

BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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President's Message

Ray de Blicek

Welcome to non-PCR members.

This issue of the *Branch Line* is being sent to all NMRA members living within the boundaries of PCR. Let me be the first to say "Hi, and welcome to PCR." This is our regional publication and it is published quarterly.

The NMRA is divided into 17 regions, 15 of these are in the US and Canada, and two are foreign. The Pacific Coast Region was the first region organized within the NMRA, dating back to 1944. The 17 Regions are further divided into smaller local groups called divisions. Some regions have more than a dozen divisions, PCR has five; The largest, Coast Division, includes Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Benito, and Monterey Counties, The Redwood Empire Division includes Marin, and Sonoma, Counties and all the counties north along the coast to the Oregon border, Sierra Division includes all inland counties roughly north of Modesto and most of Nevada, Daylight Division includes

all the counties south of Sierra and Coast Divisions through Santa Barbara and Kern Counties. The fifth is the Hawaiian Division.

I'm sure there are as many reasons as there are members as to why you have chosen to join NMRA and not the local groups.

Welcome to non-PCR members.

We are sending this issue to non-members in the hope that we can show you some of the local activities and benefits available with a PCR membership. By joining PCR, you are

automatically placed into your local division. Once a member you will begin to receive this *Branch Line* as well as a division publication.

There are a myriad of activities available to members. The primary regional activity is the annual convention, which this year will be April 23 thru 27 in Pleasanton. PCR conventions are always held in April or May and have a national reputation as one of the better regional conventions. We always are able to draw in nationally known modelers to present clinics, and have dozens of high quality layouts available. There are

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MADE IN THE PCR

by Dave Connery

International Hobbies On30 Freight Cars

A series of narrow gauge freight cars have been designed and are being marketed by Richard Gillman at International Hobbies in Auburn, California. While following no particular prototype, these cars certainly exhibit all the charm of narrow gauge equipment. Based on West Coast prototype cars, the dies and casting work is being done by International Hobbies by Chivers Finelines in England.

“What is On30?” you ask. It is a rapidly growing niche in our hobby using O scale (1/4” = 1’) or 1:48 scale and built to operate on 30” narrow gauge tracks. I know most of us think of narrow gauge as 36” between the rails and certainly most US narrow gauge railroads were built to this standard. Included in the list of 36” gauge railroads are the Pacific Coast, North Pacific Coast, South Pacific Coast, West Side Lumber, Denver & Rio Grande, Rio Grande Southern to mention just a few. In Maine a series of railroads were built to 24” gauge, all of these narrow gauge efforts were designed to reduce the costs of construction, and as a result most of these efforts have a uniquely backwoods panache that have captivated many modelers.

Here in the PCR, several railroads were built to the unusual 30” gauge. These include the Yosemite Short Line, started at Jamestown to connect the Sierra

Railway with mines, a potential logging area, and ultimately Yosemite National Park. While nearly 15 miles was built, this effort was abandoned in 1906, less than a year after it was begun. Higher in the Sierra mountains the Empire City Railway was built to connect the Cold Springs and Empire City lumber mills, located on the North Fork of the Tuolumne

River, with the Standard Lumber Company’s Sugar Pine Railway (Pickering Lumber Co.), located near the South Fork of the Stanislaus River. The Molina Timber Co./Loma Prieta Lumber Co. operated a 30” gauge line in the Santa Cruz mountains and the Sloat Lumber Company built a line near Quincy, CA in the Feather River area. There was also a 30” gauge in Siskiyou County operated by the Johnson & Pollock Lumber Co. and in Nevada the Eureka Mill railroad was built at 30” gauge to serve the mill from the Virginia & Truckee mainline between Carson City and Virginia City.

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In recent years On30 has taken off as a modeling scale with the introduction by Bachmann of a Colorado inspired 2-6-0, then a tiny Porter, and recently a 2 cylinder, 2-truck Shay. Early adherents used the On30 moguls to run with their porcelain villages around Christmas trees but fine scale modelers were not far behind in seeing the value of this scale. The scale caught on fast because HO track is approximately 30” in O scale, so equipment is built to run on HO track, which means track, wheels, turnouts, gauges and mechanisms are all available. Special On30 track is available from Micro Engineering and both track and turnouts are produced by Peco and is preferred by serious modelers, since the ties are correctly sized and spaced for the scale/gauge combination. A set of On30 module standards has been developed, several modular On30 groups now exist and there is a lively group of about 1000 members on the Yahoo On30 Conspiracy group list. With all the above as background, let’s get to building some of these cars.



All six cars

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Attending Your First PCR Convention

By Les Dahlstedt



Come to think of it, the title of this article could be either a declarative statement or a question...the difference: whether or not you've decided to take advantage of this benefit of your membership. Okay, so let's say that some of you are on the fence and are not sure whether or not you want to attend. You might be inclined to sign up, but you've never gone to one of these things before and feel awkward about asking some 'veteran' what they're all about.

Guess what? I went through the same thing not so many years ago. I can tell you that it's worth the time and effort to attend and it's not so intimidating once you've made the commitment to go. Heck, you're probably going to enjoy yourself, learn something new and maybe even make some new friends. Since I'm selling you on the value of attending, let me paint a picture for you of a 'virtual tour' through a PCR Convention.

A typical PCR convention contains activities that are likely to be found in other NMRA regional conventions, plus some that are unique to PCR. Let's look at them one at a time:

Registration

The first activity everyone participates in is registration. If you've registered in advance, the friendly folks at the registration desk will have a package made up for you with your name badge, convention program book and other important items designed to make your convention experience a positive one. Be sure to pick up the package of maps for the self-guided layout tours. If you didn't register in advance, these same friendly folks will be happy to take your money and the necessary paperwork will be processed. *Remember, only current PCR and NMRA members can register and attend, so keep those memberships up to date!*

Company Store

If you have ordered some items in advance, or want to pick up something extra, now would be a good time to stop at the company store. Many members collect the convention cars and this year's

edition will be a knockout! *Hints:* After registration and a visit to the company store, you might want to familiarize yourself with the location of the rooms that will be used for clinics and contests, the hotel coffee shop and those all-important restrooms. If you are bunking at the hotel, this is probably a good time to register and move your things into your guest room. Once that's taken care of, find yourself a cozy corner and spend 15 minutes reading through the convention program. Tick off the things you have pre-registered to do (like some of the outside tours) or might want to do (clinics, layout tours and the rest of the outside tours).

Heck, you're probably going to enjoy yourself, learn something new and maybe even make some new friends.

Clinics Program & SIG Meetings

Clinics are an important element of any convention. Many clinics provide an opportunity for modelers to learn how to hone their skills, better understand aspects of the hobby and perhaps even get some hands-on experience. Other

clinics focus on non-modeling aspects of the hobby, such as prototype information or the clinician's own experiences as a professional railroader. There's something for everyone in the clinics program. Clinicians are mostly PCR members who love to share their knowledge with fellow members. In case you were wondering, they are not paid. While many of these speakers are old hands at conducting clinics, many more are jumping in for the first time. Having been both clinic attendee and clinician, I can tell you both are a lot of fun!

Since clinics are being held daily throughout the convention, it's important to consider how you will allocate your time. Most clinics will be given once. A few are given twice. Convention attendees often find themselves wanting to attend a particular clinic and participate in another activity, (clinic or layout tour) at the same time. It is impossible to create a schedule that will accommodate all such possibilities for several hundred people, over several convention days. The best advice I can give is to arrive early, review

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First Convention

the schedule and weigh your decisions. Sometimes, for reasons beyond everyone's control, clinics have to be rescheduled. This sometimes results in two popular clinics now taking place simultaneously. Nobody wants this to happen, least of all the convention committee members.

SIGs (Special Interest Groups) are becoming more and more popular, as these provide an outlet for a growing number of modelers who have specific areas of interest, such as layout design, operations, etc. The Program will give details of these meetings. After attending one of these meetings, you may want to consider becoming a member of a particular SIG.

Layout Tours

The PCR is blessed with a high concentration of extraordinarily good layouts. Many will be open for self-guided tours during the convention. This year, the tours will be geographically grouped each day. We've found that the tour layouts generally follow the relative popularity of different scales. This year will be consistent in that regard, with all of the popular scales represented. Since the tours are self-guided, you are required to provide your own transportation. *Hint:* Perhaps you might be able to link up with another attendee, share the driving and in some cases take advantage of those diamond lanes during commute hours.

If you have not previously been on a tour to a home or club-owned layout, there are some basic rules of etiquette that apply. These are included in the information you received at registration. Personally, I enjoy layout tours because I am often amazed by and impressed with the creative talents of other modelers. These have provided me with motivation to improve my modeling skills.

Outside Tours

Outside tours provide an opportunity for you (and perhaps a companion?) to get away from the convention for a few hours to do something unique and different. This year's tour program has some really interesting content...antique automobiles, speeder rides, wine tasting, orchid growing, and military hardware...something for just about everyone. Some of these require advance reservation...sign up early so you won't be

disappointed!

Contests

The range of modeling and photography contests follow standard NMRA guidelines. If you want to attend and enter, please make arrangements with the contest chair. There will be a room dedicated to contests where models and photos will be on display and will be judged.

Most members have not taken the leap of faith and entered a contest. Well, this year's convention will see something unique; a mini-diorama contest judged on a popular vote that I predict will get members interested in contest models. Each diorama cannot take up more than an 11" x 17" footprint and will be awarded points on the basis of a list of scenic elements. Further details are provided elsewhere in the Branch Line and Convention website.

Companion Program

Convention days are filled with lots of activities for members. Spouses of attending members often asked, "What's for me to do, while you are off enjoying yourself?" The convention has a program in place that provides a dedicated room and companion activities, such as crafting. Please refer to specific information on the program that will be available at the convention.

Movie Night

Awhile back, the PCR initiated a "movie night" as a bit of an ice-breaker for attending members. This has proven to be a popular event and will be repeated again this year. We'll have a bona fide emcee and a varied program of short subjects, a feature movie, popcorn and soft drinks. Further details will be noted in the Branch Line, convention website and at the convention.

Swap Meet

In lieu of the normal evening auction we will have a swap meet this year. Members can purchase a table for a nominal fee and sell off their excess inventory of equipment, scenery items, modeling tools, etc. This will be an opportunity for members to seek out some needed items and maybe strike a bargain in the process. Further details will be noted in the Branch Line, convention website and at the convention.

Editor's Notebook

By Bill Kaufman

A while back I asked the PCR Yahoo group (which you might want to look at. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PCR-nmra/>) "OK, who out there goes to division meets? If you go regularly, why do you go? If you don't go, why not? What would it take to get you to come to division meets? What should we change about division meets? What could other divisions learn from your division's meets?"

I got this wonderful response from Ed Liesse.

"I somehow feel obligated to respond to your questions on division meets. I'm not going to answer them directly, but how I got involved and what it meant to me. I started going to Coast division meets with son Ken when they were held in a girls' high school somewhere around San Francisco State University. We sort of wandered around at first but then saw a few people we recognized. We still weren't sure what we should do so just hung around and watched. I don't think we did a lot that meet but we did decide we wanted to go again. So the next time we felt a little more sure of ourselves and even tried the auction. We also had the chance to meet some new people and learned some new things. We also learned more about the geography of the Bay Area since the meets

I hadn't gone to that first division meet, I wouldn't have all the model railroad friends I have today.

moved around the area. Since John Dennis was a member of the club we belonged to, we both eventually began helping with the auction. And then working with registration and door prizes - and the auction. Then we got more involved with the auction - even auctioneering! (Ken was much better than I was, and still is!) But one of the biggest things we got out of this was the comradeship of the members. We looked forward to attending the meets to see everyone and trade ideas, insults, good-natured fun and, of course, buy something at the auction. Ken eventually moved out of state, but I stayed and got more

involved because of attending that first meet. As I mentioned, I got started working with the registration and door prizes. Then they were looking for someone to keep the PA system and that stuff and bring it to each meeting, so I volunteered. Then somehow I got drafted for the Superintendent's job! Ray deBlieck also conned me into getting our club to be the sponsoring organization for the 1995 convention so I ended up as chairman of that. Then came the potential for the 2000 National convention. And I got involved in that, but only for a short time. I moved out of state! That didn't help. I ended up as Secretary for the PNR and then Secretary for the 4th Division. Then the 4th Division gets the bid for the 2004 National convention and I end up as the Inside Activities Chair for that! Where am I going with all this diatribe? Just to say that if I hadn't gone to that first division meet, I wouldn't have all the model railroad friends I have today. I wouldn't know some of the leaders of the NMRA and the model magazines. I wouldn't have had the chance to meet some of the leaders in the industry. Did all this involvement take time? You bet! But I wouldn't trade it for anything! Like anything else, it can be frustrating and discouraging, but in the long run, you find out you enjoyed it."

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

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Editor's Notebook

On to my own stuff. Again I really meant to keep this issue down to 40 pages, but people keep sending me good stuff. Dick Anderson's comments on our Round Robin were too good to pass up as were Terry Taylor's report on working with Scouts and other young people. I asked Jim Long for Basic stuff on building kits and he came through like a champ.

I did indulge myself with one of my own articles on basic scenery, but, even if I pulled that, I'd still have 48 pages. In for a lamb, in for a sheep, I guess.

There is lots of convention material. I am amazed and delighted by the number of clinics and layout tours these guys are offering for Tri-Valley. I'm on the committee for Napa next year and we will have a hard time topping them. (Not that we won't try. Stop by our hospitality suite at the convention for a libation and to see how well we are doing)

Uncle Guido (Bill Schaumburg from RMC), Dave Biondi, Don Cabrall, Jim Providenza, and I are going to be doing a photography clinic at the convention basically Thursday 9:00 to 5:30 . (They are the great photographers. I just along for the ride.) It should be terrific but the important thing is that you have to contact Dave (GrdpaTrns@aol.com) by the end of March to get a spot.

See you at the convention,

Bill

Military Vehicle Tour on again!

The previously scheduled and cancelled tour to the Military Vehicle Heritage Foundation in Portola Valley has been reinstated. The Foundation owns one of the largest collections of military vehicles in the world featuring tanks and other armored vehicles as well as both self propelled and towed artillery pieces. Anyone interested in further information on either the Foundation or specific pieces of their inventory prior to the tour should visit their web site at www.milvehtechfound.com.

The bus will depart Thursday morning and return by mid-afternoon. The cost of the tour is \$20.

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President's message

contests, both model and photo, as well as a variety of outside activities, some railroad related, some for the whole family. Speaking from experience I can tell you that if you haven't been to a PCR convention, you haven't lived.

At the local level, you will be able to attend division meets in a variety of locations and with varied activities. There are clinics, contests, raffles, auctions, and all sorts of social activities. Beyond all the planned activities, and the modeling experience you can gain from participation, the real number one benefit is in the people you will meet and the friends you will make.

PCR membership is one of the true bargains in this world at a measly \$6 per year. There is a membership form inside this *Branch Line*. Fill it out and watch your mailbox. But then again there is no need to wait. Aside from a very few limited activities, all PCR and Division activities are open to all. Find an event in the listings inside this *Branch Line* and just show up. Find someone who looks like they know what they're doing and introduce your self. You will find it a rewarding experience.

In the future, through some reorganization within NMRA, there will be no difference between national and local membership. Through a Long Range Plan, set to go to the membership later this year for approval, when you join NMRA, you will automatically become a member of your local region and division. Until that becomes effective, I hope you will join PCR now and get in on all the fun.



NMRA Midyear Board Of Trustees Report

Ray deBlieck

PCR Trustee

The NMRA midyear Board of Trustee meeting was held Feb 14 thru 16 in Seattle.

First off, let me say that for all the griping I did about having to go to Florida in July (I never have cared much for humidity), it was made up for by a great weekend in the Pacific Northwest. I had never been to Seattle and have always wanted to go. It is a truly wonderful and beautiful city. My wife came up over the weekend and we spent a few extra days playing tourist after the meetings were over. A fun time was had by all, except maybe the few board members who were stranded by the bad weather and resultant airport closures on the East coast.

I will give a brief overview of the main business here. More detail will be available in the near future, as the minutes will be posted on the NMRA web site.

The most important item, as always, is finances. The losses of recent years have continued, but we are getting a better grip on controlling the bleeding, and last fiscal year losses were greatly reduced. An ad-hoc group of Trustees has been working on some policy issues that will lead to further belt tightening. The current fiscal year budget is balanced and the officers are working very hard at maintaining fiscal controls. Past mistakes have been avoided and both the financial management of the organization, and home office procedures are showing a much greater level of efficiency. Office manager Jenny Hendricks and her staff are to be commended.

Membership losses appear to have bottomed out as we have been experiencing small growth over the past few months. This is very encouraging news.

You will see a few changes in NMRA publications. The Bulletin is going to be converted into a newsletter and there will be a new magazine (Name TBA). This is more a revamping than anything really new. This is in part related to the ongoing Long Range Plan discussions, but the Publications Department has wanted to do a facelift for some time, and it is due. There may be a combined issue later this

year, with two cover dates. If this happens, it will be done so as to catch up on cover dates. Do not be alarmed by this, as there will not be a skipped issue. A years membership will still yield 12 issues, and membership due dates will be adjusted if and as needed. The board did organize a publications oversight committee to be made up of Trustees as well as non-board members to review options and procedures, and to try to assist with controlling some costs. Discussions between the board and Publications Department during the meeting were very productive, and all are committed to improving all aspects of the publications.

In convention business, the rotation schedule was changed due to the upcoming 2010 75th anniversary, which will be in Milwaukee. As a result, the next time PCR will be eligible to host a national convention will be in 2011. I can report another West coast convention prior to that date as the board awarded the 2008 convention to Anaheim. Yes boy and girls, trains and the mouse! How can it possibly get better than that?

The main topic of discussion was in reviewing and further revising the NMRA Long Range Plan. For the first time, we had the new proposed bylaws available as a single document. I won't go into a lot of detail, as the revised bylaws will be available for review in the next couple of weeks. They will be submitted and posted on both the NMRA web site as well as in the files section on the PCR yahoo group page. Anyone who does not have web access and who wants a copy can contact me and I'll see to it that you get a copy. Be a bit patient as there are two rather sizable documents (the proposed bylaws and the actual Long Range Plan) involved here and they are both being revised as I write this.

