

THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 24 Number 1

January 2024

Division Coming Events

**Division Annual Meeting
January 20, 2024 at
10:00am, at Newton
Depot – Be sure to sign
up to get your boxed
lunch. More info later
in the issue!**

Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

As we enter a new year, I hope that everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season. I always enjoy hearing about who got to take a train ride or receive a train themed gift from our loved ones. This year I received a board game Ticket to Ride. Haven't played it yet, but it looks like fun! You know, for us train nuts, even a lump of coal might be interesting.

2024 promises to be an exciting time for our Division as we welcome in a number of new members from North Carolina and Virginia! I hope each of you will be able to tune in for our meetings, and perhaps decide to join us in person for a meeting or at a train show. We

have a number of events planned in addition to our regular meetings. Our Annual Meeting is coming up in January at the Newton Depot. Our member Seth Gartner has invited us to come ride rail speeders in Red Springs, NC in late March (more about these further in the Brass Pounder). We're expecting to conduct another Railroad Model University (a day of clinics) in April. Train shows are anticipated for Hickory in April and Spencer in May. Our annual picnic takes place in September. The MER Convention (being sponsored by the Carolina Piedmont Division) will take place in nearby Durham this year. Perhaps other things will also appear on the calendar as the year goes along (?). Please follow our website as well as the BP for information regarding things going on within CSD. To our new members, please let us know what is going on near you. Feel free to share any train show or event information you would like the rest of our members to know about with Joe (webmaster) and Chad (BP editor).

So, hop on board the CSD Express! Should be a year with a lot of fun things happening around our Division. I hope you will mark your calendars so you can join in.

Happy New Year

Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

I cannot believe it's now 2024. It must be future me writing this because I obviously wrote this in 2023! I write the editor's note this time with nervous anticipation. I know there are so many great things ahead for the Carolina Southern Division. From the expansion to the RMU to the MER (as Andrew pointed out), there are a host of reasons to be excited for the year ahead. In terms of the CSD, I am also excited about getting to know a lot of the current members a lot better. That's what I think is so great about an organization like this – we not only get to enjoy and advance the hobby of model railroading, but we also get to have a lot of fun while we do it.

UPCOMING AREA TRAIN EVENTS

**No nearby train
shows coming up
soon.**

On the personal front, I am very excited about all that I hope to learn this year. I see some of the things our members have done, and I only see potential in the things I can learn from everyone. I also am excited to pick up where I left off on some of those projects that never got done. One example that comes to mind is static grass – my poor static grass wand has sat unused for I don't know how long now. So, I think 2023 may be the year to stop putting off things and just dive in. We can't truly say we don't have time for something if we never even make the effort to start!

So, let's raise a glass to a wonderful year filled with trains, friendships, and a few good laughs. Here's to 2024!



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

Division and Regional News

By Chad Barnette

Train Town Update

Contributed by Ed Smith

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

Train Town Box Score	
December 2023	
Open Houses	10
Attendance	116
Hosts: Ed Smith [5], Keith Iritsky [2], Tim Rust [3], Gil Brauch, Bob Halsey, Fred Brooks	
To volunteer, go to:	
http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html	
(#)=frequency (r)=first time host	

During December we were open Fridays from 12 - 5 pm, Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm, and Sundays from 1 pm to 4 pm through Dec. 17. We had 10 open houses with a healthy holiday attendance of 116. Thanks again to all who contributed their time to host at Wade's. We would love to have more volunteers in the New Year. Perhaps you could commit to at least once per month or once per quarter. Anything helps!

December and Beyond

December was a quiet month for the division. Like previous years the division takes the month off from regular meetings as we all prepare to spend time with loved ones. We also wait in eager anticipation for our big January gathering – the division's annual meeting. More on that on the next page.

At the end of our issue this month is a very special invitation that was extended to the Carolina Southern Division by member Seth Gartner. Make sure you read all the way to the end of the issue for that!

Carolina Southern Division Annual Meeting

Contributed by CSD Superintendent, Andrew Stitt

The Annual Meeting of the Carolina Southern Division (12) of the Mid Eastern Region (MER) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) will be conducted on Saturday, January 20, 2024. It will be held at the Newton Depot @ 1123 N Main Street, Newton, NC, starting at 10 AM.

At the meeting, after determining that a quorum (call of the roll), which is defined as 12 members being present, the meeting will begin. Annual reports will be presented by the Treasurer, and Train Town manager. The nominating committee will present candidates for elected office. In 2024, the Offices of Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Treasurer, and Clerk as well as one Board member are up for election. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at that time. After the election has taken place, old business as well as any new business will be conducted prior to adjournment. Lunch will be provided to all who attend (and reserved their lunch prior to the meeting).

