

# THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 22 Number 9

September 2022

## Division Coming Events

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

### **DIVISION ANNUAL PICNIC**

The Division's  
Monthly Meeting for  
September will be  
**OUR PICNIC**

**Saturday  
September 17th  
10:00am – 2:00pm  
Kannapolis Village  
Park, Pavilion B  
700 West C St  
Kannapolis, NC  
28081**

Register [here](#) so we  
can get a head count.

## Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

Summer is drawing to a close, and Autumn will soon be upon us. Before we all retreat to our train rooms for the indoor season, there are still a couple of activities to keep us out and about. September has traditionally been the month that our membership comes together for a picnic. A good opportunity to meet new members (I have made new friends through the picnic), as well as our existing friends to talk about the summer, and all the things we got done or would have liked to have gotten done on the model railroad. This year is going to be different, as we will be having this get together at the Village Park in Kannapolis. Plenty of space, and they have an outdoor train! Check their [website](#). Please consider coming out, even if you haven't had much interaction within the Division this year. It's time to start socializing again.

By now, if you haven't heard about the Carolina Special convention in October, well shame on you. Our convention committee members have been putting in some long hours to ensure everyone attending has a good time. Since it is in Charlotte, we don't have nearly as many expenses to attend as others from the rest

of the MER or SER do. I hope many of you are already registered, but if not, I encourage you to do so. I think most will find something they will enjoy from the experience. Or a good value at the general store. Or touring layouts within this area. Or learning new things at the many clinics being presented. I'm sure Shane Wilson of Scale Trains will have some interesting things to share with us Saturday evening.

So, before we all return to the train room for the cold weather season, consider taking some time and take advantage of these opportunities in the next two months - visiting with your fellow Division members, as well as those from other parts of the country to talk about one of our favorite things - model railroading.



**LOOK SOUTH IN 2022**

**REGISTER NOW FOR THE MER CONVENTION IN OCTOBER.**  
**REGISTER AT: [https://mer-nmra.com/mer\\_convention\\_2022/](https://mer-nmra.com/mer_convention_2022/)**

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## DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

**IN CASE YOU MISSED THE BANNER ON PAGE ONE....**

**The Division's Monthly Meeting  
for September will be  
Our ANNUAL DIVISION PICNIC  
Saturday Sept 17<sup>th</sup> 10:00am – 2:00pm at  
Kannapolis Village Park, Pavilion B  
700 W C St Kannapolis, NC 28081  
Pot Luck style with the CSD providing  
Hamburgers and Hot Dogs**

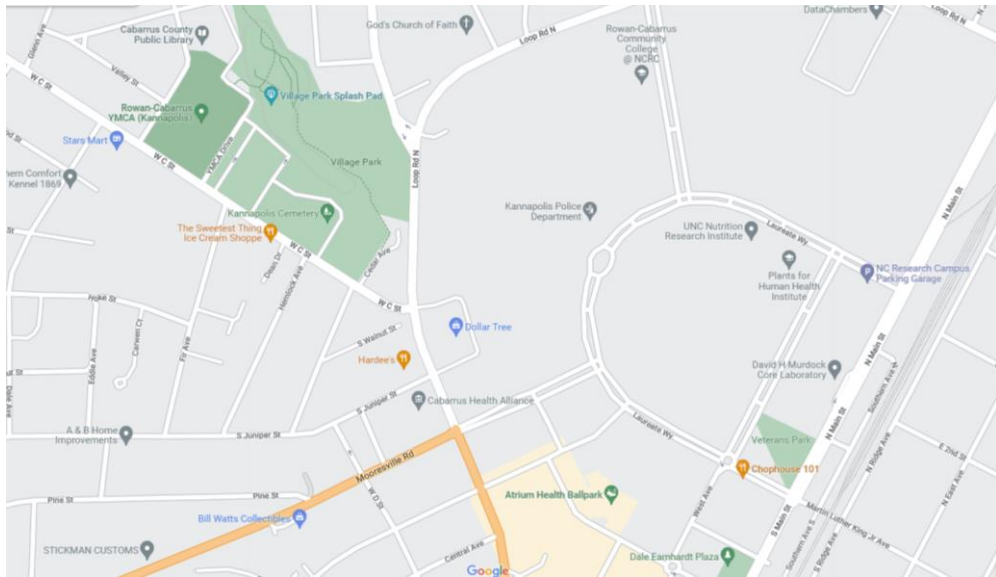
The Carolina Southern Division's annual picnic for 2022 will not be at its traditional site (Jack Parker's house). This year's event will be held at the Village Park in Kannapolis, NC on Saturday, September 17, 2022 at 700 West C Street in Kannapolis. Please check out Village Park's website for details about the facility.

