

# THE BRASS POUNDER

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

Volume 11 Number 3

July 2011

## Carolina Southern Division Events

### Division Meeting

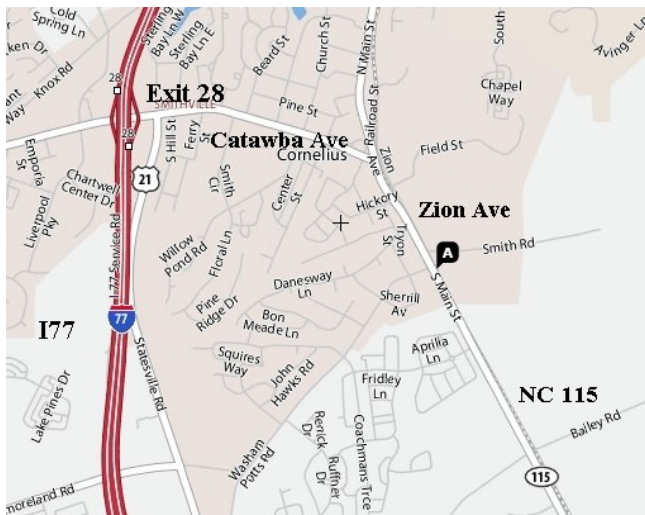
Thursday, September 1, 7:00 pm  
Presentation: Robin Frye and the Circus Train  
Williams Lodge  
19416 Zion Ave  
Cornelius, NC

### Annual Division Picnic

Saturday, September 17  
Jack Parker's  
12012 Abernathy Rd  
Charlotte, NC

### Division Meeting

Thursday, October 6, 7:00 pm  
Frank Binder, constructing wooden kit structures  
Williams Lodge  
19416 Zion Ave  
Cornelius, NC



I77 North from Charlotte, Exit 28, Cornelius  
Go East on E Catawba Ave.  
Cross Rt 115 and RR tracks  
Immediately, turn Right on Zion Ave.  
Pass Mt Zion church and stop sign. Lodge on left

### NC Rail Run Op Session Weekend

Fri thru Sun, September 2 -4 (Labor Day)  
Operations on layouts across the Piedmont from  
Greensboro to Charlotte. For information and to  
register, see these web sites:

[www.carolinasouthern.org/RailRunMain.htm](http://www.carolinasouthern.org/RailRunMain.htm)  
[ncrailrun2011.blogspot.com](http://ncrailrun2011.blogspot.com)

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## Calendar of Events

### National Narrow Gauge Convention Hickory, NC

September 7-10, 2011  
Hickory Metro Convention Center  
1960 13th Ave. Drive SE  
Hickory, North Carolina 28602  
<http://www.narrowgauge2011.com/>

### MER Regional Convention 2011 Cary, NC

October 27 - October 30  
Embassy Suites Hotel  
Cary, NC  
<http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>

### Two Day Private Antique Auction

Saturday, August 27-28, 10:00 AM  
Metrolina Expo, 7100 Statesville Rd, Charlotte  
King Auction & Realty Co, Inc.  
<http://www.proxibid.com/asp/AuctionsByCompany.asp?ahid=118>  
Includes RR Collectibles, Equipment, Cabooses,  
Memorabilia

## How the AP Program Can Help You

By Bob Halsey – Superintendent

To encourage more members to increase their modeling skills, the NMRA has a program of awarding certificates for achievement in various aspects of the hobby. These certificates are earned after the modeler has had his or her projects evaluated by a qualified Achievement Program judge. The advantage of having your modeling work judged is that the judges' evaluation sheet shows you what could have been done better, and what was done well, so you can improve your next efforts.

In the CSD, we will be holding technical clinics more often, and therefore hope to see more projects completed. This means we will be needing more judges, so David Ward invited Martin Brechbiel to come from Cary, NC, to David's workshop in Cabarrus County on Saturday, May 21, to instruct a group of CSD members in the basic requirements of AP judging. In addition to 4 of our veteran judges, there were six other members in attendance. These eager new "apprentice" judges will have to serve at a number of judging sessions with the veterans until they learn the fine points of judging, including the quality of workmanship and details that distinguish a good model from an outstanding one.

