relatively short time with the division. The first being Greg's taking the Superintendent position mentioned above. The second when Butch Sage filled the Contest

**The Super's Report**  
Continued on page 4.

**DIVISION 6 OFFICERS****Division 6 Superintendent**

Matt Goodman: 30 S. Algonquin Ave  
Columbus, Ohio 43204

[Super@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org](mailto:Super@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org)

**Division 6 Assistant Superintendent**

Dexter Hill:

[AssistSuper@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org](mailto:AssistSuper@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org)

**Division 6 Clerk**

Carter Jastram:

[DepClerk@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org](mailto:DepClerk@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org)

**Division 6 Pay Master**

Jim Borcz:

[Paymaster@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org](mailto:Paymaster@Div6-MCR-NMRA.org)

**Directors**

Dick Briggs, MMR

Donald Wilke,

Mike Wolf, MMR:

[Director@div6-mcr-nmra.org](mailto:Director@div6-mcr-nmra.org)

**Appointed Division 6 Chairs**

A list of Division 6 Chairs can be found at:

<https://div6-mcr-nmra.org/>

[Officers Page.html](#)

**Web Master:** Don Wilke

[Web\\_Master@div6-mcr-nmra.org](mailto:Web_Master@div6-mcr-nmra.org)

**Super's Signal Pub.:** Don Wilke

[SuperSignalPub@div6-mcr-nmra.org](mailto:SuperSignalPub@div6-mcr-nmra.org)

**Division 6 Web Site:**

[www.div6-mcr-nmra.org](http://www.div6-mcr-nmra.org)

**Mid Central Region President:**

Bob Weinheimer

[president@midcentral-region-nmra.org](mailto:president@midcentral-region-nmra.org)

**NMRA Central District Director:**

Robert Beaty, MMR

Non-Credited Photos by Donald Wilke

**Clerk's Report**  
**Buckeye Division 6,**  
**Mid Central Region, NMRA, Inc.**  
**Virtual Division Meeting**  
**20 June 2020**  
*Carter Jastram, Clerk*

**Division 6 Officers Present:**

Superintendent	Matt Goodman
Assistant Superintendent	Dexter Hill
Clerk	Carter Jastram
Paymaster	Jim Borcz
Director	Dick Briggs, MMR
Director	Don Wilke
Director	Mike Wolf, MMR

**Division 6 Chairpersons Present:**

Achievement Program	Dick Briggs, MMR
Inspector of Elections	Harry "Butch" Sage
Media	Matt Goodman
Membership	Rick Brown
Programs	Dexter Hill / Mike Wolf, MMR
Raffle	Harry "Butch" Sage
Super's Signal Publisher	Don Wilke
Web Master	Don Wilke

**Absent:**

Company Store, Train Show	Greg Short
Contest, Groups.io	Jim Ruisinger
Membership Retention	Bruce McDonald

**Call to Order:**

The Division 6 Meeting was called to order by Matt Goodman, Division 6 Superintendent, at 1:30 p.m.

**Announcements:**

**Zoom:** Matt Goodman. Matt presented an overview of controls available to division members attending a Zoom virtual meeting. Speaker View vs. Gallery View; how to change one's name as it appears on screen; how to use chat; and the various controls across the bottom of the screen. He also shared elements of good etiquette and how voting could be conducted.

**Personnel Update:** Matt Goodman. Matt welcomed Dick Briggs, MMR, as our new Division 6 Director. Matt has vacated that position to become Superintendent. Dick brings a deep background "from the mundane to big things." The current term expires at the end of this year.

**Reports:**

**Clerk's Report:** Carter Jastram. The previous Division 6 meeting was held in March. The Minutes were published in the April *Super's Signal*. The Clerk's Report, as it appears in that issue, was approved.

**Paymaster's Report:** Jim Borcz. The division opened a three-month CD. We could take out a second CD to alternate with the first one. The Paymaster's Report was approved, subject to audit.

**The Clerk's Report**  
Continued on page 3.

**Programs Reports:**

**Locations:** Dexter Hill. Dexter presented the schedule and possible backup plans.

**Clinics:** Mike Wolf. Clinics are lined up for our meetings, with at least two able to be presented at meetings held on line if not held in person.

Schedules will be published in the *Super's Signal* and announced at meetings as they are finalized.

**Achievement Report:** Dick Briggs. The Achievement Program is in limbo due to Covid-19, but there is still interest, and activity is expected to pick up again soon.

**Super's Signal Report:** Don Wilke. Articles for the next *Signal* are due this Thursday, June 25. Don has shortened the side bar of officers to refer to the list of division chairs on our website.

**Webmaster:** Don Wilke. The archive web site has a better look, and updating the main website will occur in the near future.

