

Waybill



Mid West Region NMRA –
Election Issue 2026

Election Biographies and Photographs for 2026 Candidates



Midwest Region

2026 MWR Election

This year's ballot includes candidates for 4 Director at Large seats as well as the question of approval of the amended Constitution and Bylaws previously adopted by the Board of Directors at its November 8, 2025 meeting. The preliminary Constitution and Bylaws can be downloaded for reading and review off the MWR website using the following URL link:

<https://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr.minutes.html>

The easy to use and secure electronic ballot is available now through March 31st. Each member of the MWR may vote at the following URL link:
<https://form.jotform.com/260187691387974>

Election Biographies and Photographs for 2026 Candidates

Director-At-Large
Robert Petit
Michiana Division



The *WAYBILL*

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Articles, photographs and artwork are encouraged in either hardcopy or electronic form. The editor uses Quark 5.0 as his publishing software on a Mac. Word documents are also acceptable, but please send the photographs as an attachment. Copy is due by the 10th of February, May, August and November and should be sent to the editor at the above address. Submitted material will be returned upon request.

ADVERTISING

Deadlines for camera ready ads are the same as for the copy deadlines. Please submit by email to the editor as a TIF or .jpeg. We accept only railroad related ads.

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	yearly	or	per issue
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I would like to introduce myself to our Region. A little bit about me, I've been interested in trains and model railroads from a very young age. I got my first Lionel set around age six or seven, it helped that my neighbor was one of the largest Lionel dealers in Chicago! From there, it was a MARX tinsplate HO tinsplate set, a 4x6 underbed layout with Atlas brass track, and Athearn locomotives and rolling stock. In my career, I have been an electrician and foreman for Amtrak, and Metra Rail.

My vision is for our region where people can come together, enjoy the hobby, help everyone needing a hand. When I was training apprentices, I would tell them that there were no dumb or silly questions. If you want to know something, just ask. And when I answered them, do so in a kind and courteous manner. I would love to see the Region and Division membership grow.

My areas of interests in the hobby include DCC Installations, Trackwork, Carpentry, Painting and weathering. I love the upper Midwest Granger roads, in the loose boxcar era. With my career in passenger railroading, Amtrak and Metra equipment is my love as well! Operation is also one of my favorite areas of the hobby. Other interests include rail preservation, including various historical societies. I recently started a Facebook page for the Michiana Division, NMRA Michiana Division. I have a page for my railroad, The Northern Michigan and Wisconsin Model Railroad.

I hope to have the pleasure to serve our region!

Director-At-Large
John Poray
Central Indiana Division Incumbent



I am running for a second term as Director-at-Large of the Midwest Region. My model railroad hobby and professional experience enable me to contribute effectively to that role.

I have been a member of the NMRA since 2008. I began my current layout in 2001, a “proto-freelanced” railroad based on the New York Central System.

Currently I serve on the MWR Membership Committee. I served four years on the board of the Central Indiana Division and managed the CID Danville Train Show in 2020, 2021 and 2022. I continue to assist with that show.

For the “Indy Junction 2022” convention, I was responsible for facilities, managed the train show, and arranged for operating layouts.

I hosted tours of my layout during the 2016 NMRA National Convention, during Indy Junction 2022, and for division-sponsored events. I’ve held operating sessions since 2022 and am a member of “OpSig”. I served on the planning committee of the New York Central System Historical Society Convention in 2024.

I served for 44 years in the management of non-profit, membership-based organizations. The final 28 years I was executive director of the national

Society of Broadcast Engineers. My career provided me with the opportunity to work with volunteers and manage day-to-day operations of an IRS 501(c) 6 organization and 501(c) 3 charitable foundation.

My goals for MWR Board service are to support our divisions with programs that attract and retain members. I look forward to continuing to contribute to the hobby through service on the MWR Board.

Director-At-Large
Bruce Backus
Illinois Terminal Division



I was born and raised in Decatur, IL. Having grown up only a block from the Wabash main to St. Louis and a great-grandfather who was chief draftsman at the Wabash, my interest in trains was natural. I received my first train set when I was 6 and I was hooked. As soon as I could drive, I made my way over to Monticello and joined the Monticello Railway Museum (known as M&SV Ry at that time).