Our upcoming clinics schedule and locations are yet to be determined, but will cover locomotives & cars, structures, and entire layouts. You can see numerous examples of quality work during visits to layouts on RailRun weekend!

A **New Committee** under the leadership of Tony Sissons, who is also a new CSD Director, will be planning a number of clinics, rail fan trips, and other events to increase our knowledge and enjoyment of model railroading. Word of these events will appear immediately when they are finalized, both in emails to members and on the website.

**Monthly Meetings** -- We will commence holding regular membership meetings on the first Thursday of every month, starting September 1. This is to (hopefully) increase member involvement, offer a forum for new ideas and presentations of clinics or classes on topics of interest to modelers. A typical meeting will last no more than 2 hours; the first 15 minutes or so for discussion items and review of upcoming events, then followed by the clinic/class. Location will be the **Williams Lodge in Cornelius**.

Other **upcoming events** (details on website):

RailRun weekend --- Sep 2-4 Charlotte to Greensboro

National Narrow Gauge Convention -- Sep 7-10 in Hickory

CSD annual picnic -- Sep 17 Jack Parkers, Charlotte

MidEast Region Convention -- Oct 27-30, Cary NC

Brookford Open House/CSD Business Meeting/Clinics -- Nov 12, Brookford (Hickory)

Railroad Modeling University (RMU) -- Jan 21, 2012, TBD

There will be more coming! Check the website frequently! For those who are not online, we will keep them informed via Pony Express!

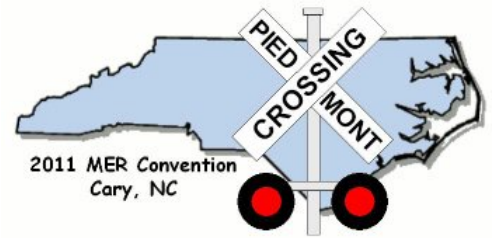
**New CSD logo** -- Here are the three finalists in the contest to design a new CSD logo. Decide which one you like best, and then send an email (or post card) to the Clerk, Jack Haynes, letting him know your choice. Results will be tabulated, and the winner announced at the picnic on Sept. 17.



# Things are Coming Together... for Piedmont Crossing 2011 !

Article Submitted By: R. Stephen Milley (NMRA Member #: 107091)

As Spring turns into Summer here in North Carolina, the days are getting longer and the temperatures are getting higher, and many of the details are coming together for the 2011 MER Convention. **Piedmont Crossing** will be held October 27 through October 30 in Cary, NC, and we have a broad range of activities in the works for attendees. Cary, NC, is located just to the Southwest of Raleigh, in the heart of North Carolina. We look forward to host our visitors from the Mid-Eastern Region and beyond. Read on for details of some of the activities planned for this year's convention.



**Piedmont Crossing** will include many of the activities that you would expect in the annual MER Convention, such as 40+ clinics, prototype rail & industrial tours, home & club layout tours, 10 layout operating sessions, model contests, dinner banquet with speaker, model displays, 5 "make-&-take" workshops, live auction, model train show, and modular layout displays. That's a full slate of activities for all to enjoy.

## Home Layout Tours

**Piedmont Crossing** will feature a variety of home and club layouts in all scales: N, HO, O, G, and even a Live Steam outdoor layout. We have identified over 30 layouts for the tour list throughout central North Carolina.

One example includes Jack Frame's *Monon Route* - which has had regular operating sessions for over 20 years. Jack's layout is based on the Monon Route from Chicago, IL, to Louisville, KY, with a large yard in Bloomington, IL, as the central point. This railroad is set in 1952 and hosts a variety of passenger service, thru-freights, local freights, and interchanges. There is plenty of switching activity on this layout. The Monon Route fills an 825 square-foot building, includes over 450 feet of mainline track and sidings, 625 feet of yard and industrial sidings, and over 160 turnouts. Jack's layout will be open for tour on Friday afternoon, October 28; you will really enjoy exploring this layout.