The Division will provide hot dogs and hamburgers, plus condiments. Otherwise, it is pot luck, so consider what you would like to bring and share with others. It is a BYOB event. It is anticipated that we will start gathering at 10:00am. We'll wrap things up by 2:00pm so we can be cleaned up and out of the shelter by the 2:30pm time limit.

**Please use the registration form on our website at**  
<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/aB8GzR1s75g9ri3POU>  
so we can get a head count to know how many hamburgers or hot dogs to provide.  
Spouses are welcome!

I encourage all Division members who have not been able to attend any previous division functions recently to attend! This will be a great opportunity to meet other members, and to socialize.

It's best to park in the YMCA parking lot between the YMCA and Library and take the sidewalk to shelter Pavilion B. See the details on the next page....



Park in the YMCA parking lot. Best spot is between YMCA and Library. Follow the path shown below.



## Train Town Box Score

August 2022

Open Houses        6

Attendance         97

Hosts: Gil Brauch MMR, Ed Smith (2), Keith Iritsky (3), Bob Halsey (2), Alan Hardee, Larry Paffrath, Fred Brooks, Ken Riddick

**To volunteer, go to:**

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

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

Attendance was up in August. We had young grade school visitors, hopefully, a trend. With new displays being planned, the future continues to be bright. We had more volunteers, but could always use more. If you are interested in joining us on a Saturday, please go to the following website to volunteer:

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

ED Smith

## MEETING

The Division's August meeting was held Saturday, August 20th at the David B Waymer Recreation Center in Huntersville. There was a good turnout with 16 members present. A Zoom option for members who couldn't appear in person had been set up, but technical difficulties prevented any successful log-ins. Apologies those who tried to connect but couldn't. We'll do better next time. Your editor was unable to attend – I thank Superintendent Andrew Stitt for the following summary of the meeting:

*Notes from the Carolina Southern Division meeting, August 20, 2022*

*The meeting began at 10 AM with Superintendent Andrew Stitt presiding. 16 members were present. We didn't have anyone log in via Zoom - later it was determined that several tried, but the link didn't connect. Alan Hardee, our host, will look into the problem to help prevent it from happening in the future. David Myers generously provided his microphone/ camera set up for the meeting.*

*Keith Iritski & Gil Brauch MMR provided us with an update on Train Town. Attendance is averaging about 20 visitors per Saturday as this has now become an attraction for*

*the Newton Depot. Those in charge at the depot continue to make changes in our section of the building. Plans have been formulated to install an O scale tinplate layout on the other side of the room. Because of the developing plans, we have been prohibited from displaying the CSD sign board, or any of the calendars associated with Train Town. This is a fluid situation which could change.*

*Convention chairman Neal Anderson MMR brought the group up to date with developments regarding the convention. Registration status is currently on par with last year's convention.*

*Discussions touched on several developing subjects - raffles & door prizes; layout open houses, and volunteers. The convention committee is going to visit the hotel on Friday, August 26 for a walk through with their staff.*

*Andrew provided the group with a 6-month Division outlook. Jack Parker MMR is not able to host the Division picnic this year due to continuing concerns about Covid, and the updates taking place on his P&W layout. As an alternative, BOD member Joe Skorch contacted the Kannapolis Dept. of Parks to see about availability of a picnic shelter, and was successful in securing a spot for our picnic (more about this elsewhere in this newsletter).*

*Alan Hardee informed us that members of the Metrolina Club, as well as the N Scalers displaying at the museum in Spencer would be tied up the last weekend of September, and the first weekend in October when the museum is hosting Thomas the Tank engine.*

*Members in attendance desired to go forward with the traditional Division member swap meet in November. They also emphatically want to resume Railroad Modeling University (RMU) in February. Suitable meeting places for all of these events will need to be found and reserved.*

*Under old business, Andrew asked if anyone would like to take on the Division's Program Chairman role going forward. Keith Iritski volunteered and will be aided by his wife Cindi. Thank you very much!*

*Being no further business to discuss, the meeting moved on to the continuing summer program of building a diorama. Due to time constraints on the room rental, Andrew presented ideas for plaster casting rather any live demonstrations.*

*The meeting adjourned at noon.*

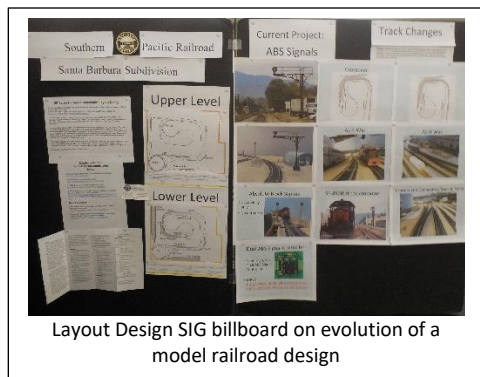


## AUGUST 2022 CHANGE OF PLANS

By Ed Smith

Originally, this article was going to be about the NMRA National Convention in St. Louis in early August. My wife and I have been attending these events for over 20 years. But, unfortunately, the viral infection, not Covid, that my wife had been fighting, reared its ugly head, and after one day, we had to leave. Returning home proved to be the right decision, and as I write this article, my wife is back doing yoga.

