



# BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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## Climb Aboard The Club Car!

By Jack Burgess, MMR, 2015 Convention Publicity Chairman

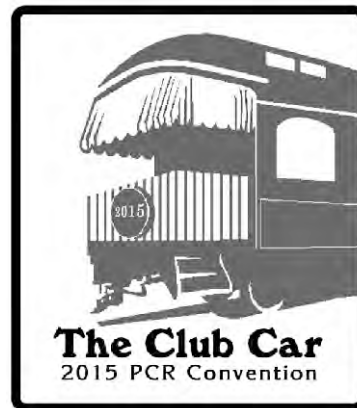
Planning is moving quickly for the 2015 PCR Convention in Newark (in the San Francisco Bay Area) on May 13-17, 2015!

### Prototype and Layout Tours

One of the Prototype Tours planned for the Convention is to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, which is one of the foremost national security research and development laboratories in the world. Founded in 1952 as a second nuclear weapons lab, LLNL has grown into a multi-program facility that includes stewardship of the nation's nuclear stockpile, advanced conventional weapons, biotechnology for medicine and counter terrorism, energy development, high energy density physics (HEDP), and new age facilities needed to perform research in all areas.

The half-day tour will involve presentations and demonstrations on the history of the Lab and overviews of current programs. A highlight of the trip will be a tour to the National Ignition Facility (operational constraints permitting), the world's largest laser used for research into HEDP, material properties in pressure and temperature realms previously unattainable, and the development of fusion energy.

Bus transportation between the Lab and the hotel is included. Note that all participants will be required to fill out an information form for pre-clearance into the Lab. The tour will be held on Thursday, May 14 and is priced at \$25. The number of participants will be limited. If it sells out, ticket allocation will be by convention registration number. All bus tours will be prioritized the same way. Ticket sales will begin as soon as the rest of the bus tours are finalized so that attendees can make informed choices.



The El Portal Local rolls through Incline on Jack Burgess' Yosemite Valley Railroad.

There are currently 41

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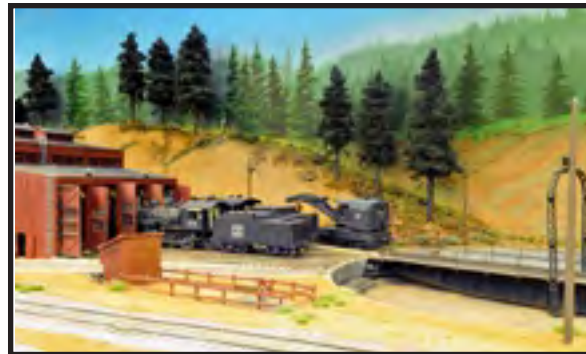
## Club Car 2015 (Cont.)

layouts open for self-guided tours during seven morning and afternoon half-day tracks. There will be one evening track for layouts nearest the hotel. A total of 13 Op Sessions are currently scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. There will also be one Op Session on Saturday and another one on Sunday. More information will be available at a later date. Here are some more of the layouts which will be on tour.

### Clinics

Would you be interested in giving a clinic on an interesting aspect of railroading?

Would you like to present an oral history of experiences in railroading? If so, please consider signing up as a clinic presenter for the Convention. The clinic signup and information form can be found on the Convention web site at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/convention2015/clinics.html>.



**No. 77 is eased into the scratchbuilt roundhouse at Keddie on Jim Dias' Western Pacific Railroad.**

Simply fill out the information form and email it to [cc2015clinics@pcrnmra.org](mailto:cc2015clinics@pcrnmra.org). You may also send the completed form to:

Chuck Catania  
2330 Stonecress St.  
Gilroy, CA 95020

Here is your opportunity to share your railroad knowledge and experiences with others! We would love to have you participate.

### Convention Hotel and Registration Rates

The Convention Hotel is the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Newark-Fremont. It is important that our block of rooms be filled in order to have access to the rooms needed for clinics, contests, the Banquet, and other activities. The room rate for our Convention is \$97 per night for a king or double. To obtain this rate, be sure to use our Group Code which is PCA. Note that this is PCA and not PCR.



**A pair of K's work the Highline on Jim Vail's Glenwood and Black Creek Railroad.**

If you haven't registered for the Convention yet, please note that fares will increase effective January 26, 2015. The Basic Fare will increase from \$29 to \$39 while the Full Fare (including the Banquet and Business Breakfast) will increase from \$89 to \$99.

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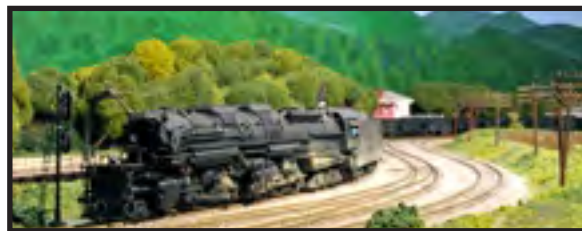
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Inquiries regarding membership application, renewal, or change of address should be directed to the NMRA, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119.

**Club Car 2015 (Cont.)**

Online registration is available right now! Log onto the Convention website at [www.pcrnmra.org/conv2015/](http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2015/) to register or get more information. 🚂



**Westbound Extra 1929 waits for a clear signal at Alleghany, Virginia on Andy Schnur's Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad.**

**President's Message**

by Pat LaTorres, President, PCR/NMRA



First off, since I know that this issue of the Branch Line is going to every member of the region, not just those that regularly subscribe, I would like to extend a greeting to all of our membership. If you are not a regular subscriber, I would ask you to consider adding a subscription when you renew your membership. After taking time to read the articles that appear in this issue, I believe that you will agree that you won't get this much quality in most of the hobby publications, for just \$8.00 a year – that's only \$2.00 per issue, much less than the rest of the other printed publications. Also, though I will mention it again in this column, please consider getting involved in the activities and/or administration of either your local division, or the PCR. If you have questions about whether you are getting what you want or need from the NMRA, this is one way that YOU can have a direct input on what you (and your fellow members) receive in exchange for your dues. No matter what you might want to believe, those of us that help run the local face of the NMRA do NOT have any direct link to the Oracle at Delphi, we're just plain old muddlers trying to give our friends something which they can make use of and any help is always appreciated.

As I start on the meat of this issue's column I find myself thinking about all of the people that I have met over my years in this hobby, that would include those that were just passing acquaintances, those that became friends within the railroad hobby – both model railroading and railfanning – and those that have become close and dear personal friends with our lives sharing experiences both with and without trains. This is one of those benefits of the NMRA that one just cannot quantify, no matter how we try to explain it. With the exception of the twenty-eight years that I spent involved in motorsports, I cannot think of any aspect of my life where I made so many truly close and dear friends that were spread over such a wide range – both geographically and socially. I am going to take most of this column to try and speak to this opportunity that is available to each of us in the NMRA.

To try and put things in perspective, over the years I have been involved in both the performing and production side of the rock-and-roll business, where over thirty years I met people working at all levels of the "music biz". I also spent several years in the late '60s through the mid '70s

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## President (Cont.)

where I was a competitor in bicycle racing at the national level, traveling across the United States and Canada. Yet, only in motorsports and trains have I met so many people where what created a relationship seemed to come down to the basics of what kind of person you were, where it seemed that you were only judged on your personal merits. And more importantly if you passed that judgement, you were accepted for what you were, not where you sat on the “social ladder”. In both of these avocations – and yes, that really is what they are – you are judged by what you can and are willing to do, not by how rich or famous you might be. And maybe not surprisingly, there have been more than a few cases where I met the same people in both environments (the PCR’s late Bob Booth and Charlie Bedard being just two of these). Though I do find it interesting, how many folks I have met that share a serious involvement in both auto racing and trains. I have sat down at model railroad events and shared a cold beer with people who could buy or sell me from their pocket change and with others that probably couldn’t handle my monthly gasoline bill. Yet, the only considerations seemed to be, what railroad do you model, what scale(s) do you work in, what was your latest project, would you like to come over for an operating session, etc.

Most of us that have been involved in this hobby for a while seem to enjoy just talking trains. I have managed to learn something from pretty much every modeler that I’ve taken the time to talk with. More importantly, I have somehow managed to have something worth passing on to many others. This is quite probably the greatest benefit of model railroading, that the process of learning is continuous. Every time I look at someone else’s layout, I seem to learn some new technique that I can use to improve my modeling – be it rolling stock, structures, scenery, or operating processes. At every operating session that I attend, I learn just a bit more about how the real railroads operated. Each time I talk with someone about a given railroad, I learn something new about railroad history and often about the history of my country or community. And best of all, I seem to always learn just a bit more about these people who have become my friends and often traveling companions. If you enjoy learning (and as one that lived my childhood with a school teacher as a parent, that became an ingrained part of my mental DNA), there are more opportunities for that than one can even begin to count. I have the pleasure of knowing among my model railroad friends, lawyers, police officers, mechanics, truck drivers, PhDs, machinists, school teachers, and common craft workers, political liberals and conservatives, but they all have one thing in common – their love of trains and things railroad. Model railroading is one of the most democratic hobbies in the world, the only thing most modelers look at is what you choose to bring to the table. Yes, there are a few puttsies in this hobby, but no more than in any other group of the same size.

