

## Division Coming Events

**OUR NOVEMBER  
Meeting and Activity  
will be on Saturday  
November 18th at the  
David C Waymer  
Recreation Center  
14008 Holbrooks Rd  
Huntersville NC, 28078**

[Click here for a link to  
Google Maps](#)

## Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

In a conversation I had with a member at the Carolina Southern Division annual picnic in September, I learned that the model railroad displays at the Newton Depot, in conjunction with the Southeastern Shortline & Narrow Gauge Museum, have become quite popular with the museum's visitors. Kudos to our members who helped to develop, maintain, and staff these displays! When they talk with the visitors, it is common that these folks seek advice on how to do things in our hobby to get started. Similarly, I have noticed during visits to the Little Choo Choo shop in Spencer a posting or two on their cork board notes from people seeking help in working on the "train layout".

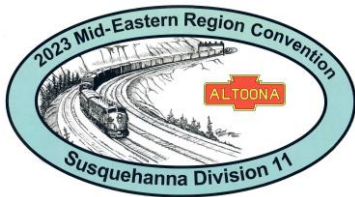
One of the stated purposes of the MER and CSD is to promote the hobby of model railroading.

By having members of our division take the time to help in these cases, we are doing this. On our website, we have a "helper service" offer. I don't recall ever being asked to help someone with an inquiry about this offer, however.

Going forward into next year, I think the Division should work harder to support our members who help teach those wanting to learn more about our hobby. We need to investigate helping provide a "continuing series" of classes/clinics for beginners at various locations – not just the Newton Depot. Working together, we could make up some small displays to show prospective modelers the basics. Perhaps some T Trak modules might be an easy answer. Also, we need to be prepared to answer the call for the "helper service" listed on the website. To help facilitate this, I have requested a new batch of NMRA brochures for distribution to appropriate locations. I intend to attach a label to each of these with our website address as well as the CSD Facebook page. I would ask you to consider helping with this effort. We all started somewhere to get into model railroading. What are you prepared to do to help others with that?

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There's one more convention that prompted us to change our September and October meetings to the second Saturday of the month. Here's some information on the remaining event.



## [Round the Curve to Altoona 2023](#)

MER Convention

October 19 – 22 Altoona, PA

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Also, there's a new opportunity for a mini-convention.

Our Division Members have been invited to attend a Joint Meet/Minicon between the James River and the Potomac divisions on Saturday November 4th.



Details can be found here.

[Minicon \(potomac-nmra.org\)](http://potomac-nmra.org)

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**UPCOMING  
AREA TRAIN EVENTS**

THERE ARE NO  
UPCOMING TRAIN  
SHOWS DURING  
THE NEXT THREE  
MONTHS IN OR  
CLOSE TO THE  
DIVISION'S AREA

**Editor's Notes**

By Ed Gumphrey

About the only thing I can say in my comments is to apologize to the Division for such a late submission of the October newsletter. Obviously, the notice for the October meeting is outdated.

Near the end of September my wife was hospitalized for eleven days. Needless to say, I have been busy. I'm breathing a sigh of relief to finally be sending this out.

As I said in an earlier email announcing the delay, I hope you find it worth the wait.

**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

I target the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for publication. Please submit articles for publication by the 27<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:editor@carolinasouthern.org)

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## DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

### Train Town Update

Contributed by Ed Smith

Here's the September update on Wade's Legacy Room at the Newton Train Museum:

<b>Train Town Box Score</b>	
September 2023	
Open Houses	5
Attendance	100
Hosts: Ed Smith (2), Gil Brauch, Larry Paffrath, Keith Iritsky, and Tim Rust	
<b>To volunteer, go to:</b>	
<a href="http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html">http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html</a>	
(#)=frequency (r)=first time host	

Attendance was up during September, probably due to less competition from other summer activities. We continue to have far more visitors each month since our move to Newton. I want to thank all our volunteers. We could always use more volunteers, so if you're interested, we'd welcome you. See the link in the score box above or on the CSD website.