The convention offered many events to fill the week and talking to Keith Iritsky, a fellow CSD member, he and his wife enjoyed a great week of model railroading. In the one day that I had available, I took a tour of the National Museum of Transportation, a great venue, took in 3 clinics, visited the Special Interest Group (SIG) room dedicated to layout designs and operations, and connected with the Iritskys and friends from Toronto. Here are a few pictures from my limited stay.



Layout Design SIG billboard on evolution of a model railroad design



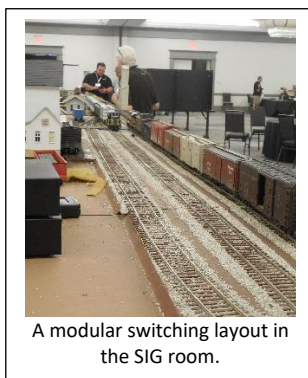
Layout Design SIG on making a model of your plans



Operations SIG billboard



The Barrett Station area of St Louis is home to the National Museum of Transportation.



A modular switching layout in the SIG room.



Erie Lackawanna SD-45 #3607. The SD-45s were the first to use the V20 version of the EMD 645 series engines.



Norfolk and Western Y6a 2-8-8-2 #2156.



Streamlined streetcar #1140 awaits restoration while its sibling #2740 is restored and in service. Both cars were manufactured by St Louis Car Company in the late 1940s.



This unrestored 8,000 gallon Monsanto Chemical car dates to 1940, and has double wall construction for hauling acids.



Some of the rolling stock at the museum has been beautifully restored. This three domed 6,000 gallon tank car dates to 1936.



This 0-6-0 from the Georgia Railroad dates to 1896. The colorful paint scheme is color-coded to the operating diagram placards.



The Museum's automobile section lobby hints at the variety of cars on display.



Everything from a Ford Model T in front to a Chrysler experimental turbine in back.



Clothing designer DiDia designed this one-of-a-kind 1960 car best known as Bobby Darin's dream car. Got fins?

Two of the clinics I attended were hosted by Dean Smith. A newly minted MMR, his biography is in this month's NMRA magazine. One clinic was on his modeling of the Tweetsie RR and the other was on creating water effects. The latter clinic leads me to the rest of my article.



With our regional convention just around the corner, I decided to do some scenery work on my layout in August. I probably only have 20% of the scenery installed, so I thought a little more would enhance viewership. I decided to work on the 11 water effects on my layout. As of now, some have minimal scenery and others are finished. But all give a fairly accurate representation.

Nine of the 11 deal with rivers under railroad bridges. Since the mainline was up and running, I removed each bridge to work on the rivers. The river base is primarily plywood in each scene. Try to make the base as level as possible. This will be addressed later. Ground contours were created by stacking, carving, and sanding blue insulation board. Once glued in place, the edges and seams were caulked to create a leak-proof base. I applied Ground Goop, tinted brown, on the board to give it an earth base. Some of the areas had Ground Foam added. All have at least some basic scenery.

After the caulk and Ground Goop dry, usually one day, I pour the plaster to create the river bed. I place towels under the area I'm going to pour because this step will show any leaks if the caulk hasn't sealed everything. I learned this the hard way. My plaster mix is really soupy. I do this for 2 reasons. First, this mix flows easily and takes a while to set up, and the soupy mix will gravitate to any leaks, which will allow them to be fixed before the resin pour. The only drawback is that it takes a while to cure.

When the riverbed plaster has dried, I add color to the basin using Woodland Scenics products and acrylic paints. Woodland Scenics Yellow Silt paint is applied along the Shoreline. Next, I mix the silt with the river's basic color, usually Mossy Green or Olive Green. The part of the country I model, Appalachia and Northeast, has predominantly greenish-brown rivers. As I work to the deepest parts of the rivers, I add acrylic Mississippi Brown to add some depth. It's subtle, but I like the effect. I do have one river that is light blue, but that's because it's modeled after an actual picture.

