



TIES AND RAILS

July 2025

The Monthly Publication of the Crossville Model Railroad Club



Vice President's Update

Well, the club has reached the half way point of 2025 and the last six months have been rewarding, stressful, frustrating and at times, combative. But the old saying that "everything good comes to those who wait" hopefully that will be our end result. Many of our members have not been attending meetings on a regular basis or at all since soon after we left the mall. That is very unfortunate as your input may have assisted as we worked our way through the long and bumpy road of finding our new home.

OUR JULY MEETING WILL BE CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE OF THE CLUB.

So this is a meeting you should make every effort to attend as the information we have been waiting for the last few months hopefully will be presented. Even more so than the final environmental report, which we have and it is great news, is the cost figures for the new building and outside parking areas on West Ave.

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JULY CLUB MEETING JULY 14th at ROANE STATE

Board of Directors 2pm Board Room

Social Hour 3:30PM

Membership Meeting Main Room 4PM

ATTENTION MEMBERS

**We will be meeting on Monday August 11th
at normal times and place Roane State**

VP Update from Page 1

It has been like pulling hens teeth to get all the contractors and vendors who are involved to get us the numbers we need to make our decision. Ann and Jim are making a concerted and direct effort to make sure we have those for the July meeting. That is why every member needs to be there to hear firsthand where we stand on this new home project. Your voice and input needs to be heard.

Please try to be there!

Pat Taylor, VP

**THANK
YOU**

Ann would like to thank Mike Durnwald for providing the snacks for the June meeting.

For July, Kevin Burdwell along with Pat and Connie Taylor will provide the refreshments.

SPECIAL NOTICE

August Club Meeting

**Because of the picnic being rescheduled to September 8th, we will be having our normal BOD and Membership meeting on
AUGUST 8TH
BOD 2:00pm
Social HR 3:30pm
Members 4pm**

Rescheduled

CLUB PICNIC



The annual club picnic will be held on **Monday, September 8th at 5pm.** Hosting again will **Jim & Ann** at their home at **5841 Taylors Chapel Rd.** Hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the club. All you need is a covered dish, chairs and drinks

**Sign up sheet at the July and August meetings.
For more info, call Ann at 931-742-1824**

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I forgot to add the photos in the June Newsletter

Several years ago, Pepe Perron asked the club if there was anyone interested in building a layout for Camp Nakanawa, Sam Goldkopf & Jim Grogitsky met with Pepe and determined that Pepe wanted a diorama of the camp as it was in 1950. A lady that was going to fund this project was from Houston, Tx and came to the camp by train from Houston to Chicago to Nashville and then got on the Tennessee Central to the depot in Monterey, Tn. From there they were met with horse & buggy and taken to camp. Both her and her daughter and granddaughter have attended Camp Nakanawa as campers and counselors. Sam wasn't interested in continuing this project and Pepe asked us if we could have it done for a June dedication. We said yes, but it won't be that June but the following June. We determined that the scale has to be 1:20th scale to fit in the area that we had to work with. Being a camp with many cabins and buildings there are no kits for this kind of structure, so we had to measure each building in both Junior Camp (girls ages 8-12) and Senior Camp (girls 13-18). Jim & I put in approximately 800 hours both at home and at least 1 day a week at the camp. These girls learn archery, horse-back riding, swimming, canoeing and how to grow vegetables and many other things.

While working on the diorama, we met girls from Hungry, Russia, Columbia, South America, and Czech Republic. Now, every spring we go to the camp and clean it up for the summer. Working on this project is how we came to know Ann & Pepe so well and their donation of \$100,000 is their way of showing their appreciation.

Ann Grogitsky

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THINK NARROW MINDED submitted by Ralph Watson

What is On30 or On3 or HOn30, or Fn2 or Sn3? These are names of various narrow gauge model railroad scales/gauges. The First capital letter is the scale; O, HO, S, F, N etc. This tells what the ratio of the size of the model is to the real world. O is 1:48. HO is 1:87. S is 1:64. The letter 'n' denotes narrow Gauge. The distance between the rails expressed in real world inches (or feet) is the final part of the designation.

In the picture below are a Lionel O27 #2055 with tender and Caboose on Gargraves code 200 3 rail track with a 32 mm gauge intended to represent 56.5 inches but it is a little bit large. 29.9mm would be 1/48 times 4 ft 8.5 inches.

