



The

Milepost

Volume 46, Number 9 — September 2026

The official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Division

Rocky Mountain Region — National Model Railroad Association.



NEXT MEETING:

Friday, September 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)

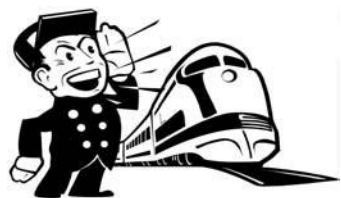
NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Loco Steam/Diesel Program: Vintage

December 11th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting.

Program: Christmas Party!



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 dave@bristow-family.org. Thank you.

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The Milepost, Volume 46, Number 9, September 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, 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 con-

Next Meeting on Friday, September 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

- September David Bristow – AI in Model Railroading
- October David Solly
- November Ken Rambo
- December Christmas Party!

Editor's Thoughts

Scale Test Cars

Sometime ago I wrote about scales used by railroads. One of the things that follows is the ways by which railroads ensure the accuracy of those scales. Well they invented the scale test car!

Scale test cars are non-revenue, maintenance-of-way (MOW) rail vehicles designed with a single purpose: calibrating track scales to ensure accurate freight weight measurements.

Railroads rely on track scales to weigh loaded freight cars for two main reasons:

- **Customer Billing:** Freight charges for bulk commodities (such as coal, grain, chemicals, and gravel) are calculated by subtracting the empty ("tare") weight of a car from its loaded weight.
- **Safety & Load Limits:** Overloaded cars cause severe damage to rail infrastructure, wear out wheels, and increase derailment risks. Track scales verify that axle loads stay within safe operational limits.

Because millions of dollars in shipping revenue and critical track safety depend on scale accuracy, railroad scales must be periodically calibrated using a mass whose weight is precise and certified.

Unlike standard freight equipment, scale test cars feature specific engineering constraints:

- **Dense Mass:** They are deliberately built to be as small and compact as possible while weighing a certified, exact amount (commonly 30,000 to 100,000 lbs). Their bodies are often made of thick, solid cast iron or steel plates built over heavy frames.
- **Short Wheelbase:** Early and mid-20th-century scale test cars were short two-axle (four-wheel) vehicles. The compact wheel distribution ensured the entire known weight of the car was concentrated directly on a single section or platform of the track scale during testing.
- **No Loose Components:** They lack standard features that could lose mass over time through wear or weather, such as traditional running boards, water traps, or open compartments. Anything that could alter the car's exact weight—even accumulative dirt or snow—was minimized.

Early Weight Cars, Late 19th Century - Early railroads used modified flatcars or hopper cars loaded with scrap metal or concrete blocks. However, shifted loads and wear caused weights to fluctuate, making calibration unreliable.

Dedicated Solid Test Cars, Early-to-Mid 20th Century - Railroads introduced purpose-built, short-wheelbase cast steel test cars. Because these cars lacked train brakes (to prevent wear on the brake shoes from changing the car's weight), regulations required them to be moved at the rear of a freight train, directly ahead of the caboose.

Self-Propelled & Modular Units, 1970s–Present - In 1974, self-propelled scale test car designs were patented (built by companies like Maxson and FMC). Modern testing often utilizes specialized box-cars carrying hydraulic cranes and calibrated test weights, or self-propelled units that can move on-to the scale independently without needing a locomotive to spot them.

Historically, operating a scale test car required strict handling rules enforced by railroad operating rulebooks:

- **No Train Brakes:** Many traditional scale test cars only had handbrakes. Piped air lines ran through the car to power equipment further back in the train, but no air brakes were installed on the test car itself to avoid brake shoe abrasion changing its weight.
- **Speed Restrictions:** Due to their short wheelbases and lack of air brakes, scale test cars were generally subject to reduced speed limits (often 25–30 mph) to prevent bouncing or derailments.
- **Master Scales:** Scale test cars were regularly hauled back to centralized railroad shops or government facilities (such as NIST or USDA facilities for grain transport) to be re-weighed on ultra-precise master scales to maintain certification.

Walthers recently released a set of HO scale test cars of different road names. I purchased a CN scale test car.



