



BRANCH LINE
NMRA'S FIRST REGION



TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTERS	"Click-Goto-Or" (Empower in Meet-Fac)
8:08	ZOOM welcome opens		Enter Here
8:30 - 8:45		Walter Mizuno Bill Scott Co-Chairs	WELCOMES
8:45 - 9:45	History of American Branch Lines/Diesels	Robert Parbood	8:45 - 10:10
9:45 - 12:00	Virtual Layout Tours and Layout Owners Live Panel/D&S 1 st Door Prize Drawing - \$25.00 (Prizes must be online to claim prize)	Rob Emery, Jim Noll, Bob Jaki, Glenn Sutherland	12:00 - 12:30
12:00 - 12:30	LUNCH BREAK		
12:30 - 1:30	Walters Sugar Pine Railroad	Scott McGhee	1:30 - 2:00
1:40 - 2:25	The Palms & Passages of Provence Modelers	Jeff Johnson	2:30 - 3:45
2:35 - 3:15	A Field Trip to Sugar Pine Lumber Co. Territory	Jeff Johnson	3:10 - 3:45
3:20 - 4:05	Meet the Modeler	Nedraus	4:40 - 4:55
4:10 - 5:05	Coastal Maritime & Line Perspectives: Inspiration, Photography 2 nd Door Prize Drawing - \$50.00 (Prizes must be online to claim prize)	Ed Merita	5:00 - 5:30
5:05 - 5:45	ORANGE BREAK		
5:45 - 6:45	Keynote...A young locomotive's journey on SP's LA&SF PCR Awards Presentation Grand Door Prize Drawing - \$100.00 (Prizes must be online to claim prize)	Mike Osborne Bill Scott Walter Mizuno Co-Chairs	6:40 - 7:35
7:00 - 7:25	Modeling the Health History in Black and White	Steve Heister	8:20 - 8:55
8:30 - 9:25	The Sunset Railway and Multiple Models - Non-Real Time	Doug Wagner	9:20 - 10:00
9:35	Sign-off / Thank You!	Bill Scott Walter Mizuno Co-Chairs	

The first ever PCR virtual convention took place on Saturday, April 24, 2021. Hosted by the Daylight Division, the on-line convention program began at 8:30 AM with welcomes from Walter Mizuno and Bill Scott. Clinics, Virtual Tours, and a special “Meet the Modeler” segment filled the morning and afternoon sessions. In place of the usual evening banquet, former SP employee, Mike Osborne, narrated his experience as a new SP crewman on a trip from LA to Bakersfield. Osborne’s presentation was followed by the PCR Awards Presentation (see “Honors” on page 12), and there were two evening clinics to wrap things up.

All in all, a fabulous job done by the Daylight Division Convention Committee in a completely new, uncharted format.



Keynote Speaker, Mike Osborne



Glenn Sutherland
Sierra Railway (HO scale)

Virtual Tour

see “Convention” - page 10

Category	Name / Position	Phone	Email
Officers, BOD	President, Frank Markovich, MMR	408-505-2727	frank@frankmarkovich.com
	Vice-President, Chip Meriam	530-899-2609	chipmeriam@comcast.net
	Treasurer, Bob Osborn	925-519-6016	brakemanbob@yahoo.com
	Secretary, Mike O'Dorney	925-998-6226	modorney@aol.com
	Director - Daylight, Ed Merrin	707-542-3620	edmerrin@comcast.net
Administration	Director - Coast, Lisa Gorrell	925-228-4429	snrylisa@gmail.com
	Director - Sierra, Jim Collins	209-566-0935	jimcol51@gmail.com
	Director - RED, Giuseppe Aymar, MMR	707-291-0701	giuseaymar@aol.com
	Manager, Frank Markovich, MMR	408-505-2727	frank@frankmarkovich.com
	Budget and Finance Committee [President, Vice-President and Treasurer]		
	By-laws and Manual Committee, (vacant)		
	Nomination Committee Chair, Dave Connery, MMR	925-735-0134	dgconnery@sbcglobal.net
	Ballot Committee, Jim Providenza	415-472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
	Honors Committee, Dave Connery, MMR	925-735-0134	dgconnery@sbcglobal.net
	Storekeeper, Mark Poggendorf	707-230-1142	on30cool@gmail.com
Membership	Audit Committee, John Houlihan	559-435-0874	oscalejohn@gmail.com
	Historian, Dave Connery, MMR	925-735-0134	dgconnery@sbcglobal.net
	Manager, Doug Wagner	661-589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
	Member Services, Bob Ferguson	925-228-6833	BobPCRCD@aol.com
Pubs.	Member Aid, Rod Smith	510-657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
	Education (vacant)		
	Special Interests, Seth Neumann	650-965-4687	sneumann@pacbell.net
Conv.	Manager, Gus Campagna	707-664-8466	campgus@earthlink.net
	Editor, Chip Meriam	530-899-2609	chipmeriam@comcast.net
	Webmaster, Dave Grenier	408-431-8989	pcrWebmaster@pcrnmra.org
	Chief Marketing Officer, Pete Birdsong, MMR	859-552-5467	rrpeteb@gmail.com
Contest	Manager, Tom Crawford	510-790-0371	tom@thecrawfordfamily.net
	2022 RED, Cliff & Denni Baumer	707-980-3250	pcr2022conv@gmail.com
	2023 - Steve Folino	916-359-7543	steve@fungusmungusrr.com
	Manager, Earl Girbovan	650-248-9255	egirbovan@netzero.com
	Daylight Division, Chuck Harmon, MMR	559-299-4385	harmonsta@yahoo.com
AP	Coast Division, Jim Eckman	650-996-6728	jim_eckman@roninengineer.com
	Sierra Division, Mike Hamlin	530-526-4408	hamlin@snowcrest.net
	RED, Giuseppe Aymar	707-291-0701	Giuseaymar@aol.com
	Manager, Jack Burgess, MMR	510-797-9557	jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com
	Daylight Division, Dave Grenier	408-431-8989	grenida@pacbell.net
Daylight	Coast Division, Earl Girbovan	650-248-9255	egirbovan@netzero.com
	Sierra Division, Dave Bayless	530-613-5784	davebayl@pacbell.net
	RED, Giuseppe Aymar, MMR	707-291-0701	Giuseaymar@aol.com
	Superintendent, Mike O'Brien	661-654-0748	obsmobile2002@yahoo.com
	Clerk / Paymaster, Milton San Soucie	714-528-8624	miltons@sbcglobal.net
	Editor, Chuck Harmon	559-299-4385	harmonsta@yahoo.com
	Contest, Chuck Harmon	559-299-4385	harmonsta@yahoo.com
	Achievement, Dave Grenier	408-431-8989	grenida@pacbell.net
	Membership, Doug Wagner	661-589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
Coast	Member Aid, Bob Pethoud	559-438-7705	pethoud@comcast.net
	Webmaster, Dave Grenier	408-431-8989	grenida@pacbell.net
	Superintendent, Phil Edholm	408-832-5618	pedholm@pkeconsulting.com
	Clerk, Brian Booth	925-324-2181	carcrazy832@yahoo.com
	Paymaster, Bob Ferguson	925-228-6833	BobPCRCD@aol.com
	Editor, Pete Birdsong, MMR	859-552-5467	rrpeteb@gmail.com
	Contest, Jim Eckman	650-996-6728	jim_eckman@roninengineer.com
	Achievement, Earl Girbovan	650-248-9255	egirbovan@netzero.com
Sierra	Membership, Ronnie LaTorres	510-317-7456	veronicashadlow@yahoo.com
	Member Aid, Rod Smith	510-657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
	Webmaster, Pete Birdsong, MMR	859-552-5467	rrpeteb@gmail.com
	Superintendent, Chip Meriam	530-899-2609	chipmeriam@comcast.net
	Clerk, Dave Fryman	925-360-1377	fryperson@hotmail.com
	Paymaster, Steve Folino	916-359-7543	steve@fungusmungusrr.com
	Editor, Chip Meriam	530-899-2609	chipmeriam@comcast.net
RED	Contest, Mike Hamlin	530-526-4408	hamlin@snowcrest.net
	Achievement, Dave Bayless	530-613-5784	davebayl@pacbell.net
	Membership, Jim Collins	209-566-0935	jimcol@charter.net
	Webmaster, Gus Campagna	707-664-8466	campgus@earthlink.net
	Superintendent, Paul Weiss	707-775-9889	REDsuper@pcrnmra.org
	Clerk / Paymaster, Dave Grundman	707-584-1964	REDclerk@pcrnmra.org
	Editor, Scott Lockhart	707-775-9889	REDcallboard@pcrnmra.org

The Branch Line
The Official Publication of the
Pacific Coast Region/ National
Model Railroad Association

Vol. 78, No. 3 3rd Qtr, 2021

The Branch Line is published quarterly to inform members of Region activities and to provide educational articles for the advancement of railroad history and the art and science of model railroading. It is distributed to members of the Pacific Coast Region. Electronic versions are posted on the website, www.pcrnmra.org.

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

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

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

Branch Line
Deadlines for 2021

OCT-NOV-DEC 2021 issue

Articles due by
September 10, 2021

JAN-FEB-MAR 2022 issue

Articles due by
December 10, 2021

APR-MAY-JUN 2022 issue

Articles due by
March 10, 2022

JUL-AUG-SEP 2022 issue

Articles due by
June 10, 2022

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

Contents

Reports

From the President.....4
 From the Editor.....5
 Achievement Report.....14
 SIG Report.....21
 Division Reports.....28

Feature Stories

Sugar Pine Centennial (virtual).....1
 Return To The Redwoods.....7
 2021 PCR Honors.....12
 Contest Room.....17
 The Answers Are Out There.....19
 Tales Of The Santa Cruz Northern.....22
 Looking Back.....24
 Shelter In Place Op Sessions.....26
 Life on the Fungus & Mungus.....30
 Orange Blossom Special.....32

Regular Goodies

Call Board.....2
 Statement of Publication.....3
 Membership Tracker.....3
 Welcome New Members.....6
 Membership Gauge.....6
 NMRA Membership Renewal Form.....16
 Time Table.....35
 In Memoriam.....36
 Club Information.....38
 Web Announcement.....42
 NMRA Partnership Program.....43

PCR Membership Tracker

<u>Division</u>	<u># Members</u>
Coast	376
Sierra	238
Redwood Empire	111
Daylight	100
Total PCR Members	825

From The President



By Frank Markovich, MMR

It is looking like we might be able to meet soon – I expect some in person get together in the Fall this year. I know that the Coast is looking at that. And other divisions are discussing it.

