

The Manifest_(C)
Railroad News and Musings from
Green Country Model Railroaders' Association_{TM}
Sunday, January 5, 2014

First, our annual disclaimer:

Opinions in the Manifest_(C) are solely those of the author, an individual, and do not necessarily represent those of GCMRA, its officers or the corporation.

I trust all had a great holiday season. The new year is upon us and is often a time for a pledge to self to do things better this time around. If you're stressed or bored or just looking for something new, it's time to get into model railroading or advance to the next level!

For years we have been talking of, and some even believed, that we would someday once again have passenger rail service in Tulsa. We may be one step closer now:

https://www.planning.org/news/daily/story.htm?story_id=193628660

http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/eastern-flyer-lets-you-ride-the-rails-to-oklahoma-city/article_0540324f-e755-5919-a358-36f934dcfbbd.html

<https://www.easternflyer.com>

<http://www.krmg.com/news/news/local/take-ride-past-possibly-future-rail-okc/ncWCZ/>

Sounds really exciting, even if it starts in Sapulpa instead of Tulsa. They are certainly wise in offering something to do at the other end, rather than simply turning around and going back. This reminds me of the well-known Arkansas and Missouri excursion starting in Springdale and allowing generous time in Van Buren for eating, shopping, riding an excursion boat, etc., before returning. Eating in Bricktown would appeal to me more than 2 meals on the train for \$89.

Our new year will be busy. We have shows tentatively scheduled in March and April, plus we expect honored guests from the NMRA to be operating our layout at the meet in March. Good times! Come join us.

As I write this, many of us are debating whether to even go outside, much less go anywhere. We're having our famous snow over ice, making travel dubious. My acquaintances in Stockholm, Sweden :-)) sometimes complain about the winters there. Well, I just checked the weather here and there. Here, it's overcast, a bitterly and dangerously cold north wind with warnings that skin will frostbite within minutes, the afore-mentioned snow over ice, with a predicted overnight low of 1. (That's one, as in very near zero.) In Stockholm, it's sunny, 39 degrees with a predicted low of 37. And, it darn sure doesn't get to be 114 in the summer!

One of our members found out this afternoon that the cold also affects even model locomotives. We know that leaving plastic locos on a sunny car dashboard will cause permanent damage to them. However, today, extremes in the other direction caused locomotives to fail to run properly after overnight storage outside. At least they recovered after a gradual warmup to room temperature.

It's worth a trip to see the changes in the layout just this last week. The engine servicing facility is now ballasted with tufts of green grass valiantly trying to grow and prosper amidst oily and soot/cinder influences. Thanks, Dave! The project granted me the first view of the backside of the roundhouse. (It looks nice.) A big "Thank you" goes to Barbie King for cleaning, dusting and touch-up painting (with custom-mixed colors from a palette, no less) It really makes a difference, and hopefully will inspire others to participate. Yes? Hint, hint...

Take a moment to read the following link:

<http://www.newser.com/story/179902/indiana-house-hit-by-car-for-11th-time.html>

Eleven times cars have crashed through the walls of the same house, and in the latest incursion, missed the occupant by a mere 5 inches!?! Note carefully the contradiction as to cause. First, blame is placed upon the railroad crossing (track) itself, but later, and much more accurately, the author quotes people who think the problems might be caused by people speeding and/or trying to beat the crossing signal. Nevertheless, it is not possible for the railroad company to be at fault for this: "They go airborne over the tracks because of the hill."

See the following for possible clarification of responsibility:

<http://www.ite.org/bookstore/gradecrossing/sec07.htm>

Since railroads were in existence long before cars and trucks were invented, they generally have the right of way. Remember the Operation Lifesaver poster that says, "Trains can't stop. You can." That's good, practical advice from both the laws of physics and the instinct for survival. But this also leads to a vexing situation for motorists as well: trains can't climb a grade nearly so well as autos and trucks can.

Here in hilly country the railroad often appears to be on top of a berm a good distance above the auto pavement. So what happens when the two intersect? To save money, highway departments (responsible for the automobile roads) move as little dirt as possible. The result is that that you can be driving along and then suddenly find yourself leaned back as though on a roller coaster, and just as suddenly find yourself level and virtually on the track! I found that many of the roads around here don't even meet minimum standards recommended in the 1920's. Regardless of legal responsibility, if you can prevent injury to yourself or family or friends, why wouldn't you? Be safe.

Hope to see you soon!

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