

NMRA BULLETIN

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mation to the NMRA Secretary:
secy@nmra.org

2026 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations
2026 Scenic City Express, Chattanooga, Tennessee www.nmra2026.org/
Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar • P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
423-892-2846 • ntsreg@nmra.org
• 2027 Tacoma, Washington • 2028 Rochester, New York

rev 10/12/25

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

GOLDEN SPIKE

Mid-Central Region

Duke Green, Corydon, Indiana
Bradley Lockwood, Columbia, Kentucky

Northeastern Region

Gregory Ricciardi, Schenectady, New York

Pacific Northwest Region

Louis Davis, Marysville, Washington

Thousand Lakes Region

Mark Carlson, New Auburn, Wisconsin
Gregory Terhaar, Broton, Minnesota

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER

Midwest Region

Richard Hanke, Manitowoc, Wisconsin

MASTER BUILDER - CARS

Mid-Eastern Region

Patrick Flash, Ellicott City, Maryland

Northeastern Region

Douglas Margison, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
Jay Ehlen, Durham, New Hampshire

Pacific Southwest Region

Terry Fearn, Prescott, Arizona

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES

Northeastern Region

Jay Ehlen, Durham, New Hampshire

Pacific Southwest Region

Terry Fearn, Prescott, Arizona

Thousand Lakes Region

Mark Carlson, New Auburn, Wisconsin

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

Mid-Central Region

George Stringer, Westerville, Ohio

Pacific Southwest Region

Terry Fearn, Prescott, Arizona

Southeastern Region

Richard Gross, Marietta, Georgia

Thousand Lakes Region

Mark Carlson, New Auburn, Wisconsin

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

Lone Star Region

David Paul, Sugar Land, Texas

Mid-Continent Region

John Averill, Indianola, Iowa

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

Northeastern Region

John Russo, Norwood, Massachusetts

Pacific Northwest Region

Malcolm Anderson, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

Sunshine Region

Andy J. Zimmerman, Tallahassee, Florida

CHIEF DISPATCHER

Lone Star Region

David Paul, Sugar Land, Texas
Pete Leach, Tomball, Texas

Mid-Central Region

Keith DeVault, Morgantown, West Virginia
Carter Jastram, Columbus, Ohio
Paul A. Bender, Columbus, Ohio

Thousand Lakes Region

Neil Maldeis, Bloomington, Minnesota

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Pacific Northwest Region

John Martin, Delta, British Columbia, Canada

Thousand Lakes Region

Neil Maldeis, Bloomington, Minnesota

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Australasian Region

Craig Mackie, Parkinson, Queensland, Australia
Paul Rollason, Forest Lake, Queensland, Australia

Mid-Continent Region

Norman Shriver, Belton, Missouri
Dale Shipman, Kansas City, Missouri

Northeastern Region

Jay Ehlen, Durham, New Hampshire

Niagara Frontier Region

Lloyd Henchey, St. Eugene, Ontario, Canada

Pacific Northwest Region

Oliver Drake, Shelton, Washington
Brian Drake, Shelton, Washington
John Martin, Delta, British Columbia, Canada

Thousand Lakes Region

Kenneth Borowski, Eagan, Minnesota

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

Niagara Frontier Region

Ronald Johnson, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER

MMR® #808 Doug Jolley, Riverton, Utah
MMR® #809 Patrick Flash, Ellicott City, Maryland
MMR® #810 Richard Hanke, Manitowoc, Wisconsin

AP QUESTIONS: If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Ray Persing at achiev@nmra.org.

DARRELL COWLES

EARNs

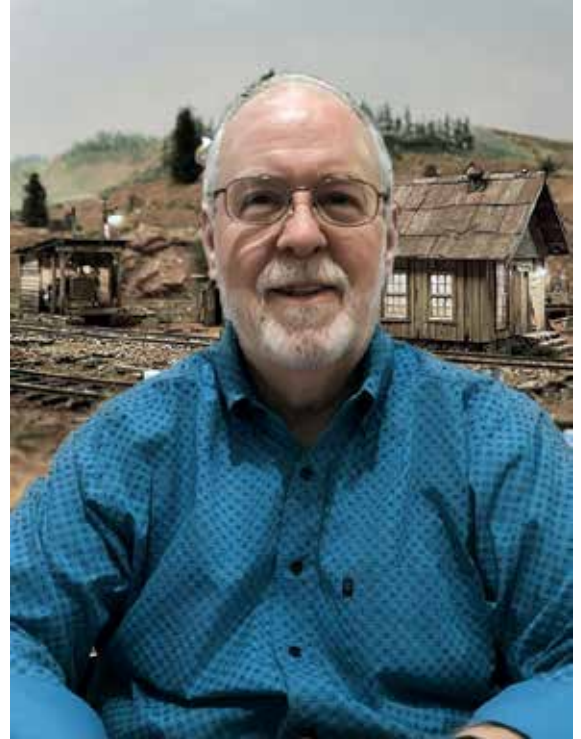
MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #802

