The Screaming Eagle News

January 2026

Message from the President: Dale Shipman

We can now say that the Museum has passed the one-year mark on construction. Volunteers 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. 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. At this time 17 backdrop panels have been installed. The next several months will be spent on creating and installing additional background panels, continuing the scenery work and installation of more
electrical components. Many days, you will see 8-12 volunteers working on various projects with more on the weekend. Each month that goes by now, our members & visitors will see big changes in the museum.

The Screaming Eagle Caboose

After the Caboose was cleaned and primed, the finish color was added. We are now waiting for acceptable weather to add the "finishing touches" - The decals that identify the Caboose with name, numbers, and other pertinent information.

2025 -A Wonderful Year of Growth

All the track has been laid and the trains are running! Our volunteers have put in 1000's of hours building the foundation of the HO layout and now the scenicing commences. Section by section the backdrops, showcasing many recognizable local areas,
are being installed.
We have hosted visitors from all over the world, held our first Train Show, and hosted talks and clinics. We have also welcomed many group events in our theatre. The Toy Train Collectors of America have chosen the Museum for a second year to host their annual end of year meeting in our theatre. We even had our first birthday celebration held here. Mo Kan Garden Railroaders held their 10th Anniversary Party here as well as a regular meeting.

We have had so many wonderful families share and entrust their train collections to us through donations. We love hearing the stories and all memories that are shared with each collection. We, in turn, have the privilege of being able to share those stories, artifacts and collections with all our visitors who come through the museum.

All of us at the Missouri Model Railroad Museum are excited to see what 2026 will bring. In March we will host our Second Annual Spring Train Show. This spring we will hold our annual volunteer appreciation dinner. We are planning exciting clinics, lectures, workshops and so much more. Please be sure to visit our website for announcements.

Thank you to all our visitors, members and volunteers for all of your support! You all continue to help bring an amazing museum to life and here is to an exciting 2026!

The Gift Shop

The Gift Shop carries a number of "new" items. Also, the museum continues to receive generous donations of books, rolling stock and buildings every week so our used inventory is always changing. In addition, we have an overflow of stock in the theater room available for purchase. Gift Certificates are now available for the railroad enthusiast in your life.

The MMRM is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all monies received go directly to the further enhancements of the museum. We appreciate your support.

Kids Depot

One of the most popular areas at the MMRM is the Kids Depot. It's getting bigger with new and additional train sets and parts. Bring the kids - big and small, young and old!

Railroad Construction Progress
January 2026

Union Station

Thank you to Dr. Nickalus Muff, from Seattle Washington, who donated many of the molds needed to re-create this iconic passenger station that will be installed on the HO exhibit. Volunteers - Phil, Lester, Wayne & Uncle Buck have taken on this project which involves pouring the castings with special epoxy which will then be sanded and set into their exact location. The Grand Hall, train sheds, and interiors will be included in this exhibit. Plans are to have most of this exhibit in place by the middle of 2026.

HO Layout

Construction began on the HO exhibit in September of 2024. As of December of 2025, benchwork, track, switches and IR sensors have been installed. Additional work continues. Late in the fall, the first 17 backdrop panels were installed from Kansas City to Jefferson City. This has really dressed up the HO exhibit. Scenery can now begin in earnest. The Gateway Arch, created by Andy Roeske and put together by volunteer Wayne, was installed mid- November.

Interior G Scale Layout Update

Well, the scavenger hunt has taken it in the chops, as a lot of the items have returned to my home layouts as they don't meet the current construction needs. New items have taken their place like four cats and one dog complete with doghouse. A new scavenger list will be compiled for the new year as guests enjoy the "hunt".

Some of the new scratch builds include the East end of Jackson County Courthouse complete with three people waiting for service inside but all employees seem out to lunch. Still needs a lot of landscaping but steps and sidewalks are in place.

Buck is really happy with the burnt shack adjacent to the Route 291 cave. His original intent was to burn it in the firepit but figured no way to control it, so the jagged edges were created with the scroll saw and painted. Boards from the "house under construction", were glued to the floor of the shack to create a pile of burnt lumber. There is also a cat, needing some dirt and ashes, wondering where his home has gone.

The house "under construction" is as done as it is going to get. Our son Nathan cut all the lumber for it with his laser cutter. He also cut the quoins on the corners of the Courthouse and the entry door frame and peaked roof too.

A small swamp was added between the Little Blue River bridge and Menard's with Janet's cattails and two hidden deer that no one seems to see. A boxcar for steel sections at Liberty Erectors was installed and it still needs extensive weathering.

Chris has been wiring led lights in the cave, blue house, Cargo Largo building, Truman Depot, Allis Chalmers Warehouse, and the Courthouse. His current project is wiring crossing signals at the two road crossings. Next, he will be lighting 8 or 9 stores on and around the Square. Chris needs to lay on his back to make the connections under the layout. What fun that must be, unless he is just taking a nap!

Next major build will be Chicago and Alton Depot between Liberty Erectors and the rusty water tower that now is the home to King Kong. Kong has got to climb something.

