



The

Main Line



February 2021

National Model Railroad Association

Mid-Continent Region

The Monthly publication of the **Western Kansas Division**



On the Cover:

Looking forward to the Tulsa Union Convention 2021, we are giving previews of a few of the spectacular layouts you can visit and perhaps take part in operating sessions. This month we peek at the massive HO scale layout **“Southern Pacific Donner Pass”** owned by Jim Sinclair.

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The **Western Kansas Division** has their **You Tube** channel back. You can view the videos at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvHBdg746vJLOpGVpKUdGA>



Editor's Musings

It seems that so far 2021 is a continuation of '20 with the cancellation of two train shows, the Wichita Train Show in February, the Denver Rocky Mountain train Show in March, and now the NMRA National in California is cancelled as well. I also received reports that the recent show in Plano, Texas was sparsely attended. If the government isn't applying over-regulation, then people are too afraid to venture out.

This does leave us with several "virtual" options. We may still work on our layouts and receive parts and materials through the internet, and we can share those activities with modelers around the world through videos posted on **YouTube**, Photos and videos posted on **Facebook** pages (please feel free to share your posts on the **Western Kansas Division** and **Mid-Continent Region** pages as appropriate). I have also recently discovered an alternate to Facebook called

MeWe (Link:) <https://mewe.com/> where I have established a personal page plus a Western Kansas Division page which you are also invited to post.

I have also witnessed increased activity through **Zoom** meetings, we recently held the Winter Board-Of Directors meeting on Zoom which worked well. I have also been contacted by other Regions to participate in their Zoom meetings as both a visitor and presenter. There are a lot of opportunities we can utilize, such as video layout tours (one example, a Club used a cell phone to slowly walk around their layout describing each scene), clinics, power point presentations, question and answer sessions, a type of show and tell where each participant shows a project they are working on like a loco, rolling stock, or structure and then describe it in some detail.

There are many ways we can still share our hobby even if not in person, we just need to think out-of-the-box.



Interested in the **Union Pacific** check out the **Union Pacific Historical Society**: <http://uphs.org/>



Interested in operating your layout, visit the [Facebook](#) page of the Operations Special Interest Group (OPSIG):

<https://www.facebook.com/OperationsSIG>

Or their website:

<https://www.opsig.org/>





NTRAK is now NRail – a January 1st Announcement

Welcome to the new year and the new name:

1973 was an incredibly significant year in model railroading. The first N Scale modules were designed, constructed, and displayed at a public show. That show was the MRMA show — no layout, just modules displayed. The first public NTRAK layout was the NMRA convention in 1974. These were the seminal NTRAK modules, and their debut began the widespread use of modular layouts, not only in N Scale, but in other scales as well. With the definition of NTRAK standards and the founding of the NTRAK Newsletter by Jim FitzGerald the modular concept took off. Today, almost one-half century since their freshman assembly more than an estimated 7,000 NTRAK modules have been built. Over the years NTRAK has evolved with variations on the basic NTRAK module including oNeTRAK, Ncat, BendTRAK, and TwinTRAK. Technical advances were made in the form of wireless throttles and Digital Command Control. In 1996, Jim FitzGerald took steps to ensure the ongoing viability of the organization with the formation of the NTRAK Modular Railroading Society, Inc. (NTRAK, Inc.). A Board of Directors was appointed to oversee the organization, which continues to this day.

The next major advance in N Scale modular railroading was made with the introduction of T-TRAK in 2000 by Lee Monaco-FitzGerald and Jim FitzGerald. After a slow start, the growth of T-TRAK was rapid and now has more modelers than NTRAK. Standards for T-TRAK were established by Lee and Jim, and they started building T-TRAK modules and module kits. Today, multiple manufacturers are making T-TRAK module kits.

NTRAK, the organization, has continued to be the standard bearer for NTRAK and T-TRAK by maintaining the standards function, as well as providing support to NTRAK and T-TRAK clubs, publishing the newsletter, organizing layouts at major shows, maintaining the web sites and our social media presence. But NTRAK has become more – promoting N scale in all forms including home layouts and supporting N scale activities including Free-moN and giving N Scale clinics at major shows.

