

Trails, Rails, & Tales



March-April 2021
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The Official Newsletter of the *Chisholm Trail Division* of the **NMRA**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

A little note on the Train Show. All of the refund checks have been sent out. We had some dealers say to keep the money and they will be paid for the 2022 show.

If you have not heard we are building a house here in Halstead. I have started packing up my trains. I am finding stuff I forget I had. The hard part will be moving it all up and out then down and back. The nice thing is the layout is in sections that will make it somewhat better to take apart

Keep yourself well.

—Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Greetings to all,

I hope this article finds all of you still staying well and Covid free. I might have already told you all that I received my first Covid injection on February 1st and I will receive my second injection this Monday, March 1st. I'm so looking forward to getting this pandemic behind us, shedding the masks, and back to some kind of a normal existence. Besides, I would like to visit my grandchildren in Omaha and Nashville.

That being said, I would like to push forward and start the planning of our next in person meeting. I would like to think we could do this in April but most likely May will be the date. Of course, this all depends on state and county regulations and Olivet Baptist Church rules of occupancy.

TRAILS, RAILS, & TAILS

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NMRA

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strongly encouraged.

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I fully understand that there will still be some of our membership that will not be comfortable attending an in person at that time. I intend to continue with the Zoom platform during the in person meetings so that hopefully no one is left out. We may have to purchase a camera with microphone and a tripod. Maybe other equipment will be needed also. I will be depending on my team to help get this accomplished.

I guess that is about all I have on my mind at this time. I hope everyone is getting to work on their railroads. I know I am but progress is going kind of slow but nevertheless is moving forward.

Zoom meeting this coming Tuesday, March 2nd, 7pm with startup at 6:45pm.

Hope to see you all there.

—Dean

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

Spring is just around the corner! At least that is what I tell myself every March. The truth is that March can be the harshest month of the year with strong winds and chilly temperatures. Even the calendar knows that the Vernal Equinox isn't until March 20 so until then, it is officially still winter.

One thing I'm sure we're all looking forward to is the end of the pandemic. The data suggests that it won't be any earlier than this summer or fall that victory can be declared and we can see if we remember what "normal" was.

In the mean time, I hope everyone is having a chance to work on their railroad. I know I'm still charging along on mine, free from the distractions of enjoying other parts of life.

Terry Ross is sharing some of his pandemic progress in this month's newsletter. He shared this at the last Chisholm Trail Division Zoom meeting as well. I'm sure you are doing something with this time of relative competition. I'd like to hear about it. I'd really encourage you to share it in the newsletter with a few words and pictures. Even if you think you can't write a coherent sentence, give it a shot anyhow. That's what editors are for.

I'd also like to encourage all of you to attend our Zoom meetings. They seem to be going smoother as we get more experience. The last meeting had a nice, short business meeting, then we had a round robin of updates.

Speaking of updates, work continues on my own San Juan Southern. I have finished laying track on the upper deck and am starting on the lower deck. Of course, it still looks like the Plywood Central, but not too far into the lower deck construction, I will need to do the scenery in the canyon that hides the entrance to the helix. It's a little hard to crawl around in that space and if I put the lid on it by plastering the upper deck, it is going to be even harder. I could have put a tunnel into the helix, but everybody does that. I wanted to do something different. This meant that I have been building mock ups for some time before even committing to the sub-roadbed. I finally reached a point that I was confident I could pull off the effect and now there is some track in the canyon. I will put a river in the canyon since there is hardly a canyon or even gully without a river or stream, but having cliff walls that hide the helix in the space available means the river will have to

change sides of the canyon and that means building a bridge in the S-curve if I want both the rail line and the river to disappear from view. That may not make sense as it is written, but just pretend that I made myself clear and it would require a bridge. However, I could avoid the bridge if I hid more of the canyon and just

pretended that the river crossed under the tracks if that portion was hidden from view. We'll see how it works out. And I'll share it even if it fails.

So please show us what you're doing. It doesn't have to be a big project. We're all interested.

– Jim



After a good number of mockups using chunks of wood, flex track, and who knows what else, I finally felt confident enough to put in a roadbed I thought I could make disappear before it got to the helix. The tracks will cross over to the other side of the bench work to enter the helix, so I had about five feet to work with. I sure hope it works. I really don't want to do it over.



