



# BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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## President's Message

Ron Plies

### Convention

Well, here we are again at convention time. It will be held at the Marriott Fremont Silicon Valley Hotel at 46100 Landing Parkway, Fremont, CA, 510-413-3700, on April 15-19. By the time you get this *Branch Line* we will be getting close to the meetings, so if you have not yet sent in your registration form you need to do that today, but tomorrow is OK. You can register on-line at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2009> or use the registration form in this issue of the *Branch Line*.

If you have not been to a PCR convention in the last 5 years, then we have a deal for you. The normal registration is \$99 but for you the registration will be \$75. Tom Crawford and his crew have done an outstanding job in providing a great line-up of clinics, a wonderful banquet, and a ride on an excursion train behind an SP Pacific-type locomotive. You will kick yourself if you are not on board. Oh, one other thing, you will need to stick around for the business meeting Sunday morning as the breakfast is on us, or free, to all those who have registered for the convention. Does someone out there not understand FREE?? So join us for the business meeting on Sunday morning and the rest of the convention.

I am very sorry and very sad to have to tell you that our good friend and PCR Secretary Rich Kolm has had to step down from his position due to his health. I received an e-mail from Rich's wife Jackie on February 18th that stated, "I have to tell you that we just found out that Rich has cancer of the bile duct. There isn't any way to treat this type

**Tom Crawford and his crew have done an outstanding job in providing a great line-up of clinics, a wonderful banquet, and a ride on an excursion train behind an SP Pacific-type locomotive. You will kick yourself if you are not on board.**

of cancer, so preventing new infections and making sure he is comfortable is the focus of his care. We are taking things one day at a time. He appreciates the concern and the prayers offered by his many PCR friends and will miss participating with the group." Rich has served as PCR Secretary under the last three PCR Presidents with honor and distinction. To me he is Mr. PCR always there to help and always putting the organization ahead of himself, in other words a real gentleman! Rich did a lot of the behind the scenes work and without his hard work the PCR and this President would not

have functioned well at all. I know most of you will wish to join me in lifting Rich and his family in prayer for the Lord's peace and comfort. I have also received word that Dwayne Coate suffered a stroke on Feb. the 12th. Dwayne has been a very active member of the PCR and was the convention chair of the 2000 PCR convention in Redding. So please join me in remembering Dwayne and his family as well as

Rich and his family.

This brings me to enlisting your help in putting together the "Thanks for Being a Friend" presentation at this year's convention. As I requested in the last issue of the *Branch Line*, please send any and all photos you wish to submit of the good folks of the PCR to Ms. Carol Alexander at 5307 Spain Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95409. If you have pictures in digital form you can e-mail them to Carol at [carolnma@msn.com](mailto:carolnma@msn.com). We are looking for photos of people you would like to honor and any activities of the region and/or division. Please put who or what the photo is about and your name. Carol needs to have these on or before the 1st of April.

(Continued on page 5)

## VIEW FROM THE LEFT SEAT

Pat LaTorres

Gee willikers, it seems like it was just a month ago and now Bill is asking for more words for the *Branch Line*. The plus side (for all of you folks) is that this column will probably be my only submission for this issue.

After my column in the last issue one member castigated me for being too negative. My reply was (and still is), one can't initiate a positive change without first acknowledging that there is something wrong. I strongly feel that if something is wrong we have to bring it out into the light and recognize it for what it is, rather than try and sweep it under the rug. It's Ok to be critical, as long as one is willing to provide a viable alternative and corrective action to fix the (perceived) problem.

I have a firm belief that the members of the PCR will always be willing to work together to make things better. Having said that, there have been a lot of very positive things happening in the PCR over the last few months and I will try to touch on many of them in this column.

To start with, all of the convention committees working within the region have been pushing ahead and I feel that we're looking at some really good conventions in our future. The PCR 2009 committee has been putting together yet another great PCR convention, which many of you will be enjoying about the same time you read these words. There have been a few bumps in the road involving the prototype tours, but these are due to the current economy and are well beyond the control of the committee.