The NMRA National may be over by the time you read this but if not please register and participate. We still need some volunteers. I am doing one clinic on building the layout for the Sacramento Train Museum, “The Magic of Scale Model Railroading”. If you have not visited the museum and seen the display yet, I urge you to do so. Some great displays.

Achievement announcement. Ted Stevens has earned MMR #679. Congratulations to Ted!!

I have been attending the RAC meetings (officers in the NMRA and Region Presidents) for a few months now and will have more to report later but one item is recruitment and retention. This past year has seen the NMRA lose quite a few members (our region for example lost 6.9% of our members. Various reasons, but we are looking at methods to better serve members and to recruit new members. If any of you have suggestions please let me know.

I will be calling a special Board meeting soon after the “Rails to the Bay” convention is over. There are a number of issues we need to deal with.

I also have contacted the National on setting up Modeling with the Masters program in our region. I have yet to hear back but if I don’t soon I will ask again.

We had to cancel the John Allen breakfast – many reasons but one main one was the date (less than a week before the National). Also, no one stepped forward to run it this year. I will be out of town on the date.

On another note, please support your local hobby shop. I try to first get everything I need from the local shops. If not I do order online.

On a personal note, I have started working on my layout again. Trying to fix some of the issues. I started this layout 32 years ago and it has a number of issues. It is in On3 and the theme is logging in the Sierras. I mainly use West Side Lumber as inspiration. If anyone is interested in helping me drop me a line.

I am also building a small ‘N’ scale layout with Ezra (my eldest grandson). That will be in Modesto where he lives so I will be in Modesto much of the Summer.

Susie (my beautiful wife) and I have already signed up for next year’s PCR Convention in Rohnert Park. Please consider signing up early. There is a discount for the Early Bird Registration. Get those models ready for the contest. I hope to see all of you before too long!



Another Delay? You're Worse Than Amtrak!

Sorry folks. This 3rd Quarter issue of the *Branch Line* should have been published between June 25 and July 1...and here it is the end of August. With few exceptions, all the content from our usual contributors arrived well ahead of deadline (or, at least, by the publication target date). The blame for the delay rests squarely on my shoulders. You see, I received a rather life-shattering diagnosis on June 10 — Prostate Cancer.

While I am hopeful, if not confident, that I will survive with the proper treatment, my thoughts, my focus, and my daily routines have been hijacked by concern, ruminations, and, well, worry. When the June 25 publication target date arrived, I was busy with a bone scan at the local hospital. Appointments with various specialists and the first phases of treatment have continued through most of July and all of August. Simply put, my mind and my priorities have been elsewhere. I beg your forgiveness.

Meanwhile, while settling into the routine of a daily treatment regimen, it is my goal to get “back on track” and become, once again, a bit more reliable than Amtrak.

From The Editor



Chip Meriam, Editor

Back on April 24, the PCR Sugar Pine Centennial convention took place, on line, over a single day. To my knowledge, this is the first time such an event has been attempted. I invested the entire day and most of the evening to attending this virtual convention from the convenience of my home office. In a word, I was “impressed”. The effort and forethought that went into the production of Sugar Pine Centennial was evident in the final production. My thanks and congratulations to the Convention Committee and the Daylight Division for a job well done. Please see the brief write-up beginning on page 1.

Speaking of Conventions, the 2022 PCR Convention will be held in Rohnert Park beginning April 24, 2022. Hosted by the Redwood Empire Division, the convention has been dubbed “Return to the Redwoods”. Registration is currently underway. Please see the story on pages 7, 8 & 9.

Welcome to Our New Contest Manger, Earl Girbovan. Earl is no stranger to most of us, and his superior modeling skills are frequently in the spotlight at division and regional events. His “duties” include authorship of a monthly column in the *Branch Line*, and his first such submission appears on page 17.

Every Once In a While, an article comes in “over the transom” from a new contributor. As an editor, I do a mental happy dance when this occurs. In this issue, we have a step-by-step set of instructions for setting up and running a virtual operating session. Michael Eldridge treats us to his “Shelter In Place Op Sessions” on page 26.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chip Meriam". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

We are happy to announce that visitors are once again welcome to visit the GEHAMS (Bakersfield Model Railroad Club), on any Saturday!

Visitation hours are Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. For the last Saturday of each month, visitation hours are from 11:15 AM to 2:00 PM, as we now have our monthly business meetings on the last Saturday of each month from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM, with the “End Of Month Fun Run” going from 11:15 AM to 2:00 PM.

There may be times that the trains will not be running due to some work being accomplished on either the HO or N scale layout, but both layouts will be fully operational for the "End Of Month Fun Run." All we ask of visitors is that they be in good health and not have had any recent illnesses within two weeks of visiting us. Other than that, we'd be happy to see your smilin' faces once more!



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

Member	City, Sate	Date Joined
Coast		
Catherine Alexander	Cupertino CA	3/23/2021
Robert Ronconi	Mountain View CA	3/24/2021
Patricia Davis	San Jose CA	3/30/2021
Michael Sullivan	Oakland CA	5/9/2021
Jerry Murri	Fremont CA	5/27/2021
Sierra		
John Robards	Sun Valley NV	3/3/2021
Hawley MacLean	Reno NV	3/9/2021
Tracy Miller	Nevada City CA	3/9/2021
Tim Schroepfer	Sacramento CA	4/13/2021
Martha Totaro	Rocklin CA	4/14/2021
Mike Totaro	Rocklin CA	4/14/2021
William Gustavson	Pioneer CA	4/15/2021
Tom Gerald	Weaverville CA	5/9/2021
Redwood Empire		
Robert Smith	Sonoma CA	3/16/2021
Glen Collins	Vacaville CA	3/24/2021

**PCR Membership
Gauge**

- May 31, 2020—868
- June 30, 2020—867
- July 31, 2020—873
- August 31, 2020—872
- September 30, 2020—868
- October 31, 2020—865
- November 30, 2020—856
- December 31, 2020—858
- January 31, 2021—851
- February 28, 2021—842
- March 31, 2021—836
- April 30, 2021—832
- May 31, 2021—825



Return to the Redwoods PCR 2022

Mark your calendar! Registration for the 2022 PCR Convention, ***Return to the Redwoods***, will open April 24, 2021. Sign up early and get a \$20 discount on a Full Fare Registration.

The convention will be held April 21-24, 2022 at the beautiful Doubletree Sonoma Wine Country in Rohnert Park. With ample room for clinics and displays and easy access from Highway 101, this is the perfect spot for PCR/NMRA members to gather once more. A full three-day program is planned including over 40 clinics, layout tours, operating sessions, contests, vendor exhibit/sales, a member swap meet and a full non-rail program. And of course, there will be excursions including the ever popular, Sturgeon's Mill.

For more information and the link to registration, visit <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2022>



More on page 8

Return to the Redwoods in 2022 for the Annual PCR Convention

Join your fellow modelers in Rohnert Park, April 21-24, 2022. It will be the first time in two years we can get together in person and we have three full days of activities scheduled plus the Sunday breakfast and business meeting.

Last year, PCR made the decision to try a new online registration program through RegFox. This will be the first full convention to use this program exclusively. It has many great features and we hope you find the registration process easy to follow. Everything is included all on one site – registration, excursions tickets, convention shirts, convention car, and swap meet tables. Register now and save \$20! <https://pcrnmra.regfox.com/pcr-nmra-2022-convention>. Hotel reservations can also be made by clicking the Lodging and Hotel button in the upper right corner of the registration page. If you have any issues, please contact registrar2022@pcrnmra.org

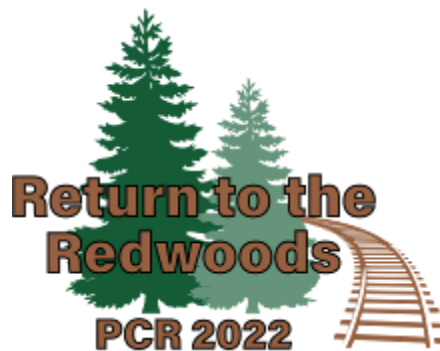
The Convention Committee has already put together an outstanding program including three great excursions.

On Thursday, take a trip through the redwoods to the site of one of California's most historic wineries, Korbel Champagne Cellars. During the tour you will hear the great story of the Korbel family, learn how their wonderful California Champagne is made and get the history of the Korbel Train Station. The tour will end in the tasting room where you will have the opportunity to taste their wines and champagnes and browse the gift shop. Transportation will be provided. This excursion is scheduled from 1:00pm to 5:00pm and tickets are \$50.

Friday, we have scheduled a fun trip through Sonoma County. Bring your camera as we visit five different train depots and see the beautiful restorations and reuses of these historic buildings. On the list are the Petaluma Depot (NWP), now the Petaluma Visitors Center, the Sonoma Depot (SP), part of the Depot Park Museum, the Kenwood Depot (SP), a beautiful building built of stone and now being used as an event center, the Santa Rosa Depot (NWP), where you will find the Santa Rosa Visitors Center and finally the Sebastopol Depot (P&SR), home to the West County Museum. The \$40 ticket for this excursion includes transportation and admission fees. The tour will leave the hotel at 1:00pm and return at 5:00pm.

And back by popular demand is the Sturgeon's Mill tour. Saturday you will have the opportunity to drive through the magnificent redwoods to visit one of the few remaining steam powered lumber mills still working. This 107-year-old lumber mill is operated by volunteers and will be open exclusively for 2022 Convention attendees. The mill is scheduled to operate from 1:30pm – 3:30pm. Weather permitting, the beautiful picnic grounds will be available before the tour for those that would like to bring a lunch. Attendees must purchase a ticket at \$40 per person to attend and provide their own transportation. Signups for carpooling will be available at the convention.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Rohnert Park!



More on page 9

Operating Sessions PCR 2022



Hi everyone. I'm Doug Smith, and I will be the Operating Sessions Chair for the 2022 PCR Convention. The convention will be April 21-24, 2022.

We are still in the early stages of planning this activity. Actually, we are not 100% sure that operating sessions will happen, but are moving forward assuming that they will. Many things both within and outside of our control need to fall into place. We are working to ensure that we are ready if the rest of the world, at least the northern California part of the world, is ready, too. So with that, let's get started. April 2022 is closer than some of us think!

The first thing that we need is a collection of operating layouts. There are many great layouts within easy driving distance of Rohnert Park. Some layouts have been flourishing recently with time available to their owners. Many new projects completed, but some have not had a train run for a year. It's time to chase out the mice and dust everything off to see what needs to be done. We had 8 layouts open for the 2018 gathering and hope to have at least that many in 2022.

Operating sessions may be limited to smaller groups. I know many layout owners are considering starting sessions again with skeleton crews. Social distancing requirements, vaccinations, and a general level of comfort with others whom you may not know in your home or club are all factors to be handled for each layout. Please keep these and other questions in mind planning your sessions, but start with your best case scenario and be willing to scale back from there if necessary. No decisions have been made yet or requirements set at the convention level.

