

# RPO

Volume 28, Number 2  
Summer 2020  
[www.gatewaymra.org](http://www.gatewaymra.org)





**Summer 2020: Volume 28, Number 2**

The *RPO* is the official publication  
of the Gateway Division  
of the National Model Railroad Association

Editor: John Carty

Articles, photos and any other materials for publication are to be sent to the Editor. No payment can be made for publication of any materials. Regular issues are published quarterly: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. Subscriptions to the *RPO* are available to members of the NMRA as a service provided by members of the Gateway Division. Send subscription applications and renewals to the Division Treasurer.

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Editor, *The RPO*  
Gateway Division NMRA  
715 W. Cleveland Ave  
Belleville, IL 62220

Articles may be submitted as handwritten, typed, plain unformatted text on disk, or plain text via email to [johnpcarty@hotmail.com](mailto:johnpcarty@hotmail.com); photo submissions may be made as hi-res digital files, 35mm slides or negatives or as prints.

Submission deadlines:

- Spring: April 1
- Summer: July 1
- Fall: October 1
- Winter: January 1

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## On the Cover

*photo by Dave Roeder MMR*

Weber Groves & Fenton Caboose #4.  
Construction article starts on page 10.

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## In This Issue

Superintendent's Desk.....	2
Under the Wire.....	3
Director's Reflections .....	3
Rock Island Passenger Car #376 ..	5
Message from MCoR President.....	8
Webster Groves & Fenton #4 .....	10
A Tale of Three Boxcars .....	12
Division Meeting minutes .....	13
Timetable of Events .....	13

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## Superintendent's Desk

*by Willie Richter*

Looking back to my summer 2019 article, I wrote about how I was without a model railroad due to the flooding. Today, I am still without a railroad but will be moving back into my house this week. I have a new ground level "basement" to begin to fill. My railroad partner, Charles Marshall, has already begun designing and has some great ideas. It's still going to be a while before we start to work on the layout but we see light at the end of the tunnel.

Now looking forward for the Gateway Division we have had our first monthly Zoom meeting. We had a few hiccups but overall, it went very well. I want to thank Dave Ackmann for presenting his Amazing Arduino Automations clinic. He did a great job. In September we are going to attempt having some virtual layout tours? If you are interested in showing your layout let Dan Knipp know and he can get you on the schedule. We are looking for a few 10 to 15-minute

tours with a few minutes for Q&A. You can do a video or a live walk through. Sign up and have some fun with it. If we have enough signup, we can always do it again the following meeting. If you have any idea for a clinic, please consider doing it virtually. It's a great way to share in these difficult times.

2 other announcements are that the Gateway Division Train Show in November and the Holiday Party are both cancelled this year. Hopefully things get better for in person meetings and events next year.

Have a great rest of your summer and stay safe.

Willie Richter

Superintendent, Gateway Division

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## Under the Wire

*by John Carty, Editor*

Once again running behind. I hope to rectify that with the Fall Issue. Despite many outside activities being cancelled, home life remains constant.

So far, I have one article for the Fall Issue (thank you, Dave Roeder), making it a great opportunity for someone to get their first submission published.

Members may submit prototype or modeling articles as well as photo essays or even fiction. If you find a subject interesting, so will another member.

With school starting soon, I hope to have more time to dedicate to leisure.

John Carty

Editor

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## Director's Reflections

*By David Loewll*

Carpe Diem Modelum

Before getting to the subject of this quarter's column I would like to express that I hope each of you and yours are well and have successfully avoided any direct impact from the COVID 19 pandemic. A wish made knowing that unfortunately some have already been affected directly and indirectly. To those I wish the best.

Since March there has been a sea change in our lives as a result of this global pandemic. I for one certainly miss the camaraderie of the monthly meetings, operating sessions and the scheduled events that have been prudently canceled for the safety of all. We as model railroaders are fortunate though because we have our hobby to fall back on in these times of seclusion to keep us busy and to divert our minds away from the added stresses, we are all enduring, even if that diversion is only for short intervals. Fortunately, all these events will return and we will once again embrace all these wonderful things in the hobby sphere with a refreshed enthusiasm. In the meantime, there has been some e-mail chatter to help bridge the gap in the absence of the in-person events and it has been nice. The scope of that chatter for me has included the sharing and receiving of pictures of projects that are in process or completed, recollections of rail fanning from the Bicentennial year of 1976 and just some communication with other isolated friends about common interest or just to give someone a hard time for the sport of it. I hope everyone has been able to do the same.

