

BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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April—June 2005

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President's Message

Gene Mayer

Now as I begin my second term as PCR President we face the task of implementing the new NMRA single membership concept. The PCR Board of Directors approved a revised Manual of Operations. The membership approved the amended By-Laws, which conform to the new NMRA Regulations, during our May 15 annual business meeting in Concord. The By-Laws and Manual will be posted on the PCR website.

Now as I begin my second term as PCR President we face the task of implementing the new NMRA single membership concept.

Members without internet access can obtain printed copies from By-Laws and Manual Committee Chairperson Dave Connery or Secretary Rich Kolm.

My biggest concern with the new organizational structure remains funding the region's ongoing programs. The regions are prohibited from collecting dues, but may charge fees for publications and other activities.

The regions will receive \$2 for each NMRA member to cover mandated expenses.

I believe the only way to reverse the downward membership trend is to promote local activities to attract new members and retain existing members. Every NMRA member should receive the divisions' quarterly newsletters. We need to find a way to subsidize the divisions. I have appointed a special committee to study the issue and submit a report to the Board at our midyear Board meeting.

The PCR BOD approved a revised FY2005 budget developed by Treasurer Larry Altbaum. Currently PCR's annual receipts from dues and interest do not cover our operational expenses. Our biggest expenditure is the Branch Line which is the primary contact most members have with the region. The Board

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VIEW FROM THE LEFT SEAT

By

Dave Connery, PCR Vice-president

As I write this the PCR Convention is just completed. I had a wonderful time. I visited some layouts (but wasn't able to see all I wanted to), I attended some clinics (but didn't have time to attend all I wanted to), I presented a few clinics (yes, I did make it to all the clinics I was scheduled to present), I enjoyed the wonderful BBQ at the Walnut Creek Club on Sunday and had fun at the train show, but most of all I got to spend five days with a hotel full of great model railroad friends. How good can life get? Hats off to Bill Swindell, Bob Ferguson and all the members of the Walnut Creek Club for such a great convention.

Now the convention is past, most of my thoughts are on the membership changes we will see as the NMRA "single dues" Regulations are implemented, effective

September 1, 2005. A good deal of the business at the PCR Board of Directors Meeting on May 11th was in preparation for this change. We

considered many things, all of them well thought out proposals and while the Board did not reach unanimity on all topics, I think their decisions will help PCR members through this change.

First and foremost, the Board converted all PCR "memberships" to "subscriptions" effective September 1, for the term of the membership. This means if you still have months or years remaining on your PCR membership you will have a subscription for the same period. PCR Life members will become life subscribers. Speaking of Life

Memberships, the NMRA BOT ended the NMRA Life Membership Program in February. All existing NMRA Life Members were "grand-fathered". Since NMRA Life Membership was a prerequisite for PCR Life Membership and since we will no longer have separate PCR

memberships, our BOD agreed to stop offering PCR Life memberships and subscriptions.

With the September NMRA Membership change, all members need to be aware of certain differences from the past. PCR will no longer maintain a separate membership data base. You will no longer send your renewals to Martinez. To continue to receive PCR mailings and be listed in PCR rosters you will need to maintain your NMRA membership. All our labels and lists will be printed from the NMRA Data Base. When you get your renewal notice from the national office you will have the opportunity to subscribe to the Branch Line at the same time. We plan on continuing to post the

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STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The BRANCH LINE (USPS 870060, ISSN 07449771), is issued four times a year in the months of January, April, July and October. Deadline for all materials is the fifteenth of the month preceding publication. No material will be returned unless requested and sufficient postage is provided. Membership in the PCR at \$6.00 includes a subscription to the BRANCH LINE. Separate subscriptions are available at \$4.00 per year.

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*Left Seat**(Continued from page 2)*

Branch Line on the PCR web site. Any changes to your personal information (address, phone number, e-mail address) will need to be communicated to NMRA Headquarters. A current e-mail address will become increasingly important to maintain as we move toward more electronic communications. At present there are no plans to eliminate current mailed material by either NMRA or PCR, but it is inevitable more communications will move to this modern media.

All of these changes will be somewhat complicated by the loss of our long-time Membership Services Chair, Bob Ferguson. Bob has been a lot of the glue that has kept our Region membership on track for a very long time. The good news is Bob has been elected to the new NMRA Board of Directors for a 3-year term representing the Regional Advisory Council (RAC). Knowing Bob and his exceptional experience at all levels of the NMRA and in most model scales, he will be a wonderful representative. To help deal with the change and provide an interface for PCR regarding membership issues, President Mayer has appointed Jim Long to serve as our new membership liaison person (I am not sure exactly what this position will be called). Jim has recently completed 4 years as Coast Division Superintendent and will be moving to Sierra Division about the time you read this. Just how all this will work should be known by the next issue of the Branch Line, but Jim will be the person who will be providing labels for Division mailings and working with NMRA to get the records as correct as possible.

While none of this is the way I thought things would be when we voted for the new Regulations, I am confident we will make it work. I have developed a set of typical Questions and Answers which I have asked our Web Master, Kevin Hurley, to post to the PCR Web Site. A copy has been provided to each

*(Continued from page 1)**President's Message*

established a \$6 subscription fee by a 5-1 vote. Frankly, I would have preferred a flat \$51 NMRA membership fee without subscription options. Member benefits and obligations are described in the Vice President's message.

Editor Bill Kaufman submitted his resignation and announced that this will be his last issue of the Branch Line. I want to thank Bill for an excellent job producing the finest regional newsletter/magazine. Maybe he will find time to get to work on his State Belt Line 1945 era railroad.

I presented this year's President's Award to Bob Ferguson. Bob has been dedicated to this organization for many years serving as president, trustee and registrar for many conventions. I have come to rely on his recommendations and advice. He understands the organization's problems.

Devil Mountain 2005 was an excellent convention in every respect. Mary and I enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. Bill Swindell, Bob Ferguson and the rest of the host committee deserve our heartfelt thanks.

Division Superintendent, Chief Clerk and Director for use at Division meets. If you have questions and cannot review it on the web or at a meet, contact me and I will provide a copy.

I am particularly sad to see Bill Kaufman leaving as our Branch Line Editor. Bill has made solid improvements to the newsletter and has produced one of the finest Regional publications within the NMRA. He has carried out this task with a passion and dedication rarely seen in our hobby. We will really miss you, Bill.



MADE IN THE PCR

by John Marshall

One company has been a quiet leader in the growth of our hobby industry both locally and nationally. Components made by this company are used by kit manufacturers nation wide. The company is Grandt Line. Their Reese Street Row Houses kit is the subject of this article.

There has been much press in recent years about the high detail and quality that is appearing in laser cut wood structures. What is often overlooked is the exceptional quality and high detail of the injection molded components manufactured by Grandt Line. These buildings are a case in point. I purchased and assembled the N Scale version and was astounded by the amount of fine detail that is packed into the kit. The buildings represent houses in the mining districts of California and Nevada but similar structures can be found in just about any part of our country, just the other side of the tracks.

The package builds three basic “shotgun” type residential buildings. Components are also provided for three



different additions or “lean to”s that can be to create variations of the basic scheme. All told, there are enough walls, end sections, windows, and doors to build four buildings and three outhouses. I was surprised by this ‘bonus’ building once I started construction.

The component’s molding has none of the flash that is typical in other plastic molded kits. The fit of walls to each other and to floor sections is very precise. The window/door fit does not require any pre-assembly filling of the delicate window sections. A Clear styrene sheet is provided for the window/door glazing. The assembly progresses quickly and, if the components are pre-

...often overlooked is the exceptional quality and high detail of the injection molded components manufactured by Grandt Line.

Painted, secondary painting is at a minimum. Grandt Line is even thoughtful enough to provide some Victorian Era scroll work for the roof peak to add a touch of class to the building.

A minor point of concern I had was regarding the fit of the roof panels to the structure. Though the roof panels are beveled properly for the fit, their thin section appeared to make them prone to some warping. This can easily be corrected and it is not unusual to see some ‘swayback’ in the rooflines of this type structure. All in all, they make beautiful little buildings right out of the box.

Another small point is the chimney. A molded piece is provided for ridge line mounting of the brick chimney. This is not

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Made in the PCR

typical for this type of structure. While brick might be appropriate for the chimney in more populated areas, tin stacks or stone chimneys would be a better match for construction in the rough and tumble mining camps of California or Nevada.

Since I wanted these buildings to represent company housing in the coal mining districts of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, the brick chimneys didn't present too big a problem. Common brick was readily available to the mining companies and their contractors when building employee housing. I did however substitute a cast stone chimney on one of the buildings to give it a different look. For N Scale buildings, an HO Scale caboose stack also makes a great metal chimney.

While many of these buildings were built directly on the ground, many more were built on pilings. The addition of pilings helps when adding the structures to existing sites on your layout. I added these to the sub floor by using short cut pieces of Evergreen square stock. These can later be trimmed at site to match your ground contour.

I wanted to back date the roofing on my buildings. Shingles, either wood or the composite type are expensive and labor intensive and probably wouldn't have been on the bill of materials for construction of company housing. By using available Evergreen sheet products, the shingle style roofing can be easily changed to a corrugated steel roofing, sheet steel roofing or a tar paper and batten roofing for variation. Front porches and steps further enhance the appearance and allow the building to blend in with its surroundings.

All in all, the buildings produced from this kit are very well designed, offer a number of kit bashing possibilities and are generic

enough to fit in to any locale or era being modeled. They represent true value for their cost. Again, we owe a great deal of thanks to the excellent quality and craftsmanship of the Grandt Line folks.

For more information go to the Grandt Line website at: www.grandtline.com. Or Grandt Line Products at 1040 B Shary Court, Concord, CA 94518 (925-671-0143). The "Reese Street Row Houses" kit is list priced at \$26.95. Counter sales are appreciated.

**PACIFIC COAST REGION - NMRA
FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

<u>Income & Expense</u>			
	FY2004 Budget	Actual FY2004	FY2005 Budget
Operating Income			
Dues	3,500.00	3,053.50	1,250.00
General Interest	20.00	10.99	15.00
Life Interest	1,250.00	1,321.10	1,250.00
BL Subscriptions		2,100.00	
From National		1,600.00	
Other (1)	200.00	500.00	100.00
Total Income	4,970.00	4,885.59	6,315.00
Operating Expense			
Operations	1,855.00	1,276.74	955.00
Branchline (2)	4,500.00	3,773.79	7,650.00
Other (3)	1,165.00	264.11	715.00
Total Expense	7,520.00	5,314.64	9,320.00
Convention Income	300.00	244.14	225.00
Convention Expense	0.000.00	0.00	
Total Excess/Deficit	(2,250.00)	(184.91)	(2,780.00)

Assets - FY2004 (March 2005)

Cash (checking/savings) & Receivables 79,005.42

(1) Other income in FY2003 includes rental of digital projectors.

(2) Under run in Branch Line due to only 3 issues being booked in FY 2004. An added \$1500 will be reflected in FY 2005 actual.

(3) Other expense includes web page, awards, travel (trustee), and miscellaneous.

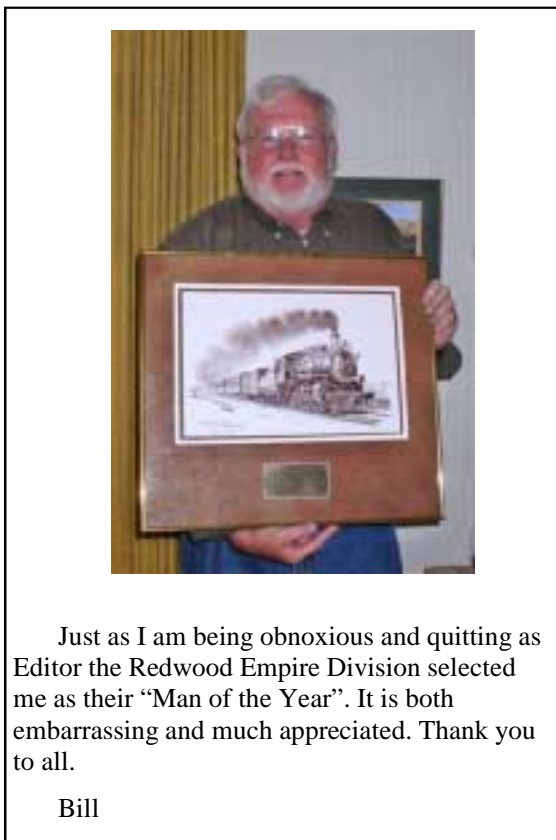
EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Bill Kaufman

As you may have seen elsewhere in this issue, this is my Last Hurrah as editor. Basically it is a policy dispute with the board. I am not going to try to bad-mouth them or reopen the argument. I believe it was hashed over at the annual meeting.

