



# THE



# FLATWHEEL

**Please Note: NEW MEETING LOCATION**

**Westlake City Recreation Center  
28955 Hilliard Blvd.  
Westlake OH 44145**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

**VOLUME 55, NUMBER 7**



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# NORTH COAST LEADERSHIP

## ELECTED OFFICERS

Superintendent - Lee Sheffield, lakeshorenc@yahoo.com

Assistant Superintendent - Ron Morgan, ronalc  
co844@gmail.com

Secretary - Chris Shick, craftqween@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer - Greg Noeth (216)-789-2086, gjnoeth@yahoo.com

Director East—Fred Obreza (216)-587-4419,  
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Director West - Gary Schaefer, trains.ohio@yahoo.com

Director Quad County -

Director at Large - Brian Haas, haasland@msn.com

Director at Large - Jeff Lauren, jflrn@sbcglobal.net  
(216)-798-1896

## APPOINTED POSITIONS

Great Berea Train Show - David James, c(440)-785-9907

Achievement - Bruce Brintnall MMR®

Layout Tours -Ron Morgan, ronalc  
co844@gmail.com

Contests - Joe Filipiak, graftonpotter@frontier.com

Historian/Archivist - Frank Bongiovanni

Raffle - Adam Woodie, woo3482@hotmail.com

Co. Store Manager - Scott Benson, sben-  
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Clinics -

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N.O.A.R.S. Representative -Bill Kovacs

Webmaster—Ben Lanza, blqt@nls.net

Refreshments—Don Glass

Training Day - Gary Schaefer, trains.ohio@vahoo.com

# DIVISION 4

## THE NORTH COAST DIVISION

**OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2020.  
WE OFFER GOOD FELLOWSHIP, FREE SOFT-DRINKS/COFFEE AND  
AN INFORMATIVE CLINIC ON SOME ASPECT OF OUR HOBBY. JOIN US!**

### WHEN & WHERE WE MEET

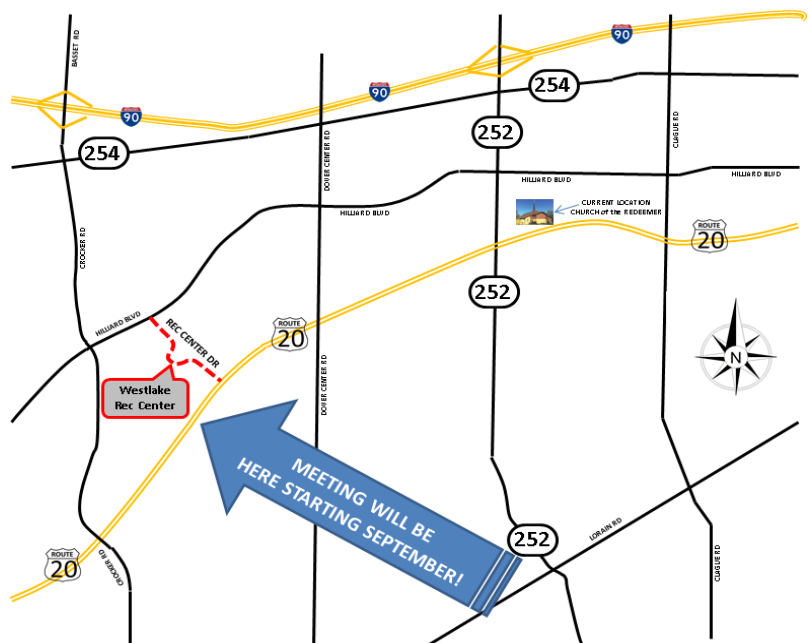
The North Coast Division holds 10 meetings a year (none in July and August). Meetings are on the 2nd Friday of each month. A social half hour starts at 7:00 p.m. followed by a short business meeting at 7:30. After a short break, a railroad themed raffle and clinic complete the typical agenda. Starting September, 2020, the meetings are held at the **Westlake City Recreation Center**, 28955 Hilliard Blvd, Westlake, OH 44145. Visitors are welcome to attend any meeting.

The Division's newsletter, *The Flatwheel* is published monthly (except during July and August) by Division 4 of the Mid-Central Region (MCR) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). All comments are welcome.

Views expressed in *The Flatwheel* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the NMRA, MCR, or Division 4.

*The Flatwheel* is typically electronically published no later than the Monday preceding the monthly meeting. Submissions are due no later than the 26th of the prior month, for example, August 26th for the September *Flatwheel*.

