

The Semaphore



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WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.

A 100% NMRA CLUB



On the web at www.wncmrr.org

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Our next meeting is on February 6th at 7 PM.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to [editor](#).

Please keep us informed of changes in your address, phone number or email address.



Inside: Special report on weathering



NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be starting at 7 PM on Thursday February 3rd.

Clinic: Weathering rolling stock

Synopsis: Curt Kuehn will be instructing the work shop on weathering freight cars. Everybody bring 1 or 2 freight cars you want to weather. The only time a freight car looks like new is when it comes out of the construction line at the manufacture, the same as when it is bought at the hobby shop. From that point on it starts to weather immediately. The work shop will teach you how to do it so it is realistic. Do you want your rail road cars to look like a toy or look real ????? (No graffiti, sorry) All supplies will be furnished. Come to learn and have fun. **See you there!**

REPORT ON THE LAST MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Superintendent Fred Coleman.

Fred reported that:

Aldi's has little food scales that measures within 1/10 of an oz up to 11 lbs - \$10.

The Hendersonville Times had a full page plus story in the 12/30 edition on the Apple Valley Model Railroad Club at the Hendersonville Depot. .

Division 15 will meet on January 15th, starting at 9:00 am at the Fletcher Library

Welcomed the return of Ken Vasilik and Charlie Krug after brief medical challenges

Wished a Happy Birthday to Jim Fuqua.

Paymaster John Williams provided a finance report for second half of 2010. We are doing well.

Carol and Sam Hopkins were present. He reported that the large-scale club continues to grow and that the progress on the modules continues. (More from Sam on the next page)

Charlie Krug has a 12 x 15 layout built in his garage, a U-shaped layout, not designed to take apart. But he needs to take it apart, and will ask for some help in moving it, maybe in April or May.

Following a short break we had an outstanding clinic on tree making.

Don't forget the Train Show March 3rd and 4th. Tell all your friends. Visit our train show website: <http://www.Asheville-Trainshow.com> - Tickets will be available at the December meeting - please pre-sell them. Blocks of tickets to small business at \$4.00 each instead of the \$ 5.00 at the door.



Tree Making Clinic

We added trees to our ongoing scenery projects. We were favored with having Ms. Barbie Stanton with us as an instructor. She has been involved with tree-making activities in the layout at Lake Junaluska.

Using small branches from real trees, and adding one or more Woodland Scenic products, she showed us how easy it is to make presentable trees in a short period of time. She uses spray-on adhesive, followed by adding scenic material. Added strength can be obtained by spraying tree with hair spray.



Photography by
Clint Smoke



Clockwise from left:
Ms. Barbie Stanton showing some trees; Bill doing a tree from nadina berry bunch; Jim trying his hand; Dave doing the same,





WEATHERING YOUR ROLLING STOCK- OR MOST ANY MODEL....

by Eric Hansmann

Weathering railroad rolling stock is a subtle way of adding a bit of realism to your model trains. When you are trackside, do you see any freight cars that are truly clean? Unless you are beside the tracks at a factory which makes freight cars, the answer is 'no'. All cars have some form of weathering that has accumulated on the sides, ends and underbody of the freight car. Mud, dirt, dust, rust, vegetation, spilt cargo, oils, peeling paint, garbage, faded lettering and paint, scrapes, and graffiti are all forms of weathering. I'll cover a few techniques I enjoy using on some of my models that can get you started.

In many cases, our new freight cars are a little too shiny as they come right out of the box. Just killing this plastic shine can make your rolling stock look a little more realistic. Use a spray from a can of Testors brand "Dullcote" (or a similar product that dulls a finish) to lightly cover the car. This can also form a base with a little more "tooth" for some



of the techniques mentioned later. If you want to fade or modify some of the lettering on the car, do that first before using Dullcote, as the over spray will fix the lettering as it is. Always work in a well-ventilated area, preferably outside, when using a spray can.

To begin weathering models of rolling stock, get a few cheap cars to play with. You know, the ones that are on sale at two for a dollar, or four for ten dollars. Swap meets and garage sales can garner a few victims. While you are getting some cars ready, take a few photographs of freight cars along your local railroad, or in a nearby freight yard. If you don't have any working rails nearby, check through some issues of *Trains*, *Railfan*, *Railpace*, or any magazine that has features on the real railroads. There are several good sources on the Internet, if you search around. Look closely for photos of rolling stock and collect a variety with different degrees and types of weathering. Use these as references for your efforts.