But I would like to explain.

I took over as editor when Ray de Blieck was trying to be Trustee, President, Publisher, and Editor. He felt like he was drowning. He and I had a couple of conversations about how important it was for the PCR to regularly communicate with its members. We talked a bit about the best way to get the membership interested which was to fill the Branch Line with interesting articles and let the readers



Just as I am being obnoxious and quitting as Editor the Redwood Empire Division selected me as their "Man of the Year". It is both embarrassing and much appreciated. Thank you to all.

Bill

stumble upon the administrative stuff.

Off I went with actually very little direction but much support from the board. It was great fun. The whole region has been spectacular in its support for Branch Line, both by saying nice things about it and by contributing material. (Believe me I hear the moans from my fellow regional and divisional editors and am truly grateful for the folks that write for me.)

One of the reasons I am not mad at the board is that this basically is not of their doing. They were put in an untenable position by the National. NMRA has been unable, for whatever reason, to provide a newsletter/magazine that its membership values. Its ultimate solution has not been to fix the communication, but to cast it off and let The Bulletin/Scale Rails be an optional, subscription item.

I cannot tell you how wrong-headed I think this is. (On the other hand I have told everybody in hearing distance more than once.) I cannot see how any organization that does not have good communications with its members can long survive. The Internet is just not fulfilling the need.

Even worse, as part of the reorganization, the National organization has imposed the same thing on its regions and divisions. PCR cannot charge dues, neither will the National provide enough funding to continue on with any programs we already had in place. They are only funding a few of their administrative requirements. Regions are to sink or swim on their own.

All of the regions are coping with this same mess. The only ones that come out

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smelling like a rose are the two or three that are already covering their budget with train shows and the like.

Our board was faced with a choice of preserving resources or funding Branchline for everyone. They chose to preserve resources. That is not an unreasonable choice, but it is not where my priorities lie.

I believe that the purpose of a newsletter, as I have said before, is to communicate with all the membership, including the 600 or so that we pick up with unification. A subscription-based Branch Line doesn't do that. I believe that BL is good enough that it would have something between 300-700 subscribers, but that is still less than half.

I think they should have used some of their resources (which are considerable) to fund BL for everyone while they figured out how to raise enough money for it. They didn't agree, and I am not interested in running a newsletter that isn't aimed at everyone. They need a new editor.

On a happier note, this last issue is full of good stuff, Convention results, contest winners and awards. Vern Alexander's take on *Model Railroading is Fun* is itself fun. Jim Providenza has more on how things got their names on the SCN. Mike O'Brien, who used to be PCR but moved away, gives us some of his experiences going to the *Great Basin Getaway* operations weekend. There are some wonderful reviews. Dave Connery does a bunch of books from Signature Press and John Marshall does a Grandt Line kit.

Alan Tacy from the NWP Historical Society gives us ideas for modeling Sausalito. You kind of expect a local chapter of the NWP group, but we have a report from Dick Anderson about the local CB&Q group. Who'd have thunk it! Byron Henderson talks about improving old layouts and we have reports of the annual and business meetings. Seems like enough for this issue.

Good luck to the next editor.

Bill

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

By Jack Burgess, MMR

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Continuing our discussion on the various AP certificates, this month we will talk about the requirements for Association Official. Like the other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available on the Internet at the NMRA site. You can also get a copy of the requirements by calling me.

We previously discussed the AP certificate for Association Volunteer. The Volunteer certificate is structured toward service on a National, Regional, or Divisional committee or as a Divisional officer or director. On the other hand, the Association Official AP certificate recognizes service as an officer (as either the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Director) at the national, regional, or divisional NMRA level. The minimum requirement for this certificate is at least one year at the national level; two years at the Regional level with at least one year as President or Trustee; or three years at the Regional level at a position other than President or Trustee. Division Superintendents or Directors who serve as voting members of the Region Board are also eligible.

Serving your region or division not only aids the NMRA but also provides a simple way to also participate in the Achievement Program.

I am pleased to report that Rod Smith has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Model Railroad Author. Golden Spike Awards have been awarded to Hart Corbett and Chuck Harmon. Congratulations to you all!

If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My phone number, and e-mail address are listed in the Call Board on Page 39.

Written in the PCR

Southern Pacific Freight Car Series Review

Review by Dave Connery

PCR member, noted SP authority and book publisher Tony Thompson is authoring a series of books on **Southern Pacific Freight Cars**. The author is uniquely qualified to produce this series as a life-long student of the history of both the SP and freight cars in general. In addition to having served 5 years as President the SP Historical & Technical Society, Tony is a long time SP modeler, a past PCR Contest Chairman and writes a column on modeling the SP for the Society's *Trainline* magazine.

The author is uniquely qualified to produce this series as a life-long student of the history of both the SP and freight cars in general.

Beyond the books being reviewed here, he has co-authored several other railroad books, authored numerous magazine articles and is co-owner of Signature Press, the publisher of these books.

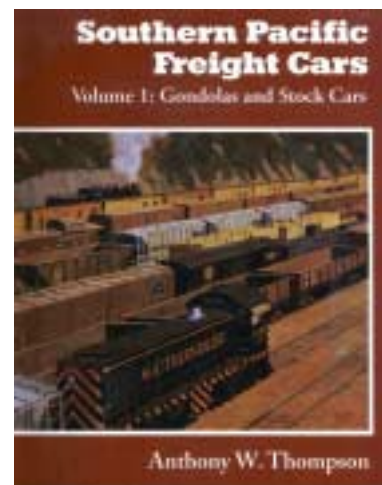
To date, three books have been released and cover SP Gondolas and Stock Cars; SP Cabooses; and SP Automobile (Furniture) Cars and Flat Cars. the author, along with Signature Press co-owner Robert Church and ex-SP train order operator Bruce Jones have produced the Second Edition of Pacific Fruit Express which strictly speaking is not a volume in the series. This is the de-facto book on SP Refrigerator cars, since PFE provided the reefer fleets for both SP and UP from 1906 until the company split in 1977 and continued as SP's refrigerator line subsidiary until the UP-SP merger in 1996.

With four books already available, there are plans to complete the review of SP cars with 2 additional books (and possibly one on the cars of the Cotton Belt). The next book in this series is expected to be on SP Box Cars with the last book on Tank Cars, Hoppers and Covered Hoppers.

The four books being reviewed here share

certain common characteristics. Each is meticulously researched, each includes wonderful details needed by modelers to accurately create miniatures of virtually every class of included cars from about the turn of the nineteenth century until into the 1960's and beyond and each is chock full of extremely interesting and high quality photos of the cars, both static shots and in use. Add to this the rich history of the SP, the background of these specific cars and the development of the railroad freight industry in general and you have a virtual graduate degree in Freight-car-ology by studying this series.

Volume 1 covers **SP Gondolas and Stock Cars** in 320 pages of text and 531 photos. There are 39 illustrations and drawings and 34 tables (providing car numbering, details and classes for most periods). Taken together, the text, photos, drawings and tables allow detailed modeling of these cars for virtually any timeframe within the periods covered and will provide the information needed to develop a prototypically accurate movement of these cars for many layout operating



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*Freight Cars**(Continued from page 8)*

schemes.

The 220 pages devoted to gondolas (20% of the SP fleet in 1950) include Work and Ballast cars, General Service gondolas from the 1920's and the 1940's, Solid-bottom gondolas from the 1930's and the post 1950 era as well as Side Extension gondolas, Ore Cars and distinctive T&NO gondolas. In addition to the various car details, I found the information on the products carried and loading / unloading processes fascinating. There are a lot of great ideas here for open loads. SP had a relatively large fleet of stock cars (4% of its 1950 fleet compared with only 2% of the national fleet) and these are covered in 58 pages.

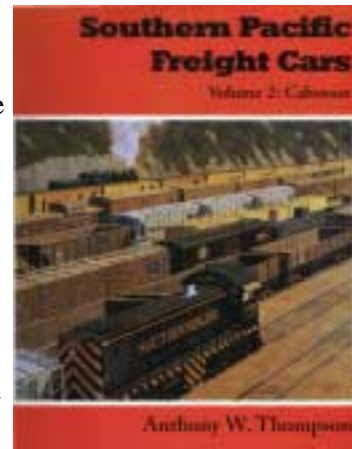
While many of the photos in this section depict cars, there are several scenes which I absolutely must include elements from on my layout – details I had never before noticed or considered. At the beginning of the book is a chapter on Freight Car Basics which covers a very brief history of cars and the SP, information on car classification, SP Painting & Lettering and SP car renumbering. The book ends with an extensive Bibliography and Index, and is listed for \$ 65.

In Volume 2, author Thompson provides 392 pages dedicated to **SP Caboose**s. It is sort of an “everything you ever wanted to know about SP cabooses but didn't know enough to ask” situation. In a word, this is an extensive study of the subject. There were about 460 SP cabooses in 1900, over 1075 in 1925, over 1250 in 1955 and 819 still on the roster in 1965. The Caboose Basics chapter covers classification, truck variations, caboose betterments and SP caboose painting & lettering. I counted 576 photos in the book, including 96 in color, along with 35 illustrations and drawings and 35 tables. Clearly, there is enough information here to accurately model virtually any caboose in the

SP fleet and to know when the caboose was on the roster, where and how it was used and all the variations in lettering over its history.

The numerous photos taken of the inside of the cars will also allow the accurate modeling of an interior, if you are up to it. The same is true for trucks and underbodies, well documented in under-construction or rebuilding photos. I was amazed at how much layout modeling information I saw in the background of the photos, especially the color shots from more recent times. In the Appendix are 6 pages with added or corrected information to what was published in Volume 1. The list price on the SP Caboose book is \$70.

SP Automobile Cars and Flat Cars (Volume 3) is the most recent book in this series. It follows the same format of the earlier two books, having 416 pages with a bunch of photos (708, of which 22 are in color). There are 71 illustrations and drawings and 46 Tables which enable the modeler to know just which cars are right for their layout and how they were numbered, lettered and used. The Freight Car Basics chapter in this book covers car pools, more about classification, Painting & Lettering, roofs and underframes and how vehicles were loaded into the Automobile cars. As explained in the book, the use of “Furniture” and “Automobile” designations began as early as 1912 and identified cars especially suited for these bulky but not especially heavy loads, often including special loading features or racks for automobile parts

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Freight Cars

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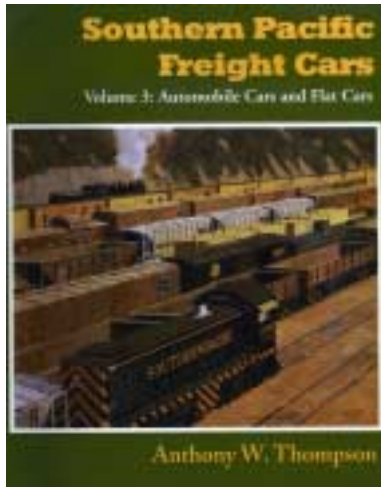
shipping.

In addition to chapters on the early cars, auto cars of the 1920's, pre-war auto cars, post-war auto cars there is a chapter on Hog Fuel (wood chip) cars. Flat cars are

covered in 8 chapters with a total of 224 pages devoted to them. The various periods of basic flat cars are covered with separate sections on logging and pulpwood cars, piggyback cars, heavy duty flats and modified or special purpose flats. The myriad of flat car loads shown in the book will provide a field day for "open loads" modelers. This book ends with 14 pages of additions to Volumes 1 & 2, and a complete Bibliography and Index as in the two previous volumes. The book is listed for \$65.

While not a part of this series, **Pacific Fruit Express** is, in fact, the book on SP refrigerator cars, as noted above. The book was first published in 1992 by Central Valley Railroad Publications (apparently a precursor of Signature Press) and the copy I am reviewing is the Second Edition published in 2000. A quick comparison of the two editions indicates several of the photos in early chapters have been substituted, several color photos are added in the last Chapter entitled "PFE in Action" and several pages of color photos added to the PFE car painting section of the Appendix, along with several color advertisements and some interesting added tables.

