



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
OCTOBER 2015 - MEMBERS EDITION

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LOCATION

ETSU Campus
George L. Carter
Railroad Museum

HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 PM in:

Brown Hall
Room 312
ETSU Campus,
Johnson City, TN.

Open House for viewing every Saturday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

Work Nights are held each Thursday from 4:00 pm until ??

SPECIAL ISSUE

FOCUS ON SCENERY AND MODELING DETAILS LESSONS FROM THE TWEETSIE AND ELSEWHERE



The September issue of *THE SIGNAL BRIDGE* featured some of the scenery techniques Fred Alsop used in creating the hillside textures seen in the photo above. As Fred and others make strides in creating a realistic landscape for the "Tweetsie" layout, *THE SIGNAL BRIDGE* will focus on the art of making a museum quality model. Ideas on how to create a sense of realism will be shared so that our trains can look and feel as realistic whether on the club layouts or at home.



Here is a close-up of the mountain meadow Fred created on the end of the Shell Creek-Roan Mountain aisle. He used tall grass matt material, stiff fiber pieces with fine ground foam, sage brush tree armatures (for the champion foreground tree) and cuttings from sage brush armatures for deadfall.



Another view of the Shell Creek-Roan Mountain aisle showing growths of goldenrod and scrub pines. The "Tweetsie" layout is set in the hay-day period of the 1920's so the right-of-way is well maintained and ballasted.



The pond outside of Cranberry was created using techniques previously described by Fred in the pages of *THE SIGNAL BRIDGE*. He's used ground foam covered stiff-fiber matt material (the light green scrub growth), two types of tall grass mats, and ballast gravel. Trees were made using the puff-ball and wire armature methods.



The Cranberry Engine House nears completion awaiting some interior details and doors. The model is the handiwork of club member David Cole

TREE MAKING TECHNIQUES
EXPLORING SEVERAL WAYS TO CREATE
REALISSTIC LOOKING TREES

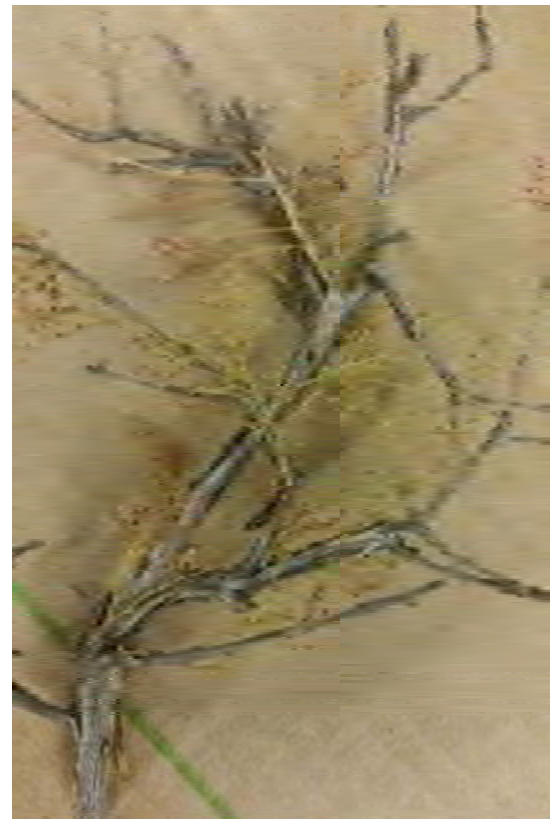
By Ted Bleck-Doran with help from
 Ken Harmon and Dean Small

PART 1: TREE FORMS

Talk with those in the know around the club and ask about trees and the reply will be “talk to the experts – Ken and Dean.” They have proven themselves to be master artists when come to making those fabulous trees populating the hillsides on the “Tweetsie” layout. They have become the go-to experts when it comes to deciduous trees.

There are several methods that can be used to make trees: plant stems; twisted wire, bendable plastic; and Polly-fiber puff balls. Each has its use in creating an Eastern deciduous forest.

Several of the more common natural materials used for tree forms include: sugar bush, sage brush, and nandina. Florist shops and Craft stores (e.g. - Michaels and Hobby Lobby) are good sources for natural materials to use for tree shapes. Look around your own yard and you just might find suitable material to use for trees.



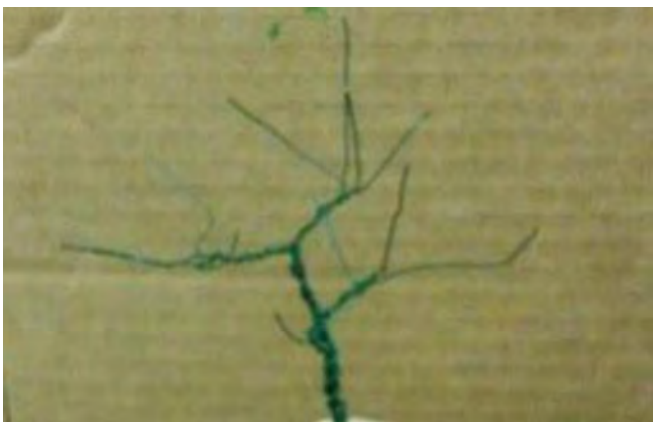
A sage brush twig which will need some selective trimming before it is ready to make into a champion tree for the layout



A cutting from a nandina bush that has been trimmed and is ready for its leaves to be added



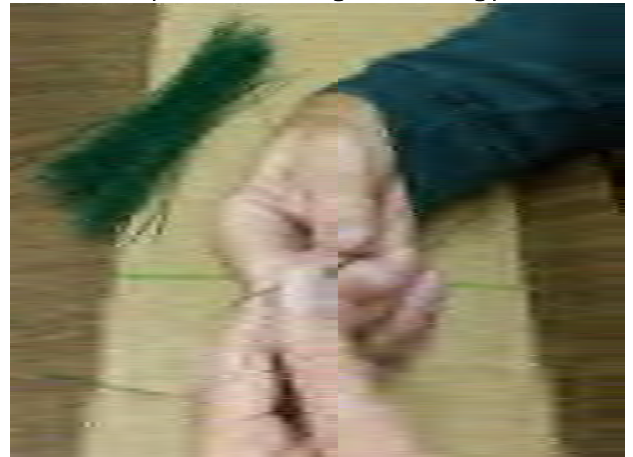
A sample of a plastic tree armature... these are available from several manufacturers if scenery material... they become pliable with the warmth of your hands or can be dipped in hot water to bend the branches into the desired shape



Above is an example of a hand twisted wire tree armature... this method of making tree forms are 1) the relative cost of making the tree, and 2) variety of shapes that can be achieved



Dean Small is one of our tree experts... in the photo above he has cut a bundle of 24-gauge wire into 6 inch lengths and has selected pair of wires to begin the twisting process.