If you have a layout and are willing to consider hosting an operating session, please get in touch with me. It's actually easier to start with a big list than to try to add layouts later. Not to mention the motivation that a point on the calendar adds to the trips to the layout room. Operating sessions are always a high point of a convention. This is the time to start working towards that goal.

Thanks for considering hosting a session. It will help the whole PCR move towards a more normal place. The convention web site is <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2022>. We'll work the timing for the operating sessions into the schedule posted there. At this time afternoons are preferred but this is flexible.

Please plan on joining the Convention activities. For everything else - stay tuned! Please feel free to contact me with ANY questions.

Cheers, Doug Smith

Operations2022@pcrnra.org





Virtual Tour

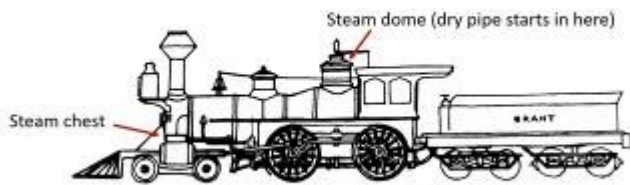
Bob Jakl
UP, AT&SF, CB&Q, Katy (O scale)



Clinic

Jeff Johnston
The Pains & Pleasures of Prototype Modeling

4-4-0 with Wagon top boiler



4-4-0 ca. 1870

Clinic

Robert Pethoud
Basics of Steam Locomotives



Clinic

Ed Merrin
Focus Stacking and Low Perspective Smartphone Photography.



**Ed Merrin's
Draw Bridge Over Petaluma Creek**

Meet The Modeler



**Jim Petro's
Transfer Caboos**

Meet The Modeler



Meet The Modeler

**Earl Girbovan's
Clear Creek Lumber**



2021 PCR Honors Awards
Dave Connery, MMR, Acting PCR Honors Manager

During the evening program at this year's Virtual PCR Convention, Sugar Pine Centennial , the 2021 Annual Awards were announced. This year's Division Member of the Year Awards and the PCR Presidents Award were a team effort. The beautiful artwork is by noted railroad artist and Coast Member, Mike Kotowski. The superb matting and framing was by Daylight Member, Bill Scott. The award plates were engraved by Coast Member, Eric Moe.

The Coast Member of the Year Award was announced by Coast Director, Lisa Gorrell. It went to Coast Superintendent, Phil Edholm. The Daylight Member of the Year went to Bob Sexton and was announced by Director, Ed Merrin. RED Director, Giuseppe Aymar - MMR announced Ed Merrin as the Redwood Empire Division Member of the Year. Jim Collins, Sierra Division Director, announced the Sierra award went to Tom Van Horn. Announced by PCR President, Chris Palermo, the PCR Presidents Award went to Doug Wagner, and the National President's Award for ervice to the Division went to Jim Collins. Chris Palermo also acknowledged the important contributions of PCR Treasurer, Bob Osborn, PCR Secretary, Chip Meriam, Pete Birdson - MMR, who produced our Constant Contact news dispatches semi-weekly ,and Ed Merrin, who stepped in to serve as Daylight Director. Chris also announced that he would be stepping down on May 6, 2021 due to his election to the NMRA Board and an impending home move to Austin, Texas.

The John Allen Memorial Award was established by the Gorre & Daphetid Operators, in concert with Coast Division, to recognize modelers who have made significant contributions to the hobby and to serve as a memorial to John Allen, "The Wizard of Monterey". The selection committee for the award is all past John Allen Award recipients. This year we had a perfect tie in the voting for the award and rather than force someone to change their vote, it was decided that two awards would be granted. The 2021 John Allen Memorial Award winners are Bruce Morden and David Parks.

Congratulations to all the awardees - they make our enjoyment of this hobby so much greater.



Lisa Gorrell presenting Coast Member of the Year award to Phil Edholm



Daylight Member of the Year, Bob Sexton



Redwood Empire Member of the Year, EdMerrin



Jim Collis presenting Sierra Member of the Year award to Tom Van Horn

Continued on page 13



Doug Wagner, PCR President's Award



**Jim Collins, National President's Award
for Service to the Division**



**Bruce Morden, John Allen Memorial
Award Co-Recipient**



**Dave Parks, John Allen Memorial Award
Co-Recipient**





Achievement Program - Scenery

By Jack Burgess, MMR, Manager, PCR Achievement Department

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

To qualify for this certificate, you must construct a completed section of model railroad of at least 60 square feet in O scale, 45 square feet in S scale, 32 square feet in HO scale, or 24 square feet in N scale. (Note that the 32 square feet in HO is the size of the traditional 4x8

layout that many of us built when we first began in the hobby.) The entire layout doesn't need to be complete in order to receive this certificate nor do the completed sections of the layout need to be adjacent to each other. You can instead complete individual scenes, as long as you meet the total required area. You can also use modules to meet the qualifications, but each must be at least 8 square feet in size and meet the quality standards.

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

- ◆ Terrain (Max. 35 points) - This element includes natural features such as rocks, trees, hills, cuts and fills, drainage ditches, etc.
- ◆ Structures (Max. 20 points) - Structures are considered from the point of prototype suitability and appearance and not from the standpoint of construction. The structures thus do not need to be scratchbuilt. Structures can include bridges, fences, turntables, etc.
- ◆ Background (Max. 25 points) - The treatment of the walls or background does not need to be artist quality. However, it needs to help “extend” the scenery and help conceal the rest of the room.
- ◆ Lighting (Max. 20 points) - Illumination can come from railroad cars, buildings, and overall lighting effects. You don't need to include day/night effects to meet this requirement. However, room lighting should be even and consistent to adequately light the scene.
- ◆ Realism/Conformity (Max. 25 points) - In the other categories, the judges evaluate what you were trying to do and what you remembered to include in your scene. In this one, they will evaluate how well you accomplished that goal.

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

If you meet these qualifications, the first step is to complete a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) the same as with all of the AP categories. You must also prepare a set of photographs (digital photos taken with a cell phone are fine) to document your work. The photos must include a written description of the intended setting. The photos don't need to be “suitable for publication”, only good enough to allow someone else to see that you have met the qualifications. You also need to prepare a simple description of the methods and materials that you used to build the layout features. Again, nothing elaborate.

The judging of the layout is typically set up by your Divisional AP Chairman and one or more assistants. After judging the layout, the judges will sign your SOQ. You then need to send the SOQ and your other documentation (along with a photocopy or scan/photo of your membership card) to your divisional AP Chairman or me directly. Note that all of the submittals can be completely digital (once judges have judged your layout if you want.)

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

Continued on page 15

Achievement Program ct'd.

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


Beck Bernard - Model Railroad Author

Ted Stephens - Master Builder – Cars

Also, Ted Stephens has, with the award of the Master Builder – Cars certificate met the qualifications for being awarded a Master Model Railroader certificate! In the past, such certificates were presented at a Regional meet but since those have been suspended, I am including a photo of Ted and his award.



If you wonder if you might be close to meeting the requirements for becoming a MMR but have lost track of how many certificates you have received, email me and I can tell you. If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My phone number, address, and e-mail address are listed in the Call Board on Page 2.





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As of a couple months ago, I took on the job of Contest Manager. If you've been in the contest room at the conventions, you probably know me as I've been helping Giuseppe for a number of years. Seeing the diverse creativity and craftsmanship in the model and photography contests is one of the high points of the convention for me. With the upcoming 2022 Rohnert Park convention a reality, I look forward to seeing what people have built in the past couple of years, when we've had no conventions.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Giuseppe for all his hard work and the years he's put in as Contest Manager. Giuseppe is also an excellent modeler, and has inspired me personally to do better at my modeling. His energy and enthusiasm will be hard to replace.

There are a couple of other unsung heroes associated with the contest, and those people are Carol Skold and Carol Alexander. They have both been fixtures in the contest room for many years, staffing the tables, logging in entries, totaling votes and generally making the contests run smoothly. I'm very grateful that Carol Skold will be staying on to keep the contest room running smoothly.

From being in the contest room over the years, I hear a number of questions and concerns. Let me address some of them.

Why even enter the contest? That's a reasonable question. My answer is that it builds your skill set and inspires others. With a contest model you're likely to take more care in its construction. I found myself doing research in the on-line forums and YouTube videos on weathering, peeling paint, lighting, details and other items when I was preparing an entry. The outcome was a much better model that I would have had otherwise. And the result is something I'm happy to show off. The other facet is inspiration to others. New modelers spend quite a bit of time looking at the models as it's an opportunity to see things up close. Often the modeler is there, happily answering questions about construction and techniques. And isn't that what much of this hobby is about anyway – sharing with others?

Isn't it unnerving having other people scrutinize your work in detail? Yes, it is. Even for those of us that have entered models previously. But if you want to improve your skill set, you need to have some impartial eyes looking at what you did. The judges are not out to nitpick your work. Instead they can see areas for improvement that will help make a better model. One of the things we ask of the judges is to do is write notes on the contest sheet on things they liked or what could be done for improvement. This is great feedback. I recently did an informal judging of 3 models for a PCR member who had never had models judged previously. This turned out to be very enjoyable for both of us and will result in many improvements to the models.

Isn't there a lot of paperwork to do? Not really, you don't need to write a book, simply document your work so the judges know what you did. Remembering that a picture is worth a thousand words, taking a few cell phone photos as you go along is extremely beneficial. Jack Burgess has an excellent article on how to fill out a contest form. It's on the PCR web site under Contest Information web and can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.pcrnmra.org/pcr/contest/MODEL_CONTEST_ENTRY_FORM_HINTS_AND_TIPS.pdf

Also, there are numerous people that will help you fill out the form and answer questions. Myself, your Division AP Chairperson, virtually any MMR and most people that have entered contests previously are normally happy to work with you.

I don't want to spend a lot of time building a contest model. Very few models are built specifically for the contest. Normally it's modelers displaying their newest build or something they're proud of. Maybe the build is a bit more than what they would normally would have done, but then the end result is an even better model.

The other way to build your skill set is to volunteer as a judge. Judging is done in teams of three people. You'll be teamed up with one or two experienced judges and assigned one of the 5 categories, then judge that category across all the contest models. What at first seems to be a daunting task soon becomes very enjoyable and allows you to look in detail at the creativity and craftsmanship of others. This is a great learning experience. There are numerous online forums and videos on modeling, but nothing beats the ability to see a model close up as you will be a judge. In addition, if you're at all considering the path to an MMR, judging at the convention awards you 2 volunteer points.

It's been two years now that we haven't had in person conventions, and that many of us have been using the time to catch up on projects. I would encourage you share some of your recent models or photographs at Rohnert Park in 2022.

