

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”

December 2025

Ahoy there. I am writing this aboard the Caribbean Princess offshore of Grand Cayman. It's 85° and sunny with a slight breeze. Do I miss you all and your current weather? Not a chance!

I am, however, looking forward to our third annual Club Dinner in January. As a matter of fact, I have already bought my \$20 gift for the Secret Santa exchange. I think I had the most steals last year. It was great fun, and I'm hoping this year is the same.

Before I left, I brought my granddaughter in to the Club on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving to work on places in Mount Witwer where we were either too big or too old to get to. I think she helped us get going on that project which had been stalled for some time. Now let's continue with it and bring it to fruition.

OK, the Captain just called and he needs me on the bridge. Never a dull moment. See you all too soon.

Look out for slow moving trains!

All Aboard

John Spach, President

Third Annual Club Dinner

By Randy Foulke

The third annual NRV Club dinner is set for **Wednesday, January 21, 2025**, beginning at 6:00 pm at the Golden Corral restaurant located at 3551 Grenelle Street, Raleigh, NC 27503 at the northwest corner of Tryon Road and South Saunders Street.

You and your spouse/significant other are invited. Youth members are also invited along with a parent. Please pay for your meal when you arrive at the Golden Corral, then find a seat in our private dining room and serve yourself from the buffet.

This year we will hold the second annual gift exchange, sometimes called a Yankee Swap or Dirty Santa. Rules are provided below; you must bring a gift in order to participate. Spouses and significant others are welcome to participate if they bring a gift.

If you plan to attend, please let Randy Foulke know at randy.railfan@gmail.com. Indicate how many people will attend.

Gift Exchange Rules:

Each participant must bring one new (or at least unused item) that has a minimum value of \$20. The gifts may be wrapped, but simply placing it in a bag will be sufficient. The point is that the gift is to be a surprise. The gifts will be placed on a table upon entering the meeting. Do not label the gifts, so that it will remain a mystery as to who has brought which item. **You should mark the bag with the gift's scale if appropriate.**

The gift exchange chairman will ask each participant to draw a number from a hat or a box. This determines the order of gift selection with the lowest number selecting first. There will be only one number per participant. The person with #1 picks a gift and opens it, the person with #2 selects next, and so on until all gifts have been selected.

The real fun is that participants with #2 and higher have a decision to make. They can select any unopened gift, or they may "steal" a gift from a participant who has gone before them. If someone's gift is stolen, they immediately choose and open a new gift or steal someone else's gift. You may not steal the same gift back at this turn. There is a limit to stealing. After a gift has been stolen two times (it has had three owners), the gift is "safe" or "frozen." The third owner is the permanent owner.

This cycle of stealing can sometimes continue for a while, until a new gift is finally chosen, at which point the turn is passed to the participant with the next highest number. There is a special rule for participant #1. After all the gifts have been stolen or swapped, participant #1 has the option of stealing any other gift not in the "safe" category. This turns the disadvantage of being #1 into a huge advantage, as almost the entire range of gifts will be available for stealing. The gift exchange ends when either someone keeps the last previously unopened gift, or when the subject of a steal chooses not to swap what he/she has been gifted.

Here are some additional tips and considerations:

- When the gift exchange is over, trading is perfectly acceptable so that, as much as possible, everyone can go home with a gift with which they are happy.
- You should not select or go home with the same gift that you brought.
- Play the game with a sense of humor. Do not take the outcome too seriously.
- Do not bring gifts that are unlikely to be useful to anyone. (Keep your spare parts box in your workshop.)
- The gift you bring should be something you would be happy to receive.
- Not everyone models in HO. Know your Club friends and provide some selections in other scales or bring a non-scale specific gift (e.g., tools, adhesives, landscaping materials, books, or DVD's). Your gift does not necessarily have to appeal to the entire group, but it should be appropriate for more than a few people, or at least something that can be regifted.

Reminder – Sodas Are Not Free

Since Wayne Aiken took over responsibility for maintaining the supply of sodas in the Clubhouse, you should all have noticed the increased selection of brands and the increased stock. Wayne has done a great job in maintaining and expanding the available supply.

Unfortunately, some members have not been living up to their honor system responsibility to pay for the sodas they consume. Wayne reports that, over the last few weeks, members have only paid for about half the sodas consumed. Sodas are now a dollar each despite Wayne's efforts to catch sales. Dollar bills or change should be left in the red cup in the refrigerator door when you take out a can. The Club cannot continue losses subsidizing members' beverage habits.

Timonium Train Show Trip Reminder

The Timonium, MD train show is on January 31 and February 1, 2026. Show hours are 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday and 9 am to 3 pm on Sunday. Travel arrangements are being worked out among the participants. In order to get the special hotel rate, arrangements need to be finalized at the Membership meeting on December 18, 2025.