The crew working on our 2010 convention is already well under way with their project. From what I've heard they already have a number of

clinics set in pencil. The hotel is within walking distance of the Sparks AMTRAK station, which provides a nice opportunity for working a train trip into the convention experience. I did this with the convention down in San Luis Obispo and it made for a relaxing way to arrive and depart from the event. Admittedly catching the train west from Sparks on Sunday morning may require a slight adjustment to our regular schedule of events, but nothing insurmountable.

The group putting together the 2011 PCR convention is looking at a Mini-convention, since we'll also be hosting the 2011 NMRA national convention in the PCR that year. And they also have already started getting things in motion.

And 2012 looks to be even more exciting, with the plan to do a joint convention with the folks from the Pacific Northwest Region. The current plans call for something just over the border into Oregon, along the I-5 corridor – the name Roseburg keeps getting tossed out, but this one is still well out there so we'll have to wait a bit and see where things go.

We'll also have the 2010 O Scale National Convention in Santa Clara. And finally, we have Extra 2011 West, scheduled for July 2011 in Sacramento. Yes, it now has an official name and logo. If even half the plans of this committee work out, this will be one of the most unconventional and innovative conventions in the history of the NMRA. Without letting too much out of the bag, they hope to bring together many of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs), a number of gauge and scale specific groups, several railroad historical societies, a number of railroad museums, garden railroaders, and live steam folks – all under one roof, right up the road from the California State Railroad Museum, one of the premier rail museums in North America. So if you like hanging out with

This is what our vision of the NMRA is all about, friends working and playing together, sharing a common hobby as friends, in no way restricted by where we happen to live.

*(Continued from page 3)*

folks that have a two track mind, the next few years will give you everything you could ever ask for!

Getting back to the world of the PCR, it looks like the Ron and Pat Show will be back for another two years and we fully intend to try and keep things moving along the track that we started two years ago. Do Ron and I agree on everything? Absolutely not! Does the PCR Board of Directors agree with everything that either Ron and I want to try in the region? Again, no! Does everyone on the BoD want to work to move the region forward in a positive direction? You had better believe it!!!

All of the members of the board, whether it's the President, Vice President, or the Divisional Directors realize that while we've been blessed with some very strong groups on the divisional level, our region has managed to be even stronger and more efficient than the sum of its parts. Our divisions work well

together, because our members are not held back by some imagined lines on a map. It's quite common to find members from one division working at events of another division. This is what our vision of the NMRA is all about, friends working and playing together, sharing a common hobby as friends, in no way restricted by where we happen to live.

While on the subject of the PCR Board of Directors, Ron may have mentioned it in his column, but I'll cover it here as well – Rich Kolm, our long serving secretary passed away the last day of this past February. He had been in the hospital with inoperable cancer of the bile duct. Even in these circumstances, through his wife Jackie he managed to get the minutes from the midyear board meeting and the agenda for the meeting due at the convention out to all of us! Unfortunately the board

received word on March 2, that Rich had died the previous Saturday.

Rich was one of those folks that just seemed to always be there when there was heavy lifting to be done, yet would quickly fade back out of view when the accolades start to flow. And Jackie is maybe a step above that, in that she didn't sign up for the job, but she helped the region just as much in the support that she gave Rich. Saying that he was modest might be a bit of an understatement, and that he will be missed is self evident. He was

and still is a very special person to both Ron and me. We ask that you keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers through this trying time for them.

Working out from this, many of us had the opportunity share our love of this hobby over the past few months. With the PCR/LDSIG/OPSIG weekend in Santa Clara, this year over the last weekend in January (it's always scheduled for the



Your esteemed Vice-President, this editor, and the Rev. Doug Harding from Iowa out railfanning in Franklin Canyon (Ronnie took this picture and the one on the cover that shows what we saw.)

weekend between the last pro football playoff games and the Super Bowl) we gathered together a bunch of folks for a Saturday full of clinics on layout design and operation, which was then put to use by operating sessions on Sunday. As far as I know, everyone that wanted to had a chance to operate on one of several model railroads in the Bay Area. I'll now offer a big THANK YOU to all of the layout owners that opened their homes to this mass of visitors and to the staff that puts this event together.

