

The Milepost

February 2017
Volume 37
Issue #2

NEXT MEETING: Friday, February 10th, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Sand Creek Police Station, 4125 Center Park Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado (southeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy Boulevards).

JANUARY 2017 MEETING MINUTES

January 13th, 2017 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Pikes Peak Division of the National Model Railroaders Association.

The meeting was brought to order by Superintendent Joe Costa at 7:00 PM. There were 31 people in attendance. Three visitors: Gary Myers, Bruce Daugherty, and Brenda.

The minutes for the last meeting were approved. Frank Pareso gave the treasurer's report.

Gary Myers presented convention information. The website for this will be ready to roll very soon. Contest will be "construction truck". Scratch built preferable. Examples can include: cement mixer, dump truck, etcetera. Not necessarily rail-capable. Gary also gave out an AP award to Rob Allen for Association Volunteer.

There was no contest for this month.

Discussion concerning future TECO location. Maybe using additional advertising draws such as Facebook in addition to regular ads. Also there is a need for photographs for a new brochure.

Discussion about the division's swap meet show by Dusty Thomson. Vote taken for day before Mother's Day (Saturday, May 13th, 2017). Dusty would like to turn swap meets over to someone else. He is willing to train the new person.

There was a meeting break and prize drawings.

Our webmaster, James Patterson has stepped down from this position. It is now open to anyone else who would like to volunteer. Additional discussion about using Facebook as well. John Emmot commented about doing some basic things on the website.

Presentation was by Irv Johnson concerning various train operations on the Silverton & Durango railroad.



TECO Train Show

Model Train Layouts * Vendors
Hourly Door Prizes * "How To" Clinics
Kids Scavenger Hunt
Historical Presentations

April 29 & 30

Sat 9-4 * Sun 10-3

Mortgage Solutions Financial Center

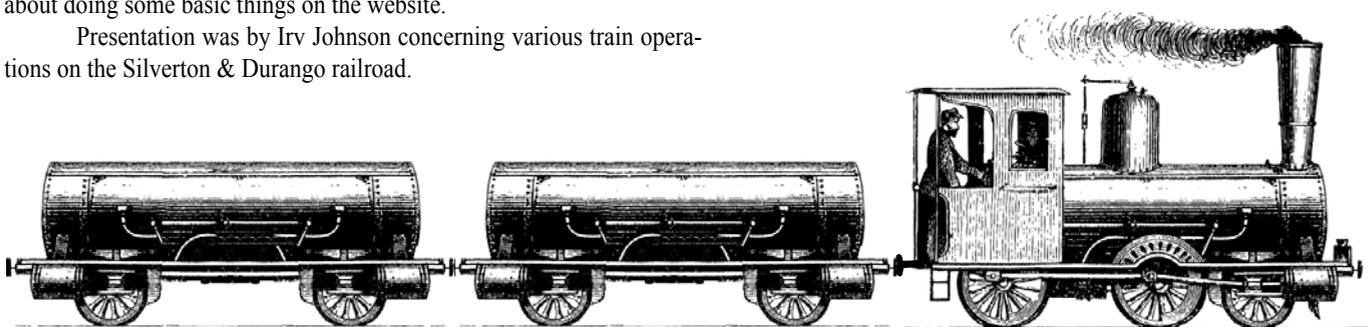
3660 N. Nevada

Colorado Springs, CO

\$6 per person * \$9 family of 2 or more

Children under 12 free

Seniors/Military \$1 Discount



INFORMATION

The Milepost is published monthly and is the official journal of the Pikes Peak Division, of the Rocky Mountain Region, of the National Model Railroad Association. Our meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month at the Sand Creek Police Station, 4125 Center Park Drive (southeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), Colorado Springs, Colorado, at 7:00 PM. Please come to one of our meetings. We'd love to meet you. All scales are welcome. Besides our monthly meeting, we have swap meets, train shows, and other model railroad activities.

