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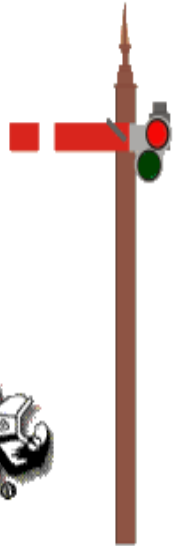


The Semaphore

LAND-O-SKY
DIVISION 15, SOUTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION
AND
WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.



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PENN BULLOCK, BARNMASTER
JIM FIQUA, PAYMASTER
DAVE ANDERSON, WEBMASTER



January 2008

Our next meeting is on Thursday, January 3rd, at 7:00 p.m.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to chsmoke@bellsouth.net.
Please keep us informed of changes in your address, phone number or email address.



Heading Home for the Holidays

The *Southern Crescent* takes travelers home for the holidays. Shown here in Western N. C., Southern's magnificent #1401 is now on display in the Smithsonian in Washington, DC.



The Fireman's Seat

By Robert Bell, Division 15 Assistant Superintendent

Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year!



The advent of the Internet has had a very positive impact for our model-railroading hobby. In the “old” days, if we followed a prototype that was not near our home, we had to wait for someone to write a book on it before we could halfway model it. We had to wait for those rare pictures to be found in some attic, for someone else to share our interest and include them in that book, and wait for that book to get published. Or, we could write letters to the NMRA Library or to any number of railroad museums, or pay someone to do the research for us, and still not find out what we wanted to know. Needless to say, it was not easy. But, the Internet has changed things. There are thousands and thousands of web sites full of information and photographs on just about any subject out there waiting to be discovered with just a click of the mouse.

Aside from the typical web sites, there are e-mail lists for various railroads (prototype and/or model) and related subjects that one can join. These lists offer the opportunity to share knowledge and ideas with people from around the world. By joining such a list, you can “lurk”, just reading other member’s posts, or jump right in and share any info you might have. The largest source of these lists is probably www.yahogroups.com, but there are others out there. There are also “forums” and on-line discussion groups such as www.railfan.net, www.railroad-line.com and my favorite www.ngdeadgoatsaloon.com. These discussions take place in “real time” and can eat up our valuable modeling time, but can be a great source of information, photos and friends.

Many libraries and museums have great on-line resources such as the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov), the Denver Public Library (www.denverlibrary.org), and of course the Smithsonian Institution (www.si.edu). Many universities also maintain searchable historical on-line resources. When you visit one of these, search for either the rail subject or look for a link to a historical photographic collection. I find several of these sites really addictive; you never know what you might find with the next click.

Two more interesting sites that I’ve found are www.rr-fallenflags.org covering defunct railroads and www.northeast.railfan.net, a great photograph source for locomotives of all kinds, industrial to mainline, steam to modern diesel.

In the February “Fireman’s Seat” we’ll talk about more on-line resources that pertain to our modeling.

Until then, remember: It’s your club - get involved! **(Become a convention volunteer!)** Let’s play trains!





From the Superintendent's Desk

Submitted by Fred Coleman

Well, we had great participation in getting the Train Show set up and running. It was really a welcome sight to see new members pitching in where ever needed. *We need someone to help with publicity and advertising.* We will have a more detailed report at the January meeting.

The raffle did fairly well on ticket sales (we could have done better with a little more help selling tickets before the show) However, the drawing of the layout was won by Rick Coble of the Piedmont Div. He donated it to the Presbyterian Home for Children that Tim Wagner had mentioned they had an interest in model trains, so that part was a very good success for keeping model trains going with the youth.

For the upcoming SER Convention in May, we have several of the jobs that are well under way. We do need the same help for the train show to include Cy Miller being in charge of the train portion of the convention. Ben Bartlett is in charge of the clinics therefore we need someone to run the company store. We also have several home layouts that will be open for tour and we need someone to head that up. There are many other jobs coming up as we get closer, so please plan some extra time to be available from the 22-25 of May.

Again, I would like thank all of you that put out such a great effort for the Train Show. We should congratulate Joe Norris who won two Merit Awards for his entries in the model building contests. Pictures from the Train Show are included in this Newsletter.

The January Meeting will be our Christmas party of which we will have refreshments. If anyone would like to volunteer for a portion of the food please let me know. Also we do need a head count on who is going to be there so please call or email me as soon as possible.... January is also white elephant sale month, so dig out some more of that really great stuff you don't have a use for any more.

As we end the year, let us remember those who we have lost in 2007, most recently, Charlie Bryan's wife.

Keep on track

Have a safe and happy holiday

Important stuff for members!

Our next meeting is January 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

Operations

We will have operating sessions on January 12 and January 20. Details will be announced at the meeting.

2008 - The Year of the MMR

During the past year we have featured stories about NMRA's MMR program. During 2008 NMRA's magazine *Scale Rails* will feature articles about each of the 11 categories, explaining what is needed to obtain a certificate in that category. The information will also be available on NMRA's web site.

The goal of this is to provide inspiration guidance, direction, and expertise in the NMR process.

The Semaphore will support this undertaking by continuing our series on the certificate process and celebrating those who have taken steps towards earning awards.

If you are a member of NMRA, watch their magazine for more information. If you are not a member you should take a look at a recent copy of *Scale Rails*. It is really a fine publication with a unique perspective on our hobby.