



THE BRASS POUNDER



**Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Division 12, Mid-Eastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association**

Volume 21 Number 11

November 2021

Division Coming Events

(See [CSD Website](#) for
further details)

**November Division
Meeting
Saturday,
November 20th
10:00am - ??
at the KK&L
Railroad of Neal
Anderson, MMR.
172 Woodfield Dr
Statesville, NC
28677-2619**

**The meeting will
be followed by an
operating session.**

**Pizza snacks will
be provided.
Bring a beverage
or two.
Hope you can
attend.**

Superintendent's Corner

By Alan Hardee

Welcome to November. A nice cool fall nip in the air means 2021 is coming to a close. But that doesn't mean we are finished with Division activities for the year. We have missed a lot of members during our last few gatherings. Hopefully, as a society, we can get back to a normal routine again. We need people to come to our monthly activities. The Carolina Southern Division depends on your volunteering and being active to keep us a strong division. January 2022 will bring the election of Division officers. I am term limited as Superintendent and I will term out in January. The division needs your help and your fresh ideas. Will you step up?

We had six members make the trip to the MER convention in Hunt Valley Maryland. We hoped for a few more to attend, but we had a great time. We also learned a lot from their convention committee that will help us put on a great 2022 convention in Charlotte next October.

Wade's Train Town is still needing volunteers on Saturdays to greet visitors and run the trains. Gil, Ed, and Keith have been doing a phenomenal job but need volunteer help from the Division. So far, I have been the first and only one to use the signup link. We had 24 visitors on 10/30/21. Every week the numbers seems to be in that 20 visitor range, which is what we probably totaled for an entire year at Brookford. So, as expected, the Layout that we just relocated and refurbished is getting more exposure.

Next up on the schedule is our November monthly meeting at 10:00 am on November 20th. Neal Anderson will host the meeting and Operating Session at the home layout near Troutman, NC. Please bring a beverage (or two) so we don't wipe out Neal's supply. I will provide the pizza for a lite snack between the meeting and the Op Session.

November and December also bring a lot of holiday train displays to our area. Metrolina Model Railroaders will have their HO scale French Broad and Catawba modular layout on display at the Southern Christmas Show in Charlotte at The Park Expo on Independence Blvd. The 12-day show opens on Nov. 10th and runs through the 21st. Metrolina can use your help manning the layout for the long schedule. Slots are still available if you would like to volunteer for a few shifts. Contact Rick Artale at rartale@gmail.com to sign up. You probably have received an email from him already. Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens in Belmont offers a fantastic holiday light display from Thanksgiving through January. Several different trains, including a smaller Metrolina layout, are on display at DSBG during this time. The Holidays and model railroading share a magical bond. As you enjoy the Holidays, be sure to include some model railroading to keep those holiday memories alive.

Happy Holidays from my family to yours.



A typical Holiday display from a previous Metrolina Southern Christmas Show in Charlotte.

Minor Disappointment... Major Issue???

by Gil Brauch, MMR

I am becoming concerned about the future 'health' of our Division – not in a medical sense, but in a communal sense. Like many, if not most, organizations with a major social component, the situation beyond our control in the past many months has strained and sometimes torn the threads of fellowship, camaraderie, and cooperation that kept us focused on the enjoyment and promotion of The World's Greatest Hobby™. Over the past five months we exhibited signs that we were beginning to recover as over 20 of us came together to successfully complete the project of moving Train Town from Brookford to Newton. Since that time, however, crickets. The call has gone out for volunteers to help host the weekly open house for the layout. Only two persons have responded. While this is a minor disappointment at this time, I wonder if it is a precursor of things to come that will be a major issue for the Division as we seek to host a successful 2022 convention for the Mid-Eastern Region. I certainly hope not.

My purpose here is not to be a curmudgeon, but to urge our leadership and our membership at large to shake off the lethargy that has invaded us during the past period of forced separation and begin to do again the things together again that fostered the close ties we once enjoyed. Holding monthly meetings once again would be a start and contacting Neal Anderson, our Convention Chairman, to ask what you can do to help in preparing for the convention is also a good way to resume activity. And, by the way, volunteering to host Train Town once in a while can also help keep the 'juices flowing' – it is easy to do, just fill out and submit the form at

<http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html> and you are on your way.