**Media:** Matt Goodman. The Facebook page has 756 likes. Jim and Butch are the Editors/Administrators for the Facebook page. No changes to Youtube. Jim is running groups.io with the Membership Chair, who also updates MailChimp.

**Membership:** Rick Brown. Membership numbers remain steady. Rick sent welcomes to four new members, and received three replies back.

**Company Store (Model Projects):** Greg Short. Matt reported that launching any car project will be delayed because Bowser is running behind. Greg has a 70-ton covered hopper project in mind.

**Train Show:** Greg Short. Mike shared his screen showing the latest flyer for the Cambridge Train Show to be distributed and the list of stores and web sites through which to advertise.

**Old Business:**

**Name Tags:** Let Jim Borcz know if you needs a Division 6 Name Tag.

**Officers and Director:** Matt introduced the new Officers and Director.

**New Business:**

**Website Changes:** Matt and Don are planning to update the division website through a couple of phases, and will be asking for help from individuals or a committee.

**Club Reports:**

**The Delaware County Model Railroad Group** in Sunbury is reopening, and its first meeting is this Tuesday, June 23. On first, third and fifth Tuesdays of each month, they meet at 10 a.m., and on second and fourth Tuesdays at 6 p.m.

**The Hocking Valley Model Railroad Club** is still on hiatus, and not meeting.

**The Mini-Bunch** (narrow gaugers) is planning to meet September 26 for tours, dinner and a program. All are welcome.

**The Janis Center Model Railroad Club** is closed until after Labor Day.

**The Northeastern Ohio Live Steamers Club** (neols.net) in Medina was allowed back into their park last weekend.

**The Mill Creek Central Railroad** (Coshocton) has a website: [millcreekcentral.com](http://millcreekcentral.com).

**Contest:**

Voting in the division's third Virtual Photo Contest is open until 6 p.m. today. Results are in this issue of the *Signal*.

**Welcome Guests and New Members:**

Division 6 welcomes Ed Block, Ken McDonough and Doug Kullman, along with Bob Weinheimer, MCR President, to our electronic screens today. Thank you for being with us!

**Good of the Order:**

**Next Division Meetings:** Our next Division 6 meeting is scheduled for August 8 in Marion, Ohio.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

**Clinic:**

Mike Wolf, MMR, presented a clinic on *Getting Started In (or Improving) Operations On Your Layout*.

If you have a clinic to present to the division, please notify Mike Wolf and discuss the clinic with him.



*Division 6 Email Group:*  
[NMRABuckeyeDivision@groups.io](mailto:NMRABuckeyeDivision@groups.io)

Chair role for an injured Jim Ruisinger. My goal is to make sure we have someone in the wings for each officer and chair position so “the show can go on.”

I have discussed this with the Board of Directors. We have a couple of positions accounted for, but have many more to go. If you have an interest in learning any existing role, please contact me. Besides providing a backstop, it will give you a look into how Division 6 operates.

### Website Modernization

This started as a continuity question; who would maintain the site if Don weren't able to? It grew into a bigger goal that would see a new design that eases maintenance and provides for continuity. To that end, my vision is to:

- Modernize the look, possibly aligned with National's branding
- Make it easier to update – preferably by multiple authors. An active website is a happy website
- Support continuity by giving multiple people access to the back end (technical) and front end (content)
- Provide a framework for additional functionality such as (but not limited to) connecting to Social Media. Update the site, send a Tweet!

The first step is to make sure Don has a backup

to the current website – the continuity part. Down the road, we may be looking for volunteers for other aspects. These goals, if even possible, are big lifts that will take time and talent to pull off. i.e., they require help! If you have ideas on any of the above or want to contribute, contact me, or Don.

### In Other News

Zoom! - Our division had our first “Virtual” meeting on June 20th, in place of the canceled Marion meeting. We (the BOD and Steering Committee) worked hard to ensure that it would run smoothly for members who joined the meeting and for Mike Wolf's clinic. We experienced no problems. Our attendance was solid, 22 attendees joined, about average for our in-person meetings. Several attendees provided some very positive feedback. They suggested other ways we could use the technology within the division. Interestingly, the feedback and ideas came from people who don't consider themselves “technical”. A good sign!

The BOD voted Dick Briggs, MMR, into the Director position vacated by me. Dick brings a wealth of experience to the position. Welcome back, Dick.

Membership Chair Rick Brown will be taking on new “Zoom Guru” responsibilities. Along with the normal duties of the position.



Time to drop the fire!

### Calling all Clinicians!

Mike Wolf, MRR

You'll note on the Timetable the we have scheduled a bunch of great clinics for the rest of 2020. But what the schedule doesn't show is the contingency plan for clinics should our virtual meeting schedule continue into the fall. That's where I need your help! While some clinics are easy to give virtually (like mine on *Operations* last month or Butch's upcoming one on the *East Broad Top*), some hands-on-clinics are more difficult unless you have a portable camera and good lighting.

