



The

# *Milepost*

**Volume 44, Number 5 — May 2024**

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



**NEXT MEETING:**

**Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 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 12th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

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

### February 9th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Offline Buildings Program: Lionel – HO Vintage Trains

### March 8th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: MOW Program: Harvey Houses of the Southwest

### April 12th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Odd Ball Program: The Delagua & Bethua Railway

### May 10th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Diorama Program: {to be determined}

### June 14th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: Charles Marchbanks

### July 12th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Locomotives/Steam Program: Circus Trains

### August 9th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

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

### September 13th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photos Live Program: John Emmot

### October 11th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Railroad Structure Program: Microcontroller Update

### November 8th, 2024 (Friday)

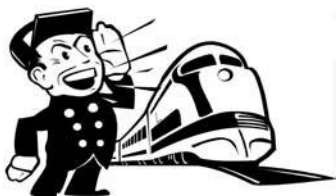
NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

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

### December 13th, 2024 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting.

Program: Xmas Party



*The Milepost*, Volume 44, Number 5, may 2024, 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, etc., without explicit case-by-case permission. The editor of *The Milepost* is Mr. David Bristow. He can be contacted at the e-mail address:

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## Next Meeting on Friday, May 10

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>

## 2024 Schedule

- |                          |                     |                              |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| • May 10 <sup>th</sup>   | Guest Speaker       | Possible Guest Speaker - TBD |
| • Jun. 14 <sup>th</sup>  | Charles Marchbanks  | TBD                          |
| • Jul. 12 <sup>th</sup>  | Mark Fuerstenberger | Circus Trains                |
| • Aug. 9 <sup>th</sup>   | TBD                 |                              |
| • Sept. 13 <sup>th</sup> | John Emmot          | TBD                          |
| • Oct. 11 <sup>th</sup>  | David Bristow       | Microcontroller Update       |
| • Nov. 8 <sup>th</sup>   | TBD                 |                              |
| • Dec. 13 <sup>th</sup>  | Christmas Party     |                              |

## Editor's Thoughts

Last month I was motivated to discuss KarTrak from a brief article in the March 2024 Model Railroader magazine in the section "News and Reviews" titled "ACI scan app now available". You may recall The technology while quite innovative didn't catch on. In the real world, Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) has been widely adopted. So, I thought I'd write about one of my favorite topics.

### Chugging into the Future: A Look at RFID in Model Railroading

Model railroading, the intricate and captivating hobby of building miniature railroads, has always embraced advancements in technology. From the early days of electric motors to the rise of digital command control (DCC), innovation has constantly pushed the boundaries of what's possible on a miniature layout.

For decades, model train enthusiasts relied on analog track layouts and physical control panels with knobs and switches. While offering a hands-on experience, these systems limited automation and scalability. The introduction of Digital Command Control (DCC) in the late 20th century revolutionized the hobby. DCC utilizes digital signals transmitted through the tracks to control locomotives and accessories, enabling more complex layouts and automated operations.

In recent years, a new technology has emerged that is transforming the way model railroaders operate their trains: **Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID)**.

The concept of using RFID in model railroading isn't entirely new. Early experiments in the 1990s explored using passive tags embedded in locomotives to trigger trackside events like sound effects or station announcements. However, the technology wasn't quite mature or affordable enough for widespread adoption.

The first known applications of RFID in model railroading emerged in the early 2000s. Pioneering hobbyists experimented with integrating RFID readers embedded within the track to detect and identify tagged cars. These early systems were often complex and required specialized knowledge.

### A Surge in Popularity: Ease of Use and Affordability

Over the past decade, RFID technology for model railroading has become more user-friendly and affordable. Several companies now offer complete RFID systems specifically designed for hobbyists. These kits typically include:

- **RFID readers:** Installed at specific points on the layout, these readers emit radio waves to detect and identify transponders on passing cars.
- **Software:** User-friendly software allows programming car identities, linking them to specific locomotives, or assigning them actions to be triggered upon detection by a reader.

- **Transponders:** These tiny microchips are securely attached to model train cars. Their small size ensures minimal visual impact on the aesthetics of the model.

The turning point came in the 2010s with the development of smaller, cheaper RFID tags and readers. This opened the door for a new generation of applications, making RFID a more accessible option for model railroaders.

RFID technology utilizes tags attached to locomotives or rolling stock and strategically placed readers embedded within the track. When a tagged car or engine rolls over a reader, the reader transmits a radio signal that excites the tag, causing it to transmit its unique identifier.

This identifier can then be used by the model railroader's control system to trigger a variety of actions:

- **Automated Train Operations (ATO):** Trains can be programmed to automatically stop, change speeds, or activate sound effects based on the RFID tag data. This allows for realistic operation and reduces the need for manual control.
- **Car Identification and Tracking:** RFID tags can store information about a specific car, such as its type, weight, or cargo. This data can be used to track individual cars as they move around the layout, providing a more realistic experience.
- **Shunting and Yard Operations:** RFID can be used to automate complex shunting maneuvers and yard operations, adding a new level of realism and challenge for model railroaders.
- **Interactive Layouts:** RFID tags can be embedded in scenery elements, allowing for interactive features like automatic level crossing activation or station announcements triggered by a specific train.

### Benefits of Using RFID in Model Railroading

- **Enhanced Realism:** RFID allows for automated and realistic train operations. Imagine a shunting yard where the system automatically sorts cars based on their RFID tags, replicating real-world practices.
- **Improved Efficiency:** RFID can automate repetitive tasks like stopping at stations or changing speeds, freeing up the operator to manage other aspects of the layout.
- **Enhanced Playability:** Interactive features and automated operations can add a new layer of fun and challenge for model railroaders of all experience levels.
- **Scalability:** RFID systems can be easily expanded to accommodate larger layouts with more locomotives and rolling stock.
- **Error Reduction:** Manual operation can be prone to errors. RFID ensures accurate identification of cars, eliminating the possibility of misplaced or lost rolling stock.
- **Data Logging and Analytics:** Advanced systems can log RFID data, allowing hobbyists to track car movements, analyze train performance, and even create detailed reports for a truly in-depth experience.

