

# Trails, Rails, & Tales



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The Official Newsletter of the *Chisholm Trail Division* of the **NMRA**

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

Hope all of you are well. How many of you went to the Ark City train show? John Kraft and I went down and there was a good turnout – more than I thought. It had some good layouts and some dealers to take your money . What I did not see was the NMRA booth. It did slip by me until I was at the show or I would have been there. As things loosen up, we need be at these shows so we can the word out . Hope we can do better at the next show.

–Phil

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

I'm excited! Finally, we're going to start up in-person meetings after over a year of ZOOM. Although the ZOOM meetings have been great, I assume that it just didn't work out for some. Seemed that it was always the same 15 or so participants every meeting. I have great hopes to see faces that have been missing this past year and we can get reorganized. I hate to spend time on reorganization but it is necessary. I'll try to keep it brief.

As for the after the business meeting program, I would like to share pics and vids of Renee and I's trip to North Platte, Nebraska to attend the Nebraska North Central Division Train Show. Also along with a trip to Cody Park to see the UP Challenger, we visited the Golden Spike Tower at UP's Bailey Yard, largest railroad yard in the world.

### TRAILS, RAILS, & TAILS

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strongly encouraged.

Logo Design by Alan Aagaard

On top of that, Gary Essells, our newest Chisholm Trail Division member will help me narrate the pictures I have of Bailey Yard. Gary spent 27 years of his life as a Union Pacific employee at Bailey Yard and pretty much knows his way around the place.

So I'm hoping for a good turnout, in-person and on ZOOM, this coming Tuesday and getting our group restarted again.

–Dean



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

This newsletter has a theme. One of the subjects discussed at the last Chisholm Trail Division Zoom meeting was whether or not it would be a good idea to have a Division modular layout that could be used at train shows and other displays. Jim Hogben and Bob Neill have both written about their own experience with modular layouts with more to come from both of them.

Also, if you haven't noticed, spring has finally sprung! Perhaps this summer we can start reengaging in the activities of past years and maybe even see each other in the flesh if the pandemic finally settles down. I know I am making plans for actually taking a few trips this year, thanks to being vaccinated.

I may be speaking out of place, but I am begging you all to get the Covid-19 vaccination as soon as you can. Regardless of what nay sayers proclaim about the virus or its severity, it is the only way I see life returning to normal. Help us have activities in person again.

That being said, please remember that, although many restrictions have been lifted, the "all clear" has NOT been issued as I type this. Please

continue to use reasonable precaution as we slowly venture back out into the world.

But back to model railroading, I stumbled on an interesting web page by a fellow building an elevated garden railroad that I thought was interesting even though I am an indoor HO<sub>n</sub>3 modeler. I think all too often we dismiss things that aren't in our scale when there are jewels to be had in any scale. Check it out, but be prepared for a long read with plenty of pictures. [http://lsc.cvsry.com/POC\\_Elevated\\_Benchmark.pdf](http://lsc.cvsry.com/POC_Elevated_Benchmark.pdf)

Meanwhile, on my own Covid-19 project, Olita Canyon has been done for at least the first time. I'm not quite happy with it yet. I may have to start over with coloring. I wanted it to look dark and moody, sort of like the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, but it turned out dark and muddy instead. If I do recolor it, it will be attempt number three. Whatever I do, I want to have it pretty well finished before I ballast the track and add water to the river.

A complicating factor in Olita Canyon is that I ran out of Hydrocal during its construction and I couldn't get more in the time frame I wanted. I

ended up getting Ultracal 30, a similar product, but not exactly the same. This resulted in some of the rock castings staining differently than others. In fact, the Ultracal 30 would hardly take a stain at all.

But before that, I discovered I didn't have quite enough clearance on one side of the canyon. To make room, I actually broke a whole wall of the canyon away from the roadbed and fixed it in its new roomier location.

I also started on what my little HO scale railroad workers have called "Big Larry's Crack" after the fictional "Big Larry" Fremont, the railroad's founder. It's my first attempt at making a styrofoam scenery base and so far, I don't like it. I think I will put it on the back burner for a while and go back to finishing the track, some of which still needs to be designed. At least I should be able to operate the railroad when that is done.