Continued on page 18

Guest Comentary by Giuseppe Aymar,

MMR - RED Contest Manager

Oh my! Give me a break, Giuseppe. It's only August and you want to talk about Contests at the next PCR Convention in 2022? Geeeeeze!!! That's next year. I mean 12 months, or better 52 weeks. Or even better 365 days. Make that 8,760 hours or 525,600 minutes; to top it "eons of seconds" from now.

A few-many *Branch Lines* ago, in one my diatribes, I referred to an Aesop's fable about the ant and the grasshopper. Do you remember it? The gist of the story was, "Do not wait till winter is on top of you to get ready for winter." Same goes for Contests. Start preparing for it now while time is plentiful and you can enjoy the process.

Remember that you do not necessarily have to start from scratch on your project. It could be something already completed that you feel comfortable will fare well in Contests, or a project that needs a few extra touches to make it a truly standout entry. Sometimes we get lost in the idea of having to bring something totally new. It can even be an entry that has won 2nd or 3rd place in previous Contests. As long as it was not 1st place it can be entered again. I would suggest making a few additions to improve your score. You could be looking at first place!

An often overlooked area of Contests is Arts & Crafts. Most of us, middle aged males, disdain the idea of Crafts. "I took shop in school, not crafts". "Crafts is not manly, you know". "Hogwash," say I. In our hobby, we are all craftsmen and craftswomen. We build beautiful scenery (that's crafty, we hear). We paint backdrops, we make trees, rivers, mountains, and meadows. We populate them with people, animals, flora, etc. I call that crafty. Do you not agree? Now put that crafty mind to work and create something that would fit into one of the Arts & Crafts categories. Ok, ok, it might not fit into the needlepoint category but it could fit into Railroadiana Original. See my point?

Let's be creative and show that we think outside the box for a change. Or we'll all be aging ungracefully doing the same thing over and over and over and over..... No wonder the younger generations don't find us exciting enough to join us. We are BORING !!!! And PREDICTABLE !!!! No FUN !!!! So, tell a story with pictures, or railroad pins or whatever strikes your fancy. Years ago my friend, Steve Wesolowski, entered a picture of a jacket given to him by a Union Pacific RR crew ("Heavy steel gang - RAILDOG "). It honored him for having spent time with them on the job - part of Steve's railroad experience. So, he entered it rightfully in Railroadiana Original. Way to go, Steve.

Looking back at the non-judged category, this is really an open invitation to bring out those models dear to you that are stored in your closet or on display at your home (even those first place models can be shown here). No one but you or the few guests that visit your home will ever see them. Why not bring them into the Contest room and share them with the rest of us? It reminds me of the art collector who keeps that beautiful Matisse painting hidden in his home. Much better to have that painting displayed in a museum, don't you think?

BE C-R-E-A-T-I-V-E , show the world you can still dance!!!!



The Answers Are Out There By Robert Pethoud

Cunningham Petroleum 1



My latest project is a lineside industry to fit a long narrow space beside a spur in my free-lanced town of Bullfrog. The spur is at the front of the layout and the industry will occupy the space between the spur and the main line, so I wanted something that would not completely screen an operator's view of the action. I decided that an oil distributorship would work well, since the structures would be small and easy to see around. To minimize the time required to build things from scratch, I chose to use the Bar Mills kit, "Earl's Oil," as my starting point. Of course, I wanted to expand and personalize it, in ways I'll explain as we go along. The first change I made was in the name, from Earl's Oil to Cunningham Petroleum, in honor of a friend and sometime model railroader.

The many sub-assemblies of the Bar Mills kit include a laser-cut main building, which is an office with a drive-through overhang; two medium-sized horizontal tanks and one small tank, all with support bases; a few signs, including a really nice billboard; some fencing; and several soft metal castings of oil drums and other details. The built-up components can be arranged any way you like, to fit a vacant lot of nearly any shape, but the result is a very small industry. Since I had enough space and some parts from Grandt Line and Walthers, I decided to enlarge the business by adding a large vertical tank, a pumphouse, and a tank car unloading apparatus. I also wanted to add a large sign on a pole out front, but that I had to scratch-build. The photo of the finished model shows how I arranged these parts to create a thriving industry served by my HO scale Southern Pacific railroad in the years immediately following WW II.

I wanted to build the diorama at my workbench, rather than in place on the model railroad, so I began by constructing a base, illustrated in the second photo. The plan is for the finished model to be fastened down to the layout's pine sub-roadbed next to the spur track, so the base had to be thin. I cut a piece of 0.020" sheet styrene in the shape of a trapezoid 15 inches long and with a width ranging from 2.5 inches to 4.5 inches. Then I cut a smaller piece of the 0.020" styrene to represent the concrete slab on which much of the industry sits. I prepared the "concrete slab" by doing the following:

- I cut a slot to represent a trench to take the pipes from the pumphouse to the dispensing apparatus just outside the office.
- I scored joints with an X-acto number 11 blade.
- I drilled four small holes for the posts which support the office's overhang.
- I primed the slab with Rust-Oleum flat gray from a spray can.
- I applied a color coat of Tamiya AS-16 Light Grey (USAF) for aircraft, also from a spray can.

After all that, I bonded the concrete slab styrene sheet to the larger base sheet. Then I attached a few other pieces to that base sheet:

- A square base for the vertical tank, made of 0.040" styrene
- A dam around the three largest tanks, made of .100" x .125" dimensioned styrene
- Pipe trench covers made of .020" x .080" basswood strips, which were stained with an India ink wash of 2 teaspoons of ink in a pint of isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol

With the base constructed and basic colors applied, it was time to increase the realism with some weathering to the concrete slab:

I darkened the joints by applying two coats of Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color (Black).

I applied various gray and beige shades of Bragdon Enterprises weathering chalks.

I added some oil stains by touching the slab in various places with the tip of a small brush loaded with the same India ink stain mentioned above.

- I darkened the joints by applying two coats of Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color (Black).
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- I added some oil stains by touching the slab in various places with the tip of a small brush loaded with the same India ink stain mentioned above.

Continued on page 20

Answers ct'd.

The next step was to add dirt to the diorama everywhere not covered by “concrete.” In the past, I’ve used crushed and sifted decomposed granite for this, but I’ve not been satisfied with the relatively coarse texture of the result. Lance Mindheim had an article in the January 2021 issue of Model Railroader magazine entitled “Using grout to model soil,” so I decided to give his method a try. The non-sanded grout he recommends is available from many of the big box home and garden stores and comes in a wide variety of hues to match pretty much any kind of dirt you can find. The grout I purchased is Polyblend Non-Sanded grout in a color the manufacturer calls “Linen.” It is a very light beige color, maybe too light for your taste, and Mr. Mindheim suggests buying several hues and mixing them as desired. I was too cheap to purchase several, but I found another way to vary the color. Here’s the process I used, which differs somewhat from Mr. Mindheim’s:

- To begin, I brushed on the base a coat of inexpensive acrylic craft paint of roughly the same color as the grout. Any of these work for me: Apple Barrel #20777 Goose Feather, Deco Art Crafters Acrylic in Oatmeal, or Folk Art / Plaid #879 Linen.
- After the paint was dry, I sprinkled on the grout, which is very fine. On my first attempt, I found that it tended to clump, so I used a soft brush to break up the clumps and spread them out. A little experimentation yielded a better way, which uses a fine metal mesh or screen. I sprinkled the grout on the screen, where it tends to pile up. Then I used that same soft brush to push the pile around, causing the grout to fall through the mesh very nicely.
- It turns out that the grout contains Portland cement, so all you need to do to fix it in place is to wet it. Once I got the grout in place with the sprinkling and brushing, I used a medicine dropper to wet it with isopropyl alcohol.
- After the “dirt” was dry and hard, I was happy with the fine texture, but I noticed that the color was altogether too uniform. I fixed this problem by adding some Bragdon weathering chalks. Using a stiff brush to pick up some chalk, I tapped the brush while it was still over its container to put most of the chalk back, then over the dirt area I tapped the brush again to get tiny spots of color in the dirt. I followed this up by using a different, soft brush to spread out those tiny spots, resulting in a very believable variegated effect. Don’t use the stiff brush for this part, or you’ll dislodge the grout you were at pains to get fastened in place. You can add several different hues of chalk to get a result you’re satisfied with.

Now with the dirt and concrete slabs in place, we’re ready to add the structures which will turn this vacant lot into a business providing the citizens of Bullfrog the petroleum products they need to thrive in a postwar economy. In forthcoming issues we’ll look at how I assembled and finished the rest of this model. Until then, you can reach me with comments and questions at pethoud@comcast.net



Oil Distributorship Base



Pacific Coast Region SIG Report

by Seth Neumann



Things are starting to open up! There have been some local op sessions, with reduced density and vaccinated or masked operators. I expect this trend to continue for the rest of 2021 barring a major resurgence of COVID.




Virtual Rails by the Bay 2021 was in Santa Clara July 6-10 and LDSIG is planned a full schedule mirroring the activities of a face to face convention.

As in the previous several months, we have had SIG activities via Zoom conferences. The Operations SIG has been holding clinics and layout tours every other Sunday afternoon at 1:00 PM, see <https://www.opsig.org/Virtual> for topics and meeting information. LDSIG is holding Zooms on a more-or-less quarterly schedule,

Some of the traditional operations meets are starting up this fall, although at reduced capacity. If you are interested in getting involved contact me at sneumann@pacbell.net.

Seth Neumann



  	<p>February 4 – 6, 2022 – Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend, Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA, Layout Design SIG, and Operations SIG</p> <p>Save the dates! Note new dates due to NFL Super Bowl scheduling change. More details will be posted Fall 2021.</p> <p>The meet and all three days of layout tours are open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. NMRA, PCR, LDSIG, OPSIG membership is NOT required! If you can't join us for the entire meet, at least come out and enjoy some truly wonderful layouts.</p> <p>Website for the January 30-31, 2021 SIG Meet</p> <p>TSG Multimedia's video of Bay Area Meet 2019.</p> <p>TSG video report of Live Crew Lounge Panel Discussion at 2020's meet (Starts at 0:49)</p>
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Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

By: Jim Providenza

What's In My Junkyard?

How many of you have gone to a 'What's In My Toolbox' clinic? No, you don't have to raise your hands, I know most of us have. Someday I might give one of those clinics myself...

Last week I needed to replace a missing ladder and power brake wheel on a boxcar I was running through the SCN shop. Being too lazy to dig through my box of packets of parts (in a really old long Athearn car kit box. How old? It's a yellow Athearn box – even before the infamous blue boxes!). Oh yeah, the parts box resides in the toolbox...

