

The Telegraph Key

An NMRA Sunshine Region Monthly Publication

May 2024



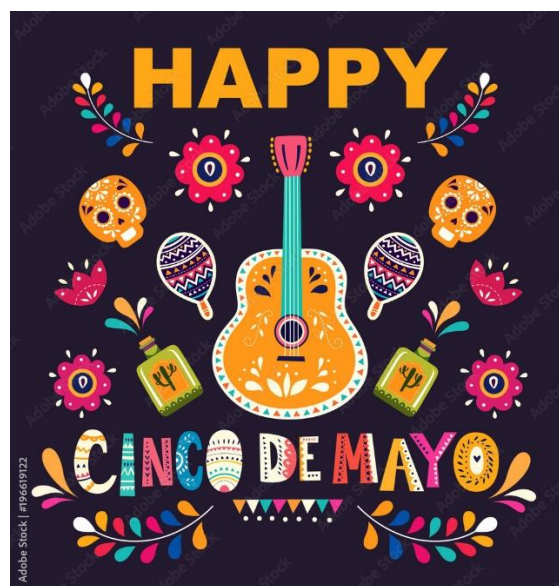
Sunshine Region - NMRA

Where modelers come to share, develop, and learn new skills.

Welcome to the best region under the sun!

2023 Sunshine Region Convention
Convention Registration

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Editor's Message



Maybe like some of you, I am (mostly) alone in my household with regards to my interests in both prototype and model railroading. I have had this interest since my early teens but only after my parents bought me an AHM trainset just prior to one of our moves overseas. I don't know why they bought that for me... perhaps because, as I later found out, my dad did some train layouts when he was also a teen. Who knows?

What I know though is that it was the spark to a lifelong hobby.

On the other hand, when *my* children were young, I only set up an N scale trainset on our coffee table a few times just to show them how the engine went round and round. This gave both my boy and girl huge smiles on their faces and the desire to reach out and "touch" the engine. I did one of the (many) things I regret in my life: I told them "No, no! You can look at the train but don't touch it!" In my mind at the time, these were my hard earned and paid for scale models and I didn't want them to get damaged. Oh! How I would love to go back to those few moments and tell them to pick them up! Turn them over! Look at them closely! Hindsight is 20/20... isn't that the saying? The opportunity for me to introduce my kids to a hobby they both could explore seemed to pass me up many times. I even bought my son a Lionel set of big, honking engine and cars. He showed enthusiasm! But I never gave him a space to actually set it up and run it. I just don't know what the heck I was (or wasn't) thinking.

In the prototype-tourist railroad arena, I have been on trains I never thought I would ever ride. I have done Durango & Silverton, Cumbres & Toltec, White Pass & Yukon, and the East Broad Top among others. Mostly on my own, some with my wife, and a couple with my kids. I will tell you though, that the best railroad I have ever, Ever, *EVER*, taken a ride on has been the Verde Canyon Railroad in Arizona. Here's why. We were taking a vacation in nearby Sedona after my wife and son attended a conference in Phoenix. While there, I found this brochure for this tourist railroad I had never heard about and it was only a few miles from our hotel. I said "Can we go on this one day while we're in the area?" Sure! Why not! Was the answer back. We had never been on a railroad together. I tell you what... during that ride, my kids had their BIGGEST smiles, my wife had her BIGGEST smile, and I had my BIGGEST smile. I was so happy that my family participated and actually had FUN sharing my passion of railroading. That memory is so dear to my heart that it still gets me emotional when I recall it - the Little Things, right?

I really wish I would have done so many things differently with my children in regards to sharing something that has been, and still is, such a huge part of my life. But I have BIG plans in store for my future grandkids!

****PREPARE FOR REGION ELECTIONS!****

Sunshine Region elections are coming up soon. As a part of this effort, we need ALL of you to please ensure you have a correct email address on file with our Region. If you doubt that you do, please send an email to nmra_sunshineregion@yahoo.com and tell us. This will enable you to receive the election email when the time comes for you to vote. And when the time comes, please VOTE!

Mark Lewalski


Vice President and Telegraph Key Editor

The Telegraph Key

May 2024

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Your Questions & Answers



Welcome!

We are still looking for an answer to a question that came from **Matthew**:

“Do you have or know of anyone near the Tampa Bay/Dade City area who does minor repairs to Hornby Model Trains?”

If **you** can help with an answer, please email me at vwtrainsailor@gmail.com

Mark Lewalski

Editor, Telegraph Key

President's Message



Wow, here we are in May already, seems like we barely blinked and we are nearly half way through 2024!

As we navigate through another exciting year together, I'm filled with pride and gratitude for the vibrant community we've built within the Sunshine Region. As your President, it is both an honor and a privilege to serve such a dedicated group of model railroading enthusiasts. Over the past year, we've confronted and surmounted countless challenges and hurdles, emerging stronger and more cohesive than ever before. This resilience stands as a testament to the unwavering dedication and strength of spirit exhibited by the members of our region. That is not lost on me. This is why I know we can be the model for other regions to follow.