All content of this journal is copyrighted to its respective owner unless otherwise noted. Please do not use content from this newsletter without explicit, case-by-case permission.

UPCOMING PROGRAM

For our Friday, February 10th, 2017 meeting, the program for the evening will be by John Campbell, titled, "Where Does All The Current Go?"

The March 2017 meeting program is scheduled to be by Mel McFarland, and is titled "Shortline".

If you have a program or project you would like to present at one of our monthly meetings, please contact Charalee Topinka at one of the monthly meetings or at

... OBITUARY ...

Frank Pareso reports that Tom Williams, who worked with him at the Discount Trains store, passed away on Saturday, January 28th, 2017.



Michael R. Clark

1015 Garden of the Gods Rd, Suite 150, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
(719) 634-4616 Fax: (719) 634-0916

P.P.D. STAFF MEMBERS

OFFICERS

Superintendent

Joe Costa
joe_costa@hotmail.com

Assistant Superintendent

Charalee Topinka
charaleetopinka@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Frank Pareso — (719) 591-9470
wfpareso@gmail.com

Secretary

Robert Allen — (719) 661-5960
allen_rea1@hotmail.com

CHAIRPERSONS

Achievement

Jack Sousa — (719) 576-7017
jackfrv@pcisys.net

Contest

[OPEN]

Door Prizes

Frank Pareso — (719) 591-9470

Membership

[OPEN]

Members Aid

John Emmot — (719) 380-8421
jemmot@comcast.net

Milepost Editor

Michael Murdock — (719) 502-9864
midnightriver@ymail.com

Module Group (HO-Scale)

John Emmot — (719) 380-8421

Monthly Meeting Programs

Charalee Topinka — (719) 646-2783
charaleetopinka@yahoo.com

Public Relations

Kristin Phillips & Joe Costa
kristin.phillips7099@gmail.com joe_costa@hotmail.com

Swap Meets

Dusty Thomson — (719) 651-7064
dthom8787@yahoo.com

Webmaster

[OPEN]

SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES

By Joe Costa, Superintendent of PPD-NMRA

I am getting psyched up for the 2017 Convention in Durango. I confess I do prowl the Thrift Stores and Flea Market Malls around town looking for railroad related bargains and occasionally scoring. This time it was "The Official Guidebook America's Railroad & Tracks Through Time DVD Gift Pack" for \$8. Woohoo.

Last month we got to watch some original videotapes from Irv Johnson of the Eureka and Palisades 1875 wood burner and a Galloping Goose running on the Durango and Silverton.

At the Chama ticket office before getting on the caboose for our train ride, Kristin and I picked up "Railroad Classics 6 Film Special DVD" which has the "Eureka's Incredible Journey on the Cumbres and Toltec" as well as "The Spirit of Mountain Railroading" which has the Eureka running on the Durango and Silverton. It's a small world that still have some small engines.

Colorado is an incredible state for tourist railroading. I see some albums in the making there.

On another note, we have been working on putting together a Facebook Page, Pikes Peak Division NMRA, to complement our PPD-NMRA webpage. It's a place where we can post pictures of our layouts, modules, contest entries and real life railroad adventures. Please check it out and let me know if you have any suggestions or corrections.

I have been researching how to turn narrated PowerPoint slide-shows into videos. Our upcoming "Cheap Wireless" presentation will be our trial balloon.

Facebook is designed for photos and videos, Actual PowerPoint or PDFs are just not suitable. *The Milepost* will remain on the website.

What we will do is create a updated version of our brochure and make that into an album (each of six pages becomes an image). Still looking for new photos to get some variety.

CONTEST CORNER

At each monthly PPD-NMRA meeting, a contest is held. A contest must have at least three entries for voting. Below is the 2017 contest schedule.