For the first time, the discussion of LRP got around to money, dues money that is. There has been no final decision but the board is committed to maintaining dues at the level where it now is. There

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BOT Report

may be some dues cost shifting between national and regional dues, but we are all hopeful that the net amount to members will not change. As there is such a wide range in dues charged between regions, this may not be possible in all regions. I can tell you all that based on discussions and my own anticipation as to how the board is leaning, that I doubt very much that anything will change in PCR.

Keep in mind that under the proposed LRP, all NMRA members will become regional members. There will no longer be a separate classification of PCR member. In making this basic change, there are some costs that are now borne by regions will be shifted to national. Additionally, costs for such items as the *Branch Line* that you are now reading, will still be borne by the regions. The current source of income to cover this cost, at least for PCR, regional dues, will no longer exist. Therefore regions will have to come up with a means of replacing this lost revenue. Some regions do not charge dues currently, opting to cover operating expenses from such sources as conventions, auctions, train shows, etc. (Yes, there was a mention of a "Bake Sale" at the BOT meeting). It is this basic difference that has for years stopped any efforts to have a single membership for all NMRA members, but the time has come to stop this difference and make all levels of the organization from local to national more inclusive.

It is anticipated that regions that charge no dues currently (there are only two) will see little if any change in their operations. Regions that do charge dues (such as PCR) will have to be a bit inventive.

The current leaning of the board is that a portion of the new national dues will go to the regions for the basic membership and operating costs of the regions. Any difference (or shortfall if you will) can be made up by the regions through the charging of subscription fees for the newsletter. This could result in a revenue and cost neutral situation for the members, but as national does not control regional policy, that is beyond their control. One item that was stressed was that if there is a change made, it is vital that there be one computerized database, and that regional and divisional personnel must have some sort of dialup access. This was met with universal agreement.

As it is obvious that the total costs under the post LRP NMRA will be dependent on decisions made by a combination of the regional and national boards, it is impossible to know exact final costs now. I encourage anyone interested in this to contact your representatives and to get involved in the process. It is most important in our volunteer organization that we hear from as many of you as possible. I will warn you in advance that there could end up being a small net increase. The PCR board has not discussed this, and there is no proposal as far as I know. PCR dues have been set at \$6 for decades and the PCR board will have to address this once a decision is made by the NMRA BOT. Again, your input and participation in the process would be appreciated.

In other business, the board was distressed that we were presented with the resignation of Rocky Mountain Trustee Ava Coleman. Ava has served long and well for NMRA and became a good friend through our work on the LRP committee. Speaking as just one Trustee, I thank Ava for her service and will

One final point on the Long Range Plan. This will all be submitted to the membership this coming Fall or Winter for approval. There will be a ballot measure that will ask for approval of a new set of bylaws (or regulations in Ohio Corporate Code nomenclature) as well as asking for approval to eliminate the existing NMRA constitution (corporate codes no longer require both bylaws and constitution, and this will also allow us to streamline our procedures). This is all due to the way these legal documents are organized and corporate code requirements. It is vital that the membership have an opportunity to review these new documents as well as be able to comment and ask questions. To that end, I will be coming to as many division and regional events as possible this year. In addition, NMRA President Allen Pollock will be attending the PCR convention in April. Allen and I will jointly be presenting a "Meet the Presidents" clinic during the convention. I encourage everyone to try and attend these events and to ask questions.

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By
Gene Mayer

The coming two years will be very eventful for the Pacific Coast Region (PCR) and NMRA. This spring NMRA members throughout the world will be asked to approve bylaws amendments establishing (1) single membership dues and (2) a reorganization plan designed to streamline administration at the national level. Declining membership and financial problems are major concerns at this time. I urge everyone to vote for these amendments.

At the regional level we need to develop programs to retain existing members and attract new members to the organization. As I previously reported the PCR Board of Directors (BOD) approved a long range plan that calls for (1) improved communications with members, (2) revitalized division programs, (3) more local activities in remote areas and (4) a new educational program to train new regional and division officers and committee chairs. We sent the January-March issue of the *Branch Line* to all NMRA members who reside within the PCR geographical area. Hopefully some non-regional members will decide to join PCR.

In recent months the PCR Yahoo Groups email discussions have included many messages concerning why members do or do not attend division meets. Several members said they feel like "outsiders" when they attend division meets because people congregate in small groups. Other members said they go to meets to see old friends. Everyone should introduce themselves to newcomers and find out what new members want from the organization.

I firmly believe that we need to provide more local activities throughout the region. Dwayne Coate has organized sub-section meetings in the Redding area to provide local activities for PCR members who reside in Northern areas of the Sierra and Redwood Empire divisions and PNR members who live in Southern Oregon.

I believe that we can only improve the organization if more people get involved. I hear complaints but generally the complainer does not step up and volunteer to take action and make improvements they want to see in the organization. We often rely on the same people to do almost everything in PCR. I hope more of you will come forward and offer your assistance.

Tri-Valley Zephyr
Proudly Presents

AN OLD-TIME MOVIE NITE!

Your Host

Don Olson

"Selected Short Subjects"

Southern Pacific in the East Bay

Santa Fe: Avon to Richmond

(A Brief Intermission)

**BUSTER
KEATON**

in

"THE GENERAL"

**Sacramento Northern
in the East Bay**

"Premier"

Nine Lines Around the Bay

by

Don Olson

(Soft Drinks and Popped Corn)

MEATBALL SCENERY

By

Bill Kaufman

“Meatball Scenery? What in the world is Meatball Scenery?”

I have seen in my life some scenery that looks like each blade of grass is numbered and corresponds to a blade of grass that existed in the prototype in August of 1939. Someday, I hope to have the skills, patience and time to do that level of work. Meanwhile I do “Meatball Scenery.”

“Meatball Scenery” is about covering the maximum amount of territory with the minimum amount of fuss while still looking good. In the original book *MASH* by Richard Hooker, Hawkeye Pierce explains front line surgery by alluding to golf. “This is certainly meatball surgery we do around here.... We’re not concerned with the ultimate reconstruction of the patient.... We’re concerned only with getting the kid out of here alive.... We want to play par surgery on this course. We’re not sweet swingers and if we have to kick it in with our knees to get a par that’s how we do it.”

We’re trying to do a little “par” scenery here, too. Our wife has just invited friends over for dinner two weeks from Friday and wants us to show them the layout, or the divisional layout tour coordinator has called up and asked if the division can visit next month, or we are just plain tired of staring at the “Plywood Central.” We have acres of carpentry to cover without embarrassing ourselves.

Where to begin? In our Round Robin, called the “Northern California Nameless Group Round Robin” (NCNGRR), we, most often, find ourselves starting with cookie cutter plywood on L-girder benchwork. However, we can “meatball” beginning with spline-based bench work, or these new foam systems, or almost anything else.

While generic scenery is nice, you end up with a much better result if you try for a specific scene. The better we understand what we want, the less we find we have to redo stuff. On the other hand meatballing is cheap and easy enough that modifying or redoing something we’ve already done is no big deal. Usually it just involves putting a little more stuff on. (“Putting a little more stuff on” is our generic solution to any scenic problem.)

“Meatball Scenery” is about covering the maximum amount of territory with the minimum amount of fuss while still looking good.

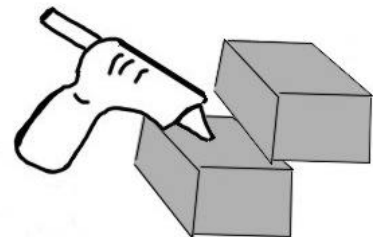
The best way to get at a specific scene is to have a good color picture or two of the territory we are modeling. (The more pictures the better. Either that or a spectacular memory.) I’m modeling Northern California so I can just walk out my front door and just stare at the hills for a while. If live in St. Louis and are building Hawaii, you need reference materials.

First we need the shape of the land. Even Kansas is not as flat as a 4’ by 8’ sheet of plywood. We need mountains, valleys, and other geology. I’ve tried all the chicken

wire, papier maché, strips of cardboard, and paper towels soaked in plaster systems that have come down the pike. The easiest and fastest is foam insulation board.

Glue a piece of foam in place. If we need a hill, build up. If we need a valley glue the first piece to the benchwork down below the tracks.

Glue more foam to the first piece building up or down until we have a considerably bigger lump than we actually need.



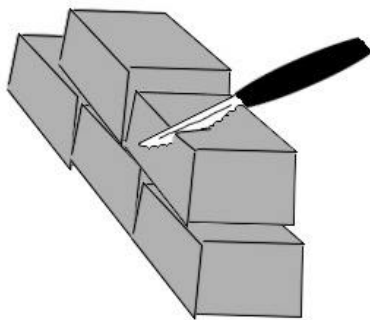
Meatball Scenery

A word or two about foam and glue. For a long time we used foam that Jim Providenza had left over from insulating a new roof on his house. Nasty stuff, full of fiberglass reinforcements that tore up our hands, but it worked just fine as scenery. When we ran out of that we moved on to some sort of yellow-brownish stuff that probably was supposed to be sound insulation. Anyway, somebody had it left over. It crumbled but we made it work. (One of the hallmarks of meatball scenery is making do with whatever is on hand.) We've even tried Styrofoam® but it is messy, hard to cut, and real marginal. If you are reduced to going out and buying foam, there is some wonderful blue-colored foam insulation board that is worth looking for. It cuts very nicely and is generally easy to shape.

“So, what kind of glue?”

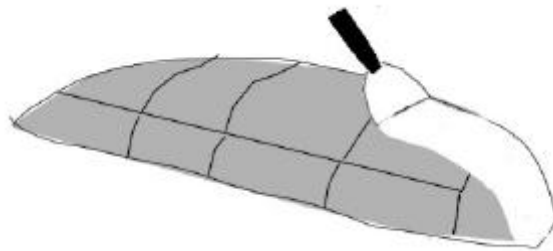
The best things are contact cement and hot glue, but watch for unfortunate interactions. Some solvent-based contact cements eat away at some foams and hot glue will melt some other foams. We usually use hot glue because we can start working on the scenery almost instantly. We're an impatient lot and always want to get on with it. If you are not as twitchy as we are, I would recommend you look for water-based contact cement.

Once the foam is all piled up and glued together, we start cutting it down to get the landforms, the hills, the valleys, the arroyos, and the ponds that we want. The process reminds me of the old joke about, “How do you carve a wooden Indian? You start with a log and you cut away everything that doesn't look like an Indian.” We take serrated knives, Sureform® rasps, electric hot wires and anything else that comes to hand and saw and dig away until the land rises and falls in about the right places. We check it against the pictures and against a standards gauge so that we can



still get the trains through. (Jim always wants us to leave ¼” more than the standards gauge. He's lucky if the gauge fits in at all when I am finished. I just put out one of the “Don't hang on car” signs and wander away. In truth, ½ to ¾ of an inch is a good idea.) If we screw up, we just glue in some more foam and try again. Fortunately for us, it is a very forgiving material.

When we are finished carving we try to give the land a skin. We've been known to just begin painting directly on the foam and plywood, but a coating of drywall mud or plaster ties everything together and fills in all the cracks. Personally I prefer drywall mud because we can come back later, smooth it, and slowly work it into the shape that we want. Its drawbacks are the length of time it takes to dry and its intrinsic lack of strength. They don't call it “mud” for nothing.



We often use plasters for the same thing, working them until they harden. Scott swears by Hydrocal® for its strength and for the speed with which it sets up. (I told you we were an impatient lot.) He wants to put in foam, lay down plaster, and put down dirt and bushes all in the same night. We usually can do that.

Mostly we use a system that has been described as “wet in wet”. We take advantage of the fact that the latex in latex paint is second cousin to the active ingredient in Elmer's Glue All®. We start by painting an area and then blowing or sifting ground cover into it.

“Painting it? Painting it what color and with what?”

It is very scientifically done. Around here our friend Joe Garbarino runs the recycling business. The way he recycles latex paint is to pour anything that comes into the recycling center into a big tank and sell the resulting mess for a buck or two a gallon to people who are trying to paint dumpsters and other things where final color is not a concern. The paint generally is a sort of green tinged light brown or tan. It is a great base color for scenery. If you your local recycler does

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Meatball Scenery

not provide this wonderful color, go to your paint store and buy the color that most looks like dirt or mud. It doesn't make much difference because we are going to cover it all up anyway. (For the real linear amongst us Jim says that Sears Easy Living Semi-gloss Wall & Trim "Honeycomb Gold" is a good dirt color.)

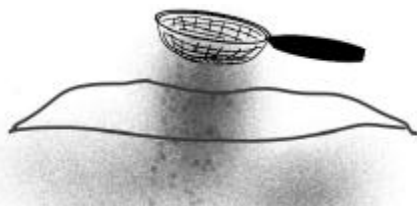
Whatever you use, lay it on thickly. Remember that this is the glue. Now we need to cover it.

"Cover it with what?"

Well there are lots of companies that are trying to sell ground foam and other stuff, but we have found the best thing for dirt is dirt. We get it and sift it as fine as we possibly can and work it into the paint. Our most frequent source is a crawl space in Scott's basement there the dirt has laid, undisturbed, for about forty years. It is very dry, crumbly, and easy to sift. An even better source would be the area that we are modeling. We know a man who was shipping dirt from Sherman Hill on the Union Pacific to his home layout in five pound overnight packages.

What we need is a shovel, a bucket, and permission to dig. We end up with a base material that is pretty close to the color of the area. If you are worried about things that live in the soil or you need to dry it enough to sift it, you can bake it for a while. We try to schedule this for a day when our spouse and family are at the in-laws.

There are all kind of ways to apply this basic dirt. Those nice little bottles with the holes in the lid that Woodland Scenics® sells to use with their materials are very useful in spreading the dirt evenly over the paint. However, I originally learned to take a small sieve, fill it up with material, and sort of slowly shake it until I had covered everything. I just like that better.



We have just spent a fair amount of time building hills and valleys and, unfortunately, sifting works less well as the slope of the hill increases. There will be places on the sides of steep hills and cuts where the dirt ends up just too sparse. We've found the best way to deal with this is to cover the area with glue, spraying,

dripping, painting with a paint brush, or smearing it on with our fingers. Then we take a 3 by 5 card, or any other piece of paper that comes to hand, fold it into a "V", put a load of our material in the "V," and use a straw to blow it onto the slopes and into all nooks and crannies.



OK. Now we have dirt as far as the eye can see. We look a bit like the Gobi desert. We need to find our pictures and contemplate the scenery. (Ahha! You thought I had forgotten about the pictures, hadn't you?) Just as you have trained your eye to look for details on a locomotive or to check the weathering patterns on a boxcar or look for the structure in a trestle, you are going to have to train your eye to look for the details in scenery. Try to think of it as "weathering" the scenery.

There are two factors that affect the natural scenery. First, life is very aggressive. Everywhere in the world, something is trying to grow. If it can find favorable conditions, a leaf, a blade, a bush, a moss, or a something will sprout and try to take hold. Second, the sun, wind, and rain that weather boxcars also weathers the natural environment. The sun bleaches out rocks and dead plants. Dirt runs down hills, rocks and rivulets and accumulates in muddy little pockets in odd corners. The wind blows dust on everything and rain washes it off. Everything gets sort of blended together.

Once we have a sense of what it should look like, it is time to "put a little more stuff on." We begin by dragging out all our accumulated ground foams. The more colors the better. A number of different companies (Woodland Scenics, ASMI and Scenery Express come to mind) sell them in a number of different sizes, colors, and textures. Try to accumulate as many as you can. Never throw any away. The bits that were left over when you scened your last kit, the hunk of tree that broke off, the stuff that you swept up or vacuumed up when you were finished up with the last scenery project all get mixed together in a "leavin's" bag or a jar to use on the next project.

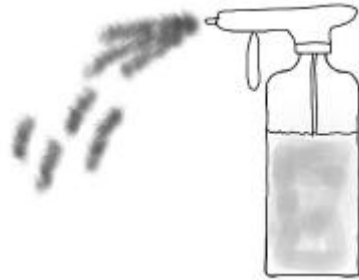
We then look at our pictures to identify a color in our ground foams that is reasonably close to one of the dominant ones in the pictures. We don't need it to be

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Meatball Scenery

exactly right, close will do. Then we prop the picture up near the actual site. (Try not to spray it with glue!)

Now we reach for “wet water” and “wet glue.” “Wet water” is just water with a couple of drops of dishwashing liquid to break up the surface tension. You do remember “surface tension” from high school physics, don’t you? “Wet glue” is nothing more complicated than one part Elmer’s to two or three parts water and a dribble of dishwashing liquid. We put the “wet water” and the “wet glue” into spray bottles and into the sort of orange-topped bottles the Elmer’s came in. (Jim prefers the pint sized bottles.) We will eventually need “wet water with India ink” in a spray bottle, which just means we put a few drops of ink in a bottle of wet water.



The dirt and the paint may have dried up so that the ground foam won’t sink into the paint. If this has happened, just wet the area with the “wet water” and then spray it with the “wet glue.”

Shake or sift some of the ground cover on the dirt and spray it again with the wet glue. Successful spraying takes a bit of technique because the ground foam wants to ball up and be pushed around by the spray. Just sort of mist over the area and let the wet water/wet glue drop gently on the dirt or foam. “Falleth as a gentle rain from heaven.” (I’ve always wanted to sneak Shakespeare into one of these articles.)

Now we get into the heart of the process.

The central mantra of meatball scenery goes like this:

Do something!
If you like it,
put some more on.
If you don’t like it,
put some more on.

Stop for a second and look at what you have done and look at the picture. If you like it, a little more won’t hurt. If it doesn’t look quite right, a little more will

probably help so sift a tad more on and glue it all down.

Look at the picture again. There are other greens or browns in it. (Heck, there are probably even purples or pinks or other equally improbable colors. Nature is made up of a plethora of colors). Pick a bit of ground foam similar to one of these other colors. Look at the picture for areas where this color shows up and drift a bit into the scenery.

