



The Main Line

The monthly publication of the
Western Kansas Division
September 2026

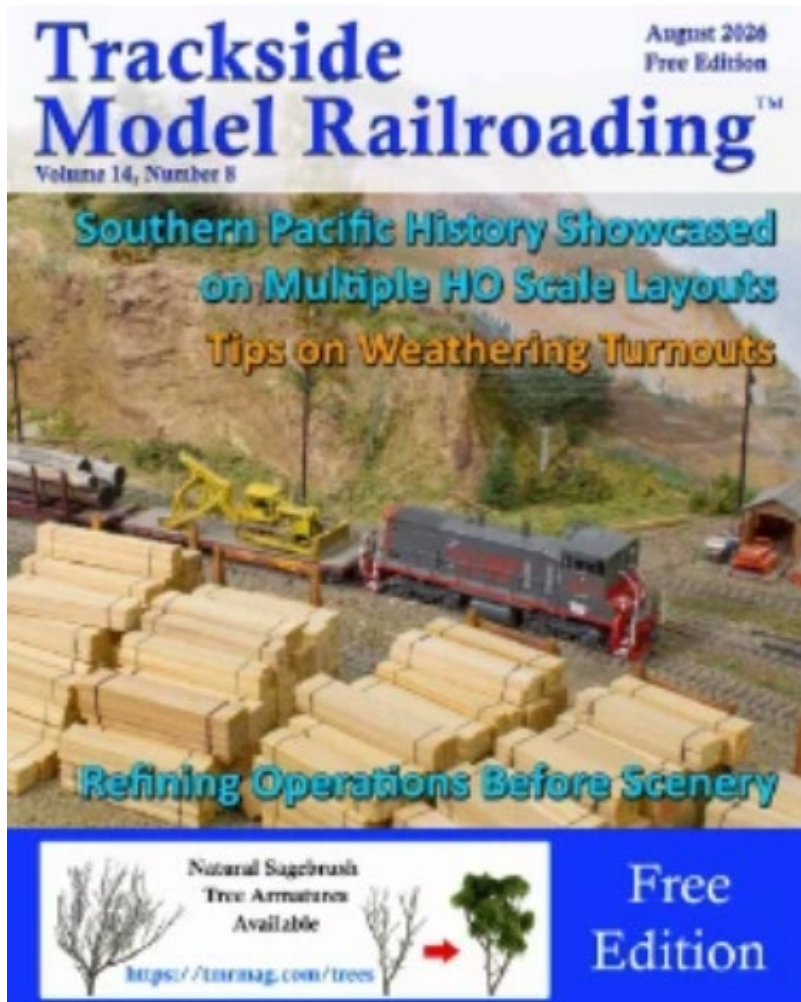


On The Cover:

We are nearing completion of the scenery upgrade on corner section 13, the Fantastic Plastics tank car unloading facility. Part II is inside...

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Main Features

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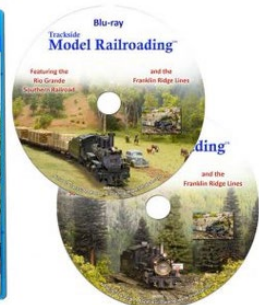
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22 Refining Operations Before Scenery

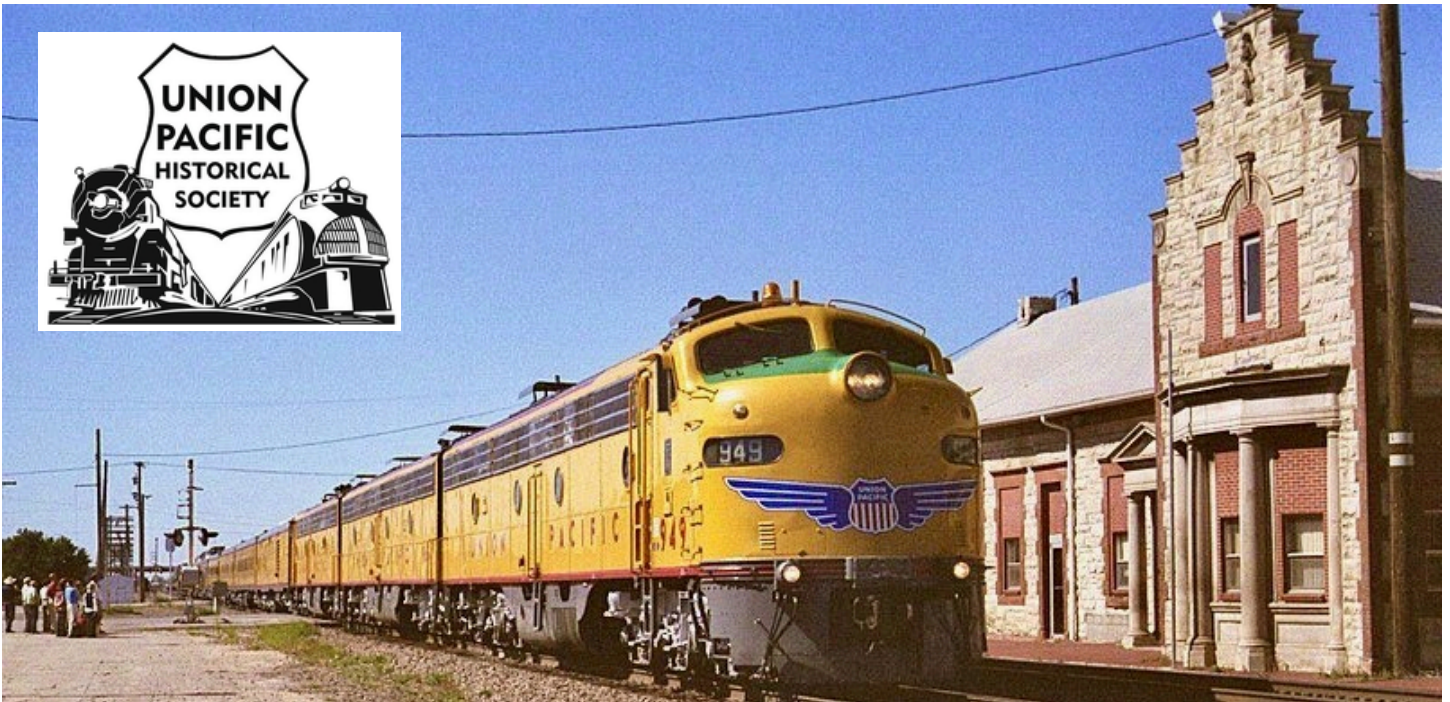
Examples of ways to refine your operations while reducing having to redo scenery

16 Tips on Weathering Turnouts

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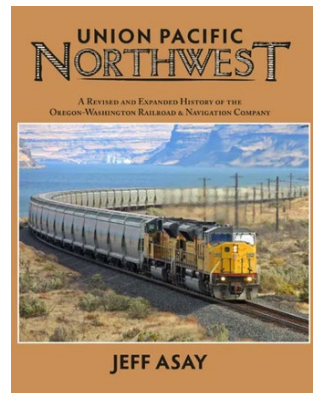


UPHS is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of the Union Pacific Railroad. The Society has about 1,900 members including: Historians, rail fans, employees, and modelers. They have found the UPHS to be a matchless source of accurate and in-depth material concerning historical operations, traffic, motive power, rolling stock and facilities of the Union Pacific and predecessor companies.



Publications: The UPHS publishes *The Streamliner*, a professionally produced and beautifully illustrated quarterly journal featuring the finest work of historians and other experts on all aspects of Union Pacific Railroad operations, traffic, management, equipment, and facilities.