- February *Off-line structure* — no railroad track access.
- March *MOW Car*.
- April *Whimsical Model Or Scene*. Something whimsical to bring a smile or chuckle. Examples could include: animal control chasing loose monkeys, mini-scene, car with a hot tub, engine with wings, etcetera.
- May *Scratch-Built Structure*.
- June *324 Contest* — 18" x 18" Mini-Scene, anything that fits within 324 sq in.
- July *Flat Car That Isn't Flat* — any load or modification.
- August *On-Line Structure* — railroad track access.
- September *Passenger Car*.
- October *Judged & Open Contest*.
- November *Kitbash Anything With Multiple Kits*.
- December Christmas Party (no contest).

MODULAR MUSINGS

By John Emmot, Chairman of Module Group

Time flies when you're having fun. Another month has rolled by. I've had a root canal and cataract surgery and I'm still going. Working on two more Moffat passenger cars and a "how-to" article for the D&SL Historical Society magazine. And I've seen a bunch of Middle School girl's basketball games. I'm not sure I would have had time for a TECO show in January. So anyway, we still have some time before the next TECO show on April 29-30, 2017 EXPO Center.

In my discussions with Gerry Drewes, we discovered a detail in the power busses of our two layouts which makes a joint setup more of a technical challenge than we expected. Unless we can find a work around, merging the two will have to be put in abeyance.

We know that Joe and Kristin will be gone in April. Charles has promised to have his new module versions ready to go by then. I expect to have the "new" four-foot Lipper module ready by then too. We will need setup help, operator help, and possibly clinic help for this show. The Time Saver switching puzzles are always popular, but we must have someone to monitor their use. You also get to practice when no one else is playing. Could someone commit to making this possible? Please confirm your intent to participate in any of these activities to me.

I'm sure everyone knows by now that the Rocky Mountain Region 2017 Convention will be in Durango, Colorado, June 8-11, 2017 (see the RMR website). Be aware that that is the same time as our local meeting night in June. Those who attend the convention will miss the usual monthly meeting.

There is tentative planning for a TECO show for the following weekend, June 17-18, 2017, which is Father's Day. Please provide feedback on your ability to support that show.

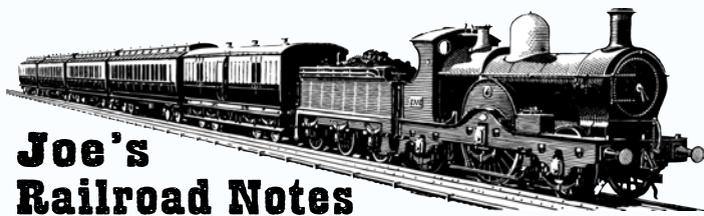
Please check our website for the list of local contest categories for the rest of 2017. Look ahead and be ready to enter your work in the popular vote monthly contests and the NMRA merit judging in October 2017. This is a great way to display what interests you in railroad modeling. Off category, display-only items are welcome anytime.

We have had several visitors lately. Please engage them and make them welcome when they attend.

See ya 'round the roundhouse.



Gary Myers presents Rob Allen with a Association Volunteer certificate of achievement award at the Friday, January 13th, 2017 PPD-NMRA monthly meeting.



Joe's Railroad Notes

By Joe Costa

More On Monocacy Trains Bluetooth Board

In my column last month, I said the Monocacy app hung when it encounter the Bachmann/Bluerail Trans module. That was an error on my part. Both apps ignore each others modules as they should.

I've done a bunch more testing of the Monocacy app and modules and have worked with several updated versions. They work fine under my android phone and android tablet when they discover a single module. Both have issues with more than one.

Both Bachmann and E-Z app hate my Android Lollipop Tablet. Google added some security features for Bluetooth 4.0 that messed up the way it works.

JMRI and Wi-Fi works wonderfully for DCC because Wi-Fi has been battle tested. Bluetooth 4.0 is still the wild, wild west in the Android world. Naturally, like Apple fans will smirk, things are very stable in the iOS world.

