

Trails, Rails, & Tales



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The Official Newsletter of the Chisholm Trail Division of the **NMRA**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

The financial report from the train show will be ready at Tuesday's Chisholm Trail Division meeting. Other than that there is little to report. See you Tuesday.

–Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

BY DEAN LIPPINCOTT

Greetings to all of my modeler friends.

Well, I haven't much to say about model railroading mainly because I haven't been able to do any modeling. Almost all of my time for the last two months has been taken up with our kitchen remodel. We are doing everything but the custom cabinets and quartz countertops. Yes, you heard right. My sons and I did the tearout. My son TJ and I did all the electrical in the kitchen and new pex plumbing in the basement over to the kitchen. I am doing all of the under the sink electrical and plumbing. Touch on-off faucet. New garbage disposal. Filtered water system. Dishwasher with pneumatic, countertop on-off control button. We installed new light fixtures and under cabinet LED lighting. Renee has done the wall papering and painting. We tiled and grouted the backsplash and are about to put down the new flooring. ALMOST DONE after several setbacks like it took the countertop people five weeks and three trips from Wichita to get it right. They had to replace the new countertop on the south side of the kitchen because the first one wasn't cut right and part of the north side counter had to be replaced also. So much for high technology like laser measuring the kitchen and computer aided cutting of the countertop. Well, I have said enough. This project is quickly coming to an end and then it's back to modeling. See you all soon.

–Dean

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

First things first – I really messed up the last edition of Trails, Rails, & Tales. Dean Lippincott's third installment on building the Kansas State Fairgrounds Racetrack diorama was four pages long and I only managed to publish the first page. I was in such a hurry to get the newsletter out the door, I just got careless. As a former coworker used to say, I stepped in a puddle of dumb! I'm correcting that error this issue by publishing it again, this time with the whole thing included.

I suppose it is a lucky accident that I messed up that article last issue, because I had no other feature article this time around. I'm sure being busy with all the tasks that springtime brings to us is partly to blame. In fact, I wish I had more to report on my own railroad.

I often think I am devoting way too much space to what I am doing and not enough to others, but it's an easy out. When I need material, I know I'm always close at hand. I hope you don't get tired of it. You can help by submitting your own articles and pictures. I would be delighted to publish them.

So what has been happening on the San Juan Southern in my basement?

I'm still working on the Virginia Mill. I should have finished it ages ago, but it seems to be suffering some scope creep. It will sit on a mountainside that doesn't exist yet and will serve a mine on that mountain. At least it will in my mind. I'm finding that fitting it into the actual space has resulted in analysis paralysis. Oh, I work on it almost every day, but that may only consist of gluing on a small piece of foam or adjusting the scene's position on the layout and then readjusting.

I've been trying to develop a reasonable color for the tailings piles around the mine and mill, but I haven't got it yet. I've discovered that tailings come in a wide variety of colors, so if I get anything that approximates what I have seen in real life, I'll go with it. I'm using concrete coloring

added to the water that I mix into the plaster. I let a chunk of plaster set up in its silicone mixing bowl, then I dump it on the floor and pound it with a hammer. I sift the crumbs through screens until I get the size I actually want.

The screening process owes a great deal to the nearby Asian market. They stock a number of sieves and dippers for cooking and a couple have proven quite useful. I found a really fine one for getting rid of the dust and extremely fine particles and a coarse one for straining out the pieces that are too large. The big chunks go back on the floor where I hammer them again, screen them, then repeat the process with everything that didn't go through the coarse strainer. I do this until I have enough of the right size to use. I'm still playing around with color, which is resulting in a whole lot of pounded up plaster.

