



THE REPORTER

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HOBBY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION MOVES FORWARD



The Hobby Manufacturers Association Board met in Las Vegas on April 26, 2005, to elect the remaining officers of the new association and to select an executive director. Members of the Board of Directors elected Mark Schwing, former president of the Radio Control Hobby Trade Association and president of Electronic Model Systems, to the office of vice president. Frank Ritota, president of Model Rectifier Corp. and chair of the Unification Task Force that led to the formation of HMA, was elected Secretary/Treasurer.

"I am pleased that all three of the merging associations are represented in the HMA administrative structure. We have a strong and representative board that is working hard to set the association on the right path to better serve everyone in the model hobby industry," said Bob Staat, HMA president and president of McHenry Couplers. In addition to Staat, Schwing, and Ritota, the HMA board consists of Lewis Nace of The Testor Corp., Bud Reece of Bachmann Trains, Jim Hudson of Sullivan Products, and Abby Robey of Xuron Corp. who was elected by the board to represent the "general hobby" product category. The National Retail Hobby Stores Association is represented by Fred Hill of The Original Whistle Stop, Inc., who will serve on the HMA board in a non-voting capacity.

The board reviewed several applications for the position of executive director and had five that were qualified for the position. Following significant discussion, the board unanimously selected Patricia S. Koziol as HMA's first

executive director. Pat has been RCHTA's executive director for the past year and a half, and was executive director of the Hobby Industry Association (now CHA) for 14 years. Pat also recently took over management of iHobbyExpo being held October 20-23, 2005, in the Los Angeles Convention Center.

HMA will incorporate to establish legal existence in the next few weeks. The HMA Board expects to assume its role as the new hobby trade association on July 1. Shortly after that, the current three hobby industry trade associations will merge (morph is a term that has been use by the present board), becoming Divisions of HMA. It will probably take several months for the process to be fully completed.

One of the first, and some think most pressing, tasks for the new HMA will be assuming responsibility for managing the 2005 iHobby Expo (the show will be transferred by RCHTA to HMA as part of the merger). The location and format of future shows has high priority as well. The show must meet the needs of exhibitors and attendees to succeed, and the show's success is key to the effectiveness of HMA. A new show committee will be formed to direct the show. The committee will be made up of equal representation from each area of hobby activity.

"With our board and officers in place, our executive director selected and working, a feasible operating budget, and our bylaws essentially complete, we will begin the process of association incorporation and the establishment of new committees to help us manage the expo and market the industry," stated Staat. "We invite all current MRIA, RCHTA, and IMMA members to continue backing us as we become the HMA."

Visit www.MRIA.org/members for more.

YOUTH IN MODEL RAILROADING EXPANDS PROGRAM

The very popular *Youth In Model Railroading* program, founded 10 years ago by Larry Price in Westminster, Colorado, is planning to expand by adding new chapters in the near future. Initial efforts will center on adding a chapter in the South Denver area, then gradually going nationwide over the next several years. Presently, the North Denver chapter has about 50 young people and their parents actively involved in the program.



YMRmembers with one of their layouts at the Denver GATS show in 2005.

The program has filed for 501 (c)(3) tax – exempt status as an educational group. A new Web site (www.ymr-online.org) was added last month to increase awareness of the program and to enhance communication with members, potential members, and the community.

As noted in the March issue of the Reporter, Y-M-R is seeking support from the model railroad industry. Currently, MRJA member companies Caboose Hobbies and Red Caboose are supporting this program with donations of merchandise and assistance with program clinics. Other MRJA member companies, notably Bachmann Trains, Kato, Intermountain Railway, and *O Gauge Railroading* have committed to help in the future.

The group meets monthly on Saturday mornings to hold hands-on clinics for members

and to work on the layouts the group has built. These layouts, in most common scales and gauges, are exhibited at shows throughout the Denver area as well as at many NTS shows and at the annual Y-M-R open house.

The layouts are fine examples of the hobby and the youngsters present them to the public in a professional manner. Y-M-R has built a large trailer to move the layouts for exhibit, and at shows the members follow a dress code that includes denim-striped vests with a distinctive Y-M-R logo.

As this story was being prepared, we learned that YMR's large trailer, used to move layouts and modules to shows, was stolen. This limits the ability to display at events (YMR does have a small trailer). If there are any MRJA members willing to help this group build a new trailer, please contact Larry Price at conductor@YMR-online.org or at 303-446-2857.

Welcome New MRJA Members

We welcome the following new and re-joining MRJA members:

GRS Micro-Liting (Rochester, MN)
Vern Skare
www.grs-microliting.com

JMRI Group (Berkeley, CA)
Bob Jacobsen
<http://jmri.sf.net>

MBI (St. Paul, MN)
Steve Dauberspeck
www.motorbooks.com

The following MRJA companies have moved:

BTS (Bill Wade)
P. O. Box 865
Elkins, WV 26241
304-637-4510 Fax: 304-637-4506
www.btsrr.com

Broadway Limited Imports (Daniel Yang)
4 Signal Ave., Ste. C
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
386-673-8900 Fax: 386-673-8080
www.broadway-limited.com