Graduation from High School saw me moving to Champaign and the parents moving to Florida. After two years at the University of Illinois I got an offer to go to work for the Illinois Central Gulf as a research assistant in the Mechanical Dept. That saw a move to Richton Park. When Southern Railway decided not to buy the ICG, the ICG had a big layoff, myself included. The good thing that happened is I

got picked up by Southern Railway Research and Test Department, in Alexandria, VA. That saw a move to Springfield, VA.

The job was operating the R-3, a hi-rail rail wear test vehicle. Typical week would see me fly out Sunday night to where the R-3 was parked, test rail Monday – Thursday and fly home Friday. I soon worked a deal that had me two weeks out, testing rail M-F for two weeks, then three days off. In 1984 I got an offer from Pulse Electronics, in Rockville, MD to come to work for them. I accepted and moved to Gaithersburg, MD. At Pulse I was Field Service Engineer, specifically for End-of-Train devices. 1984-5 was the beginning of the EOT's impact on the railroad's operation. UP was Pulse's first customer and I spent the first year and half with Pulse living out of a hotel in Salt Lake City. Once the EOT's got a little better I started teaching EOT classes and making test runs for new customers railroads. All-in-all travel at Pulse took over 300 days a year and involved three foreign countries. In 1989 the VP Marketing and the Engineering Manager left Pulse to form a new company in Orange Park, FL called Quantum Engineering. Within 6 months I joined them and moved to Orange Park, FL. In Orange Park I became aware of the Northeast Florida Model Railroaders and soon joined. That introduced me to the NMRA and I joined in 1998.

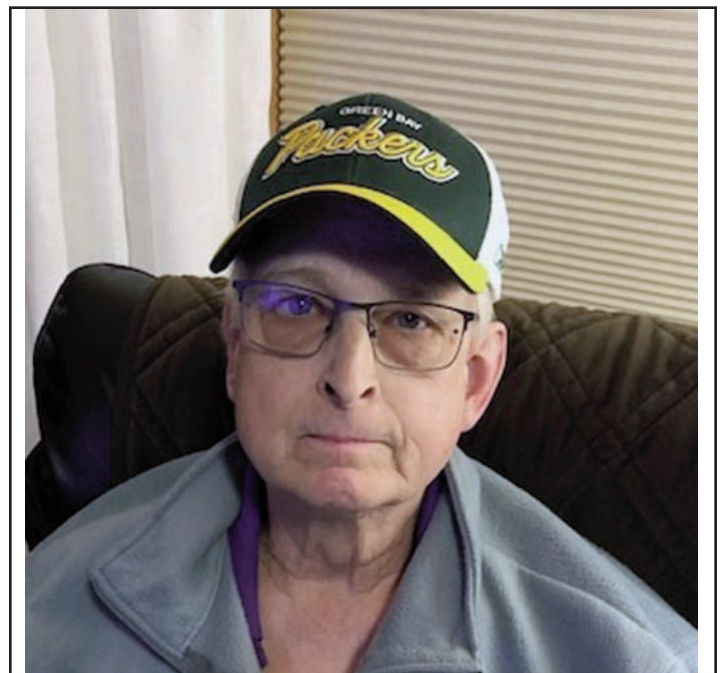
Quantum Engineering developed the first computer-based event recorder playback machines. As I wrote the software, I got to travel quite a bit teaching the railroads how to use it. In the mean time I started taking classed at the University of North Florida and I graduated in 1998. In 2018 Quantum was sold to Invensys and given to Safetran to operate. Things did not go well and I was lucky to get a call from the CMO at Norfolk Southern offering me a job. This saw a move to Kennesaw, GA, and a job at Norfolk Southern as Electrical Engineer Mechanical Dept. I quickly started attending Piedmont Division meetings and soon joined the North Atlanta Rail Barons, an operating group in the Piedmont Division.