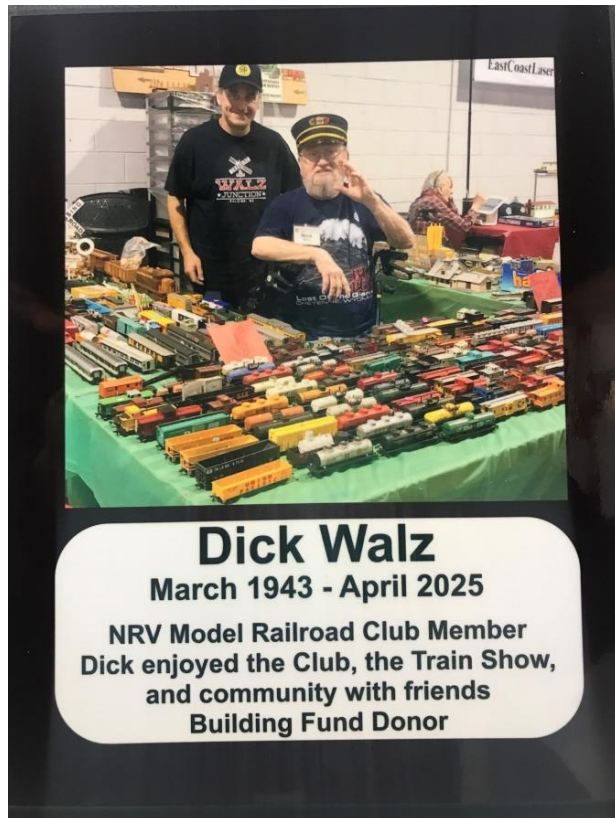
If you have an interest, please contact Randy Foulke at Barry's breakfast or by email at randy.railfan@gmail.com or by text to 919-649-8253. Note that this is not an "official" NRV sponsored event.

Randy Foulke Trivia Question

What was the southernmost point of the New York Central System?

See the answer and historical background on **Page 13**

Major Donation to the Building Fund



Plaque recognizing Dick Walz's contribution to the NRV Building Fund (photo by Ken Howard).



Dick Walz Plaque has been mounted in the Crew Lounge (photo by Ken Howard).

Gene Sing presented a plaque and check from Jane Walz for NRV's Building Fund at the Board of Governors' meeting of December 1st 2025. The donation was made on behalf of her husband Dick Walz who passed away on April 9, 2025. Dick was a Senior member of the Club for more than a decade before moving to California in 2021. He modelled in HO scale. Dick was also a vendor at Club train shows doing business as Walz Junction with his son Jason.

The commemorative plaque is now prominently displayed in the Crew Lounge at the Clubhouse. The NRV Club is very grateful for the addition to our building fund.

"Pass the Hat" Year-end Charitable Donation

Once again, the Board of Governors' has voted to support a year-end charity drive. As in past years, the Club will match member donations in an amount of up to \$500. The BoG has proposed splitting contributions between the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and the Durham Rescue Mission, but members' suggestions are welcome. Collection of donations will begin at the Membership Meeting on December 18th and close at the Membership Meeting on January 15, 2026. Further details will be available at the December meeting.

41st Annual Fall Train Show

A big thank you to all our Sponsors! Your contributions to the success of our show are gratefully acknowledged.



The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club
41st Annual FALL TRAIN SHOW

SPONSORS



Thank you to our sponsors for helping make this show a success!

Some of the Sponsors and Lucky Winners of Door Prizes

Here are photos of some of the many sponsors and the lucky winners of the hourly drawings. Thanks to Alan Servas for the photographs. Our apologies to the sponsors who weren't lucky enough to get their pictures included in this edition of the Whistle Post. The names of the recipients have been withheld to protect the innocent.



Gary Goodman of Goodman's N Scale



Trevor McMillen of Trevor's Train Store



Dal Cook of Mohawk Designs



Craig Williams of CSW Trains



Tom Davey of Southeast Hobbies



Craig Williams of CSW Trains
Craig was kind enough to provide two door prizes.

New Wi-Fi Connections for HO and N Scale

Thanks to Mike Hinman for revamping the Wi-Fi system for simpler layout access. The N scale and HO scale layouts now both operate from the Club Wi-Fi system. Logging in will allow a choice to select either the HO or N layout operation on your device. Separate logins are no longer required. Login credentials are posted in the Crew Lounge. Please consult Mike Hinman if you have difficulties.

Craftsman's Showcase Sponsors

Thanks to the Sponsors of the Craftsman's Showcase. Thanks also to the many entrants.



