



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB

December 2017 - 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 223
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 FOCUS THIS ISSUE

75th ANNUAL SANTA TRAIN



On Saturday November 18, 2017 CSX hosted once again, the Annual Santa Train on the 4 former Clinchfield right-of-way. Over 200 volunteers loaded boxes of food and presents to be distributed to families in financial distress living in rural Appalachia. The running of the train attracts numerous families as well as an army of railfan photographers.

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 21, 2017

The MEMRR meeting was called to order by President Fred Alsop at approximately 6:35 pm.

Officer's Reports are as follows:

Secretary's report: Motion was made in the absence of Gregg Mundkowsky, MEMRR Secretary, that the minutes for September and October business meetings, along with the October GL Carter RR Museum Coordinators Meeting be accepted as posted in the newsletter. Motion passed.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Theodore Bleck-Doran reported that the November issue of the Signal Bridge has been distributed to MEMRR members and uploaded to the MEMRR website. The issue is 23 pages with a special emphasis on the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the MEMRR club and the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the George L Carter Railroad Museum on the ETSU campus, Special thanks to the following for their contributions to the newsletter:

- Paul Haynes – Photo Pages; NS First Responders train; Doe River Gorge Weekend
- Bob Sullivan – Doe River Gorge Weekend
- Gary Emmert – NS First Responders Train
- Fred Alsop – President's Column
- Gregg Mundkowski – Minutes
- Geoff Stunkard – Heritage Day
- Robert Graham (non-member; member of the Clinchfield Group on Facebook) for photos and history of CRR 3619.

Next month's issue will feature the running of the Santa Train.

Fred Alsop complimented the editor on the quality and content of the newsletter.



George L Carter RR Museum Director, Fred Alsop welcomes the guests and dignitaries to the 10th Anniversary of the Museum on ther ETSU Campus

Treasurer's report: Gary Emmert reported the dues for 2018

have started to come in and the MEDMRR is on a solid financial footing. Fred Alsop suggested that members start to develop a wish list of ideas for the club layout, to perhaps include realistic signaling. Motion was made to approve the report. Motion Passed.

Webmaster's Report: Bob Jones and John Edwards, Co-Webmasters were absent. It was announced that John Edwards has requested to step down from his position due to health problems. It was announced the Ben Merritt has volunteered the handle email communications for the club. Logan Heaton has been recruited to run for the vacancy left by John (see Nominating Committee report).

Vice-President's Report: John Carter reported that the programs for December and January will be the Holiday Party and the setting of the 2018 calendar of events/Heritage Days schedule. February clinic program theme is open. He discussed a 1937 Model Railroader article discussing the same difficulties MEMRR clinic scheduling is experiencing 80 years later. One solution suggested is scheduling a roundtable presentation where two or more members provide commentary on aa variety of subjects.



ETSU President Emeritus Paul Stanton recounts the creation of the George L Carter Railroad Museum during his tenure as president

President's Report: Fred reported:

- The George L Carter Railroad Museum 10th Anniversary celebration was a success with ETSU President Emeritus Paul Stanton, and Johnson City Mayor, Jenny Brock, commented on the success of the museum and the value of the museum's presence in fostering a quality tourism draw.
- The ETSU Board of Trustees have indicated that a construction proposal for a new Humanities Studies Building has been made. The \$74 million building project would occupy the Campus Center Building site which houses the museum. Construction could occur

within the next 5 years. There is strong support for the museum to remain on the campus, but other options will also be considered. The museum will still remain associated with the university and then 5,000 square feet to 15,000-20,000 square feet.

- The galley proofs have been approved for the next *HOn3 Annual*. The photos and article for the magazine have been sent to Geoff and Fred for their approval. Hopefully, the annual will come out around November. Fifty copies have been ordered for that sales table. As in the past we will offer the annual to members for \$15 and to non-members \$20.
- Anniversary pins celebrating the 25th year of operation for the MEMRR Club and the 10th year of the establishment of the George L Carter Museum will be available in early 2018.



Johnson City Mayor, Jenny Brock shares words of appreciation for the museum's tourism draw and its contribution to preserving local history and heritage

Old Business:

Rail Excursion Update: The next event sponsored by the George L Carter Chapter NRHS and the museum will be the Polar Express Storytelling featuring Linda Poland and the Tweetsie Christmas Train bus tour. The cost will be \$10 for the storytelling event and \$90 for the bus trip to Boone NC to ride the Tweetsie after dark. The \$90 ticket price includes the storytelling, bus transportation, admission to the park, and a ride on the 3-mile loop of track. There are publicity flyers available at the museum which need to be distributed. Registration had been slow to develop.

Operating Sessions: A reminder that we have an operating session on the 1st Tuesday of December (the 5th) and the second Tuesday of January (the 9th). Please let Ted or Geoff know if you plan on attending either session.

Annual Christmas Holiday Party: The annual dinner for the holidays will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Jonesborough on Friday December 15th. Dinner will be a covered dish with meat and beverage provided by the GLC Chapter and MEMRR. A "Dirty Santa" gift exchange will be held with a train related tree and a women's tree. Presents should be \$20-25 in value and identified for the appropriate tree. A Sign-up page will be available on the MEMRZR

website. Please indicate your intention to attend along with number attending and the dish you intend to bring for the meal.

By-Laws Update: Ted reported that the December issue will have the current by-laws as amended in 2017 with the provision for Probationary Member. The by-laws committee will report of the right, responsibilities and restrictions for Probationary membership at the January MEMRR Business Meeting.



Some of the 100+ guests in attendance at the anniversary celebration

New Business:

Our Heritage Day: The November Heritage Day will be observed on November 25th with the theme: **MR. CARTER'S CLINCHFIELD RAIROAD.** Members are encouraged to bring in Clinchfield related cars and locomotives to run and display for the operating session.

Coordinators meeting: a coordinators meeting was held on November 16th with minutes to be published in the December issue of the *Signal Bridge*.

Nominating Committee: The officer nominations and ballot was reported out of committee by Paul Haynes:

- **President:** Fred Alsop
- **Vice-President:** John Carter
- **Secretary:** Gregg Mundkowski
- **Treasurer:** Gary Emmert
- **Newsletter Editor:** Ted Bleck-Doran
- **Co-webmasters:** Bob Jones, Logan Heaton
- **Assistant Webmaster:** Ben Merritt

Holiday Operating Schedule: The museum will be open on the Saturdays before Christmas and New Years.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN Dispatchers Board: interest was expressed in obtaining a flat screen, computer and internet connection to access and display the Bull's Gap Subdivision dispatcher's board. The Watauga Chapter has already installed such a display in the restored Chuckey Depot. Gary Gilliam will report out a cost estimate at the January meeting.

Et&Wnc Layout Needs: We are still looking for modelers to

help assemble rolling stock for the ET&WNC. Okay, this is not as hard as it sounds. Most of the kits are laser-cut and we have a few plastic passenger car kits so please think about helping out and building one or more.

Call for Operating Session volunteers was made. It is always helpful for members not attending the Business meeting to indicate their intentions to come to the Operating Session Saturdays. Those who sign up in advance have priority running rights.

Program: 1950's comedic video: **So You Want a Model Railroad** was shown along with **Vol. 48** of the **Great Mopel Railroads** series.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

*Respectfully submitted for
Gregg Mundkowsky
MEMRR CLUB SECRETARY
George L Carter Railroad Museum*

RAILROAD MUSEUM CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

RAINA WISEMAN – NOVEMBER 19, 2017

FROM ET ONLINE



(Photograph by Elizabeth Mathis / East Tennessean)



(Photograph by Elizabeth Mathis / East Tennessean)

Hidden in the heart of campus is a railfan's dream museum, and it just celebrated a decade of operation.

On Nov. 18, the George L. Carter Railroad Museum celebrated its 10-year anniversary. The event included a presentation followed by a reception with refreshments and presentation of the exhibits.

The museum was dedicated to George L. Carter in November of 2007, according to the museum website. November is also National Model Railroad month. In the 10 years of operation, the museum has had 70,000 visits by people interested in trains.

"We attract a lot of people, but not just people who are interested in trains," ETSU biology professor and Museum Director Fred Alsop said. "It may be just a fun thing to do or see what else the university's campus may have to offer."

During the event, train lovers young and old were able to explore the museum and talk about their love of railroads with one another.



(Photograph by Elizabeth Mathis / East Tennessean)



Fred Alsop (Photograph by Elizabeth Mathis / East Tennessean)

Alsop presented during the event as well as former ETSU President Paul Stanton.

“I grew up like a lot of you, particularly the men, who grew up with model trains from Christmas,” Stanton said. “It dawned on us when we were looking for a new home for the modelers to build trains, it ought to be here on this campus and no other place in Johnson City. ... George L. Carter was the man who, in essence, got ETSU where it is today.”

