

BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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President's Message

By Ron Plies

Friends

There are some things in life that we take too much for granted. My wife and I moved to the northern part of California, up behind the Redwood Curtain, some 38 years ago. When we first arrived we would just sit and be in awe of God's handiwork, staring at trees that reach over 365' high.

Traveling up and down the Redwood Highway was a joyous experience taking in all the beauty of the north coast of California. I still enjoy the area, but now it means how much time will it take to get to the Bay Area. Rather than be in awe of the beauty of the trees and the countryside I have come to the point of taking this all for granted.

Too often I have done the same thing with my friends. One of the things that has endeared the PCR to me has been the friends that I have made. As we see them at the different meetings I assume they will always be there so I don't think to thank them for just being a friend. The theme song, "Thank You for Being a Friend", from the TV show "The Golden Girls", was played each year at an insurance convention I attended. Photos were projected of all the different personnel of the company, which gave us an opportunity to applaud our fellow agents. It was just a small recognition but was always appreciated by those who received it.

In the last few months the need to recognize my friends took on new meaning as a good friend of mine, Mr. Frank Beavers, passed away in June on his seventieth birthday after a long battle with cancer. I met Frank at a model railroad club here in Eureka in 1972 and we had been friends from that

time on. He was an innovator when it came to kit bashing and got me started on doing a number of models using his ideas. We would travel to places along the SP or WP mainline and sit in his motor home building models while waiting for a train to come by so we could take photos. I learned a great deal from Frank and his ideas.

If you have read my column for any time you have heard me talk about my good friend Frank.



El jefe del norte

There are some things
in life that we take too
much for granted.

Whenever I missed a PCR convention he would always say, "Ron you sure did miss a good one!" Frank was one of the main reasons I ran for the PCR Board. I had some ideas of how I wanted to see things

done in the PCR. His advice was, "Don't just sit there, get in and make a difference." He was a good friend to the PCR, the Western Pacific Historical Society and the museum at Portola and I'm sure a number of you in the PCR.

Other friends of the PCR that have left us in the last few months are Charlie Piggott and Jim Martin. Charlie and his wife Babbette were fixtures at all the PCR conventions. I first met Charlie at the Ukiah convention in 1999 and was very impressed with the trees he made under the label of Okey-Doky Oaks. He took one look at my modules and said I needed oak trees and started to place them on

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the modules. What a difference those trees made. I asked him to do a clinic at that convention and he did so very willingly, as he did throughout the years.

Jim Martin is another friend who has passed on. Jim was from the Daylight Division and had been one of the convention committee members this last year that helped to make Sierra Memories very successful. Besides being active in the PCR Jim was an avid rail historian and photographer whose contributions were published in the Southern Pacific Historical and Technical Society's S.P. "Trainline" magazine. Jim was one of those people you could always count on to be at the different meetings and help out if needed. I'm sure you'll join me in praying and supporting the families who have lost loved ones.

At the next Regional or Division meeting find a good friend and pat him or her on the back and tell them how much you appreciate them. As I've said before, one of the best things the PCR has going for it is the people and the friendships that are made. Don't take either for granted.

On another subject, but along the same lines, what a showing the PCR made at the NMRA national convention in Anaheim! Jim Long, current PCR member, Paul Hobbs and Dave Liesse former members of the PCR who are currently on temporary loan to other regions, were given the President's Award. The following is a list of those who entered and won awards in the contest at the National Convention: Joseph Aymar, Mark Schutzer, Robert Ray, Ronnie LaTorres, Pat La Torres, Andrew Merriam, Karen Kiefer, Mary Moore-Campagna, Stan Keiser and Bob Booth. We members have every right to be proud of the PCR and these fine folks. I don't believe this is an over statement when I say we have some of the best modelers in the nation right here in the PCR. Good job everyone! We look forward to see what you and many other modelers will bring to the next meetings. On a personal note, I received my MMR, number 409, so I guess that makes me, Mr. Clean.

Last item, I need to apologize to a couple of

folks. I missed naming the right people to the right offices. The Daylight Superintendent's position has been filled by Mr. Dave Grenier and not Mr. Doug Wagner, as he is the membership chair for the Region, another very important position. I trust you will forgive me for these unintentional mistakes.

Ron Plies MMR

PCR President.



Redwood Empire Summer Picnic at Rio Vista

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

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VIEW FROM THE LEFT SEAT

Pat LaTorres

I'm hoping to touch on two items in my column this quarter, though as always that may change by the time I get this sent off to Bill Kaufman. The first is related to some comments and concerns that I've heard of late, and the second will be a few comments on the NMRA National Convention which is just past. I'm sure that Ron will have even more to say on the latter of the two, what with the pretty plaque that he has just received so I'll be keeping my comments fairly brief.

The first subject came up when a friend of mine complained that, "I'm not getting anything from the NMRA and may just not renew next year". I thought about this comment for about thirty seconds and then lit into him in a rather major (yet polite!) way. While on one hand I could see and understand exactly what he was saying, on the other I was quite angry that he chose not to see the entire picture. I'll try to deal with his comment in the same two parts.

Yes, for a number of years, when looking at the national organization there hadn't seemed to be much reason to join the NMRA. Looking at things objectively, Scale Rails (The Bulletin) was a joke of a model railroad publication. From what I could see, the Bulletin from the 1970s and '80s was a better and more effective publication than what we were getting. This was a view that was shared by many in the hobby, both from inside and outside the NMRA.

Well, over the past year or two Scale Rails has matured into a much more effective and focused publication. There is a much greater amount of the content that is aimed at the membership of the organization and it seems to be spending much less effort trying to compete with Model Railroader, Railroad Model Craftsman and the other major magazines and spending a lot more effort in serving the needs of the membership.

It seemed to many (myself included) that the national side of the organization had really lost sight of the fact that it was there to serve the membership, not the other way around. Slowly (too



I have, with partial success, asked each of our regular contributors for a picture to accompany their column. This is our illustrious Veep.

- Bill

slowly to some) this attitude seems to be changing and still has a ways to go. There was a period in the mid 1980s well into the '90s when there seemed to be more interest on the part of those at national in building little fiefdoms and promoting individual realms of power, rather than promoting the hobby of model railroading.

Again, over the past eight years that seems to be changing. Does the NMRA still have work to do to improve the way it serves us, the members? Absolutely! But, the point is this is just one example of someone taking the time and refocusing the organization's energy back toward the

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membership. There are still a number of things that need to be addressed and all of us need to keep on the members of the Board of Directors to keep them aware of these concerns. Which will bring me to the second part of my friend's complaint.

He didn't feel that he was getting what he "needed" from the NMRA. I asked him point blank what he had done to contribute to the association in the last three years. When he gave me a stare, like I had started speaking Greek I knew that he'd walked into my trap.

I asked if he's volunteered to help on any of the Coast Division, or PCR committees, to which he replied, "no". I asked if he'd volunteered to give a clinic at any conventions, another "no". I asked him when was the last time he'd brought a model or a photograph to a Coast Division meet, even if just for Show-and-Tell, he answered, "never". At this point I could see the light going on, so I jumped ahead and pointed out the big flaw in his logic, that the NMRA is made up of US, the Membership!

The only paid staff working for the NMRA are some folks at the National Headquarters and those folks are working for that same "US, the Membership" that I just mentioned. Our National Board of Directors, the committee members and officers of the various regions and the divisions within those regions all get paid the same amount that Ron Plies and I receive from the NMRA every month – NADA! These folks can only give what they're asked to give. That is, they (and this again includes Ron and Pat) can only give our membership what we think they want. If our members are personally involved in the process, then it makes it that much easier for us to figure out what "that" is.

Most of us have a life, maybe a family (or at least a partner of some sort), a home to take care of, and in many cases a job with a boss that would really like it if we do whatever it is that we're getting paid for when we're at work (I know, a silly attitude!), so we have limits on the amount of time and effort that we can commit to our NMRA jobs. It becomes a lot easier for us to do whatever

it is that we do through and for the NMRA if we have help from a member or two when we do our jobs within the NMRA. When you volunteer to help on a committee within your division or region, then you've just lightened the load of everyone else on that committee.

This doesn't mean that you have to step up and become chairman of five, or even one committee, only that you help carry a small portion of the load for that committee chair. Over the past four years I've been involved to varying degrees with five convention committees and it scares me a bit that the same faces seemed to keep reappearing, even when the conventions weren't in the same geographic area. At some point some of these folks are going to get burned out and we just might lose them completely, or they may just be getting older and age will slow the best of us down. If you really want to get more out of the NMRA, by getting involved you'll be able to influence what gets placed on our table as members! Again, as I said, you don't need to become a committee chair. The sword carriers are just as important, possibly MORE important than the chair people, because they actually get things done.

This past April I managed to convince a newer member to get involved with the 2009 PCR Convention Committee by letting him know that I'll be around to provide help from my experience, but as PCR Vice President, so he won't be in the deep end without a life guard near-by. The thing that I remember from the first time I got involved is that no one wants you to sink, so they'll be there to help you when things look a bit rough. In the Coast Division, Bill Burket is pulling the plug after a whole bunch of years on their Auction Committee (he's been the chairman, since the passing of John Dennis) and there's now a search on for his replacement.

In both RED and Sierra Divisions there are convention committees getting started for future PCR conventions. There is yet another committee getting things started for the 2011 NMRA National Convention (tentatively in Sacramento). In every case there will be a need for people to step in and help put these programs together. As I mentioned

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earlier, every division as well as the PCR have various committees that need people to help make our programs run. So, if you think that the NMRA might not be giving you what you feel you're looking for, NOW is the time to step up and give us (as in "US the Membership") some input on what you think can improve our service to the membership. We'd love to hear your ideas, but we just might ask you to help.

On other matters, the 2008 NMRA National Convention is now history and a good time was had by all. The turnout was surprisingly small, especially compared to what I remember from my first national when there were 2400 people at San Jose in 2000. There were a few highlights for me this year. The first was being able to share in my wife's (Ronnie) first experience of a national convention.

There was just so much to do, it was almost a case of sensory overload. We made the layout tour to San Diego and took in the fabulous museum in Balboa Park, a first for both of us, as well as a number of home layouts in the area. We spent most of Wednesday on the LDSIG organized and self guided layout tour. This included a nice picnic at Travel Town, in Griffith Park, which was another first for Ronnie. On this tour we had Randy Homan from the Coast Division join us as a rider. Which brought up another plus of these conventions and the NMRA, the chance to meet new folks and make new friends from all over. On Thursday we took in another LDSIG tour, this time we had two Canadians join us as we ran up to the Santa Barbara area and with the added bonus of an operating session on one of Gary Seigle's TWO layouts (one an indoor HO and the other an outside garden layout). Again, this tour included a nice barbeque dinner – ANOTHER nice side to these conventions, good food with good friends!

There was also a wide range of clinics for both of us (not counting those that we missed while out on tours - remember what I've mentioned in the past about too many activities and not near enough time!). An added function of the convention for me, as your PCR Vice President was a number of meetings to attend regarding matters involving the

relationship between the PCR, other NMRA regions, and the national organization. It never hurts that many of these folks are also friends that I've met over the past number of years. Yes, those involved in running the other regions and those on the NMRA Board of Directors are no different than the members of our own BOD, they're just model railroaders that want to give some of their time to help the hobby. Do we all see this hobby in the same way? No! But, we all want to help the hobby grow and are willing to work together to make that happen.

Another high point was getting to share the enjoyment of Ron Plies getting presented his Master Model Railroader plaque. He's been working towards this MMR for what seems like far too long, it was such a pleasure to see his face when the award was presented to him. A job well done and an achievement well earned! This was not something that was handed to him, he had to earn it, which makes it that much more special. As an added bonus, I got to present him with a special congratulatory gift on behalf of the PCR and that made it even more worthwhile!

And as a final plus from the convention, it seems that somebody read my columns in past issues of the Branch Line, because PCR was well represented in the contest room – with both models and photographs. They also picked up a fair amount of hardware in the process. Congratulations to all of the PCR members that picked up awards and a special tip of the hat to my sweetheart. Ronnie picked up "Best Prototype Color Print" in her first ever national convention, showing no respect to her husband and the five photos that he had in that category.

Well, I've rambled on for far too long, so I'll wrap this up by asking you to consider these words the next time you feel like complaining about what you're not getting from the NMRA. The NMRA is kind of like a sewer, what you get out of it depends entirely on what you put into it. Until next time, keep modeling and keep having FUN!

Pat LaTorres

MADE IN THE PCR

Foothill Model Works On3/On30 Rolling stock

Review by Dave Connery

Foothill Model Works has been a stalwart for On3 modelers interested in logging railroad equipment for quite some time. A couple of years ago, owner Jerry Kitts acquired a line of On3 and On30 kits from Design-Tech (Doug Heitkamp). This acquisition greatly expanded Foothill's line and the new kits fit perfectly with Jerry's existing line and acknowledged skill in polyurethane casting. For this review I am using several On30 kits, although nearly the same kits are available in On3 as well. For the most part, Foothill's original line of kits are based on specific pieces of prototype equipment (NCNG, Swayne, West Side, Mich-Cal). The new kits are not railroad specific but are free-lanced versions of cars closely based on prototype designs and practices.

In the photo you will see two completed kits (lettered for our On30 Yosemite Short Line portable layout) and two uncompleted kits – so you can see the parts included in each kit. The completed kits are an 18' tank car (FMW-2308)

and an 18' Sand & Gravel Car (this has been replaced by a nearly identical 20' version FMW-2333). The uncompleted kits are for a 15' logging caboose (FMW 2310) and a WSLCo. 24' Equipment Flat (FMW-2203). All four kits are similar in construction, based on exquisite polyurethane castings with plastic details and brass wire and etched details. The kits come with MacLeod Western On30 trucks, NWSL wheel sets and Kadee #26 couplers. The kits have excellent and through instruction sheets with drawings, photos of in progress models, lists of included parts and step by step written directions.