Unaccredited photos courtesy of the editor or staff photographer Dave Williams.

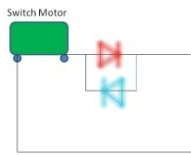




# EDITORIAL

Have you ever forgot to throw your track switch back, and caused a derailment and possibly a short on the track. How about when you have a track switch on the upper level that you can't see which way the switch is thrown, or the switch is on the other side of the room making impossible to see?

Well adding signals along the track add more "life" and realism to your layout, and make it easier to see the status of your track switches. The simple way is to wire LEDs in series with your switch motors. Just wire a Red one with the polarity in one direction, and a Green one with the opposite polarity together.



There are many other ways to do signals. You can wire the LEDs or Light Bulbs through the Switch Motor contacts. If you use LEDs for this method, don't forget the Resistor.

You can have an automatic method to throw the switch anytime a train is heading toward a switch that is set the wrong way. There are many ways to do this too. I think the easiest way is to use the NCE Mini Panel. This circuit card has 30 inputs, NCE jacks to connect the NCE Control Signal to, and a separate Jack to plug your controller into for programming, and memory to write the programs. The inputs can be wired to Block Detectors or Reed Switched, or even Photo Transistors to detect when a train is coming to a track switch. Use which ever you like. The programming is very simple. You just select menu items on your NCE controller. To program, you plug your NCE Controller into the program Jack, and turn on your power. You put in the Switch Motor Address, then which way you want the Switch thrown (Normal or Reversed). It then moved to the second input, and you program it the same way.

If you use an inputs for each track that comes into a switch against the frog, that means you have enough for 15 track switches. By using this panel in this way, you will never derail your train by forgetting to throw the switch. It will do it for you.

If you use JMRI on your computer to control or display the location of you trains, then the NCE Mini Panel is a great way to keep everything I synch. If you have a manual switch panel to control your track switches, you can wire the switches to the Mini Panel and tell it to throw the switch. That way, the JMRI knows even when you switch your tracks manually.

The NCE Mini Panel can do many things only limited to your imagination. This list price for the NCE Mini Panel is \$59.99, however you can find it for less at train shows, or online.



The Edge, Chuck Shick

# FROM THE SUPER

“Driving the train doesn’t set its course. The real job is laying the track.” *Ed Catmull*

Normally my September column would be talking about the past summer activities and getting ready for the new season of model railroading. But this year being anything but normal we are looking back on a summer of being holed up in our homes. One never stops to think of how active our division is throughout the year until virtually nothing is going on. I missed having the picnic, visiting the 4H Kids’ module setup at the Medina County Fair, going to all the conventions that were planned and all the other activities revolving around model railroading. So, we look forward to the new season of model railroading. Not this year!

We had the summer BOD meeting Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and made some tough decisions, one being to cancel the Great Berea Train Show for this year. Discussions went on over the period of an hour and I put forth a vote. It was unanimous to cancel the show. Safety, satisfying the Health Dept and liability were the main reasons brought to the table. And quite frankly, we are not short of operating funds for the coming year. Yes, we won’t have any income this year, but stop to think, we have had very few expenses this year with all the cancellations. In addition to canceling the show, we are not going to have an Awards Banquet or Training Day this year. Depending on how the meetings flow we will investigate having a December meeting at the Westlake Community Center in place of the Award’s Banquet.

Speaking of meetings, we are set to have the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting at our new location, the Westlake Community Center. The room is big enough to accommodate 80 people spaced apart per the guidelines. All participants will be required to wear a mask and practice proper social distancing. As this is our first meeting at the Westlake Community Center, I expect some hiccups along the way. We are planning on having everything in place such as refreshments, raffle, contest etc. There will tables in the main room if you have something to show or sell. There are two vehicle entrances to the center, one from Center Ridge Road and one from Hilliard Blvd. I would recommend you come in from Hilliard as the parking lot and entrance to the Community Center are on that side of the complex. As you drive in from Hilliard take the 2<sup>nd</sup> right which enters the parking lot. If you come in from Center Ridge Road you will need to wind your way through the complex past the main entrance to the Rec Center and to the parking lot for the Community Center. We will have a member at the church just in case someone forgets and shows up there. It is approximately 3.4 miles West from the church to the Community Center via Center Ridge Road. We are looking into videoing the meeting and providing a live feed to Facebook or uploading it to our You Tube page. The bugs will have to be worked out during the next couple of meetings. Other possibilities include Zoom or other virtual meeting programs. Please bear with us as we explore these new horizons. Other Divisions have been very successful conducting their meetings via Zoom. One big advantage to holding virtual meetings is how clinics are presented. We can host a clinic from any location in the United States. The clinician doesn’t have to be at the meeting to present his or her clinic. This opens up the availability of a lot of interesting subjects for clinics.