Therefore, please contact me if you have a slide show type clinic you'd like to present. There are lots of topics out there (and you can gain points toward your Author or Volunteer AP Certificate).

Looking for an idea or a “shovel ready” clinic? Log in to the NMRA site and go to the EduTrain page. There are numerous clinics ready to go. They include notes for each slide so with a couple dry runs, you can present it like the expert clinician you are!

Concerned about how to present a clinic on Zoom? Don't be. I'm here to coach you through it. It's so easy, even someone still using a flip phone could do it! So send me an email. It would be great if we don't need you this fall but have no fear, I'll be building the schedule for 2021 soon and you'll be at the front of the queue. Thanks in advance for your help.

[wvunion@gmail.com](mailto:wvunion@gmail.com)



### Division 6 – 2020 Time Table

Date	Event	Meeting	City
12 Jan	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>Hilltop Library</i> Clinic: <i>Static Grass Applicator</i> , Darrell Logan & Rich M9 Contest: Open Freight Car WITH Load	Columbus
9 Feb	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>South-East Library</i> Clinic: <i>Weathering Cars</i> , Matt Goodman & Mike Wolf Contest: Non-Revenue Car	Groveport
14 Feb	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
8 March	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>Smoke Stack Hobbies</i> Clinic: <i>Wiring &amp; Automation</i> , William Morgan Contest: Non-Steam Locomotive	Lancaster
12 Mar	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
19 Apr	<b>Meeting Canceled</b>	Business Meeting: <i>Zanesville Club</i> Clinic: <i>Developing Operating Sessions</i> , Mike Wolf, MMR Virtual Contest #1: Line-Side Railroad Structure	Zanesville
23 Apr	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
17 May	Virtual Photo Voting	Virtual Contest #2: Signals	.io-group
23 May	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
28–31 May	<b>Convention Canceled</b>	<i>Model Contest: The Great Big Express</i>	Pittsburgh, Pa
20 Jun (Saturday)	<b>Virtual Meeting on Zoom</b>	Business Meeting: Zoom Clinic: <i>Getting Started (or Improving) Operations on Your Layout</i> , Mike Wolf, MMR Virtual Photo Contest #3: Favorite Train	.io-group
25 Jun	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
8 Aug (Saturday)	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>Marion Union Station</i> Clinic: <i>East Broad Top Railroad</i> , Butch Sage; <i>DCC++</i> , Richard Matejovic; <i>Weathering Techniques</i> , Steve Hurt Model Contest: Thumbz (Humorous, Whimsical Stuff) Photo Contest: Railroad Derelicts / Wrecks	Marion
9 Aug	<b>OR</b> Zoom Virtual Meeting	Business Meeting: Clinic: <i>East Broad Top Railroad</i> , Butch Sage Virtual Photo Contest #4: Railroad Derelicts / Wrecks	Zoom
Sep	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>TBD</i> Clinic: <i>TBD</i> Model Contest: Steam Locomotive with Caboose Photo Contest: Steam Locomotive	TBD
Sep	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
Oct	<b>Division 6 Train Show</b>	Business Meeting: <b>NONE</b> Clinic: <b>NONE</b> Contest: <b>NONE</b>	Cambridge
Oct	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
Nov	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: <i>TBD</i> Clinic: TBA Contest: Closed Freight Car	TBD
Nov	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>		
Dec	Division 6 Meeting	Business Meeting: TBD Clinic: <i>TBD</i> Contest: Passenger Car	TBD
Dec	<i>Super's Signal Deadline</i>	<i>Election Issue</i>	



## Contest Report

Jim Ruisinger, Contest Chair

### “Virtual” Contest-3 Re-Cap June 2020 via the Internet

We continue to have some great photos entered in our contests. Once again we were unable to have an in-person meeting but we held a “Zoom” meeting that was pretty successful. We had 16 very nice photos submitted for our Virtual Favorite Train contest. Photos were put on special page of the division’s website for everyone to vote on them. I would love to see more people vote in these contests, or better than the turnout when we meet in person!

Congratulations to our winners. We will have certificates for you at our next opportunity to hold a Division 6 meeting where we can gather, in person, which will hopefully be in Marion. The same guidelines apply that the photo can be of either a model or the prototype.

Traditionally we’ve not held a meeting in July because of the NMRA National Convention. Well, this year the convention has been cancelled so I’ve got some ideas of trying a photo contest in July. SO if you have ideas for subjects for our photo contests, let me know. Stay tuned for further details

The cumulative point totals for Modeler and Photographer of the Year appears elsewhere in the *Super’s Signal*.

Direct any questions to:

Contest Chairman, Jim Ruisinger.