I began construction by following the sheet from Foothill's web site on working with Polyurethane. In this case I washed and dried all parts (they explain about straightening warped parts and filling bubble holes but I have never had the need to do either of these things). Normally I use both thin and thick ACC for gluing all parts of the kit but 5 Min. Epoxy would work equally well



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for the cast parts. Everything goes together as described and shown, producing a solid and well designed finished model. The model really comes to life with painting and weathering. Again, Foothill has a very good page on their web site with painting suggestions. For my models I started out spray painting the tank and truck frames with Floquil Grimy Black and the rest of the cars with Floquil Foundation. Once dry, the wood parts were stained with an Alcohol and India Ink solution. The sides and ends were dry brushed with Red Oxide and the metal parts including the wheels and truss rods were painted in Rail Brown. The car was finished with Bragdon Weathering Powders, most particularly the rust colors at points where rust would build up.

I've seen some tremendous FMW cars from other modelers, most particularly Ron Kolodziejczak's models of the FMW Fire Car and Scott Maze's FMW Tank Car lettered for Flatulene. All the kits I have seen produce interesting and smooth running cars. The models reviewed here, and a long list of other models, are available from specialty hobby shops and direct from Foothill Model Works. The price for FMW-2203, FMW-2308 and FMW-2310 is \$42.00 and FMW-2333 is \$35.00. Foothill Model Works, PO Box 470, 1131 Maize Ct., Willits, CA 95490, (707) 459-5587 web <http://home.inreach.com/jkitts> and e-mail foothillmodelworks@comcast.net



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Bill Kaufman

John Sing is getting closer and closer. Every issue his column has had more and more pictures and fewer and fewer words. There are just forty-four words and fifteen pictures in this issue. Bill Schaumburg is always talking about a "content-free" clinic. Maybe John is trying for a words-free photo essay. The pictures of the Anaheim convention are beautiful. He has labeled them well. I guess it makes up for how "wordy" the rest of us are.

There are a number of articles on first or second times of various things. Pat LaTorres gives us his take on the first time clinician. And both Clifton Linton and Jon Schmidt talk about building layouts. John's layout is his first in forty years. Mike Oberg sends his impressions of his first Coast division layout tours (It's the first of them for a long while)

Dave Connery contributed his usual sterling reviews, one on a pamphlet about Tehachapi train watching and another on On30 rolling stock.

Jim Providenza's on-going column on the perils of model railroading and Seth Neuman's on the SIG's are here. I swear that I have the finest crop of contributors of any regional newsletter. Thanks to them all that this works.

It's no secret that I love conventions. I had a great time in Fresno and in Anaheim. This issue is full of pictures and information from those two. There is information elsewhere in Branch Line about the 2009 convention in the East Bay. Looking forward, the 2010 PCR convention is in Reno and the Chairman is Raymond Rich. The "TENTATIVE (but pretty firm)" dates are April 27 - May 1, 2010.

2011 is a mini-convention May 13 - 15 probably in Santa Rosa and Steve Skold is the chairman. The National will be in Sacramento that summer. More to come on that.

Bill Kaufman

WRITTEN IN THE PCR

Tehachapi, Tehachapi Loop and Railroading Information

Written by Linda Gordon

Reviewed by Dave Connery

Thanks to PCR Vice-president Pat LaTorres for bringing this great little pamphlet to my attention. Author Linda Gordon is the owner of Trains, Etc. a hobby shop located in the town of Tehachapi. She often has customers come into the store and ask about the loop and rail-fanning. To meet this need she has produced this neat book which is primarily a compilation of information from other sources. In September of 2006 I spent parts of two days watching trains passing through the Tehachapi area – I really wish I knew about this book

before that trip as it is a great single source of answers to most of the questions you may have when you visit. While I have read John Signor's wonderful book "Southern Pacific-Santa Fe Tehachapi" it is really not designed to be used as a travel guide to the area – the book being reviewed here is designed for exactly that and it does it well.

The book starts out with some general information about the loop and the sources for the information contained in the book. Then there is a turn-by-turn description of how to get to the loop either from above via secondary roads or by taking State Highway 58 (Freeway) to Keene and coming at the loop from below. This includes distances to the nearest 1/10th of a mile and identifies all the



TEHACHAPI, TEHACHAPI LOOP AND RAILROADING INFORMATION

*Prepared Summer of 2006
by Linda Gordon, Owner
Trains, Etc.
114 W. Tehachapi Blvd.
Tehachapi, CA 93561
661-822-7777*

appropriate view points and parking spots. There is also a timetable-like listing of mileages per Southern Pacific nomenclature from Bakersfield to Mojave with all major points and tunnels identified. Then there is a conceptual map of the loop area with six specific rail-fan sites pin pointed and described. This is followed by a section with local street maps (Mapquest) and descriptions of the associated railroad facilities for Oil Junction, Gosford, Kern Junction, Sandcut, Bena, Caliente, Bealville, Woodford, Walong (Tehachapi Loop), the town of

Tehachapi, Monolith (Cement Plant) and Mojave.

There is a short piece on trains and locomotives and a place to log the trains seen while visiting the area. There are three pages of information on freight car types and designations and data on some of the best times of the day to see the heaviest traffic (which turns out to be almost all daylight hours). There is a page on radio frequencies for BNSF, UP and the NOAA weather stations as well as a page of railroad horn signals. Near the end of the book there are several reprints of information about the Tehachapi railroad history and geography, a tourists' guide to the town of Tehachapi and a couple of brief articles about

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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Scenery

By Jack Burgess, MMR

Building scenery on a layout, for many modelers, is a favorite category. If you are just getting started in the Achievement Program, the Scenery certificate might just be the place to start. The intent of this category is for the modeler to demonstrate “the prototype rendering of scenic effects from the ground up”. The type of scenery is up to you and can just as easily be mountainous scenery as “urban” scenery. Since scenery is so basic to a layout, it is a good category to start with.

To qualify for this certificate, you must construct a completed section of model railroad of at least 60 square feet in O scale, 45 square feet in S scale, 32 square feet in HO scale, or 24 square feet in N scale. (Note that the 32 square feet in HO is the size of the traditional 4x8 layout that many of us built when we first began in the hobby.) The entire layout doesn’t need to be complete in order to receive this certificate nor do the completed sections of the layout need to be adjacent to each other. You can instead complete individual scenes, as long as you meet the total required area. You can also use modules to meet the qualifications, but each must be at least 8 square feet in size and meet the quality standards.

The completed section(s) must include the elements of structures, background, lighting, and realism/conformity and score at least 87½ points using the following criteria:

- Terrain (Max. 35 points) - This element includes natural features such as rocks, trees, hills, cuts and fills, drainage ditches, etc.
- Structures (Max. 20 points) - Structures are considered from the point of prototype suitability and appearance and not from the standpoint of construction. The structures thus do not need to be scratch-built. Structures include bridges, fences, turntables, etc.
- Background (Max. 25 points) - The treatment

of the walls or background does not need to be artist quality. However, it needs to help “extend” the scenery and help conceal the rest of the room.

- Lighting (Max. 20 points) - Illumination can come from railroad cars, buildings, and overall lighting effects. You don’t need to include day/night effects to meet this requirement. However, room lighting should be even and consistent to adequately light the scene.
- Realism/Conformity (Max. 25 points) - In the other categories, the judges evaluate what you were trying to do and what you remembered to include in your scene. In this one, they will evaluate how well you accomplished that goal.

Note that, while Structures is a “judged” category, you do not necessarily need to include traditional structures on a layout in order to meet the minimum score of 87½ points...a logging scene with maybe a bridge or two, if well done, could still achieve the minimum 87½ points without a traditional structure.

If you meet these qualifications, the first step is to complete a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) as with all of the AP categories. You must also prepare a set of photographs (digital prints work well too) to document your work. You can supply regular snapshots or make a short video of the layout to illustrate your work. The photos or the tape must include a written description of the intended setting. The photos don’t need to be “suitable for publication”, only good enough to allow someone else to see that you have met the qualifications. You also need to prepare a simple description of the methods and materials that you used to build the layout features. Again, nothing elaborate.

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The judging of the layout is typically set up by your Divisional AP Chairman and one or more assistants. After judging the layout, the judges will sign your SOQ and the SOQ and your other documentation (along with a photocopy of your membership card) is sent to me to be transmitted to Headquarters.

While documentation for the Master Builder - Scenery might seem a little burdensome, it shouldn't take that long. The best part of this category is that you probably have already completed the modeling portion of the requirement!

I am pleased to announce that Joseph Aymar has been awarded his second Certificate of Achievement, this one for Master Builder – Cars; as mentioned in the last *Branch Line*, Joseph entered three models in the PCR Convention modeling contest in May and scored three Merit Awards. Congratulations Joseph!

Ron Plies has also been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Master Builder – Cars. This was his seventh Achievement Award which makes him a Master Model Railroader. His MMR was awarded to him at the National Model Railroad Convention in Anaheim in July. Ron is MMR No. 409. Congratulations Ron!

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

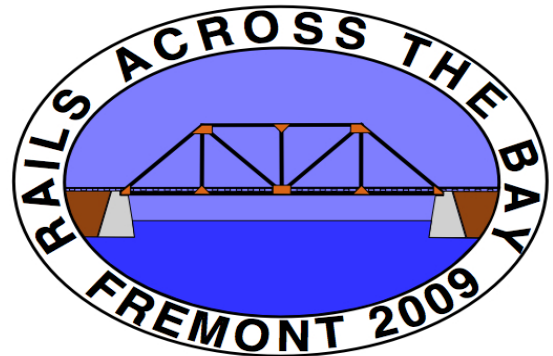


Bruce Morden explains it all

(Continued from page 9) Written in the PCR

railroading in the area.

The book is 42 pages long and printed using color copy technology. The binding is the type used for school reports with fold-over style clasps and a clear plastic front cover. The book is available for \$11.95 from Trains, Etc., 114 W. Tehachapi Blvd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 phone (661)822-7777 fax (661)822-7077 <http://trainsetc-usa.com/> email trainsetc@sbcglobal.net. The author states this publication is not a profit-making endeavor but the price covers the costs of production and is sold as a service to the shops' customers. Trains, Etc. has a full line of model railroad material for sale either in the store or via mail order or web site sales. Store Hours are 9:30 AM to 5 PM every day except Sunday when they are open 11 AM to 4 PM.



Rails Across the Bay 2009 PCR Convention

April 15 - 19, 2009

Marriott Hotel in Fremont

We are looking for clinic presenters

Please contact Jim Long if
interested

530-676-1798

jimclong@sbcglobal.net

Get off yer duff

By Clifton Linton

I recently attended a regional model railroad conference where a speaker asked the audience how many folks had a layout or were building a layout and how many didn't. The vast majority of attendees fell into the "didn't have a layout or weren't working on one".

That moment jolted my reality. I, who had just started building a 1' by 8.5' shelf layout, figured that most of the attendees had super layouts. In that moment, I saw others struggling with the same problem that has confounded me for years. I had great plans to build a layout, yet could never figure out why it never got built.

Why? The answers are fairly universal – not enough space, not enough time, not enough money, etc. What I have learned, however, is that none of these excuses is insurmountable. Personally, I think I was stymied by the "I have to design the be all and end all layout. It has to be perfect" excuse.

As Alameda, Calif., modeler Steve Van Meter told me, "Some people plan and plan, trying to reach perfection ... and don't build a layout."

He suggests taking the approach "figure (the layout) is not permanent."

When I adopted that philosophy, a big barrier to

layout construction fell. Indeed, I live in an apartment and am a single dad. The lack of permanence and time are realities. Any layout I build can't be permanent and my layout building time is limited. So, my thinking shifted to "let's try some things out."

Here are a few tips that might help you to get off yer duff and get your own layout built.

1. **Establish a reasonable benchmark** of the amount and quality of layout you want to build. Noted author Tony Koester said that Allen McClelland helped him understand this

concept. After visiting McClelland's V&O, he realized that building a large layout was "doable. (The V&O) looks huge and complex, but when you looked at the pieces, there was nothing there that the average guy couldn't do." He summed it up best, "Don't set your goals ridiculously high."

2. **Start small** – That's not to say build only a shelf layout, rather, don't try to do too much at one time. Let's face it, you won't be able to throw up the benchwork to fill a 1,500 square foot basement in a day, but you could probably put together a domino or two in a weekend.

3. **Spend a little time on it regularly.** It often seems like master layout builders spend two or three hours a night, every night on their railroads. I'm sure one or two have, but most layout builders are regular folks like you and me. They have to fit in layout



In progress construction photo of the K&C RR. Photo taken January 29, 2006. The K&C RR is an 8.5' by 1.5' shelf layout in my bedroom.



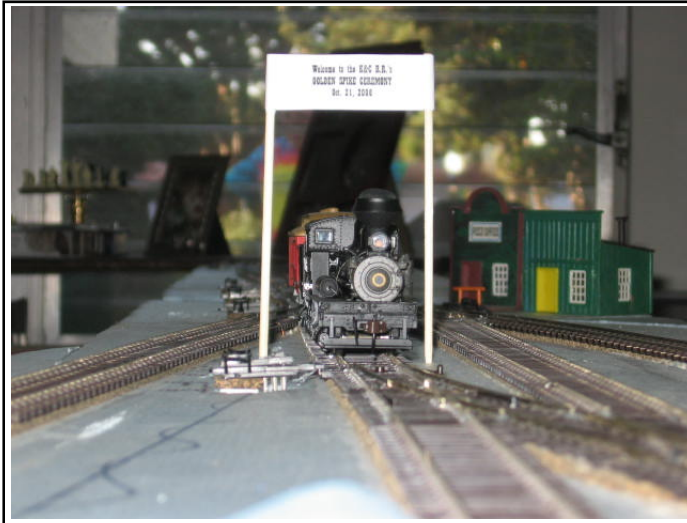
The track is mostly complete just days before the K&C RR Golden Spike Ceremony. Photo taken Oct 13, 2006

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construction when they can into otherwise busy lives. What they have done is to make a commitment to building a layout. Consider: if you spend one hour each weekend day building a layout in a year you would have spent 104 hours on your layout. In that amount of time, you could do a lot. And it will be much more than if you don't do anything at all.