– Jim



*After the first gray staining of Olita Canyon, I could see that Ultracal 30 (lower band) and Hydrocal didn't stain alike. Although some of the darker shade of the Hydrocal is the result of shadows from above, it was still apparent that they wouldn't be identical.*



*I decided to use gesso to even out the rock surface colors. Artists use gesso to prepare canvases for painting. Clearances were so tight I had to apply it with a tooth brush in some spots*



*Here it is after applying new stain. It looks too shiny to me and I'm not sure I like the color yet. Also, I think the gesso obscured some of the detail. This image was made during a lighting test and I'm not sure I'm happy with that either. I'm going to sleep on it a while, but I think I still have plenty of work to do.*

## MODULES FROM LOS ANGELES

BY JIM HOGBEN

When we lived in Southern California, we belonged to a modular club. Several of the modules followed us to Kansas, including a junction module that connects to a set of yard modules, an industry module, four engineered corners and 2 modules that have 2 main tracks only. We also have received two incomplete modules with a lot of hand laid tracks

and turnouts that have built-in legs. These are available for purchase. The owner, a best friend, passed about 5 years ago and I just don't have time to complete them. They have front and front to rear main lines. They are not heavy but it takes 2 people my size to move them.

Originally all the modules were to have been 30 inches by six feet. *(continued on page 7)*



*This is one half of a two module, three foot wide set that makes a locomotive shop complex.*



*The corner modules were engineered and built by a former member of the LA Modular Group. The two inner tracks are for mainlines that connect to all modules and the outer track is for the members who wanted passing sidings or staging tracks.*



*This view shows the fascia of the corner modules.*



*There is foam scenery for several module corners. This one replicates Columbia River scenery with multiple tunnels.*

*(continued from page 5)* But several members couldn't transport modules of that size. A second size was designated at 30 inches by four feet to accommodate those folks. Another exception from our original standards was for modules that would always go together as a single scene. Those modules had special rules and exceptions, but the

ends that joined the rest of the railroad had to follow the same standards as everyone else.

This was a great way for those of us without the space for a home layout could participate in this great hobby. I'm glad our family had the chance to do so.

# AN EAST TEXAS MODULAR LAYOUT GROUP

BY BOB NIELL

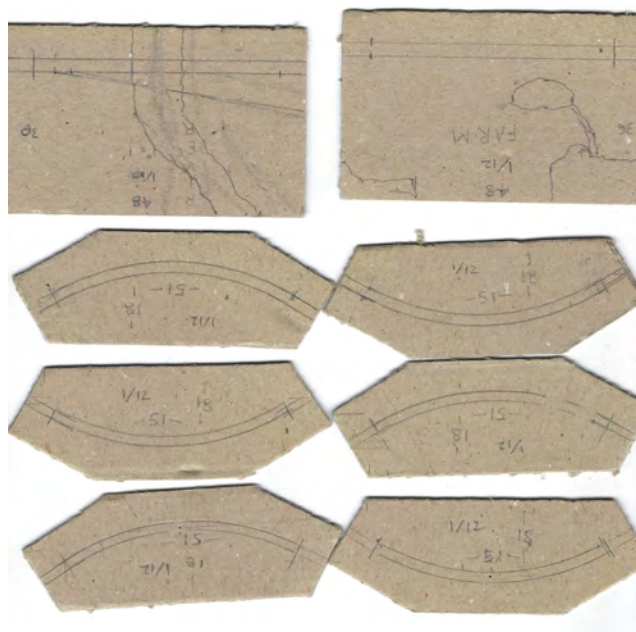
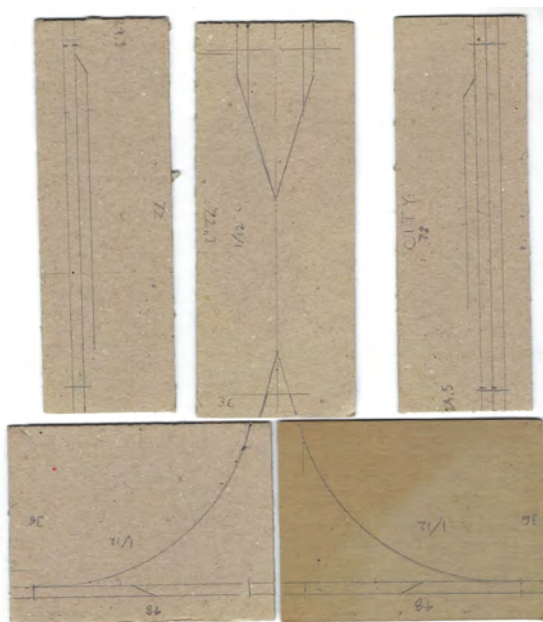
During the mid 1980s a group of guys in Greenville, Texas decided to form a model train club, but had no place to call home. It was decided to build a modular layout so that we could be ready for setting up at train shows whenever available. After looking at several published articles about modular layouts it was decided to pick different features from each and write our own standards since NMRA had not published anything yet.

