

THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 22 Number 11

November 2022

Division Coming Events

DIVISION NOVEMBER MEETING & SWAP MEET

**Saturday,
November 19th
10:00am – noon
David B Waymer
Recreation Center
14008 Holbrooks
Rd, Huntersville,
NC 28078**

Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

Well, it's over, and we all survived! Months/years' worth of planning culminated in October when the Carolina Southern Division hosted the 2022 MER Convention. I had ample opportunity during breaks in the activities at the hotel, as well as host visits to view my layout, to ask our guests about their reactions to the events. Everything I heard was positive. The hotel did an excellent job of providing us with their facilities and help. Expertise from within our division in setting up and using the lap tops, projectors, and screens worked very well. The company store ran efficiently, and many folks (me included) managed to sell some things. The banquet went smoothly and the food was very good. Shane Wilson, of Scale Trains, provided us with a very interesting presentation about the founding of his company. I believe those who attended from the other divisions, as well as from the SER now have a better idea of who we are, and what our Division represents. That's a good thing.

Going forward, November will be our final meeting for 2022. We will be back at the David B Waymer Recreation Center in Huntersville Saturday the 19th for

a members-only swap meet. This is a continuation of the swap meets that used to be held at Brookford. I imagine many of you might have an item or two (or more) that you would like to sell, or swap for something somebody else might have brought. No commission will be charged. This get together will be within our normal two-hour window (10 AM till noon) so it won't drag on all day like train shows do. So, consider coming.

To the convention committee and everyone who pitched in to help, Thank You! Job well done! Your efforts are appreciated by all who came and saw the effort first hand.

**UPCOMING
AREA TRAIN EVENTS**

Fort Mill Train Show
and Sale
Saturday,
December 17th
9:00am – 3:00pm
Free Admission
Clarion Hotel
3695 Foothills Way
Fort Mill, SC

Editor's Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

For the last several months I've kept my ideas and opinions to myself, but this month I will reactivate my podium as editor.

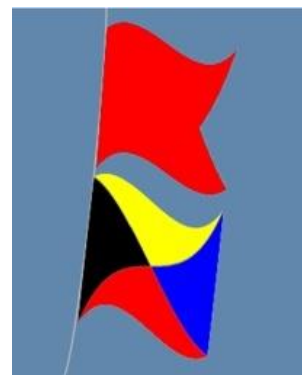
I'll start by offering a hearty **WELL DONE** to all those who chipped in their time and effort to help plan and successfully execute the MER annual Convention. Back in my navy days, that would be expressed as BRAVO ZULU. All those who helped can be proud of their accomplishment. 168 people enjoyed the fruits of your labor. The feedback I have received has all been very positive. A prime example is an email I received from Alan Mitchell a few days after the Convention. I'll quote some of what he had to say:

"Well, let me first say that I had a great time. Very impressed with how Neal Anderson, Dave Thrums, Alan Hardee and Gil Brauch coordinated their groups. As my first convention, it was filled with a lots of information. I helped with the setup, running of, and take down of the layout room.

"I did take in two clinics, namely Dead Rail given by Andrew Stitt and Fred Miller on layouts in small spaces. Because I have HO trains, the New River Valley Modular Railroad was extremely helpful in providing me info that I can use to improve my layout. It was interesting to see the layout folks interact with folks, especially young ones.... Gil was great to work with and I would do it again."

Next, I want to thank those who provided that feedback and those who answered my call for contributions to this newsletter. Thanks to your submissions of articles, photos, and information, I was able to focus this newsletter on the Convention. I hope you enjoy the multitude of pictures and reading the different viewpoints.

As always I encourage you to get your projects and ideas published in our newsletter, and I welcome your feedback and suggestions for improvement.



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



LOOK SOUTH IN 2022

A QUICK LOOK: IT WAS A SUCCESS!