Tomorrow, I should get the bluetooth game controller pictured and check it out this weekend — three weeks ship-time from China. By next month I should be able to test out my SPOR III DCC controller. [Written 1-12-2017.]

Shopping

Okay, I was scrounging at the ARC and came across a boxed Bachmann Rail King DC set for \$12.99 (one tenth of list price). I figured, even if the Santa Fe diesel didn't work the four freight cars with Kadee couplers and accessories would be worth it.

I opened up the diesel to see what would be involved in adding a decoder. The wiring board looked pretty straight forward — a twin buss that the lights, track pickups and motor leads were soldered to. Looked like putting a decoder between motor leaders and bus would be easy but first I decided to see how it runs on DC. I noticed that one of the track pickups did not have a good connection to the bus.

Sure enough, it ran pretty jerky especially on a curve. I resoldered the suspect joint and tried again and performance was acceptable. So, when things free up here I'll go ahead and stick one of my Bluetooth decoders in.

Bluetooth 4

I think I've mentioned I have been beta-testing with Monocacy Trains, who have a Bluetooth 4 decoder that competes with BlueRail Trains (the outfit that is partnered with Bachmann on their E-Z app engines).

Unlike Wi-Fi (which is standardized on everything and which requires a JMRI supported DCC system to work with), Bluetooth 4 is not well standardized from an application programming point of view. Not every tablet out there even supports Bluetooth 4.0. The carriers are pretty good about seeing their devices are full featured — they don't cut corners like low end tablet manufacturers.

Apple based devices have no issues because they are standardized by definition but Android has multiple manufacturers and versions. I had an Alldaymall Android 5.1.1 that would not work with either Bluetooth 4.0 system. I reported that and Monocacy came up with a version that does support it (although it only sees one engine when two are on the track). I'm going to have to bug them again about that.

New Item From Model Rectifier

Model Rectifier is coming with a great add on for their Prodigy DCC Systems. I was on their site looking for any updates on their Loco Genie LCD Controller. In the picture, see Figure #1, it's that little box on the left



Figure #1.

that plugs into a CAB bus port.

Essentially it's a combination Wi-Fi access point and microprocessor running the equivalent of JMRI with support for eight tablets running WiThrottle (iOS) or Engine Driver (Android OS) for \$120. It will working with any DCC engine. I will definitely be adding a couple slides on this to my presentation.

Previously, when I was adding a DCC JMRI discussion to my presentation, I left out any discussion of adding JMRI to MRC because I could find no clear path. It reminds me of how SPROG uses a Raspberry PI microprocessor running JMRI with a Wi-Fi dongle. They specifically mention no Bluetooth required. For those who already have Prodigy without wireless cabs this will be a killer solution. In theory, I see no reason why all the DCC vendors could not add this approach to their own systems.

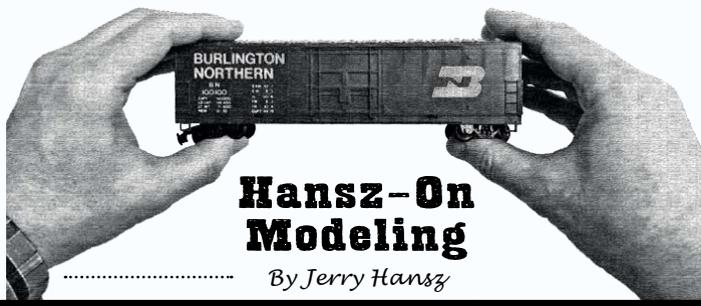
Life-Like Remote Control System

Back in the Stone Age, Life-Like had a remote control and sound system for DC. There was an HO building with antenna that plugged into the wall, had DC output for track and a speaker that played railroad sounds. There was also a battery operated remote control. I found it on eBay for \$20 with shipping.

The antenna can fold down under the removable roof. The seller mentioned that it had once controlled a train long gone. I decided to hook it up to a section of track with a DC engine. The remote control activated the sound and allowed me to have the engine go forward, reverse or stop. No variable speed control of any kind.