2025 marks a significant milestone for the National Model Railroad Association as we celebrate our 90th anniversary. It's a testament to the enduring passion and commitment of our members that we've thrived for nearly a century. Let's use this occasion not only to reflect on our rich history but also to envision an even brighter future for our hobby.

In the coming months, we have the opportunity to shape the future of our region through the upcoming elections. Your participation in this process is crucial as we select leaders who will guide us with vision, integrity, and dedication. I encourage each and every one of you to consider stepping forward to contribute your talents and insights to our team and build this region, your divisions back stronger. Your participation in the elections show you care what direction we are moving in and that

you are invested in the outcomes. Last election cycle approximately 27% of you voted. What will it take to make that 75% or better? I would honestly like to know. Send me a message and let me hear your thoughts.

As we look ahead, I'm particularly enthusiastic about the emphasis we're placing on mentorship, fellowship, and community engagement. These pillars form the foundation of our organization, nurturing both the seasoned enthusiasts and the newcomers alike. Let's be proactive in fostering an environment where knowledge is shared freely, camaraderie flourishes, and everyone feels welcomed and supported.

I urge you to get involved in our mentorship programs, whether as a mentor sharing your expertise or as a mentee eager to learn and grow. Let's continue to build bridges within our community, forging connections that enrich our hobby and strengthen our bonds as fellow enthusiasts.

Together, let's make the NMRA Sunshine Region a beacon of inspiration and innovation in the world of model railroading. Our journey is made richer by each member's contribution, and I'm excited to see what we will accomplish together in the months and years to come.

Speaking of contributions of time and talent, we are attracting some great volunteers. This past month we filled the open Membership Coordinator position with Chris Wright. Chris comes to us well qualified and motivated to increasing the membership and keeping our rolls accurate and up to date. If you receive e-mail from Chris, he is working to improve our rosters so we can continue to bring you the latest up to date regional news and information.

Joe Gilmartin has joined the team as the Western Division AP Chair. Joe brings a wealth of knowledge and talent to our team. Take a minute to say hello and thank these guys when you meet them. They are stepping up, and as I have said before, *many hands make light work*.

Until next month

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to our shared love of model railroading.

Andy Zimmerman

President

2024 SUNSHINE REGION CONVENTION



Great News! The Sunshine Region Convention has been planned and scheduled for 2024 and we wanted to make sure you "Save the Dates" for Thursday, October 10th thru Saturday, October 12th, 2024.

We chose a "new location" that we hope you will be excited about. The location will be in Ocala, FL, at the Ocala Hilton (right off of I-75 & St Rd 200).

The convention will include 2 full days of Hourly Clinics, Hands-On Clinics, and we are including our first ever OPs Sessions (for HO, N, T-Trak) at the Hotel.

The Telegraph Key

May 2024

There are a lot of new changes for this year, with more information in the upcoming months, in the Telegraph Key. So, Stay Tuned for more Details.

Jeff "Ski" Guzowski

Convention Committee



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The Western Bay Railroad is a 950 square ft On30 layout in Port St Lucie. We meet almost every Tuesday evening. We are looking for new members to join our group. There are OP sessions & scenery that we are still working on. If you're a

modeler and serious about learning, give us a try! Go to our website or contact Al Sohl MMR als0622@yahoo.com

'No dues, just a great experience'
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South Florida Railway Museum

Beginning January 2024

New Hours

**The museum will be open from 11 AM to 4 PM on the
2nd Saturday of the month**

Dates

**01-13, 02-10, 03-09, 04-13, 05-11, 06-08, 07-13,
08-10, 09-14, 10-12, 11-09, 12-14**

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Treasurer's Message



Hello everyone,

Last month we shared news about the new program the NMRA has set up with Grouper insurance to offer some members on Medicare the opportunity to get a reimbursement of their NMRA registration fees. I have only heard from one member who checked to see if they qualified for the program. Sadly, their insurer was not offering the benefit today. This is a new program so it may take some time to roll out and we can get a better idea of which insurers are adopting this program.

Our member who checked his eligibility said he had to fill out a lot of info to only find out he was not eligible. He suggests you call your insurer directly and can possibly get an answer a lot quicker without having to fill out all sorts of information online. We all should be vigilant with our personal information. That being said, I ask all of you to please contact your Medicare provider to find out if you are eligible and let us know if your provider is on board with the program. It would be great to share that with all our members. Email me directly with your findings.

Convention update! As your Convention Chair, I also wanted to let you know that you do not want to miss the June Telegraph Key. Yes, all surprises will be shared in June's TK. I will be sharing some fantastic news about what is planned for this October's convention.

