

# Vol. 21 No. 4

Oct.-Dec. 2020

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[www.facebook.com/wba.chaptertca](http://www.facebook.com/wba.chaptertca)

## WB&A Board of Directors Officers:

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Vice Pres: John Buxton  
Treasurer: Michael Ackerman  
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Bob Gray  
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William (Bill) Moss  
Karl Taschenberger

### Eastern Division Representative:

David Eadie

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## "The Trolley" The Official WB&A Newsletter



WB&A Chapter - Eastern Division - Train Collectors Association  
Established 1964

### Message from your President

As we come to the end of summer, unfortunately not the end of the pandemic, I hope everyone is safe and well and had a chance to get some fresh air as well as work on their trains, and train rooms this summer!

Yes, I am still looking for more people to do some open homes and show and tells on zoom in the months ahead. As I had mentioned in the last Trolley we had a very successful mini meeting on June 6th with close to 40 people in attendance online. It was great to see old friends, train buddies, that we hadn't seen in a while. Even though a few could have used a haircut!

Last month, the board met online to determine how we were going to handle the fall/early winter schedule.

After much discussion and trying to determine event by event whether or not we would be able to hold the event, a motion was voted on to postpone or cancel all in person meetings and shows till the first of the year. The WB&A Board of Directors felt this was in the best interest for the safety of its members and attendees, following the examples of other train shows, TCA and Eastern Division. This does not mean we can't revisit this decision should conditions change.

A considerable amount of time and energy goes into our shows, and I wish to thank all the individuals and their efforts in making our shows a success. We will be holding another Board of Directors meeting in October (zoom) and as always these are open and can be attended by any member.

November will be our Mini Meeting on Zoom, open to all members and I encourage you to attend. We will be holding elections again, some of our board members seats are up for a new term. This would also be a good opportunity for input, thoughts on options for next spring. Dust off your crystal ball.

In closing, this is one year that will definitely make the history books! I would love to have had 20-20 vision, looking out the back of the ca-boose of this year in the past!

As always should you need or have a question you're welcome to contact any of us on the board or myself.

Tom Salen  
President WB&A



# Treasurer's Report as of Sep. 1, 2020

By Michael Ackerman

The Chapter's financial activities for Jan. 1, 2020-Sep. 1, 2020 are summarized below. If you have any other questions or comments feel free to contact me at MJACK-ERMN@gmail.com.

Check Book Balance – Jan. 1, 2020           \$30,713.95  
Check Book Balance - Sep. 1, 2020       \$30,386.40

Significant Activities Jan. 1, 2020 thru Sep. 1, 2020

	Expenses	Revenue
Annapolis Show 2017	2859	3600
Membership Dues 2019 (221)		90
Membership Dues 2020 (153)		1125
Membership Dues 2021 (4)		60
Membership Donations		15
Trolley 2020	481	
Kids Korner	50	
Web Site/Facebook	680	
Train Set for Drawing	487	145
Misc. Income & Expenses	806	150

## Membership Moments

by Bill Moss

The WB&A is alive and well with hopes of meeting together sometime in 2021. As we grind through 2020 several things have happened in our lives. Although there have been no shows, meets or social gatherings, we have been able to meet virtually through our Zoom meetings. However, this has eliminated the option of paying dues while enjoying our shows. Since no shows or meets are planned for the rest of the year, this puts more emphasis on keeping our dues current by mail. As of September 1, 2020, our membership has declined to a total of 223 members with 161 members having paid their 2020 dues. If you have not paid your dues, please use the Membership Renewal Form found in this issue by December 31, 2020.

We will be meeting by Teleconferencing which will include "show and tell" and "how to" sessions. All members will be invited to join and participate in these meetings by using Zoom on their computers or by calling in on their phones. Information will be available on the WB&A Website ([wba-tca-eastern.org](http://wba-tca-eastern.org)) before each scheduled Teleconference. Check the website at any time to keep up with the latest WB&A news. In this way we can remain active in the WB&A. So, stay healthy and we hope to connect with you in our next Teleconference.



# TOP TEN WB&A BENEFITS

- 1 Fun and Fellowship with your Train Friends
- 2 Wealth of information available from other collectors, operators and layout builders.
- 3 A wonderful opportunity to participate at the local level in the world's greatest hobby.
- 4 Free admission to local WB&A Train Shows. (Show advertised in local newspapers).
- 5 Free admission at Members Only WB&A Swap Meets.
- 6 Receive quarterly the WB&A Newsletter "The Trolley".
- 7 Access to the chapter facebook page- [www.facebook.com/wba.chaptertca](http://www.facebook.com/wba.chaptertca)
- 8 Share in the excitement of the Toy Train Hobby.
- 9 Serving as a committee member or officer at the local level is very rewarding.
- 10 Buy, Sell, Trade with local train enthusiasts.

## Historian's Corner

### The History of York

As one of the prime sources of enjoyment and anticipation for TCA members, the York Train Show has evolved over the years and has become a fixture in eastern Pennsylvania for many, many years. It's much more than just a train show. It's a time to gather with friends from across the nation, and across the world. Did you know that there are often English, German, and Japan visitors among all the attendees? So, how is it that this staple in our lives has developed and changed? Well, sit back and relax, for that is quite a story.

