

Jan-Feb-Mar 2024



# BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION



Where the Art of Modeling Meets Technology

**THE TECH LINE**

PCR Convention 2024 - Silicon Valley, CA

**Virtual Convention Option Now Available**

## NMRA/PCR 2024 Silicon Valley – April 24-28, 2023

Don't miss the best and maybe last opportunity to come to the Silicon Valley for a PCR Convention. Come to The Tech Line in April of 2024 for a great convention featuring 60 clinics with some of the best clinicians in the world, over 30 open layouts to visit, including bucket list layouts that have not been open for years, a great vendor and swap meet area, great prototype events and the fellowship of a great convention in an excellent location. We have secured a \$139 per night rate in the heart of the Silicon Valley, maybe the last reasonable opportunity to visit the Bay Area. Register now for The Tech Line, the best PCR Convention in years.

If you cannot make it to the Silicon Valley, check out the PCR 2024 Virtual Convention. Get on the Tech Line on-line!!!

<https://www.pcrnmra.net/conv2024/join-the-on-line-virtual-convention/>

*Continued on page 13*

Officers, BOD	<p>President, Frank Markovich, MMR 408-505-2727                  Vice-President, Chip Meriam 530-899-2609                  Treasurer, Bob Osborn 925-519-6016                  Secretary, Mike O'Dorney 925-998-6226                  Director - Daylight, Walter Mizuno 559-977-8511                  Director - Coast, Phil Edholm 408-832-5618                  Director - Sierra, Lou Anderson 480-845-8480                  Director - RED, Paul Weiss 707-775-9889</p>	<p>frank@frankmarkovich.com                  chipmeriam@comcast.net                  brakemanbob@yahoo.com                  modorney@aol.com                  wkmizuno@gmail.com                  pedholm@pkeconsulting.com                  louiesqd@att.net                  REDsuper@pcrnmra.org</p>
Administration	<p>Manager, Frank Markovich, MMR 408-505-2727                  Budget and Finance Committee [President, Vice-President and Treasurer] 408-505-2727                  By-laws and Manual Committee, Frank Markovich 408-505-2727                  Nomination Committee Chair, Dave Connery, MMR 925-735-0134                  Ballot Committee, Jim Providenza 415-472-6715                  Honors Committee, Dave Connery, MMR 925-735-0134                  Storekeeper, Mark Poggendorf 707-230-1142                  Audit Committee, John Houlihan 559-435-0874                  Historian, Dave Connery, MMR 925-735-0134</p>	<p>frank@frankmarkovich.com                  frank@frankmarkovich.com                  dgconnery@sbcglobal.net                  rrjim@aol.com                  dgconnery@sbcglobal.net                  on30cool@gmail.com                  oscalejohn@gmail.com                  dgconnery@sbcglobal.net</p>
Membership	<p>Manager, Doug Wagner 661-589-0391                  Member Services, Bob Ferguson 925-228-6833                  Member Aid, Rod Smith 510-657-3362                  Education, Frank Markovich, MMR 408-505-2727                  Special Interests, Seth Neumann 650-965-4687</p>	<p>CarlDW@aol.com                  BobPCRC@aol.com                  Railgeez@aol.com                  frank@frankmarkovich.com                  sneumann@pacbell.net</p>
Pubs.	<p>Manager, Gus Campagna 707-664-8466                  Editor, Branch Line, Chip Meriam 530-899-2609                  Webmaster, Michael Eldridge 408-663-2019                  Editor, Proactive Communications, Denni Baumer 707-745-5746</p>	<p>campgus@earthlink.net                  chipmeriam@comcast.net                  meldridge2000@gmail.com                  proactivecomm@pcrnmra.net</p>
Conv.	<p>Manager, Denni Baumer 707-745-5746                  2024—Coast Division, Earl Girbovan 650-248-9255</p>	<p>dennibaumer@gmail.com                  egirbovan@netzero.com</p>
Contest	<p>Manager, Earl Girbovan 650-248-9255                  Daylight Division, Chuck Harmon, MMR 559-299-4385                  Coast Division, Jim Eckman 650-996-6728                  Sierra Division, Mike Hamlin 530-526-4408                  RED, Giuseppe Aymar 707-291-0701</p>	<p>egirbovan@netzero.com                  harmonsta@yahoo.com                  jim_eckman@roninengineer.com                  mikeandjerihamlin@gmail.com                  Giuseaymar@aol.com</p>
AP	<p>Manager, Jack Burgess, MMR 510-797-9557                  Daylight Division, Dave Grenier 408-431-8989                  Coast Division, Earl Girbovan 650-248-9255                  Sierra Division, Dave Bayless 530-613-5784                  RED, Giuseppe Aymar, MMR 707-291-0701</p>	<p>jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com                  grenida@pacbell.net                  egirbovan@netzero.com                  davebayl@pacbell.net                  Giuseaymar@aol.com</p>
Daylight	<p>Superintendent, Vacant 714-528-8624                  Clerk / Paymaster, Milton San Soucie 559-438-7705                  Editor, Robert Pethoud 559-299-4385                  Contest, Chuck Harmon 408-431-8989                  Achievement, Dave Grenier 661-589-0391                  Membership, Doug Wagner 559-438-7705                  Member Aid, Bob Pethoud 408-431-8989                  Webmaster, Dave Grenier</p>	<p>miltons@sbcglobal.net                  pethoud@comcast.net                  harmonsta@yahoo.com                  grenida@pacbell.net                  CarlDW@aol.com                  pethoud@comcast.net                  grenida@pacbell.net</p>
Coast	<p>Superintendent, Phil Edholm 408-832-5618                  Clerk, Brian Booth 925-324-2181                  Paymaster, Bob Ferguson 925-228-6833                  Editor, Vacant                  Contest, Jim Eckman 650-996-6728                  Achievement, Earl Girbovan 650-248-9255                  Membership, Ronnie LaTorres 510-317-7456                  Member Aid, Rod Smith 510-657-3362                  Webmaster, Bob Gardyne 510-918-9099</p>	<p>pedholm@pkeconsulting.com                  carcrazy832@yahoo.com                  BobPCRC@aol.com                  jim_eckman@roninengineer.com                  egirbovan@netzero.com                  veronicashadlow@yahoo.com                  Railgeez@aol.com                  bob@oneva.com</p>
Sierra	<p>Superintendent, Dave Putnam 661-753-6006                  Clerk, Dave Fryman 925-360-1377                  Paymaster, Michael Eldridge 408-663-2019                  Editor, Chip Meriam 530-899-2609                  Contest, Mike Hamlin 530-526-4408                  Achievement, Dave Bayless 530-613-5784                  Membership, Vacant                  Webmaster, Michael Eldridge 408-663-2019</p>	<p>dave@daveandlisa.net                  fryperson@hotmail.com                  meldridge2000@gmail.com                  chipmeriam@comcast.net                  hamlin@snowcrest.net                  davebayl@pacbell.net                  meldridge2000@gmail.com</p>
RED	<p>Superintendent, Paul Weiss 707-775-9889                  Clerk / Paymaster, Dave Grundman 707-584-1964                  Editor, Scott Lockhart 707-775-9889                  Program, Al Merkrebs 707-953-5358                  Contest, Giuseppe Aymar, MMR 707-291-0701                  Achievement, Giuseppe Aymar, MMR 707-291-0701                  Membership, Gus Campagna 707-664-8466                  Webmaster, Gus Campagna 707-664-8466</p>	<p>REDsuper@pcrnmra.org                  REDclerk@pcrnmra.org                  REDcallboard@pcrnmra.org                  REDprograms@pcrnmra.org                  REDcontest@pcrnmra.org                  REDdap@pcrnmra.org                  REDmembership@pcrnmra.org                  REDwebmaster@pcrnmra.org</p>

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Chip Meriam  
 2260 Cherry Glenn Court  
 Chico, CA 95926  
 Phone (530) 899-2609  
 e-mail: [chipmeriam@comcast.net](mailto:chipmeriam@comcast.net)

All comments about materials contained in the BRANCH LINE should be mailed directly to the PCR Publications Manager, 1915 William Drive, Penngrove, CA94951.

Inquiries regarding membership application, renewal, or change of address should be directed to the NMRA, P.O. Box 1328 Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328.

**Branch Line**  
**Deadlines for 2023/24**

**APR-MAY-JUN 2024 issue**

Articles due by  
**March 10, 2024**

**JUL-AUG-SEP 2024 issue**

Articles due by  
**June 10, 2024**

**OCT-NOV-DEC 2024 issue**

Articles due by  
**September 10, 2024**

**JAN-FEB-MAR 2025 issue**

Articles due by  
**December 10, 2024**

Please direct questions to the PCR Publications Manager, Gus Campagna at [campgus@earthlink.net](mailto:campgus@earthlink.net) Or phone (707) 664-8466

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## From The President



By Frank Markovich, MMR President

Train shows are back. By the time you read this we will have had two in our area. I will have worked both in recruitment. We did great at International Rail Fair with five new members signed up. I expect with the GTE show we will get a similar result.

1. Budget - where the money comes from and goes. This was interesting.
2. Insurance - can increase it if necessary - but to a cost. Also, some things not covered.
  - Car insurance is not covered. Do not advocated carpooling to layouts etc.
  - Can have a board for messages about sharing. (see page 19)
  - For layouts that are not NMRA members at conventions - they are not covered by insurance! Total news to me.
3. Conventions
  - For this year Pat (PSR President) said that they will use rail pass (still in force) for non-members.
  - Detroit will open to non-members. Insurance is an issue and they might get separate insurance.
4. Pig push for more members across the board.

The convention this next year in April is looking good. They do need more clinics and if you have a layout it would be great to open it up for visitors.



## From The Vice President



Chip Meriam, Vice-President and *Branch Line* Editor

As I write this, it's the waning hours of 2023, and a new year is upon us. As is customary this time of year, I look back over the previous year as a review - and sometimes further back than last year.

It has been six years since I took over as editor of the *Branch Line*, following in the footsteps of Chuck Harmon, MMR®. What stands out most for me is the number of people I have met and worked with along the way. When I first came here there were over a dozen contributing authors, and I had met but one. Today, I know them all—and then some. My enjoyment of this hobby has been greatly enriched by having had personal interactions with all of these fellow model railroaders.

Indeed, fellowship is, perhaps, the most precious gift of our hobby. Jim Providenza makes this point eloquently in a quote from this month's "Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern." Jim is commenting on Steve Gust's recollection of a particular SCN OP session from many years past:

*"The fact that Steve does recall the incident in some ways bonds the two of us together. And I think this speaks more generally to the nature of our hobby. The social aspect, the interaction between us as modelers, is an integral part of what is so special to us."*

Jim, I couldn't agree with you more.

My wish is for all of us to avail ourselves of the tremendous opportunity to make new friends that share our passion for miniature trains—an opportunity brought to us all by the National Model Railroad Association.

Happy 2024!



If you cannot make it to Silicon Valley in 2024

**Where the Art of Modeling Meets Technology**

**THE TECH LINE**

**PCR On-Line Virtual Convention 2024**

For many NMRA members, getting to a convention is a significant challenge. Whether because of work, travel, cost, or health issues, it is often impossible to make the trip to a convention. For 2024, the PCR is presenting an on-line virtual version of the convention for those members that cannot attend in person.

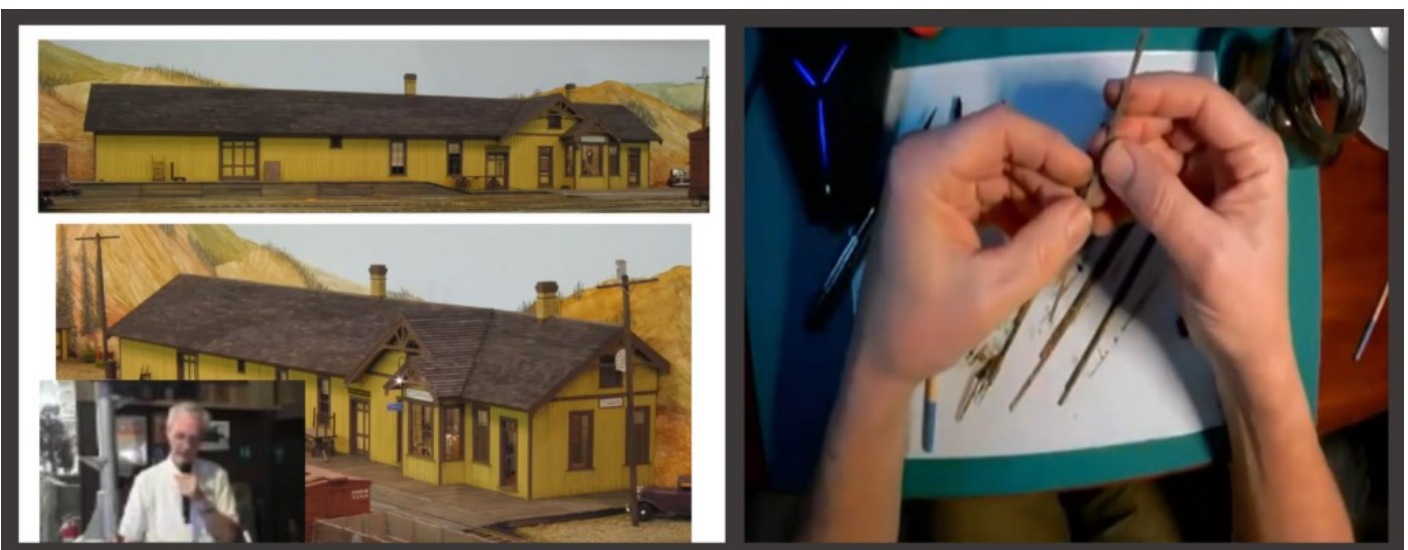
If you are not an NMRA member or outside the Northern California area, the PCR 2024 Virtual Convention will be great experience with outstanding clinics and other activities. If you are a PCR member that has moved away, it is great opportunity to reconnect.

