

# Trails, Rails, & Tales



March-April 2025  
Volume 11 • Number 2

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

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY PHIL AYLWARD

I thank all of you that helped at the show in any way. We had a good show this year. We had more paid attendance than last year. The train set slips will be counted and I will have a report next meeting.

A big shout out to the Augusta club for their work on the clinics .

The vendor for the food did not show up Friday so there was no food for the other vendors. But as luck would have it, we found that Richard Oakes's wife would do the food for us. This was at 10pm Friday. They did a great job for Saturday and Sunday, which made everyone happy.

– Phil

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

BY CHARLIE MONCKTON

I would like to begin by thanking the Chisholm Trail Division Of the National Model Railroad Association board members for all they did to make this year's train show a success. From March 2024 until January 2025 they met once a month to plan and work on the show. Also thanks to the members of the Chisholm Trail Division who worked Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the show. A special thanks to John Kraft and Lionel Smith for their work developing, advertising and presenting the clinics. Thanks especially to the members of the Augusta Model Railroad Club who worked tirelessly to help support the show and swap meet. We had seven clinics, four on Saturday and three on Sunday. The attendance for the clinics ranged from twelve to four. Hopefully we have set the seed for attendance to grow even more next year.

Participation was up for the exhibits as well as the number of people visiting. We even had one person submit an item to be judged

### TRAILS, RAILS, & TAILS

is published bi-monthly.

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Submissions for publication are strongly encouraged.

for his MMR and judges were in attendance from the Mid-Continent Region to judge it.

Well over one thousand adults and an uncounted number of children attended. Most of the children made a mini module to take home with them.

Another highlight of the show was the great social media advertising created by John Kraft and the members of the Augusta Model Railroad Club. We learned many things as we developed the commercials and look forward to expanding them next year.

The new signage was helpful creating attention to the activities upstairs. The members working the NMRA table were relentless making sure

everyone coming in was told about the exhibits and the clinics. Great job! Thank you so much.

Every show has rough spots and one that was shaping up as a real tragedy was when the food service people did not show up. Friday night at 9pm Richard and Ann Oakes and their children volunteered to step up and provide food service. They did not just cover the need, they did it in an outstanding way and are hoping to cover the food service in 2026 and expand it. Thank you Richard and Anne for a job well done.

In March 2025 the board will begin meeting monthly to work on next year's show, gleaning from the lessons learned from this year's show.

–Charlie

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY JIM MARLETT

As Ricky Nelson sang back in 1961, "I'm a traveling man." However, I don't have a girl in every town. My traveling usually involves birds and other forms of nature. This time it was a bird watching trip to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. These are not sun and surf vacations, but hard-driving, up early, out late, strenuous affairs. I figure it takes me about a week to get ready, two weeks "in country," and at least a week to recover. By then I've wiped out a whole month of time when I don't even think about the newsletter. But thanks to others, I still managed to get this newsletter out on time.

When I go on these trips, I try to take little peeks at railroad things as long as it doesn't irritate my fellow travelers too much. But this time there wasn't much to see. Despite having railroads in days past, these days Puerto Rico only has a light rail system in the capital city of San Juan, which I didn't see, and not much else. I did see one abandoned tunnel from a historic railroad. The tunnel is Guajataca Tunnel. It was built in

1904 by the American Railroad Company of Puerto Rico and was in service until 1957. It and its adjacent beach are destinations in Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican government declared it a Historical Monument in 2000.

The Dominican Republic is not much better for the rail fan. There's a rapid transit system for the capital city of Santo Domingo, which I also didn't see, and one planned for the city of Santiago de los Caballeros, but plans don't really count and we didn't go there anyhow. There are a number of sugarcane railways in various gauges and I actually did see rails from one of those. About all I could tell was it was narrow gauge. I only saw short run of tracks and a grade crossing as our van whizzed by, but I count myself lucky to have seen even that.

One thing that these trips to rural areas of tropical outposts do lend themselves to is weathered buildings. I try to take a bunch of pictures of some every time I go. I'll share one with you later in the column.