### September Activity

#### Report from the CSD Picnic

By Andrew Stitt

Yes, it did rain on us for about 20 minutes during the picnic! Fortunately, except for the trailer where Alan Hardee and Rick Beam were grilling the hamburgers and hot dogs, the rest of the activities were covered with canopies. Roughly 25 members and spouses showed up for the event. A wide variety of tasty side items, and desserts were accounted for. So, no one went home hungry. In fact, many of us went home with more than we came with! I participated in many interesting conversations on a variety of subjects, not limited

to model railroading. As the picnic was winding down, several of us took advantage of going to visit the P&W Railroad. Jim Thomas and Martin Oakes acted as our hosts. We got to see the famous model railroad again before its removal occurs next year. Many thanks to Jack Parker, MMR for graciously allowing us to use his beautiful lakeside property.

In Division business before the meal began, we got the privilege to honor Ed Smith, as CSD AP Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR presented him with a plaque recognizing his achievement of earning the recognition as a Master Model Railroader (MMR). Neal also presented Ed with the certificate for rolling stock. After the presentation, we were honored to have 4 of our 5 CSD MMRs (Fred Miller was absent) pictured together! Certainly, a lot of dedication, skill and hard work are present in these fellows.



Alan Hardee and Rick Beam toughed it out during the rain and kept grilling the hamburgers and hot dogs.



CSD's AP Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR, presents a plaque to Ed Smith for earning the recognition as a Master Model Railroader.

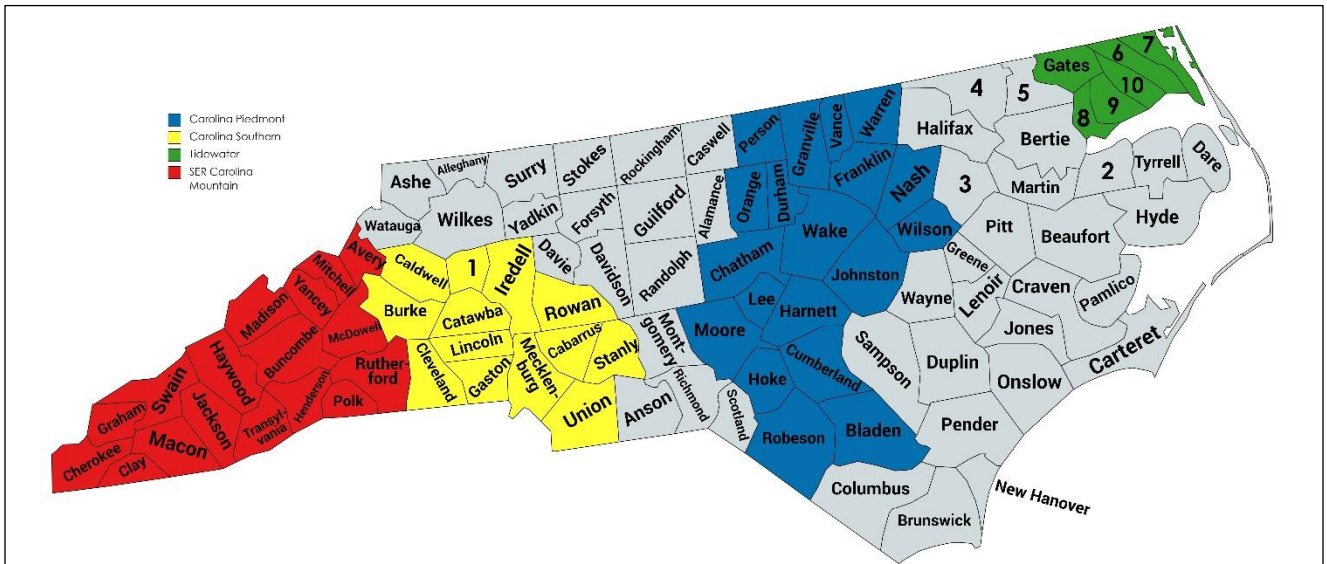


4 of the 5 MMRs in CSD. Left to Right, Jack Parker, Neal Anderson, Ed Smith, and Gil Brauch. Great role models for the Division.