As we have expanded our scope over the past few years, it has become evident that we are more than just NTRAK and the newsletter and our show activities have reflected that. But for many N scalers, NTRAK is a specific modular standard. With that in mind, the Board has considered a new name and approved NRail as a more appropriate name to match our goals and our ongoing evolution as an organization. Legally, our new name is NRail, Inc.

What does this mean for members? NRail will continue to focus primarily on the two most popular standards, NTRAK, and T-TRAK, but we will also continue to expand and increase attention to the other aspects such as Free-moN, Clubs, and Home Layouts. And NRail will continue to expand and enhance our relationship with the various N Scale manufacturers.

Already our efforts have resulted in the following:

- A new, improved web site with a members' only section.
- Monthly ZoomTRAK meetings for members.
- Expansion of the Newsletter and its staff.
- Recognize and promote Super Clubs.
- Expand the use of social media channels.

Other programs are under way and will be announced as they are ready for unveiling.

Although the new website is **nrail.org**, (Link:) <https://ntrak.org/> it will continue to be available using the existing URLs of [NTRAK.org](https://ntrak.org/) and [T-TRAK.org](https://ttrak.org/).

We look forward to continuing the 47-year-old tradition under the new name, NRail.

Regards,

John Wallis

NRail, Inc. President



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION

Start making plans for **June 17-18-19-20** of 2021 for the Tulsa Union Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma

A first-time collaboration between the **Lone Star Region**, **Mid-Continent Region**, and the **Indian Nations Division** of the **National Model Railroad Association**. We are particularly excited for members of both regions to have the opportunity to meet outstanding model railroaders from another region and learn from featured clinicians from each Region.



The expanding website will provide information for the convention activities including clinics, contests, layout tours, operating sessions, and non-rail activities.

Website Link: <http://www.2021tulsaunion.com/>



Please be sure to check out both the Registration page and the Hotel pages for information on how to register for each.

Take advantage of the early registration by March 1st, 2021 and pay only \$60.00 for Attendees. After, the Attendee fee is \$75.00. With Non-Rail only \$30.00 anytime.

Clinics! We will have a range of clinics during the convention, from model building tips to prototype history. We already have a solid list of experienced and well-known Clinicians, preparing some great Clinics for your enjoyment and learning.

Contests! Bring your models, bring your photos, show off your work in the Contest Room.

Layout Tours and Operating Sessions!

Various model railroads will be open for visits during the convention. Visit the web site to see each railroad's page, read the details and see a photo tour of the layout. Operating sessions will be available, details will be available soon.

Check back often for updates as the date gets closer. We look forward to seeing you in June of 2021. Ken Ehlers, Co-Chairman, Mid-Continent Region / Indian Nations Division

Real Deal



On January 17th, 2021 I drove over to Garden City and on the way back noticed that Wind River Grain had recently received a 100-car shipment of grain and were in the process of unloading the cars. I went back to the picture archives and found photos of the same process from September of 2017. (Above) Their locomotive is remote controlled and is a former Canadian National EMD SD40-2.

(Below) looking from the engine back towards Wind River, notice the hatches are open.



Real Deal



(Above) Wind River Grain has their storage yard on the east side of Hwy 83 (bridge) where their loco pulls a string of cars out on their siding to begin the dumping process. The grain storage silos are just part of the facility. Wind River grain is an ethanol alcohol plant where grain comes in by both rail and truck, they process the grain, and then ship out two products, ethanol alcohol by tank car and silage which goes by truck to the cattle feed yards to be mixed into the cattle feed.



Real Deal



Something you don't see everyday in Kansas...the 1982, Missouri Pacific heritage unit. Thank You to Jerry Bruce of McPherson, KS. For sending the photos, however he described it as a team effort by several people to get these images, including LEM, Thank You all.



Real Deal



Real Deal



Thanks again to all those involved in capturing these dramatic photos of Union Pacific heritage unit 1982.

