



The

Milepost

Volume 46, Number 7 – July 2026

The official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Division

Rocky Mountain Region – National Model Railroad Association.



NEXT MEETING:

Friday, July 11th, 2026, 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 9th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Show & Tell Program: The History of the McKeen Motor Car and #22 of the Virginia & Truckee RR

February 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: MOW Program: Colorado Midland.... A Train Ride

March 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: Blending your Background to your Layout

April 10th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Odd Ball Program: GM's Train of Tomorrow

May 8th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Offline Bldg Program: Colorado Springs & Cripple Creek District Railroad the Short Line

June 12th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Railroad Structure Program: The History of the McKeen Motor Car & #22 of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad

July 10th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: Charles Marchbanks

August 14th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Diorama Program: Sequel; Colorado's Largest Rail Tragedy!

September 11th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photos Proto Program: David Solly

October 9th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photo Model Program: AI and MR

November 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Loco Steam/Diesel Program: Vintage

December 11th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting.

Program: Christmas Party!



and other model railroads (and railroad) activities. Unless otherwise noted, all content in this journal is copyrighted to its respective owner. Please do not use content from this newsletter in other publications, newspapers, magazines, books,

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The Milepost, Volume 46, Number 7, July 2026, 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,

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 dave@bristow-family.org. Thank you.

Next Meeting on Friday, July 11

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

2026 Schedule

- July Charles Marchbanks
- August Rya Kricker - Sequel to previous presentation, Colorado's Largest Rail Tragedy
- September David Solly
- October David Bristow – AI in Model Railroading
- November Ken Rambo
- December Christmas Party!

Editor's Thoughts

The Evolution of Laser Technology in Model Railroading

For decades, building a craftsman structure kit meant spending hours hunched over a workbench, carefully slicing individual pieces of basswood with an X-Acto knife, praying the grain wouldn't split. Today, a new tool sits alongside our airbrushes and soldering irons: the desktop laser cutter and engraver.

Once confined to high-tech industrial factories, lasers have revolutionized the way we scratch-build structures, fabricate rolling stock, and create ultra-realistic scenery. Here is a look at where this technology came from, what it costs today, and how it is changing our hobby.

The journey of the laser from a physics laboratory to the hobbyist's workbench spanned several decades:

- **1960:** Engineer Theodore Maiman built the world's first functioning laser based on earlier theoretical work. At the time, critics jokingly called it "a solution looking for a problem."
- **1965:** The first production laser-cutting machine was used by Western Electric to drill holes in diamond dies.
- **1967:** Peter Houldcroft in Cambridge pioneered gas-assisted laser cutting (using an oxygen jet), allowing lasers to slice through thick metals. Soon after, CO2 lasers were adapted to cut non-metals like textiles and wood.
- **1978:** The primitive origins of laser engraving emerged, primarily used for mass-producing wooden art and industrial marking.
- **The 1990s & 2000s:** Computer-aided design (CAD) software integrated seamlessly with lasers, giving rise to the commercial "craftsman" laser-cut wood kits that transformed model railroad manufacturing.

If you haven't looked at laser cutters recently, you might be surprised by how far they've come. The market has largely split into four powerful technologies tailored for consumers:

1. **Diode Lasers:** Driven by brands like xTool, Elegoo, and Ortur, diode lasers use semiconductor technology. Recent advancements have compressed multiple laser diodes into a single beam, pushing optical power from a weak 5W up to a massive 20W, 40W, or even 60W. Modern diode lasers are compact, highly reliable, and can slice through thick basswood, plywood, and acrylic with ease.
2. **CO₂ Lasers:** Machines like the Glowforge or OMTech use gas-filled glass tubes. They are faster than diode lasers and excel at cutting clear acrylics and organic materials, though they require enclosed

water-cooling systems and larger footprints. This is the type of laser machine offered by Pikes Peak Library District.

3. **Fiber Lasers:** Machines like the *ComMarker B4*, *OMTech Fiber*, or *LaserPecker 5* (ranging from 20W to 50W) They use MOPA¹ or a solid-state laser using an optical glass fiber doped with rare-earth elements (like ytterbium or erbium). They are primarily known for their speed, precision, and ability to easily cut, engrave, or mark various types of metals.
4. **Dual-Source Galvo² Lasers:** Machines like the *xTool F1 Ultra* combine a blue diode (for wood/acrylic) and a 20W Fiber laser into one unit, specifically aiming at the hobbyist/small-shop market.

