

# THE BRASS POUNDER\*



D. Heinsohn Photo

Volume 28  
Issue 5  
October 2019

## Timetable

**The next Kansas Central Division (KCD) meeting will be 1:00PM on October 12, 2019 at Ross Boelling's house. Directions will be sent under separate cover.**

## Join the KCD on Facebook

Kansas Central Division-NMRA has a Facebook page and is for NMRA members only. It is a place to share model railroading adventures, post pictures, tell tales of woe in building your empire, post obstacles you have overcome, and ask questions. Have Fun. Simply enter Facebook search block and select request to join. See you there

## Join the KCD Yahoo Group

Kansas Central Division has a Yahoo Group. To join the Group, send an email to:

[KCD-NMRA=subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:KCD-NMRA=subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

You will be automatically subscribed to the group with the email address from which you sent the message. Or go to [groups.yahoo.com](http://groups.yahoo.com) and enter KCD-NMRA in the search window to find the group and join.

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## Kansas Central Division – NMRA

### Call Board

Director	Ray Brady <a href="mailto:joycove@wilsoncom.us">joycove@wilsoncom.us</a>
Superintendent	David Heinsohn <a href="mailto:Kd0r@fhrd.net">Kd0r@fhrd.net</a>
Clerk	Tom Katafiasz
Paymaster	Larry Tiffany
Brass Pounder Editor	Ray Brady
Brass Pounder Associate Editor	Christine Heinsohn

# Minutes of the Last KCD Meeting

August 3, 2019

Kansas Central Division Meeting of August 3, 2019

The August 3, 2019 meeting of the KCD was held at the Great Overland Station in Topeka, Kansas.

Superintendent David Heinsohn convened the meeting at 1pm. Those in attendance were David and Chris Heinsohn, Ray Brady, Ross Boelling, Pat Boltz, Jimmie Pottberg, Tom Katafiasz, Alan & Nancy Meinholdt Larry Tiffany and guests Gorden and Pam MacPhail from Chisholm Trail Division NMRA and the Augusta Model Railroad Club. Each person introduced themselves stating where they were from and what gauge, railroad and era they modeled.

Ross moved and Christine seconded to approve the previous meeting minutes. Tom moved and Ross seconded to approve payment of \$40 to the KCD Clerk to maintain our 501-c3 status with the state of Kansas.

Director Ray reported on the MCoR Convention. He stated the KCD was well represented; however the Region was only sparsely represented. Numerous clinics and extra tours were available for attendees to take advantage of. There are approximately 900+ modelers in the region. Ray also mentioned that he has 50 undecorated boxcars from a donation from the NMRA National. We will attempt to find a possible use for these in either a clinic or some other presentation.

Larry mentioned that the Midland RR was using lots of ballast due to the recent heavy rains causing flooding.

Ray still needs articles for the Brass Pounder. Tom mentioned that it was good to see the increase in number of articles contributed to the August Brass Pounder.

David reported that the October meeting will be held at Ross Boelling's in Lyons in Dickenson County. Due to scheduling conflicts, Ross moved and Chris seconded to move the October meeting to the 12<sup>th</sup> of October. The December meeting will be held in Council Grove.

Ross mentioned possible KCD co-sponsoring the Herington RR Days. It was decided to place on the agenda of the October meeting for discussion.

Chris moved and Larry seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:33pm.

NRRHS members Ed and Kay Grey were our hosts for the tour of the Great Overland Station and Rolling Stock. It was a very interesting tour with many varied photos being taken.

Respectfully submitted  
Tom Katafiasz, Clerk



# Superintendent News

From the KCDivision [NMRA](#)



The end of August sure feels like early Fall around here. Still plenty warm so the plants don't need to come it, nor does the garden railroad stuff. I'm hoping all of you with basement empires have had no water issues given all the rain we've had this summer.

