

# BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

USPS 870-060 ISSN 07449771

VOLUME 59 NUMBER 3

July—September 2002

## Table of Contents

- Page 1 - Vice President's Message
- Page 2 - Made in the PCR
- Page 3 - Editor's Notebook
- Page 5 - Process of Prototype Research
- Page 7 - New Forum for PCR Communications
- Page 8 - Ft. Lauderdale Convention
- Page 9 - Non-rail Report from the Shasta Daylight 2002 Convention
- Page 11 - Layout Design Tools for the 21st Century
- Page 13 - Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern
- Page 14 - S Scale in Review
- Page 16 - Contest Report
- Page 16 - Tri-Valley Clinics
- Page 17 - Achievement Program
- Page 18 - Tri-valley Layouts
- Page 19 - ELSIE
- Page 20 - Tri-valley Registration Form
- Page 21 - Coast Division Rpt.
- Page 23 - RED Report
- Page 24 - Anyplace But Here
- Page 28 - Operations SIG
- Page 31 - Club Information
- Page 33 - Golden State Museum Info
- Page 35 - Callboard

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By

Gene Mayer

Over the past month the PCR Yahoo Groups internet messages have been full of member comments concerning the future of NMRA and the Pacific Coast Region (PCR). Some of you want to break away from NMRA. Others support the proposed new single membership. Some members want to eliminate the library, do away with the museum or reduce the size of the Bulletin.

The Board of Trustees adopted a new long-range plan for NMRA at its annual meeting in Ft. Lauderdale. I understand that Ray, as our Trustee and President, will report on the Trustees' actions in a future issue of the *Branch Line*.

The PCR Long Range Planning Committee submitted its Interim Long Range Plan to the Board of Directors at its annual meeting in Redding May 1. A copy of the report is

available on the PCR Web Site. The Board generally agreed with the recommendations, but many officers and chairpersons had

serious concerns that there would not be enough volunteers to implement the committee's proposals.

Over the past month the PCR Yahoo Groups internet messages have been full of member comments concerning the future of NMRA and the Pacific Coast Region

available on the PCR Web Site. The Board generally agreed with the recommendations, but many officers and chairpersons had serious concerns that there would not be enough volunteers to implement the committee's proposals.

The committee met Thursday evening May 2 after the board meeting to discuss the input concerning the interim report. We agreed to eliminate most of the editorial

comments and expand upon the following details:

1. Divisions should insert a welcoming letter to new members in their newsletters.
2. The regional membership chair should send a welcoming letter to new members in addition to the one sent

(Continued on page 10)

# MADE IN THE PCR

by Dave Connery

Last issues' review was in N scale so I thought I would jump to the other end of the spectrum this issue. I last reviewed "large scale" products in the July-Sept 2000 issue of the Branch Line, when I described Llagas Creek Track and Hillman Rail Clamps. I am still thrilled with both products and recently learned PCR member Bob Ferguson has started an internet mail order business, Garden Railway Supply Company (GardenRRSupply@aol.com) and is a dealer for Hillman.

## Accucraft Live Steam Shay

Over the years I have grown increasingly fascinated with the idea of operating a live steam locomotive on my garden railway (Gauge #1 – see side bar on large scale). I began reading about a new locomotive, the Ruby, a very affordable (under \$400) live steam locomotive from Accucraft Trains of San Leandro . They have since added several small locomotives (0-4-0's and 2-4-2's) in the under \$650 price range.

Recently they began offering Michigan-California Lumber Company shay #2 in 1:20.3 live steam. This is a model of

the locomotive many of us saw at the historic park adjacent to the Convention Center in Redding during the PCR Convention this spring. It's a small, unique logging locomotive with a long history in California (been here since 1901 with a construction date of 1884).

Accucraft's first releases are live steam locomotives with electric models scheduled for later this year. You know how it goes, I was hooked and ordered one sight-unseen. My locomotive (#48) arrived in early July 2002. It looked fantastic as Dennis Cole at the Train Shop unpacked it for me, installing the trucks and pointing out what I should be careful with.

A few days later at home, and after I had collected the paraphernalia used by live steamers,

I was ready to give it a test run. I read through the instructions several times then began. I first oiled all moving parts with a light oil, then added special steam oil to the displacement lubricator. I next filled the boiler with distilled water, removing about 30cc's to provide some steam head room, and

(Continued on page 26)

## Large Scale – What scale is it?

by Dave Connery

This is a topic you could write reams about. Let's see if I can distill it into something understandable. First, you need to recognize the difference between "scale" and "gauge". I'm sure you all understand this, but unfortunately common usage has confused these two concepts. Gauge is the distance between the rails. Scale is the relationship of a model to the prototype. You need to know both, as they are quite different.

**History --** Near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, toy trains were first built for well to do European families. These were large by today's standards and became codified with track gauges of 1,2,3 and 4. As a

(Continued on page 27)



# Editor's Notebook

By Bill Kaufman

I think this is an interesting issue, but before we get to that I want to take a bit of personal privilege and thank all who were concerned about my health and report to those of you who didn't know. One evening in late May my chest started hurting. I am attuned to those things because I had a heart attack and bypass operation in 1988. In the middle of the night I decided that it "really hurt" and went to the hospital. By the next evening, they had done an angiogram on me and were arguing amongst themselves about another bypass or a stent.

But this edition of the "notebook" is not about me and my operation. (I had another bypass and am doing fine) It is about the model railroader community as a concerned and compassionate group.

Somehow "concerned and compassionate" are not the first words that jump into people's minds when they think of modelers. They are more likely to envision some guy toiling alone in dark of his basement or garage, the typical "lone wolf."

You kind of expect this from your church or relatives, but not necessarily from a bunch of train guys.

There may be guys like that, but I was overwhelmed by people who called or e-mailed to see how I was. I had hardly been a day in the ICU when Jim and Scott Morgan from my round robin were in my room. My sister showed up to see if I was still alive and somehow Otis McGee managed to pass himself off as a long lost cousin and get in. (I was only supposed to have two close relatives as visitors. Eventually the nurses had to come in and break it up.)

You expect this from your church or relatives, but not necessarily from a bunch of train guys. Once I was post op and back home, people came by, or phoned or e-mailed me to check on how I was and if I was being good about my diet and exercise.

I've thought about why the people I know in modeling don't fit the stereotype. I like conventions and my round robin. I like operations which is a game you play with other people. So at least part of it is because I hang around with guys who like social interaction.

But part of it is just that we are, in the words commonly thrown around, a "community" and communities are concerned about their members.

That social interaction is important in model railroading doesn't always get its due. Which brings us to this issue. First, Ray in his President's report and Gene in his VP/Long Range Planning report are concerned with the functioning of the PCR and how to fulfill people's needs and get them involved. You may or may not agree with the solutions, but increasing human interactions is one way to define what they are doing.

Steven Lowens has an article about a way to

(Continued on page 4)

#### STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The BRANCH LINE (USPS 870060, ISSN 07449771), is issued four times a year in the months of January, April, July and October. Deadline for all materials is the fifteenth of the month preceding publication. No material will be returned unless requested and sufficient postage is provided. Membership in the PCR at \$6.00 includes a subscription to the BRANCH LINE. Separate subscriptions are available at \$4.00 per year.

The BRANCH LINE is published by the Pacific Coast Region, 530 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez, CA 94553

Second Class Postage paid at Martinez, Marysville, CA and additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to - BRANCH LINE, 530 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez, CA 94553

All comments about materials contained in the BRANCH LINE should be mailed directly to the Editor, 623 Las Colindas Rd., San Rafael, CA 94903. Inquiries regarding membership application, renewal or change of address should be directed to the Member Services Chairman, 530 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez, CA 94553

The BRANCH LINE is printed by the Morris Family Printers, 727 Rideout Way, Marysville, CA 95901 (530) 742-6930

(Continued from page 3)

### Editor's Notebook

increase interaction. The Pacific Coast Region has an e-mail list for discussion of anything pertinent. (Actually, so do Sierra and Daylight divisions). Jim Radkey's Ft. Lauderdale report was an e-mails posted on that list. I wanted you to see what one looked like. If you want to join just go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PCR-nmra/> and follow the directions.

Les Dahlstadt, a couple of other guys, and I were sitting around talking a bit about prototype research forming ideas of what to model. I ragged on Les a bit and told him that lots of people would be interested in how he is going about it. The result is a peace on researching on the "Old and Weary."

About the same time Annie Ogborn wrote me about how she is making choices and deciding what she wants to model. It is as different from Les' very organized procedure as it could possibly be. She is off to India for six months to research a little pike that somehow struggles up the cliffs of the Himalayas. (Sounds like Colorado with turbans to me.)

One side benefit of Les' work is that he decided to try to draw some track plans and, being the modern man he is, decided that he would use a computer to do them. I talked him into doing a review of the track planning CAD software that he is using.

It is getting to be a bit of a stretch to tie this all together, but Dave Connery was one of the first people to call or e-mail to see how I was. Just for that, I will publish anything he ever writes, but his review of a live steamer and some very nice Carter Bros. cars for his G scale garden layout is really wonderful and worth reading.

It is no stretch to me to point out Marion Madsen's article on the non-rail's activities at the Redding convention. There is a terrific letter from the Shasta County Women's Refuge thanking them for the Afghans that they knitted. We're out

there messing with toys and they are doing good works. (Just don't let them know that we're proud of them, they might expect us to do something useful too.)

I got a couple of notices of activities that seemed worth more space than I could squeeze out of the calendar. The Donner Pass Gandy Dancers & the Kerak Shrine of Northern Nevada are holding the 2nd annual Shrine Model Railroad Show & Sale at the Kerak Shrine Building located at 4935 Energy Way, Reno, NV from 9 am to 5 pm November 15, 16, & 17, 2002. Proceeds benefit the Shrine Charities. In addition to layouts & vendors there will be: Child ID & Finger-printing, bloodmobile, hourly raffles & the Kerak Clowns. Adults: \$4.00; Seniors (over 55): \$3.00; Children 12 & under free. Contact Clyde R. Lippincott at 775-882-4529 or [CRLD\\_LIPPINCOTT@MSN.COM](mailto:CRLD_LIPPINCOTT@MSN.COM) for more information.

The Stanislaus Model Railroaders 19th annual Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet will be Saturday, October 26th, 2002 at the Oakdale Community Center, 250 North 3rd Street in Oakdale, California from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. Contact James Anglin at (209)521-6904 for further info or Larry Hockenberry (209)572-0258 to reserve vendor tables.

I really thought that this might be a shorter column than last issue, but I see that I have once again been unable to staunch the flow of my own words.



Sierra #38 waits on the siding as Baldwins #40 & 44 switch out the Great Sierra Stage Company and Standard Electric Co. of Sonora, CA on Dave Biondi's layout that will be open for the Tri-valley Convention next year.

## The Process of Prototype Research

### Les Dahlstedt

I suppose that many model railroaders get to a point where they're no longer happy with where their modeling efforts have taken them. Some may leave the hobby altogether, while others try to get to the root cause of their dissatisfaction.

Yours truly came to this crossroads last year. Since I'd always enjoyed modeling and the people associated with it, I needed to look inside of *me* and figure out what had changed and what I needed to do about it. Reviewing my journey over the last seven or eight months, I can see that a process has occurred. It's this process that I'd like to share with you.

I'd spent about 15 years being a somewhat generic Southern Pacific modeler, and was getting bored. Okay, if what I was doing no longer held the excitement it once had, what would? I tried to lay out the search for a new focus in a series of logical steps.