After the paint dries, I glue sand and crushed talus to the shorelines and any river debris, rocks, tree limbs, etc. that I may desire. After this sets up, it's time for the resin. I prefer Woodland Scenics Realistic Water. There isn't any 2-part mixing, just open the bottle and pour. It comes in 16 oz. bottles and Little Choo Choo Hobby Shop in Salisbury have the best price per bottle that I've found. When pouring, this is where you want your riverbed level, because the resin will gravitate to the lowest level. Also, a good caulk seal will prevent any leaks. I usually pour to a depth of 1/4" to 3/8". The deeper the pour, the longer it takes to cure. It takes a good day and a half to 2 days to cure usually. About halfway through the cure, I add any desired surface debris.

When the resin is fully cured, I use Woodland Scenics Surface Water Effects to create waves and rapids. This has a gel consistency as you brush it on the surface to create desired waves, or stipple to create whitewater rapids. It is white when applied, but will dry clear. When dry, you can dry brush white acrylic paint on the top of the waves or rapids to accent them. Finally, using this gel you can create waterfall effects. On a piece of wax paper, spread the gel out to the desired height and width, using vertical strokes, to create the downward water effect. After it dries, peel it off the wax paper and, using an Exacto knife, make vertical cuts in

the waterfall to give an uneven dimensional look. Apply it to your desired area, using white glue or the Water Effects Gel to secure it. Use the gel to create frothing water at the bottom of the falls.

Well, that's how I spent August. The bridges are being weathered and re-installed. Soon the mainline will be functional again. Here are a few pictures of my river effects. I think they bring some color and life to my layout.



This scene with two truss bridges also has a parallel highway bridge in the background.



Waterfall effects can be seen behind this single truss bridge crossing.



Waterfall effects work well with drainage culverts too..



Under these three truss bridges, the ripples are easy to see. I used Woodland Scenics Surface Water Effects.



Make sure you add rip-rap around bridge piers prevent erosion of the pier foundations.



The water under this stone arch bridge is a typical color.



Here's the one light blue river.

P.S. I did sign up for next year's National Convention in Dallas, TX. I'm going to quarantine my wife for a month before we go.

Until next time .... ED



## Operations on the ET&WNC

By Andrew Stitt

### An introduction to the railroad

For those of you who are not familiar with the railroad, a little background is in order. The East Tennessee and Western North Carolina was chartered in Tennessee in 1866 by a group of businessmen to take advantage of the state's offering of money to build railroads throughout the state. Ultimately, after getting nearly \$400,000 in funds, the plans for building a broad gauge railroad failed. Ario Pardee (of East Broad Top fame) bought the railroad in foreclosure in 1876. He knew that iron ore had been discovered near Cranberry Creek (in 1780), and a forge established (in 1820). He saw an opportunity to build a line into the mountains of North Carolina to haul out the iron.

The line would be converted to narrow gauge following the success of the East Broad Top. A proposed line was surveyed through the Doe River Gorge in the late 1870's and construction began. The line finally reached Cranberry in 1882. As was typical for the times then, the railroad quickly picked up additional freight and passenger opportunities due to the poor roads in the area, as well as the fact that the internal combustion engine had not yet been invented. Toward the turn of the century, a new more modern forge was built at end of the line in Johnson City, TN. This provided the narrow gauge with a change in strategy from delivering iron to the standard gauge lines in Johnson City to bringing raw iron ore to the new forge.



ET&WNC trackage crossed rugged terrain through the Doe River Gorge

In 1899, well known lumberman WM Ritter, began buying large tracts of timber in the vicinity of Pineola, NC, south of Cranberry. To get his lumber to market he incorporated the Linville River Railroad (also narrow gauge) to deliver sawn lumber to the ET&WNC in Cranberry. After a few years, as the timber in the area began to play out, he reached a deal with the owners of the ET&WNC (the Cranberry Iron & Coal Company) to buy the line. Their interest in the purchase was to extend the line further east to other large tracts of timber yet to be sawn, and to keep competing railroads from entering that mountainous part of North Carolina. After some urging by the local political powers in Boone, the ET&WNC finally entered the community in 1919. This became the farthest point from Johnson City the railroad reached.



From this date into the 1920's the railroad thrived hauling out continual loads of iron ore, and sawn lumber. Unfortunately, also during the decade, the vast stands of timber began to dwindle. To further complicate matters, the iron mine in Cranberry closed in 1929 due to competitive pressures from Minnesota's mines in the Missabe range. The narrow gauge soon fell into hard times.

