

OMAHA 2024

LCCA CONVENTION



Dennis DeVito – LCCA Convention Manager, HM 6758

Omaha. Is it a poker game? Is it steak? Is it the home of the Oracle of Omaha? Or will it be forever remembered as the convention host city for LCCA's 54th Anniversary Celebration! Omaha was originally selected for our 50th Anniversary to host this event near the home of its founder, Jim Gates. But like most of 2020, Covid got in the way, postponing this exciting venue till 2024. Yes, the tours were planned, member response was great, and then, oops.

Bringing us forward to 2024, our rescheduled visit to Omaha is now here. The fun, the events, the tours, the excitement, and most of all the renewed camaraderie we have come to expect at an LCCA convention will again trademark our LCCA Omaha Convention.

Omaha is more than a mid-sized Midwestern city surrounded by farms and cornfields. So much more. It is a lively, vibrant city full of great places to see and visit. Our Monday ride on the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad will be followed by a week of tours taking us to the most exciting and most



anticipated venues and, of course, to a few 'hidden gem' locations. We will be staying at the downtown Hilton Omaha hotel, just blocks from the Old Market.

And yes, Omaha will be an 'instant replay' event, celebrating the best the LCCA and its members have to offer. We are meeting a little earlier this year – July 8-13 – so double check your calendar. Our extended modular groups will be there, as will our member

vendors in the trading hall. Our friends at Lionel will again have their seminar while attendees should be prepared for a few new all-week activities.

This year travel by air is easy, with Eppley Airport only 4 miles from the Hilton Omaha with its courtesy shuttle. Onsite parking will be no cost for registered hotel guests, non-hotel guests have a reduced daily fee. Hotel registration opens this month, and whether you use mail, phone, or the website to register, do it early. Next year at this time you might be told what a wonderful convention Omaha was, or you can attend and be there live. #LCCAOmaha 🚂

LCCA 2024 OMAHA CONVENTION TOURS

Dienzel Dennis RM#6713
LCCA Convention Tour Manager

Six months down (Concord) and six to go (Omaha)! Time is flying by and July 8 will be here before we know it. This promises to be another tremendous convention with all the interesting tours you have become familiar with, and expect, each year.

During the 2024 convention, we will ride the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad, visit seven railroad museums, four layout sites, see the Big Boy and the Centennial Diesel, tour a great car museum, space museum, and Boys Town. Just to name a few. Everything you'll need to make your tour decisions is in the following pages, so read all the tour write-ups and make your decisions. Be sure and sign up early, as all tours have a maximum number of spots available and most are sure to sell out early. I look forward to seeing your smiling faces again as we load the buses and visit the outstanding venues in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area. See you all in Omaha!

Tour #1 Monday, July 8, 2024

7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Price \$97 Max. 220; Min. 35

Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad Excursion,
including a Trolley Ride, Back Yard Tour,
and B&SVRR Museum



Boone, Iowa and the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad will be our destination for this year's annual train excursion. This beautiful two-hour ride through the gorgeous Central Iowa countryside includes a stop on the bridge that stands well over 150 feet above Bass Point Creek. This is the tallest single-track interurban railroad bridge in the U. S. The train will stop for

us at the bridge for great photo opportunities of the valley and countryside, plus a nice box lunch. Two notes: A handicapped accessible coach is available, and the concession car only accepts cash, no credit cards. The B&SVRR is not only a passenger train line; but it also provides daily freight service in the area. This is one of a very few railroads that operate (all three) steam, diesel, and electric power on a weekly basis. Will we get steam for our trip? We must wait and see.

During this tour we will also divide our time between the James H. Andrew Railroad Museum and History Center, walk through the outside yards and restoration back shops, and take an antique trolley ride from the B&SVRR to downtown Boone and back. We also anticipate 3-6 special surprises during our bus ride to Boone and back. Hint: What happened to the items made for the first Omaha convention scheduled for 2020? Will they be available for members who take this excursion? How about pins or B&SVRR pickup trucks? Take the tour and see what happens!

NOTE: The trolley is NOT handicapped accessible.

