

October-November-December 2015

BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION



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Best In Show at Portland -
F Scale Virginia & Truckee Water Car
by Barry Roth



Best of Show, Arts and Crafts at Portland -
Portland Rose
by Pat LaTorres

More PCR Contest entries win at Portland

Taking it to the Streets of Modesto planning advances

WPRRHS Co-Hosts with PCR in Modesto

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All offices are currently vacant

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The Branch Line
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Pat LaTorres' Portland Rose, Best of Show, Arts and Crafts, Photo by
Pat LaTorres

Our organizing committee decided to co-host & co-locate our PCR convention with the Western Pacific Rail Road Historical Society's Annual Conference.

Taking It To The Streets: PCR 2016, our 72nd Annual PCR Convention

by Steve Wesolowski, Publicity Volunteer, PCR 2016, Taking It to the Streets

Lots of train fun has happened since I wrote about our 2016 PCR Convention in the previous Branch Line. There have been the NMRA convention in Portland and the National Narrow Gauge in Houston, to name only two.

I enjoyed Portland & PSX 2015 from the moment I rode a train just outside the airport door to within 100 yards of our convention hotel, until I rode a train back to catch my flight home a week later! I learned so much from many new clinics and clinicians, many new modular layouts at the train show, a Chelatchie Prairie Steam Train ride, good food while train talking with train friends both 'new' and old. In summation, more train fun happened all around the hotel and Portland than one person could possibly enjoy, from 7 AM until 11 PM! every day.

I returned home both TIRED! AND Energized -- excited to start applying what I learned in Portland: in clinics, from other modelers, from layouts and even some chance events in addition to what I learned during clinics.

I returned home with renewed interest in and knowledge about both modeling and trains, which is why I attend conventions whenever I can. I get re-energized and renewed interest in trying new ideas and techniques I've learned!

It is the opportunity to feel renewed and re-energized to model and enjoy trains which leads me to encourage you and everyone else to come and enjoy PCR2016. I know your return on the investment of a few days of your time and nowhere nearly as much money as 7 days in Portland just cost me will be worth it, if you can come next Spring to Modesto, at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Modesto, on 1150 9th Street, April 20 to 24, 2016.

For both convention & hotel registration and to keep up with all the latest details, visit our web page at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html>. Of course, in the 6 months and a week remaining before the convention starts, our website will have much more information added than is there now, so keep checking back often and it will come!

Since I wrote about PCR 2016 in the previous Branch Line, our organizing committee decided to cohost & co-locate our PCR convention with the Western Pacific Rail Road Historical Society's Annual Conference. The WPRRHS had previously planned their conference for the following weekend in Modesto at the same hotel: they moved up their dates. The idea and reasoning is that by combining together what both of our groups planned to

offer individually, both groups should have even more activities to enjoy. Our combined efforts should result in more and hopefully different activities for attendees from both organizations than what each group normally offers, and our members have enjoyed during our separate conventions.

I am and I think you should also be excited by this new development. This will be the first Combined PCR & Railroad Historical Society Convention I've attended. I'm sure there will be some interesting new and different exciting opportunities, plus some new challenges for all of us organizing both efforts!

Rather than enumerating zillions of details, many of which are still being worked out and I'm still learning about, I'll suggest you visit our website to learn more details than I'm presenting here. But also be patient for a few weeks while our committees decide many details and our PCR 2016 webmaster brings the website more up to speed with lots of new information.

But, If you DO have any questions that can't wait, I suggest you either email the appropriate member of our Convention Committee, whose addresses are listed on our Committee webpage or if you don't know who to ask, email your question to our Chairman or myself & we'll forward your questions to the right person.

While many details of our combined conventions are being worked out, what

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Our Early Bird Registration Special for \$89 includes full Registration, the Awards Banquet, and PCR Breakfast.

this means is also simple: we should enjoy more Clinics plus more Outside Activities for everyone! By combining our efforts, our co-operation should increase the variety of train fun available to everyone who attends from both groups-- A Win-Win!

We DO plan separate banquets at the same time due to our different requirements, otherwise everyone registered should enjoy equal access to any/all our combined activities. Some few exceptions make sense: e.g. I'd assume a WPRRHS member entering any judged NMRA contest category should also be an NMRA member, but if their model is brought for display only, NMRA membership shouldn't be required, in my opinion.

Of course, most of our activities are still in early planning stages: we are getting them organized, scheduled and confirmed and I hope to have more details in my future installments as we get closer to April 20th. I will NOT publicize specific activities until I'm fairly certain they will happen and I can give you a good idea of what they include and when.

Given their proximity to Modesto, I know we are working on planning activities at Jamestown and other nearby locations which have trains. Of course, among other tours we're planning a tour of the M&ET and its shops, Modesto's local short line.

More details will be available on our website soon.

I always urge everyone to register as early as you can, because then we can plan better to accomodate the total number who plan attending. Our Early Bird Registration Special for \$89 includes full Registration, the Awards Banquet, and PCR Breakfast. There is no fare differential between Rail and Non-Rail registrations. We also have Youth Registration for \$50 and One Day Registrations for \$40. For all the details, visit our Registration web page at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/registration.html>

IF YOU haven't been to a PCR Convention in the last 5 years, a special "First Timer" \$79 fare is available for anyone who has not registered for the past 5 PCR conventions. Everyone on our committee AND many others strongly believe the best benefits of NMRA membership are opportunities we enjoy together during NMRA events & conferences -- to share what we know, enjoy and love about trains, both prototype and models, during clinics, layout and prototype tours and the joy of sharing our various enthusiasms and interests in trains with others..

Most of my close train friends I enjoy I've met at PCR Conventions since PCR 2001 in San Luis Obispo, my first. I made some new train friends last month in Portland during the NMRA Convention. I've been very lucky to have enjoyed a few National Narrow Gauge Conventions and a National Garden Railway Convention

in Santa Clara.

Honestly, it is the wonderful friends I've met and enjoyed trains with at these gatherings who are responsible for most of the train fun I've enjoyed the last 15+ years.

I understand, for most, our hobby dollars are limited. But one of my best investments has been the train conventions that I could find both time & money to enjoy.

Modesto isn't as far as Portland & PCR conventions are shorter than NMRA conventions. In my opinion, the quality of most layouts, tours, clinics and contest entries at PCR conventions are fairly equal to the national conventions I've attended.

I hope you can join us in Modesto on April 20 to 24, 2016 for Taking It To The Streets, to enjoy some more train fun! Until then, I wish for you many happy trains! 🚂

PCR Membership Gauge

As of August 31, 2015
 August 31, 2014—1,007
 September 30, 2014—1,005
 October 31, 2014—1,001
 November 30, 2014—991
 December 31, 2014—969
 January 31, 2015—983
 February 28, 2015—998
 March 31, 2015—996
 April 30, 2015—1,004
 May 31 2015—1,007
 June 30 2015—1,013
 July 31 2015—1,010
 August 31 2015—1,012

President's Report

by Ed Merrin, President, PCR/NMRA

Welcome to my second column as your Regional President.

Now that I'm here I hope that I can live up to your expectations and do a halfway decent job for you all. I have to admit, however, that the first few months have been a little hectic. Seems like there have been a lot of transitions going on at once, and this has necessitated a lot of chasing after odds and ends.



Besides having new people installed as President and Vice-President, we had two changes of Secretary and a new Treasurer as well. So a bunch of us are new at our jobs.

Although the previous holders of these positions have been gracious and helpful, it is amazing how many little things slip through the cracks. There are a lot of seemingly minor tasks that someone (not always sure who) was supposed to have taken care of, but I think everyone assumed someone else knew about it or had taken care of it.

One silly example is that the NMRA website still had Pat LaTorres listed as PCR President, along with his email, phone number, and address for contact. Part of the problem, it turns out, is that someone (Who? There's that question again) is supposed to email the NMRA

webmaster with new information of that type. At least that's what I was told. Hopefully, since I immediately emailed the correct information it should be taken care of soon.

There were a few other things, but why worry you all unnecessarily. All these snags will get sorted out with time and nothing has stood in the way of our main goal, which is to make sure that we do all we can to make your membership in PCR/NMRA as enjoyable and rewarding as possible. It did remind me a little of my experiences in teaching hospitals years ago, though. July was always the month that new interns and residents arrived to take over and things could get a little crazy.

By the way, we have an opening for Storekeeper. Easy job, you just have to keep track of where things are and who has them. Think about it.

Meanwhile, the NMRA National took place in Portland just a few weeks ago and appears to have been a roaring success. Not only did those attending have a great time, but also I heard from a reliable source (my wife) that the hotel staff was greatly impressed by our enthusiasm and level of activity. PCR members were very visible, being major forces in the SIG groups, giving clinics, and winning contests (see Pat LaTorres' article in this issue for more details on who won what).

In addition, PCR as an organization was able to support the convention by delivering and/or setting up projectors for clinic presentations and display racks for the photo contests. Without our help the convention committee would have been hard put to provide these items. This was no mean feat, but we succeeded largely due to the efforts of Ray DeBlicek and David Turner. Ray managed to sweep up all four PCR owned projectors, which were distributed amongst four Divisions, and get them up there. Dave somehow crammed the components of our photo easels into his van, drive them to Portland, assemble them, and then tear them down and reload them into his van for the return trip.

My own experience at the National was pretty positive. Attended clinics, gave a couple, saw some layouts, spent some money at the silent auction, entered photo contests (unsuccessfully I'm sorry to report), and talked with a lot of people. My only regret is that I missed out on doing any operations.

There was one glitch I experienced in going to the National Train Show that could have been a disaster. A bunch of us eager beavers got on the light rail on our way to the Exposition Center when one of us received poor advice from a "local" on which station to get off at. Like lemmings we all followed and the bunch of us were trotting along to

We have an opening for Storekeeper. Easy job, you just have to keep track of where things are and who has them. Think about it.

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nowhere when Bill Schneider and I, following at the rear, both sensed this wasn't right and managed to redirect the pack back to the station platform to get back on the next train. The photo shows



graphic evidence of the desolate nature of the surroundings we had stumbled into. As you can see, we are about to be saved by an arriving train that will take us to the correct stop. We finally made it to our correct destination.

Nationals are a good thing, but sometimes members can't go because of cost and distance. That's why our own Regional conventions become more important. And, to be quite frank, I think they are just as good as the Nationals, just on a smaller scale. And the one coming up next April looks to be a real winner. Scott McAllister and his convention committee are putting together a great program that will include just about anything the National did. And it will feature something extra as well.

The plan is to hold a joint convention with the Western Pacific Historical

Society. This takes the concept of a joint convention a step further, and it fits right in with what I believe is the best strategy for long term survival of NMRA. That is, reaching out and

collaborating with other pools of railroad oriented hobbyists that are not part of NMRA. As many have stated already, these groups will often include model railroaders who are outside of

our usual demographic (e.g. 60 or older) who have not chosen NMRA for a variety of reasons. They will have a chance, we hope, to be exposed to what goes on in NMRA and who knows? They might like it. They might find out that our organization is not hidebound and narrow minded, out of touch, too political, or whatever negative ideas are floating around out there. Some may want to get a trial membership and look into it further.