One good thing about Kennesaw over Orange Park, is I now had a basement, first time since Decatur. Travel was quite a bit less, but on the railroad, you go when and where they tell you. In 2010 I retired from Norfolk Southern and moved to Monticello, IL. I'm life member of the Monticello Railway Museum and after spending nearly every vacation day helping them out, now I can be there

every day. I have been a director at the Monticello Railroad Museum for the last 4 years. Having the time now to make all the meetings. I never ran for office while I was working as travel could happen any time.

It's been an eye-opening experience coming from one of the largest NMRA divisions (Piedmont) to one of the smallest (Illinois Terminal). In the larger division you never ran out of ideas or model experience, never questioned the value the NMRA was giving you. I hope I can bring the same to the Midwest Division.

**Director-At-Large
Steve Preston
South Central Wisconsin Division**



I am currently a board member of the S.C.W.D. I joined the board a few years back so I could get a better understanding of the going on's in our division. I am also membership chairman and youth group director. I revived our youth group after Covid with the help of a few members to bring some life back to what seemed to be dying out at the N.M.R.A. level in a lot of divisions. I would like to join this board to also get a better understanding of the going on's at a greater level. I also would like to represent our S.C.W.Division since we lack representation in our area.

Director-At-Large
James Marciniak
DuPage Division



Jim is currently the Chief Clerk of the DuPage Division (northeast Illinois). He first joined the NMRA in the 1990s, and after some time away has been continually active in his Division since 2021. If elected, Jim will work for the success of the NMRA's "Vision 2035" plan for modernization, membership growth, and better member satisfaction at the Regional level. Jim also hopes to improve NMRA's success in introducing the fun of our hobby to new people of all ages.

Jim is a licensed professional mechanical engineer and certified fire and explosion investigator working in the forensic engineering field. He has served in several community organizational roles, including school board president, Scouting troop committee chair, and village historic preservation committee member. Besides NMRA, Jim is an active member of several other railroad and model railroad associations.

Jim enjoys modeling in HO scale, and his first love is the Santa Fe Railway (thanks to the Lionel's under the Christmas tree in the '60s!) He is grateful for the encouragement he has found in the DuPage Division to get to the workbench, build stuff, and share it with others.

Jim and his wife Lisa live in Riverside, Illinois.

Director-At-Large
Patrick J. Timpe
Central Indiana Division



PERSONAL BIO: PATRICK J. TIMPE
FAMILY

Married; wife Barbara, 5 children and 10 grandchildren

COLLEGE: Ball State University, Graduate 1975, Bachelor of Architecture

OCCUPATION:

Architect, Registered & Licensed in Indiana. Specialized in K-12 High Performance University laboratory facilities, Collegiate sports recreation facilities

VOLUNTEERING:

Homeowners' & Neighborhood Associations:

Southdale Civic League, Neighborhood Association Indianapolis; President-1995-2010

Arden Townhomes Homeowners Association, Carmel, IN; President-2011-2018

The Reserve at Timbers Edge HOA, Greenwood, IN: Vice-president-2019-2023

Youth Athletic Coaching, CYO Basketball, Indianapolis; 1982-2003

FREE TIME & HOBBIES

Playing drums. Wood shop time and woodworking.

Art and picture framing and matting. Model Railroading (of course)

NMRA Member past & present:

Present: Member since September 2016

Past membership: Central IN Division, ca. 1975 -1985

Present layout: Fictional small railroad town in southern Utah, located on the Blue Stripe subdivision of the Union Pacific and the busy UP maintenance yard. First experience with HO in 1973 (still in Architecture-school): Adept at constructing architectural models, bought my first boxed Northeastern Scale Lumber Great Northern caboose kit. Hooked me on model railroading. The caboose rides on the rails of my layout in perfect order today.

Follow up kit: Fine Scale Miniatures' "The Depot", intricate in detail featuring basswood, metal, and plastic parts. Awarded a NMRA certificate from CID, ca. 1975

MIDWEST DIVISION NMRA DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE
I respectfully request consideration to serve the NMRA's Director-At-Large for the Midwest Division.

