

The Manifest^(C) June, 2014
Railroad News and Musings from
Green Country Model Railroaders' Association SM

"In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." This may well be the first time in history this column has started with a quote from Alfred Lord Tennyson. ("Locksley Hall", stanza 11) It's appropriate: we congratulate member Lynn Dietrich and Janice Hoag on their marriage May 17th.

We have many KCS fans in this area. Are you aware Stilwell, Oklahoma was named after its founder? And that's not all:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stilwell>, OK

I saw the new version of Godzilla and must say the special effects (if not believability) have greatly improved since the original version of the 1950s. Our layout does not have the radiation-loving insect thingies in the movie, but we do have velociraptors and a T-Rex. Spoiler alert: if you ever find yourself in a situation where a 50-megaton bomb is sure to explode in a few minutes, bypassing the "dead-man" throttle on a boat to send it offshore is probably not going to greatly extend your lifetime. (Think milliseconds.)

I watched most of the movie "Unstoppable", supposedly based on a true story of a runaway CSX train, who understandably wanted an imaginary name substituted on the movie locos. Catchy movie, but a search of the Internet revealed that besides the situation leading to the runaway and the fact that another SD40-2 ran up to couple with the runaway SD40-2 from behind, the rest was Hollywood. There was but one injury, no almost-too-short siding, no helicopters, etc. I'm saddened. I know you can't trust everything on the Internet ("Bonjour.") :- (but...Hollywood?!?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSX_8888_incident

We've mentioned several times before about the conflict between our cravings for petroleum and the risks of hazardous spills regardless of mode of transportation. Pipelines, offshore drilling rigs and over-the-road trucks have all received their share of bad publicity from hazmat situations. Lately, though, railroads are the focus of modified routines and associated costs. (The movie showed the dangers associated with a hazardous chemical, but the principle is the same.)

<http://news.msn.com/us/feds-issue-emergency-order-on-crude-oil-trains>

<http://news.msn.com/in-depth/in-north-american-rail-towns-some-try-to-stop-oil-trains>

There's an old story about the astounded travel agent that had to explain to a disappointed prospective customer that he could not be booked exclusively on AMTRAK from Kansas City to Honolulu. So imagine my surprise to read that (seriously, folks) China is looking into building a high-speed bullet train to the United States! They do suggest a longer route through Siberia and Alaska using a tunnel rather than a bridge on steroids:

<http://www.newser.com/story/186677/china-considers-bullet-train-to-us.html>

The end of an era: the last commuter bar cars have been retired. They are to be fitted with seats to carry more passengers:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/boozy-commuter-train-retires-legendary-bar-cars-n100916>

Of course, there's always a train collision in the news somewhere. This one, 30 miles from Moscow, features dramatic photos that convey the tremendous forces involved:

<http://news.yahoo.com/photos/train-collision-near-moscow-slideshow/>

I've commented before on the favorable comments toward trains made by the character Sheldon Cooper on the TV Series "Big Bang Theory." Well, there was one episode rerun recently in which the hobby was roundly dissed by the females on the show, unable to understand why anyone would be fascinated by or wanting to "play with toy trains." WELL!!! For those of you on the fringes of the hobby, here's an important lesson: remember we're in the age of political correctness and such language is offensive to (some) serious modelers. We OPERATE SCALE MODEL trains. "Toy trains" might be appropriate for a wooden pull toy, but not so much for a highly detailed, realistic model with sound appropriate for the particular engine used in the prototype locomotive. So THERE!

In this vein, I enjoyed talking to a gentleman who used to live in Tulsa and wants to model the Frisco, MKT and Santa Fe trains through here in the 1965-70 era. He now lives in Salt Lake City and wanted to know if I could put him in touch with someone with information. I told him the problem is that so many people here are so knowledgeable that I wouldn't know whom to recommend! So I'm hoping some of you will be kind enough to contact Morey Day at Morey.Day@comcast.net. I furnished him links to several sites with info about such things as the Union Depot and the park with the Frisco 4500, but you all know so much more and could help make his representations more accurate. Thanks for your help!

That's about it for this month. Remember the membership meeting is always the second Thursday at 7:00 PM and currently the operating session is the third Thursday, starting about 5:30 PM, with reservations always a good idea. With membership growing, we may be able to expand the operations. Come look around and join us— you might make it happen!

Victor Banham

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