Before I go any farther I want to compliment Ray as the Editor of our Brass Pounder. He received a nice complement on his work as our editor in the latest issue of Chisholm Trail's newsletter *Trails, Rails and Tails*. Well Done Ray and thanks again from all of us for your hard, effective work on the BP.

Speaking about Chisholm Trail Division, we've had visitors from Chisholm Trail Division at some of our meetings of late. It's been great to see those faces at our programs. Some of us are also regular visitors at their meetings. I suspect some of the folks the northeast end of our division attend Turkey Creek Division meetings with regularity. My point: keep an eye on our neighboring Divisions meeting schedule and programs. You may find something of interest. It's always fun to visit with a new group of modelers, and learn new stuff. Both Turkey Creek and Chisholm Trail meet monthly and in the same location so it's pretty easy to attend in terms of scheduling. To find information on other Division's meetings go to [NMRA.org](#), hover over "Regions", then click "Regions and Divisions", click on MCoR in the middle of the map or just scroll down the page to Mid-Continent Region and click the link to the Division of interest.

Our next meeting will be Oct 12 at Ross Boeling's Barndominium. Chris and I will be on an East Coast Cruise to celebrate her birthday. I believe we'll be in NYC that day, so we'll at least have subways to partially slake our railroad thirst. As a result Ray will be running the business meeting. Ross will hopefully offer up more tails of dispatching to improve our understanding of modern operations. And you'll

have a chance to check out his progress on his pike. Ray will send out instructions on how to get to Ross's location later in the month. OH! Pay attention to the instructions. Your GPS will NOT get you there! At least ours won't.

I'll be stepping down as Superintendent after the December meeting. Elections will be held at that meeting. Please be thinking about new officers and new directions for your division between now and then. I'm stepping down because Chris and I have purchased a trawler type boat and will be spending lots of time on it cruising America's Great Loop. While on that loop, we may be on the water but we'll be beside some very well known sections of railroad. The tracks along the Hudson River come to mind. I'll try to get some good pictures to share.

And pictures to share are things that Ray would really like. Did you spend a day on the A&SV either riding or crewing? Great! Snap a picture and send it to Ray. Oh, you were at Baldwin on the dinner train? A picture of the main course before you destroyed it would be fun. Then add one that shows the meal and the interior of the car as well. Found something interesting in an abandoned siding? Please share. Building a new building? Some mid construction pictures would interest us all. Attended an operations session? Pictures of modelers having fun are pleasing. Of course Ray likes full-length articles as well. In addition to sharing your pictures with Ray, post them on the KCD FaceBook page. That's really easy and we get to enjoy them sooner.

I know Chris is going to move some of her painting stuff to our boat. I wonder if I should move some N-scale stuff as well?? [A quick side note. Chris took up painting as a hobby, in large part because of our discussions about how to model the stuff we were seeing out the car window as we drove around. You never know what this hobby will inspire.]

*David Heinsohn, Superintendent*



# Director News

From the KCDivision **NMRA**



Hello all, and greetings from the Kansas Central Division Director.

The past two months have been exciting, not because I have been in the basement doing model railroading, but because I have been married to my computer editing the **Caboose Kibitzer**. Yes! It has been exciting because I have had a chance to learn about other modelers throughout our 7-state Region.

Not to be confused with the **BRASS POUNDER** that you are now reading, the **Caboose Kibitzer** is the quarterly publication of the Mid-Continent Region of the NMRA – of which everyone in the Kansas Central Division has a membership. My first issue of the Caboose Kibitzer should be in your email in-basket before this issue of the Brass Pounder hits the cyber-streets.

As the Editor of that publication, I have devoted a lot of time to getting the “look” put together for that publication. In gathering the information for the Caboose Kibitzer, it became obvious that there are a lot of activities going on throughout the Region where members interact with each other in much bigger forums than our local Division can. And, with 950+ members of MCoR, there are a lot of stories to tell.