(614) 440-8962 [Jimbo2490@yahoo.com](mailto:Jimbo2490@yahoo.com)

**Subject:** Favorite Train whether it be model or prototype

**Model:** None

**Photo:**

**1st Place:** Howdy Lamprecht, MMR, *Olive Grove Shay with empties.*

**2nd Place:** Harry “Butch” Sage, *East Broad Top #17 with hoppers at Orbisonia.*

**3rd Place:** Rick Brown, *C & E I Danville Flyer on the Delaware Club.*



1st Place Photo  
Howdy Lamprecht, MMR,  
*Olive Grove Shay with empties*

## Contest Point Summary June 2020

Jim Ruisinger, Contest Chair

### Modeler

Steve Hurt	9	Dan Dennis	1
Pat Hreachmack	5	Bob Doerflein	1
Jerry Hurt	4	Alan Evens	1
Howdy Lamprecht	4	Connie Frazze	1
Richard Matejovic	4	Matt Goodman	1
Peggy Doerflein	3	Bill Hanna	1
Darrell Logan	3	Bob Lee	1
Greg Short	3	Judy Logan	1
Jim Borcz	2	Harry Sage	1
Jim Ruisinger	2		

### Photographer

Matt Goodman	13	Bruce McDonald	2
Don Wilke	12	John Baker	1
Howdy Lamprecht	6	(By way of Jack Brown)	
Dave Richter	6	Dick Briggs, MMR	1
Jim Ruisinger	6	Peggy Doerflein	1
Harry Sage	5	Carter Jastram	1
Jerry Hurt	4	Andrea McIntosh	1
Richard Matejovic	4	Jim Oberst	1
Jim Borcz	3	Jerry Severson	1
Rick Brown	2	Greg Short	1
Steve Hurt	2	Mike Wolf, MMR	1

*Division 6 on YouTube:*

[www.youtube.com/user/nmrabuckeyedivision](https://www.youtube.com/user/nmrabuckeyedivision)

*Division 6 in Facebook:*

*NMRA Buckeye Division [in search field]*

## Membership End of the Month Report

Rick Brown, Membership Chair

### Summary/Comments

As I write this note, I am still thinking about our first Zoom meeting for the full membership of the Buckeye Division. Congratulations to Mike Wolf on a terrific session about operations. I am hoping he follows up with some detailed examples and video of this concept in action on his WVU lines. Well done.

And thanks to all that showed up for that event. All members are welcome to sign in for the next event. The business portion is short, and the good stuff is longer....make this a date you won't miss. Also, we are going to find a place to post the clinic Mike did. It was recorded. I know I learned a lot of new stuff.

The Buckeye Division remains stable in its membership at

163 members. I did note that there are number of upcoming expirations over the summer. Don't get lost in the fun, sun, and model railroading and forget to renew your membership. I have a list of when your membership is up, and can fill you in with a call or an email.

Tim Rafeld of Delaware is a new member to the Division. Welcome to Tim. We hope we get to meet you in person soon, but jump on the next Zoom meeting, and I will introduce you!

If you are member, and you do not an OFFICIAL name tag from the Buckeye Division 6, please let me know and we will source that for you. It would be great to see a bunch of those name tags at the Cambridge Swap Meet....there is strength in numbers!

### Active Members (end of the month):

May	163	May '19	176
April	165	April '19	175
March	165	March '19	180
February	168	February '19	181

**Upcoming Expirations – Check your dates!** Note: If you have questions about when your membership expires, check your magazine address label or contact Membership Chair Rick Brown.

We have only **three** expirations in June, but we have **21** that come due over the summer (myself included).

### New Members, Renewals and Re-Rails

(returning lapsed members)

I noted **one** new member that joined above.  
**Tim Rafeld** of Delaware

### Other Stuff

If you have changes to your address or membership information, please share it. Are you getting emails from the division? If not, we probably don't have an active email address for you. Right now we have **18** members on our roster with no email address listed, which means we can't send you information!

Unsure when your membership expires? You can notify the National Headquarters, or inquire with Rick Brown.

### National

Email: [nmrahq@aol.com](mailto:nmrahq@aol.com)

Phone: 423-892-2846 (9am – 4:30pm)

Mail: NMRA, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1328  
Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328

### Buckeye Division Membership Chair

Email: [MembershipChair@div6-mcr-nmra.org](mailto:MembershipChair@div6-mcr-nmra.org)

Phone: 614-581-6552 (please leave a message)

Mail: Rick Brown  
7274 Nightshade Drive  
Westerville OH 43082



*Don't Just Belong,  
Participate!!*

## Virtual Meeting Recap

Matt Goodman

On June 20th, Division 6 held its first video conference (aka Virtual Meeting) via Zoom. From a production standpoint, it went very smoothly with no one reporting problems joining. The biggest issue that I was aware of was a couple of folks having trouble finding the “unmute” button. Props to the developers of Zoom for making it so easy to use!