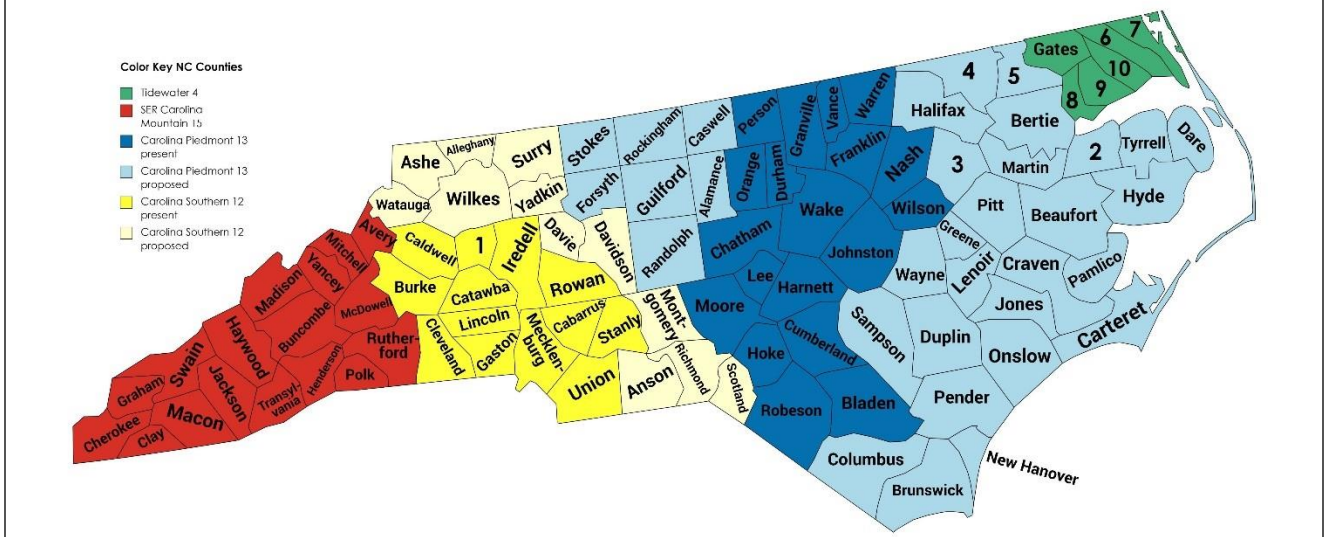
I then told the members of the recent action taken by the CSD BOD to make a request to the MER to enlarge the geographical boundaries of our division. Motivated by the initiative of the NMRA's national leaders to be inclusive of joining all members with nearby divisions, CSD (along with the Carolina Piedmont Division in Eastern NC) decided to ask the MER BOD to change our boundaries to include 12 additional counties in North Carolina to our division. The MER BOD, if it accepts our proposal, will poll all NMRA members within these counties to confirm that they want to be included. If so approved, CSD will extend from Avery & Watauga in the northwest to Surry in the northeast, to Scotland & Anson in the south. We do not plan to go further into South Carolina (part of the SER) nor into Virginia.

Finally, I closed by announcing that the October meeting on the second Saturday in October (October 14) will be held in my basement. It will begin at 10:30 and include

several mini clinics as well as a tour of my ET&WNC On30 layout. So, if you are interested in seeing what On30 looks and sounds like, please plan to attend. In the afternoon, there will be an opportunity to participate in an operating session. It will be limited to four operators, so if you would like to be included, please let me know ASAP.



Division Map of North Carolina. CSD counties are shown in yellow. This doesn't include SC counties already part of CSD.



Proposed expansion of NC Divisions. CSD (yellow) proposed expansion counties are shown in cream color. Carolina Piedmont (dark blue) proposed expansion counties are shown in light blue.



Alan Hardee and Rick Beam toughed it out during the rain and kept grilling the



Part of the picnic feast was the pork that Joe Skorch slow-cooked on his grill. When he sent me this picture, he said he still had about seven more hours to go. My stomach growls just looking at it, and I'm sorry I missed it.

Other activities during September included an invitation from Jack Dziadul to join in with the Carolina Piedmont Division for a tour of the Aberdeen Carolina & Western. Three CSD members were able to attend. Andrew Stitt, Seth Gartner, and Joe Skorch carpooled to make the trek to Candor, NC. Candor is about sixty-four miles east of Charlotte, on the Interstate 74 corridor. An in-depth report on the tour by Seth Gartner starts on the next page. Enjoy.

