

# The Daylight Observation



Dear Daylighters,

Welcome to the Observation. **This issue combines the August and October issues.** Much of the news and comment this month is from Neil Fernbaugh, our illustrious Director. We of the Daylight Observation Editorial Board decided to give Neil Carte Blanche. Have at it, Neil.

Other contributors include Bob Chaparro, guest columnist from the PSR, and Doug Wagner.

Humbly,

Brewster Bird, Editor

## Meet Schedule:

### FALL MEET:

October 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 to about noon in the San Luis Obispo Memorial Building Lounge (\$4.00 members, \$5.00 nonmembers). Maps and details will be posted on our website. Bob Chaparro has put together almost 30 layout open houses over the weekend including a couple that may be only open to NMRA members and their guests.

### WINTER MEET:

Kingsburg Depot - January 26, 2019

## Daylight Division Membership Gauge

January 31, 2017—114  
February 28, 2017—115  
March 31, 2017—115  
April 30, 2017—116  
May 31, 2017—116  
June 30, 2017—115  
July 31, 2017—116  
August 31, 2017—117  
September 30, 2017—119  
October 31, 2017—119  
November 30, 2017—119  
December 31, 2017—117  
January 31, 2018----118  
February 28, 2018--116  
March 31, 2018----114  
April 30, 2018----112

## Membership Thermometer:

### Daylight Membership by County

County	# Members
Kern	33
San Luis Obispo	25
Fresno	23
Santa Barbara	16
Tulare	12
Merced	3
Madera	3
Mariposa	2
Total Members	117

## Daylight Officers:

Superintendent: Neil Fernbaugh  
(559) 805-4520  
Chief Clerk / Paymaster: Bob Sexton  
(559) 325-7528  
Director: Neil Fernbaugh  
(559) 805-4520

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Observation Editor: Brewster Bird  
(559) 967-6773  
Clinics Chair: Doug Wagner  
(661) 589-0391  
Contests Chair: Chuck Harmon, MMR  
(559) 299-4385  
A.P. Manager: Dave Grenier  
(408) 431-8989

Parliamentarian: Brewster Bird  
(559) 967-6773  
Industry Liaison: Mike O'Brien  
(661) 654-0748  
Member Aid Chair: Bob Pethoud  
(559) 438-7705  
Membership Chair: Doug Wagner  
(661) 589-0391  
Webmaster: Dave Grenier  
(408) 431-8989

From Doug our Membership Liaison:

## **Daylight Calendar:**

Please see:

[www.pcrnmra.org](http://www.pcrnmra.org)

for further details...

## **Addendum:**

THE DAYLIGHT DIVISION NEEDS A CHIEF CLERK AND PAYMASTER. SEE FOLLOWING JOB DESCRIPTION (as written by Neil Fernbaugh)

## **Layout tours:**

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum is offering a Beer Train Excursion on Saturday, October 6. Board the northbound Starlight train, leave the SLO Amtrak station at 3:35 pm, travel over the beautiful Cuesta Grade and detrain at Paso Robles where our tour group will be picked up by a large tour van. You will be transported to Barrel House Brewing Company, where you will sample their craft beer, enjoy the live entertainment and play corn hole, if you wish. Food is available for purchase.

When the entertainment ends, you will be transported back to the SLO Amtrak Station, arriving about 9:30 pm. All transportation, complimentary beer and live entertainment are included in your ticket. Contact Diane at [media@slormm.com](mailto:media@slormm.com) or call 805-548-1894 for info or tickets.

**\$79 PER PERSON**

## **Special Notices -**

Andrew Merriam's layout will not be open Saturday. It will be only open Friday evening from 6:00 to 10:00 PM.

Bill Obermeyer's layout will be open Friday and Saturday evenings, 4:00 to 8:00 PM.

I want to remind everyone that model railroads and garden railroads sometimes vanish quietly, never to be seen again. In the case of this Festival, over the years I have been organizing the tours several great railroads disappeared and I have been unable

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to find out whether the owners died, moved or just lost interest. E-mails and snail mails have gone unanswered.

And other railroads on previous Festival tours also are extinct, but at least the owners have told me they have moved or are rebuilding. There are at least two railroads on this year's tour that probably will be open for the last time due to health and family issues. I don't expect to see these next year.

So I remind you to get out and see these railroads now. Nothing lasts forever and that, unfortunately, includes model railroads and their owners.

The schedule, locations and descriptions of the participating railroads, along with three area maps, are on the Central Coast Railroad Website on this link:

<https://www.ccrf.com/2018/MRSC-Layout-Tour-58.pdf>

I hope to see all of you next month in SLO.

