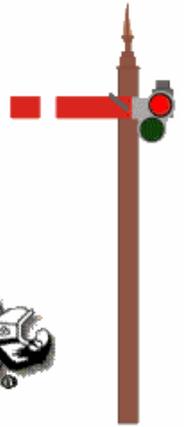




The Semaphore, The Official Publication of Land-O-Sky, Division 15, Southeastern Region, NMRA



# The Semaphore



**LAND-O-SKY**  
**DIVISION 15, SOUTHEASTERN REGION**  
**NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**



**AND**  
**WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.**



JOHN WILLIAMS, SUPERINTENDENT  
ROBERT BELL, ASST. SUPERINTENDENT  
KEN GRAZIN, COMPANY CLERK  
PENN BULLOCK, BARNMASTER  
JIM FIQUA, PAYMASTER  
DAVE ANDERSON, WEBMASTER

## August 2008

Our next meeting is August 7th 2008 at 7:00 PM.

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.



**Outgoing superintendent Fred Coleman congratulates his successor John Williams, at the Club's Annual Picnic on July 19.**



## From the Superintendent's Desk

By John Williams



First off I wish to thank the members of WNCRR for your willingness to have me as your superintendent. I'm not new to this role as I served as a division superintendent and club president for several years back in North Dakota.

For those of you that may not know me, I have been a model railroader in the modern sense since 1978 when I picked up a copy of *Model Railroader* magazine. I was hooked. (Like many of us as a kid I had Lionel and American Flyer trainsets.) Before moving to western NC in 2003, I lived for 23 years in North Dakota, where like here, my occupation was a university professor (I currently teach at Western Carolina University).

I had a friend in North Dakota who was a model railroader who was interested in modules. This was back in 1985. Several of us got together and formed a modular club. Eventually we moved to a permanent location and set up a permanent layout. I quickly became involved with the Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA and served as the Division Superintendent for the North Dakota Division and was on the Board of Directors of the TLR for a number of years as well. Although I started out as an N-Scaler, I think it is safe to say that HO is my primary scale. I like just about everything in model railroading but have to admit that scenicing and detailing are my favorites.

I joined the WNCRR and LOS Division in late 2006 and am still learning names and faces and the history of the club and division. We have a great group of guys and gals here and that was one of the reasons I accepted the nomination to be your new superintendent. I will try not to step on toes so please excuse me in advance if I do so (Fred has been great in helping me get a sense of the history of the WNCRR). We are already a great group but we can surely be even better.

As a supporter of the NMRA, I want to continue what Fred has started and increase further division membership. I see the achievement programs as one way of increasing interest in this aspect of model railroading. I will have more to say about this next month. I also want us to see ourselves as ambassadors for the hobby, especially when we take our modules on the road. The more people we get interested in the hobby the better it is for all of us. Just think of how the hobby has changed in just the last five years. Manufacturers and vendors need us and we need them. With more model railroaders, everyone wins.

Last and by no means least, I wish to extend a big round of thanks to our outgoing superintendent. Under his leadership, membership has increased in the division. He also provided the leadership that brought us a successful SER Convention back in May. Fred has done a wonderful job and his hard work has made it easy for me to step in as your new superintendent.

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## The Annual Picnic

Text by Ken Granzin. Photographs by Charles Krug

Club members gathered in the Eliada cafeteria on July 19<sup>th</sup> for a session of camaraderie and good food. Fred Coleman and Maureen Rigg once again managed the food acquisition and distribution, for which we thank them. They, in turn, thanked those who added to the cache of food by making

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and/or bringing their own contribution. Our new Superintendent, John Williams, took over the leadership role for the club, and he thanked Fred for his years of service in that position. All those in attendance joined him with a rousing round of applause for Fred, who received a very attractive plaque to commemorate his many contributions to the club. Incoming Superintendent John Williams spoke of some of his ideas for moving the club into the fu-



Ken Granzin



Jack Mershon



Ken Granzin



Boyce Brown

Fred Coleman (outgoing Superintendent) presents awards to:



Bill Siebert



Jack Mershon receives Superintendent award

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# TRIP REPORT

Text and some of the photographs by Clinton Smoke

In June, I had an opportunity to join about 100 other members of the Norfolk and Western Historical Society for their 19th annual gathering. This year we met at Marion, Ohio.