The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club
41st Annual FALL TRAIN SHOW
Craftsman's Showcase



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Thank you to our sponsors for helping make this show a success!

Tom Garren Trivia Question

What was the first Norfolk Southern Heritage Unit?

See the answer and historical background on **Page 13**

Upcoming Events

CAROLINA COASTAL RAILROADERS: 30TH Annual Train Show, New Bern Riverfront Convention Center, February 21-22, 2026 from 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday and 10 am to 4 pm on Sunday. Admission for both days \$10 for 12 and up.

OPEN HOUSE: We have scheduled out Spring Open House for Saturday, May 2, 2026 from 10 am to 4 pm.

BIG NEWS: Our 2026 “Spring into Trains” show will move to the Jim Graham Building. The Club has secured the building in perpetuity for the third weekend in May. Next year’s dates are May 23-24. In 2026, this will be the Memorial Day weekend. Plan Ahead!

Assassination Attempt on Club Vice President ?



Actually not. Tom Garren caught Mike Hinman trying to shade out glare from the windows as Ken Howard worked on photographing the Dick Walz plaque shown earlier in this edition of the WP - an unusual, but certainly beneficial, use of a table. So sorry – nothing to see here – kindly move along!

The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club invites you to an

OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY

May 02, 2026

10 am to 4 pm

at the Clubhouse located at 1615 Old Louisburg Road, Raleigh, NC 27604

Bring the entire family. View our Clubhouse, railroad library, five operating layouts and chat with our members about the fascinating world of model railroads.



We hope you will visit us in person, but if you cannot, please check out the Club's website at www.nrvclub.net.

HO Layout Work Sessions

There has been a lot of construction and maintenance activity on the HO layout during early December: additions to Mount Witwer, scenery on the west side of the Extension, and trackwork everywhere. Thanks to who have participated and continue to work on the improvements.



John Spach's granddaughter going where no man dares to go.



Mount Witwer after the work session.



The collapse when water caused the cardboard framework to collapse. Repairs have been completed.



Alec Urban and Liam Bryant working on scenery on the extension near the proposed palette factory.



Detail view of new Main #1 double track connection between the legacy modules and the extension



Why is Chuck Larned smiling? Lots of progress on improving the trackwork!

Real Railroads

Here are the last interesting pictures from **Ken Howard's** October trip into the northeast. Sometimes the history of buildings is as interesting as what is currently on the rails. The pictures show the waiting room in the Amtrak station in Westport, NY. Beautiful interiors are getting harder to find. The depot was built by the Delaware & Hudson Railroad in 1896 and expanded in 1908. Other than the waiting room, the building is now occupied by a theater company. Several renovations and restorations began in the 1970s and were completed in 1998.



Neat Links

Tom Garren forwarded the following links from **Bernie Dawson** that have been posted to YouTube by visitors to our November Show. If you didn't get to see everything of just want to reminisce, you will enjoy these videos: "Raleigh Train Shown November 8 2025 Part 2", and

<https://youtu.be/09S0jouHMpM?si=vgly6S4ghzxp1zPz>

"DEBBIE CAM - At The Raleigh Train Show November 8 2025"

https://youtu.be/ufPbn_-2_w8?si=Ro_QTn6CNk2Mtsrf

From **Charles Tubman** via the December 2025 'CSRRC News' is a link to the CSRRC YouTube Channel for Donald Arant's presentation on future plans for the state-owned North Carolina Railroad:

<https://youtu.be/t2O2YRIIteg>

Charles Tubman contributed a link to Donald Arant's presentation on future plans for the state-owned North Carolina Railroad on the CSRRC YouTube Channel:

<https://youtu.be/t2O2YRIIteg>

Tom Magnani passed along this link from **Jack Dziadul** to a magazine archive courtesy of Scale Trains:

<https://magazines.scalettrains.com/>

Upcoming Club Meetings and Activities

January Board of Governors Meeting: The next BoG meeting will be held at the Clubhouse on Monday, January 5th at 7:00 pm. Attendance via Zoom is optional.

December General Membership Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, December 18th at 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Randy Foulke is scheduled to give the program on *Those Esthetic E's*.

December HO Committee Meeting: Cancelled. See you all after the Holidays on January 18th.

Breakfast Social: Join us for the breakfast social every Wednesday, 9:00 am at Barry's Café, Raleigh, NC.

Notes from the Editor

Please send photos of Club activities to Brian Heaton, Webmaster, at bheaton1@gmail.com, so he can maintain and update our website. Also, don't forget to send your material, especially videos, to Ted Kunstling at trkunstling@aol.com so that he can keep our Facebook site current.

