

# PGRS TRACKIN'



**Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society**

**July 2017**

**Editor: Scott Williams**

Greetings Club Members.

**Christmas in June!!!** Our open house June 10<sup>th</sup> at Jim and Helen Pitts' Sugar Plum Farm. Perfect weather, great folks, yummy vittles and one of the most beautiful open house settings I can remember in the mountains of NC.













Our gracious hosts, Jim and Helen Pitts at the Sugar Plum Farm in Plumtree NC. The first clubmembers to sign the PGRS club boxcar.

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If interested in obtaining PGRS club decals for your railroad please contact Bill Huntman for information.

[whunteman@gmail.com](mailto:whunteman@gmail.com)

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The above white reefer has become the club's travelling car. What this means is club members get the car and are supposed to sign the car with a permanent Sharpie, photograph themselves holding the car or on their layouts, then take the car to another clubmember's home and continue the chain.



Here is the club car at Tim Wagner's Blind Moose & Blind Squirrel RR.





...and at the Monahan's home.



...and in Fletcher, where you newsletter editor hopes to start laying track on the Wildwood Circle RR after recovery from hip surgery.

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**Apple Valley Model RR Club celebrates 25 years in a BIG way!**

Our Brethren at the AVMRC marked their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a big party and everyone was invited.



Live Music, BBQ, Gelato, car show, and a visit from the Blue Ridge Southern.







WLOS came by to record the shindig for the news.





Trains running everywhere! Both indoors and outside on the PVC RR.







And of course, Thomas the Tank Engine. A grand time was had by everyone in attendance.

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July 1<sup>st</sup> at Apple Valley several PGRS club members attempted to build the longest freight yet run on the PVC mainline. Jon Bole brought his shiny Santa Fe Super Chief A-B-B-A EMD units to pull a collected bunch of freight cars. Things started out well until we discovered a block of track with poor conductivity/continuity. Larry Williams had recently rewired this section and it appeared to be fine but today we discovered...not so much. Fortunately we had a back-up plan and Larry owns a pair of Boston & Maine EMD units that are battery powered and we assembled a freight train of 30 cars behind the diesels and it looked pretty impressive. The train ran and behaved very nicely with a mix of Kadee and original manufacturer's couplers working with no issues.



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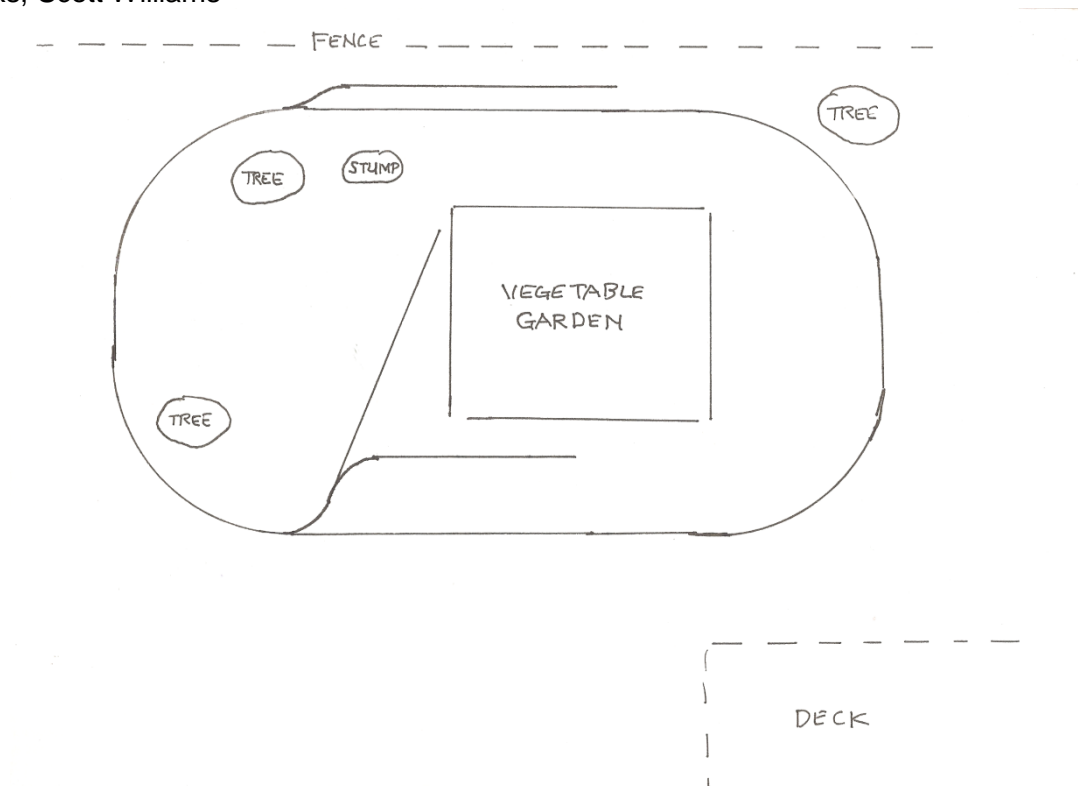
The beginnings of the **Wildwood Circle Railroad** [that's what I'm calling it for now. I may change that later but I live on Wildwood Circle in Fletcher NC and the train will run in a circle so...as good a name as any at this point.]