Pictured (below) – 2023 Division Annual Meeting at Newton Depot



BOX LUNCH DEADLINE

The division will be providing a free boxed lunch to all members who place their orders by January 12th. Please visit the following link to place your order.

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

The Workbench Wing

Here in the Workbench Wing, we take a peek at each member's workbench. From the organized to the chaotic, here we capture the beauty of where the magic happens. So, since no one has ever heard of this new featurette, and at the risk of embarrassing myself, here is one of my workbenches.



So here it is (in all its glory?). My workbench. This is my garage workbench, but I have a separate workbench in the basement where my trains are. This is a much easier place to pop in and get a bit of work done, though. Some fun easter eggs here include the "attempted" 3D printed sharpie holder as well as the George and Jerry Funko Pop figures from Seinfeld. To me it's fun (and sometimes funny) to see all the randomness that is our workbenches! Now, a call to the entire division – send me your workbench photos with a little blurb for the upcoming issues!



My Railroad Has Its Ups and Downs

By Keith Iritsky

When planning my layout to fit an 11x22 foot room, I came to the realization that I wouldn't be able to have a helix to get down to staging. I've seen some different options on using an "elevator" in several articles, so I'd try my hand at designing one. My layout is set as a branch line in 1920 and will be running short locomotives with train lengths of about 4' max. so 4' would be the elevator's length. To keep warpage to a minimum I used some scrap 3/4" plywood to make the roadbed. I used another piece of 3/4" plywood glued and screwed underneath the roadbed as a stiffening spine. Unfortunately, I didn't take any photos during construction, but here is a shot of the underside of the elevator floor or roadbed. (Photo 1). Track was simply nailed to the floor as it will be out of sight (Not as in the 1960's slang). In order to keep the ends of the track aligned with the approach track I left the ends free but secured with a small



Photo 1: The elevator floor with stiffening spine, all 3/4" ply construction



Photo 2: The adjustment screws and stopping plate. All are adjustable to align the track if needed

flathead screw between the end ties. This allowed horizontal alignment by loosening the screw and sliding the track from side to side. The end of the approach track is set up the same way. I also included a "stop" in the form of a 4" long mending plate or strap to keep the elevator from overextending whilst being raised. These measures were implemented at both ends of the elevator. (Photo 2) The lower "Floor", women's lingerie and hardware, is the same setup, but the stop plate is mounted under the approach roadbed, which is the same 3/4" ply, instead of the strap on the top level. (Photo 3)

So, how does it go up and down? Being a cheapskate, I didn't want to purchase a motor or something expensive, so I ordered some drawer sliders from amazon, and mounted them to lengths of 2x4's screwed to studs in the wall. The

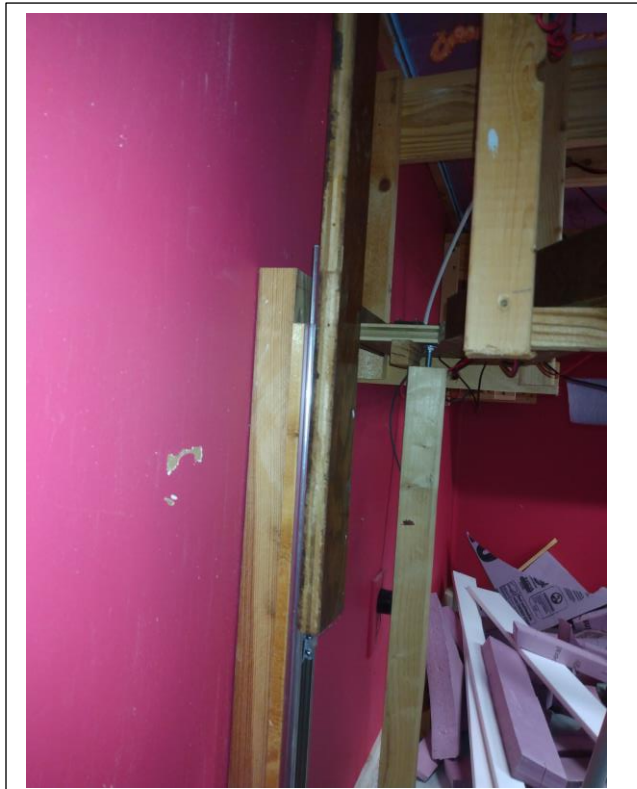


Photo 4: The drawer slide mounting setup.