According to Stanton, Tennessee officials were looking for places to start “normal” schools for teachers in the early 1900s. Johnson City was one of many sites looked at, and Carter helped make sure the land and funding was available to start the school.

The Carter Railroad Museum began as an exhibit on ETSU’s campus by Mountain Empire Model Railroaders, and it was later brought to ETSU as a museum. Today, that exhibit is the largest one in the museum, according to Alsop. It has models that are

THE CSX SANTA TRAIN SERVES CLINCHFIELD COUNTRY

By Jack M. Turner

Photos By John C. Turner, Paul Hynes, Robert Sullivan as noted



The 2017 Clinchfield/CSX Santa Train arrives in the Tri-Cities area on Thursday. Two locomotives were painted in Heritage colors for the event, seen in the photo above crossing the Boones Creek Trestle,

Photo by Paul Haynes

On the Saturday before Thanksgiving the sounds of gleeful children fill the small communities and hollows of rural Appalachia as the annual CSX Santa Train makes its way from Shelby, KY to Kingsport, TN. At each stop Santa Claus makes his appearance on the rear platform of the last car

bought for and donated to ETSU by members of the community. There are also specific sections of the museum that belong to individuals.

The museum is located in the bottom of the Campus Center Building and is open every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Anyone may visit and admission is free. The museum operates by volunteers from local railroad clubs, who also help make the exhibits. It features various railroad models, a library and a room for children to learn about trains.

Alsop says the museum sees anywhere from 65-120 people each Saturday and upwards of 200 for special events.

“The railroad layout that’s being featured is the one that actually started here in Johnson City, the Tweetsie Railroad,” Alsop said. “It’s kind of nice to have a tie with a railroad that started in a town that was started by railroads.”

from which he and a handful of volunteers toss candy and soft toys to the crowd of children encircling the back end of the train. Meanwhile, several other volunteers detrain and walk among the crowd distributing gifts, wrapping paper, and other goodies.



Railfan were offered a photo-op on Friday Morning with CRR 800 and business car 100 posed near the Kingsport Citizens Bank (ex-CRR depot).

Photo by Paul Haynes

Clinchfield Railroad ran the first Santa Train in 1943 in conjunction with the predecessor to today's Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. Initially the Santa Train consisted of a couple of extra cars added to the rear of the local passenger train that served the route between Kingsport and Elkhorn City, KY. When the scheduled passenger train ceased operation in the mid-1950s, the Santa Train continued as its own special train. The idea behind the

Santa Train was to give to the children of the impoverished Appalachia region north of Kingsport which was connected by the railroad. The Santa Train marched on when the Clinchfield was absorbed into the Family Lines rail system in the 1970s and later the Seaboard System in 1982. And when the CSX mega-railroad was formed in 1986, the tradition lived on in magnificent fashion.

The Clinchfield/CSX Santa Train has long fascinated this writer since my family roots are firmly planted in Kingsport. My grandfather, Leroy Sprankle, was the football/basketball/baseball/track coach at Dobyss-Bennett High School in the 1920s and '30s and was known by many as "the father of East Tennessee sports". My mother was born in Kingsport where she lived until her teenage years. The high school named its gymnasium for Grandad and many early athletic stars in Kingsport, most notably legendary Georgia Tech football coach Bobby Dodd, played for him. Thus when my son and I were invited to ride the 2010 Santa Train, there was no hesitation in accepting the opportunity.



The photo-op offered an opportunity to safely approach No. 800 from a variety of angles
Photo by Paul Haynes

After a lengthy drive from north Florida, we met our hosts at the Kingsport Chamber and soon joined in a kickoff dinner at a local eatery. It was apparent that most of the participants knew one another as the Santa Train volunteers

come from various walks of life in the Kingsport area. What we came to find out over the course of the next 24 hours was that these folks have hearts of gold as they would work hard to bring smiles to the Appalachian children of southeastern Kentucky, western Virginia, and northeastern Tennessee. Following dinner approximately 80 volunteers and members of the media boarded a pair of chartered busses for the two hour drive to Pikeville, KY where we spent a short night at the excellent Hampton Inn.

We re-boarded the busses at 5:30am on Saturday November 20, 2010 for the 8 mile drive to the CSX Shelby Yard where the 9 car Santa Train waited. A pair of CSX engines led the train with the trailing unit, CSX 9999 having started its career as Amtrak 288. The train's 9 cars (from the CSX office car fleet) were smartly painted in blue CSX livery. Members of the media were assigned to the sixth car, the Tennessee, a cafe/lounge/dining car built by Pullman in 1957 as a 52 seat coach. Only eight members of the media plus a CSX video crew had been invited to ride as the Santa Train is a working train not an excursion operation. Our day was neatly choreographed with opportunities to detrain at alternate stops to permit the collection storylines at various communities with on board interviews at established times between stops. CSX office car "Tennessee" was home base for invited media. This car serves as a cafe/lounge/dining car.



Note the large screen at the end of the car which projects live video from the train's rear platform
Photo by John Turner

Consist of the 2010 Santa Train

CSX 8506	SD50 engine (ex SBD)
CSX 9999	F40 engine (ex Amtrak 288)
CSX 363	Kentucky
CSX 11	Youngstown
CSX 994500	Ohio
CSX 319	Greenbrier
CSX 10	New York

CSX	325	Tennessee
CSX	315	Indiana
CsX	350	Illinois
CSX	310	West Virginia

Each year the Santa Train welcomes a celebrity guest to assist with the distribution of toys and goodwill. This year's train actually featured two celebrities, country music superstars Naomi and Wynonna Judd. Naomi was the celebrity guest in 2005 while Wynonna participated in 2009. As natives of Ashland, KY, the mother and daughter team have long been interested in rural Appalachia and are thus natural participants in this endeavor.

Several of the office cars behind the Tennessee were loaded with 15 tons of toys to be distributed at the day's 14 stops. Many of these had been packed in color coded bags to be handed to children of the appropriate age; lime green bags were intended for babies, red bags for girls up to age 9, purple for 9-15 year old girls, orange bags for boys up to age 9, etc. Other volunteers would tote heavy burlap bags jammed with stuffed animals, playing cards, toy cars, coloring books, and other popular items which would be given individually to kids of the appropriate ages. And a third group of volunteers would roam the crowd distributing rolls of wrapping paper to eager adults. Amazingly all of these items neatly lined the walls of the forward office cars in containers that made the distribution process orderly. A similar setup maintained supplies of candy and soft toys waiting to be tossed from the rear platform. It was clear that the Kingsport Chamber had the process down to a science as it was imperative that the train arrive in Kingsport on time since Santa was to ride aboard a fire truck in the annual Christmas parade. To maintain the schedule, each stop was scheduled for 15-20 minutes which meant toys, wrapping paper, and gift bags would have to be handed out efficiently.



volunteer fills burlap bags with toys and stuffed animals for the next stop.

Photo by John Turner

It was still dark outside when the train pulled to the south end of Shelby Yard at 6:10am to allow Santa and his helpers to throw some toys and candy to a small group of waiting kids. Inside the Tennessee a large screen displayed live views from the rear platform and the sounds of children yelling "Santa, Santa!" could be clearly heard. We were underway for good at 6:30am for the 20 minute run to Marrowbone where a crowd of approximately 300 waited for our 6:50am arrival at dawn. After the brief stop the train paralleled the Russell Fork as the tracks curved along the foot of the mountains. While the train worked its way southward, one car ahead workers busily prepared a new set of gift bags for distribution at the next stop.

Elkhorn City was reached at 7:25 and a huge crowd was on hand despite the early hour. It was a moving experience to observe volunteers passing out presents to appreciative children along with gift wrap to adults. Naomi and Wynonna Judd, Santa, and his helpers threw candy and soft toys from the rear platform to a massive throng. As was the case at each stop, a band of CSX employees had arrived in advance of the train to secure the right-of-way and prevent injuries to the public. These folks did a terrific job of executing this thankless but critical job as train operations came off smoothly all day. Back aboard the train CSX spokesman Bob Sullivan stated that CSX safety personnel were on the ground to ensure the safety of the public and to keep people out of the way of the moving train. If an invited guest or volunteer somehow missed the train's departure from one of the stops, the safety team would drive them to the next stop. Mr. Sullivan noted: "We (CSX) take great pride in this important event. At the end of the day everyone is very tired but the beauty is it is rewarding. This is a busy railroad and this gives us a chance to stop a train for the communities." He added: "This is a family tradition. Some of the public are here because their parents and grandparents brought them years ago." When asked about the participation of the Judds, Mr. Sullivan observed, "We are thankful for their love and respect for these communities."



Color coded bags handed to children at the Santa Train's stops are color coded by children's age and gender.