#### **Step One: Write a one sentence vision statement that captures the desired goal.**

This is a lot harder to do than it appears, because it makes you *really* ponder all of the many aspects of the hobby. In reality, your vision is what the final product must be. Don't be afraid of raising your own performance bar. You will be amazed at what you're capable of achieving. I probably wrote several dozen vision statement drafts before I came up with the one I adopted:

***“Research, design, build and operate an HO scale layout that will be prototypically accurate, and based upon a branch line of a small Class 1 carrier which conducted business during 1920-1930.”***

Yes, there are a lot of things that are rolled into that one sentence, and you'll be thinking about those things as you develop your vision

statement. I wanted to be able to operate light steam engines on light rail in a scenically rural setting that would depict a simpler way of life. Since my vision statement put a stake in the ground, I needed to capture all of the major bits and pieces that would allow me to bring the vision to reality.

#### **Step Two: List all of the attributes needed of a prototype to make it the prototype of the vision statement.**

The key point here is not too have too few...or so many defining attributes, that selecting a few potential candidates becomes your life's work.

Somewhere between four and eight major characteristics will get the job accomplished. My list had five major characteristics –

1. Small branch line of a modest sized Class 1 railroad
2. 1920-1930 era
3. Light steam with short consists...maybe even mixed consists
4. Interesting freight and passenger operations
5. Rural / small railroad feeling

I lived with these five items for several days late last year. On several occasions, I sat down in a quiet room, closed my eyes and visualized what the undefined prototype might've looked like. I imagined myself rail fanning back then, riding the trains and living in such a rural place. I visualized my idealized scenery and then pictured building a layout based upon these thoughts. By the end of that week, I had a very clear mental image of what my ideal prototype railroad would've looked like. This is a really important and quite satisfying

(Continued on page 6)

*Step One: Write a one sentence vision statement that captures the desired goal.*

## Branch Line - 6

(Continued from page 5)

### Prototype Research

part of the process. I encourage you to make this part of *your* process.

#### Step Three: Begin looking for prototypes that meet the criteria.

Researching prototype railroads is a great deal easier than it was 15 or 20 years ago. Reason: the internet. In a matter of a couple of weeks of part-time effort, I located an initial assortment of two dozen or more railroads that met at least three of my characteristics. I imagine that if my criteria were loosened up, the number would've doubled. Frankly, most of the candidates would be



Cottlekill Depot



Accord Depot

eliminated for reasons as varied as non-operation during the preferred era or being a single commodity hauler. I knew that my prototype was amongst the ones I'd found. I used several different search engines to locate these candidate prototypes. The key words (or synonyms of these) came from my key criteria. I suggest you use several different search engines because (for reasons I don't fully understand), I could find a prototype with one search engine but not others. In short, cover your bets.

While many people are internet active, it is still possible (albeit with more effort and cost) to do prototype research without a computer and internet access. Libraries are one such option, including the NMRA library and the California State Railroad Museum's own facility. How about

the major bookstores, used book stores and your local hobby shop? Back issues of Trains magazine can be had for 25 to 50 cents each. Many hobby shops keep a pile of old issues for sale. An article about another modeler who decided to model a specific road may also give you the first indication of a prototype, so look through your own stash of model railroad publications. Finally, talk to your modeling buddies. Tell them what you're thinking about doing. Get their input. Hint: once you pick a prototype, you'll probably want to exercise these other options anyway, to see what's been written about it or who knows anything about its history.

Getting back to the internet research, by week three of poring over a three inch high stack of information, I'd generally narrowed my selection to three prototype railroads. Many of the potential prototypes had active historical societies with



Anderson's Feed Mill

(Continued on page 29)

# New Forum for PCR Communications by Stephen Lowens

Members of the PCR have recently created a discussion site on the web. "PCR-NMRA" is one of the "Yahoo groups" and is open to anyone, but it is really intended for PCR members. The goal of the forum is to discuss anything related to the PCR. This may have to do with PCR organization or business, or it may become a forum for exchange of ideas, techniques and photos. The group is completely free form, and the content of the discussion will be determined by YOU, the members.

There are four main parts of a "Yahoo Group." The most frequently used part is the "Messages" section. Anyone can post a message, and it can be read in either of two ways. You may choose to have every message sent to your e-mail address. Or you may choose the "No e-mail" option and look at the log of messages through your browser at your convenience; just click on the "Messages" line to get there. Personally, I like to use the browser, because as groups get large, the number of incoming e-mails can become overwhelming. With the browser, you can pick and choose the messages you want to read based on the topic.

Registered members of the group can send an e-mail message to everyone in the group from their own e-mail program. Compose the message, and

send it to [PCR-nmra@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PCR-nmra@yahoogroups.com). You can also reply to messages from the group by hitting reply in your e-mail program, and the response will be sent to the entire group.

We should be able to have a wide-ranging exchange of ideas and techniques with this tool. It could also become a forum for Rod Smith's "Member Aid" program. If you're looking for someone to do a great custom paint job, you might find him here!

I am most excited about the “Bookmarks” section of the group. In this section are “clickable” links to websites and photo albums. So far, these are websites that PCR members have created to display their layouts. This is a great opportunity to share your talents and special effects with the entire group, and is especially valuable for PCR members too far off the beaten track to be part of a layout tour. The website serves as a “virtual” tour!

This could also be useful for the semi-annual layout tours by allowing you to preview layouts

(Continued on page 22)

# Ft. Lauderdale

By Jim Radkey

**Date:** Mon Aug 5, 2002 10:48 pm

**Subject:** Ft Lauderdale Convention

Hi everyone. I was fortunate to be able to attend the Ft. Lauderdale Convention. First off lets get the fact out that yes, it was hot and humid! But the convention center was nice and cool. The presentations that I attended were very good and the layouts that I was able to get to on the tours always had something new for me to see. The bus rides were long but that just gave everyone more time to talk to each other.

The highlight for me had to be the operating sessions with the opsig group. I was able to operate at the Palm Beach Club HO Layout, Bob Gomers SN3 layout and Cal Winters Layout. All of these layouts were a lot of fun.

It turns out that the Palm Beach crew worked all day to get ready for us working out the bugs and gremlins. Everything didn't go fine but it did go and everyone had a wonderful time. After the session we all got together to talk about how it went and that is when they let us know that this was really only the second time the layout had been operated on. It was designed as a display for the fair without operations in mind. It was great.

The second night I was able to go to Bob Gomers. He has a beautiful sceniced narrow gauge layout, with scenery 100% complete, that he designed to run trains on. When he built it he didn't have operations in mind. We were the first group to operate on the layout. Bob had done an excellent job on operation minded track plans without even knowing it. All 8 of us got together and decided how we were going to run the

railroad and we did. We had a blast. Bob learned a lot about operations and finally had to kick us out about 11 p.m.

The last night we were able to go down to Cal Winters Florida East Coast's Key West Extension. This layout was in the February 2001 issue of Model Railroader. Cal and his son Shane were

*The highlight  
for me had to  
be the operating  
sessions with  
the opsig group*

kind enough to take us in and show us how to run the FEC Key West Extension. The first question was who wants to be the dispatcher? There was silence.....So I volunteered. Having never done this job before (meaning I was clueless and still am) I think it went OK. Cal has a world class layout that was fun to operate. You would find yourself just gazing at the trains as they went by. Actually believing that you were there. As it turns out a few days after

the convention I went down to Key West. While I was driving along I was checking out the familiar names looking for the scenes that no longer existed.

Many of the bridges were still there.

The train show on Saturday had many things for you to look at and buy what else could you ask for???



Erie Units on Jim Long's layout which will be on the convention tours.

## NON-RAIL REPORT FROM THE SHASTA DAYLIGHT 2002 CONVENTION

Marion Madsen

---

A big "Thank You" to the convention committee for your support of the Non-Rail activities. We had at least 6-8 participants for all of the clinics as well as both Rail and Non-Rail players at the Bingo Night.

The raffle took in \$123.00 and after expenses left a net of \$48 to seed next year's activities.

Special thanks go to Ilene Marshall who donated a number of the Bingo and Raffle prizes, and to Norm Morris for the special ornament that was used as the prize for the draw for the ladies who donated or made squares for the afghans that were donated to charity.

This year a total of five afghans were donated to the Shasta County Women's Refuge Center in Redding. These afghans were made by Evelyn Gilmore and Debbie Diaz. The photo shows Evelyn on the left, with Marion making the presentation to Susan Evans, the Executive Director of the Shasta County Women's Refuge, on the right. Unfortunately Debbie was unable to be at the convention.

The squares made and submitted throughout the coming year will be made into more afghans that are planned to be donated at next year's convention in Pleasanton to the Tri Valley Haven, a women's and children's refuge center.

If there are any others who would like to participate in this project over the coming year, please contact me and I will

send you the instructions. If you have any ideas for other projects, please send those to me as well.

Marion Madsen,  
275 West 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue,  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 2Z8,  
Canada  
604-321-9209  
gmadsen@ieee.org



May 8, 2002

Marion Madsen  
275 West 49th Ave  
Vancouver, BC, Canada V5Y2Z8

Dear Marion and Friends,

Thank you for your generous donation of lovely hand-crocheted afghans which will be used by the women and children in our shelter. At Women's Refuge, we are committed to providing victims of domestic violence and sexual assault with the resources needed for safety, healing and prevention of further victimization, and to working within our community promoting and participating in intervention, education and advocacy to prevent family and sexual violence. We could not continue our efforts without the ongoing support we receive from the community.

Sincerely,

Susan Evans  
Executive Director

(Continued from page 1)

*Vice President's Report*

by Bob Ferguson with their membership cards.

3. A lot of the membership retention problem might be resolved if NMRA adopts the proposed single membership plan.
4. Have new members stand up and introduce themselves at division meets. Every-one including old members should introduce themselves at smaller division meets—i.e. other than the Coast Division.
5. Divisions should assign someone to sponsor new members.
6. Division officers should telephone new members and invite them to meetings and activities. They should send them letters and invitations to attend special events.
7. Hold a meeting of new NMRA members in each division at least once per year.
8. What is causing membership decline? Is it an aging membership, poor communication or unappealing activities?
9. Hold local meetings in remote areas of Daylight, Hawaiian, Redwood Empire and Sierra Divisions.
10. In home clinics are more important for membership retention than attracting new members to the organization.
11. PCR should develop an educational program and specifically assign mentors to advise and assist new and existing members and modelers
12. Scheduling more meetings may not be as important as advanced planning and notification of meeting dates.
13. Divisions and PCR should send newsletters and the *Branch Line* to all non-PCR NMRA members within its geographical boundaries at least once per year.

14. PCR should create subdivisions in remote areas to provide more local activities.

The Long Range Planning Committee will present its final report to the Board at its October 24 midyear meeting. The committee asks all PCR members to download the report and email your comments to us. Members include Bob Clark (bobclark@jps.net), Dave Connery (DEConnery@aol.com), John Rolston (jrolston@pacbell.net), Peter Weiglin (omnibus@daratamers.com) and chairman Gene Mayer (genefwrr@aol.com)..

I personally favor the single membership concept and believe that we should all work with NMRA to improve the organization. Charlie Getz, the NMRA LRP chairman, assures me that the plan is intended to maintain and improve upon technical standards, modernize the organizational structure and rectify the organization's financial problems. I understand that the membership will have an opportunity to vote on the proposals early next year.

L. E. Gene Mayer

Vice President.

## **TRI-VALLEY ZEPHYR 2003 CONVENTION**

The 2003 PCR convention, the Tri-Valley Zephyr will be held in Pleasanton, CA. April 23rd through 27th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The convention rate for the hotel is \$82 per night and reservations can be made by calling the hotel at (925) 847-6000. Be sure to tell them you are attending the Tri-Valley Zephyr convention to get the convention rate.

Convention registration is \$70, but early birds get in for \$60 and non-rail registration is just \$20. Registration forms will be available at upcoming division meets or contact registrar Jack Wall, Chairman Dennis Stokely or any of the committee members if you can't make one..