Plywood spine of the track elevator, (refer back to photo 1.) Okay, it's mounted and slides up and down. Now to make something to remotely operate it. I love pulleys and ropes. I guess from my pirate reenactment and theatre days. These would need several mounting areas. I made an actuator from a piece of 3/4" ply attached to the spine of the elevator. This has a pulley mounted to the bottom of it. Two pulleys are mounted to the wall to run the rope through. When pulling the rope down, these pulleys switch the "Direction" of the force, moving the actuator up. (Photo 5) The rope ends are run down to two pulleys mounted to a piece of 2x2" wood mounted to the baseboard of the room. (Photo 6) The rope is run through these



Photo 3: The lower-level approach track with wooded stop.

second part of the slider was mounted to 3/4" ply sections. Please carefully read the instructions that come with the drawer slides for mounting. (Photo 4) The plywood section of the sliders was attached to the



Photo 5: The actuator, center and the two pulleys mounted on each side

pulleys and tied together with a clove hitch, effectively making a single rope. This single rope was run to a wheel that I made to reel the rope in and out. The rope was run through a hole drilled in the center spool that the two round sides of plywood were mounted to, basically making a large wooden fishing reel. (Photo 7) The wheel is much larger than it needs to be as it only needs to hold about two feet of rope. It only takes four or five turns to raise the elevator between levels. Now to stop and hold the elevator in the raised position. I designed a wedge and spring to automatically click into position when the elevator moves past the stopping point. to release the wedge, I drilled a hole in it and using some more of the 1/8th" rope. I ran it to the edge of the benchwork and tied it to a handle. (Photo 8). The spring holds the wedge against the 2x1/4" piece of wood as the elevator moves up and down. As it moves over the wedge mounted to the 2x1/4" the spring forces it onto its landing area, preventing the elevator from dropping down. To release it pull on the release rope tied to the movable wedge to move the movable wedge off of the stationary one. It helps to raise the elevator slightly to release the wedge.



Photo 6: The floor pulley block.

Alright it goes up and down and stays where it should. Now for some power to the track. I ran feeders from the staging bus to the rack on the bridge. Gaps are already in place due to the elevator track gaps. My staging is basically a Wye, so I can turn whole trains to make the return trip if

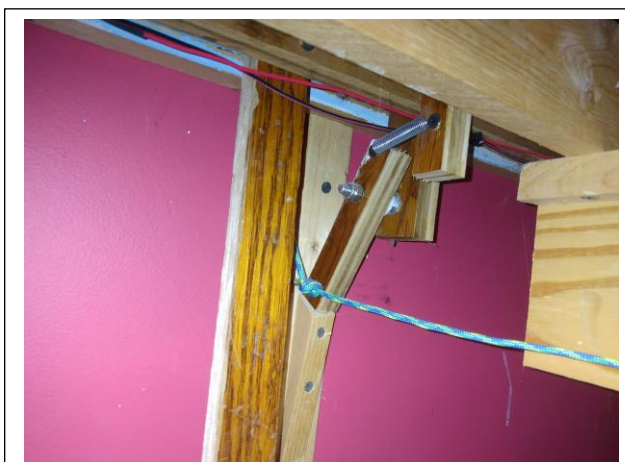


Photo 8: The locking mechanism.



Photo 7: The Medieval reel. The rope junction with the clove hitch can be seen. This assembly was bolted to the layout leg. I turned the handle on the lathe.)

needed, so I needed one of them magic polarity switchy things. Being cheap I went with one of the digitrax AR1s, followed the directions and tried it out. HOLY SCHNIKEES, it worked.

Here are some closing shots. Photo 9 is the elevator in the lowered position. Photo 10 is the elevator in the raised position. Photo 11 is the elevator in the mid position. Note the travelling wedge against the 2x1/4" "rubrail".

So, is there an AP award for weird medieval railroad devices? Any questions email me at johnsonandmoffet@mail.com

- Keith Iritsky



Photo 10: The elevator in the raised position.



Photo 9: The elevator in the lowest position.



Photo 11: The elevator in the mid position.

A 3D Printing Primer: Tinkercad

By Chad Barnette

One of the first prerequisites that is needed to 3D print your own designs is some sort of program that is capable of generating the STL files needed for most FDM and resin printers. I have used just two programs so far that are capable of generating such files (although the list of available programs is quite extensive). The first program I tried is the one I wish to share with you today – that program is Tinkercad. It is a FREE program (I knew you'd like that) that is owned by the Autodesk company (think AutoCAD etc.).