David

Keepin' it on the Tracks

By Mark Fuerstenberger

Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad, Sept. 12th, 2026 – Cripple Creek, CO

We will be heading to ride the Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. Pricing: Adults \$21. / Seniors 65+ \$19. / Kids 3-12 \$14. / 2 and under are free. Remember to bring a light jacket in case it gets a little cool on the ride. The ride will be approx. 45 minutes on a 4-mile round trip. We are targeting the 11:10 trip departure time. If anything changes, we will discuss it at the Sept. Division meeting.

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 September 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 SEPTEMBER MEETING OFFERINGS (**feel free to contribute more at the meeting; some more of Wade’s freebies will also be available, free to good homes**); for variety, three types of rolling stock and two types of structure:

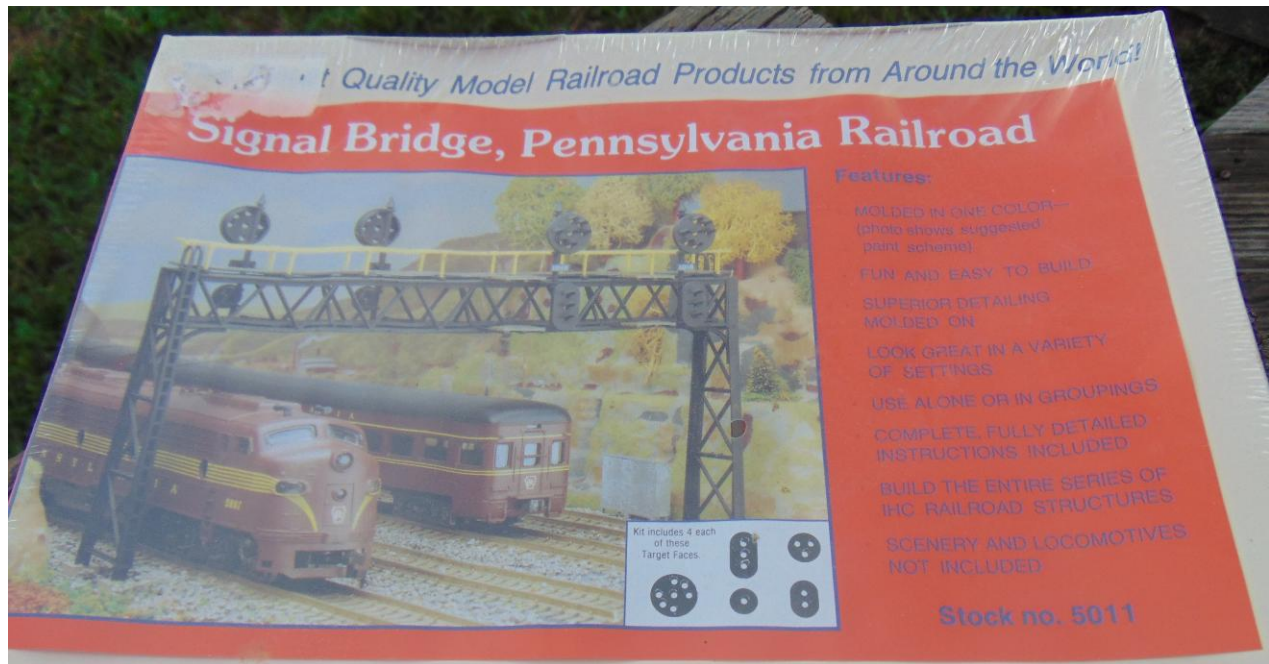
CB&Q 83116. HO scale model of a 50-foot gondola. A superdetailed Athearn “Blue Box” model. Those old “Blue Box” models can soak up an amazing amount of detail, in this case Consolidated Stencils, U1 wheel stickers, ACI placards, cut levers, roping staples, formed wire grab irons, A-Line brass stirrup steps, Kadee #5 couplers, hand brake chain, weathered trucks and wheelsets with Kadee 33-inch wheels with shined treads. Gift of Tony Pawlicki