The center track is a Bachmann On30 Forney tenderless loco and combine car. Still 1:48 ratio but the track is MicroEngineering On30 code 83 flex track with 16.5 mm gauge, again a little too large. 16.5 mm translates to 31.2 inches. But! that same 16.5mm gauge is standard gauge HO size so rather than hand lay turnouts, crossings, diamonds, and yard or hidden tracks the On30 modeler can use HO track pieces available at the local hobby shop. Note the size and spacing of the ties. In O narrow gauge the scenery, structures, and figures are the same size as in O scale.

The foreground track has a Tyco motor in the tender Chattanooga Choo Choo on Atlas code 100 HO flex track. [please forgive using a Santa Fe caboose]. The Forney and other On30 rolling stock will operate on the HO track. Side clearance can be an issue because of the larger size of the train cars.

Narrow gauge modeling has become popular because it combines a conveniently visible large more detailed scale that is easier to work on with a narrow model gauge that allows tighter radius curves, and fits layouts into smaller spaces.

Narrow gauge railways were usually built with tighter curve, smaller structure and lighter rails to be less costly to build and operate than standard gauge railways. Lower cost narrow gauge railways are often built to serve industries and communities where the traffic potential would not justify a standard gauge line industries such as logging, mining and canal tugs were a good fit for narrow gauge.



The Most Expensive Model Train

The most expensive model train set ever sold was a Lionel Standard Gauge set from 1934, which included a 400E engine and state passenger cars, selling for \$250,000. Another contender for the title of most expensive is a combination of a Lionel "Brute" locomotive and a 213 Lift Bridge, rumored to have been sold privately for a million dollars. [1, 2, 3]

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Lionel Standard Gauge Set: This set, featuring the iconic 400E locomotive, is highly sought after by collectors due to its rarity, condition, and historical significance as a piece of pre-war craftsmanship. [2, 3]

"The Brute" and 213 Lift Bridge: This combination, primarily used for display in toy shops, is exceptionally rare and valuable. The sheer weight of "The Brute" made it less accessible to the general public, further contributing to its high value. [3]

Miniatur Wunderland: While not a single set for sale, Miniatur Wunderland in Hamburg, Germany, is the largest and most expensive model railway in the world, valued at €15 million in 2015. It features 15,400 meters of track, over 10,000 rail cars, and 4,340 buildings. [4, 5, 6]

This video provides a closer look at the most expensive Lionel train collection: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBpuRBcutIA>

All responses may include mistakes.

[1] <https://forum.trains.com/t/if-you-could-find-it-one-what-is-the-single-most-expensive-lionel-item/162393>

[2] <https://wealthgang.com/vintage-train-sets-worth-a-fortune/>

[3] <https://www.goldstonefinancialgroup.com/three-of-the-rarest-model-trains/>

[4] <https://charlesro.com/fun-facts-about-model-railway-that-you-may-not-know-about/>

[5] <https://www.reddit.com/r/modeltrains/comments/1son->

JUST A REMINDER

The club will be meeting in August due to the rescheduled club picnic

August 11th at Roane State

BOD at 2pm Social Hour 3:30 and Meeting at 4pm

CMRC Now Accepting 2025 Nominations

To All CMRC Members

It is that time of year again when we take nominations for the various club positions that are due for election. This year there are three positions to be elected at the October general meeting,

President, Treasurer, and Director – Utility.

The nominating committee this year is Ralph Watson, Richard Morris, and Paul Falk (chair).

Please contact anyone on the committee to place yourself or other club member in nomination no later than the September 8, 2025 general meeting. The nominations procedures are detailed in the club by-laws. The relevant sections are 5.2 & 5.3 and are shown here below for your convenience and can found in the members only area of the Club web site, Crossvilletrains.org.

5.2 Nominations

Nominations for the office of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three At-Large Directors, as applicable, shall be accepted and verified by the Nominating Committee. The membership will be notified electronically a week in advance of the regular meeting that is held prior to the election. Nominations can be accepted from the floor of the regular membership meeting that is held prior to the election meeting for which there is no nominee previously submitted. For any available board position that is being voted on, candidates shall be introduced at the regular membership meeting that is held prior to the election. Candidates will be given an opportunity to express their reason(s) for seeking office and provide any information for the position they are seeking.

5.3 Candidate Eligibility

Candidates shall be Active Members or Life Members in good standing of the Club. Candidates shall be permitted to run for one office only.

