

NMRA



THE BRASS POUNDER

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

Superintendent's Corner

By Chad Barnette

Division Coming Events

**CSD Monthly Meeting:
March 21st, 2026 at
10:00am**

Location TBD

Hey everyone! We are off to a great start this year. With our first regular meeting under our belts, we are marching towards some exciting things in this new year. For starters, mark your calendars - April 18th is our date for this year's RMU. If there is ever a time where we need folks to step up and help, this is it. This is our big event in the first half the year to gain exposure in the community. Please take a look at Alan's article later in the issue and seriously consider helping us out. We have a lot of fun doing it, so please approach it with that mentality. We're just a bunch of folks getting together sharing something we are passionate about. It should be something we look forward to doing. Everyone can contribute in one way or another.

As for me this will be a learning experience as I have the duties of the Superintendent. I hope to inject a few new ideas I have this year. Please always email me with feedback - good or bad - when you see something you like or don't like. I hope everyone enjoyed the meeting last month. This month I am going to try something new yet again. Stay tuned for an announcement later in this issue. I'm excited for this one!

Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

Gather 'round! It's time to expand our offering with the Brass Pounder. I want everyone in our division to feel like they play a part in our monthly publication. Here are a few ways YOU can get involved:

1. Send in photos of your workspace. I'd like to bring back our segment where we display one another's workspaces - could be for any reason. You like your setup, you think it's crazy looking and think it'd be comical to share, or you simply appreciate the fact that we want to hear from everyone. Send 'em in!
2. Tools, tips, and tricks. Any small little trick that you employ to make things easier? We want to share it with the group. It can just be a photo you send me of a tool, a picture of a new paint application or weathering technique, or just a product name ("Hey Chad, I really like _____ and think everyone else might too").
3. Whatcha workin' on? I would like to do a section highlighting what folks are working on each month. It's just a one pager (mostly a photo) with a few sentences describing what you're working on. For example, it might be "here's my layout. I just started and here's the space I plan to use. Thinking of using Peco track and modeling the 1960's in Springfield, Illinois."

Click the link to email me:

editor@carolinasouthern.org



Division and Regional News

Wade's Train Town

Wade's Train Town – February Stats

Contributed by Ed Smith, MMR

Open houses: 4

Attendance: 96

Volunteers: Ed Smith(2), Danny Poole, Joe Pulsone

AP Updates from the Plywood RR Desk

Contributed by Neal Anderson, MMR



Two AP Awards have come in, and I will be handing them out soon.

I will be working with Dylan on his Scenery AP.

P.S. yes I'm Back to work on AP Awards again.

February Meeting Notes

Contributed by David Myers, CSD Clerk

Carolina Southern Division, Mideast Region
National Model Railroad Association
Monthly Meeting
February 14, 2026

Lake Wylie Public Library, Lake Wylie, SC

Attendance: 12 in person, 4 online

The Superintendent called the meeting to order at 10:35.

The Superintendent reported on the recent Superintendents Meeting.

1. The Virginia counties that have been in the Division are now reassigned to the Appalachian Division.
2. In continuing logo discussions "national" has allotted money to provide new "window shade" banners.

Tim Rumph reported that he has completed turnover from Dave Thrans as Division Paymaster. Dave Thrans will remain on the account as backup. By consensus, it was decided that the Immediate-Past Paymaster will remain on the account as backup in the future.

The Superintendent conducted a railroad trivia contest that provided several fun minutes.

The Superintendent had invited members of the Division to bring examples of their recent modeling.

1. Dylan Petro displayed a small layout using some of his impressive N scale modules.
2. Ed Smith, MMR, displayed several HO scale structures that he has worked on. He discussed the various techniques and materials that resulted in his very realistic structures.
3. Dick Bronson displayed an HO scale four track signal bridge that he has in progress. He discussed soldering the stainless steel components of the bridge and the electronics that will operate the signals.
4. Tim Rumph showed his planning mock-up of the Broyhill Furniture factory that will soon be on his N scale layout.
5. Chad Barnette displayed and discussed the HO scale, 3-D printed model of a former family home.