While it is never possible to replicate the in-person experience of a live convention, the 2024 PCR Virtual Convention will provide a part of the experience for remote attendees. But, if you cannot attend the in-person convention, you can get a great on-line experience with both clinics and other on-line activities.

## On-Line Virtual Experiences Currently Planned

- Clinics – one of the three clinics rooms will be equipped with cameras and microphones to enable remote participants to see the clinician, presentations, and demonstrations in a special video workspace. The room will have active moderation and clinics will be followed by on-line meeting time with clinicians.
- Contest Room Reviews – PCR Master Model Railroaders and Contest Judges will take you on a video tour of the contest room. They will discuss the models and, for those that were judged, a bit about the contest judging process. Learn about contests in a very unique way.

On-line discussions and Birds of a Feather – there will be opportunities to meet with the other virtual participants for discussions



and sharing.

*Continued on page 6*

## Quality On-Line Experience

The PCR 2024 On-Line Virtual Convention will be hosted and moderated by TSG Multimedia. The TSG Multimedia team of John and Cydney Abatecola will be the hosts for the virtual event at the physical convention. They have hosted multiple highly successful virtual events, including the 2021 NMRA National Convention, multiple OpSig Meets, and the PCR 2023 On-Line Virtual Convention.

## Next Best Thing to Being There

The on-line virtual convention is a great way to participate, in fact it is the next best thing to actually going to the convention in person. However, a virtual event cannot provide all of the exciting activities and interactions of an in-person event. This are how attending the in-persona and virtual events differ.

Convention Attraction	In-Person Convention	Virtual Convention
Clinics	✓✓✓	📺
Prototype Tours	✓✓✓	*📺
Contest Room	✓	📺
Layout Tours	✓	✗
Operating Sessions	✓	✗
Non-Rail Activities	✓	✗
Vendors and Swap Meet	✓	✗
Banquet and Breakfast	✓	✗
Meeting Old Friends	✓	📺

\*📺 Under Development

## PCR 2024 Virtual Convention Fares

The fare pricing for the PCR 2024 Virtual Convention is less than the in-person fares, reflecting the differences in value. For the 2024 Convention, the On-Line Virtual Fares are:

- On-Line Virtual Regular Fare (after January 15, 2024): \$30.00
- On-Line Virtual Early Bird Fare (through January 15, 2024): \$20.00

Don't miss the convention if you cannot make it in person. Get on the Tech Line virtually.

REGISTER  
HERE

<https://pcrnmra.regfox.com/pcr-2024-convention>



# Great Train Show - 24 - 25 Feb 2024



**Saturday and Sunday. February 24 & 25, 2024**

**Santa Clara County Fairgrounds**

**344 Tully Road - San Jose, CA 95111**

# Great Train Show

January 27, 2024 - January 28, 2024

\$5 – \$15

10 am - 4 pm **Cal Expo - Sacramento, CA**



The [Great Train Show](#) is the nation's only coast-to-coast model train show. The show is designed for the general public, modelers, hobbyists, families, and the just plain curious. Each show features hundreds of tables of trains and accessories for sale, huge operating exhibits, activities for kids, and more.

## Event Hours

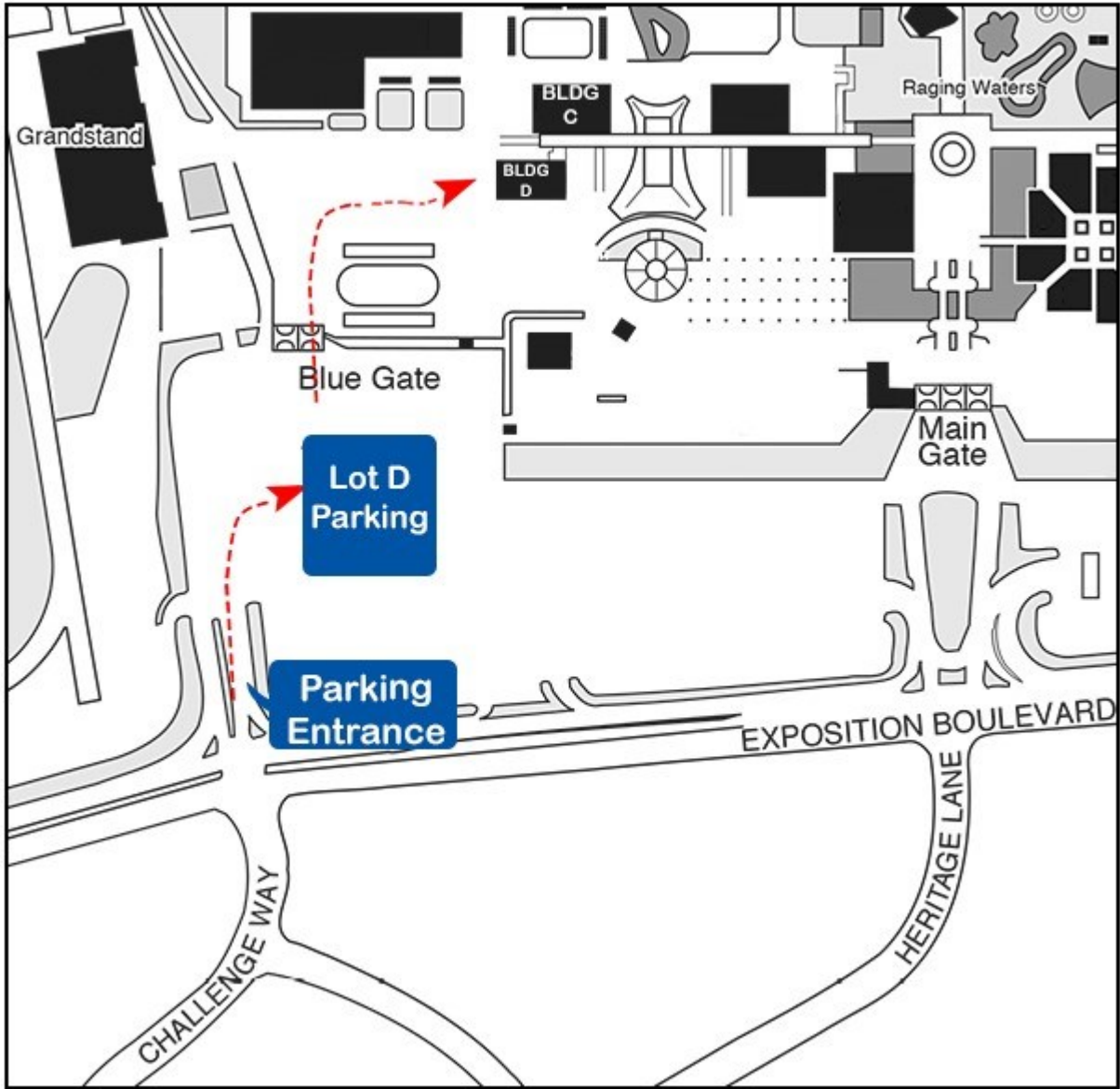
- **Saturday, January 27:** 10 am – 4 pm
- **Sunday, January 28:** 10 am – 4 pm

## Admission

- No pre-registration is needed. Buy your tickets at the gate on the day of the show. **CASH ONLY.**
- **Adults:**
  - Saturday: \$15
  - Sunday: \$12
- **Children 12 and under:**
  - Saturday: \$5
  - Sunday: FREE
- Parking: \$10

**See map on next page**





**Welcome Aboard !  
PCR's Newest Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>City, State</b>	<b>Date Joined</b>
<b>Daylight</b>		
Ernest Kerr	Hanford CA	9/27/2023
Robert Mark Nunes	Clovis CA	11/10/2023
Robert Nunes	Fresno CA	11/10/2023
<b>Coast</b>		
Jess Turnbull	Los Gatos CA	10/16/2023
Pennie Bacon	Berkeley CA	10/17/2023
Bruce MacDermott	Berkeley CA	10/17/2023
Sally Griffin	San Jose CA	11/20/2023
Robert Fassano	Fremont CA	11/30/2023
<b>Sierra</b>		
Mark Cartwright	Stockton CA	9/11/2023
David Kronick	Orland CA	9/13/2023
Wally Clark	Sacramento CA	11/30/2023
Mark Hirzy	Davis CA	11/30/2023
Matt McCracken	Sacramento CA	11/30/2023
Christian McKittrick	Roseville CA	11/30/2023
<b>Redwood Empire</b>		
Bennett Dekleva	Santa Rosa CA	11/6/2023
Erin Dekleva	Santa Rosa CA	11/6/2023
David Philp	Santa Rosa CA	11/28/2023
Nico Banuelos	Vallejo CA	11/30/2023



**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](http://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](http://www.nmra.org)

Then, get that popcorn ready.

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### PCR Membership Gauge

November 30, 2013—1,039  
 November 30, 2022—769  
 December 31, 2022—774  
 January 31, 2023—771  
 February 28, 2023—766  
 March 30, 2023—796  
 April 30, 2023—796  
 May 31, 2023—789  
 June 30, 2023—785  
 July 31, 2023—781  
 August 31, 2023—780  
 September 30, 2023—775  
 October 31, 2023—775  
 November 30, 2023—778

### PCR Membership Tracker

<u>Division</u>	<u>#Members</u>
<b>Coast</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>Sierra</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>Redwood Empire</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Daylight</b>	<b><u>84</u></b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>778</b>

### In Memoriam

<b>Member</b>	<b>City, Sate</b>	<b>Date Joined</b>
	<b>Daylight</b>	
William Beasley (Life-Time Member)	California City CA	1/1/1963
	<b>Coast</b>	
Thomas Vanden-Bosch	Redwood City CA	1/1/1972
	<b>Sierra</b>	
Mike Hamm	Cottonwood, CA	8/1/2016



# 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Bakersfield Model Train Show, March 2 & 3, 2024.

Enjoy 20,000 square feet of model railroading—from sellers of model train stuff to several operating model train layouts—at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Bakersfield, California Model Train Show, March 2, 2024, 10am–5pm and Sunday, March 3, 2024, 10am–4pm, at the Kern County Fairgrounds, 1142 South P Street, Bakersfield, CA 93307. Sponsored by the Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society. Admission is \$8 for adults with kids 12 free. There will also be hourly door prizes for model train stuff and a drawing for a Thomas the Tank Engine O Scale Train set and \$100 VISA Gift Certificate. For further information, please contact Kevin Birkbeck, 661-496-9514 or [kevin4strings@gmail.com](mailto:kevin4strings@gmail.com). Club web site: [www.gehams.club](http://www.gehams.club)

# BAKERSFIELD



# 30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MODEL TRAIN SHOW

Saturday, March 2 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Sunday March 3 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Kern County Fairgrounds  
1142 South 'P' Street  
Bakersfield

Enjoy 20,000 square feet of model railroading including:

Operating Railroads · Dozens Of Dealer Tables · All Scales · Door Prizes  
Drawing For A Lionel Thomas The Tank Set · Drawing For A \$100 VISA Debit Gift Card

**Adult \$8.00**

(\$1.00 charge for each credit card transaction for admission purchase)

**Kids ages 12 and under FREE when with an adult**

**\$5.00 Parking**

Information

(661) 496-9514

[kevin4strings@gmail.com](mailto:kevin4strings@gmail.com)

[www.gehams.club](http://www.gehams.club)