He begins the twisting approximately 1 - 1 1/2 inches from the ends of the wire. This will create the secondary branches of the tree.

NOTE: for more realistic trees, the twisting motion should be in a clockwise pattern in the Northern Hemisphere, counter-clockwise if in the Southern Hemisphere ;^)



Here Dean has twisted together two 2-wire bundles making a main trunk with four branches.

PART 2: ADDING FOLLAGE



Continuing the process of assembling 2-wire and 3-wire bundles, Dean adds a third bundle to the main trunk by twisting the new bundle around the main trunk. At this point he has incorporated 2x 2-wire and 1x 3-wire bundles creating a main trunk, 3 primary branches, and 7 secondary branches. A fourth 3-wire bundle will be added to complete the tree form.



Once the bundles have been twisted together, Dean wraps the trunk and primary branches with floral tape. Color of the tape doesn't matter since the entire tree frame will receive an overspray of olive drab.

NOTE: some modeling articles recommend saturating the taped tree frame with scenic white glue to seal the tape in order to keep it from unraveling.

Once the tape has been applied the crown of the tree can be shaped by bending the primary and secondary branches into their final array. The tree is now ready for the foliage to be applied



Contemporary scenery techniques allow modelers to create vibrant, realistic tree models fairly inexpensively and easily



Woodland Scenics and other manufacturers are offering a wide variety of products which make tree-making all the more foolproof and fun



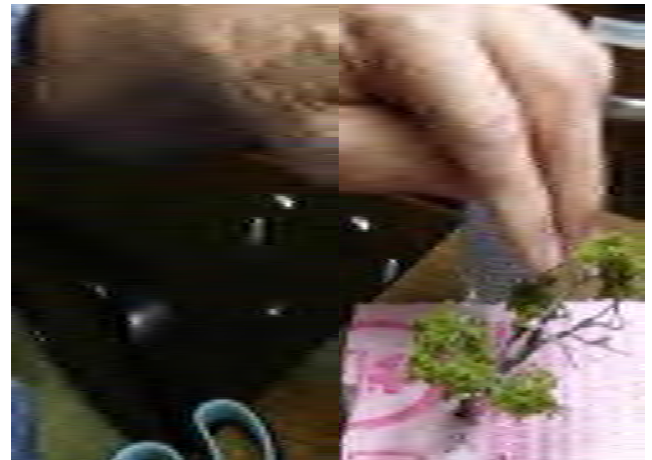
In addition to older tree making methods (e.g., the use of clump foliage ground foam – or - polly-fiber branches dusted with fine ground foam) products such as Woodland Scenics *Fine Leaf Foliage* make tree making even simpler, with less mess, and waste of materials.



Using a scrap piece of foam insulation, Ken Harmon secures the tree form to keep it upright while applying the leaves and branches. A few drops of white scenery glue (Arlene's *Tacky Glue* of Elmer's *White Glue*) is applied to the secondary armatures in preparation for the applying of the leaf clusters



The Woodland Scenics leaf material is a stiff polly-fiber core with fine ground foam already affixed. Ken trims a smaller piece off of a larger clump of foliage



The smaller clump is pressed into the glue that has been applied to the tree armature. If using a tacky glue, you will find that the glue has already started to set and accepts the foliage clump nicely. The clump can be repositioned but there may be some damage to the armatures is you are using one of the natural sources for the armatures



Ken repeats the process filling in the bare spots and secondary branches until the tree has a natural fullness to its crown. Ken works from the lower branches toward the top of the tree.





A blend of colors (dark, medium and light green foliage) can be used in a single tree to accent shadows with the darker shades more towards the lower and interior portions of the tree, working in the lighter hues toward the outer and upper branches.



When Ken is satisfied with the tree, he seals the entire assembled tree with a coat of hair spray. Make sure that you are in a well ventilated area when using the spray; Ken has the advantage of the industrial spray booth at the club for his safety.

Combining these two methods can result in a bunch of great looking tree in a relatively short span of time. Dean can manufacture 3-5 tree shapes in an hour; Ken finds that 10-15 minutes is all that is needed to affix the foliage to the tree armatures. All in all, a nice evening workbench project.

**ADDING INTERIOR DETAILS FO
PASSENGER CARS
A MATTER OF CHOICE**

colored clothing to increase their visibility through car windows.



To add a bit more realism to the Linville River passenger car No. 4 Rich Gallagher added a cluster of passengers to the interior of the car. Since the car was not lighted he selected passengers with light

Bob Jones took a different tack by adding LED lighting to the interior of ET&WNC passenger car No. 22. For daylight running the unlighted No. 4 conveys the impression of a lively passenger business, while No. 22 comes alive during night time running.

**PURPLE MOUNTAIN MAJESTIES:
CREATING THE ILLUSION OF DISTANCE**

Concept by Fred Alsop



Depth has been created using all the techniques described below: detailed foreground, types and varying sizes of trees, stippled backdrop.

Given that the Tweetsie layout is basically a point to point shelf layout there is not much depth to work with in creating visual depth to the hillsides and mountains. Several techniques have been incorporated into the layout to create the feeling of depth.



A look also at the Cranberry Mine shows the blending of scenic techniques as well

The latest effort involves the use of distant mountain profiles using thin foam boards as backdrops cut to form the contours of mountains in the distance. In the following photo the white foam board can be seen fitted behind the ridgeline (brown and unstained plasterwork) above the Doe River Gorge section of the layout.



A foam board has been cut to fit above the Doe River Gorge

The contours of the mountains in the distance are marked and cut. Each piece is test fit and the contours adjusted for the best appearance. Below, Fred is test fitting a piece of form board that has already been cut along the ridgeline out of Hampton.



Once in place, Fred paints the contour boards a light olive drab. The color distracts the eye and gives the impression of mountains further in the distance. Some of the foam boards have been installed double-sided to provide distant mountain contours when viewed from adjacent aisles.



Other techniques use to good effect are:

- Varying the size of trees - e.g., foreground to background) champion trees, individual armature trees (largest to smallest), puff-ball trees (larger to smaller), stippled tree colors on a flat backdrop.

NOTE: this effect is evident in the hillside above the Cranberry aisle.

- Varying the color palette used by using more vibrant colors in the foreground and more muted and lighter tones as the scenery recedes into the background.



Fred nasks the joint between backdrop and hillside using puff-ball trees

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

The business meeting of the of the **MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS** for September 15, 2015 was called to order by club president, Fred Alsop, at 6:35 PM in room 312 in Brown Hall on the ETSU campus. There were 16 members present.

