

Large-scale holiday displays for 2011

Great railways open to the public

by Rene Schweitzer | Photos as noted

It's that time of year again. I'm pleased to present 2011's list of large scale, holiday-themed events. If you're looking for something to do over the holidays, stop and visit one of these displays. You'll be welcomed by an enthusiastic, friendly group of people who are delighted to share our hobby.

Please note: schedules can change. If you're planning to drive any distance to visit one of these displays, it's best to call ahead to verify hours of operation.

Arizona

Arizona Big Train Operators Christmas Home Train Tour

Venue: Various homes in the Phoenix area

Contact person: Ennis Thompson, 1400 S. Dobson Rd., Mesa AZ 85202, 602-527-0402, egtrailrailroading@aol.com

Dates: Dec. 10-11, 17-18, 2011

Hours: 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Admission charge: Donations accepted

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.azbigtrains.org

Eaglewings Ironcraft 8th Annual Christmas Open House

Venue: Wild Eagle Railroad, 4007 N. 22nd Ave., Phoenix AZ 85015

Contact person: Dan Hoag, 602-276-8101 or 602-799-1356, info@eaglewingsironcraft.com

Dates: Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11, 2011

Hours: 6 to 9 p.m.

Admission charge: Donations accepted for Make-A-Wish Foundation

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.eaglewingsironcraft.com/upcoming_events.php

Tucson Garden Railway Society's layout

Venue: Tucson Veteran's Administration Hospital, 3601 S. 6th Ave., Tucson AZ 85723

Contact person: Ken Karrels, 520-749-5345, kkarrels@aol.com

Dates: Dec. 28-30, 2011

Hours: Mon.-Tues., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.;



PHOTO BY RICK BREMMER

The Fairplex Garden Railroad in Pomona, California has an open house and train run each December.

Wed., 9 a.m. to noon

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.tucsongrs.org

Arkansas

Lights on the Landscape

Venue: Garvan Gardens, 550 Arkridge Road, Hot Springs AR 71913

Contact person: Darla Kelsay, 501-262-9619

Dates: Nov. 19-Dec. 31, 2011

Hours: 5 to 9 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Website: www.garvangardens.org

California

Fairplex Garden Railroad Holiday Open House and Public Run

Venue: LA County Fairgrounds, 1101 W. McKinley Ave., Pomona CA 91768

Contact person: Rick Bremer, 714-990-1394, rcbfgf@gmail.com

Dates: Dec. 11, 2011

Hours: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: No (enter at Gate 1)

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.fgrr.org

Flying L Railroad Christmas Display

Venue: 1135 McBain Ave., Campbell CA 95008

Contact person: Brian Livingston, president, blksb1@aol.com

Dates: Nov. 24-Dec. 28, 2011

Hours: 6 to 10 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Colorado

Rosebud Railroad

Venue: 4990 S. Elati, Englewood CO 80110

Contact person: Richard & Alice Kloewer, 303-761-4990, rakloewer@msn.com

Dates: Nov. 25, 2010-Jan. 1, 2012

Hours: 5 to 10 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Delaware

Trains & Planes at the AMC Museum

Venue: AMC Museum, 1301 Heritage Road, Dover AFB DE 19902 (exit 91 off US 113)

Contact person: Michael Leister, director, 302-677-5939, directoramcm@comcast.net

Dates: Nov. 20, 2011-Jan. 3, 2012

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; closed on Mondays

Admission charge: No

Website: www.amcmuseum.org

Florida

Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children Train Display

Venue: Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children, 92 W. Miller St., Orlando FL 32806

Dates: Ongoing

Hours: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily

Admission charge: Yes (for parking)