All repeat together now! “If it looks good, put a bit more stuff on. If it doesn’t look all that good, put a bit more stuff on.” We find that sometimes we just haven’t put enough of this new color on. Sometimes we have put too much. Then the choices are to cover it up a bit with the base color or to pick another of the colors in the picture and try to cover it with that. Surprisingly, either seems to work. Spray the whole thing with the wet water and India ink solution and then some wet glue. The wet water/India ink treatment leaves everything with a similar shade of gray that ties it all together.

The other thing to concern ourselves with besides color is texture. If we use all the same size of foam, we will end up with something that looks like a meadow. Meadows are fine if that is what we want, but scrublands are bumpier. We can rummage through the dirt that didn’t go through the sifter and glue some of it in place to break up the earth. We can use concentrations of larger sizes of foam to give a more uneven texture to the ground. Anything to disrupt the flatness will help.

Like the back of the shampoo that says “Wash, rinse, repeat,” keep working on the base until you have most of the colors represented.

By now everything is usually so wet that it is good idea to quit for a while. Dirt changes color when it is wet. It changes again when it is dry, but dirt with glue in it doesn’t quite get back to its original color. The ground foams will dry back to their original color. The white cast the glue gives to everything will dry clear. It is probably a good idea to let everything dry at it at this point, take a look at the scene, and see what, if anything, we need to do. It is also a good time to have a beer and some snacks. (If you are really in a panic, you can hurry the process with a hair dryer or heat gun judiciously applied.)

“Rocks, cliffs, and cuts. I almost forgot about rocks, cliffs and cuts!”

(Continued on page 14)

Meatball Scenery

Basically we need to worry about structure and color. To get the structure right we both cast rocks and carve them.

Casting is fairly easy. We buy a mold. (We haven't made them, but I understand that it is relatively easy. All the magazines used to run articles about going out into the field and casting molds from nature. I remember some guys just made their molds from large chunks of coal.) Heck, I've even just crumpled up some aluminum foil and used that as the rock face.

We wet the area where the rock will go. We mix up a bit of plaster. We put some sort of mold release into the mold. We fill the mold with plaster. We stick it to the wetted area. We go away for a while. We come back, remove the mold, carve a bit to restore details lost, and add some plaster to the edges to blend the casting into the scenery.

"Piece of cake."

"Yeah, just wait till you try it."

Actually it is fairly easy, but you do need to do a few before you really get the hang of it.

We do a bit of freehand carving of rocks concentrating mostly on sedimentary materials in cuts and gravel quarries. All we have to do is trowel on a layer of plaster or drywall mud and cut a series of parallel lines in it as it dries. It is even possible to carve some soft plasters and the mud after it dries. Here in California, we don't even have to carve straight because earthquakes have twisted the ground in all sorts of ways.

We mostly color our rocks with our wet water/India ink solution. (Some people prefer to put their India ink in alcohol.) In the real world, the sun tends to bleach out the more exposed surfaces. We squirt the rock face liberally with this "gray water." It soaks into the plaster and collects in pockets that turn out to be right where the sun wouldn't shine. It is great. We found out by accident that a little of our base latex paint put at the top of the rock will run as we spray and give a bit of the color of the dirt to the rocks. So much the better.

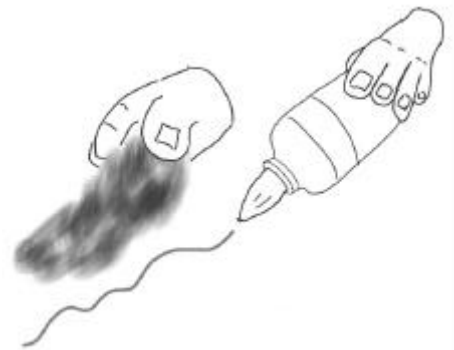
If we want to add more color or a different color (not all rock is gray), we do it with "washes." Acrylic wash is just a little bit of acrylic paint in a lot of water. We make solvent-based washes with a lot of thinner

and a bit of paint. We splash the washes around and let them run. It is better to start with a wash that is too thin and do it two or three times than it is to try to take the paint off. (Although you can do a bit of that by splashing around just the water or the thinner and let it carry away a bunch of the paint.)

We often dry-brush white highlights on the tips of rocks and end up by blowing a little bit of whatever we are using for dirt into the cracks and crevices.

Bushes and trees are great ways to break up expanses of ground, so let's start with some simple, nondescript bushes, the ones you just want to fill space with and don't want anybody to look at. The basic material is "Polyfiber." Woodland Scenics® sells it but so does the local fabric store. People stuff pillows with it. The WS stuff is green. The stuff from the store is white. I think it was Tony Koester that said that spray painting the polyfiber black increases the shadows. Sounds good to me. Whatever you do, white isn't going to cut it.

Figure out where the bushes are going to be. Lay a bead of undiluted white glue down on the scenery. Take a bunch of poly fiber and tease it out to twice or three times its compressed size. We are trying to simulate all those little branches and stalks here so we don't want just this dense mass. We paint it if we need to and settle it into the glue.



Then it's back to the picture looking for a color of our foam that most resembles the dominant color of the bushes in the picture. We don't have to use the same color on all our bushes. Spray the bushes with some glue, sift and blow on ground foam and spray them again with glue. Then we need at least one other color to accent the prime color. Sift/blow a little of this on and glue it down.

There are a couple of alternatives that make nice, unobtrusive bushes. The simplest is a netting sold as "foliage" that already has foam attached. A couple of

Meatball Scenery

companies sell it, intending it for foliage on trees and the like. Just tease it out and glue it to the ground as a sort of underbrush. WS sells clumps of colored ground foam that work well too. We just figure out where there should be a bush, put a dollop of glue there, tear off a hunk of foam, and push it into the glue. The chunks are all one color so we always dust them with another color or two.

Best thing we have found for ferns and the like is the sort of air fern that Joel Bragdon sells to make redwoods and conifers. I presume we could buy the fern somewhere else under some other name, but we just buy a bag full and use it for lots of different projects. We take two or three of the sort of branch like bits and tie them together at the base and plant them. One by itself is not too impressive, but bunched in together they look really good.



Being out here in the west, we do a lot of redwood forests. It's what we have around here and none of us are Pennsy modelers. Redwoods shade the forest floor and create an acid soil that kills off all but the heartiest ferns and bushes so the forest floor is pretty bare. The trees drop a lot of stuff which gives the floor a distinctive color and texture. We just scoop up some of the detritus, put it in the blender when the wife isn't looking, chop it up, and glue it down. I bet it would work for other forest floors.

Sometimes non-descript bushes aren't good enough. Foreground sorts of bushes are built on armatures and are really, for our purposes, very short trees. So let's talk about trees for a bit.

Trees are pretty simple. Basically a tree is a bush with an armature under it. Finding something that will make the armature, the woody part, is the hardest part of making a tree. The easiest way is to find something in nature that looks a lot like the tree that you are trying to model. The woody parts of pine trees just don't look like the woody parts of birches or oaks or elms.

Some branches and some twigs just look right. Whenever we see something even close to right, we cut it off, dry it and hang on to it. Just because we don't

like the top of a plant, we don't give up. Lots of roots have a good shape to them, too. Petite Pines Northern harvests a particularly oak looking branch that they use in their kits. I don't buy their kits but I do buy lots of their branches for my oak forests.

Branches aren't the only useful parts. Jim keeps his eagle eye out for Pride of Madera bushes in the neighborhood. When the flower has passed its prime and begun to die and dry out, he harvests them and saves them to make pine and redwood trunks.

You can make armatures if you can't solve the problem by stealing from nature. Scott and Morgan whittle the main trunks of pines and redwoods out of balsa. They carve in bark texture and stain them. They drill holes in the trunks and ACC Bragdon's air fern in the holes for the greenery. These make terrific looking conifers, especially when in groups.

We haven't tried it, but Charlie Piggott of Charlie's Oakie Doakie Oaks makes a heck of an armature by taking a piece of hemp rope, not synthetic, and unraveling the strands. He then uses ACC to make the strands stay in place. He paints the trunk to match the specific variety and makes an outstanding tree.. (Just in general, he makes a better tree than I can. You might buy a few from him if you need foreground trees.)

You can tie bits of plants together and cover the trunk with tub caulk (Use the kind you can paint. Otherwise you are going to have white trunks.) and make armatures for all kinds of deciduous trees.



Worst comes to worst, you can buy kits or even whole trees.

We make the leafy parts of almost all trees by putting a little white glue on the ends of the branches in the armatures and stretching out our old friend polyfiber to cover them. Then we spray a little glue on the polyfiber, sprinkle on the right color ground foam, and plant them in the ground. Sometimes we will use a light dusting of paint to create highlights on the top.

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New PCR Members

OUT OF REGION

Keith Loose Portland, OR
Jack Walsh Nogales, AZ

DAYLIGHT DIVISION

William Bell Gustine, CA
Steve Francis San Luis Obispo, CA
Mike Hart Goleta, CA
Regis Joly Tehachapi, CA
Edward Nagel Ridgecrest, CA
Kay Naumann Santa Barbara, CA

COAST DIVISION

John Clark San Jose, CA
Patricia Dalcher Los Gatos, CA
Al Dimatteo San Mateo, CA
James Elliot San Francisco, CA
Keith Gillette Pleasanton, CA
Jerry Haver Sunnyvale, CA
Paul Jia Lanella Clayton, CA
James J Mc Carthy Pleasanton, CA
Peter Mc Corkell Lafayette, CA
Matt Padgett Gilroy, CA
Roderick Pruet Foster City, CA
Andrew Schnur Lafayette, CA
Arleen Seybert Mt Hermon, CA
William Stayton San Mateo, CA
Bennett Woll San Francisco, CA
John Yen San Bruno, CA

SIERRA DIVISION

Justin Biggs Sparks, NV
Charles Brawman Yreka, CA
Les Ede Sparks, NV
Bud Feasel Redding, CA
Timothy Hardesty Oroville, CA
William Howlett Redding, CA
Stephen Johnson W Sacramento, CA
Richard Kreutzer Carmichael, CA
Richard Pashley Granite Bay, CA
Albert Rowe Fair Oaks, CA
Nanci Rutherford Yreka, CA
Grant Vogel Plymouth, CA
Bob Walters Montague, CA

REDWOOD EMPIRE DIVISION

David Ball Nice, CA
Alfred Cordeiro Novato, CA
Douglas Dickson Arcata, CA
Willard Hamilton Napa, CA
Ronald Kaiser Healdsburg, CA
Raymond Melvin Crescent City, CA
David Norris Fairfield, CA
Ronald Perkins Vacaville, CA
Thomas Stack Suisun City, CA

(Continued from page 15)

Meatball Scenery

We haven't got any simple system for palm trees so you might just as well go out and buy them.

"Let's see. Dirt, grass, rocks, trees, and bushes, what else do we need?"

"How about track, buildings, signals, roads, fences, and such?"

Hmm. I'm getting tired and I think I'll go take a nap, but I can tell you a couple of quick things. Two kinds of roads. Dirt and gravel roads are just like ballast on the railroad. Pour a line of the material where you want the road, use a brush to shape it, wet it down with wet water, and hold it in place with wet glue. For asphalt and cement roads, trowel in some drywall mud or slow-setting plaster. Carve the expansion lines and or cracks. Asphalt roads get painted grimy black. Cement roads get the wet water/India ink treatment and then you paint in the lines and any patches.

Last thing! Don't forget that most buildings grow up out of the ground. They have foundations that are dug into the dirt. Any building should be snuggled into the scenery and have either dirt or foliage up against its foundation.

There! We've played par on the scenery course, even if we kicked a few in with our knees. The patient is in good enough shape to keep the nitpickers at bay for a couple more years. Next time we will have to start numbering the blades of grass!

TEARING IT UP IS PROTOTYPICAL

By

Richard Anderson

Round Robin is not a fat bird as far as Northern California Nameless Group Round Robin is concerned. It's a group of modelers that meets once a week in the home of one of the members. These meetings do include operating some trains -along with refreshments, some joking and lots and lots of talking -and also some construction and reconstruction. Lots of reconstruction, sometimes. We all know how you are supposed to do it. You are supposed to do planning, planning and even more planning before you drive a single spike or even order any lumber. You are supposed to use templates to plot curves that are within limits and turnouts that will fit. There are supposed to be no surprises once construction has begun -or only a very few surprises. That's how it is supposed to work.

Members of the NCRGR know this, of course

They did their planning and plotting, their measuring and drawing and redrawing. They started construction. Some even came close to finishing that construction, folding in most of the scenery, peopling towns and industries with those little folk you have to paint. And then came the whoops... ...!

A new idea.

A better way to do it.

All leading to reconstruction.

Take Jim Providenza, for example. Jim is probably the most detail conscious member of the Round Robin. He's not a rivet counter in the worst sense of that word. I have never heard him talk down to anyone else in the group. But at the same time, Jim does sleep better at night knowing that the number of rivets is correct. His Santa Cruz Northern is one of those highly detailed layouts that packs a lot of railroading into one side of a double garage without looking or even feeling like a railroad that has been packed into one side of a double garage. Carefully hand laid track was in place, scenery was well along, and the trains ran very well on the Santa Cruz Northern. And then Jim got an idea of how he could enlarge the radius of a curve or two and add a staging yard! It meant literally sawing a finished portion of the layout in half and moving one of the halves several inches away from the other. The Round Robin

group tackled the project. It's now finished. You'd never know such work had ever been done.

Philip Smith had a well-detailed track plan in hand before he started construction on his elaborate HO version of the Spokane, Portland and Seattle. Roadbed was in place, a lot of track was laid, and then – bingo! -- Philip thought his cookie cutter plywood track base should be replaced with spline track base. Up came the track; out came the hunks of cookie cutter plywood. In went the spline. And since one thing always leads to another, Philip wound up rebuilding a helix he had finished and relocating an engine terminal as well. With the help -and, of course, the advice -of the Round Robin gang, the transformation to spline roadbed is just about finished. And it does look better and will no doubt provide for better operation as well.

In the case of Scott Kew's model of the Southern Pacific up near the California-Oregon border, it meant the relocation of the entire yard at Black Butte and the rebuilding of a major wye. The yard and wye were moved from one side of an aisle in Scott's basement to the other and operators and visitors now walk beneath newly installed main line trackage that is not just high overhead but, of course, high in the Cascades as well. And the former site of Black Butte yard is now part of a wonderfully long tangent of single track main line that lets you actually see an SP train approaching from a distance!

Ripping out, starting over, realigning this, rebuilding that - it's not what the track plan, template and detail plotting crowd thinks ought to have to happen. But it does happen for lots of us. And it is prototypical, to boot.

Take out your railroad atlas. Look at those dotted lines that weave in and around the solid lines depicting main line trackage. Those dotted lines were once the main line. At some point, someone had the idea of a better route, a better grade, better curvature, whatever. So there was prototype ripping up and rebuilding, even though the original construction had followed a plan.

We modelers of the Marin Round Robin are just being prototypically accurate, that's all.

S Scale In Review

By Lee Johnson

The last two meetings of the Bay Area S Scalers found about 20 people in attendance at each of the meetings. The November meeting was hosted by the S scale "Attic Division" of the Swayzee Pacific Transportation Company in Berkeley at Graham Henry's where the main stay of motive power for the day were a GS-1 and GS-4 SP 4-8-4s battling to maintain their supremacy over a pair of EMD demonstrator SD60s.

Ed Peterman hosted the January meeting where the BASS modular layout was set up in the display area of the Santa Clara Historical Society freight shed at the Santa Clara depot. This allowed for a wide variety of S equipment to be brought and operated, while some maintenance work was also being performed on a couple of modules set off to the side. A side benefit of having a meeting at the Santa Clara Historical Society was being able to watch the operation of the real thing right outside the door. We were also able to witness some switching being performed by a UP remote control set of locomotives. This is a case of the prototype copying the model world.

Don't forget that the 2003 NASG Annual Convention is in Oconomowoc, WI (Milwaukee area) July 9-13. There will be over 10,000 sq. ft. of exhibits, layouts, and trading tables all in one area. There will be at least eight S scale layouts on tour, along with tours for riding a real interurban, and railroad museums. There will be tours also for the non-rail folks in mind, and also a first time convention attendee program so those attending an NASG convention for the first time will not feel left out of things. The traditional clinics, model contest (special circus train modeling portion), hospitality suite, and banquet will also be included. This should be an outstanding convention. The convention car being

A side benefit of having a meeting at the Santa Clara Historical Society was being able to watch the operation of the real thing right outside the door.

offered is an S Scale America 10,000 gal. single dome tank car decorated in green with white lettering and the Sinclair logo. It is available in two road numbers of which one is a prototype number, and the other is the year of the convention. If you are headed to Toronto for the NMRA Convention and National Train Show, leave a half-week early, and stop by the NASG convention on the way.

The composite 2-bay open top hopper cars from S-Helper Service have been very popular with a couple of road names already sold out. Another run of these cars will be produced with Monon and Clinchfield being added to the road names. The 2-bay panel side open top hoppers are now

available also. The new wooden refrigerator cars are now available including the PFE. The 2-8-0 is still on track for delivery before the end of the year, and work on the E-7 is still progressing with no delivery date at this time. All of the F-7 road names and undecorated versions are available. The F-7 is available decorated for AT&SF passenger ("war bonnet" silver/red), AT&SF freight (yellow/blue), B&M, D&RGW, GN, MP, and PRR. For those wanting F-7s in SP black widow and WP silver/orange, you can either wait to see if SHS will do them in a second run of F-7s, or decals for SP are available from Des Plains Hobbies, and WP are now available from Microscale. Another item SHS is working on is a DM&IR 70-ton ore cars, and it is expected to be available during the fall of this year. Since their stock of SW-9 switcher locomotives is low, SHS is starting to tool up for SW-8 and NW-2 switchers for delivery late this year or early next year.

River Raisin Models has announced that depending on response, they will be producing three and possibly four of the Budd "Shovelnose" train sets. Initial plans are to do the following: #9900 the original

(Continued on page 33)

HOW TO BUILD A BETTER MOUSE TRAP (ACTUALLY A BETTER BOXCAR KIT)

By Jim Long

Bill Kaufman said he could use some "how to" articles for the Branch Line, so here is one on the Branchline Trains 40' AAR Boxcar from their Blueprint Series. This is a state of the art plastic kit and not "shake the box" like Athearn or MDC. There are many detail parts that need to be assembled.