Tinkercad employs a “constructive solid geometry” method of building 3D models. A user can select from a series of shapes that can be dragged onto the screen and which can be modified in a number of ways. Besides modifying the length, width, or height of a shape, you can also decide if a shape is “solid” or “hollow”. Two solid shapes joined together yield one larger, combined shape while a solid and a hollow shape joined together causes material to be removed from the solid shape in the shape of the hollowed shape. Sorry for using the word shape so many times!

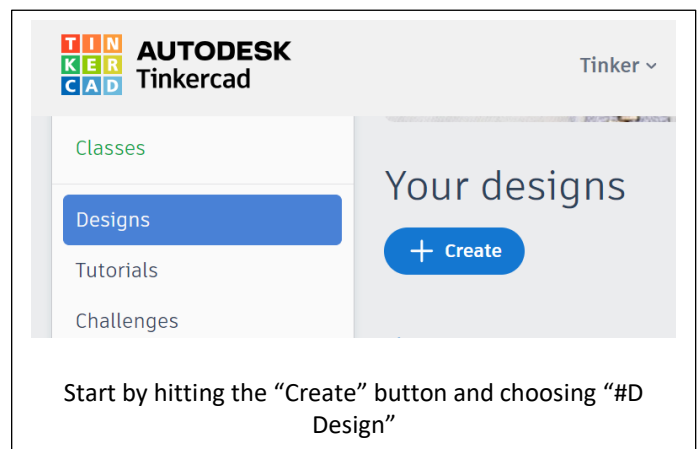


Our inspiration – the Carolina Southern Division logo.

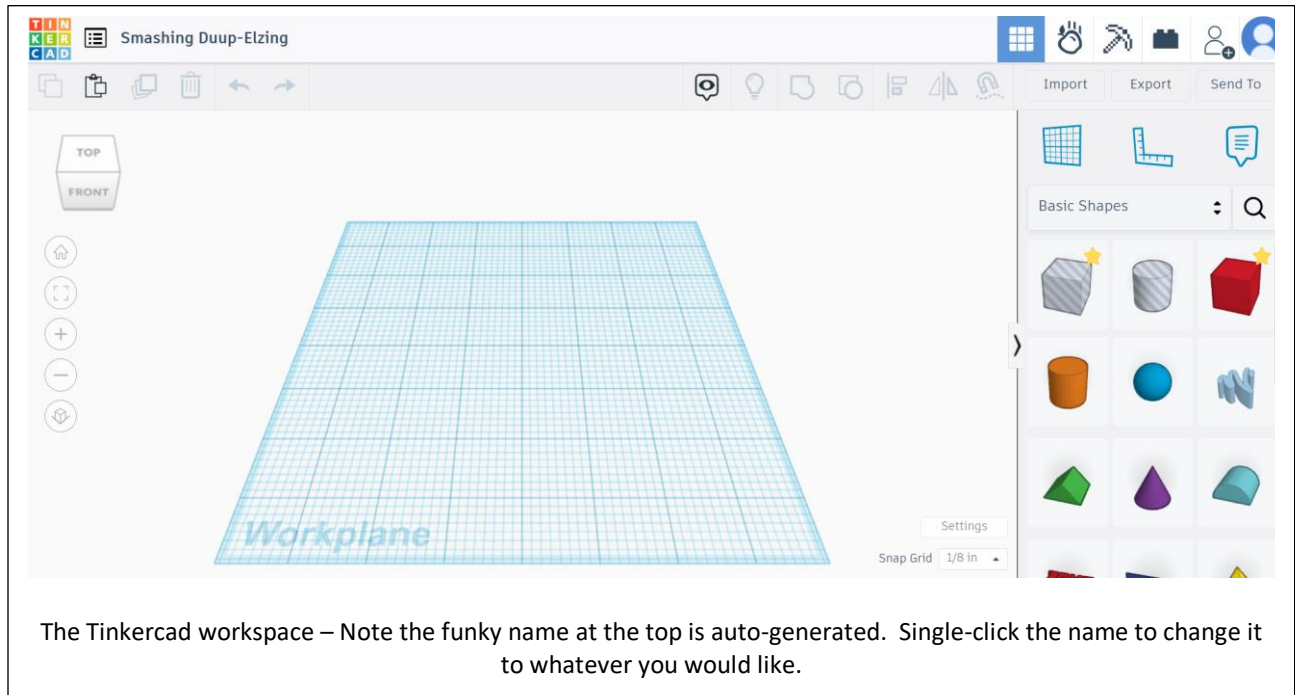
“Create” button in the “Designs” tab of the web page. Once you’re there you’ll see your canvas looks like so....