On top of the operating sessions, we had a great line up of clinics on Saturday, a chance to talk with fellow modelers in the Layout Design consulting sessions, the opportunity to tour a great selection of home layouts and a chance to just socialize with a bunch of friends that we probably don't see near

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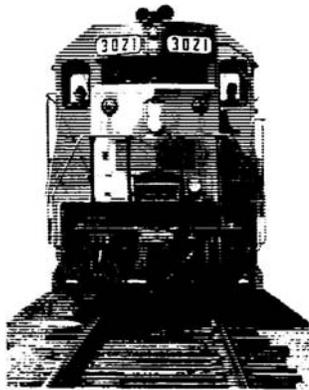
(Continued from page 2) *President's Message*

The last thing I wish to bring to this page is to get on my old soap box about bringing those models to the convention. Bring them to show and tell or bring them for the contest if you wish to enter it. At last year's convention we saw a number of contest winners that had never entered a contest before. Bring them no matter what stage of construction they are in. Let's fill that contest room to overflowing as we did last year, making Bill Scott happy and all the rest of us enjoying each other's work. We are a MODEL railroad organization so we need to have MODELS at the convention, RIGHT?

See you all at Fremont

As a last note and with a heavy heart I just received an e-mail informing me of the passing of Rich Kolm on Feb. 28th, 2009. We will have more to say about this fine gentleman in the next issue.

Ron Plies MMR PCR President



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often enough. The following weekend was O Scale West, and while not an official NMRA event, there sure seemed to be a lot of our members in attendance (and not all of them known to be O scale modelers).

Then, at the end of February we had the joy of a visit by one of my favorite people, The Reverend, Doug Harding. As most of you know, my relationship with Doug will always be something special. He just happens to be one of the special people in our world. To open our lives up for Doug, there were even more operating sessions scheduled, so he could enjoy the hospitality and fellowship of his friends out on this coast. On March 1<sup>st</sup> there was the quarterly Coast Division meet, in Santa Clara. As always attended by a number of folks from other divisions. As if that weren't enough, in mid March BayRails made its bi-annual appearance and even more model railroader friends from across the country (and Canada!) hit the S.F. area for even more operating sessions. This is what I feel makes the NMRA such a special organization, and this is also where its greatest strength lies. The sharing and camaraderie gives each of us so much more than what our membership dues will ever be able to buy! So, I'll say again, when someone asks you, "Why should I join the NMRA?", just look to these experiences and let your heart guide your answer.

Just as I'm getting ready to send this off to Bill, I got word that Dwayne Coate, the region's head Hobo suffered a stroke in mid February. So, I again ask you all to take the time to think about all of our fellow members – some who may not be quite as young as we remember them being. If there's a hobby friend of yours living nearby, take the time to keep in touch so they will know that someone will be available to help if the need arises. Well I've gone on for way too long, again. I'll wrap this up by asking you to please take the time to share what joy you get from this hobby with others. Take the opportunity to invite folks into your model railroading world and show them what is here to be shared through the NMRA – NOT the organization, but the people. Until the next *Branch Line*,

Pat LaTorres

V.P. PCR/NMRA

# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Bill Kaufman

Sometimes when you're doing stuff, you don't know why you are doing it, but things work out for reasons that you had no notion of to begin with.

I have been slowly putting Branch Line together in no particular hurry, just wrapping things up and wondering what I would put in my column when the following e-mail appeared unsolicited.

Why are you a model railroader?

Can you name the person, place, time, event or thing that got you started in Model Railroading? I can. The place was San Francisco, my grandparent's house, my uncle's bedroom. The train room off his bedroom to be exact. The person was my uncle Rich. I am a little fuzzy on the time. It must have been about 1965 when I was about four. The event was every holiday at my grandparent's house: Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, Fourth of July or just a Saturday or Sunday visit. From a very early age, the highlight of any trip to my grandparent's house was getting to go down into my uncle Rich's room and on into the train room. It did not matter if we got to operate or not. Just looking at the layout and his trains was a thrill for me. If my uncle Rich was there, we got to operate too. That was a major bonus.