### Challenges and Considerations

- **Cost:** While costs have come down, RFID technology can still be more expensive than traditional control methods.
- **Technical Expertise:** Setting up and configuring an RFID system can require some technical knowledge.
- **Space Requirements:** Embedding RFID readers within the trackbed might require modifications to existing layouts, especially for those with limited space.

### The Future of RFID in Model Railroading

As RFID technology continues to evolve and become more affordable, it's expected to play an increasingly important role in model railroading. We can expect to see:

- **More affordable and user-friendly RFID systems:** Advancements in technology will likely lead to lower-cost and easier-to-use RFID solutions for model railroaders.
- **Integration with existing DCC systems:** Seamless integration of RFID with popular DCC platforms will further enhance the control and automation capabilities of model railroads.
- **Standardization of RFID tags and protocols:** Establishing industry-wide standards for tags and communication protocols will simplify system setup and ensure compatibility between different brands.

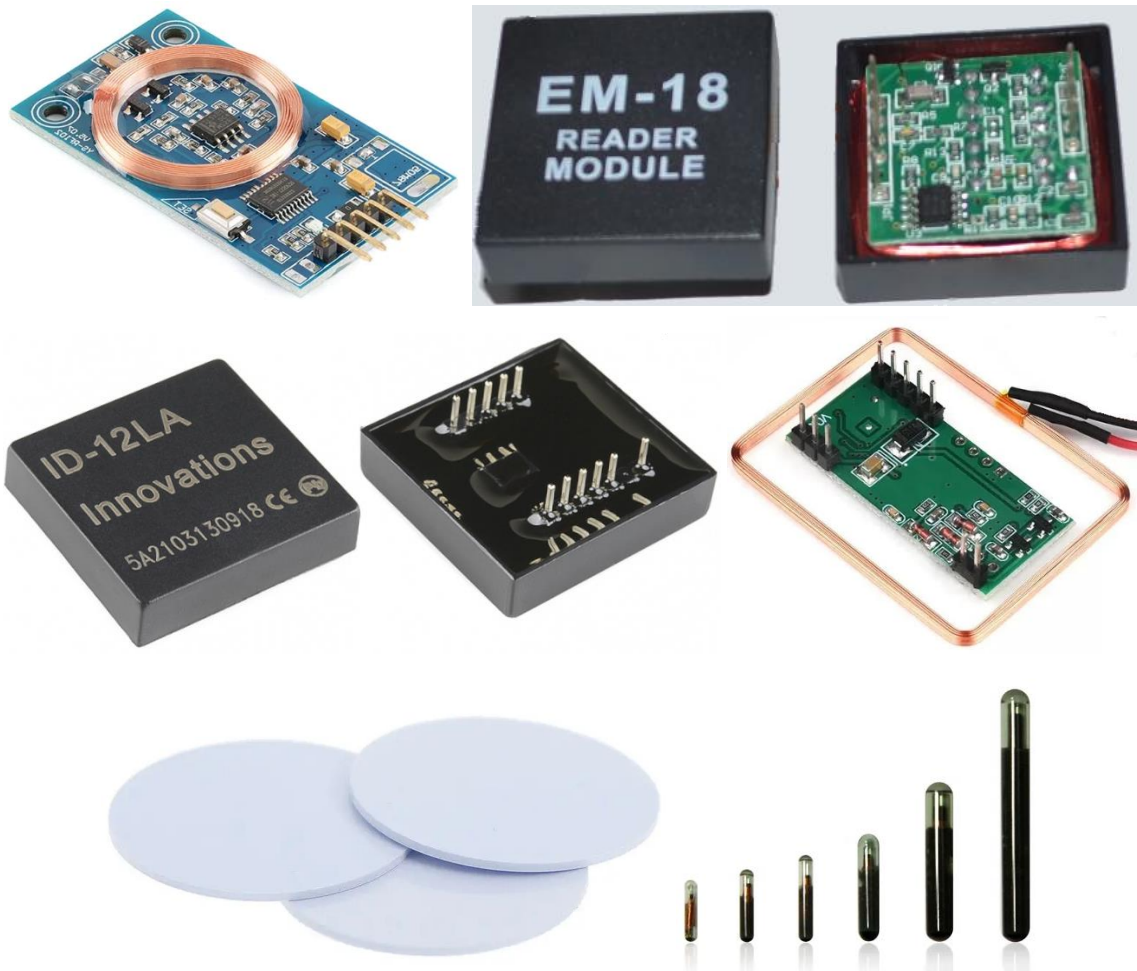


While there are many factors to consider in adopting and then implementing an RFID system the first is what frequency the tags respond to. There are several different standards, but the most common are either 125 kHz or 13.56 MHz RFID tags and readers. The following table highlights their pros and cons.

Factor	125 kHz	13.56 MHz
Frequency	Lower (125 kHz)	Higher (13.56 MHz)
Reading Range	Shorter (typically a few centimeters)	Longer (up to several meters)
Data Transfer Rate	Slower	Faster
Cost	Lower (generally less expensive)	Higher
Security	Lower (weaker encryption capabilities)	Higher (stronger encryption standards like AES)
Susceptibility to Interference	More susceptible to interference from metal objects or other electromagnetic fields	Less susceptible to interference
Applications	Simple identification, access control (key cards, security fobs)	Complex data exchange, secure transactions (payment systems, contactless cards)

When I started down the road for my system the preferred option by many model railroaders was the 125KHz. Today it seems more are considering the 13.56MHz.

I've bench-tested and installed several different readers and installed several different types of tags in my rolling stock. Here are some of the readers and tags I use.



The disk tags are 25mm in diameter and fit easily on the floor of a box car. Whereas the glass tags run a range of sizes, I currently use 2.12\*12mm, 1.4\*8mm, and 1.25\*7mm, which fit in trucks and other nooks and crannies of the underside of the rolling stock.

The cost of the readers ranges from as low as \$3 and the more expensive run is about \$30. The tags run for as little for 100 tags as low as \$17 for the disks and \$70 for the glass tags.

Here is a screenshot of my software used to display the tag id and associated rolling stock.

