



# Ties and Rails

Official newsletter of the Crossville Model Railroad Club  
and Div. 16, Southeast Region, NMRA

June 2022

(931)210-5050

[www.crossvilletrains.org](http://www.crossvilletrains.org)

## ***The Prez. Sez:***

As June is upon us, there are changes in the Club to come. Hopefully they will be good for all the Club members.

I am asking all members to wait until this whole thing with the 501c3 to either be done with a legal representative (ie. Lawyer) or kept as it is. I realize that there are online sites for legal advice, but that is just advice. It will not protect the Club and its assets if we should get one tiny thing wrong. As I learned in the military, it's the small and tiny things that will get you a trip to the great beyond.

I know Paul and Art have put a lot of time chasing down the requirements for the 501c3. I just think it is better for us to go the route with a qualifies lawyer. We have the funds.

We have a Special Board meeting at 10:00 am on Thursday, June 2 to make some decisions as to what path to follow.

Remember, it has been going on for over 10 years and now is not the time to rush into it.

Hope to see you all at the next meeting.

### **Reminder**

When completing the counter reports after a transaction, remember those transactions involving hats and whistles are not recorded on the 'Counter' page.

They have a separate page farther back in the notebook.

### **Buc-ee's**

This past week, Buc-ee's announced that they will have their opening on Monday, June 27th, just ahead of the July Fourth holiday weekend.

That will be a welcome sight in the area around the Mall as, I'm sure, the roads will be paved, the dust will have settled and we should see an upsurge in the number of visitors we will have.

If you have something you wish to put in the newsletter, contact Tom Shallcross at [chipmonk4@comcast.net](mailto:chipmonk4@comcast.net)

## HO Scale News - Paul Falk

Work continues on the installation of the signal system on the Tennessee Central/Southern line. The detectors have been installed in this area and the installation of the signals shall commence in the near future.

## Reminder

When you close up at the end of a shift, be sure to double check the front door to see that it is securely locked.

This past month we had one incident where the lock in the front door was partially 'locked' but the door was not secured.

## Visitor's Log

Tom Shallcross

During this past month, we had a unique situation here at the Club. We had a family that listed "full time Airstreamers" as their residence. I don't recall seeing this type of residence listed for anyone in the past.

They joined families from Windsor, Ontario, Canada, London, England, Hampshire, U.K. and North Wales as visitors from the traditional residences in the States.

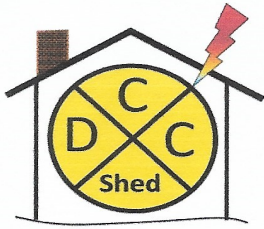
Speaking of the traditional States, we had visitors from AL, CA, CO, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MD, MI, MN, MT, NC, NJ, NV, OH, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, VT, WA, and WI among the 239 visitors that signed our guest registry this month. This was out of the 947 visitors that enjoyed our display.

Please continue your good work in getting visitors to let us know where they are visiting from.

## Mars Light on an Atlantic Coast Line Hi-Railer



"Maybe I'd better think this over, Fred. I wouldn't want to add to our trade deficit."



## The DCC Shed @ CMRC

Paul Falk

Art Landrigan

Come on in and welcome. This month we will review our DCC operating scheme and troubleshooting our HO environment:

When operating in DCC mode, the DCC system on the HO layout is based on a Digitrax DCS240 command station. The command station is the source of DCC track power that is encoded with the information to command the mobile decoders in the locos. The command station is also the source of a layout communication network Digitrax calls loconet. The loconet is a six wire network that allows layout devices to communicate with each other. One of these devices is a Digitrax handheld controller like a DT402d or a UT4. These devices can connect to the loconet via the front panel connections located around the layout. These handhelds communicate with the command station and the command station then issues commands to the loco via the track power. Using Digitrax handhelds, located under the HO tower, will always be the most **reliable** control method. Manuals for these handhelds are under the tower in the black pamphlet rack. You may use your own Digitrax handheld.

Using personal handhelds like smart phones and tablets using WiFi add another layer of complexity. As complexity increases, reliability can suffer.

You want to select ***Dtx-CMRC\_HO1\_08B4-7*** WiFi network on your phone/tablet. Select it on your connections menu of your device. After selecting it the first time, you will be prompted for the passcode,

***digitrax1234***. This network that uses a Digitrax wifi device, called an LNWI, that provides a direct connection to the layout via a loconet cable. The tower laptop is **NOT** needed or used for this connection and should remain **OFF**.