Ed Smith, MMR, reported that he had recently watched a video that highlighted the potential fire hazards of foam board material on a layout.

The Superintendent announced:

1. the next meeting will be on the third Saturday of March (March 21), location tbd.
2. Railroad Modeling University (RMU) is being planned for April.

There was no other business.

The Superintendent adjourned the meeting at 11:58.

Submitted by,
David Myers, Division Clerk

Railroad Modeling University (RMU)

Contributed by Alan Hardee, Director & RMU Chairman

Dear Carolina Southern member,

I'm writing to each of you today to ask for your help. Our Division has organized and run Railroad Model University (RMU) as an outreach program for both NMRA members and visitors who have an interest in learning more about some aspects of our hobby. These events have included a wide variety of interesting topics from hands on scenery making to electronics to how to evaluate models made by others. RMU has traditionally been held during the winter or early Spring months to provide an opportunity to all before warm weather and outdoor activities begin to happen. The date for the 2026 RMU is scheduled for Saturday, April 18th.

Since the Division does not own a building to host such events, we need to find a location suitable and accessible for all to attend. We have been very fortunate to find a host that is willing to let us resume operating RMU after the pandemic. The West Concord Baptist Church in Concord, NC has let us rent their facility for the last three years and are willing to do so again in 2026. Director Alan Hardee has agreed to act as the intermediary between our Division and the church. Roy Becker, who has served as registrar has agreed to continue to do so. He will receive all registrations, make name badges for all participants, and certificates of appreciation for our presenters.

Where the Division still needs help is for someone to take charge of organizing the event. Specifically, developing a list of possible subjects that would be of interest to attendees and soliciting people to give clinics. If you have never attended an RMU, clinics are held in classrooms capable of holding 10-15 attendees, go for about 45 minutes, and may or may not include handouts and hands on experience. Clinicians are certainly welcome to give more than one clinic and may extend beyond one period if so desired (e.g. making something). Typically, there will be two periods before lunch and two after.

I know that this is a large job, but I anticipate that someone is or has been a teacher, church leader, project manager, or military where these organizational skills have already

been learned and put to use. It will require some time, but I 'm confident that we have members (or nonmembers) that are willing to give clinics on a range of subjects on model railroading if asked to help make attending RMU a fun day of activities for all registrants. Please give this request some consideration. I and other members of the CSD are willing to help you.

Thanks,

Alan Hardee

CSD 12 Director, 2026 RMU Chairman

The Backstories of My T-Trak Layout

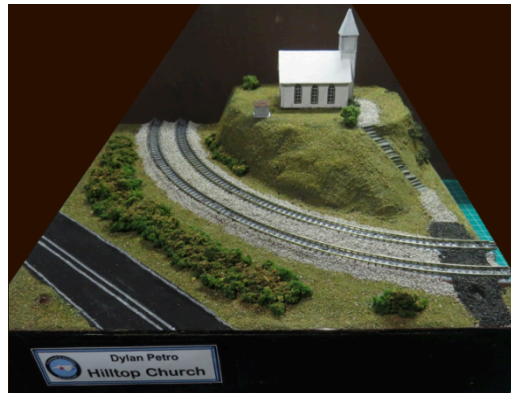
Contributed by Dylan Petro

PHASE II: from oval to L



Coal Mine #97 is my favorite amongst all my modules so far, and the most time I'd put into creating. The theme of this module is a nod off to the N&W coal drag era. The background is a real photo by a railfan photographer from Utah that runs a site called TrainJunkies.com. He has many panoramic photos available for most scales that come in 80 inch rolls, just snip out the part you want. Being a budget model railroader, you use what you have, or what you can make. For the weathering of the main buildings and shafts, since it had rained that day, I gathered a decent amount of Carolina clay and clay water from a puddle outside. I mixed the clay, clay water, and Elmers's glue together and smeared it on with my thumb and index finger. The coal dust smears is a mixture of marker, black paint, and Carolina clay. The mine tunnel directly left of the current building was a neat addition to show the origins of the mine, where it was located. Earlier that year, I attended "Model Railroaders University" and was shown how to make grid-like patterns for a stone wall. So, I used the same technique to show the drill marks for dynamite rock blasting. Many photos I saw of the railroad coal mines in

Virginia showed a lot of spilled coal on the ground with bits of grass growing sporadically, so I did the same.