I got the idea for this quarter's column as I sat on my back sunporch one Saturday morning having coffee and

reading the June edition of the NMRA Magazine that featured Hank Kraichely's CB&Q on the front cover. Which, by the way, was the first model railroad that I was invited to operate on shortly after I marked up with the Gateway Division of the NMRA in March 2015, thank you Hank. In that June issue is also a small but powerful article, to me, by Dennis Murphy. In it he chronicles his building of a small simple brass fire tower kit. This article struck me for several reasons. I am currently doing the same as he, reaching deep into the strategic stockpile of projects to finally start a brass project. And like Dennis I too have never built a brass project and was stalling because I feared the unknown. And I too like Dennis have the same attitude about trying new things when I finally gather enough impetus to overcome the rolling resistance and actually start. Give it a whirl, if it doesn't work out you can deep six it, or maybe even sharpen your skills by fixing what you don't like.

To me Model railroading is as much, if not more about the journey as it is about the end product. I am currently working on my MMR and this brass project will hopefully fulfill for me the last super detailed engine I will need to build to round out the requirements for Master Builder Motive Power. Five years ago building a locomotive was a never going to happen policy. Now I have built from scratch in styrene an electric car pusher and am building a brass Brill 55 Motor Car. Both presented challenges that I had no idea how I was going to accomplish and yet as each project moved along things worked out. Prior to this Brill Motor Car, I had already used some of this seclusion time to knock out my last two structure projects for Master Builder Structures. The point I want to make is; regardless of what else is going on, Carpe Diem Modelum or roughly translated, seize the day to model. Yes, I realize this is modeler's

license with a dead language but its model railroading and anything is possible. As I stated above, I didn't get involved with the NMRA until 2015. While previous to that I was active in the St. Louis HO Gaugers for 20 plus years and I have had the joy of model railroading in and out of my life since 1970 I really have not ever tried to stretch my skills and abilities until I joined the NMRA and started pursuing my MMR. Pushing your skill set is the point of the MMR program after all so that seems to be working out. To me model railroading is not really about pulling into the station at the end and saying look what I did, it about enjoying the time between the mile posts and saying look at what I am enjoying, the journey. Now I get that not everyone wants their MMR and I respect that. It's a hobby and we do what we like to enjoy it. However, try not to let the fear of the unknown, or the thought that you don't know how to do something slow you down. I've got a whole pile of half completed or abandoned projects and a few total failures in the corner. But from each of those failures I learned something that expanded my skills or knowledge base. Also, through the NMRA online, clinics and fellow molders you can learn any skill or gain knowledge on a particular subject that you may want. So, find something that inspires you or that you want to learn more about and Carpe Diem Modelum. I will always be available, as well as the great team of officers we have, to receive any comments or suggestions you may have. You can reach me at [LowellCoMotive@gmail.com](mailto:LowellCoMotive@gmail.com)

Happy Rails

David C. Lowell

Director,

Gateway Division, Mid Continent Region  
Nation Model Railroad Association

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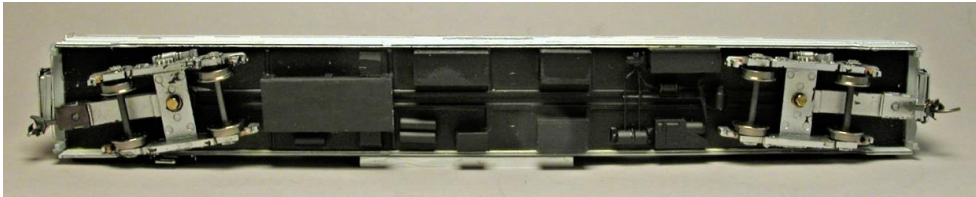
# HO Rock Island Passenger Car #376

## An oddball dormitory/club/diner

*by Dave Roeder MMR*

In 2019 the Palace Car Company attended our local Railroad Prototype Modelers meet. I was curious to see what they were offering because the last time I heard of them they were selling plastic kits of old wooden passenger cars from the late 1900s. I found they were now selling plastic streamlined passenger car kits from the golden age of passenger trains in the 1950s. They had a few kits for sale as old stock and I guess they were kits that did not sell. The price was kind of steep, but in line with what assembled, lighted passenger cars are going for these days.