But I know that in our Division, we, too, have a lot of activities going on. After all, you wouldn't be a member of the NMRA if you did not have an interest in model railroading. It is just that we are so far-flung in our distances from each other that it is hard to know what each of us are doing when we only get together once every two months. And the distance is probably one of the reasons why we, in the past, have probably had different members at different meetings – depending on the meeting location.

The BP and the CK have distinctly different rolls to play in our journey down the NMRA trail. I see the CK as a communication tool for all 950+ members to share common experiences doing model railroading. And, I see

Brass Pounder as us sharing our activities locally and celebrating our unique interests at a local level.

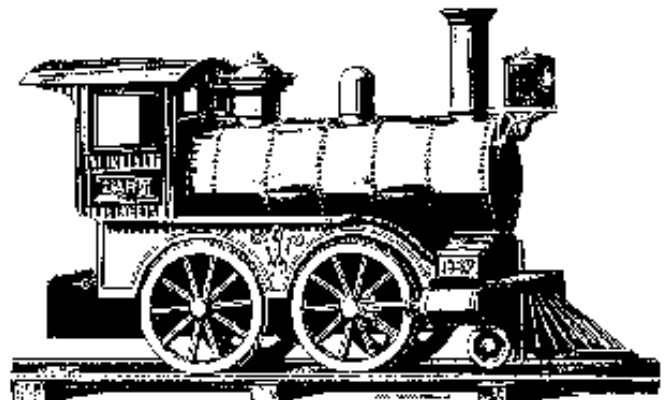
Your interests are different than mine, and that is OK! But I am interested in your interests because it helps me grow in my knowledge. For example, I am heavily into Union Pacific and the routes it follows. That leads me to learning about the geology, history, operations, etc. of the UP. But others in the Division have other railroad interests, namely SF, Frisco, operations, model building, operating prototype engines, freelancing, and more. Those are the stories that I want to know.

In the past, I have done interviews of KCD members to get to know them better. And, hopefully, you have gotten to know your fellow modeler better too. Which means that we have a common link to each other as we journey down the modeling path. We should continue the 1-on-1 interactions in the Brass Pounder.

I look forward to continuing the journey with you as we, together, journey down this hobby's path. Let me know what you are doing!

**Don't forget, next meeting at Ross Boelling's on October 12.**

*Ray Brady, Director*



# Interlockings

By Ross Boelling



From the *General Code of Operating Rules* (GCOR) glossary:

**Interlocking:** Signal appliances that are interconnected so that each of their movements follows the other in proper sequence. Interlockings may be operated manually or automatically.

**Interlocking Limits:** The tracks between outer opposing absolute signals of an interlocking.

**Interlocking Signals:** The fixed signals of an interlocking that govern trains using interlocking limits.

**Distant Signal:** A fixed signal outside a block system that governs the approach to a block signal, interlocking signal, or switch point indicator. A distant signal does not indicate conditions that affect track use between the distant signal and block or interlocking signals or between the distant signal and the switch point indicator. A distant signal is identified by a "D".

**Block Signal:** A fixed signal at the entrance of a block that governs trains entering and using that block.

**Block System:** A block or series of blocks within ABS, ACS, CTC or Interlocking limits.

**Block:** a length of track between consecutive block signal.

**Automatic Block Signal System (ABS):** A series of consecutive blocks governed by block signals, cab signals, or both. The signals are activated by a train or by certain conditions that affect the block use.

**Automatic Cab Signal System (ACS):** A system that allows cab signals and the cab warning whistle to operate automatically.

Bored yet? Definitions and glossary terms don't seem too interesting, but they are vital to the very specific phrases used in today's railroading. Our topic this month is a brief discussion of Interlockings.

Look back at the first sentence in the definition of "interlocking". What exactly does that mean? It means an interlocking is designed to only function as it was designed. It cannot allow any conflicting movements to occur, i.e. line a Westbound train into a siding while at the same time line an Eastbound train down the main track through the same interlocking plant.