Tour #2 Monday, July 8, 2024

9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Price \$97 Max. 220 - Min. 35

Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad Excursion,
including a Trolley Ride, Back Yard Tour,
and B&SVRR Museum

This is the exact same tour as Tour #1 above except leaving the hotel later and returning to the hotel later. Otherwise, Tour #1 and Tour #2 are identical.

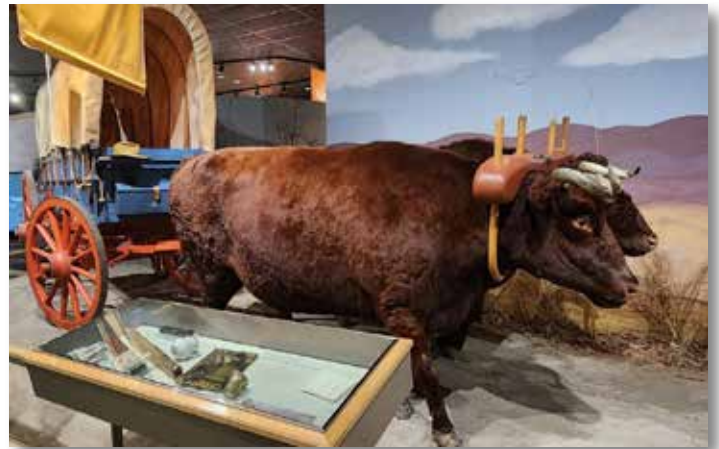
Tour #3 Tuesday, July 9, 2024

7:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Price \$ 47 Max. 220 - Min. 35

The Florence Experience, including the Depot,
Mill, Bank, and Mormon Memorial Trail Museum

This morning's tour will take us to the town of Florence, Neb., a quaint little railroad town just north of our guest hotel. The town was established in 1854 and is now home of four venues we will visit. The Florence depot was built in 1887 and was located in downtown Florence. It closed in 1966 and was moved to its present location and opened as a museum in 1971. It is now an historical railroad museum filled with articles from the past.



Another stop will be the old Florence Mill near the banks of the Missouri River. It was constructed by the Mormons in 1846-47 and was their winter headquarters. Supplying both flour, meal, and lumber in the area helped them survive the harsh winters. Today it is a museum and art center that has been preserved for all to enjoy.

Another stop will be the old Bank of Florence. This small unique little building has been restored to its original condition with an upstairs lodging filled with period objects from the past. It also served the community as a Post Office and a telephone switchboard. One final stop will be the Mormon Trail Center. With interactive exhibits, artwork, and artifacts, visitors can experience what it was like to live as Latter-day Saint pioneers during their westward migration to the Salt Lake Valley. During the harsh winter of 1846-47, over 300 pioneers died and were buried in the cemetery across the street from this museum. The museum portrays the hardships and heartaches the Mormons encountered in the winter of 1846. In all, over 3,400 lived here until it was abandoned in 1848. Recently Florence was incorporated into the city of Omaha and is now officially part of this beautiful Midwest city.

NOTE: If this Tour #3 sells out early, we may repeat it as Tour #12 on Wednesday as the same exact tour, in the same time slots.



Tour #4 Tuesday, July 9, 2024
 12:30 to 6:55 p.m.
 Price \$97 Max.100 - Min. 35
 Father Flanagan's Boys Town, the Strategic
 Air Command Museum (SACS), and Round the
 Bend Steak House

We will begin this exciting tour by visiting world famous Boys Town where guides will board our buses and take us on a driving and walking tour of these magnificent facilities. We will walk through the museum, Father Flanagan's home, and the Catholic church including the burial site of Father Edward J. Flanagan, founder of Boys Town. In his home, look for the model of the McKean car, which we rode at our LCCA 2019 convention in Reno and was manufactured in Omaha.

