The Screaming Eagle News

Fall 2025

Message from the President: Dale Shipman

We can now say that we have passed the one-year mark on construction at the museum. We have been working on 8 different displays and exhibits and several of them are near completion. With the big construction behind us, the noise level in the train area is down to almost nothing, making it easier now to give tours and talk with our visitors at the museum. A huge thanks goes out to all the volunteers who have put in an incredible amount of time to get us to where we are now. I would also like to welcome Tom Johnson as our new Board member.

The next several months will be spent on background panels, scenery work and installation of more electrical components. Each additional month that goes by now, our members & visitors will see big changes in the museum.

The Screaming Eagle Caboose

Starting in the middle of September, the city will begin the restoration of the Missouri Pacific caboose that is located on the museum grounds. The interior will be painted and restored as much as possible. Outside, the caboose will be sandblasted and repainted in Safety Red, then the finishing touches will be added with MoPac emblems and number boards. The restored "Screaming Eagle" will be a great addition to the museum area.

Donations and Volunteers Keep Us On Track

Missouri Model Railroad Museum is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit museum and donations, be it monetary, in-kind or trains means so much to us. A Donation Form is available for each collection we receive. This form states that the Museum has permission to sell items not useable in the Museum. As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Museum directs 100% of any proceeds toward materials, construction costs, and future projects and programs as needed. If you are interested in sponsorship of a display, naming rights for the Theater or to just give a donation please contact Gina Gerdel at gina@showmerails.org or speak with anyone at the front desk. In January we will have all Donation Receipt letters out for your taxes.

The Museum is very grateful to our biggest benefactor. In July, a large group of volunteers headed to Fairview, Kansas to collect artifacts from the Van Delsem family.

The Van Delsem's have made significant contributions to the MMRM including Lionel/O and G Scale trains, Lionel buildings, assorted rolling stock and many other amazing railroad artifacts such as the freight wagons, milk cans, and signs. Part of this latest collection is a miniature steam engine built in 1968 by R.E. McCullough. This engine and its train ran around the Van Delsem property to the delight of local children. Photo opportunities on the engine are available in the Kids Depot when you visit the Museum.

Hand built steam engine

We are thankful for the generosity of the many individuals and families who choose to donate old collections and other items to the MMRM. There is a team in place to review each collection and determine where it will be of the most use. Some is kept for use in the Museum while other items are designated for sale in the gift shop.

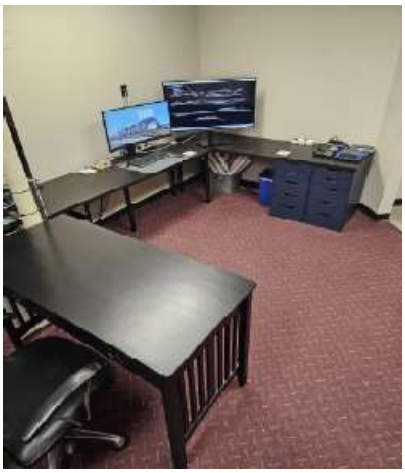
Gift shop rack with donated items

Visitors
The Missouri Model Railroad Museum is so pleased that as of August 30th we have welcomed over 2,000 guests to the museum. We have had visits from nearly all 50 states and all over the world. We see many repeat visitors and seeing everyone's reaction to how much progress has been made, never gets old!

Memberships

We have several levels of memberships that gain you yearlong entry into the museum, specific events, clinics, lectures and more. Stop by the front desk for more information. An MMRM membership even makes a great Christmas Gift!

Dispatch Room
Changes have been occurring in the dispatch room. A new work area has been put in place to hold the monitors for the computer. This larger workspace will allow the assembly / testing of electronic components. The old desk was restored with paint and put in place for a test track and programming station. It will also be used for the inspection of freight cars and locomotives prior to them being used on the exhibits. Two other desks (3-D printer) and tables were moved to new locations for better operations The white 8-foot table is being cleaned up and supplies are being organized. These changes have given the room a more professional and modern appearance.



Dispatch room desk

Railroad Construction Progress
Fall 2025

HO Layout

The final piece of decking was installed as the base of the Mississippi River at the eastside of St. Louis. Danny built an excellent swing bridge for two tracks, at the gap between the St. Louis area and Kansas City. This was followed up with Lester laying track. The triple bridge across the Mississippi needed repair on some of the top trusses and this was completed by Wayne. This bridge has permitted trains to run the complete loop of track as well as the shortcut through the staging yard. All this progress is fantastic and really shows the dedication of all the volunteers involved in the Museum. The backdrop construction from KC to St Louis has been installed and primed white with a small area by the Mississippi River remaining to be done. We are negotiating with Streamline Graphics in North Kansas City for AI generated vinyl background graphics on part of the line covering Rock Creek Junction to approximately past Jefferson City. Once this is installed scenery can proceed. Rigid insulation board has been covered with plaster cloth and painted brown for the ground. This project will continue when the backdrop work is complete. Wayne has built some wood retaining walls that look great.