In Centralized Traffic Control, is the control point at the east end of Strong City Siding an interlocking?

- The control operator requests to put a Westbound train into the siding.
- The East Siding Switch is requested to move to the reverse position.
- The switch machine moves the switch points to the reverse position.
- Contacts on the switch confirm that it is, indeed, lined safely for the siding.
- The Signal is requested into the siding.
- It finds the switch lined and locked and there is no track indication indicating the siding is occupied.
- The absolute signal displays the proper indication for the train to enter the siding.

- Any opposing signal is set to STOP.

These events are all interconnected so there is only one result and only one route possible. The East Siding Switch at Strong City **IS** a manual interlocking.



Is the Jacobs Crossing railroad crossing at grade near Tampa, KS an interlocking? The UPRR crosses the BNSF at grade at this location. It is protected by absolute signals.

- It automatically senses a BNSF train approaching the crossing.
- It checks to see if a UP Train is indicated as already occupying the crossing.
- It checks to see if a UPRR Absolute signal has a proceed indication or is approaching the crossing.
- It checks to see if there is a BNSF train occupying the other side of the crossing.

If nothing is found during all these steps, it displays a proceed signal on the absolute signal for the approaching BNSF train. No control operator is involved. Jacobs Crossing **IS** an automatic interlocking.





Railroad A crosses Railroad B at grade near Courtland.

- Where they cross, there is a gate with a “STOP” sign on both sides.
- When the gate is swung across Railroad A, they will see the gate and “STOP” blocking their path while Railroad B will not see a stop.
- When the gate is swung across Railroad B, they will see a “STOP” and Railroad A can continue across the crossing.
- IF Railroad B approaches the crossing and sees a “STOP” blocking their path, but there is no Railroad A train closely approaching or occupying the crossing, the Railroad B train can move the gate so the “STOP” now blocks for Railroad A; this opens up their route and allows Railroad B to continue on their way.

Is the Courtland crossing an interlocking? By definition, YES it is. The gate allows no conflicting movements.



When many folks think of interlockings, what they are actually thinking about is a railroad crossing at grade, i.e. one railroad crosses physically another without any switches. Yes, that is a type of interlocking, but there are also several different types. CTC Control points are technically interlockings.

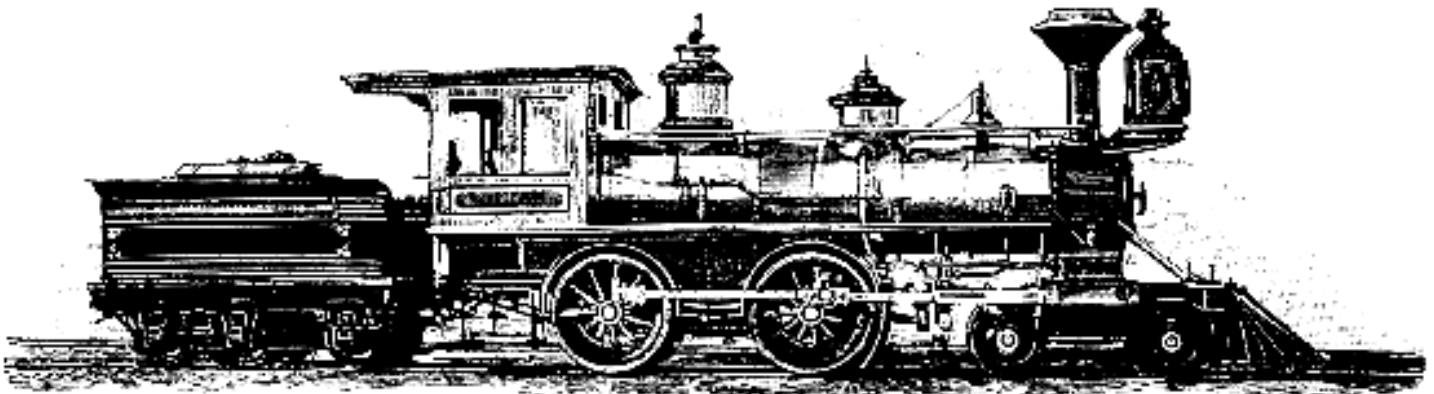
What happens when an interlocking fails? The rules provide for specific actions and verbiage to address such failures. These are fairly common where switches are involved in an interlocking as they sometimes do not indicate mechanically locked because the points have moved due to temperature changes or debris stuck between the point and the stock rail. (Yes, real railroads have switches that do not work!) Because the switch does not indicate locked, the interlocking will not allow a signal to line.