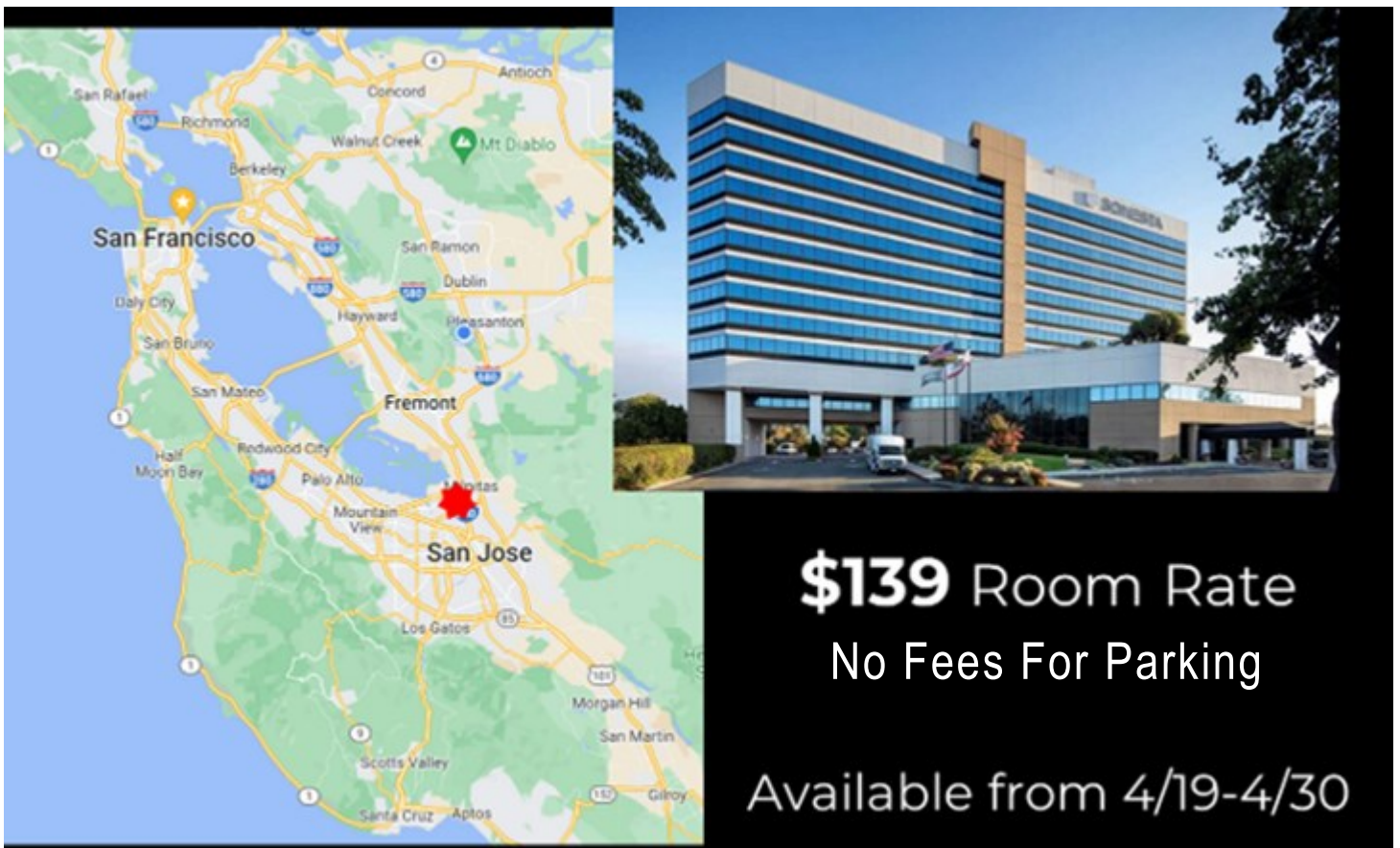
# Where the Art of Modeling Meets Technology

# THE TECH LINE

## PCR Convention 2024 – Silicon Valley, CA

The 2024 PCR Convention will be hosted by the Coast Division at the Sonesta San Jose Hotel from April 24-28, 2024. The Sonesta is ideally located for great layout tours, prototype visits, and other activities. The hotel has great convention facilities, enabling a vendor and swap meet.

AND the **PARKING IS FREE!**



**\$139** Room Rate  
No Fees For Parking  
Available from 4/19-4/30

The layout tours will feature the great layouts of the Bay Area. It has been 8 years since the last NMRA convention in the Bay Area and there are some great improved and new layouts. We are planning on having over 30 layouts open during the convention.

*Continued on page 14*



The convention will include prototype tours and operating sessions as well as lots of other model railroading activities. Check out the [PC2024 website](#) for more information. Don't miss this opportunity to go to a great local convention. With the great \$139 room rate and all of the great model railroading attractions, this is a convention not to be missed.



## Contest Room



**Earl Girbovan**  
PCR Contest Manager

The 2024 Convention in Milpitas is approaching, and now is a great time to plan on showing your skill and creativity in the contest room. There are many categories, and not all of them are judged.

### Square Foot Challenge

Back by popular demand is the Square Foot Challenge. This is a non-judged, popular vote category with very simple rules:

- Railroad themed
- Must include a piece of track
- No limit on height or scale
- Area of one square foot

For the upcoming convention, we modified Rule #4 a bit from previous years. As opposed to the entry needing to be one foot on each side, we are allowing an arbitrary shape as long as it has a footprint of 144 square inches. A rectilinear shape is preferred, with the smallest side being 4" or larger.

The entry can be prototypical or tongue-in-cheek. This is an opportunity to show off your creativity! For inspiration, there are numerous YouTube® videos on making small dioramas like this. It's a great way to try a new technique or scale.

## Entering the Contest – Picking the Right Prototype

In previous contests, there has been some confusion about models meeting criteria for the Merit Award. This is the 87.5 point threshold requirement.

All of the judging matrices are some permutation of a complexity axis and a quality of workmanship axis. Obviously, the more complex the entry and the better the workmanship, the higher it will score. This also means that a simple model, even if it has good workmanship, simply will not garner the points necessary to meet Merit criteria.

This is not to say that a 4-sided structure cannot achieve merit status. Here's a photo of Phil Edholm's contest-winning warehouse from the Sacramento Convention.



Scratch building, interior framing and details, lighting, weathering and attention to detail resulted in an exceptional model. And this was Phil's first time entering a contest! You don't need to go to this level of work to achieve merit, but it does illustrate what can be done.

*Continued on page 16*

## Contest Room, ct'd.

There was discussion in the past that only old-time models could get merit awards. This is simply not the case. Here is photo of a cement reload that I built some years ago.



With the scratch built spiral staircase, interior and exterior details, and photos and documentation of the prototype, I was able to achieve a merit award. And this was without the warehouse on the right side. As mentioned before in my column, picking a good prototype and having good documentation of it is an excellent way to bolster your score.

### Contest Forms

As always, don't let filling out the contest paperwork scare you away from entering a model. It's simply a matter of documenting what you did, and better documentation leads to better scores. Your Division AP person and/ or myself are always available to guide you through the process. We're there to help.

I look forward to seeing your creativity in Milpitas this April.





**Have you joined the NMRA Interchange? It's the newest tool to help you connect with other members, gain knowledge and learn to modeling techniques. The Interchange is hosted on the Discord application which is available for Windows, Apple OS, Android and Apple devices. See instructions below for signing up.**

## **Joining the NMRA Interchange**

Speed Muller

IT Manager, NMRA

Have you joined the Interchange yet? If not, follow these steps to get connected!

1. Go to [nmra.org/nmra-interchange](https://nmra.org/nmra-interchange)
2. It will ask you to log in to the NMRA website if you're not already logged in. If you are not registered with the NMRA website yet, now's the time to do it. Click the "Need a username? Register now" button, and get set up. Use the email address on file in the NMRA membership system (probably the one where you got this eBulletin). The system will email you a link to set your password.
3. Now you should be in the [NMRA Interchange](#) page. If not, click this link.
4. Click on [Member Info](#) in the top right corner and scroll down get your exact Member ID. You'll need that later.
5. Read through the page and then follow the "Interchange Server Invite" link at the bottom. This is a special link just for you and will look something like <https://discord.gg/xxxxxxx>
6. You will be taken to Discord (the platform that hosts the NMRA Interchange) where you will be prompted to sign in, if you already have an account there, or prompted to register, if not. If you need instructions for creating an account or logging into Discord they can be found [here](#).
7. Once you accept the NMRA Interchange Invite, and you are logged in, you will land in **#the-lobby** with a message on what to do next.
8. We suggest that you read and agree to the **#rules** first. Just click on **#rules** and then click on "thumbs up". Then click on **#the-lobby** again to do the most important step.
9. Discord and the NMRA need to check with each other, in order to verify that you are a current NMRA member with an email on file. You start the process with the **/onboard** command. Now, this is very sensitive to the type of device you are using, so just type the first few letters **/onb** at the bottom where you see a + sign in a circle. It will complete the command for you in a pop-up just above that. Click on the **/onboard** command. Add your membership number (6 characters followed by a space and then two more characters) just as you noted in step 4. Example: `/onboard input: 123456 0A`
10. Discord and the NMRA computers will have a chat, and then you will receive an email containing a **/clearance** command. That's your entry ticket. Copy and paste the whole line into **#the-lobby** (at the + sign again). Example: `/clearance input: 654321`
11. You're in! You will not have to do any of this again. If anything derails, you'll get a message telling you what to do next, and we also have Moderators in the Interchange standing by to help.
12. If all went well, you'll now see more than 350 channels (those # things). We suggest you start by going to **#introduce-yourself** and then scroll up to **#the-workbench** to see what others have done and shared! Then find your Region and Division and say "hello" there. And then start participating and enjoy!



# 2024 SPH&TS Convention : Sparks, Nevada



**Dates:**

Wednesday, October 16 through  
Saturday, October 19

**Location:**

Nugget Casino Resort  
1100 Nugget Avenue  
Sparks, NV 89431



## Vehicle Insurance Coverage

There are continual instances of region and division officers, and members, being unclear or uncertain about the extent to which the NMRA carries vehicle insurance coverage for activities such as train shows or carpooling to events. The answer is short: the NMRA **does not** carry such vehicle insurance. Every member needs to understand he or she is personally liable for any vehicle damages or injuries that occur while transporting others to events in a personal car or rented vehicle (such as a passenger van). In addition, transporting individuals or arranging transportation (such as carpool signups) for events also puts the NMRA at risk because of the “wide net” that is cast by personal injury lawyers following an accident. To be sure, the NMRA does not have a prohibition or other directive addressing carpooling and similar activities. The goal of this communication is to help members understand the risks of personal liability – and potential exposure of the NMRA to liability – associated with such activities.

The FAQs below are from a memo titled “NMRA Liability and Property Insurance Program (revised 5/1/2018)” posted here [Liability Insurance | National Model Railroad Association \(nmra.org\)](https://www.nmra.org/faq/liability-insurance). If you have questions about specific circumstances, please contact the NMRA Chief Administrative Officer at [nmracao@nmra.org](mailto:nmracao@nmra.org).

\* \* \* \* \*

### Specific FAQs

**7) Does the NMRA [Liability and Property Insurance] Policy cover car and van rentals?**

Yes, but only for NMRA employees and national executives. Employees and national executives should refuse rental car company insurance at the time they sign rental agreement contract(s). The NMRA has no other coverage available for vehicles or transportation at NMRA National, Regional, or Division events.

**8) In the memo above, you state that there is no coverage available for vehicles used for event transportation. What exactly does this mean?**

This means that in case an incident occurs, there is no NMRA coverage and the only coverage your event would have would be the personal auto liability and collision insurance purchased by the vehicle owner and/or driver.

The NMRA does not carry insurance that applies to transportation on tours, even for national conventions. The NMRA always works with contracted carriers who are required by law, and by our event contract, to carry adequate liability insurance. If there is an accident, the transportation provider is liable for all personal injuries and other damages. The NMRA has no liability. Thus, we carry no insurance for this.



## Achievement Program

### By Jack Burgess, MMR, Manager, PCR Achievement Department Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical

In the last issue of the Branch Line, we began a discussion of the requirements for Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical. Like other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available online at the NMRA website.

The essence of this AP certificate is to demonstrate your knowledge of wiring a model railroad. The required work can be done on your own layout, a club layout, or even on a friend's layout. As indicated in the last issue, the first two requirements for this AP certificate concern 1) constructing and demonstrating the basic wiring of a layout; and 2) wiring and demonstrating the electrical operation of three items such as turnout controls,

slip switches, crossing, etc.

