

# THE BRASS POUNDER

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

Volume 15 Number 1

March 2015

---

---

## ***Carolina Southern Division Events***

---

**Saturday, Mar 21, 2015 – 9:30 – 12:00**

### **RMU Extension Class**

**Interior lighting for passenger cars**

Hunter Acres Baptist Church

4620 Heman Drive, Charlotte, NC.

---

**Saturday, Apr 18, 2015 – 10:00 – 12:00**

### **Layout Tour**

**Fred Miller's condo Uptown Charlotte**

Space is limited so visitors must be scheduled  
over time, please email

[assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org)

for directions and scheduled time.

---

**Saturday, May 16, 2015**

### **RMU Extension Class**

**Seth Gartner's Home Layout**

**TT&TO Operations**

Check web site for details

---

**Saturday 3/14 & 4/11 10:00 – 2:00**

### **Wade's Train Town**

### **Open House**

Town Hall, Brookford, NC

---

---

## ***Calendar of Events***

---

**2015 NMRA National Convention**

**August 23 - August 30, 2015**

Portland OR

<http://www.nmra2015portland.org/>

---

**Asheville Model Train Show**

**Fri Mar 6 12-7 Sat Mar 7 9-5**

WNC Ag Center

NC Hwy 280, Airport Rd

Exit 40 off I-26 Fletcher, NC

[www.asheville-trainshow.com](http://www.asheville-trainshow.com)

---

**2015 Greensboro Train Show**

**Saturday, Mar 21, 2015 - 10 am - 3 pm,**

Greensboro AMTRAK Station, Greensboro, NC.

---

**NC Railroad Expo**

**Sat, April 11, 9am – 4pm**

Hickory Metro Convention Center,

1960 13th Avenue Drive Southeast,

Hickory, NC

<http://www.tarheelpress.com/Trainshow/>

---

**Delaware Valley Turn**

**MER Convention**

**Oct 22-25, 2015**

Mt. Laurel, NJ

<http://mer-nmra.com/MERConv.html>

## Superintendent's Corner

By Jack Haynes

As we start out on a new year for the Division, I want to thank and congratulate last year's officers and Directors, ably led by Larry Paffrath, for pulling together and making 2014 a successful year, culminating in another great Railroad Modelling University in January. Let's keep their example in mind as we move forward in 2015.

At the Annual Business Meeting, I think we assembled a good team to accomplish that. I moved from Director to Superintendent, and Fred Miller returns as Clerk after a hiatus as MER Business Manager. After filling in as Assistant Superintendent last year, Rusty Doss continues as RMU Chair and also as Publicity Chair. Blayne Olsen steps in to fill my previous Director position, Andrew Stitt takes over as Program/activity Chair and Nancy Campbell picks up the Membership Chair position. Roy, Gil, and John continue as Directors and Paymaster.

Andrew got busy right away and has lined up several special events for Division members. The goal is to have an activity on the third Saturday of every month except December. We will try to have an equal mix of meetings with a clinic or demonstration, site tours or visits to layouts or prototype, and longer RMU extension classes expanding on topics presented at RMU, but limited by the one hour time available there.

In February, we had a presentation on how Morgan Feldon and Troy Cross built a helix for their layout with help from other Division members. In March, Roy Becker will show how to add lighting to a passenger car. In April we will have a tour of Fred Miller's expanded layout in uptown Charlotte.

So Andrew is off to a great start planning future sessions with only a few slots open for the rest of the year. I encourage everyone to reward his efforts by participating. Come on out and join the fun, get to meet new people, and if you are not careful, you might even accidentally learn something.

Better yet, contact Andrew with ideas on what you can share with other Division members by way of a presentation at a meeting, a tour of your

layout, or a visit to a site of interest to modellers that you know about or where you have a personal contact.

Rusty and Gil are working on modernizing our communication capability with Facebook links on the web site and other social media features. Watch for more on that in upcoming months.

Together we can make the hobby more enjoyable and productive for all of us. I hope to see you at a future Division event.

=====  
**Carolina Southern Division  
Annual Business Meeting  
Summary**

By Jack Haynes

The Carolina Southern Division held its Annual Business Meeting on January 31, 2015 at Hunter Acres Baptist Church. The following is a summary of the meeting. Full minutes will be available on the Division web site.

There are 97 current members, with a gain of 4 over December 2013. Only 6 of the 12 monthly MER membership reports were received from the MER business manager, making it difficult to track expiration/new member trends.

John Stevens gave his paymasters financial report for CSD, including small gain for the year and a breakout of the revenue from the recent RMU.

Gil Brauch reported on the Brookford Project. 292 individuals visited the layout during open houses in the last year. Gil asks Division members to sign up to host the monthly Open House events. If people volunteer to do it just once a year, we should have enough to cover it for the year.