PCR has already been doing this kind of thing. There is the longstanding relationship with SIG groups, BAPM, modular groups, and so on. This is the long-term plan that may not bear fruit next week, next month, or even next year. But it is worth pursuing. 🚂

PCR Membership Tracker

Division	# Members
Coast	470
Sierra	265
Redwood Empire	135
Daylight	130
Hawaiian	12
Total Members	1012

The plan for the 2016 convention to hold a joint convention with the Western Pacific Historical Society fits right in with what I believe is the best strategy for long term survival of NMRA.



HAVE 50 MODEL RAILROADING CLINICS RIGHT IN YOUR LIVING ROOM.

Just because you can't make it to a national convention doesn't mean you have to miss out. Right now the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library has over 50 DVDs of clinics presented at national conventions from 2002 to 2010. Each is available for NMRA members to borrow for the cost of processing and postage.

So you can see clinics on everything from decoders to design, tools to techniques, helixes to highways, and research to resin casting.

All from the comfort of your very own couch.

Visit www.nmra.org and go to the Kalmbach Memorial Library page for a complete listing. Or call the Library at 423-894-8144.



We make it even more fun.
www.nmra.org

Then, get that popcorn ready.

Have you changed your address or other membership information?

Notify Headquarters

Email: nmrahq@nmra.org

Phone: 423-892-2846 (8am—4pm ET)

Achievement Program - Chief Dispatcher

by Jack Burgess, MMR, Manager, PCR Achievement Department

Interest in realistic operations on model railroad layouts has been growing exponentially in recent years, especially operations under timetable/train order or TT/TO. The Chief Dispatcher certificate recognizes the work involved in realistic layout operations. To meet the requirements, you must participate in the operation of a model railroad (either home or club) for not less than 50 hours. A minimum of ten hours each must have been

served in three of the five categories listed below, one of which **must** be as a Dispatcher.

1. Engineer (mainline freight, passenger, or wayfreight)
2. Yardmaster (or station master)
3. Hostler (or power desk)
4. Towerman (or traffic manager, or road master)
5. Dispatcher

There are definitions for the above positions and their duties online. For example, a Towerman can operate one or more towers/control panels, determine which cars come and go from each industry, or be the operating trouble-shooter and repair person.

The layouts used to meet these requirements must have at least two mainline trains plus yard switching in

simultaneous operation. Some system of freight and passenger car movements, including road switching, must be used for controlling train activity. That generally means TT/TO, Track Warrants, a CTC system, etc. Like the other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available online at the NMRA site. You can also get a copy of the requirements by calling me.

In addition, the modeler must: 1) prepare a schematic drawing of the layout being used to qualify for this category and 2) develop an eight-hour timetable for the layout and 3) develop an operating chart (graph) for this timetable; and 4) develop or adapt a system of operation for the layout including the necessary forms. If members of the same operating group are applying for Chief Dispatcher, they can use copies of the same paperwork with their application but must develop and submit their own timetable and train chart, even if they are for the same operating scheme.

A note on the required hours of operation...as noted, a minimum of 10 hours must be served in three of the five categories (with 10 hours as a Dispatcher) which totals 30 of the 50 required hours. The other 20 hours can be in any of the above categories. It is also possible that credit can

be earned by serving in other prototype positions. For example, being a station agent/operator may qualify if the position involves the duties of a prototype agent such as transcribing train orders from a dispatcher, providing crews with those orders and Clearance Cards, operating the train order board, etc.

Before you begin working toward this AP category, download the Record and Validation form from the NMRA website to easily record your progress toward meeting the operational requirements.

Once you complete these requirements, submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) which includes the required drawings and forms and describes the jobs held and approximate number of hours in each category. Witnesses must sign the *Certificate of Operation* verifying that the applicant has operated the model railroad in a prototype manner. Send the completed SOQ to your Divisional AP representative, **along with a photocopy of your NMRA membership card** and you are on your way toward another certificate!

I am happy to announce that an AP certificate has been awarded to Mike Blumensaadt for Author. Congratulations Mike!

If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My contact information is listed in the Call Board on page 2. 🚂



An AP certificate has been awarded to Mike Blumensaadt for Author.

Contest Report - PDX 2015

By Giuseppe Aymar, MMR, Chairman, PCR Contest Department

Our goals as a railroad modeling community are expressed in a myriad of ways. There are those of us who like to attend

presentations and glean the latest or not so latest techniques or ideas.

Then there are those who like to build models or do photography and share with others. Many enjoy creating dioramas or

operational RR Empires and share with others and the list goes on as our needs dictate.

PCR as part of the NMRA is satisfying

all our requests and gives us more unexpected gifts, like the work being brought to fruition at the California Railroad Museum in Sacramento. Being that all of us are the PCR and NMRA, it stands to reason that all of us have to be involved in



I would like to devote this space today in the Branch Line to honor those members who have participated in the Contest at the PDX 2015 in Portland, NMRA's flagship event. Thus, please refer to Pat LaTorres' article for a list of winners.



As most people not residing in caves probably know, the 2015 NMRA National Convention has just concluded (right at the end of August, allowing for printing lead time), up in Portland, Oregon. I won't delve to deeply into the convention itself, since I am sure that others will put fingers to keyboard covering the overall event. But, I will take up a bit of space to address the activities in the room dedicated to the "Celebration



George Gibson's photo of Pilson Logging Co. #70 won 1st place at the PCR Convention in Newark.

making sure that we do our part to offer our skills and energy so that those promises can continually be delivered. I would like to devote this space today in the *Branch Line* to honor those members who have participated in the Contest at the PDX 2015 in Portland, NMRA's flagship event. Thus, please refer to Pat LaTorres' article for a comprehensive list of winners.

I would like to express my apologies to George Gibson for not including in the last *Branch Line* his 1st place photo entry at the recently concluded PCR Convention in Newark. Please enjoy this beautiful photograph. Good job all of you who participated. You made PCR proud. 🚂

Celebration of Model Railroading

From Portland, Oregon

by Pat LaTorres

Of Model Railroading", which is more commonly known as the contest room. Not wanting to take too much away from the coverage that will appear in the *NMRA Magazine*, I'll be giving just a brief overview to PCR members and what they accomplished at this year's convention.

From what I could see, this year's turn out of entries was perhaps a bit down from some recent years past, but in exchange the quality was quite a bit higher overall. More to the point,

with very few exceptions, there were no models that would have been rated as "average", while the great majority were on the level of Very Good to Exceptional. I decided to make some extra effort and took a total of eight entries (six for judged model categories, one for Arts & Crafts and one for Thumbs) plus a number of photographs, since we were driving up and had some free space in the car. My wife, Ronnie decided to bring one model entry and several photos as well, since we don't make the trip to many nationals. Had I known what

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was going to show up in the room, I might have had second thoughts. When I spoke with Contest Chair, Bob Hamm, I found out that there were several Merit Awards issued and quite a few models that earned over 100 points – so there was some nice stuff to be seen.

On the positive side, the PCR in general was well represented across the entire range of models and photographs, though I have not received confirmation that there were any other Arts & crafts entries from the our region. I have made a concerted effort to get a full list of entrants from the PCR, but Ronnie and I were on an all day tour on Thursday when the awards were presented, so I may have missed someone by mistake. If I happened to miss your name and/or category, I apologize in advance and the error is totally mine.

On the next few pages you will find the names in order and what awards they took home. Photos of some entries are included.

As can be seen, a LOT of hardware traveled back to the PCR, with members from Daylight, Coast and Redwood Empire all participating. There were ten members that submitted twenty-four judged model entries, plus a number of photos (and at least one in Arts & Crafts and one in Thumbs). In addition, I show at least two other members that entered only the photo contest, which made for a good turn out by those from the PCR. The NMRA

Contest Chair, Bob Hamm will probably give a total count of entrants and entries in the issue of the NMRA Magazine covering the convention, so it will be interesting to see how our participation fits into the overall count.

As has been said before by many of our members, the Achievement Program is a great way to challenge one to improve modeling skills (I'll stay away from that Thumbs Award!) And the contest is also a great way to learn from the work of others. But, you cannot earn the points if

you don't participate. Even if one doesn't want to compete with others (the concept of a contest does bother some folks), the A.P. is just you against yourself with the goal of making the next model just a bit better than the previous one. At your next divisional event, or next year's PCR convention, pull out your better models and bring them down to share with the rest of us. Even if they're only in for Show and Tell, we would all like to see what you've been up to. Hope to see you AND your models soon.

Junior Past President Pat LaTorres brings this first-hand account of how well PCR was represented at the Portland National.

Photo credits go to Pat and Ronnie LaTorres.

Mike Blumensaadt

N Scale, Civil War Diorama; 3rd Place, Display, Scratch Built; Allen Pollock Miniatures Award, for best use of figures. (No Photo)



Jack Burgess

O Scale, Y.V. Weed Spraying Crew; 2nd Place, Display, Scratch Built

Dave Croshere

HO Scale, Pile Trestle; 1st Place, Scratch Built Structure; Merit Award; Hunterline Award, for best scratch built wooden model; 2nd Place, People's Choice, Photo Match. (No Photo)

HO Scale, Burton Station; Merit Award (Structures, Scratch Built); 1st Place, People's Choice, Photo Match; National Contest Judge's Award. (No Photo)

Continued on Page 11

George Gibson

Photo Contest: Photo Chairman's Award, Best Fan Trip Photo (No Photo)



Joe Henderson

O Scale (On30), Log Mill: 2nd Place, Display, Kit Built; Dean Freytag Industrial Structure Award, for best industrial model.

Stan Keiser

**Photo Contest:
1st Place, Black & White Prototype Print
2nd Place, Color Prototype Print
(No Photo)**



Thomas Knapp (No Photo)

Nn3, Class B Shay: 1st Place, Steam Locomotive, Kit Built.

Nn3, D&RGW 3000 Series Box Car: 2nd Place, Freight Car, Kit Built.

Nn3, 0-4-0 Porter: Merit Award (Steam Locomotive, Scratch Built).

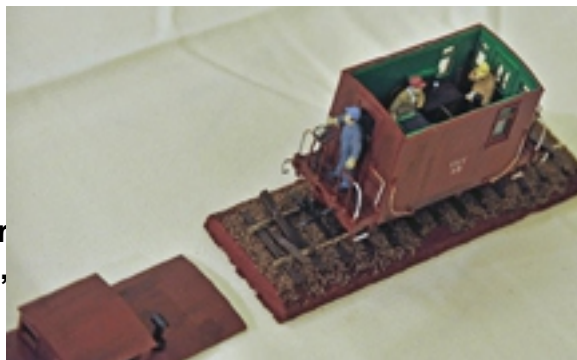
Nn3, NPC 900 Series Tank Car: Merit Award (Freight Car, Scratch Built).

Thomas Knapp

Nn3, Wooden Box Cab Logging Locomotive: 3rd Place, Diesel and Other Locomotive, Scratch Built; Merit Award.

Pat LaTorres

On30, Caboose, Tower Lumber Company #35: 3rd Place, Caboose, Kit Built.



Continued on Page 12

Pat LaTorres

On30, Water Car, MW #64:2nd Place, Non-Revenue Car, Kit Built.



Pat LaTorres

Fn3, Executive Lounge Car & Flatulene Tank Car:1st Place, People's Choice, Thumbs Award.

