

Trails, Rails, & Tales



November-December 2022

Volume 8 • Number 6

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

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

Elections are coming up for the Chisholm Trail Division. We will be voting in November. Be sure to be at the November 1st meeting.

Nominees for the offices are:

Director – Phil Aylward

Superintendent – Charles Monckton

Assistant Superintendent – Dean Lippincott

Paymaster – Gene Bowers

Clerk – Randy Stucky

–Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

BY DEAN LIPPINCOTT

(Dean is recovering from a bout with Covid-19. I told him take it easy and not worry about his column this for edition. –Jim)

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

It's good to be home for a while and back to the normal schedule of Trails, Rails, & Tales. At least I hope it's back on schedule.

In this edition, Bob Neill has questions from the morning after a train show purchase. It's probably something you've done a time or two as well. Then Jim Hogben shows us how he added a river and the

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It is sent to members of the
Chisholm Trail Division of
NMRA

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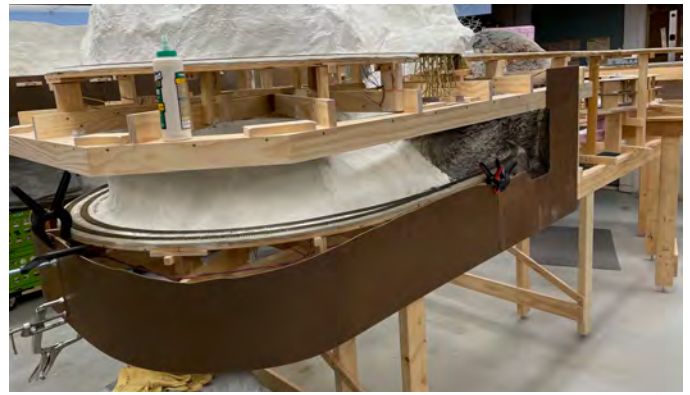
necessary bridges for one of the modules that will be part of the Chisholm Trail Division's modular railroad. And finally, I give a report on this year's National Narrow Gauge Convention.

Being away from home for a while does slow down progress on the ol' railroad, but that doesn't mean I wasn't thinking about it. Sometimes it's good to just back away and let your subconscious do the work. When I returned from the National Narrow Gauge Convention, I set about working on fascia and hiding the ugly screw jack posts that hold up the ceiling of the train room or the floor of the house above it, depending on your point of view. Regardless, progress on those two fronts will allow me to get back to the railroad itself. One stumbling block was that I mount my switch ground throws on the fascia rather than trackside. I had three switches without a way to throw them because I had no fascia near them. I decided to get two of them working before starting anything else. And that meant installing fascia. The remaining switch is for an ore processing mill that requires installing some scenery before I know what the fascia will look like. It will have to wait, but at least I got the other two switches working.

The posts needed to be covered because, if I wanted to cover them at all, I needed to do so before the fascia made it too hard. Don't get me wrong. The fascia for the switches weren't the problem, but I was teetering perilously close and I couldn't easily move forward without covering those posts.

Then I took on the task of installing a backdrop on the lower level for the main town of the railroad, Blakely. I also realized if I was going to light it with bounce lighting, I had to have something to bounce it from, so a ceiling was installed over it. That's where I stopped to put this newsletter together. Maybe in the next edition I will be able to show progress that involves laying track or building models.

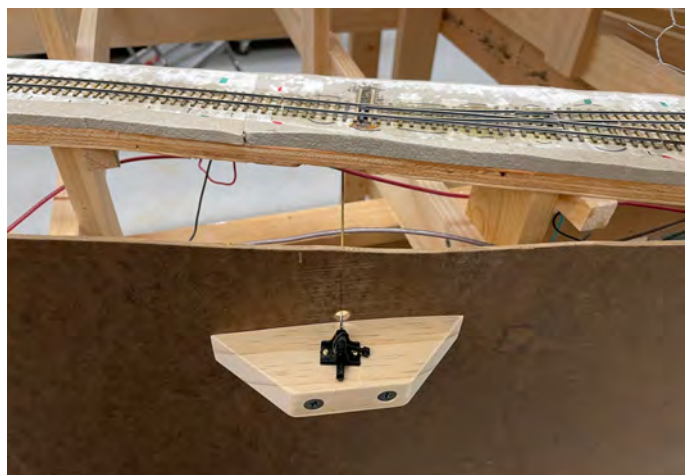
– Jim



1) The new fascia being fitted with clamps before final gluing. The switches I needed to control are at the ends of the siding.