Remember that both of these WiFi connections **DO NOT** have internet connectivity. Your cell phone or tablet will likely warn you of no internet connection. Dismiss or ignore the warning. This was done purposefully to eliminate other complexities external to the Club.

### PROBLEMS running with WiFi?? THINGS TO TRY

\*Using DT402d or UT4 with fresh battery, try running loco. This is the most reliable method of operating DCC. Start with it plugged to any available fascia socket to set the control group.

\*Assure the loop you are using is set to DCC and remove any DC loco(s) from that loop.

\*Assure DCC track power is on. The tower display (top left side) should show 12 volts minimum.

\*If the loco runs with a DT402d and not your WiFi connected device, that might be your best option for that session.

\*When using a smartphone or tablet, assure your device is on the correct WiFi network.

\*Cycle the power (REBOOT) your handheld device, select the WiFi source and verify it's connection to the layout by cycling the DCC power on and off with your handheld.

\*Will the loco run on DC? Does the loco have a decoder?

\*Has the loco been consisted on another layout? If so, clear that consist and try again.

*cont. on page 4*



## Membership

**Tom Shallcross**

Over the past three months, we have been fortunate to add 6 new members to our roster.

Jeffrey Self has joined the ranks of the HO scale and has agreed to fill the long open slot on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

Albert Scala from Rickman, has also joined the ranks of the HO scale. He will be covering a slot every third Friday that has been open for a number of weeks.

Marcus Simms of Sparta, has volunteered to cover an open HO slot with a Saturday/Sunday rotation. His assistance will be welcomed on the weekends.

John Linton, from Sparta, will be assisting the weekend rotations by covering an HO slot every three weeks, alternating between Saturdays and Sundays. He will also be assisting G scale whenever he can.

Stephen Pacheco, from Crossville, will be covering an HO slot every other Friday. Due to prior commitments, there will be some periods when he will not be able to cover his regular shift. He will be helping out filling various shifts at they open up.

Kenneth Walsh, from Crossville, will be covering an HO slot every other Friday. Occasionally he will be assisting O scale in their projects. He is interested in learning all the scales.

Recently, Steve Rosenstein sold his house in Tanzi and moved from the area. He will remain on the Roster and will assist with occasional coverage when he is in the area.

Welcome aboard to all the new members!

*DCC Shed cont. from page 3*

\*Has loco been programmed to cab number? If not, try using 03 as cab number.

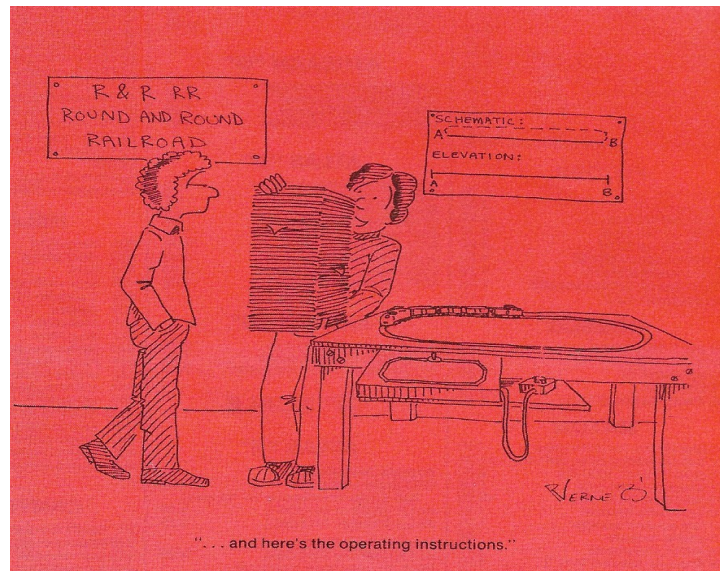
\*Try using known good loco on same track.

\*Do you have any control? For example, can you turn lights on/off? Sound horn? If so, the problem rests with the loco. Maybe decoder programming or loco wiring.

When finished with a loco, please remember to release/dispatch that loco. This helps keep the command station memory slots clean for the next user.

When shutting down, return all loop switches to the default DC mode.

Remember, one on one training and help is always available. If you experience any unexplained issues with the current DCC installations, HO or N, please document what you have encountered in an email or a note to Paul and/or Art. We welcome your interest and comments. Feel free to contact either Paul Falk ([pfalk1@gmail.com](mailto:pfalk1@gmail.com)) or Art Landrigan ([arcy22tn@gmail.com](mailto:arcy22tn@gmail.com)) with question, comments or ideas.