Judging from old photos, I had an O27 train when I was about 2 to 3 years old; I don't remember that one, so I suspect it was really my father's. Boys growing up in the 1950s expected to have a train set, and most of the dads were more than happy to oblige. I remember being at my grandparents' home for Christmas 1958, and my cousin and I were not able to go to sleep because Santa was scheduled to bring both of us toy trains that night. I was not disappointed the next morning when I found a beautiful Lionel O27 Frisco *Texas Special* freight train sitting on a loop of track under the tree. My cousin received an American Flyer freight train. We hauled loads of freight thousands of miles across the USA that day, on two loops of track. When we arrived back home in Richland Hills, Texas, Dad purchased the ubiquitous 4x8-foot piece of plywood, some green paint, a couple of turnouts, and some additional track, so we now had a siding and spur. I ran a lot of miles on that layout and delivered freight all across the continent, or so my imagination said. The *Texas Special* has long since been retired to an honored shelf in my office now.

I have always loved to build models, starting with military aircraft when I was about 10 years old. In junior high, I developed an interest in building model cars, particularly creating custom models for contests, where I performed very well. My cars all had opening doors, trunks, fully wired motors, brake lines, and cloth interiors. This was back in the day when models didn't have opening doors, trunks, or wiring. I have always loved adding details.

For many years, I did not build models while raising a family, working, and attending college. As it goes sometimes, that first marriage arrangement didn't work out, and I found myself in an apartment for a couple of years with lots of time, but no place to model anything. Then, about 48 years ago, a mutual friend introduced me to a beautiful friend of hers, and we hit it off from the start. I asked Belinda to marry me; she said she didn't think she had any other plans for the next half century, so she said yes.

I became interested in radio-controlled flying in the 1980s; I built and flew several RC airplanes over the next few years, including one that had a seven-foot wingspan with an 18-inch prop, plus a couple of aerobatic models. Our daughter was about 14 years old when I saw an ad for the 1994 Fort Worth Model Train show. She and I attended and had a great time; it rekindled my love of model trains. I envisioned years of building model trains with my daughter, but she also discovered marching band, Girl Scouts, and boys around the same time. I joined a local modular group that year called the Mid Cities Rail Barons and built a module to add to their layout. A couple of years passed, happily playing trains at local malls and train shows, when we were presented with the opportunity to use a warehouse in which to build our layout. In 1997, several members formed a new club called the Texas Western Model RR Club, where I began my learning path to becoming a better modeler and eventually a Master Model Railroader. Multiple very talented modelers belonged to this club, and I was able to learn how to build, paint, do scenery, lay track, and operate under their guidance. I owe much of my knowledge and skills to Joe Batson, MMR 475, Mike Corley, and Leo Palitti, all *very* talented modelers who shared their wealth of knowledge with me. I am also appreciative plus many others who have shown me tips and tricks along the way. I served on the Texas Western Board of Directors for many years in various roles, including as club President (or CEO) for about 10 years. I guided the club to become a 501(c)3 non-profit in 2006, which has enabled us to secure numerous donations and sustain our operations. I also served as Director at Large for the Lone Star Region. Unfortunately, this club suffered the same fate as many others when the property owner passed away, forcing us to start anew after 18 years. But the club was determined, and we found a new location, where we are building an even better layout based on Fort Worth's Tower 55 and the surrounding area.



With much encouragement and helpful critiques from my good friends Mike Mackey, MMR 573, and Regional AP Chairman Duane Richardson, MMR 391, I started seriously pursuing the Achievement Program in 2024. They helped me realize that I, like many others, had already completed a significant portion of the work required for multiple certificates; I just needed to submit the paperwork. I had just one certificate (Volunteer) earned in 2019, and I earned four more certificates in 2024. In 2025, I earned the last two certificates and qualified for my MMR. The Achievement Program has absolutely taught me how to be a better modeler. It made me focus on the details of buildings, scenes, structures, locomotives, and operations. I was also fortunate to have had many great teachers and new friends along the way to MMR 802.

Certificates Earned
Darrell Cowles, MMR® #802

Association Volunteer
Association Official
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Master Builder – Scenery
Chief Dispatcher
Master Builder – Prototype Models
Master Builder – Motive Power