



**Northeastern Region, NMRA
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING
04/02/23**

Meeting conducted over Internet via Zoom.

Present:

Officers

President: Ed O'Rourke
Vice President: David Insley
Secretary: Jeff Paston
Treasurer: Gerry Covino

Directors

Northern: Tom Oxnard
Eastern: Erich Whitney
Western: [Redacted]
Southern: [Redacted]

NER Staff & Guests

Coupler editor: Chris Carfaro
Webmaster: Jim Seroskie
Communications: Chuck Diljak
Operations: Ed O'Connell

Asst. to President: [Redacted]

Past President: John Doehring

Central NY: Rick Mniece

Eastern Canada: Bob Henry

Garden State: Mark Moritz

Green Mt.: Erich Golschneider

HUB: Erich Whitney

Hudson Valley: [Redacted]

Hudson-Berkshire: [Redacted]

Lakeshores: David Durr

Little Rhody: Steve Erickson

Metro-North: [Redacted]

Nutmeg: Jeff Hanke

Seacoast: Glenn Mitchell

Southern Tier: [Redacted]

Sunrise Trail: Dennis DeAngelis

Not present: Assistant to President Bob Dennis; Robert Robbins, Hudson Valley; Scott Russell, Metro North; Ciro Comagno, Southern Director; Ed Olszewski, Western Director; Ben Maggi, Hudson-Berkshire.

1. Meeting call to order: 7:06 pm EDT -- President O'Rourke

A. Additional agenda items? Approval of the agenda.

B. Approval of Previous Minutes:

- i. **01/08/23 minutes** Tom Oxnard moved to accept; Dave Durr seconded. Carried

2. STANDARD REPORTS

A. President's Report

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #1

- ii. So that those attending the BOD meeting would know, President O'Rourke noted meetings are recorded for short term retention.

B. Vice President's Report -- Dave Insley

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #2

- ii. VP Insley noted that there will have to be less people in the NER booth at Springfield next year so that there can be more concentration on membership recruiting.

C. Treasurer's Report – Gerry Covino

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #3

- ii. There was discussion with Editor Chris Carfaro about the NER Coupler budget and numbers of copies printed.
- iii. There was discussion of how funds from Canada Coupler subscriptions are generated. No one attending knew whether any funds actually come to the NER. The Coupler is considered part of NMRA Canada dues.
- iv. Membership retention funding was discussed. President O'Rourke led discussion about continuing the membership initiative at the Springfield Show. Treasurer Gerry Covino suggested calling it something else other than membership "retention." He suggested dropping the membership fund amount of \$2000 as no division had applied for funding. The discussion led ECD's Bob Henry to send a comment (see v.), only to discover later the funds to which he was referring were from the NMRA, not the NER!
- v. Eastern Canada Division Secretary-Treasurer Bob Henry submitted comment noting that this past weekend, the ECD took advantage of the "Matching Retention Funds" offer with an event in Dartmouth / Halifax, Nova Scotia, where about 25% of ECD membership live. Members held hands-on clinics and demonstrations and what was described as an "old home week" feeling as this was the first time these folks had met as a Division.
- vi. Webmaster Jim Seroskie inquired about the budget for NER Internet activities.
- vii. Regarding Finance and Budget, President O'Rourke said adoption of a 2023-24 budget will be deferred to to the July 9 meeting so more input can be offered to Treasurer Covino by a June 15 deadline. Dennis DeAngelis moved to table adoption of the 2023-24 Budget until the July 9 NER BOD meeting. Jeff Hanke seconded. Carried

D. NER Convention Committee Report – Dave Insley

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #4

- ii. VP Insley asked the Board to formally approve adoption of the updates to the NER Convention Handbook from November 2021 and allow them to be posted to the NERNMRA.org website VP Insley moved to adopt updates to 11/20/21 NER Convention Handbook updates; Mark Moritz seconded. Carried
- iii. VP Insley asked the Board authorize the NER Convention Chair to enter into a contract with the RIT Inn & Conference Center as the location for activities for the 2024 NER Convention between 9/19-and 9/22 2024. Dave Insley moved; Dave Durr seconded. Carried
- iv. VP Insley moved to have the Region authorize \$1000 to Treasurer Gerry Covino for advance expenses & deposit for the hotel for the 2024 convention in Rochester. Tom Oxnard seconded. Carried
- iv. Chris Carfaro asked about whether the NER can get sponsorships from manufacturers.

E. Coupler Editor's Report -- Chris Carfaro

- i. Editor Carfaro said he is receiving many strong positive comments about the NER Coupler.
- ii. He asked about how he could disseminate information on how those wanting AP certification can

participate by providing articles. Chris noted that he has published articles helping with AP certificates, specifically on taking better photos, and how to write for publications. He said he sent a tip sheet to Divisions suggesting ways to promote events as articles.

Tom Oxnard offered to assist; Chris said Greg Williams had offered to provide coverage of the Fundy Rail Fest; President O'Rourke said such information should be addressed to division superintendents; Chuck Diljak said he can add such requests to the NER News Constant Contacts. Tom Oxnard noted requests for articles for the Coupler have been made at Division meetings.

- iii. Chris asked about promotions in the Coupler. Gerry asked about money coming in for Coupler sponsorships. Secretary Paston explained that sponsorship in the Coupler had been created to add more pages and content to some issues.