This issue of Trails, Rails, & Tales is the one normally devoted to our train show, but I was out beating myself up in the Caribbean at the time. Others were there (I hope you were) and thankfully they have provided pictures and reports on the show. My gratitude goes out to Randy Stucky, Phil Aylward, Charlie Monckton, Dean Lippincott, and Terry Ross for saving my bacon. I have heard that it was very successful show and I'll try not to miss any more of them.

It seems like a long time from now until August, but I feel like I need to put in a plug for the Mid-Content Region Convention in the Kansas City, KS area. It promises to be short, close to Wichita, and more affordable than usual this year, so I hope many of us can go. I have included information from MCoR President Larry Diehl and a registration form in this newsletter and will probably do so until the big days arrive.

Down in my basement, I did have a brief period to work on my model railroad. I put more time in on the coaling tower and didn't mess up anything I couldn't fix. A little progress was made on the ramp up to it as well. As I've mentioned before, I need to get the kit put together at least to a certain point before I am sure where the tracks need to be. I'm getting much closer. I have prototype dimensions, but they aren't always what the kit builds into.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Trails, Rails, & Tales and the look back at the Best Train Show in Wichita. See you at the next Division meeting.

– Jim



*My coaling tower project now has all the roofs on it, the buckets and pulleys all rigged, and part of the coal pit attached below the hoist house. The rest of the pit is under construction in the foreground. The pit does have coal in it now. The coal was collected from Vance Junction on the Rio Grande Southern.*

*I wasn't sure if this structure from the Dominican Republic was a dwelling or a shed, but I'm going to call it a shed, despite the satellite dish. Lots of weathering here.*





*The Guajataca Tunnel in Puerto Rico. Trains haven't been through it since 1957, but it is now an official Puerto Rican Historical Monument. We didn't get to explore it since we were after birds, but this telephoto shot brings it closer than we actually were. It would have been a nice train ride along the shore.*



*A grab shot out the van window shows a narrow gauge sugar cane railroad in the Dominican Republic. I couldn't tell you what gauge it was if my life depended on it except that it wasn't 4'8.5" for sure. If I had to guess, I'd call it 3'6" as that is a common one in the Dominican Republic.*

Plan to Attend

# 78<sup>th</sup> Mid CONTINENT REGIONAL CONVENTION

MCOR to KC  
IN '25

## AUGUST 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>

... Friday and Saturday ...

Lenexa/Kansas City

hosted with and overlaying

### Turkey Creek Division Annual Show

Special Clinics



and Contest

Clinics

Modeling Photo Contest

Dessert Bar & Ice Cream

Speakers

Train Show

More Clinics

Turkey Creek Model Contest

Layout Tours

Banquet

Good Food

Speaker

Chinese Auction

Live Auction

Fun!





## NMRA Mid Continent Region Convention

Having special focus on the KCS System, History, Contest Category ...  
THE "SOUTHERN BELLE" passenger service to points South!

Hosted by

Turkey Creek Division

**August 22nd & 23rd, 2025**

To be held at

**Holiday Inn & Suites**

**8787 Reeder Street**

### Registration Form

Name of Primary Registration: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA #: \_\_\_\_\_

NMRA membership required to enter model contest.

Spouses's Name (if attending): \_\_\_\_\_ (keep name tag for banquet)

Name of other registrants: \_\_\_\_\_

(Spouse will receive a complimentary pass for admission to include the train show and banquet meal w/name tag.  
other Extra fare participation must be purchased for each person attending.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you registering as a Vendor? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ no MCoR registration needed...select wanted "Extra Fare Events".

#### Registration Fee (NMRA membership number required for reduced registration fee.)

NMRA member \$115.00 per person (includes Turkey Creek Train Show) .....

Non-member - \$135.00 per person (includes Turkey Creek Train Show) .....