New member, Bob Dunn, was introduced. Bob has modeled detailed circus trains from the 1940's and 50's and is presently interested in modeling a North Carolina shortline, the **DURHAM AND SOUTHERN**. He moved to Jonesborough several years ago to be closer to a daughter who attended ETSU and located her residence in the Tri-City area. He volunteers with the Jonesborough Visitors Center providing historic tours of the business district.

OFFICER REPORTS

SECRETARY:

In the absence of the secretary, Debbi Edwards, Jim Pahriss moved/Gary Emmert seconded to approve the minutes from the August meeting as printed in the newsletter, **THE SIGNAL BRIDGE**. Motion passed on voice vote.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Ted Bleck-Doran reported that the September issue of **THE SIGNAL BRIDGE** has been distributed to the club membership. The current issue contains 26 pages including articles on the History of the Chicago "L", "Creating Mountain Meadows", "Rescuing Passenger Cars from the Scrap Box", "President's Column", and meeting minutes. The October issue was previewed noting that articles on "Scenery Techniques", the bi-monthly electronics column as well as the usual club information and business items would appear. President Fred Alsop complimented the current issue for its content and appearance.

TREASURER:

Gary Emmert provided a detailed account of the club's finances for the month ending August 31, 2015 indicating the club was in a strong financial position as the end of the membership year nears.

Gary stated that as of September 15, 2015, the club had 127 paid members on its rolls. President Alsop noted that prior to the club's tenure at Tipton-Haynes membership held fairly steady at 35+/-; grew while at Tipton-Haynes to around 60+/-; expanded to 90+/- when first moved to the ETSU campus; and now enjoys the strongest membership in its 22 year history.

Motion: to accept the treasurer's report passed.

WEBMASTERS:

In the absence of both webmasters: John Edwards and Bob Jones, President Alsop reported that several minor editorial changes were made to the web site over the past month and that the site appears to be working well at the present time.

VICE-PRESIDENT:

John Carter indicated there was a need for clinic ideas for the months of October and November. Several ideas were suggested including rail-fan and railroad history themed programs. John indicated that he would follow up on the suggestions. The clinic schedule is as follows:

October:	TBA
November:	TBA
December:	Holiday Party at Tipton-Haynes
January:	Annual Events Calendar

PRESIDENT:

President Alsop reported as follows:



Talking anything but railroads, Lisa, Kaye, and Liz swap tales at the picnic

- **Summer Picnic** was held on Sunday September 13th and hosted again this year by Tom and Kim McKee. He thanked Jim Pahriss for his efforts in coordinating the event.
- **Reutling O-Gauge Layout** has been donated to the George L Carter RR Museum. Several members have dismantled the layout and placed it in storage. Along with the layout the club has received modeling supplies and tools (e.g., - air brushes, vacuum molding equipment, paints, strip wood of various sizes, and styrene), and a selection of railroad and modeling related books for inclusion into the library collection.
- The ETSU University Library on campus has displayed portions of the Carter Museum collection of railroad china over the summer. The display has been moved to the Elizabethton Library. President Alsop thanked Gary Emmert for his assistance in relocating the display.

OLD BUSINESS

• **PLANNED LEARNING SESSIONS:**

Resuming the occasional **Planned Learning Sessions** held over the past year was discussed. Previous sessions have included:

- RIP Track Repairs – Jim Hoit
- Making Trees – Ken Harmon
- Water Effects – Fred Alsop
- Jordan Miniature Vehicles – Ted Bleck-Doran

Interest was expressed in having the sessions resume with the following additional topics suggested:

- Passenger car diaphragms
- Passenger car lighting
- Modeling roadways
- Airbrush techniques
- Weathering with
 - Chalks and pastels
 - Cooch acrylic wash system
 - Oils
 - Using weathering powders
 - Using ink stains
- Enhancing rolling stock

ACTION: continue discussion of topics and identify presenters



Ken, John and Dan enjoy the picnic at the McKees

• **PICNIC REPORT:**

Jim Pahr reported on the club's annual picnic held at Tom and Kim McKee's this past month. He stated that 26 members and their spouses were in attendance and that the attendees thoroughly enjoyed themselves and McKee's hospitality. He also indicated that supplies for the picnic were purchased and the remaining supplies would be saved for the annual Holiday Party.

ACTION: Secretary to send a "thank you" to the McKee's for their hospitality.

• **RAIL EXCURSION – October 25th**

It was announced that the George L Carter Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, will be hosting its fall rail

excursion on October 25th. The excursion will feature bus transportation from Johnson City to the Big South Fork Scenic Railroad in Stearns KY and back. A major highlight will include a 16 mile train ride to the Blue Heron Mine historic site managed by the US Parks Service. Cost is \$85 per adult/\$65 per child and will be limited to 168 participants. It was noted that the past several rail excursions had sold out early so interested members were encouraged to purchase tickets early.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only,

• **L&N PASSENGER CAR PURCHASES:**

President Alsop announced that purchase of 5 L&N passenger cars previously approved had been purchased and now were in club possession. The cars will be used for the "ETSU Presidents' Train" as new presidents are appointed to lead ETSU in the future.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.

• **MEMORIAL CAR STATUS:**

Mike Buster provided an update on the status of the memorial cars honoring deceased members of the club indicating that the cars have been stripped and will receive a primer coat of paint this coming month. He has also secured paint to match the existing memorial cars. Plans are to reinstall the interior seating, interior lighting. Members who were former military will be honored with cars containing a flag draped coffin. A baggage car will be included in the train consist as a head-end flower car. Appropriate motive power for the train was discussed in included suggestions for N&W J1's, Y6A's and Y6B's. Discussion also focused on identifying which deceased members need to be included. There are 14 cars available.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only

NEW BUSINESS:

• **RAILROAD HERITAGE DAYS:**

Heritage Day will be held September 26th with the theme *Chil-town: Midwestern Lines and the Windy City.* Information has been posted to the website.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.

• **COORDINATORS MEETING:**

No coordinators meeting was held in September. No report forthcoming.

• **ETSU CLASS VISIT:**

Professor Ron Roache has requested that his class in Appalachian Studies might be able to visit the Museum Monday, October 5th at 4 PM. This year's class project is to identify and create interpretative signage for historic points of interest along the Tweetsie Trail. Fred enumerated several

points that have already received historical interpretation. Volunteer were recruited to host the class.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.

• **ADOBE ACROBAT PRO:**

A file compression program such as Adobe Acrobat Pro is needed to facilitate file sharing and storage, as well as, newsletter publication of the newsletter. Technical details still need to be worked out as well as determining if a multi-user licensing can be obtained.

ACTION: Tabled to later date

• **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

A nominating committee consisting of Roger Teinert, Bill Hensley, and Mike Buster was appointed by President Alsop in preparation for the club elections in November.

