

Trails, Rails, & Tales



May-June 2024
Volume 10 • Number 3

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

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

John Kraft and I drove out to the Denver train show. That was the biggest show I have ever been to. I will give more info at the meeting.

See you then.

– Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

BY CHARLIE MONCKTON

I had the pleasure of seeing many of you at the Arkansas City train show Saturday, April 20th. It was a great show and I met a lot of model railroaders. Thanks to everyone that stopped by to say hello. I hope as the weather is improving you are able to get out and do some rail fanning. Terry and I saw several BNSF trains as we traveled between Wichita and Arkansas City. It was a great way to do some train watching. I also want to wish Rick Coble happy birthday. He tried to keep his birthday a secret Saturday while he was helping operate our modular layout.

Wednesday, April 24, I will be visiting the kindergarten class my daughter teaches to build mini-dioramas with her students. I hope to have lots of pictures of their creations in the next Tales and Trails.

– Charlie

(Editor's note: Charlie made his visit to his daughter's school before this went to press. I just couldn't wait to share some of the pictures he posted on the Chisholm Trail Division Facebook page so it is in this month's newsletter.)

TRAILS, RAILS, & TAILS

is published bi-monthly.

It is sent to members of the
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NMRA

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

Spring has sprung and if my spring has been anything like your spring, its activities have pretty much displaced working on model railroads. March and early April were spent getting ready to go to Africa, being there, and recovering from the trip. Then we took the grandkids to Carbondale, IL to see the total eclipse. Then I got sick with some non-Covid upper respiratory infection that just plain knocked me out. I worked a little in the yard, but that exhausted me with very little to show for it. When I was through with all that, I realized I was late getting started on this edition of Trails, Rails, & Tales. Needless to say, nothing at all was done on the model railroad.

That also means this issue of the newsletter will be a little on the sparse side. Thanks to those who did submit something. I hope you'll bear with me and I promise to do better in the future.

The MidContinent Region must have been in a similar predicament with regional convention planning, because it was a little late in being

announced. Believe me, I have all the sympathy in the world for that. But this month the announcement and reservation material came out and is included in this newsletter. I hope you will consider attending. Not every model railroad convention is for everybody, but you should try to make one sometime. If you have never been to any, this one makes a lot of sense to start. You'll be amazed at what a shot in the arm it is to be around like-minded modelers and see what they have been up to.

Back on the ol' San Juan Southern, the Colorado narrow gauge empire in my basement, I have really nothing much to show. Before spring activities displaced model railroading activities, I started work on a coaling tower that will be on one of the three newest and final sections of the layout and recently one of my sons helped me carry one of those final sections from my shop to the basement. Like I said, not much to show.

– Jim



This is the coaling tower's hoist house under construction. It is an old Campbell kit, so it is pretty much a box of sticks that have never seen a laser beam. Old school techniques will be the name of the game for the whole thing. It has been a while since I have built any kind of craftsman kit, so I'm sure it will go slowly, and the coaling tower isn't exactly the simplest kit Campbell ever put out. Wish me luck!

Long Last!

We have a date & venue!



MID CONTINENT REGIONAL ANNUAL CONVENTION

Thursday, Friday, Saturday

June 13th, 14th, 15th

2024

Location:

Ramada Midtown Conference Center

2503 S. Locust Street

Grand Island, NE 68801

(308)384-1330

They are accepting reservations now. (to get "block price" of \$147.00 plus tax, no later than May 13th) We have a block of rooms.

Activities:

Clinics

Contest Room w/NMRA judging

Layout Tours

Spouses Events

Prototype Activities

Train Show

Door Prizes

Banquet, Saturday Evening

Registration forms and vendor registration forms to follow.

Registrar ... Whit Johnson, email: steam2856@gmail.com



Grand Island Express 2024
NMRA Mid-Continent Region Convention
 Hosted by
Platte Valley Division
June 13-15, 2024
Ramada Midtown Conference Center
 2503 S Locust Street
 Grand Island, Nebraska 68801
 (308) 385-1330

Registration Form

Name of Primary Registration: _____ NMRA# _____
NMRA Membership Required to Enter Model Contest

Spouse's Name (if attending) _____
(Spouse will receive a complimentary pass for admission to Train Show, Contest Room, Clinics. The Banquet is an additional \$35.00)

Names of other Registrants: _____
 Extra fare events (if any) must be purchased for each person attending those events.

Address: _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Registration Fee (NMRA Membership number required for reduced registration fee)

NMRA Member \$120.00 - per person, includes banquet _____ # of persons x \$120.00 = \$ _____

Non-member - \$130.00 per person, includes banquet _____ # of persons x \$130.00 = \$ _____

TOTAL REGISTRATION \$ _____

Banquet expected to be two (2) meat buffet.

Vendor Tables/Spaces Train Show Friday, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm, Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Train Show is open to the public, each attendee \$5.00 each/day

Tables \$25.00 each 8' x 2'-6" _____ # of tables x \$25.00 = \$ _____

Vendor pass does not allow attendance to the convention functions.