### **My layout**

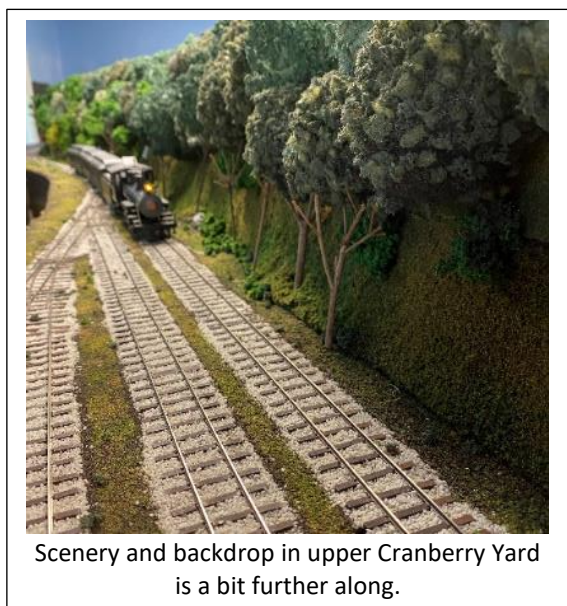
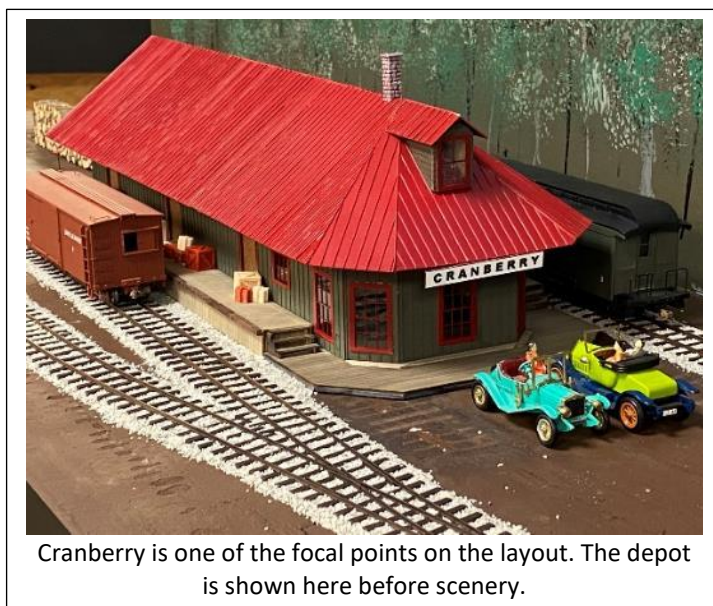
I was inspired to build the layout based on the peak of operations during the early 1920's. The railroad was thriving. Passenger trains ran the entire length of the railroad. Most of the freight trains included a passenger coach/combine due to poor road conditions in the mountains, plus the fact that most of the population in that area was still traveling by horse and wagon, or by foot. As I researched the line's historical records, I learned that much of the freight hauled outbound were natural materials or agricultural products rather than manufactured goods. Inbound freight was likely to be either manufactured goods, or coal, or petroleum products. This research led me to formulate ideas as to what the railroad would be hauling.

I failed to mention earlier, but the ET&WNC was built from the very beginning with dual gauge track at the Johnson City end of the line to facilitate interchange with both the Southern Railway, and the Clinchfield that also passed through town.

While the real ET&WNC was only 66 miles long, I knew when designing the layout I would not be modeling the entire line. I had previously built a 2 level layout with a helix, and knew I didn't desire to repeat that. I also knew from previous experience that I wanted the height to be between 48" and 54" due to limiting the mountain heights the line would be running through as well as other considerations.

If you don't already know, my ET&WNC layout is built based on the On30 4-6-0 locomotives that Bachmann produced a number of years ago. They are very faithful representations of the real locomotives the ET&WNC ran. Because of this decision, the layout is O scale (1/4" = 1 foot). While On30 uses HO gauged track, everything else is much larger! Track spacings are important, as well as tunnels and bridges. Structures are particularly large, and much consideration must be thought through in placement. The impact of all of this is I had to make a decision about how much of the railroad would fit in my space, and which part of the railroad (assuming I couldn't model the whole 66 miles) I would choose.

Clearly, the objective of the operation would best be centered around the iron mine at Cranberry. Having one or two trains a day hauling out iron ore to Johnson City was a key consideration. I decided to model the railroad from Cranberry through the Doe River Gorge to Hampton. This would provide scenic opportunities including all 5 tunnels on the railroad as well as the scenic gorge. The layout is point to point. One staging yard represents Johnson City, TN, while the other represents both Pineola and Boone, NC. A number of trains were developed to represent the actual ones that ran on the railroad during this time frame. Real ET&WNC trains #1, 2, 3, & 4 are all represented. I have also added additional trains to help carry the freight while limiting trains length to a "reasonable" size.



