



2020 National Garden Railway Convention

Nashville, Tennessee

May 31 to June 6, 2020

Welcome to the fourth 2020 NGRC newsletter. In 123 days the 36th National Garden Railway Convention begins! Time is moving by quickly. In Tennessee we are waiting for our rainy winter to end and the arrival of spring so we can get back outside and start putting the final touches on our layouts in preparation for the convention.

In this newsletter we are providing updates on: 1) registrations, 2) special convention activities, 3) pre- and post-convention tours, 4) the convention hopper car and 5) we reveal pictures of the first USA Trains SD70 AC locomotive that has been custom painted in the CSX “Spirit of Nashville” livery.

Registration

Effective on February 1st, registration fees for the convention increase from **\$ 85 to \$100** for individuals and from **\$125 to \$145** for families (2 adults and all children living at home) for late registrations. Save yourself some money to spend in the vendor hall by registering for the convention by February 1st. Effective on February 1st there will be a 5% handling fee for refunds or cancellations. Cancellations after April 1st will result in no refunding of registration fees or tickets purchased for the convention activities. As of January 29th, 70% of the block of rooms at the Opryland Hotel and Resort have been booked. Don't delay in making your hotel reservations at the special convention rate. Remember the first 200 individuals or families staying five nights at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Resort will receive one (1) official convention hopper car being produced for the convention by PIKO. The graphics on this car are simply amazing. There are still opportunities to get a free convention car, by booking your five-night stay at the Opryland Hotel and Resort. On-line convention registration can be made at the official convention website: www.NGRC2020.com or via Facebook at: 2020 National Garden Railway Convention – Nashville.

We want to clear up confusion about the cost to park vehicles at the Opryland Hotel and Resort. Normal parking rates are \$32 / day, which is posted on the hotel registration site. However, we negotiated a reduced parking fee of **\$10 per day** to park at the hotel. When you check in at the Opryland Hotel, the people working at the desk will confirm with you if you drove and parked a vehicle in their parking lot. If you did, they will note this on your account and you will receive the

special convention parking rate of \$10.00 / day. At check-out please make sure you to look closely at your statement and are charged the \$10 per day convention parking rate.

Special Convention Optional Activities

There are still main floor and balcony tickets available for the Tuesday night performance at the Grand Ole Opry. Also, there are tickets still available for all three General Jackson river boat trips and performances, the Backstage Opry Tours, Country Music Hall of Fame and Jack Daniels tour. We will need to return any unsold Grand Ole Opry and General Jackson tickets in our blocks so they can be available for the general public in early March. If these activities are on your “to do” list while in Nashville, don’t delay in making your purchases. Once we return unsold tickets you will have to purchase tickets, if available, at normal market price directly thru the venues.

Pre- and Post-Convention Tours

The organizing committee is currently contacting garden railroad clubs and individuals within driving distance of Nashville to ask them to consider opening up their layouts for pre- and/or post-convention tours. If you are interested in supporting the convention in this manner please send an email message to: ngrcnashville@gmail.com and let us know. Someone from the committee will get back in touch with you. Pre-convention tours are May 30th and May 31st and post-convention tours are June 6th and June 7th. Each individual will have the freedom to set their own dates when their layout will be open and the starting and ending time for these tours. Descriptions of the layouts, street addresses and a photo of the layout will be printed in the convention book. Please submit this information using the convention email address ngrcnashville@gmail.com by **Friday February 21** for inclusion in the convention book. A high-resolution photo (> 300 dpi .png file) is preferred. For those interested in attending pre- or post-convention tours, we will place a downloadable .pdf file with all of the information about layouts open for pre- and post-convention tours on the convention website and Facebook in May.

Convention Car

The convention cars have been produced by PIKO and are currently in shipping containers headed for San Diego, CA. It is projected the cars will arrive in the US around February 6th. The convention cars then will be shipped to Nashville. We believe we will receive them by the end of February. Once we receive the shipment, a picture of the actual car will be taken and posted on line and in a future convention newsletter. The graphics on the car highlight some famous Nashville landmarks; the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis 576 steam locomotive, the historic Union Station in downtown Nashville, the Nashville skyline and the sign for one of the famous Nashville honky tonks; Honky Tonk Central. The Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis 576 locomotive which we will see on the Wednesday tour is currently undergoing a complete restoration to full working condition.

CSX Spirit of Nashville SD70 AC

Ken Miller, a full-time engineer for CSX railroad and the Convention Organizing Committee Chairman, came up with the idea to have four USA Trains SD70 locomotives custom painted in CSX “Spirit of Nashville” livery for the convention. Fred Tennyson from Ohio did the custom painting on the locomotives. Ken just received the first finished locomotive for inspection and approval. The locomotive was on display at our club meeting this past weekend. It is fantastic. Very, very well done,

Fred! Thank you! Below are two pictures of the first locomotive which Ken is claiming for his very own! But don't fret! You might **win** one of these beautiful locomotives. There are four more locomotives, just like the one pictured below to be given away during the convention.



For those that stay five nights at the Opryland Hotel and purchase a banquet ticket, when you pick up your registration packet, there will be a numbered ticket for the CSX locomotive drawing. Bring the ticket to the banquet because if your number is drawn you will be one of three lucky winners of these beautiful locomotives. You must be present at the banquet to win the locomotive so we can take your picture.

But, this not your only chance to win a SD70 AC locomotive! Stop by the Convention Store in the vendor hall and purchase one or more raffle tickets for \$5.00 per ticket, three tickets for \$12.00 or five tickets for \$20.00 if you want to improve your odds of winning the locomotive. A drawing will be held at **Noon on Saturday June 6th** at the Convention Store to determine the winner of the fourth locomotive.