Most intriguing to me was a six page listing of all the perishable commoditys shipped from the SP showing each shipping district and then bar charts to show the shipping season for each. While this is invaluable data for developing



prototype operations plans, if you already own a first edition, upgrading to the second edition probably does not make sense for most of us. That said, this is a book that should be in the library of all SP modelers and probably most modelers of other Western and many Mid-west and Eastern roads.

The book is a treasure house of information on the PFE company, all the cars operated by the company during its history, the way the company and its blocks of cars operated and even in-depth details on early ice harvesting and later ice manufacturing. There are 464 pages in this edition, with 734 photos (including 49 in color) and lots of diagrams and tables. As with the freight car series, with this book your refrigerator car modeling can reach new levels of authenticity. The book is an interesting read, includes many features such as a large "pull-out" map of the PFE system, large accurate chips of the colors PFE used on their cars and with the complete Index, is an invaluable research resource. The sheer volume of cars owned (from 1930 until 1950 the fleet was between 35,000 and 40,000 cars) made regular PFE car appearances nearly certain on almost every railroad in the country. This book sells for \$75.

Although I do not model the SP, I consider these books critical sources of information for my modeling (the two short lines I model both interchanged with the SP and neither had their own cars in interchange service in the period I model [1929]). With a fleet the size of SP's, it is likely that all western railroads would have a good number of SP cars traversing the rails and the PFE cars could be found hauling California produce all over the nation-wide rail system. I would expect you can purchase these books from almost any well stocked railroad book source or they are available directly from the publisher at 11508 Green Road, Wilton, CA 95693 or by fax to (916) 939-1960, or via toll-free telephone at (800) 305-7942. The web page is <http://www.signaturepress.com/>.

A Little Love for the Yard

Ideas for procedures and practices to help the often-overworked layout yard crews

By Byron Henderson

One of the challenges in establishing balance in operating sessions is finding the right trade-off between mainline running and yard work. All too often, yards become the bottleneck for many layouts because yard work does not scale down in time to match the confines of the layout room: it takes about as long in real time to switch cars in the yard on the model as it does on the prototype. Meanwhile, the mainline is so short in nearly every case that the trains complete their runs quickly. If most of the road trains must be handled in the yard, congestion is the likely result.

There are a number of ways to design yards to make them more free-flowing and efficient in the model. Some of these include providing a dedicated yard lead, the use of arrival / departure tracks, the ability to work the yard without fouling the main, etc. It's worth considering these if you are planning a new yard or layout.

Help for the existing yard

But what if your yard is already built? Is there any hope of easing congestion and achieving a better balance between the road and the yard short of tearing up the dang thing and starting over? Stow that Sawzall, Bunky; here are a few ideas ...

I've tried to list these ideas from those requiring the least disruption of existing trackwork and operating procedures to those that mean more work and effort. I hope you'll find these to be useful "serving suggestions".

Thin the herd

Take a look at your yard. Are all those cars moving through on their way to or from modeled industries or staging? Or is there a track or two occupied by Maintenance-of-Way equipment or cars that don't operate because they don't run well or don't fit your era or concept any longer? Keeping yards free-

flowing means having as much space as possible -- both track length and number of tracks. Maybe there is a little-used spur elsewhere on the layout where you could spot the work cars and derrick, at least for op sessions. And maybe some of those unwanted cars would be happier on a farm out in the country where they could play with other rolling stock.

Kill the (fast) clock

As mentioned earlier, yard work does not scale down in the same way as running time over our always-too-short layouts. This can result in yard crews feeling harried, hurried, and harassed by a barrage of arriving and departing trains. Consider easing the fast clock rate (say, from 6:1 to 3:1 or 2:1). We've had good luck with 1:1 "railroad time" on Rick Fortin's ATSF 4th District layout -- easing the clock stress on yard and local crews.

Change the channel

Many layouts use multi-channel radios for communication during op sessions. Popular versions include the older 5-channel Maxon-style and the newer FRS radios. Simply selecting a different channel for road crews and

All too often, yards become the bottleneck for many layouts because yard work does not scale down in time to match the confines of the layout room

(Continued on page 12)

A Little Love for the Yard

(Continued from page 11)

yard crews can help make the work environment more pleasant for each by cutting down on extraneous chatter.

Give the yard a head start

Road crews have it relatively easy. One train, a switchlist or stack of waybills, one track to find it all. By this measure, the yard crew is starting off at a real disadvantage: five or eight or a dozen tracks; dozens of cars; and the rest of the session dependent on the yard crew's performance. Why not let yard operators start fifteen real-time minutes before the other jobs get rolling? This will give them a chance to get the "lay of the land" and thus help the performance of the entire railroad. Of the many op session enhancements we've made over time on Rick Fortin's ATSF layout, allowing the yard crews fifteen uninterrupted minutes before the road trains start has been the most effective.

Stage when you can, yard when you must

Are there trains that you ask crews to build in the yard that could instead be built before the operating session and stored in staging without compromising reality too severely? Remember, staging can take place out on the road as well, so maybe that first local of the day could start in a siding in the next town over. Real railroads are 24-hour-per-day concerns and our typical op session covers only part of that time. When the session starts, some trains can be "in progress" along the way. If you are careful in selecting the trains to be pre-staged, it will reduce the load on the yard without changing a single track.

Cut-offs encouraged

Real railroads set a cut-off time for particular trains and connections. Whatever they have ready at 10:00am goes out as the eastbound hauler, for example. The yard crew doesn't scour the yard "cherry picking" (see

below) for eastbounds at 9:45 to be sure they all get on that train. There will be another hauler later on today -- or tomorrow -- or whenever. Yet many model railroad yard crews get bogged down trying to gather up every available car for a particular train.

Sometimes this occurs because the car routing system is not flexible enough to handle the uncertainties of a yard. Some computer switchlist programs are notorious for this: "ATSF 13721 has to be on #28 today or it won't be in the right place next session". Except for rare expedited traffic (such as auto parts for a stalled production line), real railroads don't put this much effort into routing a single car.

Setting reasonable cut-off times helps ease the work in the yard, because switch crews can work each track fewer times rather than digging out individual cars from many tracks. If the eastbound hauler is supposed to be ready at 10:00 am, perhaps setting a cut-off of 9:00 or 9:30 makes sense. After that time, any eastbounds the crew finds or that are delivered from other trains can be ignored "for now" and will be handled on the next eastbound.

Don't let 'em pick the cherries

"Cherry picking" refers to the common model railroad practice of looking over the yard and picking one or two cars from each of a half-dozen or so tracks to make up a train by switching all the tracks for just those cars. This is very inefficient and wastes time. Working one track at a time while building cuts of cars for one or a few blocks or trains is much more typical of the prototype -- because it is more efficient.

Working a yard as the prototype crews would is more fun and it results in the yard getting "smarter" all the time. Experienced operators often work each yard track in turn, classifying cars as they go.

(Continued on page 13)

A Little Love for the Yard

(Continued from page 12)

A place for every paper and every paper in its place

We are often focused on the configuration, length, and arrangement of the tracks in the yard. And rightly so, for this will have the most impact on yard efficiencies. But a little time spent on thinking about how crews will use and store the paperwork needed for the yard is also important. There should be a place for ops aids such as car-cards and waybills, switchlists, blocking charts, procedure manuals, timetables, etc. If the crews keep spreading the paperwork out on the layout itself, you may not need a new crew ... perhaps just a narrow shelf will do.

Another excellent idea is dry-erase whiteboards (or old-school chalkboards) on the wall or on the fascia where crews can make notes and track their work. If you use the popular car-card and waybill system, consider dividers for the car-card pockets in the yard labeled with common destinations and "for now". Crews use these to segregate cards within the pockets as they work on the various trains.

Spread the joy

You can also consider ways to move the classification of cars away from the main yard. If there are places out on the road where the local could duck into a siding and have a track or two available to shuffle its cars into station order, this can save yard time. This is common on the prototype for locals, though often it depended on the union agreements whether a particular crew would be permitted to do specific kinds and amounts of switching. Another alternative is to let the local block its pick-ups into station order (e.g., eastbounds, westbounds, shorts) out on the road before returning to the yard. That will make it much easier for the yard to deal with the inbound train.

It may be easier to find space to add a spur or two to a distant town to create a "yardlet" that facilitates this kind of work than it would be to

add another track or two in an already-cramped yard. As well, this "job enrichment" can be fun for the crew of the local.

Launch a satellite ...

... satellite yard, that is. If you are planning an addition to your layout, consider adding a small specialized yard to serve nearby industries. These smaller yards can ease the load on the major yard elsewhere by eliminating some classification chores or even originating local jobs. The local yard might receive blocks of cars from passing through freights, which the local crew classifies and delivers. Gemco Yard on the former Southern Pacific in Van Nuys, CA operates in this fashion. In some eras, crews actually went on duty at these remote yards, did their work, and went off-duty again without ever setting foot in the main classification yards.

I hope these suggestions stimulate your own thoughts on finding a better balance between road and yard.

More design and ops articles are found on Byron Henderson's website at: www.modelrail.us



Steven Wesolowski won First Place in Open Display for his Glen Helen, CA Park Station

TALES OF THE SANTA CRUZ NORTHERN

By

Jim Providenza

Naming Things 3

I think I'll always remember Tony Koester's comment about how one of his trains got its nickname. The "Screw Train" went back to the very beginning of the Allegheny Midland. As I recall Tony's story, they were still building benchwork on part of the railroad and running test trains on some of railroad that already had rail down. He was using a train of coal hoppers; to simulate loads he filled the cars with the closest available metal – benchwork screws! Folks working on the layout got into the habit of calling it the screw train – and the name stuck even after the AM was fully built and operating and long after the screws had been replaced with coal loads.

The first train to get a nickname on the SCN was the "Crusher". The Crusher is the switch job that works the local industries on either side of Mac St. Yard. As it happens, speaking of names, it works in 4 different "places" that most folks would not think of as being separate locations. To look at them, you would not think that SP Xing was a distinct place from West San Jose, that West San Jose was not part and parcel with Mac St. Yard in San Jose, or that WP Jct. was an entity all unto itself. But they are! Different things happen at each location, and bad language will flow from the Mac St. Yardmaster as a train ventures into his space without permission to move past the yard limit sign at SP Xing or off the Western Pacific onto SCN rails at WP Jct.!

But we were talking about how the Crusher got its name... For a number of years from the

late 1970's into the mid 1980's I would get together with several friends for a railfan trip for 2 or 3 days before Winterail. One time we decided to travel into Nevada and photograph the SP and WP along the Humboldt River. Late one afternoon we found ourselves in Carlin, NV. Things had been kind of quiet – wherever we were, trains weren't, it seemed. However we finally caught up with the Espee's Paired Track Local in the yard, as it was finishing up its workday.

The first train to get a nickname on the SCN was the "Crusher".

Seems the crew had a bunch of ballast hoppers to switch out in the yard. They were either in a major hurry to get done and get home, or they had an engineer who knew only two throttle positions: Off and Run 8. You've heard the expression "batting cars around in a yard"? Well these guys were trying to hit home runs! The local had a pair of GP9's and they would nose down a yard track and come back with a cut of 8 or 10 hoppers, pull past the switch to the next track over, line the switch, and then gun the engines for all they were worth and shove the cut onto the next track at somewhere around 10 to 15 mph! Clearly the crew didn't see a need for a safe, damage-free coupling speed of 4 mph against the standing hoppers down the track.

The cut of cars would roll down the track and hit the standing hoppers with a crash that could be heard for miles. Amidst the clouds of dust we could actually see the hoppers jumping up off their trucks from the force of the impact.

(Continued on page 16)

LAYOUT DESIGN AND OPERATIONS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS NEWS

By Seth Neumann

We've had a very busy and exciting quarter for Operations and Layout Design in the Bay Area:

- February marked the annual PCR/LD/OP Sig meet where 90 participants met to participate in clinics, consultation, panel discussions, and "Birds of a Feather" sessions on Saturday, followed by layout tours Saturday night and Operating Sessions on Sunday. New Operators and visitors had priority at the Op Sessions. This is an *annual* event, usually held the first weekend after the Superbowl at the Santa Clara Depot, so keep it on your calendar for next year!
- March saw the first BayRails operating meet, where 45 mostly out-of-town visitors operated for three days on a dozen Bay Area layouts. A great time was had by all and we expect to see the event grow somewhat when it is next held on the second weekend in March of 2007. Check out the website at www.bayrails.com!
- May was another successful PCR convention, Devil Mountain 2005, and congratulations to Bob Ferguson and his crew for a fine job! David Parks organized a well-attended operations program and he reports:

"32 PCR Devil Mountain convention attendees participated as guest operators at the layouts of Rick Fortin, Otis McGee, Kermit Paul and Jim Radkey. Approximately 15 other PCR members participated as regular operating crew or coaches for the

guests. Several members operated at more than one layout.

