



The Daylight Observation

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Daylight Director's Message: Model Railroading Is Healthy for You!

By Walter Mizuno, Daylight Division Director

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As we enter the fall season, I'm excited to share some fantastic news with our members, especially those of us in the 65+ age group. Did you know you could potentially have your NMRA membership dues covered by Medicare?

It may sound too good to be true, but it's a real benefit. By taking part in an organization like the National Model Railroad Association, you're not just engaging in a hobby—you're actually supporting your health!

According to the NMRA website, "Research shows that participating in groups like the National Model Railroad Association improves our mental, physical, and social health. It's called 'Social Fitness,' and it's the perfect replica of your favorite track."

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Observation Schedule

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

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This means that Medicare, recognizing the health benefits of these activities, may cover your membership costs if you qualify. To find out more and to see if you're eligible, check out the details at [NMRA's Medicare Page](#). It's completely free, and your personal information won't be sold.

Speaking of benefits, as we look ahead to the Daylight Limited Convention in March 2025, I'm thrilled to announce a fantastic opportunity for members to bring a companion along for free. This "companion fare" gives your guest full access to the clinics and activities, provided they accompany a paying attendee. It's a wonderful way to share your passion for model railroading with loved ones—be it a spouse, a child, or a significant other. The planning committee is eager to welcome new faces and build a shared experience of fun and camaraderie. For more information or to register, visit the [Daylight Limited Registration Page](#).

In addition to membership perks, the NMRA Partnership Program continues to offer valuable discounts on model railroading products. I've recently taken advantage of this by starting to incorporate Layout Command Control (LCC) into my layout. At the national convention this August, I had a chance to speak directly with an LCC vendor. The personalized advice I received was instrumental in advancing my installation project. Upon returning home, I used my NMRA discount to order additional components, and the savings I enjoyed covered the cost of my next year's membership. It's just one more example of how membership can pay for itself.

One of the true joys of attending conventions is the friendships we make and the ones we renew. This year's national convention in Long Beach was no exception. I had the pleasure of volunteering my time and making some new friends along the way, it was an incredibly rewarding experience.

If you've never been to a national convention, I highly recommend reading Larry Young's article in this newsletter. As a first-time attendee, Larry shares his enthusiasm and excitement, which might just inspire you to attend your first national convention.

Continued on Page 3

However, it is with a heavy heart that I report the passing of Milton San Soucie, our Paymaster/Clerk for the Daylight Division, on August 23rd. Milton was not only a dedicated officer of our division, but also an exceptional modeler, particularly known for his stunning UP passenger car models, many of which were contest winners. He was an active member of the GEHAMS HO layout as well. His presence and contributions will be sorely missed.

In brighter news, we're excited to welcome several new members from various parts of the division. I strongly encourage our new members to take full advantage of the meetings, activities, and friendships we offer. This is your chance to dive into the world of model railroading with fellow enthusiasts. As always, your feedback and suggestions for improving the division are welcome. Please feel free to reach out to me directly at wkmizuno@gmail.com.

Until next time, happy railroading!

Warm regards,
 Walter Mizuno
 Director, Daylight Division



Daylight Division Membership Gauge	
August 31, 2014	134
August 31, 2023	86
September 30, 2023	85
October 31, 2023	84
November 30, 2023	84
December 31, 2023	80
January 31, 2024	74
February 29, 2024	79
March 31, 2024	79
April 30, 2024	85
May 31, 2024	87
June 30, 2024	87
July 31, 2024	88
August 31, 2024	90

Daylight Membership by County	
<u>County</u>	<u># Members</u>
San Luis Obispo County	22
Fresno County	20
Santa Barbara County	15
Kern County	15
Tulare County	10
Madera County	4
Merced County	3
Mariposa County	1
<u>Kings County</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Members	90

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical

By Dave Grenier



In this installment, we will review the requirements for the Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical certificate. While the requirements for this certificate may seem long and daunting, they really aren't. It just seems that way because there are so many options for you to choose from.

