



Trails, Rails, & Tales



The Official Newsletter of the Chisholm Trail Division of the [NMRA](#)

July-August 2021

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

It is time to start thinking about the Wichita Train Show. If you would like to help, see Dean. I was at the Hutch show. They had a lot of vendors and five layouts, but no food vendor.

Thank You.

—Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

BY DEAN LIPPINCOTT

Greetings to all my fellow model railroaders. Boy, does time fly when you are having fun! Renee officially retired the last day of April and we started doing a little traveling. First trip, with the camping trailer to Seneca, KS, to join up with the Big Kansas Road Trip. This years road trip featured Nemaha, Brown and Doniphan counties. Found a real beauty of a structure in Hiawatha. Took several pictures in case I want to do a scratch build someday.

Our trip was fun and interesting and included a side trip to Omaha to see the grandbabies.

Well, we made it home, rested up a little and then took off to Tennessee to see the other grandbabies. On the way back we stopped to see our sister-in-law who owns 75 acres in the Mark Twain National Forest. Beautiful home and beautiful scenery.

Back home again long enough to regroup and head for Beaver Lake State Park in Missouri. Camped there for a few days and caught up with old friends. Left there in time to meet up with our musical

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friends in Oxford, Ks, Napawalla Park for a weekend of just sitting around and playing tunes. It's no wonder I'm not getting much done on the layout!!!

A big thank you to all who attended and helped out at the Hutchinson Train Show. I believe it was a great success. As Phil stated in his column, it's time to be thinking about our own train show coming up in February. We have plenty of time to organize a great show of our own with hopefully more vendors and clinics. We will be discussing more on this subject at our next meeting coming up July 6th. Hope to see you all there.

—Dean

Dean wasn't kidding when he called this a "real beauty"!



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

This edition of TR&T celebrates the beginning of our return to normalcy. We're beginning to socialize again!

Live, in person meetings of our own Chisholm Trail Division have cranked up and are being shared on Zoom as well.

I hope many of you were able to attend the Kansas Central Model Railroaders' Train Show. I even bought some things, which is unusual for me.

The Wichita Area Model Railroaders luncheons started back up. I wasn't able to attend the first one, but I wasn't going to sacrifice a trip to Colorado to make it.

The Mid-Kansas Narrow Gaugers finally got together for the rib dinner that had been in my mind for years.

Some of us have even been traveling. Speaking for myself, I was so overjoyed with the chance to get away, I overextended myself and had to cancel one trip so far.

However, despite celebrating what appears to be our liberation from a year of sequestering, there is one thing I really don't like about this edition of our newsletter – there is way too much about me. I would dearly love to have my authorship on nothing other than this column. You can help by chipping in with an article or note and I think it would really help the Chisholm Trail Division.

So what does this newfound freedom mean on the home front? Combined with the onset of spring and all the duties that seems to entail around the house, I had less time for my model railroad. I was going like wildfire while the social restrictions were in place. But now construction seems to have drawn to a halt. Well, not really, but it certainly has slowed down.

If you recall from last issue, I was starting to work on scenery. I had a little problem, which I

still haven't resolved, but I've decided to complete the track work for the San Juan Southern so I can operate while I'm building scenery. The problem is I have only the vaguest notion of what that track is going to do. It will be the main town of Blakely, named for Ron Blakely, Sedgwick County Zoo's first director and my boss for the first twenty years I worked there. I'm now at a stage where I need to do more track planning. I enjoy that, but it always seems like I'm doing nothing. I want to get it right because Blakely is the nerve center of the railroad. To build it, I reserved a space about nineteen feet long by two feet wide. I thought that would be plenty to work in an engine terminal, classification yard, and all the supporting industries I wanted. While it seemed like a very generous space when it was still in my head, now I can't seem to fit it all in. My current solution has me using an additional eight or nine feet along another wall. Twenty-eight feet seems like a heck-of-a-lot of space for a little narrow gauge yard!

In the mean time, I'm pressing on with the roadbed and track between Blakely and the town of Clarke. I realized that is about 70 feet of mainline from the arrival and departure tracks at Blakely and the siding at Clarke. That's a long way on my little narrow gauge. I thought I'd better add a passing track somewhere between them. The only space available was at the end of a peninsula, so I'm now engineering a long, curved passing siding in a space that was never supposed to have one. But I can do it.

And then I have to build Blakely. Oh Lordy! What a challenge I have ahead of me. I just keep repeating our favorite mantra, "Model railroading is fun, model railroading is fun..." Luckily, it really is fun.