Another example includes Tony Sears' Live Steam outdoor empire. This railroad is a 1.5" scale railroad on 7.5" gauge track. There are over 2 miles of outdoor track plus another mile of track for yard, engine service, the roundhouse, and car barn. These engines and cars are actually large and powerful enough to ride on !! Tony and his wife Judy host this club layout on their 50 acre farm, and they integrate their love of both model railroading and horticulture as the mainline runs through wooded areas and beautifully landscaped gardens. Tony's layout will be open for tour on Friday afternoon, October 28; you will not want to miss the opportunity to see this fantastic attraction.



These are just two examples of home layout tours that visitors can see during **Piedmont Crossing**; there will be many other layout tours open for visitation from Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon. See tour details on the convention website.

## Convention Clinics

**Piedmont Crossing** will feature a full slate of railroading clinics. These clinics will cover a large variety of topics and will be presented in several different manners including presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on practice. There will be over 60 hours of clinics to choose from - from as short as one hour to as long as an 8-hour hands-on session. The clinics are organized into different tracks such as scenery, technology, industries, operations, modeling, design & construction, prototype, NMRA activities, and a hands-on make-&-take track.

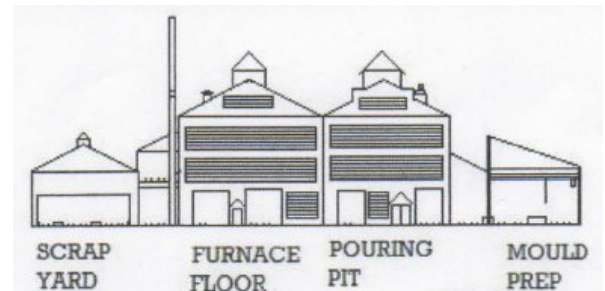
The **Scenery Track** includes topics such as *Creating Backdrops* and *Making Trees*, and some are in the **Make-&-Take Track** such as *Making Telephone Poles*.

The **Technology Track** includes interesting clinics about *Adding Light, Sound, & Motion Animation to Your Layout* and *Programming Digitrax Sound Decoders*.

The **Industries Track** provides clinics that explore details about rail-served industries that you may choose to model. A full day is allocated to *Steel Industry Modeling* and another entitled *Railroad-Worthy Industries*.

In the *Steel Industry Modeling* clinics, a group of gentlemen will give a series of clinics during a full day session on Friday, October 28. The clinics include modeling a steel mill and its operations, steel industry layout considerations, industry buildings, railcars, industrial rail yards and switching, and steel mill rail operations. There will be several steel industry models, layouts, and dioramas on display in the clinic room, and convention attendees are invited to bring their own models for display in the clinic room. For the

steel industry enthusiasts, Dick Buchan will host two operating sessions on his home steel mill layout - one on Thursday afternoon, October 27, and one on Sunday afternoon, October 30. To sign up for the operating sessions, see details on the registration page of the convention web site.



The **Operations Track** is for those who wish to see how fellow model railroaders mimic their favorite prototype as hosts to operating sessions. Clinics include *Using Switch List Software*, *Using Car Cards and Waybills*, *Tips & Methods for Uncoupling*, and *Getting Started in Operations*.

The **Modeling Track** will provide a variety of clinics to help modelers improve their skills - some will include the make-&-take feature. Examples include *Adding Decals to Freight Cars & Engines*, *Hand-Laying Track*, *Weathering with Chalks*, *Creating Freight Car Loads*, *Building with Styrene*, and *Adding Detailed Brake Systems*.

The **Layout Design & Construction Track** includes clinics that provide tips and guidance for constructing your own layout, such as *Layout Design Considerations*, *Building Lightweight Modules*, and *Building a Raffle Layout*.

In the *Building a Raffle Layout* clinic, Stephen Milley will give an overview of the design, build, and raffle of the 2010 CPD13 Raffle Layout. This layout was a huge fundraising success for the local division of the NMRA. You will see details of the unique layout design, track plan, structures, and scenery. You will hear about the hard work members of the division put into the layout and some lessons learned along the way. You can take ideas home to your division for your own fundraising efforts.



