



THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 25 Number 2

February 2025

Division Coming Events

Our next meeting will be held
on Saturday February 15th
starting at 10:30 am.
It will be held at the Abiding
Presence Lutheran Church
323 North Congress Street
York, SC 29745

Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

As you know, January is the month where the Carolina Southern Division holds our Annual Meeting. The last several years we have been graciously hosted by the Newton Depot Authority in Newton, NC. I am pleased to report that through in person, and remote participation, we had 39 members attend this year. Folks, that's nearly a third of our membership. When you consider the geographical area we cover, I think that's pretty darn good.

At last year's Annual Meeting, buying and owning the equipment to produce the meetings live on Zoom was discussed. Following the meeting your BOD voted to purchase the equipment necessary to do this. I am very pleased to report that Clerk David Myers, and BOD member Joe Skorch have become quite proficient at both setting up the meeting time and date as well as producing the broadcast. Also, during 2024, the BOD approved the expenditure for a new snap fold display representing the NMRA to replace the older folding wall unit. This expenditure was partially covered by the MER as an educational expense. The older unit is now being used at the Newton Legacy Model Train Room (formerly known to us as Wade's Train Town). In 2025, we are planning to purchase another snap fold display that will show our Division's geographical area, list of the counties within that area, as well as displaying our website, QR code, and Facebook page. Going forward, it is my plan to take these banners not just to train shows, but also any meetings or gatherings our Division has.

A survey was distributed to those attending the meeting in person asking for their input about the direction the Division has been and where they would like to see it continue to go. As expected, layout tours (like we did in November), meetings with clinics, RMU, attending train shows, and the AP program topped the list. It seems that many are willing to continue with "road trips" to visit train related activities too. The majority responded favorably to continuing the annual picnic in September.

So, there you are. Our Division continues to move forward. Let's enjoy who we are, the friendships we have made, and the potential for more activities in 2025!

Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

We are one month deep into 2025. I made the comment to someone the other day that we are less than 5 years away from the 2030's. All that to say that time's a wastin'! Time to get a move and on and make good on those promises we made ourselves that we'd prioritize time in the hobby. It's certainly good for our mental and physical health so to me it seems to check all the boxes for something to work on.

Talking to Joe Skorch the other day I was reminded of one thing I really wanted to work on. Joe was telling me he was headed to an operating session coming up. I confessed that I never really had done any operations. Well I think now's as good a time as any.

So how about you? What's something you've always thought about doing but never actually done? Hey here's an idea - try that thing out, do a little write-up about it for the Brass Pounder and get AP credit in return! Enough with the shameless plug. Here's to a wonderful February! The day is young - what will you make of it? Oh, I would be remiss if I forgot to mention the always-fun CSD annual meeting. Below is a photo of most of the in-person attendees.



Division and Regional News

Wade's Train Town

Wade's Train Town – January Stats

Open houses: 3
Attendance: 107
Volunteers: Ed Smith (2), Tim Rust, Bob Halsey



AP Awards from the Plywood RR Desk

Contributed by Neal Anderson, MMR

It was a busy month as the awards came pouring in.

- Golden Spike Award - Gordon Miller
- Golden Spike Award - Marcus Neubacher
- Andrew Stitt - Master Builder Scenery
- David Myers - Master Builder Scenery
- Scott Davenport - Chief Dispatcher
- Steve Landry - Chief Dispatcher

Railroad Model University

Contributed by Andrew Stitt

The Carolina Southern Division (MER Division 12) is pleased to announce that plans are underway for the 2025 edition of Railroad Model University. It will be a single day event, happening on Saturday, March 8 at the West Concord Baptist Church in Concord, NC. The event will have a number of clinics and presentations on a variety of topics related to model railroading. Additionally we will have a T-Trak display, a model evaluation room, and a white elephant sale room. The cost is \$10/person for the event. Registration to attend, as well as information on what classes to sign up for are on the Divisions website:

<http://carolinasouthern.org>

CSD Annual Meeting Notes

Contributed by David Myers, Clerk

Carolina Southern Division, Mid-East Region
National Model Railroad Association
Annual Meeting
January 18, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 by the Superintendent, Andrew Stitt. A quorum was present.