I have built two of these cars; the first is Erie #1505 with an 8 foot door, the second a Buffalo Creek #1601 with a 7 seven-foot door, and I have another one to build. They are Eastern prototype, were found in the area that my layout is set, and are the correct era for me. This is the same car being offered at the Tri-Valley Zephyr PCR.

The convention car is a prototypically correct Western Pacific car in the original "as built" 1947 white lettering on a BCR car. It includes the small Feather River Route logo and Mt. Vernon Car Shops builders' bug with a seven-foot door. This paint and car numbers will only be available through the convention at a cost of \$15 each. In addition five different numbers will be offered, all different from the repaint scheme produced commercially by Branch Line. A convention logo decal will be provided for convention car collectors.

As with all good kits, read all of the instructions before starting construction. You start with the under frame. The reservoir, cylinder and piping are delicate castings.

I used a hobby knife with a #11 blade, pin vise, drill bits #75 & 61, small file, despruing nippers, and an axle reamer in the assembly.

The despruing nipper is one of the best tools I ever invested in. A must have for every toolbox. One of the best is sold by PBL.

The piping is a one-piece injection molded part that is connected to the cylinder or reservoir. Those are

very delicate and should be cut from the sprue with the despruing nippers. You then mount the couplers and trucks. Before I mounted the trucks I used a reamer to clean out the opening for the axle ends. This is the other 'must have' tool. It is so easy to use it is beneficial in the way the wheels roll. The trucks have metal wheels that look good.

**This is a state of
the art plastic kit
and not "shake the
box"**

I used Kaydee #58s. The kit comes with one of the Kaydee compatible couplers. They may work well but I like the look of the new and smaller #58 by Kaydee.

The ends are next. There are many small grab irons, ladders and other details. They give you a couple of extra parts. A plus when you lose one on the floor. Ask me how I know that. The ends are cast so you

can't mix them up. This is a good design. The sides have the ladders and grabs. These look good because they are very close to scale size. The roof can be installed with or without a roof walk. These cars were built with roof walks and many lasted into the time where they were outlawed and therefore removed and the ladders cut down. The choice is yours.

The car comes with two nuts that are used for weight. I substituted lead fishing weights for the nuts and glued them to the inside of the floor with Walther's Goo. I used lead weight so the cars are not affected by Kaydee uncoupling magnets.

One of the nice things about these kits is that they have different parts and instructions in the various kits. One of the kits has a separate set of ladders because the prototype used 8 rungs and the standard kit has 7. The other kit has some special instructions about painting the ribs on the roof. It seems they had a tendency to leak and the car repair crews would seal them up with tar. The Erie car has a silver roof. They suggest we use some black paint to represent the tar in the seams. The instructions state not to do this painting very neatly because the prototype is not done neatly.

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Candidate Statements

Gene Mayer for PCR President

I have been a member of the Pacific Coast Region (PCR) for about 40 years. During that time I have served in many different divisional and regional positions. I was on the Board when the Pacific Southwest Region was formed and carved out of PCR. Since the split our membership has steadily declined from about 1700 to less than 1,000 today. That decline disturbs me.

Over the past four years I have been PCR Vice President and chaired the Long Range Planning Committee. The committee was formed to study the reasons for declining membership and to develop a plan to improve membership retention and to attract new members to the organization. The Board of Directors approved the Long Range Plan at its October 2002 midyear meeting.

My primary reason for running for president is to see that the long range plan is implemented. Dave Connery the candidate for vice president has agreed to oversee and coordinate the implementation plan. We need to get more members involved in the organization. Too many people have multiple jobs.

Dave Connery for PCR Vice-president

We have been traveling some very rough track the past few years within NMRA and naturally the PCR and its Divisions have felt the impact. I am confident our present NMRA leadership is fixing the past problems but as a consequence our membership numbers are down. The good news is the programs within our Region and the four continental Divisions remain robust. I believe this is where our Regional Board and Officers should continue to focus – bringing solid support and assistance to Divisions while maintaining our successful Regional programs (The Branch Line and our great annual conventions). If elected, I will put my emphasis on modeling activities and helping members achieve their goals in the hobby, whether that be building models, operating layouts, improving collections, researching the prototype or enjoying each others fellowship. A number of dedicated and talented members are working hard at the local Division level to provide

top-notch programs and PCR's primary objective should be supporting and encouraging these efforts. On a personal level for those who don't know me, I model in HO and HOn3 on my home layout, have an Fn3 Garden Railway and have started some On30 modeling. I have presented clinics at every PCR convention since 1994, at numerous Coast Meets and at 3 NMRA Conventions. I served 4 years as Coast Membership Chair, 5+ years as PCR Publications Chair and Branch Line Editor, 4 years as Coast Director and I remain active with the Coast Board of Operations. I have served on the 1994, 1995, 2000 and 2003 PCR Convention Committees and the 2000 NMRA National Convention Committee. I encourage each of you to get and stay active with your local Division and club and to show your interest in this organization by exercising your vote in this election.

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Better Mousetrap

The cars come with the correct ends for the many different prototype models. These cars came out a couple of years ago and Branchline found a mistake in the design. One of the dimensions was off just a little. Branchline took the model off the market for a year or two and corrected the mistake. This shows the dedication that they have to building the cars correctly.

I recommend the Branch Line Trains kits. They have 50 different road names, 26 with 6' doors, 12 with 7' doors and 12 with 8' doors. There are 4 numbers in each road name. This does not include the special Western Pacific version that will be offered at the Tri-Valley Zephyr. You can see more about these products at their web page www.Branchline-Trains.com. You can read more about the Western Pacific convention car elsewhere in this Branch Line or on the web site at www.pcrnmra.org/conv2003/index.htm

I need to add some weathering and these cars will be ready for operation.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

By Jack Burgess, MMR

For those who are new to model railroading or the NMRA, the Achievement Program is a way to provide recognition to those NMRA members who have displayed a high degree of modeling skill, service to the hobby, and service to the NMRA. It is also a way to provide incentive to members to learn and master the many skills necessary to the hobby of model railroading. Occasionally, the work necessary to earn an AP Certificate may seem onerous. However, it is an excellent way to improve one's modeling skills and finish some of those projects that have been collecting dust.

It is an excellent way to improve one's modeling skills and finish some of those projects that have been collecting dust.

There are eleven categories in the Achievement Program – Motive Power, Cars, Structures, Scenery, Prototype Models, Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Chief Dispatcher, NMRA Official, NMRA Volunteer, and Author. Certificates can be earned by completing the requirements of that particular category.

Last Fall, we talked about the requirements for the Master Builder - Scenery. While scenery is basic to a layout, layout design and track are also fairly basic to a layout. The Model Railroad Engineer - Civil certificate has been developed to encourage and recognize those abilities associated with layout design and track construction.

There are four general requirements which need to be completed and/or demonstrated as part of the process of qualifying for this certificate.

The first is to prepare an original scale drawing of a model railroad track plan identifying overall size, scale, etc. The plan needs to be neat and legible, although it does not need to be in ink or drawn using a CAD program. (It is, however, suggested that you check the requirements for Model Engineer - Electrical and Chief Dispatcher before drawing this plan so that you can include the requirements for those certificates at the same time.) You don't need to build everything included in this plan, but you do need to include a number of required features including adequate terminal facilities for handling freight and/or passenger cars, adequate facilities for

storage and service of motive power, at least one passing track and four switching locations (not counting yards, interchanges, wyes, and reversing

loops), provisions for turning motive power, and provisions for running at least two mainline trains in either direction. Remember again that you don't need to necessarily build all of these items, just include them on your plan.

The second general requirement is to construct and demonstrate the satisfactory operation of a completed section of the model layout from this plan containing at least 25 linear feet of track in N, 50

linear feet in HO or S scale, or at least 75 linear feet of track in O scale. The track must be complete with ballast, drainage facilities, roadbed profile, etc. The track must include at least six different features such as a passing track, spur, cross-over, turntable, etc. out of a possible 18 features.

The third general requirement is to scratch build three track features and demonstrate their satisfactory operation. These features can include a turnout, crossover, crossing, etc. out of a possible 14 features. These track features do not need to be part of the layout but can be built on a separate piece of wood, as long as they are long enough to be able to be powered up to demonstrate that a piece of motive power can run through them in all directions.

The last general requirement is to win a Merit Award for the scratch built track feature items listed under the last item. To win a Merit Award, you need only to demonstrate that the track features work satisfactorily and that workmanship is done neatly.

If you have completed all of these requirements, you submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) along with a photocopy of your NMRA membership card and you are on your way toward another certificate!

Like many of the other AP categories, many of us have completed a majority of the requirements as part

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Registration Form

National Model Railroad Association

PACIFIC COAST REGION

PCR OFFICERS BALLOT

Instructions for Election:

1. Election starts with receipt of ballot (Branchline mailed approximately March 1, 2003).
2. All ballots must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2003.
3. Vote only for one candidate for each office.
4. You may write in a candidate of your choice. However, the candidate must be willing to serve if elected.
5. Voting for more than one candidate in an office will void your ballot.
6. Do not make any other marks on the ballot.
7. Fold in thirds so that the return address is showing, and tape the ballot closed.
8. The ballot is considered a first class letter, and requires 37¢ postage.

PLACE AFTER YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH OFFICE.

PRESIDENT <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i>	VICE PRESIDENT <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i>
Gene Mayer	Dave Connery <input type="checkbox"/>
WRITE-IN CANDIDATE <input type="checkbox"/>	WRITE-IN CANDIDATE <input type="checkbox"/>

(fold here)

Postage
37¢

PCR Ballot Chairman

Jim Providenza

16 Drake's Cove

San Rafael, CA 94903

(fold here)

Tri-Valley Zephyr Layouts



The Tri-Valley Zephyr will have many layouts open for self-guided tours. The tours will be April 18 & 19 and April 23 – 27, 2003. There will be no layouts open Sunday April 20, 2002, because of Easter. A set of maps and times will be mailed to preregistrations for the early weekend.

Alameda County Central Railroad Society (ACCRS) is located on the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. The club operates both O and HO scale layouts that are over 90% scened and capable of operating in either DC or DCC modes. Both layouts have traction loops and the O scale has narrow gauge as well. Web page at <http://marina.fortunecity.com/spinnaker/240/track1.htm>

Bay Area N-Trak Model RR Club an N scale club located in the old SP Crockett Depot. They have a permanent layout there that is made up of member's modules and the yard, roundhouse, and passenger terminal that belong to the club. They are also setting up an N-Trak Modular Layout in the Danville Depot for the Convention Week. This is the clubs portable modular layout. Web page is at <http://www.bayareantrak.org/bthome.html>

Dave Biondi is building the Sierra Railroad in HO scale as it looked in 1975. He has several picture and models featured in Railroad Model Craftsman. He is well known for his backdrop painting and photography.

Tom Blinn. The Gloria Court Railroad is a 13' x 25' HO scale layout. It is a freelance California railroad. The layout was started in 1984 and is about 90% complete and 85% covered in scenery. Era: 1940s and 1950s.

John Blunden. Western Pacific Railroad as built by John is in HO scale. Oakland and the East Bay is modeled. Many fine buildings. The layout has fold up end to provide clearance in the garage. An article about this can be found in Railroad Model Craftsman November 2000.

Bob Brown MMR. The Tuolumne Forks Lumber Co is a famous On3 layout. Bob is the publisher of the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*. There are many fine details on this layout that is about 98% complete. There are 3 sawmills, a stamp mill, a resort hotel and many scratch-built structures. There is also an outdoor G layout.

Jack Burgess MMR is opening his world famous Yosemite Valley Railroad. The layout recreates the YV as it existed in August 1939. This is a 3 level railroad that includes all of the major features on the YV. You can see more of the YV in the January 2000 Railmodel Journal and many other magazines and on Jack's YV web page. <http://www.yosemitevalleyrr.com/> The web page has many photographs of the layout.

Dave Connery's Sierra Carson and Truckee Railroad

was featured on the cover of the May 2000 Railroad Model Craftsman. A HO & Hon3 scale railroad with fantastic buildings and scenery. His South West Side Lumber Company is an Fn3 scale garden railroad featuring a scale model of the Westside Borland Trestle.

Steve Cavanaugh has built the Western Pacific in the Feather River Canyon from Oroville to Reno Junction in the east and Crescent Mills on the highline. Starting at Keddie, he has constructed a brief offshoot up the highline and trackage west through the siding of Paxton. To the east trackage is complete through Quincy Junction and up a 1.5 turn helix. The scenery is pretty well along in these areas.

Jim Dias' Western Pacific HO scale layout features wonderful scenery, Keddie Wye and many other scenes. The era modeled is spring 1939 so steam is King. The layout has been featured in several magazines. It was the cover feature for the July 2000 Railroad Model Craftsman and appeared in the June 1996 Railroad Model Craftsman and the May 2000 Railmodel Journal.

East Bay Model Railroad Club, Golden Gate Model Railroad Museum has a 10,000 square foot building where they are building N, HO and O scale layouts. The railroads have been featured on the cover of October 1999 Model Railroader as well as other publications. Web page can found at <http://www.gsmrm.org/>

Jeff Escott. Tuolumne & Sierra Foothills Railroad is a freelance N scale layout loosely based on the Sierra Railroad serving the lumber and mining industries in early fall 1910. The layout is 2' 6" x 19' with 120 feet of main line. Digitrax DCC. Scenery is just starting. Web site is <http://home.attbi.com/~jfecott/tnsf.html>

Mel Foster. The Northern Walika & Espee RR: This is a freelance H.O. railroad measuring 9'X16'. It features a run around with a working yard and a helix to a lower staging yard. Backdrop is painted, all track is down, 95% of scenery and structures are in place. Digitrax DCC

Bob Ferguson is building a very ambitious G scale garden railroad. The layout goes around the house and across the driveway. There will be bridges, stream and pond and lots of track and operation in large scale.

Bill Fleisher has built an On3 and O 34' by 38' layout modeling the D&RGW from Alamosa to Durango with one branch to Silverton, Farmington and the RGS. The period is 1950 – 1968. The basic scenery is in with about 60% detailed. The narrow gauge mainline is 5 scale miles, and the standard gauge is 1 ½ miles.

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Joe Green. C&O – Western Maryland: An HO scale layout in its own specially constructed room set in the Virginia & West Virginia Mountains in the early 1970s. Track height is about 5'. Featured are very nice structures and background showing Eastern Mountains. The scenery is progressing nicely. About 6 years into a 15 to 20 year plan .

Don Harper. The Harper Valley is a Sn3 layout that was started in 1980. It is freelance but most of the equipment is D&RGW with some SP, Westside and East Broad Top. All but 4 of the 50 structures are prototype and mostly scratch built. The layout has been featured in Model Railroader, Railroad Model Craftsman, 3/16" Scale Railroading and Great Model Railroads

Just Trains, The Hobby Shop Layout about 94' long and features many built up kits that can be examined to see what they look like out of the box. It is HO scale and has 48" and 60" radius curves. Control is DC and DCC. Visiting trains are welcome if they have metal wheels and Kaydee couplers. The Just Train web page is at <http://www.just-trains.com/>

Bill Kennerley MMR. Southern Pacific Overland Route is presented in O scale. This is a multi level layout. The layout is based on the article by John Armstrong in the May 1972 Model Railroader. It has 450' of mainline track and a total of 950' of track.

Mike Laine. Virginia & Truckee – Virginia City Branch. A small but highly detailed representation of Nevada's historic Virginia & Truckee Railroad during the 1930s. Scenic features include Crown Point Trestle, Gold Hill and the center of the Comstock mining district, Virginia City. The scenery is complete and features hand carved scenery that is covered with material collected and repaired from the Comstock region. Control is DC.

Jim Long. The Erie and Cumberland is an HO scale layout that connects the Erie RR with the soft coal fields of western Pennsylvania and Maryland. The railroad hauls coal to a large power plant as well as New York and Chicago via the connection with the Erie. A multi level layout. DCC.

Ed Loizeaux's a 20' x 30' S scale layout with over 300' of track. Scenery resembles upstate New York in midsummer. Outstanding backdrop was painted by well-known railroad artist Michael F. Kotowski. Operations feature long freights pulled by articulated and other modern steam power plus fast passenger service. The West Side Lumber Co also has a presence.

John Marshall. West Penn and York is an N scale layout that is set in the east. The Pennsylvania and New York Central have running rights. The layout is a building that is built for the railroad. DCC controlled.

Dr Richard Miller. Denver & Rio Grand Western in O

& On3 scale layout in a 30' x 50' room built for the railroad. 85% complete floor to ceiling scenery . Many detailed buildings and towns. PFM and SDS sound in both standard and narrow gauge locomotives. Featured in the November 1994 Model Railroader.

Seth Neumann. The HO scale Niles Canyon Railroad models the former WP San Jose Sub Milpitas-Niles and former WP 1st Sub Niles to Radum in 1999. Layout is 14"x35'. The railroad is about 15% complete. Seth is very active in LD/Op SIG. Web page: http://home.pacbell.net/snewman/layout_index.html

NorCal Division of Nn3 Alliance. Tom Knapp, Bruce Hunt and others have formed Nn3 Modular Group and they will setup their Modular Railroad at the Convention Hotel. Very well done modular railroad. Several modules that represent Laws on the old Carson and Colorado. DCC controlled Nn3 locomotives with sound.

Jack Nullmeyer. Blue Lake Springs – Mountain Division is a 17' x 4 1/2' HO scale transitional era layout. The layout scenery is 40% complete. Cab control. In the back yard there is a 15' x55' G scale layout with 300' of track, numerous bridges, trestles and buildings as well as a waterfall and pond.

Kermit Paul MMR. The Lone Pine & Tonopah is an HO scale World War II layout with many animated scenes, animation which was the cover feature of the November 1993 Model Railroader. The current, moved and update layout is in the October 1999 Railroad Model Craftsman.

Jim Radkey's unnamed HO 21' x 17' layout is set in the 1990s. A freelanced railroad that includes the Feather River and a small town, it is a mushroom design that travels around the wall with a middle peninsula . Lots of pink foam. Scenery will come later. System One DCC.

