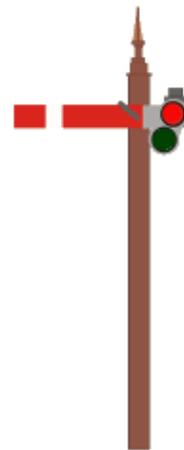


# The Semaphore



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.

A 100% NMRA CLUB



On the web at [www.wncmrr.org](http://www.wncmrr.org) & Facebook

## January 2014

### VOLUME 43 NUMBER 7

Our next meeting is on January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7 PM.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to [editor](#).

Please keep us informed of changes in your address, phone number or email address.



**REMEMBERING WHEN  
SANTA AND LIONEL  
WERE PARTNERS.  
SEE PAGE 5.**



## NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

### OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be starting at 7 PM on Thursday January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Clinic: Favorite normal rolling stock (boxcar, stock car, gondola).**

Synopsis: Be ready to discuss your favorite rolling stock with your fellow modelers, bring in your examples please (*model does not have to be finished*). No specialty items, like maintenance of way or industry special items (they'll come soon). Come to have fun. **See you there!**

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## REPORT ON THE LAST MEETING

**Superintendent Dave Anderson** called the meeting to order at 7 PM on December 5, 2013.

Under Good and Welfare, Boyce Brown is recovering from back surgery, he noted that Troy Carroll will have hip surgery in January. Wally Brown will have a birthday later this month. No other items were brought up.

**Penn Bullock** repeated his request for more who are willing to offer a little time (an afternoon a week or part thereof (see [page 4](#) for times)) or who can help procure inexpensive N-scale rolling stock to support the project. Contact Penn at 253 – 9643 or pennbullock@charter.net

Dave suggested that we have a theme each quarter with clinics, show and tell, and similar activities that relate to the theme. No one brought any objections, but no suggestions either.

Paymaster Dave Anderson noted that dues are due only a few have not remitted.

The meeting adjourned and we enjoyed good fellowship and food together.





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## THE 2ND QUARTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REVIEW

### Topics covered

We have made arrangements for our Thursday night meetings to continue at Eliada Home for the next two years.

A Memorandum of Understanding or other appropriate document with Eliada for land use for our new building.

Fred Coleman reported that we have sold 173 tables for the Asheville Train Show, most layout groups from last year are returning; one are still pending.

Advance publicity is done for the train show with announcements in all the usual train magazines, looking at Model Railroad Hobbyist.

Shirts and hats are being finalized, Dave will send out size request for shirts soon.

We are still solvent and can cover expected expenses for the next quarter.

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# CLUB CALENDAR

This is listing of know activities for our club members in the near future:

January 2nd 7:00 PM **Club Meeting**  
*Eliada Admin Building*

January 8th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

January 15th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

January 19th 9:00 AM **Land O'Sky Meeting**  
*Fletcher Library*

January 22nd **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

January 29th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

February 5th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

February 6th 7:00 PM **Club Meeting**  
*Eliada Admin Building*

February 12th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

February 19th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

February 26th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

February 26th Noon to 7 PM  
**Asheville Train Show**, WNC AG Center

March 1 9 AM to 5 PM

**Asheville Train Show**, WNC AG Center

March 5th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

March 6th 7:00 PM **Club Meeting**  
*Eliada Admin Building*

March 12th **Eliada Hobo's**  
*Downstairs in the Barn*  
2:30 -3:15 PM  
3:30-4:15 PM  
4:15-5:00 PM  
6:00-6:45 PM  
7:00-7:45 PM

We have things for you to do, expand the hobby and your talents! Come out to see what your fellow club members are doing.



## A BOX OF TRAINS, A PASSION REKINDLED

Rediscovery can be a powerful emotional force. Going back to something from childhood (a school, a long-forgotten book, or a lake where you used to swim) refreshes the memory, resurrects old feelings and can reaffirm personal relationships that have been lost in the fog of the past.

An important rediscovery for me came several years ago when on a cold winter day that seemed perfect for rummaging around closets, I opened a dusty old box I had hauled around, unopened for decades. Inside were the remnants of an HO-gauge train set my father had built in the 1950s. There was a New York Central steam engine, a diesel switcher with Burlington colors, an assortment of freight cars, a Santa Fe caboose and six streamlined passenger cars of the Illinois Central's famed Panama Limited, the all-Pullman sleeper that went from Chicago to New Orleans.