ACTION: committee will prepare a slate of officers and report out ballot results at the November business meeting.

• **HOLIDAY PARTY:**

Jim Pahrts reported on plans for the 2015 Holiday Party to be held December 18th, starting at 6:00 PM. The party will be held at Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site and will be jointly sponsored by MEMRR and GLC Chapter-NRHS. The clubs will provide meat, beverages, plates, utensils. Those attending should bring a “dish-to-pass”. Those wishing to participate in the “Dirty Santa” gift exchange should bring a wrapped railroad themed gift worth \$15.00. Details and menu selection for the dish to pass will be posted nearer to the date. Jim Pahrts will act as program coordinator for the event.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.



Fred and Bill enjoy a quiet moment out on McKee’s deck

• **2016 TRAIN SHOW:**

An update on the 2016 Train Show was provided by members of the coordination team. The show will be held in the Mini-Dome June 3-4, 2016. With the floor space available it potentially will be the largest show in the Southeast.

The vendor flyer and application form has been printed and is being distributed. A list of vendors, manufacturers, and publishers has been prepared with invites sent to each. Also anticipated will be clubs and historical society displays, layouts and other railroad themed exhibits. The ET&WNC RR Historical Society will be holding its annual convention at the Carnegie Hotel. The event is expected to draw from the Blue Plum Festival also being held that weekend. Bill Hensley related a demonstration of Broadway Limited Imports’ new “Rolling Thunder” sound system not yet available on the market. He experienced the next level of sound technology on a visit to Jeff Grubba of Factory Direct Trains in Asheville. Additional information will be provided as the event nears.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.

• **REPAIR/REPLACEMENT OF DVD PLAYER:**

It was reported that the DVD/VHS player in the Alsop Gallery is not reliable and may need replacement.

ACTION: A cleaning kit will be secured. If performance of the player does not improve Fred will secure a new player from ETSU media department since this is a museum expense.

• **MEMBER SIGN-IN SHEET:**

Jim Pahrts observed that one Saturday session this past month had 23 members present. When added to the 89 visitors the museum hosted 112 persons. He suggested that the club track its member participation in addition to public visitors. Fred Alsop concurred noting that numbers are important in supporting the museum’s/club’s continued presence on campus.

MOTION: to encourage members to use a sign-in sheet to record their Saturday participation. **PASSED.**

ACTION: Jim Pahrts will maintain a sign-in sheet at the book sale table.



Despite of the chill in the air, there is warm fellowship as Charlotte and Myra spend time catching up

• **DUPLICATE LIBRARY VOLUME DISPOSITION:**

Gary Emmert reported that there are 65 duplicate titles in the library collection. In order to excise the duplicates the following procedure is being proposed:

1. Library will retain best copy; first editions, corrected editions, autographed editions;
2. Listing of duplicates will be provided to the membership of MEMRR, GLC Chapter-NRHS, ET&WNC HS, with suggested value;
3. Members will be given a chance to make offers on desired volumes;
4. Volumes not purchased will be released for incorporation into the ETSU University Library collection.

The final policy on disposition of duplicate volumes will be discussed at a meeting date in the future.

ACTION: None – for information purposes only.

• **SPRAY BOOTH/WORKROOM STATUS:**

Myra Hensley noted that the spray booth was being poorly maintained and needed cleaning. It is being used in tree making to vent glue solvents from the work area. It was also noted that the workroom needs attention as well.



The spray booth received a good cleaning following the business meeting thanks to Ken Harmon and Fred Alsop

ACTION: Members were encouraged to clean up their work area and to leave things better than they find them. Some attention to cleaning the spray both will be needed in the near future.

• **ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN:**

Gary Emmert indicated the need to appoint an assistant librarian to assist with archiving and maintaining the library collection. While willing to continue to work as librarian for the coming year, he indicated a desire to step down at the end of 2016. President Alsop noted that with the Reutling donation the library hold approximately 1000 volumes and over 300 DVDs and VHS tapes.

ACTION: seek appropriate nominee. Anyone interested in this position please contact Gary Emmert or Fred Alsop

• **DIGITRAX 402D CONTROLLERS:**

Motion: to purchase 3 new Digitrax 402D hand throttles for use by club members. **Passed.**

ACTION: John Carter was authorized to purchase the throttles at the lowest price available.

SATURDAY VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers for Saturday open house sessions for the coming month were secured.

- Sept 19—Jim Pahr, Fred Alsop, Mike Baker, Ted Bleck-Doran, Mike Buster (Tweetsie Train Master [TM]), Roger Teinert, Gary Gilliam (HO-TM).
- Sept 26—Jim Pahr, Bill Hensley, Gary Emmert, Mike Buster (T-TM), Ted Bleck-Doran (HO-TM)
Note: Fred will be on an all-day fall bird census and not at the museum. Heritage Day: ChiTown and Midwestern Railroads of the Windy City.
- Oct 3—Jim Pahr, Paul Haynes, Gary Emmert, Fred Alsop, Mike Buster (T-TM), Gary Gilliam (HO-TM)
- Oct 10—Jim Pahr, Paul Haynes, Gary Emmert, Mike Buster (T-TM), Gary Gilliam (HO-TM)
Note: Fred at OBX with his biology class
- Oct 17—Jim Pahr, Gary Emmert, Fred Alsop, Mike Buster (T-TM), Gary Gilliam (HO-TM).

The Railroad Museum always needs volunteers in order to keep it open to the public and for our members to socialize, practice their railroading hobbies, and to create and maintain the exhibits. Please become as active a participant as your schedule will allow you to be as we can always use your capable assistance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

• **COORDINATORS MEETING:**

October 15, 6:00 PM, Campus Center Building, room 235.

• **MEMRR BUSINESS MEETING:**

October 20, 6:30 PM, Brown Hall, room 312. Dinner and social hour at 5:00 PM, ETSU Market Place, 3rd Floor, D.P. Culp Student Center.

• **LITTLE ENGINEERS ROOM STATIONMASTER:**

We will have a new Station Master for the Little Engineers Room to replace Taylor Jessee who has been doing an outstanding job for the museum in this position for several years now. **Kelsey Shubert** will be having her first day with the children in the museum on Saturday, September 26th. Please welcome Kelsey and thank Taylor for a job well done. We shall miss her and I know the children will as well.

• **A FUTURE FULL OF POSSIBILITIES:**

Fred related a conversation he had with ETSU President Nolan indicating administration’s support for the GL Carter RR Museum’s presence on campus. Dr. Noland indicated that on many weekends, the Museum’s open house

sessions are the only activities on campus. Space needs and other potential opportunities were informally discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

PROGRAM:

Jim Pahriss provided a video presentation:
 "San Diego Railroad Museum".