## Layout Design Tools For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### By Les Dahlstedt

Most of us who've built layouts have worked from some form of design. It may have been an informal series of sketches or something more sophisticated. Computer-Aided-Design (CAD) has been used in industrial design applications for nearly twenty years.

Within the past decade, several application-specific CAD programs have been offered to model railroaders for layout design. These programs support designing in all of the popular scales.

The benefits of using CAD can be both obvious and subtle. Some of the obvious benefits are the exceptional level of accuracy, the simplicity of changing a design, the convenience of track and turnout libraries and the ability to create scenery profiles.

More subtle, but equally important is the program's ability to verify your creative work (so that unacceptably-small radii are avoided), calculate your grades (to keep them within acceptable limits) and to automatically calculate and draw spiral easements.

Given the amount of time that most of us spend sketching design ideas – not to mention the pads of paper, erasers and pencils – it seemed natural that layout design would gravitate toward CAD.

I wanted, from the start, to design my Kingston Branch of the NYO&W using commercially developed layout design software. I plan to replicate much of the prototype in track plan, structures and scenery, and I'll be relying upon 1916 O&W Valuation Survey maps and 1916 USGS topographic maps to guide my design process.

Product Evaluation & Selection – My previous experience in evaluating software was

*The benefits  
of using  
CAD can  
be both  
obvious and  
subtle.*

pretty basic. Sometimes it was as simple as reading the box for key information. Other times I might've been upgrading to the next release of a previously known product. This time would be different. I began by re-reading all of the reviews that in the hobby press during the past few years. I visited the manufacturers' websites. Finally, I spoke to CAD-knowledgeable friends and got their opinions.

In the end I felt 3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt™ was a good match between the 'connectivity' aspect of its program and the way my brain seems to (occasionally) work. In short, the product wants to 'connect things together', thereby making fast work of laying track and turnouts. Comfort with the way the product is designed to work and confidence in the product are the most important factors. See resource section

at the end of this article for information on this product and some of its alternatives.

Product Purchase – I was able to purchase 3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt (release 7.03) through a secure link at El Dorado Software's website and received a confirming email within 24 hours. After purchasing, I was given a private code number and the option of downloading the program and documentation to my computer. I would still receive the CD-ROM and a printed manual through the mail. I downloaded the program and documentation to my Pentium 4 based PC. It's a two hour process with a 56K dialup modem. The CD-ROM and manual arrived via Priority Mail within 3 days.

Manual – Resisting the temptation to test drive the program right away, I spent 30 minutes reading the 8 1/2 x 11 pages spiral bound manual. Several 3D layout designs appear in color on the cover. The manual contains 138 pages, plus 8 pages of additional data and an index. Each of the

22 chapters is further sub-divided by topic. While the manual is written in text that is easily understood by non-CAD experienced, some of the reproductions of what would be seen on the user's monitor are difficult to see.

Program Installation – I had no difficulty installing the program. My computer is equipped with a CD-RW (CD-ROM, Read-Write) drive, so I can retain my designs on write-able CDs. The installation took less than a minute.

*Hint: Some of the files are compressed. To use these, you'll need to have a copy of WinZip on your hard drive. As I was using a new machine, I needed to download a (free) copy of WinZip. See resource section of this article for further information.*

Tutorial – I highly recommend that you work your way through the 22 page tutorial. (You will need Acrobat Reader, also listed in the Resource Directory, for the tutorial.) The tutorial consists of three parts:

1. Design a sectional track oval, add a single turnout spur and basic scenery landform.
2. Design a dual track oval using flex track, add multiple turnouts, a spur, basic scenery landform, structures and trees.
3. Design a flex track figure eight with an elevation change that permits over and under running.

In all cases, you can toggle your design back and forth from 2D to 3D, and you will learn how to run trains on these CAD layouts...complete with sound effects!

The tutorial took me most of a casual Sunday afternoon, but I was rewarded by seeing a 3D image of my efforts on the screen.

Product Features – 3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt is crammed with dozens of useful features. Here are just a small portion of them:

**Spiral Easements:** Provide a gentle transition between the fixed radius of a curve and tangent (straight) track. As noted above, 3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt automatically calculates and draws a

spiral easement, based upon the radius you've chosen. In some instances, you may have clearance or length problems with the calculated easement. There is a tool that allows you to select short, medium or long spiral easements.

**Add Text:** This lets you insert text to a drawing, bringing attention to specific items in the design.

**Elevation Markers:** This adds text, designating an object's elevation above a point the users has designated as 0".

**Coordinate Markers:** This displays a 3 axis reference point. Very useful during construction.

**Draw Helix:** Creating a helix has never been easier. Define the elevation of one end and the grade, or both ends and the number of turns. The program automatically draws the helix with the proper vertical separation.

**Plants & Trees:** There's an extensive library of low and high resolution plants and trees. You'll be a point and click away from forested hillsides! Just be aware that the program speed is a function of how many objects have been put into the design. Put another way, a plan of the Central Valley will operate substantially faster than one of Upstate New York.

**Connect Crossover:** We all need to use crossovers now and then. This feature speeds the placement process. Choose a default turnout number. Point and click it into position on one track. Point to the other track and click. A second turnout and connecting length of track will be automatically inserted.

**Structure Libraries:** The program includes over 40 of the most popular kits from Campbell, City Classics, DPM, Faller, Gloor Craft, Laser Kit, Piko, Rix and Walthers. Some are wire frame renderings, while others are very accurate representations with details and texture. When operating in 3D mode, it's possible to "fly" by these structures and actually enter the

(Continued on page 30)

# Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

Jim Providenza

Every so often something happens that kind of brings you back to reality. Even in model railroading.

Several months ago I was trying to work out some of the bugs on the new trackage at the west end of Fallon. For some months the Suntan had been running through this track without a problem. Suddenly it wasn't! I had pulled the Suntan out of staging between op sessions and was running it back and forth trying to figure out what was going on. Of course the trouble spot was on a curve just inside a backdrop ... that problem, and its solution, was another one of those humbling experiences that may someday see the light of day in this column. For now suffice to say it eventually got fixed and only required a few carpentry tools. But in the meantime...

The Suntan in its current configuration consists of a Stewart WP F3 and three Athearn 72 foot lightweight coaches. I would run it through eastbound, swap the power to the other end and then run it back west. For convenience sake I would run it around a turnback curve and out onto the new High Bridge that spans one of the two garage doors. At the west end of the bridge I would 0-5-0 the power around and try it again.

Now the High Bridge has been operational for almost two years. It simulates a ballasted deck girder bridge and is in truth close to five feet about the floor. With all the other things going on it had not gotten anything more than a one-inch thick band of black paint to simulate the girders on the side. No guardrails, no guard timbers, no nuthin'. And certainly nothing to really stop locos and cars from going over the side. I mean, hey, I was *busy*. And my operating crew was careful. And of course it couldn't just happen to me. And certainly not when I was working on the layout by myself. Right!

So I pulled the Suntan west onto the High Bridge. Stopped it. Turned to put the throttle down. Turned back. Narrow aisle and all that, you know. So my right elbow did a clean sweep of the bridge and the Suntan went, yes, five feet to the concrete. Luckily, the cars suffered damage only to their couplers. It was time to upgrade them with some new Kadee retrofit

kits anyhow. The F3 took a glancing hit on the rear of the roof as it skittered across the garage floor. Talk about your heart climbing up your throat! But the damage was minimal, pretty easily corrected, and entirely consistent with the condition of a WP passenger F unit in 1970 post California Zephyr.

But as I watched the F3 bouncing across the concrete I had another image flash into my mind. I saw myself back in the mid 80's walking across the tile floor of my kitchen in Livermore. I was holding the boiler shell from my second brass loco, a PFM D&SL 2-6-6-0. I bought it used, stripped the paint, had just etched, washed and dried the boiler and cab, and was heading to the garage to put on the first coat of new paint. I had several things in my hands, and kind of balanced the boiler loosely in an open box. I stumbled as I reached the door. That time it was only 4 feet to the tile. Again the damage was to the rear of the [cab] roof and easily fixed. But the panic! Yeah, I could still relive it, and did.

Needless to say I very happily took up David Parks' offer a couple of weeks later to cut some strips of plexiglass to guard the new High Bridge. As I write this they are finally in place and I just picked up the Code 55 rail for the guardrails at Gunnings Hobbies in San Anselmo after work yesterday. When the round robin comes over next week I'm sure it will get installed.

Is there a lesson here? Well, several. I won't belabor them. But I got to thinking of several other things, memories of other trips to the concrete.

Tank cars seem to be particular victims of SCN op sessions and I have several long time operators who do not hesitate to confess their own sins (as well as others) regarding this. Somehow the tales maintain some semblance of the truth ... operator error is always a good place to start. We've had crews try to fit five cars on a three car siding (two tanks to the floor); had a helper crew push too hard on a train in the helix and jack knife it just as a tank car was going over the bridge at Watson Crick trestle (one tank to the carpet and one dangling). There is a photo of the latter

(Continued on page 25)

# S Scale In Review

By Lee Johnson

For many S scale modelers, the highlight of the year is attending the National Association of S Gaugers annual convention in hopes of finding an old buried treasure or some unexpected new item, and visiting with friends you have not seen since the last NASG convention. This year's NASG convention in the Cleveland, OH area was no exception with about 350 attendees looking for bargains and old friends in the dealers' room.

The new product scoop of the convention (and S in general) was the new American Models Fairbanks Morse Trainmaster locomotive. Not only was it a new model in S that no one knew was going to be produced, but AM had the finished product at the convention for sale. The first convention goers knew of this model was the ad on the back cover of the convention

program, and the next day when the dealers' room opened, they could touch and feel the actual product. It is available in the demonstrator paint scheme along with C&NW, Lackawanna, PRR, RDG, SP, and Virginian. It matches a drawing in a 1954 MR very nicely.

Another surprise was the announcement that Scenery Unlimited was introducing an insulated wine car using the new S-Helper Service wood refrigerator car without hatches lettered for Italian Swiss Colony. This is the same scheme as produced by Red Caboose in HO and O scales. It will make a nice companion car to the previously produced Chateau Martin wine car for handling

the increase in wine shipments across your S scale railroad. The Italian Swiss Colony car should be available this coming October.

**For many S scale modelers, the highlight of the year is attending the National Association of S Gaugers annual convention in hopes of finding an old buried treasure or some unexpected new item, and visiting with friends you have not seen since the last NASG convention.**

Meanwhile, S-Helper Service was showing the pilot model of their new 40 ft. wood refrigerator car with Ajax handbrake, AB brake system, walkway around the ice hatches, and the straight center sill. They also had painted and lettered samples of the USRA composite 2-bay hopper car of which production models should be available in a few months.

BTS was showing their pilot model for the PRR P54 coach of which production models should be available this fall. At the same time, models of the PRR MP54 mu cars will also be available. The MP54 will be available with three styles of trucks just like the prototype.

The power trucks and instructions are already completed for the MP54. BTS also introduced some additional small structures to their "Cabin Creek" line including a post office that was the focal point of a hands on clinic on constructing laser cut structures.

SouthWind Models announced the Russian decapod (2-10-0) provided there is enough interest with delivery currently scheduled for the first of the year. The B&O EM-1

(2-8-8-4) production models should be arriving by October this year.

The built up version of the CN 2-6-0 from S

*(Continued on page 15)*

(Continued from page 14)

Scale Locomotive & supply is now shipping with kit versions to follow shortly. SSL&S is currently working on producing a light 2-8-2 completed mechanism for application into some of the old SSL&S light Mikes.

Banta Modelworks was showing their large display of structures and detail parts. New structures for this year were kits for the Silver Plume House, B&M Machine, an RGS water tank, and a C&S water tank.