Eastern Division was founded in 1954. Following in the footsteps of Western Division, Eastern joined together with Western in October to form the Train Collectors Association. Since that time Eastern Division meets have been held at several locations. How many of these did you know about? How many of these did you attend?

Yes, there were resolutions. The conventions and official meetings were "so far apart", and Ed Alexander (TCA CM#1) and Bill Krames (TCA CM#6) felt that the social and harmonious spirit of our organization should be fostered as much as possible.

February 18, 1956 – Eastern Division met at Alexander's Barn, Yardley, PA. This gathering was titled a "Bull

Session, Coffee Klatch, Swap Fest, etc, etc! This may have been the first Eastern Division Meet! The call went out by mail to come eat, drink, and be merry. To swap, buy at auction, and renew old friendships. The flyer goes on to say that "If our officers will sanction it" this could be an official Eastern meet.

October 19-20, 1956 – We met at Al Pittman's in Gwynned, PA. Lunch, Auctions, Dinner and Entertainment.

October 18 - 20, 1957 – We are back at Ed Alexanders Train Museum, Yardley, PA Hotels were recommended (at the outstanding rate of no higher than \$10 for a double) Early traders and Late traders were encouraged on Friday and Sunday, with official activities on Saturday.

March 21, 1958 – Eastern Division met at Lou Redman's, Ben Avon, Pittsburgh, PA. 1958 had been a long hard winter, and the flyer called for a good dose of talking trains. The phone number to call to RSVP was Poplar1-0421! Do any of you remember those telephone exchanges? (I was 5 years old, by the way)

June 5-7, 1959 – We met at Collington Pleasure Club, Baltimore, MD. The flier called for Meeting old friends, talking trains, making new friends, swapping trains, eating, talking trains, an auction and a business meeting. Who could ask for anything more!

April 2-3, 1960 – We met at Overlook Golf Club, Lancaster, PA.

October 15-16, 1960 – We met at the Hershey Community Building, Hershey, PA This is the first meet at the Hershey complex. It follows a November meet in the same location by the SGA (Standard Gauge Association) This meet introduced Door and Raffle prizes.

1961 - Based on minutes from the Eastern Division Board meetings, it appears that the April and October meets took place in Hershey

April 13-14, 1962 – Flyer identifies the meet as the TCA EASTERN DIVISION SPRING MEET. Hershey Community Building, Hershey, PA

October 12-14, 1962 – Hershey Community Building, Hershey, PA

April 19-21, 1963 – Hershey Community Building, Hershey, PA

October 11-13, 1963 – Hershey Community Building, Hershey, PA

April 17-19, 1964 – Hershey Community Center, Hershey, PA; Eastern Division President George Yohe; 211 TCA members present (25% of TCA membership + 100 family members and guests)

October 2-4, 1964 – Hershey Community Center, Hershey, PA; The meet flyer for this meet records a significant issue: "Regular Eastern Division meets have become quite large"! Those attending the meet are requested to wear their ID tags.

April, 1965 – Hershey Community Center, Hershey, PA

October, 1965 - Guernsey Sales Pavilion, Lancaster, PA

April, 1966 – Canandaigua, NY

October, 1966 – Guernsey Sales Pavilion, Lancaster, PA

April and October, 1967 – Guernsey Sales Pavilion, Lancaster, PA

April, 1970 until October, 2019 – York Fairgrounds, York, PA (Going on 50 years!)

And in all this time, when there was only two times that York has been cancelled? Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these "trainiacs" from the swift completion of their appointed tales. Some of the meets were snowed under, some during a hurricane, and an awful lot during horrendous rain storms, but there were no cancellations.

That is until early March, 2020 when the world as we know it changed dramatically. We were instructed to stay 6 feet away from each other, to not meet in large groups, and to stay at home, especially if we were over the age of 60. Did this mean you? It certainly meant me! The nation, and the state of Pennsylvania, decided that any mass gatherings would be cancelled. With the attendance at York bringing in over 10,000 people, this included April 2020 York and October 2020 York. Hotels, restaurants, and local shops had closed their doors. They are beginning now to reopen, but with staggered reservations, fewer staff, and limited seating. Each entity that made York what it has been affected.

The June TCA Convention in Jacksonville was cancelled. Local Division and other local shows have been cancelled. Life, as we knew it, ground to a halt.

So, we all stay at home and get some time to play with our trains. Dust is being removed, shelves are being straightened, and we pull out some of those trains that have been stored away for a while. The reports that I'm hearing are that online auctions are doing well. We know of folks who have been selling things in the TCA x-change and on eBay. Zoom meetings have become the norm. In June the TCA Board of Directors met over telephone conference. At least this means that they are able to talk with each other and get business done. We can share what we're doing and what we're not doing. But, as I'm sure you agree, it's not as much fun.