Instead I wandered over to the West San Jose industrial area to the junkyard. Anytime I find something lying around the railroad - it goes to the junkyard. Anytime something breaks on the railroad – it goes to the junkyard. Occasionally something from the house wanders by and is shanghaied – and goes into the junkyard.

And over the years I have scrounged any number of replacement parts previously salvaged from the railroad. Unfortunately, not this time. I had to go back to the toolbox. But in sorting through the pile in the junkyard what I did find was... history, or maybe just tales.

We'll let photos will tell the tale!



The Junkyard Pile



Let's start with some corrosion



Wheel flanges are not indestructible. Plastic ones will chip, metal ones can crack or get welded to the rail.



The wheel web – what you can do with enough electricity... or a little bit of acid... or??

Continued on page 23



Couple shank(s) – we don't need situation cards; broken, bent... track/
train dynamics, buff and draft forces... they are real even on the model.



Broken knuckles – can't just carry a spare from the
loco or caboose to fix the problem.



Truck bolsters – a fall from grace, or
maybe just to the floor. Any number
of these kicking around in the bone



Broken axles – really only possible with plastic. Right?



And one brake wheel, found while taking these photos!

What's in your junkyard?



Looking Back

by Dave Connery, MMR, PCR Historian
Voices – An Interview with Lisa Gorrell

As a young girl, Lisa grew up in Pittsburg, where she got to see a great number of trains as the WP, SP and AT&SF all passed through parts of town. When the family was driving around, they were often stopped at railroad crossings. Waiting while trains passed, Lisa would count the cars in the train, or perhaps just the green cars or those that were red. At that time her focus was on the freight cars and not the locomotives - but she always liked trains. She had two younger brothers. While she got dolls and girl things for presents, they got a Lionel train set which she liked to see run. Her brothers were mostly interested in causing wrecks.

In 1963 her family moved to Walnut Creek where there were not many trains. But as a student at Las Lomas High School, she would hear trains passing on the nearby San Ramon Branch of the SP. One time a girl friend's father took his daughter and Lisa to visit the East Bay Model Engineers layout in Emeryville. This was the first time she had ever seen a scale model railroad and she found it fascinating.

One day she was in Whitman's Hobby Shop in downtown Walnut Creek. She noticed a poster promoting membership in the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Club. She called the number and they told her when and where to come to visit the club. Once she was there (it was at the present location of the club – this was after their move to Larkey Park from down near the Walnut Creek depot) Jack O'Hara took Lisa under his wing. As they were working on the outer loop at the time, Lisa began learning how to spike rail. When she joined the club, she was the only woman. She remembers one of the members saying, "Well, we finally have someone to clean the women's restroom".

Later, Bill Swindell took Lisa and Jim Anthony to visit the Western Railway Museum at Rio Vista Junction and Lisa became especially interested in electric motive power. She has been a fan of the Sacramento Northern ever since. Lisa, Jim and Bill became good friends at this time.

Following High School, Lisa attended Hayward State, majoring in biology. She would commute to school on BART and she became interested in the BART system. While at Hayward State, Lisa had a job in the library which she enjoyed very much. She considered staying in school after graduation just so she could keep that job. Instead, she got a job working at a Sporting Goods store. Dwayne Coate told her about the job opening. They needed someone to organize their computers. Lisa hated that job. The one day, at the Walnut Creek Club, Bill Fleisher brought a BART job application form for Bob Ferguson. Lisa made a copy of the form and submitted it. She was shortly hired by BART. Lisa then attended the nine-week train operator's class and graduated in December of 1978. Her first year at BART was one with considerable turmoil. First, there was the fire in the tube that involved one of her classmates from operators training. This really shook Lisa up. Then labor issues came to a head when there had been no contract between BART and the employees union for many months. Maintenance of the equipment was suffering and mechanics at the Concord Maintenance facility took over the shops, resulting in a BART shutdown from September to November 1979. Lisa worked for BART for a total of 32 years, 15 years as a Train Operator and then 17 years as an instructor training new BART Train Operators. She retired from BART in 2010.

Meanwhile, Lisa decided she should be on her own. Once the strike was over, she moved from her parent's home to an apartment. About this time Lisa met her husband, Norman Gorrell, who was working as a caretaker at the Western Railway Museum. He then got a job in Martinez and they were married in 1980. They have a home in Martinez where they raised two daughters, one born in 1988 and the second in 1991. Lisa had stayed active in the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Club until in the mid-1990s when the demands of two young girls, their school and scouts, and her full-time job caused Lisa to become inactive.

She again became active with the club a number of years ago. If you are ever visiting the club, look for the model of the gazebo in the park scene. Lisa built that many years ago. Currently she serves as one of the cab operators during open house shows.

Looking Back



Continued on page 25

Looking Back ct'd.

The club has a regular testing process (both written and practical) and this limits the number of members who are authorized to operate cabs. Lisa was Club Secretary in her earlier time with the club and has again taken that responsibility. This requires her to attend two monthly Club meetings as well as her cab operator duties during open days. There are now four other women who are club members.

Lisa served as Coast Division Chief Clerk in the 1980s, taking minutes at all the meetings. She was the Circulation Manager for the PCR Branch Line in the early 1990s, applying the labels to the newsletters (there were about 1500 issues mailed in those days), getting the addresses all sorted by ZIP code, and mailing the issues at the Post Office. Also in the 1990s, Lisa served as the PCR Historian, writing articles for the Branch Line and putting together a lot of the material that was included in the 1994 Special Edition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Pacific Coast Region. She has also been a member of the Coast Division Auction Team for much of the past 40 years. She says she is so busy during the auctions she never has time to get involved in the bidding, and that has kept her from purchasing a lot of things by which she might have otherwise been tempted.

One of the aspects of our hobby that Lisa especially enjoys are the conventions where she often gets to see some very interesting clinic presentations. She is always energized right after a convention but then rarely is motivated to follow up on the presenter's suggestions. Lisa has assisted in several PCR Convention Committees. In 2000 she was a part of the team that put on the NMRA 20th Century Limited Convention in San Jose. Lisa produced a daily newsletter providing convention attendees with the latest updates on convention activities and news.



In addition to model railroading Lisa is interested in nature, walking, and is currently taking several evening courses in German. She was introduced to Genealogy by Sue Swindell, Bill's wife back about 1993, and she has become very proficient in this hobby. She is being recognized as a Certified Genealogist by the Board for the Certification of Genealogists (BCG). She has been teaching a class in genealogy at Acalanes High School for the past 1 ½ years. She is also on the Board of Directors of the Contra Costa County Historical Society.

Lisa served as PCR Secretary in 2013-14 time period and she is the current PCR Director from Coast Division. In 1994 she was the Coast Division Member of the Year and in 1996 was awarded the prodigious John Allen award. As you can see from the above, Lisa Gorrell is a spark plug and leader in every organization in which she has becomes involved.



Shelter-in-Place Op Session

By Michael Eldridge

Having to stay at home has had some benefits for my modeling. There has been plenty of time to work through many of my “90% projects” – the ones that have been 90% finished for a year or more. The pile of unbuilt kits has been slightly reduced. What has been missing is spending time with my model railroad buddies, which is a big part of the hobby for me and for many of us. I belong to a small club, and we have met over Zoom a couple times. I decided it would be fun to have an op session. This isn’t a regular activity for my club even in normal times, and I’ve always wished it could be. I decided rather than wait for the COVID restrictions to go away, I would see what was necessary to host an op session on Zoom. I easily found all the information needed on websites and YouTube videos.

In this article I will describe the pieces of the puzzle that you need in order to host an op session over video conferencing systems such as Zoom or Google Meet. I’ll give some instructions here and for other things I will refer to online resources. For my session I wanted the operators to control the locomotive and the switches. I would do any uncoupling required. The layout is a segment of our modular layout but can be set up independently. It is an S Scale adaptation of Robert Pethoud’s Fall Creek Branch, a layout designed for switching operations in a compact space. Operators would be able to view the layout and communicate with me over Zoom, and control the locomotive with WiThrottle or Engine Driver, and control the switches through Panel Pro.

The main components required for this are:

- A DCC operated layout (with switches that can be operated as DCC accessories)

- A computer connected to the internet and to the layout (we will use a Raspberry Pi)

- A computer running the conferencing software (Zoom), with at least two webcams attached (you may want a USB hub to connect multiple cameras)

- While operators can do everything from one computer, most will want to have a device (smartphone or tablet) with WiThrottle (iPhone) or Engine Driver (Android) installed, and a second computer to connect to view the layout via Zoom and control the switches.

After typing out the following I realized it looks pretty intimidating because there are many steps. I hope that I have developed easy to follow instructions, and there are tons of YouTubes and web pages that are easily found that address particular parts of the setup required.

The Layout

You could have a session with the host controlling the switches following the directions of the operator, but I felt it would be much better to have the remote operator control the switches. We will do this using PanelPro, part of the JMRI software set. This software depends on being able to operate the switches as DCC accessories. This is easily handled by off the shelf products like SwitchIt from NCE or the servo controllers from Tam Valley. Each switch is given an accessory address. I assigned addresses from left to right on the layout, 90 on the furthest north (left) and increasing as you moved south.

One thing I discovered in our first op session was the value of having the DCC to the switches isolated from the DCC to the track. This could be done with a separate “accessory” power station supplying power and commands to the switches, or the switches could be connected directly to the power station with a circuit breaker inserted between the power station and the track. In my setup the switches were powered and controlled from the same circuit as the track. When an operator runs into a switch thrown the wrong way, the power station shuts off the track power, and then we cannot operate the switches. I would have to push the locomotive back, wait for a reset, and then throw the switch. Not good. With the power to the switch motors on its own circuit, the operator would have been able to throw the switch, wait for a reset on the track power, and then go on with his or her duties.

The only other issues with the layout are that it should operate flawlessly, and it should be possible to position cameras to get good views where the action takes place. The camera placement is a real challenge, and I will say more about that later.

Setting up a Raspberry Pi for Layout Control

The Raspberry Pi is a small computer that is often used in dedicated applications such as robotic control. The heart of this whole project is getting the Raspberry Pi set up and connected to your layout and to your internet router. If you are willing to take on this project at all, I’ll assume that you are comfortable with using information from videos on the Web, and that you are able to follow step by step instructions even in unfamiliar settings.

Continued on page 27

There are a couple of ways to get up and running. On the JMRI web pages you can download a software image that has the Raspberry Pi operating system, the networking software, and JMRI already installed, but I prefer to set these up myself so that I know how to make changes later if necessary. There are plenty of websites and videos available explaining the steps necessary, and I have listed two below.