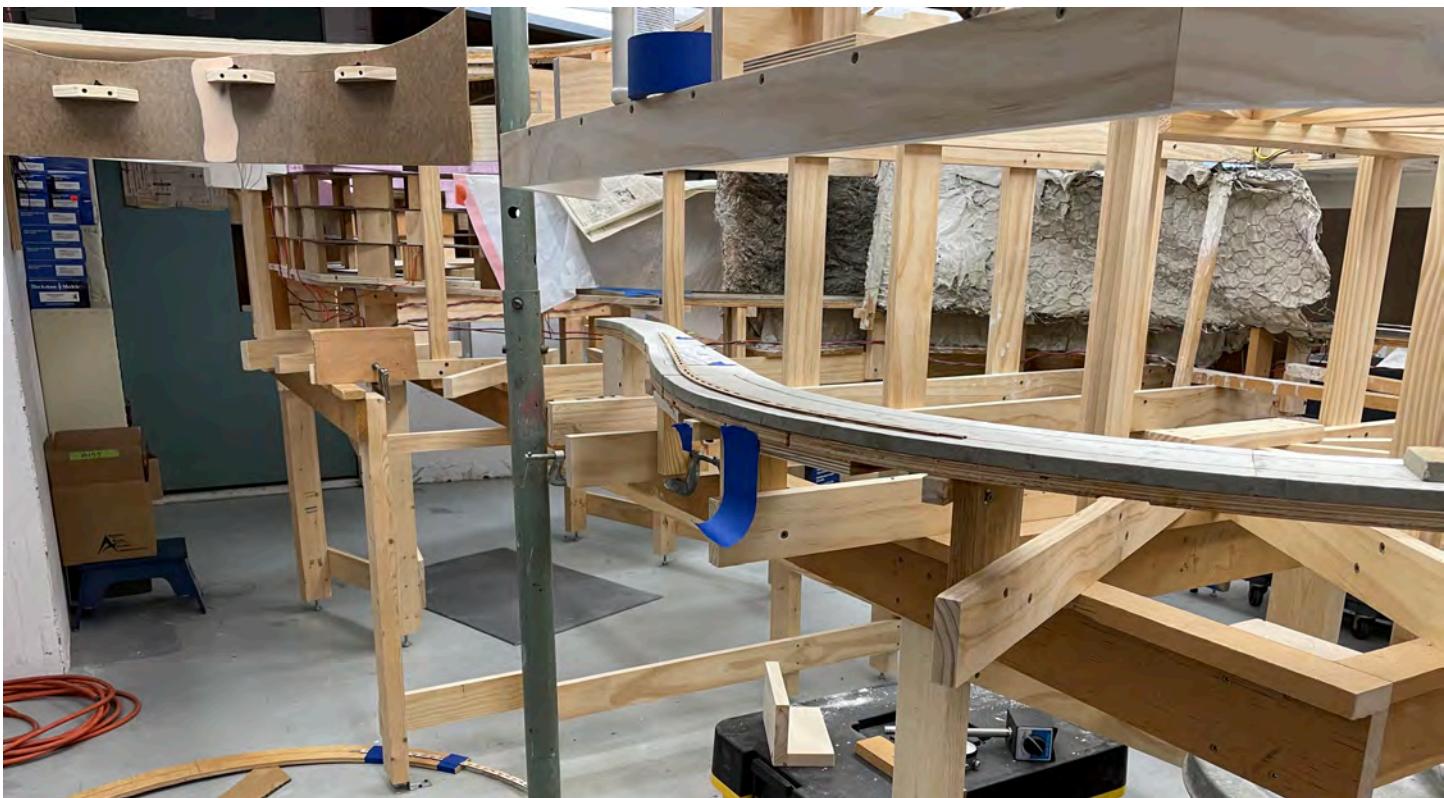
– Jim



Building the new curved siding started by using my home made trammel to lay out the sub-roadbed on 1/2" plywood then cutting out the pieces. I didn't bother to calculate the exact length I needed. As long as I had enough, I could trim to fit. I drew track centerlines as well as the cut lines so I could align the sections when gluing them together. I glued them together with overlapping splice pieces under the joints and used my trammel to ensure that the curves were right. I do this on the floor so I can have a fairly flat gluing surface and so the trammel can be used for alignment. From this I cut the Homasote roadbed to fit the assembled curve. Unfortunately, I violated the cardinal rule of cutting Homasote, namely to either do it outdoors or in your neighbor's garage. I cut it in my own garage and I spent way more time cleaning up the dusty mess than I did making the cuts. After the Homasote was glued to the plywood, but before it was installed, I dug out my trammel and drew 24" and 26" curve centerlines on the assembled roadbed to help in laying track when the time came.



The new curved siding was placed at the mouth of Olita Canyon and makes its way around the peninsula. I used switch templates downloaded from the Fast Tracks web site to help arrange things and to ensure I had no dreaded "S" curves. After much finagling, I managed to get the new siding level without too much interference with the future grade into the main town of Blakely.



