

# THE BRASS POUNDER

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

Volume 12 Number 3

September 2012

## Carolina Southern Division Events

### Division Picnic

**Saturday Sep 15 1:00 PM- ??**

**at Jack Parker's**

**12084 Abernaty Rd, Charlotte**

Operating session on the P&W layout @1:00

Followed by picnic dinner on the lawn.

See details below and/or on web site.

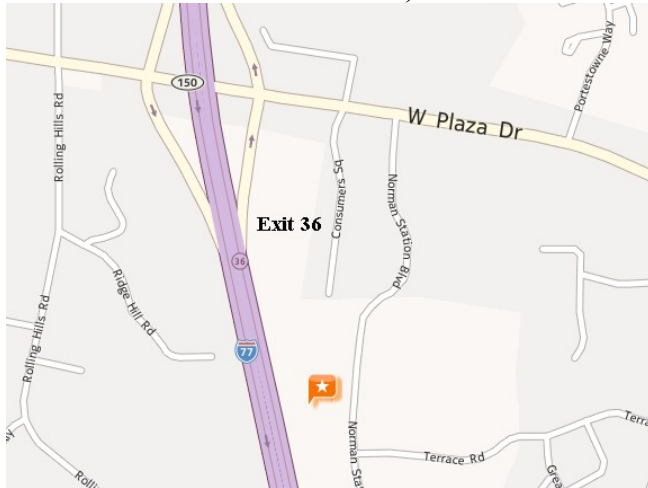
<http://www.carolinasouthern.org/>

### Division 1st Thursday Meetings

\*\*\* NEW (Permanent) LOCATION!\*\*\*

**HobbyTown USA,**

**168-W Norman Station Blvd., Mooresville**



North on I 77 to exit 36

Right at end of ramp

Right at Wal-Mart sign

**September meeting will be Sept 13 7:30**

Dick Beck - building your own LED signals.

**October meeting October 4 7:30**

See web site for program details.

**Saturday September 8 10:00 - 4:00**

**Wade's Train Town Open House**

Brookford Town Hall

**October 5 thru 7**

**NC Rail Run 2012**

Full weekend of operating sessions on 13 area layouts. Get details and register before Sept 15 online at:

<http://carolinasouthern.org/RailRunMain.htm>

**October 13 10:00 - 4:00**

**Wade's Train Town Open House**

Brookford Town Hall

**October 27 9:00-12:00**

**RMU Extension Seminar**

Scenery by Gil Brauch

[carolinasouthern.org/RMUmain.htm#RMUEX](http://carolinasouthern.org/RMUmain.htm#RMUEX)

## Calendar of Events

**September 29**

**SER Mini Meet**

**USC-Aiken, Aiken SC**

[www.ser-nmra.org](http://www.ser-nmra.org)

**October 18-21,**

**Milepost 40**

**MER Convention, Suffolk, VA**

<http://www.nmra-mer-tidewater.org>

## Special Notice

Ken Trent, Division Paymaster, was recently stricken by a stroke and is in the hospital. Since it is expected that his recovery will take some time, Dick Beck has been named to replace him as Paymaster. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ken and his family.



## **The Tweetsie Keeps ‘Em Rolling!**

By Bob Halsey

Eleven of our members had an unusual treat on Monday, May 14 – we got a very detailed inside look at the Tweetsie Railroad maintenance shop! This shop is at the amusement park near Blowing Rock and is not open to the public except for groups who make prior arrangements, which Bob Wessmiller did for us. Some of us carpoled there, arriving by 10AM, and were greeted by foreman Martin Michie and his shop crew, including Scott McLeod, Frank Aldridge, Ricky Guy, and a few others.

These very experienced machinists not only do major maintenance on Tweetsie’s own steam locomotives, rolling stock, rail bed, and the various park rides, they also do work under contract on locos belonging to other parks, such as Disney World, Dollywood, and Busch Gardens (Tampa & Williamsburg). This work includes removing and machining wheel rims by heating them and then hammering them off, and then doing the same to get them back on. Another major task is removing and machining drive wheel axles, and then pressing them back in to the wheels. They also machine drive rods, replace firebox ashpans, repair steam lines and boilers and just about anything else that needs to be fixed.