## RFID Tags Read

Time	Sensor	Reader	Tag	Road Name and Number	AAR	Color	Register
2024-05-04 04:57:36	RfidRdr01	1	900215023A	CN 49471	FM	Red Oxide	
2024-05-04 04:57:35	RfidRdr01	1	11001B0B9B	CN 521477	XM	Mineral Red	
2024-05-04 04:57:34	RfidRdr01	1	900215023F	CN 603116	FB	Brown	
2024-05-04 04:52:19	RfidRdr01	1	900215023A	CN 49471	FM	Red Oxide	
2024-05-04 04:52:01	RfidRdr01	1	0103DA3D9F	Not Registered			⊗
2024-05-04 04:51:52	RfidRdr01	1	9002150204	Not Registered			⊗
2024-05-04 04:49:48	RfidRdr01	1	900215023A	CN 49471	FM	Red Oxide	
2024-05-04 04:49:15	RfidRdr01	1	900215023F	CN 603116	FB	Brown	
2024-05-04 04:49:12	RfidRdr01	1	11001B0B9B	CN 521477	XM	Mineral Red	
2024-05-04 04:48:11	RfidRdr01	1	900215023F	CN 603116	FB	Brown	

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I've built my system using Docker and tested the Docker implementation on Windows 11, Linux Mint 21.3, and the latest Mac version. If you are curious about the design for the system as a PDF document you can see it here [https://kjcrr.org/?page\\_id=673](https://kjcrr.org/?page_id=673) how to set the system up is in this PDF document [https://kjcrr.org/?page\\_id=750](https://kjcrr.org/?page_id=750)

In conclusion, RFID technology is revolutionizing the way model railroaders operate their trains. While there are some initial challenges, the benefits of increased realism, improved efficiency, and enhanced playability make RFID a compelling option for the future of this fascinating hobby. As technology continues to develop, we can expect even more exciting possibilities for model railroaders to explore and bring their miniature worlds to life.

David

## Keepin' it on the Tracks

By Mark Fuerstenberger

National Train Day – May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024

While most of us agree that every day should be train day, it is officially coming up on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024. With that being the case, take the opportunity to ride a train, go out and watch a train, or even stay home and enjoy the trains you have.

### 2024 RMR Elections

I understand that all election results have been counted and individuals have been notified directly. However, they are waiting until the May 21, RMR Meeting to announce the winners officially.

### Rocky Mountaineer Trip

This month we will have representatives from the Rocky Mountaineer at our Division meeting to present about a possible upcoming trip to Moab, UT. In the meantime, check out the following links for more information.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHdfilGj7SI&ab\\_channel=RockyMountaineer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHdfilGj7SI&ab_channel=RockyMountaineer)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbXh\\_DbJ570&ab\\_channel=RockyMountaineer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbXh_DbJ570&ab_channel=RockyMountaineer)

### PPD Trip to Leadville

At the April meeting Division members signed up to go ride the Leadville Railroad train on Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. Currently, 10 people have signed up to go on this trip, and there is still room available if you would like to join us. We will be figuring out carpooling at the June Division meeting.

## RMR Convention – Salt Lake City, UT

Coming up very quickly is the Rocky Mountain Region Golden Spike Limited 2024 Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah on June 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>. The event is planned with a ride on the Heber Valley Railroad, on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Throughout the convention, there are several home layout tours available, along with modeling contests, clinics, and of course a train show.

Listed below is the registration link:

<https://geoffreykcarter.regfox.com/2024-rocky-mountain-region-convention>

## Drawing Prizes Preview

**By Tony Pawlicki**

“Teaser” preview of some prizes available at the drawing during intermission at the April 2024 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 Mr. Lugg’s and Alan Hutchins’s donations won’t last forever, folks – in fact, Mr. Lugg’s donations were exhausted with the February 2023 drawing.)**

(Some Of) The May Meeting Offerings (**feel free to contribute more at the meeting**).

ATSF 98191. HO scale work caboose with crane. Model Power. Gift of Alan Hutchins (if my poor old memory serves).

- Metal wheelsets.
- Knuckle couplers.
- NO modern markings (no ACI plate, no Consolidated Stencils, no U1 wheel stickers)



MRS 7593. HO scale Mather 40-foot boxcar. Life Like Proto 2000 model, new in box. Gift of Alan Hutchins (if my poor old memory serves).

- Metal wheelsets.
- Knuckle couplers.
- Individual (not molded-in) grab irons and ladder rungs.
- NO modern markings (no ACI plate, no Consolidated Stencils, no U1 wheel stickers)





## Mather 40' Box Car

GPEX 969. HO scale 50-foot iced reefer, Eversweet Fresh Squeezed Orange Juice. Athearn "Ready to Roll" model, new-in-box. Gift of Alan Hutchins (if my poor old memory serves).

- Metal wheelsets.
- Knuckle couplers.
- Express trucks.
- Wood siding, small plug doors.



## TECO Tidbits

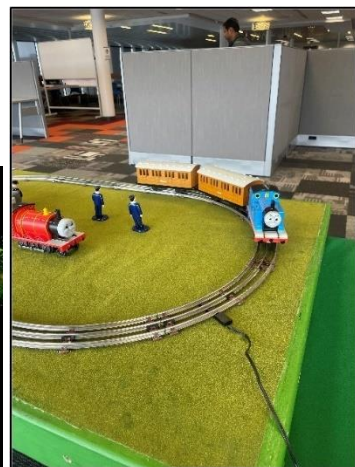
By Elizabeth Maline

On Saturday, April 27, TECO had the pleasure to display at the **All Pikes Peak Makes** at the Pikes Peak District Library 21c. It was a typical spring day for Colorado. The day started with grapple, then



rain, and ended with snow. Despite the weather not doing us any favors, the library had about 1000 attendees, and the feedback received from them was overwhelmingly positive. It was wonderful to see how engaged everyone was –

Along with a table for **TECO** to promote our November 2 & 3, 2024 model train show, the **Pikes Peak "N" gineers** leant **TECO**, a model depicting flat cars ranging from G to Z scale. The **PikeMasters** brought three modules along with the **Pikes Peak Division** switch puzzle. James Patterson manned the switch puzzle and Mike Maline toggled back and forth between the **Free-mo** modules and the **Shining Time Station** (Thomas the Train) module. Also present was Jack Sousa. Jack demonstrated the use of simple card stock to manufacture loads on flatcars. We all emphasized the resources available at the library to build model railroad equipment. On the display were several 3D built ore cars, passenger cars, and rail loads.