Dave Salamon. The 10' X 17.5' N scale transition era Deep River Southern was started in 1997. Freelanced with an interchange with the Santa Fe & Southern Pacific. Serves a large industrial city with a yard and engine facilities plus a port, farming community, mining and milling area. Designed with operation in mind. Basic scenery is complete but working on details and structures. DC block control with a walk around memory unit.

Matt Salamon (8 years old) HO Rio Grande & Santa Fe. Freelance with trains from the Rio Grande and Santa Fe. Twice around track plan with a branch up to a mine and small 3 track yard Built by father & son team. DC only one block. Shares the garage with his father's N scale layout.

San Leandro Historical Railway Society models the Southern Pacific from Oakland/San Leandro to just east of Norden using the tri-level Donner Pass plan featured in the

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March 98 Model Railroader. It is housed in the former SP San Leandro Depot.

Steve Schlaht. The Sierra Timber Belt Railroad is a HO_{n3} scale freelance railroad in the 1927 – 1932 time period. The 10' x 20' layout has over 100' of track with 4% grades operating through scenery. Two MRC Control master 20 power units supply the power.

Gary Schrader. ATSF & SP: O scale 20' x 40' set in 1947 – 1951. Double track mainline, 5-track Union Station, 12-track yard and a large engine facility featuring a 14-stall roundhouse. All track work finished and scenery has been started. Smooth, realistic track and super detailed engines. Check out the 14-car Daylight streamliner pulled by doubled headed, Daylight painted GS-4's.

Silicon Valley Lines Model Railroad Club is an 1800 square foot HO scale club in San Jose. They moved to a new location a couple of years ago and are building a new layout. Operation uses computerized train order software, real time clock, and DCC control. Point to point operation is used with two 11' staging yards. Their web page can be found at <http://www.siliconvalleylines.com/>

South Bay Historical Railroad Society. The South Bay & Pacific are HO and N scale layouts located in the historic Santa Clara Depot, built in 1863. HO depicts western railroading with detailed lumbering and industrial scenes framed by 54" minimum radius curves and beautiful backdrop scenes using Digitrax DCC and Chubb C/MRI systems. N scale features 3 mainlines a-la-N-Trak with double helixes to overhead trackage and lower staging yard, using Digitrax DCC and DC system. They also have a web site at <http://www.sbhrrs.org/layouts/layouts.htm>

Steve Van Meter. Southwestern Pacific Railroad is a large N scale layout representing a generic Bay Area Southern Pacific and Western Pacific in the 1950s steam to diesel transition era. Control is twin cab walk around Aristocraft throttles.

John Temple. Sasquatch Lumber Co (Parent Company – Delta Systems) is an HO layout started in 1996. It is set in 1980 -90, somewhere in the Pacific Northwest. This is a 16' x 19' semi around the wall layout with peninsula. The railroad is pursuing container business as more and more saw mills shut down. The scenery is about 65% complete.

Tom Tower. The Nevada County Narrow Gauge is represented from Nevada City to Oilville in On3. The layout is 18' x 22'. Some scenery is in place. There is an O scale standard gauge lower level. The railroad is controlled by DCC complete with sound

Tri-City Society of Model Engineers. The Niles Western is 2 layouts that are being built by the club in the

old nicely restored Nile Depot. One is N scale in the baggage room of the depot and one is HO scale in the basement. There is a full scale WP Caboose in the parking lot. The club has a web site at <http://nilesdepot.railfan.net/TCSMEhome.html>

Earl Vasconcellos's California Pacific Lines is an HO scale around the wall layout set in the early to mid diesel period. There is an emphasis on way freight operation. Home built walk around control with rotary block selection. 95% completed scenery.

Jerry Wilson. The Twin Pines Railroad is an HO scale layout with a logging theme covering the time of about 1880 to 1950. Thoroughly thought out operations is carried out on a 200' mainline and loop servicing three towns and a small yard. The scenery is pretty much complete

Bob Wirthlin MMR. Bob's Midland Rockies & Western is an HO scale 10' x 11' railroad. Many of the structures and rolling stock are contest winners. For a look at the town of Dunsmuir see the May and June issues of Mainline Modeler. The town of Shasta Springs was featured in the September 1994 Bulletin.

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Achievement Program

of our general approach to the hobby. Maybe you have built an HO layout with at least 50 feet of completed track which includes a passing track, spur, simple ladder yard, a grade, a turntable, and a reversing loop. If so, you have meet that requirement! Even if the plan that you used to build your layout doesn't include the features required under the first category, you could easily design and draw up a layout for a larger space which included the required features. That would satisfy the first requirement. If you scratch built some of the track components for your layout, you might only need to scratch build a couple more to meet the rest of the requirements. Hand laying track is really quite simple and you might be closer to receiving the Model Railroad Engineer - Civil than you think. If you are interested in pursuing this AP certificate, call me for a copy of the complete requirements or download them off of the NMRA web page.

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 47.



COAST DIVISION REPORT

By Rod Smith, Chief Clerk

On December 8, 119 members and friends of the Coast Division gathered in Fremont at the California School for the Deaf. As usual, we enjoyed two clinics and our roundtable in the morning.

Dave Connery and **Brad Lloyd** presented a clinic on Scenery Basics. They do this clinic wearing ties and sport jackets to prove one can do scenery before leaving for the office in the morning! In the course of the hour, the module progresses from bare plaster to a nicely finished scene. They explained the importance of 'puckerbrush' in completing the scene, so if you missed this clinic, be sure to catch it the next time it is presented.

John Marshall next presented a clinic titled 'the time capsule' with the help of a very comprehensive handout, and some help from **Les Dahlstedt** who wrote about his experiences designing his new railroad based in New York. John explained the nuances which tell viewers subconsciously where and when a layout is set. The handout is almost a magazine article. Ask an attendee for a copy of it. Makes good reading and is thought provoking.

At this month's roundtable **Al Massi** brought a display showing some Central Valley turnouts he built. Discussion ensued over the merits of the switch kits, the construction and some modifications to the points and frogs which worked for Al. We also discussed credit card abuse, and the use of foreign suppliers! How's that for eclectic?

There were two layouts set up and running for our enjoyment at the meet. One was the HO scale Free-mo group with a beautiful layout depicting Franklin Canyon in Contra Costa County. The other layout was from the Bay Area N-Trak club, known as BanTrak, and it also showed good craftsmanship, though in a smaller scale. Thanks to both organizations for entertaining us at the meet.

Superintendent **Jim Long** called the business meeting to order at 12:10. It was announced the Peninsula Model Railroad Club has had their lease terminated due to the building being demolished. There does not appear to be a space available

elsewhere on the fairground site.

Division Director **Jack Wall** announced beginning in 2004, contest judging will be done in an open room setting. PCR President/Trustee **Ray deBlieck** noted NMRA President **Alan Pollock** will attend the PCR Convention, giving all attendees a chance to meet him and learn of the changes being instituted at National to improve services to all members.

Nominations Chair **Denise Showalter** announced the incumbents have agreed to run for reelection, and she called for nominations from the floor. There were none, and nominations were closed. The election will be held at the March meet.

Clinics Chair **John Marshall** welcomed guests and first timers. He asked for clinics for the March meet, and also for the convention in Pleasanton (he wears two hats!) 2003 Convention Chair **Dennis Stokely** spoke about the convention in April, and encouraged early registration. **Dave Connery** spoke about the Diorama Contest, and noted he and **Brad Lloyd** had built one in their clinic this very morning. It took them one hour, so there is no excuse for not entering one at the convention. Rules are in the convention discussion elsewhere in this issue. It will be judged as a popular vote contest.

Auction Chair **Bill Burket** asked for volunteers to help at the national convention in Toronto, since Coast Div. will be handling the auction. He also noted the fine convention being planned for our enjoyment. We are looking for a new Layout Tours Chair, as **Gary Schrader** has had to resign. Fortunately, Gary will still be able to provide maps, so if you would like to get involved, here's an easy place to start.

We need volunteers to give In-Home clinics. Come on, there must be dozens of clinics we can hold on various subjects. This is a good outreach for new members to learn what we do, and will help retain existing members who feel they are not getting full value for their membership dues. Perhaps you could

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have a group come over and help build your layout for a day!

It was also announced the committee reviewing the Coast Div. Constitution and By-Laws has completed their task, and a synopsis of the proposed changes will be published in the next Coast Dispatcher so we can vote on them at the March 2 meeting. The meeting portion was adjourned at 12:55, and we began the auction. There were about 600 lots for sale this time, plus all the magazines in the silent auction. Those Auction Committee members sure deserve a big thanks for all their work.

Contest winners this meet were: Switching Contest: Brakeperson- **Bob Ferguson**, Senior Brakeperson- **Bill Burket**, Diesel Locomotive- **Joseph Amyar**, and Passenger Car- **Bob Wirthlin**. Congratulations to all the winners and also to the other entrants. We need more participation in our contests at these meets. The raffle prizes were won by **Stan Keiser** and **Chip Morningstar**.

We also need to thank the Rainbow Girls who serve us so fine with snacks, lunch and drinks. They really make our meets easy to attend, since there is no need to go find something to eat. It's all right here! And a great choice they give us, too.

Come to the next meet at Buchser Middle School in Santa Clara on March 2, and see for yourself. You know, I sometimes hear someone say they don't know anyone at the meets, so why go? Well, many years ago, I too knew few folks. But, I went to the meets for the clinics and auction anyway. Gradually I met some other modelers and found they are basically a friendly group. Most are not standoffish, though a bit shy perhaps. We all tend to form groups with the folks we already know, but most everyone will welcome a contact from a new person who walks up and says, "Hi." My memory for names is not very good, so please forgive me if I forget yours the next time we meet. I'd really like to be your friend, and I'm sure others feel the same way. It's hard to get a conversation going at the meet what with the folks at the microphone telling us to be quiet all the time, but in the morning before the business meeting starts, you will find some of the best people in this hobby are at the Coast Meet. Just be careful they don't appoint you to write this column every three months! On the other hand, perhaps you'd like to take it over. I'm willing! Come see me in March.

Tri-Valley Zephyr Special Diorama Contest:



In addition to the PCR model contest, the Convention is holding a special diorama contest. Winners will be decided by a popular vote for "Best in Show", "Funniest" and "Most Creative Use of Space" categories. Entry requirements are:

1. Dioramas must be no larger than 11" x 17" (they should just fit into a ream-sized paper box), with no part of the diorama extending beyond the edges of these measurements. There is no limit on height. If a backdrop is included, it must also fit within these parameters.
2. Each diorama must be completely self-contained. Two dioramas may be constructed to constitute one scene, however no part may extend over the edges of each respective diorama and each diorama will be judged separately.
3. Dioramas can be done in any scale.
4. Dioramas must contain at least four different elements from the list below (i.e. you could include elements A, C, F, and K and be okay, but having 4 trees (E) only constitutes one of the four needed elements and does not qualify.

Elements:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Track | I. Building/Structure |
| B. Rolling Stock | J. Figure - Person |
| C. Trestle/Bridge | K. Figure - Animal |
| D. Rocks | L. Animation |
| E. Trees | M. Lights |
| F. Water | N. Vehicle |
| G. Snow | O. Backdrop |
| H. Sound | |

5. Somewhere on the diorama, at least one reference must be made to railroading. This could be an abandoned track, railroad structure or sign, wrecked railroad car, even a tavern called "The Whistle Stop" would work. Use your imagination.
6. You may enter as many dioramas as you desire.

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Made in the PCR

This series of cars includes a flat car, a flat car with stakes, low- and high-sided gondolas, round roof and peaked roof boxcars, round and peaked roof ventilated box cars and cabooses both with and without cupolas. Several additional cars are planned for the series. Each of the cars is based on the same floor and utilize the same arch bar trucks. All cars are a very short 14', making them somewhat of a caricature. For comparison, the flat is nearly identical to the Yosemite Line flat car located at Railtown 1897



in all dimensions and appliances except for the length, which is 4' longer on the prototype YSL car.

The kits come in a poly bag with 6 or 7 sides of 5 1/2" X 8 1/2" instruction sheets. There are a number of drawings showing just how every piece fits. The parts are all beautifully detailed in gray styrene on "flat" sprues. The kits include metal wheel sets, brass wire and brass brake wheel castings. You must supply your own couplers and Kadee HO #5's fit perfectly on the underframe.

I started construction with the trucks. Each truck is composed of 2 sides, a bolster, 2 end beams, 2 brake beams, 4 brake shoes, 4 brass bearing inserts and two insulated metal wheel sets. Getting trucks together



perfectly square has sometimes been a problem for me, especially when ACC'ing white metal truck parts. I've built 14 of these trucks so far and each one has

turned out very free rolling and 100% square and level.

The styrene parts glue easily using MEK and an A-West #16 bottle applicator and, while the joints are still flexible, can be aligned so every wheel is firmly touching a glass plate I set them on to



cure. The exceptionally free rolling characteristic comes because you ACC tiny brass "hat-like" inserts in the pre-formed journal holes in the truck side frames. After painting the trucks I was able to polish the treads using a wire wheel in my motor tool with no threat of over heating and deforming the journals.

The rest of the car parts went together smoothly following the instructions. I cut parts from the sprues as I needed them using a PBL sprue cutter and did all the styrene to styrene joints with MEK (any good liquid styrene cement will work just fine). ACC was used to attach the brass parts. These cars are so short there is no room for either truss rods or under-floor brake appliances other than the brake beams and shoes on the trucks. Total assembly time is about 2 very enjoyable hours, of which about 45 minutes is devoted to building the two trucks.



To finish the cars I first distressed the gondolas and flat cars with a razor saw, wire brush and #11 knife. I then air brushed the trucks and roofs Grimy Black and most of the car bodies Foundation. After the bodies had dried for 5 or 6 days I applied a coat of light India Ink and Alcohol stain. Once this was dry I "dry brushed" the painted surfaces with Boxcar Red,

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Pacific Coast Region (PCR) Members Services Department

By
Bob Ferguson

The PCR Member Services Department is dedicated to making it as easy as possible for every PCR member to keep their memberships in the PCR and the NMRA current. Yes, its really two memberships right now. It is currently possible for a person to belong to the NMRA without belonging to the PCR. However, the opposite is not true. A person **cannot** belong to the PCR **without** first belonging to the NMRA.

The NMRA Long Range Plan contains a section which addresses the creation of a single dues structure for the NMRA and all of its Regions and Divisions. When this program is implemented, a single dues payment will provide for membership in the NMRA, a Region and a Division. There are a lot of issues surrounding the conversion mechanics and I don't yet have all the answers. Once implemented though, you will only have to write ONE check to belong to all three segments of participatory. That single check, or if paid through the National office in Chattanooga, TN your credit card, can be submitted to either the National Headquarters or the PCR/Division Member Services person.

This issue of the PCR Branchline has been mailed to **every NMRA member** in the PCR, regardless of their current affiliation status with the PCR. I would like to invite those NMRA members who have received this complimentary issue (your mailing label so states) to consider becoming a member of the Pacific Coast Region. The benefits are many and varied depending upon the Division in the area where you live. Eventually, you will be a member regardless. Now would be a great time to become familiar with the Region and the Divisions before the influx of a lot more members due to the single dues program.

I'm sure that my process for determining who was NOT a PCR member had some flaws and if you are a PCR member and you received two copies with one label saying Complimentary Issue, please accept my apology. You probably got two copies because of my

error. However, if you only got one copy and it says Complimentary Issue, better check your PCR membership card to see if you are expired. In the process of developing the mailing list for this issue of the Branchline, it became apparent that there are several current PCR members, mostly with 5 year Region memberships, who have allowed their NMRA membership to lapse. As mentioned earlier, membership in the Region **requires** concurrent membership in the NMRA. This condition is a violation of the PCR ByLaws and must be corrected. If you know that your membership in the NMRA has lapsed, please make the effort to renew it and send me a copy of your new membership card. My address is in the Call Board contained in this issue.

Since I have been less than reliable for the past year in forwarding the listing of new members to the Editor, I am asking him to include a listing of every new member for the past year in this issue. I apologize to those members who were not recognized earlier and I welcome all new members to one of the greatest assets to your hobby experience; the PCR and its Divisions. I look forward to renewing your memberships for many years to come.

Welcome Aboard!



Dave Biondi's Sierra Railroad which will be part of the layout tours

Operations Special Interest Group News

By

Seth Neumann

The 2003 Bay Area Regional Layout Design and Operations Meet (jointly sponsored by the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA) was held February 1st and 2nd at the Santa Clara Depot (operated by the South Bay Railroad Historical Society). 101 people attended (a new record) from the Bay Area, Southern California, Nevada and Oregon. I was pleased to see a lot of new faces. In fact the meet has grown so much (from a dozen of us sitting in a member's living room) that we may have to use a larger facility next year!



Depot Sessions (Saturday)

Saturday's session at the Depot consisted of a clinic program, a panel discussion on operating large layouts, a design consulting service, break out sessions, and tours of the SBRHS' layouts in the adjacent room.

Clinics

We enjoyed 8, 30 minute mini-clinics: How to operate: Steve Hayes & John Zach; Ops For Dummies – Bill Kaufman; DCC Ops considerations - Don Fiehman; Getting a permit for excavating a train room – Walter Naumann; Lego Train Operations – David “Zonker” Harris; NYO&W Kingston Branch - Les Dahlstedt; Variations on the timesaver – Byron Henderson; and Getting an existing layout ready to operate – David Biondi

Panel

The panel discussion covered crewing your operating sessions, preparing for a boomer visit and many other subjects and was moderated by Tom Turner and the panelists were Rick Fortin, Steve Hayes, Jim Providenza, and John Zach. Tom had collected questions from the attendees and the panelists' replies were so interesting that the audience grew in number during the time that the panel talked. The discussion was going so well that Tom was authorized to run the panel beyond their time. There was a good deal of participation from the floor. Seth

took notes for Tom who is submitting an article that should appear in the next Op Sig's “Dispatcher's Office”, based on the panel's discussions..

Design Consulting

The design consulting service, organized by Byron Henderson, which started when the smaller attendance favored a format of individual layout presentations, was running all day in the board room in the back of the depot. Two or three consultations on layout design and operations design were going on at all times. In all we handled 35 consultations during the day.

