

# THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 25 Number 9

September 2025

## Division Coming Events

**2025 CSD Annual  
Picnic**

**Village Park 700 W. C  
Street in Kannapolis on  
September 20th at  
11am**

**Sign-up by 9-17**

## **Superintendent's Corner**

By Andrew Stitt

In September the Carolina Southern Division will be having our annual member picnic at the Kannapolis Village Park (at shelter D). This has been a regular occurrence within the Division since long before I was a member. It is a very casual affair, with the Division providing hamburgers, hot dogs, condiments, and plates, etc. Each member who decides to attend is asked to bring a side item or desert to share.

What has always stood out to me is the amount of interaction between our fellow model railroaders. When you stop and think about it, we have a pretty diverse number of backgrounds within our group. Although it appears to be mostly retired folk like me, there are a pretty good number of younger members who are still employed. Taking away some time from a valuable Saturday for these folks to attend is very welcome to all of us. We get to share some different perspectives on what is going on out there in the hobby.

That brings to mind a second point. We have a diverse collection of interests within our group. I think all scales of modeling are represented within our midst. That means that there is an extensive amount of knowledge in one's chosen scale and gauge. Plus, you add that most of us have an interest in a particular railroad, or railroads, and that adds to the knowledge base/fun.

So, even if you are a member of some other modeling group within our boundaries, I encourage you to come and join in on the fun. Our division has a lot of interesting folks who are more than willing to share their interest with you. The food is pretty good too!!

One final note, we are going to honor young Graham Huntley at this year's event. He spotted a fallen tree lying across the CSX track in Waxhaw and got his mom to get in touch with the railroad to notify an oncoming train (which stopped a very short distance from the tree). Please come and help us congratulate him. [Signup by 9-17 here.](#)

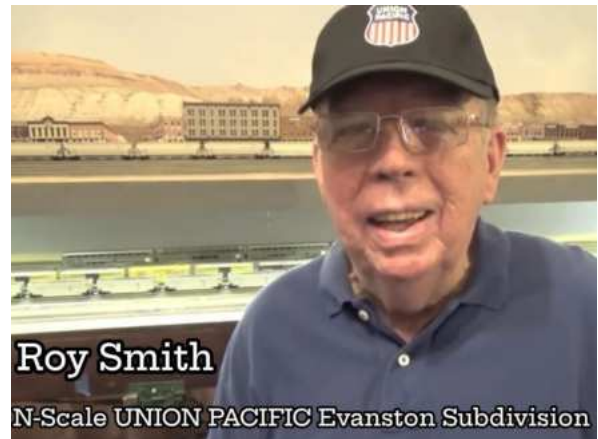
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## Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

September here we come are! I feel like all I talk about is how much time is going by so fast, but it's so true huh? Always a reminder that the day is young and the opportunity to do something fun in the hobby is just a decision away.

In fact, as soon as I finish writing this month's Editor's Notes, I will head to the basement to continue work on my new HO layout. Later in the issue, I share with you what has been happening on the layout. It's funny, I'm reminded of one my favorite model railroaders - you may have heard me mention him before - the late, great Roy Smith of the N-scale Evanston Subdivision.



You see, Roy would often attribute to himself the title of the "World's Slowest Model Railroader". But guess what? Week after week, Roy would do something. Big or small, he'd do something to advance his enjoyment of the hobby, and he always emphasized how we were meant to share with one another. That's a topic I'll touch on again somewhere else in this issue. Look out for it 😊

## Division and Regional News

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### Wade's Train Town

#### Wade's Train Town – August Stats

Contributed by Ed Smith, MMR

**Open houses:** 6  
**Attendance:** 166  
**Volunteers:** Ed Smith (4), Chad Barnette, Tim Rust,  
Danny Poole

## **The AP Report from the Plywood RR Desk**

Contributed by Neal Anderson, MMR

The CSD monthly meeting was held at Joe Skorch's house. After the meeting took place, some of the group built switches. Everyone who built switches that an engine can run through get a Merit Award under the Civil Engineering AP.

Switch Builders :

Brad Jones  
Dave Smith  
Jim Thomas  
David Myers

For the ones that would like to work on the Chief Dispatcher AP Award, classes will start back up soon. Please contact me with an email to be put on the list.

