



The

Milepost

Volume 46, Number 4 – April 2026

The official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Division

Rocky Mountain Region – National Model Railroad Association.



NEXT MEETING:

Friday, April 10th, 2026, at 7:00 PM

The New Sand Creek Police Station 950 Academy Park Loop

(Northeast of the intersection of Fountain/Academy)

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Calendar of Events

January 9th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Show & Tell Program: The History of the McKeen Motor Car and #22 of the Virginia & Truckee RR

February 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: MOW Program: Colorado Midland.... A Train Ride

March 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: Blending your Background to your Layout

April 10th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Odd Ball Program: GM's Train of Tomorrow

May 8th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Offline Bldg Program: Colorado Springs & Cripple Creek District Railroad the Short Line

June 12th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Railroad Structure Program: The History of the McKeen Motor Car & #22 of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad

July 10th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Rolling Stock Program: Charles Marchbanks

August 14th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Diorama Program: TBD

September 11th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photos Proto Program: TBD

October 9th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Photo Model Program:TBD

November 13th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting

Contest: Loco Steam/Diesel Program: TBD

December 11th, 2026 (Friday)

NMRA-PPD monthly meeting.

Program: Christmas Party!



The Milepost, Volume 46, Number 4, April 2026, is published monthly as an electronic document (Adobe PDF file) by and under the authority of the Pikes Peak Division (Rocky Mountain Region) of the National Model Railroad Association. Our meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month at the Sand Creek Police Station, 950 Academy Park Loop (northeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at 7:00 PM. Please come to one of our meetings. We would love to meet you. All scales are welcome. Besides our monthly meeting, we have swap meets, train shows, and other model railroads (and railroad) activities. Unless otherwise noted, all content in this journal is copyrighted to its respective owner. Please do not use content from this newsletter in other publications, newspapers, magazines, books, websites, etc., without explicit case-by-case permission. The editor of *The Milepost* is Mr. David Bristow. He can be contacted at the e-mail address dave@bristow-family.org. Thank you.

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[Open]

Next Meeting on Friday, April 10

Our meeting will be at The Sand Creek Police Station, 950 Academy Park Loop (northeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

2026 Schedule

- April Mark Fuerstenberger - GM's Train of Tomorrow
- May Mike Peck - Colorado Springs & Cripple Creek District Railroad the Short Line
- June Elizabeth Maline: The History of the McKen Motor Car & #22 of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad
- July Charles Marchbanks
- August TBD
- September TBD
- October TBD
- November TBD
- December Christmas Party!

Opportunities abound for programs in!

Please see or contact Elizabeth Maline at eamaline@gmail.com to sign up for an open spot on the program calendar.

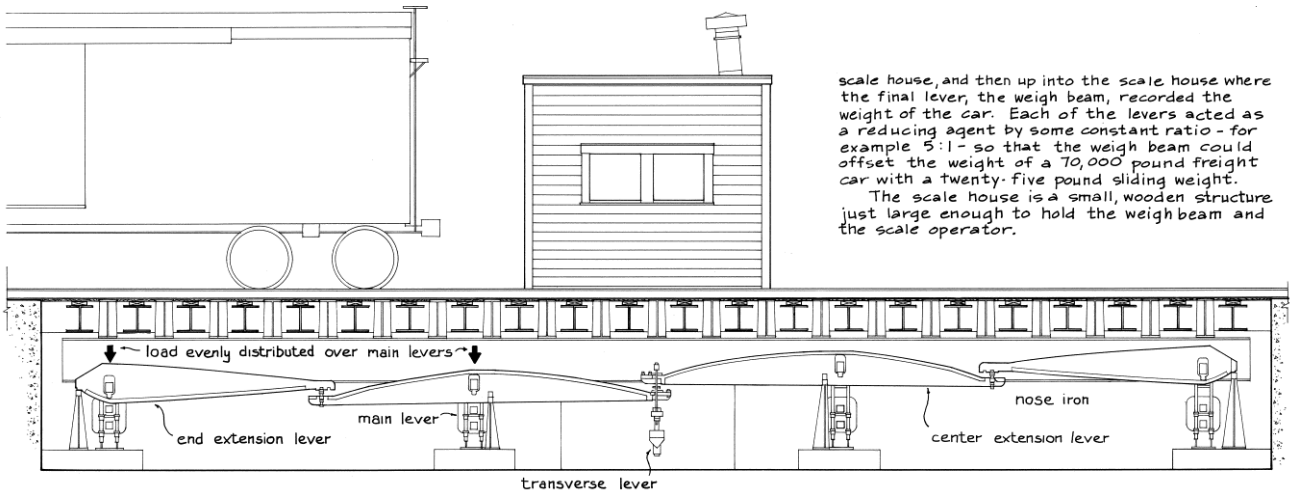
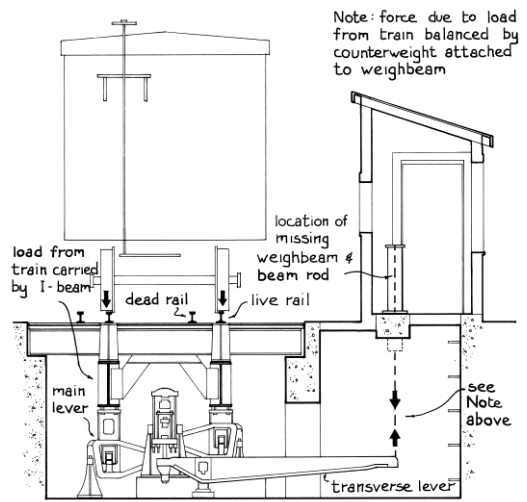
Editor's Thoughts

