



THE BRASS POUNDER

Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Div, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Assoc.
Volume 4, Number 1 Feb 2004

Annual Business Meeting

The division membership and friends met at the Waxhaw Firehouse on January 24th for the traditional annual business meeting. A good turnout of 12 members and 4 guests made for an enjoyable meeting.

See the Division Website for full minutes of the meeting (www.bytedesign.com/csdiv) or the copy attached to this Newsletter.

The principal business carried out at this year's meeting was the election of Bill Jennings to the Board for the 2004-2006 term and Super Lau's appointment of Fred Miller to fill out the remainder of Martin Oakes' term as Clerk.

The group held a lively discussion of the NMRA Long Range plan and the pros and cons for the National, Regional and Division levels. Larry Lau encouraged all to study the available published material and be prepared to vote their opinion in the upcoming NMRA process.

After the usual discussion of old and new business (see minutes) an interesting session of *Show and Tell* by several members provided an insight into various modeling techniques. Included was Michelle Chance's discussion of how she likes to model items from her childhood memories, like IC boxcars and covered hoppers; John Trott described his wood shed and fence modeling; Dave Chance described a number of his locomotive repainting and decal application techniques; Fred Miller explained some of the modeling shown in his N Scale trolley shelf diorama; and Dick Bronson described his currently under-development circuit to interface DCC to PCs.

Next Meeting

Date: March 20th, 10 AM*

Place: Larry Lau's House

Clinics: (1) Basic Soldering Techniques by Michelle Chance and (2) A simple do-it-yourself electronics project (DC/DCC voltage detector) by Fred Miller

Bring your soldering iron. After Michelle's soldering clinic, we are going to assemble the DC/DCC voltage detector as described in the September issue of MER's LOCAL

*Check website for details, maps, etc.

Superintendent's Message

At the meeting last Saturday our Division took on the task of helping the Boy Scouts with their attempts at the Model Railroad-ing Badge.

This is a great idea and it is what we are all about. We need to spread the word amongst the young folk to nurture the next generation of Model Railroaders. In my opinion this program is right on target and we should put strong efforts behind it. Let's all get behind this program and accept it.

We have an attainable goal in the meeting schedule we have put together. We now need for each of us to develop a clinic and present it at one of our meetings. I know that we have a lot of modeling talent out there, we just need to tap these resources.

See you all in March, my home, and bring your soldering irons.

Larry Lau

The Division Brass

Superintendent..... Larry Lau
 Asst. Superintendent..... Jack Parker
 Clerk..... Fred Miller
 Paymaster Dick Bronson
 Director 2004..... Michele Chance
 Director 2005..... Dave Chance
 Director 2006..... Bill Jennings
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 Membership Chairman ... Jack Parker
 Fund Raising Chair Bob Johnson
 AP Chairman..... Fred Miller
 Newsletter/Webmaster ... Fred Miller

A Neat PC Tool for Model Builders

by Fred Miller

One very important ingredient to a model building project is the availability of plans, either prototype or custom developed. For those building from scratch, an appropriately scaled drawing just can't be beat. And those of you who would like to submit models for judging in either contests or for AP merits, scale and prototype drawings are a must.

Many of my own projects have started with developing plans on a PC using a graphics drawing tool or CAD product. I personally have been using the Paint Shop Pro package for all of my plan drawing as well as graphics and photos manipulation. Making plans with a tool like this is not fancy, just simply drawing lines as if you were drawing on a piece of paper. The difficulty comes when you want to print out a plan in scale size, to actual HO Scale dimensions. I have been doing this pretty much by trial and error. I generally shrink the printing until it measures out correctly. Sometimes I have to go through a bunch of paper to get it right.

Recently I bought a CD product from Rail-Driver (P.I. Engineering) which was a reproduction of the plans, data and photos of

the *1911 Electric Railway Dictionary*. (This outfit has a bunch of other older railroad resources like this one including: *1922 Locomotive Cyclopedia*, *1922 Car Builder's Cyclopedia*, and *1921 Maintenance of Way Cyclopedia*.) Included on each CD is a program product called *Scale Print*. It has the neat ability to load and display any graphic, e.g. plans, in the standard graphic image formats (jpg, bmp, tiff, etc.) and then print that image in any scale.

Here's all you do: (1) load the image into the program, (2) mark two points on the drawing, (3) tell the program what the actual dimension is between points, (4) select the scale you would like to print in, e.g. HO, O or whatever scale, or some specific custom ratio, and then (5) print. The program will display the scaled image and show how many sheets of 8 ½ x 11 it will take.

I think this is a really neat tool. You can find out more at the vendor's website: www.raildriver.com

Coming Events

March 20 Charlotte, NC	Division Meeting at Larry Lau's house
May 13 - 16 Pittsburgh, PA	Three Rivers Transfer MER/MCR Joint Spring Convention
April 4 Hickory, NC	NRHS 2 nd Annual NC Railroad Convention
May 22 Ft. Mill, SC	Division Meeting (tent) at Bob Johnson's house
June 19 Concord, NC	Model Train & Railroadiana Show – Cabarrus Arena
July 4-11 Seattle, WA	NMRA 2004 National Con- vention Puget Sound Express
July 17 Denver, NC	Division Meeting Martin Oakes house, 10 AM - 2 PM - Lunch

September 18 Charlotte, NC	Division Meeting Annual Picnic at Jack Parker's house
Nov 13-16 Hagerstown, MD	Annual MER Convention
November 20 Charlotte, NC	Division Meeting at Fred Miller's House
November 27-28 Charlotte, NC	GATS Train Show at the Cabarrus Arena

Check our website for further info

MCR/MER Joint Convention

Don't pass up the opportunity to attend the joint Spring Convention in Pittsburgh. Meets sponsored by two regions turn out to be a lot of fun with twice as many activities and resources available. More information

can be found at: www.midcentral-region-nmra.org

NMRA AP PROGRAM

Our Division has been doing very well in the AP Program. In fact last year we have surpassed all other Divisions within the MER. Our progress last year includes the following certificates:

- Dispatcher – Dave and Michelle Chance, Martin Oakes and Jack Parker.
- Structures – Jack Parker and Fred Miller
- Scenery – Jack Parker and Fred Miller
- Civil Engineering – Jack Parker
- Electrical Engineering – Jack Parker
- Volunteer – Fred Miller

These Awards put Jack and Fred within striking distance of that MMR with 5 and 6 certificates, respectively. Congratulations to all and let's keep up the achievements.

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