UP 914331. HO scale model of a 50-foot gondola. From the road number, this was used as a Maintenance of Way (MOW) car, probably demoted in its old age from a revenue-producing car. A superdetailed Athearn “Blue Box” model. Those old “Blue Box” models can soak up an amazing amount of detail, in this case Consolidated Stencils, U1 wheel stickers, ACI placards, cut levers, roping staples, formed wire grab irons, A-Line brass stirrup steps, Kadee #5 couplers, hand brake chain, weathered trucks and wheelsets with Kadee 33-inch wheels with shined treads. It even has the modern Automated Equipment Identification (AEI) transponders, mandatory by 31 Dec 1994. Gift of Tony Pawlicki



IHC Signal Bridge. HO International Hobby Corporation (IHC) scale model of a 4-track signal bridge. Has a variety of signal head (“target face”) types. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



ARR 14855. HO scale model of a 50-foot pressure discharge cement covered hopper (has superficial resemblance to a tank car). New-in-clamshell. Highly detailed. Plastic trucks with CNC-machined metal wheels. Knuckle couplers. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



SCCX 1432. HO scale model of a Shell Oil Company-owned 8000 gallon Type 21 riveted tank car. 8 48 stencil date. Limited Edition Proto 2000 model. New in box, factory assembled. Plastic trucks and metal wheelset; knuckle couplers. It even has the road number stenciled onto the frame's center beam. One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes. (It is exquisite – if it had fit my era, I might have stolen it for myself.)



ADN 3002. HO scale kit model of an Ashley Drew & Northern 100-ton American Car & Foundry (ACF) covered hopper. New in box. Accurate Finishing [sort of a predecessor to Accurail] Premium Collector's Series kit #1052, limited edition, car 57 of 700. "NEW 2-74" stencil. Consolidated Stencil but no ACI placard (which stopped being required in 1978 – they were too hard to keep clean enough for reliability in general use; the automation need was finally solved by the dirt-resistant AEI transponder system, 31 December 1994). One of the excess Christmas present drawing prizes.



September Wavy Rails and The Lighter Rail

By Joe Costa and Kristin Phillips

We are combining our columns this month because we would both be writing about the same thing. Two classic trains were on our Bucket List on our cruise around the British Isles.

The first was the Aviemore Train and the second was the Llangollen Train. Unfortunately, just as in Colorado, for safety reasons, they were classic diesel trains and not steam. Still, we enjoyed the experience. Cost and scheduling made riding the classic Jacobite steam train impractical.

We did get to visit the Harry Potter studio which has a static train. Some trains in the British Isles run on weekends only which can make it a scheduling challenge.

The Jacobite train is still on our bucket list as it is the inspiration for Hogwarts Express.



Our next train to ride someday.

Universal Studios in Florida and California have a theme park version where you can experience a simulated train ride.

Universal Studios, England, about 75 minutes south of London, where the Harry Potter series was filmed in the English countryside, has a static version where you can take pictures.

Static Harry Potter Train at Universal Studios



Aviemore and Llangollen Visit

Aviemore and Llangollen were two railroads we visited in Scotland and Wales. They converted to diesel for the same reasons tourist railroads in Colorado shifted away from coal—fire danger. In addition, some of their coal came from Russia. The train looks like a coal burner but burns oil.





Llangollen



A Souvenir found in Colorado Springs at a local thrift store.

Kristin bought a Paddington Bear and book for her granddaughter in Hamleys, a five-story London toy store. The book tells how Mr. and Mrs. Brown find the bear at Paddington station and take the bear home. Not knowing what to name him, they choose Paddington after the station he was found at.



Queen Elizabeth II loved Paddington Bear and even made a video having tea with him. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UfiCa244XE>)

Stay tuned for more adventures next month!!

The Rio Grande, the Monarch Branch, & CF&I's Pueblo Steel Mill

By Mark Fuerstenberger

Being in Pueblo at the Colorado State Fair led me to thinking about the CF&I Steel Mills on the past in Pueblo and the role that the Denver & Rio Grande played in it. The story of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company's great steelworks at Pueblo is inseparable from the railroads that supplied it. For the Denver & Rio Grande—and later the Denver & Rio Grande Western—the connection was particularly important. The Rio Grande did not simply pass through Pueblo; its lines became part of the vast transportation system that brought the raw materials needed to turn iron into steel.

