



The

# *Milepost*

**Volume 43, Number 1 — January 2023**

**The official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Division  
Rocky Mountain Region — National Model Railroad Association.**



**NEXT MEETING:**

**Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00 PM**

**The New Sand Creek Police Station 950 Academy Park Loop**

**(Northeast of the intersection of Fountain/Academy)**

**Colorado Springs, Colorado**

## Calendar of Events

### January 13th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Show and Tell Program: {to be determined}

### February 10th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Offline Buildings Program: {to be determined}

### March 10th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: MOW Program: {to be determined}

### April 7th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Odd Ball Program: {to be determined}

### May 12th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Diorama Program: {to be determined}

### June 9th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: {to be determined}

### July 7th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Locomotives/Steam Program: {to be determined}

### August 11th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photos Model/Layout Program: {to be determined}

### September 8th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photos Live Program: {to be determined}

### October 13th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Railroad Structure Program: {to be determined}

### November 10th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Locomotives/Diesel Program: {to be determined}

### December 8th, 2023 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting.

Program: Xmas Party



**The Milepost**, Volume 43, Number 1, January 2023, is published monthly, as an electronic document (Adobe PDF file), by, and under the authority of, the Pikes Peak Division (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, 950 Academy Park Loop (northeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at 7:00 PM. Please come to one of our meetings. We would love to meet you. All

scales are welcome. Besides our monthly meeting, we have swap meets, train shows, and other model railroads (and railroad) activities. All content in this journal is copyrighted to its respective owner unless otherwise noted. Please do not use content from this newsletter in other publications, newspapers, magazines, books, websites, etcetera, without explicit case-by-case permission. The editor of *The Milepost* is Mr. David Bristow. He can be contacted at the e-mail address of: [dave@bristow-family.org](mailto:dave@bristow-family.org) Thank you.

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## Next Meeting on Friday, January 13

Our meeting will be held at: The Sand Creek Police Station, 950 Academy Park Loop (northeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), in Colorado Springs, Colorado

Be sure to check out the Rocky Mountain NMRA Callboard: <https://www.rmr-nmra.org/callboard.htm>

## Editor's Thoughts

### Happy New Year!

Last month I mentioned artificial intelligence (AI) that I had been using in developing software, somewhat useful. I'm sure it will improve as more folks use it.

There are two other areas where I've taken advantage of AI. I recently purchased Topaz a photo enhancing software that uses AI to sharpen, enlarge and remove noise from photos. I've played with it and while I'm not expert at it and I'm sure it can do more I took a photo that Charlotte gave me that I posted in the November Milepost and played around with it. The original was slightly out of focus. I've cropped it to focus on faces:



After manipulating it a little it's turned into a rather large file, so I'm only showing the results of Mike's face. While not perfect, the image improvement is quite noticeable.



The other area I've experimented with is the online application ChatGPT, which uses AI to create any number of pros from poetry, songs, stories, and articles. This tool is rather spooky! I asked about hydrogen's use in US and Canadian railroads. The following was ChatGPT's response:

Hydrogen fuel cell technology has been explored as a potential power source for locomotives in the US, but it has not yet been widely adopted. There have been a few small-scale demonstration projects, but there are currently no hydrogen-powered locomotives in commercial service in the US. Some of the challenges that have slowed the development of hydrogen-powered locomotives include the high cost of fuel cell technology, the lack of a well-developed infrastructure for producing and distributing hydrogen fuel, and the need to develop safety standards and procedures for handling and storing hydrogen fuel. Despite these



challenges, some experts believe that hydrogen fuel cells could eventually play a significant role in the rail industry, due to their high energy density and ability to generate electricity with low emissions.

Hydrogen fueled locomotives are not currently in widespread use in Canada. While there have been some pilot projects and demonstrations of hydrogen-powered trains, the majority of locomotives in Canada are still powered by diesel fuel.

One example of a hydrogen-powered train project in Canada is the H2GO project, which was launched in 2016 by the Canadian National Railway Company and Ballard Power Systems. The project aimed to test the feasibility of using hydrogen fuel cells as an alternative to diesel fuel for locomotives in Canada. However, the project was eventually cancelled due to cost and technical challenges.

Overall, the use of hydrogen as a fuel for locomotives in Canada is still in the experimental phase and has not yet been fully implemented on a widespread basis.