I hoped to build a layout this summer in my backyard along with ongoing home renovation projects but have to take the next month or two to have and recover from hip surgery so, slight postponement but on Memorial Day, Jerry Bartle and I dug the track out back while the coals got hot on the Weber for our steaks and with a cold beverage in hand we threw down a lot of track on the slightly sloping backyard where I need to run around the vegetable garden and avoid some old tree stumps so this is what we came up with in about 30 minutes of effort and I think, for now, it has potential.

This will be my 1:29 layout and seemed like the less complicated layout to start with first since it will be down on the ground and build an elevated 1:20 layout later around the side of the house. About my only design requirement was 20' radius curves so my Southern Heavyweights don't look comical going around tight curves. This layout meets that requirement with sidings for expansion possibilities.

Photos and plan below show what it will look like before grading and roadbed construction begin.

Thanks, Scott Williams







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**2017 PGRS Open Houses:**

Les and Ruth Knoll will have an open house on Saturday August 5<sup>th</sup> on Les's 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Trackage is 101' main line, 5' radius curves, aluminum track, NO electrification.



All motive power is welcome as long as it is self-powered and can negotiate 5' curves. Les has #4 turnouts, but they are all set straight on the mainline so there is no issue there.

Start time is 11:00, probably go until 5:00.

Ruth and Les Knoll

(704) 966-0349

(704) 249-1960 (cell)

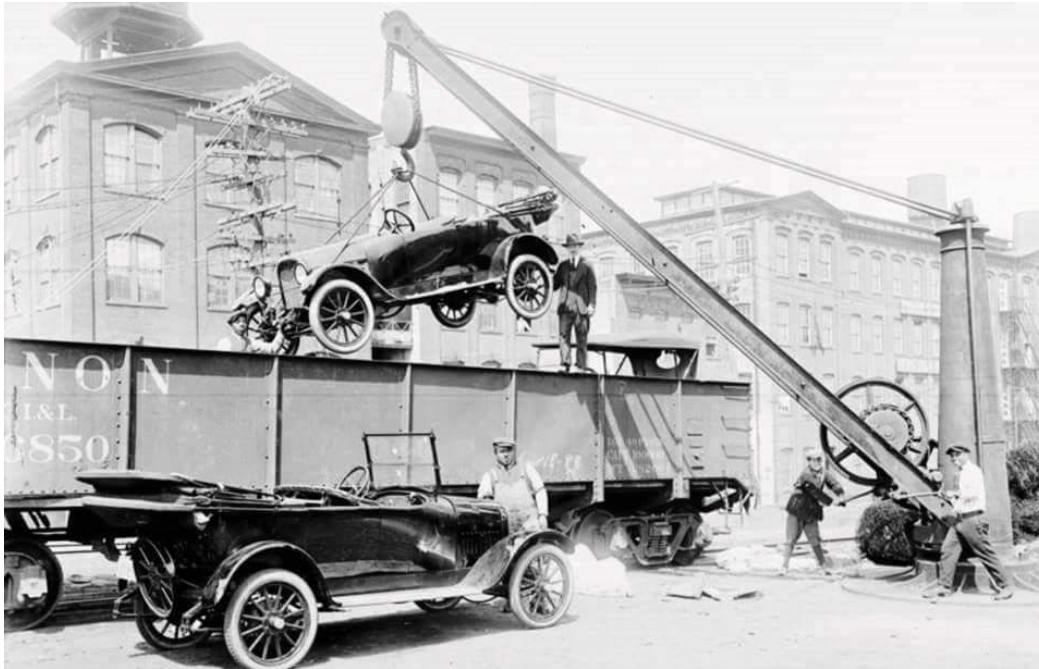
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### Member Photos:

The engineer on the Apple Valley logging line has a beef about some right of way issues.