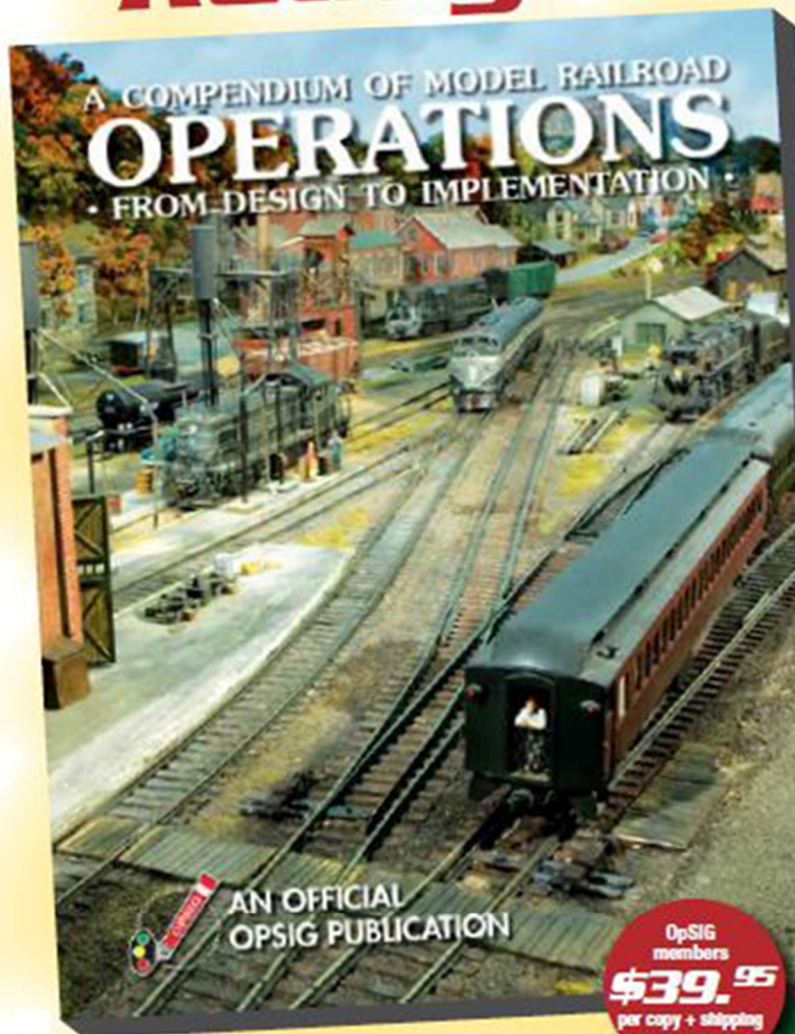


You too can become a Registered Reader of Model Railroad Hobbyist E-Zine, just click on the link below and register for your monthly copy:

<https://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/>

Dispatcher to OpSIG Publication No. 2, you're ...

Ready to Roll!



All model railroaders, whether expert or beginner, will find a wealth of useful information in the OpSIG's second publication, **A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations - From Design to Implementation**. A complete guide to all things operations, our latest offering covers every aspect of prototype operations and how to apply them to your model railroad—from design and staffing to yards and paperwork, from communications and signals to dispatching and car forwarding—in 310 full-color pages. Written by ten of your fellow modelers and professionals, **The Compendium** contains more than 350 photos, 120 illustrations, and countless tips, pointers, suggestions, and prototype information to help guide you on your journey. A must for any modeler interested in prototype operations, add it to your library today!

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**WHAT SCALE MODEL TRAINS
DOES CAPTAIN PICARD RUN?**



N-GAUGE!