Here are some other items you may need to begin weathering freight cars:

- Stiff bristled paint brushes - nothing very large and keep the hairs short.

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- Tubes of acrylic paints (model paints will do, just be sure they are water based). White, Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna, Raw Umber, and Ochre are good to start with.
- Some cardboard squares to use as paint palettes. 8" x 11", or half that size is fine. Cereal boxes come in handy for this.
- Fine dirt from your yard. Just a small bucketful.
- A soft bristled brush, similar to a make up brush.
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Shoe leather dye or India ink.
- Jars with lids.
- Small bowls for water and alcohol to clean the brushes.
- A roll of paper towels.
- A spray can of Testors Dullcote, or a similar dull spray finish ** Q-Tips ** Pump bottle with a fine mist nozzle.

Toothpicks and an old toothbrush.

I'm sure you are beginning to wonder what this is all about. I weather models in layers, kind of like nature. I sometimes use only one or two layers, or I go all out with five or six layers. The nice part is that any one layer of work can be acceptable.

Here are my basic layers:

- Rust on metal parts.
- White (or light - could be a tan, or off white shade) highlights on protruding parts.
- A wash of dirt and grime, of varying degrees.
- Touch up the rusted parts.
- Add some dust.
- Create water streaks.

Double check the highlights.

I also do not use an airbrush for this work. This is all done by hand. Many people do use airbrushes and achieve remarkable results. But, using an airbrush means doing this work under a ventilated hood or working outside. You don't want to weather your entire room, just the model at hand. When using the alcohol, please do so with adequate ventilation. Keep the lids on those jars as much as possible. I try to stay away from more toxic solvents and cleaners because of this. Be smart and work smart. Let's go over these layers one step at a time.

RUST ON METAL PARTS

What color is rust? This is a trick question, as there is no correct answer. I've seen rust that ranges from bright orange, to auburn, to brown. Find a rust color that makes you happy. Mix up some of the Ochre and Raw Umber and maybe a touch of white.

Take a look at your bargain freight car and determine the metal parts. Of course, an all metal car does have a lot of metal parts, but look at those that protrude out from the car. Grab irons, stirrup steps, roof walks, door hardware, rivets, brake wheels, structural ribs, and those trucks and wheels. Look over

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those images and see where rust shows up. What you want to do is dry brush the rust color in several of these places. You don't want to coat all of these items, but you want to give many of them a hint of rust.

To dry brush, grab a stiff bristle brush and just dab the end into the rust paint. You only want the paint on the end of the bristles. Whisk the brush over a piece of cardboard a few times until most of the paint is out of it. This technique comes up again in another part, so learn to love it.

Now, go over a few of the metal parts on your freight car. A flick here and there is all you need. Do one side first, then set your model down and compare it to a few photos. If you were a bit heavy handed, dampen some paper toweling and daub off your efforts. Now you know why we got cheap cars to work with, right? Wait 'til the paint dries some before doing the other side. Once the sides are done, do each end.

I also add rust to the truck side frames and to the inside part of the wheels. Try this on one car, then set it beside a plain one. You will notice that the plain trucks look like black holes under the model. The dry brushing not only adds color, but it highlights surfaces to bring out details and depth.

HIGHLIGHTS ON PROTRUDING PARTS

Guess what? If you did the rust part, this is the same, but with different paint. I use white, but an off white or tan can be used to good effect. The dry brushing here establishes edges and other details. I go over as much of the car as possible, but I try not to highlight a continuous edge on longer details such as corners. This work can be done heavily or with a light touch. Try it both ways to see how you like it. You will also get a better feel for developing your technique.

DIRT AND GRIME WASH

There is nothing like giving a model a good wash. I mix up several weathering solutions of various strengths. I use black or brown shoe leather dye, mixed with Isopropyl alcohol. Pour a glug of the dye into a jar and a few glugs of the alcohol. It's not very scientific, but it works for me. I mix up strong, medium and weak concoctions of brown and black. I also have a dedicated pump bottle with a medium black strength solution in it. This is great to give an overall spray to the models. Sometimes I'll over spray models outside. The sun and air accelerate the drying process, which can give you slightly different results.