(Vendor spouses will receive complimentary pass to attend and help at "train show" and "spouse activities" only.

Vendors wishing to attend Banquet: \$35.00 each person _____ # of persons x \$35.00 = \$ _____

TOTAL VENDOR REGISTRATION COST \$ _____

Vendor Attendee Names: _____

Send Completed Registration Form & Payment to:

Whit Johnson, Registrar
 1117 E. 16th Street South
 Newton, Iowa 50208
steam2856@gmail.com
 Make check payable to:
 (MCoR) Mid-Continent Region of NMRA
 Information: Whit Johnson, Registrar at email or
 telephone, evenings only please, cell (815)342-0301



Ask for MCoR Group Rate,
 \$147.00, includes breakfast
 To register on line:

[Hotel Registration Here](#)

*Amenities:
 Pool, Exercise Room
 Billiards, Ping-pong*

SHARING OUR HOBBY

BY JENNY RADER, USED WITH PERMISSION

Editor's note: I think Charlie's daughter summed this up nicely on her school's Facebook page. I have shared it here with some of the photos.

“It was all about the letter T and trains today in Mrs. Rader's Kindergarten! Thank you Mr. Monckton for visiting and helping us make our own train diorama as each student created a section of track!”





I FOUND A USE FOR CAT HAIR

BY BOB NEILL

I noticed several models on the modular layouts had cotton balls imitating white smoke. While I was unloading the clothes dryer, I noticed some of the cotton in the filter had a darker color. After grabbing a pinch and sticking it into a locomotive, it seemed to work. After finding the camera, the "smoke" was gone! Who, how, where?? So I substituted cat hair.

-Bob



MODULAR NEWS

BY TERRY ROSS

After a busy January and February, we continue to keep busy. We had two more events since the last newsletter report.

Bel Aire

In March we were at the Bel Aire Community Center for a weekend of operation. We set up on Friday and ran some trains on Friday night. Saturday, we were open to the public from 9:00 to 3:00. We were part of Bel Aire's Spring Celebration which consisted of indoor soccer, face painting, Easter egg hunt, and model railroading.



Lots of kids and kids' activity. We set up the U-shaped layout in a 20' x 36' footprint. At times during the day, we had people completely around the entire layout watching trains and looking at or taking pictures of different scenes. We were told by the Bel Aire host that there could have been as many as 3000 people through the building on Saturday. We saw a lot of smiles on kid's faces, both watching and running the trains. I overheard several moms telling their husbands, "we should have a train set at home". I'm pretty sure we sold a few train sets on Saturday. Randy was manning our NMRA table and was giving away mini-candy bars, and wooden train whistles. He ran out of candy and whistles soon after we opened the doors. We were all glad to hear that all the whistles were gone.

Thanks to NMRA member Adam Goldsmith for setting this event up for us with the City of Bel Aire. They like having the trains there for the kids to see, we get lots of running time, and it's not far away for any of us. In addition to running on Friday night and Saturday, we had a private day on Sunday for families and guests to run trains. We had a number of family members and friends stop



by. We also enjoyed seeing a few of our NMRA members on Sunday. If you have not been to this event, you should try to make it out to our next showing as it is a quality venue and we have a great time there. Bring out your favorite train and take it for a spin.



Arkansas City

Our second event was April 20th and we were at the Arkansas City Train Show. We set up our standard footprint for this show and were the largest layout there. For a smaller community show, this was a great show for us. We had a number of kids there watching the trains and a few future operators. They love to watch the trains meet and pass each other. (I think that's because they think they are on the same track and are going to crash into each other. That's ok – even some of us serious older modelers used to enjoy a good train wreck when we first started out.)

We had 8 members taking turns running their trains. We even had one engineer running two trains of his own, one with an NCE Controller and one using his iPhone. (I think he only ran into himself once). We almost always have two operators on a track at a time, but sometimes this weekend we had as many as four. We also added a new staging yard behind the backdrops of our "U" section. This track is connected to our Track 2 main, so once you have your train staged, you can pull directly out to Main 2. We continue to work on scenery, and as you can see from the pictures, we are "gaining ground" with every show.



I don't know the total number of attendees, but we had a steady group of viewers all day long. We heard from several people who have seen us before remarking on how much we are growing. We were 20' x 28' feet and we were missing eight modules. We had a guest operator, Alan Meinholdt from the Kansas Central Division NMRA Division. Alan is from Emporia and was part of the Emporia Modular group years ago. He is also planning on joining us again in Hutchinson and becoming a member



of our Modular Group. Welcome Alan. Thanks for reaching out to us. I have had several people say we are doing a lot for the future of the hobby, but I think we're in it for the fun. Win! Win!