Photo by John Turner



Wynonna Judd tosses a stuffed animal to a lucky child at Elkhorn City, KY
Photo by John Turner

Indeed the contribution of CSX cannot be overstated. The former Clinchfield line sees an average of 22 trains per day, most of which transport coal. On the day in which the Santa Train operates, the entire line from Shelby to Kingsport basically shuts down. Only two trains were spotted during our nine hours aboard the Santa Train and both were waiting or tied down on sidings. With a contingent of CSX employees actively working on board as well as those handling trackside safety, there is a strong CSX involvement beyond the tracks and the office cars comprising the Santa Train. Though national news media has ridden the Santa Train on select years, the Santa Train remains a "community service first" operation which garners limited publicity outside the region it serves.



The Santa Train drifts southbound on Saturday
Photo by Robert Sullivan

Just south of Elkhorn City we pass through one of 30 tunnels along the 110 mile route then follow the whitewater Russell Fork below sheer cliffs near Breaks Interstate Park. Brief stops are made at Toms Bottom and Haysi, Virginia and we note that Haysi is especially remote as it is tucked between two railroad tunnels. The kids are just as enthusiastic here as along the rest of the route and it is amazing that they are so alert on a Saturday at 8:30am.

During the bus ride the prior evening we passed several Food City grocery stores. It was evident that this is the area's leading grocery chain; it is also apparent that this company cares for its region as it is one of the prime sponsors of the Santa Train. As we depart Haysi we have the chance to speak with Alicia Lyons, Executive Director of Kids Wish Network, which is in its first year as a lead sponsor of the event. "Toy manufacturers donate toys to Kids Wish, we pack the toys in Holiday, Florida, and CSX transports them here for the Santa Train," stated Ms. Lyons who added, "This is spectacular. I expected it to be a fun event but find it even more rewarding to participate." Kids Wish is in the business of granting wishes to needy and ill children and has existed for 13 years. For information about the Kids Wish Network, visit www.kidswishnetwork.org



Wynonna Judd hugs an Appalachian woman in Fremont, VA.
Photo by John Turner

The train stops in Clinchco on-time at 9:00 and Santa and company work their magic while we watch via the big screen in the Tennessee. A few minutes later we roll into Fremont and are greeted by one of the day's largest crowds. Wynonna and Naomi disembark to meet the crowd and it is touching to see their genuine affection for the locals. A number of handicapped people welcome the Judds who cheerfully pose for photos and share hugs with them. The presence of the country music superstars doesn't hinder the mission of the train one bit as many kids, parents, and grandparents remain near the rear of the train in hopes of catching items tossed by Santa and his assistants. While several volunteers roam the crowd distributing gifts, a man who is holding his little boy on his shoulders stands well behind the crowd, perhaps too shy to bump elbows with the 600 or so people packing the area near the tracks. Sure enough, before long a volunteer finds the man and his son and hands the delighted child a gift bag. Another little boy, also perched on his daddy's shoulder, displays excitement as his outstretched arms reach for toys thrown by Santa. His excited look turns to disappointment as a little girl, perhaps his younger sister, catches the item that he had spied. Soon

his face beams as one of the volunteers seeks him out and hands him a present that to him is the grandest gift of all.

The driving force behind the Santa Train is the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce and Charlie Floyd, Chamber Chairman, commented that the Santa Train is a vital outreach of the Chamber as it reaches beyond the borders of Kingsport. "This train is important to the participants and to the communities," observed Mr. Floyd. "We appreciate the generosity of the sponsors and the railroad. It's amazing to see how well it works and how it changes the way that participants feel." When asked to describe the organization of the Santa Train, Mr. Floyd noted, "Logistics are so important. It's important to get the right toys to the right kids. CSX knows the special needs of some of the kids along the route. Chamber members, sponsors, and donors plan months ahead for this one day." The Kingsport Chamber also sponsors an annual essay contest that awards a scholarship to a high school student along the route who tells the story of their experience with the Santa Train.



The Santa Train passed by several historic farmsteads on its holiday run
Photo by Paul Haynes

The next stop, Dante, is reached at 10:30 and the look on the children's faces is priceless. A little girl clutches the cuddly stuffed animal she has just received while a toddler bundled up in a stroller smiles as she also is given a stuffed animal. An 8 year old boy proudly holds up a football bearing the letters "CSX" on its side while another child thumbs through the coloring book she has just been given.

After 20 minutes the Santa Train is underway again en route to St. Paul, VA. The thought registers that before the trip our primary expectation was to enjoy the scenery and the opportunity to cover the northern half of the Clinchfield line but already we have come to appreciate the human element of this event as the memory that would endure from the day. Along the right-of-way we spot numerous photographers capturing the train's progress and a steady stream of chasers on the roads that occasionally parallel the railroad provides evidence of the interest the Santa Train generates.

We reach St. Paul at 11:08 to the delight of another of the day's huge crowds. Kids and adults alike wave appreciatively at us as we peer out the window as the train eases to a stop. We are escorted to the rear of the train for a brief look at the Judds and Santa tossing goodies from the train. This view offers a totally different perspective from the ground views we have witnessed as there is a sea of locals behind the train and hundreds of outstretched arms reaching for the prized toys and candies emanating from the rear platform of the West Virginia.

After retreating to our car, we partake of our boxed lunches while enjoying a twisting 40 minute ride along the Clinch River as it navigates between numerous mountains. Soon it is time to get to work as the train stops at Dungannon. This is our opportunity to hand out some gifts and John takes an armload of the colored bags while I take a burlap bag stuffed with individual toys for a variety of ages. The job of matching specific items (stuffed animals, matchbox cars, preschool CDs, playing cards, coloring books, etc.) to the appropriate aged children is challenging for a newcomer but the smiles and appreciation from the kids gives back an unforgettable warm feeling. Our respect for the volunteers who do this at every stop is enhanced as a lot more goes into this process than meets the observer's eye.



AN antique F-unit dressed in Clinchfield Heritage colors recreates a memorable image of what used to be
Photo by Paul Haynes

The Santa Train's arrival in Fort Blackmore is greeted by the usual massive crowd along with photographers on an overpass and along an embankment as the train comes to a stop on a curve. Railfan William Pierson, who was born in Fort Blackmore, captures the train's arrival with his camera before driving ahead to photograph the train at a later stop. "I am 48 years old and my parents took me to see Santa when I was little," stated Mr. Pierson. "I have been going to see the Santa Train ever since then. My two kids have seen the train and now my five grandchildren are going. I remember the days when all Santa would throw off the train was a 5 x 7 colored note pad and crayons." He quipped, "It has grown just a little."



While the crowd encircles the train, a middle aged man sits on the front of his pickup truck. He is encouraged to get a closer look but advises that his bad back makes it difficult to do so. A volunteer is summoned and soon a pack of playing cards is given to him. "This is a great event," he observes. "This is the first time I've come out to see the Santa Train."

CSX moves the train like clockwork as the departure from Fort Blackmore is on-time at 1:08pm. A media interview session with Naomi and Wynonna Judd is enlightening as they talk about the Santa Train experience, their upbringing in rural Kentucky, and various other subjects as our train continues its trek through Appalachia. Regarding the crowds at the train's various stops, Wynonna observes, "I feel like I've stepped into a space connecting with these people." Naomi adds that it is special getting to hug the kids, many of whom never leave the hollows where they live. "This reminds me what year it is. Wynonna is an 8th generation Kentuckian. If she didn't become a singer, I'd be right here as a nurse. Growing up, I had a dream of being a nurse in Appalachia." Asked how she started her career, Wynonna reflects, "I started singing on the back porch after my mom gave me a guitar. It was my destiny."

Shortly after the interview concludes, the scenery opens up as a large valley comes into view. Below on the right a Norfolk Southern rail line parallels and soon we cross the towering Copper Creek Trestle which spans the valley and the Clinch River. The view is breathtaking and a hoard of photographers are stationed along the highway across the

valley. Ten minutes later we make a stop in Kermit then advance six miles to Waycross, the final enroute stop. As promised, CSX delivers Santa to a couple thousand waiting residents in Kingsport at 3:10pm and the annual Christmas parade begins almost immediately.

The Santa Train has endured World War II, the Korean, Vietnam, and Middle Eastern Wars, and numerous changes in the political landscape. During the Santa Train's 68 years, the interstate highway system has been built, jet air travel has become the standard, man has landed on the moon, and the Clinchfield Railroad has been absorbed into the CSX system. Yet the needs of rural Appalachia remain and the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, the railroad, a host of volunteers, and other organizations continue to step to the plate to spread Christmas joy to the people of the region.