Neither the crystal ball nor the Ouija board are working too well. The predictions are abundant that states will begin to allow large groups, that the 6' safe distance will be reduced, and that the barricades will disappear. The hope that we will be able to shake hands and give hugs, the forecast of when travel restrictions will be lifted. The hope that a safe, long lasting vaccination would be available. The hope that we will all be safe. None of this is set in stone, none of this has been decided, and none of this will change the immense pleasure we get from knowing and caring for each other.

But, it will happen! And TCA will come together and be together again. Let me know what you have been doing. Carol.McGinnis74@verizon.net.

Yours in train-ing.  
Carol, HE95-41066



## View from the Observation Car

By George Tsakiris

In the last article we discussed concepts and planning of my standard gauge layout. In this installment we are discussing the benchwork.

The terms Standard Gauge and L-Girder Construction are not usually put together in the same sentence. Standard gauge trains are big and heavy. L-girder construction is associated more with the much lighter HO and N scales. To compensate for the heavier trains, I chose girders and joists using 1" x 4" lumber with 1" x 2" flanges on the girders.

L-girder construction provides lightweight and sturdy benchwork that can be reconfigured easier than standard grid benchwork for future revisions. It is also supposed to be quicker to assemble than standard grid assembly or butt-joint benchwork but this was not the case. I'll tell you why later in this article.



L-girder under construction. Using 1" x 4" lumber and 1" x 2" flange giving it remarkable strength



L-girders being attached to the leg assemblies using deck screws and 1/4" bolts. Notice the "1 x 2" bracings

Four elements helped make this benchwork sturdy and ridged enough for standard gauge:

- Each leg was made of two 1" x 3" pieces of lumber glued and screwed at 90-degree angles. In addition, an 8" piece of 2" x 4" was attached to the bottom of each leg. This increased rigidity and provided a location for adjustable feet
- Use of 1"x 4" lumber for girders and joists
- Liberal use of bracing
- Leg assemblies and L-girders attached using a combination of deck screws and 1/4" bolts

In the above right photo, you will notice one of the l-girders appears very long. It is 17' 4" long. To create a girder that long I used a 10' section and a 7'4" section spliced together using 2"x 4" lumber that is 20" long. The photo below shows the splice.



2"x 4"x 20" lumber used to splice two girders together to make one 17'4" girder. Used four 1/4" bolts and 10 deck screws. There is also a 3/8" wood plate on the other side. Entire splice was glued.

The finished benchwork took longer to complete due to two factors. First, the benchwork is rectangular on each end but skews at a 30-degree angle in the middle making girder placement and joist length calculations more complex. Then add to this a cutout over the Hellgate Bridge section in the middle of the 30-degree transition. This would have gone much quicker if the design used two separate rectangular tables connected and offset.

Lesson learned: I-girder construction is best when using right angles. Here are a few photos of the finished benchwork.



Finished benchwork. Note the 30-degree transition mid-layout.



Hellgate bridge with cutout in the middle. Phase 2 of the layout will have a lower level.

Next installment trackwork laid and a finished phase one! Stay tuned and be safe!

## **DELKER ELECTRIC TRAIN TOWER**

Commonly known [Delker O Gauge Double Helix]  
(Also built in Standard gauge)

By Clem Clement

Another work project from my pile of ‘to-be-done-right-away’ is this neat toy.

Delker built quality buggies for years in Henderson, Kentucky.

I was crashing to finish the toy in time before the WB&A General meeting and mini-meet on June 6 at the Sharon Temple. Then things changed. I started planning work last summer. October the first I had a heart procedure and gained two stents in my “Widow maker” heart artery. Then it was a month+ of dormancy, almost 3 months of cardio rehab, aqua-Zumba and bang: the Corona /bologna hit. I guarded my sack many a day and did exactly what Nurse Sandy told me too...About March it hit me that the helix was sitting oxidizing in a box under a work table. All this work is WB&A’s fault! In one of the last meets and the Vienna Fire House a fellow asked me if I needed an O gauge Delker. Well: yes! I have a Standard Gauge helix from a bud and it made its grand opening on the floor at the WB&A mini-meet several years ago. So, the idea began percolate.

The helix consists of 22 special curve pieces. Track is clamped to the steel roadway with no ties. The rail-grabbing system is bent up slots from the road bed crimped to the track. The center rail is insulated by card-



board wedges. The rail’s steel is very thin and fails at the track-pin areas. The 8 vertical stanchions have track-mounting arms riveted at different levels. They are quite sturdy. The tracks are bolted by 2 bolts on each arm. Special bent clips pull the track in together via slots in the track. Most of these clips are missing or broken (This stopped me for months in my Standard gauge build.) Nobody has them and the job is too costly for the low number need /layout (22X 2=44 plus spares).

The start of assembly is the real challenge: Where to place the first tower? The vertical brace on the circle tower with the lowest cross arm is where the curve starts. The end of last upper curve bolts to the highest vertical brace.

The 31-inch straight sections were long gone. There is commercial long section of tubular track that can be cut to fit. Over the years, I have always saved any cut O or Standard gauge track. I found that box and “shorties” were mated to the correct length. (I note that the two tracks are of different lengths. Poor installation by me: oh well I’ll get to it.) Supposedly there are two supports for the crossing high track. Long gone. I used scrap wood. (For the standard gauge version, I had the straight pieces, repaired by Pat Rolland after someone stomped on them.)