## **Not Just Another Day at Wade's**

Contributed by Chad Barnette, Editor

I put the shifter in reverse and ease out the ol' Toyota Corolla and start to make my way. It's Saturday - but not just any Saturday. It's Wade's Saturday! That's Wade's Train Town for the unfamiliar. Wade's is part of the Newton Depot and Southeastern Narrow Gauge Museum complex. More specifically it's in the Model Railroad Center.

Wade's Train Town was built by Wade Warren. Here's a little background on the layout as seen on the Carolina Southern Division website -

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

When Wade Warren retired from Coca-Cola in Hickory, NC in 1984, his family gave him a train set as a retirement gift. As he began working on it he expanded it until it got too large for his house. He then talked the Aldermen in the Town of Brookford into letting him use an empty room in the Brookford Community Center for the layout. Eventually the layout got too large for that room, so he talked them into a larger room, where the layout resided until its relocation to the Model Railroad Center at the Newton Depot during the summer of 2021.

Over the ten years between his retirement and his death, Wade's Train Town grew to an 18 foot by 22 foot work of art. It contains not only the 280 buildings, but also thousands of 'little people', most of which he painted by hand, which populate his town. As outstanding as all this may be, the truly amazing thing is that Wade built most of his layout while confined to a wheelchair. He worked on the layout almost every day and hosted hundreds of folks, from pre-schoolers to seniors, on visits to his empire.

The Carolina Southern Division is proud to be involved in restoring and maintaining this layout for the continuing enjoyment of young and old as a heritage layout.

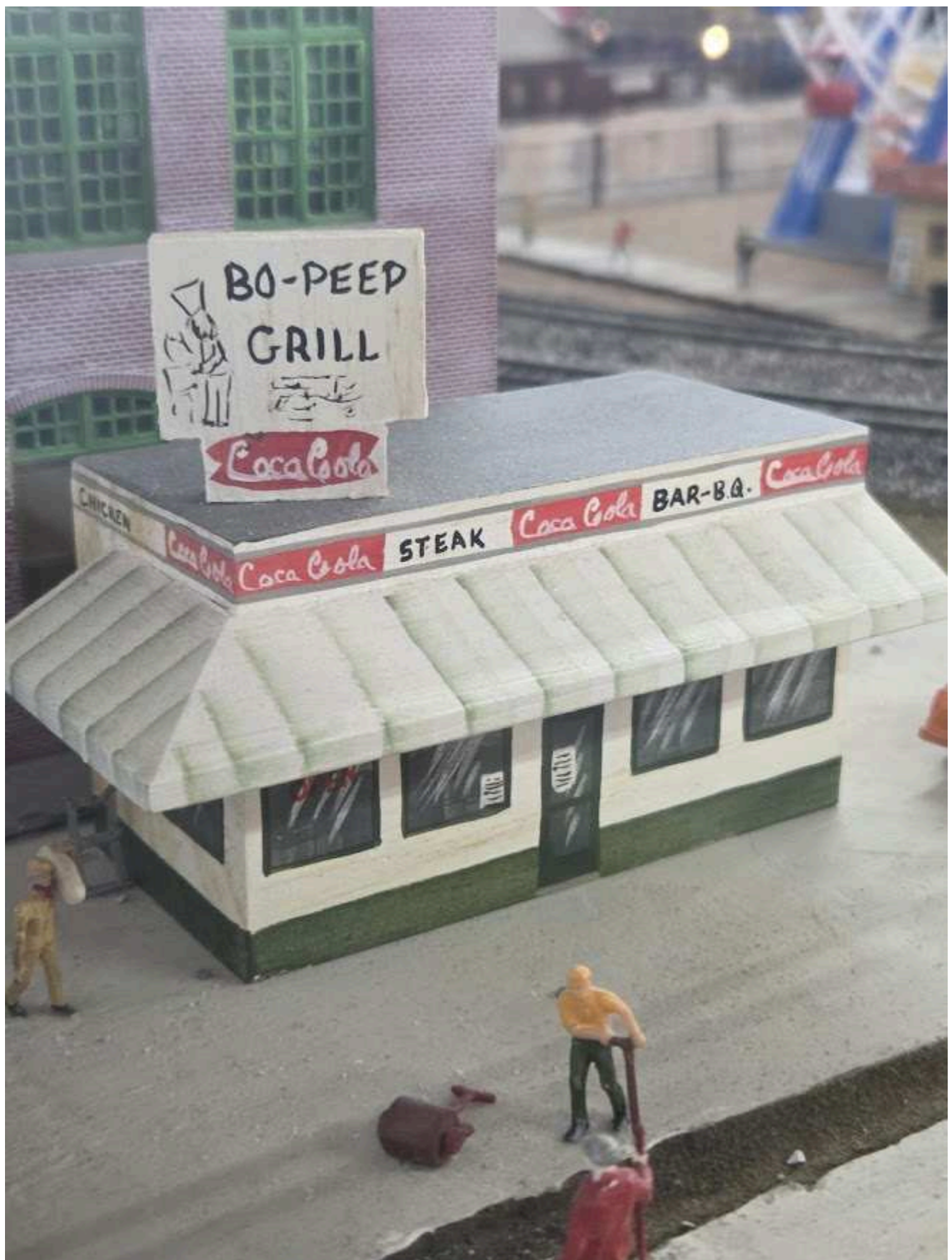
OK so where was I? Oh yes, I'm en route to Wade's. I stop and get my obligatory breakfast to fuel me through the first part of the day. I make my way up to NC 16 and get some tunes going for the ride. "I wonder what today will be like?" Every time I volunteer at Wade's is a little different, but one thing is certain. It's filled with people who love model railroading. From the dedicated staff of the museum (who always are a joy to chat with) to the museum patrons that light up with joy when they see the models on display, the people are what make volunteering at Wade's a pleasure.