The Cryer Gray Foundry displayed some S scale versions of their line of brass bridges. They also announced an S scale project of C&O and NKP 50 ton 2-bay offset side hopper cars in brass. Five versions of ends will be available including radial arch, oval notch, dreadnaught, angular peak, and flat. Reservations and deposits are required for this program. They also were displaying the pilot model of the brass cantilever style signal bridge they are producing for River Raisin Models.

Des Plaines Hobbies was selling assembled S Scale America 10,000 gal. single dome tank car bodies in unpainted and painted with lettering. They also stated that they have purchased the signal target S scale dies from Oregon Railway Electronics, and they plan to offer a completed signal in the future.

Standard Railway Castings Company now has a 4/4 dreadnaught end to go with the Pacific Rail Shops 10'-6" high 40' boxcar. They are now offering this car with the 4/4 dreadnaught ends in NYC. There was also a pre production model of a GN wood side/steel end 40' boxcar that will be available shortly.

After spending a few days of wandering through the manufacturer and dealer displays, a decision had to be made whether to file for bankruptcy, or convince the better half that everything you purchased was even a better investment than the Golden Gate Bridge you recently purchased. Besides looking for items you couldn't live without, there were prototype tours with rides behind steam, diesel, and on

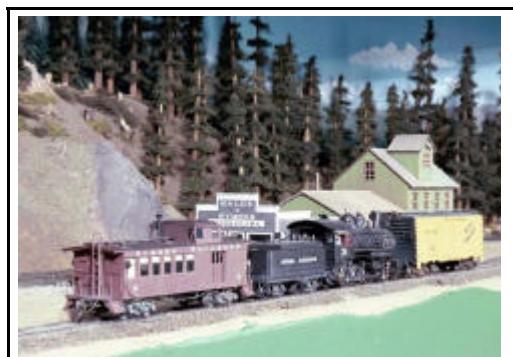
trolleys. There were plenty of activities for the non-railroader, and home layout tours included not only S, but also O, HO and live steam.

There were clinics covering construction and kit bashing structures, DCC, operation, history of S scale, and what is available and how to use the NASG Russ Mobley Memorial Library. The banquet was pleasurable short with only a few awards to present and there was not any speaker.

Next year's NASG Annual Convention will be held in Oconomowoc, WI (Milwaukee area) from July 9-13 at the Olympia Resort & Conference Center. It is already lining up to be another great convention with prototype and layout tours, along with many non-rail type tours.

As previously mentioned in this column, don't forget that S-West IV is being held at the Stockton Inn from 6 PM October 24 until 9 PM October 26 in Stockton, CA. There will be S manufacturers and dealers along with modules, and layout tours. Additional information can be found at <http://home.pacbell.net/meldridg/bass>.

If anyone is interested in obtaining additional information about anything in the column or S scale in general, my e-mail is [Leemax@jps.net](mailto:Leemax@jps.net) or call me at (925) 943-1590.



Sierra #24 is switching out Hales & Simmons Hardware in Sonora, CA on Biondi's Layout

# CONTEST REPORT

By Ken Lunders,  
PCR Contest Chair

Forget about contests for a while. Instead, take a few minutes to look over your inventory of kits, plans, & other model RR related projects you've been intending to get to. Get up and do it now. Take as long as you need. This column will be here when you get back.

...

If your backlog looks like mine, you'll need two lifetimes to finish it all. Or so it seems. But will it?

One modeler told me that he spends an hour every day model building – cleaning parts, painting, & so on. Doesn't seem like a lot of time, one hour. Only 1/24<sup>th</sup> of a day. Just a bit more than 4% of his time. Some of it while watching TV in the evening too. But this guy gets a heck of a lot done! How much time do you spend every day making models, taking pictures, laying track...?

I tried the hour-a-day approach myself. As it turns out, I can get much more done than I expected. I recommend you give it a try as an experiment for a couple of weeks. All you have to lose is some of your backlog.

Oh yeah, this is the "Contest Report," right? Well, bring in your models & pictures to the next contest. If you try the hour-a-day method I bet you'll have more, and better items to bring.

Westbound  
Sierra #38  
crosses over  
the top of  
eastbound 24 at  
the high trestle  
at Hetch Hetchy  
Jct



## Tri-Valley Zephyr Clinic Program as of August 12,

The following is a list of clinics that have signed up to present at the Tri-Valley convention next spring. Things could change between now and then so don't hold them to every last one, but it really seems like a great beginning.

Dave Biondi & John Marshall: Train Talk II, the Gondola

Dave Biondi, Bill Schaumburg, et al: Improving Your Model Railroad Photography – Parts 1, 2, 3 & 4

Jack Burgess: Timetable & Train Order Operation, Parts 1 & 2

Dave Connery & Brad Lloyd: Walls and Fences

Les Dahlstedt & John Marshall: The Time Capsule

Don Fiehman: DCC Made Easy, Parts 1 & 2

Charlie Getz: Advanced Techniques with Laser Cut Kits

Mark Gurries: Basics of DCC  
DCC Wiring

DCC Decoders Parts 1 & 2

Richard Hendrickson: Santa Fe Cabooses

Bill Kaufman: Basics of Operations

Jim Providenza: Realistic Operations

Rick Kolm: Turnouts - What You Need to Know

John LaBarba: Dry Brush Weathering

Seth Neumann: Operations  
Ops SIG Meeting

Kermit Paul: Getting Ready for Lasers in Modeling

Tony Thompson: Southern Pacific Cabooses

Bill Burkett: Heavy Snows in the Sierra

Ray deBlieck: NMRA Long Term Plan

## ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

By Jack Burgess, MMR

If you are just getting started in the Achievement Program, take a look at the Scenery category. The intent of this category is for the modeler to 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 and a lot of fun for most hobbyists, 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 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 (35 points) - This element includes natural features such as rocks, trees, hills, cuts and fills, drainage ditches, etc.
- Structures (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 scratch built. Structures include bridges, fences, turntables, etc.
- Background (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 (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 (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.

If you meet these qualifications, the first step is to complete a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) as with all of the MMR categories. You must also prepare a set of photographs (digital prints work well too) to document your work. You can supply regular snap shots or make a short video of the layout to illustrate your work. The photos or the tape 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. After judging the layout, the judges will sign your SOQ and the SOQ and your other documentation is sent to me to be transmitted to Headquarters.

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

*(Continued on page 27)*

# Tri-Valley Zephyr

Layouts as of August 12, 2002

There is quite a substantial list of layouts that will be open for the Tri-Valley Zephyr, including a number that haven't been open before:

- Bay Area N-Trak Modular Railroad Club
- Dave Biondi: Sierra Railroad, Fremont, CA
- Mike Birmingham: Spokane, Portland & Seattle, San Leandro
- Tom Blinn: Gloria Court Railroad, Pleasanton
- John Blunden: Western Pacific, Pleasanton
- Joan Bradford: Just Trains, Concord
- Jack Burgess: Yosemite Valley Railroad, Newark
- Carson & Colorado Nn3 Modular Railroad
- Dave Connery: Sierra, Carson & Truckee, San Ramon
- Emma & Dave Connery: South West Side Lumber Company, San Ramon
- Jim Dias: Western Pacific, Newark
- Bill Dwyer: Diablo Valley Lines / Western Div., Alameda
- Mel Foster: Northern Walika & Espee Railroad, Tracy
- Bob Ferguson: Martinez
- Golden State Model Railroad Museum, Point Richmond
- Jim Long: Erie & Cumberland Railroad, Fremont
- John Marshall: Pleasanton
- Richard Miller: Denver & Rio Grande, Oakland
- Seth Neumann: Mountain View
- Jack Nullmeyer: Newark
- Kermit Paul: Lone Pine & Tonopah, Pleasant Hill

- Jim Radkey: Albany
- Steve Schlaht: Sierra Belt Railroad, Tracy
- Dave Salamon: Deep River Southern, Tracy
- Silicon Valley Lines, Santa Clara
- Steve Van Meter: Southwestern Pacific, Alameda
- Earl Vasconcellos: California Pacific Lines, Berkeley
- Bob Wirthlin: Midland Rockies & Western, Martinez

## Tri-Valley Zephyr

Prototype tours as of August 12, 2002

We will have a very full slate of outside tours during the Tri-Valley Zephyr. The following is but a small sampling of rail, non-rail and events that will be enjoyed by both. Additional tours and greater detail will soon be available on the Convention web site and in the next issue of the Branch Line.

- Museum of the San Ramon Valley: This is the restored SP Danville depot. Depending upon your arrival day and time, you will be treated to a tour, conducted by a depot docent. The Bay Area N-Trak Group will be operating at the museum during the convention. Schedule to be announced.
- The Orchid Ranch, Livermore: A very worthwhile tour of 3 growers' work at one greenhouse location.
- Military Vehicle Heritage Museum, Portola Valley: A truly unique experience is in store for all who plan to participate. For further information, check their web site: [www.milvehitechfound.com](http://www.milvehitechfound.com)
- Museums at Blackhawk: Some may be aware of the world class automobile museum, but you may not have known of the Smithsonian connection or the traveling exhibits.

## Tri-Valley Zephyr Company Store and Door Prizes

Items you are sure to want from the Tri-Valley Zephyr include the handsome Polo-style shirts that are currently available. These shirts are of a top quality "breathable" fabric in light gray with the convention logo embroidered in four colors over the pocket on the left side of the shirt. (Note that the 3XL shirts are without a pocket). These shirts are available now and can be ordered through the registrar for pre-convention delivery for \$25. We will also be offering the logo as an embroidery patch, which will be available at the convention.

The convention car is a prototypically correct HO boxcar for the Western Pacific. The car will be produced by Branchline Trains and is the standard 1947 steel-sided car with prototypically correct "as delivered" white lettering. This car is not available from any other source (Branchline is doing the later re-paint scheme). The car will be available in 5 different correct numbers. A convention logo decal will be included with the car for those interested in a memorial car. Modelers of the transition era will want a complete set of these cars for their collection/layout.

Door prizes will be plentiful at the convention – some attendees feel they come out ahead registering for the convention in just the value of the door prizes they win. You certainly want your number to be in the pot when the winners are drawn.



Heading east-bound, Sierra 24 with a drag of 40 foot boxcars, crosses Sullivan's Creek enroute to Sonora, CA

## ELsie

The Left Coast (Elsie) HOn30 group recently set up & ran at the Coast Division meet in Fremont, California, on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. 12 modules were operated continuously (11 if you don't count the 4 foot 2x4 filler piece!). Steve Wesolowski took time out from his concert module to present a clinic on modular railroading to the division.

Last year we assembled modules at the PCR convention in San Luis Obispo. We'll be back in SLO for the big Train Show over the weekend of October 4-6. If you are in the area, plan on attending and come by to say hello.

We will also be setting up for the 17<sup>th</sup> annual model train show in Bakersfield. This is held at the Kern County fairgrounds January 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003. Come and see how we stuff DCC into such tiny equipment.



We don't have officers or dues, but we do have fun! We held our first irregular meet in October 1999 in San Jose and have been growing since. We use existing nationally recognized standards for module construction but are not limited to being a modular group. If you have thought of exploring this challenging gauge please call either Al Sandrini in Bakersfield at 661-322-7955, John Spelce in Martinez at 925-228-3279, or Ken Lunders in Cupertino at 408-777-9572. Join us online at YahooGroups by signing up for the LeftCoastHOn30 mail list. If you are looking for more HOn30 information, you can find it by visiting <http://www.HOn30.com>.

# Registration Form



# COAST DIVISION REPORT

By Rod Smith, Chief Clerk

On June 2, 115 members and friends met in Fremont at the California School for the Deaf. It was an ideal day for the meet, and more of you should have come! You missed a fine meet.

We had two great clinics presented. First, **Steve Hayes** from the Sierra Division presented a look at the Oakland depot of the Western Pacific. He had previously presented the clinic at Winterail in Stockton in order to work out the bugs, and it was perfect this day. Some of the good fortune Steve had in collecting information about this wonderful structure is simply amazing. Cooperation from librarians in reproducing old photos and copying rare texts was received above and beyond reasonable expectations. Some of those folks really do want to disseminate their information.