F. Communications -- Chuck Diljak

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #5

- ii. Chuck said Heath Hurwitz will assist with Constant Contact; and also with integration of Constant Contact with social media. Chuck said he needs user login ID for NER Facebook account. It was questioned whether Barbara Hoblit had set it up? John Doehring will ask her. Dave Insley said the NER Facebook "group" was originally the HUB group. **Dave Insley moved that Chuck Diljak be authorized to work with his team as to how they can connect with the NER Facebook page for the purpose of integrating Constant Contact; Dave Durr seconded. Carried**

G. Webmaster's Report – Jim Seroskie

i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #6

- ii. Jim said he ideally wants to make it possible to create a dedicated convention website. However, he recommends for this year to set up a domain for the Cannonball Express to get that material off the Sunrise Trail Division website. He said a future website would be templated to allow non-experienced people to make up sites for conventions. See his report for details.
- iii. Jim requested \$500 in the budget to create new WordPress themed subdomain, but for this year, a temporary site will be created. Dave Insley noted that NER can upgrade/rebuild from the existing Joomla-based convention site. Jim said he will provide info on cost of new WordPress site.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. RailPass

- i. VP Insley asked whether the \$169.20 Railpass he subsidized is reimbursable? **Mark Moritz moved to have Region reimburse VP Insley; Tom Oxnard seconded. Carried.**

B. NMRA Interchange

- i. President O'Rourke encouraged all NER superintendents to sign up for the NMRA Interchange. The sign up is on the NMRA website: **<https://www.nmra.org/nmra-interchange>**

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. NERX reflection

- i. President O'Rourke said he thought it went very well, and noted no technical issues or crashes. He said there were about 100+ viewers every night.
- ii. Seacoast Division President Glenn Mitchell asked whether there is way to restrict the NERx to NMRA members. President O'Rourke noted that the NERx can be a way to recruit new members and show what the NMRA does. NMRA Eastern Director John Doehring said data shows about 95% of those watching are NMRA members. John says NER is apparently the only region to stick with programming after the COVID pandemic ended face-to-face gatherings. Dave Insley said reports from viewers compliment the NER effort.
- iii. Lakeshores Superintendent Dave Durr asked about certificates for participating in NERx

B. Convention Sponsors

- i. There was discussion of a sponsor policy for conventions, and what is expected from potential sponsors/ manufacturers; any costs, etc.
 - a. Chris Carfaro noted his experience at a Piedmont Division show. He offered to assist.
 - b. President O'Rourke said the Long Island convention will be a problem for adding manufacturers because of booking more space and associated costs. Sunrise Trail Superintendent Dennis DeAngelis noted about charges for exhibitors when a convention typically gets about 150 attendees.
 - c. Gerry Covino said the NER charges \$50 a table. Dave Insley reported the Long Island cost will be \$1500/day for a room for 2 days, or a flat \$4500 charge for the banquet room.
 - d. President O'Rourke noted there were three sponsors at NERx and no fees were asked. He noted that not only people were viewing live, but people view in later on YouTube.
 - e. Dave Insley noted the difficulty of monetizing exhibitor/sponsorships. He posted a suggested policy from years ago
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vQF_x_4ILKLdUGO4QQyWGAHxzeE7BXaOF/view?usp=sharing
 - f. President O'Rourke suggested one-year sponsorships that could include numerous venues
- ii. Chris Carfaro asked about who handles marketing. President O'Rourke said Christina Zambri is the NMRA national marketing director Chris asked about pre-made brochures to give out.

5. AREA DIRECTOR REPORTS

A. Western

- i. Ed Olszewski sent report noting that he provided a copy of the new CNY Division brochure to President Ben Maggi of the Hudson-Berkshire Division to use as a guide as they revamp their brochure.
- ii. He reported the CNY Model RR club is mulling over how best to implement NMRA dues into their dues structure so they can become a 100% NMRA club.

D. Southern

Director Ciro Compagno was unable to attend, but sent the following:

- i. Ciro said NERx was very well done and executed; Nice job to those that were involved.
- ii. He suggests the Region send a post-NERx survey to the membership. This will help validate NER Board members' comment that it was a success.
- iii. Possible questions are:
 1. From a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your overall NERx experience
 2. How many nights did you join?
 3. How many hours did you stay per night?
 4. Were the clinics and round table discussion relative or of interest to you?
 5. Were the layout tours relative or of interest to you?
 6. Is 4 nights too short, too long or just the right length?
 7. Is 4 hr per night too short, too long or just the right length?
 8. Is 1 hr for layout tours, discussions and clinics too short, too long or just the right length?
 9. What did you like the most?
 10. What would you recommend to improve?

6. DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORTS

A. Central NY

- i. Full report in ATTACHMENT #7

B. Eastern Canada

- i. Bob Henry reported everything going well in setting up the Fundy Rail Fest convention for May 26-28.

- ii. He said 20 clinics are lined up so far.
- iii. Industry tours are already well booked with about six seats left on each. Tours include the Irving Pulp and Paper Mill; Port Saint John container operation with the new CP Rail-KCS connection; and a tour of the New Brunswick Maine Railway Dever Road Yard.
- iv. Hotel rooms are US\$110; the rate is good until 12 May
- v. Exhibitors are committing well for the accompanying train show
- vi. Saint John Convention address: <https://fundyrailfest2023.ca>

C. Garden State

- i. Superintendent Mark Moritz reported that the Division had its Winter Meet at the end of February, and are planning a May 13 joint meet with the New Jersey Division of the MER.

D. Green Mountain

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #8](#)

E. HUB

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #9](#)
- ii. Spring TRAINing show with presenters Steve MMR and Cynthia Priest; includes a banquet with NMRA Magazine Editor Cynthia Priest as speaker.
<https://hubdiv.org/springshow/index.html>

F. Hudson-Berkshire

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #10](#)

G. Lakeshores

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #11](#)
- ii. President O'Rourke noted that he had a wonderful time at Lakeshores' "Op Around the Clock"
- iii. Superintendent Dave Durr said there were 18 exhibitors at the RPM meet in Batavia on March 26.
- iv. Dave reported that Harold Russel MMR #14 celebrated his 91st birthday. He said Lakeshores Division disassembled Harold's layout and sold its structures now that Harold is residing in an assisted living facility.