I think “hands on” will be the best approach here. So, let’s take a real-life example and try to model it in Tinkercad. I think it would be fun to design a Carolina Southern logo three dimensionally. So, let’s see how this turns out. First, in case you are not familiar, or simply forgot, here is the logo I will attempt to model.

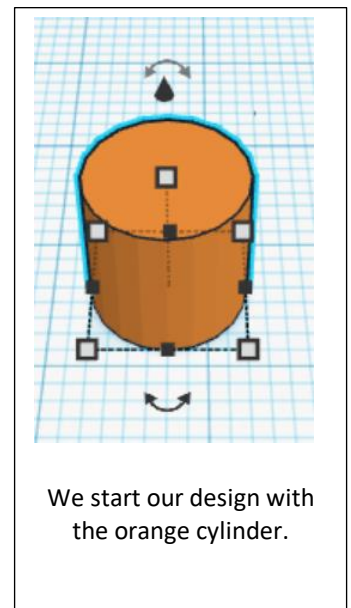
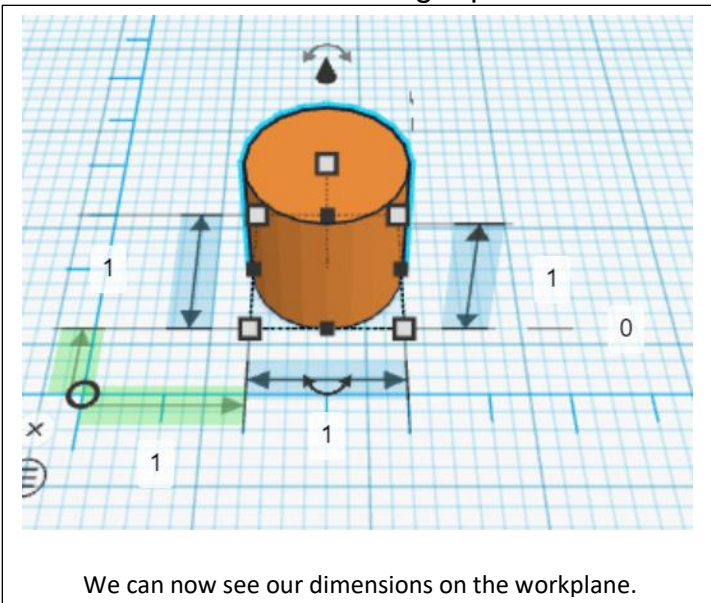
Next of course you will have to get registered with the website. If you already have a Google account, it will be easiest to register this way, but an email address is all that’s needed to get started. Once you’re registered you will need to select the



Start by hitting the “Create” button and choosing “#D Design”



I have decided to use the “orange’ cylinder shape as the basis for our design. I simply click on the orange cylinder and hold it down while dragging it onto the workplane. As you can see here, there are several nodes on the shape that will allow you to manipulate the size of the shape. The four corner nodes will allow you to change the length and width of the cylinder. The white node on top will allow you to raise or lower the height of the cylinder. Finally, the black node will allow you to raise or lower the shape as-is in the z-axis of the design. Next thing we’ll do is “add” the measurement tool to the workplane. Simply click on the icon that looks like a framing square and then click anywhere you like on the workplane.

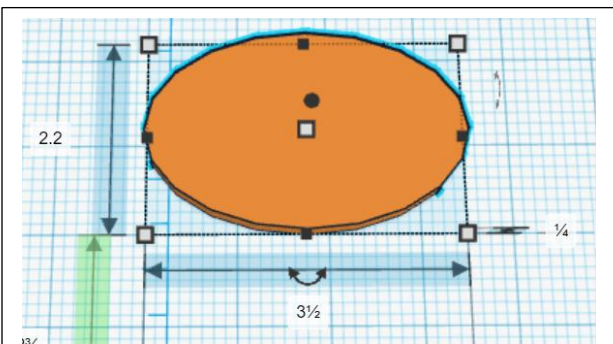


The blue bars indicate the length, width, and height of the cylinder, while the green bars indicate the distances of the cylinder from the ruler location in the x and y axis.