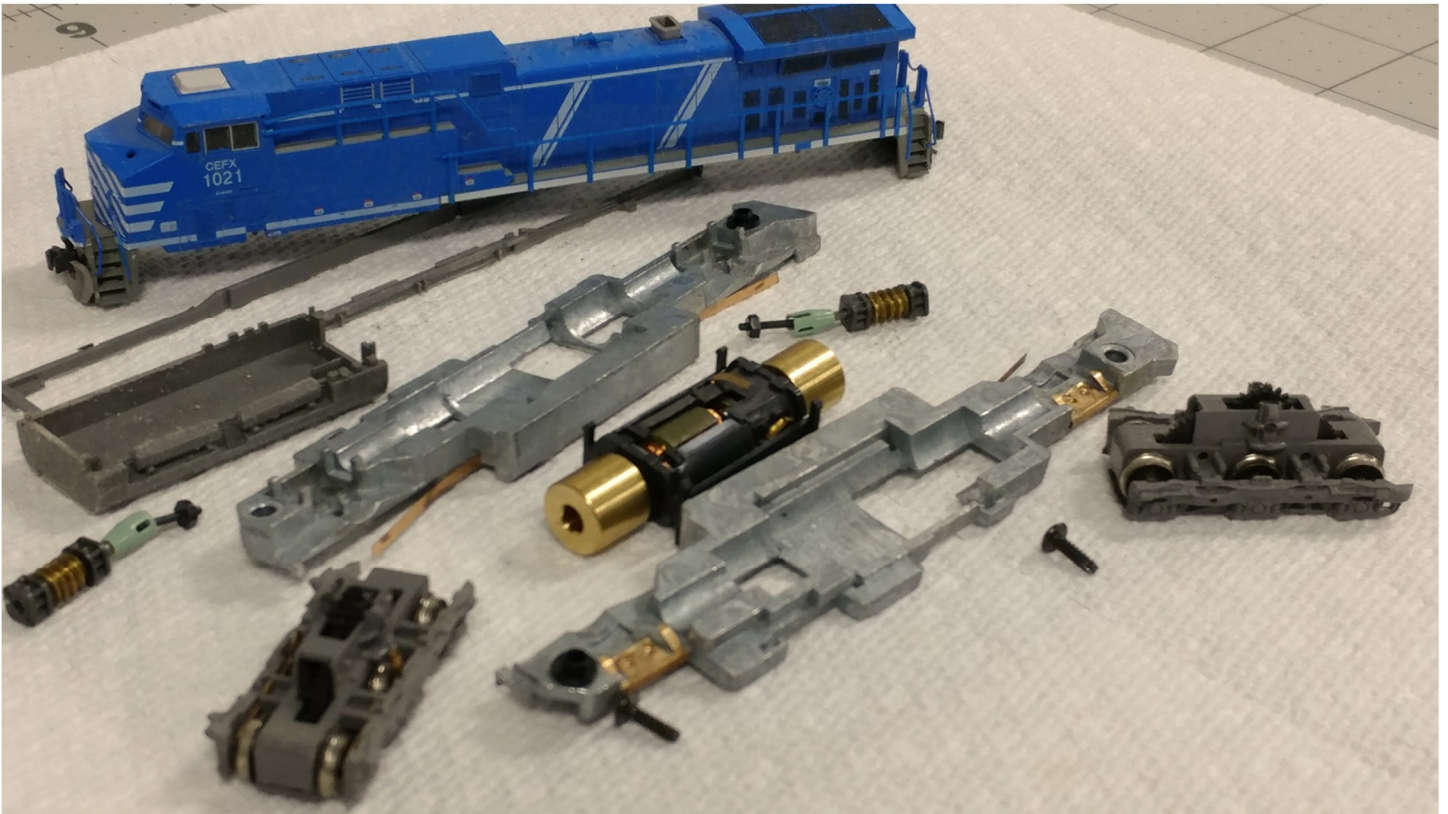
INDYHOBBIES.COM



The Western Kansas Division, NMRA now has a **MeWe** page, just click on the link below:

<https://mewe.com/p/westernkansasdivisionnmra>

Curious enough to take it apart...



Skilled enough to put it back together...

Smart enough to hide the extra parts when I'm done...

2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



(Above) Looking down one aisle next to the main yard on the right, the left side shows one aspect of the “mushroom” design with the lower level is visible from the outside of the mushroom, while the upper deck is visible from the inside of the mushroom.