By Ed Gumphrey

From the feedback received from participants, other CSD members, and Division leadership, our hosting of the MER 2022 Convention was a resounding success. For those of you who like to look at top-level metrics, here's the scoop:

There were 135 advance registrations through the convention website, with an additional 33 people registering at the door, for a total attendance of 168

The Convention Featured:

- *Hotel Layouts*
 - *6 Layouts in 5 scales (Z, N, HO, S, O)*
 - *108 Total modules on display and in operation*
 - *Approximately 25 layout exhibitors*
- *A full Schedule of clinics (more detail on clinics in next month's newsletter)*
- *Three Special Tours*
 - *NC Transportation Museum with 31 attending*
 - *Unifour Tour of Hickory area and Narrow Gauge Museum with 13 attending*
 - *Lionel Headquarters Tour with 10 attending*
- *Layout Tours*
- *Operating Sessions*
- *Model Contest (with two winning entries from Division members)*
- *General Store and Raffle*
- *Display of 7 ½" gauge trains built by Neal Anderson, MMR*
- *Banquet with Shane Wilson, President of Scale Trains as guest speaker*

The well-illustrated articles in this edition will give you some insight into the convention from five Division members.

As I sorted through all the information and article submissions that I received, I was pleased to see that two of the contest winners were from our Division. The pictures are from the MER website. Congratulation to Neal Anderson, MMR, and Michele Chance.



Contest winner for Steam Locomotive
Neal Anderson, MMR
C&NW Class H-1 4-8-4



The President's Award
Michele Chance
Lancaster & Chester RR boxcar

Pictures of all the contest winners are posted on the MER website. There is a control box at the bottom of the web page that lets you navigate through all the contest categories.

[MER-NMRA: Contests - Carolina Special](#)

Obviously, we couldn't set up a "layout" for 7 1/2" gauge. Nevertheless, that segment of our hobby was represented by some of Neal Anderson's scratchbuilt equipment in the hotel hallway. Thanks to Bob Halsey for the pictures.



Convention Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR, asked me to include his thanks to the Staff Director Dave Thrums, Clinic Director Doug Algire, Webmasters Gil Brauch, MMR & Joe Skorch, Layout Tours Manager Alan Hardee, The Modular crew, and the General Store Crew.

Lets not forget the Banquet Host Doug Algire and the guest speaker Shane Wilson of Scale Trains.

DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

RMU needs a “home”

We started Railroad Modeling University (RMU) 2004, and it has been a signature event for the Division until interrupted by Covid restrictions. RMU is an excellent opportunity to present or attend interesting clinics in all aspects of model railroading. It's also open to the public, giving us a chance to recruit new members to NMRA and the Division. We want to start again in January of 2023, but we need to identify a suitable location. A private or church run school would likely be the best due to a potential lower (donation) cost. Perhaps someone in the division has a connection to such a facility. If you know of a venue that would meet our needs, please pass along that information to our Superintendent Andrew Stitt superintendent@carolinasouthern.org and RMU Chairman Doug Algire RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org

Metrolina Christmas Display

The Christmas season is fast approaching and that means it will soon be time for the 2022 Southern Christmas Show. The Metrolina Model Railroaders will once again be displaying and operating their modular layout for the duration of the show at

The Park Expo and Conference Center

2500 E. Independence Blvd. / 800 Briar Creek Rd.

Charlotte, NC 28205.

Setup has already started. The show opens November 9th (preview opening) and runs through November 20th. For more information about the show and possibly joining Metrolina, contact Assistant Superintendent Alan Hardee alanhardee@gmail.com

HO scale N&W Covered Hopper kits

If you're a N&W modeler, you might be interested in a limited-edition HO scale kit being offered for sale by the Cincinnati Division of the MCR. It is a N&W HC-46 ACF 2-Bay Covered Hopper in a unique repaint scheme with patched-out data; available in 3 different road numbers. The following link provides details about it as well as pricing, shipping and ordering information.

<https://www.cincy-div7.org/projects.html>

Division November Meeting & Swap Meet

Saturday, November 19th, 10:00am – noon at the David B Waymer Recreation Center, 14008 Holbrooks Rd, Huntersville, NC 28078

Train Town Update

Contributed by Ed Smith

Train Town Box Score

October 2022

Open Houses 4 plus Convention Tour

Attendance 140

Hosts: Gil Brauch (2), Ed Smith (2)

To volunteer, go to:

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

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

A quick update on Wade's Train Town. We have been in a constant state of flux with new exhibits being added. Along with minor animation venues being added to Wade's layout, an N scale display is being refurbished, a standard gauge display over 100 years old, has been created, and display cabinets with O gauge trains have been added. Display shelving with **HO** displays is in the works. See the pictures below. The room is really taking shape. It's really turned into an excellent demonstration of model railroading. As of the end of October, we have had over 1100 visitors this year. I don't think we ever had over 100 in a year at the Brookford location. So, you see it's a success, but we need volunteers to continue this growth. Please, if you can spare a Saturday, go to the following website link and sign up:

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



N Scale display being refurbished by
Central Carolina N-Scalers



The Standard Gauge display includes
items over 100 years old.