One of the questions we played with at the Greenville club was how to arrange the corners. Most of the published papers we read used ninety degree corners, which used a rather large space. One option would be to use forty five degree corners, but to be different we went with sixty degree corners. With sixty degree corners we could turn one hundred eighty degrees for parallel modules but also could arrange a triangle or parallelogram to be different. There are always times when a member is unable to attend a show. Being modular sections could be rearranged from

show-to-show and new units built. The recurring problem is plugging in to someone else's layout – sometimes they work. One thing developed was a cardboard picture puzzle to arrange modules.

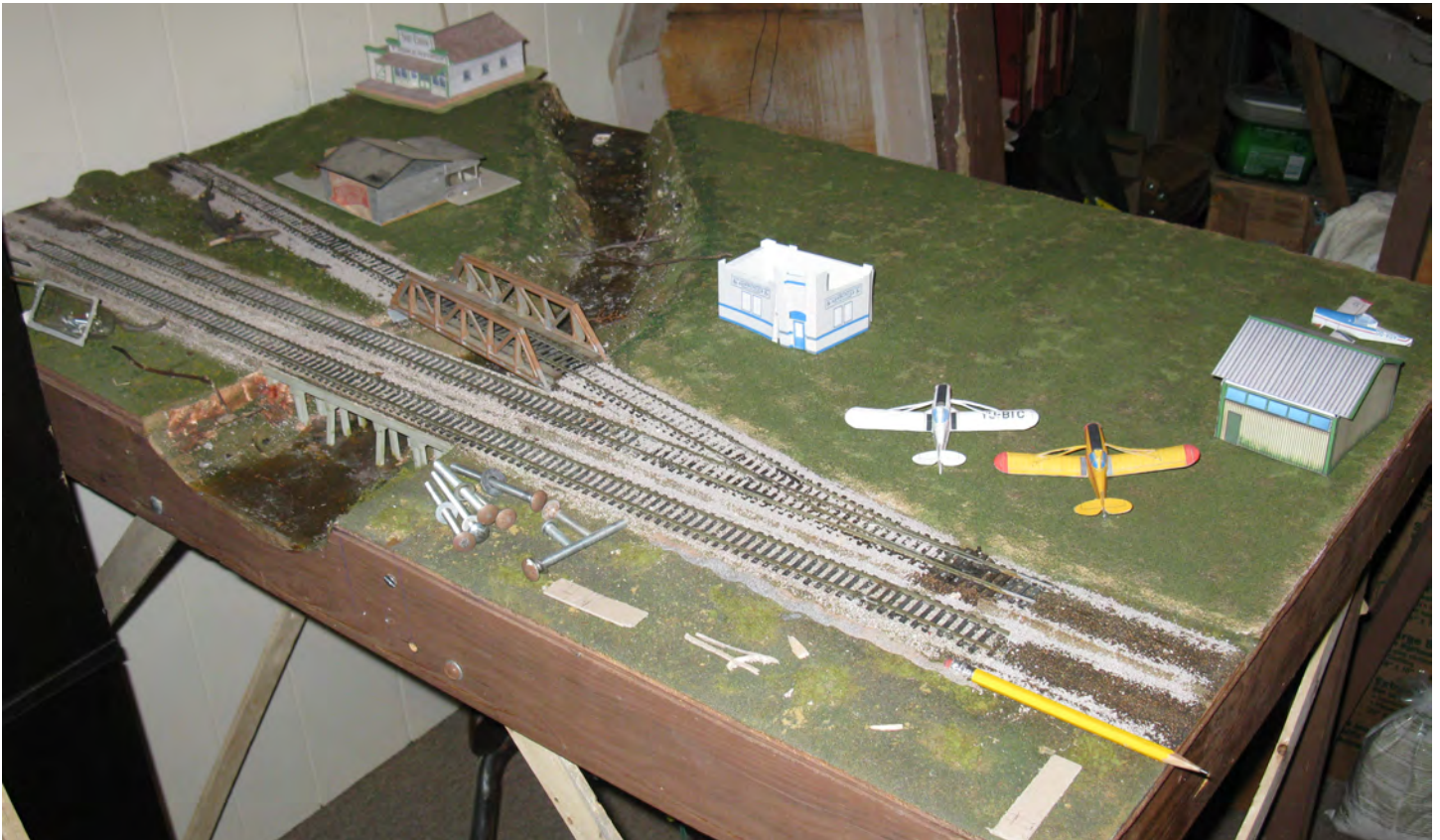
After a while, a home was found and the decision was made build a new layout that was built in and auction off the modules. I was lucky and won several. There is more than one kind of luck – I usually have dumb luck. After moving several times, having the layout in modular form has saved a lot of effort. Since I worked with the Wichita Toy Train Club (WTTC) it has been interesting to watch and help them move their Lionel/O gauge layout and S gauge layouts from show to show and back to the club house.