*Respectfully submitted,
 Ted Bleck-Doran, acting-Secretary for Meeting*

**ETSU'S CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM
 HERITAGE DAY
 CHITOWN – MIDWESTERN LINES AND THE
 WINDY CITY
 September 26, 2015**



Come see several major Rail Road Names that originated in Chicago with headquarters in Chicago. They did not compete with Eastern railroads or Western roads, but help move Passenger Cars from Eastern Railroads to Western Railroads so that passenger did not have to change cars in Chicago. Chicago had five major train stations; passenger cars came in from the east to one station and were move to the new station that served the Chicago railroads. If the Passenger wanted he or she could get off and go shopping in the loop, then go new station and get back on their same old car. One example of this was the Chicago Burlington & Quincy or Burlington Route with the Zephyr which move the cars to Denver, then the Denver & Rio Grande Western move the cars to Salt Lake City, and then the Western Pacific move the cars to San Francisco, California.

Some of the other Railroads the originated in Chicago were the "Chicago & North Western"(C&NW); "Illinois Central" (IC); "Chicago Burlington & Quincy" (CB&Q) or Burlington Route; "Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific" (CMStP&P) or Milwaukee Road and "Chicago Rock Island & Pacific". Passenger trains from all these Railroads will be on display or running. The original Pioneer Zephyr and the Hiawatha passenger trains will be running. Plus some Bi-level Commuter trains.

As always, volunteers from the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club are heading up the effort for this day; joining them will be members from the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Models of these trains will run primarily on the club's 24x44 HO scale model

operation, while period correct posters and displays making up the remainder of the exhibit. The Carter Railroad Museum is open on Saturdays from 10:00 AM o 3:00 PM, and includes model railroad layouts, a special child's activity room, and ongoing programs. There is no admission fee but donations are welcome for its upkeep. The museum is also seeking artifacts for display, including the newest addition dedicated to the long-defunct, but well-remembered 'Tweetsie' line, the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad; this room, still under construction, again will be open for guided tours during event days.

In addition to the displays, there is also a growing research library, the National Railway Historical Society chapter, membership opportunities, and an oral history archive being established as part of the museum's programs. Info can be found online at

<http://etsu.edu/railroad/>

or

<http://johnsonsddepot.com/>

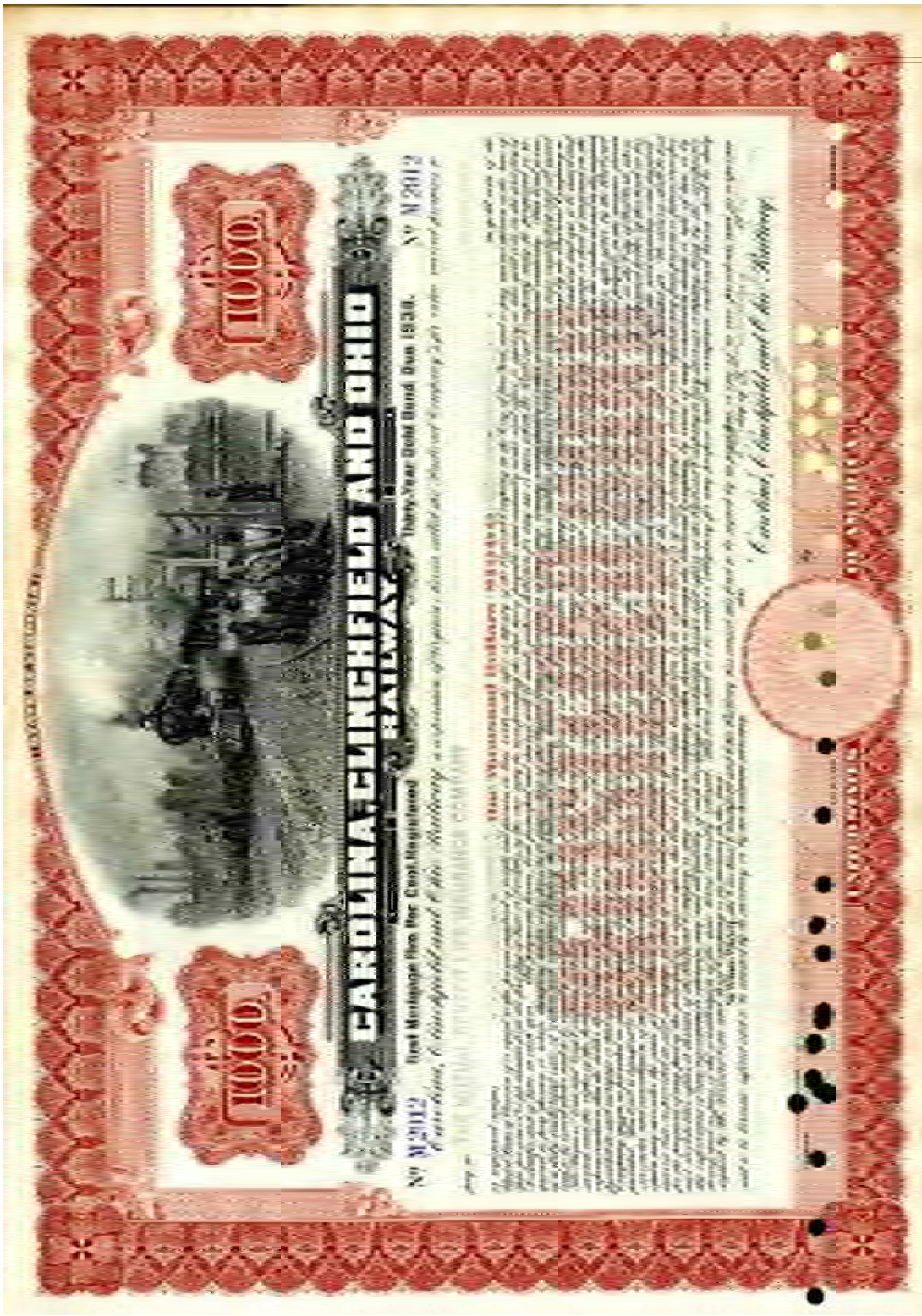
The Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) works in conjunction with the museum to demonstrate and maintain the model layouts, museum exhibits and other projects. More info can be found at 'http://www.memrr.org'. Membership opportunities are available to adults, and include special benefits and model railroading enjoyment.

The George L. Carter Railroad Museum is located on the campus of East Tennessee State University, Campus Center Building, 176 Ross Drive. The entrance door is adjacent to the flashing RR crossbuck; for more information contact the Museum Director, Dr. Fred Alsop, at telephone 423/439-6838 or by email at alsopf@mail.etsu.edu.