# The Brookville Hotel (continued from the February 2019 Brass Pounder)



By Tom Katafiasz

The sign painters have made their appearance and the concrete chicken has arrived. There are still many finishing touches that need to be done such as final position of the chicken, decorative metal fence and front end landscaping. Do you really know how hard it is to find a concrete chicken? Don't ask me!! Hopefully the project will be done in the next month or two!





# Musings from the Editor

By Ray Brady



## Tales from the (Rail)Road Part 2 By Ray Brady

In the last issue of the Brass Pounder, you read of my serendipitous discovery of BNSF concrete ties along the Union Pacific mainline (ex D&RGW) at Parachute, Colorado as I returned from the NMRA National Convention in Salt Lake City. This issue I take you to a remote place on this ex-D&RGW line that I discovered on the way to the Convention. It is:

**Cisco UT**  
**ZIP code 84515**  
**Population: 1**

I-70 runs roughly parallel to the UP (ex D&RGW) route from Grand Junction, Colorado to Green River, Utah. **(Figure 1)** I have explored the section of right-of-way from the I-70 Cisco exit west to Green River in the past. Old US-6/50 still exists, albeit in poor condition, and one can follow closer to the RR. In fact, Solitude Siding (between Cisco and Green River) is less than a mile off the old highway and one that I have included on my RR layout.



The part of the route from just west of the Cisco exit to Green River is visible from I-70. However, from Mack, Colorado to the Cisco, Utah exit on I-70, the railroad is in remote desert, either in the Colorado River canyon or in desert back-country. That section of the RR cannot be seen from I-70. I had seen the sign for Cisco along I-70 in the past and now, looking at maps, I see that Cisco is a town along the right-of-way. Ahh! Another area to explore for my model railroad layout!

My assumed frame of reference looking out the car windows at 75mph in the past has been:



Construction of the D&RGW started in 1881 and the original steam-era railroad survey followed the Colorado River downstream from Grand Junction, Colorado to Westwater, Utah where it struck out across the desert country to get to the next dependable water at Green River, Utah. And, my assumption was that it had a laborious, steep climb to get out of the Colorado River canyon to the desert plateau at Cisco. From there, I assumed it would make its way on a fairly level dash to Green River for the much need water. After all, as I cruise down I-70 in my air-conditioned 363hp Hemi, I have no idea of the route elevations that the D&RGW really encountered.

So, I leave I-70 at Exit 204 and head south on the broken up blacktop of the original route of US-6/50 towards Cisco. What I find is that Cisco is a recently abandoned Ghost Town. It is a conglomeration of falling-down buildings, trashed cars, a Post Office building and --- a population of 1.



**Figure 2**

**(Figure 2)** It is a modern day town - only recently abandoned.

Subsequent research after I get home revealed that Cisco started out as a water stop and turning "Y" on the D&RGW in the 1880's. It was about half way between Grand Junction and Green River (50 mi each way by rail) and was a location that initially supported the steam engines of that time. In fact, remnants of the "Y" use for turning the locomotives can still be seen from the air.



**Figure 3**

**(Figure 3)** But to get the water to Cisco, water had to be pumped from the Colorado River about 3 miles away. Cisco obviously had a major importance to the railroad to spend the money to get water to this remote location (as we will see shortly)

Later on as the local area became more developed, Cisco became a major sheep shearing location and in the 1920's it is estimated that approximately 100,000 sheep were sheared in Cisco before being shipped off to market. Not bad for a desert community....