My modules are built for HO, but like WTTC any scale can be incorporated. If memory is working, I think the Wichita Area Garden Railway Society had tables for their G gauge layout until their trailer was stolen. The recurring problem is the time and effort to set up and tear down. But if it is too easy, it would not be fun.



*Cardboard templates for arranging the modules before setting up.*





*Creek Module (above), Farm Module (below)*



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

### RECURRING EVENTS

**Please check the listed recurring events to find out if they have been cancelled or not due to COVID-19. Most are on hiatus.**

**Chisholm Trail Division of NMRA Monthly Meeting.** Every first Tuesday of the month. Gather at 6:45PM. Olivet Baptist Church, 3440 W. 13th St., Wichita, KS (13th & High) <http://ctd-mcor-nmra.tripod.com/ctd-mcor-nmra.html>

**Please note:** Chisholm Trail Division plans to have its first in-person meeting on Tuesday, May 4. It will also be on Zoom for those unable to attend. Members will be apprised of the details and will be receiving meeting notices by email.

**Kansas Central Division of NMRA.** Every second Saturday of even numbered months at 1:00PM. Locations vary. Contact information is here: [http://www.mcor-nmra.org/Divisions/Kansas\\_Central\\_Division/](http://www.mcor-nmra.org/Divisions/Kansas_Central_Division/)

**Kansas Central Model Railroaders Business Meeting.** (Not the same as Kansas Central Division of NMRA) Every second Saturday from 11:00AM-Noon. 16 East 3rd Ave, Hutchinson, KS <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org>

**Wichita Area Model Railroaders Luncheon.** Every second Thursday at 11:30AM. Spears Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W. Maple, Wichita, KS

### SCHEDULED EVENTS

**The following events are subject to cancellation. Unless otherwise noted, the organizers have not cancelled at press time. Check websites for updates.**

#### MAY 2021

**May 21-23 – OKC Model Railroad Expo.** Kansas State Fairgrounds, Oklahoma City, OK. 3PM-8PM Friday, 9AM-4PM Saturday, 10AM-3PM Sunday. <https://okcfairgrounds.com/events/466/details>

#### JUNE 2021

**June 5-6 – Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo.** Kansas State Fairgrounds, Pride of Kansas Building, Hutchinson, KS. 9AM-5PM Saturday, 10AM-3PM Sunday. Contact Don, 620-662-5906 or [kansascentralmodelrr@gmail.com](mailto:kansascentralmodelrr@gmail.com). <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org/train-show.html>

**June 17-20 – NMRA Tulsa Union Convention. Rescheduled to October 6-10.**

#### JULY 2021

**Cancelled July 4-11 – NMRA National Convention “Rails by the Bay.”** Santa Clara Marriott Hotel, 2700 Mission College Blvd, Santa Clara, CA. <https://www.nmra2021.com/>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS (CONTINUED)

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

### **July 24-25 – Spring Creek Train Show & Open**

**House.** Thayer County Fairgrounds Expo Building, 4th & Race Street, Deshler, NE.  
Store at 304 Bryson Ave, Deshler, NE.  
9AM-5PM Saturday, 10AM-4PM Sunday. See link for extended store hours. <https://www.springcreekmodeltrains.com/train-show/>

## **AUGUST 2021**

### **August 8 – Mid America Train & Toy Show.**

KCI Expo Center, 11728 Ambassador Dr, Kansas City, MO. <http://www.midamericatrainandtoyshow.com/>

## **SEPTEMBER 2021**

### **September 1-4 – National Narrow Gauge**

**Convention.** Events at both the Hickory Metro Convention Center and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Hickory, NC. <https://41nngc.com/>

## **OCTOBER 2021**

### **October 6-10 – NMRA Tulsa Union**

**Convention.** This takes the place of the annual Mid-Continent Region Convention. It is a collaboration between Lone star Region, Mid-Continent Region & Indian Nations Division of NMRA. Embassy Suites by Hilton Tulsa I-44, 3332 South 79th East Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74145. <http://www.2021tulsaunion.com/>

**Please send me information about any events or meetings you think should be included on this calendar.**

Jim Marlett

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