## Developing an operating system

Much of the area surrounding Cranberry on the layout is rural. Small towns with a few sidings for receiving or shipping goods would be about all the modeled portion could offer. So, in addition to relying on freight loadings from the modeled portion of the ET&WNC, I decided to also simulate freight loadings from the non modeled parts of the line by using the staging yards. This allows for a little modeler's license on what you might see being carried on any given train.



Blevins is typical of small towns on the layout

As operations began and progressed, I developed a train sequence that provides the crew with the best flow of trains. This sequence (for the most part) keeps trains from clogging any given part of the railroad while we are operating. During months of operating, the train sequence has been modified several times as new trains have been added to the lineup, or when crew responsibilities for particular train workloads have been adjusted.

A Form 19 is given to each engineer upon assignment to a particular train. Included in this are specific orders for that train, as well as consistent rules for all the trains operating on the layout. Once the engineer is given this form (I quit using clearance forms), a dispatcher (me) will give instructions on when the train may depart,

how far the train is given clearance to as well as any possible meets with other trains. Passenger trains are 1st class, with remaining ET&WNC trains being class 2. Non - ET&WNC trains are class 3 and are inferior to all other trains.

Many of the trains running on the layout have limited switching requirements. To simplify the Form 19 for the engineer/crew, I decided to note only those car numbers for cars that are going to be switched during the run via an attached switch list. While technically it is important for the conductor to know the identity of each car on his/her train, for my modeling

### Train Sequence

### Mill Jobs

Pittsburgh Lumber Company

Work Order

### Trains

### Switch list/ Train Order

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Train # 12 Cranberry Iron Ore Turn AM   | S/L |
| Extra #21 PLC East                      | T/O |
| Train #9 Pineola to JC                  | S/L |
| Train #1 Passenger Boone to JC          | T/O |
| Train #2 Passenger JC to Pineola        | T/O |
| Train #5 Mixed Boone to JC              | T/O |
| Train #20 PLC West                      | T/O |
| Train #7 Mixed JC to Cranberry Turn     | S/L |
| Train #10 JC to Pineola                 | S/L |
| Train #8 Mixed JC to Roan Mountain Turn | S/L |
| Train #16 Cranberry Iron Train PM       | S/L |
| Train #6 Mixed from JC to Boone         | T/O |
| Train #3 Passenger Pineola to JC        | T/O |
| Train #4 Passenger JC to Boone          | T/O |

Train Sequence on ET&WNC layout evolved during months of operating.

purposes, it is not. I am simply trying to get cars delivered from one staging yard to another or in between. Those being delivered/picked up in between staging yards will be clearly identified. Where they are being delivered is equally important. Running across scales (except iron ore trains), noting freight tariffs, or filling out bills of lading is beyond the scope of operating on this layout.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <div style="text-align: right;">Form</div> <div style="text-align: left;">Form</div> <div style="text-align: center;">19</div> <div style="text-align: center;">19</div> <p style="text-align: center;">East Tennessee &amp; Western North Carolina</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRAIN ORDER No. #</p> <p style="text-align: right;">May 24, 1920</p> <p>To: <u>Operator</u> Station: <u>Boone</u></p> <hr/> <p>X Train: Train #1 – Passenger from Boone to JC Engine # _____</p> <p>Proceed West from Boone through Cranberry, Elk Park, Roan Mountain, Blevins, Hampton to Johnson City. Make all station stops.</p> <p>Take on water @ Cranberry tank.</p> <p>After a 5 minute station stop at Elk Park, the passenger cars may be moved away from the platform to set out any dairy car for A. C. Dole dairy.</p> <hr/> <p>Made by: _____ Time: _____ Operator: _____</p> <p><b>Rules:</b></p> <p>West bound trains have right of track (are superior) over trains of the same class heading East bound.</p> <p>West bound passenger trains will take the station track at all stations. East bound passenger trains will take the station track otherwise.</p> <p>Speed limit 5 miles per hour through Cranberry yard. West bound engines must take on water at Cranberry. East bound trains must take on water at Hampton.</p> <p>No train will follow another closer than 5 minutes. Inferior trains clear track 5 minutes before arriving time of superior trains.</p> | <div style="text-align: right;">Form</div> <div style="text-align: left;">Form</div> <div style="text-align: center;">19</div> <div style="text-align: center;">19</div> <p style="text-align: center;">East Tennessee &amp; Western North Carolina</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRAIN ORDER No. #</p> <p style="text-align: right;">May 24, 1920</p> <p>To: <u>Operator</u> Station: <u>Boone</u></p> <hr/> <p>X Train: Train #5 Boone to JC mixed Engine # _____</p> <p>Proceed from Boone to Johnson City. You may have pick-ups/set outs @ Upper Cranberry yard. No passenger station stops.</p> <p>Take water @ Cranberry Tank.</p> <hr/> <p>Made by: _____ Time: _____ Operator: _____</p> <p><b>Rules:</b></p> <p>West bound trains have right of track (are superior) over trains of the same class heading East bound.</p> <p>West bound passenger trains will take the station track at all stations. East bound passenger trains will take the station track otherwise.</p> <p>Speed limit 5 miles per hour through Cranberry yard. West bound engines must take on water at Cranberry. East bound trains must take on water at Hampton.</p> <p>No train will follow another closer than 5 minutes. Inferior trains clear track 5 minutes before arriving time of superior trains.</p> <p><b>Switch List</b></p> <p><u>Upper Cranberry</u></p> <p>p/u</p> <p>s/o</p> |
|--|---|