## Seventh Annual Big Train Show coming to ETSU

After a two-year hiatus, the annual Big Train Show is coming back to East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. It happens June 3-4 in the Ballard Health Athletic Center, formerly known as the Mini Dome.

"We have not been able to host the Big Train Show for the past 2 years," said Geoff Stunkard, one of the event organizers. "This show brings in people and model displays from all over, and we will fill that 64,000 square foot field with railroad models and history. We are really excited to finally say 'All Aboard!' for it again in 2022."

The show will feature vendors, layouts and exhibits from across the United States. Parking in the adjacent parking garage and near the athletic center is free. The event is open to the public from noon until 6 PM on Friday, June 3, and 10 AM—4 PM on Saturday, June 4.

ETSU officials also urge visitors to swing by the George L. Carter Railroad Museum. The museum is open on Saturdays from 10 AM to 3 PM, but will be open Friday, June 3, noon until 5 PM as well for this event and includes model railroad layouts, a special child's activity room and ongoing programs. There is no admission fee, but donations are welcome.

For more information about the Big Train Show, contact Roger Teinert at (423)791-4937 or Dr. Fred Alsop, museum director, at (615)604-8759. For additional information, including registration forms for vendors, visit [etsu.edu/railroad/events.php](http://etsu.edu/railroad/events.php).

## The Power of a Free Pass

Though Frank and Jesse James robbed at least seven trains between 1866 and 1882, they never held up the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, which ran right through their hometown of Kearney, MO. And why not? As a preventive measure, railroad officials gave their mother a free pass to ride their trains.

# Did you know?

Thousands of people shop on Amazon.com, including model railroaders. But did you know that when you, your family members, and friends make purchases there, Amazon could make a donation to your favorite non-profit charity such as the NMRA? Did you also know that the NMRA qualifies as your favorite non-profit (We hope you do!)

Amazon has introduced a program called "AmazonSmile" to help community non-profits such as the National Model Railroad Association. Simply log into your regular Amazon account using the website <http://smile.amazon.com> and then select National Model Railroad Association, Inc. as your chosen Non-profit. It's that easy. Then, just shop as you normally do.

Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You'll see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. For those products, Amazon will donate 0.05% of the purchase price to the NMRA. What's great is that the donation is not added to your final purchase price or added to the seller's cost. And item prices are exactly the same as Amazon.com.

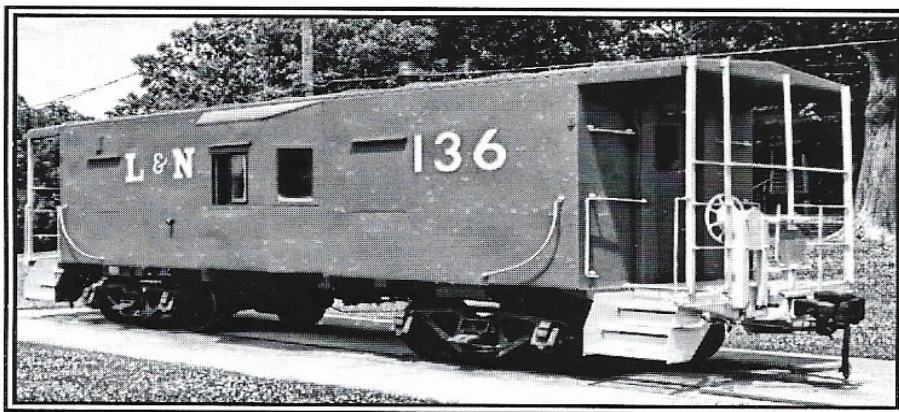
So, remember to sign up at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). You only have to sign up once and all future AmazonSmile purchases will benefit the NMRA, helping us continue to develop programs that benefit model railroaders.

**Amazon will donate 0.05% of a purchase to the NMRA.**



# 2022 13th Annual Madison Model Train Show

TRAIN LAYOUTS | FOOD | DOOR PRIZES  
*(must be present to win)*



*CDC guidelines apply on show days – Masks may be required.*

**Friday July 15th, 2022**

2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

**Saturday July 16th, 2022**

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Adults \$7.00 | Kids \$4.00 | Under 4 Free

*Please bring at least 1 non-perishable food item per family  
to donate to the Christian Cooperative Ministries*

**CITY ROAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

701 Gallatin Pike, Madison, TN 37115

*Across From Madison Square*

*For show information, or to be a vendor, please contact:*

**NATHAN BAKER**

615-612-3324 or [nathanbaker@comcast.net](mailto:nathanbaker@comcast.net)



## Railroad Fun Facts—Did you know?

### U.S. Standard Railroad Gauge

The U.S. Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the U.S. railroads were designed by English expatriates. Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagons would break on some of the old, long-distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts. SO, who built these old, rutted roads?

