



The Daylight Observation



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DAYLIGHT DIVISION

Volume 20, Issue 1

First Quarter, 2006

Winter 2006 Meet Slated for Fresno/Clovis on February 25th

By Carter Braxton*

The 2006 edition of the Daylight Division Winter Meet takes place Saturday, February 25th at the Goshen & Goosechase Railroad. The GGR operates out of Marlin Costello's home at 1125 E. Holland, Fresno and the day's agenda is as follows:

9:00 AM:

Coffee & Conversation

10:30 AM: Clinics

Building Tunnel Portals

by John Houlihan

Videotaping Your Layout

by Carter Braxton

Ballasting

by Ben McDonald

12:00 Noon: **Business meeting**

12:30 PM: **Lunch**

Me-N-Ed's Pizza, Blackstone & Gettysburg

2:00 PM: Operating session

Goshen & Goosechase

5:00 PM: Layout tours

Rob Briney

Mel Norwood

Chuck Harmon

Jim Neil

John Houlihan

Clay Cunningham

Ed Matheny

The Goshen & Goosechase Railroad

The Goshen & Goosechase is a 40' x 40', 3 level layout around a room designed with a J shaped peninsula. Scenery is a work-in-progress however the layout is 100% operational. Control is DCC by wireless Digitrax with operators and dispatcher linked via Radio Shack headsets. Mainline turnouts may be controlled by radio, pushbuttons, or a computer screen mouse controller and the dispatcher has a Digitrax track detection system at his disposal for smoother operation.

Fully computerized control begins with a computer screen diagram of the layout... now enhanced by a double-screen display system. With a click of the mouse the beginning and end of a train trip will align all turnouts and show a yellow line on the reserved track. As an engine moves along, a red dotted line shows the progress of the train. The dispatcher keeps a log of trains assigned to certain areas to prevent cornfield meets. Track warrants are issued to keep order in the car card operation.

Returning visitors to the GGR will see substantially more scenery than at last year's meet, especially at Caliente. Now the area boasts trees, fencing, structures and a river, and substantial work has been done at Sandcut, Bena and at the town of Tehachapi as well.

Elsewhere on the layout there are more new trees and shrubs plus several new mountain ranges built using Costello's favorite paper bag technique. Ballasting has been completed for virtually all track on the layout.

Since last year's meet, the GGR equipment roster has added an Auto Train, the Oil Can powered by SD45s with helpers as needed, and a classic PFE unit train headed up by a substantial Cab-foward powerhouse.

For the first-time visitor, perhaps the most noteworthy features will be the Tehachapi Loop and the "herniated" helix between the mid and upper levels. Then too there are Half Dome and El Capitan, the Feather River Arch Bridge at Bear Creek and the operational double Bascule Bridge (watch your head). Backdrops are hand painted from photos.

(See Goshen and Goosechase on Page 2)

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*See bio on Carter Braxton on Page 4

Goshen and Goosechase (Cont.)

The steel benchwork minimizes upright poles, allowing easier engineering of complex track designs. Steel also allows spans up to 14 feet. Very few straight lines are intentional so as to give a visual flow to trains. Minimum radius is 36" allowing close coupling of all rolling stock.

Yard design followed a year long study of large layouts, layout tours, published designs in Layout Designs Sig, actual yard plans and detailed photos of yards. All four major yards allow classification of trains without blocking the main line. This is accomplished by building a lead track longer than the longest track in the yard. Depending on direction, an entire train can leave the main onto the lead and on into the yard, then work unobstructed to its heart's content.

The Calwa yard evokes the "spine split" design as seen from the Jensen Avenue overpass. One lead at the south and two leads at the north allow three continuous jobs simultaneously. There are 2 mainline tracks, 4 arrival-departure tracks, 8 yard tracks and 1 intermodel track.

The lowest of the three levels is a thousand feet of staging track accessible from either end and both sides.

In addition to overseeing all aspects of GGR operations and construction, Costello has continued his progress towards earning the NMRA Master Model Railroader designation. In addition to making several presentations at NMRA meets, he has produced an instructional video, photographed an article for Model Railroader magazine and received two national convention awards for model railroad photography. Costello and the GGR were also featured in a front-page newspaper article on model railroading in the Fresno Bee. As a side-track note, the Fresno Bee also recently interviewed Costello asking for his comments regarding the recent execution of convicted killer, Clarence Ray Allen. Costello was once Allen's court-appointed attorney. Costello was named NMRA Daylight Division Member of the Year for 2005 and he is currently building the third of the three hand-built locomotives that are required for the MMR designation.