4. **Be organized** – Nothing is more frustrating than going into the layout construction room, fired up to work on some project and finding that you need to stop and go to the store to buy some key piece. Use your off-time to plan your projects, gather reference materials and purchase needed supplies. When layout day comes, you won't have delays.
5. **Do one task at a time.** If you read this entire primer, you may be tempted to throw up your hands at the enormity of the task ahead. It helps to remember the advice given by the wise man who was asked the proper way to eat an elephant: "One bite at a time." Along these lines, try to stick with one task, finish it and move on to the next. By adopting a focus like this, you should start to see progress. Rather than seeing a half



A picture taken Oct. 21, 2006 when the golden spike was driven on the K&C RR.

dozen works in progress, you may see several completed projects. Rich Weyand uses little mental tricks to motivate him to get through the challenging projects. As he says, "If I don't do the wiring, I won't be able to run trains."

6. **Remember, most things are easier than you expect.** Weyand admits that he periodically gets into the "paralyzed mode."

But, to get himself going, he recalls that "most things are easier than you think. That's a real important realization." He continues, sometimes he is confronted with how the track should fit in a particular area. Rather than get hung up, he lays track and sees if it fits. If it doesn't work, he says, he just learned why and in the meantime he learned what he needs to do to get it right. "There's nothing that you can screw up so badly that you can't do it over."

7. **Be flexible.** – A layout design is not a layout. It is an intended plan. Remember your layout will likely not end up looking as you originally imagined. Inevitably, you will run into some



K&C RR A logging train, pulling scratch-built flat cars in the grade crossing.. Picture taken 6-30-2008

snag. Or you may have a change of heart concerning one aspect of the layout or another. I am building a small switching layout and had run into a period of inactivity. I took the plan to a model railroad design conference and the great and practical suggestions I got there improved my design and helped recharge my interest in the layout. I didn't know what to

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expect as I turned my layout design over to a complete stranger for critique, but I tried to approach the experience with an open mind. It paid off.

8. **Make friends** – Remember Tom Sawyer? He had it right when he invited his buddies to help him paint Aunt Polly's fence. A similar concept applies to building a layout. The idea is not to sit back and loaf while your friends pay you to do your work, though if you can get away with it, give it a try. Instead I am talking about enhancing your hobby experience by sharing it with friends. Having folks around can make it easier to get motivated. Sometimes you will need outside help when you encounter an aspect of the hobby that isn't so appealing like, scenery, wiring, or ballasting track. Remember that quid pro quo also applies. When you help someone build their layout, they often will reciprocate. I've spoken with or heard talks from a number of successful layout builders and many admit they needed some help to put together their layout, somewhere along the line. Even Koester, who describes himself as a loner, admits that Bill Darnaby and others provided design expertise and neighbor Perry Squire has provided electrical supplies and expertise. **Along**



Paper signs fill in for the eventual placement of engine service facilities. Picture taken 6-30-2008

these lines: beware the braying chorus. Having friends is great, but you don't have to take all their suggestions.

9. **Agree to be part of an open house or layout tour** – The idea, says Tony Koester, is to raise the stakes for yourself. At the time he offered this nugget he was bracing for the arrival of four busloads of model railroaders attending the 2006

NMRA convention in Philadelphia. The idea is to put yourself out there so that you have to get something done to please the visitors. I am using this concept to motivate myself, when I sent out Golden Spike party invites with track still in the process of being laid and wired. There may not be any scenery by the time of the party, but you can bet trains will be running.

10. **Just do it and have fun.** Okay, time to pick up your tools and get to work. There is nothing to be afraid of. If you make a mistake, consider it a learning experience and remember, you will make mistakes. Rich Weyand said one reason why the folks with big layouts reached that point is because "they don't agonize. They say 's____, let's try it' and then dive into a project." One model railroader said his goal was to make his mistakes as quickly as they could so that he could get on with his real layout building faster.

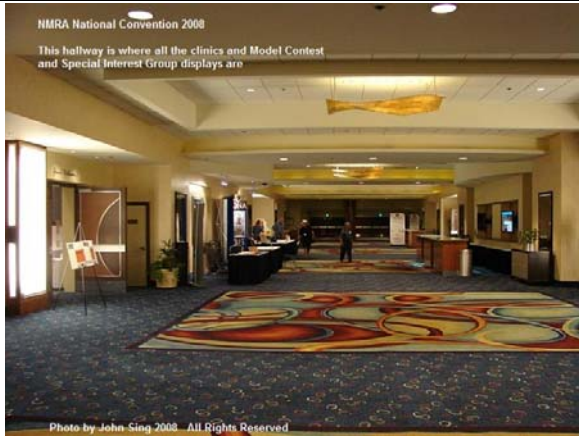
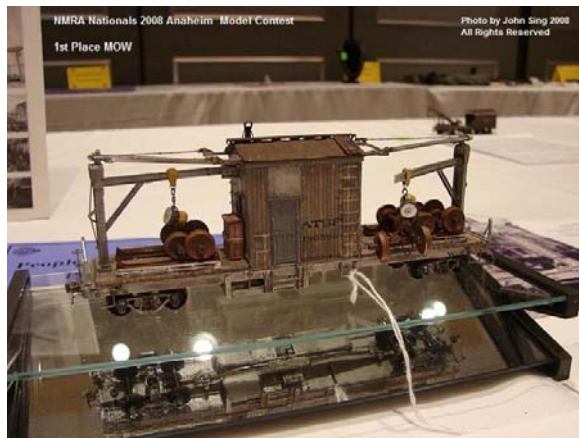


A K&C RR logging train headed to the woods crosses the as-yet to be built trestle crossing the as-yet-to-be-named creek. Picture taken 6-30-2008

Travellin' Around

By John Sing

This quarter's article consists of some photos from the NMRA 2008 National Convention "Anaheim Special". It was my first time to attend a National for this length of time; and it was great, and here are just a few photos. There are many more available at: http://www.pbase.com/atsf_arizona/ . Enjoy!



NMRA Nationals 2008
Model Contest
Multi-level station



Photo by John Sing 2008
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NMRA Nationals 2008 Anaheim
Photo Contest



Photo by John Sing 2008
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NMRA Nationals 2008 Anaheim LDSIG Layout Tours
Los Angeles Model RR Society



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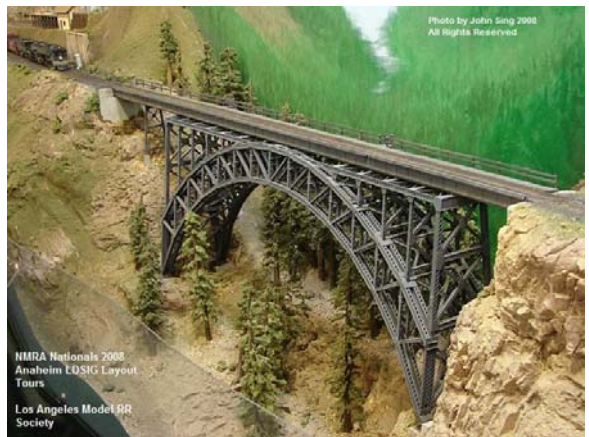


Photo by John Sing 2008
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NMRA Nationals 2008
Anaheim LDSIG Layout
Tours
Los Angeles Model RR
Society

NMRA National Train Show 2008
Layouts
The Anaheim Convention Center
was full of layouts, from front to back



Photo by John Sing
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NMRA Natl Train Show 2008

HOR3 layout built in 4 months, starting
in Jan 2008

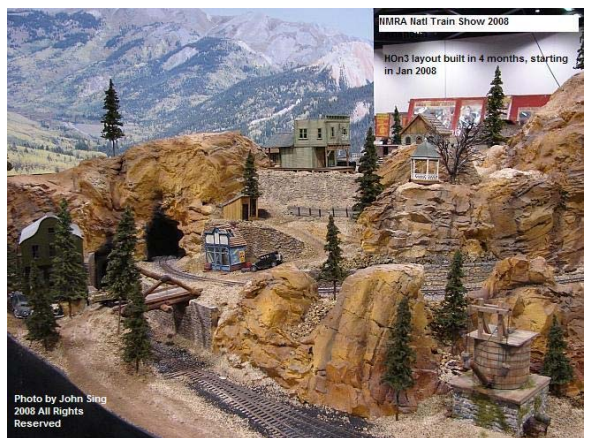


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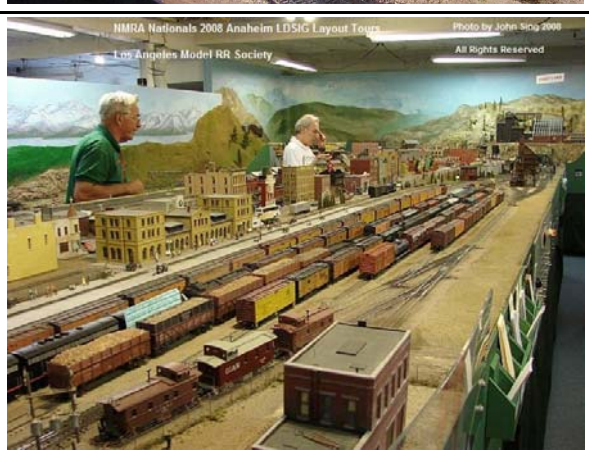


NMRA Nationals 2008 Anaheim
Railroad Prototype Modelers display room

Photos by John Sing 2008
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NMRA Nationals 2008 Anaheim LDSIG Layout Tours
Los Angeles Model RR Society

Photo by John Sing 2008
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THE JOYS OF GIVING A CLINIC

(Or, What did you do at the convention?)

Pat LaTorres

This year we've been blessed (or maybe it's a curse) with more conventions in, or near PCR than time to go to them. Starting with O Scale West back in January, we've had the PCR Convention in April, the W.P. Historical Society convention (in May, I believe), the Santa Fe Historical Society in Riverside this past July, the NMRA national in Anaheim a week later, the National Narrow Gauge Convention up in Portland, Oregon in September, and the S.P.H. & T.S. down in Bakersfield in October. Along with these big events we can add all of our local division meets.

Now if we take all of these gatherings and figure on anywhere from two clinics at a division meet up to twenty a day at the NMRA national and there's a lot of learning potential out there for one to access. Many of us try to take in as much of this – and attend as many of the clinics – as we can. Some folks are not involved much beyond going to a local meet now and then.

When someone says that they didn't get much from a convention or meet, I always ask them if they offered to present a clinic. Far too often the reply is, "I could never give a clinic", or "I don't know anything that would be worth the time".

This is my starting point to ask them to give clinics. A lot of people say that they "don't know how to give a clinic", or "no one would care to hear what (they) have to say". If you talk to a clinician or two, you'll find that there's nothing too difficult to it.

If folks enjoy having a conversation with you about train stuff, then you have something to share with others.

The two hardest steps, for me, are choosing the subject and getting off of the couch to prepare the presentation. The first step is always the most difficult, especially the first time.

Fear of the unknown raises its big, ugly head. Simplest thing is to pick a subject that you are interested in and know a bit about. Anything goes. Heck, I've even seen clinics on "giving clinics".

From this point on it only gets easier. As examples, I'll use two clinics which I've presented in the last six months – "Collecting Railroad China" and "Railroad Photography". I've been

interested in both for a number of years and have learned more than the average guy.

Conversations with others assured me that there were other people out there that shared these interests.

Similarly, If you like the X. Y. & Z. Railroad and have spent some time

studying its history and operations, then you just might know more than the rest of us on this subject and you're halfway to presenting your clinic.

If you like talking with your friends about a given subject, like switching operations, or the neat locomotive that you just built, then you're a perfect fit to be a clinic presenter. All of those folks in the room at the clinics that you've attended were there because they wanted to learn something about a given subject. Well, it will be no different with a clinic that you might give. These folks came because they wanted to learn as well, and they'll support you so that they can hear what you have to share with them.

If you're modeling the fruit packing industry and maybe spent a summer working at a packing plant, you have first-hand information that none of

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The two hardest steps,
for me, are choosing
the subject and getting
off of the couch

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the attendees will have had access to. If you worked a summer job for the railroad while attending college, you may have an insight on yard operations that others don't. I'm sure there are other examples, but you can see how this is working.

There are many aspects of our hobby that can relate directly back to our daily lives: Bench-work ties into carpentry and the construction trades, wiring or DCC ties into both the electrical trades and the computer industry, scenery and back-drop painting connects with any number of adult school or community college art classes, layout design and the drafting or architectural fields, and the list goes on and on.

Maybe you've started researching your own model railroad and want to share what you've learned with others (look at Bill Kaufman's work on the State Belt Railroad of San Francisco, or Steve Hayes' little project of building a model of the W.P. Oakland depot and where they've ended up). If you have some area of interest, either professional or recreational beyond model railroading, step back a moment and see if there is some way it might tie into our common hobby.

Once you've chosen your subject, start on a focused path of research to fill in the holes in your information base. There is an amazing range of information resources open to us in today's internet world. Just a brief glimpse into Yahoo or Google will open so many doors you may find yourself overwhelmed with information. Pretty much all of the railroad historical societies have some sort of presence on the World Wide Web ("www"), and those sites have links to even more



Some clinics are less formal than others

sites with the same general focus. The only danger here is that each link leads you deeper and deeper into a given area of interest.