From here, the track will cross into "no man's land" on the lower deck where no benchwork exists and there isn't even a finished track plan to serve as a guide. The surveyors have their work cut out for them.

CENTER OF THE NATION RAILROAD EXPO

BY RANDY STUCKY & JIM MARLETT

Finally! A train show!

The Kansas Central Model Railroaders, LLC held their expo on June 5-6 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds. The Chisholm Trail Division made its presence known with a booth staffed largely by Randy Stucky and Bob Niell with relief from Division members

Randy put it this way: "The Center of the Nation Train Show has come and gone. It felt good to see trains other than my own running (although mine aren't running at the moment). A big "Thank You" to those who stopped by the CTD table to visit and give those who manned the table a break."



Besides vendors many of us have not seen in ages, there were a number of display model railroads including the Mid Kansas Model Railroaders modular display. Phil Aylward brought two of his always entertaining 4x8 pikes. Larry Gulick allowed as how he wasn't sure he saw the whole show because of all the time he spent talking with old friends.

Regardless of how we spent our time and money, it really felt good to be back in the swing of things.

Be sure to check the schedule in the back of this newsletter for a preview of things to come to come.



CENTER OF THE NATION RAILROAD EXPO (CONTINUED)



OTTAWAY LIVE STEAMER

BY JIM MARLETT

Every now and then, a guy just gets lucky. In this case it was the luck of my wife and I being friends with a member of the Ottaway family. She thought I might be interested in attending the annual steam up that Jerry Ottaway puts on for family and friends. I got an invitation!

If you aren't familiar with the Ottaway steam locomotive, it was manufactured by the Ottaway Amusement Company here in Wichita. This eventually became Chance Manufacturing. A good deal more information and a much better history can be found at this web site: <http://www.ottawaysteam.org/>



The vintage Ottaway steamer in all its shining glory. This one is still in the family.



I was trying to get a shot of the Stevenson-style valve gear.



Jerry Ottaway on the right overseeing engineer Austin Ottaway teaching another generation to run the locomotive.



The train rounds a curve with yet another Ottaway descendent at the throttle.

WORK ON THE SCENERY AP CERTIFICATE

BY JIM HOGBEN

Big Hill Creek RR & Highway Bridges and Liberty Kansas

Big Hill Creek Santa Fe railroad bridge was built in the steam locomotive era. It replaced a wooden trestle, whose remains can be seen at low water in late fall. The approach spans are pile trestles. The interesting part is that the steel bridge is supported by three rows of large diameter wood pilings that are bridged with heavy timbers. The tops of the trestle bents were protected from steam loco firebox clinkers and hot ash by sheet metal covers.

Liberty, which is between Cherryvale and Coffeyville, was open benchwork and track on plywood, Homasote, and cork roadbed. I filled in the space by gluing a sheet of Styrofoam to the

underside of the plywood track base. Then I filled in between the track roadbed with thin, small sheets of Styrofoam packing material. I covered and contoured it with Cedar Tan caulk. While the caulk was still damp, I sprinkled Woodland Scenics ground foam, ballast, or whatever was needed to complete the scene.

To blend the highway into the backdrop, I used gray caulk to curve the road from the layout into the backdrop. Then I used acrylic paint to blend the road into the backdrop. For a “nice touch,” I added a “curved road ahead” sign (curved arrow). I used sprues for grain bin pipes.

—Jim Hogben



Liberty, KS at an earlier stage. Notice the un-detailed highway to the left and on the background and the absence of pipes on the grain bins. Compare this with the following images shot later in the process.



(Left) South end of Liberty, KS looking north from Big Hill Creek Highway and the Santa Fe railroad bridge.



(Right) Liberty, KS looking north toward Cherryvale. Note the highway blended into the backdrop and the curve sign.



(Left) Liberty, KS depot and grain storage. Again, note the highway blending into background.



(Right) The station agent waves to every train.

THE PIKE'S PEAK COG RAILROAD RUNS AGAIN

BY JIM MARLETT

A family trip to Colorado Springs gave us the chance to ride the very recently reopened Pike's Peak Cog Railroad. Closed for three years for a complete rebuilding with totally new equipment, it reopened May 27. We rode it on June 1. Unfortunately, the tracks had iced over at the top, so we had to stop at Windy Point, short of the summit. That was still plenty high. When the snow started falling, passengers opened their windows to catch a few flakes. I believe they said it was 22°F at the time. I pitied the few folks who didn't have jackets, but not enough to offer mine.



New modern cars on new rails waiting at the station. Notice the metal ties and modern attachments.