For novice operators or seasoned railroaders, the Goshen & Goosechase is a layout that is just plain fun to operate. Guests who plan to take part in the 2pm operating session are asked to please bring, if possible, their own Digitrax throttle and 5-channel Radio Shack headset radio.

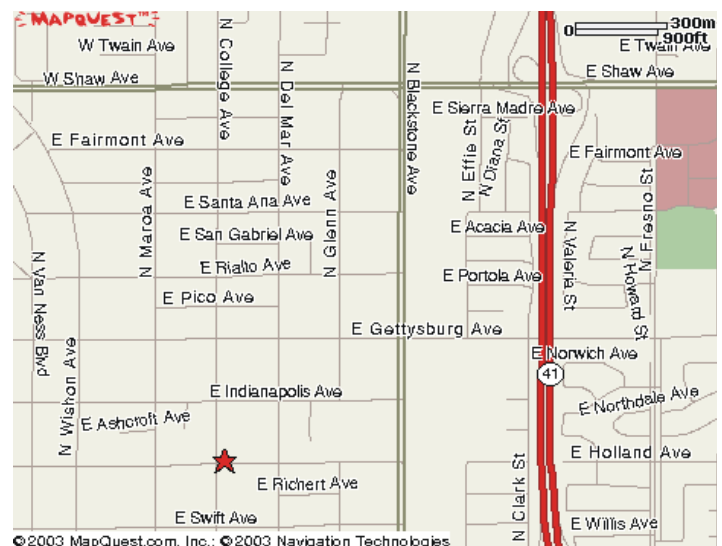
Directions to Marlin Costello's 1125 E. Holland Ave, Fresno

From the South:

- Travel North on 99 to Freeway 41
- Take 41 North to Shaw
- Go West on Shaw to Blackstone
- Turn left at Blackstone and go south to Holland
- Turn right at Holland and go to Marlin's

From the North:

- Travel South on 99 to Shaw Ave.
- Go East on Shaw to Blackstone (about 4 miles)
- Turn right at Blackstone and go south to Holland
- Turn right at Holland and go to Marlin's



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Meet Our New Daylight Division Superintendent

Editor's Note: Superintendent Paul Deis has resigned. Pat Boyle volunteered to fill the office for the remainder of the term.

Let me introduce myself to Daylight Division especially those I haven't met. My name is Pat Boyle, I will be serving out the term as Superintendent to replace Paul Deis. I've been told "there is nothing to it" but I've heard that before so I'm prepared to do whatever needs to be done. I will have experienced people to answer my dumb questions and keep me on track.

My wife Theresa and I moved from Sebastopol (Sonoma County) this February. I retired from teaching mathematics in 2000, the last 30 years at Santa Rosa Jr College.

I was a member of the RED (Redwood Empire Division of PCR) and served a term as Chief Clerk and Paymaster. I was a member of the HO modular club CVL (Coastal Valley Lines) that has at least one run each month during the year. We set up in shopping malls, schools, a grocery store, GATS shows, PCR meets, county fairs, neighborhood centers, retirement homes, etc. even in Fresno a number of years ago.

Since settling into a new house, plans are afoot for a structure to house a branch of SP in the 50's. Recently, I joined the Fresno/Selma RR Club continuing to seek out events and activities where RR is spoken.

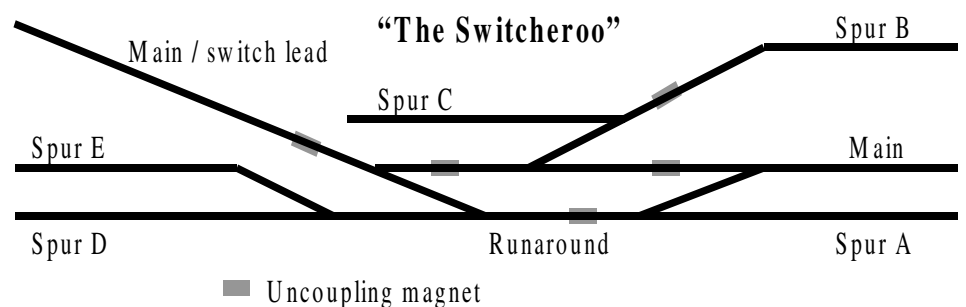
The Answers Are Out There

Bob Pethoud, Member Aid

I suppose it's a sign of addiction, really: I can't look at a vacant store, bedroom, garage, or even tool shed without thinking about how to fit a model railroad into it. In my hands, napkins, backs of envelopes, and whole reams of paper just naturally fill with hieroglyphs representing miniature transportation empires.