The **Prototype Track** includes clinics focused on modeling of prototype railroads and equipment. Examples of clinics in this track include *Modeling the Tweetsie Railroad*, *Southern Railroad Freight and Passenger Cars*, *Modeling B&O Boxcars in the Steam Era*, and *Modeling Log Cars*.

The **NMRA Activities Track** includes opportunities for you to learn how to get involved in more NMRA activities with clinics such as *Contest Judging* and *AP Lessons Learned*.

These are just a short overview of the clinics to be offered at this year's MER convention; certainly enough to keep you busy - learning new skills and enjoying our hobby.

## The Train Show

In conjunction with the **Piedmont Crossing** convention, the local NMRA division (Carolina Piedmont Division) will host a model railroading train show. Admission into the train show will be included as part of your convention fee, and it will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday for a fee of \$5.00 for adults. For convention attendees, there will be a private opening to the train show on Friday evening, October 28.

The train show will include display tables from dealers and retailers from around the Southeast area, and often attendees can find special convention prices for sale items. The local NMRA division (Carolina Piedmont Division) will present this year's raffle layout at the train show. Be sure to pick up your raffle tickets - proceeds go to a great cause, as the division purchases and gives away train sets each Christmas to less-fortunate families in the Raleigh area. The raffle tickets are only \$1 per ticket, six for \$5.

The show will also include two large operating modular layouts set up for visitors to enjoy. Joining the convention from New Bern, NC, the *Neuse River Lines* presented by the Carolina Coastal Railroaders is an HO scale modular layout. The *Danville Railroad* NTRAK layout presented by the Eastern N Lines Partnership is an N scale modular layout. The Danville Railroad will host 3 operating sessions during the weekend as well, so keep your eyes on the convention registration information to get signed up.

As you can see, **Piedmont Crossing** will be full of fun activities to keep you busy. Check out all the details on the convention website throughout the Summer, as more information and activities are added. Don't forget to register early - to get the lower registration price and to get signed up for the activities that have a limited quantity of participants.

## Transportation

Consider a rail-fanning transportation method - Amtrak serves Cary, NC, with several trains each day.

## Hotel

The convention will be held at the Embassy Suites (Raleigh/Durham/Research Triangle) at 201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard, Cary, NC. The hotel rate is \$89/night (plus taxes) and includes a full cook-to-order breakfast each morning and an evening "manager's reception".

## Registration

NMRA members \$45; early registration \$40 (by September 15); non-members \$55/\$50.

There is an extra fare for the dinner banquet and the "make-&-take" workshops.

Complete information and registration information are located on the convention website: [www.mer2011.org](http://www.mer2011.org).

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## Two Golden Spike Awards Earned!

Dave Chance, CS Div. 12 AP Chair

July 24, 2011

On July 14, 2011, CS Division 12 member Dave Draxler received a Golden Spike Award for his HO scale railroad, the "Omagolley Pike". This small layout is a work in progress but is mostly complete. The main part is a very highly detailed 4' x 8' table with hills and a mountain complete with a cut and a tunnel, lots of structures, trees, roads, and even a park. Dave has an extension off one end that goes to a "wye" near the wall. The "wye" extends to the right to a commercial business, and to the left to the corner of the room and then along the adjacent wall for an additional 6 or 8 feet with several industries along the way. This extension is not yet in scenery but it won't remain that way.

In addition to the Golden Spike Dave also earned a Merit Award for his Scenery AP. When the paperwork is complete, soon, he will apply for the Master Builder Scenery AP award.

On July 20, 2011, I made a visit to look at Joe Howards HO scale layout. Joe has made remarkable progress since my last visit. His layout is also a works in progress which also started with a 4' x 8' table and has expanded to the walls with a large peninsula and a shelf along the wall next to the main area. Joe has plans to expand even more with another peninsula which will include a coal mine and tipple. He also is planning his staging yard. While most of his layout is not scenic'ed, he has more than enough to meet the requirements and has earned his Golden Spike Award. Joe is currently awaiting its arrival.

Congratulations to both Dave Draxler of Charlotte and to Joe Howard of Cornelius for their excellent work in earning their Golden Spike Awards!