Gil Brauch gave his report on the CarolinaSouthern.org website. We have been using more of Paypal for events like RMU. We intend to add a Donate Now button. Rusty Doss is working on a Facebook presence. The page will be managed by the Publicity Chairman.

Jack Haynes edited and published 5 issues of the Brass Pounder this year. Each issue is about 10-12 pages.

Dave Chance reported on the Achievement program. There are some 12 members who are actively working on an AP certificate or have asked Dave questions on the subject.

This year:

- John Shefte - Golden Spike award
- Seth Gartner Prototype Models. Merit award and his first AP certificate, as well as Master Builder Scenery and four other merit awards.
- Tim Rumph - Chief Dispatcher
- Jack Parker had a car reviewed and received excellent scores.

Dave is writing an article about the awards over the last two years and the Achievement program.

Rusty Doss joined the board this year as Assistant Superintendent. He gave his report on the Railroad Model University as well as the new Haberdashery program which provides CSD-logged embroidered items for the club. Button down and Golf shirts, as well as ball caps.

Nearly 80 attendees at this year's RMU. Rusty read some of the survey comments about the quality of the programs. Rusty thanked Jim Rager for running the White Elephant table which earned over \$300 this year.

CSD has contracted with Lucky Dog Designs to exclusively print CSD-branded apparel for the next two years. A legal contract was signed, protecting the club. The club will have an appointed position of Wearables Manager (Haberdasher) who handles all orders. If members want their name embroidered, Rusty will contact LDD and agree on an extra charge for this service. The club is looking at additional apparel choices such as T-shirts.

Rusty and Gil are working together on a Facebook page as a supplement to the CSD website. CSD will be a Facebook fansite, not a personal page. There were several more comments about ways to use Facebook and its advantages.

Larry has read all of the RMU surveys and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Elections:

Roy Becker, Jack Haynes, and Gil Brauch were the nominating committee. Gil will conduct the elections for 2015.

Results:

Jack Haynes - 1 year unexpired term of Superintendent

Larry resumes the role of Assistant Superintendent.

Fred Miller - Clerk for the 1 year unexpired term.

Roy Becker - Director 2017.

Blayne Olsen - the unexpired term of Director 2016 (vacated by Jack Haynes)

Appointed positions:

Andrew Stitt - Events Coordinator.

Rusty Doss - Publicity Manager/Haberdashery

Fred Miller – Brass Pounder Editor

Nancy Campbell – Membership.

Marcus Neubacher – Rail Ops Weekend

Rusty Doss - RMU

Members to be on the lookout for items that would be of value to the November Swap Meet / White Elephant table.

Bob Halsey hopes to put on a Boy Scout merit badge program this year which includes Gil's Operation Lifesaver program and the Division's switching tables. Last year's event didn't happen due to unexpected cancellation of the Exploratorium event. Bob will contact Mecklenberg or Piedmont council.

Division will plan for an event every month on the third Saturday. There will be a mix of clinics, RMU Extensions, and site visits/tours.

Annual picnic currently planned for September at Jack Parker's.

=====  
**Carolina Southern Division  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Summary**

**February 21, 2015**

By Jack Haynes

Attendees: Jack Haynes, John Stevens, Roy Becker, Blayne Olsen, Andrew Stitt, Nancy Campbell

Division has filed required reports with MER. They were: Officer membership Certification, and Annual Division Report. Both are required to have the Division activities under the NMRA Liability Insurance program

Jack will update the Division incorporation information on NC Department of State web site.

The Board authorized the expense for spend the \$15.00 filing fee to update the records. Updated addresses will be Jack's as Superintendent and Fred's as Clerk.

2015 Activity Calendar status

Andrew reported on discussions he has had with potential presenters and hosts for upcoming Division events. He has filled most events through September pending confirmation with hosts and presenters.

Andrew asked for opinions on whether with two events in September and one special event in October whether we should also have a regular Division meeting in October. The general feeling was that we should have a regular event on the third Saturday to maintain that as a regular predictable time and to provide an activity for members who might not participate in RailOps. Andrew will work on filling in something for the October meeting.

See the Division web site for details of scheduled events.

Division Train Show Presence.

The Division will work on upgrading its presence at area train shows. Some sort of demonstration or presentation will be included along with an update to the Display Board to show more recent activities and have holders for flyers for future Division events like the 2015 RailOps weekend and 2016 RMU.

The Board agreed that we need a supply of flyers for RailRun and RMU for the upcoming train shows at Hickory in April and Metrolina in June. Andrew and Roy will look into updating the 2015 RMU flyer and work with Rusty to get some for both that and RailOps.

RMU

Discussion of RMU was limited because both Larry and Rusty were not able to attend.

Roy will try to confirm a date for next year with Northside Baptist targeting the third Saturday that we have had the past couple of years.

John expressed his concern (as Paymaster) that without the income from the White Elephant The Brass Pounder Volume 15 No 1

Sale at RMU, the profit we made was just enough to cover the utilities cost for Brookford. We need to be cautious in committing to any significant expenses.