The Tweetsie’s own locomotives are: old No. 12, which served the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina from 1917 to 1940; and the larger No. 190, which was operated by the White Horse & Yukon Railway from 1943 until a few years ago. To keep these locos and cars running smoothly, the shop has 3 lathes (36”, 54”, and a smaller one) plus a horizontal press capable of 300 lbs pressure. They also have a parts loft, a paint shop (including woodwork repair capability) and the two engine sheds. The shop is inspected annually by North Carolina’s equivalent of the

federal OSHA, and always gets praised by the inspectors!

All of this major scheduled work is done during the park’s off season; after the park opens (just before Memorial Day), the shop crew serves as engineers & conductors, replenishes coal/water/sand, empties the ashpans, and does the all-important never-ending lubrication of moving parts. It takes 4 hours from light-off to having enough steam pressure to move the locomotive. During the season, the fires do not go out at closing time; they are “banked” (the live coals are covered with ashes) to allow a shorter start up in the morning. At the end of the season, it takes 4 hours for the fire to go out. The shop crew also maintains the tracks, conducts right-of-way weed-spraying runs, and does a considerable amount of maintenance on the park rides. While we were there, they were not only doing the wheel and axle machining, they were fixing a couple of the miniature autos for one of the park areas. It’s a lot of work, but these fellows obviously enjoy their work, and take pride in doing it!

We also got to go inside the pre-1890 vintage enclosed passenger car, obtained from the East Broad Top Railroad, and that now only runs on Rail Heritage Day (Sept 8 & 9 this year). This well-preserved car has had all the wood replaced (except for the original doors), and the shop added a metal frame underneath to avoid the sagging which inevitably occurs in old wood cars, even with the truss rods. We will try to schedule a visit during the Rail Heritage weekend!

After thanking Martin and his crew for a very interesting and informative session, we left the Tweetsie and stopped for a late lunch at the Canyons in Blowing Rock.

Well Done to Bob Wessmiller for setting up this great tour!

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## **Monthly Meeting Moves to Hobbytown in Mooresville**

by Bob Wessmiller

Beginning in September we will have a new location for our monthly chapter meetings. Through a special arrangement with Hobbytown in Mooresville we will now hold our monthly

meetings at this location. In addition we will hold special Saturday seminars and plan to work on an upscale shelf layout for the store. Hobbytown will provide plenty of seating and as necessary tables for clinics. They will also provide drinks and snacks for all members.

We are working closely with the owner to carry a larger line of train related products to make your shopping a little easier. Hobbytown is offering a **special 15% discount to all members** on train related materials. You must show a new discount card to the cashier. No other discounts apply. **Cards will be handed out at the September meeting.** There will be lots of additional surprises, so make an effort to attend the monthly meetings.

We normally meet on the first Thursday of the month. **However due to special circumstances the September meeting will be held on Thursday September 13th.** Our guest speaker will be Dick Beck who will talk about building your own LED signals. Hobbytown is located just off exit 36 (Rt. 150) of I-77 in the Wal-mart shopping center. Hope to see you there.

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## N Scale Layout Visits

by Jack Haynes

On March 24, the Division arranged a tour of N-scale layouts in the area. Three modelers opened their layouts for visits.



*Bethlehem Steel plant is a featured industry on Michael Pennie's layout*

The first stop was at Michael Pennie's Penn Central Railroad – Lehigh & Delaware Division Set in the 1960-70s in a 1100 s.f. basement. It is a The Brass Pounder Volume 12 No 3

point to point; single level layout and no duck unders. It features fully automatic signaling and a CTC panel for dispatching trains.

After a stop for lunch at Cook's BBQ in Lexington, the group moved on to Kevin Beck's Central Carolina Southbound. Kevin's railroad serves the area of Central North Carolina for point to point, modern freight operations. It is a double deck housed in 18' X 48' building and approx. 900' track. The main part of the layout goes around the walls of the room and models the route of the Southern Railroad from Danville, VA, to Charlotte. There is a large classification yard with an operating hump track.



*Kevin watches as Gil Brauch switches the main classification yard.*

On an island down the center of the room is the Winston-Salem South Bound, a separate layout modelling a short line. It is also double deck with an enclosed helix connecting the two levels. It exchanges traffic (logically, but not physically) with the main layout at the High Point interchange yard.