As is true with many of the AP certificates, don't read more into the requirements and make them more difficult than they are. Commercial products may be used throughout, unless otherwise noted. You may build some things from scratch only if you choose to, but it is not necessary to complete the requirements for this certificate.

There is no requirement for Merit Judging in this certificate. The presence and operation of the required features must be verified by a witness (the Division AP Manager, or their designee) on the Record and Validation Form, but they do not have to be judged and achieve a minimum score.

You don't even have to do all the work on a single layout – you can do some on your own layout, your club layout, and some on a garden railroad. For fans of three-rail or overhead wire layouts out there, the work on your layouts may also be considered for ALL aspects of the Achievement Program.

To qualify for the Model Railroad Engineer -Electrical certificate, you must:

A: Construct and demonstrate on your own or club layout, the satisfactory operation of an electrical control system capable of simultaneous and independent control of two mainline trains in both directions, and containing at least:

1. **Five electrical blocks (for conventional DC) or sufficient gaps and switches to maintain polarity and troubleshooting (for DCC).**
2. **One mainline passing siding.**
3. **One reversing loop, wye, turntable, or transfer table.**
4. **One yard with at least three tracks and a switching lead independent of the mainline.**

5. **Facilities for storing at least two unused units of motive power.**
6. **One power supply with protective devices (short indicator or circuit breaker) to ensure safe operation. You don't have to build this yourself; you just have to have one. You can use a commercial power supply that has these features, modify a commercial system to add these features, or even build it yourself if you REALLY know what you're doing.**

B: Wire and demonstrate the electrical operation of at least three of the following items:

1. Turnout
2. Crossing
3. Crossover
4. Double crossover
5. Slip switch (single or double)
6. Gauge separation turnout
7. Double junction turnout
8. Three-way turnout
9. Gauntlet turnout
10. Spring switch
11. Operating switch in overhead wire

Commercial products **are** allowed on all of these. However, if you build them yourself, you can also use them to satisfy the requirements of the AP Model Railroad Engineer – Civil certificate. Two certificates for the price of one!

C: Wire and demonstrate the electrical operation of at least three of the following items:

1. Electrical turnout position indication on a control panel for at least four turnouts.
2. Track occupancy indication on a control panel or at trackside for at least five blocks.
3. Cab control, making provision for connection of at least two power supplies to a minimum of five blocks as the train progresses.
4. Engine terminal, including an electrically powered turntable or transfer table, a minimum of three stall tracks, and at least two tracks outside the stall area for a total of at least five tracks to store unused locomotives.
5. Two turnout junctions with interlocking and signals to prevent a train from going through a turnout set against it.
6. High frequency lighting (a.k.a. Constant lighting).
7. Electronic throttle with inertia and braking systems.

8. Grade crossing with actuated warning indication.
9. Two-way blocking signaling with train detection for at least five blocks.
10. Operating overhead wire or catenary.
11. Installation of advanced electronic or computer control system.
12. Design, installation, and operation of animated mechanical and/or electrical displays.
13. Design, installation, and operation of mechanical and/or electrical layout displays.
14. Installation of a command control receiver, requiring modification of device's wiring. (Installing a plug-equipped device into a prewired socket is not sufficient).
15. Installation of a command control throttle buss line around a layout capable of handling at least two throttles at three or more separate locations.

Commercially assembled complete units are not acceptable in the following items:

16. Construction and installation of a sound system (This does not have to be an on-board system; it could be an under-layout system).
17. Construction and installation of a signaling system.
18. Development and installation of a CTC system.
19. Installation and operation of an on-board video system.
20. Computer generated block detection information.
21. Hardwired or stored control program (computer) for layout operation.
22. Development and demonstration of a computer-to-railroad interface.
23. Other, including flashing warning lights on locomotives or end-of-train devices on cabooses.

Note that operating third rail (center or outside) or overhead wire powered layouts may be considered for ALL aspects of the AP. Also note that the use of advanced power supplies, train control, track wiring, and track control methods shall not be restricted by the definitions in the minimum requirements listed above.