Descriptions of the three(3) positions for this election are detailed below.

The President position is described in the by-laws section 3.2 & 3.2 President (Two Year Term) The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Club and shall supervise and control the business affairs of the Club. It shall be the President's duty to provide for the enforcement of the Bylaws, Policies and Operating Rules. The President shall appoint such committees as he or she or the Board of Directors may deem necessary to conduct the work of the Club, and these committees may be removed or changed at any time by the President. The appointment or change of committees, including the names of the members involved, shall be announced at the next regular meeting, and this fact shall be included in the minutes. When the work of the committee is completed, the President shall formally discharge the committee and this fact shall also be noted in the minutes. The President or designees shall act as the Club's representative at all model railroad club or association conventions, meetings, etc. The President shall perform any other duties incident to the office. (11/03/03)

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The Treasurer position is described in the by-laws section 3.5

3.5 Treasurer (Two Year Term)

The Treasurer shall pay all budgeted expenses of the Club which have been approved by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for all the funds of the Club, and deposit such monies in the name of the Club in such places and in such amounts as shall be authorized by the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer shall notify the President of any member's dues or assessments which are in arrears, so the President may take action as provided elsewhere in the Bylaws. The Treasurer shall render an accounting to the members at each regular meeting of all monies disbursed and collected. The Treasurer shall perform any other duties incident to the office. The Treasurer shall be responsible for filing of all licenses, permits and financial statements required to initiate, maintain and terminate activities of the Club as agreed to by the Board of Directors.

The **At Large Directors** position are described in the by-laws section 3.6

3.6 At Large Directors (Three Year Term)

The At-Large Directors should consist of: Director of Scheduling and Attendance, Director of Suite Front End, and Director of Utility. A concise description of their duties is under Policies of Crossville Model Railroad Club.

The Director - Utility - Utility position is described in the club policies Attachment 12(3) The member serving as Director - Utility is responsible for accomplishing the following tasks.

Other members may assist when available or required.

1. Restock refrigerator in the office as needed. Secure additional supplies as needed and present the 'bill' to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Remove excess 'funds' from the refrigerator and forward to the Treasurer. Leave adequate funds in the refrigerator to provide 'customers' with change.

2. Straighten up office area as needed.

3. The maintenance of all areas listed in the job description for the Suite Maintenance Coordinator.

4. Such additional duties that may be assigned by the Board of Directors. (Dated 8/4/18) Respectfully presented, 6/8/2025, The Nominating Committee



Upper Cumberland Railroad Society

A Chartered Tennessee Non-Profit Corporation, IRC 501(c)(3) designated

August Education Session August 16 9AM - Noon

The topic for the August Education Session will be modular construction. All types of benchwork will be discussed along with material needed to complete the project. The session will cover the most logical type of construction which will best benefit the club. Members with carpentry experience should attend to help decide the most appropriate direction the club needs to move forward with modular construction. All educational sessions are open to the public. Invite a friend.

Session to be held at the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Fairfield Glade

To make reservation contact Art at 931-788_3373 or arcy22tn@gmail.com



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PROTECTING YOUR MODEL RAILROAD

As a model railroad enthusiast I have raised all my kids to respect the essence of what I call "my work" and they are not allowed to touch my railroad set if I am not there with them to supervise. This has been a long-standing rule in the home and if you have children you have probably done the same yourself. Protecting my railroad set and the investment I have put into it is the most important thing I can do.

There is, however, a little story I want to tell you about. I had a friend visiting, an adult woman with her child. She had heard about my railroad set and wanted to know if she and her daughter could take a peek at it. I said of course, and proceeded down to the basement with the two following in tow.

When I opened the door the three-year-old little girl stood there with her eyes shining and her mouth agape. She had never seen anything like this before and was amazed. I turned on the set, the train horn kits blew and the train began to clickety-clack down the rails. Well, I have never seen a reaction like the one I saw next.

This girl let go of her mother's hand and headed towards my train set at full force. She started attacking it! She was trying to knock the train and the rails right off the table with a sweeping motion of her arm. Luckily, I reached her before she could do any major damage and only two cars, a house and a stop sign hit the floor. Also, I was fortunate that I had a rug set up underneath the table to break the fall.

It was amazing that during this commotion the engine and one car attached to it continued to move around the track and the air horns continued to blow. It was as if nothing had occurred and the train continued to run despite somebody else's best efforts to stop it. Perhaps this is why I love trains so much!