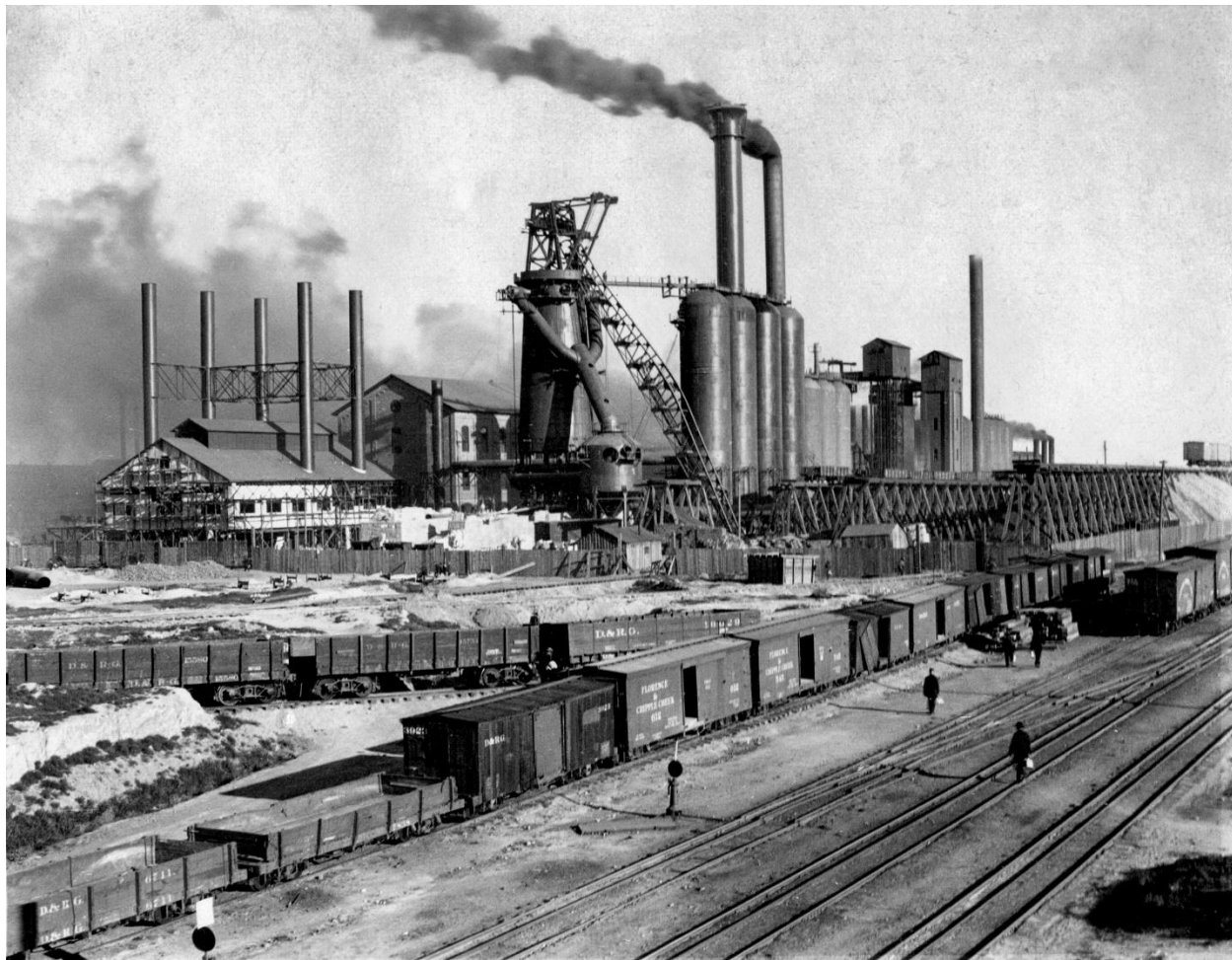
One of the most interesting pieces of that system was the Monarch Branch, which climbed westward from the Rio Grande at Poncha Junction toward Monarch Pass. Built originally as a three-foot narrow-gauge line, the branch reached the Monarch quarry in 1883. The line was only about 15 miles long, but it was one of the most challenging pieces of railroad on the Rio Grande. Grades reached approximately 4.5 percent, and switchbacks were required to climb the mountainside toward the quarry.