501(c)3 status at National:

Jack reported that email correspondence with MER officers and the National East Director indicated that the program to cover regions and divisions under the National 501(c)3 status has entered a test phase with a pilot effort with MCoR underway. Main obstacle has been slow processing by IRS. They hope to expand program to Divisions in late 2015.

Other items:

There have been some inquiries about having Brookford open for a child's birthday party. We will need to know what the town's policy toward that would be and if they approve of it, whether we should consider opening it for such special events. We discussed what compensation we would ask for, whether the town would allow us to ask for something, and how we would staff it so that everything didn't fall on Gil.

More detailed minutes of the meeting can be found on the Division web site.

=====

**Letter to Editor:**

I would like to congratulate everyone on the presentations your Division 12 of the MER gave to us at RMU 2015. It was great to hear about the different approaches/ developments in a way that everyone present could easily understand. I know that I am much better informed then I was, and I am much more confident about what the future of my model train layout will look like as well as run. Once again I offer my thanks for such a rewarding experience. I look forward to next year's RMU.

Stephen C. Wood, MMR  
Division 13/MER

## NC Rail Run 2014

By Rusty Doss, Asst Superintendent, CSD  
assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org

What is NC Railrun? That is exactly what I wanted to know and I planned to find out over the Labor Day Holiday weekend this year. So after speaking with Marcus Neubacher, the Chairman of this year's event, this is what I discovered. NC RailRun began in 2006 under Mid-Eastern Region sponsorship. It was MER-sponsored until 2011, when one of the organizers of the event suggested that the Carolina Southern Division get involved due to the concentration of operating layouts around Charlotte. At that time, there were actually two operations events being held at roughly the same time, so it seemed logical to merge the efforts to create one event. Under the Carolina Southern banner in 2011 and 2012, the event was hosted much the same as it is now. The principal differences were that the CSD was able to handle online registration and website promotion of the event, whereas those functions were done independently by a registrar in the years that it was not being run through the CSD.

OpSIG and the NMRA are not completely separate groups. The OpSIG is a part of the NMRA as one of its Special Interest Groups, for people who focus on the operations part of the hobby. The OpSIG itself cannot sponsor events such as this, but its members can organize the events with the support and sponsorship of the NMRA. OpSIG is a group within the NMRA, that has a special interest in prototypical operations of layouts, much like the Layout Design SIG's focus is on layout design. The 2014 event was held Friday August 29 through Sunday August 31, 2014 and covered the Raleigh, Greensboro, Hickory and Charlotte areas of North Carolina. On each of these days, events were scheduled for morning sessions, afternoon sessions and all day sessions, in both the eastern and western parts of the area. The idea is to give participant operators of NC Railrun a chance to operate on many different layouts over the three days, in four to six hour operating sessions, thereby sampling many different layouts or all day events that were designed to give operators in-depth sessions on a few layouts. Two of the layouts that I operate on

regularly were scheduled for Friday and Saturday and since both of them were HO Scale, I worked my way into an N Scale layout on Sunday

CR&E Railway, Marcus Neubacher  
China Grove, NC  
August 31, 2014 - Day 3

The CR&E is a coal hauling bridge route connecting the midwest and the southeast. Design and operation of the railroad has drawn influences from actual railroads such as the Clinchfield, the Southern Railway, and the Norfolk & Western. Model railroad influences include W. Allen McClelland's Virginian & Ohio, Tony Koester's Allegheny Midland, and Eric Brooman's Utah Belt, among others. The modeled portion on Version One of the CR&E represented the railroad between Lewisburg, WV, and Roanoke, VA. Construction of Version One in a 16 X 16 foot room began in March 1996. The layout operated from 1998 until 2008, when it was dismantled in preparation for a move to a new home. The modeled portion on Version Two is the same, though expanded for longer runs between stations, and now includes some additional trackage west of Lewisburg. The territory gained west of Lewisburg allows for the representation of the Kessler & Northern District, a territory of coal-hauling branchlines that connect with the CR&E mainline west of Lewisburg at Meadow Bluff, WV. The new railroad occupies two main rooms, 11 X 22 feet in size and 15.5 X 19 feet in size, connected through a laundry room/half bath. Construction began late in 2008 and the first test operating session was in December 2009. Over the 18 months or so that followed, construction continued with additional territory coming online. The railroad is set in the late 1980's to early 1990's (roughly 1989-1994), which allows the operation of a few locomotives from Norfolk Southern's predecessors Norfolk & Western and Southern Railway, as well as a large variety of CSX Transportation predecessor paint schemes. (Source: kntower.com)

So, with this kind of intro I had high expectations for this layout, and let me tell you now, and get it out of the way, I was blown away!!!! There seems to be a "line" a "gap" if you

will between those that call themselves "N-Scalers" and the rest of the model railroad world. I have to admit, that I was guilty, as most HO scale people are, when we hear N Scale mentioned. But for that I apologize. Making a decision about something before ever giving it a chance, is wrong, period. So, with all this said, I made my way to Marcus' house to see his CR&E railroad and get an idea of how N Scale operates.