This is a mockup using paper and cardboard to see if I could pull it off after the flex track was laid. This is one of the few places on the railroad where I am using flex track for visible trackage. I thought it would be a little too uncomfortable to spike rail in that confined space.



So here is a mock up of the view I hope visitors will see as the little narrow gauge trains plunge into the steep-sided Olita Canyon. Imagine the Rio Olita on the right and the bridge where the railroad crosses it is just out of view. No tunnel needed!

MAINTENANCE OF WAY TRACK

BY TERRY ROSS

My 2020 Covid Time at home has been spent in my train room. Although I did not have a specific agenda, I have been able to finish landscaping some scenes that were just rocks and buildings holding space until I got time to work them into the scenery the way that I wanted them to look. One of these projects was an MOW Trackside work and storage area at Minturn Co.

I have an abandoned depot and water tank on the property. The track in the back is the Tennessee Pass route just before it joins the Moffat Route west to Glenwood Springs, Co. Picture # 1 is what this area looked like with the rocks and buildings just setting in place.

The first step was to work on the background and tunnel portal rocks. I moved some around and then glued them in place. I then used True Scene's Fusion Fiber to fill in gaps in the rock and apply a layer of soil along the bottom of the rock wall to secure it to the table. Having put the soil in place, I immediately sprinkled Woodland Scenics "Blended Turf Earth Blend" and "Fine Turf Weeds" mixed together on the soil layer of Fusion Fiber. If you apply ground cover while the Fusion Fiber is wet, it will stick in place without using glue.

I then traced the footprint of the abandoned depot, water tower, and the ground-based section car onto the work area. I then removed the buildings and began putting rocks, dirt, and ground cover around the building creating a work area for the MOW crews. I used light brown Fusion Fiber for the textured ground cover. To create the light brown soil color that I wanted is simple. I usually mix 1 cup of Fusion Fiber (which is white), with one cup of tinted water. I take the cup of water and add acrylic paint to get

the color I want for this project. I use Delta Creamcoat acrylic paint from Hobby Lobby at about a \$1.00 a bottle. The bottle will last you for many, many projects. After I get the water color I want, I begin to stir in the Fusion Fiber to get the mix I will use for the soil. This material is very easy to work with and gives you plenty of time to work the scene before any of it dries. Complete drying time is 24 hours. I have reworked some spots as much as 1 to 2 hours after I originally placed it on the layout. You can also keep unused Fusion Fiber in a Tupperware bowl with a tight lid. I have kept some up to 6 months and it was still moist in the container.

After test fitting the buildings back on the ground covered area, I then removed them again. While the ground cover area dried, I was working on the buildings at my work desk. I applied decals, and lightly weathered the buildings to give them a smokey, weather-beaten look. For weathering I used Bragden weathering powder.

Next I put the buildings back in place on the layout. I then packed some more of the Fusion Fiber around the foundations of the buildings to join the building to the ground cover. I put a layer of Fusion Fiber on the base of the water tower to cover the large plastic ground base that the kit is built on.

I still plan on putting some MOW Railroad workers around the buildings and I am currently working on a rack to put replacement rail sections on the ground. The small water tower is a temporary piece, I plan to replace it with a fuel barrel and stand that I hope to find at the next train show I am able to attend. I am really looking forward to attending a train show with other model railroaders.



This is the area to be landscaped before any detailing was started. The rock castings are in place and a couple of structures are suggestions of what is to come.



The ingredients for land forming. Fusion Fiber, acrylic craft paint, water, and a mixing bowl.

Paint is added to the water before adding Fusion Fiber, otherwise it doesn't mix well.



It may look like refried beans, but this is the Fusion Fiber mixed into the water and paint ready to apply.

Fusion Fiber "soil" is now spread into the crevices and around the bottoms of the rocks.



The next step is to add ground cover to the wet Fusion Fiber. If it is added before the Fusion Fiber dries, it will stick to the Fusion Fiber.



This is the whole scene with buildings and rolling stock in place, but before weathering.



And this is the scene after weathering.

LET IT SNOW — LET IT SNOW — LET IT SNOW

BY ALAN AAGAARD

Another quarantined project using coffee stir sticks compliments of several of my local Starbucks locations acquired over many months prior to this pandemic's beginning. Yes, it is "O-scale" for my "Rocky Mountain High" narrow gauge railroad. These times call for EXPERIMENTATIONS, so, here we go! (Which rhymes with "...snow...")