Today's state-of-the-art machines boast features like built-in AI cameras for automatic material alignment, auto-focusing lenses, and air-assist systems that blow away smoke to eliminate charred, burnt edges on your wood components.

The price of entry has plummeted dramatically, making lasers accessible to individual modelers and local clubs alike:

- **Entry-Level/Hobbyist (\$300 – \$600):** Open-frame diode lasers (10W to 20W). Excellent for engraving plastic, etching slate, and cutting thinner balsa or basswood up to 1/8-inch thick.
- **Mid-Range/Enclosed (\$800 – \$2,000):** Fully enclosed, safe-for-the-home diode and entry-level CO2 machines (like the *xTool S1* or *Flux Beamo*). These handle thicker woods, cut much faster, and typically feature smoke extraction ports.
- **Prosumer/Club Level (\$2,500 – \$5,000+):** Powerful 40W to 100W CO2 systems or high-end enclosed diode rigs. These are perfect for large clubs looking to mass-produce layout infrastructure or modelers starting a side-business selling custom kits.

Whether you model in tight N scale or massive G scale, a laser cutter can completely transform your approach to layout construction:

- **Craftsman Structures:** Instead of buying expensive commercial kits, modelers can download or design vector files (SVG/DXF) to cut custom passenger stations, interlocking towers, or track-side shanties. The laser can cut the walls while simultaneously engraving individual clapboard lines or brick patterns.
- **Micro-Detailing:** Lasers excel at cutting delicate parts that are incredibly difficult to cut by hand, such as window sashes, architectural brackets, freight car walkways, and chain-link fences made from treated card-stock or even thin metal.
- **Scenery & Retaining Walls:** You can easily engrave incredibly realistic stone patterns into high-density foam, wood, or task-board to create custom tunnel portals, bridge abutments, and city sidewalks.
- **Layout Infrastructure:** Beyond what is visible on the layout, lasers can be used to cut perfect fascia panels, control boards with clean cutouts for toggles and LEDs, or custom-fitted sub-roadbed brackets.

You don't need to be a master CAD designer to get started. Platforms like Etsy and various model railroading forums are packed with ready-to-print laser cut files for rolling stock, structures, and signs. I use OfficeLibre Draw and Inkscape as PPLD lasers can print svg files.

The laser cutter has officially earned its place next to the 3D printer as a staple of modern model railroading. Whether you want to purchase a budget diode machine to tackle custom scratch-building projects or your club is looking to invest in an enclosed machine for group projects, there has never been a better—or more affordable—time to bring laser technology to your layout.

David

¹ A MOPA (Master Oscillator Power Amplifier) laser is an advanced type of fiber laser that separates the generation of the laser beam from its amplification. This two-stage architecture allows operators to precisely adjust the pulse width, duration, and frequency, making it exceptionally versatile for precision engraving, marking, and cutting.

² A Galvo laser is an engraving and marking system that uses a pair of high-speed, motorized mirrors (called galvanometers) to rapidly steer a stationary laser beam across a material.

Keepin' it on the Tracks

By Mark Fuerstenberger

Union Pacific Big Boy #4014 – 2026 Coast to Coast Tour – Eastern Leg Announced

The Union Pacific Big Boy is currently in Pennsylvania where it will be celebrating America 250 in Philadelphia, PA. The train will head west after the celebrations are over on its route back to Cheyenne, WY. It is planned to travel through Colorado on July 27-29.

For more details go to: <https://www.up.com/about-us/history/steam/schedule>

Colorado State Fair, Aug 27th – Aug 30th, 2026 - Pueblo, CO

The Pikes Peak Division module group is planning to set up at the Colorado State Fair again this year. We will be setting up on Thursday, Aug. 27th. We will run trains for the first 3 days of the Fair, Friday, Aug 28th through Sunday, Aug 30th. Tear down will be the following morning on Monday, Aug 31st. We'd love for everyone who wants to, to attend and run trains during the show.

Fall PPD Outing – Possibly Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad

The Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad opens for the season mid-May, and typically operates through the first weekend in October. We will contact them in June, and see about our options for scheduling an event in the fall. More to come!