In addition to our journal, the UPHS publishes books relating Union Pacific's rich history. Our most recent book is Jeff Asay's *Union Pacific Northwest*, tracing the history of UP in Oregon, Washington, and Northern Idaho.



We invite you to join the Union Pacific Historical Society!

Regular membership: Both Youth and Regular memberships entitle one to receive four issues of our highly acclaimed quarterly magazine, *The Streamliner*, as well as discounts on selected products in the Company Store.

For more information, click here: <https://uphs.org/>

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The best Guide to Model Trains for Enthusiasts and Beginners Alike!

All aboard for an exciting journey into the captivating world of model trains! Whether you're a passionate enthusiast or just beginning to explore this intricate...

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Creating a Realistic Vacant Lot

A vacant lot may look empty, but it can add plenty of character and realism to a model railroad. Start with uneven ground, patches of dirt, and areas of thin or overgrown grass rather than covering the entire space evenly. Add small details such as weeds, scattered rocks, discarded boards, old tires, fencing, and a worn footpath. A little trash near the edges or against a fence can make the scene feel naturally neglected without overwhelming it. Finish the lot with subtle variations in color and texture. Mixing fine dirt, small stones, and different shades of ground cover creates the appearance of land that has been exposed to weather, foot traffic, and years of limited maintenance.

Helpful hints from **Arizona Rock and Mineral Company**

Click here for the best scale ballast and more tips: <https://www.armballast.com/>



Take A look at part of the **NEW world record-breaking T-TRAK** layout from the 2026 National Train Show in Chattanooga!



NEW AP ANNOUNCED!

Modular model railroading is now officially recognized by the NMRA Achievement Program! The new [Modular Model Railroading AP](#) is the first new certificate added to the Achievement Program in nearly 40 years!



NTRAK, T-TRAK, Free-moN, and other modular modelers now have a dedicated path to earn Achievement Program recognition. We are here to help you achieve success with this new AP!

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[Free-moN](#) -- FreeMo modular standards for N-scaler

[NTRAK](#) -- The original N-scale modular standard

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN TRAIN SUPPLY STOCKS 1000'S OF NEW PRODUCTS IN Z-N-HO-G SCALES.

PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENT - [Freemo-N Module Kits](#)



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Model
railroading is
cheaper than
therapy

Real Deal



August 19th found these two tank cars on the RIP track. The car on the right is on jack stands with one of the trucks removed.



If you have a small space on your layout near a yard, you might consider modeling a RIP track scene.

(Right) Another work crew was busy loading or unloading a semi trailer.





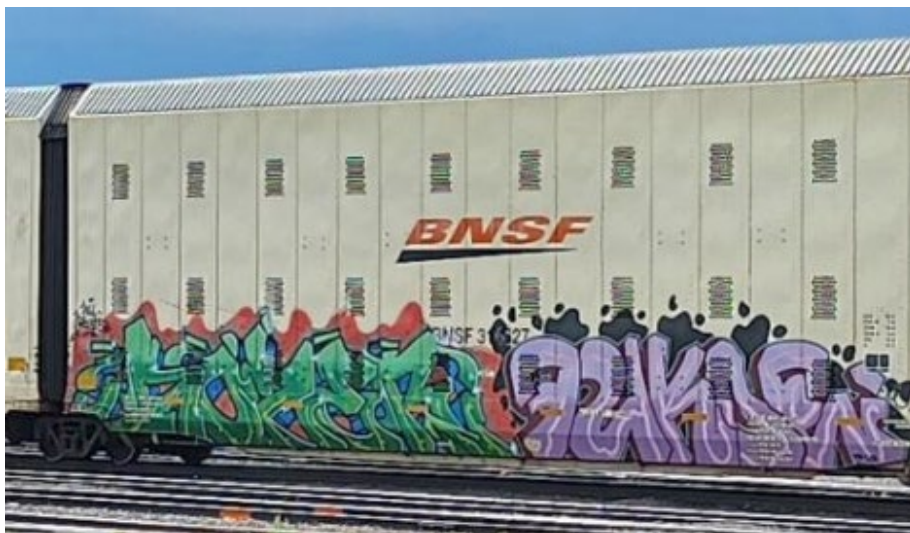
Real Deal



The same day had a group of autoracks parked in the yard.



(Left and Below) A few cars had interesting graffiti.



Real Deal



(Left) A long shot of the autoracks and just inboard from them was a ribbon rail train.

(Below) A closer view of the ribbon rail train.



Railroad Model Craftsman



RMC RECEIVING YARD

Arriving Now from Rapido Trains: EMC FT Diesels

Available now from Rapido Trains are highly-detailed HO scale replicas of the EMC FT created from all-new tooling in multiple road names with road-specific details.



RMC EXTRA BOARD

Recreating Guildwood Station

Recreating a busy Toronto suburban station served by VIA Rail and GO Transit in HO scale, one memory and detail at a time.



RMC EXTRA BOARD

Why Not a Passenger Train?

A local passenger train can add operational interest to a layout of any size, and doesn't need to overpower your operations.



RMC PRODUCT REVIEWS

Bowser's Alco/M-K RS-3m in HO

Now available from Bowser Trains are highly detailed replicas of Alco/Morrison-Knudsen RS-3ms for HO scale.



RMC PRODUCT REVIEWS

Rapido Rio Grande Steel Riveted Cabooses in HO

Now available from Rapido Trains are highly detailed lighted replicas of Denver & Rio Grande Western's steel riveted cabooses with end cupolas.

WHITERIVER PRODUCTIONS



Railroad Model Craftsman

Since 1933, *Railroad Model Craftsman* brings you the best in scale model railroading every month! In each issue you'll enjoy beautiful layout tours, detailed scratchbuilding and detailing features, the latest news and in-depth product reviews, exact scale drawings, construction tips and techniques, and more. Stop dreaming and start building!

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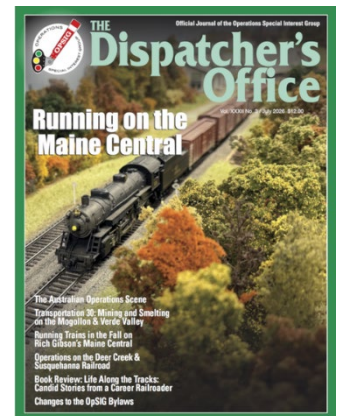
<https://rrmodelcraftsman.com/>



The purpose of the **Operations Special Interest Group (OPSIG)** is to discuss, develop and disseminate ways of operating model railroads to realistically emulate practices of the prototype. This includes sharing information on various methods of generating and controlling traffic to heighten the feeling that our models are an active and integral part of the national rail transportation network, serving shippers and consignees throughout the nation. We also discuss and communicate information about the methods and procedures used by the real railroads and ways of most practically and

realistically adapting them to the model world. This is a place to learn more and find others with similar interests.

We publish a quarterly magazine, *The Dispatcher's Office*, which in addition to containing articles and information on railroad operations (both prototype and model), contains listings of operating layouts, sessions, and events that members are invited to attend. In addition, the OPSIG web site serves as a clearinghouse for publicizing regional operating events and meetings, where layouts are open for guest operations.



Achievement Program

For more details on the new Opsig Achievement Program, please visit the program website:

<https://opsig-ap.org/>

All model railroaders, whether expert or beginner, will find a wealth of useful information in the Opsigs second publication: ***A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations – From Design to Implementation.*** It's your complete guide to all things in Operations.