Two cabinets display O gauge trains.

In case you missed it on the previous page, we need volunteer hosts. Please, if you can spare a Saturday, go to the following website link and sign up:

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

ED Smith

The Unifour Special Tour

MER 2022 Convention

by Gil Brauch, MMR

As the sun began peeking over the horizon, a small chilly group of stalwart travelers boarded the bus for a day-long odyssey into the ‘nether regions’ of the Carolina Southern Division know as ‘The Unifour’ (aka the Hickory, NC regional area – so named because it encompasses parts of the four counties marking the northern extremes of the Carolina Southern Division 12, MER, NMRA). But, enough of the prose and geography lesson – what about the tour?

Our first stop was at Neal Anderson’s KK&L Railroad, also affectionately known as “The Plywood Lines” – but that’s a whole other story. Neal’s 1970’s freelance HO layout has an 850 foot double-track mainline and fills a 1,500 sq ft basement and uses Digitrax DCC. As an MMR and the Division AP Chairman, Neal frequently uses the layout for Dispatcher Award clinics and operating sessions. One of the signature scenes is his massive steel works. (Photo 1)

The next stop on the tour was the author’s DD&DM Railroad. This N Scale freelance pike has a 6 ft x17 ft peninsula of NTRAK modules connected to a 12 ft x 12 ft wall mounted

double deck “L” extension. The NTRAK modules feature a ‘dog bone’ Mountain Division with automated passing tracks that allow two trains to run opposing each other without interference. The scenery sections of all but two of the NTRAK modules is removable, leaving only the required ‘community tracks’. Gil had on display several scenery inserts that can be used to change the ‘look and feel’ of a module. (Photo 2)



Photo 1: The Steel Mill Complex on Neal Anderson's KK&L Railroad. Photo by Neal Anderson.



Photo 2: Unifour Yard on Gil Brauch's DD&DM Railroad. Photo by Henry James Reeves.

We then boarded the bus and headed to the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Short Line Museum located in Newton, NC. Here we split into two groups with one group going to their Pavilion, which houses the 1:1 equipment and the other group going to their Model Railroading Center, which houses more than a half dozen layouts in several scales. On the pavilion side were many superbly restored pieces of narrow and standard gauge rolling stock, an AMTRAK diner undergoing restoration, a cosmetically restored Alco 2-6-0 and an



Photo 3: Walking toward the Pavilion display of 1:1 restored equipment at the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Short Line Museum. Photo by Henry James Reeves.



Photo 4: Conductor Matt Bumgarner brings Alexander Railroad #6 to a stop to pick up tour participants for a cab ride. Photo by Henry James Reeves.

operational ALCO S-3. The surprise highlight was the firing up of the S-3 and, after a few passes on the short museum lead to warm things up, the opportunity to have a cab ride as the locomotive went through its bi-weekly exercises. (Photos 3 & 4 on previous page).

On the Model Railroading Center site, one room houses the Carolina Southern Division maintained “Wade’s Train Town”, an HO legacy layout built in the 1980’s and early 1990’s by the late Wade Warren of Brookford. It is a classic illustration of what one person can do as he ‘grows’ a simple train set into a 12 ft x 18 ft pike. Another layout in the room is a 5 ft x 5 ft N Scale legacy layout built by a former mayor of the town of Newton, which is being restored by the Central Carolina N Scalers. Also in this room is an under-construction layout in Standard Scale featuring vintage 1920’s era ‘tinplate’ trains. In the second room of the Model Railroading Center is an under-construction HO layout of portions of the NS “S Line”, which runs through Newton. Also in the room is a portable HO layout that the museum staff takes to local train shows and a large O Scale Three Rail layout mounted on top of cases which house six smaller vignette-style loops that are pushbutton operated so that small children can operate them. N Scale is represented in this room by an operating display diorama featuring the superb modeling of our own Fred Miller, MMR. (Photos 5, 6, & 7).



