



# The Daylight Observation

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## Daylight Director's Message: It's better to be lucky than good!

By Walter Mizuno, Daylight Division Director

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Some modelers say that model railroading is dying as a hobby. I refuse to believe that statement, but I do know that the number of NMRA members is declining. Not all model railroaders want to be a part of the NMRA,

but they reap the benefits of the organization. In theory, if we can increase the total number of active model railroaders, a percentage of them will be interested in joining the NMRA, provided the organization is relevant to their interests.

I've been very fortunate (lucky) to be asked to be a part of Fresno State Transportation Institute's (FSTI) railroad model competition that kicks off this fall. Thirty teams of up to ten students each, ranging from K-12 in age, will be competing to see who can design, build, and operate a railway system profitably. Competing teams will need to research how real railroads operate, acquire the right-of-way, and construct an N scale layout on a map of California and Nevada. There are three levels of competition based upon the grade level of



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**Director**

Walter Mizuno  
(559) 977-8577  
[wkmizuno@gmail.com](mailto:wkmizuno@gmail.com)

**Superintendent**

Mike O'Brien  
(661) 654-0748  
[Obsmobile2002@yahoo.com](mailto:Obsmobile2002@yahoo.com)

**Chief Clerk / Paymaster**

Milton SansSoucie  
(714) 528-8624  
[miltonss@sbcglobal.net](mailto:miltonss@sbcglobal.net)

**Observation Editor**

Robert Pethoud  
(559) 438-7705  
[pethoud@comcast.net](mailto:pethoud@comcast.net)

**Clinics**

Doug Wagner  
(661) 589-0391  
[carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com)

**Contest**

Chuck Harmon, MMR  
(559) 299-4385  
[harmonsta@yahoo.com](mailto:harmonsta@yahoo.com)

**Achievement Program  
And Webmaster**

Dave Grenier  
(408) 431-8989  
[grenida@pacbell.net](mailto:grenida@pacbell.net)

**Member Aid**

Robert Pethoud  
(559) 438-7705  
[pethoud@comcast.net](mailto:pethoud@comcast.net)

**Membership**

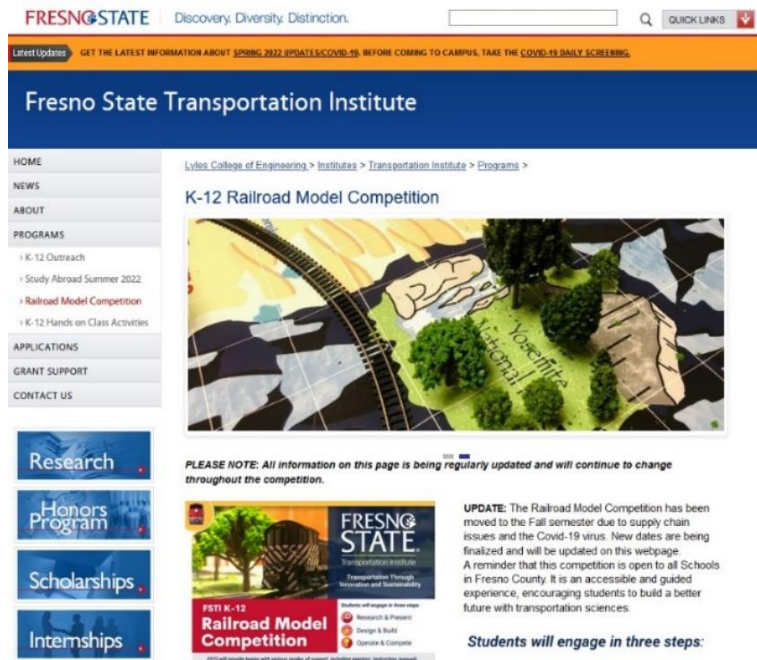
Doug Wagner  
(661) 589-0391  
[carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com)

the students: elementary, middle school and high school. Each category will offer some unique challenges to the teams appropriate to the ages of the competitors.

So why is Fresno State holding a competition about railroads? FSTI's mission is to help educate the public about all forms of transportation. Getting children involved at an early age and helping them understand the various modern transportation systems will help them make informed decisions as they mature. Railroads offer one of the most sustainable and efficient modes of transportation.

To publicize the event and get feedback from the model railroading community, the concept of the competition was introduced on John Abatecola's TSG Live Talking Trains. The link to the show is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NShJyGERpMg>



See this also (screen above):

<http://fresnostate.edu/engineering/institutes/fsti/programs/railroadmodelcompetition.html>

The feedback from the audience was enthusiastic and very positive. This gave the group more confidence to present the idea to different sponsors. Walthers has signed on as a major sponsor of the event. They will provide the N scale model railroad equipment including Kato locomotives, Walthers passenger cars, Bachmann DCC controllers and Atlas track. Thanks to Walthers for stepping up with such a generous donation that will allow all the teams to compete with first rate equipment to build their railroads.