Type: Permanent, indoors

Christmas Open House

Venue: H&R Trains, 6901 Hwy 19 N., Pinellas Park FL 33781

Contact person: Don or Alice Morris, 727-526-4682, hrtrains@hrtrains.com

Dates: Dec. 3-4, 2011

Hours: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.hrtrains.com

Christmas Trains

Venue: H&R Trains, 6901 Hwy 19 N., Pinellas Park FL 33781

Contact person: Don or Alice Morris,

727-526-4682, hrtrains@hrtrains.com

Dates: November 25-December 30, 2011; closed on Dec. 24, 25

Hours: Call for hours

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.hrtrains.com

Georgia

Vines Garden Railroad Display

Venue: George Pierce Park, Suwanee GA

Contact information: vinesrr@bellsouth.net, 770-554-9697

Dates: Nov. 25, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012

Hours: Call or e-mail for hours

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.vinesgardenrailroad.com

Illinois

Kishwaukee Valley & Eakin Creek Model Railroad Club Holiday Display

Venue: Prairie Lodge Social Lounge, 12880 Del Webb Blvd., Huntley IL 60142

Contact information: 847-669-2392

Dates: Nov. 25-Dec. 29, 2011

Hours: Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed Dec. 25

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: sccab.com

The Enchanted Railroad

Venue: The Morton Arboretum, 4100 Rt. 53, Lisle IL 60532

Contact person: Allison Phelps, 630-968-

0074, trees@mortonarb.org

Dates: Nov. 25-Dec. 31, 2011 (closed Dec. 24-25)

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: No for railroad, yes for arboretum

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Website: www.mortonarb.org

Wonderland Express

Venue: The Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Rd., Glencoe IL 60022, 847-835-5440

Dates: Nov. 25, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012 (closed Dec. 24, 25)

Hours: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Dec. 24, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Web site: www.chicagobotanic.org/wonderland

Kentucky

Cranberry and Linville River Railroad

Venue: 557 Mustang Dr., Walton KY 41094

Contact person: Dan Stenger, 859-485-6844, dan.stenger@insightbb.com

Dates: Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2011

Hours: 7 to 9 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.gcgrs.org/Clr/index.asp



Trains will run for the second year at the Air Mobility Command Museum in Delaware. In addition to the three layouts on display, visitors can enjoy vintage military aircraft and aircraft displays!

PHOTO COURTESY OF T. CONNOR VIA AMC MUSEUM

Maine

ExTRAINaganza

Venue: Great Falls Model Railroad Club, 144 Mill St., Auburn ME 04210

Contact person: Paul Lodge, 207-966-3641, paul lodge@gwi.net

Dates: Nov. 19, 20, 25, 26, 2011

Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org, www.gmrrc.com

Maryland

Garden of Lights: Riding the Train Through Beautiful Montgomery County

Venue: Brookside Gardens, 1500 Gelnallan Ave., Wheaton MD 20902, 301-962-1400

Dates: Nov. 25, 2011-Jan. 8, 2012 (closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1)

Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; 5:30 to 9 p.m. for light show evenings

Admission charge: No during the day; yes for light show, evenings

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.brooksidegardens.org or www.wvmgrs.org

Holiday Festival of Trains

Venue: B&O Railroad Museum Ellicott City Station, 2711 Maryland Ave., Ellicott City MD 21043, 410-752-2462

Hours: Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dates: Nov. 25, 2011-Jan. 29, 2012 (closed Dec. 24-25, Jan. 1)

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, indoors

Website: www.ecborail.org

Holiday Festival of Trains and Toys

Venue: B&O Railroad Museum, 901 W. Pratt St., Baltimore MD 21223, 410-752-2490

Hours: Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dates: Nov. 25-Dec. 31, 2011 (closed Dec. 24-25)

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary and permanent, indoors and outdoors

Website: www.borail.org

Missouri

Gardenland Express Holiday Flower and Train Show

Venue: Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw Blvd, St. Louis MO 63110

Contact information: 314-577-5100

Dates: Nov. 21, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012 (closed Dec. 25)

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; closes at 4 p.m. on Dec. 24 and 31

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.mobot.org

Nevada

Las Vegas Garden Railway Society Christmas display

Venue: Jim Marsh automobile showroom, 8555 W. Centennial Parkway, Las Vegas NV 89149

Dates: Dec. 12-30, 2011

Hours: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily (closed Sundays and Dec. 25)

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.lvgrs.org

New Jersey

Camden City Garden Club Train Festival

Venue: 3 Riverside Dr., Camden NJ 08103, 856-365-8733

Dates: Nov. 12-13, 2011

Hours: Noon to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary and permanent, outdoors