Two sample Form 19s: On the left for Train #1, the Form 19 includes specific orders for the train and the general rules. On the right for Train #5, the Form 19 includes the same information plus a Switch List section for Upper Cranberry to specify pick-ups and set-outs.

### Let's run a train!

Train #12 is the AM iron ore turn leaving Johnson City with empty hoppers heading to Cranberry. It does have a passenger combine on the end taking any early morning passengers as well as LCL (Less than Car Load) freight for the Cranberry depot from JC (Johnson City). It will fill the tender at the Hampton tank, and then proceed to Cranberry. Upon arrival at the upper Cranberry yard, it will leave the main and switch back down the hill to the depot where it will leave the combine. The crew will then switch out the empty hoppers for all loaded ones, and proceed back up through the switchback to the Upper Cranberry yard. Here the crew will scale all the cars. Generally, there will be a car loaded with rock outfall. This might be placed on the interchange track for pick up by a later train to deliver to Pineola or other locations to the East. Or the switch list may call for it to be delivered (by this train) to one of the team tracks to the west or Johnson City. When all scale work has been completed, the crew will take the engine and go back down to the depot and pick up the combine. Returning to Upper Cranberry, the crew turns the engine and combine on the wye, refills the tender at the water tank, and

requests permission from the dispatcher to return to Johnson City. Arrival at the Johnson City yard, and turning the train on the reverse loop completes the run. At this point, the crew goes back on the call board to wait for their next assignment.



A Cranberry iron ore train (either Train #12 or #16) hauls ore through the Doe River Gorge.

## Conclusion and thoughts

In my opinion, operations bring a model railroad to life, and provide a reason for the railroad to exist. For a simple railroad like this one to be justified, it needs goods and/or people to haul. Like their prototypes, most model railroads that I have ever heard of have operating rules and procedures. Crews need to have guidelines by which to run their trains safely and efficiently. There are a number of ways to accomplish this. What you have just read about satisfies my requirements.





## GATEWAY 2022

### My first NMRA Convention

By Keith Iritsky

I attended my first NMRA Convention, Gateway 2022, a national level convention held in St Louis. Upon arrival we registered, and picked up our itinerary for our Self-Drive Tour; "The Meteor". After loading the addresses into our trusty GPS we set out west into the suburbs of Saint Louis. Here are some pictures I took during the Self-Drive Tour, the Bus Tour, National Train Show. I'll let them and their captions tell the story.



On the left, the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, appropriately modeled on the right spanning two T-Track modules.

The first stop was 6 miles away at Steve Medler's Wabash layout. His layout takes up several large rooms in his basement. The next stop was John Peluso's Frisco Eastern Division Cuba Sub. This double deck layout had a huge amount of detail packed into a 16'X30' space.



Steve Medler's Ford plant takes up one side of a long peninsula.



A nicely detailed scene with some switching sites on John Peluso's layout.

A quick gas up, and then a few miles away we were at Hank Kraichley's Burlington Route Hannibal Division. It has a 500 foot main with two decks connected by a long ramp rather than a helix. Most impressive were the huge cement plant and the quarry that were modeled.



A partial photo of the 22' x 3' cement plant on Hank Kraichley's layout.

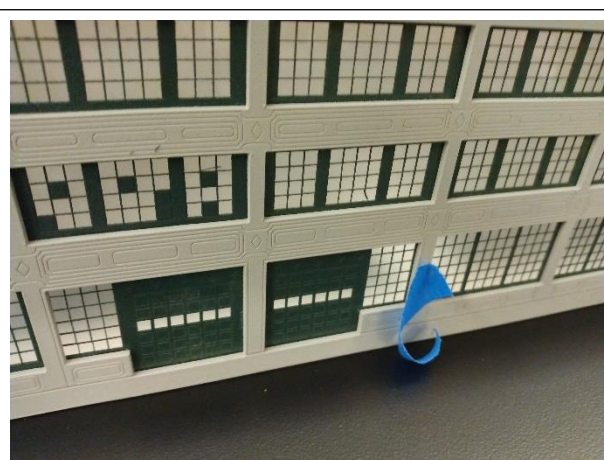


The 7' x 4' x 20" deep quarry

There were a few layouts set up at the Convention rooms. Here is a photo of a building interior on "The Mudhens" HOn3 modular layout they had set up at the convention site. Cindi and I attended many excellent clinics at the convention, one being "Just cut it out, Modeling with a laser engraver" by Greg Johnson. Here is one of his sample buildings from the clinic.