Click here for more Opsig information:

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



The **Missouri Pacific Historical Society** 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.

The MPHS publishes a quarterly magazine called *The Eagle*.

All members receive a copy of this magazine as part of their membership dues. New members will receive a copy of the current issue as soon as their dues have been received.

The Eagle is a full-color magazine printed on high-quality, heavy paper.

Copies of this magazine can be purchased through our Company Store.

A comprehensive index of The Eagle issues is available.



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N Scale - Atlas Master ALCo C420



HO Scale - Walthers Mainline 37' 2980 Cubic-Foot 2-Bay Covered Hopper

N Scale - Atlas Master Standard + Extended Vision Caboose



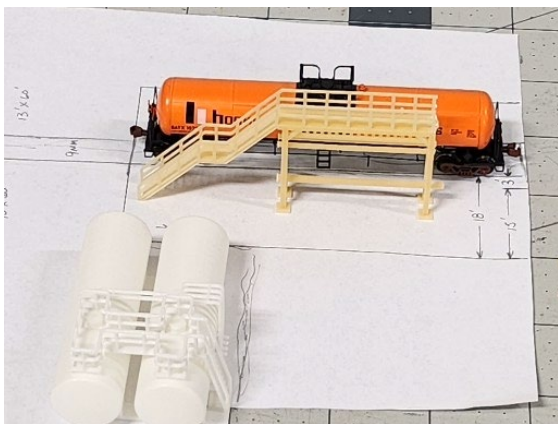
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WKR Update

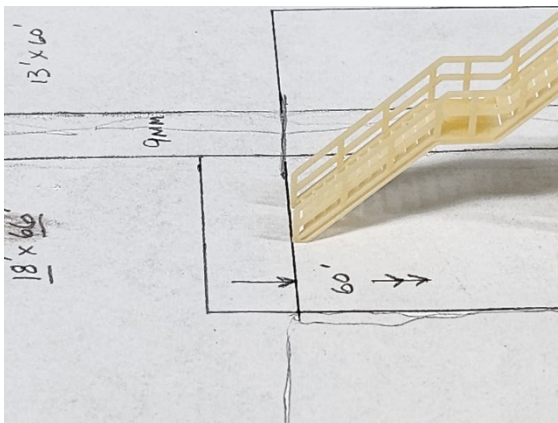
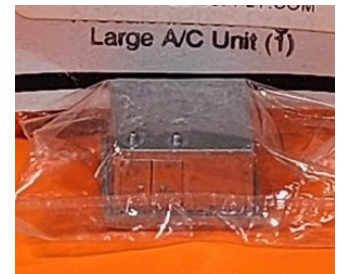
Upgrade the Tank Car Unloading Platform and Storage Tanks – Part II

(Right) Just as a reminder, this is how the scene appeared in June. Originally designed only as an off-loading facility for plastic pellets from covered hoppers, we came up with the idea that a plastics plant would also use chemicals, which could be delivered by tank car.



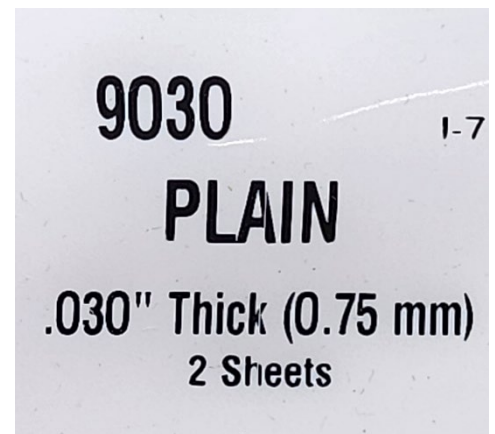
(Left) Last month we ended the update with scale plans drawn and the pre-placement of the items.

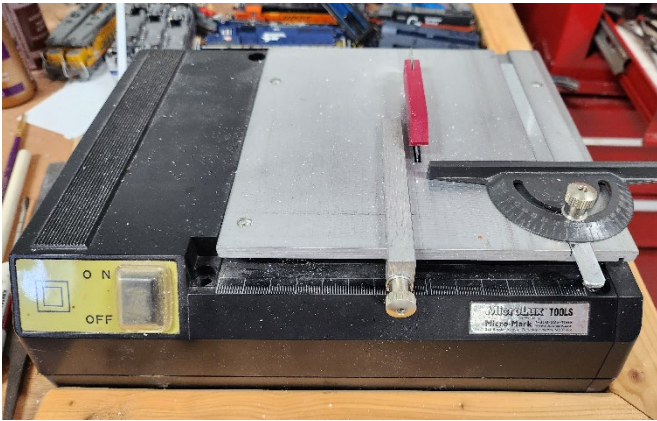
(Right) After completing the drawings, we hit upon the idea that an off-loading facility would not rely on gravity alone but would require a pump facility. We did not find a pump house but came across a resin casting of a large rooftop air conditioning unit that would suffice.



(Left) In the test placement of equipment we noticed the foot of the stairs would be right at the edge of the concrete, so we decided to extend that section of concrete to provide a landing.

(Right) Testing several thicknesses of sheet styrene against the size of the rails, it was clear that 0.030-inch styrene was the proper call.

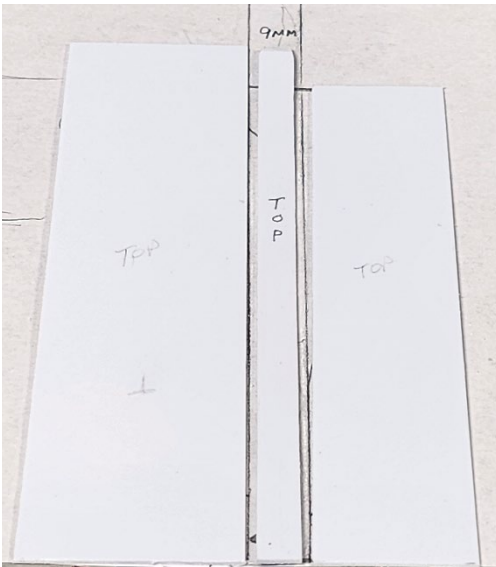
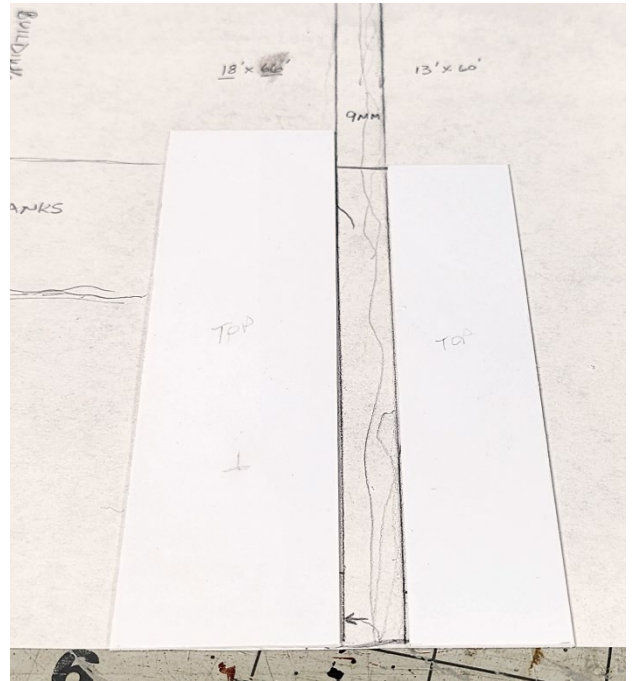