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# Aberdeen Carolina & Western Shop Tour September 15, 2023

**By Seth Gartner**

Jack Dziadul of the NMRA Carolina Piedmont Division 13 extended an invitation to our Carolina Southern Division to attend a tour of the Aberdeen, Carolina & Western shops in Candor, NC. Three of us from Div 12 accepted the invitation to join our neighboring division. We laid out our plans for traveling together and subsequently I enjoyed a railroading “hat trick” for the day.

The first leg of my travel took me to Joe Skorch’s basement to see his early 1980’s based Southern Pacific Railroad. This was my first visit to his double decked railroad designed for operations. (Extending my fortunes for the day, I was invited to an operating session there in the following week where I learned how well his railroad works and was designed. Thanks, Joe!) The nearly completed scenery made me feel like I was in California watching and listening to his SP locomotives working under load. The two of us then headed east to visit Andrew Stitt. He has built another railroad that I had not visited. Andrew gave me the line side tour for his interpretation of the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina RR. Andrew models in On30 using dead rail. The demonstration shows it to be alive and working very well. His scenery is quite impressive with its size and numerous details to a modeler accustomed to 1:87 scale. Filling his basement with the railroad has been no small achievement. We all enjoyed a quick lunch and then departed on schedule across Montgomery County to my biggest tour of the day.

The original Norfolk and Southern RR abandoned a 34 mile branch between Star and Aberdeen North Carolina in 1983 and became the Aberdeen and Briarpatch Railway for 3 years. Robert Menzies purchased the 3 year old railroad to create the Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railroad which has been growing now for 36 years. The AC&W now operates over 150 miles of track as the largest privately owned regional shortline in North Carolina. It serves business in Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh and Fayetteville and has connections with both NS and CSX. Their freight customers are in a variety of industries including poultry feed, plastics, lumber, wood chips, aggregate, bricks, and numerous fuels. The railroad also operates trains for Christmas excursions and hosts trains for private events.

The AC&W’s 70 acre 100,000 sq ft shop facility in Candor, NC is located along NC Hwy 211 and may be familiar to many traveling to Pinehurst. Here the railroad maintains its fleet of locomotives, repairs damaged equipment, and restores private rolling stock. Our host for the day was Charles Stubbs. He welcomed us into the main area and gave brief histories regarding the many and varied passenger cars located there. Some had arrived in only the past few



weeks. On the rare occasion when he couldn't answer a question, someone in our group of thirty seemed to come through. After viewing the rolling stock inside, we walked along several cars and a locomotive outside. Our visit on site was about 2½ hours.

The AC&W projects a friendly corporate image to the community. We went home with a few souvenir gifts in addition to the smiles on our faces. Charles indicated calling the railroad to schedule a group visit is usually easy. Another way to visit the railroad is to ride on their Christmas Train which begins weekend service November 24 through Christmas holidays (<https://www.acwr.com/excursions> ).

Now for some photos. Follow along with the captions for more information.





A beavertail lounge observation car from the Milwaukee Road is undergoing extensive restoration. This view is from the corner of the building. There were four parallel tracks each able to hold five cars. The shop was incredibly clean, more like a museum than a working shop.



Everything gets removed from the interior for this restoration.



A Detroit & Mackinac wood coach.



An F7A undergoing extensive rebuilding



Former NS 271, now a star of the ACW passenger train.



This caboose's exterior siding was restored board by board. It is a beautiful effort.



Not all effort is going into show pieces. Here a former CSX GE is undergoing an extensive rebuilding.



The *San Marino* private car, owned by Robert Menzies, is certified for travel on Amtrak and is used several times a year, traveling far and wide. It was built in 1916 by Pullman Standard for Henry Huntington, founder of the Pacific Electric Railway Co in California. His uncle, Collin Huntington was owner of the Central Pacific Railroad, building the western side of the transcontinental railroad and eventually becoming the Southern Pacific Railway and Steamship Lines.



The interior has been restored to what one would expect for the era of highest class possible in railroad travel. Polished brass, gleaming mahogany, and stained glass are present throughout the car.



The *Roamer* is an observation car built 1918 for an Oklahoma oil magnate. After private use it became Green Bay & Western #600 in use until 1972. It then became privately owned and found its way to the ACW for another beautiful full restoration.



