

The Manifest<sub>(C)2014</sub>  
Railroad News and Musings from  
Green Country Model Railroaders' Association <sub>SM</sub>  
May 4, 2014

We may be able to catch our breath at last. At home, we are all adjusting to different chores as the seasons change, although it's hardly clear which season we're in. I've had to cut the grass, repair hoses, etc., one day and see temperatures in the 30s the next night, sweat one day and too cold to paint the next. Sure, it's Oklahoma, but this year seems worse than ever. Students are tired of school and ready for a break.

As to railroad things, we're also entering a different season: the pace from the shows has slowed, so we can contemplate the most feasible way to repair the wear and tear on the traveling layout modules and containers. I have learned a lot by being on the other side of the layout from the public. I'm sure most people realize there is time required for construction, setup, tear-down and operation. However, I never realized the maintenance required for a traveling layout. The container's doors and castors seem to show wear more quickly than I ever thought. The modules themselves suffer wear every time they are displayed: building details and scenery get broken, switch points fail, the rail joiners break, etc. Now, the modules themselves are warping, just as bookshelves do. Hence the need for creative solutions and analysis of cost, weight, and fitting to existing space. BUT...in the end it's all worth it! And, as you've heard me say many times before, the nice thing about being in a group is that you don't have to do everything yourself. It all works when all the members work together.

We stress railroad safety here, not only because of our charter, but because we'd rather have people come to a train show and buy stuff to enjoy instead of spending time and money in a hospital. Unfortunately, one can look on the Internet to see collisions nearly every day. (For those of you who watch the Late Show with David Letterman, think of "Stupid Driver Tricks," or just "Stupid People Tricks.") In what surely must be quite an understatement, there is an account of a boy who is "a little upset" he made a bad choice to do "what everybody does" and cross the tracks, losing a foot in the process:

<http://www.newser.com/story/184904/boy-a-little-upset-after-leg-severed-by-train.html>

But there was some good news of a worker jumping in front of a train to save a woman on the tracks.

Railroad cars are subject to graffiti, just as are buildings and overpasses. (I read an article years ago that said almost any large, flat, smooth surface is a "canvas" for budding artists, not necessarily just taggers or vandals. Notice the Broken Arrow Expressway retaining walls on the southeast edge of downtown. The "corduroy" vertical walls discourage painting.) I've noticed with interest the same thing an author in Model Railroader magazine did: there seems to be a wide-spread reluctance to put graffiti on models, and some modelers became upset when graffiti decals became available. For realism, many railroaders take a brand new, shiny locomotive or car and weather it, sometimes heavily, showing worn paint, dust 'n' rust, shiny metal from repeated scrapings, and so on, but tagging - no way?

When I was in high school we knew people who leaned over bridges or climbed water towers to paint a sweetheart's name. Do any of you know someone who got caught? We ... I mean THEY,, had to make restitution or even remove it, with parents working with police to repair the damage. Well, all these years later the idea is catching on again:

<https://shine.yahoo.com/parenting/chicago-mass-transit-to-sue-parents-of-graffiti-tagger-kids-182106099.html#>

Model railroad track can be demanding sometimes. It's not always obvious wherein a problem lies. Somehow, though, this prototype can do the railroad equivalent of a tight-rope act:

[http://news.yahoo.com/aboard-sudans-sleek-nile-train-rarity-100659883.html?soc\\_src=mediacontentstory](http://news.yahoo.com/aboard-sudans-sleek-nile-train-rarity-100659883.html?soc_src=mediacontentstory)

Some days, you just can't win. You try to PREVENT problems by upgrading track and look what happens. Is it possible the entire manufacturing batch of rail is defective?

[http://news.yahoo.com/nyc-subway-rail-snapped-derailment-161434112.html?soc\\_src=mediacontentstory](http://news.yahoo.com/nyc-subway-rail-snapped-derailment-161434112.html?soc_src=mediacontentstory)

Many of you know I used to be a field engineer for mainframe computers. I tried to explain one of those to a 20-year-old as a device that filled a large room and had about 1/10 or less of the computing and communication power of the cellular telephones many of you carry right now. Every month there is always more railroad news than I can possibly reference in this column. So if something here sparks your curiosity, follow the trail! And always remember, if it's on the Internet, it must be true. Bonjour. ;-)

People will soon be going on vacation, so why not plan to take a train trip? Here are a couple of suggestions:

[http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/31/travel/round-the-world-rail-journey/index.html?hpt=hp\\_c3](http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/31/travel/round-the-world-rail-journey/index.html?hpt=hp_c3)

<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/TRAVEL/06/17/ten.epic.train.journeys.cngo/>

Would be nice, wouldn't it? Even if our plans can't include trips this exotic, we can surely include trains, large or small. We'll receive new member applications at our meeting this coming Thursday, May 8, 7:00 PM at the layout. Operations begin 5:30 on the third Thursday – email reservations for best choice.

Happy Tracks!

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