Bolts used: about 100.

Oh, I forgot: How did I strap these pieces together? In my auto work I use a lot of black wire ties. While at the Westminster car and flea market (where we always find trains), A merchant had huge packages of ties. Black and 7 ½ inches long. I think I used well over a 100, The assembly process is quite sloppy and cumbersome without the tags. I used wire ties installed loosely to gather the applicable parts, then cut it later to reset it. Works great. This task is much quicker with at least two workers.

The previous owner had sprayed brown paint over everything to protect the pieces. I polished the rails with a Dremel wire wheel followed by emery paper. I removed



every track pin and ran them thru my lapidary tumbler to remove the rust. I changed out the incorrect pins and re-mounted them on the end that has pinches on the sides of the rail. I used a fine drill the wear the rust off from the inside of the tubular rail ends. Quite a job!

I have a drawing for the towers. But no instructions for assembly. This build took 5 total assemblies and weeks of changes and corrections.

Cross tracks are held together by STG track clips as that is what I had.

As time was closing in, I roughly got the two circles shaped and used a bungee cord to hold the thing somewhat circular. This was a great help. Still all joints were loose. There are two cross bars that mount across the circle on the inside to true up the shape. I used bolts, lock washers, flat washers and nuts everywhere. Purchase extras of all nuts/bolts/washers. Thankfully, Home Depot lets us return the unopened packages and some times they run out of what you need.

Set up at a show will be easy and fun. The straight pieces come off and the towers remain assembled. Move the two towers so that the tangent to the end's snap line match up.

By late at night Friday before the mini-meet, I'm ready for power and realize I have no power wires connected or insulated blocks set. Lionel CTC clip-ons fit in the pre-cut out on two sections of curved track. I removed the center track pin so that the power for the forth-coming climb enters at the beginning of the lower cross track. This gives to loco a powered run at it over the straight section. Both towers are wired separately. Uphill required more power



It looks like Casey Jones was at the throttle of Old '97!

that the downhill. The down track needs lower power connected about the middle of the upper cross piece allowing the train to slow before the down track. (If you have a several-car consist, the back end is still climbing the rise.) I recommend a short consist made up of tired cars. The crashes are frequent!!!

Comment: this Contraption truly cannot be left alone to run happily around. Better men that I have crashed their trains off'n these magic towers.)

So, you are ready to run. The transformers I used have the variables wired the opposite to each other, so each rise in a opposite way. This adds to the glee of the observers!!!! I tried to match the polarization of the transformers but am not sure I accomplished it correctly.

For storage the towers are light and fit easily and roll sideways thru doorways. If you see me bring them to show grab a hand... set up is about 45 minutes. If had to do it over, I would use a different size washer that is bigger and doesn't slip between the ends of the track.

Sandy and I finished setting up and testing 11PM the night of June 5. Next morning, we had the set on video to all 35 attending members at the WB&A general virtual meeting, we demonstrated a couple of laps until a first-rate crash. Such good fun keeps us young!!  
Clem Clement

## ***The WB&A and The City a Railroad Built***

by Bob Gray

The Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis Chapter of the Train Collectors Association (TCA) is dedicated to promoting and growing the hobby of collecting and operating toy, model and scale trains. Its name is associated with the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway that was chartered in 1902.

The Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway (WB&A) grew out of the steam-powered Annapolis and Elk Ridge Railroad (A&ER) that was built across a sparsely settled farming community that would later become Odenton, Maryland in 1840.

Odenton, named after former Governor of Maryland Oden Bowie, has become the fastest-growing city in Anne Arundel County. In 2003, my wife Kathie and I moved to Odenton from Upper Marlboro. We get our exercise by walking on the WB&A Trail, a nine-mile paved recreational trail from Odenton to the Patuxent River on the abandoned Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad right of way.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Union soldiers guarded the A&ER railroad line because it was the only link between the North and the nation's capital. Rail traffic through Baltimore had been disrupted by southern sympa-

thizers, so supplies, mail and soldiers flowed through Odenton, Annapolis and west Anne Arundel County to Washington.

Odenton is adjacent to Fort George G. Meade, a United States Army installation that was authorized by an Act of Congress in May 1917. Known as Camp Meade in 1917, it served as one of the 16 bases built for troops drafted for World War I. The site was selected due to its proximity to the railroad, the port of Baltimore, and Washington D.C. My grandfather, traveled by rail from his home in Washington D.C. to Camp Meade for Army basic training in 1918.

