

Trails, Rails, & Tales



NMRA

March-April 2026
Volume 12 • Number 2

The Official Newsletter of the Chisholm Trail Division of the NMRA

From the Director's Desk

by Rick Coble

This year seems to be off to a fast start. MCoR has had the first directors meeting that I was able to attend via zoom. I have to say that it made quite an impact on me. My big take away from it was the desire to be transparent and going to quarterly meetings with the activities posted in the MCoR Caboose Kibitzer. MCoR is going to be improving the website and it will be a great tool for the region with a lot of great perks for the divisions to become relevant to the public regarding our organization.

On to more local activities, the Chisholm Trail Division sponsored "Best Train Show" has gone into the history books. A few changes were tried this year and some worked well and some not so much, but it was nice to see the action of trying to improve it. I would like to say a big thanks to everyone who helped with the show as they are a lot of work.

Thanks,

-Rick

From the Superintendent's Desk

by Charlie Monckton

I want to begin by thanking all the people who helped with the February 7th and 8th train show. I personally want to thank James Schinkle and his wife for their help with the mini modules. Once again this year they made sure every child who entered the door had a chance to make a mini module. I also want to thank everyone who donated materials for the children to use to make the creations. Your donations help keep the cost down so we can continue to offer the activity at no charge.

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NMRA

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are strongly encouraged.

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The clinic attendance was disappointing and I will take full credit for that. Several of you spent your Saturday and Sunday working the clinics and presenting Clinics. Thank you for your hard work .

Finally I want to thank everyone who made the Contest Exhibit area such a great success.

Before the area opened Saturday they already had at least twice as many items registered as previous years. There was a constant stream of people visiting and voting on the items displayed.

–Charlie

From the Editor's Desk

by Jim Marlett

This Trails, Rails, & Tales is our annual train show edition. Most of it will be in pictures that I hope will bring back happy memories. I also hope the train show was all it could have been for each of you. I usually don't expect to find much of anything I can use due to my peculiar modeling tastes and my vow to not buy anything I can't use in the foreseeable future. I failed at this and came home with pieces and parts, some tools and a few structures, both pre-built and kits. One was a scratch-built warehouse that seemed just right for my narrow gauge pike.

Speaking of narrow gauge, for the first time in ages, there was some narrow gauge for sale. It was Sn3, which is not my scale, but the seller did find some buyers.

I also seem to have gotten a case of human metapneumovirus at the train show. It's the respiratory bug that is making the rounds right now. Most folks experience it as a bad cold, but I, being in the high risk old people's category, have been sick as a dog. It truly interfered with my ability to put out this newsletter in a timely fashion, but somehow, the job got done.

You may not have noticed, but this newsletter is my attempt to conform to the NMRA's new graphics standards. I did this when my symptoms were still quite mild, so there may be some error involved. One of their objectives was to make things more readable in an electronic format. Personally, I find the new standard typeface of Nuckle harder to read in the newsletter than the Times New Roman that I previously used for most of it. For instance, with

my old man eyes, I have trouble differentiating a lower case i from a lower case l or an upper case I. Nuckle has no italics either. I used italics to give you a clue that you were reading a picture caption rather than body text. I substituted a lighter version of the type face instead. This being said, I'm not sure I have interpreted their "mandates" correctly. If I haven't, I'll keep trying. Wouldn't want to be a troublemaker (wink, wink).

Back in my basement, the good ol' San Juan Southern has had a major step forward. After 55 years of off and on construction in an apartment and three houses, at 9:13pm on January 16, I drove the final spike on the mainline! Patty was out of town, so I had to celebrate by myself with a big bowl of strawberries. There may have been some ice cream involved as well. That section is now wired up and I have run a train on it. It seemed fine and didn't start a fire or anything else untoward. There is still plenty of work to do before it is truly operational, including building the main classification yard at my fictional town of Blakely and the two staging yards on each end. Also remaining is a tremendous amount of scenery work and structures. Except for areas that will be more challenging to reach later, that will take a back seat to working out the operational bugs. Of course, everything was put on hold for the train show, being sick, and putting out this newsletter. I'm anxious to see what the next two months bring.

– Jim



The final mainline spike going in on the San Juan Southern. There is still a lot of track to lay and plenty of scenery to build, but finally, the railroad goes from point A to point B.



This test train came all the way from Fremont (end of track for now) to Blakely without stopping or cutting off the helper. Traveling at what I estimated was a good narrow gauge speed, it took a little over 24 minutes. With a total of five towns to switch, It should make for a satisfying operating session.