You will need the following hardware to get the Pi set up:

The Raspberry Pi – you will want the Raspberry Pi 3 Model B+ or newer. The easiest way to buy this is to get a kit that includes the computer, a power supply, and a case. There is a good kit available at Amazon for \$60 (search for Raspberry Pi 3 B+)

A MicroSD memory card – this doesn't need to be at all large, 8 GB would work. I would get a good brand, such as SanDisk. A 16 GB card is \$6 at Amazon

If it is not built into your computer, you will need an SD card reader, which normally plugs into a USB port, \$7 at Amazon

A USB cable that connects the Pi to your command station. The Pi end is a USB Type A connector, the large rectangular connector. For some DCC systems you only need a USB cable. I am connecting to an NCE command station, which (inexplicably) has an RS-232 serial interface. For that you need a cable with a converter. I used a UGreen USB 2.0 to RS232 DB9 Serial Cable Male, \$10 at Amazon. With some DCC command stations it is also possible to connect with an Ethernet cable.

We are going to do what is called a “headless” setup on the Raspberry Pi. This means that you will not attach any keyboard or monitor to the Pi. You will install the operating system and some configuration files on the SD card using your computer, add two files to the SD card then plug the SD card into the Pi and use your computer as a remote desktop for the Pi over WiFi. There are several websites and YouTubes that explain this. I created a YouTube describing how to do this using the least amount of additional software.

You can view a video for installing from Windows here: https://youtu.be/0nJ_bPIcXfA

You can view a video for installing from Mac here: <https://youtu.be/G59JsJ04t14>



Continued on page 28

Connecting the Raspberry Pi to the Layout

Once you have setup the Raspberry Pi the next step is to install JMRI Panel Pro. The steps are easier to see in a video than in text, so I created a step-by-step video describing the process: <https://youtu.be/LdhG4C2hTMw>. The basic outline is that you will need to install Java on the Raspberry Pi, and then install JMRI from the JMRI website.

After it is installed, you will need to set up PanelPro, which is described here: <https://www.jmri.org/help/en/html/apps/PanelPro/GettingStarted.shtml>.

The last step before we get to remote operations is to draw your panel. In addition to the JMRI Getting Started link above, there are several good YouTubes describing setting up a panel in PanelPro. One example is Tom's Trains and Things, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfg8QWgeEWA>. The panel will work best for what we need to do if it is short and wide. It will be helpful to put the drop off location names and the siding length in car lengths in the panel as text next to each siding, passing track, etc.

Connecting the Raspberry Pi to the Internet

You need to change settings in your internet router and in the Raspberry Pi. The router connects to the internet at one address and connects to your devices at a different set of addresses. Its name comes from the fact that it routes data from one address to the other. It also provides a "firewall" so that people from outside your network cannot access your devices. For our remote operation we need to allow access to the Raspberry Pi from the other side of the firewall. This is done by port forwarding. There is a good video that describes how to do this with Google WiFi here: https://youtu.be/d_rQtd7P_IY. The steps to connect to the Internet start at 4:30 in this video. It is more likely you have a DSL or cable router. With these, port forwarding often requires that the Raspberry Pi has a static IP address on the local side, your side of the firewall. I have created a video describing how to set up the router and port forwarding, which you can view here: <https://youtu.be/p1Dqs1iNbSo>.

After setting up the router you will be able to connect to PanelPro from anywhere you can access the internet. You can control the locomotives using WiThrottle or Engine Driver, and if you have created a panel in PanelPro you can access it from a web browser anywhere on the internet and control the switches on the layout. You can also control the locomotives remotely with PanelPro, although your computer screen will get pretty crowded. All your remote engineers need is the address of your router on the internet and they will be able to do all this remotely.

Now we need to allow them to see the layout.

Setting Up a Zoom Meeting

There are several options for video conferencing software. Many people are now familiar with Zoom, and it includes a feature to allow using OBS with multiple cameras. Unless you want to limit your op session to 40 minutes, you will need to pay for the Zoom Pro plan. If your engineers have not used Zoom before, the first time you host or join a meeting it will automatically download the client program if you need it. You also need OBS, which you can download for free from obsproject.com. Each camera needs to plug into a USB port on your computer, so if you don't have enough USB ports on your computer you will need a USB hub.

The placement of the cameras is very important. For our first op session I placed one camera to give an overall view of the switching area, and another on a tripod that I could aim at the current spot where cars needed to be set out or picked up. Because I was trying to uncouple cars and give verbal help to the operators, I kept forgetting to aim the closeup camera. It would have been helpful to have a second person with me who operated a "chase" camera, moving with the train. It would have been better yet to place two or more cameras as closeups so the engineers could get a better view of the car placement. With the setup I had in our first op session the overall view of the area didn't help the operators at all, so in the future I won't use a camera for that.

One other note about cameras. I have three webcams, and one of them is a wide angle. It is not always easy to tell from the description, but these are often called "360" cameras. They are not helpful. The best is a normal camera, not wide angle. I have found the Logitech HD 720p is a fairly low-priced camera that works well for this. This model has been replaced by the C270 HD camera, which I assume has the same view angle.

First you need to set up OBS. This software has a lot of features, so it can look complicated. For what we are going to do there are only a couple of steps to get up and running. At the bottom of the screen on the left is a box called "Scenes." Click on the plus sign, give your scene a name and click OK. The next box, "Sources," is where we add the camera views. For each camera, click on the Sources plus sign and select Video Capture Device. Click on Create New, give this camera view a name and click OK. Click on the Device box and select a camera. This will show a preview of what the camera is showing. Click on OK and it will appear in the main screen with a red outline.

Continued on page 29

You can resize and position this camera view. It is best if you can arrange the views in one row, perhaps two rows if you have more than three cameras. OBS saves this setup automatically so in the future you just need to click on the Scene name to get the same setup.

Now click on Start Virtual Camera in the menu on the right. In Zoom, when you start your meeting click on the up arrow next to the video camera icon in the bottom of the screen. Click on Video Settings, then Background & Filters. Make sure the Virtual Background is set to "None." Now click on Video, click on the box under "Camera," and select OBS Virtual Camera. Now the participants will all see the camera views you set up in OBS.

The Op Session

Finally, the day has come. You will need to give your operators the WAN IP address of your router. You will probably need to help them get WiThrottle and EngineDriver set up. I had my operators do a test run sometime during the week before the op session just to verify that they could see the panel and operate a locomotive. I also sent them switch lists. You can schedule a Zoom meeting in advance and have Zoom send an invitation to each operator or observer.

Two things that were difficult to see from the camera views were the points of the switches and the siding lengths. It might be helpful to create small stand-up signs that you could place at the clearance point of the switch points. This could have a sign with the siding length in car lengths. Another option is to include the siding length as text on your PanelPro panel. The spotting locations (Oil-1, Furniture factory, etc.) should be on the panel, and hopefully apparent in the camera views. You can also supply operators with a detailed track diagram if that is not already a part of your switch lists.

To get everything started, power up your DCC and your Raspberry Pi. Start OBS on your computer, get your Scene running, and start the Virtual Camera. Start the Zoom meeting and make sure you can hear the audio from the meeting while moving about the layout – Bluetooth earphones are ideal for this. In Zoom click on the up arrow next to the video camera in the lower left and select OBS Virtual Camera.

Each operator starts up his or her computer and joins the Zoom meeting. They open a separate window and open their web browser and point to your WAN IP address and port 12080 (something like 24.132.103.68:12080). This will show the panel. The operator can arrange windows so that the panel and the Zoom meeting are both visible.

A few miscellaneous notes.

- When PanelPro starts it will not know the turnout positions, so you or the first operator should toggle every switch on the layout. Once that is done PanelPro will show the correct turnout positions.

- The host should have some way to quickly stop the trains. Enough said?

- Observers or operators waiting their turn like to chat, but this is a problem on Zoom and makes it difficult for the operator and the host (who is uncoupling following the operator's instructions) to communicate. The host needs to give some instructions about this and will probably need to remind people at times during the session.

Beyond COVID

My op session was prompted by the Stay-At-Home orders here, but there are other reasons for hosting an op session over the internet. I belong to a club called the Bay Area S Scalpers, but apparently the Bay Area extends from California to Washington to North Carolina since we have members in several states. We S Scalpers are spread pretty thinly these days and it is nice to be able to connect in ways beyond video chats. We can have op sessions in which a member across the country can operate the trains.

I hope you will give this a try. You certainly don't need a large layout. Any layout with switching possibilities can be used. Gather some of your remote railroad buddies, run some trains, and let us know how it goes.





Part 2

By Steve Folino

It is Friday, October 12, 1906 at 6:05 am. Stanley "Stan" Still, superintendent for the Fungus Mining Corp. has just arrived at the mining complex in Mineral Valley. It was only a short buggy ride from his suite at the Shady Rest Hotel in Bedrock where he has lived since the passing of his wife Gertrude in 1903. He no longer needs his own home and best of all, the food at the Shady Rest is darned good.

The Frederick "Freddy" Fungus mining Corp. owns the two largest of over 20 mines in Mineral Valley.



A driver from Lee's Livery has just dropped Stanley "Stan" Still, superintendent for the Fungus Mining Corp. off at the site of the mill office in Mineral Valley, only a short ride from the Shady Rest Hotel in Bedrock.

Mineral Valley is located on the eastern slopes of Big Pine Mountain at the 6,127' elevation. Being on the eastern side, the valley gets little precipitation and only a light dusting of snow during a normal winter. To the north of Mineral Valley lies the Town of Bedrock, named for the type of mining done in the area.

The two Fungus mines, each of which was named after one of Fungus' daughters, operate differently. The Ophelia mine, the first, is a classic silver mine with a long vertical shaft and numerous side tunnels. The silver-bearing ore is extracted, brought to the surface, loaded into gondola cars, and transported by the Fungus & Mungus Railroad to Junction City where the silver is extracted from the ore. The silver is then sent to the U.S. Mint in Denver for coinage.

In contrast, the Leonor mine uses a long horizontal shaft carved deep into the side of Big Pine Mountain. Here molybdenite, a rare bluish-gray mineral composed of molybdenum and sulfur, is extracted from the rock. This mineral, from which molybdenum is refined, is prized by the steel industry. Small amounts of molybdenum added to steel can significantly increase its toughness, heat resistance, hardness, strength, and resistance to corrosion.

The miners and other members of the crews will begin to arrive shortly. Their day will start at 7:00 am with the blowing of the steam whistle. Those working below ground in the mines will grab their chips from the board and descend into the mines to begin their long, hot day below ground.

Others will operate the hoists and boilers, open and close the chutes, manage the stores, and keep the above-ground operations running smoothly.