I want to let you know we listened to you, our members, at what you wanted at a convention and what you didn't want or didn't care about. I'm hoping everyone will come out this year to see a new beginning – something for all to enjoy. I'll give you a couple of teasers, the convention will not be in

Plant City this year, nor will there be a train show. This year's convention will be about our members and having fellowship, learning and FUN! Stay tuned!

Glenn Kopriva

Treasurer

Achievement Program



I have nothing to report on the AP Program for this month as no APs have been submitted to me to send to National.

I would like to welcome Joe Gilmartin, from the Western Division, as the new Western Division Achievement Program Chairman - I am sure he will do a real good job. So, if the Western Division has any APs to submit, run them to Joe and he can check them out and send them to me.

Also, I would like to congratulate the Scale Rails Club from Fort Myers for completing their Model Builder Cars workshop and maybe we will get some Cars APs from them. I hope their new workshop on Model Railroad Engineer-Civil goes well constructing three different track configurations utilizing Fast Tracks switch fixtures. Hopefully we will be getting APs for Civil from them. Good job Scale Rails Club!

Thank You,

Ken Hoot

Achievement Program Chair

Revised Judging Guidelines



To be a judge you must meet the following criteria:

- All judges must attend Judging 101 class.
- Lead judges must attend both Judging 101 and 102 classes
- All AP judging to be performed by judges outside of the modeler's own division. Models judged at the Region convention are exempt from this rule.
- All judges must sign (and print) their names on the back of the #902 form in the spaces provided.
- All documentation on the #902 form must be in ink, including scores. Any errors/changes made to the form must be initialed by both the lead judge and the Contest or AP chairman. In addition, a detailed explanation as to the reason for the change must be written on the back of the form.

- All original #901 and #902 forms will be retained by the Contest or AP chairman. Photocopies of the completed forms will be returned to the modeler.

Benita Jameson

Achievement Program Chair

Northern Division



Traveling

Local traveling looks at the Sunshine Region website for other clubs and events happening in our state. Quick Link: <https://www.nmrasunshineregion.org/>

For other traveling, look at the National Model Railroad Association Calendar website for other clubs and events happening in the United States of America and Other Countries.

Quick Link: <https://www.nmra.org/calendar>

Events

First Coast Model RR Society Open Running

Florida, Jacksonville (Beaches)—First Coast Model RR Society open, running every Sun. Operational 750 sq ft. The double-level freelance mixed-era HO layout is 50% complete. Meet On30 modular layout members. The location is gated near I295 and Monument Rd. Please contact us 24 - 48 hours before your visit.

John Piselli jpmickey@att.net, www.FCMRS.club. See the club on YouTube (FCMRS).

Quick Link: <http://www.fcrrs.club/Default.html>

Big Bend Model. Railroad Association

Put on your calendar June 22 and 23, 2024 Train Show.

Quick Link: [Big Bend Train Show](#)

This month, the Big Bend Model. The Railroad Association is preparing the N-scale layout for the train show.





Robert Feuerstein

Northern Division Superintendent

Eastern Division



Greetings.

Election time is on the horizon. All Sunshine Region members are eligible to run for office and vote. All SSR Board positions are open as are all Division superintendent slots. Candidate statements and voting details will be published in an upcoming issue of the

Telegraph Key.

On Saturday, April 20, I attended the Western Division's one-day meet in Davenport (Polk Co.) Hosted by Tom Wilson, the meet featured four clinics/presentations and attracted 20 attendees. It was a pleasure to meet and chat with fellow SSR members.

The NMRA Achievement Program (AP) provides an incentive to learn and master several of the skills associated with model railroading including scenery, rolling stock, track work, and electrical. There are eleven skill areas, each of which leads to award of an Achievement Certificate. Proficiency in seven areas qualifies applicants for the Master Model Railroader (MMR) designation. Further details available from Ken Hoot (hootk@bellsouth.net), AP Chair Sunshine Region.

The Eastern Division "meet and greet" cookout is slated for Saturday, May 4, 2024 from 1100 am to 300 pm. To RSVP, email me at jim@moore-associates.net.

The Telegraph Key

May 2024

Am putting the call out to all model railroad clubs located within the Eastern Division. Email me details regarding upcoming club activities, open houses, membership drives, etc. The *Telegraph Key* is your newsletter. Use it to publicize your club's activities. Plus, advertising in the *TK* is an affordable 50 dollars/year.

Recently cleared some space on the "work bench" to assemble a small fleet of Accurail HO scale 50-ton steel hoppers. The prototype was designed by the United States Railway Administration during the First World War to incorporate a "standardized" design and to meet the nation's coal transport needs. It's considered to be one of the most enduring car designs of the first half of the Twentieth Century. In all, approximately 22,000 cars were delivered by the USRA to 23 railroads. Accurail produced two versions: 2400-series with Andrews trucks and 2500-series with "Bettendorf" style trucks.