The Evolution of the Railroad Scale: From Beam to Motion

In the early days of railroading, "weight" was more than just a number—it was the primary metric for commerce. Because freight rates were (and still are) determined by the weight of the cargo, the railroad scale became one of the most critical pieces of infrastructure on the line. For modelers, adding a weigh scale to a layout offers a perfect blend of historical interest and operational purpose.

Before the digital age, weighing a railcar was a labor-intensive process. The first specialized scales appeared in the mid-1800s, utilizing a complex system of mechanical levers buried in a shallow pit beneath the tracks.

- The Scale House: A small shack sat adjacent to the scale track, housing the "beam" (similar to a doctor's office scale).
- Static Weighing: To get an accurate reading, a train had to stop completely. A switchman would uncouple the car, and it would be spotted precisely on the scale rails.
- The "Dead Rail": Because the delicate lever mechanisms could be damaged by the weight of a heavy locomotive, many scales featured a "dead rail" system. This used a set of gauntlet tracks or a separate turnout so that the engine could bypass the scale mechanism entirely while the cars were pushed over the "live" weighing rails.



The above picture and figures¹ depict a Scranton weigh scale, which uses the “beam” scale. Note the complexity of the mechanical linkage of the “beam” scale.

Scales serve three vital functions in railroad operations:

- Revenue: Ensuring the shipper is billed correctly for the weight of the goods.
- Safety: Preventing "overloads." A car that is too heavy can cause structural failure in a truck or, worse, break a rail or collapse a bridge.
- Balance: Modern scales can detect if a load is shifted too far to one side, which is a leading cause of derailments on sharp curves.

The days of uncoupling every car are largely gone. Today, railroads utilize Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) technology. These systems use high-precision load cells and strain gauges mounted directly to the web of the rail or integrated into the ties.

A load cell is a transducer—often called a force sensor—that converts mechanical force, such as tension, compression, or torque, into a measurable electrical signal. It is the key component in weighing scales and industrial, strength-testing applications, translating physical weight into digital data.

A strain gauge is a sensitive sensor that measures deformation (strain) in an object, such as bending, stretching, or compression. It consists of a thin conductive foil or wire arranged in a grid pattern on a backing, which is bonded to a structure. When the object deforms, the gauge deforms too, changing its electrical resistance, which is directly proportional to the applied force or stress.

¹ The images were taken from [Kathy Millatt's track scales web page](#).

Computers now calculate the weight of each axle as the train moves over the sensors at speeds up to 10–15 mph. This data is instantly paired with the car's AEI (Automatic Equipment Identification) RF tag, allowing a 100-car consist to be weighed and logged in minutes without ever stopping the train.

For a layout, a weigh scale is a "space-saver" industry. You don't need a massive warehouse—just a scale house, a section of concrete-pitted track, and perhaps a gauntlet track setup.

- Scene Idea: Place a scale on a siding near a grain elevator or a coal mine.
- Operational Interest: Require your local freight to spot each car on the scale for 10 seconds before moving it to the "outbound" track. It adds a layer of realism and gives your switch crew a specific task to master.



The [Walthers Cornerstone Track Scales Kit](#) is a versatile choice because it includes components for two different eras and styles. It features parts for both a light-duty wood deck and a heavy-duty concrete deck, along with two separate scale houses—one with a flat roof and one with a peaked roof.

Whether you are modeling the steam era with a manual beam scale or a modern mainline with high-tech sensors, the railroad scale remains the "cash register" of the tracks.

David

[Keepin' it on the Tracks](#)

By: Mark Fuerstenberger

Union Pacific Big Boy #4014 – Coast to Coast Tour – Western Leg

The Union Pacific Big Boy is out and about on the rails. Currently on the west coast leg of it's coast to coast tour this year in 2026. They left Cheyenne, WY on March 29th and head west through Utah, Nevada, and California, and will return to Cheyenne, WY on April 24th. For more details go to:

<https://www.up.com/about-us/history/steam/schedule>

Rocky Mountain Train Show – Denver, CO- April 11th & 12th

The Rocky Mountain Train show will be held April 11th & 12th. It will be held in Denver at the National Western Stock Show Complex.

Address: 4655 N Humboldt St, Denver, CO 80216

Cost: \$10, children 12 & under, Boy Scouts in Uniform, & Active Military are free.

Show hours: Saturday 9am - 5pm & Sunday 9am - 4pm

Memorial Services for Irv Johnson – Sunday, April 26th

Services will be held at 2:00pm on Sunday, April 26th.

They will be held at the Episcopal Church, 36 Edlowe Rd, Woodland Park, CO 80863.

Cards can be sent to Joyce Johnson, 566 Elk Creek Dr., Divide, CO 80814

Silvis Train Days & Classic Cars – Silvis, IL – April 25th

The Railroading Heritage of Midwest America will be holding Silvis Train Days & Classic Cars, April 25th. It will be held at the former Rock Island shops in Silvis, IL.