The guest operators were uniformly grateful to the layout hosts for the opportunity to share these prototype operations. The Operations Special Interest Group (SIG) is already making plans for guest operating session programs at the annual SIG meet in Santa Clara in February 2006 and the PCR - River City Express 2006 convention in Sacramento in May 2006."

I had two opportunity to run at Rick Fortin's and I know that both convention attendees and the regulars had a great time. We also had a strong clinic program (I did one on yard operations) and we had the annual "meet-a-thon" where the LD-Sig forum continued into the Op-Sig forum. Many topics were covered and I hope some of the attendees came away with some inspiration for their layout designs.

We are very fortunate in the PCR and especially the Coast Division to have very close and cordial ties between the SIGs and the Region. I think this is one of the reasons that the PCR is recognized as vital and progressive!

Looking forward, the LD and OP SIGS are planning their usual comprehensive program of tours, clinics and op sessions at the NMRA National in Cincinnati. I won't be able to make it this year, but I encourage you to check out the SIG activities if you attend.

Summer, of course, is a great time to be

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Tales

(Continued from page 14)

Nothing derailed, but none of us watching this would have been surprised to see a car collapse. The force of impact was that great. Someone remarked, “He’s going to crush one of those cars if he keeps that up!” Talking about what we saw, we would later refer to the crew as the Carlin Crusher.

We continued on with the trip, made it back to Stockton on Saturday for Winterail, and then on Sunday held our annual “Winterail Sunday SCN Op Session”.

At the time the SCN was still set in the steam era and the local industry switcher was an old International Hobbies Shay. I had remotored it with a can motor from NWSL but it still ran a bit rough. Late in the session the local’s crew was busy spotting two cuts of Santa Fe hoppers from the Cement Train onto the WP interchange track. The car handling was less than gentle and after one particularly loud crash as cuts of cars were coupled together someone yelled out, “Sounds like the Carlin Crusher is at work again!” Its been “The Crusher” ever since.

I guess my favorite nickname for a train is the Cementipede. One day Dave Clemens, holding down his usual gig as the SCN Mountain Dispatcher, just started calling the Cement Train “the Cementipede” over the radio. If you ask him why, he will tell you variously it is because it looks like one, or that it is to commemorate John Armstrong’s articulated three bay cement hopper to which John gave a similar nickname. The name is clearly appropriate, catchy and humorous – just the sort of nickname that gets slapped on things in the “real” world. “The Cementipede” instantly became part of the fabric of the Santa Cruz Northern, adding another layer to the reality that makes the SCN a railroad, not a layout. And come to think of it, that’s what it is all about!

SIGs Report

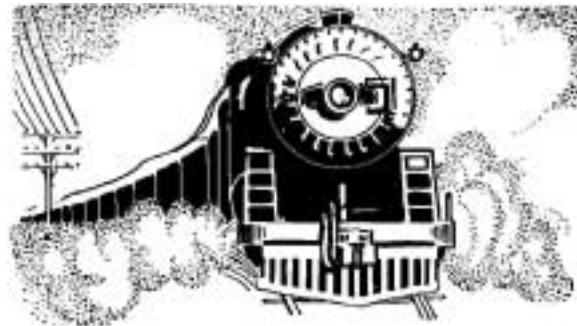
(Continued from page 15)

outside, but that doesn’t mean your modeling or operating has to suffer. It’s a great time to get out and chase the prototype, which is our inspiration (modeling operations as well as motive power rolling stock and structures). The days are long, the light is good and what better time to photograph? Watch the BL for Pat LaTorres’ ongoing series on railfan adventures, or make your own and share them with us!

If you thought it was too hot to operate in your garage or work on the layout during the summer, consider investing in some insulation and one of the low cost air conditioners that the appliance and hardware stores are advertising.

And with people traveling in the summer it’s a great opportunity to reach out to your extra board and bring some new friends in to operate! If your regular session isn’t happening, ask around and chances are you’ll find someone who is.

Personally, I hope that by the time you read this I’ll have met my goal of building 5 industry spurs and I’ll be on the way to operating the Niles Canyon layout.



HIGHLIGHTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Board of Directors - May 11, 2005

By Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Concord. Board members present were President L.E. "Gene" Mayer, Vice-President Dave Connery, Secretary Rich Kolm, Directors Kermit Paul (Coast), Ron Plies (Redwood Empire), and Jesse Menefee, Jr. (Sierra), and Director-proxy Bill Scott for Doug Wagner (Daylight).

The Agenda included several items related to the new NMRA Regulations. On September 1, when single dues take effect, all NMRA members within PCR will automatically become members of PCR, roughly doubling the current membership. Also, NMRA allows each region to set a subscription fee for its regional newsletter (in lieu of regional dues) with payment of the fee an option when members renew their NMRA dues. At the same time, each region has to provide communications to all NMRA members in the region.

The Board approved amendments to the PCR Manual of Operations, as recommended by the By-Laws and Manual Committee. Changes were made throughout the Manual to clarify and update various provisions. The more significant changes (a) re-defined the *Branch Line* as a subscription-based quarterly newsletter, (b) established a second publication referred to as the *annual official communications* to be sent to all NMRA members in the Region, which may be combined with one issue of the *Branch Line*, and (c) updated and improved the nominating processes for President and Vice-President and for Division Directors.

Amendments to the PCR By-Laws, adopted by the Board on November 6, 2004,

are on the May 15 Business Meeting agenda for membership approval. The Board adopted additional wording changes in Article 1, to be included in those amendments.

There was considerable discussion of two different proposals for the *Branch Line*, based on review of costs and PCR finances by the Publications Department and the Finance Committee. The first proposal was to provide the *Branch Line* to all NMRA members within the PCR for at least one year with no subscription fee, and then re-evaluate the costs of printing and mailing. While quarterly communications with all members are desirable, there were concerns about financing the cost over the longer term. This proposal was not adopted by the Board. The second proposal, which was adopted by the Board, establishes a subscription fee for the *Branch Line* at \$6.00 per year to be billed along with the NMRA dues. The *Branch Line* will continue to be available on the PCR website.

The Board approved combining the *annual official communications* into the first issue of the *Branch Line* each calendar year; this will be sent to all NMRA members in the Region. Besides the usual articles, the issue will carry the election ballot, information and registration for the annual convention, information related to the annual business meeting, a financial summary, and corporate notices, if any.

The Board approved conversion of all current PCR memberships to *Branch Line* subscriptions effective September 1; Regular and 5-Year Members will have a subscription until the end of their term of membership and

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Life Members will become life subscribers. It was recognized that there will be an additional cost to each Division to print and mail its newsletter to all NMRA members in the Division. To deal with that, the President is appointing a committee to gather and analyze data and make recommendations to the Board at the fall meeting. The Board directed that PCR no longer offer life memberships, consistent with the new NMRA membership structure.

Treasurer Larry Altbaum submitted a proposed revised Budget for fiscal year 2005, taking into account the loss of revenue from discontinued Regional dues, the new optional \$6.00 subscription fee for the *Branch Line*, and a \$2.00 per member allocation to be received from NMRA for administrative expenses. The Board approved the revised Budget.

The Ballot Committee reported that President Gene Mayer and Vice-President Dave Connery were re-elected for second terms. The new Storekeeper, Steve Skold, reported his initial effort to establish a computer-based inventory of all physical property of the PCR; if you have PCR property, please contact him.

It was announced that Bob Ferguson has been elected by the NMRA Regional Advisory Council to be the Director representing them on the new NMRA Board of Directors. Ferguson submitted his final report as Chairperson of the Member Services Committee. The job he has been doing for so many years is being superseded by the new NMRA organization.

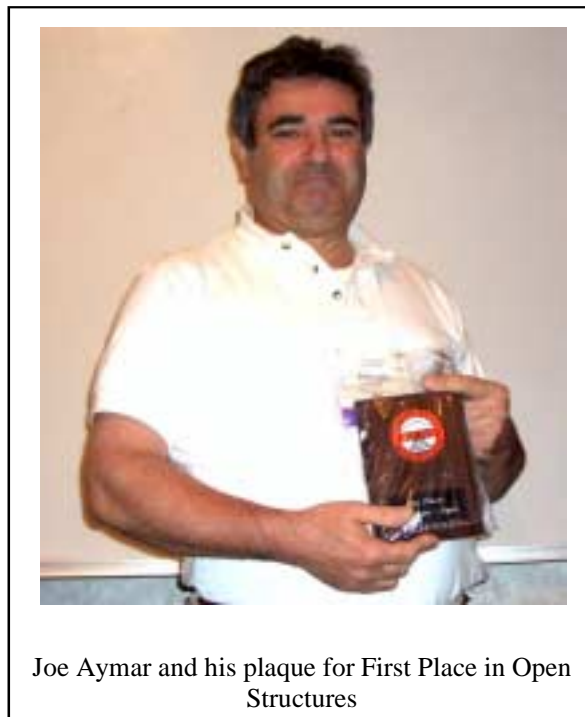
There is still a need for interface between PCR and NMRA regarding the membership data base, The Board authorized President Mayer to spend up to \$400 to get a new Member Services function operating to include printing of labels for the Region and Divisions and publication of member lists for Officers,

Directors, Division leaders, and Department Managers who need them.

Chairperson Bob Warner submitted a status report for the 2006 PCR Convention in Sacramento ("River City Express"). Chairperson Kevin Hurley presented Coast Division's proposal to sponsor the 2007 PCR Convention in Santa Cruz ("Suntan Special"), which was accepted by the Board. Chairperson John Houlihan commented on the 2008 PCR Convention in Fresno.

Director Ron Plies made a proposal related to model contests: (a) That PCR promote the displaying of models at conventions, even when they are not entered for judging nor for AP evaluation, and (b) that PCR provide a venue for the modelers to share their modeling techniques with the people attending the convention, suggesting one or two time slots in the clinic schedule. This will be developed with the Contest Department Manager.

The next Board meeting will be on November 5, 2005, probably in the Sacramento area.



Joe Aymar and his plaque for First Place in Open Structures

HIGHLIGHTS

Annual Meeting

Annual Business Meeting - May 15, 2005

By Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

President L.E. "Gene" Mayer called the meeting to order at 9:10 am at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Concord. There were 53 PCR members present.

Vice-President Dave Connery commented on amendments to the Manual of Operations and the By-Laws pointing out the need for changes under the new NMRA Regulations. Treasurer Larry Altbaum commented on the financial status of PCR and the revised FY2005 Budget approved by the Board. Secretary Rich Kolm described the highlights of the May 11 Board meeting. Trustee Ray deBlicek said Bob Ferguson was elected the Director representing the Regional Advisory Council on the new NMRA Board of Directors. The results of the election of Directors to eight other seats on the NMRA Board will be known soon.

In the recent PCR election, L.E. "Gene" Mayer was re-elected President and Dave Connery was re-elected Vice-President. They took office as the first item of new business. President Mayer announced that Larry Altbaum and Rich Kolm agreed to continue as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

The proposed amendments to the PCR By-Laws were summarized by Vice-President Connery and Secretary Kolm. They were approved by the members on a voice vote. The amendments add a brief description of the corporation, change the membership definitions to conform to the new NMRA Regulations, eliminate the reference to Regional dues, allow the Region and Divisions to establish activity and subscription fees, delete references to the PCR Trustee, add provisions regarding PCR's representation on

the new NMRA Regional Advisory Council, and update the language regarding PCR's official publication. The By-Laws will now be sent on to NMRA for review.

The new program of PCR publications was discussed. There were a number of comments and questions from members regarding the Board's decision to set a subscription fee for the *Branch Line*. There were also comments about the need to notify members by e-mail when the *Branch Line* is posted on the PCR website. President Mayer pointed out that he is appointing a committee to study the issue of Regional financial support for Division newsletters.

