

The Piedmont and Western Railroad Club

December 2015



The Bulletin

The 2015 CSX Santa Train



Pikeville, Marrowbone, and Elkhorn City Kentucky, Toms Bottom,
Haysi, Clinchco, Freemont, Dant, St. Paul, Dungannon,
Fort Blackmore, and Kermit Virginia, Kingsport Tennessee



THE PIEDMONT & WESTERN RAILROAD CLUB
THE OLD ROCK SCHOOL, 400 W. MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 513, VALDESE, NC 28690

TIM SKIDMORE, PRESIDENT; GRANT ROBBINS, VICE-PRESIDENT;
GENE AUSTIN, TREASURER, ALAN COLEMAN, SECRETARY AND
BULLETIN EDITOR, KEN HUMPHREYS, WEBMASTER,
KEVIN STINE, OPERATIONS CHAIRMAN.

THE BULLETIN IS THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
P&WRR. ALL OPINIONS ARE SOLELY THOSE OF THE
EDITOR OR CITED CONTRIBUTORS.



ON THE COVER: Gene Austin captured the 2015 CSX Santa Train on the circa-1908 Copper Creek viaduct in Scott County, Virginia. Two more of Gene's excellent photographs can be found on page 4.



2015 Christmas Parade Open House

Though the crowd was small, we had a nice morning of having fun with trains. The editor caught Jeff Whisenant and Mike Outen, Sr. making the shot above of Grant Robbin's Santa caboose.



**Next P&WRRC
Business Meeting:
Thursday
January 7, 2016
at 7:30 PM**

**The club has had its final
Thursday evening gathering
for 2015.**

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!**

December 2015 Minutes

The meeting was called to order on December 3 2015 at 7:30PM by President Tim Skidmore. (The outgoing officers proudly note that the meeting started precisely *on time* for the first time in 2015, and throw down the challenge for next year's officers to match this performance).

Members in Attendance: Tim Skidmore, Gene Austin, Jacob Riley, Josh Garrison, Robert Scism, Frank Steele, Grant Robbins, Alan Coleman, Larry Weed, Joe Bost, Mike Outen Jr., Mike Outen Sr., Dick Miller, Jerry Rowan*, Keith Garrison, Kevin Stine, and Bill Poteat.

The club welcomed guests Garatt Jackson and Reggie Stroud.

Wiring and Track Report: Bill Poteat reported that over 2,000 feet of green cable has been pulled into place, everything needed for the Murphy Branch. Termination of the wiring will start after this Saturday's Open House, the layout may be done for perhaps a month, hopefully less. per Tim, we may move the Digitrax components first, though the system will continue to be turned on at the current panel location. We may use either a timer or other means to make sure that the system is fully powered off at the conclusion of each operating session. Once the Murphy Branch wiring has been completed, the main layout will be attacked one section at a time.

Financial Report: Treasurer Gene Austin reported that with all 2016 bills paid we will have a balance of \$575.20 in our bank account. Gene said only a couple of members remain in arrears for their 2015 dues. (Note: early payees of 2016 dues swelled our coffers by over \$800 at the end of the meeting- many thanks to those folks).

Scenery Report: Frank Steele is working on some new buildings for the future Hot Springs expansion. Tim pointed out the building needs which remain for Robbinsville, Sylva, and Bryson. We also need to complete a new base for the Fontana Lake bed.

New Business: Per our club bylaws, Tim conducted the election for 2016 officers. The incumbent officers were re-elected by acclamation.

In other election news, we welcomed Jerry Rowan* as the newest member of the P&WRRC.

Larry Weed not only suggested but volunteered to work on sound modules to help guide guests through the museum. Both Frank and Bill have some ideas on how we can reasonably install sound cards around our exhibits, perhaps some with proximity triggers.

With an evening full of Open House preparation awaiting the membership, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55PM.

Submitted by Alan Coleman

Year-end Ramblings from the Editor...

First, many thanks to Bill Poteat, Gene Austin, and Jeff Whisenant for their photographic contributions in the past two issues. It makes my job a lot more fun and the newsletter far better when members help generate column inches.

2015 was no doubt a pivotal year in the club's history. On the discouraging side, we lost we lost some long-standing friends in the Town of Valdese through death and retirement; we also lost the skills and contributions of several senior members during the year. Happily, these events were far out balanced by the club's addition of some wonderful new members, the willingness of the club to launch an ambitious project to re-wire and document the layout, this huge project largely financed by a very successful rummage sale. As the Southern used to say, let's keep the green light shining!

Merry Christmas and best wishes for the coming new year.

the editor



The 2015 CSX Santa Train images by Gene Austin

^ Gene made a timeless shot of a mother and her children waving to and photographing the 73rd and perhaps last Santa Train to run on the old Clinchfield line. The Copper Creek structure is over 1,090 feet long, with eleven 70-foot and eight 40-foot deck plate girder spans.

∨ Motive power on the November 21 run was CSX No. 8033 (an EMD SD-40-2 of Seaboard and L&N heritage) and EMD FP40PH-2 No. 9998, which started life as Amtrak No. 280. Gene captured this shot in Waycross, Tennessee.



Places You Need to Visit:

Georgia State Railroad Museum



655 Louisville Road
Savannah, Georgia 31404
(912) 651-6823
For days and hours check the website
www.chsgeorgia.org/GSRM

Bill Poteat photographed the only preserved S&A EMD GP-35 No. 2715 and "Savannah Central" 0-4-0 in steam at the GSRM. The museum is located at the former Central of Georgia Roundhouse and is well worth the visit.



P&W Portraits: The Highland Classic Fair

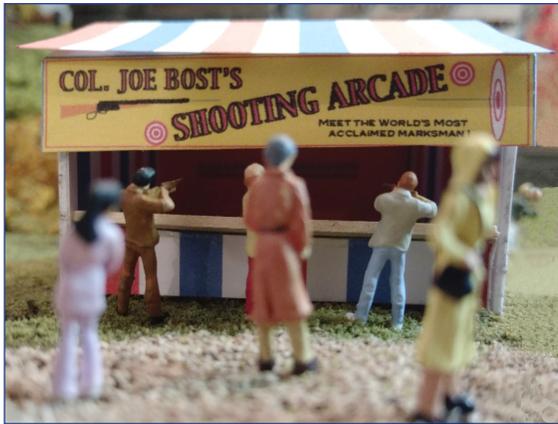
photographs by the editor

Our first view from the Skywheel takes in the Frank Steele collection of fire apparatus and the livestock pavilion.



The Royal American Shows was the largest of the rail-borne carnival companies at one time. This shot captures their string of flat cars and some visitors on the midway.





Longtime readers need no introduction to Col. Joe Bost, the world's most acclaimed marksman.

The editor advises that his next project won't involve so many human figures (there 35 Germans immigrants on this ride alone), or a crowded parking lot!



One of the famed Zacchini family get ready for his Human Cannonball act.

The Skywheel is the pride and joy of the show...