Cost	# Persons	Total Cost
\$115.00		
\$135.00		

#### Extra Fare Reservations:

Lunch Friday 11:00 am to 1:00 pm ("box sandwich etc.) .....

\$14.00

Friday Dessert Bar at 6:30 pm, per person, including spouse .....

\$18.00

Lunch Saturday 11:00 am to 1:00 pm (box sandwich etc.) .....

\$14.00

Saturday Banquet (cash bar) choose 1 per person .....  
(if a vendor wants to attend the banquet, this extra fare applies to each person)

\$30.00

**TOTAL REGISTRATION:**

--

#### Vendor Tables for Saturday Train Show Swap Meet (Vendors must register but no base fee)

are being reserved and paid for through separate Turkey Creek Registration forms.

(to be available soon)

#### Send Completed Registration Form to:

Larry Diehl  
7008 Millridge Street  
Shawnee, Kansas 66218  
ldiehl066@gmail.com  
for any additional information call (816)804-0152

#### MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS WITH HOTEL OR CLICK LINK BELOW

Holiday Inn & Suites  
8787 Reeder Street  
Overland Park, Kansas 66214  
(913)888-8440  
Rate: \$99.00 (includes breakfast)  
Ask for MCoR/NMRA group rate  
[www.holidayinn.com/overland-parkw](http://www.holidayinn.com/overland-parkw)

# From the Caboose Kibitzer



## The Head End—Second Section

By Larry Diehl, President MCoR



MCoR to KCS IN '25

MCoR is planning a unique regional convention in 2025. You all spoke!!

- ☑ Consider short convention.
- ☑ Reduce costs for member attendance.
- ☑ What can you do to “spice up” the convention?

We have secured the Holiday Inn in Lenexa, Kansas (same place we met in 2023). We have been able to negotiate what I feel is a “value stay.”

At \$99/night plus tax (vs. normal rate of \$159).

We are planning a 2-day convention, Friday afternoon and evening plus Saturday train show/layout tours/evening banquet/speaker/auctions and fun. We will have optional activities for Thursday evening and Friday morning for those who want to arrive early. The low room rate will apply to early arrivals.

We are holding the registration fee as low as possible at \$115, including banquet, plus dessert buffet Friday evening and lunches. I’m taking a risk that the cheaper cost will attract more attendance, resulting in overall better revenue.

We are planning a “special” model contest category “The Best KCS Model”, which will include associated railroads of the Kansas City, Pittsburg and Gulf (the Pee Gee RR) and the Kansas City, Mexico and Orient RR started by Ar Stillwell, 1902 thru 1928. Contemplating including “The Belt Line” (not yet decided).

The KCS started in Kansas City with The Belt Line and then the Pee Gee RR. Stillwell bankrupted the Pee Gee around 1898, lost the railroad to other investors then started the “Orient” RR. Recently the KCS merged with the Canadian Pacific continuing its success. I’m in question whether we should include any models of the new merger. (Thoughts anybody!)

We are trying to secure special clinics directed to these railroads, to include presentations on overall historic development of these railroads.

Looking forward to this variation in our convention and hope everyone of the region has the opportunity to attend. We need small models built by some of the members to be used in the live auction. I encourage everyone to consider bringing a model to participate in the KCS category. The award will be a very special nice plaque for Best of the Category. I know of a few KCS railroads and one in Oklahoma. Please participate! I am on the brink of sending out all the flyers and convention registration sheets.

See Page 11 for more information and Page 14 for a registration form.

Hope everyone had a good Christmas! Enjoy!

Sincerely,  
Larry W. Diehl  
President MCoR

## IN MEMORIAM

### STEEN MORTENSEN, MD & ROB NEISES

It was pointed out to me that I failed to publish the passing of two rather prominent members of Chisholm Trail Division and several people told me they were unaware of one or both. I apologize for this. It certainly was not intentional. I'm sure our hearts go out to their friends and family.