He and my grandfather hand built the layout tie by tie, rail by rail. I am guessing they must have started it in the early 1940's. All the track was laid by hand. All the switches were scratch built. My grandfather was an electrical engineer, so I am guessing that the power supply was scratch built too. Everything on that layout was built by hand, piece by piece. I still dream about that layout from time to time. My grandparents sold that house in the early 70's. It was a sad day for me.

One time driving in the Bay Area with my family as we drove past a park, my mother mentioned she remembered picnicking in that park one time as a child. I asked her how they

decided where to picnic as a child. She said my grandfather and my uncle would pull out a time table and see where the best place would be to spot trains. That was where they would go to picnic that day.

Trains were in my uncle's blood. I can not remember my uncle talking about any vacation that he ever took that did not involve a train in some way or another. My aunt would travel with him to NMRA conventions, museums, and off to see some obscure train in a foreign country. He was very active in the NMRA PCR, and he presented clinics at a number of conventions. Most recently, he was the PCR Region Secretary.

Richard Lewis Kolm  
April 13, 1935 - Feb. 28, 2009

I will always miss him.  
Bob Schrempp

A bunch of us in the Northern California Nameless Group Round Robin have similarly been trying to come to terms with the death of our friend and member Tom Combs. His story was not at all Bob and Rich's story but the emotions are the same. Tom had been a Naval officer, a stock broker, an Amtrak engineer, and a house appraiser.

He had joined the group years ago with a pretty clear vision of what he wanted to model but very unsure of his skill. Before we met him he had hired a professional modeler to build his layout. The man had made progress. The backdrops and a few of the scenes were marvelous but the electricity was a mess and things just didn't run.

I think Tom joined our group hoping to learn enough to begin to understand how to fix it. Unsubtle as we were and are, a bunch of us went up to his beautiful house on Mt. Tam that he had designed himself and tore out the whole electrical system on the layout and replaced it with DCC.

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Tom had no idea what we were doing, but eternally gracious, he let us do whatever it was that we were doing. We had signed him up as part of a convention layout tour and, just in time, had it running.

Two important things about Tom were first that he grew into a skilled and competent modeler but second, and much more important, that he was a good man who liked people and enjoyed his hobby. He was always grateful for even the smallest thing you did for him. Forever happy, he was a joy to be around.

I will miss him too.

No time is ever all of one thing or all of another. During the time when Rich and Tom were dying, we had a visit from the Reverend Doug Harding from Iowa. If the PCR had a Chaplain, he would be it. An uplifting character full of joy and energy, he bounced from place to place for a week in Northern California. The Monday of his visit, he, Jim Providenza, and I spent the day tracing the remains of the State Belt from the Presidio to Pier 96 where we caught up with the two surviving engines. Tuesday, he went railfanning with Pat and Ronnie LaTorres (see Pat's article and Ronnie's picture on the cover). Wednesday he operated at Vern Alexander's in Petaluma and went on to Gus Campagna's. Thursday involved a visit to the California State Railroad Museum and an operating session on Dave Clemens' new layout in Rocklin. Friday was back to CSRM and then I got a bit out of the loop. I think he operated at Otis McGee's on Saturday and I know he was back at my place on Sunday for operations. He also saw family and did a bunch of other things while out here. Clearly just a force of nature at work.

The other two things that impacted my world at the same time were that I finally delivered my book on the State Belt to Tony Thompson at Signature Press. For the next few months it will be his problem as his crew edits and lays it out. Secondly, I edited my first issue of the Dispatcher's Office for the Operations Special Interest Group. It is a much more "newsy" and much less "chatty" publication with a lot more facts in it. You might consider joining OPSIG. They have a lot going for

them here in the Bay Area.