Pat LaTorres' Best of Show Arts and Crafts Portland Rose is shown on the front cover.

Pat LaTorres

On30, Caboose, Tower Lumber Company #31:1st Place, Caboose, Kit Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

On30, Caboose, Yosemite Short Line #6:2nd Place, Caboose Kit Built.

On30, Wooden Box Cab Logging Locomotive, TLC #3:2nd Place, Diesel and Other Locomotive, Kit Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

On30, Steel Box Cab Logging Locomotive, TLC #5:3rd Place, Diesel and Other Locomotive, Kit Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

Portland Rose Dining Car Display:1st Place, People's Choice, Arts & Crafts, Railroadians; People's Choice, Arts & Crafts, Best In Show. (Photo page 1)

Ronnie LaTorres

On30, King Post Truss Bridge:Merit Award (Structures, Scratch Built). (No Photo)

Continued on Page 13



Frank Markovich

On3, Heisler #1:2nd Place, Steam Locomotive, Kit Built.

Frank Markovich

On3, Westside Snow Plow:1st Place, Non-Revenue Car, Scratch Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

Hon3, Westside Snow Plow:1st Place, Non-Revenue Car, Kit Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

On3, Westside Caboose #4:3rd Place, Caboose, Scratch Built; Merit Award. (No Photo)

Chuck Morones

O Scale, Black Smith Shop:2nd Place, Structures, Kit Built. (No photo)

O Scale, Slim's Boots & Shoes: 3rd Place, Structures, Kit Built. (No photo)

Barry Roth

F Scale (1:20.3 standard gauge), Virginia & Truckee Water Car: Best In Show; Merit Award. (Photo page1) 

Barry Roth's Best of Show V&T Water Car is shown on the cover.

Opting Out of Branch Line Subscription

by Gus Campagna, PCR Publications Manager


If you subscribe to the PCR Branch Line Magazine, now \$8.00, you can opt-out of receiving the printed version. Just write to me at campgus@earthlink.net and I will add you to my list. When I get notification that the Branch Line is at the printer I send out an e-mail to the members who have opted-out.

If you are a life member, you automatically get the printed version of the Branch Line, but you can also opt-out if you'd like.

Remember the Branch Line is available to everyone on-line. 

Web Announcement

By Gus Campagna, Manager, PCR Publications Department

New pages added to the Website. We are in the process of adding a page to display Layout Stories. We are seeking submissions from layout owners to tell the story of their layout. Details are on the page about what we are looking for. Check out the Layout-stories page on www.pcrnmra.org 

Pacific Coast Region SIG Report for Third Quarter 2015

by Seth Neumann

This summer's big SIG activity was the just-concluded NMRA national convention in Portland, held the last week of August. We had an active Operations program, organized by PCR émigré Bill Decker. About 120 operators participated in op sessions at 10 layouts during the convention. Bill also organized an excellent LDSIG tour with 18 layouts available from as far North as Washougal,



WA down to Eugene, OR. About 150 members and guests participated. The SoundRail group, based in Seattle hosted an Advance Section the Saturday before the convention featuring layouts in Puget Sound area. I was fortunate to operate at Bill Sornsins's Great Northern at the Advance Section and the Willamette Club during the convention.

I have been involved

in a new SIG: the CMRI SIG which supports the Computer Model Railroad Interface standard, which was developed by Dr Bruce Chubb, MMR, 30 years ago. With over 5,000 installed systems, it is the most popular layout control bus for supporting signaling, CTC and layout animation. We recently submitted CMRI as NMRA user group specification S-9-10.1 in order to provide a permanent home for the specification, expand the universe of suppliers of CMRI compliant hardware, protect the investment of CMRI users and expand the mutual support forum for CMRI users. We set up a couple of tables in the SIG room and were overwhelmed at the interest shown in CMRI. As Dr. Chubb said at our "CRMI 30!" celebration: "we'll be back for CMRI 50!"

Next year's National Convention in Indianapolis promises to be very good and

LDSIG President Ron Burkhardt is coordinating the LDSIG activities and Chuck Tuttle is working on the Operations SIG program.

In out of town operating action, the Bay Area was once again well represented at VanRail, an operating meet in Vancouver, BC and the surrounding area and also at the "Wyoming Division" meet in Sedona, AZ. We also had a few slots for MinnRail, an excellent meet in the Twin Cities. With excellent operating meets held around the country almost every usable weekend, there are lots of opportunities, so contact me at the email below if you are interested in joining in.

I'll provide details for the 2016 PCR/Layout Design SIG and Operations meet which will be help at the end of January (week between NFL playoffs and the Superbowl) in the next Branch Line! Stay tuned. 🚂

Details for the 2016 PCR/Layout Design SIG and Operations meet to be held at the end of January will appear in the next Branch Line.

In Memoriam

Member	City,	State	Date Joined	
Coast Division				
Richard Condon	Lafayette	CA	1/2/2007	
Sierra Division				
Donald Fether	Modesto	CA	1/1/1963	Life Member
Don Drummer	Murphys	CA	1/1/1966	Life Member
J Jackson	Citrus Heights	CA	1/1/1975	



Coast Division Report

by Frank Markovich, MMR, Coast Division
Superintendent

This report was sent in 2 weeks before our Fall event. So no news on the Fall event, below, is what the Fall event will be and the next one in December.

By this time many of you will have gone to the National NMRA convention in Portland, Or., I saw many members there and a number of the PCR members did well in the contest. By my count at least 20 prizes to PCR members including a best of show. Some of you also went to the National Narrow Gauge convention in Houston. If you went to either and entered a model

please bring your models to the next Coast meet or the next meet in the division you reside in.

Next Event will Be:
September 27,

2015 - 9:00 am to
5:00 pm, [Coast Division](#)

Event/Meet, BPOE Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501. Please don't park in handicapped unless you have the right to. Below are the directions.

From the North: Take Highway 880 south. Take exit #39B/23rd Avenue/Alameda onto Kennedy St. Turn right onto 23rd Avenue, and then bear right onto 29th, which becomes Park. Turn right on Santa Clara.

From the South: Take Highway 880 North. Take Exit 38, High St. Turn left on High St. Bear right on Gibbons. Turn right on Santa Clara. The Elks Lodge is on the right.

We met at the Elks 2 meetings ago and the people there really liked the facility.

Come meet other local model railroaders during our free quarterly event and enjoy two free clinics, model, photo & switching contests/displays, videos, etc.! Bring YOUR questions to modeler's roundtable for answers. You may win a door prize! Enjoy our lively auction of model railroading items & more!

It will start at 9:30 AM. There will be two clinics – at this time Mike Blumenstaadt will do a clinic on Civil War Railroads and we will have another clinic – tentatively on painting figures.

At the June meet we had about a dozen models and the same for photos. There were over 400 items in the Auction. There were 108 in attendance with a number of new members. There were over 20 door prizes. Two great clinics – one on the Clayton Branch and one of Scale and Gauge. Charlie Getz spoke briefly on Portland and other things related to the national organization.

Dates and locations for next year are all set – mark your calendars:

Sept 27th Elks

Dec 6th back here

San Leandro Boy Scouts.



Photos by
Frank
Markovich,
MMR



Branch Line Deadlines for 2016

JAN-FEB-MAR 2016
Issue

Articles due by
December 10, 2015

APR-MAY-JUN 2016 Issue
Articles due by
March 10, 2016

JUL-AUG-SEP 2016 Issue
Articles due by
June 10, 2016

OCT-NOV-DEC 2016
Issue
Articles due by
September 10, 2016

If there are any questions contact the Branch Line Editor, Chuck Harmon at harmonsta@yahoo.com or phone (559) 299-4385.

Dark Territory

By Neil Fernbaugh, Daylight Division Superintendent

The more I think about it, “Dark Territory” is still a pretty good description of how the Daylight Division operates. The NMRA Divisions are pretty much “Branch lines,” and our operations are akin to “peddler freights” and a lot of running dark. But “running dark” means that we don’t get a whole lot of flak from the top brass, and as long as

we deliver the goods, we’re ok. We’ve reduced our business meeting down to a

leading the event. Joining with the Depot and SLOMR gave us a chance to meet some new faces and enjoy the ambiance of the depot. Thirty-eight members and friends joined with us.

Thanks to SLOMRA and their connections at Athearn, our raffle included a grand prize of a DCC and sound equipped SP F7P that Bruce Morden walked away with.

Athearn also donated a 50’ box car and a lighted caboos for the raffle as well. Jeff and Heather Parker of Central Valley Model Works donated a \$100 dollar gift certificate for their products, and Anita From Central Coast Trains donated a \$40 and a \$20 dollar gift certificate as well. So several of our members left with a lot more than they came in with.

For the first time in a long time our clinics were focused on the electronics side of our hobby, with

SLOMRA President Phil Lawyer presenting the first clinic on voltage loss and power protection for layouts and modules. George Gibson followed up with a

workshop on how to install flicker free lighting in passenger cars and cabooses.

After a great lunch provided by the Oceano Depot and a short meeting we were off to visit layouts. The first stop was a visit to Central Valley Model Works



Andrew Merriam, MMR, was our host at the San Luis Obispo Museum

and their Northern Pacific layout. Jeff & Heather have recently released a super detailed 200’ double track truss bridge (two of which I hope to have spanning the door to my new layout room). Check out their ads, and support their great efforts.

Our second stop was at the San Luis Railroad Museum to see the Central Coast Model Railroad layout that has grown far beyond the benchwork in an extremely



Daylight Division's August Event featured an Open House at Bill Obermeyer's layout in Atascadero



August's Event was held at the Oceano Depot Museum

few minutes in the middle of clinics, sharing ideas, and socializing, and I’ve gotten a lot of positive feedback about the pace of things.

Our August first meet was co-sponsored by the San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association and the Oceano Depot Association. We owe special thanks to George Gibson for organizing and

short period of time. John Marchetti and Andrew Merriam, MMR, along with many others are creating a real showpiece layout featuring major scenes along the SP coastline.

Then it was off north on 101 to Atascadero to visit Central Coast Trains and Bill Obermeyer's layout. For those of you that don't know, CCT is the only railroad hobby shop between LA and the bay area, and probably the only "brick and mortar" store that is expanding. Just peeking through the door to the new area, it looks like they will double in size.

I didn't meet Bill Obermeyer until a year ago or so, but what he has created in the last year or two is already turned into a classic layout. As with many others of us, he features the SP and ATSF, and jammed together an incredible amount of detail into his 24' x 17 layout. As a citrus grower and modeler, I was pleased to see the orange

industry prominently featured, and I was amazed at how well he blended the Backdrop Warehouse photo murals into his scenes. You'd never know you weren't in the Sierra Foothills.

If you weren't able to join us at the Oceano Depot, I hope you'll make the trek to Santa Barbara on November 7. Gary Siegal has been a wonderful host to us and both his HO and outdoor layouts will be available for your enjoyment. Clinics are being planned, and Bob Sexton was kind enough to repair and improve my old John Allen designed Timesaver switching layout. We are looking for experienced switchmen who can demonstrate how to master this RR puzzle, and if any others of you have another timesaver module you can cart with you, bring it along as well. Of course there will probably be more than enough of a challenge on Gary's layouts.

