



# The Dispatcher



## Officers for 2004-2006

Superintendent:  
**Jeff Ashby**

Dispatcher:  
**John Reitz**

Treasurer:  
**Gene Cowan**

AP Chairman:  
**Daniel Metzger**

Board of Directors:  
**Glenn Roan**

Division Scribe:  
**Chuck White**

Dispatcher Editor:  
**Rich Mohr**

North Central Region  
NMRA

Northeast Hoosier  
Division 3

Meetings:  
2nd Monday of  
each month  
7:00 pm

## Meeting Notes

North East Hoosier Division 3 - November 8, 2004

Attending: Art Solomon, Dan Brown, Chuck White, Daniel Metzger, Gary Evans, Gene Cowan, Mel Wise, Rich Schwab, Don Rhodenbaugh, Mark Wilson, John Cartwright, Drake E. Omstead, Rich Swihart, Steve Brigham, Alan Bell, and guest Rick Van Laar (16 total)

years away, and per our efforts for 2001, we need to start our efforts soon. For 2001, we contracted for the hotel in 1997. Chuck said he would know more about 2006 (and then 2008) by the end of December.

### Old Business

GATS: We earned \$70 for manning a table with Gary Evans' Time Saver and the clinics hosted by Alan Bell and John Reitz. (Whoever has the check needs to turn it over to Gene Cowan, our Paymaster) According to comments heard by several division members, it was a successful show for GATS. The GATS manager was quoted as saying he did not have one disappointed dealer. There was a dearth of dealers and several areas of the hall were void of layouts or dealers who apparently failed to show up. Still, GATS is already booked to be back in Fort Wayne for the last weekend of October in 2005.

The 2006 NCR Convention host division/location is uncertain. Division 6 recently served notice they cannot handle. Chuck White, who is also the NCR's Convention Coordinator has been in discussions with Tim Fisher, NCR President, as to where or whom will host the NCR's 2006 convention. Tim has several ideas and proposals in the works. One issue is that with the new NMRA National Convention agreement (which applies to Detroit), the host region cannot also have a regional convention in their city, either 18 months before or after, the national. This is why they asked if Fort Wayne could host. We've already advised we didn't have enough time or support. Depending on whether the Toledo Division steps up to the plate for 2006, our group, the North East Hoosier Division 3, would be on tap for 2008 or 2009. It was noted that 2008 is now less than 4

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Gene provided members present with a copy of our current balances. We continue to be solvent. Motions were made and passed to:

- Reimburse Drake \$120 for the Op Sig Aprons
- Reimburse Chuck 10.73 for a plastic shelf talker for our brochures at Hobbyland, and for postage for snail mailing The Dispatcher to 5 recipients.
- (And Later) to give Alan Bell an advance of \$200 for the 2005 Annual Meet.

### ANNUAL MEET FOR 2005

Our 11th Annual!

After the break, Alan Bell led a discussion of pending issues for our annual "Coming Out Party." Our venue will be the same. Discussions about relocating to another site, never got off the ground. Alan's has locked in things with our host, The Church of the Covenant, United Methodist, at: 10001 N. Coldwater Rd. Our date will be: Saturday, March 12, due to conflicts with Palm Sunday, which is the following weekend. Time will be from 10 AM to 3:30 PM. He proposed keeping the entrance fee at \$2 with free entrance to any Scout in uniform. There will be a separate \$2 fee for the "Make & Take" clinic. He's planning to disperse these into "stations," rather than having an "assembly line." The classrooms will be more heavily utilized this time. It will be optional to the participants as to which ones they want to go to. Two types of car kits discussed: the RTR bargain

table ones from Hobbyland (These would be for the children too small to assemble a kit), and the more intricate ones from Athearn or Atlas. Alan is going to put a lot more emphasis on the Scenery portion of the clinic, providing castings to stained & colored. A plaster making party is planned with anyone having molds to be invited. Art said he had several and volunteered helping out with making these. Alan said he has plenty of scenery material left over from last year. He's also doubtful, that with Horizon's acquisition of Athearn, that inexpensive car kits will be available.