Having done some research into the topic I feel ChatGPT's response was reasonably accurate and reads well!

As I am aware of the Canadian Pacific's efforts to use hydrogen fuel cells in a locomotive I pressed ChatGPT for details specifically about the H2OEL. Apparently ChatGPT is trained well and knows its own limitations as it responded that it didn't know and I should look to Google!

The CP's experimental hydrogen-powered locomotive made its maiden revenue run in October 2022 in Calgary, Alberta, taking the first step in determining whether the technology could one day replace diesel-electric locomotives. The home-built unit, converted SD40-2F was dubbed H2 OEL for "hydrogen zero-emissions locomotive." CP was hoping to have three locomotives switching customers in Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver in service by the end of 2022.



So, you might ask what does AI have to do with Model Railroading? That would be a good question, while I don't pretend to know but I suspect AI will permeate more and more software without many of us paying much attention. I can think of at least one use-case for model railroads, which I'll discuss in a later edition. I also suspect that for 1:1 scale railroads it will play a more and more significant role in the analysis and use of large sets of maintenance and operations data.

Margit Thompson passed on Dec 15, 2022, a truly sad day. This past Saturday there was a service at the Holy Cross Lutheran Church. It was encouraging to see many model railroaders who attended. I will miss Margit's smiling presence at Roy's Train store and at RCAF functions.

David

## Conductor's Corner

First - Many thanks to all last year's officers for doing their jobs and keeping us going for another year.

By the time all of you read this (if you read this part) it will be a brand-new year. This year I will attempt to say more and write less, (hoping you believe that).

Last year my main goal was to increase attendance and participation. Let's try to do the same this year - as I don't feel I hit my goal last year. Here is where it starts - NOT with the officers or assorted chair persons - but the MEMBERSHIP.

- Monthly contests - POOR participation from our membership. We still struggle just to get three participants.
- Monthly programs - Every member knows enough to put on one program. When was the last time you contacted our program chairman and volunteered to show us something about this hobby that you enjoy and can demonstrate to all of us.
- Annual layout tour - We had five excellent layouts on last year's tour. How many of us attended ALL of them??
- Division trip - Most of us have seen the Greeley Museum at least once, but those of us who went up there again had a great time and a great lunch. Who wants to plan this event for the upcoming year?? I need a chairperson - Is it YOU??
- December Holliday Party. Always a good get together. All of us enjoy parties. NONE of us ever eat enough cake.

For this next year, let's all of us try to do & participate more and just think about it less. ALL of us make up a division and all of us can make it stronger and more fun.

Wade Mountz  
Superintendent

## Margit Helen Thompson

**March 26, 1936 - December 15, 2022**



Margit's train has left the station for her final journey to forever. She leaves us with so many wanting to wave to her a final goodbye that I cannot recognize everyone there at the depot landing. Margit leaves more than just her many friends with our model train division and TECO. She also was very active with Rescued Hearts animal rescue right here in Colorado Springs. All that knew her thought she was one strong woman deserving of both friendship and respect, and I think she probably got it from everyone she met. Besides her husband Roy, Margit leaves family both in the United States but also in Canada and Sweden. Both Margit and Roy have been VERY active in the hobby of model railroading in Colorado for a quarter of a century. ALL of us who know her husband Roy and knew Margit will have many happy thoughts from knowing her for a long, long time. We will miss you.

# Drawing Prizes Preview

By Tony Pawlicki

“Teaser” preview of some prizes available at the drawing during intermission at the January 2023 Pikes Peak Division NMRA meeting. The idea is to entice more members to our meetings. **HEY – feel free - encouraged, even - to bring/donate surprise items! The more the merrier! (Wade’s and Mr. Lugg’s and Alan’s donations (Alan, thanks for your recent donations!) won’t last forever, folks.)**

(SOME OF) the January meeting offerings (returning to rolling stock-heavy selections):

ATSF 180413 LIFE-LIKE 40-foot, 50-ton HO scale World War II Emergency 2-bay hopper model kit. Gift of Tony Pawlicki (Christmas party drawing present, but inappropriate era for my layout).

Features:

- Plastic trucks.
- Metal wheelsets.
- Plastic couplers.
- No modern placards/stencils (ACI placard, Consolidated Stencil, U1 wheel inspection stencil).



40' tank car GATX 30902. An Athearn HO scale blue box model. One of Mr. Lugg's donations. Visually, a twin of GATX 30905 featured in the November 2022 drawing.