We opened the meeting at 1 pm to give folks the option of joining early to work out any glitches. We spent most of the first thirty minutes socializing, with a few folks taking the opportunity to show their latest projects on the screen. While a business meeting isn't the best venue to show off models, it showed one benefit of attending a meeting from your home. Your models are within arm's reach!

The meeting proper started at 1:30. We went through the agenda in a little under 45 minutes. See Carter's Clerk's Report for details. I was surprised and impressed with the etiquette displayed. Members didn't talk over one another, raised their hands to talk, and generally stayed on mute until called on. You guys were better behaved on a video call than in person!

In all 22 people attended. Including our Region President, Bob Weinheimer, and one new member. Mike Wolf's clinic on operations had fantastic content. It was a perfect fit for a Zoom call – and we recorded for posterity. Bob's attendance illustrates one of the cool things about meeting in this fashion. We can have “exotic” guests (or clinicians) from far away. Today, Charleston WV, tomorrow the world!

So how do 22 attendees compare to a typical meeting? Not too bad. In 2019, we averaged 29 attendees per meeting. If you take into account that everything about this Zoom call was new to members and organizers alike, the attendance really was quite good. I'm encouraged.

The initial feedback was positive. A couple of folks who admit to being “low-tech” thoroughly enjoyed the

experience. For anyone who may have avoided the call because of the tech, contact me, or Membership Chair and Zoom Guru Rick Brown for a walkthrough. Keep in mind that it's possible to attend a Zoom call with nothing more than a phone. Though of course, it's better with a computer screen so you can see faces and clinics.

Division 6 isn't the first division in the Mid Central Region to hold a membership meeting via video conference. That distinction belongs to Division 8, Louisville, – but we are among the vanguard. As I mentioned in the MailChimp announcement of this meeting, Zoom meetings are not intended to or should they ever replace in-person meetings. However, they are a great stand-in and augmentation of in-person meetings.

Included below are links to Zoom “how-tos” and a link to Mike's presentation (the first couple of slides missed the recording). I hope to see all of you at a future meeting – whether we meet in person or on Zoom!

### Zoom How-Tos

The first three videos on this page are great for the average new user

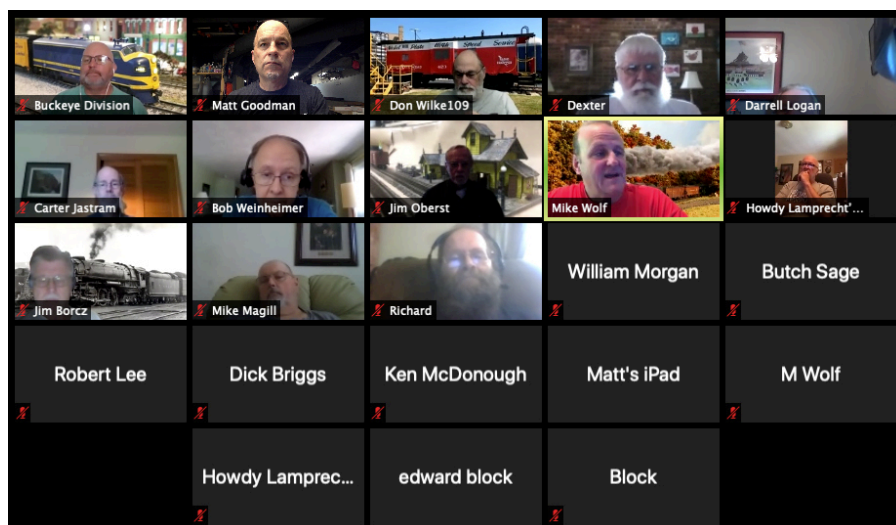
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

**Clinic Recording:** *Getting Started (or Improving) Operations On Your Layout*, Mike Wolf, MMR

Be sure to enter the password after clicking the link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/xNxVFLchxGRLGs-Wr2X5A5QBRpnLT6a8gyFLqPQMnxlqcB3AR0xgcBL2O2lzlOLb>

**Password:** 4j!5^S3k



Screen shot of the June Zoom Call.



## Operations (Part 4)

### Car Routing

By Mike Wolf, MMR

In the first installment of this series in April, I defined operations as “a systematic movement of locomotives and cars from point A to point B with an underlying reason the rail cars are being moved.” This month, we’ll look at some of the methods used during an operating session to provide that “underlying reason.”

There are nearly as many ways to direct the movement of cars during an operating session as there are opinions on which photo won the virtual photo contest last month. Which one is best? That depends on your operating scheme, your era, the amount of time you have for prep and training, and the skills of your operating crew. Let’s examine several systems.