Save the Date: Rail Proto Meet (RPM) – October 16th - 18th, 2026 – Greeley, CO

The event will be held at the Island Grove Event Center in Greeley.

Visit: <https://corpm.org/> for more details.

Rocky Mountain Region Website

The RMR region website just underwent a total rebuild. Be sure to check it out now. The website has the latest events and information from the region. <https://www.rmr-nmra.org>

NMRA Interchange

If you like to be online, you should check out the NMRA Interchange. You'll need to create a login on the Discord website. <https://discord.com/> From there you'll need your login information to the NMRA website, and once you're there check out the link to the Interchange.

<https://www.nmra.org/members/nmra-interchange> You'll find a few simple steps to get setup. This setup process is only required the first time, and after that it's easy to jump online and see what others are doing. The site also allows for easy conversations, just like you might do on Zoom. I encourage you to check it out.

Drawing Prizes Preview

By Tony Pawlicki

"Teaser" preview of some prizes available at the drawing during intermission at the July 2026 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! (ALERT: We have exhausted ALL of the various donations from Wade Mountz, Alan Hutchins and Mr. Lugg; November's were the last of Andy Buco's donations as well.)**

As a reminder, per the consensus at the December 2025 meeting, the excess Christmas party gifts are being spread out over this year's drawings.

(SOME OF) THE JULY MEETING OFFERINGS (feel free to contribute more at the meeting; some more of Wade's freebies will also be available, free to good homes):

CNW 182629. HO scale model of a 54-foot grain-loading covered hopper kit. Intermountain model. Kit is new-in-box. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes (that happened to be one of my own donations – recognizable both by the road number label on the carton and the weathered trucks and wheelsets with Kadee 36-inch wheels with shined treads).



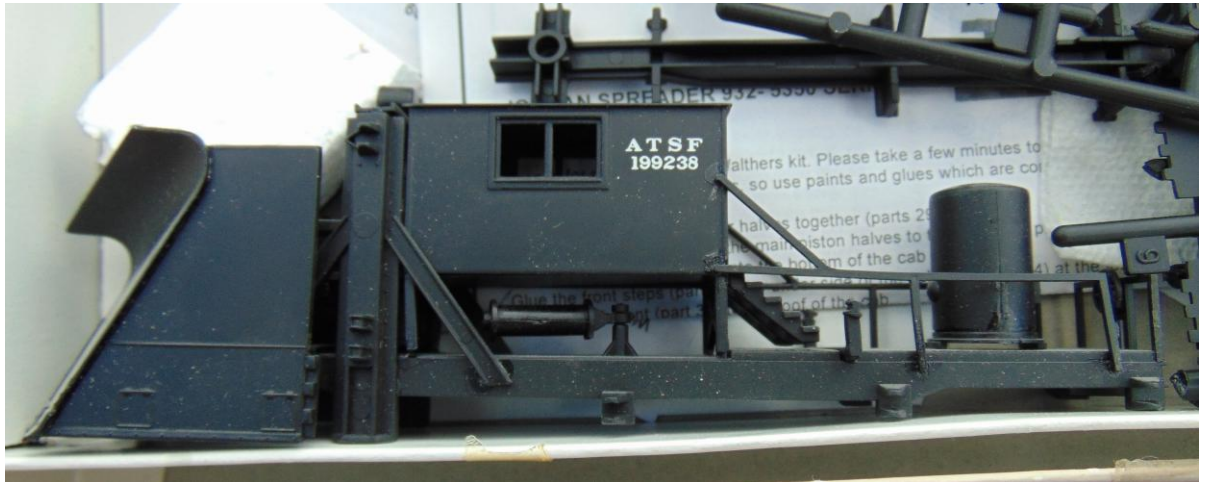
UP Old-Time Flat Car with Stakes. HO scale model of a 30-foot flat car; UPRR road name but no road number. Toy-like BACHMANN product as originated, but really just raw material for some kit-bashing. New-in-box. Horn-hook couplers. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



GM&O Caboose. HO scale model of a wood-sided Gulf, Mobile and Ohio caboose. Beautiful fully assembled imported SUNSET MODELS by Samhongs model. Sprung metal trucks, Kadee-style metal couplers. Used, missing a few easily added parts (some side braces, cupola roof). One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



ATSF 199238 Jordan Spreader. HO scale kit model of an ATSF maintenance-of-way Jordan Spreader. Walthers model kit. Plastic trucks, plastic wheels, horn-hook couplers. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