If the thought of the computer world intimidates you, all major cities still have a traditional paper based library. The main branch of the Oakland Library has an "Oakland History Room" with a wealth of information on that city and the surrounding area. I'm sure that the same type of resource is available in many other communities. The only problem that I've found is a case of maybe too much information. This has been the most difficult part of clinic preparation, editing down what I want to present so it fits into a sixty minute window.

The next step in putting that great clinic of yours together will be tightening up your focus so that you don't overwhelm your audience or end up with a two hour clinic. What I've found to be a key help here is to try and present enough information that my audience knows what they're looking at, but will want to look into it more on their own time. In some cases, it does work to present a subject in two (or more) parts, since the information really needs to be covered more fully. But again, if you see their eyes start to glaze over it may be a bit too much information.

Another helpful tool is a well written hand-out that will fill in some of the blank spaces that you might not cover in detail during the clinic presentation.

When I start working on a new clinic (or even when refreshing an older one) I start with a very basic outline. The first point that I note is, "What do I want my audience to learn?" This is the key point, without which your audience will walk away with what may seem to them to be a bunch of unrelated bits of information. **THIS** is the subject of your clinic, it's really that simple.

The next consideration is how do I want to present this information? Keeping in mind that we can use any, or all of the five senses to present our subject to the audience. The most obvious is hearing, either by voice, or through the use of sounds (pre-recorded, or not). The second is visual, using photographs, charts, maps, drawings,

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etc., either individually or in various combinations. Obviously feeling and the sense of touch will be an option if the clinic relates to some sort of construction or building project. The sense of smell is useful when presenting a clinic on modeling safety and many of the chemicals that get used in the model railroading hobby. The one that I haven't nailed down yet is how to use taste to present a model railroading subject, but I haven't given up! Whichever of these I choose to use will be noted in my basic outline.

And finally, I'll put together a rough outline of the order in which I want to present my subject. Once I get all of this figured out, I'll put together my working outline of the clinic working from my introduction (of both myself and the subject) to my concluding comments on the subject. If in the process of reading through this outline I manage to lose myself, then I need to start over and work to tighten things up a bit.

Again, by keeping myself to a sixty minute window I force myself to keep my subject in a tight focus, keeping in mind that there may be some questions from the audience at the conclusion of the presentation. There's no way that one can give a comprehensive history of the Pullman Company in an hour, but one can cover the evolution of basic sleeping car design quite effectively.

So you've finally put your clinic together and you think you've got everything nailed down tight and it's ready for prime time. On the mechanical side, make sure that any multi-media tools work correctly. I've seen a number of clinics go off-kilter because either a slide projector won't work with the presenter's slide carousel, or an LCD projector has the color settings off, or the presenter's computer and the LCD projector aren't compatible, and these are just a few examples.

A lot of this can be prevented by a little bit of preliminary prep work, but sometimes you just have to work through it regardless. As I mentioned early on, in most cases your audience doesn't want you to fail, because they've got their time invested in your clinic as well. So if you've got yourself and your clinic in order before you start, the audience will support you and back you up. When it comes

to presenting your clinic, it's often easier (might I say more prudent?) to make your first presentation at a divisional meet or even at a model railroad club meeting. This will give you a chance to make changes and adjustments prior to hitting the "big time".

Rest assured, very few clinics survive their first presentation without some changes being made. The hardest part of giving any clinic is that first time you put it up in front of an audience. While it may never be easy to step up in front of a group, once you take that first step it gets less difficult with each presentation. And as a final set of thoughts, remember that presenting a clinic at any level can earn both Volunteer and Author points in the NMRA Achievement Program. Also, you can always contact your friends that have presented clinics in the past for hands-on help in putting your clinic together. To that end, feel free to contact me at "duhnerd@pacbell.net" if you have any questions, or if there's any way that I can help you get a clinic together.

Remember, there are still a few division meets throughout the PCR before the end of 2008, and 2009 has a whole bunch more on tap before the PCR convention in Fremont – and I know that both Jim Long (the 2009 convention Clinic Chairman) and all of the division meet organizers would be interested in what you have to share!



Byron Henderson offering layout design advice as part of the SIG activities at the National Convention in Anaheim



Sierra Division Report

By
Bob Warner

The Sierra Division had a picnic on August 9, 2008 at the Western Railroad Museum. There were 44 people that signed in. We all started to gather around 11AM. We talked and socialized till noon when we started the business meeting.

We had a report about the last meet in Colusa. We want to thank Walt Schedler for setting this up and providing such a great program.

We had a report from Charlie Getz who is one of the NMRA Directors. He brought us up to date on the NMRA Board Meeting last month in Anaheim. He then explained the proposed move of the Howell Day Museum from Chattooga to Sacramento. This will start with a display that will be on the upper level above the round house stalls. The money for this, about \$500,000, is in the bank. This is not NMRA dues money but has come from several sources. Later there are plans to house the museum in a building that is part of the old SP Locomotive Shops that are behind the current museum. This will be part of the Museum of Locomotive Technology. This will be some time down the road as the money for this has to be raised. He then explained the move of the NMRA Library from Chattooga to the California State Railroad Museum's Library. The NMRA collection will be housed in Sacramento. The agreement will give all NMRA members' access to the NMRA Library and the State's Library. NMRA will provide one staff person for the library. This will be a saving of 1 and ½ positions from the current system. This will be a great benefit to the people of PCR and Sierra Division because of the location.

We all ate well and rode the trolleys. The museum ran most of the operating trolleys just for us. They put on a good show for us. If you can make a trip to the Western Railway Museum, I recommend it.

Ray deBleick talked about the 2011 NMRA National Convention that will be held in Sacramento at the Sacramento Convention Center. Ray has put together a great committee to work on this convention. At this time he isn't asking for anything from Sierra Division and PCR. At a later date the need for volunteers will come up. At this time he and the committee are looking for layouts that are willing to be considered for the layout tours. He expects the layout tours to be a little different. Most will be self-guided in cars. This will reduce the cost to the people that are attending. Ray is trying to include many different groups and SIGs

in the planning of this convention.

Chuck Mitchell talked about the 2009 PCR Convention. It will be held April 15 – 19, 2009 at the Fremont Marriott. There is more information on page 23

Ray Ritch talked about the 2010 PCR

Convention that will be held at the Nugget in Sparks, NV. It will held April 28 – May 2, 2010.

The next Sierra Division Meet will be October 11. The Carson City Railroad Association will be hosting us. We will meet at the Nevada State Railroad Museum at 10AM. At noon we will go to the Mills Park in Carson City to visit the Carson City Railroad Association's layouts and have lunch. We plan to finish up in Virginia City to ride the Virginia and Truckee RR. The 4 PM train goes not only to Gold Hill but to the end of the line which currently is American Flats. We are looking for an RSVP for this meet so we know how much

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A NEW PCR MEMBER'S VIEW OF THE COAST LAYOUT TOURS

By Michael Oberg

I have been a member of the PCR/NMRA for nearly two years. I have been a model railroader for over 43 years.

As a new PCR member, I was very anxious to go on the Coast Layout Tour. As a model railroader, whether in a train club, round-robin operating group, or a 'loner', I felt that I could certainly learn from other model railroaders and enjoy myself at the same time.

On Friday, June 13, three members of the Niles-Fremont train club and I, visited Jack Burgess's Yosemite Valley Railroad layout. I had read all the articles in the various model railroad magazines about this layout, but, when I

saw it in person, it's a whole another story! Jack's layout is so meticulously done and accurately modeled as to have a specific date (August 13, 1939) as the date of operations on the layout! I was totally awestruck by the exact, perfect detail applied to every inch of the train layout. The layout is truly museum-quality. It is the most perfect, the most complete, and the most accurately detailed and modeled train layout I have ever seen! **THE LAYOUT SHOULD BE IN A MUSEUM!**

My only questions were, **WHERE WAS EVERYONE ELSE?** Two TCSME members, PCR member Stan Keiser, and I were the only four visitors that night at Jack Burgess' layout. Has everyone seen Jack Burgess' layout but me? The second question is, and my apologies to Jack, why build a model railroad that goes nearly all the way up to the ceiling of the room, where no one can see the track or trains? To me, that is a waste. But, I already know the answer from Jack Burgess. He is modeling the Yosemite Valley Railroad as accurately as he can, and that includes modeling all the necessary and important points of the railroad during the time chose to model.

I had read all the articles in the various model railroad magazines about this layout, but, when I saw it in person, it's a whole another story!

Saturday morning, June 14, two TCSME members and I started our layout tour by visiting all the home and club layouts in the '880 Corridor'. Our first stop was at Clifton Linton's apartment in Alameda, to see his small HO shelf layout. Clifton is modeling a freelanced modular steam-era logging layout. Although the shelf layout is incomplete with only its wood and blue foam cut, formed, and mounted as a shelf, Clifton did have some roadbed and track down and was operating a

3-truck Bachman Spectrum Shay back and forth on his 1.5'W by 8.5'L. Clifton operates his layout with Digitrax DCC. Clifton also scratch built three 30' wood flatcars that are quite impressive.

Although Clifton's layout was small and incomplete, it wasn't just the train layout that impressed me. Clifton, himself, besides being a great and humble host, was so full of ideas, concepts, plans, imagination, and enthusiasm about the hobby of model railroading. He was easy to talk to, ask questions, share ideas, take suggestions, and offered to stay in touch. I felt like a just met a new model railroad friend!

The next layout we saw was Steve Van Meter's N scale basement layout that generically represents the SF Bay Area. Steve's layout nearly fills his whole basement, roughly the size of a two-car garage! He uses NCE DCC to operate on his layout. While we there, both of my fellow TCSME members enjoyed running a train on Steve's layout while I took some pictures. Steve, and his two model railroad buddies, were perfect hosts. We all felt welcomed and comfortable in and around Steve, his fellow model railroad buddies, and me and my friends. I really liked Steve's ideas and techniques for his scenery, backdrops and rolling hills. It was a great visit!

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Next, we went to John Cockle's home in Berkeley, to see his small N scale layout. This was the first layout on the tour that I saw other PCR members (2) at. John's N scale layout is small and compact, but full of operations and lots of potential. John uses Digitrax DCC on his layout. John was a gracious host. John reminded me of Clifton Linton. John has some good ideas about scenery, details, operational concepts and a lot of imagination! That's what every good model railroader needs! Nice guy and great visit!

The funnest layout on the layout tour was Jim Radkey's HO train layout. Jim's home layout in Albany is located in a rebuilt 1920's era garage, that is separate from his house. Jim's huge layout completely fills the size of a two-car garage. That's a lot of trains in HO! His layout concept is mostly an 'around the wall' design with a peninsula that contains a hidden staging yard, return loops, and a helix. The layout is built and operated on at least 4 or 5 levels. The layout climbs from about 30" from the floor to within 12" from the ceiling of the train room. Jim uses NCE DCC on his layout for operations. Although the layout is only at the stage where only the track and wiring are complete, Jim sure has a lot of fun sharing his layout with kids of the neighborhood, visitors and guests, and with his 'round-robin' operating group. Jim even invited me and my friend to operate on his layout sometime in the future. I can't wait to take him up on his invitation!

Jim's layout was the second layout where I saw other visitors. I met up with Bob Crawford at Jim's. Besides the two young boys from the neighborhood running trains, I met another model railroader and his young son at Jim's as well. My fellow TCSME member was able to run a train on Jim's layout as I took some more pictures.

Jim was a perfect host and was able to give us excellent directions to our next stop, the Golden State Model Railroad Club in Point Richmond. This club features huge model railroad layouts in N, HO, HOn3, O, and On3 all under one big roof, in one big building! The layouts are all more than 75-90% complete. As a whole, the layouts model specific points in the eastern San Francisco Bay

Area. The HO layout uses an operating system featured in the Model Railroader magazine by Bruce Chubb for most of the layout. The rest of the HO layout is DCC. It has a beautiful recreation of the Oakland Mole!

Again, I have to ask, WHERE WAS EVERYONE ELSE? The only other visitor I saw there was Bob Crawford.

Finally, the last layout I was able to see and enjoy was the San Leandro Historical Society club layout in a restored SPRR depot. The HO train layout housed in the depot is quite unique, to say the least. Only half of the operating layout is at a level that the public can see and enjoy. The other half of the train layout is about 6 feet over the public's head! I have never seen a model railroad layout, home or club, that had 50% or more of the layout out of the reach and sight of the public! The upper level(s) are reached by what looks like a 12-turn helix! The club members operate the upper level on a platform that is built higher than my head. I can only see their shoes and their backsides.

To me, as a member of the public, this is a poorly designed layout. But, I guess, as a member of this club, it was the only way to squeeze in as much track as possible to model the prototypical locations needed or wanted by the club members. This club layout was a major disappointment to me. Sorry Pat LaTorres. I did like the club's swap meet though.

Driving home with my friend and fellow TCSME member, we talked about all the great layouts we saw. We asked, to no one in particular, where was everyone else? We discussed all the ideas, suggestions, and concepts we learned from our hosts. To me, it made me want to go home and work on my own apartment-sized HO train layout. That's what a good layout tour should do! Thanks guys!

Michael Oberg

Rails Across the Bay

By

Steve Wesolowski

Enjoy PCR 2009: Rails Across The Bay!

While reading this, NMRA's Anaheim 2008 Convention may still be fresh in your mind. Although I missed the convention, from September's Scale Rails I learned many current and former PCR members earned a big share of the awards in Anaheim, and not just for models, photographs and crafts!

Jim Long was recognized with a President's Award for his outstanding volunteer contributions for us all! I congratulate all who entered for sharing their work and especially thank those like Jim for giving their time for us all to enjoy our favorite hobby more!