The first step in developing a car forwarding system for your railroad is to identify all your railroad’s “customers.” You’ll need to look at each siding and industry on your railroad and identify what type of material they would ship or receive at each “spot.” You need to determine the type of car your “customer” would have used in your era. For instance, a grain elevator in the 1940s would use boxcars to send or receive grain. But a modern-era elevator would use covered hoppers. Once you have identified what type of cars would transit each location, you need to determine how often your “customer” would load or unload the car? Twice a “shift”, once a day (ops session), or once a week (every couple ops sessions). With a firm idea of what types of cars you need for your railroad and how often they would transit each spot, you can start developing a method to direct their movement.

Next, where would those cars come from or go to? Somewhere on your railroad? Somewhere off your railroad (see discussion of staging in an earlier segment of this series). With that information, you can begin assembling your car fleet and “routing” your cars.

One of the simpler methods I have seen involves putting dots on top of the car indicating it needs picking up. Although the thumbtacks, or peel and stick dots are a bit of a distraction, it’s a pretty easy way to test out the operational structure of your railroad. Is there a convenient runaround to work that siding? Is there enough trackwork to set cars aside while switching? Much like other aspects of the hobby, you have to crawl before you can run. Doing a dry run with just one or two experienced operators is highly recommended. You can work through the problem areas before committing to one of the more labor-intensive systems below or having a lot of guys standing around in your train room waiting for you to figure things out.

One popular and fairly simple method involves the use of a **Switch List**. A Switch List a sheet of paper with a listing of the specific cars and locations the crew will pick up, drop off, or reposition. There are computer programs designed to

generate these. ShipIt!, JMRI Operations, and others can generate Switch Lists, or they can be handwritten by the owner. While I have never used one, computer-generated software seems to work pretty well **AFTER** you’ve taken the time to input all the data (spots, cars, frequency, trains, etc.) and worked out the kinks. Handwritten Switch Lists work fine on smaller railroads but involve a lot of work for the owner in preparing for a larger operating session. **Figure 1** contains an example of a Switch List.

INITIAL	NUMBER	X	TRACK NO.	CARS IN CUT	TIME PLACED	TIME	NO. OF CARS	NO. OF CARS
SHPX	62630	X H	2	DICK	1	KCFS	1830	
NYC	166355	X B	1	KCFS	1	DICK	1530	X
LV	62384	X B	2	DICK	1	KCFS	1045	
ACOX	23837	X T	3	DICK	2	ALCO	1130	
ACPX	26885	X T	3	DICK	2	ALCO	1140	
UTLX	641533	X T	2	ALCO	2	DICK	1150	
ACFX	84021	X T	2	ALCO	2	DICK	1200	
NW	308164	X B	2	DICK	2	DB	230	
SOU	92397	X H	2	DICK	2	DB	230	
GTW	516734	X B	1	CHARL	1	ARM	330	
GMRC	7012	X B	1	ARM	2	DICK	345	X
NYC	206988	X B	1	KCFH	2	DICK	400	X

**Figure 1.** An example of a Switch List. Switch Lists can be handwritten or computer generated but indicate which cars are picked up or dropped off by a specific train crew.

The use of **waybills** in another commonly used car routing system. Technically, waybills are a shipping document prepared by the railroad at the point of origin. It shows the point of origin, destination, route, shipper, consignee, description of shipment, weight, charges, and other data necessary to rate, ship, and settle. Crews would normally never handle a waybill. However, model railroaders typically use the term waybill to denote where a car is coming from and going to. One of the simplest use of waybills is the **Card Order Waybill** shown in **Figure 2**. You make a card for each car on the railroad and then you make a sequence of movements for that car. As the crew completes each movement the crew checks it off or fills in the block. Some layout owners use a laminated card and a grease pencil. When the car has been routed through all the movements on the card, you wipe off the checkmarks and the cycle begins anew.

While they didn’t create it, *MicroMark’s* so-called **four-sided waybill** system

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Continued: **Operation – 4**

Y.C. 75463 BOXCAR	S.P. 66781 TANKCAR	C & C 17843 HOPPER
MANOR	CONOVERS	GASTONIA
TEAM TRACK	NAT'L EEL OIL	MINE
THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH
NYC	NYC	GASTONIA
INTERCHANGE	INTERCHANGE	SIMP CO FUEL
THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH
BAYVIEW	GASTONIA	PENINSY
TEAM TRACK	SIMP CO FUEL	INTERCHANGE
THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH
L.C.L.	PENINSY	GASTONIA
FREIGHT HSE.	INTERCHANGE	MINE
THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH
PENINSY	CONOVERS	ENGINE
INTERCHANGE	AAJAX MACHINE	COAL
THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH	THRU FREIGHT NORTH
WATERVILLE	N.H.	GASTONIA
TEAM TRACK	INTERCHANGE	MINE
THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH	THRU FREIGHT SOUTH
CONOVERS		ENGINE
AAJAX MACHINE		COAL

**Figure 2.** Examples of a card order car forwarding system. As the car is moved from stop to stop, the crew draws a line in the box. Once the card is full, a new card is produced to begin the cycle again. If a laminated card and grease pencil or dry erase pen are used, the card can be cleaned and reused.