Just like the previous two sessions, we all took a tour of the railroad. Marcus lead the way as we made our way though a two car garage that had been converted into one of the two trains rooms. Marcus "finished" this area but left room for a crew lounge, that area is still under construction, trains are the priority.



PICS BY FNGFASHA PRODUCTIONS/YOUTUBE

Ken Mann, (L), Chris Wiley, Marcus Neubacher (center) leading the tour in room two and Steve King (far right).



PICS BY FNGFASHA PRODUCTIONS/YOUTUBE

Westbound trains are lined up at the Roanoke, VA, staging yard.

The west end staging yard represents Charleston, WV, and other points west of the modeled portion of the railroad. For reference, this area of the railroad is below the Roanoke, VA staging yard.



PICS BY FNGFASHA PRODUCTIONS/YOUTUBE

Charleston, WV



PICS BY FNGFASHA PRODUCTIONS/YOUTUBE

Glace, WV, on the lower level is where the 2.5%+ grade up through the Loops begins. The Loops connect the railroad's lower and upper levels.



Passing from one room to the next, I noticed this basket. Paperwork for trains that are awaiting crews is kept in sequential order in a bin in the crew room. The paperwork includes a laminated instruction card and map on the reverse side, clipped to a pouch that holds the car cards and waybills for the train. Cars being set off at the classification yard at Lewisburg, WV, are clipped together using clothes pins.. To the right of this area are the steps to go upstairs where we had our crew meeting. Also dispatch is upstairs, thus the radios!



*This is what meets you as you pass from one room into the next! And yes, that red dot near the middle of the picture is a working signal.*

Anderson is the name of an intermediate signal in the Loops. Here the tracks make a horseshoe curve around Anderson's Geyser as they climb the Alleghenies. This area of the railroad is influenced by the Southern Railways Old Fort Loops and Andrews' Geyser in that area.



As we pass through the hallway, the trains need a place to pass through. The railroad is built in two separate rooms, with a small laundry room between them. To get to the other room, the railroad makes a brief run behind the washer and

dryer. On the lower level is West Lewisburg and on the upper level is Tub Run.



*Paint Bank, VA, is a busy place near the top of the climb over the Alleghenies.*

Coal from loadouts on the western portion of the railroad is moved to Paint Bank by "Hill Runs" for later pickup by other coal trains. Pictured in the siding at Paint Bank is local C54, ready to make its way back west to the yard at Lewisburg (seen on the lower level.)

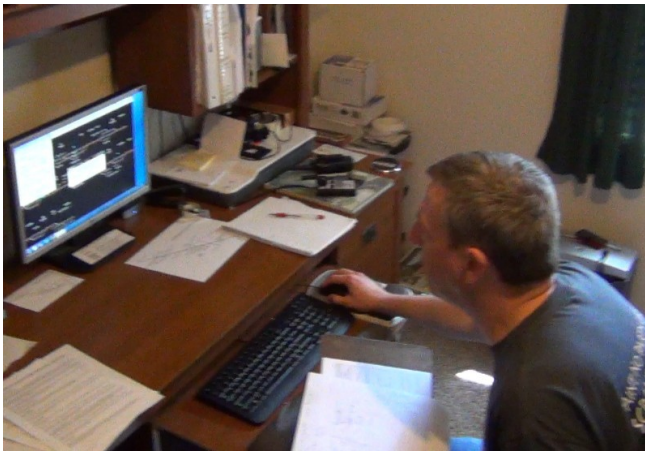
With the tour completed, it was time for a crew meeting and to hand out assignments. I was excited to see many people here that I know locally and from meeting this weekend.



*Ken Mann (L), Jeff Lindstrom, Tim Rumph (P&W Mbr), Steve Holzherimer (standing) and Larry Keller (L&HRR) in doorway.*



*Steve King in recliner, Marcus Neubacher (center at table), Chris Wiley (right side of table), and Ben Earp (seated against wall)*



With crew meeting and assignments handed out, Marcus headed to the Dispatcher's Office to get them started. Marcus is setting up the CATS dispatching program and JMRI fast clock for the session. The dispatcher works upstairs, completely out of sight and earshot of the railroad. Communication is via FRS radios and dispatching is mostly by CTC following signal indications.

Marcus has resistors installed on most, but not all of the axles on all rolling stock. That with block signaling allows the dispatcher to run a CTC System while routing trains and following their progress on screen.