Break Out sessions

Break out sessions covered DCC, Signaling (Chubb), Traffic control systems (TT&TO, DTC, TWC, CTC etc.), Model Railroad-oriented CAD products and many informal discussions.

Layout Tours (Saturday Evening)

Ray Mayle organized Saturday evening's program consisted of layout tours with layouts as far away as the Oakland Hills reporting attendance for a total of about 235 total visits! These owners graciously opened their homes and clubs to the attendees: Jack Burgess, Cal Central Club, Jim Dias, Joe Green, Ed Loizeaux, Don Marenzi, Otis McGee, Seth Neumann, David Parks, Gary Schrader, Silicon Valley Lines, South Bay Railroad Historical Society, and Tom Towner.

Special thanks to Gary Schrader for providing the maps for layout and operating tours!

Operating Sessions (Sunday)

Once again, David Parks served up a super menu of operating opportunities on Sunday! The focus was to provide new operators a chance to see what it's all about and secondarily to accommodate our many out-of-town guests. We had 7 layouts open and a total of 61 operators participating! An innovation this year, was that all of the operating layouts were open for visits during the sessions, so that there was more time to see all of the layouts and to provide an opportunity

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NON-RAIL

By
Mary Moore-Campagna

The PCR now has a Non-Rail Program resource! The Regional Non-Rail Program Department, in addition to providing assistance to the PCR Convention committees in conducting their non-rail activities during the convention, is available to act as a resource to any PCR divisions that may want to feature non-rail programs at their meets or other division activities throughout the year.

As we all know, one of our most significant challenges is to increase participation in the activities of the organization; and one way to work towards doing that is to include the entire family in planning the agenda for an event. While it doesn't have to be a full-fledged program, including a non-rail activity as part of a division meet can be an excellent way to encourage members to attend the meet and bring their families as well. Since each division has different membership demographics, different activities will be popular depending on the time and place; but providing opportunities for everyone can certainly help to attract people to the meets and encourage their families to become involved as well.

While the decision is up to each division as to whether they want to include non-rail activities as a part of their meets, the Regional Non-Rail Activities Department is available to serve as a resource for suggestions, planning and any other assistance necessary in setting up a local non-rail program – either ad hoc for a specific meet, or on an ongoing basis. Anyone wanting further information or assistance is welcome to contact Regional Non-Rail Activities Chair Mary Moore-Campagna at (415) 672-4806 or marymoore@campagna.com.



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S Scale

3 car CB&Q "Pioneer" Zephyr; #6000 the original 3 car B&M "Flying Yankee;" #9901-9902 the original 3 car "Twin Cities" Zephyr; and the "Pioneer" Zephyr expanded to 4 cars with Budd chair car #525. The models will be built in brass and nickel silver with detailed interiors. Pricing is not currently available.

BTS has released four new structure kits. They are the Ma & Pa Railroad Laurel Brook station, a rural church, a branchline water tank, and the Willet's Supply Company. Also, their stock of BL-2 locomotive kits has been replenished.

Microscale is back making S scale decals. They have just released a set of decals for WP freight F units in silver and orange, and another set for WP passenger F units in silver and orange.

American Model Builders have just added four structures to their S scale line. They are a Gandy Dancer's Shack, a two-story house, an interlocking tower, and a Feeder Barn.

For those contemplating a dock or harbor scene, Scenery Unlimited is offering an S scale tugboat. It is cast resin about 9 inches long, and comes assembled. A companion piece is a 12 inch cast resin rail barge less the track.

If anyone is interested in obtaining additional information about anything in the column or of S scale in general, my e-mail is Leemax@jps.com or call me at (925) 943-1590.

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SIG Meeting

to observe ops without actually participating (although my host had a cab and a clearance form in each visitor's hand before they had a chance to refuse!).

Acknowledgments

I want to thank Ray DeBlicek and Jim Long of the PCR for jointly sponsoring the event, the South Bay Railroad Historical Society for providing the excellent and appropriately railroady facility, the owners for hosting the tours, the organizing committee, and of course all of attendees for taking the time to make this a memorable event!

Tri-Valley Zephyr

Clinics as of February 14, 2003



Please Note:

- 1. Clinic schedules are subject to change relative to day and time.*
- 2. Some clinicians have not confirmed their absolute availability, and may not be shown on the schedule, even if they are listed below.*
- 3. Be sure to check the Convention Website periodically for the most recent listing and schedule.*

Advanced Backdrop Painting -Dave Biondi. Need a backdrop? Don't know where to start? This is the clinic for you. Dave has mastered the technique and shares his secrets with us. Fast, easy and beautiful. Fri. 2:30 pm.

Advanced Laser Building -Charlie Getz shares his experiences and the tricks he has learned to make a laser cut kit into an award-winning model. Thur. 7:00 pm & Fri. 8:30 pm.

Background Sound – Part One -Jim Wells. Just as sound enhances the operations of your locomotives, background sound enhances your Whole Layout! Jim is a master of sound design and sound gathering. Wed. 1:00 pm & Fri. 9:00 am.

Background Sound – Part Two -Jim Wells. You know you need it. You know you want it. How the heck do you do it? Well, that is what this clinic of Jim's is all about. Learn how to put together the right sounds for those impressive locations on your layout. Wed. 2:30 pm & Fri 10:30 am.

Basics of Operations -Jack Burgess is a master at establishing an operations plan. Jack's clinic will assist the novitiate move into this exciting aspect of model railroading Fri. 10:30 am.

Basics of Operation, The -Bill Kaufman This clinic will be based on Bill's article in the August 2002 RMC. Bill will explore the 4 main aspects of railroading and road operations Thur. 1:00 pm.

Board by Board Construction Made Easy -John Ameling is a master builder. He has learned lots of secrets that allow him to build beautiful model buildings the way the prototype carpenters do it. Thur. 8:30 pm & Sat. 9:00

Building Fine Scale Locomotives -Jeffrey Heller will share with us his techniques for building fine scale locomotives and preparing them for reliable operation. Sat. 2:30 pm

Constructing Bench Work with Metal Struts and Fittings -David Griffy outlines the bench work system developed -the Silicon Valley Lines for the club's modular layout. This innovative idea is applicable to modular and home layouts alike. Wed. 4:00 pm & Thur. 1:00 pm.

DCC Basics -Mark Gurries. In this clinic Mark discusses the DCC system from both a benefit and component point of view. He compares various DCC Systems and offers recommendations of how to get started. Sat. 10:30 pm

DCC Decoders -Mark Gurries. In this two-part clinic Mark discusses the system component that makes your engines and layout come alive. He will cover decoder basics along with a review various decoder hardware and software features to help you choose the right decoder for the job. Some familiarity with DCC is required. Sat. 1:00 pm

DCC Made easy! (?) -Don Fiehmman. This two part clinic based on Don's series of articles in *RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN* is designed for the modeler who wants to know more about or is considering conversion to DCC operation. It covers the history of 'command control', how it works and how to wire a railroad for DCC. Sat. 9:00 & 10:30

DCC Programming -Mark Gurries. Ever wonder how it is done? There is no magic to it. You don't have to be a rocket scientist, but knowing the basic steps of computering does help. Mark is a whiz at explaining how to program those pesky decoders for both locomotives and accessories. Sat 4:00 pm

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DCC Wiring -Mark Gurries reviews wiring considerations for converting an existing layout and offers suggestions to get maximum performance from your DCC equipment if you are building new. His discussion also covers special electrical issues, wire, cabling and tools. Some familiarity with DCC is required. Sat. 2:30 pm

Designing Model Bridges -Harold Mentzer loves railroad bridges. But you can't build them the way railroads do. So, what do you do? Harold has developed some quick and easy techniques for building all types of railroad bridges that look as good in miniature as the real ones do out on the plant. Thur. 2:30 pm & Fri. 1:00 pm.

Dry Brush Weathering -John LaBarba will share with us the tricks and techniques he has spent years developing and perfecting to become a master of dry brush weathering. Thur. 1:00 pm & Fri. 1:00 pm.

Fences, Fences and More Fences -Dave Connery and Brad Lloyd team-up once again to tackle an under looked topic in model railroading; the lowly fence. They are everywhere in the real world, how about on your layout? They share techniques they have learned to make these necessary evils of model railroading both easy and practical for your layout. Wed. 2:30 pm & Fri. 4:00 pm.

Gondolas – Train Talk II -Dave Biondi and John Marshall have decided to use the Gondola for the second in their series of "Train Talk" clinics. This clinic will share techniques both use in modeling in their respective scales to improve the equipment appearance. Fri. 9:00 am.

Hands-on Model Photography -Dave Biondi, Bill Schaumberg, Jim Providenza, Don Cabrall and Bill Kaufman present a 4-part clinic on photographing model railroad scenes and equipment. There will be modules set up for the dozen attendees to photograph. The series will include basic sessions on equipment and lighting, and a critique session where photos taken by the attendees are reviewed and suggestions for improvements provided. you must register with Dave Biondi (GrdpaTrns@aol.com) by March 31, 2003 Thur. 9:00 am to 12:00 am and continues 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm.

High Snow in The Sierras -Bill & Joe Burket. Ever wonder what it is like to ride the front end thru a blizzard as you crest the Sierras? Joe and Dad Bill take us on the ride of a lifetime. You are right there with them as their train climbs the grade and passes the snow line. Fri. 4:00 pm.

Installing SoundTraxx Decoders -Ogden Lamont is doing two clinics on installing speakers and SoundTraxx decoders in HO locomotives. One clinic covers steam and the other diesel. Steam Thur. 9:00 am & 7:00 pm. Diesel Thur. 10:30 am & 8:30 pm.

Large Layout & A Small Room -Jim Hanna. You want big layout. You designed a big layout. But your negotiations with the property mistress just destroyed your dream. Well, that doesn't have to be the case. Jim will show you how to get that big layout into the smallest room. Wed. 2:30 pm & Thur. 2:30 pm.

Layout Design Forum Moderated -Jim Providenza. Join members of the Layout Design SIG for an interactive group discussion of layout design issues. Bring your track plans, mockups and questions to this annual forum, open to all convention attendees. Thur. 8:30 pm.

Layout Design for Passenger Operations -Bob Clark. If you missed this clinic at Redding in 2002, here is your chance to catch it. This is a great look at the what, why and how of passenger operations and facilities. Fri. 2:30 pm.

Lighting With LEDs -Hank Ellett. I have always enjoyed seeing a layout or module with lights. We see them everywhere around us as we drive along the right of way. Every store, factory and home has lights. Why don't we see more on layouts? Hank is a wonder with the LED and their applications. And it is really easy to do too. Wed. 4:00 pm & Fri. 9:00 am.

Locomotive Construction -Tom Knapp models in a scale that doesn't offer much in the way of motive power and has to scratch build many of the locomotives he operates. The methods he has learned and will share with us are applicable to all scales. Wed. 4:00 pm & Sat. 4:00 pm

Logging with Steam in the 1950's -Dave Mussatti. A look at the narrow gauge logging lines of the Sierras, SP's narrow gauge lines and the WP and SP steam operations in the '50s. Thur. 9:00 am.

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Clinics

Make Those Brass Engines Run Reliably -Jeffery Heller. Tired of spending lots of money on brass engines that don't run well? So is Jeffery. He has developed some simple-to-perform ways to rework them so they run like what you paid for. Sat. 1:00 & 2:30 pm

Making Realistic Trees -Bob Hundman. We credit the beauty of a tree to Mother Nature or GOD and that is just. But how many good trees have you seen on the average layout? Bob has been studying all the techniques for building good trees and has put all of them together for us in this clinic. Sat. 1:00 pm

My Collectibles -Bill Burket. One man's trash is another man's treasure. Well, those treasures are even more enduring if there is a story to go along with them. Bill has a lifetime of collecting and not just railroad artifacts. He has the stories to go with them. Fri. 7:00 pm.

Operations SIG Meeting Moderated -Seth Neumann. The area of OPERATIONS is one of the fastest growing facets of model railroading. Making them run like the real ones is the topic of this round table discussion led by the president of the Operations Special Interest Group. Thur. 7:00 pm

Owning Your Own Passenger Car -Francis Wong. Ever wonder what it would be like to own your own 12 inch to the foot passenger car? Francis did. He has been a car owner since 1982. He will walk us thru all the steps in owning one and their care and feeding. It is a lot of work, fun, expense and a big chunk of history. Thur. 4:00 pm & Fri. 9:00 am.

Prototype Operations -Seth Neumann, the president of the Operations Special Interest (OPSIG) Group, focuses on attaining realistic operations on your home layout. Thur. 4:00 pm

Passenger Facilities at St. Louis and Cincinnati - Bob Clark expands his clinic on Passenger Car Facilities with an in-depth look at the facilities used in these two major cities. Join him as he tours their operations visually and pick-up ideas for things you can add to improve the appearance and functionality of your passenger operations. Fri. 1:00 pm.

Pennsylvania Diesels -Peter Weiglin is the author of a new book on the PRR and the diesel fleets that it operated. If it ran on PRR rails, Peter knows about it and will share his love of the Standard Railroad of the World's diesels. Sat. 10:30

Realistic Operations -Jim Providenza. Join Jim for an open ended discussion on operations, focusing on the three key concepts of directional movement, interchange and crew interaction. Based on the "Realistic Operations" articles in Railmodel Journal, Jim will use the work and function of different types of trains as the vehicle for discussion. We will touch on such issues as yard operations, paperwork, role-playing, and looking to the prototype to solve operational problems. Fri. 2:30 pm.

Revisiting the Rio Grande Circle -David Mussatti. Colorado in October, what could be more beautiful? The Georgetown loop, Leadville, Cumbres, Durango and more. Join David as we relive his recent trip over the famous D&RG. Fri. 10:30 am & 2:30 pm.

San Jose Trolleys -Mac Gaddis takes us on a guided tour of the car sheds of San Jose. He is a master storyteller and even if trolleys and street cars don't start your blood a'coursing, his wonderful stories will. Wed. 2:30 pm

Santa Fe Cabooses -Richard Hendrickson is a fine scale modeler who loves the SF. One area that is of special interest to him is the caboose. Join him in an overview of the SF caboose and its modeling.

Scratch Build a Southern Coal Hopper -Gene Mayer. The Southern Railway's all aluminum rotary hoppers are a unique car. Gene shares his techniques for scratch building this special car using styrene. Thur. 1:00 pm.

Small Scale Live Steam -Reg Shaffer is the master of live steam operations in 1:20.3 (F) scale. He knows how to make 'em run like the prototypes. This clinic will feature an operating live steam layout. Thur. 8:30 pm & Fri. 4:00 pm.

SP Narrow Gauge in Laws, California -V. Bruce Hunt. This clinic focuses on the town of Laws, California and the SP narrow gauge operations that created the town. Thur. 10:30 am.

Special Trains on the Santa Fe and SP -Tommy Johnson fired and ran lots of special trains over both of

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Clinics

these lines. Join him as he shares his experiences back in the '50s and '60s on both steam and diesels. Thur. 9:00 am & Thur. 2:30 pm.

Southern Pacific Caboose -Anthony Thompson is a noted expert on the Southern Pacific. His clinic will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about the SP caboose fleet. Wed. 4:00 pm & Fri. 10:30 am.

Styrene Modeling -Robert Hundman is the Editor/Publisher of Mainline Modeler and N Scale magazines and his modeling skills are phenomenal! If you have never seen how he does it, this is the clinic for you. Everything you'll see can be done -you. Don't miss this one. Sat. 4:00 pm

Time Capsule Modeling -Les Dahlstedt and John Marshall. Do you remember childhood puzzles where you had to spot "what's wrong with this picture"? Les and John teach us how to avoid the "what's wrong with this picture" scenario on our layouts. Sat. 9:00 & 1:00

Timetable and Train Order Operation -Jack Burgess. In this clinic Jack moves from prototype to layout to discuss developing your own timetable, issuing train orders, and use of other prototype paperwork to enhance operations. Fri. 1:00 pm.

Turnouts and Track -Tom Knapp shares the methods and processes he has developed over the years to install trackwork with the precision required for reliable Nn3 operations. Wed. 1:00 pm & Sat. 9:00

Turnouts, What You Need to Know -Rich Kolm covers basic information about turnouts, modeling compromises, how turnouts are used in trackwork design, NMRA standards and recommended practices, along with a review of prefabricated turnouts, and thoughts on installing them. Thur. 10:30 am.

Twenty-five MUST HAVE Freight Cars -Ted Culotta. Every railroad and every era has some distinctive rolling stock. Ted will take us down to track side and point out those cars which are company specific and which cars highlight the operations of our favorite railroads thru the years. Thur. 4:00 pm & Fri. 4:00 pm.

Unique Laser Kits -Kermit Paul. Most craftsman kits available today are produced using lasers to make precision cuts in wood materials for buildings and scenic details. Join Kermit as he explains how to put together a package to get that unique building you need but which is not commercially available. Thur. 7:00 pm

Working the San Joaquin Division -Tommy is a retired runner. He has run over just about every mile of track on the SP. Join him for a trip down memory lane. What was it like firing on the SJ back in the early '50s? Join him and learn all about it.

BOB HUNDMAN TO ADDRESS PCR CONVENTION



The Convention Committee of the 2003 Tri-Valley Zephyr PCR Convention is proud and honored to announce that Robert L. Hundman, Editor and Publisher of Mainline Modeler, N-Scale magazine and the CTC Board magazine, has agreed to be the Keynote Speaker at the annual Convention Banquet on Saturday, April 26th.

Mr. Hundman is not only the Editor and Publisher of the fine magazines, but also a noted author and true craftsman in model railroading. His publications are noted for focusing on content for the modeler rather than retail advertisement.

Not satisfied to model in any one scale, Mr. Hundman believes that each scale has its own significant modeling potential. This becomes readily apparent by the numerous modeling articles he has authored in these publications. The techniques and skills he demonstrates are applicable to all scales and levels of modeling expertise.

We look forward to his keynote address with great anticipation.