Then, **Steve Wesolowski** spoke on HOn30 modeling. His clinic presented a brief history of modular modeling, and discussed available materials, weight considerations, and the progress in technologies benefiting modular layouts. He also noted the importance of the internet, which makes possible the interchange of information among a group of modelers who have never met. Then, they can get together and set up their modules and successfully run trains. Not by accident, we had a modular layout operating at the meet. The Elsie (Left Coast) HOn30 group was present and had some wonderful and whimsical modules on display.

We also enjoyed another great roundtable discussion, moderated by **Dave Connery**. Discussion this meet centered on the new turnout kits being marketed by Central Valley, DCC friendly turnouts, DCC versatility and radio control, block detection, and Ohms Law.

During the business meeting, Director **Jack Wall** announced the Coast member of the year

award went to **Jerry Littlefield** and **Don Shortt**. Congratulations to two of our hard working auction committee members, who also perform other services for the Division. Clinics Chair **John Marshall** thanked the presenters and introduced the first time attendees. **Anne Ogborn** invited us to the Sierra Division meet in Sutter Creek, which I personally attended and very much enjoyed. It was so much fun I plan to be at their meet in Carson City in September! The PCR President, **Ray deBlieck** spoke on the long range plan for the National, which will be reviewed at the National Convention in Fort Lauderdale. Our Contest Chair, **Ken Lunders** mentioned the Tug of War contest is available if someone will take on the opportunity to run it. Volunteers can contact Ken.

Wearing his Tri Valley Zephyr Registrar hat, **Jack Wall** noted some of the benefits of registering early for next years PCR convention in Pleasanton. Look elsewhere in this issue for a registration form, with the dates and information. **Jim Edgington**, representing the Golden State Museum, encouraged visiting their fine museum in Richmond. Memberships are also available. He also mentioned the "Art Train" will be visiting Richmond in September. Watch for an announcement in your local newspaper.

As usual, we had a fine snack bar run by the Rainbow Girls. Don't know how they manage to have such a wide choice of vittles for us. The raffle was won by **Pat La Torres** and **Don Shortt**, both auction committee members! The auction was smaller than many meets, so you may want to consider bringing your surplus stuff to the next meet in Santa Clara on September 8. Once again we will meet at the Buchser Middle School, 1111 Bellomy St. Put it on your calendar NOW!

*(Continued on page 22)*

(Continued from page 7)

#### *Website*

before you go. I will offer additional ideas on how to use Bookmarks without creating your own website at the end of this article.

Another section of the group is called “files.” Attachments cannot be sent directly to the list to protect against viruses and the like, but files of any type can be uploaded to this section. So far there are copies of the Branch Line, registration forms, and copies of other PCR business here plus files discussed in message texts.

There is also a “Photos” section. We could fill this up with layout or construction photos or any kind of picture. However Yahoo limits the whole site to 10 Meg which constrains us a bit. See my alternative idea for pictures down below.

To become a part of the group, bring up this website in your browser: <http://groups.yahoo.com>. If you not yet a member of a Yahoo group, you will need to register by selecting a user-name and a password, and you will need to provide your e-mail address. Then, use the search engine to search for the group’s name: PCR-NMRA. When you’ve found the group, there will be another simple process to join the group, and you’re in!

#### Displaying Photos of Your Layout Without a Website

One way to put your layout on the web without clogging Yahoo is to use one of the number of sites on the web that allow you to upload photographs for your use and for the purpose of sharing them with others. I am most familiar with [www.photo.epson.com](http://www.photo.epson.com).

You don’t have to build a website; you just upload photos to the site, and then place a bookmark with instructions in the Yahoo group Bookmarks section. For an example on how to do this, please check out my “United Pacific Railroad” bookmark on the PCR-NMRA site. A feature of the Epson site (and probably others) is that there is no limit to the number of photos you

can post.

Because some of this can be intimidating, I would like to volunteer to aid anyone who needs help to get pictures of their layout onto the web in this way. I have a digital camera, and would be happy to take the pictures if you need that; or if you need help setting up the albums, I can help you with that as well. I think I should initially limit this offer to anyone within an hour or so of Berkeley, but I can be bribed to drive farther! If you would like either kind of assist, please e-mail me at [sjlowens@aahawk.com](mailto:sjlowens@aahawk.com).

#### List Owner

Bill Kaufman is the official owner of the PCR-NMRA group list. For items of technical interest regarding the site, please contact Bill at [captnbilly@aol.com](mailto:captnbilly@aol.com).

#### Two Disclaimers

Yahoo groups is an advertisement supported site. You will be asked to look at ads when you read messages. On the other hand, in the last 3 years, Yahoo has not sent me any spam as a result of my use of Yahoo groups. I trust that policy will continue.

The PCR-NMRA Yahoo group is not officially affiliated with the NMRA. The NMRA will not be held liable for any material presented on the Yahoo group site.

(Continued from page 21)

#### *Coast Division Meet*

Clinics for the September 8<sup>th</sup> meet are as follows:

- 10 AM “Some of my Railroad Collectibles and their Story” by Bill Burkett
- 10 AM “The Basics of Detailing” by Dave Connery & Brad Lloyd
- 10 AM “DCC Made Easy (with modular HO layout) by Don Fiehmann
- 11 AM “Model Railroading Roundtable” with Dave Connery as Moderator



## **Redwood Empire Division Report**

By Steve Skold

Our summer picnic was held on August 4<sup>th</sup> at the Sonoma Depot Park Museum. 20-25 people enjoyed a wonderful warm afternoon picnic with swarms of yellow jackets. There were no reports of stinging. After the picnic, Bob Parmalee of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society gave a talk on the railroads of Sonoma County, followed by a question and answer session. After that, we wandered around the museum and were shown many pictures of the Sonoma area that pertained to railroading. They also brought out blueprints showing the railroad right of way. Among those attending were Ron Plies RED Director, Pat Boyle RED Chief Clerk and Harold Mentzer Chairman of the 2002 PCR Convention.

Our next meet in Santa Rosa at Ursuline High School on November 3<sup>rd</sup> will feature a movie on fishing a locomotive out of the Napa River in 1954. Also on the program will be a video on soldering and possibly a clinic on weathering. The contest will be Structures. The Special Door Prize will be a one year subscription to Railroad Model Craftsman. Following the meeting, Bill and Kitty Wells will open their huge O Scale Colorado Joint Line from Denver to Pueblo, Colorado. You walk into the layout area and are facing Castle Rock and to your left is Palmer Lake with snow. It is controlled by the Lenz DCC system and is well worth seeing. The era is end of steam and beginning diesel with locomotives from a 2-8-0 to a 2-8-8-2. Directions will be provided at the meet and in the next Call Board.

At the last PCR Convention, Shirley Mentzer was presented with the RED Member of the Year Award. She has quietly provided sandwiches, coffee and cookies/brownies for years at RED meets and finally has received the recognition she deserves. Congratulations Shirley!

## **PROTOTYPE INSPIRATION**

Looking for railroad ideas. Why not check out the Northwestern Pacific RR? From its humble beginnings in the 1860s, right up to the present where it exists as two streaks of rust with politicians and alphabet entities hovering over it like a flock of buzzards, the NWP has packed a lot of railroading into its like between the San Francisco Bay and the Humboldt Bay region.

Motive power ran from shiny 4-4-0s in the early days, lash ups of geeps and SD-35s. It has seen high speed electrics and logging shays. Standard gauge and narrow gauge once existed together. The line runs through sleepy rural country sides, giant redwood groves, and rugged mountain canyons.

It had its own ferry fleet on San Francisco Bay, and served numerous agricultural, mining, quarrying, logging and lumbering industries, as well as a shipyard during WWII. This was a railroad with a lot of character.

For more on the NWP, look up "THE NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD" by Stindt & Dunscomb, or "REDWOOD RAILWAYS" by Kneiss. You could also go online for the Northwestern Pacific RR Historical Society's web-site at [www.nwprrhs.org](http://www.nwprrhs.org). While there, check out the Library. There is a vast amount of information, photographs, maps, and drawings available on the history and operations of the NWP.

The NWPRHS also publishes the NORTHWESTERNER twice a year, full of photos and articles on the railroad's early and latter-day steam operations, Marin's electric commuter service, and the diesel era.

For all kinds of railroading in a single package, the NWP might be the line for you.

# ANYPLACE BUT HERE

By Anne Ogborn

I was going to model Pittsburgh in 1944. I got as far as a bit of track work when a move intervened.

The next time I felt stable enough to have a permanent layout again, I'd caught the narrow gauge bug, so I had a cane railway, somewhere on a mythical tropical island, with a little 30" gauge line winding up towards the volcano. Out in the jungle I'd planned to have a hidden speaker play the 'George Of The Jungle' theme song, while a hidden drive pulled a stick through the jungle to simulate George's vine-to-vine passage. At the 'watch out for that tree' part a hidden 'thumper' would knock a tall tree.

I got that one to about the same place before the inevitable move. I did have lots of fun experimenting with the working volcano, but something told me I'd better stick to modules or change to a profession that required less moving around. Fortunately about this time I found out about the HOn30 modular club. After a couple of different ideas for modules, I hit on one that I thought would be really interesting.

There's an island off Antarctica called South Georgia. They used to bring whales in there to be butchered. They used small 'Decauville' style industrial tippers to haul materials, especially coal, around the whaling stations. Of course since there are only 4 people living there now, and they can only be reached by satellite phone, and a site visit would have cost me around \$20,000 plus three months of camping in subzero temperatures and 60MPH winds (and that's the nice part of the year), and well..

It took a while to do proper research.

It didn't help that the one survey of the stations that had been done was in Norwegian. My Norwegian's a lot better now than it was at the start of this project. And I've got a nice shelf of books on such topics as how to operate a hval klaw, advice for medical treatment in the Southern Ocean, and the bioacoustics of whales.

And in case you need to make models of giant mammal innerds, get ahold of me. I figured out some pretty tricky ways of making whale stomachs.

So that took up, all told, a year. Halfway through, I got tired of not having any trains to play with. So I decided I'd do a 'quick' module while I worked on the whaley bits.

Almost everybody modeling in HOn30 is actually modeling 2' gauge prototypes. I thought I'd try to model a real, honest to

goodness 30" prototype. Casting about, I discovered that the Portland Zoo had a 30" railroad. Wow! The Portland Zoo? Research (easier – they have a web site) revealed that the zoo was too spread out to be a good subject for a module, but by that time I was hooked. Of course building a zoo didn't turn out to be all that easy either, and ended up not quite being finished now, more than a year later.

And of course now something else has intervened. For years I'd rented one of those 'self store' lockers for all my excess stuff. Last spring I got tired of the expense and bought an intermodal container. Having grossly overestimated how much stuff I have, I discovered I'd suddenly acquired a 'land grant'. I could store my stuff under the bench work and in only part of the

Since I've lived part of my life in Northern India, and since I was already modeling HOn30, I hit on modeling the Darjeeling Himalaya Railway, a 2' gauge line that runs up into the Himalaya Mountains through Sikkim province.

(Continued on page 25)

(Continued from page 13)

### *Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern*

somewhere in the SCN archives. Brass cars too. I have one brass caboose on the SCN, and one brass freight car. The caboose has been one the ground twice, the reefer made it to the floor less than two months after I bought it!

And then there are those individual cars that really seem to have much more fun than any others. The reverse is true of course. I'm sure most of you, like me, have any number of cars that work for you, making numerous trips over the road, year after year, with no complaint. Faithful servants, no doubt. Then there those few that always seem to have problems. I know the ones on the SCN. I keep track. I have any number of Athearn 57 foot mechanical reefers that have toiled for 15 years with little or no problem. I have one that has been in the shop 6 or 7 times. Right now it is awaiting a new center sill.