Earlier in the month, **TECO** had a display table at the Rocky Mountain Train Show – Spring Edition. Again, **TECO** was there to promote its next model train show scheduled for November 2 & 3, at the Colorado Springs Event Center. November is Model Railroading and we are looking forward to kicking off the holiday shopping season with our show!



Here Ray Schalcosky waits for our next customer, to talk about TECO and the model train show in Colorado Springs. Also in attendance were Amber Fuerstenberger and Elizabeth Maline.

## Show and Tell

### Tony Pawlicki

This note lays out the rules for the bi-monthly Show And Tell session/contest at the JUNE 2024 Pikes Peak Division NMRA meeting. These rules apply to the bi-monthly ***“salvage and resurrection”*** events. This event was originally announced a bit over a month in advance to give entrants enough time to prepare their entries. The event (sort of a second contest) was inspired by our late beloved Division Superintendent’s notion in his March 2023 Milepost Conductor’s Corner column.

**NEW FEATURE:** Starting with this coming June’s meeting, we have two parts to the event:

- The theme-specific contest/presentation (this June it is boxcars).
- **NEW FEATURE: *Free-form show-and-tell***, on any topic you choose. This feature is being added by popular request -folks have been suggesting this to our Superintendent.

You have five weeks to get ready, so I’m hoping for a big turnout!

### General Idea

- Grab an old, failed project you couldn’t bring yourself to discard (or a disaster picked up at a train show or store).
- Plan a fix (turning it into something good, though not necessarily creating what you originally planned).
- Actually fix it.
- Bring it to the meeting, display it, and then after the regular model contest, stand up and tell us about your adventures.
- ***The show-and-tell aspect is the main thing.*** If there are enough entries (three), there will be a contest aspect as well, but the main goal is to have fun salvaging something and entertaining the rest of us with the way you had fun.

**EXAMPLE:** An example and the rules were provided in the April 2023 Milepost.

## Calendar of Future Train Show Events

### Mark your calendars!

- **May 11**, National Train Day – visit the PPNG Clubhouse at 32 Sierra Madre, Colorado Springs, CO, and watch the trains go by. Saturday 11-1
- **June 1 & 2**, Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo (\$8) – Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, KS Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-3



- **June 5 – 8**, Rocky Mountain Regional Convention Stadler Rail Manufacturing Facility, Salt Lake City, UT <https://www.northernutahnmra.org/>
- **June 29 & 30**, Sherman Hill Train Show (\$10) - 3801 Archer Parkway Cheyenne, WY
- Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-3
- **July 27**, Lawrence Kansas Model Train Show (\$8) – Double Tree 200 McDonald Dr Lawrence, KS Auction - Friday, July 26, 6:30 – 10 pm Saturday 10-3
- **August 3 & 4**, RMTS Big Boy Days at the Forney Museum, Denver, CO
- **August 4 – 11**, NMRA National Convention, Long Beach, CA <https://surfliner2024.org/>
- **September** (TBD) YMR – Westside Global Methodist Church 1927 Henderson Ave, Colorado Springs, CO
- **September 21** Colorado Rail Proto Meet (\$20) 715 10<sup>th</sup> St, Greeley, CO [www.corpnm.org](http://www.corpnm.org)
- **September 21 & 22**, Rails in the Rockies (\$10) – Estes Park Event Center, Estes Park, CO Saturday 10-5, Sunday 9-4
- **November 2 & 3**, TECO Model Train Show (\$11) – Colorado Springs Event Center, Colorado Springs, CO Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-3
- **November 23 & 24**, Rails Along the Rio Grande (\$10) – Balloon Fiesta Park, Albuquerque, NM Saturday 19-5, Sunday 9-4
- **November 30 & December 1**, Rocky Mountain Train Show Holiday Edition, The Ranch Event Center, Loveland, CO
- **December 14 & 15**, BMRC Rocks and Rails – Boulder County Fairgrounds, Longmont, CO
- **February 22 & 23**, 2025 TECO Model Train Show (\$11) – Colorado Springs Event Center, Colorado Springs, CO Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-3
- **April 5 & 6, 2025**, Rocky Mountain Train Show Spring Edition, The National Western Complex, Denver, CO

## May Wavy Rails

By Joe Costa



This was a view from our cabin on one of the Caribbean islands.



## Insane Module Concept



On board the Norwegian Viva cruise ship, they have a 10-foot-long model near the observation lounge. I estimate that it was between n and ho gauge. Imagine that on a 12-foot-long module. Ignore the googly eyes behind the model.

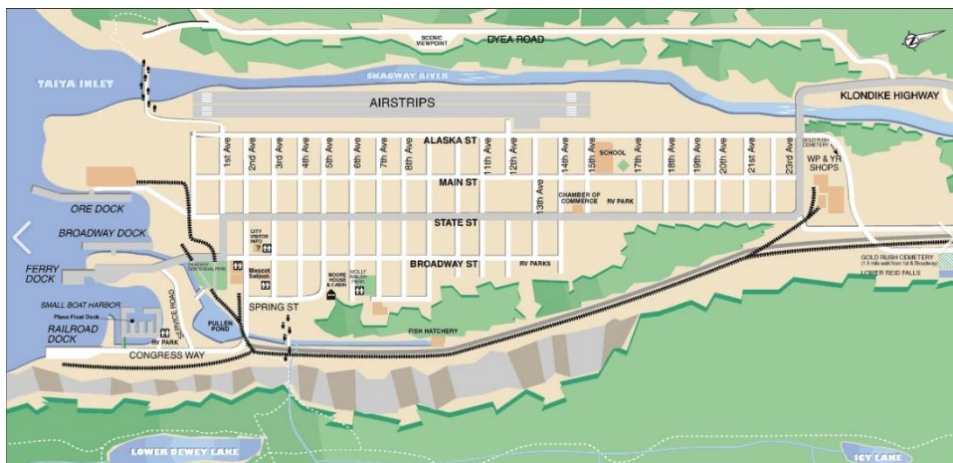
## Skagway Railroad Cruise Ship Railroad Dock Update

The replacement railway passenger ship dock in Skagway had an oopsie during ocean transport this year but they say it can be fixed. Until all repairs are done big cruise ships still won't be able to dock there.