And to who do we owe the credit for some of this glorious joy-making that's going on every Friday and Saturday? Well, that's Wade, and of course the other contributors who have poured their talents into layouts displayed at Newton Depot. Well this story is not meant to diminish the efforts of others, but simply to highlight Wade's story. And speaking of that story - I know the story - but I don't KNOW the story. Sometimes I wish I could know a little bit more of what's behind the stories that are undoubtedly baked into the model. Surely it's not JUST a model - Wade must have had a reason for why he put this here, or that there. I always wonder about that.

And on this day at Wade's I wonder again. Soon my wondering is interrupted by the next visitor. "Hello and welcome!", I say. I start to tell a bit about Wade.....and no sooner do I utter his name does a lady, who just walked in the door, pipe up with "I'm Wade's daughter!". Did I hear that right? After several years I had not known anyone who knew Wade, except one gentleman that told me he stopped by the school in Brookford where the layout used to be. And now, right here stood Wade's daughter - Kim to be exact. Kim introduced herself and the previous guests eventually exited - "Thanks, come back and see us soon!" I say.

What happened next was about twenty five minutes of joy. Getting to hear from Kim all about her Dad and what his layout meant to him, and to her. Kim shared stories of why certain buildings were there and a few stories behind them. Suddenly the model before me took on a brand new life - I could appreciate the history, the love, and the life that was represented by the miniature people and miniature buildings. Here are a few of the things that Kim shared with me.





Bopeep Grill was across the street from Wade's Train Town during its tenure at Brookford.





Wade put this on his layout to depict his daughter Kim and grandson. Kim often spoke of the many times she had to let him go pee in the bushes. Wade liked to put fun references like this on his layout.