The Cementipede has always been fertile ground for problems, and regular crew members have been known to stand back and watch a crew new to the job with relish. Usually most of the cars stay on the track most of the time. But there is that one car ... In addition to its Espee cement hoppers, the Cementipede regularly hauls two and three bay Santa Fe hoppers of coal to the Santa Cruz Portland Cement plant. There are 8 Athearn two bay hoppers in the fleet. 7 of them have served the SCN without trouble for almost 25 years. One of them had been in the repair shop with major crash damage 4 times. It is still there since its latest headlong dive over a year ago. It will need new end posts on the B end and part of the end sill rebuilt, a new coupler pocket and repairs to the center sill. I had pretty much decided just to chuck it.

But I get to thinking. Why this car all the time? Why not one of the others? I don't know. It's not a mechanical problem. What evil gremlin inhabits this otherwise undistinguishable piece of rolling stock? And why? Unsure.

Well, I probably will repair it again. As I reread this, I feel surer that I will. I suspect I'm probably just tempting fate. But what the heck, at least it's not a locomotive!

(Continued from page 24)

### *Any Place But Here*

container, and containers are, by their nature, quite movable.

Since I've lived part of my life in Northern India, and since I was already modeling HOn30, I hit on modeling the Darjeeling Himalaya Railway, a 2' gauge line that runs up into the Himalaya Mountains through Sikkim province. The line, still operating with the original 1880's era 0-4-0's, has three loops (one a double), two switchbacks, and is street running part way. So the DHR was already calling me when Backwoods Miniatures announced the Class B, the backbone engine of the line. Since Backwoods already offered the Pacifics and single Mallet, the entire roster was covered.

Of course the Backwoods Miniatures engines WERE in OO... Well, a slight bit out of scale was something I could live with. On the other hand, the only other commercial parts I'd be able to use would be a few detail castings. And since India was once a British colony, many things in India resemble the same things in the UK. And to boot, in OO 9mm N gauge track (which us HOn30 people use) is 26". So the decision was obvious – build it in OO9.

It does present some challenges. There are only two sari clad women figures available. There's one Sikh character, and a few Muslims. There's no rolling stock available. Most vehicles in India are domestically produced with unique body styles. Indian architecture is pretty distinct. Many things in India, like bullock carts, auto rickshaws, hutments, etc. just aren't available. A panwalla? Sorry, my dealer can't get it from Walthers.

The DHR layout is a big project. I expect it to take up my modeling time for many years. But I imagine eventually I'll turn my interests in other directions. Where will I go?

Anyplace but here.

(Continued from page 2)

#### Made in the PCR

finally filled the fuel tank with butane from a Ronsen lighter can.

The fire is lit through the boiler and, after striking a match, I turned on some gas. It fired right up and when I lowered the gas the flame “popped” back into the fire box and I could see a nice ring of blue flame at the back of the boiler. With the boiler front closed it took about 5 minutes for the pressure to build.

By the time the pressure gauge read 40 pounds the locomotive was sputtering lots of water. After moving the Johnson Bar back and fourth several times to clear out the condensed water, I put it in forward and turned up the throttle. The engine soon moved forward and my heart was pounding as it puffed itself around my rather hilly and curved garden railway. What a hoot, I have discovered a great new way to spend my kids inheritance!

I am ecstatic with my new “steamer”. Included with the locomotive was a strangely bent copper tube with fittings on both ends but not mentioned in the instructions. I learned at the National Summer Small Scale Steam-up in Pleasanton it was a blow down and later installed it on my locomotive. I also installed a Goodall valve in the water filler orifice so I can now inject water into the boiler while the locomotive is under pressure.

Accucraft is located at 31112 San Clemente Street, Hayward, CA 94544 and can be reached at (510) 324-3399 and you can learn more about their products at [www.accucraft.com](http://www.accucraft.com). The company has also produced a line of other brass locomotives (K-27, K-28, C-16, Plymouth Diesel and RGS Geese) all electric powered and in 1:20.3 scale. They also catalog a brass SP Daylight and cars in 1:32, some old time 4-4-0 and 2-6-0's in 1:24, several brass cars and recently a high quality plastic and metal Colorado narrow gauge gondola in 1:20.3. Based on their recent affordable live steam locomotive offerings,

I believe Accucraft will drive a surge in this aspect of the hobby and cause you to hear a lot more about small scale live steam in the coming years. (Isn't it ironic that what we in NMRA call **large scale** is called **small scale** in the live steam fraternity!)

#### Sierra Valley Enterprises ready-to-run Carter Brothers 28' Flat Car

Gary Watkins, of Sierra Valley Enterprises (SVE) produces a series of custom built large-scale craftsman cars. Each car is built to order. This Carter Bros. flat appears to faithfully replicate the prototype – used on a number of narrow gauge lines here in the west. The detailing and weathering are exquisite. Each board is individually pre-stained and all metal detail parts



are chemically blackened. Joints are completely devoid of any glue marks and the final paint on the side sills and rust on the metal is applied with a deft skill. Each car is numbered and signed like any fine piece of art. This car has all expected under body detail and the wheel sets are steel SVE wheels.



My car tracks well, runs beautifully and looks like a million dollars.

Gary is a wonderful person to do business with – I look forward to ordering from him just to

(Continued on page 28)

(Continued from page 2)

### *Large Scale Sidebar*

middle class arose and desired toy trains that were more affordable and fit in more modest spaces, a smaller “Gauge zero” was developed at 32mm. When this scale came to England and North America it became O (the letter and not the number) and was modeled in the simple  $\frac{1}{4}$ ” equals a foot scale. Pressure for less expensive and smaller trains led to the developments of S, HO (half O), OO, TT, N and Z scales. With the growth in these smaller scales, the original larger scales nearly died out (except for a staunch group of Gauge #1 modelers in England – the G1MRA).

**LGB** -- Then in 1968 a Nuremberg, Germany toy manufacturer, Lehmann Brothers brought out a line of European inspired trains to operate on Gauge #1 (45 mm) track. Named Lehmann Gross Bahn (LGB), the new line provided ready to run mechanisms, sectional track and extremely reliable operation. This started a revolution that translated in this country into the Garden Railway phenomenon of the 1980's and 1990's.

**Many Scales** -- The original German manufactured equipment was designed around European narrow gauge prototypes, which were generally constructed to meter gauge (39.37”). This scales out to 1:22.5 and was given the generic letter designation of “G”. It quickly became the gauge of choice for many scratch-builders in this country, who were previously hand laying track to the more natural scale of 1:24 or  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” equals a foot. The growing ready to run market was met in North America by producing prototype “standard gauge” equipment for this market to operate on the gauge #1 (45 mm) track. They chose a rather odd 1:29 scale for the equipment, which was actually large for the gauge (some say this was done so they could use the readily available HO plans, scaling the equipment up by a factor of 3 – divide

87 by 3 and you get 29!). There were some existing accessories in the toy market modeled to 1:25 and used by “large scale modelers”, but if you want to be accurate for standard gauge on Gauge #1 track you model in 1:32. Equipment is now being produced in this scale. Those who wanted to model North American 3' narrow gauge began modeling in a scale of 1:20.3 (Fn3) and recently there has been a lot of interest in modeling 2' narrow gauge in 1:13.7 (7/8” scale). Again, all of these **scales** are modeled on the same **gauge** track! If you are interested in all the many scales that are currently listed in the NMRA see Standards S-1 available on the NMRA web site ([www.nmra.org/standards/s-1.html](http://www.nmra.org/standards/s-1.html)). Information specific only to “large scale” is available on Rick Blanchard’s web site ([www.urbaneagle.com/data/RRIlgscale.html](http://www.urbaneagle.com/data/RRIlgscale.html)).

The following chart is an attempt on my part to show the many “Gauge #1” modeling scales:

| Scale Ratio | Scale Name | Representation              |
|-------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 1:32        | #1         | Standard Gauge              |
| 1:29        | A          | Standard Gauge (over sized) |
| 1:24        | H          | Narrow Gauge (under sized)  |
| 1:22.5      | Gnm        | European Meter Gauge        |
| 1:20.3      | Fn3        | 3' Narrow Gauge             |
| 1:16        | N          | 30" Narrow Gauge            |
| 1:13.7      | M          | 2' Narrow Gauge             |

(Continued from page 17)

### *Achievement Program*

have already completed the modeling portion of the requirement!

I am happy to announce that Ken Lunders of the Coast Division has been awarded a Golden Spike Award.

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 31.

(Continued from page 26)

*Made in the PCR*

have a chance to chat for a minute or two. In addition to this flat car, Gary produces a 24' Carter boxcar in several South Pacific Coast and Nevada County Narrow Gauge versions, Carter gondolas and Barnhart loader log buggies. He has 9 unique shorty (9') cars in the Munger Mining Co. series including a wood ore car, flat car, crane car, water car, tool car, oil drum car, sand & gravel car, box car and rail car. These industrial cars also work well in 1:13. He also offers a conversion of the Bachmann 1:22.5 porter 0-4-0T to a 1:20.3 0-4-0T side tank locomotive.

In addition, SVE produces a line of steel wheel sets. Each wheel is beautifully turned and they come in five sizes from 17" to 26" in 1:20.3. They can also be used in 1:22.5 and 1:24 representing slightly larger prototypes and Gary provides a chart with each package showing these relationships. The wheels are all insulated with scale flanges for a wonderfully accurate look and great tracking. They come in unplated steel and nickel or black oxide plated. The unplated wheels are \$3.25 per axle. Do I like these wheels? Well, I have replaced every wheel on every piece of my rolling stock with SVE wheel sets. They have become the industry standard among large scale narrow gauge modelers and are superb!

The contact information is Sierra Valley Enterprises, 2755 Saratoga Avenue, Merced, CA 95340 (209) 722-8278.

**Addenda:** In the Oct-Nov-Dec 1999 issue of the Branch Line, Jim Long reviewed Homabed. This product line has been sold to another PCR member, Richard Jayne. Richard first moved the company to Stockton but has recently relocated again, this time to the Redding area. The new contact information for the excellent product is California Roadbed Company, Inc., 3568 Balls Ferry Road, Cottonwood CA 96022 (voice) 530-347-9786 and (fax) 530-347-9796.

## OPERATIONS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

So what does an Ops junkie do for the summer? Your regular operators are on vacation, and everyone who has a layout seems to be rebuilding.

Well, it's not quite that bad but there haven't been many organized operating events in the Bay Area this summer. A number of operating layouts have been operating, and that's an opportunity for owners to tap their extra boards and for new operators to operate on unfamiliar layouts. Keep your network up for the summer!

In fact a number of owners are doing major upgrades to their layouts this summer. I know of two operating layouts that are adding second decks, several other owners including me are building towards initial operations. If you know someone who is building, offer to help out. Not only will you enjoy yourself and learn some new skills, but you'll probably earn yourself a slot on that operating crew!



Looking forward to next year, we are planning a joint Op Sig/LD Sig meet for the January-February time frame including clinics, birds-of-a-feather sessions, tours and op sessions (some focused on first time operators – so if you're interested in finding out what all the fuss is about, here's your chance). We'll have a strong Ops/LD track at the PCR convention in Pleasanton, so be sure to register. Also the NMRA convention will be in Toronto in 2003 and a major Layout and Operations Sig effort is planned.

That's all for now!

Seth Neumann

(Continued from page 6)

### Prototype Research

their own websites. Do not underestimate the benefit of picking a prototype with a vibrant and active historical society. Even some fairly obscure railroads have an active following of fans.

The criteria you established and the visualization you did in step two needs to be linked to the research material you've uncovered. Is there a match?