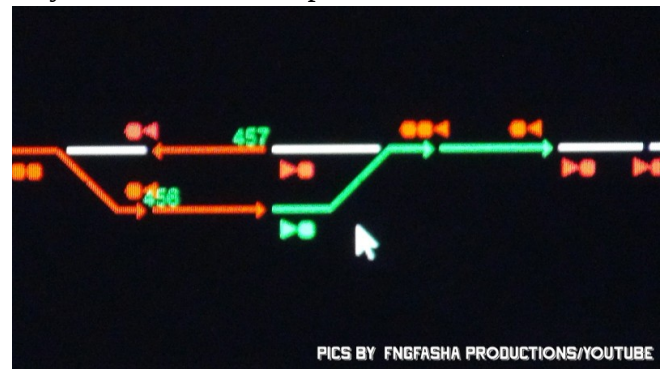
The westbound signals at Ridge, the passing siding in the Loops, are displaying "stop" indications.



CATS dispatching console

The CATS dispatching console is used to control switches and signals on the railroad. The program, designed by Rodney Black, is based on the DigiCon dispatching software used by the prototype railroads beginning in the late 1980's. It is available for free download from the JMRI website.

The Dispatcher gives a Train Crew its clearance and then watches as the Train progresses through Block Signaling. If a crew gets a red light and then green to proceed and the train does not start to move within a timely fashion, (not that Engineers would be distracted) the Dispatcher can note the lack of movement on screen and then contact the train crew via two-way radio to check for problems.



A close-up of the East End Dispatcher's console shows eastbound time freight 456 entering the siding at Ridge, where westbound counterpart 457 is waiting.



Chris Wiley working the Roanoke VA staging yard

I had a chance to talk with Chris Wiley from Lynchburg Va. This was Chris's first time on this layout, but he had operated on the CR&ER in 2006 at the old layout. Chris mentioned that he was heavy into N Scale and this weekend had been phenomenal! Chris said "You can do HO



things, you can do N scale things, you can see everyone's different layouts." I asked Chris which other railroads he has visited. Chris replied that he had been to Seth Gartner's, Scott Teague's and then Larry Keller's earlier that day. Chris also mentioned that he got involved in OpSIG in 2002 and has enjoyed every event.

In wasn't long before I caught up with my new friend Ken Mann. He was running Train #596, a coal train as he was pulling into Glace. Here Train #596 would need the help of C91 engineered by Martin Oakes to get up the grade into Catawba.



*Martin Oakes radios to dispatch to get clearance to enter passing track and couple to #596.*



*C91 eases up to the end of #596 and prepares to couple in Glace.*

Pusher locomotives are used to move heavy coal trains up the Loops east of Glace, WV. Following prototype practice, a separate crew is used for the manned pushers. Two ancient N&W SD35's prepare to tie on to coal train 596 in the siding at Glace. Westbound local C54 is on the mainline waiting for its turn to work.



*Eastbound coal train 596 emerges from Wolf Hills Tunnel as it struggles upgrade through the Loops.*



*Steve King (L), Jeff Lindstrom and Tim Rumph.*

Steve's Virginia Midland is a well-known N Scale railroad that operates with Timetable & Train Order rules and is part of the Appalachian Lines system with Allen McClelland's Virginian & Ohio and Tony Koester's Allegheny Midland. These railroads had a huge influence on Marcus' model railroading.

As operations get underway, all things seem to be running smoothly, I corner Marcus for some questions. I ask Marcus if this is his first operation Railrun event in the new house? Marcus replied that he has been running trains here for about 5 years in regular operating sessions. He and his crew try to meet every other month or so, but recently he has turned into every three months. Marcus skipped the last Railrun, but in 2010 they setup an N Scale only Railrun. 2006, 2007 & 2008, they had started out on a yearly basis, but then decided that it was a lot to do yearly. I ask Marcus what "jitters" he is feeling right now, what was his concern about today when he rolled out of bed? He replies that he would turn on the power and nothing would work. We all get a loud laugh on that, it is a common concern by railroad owners. Marcus continues and says "that no matter how many times you run it by yourself or how many times you run it with the

regular crew, when people that don't run here all the time show up, you expect the worse to happen. Something will always happen. It is funny that this common concern is shared by all the railroad owners I have talked with this weekend.

Watching Marcus have a conversation with me, monitor the radio he has and the conversation on the railroad nearest us, I get the feeling that Marcus is in his element as a veteran railroad owner.

With that I move on and ask Marcus: As a veteran of the NC Railrun/OpSIG, what advice would you have for someone considering having folks over to operate on their layout for the first time at an Railrun event? Talk about a crew, what type of crew do you want here to be with you? Marcus says that preparation is the best thing: "Prepare as much as you can, make a list of all the things you want people to know. Have a few sessions completed, run the railroad with a crew a few times, make sure, your first ops session is not a Railrun event."

We move into another area of the railroad where there is less activity going on and I find my new friend Steve King at New Castle, VA, working on Train C41, the New Castle Switcher. (Steve put in about 8 fast clock hours on that job, which is typical). Larry Keller is with us and I can't pass up the opportunity to snap a pic of Larry and Marcus with Steve King.