The good news is that the addiction is cheap, requiring only the regular infusion of paper products and the occasional glimpses of prototype track arrangements. The bad news is that there is an unavoidable urge to build many of these paper empires, and that can get expensive.

In the next several columns I propose to discuss some of the strategies, techniques, and rules of thumb that I use in my track planning.



The first (and perhaps most important) point I want to make about track planning is that it is not necessary to fill an aircraft hangar in order to build a worthwhile model railroad. The illustration above shows the track arrangement of a portable HO layout I built decades ago and which I still use and enjoy. It measures 11" by 96" when set up, but it folds up to 11" x 48" x 4" to carry in any car and has a footprint of just 4" by 11" when standing in my closet.

Long-time NMRA members will recognize the plan as an expanded version of one that appeared in the Bulletin some years back ("Which Switch Is Which?" by Hale Hammer with photos by Jack Burgess, December, 1974, pp. 56-57). That simple plan includes all of the basic features needed for making pickups and setouts at industries by the local or way freight: facing point and trailing point spurs, switchback, and runaround.

In the original plan the spurs and access tracks were very short, turning every switching assignment into a puzzle requiring many moves. For example, the tail of the runaround (east end of the main) held one car or one loco, but not both at once, and the tail of the switchback (spur B) held at most two cars. My contribution was to lengthen all of the spurs, the runaround, and the runaround tail (one loco + one car), and to add one more spur (E), since there was plenty of room for it. This makes most switching tasks fairly straightforward, but I've found that the inherent challenge of picking up from a facing point spur is quite enough for most operators. And by lengthening the spurs, there are now two or more spotting locations on each, necessitating picking up one car located behind another one which must remain. Further, if one feels the need for more challenge, one can

(See Answers on Page 4)

Answers (Cont.)

simply add more cars, use some longer cars, or fire up a cab forward as the switching engine.

This little layout has introduced countless people of all ages to the intricacies and pleasures of way freight operation. Included among them have been some serious model builders who thought actually running the trains was beneath them. It only took a few minutes for them to become enlightened: "I had no idea there was so much thinking involved in switching a few cars!"

Given that the track plan results in a small railroad that is easy to build and fun to operate, does it actually resemble any prototype? You may be surprised to find that it does. Southern Pacific's tracks in Chowchilla and the Butcher Town spurs in Modesto (both circa 1970s) are two nearby examples of remarkably similar track arrangements. If you've been inspired by this little railroad and would like to know what else can be done in a small space, check out <http://carendt.us/>, Carl Arendt's website featuring Micro Layouts for Model Railroads.

In future columns we will look at goals and guidelines and the design process, including some lesser-known techniques and gimmicks. Until next time, you may reach me with comments and questions at pethoud@comcast.net.

Meet Carter Braxton

Carter Braxton is an advertising and marketing man and runs the Bottom Line Marketing advertising agency. He maintains an office in his home which, he says, is the reason he doesn't have a real layout of his own. Instead, he has a "make do" oval track and figure 8 that hangs suspended 16 inches below the ceiling of his office and he runs up to four short trains at one time. He is currently adding a second level 5 inches below the first to serve as a staging yard and extended main line. The two levels will be accessed by a 3% connecting ramp.

Braxton's "one-of-these-days" layout will feature his fictional Botum, Lyne & Marqueting RR (named after his advertising agency) and will be set in the transition period with mostly steam and a few F3s for color.



National Model Railroad Association

Membership Application

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Daylight Division

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

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I want to become a member of or renew my membership in the National Model Railroad Association. I have checked below the type of membership I desire and have enclosed the proper amount in a check payable to "NMRA". I understand that membership in the NMRA includes my affiliation with a Region and Division based on my address above. I also understand that I must subscribe to the National and Regional publications in order to receive them.

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Sustaining (clubs, businesses, associations, etc.) includes National Subscription and Region Subscription	\$ 84.00
RailPass Trial Membership (6 months w/ National Subscription and Region Subscription – new members only)	\$ 12.95
Total	

Send all membership applications to: NMRA, 4121 Cromwell Rd, Chattanooga, TN 37421

Director Rants and Raves

By Doug Wagner

Daylight Division Director

Well, since the Observation's Editor, Chuck Harmon, first coined that phrase to title my reports a while back, I kinda' liked it, so I guess we'll stick with it.