Regards,
Patrick J. Timpe

Director-At-Large
Jeremy Reese
Winnebagoland Division



My name is Jeremy Reese, and I have been a model railroader since my fourth birthday when my mother bought my first HO scale layout when we lived on Mackinac Island. For the next sixteen years that 4X8 layout, cut into three pieces and sandwiched between OSB protectors, moved back and forth between school days on the island and summers at my grandparents in Rock, MI. Their house was

across the road from the Chicago & Northwestern ore line between the Marquette Range mines and Escanaba. A lifelong Yooper, I have always modeled the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in HO scale, bought my first brass engines and Digitrax Chief system when I was 15, and attended the NMRA Lake Junction National Convention in Madison, WI when I was 17, driving about 7 hours solo. I also am an avid railfan, drone and RC airplane flier, and have had my amateur radio license, **N8YP**, since 2000. I work full time as a Safety Czar, IT and everything else with a FedEx Corp ISP for the past 16 years,

I have not always been a member of the NMRA, some of the reasons are that the Upper Peninsula is a bit rural. In 1996/1997 when I first joined the NMRA, I was told that most activity in my Division was in the Detroit area. That would be a four and a half hour drive after a 18-30 minute ferry ride and a trip over the Mackinac Bridge. When I moved full time to the Escanaba, MI area, I was in the Winnebagoland Division and was able to participate with much closer activity there. After losing some family members, returning to college after ten years and working three jobs to pay for that, I let my membership lapse. I had rejoined the local club and NMRA early in 2020, and then the world changed.

We saw the way we participate in our hobby change drastically. Technology had advanced to the point where virtual events could happen. I have always been into computers, taking high school computer classes in first grade and programming 3000 line code games on a Commodore 64 computer. YouTube videos, podcasts, live streams and Facebook help to connect, teach and research all aspects of the hobby.

I would like to see the Region grow in activity. With technology, we have the ability to learn when a member joins much faster than a USPS update. With a large geographic region, technology could bring enhanced virtual conventions where a member could participate over the computer where travelling could not be possible due to distance, physical limitations, etc... Contact will help with retention, and hopefully also help with the average age of members. I will turn 46 in January, and between my hobbies, I see that the participating demographic is changing, and the organization is starting to make strides to change too. That needs to continue, and new ideas are needed to continue that progress.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Continued on page 9

Director-At-Large
Gerry Ring
Winnebagoland Division



My name is Jerry Ring, and I am presently the editor of the Winnebagoland Whistle. I am also a retired educator with very strong feelings about the role of the NMRA in creating the highest quality collegial and learning experience for modelers. Since my retirement in 2013, I have been active with local model railroading clubs, helping to build member's layouts, publicize local events, and participate in operating sessions.

One of my personal goals is to encourage participation in the NMRA's Achievement Program and to ensure that individuals receive proper recognition for their efforts. This goal is derived from my professional experience mentoring young individuals in their careers.

My present participation in the NMRA parallels my thirty years of experience in professional organizations. And it is the reason that I am interested in becoming a director-at-large for the Midwest Region. I believe I have acquired essential skills participating and running meetings in this new world of stay-at-home ZOOM conferences.

I currently live with my wife of fifty years in Central Wisconsin. I model in HO scale and have a life-long interest in pulp and paper manufacturing.

Director-At-Large
Rich Hoker
Fox Valley Division



My name is Rich Hoker and I'd like to ask for your vote for the Director at Large position for the Midwest Region.

I have been a life-long model railroader. Like many of us, I received my first train, an American Flyer set, at the holidays as a kid. That was the beginning of a long and happy road of designing, building, and learning all of the dimensions that our great hobby offers. My Dad was also a driving force in my introduction to model railroading as he was a modeler who taught me about the hobby, as we built a layout together. Many years ago when I was in high school, I was involved with the old North Shore and Western Division of the Midwest Region, holding the position of editor of the division newsletter. Today, and a couple of layouts later, I'm the Chief Clerk for the Fox Valley Division. We have a great group of guys in the Fox Valley Division and the camaraderie of everyone is what really provides the joy of the NMRA. I'd like to bring that enthusiasm to the Director at Large position for the Midwest Region.