Photo 5: Wade’s Train Town at the Newton Depot Model Railroading Center. Photo by the author.



Photo 6: “Traveling” HO Scale layout at the Model Railroading Center of Newton Depot. Photo by Henry James Reeves.



Photo 7: Operating diorama in N Scale called Charlotte Trolley by Fred Miller, MMR on display at the Newton Depot Model Railroading Center. Photo by Henry James Reeves.



Photo 8: The Newton Depot – Home of the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Short Line Museum. Museum stock photo.

Our visit here concluded with a very tasty box lunch provided by The Depot Deli, located across the street from the museum. During the lunch hour, tour members were able to roam the museum itself which houses many artifacts and displays depicting railroading in and around the region, including vintage items from the narrow gauge and short lines that traversed the area before either being gobbled up by major carriers or simply being abandoned as their usefulness declined. (Photo 8).

Following lunch, we again boarded the bus and headed for Ed Smith's "Erie Railroad – Delaware Division". Ed is focused on the 1940's and prototype locations within the area. His under-construction HO layout twists a double-tracked serpentine path through 1,600 ft in his basement. The free-standing double-deck benchwork alone is a work of art. He has completed several scenes which show his masterful attention to detail and prototype fidelity. Several members of the tour instantly recognized some of the scenes with that "I've been there..." observations. (Photos 9 & 10).



Photo 9: Ed Smith (back to camera) briefs tour participants about his layout. Photo by the author.



Photo 10: Signature prototype scene on his Erie Railroad – Delaware Division layout. Photo by Ed Smith.

From here we made our final visit of the day to Rich Colton's Train Room. This layout is above a three stall garage and features O Scale Three Rail trains evoking nostalgic memories from the older members of the tour. Perhaps the best description of the layout is that it contains "... all the neat things you wanted in your first Lionel layout, but couldn't afford...". The walls of the room are lined with displays of vintage and contemporary equipment of all types, giving us the feeling of being totally immersed in this niche of the World's Greatest Hobby™. (Photos 11 & 12).



Photo 11: Operating coal yard accessories in Rich Colton's Train Room. Photo by Henry James Reeves.



Photo 12: Vintage O Scale train display in Rich Colton's Train Room. Photo by Henry James Reeves.

And so, as with all good things, time had come to bid farewell to 'The Unifour' and return to the hotel. Our trusty Engineer Ned safely piloted us through the Friday afternoon traffic on I-85 through Charlotte and deposited us on time at the front door. Our thanks to him and Burke International Travel for providing us with comfortable, safe travels. And so it ends. Tired, but inspired, we ambled off to our rooms to freshen up before dinner and the evening's convention events. (Photo 13).



Photo 12: Weary travelers at day's end. Thanks to Ned for safe travels. Thanks to all those who made this odyssey an enjoyable one. Photo by the author.



A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND A LITTLE BIT OF THAT

By Ed Smith

This month I want to touch base on several items. Most important is our regional convention in Charlotte. I want to apologize for the lack of pictures, but I forgot my camera and was too busy volunteering and participating in the Unifour Tour to go home and get it. Based on the response I received from the attendees, the 4 days were very successful. With the layout room, showing layouts in Z, N, HO, S, and O gauges, a multitude of clinics, layout OP sessions, and tours, the registrants were kept pleasantly occupied. I'm sure there are pictures somewhere. I just want to thank everyone, top to bottom, in our Division who pitched in to make this a success.

This convention was an inspiration for me to work on my layout, which was on the Unifour Tour. I added a ton of background trees to my scenes to resemble NY and PA, the area I model. This is a quick description of what I call "shake and bake" trees. I start with poly fiber from Micro-Mark. They have black and green, both of which work, but black is easier to work with and creates a shadowy green tree when finished (pic 1). First, usually, while I'm watching football, I pull the poly fiber apart and create a mass quantity of puff balls 1" to 1 ½" in size (pic 2). Next, using green ground foam that I buy in 5-gallon buckets from Scenic



Pic 1: Micro-Mark poly fiber is available in black and green.