This is pretty much what BlueRail trains allows you to do when you hard wire their \$75 receiver between track and power supply. Of course, they offer variable track power which translates into variable speed for a DC engine.





Hansz-On Modeling

By Jerry Hansz

We picked up an old "blue box" Athearn GP35 at the June 2016 TECO. It is in the blue stripe color that that model carried from 1969 to 1982. The shell looked okay. The hand rails needed painting. Super glue was used to secure the handrails and stanchions.



On normal DC it started with 0.14 amperes at 5 volts, ran nicely with 0.25 amperes at 7 volts, and stalled with 1 amperes at 12 volts. I've had good luck running DCC with those parameters. So, I stripped it down and put in an NCE D13SR decoder.

The shell was removed, and shrink tubing was glued inside to hold the headlights. The chassis was disassembled, couplers and motor removed. At the drill press, a #50 hole was drilled and tapped on the left front of the frame to receive a brass screw to connect the left-side (black) wire from the decoder.



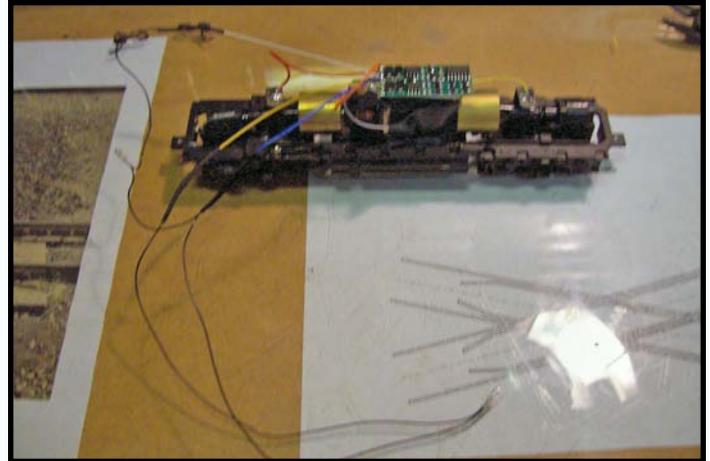
The lower motor contact was removed; the pointed chassis contacts were cut off. Electrical tape was placed on the chassis to prevent shorting to the motor contact.



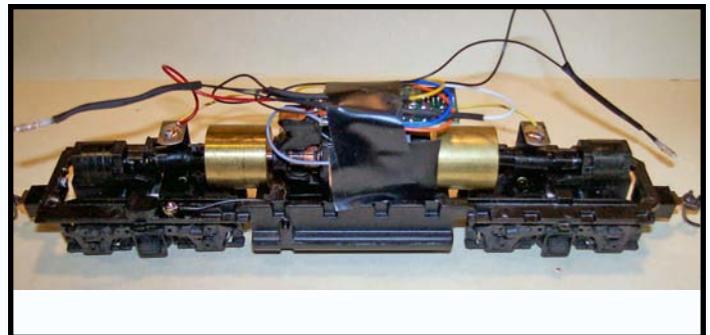
The D13SR orange wire was soldered to the motor top contact, the gray wire to the motor bottom contact, and the motor was reinstalled.

The trucks were reinstalled and the drive shafts were connected. A wire was connected between the right-side contacts on the front and rear trucks, and the D13SR red wire was soldered to the front contact. The D13SR black wire was soldered to the brass screw threaded into the chassis hole.

Two 12 volt lamps were located. Since my lamps are in a pile, they were first tested with one 1.5 volt battery to verify that they were 12 volt lamps, then with a 9 volt battery to verify that they worked! A wire from both lamps was soldered to the D13SR blue wire (lamp common). The other wire from the front headlight was soldered to the white wire; the other wire from the rear headlight went to the yellow wire. All joints were protected with shrink tubing (slipped on before soldering).