I'm an HO modeler living in the town of Glenview, Illinois. By day, I'm a certified public accountant and by night, I'm a father, a new grandfather and a modeler. I'd like to continue to help build the NMRA and build the connections that the NMRA provides between members. Together, learning and growing as modelers. To do this, I will bring my enthu-

siasm and views to the position. Thank you for your consideration.

Director-At-Large
John Schaffer
South Central Wisconsin Division



Please let me introduce myself. I am a retired University professor and Music School Director (UW-Madison) and a current Alderman in the city of Middleton. I grew up in a working-class neighborhood in Detroit where my first experience with trains was before school age. I can remember watching the arriving passenger trains through a giant glass window in the Fort Street station awaiting the arrival of my grandfather. A few years later I can remember bringing used clothes with my dad (a minister) to a clothing drive collection being delivered to an LOL box car downtown. My experience entering that car was beyond description—I was hooked for life. As a teenager, I built my first HO layout in the basement, followed shortly by a switch to N-scale after seeing a layout at a high school friends house. By my late teens I joined an N-Trak club near Detroit (Society of N-Scalers), one of the first in the region and learned a lot of skills, both related to the modeling hobby as well as working with other passionate individuals in shared pursuits.

College, marriage, and career soon took away the time and money needed to continue actively being involved in model railroading. Being a railfan and an avid reader of model magazines, however, let

me continue to be engaged in the railroading landscape for decades. And, I faithfully hauled my N-Trak module and boxes of collected N-scale equipment with me where ever I moved. Retirement finally opened the door for building a layout. I joined a club in Waunakee WI, started attending the regional SCWD meetings, travelled to national and regional conventions, engineered and dispatched at several large home layouts, and am nearing completion of my own DCC layout modeling the modern ex-CB&Q mid-west lines. I have since learned many modelling and operational skills from these experiences and interactions; and, most of all, made a number of new friends!

I believe that my decades of following the hobby, my skill sets learned from years of teaching, administrating, governing, and modeling, together with my strong desire to give what knowledge and skills I can to an organization I strongly believe in, would make me a very positive choice for the at-large seat in the region.

Director-At-Large
Bill Moede
Winnebagoland Division



I have been model railroader for most of my life, a member of the Paper Valley Model Railroad club for 45 years and a NMRA member for many years. I been building my HO scale Lakeshore and Becher RR in some form for 40 years. The NMRA has been a great resource for me especially with connections to other modelers.

Midwest Region 2026 Mail-In Waybill Ballot

(This ballot is for use only by resident members of the Midwest Region)

Optionally vote on-line at <https://form.jotform.com/260187691387974> and save a stamp!

Do you approve the Constitution as amended & proposed at the November 8, 2025 MWR Board of Directors meeting? YES NO

Do you approve the Bylaws as amended & proposed at the November 8, 2025 MWR Board of Directors meeting? YES NO

Director-At-Large - 2 Year Term (Vote for up to Four)

- Robert Petit Michiana Division
- John Poray Central Indian Division *(Incumbent)*
- Bruce Backus Illinois Terminal Division
- Steve Preston South Central Wisconsin Division
- James Marciniak DuPage Division
- Patrick J. Timpe Central Indiana Division
- Jeremy Reese Winnebago Division
- Gerry Ring Winnebago Division
- Rich Hoker Fox Valley Division
- John Schaffer South Central Wisconsin Division
- Bill Moede Winnebago Division

Write-In _____ Write-In _____

Write-In _____ Write-In _____

To validate your ballot, please carefully print your:

Full Name _____

NMRA No.* _____

Division Name* _____ or Division Code* 28 / _____

* From your membership card. Or you can go to:

<https://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr.divisionmap.html>

to look up your Division assignment based on your Zip code.

Note: "Midwest" is not your Division!!! It is your Region.

If you do not provide all of the above information, your ballot will not be counted.

Return this printed ballot to:

Midwest Region Election Committee,
c/o Jim Osborn, 2202 Bay Oaks Dr. McHenry, IL 60051-3710.
Your ballot must be received no later than Tuesday, March 31, 2026.

Tape Here

Tape Here

Fold over last

Midwest Region Election Committee,
c/o Jim Osborn
2202 Bay Oaks Dr.
McHenry, IL 60051-3710

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Postage

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