Address: 1101 2nd Ave, N, Silvis, IL

Visit www.RRHMA.com for more details.

2026 Rocky Mountain Region Annual Convention – May 13th – 16th - Rapid City, SD

The region website has been updated to show the activities, timelines, clinics, train rides, and all the fun stuff that will be happening. There will be two vendors with high end and unique inventory to sell. This is an added benefit this year.

A YouTube video has been made with information for the convention by James Willmus.

<https://youtu.be/9lIcad0s04>

Be sure to check out the full itinerary on the website, and sign up at www.rmr-nmra.org

If you have any questions, contact Blaine Holbrook or Geoff Carter

Geoff Carter, gkc450219@gmail.com, 801-815-6028

Blaine Holbrook, bholbro1466@earthlink.net, 801-580-1459

Sherman Hill Train Show & Hobby Expo – June 13th & 14th, 2026 – Cheyenne, WY

It will be held at Event Center – Archer, 3801 Archer Parkway, Cheyenne, WY

events@laramiecounty.com or shmracts@gmail.com

Sat. 9-5pm Sun 10-3pm

Adults \$10, Kids 12 and under Free.

Save the Date: Rail Proto Meet (RPM) – October 16th - 18th, 2026 – Greeley, CO

The event will be held at the Island Grove Event Center in Greeley.

Visit: <https://corpm.org/> for more details.

Rocky Mountain Region Website

The RMR region website just underwent a total rebuild. Be sure to check it out now. The website has the latest events and information from the region. <https://www.rmr-nmra.org>

NMRA Interchange

If you like to be online, you should check out the NMRA Interchange. You'll need to create a login on the Discord website. <https://discord.com/> From there you'll need your login information to the NMRA website, and once you're there check out the link to the Interchange.

<https://www.nmra.org/members/nmra-interchange> You'll find a few simple steps to get setup. This setup process is only required the first time, and after that it's easy to jump online and see what others are doing. The site also allows for easy conversations, just like you might do on Zoom. I encourage you to check it out.

Drawing Prizes Preview

By Tony Pawlicki

"Teaser" preview of some prizes available at the drawing during intermission at the April 2026 Pikes Peak Division NMRA meeting. The idea is to entice more members to our meetings. **HEY – feel free - encouraged, even - to bring/donate surprise items! The more the merrier! (ALERT: We have exhausted ALL of the various donations from Wade Mountz, Alan Hutchins and Mr. Lugg; November's were the last of Andy Bucu's donations as well.)**

As a reminder, per the consensus at the December meeting, the excess Christmas party gifts are being spread out over this year's drawings.

(Some of) The APRIL Meeting Offerings (**feel free to contribute more at the meeting; some more of Wade's freebies will also be available, free to good homes**):

One or both of these could be considered collector items.

SOO Line Historical & Technical Society 1985 Limited Run 40' box car, DSS&A 17065. "Number 95 of 1000." HO scale Athearn "Blue Box"-style kit model of 40-foot boxcar with 6-foot sliding door. Never-assembled, "new-in-box." Original box. Maybe a collector's item? One of the excess drawing prize Christmas presents.



MP45203. HO scale model of 43-foot boxcar, BLT 2-20, so an inter-War wood-sheeted product. Beautifully factory pre-assembled; lightly weathered trucks and underframe. An ERTL product from the early 1990's, from a short-lived (sold poorly, quickly discontinued) product line aimed at the collector market. Offered "used" on eBay at \$22 (a steal, in my humble opinion, as this is a beautiful model). Metal wheelsets, Kadee #5 couplers. One of the excess drawing prize Christmas presents.

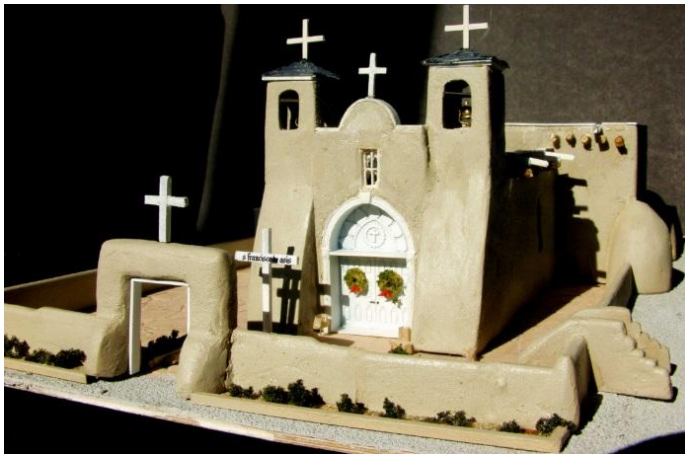


[April Wavy Rails](#)

By Joe Costa

T-Track Rancho de Taos

A few years back I worked on a project to create an HO scale 3D printed model of San Francisco de Assis in Rancho de Taos. It turned out to be much too ambitious. My revised plan is to complete in with wood and Styrofoam. Actually, it's about 90% done. Original, out of production from Half Moon Hobbies



Hallmark Adobe Church 2000 Keepsake & Modification



Pueblo Photograph

This pueblo is approximately n-scale (and very heavy).