–Jim



Dr. Steen Mortensen passed away on November 26, 2024. Steen was an active member of Chisholm Trail Division until his battle with pancreatic cancer became too much for him to participate. He could always be found hosting the contest room of our train show. The photograph shows him with his award for being the exceptional volunteer at the 39th National Narrow Gauge Convention.



Rob Neises (right) passed away on July 10, 2024. Rob was a past Superintendent of Chisholm Trail Division and was always around to help out at our train shows. He was one of the driving forces behind the Division hosting the 2019 Mid-Continent Region NMRA Convention. The photo shows him receiving recognition for the being superintendent when we hosted that convention.



# THE BEST TRAIN SHOW IN WICHITA – CONTEST ROOM

BY RANDY STUCKY. PHOTOS BY RANDY STUCKY, PHIL AYLWARD,  
AND DEAN LIPPINCOTT

The Best Train Show in Wichita was February 1st & 2nd. The Model Contest Room had 30 entries this year, which is up from 24 in 2024. Some categories did not have any entries.

Congratulations to the winners for this year:

- Steam Engines, 1st Place – Phil Aylward
- Passenger Cars, 1st Place – Radford Walker
- Freight Cars, 1st Place – Radford Walker
- Freight Cars, 2nd Place – Randy Stucky
- Freight Cars, 3rd Place – Randy Stucky
- Caboose, 1st Place – Radford Walker
- Caboose, 2nd Place – Radford Walker
- Non-revenue Cars, 1st Place – Phil Aylward
- Structures, 1st Place – Dean Lippincott
- Structures, 2nd Place – Ron Werak
- Diorama, 1st Place – Frank LeBleu
- Diorama, 2nd Place – Augusta Model Railroad Club
- Diorama, 3rd Place – Bronna Leach
- Photo – Prototype, 1st Place – Ron Werak
- Photo – Prototype, 2nd Place – Randy Stucky
- Photo – Prototype, 3rd Place – Dean Lippincott
- Photo – Model, 1st Place – Dean Lippincott
- Photo – Model, 2nd Place – Dean Lippincott
- Favorite Train, 1st Place – Radford Walker
- Favorite Train, 2nd Place – Alan Meinhart
- Favorite Train, 3rd Place – Randy Stucky

Best of Show went to Frank Le Bleu for his diorama depicting the Golden Spike ceremony for the transcontinental railroad. This entry also won first place in the diorama category.

My thanks to Gene Bowers for his help with the contest room.

There is less than a year until our next show on February 7-8, 2026. It is not too early to start working on your entries.

– Randy



*First Place Steam Locomotive*



*First Place Passenger Car*



*Second, First, and Third Place Freight Car*



*First and Second Place Caboose*



*Second and First Place Structures*



*First Place Diorama & Best of Show*



*First Place Structures*



*Second Place Diorama*



*Second, First, and Third Place Photos Prototype*



*Snow-covered Diorama*



*First and Second Photos Model*



*Second and First Place Favorite Train*



*Third Place Favorite Train*

## MINI-MODULE MAKE AND TAKE FROM THE TRAIN SHOW

PHOTOS BY PHIL AYLWARD

The mini-module project has been spearheaded by our superintendent Charlie Monckton and is always a rousing success. Kids attending the show get to try their hand at making a small N scale module which can be connected with others to make a functional model railroad. The kids always get a big kick out of it.



# PICTURES FROM AROUND THE SHOW

PHOTOS BY PHIL AYLWARD





# MODULAR NEWS

## BY TERRY ROSS

In the last newsletter we were looking forward to the McPherson Train Show Jan. 11 and 12. We regrettably had to cancel the McPherson Show due to ice and snow. We just didn't think it was worth the risk to get out on icy roads and sidewalks. Hopefully we will be able to be there next year.