Clinics.

We are looking for a new Clinic Chairman. Larry Madson is stepping down. I don't want to go from push to shove but I need someone to belly up to the bar and take over as Clinic Chairman. The alternative is we don't have clinics after our meetings. I know things look bleak when it comes to meetings, but we still need someone to take over setting up clinics. So, give it some thought and come see me.

Please continue to welcome our new members and visitors to our meetings. Try to answer their questions the best you can or refer them to another member who might have the answer. Remember, we were all green at some point. See everyone on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

And remember, Model Railroading is Fun !!!



Lee Sheffield , Superintendent

# GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

NMRA MCR Division 4 General Meeting Minutes for  
Friday, June 12, 2020  
Westlake Recreation Center, Westlake Ohio

There hasn't been a meeting since February. The March Flatwheel published the minutes.

So there are no minutes to publish in this article.

Chris Shick, Secretary



# BOD MEETING MINUTES

## NMRA, MCR, Division 4, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes for Saturday, August 11, 2020 9:00am

In Attendance: Lee Sheffield, Ron Morgan, Ben Lanza, Greg Noeth, Dave Williams, Gary Shaefer, Adam Woodie, Joe Kurilec MMR, Bruce Bowie, Fred Wagner, Chuck Shick, Chris Shick, Larry Kuczyanski, Larry Madson, Frank Bongiovanni, Joe Filipiak, Jeff Lauren, John Janda, Ramhog Shearer & David James (host),  
Note: This meeting was held via Zoom, due to the State of Ohio still being under quarantine from the Covid 19 pandemic.

Lee Sheffield called the meeting to order at 9:18 am. He then handed the floor over to David James. David let us know the status of the Great Berea Train Show with how many vendors have responded, how many are interested, what precautions we would need to take in order to protect our Division from liability, and how the Fair Board was working with him to only charge for what we would need (if we go through with it). After hearing from other board members Lee took a vote to see who wanted to hold the Great Berea Train Show. By a unanimous it was decided to not hold the Great Berea Train Show this year for everyone's safety and health.

David James was thanked for all of his hard and dedicated work for the present and past on the wonderful job he puts forth into the Great Berea Train Show, along with hosting the Zoom meetings.

A decision was made to cancel the Awards Banquet in December, but to possibly hold a regular meeting if the room is available at the Rec Center.

Joe Filipiak let us know that the Rec Center is open and we have two rooms that combine into one large room. All members must wear a mask and we have room for 80 members (for proper social distancing). Refreshments must be served, there is no self-serve to be done. Jeff Lauren volunteered to go to the church to send any members who show up to the Westlake Rec Center.

Joe Filipiak announced that the monthly contest will still be held. So gentlemen get to working on those models!

The suggestions were brought up of doing monthly meetings on Zoom or maybe record them to be posted on Division's You Tube page. Looking into this for possible October's meeting. Volunteers will be needed to take charge of this.

Ron Morgan stated there will be no home layout tours in November. Ram then suggested we could have home layouts videoed and then put out on line for others to see them. Maybe Ben Lanza could post them.

Gary Shafer announced Training Day was canceled this year. He also mentioned Trees and Trains were still undecided at this time. They are thinking of a back up plan of possibly displaying all of the displays facing the windows and having visitors walk around the outside of the building. Nothing is set as of yet.



# BOD MEETING MINUTES—Continued

Adam Woodie reported the Zoo is going ahead with the Christmas Light Display. They are not sure about the indoor displays, so that is still a possibility.

Ben Lanza and Joe Kurilec were both thanked for the great job they are doing on the Division Members stuck at home and the monthly raffles. Great Job guys!

Lee Sheffield mentioned about the NMRA Youth policy. We are no longer permitted to have interaction with youths under the NMRA sanction. Youths are permitted as long as a parent is with them at all times. We can still support the youth organizations through monetary gifts.

Lee then called the meeting to adjourn at 10:34 am.



Respectfully,  
Chris Shick  
Secretary

# THIS & THAT

Me again.