**2015 DATES TO REMEMBER:
 GEORGE L CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM**

- October 31:** George L Carter's Fabulous Clinchfield Lines; HarvestFest for Little Engineers
- November 14:** Homecoming at Carter's Place – 8th Anniversary
- November 28:** Precision Transportation: N&W and NS Glory
- December 19:** Home For Christmas: Railroading in the Cold Weather States

1908 30-YEAR CC&O STOCK CERTIFICATE
THE LATEST GL CARTER RR MUSEUM ACQUISITION
ADDED TO THE APPALACHIAN COLLECTION AT ETSU





REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER
DUES RENEWAL CYCLE BEGINS IN NOVEMBER
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP EARLY

MEMBER CLASS	FULL (WITH HOUSEHOLD)	STUDENT	YOUTH	DISTANT REMOTE	EMERITUS	HONORARY
DEFINITIONS	Full membership with rights, privileges and obligations as per below; 18 of age or older; <i>(others residing in the same Household may be enrolled as members for an additional fee for each with FULL member privilege if adult or Youth privileges if under 18 years of age)</i>	College student with proof of enrollment	Ages 17 and younger with Full member providing sponsorship <i>(may be enrolled as part of a Full membership with Household option)</i>	Limited membership; must live more than 100 miles from Johnson City to be eligible	Life time honorary membership upon 2/3 vote of membership	1 yr Honorary membership upon majority vote of membership
DUES	\$30 (+ \$6 each adult/youth)	\$18	\$12	\$12	Free	Free

ET&WNC Track Crew
Photo taken around 1920



Second From Left is Larry Charles Thomas Lacey of Hopson Center, Tennessee

REGISTRATION CARD

SERIAL NUMBER *H49* ORDER NUMBER

PERMITS BUREAU ADDRESS
Thomson *Lacey*

Age on Texas Day of Issue *26* *November 7* 1881

RACE
White Negro Oriental Indian Chinese Japanese

U. S. CITIZEN ALIEN

Native Born Naturalized Citizen by Father's Determination Before Requirement's Maturity Deceased Non-declarant

PRESENT OCCUPATION *Labour* EMPLOYER'S NAME *East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railway*

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS *Hopson Center Tenn*

NEAREST RELATIVE *Rose A. Lacey*
Address *Hopson Center Tenn*

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE

F. M. G. O. *Thomas A. Lacey*
Form No. 1 (Rev. 1-2-11)

On the last Saturday of September, a bunch of traction modelers gathered in Ed Halstead's train room to witness the final day of operation on his O scale *Chicago & Utopia*. In mid-August, Ed informed us of his plan to downsize and move within the next year. He has since sold the layout and several of his models to help finance his granddaughter's college education.



A classic pair of CNS&M cars Nos. 740 and 105



Chicago Aurora & Elgin No. 315 shares the track with a CTA Skokie Swift articulated



Los Angeles Open Air Street Car No. 742 noses past CA&E No. 434

The George L Carter Railroad Museum recently received the preceding photograph and draft registration card. The draft registration card reveals that his was born November 7, 1881 in Hopson Center, Tennessee and worked as a laborer for the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railway. Death records indicate that he died in August of 1923, having lived 42 years.

Does anyone have any additional information on Charles to fill in the missing pieces of his story? Also missing are the names of the other members of the track crew depicted in the photograph.

If you have any information contact the editor of *THE SIGNAL BRIDGE* at: Flagler05@memrr.org. Responses will be included in a future issue.

ED HALSTEAD'S RENOWN O GAUGE TRACTION LAYOUT
FINAL RUN OF THE CHICAGO & UTOPIA RY
Photos and text by Eric Bronsky

The last run of *any* railroad - miniature or the real thing - is a melancholy occasion. Most of us continuously build and/or accumulate stuff well into our retirement years. Knowing how active Ed has been in the hobby through the decades, his announcement took us quite by surprise.

I hasten to add that Ed is *not* retiring from the hobby. Once he and Lois are settled in their new home, he plans to build a small streetcar layout. Meanwhile, the Chicago & Utopia, one of the finest O gauge traction layouts in the Midwest, has a new owner and will soon be carefully transported to its new home.



CA&E No. 434 stops for passengers



C&U Ry Line Car No. D24



Terre Haute Indianapolis & Eastern No. 28



Another look at a CRT "Baldie"



Chicago Rapid Transit "Baldie"

Armed with my Nikon DSLR and "Picklevision" video camera, I was among several visitors who recorded the final runs for posterity. Bill Becwar brought along a Pittman box motor which he reworked into D24, a TM-inspired line car equipped with a miniature video camera. Hooking up a receiver to his laptop, he shot videos of the layout from a motorman's perspective. These turned out really good and I will incorporate them in my YouTube video.

Electropickle Productions will need some time to put all of this together. For now, I hope you enjoy the attached photos. You can also view my two earlier videos of Ed's layout on YouTube:

[Pantographs and Pickles](#)
and
[Ed Halstead's Chicago & Utopia](#)

THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

About 40 of us had a great time laced with wonderful food at the annual Carter Railroad Museum picnic in mid-September. The feast and festivities were once again hosted by **Kim and Tom McKee** at their lakeside home (the lake was a little lower this year). Our thanks go out to the McKees for the fine chicken they furnished and the great picnic site they provided us with. If you missed this annual event be sure to plan to join us next summer and begin your plans for our Christmas party on 18 December at Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site on South Roan Street in Johnson City. Dirty Santa will be there to visit us and to help spread the season's merriment. We extend a special thank-you to **Jim Pahr** for once more coordinating the event for the museum.

It was with deep felt sadness that we learned of the passing of **Rev. Howard Walker** of Joliet, Illinois in late September. Rev. Walker donated more than 900 volumes of railroad books, and numerous DVDs and VHS tapes on railroads, from his personal library to establish the majority of the holdings in the Carter Railroad Museum Library that bears his name. He also donated much of the railroad china, a number of conductor's hats, and other railroad memorabilia to the museum's collections. His wish was to be buried in his railroad conductor's uniform and our museum may send the family one of the conductor's hats he donated to complete request. Rev. Walker also has left his HO scale model railroad rolling stock, locomotives, and buildings to the museum. **Jim Pahr** is in the process of organizing a trip to Howard's home to pack and retrieve these items for the museum. If anyone is interested in making the trip and helping bring Rev. Walker's donation to Johnson City please let Jim know. The museum will take care of lodging and gasoline expenses, more if possible, for any of our members willing to undertake the journey.



RailCampers photograph an Amtrak Acela at the Wilmington, DE, station. Courtesy of Washington DC Chapterm NRSH, TIMETABLE.