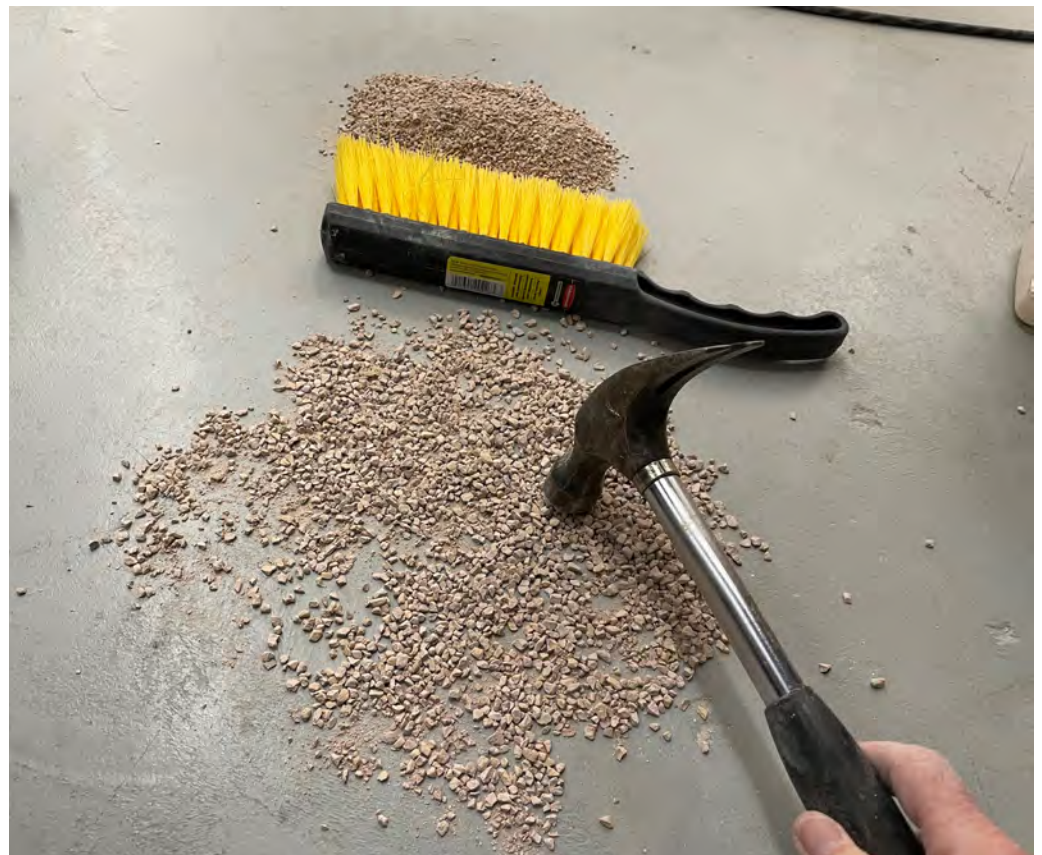
Because I'm trying to compress the space, I'm cheating on the natural slope of mine tailings, which is about 37° in real life. I am adopting a 45° slope in addition to using a lot of cribbing to hold things in place. Since I'm trying to defy gravity with steeper than natural slopes, my plan was to apply the tailings at the workbench with the whole scene tilted back. I figured when the glue set I could tip it back upright, slip the nearly complete scene into its final resting place and blend the mountains around it. I figured building the whole thing on a sheet of styrene would make tilting and moving easier. It didn't take too long to figure out that .060" styrene is too flimsy to support the tilted scene, so I'll have to do something else for tilting. I'm still using the styrene for a temporary base since it allows me to mark locations on the layout and move it all to the workbench where it lays flat and plays nice. But gluing the tailings remains a challenge. I'm incubating another idea and maybe you can see it in the next issue of Trails, Rails, & Tales.

– Jim



The Virginia Mill is nestled into part of its pink foam hillside at this stage. The foam is loosely tacked to a sheet of styrene while I'm working away from the layout. My plan is to remove the styrene at the final installation. I hope that works out. If it doesn't, I'll just have to hide the styrene. I've dealt with worse things.

You may have heard of a 10, 20, or 40 stamp mill for processing ore. Well, this is my one stamp mill for creating mine tailings.





Around Creede, Colorado the tailings piles tend to be close to the same color as the surface rock, though it's not a perfect match. I think this will be the look I'll be using around the Virginia Mine and Mill.



In other places the mine tailings seem to stand out in stark contrast to the surrounding rocks. This is a look I'll try for in other areas of my model railroad.

KANSAS STATE FAIRGROUND RACETRACK DIORAMA

PART 3 – “DIRT AND STRUCTURES” BY DEAN LIPPINCOTT

In Part 2, I had finished the base of the racetrack, sanding it smooth and was ready to add something to the track that resembles dirt. It just so happened that the Grand Nationals was coming to Hutchinson the coming weekend and test runs were taking place the Wednesday before. I decided to go over and take some more pictures. There were quite a few people in the stands and low and behold, I ran into my friend Warren Hardy. You might remember Mr. Hardy from part 1 as being the announcer for the Grand Nationals held at the KSF and retired manager of Wichita's 81 Speedway. I showed him some of my racetrack progress with pictures saved on my I-phone and he asked what I intended to use for ground cover on the track. I told him I was thinking of digging and sifting some dirt from a dead spot in my backyard. He said, “Hell no! You just go down

there and get some dirt right off that 100 plus year old track and use it.” So I did and it worked out great. I also finished the infield with some of the same dirt, adding patches of grass and weeds. I used Google Earth, pictured below, as an aid to layout the infield on the diorama.



Kansas State Fair
Fairground in Hutchinson, Kansas

The next step was to make the stage and announcer's tower. Again, I went back over to the fair grounds and took pictures and measurements. I made the stage and tower out of styrene shapes. It may not show well in the pictures but there were quite a few odd cuts needed to make the two structures.