*Larry Keller (L), Marcus Neubacher & Steve King. Smiles say a lot.*

As we were walking into the room, Marcus said he didn't want to have his picture taken with the headset on and look like a "Capital Dweb" but given the opportunity to be photographed with Steve King, he forgets all about it. Marcus is a good guy, but a serious railroader. So I head us back into my interview with Marcus before he

gets pulled away by saying, "So rule # one, make sure everything runs. Your biggest concern is that the power will come on when you flip the switch and what? Marcus replies that again, don't let the first time you "operate" your railroad be a OpSIG event. It is good to prepare, work out problems, car routings, line ups, try to figure out how things are supposed to happen. Think about all the things someone might ask you, you will never be able to think of all of them, but have people on hand to help and answer the questions. That is why I have Larry (Keller, Lehigh & Hudson River Railway) and Jeff (Lindstrom) here with me.



*Terminal Trainmaster Jeff Lindstrom (L) and Lewisburg Yardmaster Tim Rumph preparing to do some work at Lewisburg Yard.*

Tim is a visiting operator for NC Railrun, while Jeff is a regular operator who frequently works the yard at Lewisburg. Pairing up a guest with a regular operator makes special operating sessions run more smoothly, especially with key positions such as yardmasters and dispatchers.

In my effort to learn more about this group, I asked Marcus about an apron I had seen: "So let me ask, as someone that knows nothing about it, I saw an apron that had the OpSIG, Special Operations Group printed on it, tell me a little about that. Marcus replies that OpSIG is a Special Interest Group of the National Model Railroad Association. I'm a Carolina Southern member, but you don't have to be an NMRA member to be a OpSIG member. These events have to be sponsored by either a Division, a Region or National and can be co-sponsored by OpSIG. So that is how we can cover ourselves as far as, well you got NMRA insurance, that's kind of like a second step to your homeowner's insurance. A host must be an NMRA member for

the NMRA insurance to apply to them, but a non-member can host a session accepting that they are not covered by NMRA insurance. I ask "what makes it a special interest group?" Marcus replies that that you have layout design special interest group, people that focus on one thing. Larry Keller adds "People that are interested in operating a railroad." And I say that's all? Marcus says "NO, it's, to me, the most interesting thing about model railroading is operating it. Being an OpSIG member, and I just recently joined, their publication has things like running by a timetable, train orders, doing car card and waybills, all the stuff that involves running the railroad. Layout Design SIG covers building a layout and how to arrange track and all that stuff. And with that, I start to get it: People join the NMRA, but some people have a more focused interest in one area of railroading. That's cool!

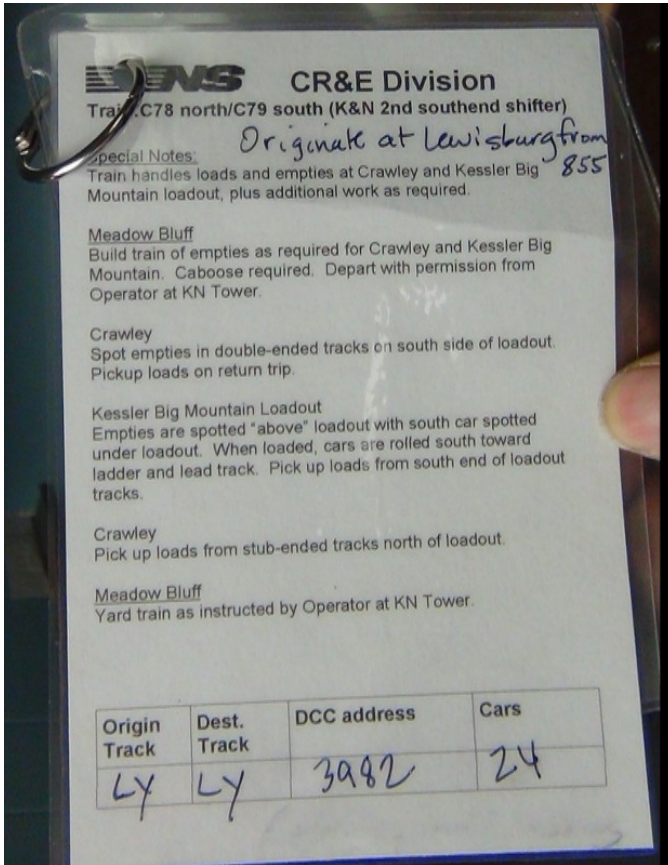
I knew my time with Marcus would be short, it is just the way he is wired. He runs off to make a crew change and I turn to Larry Keller and say: So tell me why, Mr. Keller, me as an HO guy, should not scowl when I hear N Scale? I get the laugh I want and continue with: why should I not look like a cat that had water thrown on it? Larry smiles then laughs. Let me be clear here, I love the people that this hobby is made up of. I enjoy a great debate, as long as it doesn't turn into a personal attack and I love to have fun with others, even at my own expense. I knew the opportunity I was giving Larry, but I wanted to honestly know and I felt comfortable enough with him, (in the short time that we had met and talked) to ask him. So he starts off "Why shouldn't you..." and I add "look down on..." and we both laugh out loud! Once we are done laughing, Larry replies, I guess you shouldn't be a "scalist" and I reply "good answer!!" We laugh some more. But then Larry warms to the subject and says " there is no reason to look down on it, it runs like a Swiss Watch. I ask, what are some of the "nuances" of N scale that a HO scale guy, might not experience? Larry smiles as he replies: Well, the ability to run 25 or 30 car trains, actually having a long run from town to town, I think that is one of the main advantages. Or if you like having space between towns, so you feel like you are actually going somewhere. As opposed to coming out of one town and immediately going into the next. I shake