ETSU's Dr. Ron Roach brought his **Appalachian Studies** class for a special tour of the Carter Railroad Museum on Monday afternoon, October 5th. The class is focusing on the Clinchfield Railroad and George L. Carter and wanted to see our Clinchfield collection as well as the rest of the museum exhibits. Thanks to **Roger Teinert, Gary Emmert, Dan McLeod, Mike Buster, Bob Jones, Jim Pahr, Paul Haynes, Gary Woods**, and anyone whose name I may be forgetting as I write this for being there for these students. Jim gave a short lecture on the history of early railroading in the region and the students had their note pads out and took copious notes. Thank you all for the educational services you render on a regular basis to our many visitors.

The Railroad Museum welcomes our new Station Master, **Kelsey Shubert**, and Ticket Agent, **Chris**. Both began full-time Saturday duties on October 3rd with **Taylor Jessee** spending half a day with them to get them oriented to the little engineers and the duties they are expected to perform. We will miss Jessee who has worked for us more than two years now, but she is leaving us in good hands and we are fortunate to have Kelsey and Chris working with us. Make them welcome!



Norfolk & Western No. 611 poses with VRE MP36PH-3C No. V59 at the Manassas Railway Heritage Festival. Photo Courtesy of Washington DC Chapterm NRSH, TIMETABLE.

All of you are most aware that **we are planning a huge train show** sponsored by our Carter Railroad Museum right here in Johnson City in early June 2016. We are using the ETSU "mini-dome" with 64,000 sq. ft. of floor space as the venue. **Roger Teinert** is chairing the Train Show Committee and the planning began many months ago. We need several things from our members. We need any contacts or suggestions you may have for potential vendors for the show. We need any contacts or suggestions you may have for clubs with layouts that we can invite to participate in any scale and in any layout size including live steam. More importantly, we need volunteers to do a lot of things while the show is going on. Many of us spend many hours each year driving to, and participating in, train shows in several adjoining states. We

need you to spend some of those hours next year helping us bring about the biggest train show ever held in East Tennessee to Johnson City. With your help we can do this and the more help we have the easier it will be for everyone. Please plan to help us in any way you can and, remember, we need your suggestions to make this a really special event that, if successful, may become an annual big train show in our own backyard. Think of it; of not having to drive for hours to get to a great train show because one will be happening every year right here in Johnson City with vendors, manufactures, and super layouts coming to the area where you live!



East bound BNSF train of UPS trailers crosses the spectacular (but difficult to photograph) 1680-foot-long, 80-foot-high Muir Bridge in picturesque Franklin Canyon between Hercules and Martinez, CA, on February 28, 2015. Photo by Alex Mayes. Courtesy of Washington DC Chapterm NRSH, *TIMETABLE*.

Next month we will be commemorating the **8th Anniversary of the George L. Carter Railroad Museum**. We have become a Saturday destination for many citizens of the region with more than 8000 visitors last fiscal year and with a sustained average of approximately 100 visitors each day we are open to the public. Our MEMRR club has grown from an average of 35 members to more than 100 in each of the last 5 years. The G.L. Carter Chapter NRHS was created and affiliated with the museum and this year the ET&WNC RR Historical Society chose to affiliate with the museum. We have expanded our gallery space from 2,400 sq. ft. to more than 5,000 sq. ft. and could use much, much more. Our library has grown from a score of hardback books to almost 1,000 volumes, mostly through the generosity of donors. Donors have also greatly expanded our collection of exhibits and have created a working foundation account through the gifts of their dollars. The quality of our model railroading is not only being admired by our visitors, some of whom have joined us as members, but is being exhibited nationally in prestigious model railroad magazines. As we celebrate 8 years on the ETSU campus next month reflect on how far we have come, how much we have grown, and what an impact you and your love of railroads and model railroading has made on this community. Thank you for all you do and for

the continued support you give to your hobby, your fellow members and to the museum.

The Carter Chapter NRHS and the Carter Railroad Museum are once more co-sponsoring a rail excursion from ETSU to the **Big South Fork Scenic Railroad**. This is a Sunday trip on 25 October and will be the first one that has not taken place on a Saturday when our museum is open to the public. We hope all of our member will join us for this bus ride to Stearns, KY and the 16 mile roundtrip rail ride in the Daniel Boone National Forest and the Big South Fork National Scenic River during the fall color season. The trip is only \$85 for adults (\$65 for children) and includes the roundtrip motor coach ride from ETSU, the train ride and tickets to the McCreary County Museum in Stearns. This is a great trip and there are still seats available, but the cutoff date to get tickets is October 19th. You can pick up ticket applications at the Carter RR Museum or download them at home on your computer by going to the memrr.org website, clicking on NRHS News and then on the ticket information link. If you have gone on this favorite trip with us before please consider coming again and bringing friends or family. If you have not made this scenic trip to an important coal mining and timber harvesting region that established the Tennessee & Kentucky Railroad where 4501 once worked, you need to take advantage of this opportunity. It is a full day trip that is filled with fun and regional history.



Roanoke Line-up – a Y6b, J and A together again. Photo courtesy of Potomac Chapter NRHS, *Rail News*.

We have our **annual election of officers in the month of November** and at the September business meeting a nominating committee was created. This committee will present a slate of officers to be placed in nomination at the October business meeting. The floor will be open for additional nominations. Once the slate of nominees has been accepted by those present at this meeting a ballot will be created and emailed to all our members so they may cast their votes that will elect our officers for 2016. Anyone wishing to be nominated should let the committee, or any of the current officers know of your desire to serve and for

which office you would seek to fill. All elected positions are open each year for nominations and election by the organization.

The **Board of Directors of the ET&WNC RR Historical Society and the Director of the George L. Carter Railroad have all signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** that formally links the Historical Society and the Railroad Museum in an agreement of mutual support. The Historical Society will use our ETSU Museum/MEMRR/Carter Chapter NRHS mutual mailbox as their permanent mailing address and we will exchange ideas, newsletters, exhibit items, information and other things that pertain to the promotion of both the museum and the Historical Society with the ET&WNC Railroad as the major focus of our mutual interest. A copy of the MOU is on file in my office. This mutual agreement creates a wonderful pledge of support and cooperation between an important historical organization that keeps the memory of the "Tweetsie" alive and our efforts at the Carter RR Museum to create the largest and most historically accurate operating model railroad layout of this famous narrow gauge railroad as an educational exhibit for all our museum visitors. I look forward to a positive growing relationship between our two entities. I enthusiastically recommend to all our members who are not now members of the ET&WNC RR HS that you seriously consider joining the society that has a passion for the little 3-foot gauge railroad that had its origin in Johnson City, TN. Their 2016 annual convention will be in early June 2016 (to coincide with our museum train show) with **Dean Smith** who models the Tweetsie RR in HO_n3 at his Missouri home being the keynote speaker for their Friday night banquet. This will be a great opportunity for the Society members to focus on modeling the ET&WNC, and you are urged to join and be a part of this meeting in our backyard. In 2017 ET&WNC locomotive #12 will be 100 years old and the society will join with the Tweetsie Railroad in Blowing Rock, NC for a big celebration of that engine's anniversary. Membership is only \$30 annually and there are application forms available at the Carter RR Museum or you can download them from the Society's website.