D. Prepare a schematic drawing of the propulsion circuitry of the model railroad in used to satisfy (A) showing the gaps, blocks, feeders, speed and direction control, electrical switches, and power supplies.

You do not have to show the turnout control, signaling, or structure lighting wiring on this drawing. You do not need to include the details for parts of the diagram which are repeated. If several parts are wired in the same way, it is sufficient to draw one section in detail and indicate other locations with rectangles.

E. Prepare schematic drawings identifying the wiring and components of the six items used to satisfy the requirements in (B) and (C).

For clarity, this should be separate from the propulsion circuitry schematic in (D) above. If you already have one overall schematic of the layout, make photocopies and go over the applicable lines using a highlighter for each feature.

F. Submit a Statement of Qualifications form, which includes the following:

1. The track plan for the layout used in (A).
2. A description of each of the features used in (B) and (C), including:
 - a. A description of the item.
 - b. Construction methods used.
 - c. Identification of commercial products used.
3. Schematic drawings as required in (D) and (E).
4. The signed Record & Validation Form, showing that each of the above items are operational and meet all applicable NMRA standards.
5. Copy of your NMRA membership card.

Send your package to the Daylight Division AP Manager, Dave Grenier (send email for the mailing address), who will review your submission and forward it to Jack Burgess, PCR Achievement Program Manager. If possible, scan the documents as PDF files and email them as attachments instead of mailing paper copies. Each document should be a separate PDF file.

The full requirements for this category are available on the NMRA website at <http://www.nmra.org/electrical>. The Statement of Qualifications form may be downloaded in ([PDF](#)) or ([DOC](#)) formats.

Also look at the *Scale Rails*, August 2008 issue, page 10, for an informative article, complete with drawings and samples of what it takes to earn this certificate.

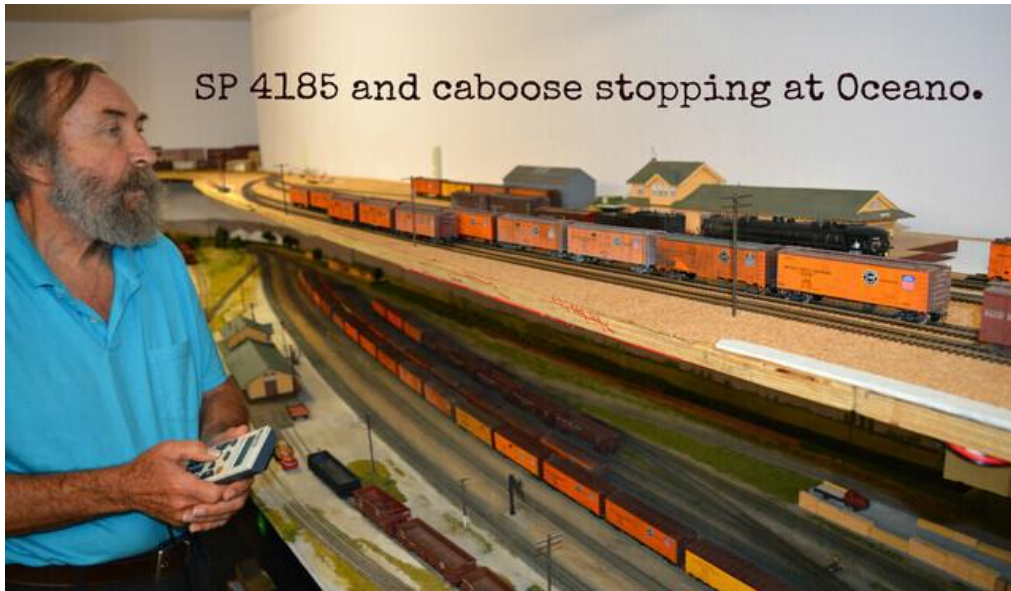
If you have any questions or want to learn more about the Achievement Program or Golden Spike Award, e-mail me at grenida@pacbell.net