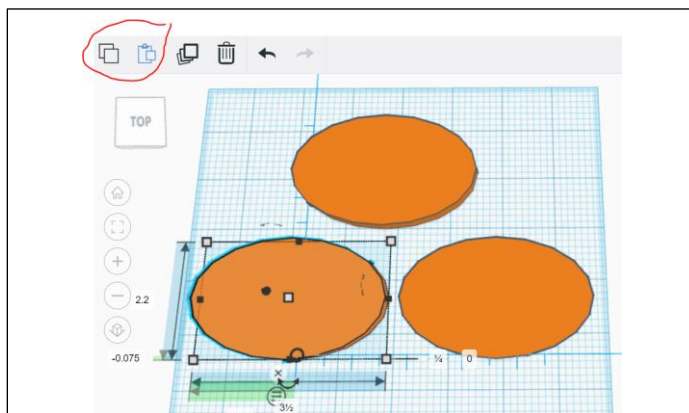
For this demonstration I will be using dimensions to set the size of the cylinder rather than using free hand by dragging the nodes. I know that I want the height of the logo to be 0.25” high so I start by typing that into the height field. Note that there is

a zero on the screen as well. That denotes the z-height from the bottom of the cylinder. It just means that the cylinder is currently sitting flush with the bottom plane. Upon close inspection, I decided the length of the logo (x) should be 3.5" and "width" (y) of the logo should be 2.2". I should note here that you can work in metric or standard in Tinkercad. It does become important if you import files into Tinkercad – you will need to tell the program whether the imported file was created using metric or standard measurements.

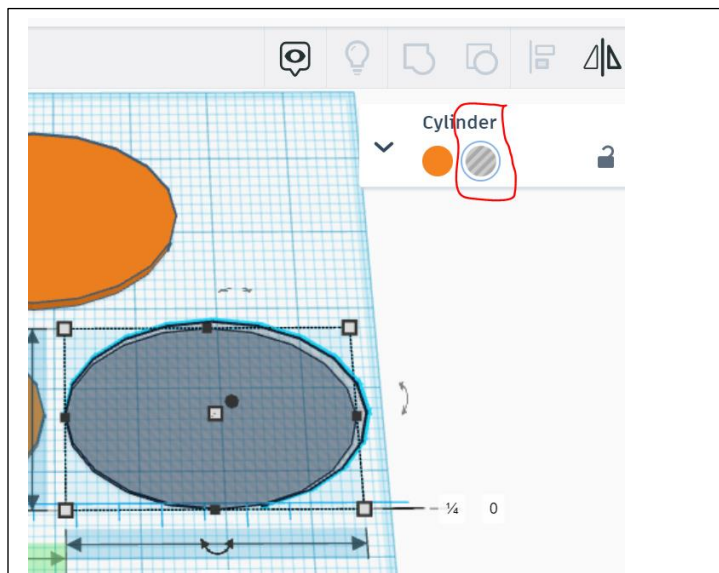
Next, I want to create the green border of the logo by making a raised edge. I will accomplish this by doing two things. First, I will copy the base layer twice by copying and pasting the cylinder (copy and paste buttons circled in red). I will hollow out one of the cylinders by changing the shape from solid to hollow. I reduce the size of the hollow shape by 0.5" in the x and y directions.



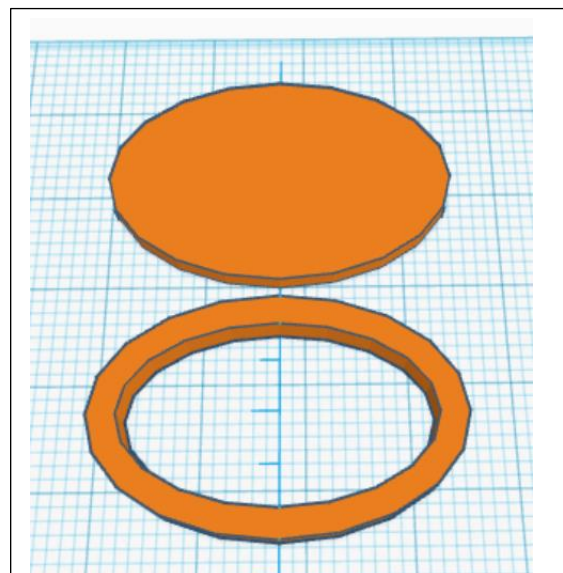
Here are the dimensions we have chosen for the base layer.



We copy and paste the base layer twice for the next step..



Change one of the cylinders to a hollow.