The very first long-distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for, or by, Imperial Rome, they were alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original question. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. Specs and bureaucracies live forever. So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's back

end came up with it, you may be exactly right—because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.

Now the twist to the story: When we see a Space Shuttle sitting on the launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are the solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol, at a factory in Utah (very near Promontory Point!). The engineers that designed the SRBs might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line to the factory runs through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than a railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds. So, a major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined by the width of a horse's rump!

*Submitted by Bruce Herring*



"Maybe you should reduce the pressure in your airbrush a bit."





## RETURN OF THE **BIG TRAIN SHOW**

**Friday - Saturday  
June 3-4, 2022**

To be held in the ETSU Mini-Dome with more than 64,000 square feet of display space.

### Hours

**Friday:** Noon - 6 p.m.

**Saturday:** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

### Admission

\$6 per day

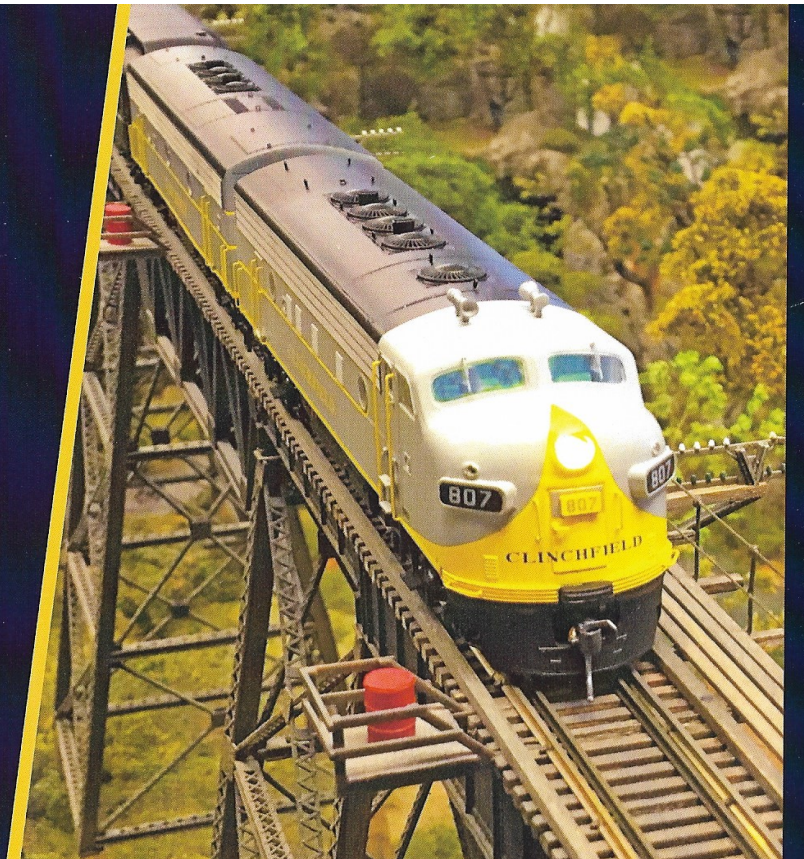
Children under 12 free

FREE Adjacent covered parking garage

**Food booths will be open in the Mini-Dome**

Lodging available at the Carnegie Hotel right across the street from the ETSU campus.

For information, call Roger Teinert, 423-791-4937, or Gary Emmert, 903-452-5012



### Directions:

**Coming from the north, south and west, use I-81.**

- Take exit 57-A onto I-26 east to Johnson City.
- Take exit 24 onto University Parkway and follow the signs to campus.

**Coming from the east, take I-26 from Asheville, N.C.**

- Take exit 24 onto University Parkway and follow the signs to campus.
- When you approach State of Franklin Road (McDonald's should be on your right)
- Turn left onto State of Franklin
- Past the Mini-Dome and Parking Garage turn left onto Jack Vest Drive.
- The Parking Garage will be on your left.

The George L. Carter Railroad Museum is located in the Campus Center Building at:

**176 Ross Drive  
Johnson City, TN 37614**



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