WKR Update

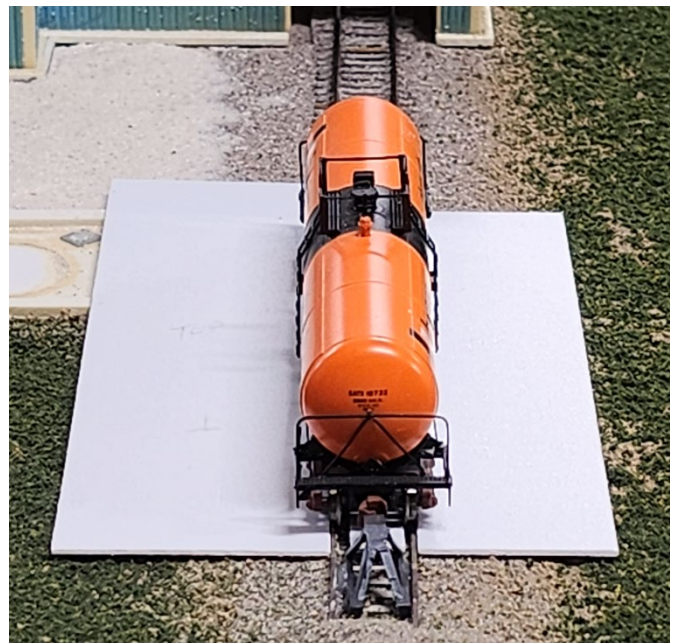
(Left) Seeking straight cuts we turned once again to our trusty mini table saw from Micro-Mark.

(Right) Quickly we were able to cut the first two sections of the new concrete off-loading platform, matching the dimensions of our drawings.



(Left) The third piece, the section between the rails was cut and then carefully tested to make sure there was no interference with the tank car wheel sets.

(Right & Below) The three pieces of 0.030-inch sheet styrene set in place for a test fit.



WKR Update

(Right) In order to clear the area we needed to remove the old tanks and containment pit, which pried right out.



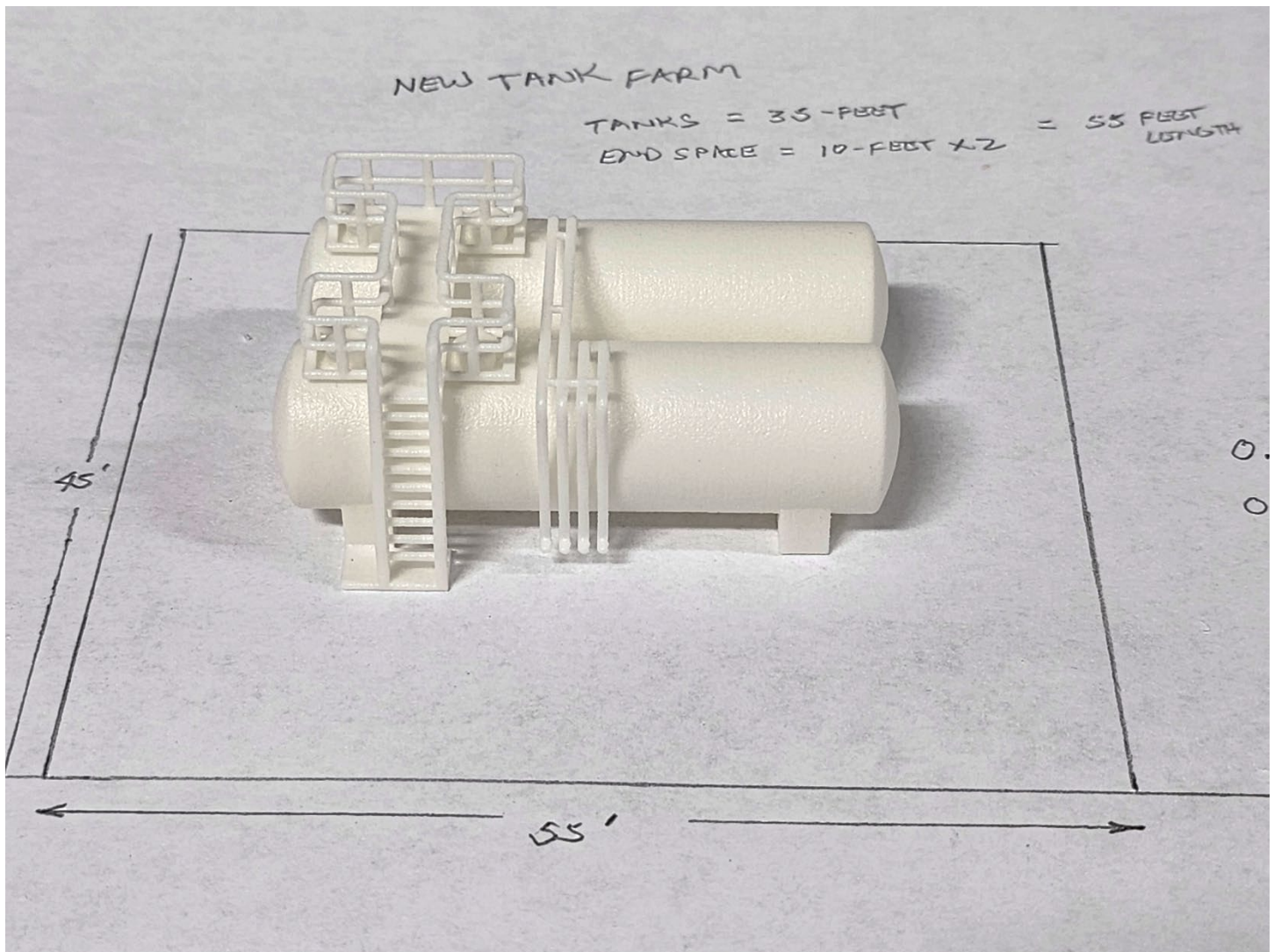
(left) Now the area was clear for the new construction.

(Below) Ready to install the new platform pieces, we applied a generous amount of Alieen's Tacky Glue to the underside before laying in place.

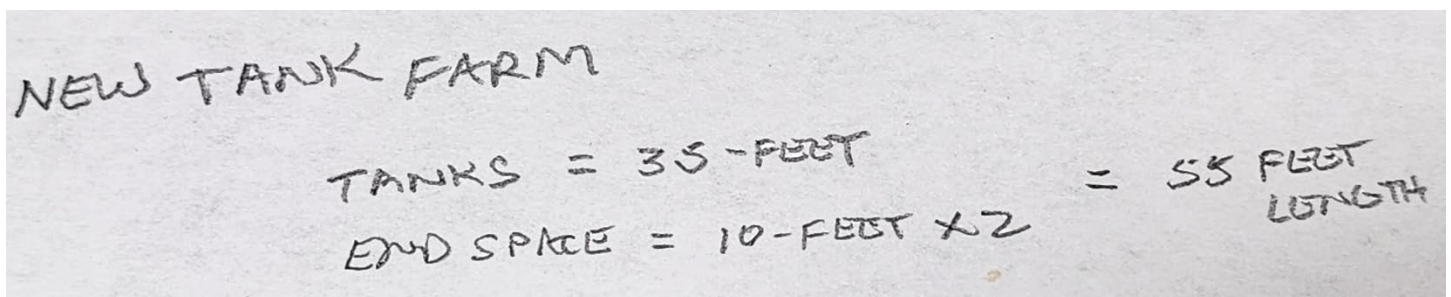


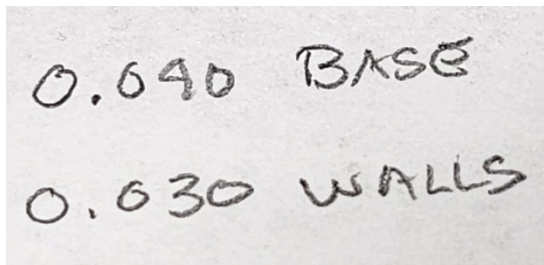
(Left) The two outer pieces went right into place as did the center piece, but since cars would roll over the center section, we used a small metal track gauge laid on edge with a tack hammer placed on top to prevent any curling or shifting. Letting the glue dry overnight gave us a completed unloading platform.