A prospective module could have the hillside and passenger track behind the cruise ship.

This image of ships at dock and map are from Wikipedia Commons:





Not only would a scale module have to be long, but it would also have to be tall.

On a small NCL ship visit to Skagway we docked at the ore dock --- no danger of rockslides there.

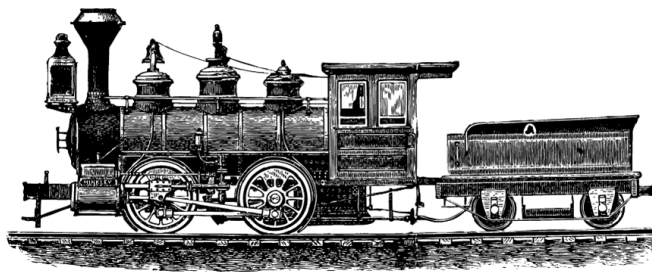
### TEMU Copyright Violation?



This is a hundred-dollar brick kit. There are two interesting details here. The first is the  $9 \frac{3}{4}$  track number and the second is the color scheme and Wizard Express name on the engine.

### AliExpress "Hogwartsed" Train?





## **April 2024 Minutes**

### **Secretary, John Emmot**

The regular monthly meeting was called to order by Superintendent, Mark Fuerstenberger at 7:00 in the community room of the Sand Creek Police Station. There were 23 members present and no visitors.

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

### **Treasurers Report**

Tony was present. There were hard copies of the report. The payment for the balance of the new Division shirts was posted to Amber. The statement was accepted as presented.

### **Announcements**

Mark asked attendees if they went to the TCA show.

John related that he had a good time. The PikeMasters said they had a 150' freemo layout and were glad for the use of the PPD rope posts.

Mark and John had received calls from Jerry Hansz' family about Jerry's layout. They have taken what they wish to keep, and the rest is available if anyone wants it. No one was available to look at it the following weekend.

The C21 library is having an open house on April 27 to show their capabilities. PikeMasters is going to have a small layout. They asked to use the Division switching puzzle for the kids to operate. They also asked for volunteers to interact with the public. The show runs from 10 AM to 3 PM.

As a follow-up from last month, Amber had contacted the Leadville train. She suggested 3 dates in July for a possible PPD trip. It was decided to try for July 9<sup>th</sup>. The ride begins at 10 AM. The coach price for the ride is \$57. Other classes of service are available for higher costs. A list was made of likely participants.

Mark reminded the group of the Rocky Mountaineer train trip that Mike Peck is organizing. Their representatives will be at the May meeting to describe the trip. It is currently scheduled for October 15-18, 2024.

Elizabeth presented a check to the Division from TECO for participation at the January show. She also discussed the future November 2-3 show. She is seeking volunteers to sell tickets, supervise the seek & find activity, and oversee the entrance on show day.

She also noted that they were willing to host a 'summer' picnic at the Casa. The timing is July, August, or September, TBD.

It was announced that the Estes Park show is scheduled for the third weekend of September.

There were two entries for the Reefer show and tell.

- John described his modifications to the roofs of several cars to resemble the Moffat cars more closely they represent.
- Tony described the changes and changes he made to an Athearn reefer to match a prototype.

Bill LaFollette noted that Alan Hutchin's collection will be liquidated this week.



Mark brought up a question if the PPD might like to consider an alternative meeting schedule. It was left for further discussion after the membership had time to think about it.

### **Program**

After a 15-minute refreshment break, Mel McFarland gave a presentation on the Delagua and Bethune Railroad. It was a vintage Colorado that served the designated points. For all their short, checkered history they went "through the weeds, not around them".