2) The fascia will eventually enclose the post in this area, but I can install the switch control before I get that far.



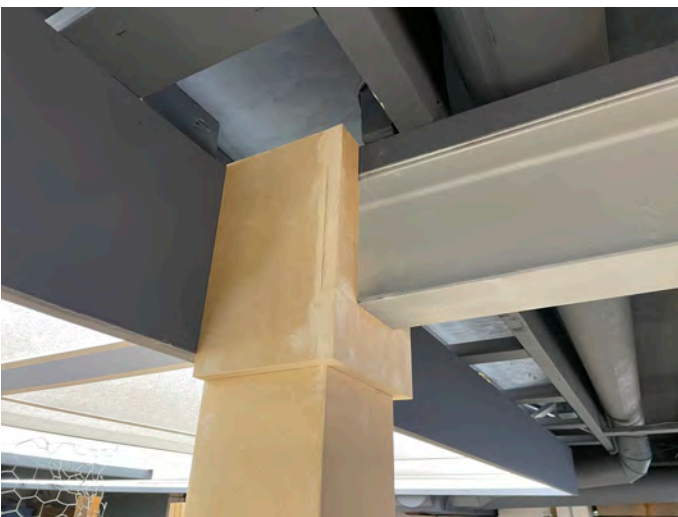
3) Here is one of the new ground throws installed on the fascia. Now the siding is usable. Too bad end of track is just out of the picture on the left.



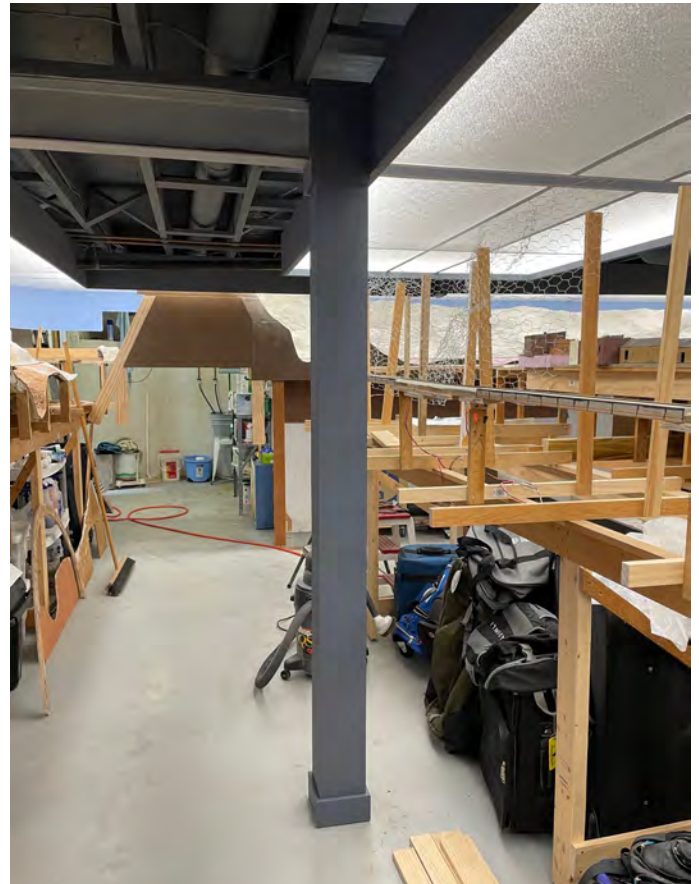
4) One of the ugly posts I wanted to cover can be seen in this picture.



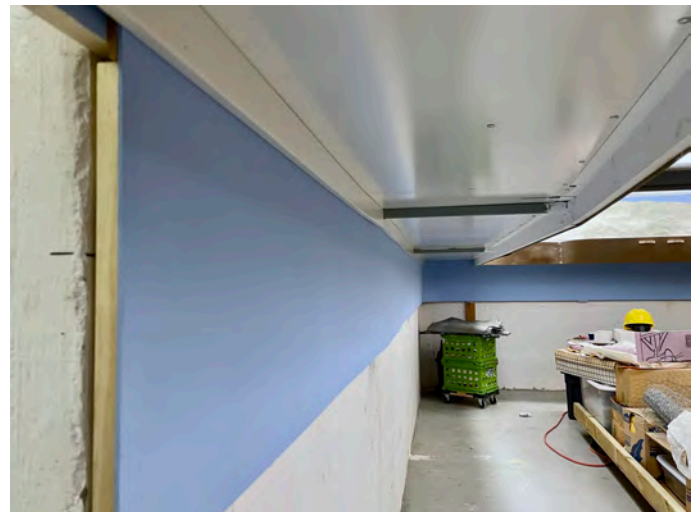
5) I made my post covers out of MDF. This is the one that will be inside the fascia someday.



