

COWTOWN MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

FORT WORTH TEXAS

CMRRC



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Number 1

General Meeting

The January monthly meeting of the CMRRC will be on Monday night January 20th at 7:00 pm. The program for the evening is TBD for now. I hope to see you there.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Joe Pritchett



I hope that everyone had a great Christmas and welcome to 2025. The January show will be January 18th & 19th, 2025. We have sold 257 tables for the January Show. Doug and George are going to man a Club Table at the show to promote the Club and maybe sell a few pieces of excess Club items. If you go to the show, be sure to stop by and see them. The North Texas Council January meeting will be on the 14th so that we go over final details for the show.

We have had a couple of operating sessions, and the layout seems to be running pretty well. We will not have a session on Saturday the 18th because almost

everyone will be at the Plano show. The plan is to mostly run with 1 Thursday night a month reserved for maintenance. Be sure to check your phone next work/operating session. I encourage everyone to come out and participate.

George continues to make progress on Midway. Get with Dale or I if you would like to do program for one of the meetings, we are always looking for new topics.

Now that cars have been spotted on the layout make sure that if you need to move a car to work on something that you put it back where it was. When you are out working on the layout, please make sure that nothing is left on the rails and remove any leftover materials that could interfere with the testing. If you know someone that might be interested in joining the club, be sure to invite them out since we are open to having new members. I want to thank Dale for all the work it takes to put together the newsletter each month.

The normal schedule of Thursday night sessions is from 6:30 – 8:30pm, 1st & 3rd Saturdays but watch your phone for changes. Saturday sessions will start at 9:00am and run until 12:00pm.



Joe Pritchett
President - Cowtown Model RR
Club



TREASURER'S REPORT

by Dale Schmidtbleicher

Membership stands at 7 active members. It is a new year so club dues are now due. You can pay by the quarter, semi-annual, or annually. Please get your dues in on time.

As always, a full treasurer's report will be made at the Club's monthly meeting.

Please mail your dues to the following address:

CMRRC
4504 Quail Hollow Ct.
Fort Worth, TX 76133

Make payable to: "Cowtown Model Railroad Club".



www.cmrrc.net

We are on occasion getting some requests/feedback from our **cmrrc.net** website. We can thank the website for giving us a hand in getting donations.

Operations

Operations are back and so far in the new year we have had two running sessions and things have been going fairly well. Of course we are always trying to

keep the track clean. As Joe mentioned we will be running more and in-between putting in a work session to clean, repair, or add to the layout.



Operating sessions will be announced to all members by text or e-mail. We hope to see more members attending in the future.

Update on Construction

by Dale Schmidtbleicher

What's new in the area of layout construction?

The last run session we noticed that the room light at the east end of the layout had burnt out. We will need a 10 ft. ladder to replace the bulb. If you have access to such a ladder, please let Joe know.



We also noticed at the last run session that one of the crossover switch combinations in Cimarron Yard between the main and passing siding wasn't working. A burnt-out LED is suspected.

The east end switch machine for the passing siding in St. Charles has been clicking (not fully reaching the electric cut-off position) due to the colder temperatures in the layout room. It is mainly just annoying as it stops when the temperature goes up.

There are several boxes of donations under St. Charles Yard that will be taken to the upcoming Plano Train Show for sale. Lots of metal old style automobiles, plastic structures kits, vintage Varney car kits, and a bunch of Tyco cars. There are also a bunch of model railroad magazines that will be taken to pass out to guest at the show.

We still have a lot to do cleaning out old unused items under the layout.

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

General Meeting:

The monthly Railroad Club meeting is held at 7:00 PM on the 3rd Monday of the month.



The meeting is held at the Handley Community Center in the first-floor room.

Normal Work/Operate Schedule:

The normal work schedule is as follows:
Thursday Nights 6:30 PM-9:00 PM **unless**, due to high temperatures and heat index, we switch to Thursday mornings. An email or text will be sent out prior to Thursdays to let members know if we are doing Thursday morning or evening.