H. Little Rhody

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #12](#)

I. Nutmeg

- i. Superintendent Jeff Hanke noted that Connecticut Yankee convention [had only three vendors \(F&C, MicroMark, and a book dealer\), none of which were happy with their setting and lack of traffic.](#)
- ii. Jeff said this meeting concludes his term as Nutmeg leader. He said Art Dutra has been elected to succeed him.

J. Seacoast

- i. [Full report in ATTACHMENT #13](#)

K. Sunrise Trail

- i. Superintendent Dennis DeAngelis said the Division's "Lets Talk Trains" sessions on Long Island Expressway are now resuming.

7. Next meeting scheduled for **Sunday July 9 at 7 pm EDT/8 pm ADT.**

8. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm EST. **Adjournment moved by CNY Div. Asst. Supt. Rick Mniece.**

ATTACHMENT #1

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

April 2023

Positives:

- 2023 NERX was a success.
- Amherst Railway Society Train Show. Good traffic through the booth. I believe National folks thought it went well – many positive comments.
- Fundy Rail Fest seems to be going well. Hoping for good attendance from NER.
- 2023 Cannonball Express is in progress.
- Operations events appear to be going well in a number of Divisions.

Challenges:

- More NER members need to sign up for the Interchange. It would be helpful if Division Supers and BOD members got on board with it. I'd like to start using it for these meetings.
- Please try not to have Division events conflict with Region and National events.
- Do we intend to continue subsidizing RailPass memberships at Springfield? Recent info from Gordy indicates only about 10% continue to regular membership. Any feedback from Divisions that got new members from Springfield?
- Oswego and Jefferson counties in upstate NY remain a concern. Southern Tier Division is attempting to get organized.
- Several areas of our by-laws need some revision, particularly with the need to hold elections and meetings virtually during the pandemic. I need to get a committee working on this. Elections are next Spring.
 - The four Area Directors are the Nominating committee. It is not too early to begin looking for candidates.
- Officers and Directors insurance for the Board and Division officers continues to be a concern. I have not heard of any result of discussions at the National level.

ATTACHMENT #2

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT - Dave Insley

2-April 2023

Spate Award

I have received no nominations to date for the 2023 Spate Award. Please forward them to me as soon as possible.

Springfield

The new NMRA Booth at Springfield was a success, in my opinion. We had a good robust crowd, and probably too many people in the booth and too many things going on. See the retrospective notes for more on the team feedback.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AqRqThyOzQZx3FKD6Px2NeqWEXMLVbBE/edit?usp=sharing&oid=107141460128618504645&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Special thanks to the volunteers that spent a lot of time in the booth, in particular:

- Bob Verkyl and Ed O'Rourke who managed the CNY Layout
- The Whitney Family – Erich, Holly, and Brenna
- Erich Golschneider
- Mark Moritz
- Bob Dennis
- Ciro Compagno
- Irwin Nathenson
- Ed Olszewski
- Cheryle Insley
- Chris Carfaro
- Dennis DeAngelis
- Ben Maggi

Member Signups

We signed up 20 new members at the booth, 17 as RailPass and 3 as full members. In addition, I know of at least one member that was referred to the HUB Booth to signup.

I thought the region had agreed to sell RailPass for \$10 per person, leaving a \$9.95 subsidy. There was one error in charging a member \$9.95 instead of \$10.00 so in total we owed National \$169.20. I had requested the same to the treasurer, but due to timing and wanting to make sure members were signed up in a timely manner, I paid this out of pocket and requested reimbursement which is still pending.

National is considering the future of RailPass, so I will make a new proposal, if any as we get closer to the event.

Dinner

I did get some indirect feedback on the dinner, one member thinking the buffet price was too high and another feeling that the dinner did not do enough to promote social interaction. We did have 35 people in attendance broken down as follows:

- NER Memembers – 14
- National BOD Members – 10
- Rocky Mountain Region Members – 5
- Niagara Frontier Region Members - 6

Bob Dennis would have the final count. I was asked at the event to collect the money, so here is my accounting:

Student Prince Bill	\$1,752.66
Gratuity	\$350.00
Total	\$2,102.66
Cash Collected	\$1,570.00
Insley	\$ 110.00
PayPal	\$ 165.00
Deposit Refund	\$ 250.00
Total	\$2,095.00
Variance	-\$7.66

I would appreciate thoughts on how we can improve the Springfield experience. We will be meeting with Gordy and Christina in late summer to talk about our 2024 efforts.

ATTACHMENT #3

TREASURER'S REPORT - Gerry Covino



Northeastern Region - NMRA
BUDGET vs ACTUAL (Cash Basis)
 Fiscal Year 2022-23

Balances as of
 1/7/2023

REVENUES	Budget	Actual	%
Subscriptions - Coupler	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 3,705.89	54.5%
Investment Fund Transfer	2,000.00		
Sponsorship - Coupler	325.00	0.00	
NMRA Dues Rebate	2,000.00	936.59	46.8%
NMRA Dues Rebate AP 27%	540.00	346.41	64.2%
Convention	1,500.00		
Donations	1,000.00	0.00	
Interest Income	0.00		
Other - Spate Award	75.00	59.77	79.7%
Total Revenue	\$ 14,240.00	\$ 5,048.66	35.5%
EXPENSES			
Coupler	\$ 8,000.00	\$3,460.12	43.3%
NMRA Dues Rebates Distribution	2,000.00	936.59	46.8%
Achievement Program	500.00	202.77	40.6%
Membership Development Program	2,000.00		
Spate Award	75.00	59.77	79.7%
President's Awards	50.00		
Legal - NJ Business Registration	35.00	0.00	
Contingency Fund	100.00		
Regional Banner	0.00		
Office Expenses	150.00	88.86	59.2%
Other - Election Expenses	0.00		
Other - Credit Card/PayPal Fees	0.00	35.46	0.0%
Communication Expenses			
Constant Contact	400.00	378.00	94.5%
Site Ground Hosting Expense	0.00	0.00	
Region Annual Domain Fees	190.00	0.00	
Website Tools	368.00	246.98	67.1%
SG Site Scanner	40.00	0.00	
Division Domain Registry Fees	54.00	61.97	114.8%
Total Expenses	\$ 13,962.00	\$5,470.52	39.2%
Net Operating Revenue/Expense	\$ 278.00	\$ (421.86)	-151.7%