This view of Colorado Springs looks like you could almost see Kansas. (Ha!)



This is NOT Pikes Peak; it is Mt. Almagre, the second highest peak in the area. The angle of the car is no illusion. Don't drop your water bottle.



Windy Point was the end our journey. Shortly after this picture was made, snow started falling in earnest to the delight of the passengers.

MID-KANSAS NARROW GAUGERS EAT RIBS

Ok, that's a strange headline. But the first face-to-face get together for local narrow gaugers happened in June. Jim Marlett hosted with smoked ribs for supper and the guests bringing side dishes and deserts. There was lots of jawin' and chawin' for all. In the basement, a slim gauge train ran on Jim's San Juan Southern from Fremont to end of construction at Clarke and another short train made its way across the future mountains from Clarke to Fremont. It was the most action the San Juan Southern had seen in quite some time. Joining us were Steve McKee and Ross Moody from Kansas City.



Jim Marlett, Bill Robinson, Ken Neufeld, Steve McKee, and Ross Moody mull over the San Juan Southern in Jim's basement.



Larry Gulick and Tom Smith are no doubt discussing narrow gauge in the background of the dessert table. That cherry cobbler was delicious!

A TIDBIT FROM BOB

BY BOB NIELL

While looking at Model Railroad Craftsman I noticed an answer to an old question. The barns used to be painted red because paint companies made a less expensive paint for barns with metallic oxide compounds (red iron oxide). Eventually paint companies made white wash paint that was cheaper. I guess by that time barns were supposed to be red.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

RECURRING EVENTS

Chisholm Trail Division of NMRA Monthly Meeting. Every first Tuesday of the month. Gather at 6:45PM. Olivet Baptist Church, 3440 W. 13th St., Wichita, KS (13th & High) http://www.mcior-nmra.org/Divisions/Chisholm_Trail_Division/

Kansas Central Division of NMRA. Every second Saturday of even numbered months at 1:00PM. Locations vary. Contact information is here: http://www.mcior-nmra.org/Divisions/Kansas_Central_Division/

Kansas Central Model Railroaders Business Meeting. (Not the same as Kansas Central Division of NMRA) Every second Saturday from 11:00AM-Noon. 16 East 3rd Ave, Hutchinson, KS <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org>

Wichita Area Model Railroaders Luncheon. Every first Thursday at 11:30AM. Spears Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W. Maple, Wichita, KS

SCHEDULED EVENTS

JULY 2021

July 6-10 – NMRA Virtual National Convention “Rails by the Bay.” Santa Clara, CA. **Now converted to a virtual convention with dates adjusted. Also be aware that there is a new website.** <http://www.pcrnmra.org/NMRA2021/>

July 24 – The 4th Annual Great Plains Trains & Wichita Toy Trains Celebration.

9:00AM-5PM. A ten dollar admission includes entry to both the Great Plains Transportation Museum and Wichita Toy Train Museum. <http://www.gptm.us/copy-of-events>

July 24-25 – Spring Creek Train Show & Open House. Thayer County Fairgrounds Expo Building, 4th & Race Street, Deshler, NE. Store at 304 Bryson Ave, Deshler, NE. 9AM-5PM Saturday, 10AM-4PM Sunday. See link for extended store hours. <https://www.springcreekmodeltrains.com/train-show/>

AUGUST 2021

August 8 – Mid America Train & Toy Show. KCI Expo Center, 11728 Ambassador Dr, Kansas City, MO. <http://www.midamericanatrainandtoyshow.com/>

SEPTEMBER 2021

September 1-4 – National Narrow Gauge Convention. Events at both the Hickory Metro Convention Center and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Hickory, NC. <https://4Inngc.com/>

September 25-26 – Wichita Toy Train Club Train Show. Cessna Activity Center, 2744 George Washington Blvd, Wichita, KS. Saturday 9AM to 5PM. Sunday 10AM to 3PM. <http://www.wichitatoytrainmuseum.org/club-shows-1.html>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (CONTINUED)

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

OCTOBER 2021

October 2-3 and October 9-10 – Kansas

Railfest 2021. Great Plains Transportation Museum, Wichita, KS. Steam train rides will be offered. Proceeds go toward restoration of ATSF locomotive #93. <http://www.gptm.us/copy-of-events>

October 6-10 – NMRA Tulsa Union

Convention. This takes the place of the annual Mid-Continent Region Convention. It is a collaboration between Lone star Region, Mid-Continent Region & Indian Nations Division of NMRA. Embassy Suites by Hilton Tulsa I-44, 3332 South 79th East Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74145. <http://www.2021tulsauunion.com/>

Please send me information about any events or meetings you think should be included on this calendar.

Jim Marlett

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