I looked at a Rock Island kit for a dormitory/club/diner car that was interesting because it was one of only two such cars run in trains on the Rock Island. Upon opening the box, I asked the vendor if it could be built with the roof removable. He said it could and that there was an interior included. I noticed it also had a set of the old one-piece passenger car trucks in black plastic. The car sides were partially corrugated and the windows were routed out. There were a lot of flat sheet parts in the box and a decal set. After I researched it on the internet, I found that this car #376 had been built in 1939 as a postal/chair car and remodeled three times beginning in 1947 and that the kit contained parts to build the last version from the 1950s.



began construction by measuring the sides and the chassis plate from the kit. I found that the chassis plate was .063" too long so I removed that amount from one end. I then found that the truck bolster on one end was .130" off location from the end of the car. The two truck bolster mounting holes were .136" diameter which was too large for a #2-56 threaded hole. All of this needed attention before I could begin work on the chassis. I first made a threaded plastic bushing for the one oversize hole. This fixed the one end. The more difficult problem was the other hole. It was molded in to the molded bolster on the chassis plate. I began by plugging the .136" hole in the bolster. I then removed half of the bolster boss flush with the top of the chassis plate. I made a new boss from styrene, then drilled and tapped it for a #2-56 screw. I also had to drill a new clearance hole in the metal car weight. The chassis plate now had the two trucks mounted at the same distance from the end of the car. The details for the underside of the car were really obscure so I took one of my Rivarossi diners and turned it upside down to get a feel for what went where. There were a number of resin cast boxes with no particular identification so I began placing the two battery boxes, then an AC unit in place. There was a water tank shown, but no resin casting so I scratch built one. I scratch built a set of air reservoirs, a generator, and the cross-frame braces. I added the AB brake system from a freight car to complete the semi detailed underside. I now checked the one-piece

roof and found it was bowed in the center and would not sit flat on top of the sides. This would not have been a problem if it was going to be attached permanently, but I was making this car up with a complete interior and the roof had to be removable. I tried heating it up with water with no success. The next step was one I had used before for this problem. I took a piece of K&S .250 x .040 brass bar stock and super glued it in the vertical position to the underside of the roof. The brass is strong enough to remove the bow.



read the general instructions for this type of kit and began with the sides which were CNC machine routed from styrene sheet. The routing process was not as clean as laser cutting and left burrs and scraps of styrene in all of the window openings and around the outside of the pieces. This required tedious filing and sanding to get a square clean edge on these surfaces. Both sides had to be built up with corrugated siding for the lower panel which I added using super glue per the instructions. I also fabricated and added the letter boards and number boards. There were two metal grab irons on one end which I made from wire supplied in the kit. The one side wall had a service door opening with a window cutout. There were no instructions regarding this feature and only a drawing showing this side of the car indicating two grab irons on this door. I researched the internet and found photos of this car that showed external framing around the door and a step below it. I scratch built this detail using styrene angle and a brass caboose ladder step. The two car end walls were then prepared. These were injection molded parts common to all of the cars in this series. They only needed doors, grab irons and Train Station Products # 453 diaphragms added. I added a brake wheel to the "B" end. I painted the sides and the ends with Tamiya Silver and set them aside. The widows would be added after decals and clear coat.



The kit instructions showed an overview of the interior. There was one sheet of the instructions with drawings showing the roof, interior and underside details. After studying this, I began trying to locate the parts referenced on the sheet. There were

eight chairs with armrests for the lounge, six dining room chairs, two L shaped end sections for the dining room and two three table dining room castings. There were a number of locker castings that had to fit in the "B" end of the car. I was left to supply the eight table tops for the dining room. There were two interior bulkhead walls and some styrene strip that was supposed to be used to fabricate the interior walls. I could not make the parts for the interior fit into the drawing as shown, so I made my own plan based on what I knew about dormitory cars and crew bunks.