A while back I bought a brass USRA light 2-10-2 on Ebay and made a few minor detail changes, added a decoder and painted and lettered it for Ann Arbor RR. See, I can model both sides of the border, eh! And since a locomotive needs a matching caboose I found an old Silver Streak C&O kit on Ebay that approximately matched a picture of an Ann Arbor wood car I found on line. Old timers will likely remember Silver Streak models. They weren't bad for their time. I've added truss rods, Grandt Line windows, better ladders and a PSC stack casting but otherwise building it according to the instructions. I'll send a photo of the car when it's finished if the virus doesn't get me first.



Dave Lawler

# MODULE GROUP

Greetings Fellow Model Railroaders!

It goes without saying that every event that module group was scheduled to display this past Spring and Summer were cancelled. Unfortunately, some of the fall events that module group was scheduled to display have already been cancelled such as the Cleveland Oktoberfest (Labor Day Weekend), Great Berea Train Show, and Training Day.

I do have a sliver of good news. I have spoken with Cleveland Zoo and they intend to have the Winter Lights Display during the upcoming holiday season. I will be sure to let everyone know more details once I receive more information from Cleveland Zoo regarding this event.

Until next time!



Adam "Hot Box" Woodie

# MEMBERSHIP

# RAFFLE

Greetings Fellow Model Railroaders!

Well, it's been quite some time since the last monthly raffle. The last one was held on February 14, 2020. Rest assured. I have been scouring the online auction sites to find some good deals during this pandemic. There will be something for everyone at the upcoming meeting scheduled for September 11, 2020. I hope to see everyone there!



Adam "Hot Box" Woodie

# COMPANY STORE

We'll have some new items at our next Division meeting. I'll have some cars and building kits from our sister divisions. I'll also have more of the Glue Loopers - demand was hot in January! I'll also have some of the glue pens we saw in the January clinic. More finger LED lights, Golden Spike stamps, HO gages etc. for sale at upcoming meetings.

Division 4 shirts and hats are available through the Company Store. Order at the monthly meeting, or through the form on the Company Store page on our web site. Division 4 patches are also available at \$3 each.

We have a library of how-to DVD's for member use, available at our meetings. A \$10.00 deposit for each DVD rented. \$10.00 returned when DVD returned at next meeting.



Scott Benson



# CLINIC



# CONTEST TABLE

The Model Contest consist has been side tracked for months but we finally have the signal and will soon be up on the high iron again. The model contests that were held during our division meetings from the later part of 2019 into the early 2020 numbered a total of five contests. We will have awards for the top point winners in both the model as well as the diorama categories. The last three contests that were to be held have now become the subjects of our first three contests beginning with a flat car load for the September contest. October's contest subject is a passenger car that was or is a sleeper/ bedroom car. Any road, any era, from the earliest heavy weights to todays Amtrak. The contest for November is a rubber wheeled railroad vehicle. The January challenge for you is to build a building that would be found in the business district of a town or city that would be no more than one block from the tracks. The contest for February is large motive power (non steam). No little yard switchers or four axle road switchers. The March contest will be an R.P.O. car. Maybe an R.P.O. car should have been the November subject. Think about it, you'll get it. April's contest is to be a small, rural country railroad station. We will finish the contest session off with May's subject being a box car lettered for a short line railroad that really did exist or still is active today.

A note to the diorama builders that the diorama can not exceed two square feet and it must be built on a wood or foam base.

Well, that's it from the Model Contest Box for now, so get your entry together, mask up, and I'll see you at the meeting at the Westlake Rec Center.



Joe Filipiak

# What's Going On?

Well here is what is on the calendar, and the current status so far.

- Div-4 Summer Picnic - Cancelled
- Cuyahoga County Fair - Cancelled
- **September 11th DIV4 member meeting - still on**
- Octoberfest - Cancelled
- The Great Berea Train Show - Cancelled
- Fall Layout Tours - Possible Videos and Pictures
- Training Day - Cancelled
- DIV4 Awards night and Banquet - Cancelled

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DIVISION 4 Website    [www.div4.org](http://www.div4.org)

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Joe Andrews, Proprietor

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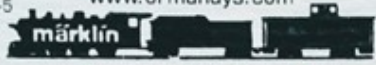
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# ABOUT US

We are Division 4 of the Mid-Central Region of the National Model Railroad Association. With more than 200 members from Cuyahoga, Erie, Huron, Lorain and Medina counties in the state of Ohio. The North Coast Division meetings are normally held on the second Friday of the month, to hear guest speakers, share skills, have railroad related clinics, and to share common problems and successes. Many of us get together informally in round-robin sessions to operate and work on each other's layouts, or just talk railroads and modeling.