Unlike the workers at the Hugh Mungus Logging Camp, the Fungus Mine workers do not live in a camp but rather, if they are single, in Bedrock at either Mabel's Boarding House for Miners or in the tent city just north of town, past the livery stables. Most married miners live in homes on the outskirts of Bedrock. The mine workers provide their own lunches, but fresh water is readily available from the water cars. At \$2 per 10 hour day, the miners are well-paid. The miners work 7 am to noon and 1 pm to 6 pm.

Working in teams of four, the miners will use one of Fungus's three Ingersoll Rock Drills, far superior to the star drill and hammer method of the past, to drill holes 24" to 36" deep in the rock face at the end of each chute. When enough (12 – 20) holes are drilled, typically a two-day task, it will be time for the blasting.

Continued on page 31

Fungus & Mungus, ct'd.

Justin Case, the mine foreman, oversees all blasting operations. He will calculate the required amount of Dynamite, and order it sent down from the surface. He will supervise the placing of all charges. A stick or two of 60% Dynamite, 1-¼ inch in diameter and 8 inches long with a blasting cap composed of mercury fulminate will be gently prodded into each hole. The holes will be packed with clay. The wires will be connected to the blasting machine and after sounding the warning bells, Case will push the plunger, engaging the magneto and igniting the explosive charges.

The Dynamite that will be used is manufactured by DuPont (formerly Giant Powder Company of San Francisco, California). It is stored above ground, at the farthest point from the mill structures in the only stone building in the area.

All blasting is done just after 6:00 pm when the miners have completed their shifts below ground and returned to the surface. As each man returns, he replaces his chip on the board. At a quick glance, the foreman can check the chip board to ensure that all miners are accounted for and that none remain below ground.

The following morning the miners will begin the arduous task of breaking the rock debris from the explosions down into smaller, more manageable chunks. This is typically a four- to five-day process. But first, the newly excavated three feet of tunnel must be shored up. Using 8x8, 10x10 and 12x12 timbers from the Hugh Mungus Lumber Company, miners under the direction of the Chief Engineer Theodore "Ted" E. Baer will reinforce the newly exposed tunnel walls and ceiling.

The mineral-bearing ore will be separated from the tailings. The tailings will be tossed out one of the side tunnels or shafts and allowed to accumulate in the valley below, or moved and dumped into one of the no longer used shafts or tunnels. The mineral-rich ore will be brought to the surface where it will be dumped into one of the storage bins, where it will await loading into F.M.R.R. railcars for shipment to the refineries in Junction City (silver) or Ohio (molybdenite).

After the debris is cleared, the tailings disposed of, the mineral-bearing rock moved to the surface, and the tunnel reinforced; the mine tracks will be extended another three feet to the rock face and the process will begin anew.



Bird's eye view of the "Freddy" Fungus mining complex on the north end of Mineral Valley. On the left is the Ophelia mine and on the right is the Leonor mine.

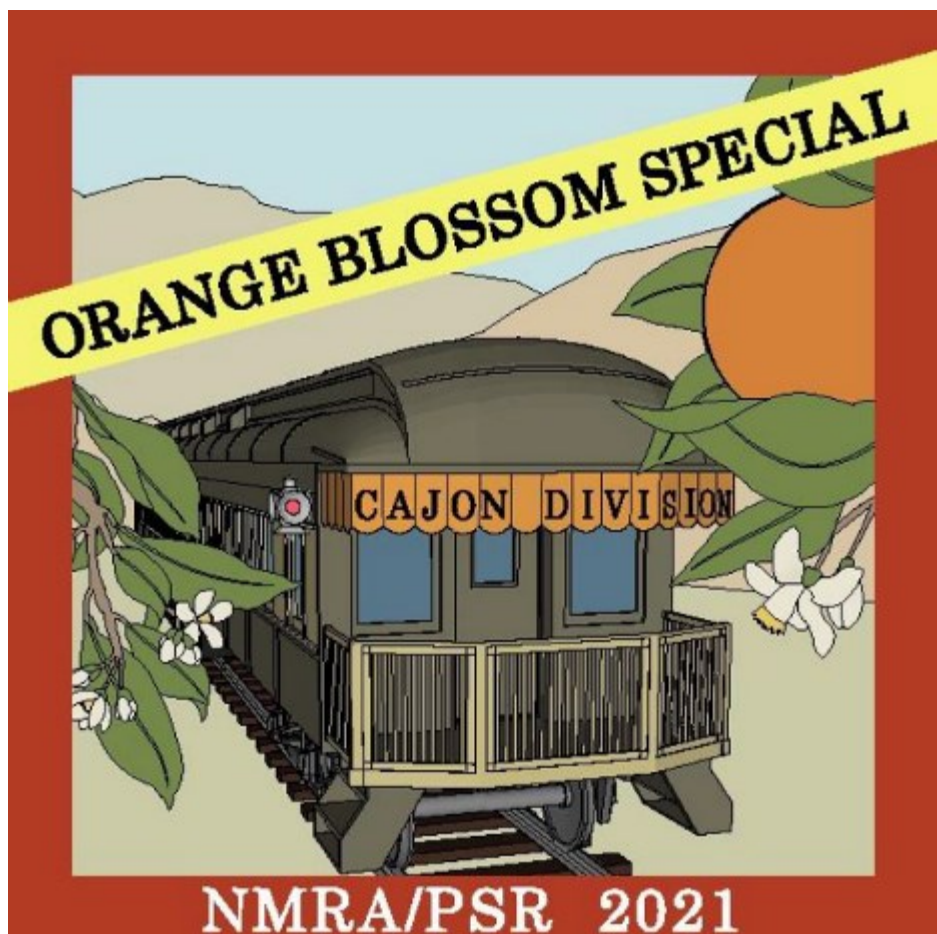
The work is not glamorous; working in the dimly-lit mines is hard, hot work. Miners are at risk from cave-ins or collapsing tunnels. Despite the dangerous and tough working conditions there is no shortage of workers willing to work for \$2 per day. It is a good, living wage. A single worker pays \$20 per month for room and board at Mabel's. A married miner can easily support a family on this wage



The PSR's 2021 "Orange Blossom Special"

Is Arriving Soon!

Nick Lisica, LA Division



Have you reserved your spot at this year's Pacific Southwest "Orange Blossom Special" yet? In just a few short months we are planning on getting together once again to meet, mingle, and model. After a year of uncertainty, all signals are pointing toward a welcome return to the Pacific Southwest Region's Annual Convention, the "Orange Blossom Special". The convention will take place in Irvine, CA, between September 8 – 11.

We are pleased to announce that we have lined up former NMRA President Charlie Getz to be this year's keynote speaker. According to his biography on the NMRA webpage, Charlie has been the Western Area Vice President, on the Pacific Coast Region Board, President, Pacific Coast Region Trustee, and At-Large North American Director of the NMRA. He chaired the

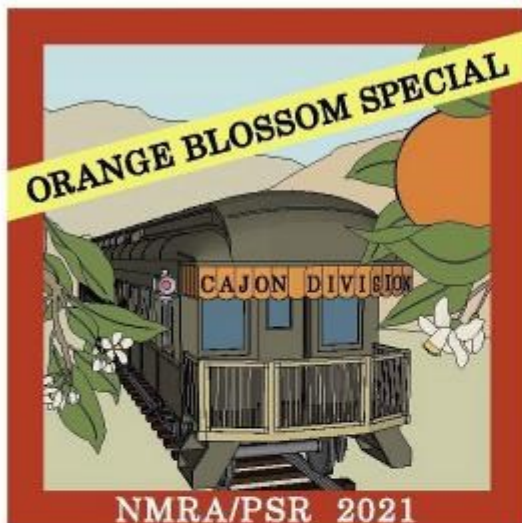
Long Range Plan Committee, in addition, he was the primary author of the new NMRA regulations. He is an experienced modeler and is well versed in the NMRA. For his keynote address, Charlie has put together a discussion on the influential Model Railroader Project Railroad – The San Juan Central. He'll discuss the history of the layout, and where you can see it today. Charlie will then discuss the new "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" exhibit at the California Railroad Museum, how it came to be, and what you can expect to see there. It promises to be an interesting discussion you won't want to miss.

We encourage you to visit our website, www.psrconvention.org, to learn more about the convention. We have a number of layouts set up for both operations and tours, numerous clinics, prototype tours, and of course there are plenty of non-rail activities lined up as well.

As the clouds of the past year begin to part, we are excited to see you all in Irvine this September.

The "Orange Blossom Special" will run between September 8-11, at the Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport Hotel, located at 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine, CA 92612.

More on page 33



National Model Railroad Association
Pacific Southwest Region

2021

“Orange Blossom Special” MODEL RAILROAD CONVENTION

September 8 – 11, 2021

Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport Hotel
Irvine, Ca



❖ Keynote Speaker Charlie Getz

Past President of the NMRA

❖ Operating Sessions

Featuring: 10+ Layouts

❖ Prototype Tours

*Including: **The UPRR Gemco Yard***

❖ Non-Rail Activities & Tours

*Including: **Whale Watching**
& **The Nixon Library***

❖ Welcome Reception

❖ Private Layout Tours

❖ Railroad Modeling Clinics

❖ Hobo Breakfast

❖ Model Railroad/Railroadiana Swap Meet

❖ Railroad Model Contest Room

❖ Model Railroad Auction

❖ Awards Banquet

Hotel Reservations: You can now reserve your room on-line by going to the convention website and clicking on the ‘Hotel’ link. The convention rate rooms at the Hilton are guaranteed to fill up, and you don’t want to miss out on the discount, or worse, be trying to find a last-minute hotel deal. Hilton Reservations: 949-833-9999 – Group Name: 2021 PSR Convention / Group Code: PSRC

Convention Tours: Convention staff is working on securing additional rail and non-rail tours. Currently, the list of tours includes the UPRR Gemco Yard in Van Nuys, as well as a trip to the Nixon Library and a Whale Watching Tour for the non-rail attendees. Check the website for additional information and updates.

Convention Goodies: Don’t forget to check out the Company Store, where you will find shirts, pins, patches, as well as our special run model railroad cars.

Registration: The full fare rate of \$125 covers your convention registration and the awards banquet. See the convention website for complete registration and convention details.

www.PSRConvention.org



NO DIVISION REPORTS WERE SUBMITTED FOR THIS ISSUE



September 5 – 19, 2021 - Tuesdays through Sundays, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, San Francisco Bay Area European Train Enthusiasts modular European-themed HO modular layout, Oakland Aviation Museum, 8252 Earhart Road, Oakland, CA. We have delighted visitors with our remarkably detailed scale versions of European landscapes including: mountains, villages, bridges, farms, trains stations, lakes and industries. Each day of our exhibitions guests are treated to a wide selection of operating locomotives, freight and passenger trains from the various countries of Europe operated by our group's members. European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) is a member of the NMRA Special Interest Group (SIG) Program.