Saturday, January 7, 2023

NER Investment Reserve Account (Edward Jones)	\$ 58,223.81
Operations Reserve	\$ 56,916.43
Life Equity Fund	\$ 74.00
Spate Award	\$ 1,233.38
NER Convention Account Balance	\$ 6,412.76
PayPal Account Balance	\$ 1,586.07
Regional Checking Account Balance	\$ 2,821.48
Dues Rebate (Southern Tier)	\$ 81.03
Coupler Ledger	\$ 3,195.03
General Funds	\$ (454.58)
Total NER FUNDS All Accounts	\$ 69,044.12

Budget Approved and Authorized
 By NER Board
 April 10, 2022



Northeastern Region - NMRA
BUDGET vs ACTUAL (Cash Basis)
Fiscal Year 2023-24

FY 2022-23

REVENUES	Current Year Budget	Year to Date Actual	Projected additional Totals	Projected FY 2022-23 Actual	Proposed Budget
Subscriptions - Coupler	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 6,245.32	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 7,495.32	\$ 7,500.00
Investment Fund Transfer	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Sponsorship - Coupler	325.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NMRA Dues Rebate	2,000.00	1,869.53	0.00	1,869.53	1,900.00
NMRA Dues Rebate AP 27%	540.00	691.47	0.00	691.47	700.00
Convention	1,500.00	2,456.38	0.00	2,456.38	1,000.00
Donations	1,000.00	205.24	50.00	255.24	500.00
Interest Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other - Spate Award	75.00	59.77	0.00	59.77	60.00
Total Revenue	\$ 14,240.00	\$ 11,527.71	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 12,827.71	\$ 12,660.00

EXPENSES					
Program Expenses					
Coupler	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,300.61	\$ 1,770.00	\$ 7,070.61	\$ 7,150.00
NMRA Dues Rebates Distribution	2,000.00	1,825.73	0.00	1,825.73	1,900.00
Achievement Program	500.00	202.77	150.00	352.77	400.00
Membership Development Program	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Spate Award	75.00	59.77	0.00	59.77	60.00
Business Expenses					
President's Awards	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Legal - NJ Business Registration	35.00	33.00	0.00	33.00	35.00
Contingency Fund	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Regional Banner	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Office Expenses	150.00	328.52	0.00	328.52	350.00
Other - Election Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
Other - Credit Card/PayPal Fees	0.00	68.24	15.00	83.24	100.00
Communication Expenses	1,052.00	1,687.12	96.00	1,783.12	1,040.00
Constant Contact	400.00	378.00	0.00	378.00	400.00
Site Ground Hosting Expense	0.00	766.76	0.00	766.76	0.00
Region Annual Domain Fees	190.00	33.57	20.00	53.57	50.00
Website Tools	368.00	246.98	0.00	246.98	300.00
Dedicated IP Address	0.00	54.00	0.00	54.00	0.00
SG Site Scanner	40.00	59.88	36.00	95.88	100.00
Division Domain Registry Fees	54.00	147.93	40.00	187.93	190.00
Total Expenses	\$ 13,962.00	\$ 9,505.76	\$ 2,031.00	\$ 11,536.76	\$ 12,485.00
Net Operating Revenue/Expense	\$ 278.00	\$ 2,021.95	\$ (731.00)	\$ 1,290.95	\$ 175.00

Thursday, March 30, 2023

NER Investment Reserve Account (Edward Jones)	\$ 59,198.84
Operations Reserve	\$ 57,870.81
Life Equity Fund	\$ 74.00
Spate Award	\$ 1,254.03
NER Convention Account Balance	\$ 99.50
PayPal Account Balance	\$ 682.50
Regional Checking Account Balance	\$ 5,126.26
Dues Rebate (Southern Tier)	\$ 103.66
Coupler Ledger	\$ 3,869.70
General Funds	\$ 1,152.90
Total NER FUNDS All Accounts	\$ 65,107.10

ATTACHMENT #4

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - Dave Insley

Current Highlights

2023 Convention – Cannonball Express 2023 finalizing the budget
2023 Convention – Eastern Canada/MFMR Memorial Day event
2023 NERx – Complete! Retrospective scheduled for 4/11
2024 – RIT Inn and Conference Center Contract needs to be signed
2025 – Possible location in Concord, NH

Meetings

Last meeting was held January 9, 2023. Minutes are [here](#).
Next Meeting is May 8.

Convention Handbook Updates

Final version of the Handbook updated November 2021 has not yet been posted to the website. Does this need further approval?

2023 – Cannonball Express - Long Island

We are still working through the proposal for the budget and finalizing meal plans. Registration costs are projected to be:

- Room Rate is \$199 per night
- Rental Fees for the Convention Space is \$6000. Contract allows for a 100% discount with \$9000 of food purchases. We expect to meet that number.
- Additional space is considered for vendors and layouts. There are two rooms that are \$1500 per day each. The banquet space would be \$4500 per day.
- Food Minimum is \$10,000
- Early registration fee: \$85.00, \$185.00 with all food.
- Banquet costs including service fees is \$80. Breakfast is \$40.

Spring 2023 – Registration is open.

2024 – Lakeshores Bid Proposal

Lakeshores has received a contract from the RIT Inn and Conference Center and is looking for approval to move forward.