Alan advised that Rick Van Laar (our guest) had agreed to bring his portable layout. Gary Evans' will be unavailable due to his moving. The Maumee Valley RRC layout has been invited (and has agreed to attend). Alan is looking for one other layout with either the N Scale or G TRAC clubs to be invited. Alan also said he wants to get the public more involved with each club and the clubs be promoted more. Hands on operation was discussed. The MVRRC advised they let the public run their Thomas the Tank layout at GATS Sunday, and except for a "time out" for one child, all the others successfully ran it, with the Aristocraft Throttle, and with great enjoyment. Each club will be asked to have a handout available for the public, and to be identified as a club member. Our MC will also announce the clubs periodically, including the deal with letting the public handle a throttle/train on these layouts.

For the home layout tour, Chuck's planning a Sunday Warsaw tour with two layouts over there, Lon Hawkins in Decatur, and Dan Metzger's. For Saturday he's thinking of probably having several on the north side including Alan Bell's and Mark Wilson's. He has yet to contact all the layouts he's thinking of asking. He wants to look at who was open last year, so he doesn't ask them again this year, although they're all welcome to participate.

The NMRA Merit Contest Judging issue was discussed. It's been proposed that anyone entering anything for NMRA judging at the Annual Meet would also be asked to participate as an official NMRA judge. If they aren't a NMRA member, they'll be asked to join, or their model will not be able to be judged. If they refuse to judge, we may not be able to judge their model, given our acute shortage of contest judges. These new/additional judges should relieve some of the stress and strain we had last year. They'll be given a tutorial on the judging criteria, and will not be allowed to judge on their own entry. It was suggested the contest judging would be handled during the Op Sig two weeks later. However, this was deemed as unworkable.

Food and Refreshments – We'll handle again.

Door Prize – With Glenn's change in career, Rich Schwab and Mark Wilson will split handling this, contacting Glenn for the info and database he used to handle this.

Publicity - Magazine announcements and Press Release will once again be handled by Rich Mohr. Rich would like more pix of the home layouts & club layouts to put up on our web site. Please forward them to him, WITH A DESCRIPTION. Alan has had 1000 of the flyers printed, with distribution started at GATS.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Round Robin will be at Mark Wilson's (11523 Green Holly Cove, Ft. Wayne (489-0627)) on 11/20 at 7 PM. Art Solomon's traditional Christmas RR will be on 12/11, also at 7 PM.

Science Central's Train Fest is coming up Thanksgiving Weekend. Since we won't be doing anything involving a clinic or similar efforts, we won't be participating this year. We'll drop off the Annual Meet flyers for each of the clubs to display & hand out.

Drake's Op Sessions are always on the Second Saturday from 1 PM to 5 PM. The next one is on 11/13. He's been getting nearly complete/full crews, so you might call first.

Continental's Op Sessions are still on the First Saturday starting at about 9 AM. Contact Bill Wemhoff if you wish to attend.

The Lantern's Swap is on Saturday, 11/27 starting at 11 AM. Admission is \$3

The Duneland Model RR Club's Swap in Michigan City is on Sunday 11/28. Chuck White & Rich Schwab plan to head up there, leaving at about 8 AM. If you'd like to go with, contact Chuck or Rich.

### ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Jeff Ashby, our Division Superintendent, would like to see more focus on this program, with possibly a "door-to-door" campaign to help members get their paper work completed, witnessed and submitted.

### DRAWING

Gene Cowan won. This is a \$10 gift certificate from Hobbyland. Again, this is great support by one of our local hobby shops. Everyone is encouraged to support this store/retailer.

**CLINIC**


This time the VCR we brought failed to work. We'll try again in the future, possibly bringing a PC or DVD player to see Gary's pictures/videos.

**NEW BUSINESS**

John Cartwright announced he had a surplus of card stock. Anyone wishing to relieve John of some of his supply is asked to contact John

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting ended at approximately 9:00 pm.