Oh! Yeah! I'm supposed to tell you something in this column about the issue. Karen Keifer has started a new column about people in the PCR. Go look at it. Guiseppie Aymar has a tale about toy trains and the opening of Japan. Jim Providenza tells us of his interactions with Mark Fourbee. Dave Connery has what are probably the last of his "Made/Published in the PCR" columns. John Sing sent more pictures than ever.

Go read it. It's a fun issue.

Bill

### **Clyde Lippincott**

Clyde Lippincott, longtime NMRA, PCR and Sierra Division member, died in a single-car accident Thanksgiving weekend on icy roads near his home in Newport, Wash. Clyde's wife of 32 years, Linda, suffered minor injuries in the accident.

Born in Oakland, Calif., in 1944, Clyde and his family moved to Carson City, Nev., where they lived until 2007. Clyde was very active in PCR and the Sierra Division, serving as an officer and chairing the 1993 PCR convention. More recently, he and Linda served on the board of the Northern Nevada Railway Foundation, an organization committed to the reconstruction of the Virginia & Truckee Railway as a tourist line from Virginia City to Carson City. For many years, they also participated in the Donner Pass Gandy Dancers modular group. In addition, Clyde was a member of various Masonic bodies and of the Family Motor Coach Association and the National Rifle Association.

Clyde was certainly larger-than-life. With his tall stature, hearty laugh and distinctive voice, his presence in a room could hardly pass unnoticed. He is missed by all who worked and played with him during the years.

Contributions in his name may be made to The New Hope Resource Center, 1211 E. Colbert Rd., Colbert, WA 99005, or to the Northern Nevada Railway Foundation, PO Box 339, Carson City, NV 89702.

Chuck Gardner

# MADE IN THE PCR

## Irish Tracklayer O-Scale Details

Review by Dave Connery

There are so many aspects to this wonderful hobby of model railroading and today we have the help of so many large and small suppliers of all types of items to make our hobby more enjoyable. The truly amazing thing is that not only do we have all these products – we have most of them in 4 or 5 scales!

While I do most of my modeling in HO or Fn3, I also have a modeling interest in On30 as well as HOn3 so I have really tested the availability of products across an array of scales and gauges. A group of us have an On30 layout called the Yosemite Short Line and thus I have had a chance to do some modeling in 1:48 scale. I am pleased with the many products available to the O Scale modeler.

As you move up from N or HO to O or F you realize that you can now accurately model a level of detail you only could hint at in the smaller scales. The Irish Tracklayer line of cast brass O-Scale detail parts permits a great level of detail that can be seen from the layout aisle. Since our portable layout is at adult eye-level it is important to me to include a high level of detail on the structures and rolling stock.

PC Daylight Director John Houlihan, “The Irish Tracklayer” has come to the rescue with a huge line of finely detailed brass parts. There are about 63 parts for Steam Locomotives, 10 track parts including scale rail anchors. 4 catenary parts for traction modelers, 11 diesel detail parts, 8

electrical items and 5 freight car details and about 20 other detail sets. There are laser kits for the YV-ATSF interlocking tower in both S and O scales and a whole line of about 20 products for on-board camera systems for model railroads.

The accompanying photo shows 4 detail castings I have from the Irish Tracklayer. In the upper left is a set Shop Tools O-101 \$6.00, upper right 2 Derail Frogs S-123 \$1.00, lower left a set of lamps 102 \$5.00, and lower right a set of valves O-103 \$5.00. To give you a sense of the level of detail, the hacksaw in the Shop Tool set measures

less than ¼ inch total length and the blade has teeth!

I love these fine details, all come in attractive Kelly Green packages – Hmm, I wonder why John came up with a Kelly Green package.



If you attended last year’s PCR Convention and visited John’s beautiful O Scale layout you know just how deeply John is into fine O-Scale modeling. Since John was also the Chairman of the 2008 PCR Convention he is selling some Sierra Memories shirts and indicates Sierra Memories Convention cars sell 2 cars for \$40 and he is offering wireless cameras at 50% off and will pay shipping and tax. What a deal. You can contact Irish Tracklayer, 2682 W. Palo Alto Ave., Fresno, CA 93711-1107, [www.irishtacklayer.com](http://www.irishtacklayer.com), [john@irishtacklayer.com](mailto:john@irishtacklayer.com).