July Wavy Rails

By Joe Costa

Planned British Isles Excursions

Warner Brothers Studio Tour



Invergordon Steam Train and Scottish Wildlife



Ride a vintage train through the majestic Highlands and see indigenous Scottish animals and many exotic species in a wildlife park. You will embark the heritage train at Broomhill Station and travel through open moorland, native forests and along the meandering River Spey. The towering Cairngorms will be ever-present and quite the sight as this mountain range is among the highest in Great Britain. Upon disembarking in Aviemore, you will enjoy free time to explore this charming town in the corner of Cairngorms National Park. Besides its scenic beauty, Aviemore is known for its boutique shops and friendly pubs. In the nearby Highland Wildlife Park, you will see some of animals that inhabit the Highlands, including the Scottish wildcat, an elusive forest predator that is rarely seen in the wild. The park is also home to an array of non-native species such as Bukhara deer, Japanese macaques and Himalayan monals, the national bird of Nepal.

Vintage Train, Llangollen and Chirk Castle





Travel on the scenic Kyle Line

Leaving Inverness, the route to coastal Kyle of Lochalsh reveals spellbinding views of wide-open moorland, ancient forests and rising mountains glimmering lochs.

Journey on the West Highland Line

Passing the bonny banks of Loch Lomond, heather-clad moorland and the most isolated train station in the UK, the West Highland Line from Glasgow to Fort William is one of the country's most scenic.

2027 Overseas Wavy Rails Train Visits

Originally we thought about riding the Inspiration for the Harry Potter Train, the Jacobite train, in Scotland



It would have added time and expense to our UK cruise so we decided to delay that for a future vacation.

The new plan is to add is to tack it on to the end of a Baltic cruise when we get off the ship in Copenhagen to visit Miniatur Wunderland in Hamburg:



Then, we will fly to Edinburgh in Scotland on a full sized plane and fly on a full sized plane back to the US.

If we were totally insane, we would visit the miniature railroad near The Hague at Madurodam. Before Scotland



Madurodam features 12 miniature trains and trams running daily on 4.5 kilometers of track, offering a fun and interactive experience for visitors. At Madurodam, visitors can enjoy a variety of miniature trains and vintage trams that traverse the park's 4.5 kilometers of track, equivalent to about 6,000 adult-sized steps www.madurodam.nl. Each train travels approximately 16,000 kilometers per year, showcasing a lively miniature railway system www.madurodam.nl. The park includes replicas of famous Dutch stations such as Rotterdam, Utrecht, and Groningen, as well as the RandstadRail.

What's a Modeler to Do?

By: Mark Fuerstenberger

In my opinion, this year and into next year will be like nothing we've seen or experienced before as modelers. With the celebration of America 250, it seems that every single railroad is custom painting engines and cars for the celebration. So it's a certainty that all of the model manufactures are going to be pre-ordering and rushing to get all of these brand new paint schemes produced so that they can all cash in on this once-in-a-life time event.



BNSF 2026 250th Anniversary Locomotive



Wheeling & Lake Erie #1776 Locomotive



CSX #250 Locomotive



CN 1776 Locomotive



Buffalo & Pittsburgh #4434 Locomotive



CPKC #776 Locomotive



CN 2026 Locomotive

Even as I type this article, Union Pacific Big Boy 4014 has Norfolk Southern 1776 in it's consist.



NS 1776 Locomotive

And if that weren't enough right now, we also we have the potential merger with Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern. We all know that could potentially lead to additional paint schemes or heritage units.



NS 1230 Locomotive

This only represents a handful of the new locomotive paint schemes that have been released so far this year. Good Luck deciding which ones to collect.

Show and Tell

By Tony Pawlicki

This note lays out rules for the **Show And Tell** session/contest at the August 2026 Pikes Peak Division NMRA meeting. Free-form show-and-tell really has no rules, just do a little presentation. The salvage and resurrection topic is ANYTHING AT ALL that you have rescued from a fate worse than the wastebasket.

This event was announced a bit over two months in advance (in the MILEPOST just before the July meeting) in order to give folks enough time to prepare their entries. For August, there is a salvage and resurrection contest, topic: ANYTHING AT ALL that you have rescued from a fate worse than the wastebasket.

