

COWTOWN MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

FORT WORTH TEXAS

CMRRC



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Number 6

General Meeting

The June meeting of the CMRRC will be on Monday night June 15th at 7:00 pm. The program is still being decided. I hope to see you there.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Joe Pritchett



The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs will hold the Fall show on September 26th & 27th, 2026 and the January show will be January 16th & 17th, 2027. The table and admission prices are staying the same as last year. We have strong early tables sales, so far, we have sold 122+ tables for the Fall show and 112+ tables for the January show. The update to the Council's website is going well with a go live date of July. The Council will not have a June meeting.

The exterior door lock is very finicky, so for now we will leave the door unlocked when we're in the building. The room temperature has been comfortable so come out and enjoy the room before it gets too hot. Start watching your phone for when

we will make a change to the Thursday evening sessions for the summer to better handle the heat.

The layout seems to be running pretty well. George continues to make progress on Midway. Be sure to check your phone for the next work/operating session.

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 evening sessions is from 6:30pm – 9:00pm, 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.

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

The next due date is for 3rd quarter dues is July 1st. Please give Dale your dues or mail your dues to the following address:

CMRRC
4504 Quail Hollow Ct.
Fort Worth, TX 76133

Make payable to: "Cowtown Model Railroad Club".



Operations

Trains are running!

I have been creating engineer orders in some cases that use single yard tracks for assembly as well as disassembly of trains.

The usual method would be to allow the program to choose from all available tracks which takes more time and many more locomotive moves. Let me know which method you like more or if you prefer a mix of both.

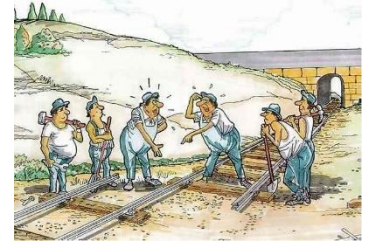
Operating sessions will be announced to all members by text or e-mail. We hope to see more members attending in the future.



Update on Construction

by Dale Schmidtbleicher

What's new in the area of layout construction?



I've noticed a few track problems in the Gila Basin area of the layout during the last few operations sessions. There seems to be easy derailments on the west end main-passing siding switch. Also the switch into the mine dock track sticks or fils to throw. These will be looked into the next work session.

Tom has has fixed the Post Oak Gap town switch panel which had two burnt out LEDs.

George continues to run the track cleaning cars so the mainline and passing sidings have been allowing clean operation. We will probably have to manually clean the short spurs and industry tracks to improve operation.

As always, track cleaning is always needed to be addressed. Keep those track cleaning cars rolling!

Cleanup under the layout is still a major eyesore.

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

General Meeting:

The Club's 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 just inside the building side door.

Normal Work/Operate Schedule:

The normal work/operate schedule is as follows:



Thursday Nights 6:30 PM-9:00 PM.

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

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



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.

Many of those donations have contributed to the club's financial position as well as adding to the scenery or structures on the layout.

12 Train Facts You Might Not Know

Learn 12 fun facts about trains, including how much locomotives weigh, how many truckloads can fit in a rail car and how trains are beneficial to the environment

Trains help ship the goods we rely on every day, from cars to clothing to lumber and so much more. Most people (except rail fans!) don't have much of an interest in trains beyond enjoying the items they ship. But trains have cool tech, environmental benefits, and even help reduce highway traffic. So, while you may not think trains are so interesting now, these 12 railroad facts may change your mind.

1. Rail cars are far bigger than truck trailers

The first train fact on the list is how one rail car can hold three to four truckloads worth of freight. That means a single train could carry the same amount of freight as 300 trucks!

What does that look like in terms of weight? Most rail cars can have a gross weight (the total weight of the load, including the weight of the rail car itself) of up to 286,000 pounds. Heavy axle rail cars can have a gross weight of up to 315,000 pounds. By comparison, the federal gross vehicle weight limit for trucks traveling on the interstate is 80,000 pounds.

2. Railroads help reduce congestion on U.S. highways

Because rail cars can hold three to four truckloads of freight, just one train can take more than 300 trucks off the road. Think about what happens when you multiply that number by a year's worth of shipments – that's a lot of trucks! The result is reduced congestion on already overcrowded highways, less wear and tear on bridges and roadways, and a lessened burden on the taxpayers who pay to maintain them.

Here's just one example:

Every [autorack](#) of [electric vehicles](#) (EVs) shipped by rail removes an average of 1.2 trucks from the highway. In 2020, Union Pacific's EV shipments alone took nearly 9,600 trucks off the nation's congested highways.

3. On average, freight railroads spend six times more on capital expenditures as a percentage of revenue than the average U.S. manufacturer

In the U.S., roadways are built and maintained using taxpayer dollars. The same is not true for the vast majority of railroad tracks. America's freight railroads own, build, maintain, operate and pay for their infrastructure without relying on government assistance.