Continuing our series of giving a sneak peek at some of the layouts you can visit and perhaps operate on during the 2021 Tulsa Union Convention, this month we visit Jim Sinclair’s **“Southern Pacific Donner Pass”** HO-scale layout.

Taken from the *Layout Design and Operations Weekend* Timetable, Jim describes his layout; “I’m modeling the Southern Pacific over Donner Pass from Roseville, California to Truckee with West and East staging yards in HO-scale. The predominate motive power are Cab-Forwards, F7’s, ABA’s, ABBA’s from the era of 1940’s to 1955. Helper service is required going both east and west over the hill. Southern Pacific began replacing the steam in 1956 with the more efficient diesels.

The railroad supports fourteen to eighteen operators and a Dispatcher. The Dispatcher controls the double mainline traffic utilizing a computer program. Eventually a detection system will support the Dispatcher in controlling the heavy traffic.

2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



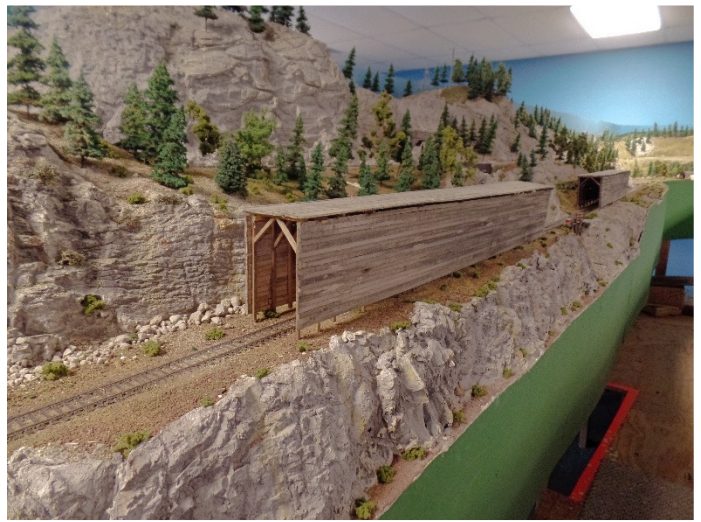
(Above) A look at the upper level of the mushroom



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



(Above) Having just stepped down from the mushroom, the industrial area in the center is where I was stationed to do my switching. My trusty GP7 and I left the yard with a string of cars, pulled into town, and went to work. It was a good place to watch the AC cab forwards pulling their drags up the grade or coming back.



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



(Below left) The pickup headlights are illuminated.



2021 TULSA UNION CONVENTION



I would like to thank Jim Sinclair for opening his home and "Southern Pacific Donner Pass" layout for the Layout Design & Operations Weekends, and now the 2021 Tulsa Union Convention. Hosting operating sessions takes a lot of work, and Jim has put in a fantastic amount of work into the layout as well. If you get a chance to visit and/or operate this layout...go for it!



Click on the link to go to the Convention page and register...

<http://www.2021tulsaunion.com/>



Model train heaven is found in Deshler, Nebraska and it's called Spring Creek Model Trains. Check out their website today:

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





Our mission is to preserve and promote the heritage of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and its affiliates. This includes the Texas & Pacific, Chicago & Eastern Illinois, Kansas Oklahoma & Gulf, Alton & Southern and many other roads that were part of the MP family.

Please consider becoming a member and help us keep this history alive.