6) The other post cover had to surround a steel beam at the top. The beam will eventually be faced with MDF to tie it into the post.



7) Both posts are painted now with base boards applied. I'm calling them done! Now to get the rest of the room in the same condition.



The final task this time around was to install a backdrop on the lower level and to put a "ceiling" on the level above so I could use bounce lighting for the lower level illumination. LEDs will mount to aluminum strips fastened to the bottom edges of the L-girders and point up at the ceiling resulting in even light on the lower level (I hope).

A TRAIN SHOW FIND

BY BOB NEILL



Bob's train show "gem" ready for whatever comes next.

I found a gem at a train show that followed me home. I was looking forward to having fun finishing it up – it looks like it needs a little attention. Then the idea came to me about getting some advice from a few experts. Do you know where I can find any? Maybe this can turn into an NMRA project. What would you suggest doing?

My first thought was to repaint the model, even stripping the existing paint. Many of the windows

have suffered from crazing from the glue that was used, so they will need replacing. It was suggested that some could be saved by having advertising signs pasted over the crazed portion. For NMRA use, some interior work and lighting would be good. It seems that many buildings need some roof work. The cardboard base seems to want to be replaced by a sidewalk or maybe a street.

Depending on the era of your layout, would the up-stairs portion be occupied? Hum, could a model RR club be renting space? What if there was a fire? For me, a downtown needs to be near my train station. What about cars and trucks? Is this growing?

A silly question, what would you do if you received something like this as a Christmas white elephant gift? Would you find a trash can, or someone to trade with, or have a ball?

–Bob



The back side is as “glamorous” as the front. Will Bob turn it into a real beauty?

HOW TO MAKE A RIVER IN A PORTABLE MODULE

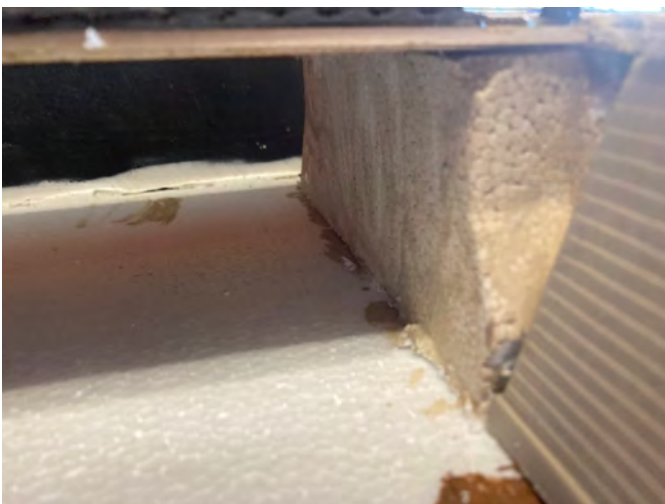
BY JIM HOGBEN

I enjoy putting in the scenery first and then fitting roadbed and track into the topography, much like railroad surveyors and construction engineers must do. I enjoy studying bridge design and construction. I built my first trestle into a window screen and drugstore plaster scene about age 12 or 14. Follow along as I use newer techniques to build a river and bridges for the four tracks that cross it.

—Jim



First I cut the rough shape of the river into the table top. Next I glue a thin piece of styrofoam flush with the bottom of the sides.



I'm fascinated by the shapes I find in styrofoam packing materials. I found two different pieces to use as bridge abutments for the ballasted deck girder bridge on the double track main line of my module. I mixed paint that gives the appearance of very old concrete and painted the styrofoam with it.



For the next bridge, I cut plastic bridge piers in half and cut them into the scenery. Before gluing them in, I roughed them up with sandpaper and painted them with my “old concrete” paint mix.



This photo shows roadbed being glued down for the rear-most track with temporary placement of track and bridge to align everything. I use earth color caulk to glue everything together.



