

Greetings, I'm your Division 8 Secretary. I also happen to be the web master for the division.

I got my start in model railroading with a 1959 Lionel Super-O set that my father bought for me for Christmas. About the same time, I was also given my cousin's pre-war tinplate Lionel set. The Super-O set ran circles around the Christmas Tree and during the rest of the year on a sheet of plywood table that folded up into the wall. The turnouts were too expensive, but I had, and still have, the operating satellite car, the Minute Man missile car, and the exploding target car.

About the same time, my friend was running a small H.O. set. He had turnouts and I wanted some of those. By the time I was 12, I asked mom for a H.O. trainset for Christmas. She went to a hardware store, which still sells model railroad supplies, and purchased an Atlas N-scale set for me (Santa Fe covered wagons and freight cars). Mom was proud of what she found, and I became an N-scaler.

Though high school, college, med-school, and residency I followed my model railroading interest. I joined the NMRA in the mid 1970's and attended my first national convention in Dearborn Michigan in 1978. Circa the late 1970's my collection of N-scale rolling stock grew to about 500 cars.

While my surgical residency took up a lot of time, I still found a way to build a 4' x 10' N-scale layout in the basement of my townhouse. This was a twice around plan that I developed loosely based on the Clinchfield RR. Coal hauling and bridge line traffic was the reason for the line's existence. Having read Bruce Chubb's book on Operations, when I planned the layout, I wanted it to be run like a railroad. One problem with N-scale, at that time, was that motors were just not that smooth. There would be some jerky motion of the trains and occasionally, the caboose would be left behind.

About this same time, I also became involved in Railfanning. I took numerous photos of the D&M, it's car ferry operations, the Rio Grande, and the Union Pacific, the later two around Salt Lake.

Then life came along, five sons, and a busy Orthopaedic Surgical practice. I did build a Lionel layout for my sons with tubular track and rubber ties. There was some attempt to make a reason for the line's existence. Also, I build a small H.O. layout and later upgraded it to dcc.

The kids grew and I had more time for my pursuits. I became active in the MNRA's NCR-Division 9. This opened a whole new facet to model railroading. Getting together once a month and talking model railroading over breakfast was great. Some meetings were combined into layout tours and others were clinics. Op-session were held on member's layouts. Each of us had special interest/skills to share. With time, I joined the board of the division.

I greatly enjoyed the interaction with other modelers. My desire to continue that interaction was my motivation to work and get Division-8 up and running again. I believe that the time that I invest into this project will provide a great deal of enjoyment for all of us.

At our new home I am slowly getting to work on my version of the Ann Arbor Railroad, set in the fall of 1950, in H.O. scale. Car ferry operations are to be the highlight of the planned two deck layout.

My niche area of interest, besides car ferries, is electronics (I happen to have an M.S. in Computer Science). I have given clinics on microcontroller operations to my old division. Other clinics that I have done include one on 3-D printing and rail operations on JP-East, the Japanese railroad about Tokyo (we have a son that lives there).

The geography of our division will make it hard for all of us to gather in one location. I hope that we can all work together to make this an active, functional, and enjoyable group of model railroaders.

Casey Bartman