The next time you talk to someone at a division meet or a convention – be it regional, national, or focused on some niche segment of the hobby – take some time and try to find out a bit more about how that person ended up in the hobby. This would include the basic, “how did you get involved in trains?” question. But, take it a bit farther and ask about how they got involved in the type of modeling that they’re doing today, whether it be narrow gauge logging operations or modern class one mainline freight trains. You may find it quite interesting, especially since you will often learn a bit

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## President (Cont.)

more about your friend and the path to this point in their life. (Please note that I have not mentioned many of the people in my experience by name, mostly because I don't want to put them on the spot.) You may notice that I continue to speak about getting to know people beyond their involvement in trains and model railroading. I have always felt that no matter how involved I am in various forms of model railroading, I always view it as just a hobby – there is so much more to the “quality of life” that reaches far beyond this hobby. That being said, this experience that reaches beyond trains often adds so much to the quality of the hobby as well.

In saying this, I ask that you take this as an opportunity get involved in model railroading activities in our region (or, if you are reading this, but are from outside the PCR, in your home region) and find one of those non-quantifiable benefits of NMRA membership. The next time you sign up for a railroad or model railroad convention, take some time and look outside your regular area of interest and see what might be waiting for you there. Take the opportunity and spend some time with folks that you might not know as well, you might find a new friend just waiting to meet you. But most of all, have fun.

Speaking of which, I do hope that most of you have taken the opportunity to register for the next two big NMRA activities coming along. The first would be the 2015 PCR Regional convention, coming to Newark this next May. David Parks and his team are putting together what looks to be a great convention, with a focus on model railroad clubs and how they can contribute to our enjoyment of the hobby. The second would be the 2015 NMRA National Convention, which will be just north of us, in Portland, Oregon. Both of these events hold a lot in store for those that choose to attend. This coming June 20<sup>th</sup>, the Bay Area Prototype Modelers (BAPM) will be having their annual meet, in Richmond. As we get closer, this event should be showing up in the PCR Master Calendar, on the region's website at [www.pcrnmra.org](http://www.pcrnmra.org). A bit farther out, the Bay Area Garden Railway Society (BAGRS) will be putting on the 2016 National Garden Railway Convention, July 4<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup> in Santa Clara. Even if you are not a garden railway modeler, there will be several clinics that will be of benefit to any modeler and there will be over 60 fantastic garden railways to visit as part of the layout tours. There is more information on this event at their web site, [www.bagrs.org](http://www.bagrs.org). I hope to see you at all of these events.

Moving on to some regional matters, the PCR Board of Directors had their regular mid-year meeting this past October and, in spite of our best efforts, it seems like we got a lot accomplished – though the meeting took a bit longer than I really wanted. For those who were there, thank you. It always makes it a lot easier for those of us on the board when we're not working in a vacuum. I would also like to take a moment and publicly thank the PCR board for the time and effort that they spend on your behalf. While in general it isn't too much time, for some that travel from afar there is a cost of both time and money involved and I want them to know that I truly appreciate their effort. Especially a BIG thank you to Mel Jones (who drove down from Carson City, NV) and Dave Grenier (who drove up from the Fresno area) for their contribution. These people are making this effort for you, the members of the PCR. Please let your Division Directors (and the others that work both on and with the BoD) that you appreciate the effort that they put forth for you.

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## President (Cont.)

At the mid-year meeting the board has taken some steps toward the creation of a new logo for the region and we hope to have the final word on this at the general membership meeting in May. Though right now, I would like to say a quick "Thank You" to Russ Clover for the design work that he has put into this project. If accepted, this new logo may (at least initially) be more of a supplement to the existing logo, rather than a direct replacement. More to come on this.

Finally, this issue of the Branch Line should have the ballots for President and Vice President of the region and I would ask you to please turn these around and get them mailed in quickly. While there may not be a wide selection of members running for these positions, it really does count for a lot from the candidates position when they see that the membership cares enough to vote in these elections. And again, please let them know that you appreciate the effort that they are willing to put forward on your behalf. 🚂

## From the Fireman' Seat

By Ed Merrin, Vice-President, PCR/NMRA

Today I will be making a lot of statements for which there is minimal or no actual established facts to support. So if you see anything that is outright ridiculous, offensive, or downright mistaken, please feel free to respond accordingly. I don't have thin skin about this at all.



And as usual, the topic is the aging of the NMRA.

When I first starting riffing on this I encountered some reluctance to accepting the fact that the NMRA was an aging organization without enough "backfill" of newly entered younger members to keep it going indefinitely. One argument I heard or read frequently is that younger people don't join, that you had to wait for the kids to grow up and the work career to wind down for them to consider it. Although this might be somewhat true, I found it interesting that some of the people making that case had themselves joined at an early age.

Anyway, some time back I published in these very pages an analysis (with pictures!), showing that our average age of PCR members was increasing over time and that our members had in fact joined at an age that was quite younger than retirement time. If you want to refresh your memory, check out the January-March 2012 and then the July-September 2013 issues. In the first instance members had joined at an average age of 44 and were now 62 years old on average. Less than two years later the average age had increased to 67, but the age of joining was still about the same. Meanwhile I've seen on-line discussions citing other sources, perhaps more rigorous than my efforts, showing the same basic trend nationwide, as well as a decrease in total membership.

So given that we are in fact an aging organization the only questions remaining are whether it matters to us or not and if it does what to do about it.

Both of these questions have been churning around for sometime on

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## Vice-President (Continued)

the Yahoo forums, with endless go-arounds on possible strategies for attracting and keeping younger members (sometimes defined as people under sixty!) without disenfranchising our current members. I usually refrain from adding comments myself because I find it difficult to come up with something that hasn't already been said. Much of the time PCR luminary Bill Kaufman says most of what I would, but in a more informed manner, with facts at his fingertips. Some of the ideas bouncing around are quite good. At least people are trying, which is good.

Handwriting on the wall comes in a variety of forms. One example is what has happened recently to Railroad Model Craftsman (yes, I know it has been rescued, at least for now). This was a hard hit to take. For myself, I recall pages from RMC from my preteen youth that inspired me, long before I joined the NMRA in my late forties. But despite the high regard in which we older modelers hold that venerable publication, it just wasn't making enough money to cover costs. Hopefully the new publisher succeed with its rebirth, but only time will tell.

In contrast to RMC, the Kalmbach equivalent, Model Railroader, is apparently doing just fine. Some of my modeling buddies view MR as a glossed up, superficial magazine that caters to beginners and neglects the true craftsman/hobbyist. So how could such an unfair situation come about?

Well, let me put my spin on this. I have subscribed to both of these magazines for years. In recent times MR has bombarded me via electronic media. There are newsletters with embedded videos, links to a website with discussion groups and online sales of special extras, loads of annoying email adds for back issues, special publications, and new books (with are often compilations of old MR articles). At one point there was a rather brash promotion for a video magazine, similar to what the record clubs used to do. You know, send something unsolicited that you can either pay for or go to the trouble of returning. If I Google a model railroad topic, I'm more likely than not to find links to discussion forums on the MR site. And of course, if I browse the magazine racks at my local Safeway or Barnes & Noble I might find MR there. But certainly not RMC.

Model Railroader, as I learned from lurking in the forums, has more Facebook "likes" than the NMRA has on its page. This is a clue that there are plenty of model railroad people out there that are not part of the NMRA.

Unless I have been napping too much or suffer from some sort of selective amnesia, I have never seen anything like that coming from Carstens. It's as if you don't know about RMC already it isn't for you. And of course there are less and less of us that already know about RMC. Which, by the way, is the sort of model railroading snobbishness that could relegate the NMRA to the dustbins of history. The fact that MR reaches out to beginners is part of their success. Did I mention that it includes articles meant for beginners?

Fortunately the NMRA has been working to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is a digital newsletter, the website is undergoing dramatic changes for the better, and so on. But whenever changes are made there will always be some that feel left out. One recent Yahoo entry pointed out that a significant proportion of one Midwest division's members live in rural areas with limited email and no high speed Internet service. They would be left out in the

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## Vice-President (Continued)

cold by many of the options to go digital with newsletters and announcements. Figuring out how to balance the needs and interests of existing members versus potential younger members is no easy feat.

I'd like to wrap up this meandering column by describing a personal encounter with one of these mythical younger modelers. This young man recently graduated from high school and is headed for military service. He has been a train nerd for years and joined the NWP Historical Society at an age when his parents had to transport him to meetings. He quickly dove into historical research and has given impressive slide talks about areas of interest to him. These have largely focused on more recent, e.g., post Southern Pacific, NWP history, where he has made a mark for himself. Most of the older membership of the Historical Society is more interested in older steam and narrow gauge days on the NWP. He and I got together because he was interested in seeing my NWP flavored layout before he went off to boot camp.

He arrived on a bicycle, carrying a box with several of his own locomotives. These included Athearn "blue box" SD9s, one of them decorated for California Northern. He spent at least two hours running trains, including my double-headed Eureka Southern GP-38s and his own locomotives. During the process he shot photos of the trains with his phone and texted them to his girlfriend, who is apparently planning a Eureka Southern layout herself. He was knowledgeable about DCC and his preferred prototype, including the Gen Set diesel currently running on the NWP. He was also up to speed on various diesels that ran on the NWP tracks in various post steam eras.

Here's the rub. Despite his high level of interest, obsession if you will, he had no interest in joining the NMRA. And yet he is an active member of the Historical Society! He has also been involved with a local modular group based on the NWP. Why not the NMRA? He cited the cost and his limited budget, but that didn't make sense to me. Somehow he managed to obtain and decorate locomotives, even adding decoders. The only answer I can think of is that nothing that goes on in the NMRA, at least in his understanding of it, is attractive enough for him to make a commitment.