- Room Rate is \$129.00 per night.
- Convention Space Rental is \$5400
- Food Minimum is \$6150
- Banquet Cost is estimated to be \$30-\$40 plus 22%

Projected attendee costs would be as follows:

Room Rental - \$45 per registrant
Standard Expenses - \$20 per registrant
Profit Target - \$20 per registrant
Registration total - \$85.00 per person. \$75.00 per person for all food

2025 – Seacoast

The Seacoast Division is researching potential host hotels in their area and are proposing an event at the Grappone Center/Courtyard by Marriott in Concord, New Hampshire. They cannot do formal bids more than 2 years out, but generally a summary is

- \$159 - \$169 room rate
- Convention Space \$6200

We would need to discuss possible concessions based on room rentals and food purchases.

ATTACHMENT #5

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT - Chuck Diljak

Board of Director's Meeting, April 2, 2023

Team Update

Heath Hurwitz, a Sunrise Trail Division member known as Human[c]ity on the NMRA Interchange and YouTube, has expressed an interest in helping the NER. I have begun to show him what I do with Constant Contact. He also may help in migrating the ner-conventions.org website to WordPress.

Integrations

It is possible to connect the Constant Contact account to Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, and other social media. To do so, I will need the login information for social media accounts. It allows us to share the emails to social media directly instead of posting it manually.

Is it possible to provide this information?

If so, who has the login information?

NER Map

The NER Map has been updated for the website and the Constant Contact welcome email. The new map fixed the omission of Labrador in the Eastern Canada Division and moved Berkshire County, Massachusetts to be part of the Hudson Berkshire Division.

Email history since the last NER Board of Directors meeting

13 emails: 2 - NER News, 5 – NERx, 3 - Renewal Reminders, 3 - Welcome to the NMRA

Time Sent ↓	Campaign Name	Sends	Opens	Clicks	Bounces	Unsubscribes
Thu, Mar 16, 2023, 4:00 AM	NERX 2023 - 5	2,236	1,373 63%	154 7%	52 2%	2 1%
Wed, Mar 8, 2023, 4:00 AM	NERX 2023 - 4	2,237	1,332 61%	117 5%	48 2%	1 1%
Sun, Mar 5, 2023, 9:42 AM	Renewal Reminder 2023-03	55	38 70%	7 13%	1 2%	0 0%
Sun, Mar 5, 2023, 9:41 AM	Welcome 2023-03	15	11 100%	3 27%	4 27%	0 0%
Wed, Mar 1, 2023, 4:01 AM	NER News - Mar 2023	2,228	1,425 65%	149 7%	44 2%	2 1%
Mon, Feb 20, 2023, 4:00 AM	NERX 2023 - 3	2,233	1,428 65%	75 3%	46 2%	4 1%
Mon, Feb 6, 2023, 3:20 PM	Renewal Reminder 2023-02	59	45 78%	8 14%	1 2%	0 0%
Mon, Feb 6, 2023, 3:19 PM	Welcome 2023-02	12	9 75%	4 33%	0 0%	0 0%
Mon, Feb 6, 2023, 7:05 AM	NERX 2023 - 2	2,288	1,434 64%	101 5%	52 2%	2 1%
Fri, Jan 20, 2023, 7:28 PM	NER News - Jan 2023	2,275	1,447 65%	280 13%	45 2%	1 1%
Tue, Jan 17, 2023, 11:09 AM	Renewal Reminder 2023-01	50	41 84%	4 8%	1 2%	0 0%
Tue, Jan 17, 2023, 11:08 AM	Welcome 2023-01	10	6 60%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%
Mon, Jan 16, 2023, 4:00 AM	NERX 2023 - 1	2,297	1,440 64%	140 6%	59 3%	0 0%

Number of contacts in Constant Contact

Ex-NER Members and Nonmembers

- Reduced the number in Constant Contact.
- Created a query that identifies Ex-NER and Nonmembers that have not opened an email in the last 2 years.
- Eliminated any of these contacts, but only if they are not a new contact in the last 2 years.
- It keeps the list trimmed to those contacts that show an interest in the NMRA or NER.
- Improves the email open rate.

Life members

- Life members are an issue since their membership is never up for renewal.
- The only way we learn to remove a life member from the roster is if a surviving spouse or relative notifies us of their passing.
- Non-Life members will eventually become non-members after their passing and be removed from the Constant Contact list as part of the query created above.
- A second query was created to find life members that have not opened an email within the last two years.
- Any life members that are not NER members and have not opened an email in the last 2 years will be removed.
- A Google search for obituaries for NER life members on this list will be done annually.

Springfield

- During the Springfield show, 20 new members were signed up.
- Of the 20, 14 were within the NER territory, yet there is still a net loss of 2 members since the last BoD meeting.
- A welcome email was sent prematurely. The email should have been sent after NMRA HQ entered the new members into the system.

Description	Prior Board Report	Current Board Report	Difference
Total NER Members	1452	1450	-2
Less Members without email addresses	147	143	-4
Less Members sharing email addresses	13	156	-4
NER Members in Constant Contact	1292	1294	2
Subscribed members	1236	1238	2
In process of resubscribing	0	1	1
Unsubscribed members	56	55	-1
NER Members in Constant Contact	1292	1294	2
NonMembers in Constant Contact	317	310	-7
Life members not in NER	17	14	-3
Ex-NER Members in Constant Contact	724	675	-49
Total Contacts	2350	2293	-57

ATTACHMENT #6

WEBMASTER REPORT – Jim Seroskie

NER Convention Website

Dave Insley's vision for the NER convention website is to have a SINGLE website to include the current NER convention as well as archive past NER conventions. **Divisions would no longer create dedicated websites.** The current convention site was used for Connecticut Yankee and is built in **Joomla**. Dave wants to move this to **Wordpress**. I support that.

This Year

Rick Mazzola's Cannon Ball Express website https://sunrisetraildiv.com/Test/CBExpress_2023/default.htm is based on HTML and PHP code and is functionally complete. It is located on the Sunrise Trail Division website.