Needless to say, I grab the little girl and ushered her out of the room quickly. The mother apologized profusely and told me that her daughter had some destructive characteristics. I'll say!

After they left I developed two more rules for my train room. The first one is that anybody, and I mean anybody entering my room will be screened first before allowed entry. The second one is that an adult will have to hold onto any child that I have not had the privilege to meet before while they are in the room. I am hoping that these rules will help further the protection I already have set up in place for my trains.

I did learn something about my train set that day. The pieces that fell were fine, and as the horn train blew and the train went around the track, I knew that my train set had a spirit of its own that could not be broken. While I already "knew" that, it was nice to experience it just the same.

Have A Great Story To Share?

Telling model railroad stories, like old sea tales, is a great way for us model railroaders to enjoy the hobby. By sharing what we've experienced, we spread the fun, the excitement and even some of the problems that we've all faced. It helps us connect as model railroaders, form some friendships, enjoy each other's trials and tribulations, and helps us all learn more about our hobby and about ourselves...



SAVING THE PACIFIC SOUTHERN RAILWAY



In January of this year, the future looked bleak for the storied Pacific Southern Railway, a model railroad club based in Rocky Hill, New Jersey. Their decades-old, constantly evolving club layout was facing an existential threat.

The HO scale Pacific Southern Railway, spanning 5,000 square feet with over 3,500 feet of handlaid track, began its journey in 1962 in the basement of a New Jersey farmhouse. Avid model railroader Bob Latham designed the home with his passion in mind. Over more than two decades, the layout expanded throughout the basement as the Pacific Southern Railway's reputation and membership grew.

Tragically, Bob Latham passed away in 1988. Geoff Green, a founding member, acquired the house and, with it, the Pacific Southern Railway. Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, the layout continued to flourish, eventually commanding a 30 x 45-foot addition to the basement.

In 2016, Carl and Anne Pate — also club members — acquired the home, ensuring the continuation of the sprawling layout. However, Carl's passing in June of 2024, coupled with the impending sale of the house, cast an uncertain shadow over the Pacific Southern Railway's future.

What was needed was a “unicorn buyer”: someone who would purchase the house without dismantling the expansive layout, allow club members continued access, and agree to host the club's charitable open houses. Anyone who has sold a house in the past decade can tell you that unicorn buyers are about as common as actual unicorns, and the Pacific Southern Railway and its members were facing an uncertain future.

Then, a Wall Street Journal article about the pending sale caught the eye of a television star.

If you've watched television in the past decade and a half, chances are you've seen James Murray, better known as "Murr," from the long-running, widely beloved hidden-camera comedy show *Impractical Jokers* on TBS (formerly TruTV). Murr is also a lifelong train enthusiast. "My best memories from childhood are my father and I building our model train layout," he shares. His love for trains even extends to his writing: "...My first book trilogy came out like six years ago. It was all about trains. It was about creatures in the subways in New York City that are tearing the subways apart."

The WSJ article resonated deeply with Murr, a sympathetic reader and fellow railfan. "...The Wall Street Journal and local papers covered the story of the Pacific Southern Railway and the circumstances they were in. It came on our radar, my wife and I, (and it was five minutes away from our house."

Murr elaborates on the situation: "The former owner of the house and President of the club died from cancer about a year and a half ago. The widow was put in a situation where she was forced to sell the house, and there's just no way in this day and age anyone's going to let a model railroad club come into their house multiple times a week, and open up the house once a year to the public... I didn't know this existed right by our house, much less this situation."

Coincidentally, Murr and his wife, Melissa, were also facing a space crunch. Melissa's candle company, 95 Candles, which she started during COVID-19, had rapidly expanded. "She was an elder care nurse and then had to pivot during COVID... business grew and grew and took over our entire garage, and the entire basement, and the entire office, and so I built a shed, and she took over that entirely. And we're just out of space." They also run 95 Charity, an Alzheimer's charity that has seen significant growth. "So we were at a critical point where I said to Melissa, 'we need to solve this problem. We need to buy a warehouse that we can run your company out of, run the Alzheimer's charity out of.' And I said, 'why don't we approach this train club and see if we can solve two problems at once?'"

With that, Murr acquired the house, granting the Pacific Southern Railway Club full access to the layout while also providing Melissa with much-needed space for her business and their charity. In short, the Pacific Southern Railway had found their unicorn buyer, and then some.