A Photo Tour of the 2026 Wichita Train Show

“The Best Train Show in Wichita Kansas”

Friday was set-up day with a crew of Chisholm Trail Division members setting up tables and making sure vendors and modular layouts had what they needed.

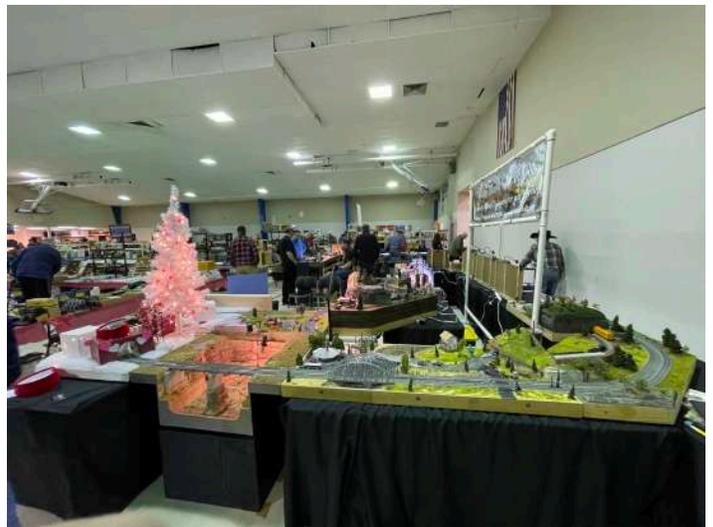


The doors opened at 9:00 Saturday morning and we were open for business.



The first two sections of the building were filled primarily with vendors. The third displayed mostly modular and portable layouts. None of the space upstairs was used this year because it is not accessible to people with mobility issues.









The Contest Room

By Randy Stucky

The 2026 Best Train Show in Wichita is now history. It was well attended. The clinics and contest room were moved downstairs this year. There were double the entries in the contest room this year.

Madison Ross made a "mini module" at Charlie's table. She entered it in the Youth category and won 1st place. Frank LeBleu won Best of Show with his O-scale train of military equipment.

Congratulations to all the winners. And a special thanks to Gene Bowers for his big help with this year's show!

-Randy



This is about half the entries in the contest room. Compared to last year, it was a whopping success.



Larry Diehl and Larry Alfred made their way from Kansas City to do merit judging for those who wished. Here Larry Diehl is giving a model structure a good looking over.

My Favorite Train had quite a few entries this year. It filled two tables and spilled over to a third.



1st Place, Youth – Madison Ross





1st Place, Steam Locomotive – Steve Weidman



1st Place, Diesel Locomotive – Rick Coble



2nd Place, Diesel Locomotive – Len Wigton



3rd Place Diesel, Locomotive – Randy Stucky



1st Place, Passenger Cars – Radford Walker



2nd Place, Passenger Cars – Radford Walker



3rd Place, Passenger Cars – Radford Walker



1st Place, Freight Cars – Frank LeBleu



2nd Place, Freight Cars – Len Wigton



3rd Place, Freight Cars – Radford Walker



1st Place, Caboose – Rick Coble



2nd Place, Caboose – Ron Werak



3rd Place, Caboose – Radford Walker



1st Place, Non-revenue Cars – Radford Walker



2nd Place, Non-revenue Cars – Terry Ross



3rd Place, Non-revenue Cars – Terry Ross



1st Place, Tongue in Cheek – Radford Walker



2nd Place, Tongue in Cheek – Randy Stucky



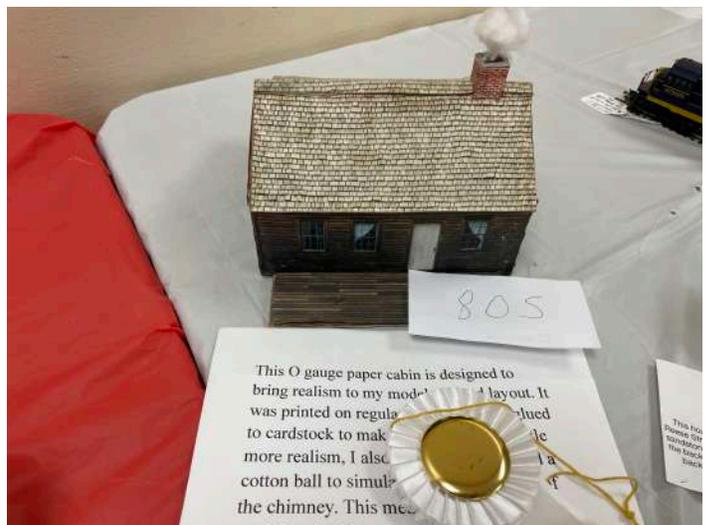
3rd Place, Tongue in Cheek – Randy Stucky