ROAD NAME	CNW
CAR NO.	84028
TYPE	Box
EU	WAYBILL 1
CARTYPE	CNW 84028
VIA:	
TO	SEATTLE, WA
RCVR	NORTHWEST LUMBER
FROM	DUNSMUIR, CA
SHIPR	PLANING MILL
CONTENTS	RAW LUMBER

**Figure 3.** A typical “four-sided” Waybill system and car card. After each movement, the white card is rotated or flipped to the next waybill segment and the next shipping instructions are revealed. After 4 rotations, the cycle begins again. The cards generally remain with the cars as they travel around the system.

is a very popular waybill system (see **Figure 3**). Their system (and the many homemade or computer-generated derivatives of it) features a **car card** with a small pocket and a **four-sided waybill card** that slides into it. You make a pocket card for each car by folding up the bottom of the card and filling in the car information. Waybills are also created for various car types to serve the industries on (and off) the layout. Each side of the waybill card has two shipping instructions (one top and one inverted on the bottom). With each movement, the card gets rotated or turned to allow 4 separate movements. For example: from off layout origination K to yard A, from yard A to industry X, from industry X to industry Y, and from industry Y to off layout destination M). Similar to

the computer-generated Switch Lists discussed previously, this system does require a bit of work upfront filling out all the cards and ensuring the system doesn't generate unworkable switching issues. For example, more cars than spots, more work or cars than the railroad/crews can handle at a time, etc. Given the variety of the movements, most operators would never notice the pattern used from ops session to ops session once the system is in place and working smoothly. You can identify the owner of a layout using this system pretty easily though. They always have that “where is NYC gon #134234 at?” The look on their face as they try to figure out where a crew may have miss-spotted a car and gotten the system out of sync. Another drawback is that you can't move cars around your layout between operating sessions (i.e. a friend or grandkid drops by and wants to “run some trains”) without shuttling all the car cards around afterward.

Since I generally look confused enough, on my layout, I use a simplified version of the four-sided car cards discussed above. My cards only have two sides – **PICKUP** and **CAR ORDER**. Instead of each card representing a car, each card of this system represents a **SPOT** (or set-out location) on the railroad. They also don't contain specific car numbers – only car type (40' boxcar, tank car, gondola, etc). **Figure 4** shows an example of the car cards I use. A train crew assigned to work a particular area or siding will pick up any cars with a card labeled **PICKUP**. Additionally, if they have a car type requested by a **CAR ORDER** card in their train, they will spot it as

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Continued on page 10.

<b>Industrial</b> <b>PICKUP ORDER</b>  40' Boxcar  Pick up at: <b>Team Track</b> <b>Spot 4</b>  Forward car to: <b>Columbus</b>  After car is gone, TURN card, then place in box labeled: <b>UNFILLED ORDERS</b> West Valley Union RR	<b>Industrial</b> <b>CAR ORDER</b>  Gondola  Deliver To: <b>West Valley Gas</b> <b>Track 1 Spot 3</b>  When car has been delivered, place this card in box labeled: <b>SETOUT</b>  West Valley Union RR
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**Figure 4.** Examples of the car cards without car numbers system used on the *West Valley Union*. After a car is picked up and sent in the correct direction, the card is turned over and becomes a car order for the vacant spot at the specified industry. Any arriving gondola to the Industrial area of the layout can fill that spot. During staging, the cards in the SETOUT bin will be rotated and become pickups for the next operating session.



Continued: **Operation – 4**

appropriate. The PICKUP side of the card does denote where the car is going but I keep that simple. Either another industry on the layout, or one of four staging locations “off” the layout). I’ve given a clinic on *Adaptations of the Car Cards with No #&%@ Car Numbers System* in the past. There have also been several articles written about it in NMRA Magazine and in OPSIG’s quarterly publication. Several layouts in the local area use derivatives of this system.

While it sounds simplistic and some people feel it lacks the realism of knowing that a boxcar contains paper from ACME Paper Co in NJ destined to WV Printing in PA, I find some crews challenged by the maneuvers required to pull and set out cars. They don’t care that much about what is in the car and where it is coming from or going to. It also saves set up time for me. I do a quick survey of car orders in each area, and then make sure the trains have a “mix” of car types to fill some/most of the CAR ORDERS for that shift. If a particular car type doesn’t show up, the spot remains empty for another day. Due to the simple instructions on the cards, PICKUP cards get turned over and become CAR ORDERS for the next shift. No lengthy paperwork and no searching the layout for a specific car. If the previous gang miss-spotted a car, I just flip the card for that spot over and the problem is fixed. I use plastic sleeves to protect the card and limit the crew’s view to only side of the card at a time. I also used an Excel spreadsheet to generate the cards. The spreadsheet has a line for each spot on the railroad. It can auto-fill eight double-sided cards at a time. **Figure 5** depicts a portion of the spreadsheet.