Because of this competition children will be exposed to model railroading along with parents and teachers. Previous meetings with interested schools have been positive as well, with students eager to form teams and begin planning for the competition. Parents have been looking for family activities that can be shared by parents and children alike.

As the teams begin to organize, they will need the help and guidance of experienced model railroaders like you to lend a helping hand, guide them, and make the experience of building and operating a model railroad fun and enjoyable. Even though the competition is for the Fresno County schools; coaching and mentoring can be done remotely using Zoom. This is an excellent opportunity to share our passion for model railroading with others and even recruit new members to the Daylight Division. The formation of teams will take place this fall, I'm hoping that you'll volunteer to help with this worthwhile project. I'll be reaching out to you for your help as fall approaches.



<b>Welcome Aboard!</b>		
<b>Daylight Division's Newest Members</b>		
<u>Member</u>	<u>City / State</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>
Dan Golowka	Cambria CA	4/2/2022



## What Is the Achievement Program?

By Dave Grenier,  
Daylight Division AP Manager



So, what exactly is the Achievement Program? From the introduction on the NMRA website, we can read “In simple terms, the Achievement Program (AP) is a travel guide to help you on your journey through the world of model railroading. The AP also provides incentive to learn and master the many crafts and skills necessary in the hobby of model railroading. With the completion of each category, you will be issued a certificate acknowledging your achievement.”

“The AP requirements are a set of standards, but they can also serve as a set of guideposts for those who are new, near-new, and not-so-new to the hobby. Not because they lead to some sort of official pat-on-the-back, but because they are a source of ideas for projects that can help us learn to become better modelers.”

“Briefly, the AP is a system of requirements for demonstrating a superior level of skill in various aspects of our hobby. It covers not only building various types of models, but also building other things, which are important to the hobby, such as scenery, structures, track work, and wiring. It also recognizes service to the hobby and the NMRA, which are important as well. The Achievement Program is also a personal commitment to share one's knowledge with others and to encourage them as they also make the AP journey.”

There are eleven different AP categories in which a certificate can be awarded. The requirements for each category are beyond the scope of this article but are described in detail on the NMRA website ([nmra.org/categories](http://nmra.org/categories)). The eleven categories are grouped into four areas, as shown below:

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## Model Railroad Equipment

Master Builder – Motive Power

Master Builder – Cars

## Settings

Master Builder – Structures

Master Builder – Scenery

Master Builder – Prototype Models

## Engineering and Operation

Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical

Chief Dispatcher

## Service to the Hobby

Association Official

Association Volunteer

Model Railroad Author

Although there are eleven different AP categories, a member only needs to meet the requirements for seven categories, with at least one from each of the four areas, to qualify for the eventual, and ultimate goal of Master Model Railroader (MMR).

This may seem daunting to you, but please don't get discouraged. There is also a "starter" award for those modelers that are new to the AP, the Golden Spike Award. We'll go over the Golden Spike Award in the next installment of the series.

For more information on the Achievement Program, visit the NMRA website at [nmra.org/education/achievement-program](http://nmra.org/education/achievement-program) or contact the Daylight Division Achievement Program Chair, Dave Grenier, [grenida@pacbell.net](mailto:grenida@pacbell.net).

Next: Golden Spike Award



## Observation Schedule

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Articles Due</u>
Summer (Jul-Aug-Sep)	June 10
Fall (Oct-Nov-Dec)	September 10
Winter (Jan-Feb-Mar)	December 10
Spring (Apr-May-Jun)	March 10



## In-Person or Hybrid?

By Robert Pethoud

In the few hours each week when I'm not model railroading, I chair my church's finance committee and lead a Bible study class. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both of these groups moved to the Zoom platform. Now two years later, either of these could go back to meeting in person, but neither has. The Bible study class continues to meet exclusively via Zoom, while the finance committee now meets in a hybrid fashion, with most members getting together in the church library and the remainder joining with Zoom.

Why, you may ask, do we not just go back to meeting in person, now that everyone is vaccinated and boosted? Surely, anyone not fully protected could wear a mask? Of course, that's possible, but there are benefits to Zoom: it's easier to do from home and it provides an opportunity for others to join, who could not attend an all in-person meeting. During the Bible study, I like to share my screen with a video lecture which would be harder to do in person. But, more importantly, during the pandemic we acquired two new attendees from Ecuador, and I don't want to take away their opportunity to participate. Typically, in addition to those two, two or three others attend from their distant homes and another may attend from a vehicle. The finance committee works basically the same way, minus the two people from Ecuador.