Bill Swindell, Chairperson of this 2005 Convention, thanked the Committee and especially Bob Ferguson for their work in making it a success. Bob Warner, Chairperson of the 2006 Convention in Sacramento, described the program for "River City Express." Kevin Hurley, Chairperson of the 2007 Convention in Santa Cruz, talked about plans for "Suntan Special."

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am. This was followed by the drawing for door prizes and the Convention's presentation of awards.





DEVIL MOUNTAIN

2005 Contest Report

01-Freight Car-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
92	Steven	Wesolowski	1880 Ventilated Boxcar	
79	James	Eckman	Box Car #24	
74	James	Eckman	Box Car MW14	
59	James	Eckman	SP R #12 Gondola	

04-Passenger Car-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
84	Ron	Plies	UP chair car	

07-Steam Loco-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
90	Mark	Schutzer	SP C-6 Consolidation # 2500	
64	Mark	Schutzer	Pickering Lumber 3 Truck Shay #3	

10-Diesel-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
114	Joseph	Aymar	SP SD45T-2 as SP9341	Best in Show
42	Pat	La Torres	Western Pacific GP-7, 711	

13-Caboose-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
75	Steven	Wesolowski	Caboose, Falling Water & Boomtown RR Nn3	

16-Structure-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
92	Joseph	Aymar	Stoney Creek Bridge	
90	Darryl	Huffman	O Scale Miners Bar	

19-MoW-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
106	Joseph	Aymar	Track Tamper	

22-Display-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
31	Steven	Wesolowski	Glen Helen, CA Park Station	

23-Display-Novice

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
44	Gordon	Mortlock	Hobo Jungle Scene	

25-Traction-Open

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
42	Pat	La Torres	Budd RDC1 Western Pacific #376	

29-Module-Group

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
113	Jim	Long	Portable Layout Yosemite Shortline	Ingenuity Award

33-Slide Model

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	Pat	La Torres	Helper at Long Ravine	

*(Continued from page 20)***34-Prototype Slide**

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	Pat	La Torres	Cherry	
12	Pat	La Torres	2200 At San Lorenzo	

35-Model Color Print

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	William	Scott	AT&SF Valley Flyer	
12	William	Kaufman	SR&C Baird Engine House	
11	William	Kaufman	SF&C Escarpment	

38-Trains in Action Print

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	Edward	Richards	Cumbres & Toltec 2004 RG 487	
12	William	Kaufman	M&ET Switching 1	
11	Stephen	Skold	Shasta 1	
0	Stephen	Skold	Shasta 2	
0	William	Kaufman	M&ET Switching 2	

39-Other Prototype Print

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	William	Kaufman	CSRM Santa Fe	
12	William	Kaufman	CSRM SP	

40-Tracks & Structures Print

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
13	Edward	Richards	Mt Ranier Scenic Rwy Rail Joint	
0	Edward	Richards	Antonio Water Tower 2004 Best Print in Show	

48-Railroadiana-Original

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
95	Mary	Moore-Campagna	Stitched Table Mats	

51-Needlework-Original

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
120	Susan	Swindell	Crocheted tote Bag	
105	Sally	Bird	Afgan	

52-General-Kit

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
125	Kristy	Webster	Grand Piano Wall Hanging Quilt, Watercolor Fabric	

53-General-Pattern

Score	First Name	Last Name	Entry Description	Special Awards
125	Susan	Swindell	Mile A Minute Quilt	
120	Carol	Skold	Fabric Quilt-Tropical Print	
119	Kristy	Webster	String Pieces Star Quilted Table Topper	
118	Phyllis	Biggs	Rag Heart Quilt	





DEVIL MOUNTAIN

2005 Contest Photos



Joseph Aymar's Southern Pacific SD45T-2 SP9341 won Best in Show



Steve Wesolowski's 1st place Caboose done in Nn3 was almost too small to see



Mark Schutzer's SP C-6 Consolidation # 2500 earned a First in Steam Locomotives



Joseph Aymar won again for this Track Tamper, taking the MOW Category



The Hobo Jungle Scene won First Place in the Display-Novice category for Gordon Mortlock



The Yosemite Short Line group deservedly won in the Module category



Susan Swindell won the General Pattern division of the Arts and Crafts contest



Mary Moore Campagna's Table Mats took First place in the Original Railroadania section of the Arts and Crafts contest

CHICAGO, BURLINGTON AND QUINCY: ALIVE AND WELL IN CALIFORNIA

By Dick Anderson

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy motto that adorned its boxcars, timetables and advertising was Everywhere West. It was something of a boast not quite backed up with the facts. The Q's rails didn't come close to California, for instance, even though some of its passenger rolling stock made it into Oakland regularly as part of the California Zephyr.

These days, however, the Burlington Route is alive and well in the Bay Area, perhaps more of a presence than it ever was in former times. That's because a dozen or more CB&Q railfans and modelers throughout the region continue to collect Burlington memorabilia, model Burlington trains and share slides, video and - most of all -

Burlington stories to these many years after Burlington Northern green and white were splashed over everything Q. They call themselves The Everywhere West Group. Most of them are also members of the Burlington Route Historical Society.

The Everywhere West Group met on April 2 in San Jose. They gathered at 10 a. m. in the home of Ray Bedard to watch operations on his HO layout, look over his extensive collection of Burlington stuff, and enjoy a pizza lunch. About a dozen were present, coming from San Rafael, Corte Madera, Novato, Pinole, Citrus Heights, Modesto and even Oregon, thanks to Jim Young, who arrived on the Coast Starlight reasonably close to schedule (believe it or not).

Ray demonstrated some of the new Broadway Limited steam locomotives and E7 passenger units equipped with sound that is compatible with DC operation. The structures, landscaping and rolling stock effectively bring to life the CB&Q of years gone by.

After a pizza lunch, the group traveled a

couple of miles to the restored Victorian home of Bill Glick. Bill's HO Burlington includes a model of the heavyweight Blackhawk that plied the rails between Chicago and the Twin Cities in pre-Zephyr days, including some cars with the train name on the letterboard. Bill is well known among Burlington fans for his book *Passenger Cars of the Burlington*, a collection of diagrams, plans and other data about

the Q's fleet of heavyweight and lightweight cars. It's the book to use if you're a kitbasher desirous of turning commercially available rolling stock into equipment that was uniquely Burlington.

The Everywhere West Group has been meeting since 1981. Bill Glick gets the credit for initiating the gatherings and he is still the

one who has a hand in planning the groups gatherings. You don't have to be solely Burlington oriented to enjoy the group's. It's open to those mildly interested in the CBQ as well as those addicted to the road. You can contact Bill Glick at 1321 Newport Avenue, San Jose, California 95125 if you're interested.

These days, however,
the Burlington Route is
alive and well in the Bay
Area, perhaps more of a
presence than it ever
was in former times.



2004 GREAT BASIN GETAWAY

By Mike O'Brien

Hi all....

There were 3 operating layouts, each operating all day for one third of the 45 guests, over 3 days. One of the layouts ended up a little crowded for 15 guest operators, but that was OK. This "Great Basin Getaway" was advertised with notices published on the Internet in the OpSig email list and also in the quarterly Journal of the Operations Special Interest Group, "The Dispatcher's Office." For example, the April 2004 D.O. lists 14 of these regular operations events, some annual, some biannual, all over the USA, along with who to contact. They are pretty much first-come, first-served. So these events cater to those of us in the hobby who want to attend operating sessions, and who follow the Operations SIG. You can join the SIG for \$15 a year direct, or send me \$25 and I will join you up. <joke>

The 3 were: Lee Nicholas' UCW, Ted York's ATSF Cajon Pass, and Gary Peterson's SLS, all near Salt Lake City, Utah.

All 3 layouts ran by signal indication, so radio or phone contact with the dispatcher/towerman/yardmaster was limited to getting clearances for certain tracks and so forth. This



Tom Turner and I railfanned Cajon Pass on the way home. It was especially interesting to be here, after being at Ted York's model of the same place. The scale is different. Really. Not just HO versus full size, but the real place seems vast, with mountains thousands of feet high

worked well, even though we had greenhorns running most positions. When railroad procedures are followed, instead of model railroad inventions, experienced operators can pick it up real fast.

We had 3 completely different command control systems. Digitrax radio DCC, RailCommand radio analog, and RailLynx infrared direct. All worked well enough. My local layout (Gary Siegel's L&N) has problems with EasyDCC because it's so big. So I am especially interested in these systems. On large layouts with many locos there is a perceptible delay between the speed control knob and the locomotive, up to one full second on Gary's. I asked around during our socializing time and some delay is commonplace on all systems, except RailLynx. It was wonderful using RailLynx for switching on Lee Nicholas' as the loco could just nudge up to a coupler and stop with the knuckles just touching, then nudge up some more with the knuckles just opening up and clicking into place. With DCC you just ram into the cut of cars and hope you don't push them too far. Ken McCorry in Pennsylvania has a huge layout which has been NCE and is now going to DigiTrax--in the past he has used 4 different command control systems. We all love command control but it is not yet perfected. Ted York is anxiously awaiting a newly designed DigiTrax throttle designed to his givens and druthers for op sessions. Lots of ideas and choices in the command control world.

Another thing I'm looking at these days is how to light a layout. There is no consensus on the best way to light a model railroad. Sure, fluorescent lamps are great these days, either tubes or bulb-like, but where do you put them? The usual thing has them over the rooftops, not lighting the sides of freight cars and locos near

(Continued on page 25)

*Getaway**(Continued from page 24)*

the front of the layout. I don't care for backlighting of highly detailed models. Yet layouts look good with the "museum diorama" fascias and valances. Lee's layout had these painted black, so did Ted York's ATSF Cajon Pass, and Gary Peterson's SLS had them painted buff color. My own plan is to have fascias painted the color of the layout scenery (ballast green? <g>) and not have any valances. Lights will be directly overhead of the operators down the center of the aisles. So, bright aisles and bright layout, with good light on the front of equipment. Give the feel of a bright Texas sunny day with lots of scattered clouds. I saw a layout lighted this way in Seattle last July at the NMRA national convention, Brian Ellerby's Alaska narrow gauge layout. But there were no complaints on the lighting of these 3 excellent layouts in Salt Lake City--or on Gary's L&N in Santa Barbara, either.

Operations-wise, I got to use carcards on



As an extra event, we visited the layout in progress of Jon Robinson in SLC. He lives in an old church building which is huge. You can see how big his layout room is. There is another wing as big as this one, plus full basements under everything. This layout is planned to be two stories high, so is built like a two story house in the middle of the room.

the UCW, which I like a lot. I think Cajon Pass uses switching lists, which are more of a hassle in my opinion, but they suit its thru trains mode so Ted uses them. I didn't switch on the SLS, the 3rd layout -- I

dispatched the first half, then ran thru trains the 2nd half, and Gary gave me a freight with switching to do so I would get a chance to try it, but time ran out before I got to a yard with my train. I stand firmly on the side of carcards: even tho real RRs use switching lists. Carcards are simply carriers of waybills, and a stack of carcards with waybills comprises a sort of switchlist, quickly put together and easy to use.

Gary's SLS had a sort-of CTC panel made using plastic switches from Rix Products and various push buttons on a masonite model board. I enjoyed dispatching. The switch machines threw when set instead of waiting for the code button, while the signals did not set until the code button was pressed, so you could not pre-condition nor even set up a route and wait to code it. But I quickly figured it out and got trains running. Probably because everyone was new to the layout, it got pretty hectic and stressful -- also because we had a few too many ops and tried to keep everyone busy. The 2nd half I ran thru trains and got stressed with unfamiliarity, passing red signals, not knowing what to do where, etc. For example, at one point another train collided into my rear, inadvertently coupling into my helper engine and pulling it off my train and down the track a half mile. This layout has lots of hidden track



Here's a bald guy from Pasadena sticking his head into Ted York's Cajon Pass layout. They tell me his name is Mike O'Brien. I see him in the mirror every morning.

(Continued on page 26)

Getaway

(Continued from page 25)

and loops where you don't know where your train will reappear. At one point I was waiting for my train to appear in the bathroom, cranking up the speed to get it out of a tunnel, but it was actually running around a loop in a hidden staging area under the layout! Boy, could I have caused a big wreck.

My own plans are to do as my prototype, the M-K-T in Texas, with TT&TO, some tower interlocking, some CTC trackage, some trackage rights on other RRs, and some dark branches. It might be confusing to my ops, so I am a little concerned. We'll see.