My final plan will be to use the PPLD Makerspace scanner to create a 3D printable (and lightweight) model.

Originally, the central “plaza” was empty and I filled it with plaster. I did not paint that plaza and it was in the house unpainted for over a week. The exposure ended up giving me a bloody nose and a trip to the ENT specialist. Once sealed it was totally safe.

The Race to Dieselization in the late 1930's & early 1940's

By: Mark Fuerstenberger

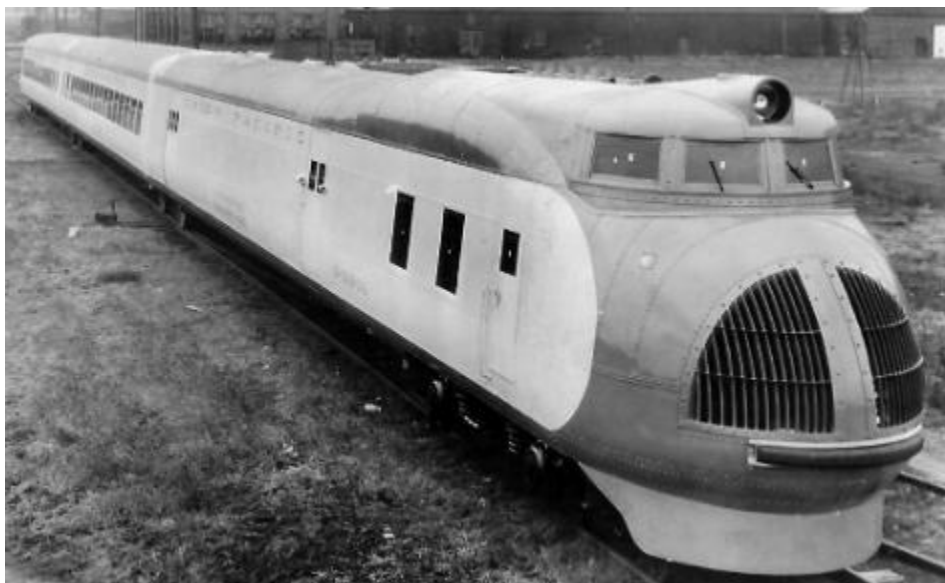
Throughout the late 1930's, General Motors worked on a new idea for locomotive power. Up until now everything that operated with any real success was powered by steam.

In the late 1920's & 1930's General Motors corporation purchased a variety of companies that were seen as leading their field in the business of electrification & internal combustion engines. These were companies such as Delco Electronics Corporation, Dayton-Wright, and the Winton Engine Corporation. Eventually these companies would be consolidated into General Motors Research and development company known as Electro-Motive Corporation (EMC).

At the forefront of this effort was Charles Kettering. He was an American inventor, teacher, engineer & businessman. Kettering was born in 1875 where he worked on the family farm and attended school. After graduation he chose to continue with education and become a teacher. He was very engaging and attracted students to evening scientific demonstrations on electricity, heat, magnetism, and gravity. Later he chose to go back to school and further his studies at Ohio State University in 1904 where he graduated with his degree in electrical engineering. Right out of college, Kettering created the electric cash register in 1906, and by 1909 he co-founded Dayton Engineering Laboratories Company (Delco). By 1918 Delco was part of the United Motors Company, which became the General Motors Research Company in 1920.

Combining the knowledge and know-how from multiple companies, Charles Kettering revolutionized the transportation industry by developing practical, lightweight, high-speed two-stroke diesel engines during the early 1930's while leading the General Motors Research company.

By 1933, they had developed a new breakthrough power setup for Zephyr's and the M-10000 streamliners. This General Motors-Winton venture produced a 600 hp, eight-cylinder engine, which was a version of the Winton 201A engine.



UP's M-10000

Seeing success and looking at the future of diesel-powered locomotives, in 1935 EMC, invested in a new factory and started development work on a bigger class of locomotives that they would even-

tually produce. This research and development led to General Motors new 567 engine which was introduced in 1938. This new engine increased the overall horsepower of EMC's new E-series locomotives to 2000hp per locomotive.

In 1939, thanks to Charles Kettering and his improvements in fuel injection and design, the company built a four-unit freight locomotive demonstrator, called the FT. Armed with this new FT locomotive set, General Motors was able to set out on a tour of the continent's railroads, selling their new locomotive power. The FT locomotive was the engine that would now allow diesels engines to start replacing older powerful steam locomotives, while using far less maintenance & manpower, and at a reduced cost.



Not wanting to be left complete behind, in the early 1940's, the American Locomotive Company (ALCO) worked with General Electric (GE) to create the PA locomotive. While the PA locomotives were a bit larger, they were plagued by problems due to being rushed through design, development, production and testing.



ALCO PA Locomotive

While other locomotive manufacturers would try to compete in the production of diesel locomotives, it was the FT locomotive from the Electro-Motive Corporation that set the new standard for diesel power in railroading.

Show and Tell

By Tony Pawlicki

This note lays out rules for the **Show And Tell** session/contest at the APRIL 2026 Pikes Peak Division NMRA meeting. Free-form show-and-tell really has no rules, just do a little presentation. The salvage and resurrection topic is ANYTHING AT ALL that you have rescued from a fate worse than the wastebasket.