The MPHS Website: <http://www.mopac.org/>

The MPHS Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1778975332416533>



**ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY
STOP BUYING MODEL TRAINS**



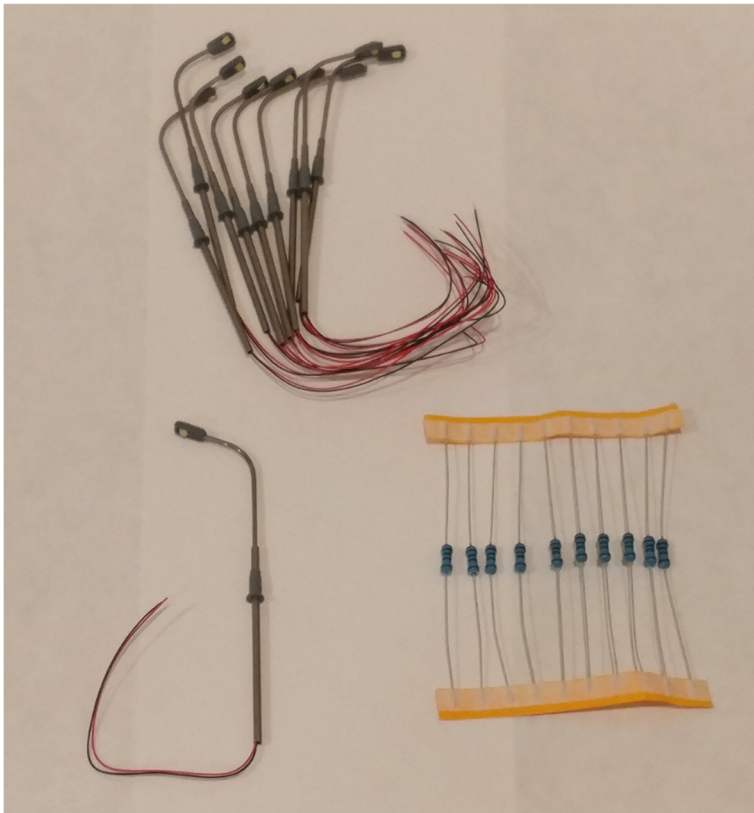
Facebook.com/AddictingTrains

**JUST BECAUSE THERE
IS NO MORE ROOM**

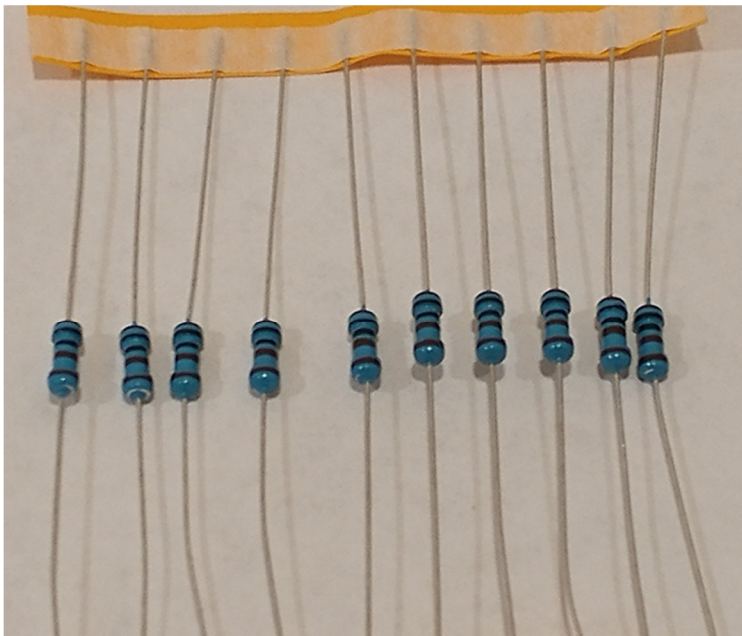
WKR Layout Update

It's time to get to work on the WKR N-scale layout. A while back, I ordered a few packs of N-scale streetlights from Amazon and they have been sitting for a while.

(Left) The kit includes the LED street lights, plus the proper resistors and instructions



(Below) A close-up view of the resistors and one of the streetlights.