# WRITTEN IN THE PCR

## *Sierra and Desert Rails*

Written by Fred Matthews

Reviewed by Dave Connery

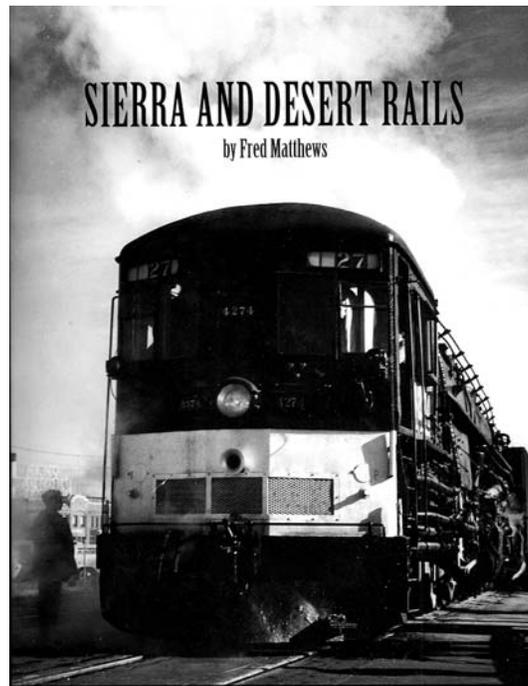
About twenty or more years ago I added a book titled, *Northern California Railroads, The Silver Age, Vol. II* to my library. This book was printed in 1984 and was packed with stunning photography of railroads in this Region – serving as an introduction for me to many of the wondrous rail lines I would eventually come to love.

About 8 years later I considered myself extremely lucky when I acquired a second hand copy of Fred Matthews Vol. I. Here was more to learn, but most importantly, taken together these two books defined for me what words like “railroad photography” and “railfanning” came to mean and what a wonderful canvas of prototypes (and modeling subjects) the railroads of Northern California and Northern Nevada offered, from the giants to the hidden short lines.

But I began to think Fred Matthews must have passed away as there seemed to be no more from this rich source of so much inspiration. With this new book I learned that Mr. Matthews spent most of the intervening years teaching history in England and Canada, and traveling and writing European rail books. I’m glad he is back and has added this book to his many accomplishments.

The book reviewed here is in no way a part of the previous series. It is more modest in scope, a vertical format soft cover while the other two books are horizontal format and richly bound volumes. In two respects, however, it does seem to fit perfectly

with the previous volumes. First, the photography is absolutely superb, and as with the other books, the reproduction of these photos does them justice. Second, it appears all of the photos in the book were taken in the same time frame as the previous volumes (late 1940’s up to about 1960). I did not recognize any of the photos in this being repeats of previously published photos and that makes many of them priceless to fans and modelers.



The 87 photos in the book are focused in three chapters on the SP & WP crossing the Sierra mountains; the Sierra Railroad / West Side Lumber Co. / Pickering Lumber Co. and the SP Narrow Gauge in Owens Valley. There is a page or two of narrative introducing each of the three sections and then excellent captions to help you understand what is taking place in each photo. About half the photos are printed in a horizontal format, taking up the full 8 ½” X 11” and in

three cases the photos cover a double spread at 11” X 17”. There are two maps to help know where the various action in the photos is taking place but the magic here are the photos themselves. While this does not look like a coffee table book, the composition and quality of the photos might just convince you that is where it belongs.

*Sierra and Desert Rails*; Donner, Feather River, Owens Valley at the End of the Steam Age, \$32.99, Dr. Fred Matthews, 2006, Xlibris Corporation, 888-795-4274, [www.Xlibris.com](http://www.Xlibris.com), Orders@Xlibris.com.