Nothing really to report since I last gave my report at the Bakersfield meet on November 19th. The last Board of Director's meeting, held on November 5th in Sacramento, was covered in the recently published Pacific Coast Region's Branchline newsletter, so you guys are all up-to-date on what's happening there. I want to thank Pat Boyle for taking over the helm of the Daylight Division's Superintendent's position for the remainder of the term, which is one year. The next election for Superintendent is right after the November Daylight Division's meet, so we'll need to have nominations opened up for that position, along with the Chief Clerk/Paymaster, currently held by Brewster Bird. So, please consider stepping up and serving a position. I know lots of people are reluctant to serve as an officer, but it isn't that hard—just 4 meetings a year, and the term are for 2 years. We are having the same people serve over-and-over—and in more than one position to boot—and it just gets a little old when you've held the same position for 8 years. Come on folks, please just consider serving for one term, because the folks that put these meets on or hold the many positions of the Daylight Division can't do it all alone—and forever! My position of Director, is up for election for which you should have received the ballot by now in the recent issue of the Branchline—and I am the only name on the ballot for Daylight Director. Now, I can only serve one more term, so in 2 years, someone else will have to have their name on the ballot. That's when we're going to need some of you to step forward and run for that position. So, you have 2 years to think about it! OK, that's my rant! Now, on to the raves!

The raves are that it looks like we have our meets already scheduled for the remainder of the year. On February 25th, Marlin Costello and his operations crew will be hosting the Daylight Division's meet. They plan on having an operation session immediately following the adjournment of the meeting. Then on May 13th or 20th, the meet will be in Santa Barbara, and if everything works out as planned, it may well be held in Santa Paula/Fillmore for a ride on the Fillmore and Western. More details to follow on that meet. Then, on August 26th, the meet will be held in San Luis Obispo (heh, who wants to spend time in the hot San Joaquin Valley when you can enjoy a May and August trip to the central coast!). Then to end the year, the November meet will be held in the Merced/Mariposa area—either on November 4th or 18th—and Charlie and Babette Pigott are working on those details. As far as the Bakersfield meet went, we had some new faces attend. Due to the one membership, former NMRA members who weren't PCR members, are now part of the mailing list of the PCR and Daylight newsletters, so we were able to meet a few of them. Hope to see more of you at our meets throughout the year! And don't forget to bring your models for display and judging. If you have any questions about model judging, please contact Daylight Contest Chairman, Bill Scott, for more details. Also, for the meets, don't forget to bring your White Elephant items for the auction we hold at the close of each meeting. So wrap up those no longer wanted models or the ones you haven't touched in years to the next meet. Besides, it brings in extra income for the Daylight Division.

Well, that's it for my report this quarter. If any of you have any questions, comments, or just need some more information, I don't have all the answers—in fact, I have very few of those—please give me a call at (661) 589-0391, or email me at carldw@aol.com.

Layout Design and Operations Sig meet February 11 and 12

The NMRA Pacific Coast Region and the Layout Design and Operations Special Interest Groups will hold another joint Regional Meeting in Santa Clara, CA (approx. 45 minutes south of San Francisco) on Saturday February 11 and Sunday February 12, 2006. A terrific two-day program is planned. The agenda includes clinics, operations discussions, track planning workshops, and visits to local layouts on Saturday. There will also be operating sessions at a number of nearby layouts on Sunday.

The meeting will be held at the South Bay Historical Railroad Society's (SBHRS) meeting room. The SBHRS is located in the Santa Clara Caltrain Depot freight house at 1005 Railroad Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050.

For details visit <http://homepage.mac.com/jacobsen/LORM2006/>

Sierra Memories Convention Challenge

It is now time to activate the Sierra Memories 2008 PCR convention committee.

I would like to start committee meetings in March 2006. They will be conducted in person, over the telephone and the internet. The first meeting will be held March 11, 2006 at 10am. This will allow Bakersfield and Merced committee members to come up on Amtrak. Transportation will be provided to the actual meeting palace. For most members, attendance at each meeting is not required. Reports of continuing progress are all that is needed. Committee members are as follows:

General Chairman: John Houlihan

Vice-Chairman: Bill Scott

Registrar/Treasurer: Doug Wagner

Door Prizes: Vacant

Web Master: Vacant

Contests: Vacant

Clinics: W.Brewster Bird

Layout Tours/Timetable: Vacant

Company Store: Vacant

Maps/Publicity: Vacant

Non-Rail Activity: Vacant

Junior Engineers: Vacant

Hospitality Room: Vacant

Please e-mail me at john@irishtracklayer.com

To volunteer for any of the vacant positions listed above. List your name, address, phone number and e-mail address in the reply.

John Houlihan, Chairman

Bakersfield Meet Welcomes New Members, New Superintendent

By Chuck Harmon

Approximately 40 members and guests filled the Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society's (GEHAMS) club house in downtown Bakersfield Saturday November 19 for Daylight Division's fall meet.