WKR Update



(Above) While the glue was curing, we turned our attention to the new containment pit and tank farm. Using a scale ruler, it was noted the tanks were a scale 35-feet long from end to end. We needed to allow enough room for freedom of movement plus other equipment, so we came up with the dimensions of 45-feet by 55-feet.

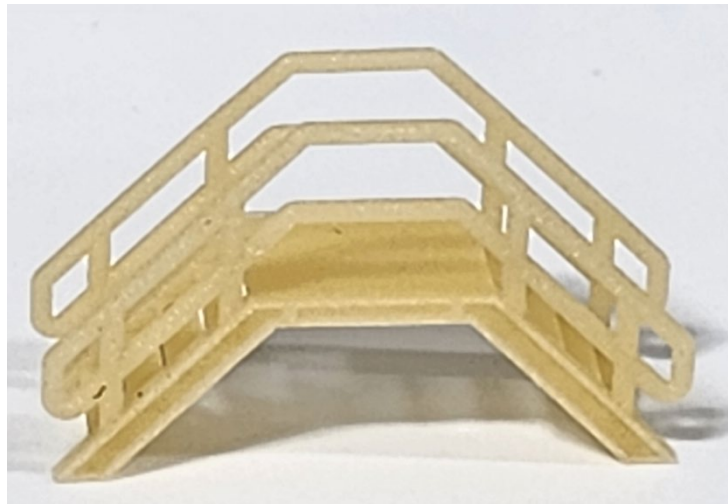
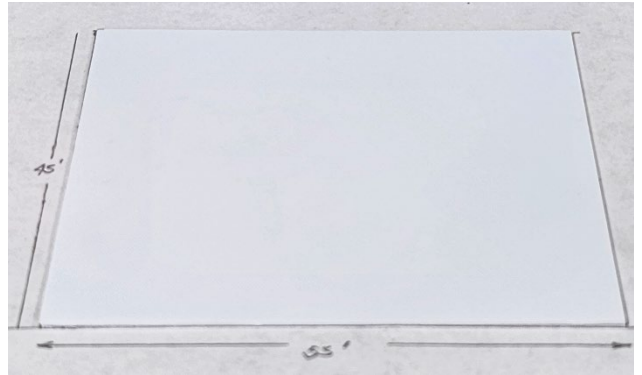




WKR Update

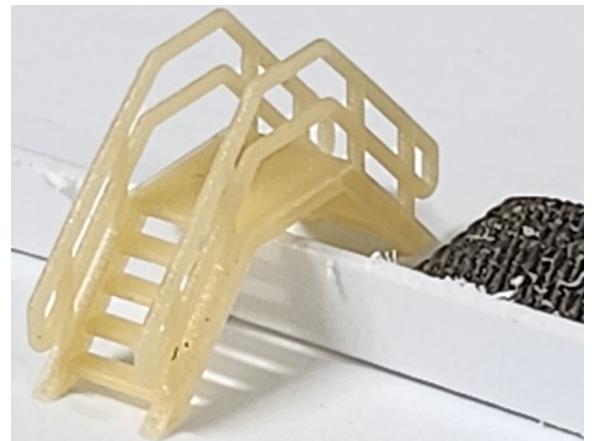
(Left) It was decided to use 0.040-inch styrene for the floor to prevent warping while using 0.030-inch for the containment walls.

(Right) The mini table saw made quick work of the floor section.



(left) Before proceeding we dipped again into the spare parts bin and found a set of 3D-printed stairs for crossing over containment walls.

(Right) We cut a test strip of 0.030 styrene for the pit walls and used the edge of a file to hold it up straight to see if the stairs would clear and they did.



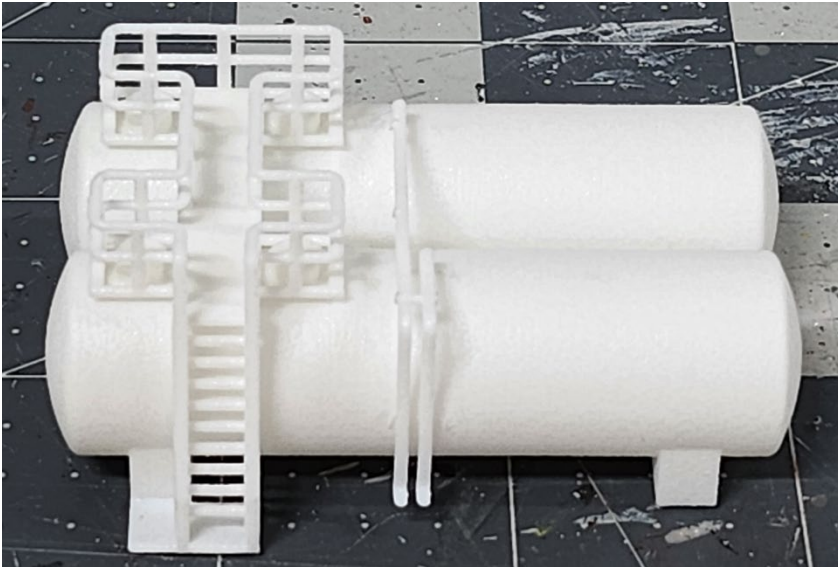
(Left) For all our plastic construction, we choose to use a combination of plastic glues. “Same Stuff” from Micro-Mark is an excellent liquid glue that offers lightning quick bonding but incomplete penetration. Reliable Testors glue provides the complete and hard bonding. The combination means we can mount a part, tack it in place with Same Stuff and move on without waiting or clamps, then follow up with a bead of Testors.