Our next scheduled show is the "Center of the Nation Train Show" in Hutchinson, June 1st and 2nd. If you like Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Rock Island, Rio Grande, MoPac, Pennsy, KCS, Southern, Florida East Coast, or any other railroad we have it on our line. We have some beautiful trains running on the layout and I'm sure you will find one that brings back a wonderful train memory. Come out and see us. You are always welcome and bring something to run.

– Terry



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

February's Program – Jim Marlett, a Report on the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Denver



Among the numerous modular layouts was this one that featured all of the trestles of the famous Ophir Loop on the Rio Grande Southern.



An abandoned mine scene on Jim Gray's layout. Jim uses photo backdrops to very effectively expand the perceived space of the layout.

April's Division Program – Bill Phillips, Operations on His Layout



I didn't get any photos from Bill's program, but I did get a few of actually operating on Bill's layout. Here Bill and Gene Bowers are switching the Hutchinson yard.



On Bill's twice around the room mainline the stockyards at North Dodge are on a separate loop from the packing plant at Dodge City – two towns in one! Bill uses car cards and waybills.

BOTANICA IS STILL LOOKING FOR A TRAIN TECHNICIAN DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED?

Initially this will be a Train Technician position. The Train Technician will be learning for 6 months to a year. I believe that it will be a part time, paid position that will lead to becoming the Botanica Train Coordinator (also a part time paid position, but with more hours).

A current summary of the Coordinator position is:

The job of the Coordinator is to make sure trains run as requested in an attractive setting. This involves ensuring there are:

- 1) volunteers to run the trains
- 2) functional trains with well working tracks and power system
- 3) buildings and accessories in good condition
- 4) that the plantings are appropriate and adequate.

The Coordinator reports to the Director of Operations and works in collaboration with the Volunteer Coordinator.

This position falls under the non-profit Botanica, Inc., rather than being a city of Wichita employee.

The position is a Permanent Part-time paid position with 20 to 30 hours per week that are flexible according to need.

A List of Qualifications preferred:

Hard skills

- At least a general knowledge of model train equipment, preferably G-scale.
- Have routinely cleaned and repaired model train equipment, preferably G-scale.
- Competent in MS Word and Excel for reports and schedules.

- At least a general knowledge of small scale horticulture appropriate for a train garden setting.
- Working knowledge of electricity and electronics.
- Capable of using diagnostic and small hand tools.
- Prefer someone capable of physical activity in the train shed or garden itself, such as standing, reaching, bending, stooping, kneeling, crawling, or lifting, up to 20 pounds. This might take place in any weather condition.

Soft skills

- Previous leadership or supervisory experience and is aware that supervising volunteers is different than supervising paid employees.
- Can deal with public positively and effectively as an operator or giving a presentation.
- Dependable.
- Open minded with personnel and new ideas.
- Can solve problems.
- Adaptable to changing processes and schedules.

Willingness and ability to learn is more important than any extended formal education.

Contact Claudia Rollstin

crollstin@botanica.org

316-688-0470

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. Every second Thursday at 11:30AM. Spear's Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W Maple, Wichita, KS

Third Thursday Model Railroaders's Lunch. Every third Thursday at a location and time to be announced. If you are not receiving notices and would like to be included, contact Terry Ross (316) 258-4029.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

JUNE 2024

June 1 – Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo. Pride of Kansas Building, Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-3PM. <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org/train-show.html>

June 8 – Heart of America Model Train Swap Meet. Heart of America Chapter, Ozark Division, Train Collectors Association. The Palmer Center, 218-A North Pleasant Street, Independence, MO. Saturday 10AM-2PM. <http://ozarkdivisiontca.org/index-2.html>

June 13-15 – Mid-Continent Region NMRA Convention. Ramada Inn, Grand Island, NE <http://www.mcor-nmra.org/Conventions/>

JULY 2024

July 27 – Kansas Model Train Show. Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, 200 McDonald Drive, Lawrence, KS. Saturday 10AM-3PM. Sponsored by the Lionel Operating Train Society. <https://lots-trains.org/annual-convention/>

AUGUST 2024

August 4-11 – National Model Railroad Association Convention. Weston Long Beach, 333 East Ocean Blvd, Long Beach, CA. <https://surfliner2024.org/>

SEPTEMBER 2024

September 11-14 – National Narrow Gauge Convention. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. <https://www.44nngc.com/>

September 20-21 – Ozark Model Railroad Association Train Show. Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, Central Buildings Event Center, 3001 N Grant Ave, Springfield, MO. Friday 4PM-8PM, Saturday 9AM-3PM. Sponsored by the Lionel Operating Train Society. <http://www.omraspringfield.org/train-shows.html>

OCTOBER 2024

October 5-6 – Western Kansas Train Show.

County Fair Grounds, 1344 Fairground Fd.,
Hays, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday
11AM-4PM [https://www.lasr.net/travel/
city.php?
&TravelTo=KS0802010&VE=Y&Event_ID=
KS0802010e031](https://www.lasr.net/travel/city.php?&TravelTo=KS0802010&VE=Y&Event_ID=KS0802010e031)

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

Jim Marlett

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