The third requirement may seem more challenging but has a number of options. Basically, you need to wire and demonstrate the electrical operation of at least three items from a list of 23 possible choices, most of which can be satisfied with the installation of commercial units. Keep in mind that many of the first items for related to traditional block control while DCC control items are further along on the list. These items include:

- Electrical turnout position indication on a control panel or at trackside for a minimum of four turnouts. (Remember that many commercial switch machines have electrical terminals to allow you to do this easily.)
- Track occupancy indication on a control panel or at trackside for a minimum of five blocks.
- Cab control, making provision for the connection of at least two power supplies to a minimum of five blocks as the trains progress. (This means that your layout has at least five blocks, each of which can be controlled by one of two power supplies. The five blocks do not have to be in a row along the same stretch of track.)
- Engine terminal, including an electrically powered turntable or transfer table, a minimum of three stall tracks, and at least two blocked storage sections for parking locomotives outside the stall area. (This means you need to have a total of five tracks (three inside an engine house or roundhouse, and two outside), that you can cut power independently to store motive power).
- Two turnout junctions with electrical interlocking and protecting trackside signals. (This is simply a turnout with electrical protection to prevent a train from going through a turnout that is set against it. Again, the electrical terminals on a switch machine, combined with a couple of insulated rail joiners, make this a fairly easy project.)
- High Frequency Lighting (This is an old term for Constant Lighting.)
- Electronic throttle with inertia and braking provisions.
- Grade crossing with electrically actuated warning indication. (You don't have to design or build the circuitry for this yourself. There are a number of commercial components available that you can just wire up to meet this requirement. Or you can use commercial plans that appear in magazines from time to time. Or you can do it from scratch.)
- Two-way block signaling with automatic train detection for at least five blocks.
- Operating overhead wire, using either pantographs, trolley poles, or both for current collection.
- Installation of an advanced electronic and/or computer control for the model railroad.
- Design, installation, and operation of animated mechanical and/or electrical displays. (This doesn't have to be a huge animated display - think about small eye-catching displays like animated industries or signs.)
- Installation of a command control receiver. Modifications or additions to the device's wiring are required. Installing a plug-equipped decoder into a manufactured prewired socket is not sufficient.
- Installation of a command control throttle buss line around a layout capable of handling at least two throttles at three or more separate locations.

*Continued on page 21*

## Achievement Program ct'd.

### Commercially assembled complete units are not acceptable in the items below:

- Construction and installation of a sound system. (This does not have to be an on-board sound system, it could be an under-the-layout system.)
- Construction and installation of a signaling system.
- Development and installation of a CTC system.
- Installation and operation of an on-board video system.
- Computer generated block detection information.
- Hardwired or stored control program (i.e. computer) for operation of the railroad.
- Development and demonstration of a computer-to-railroad interface.
- Other: Examples of 'other' include flashing warning lights on locomotives, or end-of-train devices on cabooses, etc.

These are just some of the more common electrical projects which are typical on many layouts. It is therefore easy to see that many layouts already satisfy this particular requirement. For example, most of the layouts with DCC would automatically satisfy two of the requirements in this category (Items 14 and 15).

The fourth and fifth requirements basically involve documentation proving that you understand what you have done to satisfy the other requirements. First, you must prepare a schematic drawing of the propulsion circuitry for the layout showing the gaps, blocks, feeders, etc. This drawing does not need to show turnout control wiring, building lights, etc. It is therefore much like the drawings included in *Model Railroader* magazine layout project articles which illustrate for the new modeler where gaps are required, where to connect the track power, etc. Finally, you need to also prepare a schematic drawing identifying the wiring and components used to complete the category on wiring a turnout, crossing, etc. mentioned in the last issue and the three items selected from the above bullets.

Once you have satisfied all of the requirements, submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) which includes the required schematic drawings and describes the features that you used to satisfy the requirements. You are not judged for a Merit Award for this certificate. However, the operation of the various features must be witnessed by the AP Chairman or his/her designee. The witnesses must sign the SOQ. 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 one new Achievement Program awards this issue:

Chip Meriam - Association Official

If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My phone number, address, and e-mail address are listed in the Call Board on Page 2.



# The Answers Are Out There

By Robert Pethoud

## Non-Clearing Trains 4

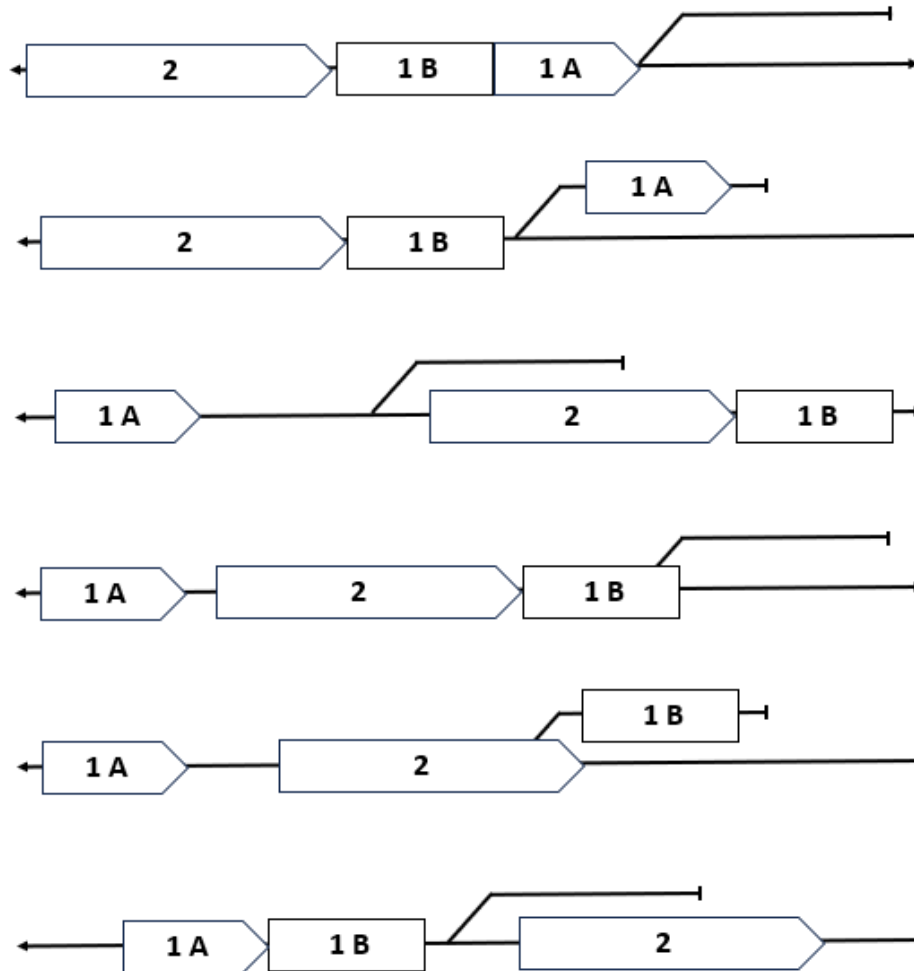


Non-clearing Trains 3 was supposed to be the concluding chapter of this discussion of how trains which are too long for sidings can still get around each other in single-track territory. Then, I received an email from Reinhard Müller, which caused me to re-evaluate. In the matter of one train passing another at a facing point spur too short to hold either train, I wrote, “I don’t believe that this maneuver can be done without ending up with the passed train pushing its own rear end ahead of the locomotive. Am I wrong?” Reinhard wrote to let me know that I was indeed wrong, and he explained step-by-step how the pass could be accomplished.

Herr Müller lives in Northeim, Germany, and is a member of FREMO. He enjoys operating on modular layouts, with the challenge of a different layout at each meeting. His expertise is in DCC; he is a member of the NMRA DCC working group; and he is chair of RailCommunity, the association of manufacturers of digital products in Europe. While he claims to be knowledgeable about DCC, you’ll see he’s no slouch in operations, either.

The illustration below shows the maneuver one step at a time. Train 1 is the train to be passed, broken into two parts—1A and 1B—each of which will fit onto the facing point spur; train 2 is the train that will pass it. To begin, train 1 is broken in two and the head end enters the spur, after which the turnout is reset for the main. The passing train, train 2, then pushes the rear of train 1—1B—past the turnout, allowing 1A to back out of the spur and far enough down the main to allow train 2 to maneuver.

The next step is for train 2 to pull 1B back clear of the turnout, have a brakeman throw the switch, and then push 1B onto the spur, uncouple from it, and back out of the spur. After throwing the turnout for the main, train 2 pulls forward clear of the switch, which permits 1A to re-enter the spur to retrieve 1B and pull it out onto the main. All of this leads to the situation shown in the sixth part of the illustration below:

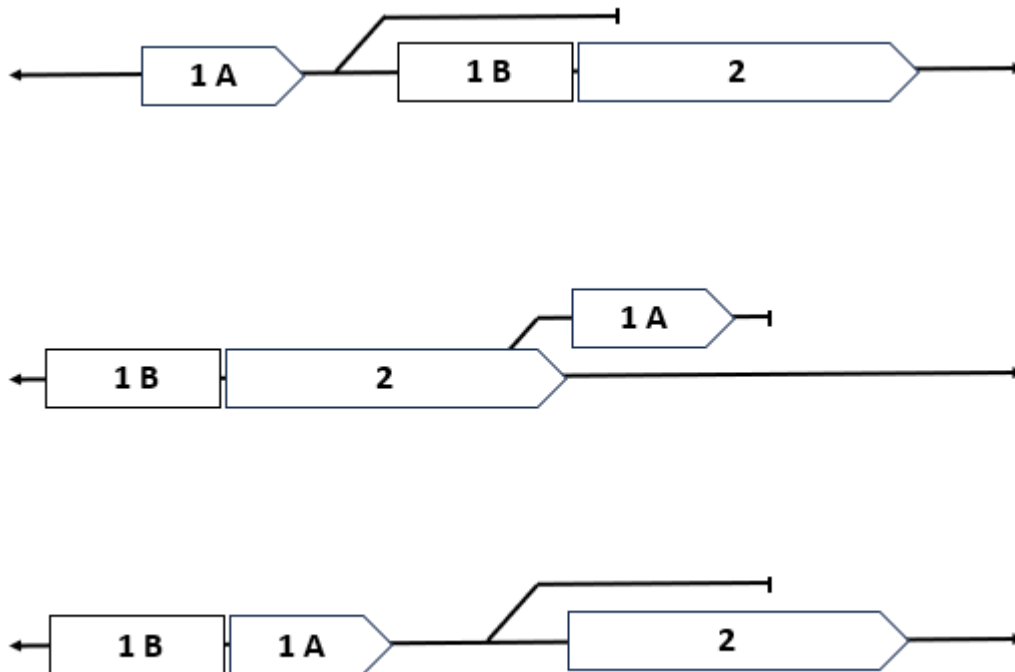


Continued on page 23

## Answers ct'd.

This is the point where I figured that train 2, the passing train, would proceed on its way, leaving train 1 to fend for itself, with the caboose and rear cars now ahead of the locomotive. Herr Müller's insight is that train 1 can be restored with just a little

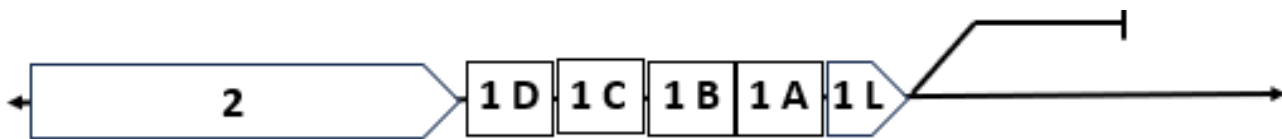
more help from train 2:



By pulling the rear of train 1 ahead of the turnout to the spur, thus allowing train 1's head end to enter the spur, and then pushing 1's rear end back to where it is accessible to the head end, both trains become free to proceed after a successful pass.

After seeing this nifty little maneuver, do you not want to have your dispatcher order a pass at a short facing point spur somewhere on your layout? Maybe an accident of some sort has rendered a section of a lengthy siding temporarily unusable? How will your usual crews handle such a problem?

I will leave you this time with another puzzle posed by Reinhard Müller. This time the facing point spur is shorter and will only hold the locomotive and a smaller fraction of the cars, say 1/3 or 1/4 or 1/5 of them. How can train 2 pass train 1 in this situation? And the order of the cars on both trains must be the same after the pass as it is before.



Until next time, you may reach me with comments and/or questions at [pethoud@comcast.net](mailto:pethoud@comcast.net) Happy puzzle solving!





# Pacific Coast Region SIG Report

by Seth Neumann



The SIG story for 4th quarter was that most of the traditional national visiting operations meets are back, and events are falling back into pre-pandemic schedules. We often have slots for these meets, so contact me if you'd like to try one out. I personally participated in VanRail in Vancouver, BC, a new invitational meet, Front Range Rails in the Denver area (supplementing the ever-popular Rocky Ops), and Great Lakes Getaway in the Detroit/Toledo area. We also had slots for the newly rejuvenated MinnRail in the Twin Cities.

We lost one of our long time operating hosts this fall, as Steve Hayes of Soulsbyville (Sonora) passed away. Steve was one of the earliest organizers of operating tours in California with his "Central California Operating Group" (CCOG) in the 90s and 00s. We will miss Steve and his ambitious Western Pacific layout.

The 2024 Bay Area/Northern California SIG Meet, will be held in Santa Rosa the weekend of February 3. We are planning to offer tours on Friday the 2nd, followed by a no-host dinner in Santa Rosa. The main clinic program will be Saturday the 3rd at the Finley Community Center, Santa Rosa, CA and clinics will be streamed. Check out the website at [www. http://bayldops.com/](http://bayldops.com/), online registration should be available by the time you read this.

LDSIG has been struggling with various production delays but LDJ72 should be by the time you read this.