The reason for building and maintaining such a difficult railroad was the rock itself. The Monarch deposit contained high-quality limestone and dolomite, which CF&I eventually used as flux in its blast furnaces at Pueblo. The Monarch Branch therefore was not primarily an iron-ore railroad. Its importance was in moving the fluxing stone required by the steelmaking process.

Inside the Pueblo blast furnaces, iron-bearing material, coke, and limestone were charged into the furnace. The limestone helped remove impurities from the molten iron by forming slag. In other words, the rock coming down from Monarch was an essential ingredient in producing the iron that would ultimately become CF&I steel.

This illustrates the remarkable industrial network behind the Pueblo steelworks. CF&I operated or controlled mines and quarries supplying many of its essential materials. Iron ore came from mining districts in the region, coal provided the fuel for the operation and the raw material for coke, and

limestone and dolomite supplied the blast furnaces with flux. Railroads tied all of these widely scattered resources together.



For the railroad enthusiast, the Monarch operation is especially fascinating because of how the Rio Grande handled the traffic. During the narrow-gauge years, loaded stone cars descended the steep branch toward Salida. The difficult upper portion required careful train handling, including the use of Rio Grande power and, at times, additional assistance on the steep grades. At Salida, the narrow-gauge stone was transferred to standard-gauge equipment for its continuing journey toward Pueblo. A specialized rotating "rotary dump" transfer was eventually used to move the rock from narrow-gauge cars into standard-gauge gondolas.

The end of the Rio Grande's famous narrow-gauge era did not immediately end the Monarch traffic. When the Marshall Pass line was abandoned, the Monarch Branch was converted to standard gauge in 1956. This eliminated the need for the earlier narrow-gauge-to-standard-gauge transfer and allowed the quarry traffic to move directly in standard-gauge equipment. The branch continued to serve CF&I for another quarter-century.

The relationship between Monarch and Pueblo lasted until the beginning of the end of CF&I's traditional ironmaking operation. In 1982, CF&I shut down its blast furnaces, eliminating the major requirement for Monarch's flux stone. Without that traffic, there was little reason to continue operating such a difficult mountain branch. The Rio Grande subsequently abandoned the line, with the rails removed during the mid-1980s.

The Monarch Branch is therefore much more than an interesting piece of Colorado narrow-gauge railroad history. It was a vital link in CF&I's integrated industrial system. The Rio Grande carried

Monarch limestone and dolomite down from the high country, connected that traffic with its larger railroad network, and delivered an essential raw material to the furnaces at Pueblo.

For a railroad crew looking at the history of the Rio Grande, it is a wonderful example of how the railroad and industry depended upon each other. The Rio Grande supplied the steel mill, while the steel mill supplied the rails and steel products that helped build the West's railroads. At Monarch, that relationship could be seen quite literally: high above the Arkansas Valley, Rio Grande locomotives fought their way up steep mountain grades to bring a seemingly ordinary rock down to Pueblo—where that rock became an essential part of making steel.

Show and Tell

By Tony Pawlicki

This note lays out rules for the **Show And Tell** session/contest at the OCTOBER 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 is announced a bit over two months in advance (in the MILEPOST just before the September meeting) in order to give folks enough time to prepare their entries. For OCTOBER, 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 August 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, still aiming at 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.



August 2026 Minutes

Secretary, John Emmot

The regular monthly meeting was called to order by Superintendent, Mark Fuerstenberger at 7:08 in the community room of the Sand Creek Police Station. There were 24 members present including first time attendee Mr. Victor and his wife.

Secretary Report

The minutes of the July meeting were accepted after noting that the correct date of the Cripple Creek train ride is September, not October.

Treasurers Report

Tony presented hard and soft copies of the treasurer report. The statement reflected the interest payment and the drawing. The statement was accepted as presented.

Announcements

Mark was advised that Mel McFarland was in the hospital; that Chris Fox had been flown to a hospital in Colorado Springs; that David Gaunt was experiencing some serious medical issues and that Charalee Topinka had passed away.

Dave and Audrey Solly had attended the NMRA National Convention in Chattanooga. There were many rail excursions and they were able to participate in four of them. The convention featured 16 layouts, many home layout tours and a 10,000 square foot T-Trak layout. Many national manufacturers were represented and Dave got to meet several model railroad celebrities in person. They were also impressed by the tour of the Scale Trains Headquarters in Cleveland, TN.