Our **Heritage Day Event** for October focuses on the **Clinchfield Railroad**. So, bring you CRR locomotives and rolling stock, those long coal drags and mixed freight consists; passenger cars if you have them, and let's do George L. Carter's railroad up right for ourselves and for our

BRISTOL, VA., WANTS TO STUDY AMTRAK EXTENSION SEPTEMBER 25, 2015

BRISTOL, Va. – The Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission recently approved \$250,000 for the city of

visitors. I know many of our members are CRR fans and there are lots of steam locomotives, gray yellow-nosed F and GP locomotives, and some black painted diesel engines available that should vie for trackage time on our HO layout and a few on the N-Scale as well. So, fellows, get out and lubed up and bring them to the museum to operate on Saturday, October 31. If you have Clinchfield memorabilia that we can display, please make it available to **Geoff Stunkard** so we can get it in the exhibit cases or out where it can be shown to our guests on Heritage Day.

We are already into the fall season with train shows on the horizon to visit, new things to find and purchase for our hobby of model railroading and a lot of activities on the layouts continuing at the Carter Railroad Museum. We invite all our members to come and participate. Join us in our mutual hobby. Operate your trains, or the club trains, on our layouts (4 scales are available), help us create our exhibits, give us your time and your talents, or learn some new things about the hobby from the members you find at the museum when you come. Exercise all the privileges of your membership and remember, November is the month when we renew our memberships for the following year and we want you to remain a part of us by being among the first to pay your dues for 2016. We have a wonderful museum that we have all had a hand in creating a venue that attracts a host of visitors every Saturday and is a model railroading laboratory that is becoming a destination not only for our Saturday guests, but for our members as well. We have created exhibits that have attracted national attention via major model railroading publications. There is always something going on at the museum and we want you to remain an active part of it.

We have been growing for almost 8 years now in the Carter Railroad Museum and some of us have been a part of this history since the beginning, and members of the MEMRR for many years before that day in 2007 when the doors opened and we begin to fill the space with layouts, exhibits, display cases and dreams. Where will the next 8 years take us? Listen to the sound of the whistle of the train at night and dream of all the destinations yet to come.

Fred J. Alsop III
President, Mountain Empire Model Railroaders
Director, George L. Carter Railroad Museum, ETSU

Bristol to study extending Amtrak service from Roanoke to Bristol and beyond, the Bristol Herald Courier reports.

The commission unanimously approved the funding at a meeting this week. According to the article, the funds represent about half of the expected feasibility study cost. The comprehensive study would be the first step in trying to attract passenger service into southwest Virginia local officials say.

In addition to the \$250,000, the city of Bristol has already earmarked \$50,000 toward the project and believes the remaining cost can be paid for with funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The first phase of the study will first look at the ridership component using preliminary data already available. Project leaders hope to have this phase of the study completed by

the start of the Commonwealth's General Assembly in January. The city is also trying to link communities in Virginia and neighboring states to present a larger picture of interest in extending passenger rail.

Passenger rail service to Roanoke is expected to return in late 2016 or early 2017.



The Charger locomotives, which are based technically on the Siemens Eurosprinter, Eurorunner, and Vectron locomotive platforms, feature a primary traction drive consisting of a 4,400-hp-rated 16-cylinder Cummins QSK95 diesel engine with a cubic capacity of 95 liters. The QSK95 complies with EPA Tier IV emissions regulations. The 120-ton (approximate) Charger locomotive offers a starting tractive effort of 65,200 pounds (290 kN).

MARC's four EMD/ASEA-produced AEM7s, like Amtrak's, are approaching 30 years in age. Its six-unit HHP8 fleet, also like Amtrak's, is only about 15 years old but has suffered from reliability and availability problems. (The HHP8 was part of Amtrak's Acela Express trainset contract with a Bombardier/Alstom consortium in the late 1990s.) According to a report in the Baltimore Sun, MTA spokesman Paul Shepard said that replacing the electric fleet with diesels will improve MARC's service reliability and will "enhance the passenger experience." The electric locomotives operate only on MARC's Penn Line (Northeast Corridor) between Perryville, Md., and Washington D.C. Union Station.



The old and the new - A southbound MARC commuter train has moved past the Halethorpe MARC station just as a northbound Amtrak regional train rushes north at 100 mph. MARC 4903-4901 are nearing retirement. Amtrak City Sprinter 632 is just beginning its career moving passengers along the Northeast Corridor. The MARC electrics are scheduled to be replaced by diesels in 2016. August 28, 2015, photo by Charlie Plantholt.

PROTOTYPE NEWS

MARC TO REPLACE ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

From the BALTIMORE CHAPTER NRHS INTERCHANGE

The MTA plans to ask Maryland's Board of Public Works for permission to piggyback on an Illinois DOT contract with Siemens to acquire the locomotives, for an estimated \$58 million. Amtrak, which has been maintaining MARC's electric fleet since 1983, will no longer be able to provide the service as of June 2016 because it has retired its own HHP8 locomotives and is phasing out its AEM7s as new Siemens ACS-64 electrics enter service.

The agency's existing 33 diesel locomotives are used on the Camden (Baltimore Camden Yards Station- Union Station) and Brunswick (Martinsburg, W.Va.-Union Station) lines as well as the Penn Line.

"Concerns about the reliability of MARC peaked in June 2010 when a Penn Line train with an [HHP8] electric locomotive stalled outside Washington in 100-degree heat and the passengers were stranded for two hours," the Baltimore Sun reported. "The so-called 'hell train' incident became an issue in the 2010 gubernatorial election between then-Gov. Martin O'Malley and former Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr."

Shepard said MARC's electric fleet has a reliability rating of between 40% and 50%. Its diesel fleet, most of which was replaced about five years ago with 26 MP36PH-3C units from Wabtec subsidiary MotivePower Industries, has a reliability rating of 85%. MARC's diesel fleet also contains six EMD GP39H-2s, which are scheduled for repowering, and one EMD GP40WH-2, used as standby power.

MARC's Charger locomotives are expected to be delivered by late 2017