Please support the Club's new Instagram site by submitting videos of operations on the NRV layouts to Alec Urban at alec.urban@icloud.com. Alec is managing the new site.

Please send articles, photos of real trains, Club activities, book reviews, product reviews, photographs of your home layouts, and interesting links to Ken Howard, Whistle Post Editor, at klhowardjr@aol.com.

Minutes of Membership, Board, HO, and N Committee's Meetings

Minutes of Board of Governors, Membership, and HO and N Committee meetings are available on the Club website. The link below takes you directly to the Minutes page:

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

Randy Foulke Trivia Question Answer:

The southernmost point of the NYC was the 17th Street Yard in Cairo, IL. The yard was between the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers near the confluence of the two rivers.

The yard was built by the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Chicago Railway (CIS&C) in the 19th Century. The CIS&C merged in 1889 with the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis Railway to form the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railway (CCC&StL), known as the Big Four Route. The CCC&StL was purchased by the NYC in 1906, and was incorporated into the NYC in 1930. The yard was built to service the numerous ferries, wharfs and port facilities in Cairo. In 1900, an average of 42,000 railcars per month were ferried into and out of Cairo area. Bridges were constructed across the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers in the early 1900's. The ferry traffic dried up, but the yard still serviced the wharfs and port facilities in and around Cairo.

The rail line coming down through Illinois to Cairo was like a wye. The western leg of the wye branched from the NYC/CCC&StL New York to St. Louis main line at Paris, IL to the south toward Robinson, IL. The eastern leg was a branch line from Vincennes, IN. The two lines joined at St. Francisville, IL, and then proceeded southwest paralleling the Wabash River. At Mount Carmel, IL, the NYC connected to the Southern Railway (SOU). The NYC had trackage rights on the SOU line that travelled southwest across southern Illinois toward Cairo. At Olmsted, IL (approximately 15 miles northeast of Cairo), the NYC connected back to its own track for the remainder of the distance to Cairo.

At White City, IL, a branch went off of the SOU track that was solely owned by the NYC with no trackage rights granted to the SOU. This branch served six major Illinois coal mines. The branch continued on to Sahara, IL interchange with the Illinois Central Railroad (IC).

The 17th Street Yard along with 3 miles of track in the Cairo area was purchased by the Shawnee Terminal Railroad, a subsidiary of the Pioneer Lines, from Conrail (CR) to service port and industrial customers. The Shawnee Terminal Railroad connected to Canadian National Railway (formerly the IC) and operated until 2019. The yard and railway lines are out of service, but not abandoned. The rail lines from Paris, IL and Vincennes, IN have been abandoned except for a 2-mile section at Mount Carmel to service the coal fired Gibson Power Plant, IN (10th largest in the USA and the largest owned by Duke Energy). The rail line to the power plant was operated by NYC, but is now operated by Norfolk Southern. The NYC and the CCC&StL lines to Cairo were abandoned by Conrail, and the SOU lines were abandoned before the merger with the Norfolk & Western Railway.

Source: Walker, M, *Comprehensive Railroad Atlas of North America, Great Lakes West*, SPV, Upper Harroldown, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 9AX, U.K.

Tom Garren Trivia Question Answer:

Norfolk Southern locomotive 4610 is a unique GP59 that became famous for its commemorative Southern Railway paint scheme, created to honor the Southern Railway centennial in 1994.

🚂 Key Historical Highlights:

- Built in 1989: NS 4610 was constructed by Electro-Motive Division (EMD) as part of a small order of GP59 locomotives. Norfolk Southern was the only railroad to purchase this model.
- Special Request in 1992: The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) requested a commemorative unit to celebrate the Southern Railway's centennial (1894–1994). Ben Lee, BLE local chairman in Charlotte, NC, designed the paint scheme and commemorative plaque.
- Painted in 1994: Instead of a new SD70, NS chose the GP59 #4610 for the project. It was repainted at the Chattanooga paint shop in Southern Sylvan Green and Imitation Aluminum with Dulux gold lettering and logos.
- Role in Heritage Events: The locomotive often worked alongside Southern steam engine #4501, serving as a helper engine during excursions and special events.
- Return to Standard Paint: In 2012, NS 4610 was repainted back into the standard black NS scheme, ending its run as a heritage-painted unit.

⚙️ Technical Specifications:

- Model: GP59
- Horsepower: 3,000 hp
- Engine: EMD 710G3A, 12-cylinder
- Wheel arrangement: B-B (four axles)
- Built: November 1989



Norfolk Southern 4610 in its distinctive Southern Railway commemorative paint scheme (photo from locomotivefandom.com)

Source: MS Copilot

NRV Whistle Post
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First Class

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