I will be



Bill Obermeyer has jammed together an incredible amount of detail into his 24' x 17 layout.

sending out a draft of our 501c3 bylaws in the near future, so if you are interested in contributing to that discussion, please email me at marmot47@sbcglobal.net if you want to be involved.



Bill Obermeyer's layout in Atascadero features the SP and ATSF

In the meantime, get to work on a diorama and/or color model photo to share in Santa Barbara.



Bill Obermeyer's layout in Atascadero featured the orange industry.



See you in Santa Barbara on November 7.



Bill Obermeyer blended the Backdrop Warehouse photo murals into his scenes so well that you'd never know you weren't in the Sierra Foothills.

It's Good, and It's Yours for Free Online Modeling Information and Clinics

by Neil Fernbaugh, Daylight Division
Superintendent

Only a very small portion of our membership join us for more than one meet per year, and an even smaller group is able to travel our Regional and NMRA conventions. When I rejoined the hobby a few years ago I was desperate to catch up and decided that the clinics, workshops, and layout visits that were offered at all the meets and conventions were really worth my time. As a newby I was lucky enough to attend both the Anaheim and Sacramento conventions, and since my daughter lives only a couple of hours from Portland, I'm really looking forward to one last convention before the future conventions

move out of my price range and travel opportunities.

I can't tell you how much the meets and conventions have helped my modeling and planning for my layout construction, and buoyed my enthusiasm

during frustrating hours at my modeling bench. I know there are a number of reasons why our members don't attend our gatherings around the division. We all have active lives, love working on our own layouts and projects, and between grandkids and work, Daylight Division Meets, especially ones that are a three or four hour drive, just don't fit in. If you haven't come around lately, though, please do give it a try.

In the meantime, between the NMRA and a number of manufacturers and master modelers, there's enough out there to keep you online far more than you know.

How many of you have registered for the new NMRA website? If you are a current member, all you need is the email address that the NMRA has on file in your membership record. Go to our website, <http://www.nmra.org/members> --- sign in is fast. Once you're registered, sign in and start to

explore. Scroll down the page to Clinics and you'll find a number of national convention clinics have been video taped. Look through the list and see what's there. Whether it's President Charlie Getz talking about Advanced techniques for laser kit assembly, or Jack Burgess discussing tips and techniques for resin kits, you'll probably find something worth an hour of your time.

Look too at the website section called Data sheets. Need to know the standard width for highways and roads? How to use capacitors? How to design a freight terminal. Scroll through the list, you may not need any of it now, but it's there for your convenience, and, again, it's free. Don't forget to look at the regional websites as well. Our own region, for example, has a number of handouts, presentations and website references for many of its recent clinics.

A lot of manufactures have helpful hints on their websites as well. One of my favorites is Jimmy Simmons Monster Model Works (<http://monstermodelworks.com/>), but under "Jimmy's Tips" on the website you'll find some great and easy to learn tips on making your structures more realistic and unique. He has another section on "product How-tos" that you'll probably find useful as well.

I suppose the list goes on forever. For me, both the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Historical societies have provided me with lots of info and inspiration. While much information requires membership, their homepages list a lot of resources and websites to help you along.

Southern Pacific Historical and Technical Society
(<http://www.sphts.org/index.php>)

Santa Fe Railway Historical and Modeling Society (<http://www.atsfr.com/>)

If you have time, you might share with our readership some of your own favorite sources of information. If you do, please pass them on to Chuck Harmon or George Pisching through their emails on our Daylight Division website. 🚂



How many of you have registered for the new NMRA website?

Show and Tell, or Competitions?

By Neil Fernbaugh, Daylight Division Superintendent

I am continually amazed at the artistry and skill of so many of our division's members. For those of you who haven't been able to attend our meets, or have only been able to attend the once a year meets in your own neighborhoods, I have to say it has been a real privilege to see the modeling skills and layouts our fellow members have shared. That being said, I think we need to rethink our contests and award programs. Over the last several years it seems like all the emphasis at "meets" and conventions has

been about incredibly good modelers competing for achievement

awards, their Master Model Railroader certificates, or just the recognition that comes with "best of show" awards. As a result, I think a lot of good modelers have been intimidated and decided to not bring models to "show and tell."

Even though I'm barely past the novice stage in modeling, and I'm still intimidated by the quality of some of the great scratch built, kit-bashed, and craftsman kit models I've seen at our meets and regional conventions, I've tried to bring something to share with my fellow model railroaders to every gathering. Every time I've

done so, I've gotten some kind of helpful feedback, encouragement, or praise for what I've contributed, whether it's been a structure, diorama, or photo.

Sometimes a model just serves as a conversation starter with a new member, other times it's the helpful suggestions I get about what to add, or what to try next. Sometimes folks suggest other products or tools that I might try. Yes, once in a while there is a member who has to lord it over me and brag about his own work, or find fault with what I've done, but those incidents are so few and far between compared with all the good I've gotten from bringing things, that I really want to urge everyone to bring something with you to every meet you attend. If you can't attend, you might even want to send something with a friend.

George Gibson had a great suggestion at our Oceano Depot meet. He suggested that we work with a hobby shop to arrange a discounted kit, something inexpensive and easy to play with, perhaps a small DPM or other "beginners" kit. Then try to have a number of us put together our version of that kit.... Maybe different paint jobs, details, signs, roof, etc... use up some of the left overs from our previous kits... Everyone

would bring their version to one of our meets to show what could be done. I think seeing the variety would be worthwhile, learning others techniques, and probably seeing some humor as well, would make for an interesting extra event. 🚂



I think a lot of good modelers have been intimidated and decided to not bring models to "show and tell."

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Redwood Empire Division Report

by Peter Barnes, Superintendent, Redwood Empire Division

Train activities continue to be busy and healthy in the Redwood Empire Division from scales 1:220 thru N, HO, G, on up to SMART's (Sonoma Marin Area Rapid Transit) 1:1 testing of its new train sets on the former NWP right of way. Here in Sonoma county new layouts are building, (Carol Alexander, Ron Kaiser), modular, sectional groups are out in public and developing new

segments (Sonoma Short Line, Healdsburg Steamers, and Coastal Valley Lines), so there is good public exposure of model trains and NMRA.

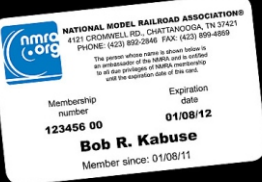
Our annual picnic was held on Saturday the 15th of August. The bring-your-own barbecue was at Ron and Pam Kaiser's new home and their new train "shed", just west of Santa Rosa. The Kaiser property is a beautiful setting and Ron is well along in expanding (doubling!!) his layout after the move from Healdsburg. Besides the good food there was lots of social and train related discussions. In addition trains were running on Ron's soon to be fully functional WP layout. There were even some trains

from Newfoundland and Europe seen running on the layout. Perhaps the Atlantic "Tunnel" comes to the surface somewhere nearby.

One of our own, Division Director Dave Croshere, did us proud with his scratch built model entries at the NMRA convention, winning multiple awards. Numerous other RED members participated and brought back perspectives and insights to share.

The RED fall meeting will be at Munroe Hall in Santa Rosa, Sat. November 21, from 11-3. Watch the fall Call Board for the show-and-tell theme and program. Giuseppe has some ideas to get more of us involved in the show-and-tell display part of the Division meet. 🚂






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Welcome Aboard! - PCR's Newest Members

Member	City, Sate	Date Joined
Coast		
Jay Escamilla	San Leandro CA	6/8/2015
Craig Matoza	San Leandro CA	6/16/2015
David Truman	Pleasanton CA	6/16/2015
Tom Truman	Pleasanton CA	6/16/2015
Deanna McKee	Carmel By The Sea CA	6/17/2015
Mark Boyd	Castro Valley CA	8/10/2015
Sierra		
Dallas Kell	Herald CA	7/21/2015
Andreas Dierenga	Reno NV	7/28/2015
Steve Harvath	Stockton CA	8/13/2015
Klaus Keil	Paradise CA	8/28/2015
Redwood Empire		
Katie Snuffer	Fairfield CA	6/4/2015



Sierra Division Report

by Jim Collins, Sierra Division Superintendent

The Sierra Division held its summer meet on August 1 in Reno where, in addition to the normal meeting with one clinic, we saw some really great layouts and had a chance to meet some outstanding modelers in the Reno area.

The meeting was held in the Sparks public library's meeting room – a very nice room at a great price (\$20).

But before the meeting, there were five layouts available for tours and one for operations from 10 am until about 1:30. . Jim Petro opened his superb HO scale layout of the D&RGW circa 1950s for viewing and for operations. There were at least 12-15 people who took him up on the offer and they all had a great time for



Mel Jones, Sierra Division Director, presented the well-deserved and beautiful member of the year award to Larry and Judy Champlin

several hours.

Additionally, John Currie's S scale layout of the Northern Pacific (circa 1955), Al Nelson's HO scale Santa Fe (circa late 1960s), Bob Norwich's narrow gauge HO scale post-war Nevada (circa 1930s), and Bob Westphall's HO scale Western Pacific (circa 1950s) were all open for tour. These are all exceptional layouts with some really fine modeling and scenery. All are still in work (well, what layout isn't) but each has some

particularly well done scenes and equipment. The next time we do this, I highly recommend that you attend if at all possible. You will not be disappointed. Note that the annual Reno layout tour is being organized now – look for information in the PCR calendar (end of Oct/beginning of November time-frame).

The meeting included discussion about changing the Sierra Division newsletter, the Short Line, from its current 10 page printed format to a single sheet printed two sides. While this won't cut down on the mailing costs, it will help reduce the current printing costs and hopefully will encourage more to shift to the (much larger, full-

color) digital version. It was noted that other divisions send print versions only by special request and this may be something looked at in the coming year. The meeting was well-attended with 27 folks.

The clinic by Jim Collins showed how to make a static grass applicator from an inexpensive electronic bug swatter. While there are several versions of the procedure available in the hobby press and YouTube, it seemed many were not familiar with it and all the inserts Jim made (molded plastic resin) went quickly.

New member Andreas



Al Nelson's HO scale Santa Fe (circa late 1960s)

Dierenga received his Sierra Division gift of an NMRA Standards Gauge in his scale (HO). Several other folks who had not received theirs in the past also received one.

The photo contest was for black and white prototype photos and results were: 1st place – Tom Van Horn, 2nd – Dave Bayless and Jim Collins, 3rd – Dave Bayless. The modeling contest was non-revenue cars and results

Continued on Page 22

were: 1st place – Jim Petro, 2nd and 3rd – Dave Bayless.

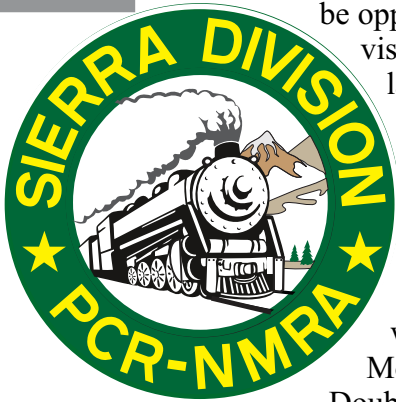
Mel Jones, Sierra Division Director, presented the well-deserved and beautiful member of the year award to Larry and Judy Champlin.