I will be happy to help anyone who is working on an AP project. I will also be happy to come to your home to look at your layout for a Golden Spike, or to help with paperwork, etc. on an AP project. Let me know if you need help with your project, from understanding the requirements to assisting with the paper work. Send me an email or call me on the phone and we will schedule my visit.

## 2011 Duke Merit Badge Encampment

By Steven P August



On May 7<sup>th</sup> several volunteers from the Carolina Southern Division attended the Boy Scouts of America Merit Badge Encampment. This year there were more 575 Boy Scouts who attended. The purpose of this weekend is to allow the boys opportunities to work on Merit Badges which help them to move up in rank, provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness.

For nearly a century, the BSA has helped build the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun. The Boy Scouts of America believes — and, through nearly a century of experience, knows — that helping youth is a key to building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.



For more than 20 years now the Merit Badge Encampment has taken place and every year it gets bigger and bigger. The weekend offers opportunities for the Scouts to get Merit Badges in subjects like Aviation, Computers, Crime Prevention, Electronics, Finger Printing, Nuclear Science, and Railroading just to name a few. All these classes are taught by professionals in the given field.

The Carolina Southern Division was represented very well for the Railroading Merit Badge. The Railroading Merit Badge is a program to teach a brief history of railroading, safety around trains and train tracks. It also brings the scouts ideas of a possible future career in Railroad Industry. As prices for fuel keep going up, shipping by rail becomes easier because one train can move more freight with a gallon of fuel than any other form of transportation.

This class also teaches some of the points in Signals, Railfanning, Model Railroading and it gives the scouts some valuable information. Rick Knight and Steve August have been teaching the class for a couple years, this year we were joined by Jim Rager, Bob Halsey and Gil Brauch who taught a section of the curriculum on Operation Life Saver.



The Time Saver Train Puzzles that the Division authorized to have built came in very handy at this event. The Scouts really enjoyed the puzzles. If you like Railroading as most of us do, and you would like to sign up as a volunteer to teach the Railroad Merit Badge or any other Merit Badge please contact your local scout troop. The scouts always are looking for volunteers and this is a great way to earn points for your Volunteer AP Certificate. The purpose of the Boy Scouts of America is to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character and a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

## A Visit to the Real “Tweetsie”

Bob Halsey

Most of us think of the “Tweetsie” as that nice amusement park on US 321 between Blowing Rock and Boone with the short scenic narrow-gauge rail loop surrounding the park. But the only connection that “Tweetsie” has with the real East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad is the old steam engine #12, which served many years on the ET&WNC, hauling iron ore, pulpwood, and passengers between a few locations originating from Elizabethport, TN. Although the original ET&WNC packed it up in the 1950s, a group of rail enthusiasts in 1988 began to restore a six-mile stretch of the most scenic part of the narrow-gauge track that runs through three short tunnels and along cliffs above the white-water rapids in the Doe River Gorge. The original restoration completed in 1992 with intent of running engine #12, but economic reality prevailed, and you know where #12 ended up.

A new effort began several years later, finishing in 2002, and the primary transportation for visitors is now two 100-year old gondolas fitted with wood bench seats (arranged like a bus) pulled by a little diesel-powered Porter built in 1978.



The train only goes (slowly) about 2 miles down the line to the most scenic part of the gorge, but is well worth the time! The only wildlife to be seen on this trip was an escaped goat who lives down by the river. “Gertie” once thought she was a Rocky Mountain goat and had to be rescued from a cliff ledge by the train crew rappelling down to get her.

The “new” ET&WNC is actually part of the Doe River Gorge Campground, a summer camp and bible studies organization for kids who

come for the day or the week. The overnighters stay in a string of four boxcars and two cabooses, presumably configured as cabins. There is a small man-made pond with a sandy beach, and a large pasture where the riding horses graze. The most fun thing for kids (and some adults!) is the zip line that comes down from the hill top and delivers the riders directly into the middle of the pond! It is apparently impossible to ride the zip line without screaming the whole way!



So our three CSD visitors (Jim Rager, Rick Knight, and Bob Halsey) rode the train in the morning like the other passengers, but found out by chatting with the train crew that there would be a “work train” in the afternoon that would go farther down the line, and was not for regular riders. We agreed to help them on their weed-spraying mission, and they let us ride on the “work train” (2 over-sized golf-cart like home-made cars, the powered one pulling the other). This was after a very edible lunch (hamburgers, hot dogs, and barbecue) under the big tent, and a visit to the gift shop in the main building.