Next installment: Chief Dispatcher



Vacation in England

Article by Bruce Morden



As I plan our trips, I have to be careful not to go overboard on the train focus. My wife's passion is plants, so we have to visit gardens and natural areas. She saw a garden several years ago on PBS which was assembled by one of the Rothschild family who had a penchant for collecting *Rhododendrons* from around the world. We planned the trip to coincide with the bloom time for the *Rhodies*. As luck would have it Exbury Gardens <https://www.exbury.co.uk/> also has a steam railway associated with it so while I enjoyed the plants, I got the extra reward of a steam train ride.



**Andrea Morden
with blooming
rhododendrons at
Exbury Gardens**

*Exbury Gardens
steam train*



Beside riding trains on our trip, I had planned to visit a model railroad friend in Plymouth. Brian Moore is a little different in several regards. First, he has a basement to model in which is quite rare in the UK. Second, Brian models Guadalupe, California! Here are a couple of links to some videos of Brian's layout <https://www.youtube.com/@BrianXMoore/videos> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNcSq7HIGZc>

I had shared with Brian a Southern Pacific Station Plat map which he used while designing and laying out the trackwork on his Guadalupe. He was most grateful then and allowed my wife and me to stay with him during our visit to Plymouth. We took Brian and his wife Jane out to dinner the night we arrived, and he took us on a walking tour of Plymouth Harbor and all the historic sights. The next day, Brian and I retreated down to his basement, ran trains and shared information while the ladies went out to visit a museum. Brian is still laying track into his upper staging yard and starting to put structures and scenery into Oceano.



*Guadalupe,
California's
Southern Pacific
depot as modeled
in HO scale in
Plymouth,
England*

When we left Plymouth, I had not really planned much more railroading except for a few more trips on the Underground when we returned to London. Instead, we would be visiting gardens, and seeing some of the tourist sites, including Lands' End, St Michael's Mount, Cornish Tin Mines [ala Poldark], Port Isaac [Doc Martin's fishing village], Tintagel [alleged home of King Arthur's castle], Glastonbury and Oxford [with its museums, libraries and colleges]. During my trip planning, I had looked at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, <https://www.lynton-rail.co.uk/> a small steam railway up north in Exmoor National Park. I decided not to ride the train. We had time, so we went to Woody Bay Station and the timing was such that we actually saw the train come into the station.

When we returned to London, we did use the Underground to visit Trafalgar Square, the Tate Britain art museum and the Royal Observatory in Greenwich where the Prime Meridian is marking Greenwich Mean Time.

It was a great trip and the small taste I got of British railroading made it all the more satisfying.



*Lynton & Barnstaple
Railway locomotives and
cars at Woody Bay Station*



Daylight Division Report

by Doug Wagner,
PCR Membership Manager



As many of you may know by now, Milton SanSoucie, of Bakersfield, passed away recently. Who was Milton SansSoucie? Milton was the Daylight Division's Paymaster/Clerk (railroad term for secretary/treasurer) for the last four years.

Milton passed away almost two years to the day after the Daylight Division's Superintendent, Mike O'Brien, also of Bakersfield, passed away in late August of 2022. So, the Daylight Division has lost two of the three elected positions of Officers in the last two years! Folks, to put it bluntly, we need your help! We have not been able to fill the Division Superintendent's position for the last two years, and now we will need to fill the Paymaster/Clerk's position as well. The saying that "*oh, someone will do it*" has not been the case. The "*oh, someone will do it*" is why you have not seen many Daylight Division meets, recently—because the folks that help put the meets together are also terribly busy doing other tasks for either the Daylight Division, Pacific Coast Region, the NMRA, or their local model railroad clubs. And, on top of that, they are now involved with planning the Pacific Coast Region's Convention, in San Luis Obispo, in late-March 2025. So, you can say, they "*have too many irons in the fire!*" If you look on page 2 of this issue of the Observation, you will note the names of folks that currently have positions to keep the Daylight Division operational. The Superintendent's position has been listed "*Vacant*" for the last two years. Now, we will have another position open—the Paymaster/Clerk. Am I making excuses? No, I do not need to! I do not need to put another iron in the fire! I wish I could find time to organize Daylight Division meets, but with me being treasurer and membership manager and co-chairman of the Bakersfield Annual Model Train Show, for the Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society, and with now being involved as Clinic and Train Show manager for the Daylight Limited 2025 San Luis Obispo Convention, besides also being the Membership Manager for both the PCR and Daylight Division, I have not even the time to make any progress on my home layout. So, no, I do not need to make excuses. Folks, we need members who are willing to lend a hand. Can we count on you for some help if asked? Thanks for letting me bend your ear for a little bit!