The next meet will be in Paradise, CA at the Mountain Mikes pizza on October 10 from 10am – 2 pm. Lunch (pizza, of course) will be \$5 per person and includes a soda. Currently Klaus Keil will be giving a clinic on LED car lighting.

After the meeting there will be opportunities to visit four area layouts.

The next PCR convention, sponsored by Sierra Division, will be held in Modesto at the Doubletree Hotel (April 20-24, 2016). The website is up and accepting registrations:

www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html.



Bob Westphall's HO scale Western Pacific (circa 1950s)



Jim Petro opened his superb HO scale layout of the D&RGW circa 1950s for viewing and for operations.



12-15 people took part in the Op Session on Jim Petro's layout. They all had a great time for several hours.

Bob Norwich's narrow gauge HO scale post-war Nevada (circa 1930s)



John Currie's S scale layout of the Northern Pacific (circa 1955)

Notes from the Membership Manager

by Doug Wagner, PCR Membership Manager

First off, I would like to welcome aboard our newest members! We hope each and one of you will take full advantage of your NMRA and PCR membership and hope to see you at one of the PCR's Division events (formerly meets).

Ok, on to membership stuff. If any of you that receive either the *NMRA Magazine* or *NMRA eBulletin* emails, you have probably noticed several articles in relationship to insurance and how many times a non-NMRA member is allowed to attend NMRA-sponsored events such as Division quarterly events (yes, they would like to change the wording of "meets" to "events" because meets don't sound like fun!), conventions, etc.

Not to bore you with the 11-page memo we received from NMRA HQ, so I'll put it into a nutshell:

1) Non-members can attend three NMRA-sponsored events over their lifetime. After that, they will be asked if they are interested in joining the NMRA.

2) Non-NMRA layout hosts are not covered by the NMRA-sponsored insurance.

I've pared down the memo for some of the Frequently Asked Question from the Insurance Policy memo that was sent out that pertain directly to our division events:

3) My Division has always had members and guests who don't belong to the NMRA. We like it that way. Many of these people are personal friends of ours. Why is this anyone's business but our own?

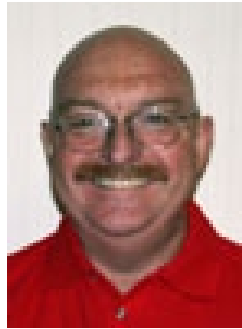
This question keeps coming up, so let's be very direct here: **If your Division allows permanent visitors to participate actively in Division activities as if they were NMRA members, you risk losing insurance coverage for any event where that abuse of membership can be demonstrated.** You could be personally on the hook for thousands of dollars – or more – in damages to the

injured person and to the public facility to which you represented that you had insurance. As an NMRA officer or member, your personal assets are being protected by our liability insurance. Without that insurance, all the officers, and even the members, of a Division (or Region) are **personally** responsible for paying damages in case of an injury. **That means your house, your bank account, your assets are on the line.** You know that most insurance adjusters are on the lookout for reasons to deny claims. If there's a claim, you can be sure it *will* be investigated. Member fraud is a breach of the insurance agreement, and is an easy-to-find and easy-to-support reason for denying a claim. One of the first things the insurance investigators will ask HQ for is a membership roster of the NMRA group in question. All the insurance company needs to find out is, "Hey, this Division is letting non-members participate as if they were members." Keeping clean, honest membership records isn't something that National came up with to complicate your life or take away your fun. This is what our insurance provider has demanded in return for selling us our policy. It's part of what we all pay for peace of mind and protection of our personal assets. **If your Division is trying to run a game on the NMRA or on our insurance company, the company will find out – and your negligence and dishonesty could mean that everyone in your Division, and even everyone in the entire NMRA, loses this huge, huge benefit.**

4) Can coverage be extended to a home layout tour where the host is a non-NMRA member?

No, unless the non-member purchases an NMRA membership, or one is purchased for him or her. We recommend that non-members be encouraged to join the NMRA prior to the event. A one-time six-month *RailPass* membership is available, to those who are eligible, for \$9.95. Or non-members can be encouraged to join for the full annual fee while the event underwrites \$9.95 of the full amount.

13) Can non-members attend Division and Regional meets?



As an NMRA officer or member, your personal assets are being protected by our liability insurance. Without that insurance all the officers, and even the members of a Division (or Region) are personally responsible for paying damages in case of an injury.

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This policy means that the NMRA's insurance WILL NOT cover a non-member's layout host on a layout tour. If a loss were to occur in such a location, the NMRA insurance will not be available to protect that non-member.

Yes, but they cannot participate in NMRA contests or receive benefits of membership without being a member.

The **official policy** of the NMRA is that non-members ("guests") are allowed to visit a Division or Region meeting three times over the course of a lifetime to get a sampling of what goes on at those activities. The NMRA Board of Directors has determined that three visits are enough to give a non-member a good idea of the benefits of NMRA membership. After three visits, the non-member must either join the NMRA, or the must be asked not to return to the Division or Region meeting or members' event. If a former member allows his or her membership to lapse but continues to show up at Division or Region events, then he or she cannot be permitted to hang around, taking advantage of old friendships to receive benefits that are intended only for members. If they are not willing to join, these individuals must be asked to leave. As part of determining the cost and extent of our insurance coverage, our insurer wants to know who our members are and how many members we have. Should a claim occur, having allowed non-members and former members to become "permanent guests" could severely jeopardize not only the offending Division or Region's insurance coverage, including coverage for their officers, but also the coverage of the entire NMRA.

14) Are non-members allowed to participate in NMRA-run auctions and raffles?

No. Participation in Division-run or Region-run auctions and raffles is a benefit of NMRA membership that cannot be extended to non-members. In addition to the insurance questions raised by non-member participation, there are also tax consequences resulting from non-member participation in these activities.

OK, a lot of the following explanation comes directly from the NMRA's insurance memos, so I will plead guilty to plagiarism. Does this mean we quit inviting non-members? Of course not. But, if after three visits to an event, and they have yet not joined the NMRA, admit it, they are not going to join. So, just move on to the next candidate for membership, and work on them. This means

we have to keep a closer eye on the attendance sheet that we all sign up on when we enter the front desk at an event. I know some of you may not like this policy, but as NMRA Insurance Coordinator, Mike Brestel says, it is to keep us in good standing as far as insurance for our events and each division.

Ok, to clear up some misunderstanding, as far as layout tours goes. Some members may think that we will not be able to visit layouts of non-members during the course of NMRA-sponsored events. This is not the case. This policy just means that the NMRA's insurance **WILL NOT** cover the non-member's layout host. If a loss were to occur in such a location, the NMRA insurance will not be available to protect that non-member. For this reason, the NMRA strongly recommends that NMRA event-organizing groups purchase memberships for each non-member whose home will be visited during an NMRA-sponsored event. If the NMRA-related group is unwilling to make this purchase, then the nonmember should be offered the opportunity to purchase his/her own membership, and should be informed of the risk involved if a loss occurs on his/her property. In addition, a record should be kept that the non-member was informed of the risks he/she has assumed by declining to purchase a membership. If a non-member still declines to join the NMRA, we strongly encourage each Region, Division, or other sponsoring organization to have the Event Waiver form signed by any non-member on whose property an event will occur. In this way, the person acknowledges that he/she has been informed and is aware of the potential risks he/she is assuming and that he/she chooses not to be an NMRA member and take advantage of all of the benefits of membership, including the liability insurance coverage for his/her property. And if they refuse to sign the Event Waiver, I'd get another layout to visit.

You may be asking yourself, why all of a sudden the need for this new policy? This isn't really a new policy, since it was first adopted in 2007 and explained in the "President's Car" column in the November, 2007 issue of *Scale Rails* (now called *NMRA Magazine*). Then, as now, the needs of our

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insurance provider played a large part in the adoption of this policy, but there are also issues of basic fairness, as well as tax issues in the United States. The policy does apply to non-members who continually show up at meetings and make themselves at home, month after month, and year after year. Allowing freeloaders to participate as if they were members is unfair because it takes advantage of our members who **HAVE** paid up. We members are all paying to keep the organization going. What are the freeloaders doing, besides getting a free ride on our backs? Tolerating permanent freeloaders can give our insurance providers a reason to cancel an NMRA group's coverage if there's an incident, leaving individual officers and members responsible for paying the claim. The IRS has rules about giving benefits of membership to non-members, too. They say don't do it, and there are tax consequences if you do.

Well, the memo hopefully explained it

better than I could. I know we've allowed a lot of the above to occur as we were trying to be the nice guys and show the visitors that we weren't monsters, in the hopes that they would join the NMRA. But, the bottom line appears to be liability, which is explained to its fullest in the longer, 11-page memo. You may view the entire insurance policies of the NMRA by visiting <http://www.nmra.org/liability-insurance>.

If you have additional questions about this policy or how to implement it, please feel free to contact me at carldw@aol.com or (661) 589-0391. I will use my favorite line from when I was an active firefighter—if someone asks me a question that I did not know, I will find someone who does know the answer!

You folks keep up the great work on inviting potential members to all our events. We, again, are over 1,000 in membership, so we want to keep that going!

Until next time, may all your signals be green! 🚂

The Answers Are Out There: What the Future Holds, Part 1

by Robert Pethoud, Daylight Division Member Aid Chairman

“I read that model trains as a hobby is dying. Is that true?” A colleague of mine hit me with this question a few years ago. Turns out he had read a newspaper account of the demise of a well-known model train shop, a story in which the business's owner was quoted as explaining, “It's just a dying hobby.” One can certainly make a case for this thesis. The circulation of Model Railroader magazine declined from 272,000 in 1993 to 120,000 in 2014. That's a 55% drop in just over twenty years. Our organization, the NMRA, had over 24,500 members in 1973, but that number has fallen to around 18,500 now, a loss of 24%. That decline took place during a time when the U. S. population increased by about 52%, so in that interval our membership, as a percent of population, fell by almost exactly 50%.

Those numbers are significant and

troubling. When we model railroaders get together, we often lament the scarcity of young hobbyists, and it can feel like our hobby has just about run its course. But I want to point out a few things:

- My 2015 Walthers catalogue has over 1000 pages. Somewhere in my stash of things I never throw away I have a Walthers catalogue from 1974, which has less than half that many. For a dying hobby, we certainly have a cornucopia of products to help us pursue it.

When I joined the NMRA in 1973, Model Railroader, Railroad Model Craftsman, and the NMRA Bulletin were the most relevant periodicals available. Today I subscribe to five general model railroad magazines, four railroad historical society journals, and two special interest group (SIG) publications; and I purchase random issues of literally dozens of other niche magazines. Perhaps Model Railroader's drop in circulation is due as much to a splintering of the market as to a drop in overall interest in the hobby. Similarly, it's very possible that a downturn in business for local hobby shops is

The NMRA had over 24,500 members in 1973, but that number has fallen to around 18,500 now, a loss of 24%.

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at least partly balanced by an increase in internet sales.

A downward trend is not the end of the story. We can't assume the numbers will ever approach zero, because the appeal of scale models is innate and universal. There will always be miniature replicas of airplanes, boats, armored vehicles, and trains, often in dioramas with realistic landforms and buildings. The kid in all of us will always delight in these.