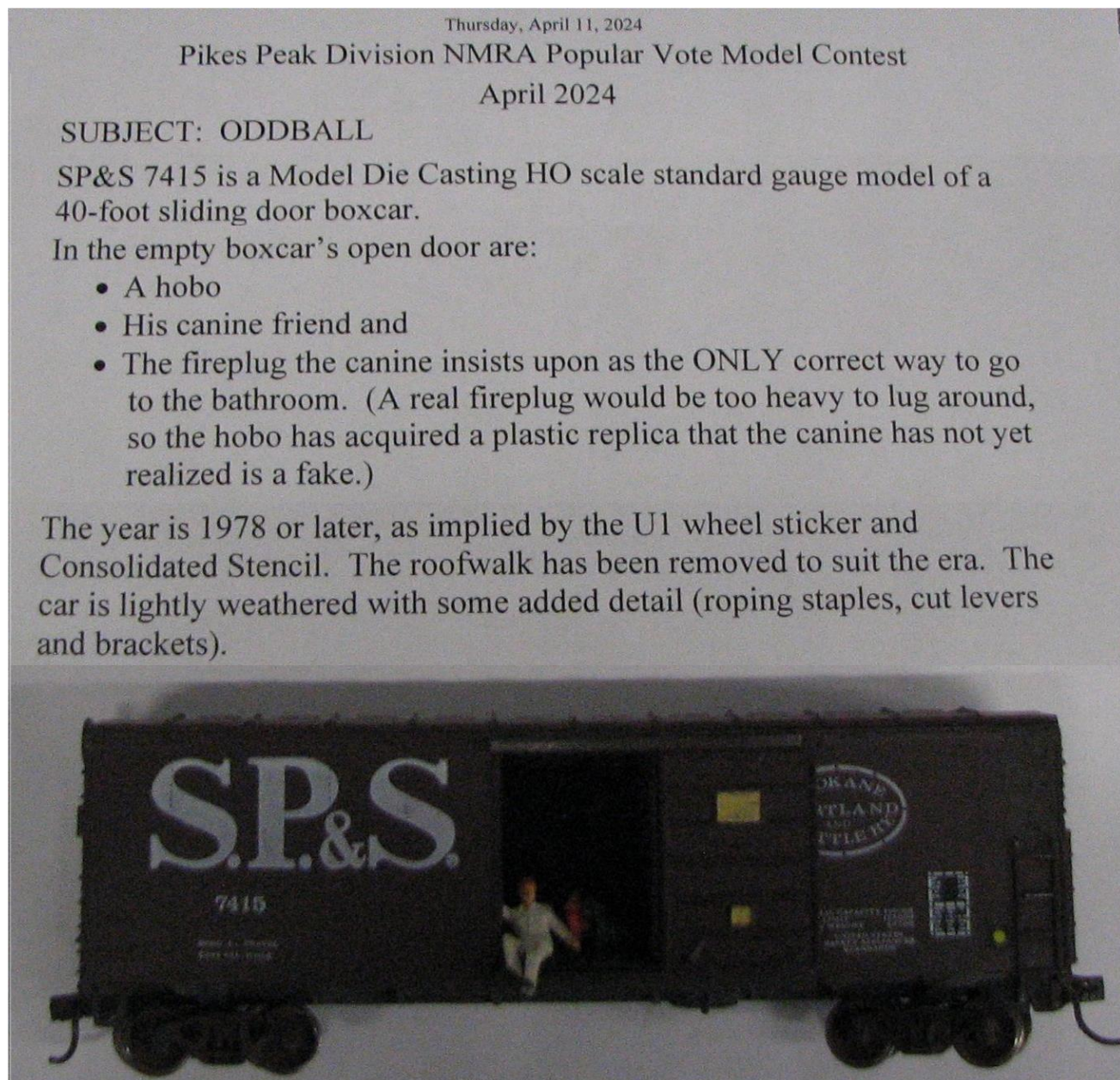
### **Drawing**

The drawing was held with several happy winners.

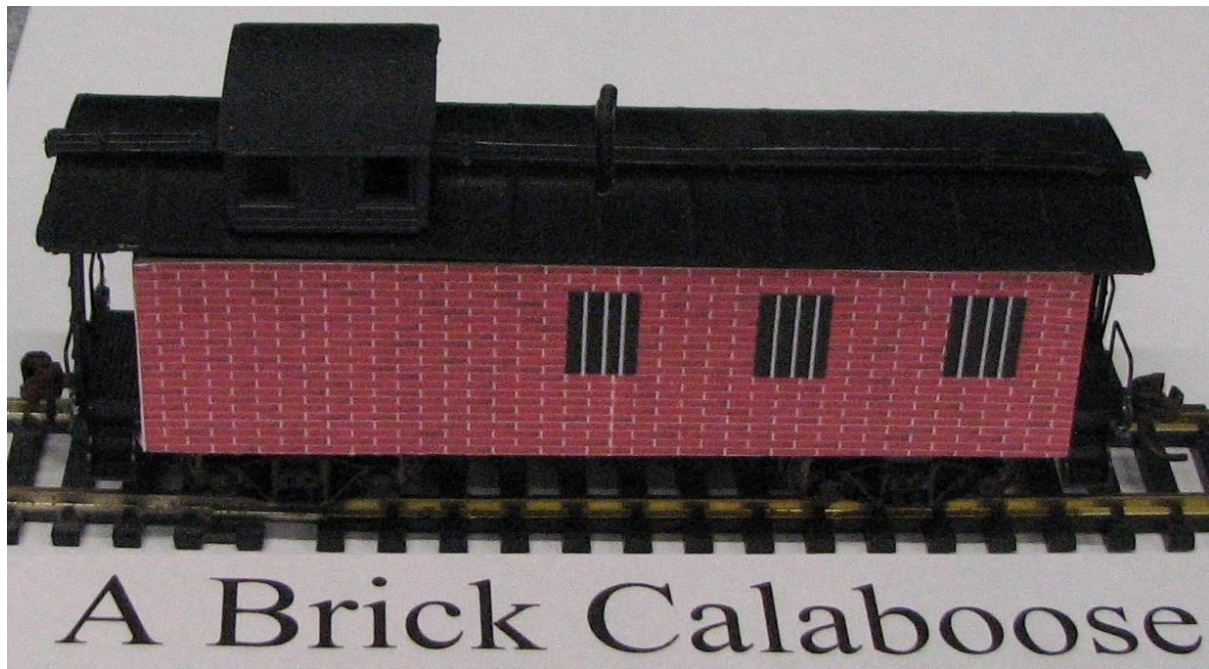
### **Contest**

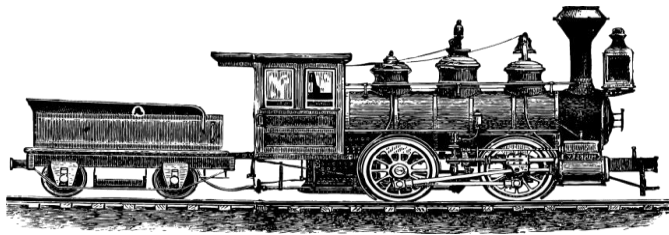
There were only two entries in the April contest.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:37.









## Notes from The Siding

**By John Emmot**

My mind has turned to Swiss cheese. More holes than substances. Once again, I had spaced the dates, even after I had updated the website I still forgot until David reminded me. Along with forgetting meeting schedules, I am also not keeping up with my modeling. I have several projects for me and Dave is waiting for progress. I have Moffat refrigerator cars in mid-production. They need ladders and roof walk installation. I need to get with Gerry and print some decals, both black and some white. I have Consolidation and Mikado locomotives needing DCC installations. It can happen, but only if I do it.

One thing that did happen was a trip to Calhan. There was a planned workday last weekend, but weather, illness, and houseguests for participants kept them away. I and one other did go out and get some material to allow me to complete some work at home. That will quicken progress when we do get to go out and work on repairs to the vandalism of last summer. It would be possible for two or three two-person crews to work simultaneously if they were available. Any help would be appreciated. Light work with small hand tools is what we need.