Since its founding in 1917 by



Father Flanagan, Boys Town has transformed tens of thousands of young lives. While visiting the campus, you'll take in the beautiful Dowd Memorial Chapel, the final resting place of Boys Town's founder. Inside the museum, you'll discover how Boys Town programs developed and how it continues its mission to change the way America cares for children and families. You'll also see the Best Actor Oscar presented to

Spencer Tracy for his role as Father Flanagan in the 1938 film "Boys Town." At the Visitors Center, be sure to look for the World's Largest Ball of Stamps. How much do you think it weighs? How many stamps do you think it took to make this gigantic sphere? You won't want to miss it!

Thirty minutes south of Boys Town is the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum, one of the greatest museums of flight in the United States. We will see the restoration area from a viewing platform where the EC-135 is restored. The huge B-52, B-56, B-58, B47, F-101 and the F-11 all are in Hanger A. Make your way to Hanger B where you will see the KC-97, the C-119, the MIG-21, the B-29, and the F-102. Don't miss the Space Walk, the Cold War Display, and the Vulcan outside as you enter the grounds. You will even be in the lobby. Flight simulators and a gift shop complete the package.

Only a mile away is our last stop, and a great one – the world famous "Round the Bend Steak House" where we will enjoy dinner in our own private room. This may not be the fanciest restaurant, but it is where all the cattlemen and local ranchers come to eat. Established in 1995 by Ron Olsen, it has been run by his son T. J. since 2012. This restaurant hosts the Testicle Festival each Fathers' Day when they serve over 2,000 pounds of these delectable treats, and we plan to have a "buck a nut" for each diner. The two-meat buffet dinner will include drinks (Coke, tea, & coffee) and desserts, but you must purchase your own alcoholic beverages from the cash bar.

If this Tour #4 sells out, we will repeat it on Wednesday, July 10, as Tour #13 with the same time schedule.

Tour #5 Wednesday, July 10, 2024

8 a.m. to 1:20 p.m.

Price \$59 Max. 220 - Min. 40

The Lincoln Experience, Museum of American Speed, Nebraska History Museum, & the State Capitol Building

Nebraska's capitol city, Lincoln, is less than an hour's bus ride from Omaha. On our visit to the State Capitol Building, we will walk the halls of the capitol building with its 110 feet tall rotunda built of Indiana limestone. Standing stately at one end of the Centennial Mall, it features glass wall murals depicting the Blizzard of 1888 and the Arrival of the Railroad. At the other end of the Mall, we will visit the Nebraska History Museum to learn about the history of this great state. We will experience

13,000 years of history and learn about the people and cultures that have made Nebraska their home. Find out what life was like before and after statehood, see unique artifacts, and discover the stories that have defined Nebraska.

On our third stop, we will visit the huge Museum of American Speed. This museum began almost 35 years ago with 150,000 square feet of exhibits. Since then, it has added much more space, and you will be pressed for time to see all of it on this one trip. One display has the five



millionth Model "T" preserved just as it rolled off the assembly line a century ago. The world's largest collection of pedal cars (over 500) is also on display. Don't miss this chance to see racing cars, show cars, classic cars, hot rods, street rods and many more. This is one of the largest, most diverse, and entertaining motor museums in the country.

If Tour #5 sells out, it may be repeated on Tuesday, July 9, as Tour #14 with the same time schedule.

Tour #6 Wednesday, July 10, 2024
2:15 to 6:55 p.m.
Price \$47 Max. 100 - Min. 35
Home Layout Tours, and Oak View Mall Layouts

At the Oak View Shopping Mall, you will find 16 different sets of model trains all running at once. They range from the tiny Z gauge (1 to160 scale) up to Standard and G gauge and everything in between. Be sure and see them all. Even Kenefick Park (Tours 7 or 16) is modeled on these layouts.

We will visit Mark Nelson's home layout with numerous trains running on different layouts throughout his basement train empire where it is Christmas 365 days a year. Mark also heads up the Oak View Mall layout that we will be visiting. Russ Quimby will welcome us into his home to see his trains running through a scenic landscape. Not only is Russ a Lionel train buff, railroading in the real train world is his occupation. Joe Snook will be our third home layout. On March 16, 2019, Joe had a flood disaster that almost wiped out his collection. A dam broke up stream creating a river of water that completely covered the first floor of his home. His home had to be demolished, and he constructed a beautiful new home on the same site with a train room (16 x 37) for his restored train collection, and it's high and dry!