2024 NMRA National Convention

A Beginner's Perspective

Text and photos by Laurence Young

In early August, I attended the 2024 NMRA National Convention hosted by our neighbors, the Pacific Southwest Region. They put on a fine show, with lots of great clinics, make-and-take sessions, tours, and of course good company and cheer. I had been looking forward to this event since I joined the NMRA last April. Even as a complete beginner, I knew that this was an exciting opportunity that I did not want to miss, and I hope in this article to highlight those aspects that were very rewarding to me.

I began my convention week with an exciting operating session on Gary Siegel's L&N Eastern Kentucky Division. I've been operating on Gary's layout, at the invitation of our Bruce Morden, for almost 18 months now, and I always have an enjoyable time.

Taking part in an operating session has been a great reintroduction to the hobby and has encouraged me to see beyond just "running trains" as I did as a child. For me, thinking about prototype operations, having defined places to go on the layout with a purpose, and navigating the inevitable switching puzzles when you get there, has been a delightful way to explore an aspect of our hobby I never knew existed. I have since joined the



Operations Special Interest Group (OPSIG), and I would encourage anyone who attends a convention to take advantage of operating on a “foreign road.” You can get some great ideas by seeing what others have done, and you will absolutely have a good time.

On the opening day of the convention, the first session I attended was “The 2024 NMRA Members Survey” led by John Doehring. It featured a discussion of the results of the membership survey the national organization conducted earlier this year. The data reveals some intriguing avenues in which we could grow the hobby into the future.

For example, did you know that “fear” is a significant barrier to participating in our hobby? It was listed as “fear” in the data from the survey, but one surmises that it is uncertainty, coupled with a lack of confidence. It is a fear borne of feeling insecure that our own personal modeling abilities may not measure up to MMR standards, as well as an uncertainty that our knowledge, passion, and joy for model trains and prototype railroads will be welcome.

A significant reason I joined the NMRA last year was to conquer my own “fear” and exemplify for my young son how to work through his inhibitions. Of course, the reality of becoming a member has been a tonic to this feeling of worry. It has been a liberating experience to find fellowship and generous guidance from my fellow hobbyists in the NMRA. If we can help those would-be modelers full of doubt take their first steps, our hobby and organization will surely grow significantly.



OPSIG room at the 2024 Surfliner convention

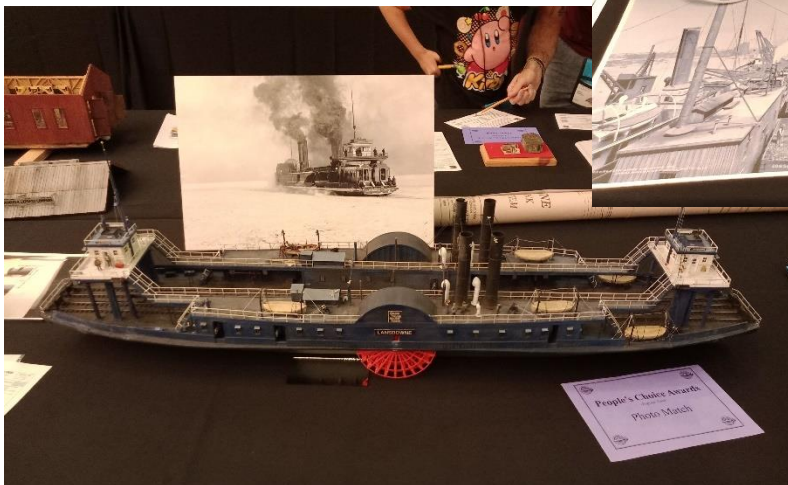
I dedicated the entire morning session of the first full day to the LDSIG Bootcamp led by Byron Henderson and Seth Neumann. The session covered a three-phase approach to designing a layout: Conceptual, Footprint/ Structural, and Detail. This is a reframing of John Armstrong’s “Givens and ‘druthers” with an emphasis on the initial Conceptual phase.