Website: www.camdenchildrensgarden.org

South Jersey Garden Railway Society display

Venue: Ocean City Music Pier, Moorlyn Terrace, Ocean City NJ 08226, 609-525-9300

Contact person: Anita Brown, nanb1@comcast.net

Dates: Dec. 3-4, 2011

Hours: Sat., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.trainweb.org/sjgrs

New Mexico

River of Lights Garden Railroad

Venue: Rio Grande Botanic Garden, 2601 Central NW, Albuquerque NM 87104, 505-768-2000

Dates: Nov. 26-Dec. 30, 2011 (closed Dec. 24-25)

Hours: 6-9 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.cabq.gov/biopark

New York

Toys for Tots Railroad

Venue: Vincent Bove Community Center, 55 Cliff Rd., Belle Terre NY 11777, 631-928-0020, btvillageoffice@gmail.com

Contact person: John Serabian, 631-331-6774, jserabian@optonline.net

Dates: December 2-31, 2011

Hours: Wed.-Fri., 4 to 8 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., noon to 8 p.m.; closed Mon.-Tues.

Admission charge: No, toy donation requested

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.belleterre.us or on Facebook under "Toys for Tots Railroad Holiday Train Display."

Ohio

Christmas at EnterTrainment Junction

Venue: EnterTrainment Junction, 7379 Squire Ct., West Chester OH 45069, 513-898-8000

Dates: Nov. 19, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012

Hours: Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sun., noon to 6 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, outdoors



The Toys for Tots Railroad on Long Island, New York collects toy donations for needy children during the holidays.

PHOTO BY RALPH WEIDIER



PHOTO BY PAUL G. WIEGMAN

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh will open their garden-railroad display in mid-October.

Website: www.entertainmentjunction.com

The Easton Express

Venue: Easton Square Place East, Town Square, Columbus OH 43219, guestservices@eastontowncenter.com

Dates: Nov. 18–Dec. 31, 2011

Hours: Mon.–Thurs., 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sun., noon to 6 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Website: www.akronzoo.org

Pennsylvania

Christmas Magic Festival of Lights

Venue: Rocky Ridge County Park, York PA
Contact person: Turk Russell or Walter Plank, 717-762-8873

Dates: Nov. 25–Dec. 31, 2011; (closed Dec. 24, 25)

Hours: Mon.–Fri., 6 to 9 p.m.; Sat.–Sun., 5 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Holiday garden railroad display

Venue: Longwood Gardens, 1001 Longwood Road, Kennett Square PA 19348, 610-388-1000

Dates: Nov. 25, 2011–Jan. 8, 2012

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; extended hours on select dates

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.longwoodgardens.org

Holiday train display

Venue: Lititz Public Library, 651 Kissel Hill Road, Lititz PA 17543

Contact person: Sallie Rihn, 717-626-2255, srihn@lititzlibrary.org

Dates: Dec. 9–10, 2011

Hours: Fri., 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.lititzlibrary.org

Laurel Highlands Model Railroad Club, Inc. display

Venue: 209 Georgian Place, Somerset PA 15501

Contact information: 814-445-9822 or 814-443-9166, trainman_15501@yahoo.com or mplcpa@rwd.net

Dates: Ongoing; winter hours begin mid-November

Hours: Fri., 3 to 7 p.m.; Sat., noon to 6 p.m.; Sun., noon to 5 p.m.; will open for special showings for a minimum donation

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, indoors

Website: www.lhmrc.org

N scale & G scale Garden Railroad Displays

Venue: Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, One Schenley Park, Pittsburgh PA 15213, 412-622-6914

Dates: Oct. 12, 2011–March 3, 2012

Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fridays, 9:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.phipps.conservatory.org

Tennessee

Crossville Model Railroad Club Display

Venue: Crossville Outlet Center, I-40 exit 320, 361 Sweeney Dr., Crossville TN 38555

Contact person: Ann Grogitsky, 931-788-2613, im4trains@frontiernet.net

Dates: Weekends, Nov. 18, 2011–Jan. 29, 2012

Hours: Fri., noon to 4 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun., 12 to 3 p.m.