The wire tangle was corralled as best as possible, and secured with electrical tape.



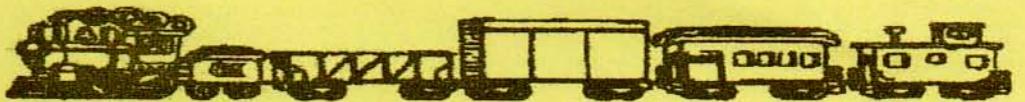
On the programming track the locomotive responded well. Manufacturer = 011, version = 035. Moved to the main line, the locomotive moved forward and reverse, and headlights worked okay.

When the rails and stanchions were dry, they were painted, and ATSF 3346 went into service. The locomotive measures 7½ inches long and weighs 11.1 ounces. Kadee #5 couplers were installed.



#3346 Parked at Talheim.

Introducing...



Youth in Model Railroading

"The most exciting model railroad club just for kids"

- Do you want to learn different modeling techniques ?
- Do you want to meet other kids with the same interest ?
- Do you want to learn more about model railroading ?
- Do you want to participate in model train shows ?
- Are you between the age 8 and 18 and love trains ?

Then Youth in Model Railroading is for you !

TREE MAKING—MOUNTAIN BUILDING—CAR WEATHERING
—BUILDING BUILDINGS—BUILDING FREIGHT CARS—
BASIC SCENERY—MODELING WATER—BUILDING
DIARAMAS—SOLDERING—AIRBRUSHING—DCC OPERATION



Pikes Peak Division meets at Immanuel Lutheran Church
846 East Pikes Peak Ave.

Colorado Springs

(On the corner of Pikes Peak Ave. & Institute

On the 3rd. Saturday of the month from 9:00-12:00)

PARK NORTH OF CHURCH AND ENTER THROUGH
NORTH DOOR

For more information call : (719) 272-1450

CELL:719-271-8118

E-mail: ppd.ymr@gmail.com

Rocky Mountain Train Show

March 4th & 5th, 2017

Saturday 10 am - 5 pm, Sunday 10 am - 4 pm

at the Denver Mart



451 East 58th Ave Denver, CO 80216 1-25 at 58th Ave Exit

See new products & visit with reps from



2 1/2 Acres of Toy Trains - All Scales - Over 600 Tables of Trains

25 Operating Layouts - Free Workshops and Clinics

Hourly Train Set Giveaway

Kids Play Layouts - Train Rides

Active Military, Scouts In Uniform, Kids under 12 FREE!

Admission - \$10 Good for Both Days

FREE PARKING!

Free Parking is back! - We have made arrangements to purchase the parking lot for the show, which will eliminate the \$5 parking charge and speed up entry to the lot. Thank you to the management of the Denver Mart for helping make this happen and to our loyal customers for sticking with us during this period of change.

Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Division of the Train Collectors Association™



Skip the lines and buy your tickets in advance at your favorite hobby shop or online at -