**Seth Neumann**





## Life on the Fungus & Mungus



## Life on the Fungus and Mungus Railroad

By Steve Folino

Hubert “Hugh” Mungus, President of the Hugh Mungus Timber Company, I.B. Sawyer, Superintendent of the Hugh Mungus Sawmill, and I.M. Cutter, Sawmill Foreman, are pleased to announce that construction of the new Hugh Mungus Sawmill has been completed and it is now fully operational. The new sawmill with the capacity to process 40 logs per day replaces the mill formerly on this site that was destroyed by fire last spring.



Ben Dover, FMRR Dispatcher and his wife Ilene Dover, FMRR Telegrapher, announced that their son Trip Dover recently graduated from the 6th grade and will now be employed full-time by the Fungus and Mungus Railroad. Let’s keep it in the family.

Tim Burr, Superintendent of the Hugh Mungus Logging Company Camp 4, would like to remind everyone that Camp 4 is now on its winter schedule. All logging operations have been suspended for the season and the crews have been sent home. With an ample supply of logs, loaders as well as some support personnel will continue through the winter.



Hobos have once again been spotted camping at the Old Pickens place south of the sawmill. The place has been abandoned since old man Pickens passed away nearly 10 years ago. Since no one quite knows who now owns the place, the sheriff is reluctant to run them off.



*Continued on page 26*

## Fungus & Mungus, ct'd.

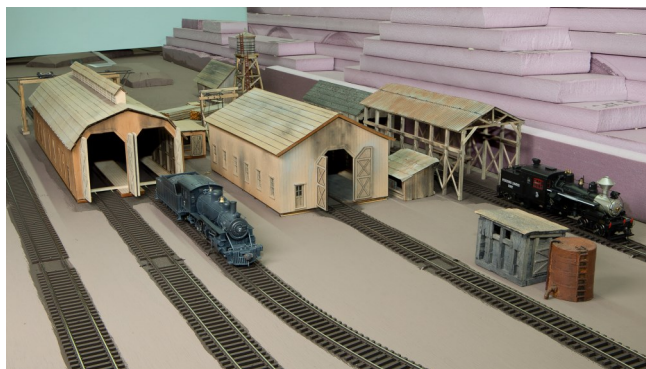
The Reverend Matthew John Luke, pastor at the 47th Baptist Church, would like to thank the anonymous doner who left a ten-dollar gold piece in last Sunday's collection plate. Luke plans to add an additional two pews to the church so that there's room for everyone to sit during service.



Miss Lee, owner of the Dusty Bottoms Cattle Company, has announced that starting next spring, she'll be adding a small passel of pigs to her operation and has agreed to supply the Logging Camp with pork. Pigs will be delivered to the Hugh Mungus Commissary in Cloud's Rest for processing, from where they'll be shipped to the camp.

Belethor, owner of Belethor's General Store, would like to remind everyone that he will be closed from Christmas day to January 2, 1907. He encourages everyone to stock up before Christmas to avoid disappointment.

Construction has begun on a dedicated machine shop here in the Cloud's Rest yard. Previously, machining was done in the locomotive shop. It should be completed and move-in ready in the late spring.



*Continued on page 27*

## Fungus & Mungus, ct'd.



The Fungus and Mungus Railroad has announced that passenger service will not be available on December 24th or December 25th, so that railroad personnel may spend Christmas with their families. Normal schedules will resume on December 26th.

Justin Case, Fungus Mines' Foreman, announced that the Le-nor mine set a one-day record of 60 tons of high-grade un-obtanium being shipped. That's three full rails cars. Case said that they had reached a particularly rich vein deep in the mine.

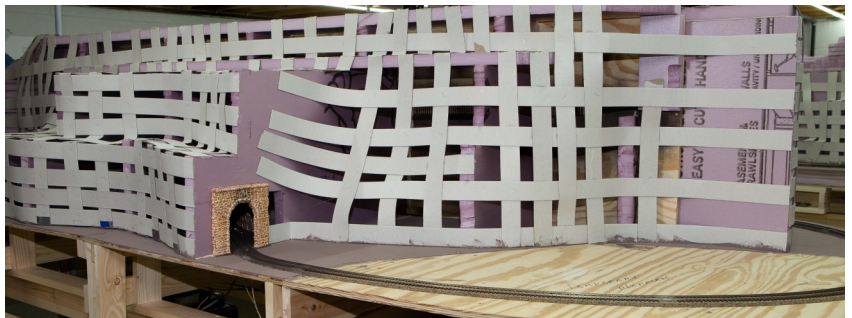
Switching gears here...

Phase-3 of the construction of the Fungus and Mungus HO Scale Model Railroad has been completed. The Phase-1 open-grid benchwork was completed just over a year ago. The Phase-2 track-laying and sub-layout electrical work, along with all DCC components, was completed this past April with the driving of the last spike. As of last week, the Phase-3 terraforming has also been completed. The basic shapes of the hills, mountains, rivers, streams, and valleys have been created and are awaiting the Phase-4 application of their plaster covering.

Speaking of plaster products, I'll be using several different products to achieve the strength and look that I desire...

Where I constructed a feature out of webbed cardboard strips, I'll apply several layers of plaster cloth and after they're in place, spray them with a mist of water to activate them. After the plaster cloth has finished setting up, layer upon layer of Hydrocal will be liberally brushed on until a thickness of 3/16" to 1/4" is achieved. For the last two coats, I'll replace the Hydrocal with Hydrostone which is much, much stronger. Immediately after the final coat is applied, pre-made Hydrocal castings will be pressed into place in the wet Hydrostone.

In those places where the hills or mountains were constructed by layering EPS sheets, I'll use a Foam Factory hot knife and other forming tools to create the basic shape, insert T-pins into the foam at opposing angles, and apply multiple thin layers of drywall joint compound using a putty knife. The T-pins ensure that the plaster doesn't simply 'lift off' the foam. Since the joint compound contains no hardeners, several layers of Hydrostone will be applied on top of the joint compound.



For the detail work, the edges of rivers and streams, the spaces between applied castings, and where a more contoured look is desired; I'll be using Sculptamold modeling compound. Since the Sculptamold also contains no hardeners, when preparing the mix I add one part of Hydrostone to three parts of Sculptamold before adding enough water to make a very thick paste.

For the bottoms of ponds, rivers, and streams I'll use a thin mixture of Plaster of Paris and allow it to level itself. This will create a smooth base beneath the water's surface. I'll later apply some Woodland Scenics small rock casting to create a 3D effect.

Well, that's all for now. The Phase-4 plaster work is scheduled to start on January 2, 2024. Meanwhile, I have several structure projects on the workbench that need to be completed before I can lay out the Town of Bed-rock.

So, a Merry Christmas and a joyous and happy New Year to all!



# Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

By: Jim Providenza

## A Tale with Legs

Some of you might remember ‘The Tale of Two Dispatchers’, which I wrote back in about 2002. It concerned a couple of train dispatchers (real ones, that is) and the grief they gave the SCN’s dispatcher one op session when they agreed to crew the work train.

That particular day the work train was to spread ballast between M.P. 28.3 and M.P. 27.4. As such their train, and their work, would predominately be hidden inside the helix.

The story of what they did (or more correctly didn’t do) is one of my favorite Tales, and I have sent it along to our editor, figuring it would be easier to reprint it rather than have me hash back over the details. Steve Gust, one of the guilty parties, recently made mention of the incident, describing it in some correspondence I was copied on. And Steve did so in some pretty accurate detail.

Thinking about this, I am frankly amazed. I mean, I like my railroad. And I clearly like to write about it and even sometimes tell stories about what happens on it. But I have to wonder why someone else would remember an incident that happened on it over 20 years ago. I talked to son Mike about this a bit and he suggested this column.

The fact that Steve does recall the incident in some ways bonds the two of us together. And I think this speaks more generally to the nature of our hobby. The social aspect, the interaction between us as modelers, is an integral part of what is so special to us.

I checked in with Steve for his thoughts. Steve said he feels that the incident itself was important within a larger context. Steve sees the SCN as ‘operating a model railroad in as close to the prototype as possible’. High praise from a career railroader. More to the point, Steve feels that operations causes you to share and interact with others within the hobby in a way that is beyond model building. I think a big part of this is because operations is a shared, cooperative effort, even if there are occasionally some high jinx involved.

Some 20 years later I agreed to recreate the work train – the SCN 2917 is still kicking around, we still have ballast to spread and hoppers to do it with, and an SCN caboose to bring up the rear. And so here are a couple of photos...



The crew of the work train pulling down the siding – they will stop with their caboose clear of the grade crossing and then head into the East Rica Market to get a couple of sodas.



What the crew of the work train SHOULD have been doing – getting ready to spread some ballast. Note the tie placed ahead of the hopper gates of the WP hopper.

*Continued on page 29*

**Steve Gust putting out flags for another work train!**



Steve has been heard to say that I would never let him or Garry Greenhaw ever crew a work train on the SCN again. Not true! The photo of Steve putting out flags at Doughertys is from a 2012 op session – I just won't let him run it too often!

### **A Tale of Two, or Maybe Three, Dispatchers**

Like all good tales this one has grown in the telling, if only a little. However, these are, as Bill Schaumburg likes to say, still "true facts". True facts are, by definition, more true than other facts, just differently so.

Some years ago, several dispatchers, having not much better to do, drove down to Marin from Roseville one day. Needless to say they were late getting to the op session, which had been going on for an hour or so. At this point I've had more than two dispatchers claim to be these guys, but never mind. In deference to those who say they were there that day, let me point out that this is my story today, so I get to use the characters, real or imagined, as I remember them.

Anyhow, when they arrived, we were well along, one of the smoother running op sessions on the SCN as I recall, even though the SCN dispatcher was relatively new in the position.

Our heroes asked me what they might do. They politely declined taking over as DS (not unexpected); checking the call board I saw all that was left was the work train. The work train is usually a constant on the SCN (though it is currently annulled as we work out the kinks of T&TO). Not many modelers run a regular work train but I have always found them underfoot out in the real world . . .

Hesitantly, I made the offer. There's really not much for a crew to do on the work train. "Work train?" "Did you say work train?" Ears perked up. Smiles appeared on the faces of our boys. "What does the work train have to do today?"

"Looks like it goes on duty at E. Rica where it is clogging up the siding and then has some ballast to spread on the main east of Watson Crick trestle."

Gust: "Oh?"

Greenhaw: "OH!"

In unison: "Yes, we'll take the work train".

So our worthies acquired a throttle, a radio, the work train's clipboard and wandered off to E. Rica.

"Hello Dispatcher?"

"Spatch."

"Yes Mr. Dispatcher, this is Conductor Gust on the work train at E. Rica".

Silence. Then, "Yes, Conductor Gust, what can I do for you."

*Continued on page 30*

## Tales of the SCN ct'd.

"Well, Dispatcher, we're here on duty as E. Rica and we've got orders to spread some ballast between M.P. 28.3 and M.P. 27.4"

Silence. "Hmmpf." "I'll get back to you".

More silence. Then, "SCN Dispatcher calling Conductor Gust on the work train."

"Go ahead Dispatcher."

"Yeah, work train, I've got an east and two wests to get by you there, it'll be a couple of [4 to 1 fast clock] hours before I can get you moving."

"That's okay Dispatcher, we're on the clock. Engineer Greenhaw and I, we'll just walk over to the market and get some sodas." Click.

Time passes, trains run.

More time passes.

"Conductor Gust on the work train at E. Rica calling the SCN Dispatcher".

"Oh yes, ah, Conductor Gust." "What can I do for you again?"

"Well Dispatcher we still have that ballast to spread between M.P. 28.3 and M.P. 27.4"

"Ah, hmmm, yes. How much time did you say you needed?"

"Oh, I think about an hour and a half should do it Mr. Dispatcher."

"I'll get back to you work train." Then, "I can give you an hour, the 'Cementipede' will be coming back down the hill by then."

"That'll be just fine Dispatcher".

Track warrant issued, the work train slowly creeps up the hill out of E. Rica with our boys diligently preparing to "spread ballast".

Time passes, trains run. More time passes. Various trains stop running. The DS finally catches on to the fact that the work train is way past the time limits on his track warrant . . .

"SCN Dispatcher to the work train at M.P. 27.4." Silence.

"SCN Dispatcher to the work train at M.P. 27.4" More silence.

Now during an op session the DS occupies the kitchen table just inside the garage door from the SCN. But tradition, usually honored, is that he/she does not walk past the threshold . . . Tradition is dispensed with, to no avail.

In desperation the DS calls for the Trainmaster and search parties are sent out.

Our boys are finally located in the living room, having walked past the harried DS to acquire another round of cokes, and are happily watching a Keller video, just enjoying the hell out of being a work train crew putting the screws to the DS.

Herded back to the job they are all smiles, muttering something about turnabout being fair play.

There is in fact something special about having working rails "working on the railroad".