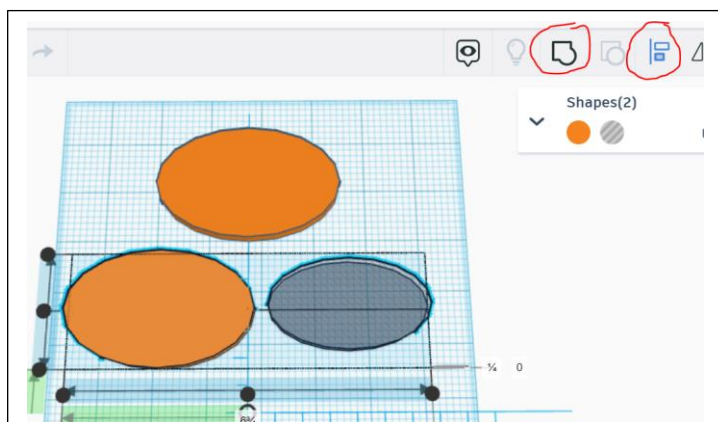


Here we see the result of the two cylinders being grouped together. Also we have changed the height of the bottom shape to 0.45".

I next use the alignment tool to align the two shapes, followed by the group tool to combine the solid shape and the hollow shape. As mentioned previously, combining a solid and a hollow shape effectively removes the material from the solid shape in the size of the hollowed shape. The result is the “ring shape” that you see above. Because I made the ring shape 0.45” tall, it will stick out above the base layer, creating the 3D effect of the edge of the CSD logo. I once again use the alignment tool, and the group tool to create a solid shape.

Using similar techniques, I created the triangular shapes seen in the CSD logo, and I also made those 0.45” tall to give them a three-dimensional feel. The “CS” was done free hand using a tool built-in to the Tinkercad platform. The “CS” is also 0.45” and I use the alignment tool to get the “CS” shape centered with the logo base shape.

Although this has been a very quick and simple tutorial, I have found that I can do quite detailed work using Tinkercad. It does have limitations, but I am having fun learning how to do structures with it. The shapes and geometries found within typical structures seem to lend themselves to the Tinkercad platform. I hope you enjoyed this glimpse into Tinkercad, and I encourage you to log in and give it a try.



Use the align tool to align the two shapes by selecting the middle black “dot” in both directions. Then click the “group” button to combine the two shapes.



A Special Invitation to the CSD from the Red Springs and Northern Foundation

Contributed by Seth Gartner

Saturday March 30, 2024



Come ride the Red Springs and Northern Railroad. Learn about the history of this 13-mile jewel in the sandhills of North Carolina. See how our foundation works to maintain this line, abandoned by SCL 40 years ago, as a corridor of potential economic development. This is our private railroad where members enjoy a safe place to run their motorcars.

This invitation is to the NMRA members of the Carolina Southern Division and the Carolina Piedmont. The RSNF would like to show you the beauty of our line as we cross swamps and run past fields of cotton, beans, wheat, and corn (in season naturally).

Our journey will begin in Red Springs, NC at the John McNeil Farmers Market on 4th Street at 9:30 AM. We will have a safety briefing before boarding our train pulled by the foundation's A cars. Our northward destination will be Parkton, NC. We will have a brief station stop for snacks and observing any passing CSX trains on their A line.

We will then depart southward to Shannon, NC for a brief tour of Hollis Siding. This serves as our material storage facility and is the midpoint of the railroad. You will see how some members store their motorcars and get them onto the rails. Departing from Hollis Siding we will return south to Red Springs for our lunch at the farmers market.

After lunch we will have a short ride to tour the John Green Engine Terminal which is the end of our line. There you can see a 17-ton Brookville switcher owned by a member. We will then return to the farmers market to end our day.