In 1924, oil and gas was discovered in the area and Cisco became somewhat of a boomtown for a while until the fields gave out. Oil and gas is still produced there, but at a much-reduced rate from



the original production.

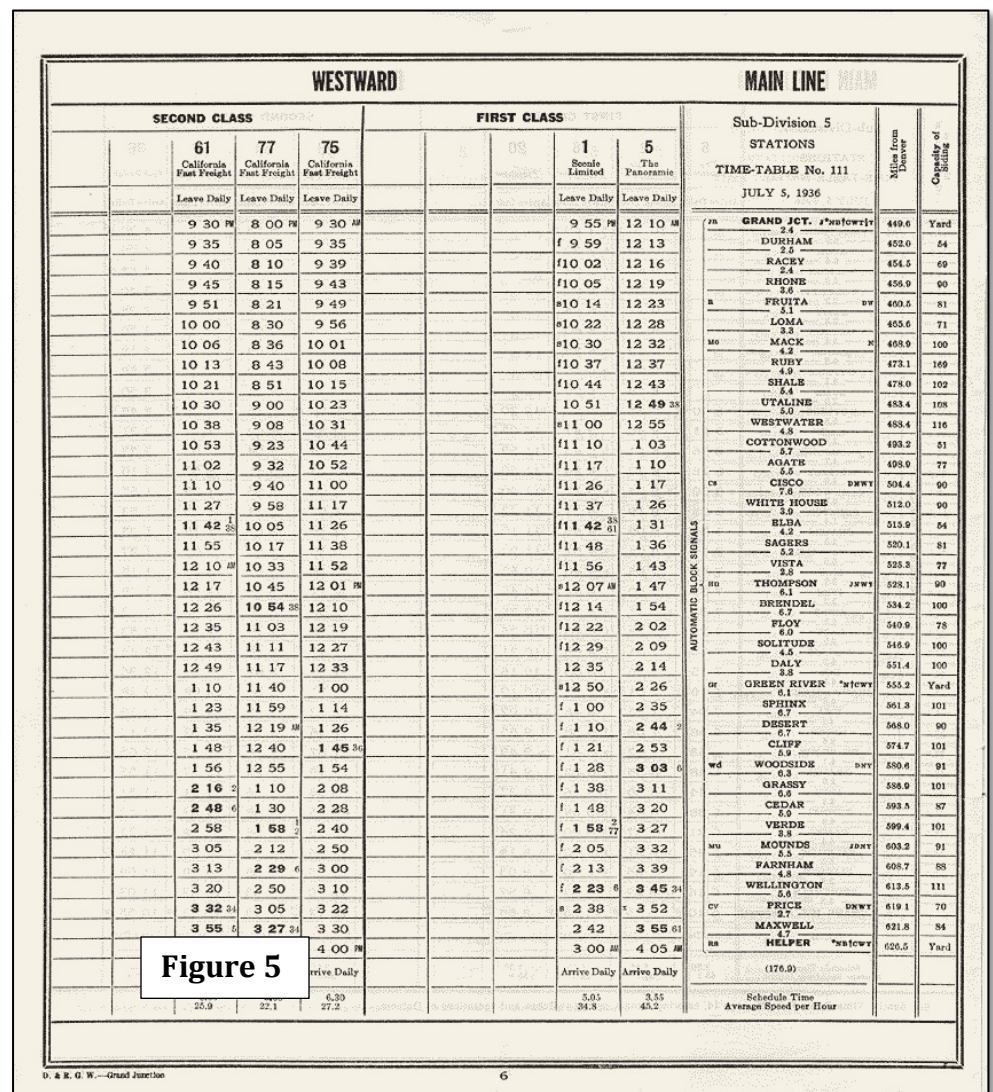
But the death knell came when the Interstate System came through and I-70 bypassed Cisco



about 2 miles to the north. Cisco cannot be seen from I-70. Johnny Cash wrote about Cisco's becoming a ghost town in his song *Cisco Clifton's Fillin' Station*.