The picture above shows a side view of the stage and announcer's tower. The stairs up to the tower were added later as seen in the picture below. Under the original stage were dressing rooms for the bands and other acts that came to the fair. This

stage is still there, but is no longer used for its original purpose. It is used mostly for storage. Now during the fair, a stage is erected on the race track in front of the grandstand for fair time acts and concerts.



I finished the diorama by making a concrete slab using a thin layer of joint compound complete with cracks and dirty areas. I added a 10 foot high chain link fence between the concrete slab and the dirt track. This was to protect the audience from flying car parts, tires, etc. I landscaped the corners

with nice green grass and trees. I also added a flagman's tower, a few spectators, a fuel truck, an ice truck, a tractor and various race cars on and off the track. All of the race cars were made by Micro Machines.





Even though this isn't directly related to model railroading, a lot of the techniques I used for this diorama are the same I use on my model railroad dioramas and eventually on my basement layout. For example, one can dig up and sift his own dirt. One doesn't have to buy manufactured dirt. Just get it from your neighbor's backyard at no cost.

Well, I hope I met the expectations of the folks at the State Fair. I was told that they were going to use it again at this year's State Fair in September. Thank you for reading. I hope you gleaned a little something from this article.

—Dean

LAST RIDE

Once again we have the sad task of announcing the passing of one of our own. Don Owens, or more formally, the Reverend Doctor Donald Owens, passed away on March 24, 2022.

Don became active in the Chisholm Trail Division in 2019 and this year was serving as our paymaster. His infectious smile and upbeat personality will be sorely missed.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

At the March meeting of the Chisholm Trail Division, Dean Lippincott gave a hands on clinic on making tissue paper "ghost signs." These are the old hand painted signs seen on the sides of buildings. Here Shirley Hogben applies glue to the location of her ghost sign.



At the April meeting, Jim Marlett gave a clinic on hand laying track. He touched on spiking, gluing, and soldering as assembly techniques and included some helpful hints for making Fast Tracks switches.

A MOIST THIRD THURSDAY LUNCH



What we have here is a bunch of guys that really don't have enough sense to come in out of the rain. The Third Thursday Lunch was held on the patio of Connie's Mexico Cafe so participants could watch trains along Broadway while eating lunch, and they did. The light misty sprinkle didn't deter them at all.

WHAT COLOR IS BALLAST?

BY JIM MARLETT

While on a bird watching trip in Western Kansas we stopped at the Leoti sewage pond. Such ponds are often a hot spots for waterfowl and shore birds. This one happened to be near a siding and small yard for the Seaboard Feed Mill. It revealed an interesting change in the order of things as usually perceived by model railroaders.

More often than not, we modelers ballast our mainlines with a light limestone and ballast the sidings in a darker hue. In this case, the mainline is darker and the siding and small yard are light colored. Also notice there are small piles of spilled grain between the rails in a couple of spots.

– Jim



WHO WAS IT? HERE'S THE ANSWER

Last issue we asked, “Who is this
Chisholm Trail Division
model railroader shown in
his formative years?”



The young man on the running
board of C&S #70 is Terry Ross.

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.mcor-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.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

SCHEDULED EVENTS

MAY 2022

May 7 – Watermelon Campbell Memorial Open House and Train Show. Railroad Museum of Oklahoma, 702 N. Washington, Enid, OK. 9AM-3PM. <https://www.facebook.com/RailroadMuseumofOklahoma/>

JUNE 2022

June 4-5 – Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo. Kansas State Fairgrounds, Pride of Kansas Building, Hutchinson, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-3PM. <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org/train-show.html>

JULY 2022

July 16 – Model Train Show & Swap Meet Joplin History & Mineral Museum, Schifferdecker Park, 504 S. Schifferdeck Ave, Joplin, MO. Saturday 9AM-3PM. <http://www.tristatamodelrailroaders.com/NewSite/>

AUGUST 2022

August 6 – Turkey Creek Division Train Show. Lenexa Community Center, 13420 Oak Street, Lenexa, KS. Saturday 8AM-3PM. Layout Tours 3:30PM-8:30PM <http://tc-nmra.org/TrainShow.html>

August 7-13 – Gateway 2022, The NMRA National Convention. Marriott Grand, 800 Washington Ave, Saint Louis, MO. Saturday 9AM-3PM. https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=13724

August 12-14 – National Train Show. The Gateway Convention Center, 1 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, IL (St Louis area). <https://www.nationaltrainshow.org/2022/ntsstlouis.html>

SEPTEMBER 2022

September 1-4 – National Narrow Gauge
Convention. Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA.
<https://www.seattlenngc.com/>

FEBRUARY 2023

February 4-5 – The Best Train Show in
Wichita, KS. Cessna Activity Center, 2744
George Washington Blvd., Wichita, KS.
Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 11AM-4PM

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

Jim Marlett

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