I did not invent this technique. I learned it from an article published several years ago by noted modeler Dr. Wayne Wesolowski. I suggest you check it out to learn some more. "Dr. Weso's Weathering Goop" - *Railroad Model Craftsman*, September 1977, page 38.

To apply this with a brush, just dip the brush into the mix, then carefully dab the brush under the roof line of the car and let gravity pull the solution down the sides. If I want a strong grimy look, I just pull the brush along at the top of the car side and let gravity take over. I do this a few times and carefully soak up the excess along the bottom with a paper towel. Check those photos over and see where grime collects.

One point to remember when you use this alcohol solution on a keeper car. Many cars are lettered with alcohol based inks. If you use a heavy application of an alcohol based weathering solution, you could dissolve the lettering. Now, this can also work in your favor as you weather your models. Sometimes you want to get a faded lettering effect, or you want some lettering to be removed. Soak a Q-tip in alcohol and rub on the lettering you want to alter. If the paint is alcohol based, it won't take long for you to see results.

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TOUCH UP THE RUSTED PARTS

Just a second dry brushing of rust color. This step is only needed if the wash or white highlighting has obscured the original rust dry brushing. Sometimes I do this to add 'newer' rust to other surfaces.

ADD SOME DUST

If you were wondering about the dirt mentioned in the menu of things needed, here is where it can come in. I use a small baby spoon or plastic spoon to shovel on a little bit of dirt. Then I whisk it off with the larger soft bristled brush. Sometimes, I'll rub it in with my finger to get some of the dirt into the cracks and crevices, then brush off the excess. I don't use any spray to fix this onto the car. I find the spray just blows most of the dirt right off of the model.

To get different shades of dust, carefully grind up some earth toned pastel chalks and apply them in a similar manner. I found a product called 'Rottenstone' that is an extremely fine gray powder. It is apparently a polishing rouge in the furniture industry and there are other similar products with different shades. Another avenue to explore for more weathering techniques...

Some people fix this dust onto the model using a spray dull finish, such as Testors Dullcote. The chalk and dirt can be fixed on the side of your car using the Dullcote. The spray will tend to wash or blow away some of your weathering. It may take several alternating applications of "dust" and spray to get the effect you are looking for. Be sure the surface you are working on is horizontal and the spray coats should be as light as you can make them. As always, work outdoors or in a very well ventilated area.

CREATE WATER STREAKS

Water affects real buildings and railroad cars more than any other element. Look closely at photographs and observe how water washes off the dirt and grime in some areas, but leaves it in others. Look at the rows of rivets and along supporting ribs. You can do this with a light grimy wash (mostly alcohol) and a pointed brush. Dip the brush into the solution and dab it on the edge of the jar. You may not want a full paintbrush of the wash for this. Then, carefully dab the model and let gravity pull it down the side in a streak. Reapply more wash if you want it to go all the way down the side. Dust and dirt that was applied earlier may run down with the solution and collect along the bottom edge. Now you are getting somewhere!

DOUBLE CHECK THE HIGHLIGHTS

Once you have finished with one or many layers of weathering, let the model dry thoroughly. Come back to it after a few days and check the highlights that were applied early in the process. Much of this may have been washed away or covered in other layers of your work. If you need to, go back over and dry brush on some white to bring these details out. This is optional, as is any step here, of course.

So, what do you have? My first few attempts were embarrassing, and there are still occasional efforts that I am not excited about. Much of my rolling stock is weathered and it all looks great rolling down the tracks. I did a couple of cheap cars that ended up so good that I had to upgrade the under frame, wheels, couplers and trucks so I could run them on the railroad!

These techniques can be used on any model. There are many more avenues to try out and experiment with on future projects. Keep your eyes open for neat articles in the hobby magazines, and don't discount an idea that gets published for a different scale or type of model.

The above is available from NMRA.

The photographs on pages 1 and 4 are of models! For more examples of outstanding model weathering see [.modelrailroadforums.com/forum/showthread.php](http://modelrailroadforums.com/forum/showthread.php)



LARGE-SCALE MODELERS REPORT

Report from Sam Hopkins

Through snow and sleet several enthusiastic and hearty souls journeyed to Waynesville for the January Smoky Mountain Model RR Club meeting at the Clackett's Buffalo Ranch. The buffalo were actually spotted by a few of us in the snow! One newcomer, Charles, traveled from near Charlotte to attend and meet the folks. Harriet and Barbara served up some warm CC cookies, various snacks and the best punch ever! Harriet's amazing 30 year collection of Snow Village pieces was greatly appreciated.