OOPS



RAILFAN SAFETY **OBSERVING TRACKSIDE CAUTION**



The photo above was recently posted on a Facebook railfans' page. It is a great reminder to be especially cautious while railfanning. Those photographers and videographers among us seek the perfect action shot of the powerful lash-up pulling a heavy load behind... This frequently elicits an urge to be down and close to trackside. But open loads can come loose and present a serious hazard to anyone close to the right-of-way. Even if you are on private property and avoiding railroad property, remain aware of your surroundings, be observant, and watch out for emerging hazards.

GEORGE L CARTER LIBRARY

BOOK SALE OF CULLS AND SECONDS

The George L Carter Museum Library will be offering a selection of railroad related titles for sale to MEMRR and GL Carter Chapter-NRHS members. These are second copies and culls from the core library holdings. The library has over a thousand volumes presently available to members. This thanks in large part to the donations from Pete Morriset, John Waite, Rev. Walker and others who have made donations to the museum. The Library's policy is to retain 1st editions and/or best copies of duplicate titles. The seconds and culls are available for purchase by contacting Gary Emmert. The asking price is solid and for volumes "as-is". The price listed is the minimum price expected.

TITLE	AUTHOR	PRICE	COPIES
The History of the Santa Fe	Pamela Berkman	\$15.00	
Modern Locomotives	Brian Hollingsworth	\$15.00	
ST. Louis Union Station & its Railroads	Norbury L. Wayman	\$5.00	
Illustrated Book Of Steam & Rail	Collin Garratt & Max Wade-Matthews	\$15.00	2
Chesapeake & Ohio H7 Series	Thomas W. Dixon, Jr.	\$5.00	
When the Railroad Leaves Town	Joseph P Schwieterman	\$20.00	
More Classic American Railroads	Mike Schafer	\$15.00	
The Last Steam Railroad in America	Thomas H. Garver	\$15.00	
The Locomotives that Baldwin built	Fred Westing	\$15.00	
Classic American Railroad Terminals	Kevin. Holland	\$20.00	
Railroad Artistry of Howard Fogg	Ronald C. Hill & Al Chione	\$35.00	2
The Old Patagonian Express	Paul Theroux	\$2.00	
The Electric Interurban Railways in Ame.	George W. Hilton & John F. Due	\$2.00	
Building The Clinchfield	James A Goforth	\$15.00	
Steel Rails to the Sunrise	Ron Ziel & George Foster	\$10.00	
The Road to Paradise	William M. Moedinger	\$5.00	
Train Wrecks	Robert C. Reed	\$15.00	2
History of the Pennsylvania Railroad	Timothy Jacobs	\$20.00	
American Locomotives 1900-1950	Edwin P. Alexander	\$10.00	
Tall Tales of the Rails	J. L. Lonon	\$10.00	
Complete Book of Model Railroading	David Sutton	\$10.00	2
When STEAM ran the Clinchfield	James A. Goforth	\$15.00	
CSX Clinchfield Route in the 21st Century	Jerry Taylor & Ray Poteat	\$20.00	
Portrait of the Rails from Steam to Diesel	Don Ball, Jr.	\$15.00	2
America's Colorful Railroads	Don Ball, Jr.	\$15.00	
Tweetsie Country	Mallory Hope Ferrell	\$15.00	
This Was Railroading	George B. Abdill	\$10.00	
A Locomotive Engineer's Album	George B. Abdill	\$10.00	
The History of Union Pacific	Marie Cahill & Lynne Piade	\$10.00	
The History of the Southern Pacific	Bill Yenne	\$10.00	
Narrow Gauge Railroads in Colorado since 1870	Frederic Shaw	\$15.00	
High Iron a book of trains	Lucius Beebe	\$10.00	

North American Steam Locomotive Builders	Harold Davies	\$40.00	
Trains Trestles & Ties	Lou Harshaw	\$ 5.00	
MAKIN' TRACKS	Lynne Rhodes & Kenneth E. Voss	\$15.00	
CINCINNATI UNION TERMINAL	Linda C. Rose production manager	\$20.00	
PA4 LOCOMOTIVE	Norman E. Anderson & C. G. MacDermot	\$15.00	
THE AGE OF STEAM	Lucius Beebe & Charles Clegg	\$10.00	
Colorado Memories of the Narrow Gauge Circle	John Krause and Ross Grenard	\$10.00	
The Steam Locomotive a Century of North American Classics	Jim Boyd	\$15.00	

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS BYLAWS (Adopted May 16, 2017)

EDITOR'S NOTE: The MEMAR Bylaws are presented in this issue with the changes approved by the membership at the May 16th 2017 business meeting. These are the most recent edition of the bylaws, but require a description of the rights, duties and privileges for PROBATIONARY MEMBERSHIP (Appendix C). The missing descriptions will be presented at the January 2018 business meeting for approval. In that they are contained in the Appendices they do not require three readings and can be altered, changed, and amended at the will of the membership.

Article I.

The name of this organization shall hereafter be known as, **MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS (MEMRR)**.

Article II.

The officers of this organization shall be elected by popular vote of the membership at the November business meeting each year and retain that office for one calendar year. The officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Webmaster. Officers shall perform their duties and responsibilities according to those enumerated in **APPENDIX A: Duties of the Officers of the Organization**

Article III.

Committees shall be drawn from the general membership with appointments made by the president based on interest of the individual members and needs of the club. Committee Chairpersons shall be appointed from Full and Adult Household members. Committee membership may include persons from all membership classifications.

Article IV.

Membership is open to any individual with a sincere interest in model railroading and shall be governed by the duties, rights, responsibilities and obligations as described in Appendix B: Table of Membership Classifications, Dues, Rights, Responsibilities and Obligations. All membership levels include a digitally available copy of the club newsletter known as *The Signal Bridge*.

FULL MEMBER is defined as one who is 18 years of age or older and pays "Full Member" dues as set by the club in Article VIII and is willing to construct or

assist with the building and/or operation of one or more modules or layouts which meets the club specifications. **ONLY PAID UP FULL MEMBERS** will have access to the museum key box.

HOUSEHOLD MEMBER is defined as a **FULL MEMBER** if 18 years of age or older or as a **YOUTH MEMBER** if 14 to 17 years of age. **HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS** shall reside at the same address as the **FULL MEMBER**. **HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS** should be interested in model railroading and be willing to support club activities. **HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS** will have one vote per adult 18 years of age or older.

YOUTH MEMBER is a non-voting member 17 years of age or younger and will be accepted if sponsored by a **FULL MEMBER**. The **FULL MEMBER** shall be present and will accept full responsibility, financial and otherwise, for the sponsored youth.

STUDENT MEMBER is a voting member who is a full-time student enrolled in any private or public technical school college or university. Proof of student status is required to establish and maintain student membership.

DISTANT/REMOTE MEMBER resides 100 miles or more from Johnson City and intends to occasionally participate in MEMRR meetings and activities.

EMERITUS MEMBER is one who has been a long time active member who is voted to this lifetime voting status by 2/3's vote of the membership present.

HONORARY MEMBER is one who has been awarded special non-voting membership for outstanding contribution by a non-member. To be established by 2/3's vote and renewed by similar vote at each November meeting.

PROVISIONAL MEMBER: Any person seeking new membership in any of the membership categories requiring payment of membership dues; this is a temporary membership category lasting the initial 120 days of membership to allow for proper vetting of the candidate by the MEMBER VETTING COMMITTEE (See ARTICLE XVII); the provisional member's activities may be restricted as described in Appendix B: Table of Membership qualifications, Dues, Rights, Responsibilities, and Obligations; a provisional member's request for membership will be acted on by the MEMBERSHIP VETTING COMMITTEE immediately following the expiration of the 120 day waiting period with the committee's recommendation presented at the next Business Meeting following the completion of the 120 day waiting period.

Article V.

Election of officers and changes to the constitution or bylaws must be announced to the membership no less than one month in advance. Membership will consist of all individuals listed on the official roll kept by the treasurer. Changes to the aforementioned documents of the club will require a vote "in the affirmative" of one more than half the membership voting. Passage of regular business items will require a majority vote of the members present at the meeting when the item is on the floor. Members must be sent notice by email (surface mail should the member not have email access) of special called meetings no less than one week in advance of the proposed "called meeting" date.

Article VI.

The regularly scheduled business meeting of this organization shall be the third Tuesday evening of each month.

Article VII.

These bylaws may be amended by the membership, as deemed necessary, by the process set forth in Article V.

Article VIII.

Each member will pay his or her dues to the treasurer no later than January 31st. At that time non-paid members will be removed from the distribution of the newsletter (herein known as *The Signal Bridge*) with the February edition. An extension may be granted upon approval by the President and the Treasurer. The key box code to the George L. Carter Railroad Museum door is to be changed each February. The dues will be fixed for the next year at the November meeting and published in the minutes of that meeting.

Article IX.