my head as I agree with that. So then I ask, what had been my argument up to this point and as mentioned at the beginning of this article, unfairly done so by me: Someone says to you "I don't want to run N scale because I can't see the numbers on the cars.", how does working with N scale on a railroad like this work? Do the numbers matter? Larry replies: yes and no. There are unit trains, 25 hopper cars going, wherever they're going, the car numbers are not material. But then you have locals, that are delivering individual cars, or two or three cars to a location, that is where the numbers are important. I say: So the unit trains alleviate the need for car cards or a waybill system, to a point. Larry agrees and says yea, the numbers are small, but deal with it. There are plenty of HO cars with small numbers. I agree, Larry makes a valid point. We continue the conversation with good spirited, laugh filled jokes and jabs at one another, and to me, that's what this hobby is all about: Fun.

I move again to get out of the way, the railroad is flowing good now and with it, so are the train crews. As I move I get a chance to talk with Ben Earp. Ben, who was the Assistant Trainmaster and Company Photographer helping the road crews and taking pictures and video during the event. Ben has an active YouTube Channel (NTrainFan) for sharing layout tours, modeling tips, railfan adventures, etc. Ben heard our conversation about N versus HO scale and wanted to offer why he chose N scale. Ben said: He lives in an apartment and has his N scale home layout in his second bedroom, he choose N scale because he could not do what he wanted to do, with HO in the apartment. Ben models the Salt Lake Route, but instead of being modeled out west, he has it set in Western North Carolina. I will admit, that if you are limited on space for a home layout, N scale should be considered.

I'm off and moving again, I can only imagine how many trains have made their way along this railroad. I invited myself here at the last moment, well that is not true. During Saturday's event, I made the decision to try and get into Marcus' session, I called and left him a message, asking if I could come up and observe. Marcus was gracious enough to allow me to do this, so I wanted to stay out of the way. As I turn the corner I run into Ken Mann getting his next train

assignment. I take this time to get a good look at the paperwork used by the train crews.



Ken has been assigned C78, here is the front side of the Crew's Paperwork. It has special notes and all stops, pickups and set outs.

Back side of Crew's Paperwork shows track, load out, junctions and turnouts. All in a nice plastic sleeve for protection, with a ring for lanyard, if you wear one. I like it!

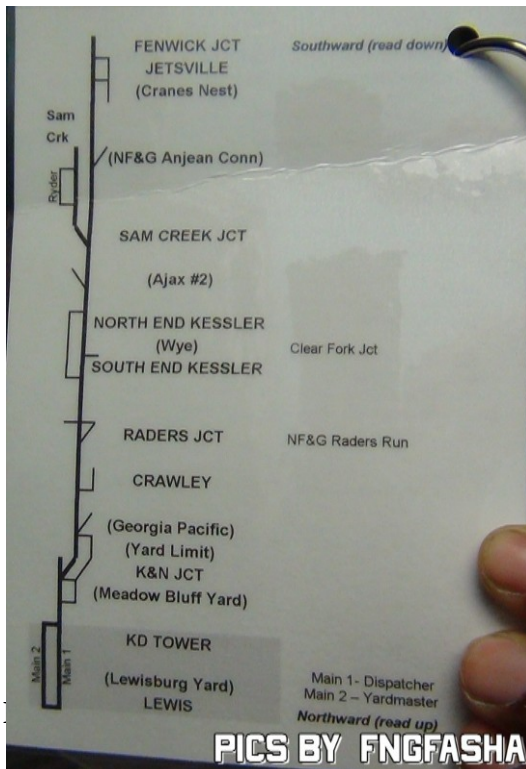


Steve Holzheimer (L) and Quintin Foster from Salt Lake City are working the Dispatcher's Desk.

Steve is a regular and was serving as Chief Dispatcher overseeing the visiting dispatchers. Steve's N Scale Akron, Canton & Youngstown hosted a short guest session during the NC RailRun. Steve and his wife Cynthia prepared a great meal for the visitors as well.