The 2021 PCR convention was moved to Zoom exclusively, and it turned out that we had more attendees than normal, and from greater distances, including Canada, the UK, and Australia. The NMRA national convention that year experienced a similar attendance from great distances, accompanied by a much-reduced cost for those far-away participants. The 2022 PCR convention went back to Rohnert Park and—as far as I could tell—had no virtual component. So, is that a good return more or less to normal, or should we try to include Zoom?

**Concluded on Page 7**

This is the back of a polo shirt prepared for the PCR 2021 convention committee members and helpers who made that virtual event happen so successfully.



For comparison, our own Daylight Division held its first in-person meet since COVID on May 14. Due to the efforts of Robert Sexton, it was not just in person, though, but was also available on Zoom, which made it a hybrid meeting. This feature made it possible to attend from greater distances for several attendees, at least one of whom was confined to a hospital room.

For the benefit of those otherwise unable to attend, I feel we ought to continue including a Zoom element in each division meet and regional convention. That means more effort for whomever is putting together the virtual part. It certainly wouldn't make a Zooming attendee able to participate in everything—contests, swap meets, and banquets spring to mind—but for low (or no?) cost one could still attend a few clinics and layout tours and feel included, inspired, and more determined to go to the next meet or convention.

What do you think? Should we put forth the effort to record a few layout tours and clinics for those who can't make it to the next meet or convention in person? You may reach me with your responses at [pethoud@comcast.net](mailto:pethoud@comcast.net)

Daylight Division Membership Gauge	
May 31, 2012	149
May 31, 2021	100
June 30, 2021	98
July 31, 2021	100
August 31, 2021	96
September 30, 2021	97
October 31, 2021	97
November 30, 2021	97
December 31, 2021	95
January 31, 2022	93
February 28, 2022	92
March 31, 2022	92
April 30, 2022	93
May 31, 2022	90



## Daylight Division Membership Report

By Doug Wagner, Membership Manager,  
and Milton SansSoucie



Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, in Fresno, the Daylight Division held their first in-person event/meet in 2 years! The meeting was held at Papi's Mex Grill, and the meet got started at 8:45 AM with a No-Host breakfast. Yes, they do serve breakfast! We had 15 total folks attend, with 3 of those being visitors.

The Meeting was opened with welcome and layout tour info from Steve Lowe and Mike O'Brian, via ZOOM, from his hospital room.

There were three presentations, with the first one given by Steve Lowe on "Model Railroading Ideas for Travel". The second and third presentations were given by Robert Pethoud "Model Railroad in the Guest Bedroom" and "Freight Switching as a Wooden Manipulative Puzzle."

The winners of the "My favorite Model Contest" were:

- 1<sup>ST</sup> Steve Lowe
- 2<sup>ND</sup> Neil Fernbaugh
- 3<sup>RD</sup> Doug Wagner

The door prizes were won by:

- Ambroid Kit – Tom Sciara
- Passenger car kit – Mike O'Brian (who attended via ZOOM)
- \$25.00 Shell Gas Card – Brewster Bird (who attended via ZOOM)
- \$50.00 Central Coast Trains Gift Certificate - Neil Fernbaugh

The White Elephant Sale was cancelled due lack of time.



Everyone seems to be enjoying the breakfast before the start of the events of the May 14<sup>th</sup> Daylight event/meet, in Fresno, at Papi's Mex Grill. We had this large meeting room all to ourselves.





3 Southern Pacific SD9's rumble over the Kern River on Steve Lowe's Tehachapi-Loop-themed N scale layout, included on the layout tours at the Daylight Division meet May 14.

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The Daylight Observation is published quarterly to inform members of division activities and to provide educational articles for the advancement of railroad history and the art and science of model railroading. It is distributed to all members of the Division and to officers and newsletter editors of other divisions in the PCR.

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Robert Pethoud  
460 West Vartikian Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93704  
Phone (559) 438 – 7705  
e-mail: pethoud@comcast.net

**Daylight Membership by County**

County	# Members
San Luis Obispo	24
Kern	18
Fresno	18
Santa Barbara	17
Tulare	8
Merced	3
Mariposa	2
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>90</b>



A Southern Pacific switcher getting ready to set out some cars at industries, on Rob Briney's, *Clovis, Sierra & Western*, HO layout

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM, for the layout tours, which included:

- Chuck Harmon, MMR®, San Joaquin Central (HO).
- Rob Briney, Clovis, Sierra & Western (HO), featuring great prototype fidelity on this locally themed layout.
- Robert and Sylvia Pethoud, Fall Creek Branch (HO), get inspired by the super-detail and endless enjoyment that can be achieved on a portable layout. Featured in the March 2016 issue of Model Railroader magazine.
- Fresno Model Railroad Club (HO, N, O), enjoy the two fine HO scale layouts, plus N scale and an O scale 3-rail layout in the historic Southern Pacific Selma Depot.
- The Belmont Train Group (HO), A great multi-level layout, featuring modern equipment running in long trains on long mainline runs.
- Steve Lowe (N) Tehachapi Pass-inspired layout

We want to thank Steve Lowe for organizing this much-needed event/meet and to all the layout owners, who allowed us to invade their layouts!