Although it took about 3 hours by road to get there, it was a very pleasant visit, with perfect weather the whole time, and even though we didn’t ride the zip line! The folks who will be attending the national narrow-gauge convention in September will get to ride the whole 6 miles of the Doe River Gorge section of the ET&WNC!



## **Division Board of Directors Meeting June 16, 2011**

Bob Halsey

Subject meeting was held at Roy Becker's home starting at 7PM and concluded at 9PM. Attendees were Roy Becker, Gil Brauch, David Ward, Rick Knight, Dave Chance, Fred Miller, Joe Howard, and Bob Halsey.

Staff elections scheduled for December will require finding candidates for positions of Clerk and Paymaster, since our long-swinging incumbents will be completing their terms. Possible candidates were mentioned, and they will be queried as to their desire to serve. Bob Halsey is now Division Superintendent until the end of the year, due to departure of Steve August to a different location. Immediately following the end of the meeting, David Ward agreed to serve as Assistant Superintendent until the end of the year. We will also have to vote for candidates for these two positions in the December elections. The non-Officer Directors now have to recruit another Director to replace David.

Discussion of upcoming events revealed that RailRun weekend, although well-planned, needs a lot more of our members to sign up to attend. David said that the OpSig group is going to increase efforts to publicize it. CSD annual picnic is scheduled for Sept 17 at Jack Parker's. Possible concurrent clinics are being considered, either at Jack's or a nearby location. More details will be published in Brass Pounder and our website. Will need advance reservations so we can do more accurate planning for the clinics. Next RMU is scheduled for January 21, 2012, possibly at same location as previously. RMU Committee chairman is Rick Knight, and some members have already volunteered for committee duty. Rick is aiming for a small, but effective, committee. Meeting attendees discussed possibility of holding a clinic session sometime in Oct or Nov. Gil mentioned that Brookford is having open house on Nov 12, and this would be a good opportunity to also have the CSD business meeting and present some clinics. All agreed.

Considerable time was spent discussing ways to improve membership recruiting and retention. Bob stated that he has appointed Director Jim Rager as head of a new Membership Committee. Duties will include: getting volunteers to man a table at shows, at RMU, and other CSD events; calling CSD members to obtain their opinions and suggestions; distributing, and tabulating results of, a member survey form (soon to be developed similar to one that Rick created 2 years ago); and other ideas.

The above discussion of CSD events revealed the need for a Planning/Scheduling Committee (Rick has been developing the annual CSD calendar himself for the past several years). Therefore, Bob Halsey will request a Director (TBD) to chair this committee. Events to be included will not only be CSD-sponsored, but also those of related railroad organizations, such as the imminent National Narrow-Gauge convention. We also need to hold more clinics and offer more opportunities for model judging, and this function too will be handled by the Planning/Scheduling Committee. The schedule will also include an occasional rail-fan type trip, such as the recent trips to the Greenwood, SC, museum, the Tichy Group, and last weekend's journey to ride on the real ET&WNC (not the "Tweetsie" in Boone). We will need some really interested volunteers for this committee!

Attendees discussed ways to increase readership of Brass Pounder. Bob will get with Jack Haynes on this. All agreed Jack is doing an excellent job as newsletter editor!

General discussion was held on ways to promote the 7 purposes of the Division as listed in Art. 1.4 of the CSD By-Laws. Our next meeting will be held in late Sept (date TBD) sometime after the picnic, and we should all present our ideas on this subject at that meeting. But you do not have to wait until then -- just send an email to any of the officers!

Meeting adjourned.

Our thanks to Roy and Roxanne for being our hosts and offering all those goodies!

## The Division Brass

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## Division Website:

www.carolinasouthern.org

## Submissions For Brass Pounder

Next Issue Submission Date  
Sept 2011 August 29, 2011

Articles are welcome on any railroad topic, model or prototype. Your editor is available to assist in preparing the materials.

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