The last outing for the Chisholm Trail Modular Group was the NMRA / Wichita Train Show back on Feb. 1st and 2nd. We had a really good show, with 10 Members present to run trains. (Several members were not able to operate due to working at the Train Show itself.) We visited with a lot of people, and answered a lot of questions about Modular Railroading for a number of new modelers, and possible new NMRA members. We were able to set up a 40' x 20' rectangular layout with a "U" shaped center. We set up our new "Staging Yard" for this show. The Staging Yard is 22' long, 3 tracks wide, and clamps onto the back

side of our U-Shape area modules. The yard runs behind the backdrops of the modules so it is a hidden staging area. It is a 3-track yard with run thru capabilities, so we can stage trains to go either direction on the main. This was a real asset, as we did not have to tie up main line track to put trains on and off the layout. It was especially useful when Adam set up an 80 car freight train with 6 powered units for his train. See the photos, in the "U" section it covers all 52 feet of track. There is also a photo where it stretches from one end of the layout to the other and around the curves. He had pushers and MU'ed units in the middle of the train at one time. We are currently working on a couple of new modules, and several of the older modules that we have rearranged the track to make the layout better. We are hoping to host an operating session in the near future.



*If you like long trains, Adam Goldsmith has one for you – two locomotives on the point, a pair of mid-train helpers, and another pair pushing on the back end provide the power..*

Our next display will be at the Bel Aire Community Center on Saturday, April 12th and Sunday, April 13th. (Saturday we are open to the Public, then Sunday is just for us to have Family, Friends, fellow modelers, etc.) So, if you can make it out to see us on Sunday, that would be great. It's a great time to bring your favorite train and run on the layout.

The following Saturday, April 19, 2025 we will be at the Wichita Toy Train Show in Arkansas City. (Note: it is Saturday only!!) It starts at 9:00 am and closes at 4:00 pm. It is located in the Agri-Business Building, 712 W. Washington, Arkansas City, KS. Again, we would like to see everyone come out, bring a friend, your favorite train or rolling stock to run, and most of all just join in the "Fun of Model Railroading".

See you at the next show!!

– Terry



*Seeing the next generation take the throttle gives us all hope that the hobby is alive and well.*



*When the whole modular layout is set up, it's no longer a matter of whether we can get enough modules to fill the space; rather it is whether we can get enough space for the modules.*

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The third Thursday lunch group visited Larry Gulick's On30 layout. Larry's outstanding structures impressed us all and we had a great time!



*Larry (center) gave us a chance to run trains while we admired his layout.*

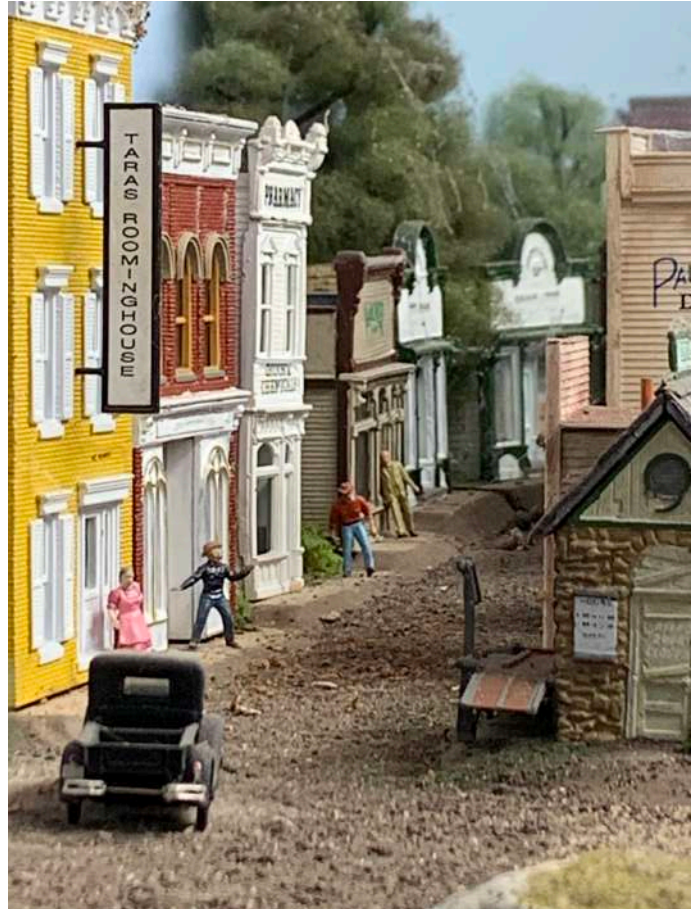


*Down town scene.*





*Left: Pamela's Emporium gives a nod to Chisholm Trail Division past Superintendent Pam MacPhail. (Dean Lippencott photo)*