This event was announced a bit over two months in advance (in the MILEPOST just before the March meeting) to give folks enough time to prepare their entries. For APRIL, there is a salvage and resurrection contest, topic: ANYTHING AT ALL that you have rescued from a fate worse than the wastebasket.

As a reminder, starting with the June 2024 meeting, we now have two parts to the event:

- The **theme-specific** contest/presentation (for April it is ANYTHING AT ALL).
- **Free-form show-and-tell**, on any topic you choose. This feature was added by popular request - folks had been suggesting this to our Superintendent.

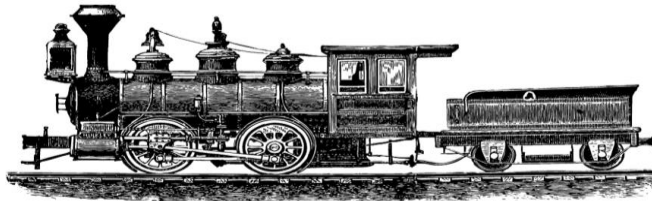
GENERAL IDEA for the theme-specific part (ANYTHING AT ALL this month):

- Grab an old, failed project you couldn't bring yourself to discard (or a disaster picked up at a train show or store – or even the remains after an unplanned encounter with an uncarpeted floor).
- Plan a fix (turning it into something good, though not necessarily creating what you originally planned), then actually fix it.
- Bring it, display it, then after regular model contest, stand up and tell us about your adventures.
- **The show-and-tell aspect is the main thing.** Given enough entries (3), there'll be a contest aspect too, but main goals are having fun salvaging something and entertaining the rest of us with the way you had fun.

THIS SESSION'S THEME: ANYTHING AT ALL, trying to encourage broader participation.

EXAMPLES:

- An example and the rules were provided in April 2023 Milepost.
- To remind us that a salvage and resurrection project need not be a huge effort, **the January 2025 Milepost provided an example (SALVAGING INTERNATIONAL HOBBY CORP. (IHC) DTI 10175) where just one major change was needed to "save" the model.**
- This was also an example of **a model that needed saving right out of the box.** A model doesn't always need saving just due to having lived a rough life post-purchase.



March 2026 Minutes

Secretary, John Emmot

The regular monthly meeting was called to order by Superintendent, Mark Fuerstenberger at 7:04 in the community room of the Sand Creek Police Station. There were 19 members present and no visitors.

Secretary Report

The minutes of the February meeting were accepted as published.

Treasurers Report

Tony had hard copies of the treasurer report. The statement reflected the interest payment and drawing receipts. The payment for web hosting was covered. The statement was accepted as presented.

Announcements

Mark noted that Irv Johnson's wife, in Divide, had asked for help with appraising his layout. Mark asked if anyone could assist.

Mark and Amber said that she is experiencing some medical issues. She will be getting treatment in the near future.

Elizabeth recapped the very successful TECO show. More than 2000 came through the door in addition to the many vendors and layouts there. Everyone, including the venue and caterer, was very happy with the results.

The question of a summer picnic for June or July was raised. Suggestions for a venue included Palmer Lake, Fox Run Park or Bear Creek Park. It will be discussed further at the next meeting.

There was also discussion of a possible Division excursion for mid-to-late summer. Suggestions included Cripple Creek or the Cog Train.

Mark reminded everyone of:

- Rocky Mountain Train Show in Denver, April 11-12.
- It was noted the next RMR convention is scheduled for South Dakota on May 13-16, 2026.
- The Sherman Hill Show in Cheyenne, WY is June 13-14.
- Check for other events on the Rocky Mountain Region website.
- The possibility of a PPD swap meet, perhaps at the Church on the west side in November or December, was discussed. Mark also indicated that having it at a Classic Homes venue might be possible. It would include a small modular layout.
- It was also noted that the Division might want to set up a large modular layout at the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo in early September. That would depend on a confirmed invitation and how much support is available for the project.

Show and Tell

There were three Show & Tell items. Joe discussed a laser printed picture on wood. John related the long history of the D NW & P caboose that was finally ready for delivery to Dave Naples at the Moffat Road Museum. There was also an old Ambroid material car, though I failed to record the owner.

Program

Paul Petty discussed and displayed pictures of the backgrounds for his layout. They were created from multiple photos printed and pasted together in masterful ways.

Contest

There were three entries in the 'rolling stock' model contest. David Solly had 1st place and Tony Pawlicki got 2nd and 3rd. The April contest is 'Oddballs' (something appropriate for April Fools).

The door prize drawing was held following the contest announcement.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.