Planning is underway for the next two TECO shows. We have a 'reservation' for the south Hall on November 2&3 of 2024 at the CS Event Center and a request for February 2025. The intent is to focus on local layouts first. Keep those dates in mind.

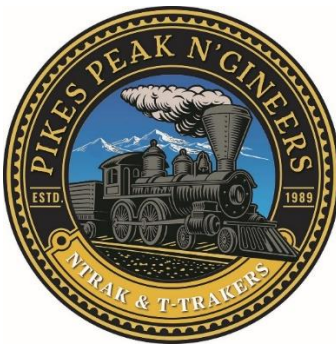
Don't forget the Division field trip to Leadville in July. I hope my lungs will let me go, but too soon to tell yet.

There wasn't much interest in the buildings on Jerry Hansz layout at the last meeting. It is unfortunate but understandable. While it would be nice to have something from Jerry, I have passed the time when new acquisitions make sense. Collecting the material and storing it until the next TECO show where it could be offered to new owners is more than the current membership could handle. Jerry's work will live on in pictures only.

The subject of alternate meeting times surfaced at the last meeting. It is an interesting idea, but it comes with some concerns over attendance at other times. The current membership knows the schedule and plans around to be there or decides that they will miss. I doubt that a greater number would be present on a different schedule, though I can't prove that. Finding a time other than Friday evening might get some who can't make it on Friday to attend. Perhaps a survey/poll of the NMRA members to see if any would attend the meeting at a different time would be illuminating. Finding a venue would be a consideration.

Hope to see a crowd 'round the roundhouse of Friday.





## **Pikes Peak “N”Gineers Model Railroad Club**

**By Mike Peck**



Setting up at the TCA Show.



The calm before the storm, TCA Show.

### **Superintendent's Corner**

The club had some success at running trains on Saturdays without a snowstorm to cancel a session. We did have a wiring issue for the DC lines red and yellow, but Mike got those repaired. Chris was able to repair a power problem on one of the green line switches by replacing the metal joiner.

The club flyer needs some new photos of club activities for the flyer. We want photos that have a few club members in them. Hopefully, when we go to the Colorado Railroad Museum or the Moffat Museum we can get some group shots.

### **Colorado Railroad Museum**

For those club members who are planning on going to the Colorado Railroad Museum, we will meet at the Monument Park & Ride at 8 am and carpool up from there. Those that attend please take a few group photos for the club flyer and Railhead articles.

### **Rocky Mountain Pace, Pikes Peak location**

Set up for the Rocky Mountain Pace event will start at 8 am on Thursday, May 23. The first group to come through will be around 10 am. The second group will be at 2 pm. Friday, May 24 we will have just the morning group as some of the staff have to attend some meetings in the afternoon, so we will have an early teardown.

The layout size will be 30" 24' using 6' tables as we have done in the past.

### **Rocky Mountain Train Show**

Set up for the show started at 1 pm on Thursday for layouts requiring vehicles to enter the event. After I found our space, we had to find some vehicle owners to move their vehicles out of our spot so we could set up the tables. We didn't have enough tables so went and ordered three more.

We set up the three sales tables first so Mary could begin laying out the sales items. We unloaded the van and took it outside. Once the other tables arrived, we started setting up the layout in an "L" shape.

Both Thursday and Friday proved to have lots of rail traffic come by so when I could, I would run out and take a photo or two and lots of video.



Saturday started slow for us since we were as far back in the building as one could get without being outside. We were right across the aisle from the Thomas the Tank Train ride, so cotton in our ears helped.



Slowly the crowd made it back to us. We had a lot of lookers and answering questions. We did however have a good sales day. We moved a lot of the Tomix train inventory but none of the trains. We could have sold a dozen Firehouses if we had them. Sunday was slower but still a good crowd. The show officials reported that they had over 10,000 people through the door up 18% from last year. Sales were down for everyone from what I heard and the economy may have had a lot to do with that.

We were packed up and ready to load in about 45 minutes. I went out and got the van and got in line. Once I was able to get in we loaded the van and I headed to the exit to leave. I had to wait for a few minutes so large vehicles with trailers could get in then I was given the signal to depart. In the after show report there was no damage to modules this year and it went a little smoother.

### **California Trip by Terry Kift**

After the wedding I attended, my brother took me on a tour of the Port of LA to get some train pictures. Unfortunately, they are building tall, concrete walls along the track to keep thieves from breaking into the containers on the trains as they wait. It also keeps us from getting good shots. So here are a few non-train pictures (except one)

- The Goodyear blimp is based in Carson, CA a few miles from my brother's house off the freeway. He was flying around the Long Beach Grand Prix that weekend and is probably the only reason he was there.



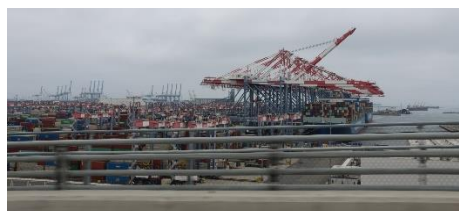
- Here is a quick shot of the SoCal Metro going across the same freeway. Didn't have time to chase one down for a better shot.



- This is a track mobile railcar mover that the port uses to push assorted railroad cars found in the port. There's no coupler on it, just brute force, and it's only when the rails are laid in concrete (see foreground).



- This is a shot going over the main bridge showing off just some of the cranes used to off-load container ships. This is just a small portion of the Port of LA, not the Port of Long Beach that sits next door.



- There used to be a trolley system called the red line that ran from 2003 until 2015. The line ran for 1.5 miles and cost a dollar for the day. There were shops, restaurants, and museums that were along the line. Unfortunately, due to major construction projects along the line. It was shut down in 2015. There



is a tent next to the line housing two of the trams. There were three trams used on the line, two built from scratch. One of the trams is used by the port for charter service and the fate of the remaining two is not known. The picture is part of the trolley line with the overhead wire poles still up and you can see some men who were down removing a switch.



### **Editor's Remarks**

I want to thank Terry Kift for his photos and article, these are what I would like to have for Railhead. The club has a couple of field trips coming up so I hope I can get articles from each of those trips along with photos.