WKR Update

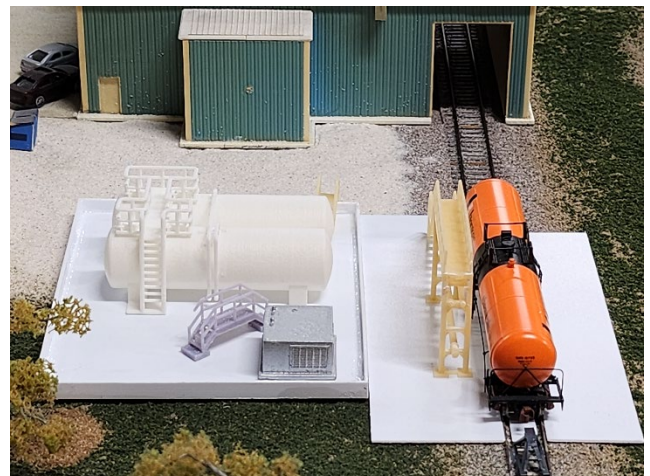
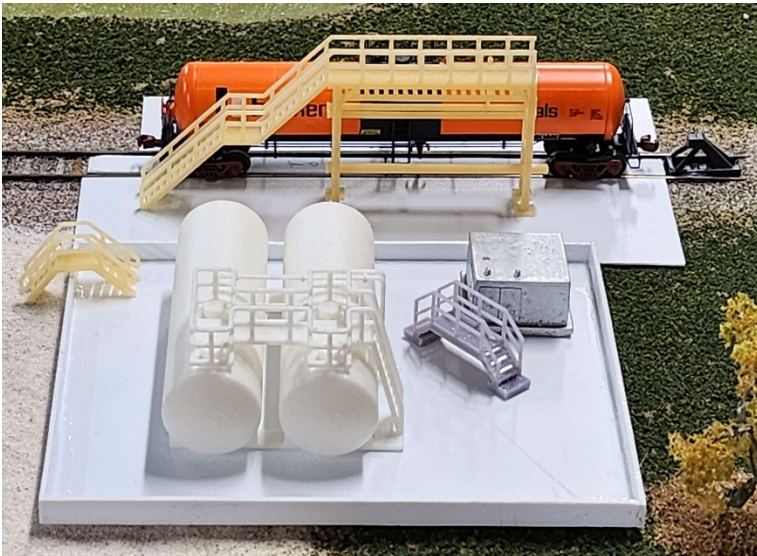
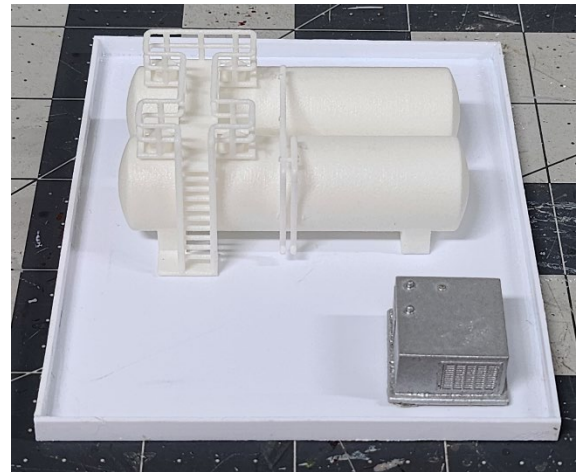
(Right) Using the combination of glues, the containment pit was assembled in about five minutes and set aside to cure.



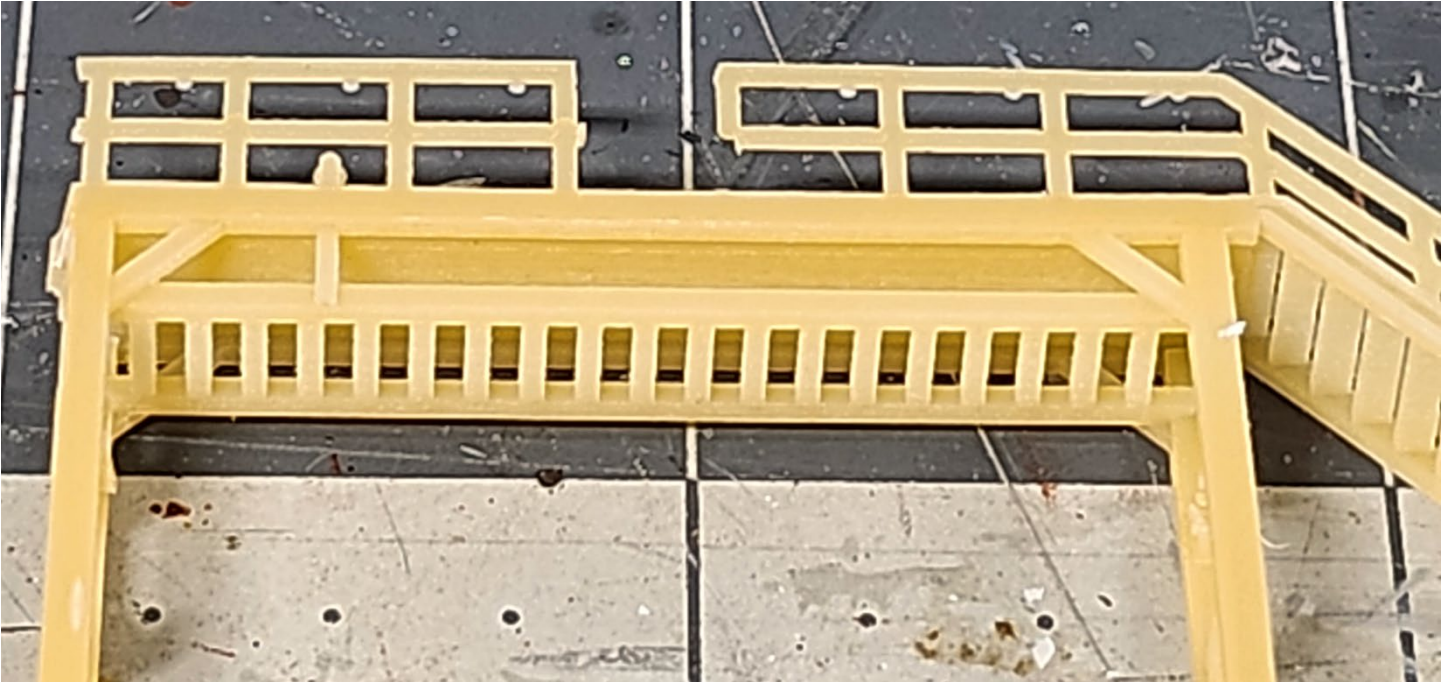
(Left) The original tank set came with four loading pipes, but since we only had two tanks, we used some nippers to carefully snip off the first and fourth pipe leaving us the two we need.



(Right & Below) With the pit completed we need to figure out where everything will fit inside the pit and where it applies also to the unloading rack (on the right).



WKR Update



(Above) Moving on we started work on the unloading stairs and rack. Using nippers again we carefully removed a section of safety railing on the proper side of the rack (still lost a bit of support post).



(Left) Both items are 3D printed and we had an extra safety rail extension that goes above the tank car for hatch access.

(Right) When working with 3D printed plastics we choose super glue and Loctite Pro is very easy to dispense a small amount right where you need it.



WKR Update



(Left) With the safety rail extension platform installed we also had to add two horizontal safety rails to the closed end of the platform as this was cut from a much longer platform. We had some scrap 3D rod and very carefully cut them to length and super glued them in place.



(Right) It was at this point we discovered we made a tactical error in gluing the unloading rack concrete pad in place as this part must be removable to transport. The trick we came up with was to make an additional piece from 0.020-inch sheet styrene which will simply be placed on top of the original piece.



(left) Test fitting the unloading rack on the new concrete base.

(Right) Knowing we are going to have an unloading hose to place on the scene, there needs to be a holder which we will form from a single staple.



(Left) Using a scrap piece of 0.020-inch styrene as a baking we mounted the bent staple in place on the rack.

I'm afraid this is getting too long for one issue, so we will wrap up the project in the next issue, same Bat Time, same Bat Channel. (If you don't understand this, go ask your Father.)

Free-mo was developed with the idea that a set of standards focusing mainly on module endplates would enable faithful modeling of prototype trackplans and operations in a modular environment. The length and track configuration of a Free-mo module or module set is up to the modeler. Free-mo takes the boredom out of running trains monotonously around a double or even a triple track mainline. With Free-mo, less is more.

Welcome to Southern Kansas Free-mo!