It would be very easy for all of us to revert to being 'lone wolves' or 'basement dwellers' after this long period of separation. Let's not allow that to happen to us so that we can not only show off the skills and talents that we have acquired, but also attract others to our wonderful hobby so that it can continue to grow and prosper into the future. Respectfully submitted...

Gil Brauch, MMR

UPCOMING AREA TRAIN EVENTS

**For those who don't mind
driving for a few hours:**

**Neuse Valley Model
Railroad Club
TRAIN SHOW
November 6-7
9:00am – 5:00pm
Jim Graham Building,
NC State Fairgrounds,
4285 Trinity Road,
Raleigh, NC 27607
Enter at Gate 9 on Trinity
Road**

Admission \$9.00

**And a bit closer (only 6
miles from the Charlotte
Airport):**

**Fort Mill SC Model Train
Show
December 18th
9:00am – 3:00pm
Clarion Hotel
3695 Foothills Way
Fort Mill, SC 29708**

Free Admission

Editor's Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

Last month marked the MER Convention at Mount Clare Junction in Baltimore. As Superintendent Alan Hardee mentioned, six CSD members made the trek north to attend. I hope to get some first-hand accounts of the event for publication in a future newsletter.

I had hoped to attend a work session on fellow member Joe Skorch's layout, but an intervening doctor's appointment prevented me from going. I hope to have some news in the near future about the work Joe has been doing on his wonderful Southern Pacific layout.

Similarly, I'm anxious to see the progress on Andrew Stitt's ET&WNC layout in On30 in the near future. As previously reported, Andrew is using dead rail for flawless operation.

Looking ahead, there will be the holiday display by Metrolina, a monthly meeting and operating session for the Division, and then a break during December for Christmas. Our January meeting, at a time and place to be determined, will include elections. Think about what you can do to help the Division.

I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of you at Neal's house on the 20th.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

I target the 1st of each month for publication. Please submit articles for publication by the 27th of each month.

The preferred format is MS Word, but I can convert most other formats.

For questions and help, email me at editor@carolinasouthern.org

Train Town Relocation Progress

Gil Brauch, MMR - Project Manager

FINAL TRAIN TOWN RELOCATION UPDATE

October marked the first full month of open house sessions for Train Town at the Newton Depot. All of the showings went very well with only a few minor glitches in the operation of some of the accessories. The biggest issue is the skating rink, which is really showing its age by refusing to consistently cooperate. We were able to install a new interactive feature thanks to the wizardry of Fred Miller, MMR and the sharp eyes of Keith Iritsky. Keith managed to acquire and donate an operating Bachmann Gandy Dancer. Then Fred developed one of his 'magic boards' that allows this accessory to cycle back and forth at the press of a button – a real treat for young and old alike. Thanks guys.

Instead of a monthly update article, we are introducing a new continuing feature called The Train Town Box Score. The initial installment is just below this article. It contains the key statistics of the month and the names of all those who served as hosts for our open house events.

SUPPORT FOR THE FUTURE

Our Division needs your support. Yes, you who are reading this right now. Yes, you individually. We need you to contribute one Saturday in support of Train Town by agreeing to co-host one of our weekly open houses. We have a 'Two Person Rule'. Each Saturday between 10 am and 4 pm we have promised the Newton Depot that we will have two persons host the layout. During October, only five persons, and three of them being the Leadership Team (Ed, Keith, and Gil) helped out and filled the twelve available slots. Only Ken Riddick and Alan Hardee stepped in to help. We can do better than that. We need your help. It is easy to volunteer. Just go to the CSD Website at: <http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html> and fill out and submit the form. A member of the Leadership Team will contact you to confirm the date you have selected and provide you with more information. Don't worry about not knowing enough. If you are a first or second time volunteer, you will be paired with someone who has 'been there, done that', so you won't be hung out to dry. As of this writing, nobody except the Leadership Team is scheduled for November or December, so check your calendar (yes, right now, faithful reader), pick out a date, and go to the link above to volunteer. Thanks in advance for your support.

