



The Semaphore, The Official Publication of Land-O-Sky, Division 15, Southeastern Region, NMRA



# The Semaphore

LAND-O-SKY

DIVISION 15, SOUTHEASTERN REGION  
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

AND  
WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.

FRED COLEMAN, SUPERINTENDENT

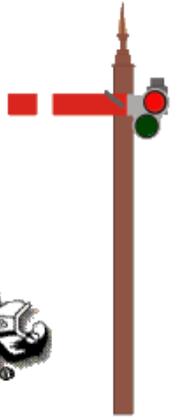
ROBERT BELL, ASST. SUPERINTENDENT

BILL SIBERT, COMPANY CLERK

JIM FIQUA, PAYMASTER

PENN BULLOCK, BARNMASTER

DAVE ANDERSON, WEBMASTER



Our next meeting is on Thursday, May 1, at 7:00 p.m.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to [chsmoke@bellsouth.net](mailto:chsmoke@bellsouth.net).

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



## ITS ALMOST HERE!

### Have you registered to attend?

### Have you signed up to help with the conference?



## From the Superintendent's Desk

Submitted by Fred Coleman



Here we are - the month of the Smokey Mountain Rails Convention and most everything is falling into place. I should have a copy of the Convention Timetable at the meeting to familiarize everyone with exactly what is going on and when it will happen. Also, the volunteer shirts will be in, and a few other things for the convention will be discussed. If any of you ideas for getting the word out to promote the train show please bring it up at the meeting. We want to staff registration, show admission, concessions, Company Store and the contest room. Plenty of work for all hands. We need your help to make is a success.

Speaking of the Convention, let's all do our best to make our guests feel welcome. Please be there, participate, and go out of your way to help our visitors find their way around town and the convention. We have a reputation here in the mountains for good hospitality: let's live up to that reputation.

For your convenience we are enclosing registration forms for the Convention and the Company Store. I hope you are already registered, but if not, here is one more opportunity. We should all be there.

For those that did not attend the Hickory Show you missed a good show. We had great help loading and setting up and the layout showed really well. I am taking this opportunity to thank all of those that were there at the barn, at the show, and back at the barn again for a really great job with everyone helping making it easier on all involved. THANKS !

Joe Norris is going to have the program at our meeting on May 1st; it will be of interest to all. As mentioned, we will talk about the convention, and we will discuss taking the modules to the Charlotte Show, June 27 and 28. Please check your calendars and let me know if you will be available for that outing. This is an important meeting – please make every effort to be present.

Keep on track

*Fred*

## The Company Store will be open in May

Submitted by Gordon Fewster

The Company Store will be open 12 to 7 Friday and 9 to 5 Saturday at the Train Show at the Lake Junaluska SER NMRA Regional Convention. This is a good opportunity for club members to sell surplus equipment. This is a win-win situation. You clean house and the club gets a 10% commission.

Please bring your equipment to the Company Store tables with a completed inventory form (copies should be available at the meeting and one is included in this newsletter). Please either note minimum acceptable prices on the form or give us some guidelines on the back of the form to negotiate prices for you. We frequently get offers, and if you do not say otherwise, we must assume that your prices are firm.

All items must have a price tag, and it would be very helpful if the tag has your initials and a number corresponding to your inventory list. Also, please pick up your unsold items at the end of the show.

If you have an hour or two free during the show, stop by to visit and give the store crew a break.

### Schedule for Operating Sessions in April and May

The LOST railroad will have an operating session on Saturday April 27, from 2 to 4 pm. and on Saturday May 10, from 2 to 4 pm. For those who are attending the convention, there will be an operating session on Thursday night at the Train Show site from 7pm until around 10pm. If you wish to participate, sign up on the club website in the convention section.



# Keeping Scenery Light

By Joseph Norris

Most of my recent construction has been on 'portable' layouts and dioramas. I always strive to keep them as lightweight as possible and keep my eyes open for 'new' techniques to facilitate this. Recently I tried an experiment that seems to show promise. While new to me, I'm sure that others have preceded me using this method. The sample module shown in this article was constructed in about 15 minutes, including photography time. While the photos lack detail in black and white, the completed scene is quite vivid and colorful.

Using scrap materials at hand, I began with a piece of ¼ inch foam core board as the base and cut some random shapes of 1 inch bead board foam (very inexpensive, though messy to work with). I rounded the edges of the shapes. After 'playing chess' a bit, I glued them to the base with Aleene's Clear Gel Tacky Glue (see Figure 1.).



Figure 1

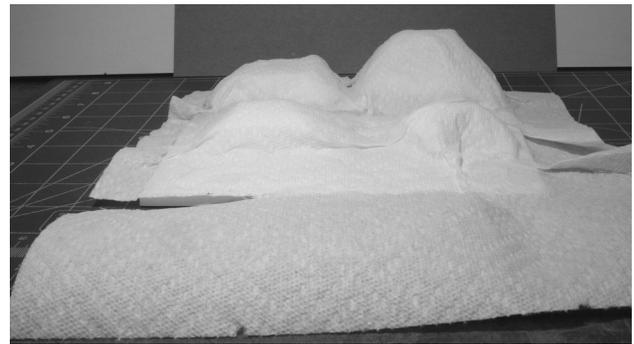


Figure 2

Without waiting for the glue to set, I applied more Tacky Glue around the base perimeter, on the edges and flat surface of the shapes, as well as on the central parts of the base, not covered with the shapes.

I then got a sheet of ordinary paper towel and draped it over the shapes to form reasonable contours in the scene, pressing it into the glue and molding it with my fingers until I was satisfied I had a workable surface.