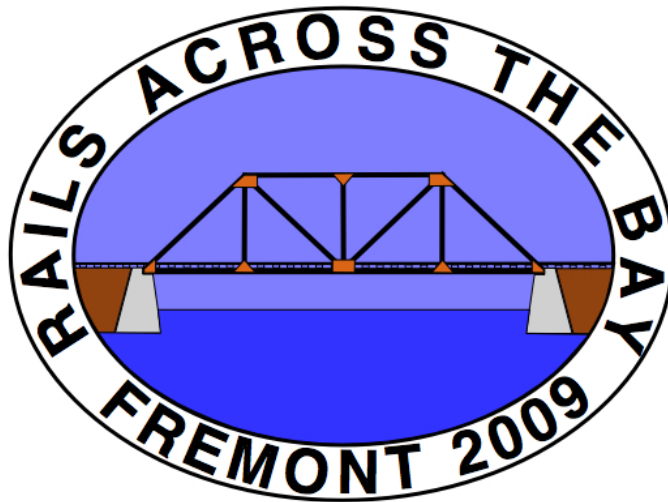
I also noticed how many Anaheim contest winners were also winners at PCR 2008 in Fresno, and many PCR Convention clinicians also gave clinics in Anaheim. PCR is lucky to have so many talented members helping us all learn to be better modelers, photographers, craftspersons, and volunteers, with so many volunteering their time and skills for us.

Many PCR members volunteer to help provide similar quality activities at both our National and PCR conventions. They contribute to improving your modeling, photography and craftsmanship, enjoying fun activities like clinics, meeting and learning with others who enjoy building and discussing models, visiting and/or operating layouts and prototypes and other kinds of fun you enjoy at conventions.

This overlap of human talent makes PCR

Conventions probably your next best thing to attending an NMRA National. PCR's 2009 Convention, *Rails Across the Bay*, from April 15-18, 2009 at the Fremont Marriott Silicon Valley is your next chance!

I've enjoyed every NMRA, PCR, and other train lover gatherings I've attended. I've also noticed the more fun options available at the same times, which occurs more often the larger the convention is, the smaller percentage of all activities offered I can attend, because more are scheduled at parallel times. There should also be too many fun activities for any of us to attend them all in



Fremont next year. Maybe that's not really bad, or a problem?

I've found PCR Conventions offer the same quality as NMRA Nationals in terms of modeling, photography and crafts, while still providing a substantial variety of clinics, operations, layouts and prototype tours, and other fun times to meet and enjoy trains with others, just for a shorter time and on a closer scale. Even if you attended Anaheim, by April 15th, 2009 at *Rails Across The Bay* there should be plenty of new and different clinics, activities, models, photos and people, so you are sure to enjoy plenty of new fun stuff.

And Fremont 2009 should cost you less to attend-- PCR 2009 is a pretty great deal: Early Registration is only \$85 until 1/31/09 (\$99 after that), and ALL Full Registrations (including Spouses \$70 and Youths \$50) INCLUDE Saturday

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Night's Banquet with Guest Speaker. Our 1st Timer Discount Registration is \$75, if you've missed the last 3 PCR conventions.

Our preferred room rate of \$89/night (plus tax) is available Only Until March 27th, 2009. I encourage everyone who can to stay at least one night at our hotel, the Fremont Marriott Silicon Valley, to avoid some traffic, and enjoy more relaxed fun. For Reservations call 1-800-228-9290 or reserve On-Line at

<http://marriott.com/sjcfm?groupCode=nmrnmraandapp=resvlink>

Our theme is the Bay Area's rich urban and interurban railroad/transportation history: not only Across the Bay but around and beyond our Bay Area, including the ship, bridge and land based (especially rail) passenger and freight transport which built and grows our Bay Area; freight and people move across and around our bay in all directions, to/from places within the area and the rest of the world. Our Bay Area railroads included the South Pacific Coast RR hauling passengers and freight with steam locomotives, ferries and horses from the 1880's to 1900s, to/from SF via ferry to the East Bay, connected with Santa Cruz by rail, carrying lumber and food to re/build SF and other areas after the '06 quake. The SPC was only one of many Railroads Across the Bay, including SP, WP, Santa Fe, Muni, and BART.

We also plan (for additional cost), speeder rides Thursday through Niles Canyon, and a Steam Train on Friday for your enjoyment. Our committee continues to add other activities and more fun stuff all the time, including our Convention Car, working on more Prototype and Non-Rail tours, adding more clinics to learn from and layouts to enjoy. I'll write more about these topics in the next Branch Line, and/or you can keep visiting our website every so often for the most current information: <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2009/>

I encourage everyone coming to begin building model(s), gathering photos and working on craft entries to bring. All the fine work displayed in Fresno and in Anaheim was not completed overnight. I hope you will bring your models,

photos and crafts to *Rails Across the Bay* for everyone to enjoy, whether you enter for AP points and possible awards, or for Display in the Show and Tell area. We all enjoy seeing and learning from each other's work. With over six months until April 15th, there's plenty of time for you to produce something beautiful we all will enjoy. I also hope you finish your taxes early-- don't miss the first day of our convention, April 15th.

I've entered contests and helped judge after my first PCR convention in SLO in 2002. I know entering takes some time, but I enter models to become a better modeler. The feedback I get helps me improve and learn new and old weaknesses I can improve upon. Every "mistake" I've made taught me something and improves later work. I still want to be the best modeler I can be.

We also learn and improve with knowledge learned in clinics, by judging others' models, photos and handicrafts, and having our own work judged. I most enjoy building models, but I've also improved by volunteering and learning with others how to fairly and consistently judge other's work. If you volunteer to judge, you will learn more how to become a better modeler.

Our Committee hopes everyone at Fremont brings some of their work either for Show and Tell or to enter the contests, especially anyone who has never brought their work before.

I know one convention volunteer will enter his first model for judging in Fremont, after helping us judge in Fresno. He had many questions about the entry forms; I advised he fill them out as he builds and take pictures of unusual techniques or jigs used. While judging in Fresno he saw problems with entries being harder to judge fairly because too much more info was given on forms than judges have time to read. For many of us, being concise may be harder than building models. I pointed him towards recent Scale Rails MMR articles and a couple of excellent articles on PCR's website at

<http://www.pcrnmra.org/pcr/contest/contest.shtml> to help him understand more what info should be provided and what may be assumed. I also

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suggested he bring his model and forms to a Coast Meet for myself and/or others to look at. I also learned in Fresno I left some info off which would have helped others judge my work more easily and fairly, which might not have happened IF I had finished my forms Before the Convention-- a common mistake of mine.

So, please consider starting today on producing something to enter at PCR 2009, to allow you time to complete your work, write it up well and still have time for another to review your forms and suggest how to make them clearer and more concise, so your models, crafts and photos receive their fairest judging. And/Or if you prefer to bring some of your work not to be judged, bring models, photos and crafts for Show and Tell. All of us learn from each other: bring some of your work to share, and you'll probably learn even more.

Remember to mark your calendar on April 15-19, 2009 for *Rails Across the Bay* in Fremont, PCR 2009. To enjoy *Rails Across the Bay* the most, I strongly recommend:

1. Finish your 2008 taxes BEFORE April 15th, so you don't miss the first day of *Rails Across the Bay* .
2. Register before January 31st AND reserve your room before March 27th, to save money.
3. Keep visiting our website for the most current information:
<http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2009/>

Begin working on models, photos and crafts to bring and share with the rest of us.

Finally, I encourage any PCR members knowledgeable in an aspect of our Bay Area transportation history who may be interested in presenting a clinic, one related to our theme, or a new clinic to contact our Clinic Chair, Jim Long at jimclong@sbcglobal.net. There is still time for you to put together something interesting to share. The more modelers I've met, the less surprised I am to learn how knowledgeable many are about many aspects of local and rail history I never knew, or the wealth and depth of their modeling knowledge.

Thanks for listening. In the next Branch Line

will be more about PCR 2009, *Rails Across the Bay* . Meanwhile, I hope you Get Registered and Start your Models!

Many Happy Trains to You, Until we Meet Again!

Steve Wesolowski, PCR 2009 Publicity

(Continued from page 20)

food we will need. Please call Jim Long at 530-676-1798 or jimclong@sbcglobal.net

We had a report that Al Rowe, the Sierra Division Paymaster, would not be with us at the picnic because he had emergency surgery on Friday night. We found out that he had a stent put in his heart. He is doing fine and was going home on Sunday.

We also sang Happy Birthday to Brewster Bird from Daylight Division. August 9 is his birthday and he wanted to spend it with us. Sally, Brewster and James made the trip from Visalia to be with us.

We all ate well and rode the trolleys. The museum ran most of the operating trolleys just for us. They put on a good show for us. If you can make a trip to the Western Railway Museum, I recommend it.

I would like to thank several of the ladies that helped prepare the food. I didn't write their names down but their help was wonderful.

Jim Long



RED Picnic with all the usual suspects

Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

Jim Providenza

A Snakebit Train

Ever had so many things go wrong during a day that you just had to smile? I mean, life is just like that sometimes, isn't it? "Got out of the wrong side of the bed"; "Should never have gotten up this morning", "Ought to just turn around and go home"...

But if you are in a basement in Peculiar, Missouri, or out on the prairie on the GN's 4th subdivision out of Butte, Montana (or as happened to be the case, both at once) it's kind of tough turn around and go home. Sometimes you just have to grin, make the best of it, and figure that the bumps in the road really are kinda like a roller coaster ride after all!

Working Train No. 352 was just such a ride. We were a third class freight, scheduled to depart Shelby en-route to Butte. We had two regular trains to meet. Seemed like a piece of cake. A good way to get over the road on one of the two modeled subdivisions of John Breau's GN.

Receiving a clearance from the operator we checked the register against No. 3 which had arrived. The clearance had no train orders for our train, so we departed the staging yard at on timetable authority at 3:14 p.m. Or at least started to depart. Shelby staging is in a separate area from the rest of the basement and the eastbound main from Shelby goes directly from the yard throat into

and through a 3 – 4 foot "tunnel" before emerging "on stage". The yard is about 8 – 10 tracks wide and the switches at the yard throat are controlled through eNtrace – eXit routing. I'm not sure

whether John was using a diode matrix or DCC components to work the NX logic, but the result was that a crew only had to push a single button to line themselves out of the yard. Unfortunately for No. 352, a following extra decided to line their route while we were still departing the yard. At least one turnout was thrown under cars in the last third of the train. Of course the cars derailed as they crossed the points lined against them – but they didn't pile up until they were in the middle of the tunnel... The superintendent was called to sort out the mess which required careful and slow extrication, and blew our time over the road

all to hell! Maybe 20 – 25 actual minutes lost.

Back together, No. 352 finally pulled out of Shelby. Approaching Dracon Jct. we found, surprise, a red flag in our face. A local with several spots and pulls still left to do had cars scattered all over the place and had both the main and siding blocked. The conductor on the local was Jack

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY
CLEARANCE FORM A

LOCATION <i>Shelby</i>	DATE <i>June 12, 1923</i>
TO CONDUCTOR AND ENGINEER	
<i>No 352</i>	
CLEARANCE NO.	DESTINATION - RULE D-97
I HAVE <i>no</i> ORDERS FOR YOUR TRAIN LISTED BELOW	
O R D E R S	
DO NOT LEAVE BEFORE	SUPT'S INITIALS
OPERATOR <i>Han</i>	<i>M O.K. 3:14p M JAB</i>

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LAYOUT DESIGN AND OPERATIONS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS NEWS

By Seth Neumann

The big SIG news was the Anaheim Special 2008 NMRA convention in Anaheim, in July. Local coordinators Bruce Morden (Design SIG) and Kent Iverson (OP SIG) put together a great program featuring two days of self-guided layout tours and about two dozen operating sessions from Gary Siegel in Santa Barbara to the La Mesa (Tehachapi) club in San Diego.

Bruce Morden reported, “We had about 180 [LDSIG] members at the convention. That was close to 20% of all the railroad types [not counting comps, 1 days, non-rail] conventioners. [The LDSIG] “Meet and Greet” Sunday evening brought about 50 convention goers together to talk about their layouts and design issues as well as to discover all the LDSIG events for the week. Members from across the US, as well as Canada, Norway, Germany, Netherlands and Australia brought their ideas to the SIG room which was crowded with over 20 design displays. The gathering and discussion went until 10PM and some people did not leave until 11!

“Several of our Tuesday clinics were standing room only including [PCR member] Byron [Henderson’s] *Layout Design from the Prototype* and Bob Reid’s *Layout Designs for a Small Room*. The esteemed LDJ editors panel discussed many interesting topics from design trends to operations and layout construction ideas. Beyond our track on Tuesday, LDSIG members presented 8-10 other clinics during the week.

“Wednesday’s business meeting could have used even more space as LDSIG members crowded in to vote for new board member Ron Burkhardt and returning board member Seth Neumann. Outgoing board member and LDSIG founder Doug Gurin was honored at a special presentation during the meeting. Doug continues to be a guiding

influence to the LDSIG and many at the meeting gave testimonials to his thoughtful design insights and assistance over the years. Doug will be building his own layout and telling the story of railroads contribution to the World War II efforts in the New York/ New Jersey area during the war...

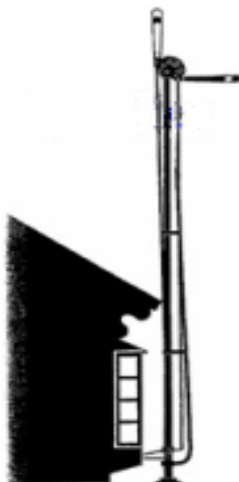


Seth Neumann

“The carpool and tour maps gathering in the SIG room went quickly and smoothly with everyone getting a ride. And the 105 LDSIG Layout Tour folks were off to visit wonderful layouts from Mission Viejo, Tustin, Fullerton, Whittier and Walnut in the South, to Pasadena, Burbank and Van Nuys in the North and ending with ... layouts in El Segundo, Hawthorne and Torrance on the way back to the convention hotel in the late evening. See some reviews on Joe Fugate’s new e-magazine at <http://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/node/51> We might be able to get Bruce Morden, the LDSIG coordinator for the Anaheim Special 2008 to spill the beans about the meals in the next LDJ.