This is a far cry when the NMRA was the face of model railroading, virtually creating the hobby we know with its implementation of standards and recommended practices. Sounds like we have an image problem to overcome here. This is a challenge, yes, but one that is worthwhile pursuing.



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## Call Board - Divisions (Cont.)

### RED (Cont.)

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#### Estate Counselor

Don Clauder

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(no e-mail)

### Hawaiian Division

*(offices are currently vacant)*



## Calendar

**NOTE: For details on any event see the PCR website, [www.pcrnmra.org](http://www.pcrnmra.org).**

**January 17 & 18, 2015** - 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Weekend Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**January 23 to 25, 2015** - Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend. Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA Layout Design and Operations Special Interest Groups.

**January 30, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

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## Achievement Program

by Jack Burgess, MMR, Manager, PCR Achievement Department

We all enjoy this hobby more because of the numerous volunteers who work on our behalf at the National level, produce our regional conventions, and help out at our divisional meets. All of these people can be referred to as Association Volunteers which is a category under the Achievement Program. Like the other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available on the Internet at the NMRA site, [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). Knowing that this is a category for the Master Model Railroader program might encourage you to volunteer at one of these levels. For those who have already volunteered, submit your paperwork!



The intent of the requirements for Association Volunteer is to reward those modelers who volunteer at the National, Regional, or Divisional level of the NMRA. A total of 60 time units (TUs) are required to satisfy this requirement. There are a number of ways to accrue these credits. For example:

- Active satisfactory service as a National committee member or Chairman of a Regional committee receives 2 TUs per month.
- Active satisfactory service on a Regional committee or Divisional Chairman is good for 1 TU per month.
- Service as a Divisional officer or director is worth 1 TU per month.
- Active satisfactory service as a Division committee or board member equals ½ TU per month.

While these TUs are typical for those given for elected or appointed officials, there are other TUs which are available for volunteer efforts:

- Judges at NMRA sponsored model contests are given 3 TUs per event for judging National contests, 2 TUs for Regional contests, and 1 TU for assisting at Divisional contests.
- Modelers who open their layouts for tours are also eligible for credit at the rate of 3 TUs per day for National, Regional, and Divisional events (with a maximum of 12 TUs for a National convention, 6 TUs for Regional events, and 3 TUs for Divisional events.)
- Individuals who participate in modular layout displays at National, Regional, and Divisional meets are also eligible for 3 TUs per day, with the same maximums as for layout tours.
- Note that there is generally a maximum of 48 TUs of credit for any one National convention, 24 TUs for any one Regional convention, and a maximum of 6 TUs for any one Divisional convention.

There are a number of committees at the Regional level. So what exactly constitutes a "committee?" Basically, just about any office or function that isn't covered under Association Official. Most other officers in a Division (or Region) are considered Committee Chairmen. For example, if your Division has a person who runs the contest at the monthly meeting, they can be considered the "Contest Committee Manager". Your local AP

Continued on Page 10

## Calendar (Cont.)

**January 31, 2015** - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sierra Division Meet, Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society, 1990 Grand Ave., Sacramento, CA in the morning and 1st Christian Church, 3901 Folsom Blvd, Sacramento, CA. in the afternoon.

**February 5 – 7, 2015** - O Scale West / S West Meet, Hyatt Regency, 5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA.

**February 21, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Winter Meet, HobbyTown USA, 102 E. Barstow Ave, Fresno, CA.

**February 21, 2015** - 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Redwood Empire Division Winter Meet, Creekside Village Clubhouse, off Arnold Ave (CA-116), Sonoma, CA

**February 27, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**March 1, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, BPOE Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501.

**March 14, 2015** - 9:00 am to 10:00 pm, Winterail 2015 Railroadiana Show and Sale, Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 33 W. Alpine Avenue, Stockton.

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## Achievement (Continued)

representative is a member of the “Region AP Committee” and so on.

Individuals who work just the day of an event (for example, at a Convention registration desk) receive credit for one month’s work as a committee member.

The bottom line—keep track of those hours of service to the hobby! The easiest way to do this is to obtain a Record Form (available at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)) and have it signed by your local AP Chairman at the time or another official. For open house events, you may also be able to use the official Convention Program as verification of your service to the hobby.

Once you have accumulated a total of 60 certified TUs, complete a Statement of Qualifications and submit it along with a copy of your Membership card.

I am pleased to announce the following Certificate of Achievement awards since the last issue of the Branch Line:

- Mike Blumensaadt - Master Builder - Structures  
Congratulations Mike!

If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My phone number, address, and e-mail address are listed in the Call Board on Page 6. 📞

## Hip Hip Hooray, Hip Hip Hoorey, Hip Hip Hooray

by Guiseppe Aymar, Chairman, PCR Contest Department



**Hear Yee, hear Yee, hear Yee** ladies and gentlemen and all ferroequinologists in general, changes are coming to the contest room at your next regional convention. Just to show you that your contest management team did not hibernate during the off season (oh my, says I, what month is this? Oh good it is still early winter, YAWN) we have proposed and accepted modifications to how the contest is to be run and how it is presented at the award ceremony, all in the interest of fairness and in saluting the participants in this wonderful venue that is so much part of our annual get-togethers.

### First change

I submitted a proposal to your PCR’s BOD (Board of Directors) to change the language in the PCR’s Contest Directory to eliminate the point disparity assigned to the scratch-building category between a kit-built and a scratch-built model, and instead assign the full 15 points available to either entry so as to eliminate a seemingly inherent bias toward the scratchbuilt models. The judges assigned to this category will be the ultimate decision makers, not the point penalty. The BOD voted unanimously to adopt the change which will become standard procedure beginning with your next regional convention.

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## Calendar (Cont.)

**March 14 & 15, 2015** - Sat:  
10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sun:  
10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Golden  
Empire Historical & Modeling  
Society's Annual Model Train  
Show, Horace Massey  
Building, Kern County  
Fairgrounds, 1142 South P  
Street, Bakersfield, CA.

**March 14 & 15, 2015** - 11:00  
am to 6:00 pm, Weekend  
Model Train Show, Walnut  
Creek Model Railroad Society,  
in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena  
Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**March 19 - 21, 2015** -  
BayRails VI, DoubleTree by  
Hilton Hotel Newark-Fremont,  
39900 Balentine Drive,  
Newark, CA. Eighteen Bay  
Area railroads will be open for  
operating sessions.

**March 21 & 22, 2015** - 10:00  
am to 5:00 pm, Spring Train  
Show, Black Diamond Lines  
Model Railroad Club, 425  
Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch,  
CA.

**March 27, 2015** - 8:00 pm to  
10:00 pm, Monthly Model  
Train Show, Walnut Creek  
Model Railroad Society, in  
Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista  
Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**March 28, 2015** - 7:00 am to  
4:00 pm, Swap Meet and Open  
House, Santa Susana Railroad  
Historical Society, Santa  
Susana Park Pavilion. 6503  
Katherine Road, Simi Valley,  
CA.

**March 28 & 29, 2015** - 10:00  
am to 5:00 pm, Spring Train

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## Contest (Continued)

### Second change

Given that our awards banquet is always well attended (thank you, all of you) and thus requires a large room for seating, it follows that it becomes difficult for many of you to see the person who walks up to the podium to receive their award. We are now including on the big screen a picture of the modeler next to the entry being awarded making the whole process friendlier. The other side of the coin is that a picture will have to be taken at the time of registering the entry, so please comb your hair, brush your teeth and look your spiffiest when you come to the contest room to enter your model so that you will look your best on the wide screen. (Somehow I always manage to look my worst when I get my picture taken for my driving license; it looks like a mug shot at the police station, good grief!!!).

As you know, we are always looking for volunteer judges; everything seems to click when we have 20 to 22 judges present. The more judges assigned to a team means better, or I should say, fairer allocation of points to the models removing any potential doubts of nepotism. The process will unfold much faster so no one gets tired, even though we do supply chairs and AMBU bags!!! So, why should I become a judge when it will take away from my attending a clinic or possibly a tour? Why should I do that? I have paid to attend the convention, let someone else do that! For one, we all have paid to attend the convention and imagine, if we all had that attitude who would run the convention? No one. We will all be waiting for the other person to do something. Secondly, judging will give you the satisfaction of being an active participant and not just a spectator; I see it in the faces of the judges once their task is completed, or, or, or, was that satisfied face made because the judges' lunch was so tasty? Humm!!!

As you gather from this column we are always looking at improving the contest so convention attendees get the best show we can offer, thusly I am always open to suggestions on possible improvements. Just drop me a note ([giuseymar@aol.com](mailto:giuseymar@aol.com)) or verbally elicit your suggestions. It is after all YOUR CONTEST; I am only the manager!

See you at the next PCR Convention! Bring a model, of course! 🚂

## The Answers Are Out There: Paper Shell Scenery

By Robert Pethoud, Daylight Division Member Aid Chairman

In the photo on the next page an SP way freight emerges from a conifer forest somewhere in western Oregon on its way to the end of a bucolic branch line. The date is the early 1950s and the action takes place on my Fall Creek Branch, an HO scale portable switching layout. I'm sure you'll agree that the scenery on a model railroad does far more than any other element of our hobby to create a realistic setting in which to enjoy the trains we love. Whether our primary interest is operation, photography, or just watching the locomotives roll by, believable scenery greatly enhances the enjoyment.