Laser Framing

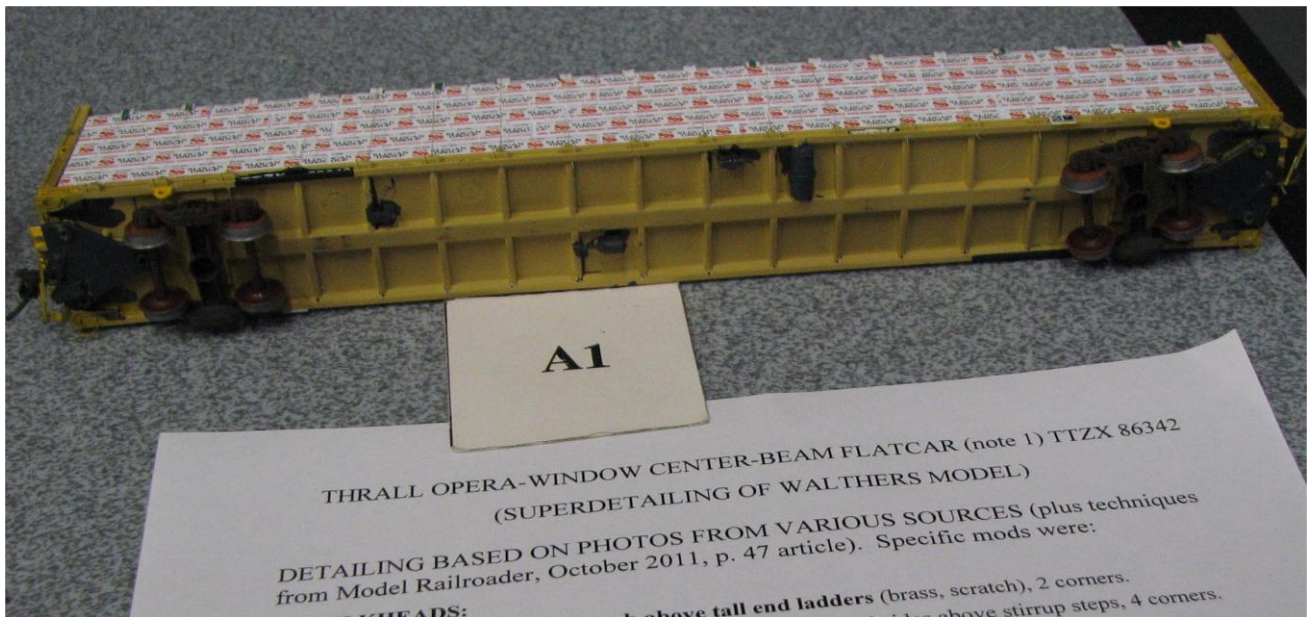
Framed monochrome images can be created as railroad art., sometimes as LASER generated etches or prints.

Originally, I had planned to create laser etchings from wall sized murals from the hotel that hosted the Regional NMA conventional in Durango. For reasons unknown the LASER just would not cooperate. Photos worked out perfectly.



HTCX (note 1) 360 THRALL DOOR BOXCAR (note 2)
 (SUPERDETAILING OF WALTHERS MODEL)

DETAILING BASED ON DATA & PHOTOS FROM RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN (June 1978, pp. 49-51 for prototype photos and drawings; Dec. 2000, pp. 118-123 for model review that points out missing end details and provides on page 123 a photo of the model's "B" end – comparison to prototype "B" end photo from June 1978 RMC article makes obvious what end details the model lacked).



THRALL OPERA-WINDOW CENTER-BEAM FLATCAR (note 1) TTZX 86342
 (SUPERDETAILING OF WALTHERS MODEL)

DETAILING BASED ON PHOTOS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES (plus techniques from Model Railroader, October 2011, p. 47 article). Specific mods were:
 HEADS: ... above tall end ladders (brass, scratch), 2 corners.
 ... above stirrup steps, 4 corners.



PIKES PEAK “N”GINEERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

By Mike Peck



Rick Sutton our newest PPNG member

Superintendent's Corner

April is here and the Rocky Mountain Train Show is just a couple of weekends away.

I would like to thank all the members that helped make the TECO show a success hopefully it will not be the last, we signed up 2 new members at the show, William Casey and Rick Sutton, I would like to welcome them to the club and hope to see a lot of both of them at the clubhouse and shows. I would also like to thank the members that showed up for the RM Pace setup on Wednesday March 18, it was a fun time running trains for their clients and talking with and answering questions for them. It was also a great time just talking with our own members when we didn't have visitors to the layout. I am looking forward to more setups like this with RM Pace and others. I enjoy going out and promoting this great hobby of ours to the public.

I would like to see more of our members at the clubhouse on Saturdays, we have all 4 lines going with no problems. We are getting the word out about the open house on the last Saturday of every month and hopefully we will keep getting good turnouts for those. The club has a business meeting on the 3rd Friday of every month, at 5:30 pm, at Perkins on the corner of Platte and Chelton. I would like to see more members show up for that meeting, your input and opinions are valuable to both me and the club. I welcome any ideas any member has about the club and how to make it better and how the club can help promote this great hobby of ours.

Garden City Boot Hill Show

Glenn & Deb Hobbs, Chris Dueker, and Mary & I attended this show. We had a lot of smoke in eastern Colorado; we were guessing that a few of the ditch burnings got away from the farmers and burned some fields as well. We made our breakfast stop at the Copper Kettle in La Junta and headed to Garden City.

We arrived just after 3 Garden City time, and I was able to drive in and unload. Once unloaded I parked the trailer outside. We got the sales tables and layout setup and running

just in time for pizza. After we ate we did one more check on the yellow line then headed for our hotels to check in and get ready for the show.