**Three Rivers OPSIG**  
 Northeast Indiana/Northwest Ohio  
 April 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 2005

Drake asked for volunteers to help with the layouts, both from being their and to be at the hotel to give persons rides to the various layouts. It was also announced that the Op Sig date needed to be revised, so as not to conflict with Easter Weekend. We're now targeting April 1, 2 & 3. We currently have room for 24 participants, although this number could increase if we get a positive response from the Dalmatian Switching District. Two members of the Garret MRRC, Rich Schwab and Mel Wise, said things were moving along and they were confident they too could participate. Drake made arrangements with them to visit their club on 10/18. Other Op Sig 2005 committee members may also visit that night. Alan Bell is working on firming up arrangements with the Courtyard by Marriott for a Comp Room (for the Dalmatian guys), and a Comp room for their layout.

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**GATS - Round up** by: John "Sparky" Reitz

The NMRA NCR DIV 3 received a check from the GATS host in the amount of seventy dollars. Thanks to the effort of Gary Evans, John Reitz and Alan Bell. We received a card of "Thanks" and a certificate of appreciation from the GATS host for being at the show in Fort Wayne November 6th and 7th. A big THANK YOU should go to Gary Evans for standing 'watch' over the NMRA table for both days. He had his portable Time Saver Layout at the NMRA table and from what I saw had a great time with the people who stopped to run trains and learn about switching and car movement. Nice job Gary! Saturday, John Reitz gave his clinic on weathering cars with his 'magic solution' and soft pastels sticks. Sunday Alan Bell gave his clinic on hand laying track. What type of wood he uses. The ties and spikes. And how he attaches the wire to the bottom of the rail. GATS does have another show set in OCT of 2005 here in Fort Wayne. There is talk that this might change at the first of the year. So right now it is a wait and see thing. The shows may be a thing of the past if attendance does not pick up.

My thanks to those who helped at the NMRA table, the set up and break down. And for the other members who worked their club layouts.

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**Update for Train Chasing 101** by Chuck White

Gary Evans & I recently attempted some "viewing" at the St. Joe crossing of the former Wabash and B&O lines, northeast of Fort Wayne. If you don't know where this diamond is, it's irrelevant as the area is now basically offlimits for any extensive Ferroequinologist related activity. We encountered the homeowner, his house is located in the southeast quadrant. Our visit was brief and non-confrontational. The man basically wants his privacy. He said he was virtually being overrun by guys like us. One weekend, there was a mini-convention of train watchers with about 17 different vehicles present, many parked on his property. On other occasions, he's had persons "camped" out for days on end, but living out of their car, not a camper or motor home. He didn't call the sheriff, but said he will if we were to stay more than 15 or 20 minutes. I asked about establishing some sort of "pass" or liaison, but he wasn't interested in discussing. Still, he was polite & cordial.

Gary & I walked down to the diamond. We saw a headlight way off to the north, which we deemed as too far off to be worth staying for. We resumed our journey northward (We were headed for the NCR convention in Lansing), coming across the first cross road north of the diamond. Here the train appeared to be much closer, so we stayed, catching a UP powered unit train consist of steel coil cars (with all cars covered), coming south from SDL.

Back at the crossing, we had noted he was lined for a westbound move onto the B&O/CSX line. This venue actually presented a better photo op to catch the north/south action. With a little help from a scanner, one could probably bounce between this crossing and the town of St. Joe, catching probably everything that passes in all directions. Might take a little work, but you won't run the risk of being arrested. My advice is to steer clear of the diamond - there's plenty of other places near by.



**Three Rivers OPSIG**  
Northeast Indiana/Northwest Ohio  
April 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 2005

**REGISTRATION FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE H/W/C \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

OP SIG MEMBER (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA MEMBER (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

OPERATIONS EXPERIENCE (YEARS/# OF SESSIONS/JOBS HANDLED)

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Please return this form with \$10 (with checks payable to North East Hoosier Division 3 NMRA) c/o:

Drake Omstead  
992 West 200 South  
Warsaw, IN 46580

Please return this form by 3/1/05. We'll advise you of the specifics prior to your arrival. For hotel accommodations, we've reserved a block of rooms at The Courtyard by Marriott in Fort Wayne, with a rate of \$69.00 per night for two nights, for a room with two double beds. For hotel reservations call: 1-260-489-1500 and advise them you're with the Three Rivers Op Sig Group. The Courtyard is located at 1619 W Washington Center Road, next to I-69 and will be the Op Sig headquarters. The number of operators we can accommodate is limited. Based on the responses we've been getting, we expect things to fill up fast.