In fact, between 1980 and 2020, America's [freight railroads spent nearly \\$740 billion on capital expenditures and maintenance expenses](#). That means, on average, railroads spent approximately \$25 billion a year on the locomotives, freight cars, tracks, bridges, tunnels, and other infrastructure and equipment required to keep rail shipments moving safely and efficiently. Not only is this a fun fact about trains; it also [saves taxpayers money!](#)

4. Trains are the most environmentally responsible way to ship freight by land

On average, railroads are three to four times more fuel efficient than trucks on a ton-mile basis. Railroads can move one ton of freight more than 480 miles on a single gallon of fuel, [generating a carbon footprint up to 75% less than trucks](#) and making them the most fuel-efficient way to move freight over land.

Better fuel efficiency equates to fewer emissions. So, while railroads move 40% of U.S. freight, they are only responsible for 2.1% of U.S. transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and just 0.5% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

What does using a more fuel-efficient way to ship freight look like? If 10% of the freight shipped by the largest trucks were moved by rail instead, it would cut greenhouse gas emissions by more than [17 million tons each year](#) — the equivalent of removing 3.35 million cars from our highways.



5. Locomotives can process a billion data points per second

[Tier 4 locomotives](#) are equipped with super computers that allow them to process massive amounts of data that allow them to improve operational and fuel efficiency. The units have 15 million lines of computer code, five times that of its predecessor.

"Tier 4" refers to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emission-level standard that went into effect for new locomotives on January 1, 2015. Tier 4 locomotives earned their name because they comply with these emissions standards and reduce emissions by 90 percent compared to locomotives manufactured before the year 2000. This makes them the [most fuel-efficient locomotives to date](#).



6. Drones help run the railroad

Perhaps one of the coolest train facts is that the railroad industry uses drones. In order to run a safe railroad, tracks must be in good shape. Drones help get the job done. They do so by flying over rail yards and around bridges, allowing ground-penetrating radar and wayside sensors to identify possible track defects.

That's not the only technology making the railroad safer. Locomotives equipped with [Positive Train Control](#) (PTC) systems have on-board computer software that automatically stops a train in certain

instances to reduce specific types of human-caused errors.

7. Trains have “cruise control”

Locomotives use energy management systems that take into account the topography of the land, the length of the train, and the weight of the train and its cars (tonnage) to optimally apply power and speed to the train. In other words, energy management systems are a lot like [cruise control](#), as they use throttle (like applying the gas pedal in your car), coasting and braking to save fuel. The result is a fuel savings of 3-5%. That may sound small, but when you consider that larger railroads consume more than a billion gallons of fuel every year, it makes a big impact...with the potential to save millions of gallons of fuel annually.



8. Rocket boosters can ship by rail

Actually, most anything can ship by rail, but [rocket boosters](#) just happen to be one of the most interesting.

When NASA needed to ship rocket boosters from a manufacturing facility in Utah to Kennedy Space Center in Florida for its Artemis I mission, they used rail to make it happen. The two massive rocket boosters consisted of 10 13-foot wide and 32-foot-long segments weighing 180 tons each.

The historic shipment that launched on June 15, 2020, involved specialized rail cars, multiple

railroads and lots of planning. But on June 15, 2020, the rocket boosters arrived safely by rail.

9. The railroad has its own language

Piggy backs. Demurrage. Lading. Those aren't words most people use every day, but they are terms used frequently in the rail industry. The railroad actually has a long list of words that may seem foreign to those outside of the industry. Even more specific, [train dispatchers have their own language](#), too.

Check out this [bilingual guide to railroad terms](#) to see some of the most common ones. Or, take a deeper dive with these [glossaries](#).

10. One locomotive weighs about as much as 108 hippos

Tier 4 locomotives weigh a whopping [432,000 pounds](#) — the same as 108 hippos weighing in at 4,000 pounds each. These 6-axle engines have 4,400 traction horsepower and can reach a maximum speed of 70 miles per hour pulling thousands of tons of freight.

11. More than 600 railroads operate in the United States

Freight rail shipments in the United States travel on seven Class I railroads (the largest railroads, five of which are U.S. based and two that are based in Canada but have tracks in the States) and approximately 630 Class II and III [short line railroads](#) (smaller railroads). Class I railroads operate over approximately 92,000 route miles in 47 states and short lines operate over approximately 45,000 route miles in 49 states.

12. Freight railroads haul about 1.7 billion tons each year

Our final fun fact about trains reveals the amount of goods railroads haul in 12 months. In a typical year, freight railroads haul about [1.7 billion](#) (with a “B”!)

tons of raw materials and finished goods. Improved rail car designs are making it possible for trains to ship more product. In 2000 the average freight train hauled 2,923 tons; in 2020, that average rose to 3,187 tons.

Freight railroads are part of the integrated freight transportation network which, in addition to trains, relies on truck, air and barge. Together, this transportation system delivers about **61 tons of goods per American each year.**