The President may appoint an Audit Committee once a year to audit the books and physical assets of the Treasurer and to count the "cash on hand" kept by the Treasurer. The audit report will take place after the January business meeting and thereby present the incoming administration an accurate and verified base for the new fiscal year to run January 1st to December 31st).

Article X.

All club funds will be kept and maintained by the Treasurer. All expenditures must be submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement upon receipt of appropriate receipts. Upon termination of this club, all funds remaining will be used to pay outstanding debts. Any club-owned property will be sold and the proceeds, along with any remaining cash funds, will be donated to a 501C3 organization.

Article XI.

This club has been organized and will operate exclusively for the pleasure, education, and recreation of its members. No part of the club's income and/or contributions will accumulate for the benefit of any member.

Article XII.

Unfinished modules shall show substantial improvements in a timely manner. If recommended improvements are not implemented on schedule after advisement from the Executive Committee (officers of the MEMRR), the disposition of the module or modules will be brought to a vote by the membership.

Article XIII.

Each **FULL MEMBER** is encouraged to work the equivalent of one full Saturday, or two half-day Saturdays, at the current club display venue per month. Each member is to sign up for scheduled operating days and/or special events in advance so adjustments can be made to schedule. Showing up unscheduled with staffing already scheduled is encouraged but will not count towards fulfillment of this commitment.

Article XIV.

Approved expenditures shall not exceed original estimates by more than 10% unless prior approval by the Treasurer and one other executive officer. (Executive officers are: President and Vice President). No expenditures will be reimbursed without receipt and all receipts must be signed and dated by the purchaser.

Article XV.

A hard copy of the club newsletter will be available at an additional fee for duplication and mailing. The additional fee will be established annually

Article XVI.

Pro-rated dues rates for new members who sign up during the year.

Jan. thru Mar. 100%

Apr. thru June 75% (for balance of the current year)

July thru Oct. 50% (for balance of the current year)

Nov. and Dec. 100% (this will include the following year's dues)

ARTICLE XVII.

The organization will maintain a MEMBERSHIP VETTING COMMITTEE to review, monitor and make recommendations for membership on all persons seeking a membership status that require payment of dues and are considered Provisional Members. The MEMBERSHIP VETTING COMMITTEE shall consist of 9 members appointed by the president of the organization and shall include 3 FULL MEMBERS drawn from each of the following categories: Officers, Module Owners, Members-at-Large. The committee members will be responsible for monitoring, mentoring and evaluating the persons seeking membership status and who are considered Provisional Members. The committee will make recommendation on the Provisional Member's request for membership following the completion of the 120 day provisional membership period. Recommendations will be decided by majority vote of all the committee members. Recommendations will be presented to the MEMRR membership at the business meeting immediately following the completion of the 120 day waiting period. Should there be a tie due to absention of one or more committee members, the recommendation will be decided by the vote of the President, MEMRR, (or Vice-President in the absence of the President). Recommendations are to include: Approval of Membership status, Refusal of Membership Status, Extension of Provisional Status for one additional 120 day period.

APPENDIX A

Duties of the Officers of the Organization

President:

- Prepare meeting agenda and preside over the Monthly Business Meeting.
- Appoint Committees for various tasks as necessary.
- Maintain contact with Train Show operators.
- Prepare a monthly column on club activities and news and submit it to the Newsletter Editor for publication in the "Signal Bridge".
- Assign individuals to specific tasks, i.e., Program Director, Recording Secretary, Specification Librarian, etc.
- Provide contact point for local media, civic organizations and political leaders.
- Is responsible for promotional aspects of the club, i.e., club logo, club brochures, media news releases, etc.

Vice President:

- Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.

- Is responsible for monthly club programs.

Secretary:

- Take minutes at Monthly Business Meeting and Coordinators' Meeting (a Recording Secretary may be appointed by the
 - President to perform this function).
- Send copies of minutes to newsletter editor.
- Originates official club correspondence (i.e.: thank you cards/letters, condolences/etc.)

Treasurer:

- Maintain club funds and account for same in writing.
- Collect annual club dues from members.
- Prepare monthly financial report (income and expenditures).
- Prepare Annual Financial Report.
- Maintain current Active Membership Roll.
- Order club shirts, caps, patches and other club items

Newsletter Editor:

- Publish and distribute monthly newsletter, "The Signal Bridge".
- E-mail "The Signal Bridge" club newsletter to the Webmaster for distribution in digital format to the membership.

Webmaster:

- Secure and maintain a suitable web host for the MEMRR web site.(Insure that yearly host fees are paid)
- Design and create MEMRR and George L. Carter Railroad Museum web pages.
- Maintain and update web pages in a timely manner.
- Maintain an E-mail list of all members with computer access.
- Notify all members with computer access of important upcoming club events.
- Once all versions (extra and/or bonus) of "The Signal Bridge" club newsletter are released they will be combined into one monthly edition and then posted on the MEMRR Website in a timely manner.
- Maintain MEMRR E-mail server.

Communications Coordinator

- Identify potential members that come into the museum and give them an overview of the club and the museum.
- Give them a quick tour of the facilities.
- Help prospective members get the proper paperwork filled out to join the club.
- Introduce potential new members to other members of the club
- Once they decide to join, schedule time on Thursday night or Saturday to give them a complete tour and explain the following:
 - How the club operates.
 - Operational characteristics of each layout

- Explanation of all the facilities and how to use them.
- Give them copies of any material available on layout operations.
- Insure they get a parking pass and access to the museum.
- Make sure you send them the “Welcome Aboard” survey. Based on their answers, direct them to work with the Coordinator or work group that best meets their interests.
- Attend the Coordinators Meeting, when required, to report on membership interests and programs desired by new members.
- Periodically compile and report the new membership survey results at the monthly General Business Meeting and at least once a year in the Signal Bridge (Was in the process of compiling).
- As requested, contact inactive and former members to try and get them involved back in the activities at the museum and club.
- Mail copies of the Signal Bridge to members who have paid for hard copies of the publication.
- Work to complete any assignments requested by the officers of the club.

RIP Track-Bad Order Coordinator

- Repairs rolling stock to put back into operation.
- Maintains inventory of club owned property (to include rolling stock and motive power) & location of such property.

Librarian

(The following duties shall be performed under the auspices of MEMRR and the George L. Carter Railroad Museum ETSU)

- Receives, inventories, and catalogues all club books, pamphlets and visual media (i.e., video tapes, CDs, DVD, posters, prints, photographs, etc.)

- Shelves, stores, displays and otherwise properly maintains club library collections.
- Circulation and check-out/check-in system for member use of the library collections

Historian

- Maintain the club archives
- Compile and keep a roll of inactive and former members.

**APPENDIX B
Application for Membership**

Name:
 Address:
 Phone: Additional phone number or point of contact
 Email:
 Sponsor:
 End of provisional status date: __/__/____

Membership level applied for:

- Full (Adult)
- Associate
- Household (additional Member is applying for;
 - Youth under 14 years as part of Household Membership)
 - Youth 14-18 years
 - Student (Program Enrolled in is:_____)
 - Adult 18 years or older
- Youth (14 to 18 years old)
- Student (enrolled in higher education program
 Program Enrolled in is:_____)

How did you learn of mountain empire model railroaders?
 What scale(s) are you interested in?
 What are your modelling strengths?
 What would you like to learn about modelling?
 Do you have a home layout?
 Are you interested in building a module?
 Do you have a member to sponsor you?

APPENDIX C

Table of Membership Classifications, Dues, Rights, Responsibilities and Obligations

MEMBER CLASS	FULL (WITH HOUSEHOLD)	STUDENT	YOUTH	DISTANT REMOTE	EMERITUS	HONORARY	PROVISIONAL
DEFINITIONS	Full membership with rights, privileges and obligations as per below; 18 of age or	College student with proof of enrollment	Ages 17 and younger with Full member providing sponsorship (<i>may be</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	

	older; (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)		enrolled as part of a Full membership with Household option)				
DUES	\$30 (+ \$6 each adult/youth)	\$18	\$12	\$12	Free	Free	
PRIVILEGES							
Signal Bridge (electronic edition)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Signal Bridge (hard copy edition)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	\$24 (\$2/MONTH)	
Key box code (24/7 access)	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Module ownership	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Hold Office	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Voting rights	YES Voice and Vote	YES Voice and Vote	NO Voice only	NO Voice only	YES Voice and Vote	NO Voice only	
Running rights (General)	YES	YES	YES With Supervision	YES With Supervision	YES With Supervision	YES With Supervision	
Running rights (1 st Preference)	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Supervised access	N/A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Use of work rooms	YES	YES	YES With Supervision	YES	YES	YES	
Social Functions	YES	YES	NO Except when invited	YES	YES	YES	
Committee Membership	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	
Coordinator Council	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	

RESPONSINILITIES							
Saturday Obligation 1/month -or- 6 hrs/month at special events	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
NOTES	Remains the same	Dues increase	Remains the same	Replaces family/household member	Life time membership for longstanding member with special contribution	1 yr membership to non-member making special contribution	

APPENDIX D

History of Amendment and Ratification of Changes

Amended by the general membership 02/20/2001.