Electrical Department

Bruce, Chris, Curtis, Danny and Norman, along with others, continue working on the electrical system of both the G and HO scale displays. Chris has been focusing on the G gauge, wiring buildings and crossing gates. He has also soldered several C/mri boards for use on the HO display. These have been programmed and installed by Norman. Danny continues to wire the IR sensors to the C/mri boards. Curtis and Bruce have been installing and wiring switch machines.

Most switch machines and IR sensors have been installed other than where new sidings or industry track are being installed.

Signals and train detection will be the next step in the process and are in the planning stages at this time.

There was a power issue on two of the C/mri boards and it was found to be a bad computer power supply. Thanks to Dale, who had three old computers available, Norman was able to get this issue fixed in short order and the museum now has extra power supplies pre-wired and staged in case of another failure.

The N scale display had a small makeover on its wiring allowing an easy on and off system without having to unplug the power from a wall outlet.

The museum is proud of the electrical staff and their hard work on this huge undertaking. Thank you, Bruce, Chris, Curtis and Danny,

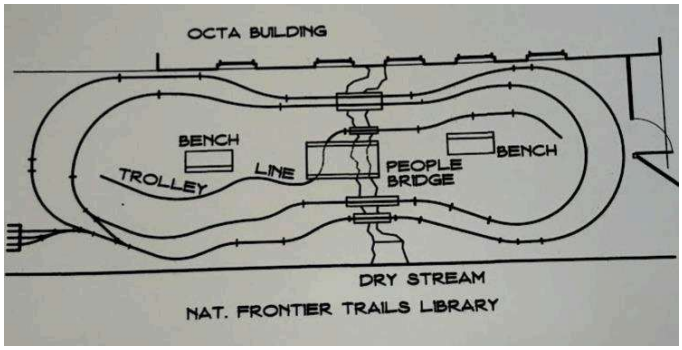
Proposed Exterior G Scale Layout

In the exterior space between the OCTA Building and the National Frontier Trails Library wing, behind the MMRM, at the end of Gallery "A", is a planned exterior G scale layout. The available space is 17' wide by 60' long, with a slight slope down away from Gallery "A".

Buck came up with an initial plan in May and it was shown at a meeting to MO-KAN members for their input.

At a MO-KAN meeting, in December, at the Museum, there was some leftover track that did not sell, which the Museum was able to purchase for this layout. Then volunteer Bruce decided to donate track he has accumulated. This donation was more than incredible: 375 feet of straight track and 240 feet of curved track. This is more than enough to do the layout, and now, because most of these curves are large diameter, the "look" of those big KCS passenger cars in motion, will look proper.

Buck has since revised the layout based on the new track and a print will be placed adjacent to the ON3 layout, in the Gallery for viewing.



Lionel Layout

The holidays are here and Lionel is ready! First, we have the Christmas trains. Starting with the Polar Express train and a Union Pacific Holiday Train and a Lionel Christmas train with full lights and sound. Our visitors are excited to see all the Christmas lights, animation and sounds of Christmas on the rails. Last month, Volunteer Braden had an idea for the Lionel residential area to celebrate the Christmas season. Braden designed and staged “Lionel Town Christmas”. Along with his mother, the work began. Finishing touches were completed by Elf Russell and Elf Denver. The project was completed and viewed by so many visitors, including the Train Collectors of America - Heart of America Chapter, at their Annual Meeting held in the MMRM auditorium. Thanks Volunteers, great work. Stay tuned for new and interesting additions to this popular exhibit.

If Walls Could Talk

The brick walls of the Missouri Model Railroad Museum were built in 1875, some 150 years ago. If those walls could talk think of the stories they'd tell.

While our walls can't talk, the interior walls around our galleries will tell stories, many stories.

By way of didactic wall panels, MMRM walls will talk about the history and significance of railroading in Missouri and to a lesser extent, across America.

Didactic wall panels? Few people know what a didactic wall panel is. A picture is worth a thousand words, so here's a photo of several didactic wall panels which were part of an excellent Train Exhibit at Johnson County Museum in January 2024.

Please take note that the 2-sided panel in the foreground has a "background image" totally covering each of the two panels and overlaying the background images are numerous smaller photos, along with numerous text boxes. On the table in front of the display is the artifact being described, illustrated and explained in the panels. The viewer leaves with a fairly full understanding of the artifact and possibly with an appetite to research the artifact further on his/her own for more information.

We need your help! This photo is being shared because MMRM has a need for small artifacts, but more than that, we have need for old photos for use as background images and the small photos overlaying the background image. We need old photos of railroaders laying track, installing switches, maintaining switches, installing/maintaining track signals, building/repairing rail bridges – essentially anything that's "railroad." We need photos of Missouri track crews or train crews or railroad handcars (Gandy Dancer cars). Old photos of steam engines at work are needed, also. Donations of small artifacts are welcomed and appreciated.

If you have photos which fit our "Needs" List and you'd be willing to either donate those photos or loan them to MMRM for digitizing, we'd greatly appreciate you getting in touch with us at museum@showmerails.org.

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.

Final

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Kathy Shriver
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Admission:

Age 12 and up	$10.00
Age 2 to 11	$4.00
Under age 2	Free
Museum Members	Free
Seniors	$5.00
Military	$5.00

Minimum charge for cards is $10

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