Marcus takes a breath and smiles, I walk over to say thank you for allowing me to spend some time on his railroad. Superintendents are tough, they don't like interlopers who do nothing but get in the way. I had heard that Marcus was operating every third month and asked about that. He replied that in the past, they would operate every other month, but there are so many operating layouts in this area, that every Saturday was full, so we (Marcus and his regular crew) decided to go every three months. When I asked what is next, Marcus says he has more scenery to finish, more signals need work, some more local controls for switches need to be wired, but normally he will work on what he's in the mood to do.

I mention that I have not been to a layout that has the number of functioning signals that the CR&E has, that to me, it brings a level of realism to the layout. Marcus replied that it has certainly cut down on a lot of the radio traffic, "we use to talk constantly here." Wanting to know more about the signals and how they helped with operations, I asked Marcus: So an engineer will get authorization from Dispatch to go from Anderson to Abbott and then the engineer follows the signals? Green light proceed and red light stop? Marcus' reply is yes, he just follows the signal indication. He travels out of the yard on



The

signal indication until he gets a red signal, and then he stops until he gets green to proceed. I can see how this would cut down on radio traffic!

So I thanked Marcus for allowing me to get in the way, shake his hand and head out. It was educational, and really cool, to see a fabulous N Scale layout in operation. This afternoon, dispelled a lot of my concerns over N scale. Truth being stranger than fiction, I'm now the owner of a small N Scale layout and have started collecting engines and rolling stock. Have I given up on HO Scale? No. But I no longer consider myself a "scalist" (Thank you very much Mr. Keller) any more :-)

Find more about Marcus Neubacher's CR&E Railway at [www.kntower.com](http://www.kntower.com)

Hats off to all the owners, regular crews and visitors who made NC Railrun a huge success

again this year and allowed me to help, hinder or interlope. This three day weekend had me running all over the place, but it was well worth it. I saw three different railroad layouts, operated three different ways, some with clocks, some without. Dispatchers on telephones, dispatchers with two-way radios and no Dispatcher!!!! Car cards, switch list, steam engines and diesel locomotives, but most of all, what I saw at all three railroads, was not the differences, but the one common thing: fun

## **2015 MER Convention**

Mike McNamara

Delran, NJ

As we get further into 2015, a lot of details about this year's convention will start to become available. For those going, thinking of going or still on the fence, there are two great resources to stay abreast of the convention activities.

First, subscribe to the Yahoo group **MER2015**. Here you will be able to see information as it becomes available and also ask any questions you might have about the convention. Go to the link below and select the option to Join the group.

MER 2015 Convention:

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MER2015/info>

A group to share information and ask questions about the Mid-Eastern Region's Fall 2015 Convention, the Delaware Valley Turn, hosted by the New Jersey Division.

Second, be sure to check out the web site for the convention:

**[DelawareValleyTurn.org](http://DelawareValleyTurn.org)**

Here you can get information on each convention activity as well as the registration form, photos of open layouts, info on the Ops Sessions and other events. We will also have information about the hotel and local eateries and other important information to make your stay easier and enjoyable. The site will be updated with information on a regular basis as we move forward, so make a bookmark and check it out regularly.

Our convention hotel will be the center of all convention activities. The 281 Smoke-free rooms feature 37" HD Flat screens and complimentary Wi-Fi and wired Internet

**Page intentionally blank**

**The Division Brass**

Superintendent Jack Haynes  
 superintendent@carolinasouthern.org  
 Asst. Superintendent Larry Paffrath  
 assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org  
 Clerk Fred Miller  
 clerk@carolinasouthern.org  
 Paymaster John Stevens  
 Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org  
 Director 2016 Blayne Olsen  
 director1@carolinasouthern.org  
 Director 2014 Roy Becker  
[director2@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:director2@carolinasouthern.org)  
 Director 2015 Gil Brauch  
 director3@carolinasouthern.org  
 AP Chairman Dave Chance  
 Apchair@carolinasouthern.org  
 Webmaster Gil Brauch  
 Webmaster@carolinasouthern.org  
 Newsletter Editor Fred Miller  
 editor@carolinasouthern.org  
 Program Chair Andrew Stitt  
 program@carolinasouthern.org  
 RMU Chair Rusty Doss  
 RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org  
 Publicity Chair Rusty Doss  
 publicity@carolinasouthern.org  
 Membership Nancy Campbell  
 membership@carolinasouthern.org

**Division Website:**  
[www.carolinasouthern.org](http://www.carolinasouthern.org)

**Submissions For Brass Pounder**

Next Issue Submission Date  
 May 2015 April 24, 2015

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

Editor: Fred Miller  
[editor@carolina](mailto:editor@carolinasouthern.org)southern.org  
 333 W Trade St #2504,  
 Charlotte, NC 28202-1753  
 704-332-1753

=====