Pic 2: A pile of puff balls while watching football and cheering for Ohio State.

Express (pic 3 on next page), I prepare for the shake and bake process. (*Editor's Note: The Scenic Express website says to call for 5-gallon availability.*) I pour the ground foam into a fairly large container and use cheap hairspray for the adhesive agent (pic 4 on next page). I purchase Rave hairspray in quantities from Dollar General. It seems to be the cheapest. I've learned to do



Pic 3: Scenic Express 5-gallon bucket of green ground foam.



Pic 4: Scenic Express 5-gallon bucket of green ground foam.



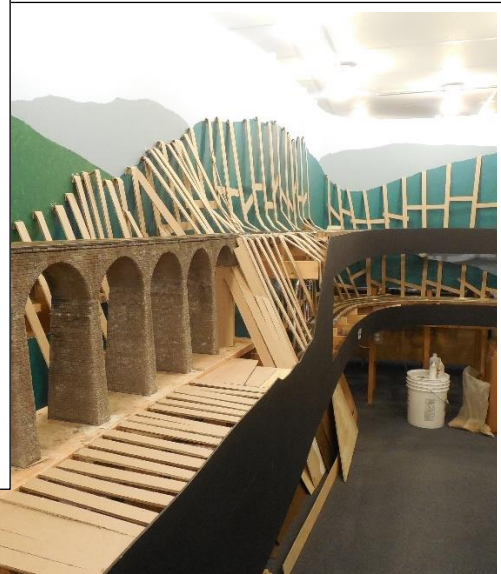
Pic 5: Completed puff balls are set aside to dry.

this next step outside on my lower deck because the hairspray has a tendency to irritate your sinuses. Outside, I take a puffball, thoroughly spray it, and put it in the ground foam container. After doing 6-10 balls, I shake the container. The puffballs are completely covered with foam. I place these in a large box to dry and repeat over and over (pic 5).

On the layout, using cardboard strips and hot glue, I create the basic terrain contours (pic 6, 7). I then cover the latticework with red rosin paper (pic 8 on next page). The paper comes in rolls and is used in construction. It can be found at Lowe's at a reasonable price. You can paint the paper earth tones or leave it red. The puffballs should cover the paper entirely. Working from the top of the mountains, I apply the puffballs using hot glue (pic 9, 10 on next page). This step can be time-consuming and painful from hot glue burns, but the results are gratifying (photomontage on next page).



Pic 6: Cardboard strips form grid around the viaduct.



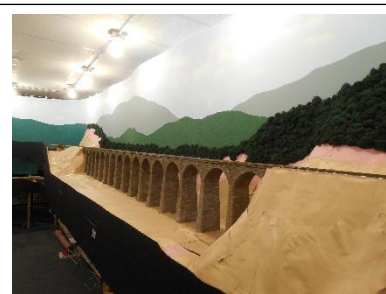
Pic 7: Viaduct viewed from the other end with grid in place.



Pic 8: Red rosin paper covers the cardboard grid.



Pic 9: Puff balls glued from top to bottom (protect track).



Pic 10: A large area can be covered very quickly.



Until next time ED



MER 2022 Convention Hotel Layouts

By Gil Brauch, MMR

What was I thinking when I blurted out at a pre-convention meeting “It would be nice to have some layouts for folks to enjoy”?... And then Convention Chairman Neal Anderson, using his Star Trek voice said to me “Make it so!”. OOPS!! And so it began...