This photo shows early scenery construction. After the glue sets, I’ll remove the track and bridge and complete the scenery under the bridge. This is the track in the rear of the module.



Card stock is an excellent material to build up a bridge abutment. It can be cut to fit the terrain and bent to form the abutment. I used adhesive caulk to glue it into place. When the glue dries, it can be painted with acrylics to represent concrete.



The company photographer took a picture of the crew digging the outflow of the module's river after another crew provided sufficient stiffener in the form of a steel strap.



This 3/4 view of the module side shows the steel strap brace that allowed the "digging out" of the module's river.



This final view shows the module as it stands at the end of this article. From left to right, the main line tracks are at 4 inches and 6 inches from the front. The third track is at 8 inches and the rear track is at 20 inches.

Editor's note: This module is built as part of the Chisholm Trail Division's modular group. Jim Hogben is chair of that group. If you are interested in joining them, send an email to me at jmarlett@cox.net and I will forward it to him.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



The Third Thursday Lunch Group ate at Cy's Hoof and Horn in Sedgwick in September. Afterwards, we visited Javen Schmucker's for a tour of his expanded HO scale layout and his extensive toy train collection. Here Javen is pointing out some details of the layout.



In October, at the Wichita Area Model Railroaders luncheon at Spears Restaurant and Pie Shop, we learned about the history of covered hoppers. If you've never attended either of these lunches or if you've stopped coming, then give it some thought. They're fun.

THE 2022 NATIONAL NARROW GAUGE CONVENTION

BY JIM MARLETT

The 2022 National Narrow Gauge Convention (NNGC) at Tacoma, Washington is in the books. And a fine convention it was!

The format of NNGCs has become my favorite convention format. The clinics, modular layouts, contest room, and vendor's hall (think train show, but with many national vendors) open in the morning. Then in the middle of the day, everything closes for layout tours. Shutting down during layout tours allows everyone to participate, including the vendors. In the evening there are more clinics and everything opens back up.

The layout tours are on your own, but a lot of folks car pool. I like not having bus tours because it lets you see the layouts you want to see and on your own schedule. After all, some folks like to spend more time at fewer layouts and others like to get to as many as they can in the time allotted. Personally, I've never managed to see all I wanted to see, to say nothing of all the layouts that have been available.

The clinics are not just for narrow gaugers, although plenty of them are about slim gauge subjects. For instance, Patrick Student (heck of a name for a retired teacher, don't you think?) presented one that was an assortment of helpful modeling hints he had picked up over the years. I thought one hint was pure gold. If you've ever tried to cut out white decals on a pale blue backing sheet, you know it is a challenge to see what you are doing. If you do it under black light, the paper glows like crazy while the ink is dark and stands out boldly. That was a new one for me.

In another clinic, Soundtraxx's George Bogatiuk talked about the new Blunami bluetooth decoder. It is basically a Tsunami 2 decoder that can work wirelessly through an iPhone or iPad app if you have iOS 8 or later. It is not available for Android at this time. With the iOS app your iPhone or iPad

communicates directly with the decoder and doesn't rely on the rails to tell it what to do. Track power is still needed to run the engine or accessory, but not to carry the instruction signal. In fact, a command station isn't even needed. However, a locomotive with a Blunami installed will still work just like a Tsunami 2 if you want to use the standard technology and command station. George's demos were pretty impressive and I suspect this is the wave of the future.

Layout tours are my favorite part of any convention. Again, even though this is the National Narrow Gauge Convention, tours are not restricted to narrow gauge layouts. Just about any scale is available and that typically includes garden railways and live steam. This year was no exception. Time restraints kept me from visiting the live steam operation, but I did manage to visit 14 of the 37 layouts open for tours.

Modular layouts are always a kick and this year one just blew my socks off! It was the Hangman Creek Lumber Company in On3. It won "Best in Show" at the 2012 NNGC and hasn't been back since. For this year they gave it an extensive refurbishing and the results were amazing. If you want to know more about it, their web site is <https://narrowgaugebuilder.com/?fbclid=IwAR2UsFSITgciEpzHDp-6K7HX7sJYj0ipC6HwD9rRxp39aJ4iah-oS0MWPQs> and their Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/HangmanCreekLumber/>.

I wish I had room to share more pictures with you. However space restraints keep me from sharing all but the tiniest fraction of them.