As a reminder, starting with the June 2024 meeting, we now have two parts to the event:

- The **theme-specific** contest/presentation (for June it is ANYTHING AT ALL).
- **Free-form show-and-tell**, on any topic you choose. This feature was added by popular request - folks had been suggesting this to our Superintendent.

GENERAL IDEA for the theme-specific part (ANYTHING AT ALL this month):

- Grab an old failed project you couldn't bring yourself to discard (or a disaster picked up at a train show or store – or even the remains after an unplanned encounter with an uncarpeted floor).
- Plan a fix (turning it into something good, though not necessarily creating what you originally planned), then actually fix it.
- Bring it, display it, then after regular model contest, stand up and tell us about your adventures.
- **The show-and-tell aspect is the main thing.** Given enough entries (3), there'll be a contest aspect too, but main goals are having fun salvaging something and entertaining the rest of us with the way you had fun.

THIS SESSION'S THEME: ANYTHING AT ALL, trying to encourage broader participation.

EXAMPLES:

- An example and the rules were provided in the April 2023 Milepost.
- To remind us that a salvage and resurrection project need not be a huge effort, **the January 2025 Milepost provided an example (SALVAGING INTERNATIONAL HOBBY CORP. (IHC) DTI 10175) where just one major change was needed to "save" the model.**
- This was also an example of **a model that needed saving right out of the box.** A model doesn't always need saving just due to having lived a rough life post-purchase.



June 2026 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 15 members present and 1 visitor, Bill Bowman. Bill had previously worked with the Allens on YMR.

Secretary Report

The minutes of the May meeting were accepted as published.

Treasurers Report

Due to his absence, Tony had sent copies of the treasurer report to Mark. The statement reflected the interest payment and drawing. The statement was accepted as presented. John noted that DigiTimber, the web host, had taken it upon themselves to charge our debit card for the next 3 months of hosting at \$60. Consensus was to let it stand while Mark works on setting up local hosting for our site.

Announcements

- The PPD picnic will be held at the Palmer Lake Pavilion from 10-2 on June 20th. Mark asked that members wear our blue PPD shirts. An invitation was sent to all NMRA members in the area. The Division will provide some kind of 'main course' while the members are asked to bring a pot luck dish. They may vary from deserts, sides or other main offerings. Plan to eat around 11:30. The address for gps is in the MilePost.
- A Fall outing to Cripple Creek in September or October is still in the exploration stages.
- Mark mentioned the UP Big Boy, 4014, summer trip to the east coast. It will be in Philadelphia on July 4th. It will return to Colorado about July 27.
- The Sherman Hill Show in Cheyenne, Wy was the weekend following the meeting.
- He said the planning is underway for a PPD module setup at the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo about August 27 to 31. It will depend on confirmed availability and Division participation. Please let Mark know if you can help.

- The Greeley Proto Rail Show is October 16-17. Many high end vendors are usually in attendance.
- There was more discussion about a possible venue for a PP Division swap meet in the fall either at the Church on the west side or at a new venue Kristin found. After some discussion, it was decided to see if the church was available.

Show and Tell

- David Gaunt continued his discussion of upgrading locomotives by adding electric pickups and decoders. He also had a model of a wedge snowplow.
- Rob Allen displayed very nicely done laser cut kit of a house.
- Mark provided a comprehensive report on the RMR Convention in Rapid City, South Dakota. In conjunction with the Region meetings, there were many other activities. He had pictures of the train ride from Hill City and several locomotives on the roster. They also visited Deadwood, the Homestake gold mine and Mt Rushmore even though it was obscured by low clouds and fog.

Program

Elizabeth gave a very complete review of the history of the McKeen railcars. They were originally designed by W.R. McKeen Jr. while he was working for the Union Pacific RR in 1902. E.H. Harriman liked the plan and supported a separate manufacturing company. 152 were built in differing lengths by 1917. It was an early example of standardized parts for assembly. Many railroads used them for light use routes and they were sold to secondary users. The Virginia and Truckee had the last one built which has been rebuilt and is on display at the museum.

Due to the absence of Jack and Tony there was no contest or drawing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.



PIKES PEAK "N"GINEERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

By Mike Peck

Superintendent's Corner

Hello Everyone,

I hope everyone had a great month in June, we had a good turnout for the June open house. We had a visitor and we were happy to let him run a train on the layout. John McCall showed up with some great deals on rolling stock and Mike Peck brought a lot of stuff that the club has for sale.