You can also integrate Passenger operations into your operating scheme. Do certain cars (i.e. sleepers) get pulled off one train and added to another? Do dining cars get spotted on a commissary track for restocking and servicing? Do RPO, or express reefers or boxcars get spotted on

specific tracks during the time in the station? While passenger trains tend to take up a lot of valuable real estate on a layout, there are many possibilities for operations if you model in a bygone era.

Over the years, various versions of the systems discussed above as well as numerous other methods have been created and used by modelers to direct car movements. Depending on your era and operating scheme, you may not need individual car cards. A unit through train for instance may simply pass through the modeled portion of your layout. The switching instructions for a train could be as simple as “pull the last 7 cars from the train and hold for train #123 tomorrow.” Or “delivery 10 empty hoppers to mine #1 and bring back 10 loaded hoppers.” Regardless of the system or method, I recommend starting slow. Then add more complexity as you and your operators become more comfortable. As with most things, you need to learn how to walk before you can run.

We recorded the Virtual Clinic in June for those members that missed it. We recorded all but the first couple of slides. See the link and password below. Next month we’ll finish up discussing the various ways to direct (or control) trains during an ops session.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/xNxVFLchxGRLGs-Wr2X5A5QBRpnLT6a8gyFLqPQMnxlqcB3AR0xgcBL2O2lzlOLb>

Password: **4j15^S3k**

Mike Wolf’s, MMR, *Operation Series* in the *Signal*.

**Ops 1:** *What Is Operations?*, April 2020

**Ops 2:** *Designing (or reconfiguring) Your Layout for Operations*, May 2020

**Ops 3:** *Help Wanted – Employment Opportunities During an Operating Session*, June 2020

**Ops 4:** *Car Routing*, August 2020

85	Industrial	40' Boxcar	Team Track	Spot 2	Harrisburg
86	Industrial	50' Boxcar	Team Track	Spot 3	Columbus
87	Industrial	40' Boxcar	Team Track	Spot 4	Columbus
88	Industrial	40' Boxcar	Eshelman & Sons Grain Co	Spot 1	Columbus
89	Industrial	40' Boxcar	Eshelman & Sons Grain Co	Spot 2	Harrisburg
90	Industrial	40' Boxcar	Eshelman & Sons Grain Co	Spot 3	Columbus
91	Engine Terminal	Coal Hopper	Coaling Tower	Spot 1	Branch Mines
92	Engine Terminal	Coal Hopper	Coaling Tower	Spot 2	Branch Mines
93	Engine Terminal	Coal Hopper	Coaling Tower	Spot 3	Branch Mines
94	Engine Terminal	Tank Car	Diesel Fueling	Spot 1	Harrisburg
95	Engine Terminal	Tank Car	Diesel Fueling	Spot 2	Harrisburg
96	Engine Terminal	Gondola	Sand House	Spot 1	Columbus
97	Engine Terminal	Gondola	Cinder Tower	Spot 1	Columbus
98	Engine Terminal	40' Boxcar	Freight House	Track 1 Spot 1	Harrisburg
99	Engine Terminal	50' Boxcar	Freight House	Track 1 Spot 2	Harrisburg
100	Engine Terminal	Flat Car	Freight House	Track 2	Columbus
101	Engine Terminal	Coal Hopper	Power Station	Spot 1	Branch Mines
102	Engine Terminal	Coal Hopper	Power Station	Spot 2	Branch Mines
103	Branch	40' Boxcar	Wolf Hollow Lumber	Track 1 Spot 1	Columbus
104	Branch	40' Boxcar	Wolf Hollow Lumber	Track 1 Spot 2	Columbus
105	Branch		Wolf Hollow Lumber	Track 2	B&O Interchange
106	Branch	Woodchip Car	Wolf Hollow Lumber	Track 3 Spot 1	Pittsburgh
107	Branch	Woodchip Car	Wolf Hollow Lumber	Track 3 Spot 2	Columbus
108	Branch	40' Boxcar	Hofmann Lumber	Spot 3	Harrisburg
109	Branch	40' Boxcar	Hofmann Lumber	Spot 2	Columbus

**Figure 5.** A portion of the Excel spreadsheet used to generate the car cards in Figure 4. Within each switching area (Industrial, Engine Terminal or Branch), each available industry and slot are identified along with the type of car set out there and to which location the car is routed next – Harrisburg (east), Columbus (west), etc. This information is used to autofill the cards and print eight double sided cards at a time.



Columbus Railroads