1st & 3rd Saturday 9:00 AM-12 Noon.

Operating sessions will be announced by text and e-mail prior to the scheduled event.

Blast from the Past

The GE 44-ton switcher is a four-axle [diesel-electric locomotive](#) built by [General Electric](#) between 1940 and 1956. It was designed for industrial and light switching duties, often replacing steam locomotives that had previously been assigned these chores.

This locomotive's specific 44-[short ton](#) weight was directly related to one of the efficiencies the new diesel locomotives offered compared to their steam counterparts: reduced labor intensity. In the 1940s, the steam to diesel transition was in its infancy in [North America](#), and railroad unions were trying to protect the [locomotive fireman jobs](#) that were redundant with diesel units. One measure taken to

this end was the 1937 so-called "90,000 Pound Rule," a stipulation that locomotives weighing 90,000 pounds (41,000 kg) – 45 [short tons](#) – or more required a fireman in addition to an engineer on common carrier railroads.^[2] Industrial and military railroads had no such stipulation. The 44-ton locomotive was designed to abrogate this requirement.^[2] Other manufacturers like [Davenport](#) and [Whitcomb](#) also built 44-ton switchers for this reason.^[2]

GE built 276 of this locomotive for U. S. railroads and industrial concerns, four were exported to Australia in 1944, 10 were exported to Canada, 10 were exported to Cuba, one was exported to the Dominican Republic, five were exported to France, three were exported to India, six were exported to Mexico, five were exported to Saudi Arabia, one was exported to Sweden, two were exported to Trinidad, 10 were exported to Uruguay, and 57 were built for the [United States Armed Forces](#). Many remain, in service and in museums. The reliability of the type ensured their longevity, and many can still be found in operation today, both on tourist railroads and in revenue service.



20 Most Scenic Train Rides In The South

Story by Jacqueline Mendelsohn



Embrace the romance and nostalgia of old-fashioned [train travel](#) with a relaxing ride where the emphasis is on the journey rather than the destination. From steep mountain climbs and jaunts through [marshlands](#) to journeys across trestle bridges and jaw-dropping gorges, the geographic diversity of the South is on full display. In no particular order, we've rounded up 20 of the most [scenic routes](#) you can experience on the Southern rails.

Amtrak Crescent Train



Multiple Locations

If your objective is to see as much of the South as possible on a single ride, try the Amtrak Crescent. Service begins in the Big Apple and ends in the [Big Easy](#) with stops in Delaware, Maryland, the District

of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. This epic journey ventures across big cities, charming small towns, and open landscapes in approximately 30 hours with ticket options that include both sleeping cars and dining packages.

Plan your ride: amtrak.com

Big South Fork Scenic Railway



Kentucky

Owned and run by the McCreary County Heritage Foundation, the Big Fork Scenic Railway offers visitors an unparalleled opportunity to experience the historic Kentucky and Tennessee Railway line. The 30-minute ride to Barthell Coal Camp includes a two-hour layover to tour the mines and take in views of the Cumberland Plateau in the southernmost portion of the [Appalachian Mountains](#). Reserve a Coal Miner's Lunch in advance, which includes a half sandwich, chips, moon pie, and drink of choice.

Plan your ride: bsfsry.com

Blue Ridge Scenic Railway



Georgia

Spend half a day exploring the North Georgia countryside with this four-hour, 26-mile roundtrip journey. You'll pass a Native American fish trap that's estimated to be over 500 years old and take in picturesque views along the Toccoa River Valley before making a layover to visit the sister towns of McCaysville, Georgia, and Copperhill, Tennessee. Both indoor and open-air cars are available.