The Superintendent asked for a moment of silence to remember two members of the CSD family that recently passed, Keith Iritsky and Kelli Skorch (wife of Joe Skorch). He asked everyone to remember the western North Carolina victims of the hurricane flooding and the victims of the Los Angeles area wildfires.

The Superintendent called forward Rich Colton of Southeastern Narrow Gauge & Shortline Museum to accept the annual renewal of the Carolina Southern Division's membership/partnership with the museum. Rich thanked the Division and presented a brief update on activities and progress at the museum.

Dave Thrans, Paymaster, presented his annual report. The Division began 2024 with a balance of \$9600 and ended the year with a balance of \$8400. Major expenditures were acquisition of equipment to conduct Zoom meetings and a new banner for display at train shows. The Paymaster can provide more details if desired.

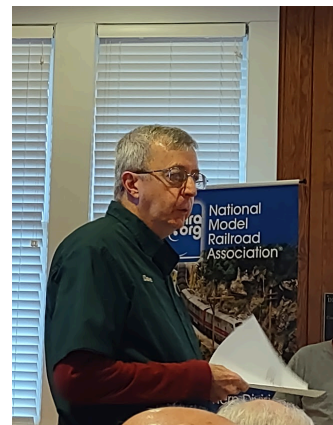
Ed Smith presented the yearly report (attached) on activities at Train Town. He noted the link between prototype and model railroading that Train Town at the museum provides. He observed that the exhibit is providing good publicity for the NMRA. Ed noted, sadly, that a replacement is needed to fill Kieth's position in manning the display.

Neil Anderson presented updates on the Achievement Program. The Division has several "Golden Spike" awards and AP certificates awaiting presentation, but they have been "lost in the mail" and not on hand.

The Division Webmaster said the Division website will be updated to show 2024 awards. He solicited photographs of member layouts to add to the website.

Annual elections were conducted. Ed Smith, who has just completed his term on the Board of Directors, agreed to fill Iritsky's position on the Board of Directors. Tim Rumph was elected to fill the 2028 position on the Board of Directors. No elections were required.

The Superintendent recognized model railroading groups represented by Division members:



Kieth
other

- Jim Thomas and Tim Rumph reported that The Piedmont and Western (P&W) is still operating and will be for the foreseeable future. New operators are invited. The operating sessions meet on the first Saturday of each month and the preceding Friday night.
- Alan Hardee reported The Metrolina Model Railroaders are continuing to support the usual train shows and events. They are reworking older modules and continue to work on new modules. They meet every Saturday at Rick Beam's.
- The Concord Area Model Railroad Club continues to meet.
- Gil Brauch reported on the Central Carolina N-Scalers and spoke of the joys of "Normal" scale model railroading. Their permanent layout is at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC. They use T-Track modules for mobile shows. The National Train Show in the summer of 2026 will feature the planned largest ever N-scale T-Track modular layout. Anyone interested in participating should contact Gil.
- Neil Anderson reported that the Southern Piedmont Live Steamers meet on the second Saturday at Oakboro, east of Charlotte.



The Superintendent announced that this year's Railroad Modeling University (RMU) will be held on Saturday, March 8, 2025, at the Concord Baptist Church. Lunch will not be offered by the church due to insurance issues. Clinic presenters are still being sought. Contact the Superintendent if interested. Our RMU will be promoted to neighboring divisions.

The Superintendent reported on plans and events for the upcoming year:

- February: the Division meeting will be held at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in York, SC, on Saturday February 15 at 10 AM.
- March: RMU at Concord Baptist Church on Saturday, March 8, at 10:00.
- April: The annual NC Railroad Expo at Hickory will be April 4 and 5.
- May: The annual train show at the NC Transportation Museum in Spencer. Dates tbd.