Continued on Page 14

It was a delightfully freeing moment to be told blue-sky thinking about the theme and concept of our future layout is key to a successful design. This is an activity that I can engage in right now with the knowledge and tools I have. The rush to the footprint and details of a layout is not only unwise, but it can also be paralyzing to try and address too many possibilities and limitations. Taking the time to unshackle our imagination and develop a solid conception is clearly good planning. For me, part of the joy of our hobby is crafting the story I want to share.

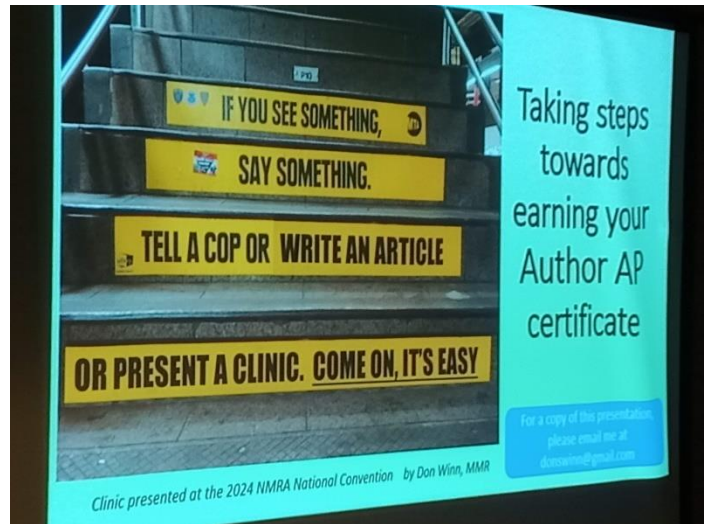
Between sessions I took the opportunity to explore the “Celebration Room,” the space dedicated to displaying our own work in the hobby. The models and pictures on display were truly spectacular: a wide variety of locomotives, scratch-built rolling stock, train ferries, impressive scenery, and structures, including a working version of the Thornberger Ore Unloaders from the Lackawanna Docks in Buffalo. While I’m not quite ready to submit a scratch-built “Big Boy,” I was intrigued by the possibilities and would recommend all of us, even beginners, take in the impressive skill on display and think about entering our own work as well. I know I would enjoy seeing what your imagination can conjure up.

Thornberger ore unloaders



Two models built to match vintage photographs

The last clinic I attended was entitled, “If you see something, say something” by Don Winn, MMR. This was the most inspiring session that I attended and was the motivation behind this first attempt at a contribution to the newsletter. Don’s presentation covered the requirement of the NMRA Author AP Certificate, but it really delved into the endless possibilities of places to which we can contribute articles and essays.



For the final day, I wanted to share this convention with my family. My wife, Kate, and our young son, Eli (3), joined me for a trip through the National Train Show. It was the greatest thrill of the week to share the excitement and joy on display. Young Eli was ecstatic to find a running layout with Thomas the Tank Engine and all of his friends. He also had a chance to run a train on another layout and got a great thrill from sounding the locomotive’s horn. Being able to share the impressive modular layouts and fine craftsmanship with my family was terrific fun and yet another way I derive enjoyment even while just starting out.