After introductions all around, we discussed upcoming events and ideas for the club. Soon to be upon us is the annual WNC MRRC's fine train show at the WNC Ag Fairgrounds across from the Asheville Airport. The dates this year are March 4th & 5th with set-up on Thursday evening the 3rd. We want to make a good showing there this year and need as many people to participate as possible. There is a new O gauge club in Winston Salem and they will display their layout as well. With TWO nice 3 rail set-ups to be seen, this could be a real boost for our part of the hobby this year! Plus we don't want the 'out of towners' to show us up either...

Please consider your involvement in the club for the new year. There are many facets of enjoyment to be derived from a train club – fellowship with others having like interests, sharing of ideas and knowledge, exchange of information, hands-on help with the hobby, field trips to shows and other rail fan events, etc. We need your input to make this enjoyable and informative for all. Last month, several of us attended the Asheville (WNC MRR) Club's monthly meeting where they had an excellent demonstration on how to build trees for your layout or dioramas. Our wives really enjoyed the presentation done by a lady from Lake Junaluska who was recruited into the task of constructing 3000 trees for the Historical Display at the Terrace Hotel on the Lake .

The modular project is well-underway and welcomes more of you to join in. The new building is working out well and gives us a readily accessible location to work on the layout. Starting this week, we will be gathering there at 7 on Thursday evenings for fellowship and construction. Please come and get a table to develop as you want. We'd like to have a circus, perhaps an amusement park, passenger station and any other displays that will be of interest to the general public, and especially children. The modular layout can be a great 'ambassador' for the hobby!

We realize that not all of you are interested in the modular project. As mentioned above, there are many aspects to this fascinating hobby. I have well over 40 email addresses that I send this to each time. If you would like to be removed, please let me know. Otherwise, please consider how you can help promote different aspects of the hobby for the benefit of the others. We need several of you to step up now and become active in helping us to keep this a 'full-service' club! Perhaps a field trip of some type this spring? We want your help!

Who would like to host the February meeting? If you host it, you get to set the date. How about a Saturday afternoon because of the inclement weather we've been having? All of you have some type of display if not a full layout that others would like to see and hear about. So many stories to tell! Please get back to me ASAP if you'd like to host the next meeting. If no one offers, we will have it at the new club facility in mid-February. A meeting notice will be sent.

Doug Mason brought his Lionel PW 2020 steamer and freight consist to run last Saturday. It is a nice piece, just like his boyhood train! Sam had his SOUTHERN 2356 ABA operating as well. Harold has his 'Red Caboose Motel' under construction on one corner table and an equipment sales operation on another. As you can see, we need a lot of construction SOON to get this real estate looking good for the March Train Show!



EVENTS FOR MODELERS:

2011 MODEL TRAIN SHOW

Central Railway Model & Historical Assn,

February 26, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

February 27, 2011, noon - 5 p.m.

Bagwell Gymnasium, J.B. Owens Sports Complex, 111 Walker Way, Easley, SC 29642.

For more [details see their website.](#)

21ST ANNUAL WNC TRAIN SHOW

WNC Ag Center, March 4th from Noon to 7 PM, March 5th from 9 AM to 4:30 PM

2011 MODEL TRAIN SHOW

Sponsored by Piedmont Division

March 19th and 20th, 2011

Saturday: 10 - 5 & Sunday: 10 - 4

Admission: \$8 Adults - Kids 12 and under are FREE!

Cobb Galleria Centre, 2 Galleria Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30339

[Check website for details](#)

DIVISION 15 SER MINI-CONVENTION

April 16 at 9 AM, Hampton Inn, Hendersonville, NC

[See website for details.](#)

FRENCH BROAD E" N" PIRE TRAIN SHOW

April 30 from 10 AM to 4 PM, Whitmere Act. Ctr., Hendersonville, NC

[See website for details.](#)

2011 SER CONVENTION

May 20-22, 2011 in Macon, Georgia.

Hosted by the Empire Division

For the latest information [go to the website for details.](#)



EXTRA 2011 WEST



NMRA 2011 SACRAMENTO, CA

2011 NMRA CONVENTION

July 3-9, X2011, Sacramento, CA

Check [out website for details](#)

National Train Show

July 8 to 10 check out [the website for more details,](#)