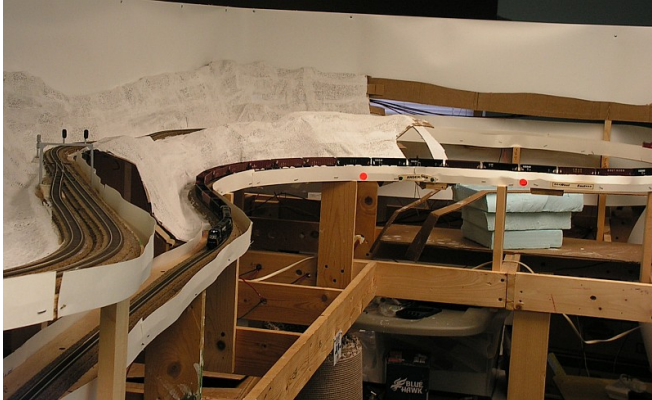


*Kevin explains the operation of the WSSB*

The final stop was Marcus Neubacher's Charleston, Roanoke & Eastern Railway. This is a coal hauling bridge route connecting the Midwest and the Southeast. It is fully operational in 22' X 36' space made up of two connected rooms. It is double deck without a helix and features Norfolk

Southern and CSX operations in the late 80's-early 90's.

Scenery is in progress, but the landforms are mostly in place and give a realistic impression of mountain railroading. The layout shows how effective N-scale can be at letting the scenery dominate the scene with the trains just fitting in.



*A train snakes down the mountain side on Marcus' layout*

It was an interesting and informative day and the Division appreciates the hosts opening their layouts for our visit.

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## **RMU Extension Scratchbuilding with Carl Baumgart**

by Jack Haynes

This year, the Division began holding classes that expand on subjects presented in our annual Railroad Modelling University. Carl Baumgart



*The kit supplied by Carl (not including tools)*

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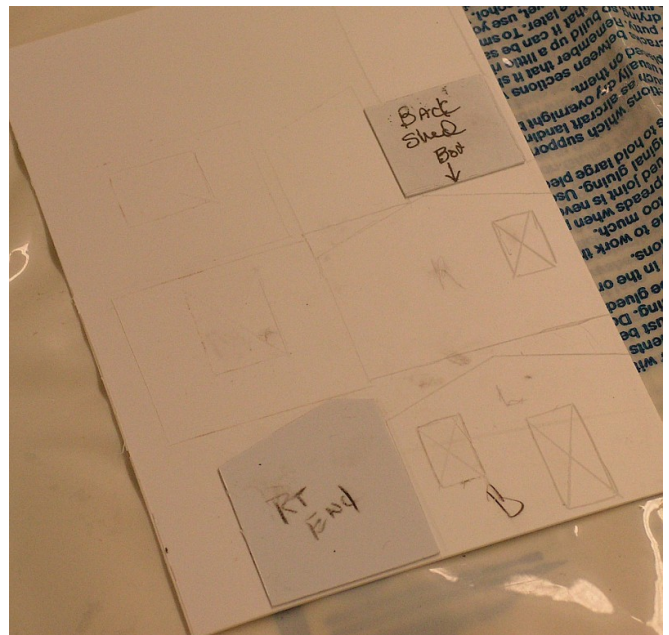
held the latest session on July 28. His subject was scratchbuilding and he brought along "kits" that would let each attendee cut out and assemble a small structure.

For the nominal fee, Carl provided sheets of styrene siding and roofing, strips of styrene for trim and bracing, window castings, a plywood jig to help assemble the walls squarely, a holder for a glue bottle to keep it from getting spilled, and small brushes for applying glue. We definitely got our money's worth.

Carl also supplied templates for cutting out the wall sections of the buildings that were shared. Templates were available in both HO and N scales.

We started by tracing the templates on the styrene sheet in pencil and cutting out the wall sections. A strip of double sided tape on the back of the template kept it from sliding on the sheet as it was traced. Cutting was done by scoring with the back of the hobby knife blade and a straight edge to guide it, and snapping the styrene on the score.