Future events/meets for the Daylight Division will be Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, at *The Historic Kingsburg Southern Pacific Railroad Depot*, in Kingsburg. And for the Daylight Division's Fall Meet, the event/meet will be Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, on the same weekend of the *Central Coast Railroad Festival*, which occurs from October 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. We will be having a lunch get together at the *A-Town Diner*, in Atascadero, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The *A-Town Diner* is just a few blocks from *Central Coast Trains*, which makes it REAL convenient for the winner of the \$50 Gift Certificate, from *Central Coast Trains*! We figured since there will be several Daylight Division and PCR members already there for the Railroad Festival, we just figured it would be convenient to take a lunch break from Saturday's events, to get together and meet one another again, rather than on the screen, through a ZOOM meeting! Since we know all of you are more interested in taking in the events being offered at the *Central Coast Railroad Festival*, we figured this meet would just be a little get together for members, have lunch and maybe a chance to win the \$50 Gift Certificate, from *Central Coast Trains*. And if we have some extra time, we may even have a White Elephant auction!

Both events are still in the planning stages, so be sure to keep up-to-date of these two Daylight Division events/meets by visiting the Daylight Division's web site's, *Next Daylight Meet* page, at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/nextmeet.html>

Well, that's it for now. We hope everyone has a safe and happy summer and may all your signals be green!



**July 2, 2022** - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Summer Open House, [San Leandro Historical Railway Society](#), 1302 Orchard Ave (in Thrasher Park), San Leandro, CA. [MAP](#) 4,000+ feet of indoor HO Scale Track modeling the Overland Route from San Leandro, CA to Sparks, NV; G&O Garden Railway with interactive Children's Display; Fun for the whole family! Admission is Free; Donations are always welcome!  
For more Info: Email [info@slhrs.org](mailto:info@slhrs.org) or call Eugene, (510) 963-2985

**July 9, 2022** - [Sierra Division](#) – 10:30 AM Online Meet. For information contact Lou Anderson at [louiesqd@att.net](mailto:louiesqd@att.net)

**July 29, 2022:** 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

For information call: (925) 937-1888

Visit our website: [wcmrs.org](http://wcmrs.org)

Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/wcmrs](http://www.facebook.com/wcmrs)

**August 7 – 13, 2022** - [Gateway 2022](#) NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Marriott Grand Hotel, St. Louis, 800 Washington Ave, St. Louis, Missouri, USA • [MAP](#)  
Registration now open and includes free admittance to the National Train Show and one self-drive tour. See [website](#) for more details.

**August 13, 2022** - [Sierra Division](#) – In-person Meet. To be determined.

**August 26, 2022** • 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. • [MAP](#)

**August 20, 2022,** [Redwood Empire Division](#) Picnic. Location to be determined.

**September 7 – 11, 2022** - [Back on Track in 2022](#), NMRA Pacific Southwest Region 2022 Convention, presented by San Diego Division, Four Points by Sheraton San Diego, 8110 Aero Drive, San Diego, CA • [MAP](#)

**September 10, 2022** - [Sierra Division](#) – 10:30 AM Online Meet. For information contact Lou Anderson at [louiesqd@att.net](mailto:louiesqd@att.net)

**September 11, 2022** - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, [Carquinez Model Railroad Society](#), 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. • [MAP](#)

**All proceeds from this Open House will be donated to the Crockett Carquinez Fire Department.** Come visit this HO scale tri-level 36' x 60' model railroad depicting the Southern Pacific/Union Pacific railroad as it traverses California from Oakland, California through the picturesque East Bay before climbing through the dramatic scenery of the Sierra Nevada mountains to Sparks, Nevada. Our walk-around model railroad allows you to closely follow a train as it traverses the railroad from Oakland to Sparks. Admission: \$5.00; children under 16 free when accompanied by an adult. Info: [davetateosian@sbcglobal.net](mailto:davetateosian@sbcglobal.net)

**September 17 & 18, 2022** - 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. • [MAP](#)



*The Daylight Observation*

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**Daylight Observation**  
**460 West Vartikian Avenue**  
**Fresno, CA 93704-1441**

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