A rush of memories and images took me back to a precise moment, on a cool Minnesota fall day when I was probably 6 or 7. As my father and I drove by the Milwaukee Road station downtown, we saw a marvelous steam locomotive, hooked up to a passenger train about to depart. We pulled over and got out to take a closer look. The engineer, complete with gray-striped cap, saw me and waved, then climbed down from his cab and came over. He said he was taking his train to Chicago, a city I had heard of but had never been to. Reaching into his overalls pocket, he pulled out a nickel for me "to get some gum or some candy." Momentarily speechless, I finally blurted out a "Thank you!" He smiled, gave a wave, then climbed back into his cab.

Soon there were two startling whistle blasts. Then, to a "Bolero"-like progression of hissing and chugging, the train slowly gathered speed, puffing out clouds of white smoke through which the engineer's hand appeared in a final wave. That was it. I was hooked as a train enthusiast, or as my wife would prefer to call it, a train nut. Part of it, I'm sure, is genetic. My maternal grandfather worked for the Northern Pacific.

Beyond assembling the requisite Lionel train around the Christmas tree, my father one day began a mysterious basement project, hauling 2x4s and plywood down to an unused room. It turned out he was building an HO-gauge layout, depicting a Midwestern town with passenger and freight service.

At first I thought this was for my benefit. But then he always seemed to be down there, "testing" the rolling stock, fussing with a signal light or adding a new piece of track. Oh, I see. But my father soon began showing me how to do stuff: fix a broken coupler, wire a remote-control switch and connect track sections tightly enough to prevent derailments.

And when we worked together, especially underneath the layout, pulling wires for lighting or track, I felt especially close to him. My dad didn't talk much. I learned mostly by watching, not listening. But as we tweaked and refined, adding or removing track, scenery or electrical work, he taught me an important life lesson, though I wasn't totally aware of it at the time: Nothing is ever static. As you create a world of your own, to be happy you have to constantly keep working on it. Never be satisfied with the status quo.

The layout remained for several more years, but as I grew older and developed other interests, I spent less time in the basement. My father and I eventually dismantled everything, carefully packing engines and cars into that box, whose tempting contents now beckoned: I wonder if the engines still work. I was disappointed but not particularly surprised that they didn't. But that only inspired me.

Now that we lived in a country home with a basement, it was time to be bold and channel my father. So I ordered an HO model of Amtrak's Acela, a train I had ridden occasionally for business. The first hint of trouble came when my wife spotted the charge on the Amex bill. "What's that for?" she asked. When I explained that the train was for "display purposes only," that seemed to be the end of it. But of course it wasn't. Before long I had ordered enough track to make an oval around the edge of the dining-room carpet. Soon my Acela was circling the room, resplendent at night with its headlight and lighted car interiors. I started hauling lumber down to the basement, and ordered track and other supplies, some-



times having the small stuff delivered to my office so I could smuggle it home allegedly undetected. But nothing escaped Meredith's CFO scrutiny of monthly bills and bank statements. Besides thinking it was a waste of money and a sign of seriously misplaced household priorities, she questioned my sanity. My current layout depicts a small German town, served by a mix of steam and electric-powered engines, plus passenger and freight cars of various eras. The lighted buildings include a big clock tower, a *rathaus* (town hall), *biergarten* and, of course, a *bahnhof*. The next one? Who knows. But whatever form it takes, I take comfort from the fact that Meredith has finally realized that part of my rediscovery somehow involves reconnecting with my father, who has been gone now for more than 30 years. As I lay track, crawl underneath to tweak the wiring or fuss over an uncooperative switch, I sometimes feel he's there, offering advice, in his quiet, understated way. And that's very cool.

This article appeared recently in the Wall Street Journal. The author, *Mr. Pinkerton*, a writer in Stone Ridge, N.Y., is former managing editor of *Forbes* and former deputy managing editor of *The Wall Street Journal*. He can be reached at [en-core@wsj.com](mailto:en-core@wsj.com).

## EVENTS FOR MODELERS:

### LAND O'SKY DIVISION MEETING

January 19,2014 at 9:30 am at the Fletcher library, Fletcher, NC.  
see [website](#) for details

### WNC TRAIN SHOW

February 28th & March 1st

At the WNC AG Center

Friday from Noon to 7 PM, Saturday from 9 until 4 PM,  
see our [website](#) for details



### RAILS ACROSS THE RIVER

Fri, 06/13/2014 (All day) - Sun, 06/15/2014 (All day)

The Memphis Railroad and Trolley Museum and the Bluff City Division of the NMRA are proud to host the 2014 Joint Convention of the Southeastern and Mid Continent Regions of the NMRA. See [website](#) for details



### NMRA 2014 CONVENTION

July 13-20, 2014

79th Annual convention in Cleveland OH.

See their [website](#) for details