www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com

Seller Information Call (303) 364-0274

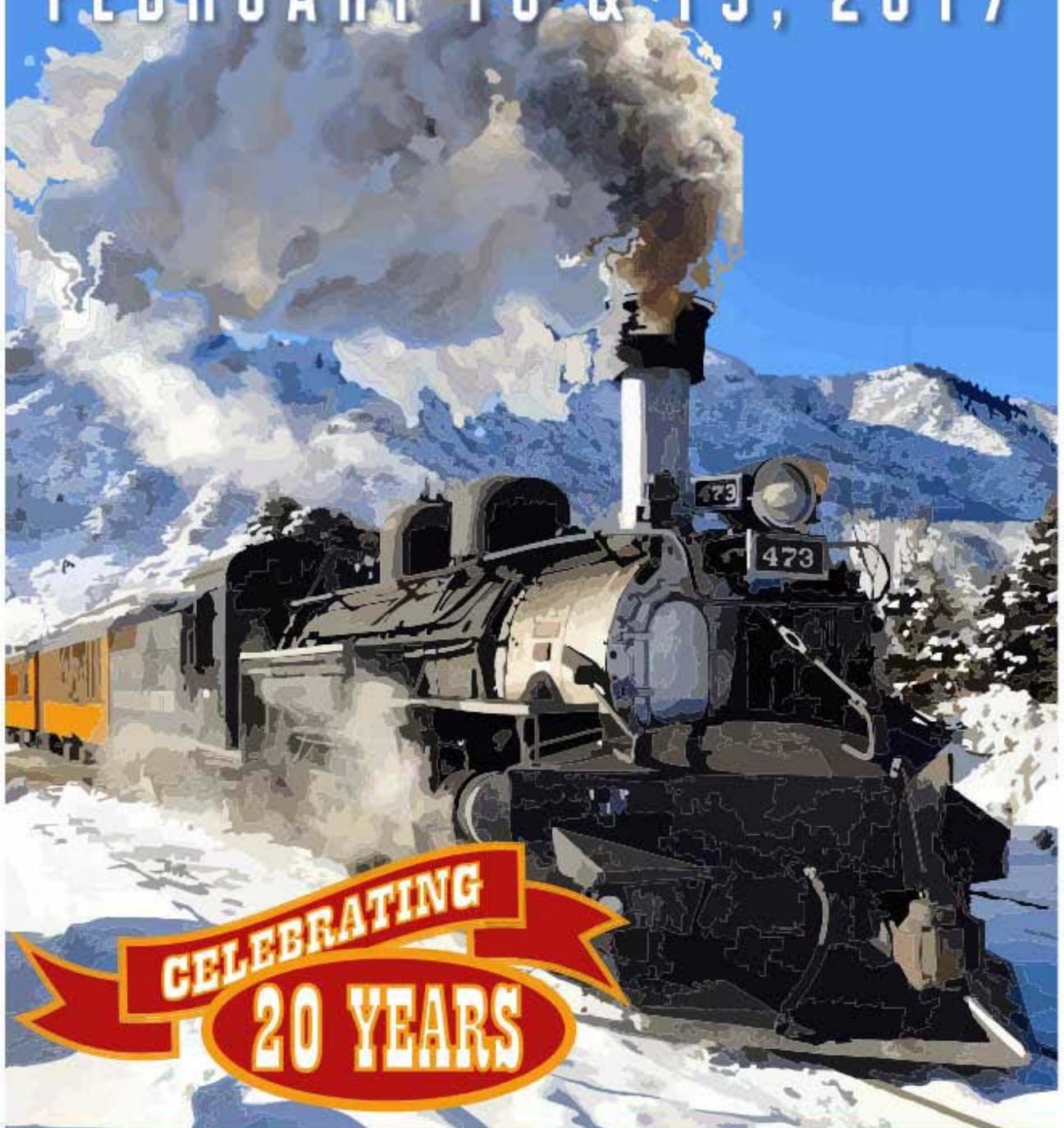
Join us on Facebook!



ESTES VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

RAILS IN THE ROCKIES

FEBRUARY 18 & 19, 2017



CELEBRATING

20 YEARS

SATURDAY 9-5 • SUNDAY 9-4

ADULTS \$7.00 • KIDS 12 AND UNDER FREE W/ADULT

FAMILY MAXIMUM \$20

NEW LOCATION STANLEY FAIRGROUNDS EVENT CENTER COMPLEX

INFO@RAILSINTHEROCKIES.ORG

Animas Rails

Durango, CO



**Annual Rocky Mountain Region Convention
June 8-11, 2017**

**D&SNGRR Train Ride
Tours: Layouts, and Durango Shop & Yard
Model Contest, Clinics, Board Meeting
Photo OP & Contest Awards**

Convention Hotel: Durango DoubleTree

rmr-nmra.org



**ROCKY
MOUNTAIN
REGION**

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