I drew up a floor plan for the interior that used the three lockers furnished in the kit, then added a restroom to the former vestibule at the "B" end of the car. The drawing showed a bar at the "B" end with one of the lockers next to it. By using the kit supplied lockers, I was able to determine the location of the first and second bulkhead. After the second bulkhead I set the space for the four lounge chairs. These were loose chairs with armrests so I spaced them slightly apart. Next were the large dining room table castings from the kit. These were super glued to the two L shaped end table castings. This assembly then gave me the location for the third bulkhead. The area from the third bulkhead to the end of the car held the kitchen, bunk room crew lounge/locker room and restroom. The kitchen/dormitory end is designed to hold a crew of 10. On overnight trains the bunks could accommodate eight. There were two of the crew on duty to service the passengers during the night. The crew area was very sketchy on the instruction sheet. There was no toilet and no room for lockers or any other amenities. I began my plan by putting a crew restroom at the end of the car. Then I planned for eight bunks with two tiers. This gave me a location for the fourth partial bulkhead between the kitchen and the bunk room. It also set the location for the bunk room bulkhead. The final room was the crew lounge/locker room. This is the area where the crew changes clothes and prepares for work as well as rests between duties. This area also serves as a place for the conductor to work. There is a long wall outside of the kitchen/crew area that provides access to the rest of the train. I scratch built the entire interior including the bunk beds with pillows and the kitchen counters. I also scratch built the table tops for the dining room. I scratch built two sets of angled top lockers, the bar and a small table in the crew locker room. I added a mirror to the "B" end restroom plus sinks and toilets to both of the restrooms. There are three small chairs for the crew. One chair is in the "B" end crew locker room. Since this is a contest model, I further detailed the interior with passengers and crew. We have four women and two men in the lounge/dining area, a bartender, a waiter and a cook. Adding the fully detailed interior was the most fun on this project. Normally this car would be placed at the front end of the train behind the baggage car with the crew area next to the baggage car.

I enjoy researching these cars and find the challenge of designing and scratch building the interiors rewarding.



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## Message from the MCoR President

*by line Brad Sloan*

A lot is continuing to happen in our world today. We hope that everyone is staying healthy and getting some time for model building.

With the cancelation of the St. Louis National Convention this year we are working on a plan to have a remote member meeting for our annual membership meeting for 2020. This is the 70th Anniversary year for the Mid-Continent Region! What a journey we have had and are continuing to have with all the changes in the world and our Hobby.

Planning for a big celebration of Model Railroading with our friends from the Lonestar Region in 2021 is underway

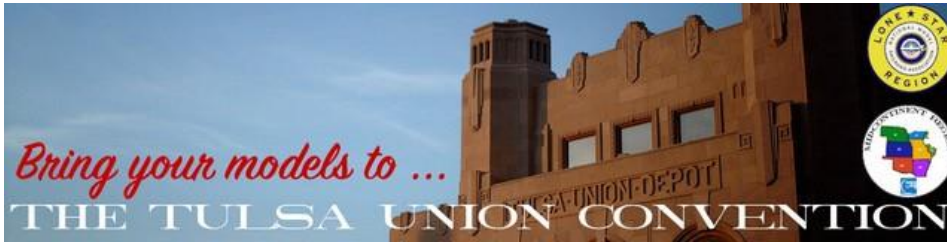
and progressing. We wanted to get the information below out to you so that you can start planning to join us for the event and bring some of this year's new models to share!

**Watch for Future Announcements-  
More to Come!**

Sincerely,  
Brad Slone MMR  
MCoR Region President







# **2021 Midcontinent & Lone Star Region NMRA**

**June 17-20, 2021**

**Embassy Suites**

**3332 South 79<sup>th</sup> East Ave.**

**Tulsa, OK 74145**

King Room-\$106.00/Double Room-\$111.00

The 2021 Tulsa Union Convention is the joint production of the Midcontinent and Lone Star Regions, NMRA.

The Convention will feature operating sessions, layout tours, clinics, contest room and “non-rail” activities.

Watch for an announcement of the web site address which will include additional details as they become available.