A view of the 2024 National Train Show

I hope this overview of my experience has enticed you to explore more of what is available at one of our conventions. Whether you are just starting out or perhaps more advanced, there are a lot of great opportunities to learn and connect with others in our organization during these events. The next one might even be in your backyard! See you down the line!



Achievement Program Announcement!

Steve Lowe of Fresno demonstrated his familiarity with different areas of the hobby and earned the Golden Spike Award in February. Congratulations, Steve!



In Memoriam

Milton SansSoucie, age 76, of Bakersfield, passed away peacefully on August 24th. Milton was born in Mayfield, Kentucky, in January 1948, and spent his early childhood in the St. Louis area. Chicago is what Milton called home during his teen years. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, with a BS degree in chemistry, Milton worked for some major United States' companies. He was employed as a Quality Insurance Manager for Swift Meats, Anheuser-Busch, and Hunt-Wesson Foods. In the 1990's, Milton relocated to Arcadia, California, where he was employed as a Computer IT for the California Amforge Corporation, from which he retired in 2014. While he was in the Southern California area, Milton was a member of the Pacific Southwest Region of the NMRA and the Orange County Module Railroaders. Upon relocating to Bakersfield in 2017 to reside closer to his daughter, Milton became a member of the Daylight Division and Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA and the local model railroad club, Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society, where he was also the Secretary from 2021 to March 2024. Milton modeled HO and was a fan of the Union Pacific and won several awards for his various scratch-built Union Pacific passenger cars that many of you may have seen at the Regional Conventions' Contest Rooms. Milton also designed and manufactured the Convention Car for the 2021 PCR Fresno convention. His passing comes on the heels of the passing of the Daylight Division's Superintendent, Mike O'Brien, almost two years earlier. Milton will be sorely missed as a modeler and friend.

Great Train Show

Saturday and Sunday, Oct 5 and 6, 2024
 Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante
 Blvd, Del Mar, CA 92014, USA ([map](#))
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

Southern Pacific Historical and Technical Society Convention

Oct 16 – 19, 2024
 Nugget Casino Resort, 1100 Nugget Ave,
 Sparks, NV 89431, USA ([map](#))
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

International Railfair

Saturday and Sunday, Nov 2 – 3, 2024
 Cal Expo, Sacramento, 1600 Exposition
 Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95815, USA ([map](#))
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

NMRA Modular Weekend

Saturday and Sunday, Nov 9 and 10, 2024
 California State Railroad Museum, 125 I St,
 Sacramento, CA 95814, USA ([map](#))
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

Coast Division Auction

Sunday, Dec 8, 2024
 The next Coast Auctions will be held at the Alameda Senior Center
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

Great Train Show

Saturday and Sunday, Dec 14 and 15, 2024
 Alameda County Fairgrounds, 2005 Valley Ave Gate 8, Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA ([map](#))
[more details»](#) [copy to my calendar](#)

Coast Toy Train Club Monthly Meetings

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: kenattr@thirdrail.com

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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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San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association Monthly Meetings

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

Visalia Electric Monthly Meetings

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

GEHAMS Weekly Meetings

Every Tuesday & Thursday 7:00 PM / [Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society](#) (HO, N)

Bakersfield, CA / Doug Wagner: carldw@aol.com or 661-589-0391 / Club phone 661-325-5820

Thursday Nite Boomers Weekly Meetings

Every Thursday 6:15 PM / Thursday Nite Boomers (all) / San Luis Obispo County, CA / Terry N. Taylor, e-mail: terryntaylor@charter.net or 805-595-9535

Fresno Model Railroad Club Weekly Meetings

Every Saturday 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM / Fresno Model Railroad Club (HO, N)
1321 Betty Lane, Selma, CA / Mailing Address: PO Box 181, Selma, CA 93662

Daylight Limited

PACIFIC COAST REGION CONVENTION

MARCH
27-30
2025



SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF.



The Daylight Observation

Daylight Division

Pacific Coast Region

National Model Railroad Association

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