Features:

- As received:
  - Kadee #5 couplers.
  - Sprung metal trucks and metal wheelsets.
- Added goodies:
  - Weathered wheelsets.
  - Cut levers and associated brackets (unusual outside brackets attach to walkway struts).
  - NO modern era features (such as AEI transponders, Consolidated Stencils, ACI placards).
  - Major coupler height adjustment due to sprung metal trucks' bolsters being much higher than factory original; had to entirely remove original frame bolster bosses and file down one truck boss. (There appears to be no widely applied standard for the truck bolster boss heights, so every truck replacement can turn into an "adventure.")



50' single sliding door boxcar, MILW 2636, HO scale Athearn Blue Box model. One of Alan Hutchins' donations.

#### Features:

- As received:
  - One broken stirrup step.
  - Plastic wheelsets.
  - Kadee #5 couplers.
  - NO modern era features (such as AEI transponders, Consolidated Stencils, ACI placards); has roofwalk, high side and end ladders.
  - Has poling pockets. (Fallen Flags Web site ([rr-fallenflags.org](http://rr-fallenflags.org)) has photo of prototype car, showing NO poling pocket and a different style of cut lever bracket.)
- Added goodies:
  - Replaced broken stirrup step with A-Line formed bronze Style C stirrup step.
  - Weathered trucks.
  - Removed poling pockets.
  - Replaced wheelsets with weathered Kadee 33" wheelsets with metal wheels, shined treads.
  - Cut levers and associated brackets (outside brackets assembled from 2 pieces of styrene, Evergreen C-channel, and Evergreen angle).
- Bonus:
  - Printout of Fallen Flags Web prototype photo, showing the cut lever bracket detail clearly.
- Further Upgrade Opportunities (only fanatics or would-be fanatics need apply):
  - Relocate tack boards to panel nearest door to match prototype photo.
  - Relocate door stops to match prototype photo.



Lehigh and New England LNE 12785, a 34-foot 2-bay covered cement hopper, HO scale model (mainly E&B Valley, with upgraded hopper outlet gates). One of Alan Hutchins' donations.

#### Features:

- As received:
  - Weathered body.
  - Plastic wheelsets.
  - No couplers, only one coupler pocket cover.
  - NO modern era features (such as AEI transponders, Consolidated Stencils, ACI placards); has roofwalk, high side and end ladders.
- Added goodies:
  - Weathered trucks.



- 
- A detailed model of a Lehigh Valley Railroad hopper car, painted in weathered grey. The car features a red circular logo with "LEHIGH" and "NEW ENGL" text. It has a ladder on the side and various markings including "LN 123", "40 TON HOPPER", and "NEW ENGL R.R. CO. PHILADELPHIA, PA."

**By Joe Costa**





## The Portuguese Antidefamation League Will Hear About This!



**Sugar trains collide - Drivers two Portagees (Portuguese)**

### **Whose Kiwi Bridge is it Anyhow?**

This is the way it's supposed to work:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sstRJcaFU9U>

This almost turned into an auto sandwich:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zv8ZilUvLJ0>

## Miniature Wonderland Music Video from 2021

Incredible musical feat:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oK8B-d24YAk>

### Truck vs. Train, Both Lose



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQyqtx5nn6M>

### Bob Bandy Layout Visit

It's been a few years since I've had the opportunity to visit Bob Bandy's layout and a lot of progress has been made.

My favorite scene has to be the lighted roundhouse:



Kristin is a fan of the old-time gas station which is waiting for a permanent site:





One of my favorite old-style buildings there is waiting for a permanent home:

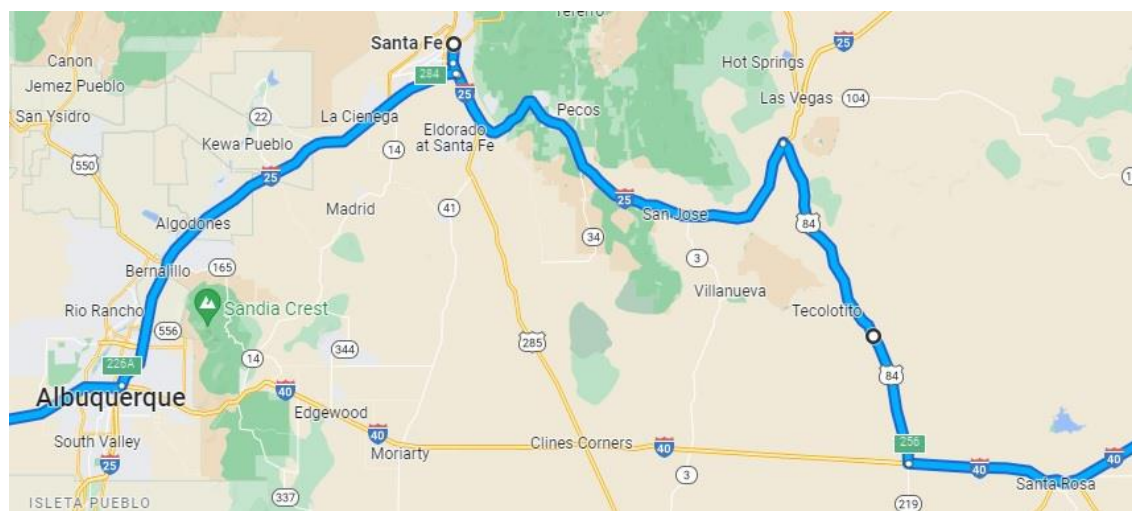




The coal mine is one of my favorite scenes:



### Route 66 Old vs New



Through much of New Mexico, Route 66 originally went along the Santa Fe Railroad route through towns like Winslow, Holbrook, Ash Fork, Williams and Albuquerque.

It even followed the Santa Fe trail six miles away from Las Vegas (home of the Castaneda Hotel).

As the national highway system matured, it was straightened out east of Albuquerque where Interstate 40 runs.

(Holbrook would be a great inspiration for a module with the Teepee Hotel and Dinosaur Rock Shop.)

The O-scale L-shaped Escalante model occupies an 8 square foot table at the Ash Fork Museum.

The portion along the track could be reasonably modeled on a four-foot module in HO-scale.



### **Fascinating Paper on Preserving the Harvey Houses**

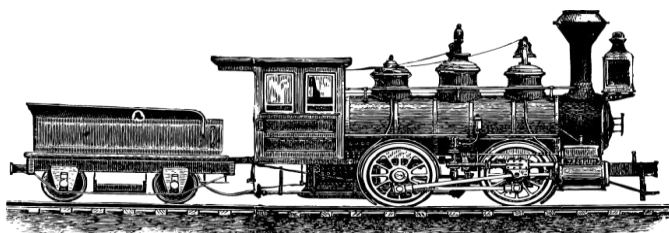
The paper is 10 years old and over a hundred pages full of history.

[https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1145&context=hp\\_theses](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1145&context=hp_theses)

### **Georgetown Loop Knows How to Light up for Christmas:**







## Notes from The Siding

By John Emmot

Well, here we are on the cusp of a new year. It is hard to tell what to expect. I can hope that it is better for me than the last one or at least doesn't get any worse. I can hope that the local model railroad environment stays alive and active. There are several organized groups who are working in various formats to create portable railroads suitable for public display and there are a great many folks who are working in isolation to create private railroads that few, if any, will ever see besides themselves and perhaps a few friends. It is my observation that the organized groups are generally shrinking, though there are occasional folks who voluntarily add themselves to the rosters. Many are folks who have been part of the RR scene for a long time. On the other hand, there are MANY folks who go to Roy's store and buy all kinds of model railroad material who are part of those 'private railroads'. They don't know or don't care about the public groups. It occurs to me that the place to find railroaders is the shop they all go to. We need posters and/or folks to be there and meet the people coming in. Some of them might become part of the display layouts if they knew and others want nothing to do with friends in model railroading. **Model Railroading is Fun, and Model Railroading with Friends is More Fun!** I have been around the PPD for about the last 32 years. I can remember attending Christmas parties with about 50 members present. There were 17 at the last one. Of those, two families might be counted as 'new' in the last five years. COVID and the other viruses may have changed the public outlook on social interaction in the recent past, but colds and flu have been around for many years. There are ways to deal with them. OK, enough of dark thoughts.