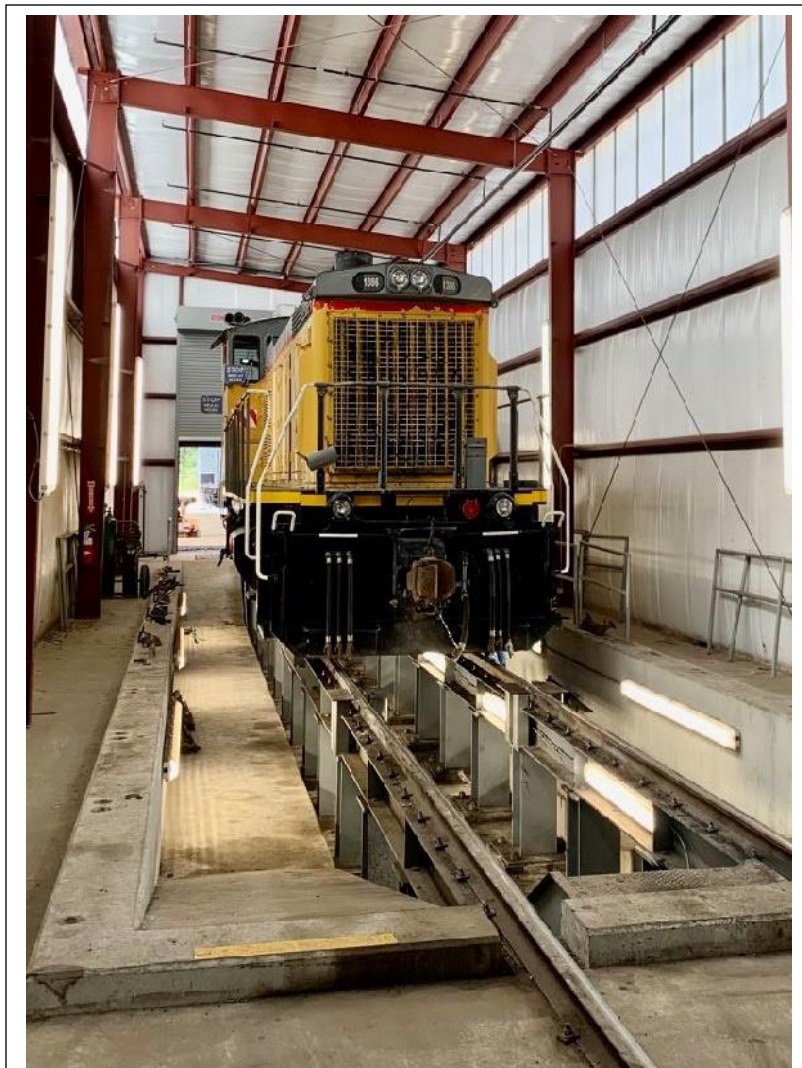
Here is a photo showing a full bathroom inside. Note the marble shower and sink.



The interior of the *Roamer* has such beautiful gleaming finishes. Here are the train air line pressure and speedometer inside from the observation platform.

We then transitioned outside for ground level viewing of a few cars and locomotives. These are not undergoing full restorations and are in use for the Christmas train or other excursions. Former UP Yard engine 1457 was auctioned in 2016 and has found new life with the ACW.





Former MP/UP Yard 1386 is leased to Mountaire Farms and is seen over the inspection pit.



## NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION

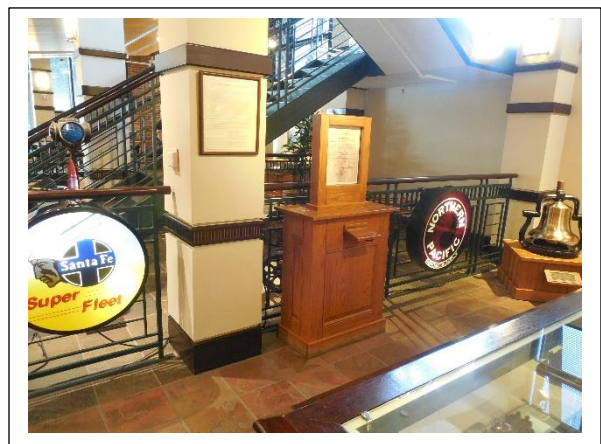
By Ed Smith, MMR

Well, another National Convention has come and gone. This time it was in Grapevine, Texas, near Dallas. The Gaylord Texan Resort was the venue for a week of festivities. And, like they say, “Everything is bigger in Texas”. The Gaylord is a massive self-contained facility. With multiple wings of rooms, four restaurants, shops, a bar, and meeting rooms, all connected by a giant atrium area, it was the centerpiece for our convention. There were two negatives to the resort for our convention attendees. Both are because of its massive size. First, there were no other hotel facilities close enough to allow attendees to commute to the convention. Second, there weren’t any other