Saturday morning arrived and we were running trains by opening time. Customers were looking and asking questions but not buying. We didn't even make our table fees. It was a great weekend for running trains though.



Glenn & Chris showing off the new logo-stand Steve built.

We did have a good lunch at the show. They didn't serve the pulled pork sandwiches they had last year.

The wind blew all day Sunday – 55 to 65 MPH winds, which had us worried about loading out after the show. Robert would open one door at a time, so we didn't have an issue, and everyone took their time. I was able to bring the trailer in and with a lot of help getting me backed up into position we were able to load the trailer and then exit the building. I parked the trailer and then picked up Mary and Chris so we could leave. As we left, we saw a shed on fire, so Chris called 911 to report it. The next day we checked it out after we picked up the trailer to head home. We couldn't see much damage from the road.

Rocky Mountain Train Show

During this show we will have a booth with three sales tables across from our layout location, so help is just an isle away. We will have 6 tables to set up on so I will need most of the club modules for this show. I think if I put all my modules in the bed of the pickup I'll have room for the other modules.

We are scheduled to enter the facility at 8:30 am Friday morning. Mary & I will be arriving on Thursday. I asked to see if I could get in on Thursday but haven't heard back yet. Hopefully I'll have an answer by the April board meeting.

Sherman Hill Show

The Sherman Hill Show will be June 13 & 14, 2026 at the Archer facility. The Sherman Hill club made arrangements with the Red Lion Hotel for special rates for us.

Dave & Lee plan to go as well as Glenn and maybe Deb, and Mary & I. We need a few more club members to attend.

This show has not been voted on by the membership to attend, so we need to do so at the April business meeting.

North Platte Golden Spike Show

The club received an invitation to attend the North Platte show August 7 – 9, 2026 as both a vendor if we wish or just the layout. If you have never been to this show, it is a great show and fun to attend. Lots of things to do during and after the show. We had four club members and two family members attend last year.

The club will need to vote to attend this show, I recommend if we don't have more members attend, we don't go.

March Open House

We had good weather for the open house. John reported we had four guests and quick visit by Elizabeth Maline.



A couple of photos of our guests and crew for the day. Taken by John Grier.

“N”Gineers Editor’s Notes

Thanks to John Grier, I have photos for the April addition of the Railhead. I'm still looking for stories from the membership. I like to use other's stories and projects, so you don't always have to read my ramblings.

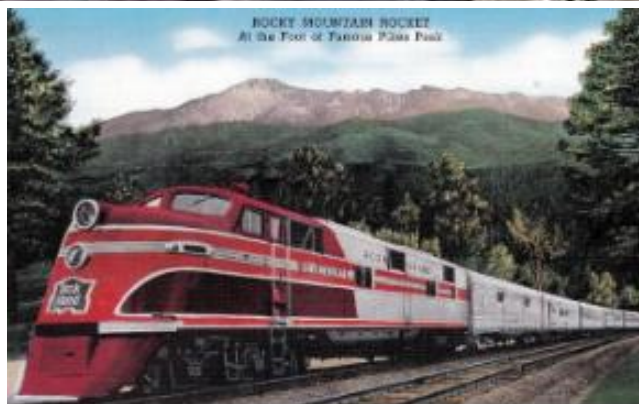
The Lighter Rail

By Kristin Phillips

The Wednesday, March 25, 2026, Gazette Telegraph, had an interesting front page article written by Savannah Eller of the Gazette and titled “New Colorado passenger rail project would cover old foot-

print. Her article begins, "In 1900, an adventurous tourist could buy one train ticket in Chicago that would take them all the way to the top of Pikes Peak."

The first leg of the journey crossed the Eastern Plains. Small towns existed because of the railroad and disappeared when the railroad abandoned the rail line. Pikes Peak could just be seen in the distance as one approached Limon, Colorado where the Rock Island's Limon "shuffle" occurred. That is where the Rocky Mountain Rocket would split off the AB unit and three cars which would travel to Colorado Springs and the Rocket would continue its journey to Denver.



The Rocky Mountain Rocket in 1942.
(Rock-Island-Railroad., -Public-domain, -via-Wikimedia-Commons)

When the train arrived in Colorado Springs, the riders would walk to their electric streetcar connection which took them to the major neighborhoods of the city. One route of the streetcar would take them to Manitou Springs where a short walk to the Cog Railway Station would take them to top of Pikes Peak via the Cog Railway. The Rock Island station itself, at 555 E. Pikes Peak, is now part of the Catalyst campus. A Fred Harvey lunchroom occupied the south end of the main building.

Eller interviewed Mel McFarland extensively for her article. He spoke of Colorado Springs as originally built around rail traffic. Hotels, restaurants, and other businesses catered to the ebb and flow of foot traffic at the beginning of the 20th century, when the city grew as a health center to cure tuberculosis. My great aunt moved here because of TB. Sadly, she passed way and is buried in Fairview Cemetery on the westside.

Transportation fell out of favor after World War II, a relic of the past, as the automobile grew in prominence. Dwight Eisenhower developed the over 48,000-mile Interstate Highway system, officialy known as the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, which

provided a main transportation system in the country, connected major cities, and aided national defense. A Wikipedia article lists it as is the largest public works project in U.S. history, moving 25% of all traffic. It is still expanding. One-mile info every five-mile segment is flat so that it can be used as a landing strip if necessary.