Plan your ride: brscenic.com

Bluegrass Scenic Railroad



Kentucky

Make your way through the Kentucky countryside with a 90-minute excursion on the Bluegrass Scenic Railroad, which operates out of Versailles. Travel in an open-air car or enjoy plush first-class seating; either way, you'll observe corn and tobacco fields, Thoroughbred horse farms, and the Kentucky river. Check the schedule for specialty rides like holiday trains with Santa.

Plan your ride: bluegrassrailroad.com

Branson Scenic Railway



Missouri

Travel through the foothills of the Ozark Mountains on a vintage passenger train along the Branson Scenic Railway. There's a Northern route that extends as far as the James River Valley in Galena, Missouri, as well as a Southern route that heads down to the Barren Fork Trestle in Arkansas. Both trips, clocking in at just under two hours, offer passengers a chance to observe wildlife and landscape that's native to the northwest Arkansas wilderness as well as landmarks dating back to the early 20th century.

Plan your ride: bransontrain.com

Brightline



Florida

The eastern coast of Florida's newest commuter train features premium service on high-speed trains from Miami to Orlando with stops in Aventura, Fort Lauderdale, Boca Raton, and West Palm Beach. All of the reclining leather seats are equipped with power outlets and high-speed Wi-Fi, not to mention access to food and beverage on board. The best part? Continuous views through windows of the surrounding marshlands, sabal palms, and the Atlantic Ocean.

Plan your ride: gobrightline.com

Cass Scenic Railroad



Great Smoky Mountains Railroad



West Virginia

Ride an antique locomotive on a former lumber route up Back Allegheny Mountain to Bald Knob, one of the highest peaks in West Virginia. On a clear day, the open-air cars allow visitors to observe flora and fauna native to the area, such as spruce trees and snowshoe hares. This 22-mile, half-day excursion includes a boxed lunch.

Plan your ride: mountainrailwy.com

Eureka Springs and North Arkansas Railway



North Carolina

Take a front-row seat to the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina with a ride on either a steam-powered train or a diesel locomotive. Various excursions and theme rides are available, but the four-and-a-half hour, 44-mile roundtrip journey from Bryson City to the Nantahala Gorge offers the best views of them all. Travel along the historic 777-foot-long trestle bridge across Fontana Lake before arriving at the impressive eight-mile gorge.

Plan your ride: gsmr.com

Lookout Mountain Incline Railway



Arkansas

Journey back in time with a visit to the Eureka Springs Railroad Depot, home to an extensive collection of antique train equipment and vintage memorabilia, followed by a ride on the 1940's diesel locomotive. Scenic excursions narrated by the conductor as well as lunch and dinner trains are on offer. All rides journey through the Ozark Mountains allowing visitors to appreciate the beauty of the region.

Plan your ride: esnarailway.com

Tennessee

Enjoy views of the Tennessee Valley from this unique single-track system, also known as a funicular, which takes passengers on a one-mile journey up Lookout Mountain. This quintessential Chattanooga attraction has been transporting passengers for over 125 years, including the likes of President Theodore Roosevelt and actress Elizabeth Taylor. Even though the ride

lasts only about 10 minutes in each direction, passengers should allow up to an hour for the full experience, including a visit to the observation deck atop Lookout Mountain.

Plan your ride: ridetheincline.com

My Old Kentucky Dinner Train



Kentucky

Sign up for a one-of-a-kind fine dining adventure with a ride on the My Old Kentucky Dinner Train. This gourmet meal, served in a restored 1940's dining car, takes place during a two-and-a-half hour, 37-mile roundtrip through the Kentucky countryside. The scenery includes the Four Roses and Jim Bean distilleries as well as the Jackson Hollow Trestle in the Bernheim Forest.

Plan your ride: kydinnertrain.com

Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad



West Virginia

Birding enthusiasts will appreciate riding this historic locomotive through the South Branch Valley of West Virginia, where American bald eagles soar through the skies over the Potomac

River. Choose from among seven different excursions ranging from 75-minute interactive holiday-themed rides to all-day excursions that include a three-hour layover at the South Side Depot, which borders the Monogahela National Forest.