## Looking Back

by Dave Connery, MMR, PCR Historian

### Voices – An Interview with Tony Thompson

Tony was born in Burbank, California and grew up in Glendale, where he attended High School at Herbert Hoover High. (Interestingly, Richard Hendrickson and Richard Steinheimer both attended the same High School but both were in classes a bunch of years before Tony). Tony had an early introduction to the Southern Pacific (SP), living only a few blocks from SP's four-track line departing west out of Los Angeles and Taylor Yard. Afternoons he would often ride his



Cotulla, TX in the spring of 1942. The lco is an I-GN (part of MOPac) 4-6-0.

soon graduated to Varney and Athearn metal kits.

About this time, Tony saw a flyer for a teen group being organized at the Glendale Model Railroad Club. Most of the elder men in the club were not interested in the teens and did not interact with them. In fact, years later when Tony talked with club members, none of them even remembered the club doing this. The teens met at the club on an evening different from the adults. One good thing about this club was that the adult advisers required the teens to work on the club layout for an hour each evening before they were permitted to run trains. From this experience (age 12-14) Tony began to develop many basic model railroad skills and knowledge.

When Tony rode his bike to see the SP trains he often had a chance to watch the Burbank local switch job working switch leads on both sides of the mainline tracks. One day the conductor asked Tony if he would like to ride with them (he had probably noticed Tony often watching them). Tony said, "But I will need to get home for dinner." The conductor told him they could let him off whenever he asked. Tony said, "What will I do with my bike? I can't just leave it." The conductor said, "You can put it here in the caboose." So Tony got a wonderful caboose ride. The conductor began explaining to Tony what they were doing and used railroad lingo Tony did not understand. But once he asked what the conductor meant, the conductor explained things in easily understood words. Tony was especially excited, as he had just recently learned railroad hand signals and he watched to see the crew use them. He was disappointed when after an activity the crew-man would just wave his hand. Since they did this every day, all they needed was to let the conductor or engineer know that he was ready for the next activity and a simple wave worked well. It was a great afternoon . . . and Tony was late for dinner that day. Back in those days, things like this happened, but today railroaders would lose their job if they invited a local kid to ride with them. Times were much friendlier back then.

After high school Tony attended Stanford University where he met his wife, Mary. After his four years at Stanford Tony worked for a year for Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) as he was not ready for more University training. He soon realized he needed a Master's degree if he was to stand out among his peers and at that point he and Mary looked at places where she could work (she had completed her Bachelor's Degree). She had a job offer with Boeing and so Tony enrolled in a Master's program at University of Washington, completing his Master's Program in Materials Science (Metallurgy). One of his professors strongly urged Tony to go on and complete a Doctorate. Although Tony hadn't planned on that, he ultimately followed the advice and enrolled at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Tony found graduate school much more enjoyable than undergraduate, where your schedule was packed and you were almost always busy. In graduate school they pointed you in the right direction and it was up to you to do the readings and learn—a method that suited Tony well. After attaining his PhD at MIT, Tony went to work for the Sandia Livermore Laboratory and the young couple moved to Livermore, where their second son was born.

## Looking Back



bike to near the tracks and watch the parade of trains passing in both directions and connecting to the Coast Line and the San Joaquin Valley Line. Tony has a photo of himself at about age 2 ½ years in Texas, looking intently up at a steam locomotive. His parents told him that he was always interested in trains.

As a boy, Tony enjoyed building models including many balsa models of airplanes. At an early age his parents had acquired a Marx train set that went around in a circle with cars stamped out of thin steel—rather crude representations of real railroad equipment. One time his dad brought home a couple of Strombecker kits of railroad models and Tony then began building railroad models. He

*Continued on page 32*

## Looking Back ct'd.

Tony left Sandia after three years and went to work at the Science Center of Rockwell International in Thousand Oaks. He worked there four years and really enjoyed himself as they were doing basic research. His work was published and he was having a lot of fun. About this time, Mary reminded him of his early interest in model trains, and with two young sons he built a simple 4' X 6' HO loop layout. This slid under the boys' bed and they could slide it out and play with it. While they eventually lost interest, Tony became interested in getting back in the hobby. While he greatly enjoyed his job at Rockwell, he realized the work he was doing could suddenly disappear and he looked around for another work opportunity. He had an offer from Carnegie Mellon University and talking it over with Mary, she agreed they could relocate to Pittsburgh but that eventually she would want to return to California and Tony agreed. As it turned out, they stayed in Pittsburgh for seventeen years, but as they approached being "empty nesters", they were reminded of the plan to return to California. They moved to Berkeley in 1994. Mary got a position at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. Tony worked there and had a teaching position at the University of California. He retired in 2007.

While in Pittsburgh, Tony became involved in local NMRA activities. At the time, Pittsburgh's Division 2 held monthly Sunday meetings, usually at one of the member's homes and generally had 20 to 30 in attendance. The Mid-Central Region held two conventions each year and Tony usually attended both. He helped the Division when they hosted regional conventions. In 1990 they hosted the NMRA National Convention and Tony served as Clinic Chair. Tony had built an HO layout based on the SP in coastal California in his Pittsburgh basement. This layout was on the tours during the 1990 National. In 2000 Tony again served as Clinic Chair for the 2000 NMRA National Convention held in Santa Clara, CA. He remarks at how much easier it was to handle communication once most people had a computer and e-mail access than during 1990 when everything (presenter bios, clinic descriptions, schedules) had to be done with mailed letters. After doing a bang-up job as clinic chair in 2000, he was approached to repeat this essential position for the 2011 Sacramento NMRA Convention, but instead Tony agreed to work as co-chair with Dave Falkenburg in mostly an advisory capacity. Dave did not really need much help and did a fine job.

While in Pittsburgh, Tony was part of a group that questioned the way points were allocated among the general categories in the NMRA contest rules, and the behavior this was driving. This group worked to develop an alternate allocation and worked to get consensus for changes. The points for prototype fidelity were increased and the points for scratch-building were reduced. To maximize points in scratch-building, modelers were scratch-building parts that were readily available commercially and maximizing the number of these parts with little concern for prototype fidelity—which was not generally understood by many judges and most entrants. These changes were made and remain in effect to this date.

The new scoring system more closely aligned with the way top-notch modelers were building their models with greatly increased prototypical accuracy. Once in PCR, Tony got involved with the Contest program and became the PCR Regional Contest Chairman—in part to help lead implementation of the new contest rules. He served in that position for five years.

Before he left Pittsburgh, Tony had started work on the Pacific Fruit Express (PFE) book. Initially he was more interested in the SP freight car fleet but suddenly a great deal of data on PFE became available and moving that book to priority was the right choice. He began working with Bob Church, who had written several SP steam locomotive books and was very knowledgeable on operations (including PFE operations). Bob had self-published his previous books and so they decided that was the way to go with the PFE book and this led to the creation of Signature Press.

The PFE book was their first in 1992. Over the following 30 years, they published 49 high quality books on railroading and railroad history. Bob handled the business end of the company dealing with book shipments, sales inquiries, billing, and financial records while Tony edited the books, worked with prospective authors to develop and refine their manuscripts, and then with the printers to get the books produced. The company ceased operations at the end of 2022. It was a 30-year effort that produced some magnificent titles and in the end, the company operated in the black, liquidated its inventory and became an important part of the railroad history and modeling scenes.

*Continued on page 33*



## Looking Back ct'd.

Following the PFE book, Tony returned to his work on SP freight cars and ultimately between 2002 and 2014 published five books: Vol. 1 – Gondolas and Stock Cars, Vol. 2 Cabooses, Vol. 3 Automobile Cars and Flat Cars, Vol. 4 Box Cars, Vol. 5 Hoppers, Covered Hoppers and Tank Cars. These books all cover from the earliest days up through the 1960s, though rarely to the end of SP as a corporation. With the move to computers in the 1960s to track freight cars, a paper trail was lost and that data, sadly, no longer exists. It is significant that Tony has acquired a mass of information on the SP, the SP freight car fleet, and how that fleet has evolved over the years. His books include extensive photographic documentation and this series have become “must have” resources for serious SP modelers and fans. In 2000, Tony and his friend John Signor published “Southern Pacific’s Coast Line Pictorial” and Tony was a major contributor to *Morning Sun’s Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment*.

In January 1987, Tony wrote the first of four articles on the Pacific Fruit Express for *Railroad Model Craftsman (RMC)*. The first article was on wood reefers, next an article on steel reefers, third PFE’s rebuilt cars, and the fourth article on express cars and reefer operations. Each of these articles included information on modeling the cars under consideration in that article. In January 1988, Tony followed up the previous articles with an article on PFE’s mechanical reefers. Tony is quick to note that the best source of information on PFE is the book, which contains so much more information developed in the preparation for that book’s publishing.

Tony had his Pittsburgh layout featured in the June 1990 *RMC*, in the lead-up to the 1990 NMRA National Convention. One section of that layout was later moved from Pittsburgh to Berkeley. In February 1993, Tony co-authored with Richard Hendrickson and Steve Peery an *RMC* article on the AAR-design boxcars of the SP with full prototype information and tables of data on these cars. This was followed up the subsequent month with an article on modeling these cars.

Tony served on the Board of Directors of the Southern Pacific Historical and Technical Society (SPH&TS) from 1990 to 2018, and served as this organization’s President for five years. He co-authored, with Dick Harley, the book “Southern Pacific Freight Car Painting and Lettering Guide”, published by the SPH&TS. Tony wrote the SP modeling column for the SPH&TS magazine, *Trainline*, for twenty five years. During this time, Tony authored several full articles for the *Trainline*. Noteworthy was a three-part series about Pacific Motor Trucking, SP’s highway and pickup/delivery subsidiary that ran in issues from Spring 1995 to Winter 1996.

In 2009, Tony was approached by Joe Fugate, editor and publisher of *Model Railroad Hobbyist*, asking if Tony would join a group of top modelers and write an article about some aspect of prototype modeling as a part of the “Getting Real” column. Tony felt complimented to be included in this group and he has written an article about every six months, his latest being his 26th article. In 1990 and 2000, in conjunction with the NMRA Convention Clinics Tony edited books of select clinic write-ups (*Learning from the Prototype* in 1990 and *21st Century Clinics* in 2000). Tony also served as editor of a series of four books published by the NMRA in 1990, 1992, 1994 and 1996, each titled “Symposium on Railroad History” and documenting a series of special presentations each of those years.

Tony is a regular attendee at several Railroad Prototype Modelers (RPM) meets and often makes presentations to these groups. He is the founder and “host” of the annual “Friends of the Freight Car” dinner, often held in conjunction with the Cocoa Beach RPM gathering, held each January. Tony also posts to a Blog he started in 2010 called “Modeling the SP.” Tony has posted 1,580 times as I write this in September 2023, averaging a post every three days over the past thirteen years. You can find this blog by Googling “Modeling the SP”.

Once settled back in California, Tony modified part of his Pittsburgh HO layout based on a section of the Central California Coast south of San Luis Obispo. Tony models the transition era from steam to diesel (1953) on an imaginary branch line (Santa Rosalia Branch of the Southern Pacific) that is dense with switching. Tony has developed a locally prototypically accurate scheme and often holds operating sessions that keep two train crews busy for several hours. You can see Tony’s layout and get an overview by Tony by viewing the TSG Multi Media YouTube of Tony’s Layout.

*Continued on page 34*

## Looking Back ct'd.

Tony started attending PCR conventions before he relocated back to California and began providing his phenomenal clinics then. Tony is an excellent presenter, his clinics are well organized and packed full of information. His graphics are always excellent and his depth of knowledge is truly amazing. If you have not attended one of Tony's clinics you owe it to yourself to sit in on one. It alone is worth the price of the convention. Tony has been very generous with his knowledge. I counted a mind-boggling 37 different clinic topics Tony has presented at PCR, PSR and NMRA conventions.

In 2009 Tony received the coveted John Allen Award. Dating back into the 1990's Tony has been providing us with a plethora of information, using a wide range of media to make our own enjoyment of the hobby more complete and rewarding. Thanks and hats off to you, Tony!



Tony Thompson - 82 years after inspecting the 4-6-0 in Cotulla, TX





The last Daylight Division meeting was October in Atascadero. Thanks to Doug Wagner for making the arrangements.

We enjoyed an outdoor lunch at A-Town Diner, making new friends along the way. Phil Edholm, Coast Division's Director, shared with us the plans for the upcoming Tech Line PCR 2024 convention.

After lunch, a visit with Anita Walter at Central Coast Trains, <https://www.centralcoasttrains.com/>, satisfied our "train fix". Once we walked out with our new-found treasures, we headed to the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, <https://www.slorm.com/>.



A nicely designed and executed control panel for the Guadalupe yard.



A brace of SP black widow F units pulls a freight past the station at Surf on the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.



The Oceano station model and its surroundings.



An SP beet train rumbles past the unloading trestle.



Another view of the sugar beet unloading trestle.