Unfortunately, model scenery construction is intimidating to many modelers. How many of you have built the benchwork, laid the track, installed the wiring, and then stalled out, unsure of how best to go about tackling the scenery? There are plenty of ready-to-run and kit

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## Calendar (Cont.)

Show, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch.

**April 18, 2015** - 9:00 am, West Side Reunion presents the 28th Annual Logging & Mining Modeler's Convention at the Sonora Elks Lodge, CA. Clinics, contests, and dealer sales area.

**April 24, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**April 25, 2015** - 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Spring Meet, Golden Corral, 5001 Ming Ave, Bakersfield.

**May 9, 2015** - 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Redwood Empire Division Spring Meet, Monroe Hall, 1400 West College Ave, Santa Rosa, CA

**May 9 & 10, 2015** - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

**May 13, 2015** - 1:00 pm, Annual Board of Directors Meeting, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Newark-Fremont, 39900 Balentine Drive, Newark, California, 94560-0564.

**May 13 - 17, 2015** - The Club Car 2015 PCR Convention, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Newark-Fremont, 39900 Balentine Drive, Newark, CA.

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## Answers (Cont.)

versions—complete with detailed instructions—of locomotives, rolling stock, and structures, but the scenery is pretty much going to be all you, from initial design to final detailing. In this column I want to propose a very low stress method to construct your desired topography.

The January 2007 issue of Railroad Model Craftsman featured an article by Howard Zane, in which he presented a technique for creating model terrain without plaster. Frankly, the process he described seemed too simple to work well, so I tried it out on a small diorama and was favorably impressed. It turned out to be inexpensive and easy (two of my favorite qualities) and gives results which are comparable to the traditional hard-shell technique. The key element in this method is red rosin paper, a heavy paper used as a flooring underlayment. I purchased mine at Home Depot for the princely sum of \$11 (this was back in 2008). What I got for my money was a roll of paper 3 feet wide and 166 feet long, which I estimate will get me through my next four layouts.

Here's the recipe: start with basic scenery support, which could be carved Styrofoam, criss-crossed corrugated cardboard strips, or simply wadded-up newspaper to define the basic shape of the terrain. Then, instead of plaster-soaked paper towels, you simply attach pieces of the heavy paper with hot glue. After you have all of the paper terrain in place, you brush on full strength white glue. Several hours later add a second coat of the glue and you have a stiff paper shell which is ready to be colored and textured.

That's the basic method, but here are some useful details. After you have the basic support, tear off pieces of the red rosin paper about one foot square and wad each of them up into a tight ball. When flattened out again, each piece exhibits many small facets in a complex pattern which looks quite natural and adds pleasing detail to a hillside or field. Hot glue each piece to the subroadbed, basic scenery support, and to adjoining pieces of paper. Work from the bottom to the top of a hill so that upper sheets will overlap lower ones and hide any small gaps that appear.

A nice feature of this system is that you get to see what the terrain will look like before you add the glue, when it's still easy to make changes. You can flatten high spots by applying hot glue and pressing the paper down against the cardboard or other support; low spots can be raised by stuffing wadded up newspaper underneath. When adding the white glue, I thin it slightly with water to make it easier to brush on. This may result in a few small drips, but they are far less messy and much easier to control than wet plaster. If the edges of the paper pieces are too noticeable, you can putty the edges with joint compound and let dry for 24 hours. I have used Pro Form All Purpose Joint Compound for this.



**An SP way freight emerges from a conifer forest somewhere in western Oregon. The action takes place on Robert Pethoud's HO scale portable switching layout.**

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## Calendar (Cont.)

**May 23, 2015** - 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Swap Meet and Open House, Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society, Santa Susana Park Pavilion. 6503 Katherine Road, Simi Valley, CA.

**May 29, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**June 7, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, 1001 Davis Street, San Leandro, CA. (SF Bay Area Council Office of Boy Scouts of America.)

**June 20 & 21, 2015** - 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Weekend Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**June 24 - 28, 2015** - 23rd N Scale Convention, DoubleTree Hotel Sacramento, 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA. Presented by N Scale Enthusiast.

**June 26, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**June 27 & 28, 2015** - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

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## Answers (Cont.)

To this scenery shell we can now add rock castings, color, and texture. Plaster or plastic resin castings can be glued to the paper shell. Between the two materials, I prefer the plastic resin for a variety of reasons, but that is a story for another time. I begin the coloring and texturing by painting the paper shell with latex paint. A good paint to represent dirt is Folk Art brand #879 Linen, a beige color manufactured by Plaid Enterprises, Inc. which I found at Michaels. When that is dry, I sprinkle on some finely sifted dirt. I attach the dirt with diluted white glue in a two-step process: I wet a small area with isopropyl rubbing alcohol from a medicine dropper, and then drizzle on the diluted white glue. The glue dries clear and the dirt is firmly affixed and looks like it belongs there. Continuing to add to the terrain surface, you can place talus, deadfall, and ground foam foliage and fasten it all down with the diluted white glue. Finally, add some trees and your scenery should look very realistic.

So is this method better than the traditional hard-shell plaster process utilizing the often recommended Hydrocal white gypsum cement? Here are some clear benefits to paper shell scenery:

It's cheaper: my essentially endless roll of red rosin paper and a gallon of white glue came in at about \$25 together; inexpensive paper towels can readily be found, but check out the price of a 100-pound bag of Hydrocal.

It's lighter: my roll of rosin paper weighed in at 15 pounds; did I mention that Hydrocal comes in 100-pound bags?


It's less messy: actually, no mess at all, except for those annoying hot glue strings and the very occasional drop of white glue; contrast that with the plaster powder and soupy glop which ends up everywhere.

It gives us a preview: with plaster it's hard to see exactly what the landforms will look like until the wet plaster-soaked towels are laid into place, at which point it's too late to make changes; with rosin paper you see the final appearance as soon as the paper is in place and you can pull up or push down areas before you add the white glue, so you get it right the first time.

It's easy to modify at any time: even after several coats of white glue have set up and you've added paint, dirt, bushes, and trees, you can push up or down to flex the stiffened paper into a new position; try that with plaster which has set up.

It's easier to do. You know the drill with plaster: lay down tarps everywhere the dry or wet plaster could fall, transport the heavy bag of Hydrocal without spilling any, mix the right amounts of plaster and water in a suitable container until it's the consistency of buttermilk, dip the paper towels in the milky goo and lay them in place, then clean up the mixing bowl and your hands and your clothes and all of the things that shouldn't have plaster on them but now do. Compare that experience with paper shell: tear off some pieces of paper, crumple them up, flatten them out again, hot glue them down, and brush on some nearly full-strength white glue.

Especially if you've been procrastinating on starting your scenery, I urge you to try the paper shell method. I used it on my portable layout initially in order to minimize the weight of a display I have to schlep from home to train shows and back, but the many other benefits have convinced me that this is also the process to use on any layout I construct.

Until next time, you can reach me with comments or questions at [pethoud@comcast.net](mailto:pethoud@comcast.net) 

## Calendar (Cont.)

**July 12, 2015** - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

**July 31, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**August 1, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Summer Meet, Oceano Depot, 1650 Front St, Oceano, CA.

**August 15, 2015** - 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Swap Meet and Open House, Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society, Santa Susana Park Pavilion. 6503 Katherine Road, Simi Valley.

**August 23 - 30, 2015** - Portland Daylight Express, NMRA 2015 Convention and National Train Show, Portland, OR.

**August 28, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**September 2 - 5, 2015** - 35th Annual National Narrow Gauge Railroad Convention, Houston, TX

**September 19 & 20, 2015** - 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Weekend Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

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## Pacific Coast Region SIG Report for Fourth Quarter 2014

by Seth Neumann

The fall operating season has wrapped up and many of the local operators were able to visit other western cities within (extreme) driving range: Salt Lake City, Phoenix and San Diego. These were all excellent meets with new twists: new layouts at Great Basin Getaway in Salt Lake and Desert Ops in Phoenix and a revised 3 day schedule for the La Mesa Club's TT&TO operating extravaganza in San Diego.



The big news for SIG members, and anyone else interested -- all are welcome-- is the upcoming 2015 PCR/Layout Design and Operations SIG meet January 23-25 (bye week between playoffs and Superbowl). We'll be in Marin for the first time in years, at the Best Western Novato Oaks Inn. Complete information is on the PCR website at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/signs/>. By moving the meet around the Bay Area we are able to feature different layouts for tours and operations and we'll have layouts that have not been seen before on "SIG meet" tours. One new activity this year will be a Friday afternoon tour including the Tiburon Rail Museum, the Peter Hess Train Room in Corte Madera and the Northwestern Pacific Historical Society Library in Petaluma. The idea is to get attendees who want to attend the Kick-Off Dinner Friday night north of the Bridge before the commute rush starts. Saturday will feature clinics, panel discussions and layout design consulting at the hotel and layout tours in the Marin area in the evening. Sunday will feature op sessions (again: North Bay layouts) and those new to operations are welcome.

There will be a fee of \$20 to cover facility rental and associated expenses.

There is an interesting new ops meet near Sedona, AZ, February 6 and 7 on a large (5,000 sq ft) layout which models the Union Pacific in Wyoming. Slots are still available, so contact me if you are interested.

BayRails, the Bay Area invitational operating meet, will be held the third weekend of March (March 19-21) 2015. While this event caters to out-of-town operators (more than 100 miles from the Bay Area) we are always looking for locals to help out in various capacities including filling unused ops slots. If you are interested in getting involved please contact me or any of the BayRails committee at <http://www.bayrails.com>.