More so than with other pastimes, the character of model railroading has changed dramatically over the last 40 years. In 1975 the advanced practitioners of the hobby were scratchbuilding freight cars and structures out of wood and the then-new medium of styrene. Now, highly-detailed kits of laser-cut wood, epoxy resin castings, and 3-D printed parts put state-of-the-art models within everyone's reach and still leave us time to run our trains. Model railroading, with its focus not on a single vehicle but on a whole network of paths (metal ones at that) was uniquely positioned to take full advantage of the microcomputer revolution. And take advantage of it we have.

The advent of DCC has made it child's play to build and operate not just a train, but a realistically functioning transportation system, complete with sound, signaling, and prototypical dispatching. Contrast this with the plastic modelers who are still building static dioramas and the RC enthusiasts who are still racing their cars, boats, and airplanes. You don't see the RC car builders fashioning and running whole highway systems.

My answer was, no, I don't think my hobby is dying. Changing, for sure; dying, no. Regardless of how it eventually turns out, though, I'm not worried about it. If all interest in trains evaporated tomorrow, there would still be enough products on the market from former hobbyists unloading their collections (248,763 items in HO gauge alone on eBay yesterday) to keep me busy and active modeling and running trains if I live to be 200.

That's all for now. Next time we'll take a look at what we can do to promote more interest in our hobby. Until then you may contact me with your comments and questions at pethoud@comcast.net . 🚂

Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern We did THAT? WE did that?

By: Jim Providenza

Bill Kaufman has been searching for the right way to make cobblestone streets ever since he began building his State Belt RR. So something on the order of 8-10 years. At a guess, Bill has tried 4 or 5 different products / media. Everything from commercial plastic and plaster products to home made cast resin and rubber. It seems that every one has had its drawbacks.

Commercial products suffer from several problems including the difficulty in hide joints and difficulty in shaping the original pieces to fit in the tightly curved confines of the San Francisco waterfront.

One of our round robin, Morgan Trotter, went to considerable effort to carve a master from which Bill has cast strips of

cobblestone in both resin and rubber. The rubber looks nice but over time has curled back at the edges. The resin castings were difficult to cast at a consistent thickness and very difficult to then thin down enough to keep the cobblestones below the top of the rails in the street.

And of course, this doesn't begin to discuss the efforts that went in to securing the various media to the layout. Silicon caulks and adhesives, Walthers Goo, various brands and viscosities of super glue, contact cements all have found their way into the interstices between the cobblestones and Homasote™ subroadbed. Oh, I think I forgot to mention the several types of fillers used to bring the subsurface up to the level of the tops of the ties before the cobblestones are laid... and the fact that Bill had glued full sized paper track plans to the Homasote before he put down the track. It is amazing how hard and rock-like a sufficient amount of super glue will make a section of Homasote!

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Came the day (a Thursday evening actually) when Bill announced that the round robin was going to try another new cobblestone product. This was going to be clay leveled in between and around the track, which would then have the cobblestones pressed into the clay using 3D printed rollers he had bought through Shapeways.

As it turned out, we had to cancel the meeting due to a lot of conflicts. Bill went ahead however and started on ripping out some worst of the existing cobblestones and the fill pieces underneath them.

Friday morning I woke up to find an email from Bill. It seemed that in the process of trying to remove the offending cobblestones he had done irreparable damage to some already questionable trackage. When was I available to give him a hand with some remediation? I asked Bill what street he had started on. He replied King Street in front of Hills Bros. Coffee. I groaned, and not just for effect. If there was one place on the State Belt that I would have asked Bill not to work, it was right there. Two weeks earlier Scott Kew and I had spent an evening repairing / replacing a piece of rail and a guardrail – right THERE. Ah well.

Bill added that I would not believe what he had found until I saw it for myself. Then I would understand why he wanted another pair of hands – and someone else to help figure things out.

So I sorted myself out and made my way over to Bill's. I have to admit that we were so amazed at what we the round robin had collectively managed to 'accomplish' that neither Bill nor I thought to take the first

on the Hills Bros. building site – the building itself has been moved to safety. The siding at Hills Bros is sitting, intact, in front of the box and partially hidden by the small zip lock baggy.

I am using a chisel to pry up and dig out pieces of one of the three tracks at the throat of King St. We've already cut the rails at the edge of the sidewalk along First St on the left, and at the point where the next set of crossovers begins leading onto the Embarcadero on the right. I've already removed three separate rails and about 6" of tie strip.



Photo 2

Now look closely at the bottom of the ties in Photo 2. Of course they won't come up without taking a very uneven layer of Homasote with them. But look more closely. The black wire to the left of the chisel was a jumper running from one part of the back rail to another. And above my ring finger you can see a red feeder wire poking through one of the ties.

Photo 3 tells the whole tale – in the space of less than about 4 inches we had managed, over the years, to jumper around a break or gap or bad rail joint in the far rail and also attach five different feeders to the near rail. At this point in time neither Bill nor I could say who among the round robin had done various parts of the work, or even why it was necessary. We looked at each other and could only say, "We did THAT? WE did that?"

Bill invoked Rule No. 1 and, ignoring my really misguided attempt to convince him

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Photo 1

photo we should have. It would have shown the exposed tracks in front of Hill's Bros. without my hands in the way. But Photo 1 will serve. For reference, the plastic tool box is sitting



Photo 3

it would be easier just to make some (more) repairs, said that we were going to replace the two running tracks entirely. The foreground switch would need one rail spiked back into gauge, but he decided he could live with that. Further work with implements of destruction yielded a clean if somewhat uneven slate for the new track. I cut and laid in pieces of flex track, then added cardboard shims as needed to level everything. A bit of work with the soldering iron and some test running with one of the State Belt's Alcos and we declared we were done for the day. Photo 4 shows this happy state of affairs.

Bill decided that the new cobblestones would be laid on a test section of track before he put anything in place over the new and rebuilt tracks. Experiments continue as I write this!

Lesson learned? We really should have torn up the track in the photos some number of years ago and replaced it entirely rather than succumbing to the temptation for a quick fix. It would have saved us from several other rounds of quick fixes and undoubtedly made for better and smoother operations. 🚂



Photo 4

Looking Back

by Dave Connery, MMR, PCR Historian

Mostly in this column I have concentrated on the historical aspects of our region but recently I have been thinking it is equally important to understand the context these events occurred within. The growth, changes and personalities in PCR all have meaning when looked at against the backdrop of what was happening in the hobby and in our society. Like on a layout where the equipment and structures really come to life when seen against the backdrop and scenery, our history needs the milieu it happened in to understand its importance.

In his editorial in the September issue of the *NMRA Magazine*, NMRA President Getz shares with us some data on the changes in the hobby since 1984, all leading to the conclusion that our organization, and the hobby, is shrinking. Certainly in terms of membership

numbers, both the NMRA and PCR have sustained losses, but there are also changes that have occurred that would indicate all is not "doom and gloom". Our membership body has grown steadily older and most likely will continue to do so as we live longer and healthier lives and find most young people drawn to different pastime pursuits than what interested us when we first joined the hobby. Print magazines have shrunk in size and many have disappeared. Events like the Regional and National Conventions and Division Meets see fewer attendees and local hobby shops are becoming a rarity today. But perhaps we should not measure our success in terms of the number of members in our organization. The NMRA and PCR have been a vital and positive force in the hobby and certainly in my own life, but as in all aspects of our world, things change. When these organizations were founded they were desperately needed and the only game in town. Today there are alternatives.



At the recent Portland NMRA Convention I rode on “tourist” trains four days in a row, all within a 2 hour bus ride of the convention hotel and I can ride more than that number within a two hour drive from my home. These rides are publicly accessible and fill a niche in the general rail fan community that once required an organization like PCR/NMRA to sponsor. While I no longer receive as many model and railroad periodicals as I once did, I have access to several on line publications and a number of very active internet “groups” and should I have a question about almost any aspect of railroading or modeling, a Google search usually produces a plethora of sites to help quench my thirst for knowledge. When I am looking to acquire models and material, I have virtually unlimited access to everything



Oregon Scenic - ex-McCloud #25

available in the country, without ever moving from my computer desk. Today there are historical societies with newsletters and conventions for most major US

railroads and a growing number of day or weekend events for specific railroads as well as Prototype Modelers meets and of course, a shotgun blast of weekend Train Shows around the country. Several events have grown to challenge and exceed the NMRA National events such as the National Narrow Gauge Convention and the National Garden Railway

Convention. Both of these week-long events have succeeded over decades with no formal organization backing them. The large scale community of scale and gauges are all fairly recent additions to our hobby. And thinking of scales, we now have a lively On30 community,



Doug Smith's Z-Scale Layout

thanks primarily to the innovative products of Bachmann and if you were in Portland you got to see an immense “Z” scale layout, anchored by our own BAZBoys as well as a smaller TT layout. All these “new” scales have, to an extent, supplanted the O and HO centrality of decades ago. As my friend Rod Smith recently put it, “Once all the streams of model railroading fed into a single river while today it is like the river has reached the ocean and divided into dozens of separate streams that make up a vast river delta.”

If you have visited the contest rooms of both NMRA and non-NMRA events you will come away knowing the quality of models have never been better than today. When you go on layout tours you will surely be impressed at the breadth and depth of today’s club and home layouts. While trolley and interurban layouts have become quite rare, layouts based on nearly every other era of railroading are in evidence and extremely well done. Not only do these layouts look good, they run well and can be prototypically operated. The superbly detailed civil war diorama in N scale by PCR member Mike Blumensaadt is a good example of new frontiers in modeling that are being forged.

Our region, and the National organization, have a very proud history and continue to play a critical role in making this hobby enjoyable for me, and I suspect for you. That said, I think it important to keep today’s changed reality in mind when we fret about a somewhat declined membership. Many organizations face down-sizing at some point in their existence. I know President Getz wants to leave this organization stronger at the end of his term than when he started, but perhaps if we all look at the organization as being “right-sized” in face of our changed hobby and world we would see there are still important roles for our organization, both traditional and perhaps some new ones. It just isn’t necessary for everyone in the hobby to have an NMRA membership card in their wallet for us in the organization to enjoy the great wealth of model railroading that lies before us. We should be grateful for the many hobby adjuncts that now exist even though they somewhat dilute our organizations dominance in the field. 🚂

NMRA InfoNet News for August, 2015

by Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA, MSA, PA
Director – Support Services

Candidates for the 2016 Election

From John Stevens, NMRA Secretary:

National Nominating Committee Chair

Tony Koester has submitted the Combined Nominating Committees' Final Report to the National Board of Directors. The candidates for the 2016 election are shown below.

Atlantic District Director

- Peter Bowen
- Kathy Millat

At Large World Wide Director

- Mike Brestel

Western District Director

- Steve Barkley
- Don Fowler
- Stephen Priest

Members may petition to the NMRA to nominate additional candidates by using the By Petition process which can be found in Sec A 10.1 paragraph 3 of the EHB (Executive Handbook) available as a PDF on our website at <http://www.nmra.org/executive-handbook>.

All petitions must be received by the NMRA Secretary by September 15, 2015. For more information, contact NMRA Secretary John Stevens at snevets4@bellsouth.net.

A message from Mike Brestel

NMRA At Large Worldwide Director

The three strikes policy: What is it and what does it mean?