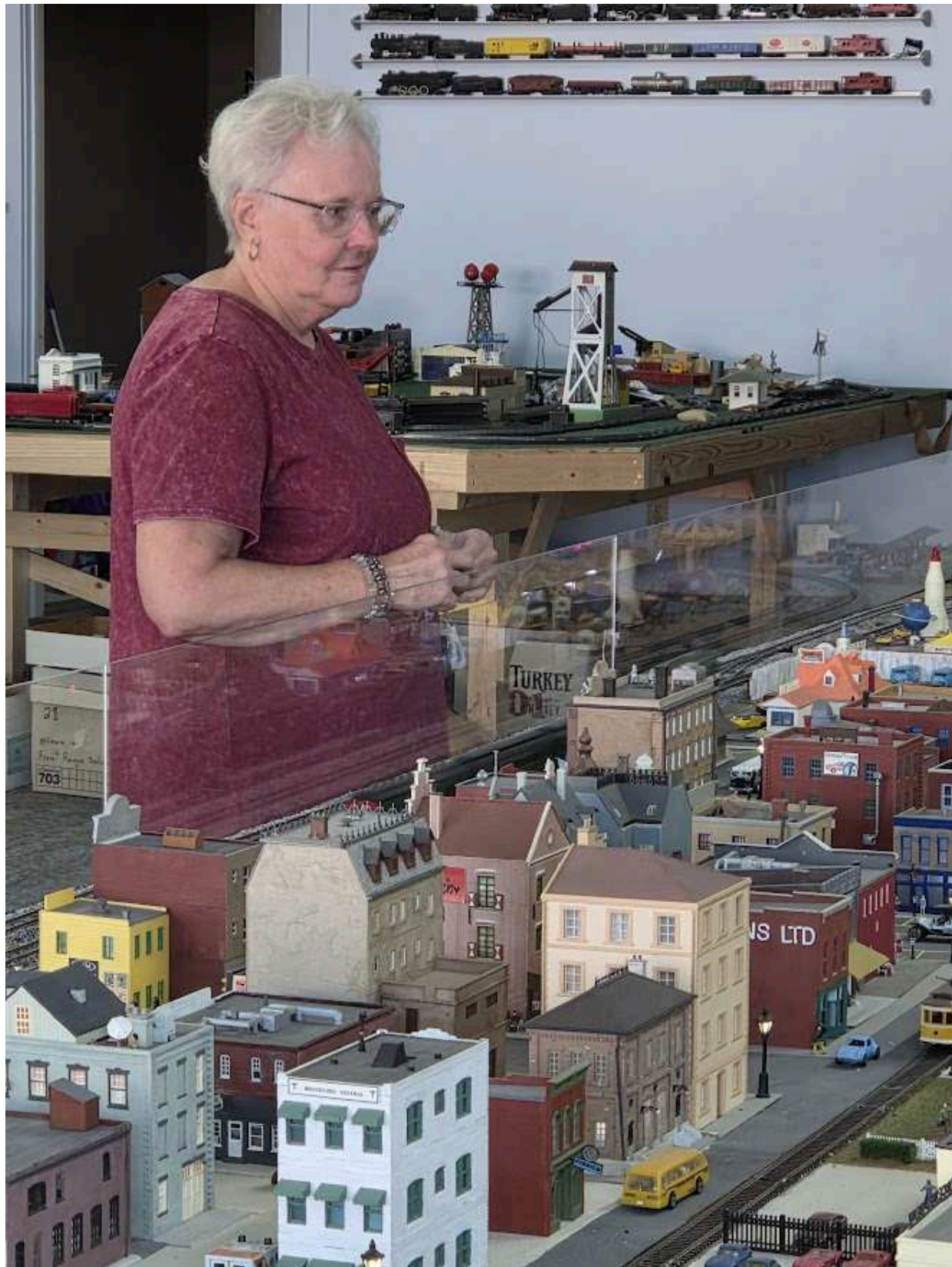




The furniture store was Wade's brother-in-law's store.



And here is Kim looking fondly at the years of memories packed into Train Town. And thanks to Wade's foresight to get the layout a more permanent home, Kim and everyone else can continue to enjoy the layout for years to come.





Final thoughts. As Kim left I thanked her so much for sharing some insights into Wade's masterpiece. And although I just so happened to type the word "masterpiece" there, the thought hits me that maybe it's a masterpiece because of what it did and what it continues to do - to tell stories, and to share joy with others. As Kim left and I was once again alone with my thoughts, my gaze went round the room. On one side there was Wade's Train Town, enduring for years to come. On the other side sat about fifty banker boxes full of the contents of an estate sale. Someone else's dreams, now relegated to just boxes of stuff - stories lost to time. I was left thinking - which one do I want for my creations?

I think I want the stories to go on. Maybe we all can't arrange to have our layout be publicly displayed for years to come, but I can think of quite a few ways to not end up the way of the bankers box. Well...enough philosophy for now. It's time to welcome more people in - to share with them Wade's stories, and to inspire them to start their own. It was a great day at Wade's today. It certainly was not just another day.

## **2025 CSD NMRA National Model Railroad Month Celebration**

Contributed by Dave Thrams

Our second National Model Railroad Month celebration is a go and it will be another good one!! Twelve layouts have already confirmed to be open as I write this update and I have not yet talked to all the layout owners from last year. Thank you to all the layout owners that are opening your layout and homes to us. We had a great time last year, and I hear all the visitors were great, and I want to stress again to our members visiting these layouts, of the importance of respecting the layouts and homes we will be visiting.

Most layouts are open from 10am – 3pm, but due to layout owner schedules, a couple layouts may have slightly different hours when the schedule is finalized.