May 2015 will see the PCR "Club Car" convention headquartered in Newark at the newly remodeled Doubletree Hotel -- you may remember it as the Newark Hilton. The Club Car program will include many of the BayRails layouts for touring and operations (operations newbies welcome!) and of course the SIG clinic track will be going on for most, if not all, of the convention. We expect the usual high quality clinic content and the usual SIG meet-ups will be held on Thursday evening. I hope to see all of you at these events! <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2015/>

We are also very fortunate to have the NMRA national convention within a day's drive in July. The Portland group which put on the very

Continued on Page 15

## Calendar (Cont.)

**September 25, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.

**September 27, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, BPOE Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501.

**October 17 & 18, 2015** - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

**October 24, 2015** - 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Swap Meet and Open House, Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society, Santa Susana Park Pavilion. 6503 Katherine Road, Simi Valley, CA.

**October 24 & 25, 2015** - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Fall Train Show, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA.

**October 30, 2015** - 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA.


**October 31 & November 1, 2015** - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Fall Train Show, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA.

**November 7, 2015** - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Fall Meet, Gary Siegel's home, Santa Barbara, CA.

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## SIG Report (Cont.)

successful 1994 meet has come out of retirement to organize the 2015 convention. Our own Bill Decker, a recent émigré to the Willamette Valley from Silicon Valley is the SIG Coordinator and has organized a great LDSIG layout tour (Wednesday) as well as a fine operating program. I've been talking to the OPSIG leadership and there will be an "Advance Section" of operating sessions in the Puget Sound area the weekend prior to the convention. So if you can spend a few extra days you can run some excellent layouts. In general, these are SoundRail (the Puget Sound equivalent of BayRails) layouts and from my experience they range from very good to awesome. If you, like me, intend to drive you'll find a number of layouts available for touring and operations on the way up and back. More details to follow. <http://nmra2015portland.org/>

If you are interested in any these out of town meets, contact me at the address below as we are now in the long-desired position of having meets in most major western cities and many more operating slots than in the past. [sneumann@pacbell.net](mailto:sneumann@pacbell.net) 

## Welcome Aboard ! - PCR's Newest Members

Member	City, Sate	Date Joined
	<b><u>Coast</u></b>	
Tim Woodson	Dublin CA	9/26/2014
Tim Carson	Alameda CA	9/29/2014
Gordon Dakin	Danville CA	9/29/2014
Jeffrey Klurfeld	Lafayette CA	9/29/2014
	<b><u>Sierra</u></b>	
Douglas Coates	Brooks CA	9/15/2014 

## In Memoriam

	<b><u>Coast</u></b>	
Smoky Jones	Antioch, CA	1/1/1964(Lifetime member)
	<b><u>Redwood Empire</u></b>	
William Williams	Santa Rosa, CA	1/1/1969(Lifetime member) 

## Calendar (Cont.)

**November 14 & 15, 2015 -**

11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

**November 20 - 22, 2015 -**

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

**November 27 - 29, 2015 -**

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

**December 5 & 6, 2015 -** 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

**December 6, 2015 -** 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, 1001 Davis Street, San Leandro, CA. (SF Bay Area Council Office of Boy Scouts of America.)

## 2016 and Beyond Events

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

**September 7 - 10, 2016 -** 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention, Augusta, ME.

Continued on Page 17

# Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern Woody, one more time!

By: Jim Providenza

You will recall we left off last time with a number of questions Lawrie Woodley posed... Herewith the back and forth that followed. You might want to grab last quarter's *Branch Line* so you can read Woody's questions in full.

LW: James I am only human Bro and one man's drink is another man's poison, so they say. My questions stem from my own curiosity, respect for yourself, and an ever consuming passion to come up wit the perfect op system that is easy peezy...Fool that I be... My add-on's below my old mate.

LW: I can find no mention of the crew size...

JP: Max number of operators is 14-15 [at the time this was written. Changes in operating patterns now have the max crew size at a dozen]. Train crews usually run two through trains a session, which lasts about 3.5 - 4 hours. With TT&TO we run less trains and it takes more people - no wonder the real railroads gave it up when they could afford to!

LW: In my book James that is a lot of people. I would like some comment on aisle widths and ease of moving around from switching place to switching place. What do you do with the guys waitng for trains as when I was their in '84 (?) I don't think you had a crew room. Do they sit on stools or stand and just mill around until called?

LW: How do you do it? Through the dispatcher, assuming an "on call" approach where you roam the layout, or wearing your police uniform complete with o'le 45?

JP: A trainmaster is designated as "management" to make management decisions if we have enough experienced folk. Otherwise, I handle that position. He is also responsible for setting up crew calls and fills in "soup tickets" (train and crew info slips for the DS to put on the train sheet for planning purposes).

LW: Again you must have ball park space for these guys to move around in, or is it, "Excuse me," "Sorry," "Tummy in, that's my pal," "Did I step on your toes?" "Give me space."

LW: In your writings you always (to me) present the sunny [of operations]:

JP: Oh, we often have such problems. But they are usually relatively small. The bigger issue is when the SCN decides to act out and be difficult. That only happens every so often, but its gut wrenching cause it can ruin the day for everyone, not just me. Will send you a couple of my "Tales of the



Woody drives the Golden Spike on his Alpine and Shasta Layout

Continued on Page 17



## Calendar (Cont.)

**July 30 - August 6, 2017 -**  
Orange Blossom Special, NMRA  
2017 National Convention and  
National Train Show, Orlando,  
FL.



## Web Announcement

By Gus Campagna,  
Manager, PCR Publications  
Department

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

## SCN (Cont.)

SCN" columns describing things that didn't go right...

LW: Personally I think these things should be told as they are the very guts of model railroading and provide a lifeline to those we call closet modelers or loners.

LW: Have you found it necessary to paste maps of towns /industries?

JP: Absolutely, and everywhere. A track diagram at each station, with industries and track names were needed. Also a legend at the bottom to show where on the railroad this location is in relation to everywhere else, and east / west arrows.

LW: I don't know if I have mentioned my pet 'peeve' before... [you have] a love affair with paper work:

JP: Seriously, there are those here in the US who really don't want any paperwork - that is okay, their decision. I lost maybe a third of my regular crew when I went from Track Warrants to TT&TO. We remain good friends.

LW: Yeah, well the jury is still out...

LW: After our latest 'op' session... that car shouldn't be there?"

JP: Happens even with the carcard/waybill format I use to drive the car movements, even when the info is put on a switch list so the crew only has to think about reporting marks, car type, and destination.

LW: Explain yourself James. We run about twenty-two trains per session. That sounds a lot of extra effort and undoes what the card plus waybill system was created for doesn't it?

LW: After a knife at the throat investigation it turns out... too much printing to read.

JP: How about keeping your waybills to drive the car movements and creating switchlists to give to the crews to do the work with?

LW: No-way Bro. That would take us right around the clock to where we first came in...down with unnecessary paper work....right?

LW: A real gut wrenching, tear jerking, account of operating on the dark side of model railroading.

[So I sent Lawrie a couple of previous 'Tales']

LW: Now James, I enjoyed the snakebite train very much but it illustrates my point exactly that the closet model railroader wouldn't have a clue of what we were talking about.

Bro I come in peace.

But Jim the reason I am writing, I would like some more info...

And so our conversations continued over the years. Woody's passion for modeling his beloved SP and his quest for 'the perfect op session' continue to be an inspiration. I guess I'm not surprised that Woody and I have run out of room here. We will have to catch up with Woody and Rick Kang some other time!



There was room for lots of operators on  
Woody's Alpine and Shasta Layout

## Candidate for Vice President - Carol Alexander



Hello, my name is Carol Alexander and I am running for Vice President of PCR. Why am I running you might ask? Well, because it's my turn. It's not my turn to BE Vice President but it is my turn to SERVE as Vice President. I come from a family with a tradition of service to country, community and family. I think it is important to not just belong to an organization but to participate.

I have had the honor of serving as a Director for two terms and would like the opportunity to work on behalf of the organization and its membership again. There are lots of opinions about whether or not the hobby of model railroading and the NMRA and its regions are in trouble or not. I happen to think the hobby and the organization are in fine shape but they are in a state of rapid change. The greatest challenge facing our leadership today is the same as it always has been, how do we best meet the needs of our membership?

Working with our new President and the Board of Directors I hope to help answer that question and bring you the services and activities that will help you enjoy the world's greatest hobby.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Carol N. Alexander

## Candidate for President - Ed Merrin



For almost four years I have served you all as PCR Vice President, and I have now decided to take the plunge and run for the office of PCR President.

During my tenure as Vice President I have learned a lot about the operations of PCR and how the Board of Directors conducts its business and makes policy decisions. I have had an extended look at the functions of the Board and what it can do for the membership. I have also acquired, hopefully, a sense of where efforts should be focused and what issues are of less importance in fulfilling our mission.

And that mission, I believe, is to facilitate the continued vitality of our great hobby in general and to provide whatever it takes to make it as easy as possible for our members to enjoy model railroading.

This can be a real challenge, given how diverse our membership is and how many different facets of model railroading are represented. We must be sure to support as many different areas of interest as possible, and not limit ourselves to a narrow slice of the hobby.

If you choose to elect me to this office I will strive to advance this mission to the best of my ability. I will call upon those of you, whether you are on the Board or not, to make your special talents and knowledge available. I intend to encourage the younger members of our organization to feel free to step forth and contribute with the understanding that active leadership roles in both their Division and in our great Region are wide open for them. My goal would be for all this to happen in a way that we all feel positive about our experiences in PCR.