This meet was somewhat historical in that it was the first meet under the new NMRA single dues structure. Although I have heard rumors that the change was delayed from September to next January, we decided not to put off welcoming several "new" PCR/Daylight members who were members of the NMRA, but not of the PCR. It appeared that everyone had a good time meeting new friends and swapping stories. That is exactly the purpose of a "meet." It brings us together for friendship and a good time.

We enjoyed an outstanding clinic about resin casting put on by Kelly Cruise. Kelly does this commercially for the On3 market and really stirred our enthusiasm for this promising modeling technique.

Our business meeting was made significant when Director Doug Wagner announced that Superintendent Paul Deis has sent him a resignation letter. Doug regrettably accepted the resignation and called for everyone to think about volunteering to fill out the remaining year of the superintendent's term. He gave a truly inspirational speech, promising that the victim, that is volunteer, would only have to run 4 meetings before there would be another election. He gave us until new

(See Bakersfield Meet on Page 7)



Favorite Model Display featured some steam-era models

Bakersfield Meet (Continued)

business (about 2 minutes) to think it over. When the time came, Pat Boyle, a recent transplant from Redwood Empire Division, volunteered to take the reins. Everyone was delighted with the possibility of having “new blood” in office, one who had previously served as Clerk and Paymaster in another division. Director Wagner made it official by appointing Pat Boyle to be the new Daylight Division Superintendent.

After the business meeting came the white elephant auction, always a great time picking up treasures that others no longer need, while helping finance the meet.

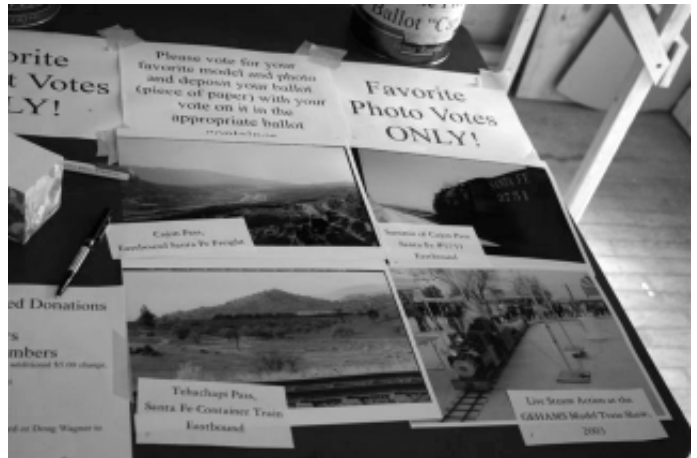
Many of us enjoyed a spaghetti lunch prepared by Brewster Bird. There was also plenty of coffee and donuts in the morning.

The afternoon was spent touring the GEHAMS HO and N scale layouts as well as several home layouts.

The next Daylight is slated for February 25 at Marlin Costello’s Goshen and Goosechase Railroad in Fresno. See the details in this issue of the *Daylight Observation* for details. I hope you will join us then!



Kelly Cruise shows how to mix the ingredients for making resin castings



Division Members voted for thier favorite photo in this selection

Register Now for River City Express 2006 PCR/NMRA Regional Convention Double Tree Hotel Sacramento, California May 3-7, 2006

Use the registration form in the latest Branchline or go to <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~rivercityexpress/index.htm>

The Doubletree Hotel on Arden at Point West Way in Sacramento will be the site of this year’s convention. With hundreds of guest rooms, four clinic rooms, hospitality room, contest rooms, and loads of vendor and layout display space; this year’s convention will be another great Sierra Division event to remember. The local number to call is 916-929-8855, the toll free number is 1-800-222-8733 for central reservations. You can also go to their [website](#) and make online reservations. Rooms can be booked at the convention rate for the period 5/2/06 - 5/7/06 (Tues. - Sun.). Rate Code is PCR

The convention rate is \$98 for single or double, \$108 for triple or quad. Rates do not include taxes and fees.

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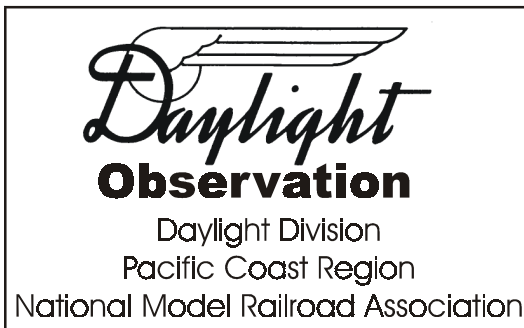
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