REORGANIZATION OF PCR COMMITTEES INTO DEPARTMENTS

By Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

The proposed reorganization of PCR's standing committees into seven departments was accepted in concept by the Board of Directors at its October 26, 2002 meeting in Sacramento. The purpose is to better coordinate and improve the Region's operations. To establish the new departments, the membership has to approve amendment of the By-Laws and the Board has to approve amendment of the Manual of Operations. The amendments will be on the agendas for the Board Meeting and Annual Business Meeting at the upcoming PCR Convention in Pleasanton. The wording of the amendments is contained in an Acrobat PDF file which can be downloaded from the PCR website (<http://www.pcrnmra.org>) and is also available from Rich Kolm (ironhorseK@aol.com <<mailto:ironhorseK@aol.com>>). The seven departments would be organized as follows:

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT will consist of the Budget and Finance Committee, By-Laws and Manual of Operations Committee, Nominating Committee, Ballot Committee, and Honors Committee. The Department will be managed by the President.

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT will consist of a Manager (a new position) and the Member Services Committee, Membership Promotion Committee, Member Aid Committee, Education Committee, and Special Interests Coordination Committee.

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT will consist of a Manager (currently chairperson of the Publication Committee) and the Publisher, Editor of the *Branch Line*, Circulation Manager, and Webmaster.

CONVENTION DEPARTMENT will consist of a Manager (currently chairperson of the Convention Committee) and the Convention Committee and Convention Host Committees.

CONTEST DEPARTMENT will consist of a Manager (currently chairperson of the Contest Committee)

and the Contest Chairpersons in the Divisions.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM (AP) DEPARTMENT will consist of the current PCR AP Manager and the AP Chairpersons in the Divisions.

NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT will consist of a Manager (currently chairperson of Non-Rail Activities) and the staff members and committees needed to develop and implement non-rail activities at the division and regional levels and at PCR conventions.

PUGET SOUND EXPRESS 2004

The NMRA National Convention, Puget Sound eXpress (PSX 2004), will be held in Seattle, WA July 4 to July 11, 2004.

As with any model railroad convention, there will be lots of clinics.

With Seattle being relatively close to the PCR, it's a great chance to attend another NMRA National

Convention. If you are planning to attend and would like to share your modeling knowledge, experience and/or expertise, why not consider presenting a clinic? The PCR, as most modelers know, has many members that can meet the above criteria. If you would like to consider doing a clinic at PSX 2004, let me know. Several of you already have, but I'm looking for several more. Contact me by e-mail at insidechair@nmra2004.org. Thanks.

Ed Liesse

Inside Activities Chair, PSX 2004



HOn2 in the Desert

By Siles Bazerman

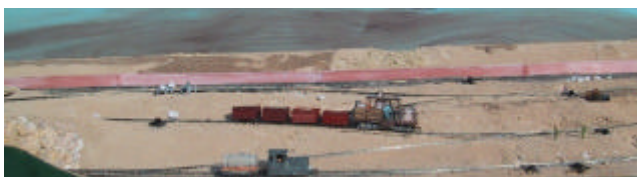
Back in January 1961, Bruce Bowden wrote an article in *Railroad Model Craftsman* titled "HOn2, does it run?". This caught my eye and I took up the challenge. This was not my first exposure to HOn2. In my pre model railroading days, I read a two-part article by John Mulholland in *The Model Craftsman* (also pre *Railroad*) for April and May 1944 in which he described an HOn2 train he scratch built.

My first attempts were with Lone Star Treble-O-Letric brand Hi-Fi rubber band drive F7 diesel locomotives and cars. Newberry and Woolworth sold them. The locos narrowed successfully as the drives were almost identical to the Athearn Hi-Fi drives and the side frames were along only for looks. Track was brass code 100 hand laid, as I could not obtain code 70 at an affordable price. Cars were scratch built and ran on reworked HOn3 Kemtron trucks.

Running qualities left much to be desired. First, as with the Athearn Hustler, top speed was over 200 mph. Second, the locos were top heavy and had a high roll center. This made them prone to rolling over at the least track fault. They did not look right on the code 100 rail either.

I had already fallen under the spell of Dick Andrews, Joseph Wilhelm, Larry Gelbert, and "Uncle Eric" (Eric LaNall, a.k.a. Allan Lake Rice), and was working in HOn3. I continued with on again off again efforts with HOn2 but never really overcame the roll over problems. I also worked in On2 using plans from Andrews, Frary and Hayden. However when Dave Gast, in early 1964, wrote about On30 I switched to HOn30. I dropped HOn2 for a while, but still developed sketches for locos, not really completing much but starting many unsuccessful projects.

Recent developments spurred me on to build an HOn2 module that was shown in Salt Lake City at the



21st National Narrow Gauge Convention. This was part of the Left Coast HOn30 module group (Elsie). I will present these efforts in three parts: first, the module; second, a one evening conversion to HOn2; and third, a seven-ton Plymouth locomotive. One thing that spurred me on was the Plymouth Gasoline Locomotives reprint by M2FQ Publications and its picture of the 2-foot Pacific Coast Borax Company Railroad in Death Valley. This picture cried out to be modeled.

The Module

Since the distances traveled to and from meets are large, the nearest HOn30 module is located 110 miles from my home, and several are in the 400-mile range, I decided to try a lightweight module. In addition, I determined that I would be bringing two modules to Salt Lake City (700 miles each way), and that the new one would ride above the old



module in the back seat of a car. I decided on stressed skin construction as used in the modular housing industry. Its sturdiness was proven by both the trip and by continuous operation during the entire convention. The only problem encountered was that a switch point became unsoldered from the PC tie during transport.

The module is constructed on a framework made of a sandwich of three quarter inch blue foam center with one eighth inch Luan door skin outsides. They are glued together with a Latex cement made for foam-backed shower and tub surrounds. The Luan on the inside part of the frame is cut back so that all joints are foam to foam. The top is a layer of three-quarter inch foam with the underside reinforced with the Luan. I then built up the area with pieces of three quarter inch, one inch and inch and one half foam as needed. It was shaped with a hot wire cutter and files to obtain the grades and elevations needed.

The track work is hand laid code 55 rail on PC and

(Continued on page 40)

HOn2 in the Desert

Micro Engineering wood “N” scale ties. There are nine switches. The “Narrow Gauge Machinist” Jeff Bissonnette, Kingfield Car and Foundry, (see his ads in LID) constructed five. I built four switches including a dual gauge HOn2/HOn30 switch with the 2-foot going through both legs and the 30-inch going only through the straight leg. Jeff’s switches both look beautiful and run excellently. Mine run good but are not as good-looking as his are. Jeff also provided both HOn2 and dual gauge HOn2/HOn30 track gauges in both Bakelite and aluminum. The scene was inspired by photos of the approach to the Widow Mine in Death Valley on the “Baby Gauge” railroad as shown on pages 618 and 619 in David Myrick’s book *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California, Volume 2*.

The design has an oval of track with ten-inch radius and is two thirds hidden around the perimeter. At the front is a very short passing track with tight clearance, and four levels of switchbacks up a 6 percent grade reaching a future mine site at the front left. Another switch takes the track to the dual gauge main line at the standard six and seven eighths inches from the backdrop. See the attached photos to understand the description. The module is wired for DCC. I use Radio Shack SPDT lever action micro switches actuated by the same Caboose Hobbies “N” sprung ground throws that control the points to switch frog polarity.

The Conversion

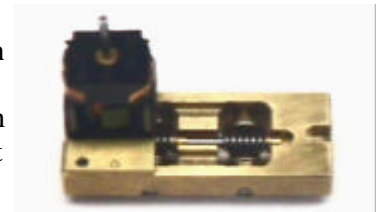
One of the best running locomotives for use in HOn30 has been the LifeLike SW 9/1200. It has been the basis for all type of engines from Diesel to Doodlebug to geared engines. Thanks to tips from Jeff Bissonnette and Darryl Sleszynski, I was able to convert my HOn30 Class A Climax to HOn2 in less than an evening. Since the power pickup is through the axle ends and brass wipers on the truck frame, this conversion is easy. Only commonly available hand tools are needed.

- Tools needed:
- Jeweler’s files
- Gear Puller
- Vernier Calipers
- Xacto Knife
- Razor Saw

The first step is to remove the power trucks from the locomotive and disassemble them. I would advise removing all the pins and gears as you would be filing on the truck frames. Put the parts in a safe place. The

wheel, gear, and axle assembly is the first thing to be worked on. The assembly consists of two wheel/axle units in a plastic central axle/gear molding. Pull the wheels off carefully so as not to elongate the hole. Remove 1 millimeter or 0.039 inches from each side. I used a digital vernier caliper to scribe a mark on the plastic and then rotated the unit by hand and scored it with my knife. I then finished the cut with a razor saw. I pressed the brass stub axle outward on each wheel with a NWSL gear puller, again 1 mm. I used the pin end of the calipers to measure this. Reassemble the unit and measure the back-to-back wheel spacing. It should be 0.230 inches. Do this for all four axles.

The next step is to narrow the inside edges of both parts of the Delrin truck frame. Work slowly and remove an equal amount from both sides. The important thing is for the wheel sets to clear and rotate easily. The dimension should be about 0.228 inches. Reassemble the truck with all the pins and gears and the pickup wipers. Test roll the truck. It should roll easily, although with the gearing in place they will not coast. After both trucks are done, remount them on the chassis, apply low voltage power to the locomotive, and make sure there are no binds. If everything looks OK then place it on the track and test run. You now have a working HOn2 chassis. Add a superstructure to suit your taste or prototype and have fun.



The Plymouth

This locomotive was the inspiration for the whole project. Remember the picture I referred to at the beginning? After much Email correspondence with Jeff Bissonnette, it was determined that a 3-ton Plymouth, as pictured, was impractical. We decided on the dimensions that closely matched the 7-ton model. Jeff produced an exquisite work of the machinist’s art. It is a solid brass chassis with double worm reduction and powered by a Mashima 916 motor. On DCC, it has a top speed of about 5 mph. I never measured the low end, as I did not have the patience. It took two minutes to go its own length, which is 2.25 inches.

I produced masters for one side and one end of the frame in styrene based on the Grandt Line On3 FL Plymouth. I also made masters of the sides and ends of

MEMBER AID

What Does It Mean For Me?

By Rod Smith – PCR Member Aid Chair

Hi There – I'd like to introduce you to the recently reactivated Member Aid function within the Pacific Coast Region. First though, I should introduce myself. My name is Rod Smith, and I am a member of the Coast Division. I joined NMRA and PCR in 1956, so I guess I am a dinosaur, but my long membership has allowed me to meet an awful lot of fine modelers, and I can't think of anything I've done in model railroading which has given me more pleasure. Most of my close friends are people I've met through this hobby, and I treasure their tolerance of me.

The Member Aid program is a benefit to which each member is entitled. You can seek answers to your questions about this great hobby. You can also volunteer, and become a resource to others. Many years ago Paul Shimada, a legend in the PCR, headed up this committee. He was always promoting the hobby of model railroading, and encouraging modelers to become active in the organization. After he passed away, the Member Aid committee faded out a bit, but the interest of members in helping others continues to this day. That's what Member Aid is all about – helping others. You can avail yourself of the services of this committee by e-mail or snail mail. If you use snail mail, a self addressed stamped envelope is appreciated, since there is no budget for incidentals. My addresses are at the end of this article.

Member Aid comes through the efforts of volunteers so it may take a while to answer your questions. We may have to do some research, or locate an appropriate volunteer to handle it.

My first bit of Member Aid to you is about how to get the most out of your membership in the Pacific Coast Region. Get Involved with your Division! Attend its meetings and activities. Go to the clinics which are held, even though you may think the subject matter is not your current interest. But, and it's a big

but, don't just attend and take a seat in the back, listen, and go home. You have to get involved and meet the folks.

Now, I know it's our responsibility to make you feel welcome and draw you into the group. But, have you ever attended a new church, or gone to a service organization lunch meeting? Remember how the folks there gathered in their groups of folks they knew, and didn't seem to recognize the new guy? Well, model railroading can be similar to those groups.

Most of us are somewhat shy, and aren't the best ambassadors for the hobby. It's not that we want to exclude you. We'd be happy to make a new friend who shares our hobby. Perhaps

we don't recognize you as new. Most Divisions don't make first timers wear a special badge or some such other way of conveying that status.

But, if we don't invite you into our conversations, it's not because we want to exclude you. Join right in. Tell us your name, and what your interests are. No doubt someone at the meeting shares your interest, and we can introduce you. The Coast Division, for instance, has a modeler's roundtable at each meet where anyone can bring up a topic for discussion. Why not ask, "I'm new here, and does anyone know where I can learn about the (insert a subject)?" I think you'll find model railroaders are the friendliest and most helpful people there are. Give it a try, you'll like it.

Now, if you have a question and I can be of service, please contact me at:

Rod Smith
40330 Monte Ct.
Fremont, CA 94538-2832
Or, Railgeez@aol.com

My long membership has allowed me to meet an awful lot of fine modelers, and I can't think of anything I've done in model railroading which has given me more pleasure.

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM/ EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

By John Edginton

The Museum is closed for its winter restoration and will reopen to the public on the first weekend in April 2003 and continue through the end of December 2003. The Museum will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 5 PM. However, model train operations this year are scheduled only for Sundays and Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day. Saturdays the Museum will be open for visitation and trains may or may not be running on the layouts and members may be working on the layouts.

Model railroaders are welcome to visit on Wednesdays from 12-5 PM and Friday evenings from 7:30-10 PM. No fees are collected except on Sundays and the indicated holidays. Operating on our spacious layouts is a thrill rarely duplicated anywhere else. We also welcome volunteers to assist with functions, such as providing education in railroad history.

Changes in the layouts include scenery in all Scales and trackwork in O Scale. They have made major progress on their layout again and even the trolley section is being upgraded. Several of their locomotives are sound equipped. N Scale has started prototype operating sessions and have made real progress in their yard scenery at the front of their layout. HO is near completion on the Yolo Causeway and Sacramento River sections of the layout and further progress has been made on the mountain scenery. The route from Roseville to Donner should be in full operation this year.

Nearby attractions include picnics and hiking in the park, the RED OAK VICTORY, the ATSF Ferry Pier restoration just down the road, and the Rosie the Riveter Memorial and National Park.

We continue to receive donations of equipment, models, prototype artifacts and library materials. As a tax exempt organization, all donations to the Museum ordinarily are tax deductible. Donated equipment is either used in our Museum operations or auctioned off sold with the funds benefiting the Museum.

The Museum is located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point Richmond, CA. Admission on Sundays is: Adults \$3; Seniors and Children under 12 \$2, with a family maximum of \$7. For information, a map and to see photos view our website at, www.gsmrm.org. Telephone: (510) 234-4884; or, (510) 758-6228 (to 8 PM). Museum Memberships offering unlimited annual admission are \$20.00 (individual); \$35.00 (family). For other information or to schedule special shows, email John Edginton, Public Relations Director, at jedginton@edg-law.com, or Jim Ambrose, EBMES President, at JMAM@chevrontexaco.com or use the communication section of the website.



Convention Registration:

The Tri-Valley Zephyr Registration desk will open promptly at 12 Noon, on Wednesday, April 23, 2003.

Convention Banquet:

Convention attendees planning to sign up for the Banquet must do so BEFORE April 23, 2003 in order to be assured of a meal choice. Those signing up AFTER that date may not get the meal of their choice!

Contest entry times. They are noon to 5:00 pm on Thursday and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Friday. We will also accept entries from 8:00 to 8:30 am on Saturday CONDITIONAL on the entry paperwork being completed prior to the time the model is delivered. Judging will not be delayed waiting on someone to complete their paperwork on Saturday morning.

Scouts & Model Railroading

By Terry N. Taylor

We all have seen the articles talking about the "graying" of our hobby and the need to increase the number of younger modelers. Some young people appear at prototype modeler, NMRA and region meets, but they are not all that numerous. There have always been people who return to the hobby after they are married and settled down; but to return they need to be exposed when young. To keep an influx of future modelers, we need to make sure that they have 'fun' with model railroading when young.

You may have seen "700 Boy Scouts Earn a Merit Badge for Railroading in Iowa" (June 2002 AAR "RailFanClub Newsletter,") that has been emailed around. At the May 2002 Boy Scout Railroad Camporee held at the Boone County Iowa Fairgrounds, seven Railroad Merit Badge 'learning' stations were set up to help the scouts fulfill their requirements and introduce them to our hobby.



Scouts by the SCSME testing track with a display of various scales and gauges.

Our model railroad club in San Luis Obispo is similar to most model railroad clubs: a couple of teenagers, a good sprinkling of young to middle age males, and a vast majority of us who are either retired or soon to be. Sometimes we have female modelers but not always. Lets face it, we are not getting any younger and fresh blood is always nice when it comes time to set up modules or do other physical activities. We liked the idea of attracting younger modelers and debated various ways.

Brewster Bird, our PCR Daylight Division

Director and the father of two active teenage boys, is an avid scouter in Visalia. He went to the Boy Scouts of American 2001 National Jamboree and participated in their Railroading Merit Badge program. We invited he, his wife Sally, and their two sons to come to our summer BBQ meeting and tell us about the program.

He brought material on the requirements and the seven stations. We looked them over, talked with our local scout representatives, and decided to give it a try at our next train show in October 2002. We did make one major change. While we would sponsor the Scout program, we would open it up to all interested participants of either gender and of any age.

Steve Francis, our club Vice President and also connected to the scouting program, contacted all local scout troops to make sure that the proper paperwork was filled out and that each scout troop got feedback. Tom Turner, Railroading Merit Badge Counselor for over 25 years and South Coast District Advancement Chairman, volunteered to come up and help us put on the program. Bruce Morden and his son Michael, who has already earned one of the merit badges, also came up from the south to help us. Terry Masters of the Union Pacific RR set up the Operation Life Saver table that handled some of the merit badge requirements. All in all, twelve volunteers shared with young the people our experiences about railroading, safety and hazards.



Brewster explaining signaling to the scouts

In addition to the expected Boy Scouts, we had some Cub Scouts and even two Brownies who finished the program.

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(Continued from page 43)

Scouts

Each participant received a railroading pamphlet that covered the merit badge requirements and organized the seven stations. It had a signature page showing that the scout had completed the merit badge requirements. Steve, working from the last page of the booklet and the scout's individual blue card, forwarded filled out and signed paperwork to scoutmasters.