But back to my assumptions on the survey! I went into Google Earth and plotted the current alignment of the railroad and what I found contradicted my assumption of grades. **(Figure 4)** The grade gradually drifts downhill from Grand Junction (4580') to Westwater station (4318') at a 0.2% grade (except for a short .2% grade at Mack (4580')) as one would expect. But at Westwater the route leaves the Colorado River and follows a +1% grade for about 5 miles to Agate (4570) before it continues -1% descent to Cisco (4300').

But from there, I found the greatest surprise. The grade follows a continuous +1% rise for 20 miles to Thompson (**5160'**) before it descends at -1% to



### Figure 5



Green River (4080').

The steepest and most severe grades on the Grand Junction – Green River section were on the western half of the route, not the part coming out of the Colorado River canyon. This is the reason for the water stop and the turning “Y” at Cisco. Water and helpers were not needed to get out of the Colorado River canyon. They were needed to continue the 50 miles west to Green River.

In looking at a 1936 Employee Turntable, **(Figure 5)** water and turning “Y”s were located at Cisco, Thompson and Green River. The D&RGW were able to cover 50 miles of desert with adequate water and helper service.

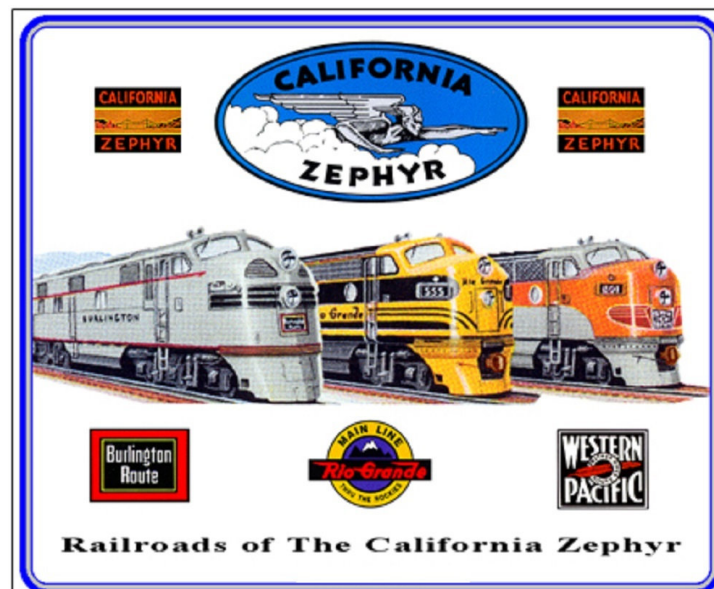
**Figure 6**



So that is the story of Cisco. A modern day Ghost Town bypassed by civilization.

But wait. What is that that I hear while I was taking my pictures of Cisco, the Ghost Town. Yes! Yes! I hear the familiar “Long, Long, Short, Long” out in the desert to the west. And, as I wait a couple of minutes, around the bend comes the Colorado Zephyr heading east to Denver. **(Figure 6)**

So civilization continues to pass by Cisco, Mile Post 504. It is no longer a flag stop. It is no longer a water stop. It no longer needs a turning “Y”. It is no longer a sheep shearing station. It is no longer a booming oil center. It is just a 6890' siding out in the middle of the desert with a Ghost Town watching the trains go by.



# Timetable

A Look Down the Line

**-Mark Your Calendar-  
Future  
Kansas Central Division  
NMRA Meetings**



**October 12, 2019; 1:00PM**

**Ross Boelling's Barndominium**

Directions under separate cover.

**December 7, 2019; 1:00PM**

**Katy Depot in Council Grove**

