

Route 66 Blue Hippo Festival

The date was August 6th & 7th and the TTOS Sooner Division was on location at Stephenson Park in Edmond, Oklahoma. First time event organizer Amy Stephens, Executive Director Edmond Historical Society & Museum, invited John Spall (TTOS Director-At-Large Western) to be part of the attractions. John, as always, did a great job of representing TTOS and the Sooner Division. John's static train display was setup in the master bedroom of the Rodkey House which is located in the Stephenson Park complex. Around the room were five tables displaying trains of various scales, historical information about railroads and old railroad artifacts. Items on display were on loan from TTOS members Bob Pope and John. During the event John handed out TTOS trifold brochures to visitors as they were introduced to our hobby and the TTOS organization.

Good things do happen when you have the opportunity to put your organization in front of the general public. Receiving an invitation to the event had a lot to do with our recent Sooner Division train show in the city of Edmond. In mid-July, just weeks prior to the Route 66 event, John was the show coordinator for our first ever train show held in downtown Edmond. It was a great success and well attended by members of the community as well as train enthusiasts from as far away as nearby states. No doubt our event impressed key individuals in the city of Edmond. Within days of the train show John was contacted by Amy Stephens and invited the Sooner Division of TTOS to have a display at the two-day event.

Current plans are to continue with a yearly event and TTOS has been invited to return again in following years. These types of events most generally require only our time with very little to no expense of division funds. Events like this are being held all over the US and provide exposure for organizations like ours. Promoting the hobby of collecting and operating both model and toy trains of today and yesterday is what we do as an organization. Look at your local area and see what opportunities are out there to help share our passion. During the time of this writing John reported that our group has been invited to Edmond's annual Christmas event held on the first Saturday in December.

Information for this article furnished by John Spall.