Lee's UCW had a real CTC board, made by Rod Loder. Just like Gary Siegel's. So mainline trains run on signal indication. I also ran on a branch with "manual blocks" which was just like DTC, tho short so there were only three blocks. Telephones are used to get blocks, no radio. Very nice.

DCC and RailLynx allow sound systems, which are really, really, really nice for operations as a feedback device for running trains. A "must have", really. Besides being fun to whistle at road crossings. These new Broadway Limited sound-equipped locos will advance the hobby by making sound systems routine. Ken McCorry said he tests response time on his huge DCC Pennsylvania layout by seeing how quickly he can send whistle commands.

Scenery on all three layouts was beautiful. I think two of them will be in the *Great Model Railroads* issue due out soon. Ted York has delicate models and would not normally allow visitors to run them, to preserve handrails etc. So he has rules: do not touch the models. Do not lift up cars to uncouple them. Do not rerail wrecks, call him to do it (not that there were any wrecks, it all ran perfectly). Do not reach into the layout, knocking over signals, buildings, etc. These rules are OK because the railroad deserves the respect, it is gorgeous.

Multiple decks. Lee's and Ted's were mostly one deck, tho Lee had an upper deck branch line. Gary's had multiple decks -- as many as five in places, and single deck in other places. It got pretty confusing to someone new to it, as we boomers were. I am planning on three decks on my RR, with the third being minimized kind of like a "basement." So I will have two main decks. I want them aligned along the front, or "fascia." None of these three layouts were like this, but I remain pretty sure of myself on what I want to do. This is an issue on which there is no general consensus on how a model railroad should be. Obviously single deck is best, unless the mainline run is too short. Then we start compromising, with many variations possible. Ted York did not have to compromise, as he has a huge basement. Lee Nicolas keeps the single deck feel while often having two lines nearly parallel in one scene, very successfully. This seems to violate the "sincerity" principle but it actually works very well here. Gary Peterson mostly maintains sincerity but extends the run with multiple decks and hidden loops, adding complexity and extending the learning curve. Operating a big model railroad has enough interest to get 45 guys to travel hundreds or thousands of miles -- we had several guys from the east coast -- so a readily understood track



Here's Robin. He's at a choke point in the aisles where it gets too narrow to pass, which is probably why he's looking at me that way, I hope.

(Continued on page 27)

*Getaway**(Continued from page 26)*

plan is an advantage. I may have to rethink my plans to add several potentially confusing branch lines to my linear track plan. I am designing my own model RR with the idea that it can accommodate boomer op crews such as we had in Salt Lake this week.

Crew lounges, dispatcher offices, and such. Lee had a dedicated one right near the crew caller position, which seemed optimal. Ted used his breakfast room upstairs. Gary had a basement family room surrounded by staging yards, which everyone who used the sofa hit their head on. two of the layouts had dispatcher offices, the third did not have a dispatcher. I am planning on having these upstairs, since I wanted the layout to be as big as possible in the basement. Everyone loves Lee's crew lounge right at the RR. Oh well. By the way, Lee's has a ceiling height of about six feet, so I have to tilt my head, but we all put up with it. His RR has 6'-3" headroom but is OK for almost everyone, so a low

ceiling height is no deterrent. Sorry, you tall guys.

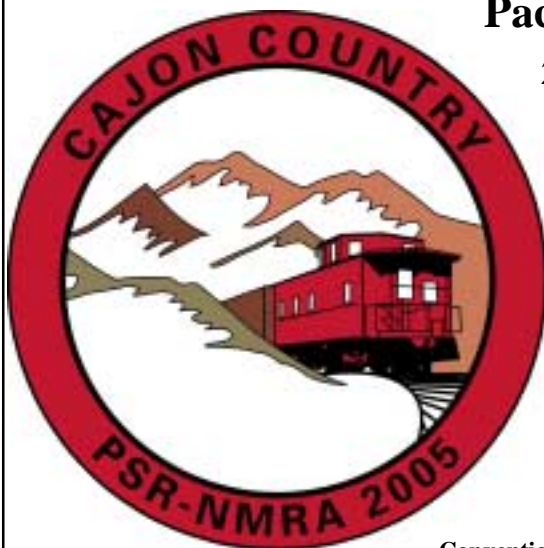
What else/ Like Tom, I loved the food events put on for us, barbeque, etc. Very well organized, thanks to Lee Nicholas. Great to socialize with my MRR friends from other cities, gossip, etc. Shared a hotel room three ways, so it was inexpensive. Drove to SLC from LA, over 700 miles, with Tom Turner.

We carpooled a lot, visited hobby shops in odd moments, railfanned, you know how it goes. A great time had by all.

Mike O'Brien



The Yosemite Short Line—winner in the Module Group



Pacific Southwest Region, NMRA®

2005 Convention — September 7-11, 2005

Radisson Resort Knott's Berry Farm

Buena Park, California

Presented by the Cajon Division, PSR

Model Railroading Fun at Its Best!

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Details & Information: www.psr-nmra.org

Convention Chair: Jan Wescott, (702) 566-0856, wescvegas@cox.net



Redwood Empire Division Report

By Steve Skold

RED members had a good run in the PCR Contests at the recent PCR Convention. Highlighting the list was Joseph Aymar who won Best of Show for his SP Tunnel Motor. He garnered two additional first place trophies. Ron Plies took a first place in Passenger with a UP chair car. Bill Kaufman and Steve Skold both got awards in photography. Carol Skold won a second in the Non-Rail contest for her quilt. Bill Kaufman was also named as RED's Man of the Year, the award which will be placed on the wall next to his PCR Presidents Award.

Two sad events have taken place. First, the Vallejo Model Railroad Club is being forced from their long run at the Vallejo Fairgrounds. Fortunately, they have found space in Crockett and will be moving in sometime this summer.

The other bad news is that after 28 years of operation, Don Cabrall's *Hessel and Lone Pine* is shutting down. Don and Liz are moving to Rohnert

Park and the layout is coming down. The Sonoma County Hi-Ballers have operated on this wonderful layout this entire time. This will cause several members to speed up layout construction to fill the void. Thank you Don for all the wonderful hours we have had on your layout.

The Napa meet was held just before the PCR Convention. Nolan Alexander was reelected as RED Superintendent and Steve Skold was reelected as Chief Clerk/Paymaster. With the recent enactment of the single dues structure in NMRA, RED will be studying the possibility of

going to an all electronic Callboard to cut costs. Details will be in the next Branch Line and subsequent issues of the Callboard.

Our summer meet will be held in Lakeport at the Fairgrounds on July 17th. We will be having a picnic and soft drinks and BBQ's will be available. Bring sandwiches or food to cook. Directions will be in the next Callboard. Program will include two clinics. The Art of Model Railroading—Your Models on Canvas is one by Dave Frommer . It will be about digital

photography and he says bring your digital camera. There will be a computer and printer. Mike Ernst will be doing a clinic on casting in plaster. The layout is under construction but can run on both DC and DCC so bring an engine if you want to run.

We are working on the November meet which is tentatively scheduled for Tiburon. Bill Kaufman may be doing his clinic on the State Belt Railway of California, the line that worked the San Francisco

waterfront when San Francisco was an active port. If you have any information or pictures on the State Belt, please bring them as Bill would love to see them as he is starting his new layout based on the State Belt.

The Callboard is available on line at <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/>

Our summer meet will be held in Lakeport at the Fairgrounds on July 17th. We will be having a picnic and soft drinks and BBQ's will be available.

New Board of Directors Elected

By Ray deBlieck, PCR Trustee (lame duck sub-division)

Since the new Regulations were adopted by the membership last year, we have been slowly implementing the various components. Now, we are ready to begin operating under the two biggest changes to our organizational structure, single membership and the revamped Board of Directors.

The first Board of Directors (formerly known as the Board of Trustees) election is now complete. The new board, consisting of nine directors, as opposed to the former 17 Trustees, will be seated at the annual Board meeting, which is held in conjunction with the annual convention. The Board will consist of the individuals listed below. Listed by the seat they fill and the length of their initial term.

Eastern District Director (one year term)	Kevin Feeney
Central District Director (three year term)	Dave Thornton*
Western District Director (two year term)	Ray deBlieck*
Atlantic District Director (two year term)	Steve Park*
Pacific District Director (one year term)	David North*
NMRA Canada Director (three year term)	Clark Kooning*
At-Large Director - North America (one year term)	Charlie Getz
At-Large Director - Worldwide (two year term)	Tony Koester
Regional Advisory Council Director (three year term)	Bob Ferguson

**Directors who served on the most recent Board of Trustees*

Board elections will be scheduled as follows;

2006 – Eastern District, Pacific District, and At-Large – North America

2007 – Western District, Atlantic District, and At-Large – Worldwide

2008 – Central District, NMRA Canada, and Regional Advisory Council

That pattern will repeat every three years.

PCR Awards Presented at Business Meeting

By Ray deBlicek, Chair - PCR Honors Committee

The annual PCR awards were presented at the annual membership meeting held during the PCR Convention in Concord. As is our normal custom, the Division Member of the Year Awards are presented by the Division Directors. Coast Division's presentation went to Rod Smith, Sierra Division's Member of the Year was Don Schmidt, Daylight honors went to Marlin Costello, and the Redwood Empire recognized Branch Line editor, Bill Kaufman.

Gene Mayer then presented the PCR President's Award. This is presented to the annual selection as Regional Member of the Year. For 2005, it was presented to Bob Ferguson. Bob, who was recently elected to a seat on the NMRA Board of Directors, was cited for the numerous contributions he has made over the years at all levels of the NMRA, as well as for his work in other hobby organizations. Bob is certainly one guy most deserving of recognition.

The last award presented was the John Allen Award. Named for one of the most renowned model railroaders, John Allen. Famed for his remarkable railroad, the Gorre & Daphited, John was a noted layout photographer, and an early pioneer in model railroad operations. John, who lived in Monterey, in

addition to all his remarkable work on his railroad, was also known for his selfless service to the hobby, Coast Division, Pacific Coast Region and the NMRA.

The now famous Switchstand trophy was first presented in 1973, shortly after John's untimely passing. Sponsored by Coast Division, it is presented annually in remembrance of John by recognizing individuals who give of themselves for the betterment of NMRA, PCR, the Divisions, and model railroading in general. With selection by past recipients, it is in recognition of hobbyists sharing time they could otherwise spend modeling.

The 2005 recipient of the John Allen Award was Larry Altbaum.

Larry has served as PCR Treasurer since 1991, and as PCR Secretary from 1991 through 2000. He has also served on several convention committees, including 7 years as

Vice Chair on the 2000 NMRA National held in San Jose.

Congratulations to all recipients. I am confident I speak for all PCR members when I say, "Thank you! Well done, and well deserved."



Gene Mayer presenting Bob Ferguson with the President's Award

The Ultimate Trustee Report

By Ray deBlieck, Chair - PCR Trustee

I sat down to write my last report for the Branch Line as PCR Trustee. But it truly is a revolving door. You indeed will still have me to kick around. I learned just last night that I have won the election for the Western District Director. So the title is basically the only thing that changes for now.

For this report, I am going to look ahead. As I anticipate participating on the new, basically half-size Board of Directors, I am excited about the possibilities. I was somewhat concerned going into the election about how many of the nine Directors would come from the ranks of recent Trustees. I was concerned that we maintain some level of corporate memory.

With the major changes in both Board structure, as well as implementation of single membership just three months away, I felt that a near absence of any of the recent Trustees would result in a board unfamiliar with the reasons behind some decisions. Based on the way the election ballot came together, it was possible only one Trustee, experienced beyond one meeting, would carry over to the new board.

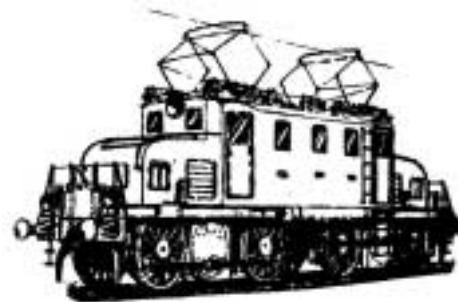
As I look over the new board makeup (see separate report in this Branch Line) I am pleased that five of the nine members were Trustees, and one, Charlie Getz, who was my predecessor as PCR trustee, actually wrote most of the Regulations as LRP chair. So, for now, I think corporate memory is protected at a time it will be a real benefit to the organization.