If Tour #6 sells out, it may be repeated as Tour #15 on Tuesday.



Tour #7 Thursday, July 11, 2024
9 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.
Price \$69 Max. 200 - Min. 35
The Durham Museum (Union Station),
the Lauritzen Gardens, & Kenefick Park
(Big Boy & Centennial)

The Durham Museum is located in the beautiful Omaha Union Station, the first railroad depot with art deco architecture, designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood. This gorgeous building opened 98 years ago and is still in supreme condition. During World War II, over 10,000 passengers from seven different railroad lines passed through it every day. The museum includes a model train layout that measures 30 feet wide by a whopping 120 feet long. There are many real railroad cars to walk through and displays and exhibits depicting railroading on the Plains. However, even if there was nothing to see inside, the magnificent structure and its architecture alone would be well worth your visit.

Our second stop will be Lauritzen Gardens and Kenefick Park. On top of the hill in Kenefick Park overlooking Interstate 80 stand the two biggest engines ever produced. The Big Boy Steam engine #4023 and the gray and yellow Centennial Diesel #6900 rest proudly against the Nebraska sky. On the way up or down the incline, try to spot a carving in the stone wall of the McKeen car which were all manufactured in Omaha. We anticipate having trolleys available to help transport our members.

However, be prepared to walk to the top of the overlook as we are not 100 percent sure the shuttles will be available.

The Lauritzen Gardens' beautiful botanical exhibit offers hundreds of plants housed in a large glass conservatory with flowing brooks and waterfalls. Outside the conservatory are the Festival Gardens, Victorian Garden, Tree Peony Garden, Rose Garden, Children's Garden, Garden of Memories, Herb Garden and the Founder's Garden. And don't miss the Arboretum and Bird Sanctuary. At the back of the Gardens, you will find a G scale model railroad that runs by your feet, at your waist, and overhead, with bridges and tunnels made of natural plantings. There are seven Union Pacific trains continuously running through models of familiar Omaha landmarks. This is a fantastic garden layout with seven named lines, including one called the Big Boy Line.

If this Tour #7 sells out, it may be repeated on Friday, July 12, as Tour #16 with the same time schedule.



Tour #8 Thursday, July 11, 2024

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Price \$49 Max. 150 - Min. 35

Hot Shops Art Center, the Full Fledged Brewery,
and the Wimmer Train Museum

Inside a huge antique brick warehouse structure from a century ago, we will find many unique craftsmen making and selling their wares. More than 80 vendors in the Hot Shops Art Center offer painting, glass blowing, jewelry, sculpture, photography, design printmaking, fiber printmaking, fiber art, woodworking, metalworking, musical instrument construction (violin/fiddle), and many other mediums. The artists love to talk with you about their works and are happy to answer your questions.

Next stop is the Full Fledged Brewery where we will take a tour of its facilities. The tastings of its local brew will be offered separately from our tour. You may partake on your own and pay as you go. This brewery, owned and operated by Marshall and Dessie Redmond, is widely celebrated in Council Bluffs, Iowa, as well as across the river in Omaha.

On our last stop, we will also visit the outstanding collection of Bill & Judy Wimmer and learn their fascinating story. Bill retired in 2008 after serving the railroad industry for 51 years at both the Union Pacific and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Bill served 34 years as U.P.'s vice president of engineering which included design, construction, maintenance, signals, track programs, signals, and structures. Bill and Judy met while Judy was working for the U.P. as an inspector. She was following in her father's footsteps who worked on the railroad for 51 years. During the last 60 to 70 years, this couple has collected railroad memorabilia from not only the U.P., but every other railroad they could find. It is all now on display at their location in Beaver Lake where they will welcome us to see this fabulous collection. See the real

Plymouth U. P. Industrial Loco, the switcher Diesel engine, the 100-year-old handcar, the U. P. Maintenance car, the telephone operators' switchboard, and many, many sets of railroad china. They also operate a model train layout with Lionel FasTrack® where they run extra-long U. P. passenger trains on their "Train Model City" exhibit. All together there are over 10,000 pieces of railroad memorabilia in this collection.