Bob Chaparro  
Moderator  
Model Railroads of Southern California  
[https://groups.io/g/  
ModelRailroadsofSoCalif](https://groups.io/g/ModelRailroadsofSoCalif)

Thank you Bob for all you do for those Operators out there! (ed.)

Director Neil's Report:  
Daylight Division Report  
Neil Fernbaugh, Superintendent

With some of our officers out of the country, and the Bakersfield gang's main vehicle out of commission, our coastal members were still able to put together a great July meet at Gary Siegel's home in Santa Barbara. Bruce Morden gave a clinic on track cleaning, and Dana Driskel gave a clinic on McKen cars. After lunch folks split up to run on Gary's G scale SP Santa Cruz Division, or his L&N HO layout, while others went out to tour other layouts.

Special thanks to Bruce, Gary, Dana, Tom Fratello and everyone else who helped. I hope we are able to return again next year when more of us from the San Joaquin side of the Coast Range can make it over.

Our fall meet is scheduled to coincide with the Central Coast Railroad Festival on October 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 to about noon in the San Luis Obispo Memorial Building Lounge (\$4.00 NMRA members, \$5.00 nonmembers). Maps and details will be posted on our website. Bob Chaparro has put together almost 30 layout open houses over the weekend, including a couple that may be only open to NMRA members and their guests. The Railroad Festival has events stretching from Paso Robles

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south to near Santa Barbara so there will be something for everyone. For those of you who are outside the division, and may want to join us, check out the weekend events listed at <https://ccrf.com>.

Our winter meet is scheduled once again for the Kingsburg Historic Depot on the morning of January 26<sup>th</sup>, Details to follow.

Neil's Brainstorm:

The lounge and kitchen we've rented has a coffee pot. I will pick up donuts, etc., since I will be there all weekend. I haven't communicated with Bob to see if he, or others from Fresno are coming over, but I will probably be able to touch base with him before the meet. I will have a cash box, tickets of some sort, a number of white elephants, a couple of great door prizes, and could sure use someone to do a quick clinic, but I think our goal is to have a quick meeting and get out and take advantage of the festival. Matt Metoyer is going down to operate at La Mesa during the PSR convention, and I've asked him if he can bring back some pictures and maybe give a bit of a narrative on what it's like to operate down there. I will, of course, bring the Division projector, etc.

I have reserved the Kingsburg Depot for January 26<sup>th</sup> for our next meeting. IF anyone would like to help out and host it somewhere else (Fresno, B'field) it's not too late to plan somewhere else. I hope we can do somewhere in Bakersfield in late April or May.

No, the Daylight Division isn't the only one that has these issues. We could sure use a couple of newcomers to take over some positions in

administration. Bob has asked to have someone take over as paymaster, and I have been looking. Can anyone else find someone to take over that job? I've desperately tried to have someone at the PCR take over Doug's duties so we could prevail on him, but he's already overloaded.

Some thoughts--- from my perspective, most of the members who have come to meets have really appreciated limiting the amount of time we spend on business issues. It's obviously really been a problem to get people to step up and help. Most of the work has been done by Doug, Bruce, Chuck, Dave, Mike, Bob Chaparro, and others, with me just struggling to keep up.

IF anyone would like to take over either or both of the positions I'm in, I would love to pass on the torch. I think it would help if we actually had an executive committee that could do all the organizational stuff outside of our "meets."

A couple of years ago I made some suggestions on how to do that, but I didn't get much feedback.

I definitely don't want to bore the members who just want to come to meets, enjoy the fellowship, share ideas, and visit layouts; but if there is a way we could get everyone who wants to work on the "business" of running the division in one place for an organizational meeting, maybe that would be helpful. How about lunch after the October or January meets?

Any other ideas?

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*Finally, the barebones of a layout.*

## **What A Long Strange Trip It's Been**

By Neil Fernbaugh

Daylight Division Superintendent & Director

It's been more than a decade since I returned to model railroading.

Several years before I retired, I dug into an old chest to show my grandson my old collection of Lionel 027, Marx, & what now seems to be ancient HO equipment. After that, my five-year plan for a layout began with opening my Dad's old Mare Island storage chest and pulling out those OK Herkimer passenger cars and those gear powered Alcos to show my grandson, Kyle.

After that, my journey towards my own Golden Spike began with visits to PSR and PCR conventions and encouragement from many of the folks you still see on the Daylight and Branch-line mastheads. I started with a 2x2 module for the Visalia Electric club, and some 2x4 switching modules that I thought would quickly be added to my home layout (they weren't).