The open house schedule has changed to avoid conflicts around the Thanksgiving holiday. We are starting a week earlier with October 25 being the first Saturday open house and will be in the Northeast Charlotte area. Last year this area was Saturday before Thanksgiving.

### **The 2025 open house schedule is as follows:**

October 25: 10 am –3 pm Northeast CLT

November 1 Hours: 10 am –3 pm (Southwest) Gaston County/West CLT area

November 8: 10 am –3 pm Southeast CLT

November 15: 10 am –3 pm (Northwest) Hickory/Statesville

To visit a layout, or many layouts, you will need to register on the CSD website at [carolinasouthern.org](http://carolinasouthern.org). Registration will begin October 1st and ends the Sunday before the open house. After you register, and a few days before the open house, I'll send you the

addresses of the layouts you are visiting and the owners will get a list of registered visitors so they know who and how many to expect.

The registration page will list the open layouts and you can register to visit as many or as few layouts as you want. Planning ahead is crucial if you want to see multiple layouts in 5 hours. One Saturday last year I ran out of time before getting to see all the layouts on that day. I'll do a better job planning my driving this year, I hope. Thank goodness for GPS!

If you participated last year, you know it doesn't matter if your layout is under construction with benchwork and a little track, or fully scenicked. People enjoy learning from your experience as well!

If you have a layout and would like to celebrate National Model Railroad month with our Carolina Southern Division members and their friends by sharing your layout on one of the dates above, please contact:

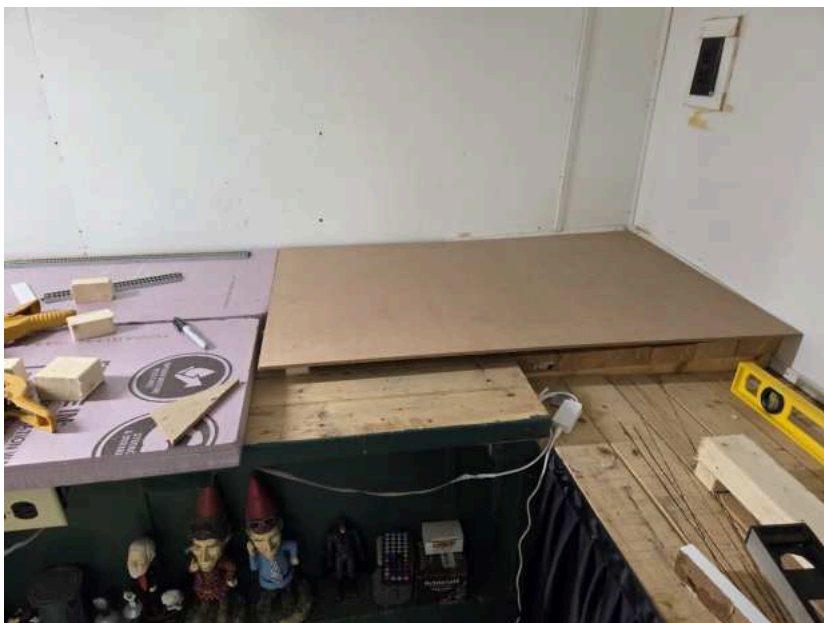
Dave Thrans at [Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org) (704) 747-6823

Alan Hardee at [Assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:Assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org) (704) 689-3867

## An Idea Whose Time Has Come - Part Three

Contributed by Chad Barnette, Editor

Welcome back everyone to my HO scale layout project. I may or may not be the "world's slowest model railroader", but you can't say I haven't made any progress. Last we met I was working on the right-hand corner of the layout where there's another balloon loop to support the continuous running portion of my layout. Last time I had some white foam in the corner to get the correct buildup. You see, the corner of my shop benchwork is very wonky in this corner. Part of me wants to take it apart to see how it ever got so wonky, but in the end I have just been working to create a series of piers to support 1/4" MDF sheet goods to finish off this section.