restaurant selections, so we were limited to the resort's options, some of which were closed on certain days. That said, the Gaylord hosted a successful convention.

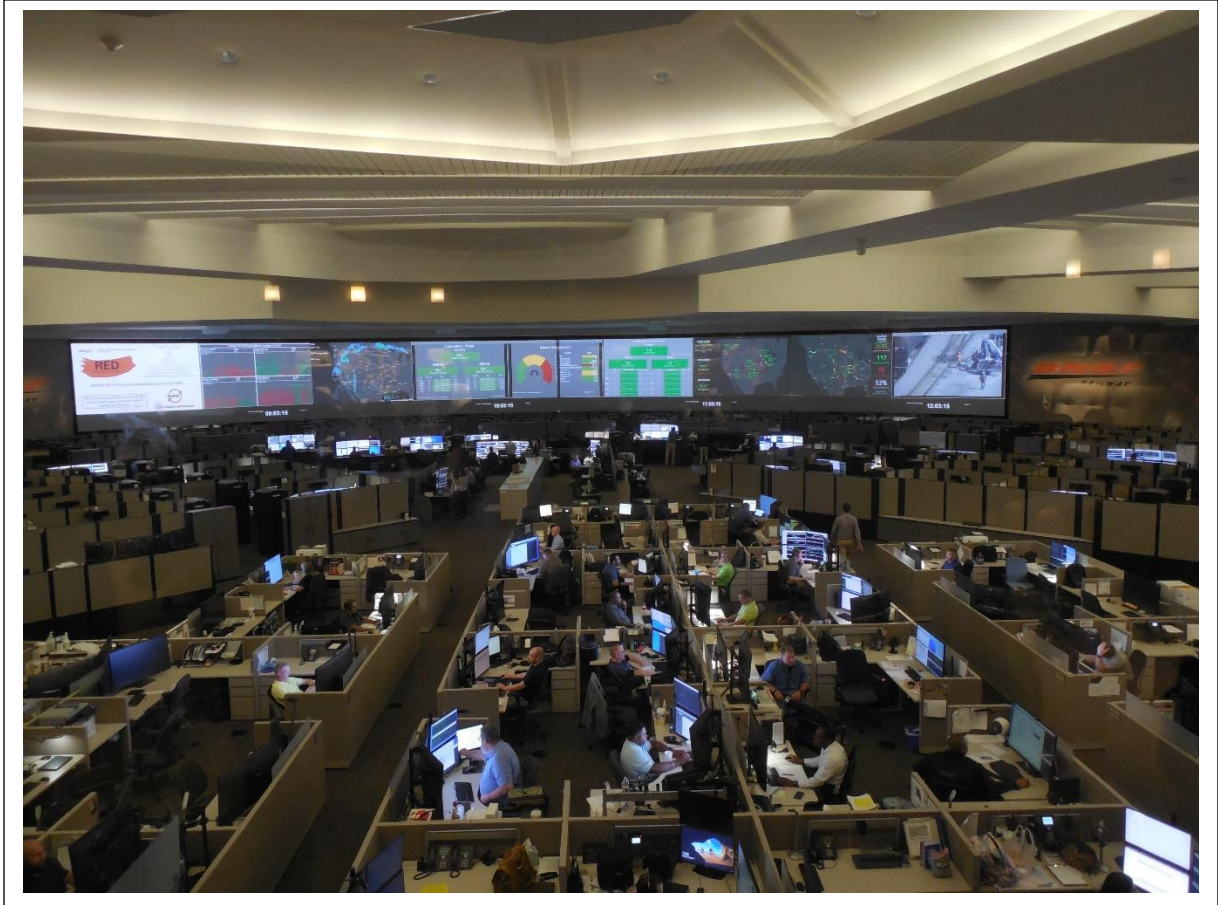
It all started on Sunday, August 20th, and ran through Saturday, August 26th. Each day had an itinerary filled with railroading options for everyone. There were daily clinics that started at 8 a.m. and ended around 10 p.m. that covered all facets of prototypical and model railroading; over 100 in total. Prototype tours were offered daily. There were tours of historic train stations, grain elevators and maintenance shops, a trolley barn and trolley ride, the Texas state excursion ride, the Grapevine shops and excursion tour, and the hit of the week, the BNSF Network Operations Center and Alliance yard.