Given that time is short, I believe we should create a new dedicated domain on SiteGround for this year's Cannon Ball Express 2023 site rather than integrate it into a new Wordpress site. The alternative is to integrate into the existing Joomla site.

Long Term

For 2024 and beyond, we can create a Wordpress site on a subdomain in SiteGround to replace the Joomla site to include current and past conventions. Proposed subdomain—<https://conventions.nernmra.org>

Everything would be in Wordpress with fill-in-the-form templates for convention specific information where ever possible using custom content types. AND we will need a dedicated CONTENT MANAGER (no Wordpress experience needed) to coordinate with the divisions.

I could create the Wordpress site but the CONTENT each year would be the responsibility of this new manager. Divisions would no longer create convention websites starting in 2024.

Proposed annual budget is \$500 to begin this summer.

ATTACHMENT #7

CENTRAL NEW YORK: Submitted by Drew James, CNY Superintendent

The division's banquet in January was well attended by over 40 members and spouses. Presentations by members Rick Mneice and Charlie Albee on recent trips on the Rocky Mountaineer were well received. We were pleased to have several new members attend the banquet.

Our annual meeting and swap meet was held in February. Bill Brown, MMR, gave an excellent clinic on modeling trees in Autumn. At the meeting the following officers were elected for a one-year term:

Drew James – Superintendent
Rick Mneice – Assistant Superintendent
Charlie Albee – Paymaster
Tom Lynch – Chief Clerk

In addition, the membership confirmed the appointment of Mark Withiam to the new position of Assistant Paymaster. Sadly, long time life member, Jim Heidt, had to step down from our board due to health issues.

The division's Port of Oswego layout was displayed at the Springfield train show in the NMRA booth.

Several division members provided videos for the recent NERx. A big thank you to Ed Olszewski for shooting and editing several of the videos.

In this quarter the division resolved a long standing banking issue. We now have a new bank account with our new state tax ID with multiple authorized members. We are in the process of updating our bylaws in preparation for applying for 501C3 status with the IRS. Many thanks to Dennis DeAngelis for reviewing our governance documents and recommending changes to our bylaws.

ATTACHMENT #8

Green Mountain Division Superintendent's Report – April 2, 2023

The first quarter was busy for the Division. We had two meetings, one in January and one in March, helped staff the NMRA booth at the Amherst show, and had an exhibit at a large model railroad show in Vermont.

We had six members at the January meeting and ten at the March meeting, which is about a third of the total membership. At both meetings members brought recently completed or in-progress projects to share. At the January meeting, a clinic was presented on using the Dwarvin fiber optic lighting system, and members were asked to consider presenting a clinic at future meetings. It was noted that these are eligible for Model Railroad Author AP points the first time, and Volunteer points if presented again elsewhere.

We discussed upcoming conventions, the Railpass membership incentive program, and various NMRA/NER online resources (Turntable, Facebook, NERx, NMRAX, etc.), and we plan to cover how to sign up for NMRA Interchange at our next meeting so that we can begin to use it for Division activities. Erich Golschneider talked about the rewarding experience he had helping staff the NMRA booth at Amherst. We were pleased to have gained two new members this quarter, one of whom joined at the booth. Chris Carfaro encouraged members to help find places such as libraries to exhibit the promotional display he and other members put together, and to write for The Coupler. At the March meeting we shared that our very own AP Chairman, Glenn Glasstetter, was featured in Tony Koester's Trains of Thought column in the March 2023 issue of Model Railroader.

We also discussed our current website, which is out of date. Max Brisben has taken on the role of Webmaster and will be setting up a new website using WordPress so it will be consistent with other NER websites.

We traditionally have our meetings near Burlington, VT, as most members live near there, but it's a long drive (up to 2 hours or so) for some members to attend. We've started looking for alternate places to meet on occasion so that members from other parts of the state will be more likely to be there. In addition, we are looking to have the meetings in places other than community spaces like library conference rooms. We're planning to have our May annual meeting at the Rutland Railway Museum, which has a layout as well as exhibits.

In March, Lew White brought the Division's Bellows Falls modules to the Vermont Rails show put on by the Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association, and he, Max Brisben, and Chris Carfaro staffed the modules and the two tables the NWV provided free of charge. Dave Insley had provided a couple of boxes of materials leftover from the NMRA booth (magazines, brochures, flyers, etc.) and virtually all were handed out at the show, which attracted well over 1,000 people. The three of them interacted with a good number of people and between their efforts and the materials handed out, we were pleased to promote both the GMD/NER/NMRA and the hobby in general. We hope to gain some members as a result.

Our Secretary, Ren Russo, unfortunately had to resign for personal reasons and will be missed. We will elect a new Secretary at the May meeting to complete Ren's term, as well as a Director-at-Large position that will open up.

Erich Golschneider
Superintendent
Green Mountain Division

ATTACHMENT #9

HUB DIVISION REPORT

Overview of First Quarter 2023

The beginning year 2023 looked good with multiple modular displays, with Wenham Museum, Danvers, MA; Amherst Show, Springfield, MA and Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show, Wilmington, MA

We are scheduling for Spring *TRAINing* event on April 15th, 2023 (Manchester-by-the Sea, MA), this event will be dedicated to our long member "Dick Towle" who passed away last year. Our guest clinicians are Stephen and Cinthia Priest, MRR. Check our website for further information and clinic schedule: [HUB Division Spring TRAINing](http://www.hubdiv.org/springshow/index.html). (www.hubdiv.org/springshow/index.html)

Our *Railfun* activities nights are still going strong. In the month of May, we are doing off site to the Cape; **Cape Cod Clinic**, 9:00 AM, Location First Lutheran Church, 1163 Main Street, West Barnstable, MA. **Topic:** "Presentation: Helping the World Build Better Railroads", Presented by Ken Belovarac. Thanks to our Coordinator planning various clinics every month. We have more plans for the more for 2023 year ...