Mark had contacted the Cripple Creek Railroad for a Fall outing and found that their standard price is \$21 and \$19 for Seniors. It is the weekend of Saturday, September the 12th. Plan to ride the 11:10 departure. Everyone should plan to buy their own tickets prior to boarding.

He said the planning is underway for a PPD module setup at the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo August 27 to 31. He had a handout with all of the details for the event. Please confirm with Mark if you plan participate so that you can be included on the free parking and access pass lists. Please let Mark know. As luck would have it, Mark will have a wedding to attend on that weekend. Charles Marchbanks plans to be there during the whole show.

The Greeley Proto Rail Show is October 16-17. Many high end vendors are usually in attendance.

A fall PPD swapmeet at the Methodist Church on the west side was discussed. Howard Smith will contact them and determine what dates are available in November or December. Expect a format similar to what we did in the past.

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

Ryan Kricker presented 'More North American Rail Preservation Tragedies'. There are many other cars besides the 25 cars lost from Burnham Yards that have been lost to the preservationists. He listed many that were lost due to the inability to find new homes for them when funds were exhausted and others that simply succumbed to weather from setting out unprotected. There were so

many noteworthy cars lost, that I was unable to record them all. Many were local to Colorado and others were lost in preservation sites in other parts of the U.S..

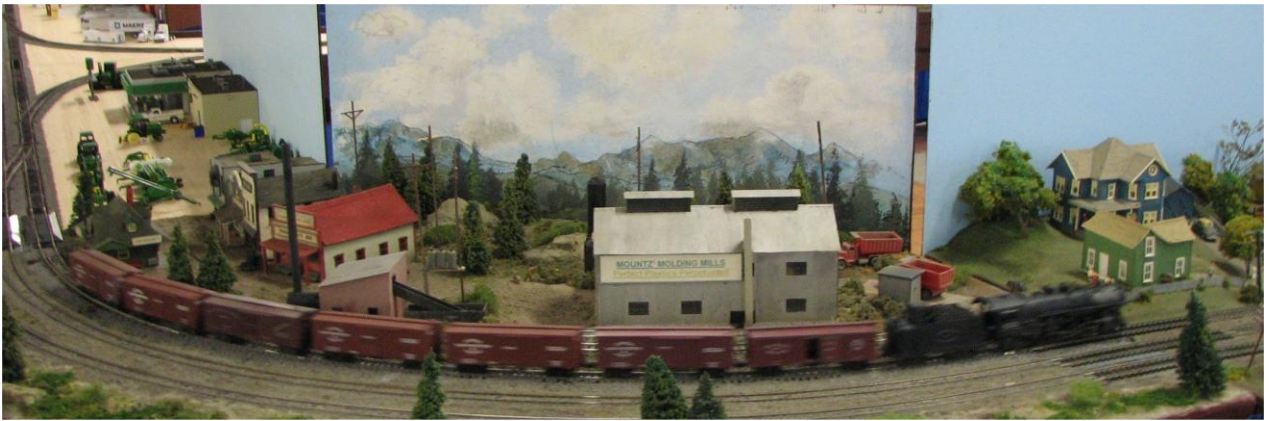
There were no contest entries this month.

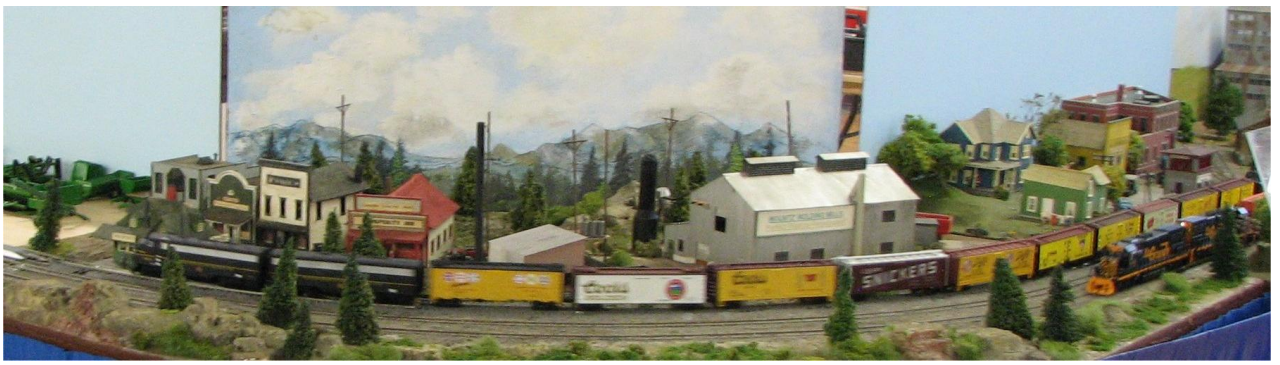
The drawing followed the program.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.