The next several months consisted of finding two things. First, getting enough space allocated in the convention hotel and then finding folks with modular layouts to fill that space. Ultimately it all worked out so that six groups and individuals could display layouts in five different scales in a 4,200 sq ft ballroom, but with one major hurdle. It turned out that access to the ballroom was not nearly as convenient as most modular groups have been accustomed to – no driving in to unload, and even no direct access at ‘ground level’ to the room. Instead, load-in and load-out operations were conducted at the hotel’s only single-vehicle loading dock, onto a balky freight elevator reportedly named “Gertrude” by the hotel staff, and down a narrow ‘back of the house’ hallway into the room. So, why is this important for you to know? It is simply to show the dedication of these people to ensure that the convention attendees could enjoy their handiwork and, thus, the joy of The World’s Greatest Hobby™. We, as a Division and Region need to express to them our gratitude in a meaningful way, particularly since only a small handful of them are NMRA members and they did it for the love of the hobby. *(OK, I’m off my soapbox now...).*

Arrival of the layouts began early on Thursday, well before any other convention activities began. We had a timed arrival plan and it worked out so that groups did not get into each other’s way. The groups worked throughout the day and into the evening assembling their respective layouts. By about 9 PM everyone had either finished or decided that they would finish early the next morning before the doors opened to conventioners. Sure enough, by scheduled opening time at 9 AM on Friday everybody was all set up and ready to run. (Photo A)



Photo A: Hotel Layout Room overview.

John Duino and Ken Avery each brought a Z Scale layout. John's was in a Free-Mo type configuration and Ken's used the T-Trak format. We don't see Z Scale very often around here and it was fascinating to see that fine detail, particularly in some of the laser-cut structures, that is truly available in such a small scale. In the modular popular vote for Z Scale, John's "Buena Vista" module took top honors. (Photo B).



Photo B: Z Scale Favorite Module: Buena Vista by John Duino

Fred Brooks led a three-man contingent of N Scalers from the Central Carolina N Scalers. They set up and ran a 44 module layout in the N Scale T-Trak format. The layout covered 12 six-foot tables in a 24 ft x 17 ft "U" shape. Tom Spiggle garnered the most popular votes in N Scale with his "Middleton" module. One interesting item is that Tom also has an NTRAK module that mirrors the T-Trak one. (Photo C).

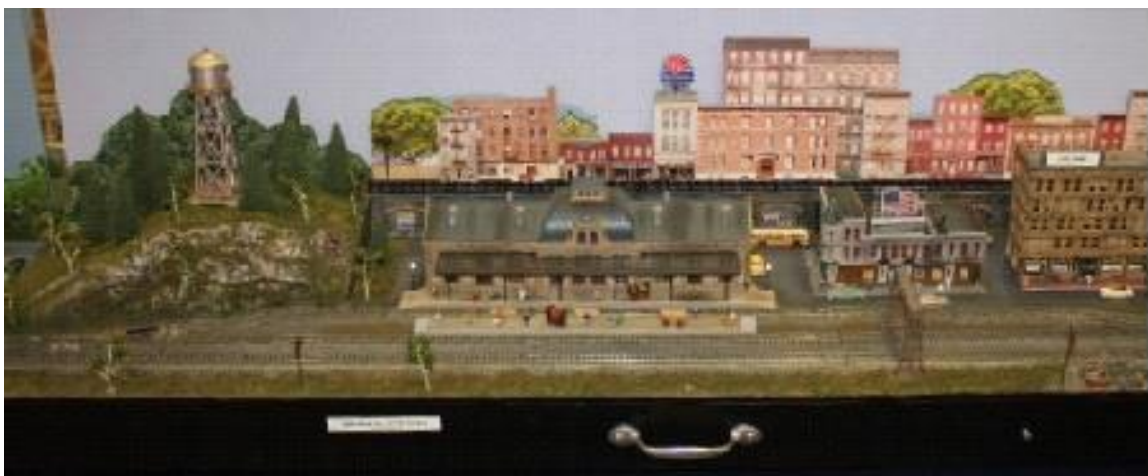


Photo C: N Scale Favorite Module: Middleton by Tom Spiggle.

The HO Scale contingent was from the New River Valley Model Railroaders led by Gary Eifried. Their layout consisted of 20 modules using the NMRA standard format. This particular layout was not in the usual rectangular shape, but had a large number of inside and outside curves to provide some viewing interest as consists snaked around them. Popular voters couldn't make up their minds, so they chose Steve Bienstock's "New River Trail Park" and "Pandapas Pond" modules and Gary Eifried's N&W Radford Yard as co-co-favorites. (Photos D, E, & F).