## HO Caboose – Webster Groves & Fenton RR #4

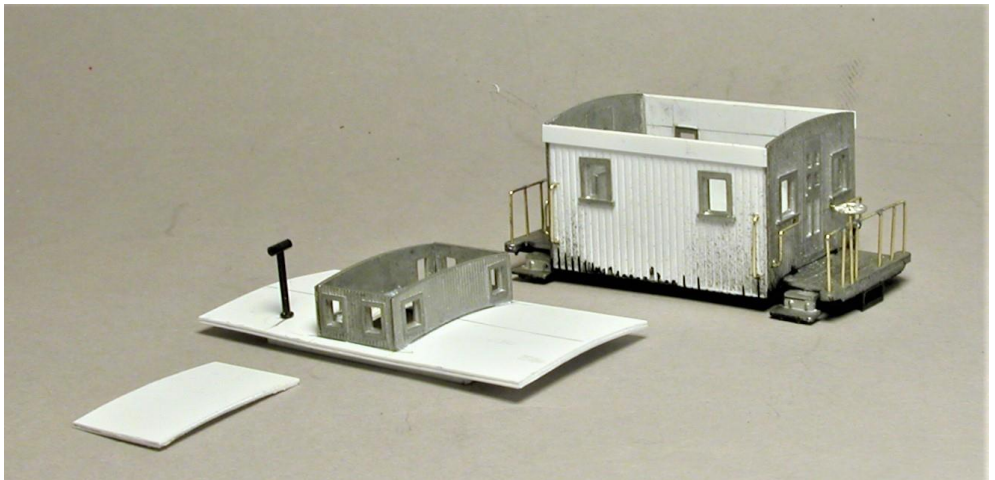
by Dave Roeder MMR

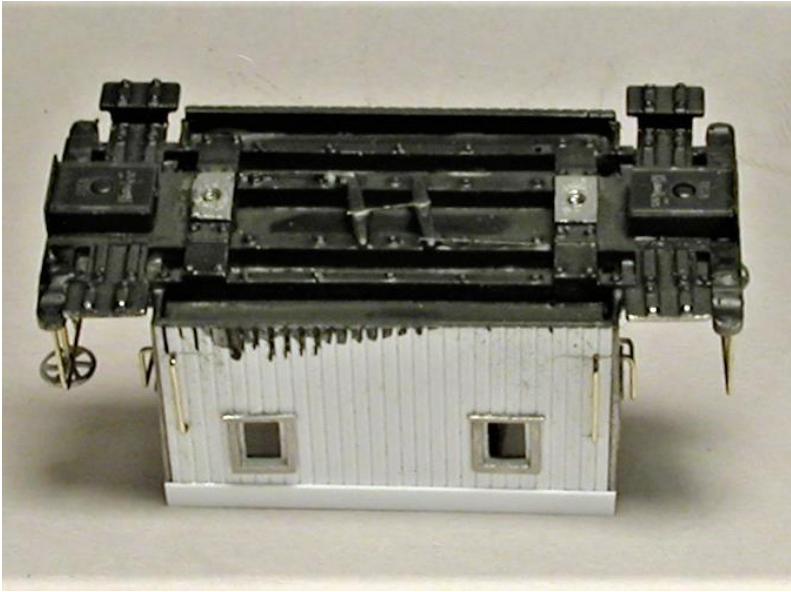
I enjoy building simple old craftsman kits and search them out at swap meets. I found this nice wood and white metal kit for \$3.00. It was a typical craftsman kit from the 1960's with the usual pieces of wood flat stock, and white metal parts. These kits never contain trucks or couplers. I built it up following the instructions and

decided to replace all of the wood parts with styrene because it is easier to work with. I replaced the two side walls, the main roof and cupola roof with sheet styrene. The chassis and both end walls were white metal, so all I had to do was make the two side walls, then super glue them to the end walls to build the basic body. The kit had a one-piece white metal chassis that was



nice, so all I added was a set of mechanical brake rods. The kit





short there was no room for a type K brake cylinder. Since this was a short line home-built caboose for the old Webster Groves & Fenton, I used a set of friction bearing freight trucks. A set of Kadee whisker spring couplers completed the

included four nice white metal steps which fit very well and were super glued in place. The kit parts included two handbrake wheels and brass wire. I scratch build a set of end railings. I cut and bent up the end railings, then soldered these together. I made four side grabs and four end wall grabs using a bending jig from an old AMB kit. The windows are made from Micro Scale Micro Crystal Klear. I installed mechanical brakes because this kit was so

job. I made the banner decals and numbers on my computer and printed them on Testors clear decal paper. I did not need another caboose on my railroad, but this kit was such a good deal I could not pass it up.



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## A Tale of Three Boxcars

by Dave Roeder MMR

Like many who are sitting at home during the pandemic, I began looking for a model railroad project that was fairly simple and did not require any expense. My Webster Groves & Fenton railroad has been in operation for 23 years, so all of the rolling stock has been around a long time. Initially I was buying box cars from any road

Yellow cars because I was tired of the Cascade Green BN stuff and I did not want any more mineral red cars.