Here you can see the transition from the pink foam to the MDF

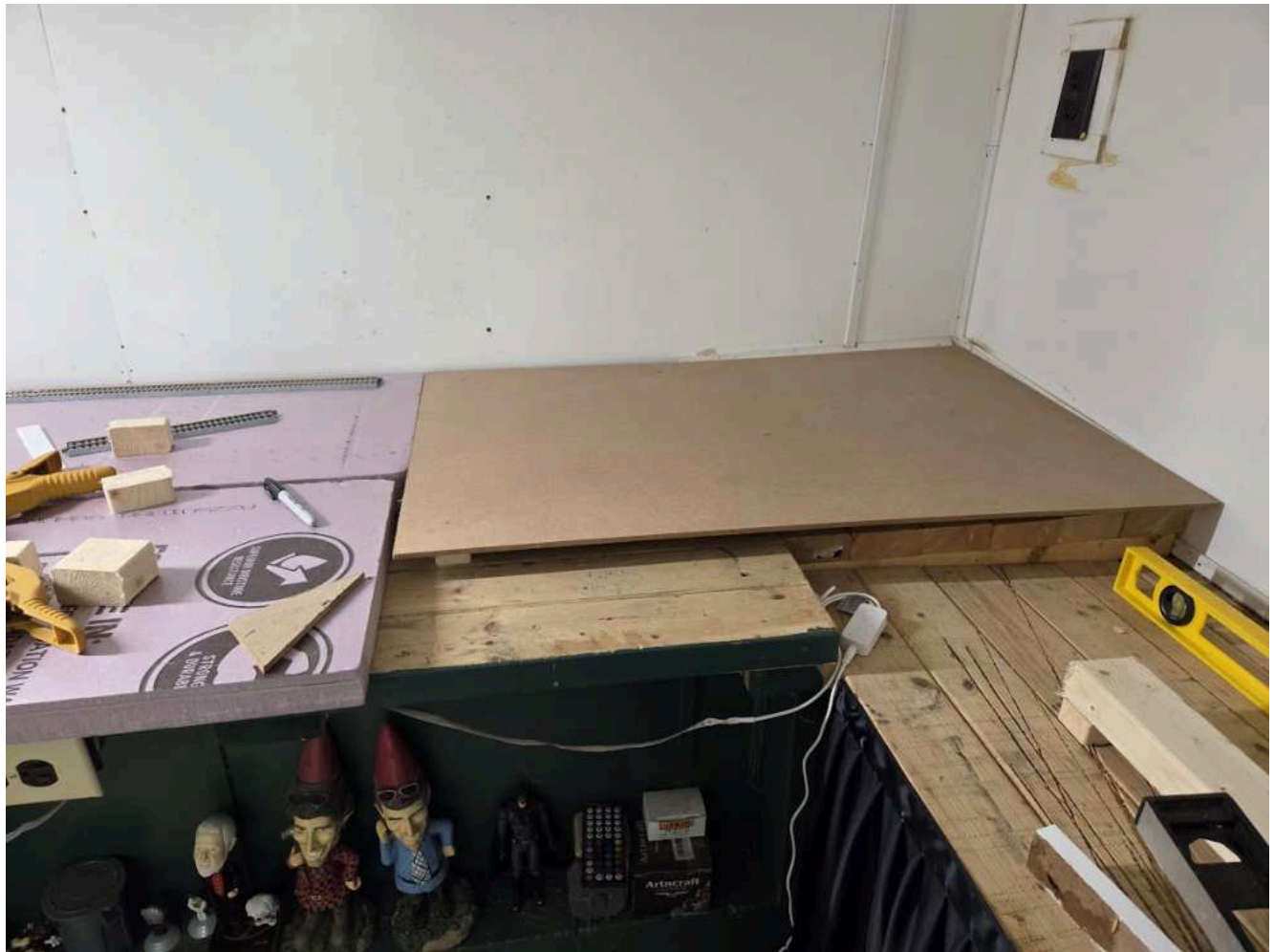




A sideview reveals the pier supports

On my particular layout I am choosing not to attempt any gradients. I am choosing to depict a setting that is generally flat. What setting you ask? I don't know yet is probably the best answer I can give you. Ultimately this layout is leaning towards a protolance type situation. That is, a mixture of prototype and freelance if you've never heard the term before. The prototype aspects of my layout will be for specific landmarks, rather than the railroad itself. The railroad will be totally fictional. Some of the structures, for example, will be prototypes of actual buildings such as the Grandma Louise House (my late, great Grandma's house on my mom's side).

OK, back to the project - after finally getting the first piece of MDF in place, I added wood glue to the tops of the piers and shot a few 16-gauge nails into the top for good measure. One problem I ran across here is losing track of where the piers are - due to the wonky factor I had to place piers where they made the most sense, rather than in a properly measured out grid fashion. Regardless, I was able to locate some of the piers post MDF placement so that I could shoot the nails into something other than thin air.