“The Thursday tour had wonderful weather in Santa Barbara, the layouts were interesting and the crowd of 50 some enjoyed Italian food in Gary Siegel’s backyard surrounded by his outdoor G-gauge layout...”

Kent Iverson of the OPSIG had well over a dozen layouts available for OP Sessions, many of them multiple times. I personally got to run with Gary Siegel, Jon Cure, Paul Catapano, Bill Meyer, (former PCR member) Dick Roberts, and Dick Trotter. We also dropped in on the La Mesa Club’s



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(Continued from page 28) (SIGs)

Tehachapi session the last Saturday. The NMRA convention is becoming a first rank operating meet on top of everything else.

You might want to add the Hartford National 2009 to your schedule now as the SIGs are planning another great program with two days of SIG touring, a week-long SIG clinic track, the return of the SIG banquet (Friday night), numerous operating sessions and special stop-in and stop-out layout tours on the way to and from the convention for those who drive. See <http://www.HN2009.org>

Another very exciting development this summer is that my "Niles Canyon Layout" is now operational. We've held 5 operating sessions and discovered that my 6 person/2.5 hour session is really 9 operators for five hours. Over 30 operators have participated and I have a lot of learnings to share and stories to tell (and Editor Bill will no doubt be coaxing them out of me <g>). In the meantime, feel free to contact me at sneumann@pacbell.net if you'd like to be on the extra board. You can see my layout September 21 on the Southwest Bay layout tour.

SIG Calendar:

- La Mesa Club 24 hours of Tehachapi operating session in San Diego, Veteran's day weekend
- Annual PCR/LD/OP SIG meet for 2009 at the Santa Clara Depot on the bye weekend between NFL playoffs and the Superbowl.
- BayRails 2009, March 19-21, 2009 – more next column
- Rails Across The Bay, Fremont, April 15-19 2008
- Hartford National NMRA convention, July 5 - 11, 2009

That's it for now!

(Continued from page 27) (Tales)

Ozanich, a retired locomotive engineer off the Grand Trunk and owner of the well known Atlantic Great Eastern RR. Jack fussed and fumed, swore they would be done in less than 10 minutes, and stuck No. 352 for another 20 minute delay.

Cooling our heels west of the west switch of Dracon Jct., we checked the timetable again. Things were looking grim. No way were we going to make our scheduled passing location with No. 268 at Dutton. It looked like the best we could do was to get into the clear at Brady which was the next station east of Dracon Jct. When the local was in the clear we pulled and made good time to Brady. Arriving at 4:38 p.m. we found more trouble! A cut of cars was sitting at the west end of the siding. There was not even enough room for us to pull into the clear.

Well, we put out a flag, backing into the siding the best we could and waited for No. 268 to arrive. After his station stop he pulled down into a spur and we sawed by him. Now we were in a quandary. Well, not really. We were just stuck. Now we had to cool our heels for a scheduled MILW train on trackage rights running as No. 403. When No. 403 arrived we ran around him as well and then...

Well then we ran wild. With all the accumulated delays we were on the time of another opposing train, No. 435. However, we figured that No. 435 could not depart Butte until after No. 268 arrived and didn't figure a boomer dispatcher would give No. 435 time on No. 268. So we beat feet for Dutton, arriving just after 5 p.m. Sure enough, as we were pulling down the siding No. 435 was approaching the east switch. Great! All we had to do was pull down another couple of car lengths... what do you mean we don't clear?

Conferring with 435's crew we found that they were non-clearing as well... a double saw-by can take all of a real hour! At least there was an industry run around that had a little bit of room. At some point John Breau came walking by, checked in on what was going on, and walked away chuckling. Model railroading is fun – even with a snake-bit train!



Coast Division Tours

By David Parks

The 2009 Coast Tours will be the weekend following the Coast Division quarterly meetings. The description of layouts will be available on-line thru the PCR Coast Division Web site. The layout description site is updated as the tour composition changes. Layout addresses and maps will be available on-line about one week prior to each tour weekend. In order to download the maps it is necessary to log-on using your email address as a user name and your NMRA membership number as a password.

The preferred distribution of tour maps is on-line and free. Hard copy map sets are available only by pre-ordering from a member of the Coast Tours committee (contact below). The map packet cost is five dollars per tour weekend and distribution is at the Coast Division meeting preceding each tour weekend. PCR convention tours maps will be distributed to convention registrants.

March 7 – 8, 2009 - Monterey Bay and Salinas - Steve Williams, coordinator

April 15 - 19, 2009 - PCR convention tours. Layouts tours will extend about 25 air miles from the convention site in Fremont, CA. Bob Osborn and Don Marenzi, coordinators.

June 13 – 14, 2009 - North East Bay - Andy Schnur, coordinator.

September 12 – 13, 2009 - South East Bay - Bob Osborn, coordinator.

December 12 – 13, 2009 - North West Bay - Pete Cressman, coordinator.

In addition to the above tours we intend to sponsor a tour of the southern part of the PCR Redwood Empire Division with Ernie Simard coordinator. This includes Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties. Other Tours outside the Coast Division boundaries are being planned.

Coast Tours is actively soliciting layouts for inclusion in the tour program. Layout owners do

not have to be a member of PCR. There are no minimum standards for opening a layout for tour. There are those who want to visit only completed layouts with full scenery. Others are more interested in carpentry and infrastructure. An open layout could include an empty room with a detailed plan to show visitors. It is important that all layouts be accurately described so that visitors may choose the types of layouts they are interested in. Hopefully, a picture will supplement each layout's description.

Please Send Us Your Email Address

We are assembling a data base of PCR and Coast Division email addresses. The use of email is much faster, less time-consuming and will save a significant expense as opposed to using the US Mail. Please help us assemble this data base by sending an email with your name and the words "PCR Email" in the subject line to Steve Williams at spwilliams@gmail.com. We hope to do all tour notices via email and the web sites. The email address database will be only for the use of PCR and Coast Division event communications and not distributed to any third party.

Coast Tours Coordinators:

Chair - David Parks bearwestern@comcast.net
(650) 961-7644

North East Bay - Andy Schnur Schnur@netzero.com (925) 283-4476

South East Bay - Bob Osborn bob@cmrailroad.com (925) 484-4136

Don Marenzi donmarenzi@aol.com (510) 794-3469

North West Bay - Pete Cressman gabi2pete-friends@yahoo.com (415) 641-9379

South West Bay - Steve Williams spwilliams@gmail.com (408) 857-6787

North Beyond the Bay - Ernie Simard esimard@yahoo.com

15 Inches to the Foot

(In Quest of HOn2-1/2 Flextrack)

By Kenneth L. Lunders

On January 17th, 1999, Bob Hayden posted an e-mail message to the Hon30 Mail Car discussing ballasting both hand-laid track and flextrack. Towards the end of his message Bob speculated that if enough of us committed to buying Hon30 flextrack, there might be a manufacturer willing to accommodate us. He asked if anyone wanted to take the lead on the effort. Being afflicted with Dr. Strangelove Syndrome, my hand went up in virtual space and I got the job. This couldn't possibly take more than a few months to complete. It was sixteen months before the last of the track was shipped and the last payments made.

I put in about 10 hours per week and have 1200 e-mails. There are numerous spreadsheets in my computer, and a stack of regular mail 6" thick. As Yogi might have once said, "You can't always sometimes tell."

It all seemed pretty simple in the beginning: 1) Find a company that manufactures flextrack. 2) Ask them to make some HOn2-1/2 track. 3) Wait for it to arrive on our doorsteps.

The first two items were pretty easy to get done. Fortunately I came into contact with Robert Rands at Micro Engineering. The company had made HOn2-1/2 track in the past but stopped when the molds were destroyed in a manufacturing accident. Robert expressed a willingness to consider making new track for us.

Unfortunately, I forgot to add about 20 items between #2 and #3. Paul Havasi suggested to me that a survey of potential purchasers be taken.

The questions I came up with were:

1) What code rail should be used?

2) Should the rail be weathered or plain?

3) What length should the ties be?

4) What should the tie cross section measure? (I.e.: 6"x5")

5) What should the tie spacing on centers be?

6) What color should the ties be?

I also asked:

A) What is the maximum price I am willing to pay for a length of flex track?

B) How many pieces will I commit to buying at that price?

**This couldn't possibly
take more than a
few months to
complete.**

I weighted the responses based on the amount of track he or she was interested in buying. Somebody who wanted 400 pieces of code 30 carried more weight than someone who wanted 15 pieces of code 110.

The results were Code 70 rail (the range was 55 to 70). People wanted it plain with a tie length of six feet (range was 5' to 7') and a profile of 6 inches by 5 inches. Spacing was a bit more iffy with the most common answer being, "a tie spacing between" and the second most common was "scale". Brown was the color choice.

The maximum people were willing to pay was \$5.77 per length (range: \$2.50 - \$10.00) People committed to 550 pieces. A number of people ended up feeling grumpy that I was negotiating for code 70 rail, not 55. Lesson #1 – You can't please everyone.

On March 31st, after talking with Robert at Micro Engineering, M.E. offered to make code 55 flextrack as well, provided the rail could be used in

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(Continued from page 31)

the same molds for the code 70 product. And we could choose between weathered or plain rail!

The deal as I understood it had several parts. First, we would pay a total of \$4000 to have track made. We would receive track at dealer discount price as compensation until we used up the \$4000. We would pay 50% up front to finance new molds and the remainder when track was about ready to be shipped.

During the process we would inspect test shots and verify the technical aspects we specified. Bob Hayden and Dave Frary graciously accepted jobs as inspectors.

I thought we might have track in hand by September, before the Narrow Gauge Convention in Portland, Oregon. Considerably longer than I originally thought it would take, but not bad.

Next came the task of collecting deposits and reservations from interested modelers. By April 6th the track was fully subscribed. I began to receive payments from the subscribers.

A small problem arose that caught us off guard but was quickly resolved. Robert Rands told me that the "one tie space between ties" specification seemed awfully tight. I got in touch with Bob Hayden and discussed this with him. He Faxed over a copy of an engineering drawing for an SR&RL #8 turnout. With fresh prototypical dimensional information, the group decided that a center to center spacing of 18" to 19" was the best solution.

The money kept coming in.

On June 24th I called Micro Engineering and was told that the molds were in the process of being made and that I should receive test shots in about two weeks.

On August 8th I was told that the molds were still in the process of being made and that they were about .010 inch away from completion. We were two weeks away from getting test shots.

Delivery of track before the NG convention was not looking good. I noticed a nagging headache.

On September 2nd I got the bad news that the tool and die maker, a new Micro Engineering employee, got the molds wrong. He had measured the space between the rail base flanges instead of between the railheads to determine the gauge. Nagging headache worsened.

On September 28th I learned that some initial test shots had been made and the tooling was being tweaked to eliminate some minor flash problems. With a small amount of luck we should have test shots to examine in one week. Nagging headache goes away.

The test shots arrived on my doorstep October 21st. I immediately sent 2 lengths of track to Dave Frary, and two to Bob Hayden. The other two I kept and brought to the first meet of the Left Coast group on the 24th at Keith Wandry's in San Jose, California.

Aspirin companies reported record sales over the previous two and a half weeks.

On October 28th I learned that code 55 flextrack would probably not be produced. There was too much flash when using code 55 rail in the code 70 molds. I posted a note asking everyone

that had reserved code 55 flextrack to reconsider and change to 70.

Inspection results of the test shots of code 70 flextrack came in. The gauge was too tight, and the spike heads too small to hold the track to the ties. The opinions on the overall appearance of the track range from good to excellent. Beginning of major headache #1.

By Friday, November 19th the reservation changes, additions, and cancellations surrounding the availability of code 55 track have been handled. End of major headache #1. Aspirin companies reported record sales over the previous two and a half weeks.

On December 8th new test shots arrived here. Two pieces went out to Bob, and two to Dave.

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(Continued from page 32)

Bob Hayden gave a green light to the test shots on December 21st. We were all breathing easier.

December 30th brings a green light message from Dave Frary. Also, M.E. said, "We will go ahead with production of the HOn30 track. It should be ready for shipment in two to three weeks. At that time we will package the track for each customer and will then be able to let you know the shipping for each customer." A sigh of relief was heard around the world. Shipping addresses and quantities to be shipped were sent to Micro Engineering.

I received the shipping costs for everyone from Micro Engineering on January 11th, 2000, almost a full year since the project began. I noticed there was an error in the shipping charges calculated for one of the packages going to Australia. When I contacted Micro Engineering about this I found there was a major misunderstanding and the entire deal had fallen through.

I posted a note to the Mail Car on January 21st saying, "What it boils down to is: They now want us to pay for the tooling, then make a gift of it to them. Afterwards, they want us to buy track at retail, then pay ourselves back for the tooling from the difference between the discount price and retail. No reasonable person I know of would consent to anything like this. I have sent them a note demanding return of the cash already paid to them. I do not know if they will provide it. Unless something drastic happens in the next week I will be writing checks to each of you to repay all the money you have sent me for this project. I will begin sending checks in 10 days, and it should take me about 5 days to complete them all."

Lesson #2 – Get it in writing. Beginning of major headache #2.

By January 31st the aspirin manufacturers were once again reporting record sales. Negotiations continued with Micro Engineering. I had put forward a proposal to the people that had reserved track that they be willing to pay retail. This did not sit well and refunds were sent to some of the 52 people that signed up for track.

When March 1st arrived I posted another survey to the Mail Car asking for clarification on track reservations and pricing issues. The three options: 1) Reserve the same quantity of track at retail price. 2) Limit the quantity to the previous total cost (reduce quantity). 3) Full refund.



Not only did the track get made, it came in third in ikebana in the crafts division that year

By March 10th the quantity of track reserved had dropped by 1/3. On the up side, Micro Engineering said they were developing new Hon2-1/2 turnouts. Major headache #2 was still with me, but the throbbing had decreased somewhat.