But most of all, I'm counting on all of you to submit your ballots, no matter who you wish to vote for. It only takes a few moments, and the more of us that vote the stronger we will become.

Respectfully,  
Ed Merrin

# National Model Railroad Association

## PACIFIC COAST REGION

### PCR OFFICERS BALLOT

Instructions for Election:

1. Election starts with receipt of ballot (Branch Line mailed approximately January 10, 2015).
2. All ballots must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2015.
3. Vote only for one candidate for each office.
4. You may write in a candidate of your choice. However, the candidate must be willing to serve if elected.
5. Voting for more than one candidate in an office will void your ballot.
6. Do not make any other marks on the ballot.
7. Fold in thirds so that the return address is showing, and tape the ballot closed.
8. The ballot is considered a first class letter, and requires 49¢ postage.

PLACE  AFTER YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH OFFICE.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PCR President</b> <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i></p> <p>Ed Merrin <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Write in candidate</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PCR Vice-President</b> <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i></p> <p>Carol Alexander <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Write in candidate</p>
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(Fold here)

Postage  
49¢

PCR Ballot Chairman

Jim Providenza

16 Drake's Cove

San Rafael, CA 94903

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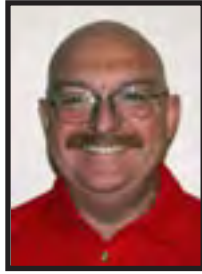
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# Membership Department

by Doug Wagner, PCR Membership Chairman

## PCR Membership Gauge

November 30, 2013—1,039  
December 31, 2013—1,039  
January 31, 2014—1,056  
February 28, 2014—1,044  
March 31, 2014—1,035  
April 30, 2014—1,032  
May 31, 2014—1,022  
June 30, 2014—1,008  
July 31, 2014—1,013  
August 31, 2014—1,007  
September 30, 2014—1,005  
October 31, 2014—1,001  
November 30, 2014—991



Even though I am writing this article in early December, I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday season and you got everything you wanted for Christmas. If you didn't, you might try being better for Santa in 2015. I guess I was good, as Santa brought me a new paint booth (still trying to figure out how I got that, though!)

I will start off this article with the bad news first. Heh, that's the way I operate since I'm a pessimist—or as I call myself, a realist! As you can see by the PCR Membership tracker, we are now below 1,000 in membership, in the PCR. Since November 30, 2013, we've had a net loss in membership of 48 members. We lost a total of 105 members—either to passing away or just deciding not to re-up their membership. The good news? We had 57 new members come on board in that same time frame. It's a new year, so let's go out and talk to modelers about the benefits of belonging to the NMRA, and turn those figures inside out!

How do we get new members into the NMRA? First off, we have to actually talk to them. And, I'll admit I'm not the friendliest guy to chat with. But, at the very least, we need to make visitors feel welcome at meets. The biggest complaint I hear from those that do not re-up their membership in the NMRA, was that they were not felt welcome at a meet. No one came up and

talked to them. Now, I can't confirm that these events actually occurred, but this is what these folks communicated to me. That is why they were not renewing their membership. Boy, I'm just filled with good news, ain't I?

OK, here are some innovative ideas that were published in the November/December issues of NMRA *e-Bulletin* to help get new members:

Ken Mattern, of the Mid-South Division, personally made a commitment to sponsor 3 *Railpass* memberships at one of the Mid-South Division's meets. Ken went on further to challenge all 12 members attending to sponsor at least one *RailPass*. It must have worked for them, because the Mid-South Division gained 17 new members. The sponsors were also challenged to be in direct and frequent contact with their sponsored members, to personally remind them of division meetings, invite them to visit their layouts and promote the hobby as much as reasonable. Ah, frequent communications, where have I heard that one before?

Another suggestion came by way of Al Hovey, of the Rio Grande Division 6. Al suggested that rather than wearing a badge or having a sign that says, 'Ask me about the NMRA,' have badges that read, 'Ask me how to get started in model railroading.' Al also added that once we get them interested in the hobby, then we sell them on the benefits of the NMRA.

Another suggestion came from Daylight Division member Don Smith of Visalia, who suggested that all members bring their *NMRA magazine* to Davison meets. If there are any visitors in attendance, hand them a magazine to give them a chance to read about the NMRA. These are three

**Thousands of negatives still need your positive support.**



So do the thousands of plans, photos, and slides from our Kalmbach Memorial Library that we're working to digitize so that members can access them from their own computer. The good news is that the scanning is well underway. The better news is that our image library is even larger than we thought!

Which is why we still need your help. The more funds we receive, the more images we can make available.

If you haven't contributed to the Diamond Club, do it now:

**Silver Level** – Contribute \$75 and receive a silver 75th Anniversary commemorative pin and have your name listed in *NMRA Magazine*.

**Gold Level** – Contribute \$750 and receive a gold 75th Anniversary pin, a golf shirt with the Anniversary logo, and have your name listed in *NMRA Magazine*.


**Diamond Level** – Contribute \$7,500 and receive a diamond-and-gold Anniversary pin, a golf shirt and sweater with the Anniversary logo and your embroidered name, a print of the NMRA's 75th Anniversary commemorative painting, and have your name and photo printed in *NMRA Magazine*.

Make a contribution that will make a difference for decades. Visit [www.nmra.org/diamondclub](http://www.nmra.org/diamondclub) or call HQ at 423-892-2846 to contribute.



Continued on page 22

## Membership (Cont.)




**Check out  
6,000 train books.**

Or 100,000 train photos. Or 50,000 train magazines. In fact, there are a lot of things you should be checking out at the National Model Railroad Association's Kalmbach Memorial Library. You'll find everything from prototype railroad periodicals to vintage model kit instructions.

As an NMRA member, you have easy access to everything – it's all just a phone call, letter, or email away. Our staff will even help you do research about virtually any train topic, whether it's model or prototype.

Visit one of the world's largest train libraries at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). You'll find that the NMRA has a lot to offer modelers.

**We make it even more fun.**  
www.nmra.org  
423-892-2846



ideas that might work. We'll never know unless we start thinking outside the box. Then all model railroaders will flock to the NMRA to join us. We have to go out and seek them, because there is a good chance that model railroaders are not actively seeking the NMRA. Currently, I believe most of the Divisions in the PCR set up NMRA booths at most train shows that occur in their respective Divisions. Keep up the great work on that job, guys!

OK, now that we've mulled over new ideas on getting new members, how do we keep them? Currently, the NMRA is developing a program nationally for retaining existing members. Bob Ferguson was appointed as a special assistant to the NMRA President, Charlie Getz, to help implement this program for member retention. Bob wants to try and put together a group of members to a "think tank" to help develop programs and training that can be used by every Division in the NMRA. More to follow on that.

Earlier in this rant—err, I mean article—I mentioned the NMRA *e-Bulletin*. Some of you may not be aware of the NMRA *e-Bulletin*. It is one way that the NMRA communicates with members. Communications, whether it be at your job, home, school, and yes, model railroad organizations, is the key to keeping its members up to par on all issues, events, etc. You may not like to receive communications via an email or having to go to a web site, but welcome folks to the 22<sup>nd</sup> century—and it's here to stay! The reason for offering the newsletters and magazines electronically sure saves money—and that keeps the editors and distribution folks from going insane! So, I'm urging all PCR members who do not receive the hardcopy version of the PCR's *Banchline*, if you have not done so already, to go to the PCR's web site and view it electronically. You don't have to subscribe for the \$8.00 subscription fee, as you do to receive it via the United States Postal Service, since it is free to view from the web site. Also, many Divisions now offer their newsletter electronically, so chances are, your Division offers its newsletter via its web site. [Doug failed to mention that the on-line version is available about 3 weeks before your hard copy appears in the "snail" mail box. Ed.]

Ok, where do you go to get all this information, such as the newsletter and events happening in the PCR and your Division? Simply go to the PCR's web site at [www.pcrnmra.org](http://www.pcrnmra.org). There you will find all the events, photos, and other info for each and every Division in the PCR. Another great place to keep pace of PCR and Division events, is at the PCR's Yahoo Groups Email List. You can join by going to <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/PCR-nmra/info>.

Also, one last request—I promise. Most of you have to have an email address, right? If you do, and if you haven't notified either the PCR or NMRA of your email, or you have changed your email address (because we get several bounced emails thrown back at us when sending out email communications), please notify PCR or NMRA HQ of this. If you do not want to do it yourself—which is easy to do through the NMRA's web site at by emailing them—please contact me and I'll send in the request for you. We promise that you will not be inundated with special offers after informing us of your email. The PCR and NMRA ONLY uses your email to contact you

Continued on page 23

## PCR Membership Tracker

Division	#Members
Coast	451
Sierra	265
Daylight	132
Redwood Empire	132
Hawaiian	11
Total PCR Members	991

## Branch Line Deadlines for 2015


**APR-MAY-JUN 2015 Issue**  
Articles due by  
**March 10, 2015**

**JUL-AUG-SEP 2015 Issue**  
Articles due by  
**June 10, 2015**

**OCT-NOV-DEC 2015 Issue**  
Articles due by  
**September 10, 2015**

**JAN-FEB-MAR 2016 Issue**  
Articles due by  
**December 10, 2015**

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



**The best gift card you'll ever give.**  
(Or receive!)

When you give the gift of an NMRA membership, you're giving someone a gift they can use all year long. From accessing our online photo archives to getting special deals on books, to attending Division and Region meets, an NMRA member has a wealth of benefits to take advantage of.