This tour was so popular, they added a second tour. The tour showcased the offices and Brain Center for the BNSF system. Entering the building we had to show photo ID's. Inside the modern facility, we encountered BNSF memorabilia, original American Indian artwork, and enclosed offices (pic 1, 2, 3, 4).





After seeing a presentation by BNSF, the curtains opened and we were able to view the huge room below us that is the center for all BNSF activities (pic 5). Employees man cubicles that control all track and train activities for BNSF. On our return, we stopped at the Alliance yard. The 500-acre intermodal yard was filled with containers, loading cranes, trucks, and trains being loaded and unloaded.



The General tours offered a multitude of trips; the Grapevine Zoo, Art museums, the JFK Museum and Dealey Plaza, a wine tour, and the George W. Bush Center. My wife and I went to the Zoo. This was a great idea when we scheduled it in February, but in August, in 110° heat, it was a bad choice.

There were over 30 layouts open to the attendees. You could take daily tour buses to visit groups of layouts, or you could access the self-drive itinerary and visit all layouts on your own time.

Added to all this, there were Special Interest Group (SIG) activities, 7 Modeling with the Masters clinics (make and take clinics), the Operation Road Show, where you learned about operations and then could participate in a 3-hour session on 4 different nights, multiple operating sessions on home layouts, and the Celebration of Model room. This was the contest room showcasing the modelers' talents. So during the week, there was no reason to be bored.

The National Train Show was on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, at the end of the convention. This is a highlight of the convention for most attendees. The Train Show isn't what it used to be. There were fewer vendors and manufacturers. It may be Covid recovery, economic issues, or location, causing less participation. That said, it probably saved me money, but I still loved it.

Overall, it was a good week. Our Division was well represented by Roy Becker, Dick Brunson, Tim Rumpf, and myself. The Lone Star Region put on a good convention. The biggest negative was the weather. It was 110° or more every day, making outdoor activities or excursions brutal. Not to be deterred, my wife and I are registered for next year's convention in Long Beach, California.

Until next time,  
.... ED



## **BACK TO THE LAYOUT SEPTEMBER 2023**

**By Ed Smith, MMR**

For almost a year now, my model railroad time has been sidetracked from the layout to a multitude of other modeling agendas. My MMR quest, clinic preparations, and Newton duties have left little time for my layout. In preparation for our Regional Convention last year, a lot of progress took place on the Erie Delaware Division. Nine water scenes were completed, the 700' main was up and running, but still needs tinkering, and some scenery was completed. Now, it's time to get back to work.

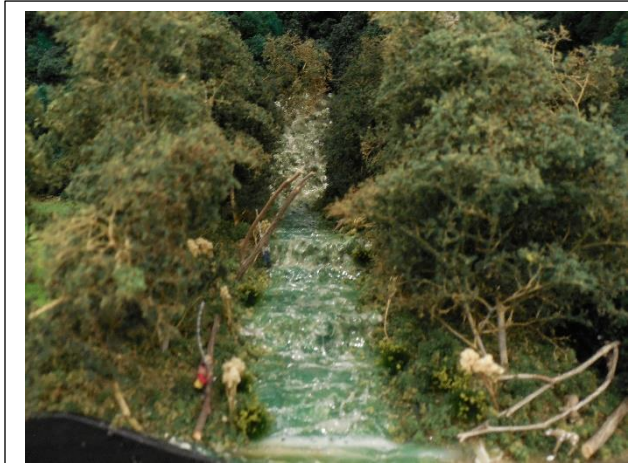
With the help of Keith Iritsky and technological support from Fred Miller, MMR, work on installing and indexing my 130' turntable has finally started. With Fred's assistance, I will be able to control the turntable from 2 locations, index 23 tracks, and control power to 19 storage tracks. This installation is the precursor to finishing a main yard 30' long.