1st Place, Structures – Steve Weidner



2nd Place, Structures – Jim Hogben



3rd Place, Structures – James Shinkle



1st Place, Dioramas – Terry Ross



2nd Place, Dioramas – Robert Hitchcock



3rd Place Dioramas, Robert Hitchcock



1st Place Modules, Frank & Shirley LeBleu



2nd Place, Modules – Adam Goldsmith



1st Place, Photo-Prototype – Jim Marlett



2nd Place, Photo-Prototype – James Shinkle



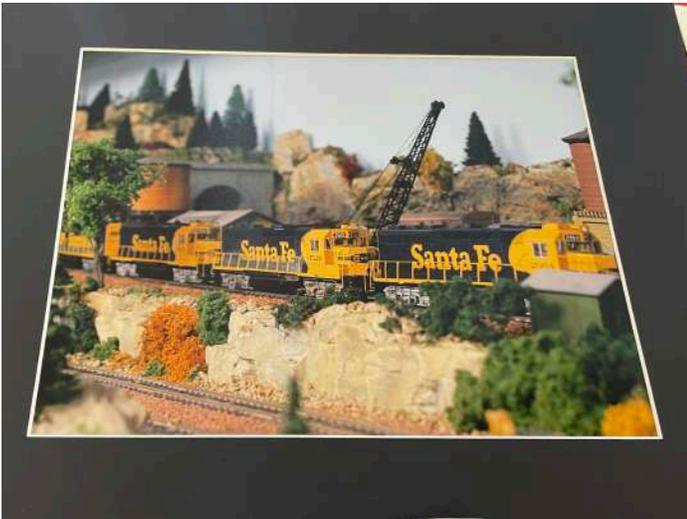
3rd Place, Photo-Prototype – Terry Ross



1st Place, Photo-Model – Jim Marlett



2nd Place, Photo-Model – Radford Walker



3rd Place, Photo-Model – Terry Ross



1st Place, My Favorite Train & Best in Show – Frank LeBleu



2nd Place, My Favorite Train – Radford Walker



3rd Place, My Favorite Train – Randy Stucky

Modular Group Report

By Terry Ross

Here is a short recap of the Modular Group's activity since the last TR&T. For the first time ever, I have to report that the Modular Group went the entire months of January and February without setting up the layout. We volunteered to step aside at our own NMRA Train Show in February to allow space for some layouts from Oklahoma, Nebraska, and the Kansas City area. The consensus at the Train Show sounded like they enjoyed the new layouts. It was nice to hear people ask where our layout was. It's always nice to know you were missed. We'll be back in next year's show with lots of new scenery and ideas.

We are gearing up for a busy schedule this spring as we are scheduled for the Arkansas City Train Show, Bel Aire Community Center, Pine Village in Moundridge, and The Hutchinson Train Show. All of these in just 4 months. We all are looking forward to showing everyone our newest gains in scenery and modules.

Again, we would like to invite everyone to come out, bring a friend, your favorite train or rolling stock to run, and most of all, just join us in the "Fun of Model Railroading". See you at the next show!!

Hope to see you soon!