Southern Kansas Free-mo

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Publisher's Musings: The hobbyist was always the point
JOE FUGATE



MRH Website this month: Let's see your workspace, ...
Compiled by JOE FUGATE



Let's talk ops: Next steps with car cards for ops
JOE FUGATE



What's Neat: Steve Goaring's Illinois Terminal, ...
KEN PATTERSON



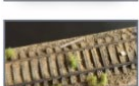
Electrical Impulses: How benchwork can affect wiring
JOE FUGATE



Updating USRA heavy 2-8-2 locomotives
ROBERT SCHLEICHER



My layout operations journey
JEFF LEE, MMR

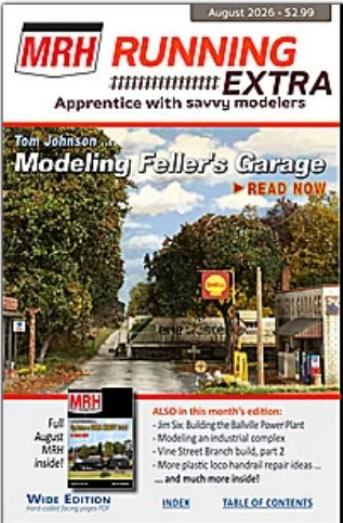


Savvy Modeler online: More realistic model track
Compiled by the MRH STAFF



August 2026 news and events
JEFF SHULTZ and RICHARD BALE

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Hard-coded wide PDF version of Running Extra
The facing pages in this PDF have been merged into a single wide page, making them landscape.

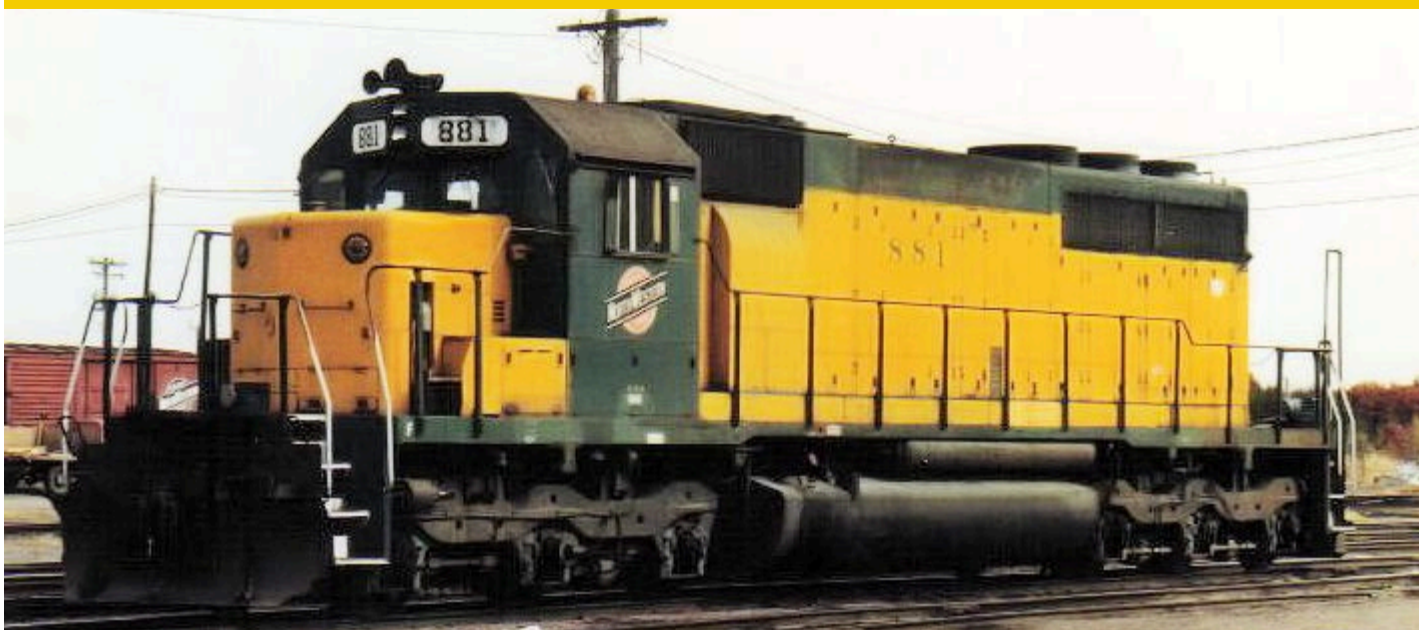
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CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



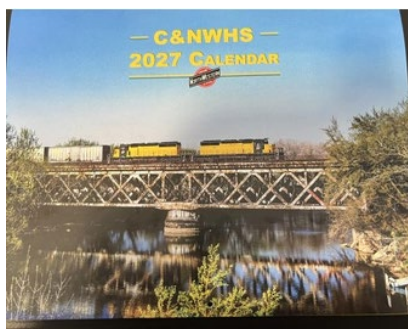
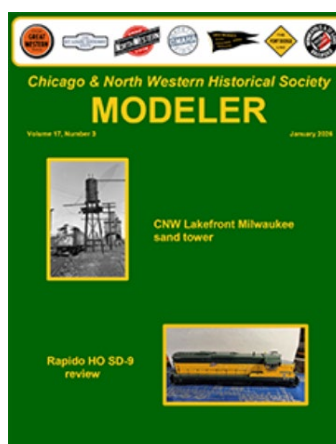
The **Chicago & North Western Historical Society** was founded in 1973 by a group of Midwestern railfans interested in the C&NW, along with its predecessor and successor roads. These roads include the Chicago, St. Paul Minneapolis & Omaha; the Minneapolis & St. Louis; the Chicago Great Western; the Litchfield & Madison; the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern; the Des Moines & Central Iowa; and many more. The Society's purpose is to collect, circulate and preserve the history of the C&NW and its predecessor and successor lines; to create and publish a magazine; and to promote fellowship among C&NW fans and Society Members.

[CNWHS Modeler Volume 17 No 3](#)

In this issue:

C&NW Milwaukee Lakefront Sand Tower

HO Rapido C&NW SD9 review



A regular 1-year membership includes 4 issues of the *North Western Lines* magazine. As a contributing member, you also receive a copy of the current C&NWHS all-color calendar.

Click here for the CNWHS website: <https://cnwhs.org/wp1/>



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Welcome to Spring Creek Model Trains

We welcome everyone, from our loyal “show” regulars to those discovering us for the first time. Feel free to stop by and explore our offerings! Stay connected by following our Facebook page, where we announce website updates, show schedule changes, and new product arrivals. Additionally, our newsletter keeps you informed about all things new, including product announcements and arrivals.

New Exclusive Product...



Spring Creek Model Trains Denver & Rio Grande PS 4750 Covered Hopper

Spring Creek Model Trains offers exclusive Intermountain Pullman Standard 4750 covered hopper. This model comes in six road numbers.

Rapido Trains HO Scale M420R Diesel Iowa Interstate

Our first exclusive locomotive. We partnered with Rapido Trains on a HO scale Alco M420R in Iowa Interstate paint scheme. We did all 3 numbers in DCC & Sound.