At this point, it might be prudent to give the glue time to dry, but I kept right on going. I cut away the excess paper towel with a razor blade and covered the entire scene with a heavy coat of ordinary latex paint, in a basic ground color, using a soft bristle, 1 inch paint brush. I followed this with the first layer of ground cover, which for me is finely ground dried leaves. I like to use the leaves first because they provide a textured background for the subsequent layers which are usually very fine particles. This 'forest floor' is held securely by the thick paint. Figure 3 shows the module, trimmed and primed with latex, and the foreground has been covered with the crushed leaves. I allowed the module some drying time, at least an hour.

An advocate of multi-layer scenery, I added layers of ground dirt, in two colors, and a variety of grass colors. In the past I have used a diluted white glue to prepare the surface for these additional layers. More recently I



Figure 3

have been experimenting with Elmer's Craft Bond spray adhesive and have been very pleased with the results. It has the advantage of not soaking the paper towel structure and makes it a simple matter to cover the entire working area thoroughly and quickly. A few trees and some Woodland Scenics foam bushes and the module is beginning to look acceptable.



Figure 4: Here we see the completed experiment with an O scale figure.

This technique provides a reasonably firm shell that is extremely light weight. The shell will support trees in HO and smaller scales, though it may require some reinforcement for very large trees. While admittedly fragile, it would serve well in those areas of the layout that do not have to support heavy weights. It will support Hydrocal castings readily, and with some forethought in placing the underlying supports, could be used to surround even heavy structures. For additional strength, multiple coats of latex primer can be added. Of course, one is not limited to a single paper towel; they can be joined to cover any required area, similar to the use of plaster soaked cloth.

I like to make small modules of this kind to try new methods so that I am clear how to proceed when working on my layout. I invite you to give this very inexpensive and flexible scenery technique a try.

## Steam returns to Spencer during Rail Days!

**This weekend - April 26 & 27 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.**



The restored Flagg Coal Co. No. 75 steam locomotive will be working at Spencer this weekend. It was in Bryson City last summer during GSMR's annual Rail Fest.

It can often be found running at the Steam Railroading Institute in Michigan, where visitors can experience a bit of a bygone era in railroading. The locomotive also travels to other tourist and short line railroads across the country so more people can experience riding behind a steam locomotive. This engine, an 0-4-0 configuration locomotive, was built in 1930 by Vulcan Iron Works of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. A small, industrial-type locomotive, No. 75 was first purchased by the Flagg Coal Company in Pennsylvania, then sold in 1935 to the Solvay Process Quarry in New York, where it was used to push cart loads of rock.

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# Compton's Crossing at Eliada Homes

By Penn Bullock

*(Editors note: The following is a summary of Penn 's comments regarding our involvement with the youth program at Eliada Homes in several sessions during the month of April. )*

Compton's Crossing has greeted Spring 2008 with a flourish. This "First" Tuesday of Spring greeted 9 Eliada Youth at the evening "Trains" session. Reuter's Boys "Ruled", arriving first with 4 members, two being "Newbees". Welcome to "Trains", Cody and Jirian. Cummings's 5 Girls, Brooke, Hannah, Karisa, Jennie, and Justine arrived shortly after the Boys and settled in to work on their projects. Eliada Staff members Courtney and Crystal are thanked for their assistance in encouraging the Eliada Youth during the work session. A "Big" Thank You to tonight's "Crew", Tim W., Ken V., and Ken G. It was a very good session.

One could not ask for a more beautiful day at Eliada Homes and Compton's Crossing than today's day.

Although an early morning shower and late evening drizzle may have brought 0.10" of rain, the day was bright , sunny, and in the mid-70's. Eliada's Youth could be seen about the Campus enjoying their daily activities. What a Day!

Cummings and Reuter Cottages, youth, arrived at "Compton's Crossings" on time and ready for work. You could not ask for a more well behaved group of youth. Ten Eliada Youth engaged in a very productive session tonight. Cottage counselors are to be commended for their shepherding duties.

Reuter Cottage Boys arrived with 6 members, 5 Old Hands, and one "Newbee". The Old Hands, Chapel, Zack, Donte, Wayne, and Jirian made up Reuter's "Gandy Dancers" while William is our welcomed "Newbee". These experienced Old hands, drew their "Project Boxes", and went straight to work.

Cummings Cottage's four girls, Martha, Hannah, Jennie and Justine made up a great team of "Gandy Dancers" doing some "fine" railroad work. Good things are being done by these girls. They to are to be commended for their business like approach in drawing their project boxes, selecting needed materials and help, and then getting to work.

What a wonderful group of young people journeyed to "Compton's Crossing" tonight and did good work.

A special thanks to the Eliada Staff that escorted and worked with the Eliada Youth. They made the session extra special tonight. Another special thanks to tonight's crew: Ken V., Boyce, and Ken G. for the time and energy they put into tonight's session. You make "Trains" happen at "Compton's Crossing" !

An interesting evening at Compton's Crossing. Cummings Girls Ruled tonight, arriving on time and ready for work. Earlier events at the cottages limited "Trains" participation to two girls, Hanna and Justine. Their timely arrival, shepherded by Donna, allowed a full 45 minute session. Tonight's activities in diorama construction focused on citing buildings, designing access roads, parking, and sidewalk, paths, basic landscaping, pond construction, and placement of water features'. New skills are being learned and good progress is being made. The girls are to be commended.

Thanks to Ken V., Ken G., and Boyce for providing assistance needed to make "Trains" happen.