Those members that want Micro-Trains cars, couplers, trucks, and spare parts you can order from Ron. Ron said if you turn in your order at the board meeting, he should have the items by the business meeting.

If anyone has something to sell let me know and I'll put it in The Railhead.

Those of you interested in the DSP&P or better known as the South Park rail system, prepare to attend the Boreas Pass Railroad Day in Como.



### **Lighter Rail**

**By Kristin Phillips**

While sitting in the chiropractor's office waiting for my appointment, I flipped through the Reader's Digest in the magazine pile. I came across an article in the June 2023 Readers Digest, Keeping Track of Train Travel by Samantha Rideout. She listed 13 reasons you might want to take the train for your summer getaway. Here are a few of them.

In a plane you see clouds. The United States has the world's largest rail network of nearly 140,000 miles of track with many scenic and interesting views.

Europeans built the built the earliest tracks in mines, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Men or horses provided the motive power.

The fastest trains today are sometimes called bullet trains and can reach speeds of 200 mph. The fastest train of all, the Shanghai Maglev in China, uses magnetic attraction and repulsion forces to move forward and can reach speeds of 285 mph. The fastest American train, the Acela can reach speeds of 150 mph in Connecticut and Rhode Island.

It can be faster to ride a high-speed train than to take a plane, counting the time it takes to get to a distant airport and clear security, etc.

The Orient Express is a real train route. It is the lap of luxury featuring marble bathrooms and a live pianist in the bar car. The trip starts at \$23,000 for the five-night trip from Paris to Istanbul.

If you want to economize, consider the B & O, Reading, Short Line, or Pennsylvania Railroads. You can own them for only \$200 each in Monopoly money. In Ticket to Ride, you link cities to earn points.

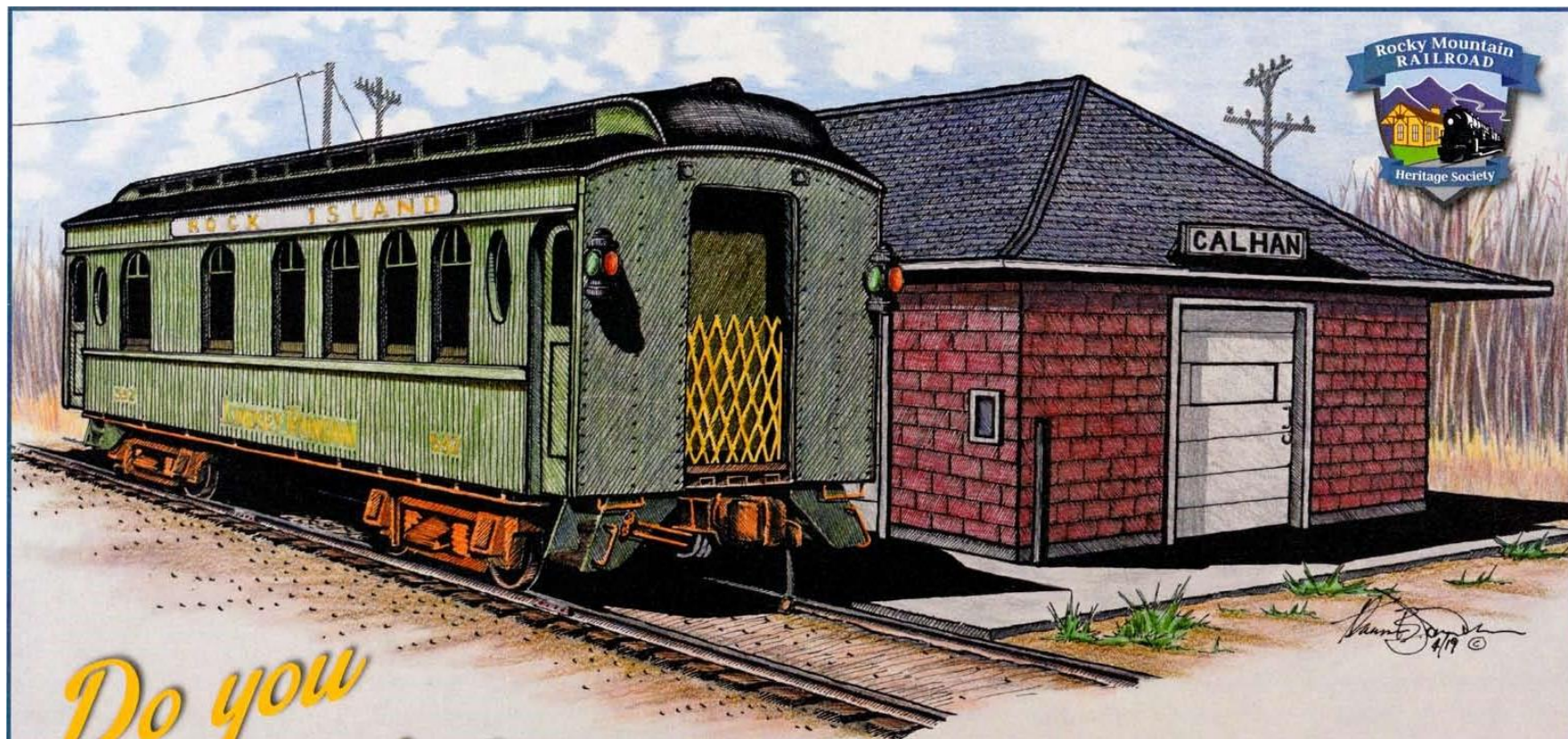
One of the longest real-life routes is the Trans-Siberian Railway. The route, from Moscow to Vladivostok, Russia is 5,700 miles long, goes through eight time zones, and can take a week or more to traverse. Once a week a train car from North Korea connects in Vladivostok, making Vladivostok to Pyongyang the longest route you travel without switching trains.

After reading the article, a factoid popped into my head, that of the Grand Funk Railroad rock band that was formed in Flint, Michigan in 1969. The band's name, thought up by their manager, Terry Knight, is a takeoff from the Grand Trunk Western Railroad, a well-known railroad in Michigan. Think back to "Walk Like a Man" and "The Loco-Motion". The band broke up in 1976. I still love their music. Am I dating myself?

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