Coming up in July, we have the setup at the Dino Resource Center in Woodland Park on the 10,11,12. The 10th is setup day and the 11th and 12th are the run days and visiting with everyone that comes to the Center. Mike will have more information on times. I am hoping as we continue to expand our online presence that we can get more visitors to the clubhouse and potentially new members to join us. I very much enjoy sharing this great hobby of ours with everyone. I would like to see as many members as possible at the Dino Resource center this month.

The club is not open on July 4. Everyone will be enjoying time with their families and friends on the 250th anniversary of the good old USA.

I am sure that we will not be running out of the clubhouse on the 11th, because we will all be at the Dino Resource Center.

Don't forget we have the Board Meeting on July 6 at 5:30 pm at Perkins and the Business Meeting on July 17 at 5:30 pm at Perkins. Anyone is welcome to join us at these meetings; the board values your ideas. PPNG is your Club after all and the more active the members are the better it is for all.

That's all for now
Thanks Brian

Dinosaur Resource Center Show

The plan is to arrive at the Dino Center around 2pm on Friday July 10th for set up. If we don't have to share with another group like last year, I'm hoping to have a larger layout. If you want to bring your modules let Mike know so he can make plans for your modules.

I plan to make a large "C" configuration. The design could change if we plan on running DC as well. We'll have extra dinosaurs there to place around the layout and place in cars to ride around the layout in.

I need a head count for those planning to attend on Saturday and Sunday so Eric can plan lunch for us.

North Platte Show

We didn't have enough people to attend this year. We can put this on the list for next year and hopefully we'll get 8 or more people to attend. There are a lot of events to make plans to attend, this is the reason for requiring more people.

Club Anniversary Party

You are cordially invited to attend the..... Pikes Peak N-TRAK & T-TRAKers

37th Anniversary Dinner When :October 10th

Where :The Airplane Restaurant, 1665 Newport Road, 719-570-7656 Time : 6pm

Please let John Grier know if you plan to attend by NO LATER THAN October 7th. The club will be paying for members and their spouse, guests will have to pay.

The club will have a guest speaker, Ken Valle, who will give his presentation on the "Golden Spike"

Sherman Hill Show

Chris, Mary & I left for Cheyenne around 9 am on Thursday. We arrived at Archer at 3 pm and were able to drop off our sales items, modules and tables. We then parked the trailer and went to check in at our hotel.

On Friday, we arrived around 9 am and started the set up. Dave & Lee got there around 10 am and we unloaded their modules and finished the set up. We had enough modules for 6 tables, so the seventh table became a work and display table. We were able to have the sales tables at our location so Chris & I wouldn't have to run back and forth all the time, this worked out great.

Chris, Dave & I ran trains all weekend with just a few glitches. Earl worked on the DCC power supply after the last show, and we didn't have any of the problems we had before. Just a note here: When a short occurs listen for the beep, the screen on the Digitrax display doesn't flash anymore.



Mary & Lee working the sales tables NO customers!

Mary reported a few sales Friday night. Saturday hit and we had a few customers but not many sales, by noon the crowd was gone. Sunday proved to be a better day as it was cool outside and we had a bigger crowd, and yes, I was wheeling and dealing,



Dave & Chris watching trains. Mike, Dave & Lee



Chris working on a car. Dave being Dave!

Although the show was a little slow, we did have fun and met some new folks, and talked to a lot of folks wanting to get into the hobby. We didn't sign up any new members but we did hand out a few open house fliers.

The next Sherman Hill show will be May 15 – 16, 2027 at Archer. This weekend will also be Depot Days and a regional NMRA convention, so should be a busy weekend.

Colorado Country Christmas Show

Just an up date for us – Our set up date is Wednesday November 11 starting at 12 noon. Our new location is in the south east corner of the building. We cannot drive in so everything will need to be carried or moved in on carts, like last year. I think we can be there till 7 pm but I will check that out later. This setup time should let those of you still working to have time to drop off your modules. If we don't finish setting up the layout on Wednesday, we can still get in on Thursday to finish.

We will be using the club owned tables, and bring your own chairs for comfort. The plan is to fill all ten tables with modules making it the biggest club layout ever. I think our record is 54 modules.