**Background.** To many tourists, Marion is best known as the hometown and burial location of President Warren G. Harding and First Lady Florence Harding. But we should note that Marion was one of Ohio's major industrial centers until the 1970s. Marion Power Shovel was a Marion, Ohio based manufacturer of earth moving shovels and draglines, mainly used in construction and resource extraction.

The company's main product line consisted of bucket mining shovels and dragline mining shovels. From 1900 to the 1960s, Marion-built shovels and other products were among the best known trade names in earth moving equipment. Products of the Marion Steam Shovel Company (later Marion Power Shovel) built the Panama Canal. In the 1960s, NASA contracted with Power Shovel to construct the crawler-transporters that moved the assembled Saturn V rockets, used by Project Apollo, to the launch pad.

Marion built its first walking dragline in 1939 and became a key player in providing giant stripping shovels to the coal industry, being the first to put a long-boom revolving stripping shovel to work in North America in 1911. Marion's succession of giant shovels, many breaking world size records, culminated in the world's largest in 1965, the Marion 6360. The 6360 at the Captain Mine, Ill., operated with a 180 cubic yard dipper. With an estimated weight of 15,000 tons, it holds the record as the heaviest mobile land machine.



All of that is gone now. However, Marion remains a surprisingly viable community of about 35,000. It is the nation's leader in corn and popcorn produced foods. Whirlpool Corp. is the largest employer in the city operating the largest clothes-dryer manufacturing facility in the world.

The city is also a rail center for CSX, and Norfolk Southern, linking all four points on the compass. To understand the strategic significance of Marion, we have to go back and look at the history of both railroads. Today, CSX represents the former NYC, Erie Lackawanna, and

Hocking Valley Lines. NS represents the former Pennsylvania RR. All went through Marion. Today, NS and CSX transverse Ohio and converge at Marion and other places. There are two four-diamond crossings at Marion, about 200 feet apart, with the AC tower (shown on page 7 of last month's issue of *The Semaphore*) located in between.

On Friday our little group boarded a bus for a one hour ride to Bellevue, Ohio, near Sandusky. At one time, five railroads served Bellevue. Today, NS operates a terminal at Bellevue, a facility that

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Trains are everywhere in Marion

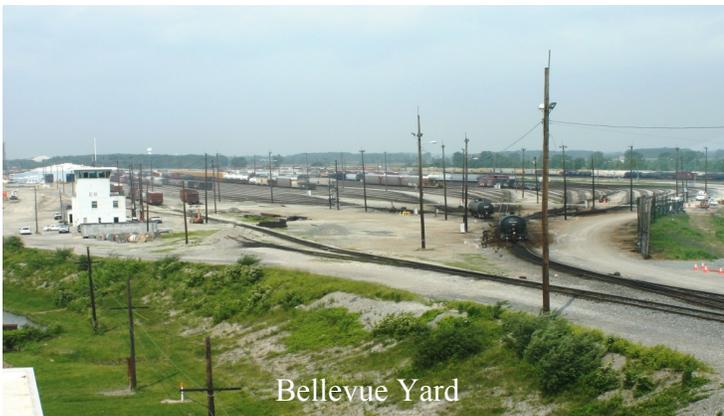


NS train approaching the diamonds where NS crosses the former NYC and Erie Lackawanna, now CSX.

Here we see a CSX train crossing Center Street in downtown Marion

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include a switching yard, engine repair shop, a car repair shop, and a transportation department (sales and administrative functions to support freight operations). Over 400 people work at Bellevue including Bellevue-based road crews and contract employees.