The front of the hotel with curtains blowing in the wind! The lower window shade was yellow construction paper with weathering added. The front door was intentionally left ajar. The knob is a heavily weathered straight pin. Eventually a porch roof will be added which will block viewing.

(Right) The rear of the building with the windows completed. I had *fun* experimenting with several “window treatments.” For added interest the lower left window has been broken by young lads throwing rocks... LOL. You should zoom in to appreciate it. It was later weathered.



(Above) The upper window curtains are “lace edging” from my local Walmart’s fabric and sewing center (Simplicity trim #700325) and are then gathered using thread from my mending kit.

(Right) The curtains are adhered to the window glazing using Aleene’s “Original Tacky Glue.” It did NOT attack/craze/fog the window panes.





The curtains in the front of the building are another experiment. They are “used” laundry fabric softener dryer sheets. They worked well for the curtains blowing in the wind.



Above are the curtains prior to being “gathered.” The two on the left are for the front of the building and the rear window is on the right. On the back of the building, the lower window shade was a scrap of paper grocery sack weathered with acrylic paints.

Speaking of experimenting...next, I tried/used the method of coating and adhering the acetate window panes using Future floor finish. Future is no longer available, so I located and used Pledge

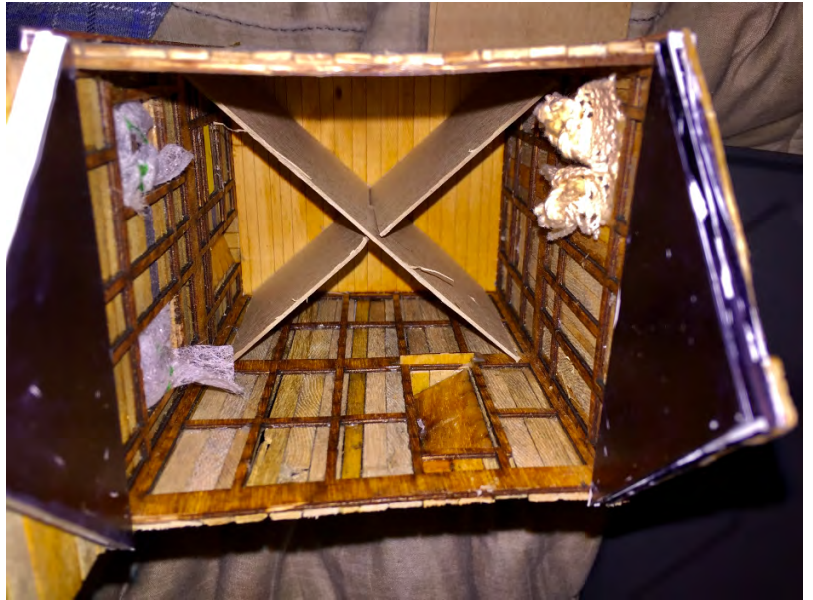




The second story door is also ajar. I love the door knob – nice and crusty-rusty!

Graining of the timbers was accomplished by scribing with a Zona™ miter/crosscut saw.

The next step was to create “room dividers” (view blocks) so you can’t just look completely through. Add the second floor, then I’ll need to support my porches.



Next, the second floor was tested for fit. Then, complements of local “big box stores/lumberyards,” I was able to download examples of flooring. These were printed onto white paper and adhered to the cardboard floor. As a result, when you peek in the doors on both floors, you will see realistic flooring.