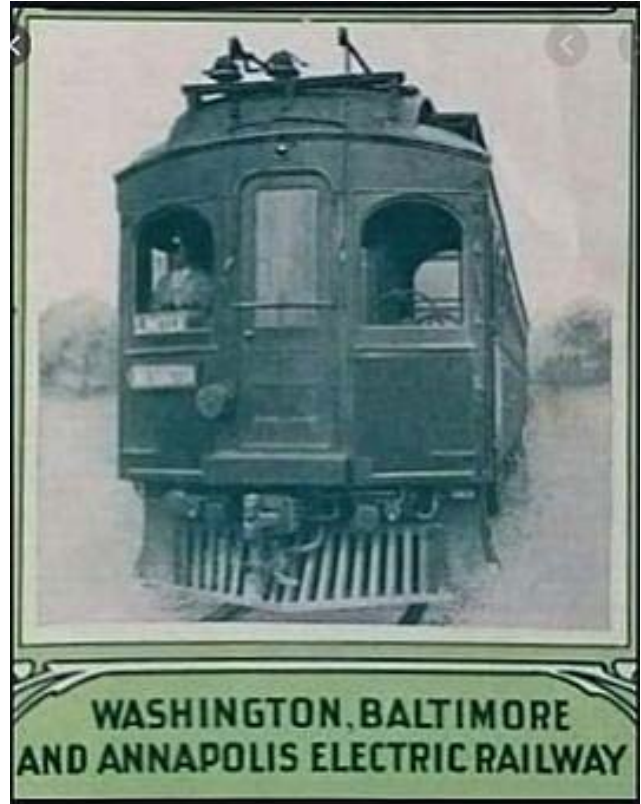
The Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway was built by a group of Cleveland, Ohio, electric railway entrepreneurs to serve as a high-speed, showpiece line using the most advanced technology of the time. It served Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis, Maryland, for 27 years before the "Great Depression." The Baltimore & Annapolis portion between the state's largest city and its state capital continued to operate electric rail cars for another two decades, replaced by a bus service during the late 1950s..

Surviving landmarks of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway include the following:

- The WB&A Terminal in Baltimore, now a former westside downtown Baltimore bank branch for the old Equitable Trust Company at North Liberty Street and Marion Street (alley)
- The Scott Street electric generating power substa-

tion on the NE corner of Scott and West Ostend Streets in southwest Baltimore

- The Westport tunnel's southern portal is visible just north of the (Continued Page 9, Column 1)



**WB&A CHAPTER 2020/2021  
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / NEW APPLICATION**

Please return the following dues with **Self Addressed Stamped Envelope** and a check / money order payable to WB&A Chapter : **2020 dues are \$15; 2021 dues are \$15**

Mail to: Bill Moss, 6929 Standish Drive, Hyattsville, MD 20784

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 TCA # \_\_\_\_\_ WB&A # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ APT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Train Interest (what do you collect )

Do you have a layout Yes No

Do you plan attending a WB&A event this year yes no

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact Bill Moss at 301-322-9080 or trainman027@yahoo.com with any questions



(Cont'd from Page 8) Baltimore-Washington Parkway's Annapolis Road exit.

- The Baltimore Light Rail built in the early 1990s uses the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway right-of-way twice
- Linthicum railroad station
- WB&A Boulevard in Severn was built on the right-of-way.
- A section of railroad track exists in the Academy Junction section of Odenton, Maryland.
- At the northeast corner of the location where the track listed above crosses MD 170 (Telegraph Road) is a brick building that once housed the WB&A operations headquarters.
- Two portions of the WB&A Trail, one from Odenton Town Center to the Two Rivers development and another 5.8-mile (9.3 km) section from the Patuxent River to Glenn Dale, run on the old right-of-way of the Main Line.
- The trestle over Horsepen Branch on the Bowie Race Track spur, and short sections of roadbed on either side of the trestle
- MD 704 was built on the right-of-way.



## **TRAIN DRAWING**

This year has been a challenging year for all of us. The WB&A began the year with a very successful February Annapolis Show and expecting to continue through the year with more shows and Mini meets. We also expected to have two York Meets. Most of the ticket sales take place at the shows and some through the Trolleys. Since these events have been cancelled, the WB&A Board of Directors has decided to extend the ticket sales through 2021 with a REVISED DRAWING DATE of JANUARY 2022.

Tickets purchased during 2020 with drawing date of January 2021 are still valid and will be part of the drawing in January 2022.

We do not know how many shows and meets will be scheduled during 2021, but you will still be able to request drawing tickets by submitting the form in our Trolleys. Ticket requests are not restricted to WB&A members, so think about any friends who would be interested. Please remember to complete the form clearly including your name, WB&A membership number, phone number and mailing address. You may include any ticket request with your dues payment to receive your tickets with your membership sticker. Thank you for your support. We hope to see you in person during 2021.

Bill Moss  
Membership Chairman

***Don't miss out on the chance to win the WB&A Drawing for an MTH Rail King Imperial 4-6-2 K4 PRR Pacific Steam Engine w/Proto-Sound 3.0 with PRR work caboose and hopper car. (runs on O-31 track)  
Product Item Number: 30-1743-1***



***Contact our Membership Chairman for tickets. Send a check to Bill Moss, 6929 Standish Drive, Hyattsville, MD 20784  
Your tickets will be sent to you by return mail.  
(1 for \$5 or 6 for \$25) Only 500 tickets are being sold.  
Drawing to be held in January, 2022.***

## ***Eastern Division Report***

**The Eastern Division Board of Directors has announced that the York Train Meet in October 2020 has been canceled.**

This has been a difficult decision, but due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and concern for the safety of our members, it is not possible to maintain social distancing or the limited number of persons permitted in a location at one time. Even though we rent the entire fairgrounds, we must hold our meet indoors and therefore, convinced the York Fairground's management that given the current requirement for "social distancing" that there was no way we could satisfy that requirement. Normally we would be liable for paying a base amount for renting the fairgrounds unless the state of Pennsylvania mandates closure as was the case for the April show. For the October meet, the fairgrounds waived the minimum base payment requirement.