I found a good side shot of the Laurinsburg & Southern logo, downloaded it and reduced it to HO scale as a decal. The ACY (Akron Canton Youngstown) was easy. The Wabash Valley Railroad Co. logo was



and then re-painting and decaling them with BN decals from Micro Scale. These three are now on the third paint scheme.

I began this project by searching the Fallen Flags website looking for Midwest short lines that had box car photos. I was interested in Red or

the most time consuming. I could not find a good side shot of it, so I drew one up in a 4" diameter. I then colored it in with a red pencil, reduced it to HO scale and printed it on white decal paper.

These are not contest models; they run monthly in freights on the layout. The



cars were built right out of the “Blue Box” with metal wheel sets, Kadee whisker spring couplers set to NMRA standards and weight to NMRA standards. These three things are the standard on my railroad and they insure good performance and reliability.

When we start monthly sessions again, the operators will have some new cars

to deal with. The colors will stand out from the old box car red paint schemes. I have done the same thing with my 15 covered hopper grain train, changing all but three to various roads and colors. In fact, the only solid color train is a BN coal drag with 23 Black hoppers. I used a lot of Black paint and Micro Scale decals on that set of cars.



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## Division Minutes

*Due to COVID19 lockdown restrictions the Gateway Division has not held any meetings from April through June. Minutes from the first Division meeting via Zoom will appear in the Fall Issue.*

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## Timetable of Events

Do you know of an event of interest to other Gateway Division members? Send the information to the editor so it can be listed in future *RPOs* and on the [www.gatewaynmra.org](http://www.gatewaynmra.org) website.

NMRA Divisions or St. Louis area clubs may have their event listed here by sending a description of the

event, in the format shown here, to the Editor ([rpo@gatewaynmra.org](mailto:rpo@gatewaynmra.org)).

## Sat. & Sun., October 10 & 11, 2020

**30th Annual Greater St. Louis Metro Area Train Show**, Sponsored by the Mississippi Valley N Scalpers LLC, Saturday 10 am - 4 pm, Sunday 10 am - 3 pm, Kirkwood Community Center, 111 S. Geyer Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122. Admission for adults \$7 All kids and students with ID age 25 and under are FREE!

## Mon., October 19, 2020

**Gateway Division Meeting**, via Zoom. Link to be published prior to meeting.

## Cancellations:

**Boeing Employees Model Railroad Swap Meet**

**Gateway Division Fall Meet**

**Gateway Division Holiday Party**

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## NMRA MCoR Region & Gateway Division

The National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) is a world-wide organization dedicated to all aspects of model railroading. In order to bring the most benefit to its members, the association is subdivided into Regions, and each Region has a number of local Divisions. National dues are \$72 per year, and all members of the NMRA are automatically members of the Region and Division in which they live. The Gateway Division is part of the Mid-Continent Region, which represents Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and parts of Iowa and Illinois.

The Mid-Continent Region publishes a quarterly bulletin, *The Caboose Kibitzer*, and holds an annual convention meeting that usually includes modeling clinics, local tours of layouts or prototype facilities, and model contests. Annual subscription to the Mid-Continent Region *Caboose Kibitzer* is included with membership at the National level and runs concurrently.

The Gateway Division is well represented on the regional and national levels of the NMRA. Its members actively promote the modeling hobby through local monthly meetings, this quarterly newsletter, an annual train meet in the fall, participation in area train shows and other events, and a comprehensive website. Annual subscription to the Gateway Division *RPO* is \$10, running

from July 1 through June 30. Members who subscribe mid-year are given extended memberships. The division's official mailing address is on the "Contact Us" page on the website: <http://www.gatewaynmra.org/gateway-nmra-contact-us/>. Checks may be sent to Gateway Division NMRA, PO Box 7742, Chesterfield, Missouri 63006-7742. Membership is open to anyone from the beginner to the most advanced modeler, of all ages, so that everyone can share questions and knowledge of the hobby. Visitors are welcome at the monthly Division meetings listed on our website, [www.gatewaynmra.org](http://www.gatewaynmra.org)

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## Division Officers

**Superintendent**

Willie Richter

**Assistant Superintendent**

Dan Knipp

**Clerk (Secretary)**

Tom Ose

**Paymaster (Treasurer)**

Position open pending election

**Division Director**

David Lowell