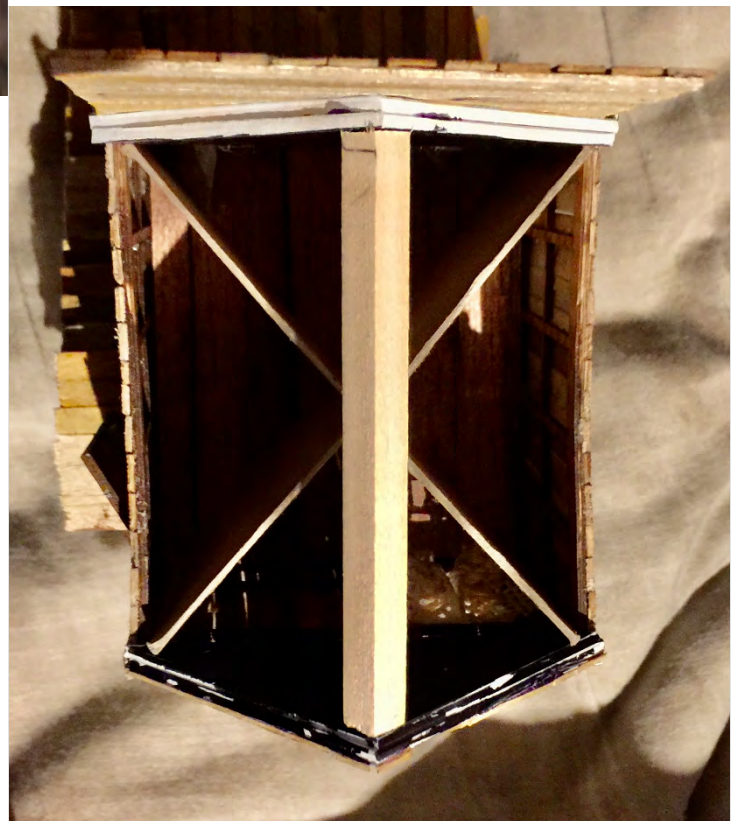




Next came the second floor room view blocks.



Then the main roof beam was installed.



The roof beam not only supports the roof, but enables keeping the front (false-front) and rear walls to remain plumb.



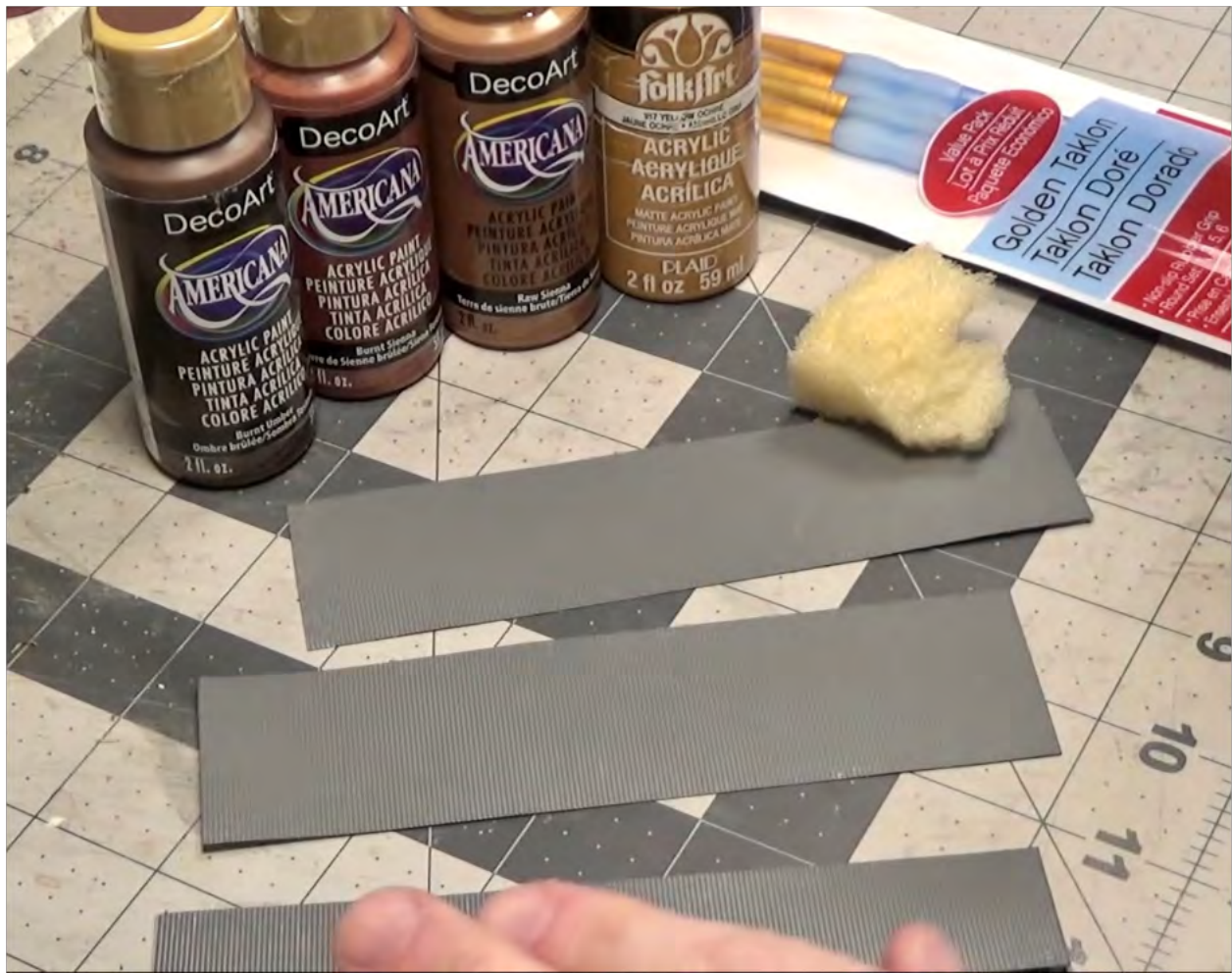
Test fitting the porch overhang was next.