Updated 3/21/06 to include approved Amendments of 02/20/2001 and voted changes to bylaws in 2004 by the general membership.

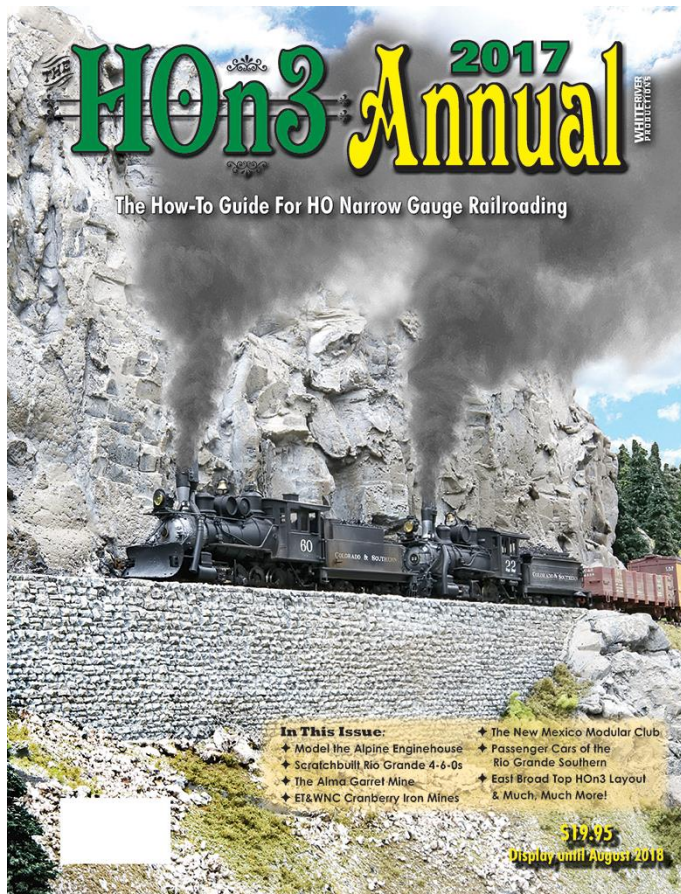
Amended by the general membership 05/16/2006.

Amended to its present form by the general membership 03/18/2008.

Amended to its present form by the general membership 09/18/2012.

Amended to its present form by the general membership 04/21/2015.

Amended to its present form by the general membership 05/16/2017



**GEORGE L CARTER RR MUSEUM'S
ET&WNC RR FEATURED IN THE
2017 HOn3 ANNUAL
THE TWEETSIE LAYOUT MAKES ITS 4TH
APPEARANCE**

The new 2017 Hon3 Annual has arrived and is available at the museum with a 25% discount for members priced at \$15 (\$20 for non-members). This issue features 9-10 pages on the Cranberry section of our ET&WNC RR layout. There is an additional article about some new Hon3 ET&WNC rolling stock that is being produced by Shapeway, Inc. using 3-D printing for the car bodies. There's also an article on the TOFC Car and trailer used by ET&WNC Motor Freight Co. Supplies are limited so get yours today.

This is the fourth year in succession that the George L Carter RR Museum's layout has been featured in the pages of the HOn3 Annual. The Annual is published by White River Productions, publisher of numerous railroad publications including: *RAILROAD AND RAILFAN*, *RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN*, and *PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL*.

DECEMBER OPERATING SESSION INTRODUCTION TO SWITCH LISTS AND TRAIN ORDERS

The MEMRR monthly Operating session was held on December 5th. Geoff Stunkard, Robert Sullivan, Donald Beck, Gary Gilliam, and Ted Bleck-Doran participated in the evening's activities. The team started to arrive at 5:30 PM with trains rolling by 5:45.

head the consist. The refer express was deposited on track 3 and when it received its crummy the steamer hoked up and pumped air. The refer express depaqrt on time with Bob at the throttle.

Sample of a Switch List

For a Nrfolk & Western Box Car headed from the main yard to Haynes interchange and assembled into a waiting consist on Track 2 the entry would read:

| N&W | 560445 | XM | JC Yard | Haynes | Track 7 |

The first order of business was to create a switch list for the Haynes Turn, a local freight hauling loads of lumber running from the main Johnson City Yard to the interchange at Haynes. There the local will swap out the cars in its consist for the cars held in the interchange track. Don accepted the challenge and started pulling cars from the main yard. He would have 45 minutes to complete the job, having the consist delivered to the depot at Rogersville. The Haynes Turn would be due out at 6:30 PM.

While Don was working his list, Gary Gilliam was shifting loaded hoppers from the Hyder Mine for delivery to the Heaton Interchange. Gary was to clear the mainline by 6:15 PM for a hotshot refer express.

Ted pulled the four block of refers from the spurs north of the ready tracks, while Geoff readied a steam locomotive to

Sample Form 19 Train Order

For our purposes the order would describe the route, destination(s), and class, e.g. -

(Loco) 1560 - Leave JC Yard 7:00 PM

Westbound - inner track

outer track

take passenger siding and hold at station 5 min

Return same

First class - superior to all trains

Geoff drew a Hudson from the roundhouse for the scheduled southbound passenger train due out at 7:00 PM. Ted put the passenger cars on a ready track, hooked up the Hudson, pumped air and was ready to depart one minute late!

While Don continued to work his list (he had the more challenging draw) Geoff received his list of pulls for the Rogersville Turn, a set of loads of steel pipe, sheets and coils. Like Don he had 45 minutes to pull and shot 15 cars on a ready track with a departure time of 7:15 PM.

This is just a sample of how an operations night goes. There are challenges, snags and puzzles to solve with plenty of action to hold the interest of those who attend. Join us sometime in the future. **Model Railroading is FUN!**

NOTE: the Operating sessions are normally held the first Tuesday of each month, however, the January session will be held on the second Tuesday, January 9th due to the News Years Holiday. Accordingly, the session will be cancelled if inclement weather causes the University to close on the 9th.

THE PAST COMES BACK FOR ETSU CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM'S "FALLEN FLAGS" HERITAGE DAY ON DECEMBER

AMERICA'S FORMER SIGNATURE RAILROADS COME TO TENNESSEE IN MODEL FORM



The colorful multiple railroads of the past will be featured at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum, located in the Campus Center Building of East Tennessee State University, on December 30 to complete the facility's yearly Heritage Days program. Today's super railroads were spawned by numerous smaller firms, all who competed for business in their regions. The result of marketing caused each to have a signature identity, which came through in colorful paint schemes, unique fonts and memorable slogans. This was particularly evident in the 1940-1970 era, as diesel power

rapidly gained acceptance. From the mighty Santa Fe and New York Central lines to smaller regional carriers like the Interstate and the Central of Georgia, each had trains instantly recognizable to those paying attention. Consolidation efforts started during those years rapidly accelerated following the introduction of Amtrak and the large Penn Central and Burlington Northern integrations.

"The term Fallen Flags is actually thought to be dated to 1964, when the N&W took over the Wabash, whose slogan had been 'follow the flag,'" notes Heritage Days coordinator Geoff Stunkard. "The term came to represent the nostalgia of what was rapidly changing in this industry, which had just seen so much upheaval in technology in the previous decade. Those of us who are fans of railroading enjoy the sense of a simpler era when these companies operated independently, though there was no other choice to the solving the issues facing the lines beyond their consolidation."

This was an era of on-time performance and company pride, with many lines creating select names to sustain that business. 'Everywhere West,' 'Fast Freight Service,' Mainline of Mid-America,' and 'Serves North and South' were all part of the advertising campaigns, repeated on the sides of railroad cars that rushed by. Thanks to the efforts of the Mountain Empire Model Railroad club volunteers, some of these train will be operating on the museum's 24x44 foot HO scale layout. Other examples will be shown in the museum's multiple display cases, and of course, trains will be running on the N scale and HOn3 dioramas as well. The latter, of the ET&WNC "Tweetsie" line, was again featured this year in a national magazine for the fourth consecutive time.

THEY ARE STILL OUT THERE

By Geoff Stunkard



While out in Mooreville, N.C. on December 2 for NASCAR star's Bobby Allison's 80th birthday, this appeared like a mirage to me on a little section of industrial trackage north of town. This looks to be a real Alco S1 or S2 yard engine, owned by the Bay State Milling Company and likely built in the 1940s-era war years or earlier. The engine was on a section of trackage that leads into the large mill complex and, as can be seen, has had some changes to it. Busy with modern cylindrical hoppers, it was not possible to stay long enough to see the engine actually get underway, but it was idling quietly along a city street. Bay State is a multi-national conglomerate with facilities across the nation. They bought the original Mooreville Flour Company in 1973, and it is

unknown if the engine was part of the deal. Regardless, seeing it running outside of a museum setting in late 2017 was a real surprise...



THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB THE MEMRR PRESIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

As I write this column I am looking out on 4 inches of snow on a very cold December day that was left by our first snow storm of the season. The extended warm fall weather is now a past memory and we shall be settling in the traditional holiday season and doing more and more of our railroad modeling hobby indoors. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.....!

Our long-time club member, Web-Master, and friend, **John Edwards**, is recovering from a second operation on his ankle and this time the reported progress is very positive. There are rumors that he has been sighted walking upright and putting some weight on the limb. Way to go John! We look forward to having you back in the museum and working the laser-knife by early 2018.



Museum's 10th Anniversary: The Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club is celebrating its 25th anniversary and the George L. Carter Railroad Museum just had a wonderful celebration of its 10th anniversary on November 18th. We had party balloons and banners around the museum, great finger food set up in the corridor and a lot of guests at the

11 a.m. ceremony. Former ETSU **President Paul Stanton**, who was the president that provided the university space that made our railroad museum possible, was our special guest speaker. Dr. Stanton gave a brief summary of the decisions he made to move our club and create the museum on campus and continued to show his strong support for the outstanding railroad museum we have become with lots of compliments to everyone who has worked so hard to create the exhibits, operate the museum and make it the regional attraction that it is. Johnson City **Vice-Mayor Jennie Brock** also spoke to our group praising the efforts of everyone connected with the railroad museum and stating what a great asset it is for the university and the city. Both wished us the best for our future and promised to continue to support our efforts in bringing a touch of the history of railroading that sparked the creation of Johnson City and the attention our museum brings to that history. It was a very nice landmark for the museum and the university and the promise for more to come and a long life for our museum is most positive.

Museum Annual Christmas Party: In keeping with our well established holiday tradition, the Annual Carter RR Museum Christmas Party will be held this **Friday, December 15th** at the First Presbyterian Church on Main Street in Jonesborough (same venue as last year's event). Decoration of the hall will begin around 4-4:30 p.m. and you are invited to help out with this fun-task if you can. **Charlene** and **Dan McCloud** have donated the holiday decorations and you are welcome to bring some of your own if you want to. The festivities start at **6: 00 p.m.** This social event is form members and their spouse or significant other; not for children. Everyone is to bring a covered dish and the club/chapter will furnish the meats, the plates, cups, flatware and drinks. If you want to help with the decorations please come early around 4-4:30 p.m. to help Santa's elves bring the room a splash of Christmas ornamentation. **Dirty Santa** (aka **Roger Teinert**) will be making his appearance so please bring a gift that is gender-oriented, for men and ladies, to put under the proper tree. Each wrapped gift should be railroad-themed and have a value of approximately \$20 dollars. This is a fun event

filled with cheer, merriment, good food and friendship and a great way for us to end the year in each other's company. Please put it on your calendar and come join in the fun! **Jim Pahr** is once more coordinating the event so please contact him with your *rsvps* and let him know what you are bringing to add to the larder.

Polar Express Storytelling: We had planned two storytelling events with professional storyteller **Linda Poland** scheduled for December 2nd to be held in ETSU's Culp University Center's Forum Room. The plans were to have this event followed by a bus trip to Blowing Rock, NC to the Tweetsie Railroad to join the theme park's Christmas with a ride on their Christmas Train. We made the plans and some of them were realized while others were not. We had little response for the trip to Tweetsie Railroad so I cancelled the bus contracted with Premier Transportation on November 27. We had no sales and no audience for tickets for our 11 a.m. storytelling, and we cancelled that session. Our afternoon audience in a venue that would have seated 60 consisted of 10 people (including Jim Pahr and me). Linda Poland was not only gracious in telling her stories with enthusiasm and in a highly entertaining way, but she had two storytelling friends in the audience, and one who was visiting from Ireland, also gave us two delightful Christmas stories. If you missed this event, and most of you did, you really failed to have a great opportunity to hear and watch some very fine storytellers practice their craft. I hope we can have them back sometime in 2018 and generate the audience that they so richly deserve.

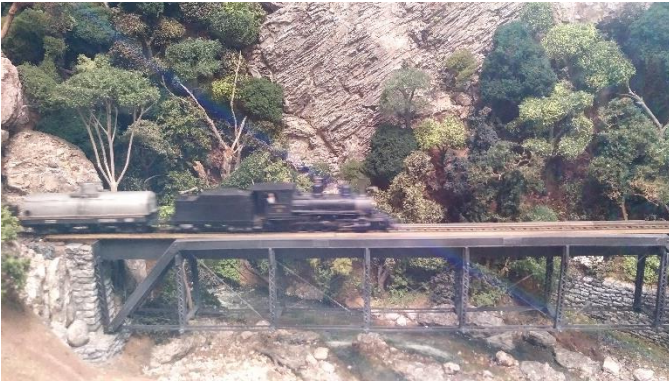
Officers Elected for 2018: I want to once more take this opportunity to thank each of our elected officers, and those holding appointed positions, for the tremendous job you did for the MEMRR in 2017. Taking on the added responsibilities of administration to serve the members of our club is not an easy task and sometimes is not the most rewarding. But, the service you provide as a leader is critical to the success of the organization and to the museum and it spreads the workload so that all things get done in a timely and responsible manner. Providing programs for monthly meetings and standing in to conduct meetings in the absence of the president, getting out monthly newsletters, collecting dues and balancing the books for all expenditures and deposits, taking accurate notes and submitting them to the editor, keeping websites up and running, providing information notices to the membership, plus the many *ad hoc* committees that are created that need to do some task or solve some problem is layered in on top of their hobby with good-natured professionalism by these officers that you elected. They have all be outstanding to work with in 2017 and they have done the jobs you elected them to do. None of our positions are permanent and it would often be a relief to some who are serving if others would put their hat-in-the-ring and become a candidate for their positions to give them a well-deserved break.



Congratulations to our elected MEMRR officers for 2018. They are, as reported by our Nominating Committee **Paul Haynes** and **Mike Buster**: President, **Fred Alsop**; Vice-President, **John Carter**; Secretary, **Gregg Mundkowsky**; Treasurer, **Gary Emmert**; Newsletter Editor, **Ted Bleck-Doran**; Web-Masters **Bob Jones & Logan Heaton**; Web-Master Apprentice, **Ben Merritt**. Gentlemen, I look forward to working with each of you towards a most successful year for the MEMRR and the Carter RR Museum as you assume your roles for 2018. **Important Note:** Gregg has agreed to accept the position of secretary on a temporary basis and we are still seeking a member to come forward to be our secretary to complete Gregg's term. Gregg's new job means that he often works late afternoons and nights thus preventing him from attending all of our business meeting and Coordinator's meetings from which our minutes and reports are derived. If you are willing to assume this position please let me (Fred) know ASAP. Thank you; your club needs your service as secretary!

New Faces in Established Positions: Club member **Amy Merritt** is applying for our part-time position as the Station Master in the Little Engineer's Room. We have had this position open and advertised for since **Kelsey Shubert** resigned that position she had held with us for more than two years. The Station Master is the supervisor for the children's playroom and our great student workers will report to her. As soon as the paperwork can be completed by the university Amy should be officially hired. Please give her your congratulations on taking this important position in the museum. We have more than 2,000 children and their parents and guardians visit this room annually.

Robert Sullivan has agreed to take over the duties currently held by **Roger Teinert** as our "official greeter" of new members. This role will have Robert greeting our new members and working with them to fill out our questionnaire about their interests in model railroading including any particular railroads and scales they model. Roger will provide this information to our Newsletter Editor, **Ted Bleck-Doran**, for insertion into the monthly newsletter so all our MEMRR members can become acquainted with our newest members and help them transition into our club and the Railroad Museum.



Dues are Due! We are into our second month of dues collections and membership renewals for the MEMRR. **Don't let your membership lapse!** Your small \$30 annual membership (+\$6 for family members living in the same household; less for student members) provides you with so many perks including; 24/7 access to the Carter RR Museum, free parking on the ETSU campus (that costs ETSU students \$25; staff and faculty \$50), access to the operation of the MEMRR club layout and club/museum locomotives and rolling stock, a monthly 20+ page newsletter with many color photos, monthly business meetings, use of museum layouts (other than the MEMRR layout) and operation of museum trains, several social events with your spouse or significant other (museum picnics, spring flings, Christmas party, and more), plus the active modeling skills of a great group of men and women who operate the Carter Railroad museum and create its exhibits. **Please renew your membership before January 31, 2018.**

December Heritage Day: Our Heritage Day Event Coordinator, **Geoff Stunkard**, has brought back a favorite for the Christmas Holidays. The focus for December 30 will be **"Fallen Flags: Those Vintage Railroads of Yesteryear"**. Any railroads that no longer exist because they have become defunct or because they became part of the merger consolidations that created the big railroads of today, are what you need to bring to operate on our layout tracks for this Heritage Day Event. We should have lots of visitors over the Holidays and this is always a popular theme. So bring in the "ghost railroads" from your collections and give them one more run in the light of day.