Now it's time to get the first piece of track secured. This was quite an exciting moment as everything had been free floating up until now. Actually securing trackwork felt like a true step forward. Progress! I had gone back and forth when determining what approach I would take to secure my Kato track to the underlayment. With my T-Trak modules I used track screws since my underlayment was always wood. Here I have a mixture of foam and MDF underlayment so after Googling what everyone else was doing, I decided to use latex caulk to secure my track. I traced the edges of the track, removed it, and then laid down a pretty thick bead of caulk along the centerline. I came back through with a painter's putty knife to smooth out the caulk so that it extended past the track edges. I laid the track down and gave each piece a decisive push into the wet caulk. A visit to the basement the next day confirmed that the choice to use caulk was a good one.

I will need two more sections of 2'x4' MDF to finish the balloon track. This area will also support a spur that leads to my future yard. I wanted to get the turnout purchased and in place now to avoid a lot of hassle later. I don't have the funds to support all the turnouts the yard will require so that will be something I work on over time. For now I will work on getting number 2 of 3 MDF boards in place. Get ready for it because you're about to see the wildest looking set of piers and 2x3s anyone ever used to create benchwork. Check it out.





First piece of track is in place!



485 / 77 Interchange? No, it's benchwork!

Well, I think that's gonna wrap up this month's edition of "An Idea Whose Time Has Come". I hope you're enjoying this look into the progress of my layout. I look forward to the next chapter!





# MODEL TRAIN SWAP MEET & EXHIBITION

BUY • SELL • TRADE • EXPLORE

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2025**

**10:00 AM—3:00 PM**

(Rain Date: Saturday, November 8, 2025)

**FREE ADMISSION!**

Model Trains (HO, N, O, G & more), Track, Scenery & Accessories

Explore the Newton Depot campus including museum, pavilion, & Model Railroad Center

#### SELLER INFO (Outside Location)

Space for 40 sellers

- This is an outdoor event in the parking lot and on the brick plaza.
- One 10' x 10' space allotted per seller at no cost.
- Sellers will need to bring their table(s) & chairs & may put up a 10 x 10 tent. **Must weight tent legs OR USE YOUR TRUNK**
- \*Email AJ to get a Seller Registration Form [ameadows@newtondepot.org](mailto:ameadows@newtondepot.org)

#### EXHIBITOR INFO (Inside Location)

Space for 20 exhibitors

- Each exhibitor will be allotted a 4 ft space to showcase a model train/module/small layout at no cost. (No sales in inside Exhibition Hall)
- Tables and chairs will be provided
- \*Email AJ to get an Exhibitor Registration Form [ameadows@newtondepot.org](mailto:ameadows@newtondepot.org)
- **\*Both registration forms also available at the Gift Shop in the Newton Depot Model Railroad Center**

THE NEWTON DEPOT

HOME OF THE SOUTHEASTERN NARROW GAUGE & SHORTLINE MUSEUM

1123 NORTH MAIN AVENUE, NEWTON, NC 28658

## Help Wanted

Contributed by Andrew Stitt, Superintendent

**CSD Program Chair** – The Division needs someone to take on the responsibility of arranging for programs to be scheduled and presented at Division meetings. This can be accomplished by doing the presentation themselves, getting a commitment from someone else to make the presentation, or arrange for presentations to be conducted remotely (via Zoom). When the presentation has been established, the who, what, when, where needs to be sent to the editor of the Brass Pounder and the webmaster prior to the meeting so they let the members know about the upcoming program.

**RMU Chair** – The Division conducts Railroad Model University (RMU) annually to provide all model railroaders within our area the opportunity to attend a day-long event featuring clinics on a wide range of model railroad topics. The chair is responsible for recruiting member and non member clinician presenters as well as setting the schedule for these presentations. The chair also coordinates with other Division members to enable them to secure a location for the event, schedule and promote the event, and assist with any registration or A/V issues.

Please contact me ([superintendent@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:superintendent@carolinasouthern.org)) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer.

**MER Business Manager** – Works with both the leadership team of the MER and the NMRA national office in Soddy Daisy to develop and distribute membership rosters to the various Divisions throughout the MER. Other duties as assigned.

Please contact Gary Brown ([vp@mer-nmra.com](mailto:vp@mer-nmra.com)) if you are interested and want to have more information.

