

In Memoriam: Dean Dickerhoof

Roland Lawrence

Dean W. Dickerhoof was born in Akron, Ohio, on November 9, 1935. Dean earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Akron. While attending that college, he met Joy, whom he married on August 27, 1958. The couple moved to Chicago so Dean could continue his education, earning a master's and doctorate in chemistry from the University of Illinois. Upon graduation, Dean accepted a teaching position at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. He taught undergraduate and graduate chemistry at Mines until his retirement in 2004. Dean and his wife moved to Midland, Texas, to live out their retirement years. Dean passed away on January 9, 2024.

Dean fell in love with trains at a young age. He rode on trains, as well as photographed, read about, and modeled trains. He especially loved the Union Pacific. Dean's daughters, Katerina and Cheryl, recall fond memories of family vacations following various train tracks, trips into Denver, Colorado, to visit hobby shops, and their dad's generosity with all he had collected.

NMRA Achievement Program

Association Volunteer – Dean served the NMRA for 19 years (1991–2011) as Display Floor Manager for the National Train Show, which occurs at the end of the annual NMRA National Convention. He was responsible for the modules and displays (M&D) at the shows.



Above: Dean accepting his Association Volunteer Certificate. — Roland Lawrence photo



Above: Dean prepares to give his clinic on Looking Back at UP Diesels. — Paul Brennecke photo

Model Railroad Author – Dean wrote numerous articles for the Union Pacific Historical Society's publication, *The Streamliner*. His articles included: "UP F3s" (January 1985); "SW Switcher Assignments in Denver" (January 1986); "251 Territory" (two photos pg. 9 and 13 - January 1987); "Alco FAs Part 1" (July 1987); "Alco FA/FBs Part 2" (April 1988); "UP Express Box Cars" (4th Qtr 1989); "The Joseph Schick Collection" (Vol. 7); and "Denver Steam Operation" (Vol. 14).

N-Trak

Dean was also a member of N-Trak, joining the group in the 1970s. His corner module was built around 1977. One of the N-Trak publications has an overhead photo of Dean's module at the 1977 Denver NMRA National Convention.

His corner module was also featured on page 32 of the N-Trak "How-To" book published in 1984. That feature included a photo of the module, the track plan, and details about its construction.

Dean's friend, Kent Charles, remembers the first time he saw Dean's N-Trak module at the Jeffco Fair Grounds, where the NRHS held an annual train show. Dean was a member of the NRHS and arranged for N-Trak participation in the show. His

module caught Kent's attention because all the industries were named after famous chemists or scientists. One memorable name was Avogadro's.

As a member of the NRHS, Dean participated in several of their train rides as a car host or car captain. These trains used Union Pacific locomotives and coaches and usually went from Denver, Colorado, to Laramie, Wyoming, where UP crews wye'd the engine for the return trip to Denver. Dean was also a long-time member of the Forney N Scale Club and helped with the construction and operation of that layout until it was dismantled.

After Kent built his first N-Trak module, he and Dean traveled together to many shows. One of Kent's most memorable trips with Dean was to the first N-Scale National Convention in Houston, Texas, in 1983. Kent drove his old green pickup, and Dean navigated. Dean had a thick black binder full of notes about all the places and depots he wanted to photograph along the route, places like Gene Autry, Oklahoma. His organizational skills and attention to detail were impressive. They also traveled together to several NMRA conventions to participate in the N-Trak layout as part of the National Train Show. Dean became interested in the National Train Show and joined the staff. He was really enthusiastic about each show and spent countless hours planning and overseeing the modules and displays.

Dean's dedication to his family and the hobby will surely be missed by all.