The last part of step three is very personal. Think about the prototype you're probably going to select. Do you think its personality will match yours? In the practical sense, will you be able to find or create the necessary equipment? Will it keep your interest for 10 or 20 years? Will there be an emotional link to your life?

By this stage of the game, I had about three months of part time effort invested. It was decision time. My decision was in favor of the Kingston Branch of the New York, Ontario & Western. It operated from Summitville to Kingston, NY; a total distance of 35.1 miles. The clincher that ruled in its favor was that my parents lived their last years in Kingston, some years after the O&W was abandoned.

### Step Four: Become knowledgeable about the prototype.

This is an exciting part of the process and probably the step that will take up the most time. If your prototype has a historical society, this is the time to become a member and start obtaining all of the material you'll need to develop a faithful rendition. See what has been written about it. A great internet resource is [www.trains.com](http://www.trains.com). Its database can be searched for articles on a specific prototype. I found references going back to the early 1940s on the O&W.

While you're at it, research the towns the prototype passed through. Again, the internet is a great and inexpensive way to gather these acorns of information. The Kingston Branch passed through a dozen or so small towns. I've found

information about all of them. A great resource for such material is [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com). For those not familiar, eBay is an internet auction site. You can search by town name. I've gathered and will keep on looking for black and white and hand colored postcards, photographs, information about products produced in those towns, paper items such as billheads from local businesses and even books written about specific towns. Things like postcards are a good visual reference to what a place looked like at a specific point in time. Ones that were hand-colored before the age of color film will give you some indication of paint colors.

Finally, there is the aspect that I looked forward to; field research. I've recently returned from an east coast business trip, during which I was able to spend a highly useful day and a half photographing much of what remains of the Kingston Branch. My research brought me into contact with several local residents who were fascinated that someone from California knew something about the history of their region and the railroad which once served it. A positive byproduct is that we become roving ambassadors of the hobby through the research process.

By the way, the accompanying photos are very close to the mental images I had of the prototype's structures and scenery. I can be reached for questions at [kingstonbranch@earthlink.net](mailto:kingstonbranch@earthlink.net).



Deyo Company

## Branch Line - 30

(Continued from page 12)

### CAD Tools

buildings!

Bench work: A library of all the popular dimensional lumber stock (with adjustable dimensions) allows the user to “build” a bench work design under their completed track plan. For those using L girder, there are three different lumber stock combinations to choose from. This feature makes it possible to precisely calculate a bill of materials.

Auto Ballast & Auto Roadbed: There are four different combinations of roadbed and ballast configurations to choose from.

Verification: This is a very powerful feature that determines if the design can be built and whether trains will operate smoothly and successfully. It will point out radii which are below a minimum dimension for the particular scale, grades that are too steep, track that's too close to an adjoining track or insufficient vertical clearance between intersecting tracks.

In all, I think that developing a layout design is much easier when the average modeler uses a computer and layout design software. Although there will be an investment of time in learning the software, the payoff is a valuable new skill, a lot of satisfaction and most importantly, a new layout that is designed correctly.

Just for the record, I have no connection with El Dorado and they knew nothing about the development of this review.

You many want to review some of the information from the Resource Directory. I can be reached for further comment at:  
[kingstonbranch@earthlink.net](mailto:kingstonbranch@earthlink.net).

## Resource Directory

### Layout Design Software:

CadRail – Sandia Software  
<http://www.cadraill.com>

9428 Tasco N.E.  
Albuquerque, NM 87111  
505-821-0014

3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt – El Dorado Software

<http://www.TrackPlanning.com>

PMB 196

2222 Francisco Drive, Suite 510

El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

3D Railroad Concept & Design – Abracadata, Ltd.

<http://abracadata.com>

P.O. Box 2440

Eugene, OR 97402

800-451-4871

### File Compression/Decompressiosoftware:

WinZip – <http://winzip.com>

### Acrobat Reader for opening .pdf files:

<http://www.adobe.com>



## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA MODEL RAILROAD SHOW

International Railfair Presents:  
The West's Premier Model Railroad Event!



### Indoor & Outdoor Operating Layouts!

Vendors / Snack Bars / TrainMart Consignment Store

American and Multinational Model Railroads

Live Steam Train Rides!

Kids can operate a model train and become a Junior Engineer!

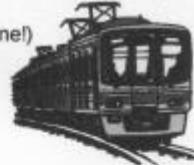
November 9-10, 2002 (Rain or Shine!)

Sat. 10-5 Sun. 10-4

Admission by donation:

Adults: \$6, Kids under 12 FREE!

Scouts in Uniform: \$3 / Parking: \$1



### MODEL RAILROADING IS GREAT FAMILY FUN!

\$10 Sunday Family Special



Placer County Fairgrounds  
Roseville, California

Visit Our New Website During 2002 For More Information  
[www.internationalrailfair.com](http://www.internationalrailfair.com)

Locomotive Images By Stan Lytle and [www.Paintshop.railfan.net](http://www.Paintshop.railfan.net)

# Club Info

## NITTY GRITTY NARROW GAUGERS

The Nitty Gritty Narrow Gaugers is a round robin group of On3 modelers that meets bi-weekly in members' homes in or near the Santa Clara Valley. Individual members construct modules following basic guidelines. We display our modular railroad twice a year. There are no officers, no dues and no bylaws. Contact Fred Verrier, 889 Brookgrove Ln., Cupertino, CA 95014(408) 253-9669

## SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

The San Leandro Historical Railway Society models the Southern Pacific 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, now located at 1302 Orchard Ave. in San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions are Sat. 9:00 am - 1:30 pm and Tues. 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm, business meetings on the first Friday at 7:30 pm. Contact: Pat LaTorres at (510) 276-3121 or email at [duhnert@pacbell.net](mailto:duhnert@pacbell.net)

## SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The South Bay Historical Railroad Society invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Avenue, Santa Clara, CA. on Tuesdays, 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm or Saturdays, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Phone (408) 243-3969 for more information about our group.

## 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 at 661-322-7955, John Spelce in Martinez at 925-228-3279, or Ken Lunders in Cupertino at 408-777-9572.

## NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society meets at The Napa Valley Expo (fairgrounds) at 575 Third St. in Napa every Friday from 7:30 pm to midnight. Visitors are always welcome but must

be at least 14 years old to join. Our railroad runs between Napa and Ukiah with offline connections to Stockton and Portland. We have large classification yards at each end of our system, which includes about 700 feet of mainline. Scenery is about 80% complete. The layout is never really finished, because we are always tearing part of it down and rebuilding it! As there are 80+ members with varied interests in our group, the time frame is compromised at about 1940 to present. The rolling stock on the railroad is member owned with emphasis on reliability and realism. Our schedule normally calls for a formal run session the second Friday of every month. Info: John Rodgers (707)226-2985 [napajohn@napanet.net](mailto:napajohn@napanet.net) <http://www.nvmrc.org>

## CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The California Central Model Railroad Club is located in the old Agnew depot (Santa Clara) of the Southern Pacific (4185 Bassett Street) directly across from the Lafayette Street main gate of Agnew State Hospital. The theme of the 15' by 50'HO club is western railroading running loosely from the Bay Area to Southern Oregon. We meet on Friday nights from around 7:30 until 11 pm. Official club operating sessions are held on the first and last Fridays of each month. Call (408) 988-4449 on operating nights, or contact Wayne Cohen at (408) 779-0707.

## EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

The Eel River Valley is a new club, with a NWP layout series of modules under construction. The club meets each Friday evening at 7:30 pm at the Humboldt County Fair Grounds Commercial Building NW corner, Ferndale, CA 95536. Write to P.O. Box 950, Fortuna, CA 95540 or call Ron Plies at 707-725-9063 for more information.

## VALLEJO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Vallejo Model Railroad Club, founded in 1976, takes its theme from the environs of the greater Vallejo and Solano County region, with diversions into mountains, logging, and mining. The Club is home to the two thousand (2000) square foot HO-scale layout Vallejo and Solano Western Railroad and

---

## Branch Line - 32

---

(Continued from page 31)

a smaller N-scale layout. The Club's currently meets every Wednesday and Friday evening (with exceptions for Holidays). Doors open by 7:00 PM. It is located in the Civic Building, Solano County Fairgrounds, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, off Interstate 80 at Highway 37, in Vallejo, California. Enter Sage Street, Gate #1; if stopped by the Gate Guard, state that you are 'visiting the Vallejo Model Railroad Club'. The Club welcomes all model railroad hobbyists and enjoys visits and tours, with prior arrangements. Contacts may be to (PO Box 4057, Vallejo, California, 94590-0405). The Club's telephone, which has an answering machine, is (707-643-1809). E-mails may be to either loggingRR@aol.com or lambertrp@aol.com.

### BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Bay Area Ntrak Model Railroad Club invites N scale model railroaders to visit us at the Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad depot, 902 Loring Avenue in Crockett on Wednesdays and Saturdays between 10 A.M. and 3 P.M. For additional information please contact: Bob Lewis, 925-283-6838; or via e-mail at boblewis@ix.netcom. com.

### SILICON VALLEY LINES

The Silicon Valley Lines is located at 148 E. Virginia St. San Jose, CA. It meets every Friday evening from 7:30 pm until 11:30 pm. Business meetings are held on the first Friday of each month and operating sessions are held on the last Friday of the month. The Silicon Valley Lines is an HO layout utilizing DCC for realistic operations, computer-generated train orders and radio- based dispatching. For additional information, contact Mark Gurries at 408-377-0544. Visit our web site at [www.siliconvalleylines.com](http://www.siliconvalleylines.com)

### WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society will have open houses on September 14 and 15 from 11 am to 6 pm each day. In addition, the railroad is open on the last Friday night of every month from 8 pm to 10 pm for operations. The 2002 Annual show will be the two weekends before and after Thanksgiving; November 22 from 8-10 pm, November 23 & 24 from 11 am-6 pm, November 29 from 2-10 pm and November 30/December 1 from 11 am-6 pm. Fares are \$1 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$2 for adults. Membership in the Society is always open to all modelers interested in HO scale. The Society is located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA 94597. (925) 937-1888 (recorder). Visit our website

at [www.wcmrs.org](http://www.wcmrs.org)"

### SACRAMENTO MODEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Avenue, Sacramento, CA and can be reached at 916-927-3618 or email to [dmegeath@aol.com](mailto:dmegeath@aol.com); web site <http://members.aol.com/dmegeath/index.html>. Modeled as the Sierra Central Railroad, both HO and HOn3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Wednesday and Friday nights, 7:30 pm.

### COASTAL VALLEY LINES

Coastal Valley Lines (CVL) is an informal association of novice to advanced model railroaders who live in Sonoma County that meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. We operate our HO scale modular railroad at local public shows. Prospective members can obtain more information from Brad Squires at (707) 568-4298 or Don Hanesworth at (707) 823-9615. Our web site is: <http://home.pacbell.net/jrolston/>

### HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Humboldt Bay & Eureka Model Railroad Club meets at their clubhouse and layout; located at 10 West 7th Street, Suite #C in Eureka, on Saturday nights from 7:00 pm on. Visitors are always welcome. Business meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at 7:30 pm. Interested parties should contact: David Berriman P.O. Box 915, Arcata, CA 95518 (707) 825-7689

### MOTHER LODE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Mother Lode Model Railroad Club meets every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the old historic primary school building located in Sutter Creek. Additional meetings normally are also held every Saturday at 9:00 am. We are a modular HO club and are fully DCC operational. For further information call Joe Stafford at 209 245-5016.

### 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. For the latest club information, check out our web site at <http://>

saccentral.railfan.net/, or call Dick Witzens at (916) 966-4592.

### TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Tri-Cities Club meets in the restored Niles Depot at 36997 Mission Blvd., Fremont. The club has both N and HO scale layouts. Work nights are Friday, the business meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month and operating session are on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. For more information contact Stanley Keiser at (510) 791-1504.