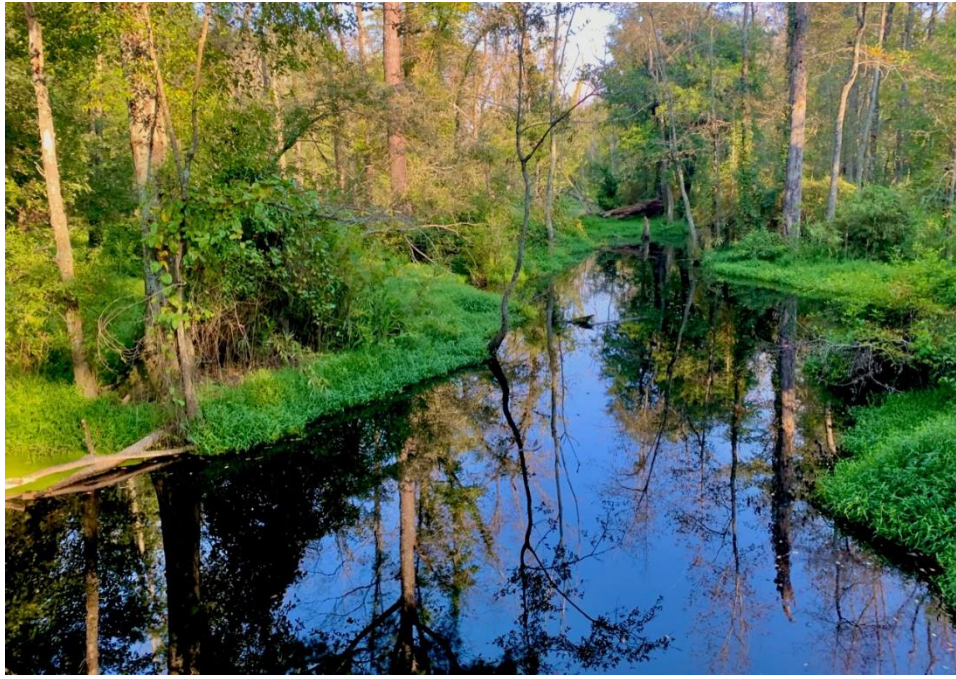
The ticket price for the outing will be \$20. It includes the ride, facilities tours, lunch, and an Apprentice Membership in our Red Springs and Northern Foundation for the remainder of 2024. This membership will be your invitation to meet more members and keep abreast of the foundation's activities and hopefully return to ride again under the guidance of a member. If you enjoy the experience and want to develop more friendships, you are invited to attend the foundation's annual meeting in February and become a full member of the foundation with regular dues costing \$45/year.

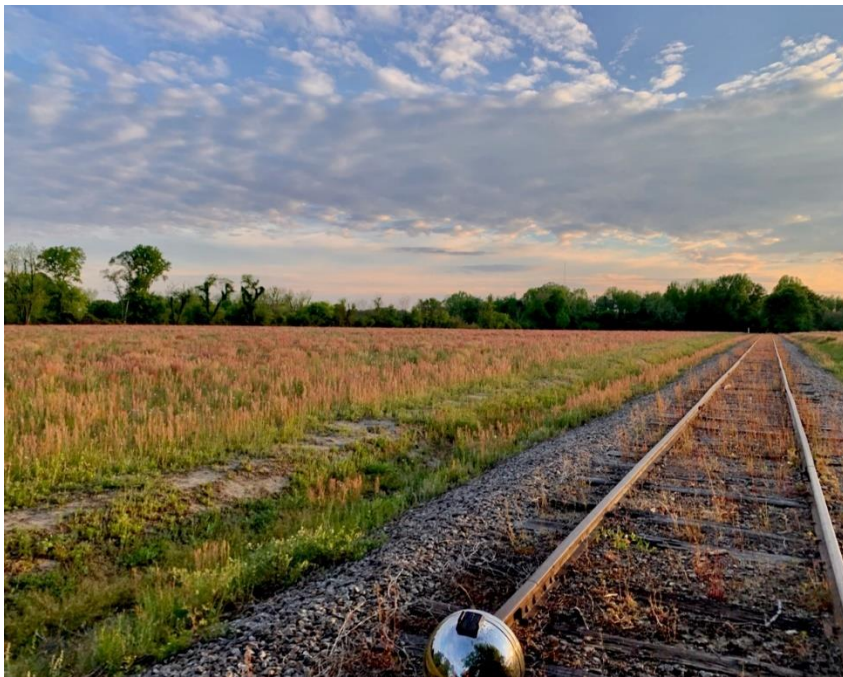
Please contact your division superintendent to RSVP by March 14, 2024, if you want to share in this experience.

This headcount will allow us to size, prepare, and inspect the train and have a proper amount of food for our lunch. The weather should be glorious by the end of March so make plans to come see our railroad and enjoy some time with friends on our rails.

If you have specific questions about the RSNF, please contact Seth Gartner at docgartner@gmail.com. Please enjoy a few photos below from the RSN!









CLOSING PAGE BONUS



A westbound six-car *Southwest Chief* passes the Highlands Metra station in Hinsdale, Ill., on Dec. 8, 2023. David Lassen

Division Brass

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