Notes from the Siding

By John Emmot

This will be short, but I must write to say that I was very happy to see the support for the modules at the Colorado State Fair. I was only there for a couple of afternoons myself, but I saw lots of folks who took the time to be there. While Mark was not able to run, there were people and trains to occupy the layout.. Setup and teardown were also well supported. I just want to say that I appreciate all who were there. Thank you all. As always, I hope to see lots of folks 'round the roundhouse on Friday.

John



PIKES PEAK “N”GINEERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

By Mike Peck Superintendent's Corner

Hello Everyone,

I am pleased to tell you that there will be a TECO Show in February, the dates will be February 20 and 21, 2027. The TECO board will need help so if you are able to help, please get in touch with Glen or Mike. We had a great show this year and let's make it a better one in 2027.

I am also pleased to let you know that the blue yard is working all the way through on both DC & DCC. We are currently working on figuring out the red yard to get it working and hopefully it will be complete in the not to distant future. We will keep working our way around the layout until we have all 4 lines working on both DC and DCC, with the ability to go from the lower level to the upper level with running trains instead of the green line being isolated from the rest of the layout. We could use some help with these tasks. Helping with the yards and green line wiring would be a great way to learn about how to wire a layout.

Please come and join the track repair clinics on September 5th and September 12th at 1pm right after the regular run session. Please let Mike know if you are doing the clinic so he has enough projects for everyone.

We have a new hobby store in town, Colpar's opened a hobby shop this month at 7870 N Academy Blvd. I visited the store on Sunday, and they will be a great resource for paints when they finally get all of the lines in. They don't have a lot of n-scale stuff yet, but they told me they are planning on stocking engines and rolling stock as well as DCC decoders. The store has a pretty good selection of hobby tools, not a lot of quantity at the moment, but they are working on building the inventory throughout the store. Stop by and check them out and let them know what you need or what you would like to see in the store.

That's all for now
Brian

Dinosaur Resource Show

We will start our set up at 1 pm on Friday September 18. Those members bringing modules need to be there by then or just before 1:30pm. We will be doing the same configuration as last time.

We will be installing new power cables for the RED and YELLOW lines after all the modules are connected. We are looking at streamlining the cable network. We will be using blue table runners to cover the cables.

Saturday's schedule is 10 am to 4 pm, and we can get in at 9 am to clean track and check track joints.

Sunday's schedule is 11 am to 3 pm, followed by teardown. We can get into the facility at 10 am to clean track and check track joints.

We will be using the club's switching puzzle so I could use some volunteers to help with that. I'm looking at two-hour shifts for both days. Please let Mike know if you can help with this.

M&M's Iowa Trip

We did see trains going to Iowa but always in a place where I couldn't stop and take a picture. On the way home I fared a little better.



There is a train behind that row of trees. The grain car between the building & trees

The two photos are of what I get to see from my in-law's house when a train goes by. I think this line was originally a Rock Island RR, but I'll have to find my records on this line to confirm. UP operates this line for now hauling lumber cars to Graettinger, IA, grain cars to Emmetsburg and Estherville, IA for the ethanol plants, and empty tank cars going north. South bound freight usually hauls the empty lumber and grain cars, and full tank cars of ethanol.

Kossuth County Fairgrounds Museum

Mary & I stayed one extra day to attend the Kossuth County Fair so we could see the museum. The museum houses Agriculture and Motorsports, and in 2013 the Benschoter Train Station was added to the museum. Arlen Benschoter collected Lionel trains all his life. His collection outgrew his home, so he made arrangements with the fair board to build the addition to the museum. Arlen's whole collection is worth well over \$1,000,000 and is in operational condition. There is no club that runs the display, just a bunch of volunteers. I was told they have more fun when no one is around so they can do operations or swap out equipment.