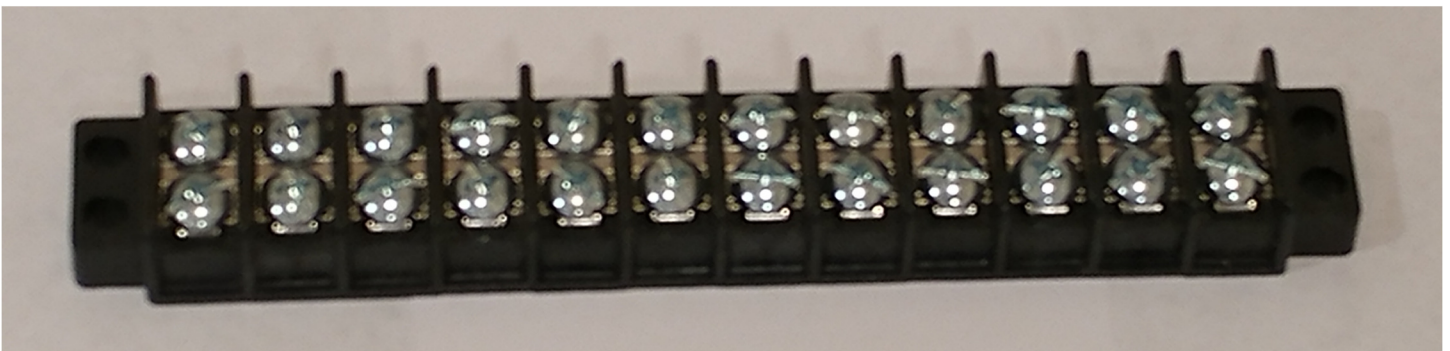
WKR Layout Update



Back in 2015 when the WKR was receiving the electrical main buss system, we decided to add an additional buss for any future needs. This will make adding the new streetlights much easier.

The 12-volt power supply (Left) will be added to the power strip on the power cart where it will be connected to the lighting buss which will feed all the sections of the layout.

On each layout section, we will add a terminal strip (Below) so the LED streetlights can be wired in parallel so if one goes out, the others will stay lit.



We'll keep you updated on the progress and it proceeds.



Welcome to Midwest Model Railroad

In 2011 Midwest Model Railroad started with the idea of making this hobby more accessible to everyone. Since day one we have strived to keep our operating cost to a bare minimum and pass on those savings to you, the hobby's best customers. As of 2019 we are succeeding in offering some of the **best prices** anywhere in the hobby.

Some great side effects of this goal have been the creation of **real time inventory** on our website and a turnaround time of just **one day between purchase and shipping**. Also, being centrally located in Kansas City, MO means orders to any corner of the United States arrive with in just a few days.



A New Store in 2019

2019 was a banner year at Midwest Model Railroad. We expanded our business to a new and larger location to accommodate a better buying experience for our customers.

Midwest Model Railroad's new store & distribution center can now accommodate ever-expanding product lines and inventory to surpass our initial online experience.

In March we opened our new store and distribution center in Independence MO to the public.

17331 E US Highway 40
Suite 101C
Independence, MO 64055
(816) 399-5226

GOOD MEN DO EXIST

WE'RE JUST...
BUILDING TRAINS,
BUYING TRAINS,
THINKING ABOUT BUYING TRAINS,
BUYING PARTS TO FIX TRAINS,
TALKING ABOUT TRAINS
& RUNNING TRAINS



The Friends of the Burlington Northern also include BNSF, and Montana Rail Link. You can view their web site here:

<http://fobnr.org/>

February 2021

6th & 7th
Sat & Sun

Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet
Cessna Activity Center

CANCELLED

Wichita, KS.

March 2021

The 2021 Spring Rocky Mountain Train Show in Denver, Colorado has been **cancelled**.

13th & 14th
Sat & Sun

Boot Hill Model Railroad Club Show
Finney County Fairgrounds – West Pavilion

Garden City, KS.

June 2021

17th – 20th

Tulsa Union Convention (NMRA)
Embassy Suites Hotel

Tulsa, OK.



You can follow the activities of the Mid-Continent Region, NMRA on their website, just click the link:



<http://mcor-nmra.org/>



On the Back Cover:

A parting look at Jim Sinclair's *"Southern Pacific Donner Pass"* HO-scale layout. The real stars of the show were the main line motive power, the iconic Southern Pacific AC-Cab Forward steam locomotives, each equipped with sound. They were hugely impressive as they stomped down the rails hauling their charges. A parting Thank You to Jim Sinclair for hosting me years ago, and for opening his home this Summer.

The *Main Line*

Publisher & Editor: Robert A. Simmons

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