September 8 – 11, 2021 - Orange Blossom Special 2021, NMRA Pacific Southwest Region 2021 Convention, Hosted by Cajon Division, Hilton Hotel / Orange County Airport, 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine, CA

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

For a list of monthly activities see page 37

September 18 & 19, 2021 - 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. Phone: (925) 937-1888 The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. Fares:

- \$3.00 Adults
- \$2.00 Seniors & Children (6-12 yrs)
- Children under 6: FREE

September 24, 2021 • 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. The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. Fares:

- \$3.00 Adults
- \$2.00 Seniors & Children (6-12 yrs)
- Children under 6: FREE

October 1– 3, 2021 - Central Coast Railroad Festival, San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara Counties, CA., Hosted by San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, 1940 Santa Barbara Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA. MAP For now, the plan is the same as usual... Preliminary activities of the 2021 Central Coast Railroad Festival (CCRFF) will start in September 2021, model layout tours will start Thursday 9/30/21, Saturday 10/2/21 at the SLO Railroad Museum, etc. This is all tentative, of course, but that's the plan right now.

October 2, 2021 - 1:00 pm, Pacific Coast Region Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom. All PCR members welcome. Meeting details are: TBA

October 10, 2021 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Fall 2021 Model Train Swap Meet & Open House, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA. We have transitioned to a fully DCC system to run our layout. Come check us out and see the new way

we are operating model trains. Fare: FREE
Info: info@blackdiamondlines.com, Phone: (925) 779-1964.

October 29, 2021 • 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. The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. Fares:

- \$3.00 Adults
- \$2.00 Seniors & Children (6-12 yrs)
- Children under 6: FREE

November 18, 2021 - 7:00 pm PDT, Daylight Division Fall Meet, via Zoom. See the Daylight Division website for the full agenda.

November 19 – 21, 2021 • Friday: 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm; Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, November Holiday Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. Fares:

- \$3.00 Adults
- \$2.00 Seniors & Children (6-12 yrs)
- Children under 6: FREE

November 26 – 28, 2021 • Friday: 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm; Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, November Holiday Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines. Fares:

- \$3.00 Adults
- \$2.00 Seniors & Children (6-12 yrs)
- Children under 6: FREE

January 28 – 30, 2022 – Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend, Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA, Layout Design SIG, and Operations SIG. Save the dates! More details will be posted Fall 2021. The meet and all three days of layout tours are open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. NMRA, PCR, LDSIG, OPSIG membership is NOT required! If you can't join us for the entire meet, at least come out and enjoy some truly wonderful layouts. Website for the January 30-31, 2021 SIG Meet TSG Multimedia's video of Bay Area Meet 2019. TSG video report of Live Crew Lounge Panel Discussion at 2020's meet (Starts at 0:49)

Continued on page 36

Calendar

February 4 – 6, 2022 – Bay Area Layout Design & Operations Weekend, Sponsored by Pacific Coast Region-NMRA, Layout Design SIG, and Operations SIG. Save the dates! Note new dates due to NFL Super Bowl scheduling change. More details will be posted Fall 2021. The meet and all three days of layout tours are open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. NMRA, PCR, LDSIG, OPSIG membership is NOT required! If you can't join us for the entire meet, at least come out and enjoy some truly wonderful layouts. Website for the January 30-31, 2021 SIG Meet TSG Multimedia's video of Bay Area Meet 2019.

TSG video report of Live Crew Lounge Panel Discussion at 2020's meet (Starts at 0:49)

February 12, 2022 - 9:00 am PDT, Daylight Division Winter Meet, in-person and Zoom. Tina Marie's Downtown Cafe, banquet room. Located on ground floor of GEHAMS Model Railroad Club clubhouse, downtown Bakersfield. See the Daylight Division website for the full agenda.

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

For a list of monthly activities see page 37

March 5 & 6, 2022 - 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. • MAP Admission is \$x.00 for adults, kids 12 and under admitted free, when accompanied by a paying adult. Admission is good for both days. Approximately 100 vendor tables with model train supplies for sale and thousands of square feet of operating model trains on display. Contact info: (661) 331-6695; email: carldw@aol.com

April 21 – 24, 2022 - Return to the Redwoods 2022, PCR/NMRA Convention, Hosted by Redwood Empire Division. DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sonoma Wine Country, One Doubletree Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

April 24, 2022 - 9:00 am, Pacific Coast Region Annual Business Meeting. DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sonoma Wine Country, One Doubletree Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928 The quorum for any meeting of the Membership shall be thirty-five (35). (PCR By-Laws, Article 4, Section 5. Meetings)

May 18 – 22, 2022 - Midwest Region, North Central Region, and Mid Central Region of the NMRA and the Railroad Prototype Modelers (RPM) Conference. Indianapolis Marriott East Hotel and Convention Center, 7202 East 21st Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

June 10 – 12, 2022 - Southern California Ops - 2022, Operations weekend in the greater Los Angeles area. Event hotel planned for Simi Valley, CA NOTE: Information on the website (e.g. layouts, schedule, hotel, etc.) still contains content from the cancelled SoCalOps-2020 event. Information for the 2022 event will be updated periodically, so check back later. For those interested in Operations in the Southern California area, the NMRA Pacific Southwest Region (PSR) Convention, Orange Blossom Special 2021, is planned for Wednesday, September 8 – Saturday, September 11, 2021 at the Hilton Hotel / Orange County Airport, 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine, CA



August 7 - 15, 2022 Gateway 2022

Marriott Grand Hotel, St. Louis, 800 Washington Ave, St. Louis, MO USA



August 22 - 25, 2023 Texas Express 2023

Gaylord Texan Hotel, 1501 Gaylord Trail, Grapevine, TX

In Memoriam		
Member	City, Sate	Date Joined
	Coast	
Frederick Boswell (Lifetime Member)	Gilroy CA	1/1/1943
Don Fiehmann (Lifetime Member)	San Jose CA	1/1/1966
Richard Ruppert (Lifetime Member)	San Francisco CA	1/1/1969
Mike Schwab	Santa Cruz CA	1/1/1971
Wayne Yamada	Castro Valley CA	3/14/1988

Monthly Activities

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

First Friday 7:30 PM / San Leandro Historical Railway Society (HO, O, G), Monthly meeting / 1302 Orchard Ave, San Leandro, CA / Club phone 510-569-2490 / Info: info@slhrs.org.

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

First Saturday 12:30 PM / European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) Sacramento Chapter (HO, HOM, N) 3600 J Street, Sacramento, CA. (entrance from 36th Street near East Sacramento YMCA). Social and H0 layout running 12:30 to 2:00 PM, then program/show and tell, followed by 2:30 PM business meeting. / Contact: Dusan Petras (650) 300-9504 or Helmuth Nixdorf (916) 481-0991, e-mail: dusanpetras@aol.com / See the website for additional information: www.ete.org.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Enjoy the fellowship and learning experiences of a club near you

Alameda County Central Railroad Society

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

Contact: Gary Lewis 925-455-8135

Email: glslewis@comcast.net

Web: www.pleasantonmodellrr.org/index.html

Amador County Model Railroad Museum

The ACMRRM is located at 13828 Gold Mine Road, #1, Pine Grove, CA. Gold Mine Road intersects with Hwy 88 in Pine Grove. Our non-profit association is open to the public from 10 AM to 5 PM, Friday through Sunday during Winter months and Wednesday through Sunday during the Summer. Work sessions are held every Tuesday starting at 10 AM. Our scenic DCC HO-scale layout depicts the lumber and gold mining history of Amador County. Operations include the Amador Central short line as well as the railroads of California's Central Valley including terminals at Stockton and Sacramento. Contact: Robert Piety, 209-296-3587 email rdpiety@sbcglobal.net

Antioch Model Railroad Club

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

Bay Area Ntrak Model Railroad Club

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

Bay Area S Scalers

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

California Central Model RR Club

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

Carquinez Model Railroad Society

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

Coastal Valley Lines Model Railroad Club of Sonoma County, LTD

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

Continued on page 39

Eel River Valley Model Railroaders

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

Elsie

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

European Train Enthusiasts

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

Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society

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

Golden State Model Railroad Museum – East Bay Model Engineers Society

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

Humboldt Bay & Eureka Model Railroad Club

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

Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad Museum

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

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

www.msvrr.org
info@msvrr.org

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Then, get that popcorn ready.

Continued on page 40

Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society

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

Nn3 Alliance

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

Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society

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

Sacramento Modular Railroaders

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

Sacramento Valley Live Steam Railroad Museum (SVLSRM)

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

San Joaquin Valley Garden Railway Society

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

San Joaquin Valley Toy Train Operators

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

Enjoy the fellowship and learning experiences of a club near you

Continued on page 41

San Leandro Historical Railway Society

The SLHRS models the SP from Oakland/San Leandro to just east of Norden using the tri-level Donner Pass plan featured in the March '98 Model Railroader. It's housed in the former S.P., San Leandro depot, located at 1302 Orchard Ave., San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions Sat. 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM and Tues. 7:30 - 9:30 PM, business meetings the 1st Fri. at 7:30 PM. Contact: Eugene Brichacek, 510-963-2965 email: embrichacek@gmail.com

San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association (SLOMRA)

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

Silicon Valley Lines

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

Siskiyou Model Railroad Club

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

South Bay Historical Railroad Society

SBHRS invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Ave., Santa Clara, Tues. 5:00 to 8:00 PM or Sat. 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Contact: 408-243-3969. Web: www.sbhrrs.org.

Sonoma Short Line (SSL)

A group of model railroaders has formed a DCC, HO 100% NMRA club, Sonoma Short Line (SSL). The club is building a modular layout with a Sonoma County theme inspired by the period 1900-1950s. Private ops sessions and public shows are scheduled. SSL is looking for new members with skills in all aspects of model railroading and a desire to actively participate in the club. Contact Steve Lewis (707) 527-0396 or Steve Skold (707) 539-1782 for further information.

South Coast Society of Model Engineers

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

The Tidewater Southern MRC Inc. & Tidewater Southern Railway Historical Society Inc.

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

Tri-city Society of Model Engineers

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

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



IMPORTANT !!!!

Continued on page 42

Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society

The WCMRS located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, is open to last Friday of the month from 8:00 to 10:00PM for operations. Fares are \$2.00 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$3.00 for adults. Membership is always open to interested HO modelers. Contact: 925-937-1888 (recorder). Web: www.WCMRS.org. "Like Us" on Facebook (www.facebook.com/wcmrs). Please refer to www.wcmrs.org for the dates and times of our Annual, Weekend and Friday evening shows .

West Bay Model Railroad Association

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

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**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

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

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

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

Just contact our editor, Chip Meriam, at:

chipmeriam@comcast.net

We're looking forward to hearing from you!





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