We'll send your new member a membership card, then bill you separately. Call HQ for details and ordering. Allow 4 weeks for processing.

Perfect as a gift for holidays, birthdays, graduations, Fathers Day, Mothers Day...even Valentine's Day!

This year, give a card they'll treasure all year!

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## Membership (Cont.)

with current information, such as the NMRA's *e-Bulletin* and to inform you when the PCR's *Branch Line* and your Division's newsletter is ready for viewing. If you aren't sure that we have your correct email address, please contact me.

In conclusion, please try to attend as many of your Division's meets as possible, as that is where you can enjoy the company of fellow model railroaders, learn new modeling tricks in the clinics, get to see some really impressive modeling in the contests, and visit some neat layouts. Same is true at the annual PCR conventions—this year held in Newark, California, May 13-17.

If anyone of you need to contact me—for whatever reason—please email me at [carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com) or you can do it the old fashioned way—by phone—at 661-589-0391. And for the New Year, 2015, here is wishing that all your signals be green for highballing it! 🚂

## Not Voting = Ignorance and Stupidity A factual Treatise

by Giuseppe Aymar, MMR

It might be that my feelings toward casting my ballot at any election, being Club, Division, Regional or National are so strong because I am a transplant from a foreign country. Having the ability to express my opinion and making it count at the ballot box is a privilege I treasure. Yes it is guaranteed under the “Bill of Rights”, for our forefathers were men of integrity and wisdom. So, why are we, citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, NOT utilizing this “Devine privilege”? Only about 20% of our membership casts their vote in any election. It is disgraceful!!! Pitiful!!! and, in my words and they are only my words, I would summarize this non action as “I really don't give a damn.” Our Organization is based on Democracy not oligarchy nor tyranny nor monarchy; it's very existence as a democracy is based on the majority of the members take interest and vote to elect their representatives. So get your pencils and mark an ” X “ next to the name(s) of the candidates you support or at least prefer to run your Organization.

Elections are coming up at the Regional and the National level. Please support your candidate and return your ballot. At the National level we have two representatives from PCR who are running in contested positions. Mr. Charlie Getz for “NMRA President” and Mr. Bob Ferguson for “North American Director at Large.” These are two very crucial positions that will weigh in heavily in structuring the future course of our beloved Organization. They are both from the PCR which should make us proud and at the same time we know they will bring to the NMRA the spirit of the PCR, which is our Spirit. Let's support them 100% by having all the PCR members send in their vote. Let us be unified for once; we can continue bickering later if we want. 🚂



## Coast Division Report

by Frank Markovich, MMR, Coast Division Superintendent

First of all I want to wish everyone Happy Holidays from the Coast Division. Our next event is, March 1, 2015 at the Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501. <http://goo.gl/maps/mN7Q4>

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

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

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

Contest categories (Popular Vote) 9:30 AM – 12:15 PM

Model - Caboose, Freight Car, Maintenance of Way

Photo - Railroad Structures

Allen Fenton Timesaver Switching Contest (until 3:15)

The meet will start at 9:30 AM. There will be two clinics and a roundtable. I really want to encourage entrees into the contest so there will be an extra door prize again for every entry in model or photo even if it is just show and tell. At this time the clinics are not fully decided but there will be one by Master N Scale builder Tom Knapp – I can't wait to see it as his work is incredible. Dave Connery will also be doing a clinic – topic coming later.

### December Coast Division meet

The meet was held on December 7 at the Boy Scout Headquarter in San Leandro. Again the auction made a sizeable amount as we had close to 500 items. We had two clinics and the room was packed for both of them. One was by Paul Ingraham on car cards for modules and the other was the final build a memory clinic by Frank Markovich, MMR. and Mike Blumensaadt. We also had just under 100 people sign in. This was about 20% more than the number that we had for the previous meet.

The Business meeting was rather short but here are some of the highlights: Lots of information but here is just a sampling. Charlie Getz talked about changing our meets to be called events, also about progress at the Sacramento Train Museum on the Scale Model Railroading exhibit. Seth talked about the upcoming op session that will be in Marin County in January.

### Bay Area layout Design and Operations Weekend

January 23 to 25, 2015 - [Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend](#), Sponsored by [Pacific Coast Region-NMRA](#), [Layout Design](#) and [Operations](#) Special Interest Groups. Admission: \$20.00 for entire weekend of events, excluding Friday night's dinner, which is no-host. [Best Western PLUS Novato Oaks Inn](#) 215 Alameda del Prado, Novato, CA 94949 Tel: (415) 833-4400 or (800) 625-7466.



The registration desk at Boy Scout Headquarters was a beehive of activity.

Continued on Page 25





### Oscale West

Also coming up is O Scale West: February 5 – 7, 2015, [O Scale West / S West Meet](#), Hyatt Regency, 5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA. I will have my layout open on Friday night. Even if you don't go to the convention you are welcome to come visit my layout at 1904 Chula Vista Dr, Belmont, Ca 94002. I will be open on Friday February 6, 2015 from 7:00 PM until 10:00 PM.

### Division News

Pete Birdsong has taken over the Coast Website, if you haven't looked lately please do. Much improved. Pete is a great addition to our board.

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

March 1st Elks club in Alameda,

June 7th back here San Leandro boy Scouts – thanks so much to Bob Carnes!!

Sept 27th Elks

Dec 6th back here San Leandro Boy Scouts.

Don't forget the PCR Convention is in Newark this year. The Club Car 2015 May 13-17, 2015.

We also recognized 3 of our members for getting Achievement awards:

Dave Connery was awarded Master Builder - Scenery and Master Builder - Structures. Dave completed all the requirements for Official and am about ready for final judging on the Civil Engineer and Master Builder - Cars awards, which would be all required for the MMR designation.

Howard McKinney – Scenery, Electrical and Civil.

Rodney Smith – Electrical

### Contest Results from December 7<sup>th</sup> meet:

First – Earl Girbovan – Yehuda's Heating – Also received a merit award.

Second - Pete Birdsong – Blacksmith Shop

Third – Pat LaTorres – Box Cab.

Three other great models – Pete Birdsong's Freight House, Paul Ingraham's Business Car and Coach, and Steve Wesolowski's Recycled Radio Flyer.



Mike Blumensaadt presented last part of the 4-part clinic on building a memory.



Yehuda's Heating by Earl Girbovan won first place and a merit award.



**Coast Report (Cont.)**

**Show and Tell**

Tom Knapp's Nn3 log train.

Howard Lloyds' Legeigh Terminal Grain Elevator and a rural Pump house.

**For Photo**

First place Stanley Keiser, Through the Rotary Window.

Second place Seth Newman , UP 5334 East at Aftan Canyon, tied with Pat LaTorres Star light at Oakland Canyon.

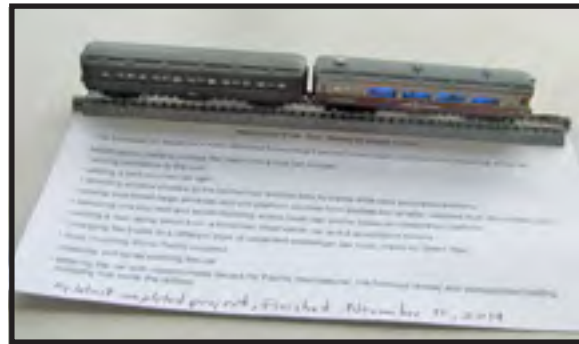
Third – First place Stanley Keiser, Coming out of Tunnel One. 🚂



**Doug Smith tried his hand at the time-saver switching challenge.**



**Par LaTorres' Box Cab took 3rd place**



**Paul Ingraham entered his business car model**



Pete Birdsong took 2nd place with his Blacksmith Ship



Howard Lloyd's Rural Pump House was entered in Show and Tell



Pete Birdsong entered this freight house



Tom Knapp entered this Nn3 log train in Show and Tell.



## Daylight Division Report

by Neil Fernbaugh, Daylight Division Superintendent

We had our last meet at the Boy Scout Shack in Exeter, California. After battling the fog to get there, we were treated to a railroad breakfast by Dining Chair Chef, Brewster Bird. Several of us brought models for show and tell, but no one brought contest entries for judging. Bo Hammerling, one of our newest members, brought his “module” depicting narrow gauge operations in Sweden. Judging from the quality of his rolling stock, trackwork and structures, he should be well on his way to MMR status. I was amazed at the detail, right down to a small brass sled leaning against one of his sheds.



**Bo Hammerling's Narrow Gauge Swedish prototype “module” or switching layout with DCC and sound**

Brewster also led the group through a ballasting clinic and many of the rest of us shared their secrets and techniques as well.

At the end of our business meeting we had an extensive discussion on ways to enhance and reform our division. Since we are about to acquire our 501c3 non-profit designation, we are rewriting our bylaws to streamline our operations and meetings. We hope to limit business meetings to once a year, and focus our meets on clinics, operations, hands on activities and layout tours. Thanks to hard work by Doug Wagner and support by a whole cast of division leaders, we have dates and locations for all of our 2015 meets.

Our next meet will be on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at the Fresno Hobby Town meeting room. With clinics by Bob Pethoud and Chuck Harmon, followed in the afternoon by an operating session at Chuck's San Joaquin Central. The contest categories for this meet, Freight Cars, and General Rail Subject Photos. Please bring other models and even half finished projects to share, and don't forget the “white elephant” raffle.