There were 17 great folks at the Division Christmas Party. It was an evening of good food and good railroading. The potluck snacks were great, and the fun and camaraderie made for an enjoyable night of entertainment. The gift exchange had nice entries and several 'exchanges' that rehomed

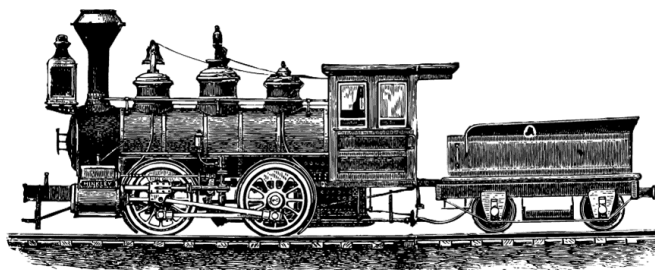


some special ones. There was no blood shed and I don't think any hard feelings. This was certainly the year of the boxcar based on the predominance of the offerings :-). Tony's 'last chance' drawing went well. Thanks to Tony and Roy's Trains for sourcing some great material. I'm sure those who were there had a good time. I can only encourage others to join us and make their presence known. It is kind of one of those things where what you get out of it is based on what you put into it.

Last month, I mentioned the train and the tree. Well, I did get it done though I skipped the hanging ornaments on the tree. Sharp eyed folks will see the grey shadow that explains that choice. And for another year, our Christmas cactus did not disappoint, though the grey shadow did have some input on the results. (We have been kitten sitting when our son and family are out of town.)

Many of us were present last Saturday morning to pay our respects to Margit Thompson. She was a great lady and a friend of model railroading. She passed away on December 15<sup>th</sup> after a long battle with cancer. We'll miss seeing her at Roy's Trains and at the swap meets.

Time to end this and get it to Dave. Hope to see lots of folks, round the roundhouse on Friday.



## **December 2022 Minutes**

### **Secretary, John Emmot**

The regular monthly meeting was held at the community room of the Sand Creek Police Station. There were 17 members, and no visitors present. Most had gathered early in anticipation of the Christmas Party. The potluck eating began promptly at 7:00 PM. The meeting was called to order by Superintendent, Wade Mountz at 7:12 after the first round of grazing.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as published in the Milepost.

### **Treasurers Report**

Tony had provided an email update to the officers on activity in the PPD bank account and he passed out hard copies at the meeting. The statement covered the income from last month, the

November drawing and the monthly interest of \$0.13. The statement was accepted as submitted. Tony is still waiting for the clearance of the check written for printing brochures. No one remembers receiving it. Amber presented \$20 cash from the sale of two convention cars at the September TECO show. While he had the floor, Tony thanked the helpers for wrapping the Christmas gifts. (Kristin, Charlotte, and Wade got a round of applause.)

### **Meeting Discussions**

The election of 2023 officers proceeded. With no new nominations from the floor, it was moved to cast a unanimous 'white ballot' for the incumbents, Tony, John, Mark, and Wade.

### **Old business**

There was no old business.

### **Contest**

There was no contest.

### **Program**

Joe presented a special gift to Wade. It was a coffee cup in the shape of a travel trailer to remind him to check the meeting schedule before making camping reservations in 2023.

With the formalities out of the way, the gift exchanges began. The non-rail exchange began with 5 gifts in play. Several of the gifts 'moved' several times before all was said and done. Items ranged from kitchen items and towels to gift cards.

The rail related exchange began with 15 gifts on the table. In hindsight, this could be labeled the year of the boxcar, thought there were some other gifts for variety. They included puzzles, structures, and an M&M train. Again, there was much movement of gifts as folks traded out of 'the wrong road name or era' to something more in tune with their interests.

Tony had done well with procurement at 'Roy's Santa shop'. With the small attendance, the drawings made it to the third round. There was a good variety of modern to old time rolling stock. David Solly scored a very nice SW-7 switcher in the draw.

While several members were not in attendance, it was good gathering with a wonderful selection of food choices and congenial companions to discuss railroads and comment on the proceedings.

Merry Christmas to all.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 followed by cleanup.















## TECO Tidbits

Happy New Year! The TECO board is gearing up once again for its winter show. The show will be on February 4 and 5 at the Colorado Springs Event Center, Hall B. This is in the large event space on the south end of where we have previously held our shows. We have invited many layouts, vendors, and museums to join in the fun! Thus far, we have 13 layouts participating at the TECO show, which is the most we have ever had at our events. We will also see a few new vendors.