Bellevue Yard

The yard, while by no means large by NS standards, is none-the-less impressive. There are 10 receiving tracks, 40 classification tracks, seven departure tracks, and 15 tracks for sorting and storing cars for and from local destinations. The overall length of the yard is 6.5 miles. The operation of the hump yard is controlled by a computer. While it is still necessary to manually pull the pin to uncouple a car, nearly everything else is computer operated. As the cars roll over the hump and start down the hill, their speed is measured and controlled. The computer also

knows the car's number, weight, and destination. It considers these facts (and wind speed) in applying appropriate braking effort at the retarders and proper routing to one of 40 tracks. Ideally, a car will roll down hill and couple gently with the car ahead. Sometimes, it stops short. A remotely controlled switch engine is used to push the cars together to form a continuous train. During our visit, the operation at the yard was continuous with from five to ten cars moving over the crest per minute. According to information provided, the yard typically assembles 26 trains a day.

We also saw the engine shop. NS operates large shops at Roanoke and Chattanooga; Bellevue is next in size. They have five tracks in the shop with one set aside for electrical trouble shooting, one for heavy mechanical repairs, and one for routine maintenance. They also have a drop table to facilitate traction motor replacement, and a wheel truing machine. On average they service 44 locomotives a day, nearly half of which get fully serviced. They typically use 1.5 million gallons of fuel and 250 tons of sand a month to service their equipment. Good safety and housekeeping practices were much in evidence.



our wonderful host at Bellevue, Mr. Greg Culver of Norfolk Southern



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ture. For example, he intends to emphasize rewards for various areas of achievement recognized by the NMRA. John wants us to maintain a close relationship with the national association, but he emphasized that NMRA membership is not requisite for belonging to our club.

John presented recognition certificates to those in attendance who have worked with the Eliada youth in the barn and/or previously with cub scouts. He will later distribute their certificates to workers who didn't attend the picnic. The certificates were provided by Lee Monaco-Fitzgerald, who is the major proponent in this country for using n-scale t-trak modules as the basis for creating model railroads as well as for modeling the environment of railroads

Jack Mershon was recognized as the outstanding member of the year. (If you have not member seen the fine scenery contributions Jack has made to our modular layout, stop by the barn and take a look at the park scene, the village, and especially, the magnificent high trestle bridge he built.) †

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## NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

### Lake Junaluska update

At the beginning of the year, The Lake Junaluska Assembly acquired a model railroad layout. If you attended the SER convention, you saw this layout at the Terrace Hotel. Bill Seibert, Jack Mershon and John Williams have been advising a group of retirees at Lake Junaluska in refurbishing the layout. With a little bit of labor trains now run on one loop of track with some degree of reliability.

They met two weeks ago to discuss the layout's future. In its current form the layout is antiquated. In the 1960s and 70s it was a state-of-the-art operation, but not anymore. After some brainstorming, it was decided that a portion of the layout would be redesigned to reflect a portion of Lake Junaluska, complete with buildings found there today. The remainder would be built to reflect Waynesville or some other area nearby. The new layout has the potential for small operating sessions. This update will require a major dismantling of the layout.

Money is not really much of an issue, but commitment is. The three are willing to work on this project, but before they sink their time and their money into it we need to get a feel from the Lake Junaluska group how much is there interest. We will be submitting a track and layout plan to them about the first of September. At that time, a decision will be made to go forward or to abandon the project altogether.

If anyone is interested in helping as your time permits, please contact, Bill, Jack, or John Williams.

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## OPERATING SESSIONS

Operating sessions in August are scheduled for the 9th at 9am and the 24th at 6:30 pm.

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### Parting Shot

We will leave you with this parting shot. What is this guy trying to do? If you think you know, send me (Clint Smoke) an email. The first correct entry may receive some sort of prize.

