

Revised 9/9/08

Mid-Eastern Region (MER) – National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Planning Questionnaire

We are asking for about fifteen minutes of your time on several questions of mutual interest.

The MER is “taking a deep breath” (so to speak), and looking ahead to see where to put most of our effort for the next few years. As a starting point, we are soliciting input from interested parties like you.

Please fill out the questionnaire below, and **mail or E-mail your response** to: Roger L. Cason MMR, 1125 Grinnell Road, Wilmington, DE 19803-512 (rogercason@juno.com). A response by October 31 would be appreciated. Although the questionnaire may appear long at first glance, most questions can be answered by simply checking a blank space, or by writing a very few words. (Of course, if you want to write more, we would welcome your thoughts.) Feel free to skip questions you feel you can’t answer. At the bottom of the questionnaire, you are welcome to give your name, or not, as you desire. In advance, many thanks for your input.

If you express opinions about the national organization, we will pass them along as appropriate. But, our main focus here is on Regional and Divisional activities.

1. What is your current connection to the NMRA? (Check all that apply)

National organization

- Officer or board member
 Active chairman and/or worker
 Member

Mid-Eastern Region (MER)

- Officer or board member
 Active chairman and/or worker
 Member

One or More Divisions

- Officer or board member
 Active chairman and/or worker
 Member

Other _____

2. What scale(s) do you model in? (Check all that apply)

G O-scale O-3 rail S HO N Z Other (specify)

3. A recent article in a national magazine described model railroading as “a hobby you can customize” – i.e. one with many facets. Check all the ones below that you particularly enjoy and/or that particularly interest you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cars – building, kitbashing | <input type="checkbox"/> History |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structures – building, kitbashing | <input type="checkbox"/> Railfan trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Locomotives – repair, tune up | <input type="checkbox"/> Prototype photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Layout planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Model photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Electronics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trackwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____) | |

4. Why do you belong to the NMRA? (Check all that apply)
- Improve modeling skills
 - Participate in the Achievement Program
 - Sociability
 - Support the organization's programs (for example, standards)
 - Attend Division meets and other activities
 - Attend MER Conventions
 - Attend national conventions/train shows
 - Receive *Scale Rails*
 - Receive *The Local*
 - Use the Kalmbach Memorial Library
 - Other _____
5. In about the last five years, how many of each of the following have you attended?
- National conventions (there is one per year)
 - Regional conventions (MER has had one per year, except for 2006)
 - Division meets or other activities (number per year varies by Division)
6. In the MER Bylaws, the following are given as the MER objectives: Expand interest in and publicize the hobby of model railroading; Promote membership growth; Sponsor at least one convention per year; Operate on a balanced budget; Improve and publicize contest judging standards and procedures; and Support the National Achievement Program.
- This looks reasonable to me.
 - I would suggest the following change(s) _____
7. How well does the MER actually carry out the forgoing objectives?
- Quite well.
 - Falls short as follows: _____
8. Among model railroaders that you know, what is the image of the MER?
- Generally favorable
 - So so - i.e. mediocre
 - Has problems as follows: _____
9. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = very poor, 10 = outstanding), rate the following:
- MER Newsletter (*The Local*)
 - MER Web site
 - MER conventions:
 - Cost for members
 - Cost for spouses/children
 - Clinics
 - Layout tours
 - Industry tours
 - Hands-on operating sessions
 - Non-rail activities
 - Contests
- (continued on the next page) _

- Auction
- Door prizes
- Banquet
- Other (specify)
- Divisional activities:
 - Meets and clinics
 - Contests at meets
 - Meet door prizes
 - Layout tours
 - Social events
 - Other (specify)
- Achievement program:
 - For MER as a whole
 - For my Division
- MER merchandise sales (cars, etc.)
- Governance (officers, board of directors, Bylaws, etc.)
 - Region
 - My Division
- Nomination and election process
 - Region
 - My Division

10. An important function of the Region is to assist and support the local Divisions. How might the Region do a better job in this area? (Check all that apply)

- More financial support
- Assist with training of board members and officers
- Help identify clinicians
- More help with AP program
- Help recruit members (and if so, how?) _____
- Hold information exchange meetings of Division Superintendents
- Other (specify) _____

11. In practice, what are the barriers to having your Division host an MER convention?

12. What can/should the Region do to encourage Divisions to host Regional conventions?

13. Even after taking number of members into account, there are huge differences between Divisions in the amount of AP activity that takes place. Why is this? What might the MER do to help encourage more activity in this area?

14. Several years ago, a team of people from the MER visited one of the Divisions over a weekend to do Merit Award judging, and generally help “jump start” the Divisional Achievement Program. Would something like this help your Division?

15. What else would you like to see the Region do, or do more of?

16. What would you like to see the Region stop doing, or do less of?

17. Financially, from time to time, the Region may be in a position to support outside charitable and/or educational activities. How do you feel about doing this? If so, which ones would you like to see us support?

18. If you could be granted three wishes on behalf of the Region, what would they be?

Feel free to skip any of the questions below if you think you have covered the issues with your answers above.

19. What do you feel are the Region's:
Strengths?

Weaknesses?

Opportunities?

Threats?

Issues that must be faced?

20. What are the one or two most needed changes or improvements at this time?

21. Please feel free to offer any other suggestions or comments that you may have:

(Optional)

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

In advance, thanks for your help !!