Note: Bill was head of the company that brought the Big Boy and Centennial up the grade to Kenefick Park. Don't miss his photos of that rigorous process.

This Tour #8 will not be repeated.



Tour #9 Friday, July 12, 2024
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Price \$69 Max. 200 - Min. 35
Council Bluffs, Iowa - U.P. Museum,
Rails West Museum, Squirrel Cage Jail,
& The Dodge House Mansion.

Our morning in Council Bluffs, Iowa, just across the Missouri River from Omaha, will include four stops. First, the General Dodge House is a French second Empire style mansion designed by William Boyington of Chicago for General Greenville Mellen Dodge in 1869 for a sum of \$35,000. For a home built on the frontier, it was elegant with central heat and running water. General Dodge was chief engineer for the Union Pacific and supervised the construction of the U.P. portion of the Transcontinental Railroad. He was assigned to this duty by his personal friend President Abraham Lincoln. Dodge's garage was built with a turntable because backing down the steep slope was almost impossible for the early automobiles with their faulty brakes. Therefore, they would drive up the hill, into the garage

and onto the turntable which would rotate the car 180 degrees so it could be driven forward back down the driveway. This garage sits between the Dodge House and the August Beresheim home which we also will visit. All rooms are open to us and are in their original settings. Don't miss this National Historic Landmark. NOTE: Be advised the mansion is on a hillside and may be hard for some to access.

Another stop is the RailsWest Railroad Museum housed in a Romanesque Revival structure also known as the Rock Island Railroad Passenger Depot. This was a daily stop for the Rocky Mountain Rucker, the Midwest Hiawatha, and the Arrow. The depot was built in 1899, as two one story brick buildings with pink granite trim connected with a massive Spanish tile roof. The larger building contained the passenger waiting rooms and offices with baggage rooms in the smaller building. This museum houses the history of Council Bluffs and its integral connection to the railroad. In the museum yard, there is rolling stock, including the CB&Q 915 locomotive (4-6-0), an Omaha club car, Burlington caboose, Plymouth 5700, U.P. 814 locomotive (4-8-4), a U. P. boxcar, the Railway Mail Service (Railway Post Office), and a Rock Island caboose #17130. You may view and climb on these items as you please. Also, there is



currently a model train layout running in the depot lobby.

Another unique stop will be the historic revolving Squirrel Cage Jail. The jail was built in 1885 and was in continuous use until 1969. It was acquired by the Council Bluffs Park Board in 1971 for preservation and was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 by the United States Government. The Historical Society led an effort in 1977 to save the jail and today owns and operates the facility. The signatures and dates of many of its infamous prisoners remain scratched in the cell walls. This jail has a 90,000 lb. metal structure that rotates like a Lazy Susan by a single jailer using cranks with gears. The jailer brought the prisoners to him instead of him going to them. Every door but one faced a concrete wall. The only way to get out of this pie-shaped jail was when the unit was turned so your door was in the one open space the jailer controlled. You have to witness this Squirrel Cage Jail House. This may be the most unique site I have ever visited!

Last stop will be the Union Pacific Railroad Museum housed in

the historic Carnegie Library building. Don't get it confused with the Durham Museum located in Union Station. The President Lincoln collection on display includes artifacts from his rail car and his funeral. In this museum you will travel through 150 years of American railroad history, allowing you to walk through three passenger cars from the 1950s, be in awe of over 300 pieces of Union Pacific silver and fine china, and learn about Hollywood stars traveling by luxury passenger trains before the airplanes arrived on the scene. The entire first floor covers the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, and one of the original Golden Spikes is on display.

This Tour #9 will not be repeated.



Tour #10 Saturday, July 13, 2024

8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Price \$49 Max. 200 - Min. 35

A Day at the ZOO

Unleash your sense of wonder across 160 acres of plants, animals, and unique habitats from around the world. This zoo has been in existence for 128 years and saw its one millionth visitor in July 2021. This park has been designated as the best zoo in the United States. There is a real train ride around the park, an overhead tram, and many, many special exhibits to witness. Your ticket is only for park admittance and transportation to and from the hotel. All special viewing is on your own along with the food you purchase there. There will be no extra transportation to or from the Zoo except at the time scheduled above. You are on your own if you wish to return early.