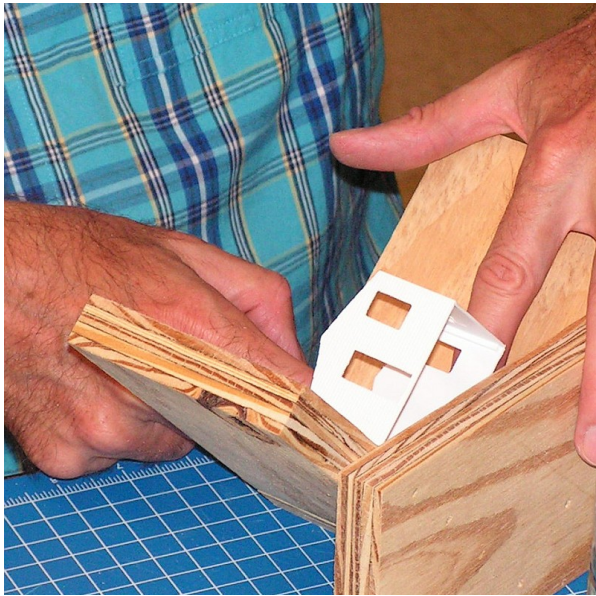
Window openings were cut out by scoring around the edges, and then scoring an X between the corners. Pushing on the center of the X split the sections apart which could then be snapped out.



*Templates taped to styrene sheet and traced.*

The walls were assembled using the jig. A strip of square styrene reinforced each corner

joint. Carl cautioned us to pay attention to which sides overlapped so the thickness of the styrene was always added to the same wall dimension.



*Using jig to get walls square*

Glue was applied with a small disposable art paint brush to keep it to a minimum and avoid damaging the styrene surfaces. Capillary action pulled the glue (MEK) into the joints.



*The structure takes shape as glue is applied with a small paint brush*

A small shed addition to the main structure gave us the opportunity to use scale lumber to add framing studs to the visible inside wall and assemble a bench mounted on the wall.

Carl wandered around the room watching each of us work, answering questions and offering specific advice.



*Everyone got some individual attention from Carl*

By the end of the three hour session, all of us had at least a partially assembled structure. With some details, paint, etc. we would have a structure ready for the layout.

It was a very informative and productive day. We all appreciated the effort Carl put into preparing the session.



*An N-scale structure takes shape*

The next RMU Extension session is scheduled for **October 27** when we get to make some **scenery with Gil Brauch**. Sign up now and while you are signing up, give Gil some ideas about what you would like most to do **by submitting a response to his survey**. He is looking for the topics most in demand, so give him your wish list and Christmas may come early for you.

Sign up and survey are at:  
<http://www.carolinasouthern.org/scenerysurvey.htm>

## Another Visit to the P&W at Valdese

by Bob Halsey

Our 2012 visit to the Piedmont & Western in the old school building at Valdese was very much like our visit last year, with a couple of newer CSD members along, and equally as amazing to see all the details in this big, beautiful layout. Even the P&W members who were there were the same ones from last year: Ken Humphreys (conductor & ticket collector), Kenny Mann (dispatcher), and engineers Joe Bost, Grant Robbins, Kevin Stine, Frank Steele, Mike Outen Jr., and Tim Skidmore. Arlene Koski was selling admission tickets (\$2 each), while Mike Outen Sr. and Bobby Cox were outside supervising the classic car show (something new this year!).



The P&W has made a lot of progress in the past year in constructing the “Murphy Branch” under the guidance of chief builder Jeff Whisenant. The Murphy Branch, while connected to the main P&W, is in an adjacent room, and runs from Bryson City (close to the entrance doorway) to a major logging operation in the hills (in the far corner of the room). Although only the benchwork and most track-laying has been completed, the only scenery so far is the very well done and detailed logging area, which includes dual – gauge track (HO and HOn3). It will probably be at least another two years before Murphy Branch is close to being completed both operationally and scenery-wise. But it will be equally as spectacular as the main part of the layout!

The P&W is a DCC-controlled HO gauge railroad that is a joint subsidiary of the Clinchfield, Southern, and Norfolk & Western Railroads, operating in the Appalachian

Mountains during the 1950s to the mid-1970s, so it includes both steam and diesel power pulling primarily coal loads and general freight, with an occasional passenger train. There is a wide variety of industrial and mining facilities, towns and residential areas with mostly hills, tunnels, bridges, sidings, a freight yard, and a hidden staging yard. Much of it is scratch-built, and most of the locos have sound.



Aside from the layout, the P&W maintains a museum area across the passageway from the railroad, including many old railroad artifacts and a former Clinchfield Speeder track inspection vehicle. In one of the rooms, Larry Weed had set up his very detailed, operating Z gauge layout with many buildings and some engines scratch-built. Amazing the amount of track, industries, and scenery you can get into only 4’ by 4’! Most of his track and rolling stock is by Micro-Trains, which he considers better than Marklin, although he has a lot of that too. His realistic, scale passenger cars were made from Christmas tree decoration cars!