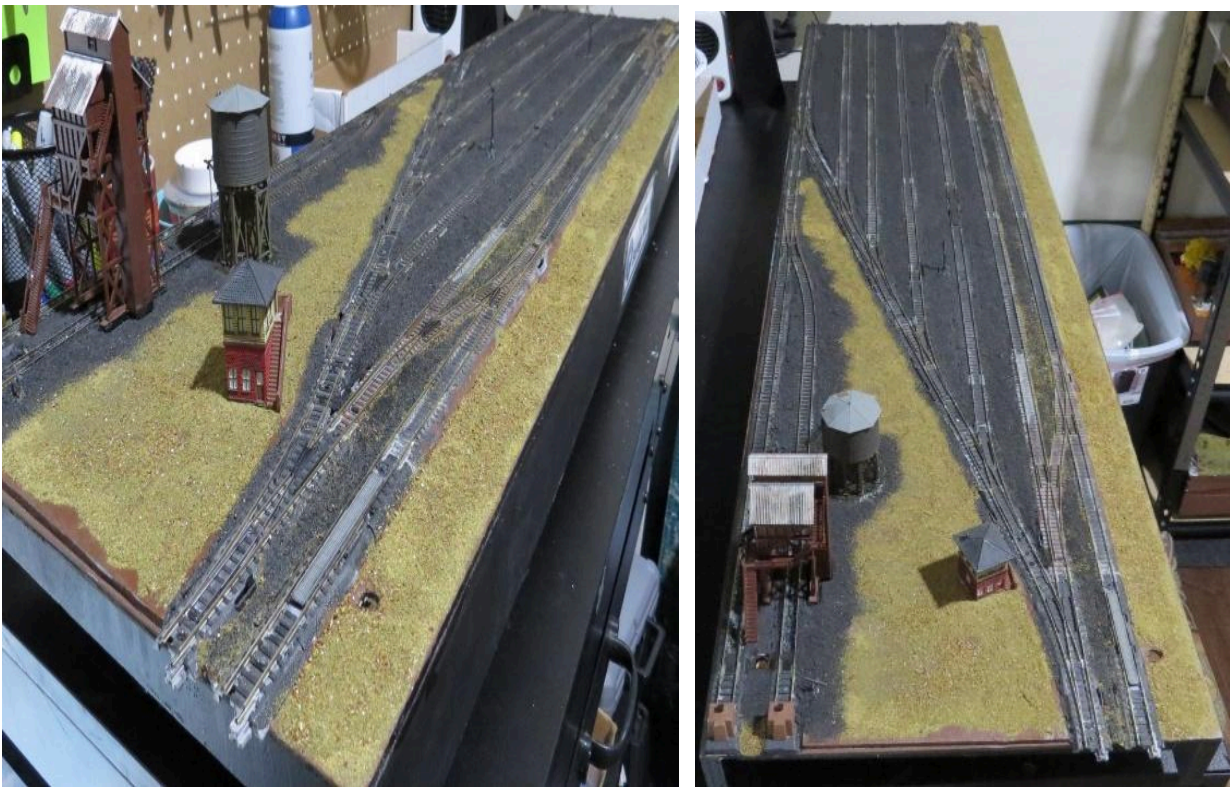


Another structure of the countryside here in the south I love are those small white churches. This module was based off the very few photos of the Toeriver Freewill Baptist Church in Green Mountain NC. A historical landmark church established in 1900, next to the North Toe River on Hunt Dale Road. After reaching out to multiple photographers for a year now, one got back to me with the church's location. For this module I was trying to do a photocopy technique where you model the photo onto your layout, in the end it came out better than I expected, especially since it took me several tries to cut semi-equal foam stairs. I have plans to add the fence, light pole, and signage to it later. Since Hurricane Helene blew through that area, I updated the scenery. Since I had its exact location, I could see more of the surroundings, instead of the same angle taken in the photos. I removed the original trees and some of the ground turf and put down a row of shrubbery and ground foam. I also cut a strip of hockey stick tape and after the glue dried, used a silver sharpie and a ruler to draw the center and curb lines for the road. I might add a car or two later.