HOn3 Annual for 2017 is HERE!

Our much anticipated order of 50 copies of the new *HOn3 Annual* has finally arrived and is on sale at the Carter RR Museum. The price to non-members is \$19.95, but members pay only \$15.00. Supplies are limited so if you want a copy at this discounted member's price please hurry to purchase your copy at our sales desk or from **Gary Emmert**. This issue features 9 color pages on the Cranberry Mine section of our ET&WNC RR HOn3 layout. The article is very well written by **Geoff Stunkard**, with photographs by **Geoff** and **Fred Alsop**. It is an outstanding achievement to have anyone's model railroad published in any model railroad magazine; it is especially fortunate when that

railroad is published in a magazine with national and international distribution that is published only once each year! We have had the great good fortune to be published for 4 consecutive years in the HOn3 Annual (issues in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017); almost 40 pages on the Carter Railroad Museum and the outstanding talents of many of our members who have created the large 1,300 sq. ft. layout depicting the ET&WNC RR circa 1925.

There are two additional articles in this 2017 issue of the magazine on the ET&WNC RR. One on the 3-D printing of the 505 caboose and a gondola by Shapeways company, and one on the trailer on flatcar history of the ET&WNC as pioneers of this practice with drawings of how to kitbash the flatcars the railroad modified to carry their trailers. This one has a color picture of our #11 locomotive pulling our flatcar with its yellow trailer over the deck truss bridge on our Tweetsie layout with credit to the museum!

Fred's Gone BirdingAgain! I am going to use part of the holiday break from my regular duties at ETSU to do some international birding. **I will be leaving Johnson City on December 20th** for Panama City, Panama to bird the Darien areas of eastern-most Panama for 10 days and then flying to Guyana in northern South America for another 11 days of rather rugged birding. **I am scheduled to arrive back in Johnson City on January 12, 2018** and plan to be at the RR Museum on the following day (Saturday, January 13) when we have a child's birthday party scheduled. I am asking **Jim Pahrts, Roger Teinert** and **Mike Buster** to look after things at the museum in my absence, so if there are questions or problems please take them to these gentlemen who will be speaking for me. If weather creates hazardous driving conditions they have the authority to close the museum and to notify our Web-Masters and WJHL to let everyone know the museum is closed. Thank all of you in assisting them with these added responsibilities.

Happy Holidays!!! May this holiday season bring you many blessings including great friendships and good health. May Santa put those model train things you have been hoping for in your stockings or under your trees. You are a terrific group of men, women and young men to work and have the pleasure of associating with. Together, we have had another very successful year at the MEMRR and in the George L. Carter Railroad Museum. Thank you for all you do for the MEMRR and the Railroad Museum. The New Year of 2018 is only a few weeks away and with it will come many challenges and opportunities. Hear the sound of the whistle of the train in the night and dream of all the destinations yet to come!

Merry Christmas!Happy Holidays!.....and a Happy New Year!

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

Coordinator's Meeting: G.L. Carter RR Museum November 16, 2017

Meeting called to order by Fred Alsop at 6:04 p.m. in room 235, Campus Center Building, ETSU.

General Announcements: Alsop.

- 10th Anniversary event for the George L. Carter Railroad Museum will be on Saturday, 18 Nov. Festivities with speakers to include former ETSU President Paul Stanton, Jr. and refreshments will begin in the Alsop Gallery at 11 a.m.
- Polar Express Storytelling with Linda Poland at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. followed by charter bus to Tweetsie Railroad at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 2. Storytelling venue the Forum Room 311 in the ETSU Culp Student Center.
- Elections of Officers: Carter Chapter NRHS Nov. 20 and MEMRR Nov. 21 at regularly scheduled business meetings. Ben Merritt and Logan Heaton will be acting as Web-masters for the MEMRR as John Edwards has announced that he will no longer be in that role.
- ETSU President Noland has announced plans for a new humanities building on the university campus that hopefully will be under construction in the next 3-5 years. The building will replace the Campus Center Building and be on its footprint. Plans for the RR Museum will be forthcoming in due time.
- Train Show flyers for the 2018 train show will soon be available for distribution as will vendor registration forms.
- Robert Sullivan reported he passed out Polar Express flyers at a local mall and at Bluefield train show.

Library: Gary Emmert.

- Books donated by the Pete Morrisett and Jack Miller estates are now available in the RR Museum library.
- The books from the John Waite collection are being inventoried and processed.
- Duplicate book holdings will be offered for sale with club members getting first choice.

2018 Train Show: Roger Teinert.

- Next scheduled meeting of the Train Show Committee is Monday, Nov. 20, at 5:00 p.m. at Portobellos Restaurant. Anyone interested in attending the meeting or becoming a committee member is welcome.

Locomotive Repair: Gary Gilliam.

- The 2-truck H0n3 shay has been disassembled and parts are being replaced and a sound decoder is being installed.

N-Scale layout: Jessee Kettle.

- The Bankus N-Scale layout is operating without any difficulties.

Newsletter Editor (MEMRR): Ted Bleck-Doran.

- Reported the publishing of a 23 page issue for November 2017.

H0-Scale Layout: John Carter.

- Work continues on the wiring on this layout and rail painting and track ballasting will soon begin.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m. there being no further business.

Minutes taken and submitted by Fred Alsop

MUSEUM ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH JONESBOROUGH

In keeping with our well established holiday tradition, the Annual Carter RR Museum Christmas Party will be held this **Friday, December 15th** at the First Presbyterian Church on Main Street in Jonesborough (same venue as last year's event). Decoration of the hall will begin around 4-4:30 p.m. and you are invited to help out with this fun-task if you can. **Charlene** and **Dan McCloud** have donated the holiday decorations and you are welcome to bring some of your own if you want to. The festivities start at **6: 00 p.m.** This social event is for members and their spouse or significant other; not for children. Everyone is to bring a covered dish and the club/chapter will furnish the meats, the plates, cups, flatware and drinks. If you want to help with the decorations

please come early around 4-4:30 p.m. to help Santa's elves bring the room a splash of Christmas ornamentation. **Dirty Santa** (aka **Roger Teinert**) will be making his appearance so please bring a gift that is gender-oriented, for men and ladies, to put under the proper tree. Each wrapped gift should be railroad-themed and have a value of approximately \$20 dollars. This is a fun event filled with cheer, merriment, good food and friendship and a great way for us to end the year in each other's company. Please put it on your calendar and come join in the fun! **Jim Pahr** is once more coordinating the event so please contact him with your *rsvps* and let him know what you are bringing to add to the larder.

PAULS PICS PAGE
PHOTOS FROM THE CAMERA OF PAUL HAYNES
FROM DWARF SIGNAL PRODUCTIONS



MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS

DECEMBER OPERATING SESSION

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9TH, 2018



5:30 PM – SETUP AND JOB ASSIGNMENTS
 6:30 PM – OPERATION SESSION BEINGS
 9:00 PM – WRAP-UP AND BULL SESSION

Set the date – **JANUARY 9TH** - Mountain Empire Model Railroaders will sponsor an Operating Session at the George L Carter Railroad Museum. Club members will use the MEMRR Club HO layout in the Fred Alsop Gallery along with club locomotives and rolling stock.

Those attending will be randomly assigned job duties including:

Dispatcher/Trainmaster Engineer/Conductor Brakeman Hostler

Assignments will include:

Classification Yard	Steam Facilities and Roundhouse	Passenger Trains
Mixed Trains	Diesel Facilities and Transfer Table	Local Switcher
	Priority Trains	

Radios and headsets will be used for communications using everyday language. Simplified train orders will govern train operations.

PLAN ON JOINING THE FUN
PREREGISTGERING IS NOT REQUIRED
BUT LET US KNOW IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND

A REMINDER

DECEMBER – JANUARY - FEBRUARY
ARE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTHS



**DON'T LET RED MARKERS HALT YOUR MEMBERSHIP
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY**

SEND YOUR DUES IN TODAY!

Make Checks payable to:

"MEMRR"

Gary Emmert, Treasurer

PO Box 70697

East Tennessee State University

Johnson City, TN 37614.

Dues are payable during the months of December, January and February. Don't miss out on a single issue of *THE SIGNAL BRIDGE* or the opportunity to run you favorite lash-up on the club layouts.