One of the goals of TECO is to grow and promote the model railroading hobby. The board has taken action to reduce the entry cost for youth aged 13-18. The price for this age group is now \$5.00. The regular entry fee is \$10, with a discount offered to seniors, military, and first responders.

We have hands-on activities you may want to experience.

- Bring a box car for the box car races. Or watch the box car races and cheer on the fastest box car!
- Learn from a pro how to weather your equipment.
- Play the Seek & Find scavenger hunt, and you will find details on the layouts you might typically miss.
- Don't let the switching puzzle haunt you. Get in there and show 'em what you've got!

It's not too late to reserve a table if you are interested in being a vendor! Contact Mike Peck at (719) 640-2076 or email him at [mmp85trainnut@hotmail.com](mailto:mmp85trainnut@hotmail.com). Find vendor registration forms at <https://tecoshow.org/trainswap.htm>

As usual, we always need help. If you are interested in volunteering at the TECO show, don't hesitate to contact Kristin Phillips at (719) 338-7073 or by email at [Kristin.phillips7099@gmail.com](mailto:Kristin.phillips7099@gmail.com).

I know I've said this before- come early and stay all day! We hope to satisfy your railroading appetite with new layouts, clinic offerings, and two Colorado Railroad Destination presentations.

Elizabeth Maline  
Chairman  
Train Expo Colorado



# Rail Fanning Destinations of Colorado

## MODEL TRAIN SHOW



**February 4 & 5, 2023**

**Sat 10-5      Sun 10-3**

**Colorado Springs Event Center**

Hall B

3960 Palmer Park Blvd  
Colorado Springs, CO 80909



Info and online ticket sales at [www.tecoshow.org](http://www.tecoshow.org)



# Pikes Peak “N” Gineers Model Railroad Club

By Mike Peck  
Superintendent's Corner



Royal Gorge Route RR Christmas paint scheme and then afterwards.

Well, here we are starting 2023 and we have something planned for every month through May. Now I must work in some scenery clinics to help those wanting to add scenes to their T-TRAK modules. Next, we need a few nice days in a row to empty the trailer and decide where to go from there. Now to schedule all these events and keep all those darn doctor's appointments.

## **Colorado Springs Senior Center**

Those who can help with setup, be at the senior center at 10am on January 2, 2023. The address is 1514 N. Hancock Av. 80903. We'll utilize as many tables as we have module to cover. Bring your own lunch and drink. We may experiment with the layout design to see what we can come up with. Should be a lot of fun.

## **TECO 42**

TECO 42 will be held at the Colorado Springs Event Center in hall B. We will be setting up the T-TRAK layout and have three sales tables to man. Set up will be on Friday, layouts can setup after 8am. The sales tables will be set up in the afternoon. Be sure to bring your own chairs so you can be comfortable. If you can volunteer to work the door, I'll have a signup sheet at both the board and business meetings.

## **In Memoria**

I am saddened to announce the death of Margit Thompson. I shall miss her smiling face and greetings when one entered Roy's Train Store. Margit also worked the TECO shows when health would let her. The Model Railroad community lost another of our members.

The Memorial Service for Margit will be held on Saturday January 7, 2023, at 11am at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, on the southwest corner of Constitution and Murry Blvd.

## **Diner Car Menu Item**

By Mike Maline

This month we will indulge with another fantastic, non-low calorie breakfast item. This artery clogging serving must have tasted very good. I have learned this fact of life: the higher the calorie content, the better it tastes. The Soo Line must have subscribed to this philosophy for they served this scrumtish meal in their diner cars every morning. Try preparing it and let us know at the next PPD meeting how good it was. Also, this was made and served before sliced bread was invented.

## SOO Line Special French Toast

2 slices bread  
1 egg, well beaten  
Pinch, salt

2 oz sugar  
oil for deep frying  
3 oz light cream

Cut bread in  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch slices and cut slices in half diagonally. In a shallow dish, make a batter of well-beaten egg, salt, cream, and sugar. Dip bread in batter and fry to a golden brown in hot, deep fat. Remove and drain. Sprinkle with fruit, maple syrup, or honey and serve immediately.

### Before you Begin

You'll need: deep fryer, shallow dish

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Preheat frying oil to hot

Yield: 1 serving

## The Lighter Rail

By Kristin Phillips



Skiers disembark Boston & Maine's Snow Train at North Conway, N.H.