Going forward, those who have registered for the April, 2020 York meet, will have their registration moved to the April, 2021 meet next year. We all miss going to York this year and hope that this virus will diminish next year and an effective vaccine can be provided so we all can enjoy the "York experience".

This past June, Mike Wolf of MTH Trains, announced he was retiring after 40+ years. This certainly has caused much anxiety among the many who have MTH products. At this time, it appears that the company might result in the formation of several companies or its assets bought by existing companies. Many have assured that the DCS and associate electronics will continue to be supported, most likely by former employees. Stay tune !!

At this time, the Eastern Division is planning to have a three-day meet in April 2021. Please refer to the Eastern Division website at [www.easterntca.com](http://www.easterntca.com) for more details, which will include registration information.

Submitted by Dave Eadie  
Eastern Division Representative

Putting a little light on the subject!



## Report from the Florida East Coast – Viera Division June - August, 2020

Bonnie and Gil Baldwin relocated to the Sunshine State in late March. We are fortunate enough to have a 4-bedroom house so I was able to commandeer a bedroom as a train room and keep everything in a climate-controlled area.

This part of Florida is known as the Space Coast so we get all the launch news. In fact the telephone area code here is 3-2-1! We are able to see the missile shots from our driveway, about 20 miles from Cape Canaveral. Just about the time the missile disappears from view the sound gets here. On June 3 there was a night launch of a load of communications satellites and the night launches are more dramatic to watch. Most of our neighbors have the 321Launch app on their phones so they come out about 20 seconds before ignition and go in after about two minutes. We have only met a handful of people here but have ventured out to one social gathering. We are now official Floridians. The County offices finally re-opened so we got FL drivers' licenses, car titles and tags, and motor-voter registration. FL has long been a vote-by-mail state so we signed up for that.

Progress on my 8' x 10' rectangular bedroom layout seemed to slow down since my last report. When we were getting ready to move I was very aggressive about getting rid of stuff so this build relied upon a lean tool set. Power tools are a 7.5" circular saw, a jigsaw, two power drills, and a hand-held belt sander. Making any kind of accurate cuts means using a framing square to get a 90 or 45 degree angle. As usual in my builds I am using a lot of recycled stuff, which in this case includes some of track, the scenic items, and the screws salvaged during the teardown of my Fairfax layout. The other limiting factor is working in the garage, which by about 10AM is intolerably hot. I use the garage to cut, sand, and paint the wooden parts before they go into the bedroom for assembly.



This picture shows the mostly-completed benchwork before wiring. I run the track wiring bus lines and track "drops" before the plywood goes on so I can do

everything from the top side. When it's finally time to connect track I just drill a hole next to the track and poke the wire up through it. I use 18 gauge speaker wire for the track power. It's relatively cheap, readily available, and easy to work with. I use the copper wire for the hot side and the aluminum wire for the common. With this gauge wire there is no measurable voltage drop over the short distances involved. I also preinstalled 22AWG speaker wire for the lighted buildings.

My electrical controls are housed in a plastic two-drawer rolling file cabinet. One drawer holds a power strip, the TMCC command base and the CAB-1 and LionChief controllers. On top are two vintage Lionel transformers, a 125 watt LW and a 75 watt model 1034. This setup supports conventional, TMCC, and LionChief operation. I have no DCS equipment, a decision which appears to be validated by the recent news out of MTH, so I am not providing for that.



By early July my benchwork was complete with the installation of the geezer gate being the final step. The layout surface is 3/8" BC plywood purchased in 2'x4' sheets from Home Depot, also the source for the grey indoor/outdoor carpet.

Most of the electrical system has been installed and tested for shorts. I have learned the hard way to test the system every time something is added or a new connection made. This really simplifies trouble-shooting when something goes wrong. For example I tested the non-derailing function of my two K-Line 031 switches before installing them and tested them again once they were in place.

The next picture shows one corner of the layout with the 042 outer main and the 031 inner loop and siding.



Since I'm fairly close to the Florida East Coast single-track main line I have gone out a couple of evenings for some train watching. On the first occasion I waited over an hour and nothing came except heavy rain. The second time the crossing gate began to fall before I could even shut the engine off. The train was headed by two ES44s in FEC heritage livery with a Liquefied Natural Gas tank car between the two locos. Then came about 60 empty well cars followed by about 30 double-stack container cars. I have never seen so many empties in an FEC consist so I assume it's a reflection of the COVID economic downturn.