Tour #11 Saturday, July 13, 2024

9:40 a.m. to 3 p.m.

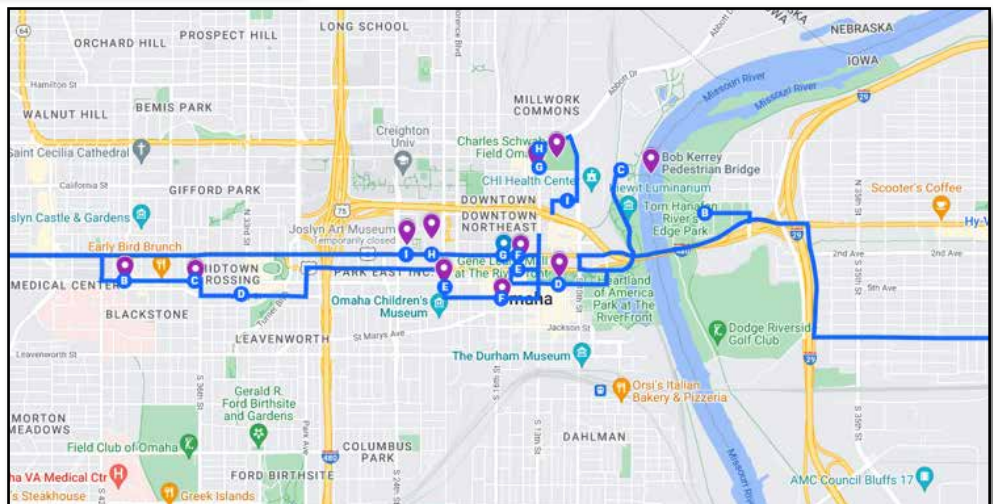
Price \$49 Max. 200 - Min. 35

City Driving and Walking Tour

On this tour, if you want to just stay on the bus for the whole time and go along for the ride, you definitely can. However, we will have two to four stops with options to get off for photo ops. We will begin by crossing the river into Council



Bluffs where we will stop at the largest golden spike ever for a ten-minute photo-op. This marks the spot where Mile Post "0" started the trip west for the Union Pacific Railroad. Our next stop will be the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge where you can walk all the way from Iowa to Nebraska across the mighty Missouri River. The bus, along with passengers who do not wish to walk the bridge, will pick you up in Omaha after your approximately 30-minute walk. We will also stop for 30 minutes at the gift shop and lobby of the Union Pacific Headquarters



Building. The rest of the tour will be a driving tour passing by Pioneer Courage Park where Buffalo statues are on display, the beautiful Omaha Central High School, and the Joslyn Art Museum (we cannot tour there as it is undergoing refurbishing). The present Mutual of Omaha Insurance building and the new one under construction will be on our path, as well as Gene Leahy Park, the Orpheum Theater, Black Stone District, the Rose Theater, Cottonwood Hotel, Rocco's Pizza, Charles Schwab Baseball Stadium, the Union Pacific murals, Old Town Omaha, and Warren Buffet's office.

Special Note: The same buses will be used for both Saturday tours. They will drop off the Zoo Tour, come back and do the City Tour, and then return to pick up the Zoo Tour for returning to the hotel.

Tours #10 and #11 will not be repeated.

Activity/Tour #17 Saturday, July 13, 2024

1 to 6 p.m.

No charge - come and go as you wish.

Operation Life Saver!

The Operation Life Saver Trailer will be parked outside the hotel by the main entrance (front door). This trailer has a diesel engine cab train simulator where kids of all ages can practice driving their own engine. How exciting! Other safety devices and information will be available. Inside the hotel, look for the table with Operation Life Saver free gifts such as pencils, ink pens, lapel pins, coloring books, etc. Be sure to stop by and say hello and thank you to Connie Rose and her helpers.