Jerry Bartle found this old photo of loading cars in gondolas. There appears to be body damage on the cars so 'marring' the finish isn't a paramount concern.

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**Trivia Question: What is the purpose of Elephant Ears on Steam Locomotives?**

### **Videos of Interest:**

Before I moved south from Maryland I often pedaled my mountain bike along the very scenic bike path that parallels the Northern Central Railroad line. This historic rail line ran between Baltimore and Sunbury Pennsylvania and was completed in 1858 and came under the control of the PRR in 1861 to compete with rival B&O Railroad. This Class 1 railroad operated for over 110 years until much of its track was washed out by Hurricane Agnes in 1972. Penn Central decided not to repair the track and thus the Northern Central became a fallen flag.

For more info on the Northern Central please find this Wiki link below

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern\\_Central\\_Railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Central_Railway)

Lincoln's Funeral train famously ran over this line after his assassination.



This video shows what it was like riding on the Northern Central **100 years ago**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT2mYY4JrGY>

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Just a nice Dynamo Production showing the power and grace of what it looked like back when steam trains were the way people travelled from place to place.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy\\_dzDpTHkc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy_dzDpTHkc)

And another nice reminiscence of what a branchline mixed train may have looked like in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NT7qqjW9isg>

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**Trivia Answer:**

The Elephant Ears were smoke deflectors or smoke baffles. As boilers grew in diameter and bridge and tunnel heights stayed the same the smoke stacks no longer could be raised to get the smoke above the cabs. As rushing air struck and split on the smokebox it created a vacuum alongside the boiler making the problem worse pulling smoke back along the sides to the cab. The 'wings' pulled those air currents back together as the loco split them and forced them upwards to push the exhaust smoke upwards away from the locomotive.





\*\* A reminder from Terry Ketcham that PGRS club members are invited to come by the Apple Valley Model Railroad Club in Hendersonville the last Saturday of each month to run their large scale trains on the club layout from 10 – 2 pm.

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### Membership:

Please consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form.

Don Watson  
125 Mistletoe Trail  
Hendersonville, NC 28791

[docwatson@morrisbb.net](mailto:docwatson@morrisbb.net)

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### Train Lover Luncheons:

The current luncheons are:

Columbus Area: Meets every Third Thursday of every month at Larkins Carolina Grill, 155 West Mills Street in Columbus, NC 28722. @ 1:00 PM. Contact Pete Gendron: 954-812-6270

Greater Greenville Area: Meeting the first Tuesday of every month - at 12 noon. It has been moved to Mutts in Greer as it is more centrally located for the greater Greenville area. Contact Ken Majchrzak at: [kemajchrzak@gmail.com](mailto:kemajchrzak@gmail.com) or call Ken at: 864-385-4951

Asheville Area: Meets the 4th Thursday each month. We meet at 11:30 AM at Gondolier Italian Restaurant and Pizza located at 1360 Tunnel Road, Asheville 28805. Contact Tim Wagner [timwagner2012@gmail.com](mailto:timwagner2012@gmail.com)

The location is on the east end near the VA hospital, so it is recommended that you access Tunnel Road from I-40, exit 55. Take a left at the first light after you exit and a left at the next light. The venue will be on the right a few hundred yards from the intersection.

Winston Salem luncheons are currently being planned by Tony Potter and J.R. Snider.

Charlotte luncheons are meeting at Bubba's BBQ 4400 Sunset Rd. (exit 16, rte. I-77).  
at 11:30am on the third Tuesday of each month.

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**Thanks, and please help make our newsletters interesting!!!**

Send any idea, project, photo, something you found surfing on the Internet, etc., no matter how great or small you may think them to be to your newsletter editor. We all love trains so...if it's about trains, and you've got it on your computer, chances are you won't be the only person who might enjoy reading about it.

Send your input to: [srwavl@outlook.com](mailto:srwavl@outlook.com)

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### Business Related to Our Hobby

Any Member who has a business related to our hobby is welcome to submit an entry for inclusion in PGRS Trackin' each month.



Garden Railroad Design  
Old Trains Wanted

**Jim's Train Sales**  
O & G Gauge New & Used Trains  
**Jim Hendley**  
Etowah, North Carolina 28729  
Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB  
Bridgeworks Power Supplies, Bachmann  
Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track

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**Peggy Keyes**  
Owner / Chief Conductor  
[RightTrackTrainMuseum@gmail.com](mailto:RightTrackTrainMuseum@gmail.com)  
828.625-5551

**The Right Track Toy Train Museum**  
A non-profit museum to benefit Pancreatic Cancer  
research  
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Lake Lure, NC 28746  
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