*Home To Central California's*



*Largest Model Railroad Club*

GEHAMS welcomes visitors  
on any Saturday, (closed on Dec. 25)  
11:00 AM to 1:30 PM,  
to view trains operating over  
Central California's largest  
HO and N Scale layouts.

For more information, please email  
[carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com), phone (661) 331-6695  
or visit our web site at [gehams.club](http://gehams.club)

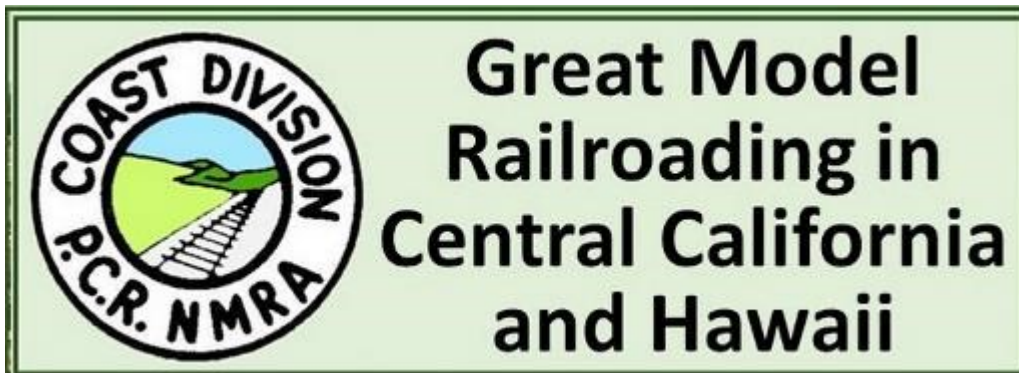


## Great Train Show Pleasanton Wrap UP

We had 6 volunteers for the NMRA display at the Great Train Show at the Alameda County Fairgrounds a couple of weekends ago. We set up the NMRA booth with the NMRA recruiting and convention displays. Overall we were successful in signing up 24 new RailPass members. Bob Gardyne worked the booth on Saturday morning alone and signed up 10 new members by himself. Congratulations and thanks to Bob for job well done. Bob and all of the volunteers had fun talking to modelers about how NMRA membership can improve your overall modeling experience and results.



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VISIT THE COAST DIVISION YOUTUBE CHANNEL



[LINK](#)



**There are currently twelve recorded videos comprising nearly sixteen hours of model railroading content. Make sure you have plenty of time!!**





RED completed another successful in person meet in November, continuing a new format that has been well received by our members.

There are two key components to what we are up to with these meets, diverse and interesting speakers and what I have dubbed BANG BANG Show and Tell.

We reached out to the Coast Division and brought in 3 of their Hall of Fame (according to me) layout owners, Tony Thompson, Clifton Linton, and Jim Radkey. Each wrote a presentation of approximately 20 minutes for us. We love this approach of bringing in our beloved neighbors for fresh and interesting content; there's no need to wait for the next convention to hear what our neighbors are up to! Thank you to our speakers who exceeded my high expectations.



**Tony Thompson on his imaginary branch line, leaving Southern Pacific's Coast Line in the Central Coast area in San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria, at a junction named Shumala.**



**Clif Linton, of Alameda, reviewed the four layouts he either built or is contemplating in his adult life. His primary modelling scale is N. But, he also built an HO scale logging layout.**



**Jim Radkey's presentation showed the destruction of the 2nd iteration of the BNSF PLSD( Pink Lady Sub Division). The first iteration was extremely modified after the 1st op session, which was held a long, long, long, time ago! The 2nd iteration was fun and hosted over 60 op sessions with a regular round robin group meeting once a week. These session were in tight quarters (WW2 submarine type) Showering and deodorant were highly recommended before participating in operations.**

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After presentations we offer attendees a free lunch. If your division doesn't do this, ask your officers: why not? Tell them the RED sent you!



The Redwood Empire Division provided a delicious free lunch to everyone at the meeting, A big "Thank You!" to Mary-Moore Campagna for providing and serving the lunch.

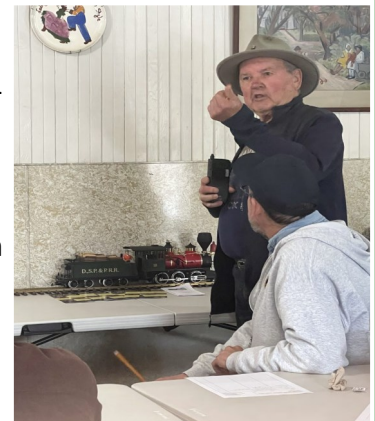
BANG BANG Show and Tell is not a modeling contest, rather brief shares (which of course could include models) as well as stories, memorabilia, summaries of recent projects, whatever can justifiably be considered model or real railroading! BANG BANG means I try to keep the pace moving, but admittedly I don't wield the proverbial gong often. These presentations are always interesting, and are judged by the crowd based on what pleases them. This time, our member Ben Sochacki not only made a lengthy trip from the far north to attend, but also told a heartwarming about his adult onset, all in journey in the hobby... to wit:

"I'm Ben Sochacki from Ft Bragg club MCMR&HS. I brought my G Scale locomotive and track to demonstrate its conversion to RC powered capability. Also mentioned our video car that will take an iPhone for a 4 minute ride around our club track. Thanks for letting me share. Enjoyed meeting you all."



Ed Merrin

Ben took home \$75 top prize for best in show, with Ed Merrin coming in second with \$25 after sharing progress on and history of his Petaluma Cement plant model.



Ben Sochacki

We hope to see you February for our Winter Meet at Monroe Hall in Santa Rosa, lunch is on us!





# Sierra Division Report



by Chip Meriam

Sierra Division members were kept busy during the fall with two big events in Sacramento.

First was the “Modular Weekend” cosponsored by NMRA and the California State Railroad Museum. To recognize “National Model Railroad Month”, several modular layouts were displayed on the museum round-house floor.



Children of all ages enjoyed the “modular weekend” displays at the California State Railroad Museum.

*Continued on page 42*

The second big event was International Rail Fair, held at Cal Expo over the Veteran's Day weekend.



Ed Powell (left) and David Fryman (right) were on hand to explain the benefits of NMRA membership and help the public operate the Sierra Division TimeSaver switching puzzle.



Michael Eldridge Demonstrates The Finer Points Of Track Painting During His Clinic, "Making Track Look Realistic."

Tom Campbell prepared a special exhibit comprised of "coloring projects" with a theme of "Color Sacramento."

This interactive display attracted a healthy crowd of young artists, and resulted in quite a collection of completed works of art.



**Saturday, January 6, 2024**

10:00am North State Model Train Show

**Saturday, January 13, 2024**

9:00am Sierra Division Zoom Meeting

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

Great Train Show

**Sunday, January 28, 2024**

Great Train Show

**Friday, February 2, 2024**

9:00am Layout design and operations weekend,

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**

9:00am Layout design and operations weekend,

**Sunday, February 4, 2024**

9:00am Layout design and operations weekend,

**Saturday, February 17, 2024**

9:00am Sierra Division Meeting

**Saturday, March 2, 2024**

Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society Train Show

**Sunday, March 3, 2024**

Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society Train Show

**Wednesday, April 24, 2024**

9:00am PCR 2024 Convention, The Tech Line, Silicon Valley, CA

**Thursday, April 25, 2024**

9:00am PCR 2024 Convention, The Tech Line, Silicon Valley, CA

**Friday, April 26, 2024**

9:00am PCR 2024 Convention, The Tech Line, Silicon Valley, CA

**Saturday, April 27, 2024**

9:00am PCR 2024 Convention, The Tech Line, Silicon Valley, CA

**Sunday, April 28, 2024**

9:00am PCR 2024 Convention, The Tech Line, Silicon Valley, CA

**Sunday, August 4, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Monday, August 5, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Tuesday, August 6, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Wednesday, August 7, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

*Continued on page 44*

**Time Table, ct'd.**

**Thursday, August 8, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Friday, August 9, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Saturday, August 10, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Sunday, August 11, 2024**

Surfliner 2024 NMRA National Convention

**Wednesday, October 16, 2024**

SP Historical and Technical Society Convention

**Thursday, October 17, 2024**

SP Historical and Technical Society Convention

**Friday, October 18, 2024**

SP Historical and Technical Society Convention

**Saturday, October 19, 2024**

SP Historical and Technical Society Convention



**August 4 - 11, 2024**

The Westin Long Beach

333 E. Ocean Blvd.

Long Beach, CA

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## Monthly Activities

**First Thursday** - 10:00 AM / Siskiyou Model RR Club. / Currently meeting at member's homes. Info: Tom Brass, (530) 842-4921,

**First Saturday** 10:00 AM / San Leandro Historical Railway Society (HO, O, G), Monthly meeting / 1302 Orchard Ave, San Leandro, CA / Eugene 510-963-2985 / Info: info@slhrs.org.

**First Saturday** 11:00 am to 12:00 PM / Golden State Model Railroad Museum / East Bay Model Engineers Society (O, HO, N, Narrow Gauge, Traction) / Point Richmond, CA / Club Phone 510-234-4884 or info@gsmrm.org. Free coffee and doughnuts.

**First Saturday** 12:30 PM / European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) Sacramento Chapter (HO, HOM, N) 3600 J Street, Sacramento, CA. (entrance from 36th Street near East Sacramento YMCA). Social and H0 layout running 12:30 to 2:00 PM, then program/show and tell, followed by 2:30 PM business meeting. / Contact: Dusan Petras (650) 300-9504 or Jim Fischer (916) 965-7117, e-mail: dusanpetras@aol.com / See the website for additional information: www.ete.org.

**Second Tuesday** 7:30 PM / Empire Builders Model Railroad Club (HO) 3318 School St, Oakland, CA / e-mail: president@ebmrc.org

**Second Wednesday** 7:30 PM / Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society (HO&N) Bakersfield, CA / Doug Wagner, e-mail: carldw@aol.com or 661-589-0391 / Club phone: 661-325-5820

**Second Saturday** 10:00 AM / Tehachapi Loop RR Club / Tehachapi, CA / Tom O'Brien, e-mail: threerail@earthlink.net 661-822-1546

**Second (and Fourth) Saturday** 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (and every Wednesday 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM) • Admission: Free / Bay Area N-Trak Model Railroad Club (N) Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, 900 Loring Ave., Crockett, CA • Map / Donations are welcome. / Contact: Jim Gray, send text to 925-260-5804 or e-mail to gray-marks@hotmail.com

**Second Saturday** 1PM-4PM / West Bay Model Railroad Association, Open House, We run trains run for our visitors, 1090 Merrill Street, Menlo Park, CA / e-mail westbaylines.com

**Second Saturday** 1:00 to 5:00 PM / European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) San Francisco Bay Area Chapter (HO) Location varies / Contact: Brian Hitchcock, brianhitchcockdba@gmail.com / See the website for additional information: www.ete.org.

**Second Saturday** 1:30 PM / Carquinez Toy Train Operating Museum Business Meeting, 645 Loring Ave (Across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. MAP

**Second Saturday** 3:00 - 6:00 PM / California Central Club (HO & HOn3) / Old Agnew Station, 4185 Bassett St, Santa Clara, CA / Subject to change, contacting us in advance of your visit is highly recommended at: ccmrc1961@gmail.com

**Second & Fourth Weekends** / Swanton Pacific Railroad Society (19") Santa Cruz County, CA / Ed Carnegie, e-mail: ecarnegie@calpoly.edu or 805-756-2378

**Mid-Month Weekends** / Bitter Creek Western RR (Live Steam) Arroyo Grande, CA / Dan Andrews, e-mail: danandrews@charter.net or 805-481-0419

**Third Monday** 7:00 PM / San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association (all) Oceano Depot, CA / Dennis Pearson, e-mail: info@sломra.org or 805-929-3062

**Third Tuesday** 7:00 PM / Visalia Electric Model Railroad & Historical Society / Meets at Ryan's Place Restaurant, 3103 South Mooney Blvd, Visalia, CA / Cecil Eppler, e-mail: cecil\_eppler@sbcglobal.net

**Third Wednesday** 8:00 PM / West Bay Model Railroad Association, Monthly Business Meeting, 1090 Merrill Street, Menlo Park, CA / e-mail westbaylines@gmail.com

**Third Friday** 7:00 - 11:00 PM / Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club Operating session (HO) / Antioch, CA / Info: info@blackdiamondlines.com / Club phone 925-779-1964

**Third Saturday** 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Noon / San Joaquin Central Operating Session (HO) / Fresno, CA / Chuck Harmon, e-mail: harmonsta@aol.com or 559-299-4385. It's April 1949 on SP's Donner Pass and fictitious SJC. An advance courtesy contact is appreciated. Send e-mail to be added to mailing list.

