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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

*Indicates first Certificate of Achievement

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GOLDEN SPIKE

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Pacific Northwest Region

Stan Schmidt, Dallas, Oregon

Southeastern Region

Ray Peterson, Marietta, Georgia

MASTER BUILDER — CARS

Mid-Central Region

Richard Briggs, Grove City, Ohio

MASTER BUILDER — STRUCTURES

Mid Eastern Region

Charles Hladik, Rustburg, Virginia

MASTER BUILDER — SCENERY

Mid-Continent Region

Howard Junker, Juniata, Nebraska

MASTER BUILDER — PROTOTYPE

MODELER

Mid-Central Region

Lawrence Brintnall, Cleveland, Ohio

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER —

CIVIL

Mid-Continent Region

Donald Taschner, St. Louis, Missouri

North Central Region

Marv Linke, Macomb, Michigan

Southeastern Region

Robert McIntyre, Alpharetta, Georgia

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER —

ELECTRICAL

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Midwest Region

Ronald Lane,* Columbus, Indiana

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Mid Eastern Region

Charles Hladik, Rustburg, Virginia

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Mid-Continent Region

Tony Bowen, Coggon, Iowa

Robert Wintle, Parsons, Kansas

Southeastern Region

J. Gary Jarabek, * Marietta, Georgia

Larry K. Smith, * Marietta, Georgia

MMRS EARNED



CHARLES P. STAPLETON EARNS MMR 398

Playskool, Marx, American Flyer, Lionel. All remembrances of a childhood that led to a major part of my life. Yep, my first train was a wooden Playskool train that had no wheels but just slid along on the rugs of the living room and dining room of my folks' house in Kansas City, Kansas. It was a Christmas gift of my third or fourth year on earth back in 1937 or 1938. These were just the beginnings of a lifetime of fun, learning, and comradeship with people of the same mindset that I had, especially in these past 25 or so years.

I have loved trains since I was old enough to know that smoke on the horizon meant that a steam locomotive was chuffing down a mainline. Standing up behind Dad in a 1936 Pontiac, I would encourage him to hurry and catch up with it. He usually granted my request and would slow down when we caught up with it, so we could get a wave off to the crew in the cab. Memories like this will never fade. That was a time when a locomotive could just sit there and look like brute power in itself. And it was.

The O27 models in the Marx and American Flyer were your typical tinplate. Not much detail, just wheels mounted on metal boxes for cars and an electric motor in a container that looked a little bit like an engine. The Lionel set had a little more detail, but it still took three rails for it to run. By my teenage years, I wanted something with a little more realism and variety. The answer was HO scale. Not that other scales were lacking detail, but I could pack a lot more railroad into the basement of a 1920s

ungalow using a smaller scale. My first locomotive was a Mantua dockside switcher. It not only served in the yard, but did a lot of mainline work, too. Oh well, you have to work with what you have until something better comes along.

I took model railroading into my first marriage, but children came along, and the hobby sort of took a back seat. My first wife and I had five children and, when the oldest was 11 and the youngest was four, God decided to take my wife home, and that left me with quite a chore. "The hobby" was totally shelved for quite a number of years. Then, in 1982, I met my present wife, Patricia, who has been the most push in my achievement program. Much of the credit goes to her!

My layout is modeled after Union Pacific's Kansas Division between Topeka and Russell, Kansas. This represents a distance of about 200 miles of hills, prairie, rivers, and agriculture. The time period is summer 1952 with lots of grain traffic, passenger trains, and even a military main train out of Fort Riley thrown in. My throttle system is CTC 80, which is one of the "bullet proof" systems of the hobby. Eleven people are required to operate the railroad. Nine hundred of the 1,200 feet of track is hand-laid. Half of the 136 turnouts are scratchbuilt. Communication between the dispatcher and train crews is by a party line phone system. The structures are a mix of kits and scratchbuilt. The layout has a digital turntable in Junction City that 96,000 points can be programmed into. The pride and joy of my railroad is a brass model: one of Union Pacific's nines, a 4-12-2. Now you know why so many of my turnouts are scratchbuilt. A fast clock is used to record departure and arrival times.

My journey to MMR began with earning the Electrical Engineer certificate in 1993. This one came pretty easy having worked for a power company for 33 years. The rest took some hard thinking and progressive doing on my part. Encouragement from the crew in the Turkey Creek Division in the final steps of earning my last certificate was the kick that pushed me "through the goal posts." Again, thanks to my dear wife, Patricia, for providing the crank that got me "back on track." If you even have just one certificate, *go for the biggie!*

Charlie has earned certificates for the following: Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical, Master Builder—Scenery, Master Builder—Cars, Model Railroad Engineer—Civil, Chief Dispatcher, Association Volunteer, and Model Railroad Author.