

The

Whistle



Post

Official Newsletter of the

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

1615 Old Louisburg Rd Raleigh, NC 27604

Phone: 919-400-5570

“All Aboard”

I am very happy to tell you that we are officially replacing Covid Madness with March Madness! Everyone get your brackets done, and let's have some fun rooting for our teams. What a welcome change - seems like we are almost back to “normal.”

As you should all be aware of, the Board has acted, in an abundance of caution and following the lead of the City of Raleigh, to reopen the Club to outside people. So, while masks will not be required for fully vaccinated members, please feel free to wear one if it makes you more comfortable and/or if you think you might put others in danger. Visitors should also follow these guidelines. Remember, these things are changeable on rather short notice, so please be flexible and do everything we can to keep all safe and healthy.

We have been having a good increase in attendance – yes, in person attendance – at our meetings and at our Wednesday Breakfast Social. Thank you all for the participation. I hope you are enjoying the changes we have made to the Membership meeting (less business more fun – like show and tell, lucky 7, and great programs). Please give us input, bring items to share, and let us know of programs you can present at future meetings.

This month's meeting will feature a video presentation provided by Ted Kunstling, entitled “Railroads of the Civil War.” Anyone with any interest the Civil War and railroading, especially on how it was in this area, will want to attend this program. Make sure you join us. It, like all our programs, is also available via Zoom.

The HO layout committee is making terrific progress and is actively planning the new expansion and development. There will be updated reports and meeting notices from the committee as they progress. Sounds like they are on the right track.

Just a reminder – Saturday, March 19th – is our next work/learn day at the Club. We plan on working on the N gauge traveling layout. We were planning on raffling it off at the Spring into Trains Show, however, while setting it up for our work session, one of our members, Robert Wilson, expressed a desire to purchase it for his home use. So, now we will be prepping it for a

member – and that means extra love and care needs to be applied as we spiff it up for his use. AND - I will provide food for a lunch break. Don't miss it.

One last thing – if you know anyone interested in trains, bring them to the Club, introduce them to our group - let's keep building our membership.

OK Train's leaving the station on track 1 - - - ALL ABOARD

John Spach, President

In Memorium

Patrick Ruark Moore
January 15, 1952 - March 12, 2022



It is with great sadness that The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club notes the passing of Pat Moore. Pat was a Charter Member and the first President of the Club, serving from June 1984 to May 1985. He is survived by his devoted wife of 41 years, Kay Veasey Moore, and by sisters, Gaither Moore Terrell (Tom) of High Point and Hannah Moore Jordan (Jeff) of Falls Church, Virginia, and brothers, Joseph C. Moore, III (Martha) and Hugh H. Moore (Linda) of Raleigh, many nieces, nephews, cousins and members of Kay's family.

A graveside service will be conducted at Historic Oakwood Cemetery at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2022.

Future Events

Carolina Train Shows Presents.....

Saturday, March 26th, 2022
Jamil Temple
206 Jamil Rd, Columbia, SC
Saturday 9am-3pm
Admission \$5

Club COVID-19 Mask Policy

Because the City of Raleigh has discontinued its mask mandate, the Board of Governors has elected to follow the current guidelines. Masks will not be required in the Clubhouse. All members and guests are free to wear or to not wear a mask at their personal discretion.

February 19th Work Session by Tom Garren



On Saturday, February 19, 2022, a group of members gathered at the Club for two reasons: first, to move the N scale layout to its new location; and second, to begin the process of learning how to install a DCC decoder in a DC locomotive.

At 9:45 am, a group of members moved the N scale layout to its new home without a problem. This clears the area designated for the HO layout expansion. The wall rack for storage of N scale trains also moved to its new location near the door of the layout room. Good job guys.

For the second activity, we gathered in the meeting room for a session led by Wayne Aiken on decoder installation. This was a learning experience in which we discovered that there is more to learn, depending on the specific locomotive, before we can successfully install a decoder. This work will continue, and knowledge will be shared once it is obtained. On a positive note, one Club locomotive, an Atlantic Coast line E7, was found to already be DCC equipped once the body was removed. With a bit of work on the test track, the locomotive now successfully runs and makes sounds under DCC control.

Those in attendance for the activities throughout the day (Ron Abraham, Wayne Aiken, Richard Calfee, Tom Charnley, Stephen Dahlem, Bernie Dawson, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Mike Johns, Mike Keelean, Ted Kunstling, Phil Michaud, Jim Nelson, Richard Nyce,

Robert Wilson, Ken Wesp, and Bob Witwer) were also treated to a hot dog lunch courtesy of John Spach. Thanks to all who helped make the day a success.