While Accurail offered this attractive model in a variety of road names, I chose to start with undecorated versions. Across the years several articles have appeared in the hobby press as well as online describing potential USRA twin-hopper upgrade options.

For my fleet of eight USRA twin hoppers, I opted to paint four cars in PRR FCR (as stand-ins for GLa class cars with Circle Keystone emblems) and four black (decaled for NYC and various Pennsylvania short lines). To do so, I used Tamiya paint and K4 decals.

Until next month...

Jim Moore

Eastern Division Superintendent

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Western Division



The Western Division held a workshop in Davenport on April 20. There were 20 in attendance. Four clinics were presented:

- **John Wilkes** - *Construction of Appalachian Coal Tipples*
- **Don Wetmore** - *Modeling a Prototype Passenger Train Consist*
- **Tom Wilson** - *Operation on the P&WV Car Card to JMRI Using Operations Pro*
- **Tom Wilson** - *Florida Orange Processing Plants*

Tom Wilson then hosted a tour of his excellent P&WV layout.

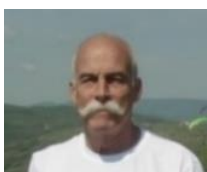
The next event will be the Sunshine Region Convention. Watch the Telegraph Key for details.

Please welcome our new Western Division AP Chair Joe Gilmartin. Joe is ready to help you move forward in the NMRA Achievement Program and answer any questions you may have. You may contact Joe at 224-637-5965 or jgilmartin@mac.com

Don Wetmore

Western Division Superintendent

Southern Division



Another month folks,

Last month I commented about the weather and its seasonal temperatures, well, it's over, time to get back into the house and out of the garage. But it was nice while it lasted. So on to what has been going on.

The big news is there have been communications from Palm Beach, some good and bad subjects, but communication! The club president, Paul Mathis filled me in on projects that are in process and some that are still in the planning stages. One of the main yards will be re-furbished and cleaned up to offer more operations, but he said operations are still a work in progress. But, on the positive side, when they are ready to put TT/TOs to work, the layout will be also. He spoke of a refinery that has been on the layout well before Paul joined and he said it was old, brittle old, better to start from scratch old. To re-furbish it would be too time-consuming as opposed to building a new one, so a new one is in the offing. Their hours remain on Tuesday and Wednesday, Tuesday is the work night for them. Paul said they would be back to normal after the Barrett-Jackson auctions, by the time you read this, all should be back on track.

The one bad subject in our conversation, actually not bad, but sadder, I found out that Lyman Fussell had passed away. Lyman was a more senior member of the SSR and of the club, he was the Journal Box bill collector, and he was good at his job. I will try to get more information about him for the next

Journal Box. If any of the readers can provide information about his presence in the region I would appreciate it. Send me a message in regards to it.

The Florida Citrus group remains at the Plantation Historical Museum for most of the year, hopefully they will be able to extend the stay. The April 20th presentation of Florida East Coast Railway history by Seth Bramson was a success, more than just the club members attended. The museum location is 511 N. Fig Tree Lane in Plantation. Regular museum hours, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Wednesday through Saturday, only.

The ECHOES are going to be running trains at the church next month and they have more activities on tap for the month of June.

The South Florida Railway Museum has another layout tour in the works, the first two on display were slated for April 28th and they were well attended. The plan is to have two layouts available on a Sunday it will be scheduled for the month of May. I know they would welcome nonmembers (they got Larry Lawler again for this year) with layouts to the tour, so if you are interested let them know, go to their website. Remember the museum hours have changed, it is open to the public, the 2nd Saturday of each month, for May the date is (05/11/24), from 11 AM to 4 PM.

Until next month, Model 60!

Robert Leonard

Southern Division Superintendent



Citrus Model Railroad Club, Inverness, FL



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E.C.H.O.E.S is a modular model railroad club located in Miami-Dade, Florida, dedicated to building and displaying our HO scale model railroad layout. Our purpose is to enjoy and promote the hobby of model railroading and preserve the history of railroading in South Florida. The club was started in the summer of 1985, with the goal of presenting a HO scale modular model railroad layout for display at “The Harvest Festival”. Throughout the years, the layout has been displayed at regional conventions, four NMRA National Train Shows (Atlanta twice, Ft. Lauderdale, FL and Orlando), and other events in Miami Dade and Broward counties. We do running/operating sessions several times a year and welcome guests to join us. Membership is open and we welcome anyone who shares an interest and passion for Model railroading.

For more information, please contact:

Rick Diaz	rickdiaz@att.net	305 496 9266
Tracey Sanders	tassailor@mac.com	786 514 5667
Herb Ford	ehf640@gmail.com	786 375 1424



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