Trains Magazine Collection

Snow trains, a Depression-era innovation to boost passenger ridership, spread throughout the country in the 1930s as railroads started winter promotions in New England, Colorado, California, Michigan, Washington, Wisconsin, and other states. Some railroads built resorts: Union Pacific, Sun Valley in Idaho for the elite skiers; and Milwaukee Road, a modestly priced lodge at Snoqualmie Pass in Washington.

Boston and Maine's early and long-lived efforts are the best known among snow trains. B&M inaugurated its one-day excursions on January 11, 1931, carrying 196 people to Warner, New Hampshire, a ski resort. The railroad, in cooperation with the Appalachian Ski Club, took more than 8,000 passengers out of Boston in that first, 10-week season.

B&M also drew recognition for its promotional skills. As the season ended, *Sales Management* magazine reported, "It is an amazing example of alert merchandising; as a result, winter sports excursions into northern New England have become a New England institution."



But there were earlier, less publicized trains as well, especially Southern Pacific's Snowball Specials to Lake Tahoe in 1928 and semi-regularly to Donner Pass and Truckee, beginning in 1931; and some Canadian Pacific trains, beginning in 1928.

Colorado had the longest running snow trains. The era extended from 1936, when the *Denver Post* sponsored the first snow train to Hot Sulphur Springs for a ski tournament, to March 29, 2009, the last day of the Rio Grande Ski Train to Winter Park.

Even the Colorado narrow gauge lines got into the act. In 1938, Rio Grande operated trains from Salida and Gunnison to Marshall Pass. People skied on the west side of the pass, and the railroad made three trips back to the summit as a lift for skiers. The *San Juan*, the Alamosa-Durango train, occasionally dropped a coach at Los Pinos for cross-country skiers.

"The [Winter Park] ski train kept untold amounts of vehicles off Highway 40 over Berthoud Pass for all its years, preventing fender benders and crashes on the iced or slick highway. There was not a more relaxing way to get to and from Winter Park, especially in its latter years with three refreshment lounge cars," said Steve Patterson, co-author of "Rio Grande Ski Train" (1984, 1995).

The New Haven and New York Central introduced snow promotions to the New York metropolitan area in January 1935. The Lackawanna and Erie followed in February. Traffic continued to grow in 1936. Lehigh Valley started service in January with trains to Hazleton, Pa., where a new winter sports center was being developed. Maine Central, Delaware & Hudson, Reading, and Pennsylvania railroads joined the snow train parade. Baltimore & Ohio collected \$3,475 in passenger revenues from four trains out of Buffalo and Pittsburgh. The Central Vermont said the 1936-37 winter sports business was worth \$80,000 to residents and businesses of Vermont's Stowe district; of the total, the CV received \$10,000. The New York, Ontario & Western started service in January 1938 to Roscoe, N.Y., in the Catskills.

The Chicago & North Western started in December 1933 with a "Winter Sports Special" to Eagle River, Wis. It was not until February 1936 that the Pennsylvania and New York Central operated winter sports excursions from Chicago to Petoskey, Mich.

Union Pacific planned a new ski resort at Sun Valley, Idaho, modeled after resorts in the Swiss and Austrian Alps. UP invented the ski lift for Sun Valley. Socialites from the East and celebrities from Hollywood attended the grand opening Dec. 21, 1936. In December 1937, UP arranged another publicity splash: its new streamliner, the *City of Los Angeles*, made its maiden run from New York to Sun Valley.

The Milwaukee Road built the Snoqualmie Ski Bowl at the crest of the Cascade Range, 61 miles east of Seattle "for fun and not for luxury," opening it in January 1938. A typical train had 10 coaches, a baggage car, and a recreation car with a Wurlitzer "nickelodeon going full blast." The bowl operated until 1949 when fire destroyed the lodge.

World War II occasioned suspension of snow trains. After the war, the New Haven operated the first train from Grand Central on Jan. 27, 1946. Most roads continued the pre-war tradition. Union Pacific reopened Sun Valley but sold it in 1964.

A few trains continue. For example, Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society in North Freedom, Wis., has presented its annual snow train in February since 1976. Saratoga and North Creek Railroad in New York State will run a snow train Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from December 30 to March 31. Nordic Ski Association of Anchorage sponsors an annual train on the Alaska Railroad to the ski hill at Curry. Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts charts a Conway Scenic train for Steam in the Snow.