**Third Saturday** / Sacramento Modular Railroaders Operating Session (HO) / Sacramento, CA / Scott McAllister, e-mail: scooter923@att.net

**Fourth Wednesday** 7:00 PM / Coast Toy Train Club / Wood Glen Hall, 3010 Foothill Rd (at Alamar), Santa Barbara, CA / Lots of collecting in S, O, and Standard gauges. / Contact: Ken Kelley, e-mail: kenatttr@thirdrail.com

**Fourth (and Second) Saturday** 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (and every Wednesday 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM) • Admission: Free / Bay Area N-Trak Model Railroad Club (N) Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, 900 Loring Ave., Crockett, CA • Map / Donations are welcome. / Contact: Jim Gray, send text to 925-260-5804 or e-mail to gray-marks@hotmail.com



**Alameda County Central Railroad Society**

ACCRS is an HO and O scale club with layouts in a 30x100 building on the Alameda Co. fairgrounds in Pleasanton. With over 60,000 annual visitors, ACCRS is a great showcase for the hobby. Layouts reflect Alameda County and California and are continually improving and updating. Open for Fair events and Fridays, 6-9 PM. Lowest dues in the area.

Contact: Gary Lewis 925-455-8135

Email: [glgslewis@comcast.net](mailto:glgslewis@comcast.net)

Web: [www.pleasantonmodelrr.org/index.html](http://www.pleasantonmodelrr.org/index.html)

**Amador County Model Railroad Museum**

The ACMRRM is located at 13828 Gold Mine Road, #1, Pine Grove, CA. Gold Mine Road intersects with Hwy 88 in Pine Grove. Our non-profit association is open to the public from 10 AM to 5 PM, Friday through Sunday during Winter months and Wednesday through Sunday during the Summer. Work sessions are held every Tuesday starting at 10 AM. Our scenic DCC HO-scale layout depicts the lumber and gold mining history of Amador County. Operations include the Amador Central short line as well as the railroads of California's Central Valley including terminals at Stockton and Sacramento.

Contact: Robert Piety, 209-296-3587 email [rdpiety@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rdpiety@sbcglobal.net)

**Antioch Model Railroad Club**

The Black Diamond Lines is an HO Club located at 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch. The BDL has been in continuous operation since 1981. We meet Tues. (work night) & Fri., 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Visitors can always find trains running every Friday club night. For more information, e-mail [info@blackdiamondlines.com](mailto:info@blackdiamondlines.com) or visit us on the web at [www.blackdiamondlines.com](http://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](mailto:BobLewis1@sbcglobal.net).

**Bay Area S Scalars**

BASS is a group of modeler railroaders in the San Francisco Bay Area focused on scale modeling in 1:64 scale. BASS is a round robin club, typically meeting in a member's home on the third Saturday of odd numbered months. Meetings may include a mini-clinic, or showing progress on models or a layout. We also have a modular layout that has been displayed at public events. Contact: Michael Eldridge ([meldridge2000@gmail.com](mailto:meldridge2000@gmail.com)).  
Web: [www.bayareasscalars.org](http://www.bayareasscalars.org).

**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**

CMRS models the line from Oakland to Sparks with a double track mainline and many well-known lineside industries on three levels. The layout is in the 36 x 60 foot main room of the recently renovated former Oddfellows building that dates back to the 1890's. New HO<sub>n3</sub> branch-line coming soon. Entire railroad is NCE DCC-based with JMRI WiFi throttle support. We are open to the public bi-monthly with weekend open houses. Please see our web site ([www.cmrstrainclub.org](http://www.cmrstrainclub.org)) and our listings in the PCR Master Calendar for more information. The club is open for perspective members and visitors during our Wednesday night work nights, 5PM to 9PM. We are located on the second floor at 645 Loring Ave., Crockett, CA 94525. Contact: Ron Lehmer, [president@cmrstrainclub.org](mailto:president@cmrstrainclub.org) or Steve Huffstetter, [secretary@cmrstrainclub.org](mailto:secretary@cmrstrainclub.org). Club number 510-722-3025

**Coastal Valley Lines Model Railroad Club of Sonoma County, LTD**

Coastal Valley Lines Model Railroad Club of Sonoma County, LTD (Coastal Valley Lines) is an association of novice-to-expert model railroaders from the Sonoma County area, who operate a digitally command controlled (DCC) HO scale modular railroad at public and private events, and gather for clinics, work sessions and monthly meetings. Coastal Valley Lines is incorporated in the State of California with its primary purpose of educating the public about model railroading as a family hobby and is a not-for-profit 501(c) 3 organization with elected officers and bylaws. Additional information can be found at [cvlrr.com](http://cvlrr.com).

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**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.

**European Train Enthusiasts**

ETE ([www.ete.org](http://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 BillKeaney (650) 355-7231 or [billkeaney@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:carldw@aol.com) GEHAMS web: [www.gehams.org](http://www.gehams.org)

**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](mailto:info@gsmrm.org). Website: [www.gsmrm.org](http://www.gsmrm.org)

**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

**Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad Museum**

26 Station Place - Salinas, CA 93901  
The Monterey and Salinas Valley Railroad Museum is dedicated to creating & maintaining a Railroad Museum in Salinas with an emphasis on the historic, contemporary and future value of the Railroad to the Salinas Valley and Monterey Bay Regions, providing experiential educational opportunities for children of all ages enhancing the core curriculum and inspiring civic involvement in our communities.

Open first weekends of each month 10AM - 4PM  
831 789 8097

[www.msvrr.org](http://www.msvrr.org)  
[info@msvrr.org](mailto:info@msvrr.org)

**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: [Napa-John@napanet.net](mailto:Napa-John@napanet.net) Web: [www.nvmrc.org](http://www.nvmrc.org)

**Nn3 Alliance**

An Internet-based fellowship of over 700 members in nine countries who model narrow gauge in "smaller scales". The term "Nn3" is used generally to describe 3', 3'6", and meter gauges, modeled in N or 2MM Scales. Members include local groups in the USA, UK and Europe whose portable exhibition layouts and modules regularly appear at conventions and shows. The "corporate" entity of the group - The Nn3 Alliance - created and published "The Nn3 Handbook", 140 pages with 400 illustrations, covering all aspects of small-scale narrow gauge, which remains the standard reference.

Web: [www.Nn3.org](http://www.Nn3.org)  
<https://groups.io/g/Nn3>

Enjoy the  
fellow-  
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learning  
experi-  
ences of  
a club  
near you

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### 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 HO<sub>n</sub>3 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](mailto:d.megeath@comcast.net)  
 Web: [www.smrhs.com](http://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: [memberhip@sacmodularrailroad.com](mailto:memberhip@sacmodularrailroad.com)

### 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](mailto:emerson.r@worldnet.att.net)  
 Web: <http://home.att.net/~sjvgrs/train/>

### San Joaquin Valley Toy Train Operators

We are an all scale train club. We have members in scales from Z to G. Whether you are someone who likes to run toy trains in circles or model an exact date, railroad or scene or anything in between you are welcome. Everyone who likes trains is welcome. You don't need to own any trains. We have two portable layouts that we set-up at public locations. We have set them up at care facilities, Amtrak stations, train shows and other places. We also have outside club activities. We have gone on the train to Sacramento and the Sacramento Rail Museum. We've ridden the train at Railtown 1897 SHP and had a private tour there. Also we have visited home train layouts and will have many other activities in the future. Our meetings are at the Scouts Hall, 4717 Elm Street, Denair, CA at 1:30 PM (doors open at 12:30) on the first Sunday of each month. Holidays or other events can change that. We always get there by 1:00 PM to visit and see what others have brought to show. For more information please call Ed Cathcart at 209-479-4432

### 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: Eugene Brichacek, 510-963-2965  
 email: [embrichacek@gmail.com](mailto:embrichacek@gmail.com)

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 email: [embrichacek@gmail.com](mailto:embrichacek@gmail.com)

Enjoy the fellowship and learning experiences of a club near you

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### San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association (SLOMRA)

The SLOMRA is a multi-scale modular group with active N and HO scale layouts. The goal of our nonprofit association is railroad education and local history through public display of our modules. Our shows usually include G-gauge, tinplate, 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](http://www.slomra.org) or email [info@slomra.org](mailto:info@slomra.org).

### 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](mailto:svl@siliconvalleylines.com) Web: [www.siliconvalleylines.com](http://www.siliconvalleylines.com)

### Siskiyou Model Railroad Club

Currently we are meeting at a member's home on the first Thursday evening of the month. Contact Tom Brass as 530-842-4921 Currently a few members have been getting together on Tuesday mornings for various activities.

### 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. 5:00 to 8:00 PM or Sat. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Contact: 408-243-3969. Web: [www.sbhrs.org](http://www.sbhrs.org).

### 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](mailto:davidkuehn@cox.net). Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=163470062239>

**The Tidewater Southern MRC Inc. & Tidewater Southern Railway Historical Society Inc.** reorganized and incorporated in 2018. We are Located at the San Joaquin Fairgrounds, Building 1, (corner of Airport and Charter Ways (Hwy 4), Stockton), a 2,400 sq. ft. alcove houses a large HO layout depicting the Tidewater Southern, & Freelanced N-Scale. We meet 2p-7 :30p Thursdays. 10a-3p Saturdays events permitting. Contact: Tiffany Barning 135 W. Emerson Ave. Tracy , CA 95376 E - mail: [tidewatersrhs@gmail.com](mailto:tidewatersrhs@gmail.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>

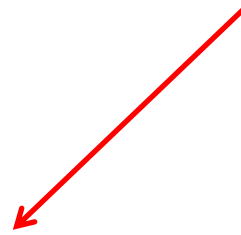
Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society The WCMRS located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, is open on last Friday of the month from 8:00 to 10:00PM for operations. Fares are \$3.00 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$5.00 for adults. Membership is always open to interested HO modelers. Contact: 925-937-1888 (recorder); Web: [www.WCMRS.org](http://www.WCMRS.org). "Like Us" on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/wcmrs](http://www.facebook.com/wcmrs)). Please refer to [www.wcmrs.org](http://www.wcmrs.org) for the dates and times of our Annual, Weekend and Friday evening shows .

West Bay Model Railroad Association The West Bay Model Railroad Association is accepting new members; all skills are invited. Construction and scenery are now complete on our DCC 2-level HO layout designed for operations; work on signaling is in process. Work sessions are Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Prospective members and visitors are always welcome. We run trains for visitors monthly on second Saturday afternoons. Business meetings are at 8 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, and operating sessions are on Saturday of the following week. We're located a few hundred feet south of the Menlo Park Caltrain station, in the former baggage building, at 1090 Merrill St., between the station and Ravenswood Ave. For more information, visit [wbmrra.ning.com](http://wbmrra.ning.com) and [facebook.com/wbmrra](http://facebook.com/wbmrra). Or e-mail [westbaylines@gmail.com](mailto:westbaylines@gmail.com).



Enjoy the fellowship and learning experiences of a club near you

**IMPORTANT !!!!**



Have you changed your address or other membership information?  
Notify Headquarters  
Email: [nmrahq@nmra.org](mailto:nmrahq@nmra.org)  
Phone: 423-892-2846 (8am—4pm ET)

We not only welcome your input here at the *Branch Line*, we actively encourage it!

In fact, may we say that we go so far as to solicit your input?

If you have a small article you would like to submit for publication, or even just an idea for an article, please let us know. We will be happy to work with you.

Just contact our editor, Chip Meriam, at:

[chipmeriam@comcast.net](mailto:chipmeriam@comcast.net)

We're looking forward to hearing from you!



# NMRA's Partnership Program



## PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

NMRA members can log in and click on the **Benefits** tab to view the **NMRA Partnership Program**. Please patronize all of our partners for some fantastic discounts as an NMRA member!

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October 2023

## *Partnership Program*



# National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

## Membership Renewal Notice

Name:				
Address:				
City:		State:		Zip:
Phone:		Birth Date:		Scale:
Email:	Occupation:			

Membership	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	Total
<b>Member with Printed Magazine Subscription – All Rights &amp; benefits, digital NMRA Magazine access and the Printed Magazine. (26 cents a day!)</b>	\$92.00	\$184.00	\$276.00	
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<b>Family – Spouse or minor child of above member. No magazine, no voting rights, not allowed to hold office. Name: _____ Email : _____</b>	\$10.00	\$20.00	\$30.00	
<b>Sustaining – Mandatory for group memberships (Clubs, Business, Associations). All rights &amp; benefits, and the Printed NMRA magazine.</b>	\$120.00	\$240.00	\$360.00	
<b>Student – Between the ages of 19-25 years of age. All Rights &amp; benefits, digital NMRA magazine access only.</b>	\$40.00	\$80.00	\$120.00	
<b>Membership</b>				\$
<b>General Donation</b>				\$
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<b>Total</b>				\$

If you would like to set up auto renewal, pay with PayPal or make payment arrangements please call the office to speak with a staff member: 423-892-2846. Thank you for becoming a member of the NMRA!

Please make checks payable to NMRA

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Item	Size (Select Size: Circle)	Qty	Price (S/H Included)	Total
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Please update your contact information below.

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Phone:	Email:		

P. O. Box 1328

Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328

Email: HQ@NMRA.ORG

+1 423-892-2846