New Business:

The Superintendent stated a need for a new "Program/Clinics Chairman". Articles for the Division newsletter, "The Brass Pounder" were requested. Send to Chad Barnette at editor@carolinasouthern.org. Articles can receive "Author" points in the Achievement Program.

The Superintendent encouraged members to complete a survey of interests to allow more effective planning of events.

The Superintendent adjourned the meeting at 11:50.

Submitted by,

David Myers
CSD Clerk



Welcome to Tools, Tips, & Tricks. A periodic column of the Brass Pounder that features...you guessed it! Tools, tips, and/or tricks to help modelers give each other practical advice on how to address techniques or issues in a more efficient manner.

Locomotive Wheel Cleaning Gadget

Contributed by F. Miller, MMR



Figure 1- N-Scale Wheel Cleaning jig

Many model railroaders are familiar with the technique of using an alcohol soaked cloth over the rails to clean locomotive wheels. This works but can be a bit cumbersome when holding the running locomotive with some wheels in contact with the rails and others on the cloth.

I built a little jig to hold my locomotives in place while cleaning some of the wheels. Figure 1 shows the jig ready to be used.

A small piece of rail mounted on a wood block is 'extended' with a track cleaning pad. Blocks of wood are mounted to keep the engine in place without the need to hold it while it is running.

I use the cleaning pad strips which are a part of the Woodland Scenics cleaning kits. The strips are available separately as part number TT4562.

Figure 2 shows the cleaning jig in action with one of my NScale diesels. I wired the rails to two brass screws to make it easy to connect the rail power with alligator clips.

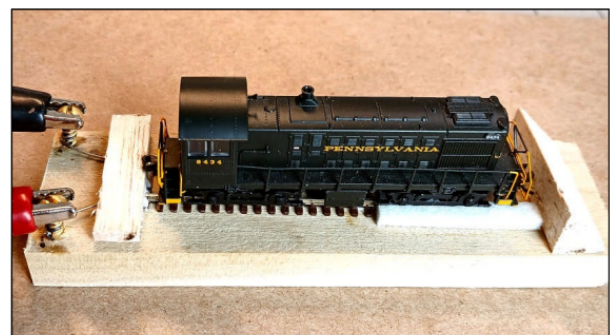


Figure 2 - N-Scale Diesel in wheel Cleaning Jig

After putting a few drops of 70% alcohol on the pads, the locomotive is placed in the jig in one direction and run at a medium speed. The locomotive is then turned in the other direction to clean the wheels on the other truck. Figure 1- N-Scale Wheel Cleaning jig Figure 2 - N-Scale Diesel in wheel Cleaning Jig In fact I built another wheel cleaning jig for my HO Birney Streetcars. (Figure 3)

The construction is similar to the N-Scale version and contains wood blocks to hold the 4-wheel Birney Streetcar in a position to clean one set of wheels.

Figure 4 shows the Birney Streetcar in place to clean the right end wheels. After running the car in one orientation, then its position is reversed to clean the wheels on the other end.



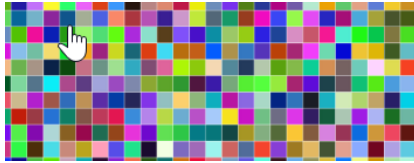
Figure 3 - Cleaning Jig for HO Trolley



Figure 4 - HO Birney Street car in position on Jig

I find these simple jigs make locomotive wheel cleaning so much easier.

1. Connect rail power to brass screws,
2. Put a few drops of 70% alcohol on pads,
3. Place locomotive in jig in one position and turn on power
4. Reverse locomotive orientation and run again.



Digital Distractions

A Look at our hobby online



Boomer Diorama

Boomer Diorama is a must-see Youtube channel if you are looking for solid scenery techniques and tips. I must admit this is a channel I haven't frequented as much as I'd like, but I plan to tune in more here soon.

<https://www.youtube.com/@boomerdiorama>

Division Brass

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