Members who are working on new modules still have time to get them ready. Members who are still undecided about what scene they want to do can still bring your modules that have track applied. Mike has four back up scenes that can be placed on undecorated modules.

June Open House

We had a good member turn out for the open house. We did have one guest and his daughter attend, maybe a new member, we'll see.



Steve, guest Joyhn McCall, Ben, Lucas, and Glenn Glenn, Steve3, Ben, Ron, Chris, Rick & Lucas

There was a car and motorcycle rally going on across the street but we didn't pull any of these folks in to view the layout. There were some really neat tricked out cars over there.

"N"Gineers Editor's Notes

I want to thank Chris and John for sharing their photos with me so I could put them in the Railhead. As you can see in the photos from the open house we really need the room expander we ordered back in 2003.

I would like to hear from the membership about train trips they took or stories about their favorite railroads. The stories do not have to be about just Colorado railroads. To give an example, a few years ago, I did an article about some railroads back in Iowa. I'll see if I can dust those off and re-write them as I have more information about them than had when I first wrote those articles.

I'm looking forward to more photos from club members as well. Remember to take photos of any railroad or transportation murals you may come across.

The Lighter Rail

By Kristin Phillips

Belated Happy 4th of July! It was strange not having fireworks but we needed to save the planet. We did celebrate by visiting the National World War II museum near Powers and Aeroplaza. Joe and I had never been to it and found it to be more than just planes in a hanger. Even though there were no trains, it was a fun experience.

We do have Semiquincentennial (that's a word I never heard before) or quarter Millennium trains traveling this year in honor of America's 250th anniversary. The big Kahuna, of course, is Union Pacific's 4014. This is the first time the train has traveled across the Mississippi River and steamed its way through the Ohio Valley since it was built in Schenectady, New York, and delivered to the Union Pacific Railroad in 1941. It was on display in Philadelphia on July 4th and 5th and is operating on Norfolk Southern trackage, a collaboration between two of the nation's historic railroads.

The eastward route has taken the train through Omaha, Chicago, Fostoria, OH; Buffalo, NY, and Scranton, PA to Philadelphia. The return trip will go through Altoona, PA, back to Fostoria and Chicago. From there it will travel to St. Louis, through Missouri and Kansas and back to Cheyenne. There will be whistle stops in Kit Carson from 10:45 to 11:15 and Strasburg from 3:45 to 4:15 on July 27th. There is no public viewing in Denver. It will stop in Greeley on July 29th from 1:15 to 2:00 arriving in Cheyenne at 4:00. There is no public access in Cheyenne. In all, there has been or will be major display events in eight cities and more than 50 whistle-stops in 10 states, including stops for the first time in Indiana, Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania. Earlier this spring, going west the Big Boy visited California with a stop at the Central Pacific's Milepost Zero where eastward construction of the transcontinental railroad began.



The American Freedom Train, unfortunately, had to cancel its planned national tour. Coming out of the tumultuous events at the start of this decade, the AFT Foundation board was behind schedule to obtain necessary operating agreements, had a tight timeline, and insufficient corporate interest from corporate America to sponsor the train. This led to insurmountable obstacles. This train carried historic American documents and was a rolling museum to American freedom.

The 1975-1976 Bicentennial American Freedom consist had 26 cars pulled by three steam locomotives and painted in red, white, and blue livery. To commemorate the event. At times a diesel locomotive pulled the train due to track conditions, light loads, and a steam engine derailment in Chicago.

From a CoPilot search:

"Amtrak unveiled a Freedom250-themed NextGen Acela in Washington, D.C., featuring bold red, white, and blue patriotic wrap inspired by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Freedom 250 campaign. This high-speed train (160 mph) will operate regularly on the Northeast Corridor,



connecting Washington, Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, and more. It will also be joined by decals on 20 additional locomotives nationwide, and Amtrak is partnering with the America250 Commission to spread the celebration.”

The BNSF’s website has the following information about their participation:

“FORT WORTH, TEXAS, May 14, 2026 – BNSF Railway, the nation’s leading freight transportation provider, today unveiled a series of specially painted locomotives to honor America’s 250th birthday.

The three new locomotives, carrying numbers 250, 1776 and 2026, feature an exclusive livery ahead of the nation’s Semiquincentennial birthday on July 4, 2026.