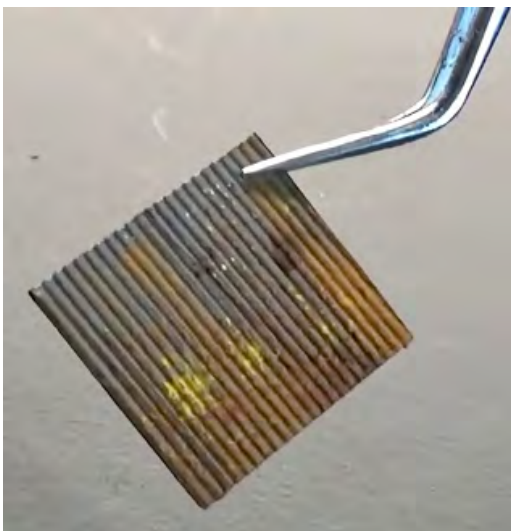
After the adhesive cures, the “flashing” will be created from the soft metallic neck labels of wine bottles supplied by a friend willing to support my hobby.



The stairs have been reinforced by rustic carpenters as shown in a side view and a rear view.



At the time of this writing, I am working on weathering/rusting the corrugated metal roofing the porch and the main structure. I am using acrylic Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna, and Yellow Ochre.



Porch posts and a roof will finish this project, but I'm not quite there yet. So fittingly, I will conclude this with a bit of modeling humor.

NO one seems to know how to cook umber!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

RECURRING EVENTS

Please check the listed recurring events to find out if they have been cancelled or not due to COVID-19. Most are on hiatus.

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://ctd-mcor-nmra.tripod.com/ctd-mcor-nmra.html>

Please note: Chisholm Trail Division is conducting Zoom meetings on the internet until further notice. Members will be apprised of the details and be receiving meeting notices by email.

Kansas Central Division of NMRA. Every second Saturday of even numbered months at 1:00PM. Locations vary. Contact information is here: http://www.mcor-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 second Thursday at 11:30AM. Spears Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W. Maple, Wichita, KS (Not meeting due to COVID-19)

SCHEDULED EVENTS

The following events are subject to cancellation. Unless otherwise noted, the organizers have not cancelled at press time. Check websites for updates.

APRIL 2021

April 10 – Greater Tulsa Area Train Show.

Bixby Community Center, 211N. Cabaniss Avenue, Bixby, OK. 9AM-3PM. Sponsored by the Toy Train Operating Society Sooner Division. <http://www.ttos-soonerdiv.org/division-events.html>

April 24 – Wichita Toy Train Club Ark City

Show. Agri-Business Building, 712 W. Washington, Arkansas City, KS. 9AM-4PM. <http://www.wichitatoytrainmuseum.org/club-shows-1.html>

JUNE 2021

June 5-6 – Center of the Nation Model

Railroad Expo. Kansas State Fairgrounds, Pride of Kansas Building, Hutchinson, KS. 9AM-5PM Saturday, 10AM-3PM Sunday. Contact Don, 620-662-5906 or kansascentralmodelrr@gmail.com. <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org/train-show.html>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (CONTINUED)

INCLUDES NON-NMRA EVENTS

June 17-20 – 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.2021tulsaunion.com/>

JULY 2021

Cancelled July 4-11 – NMRA National

Convention “Rails by the Bay.” Santa Clara Marriott Hotel, 2700 Mission College Blvd, Santa Clara, CA. <https://www.nmra2021.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://41nngc.com/>

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

Jim Marlett

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