The snow train tradition shows the importance of the railroad in the growth of the winter sports industry, and its relationship to the everyday activities of people across the country.

JOHN GRUBER is a long-time Trains contributor, founder, and president of the [Center for Railroad Photography & Art](#), and editor of *Railroad Heritage*. He has been a freelance railroad photographer since 1960, and received awards from the Railway & Locomotive Historical

Society in 1994 for lifetime achievement in photography and in 2010 for an article about Lucius Beebe and Charles Clegg.

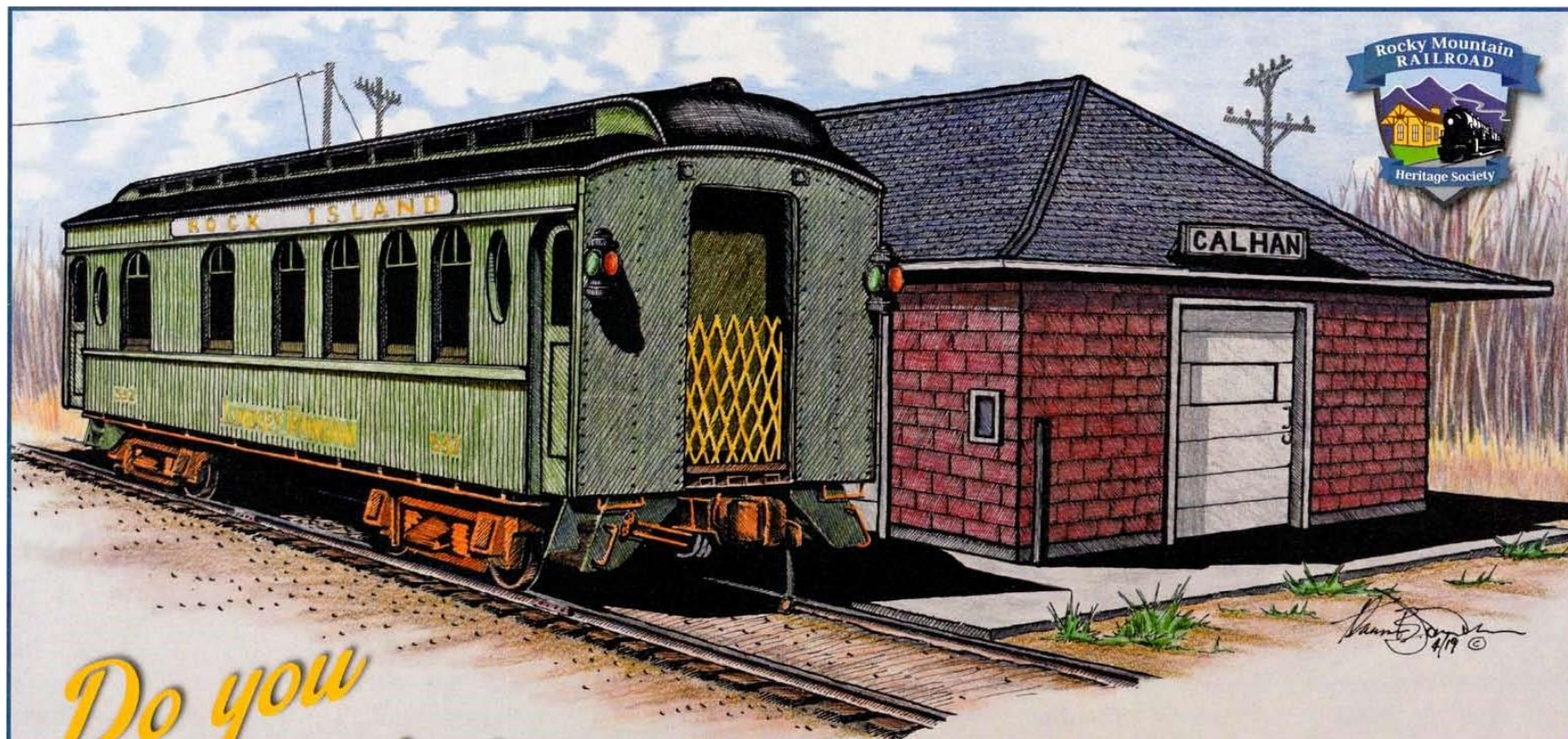


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