Membership

Our membership Chair is doing great in recruiting new members and retainage. We've had sixteen new members since January 2023.

Division Financials

HUB Division is pleased to report that our division finances is in good shape and stable.

Annual Meeting

HUB Division Annual Meeting will be held on Apr 15, 2023 (Sat), with the elections for three (3) Board of Directors (BoD), this will be held following our Spring *TRAINing* event with a dinner banquet.

Respectfully submitted,
Manny Escobar
HUB Division, Inc. el Presidente
2 April 2023

ATTACHMENT #10

HUDSON-BERKSHIRE DIVISION

Report to NER

April 01, 2022

Our Spring meetings were in person, following CDC and NYS DOH protocols.

In January, we held a meeting at a local library. It featured a presentation by Dave Marecek on the Trainz software system and how it could be used to model prototype railroads, as well as its applications in developing model railroads. Constructing our model railroad in the computer software is useful for checking train scheduling when developing operating schemes by actually running the simulated trains in the computer. It was also helpful for confirming siding lengths, track locations and orientations, and roughing in scenery. Of special note is that Mr. Marecek spoke to us live from British Columbia, Canada via a remote connection.

This meeting was also our Division's very first meeting where we broadcast it live on the internet. Though only a few people attended the meeting remotely (most came in person), it is a start. We have been encouraged by other neighboring Divisions who use remote meeting technology for a lot of their activities, and it is something we will pursue more in the future.

Our February meeting was also held in a public meeting room, and it was a completely open forum whereby all of our members sat around a large table and we discussed various subjects affecting our Division. These included introductions by several of our new members about their modeling interests; different ideas for upcoming clinics and demonstrations to be held at our meetings; fun things we purchased (or couldn't afford to purchase) at the recent Springfield train show; a new portable switching layout that we could use to promote the hobby to adults by including realistic scenery and structures; good things and bad things from the Division's recent Great Train Extravaganza train show; areas to railfan in the area that might also be good locations for one of our outdoor monthly Division meetings; nearby railroad museums, tourist railroads, and model railroad clubs that we could visit as a group; having club shirts and other apparel made for our members; techniques for building craftsman structure kits; and any other subjects that members wanted to talk about. It was a fun to sit around and really get to know one another better, especially since we had some people show up who rarely attend our meetings.

Our March meeting was held at Mike Hachey's house and his fantastic HO layout complete with hundreds of craftsman structures was on display. We had over 30 members attend and they all enjoyed themselves. Mike showed us some of his techniques for modeling night scenes on his layout. Another member, James Lauser, brought his Iowa Scaled Engineering ProtoThrottle to the layout to demonstrate the neat things it can do.

We look forward to several more interesting layout tours, railfan events, and our family picnic this spring before we take a break for the summer.

Benjamin L. Maggi,
President

ATTACHMENT #11

LAKESHORES DIVISION

First Quarter--2023 Report for NER-BOD

Membership--Jim Fairbanks

As of February 21, 2023 the Lakeshores Division had 87 members with dues up-to-date and 6 members past due.

Finance--John Becker

As of February 28, 2022 the checking account balance was \$3,048.34. There was \$25.23 in petty cash. Total Division funds were \$3,073.57.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee continues to meet monthly via Zoom to plan activities for the general membership. Minutes are available on request.

General Membership Meets

LakeshoresX23, a Zoom meet, was held on Saturday, February 11. This year's meet was a joint effort by Div12-MCR, WNY-NFR and Lakeshores-NER. Presentations included "Developing Operations for the PRR Chautauqua Branch" by Brad White (Div12), "Expand Your Horizons with Backdrops" by Dave Ellis and "Scratch-building with Styrene...mostly" by Dave Durr. There were 39 attendees including NMRA President, Gordy Robinson.

Our second "Op Around the Clock" operations weekend was held on Friday and Saturday, March 24 and 25. Five members hosted sessions, and there were 14 participants with some coming from Pennsylvania, Ohio and North Carolina. The next meet will be on Saturday, April 15 at the Genesee Society of Model Engineers in Oakfield, NY. There will be three clinics; club layouts will be available for viewing; and two members are opening their layouts for viewing following the meet.

On Saturday, September 16, Lakeshores and Hudson-Berkshire have been invited to tour the layouts of the CNY. Other meets are planned but not yet finalized for June, October or November along with summer picnics.

The "Lakeshores Build-it Series", our version of "Modeling with the Masters," continues with *ad hoc* sessions two or three times per month. Jim DeMarco, MMR leads the clinics at his home in Kendall. There are two to five regular participants. Thus far, a scratch-built wooden boxcar has been completed, and a wooden reefer is almost done. The next project will be craftsman structures.

Train Shows

Div12-MCR, WNY-NFR and Lakeshores-NER had a joint promotional table at the Hamburg (NY) Train Show on Saturday and Sunday, February 18 and 19. WNY and Lakeshores also had a promotional table at The Great Batavia Train Show on Sunday, March 26. The Lakeshores' HO scale T-TRAK switching layout was used at both shows.

BataviaRPM--Mike Pyszczek

The Second Annual Batavia RPM (Railroad Prototype Modelers) Meet sponsored by the Lakeshores Division and the Genesee Society of Model Engineers was held on Sunday, March 26, in conjunction with The Great Batavia Train Show. There were 18 participants, some from out of state, who displayed models and attended two clinics--"B&M Postwar freight Car Fleet" by Ken Akerboom (WNY-NFR) and "Researching Prototypes" by Dave Durr.

Achievement Program--Ned Spiller MMR

No certificates or awards were presented this quarter.

Communications--Ray, Howard, Ed O'Connell, Dave Durr

The *Lake Shores Limited* was published in January and March with the next issue due in May. All issues are archived on our website--<lakeshoresnmra.org>.