If you haven’t visited the P&W, be sure to go to Valdese the next time they have an open house day! (Check out their website).

<http://www.pwrr.org/>

## The Norfolk Southern Heritage locomotives!

by Bob Halsey

We were fortunate to have all 20 of the Norfolk Southern Heritage locomotive fleet visiting the NC Transportation Museum in Spencer (the former Southern Railroad locomotive works) on July 3rd & 4th! These locomotives are all brand-new, and every one of them has a beautiful paint job representing each of the former railroads that were absorbed into the current Norfolk Southern.



*NS Heritage includes several Northeast Anthracite RR's via Conrail*

On the evening of July 2nd, a half dozen or so CSD members were invited to act as hosts/guides during the reception and briefing at the Salisbury railway station. There was an excellent catered meal of barbecued pork, fried chicken, etc. (free to us hosts, \$15 to other attendees) and some great home-made ice cream (at extra cost, of course) from a different vendor. After the meal, there was a presentation by an NS executive and by Andy

Fletcher, the artist who designed the paint schemes. He told us that much research was required to figure out the best way to adapt the old road schemes to the new engines, and to determine the exact colors to use. Some paint hues were no longer being made, and then there was some difficulty obtaining permission to use certain of the old designs.



The next day, July 3rd, at Spencer it was hot (upper 90s) and humid! Starting at 7 AM, the Museum staff had each of the engine crews move their engines onto the turntable one after the other, where each was rotated slowly 360 degrees and then went back onto their designated roundhouse track. This gave the assembled railfans (hundreds of them!) plenty of opportunity to take photos. You could tell the engine crews were proud to display their charges because each would sound the horn, or ring the bell, or turn on headlights or ditch lights, or do all of these! This process took about 2 ½ hours, and the two ambulances present were busy the whole day treating heat exhaustion cases!



But the gift shop was doing a record amount of sales, and there were other vendors in the roundhouse selling shirts and other souvenirs continuously the whole day! The Museum had obviously spent much time and effort preparing for this event, as evidenced by the freshly painted

turntable and their own Southern locomotives, and new gravel ballast on some of the siding tracks.

Everyone who attended these events would agree that the Norfolk Southern and the Spencer Museum deserve an emphatic “Well Done!” for their planning and executing of the Heritage Days!



Of course, on July 5th, these locomotives all went back to work for the railroad, but their paint jobs are expected to last for at least ten years. You can learn much more about this event by reading the recent issue of “Trains” magazine.



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## Locomotive Collection Sale

The Piedmont Division, SER has many locomotives left from their auction of a collection. They are mostly new, in the box. Many roadnames are included. If you are interested, the full list is available on their web site:  
<http://www.piedmont-div.org/>

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## Letters:

### THE “ME-ME-ME” CHORUS LINE

Gosh, it was good to get the “ME-ME-ME” chorus document in the mail recently. Of course, I am referring to the annual “statement of candidacy”/ballot. This year was something of a milestone. The two candidates for MER President have chosen to step aside from the traditional chorus and actually tell us what they want to do in the next two years as MER President. What a concept!

Unfortunately the rest of the candidates fall into the “ME-ME-ME” chorus. What, pray tell, does the number of grandchildren have to do with the job they will do if elected? Who really cares about their membership status? Or how long they have been a member? Is it important to tell how many conventions they have attended –or– would it be better to state their ideas for improving future conventions to attract more attendees? Stop with the “ME-ME-ME” nonsense. Tell us what you want to do in your term to make the MER and its Divisions grow and prosper.

Candidate Hladik said “it doesn’t matter who you vote for just vote” but, as for me, I’ll choose between the two Presidential candidates because they have been good enough to share part of their vision with me. The balance of the candidates, even though they are unopposed, will get no vote from me because they have not earned it. Or given me any reason to cast a vote for them. If they can drag up a fourth, they can form a barbershop quartet and take to the road.

Rick Knight

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Editor's note:

Just before publication, I received a revised Ballot from MER. **The first Ballot form (printed on white paper) will not be valid for voting** and even if you mailed that in, you must mail in the new (colored yellow) ballot to have your vote count.



### The Division Brass

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### Division Website:

[www.carolinasouthern.org](http://www.carolinasouthern.org)

### Submissions For Brass Pounder

Next Issue Submission Date  
November 2012 October 20, 2012

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

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