Interior detail of a shop on the Mudhens Modular layout.



The building side was cut out with a laser, and the architectural design engraved with a laser as well.

Thursday we visited the ST Louis Zoo, and went on the Texas Special bus tour. First stop was Ken Patterson. His weekly podcast show "What's Neat This Week" got me back into model railroading after not doing any modeling for 6 years. A lot of his crew was there; Joshua "Sugarfire" Barton, James Regier, and Mike Budde. Cindi and I had a great opportunity for a picture with Joshua "Sugarfire" Barton. It was a treat to see Ken Patterson's layout live instead of on YouTube.



The Desk where it Happens on Ken Patterson’s weekly podcast “What’s Neat This Week.”.



A Photo opportunity with the Executive Chef of Sugarfire BBQ..



A sample of Ken's excellent modeling skills.

After Ken's, the next stop was John Shindler's St. Louis Junction. It's a large layout with some huge buildings made with printed paper textures. Four class 1 railroads have trackage rights over the layout.



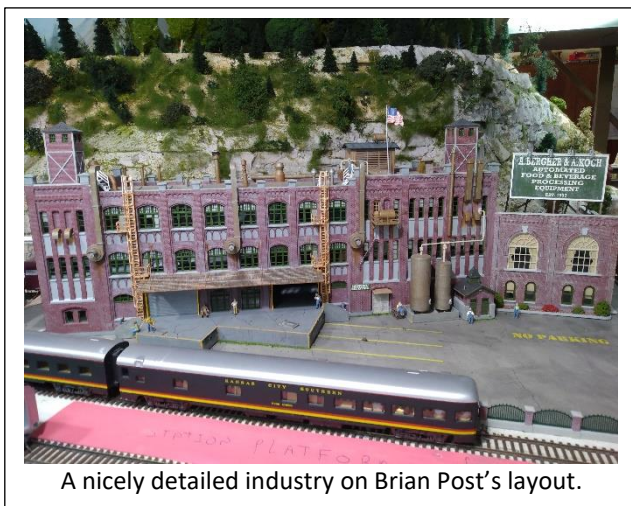
There are many structures on John Shindler’s layout, some made with printed paper textures.



This exceptionally large silo industry is representative of how large some of John’s models are.

The last stop for the day was Brian Post's Sierra Nevada and Indian River Railway. The layout features a lot of lumber/wood products and other industry switching in a 40 x 25 foot basement.

Friday was the National Train Show which had many modular layouts set up. One HO layout even featured a whimsical attack by the Martians from "War of The Worlds".

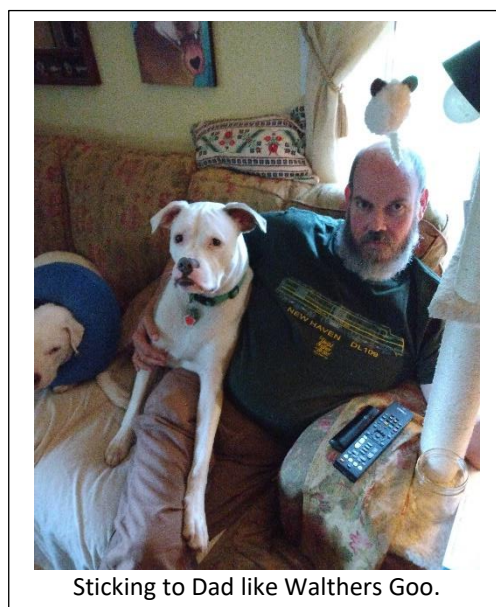


A nicely detailed industry on Brian Post's layout.



A Martian death ray melting a tank in HO scale.

By the time we got home Hamilton was really missing us. He stood on me so I couldn't leave again.



Sticking to Dad like Walthers Goo.

## CLOSING PAGE BONUS

September is the traditional month for Thomas to visit the NC Transportation Museum in Spencer. So, it is fitting that they get an endorsement on the closing page. If you have a young child, grandchild, or friend who loves trains, treat them to a [Day Out With Thomas](#)



Photo montage from prior events shown on NCTM website.

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