“Few institutions are woven into the fabric of America quite like the railroad, and BNSF is honored to celebrate our nation’s 250th anniversary with these specially painted locomotives,” said Katie Farmer, BNSF Railway president and CEO. “For nearly two centuries, railroaders have helped shape the American story, connecting communities, powering economic growth and strengthening the nation we call home. These locomotives pay tribute not only to our country’s heritage, but also to the men and women of Team BNSF who carry that legacy forward today.”

“America’s 250th anniversary is an opportunity to recognize the industries and workers who have helped connect and strengthen our nation for generations,” said Jen Condon, executive vice president at America250. “BNSF’s commemorative locomotives are a powerful tribute to the role railroads have played in America’s growth and to the people who continue that legacy every day as we approach the Semiquincentennial.”

Each locomotive, specially painted by Mid-America Car, Inc. in Kansas City, Missouri, proudly features our nation’s red, white and blue colors and the America250 logo. The locomotives feature a nod to the Preamble to the United States Constitution with the words, “We the People.” The trailing end of the locomotives includes the words “Freedom and Liberty” on either side, with the circle of stars on the tail, paying tribute to the Betsy Ross flag.

These three historic locomotives will travel BNSF’s 32,500-mile rail network for special events, while joining the rest of the BNSF fleet to deliver the nation’s freight for the customers and communities we serve across the supply chain.”

Happy Fifth of July



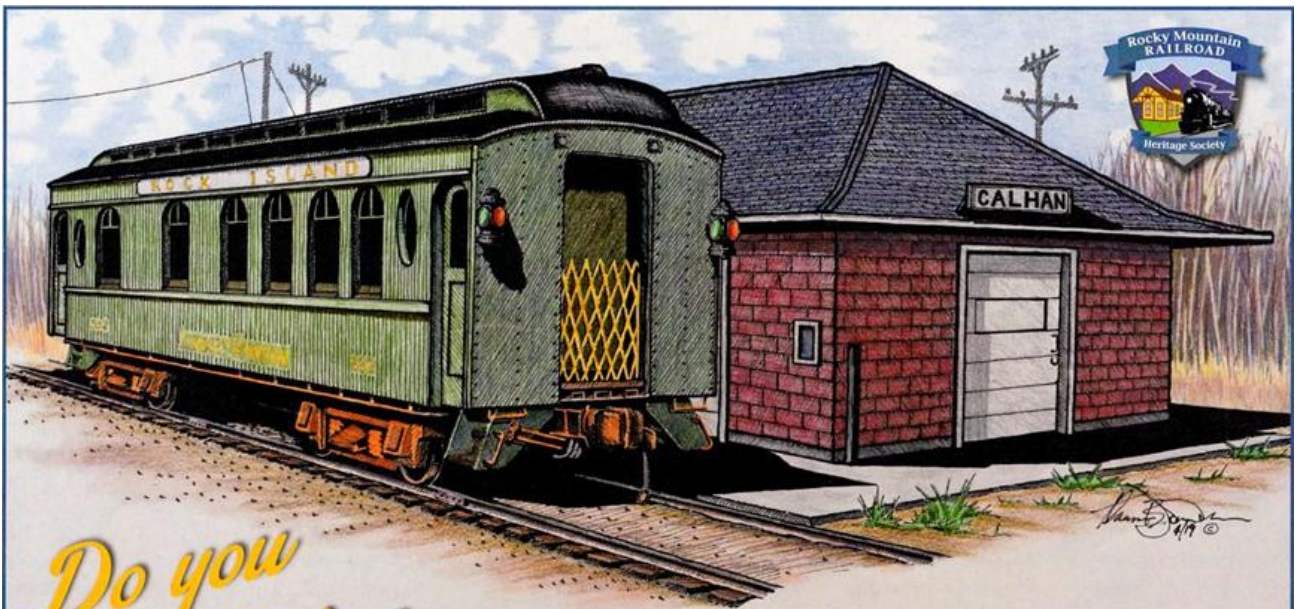
Advertisements

David Solly has an HO Scale model railroad layout that is looking for a new home. The layout is roughly 5' X 8' and is near museum quality in scenery. It is set up as DC, but could be DCC. It is dual track, with figure 8 crossing tracks. Price is negotiable. Folks who are interested or want more information can contact me at (719) 338-8995 or drdsolly@gmail.com.









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