A couple of my structures won awards or favorable notice from fellow modelers, and I was off on a building spree. After initial encouragement from the Visalia club, I also joined the Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society in Bakersfield and their members encouraged me to get even more involved. Doug Wagner welcomed me with open arms, and Dan Seames, let my grandson Kyle run his trains for hours on the layout. A few years later Jason Hill and Doug Willoughby invited me to operate on the famous La Mesa layout in San Diego, and I was hooked on operations.

I began acquiring everything I thought I would need or use. Swap meets, Al's old Bakersfield Hobby Shop, Anita's Central Coast Trains, innumerable visits to eBay, a couple of lucky estate sales.... My cabinets are full. I probably have

more cork roadbed, flex track, spikes and tools than I'll ever use. I've actually stopped buying stuff and figure I can finance the next stages of construction by selling stuff off (call me).

I made one extensive but ill-fated attempt to insulate an old equipment storage shed on our ranch for a layout room before my wife and Chief Financial Officer stepped in and insisted on a roofed and air-conditioned room for my layout (that included new storage cabinets and a garage for her new car).

Since then, she has graciously wondered whether I might need room for a desk (for a dispatcher) and a shelf for staging in her side of the garage-- and granted a couple of holes in the wall to make it work.

So, finally, a layout begins to emerge from the chaos. Our contractor managed to put in double doors to the "TRAIN SHED" so I can roll out the old Powermatic table saw onto an outdoor concrete slab from its place under one of the two dog-bones that anchor the southwest and northwest corners of the benchwork. Finally, the benchwork is in, roadbed is under construction, and a couple of modules will be wired in.

Years of suggestions from the Layout Design SIG (Special Interest Group) and Operations SIG have merged into a somewhat coherent track plan that looks like it's going to work. I have at least five citrus packing sheds, some ag related chemical industries, mid-century sugar beet ops (mostly thanks to Chuck Catania), and by extension, the Monolith Cement Plant and other industries along the east side of the San Joaquin Valley. I designed a central division point yard at what I now call Bakersfield, where ag products, like the oranges my wife and I grow on our small ranch near Ivanhoe, can be shipped east and west to the rest of the world.

I really wanted to stick to the kinds of prototype specific details that Jack Burgess' era specific Yosemite Valley railroad, and other SP and ATSF modelers have done so well, but I've opted for more of what some of our earlier modelers called

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“good enough.” The end result appears to be a railroad that models the East side of the San Joaquin Valley as if the flooding of 1954 ended up with the SP and ATSF using the eastside lines as mainlines. But then, having been so enthralled with the crossing of the Sierra, I’m still trying to incorporate some tourist and timber industries around a mountain resort. We’ll see how it works!

Thanks,  
Neil

At one Southern Pacific Historical Society Convention, I had the opportunity to operate on Dave Houston’s Burbank Branch, and that has become the model for my citrus industry branch line. Thanks to a chance to operate with Bruce Morden on Gary Siegel’s L&N layout in Santa Barbara, I began to learn much more about using my layout to mimic how real railroads work, and how to turn my layout into more of a chess game or puzzle. That led me to even more interests in how to make my railroad work. More recently, our local leader, Bob Pethoud’s, “Fall Creek Branch” switching layout led me to rethink how I will design more of my industrial switching.

This issue of the Daylight Observation produced with a donation provided by Brewster’s Brews, a coffee roasting enterprise. Roasted beans only, not ground. Roasted to order. Contact: Brewster Bird at 559-390-1392 or [roastcoffeemicro@gmail.com](mailto:roastcoffeemicro@gmail.com)

As you can see from the photograph, my layout is very much in its beginning stages. Unlike a lot of layouts, it’s probably a little less well planned out than the layouts you see in all those Layout Plans from Model Railroader and Tony Koestler. It seems like every riser I add, and every siding I put in, demands some change in benchwork, wiring, or scenery. One of the things I learned from Bill Obermeyer’s layout in Atascadero is that you can create a wonderful layout in only a couple of years, so now that I’ve started I hope to move along quickly.

Maybe in a year or two I will have something wonderful to show for my efforts, or maybe I will tear out everything and completely change some part of my layout. Mostly, I just want to thank all of you who have helped me on my journey, and urge all of you who are somewhere else along the path to your layout Nirvana to take advantage of all the opportunities your friends, NMRA divisions and regions, special interest groups and more specific historical societies, modular groups, and local clubs that make our hobby such a unique and special way to indulge our few spare moments.