HO Layout Committee Activities

Two sessions (February 17th and February 21st) were held at Bob Witwer's storage module in Clayton for Club members to examine the approximately 40 modules that we received as a donation. The sessions were sparsely attended, but three modules were purchased by members. Additionally, the procedures necessary to salvage equipment and prepare the modules for use in the HO expansion were worked out. Modules and equipment that will not be used by the Club are available for member purchase.

Thanks to Richard Calfee and Tom Tieman for their efforts in reworking the support legs on the end modules of the current layout. The legs no longer protrude into the aisle space around the layout – a significant hazard to navigation has been removed!

Additional meetings and work sessions have been scheduled:

HO Layout Committee Work Session: Saturday, March 26th, 1:00 pm, to dismantle and salvage the modules from the Greenville donation at the storage facility in Clayton where the modules are currently stored. Please contact Bob Witwer for location and access to the storage shed.

HO Layout Committee Meeting: Those interested in the planning process for the layout expansion are invited to the Clubhouse at 1 pm on March 20th to participate in deciding what the new addition should incorporate. Ideas on industries, topography and track layouts are streaming in – keep them coming!

If you were unable to attend the meeting, please send additional thoughts to Bob Witwer or other members of the HO committee (Richard Calfee, Mike Johns, and Ken Howard). Thanks to those of you who have already contributed!

The full minutes of HO committee meetings are available for all to review on the Club website.

Ken Howard

Member Layout

ROCK CREEK DIVISION: A Work in Progress by Ted Kunstling

Like some of you, retirement has allowed me time and resources to return to past pleasures. My 60-year-old HO trains had somehow miraculously survived multiple moves and younger brothers before resurrection in 2018. The structures, rolling stock, and “Little Joe” Varney tank engine were in surprisingly good condition, although the Atlas Flex track was long gone. I added a

basic Bachmann starter train, set up a 4x8 foot sheet of plywood in my basement workshop, purchased more E-Z Track, and began running trains again. I brushed up on old modeling skills and learned new ones building structures, scenery, and rolling stock. The miracle of DCC meant I would not need to create a complicated system of blocks, but this too has a learning curve. I began frequenting Nick's Trains for gear and advice, until Nick finally suggested I visit the Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club. Wonderful advice!

2018 Start-up layout on 4x8 foot plywood



Main Street scene



Freight station and Model T truck built 60 + years ago

In 2020, opportunity knocked. A friend of a friend had lost her husband and was preparing to move to a new home. Her husband had amassed a quantity of HO equipment and had a working layout (below) but had not yet begun to install scenery. Many structures and scenery resources were still in original boxes. After visiting her, I pondered for several days then made an offer. Soon, I was moving up to the next level, creating an 8 x 13 foot layout in my basement.



Planning followed an “evolutionary” approach, beginning with resources I had accumulated. Liking the NRVMMR Club layout, I decided on a rectangular configuration with access on all sides and open center. I had plenty of Sievers Benchwork and a large inventory of Bachmann E-Z Track, so that is what I used to develop and assemble a layout, enabling me to begin running trains right away. Ultimately, I came

up with 2 and 7/8 complete loops and a staging yard. The 7/8 loop serves industrial sidings with several spurs.



Editor’s Note: Ted has provided a number of photos of his new layout that document his planning process and construction of scenic detail. Stay tuned for next month’s Whistle Post for the second installment.

Thanks for Sharing Knowledge by Tom Garren



I got out of model railroading in 1985. When I returned to the hobby, so very much had changed. One of the most mystifying, at least to me, was DCC. Many of the things we dreamed about 40 years ago is now possible with DCC.

One thing that was scary to me was the concept of installing a decoder in a locomotive myself.

The only motive power I saved from my HO days in the seventies and eighties are a pair of Athearn F7s that I

had painted in my private road scheme of those years. Before trying to convert them to DCC, I knew I had to gain knowledge, confidence, and experience.

Thanks to our Club and members' willingness to share information and help others develop skills, I can now say the initial mystery is behind me. I knew we had some blue box Athearn locomotives that needed to have decoders installed. I talked about trying to install a basic DCC chip in a Southern switcher with John Spach. He said he would be glad to help me and felt that we could be successful. To prepare for this work, I watched some videos on adding DCC to Athearn blue box engines on Youtube.

When the day came, John Spach and I met in the Clubhouse shop and began the work. John provided tips in addition to the ones I had gained from the videos. He also let me do most of the work. When it came time to test the loco, it ran first time on DCC. While I am no expert in this activity, I do have a much better understanding of how to proceed next time, and a much higher comfort level when I try again.