Plan your ride: potomaceagle.com

South Carolina Railroad Museum



South Carolina

Board the Rockton, Rion, and Western Railroad operated by the South Carolina Railroad Museum for an educational trip through the piney woods of South Carolina. Operating out of Winnsboro, this hour-long ride takes passengers on a narrated journey along five miles of track. Don't miss a visit to the museum to scope out its historic stationary cars and vintage artifacts.

Plan your ride: scrm.org

Tennessee Valley Railroad



Tennessee

[Experience Chattanooga's](#) rail system with a visit to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum and a ride in one of their climate-controlled coaches pulled by a diesel locomotive. The most popular ride to book is the six-mile Missionary Ridge Local that is just under an hour. Longer routes, such as the five-hour Hiwassee Loop and the eight-hour Copperhill Special, travel on an extended journey through the countryside including through the Hiwassee River Gorge. Snacks are available for purchase on board.

Plan your ride: tvrail.com



Texas State Railroad



Texas

Delve into the history of eastern Texas with a narrated ride on the Texas State Railroad, which features four-hour, 25-mile rides in vintage steam and diesel locomotives. The roundtrip journey operates between the towns of Palestine and Rusk, mere hours [from Dallas](#) and Houston, crossing over 24 bridges and offering views of the Piney Woods. Seven different accommodations are available, such as a private caboose for a party of eight as well as a glass-top observation dome that includes a complimentary glass of champagne.

Plan your ride: texasstaterailroad.net

Three Rivers Rambler

Tennessee

[Explore Knoxville, Tennessee](#), with an 11-mile journey on the Three Rivers Rambler, which operates using both steam and diesel equipment. From historic sites to pastoral farmland, visitors can expect a view of this unique community. Highlights include the Henley Street Bridge, which connects North and South Knoxville; the Three Rivers Trestle where the French Broad and Holston Rivers combine to form [the Tennessee River](#); and, McNutt Farm, owned by a descendant of a Revolutionary War veteran.

Plan your ride: threeriversrambler.com

Virginia Scenic Railway



Virginia

Want a front row seat to Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah Valley? Operated by Buckingham Ranch Railroad, the Virginia Scenic Railway offers two excursions daily [from Staunton](#) that take travelers on a three-hour roundtrip journey, complete with dining service. The Alleghany Special heads west across rural landscapes and working farms while the Blue Ridge

Flyer chugs east in the afternoons through Fishersville and Waynesboro before passing through the mile-long Blue Ridge Tunnel.

Plan your ride: virginiascenicrailway.com

Walt Disney World Railroad



Florida

Calling all Disney World fans! Operating right out of Main Street U.S.A. at Magic Kingdom Park, the Walt Disney World Railroad offers 20-minute, one-and-a-half mile rides throughout the park in vintage narrow-gauge steam trains built in the early 1900s. Passengers may board and/or disembark at any of three stations, including near the park entrance on Main Street, the Frontierland station, or the Fantasyland station.

Plan your ride: disneyworld.disney.go.com

Western Maryland Scenic Railroad



Maryland

Visit the majestic Allegheny Mountains with a journey on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, which operates year-round steam and diesel trains. The signature four-and-a-half hour Frostburg Flyer excursion departs from Cumberland with a 90-minute layover in the quaint mountain town of Frostburg. Enjoy mountain vistas, ride over streams, and pass through a 916-foot-long tunnel.

Plan your ride: wmsr.com

Wilmington and Western Railroad



Delaware

Wind through some of the most picturesque areas of Delaware on a 10-mile track operated by the Wilmington and Western Railroad. Departing from Greenbank Station, the train crosses Red Clay Creek before rolling past the historic Greenbank Mills and Philips Farm as well as the Wooddale Covered Bridge and old Wooddale Quarry, among other historic sites. Seasonal theme rides as well as private charters are available.

Railroad Art