Photo D: HO Favorite Module #1 (tie); New River Trail Park by Steve Bienstock



Photo E: HO Favorite Module #2 (tie); Pandapas Pond by Steve Bienstock



Photo F: HO Favorite Module #3 (tie); N&W Radford Yard by Gary Eifried

The Carolinas Division of the Atlantic Coast S Scalpers, led by Marvin Thiel, also brought 20 modules, but because of the difference in scale, they covered a 42 ft by 16 ft space. The clean lines and wide rounded corners made a perfect way to display the many operating accessories they brought with them. Once again, the popular vote was split, but this time it was kept in the family with Marvin Thiel and his wife Heidi sharing the honors with their “The Swamp” and “Farm Scene” modules respectively. (Photos G & H).



Photo G: S Scale Favorite Module #1: The Swamp by Marvin Thiel



Photo H: S Scale Favorite Module #2: Farm Scene by Heidi Thiel

The sixth layout was an O Scale Three Rail one from the Yadkin & Catawba Railroaders, let by Rich Colton. Contrary to usual O Scale practice, these folks ran their trains at near prototypical speeds so that viewers could appreciate the detail available in that scale as the trains looped through a virtual cornucopia of operating accessories on their 16 ft x 24 ft layout. For this layout the popular voters chose the “Theater and Cemetery” module by Rich Colton and Dennis Schlossman as their favorite. *(Photo I).*



Photo I: O Scale Favorite Module: Theater and Graveyard by Rich Colton and Dennis Schlossman

After operating their layouts for 12 hours on Friday and nearly 8 hours on Saturday, the participants faced the final challenge of the weekend. They had to disassemble, pack up, and move out everything in less than 5 hours – all through the same restricted spaces used on Thursday. Through their hard work and mutual cooperation, and a smoothly functioning “Gertrude”, the door was closed on the last trailer by 9:30 pm, beating the 10 pm deadline the hotel had set for us.

On closing, I cannot miss thanking Peter Bonney, Keith Iritsky, Alan Mitchell, and Ed Smith who worked tirelessly to help the layout organizations move their equipment in and out of the hotel. What a great team of volunteers.

22,000 Words on the Convention

By Joe Skorch

If, as the saying goes, “A picture is worth a thousand words,” then here are over 22,000 words on the Convention from my point of view. The collection of snapshots show some of the things that caught my eye as I looked at layout displays, contest models, general store “bargains” ready to be bought, and other activities. There might be some duplication of scenes presented by other authors and the contest photos on the [MER website](#), but you’ll get to see things from a different angle. You’ll also get to see other models that were entered into competition – they might not have won, but there were plenty of really nice models. I present them in no particular order. Enjoy the “sightseeing.”



Convention leadership meet in the hotel to discuss final preparations – a meeting of the minds.



A long line of raffle items.



Excellent detail in this B&M passenger station. This model won the “Favorite Model” award, but, oddly, did not win for on-line structures. I liked this better than the winning depot.



There was a good collection of excellent rolling stock models entered in the contest.



A nice gas station model



A modeler's first contest entry.
An excellent start in scratch-building.



Arrow Brewery is the third of three
contest entries by John Pursell.



Atlas locomotives at the General Store



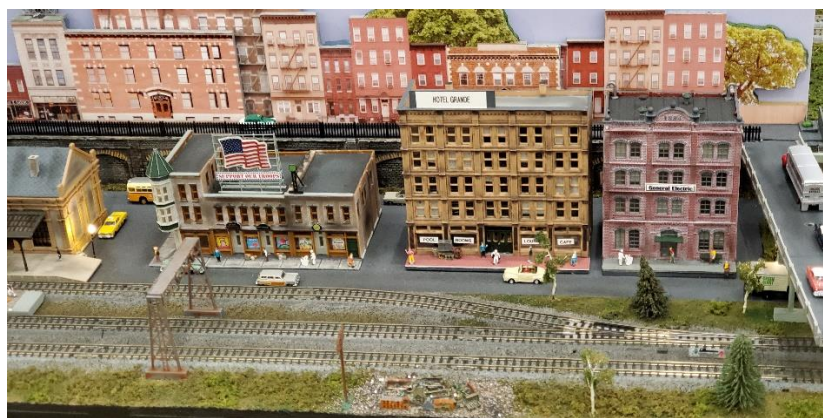
This steam ore excavator won the contest for off-line structures.