On the 15th I contacted Robert Rands with the information I gathered about track quantities and cost. I also sent out postal money orders to all that had not responded to the March 1st survey.

By the end of the month Robert Rands consented to sell the quantities of track we wanted at the retail price and without the additional \$4000 charge. I sent a check for the balance due plus

shipping on the 31st.

I was so relieved to finally be done with the "hard part", the items between #2 & #3, that I decided the people that really made this all happen should get something for their effort besides the privilege of paying retail for track that would eventually be available at discount. I created some certificates of appreciation for each of the people that paid for track and for Robert Rands as well. These were all signed and dated April 1st. It just seemed too good a date to pass up.

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(Continued from page 33)

Aspirin manufacturers were puzzled by the sudden fall off in sales after the first quarter.

As final payments came in to me I Faxed over to Micro Engineering the names of the people it was okay to ship to. They didn't actually start to ship the track until the 13th, and then sent the track out of order of release. This causes some of the guys to become a little disturbed. By the 18th all the payments were received except eight so I started sending nastygrams to the tardy payers via the Mail Car. On the 19th Jeff Schumaker took honors as the first to receive his track.

On May 11th I learned that Micro Engineering had sent track out that hadn't been paid for, and that I had not released. This got me ticked off so I called to complain about it and make sure it didn't happen again with the last guy. Well, it happened again with the last guy. Oh well. Fortunately, every one of the 39 people that got track eventually paid what they owed. Some even included a few dollars extra as a way to say thanks. I couldn't accept the additional money. Since they didn't want it back, and I was tired of going to the post office to buy money orders, it has been donated to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society where I am sure it will do more good than it would in my pocket.

One of the best things that happened out of all this was gaining the knowledge that I won't go hungry or thirsty for long. I got so many offers of Brat & beer that I think I could live for months just on that. Another was the opportunity to be in touch with so many genuinely outstanding people across the country and throughout the world who share a common interest. With 20/20 hindsight I have to say I would not hesitate to do it all again - after buying stock in an aspirin company.

The single best thing though, is the fact that Micro Engineering carried through with the project in spite of the difficulties we all faced. We now have a product we wanted and might never have had. Thanks, Micro Engineering, for taking a risk.



Redwood Empire Division Report

By Steve Skold

The RED summer meet is history. We had about 30 people on a beautiful day on the Russian River at Pam and Ron Kaiser's West Side Farm. RED provided coals for the BBQ and soft drinks and water. Ron's Western Pacific was running all afternoon with members of the Sonoma County Hi-Ballers taking turns operating the layout. Notably absent were Harold Mentzer (partial lung removal), Gus Campagna (infected toe) and Don Cabrall (a variety of ailments).

A number of RED members attended the recent NMRA convention in Anaheim. Guiseppe Aymar took a first place in non revenue with a Santa Fe Wheel Car and just missed another 1st in diesel losing by one point (124 to 123 out of 125). Mary Moore-Campagna took a first in Needlework Original.

Our next meeting will be at Monroe Hall on November 15. We can not get in until 1:00 PM so the meeting will start at 1:30 and run until 5:00. Harold Mentzer will do a clinic on culverts which will be after our show and tell on finished projects, recent PCR and NMRA award winners and current projects. We have not located a layout to visit after the meet yet. It will be posted in the next RED Callboard when it comes out at the end of October.

RED member (and PCR President) Ron Plies is now Master Model Railroader number 409. He was awarded this honor at the NMRA Convention in Anaheim. Now you can ask him any question about model railroading and he will have an answer. Ron also is president of the Eel River Valley Model Railroad Club which recently had its annual two week long show in Ferndale in conjunction with the Humboldt County Fair. It is quite a chore to keep running 11 hours day for that period of time. The summer is coming to an end and it is time to get back to building models for next year's convention in Fremont. I am getting ready to head to Portland for the National Narrow Gauge Convention and expect to see some of you there.



Daylight Division Report

By John Houlihan

Daylight Division held its summer meet on August 23rd at the Goleta Depot (in the Santa Barbara area). Following are some of the comments submitted by those who attended. Our meet was organized and hosted by Bruce Morden, who gave this report:

"Thank you to all those who came over to Santa Barbara for the meet last Saturday. We enjoyed having you visit our part of the Division.

"If you missed the meet here is a brief description of the activities.

"About 9:45 the Fresno contingent called to say they were in Carpinteria and were on their way. It was clear that we would run late if we did not start so Bruce Morden pulled out some registration/sign-in forms and we started. When Suzie Paff, Chief Clerk and Paymaster, arrived we handed out the blue tickets for the door prize and were set to go. Dave Grenier, Division Superintendent, did a very brief welcome and then Bruce Morden took the entire group of about 39 on a historic walking tour around the Goleta Depot, telling stories, explaining details and answering questions along the way. After the exterior tour, we were treated to a clinic on installing batteries and sound in G-gauge locomotives presented by John Ryan and Bob Lyon, both members of the local club, South Coast Society of Model Engineers.

"Following the clinic, Dave and Suzie ran the division meeting (get the minutes from Suzie). At the conclusion of the meeting the pizza arrived and we all had lunch. After lunch, we had the traditional white elephant auction. Following the

auction Bruce took some of the group on a tour inside the Depot's waiting room, freight office and HO scale model railroad exhibit. Some of the group took advantage of the free miniature train rides and hand car rides as well as visiting the gift shop in the museums visitor center. Most of the group then hit the road visiting a collection of 8 model railroad layouts from Goleta to Carpinteria. Layouts included James Donlon's HO SP Coast Line, Yves De Bievre's outdoor G-gauge, Bill Everett's O-scale trolleys, Dave's Hobby Central window display layout including N, HO and O, Walter Naumann's N-scale UP&W, Gary Siegel's HO-scale L&N EK Division and his outdoor G-gauge SP Santa Cruz Division, and Bruce Morden's HO-scale SP Santa Barbara Subdivision.

"The weather was great, with a cool overcast morning while we were outdoors warming to a nice sunny afternoon for the layout tour. Everyone seemed to have a very enjoyable time.

"Chuck Harmon is looking for more photos and descriptions of the meet for inclusion in the PCR newsletter. Send them to Chuck at harmonsta@aol.com

"I would also love to hear if you enjoyed the meet and if there are things we might do better next time."



Assembling at the Goleta Depot

Then we received another write-up from our new Superintendent, Dave Grenier:

"Daylight Division held their summer meet in Santa Barbara on Saturday, August 23, at the South Coast Railroad Museum in the historic Goleta

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(Continued from page 35)

Depot under a sky slightly obscured by the usual coastal morning fog. For those of us from the Central Valley, it was a welcome change from our triple-digit summer temperatures. The high for the day (76°) was the same as Fresno's overnight low. VERY welcome, indeed!

On behalf of the Daylight Division, I want to thank Bruce Morden for setting up and coordinating the activities at the meet. Even as busy as he was with the NMRA national convention in Anaheim, he did an exceptional job with the meet. He even got pressed into service as the stand-in Paymaster to register the attendees, as we were a bit late arriving from Fresno. Another big thanks to Bruce for leading us on the informative and educational tours of the Goleta Depot. He certainly is a fountain of information. Thanks also to John Ryan and Bob Lyon for presenting their clinic on installing batteries and sound in G-scale locomotives. Another big thanks to the layout owners who opened their homes and layouts to us.

Following the clinic, we had our business meeting, with more new business than old. Under "Old Business" (from 2006) was putting on a train show in the Fresno area. Bill Scott and Chuck Harmon accepted appointments as co-chairs to follow-up and report back at the next meet in November.

Under "New Business", registration for future meets was set at \$4.00 for PCR members and \$5.00 for non-PCR members. Lunch fare is extra, of course. We also named tentative locations for future meets: November 2008 – Tehachapi; February 2009 – Visalia; May 2009 – Fresno at Marlin Costello's; August 22, 2009 – San Luis Obispo at Hilding Larson's; November 2009 – Santa Barbara. The actual dates and meeting locations will be announced on the PCR and Daylight Division Yahoo Groups and published on the Daylight Division website (www.pcrnmra.org/daylight) and the PCR Master Calendar (<http://www.pcrnmra.org/pcr/calendar/mastercalendar.htm>).

Under "Good of the Division", Marlin Costello

invited everyone to an October 4, 2008, all-day operating session on his HO-scale Goshen and Goosechase Shortline Railroad. Refreshments and lunch will be provided. For more information and to sign-up, go to the Daylight Division website: http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/ops_session.htm.

After the business meeting, Bob Randall led the spirited bidding for the white elephant auction. Then it was time for pizza, followed by handcar and miniature train rides and visits to eight layouts, from N-scale to G-scale. I hope everyone got to see at least some of the layouts before heading for home. Those that didn't missed some wonderful and inspirational models and layouts.

I hope those that could not attend the August meet will join us at the November meet in Tehachapi. As always, train watching at the world-famous Tehachapi Loop will be on the agenda. Don't miss it!

Until then, may all your signals be highballs."

Not to miss out on an opportunity to continue to rant and rave, the Jr. Past Director, Doug Wagner, also chimed in:

"Bruce, the boys from Bakersfield always have enjoyed -- and will continue to enjoy -- the great times we have when visiting Santa Barbara. I just wish that more of the folks that live in the northern part of the Division would attend the Santa Barbara meets, as they are missing out on some great layouts.

We appreciate you going through the hassle of setting up a meet -- especially right on the coat tails of the PCR and National Conventions!!"

Apparently a great time was had by all. I am just sorry that I had another commitment and was unable to attend the meet.

Chuck Harmon,

Editor, The Daylight Observation

Forty Years Later

By Jon Schmidt

In 1963 the Mobile Terminal & Interchange Railway closed up shop. It had served the port of Mobile well during its time. It handled the interchange traffic between the L&N, the Southern, the Frisco, and the GM&O. MT&I was well known for its brace of 0-4-0T Dockside engines, but the pride of its locomotive department was a couple of GP30s with Hobbytown of Boston mechanisms.

Why were its rails torn up? Its owner and president left to attend college in Michigan.

But the MT&I had done its job. Besides providing a lot of fun, over the years it taught me a lot. I learned enough of the business world and commerce and engineering to have a classmate remark, when I won a scholarship, "Schmidt, you and your damn trains!"

Building and running my 4 x 8 foot pike, taught me about mechanical, civil, and electrical engineering. I learned the history of the railroads, and industrial history in general. I worked with the logic required to operate a card-based switching pike, and practiced the discipline of sequential thinking (necessary for computers). I designed things. I solved problems. I wired intricate, for a teenager, control panels.

Though a teen, when the adults formed a model railroad club in Mobile, I was included, since I had the only operating pike.

But I tore up the rails and left for school. What followed was 40 years of armchair

railroading, mostly reading. Other interests intervened, and I never had the space nor took the time to collect or build anything.

About 6 years ago, I bought my current house.

Lots of things attracted me to it, but the most intriguing was an approximately 21 x 20 semi-finished space under the garage. "Here's the train room," I thought. The house had enough else going for it that I didn't have to articulate this particular point to my wife, but I know she understood.

So the germ of Nicasio Northern Railway Co. began to take shape. First, some sketches of a track plan. Then a couple of visits to the local round-robin modelers group. Wow! Talk about intimidating! Museum-class model railroads, and nationally-known

authors and experts. I knew that I wanted to build something, but I felt that I had to build up some "street cred" by doing a significant amount of work myself before I invited them over to help. So I got to work, slowly, as time permitted.

The deeper I got into it, the more I was thrilled and tickled by how the technology of model railroading has changed. DCC and sound make the technology I used on the MT&I seem ancient. I did unbox the stuff from the MT&I. I now refer to "legacy" equipment and buildings: Some cars and structures from the MT&I are/will be in use on the NN Rwy.



(Continued from page 37)

And so the story. In the universe in my “train room,” around the turn of the century some prosperous ranchers and farmers in Nicasio decided that they needed a better way to get their products to market. A railroad was discussed, incorporated, and funded. The plan was to build from Nicasio to Bayside, a small but bustling port on San Francisco Bay.

The Nicasio Southern Railroad laid rails, started running trains, hired the wrong president, and he very quickly stole all the capital and absconded.

A group of San Francisco financial types saw an opportunity to take a functional railroad, and a territory rich with farms, ranches, fisheries, and lumber, and create a viable railway with connections to the national rail network as well as the Bay. The Nicasio Northern Railway was born, and at this time in history (mid-1920’s) is a viable concern. Barely.

My Nicasio Northern starts at Bayside, which has the main passenger and freight yards and the engine servicing facility. Bayside is on a peninsula jutting into the Bay. The wharf and several industries serve the railway and southern Marin .

From Bayside we go north past Backdoor Junction, the connection to an abandoned railroad that went due east. Past Backdoor, the road continues north through the hills (literally) until we hit Skálville. Skálville is the junction to the NN Rwy’s eastern division, the town of Sleepy, and the connection to the rest of the US rail network.

From Skálville the line heads north to the thriving metropolis of Nicasio, with its ranching and farms. Leaving Nicasio, we continue northward to Highland, which is the current terminus of the railway. (The tracks do continue from here, but they are abandoned for lack of business.)

The Nicasio Northern railway weaves through the hills on muddy and slippery roadbed. Need I mention that this is earthquake country? Even if the right of way was once perfectly laid out with straight tangents and smooth grades and curves, it didn’t stay that way. The little steam engines rock and roll as they lead their trains across the pike.

I’ve got the railroad partially laid. In my CST (copious spare time, hah!) the layout has a peninsula in the center of the 12 x 21 foot space, and then runs the rest of the track around the perimeter of the room. Bayside yards and the engine terminal are on the peninsula; I need more track work to fill in the industrial areas.