We've been getting a lot of questions about the Visitor Policy that the NMRA Board adopted and publicized in February of this year, limiting visitors to NMRA meetings to three visits during their lifetime.

This isn't really a new policy, since it was first adopted in 2007 and explained in the "President's Car" column in the November, 2007 issue of *Scale Rails*. Then, as now, the needs of our insurance provider played a large part in the adoption of this policy, but there are also issues of basic fairness, as well as tax issues in the U.S.

Here's the policy: Visitors are allowed three visits to an NMRA meeting IN THEIR LIFETIME. If they don't join by their third visit, they cannot attend any more meetings.

A lot of the questions we've been getting are from members trying to over-complicate the policy, worrying about this or that exception and making up complicated what-ifs. *The policy does not apply to spouses who come along to the meetings so that they can go to dinner afterwards. It does not apply to non-member caregivers who aren't modelers, but who provide a ride to a member who cannot drive himself. It does not apply to events that are organized for the general public, like mall shows, swap meets, beginner clinic series, and the like, nor does it apply to things like joint meetings with another group or family picnics or outings.*

Allowing freeloaders to participate as if they were members is unfair because it takes advantage of our members who HAVE paid up. We're all paying to keep the organization going – what are the freeloaders doing, besides getting a free ride on our backs? And tolerating permanent freeloaders can give our insurance providers a reason to cancel your coverage if you have an incident, leaving individual officers and members responsible for paying the claim. The IRS has rules about giving benefits of membership to non-members, too – they say don't do it, and there are tax consequences if you do.

Now, if your Division and Region are already following the rules (which would be a really good idea if you want the protection of our NMRA Liability Insurance policy), this is not the big deal you might think it is. We all know that if someone comes and tries us out three times and still doesn't join, they're not going to join. So after the third turn-down, don't worry about it – just move on to the next prospect.

If you're still wondering whether your group is in compliance, just ask yourself: are you allowing people who aren't members to come to your meetings month after month, year after year, and participate as if they'd paid their dues? If the answer is no, then fine, just keep doing what you're doing. If the answer is yes, then you have some changes to make.

If you have questions about this policy or how to implement it, please contact an NMRA officer, director, or NMRA HQ. We'll get your question to the right person. 🚚

Visitors are allowed three visits to an NMRA meeting IN THEIR LIFETIME. If they don't join by their third visit, they cannot attend any more

NMRA InfoNet News for September, 2015

by Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA, MSA, PA
Director – Support Services
NMRA Directors and Officers

The NMRA Board recognized the newly elected and re-elected members: Peter Youngblood, MMR (North America At Large Director), Mike Bartlett (Pacific District Director), Joe Gelmini, MMR (Eastern District Director). It also recognized newly elected Vice President – Administration Clark Kooning, HLM, MMR and Vice President – Special Projects Gerry Leone, HLM, MMR who took office at the General Membership Meeting on Thursday evening at the recent NMRA Convention in Portland.

Additionally, the Board thanked outgoing Vice President – Administration Dave Thornton for his many contributions and years of service. The Board also named Pete Magoun, MMR, as new Lead Director.

NMRA adopting standards for Layout Command Control

The NMRA Board of Directors has agreed to adopt standards for Layout Commands Control (LCC), formerly known as NMRANet. LCC is an operating system protocol, which will work hand-in-hand with Digital Command Control (DCC), handling all non-motive power related functions on a model railroad layout, such as signaling, telephone, and automation. In essence, LCC is DCC for the rest of your layout. LCC was developed over the past several years by the OpenLCB Group – a large group of volunteers with expertise in electronics, networking, programming, and model railroading similar to the group that developed Java Model Railroad Interface (JMRI). The final draft of the LCC protocols and the specification documents have been published for comment on the NMRA's website. Look for an article describing all of the benefits of LCC in a future issue of the *NMRA Magazine*. 🚂

2015 Events

October 31 & November 1 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Fall Train Show, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA. Fares: - Adults: \$3.00 - Seniors (60+): \$2.00 - Children (6-12): \$2.00 - Children under 6: Free. Info: info@blackdiamondlines.com.

November 7 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Fall Meet, Gary Siegel's home, Santa Barbara, CA. Clinics start at 10:00 AM. Registration fee: NMRA: \$4.00; Non-NMRA: \$5.00. Contest Categories: Model Displays, Photo: Model Color.

November 7 & 8 - Saturday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Fall Train Show and Open House, South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Santa Clara Caltrain Station, Santa Clara, CA. (408) 243-3969. Admission: \$5 all persons 18 and over.

November 7 & 8 - Northern Nevada Model Railroad Tour, presented by PCR Sierra Division. Info: Jim Petro, jpetro@gmail.com or (775) 852-5639

November 14 & 15 - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, 39th Annual International Railfair Model Railroad Show, Placer County Fairgrounds, 800 All American City Blvd, Roseville, CA. Co-sponsored by PCR Sierra Division. Vendor coordinator Bob Warner at bkwarner51@comcast.net.

November 14 & 15 - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Autumn Model Train Show, Tehachapi Loop Railroad Club, West Park at the Tehachapi Recreation and Park District, 410 West "D" Street (off Mill Street), Tehachapi, CA. For more information, call Mike @ (661) 821-5271 or Linda @ (661) 822-7777

November 14 & 15 - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society, 1990 Grand Ave., Sacramento. Admission \$3 Adults, \$2 ages 6-12, under 6 free. Info (916) 927-3618.

November 14 & 15 - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

November 20 - 22 - Friday: 8:00 to 10:00 pm, Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Holiday Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

November 21 & 22 - 11 am to 4 pm, Great Train Expo, Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton, CA. Adults \$7 (good both days) Under 12 Free.

November 27 - 29 - Friday: 2:00 to 10:00 pm, Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Holiday Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

For more details on these events go to the Calendar at the PCR web site.

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October - November - December 2015

2015 (Cont.)

December 4 - 6 - Friday: 7:00 to 9:00 pm, Saturday & Sunday: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, Lompoc Valley Model Railroad and Historical Society, 428 North I Street, Lompoc, CA. (southeast of Vandenberg Air Force Base in Daylight Division).

December 5 & 6 - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

December 6 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, 1001 Davis Street, San Leandro, CA. (at SF Bay Area Council Office of Boy Scouts of America). Contest Theme Categories (Popular Vote): 9:30 AM - 1:15 PM: Model: My Favorite Model and/or My Current Project Photos: My Favorite Train Picture, Model or Prototype. Clinics: TBA.

2016 Events

January 9 & 10 - 10 am to 4 pm, Great Train Show, Craneway Pavilion, 1414 Harbour Way South, Marina District, Richmond, CA. \$9.00 at door (\$7 in advance) good both days, Under 12 free. e-mail frank@frankmarkovich.com or swezz@comcast.net.

January 29 to 31 - Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend, Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA, Layout Design and Operations Special Interest Groups.

February 13 - 9:30 am, Sierra Division winter meet, First Christian Church, 3901 Folsom Blvd., Sacramento, CA.

February 27 & 28 - 10 am to 4 pm, Great Train Show, Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, CA. \$9.00 at door (\$7 in advance) good both days, Under 12 free.

March 12 - 9:00 am to 10:00 pm, Winterail 2016 Railroadiana Show and Sale, Corvallis, Oregon.

March 12 & 13 - Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society's Annual Model Train Show, Horace Massey Building, Kern County Fairgrounds 1142 S. P Street, Bakersfield, CA. \$7 adults, under 12 free with adult, good both days. Info: (661) 331-6695 or e-mail carldw@aol.com.

April 17 - 9 am, Sierra Seminar, Jamestown Hope Center, 10365 9th Street, Jamestown, CA. \$20 at door (\$15 in advance). Info: glennsutherland@sti.net.

April 20 to 24 - Taking It To The Streets 2016 PCR Convention, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Modesto, 1150 9th Street, Modesto, CA.

April 30 & May 1 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

June 15 - 19 - Selkirk Express 2016, Pacific Northwest Region 2016 Convention, The Prestige Harbour Front Resort & Convention Centre 251 Harbourfront Drive, NE, Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada.

June 25 & 26 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Crockett Railroad Days joint show with Carquinez Toy Train Operating Museum, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Lionel Club on 3rd floor. Donation: \$5 Adults.

July 3 - 10 - Highball to Indy, NMRA 2016 National Convention and National Train Show, Indianapolis, IN.

July 4 - 10 - 2016 National Garden Railway Convention, proudly hosted by the Bay Area Garden Railway Society (BAGRS), Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA. The convention hotel is the adjacent Hyatt Regency Hotel. There will also be pre-convention self-guided layout tours starting July 2, 2015.

September 7 - 10 - 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention, Augusta, ME. Info: info@nngc2016.org.

September 21-24 - PSR Convention, Los Angeles, info: www.psrconvention.org.

September 21-26 - Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society Annual Conference, Palm Springs, CA.

October 1&2 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

November 5&6 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

December 3&4 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Donation: \$4 Adults, Under 16 Free with an adult.

2017 Events

January 27 to 29, 2017 - Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend, Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA, Layout Design and Operations Special Interest Groups.

July 30 - August 6, 2017 - Orange Blossom Special, NMRA 2017 National Convention and National Train Show, The Rosen Plaza Hotel, International Drive, Orlando, FL. 🚂

For more details on these events go to the Calendar at the PCR web site.



NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, INC ®

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Club Info

Alameda County Central Railroad Society

ACCRS is located at the Alameda Co. Fair Grounds, Pleasanton. A 30 by 100 foot room has O and HO layouts. Open to the public every Friday, 6 to 10 PM, they operate continuously during county fairs and special events. Annual dues: \$24, \$15 initiation fee; Jr membership for ages 12 to 18 (with sponsor), free. Contact: Gary Lewis 925-455-8135 E-mail: glslewis@comcast.net Web: www.pleasantonmodelrr.org/index.html

Antioch Model Railroad Club

The Black Diamond Lines is an HO Club located at 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch. BDL has been in continuous operation since 1981. We meet Tues. & Fri., 7:00pm to 10:00pm. Formal Operating Session on the 3rd Friday of the Month, but visitors can always find trains running every club night. For more information, e-mail info@blackdiamondlines.com or visit us on the web at www.blackdiamondlines.com and we can be found on Facebook and YouTube.

Bay Area Ntrak Model Railroad Club

BANTrak MRC invites N scale modelers to visit us at the Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad depot, 902 Loring Ave., Crockett, on Wed. and Sat., 10 AM to 3 PM. Contact: Bob Lewis, 925-283-6838 E-mail: BobLewis1@sbcglobal.net.

Bay Area Z Module Cooperative

BAZ is a group in the SF Bay Area interested in developing and displaying Z scale modules. Members are building them to the "ZBend Track" Module miniModuleZ specs Anyone in Northern California interested in Z Scale railroading is welcome to join us. We meet Sundays 10 AM to 5 PM at members' houses. Contact: Robert Ray pray59@sbcglobal.net Yahoo group: groups.yahoo.com/group/BAZ_modules.

California Central Model RR Club

The CCMRC is located in the old Agnew depot (Santa Clara) of the Southern Pacific (4185 Bassett St.) directly across from the Lafayette St. gate of Agnew State Hospital. The theme of the 15' x 50' HO club is western railroading running from the Bay Area to Southern Oregon. We meet Fri., 7:30 to 11 PM. Operating sessions the 1st and last Fri. of the month. Contact: 408-988-4449 (operating nights), or Wayne Cohen, 408-779-0707.