Train Town Box Score

October 2021

Open Houses 5

Attendance 67

Hosts: Gil Brauch (3), Alan Hardee (r), Keith Iritsky (3), Ken Riddick (r), Ed Smith (4)

To volunteer, go to:

<http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html>

(#)=frequency (r)=first time host

DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

As Gil Brauch, MMR reports in his update, Train Town logged 67 visitors during the month of October. That's roughly the number of visitors we hosted in a year at Brookford. Visitors to the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum at [Newton Depot](#) provide a baseline of potential visitors. But, as Gil also mentioned, we have an obligation to the museum to staff the layout. Please volunteer to help out.

In other Division news, Neal Anderson, MMR, will be hosting our November meeting on Saturday, the 20th at 10:00am. The meeting will be followed by an operating session. If you haven't visited Neal's KK&L Railroad, you need to make a point of joining us at the meeting. You won't be disappointed – it's always fun operating on his railroad. Neal's address is 172 Woodfield Dr., Statesville, NC 28677-2619. While you're there, you might get a chance to see his progress on a series of flatcars he's building in 7½" gauge as shown in the picture on the right from his Facebook post.



Neal Anderson, MMR has started building a series of five flatcars in 7½" gauge.

Seth Gartner's Facebook post on his [NYC Piney Fork Branch](#) shows that he's been busy too. It looks like he decided to make a change from his usual work with styrene structures to assemble a laser-cut wood kit from Built-Rite Models. As you might imagine, Seth's craftsmanship earned a lot of positive comments.



Seth Gartner recently completed this laser-cut wood kit for his NYC Piney Fork Branch.



ONE THING FINISHED – ANOTHER BEGINS

By Ed Smith

The title of this month's article exemplifies how great this hobby is. There are so many facets that you can finish one project and another more challenging, interesting, and different awaits. After 3 or 4 months of work and articles, I've completed my military train.

What started out as maybe 10-15 cars, grew to 29 pieces of rolling stock. There are 3 renovated boxcars, 1 tank car, 2 gondolas, and 22 flatcars, 6 are 52' and 16 are 40', followed by a Gloor-Craft Models Erie Caboose (pic 1, 2). To complete the consist, I built 2 flatcars with loads, 2 boxcars for military personnel, and the Craftsman kit Caboose (pic 3, 4, 5). The loads installed on the pieces of rolling stock consist of two P-51 aircraft, 19 tanks, 4 artillery pieces, 7 trucks, 1 Jeep, 1 bull dozer, 1 grader, and 3 ambulances. All were pivotal in the WW II European Theatre.



Pic 1: The completed train...29 cars



Pic 2: Viewed from the tail end



Pic 3: Two flatcars with loads.



Pic 4: Two bunk cars converted from boxcars.



Pic 5: A vintage Gloor Craft kit of an Erie caboose.

To finish the train, I positioned an Erie USRA Heavy 4-6-2 Brass Steam Unit by Akane, at the head end in the staging yard (pic 6). Then I stretched the train out in my staging yard. From the overpass that separates West staging and the beginning of my layout, the train was 16 feet long, or almost 1400 feet in HO scale (pic 7). I believe helper service will be mandatory, because of weight on this train. So, this completes my side-tracked obsession with WW II military trains.



Pic 6: A USRA Heavy Pacific from Akane heads up the train in the staging yard.



Pic 7: Viewed from the overpass, the finished train is 16 feet long (almost 1400 scale feet). Helper service will be mandatory for this consist.

Now, after a little R & R with friends from Ohio on the Bourbon Trail in Kentucky (pretty redundant for an old retiree), it will be time to install the Digitrax System for my layout. I'm a novice at this, just knowledgeable enough to be dangerous. In the upcoming months I'll try to chronicle my successes and disasters as I try to get this monster up and running. I only have a year until the Regional Convention, hosted by our Division, comes to Charlotte. We should all be planning on what we can do to support this endeavor. All we have to do is blink, and it will be October, 2022.

Well, Elway and I have to get ready for Kentucky (pic 8).

Stay tuned.

ED



Pic 8: It looks like Elway is already in the spirit of our upcoming trip on the Bourbon Trail in Kentucky.

CLOSING PAGE BONUS



How's that for a Thanksgiving train?

Image from internet search

Division Brass

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