T-track N scale



The Nighthawks Diner (center structure) scene won the contest for off-line displays.



This busy scene is part of the favorite module winner in N scale.



If you look closely at this O scale scene, you can see smoke wisping out of the roof.



There was plenty to choose from in the General Store.



John Pursell entered three structures in the contest. These two tied for the win in off-line structures. The General Store on the left also captured the Clyde Gerald Award. His third entry, a brewery, is two pages up.



A couple of eye-catching scenes on the three-rail O scale modular layout.

The Convention Through My Eyes

By Alan Hardee

It was both satisfying and a relief to see our planning come to fruition hosting the MER 2022 Convention. I was Superintendent when we first made the commitment over three years ago. Covid delayed plans for a 2020 hosting. Since the Chesapeake Division already had some 2021 Convention commitments, our delay skipped a year to 2022. There were times when it looked like we might drop the ball, but in the end, all the hard work came together. I started with the Special Tour at the NC Transportation Museum on Thursday afternoon. During registration we had quickly filled our thirty “freebie” spots for the tour. Even more showed up and it was a great tour.

I was also pleased that Shane Wilson, President of [Scale Trains](#), was able to accept our invitation to be guest speaker at the Convention Banquet. I have known Shane for years, and, as many of you know, I am a happy consumer of the excellent Scale Trains products.

I was able to make it to some of the other activities, among them being a close look at the layouts on display in the hotel and an operating session on Joe Skorch's HO scale Southern Pacific layout.

I'll add my thanks to all those who helped plan and successfully manage all aspects of what I think was an excellent Convention. Anyhow, here's a few photos of some of my favorites.



My activity started an NCTM. The Special Tour started at Barber Junction. A lens flare rainbow showed up on my picture of this historic depot which is now the Visitor Center at the Museum. For more information, check out this [YouTube video](#) narrated by CSD member Marcus Neubacher.



Shane Wilson arrived in style with Scale Trains Goodies.



The Scale Trains display at the hotel showed some of the newest offerings in both HO and N scale.



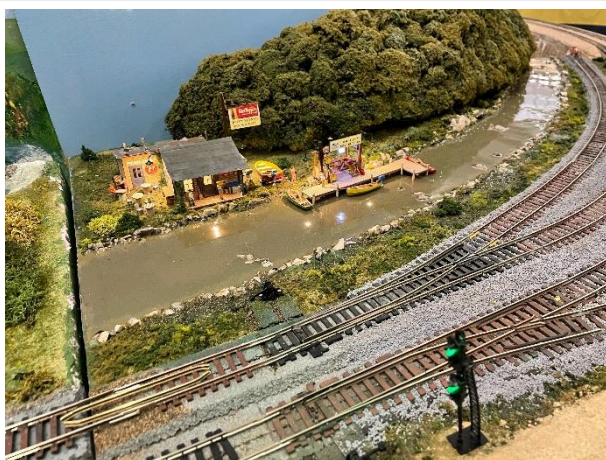
Despite the selective compression of runway length (hope that DC-3 can take off okay), the New River Valley Airport module caught my eye.



Seen on the hotel layout, the detail on this Z scale structure is impressive



Another nicely done airport scene, this one of Middleton Airport.



This module of Jimmy Flynn's features excellent water effects.



Somehow I kept gravitating back to the Scale Trains display. That Southern Heritage Unit is simply awesome.



I'm not the only one who was impressed with this Middleton module – it tied for favorite module.



This is what it's all about – an operating session. The happy operators are enjoying the N scale Charleston, Roanoke & Eastern Railway of Marcus Neubacher. See more at <http://www.kntower.com/>



Dang, why do I keep going back to that Scale Trains heritage unit?

CLOSING PAGE BONUS

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Amtrak usually schedules additional trains to handle the influx of passengers for Thanksgiving and Christmas travels.

Division Brass

Superintendent
Asst. Superintendent
Clerk
Paymaster
Director 2025
Director 2023
Director 2024
AP Chairman
Webmaster
Newsletter Editor
Program Chair
RMU Chair
Publicity Chair
Membership Chair

Andrew Stitt
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