Carquinez Model Railroad Society

HO Model Railroading on a Grand Scale! Can you imagine taking one real time hour to run an SP (or your favorite name) DCC train round trip from Oakland, through the Sierras to Sparks and back? Don't imagine, join us! Friday nights 7-10 (by appointment) at 645 Loring Dr, 2nd Floor, Crockett CA Call Weds 7-10 510-787-6703 or e-mail anytime loggingrr@aol.com, bob@bob2sell.com or lambert5522@att.net

Coastal Valley Lines

The CVL is an informal association of novice to advanced model railroaders who live in Sonoma County. We meet at 7:00 PM the 1st Thu. of the month. We operate our HO modular railroad at local public shows. Contact: Blain Hendrix (707) 528-8655 or Steve Lewis (707) 527-0396. Web: http://cvl.hobby-site.com.

Eel River Valley Model Railroaders

The Eel River Valley is an HO club with a NWP-layout series of modules under construction. We meet Fri., 7:30 PM at the Humboldt County Fair Grounds Commercial Building, NW corner, Ferndale. Contact: Jack Jensen, 707-845-2823, 3313 Union St., Eureka, CA 95503 or Ron Plies, 208-229-7107, 12818 N. 11th Ave., Boise, ID 83714.

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, 661-664-8614 or Ken Lunders in Cupertino, 408-777-9572.

Empire Builders Model Railroad Club

Starting over after a warehouse fire destroyed our layout, we are a small friendly group now constructing an HO layout of no specific origin based in the early 50's era. The mountain division is laid and operating, we also have a reasonable size yard operationally working well. Work days are Saturday and during summer on Wednesdays. Our retired members also show up on occasional weekdays. The club site is located at 3318 School St Oakland, Ca Call Charles at 510-917-5790 or Ted at 510-749-7099 for an invite to see/chat/join. Please visit our website <http://www.ebmrc.org>.

European Train Enthusiasts

ETE (www.ete.org) serves modelers, railway fans, related organizations, and the community through public venues, operating layouts, the annual convention EuroWest, the chapter newsletter, and the quarterly national journal, the *ETE Express*. ETE is open to all who have an interest in European railways, whether full size or scale model. The SF Bay Area Chapter meets the second Saturday of the month from 1-5pm in various locations around the bay. Contact Bill Keane (650) 355-7231 or billkeaney@comcast.net.

Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society

Bakersfield GEHAMS, founded in 1987 and in their current location since March '94, is dual-scale with a 30' x 100' HO, and a 18' x 80' N based on SP's route from Bakersfield to Mojave with Tehachapi Loop. Though under construction, mainlines are in with monthly operations. Contact: Doug Wagner, 661-589-0391 email: carldw@aol.com GEHAMS web: www.gehams.net

Golden State Model Railroad Museum – East Bay Model Engineers Society

900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park at Point Richmond. Weekly public hours are on our website. To meet members, inquire about membership and behind the scenes tours come 1st & 2nd Friday evenings of the month between 7:30 and 10 PM.; behind the scenes tours also available most Wednesdays 11 AM to 3 PM. New members are welcomed in all Scales – O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction. For general information check the website or call (510) 234-4884 (recording); for membership inquiries call 1st or 2nd Fridays 8-10p.m. (510) 236-1913. For other information or to schedule special events, Email info@gsmrm.org. Website: www.gsmrm.org

Continued on Page 35

Clubs (Cont.)

Humboldt Bay & Eureka Model Railroad Club

The HB&EMRC meets at their clubhouse and layout at 10 West 7th St., Suite #C in Eureka, on Sat., 7:00 PM. Visitors are always welcome. Business meetings 1st Sat of month, 7:30 PM. Contact: David Berriman P.O. Box 915, Arcata, CA 95518 707-825-7689.

Lake County Model Railroad Club

HO layout. Meets Wednesday at 7:00PM in the old National Guard Building at the Lake County Fairgrounds on Martin Street, Lakeport. Call Mike Ernst at (707) 263-4949

Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society

Located at The Napa Valley Expo, (fairgrounds), 575 Third St., Napa, our railroad runs from Napa to Ukiah with off line connections to Stockton and Portland, has 700 feet of main line, and large classification yards at each end. The layout is never finished, as we are always rebuilding and improving! Era is 1940 to present. Member-owned rolling stock stresses reliability and realism. We meet Fri. 7:30 PM to 12, with formal runs the 2nd Fri. of the month. Info: John Rodgers 707-226-2985 E-mail: NapaJohn@napanet.net Web: www.nvmrc.org

Nn3 Alliance

Our 700 members in nine countries model narrow gauge in "smaller scales". Nn3 describes 3', 3'6", and meter gauges, modeled in N or 2MM Scales. Our local portable exhibition layouts and modules regularly appear at conventions and shows. The Nn3 Handbook, 140 pages with 400 illustrations, covering all aspects of small scale narrow gauge, is available through the address on the website. Official mailing address: The Nn3 Alliance, PO Box 6652, Chesterfield, MO 63006 Web: www.Nn3.org http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nn3/

Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Ave., Sacramento. Modeled as the Sierra Central RR, both HO and HOn3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Tues. and Fri. nights, 7:30 PM. Contact: 916-927-3618 Email: d.megeath@comcast.net Web: www.smrhs.com

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. Contact: Dick Witzens, 916-684-1987 Web: http://saccentral.railfan.net/

Sacramento Valley Live Steam Railroad Museum (SVLSRM)

The SVLS was founded in 1968 and is located in Hagen Community Park, Rancho Cordova, CA. Our initial 1500 feet of track has expanded to over 6300 feet of mainline and sidings. Approximately 1500 feet is dual gauge 4 3/4" and 7 1/2". We can accommodate equipment ranging in size from 1 inch scale (standard gauge) to 5 inch scale (2 foot narrow gauge), the most common scale being 1 1/2". Public run days are on the 1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday of each month during our operating season.

San Joaquin Valley Garden Railway Society

The SJVGRS was founded in July of 1995 to promote the joy of building and operating Garden Railways. We have grown to over 70 families in the Central Valley, meeting monthly at members' homes to spend the afternoon sharing our hobby, weather permitting. Dues: \$25 a year for a family. Contact info: Richard Emerson 559-439-7173 E-mail: emerson.r@worldnet.att.net Web: http://home.att.net/~sjvgrs/train/

San Leandro Historical Railway Society

The SLHRS models the SP 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, located at 1302 Orchard Ave., San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions Sat. 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM and Tues. 7:30 - 9:30 PM, business meetings the 1st Fri. at 7:30 PM. Contact: Pat LaTorres, 510-276-3121 email: duhnerd@pacbell.net

San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association (SLOMRA)

The SLOMRA is a multi-scale modular group with active N, HO, and On30 layouts. The goal of our non-profit association is railroad education and local history through public display of our modules. Our shows usually include G-gauge, tinsplate, and even LEGO trains. The monthly meetings include model and prototype activities, videos, and discussions. The SLOMRA is open to new members who have a love of trains. The general meeting is the third Monday of every month at 7:00pm at the Oceano Depot. For more information visit www.slomra.org or email info@slomra.org or phone Dennis Pearson at (805) 929-3062.

Silicon Valley Lines

The SVL is located at 148 E. Virginia St., San Jose. We meet Fri. 7:30 to 11:30 PM, with business meetings the 1st Fri. and operating sessions the last Fri. of the month. Our HO layout utilizing DCC for realistic operations, computer-generated train orders and radio-based dispatching. E-mail: svl@siliconvalleylines.com Web: www.siliconvalleylines.com

South Bay Historical Railroad Society

SBHRS invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Ave., Santa Clara, Tues. 7:00 to 10:00 PM or Sat. 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Contact: 408-243-3969. Web: www.sbhrrs.org.

Sonoma Short Line (SSL)

A group of model railroaders has formed a DCC, HO 100% NMRA club, Sonoma Short Line (SSL). The club is building a modular layout with a Sonoma County theme inspired by the period 1900-1950s. Private ops sessions and public shows are scheduled. SSL is looking for new members with skills in all aspects of model railroading and a desire to actively participate in the club. Contact Steve Lewis (707) 527-0396 or Peter Barnes (707) 539-6746 for further information.

Continued on Page 36

BRANCH LINE
530 FIG TREE LANE
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

Clubs (Cont.)

South Coast Society of Model Engineers

The club consists of enthusiasts of all scales and prototypes living in the Santa Barbara area, and has a collection of railroad books and videos for loan to members. The club has no layout but activities include weekly operations and work sessions at member layouts, as well as occasional club field trips. We meet every 3rd Tues. at 7:30 PM, at Woodglen Hall, 3010 Foothill Road, Santa Barbara. Junior members welcome. Contact: Secretary David Kuehn, email: davidkuehn@cox.net. Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=163470062239>

Siskiyou Model Railroad Club

Currently we are meeting at a member's home on the first Thursday evening of the month. Contact Tom Brass at 530-842-4921 or Glenn Joesten at 530-842-2359 for current info. The layout is still in the Yreka Western freight room, but is inoperable due to no power in the building. #19 was still in the engine house last we saw, but in "kit form." No further info. Currently a few members have been getting together on Tuesday mornings for various activities.

Tidewater Southern Railway Historical Society Inc.

Manteca, formerly the Manteca Model RR Club (org '73), TSRHS reorganized and incorporated in 1990. Located at the San Joaquin Fairgrounds, Building 1, (corner of Airport and Charter Ways (Hw 4), Stockton), a 2,400 sq. ft. alcove houses a large HO layout depicting the Tidewater Southern, several Valley towns, and museum display cases. We meet 6 - 8:30 PM Thursdays. Contact: Ben Cantu, 209-825-7215 Mail: PO Box 882, Manteca, CA 95336 E-mail: bcantu@SQ50.com

Tri-city Society of Model Engineers

The TCSME located in the Niles Plaza is currently looking for new members to help build and operate both an N Scale and an HO layout focused on Fremont and surrounding areas. We meet Fridays 7:30-9:30 PM. The depot is located at 37592 Niles Blvd, Fremont, CA 94536. Please visit our web site at <http://www.nilesdepot.org/http://www.nilesdepot.org>

Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society

The WCMRS, located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, is open the last Fri. of the month from 8 to 10 PM for operations. Fares are \$2 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$3 for adults. Membership is always open to interested HO modelers. Contact: 925-937-1888 (recorder) Web: www.wcmrs.org. "Like Us" on Facebook, www.facebook.com/WCMRS. 2013 week-end schedule: Mar 16-17, May 18-19, Sept 14-15. Holiday Open House schedule: Nov. 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, Dec. 1.

West Bay Model Railroad Association

Meets at the former baggage building at 1090 Merril St., near the Menlo Park train station and Ravenswood Ave. We are currently constructing a new 2-level HO layout designed for operations. Scheduled work sessions are Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Our monthly business meeting is held at 8 pm on the second Wednesday of each month. We are seeking new members with an interest in layout design and construction, model train operations, and/or who just love trains. Contact: Lauren Mercer at 650-322-9335, Tom Vanden Bosch at 650-369-8305 or visit the club website at wbmra.ning.com. 