



The Brass Pounder

Newsletter of the
Carolina Southern Division
Mid Eastern Region/ National Model Railroad Association, Inc

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Superintendent's Message

Our annual meeting in January was a very good one. We elected officers, appointed committee chairs, and had productive discussions of our plans for the New Year and our continued efforts to increase our membership.

I have recently been reading a number of articles that mirror the problems of our division: *MEMBERSHIP*. The *NMRA Bulletin* reports a decline in national membership in the NMRA of 15% from November 2001 to November 2002. Norm Garner, President of the MER Division, reports in *The Local* that regional membership is down 4.5%. A *New York Times* reported the struggle of hobby shops as "customers dwindle and grow older". In the 1960 there were five railroad hobby shops in midtown New York, today two are hanging on to survive. The average age of the buyer has gone up in 15 years from 43 to 55. In the US the number of hobby shops has decreased by 25% in the last decade. The Times reports that there are only 500,000 people involved with Model Railroading.

As you can see, we are not alone in the membership troubles (as they would say in England). Although it is wise to put every effort into increasing our membership, I hope we do not lose sight of the main reason we are in the hobby and this organization. No matter our numbers, we should have fun and enjoy the fellowship.

Larry Lau

Events

- March 15 Larry Lau's home
- May 17 Achievement Program, Waxhaw Firehall and other locations.
- July 12 Martin Oakes' home. 11AM –4PM. Barbecue. Lake sports. Operate the Cascade Pacific. Clinic
- July 13-20 NMRA National Convention, Toronto
- Sept 13 Jack Parker's home. Barbecue. Report on the Toronto Convention (Martin).
- Oct 10-13 MER Convention, Reston, VA
- Oct 18-19 Charlotte Model Train Show (tent.)
- Nov 8 Fred Miller's home.
- Jan 17/04 Annual Meeting, Waxhaw Firehall.

Carolina Southern Division – Elected Officials (Elected at the January 25th, 2003 Annual Meeting):

Superintendent

Larry Lau
1431 Queens Road West
Charlotte, N.C. 28207
(704) 373-1498
e-mail: llau@carolina.rr.com

Assistant Superintendent

Jack Parker
12012 Abernathy Rd.
Charlotte, N.C. 28212
(704) 399-1722

Treasurer

Richard J. Bronson
7918 Royal Court

Waxhaw, N.C. 28173
(704) 843-8769
e-mail Dick_Bronson@SIL.ORG

Clerk

Martin Oakes
8057 Lucky Creek Ln
Denver, N.C. 28037
(704) 483-0419 cell: (704) 277-3226
e-mail: martinoakes@charter.net

Director

Michelle Chance
5884 Circlewood Drive
Kannapolis, N.C. 28081
(704) 933-4200
e-mail: michelejc@carolina.rr.com

Elected in previous years:

Director

Dave Chance
5884 Circlewood Drive
Kannapolis, N.C. 28081
(704) 782-2878
e-mail: loconut@carolina.rr.com

Director (and Membership Chairman)

Edwin C. Locklin
10812 Balbriggan Ct.
Charlotte, N.C. 28262
(704) 549-1407
e-mail: elocklin@charlotte.infi.net

Appointed:

Webmaster

Fred Miller
4650 Addison Dr.
Charlotte, N.C. 28211
(704) 364-2305
e-mail: TractionFan@aol.com

Division Web site:

www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv

Note that space is available to host 3-4 pictures and lots of text for member's own pages

Annual Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the Annual meeting -- Saturday, January 25th.

10:30 Meeting called to order by Larry Lau

Larry asked to add an item to the agenda, Fund Raising idea. Approved (moved by Miller, seconded by St. John, passed unanimous)

Dave Chance gave the Clerk's report. Approved (Jennings, Johnson, unanimous).

Dick Bronson announced that dues had been received in the fall from new members Tim Rumph, Fred Miller, John Trott and Derek Clerk.

The Paymaster (Dick Bronson) reported a balance of \$306.08, \$147 in (dues) , \$37.42 out (expenses for module). Approved (Jennings, Johnson, unanimous).

Web Site discussion.

www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv. Fred Miller created the pages. Martin Oakes hosts the site on his business web site. There is ample space and members are encouraged to submit 2-4 pictures of their layouts to Fred for inclusion as 'members pages'. Martin owns a scanner if only hard copy is available.

Annual elections were held. Larry noted that there were only single nominations for each position, and asked for more. None were forthcoming. Larry asked for a vote for the entire slate. (Miller, Chance) The slate was unanimously approved.

The following were elected:

Larry Lau Superintendent, 2 years
Jack Parker Asst Superintendent, 2 years
Dick Bronson Paymaster, 2 years
Martin Oakes Clerk, 2 years
Dave Chance Board Member, 3 years.

And appointed were:

Ed Locklin Membership Chairman
Fred Miller Web Site Chairman

Note: Michelle Chance (2 years), and Ed Locklin (1 year) are the other board members, having been elected in prior years.

Ed Locklin (and Larry) gave a membership drive report. Larry reported that he had discovered the

names, and partial addresses, of some 170 Model Railroaders in the Charlotte area. 79 NMRA Members and 49 MER members. A goal of 15 visitors to the March meeting was announced. The target list was distributed. Ed Locklin has a color brochure that could be handed out, if printed. Ed committed to sending the current version in computer-readable format to Larry and Dick by Feb 15 for a discussion of how to print it more cheaply.

The annual program was discussed. The meeting dates were arrived at (and are published elsewhere):

A fund raising idea was discussed: Offering to sell starter train tables to beginners. Basically a 4x8 portable layout with track, switches, power connections. The project was assigned to Bob Johnson for more work. To report back at the next meeting.

A proposed train show was discussed. A 'pro-forma' budget was passed around.

A date of Oct 18/19 was discussed as being possible. Issues were budgets – an initial cash outlay of about \$900 is required: -- hall, a 5,000 sq ft location for a reasonable rent (\$1,000-\$1,500) was desired (Metrolina Expo is 20,000sq ft and \$5,000). Members were asked to research likely locations.