The *Member Marketplace* is published monthly if there are submissions. The Division's Facebook site, webpage, and calendars are up-to-date.

Presentations

Dave Durr--Scratch-building with Styrene...mostly"--Lakeshores23X, Feb 11

Harold Russell MMR--Guess-timating Structural Dimensions--NERx, Mar 20-23

Mike Pysczek--New Use for an Old Microbrush--NERx, Mar 20-23

Mike Pysczek--Cutting Styrene Accurately--NERx, Mar 20-23

Ed O'Connell--Uncoupling Techniques and Tools--NERx, Mar 20-23

Ed O'Connell--Operations Roundtable--NERx, Mar 20-23

John Becker, Gordon Spalty, Jeanne Spalty, Dave Durr--Model Showcase--NERx, March 20-23

Dave Durr--Researching Prototypes--BataviaRPM, Mar 26

Regional and National Publications

None this quarter.

2024 NER Convention

The RIT Inn and Conference Center has been chosen as the venue for Lakeshores24, pending approval of the proposed contract by the NER-BOD.

Respectfully submitted,

David P. Durr

Superintendent

March 28, 2023

ATTACHMENT #12

Little Rhody Division Interim Report 2 April 2023

The Little Rhody Division is continuing to devote monthly membership meetings to the newer modeler. The April meeting will bring in two members of the HUB division to discuss roofs in a presentation titled "Think Like a Raindrop; Roofs and Visual Elements". May will see the modular layouts hitting the road again with a trip to the library in Bristol, RI. Our annual meeting and elections will be a luncheon this year rather than a dinner as it will be less expensive for all of us watching our pennies and will allow folks to travel home during daylight hours.

We have set up our annual Little Rhody Model Railroad Expo train show for the first weekend in November again. This year will find us at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center in Cranston, RI. The facility is relatively new, has a lot of space and tables for us to utilize and the folks there are excited about a train show "coming to town".

The web page for Little Rhody is being modified by two volunteers, Linda Bergemann, Membership Chair, and DK Paul. Linda and DK are slowly working to simplify navigation, clean up errors in email addresses, add documents to the page and eventually work to make the webpage more interesting and exciting to view.

A change of AP Chair took place last month with Justin Maguire, MMR stepping down after 13 years of service to Little Rhody and Steve Erickson and Tom Emmett, MMR co-chairing the Achievement Program for the division. We should soon have our third MMR as well with George Landow earning his last two AP awards in Volunteer and Engineer, Electrical qualifying him for MMR status. All paperwork and documentation are in the hands of Bill Brown, regional AP chair. The division has one member working on the Dispatcher award and one working on the Prototype award.

Our summer picnic will be held in July at the Connecticut Eastern Railroad. Hopefully the weather will cooperate this year as it did not last year with the extraordinary heat wave causing the division to cancel at the last minute.

Sue Osberg
Superintendent,
Little Rhody Division, NER, NMRA

ATTACHMENT #13

SEACOAST DIVISION

April 2, 2023

Winter 2023 Event and Annual Meeting

The Seacoast Division 2023 Winter Event was held on Saturday January 7, 2023 at the Westbrook ME Community Center.

The Seacoast Division Annual Meeting was held as part of the Winter Event. A major part of the annual meeting is the installation of the three directors. (No election was required this year since there were only three candidates for three positions.) Incumbent Directors Tom Oxnard, MMR and Jay Ehlen were installed. Bob Kotsonis chose to not run for re-election as a Director. We wish to thank him for all his contributions to the Seacoast Division. Guy Mason, who recently moved to the Seacoast Division was installed as the third Director. I wish to thank Tom, Jay and Guy for volunteering to support the Seacoast Division for the next three years as Directors.

In his opening remarks, President Mitchell discussed tentative plans for the Division to host the 2025 Northeastern Regional convention. He stressed the need for member volunteers to fill key Convention management positions. Additionally, he noted that Division membership had declined from 174 members this time last year to a recent tally of 157 present members.

Our first clinic presentation was "Operations 101", a complete introduction to effective operating sessions presented by Bruce Robinson. This well received power point clinic was prepared for the NER Mill City Convention and described the process and paperwork for use on his VJRR.

The second clinic, "Modeling Realistic Brick and Concrete" was presented by new member Dan Pugatch.

Through slides and actual examples he demonstrated techniques to add mortar to brickwork and create weathered concrete finishes. Several attendees offered their own experiences to a well delivered clinic.

Given time constraints, the lunch break was combined with a hands-on operating session conducted by members of the Southern Model Railroad Club. Several Club members set-up modular units and demonstrated switching techniques.

The final session was a panel presentation chaired by Glenn Mitchell. Panel members were Matt Keiser, John Newick and Bruce Robinson. The panel reviewed the different approaches to operating sessions employed on Matt's, John's, and Dick Fralick's layouts. Slides showed features of each layout and the participants discussed the differences in operations on the different layouts.

Seacoast Division 2025 NER Convention Exploratory Committee

The exploratory committee has held several zoom meetings in order to determine if the Seacoast Division will commit to host the 2025 NER Convention. The first main issue to be investigated is the identification of a suitable and affordable venue available in the September 2025. Thus far of the four venues contacted and visited, one is a viable candidate - the Grappone Center in Concord, NH. The second main issue is getting volunteers to step up and take leadership roles. The Exploratory Committee decided to utilize co-chairmen for each of the four main committees (Overall Convention, Indoor Activities, Outdoor Activities, and Publicity) Thus far Peter McKenney has volunteered to be a co-chairman for the Publicity Committee and John McHugh has volunteered to be a co-chairman for the Indoor Activities Committee. We need to have at least one co-chairman for each of the committees to move forward.

The next Seacoast BOD meeting is April 13, 2023 and the Spring 2023 Event will be held on April 15, 2023 in Rochester, NH.

Respectfully submitted,
Glenn Mitchell, Seacoast Division President and Director