Above: eastbound Sierra # 24 crosses Sullivan's creek  
Below: Fassler Lumber #735 delivers empties to Sonora  
On Dave Biondi's layout.



### LAST CALL FOR CONVENTION MERCHANDISE

Anyone who purchased a McCloud River box car or Shasta Daylight 2002 Convention patch but did not receive it because the company store was out of stock should contact Gene Mayer ASAP. About 6-8 prepaid cars remain unclaimed..

A few unsold cars are available for \$15 plus \$4 shipping. Convention patches are available for \$4 postpaid. Please contact Gene Mayer at 4349 Virgusell Circle, Carmichael, CA 95608, telephone (916) 485-0934 or email at [genefwrr@aol.com](mailto:genefwrr@aol.com).

### GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM/EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

The Museum is operating under new and substantially expanded hours and days of operation this year: Operating days for the public, April and through December, are Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 12 to 5 PM. We will also be open on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day holidays. As usual we will dress up the Museum for Christmas, particularly the weekends before and after Christmas Day.

Club meetings and behind the scenes tours, to which you are welcome, are Friday evenings from 7:30 to 10 PM, and Wednesday afternoons from 12 to 4 PM when work on the layouts typically is done.

Other nearby attractions include the Park for picnics and hiking (Bay Trail); the RED OAK VICTORY and the ATSF Ferry Pier restoration just down the road; and, the Rosie the Riveter Memorial and National Park.

We welcome new members in all our scales, O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction enthusiasts. Those interested in membership should definitely come on Friday evenings.

The layouts are progressing towards completion; N Scale is nearly complete; O Scale has made significant progress with their track work and scenery recently; and HO's Mountain Division, Roseville to Truckee, has also made progress in scenery completion, Chubb system debugging, and completion of the track work. If you haven't been there in a while you will certainly notice the difference.

Plans continue to locate a former UP baggage car on the rails alongside the Museum. The car has been donated by Levin Terminals of Richmond and will be restored to its former livery and function possibly as a lecture/clinic site and also provide needed storage for Museum artifacts. Volunteers are also needed to assist with this restoration project.

The Museum is located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point Richmond, CA. Admission is: Adults \$3; Seniors and Children under 12 \$2, with a family maximum of \$7. For information, a map and to see photos view, [www.gsmrm.org](http://www.gsmrm.org). Telephone: (510) 234-4884; or, (510) 758-6228 (to 8 PM). For other information or to schedule special shows, email John Edginton, EBMES President, at [jedginton@edg-law.com](mailto:jedginton@edg-law.com) or use the communication section of the website.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
PACIFIC COAST REGION

09/02

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA # (if a member): \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY MEMBER NAME(S):  
\_\_\_\_\_

I want to become a member of the National Model Railroad Association and the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA. I have checked below the type of membership I desire and have enclosed the proper amount in a check payable to: PCR-NMRA. I understand that membership in the Pacific Coast Region requires membership in the NMRA.

PCR and NMRA for one year at \$51.00

PCR only (requires NMRA membership# above) at \$6.00

### The Golden Spike Award

The Golden Spike Award will be awarded to any NMRA member who does not hold MMR status. It will be administered by the Regional and Divisional Achievement Program Chairman under the direction of the National Achievement Program Chairman. AP regulations and definitions apply for scratch built and super detailed. To qualify for the award the member must complete the following checklist, obtain the signature of the Divisional AP Chairman, or another NMRA member designated by the Divisional AP Chairman. The Divisional AP Chairman will submit the signed form to the Regional AP Chairman who will issue the Golden Spike Award Certificate.

#### Qualifications for the Golden Spike Award

1. Rolling stock (Motive power and cars)

\_\_\_\_\_ Display six (6) units of rolling stock (Scratch built, craftsman, or detailed commercial kits).

2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures and Scenery)

\_\_\_\_\_ Construct a minimum eight (8) square feet of layout.

\_\_\_\_\_ Construct five (5) structures (Scratch built, craftsman or detailed commercial kits). If a module has less than five structures, additional ones separate from the scene may be used.

3. Engineering (Civil and Electrical)

\_\_\_\_\_ Three (3) types of trackage required (turnout, crossing, etc.,). All must be properly ballasted and installed on proper roadbed. Commercial trackage may be used.

\_\_\_\_\_ All installed trackage must be properly wired so that two trains can be operated simultaneously.

# Callboard

| <b>President</b>   | <b>Trustee</b>   | <b>Vice President</b>   | <b>Treasurer</b>  | <b>Secretary</b>  |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Ray Deblieck<br>1304 Santa Clara Ave<br>Alameda, CA 94501<br>(510) 521-9778<br>RaydBCS@aol.com | Ray Deblieck<br>1304 Santa Clara Ave<br>Alameda, CA 94501<br>(510) 521-9778<br>RaydBCS@aol.com | L. E. "Gene" Mayer<br>4349 Virgusell Circle<br>Carmichael, CA 95608<br>(916) 486-0934<br>GeneFWRR@aol.com | Larry Altbaum<br>40 Live Oak Lane<br>Danville, CA 94506<br>(925) 736-8160<br>emerbaum@msn.com | Richard L. Kolm<br>3535 Arcadian Way<br>Castro Valley, CA 94546<br>(510) 538-8973<br>IronHorseK@aol.com |

| <b>Board of Directors</b>  |   |  |   |                                    |
|--|---|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Director, Daylight Division</b>   | <b>Director, Coast Division</b>   | <b>Director, Sierra Division</b>   | <b>Dir., Redw'd Empire Div.</b>   | <b>Director, Hawaiian Division</b> |
| Brewster Bird<br>1122 West Princeton Ave.<br>Visalia, CA 93277<br>(559) 732-6096<br>Williambird@mybluelight. | Jack Wall<br>266 South Sea Way<br>Livermore, CA 94550<br>(925) 294-9766<br>JackWall@aol.com | Bob Mountjoy<br>4932 Hidden Meadow Way<br>Antelope, CA 94583<br>(916) 728-1205 | Ron Plies<br>P. O. Box 950<br>Fortuna, CA 95540<br>(707) 725-9063<br>Rplies@cox.net |                                    |

| <b>Publications Committee</b>   |  |   |                         |
|---|--|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Editor</b>   | <b>Circulation Manager</b>   | <b>Webmaster</b>  | <b>Business Manager</b> |
| Bill Kaufman<br>623 Las Colindas Rd<br>San Rafael CA 94903<br>(415) 491-0543<br>Whk58@pacbell.net | Norman Morris<br>727 Rideout Way<br>Marysville, CA 95901<br>(530) 742-6930<br>Nomanmorris@Cs.Com | Kevin Hurley<br>1099 Pleasant Valley Road<br>Aptos, CA 95003<br>(831) 728-1934<br>Kmhurley01@Home.Com |                         |

| <b>Membership Services Committee</b>  |                         |   |  |
|---|-------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Chairman</b>   | <b>Member Promotion</b> | <b>Computer Records</b>   |  |
| Bob Ferguson<br>530 Fig Tree Lane<br>Martinez, CA 94553<br>(925) 228-6833<br>Bobpcrcd@Aol.Com |                         | Bob Ferguson<br>530 Fig Tree Lane<br>Martinez, CA 94553<br>(925) 228-6833<br>Bobpcrcd@Aol.Com |  |

| <b>Achievement Committee</b>   |  |  |   |                          |
|--|--|--|---|--------------------------|
| <b>General Chairman</b>  |  |  | <b>Redwood Empire Division</b>  | <b>Hawaiian Division</b> |
| Jack Burgess, MMR<br>36129 Sandalwood St.<br>Newark, CA 94560<br>510-797-9557<br>Jack@Yosemitevalleyrr.<br>Com |  |  | Harold Mentzer<br>102 Berna Ave<br>Napa, CA 94559<br>(707) 226-5153<br>Gramashrly@Aol.Com |                          |

| <b>Contest Committee</b>   |   |  |                                |                          |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>General Chairman</b>  | <b>Model Contest</b>  | <b>Photo Contest</b>   |                                |                          |
| Ken Lunders<br>22530 Kinst Ct<br>Cupertino, CA 95014<br>(408) 777-9572<br>Ken@Intercad-Inc.Com | Ken Lunders<br>22530 Kinst Ct.<br>Cupertino, CA 95014<br>(408) 777-9572<br>Ken@Intercad-Inc.Com | Jim Providenza<br>16 Drake Cove.<br>San Rafael, CA 94903<br>(415)472-6715<br>Rrjim@Aol.Com |                                |                          |
| <b>Daylight Division</b>   | <b>Coast Division</b>   | <b>Sierra Division</b>   | <b>Redwood Empire Division</b> | <b>Hawaiian Division</b> |
| Bill Scott<br>341 Evergreen<br>Clovis, CA 93612<br>(559) 298-7715<br>Vallyflyer@Aol.Com        | James Rustermier<br>4775 Raway Dr.<br>San Jose CA 95111<br>408-972-1689<br>Rusty1945@Juno.Com   | Marysville, CA 95901<br>(530) 742-6930<br>Nomanmorris@Cs.Com                               |                                |                          |

| <b>Convention Committee</b>  |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Department Chair</b>  | <b>2003 - Tri-Valley</b>  | <b>2004 - Napa</b>  |  |  |
| Jim Long<br>47464 Cholla Street<br>Fremont, CA 94539<br>(510) 651-3467<br>Jimclong@Aol.Com | Dennis Stokley<br>106 Minerva Way<br>San Ramon CA 94583<br>925-828-1990<br>stokely4@Aol.Com | Harold Mentzer<br>102 Berna Ave.<br>Napa CA 94559<br>907 (226) 5151<br>Gramashrly@Aol.Com |  |  |

| <b>Division Superintendents</b>   |  |  |   |                          |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Daylight Division</b>  | <b>Coast Division</b>  | <b>Sierra Division</b>   | <b>Redwood Empire Division</b>  | <b>Hawaiian Division</b> |
| Bob Randall<br>2212 B Street<br>Bakersfield, CA 93301<br>(661) 859-0636<br>Daylightbr@Aol.Com | Jim Long<br>47464 Cholla Street<br>Fremont, CA 94539<br>(510) 651-3467<br>Jimclong@Aol.Com | Dick Witzens<br>6764 Will Rogers Dr.<br>Fair Oaks, CA 95628<br>(916) 966-4592<br>Witzrr@Cs.Com | Howard Brown<br>2321 Sunrise Ave<br>Santa Rosa, CA 95409-4038<br>(707)578-7167<br>Howardb@Sonic.Net |                          |

BRANCH LINE  
530 FIG TREE LANE  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

SECOND-CLASS POSTAGE  
PAID  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553



# Calendar

September 8, 2002, **Coast Division** - Buscher Middle School. 111 Bellamy Dr. Santa Clara

September 14,15, 2002 **Sierra Division** meeting, Mills Park, 50 & Salomon Park, Carson City, NV

October 5 & 6, **San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Club** train show, San Luis Obispo.

Saturday, October 26th, 2002 9:30 am to 4:00 pm **Stanislaus Model Railroaders 19th annual Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet** at the Oakdale Community Center, 250 North 3rd Street in Oakdale, California

October 25 & 26, **S-West IV**, all S Gauge Convention, Stockton Inn, Stockton

November 16, **Daylight Division** meet, San Luis Obispo.

November 3, 2002: **Redwood Empire Division** meet in Santa Rosa.

November 9 & 10, **International Railfair**, Placer County Fairgrounds, Co-sponsored by the Sierra Division

November 15, 16, & 17, 2002 9 am to 5 pm, 2nd annual **Shrine Model Railroad Show & Sale** Kerak Shrine Building 4935 Energy Way, Reno, NV

December 1, 2002, **Coast Division** - California School for the Deaf, 39350 Gallaudet Dr. Fremont

If you have any more listings send them to whk58@pacbell.net