Next year's NNGC is in Denver, CO. It promises to be a humdinger and if it is anything like the last one in Denver, it will be. Maybe you should go. It isn't that far away.

—Jim



Dale Kreutzer (front) made excellent photo backdrops of the actual areas being modeled on his Sn3 Rio Grande Southern, 2nd District.



Bill Bussacca tends to a locomotive on his Sn3 Rio Grande Southern, Dolores to Rico. He also has photo backdrops made by Dale Kreutzer.



A small part of Chuck Lee's HO scale standard gauge Colorado Front Range Railroad.



The Pacific Northwest provides a beautiful setting for Bill Turston's Sunny Bay garden railroad.



Angled holders keep potential snags below the table top on Greg Price's HO Matheson & Western.



A polluted stream, complete with oil slick, on Steven Shores's HO scale Pacific Shores Railroad.



Partial stock loading pens save space on Russ Segner's Sn3 Coal Creek Lumber Company.



Glenn Farley's On3 D&RGW Black Canyon Lines features the Gunnison roundhouse.



David Yadock's HO & HO_{n3} Dry Gulch & Western is loosely based John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid.



The Seattle & North Cascades is the Boeing employees' HO scale model railroad.



Roger Nulton's 30'x60' S scale Monon Railroad Fourth Subdivision depicts late 1940s Indiana.



The extensive inclusion of active residential areas on Roger Nulton's layout impressed my wife.



11) This diorama won the “Square Footer” contest category and also won “Best of Show.”



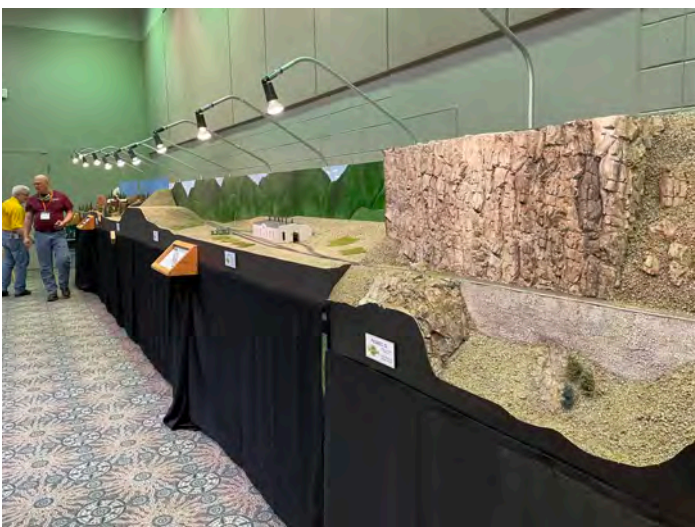
12) This is the “Structures” winner. See all winners here: <https://www.seattlenngc.com/contest-results>



13) Part of the Hangman’s Creek modular layout.



14) The Moose Creek Logging Company in On30.



15) The Palisades module (on the right) was part of the Arizona Mudhens modular layout.



16) One of the booths in the Vendors’ Hall.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

RECURRING EVENTS

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://www.mcor-nmra.org/Divisions/Chisholm_Trail_Division/

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/

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. The second Thursday of every month at 11:30AM. Spears Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W. Maple, Wichita, KS

SCHEDULED EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2022

November 5-6 – OKC Train Show. Oklahoma State Fairgrounds, 3212 Wichita Walk, Oklahoma City, OK. <https://www.okctrainshow.com/>

November 19 – Heartland Toy Show. 4-H Building & Kenwood Hall, 900 Greeley Ave, Salina, KS. 9:00AM-3:00PM

DECEMBER 2022

December 3-4 – Great Train Show. Overland Park Convention Center, Overland Park, KS. <https://www.trainshow.com/>

JANUARY 2023

January 8-9 – Model Train Convention and Expo Fundraiser. McPherson Community Building, 122 E. Marlin St, McPherson, KS. Saturday 9AM-6PM, Sunday 10AM-3PM. <https://www.facebook.com/events/mcpherson-community-building/model-train-convention-and-expo-fundraiser/1544232989256957/>

FEBRUARY 2023

February 4-5 – The Best Train Show in Wichita, KS. Cessna Activity Center, 2744 George Washington Blvd., Wichita, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 11AM-4PM

February 18 – Winter Train Show. Payne County Expo Circle East, Stillwater, OK. 9:00AM-3:00PM

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

Jim Marlett
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