-Terry

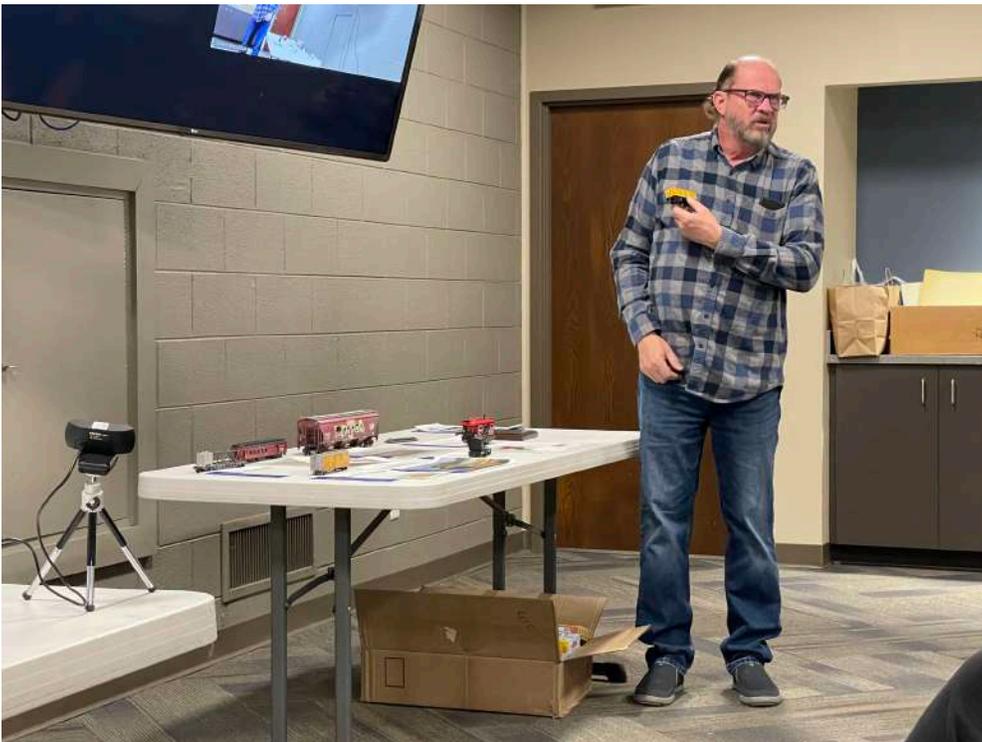


It's hard to remember back in July of 2022 when the modular group brought one of their first modules to the Chisholm Trail Division's monthly meeting for a show & tell. The inset is from August of last year when the layout was set up in our meeting host's gymnasium at Olivet Baptist Church. What a difference three years made!

In Case You Missed It



In January, Jim Hogben was presented with an NMRA Merit Award for his Quonset hut on his way to becoming a Master Model Railroader.



In February, Randford Walker shared some of his award winning models and told us about the contest program at his previous NMRA Division.

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. Hutchinson Public Library, 901 N Main St, Hutchinson, KS. <http://www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org>

Wichita Area Model Railroaders Luncheon. The second Thursday of every month at 11:30AM. Spear's Restaurant and Pie Shop, 4323 W Maple, Wichita, KS.

Third Thursday Model Railroaders's Lunch. The third Thursday of every month 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 2026

February 28-March 1 – Lawrence Model Railroad Club Train Show and Swap Meet. Crown Toyota of Lawrence, 3400 South Iowa St, Lawrence, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM. Sunday 9AM-3PM. <https://lawrencemodelrailroadclub.org/>

March 14-15 – Garden City Model Train Show. Finney County Fairgrounds, West Pavilion, 601 W Lake Ave, Garden City, KS. Saturday 9AM-5PM. Sunday 11AM-4PM. <https://www.facebook.com/BootHillModelRailroadClub>

March 21 – 11th Annual Arkansas City Train Show. Agri-Business Building, 712 W Washington, Arkansas City, KS. Saturday 9AM-4PM. <http://www.wichitatoytrainmuseum.org/club-shows-1.html>

April 2026

April 11-12 – Rocky Mountain Train Show. National Western Complex, 4655 Humboldt St, Denver, CO. Saturday 9AM-5PM. Sunday 9AM-4PM. <https://rockymountaintrainshow.com/Default.aspx>

April 18-19 – Festival of Trains. Oklahoma City Fairgrounds - Expo Hall, 3213 Wichita Walk, Oklahoma City, OK. Saturday 9AM-5PM. Sunday 10AM-4PM. <https://www.festoftrains.com/>

April 24-25 – Greater Tulsa Area Train Show. Rhema Ninowski Recreation Center, 1367 East 71st South / West Kenosha, Broken Arrow, OK. Friday 5PM-7PM. Saturday 9AM-3PM. <https://www.ttos-soonerdiv.org/train-shows.html>

May 2026

May 2 – Marceline Train Show. Walsworth Community Center, 124 E Ritchie St, Marceline, MO. Saturday 9AM-3PM. <https://www.marcelinespringfestival.com/train-show/#>

May 9-10 – Lincoln Area Railway Historical Society Train Show. Sandhill Global Event Center, 4100 N 84th St, Lincoln, NE. Saturday 9AM-5PM. Sunday 10AM-4PM. <https://larhs.org/annual-show/>

June 2026

June 13-14 – 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 2026

July 27-August 2 – NMRA National Convention. Chattanooga Convention Center,

1 Carter St, Chattanooga, TN. <https://www.nmra2026.org/>

Late July – Mid-Continent Region Convention.

Collinsville, IL. (St Louis area) I'm sure more information is coming. This will be in conjunction with the St. Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet, July 23-July 25.

<https://www.stlrpm.com/>

September 2026

September 2-5 – National Narrow Gauge

Convention. Double Tree – Bloomington, 7800

Normandale Blvd, Bloomington, MN

(Minneapolis/St. Paul). <https://2026nngc.com/>

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

Jim Marlett

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