I thanked John for his help and was informed that he had learned from Dan Egy and was just passing on the knowledge to another Club member. To me this is a very big advantage of our Club. We have many members with lots of different skills who are willing to share with others. Just ask and enjoy the Club.

Neat Links

Tom Garren - After our work session last week, I went to You Tube to view some videos about installing DCC decoders in Athearn locomotives. There are many from which to choose, but I particularly liked the one from Larry Puckett, the guy that writes the DCC column in Model Railroader. Anyway, here is a link for you to check out:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIUyxt3UVqo>

Editor's Note: This link has been a little troubling. You may have to copy and paste it in your browser. The video runs about 29 minutes.

Courtesy of **Tom Magnani**: "These guys really dig tunnels!"

<https://www.newcivilengineer.com/latest/watch-overcoming-geological-challenges-on-the-brenner-base-tunnel-07-02-2022/>

Editor's Note: Runs 15:44 minutes. This is a presentation about the construction of the 64 km Brenner Tunnel.

Also from **Tom Magnani**: A website of interest to those in the group with model kits for old freight cars - "A guide to 1920s era HO scale plastic freight cars"

<https://designbuildop.hansmanns.org/a-guide-to-1920s-era-ho-scale-plastic-freight-cars/>

Railroad Slang Contest (courtesy of John Spach)

Test your train trivia knowledge with this 10 part challenge match up. Match the term with the appropriate definition. Answers can be found on Page 9.

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|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Big o | a. Overheated Bearing |
| 2. Blowing Smoke | b. Streamliner |
| 3. Grass Wagon | c. Stock Car |
| 4. Tallow Pot | d. Brakeman |
| 5. Hog | e. To Brag |
| 6. Shack | f. Railroad Cop |
| 7. Cow Cage | g. Conductor |
| 8. Pussyfooter | h. Locomotive |
| 9. Hot Box | i. Fireman |
| 10. Windcutter | j. A Tourist Car |

Editor's Note: This will be the last installment of the "Railroad Slang Contest." Thanks to John Spach for making this a regular Whistle Post feature. If you haven't completed all of the games, they are still available at the Club website in past issues.

Real Train Photos

Ken Howard sent a photo of Carolina Southern EMD GP-38 #4002 at Nichols, South Carolina.



Upcoming Meetings and Activities

March Membership Meeting: The next meeting will be held Thursday, March 17th, 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Attendance via Zoom is optional.

April Board of Governors Meeting: The next meeting will be held Monday, April 7th, 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Attendance via Zoom is optional.

HO Layout Committee Work Session: A session will be held on Saturday, March 26th, 1:00 pm, to dismantle and salvage the modules from the Greenville donation. This will take place at the storage facility in Clayton where the modules are currently stored. Please contact Bob Witwer for location and access to the storage shed.

HO Layout Committee Meeting: Those interested in the planning process for the layout expansion are invited to the Clubhouse at 1 pm on March 20th to participate in deciding what the new addition should incorporate.

N Scale Travelling Layout Work Session: A work session will be held to fix up the existing N scale traveling layout on March 19th at 10:00 am at the Clubhouse. This will entail some repair and cosmetic work to get the layout ready to be sold to a Club member. If participation is high enough, we can get started on a new layout to be raffled off or sold at the **Spring into Trains** show. Once again, John Spach will provide lunch at the work session.

Breakfast Social: Every Wednesday, 9:00 am at Barry's Café, Raleigh, NC.

Dates are set for the **NRV SPRING INTO TRAINS**, 2022 edition, for April 30 – May 1, so mark your calendars. The date is a week earlier than usual to avoid the Mother's Day weekend.

Notes from the Editor and Webmaster

Please send recent photos of Club activities to Bernie Dawson, at nrvwebmaster@gmail.com, so he can maintain and update our website.

Thanks to all who are contributing items for the Whistle Post. Your participation is appreciated, and your contributions will appear as space permits. Please send articles, photos of real trains, book reviews, product reviews, photographs of your home layouts, and interesting links to Ken Howard, Whistle Post Editor, at klhowardjr@aol.com.

Answers to Railroad Slang Matching Game: 1-g, 2-e, 3-j, 4-i, 5-h, 6-d, 7-c, 8-f, 9-a, 10-b

How Did You Do?

Minutes of the Membership, Board, and Committee Meetings

Minutes of both Board of Governors and Membership meetings are now available to those who wish to read them on the Club website. Also, minutes from HO Committee meetings are now available, so members can follow the planning and construction of the new HO layout additions. The link below takes you directly to the Minutes page:

<https://nrclub.net/meeting-minutes/>

NRV Whistle Post
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First Class

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