Spring Creek Model Trains - HO
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September 19, 2026

September 20, 2026

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BUILD A RELIABLE POWER SUPPLY

Model Railroader

October 2026

Make realistic choices

A professional railroader explains how he built his model locomotive roster



PLUS

- Tips for building a first 'real' layout
- Prototype to Model: When the roads came
- Koester: Friends make the hobby more satisfying

Featured In This Issue



DEVELOPING A DIESEL ROSTER

Look to the prototype when selecting power for your freelanced railroad



A HEAVY INDUSTRY SHOWCASE

This HO scale Pennsylvania RR layout features steel mills, coal mines, and more



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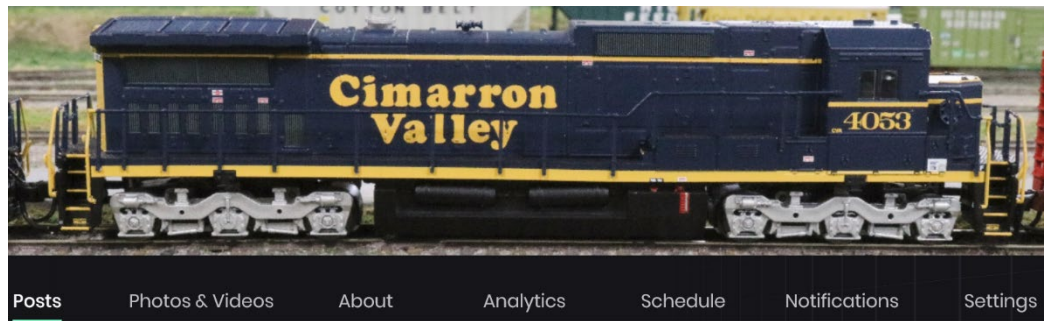
This link takes you to the website of the Mid-Continent Region of the NMRA:

<https://www.mcor-nmra.org/>



This is the link for the Western Kansas Division, NMRA MeWe page:

<https://mewe.com/westernkansasdiv/feed>



I was watching a show
called, "10 steps to avoiding
a shark attack."

I was really surprised that
"Stay out of the water"
wasn't step 1."



Date Book

September

11th & 12th **Ozarks Model Railroad Association Train Show** **Springfield, MO.**
Sat & Sun <https://trainshows.net/event/1426/ozarks-model-railroad-association-train-show>

October

3rd & 4th **Topeka Model Railroaders 5th Annual Train Show/Swap Meet** **Topeka, KS.**
Sat & Sun Great Overland Station
<https://trainshows.net/event/2013/topeka-model-railroaders-5th-annual-train-show-and-swap-meet>

November

14th & 15th **49th Annual OKC Train Show** **Oklahoma City, OK.**
Sat & Sun <https://www.okctrainshow.com/>

December

11th & 12th **Lawrence Model Railroad Club Holiday Train Show** **Lawrence, KS**
Fri & Sat <https://trainshows.net/event/1909/lawrence-model-railroad-club-holiday-train-show>

12th & 13th **Festival of Trains** **Wichita, KS.**
Sat & Sun <https://www.festoftrains.com/>



OMRA Train Show 2026



SEPTEMBER 11th-12th, 2026 – SAVE THE DATE

The Ozarks Model Railroad Association is pleased to announce that we will be holding our 2026 Train Show in the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds – E-Plex West Hall, at 3001 North Grant Ave in Springfield, MO. The E-Plex comes equipped with Air Conditioning, Bathrooms and Food service!

Friday September 11th – 4pm-8pm

Saturday September 12th – 9am-3pm

Click here for more details:

<https://omraspringfield.org/train-show/>

Topeka Model Railroaders 5th Annual Train Show & Swap Meet

Organized by Topeka Model Railroaders

October 3-4, 2026

Hours: Sat: 9am-4pm, Sun: 9am-3pm

Great Overland Station

Topeka, Kansas, USA





OKC Train Show 2026 Bigger, Better, and Back at the Bennett Event Center!

November 14th-15th 2026

The 2026 OKC Train Show will be at the Bennett Event Center, Oklahoma State Fairgrounds.

3101 Gordon Cooper Blvd,
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

Click here for the details:

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

Lawrence Model Railroad Club Holiday Train Show

Organized by Lawrence Model Railroad Club

December 11-12, 2026

Hours: Fri: 4pm-8pm, Sat: 9am-3pm

Douglas County Fairgrounds, Building 21

Lawrence, Kansas, USA





The Free-moN layout at the National Train Show in Salt Lake City, UT, July, 2019 (Mark

Free-moN

N Scale Free-mo

Free-mo is a modular scale railroading standard designed for individual modelers that specifies bench work, track work, scenery and digital control intended to *raise-the-bar* for scale modular railroading in general and, in this case, for N scale modular railroading.

The official website for N scale free-mo modular railroading is here:

<http://free-mon.net/>

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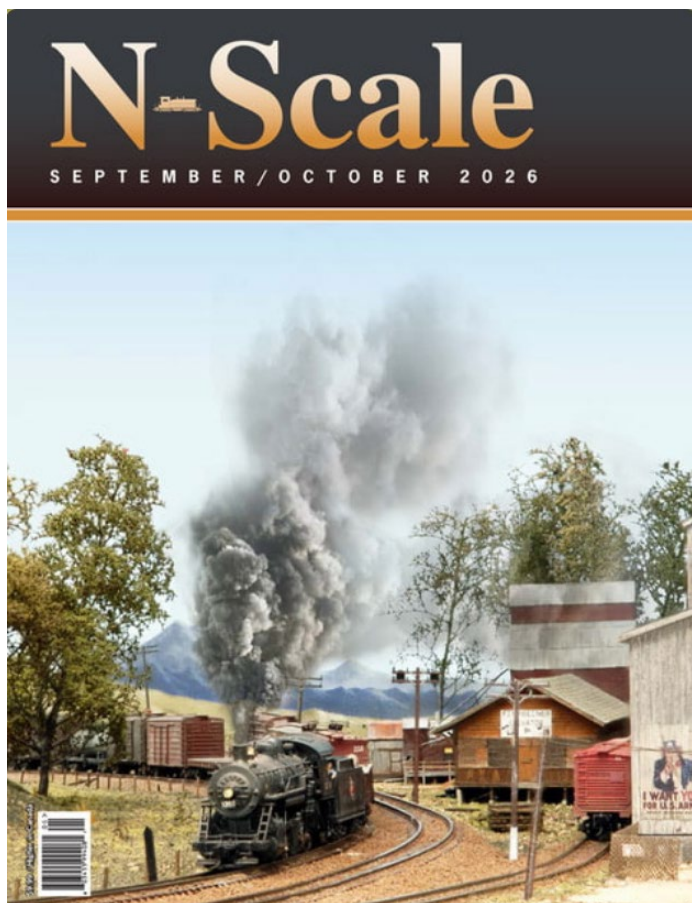
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In The Current Issue

Locomotive Noise

A Troubleshooter

BY RON BEARDEN

The Short & Nn3arrow

The OmniRGS in Nn3, Part 1

BY GREGG CUDWORTH

Quick Notes

Making Easy Power Poles

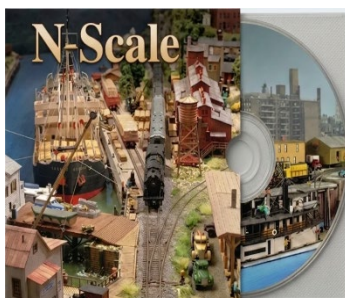
BY DENNIS MURPHY

The Sutter Creek Division

Phase Two, Part 2: Carbon Lake and The Estates at Carbon Lake

BY WARD THORNE

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**GOOD JUDGEMENT COMES
FROM EXPERIENCE.**



**AND EXPERIENCE? WELL THAT COMES
FROM POOR JUDGEMENT.**



Next Issue Preview

In the next issue of the *Main Line*, we wrap up the tank car unloading facility for the Fantastic Plastics plant on corner section 13 of the Western Kansas Rails N-scale Layout.

The *Main Line*

Publisher & Editor: Robert A. Simmons

The newsletter of the **Western Kansas Division** is published monthly for no charge by

Robert A. Simmons, Division Superintendent / Director

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