**MER Editor for the Local** – Maintains and publishes the MER newsletter. The editor also assists those desiring to have their work published in the newsletter.

Please contact Greg Warth ([local-editor@mer-nmra.com](mailto:local-editor@mer-nmra.com)) if you are interested and would like to more have information.

## Lionel Tour Photos

Contributed by Dave Smith

Please enjoy some of the photos captured by member Dave Smith during the recent Lionel Factory Tour. Thanks again Dave for sharing these!





















***The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club***  
**41<sup>st</sup> Annual**  
**RALEIGH FALL TRAIN SHOW**

**November 8 - 9, 2025**

**Saturday 9 am – 5 pm**

**Sunday 10 am – 4 pm**

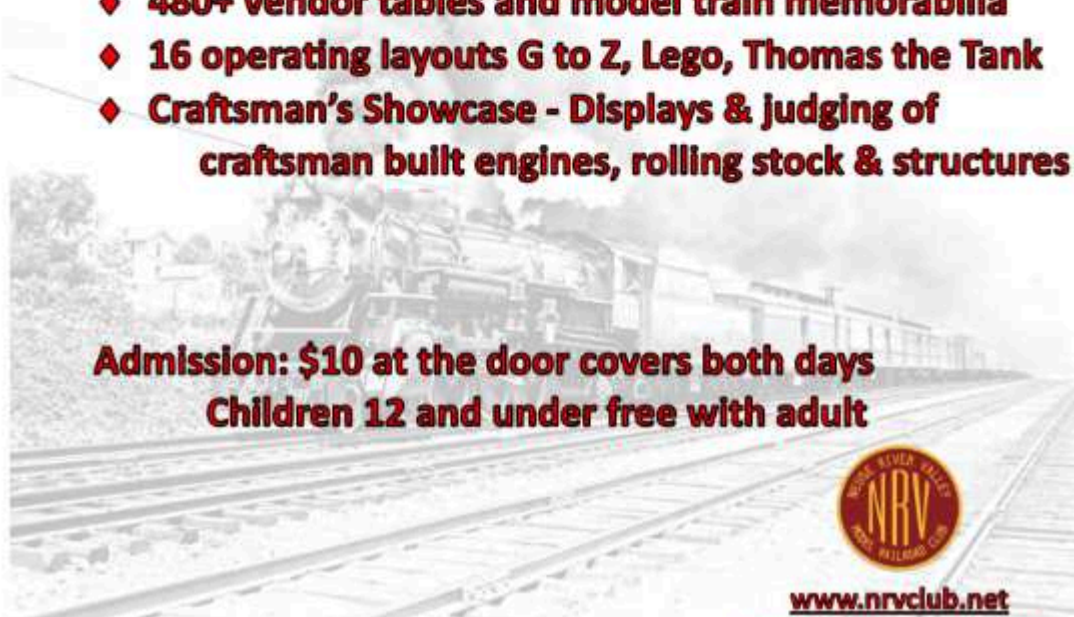
**Jim Graham Building**  
**NC State Fairgrounds**

**4285 Trinity Road, Raleigh, NC 27607**

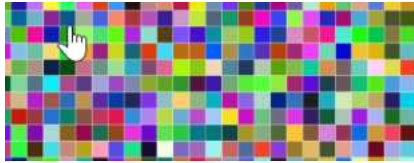
**One of the largest train shows in the Southeast**

- ♦ **480+ vendor tables and model train memorabilia**
- ♦ **16 operating layouts G to Z, Lego, Thomas the Tank**
- ♦ **Craftsman's Showcase - Displays & Judging of  
craftsman built engines, rolling stock & structures**

**Admission: \$10 at the door covers both days**  
**Children 12 and under free with adult**



**[www.nrvclub.net](http://www.nrvclub.net)**  
**[NRV.Shows@gmail.com](mailto:NRV.Shows@gmail.com)**



## Digital Distractions

Check out the Libery Farms and Neo Wilson Railroad. Somewhat of a departure for model railroads and more of the big boy toys. Here is the description from their Youtube channel.

Welcome to Liberty Farms & Neo Wilson Railway! On this channel we will cover the ongoings of both Liberty Farms & Flour Mill LLC and the Neo Wilson Railway LLC. When we're not busy working on the flour mill or the railroad, we'll be showing you what life is like in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Stay tuned!



Check out their channel [here!](#)

### Division Brass

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