Track work consumed a lot of time. A complicating factor is that there are two connection systems in play. My 042 corner set is K-Line ShadowRail which uses the traditional O gauge Lionel-style pins. The later iteration, Super Snap, uses a press together connection system which goes together very quickly. A problem arose as I got close to finishing laying the track. Turns out I was 28" inches short of completing my loops with K-Line track. The local train shop here didn't have any and the track on Ebay is typically sold in big batches so I had to make do. I made up the requisite filler pieces (one 10", two 7", and two 2") from Lionel tubular with the center rail painted black. These were put into spots where they were not super obvious, with the notion that they may be replaced sometime in the future.



The geezer gate is a hinged affair, spanning a 22" gap. The tracks have their own power feeds soldered to the bottom of those 2" Lionel rail sections in the center of the bridge. Close to the end I was using a lot of short pieces of track and vertical alignment became an issue. The end of the geezer had a nasty ski jump but it was all smoothed out by using shims cut from popsicle sticks painted black, and shoved under the track where they are nearly invisible.

It's alive! By the beginning of August trains were running at the Baldwin Locomotive Works.



For last couple of weeks I've been messing with rearranging buildings and scenery and doing little paint touchups. You may recall that during my move I sold off most of my buildings, but I kept several of the smaller, easy-to-pack items. The Plasticville Frosty Bar that my son had painted and detailed came from Virginia along and now occupies an outside corner with five 1950's classic cars out front.



From Ebay I replaced the MTH Railtown switch tower and granary sold before the move and added the elevated station platform. At this point the buildings are between the track loops to screen the view of the trains from time to time. Things are still being moved around to see where they look best so none of the lighted buildings are wired yet.

Recently the layout was visited by an arborist who supervised "planting" numerous evergreens. I had accumulated quite a few trees over the years, primarily from train shows or Christmas decorations with the fake snow removed. The set of bottle-brush evergreens from Noch was getting kind of threadbare but placed close together they will pass. Some of trees have little bases so they can stand anywhere but most just have wire trunks. Groups of these were planted on pieces of scrap wood painted layout gray and sprinkled with green ground foam. This technique allows me to move whole groups of trees to different positions. The only piece that is location-specific is the triangular corner section shown below.





The trains are running! As a Lionel true believer it was good karma to find my street is just off Legacy Blvd. I'm using vintage Lionel transformers and the now-classic TMCC command base and CAB-1 along with some LionChief motive power. Given the small size of the layout a short consist of four to six cars look right. I am currently running my LN Alco FA set (Williams with TMCC), a Southern NW-2 switcher (LionChief Plus) and a CSX GP-38 (LionChief with Blue Tooth). Each has a five-car consist.



We survived hurricane Isaias with no trouble since the storm blew well out to sea from us. I keep seeing news articles predicting a very active hurricane season so I'm hoping our new storm shutters get installed before we get a big one. We were able to open the layout to guests for the first time in mid-August. Old friends from Orlando came over and even though the guy runs N scale there may be hope for him yet!

Gil Baldwin  
Melbourne, FL  
August 2020

## The Saluda Grade by Bob Gray

WB&A member Bob Gray visited the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina in August. A highlight of

the trip was the town of Saluda the end point of the steepest standard-gauge mainline railway grade in the United States.

Owned by the Norfolk Southern Railway, the Saluda Grade gains 606 feet in elevation in less than three miles between Melrose and Saluda. The average grade is 4.24 percent for 2.6 miles and maximum is 4.9% for about 300 feet.

The track grade is expressed as the percentage of its rise for the length of its run. For example, if you have 100 inches of model railroad track and the train climbs one inch, then the grade is 1 percent. When 25 inches of track rises 1 inch, the grade is 4 percent.

From an engineering and railroading perspective, the Southern Railway's Saluda Grade was one of the scariest and most daunting sections of main line anywhere in the country. The line was originally constructed in the 1870s to connect Spartanburg, South Carolina and Asheville, North Carolina through the Blue Ridge Mountain range but with no suitable grade available in southern North Carolina engineers were forced to lay a grade between 4% and 5%. Unable to find a better grade in later years the line remained in operation until late 2001 as the steepest main line railroad anywhere in the United States. To reduce the chance of runaways, a safety spur was installed (a type of runaway ramp often employed on steep highway grades for trucks) at the bottom of the hill.

In addition, trains were often required to "double the hill," a railroad expression involving cutting the train into two sections. Interestingly, this was done in both directions due to the grade's severity. Today, Norfolk Southern has finally given up on the route and while officially moth-balled (i.e., not abandoned) it likely will never see freight trains again. Its future will likely involve being turned into a recreational trail.





**Do you Remember?**

Food served from the kitchen by a Lionel electric train to your seat at the counter. Hamburger Junction, Parkville, Maryland, circa Late 1950's, Early 1960's



**Look who just joined WB&A!!!**

Due to the Pandemic, we have had no new members.

**LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS**

If you know a TCA member in our area who is not a WB&A member, invite them to attend the Annapolis Show or the York Spring Meet.

If they join the WB&A, you will be entered into a drawing for a \$100.00 gift certificate.