One section of the HO Layout

G Layout

Chris installed lights, provide by Dave, in the cave at the end of the line, complete with a transformer for their operation. The viewport is no longer a dark hole. A rattlesnake has joined the hunters near the top of the cave. Partial houses and a shed have been added against the wall to the right of the route 291 bridge with a mix of various landscape materials. To the right of that, the Menards lumber yard has been completed with shed, garage, and lumber racks. It is enclosed by fencing. Some swampy areas along the ditch at the edge of tracks have been added complete with cattails by Janet. Across the tracks from Menards, Costco loading docks are under construction with the building to follow. The ancient water tower adjacent to the Museum, which fell during its removal this spring, has a model installed to represent it, adjacent to the end of the train room model. And lastly, the Historic Independence Courthouse model is nearing completion with extreme detail work recreating the quoins on the corners of the structure. Thanks to Nathan N. and his laser cutter for making these parts. He is also making the side entrance door and transom frame and the entry roof structure.

Entrance to “G” Hwy 291 cave

Lionel Layout

What's happening along the North wall? Yes, it's the O scale Lionel-land layout making all that train music (noise). Thanks to the input, assistance and ideas from many MMRM volunteers, the north wall plywood table is evolving into a real layout. This exhibit is being completed in phases. First, a residential section is in progress. The second phase will be industrial. The phases are divided by a stream and bridge. Looking towards keeping the phases fresh, dioramas are being constructed to present holiday and seasonal periods. The residential area will see holiday dioramas. The industrial area will see Lionel operating accessories in action. Under construction are accessories, like log dumping, coal dumping, and factory operations that our visitors will be able to activate. Thanks to all the volunteers that so generously share your knowledge, skills and suggestions to improve our O scale layout.

Lionel Residential area

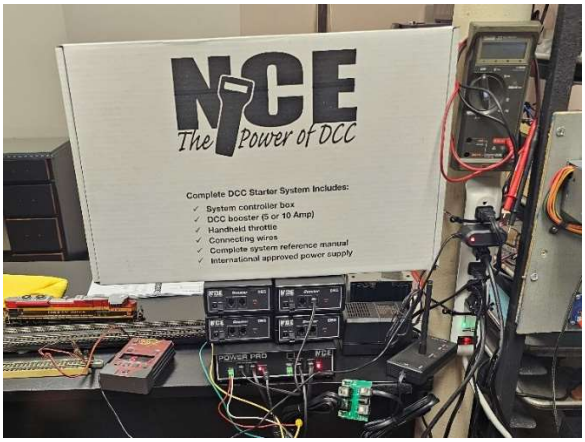
ON-3 Layout

This layout has been rotated 90 degrees and will no longer be operable as its size was outgrowing available space. The front of the layout is to receive a new facing to cover the present hole, and below that will be a skirt to conceal the support structure and wiring. Since the layout is to be a static display only, Norman has made adaptations to the engine so it will produce appropriate sounds.

ON-3 showing new mine entrance

Electrical Department

Electrical work continues around the HO exhibit. Computer Model Railroad Interface (C/MRI) switch control boards are being placed in St Louis and then Kansas City. Sensors will be wired in the next week or so. BIG NEWS - The Digitrax components are being replaced with NCE equipment. This is due to failures of the Digitrax equipment and other issues with it. After talking to several other railroad museums, it was decided that NCE was the way to go. Once all the new components have arrived the electrical team will begin the change out. It is planned that the display will be non-operational for two days, which will be when the museum is closed, thus not affecting the visitor’s experience. The MMRM is fortunate that we had a member graciously purchase the NCE equipment, therefore, the cost will not affect our operating budget.



The new NCE equipment

Silent Auction

Over the Summer, the museum held its first Silent Auction. The items, which were donated to us, were a New York Central Pacemaker Freight Set, and a Wabash "Follow the Flag" set. The items were on display in the Gallery with bidding starting at $50.00 each. Both sets were won by Ernel Guerrero for $190 total. The sets will have a new home in Houston, Tx. When the opportunity arises, there will be other Silent Auctions.

Halloween Event

Saturday, October 25th we will have a special Family Event Tickets are $10.00. We will feature a friendly haunted area for everyone to walk through and enjoy as well as treat stations around the museum for the kids to visit. We will also feature a free Halloween movie for everyone! The Movie will begin at 11:00 am. Everyone is encouraged to wear a costume! The Haunted Area and Treat Stations will open after the movie for those who purchased tickets. wear a costume! The Haunted Area and Treat Stations will open after the movie for those who purchased tickets.

Annual Polar Express Movie Event

Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 11:00 we will run Polar Express in the theatre. The movie is free for everyone! More information to come. But mark your calendars because you don't want to miss out on this fun event.

Spring Train Show

Our 2nd Annual Train Show is planned for Spring 2026. If you are interested in reserving a booth, please contact Gina Gerdel at gina@showmerails.org for information. More information about the show will be available soon.

Board of Directors

President and CEO – Dale Shipman

Vice-President – Darrell Swofford

Vice-President – Buck Neulinger

Treasurer – Gina Gerdel

Secretary – Roseanne Swofford

Kathy Shriver – Member-at-large

Admission:

Age 8 and up	$5.00
Age 2 to 7	$2.00
Under age 2	Free
Museum Members	Free

Minimum charge for cards is $10.00