The mainline is in and, using the “abandoned” segments, we have a twice-around circuit of the room which I can use when I just want to “run trains.” Backdoor is in. Skálville is in, but needs more industrial track. The staging at Sleepy is in. Nicasio only has a passing siding, as does Highland. Both of these towns need a lot more thought and design work.

But I can run trains. The railway is wired with DCC (Digitrax), with four blocks for short circuit isolation. All the engines have DCC, and many have sound. All will. There isn’t any scenery to speak of, just a couple of buildings.

In any case, I think I have enough “street cred” to invite the round-robin group over. That’s going to be fun. It’s only taken forty years.



RED picnic at Rio Vista Junction

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The Golden Spike Award

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

Qualifications for the Golden Spike Award

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

Member _____ NMRA# _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Scale _____ Type of Pike _____

Club Info

ALAMEDA COUNTY CENTRAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

ANTIOCH MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Black Diamond Lines is an HO club located at 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch. Scenery is 95% complete and there is a lot of operating action. In 2006 we celebrated our 25th year of operation (anniversary cars available). We meet Tues. and Fri., 7:30 to 10:00 PM. Runs are the 3rd Fri. of the month. Contact: President Tom Lutrel, 925-609-7093

Web: www.blackdiamondlines.org

BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

E-mail: BobLewis1@sbcglobal.net.

BAY AREA Z MODULE COOPERATIVE

BAZ is a group in the SF Bay Area interested in developing and displaying Z scale modules. Members are building them to the "Z-Bend Track" Module miniModuleZ specs Anyone in Northern California interested in Z Scale railroading is welcome to join us. We meet Sundays 10 AM to 5 PM at members' houses.

Contact: Robert Ray pray59@sbcglobal.net
Yahoo group: groups.yahoo.com/group/BAZ_modules

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

CARQUINEZ MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

Formerly the Vallejo Model Railroad Club, we moved from the Solano Co. Fairgrounds, and are developing a track plan to fit our 36' x 60' room, located on the 2nd floor of the Odd Fellows (IOOF) Lodge, 645 Loring Ave. We are deciding if we will model a prototype or freelance road. We meet Wed., 7:00 to 10:00 PM. Contact: 510-787-6703 (recorder) Mail: P.O. Box 4057, Vallejo, CA 94590-0405

E-mail: LoggingRR@aol.com or LambertRP61@comcast.net Place "Carquinez Model RR Society" in subject line.

Web: www.CarquinezMRS.org

COASTAL VALLEY LINES

The CVL is an informal association of novice to advanced model railroaders who live in Sonoma County. We meet at 7:00 PM the 1st Thu. of the month. We operate our HO modular railroad at local public shows. Contact: Brad Squires, 707-568-4298 or Don Hanesworth, 707-823-9615 Web: <http://cvl.hobby-site.com>

EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

The Eel River Valley is an HO club with a NWP-layout series of modules under construction. We meet Fri., 7:30 PM at the Humboldt County Fair Grounds Commercial Building NW corner, Ferndale. Contact: Ron Plies, 707-725-9063 Mail: P.O. Box 950, Fortuna, CA 95540

ELSIE

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

EMPIRE BUILDERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB (Oakland)

Starting over after a warehouse fire destroyed our layout, we are a small friendly group now constructing an HO layout of no specific origin based in the early 50's era. The mountain division is laid and operating, with a reasonable size yard well along in construction. Work days are Saturday and during summer Tuesday nights. Us retired members also show up occasional weekdays. Central located by I580 and 35th Ave. Dues \$10! Call 510 339 0550 (Bob) for an invite to see/chat/join....

GOLDEN EMPIRE HISTORICAL & MODELING

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

GEHAMS web: www.gehams.com

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM -- EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

The Museum is located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park at Point Richmond. Visit us during weekly public hours as shown on our website or to meet members, inquire about membership and behind the scenes tours come Friday evenings between 7:30 and 10 PM (first Fridays are meetings); behind the scenes tours are also available most Wednesdays between 11 AM and 3 PM when work is going on. New members are welcomed in all Scales – O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction. For general information check the website or call (510) 234-4884 (recording); for membership inquiries call (510) 236-1913 (to 8 PM). For other information or to schedule special events, email PR Director and Museum Secretary John Edginton:

publicity@gsmrm.org. Website: www.gsmrm.org.

HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

MOTHER LODE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The MLMR meets Wed., 7:00 PM in the old historic primary school building in Sutter Creek. Additional meetings normally held 9:00 AM Sat. We are a fully DCC modular HO club. Contact: Joe Stafford, 209-245-5016

(Continued from page 41)

NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Nn3 ALLIANCE

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

Web: www.Nn3.org <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nn3/>

SACRAMENTO MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

SACRAMENTO MODULAR RAILROADERS

Most of our events are operating sessions, where we make up trains in our large switch yard, and send road crews out to switch cars into and out of industries at the towns along the main line. The club owns a large main yard, the corner modules, some special modules, and some rolling stock. Members own their own modules and rolling stock. Contact: Dick Witzens, 916-684-1987

Web: <http://saccentral.railfan.net/>

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

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

SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

The SLHRS models the SP from Oakland/San Leandro to just east of Norden using the tri-level Donner Pass plan featured in the March '98 Model Railroader. It's housed in the former S.P., San Leandro depot, located at 1302 Orchard Ave., San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions Sat. 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM and Tues. 7:30 - 9:30 PM, business meetings the 1st Fri. at 7:30 PM. Contact: Pat LaTorres, 510-276-3121 E-mail: duhnerd@pacbell.net

SAN LUIS OBISPO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

SLOMRA members are actively engaged in HO, N, O and On30 scales. Work & run sessions on our N-scale modular layout monthly, and we are actively seeking new members to join us! Evening meetings on the 3rd Mon. of every month - 7pm at the Oceano Depot in Oceano. Contact info: Web: www.slomra.org

Email: info@slomra.org. Emailing list: groups.yahoo.com/group/SLOMRA. Jim Keating 805-458-8734

SILICON VALLEY LINES

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

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

SOUTH COAST SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

We meet every 3rd Tues. at 7:30 PM, and other times. The club has no address, but consists of enthusiasts of all scales and prototypes in the Santa Barbara area, and has a collection of railroad books and videos for loan to members. Activities include operations and work sessions at member layouts, and field trips. Membership is \$2 per month. Contact: Secretary Walter Naumann, 805-564-1359 E-mail: WINaumann@aol.com

SISKIYOU MODEL RAILROAD CLUB,

located at the Yreka Western RR Depot, 300 East Miner St., Yreka, CA 96097. Passenger operations, and club layout open, begin June 7, Wednesdays thru Sundays. at about 10:00 am. Meeting Night is Thursdays at 7:00 pm. Exit 775 from I-5. Info Glenn Joesten, 530-340-2537 or Tom Brass, 530-842-4921, or email glenn476@4fast.net

TIDEWATER SOUTHERN RAILWAY HISTORICAL

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

TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The TCSME is temporarily without a home or layouts. The Niles Depot in Fremont is being moved by the City of Fremont back to its original location in downtown Niles. It will be part of the new Niles Plaza complex. We are in the process of designing new HO and N scale layouts. The N scale layout will be in the Niles Depot with an expanded footprint. The HO scale layout will be housed in the renovated Niles Freight Building, also part of the new Niles Plaza. We are looking for new members that are interested in helping us design, build, and run on the new layouts. Please contact Stanley Keiser, 510-791-1504, sbkeiser@juno.com for more information. Also visit our web sight at <http://nilesdepot.railfan.net>.

WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The WCMRS, located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, is open the last Fri. of the month from 8 to 10 PM for operations. Fares are \$2 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$3 for adults. Membership is always open to interested HO modelers. Contact: 925-937-1888 (recorder) Web: www.wcmrs.org

If you would like your club listed, send a brief description and contact information to whk58@pacbell.net or Bill Kaufman, 32 Salvador Way, San Rafael, CA 94903



CALLBOARD - PCR

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

• President	Ron Plies, MMR	(707) 725-9063	ron@ronpliesinsurance.com
• Vice-President	Pat LaTorres	(510) 317-7456	duhnerd@pacbell.net
• Treasurer	Larry Altbaum	(925) 736-8160	emerbaum@msn.com
• Secretary	Rich Kolm	(510) 538-8973	IronhorseK@comcast.net
• Director, Daylight Division	John Houlihan	(559) 435-0874	john@irishtracklayer.com
• Director, Coast Division	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
• Director, Sierra Division	Mary Moore-Campagna	(530) 426-9055	marycmoore@campagna.com
• Director, Redwood Empire Div.	Carol Alexander	(707) 537-8108	carolnma@msn.com
• Director, Hawaiian Division	Eric Minton	(808) 947-5147	train@ericminton.biz

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Ron Plies, MMR	(707) 725-9063	ron@ronpliesinsurance.com
• Budget & Finance Committee	[President, Vice-President, and Treasurer]		
• By-Laws & Manual Comm. Chair.	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Ballot Committee Chairperson	Jim Providenza	(415) 472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
• Honors Committee Chairperson	Ray deBlicek	(510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com
• Storekeeper	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Audit Committee Chairperson	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Doug Wagner	(661) 589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
• Member Services Chairperson	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRCD@aol.com
• Asst. Member Services Chair.	Jim Long	(530) 676-1798	jimclong@sbcglobal.net
• Membership Promotion Chair.	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Aid Committee Chair.	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
• Education Committee Chair.	Chuck Mitchell	(925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• Special Interests Coord. Chair	Dave Parks	(650) 961-7644	bearwestern@comcast.net

PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Editor, <i>Branch Line</i>	Bill Kaufman	(415) 491-0543	whk58@pacbell.net
• Webmaster	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	khurley@pcrnra.org

CONVENTION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
• 2008 Fresno -- Chairperson	John Houlihan	(559) 435-0874	john@irishtracklayer.com
• 2009 Fremont -- Chairperson	Chuck Mitchell	(925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• 2010 Reno/Sparks -- Chairperson	Raymond Rich	(775) 358-8571	ray@ritch.net

CONTEST DEPARTMENT

• Manager (see Div. chairs below)	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

• Manager (see Div. chairs below)	Jack Burgess, MMR	(510) 797-9557	jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com
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NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

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

• Superintendent	Dave Grenier	(559) 297-1345	grenida@pacbell.net
• Chief Clerk & Paymaster	Suzanne Paff	(559) 645-5145	suzannepaff@comcast.net
• Editor, <i>Daylight Observation</i>	Chuck Harmon	(559) 299-4385	harmonsta@aol.com
• Contest Chairperson	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Dave Grenier	(559) 297-1345	grenida@pacbell.net
• Membership	Doug Wagner	(661) 589-0391	carldw@aol.com
• Member Aid (Key Contact)	Bob Pethoud	(559) 438-7705	pethoud@comcast.net

COAST DIVISION

• Superintendent	John Marshall	(925) 461-0206	ntrak@sbcglobal.net
• Chief Clerk	Tom Crawford	(510) 790-0371	CrawfordT@asme.org
• Paymaster	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRCD@aol.com
• Editor, <i>Coast Dispatcher</i>	Tom Crawford	(510) 790-0371	CrawfordT@asme.org
• Contest Chairperson	John Sing	(650) 372-0765	singj@us.ibm.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Kermit Paul, MMR	(925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Membership	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Aid (Key Contact)	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com

SIERRA DIVISION

• Superintendent	Jim Long	(530) 676-1798	jimclong@sbcglobal.net
• Chief Clerk	Bob Warner	(916) 772-7502	bwarner1@softcom.net
• Paymaster	Al Rowe	(916) 961-9911	hofunar@aol.com
• Editor, <i>Short Line</i>	Don Schmitt	(530) 742-0929	dschmitt911@aol.com
• Contest Chairperson	Norman Morris	(530) 872-3894	normanmorris@sbcglobal.net
• Achievement Program Chair.	Dave Bayless	(530) 887-8880	davebay@pacbell.net

REDWOOD EMPIRE DIVISION

• Superintendent	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Chief Clerk & Paymaster	Ed Merrin	(707) 542-3620	edmerrin@earthlink.net
• Editor, <i>Callboard</i>	John Rolston	(707) 938-5478	jrolston@pacbell.net
• Contest Chairperson	Giuseppe Aymar	(707) 584-1477	Giuseaymar@aol.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Harold Mentzer	(707) 226-5153	HSMentzer@aol.com
• Membership	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net

HAWAIIAN DIVISION

Hawaiian Division offices and positions are currently vacant.

BRANCH LINE
530 FIG TREE LANE
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

Calendar

October 11, 2008, **Sierra Division Fall Picnic**, Nevada State Railroad Museum, 2180 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV

October 18, 2008 - 1:00 - 5:00 pm, **PCR Board of Directors Meeting**, Fremont Marriott Silicon Valley Hotel, Fremont, CA.

October 25, 2008 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, Open House, **Fresno Model Railroad Club**, Pioneer Village, 1321 Betty Lane, Selma, CA

October 25 & 26, November 1 & 2, 2008 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, 2008 Annual Fall Show, **Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club**, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA

October 31 8:00 to 10:00 pm, November 28 to 30, 2008 Friday: 2:00 to 10:00 pm, Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Model Train Show, **Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society**, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

November 1 & 2, 2008 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Fall Train Show and Open House, **South Bay Historical Railroad Society**, Santa Clara Caltrain Station, Santa Clara, CA

November 8 & 9, 2008 - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, **32nd Annual International Railfair**, Placer County Fairgrounds, 800 All American City Blvd, Roseville, CA

December 6, 2008 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, **Carquinez Model Railroad Society**, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. Info: Greg Ockander (510) 787-6703 or cmrs.trainclub@gmail.com

December 6 & 7, 2008 - Saturday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, Train Show, **San Joaquin Valley Division TTOS**, Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, 900 North Broadway, Turlock, CA. Info: Bob Silva (209) 838-2703 / rsilva61@aol.com or Steve Waggoner (209) 634-4583 /alconutsw@juno.com.