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BUY - SELL - PARTS - SERVICE

**Share Your Memories**

Please send any train-related articles, stories, and/or print-ready photos for consideration in any upcoming publication of "The Trolley" or on the Chapter Web Site. Send via e-mail to:

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

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES  
FOR Jan.-Mar. 2021 TROLLEY  
December 10, 2020**

**WB&A BoD Meeting**

When: To Be Announced

Where:

Time: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Come and join the WB&A Board of Directors

Agenda: Officer reports, Eastern Division report, Upcoming Events, Open Discussion.

Members are welcome as guests

## ***Candidates for WB&A Office***

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### ***Eastern Division Representative***

David Eadie  
Springfield, VA  
TCA 03-55724

Current position: Eastern Division Representative for WB&A Chapter (2017 - 2020)  
WB&A Board Member, 2013 – 2016  
Membership Chairman, 2013 -2016  
Co-meet Chairman, Vienna Train Show 2013 -2018  
Co-meet Chairman, Annapolis Train Show 2014 -2017  
Organized N&W J611 Excursion 2016

**Train Interest:** "O" Gauge, primarily Post-war (conventional and command) but also some Pre-war Tinsplate (original and reproduction). Recently obtained a few Standard Gauge items to participate in club activities. Got started collecting with a few pieces from the 1930's my father passed down to me early on. My first postwar was the Virginian 2328. Each Xmas we received a postwar freight car till there was enough to build my first 'semi-permanent' 8x8 layout. Re-entered the hobby in the mid 1990's acquiring both Lionel and MTH conventional and command engines.

Since 2003, have been an active member of the WB&A Chapter, participating annually in the Vienna and Annapolis Train Shows. As membership chairman, I have helped maintain our current membership level at 300 members. I have coordinated the York show WB&A Membership table in the Silver Hall. Since 2017 as your WB&A Representative to the Eastern Division board, my primary responsibility has been to assist in organizing the two semi-annual York Meets. This year has been particularly hard as we have had to cancel both York meets due to the covid 19 pandemic. Additionally, I have been an active member of the National Capitol Trackers "O" Gauge modular club for the past 17 years currently holding the position as membership chair.

**Special Skills:** Over 35 years in the computer technology field including the design, development, testing, and implementation of midsize and large scale systems.

**Goals:** To represent WB&A membership in efforts to introduce our hobby to all particularly the young. We are an aging demographics and must be open to new ideas to widening our membership if we are to continue as a viable hobby. The future of TCA lies in the our children and grandchildren and we must find new ways to attract these generations to the many benefits and life experiences we have come to understand and enjoy. As important, we must restore fiscal discipline to the York train meets.

I will continue supporting the membership of WB&A in doing what I can to promote and expand our hobby. This would include expanding upon what we all have enjoyed in the past; club excursions, annual picnics and our mini-meets. It is important to find new ways to engage existing members and recruit younger members into the many activities we do for the continued success of the WB&A Chapter. Crucial to this, would be to find ways to engage young people into enjoying the many facets of this wonderful hobby.

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### ***Board of Directors***

Bill Moss  
TCA 04-57208, WB&A 3046

My home is in Hyattsville, Maryland near Route 50 and the Washington Beltway. I am retired after a career with a Civil Engineering Firm in Mitchellville, Md. I was raised in Baltimore playing with toy trains beginning with first Lionel Christmas train which I still have. My other pass time is baseball which began with going to see the Baltimore Oriole games of the 1960's. My train hobby has continued with collecting and operating O gage trains with my son and grandson. I enjoy the mechanical aspects of the trains and operating accessories more than modeling and landscaping although we have had layouts with towns and accessories. I still push the buttons at train shows to see the accessories operate.

I joined the TCA in 2004 which led to joining the WB&A in 2014. Since joining the WB&A, I have been involved with the Annapolis, Vienna and now the Bowie shows and have been the WB&A Membership Chairman since January, 2017. I have been able to combine my hobbies by organizing WB&A outings to the Bowie Baysox Baseball games.

A large part of belonging to the TCA and WB&A is socializing with friends and promoting the hobby. That is why I would like to continue on the Board of Directors and as Membership Chairman with the hope of maintaining our membership and planning more trips in 2021.

Respectfully,  
Bill Moss

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# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

## Annapolis Train Show

**February 28, 2021**

Annapolis Elks Lodge  
2 Pythian Drive  
Edgewater, MD

10:00 AM To 3:00 PM

9:00 a.m. to 10:00 am. Exclusive access for members.

For information, Contact Skip Lee (ocbp55@comcast.net) or 443-618-6866  
Tables available beginning January 1, 2021. Don't miss out on the only Annapolis Area Show.

Plenty of fun for the whole family including:

- Trains for sale including Lionel, MTH, K-Line, American Flyer, K-Line, MARX, Bachmann, etc.
- G, O, S, HO, Standard Gauge (old and new) (inventory subject to change).
- Pre-War, Post-War, Modern Trains Available.
- Modular Layout by the National Capitol Trackers.
- Train Repairs and Parts
- Door Prizes
- Free Parking
- Free Train Appraisals
- Lunch provided by the Elks Lodge



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