Admission charge: Donations accepted

Type: Permanent, indoors

Website: crossvillemodelrrclub.org

Texas

Bluebonnet and Keystone Railroad

Venue: 3710 Poplar Ct., Carrollton TX 75007

Contact person: Bob Roerig, 972-529-7810, broerig@aol.com

Dates: Dec. 16–26, 2011

Hours: 7 to 10 p.m., weather permitting

Admission fee: No, accepting donations for food bank

Website: www.carrolltontrains.com

Virginia

22nd Annual Holiday Train Show

Venue: Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Rd., Fairfax Station VA 22039, 703-425-9225

Dates: Dec. 3-4, 2011

Hours: Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.;

Sun., noon to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Permanent, outdoors

Website: www.fairfax-station.org
www.wvmgrs.org

Tidewater Big Train Operators Holiday Train Display

Venue: Avalon Church of Christ, 844 Woodstock Rd., Virginia Beach VA

Contact person: Sherry Caldwell, 757-490-2155, slovca@cox.net

Dates: Dec. 2-9, 2011

Hours: Dec. 2, 6 to 8:30 p.m.; Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.;

Dec. 5-9, 6-8:30 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.tbtp.org

Washington DC

National Christmas Tree

Venue: Presidents Park, near the corner of 15th and E Streets. In front of the Washington Monument

Dates: Dec. 3, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012

Hours: 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Wisconsin

Garden Railroad Display

Venue: Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, 534 S. Layton Ave., Milwaukee WI 53215, 414-649-9800

Dates: Jan. 14-March 18, 2012

Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: <http://county.milwaukee.gov/MitchellParkConservatory10116.htm>

Olbrich Botanical Society Holiday Express

Venue: Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Ave., Madison WI 53704, 608-246-4550

Dates: Dec. 3-31, 2011

Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Christmas Eve; closed Christmas Day

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.olbrich.org

Garden of Lights

Venue: Green Bay Botanical Garden Inc., 2600 Larson Rd., Green Bay WI 54303, 920-490-9457

Dates: Fri.-Sun., Nov. 26-Dec. 19, 2011

Hours: 5-8 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.gbbg.org

Shady Lane Greenhouse Display

Venue: Shady Lane Greenhouse, W172 N7388 Shady Lane, Menomonee Falls WI 53051

Contact person: Karl Hornung,

262-251-1660

Dates: Oct. 1, 2011- Jan. 1, 2012

Hours: Call ahead to verify hours of operation

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, indoors

Website: shadylanegreenhouse.com

Canada

DeWinton Station Garden Railway

Venue: #1 Valleyview Acres, 242 Ave. & 48 St. W, De Winton AB T0L 0X0 (five KM southwest of Calgary—see map on website)

Contact person: Barrie L. Roberts, info@dewintonstation.com, 403-680-7061

Dates: Call to arrange a viewing

Hours: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Admission charge: Donations accepted

Type: Permanent, outdoors and indoors

Website: www.dewintonstation.com

Fred & Jenny Aldred's G-Scale Railway Display

Venue: Christkindl Market, Kitchener City Hall, Kitchener ON Canada

Dates: Dec. 1-4, 2011

Hours: Thurs.-Fri., 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Temporary, indoors

Website: www.christkindl.ca

Once Upon A Christmas

Venue: Heritage Park Historical Village, 1900 Heritage Dr. SW., Calgary AB T2V 2X3

Contact person: Jo Morris, 403-268-8500

Dates: Nov. 19-Dec. 18, 2011

Hours: Sat. and Sun., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission charge: Yes

Type: Temporary, outdoors

Website: www.heritagepark.ca

Switzerland

Andi Engi RhB LGB Gartenbahn (Andi Engi's LGB Garden Railway)

Venue: Hotel Bellevue-Wengen, 823 Wengen, Switzerland,

www.bellevue-wengen.ch

Contact person: Andi Engi, info@aengi.com

Dates: Once per week for the public on Wednesdays; email for more information

Hours: 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Admission charge: No

Type: Permanent, indoors


Website: www.gardenrailway.ch,
www.webcamwengen.ch 



PHOTO BY ANDI ENGI

Andi Engi in Switzerland continues his tradition of running a garden railroad at Hotel Bellevue-Wengen once per week.