Eller continues in her article that “generations later, a part of history might be on track to return. As early as this fall Front Range voters could see a ballot question to fund the expansion of passenger rail from Pueblo to Fort Collins.” The train route would have both passenger and freight service traveling over the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe train tracks.

She adds that interest, both positive and skeptical, has been high. According to the Front Range Passenger Rail District more than 18,000 people voted on possible names for the new service in the first 72 hours of an online post. A Colorado Springs town hall on the project drew a large crowd last month, and another meeting is scheduled for next month. That could bring a historical transportation system back to the city.

With the growing automobile traffic, the city grew to the north and east. Shopping malls became the preferred destination for shopping and “downtown” slowly eroded. Today, however, we have a renaissance of business and residential occupation of “downtown” or the modern name “city center”.

Freight traffic has also declined. Coal shipments fluctuated and steadily declined throughout the 20th century. Eller added that the mining industry in Cripple Creek which once supported three rail lines, no longer supported any by 1950. Limon, CO is now a cutoff to Highway 24 to drive to Colorado Springs.

Eller continues that proponents of creating a rail system between Pueblo and Ft. Collins speak of the congestion of I-25, the growth of the Front Range and the need for accessible travel options. There are limitations as well. Train travel is slower and less flexible than car travel. Railroad tracks have to go where the area’s growth is going to be viable.

McFarland believes that with increasing public interest in passenger rail transportation the city is an ideal place to start passenger service. Pueblo has published a \$30 million plus plan for renovating its historic train station. Colorado Springs would need to start from the ground up. The most recent train project review proposes a station near America the Beautiful Park. If the Front Range Passenger Rail District ballot measure plan passes Colorado Springs would get about \$80 million to facilitate rail infrastructure such as parking and public transportation around the new train connections.

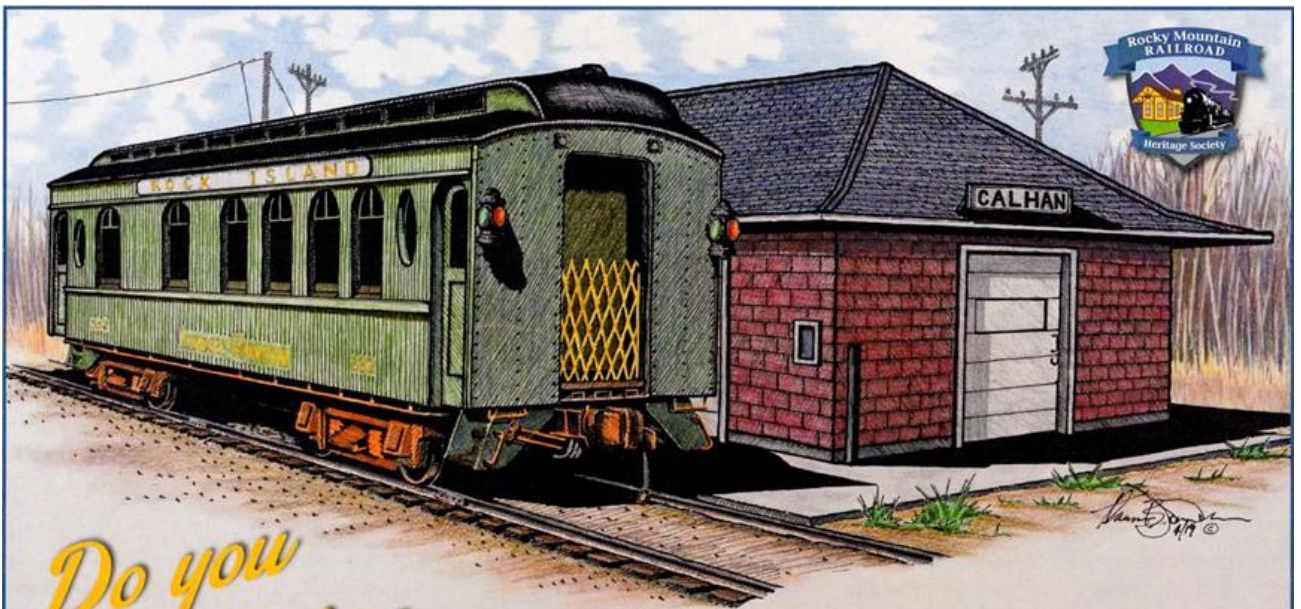
Eller writes that the rail district is hoping to get a \$900 million starter service running north out of Denver by 2029 based on an existing taxpayer funding stream. If a sales tax ballot measure is successful, a Colorado Springs station could be in the works before 2031. Only time will tell.

Information about the railroads of the Pikes Peak region can be found in two books by Allan C. Lewis, Railroads of the Pikes Peak Region 1870-1900 and Railroads of the Pikes Peak Region 1900-1930 available on Arcadia Press, Amazon or eBay.

Advertisements

Joan Schulz is offering her village, with the 1940s Merklin train, for sale for \$200 for the entire set. But would give it to someone who would really appreciate the entire set (she is not interested in selling pieces.) You can contact Joan Schulz at (719) 235-3481 or joansixty@msn.com





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