The next, and last, major change in implementing the new Regulations, will be single membership. That will happen on September 1. Part and parcel with that change

will be the change over to a new database. From the very beginning of the LRP process, it was understood that single membership was going to require a single database. And what we had been using wasn't going to be it. A committee has been hard at work on this project. Included in the plan will be access to the database by regions and divisions. As soon as final decisions are made, the regions will be notified.

A word of warning, and a request. In looking over membership records, specifically comparing due dates for regional and national memberships, there are a large number of members whose dates are not in alignment. That will have to be corrected if single membership is going to work. Due to the variety of situations involved, there is no single method that will work for everyone. There are going to have to be some decisions and adjustments made. We do not know at this date exactly how it will work for everyone. Please be patient and work with us while we go through that process.

That's all for now. I will continue to get info into the Branch Line and as always I remain available for any member who wishes to contact me. It has been my pleasure to serve as PCR Trustee and I greatly appreciate the support in the recent election. I will try my best to live up to that support.



Sausalito

Layout Design from the Northwestern Pacific Historical Society

By Allen Tacy



Breathes there a modeler with soul so dead he would not build a version of Sausalito? If he had his druthers? With its beautiful harbor, hills tumbling down to the Bay, Victorian style multistory buildings clinging to the base of those hills? Freight and passenger terminal built out on a wooden wharf, car barge making off-the-layout interchange? It's a prototype crying out to you, "Please, model me!" The stores of today's Sausalito are those of yesteryear, and who would not enjoy a day visiting Sausalito to see and to shop?

This photograph was taken in 1892. Anchored offshore are tall ships of the California grain fleet. Snuggled up against the North Pacific Coast freight wharf are two of the Bay's ubiquitous scow schooners taking on lumber. Behind the wharf and rising above it is the pilot house of NPC's car barge *Transfer*. Were it occupied loading freight cars, it would be tied up at the apron between the two square wooden towers (photo center) which house

the apron lift mechanism. To *Transfer's* left is the headframe of a pile driver. Wish it were car mounted; NPC's numerous trestles needed one

An interesting detail is the harp switchstand at bottom photo center, which is mounted on a platform. Note the farmer and his hired hand transferring grain sacks from a freight wagon to a flatcar standing just beyond the three-way switch. Stakes mounted on the car's end, like those on the car just beyond it, suggest the car was often used to haul cordwood, which is what that car beyond is loaded with. Huge quantities of cordwood came down to Sausalito, and to Tiburon, from Marin and Sonoma County woodlots. San Francisco's demand for cordwood seemed insatiable. The city's cool summers meant that demand continued year round

To the right of our farmer's wagon is one of N P C's picnic flatcars, a converted Carter car with

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bench seats. This one features a roof, which is a real improvement. The original design left passengers sitting in the hot sun, beating off hot stack sparks. N.P.C. handled floods of picnickers on summer Sundays taking day trips to see the redwoods at Mill Valley, Fairfax, or Camp Taylor. All of them streamed through Sausalito. The road steamed up every pot that could turn a wheel, called every man who could pull a throttle summer Sundays. The railroad left the flatcar numbers on its picnic cars, so we know only from photos that there were many of them.

not so large in 1891 that it could not be reproduced on a home layout. The elevations indicate how steep the hillsides are, and you can see steps staircasing up their slopes. A clever modeler could finesse the rather unattractive ferry building at the end of the wharf. The railroad put up a new, better looking structure in 1894, but it featured a train shed which would hide your models. Perhaps a flat representing just the end of the building.

Engines backed their trains down to this terminal throughout the history of Sausalito. The engine house, shops, and main yards were a mile



Not an accurate count. Beyond the picnic car is another converted flat, this one a gon. Perhaps carrying coal. Coal was making inroads in the home heating market among Marin's well-to-do. It came from Vancouver Island.

Tracks shown in the Sanborn fire insurance map don't quite agree with those in the photo. Sanborn was more concerned with insuring buildings than with mapping tracks. Another interesting detail, which shows in the 1894 Sanborn map (not reproduced), is the small shed built on the N.P.C. wharf above this map's passing track which housed a two-wheeled hand powered fire hose cart.

Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society archives a number of versions of Sausalito maps, as well as photos of the waterfront. They tell the story of how the terminal grew into a major commuter operation during the NWP years. I chose this map for its economy of space. This terminal was

away, where Marinship thrived during World War II and the Coast Guard's San Francisco Bay model now is. That white structure in the photo (center foreground) would be an ideal spot for a turntable. Right up front where everyone can see the loco spin and show its fine detail.

Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society has hundreds of tracings of NWP RR station maps covering nearly all the depots on NWP. They represent a treasure house of layout design ideas. Use them to model a prototype or simply for freelance inspiration.

Write NWPRRHS P.O.Box 667, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 or visit the Society's Library in Rohnert Park with over 12,000 catalogued records including maps, 6,500 photos, and plans. Open Saturday afternoons, 1-5 PM. See NWPRRHS.org for direction map and for information regarding Society activities.

MODEL RAILROADING IS FUN: PART UMPTY-SEVEN

By Vern Alexander

It all began so innocently. A few months ago an article about freight car fleets appeared in *Scale Rails*. It was a good article and made several relevant points about how our freight cars ought to be apportioned on our layouts. However, I, in my infinite wisdom, decided that one salient point had been omitted. I had recently had an epiphany, which was that even though I had a ridiculous total of 540 unbuilt freight car kits, I did not have enough freight cars for my tiny little Colville, Republic and Palouse (CRAP) railroad!

So I wrote of my epiphany to *Scale Rails*. The CRAP is set in eastern Washington State, and most of my 540 unbuilt freight car kits carried the names of Pacific Northwest railroads. The gist of my letter was that this was a big mistake, that a study of pictures of trains in the PNW showed that they had a large proportion of Eastern road box cars. My 540 kits were insufficient—I needed more Eastern road box cars if I were going to be able to run prototypically plausible trains.

Scale Rails, in its infinite wisdom, decided to print my letter. Devious Steve Skold read the letter, which he saw as Poor Verne going “wah, wah” over not having enough Eastern road box cars. The gears in Devious Steve’s mind began turning, and ground out a plan. This plan involved accomplices. Steve is surrounded by a mostly geezer group of equally devious individuals known collectively as the Sonoma County Highballers. A conspiracy was set in

motion! Only I, possibly the most deviant of the devious, was unaware of what was going on, and it was going on right under my nose!

Eventually the Highballers convened at my house for a work session on the CRAP.

I had recently had an epiphany, which was that even though I had a ridiculous total of 540 unbuilt freight car kits, I did not have enough freight cars for my tiny little Colville, Republic and Palouse (CRAP) railroad!

Immersed as I was in the attempt to orchestrate a work session for 10 guys when the CRAP only has a 13’ x 13’ room, I was utterly oblivious to all of the brown paper bags that the guys had brought with them. At some point the work stopped and everyone took a seat in the dining room. All eyes were upon me, and all faces were marked by diabolical grins. I felt like a mouse at a

snake convention, but what ensued was far different from that.

Out came the contents of all those paper bags. They were boxcars. Not kits, but ready to run box cars. Each of these guys had gotten an undecorated carbody, painted it, added trucks and couplers and lettered it for an Eastern railroad. Poor Verne’s fleet imbalance had been redressed in a major way!

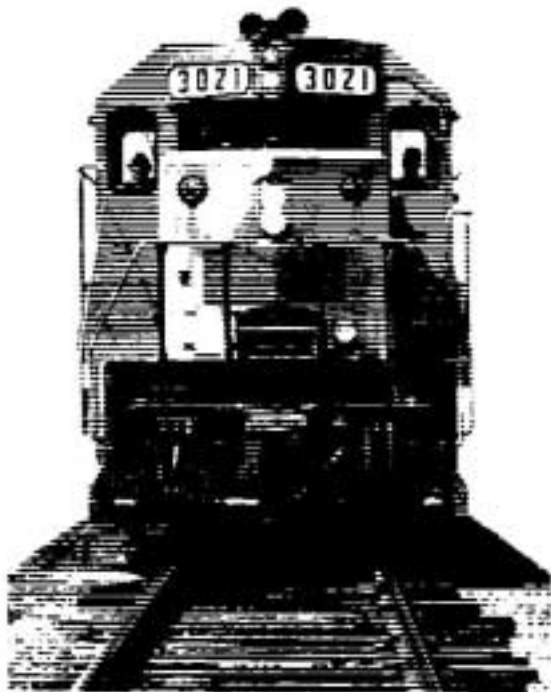
It doesn’t stop there. Devious Steve read a proclamation suitable for the occasion. And I then learned, as I examined the individual cars, that some railroads are more “Eastern” than others. These cars were not the typical Pennsy, NYC and B&O. Oh no. A couple, such as the Rutland and the Wheeling and Lake Erie, were somewhat familiar. I had also heard of the New

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York, Ontario and Western, and the Pere Marquette, and I guess the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern isn't too far out. But how about the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain? Or the Syracuse, Binghamton and New York? The Hocking Valley? One guy did the Edaville, and I'm pretty sure that was a narrow gauge road! And if one goes far enough East—way, way far East—he comes to the world famous Oahu Railway!

Just how the Oahu ever interchanges is quite a mystery, and how it could interchange in 1944 (the CRAP era) kind of boggles the mind. But there is no way I am not going to use it on the CRAP, and all those other cars as well. Every time I see one on the railroad, I will remember this masterfully conceived and executed practical joke, which was a practical gift as well. Those guys put a lot of real effort into those cars, and it is one of the nicest things that has ever happened to me. It's a hell of a hobby, and we never know from whence the next fun will come!



In case you have not yet registered for the upcoming NMRA Cincinnati Limited 2005 National Convention, procrastinate no longer as the time to do so is "now"!

The convention is the week of July 3 and some layout tours, general tours, as well as the banquet, are almost sold out!

Some highlights of CL2005 that may pique your interest:

- Cincinnati is one of the "TOP 10" Model RR cities !
- There are over 100 layouts that will be open for tours !
- Fabulous non-rail events the likes of which have not been seen before !
- National & Local Clinicians galore !
- Banquet in Art Deco Union Terminal !
- SIG events !
- RPM meeting space & displays !
- Great local rail fanning !
- National Train Show !
- Cincinnati Reds Baseball !

Further details and contact information, along with the registration form, can be found in the February issue of Scale Rails, or better yet, please visit our web site at www.CL2005.com !

Don't delay - register today !!

Looking forward to seeing you in Cincinnati in July !!

Club Info

BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Bay Area Ntrak Model Railroad Club invites N scale model railroaders to visit us at the Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad depot, 902 Loring Avenue in Crockett on Wednesdays and Saturdays between 10 am and 3 pm. For additional information please contact: Bob Lewis, 925-283-6838; or via e-mail at boblewis@ix.netcom.com.

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The California Central Model Railroad Club is located in the old Agnew depot (Santa Clara) of the Southern Pacific (4185 Bassett Street) directly across from the Lafayette Street main gate of Agnew State Hospital. The theme of the 15' by 50' HO club is western railroading running loosely from the Bay Area to Southern Oregon. We meet on Friday nights from around 7:30 until 11 pm. Official club operating sessions are held on the first and last Fridays of each month. Call (408) 988-4449 on operating nights, or contact Wayne Cohen at (408) 779-0707.

COASTAL VALLEY LINES

Coastal Valley Lines (CVL) is an informal association of novice to advanced model railroaders who live in Sonoma County that meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. We operate our HO scale modular railroad at local public shows. Prospective members can obtain more information from Brad Squires at (707) 568-4298 or Don Hanesworth at (707) 823-9615. Our web site is: <http://home.pacbell.net/jrolston/>

EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

The Eel River Valley is a new club, with a NWP layout series of modules under construction. The club meets each Friday evening at 7:30 pm at the Humboldt County Fair Grounds Commercial Building NW corner, Ferndale, CA 95536. Write to P.O. Box 950, Fortuna, CA 95540 or call Ron Plies at 707-725-9063 for more information.

ELSIE

The Left Coast (Elsie) HOn30 group invites anyone interested to join us. We use existing standards for module construction but are not merely a modular group. Contact Al Sandrini in Bakersfield at 661-322-7955, John Spelce in Martinez at 925-228-3279, or Ken Lunders in Cupertino at 408-777-9572.