During my visits to several Western states, I came to enjoy the serenity of the sandy rolling hill scenery, especially the towering layers of the mesa. Though since this module was needed to be a simple semi-flat curve, I decided to go with a different location to base the scenery off of. Like most modules that I start with thinking they'll only be one-layered, I

started adding mounds just so it wouldn't be as dull. After reviewing many photos of the landscape from our family trips out west, I chose to do the yellowish white sands of Wyoming and green desert brushes that grow abundantly in it. I wasn't quite able to find sand with the right color or fine grit texture till I started looking for real sand samples from certain locations in the US that grinds it finer for smaller scale sizes. I eventually came across Barnes Products which do just that and looks great on the module. Recently, I unfortunately had to redo the track as I unintentionally used double track pieces of super elevated curves. Oops. After grinding down the top ballast to find the screws, I ripped up the track, removed excess bits of ballast, and using my Dremel, carefully cut out the middle section and any plastic underframe that elevated the curves. After that, I replaced the track screws and applied fresh ballast and sand as needed. Should cause less derailments now.



This module's purpose is to store freight cars, service engines, and hold cabooses. I hadn't seen many decent-sized railyards squeezed into a one single module, and since trying several sidings with a triple wasn't long enough, I figured I'd try it with a quad, since a quintuple wouldn't have fit on the layout. So, I squeezed in 2 crossovers, a passing siding, 3 freight sidings and two steam locomotive service tracks onto the module which was fun trying to draw all that on S.C.A.R.M. Unfortunately, using #4 switches proved to be very troublesome even after many adjustments. Even after ripping up both crossovers to work on them, then re-installing them, the turnouts still don't throw right, and the track must be moved manually.

This module also unfortunately got warped soon after it was built, which I didn't think would've been a problem at first, but afterwards I realized that eventually I'll need to do a major redo on most of the track. Sometimes I wonder if I should save the track and structures that I can salvage from it and start over with another quad or do a set of doubles.

Help Wanted

Contributed by Chad Barnette

CSD Program Chair – The Division needs someone to take on the responsibility of arranging for programs to be scheduled and presented at Division meetings. This can be accomplished by doing the presentation themselves, getting a commitment from someone else to make the presentation, or arrange for presentations to be conducted remotely (via Zoom). When the presentation has been established, the who, what, when, where needs to be sent to the editor of the Brass Pounder and the webmaster prior to the meeting so they let the members know about the upcoming program.

RMU Chair – The Division conducts Railroad Model University (RMU) annually to provide all model railroaders within our area the opportunity to attend a day-long event featuring clinics on a wide range of model railroad topics. The chair is responsible for recruiting member and non member clinician presenters as well as setting the schedule for these presentations. The chair also coordinates with other Division members to enable them to secure a location for the event, schedule and promote the event, and assist with any registration or A/V issues.

Please contact me (superintendent@carolinasouthern.org) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer.



RPM Carolinas

May 2-3, 2026

9140 Arrowpoint Blvd. Suite 140

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Carolina Model Railroaders

- Friday Setup: April 17th – 5:00PM until 8:00PM

- Saturday Setup April 18th – 7:00AM until 8:45AM

First Baptist Church, 1000 W Friendly Ave, Greensboro, NC 27401.

CAROLINA SOUTHERN MARCH MEETING CHALLENGE

Can you model a rural grade crossing like
this one?

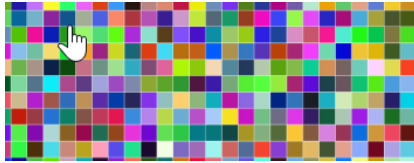


HO: No larger than 12" x 12"

N: No larger than 6" x 6"

Be creative and set the scene -
objects only, no structures!

We'll all vote to choose a winner!



Digital Distractions

3D Train Studio

Check out 3D Train Studio. A new (to me, anyways 🙄) train simulation software that will allow you to plan and fully simulate your layout. It looks pretty sharp!



Check out their page [here!](#)

Division Brass

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