Our seven stations were: #1 Introduction to Railroads (scale / gauge & a RR operating video); #2 Rail Safety - Operation Life Saver; #3 Railroad terminology, differences in types of locomotion, braking systems and explanation of diesel/electric power & electronic rear end of train devices; #4 Careers available in railroading, rail car identification, train types & RR departments; #5 Amtrak/passenger schedules and timetable reading and comprehension; #6 Trackage Signals and Whistle Signals; and #7 Layout Planning. We also set up our club's time saver layout for the young ones to have fun with .

A full report of the event was presented in the November 2002 issue of SLO Trains which is available at <http://www.trainweb.org/slomrc/newsletters.html> .

Feedback was so immediate and positive both at the show and afterwards from both the participants and members of the scouting program that we will continue the program this year at our 14th Annual Train Show October 3-5 in San Luis Obispo.

Tom Turner then went back to his home club; the South Coast Society of Model Engineers (SCSME)



Tom explaining how to design a layout to the scouts using a tub lid.

and convinced them that they should also support the Merit Badge program at their annual open house. Expecting about 25 to 35 scouts and their families and leaders, they were surprised when 90 boy scouts plus families and leaders showed up. Instead of sending the youths to stations in groups of 3 to 5 as we had, they had to setup larger groups and rotate them thru the stations. Given that we were already doing a train show or workshop, our only costs were the printing of the pamphlet and the time of each station agent .

I believe that programs of this nature (whether only offered to scouts or open to all interested youths of either gender) will introduce them to our very rewarding hobby and provide the basics for getting involved now or later in their lives.

As a side note, if you would like to be notified when our club newsletter is available for downloading from our web site: Just send me (terryntaylor@charter.net) your name & email address and I will add you to one of our notification lists.

(Continued from page 30)

Made in the PCR

concentrating the paint on metal surfaces and in the corners and crevices and leaving some foundation showing in areas that would get heavy wear. Once this had dried I lettered the cars with a mix of "O" and "HO" Private Road Name decals from Champ. After three applications of Solvaset, I applied another coat of light India Ink stain to blend the earlier work. Finally, I finished the weathering with Bragdon Weathering Powders and a coat of Dullcoat. I glazed the caboose windows after this was all done and attached the caboose roofs and cupola as a last step.

These cars retail for between \$23 and \$30, depending on the complexity of the car and are produced by International Hobbies, 10556 Combie Rd., Suite 6327, Auburn, CA 95602, tel. (530) 268-8715 or fax (530) 268-3847. Life is great and so far On30 modeling is a blast. These cars really are fun. You should give it a try!

(Continued from page 40)

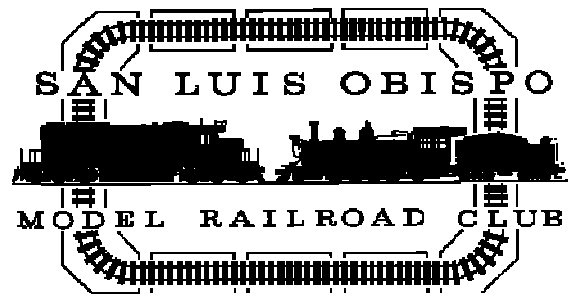
HOn2 in the Desert

the cab. These were then used to produce R.T.V. molds and then cast in resin. The hood is part of a LifeLike SW9 hood with some old brass carburetor filter screen for the radiator. Other details were added; exhaust muffler, bell, etc. I also made wipers for the little loco to enhance the wheel pickup. This little jewel of machine work runs around the oval at a realistic speed pulling one or two Koppel ore cars loaded with real silver ore obtained at a gift shop in the Black Hills on a past vacation. The "Baby Gauge" road was the only one in the United States to actually use Koppel dump cars for ore haulage.

Due to its light weight, the Plymouth has a problem with my 6% grades and slips a lot with even a one-car train. I am investigating how to cast Templo or Cerro metals in an R.T.V. mold. This, in addition to the weight in the hood, would give sufficient weight to handle loads on those grades. I have omitted lights as there just isn't room in the cab for the extra wires required for reversing headlights using the DCC functions.

Now that I have created interest in Hon2, the question of where to buy supplies arises. Code 55 rail is available from Micro Engineering; if your local hobby shop does not carry it, B and F Hobbies (www.bfnhobby.net) does. Just tell "Big Al" I sent you. Tie material is available from Clover House. You will have to contact Russ Clover by Snail Mail, as he does not have Email or a web site. He also will not sell to hobby shops, only sells direct. Track gauges can be gotten from Jeff Bissonnette, as can wheel sets. He also produces mechanisms in both Hon2 and Hon30 for almost any steam engine on the SRRL. He also builds some that will fit as the drive for gasoline critters. Turnouts can be scratch built or Railway Engineering, or BK turnouts can be narrowed from Hon30. These are the easiest to work with as they have solid rail points instead of pivoting points as do most "N" scale turnouts. Jeff might be persuaded to produce #8 turnouts, but do not tell him I said so. NWSL makes wheel set replacements for both the MT trucks and the Grandt Line ones. You can narrow them with the NWSL presses, or get them already narrowed from Jeff. Of course, since this is HO scale, all buildings, people and scenery items will work.

Happy modeling, and if you do construct any Hon2 send pictures.



The San Luis Obispo Model RR Club (all scales) recently had its February Run with 31 HO modules set up in Free-mo fashion in the basement of the Vets Hall in San Luis Obispo. 10 members and guests were there for setup on Friday 7 February with the modules being setup in a new pattern. While most of the weekend was spent using tethered DCC throttles, Sunday we hooked up a radio receiver and went wireless. Nice.

Of special note was watching and listening to three sound equipped locomotives (a 4-6-6-4 Challenger, a 2-8-8-2 Class Y6 and a 4-8-8-4 Big Boy) pulling 86 freight cars and a caboos from the yard out over the layout and back via the loop. To hear those three engines drift in and out of synchronization as they moved from a very slow snail pace in the yard throat to a faster speed on the main line was a delight. Even watching (and listening to) the yard switch diesel help make up and break the train down between runs while the three steamers were moving around the yard was very nice and all appreciated how much sound adds to the enjoyment of operating our equipment. We had several occasions where three different trains would jockey by each other en route. Higher Priority Train overtaking a lower priority train at a siding while meeting a train passing in the other direction. Whistles added a lot to the fun.

Our next run is scheduled for the weekend of April 18-22 at the Vet's Hall. Visitors are always welcome. Further down the track, we (SLOMRC) will hold our 14th Annual Train Show in the San Luis Obispo Vets Hall on the weekend of October 3-5. Please contact either Dave Wilding at (805) 543-1651 DTCBATS2@aol.com or Jim Jonte at (805) 544-6333 jimjonte@charter.net for more details. You can also find out more about our club at our club web site at <http://www.trainweb.org/slomrc> or read some our newsletters at <http://www.trainweb.org/slomrc/newsletters.html>.

Nn3 LAYOUT AT PCR-NMRA CONVENTION

This April, members of the international Nn3 Alliance will again be sharing their Nn3 modular layout at the PCR convention. The layout represents portions of the Carson & Colorado and the Southern Pacific narrow gauge running through typical desert scenery, and a short stretch of the Casper Lumber Company Railroad running through coastal forests. This layout is based on single-track 12" wide modules – most built using “ultra-light” techniques. (In fact, two of these modules were taken to the 2003 National Narrow Gauge Convention in Warwick, Rhode Island, as carry-on baggage on commercial flights!) The modules include both hand-laid and commercial flex track, and hand-laid and commercial turnouts. A variety of motive power will be operated, from Shays to a visiting K-28, some with DCC, and one with on-board sound. As always, “junior engineers” attending the show will be encouraged to take the throttle and help run the trains.

You can find out more about Nn3 at www.Nn3.org



CONTEST REPORT

By Ken Lunders, PCR Contest Chair

You all know about the Tri-Valley Zephyr, PCR Convention this April. Bring your models, modules & photos! The contests are about more than winning a plaque or ribbon: You don't need to compete in the contest if you don't want to. One option open to you is that you may display your items for others to see and appreciate. This is usually a lot easier than dragging your buddies over to your hotel room for a look at your latest creation. It might even raise interest in what you are doing from someone you never before met. If all you are after is to have your model AP judged you can have that too.

Judging will take place on Saturday, April 26th at 9:00 A.M. No entries can be accepted once judging begins. As always, if you are interested in judging please let me know. This is an opportunity to learn and also to earn credits towards your AP certificate as a Volunteer.

All entry forms, cover sheets, judging guidelines, and more are available on-line. Visit <http://www.intercad-inc.com/rr/PCR/> and get your forms now. Remember, it is ALWAYS better to have your paperwork prepared in advance. I will also be happy to mail you any forms you might need if you send a legal sized SASE to my address shown in the Callboard. There will also be forms available in the contest room during the convention.

Model contest judging will be open this year. What this means is that convention attendees are welcome to watch the judging as it takes place. Please be considerate of the judges: There is usually a lot to do, and not nearly enough time to talk with everyone about their entry.

Good luck to everyone! Be seeing you there.



The modules in Santa Rosa.

Redwood Empire Division Report

by Steve Skold & Ron Plies

RED's winter meeting at Napa on February 9th was the best attended in recent memory. It was hosted by the Napa Model Railroad Club which operates the Napa Valley Northern Railroad which is an extensive HO model. Several RED members took advantage of the invitation to run their equipment on the layout. Ralph Jachens narrated the story of two incidents, one in 1959 and another in 1983 involving diesel engines running into the Napa River through an open drawbridge. John Rogers ran a color film taken in 1983 of the SP pulling one of the engines out of the water and onto a barge.

Ed Zakareckis opened nominations from the floor for the positions of Superintendent and Chief Clerk. Steve Skold was nominated for Chief Clerk and Pat Boyle and Nolan Alexander were nominated for Superintendent. The election will be by mail ballot. The ballots will be mailed out in the next Call Board.

Pat Boyle did an excellent job of getting door prizes. These were won by: Gus Campagna, David Grundman, Ron Plies, Glenn Jensen, Don Cabrall, Hart Corbett, Pat Boyle, and Tom Butler. The special door prize of a year's subscription to the model railroading magazine of choice went to Mark Granados who chose a subscription to Model Railroading.

There were 14 displays of flat cars with loads which featured John Rogers' flatcar with steel pipe load which may become the convention car for the 2004 convention in Napa and Hart Corbett's Westside Lumber Company flatcar with a Dolbeer Donkey as a load.

The next RED meeting will be held on May 10th at the Vallejo Model Railroad club. This is to avoid holding the meeting on Mother's Day Sunday. See the next Call Board for details at <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/>.

Big doings on the north coast of California up in the Redwood country at the RED picnic hosted by the Eel River Valley Model Railroaders of Ferndale Aug 1-3. We will meet at the Best Western Inn in Fortuna on Friday night Aug. 1, 2003 for an evening

of slides, films, videos and fellowship beginning at 7:30 PM.

On Sat. the 2nd, we will have a full day of layout tours ending with a banquet and special program that will interest all at the Victorian Village Inn in Ferndale. On Sunday morning we will be meeting for breakfast at the old Samoa Cookhouse, an old cookhouse for the loggers and lumber mill workers. The rest of the day will be spent visiting different layouts and logging exhibits.

We have a block of rooms at the Best Western Country Inn in Fortuna, CA (reservations 1-800-679-7511 or 1-707-725-6822.e-mail address bestwestern@northcoast.com. web page at www.bwcountryinnfortuna.com. \$75.00 per night for a non-smoking king or 2 queen beds.) The motel sits on the Eel River and affords a beautiful view of the countryside. They will hold this block of rooms until July 4. If you wish to take advantage of this offer be sure to tell them you are with the Redwood Empire Division of the model railroad association. This is a very popular inn and these rates are a lot lower than their normal rates for the middle of summer. The banquet will be around \$25.00 ea and breakfast at the Samoa Cookhouse will be \$8.75. Please make reservations for the banquet and the breakfast by phone with Ron Plies at 1-707-725-5411 or by e-mail rplies@cox.net.

This area is the beautiful Redwood country of Northern California, vacation get away of choice for many Californians and people from all over the world. Not only do we have the Redwoods, but also miles of unspoiled beaches and open country. If you travel just north of here you will find the beautiful Oregon Coast with its many attractions. So plan to come up and be a part of this year's RED picnic even if you are not a member of the RED. Plan to stay for a while and visit our beautiful area. If you stay until the following week you could even help us run the Eel River Valley model railroad layout during the Humboldt Co. Fair Aug. 7-17, we can always use the help. Please visit our web-page at www.eelrivervalleyrr.org.

Club Info

BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

COASTAL VALLEY LINES

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

EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

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

ELSIE

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

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM/ EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

Located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point

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

HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

MOTHER LODGE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

NITTY GRITTY NARROW GAUGERS

The Nitty Gritty Narrow Gaugers is a round robin group of On3 modelers that meets bi-weekly in members'

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homes in or near the Santa Clara Valley. Individual members construct modules following basic guidelines. We display our modular railroad twice a year. There are no officers, no dues and no bylaws. Contact Fred Verrier, 889 Brookgrove Ln., Cupertino, CA 95014(408) 253-9669

SACRAMENTO MODEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Avenue, Sacramento, CA and can be reached at 916-927-3618 or email to dmegeath@aol.com; web site <http://www.smrhs.com> Modeled as the Sierra Central Railroad, both HO and HO3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Wednesday and Friday nights, 7:30 pm.

SACRAMENTO MODULAR RAILROADERS

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

SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

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

SILICON VALLEY LINES

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

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Tri-Cities Club meets in the restored Niles Depot at 36997 Mission Blvd., Fremont. The club has both N and HO scale layouts. Work nights are Friday, the business meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month and operating session are on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. For more information contact Stanley Keiser at (510) 791-1504. The Tri-City Society of Model Engineers (TCSME) will be holding a Railroad Swap Meet at the Niles Depot on Mission Blvd in Fremont on June 1 from 10 until 5. Anyone wanting to obtain a table please contact Nick Frischhertz at (408) 263-4210 nffjr@aol.com. Their website is <http://nilesdepot.railfan.net/>.

VALLEJO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Vallejo Model Railroad Club, founded in 1976, takes its theme from the environs of the greater Vallejo and Solano County region, with diversions into mountains, logging, and mining. The Club is home to the two thousand (2000) square foot HO-scale layout Vallejo and Solano Western Railroad and a smaller N-scale layout. The club currently meets every Wednesday and Friday evening (with exceptions for Holidays). Doors open by 7:00 PM. It is located in the Civic Building, Solano County Fairgrounds, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, off Interstate 80 at Highway 37, in Vallejo, California. Enter Sage Street, Gate #1; if stopped by the Gate Guard, state that you are 'visiting the Vallejo Model Railroad Club'. The Club welcomes all model railroad hobbyists and enjoys visits and tours, with prior arrangements. Contacts may be to PO Box 4057, Vallejo, California, 94590-0405. The Club's telephone, which has an answering machine, is 707-643-1809. E-mails may be to either loggingRR@aol.com or lambertp@aol.com.

WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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



Terry Taylor, timetables, and Scouts



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
PACIFIC COAST REGION**

11/02

LAST NAME: _____

FIRST NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIPCODE: _____

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

FAMILY MEMBER NAME(S): _____

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

PCR and NMRA for one year at \$51.00

PCR only (requires NMRA membership# above) at \$6.00

The Golden Spike Award

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

Qualifications for the Golden Spike Award

1. Rolling stock (Motive power and cars)

_____ Display six (6) units of rolling stock (Scratch built, craftsman, or detailed commercial kits).

2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures and Scenery)

_____ Construct a minimum eight (8) square feet of layout.

_____ Construct five (5) structures (Scratch built, craftsman or detailed commercial kits). If a module

_____ has less than five structures, additional ones separate from the scene may be used.

3. Engineering (Civil and Electrical)

_____ Three (3) types of trackage required (turnout, crossing, etc.). All must be properly ballasted and

Callboard

President Ray Deblieck 1304 Santa Clara Ave Alameda, CA 94501 (510) 521-9778 RaydBCS@aol.com	Trustee Ray Deblieck 1304 Santa Clara Ave Alameda, CA 94501 (510) 521-9778 RaydBCS@aol.com	Vice President L. E. "Gene" Mayer 4349 Virgusell Circle Carmichael, CA 95608 (916) 486-0934 GeneFWRR@aol.com	Treasurer Larry Altbaum 40 Live Oak Lane Danville, CA 94506 (925) 736-8160 emerbaum@msn.com	Secretary Richard L. Kolm 3535 Arcadian Way Castro Valley, CA 94546 (510) 538-8973 IronHorseK@aol.com
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Calendar

March 1, 2003: Sierra Division Banquet in Roseville.
Contact Dick Witzens

March 2, 2003: Coast Div. Meet at Buchser Middle
School, Santa Clara.

April 11-12, 2003: Western Pacific Convention in
Oakland at the Holiday Inn. Go to <http://www.wprrhs.org/index.html> for details.

April 12-13, 2003: Apple Blossom Festival Train
Show Sebastopol.

April 23-27, 2003: Tri-Valley Zephyr, PCR annual
Convention, Pleasanton.

May 11, 2003: Redwood Empire Division Meet in
Vallejo. Annual meeting and SWAP meet.

May 17-18, 2003: GATS San Rafael Civic Center

June 1, 2003: 10:00-5:00 Tri-Cities Model RR club
railroad swap meet, Niles Depot, Fremont.

July 9-13, 2003: 19th Annual Garden Railway
Convention, Sacramento website: www.svgrrs.org

July 13-19, 2003: NMRA National in Toronto.

July 22-27, 2003: Union Pacific Historical Society
Meet in San Pedro CA <http://www.uphs.org/convention.htm>

August 1-3, 2003: RED Summer Picnic meet in
Fortuna CA.

August 16-17, 2003: GATS Santa Rosa at the
Sonoma Co Fairgrounds

December 27-28, 2003: GATS San Rafael Civic
Center

If you have any more listings send them to
whk58@pacbell.net