Inserted here are some of the photos I took of the layout. Most of the animation is working. When it breaks down it is repaired. I forgot to count how many trains are running, but best guess 15 different trains.

The volunteer I talked to said that what you see on the layout is only a small part of the collection. When they get tired of running what's on the table, they pull out other train sets and swap them out. All the extra train storage is under the layout. The display is 2,400 SQ FT., boy, could we use that much space!

On the Way Home

We saw some trains on the way home as well as some elevator equipment. The two photos below are of some of the new motive power the elevators are using to move grain cars and tank cars around instead of switching diesels.



We caught up with this mixed freight along Hwy 34 in Nebraska.



I just cleaned the windshield a few miles back, but the flying bugs were everywhere.



We were able to pull over for this east bound BNSF double stacker just outside of Otis, CO on Hwy 34

“N”Gineers Editor’s Notes

Here it is the last day of August and I’m struggling to get this issue of the Railhead out and I know I’m missing something? When I figure out what I missed, I’ll send out an addendum.

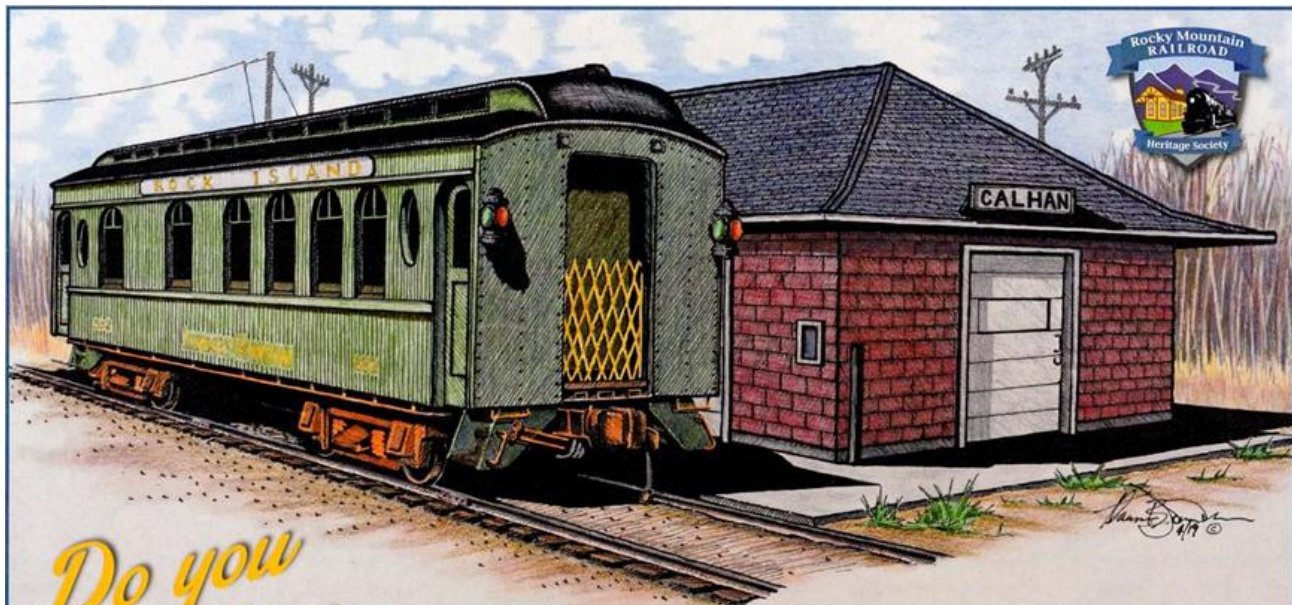
Please keep sending me photos and stories of interest to the membership. I guess I should take some photos of the rat’s nest of wiring under the red yard that Brian & I are working on. When we’re

finished getting the red yard running, we'll work on the passenger yard on Ron's module. The plan is to the ability to hold operation sessions in the clubroom. More on this later.

Next month the club turns 37 with a celebration dinner and presentation at the Airplane Restaurant. Please contact John Grier to reserve your space.

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