That said, what I miss most is doing scenery on the layout. So, I decided to pick a location monthly and finish the scenery to the "good enough" standard. Down the road, more details will be added, but I don't think I'll ever be George Sellios. So, my first project is the Starrucca Viaduct Valley. The viaduct model is 12' long and has 17 arches. The prototype is located outside Lanesboro, PA. It was constructed in 1848. Constructed of cut stone, it is over 1,000' long, 110' high, and has 17 arches. It is still in operation today, although the 2 tracks have been reduced to 1. I visited this area several times in the early 2000s. Since I model the late 1940s, many of the buildings are gone, but I got a general feel of the location. So, with research and artistic license, I created this scene.

I first added hundreds of puffball trees. First, on both ends of the viaduct, and then behind each of the arches (pic 1). This helps create the viaduct spanning the valley. During my visit, I noticed a small river crossed under one of the first arches. So, since the depth of my scene is only about 18", I built a waterfall and a creek. I glued stones to the backdrop, tinted the stone, built the creek out of Foamcore sheets and Hydrocal, tinted the creek bed, poured Realistic water, and used Woodland Scenics water effects to create the falling water and waves. I added Scenic Express Super Trees, figures, debris, and deer to create the scene (pic 2, 3).



Pic 1 – Buffballs were added at each end of the viaduct, with the eastern end shown here.



Pic 2 – A creek flows under one of the arches



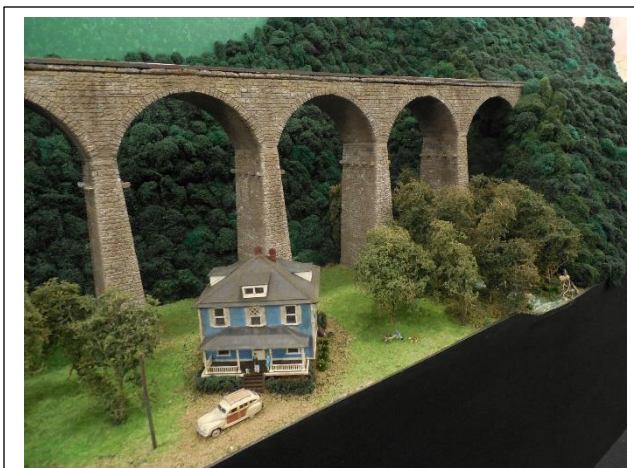
Pic 3 – A closer view of the waterfall

Next, using Ground Goop, I created the valley floor. I added a road using Brown grout, added ground foam, static grass, Scenic Express Super Trees, and Rix telephone poles along the road. I installed 3 homes with figures, autos, and dogs to create this scene

(pic 4, 5). I don't usually add power lines on the poles because they can create issues when reaching into the scene.



Pic 4 – A couple of small houses and old cars.



Pic 5 – This house and new car are a step up.



Pic 6 - all houses and old cars.

Finally, during my research, I found the D&H had tracks crossing under the viaduct at the opposite end from the river. These were long gone when I visited, so I built my representation of this line. Using the Hubermill Warehouse kit from J. L. Innovative Design, I kitbashed a D&H Freight House and, using leftover pieces, scratch-built a Borden's Milk Station. I added one track that terminates at the fascia, passes under the viaduct, and terminates at a mirror. The mirror gives the illusion of the track continuing. I installed a signal tower and electrical box, details for clutter, figures, and a delivery truck. Scenic Express trees were added and used to disguise the mirror (pic 6).

There is a myriad of details that I can add in the future, but I'm satisfied with the scene as it now stands (Pic 7, 8). Like I said earlier, I'll never be compared to George Sellios when it comes to details. Good Enough is just that. So, hopefully, I'll have more scenery vignettes to describe.



Pic 7 – An easterly view of the viaduct scene.



Pic 8 – A westerly view of the viaduct scene.

## CLOSING PAGE BONUS



I'll soon be turning The Brass Pounder over to a new editor. I thought I'd use a picture from my first edition. I took this photo on the Cass Scenic Railroad in October 2008 and used it in the [January/February 2018 edition](#).

### Division Brass

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