



RON GRIBLER EARNS MMR #494

As so many model railroaders have, I, too, started with a Lionel set at Christmastime. This set included the streamlined New York Central “Hudson” with a metal Pennsylvania Railroad caboose. For a number of years, every Christmas brought a few more cars, track, and locomotives. The last Lionel I obtained was a new GG1 purchased for \$20 using money that I saved from my paper route income. I never had a layout, but the trains were usually set up on the floor somewhere in the house.

I was introduced to scale model railroading during a visit to the Dayton Art Museum. In the basement, there was an HO club layout that operated on Sunday afternoons. There was another train club O scale layout in the Dayton Union Station. That was my favorite, even though I never saw it operate.

I started early as a railfan, since the Delaware & Ulster (a Baltimore & Ohio branchline) was located half way between home and school. Most afternoons on the way home from school, I could be found sitting on my bike watching an old 2-8-0 shuffle freight cars around. The local hobby shop hired me as a teenager. There, I was introduced to HO models such as the Varney docksider, the Globe F3, and the American Flyer die-cast Hudson. My first, and only, HO car was a *Silver Streak* boxcar kit with Baker couplers. I decided then that I still liked the bigger trains.

The Lionels were eventually put away. Following high school, college, marriage, kids, and several career moves, I dug out the old trains. I built a few simple layouts with our twin sons. It was in the early 1990s when I began to build O scale kits with three-rail trucks. During several business trips to the Detroit area, I visited the P&D Hobby shop. That store was, and still is, a major source of O scale treasures. After the second visit,

I decided that I was going to go to 2-rail O scale. Before long, I was kit-bashing and scratchbuilding O scale cars and structures.

I joined the NMRA in 1996. I didn't attend any events until some time in 2000, when I went to a MidCentral Region Cincinnati Division 7 meeting. I was very impressed with the activities they sponsored, such as Boy Scout merit badge training, donations of model railroading books to local libraries, visits to members' layouts, and monthly model contests. I entered a model at the next month's contest and became acquainted with Sam Swanson, the contest chairman at that time. It was Sam who convinced me to keep building models and entering them in contests. By 2003, I won the contest's first place plaque for the year.

I joined the Cincinnati Model Railway Club, which is O scale and a 100% NMRA club. It was there that Mike Brestel and Frank Koch introduced me to the Achievement Program by encouraging me to bring some of my models to the club so they could judge them for Merit Awards. I received my first Certificate in 2003 for Cars.

Through all this, I still had not started an O scale layout. However, I earned the Golden Spike Award that year with a portable Lionel layout I built to display at the local Division fall train show. The little kids loved the noise, smoke, and the gateman popping out.

I volunteered to be a judge at the Seattle 2004 and the Cincinnati 2005 National Conventions. Those activities, along with being the chairman for Division 7's Spring Flea Market for several years, helped me earn the Association Volunteer Certificate.

Several years ago, I began to build my multiple-deck O scale layout that includes the PRR, B&O, and NYC since they served my hometown of Greenville, Ohio, in the early 1950s. By mid-2012, I had completed the Electrical and Civil Engineer requirements.

I want to thank my wife, Jean, for her patience and understanding all these years. I also thank Mike, Sam, and so many other Cincinnati Division 7 members who, by example, exemplify what a great hobby model railroading is. I am especially appreciative of all the help and encouragement from Frank Koch in completing the AP requirements.

It's an honor to be the fifth MMR from Cincinnati Division 7 in recent years. 🏆

Ron earned the following certificates: Master Builder—Cars, Master Builder—Structures, Association Volunteer, Model Railroad Author, Model Railroad Engineer—Civil, Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical, Master Builder—Motive Power.