*Right: In the town at the other end of the railroad, unpaved streets reveal a different economy. (Dean Lippencott photo)*



*Left: A passenger train crossing the high spindly trestle. There must not be much of a hurry on the narrow gauge since the varnish is being towed by a Heisler logging locomotive.*

# 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/](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/](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. Spear's Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W Maple, Wichita, KS

**Third Thursday Model Railroaders's Lunch.** Every third Thursday at a location and time to be announced. If you are not receiving notices and would like to be included, contact Terry Ross (316) 258-4029.

### SCHEDULED EVENTS

#### **MARCH 2025**

**March 1-2 – Lawrence Model Railroad Club 23rd Annual Train Show & Swap Meet.** Crown Toyota, 3400 S Iowa St, Lawrence, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 9AM-3PM <http://www.lawrencemodelrailroadclub.org/TrainShow.html>

**March 8-9 – Garden City Model Train Show.** West Pavilion, Finney County Fairgrounds, 601 W. Lake Ave, Garden City, KS. Saturday 10AM-5PM, Sunday 11AM-4PM. <https://www.facebook.com/BootHillModelRailroadClub>

**March 22-23 – Nebraska-Iowa Railroaders 2025 Train & Toy Show.** Papillion Landing Field House, 1022 W. Lincoln St., Papillion, NE. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. <https://nebraskaiowarailroaders.com/>

#### **APRIL 2025**

**April 12-13 – Chisholm Trail Division Modular Group at Bel Aire Spring Festival.** Bel Aire Recreation Center, 5251 E 48th N, Bel Aire, Kansas. Saturday public display 1PM-3PM, Sunday Chisholm Trail Division friends and family only. <https://www.belaireks.gov/calendar.aspx?view=list&year=2025&month=4&day=12>

**April 12-13 – Festival of Trains.** OKC Fairgrounds - The Pavilion, 3212 Wichita Walk, Oklahoma City, OK. <https://www.festoftrains.com/>

**April 19 – Arkansas City Train Show.** Agri-Business Building, 712 West Washington, Arkansas City, KS. Saturday 9AM-4PM. <http://www.wichitatomtrainmuseum.org/home-page.html>

#### **JUNE 2025**

**June 24-25 – National N Scale Convention.** Sheraton Overland Park, 6100 College Blvd, Overland Park, KS. <https://www.nationalscaleconvention.com/>

## **JULY 2025**

**July 14-19 – 90th NMRA National Convention, Station No VI.** Sheraton Hotel, 21111 Haggerty Rd, Novi, MI. <https://nmra2025.com/>

## **AUGUST 2025**

**August 22-23 – NMRA Mid-Continent Region Convention.** Holiday Inn & Suites, 8787 Reeder Street, Overland Park, KS. <http://www.mcor-nmra.org/Conventions/>

**August 23 – Turkey Creek Train Show and Swap Meet.** Shawnee Civic Center, 13817 Johnson Dr #3802, Shawnee, KS. <https://tc-nmra.org/TrainShow.html>

## **SEPTEMBER 2025**

**September 3-6 – 45th National Narrow Gauge Convention.** Gateway Convention Center, 1 Gateway Dr, Collinsville, IL. <https://www.45thnngc.com/>

**September 19-20 – Ozark Model Railroad Association Train Show.** Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, E-Plex East Hall, 3001 N Grant Ave, Springfield, MO. Friday 4PM-8PM, Saturday 9AM-3PM. <http://www.omraspringfield.org/train-shows.html>

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

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