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM/ EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

Located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point Richmond, CA. Club meetings and

behind the scenes tours, to which you are welcome, are Friday evenings from 7:30 to 10 pm, and Wednesday afternoons from 12 to 4 pm when work on the layouts typically is done. We welcome new members in all our scales, O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction enthusiasts. For information, a map and to see photos view, www.gsmrm.org. Telephone: (510) 234-4884; or, (510) 758-6228 (to 8 pm). For other information or to schedule special shows, email John Edginton, EBMES President, at jedginton@edg-law.com or use the communication section of the website.

HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Humboldt Bay & Eureka Model Railroad Club meets at their clubhouse and layout; located at 10 West 7th Street, Suite #C in Eureka, on Saturday nights from 7:00 pm on. Visitors are always welcome. Business meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at 7:30 pm. Interested parties should contact: David Berriman P.O. Box 915, Arcata, CA 95518 (707) 825-7689

MOTHER LODGE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Mother Lode Model Railroad Club meets every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the old historic primary school building located in Sutter Creek. Additional meetings normally are also held every Saturday at 9:00 am. We are a modular HO club and are fully DCC operational. For further information call Joe Stafford at 209 245-5016.

NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society meets at The Napa Valley Expo (fairgrounds) at 575 Third St. in Napa every Friday from 7:30 pm to midnight. Visitors are always welcome but must be at least 14 years old to join. Our railroad runs between Napa and Ukiah with offline connections to Stockton and Portland. We have large classification yards at each end of our system, which includes about 700 feet of mainline. Scenery is about 80% complete. The layout is never really finished, because we are always tearing part of it down and rebuilding it! As there are 80+ members with varied interests in our group, the time frame is compromised at about 1940 to present. The rolling stock on the railroad is member owned with emphasis on reliability and realism. Our schedule normally calls for a formal run session the second Friday of every month. Info: John Rodgers (707) 226-2985 napajohn@napanet.net <http://www.nvmrc.org>

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SACRAMENTO MODEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Avenue, Sacramento, CA and can be reached at 916-927-3618 or email to dmegeath@aol.com; web site <http://www.smrhs.com> Modeled as the Sierra Central Railroad, both HO and HO_n3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Wednesday and Friday nights, 7:30 pm.

SACRAMENTO MODULAR RAILROADERS

Most of our events are operating sessions, where we make up trains in our large switch yard, and send road crews out to switch cars into and out of industries at the towns along the main line. The club owns a large main yard, the corner modules, some special modules, and some rolling stock. Members own their own modules and rolling stock. For the latest club information, check out our web site at <http://saccentral.railfan.net/>, or call Dick Witzens at (916) 966-4592.

SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

The San Leandro Historical Railway Society models the Southern Pacific from Oakland/San Leandro to just east of Norden using the tri-level Donner Pass plan featured in the March '98 *Model Railroader*. It's housed in the former S.P., San Leandro depot, now located at 1302 Orchard Ave. in San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions are Sat. 9:00 am - 1:30 pm and Tues. 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm, business meetings on the first Friday at 7:30 pm. Contact: Pat LaTorres at (510) 276-3121 or email at duhnerd@pacbell.net

SILICON VALLEY LINES

The Silicon Valley Lines is located at 148 E. Virginia St. San Jose, CA. It meets every Friday evening from 7:30 pm until 11:30 pm. Business meetings are held on the first Friday of each month and operating sessions are held on the last Friday of the month. The Silicon Valley Lines is an HO layout utilizing DCC for realistic operations, computer-generated train orders and radio-based dispatching. For additional information, contact Mark Gurries at 408-377-0544. Visit our web site at www.siliconvalleylines.com

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The South Bay Historical Railroad Society invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Avenue, Santa Clara, CA. on Tuesdays, 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm or Saturdays, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Phone (408) 243-3969 for more information about our group.

SOUTH COAST SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

Santa Barbara, California. We meet every third Tuesday at 7:30pm and other times. The club consists of enthusiasts of all scales and prototypes. Membership is \$2 per month. The club has no address, but activities includes operations and work sessions at member layouts and field trips. The club has a collection of railroad books and videos for loan to members. Email the club secretary, Walter Naumann at wjnaumann@aol.com or phone at 805 564 1359.

TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Tri-Cities Club meets in the restored Niles Depot at 36997 Mission Blvd., Fremont. The club has both N and HO scale layouts. Work nights are Friday, the business meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month and operating session are on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. For more information contact Stanley Keiser at (510) 791-1504. Their website is <http://nilesdepot.railfan.net/>.

VALLEJO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Vallejo Model Railroad Club, founded in 1976, takes its theme from the environs of the greater Vallejo and Solano County region, with diversions into mountains, logging, and mining. The Club is home to the two thousand (2000) square foot HO-scale layout Vallejo and Solano Western Railroad. The club currently meets every Wednesday evening (with exceptions for Holidays). Doors open by 7:00 pm. It is located in the Civic Building, Solano County Fairgrounds, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, off Interstate 80 at Highway 37, in Vallejo, California. Enter the fairgrounds at the main gate on Fairgrounds Drive, at the traffic light. The Sage street gate is now permanently closed. The Club welcomes all model railroad hobbyists and enjoys visits and tours, with prior arrangements. Contacts may be to PO Box 4057, Vallejo, California, 94590-0405. The Club's telephone, which has an answering machine, is 707-643-1809. E-mails may be to either loggingRR@aol.com or lambertrp@earthlink.net

WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society open on the last Friday night of every month from 8 pm to 10 pm for operations. Fares are \$1 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$2 for adults. Membership in the Society is always open to all modelers interested in HO scale. The Society is located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA 94597. (925) 937-1888 (recorder). Visit our website at www.wcmrs.org



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION **5/05**
PACIFIC COAST REGION

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIPCODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ NMRA # (if a member): _____

FAMILY MEMBER NAME(S) _____

I want to become a member of the National Model Railroad Association and the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA. I have checked below the type of membership I desire and have enclosed the proper amount in a check payable to: PCR-NMRA. I understand that membership in the Pacific Coast Region requires membership in the NMRA.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PCR and NMRA for one year at \$51.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> PCR only (requires NMRA membership# above) at \$6.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NMRA YOUTH and PCR at \$36.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> PCR only - five years (requires NMRA # above) at \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NMRA Affiliate and PCR at \$29.00
(No NMRA Newsletter) | <input type="checkbox"/> PCR Family Associate at \$1.00 (Must have Regular PCR member as sponsor) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if this is a renewal PCR# _____ | |

Send Application form and remittance to: PCR Member Services, 530 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez, CA 94553.
 Allow 3-6 weeks for processing.

The Golden Spike Award

The Golden Spike Award will be awarded to any NMRA member who does not hold MMR status. It will be administered by the Regional and Divisional Achievement Program Chairman under the direction of the National Achievement Program Chairman. AP regulations and definitions apply for scratch built and super detailed. To qualify for the award the member must complete the following checklist, obtain the signature of the Divisional AP Chairman, or another NMRA member designated by the Divisional AP Chairman. The Divisional AP Chairman will submit the signed form to the Regional AP Chairman who will issue the Golden Spike Award Certificate.

Qualifications for the Golden Spike Award

1. Rolling stock (Motive power and cars)
 _____ Display six (6) units of rolling stock (Scratch built, craftsman, or detailed commercial kits).
2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures and Scenery)
 _____ Construct a minimum eight (8) square feet of layout.
 _____ Construct five (5) structures (Scratch built, craftsman or detailed commercial kits). If a module _____ has less than five structures, additional ones separate from the scene may be used.
3. Engineering (Civil and Electrical)
 _____ Three (3) types of trackage required (turnout, crossing, etc.). All must be properly ballasted and _____ installed on proper roadbed. Commercial trackage may be used.
 _____ All installed trackage must be properly wired so that two trains can be operated simultaneously.
 (Double-track main, single-track main with sidings, and block or command control).
 _____ Provide one additional electrical feature such as powered turnouts, signaling, turnout indication lighted buildings, etc.

Member _____ NMRA# _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Scale _____ Type of Pike _____

Verification by _____ NMRA# _____

PCR CALLBOARD

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

• President	L.E. "Gene" Mayer	(916) 359-6934	GeneFWRR@aol.com
• Vice-President	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Treasurer	Larry Altbaum	(925) 736-8160	emerbaum@msn.com
• Secretary	Rich Kolm	(510) 538-8973	IronhorseK@comcast.net
• Director, Daylight Division	Doug Wagner	(661) 589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
• Director, Coast Division	Kermit Paul	(925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Director, Sierra Division	Jesse Menefee, Jr.	(916) 363-6640	(no e-mail)
• Director, Redwood Empire Div.	Ron Plies	(707) 725-9063	rlplies@cox.net
• Director, Hawaiian Division	(vacant)	<i>Hawaiian Division is not active</i>	
• Trustee, NMRA Board of Trustees	Ray deBlicek	(510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	L.E. "Gene" Mayer	(916) 486-0934	GeneFWRR@aol.com
• Budget & Finance Committee	(President, Vice-President, and Treasurer)		
• By-Laws & Manual Committee	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Nominating Committee Chair.	(vacant)	---	---
• Ballot Committee Chairperson	Jim Providenza	(415) 472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
• Honors Committee Chair.	Ray deBlicek	(510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com
• Storekeeper	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Audit Committee Chairperson	Bill Swindell	(925) 372-6996	Bill.Swindell@clorox.com
• LRP Implementation Chair.	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

• Manager	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Services Chairperson	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRC@aol.com
• Membership Promotion Chair.	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Aid Chairperson	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeez@aol.com
• Education Chairperson	Chuck Mitchell	(925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• Special Interests Coordination	Dave Parks	(650) 961-7644	westernbear@msn.com

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

• Manager & Publisher	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Editor of the <i>Branch Line</i>	Bill Kaufman	(415) 491-0543	whk58@pacbell.net
• Circulation Manager	(vacant)		
• Webmaster	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	kmhurley01@pcrmra.org

CONVENTION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
• Convention Host Committee Chairpersons:			
• 2005 Concord	Bill Swindell	(925) 372-6996	Bill.Swindell@clorox.com
• 2006 Sacramento	Bob Warner	(916) 772-7502	bwarner1@softcom.net
• 2007 Santa Cruz	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	kmhurley01@pcrmra.org
• 2008 Fresno	John Houlihan	(559) 435-0874	rubyjohn@comcast.net

CONTEST DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Division Contest Chairpersons:			
• Daylight Division	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Coast Division	(vacant)	---	---
• Sierra Division	Norman Morris	(530) 742-6930	normanmmorris@aol.com
• RED	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Model Contest Chair	(vacant)	---	---
• Photo Contest Chair	(vacant)	---	---

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Jack Burgess, MMR	(510) 797-9557	jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com
• Division AP Chairpersons:			
• Daylight	Brewster Bird	(559) 732-6096	mec569@yahoo.com
• Coast	Kermit Paul, MMR	(925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Sierra	Dave Bayless	(530) 887-8880	---
• RED	Harold Mentzer	(707) 226-5153	HSMentzer@aol.com

NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Mary Moore-Campagna	(530) 426-9055	marycmoore@campagna.com
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Calendar

July 3-9, 2005: NMRA National Convention,
"Cincinnati Limited", Cincinnati OH.

July 17, 2005: **RED Summer meet** in Lakeport

August 3-7, 2005: **PNR Convention, Spokane WA**

August 11-14, 2005: **Costal Valley Lines MRC
Train Show** at the Redwood Empire Fair, Ukiah,

August 11-21, 2005: **Eel River Valley Model
Railroaders** open house during the Humboldt
Co. Fair at Ferndale California.

August 26-28, 2005: **Portola Railroad Days,
Western Pacific** Museum at Portola

August 20, 2005 **Napa Valley Model Railroaders'**
Annual SWAP MEET AND SHOW 8am to
Noon, Napa Valley Expo Center (Fairgrounds)
contact: John Rodgers (707)226-2985
<napajohn@napanet.net>

September 4, 2005, 9:30 AM **Coast Division** meet.
Bushser Middle School Santa Clara

September 24-25, 2005: **Costal Valley Lines MRC
Train Show** at Oakmont, Santa Rosa

September 24-25, 2005: **GATS** Santa Clara
Fairgrounds

Gus Campagna is trying to keep an updated calendar
at <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/#projects>.
Email him with any regional, divisional, or
otherwise interesting events.

Bill