**Here is another photo of Bo Hammerling's module.**

Our Spring meet will be at the Golden Corral Restaurant in Bakersfield on April 25<sup>th</sup>, followed by our summer meet on August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Oceano Depot (<http://www.oceanodepot.org/>). We'll end our year on November 7<sup>th</sup> in Santa Barbara at Gary Siegel's Southern Pacific Santa Cruz Division Garden Railroad.



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## Held Out!

by Verne Alexander, RED Chief Clerk and Paymaster

Back in the early 1970's my family (wife, 4 kids) was up in Spokane visiting our parents, the kids' grandparents. My dad, a hoghead, was still working, and on our final day of the visit was bringing a BN freight from Missoula, MT to Yardley in Spokane. A typical run would have brought him in with plenty of time to say goodbyes and such. And the run was typical. Yardley, however, was not.

Yardley was plugged. It had no capacity to yard any further trains until it sent some out, and for some reason nothing was moving out. So my dad's train was held out just east of the Argonne grade crossing, along with another westbound freight and two or three eastbounds on the other side of town. And he was not first in line!

He got off the engine and went to a gas station where there was a phone and called us to inform us of the predicament. He suggested that we drive out to the Argonne crossing and say our goodbyes there. He put on a show for the kids, sitting in the fireman's seat holding a broom outside the window and moving it like a paddle as though trying to get the train under way. The kids got a brief foray into the cab of the F unit that was the lead engine. The point is, he did what he could to make the best of an unforeseen delay.

I am being held out today, have been held out for a while and will be held out for a while more. I am quite happy with my brand new left knee. I prepared well for the replacement, and am working hard at the rehab exercises. And the hard work is paying off as I am almost at my range of motion goals and am doing everything around the house that I would normally do except for working on my layout. But the rest of my leg is not cooperating like the new knee. It is excessively swollen, and the reduction of the swelling is not proceeding apace with the efforts being expended toward that end. So I am being held out from my life of choice. It is not that I cannot do things. It is that I cannot take enough time off from elevating and icing to do things. So I have had to skip some Op Sessions and the RED fall meet in favor of treating my leg. Like my dad 40 years ago, I am making the best of this unforeseen complication, but being held out isn't very much fun at all! 🚂



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Then, get that popcorn ready.



## Sierra Division Report

by Jim Collins, Sierra Division Superintendent

The Sierra Division held its fall meet, as scheduled, on October 11 at The First Christian Church on Folsom Blvd in Sacramento. The meeting was well-attended with 27 folks. There were announcements, elections, and two excellent clinics.



Scott Welcomes all at the beginning of the meet



George Johnson, Chairman, National N-Scale Convention

George Johnson, chairman for the National N-Scale Convention that will be held June 24-28, 2015 in Sacramento, gave a brief but interesting presentation on the convention and N-scale in general. As he pointed out, even though this is the N-scale convention, it is a very large convention that has layouts, displays, and clinics that will be of interest to all model railroaders, no matter what scale they model in. In particular they are looking for people in the general area who are willing to open their layouts for tours and/or operation. If you are interested, let George know; his email is [george@nscaleenthusiast.com](mailto:george@nscaleenthusiast.com). For more information on the convention, their website is [www.nationalscaleconvention.com/](http://www.nationalscaleconvention.com/).



Gary Ray gave a clinic on making realistic Valley Oaks

The next item was elections. Scott McAllister was stepping down from Superintendent and received a vote of appreciation with a round of applause for the excellent job he's done. Yours truly, Jim Collins, accepted the nomination and was voted in unanimously (all votes were unanimous, by the way) as the new Superintendent. Bob Warner and Al Rowe have both done fantastic jobs as Clerk and Treasurer, respectively. James Firehock was nominated and voted in as the new Clerk and Al Rowe agreed and was voted in to continue as Treasurer. Congratulations to both men and I look forward to working with you both.

One of the primary reasons Scott stepped down was so he could concentrate on planning and organizing the 2016 PCR Convention to be hosted by Sierra Division. He has been working hard on this and recently submitted a proposal to the Board to hold the convention in Modesto. Additionally, Mel Jones, our current Director, will be termed out next year and Scott was nominated as his replacement.

There were three contests this time, a model contest and two photo contests.

Model Contest: Buildings. First place went to RJ Meyer, second to Mary Moore-Campagna, and third to Gary Ray.

Continued on Page 31



**Sierra Report (Cont.)**

Photo Contest #1: Prototype track and/or structure in color. Gary Ray won first place, Dan Evans photo took second and Jim Collins won third.

Photo Contest #2: Portola Railroad Museum or Feather River Canyon photos. Gary Ray was the only entrant so he took first, second, and third.



**The Hands-on Tree-Building clinic was very popular**



**Howard Shively presented a clinic on low cost storage boxes**

Two clinics were conducted. The first one (though actually split into two sessions) was given by Gary Ray on making realistic Valley Oaks. This was a hands-on clinic so everyone got a chance to make their own trees and there some really spectacular and realistic ones produced. The other clinic was on making your own low cost storage boxes by Howard Shively. This was an excellent clinic with a lot of interest as Howard showed it to be an easy process that could save money over the manufactured boxes.

As always, the meeting ended with door prizes. As Sierra division received a large gift of items, everyone at the meeting got a prize.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 31, 2015. Final arrangements are still being made but currently the plan is to visit the Sacramento Historical Society layout for operations in the morning and then hold a meeting with clinic in the afternoon at First Christian Church on Folsom Blvd. The model contest will be weathered locomotives: steam, electric, or diesel and the photo contest will be “your favorite railroad photo” (must be taken by the member).



**Scott McAllister Passes the baton – err, name tag - to Jim Collins.**

A brief introduction of ‘moi’, the new Superintendent. My name is Jim Collins. I have been interested in model railroading (off and on) since I was very young and my brother received a Lionel train set (now isn’t that just classic). I had an HO set some time later and did manage to build one small layout in my bedroom. However, college and then a career in the Navy intervened. It’s awful difficult to construct a layout at sea, even on a carrier – the CO sort of frowns on such things taking up room he didn’t authorize. So mostly I was confined to armchair railroading and building the occasional model. After I retired, I got interested again and even joined NMRA once several years back, though I let that lapse. To steal a phrase, I have returned now, though, and the feeling of camaraderie is much better this time than the first. I look forward to working with all members to continue the work Scott started of providing meets that are interesting with varied activities that will encourage more members to attend and get to know each other. I also hope to get more folks involved and communicating using email and the internet. 🚂



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# Club Info

## ALAMEDA COUNTY CENTRAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

## ANTIOCH MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

## BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

## BAY AREA Z MODULE COOPERATIVE

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

## CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RR CLUB

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

## CARQUINEZ MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

## COASTAL VALLEY LINES

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

## EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

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

## ELSIE

The Left Coast (Elsie) HOn30 group invites anyone interested to join us. We use existing standards for module construction but are not merely a modular group. Contact: Al Sandrini in Bakersfield, 661-664-8614 or Ken Lunders in Cupertino, 408-777-9572.

## EMPIRE BUILDERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

## EUROPEAN TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS

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

## GOLDEN EMPIRE HISTORICAL & MODELING SOCIETY

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

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

900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park at Point Richmond. Weekly public hours are on our website. To meet members, inquire about membership and behind the scenes tours come Friday evenings between 7:30 and 10 PM (first Fridays are meetings); behind the scenes tours also available most Wednesdays 11 AM to 3 PM. New members are welcomed in all Scales – O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction. For general information check the website or call (510) 234-4884 (recording); for membership inquiries call (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](mailto:publicity@gsmrm.org). Website: [www.gsmrm.org](http://www.gsmrm.org).

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## Clubs (Cont.)

### HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

### LAKE COUNTY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

### MOTHER LODGE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The MMRC meets every Mon., 11:00 AM in the old historic primary school building in Sutter Creek. Additional open houses are normally held the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM. We are a fully DCC operating HO club with a large layout. Contact: Robert Piety, 209-296-3587.

### NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

### Nn3 ALLIANCE

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

### SACRAMENTO MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Ave., Sacramento. Modeled as the Sierra Central RR, both HO and HO N3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Tues. and Fri. nights, 7:30 PM. Contact: 916-927-3618 Email: d.megeath@comcast.net Web: www.smrhs.com

### SACRAMENTO MODULAR RAILROADERS

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

### SACRAMENTO VALLEY LIVE STEAM RAILROAD MUSEUM (SVLSRM)

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

### SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

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

### SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

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

### SAN LUIS OBISPO MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION (SLOMRA)

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

### SILICON VALLEY LINES

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

### SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

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BRANCH LINE  
530 FIG TREE LANE  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

### Clubs (Cont.)

#### SOUTH COAST SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

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

#### SISKIYOU MODEL RAILROAD CLUB,

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

#### TIDEWATER SOUTHERN RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC., Manteca, formerly the Manteca Model RR Club

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

#### TRI-CITY SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

The TCSME is located at 37592 Niles Blvd. Fremont CA 94536 in the Niles Plaza. We are currently building two new layouts. The N Scale layout is in the restored Niles Depot and the HO layout is in the restored Niles Freight Building. Both layouts focus on Fremont, Newark, Union City and surrounding areas. We are looking for new members interested in building and running on the new layouts. We meet Fridays 7:30-9:30 PM and Sundays 10:00-4:00. Call 510-797-4449 for info. Please visit our web site at <http://www.nilesdepot.org>.

#### WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

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

#### WEST BAY MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

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