# Hawaiian Division Report

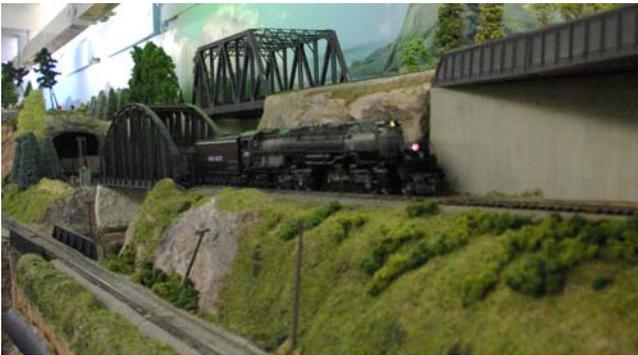
By Eric Minto

## Aloha from Hawaii

Due to a variety of things I did not have the ability to write anything so here are a few pictures.

Eric

Oahu Model Railroad Club, HO in a WWII Boxcar



More Oahu Model RR Club



Big steam heaven in a boxcar



Jim Blateau's "N" Scale on the North Shore of Oahu



Jim Blateau's "N" Scale



Jim Blateau's "N" Scale



# **ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

## **Model Railroad Engineer - Civil**

By Jack Burgess, MMR

In the last issue of the *Branch Line*, we talked about the requirements for the Master Builder - Scenery. While scenery is basic to a layout, layout design and track are also fairly basic to a layout. The Model Railroad Engineer - Civil certificate, which is part of the Achievement Program, has been developed to encourage and recognize those abilities associated with layout design and track construction.

There are four general requirements that need to be completed and/or demonstrated as part of the process of qualifying for this certificate.

The first is to prepare an original scale drawing of a model railroad track plan identifying overall size, scale, etc. The plan needs to be neat and legible, although it does not need to be in ink or drawn using a CAD program. (It is, however, suggested that you check the requirements for Model Engineer - Electrical and Chief Dispatcher before drawing this plan so that you can include the requirements for those certificates as part of the same effort.)

You don't need to build everything included in this plan, but you do need to include a number of required features including adequate terminal facilities for handling freight and/or passenger cars, adequate facilities for storage and service of motive power, at least one passing track and four switching locations (not counting yards, interchanges, wyes, and reversing loops), provisions for turning motive power, and provisions for running at least two mainline trains in either direction.

Again, remember that you don't need to

necessarily build all of these items, just include them in your plan. If you are limited for space, you can design the layout that you want to build in the future but only build what you have space for at the time.

The second general requirement is to construct and demonstrate the satisfactory operation of a completed section of the model layout from this plan containing at least 25 linear feet of track in N, 50 linear feet in HO or S scale, or at least 75 linear feet of track in O scale. The track must be complete with ballast, drainage facilities, roadbed profile, etc. The track must include at least six different features such as a passing track, a spur, a cross-over, a turntable, etc. out of a possible 18 features.

The third general requirement is to scratch build three track features and demonstrate their satisfactory operation.

These features can include a turnout, crossover, crossing, etc. out of a possible 14 features. These track features do not need to be part of the layout but can be built on a separate piece of wood, as long as they are long enough to be able to be powered to demonstrate that a

piece of motive power can run through them in all directions.

The last general requirement is to win a Merit Award for the scratchbuilt track feature items listed under the last item. To win a Merit Award, you need only to demonstrate that the track features work satisfactorily and that workmanship is neatly done.

**If you are limited for space, you can design the layout that you want to build in the future but only build what you have space for at the time.**

# Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

Jim Providenza

## The Tale of Mark Fourbee

It was the day before Christmas – and a padded envelope arrived in the mail. Addressed to me. I wasn't expecting anything from anyone, but then again it was Christmas. I looked at the return address. "Mark Fourbee, No. Short Lane, San Jose, CA." and a Zip code. Who? I didn't recall ever meeting Mark. Wracked my brain. Nope, don't remember anyone with the last name of Fourbee. I'm getting older, sure. But not that old. And I admit that I've often wondered how come I'm still a cop after all these years – you see I have a terrible time keeping names and faces stuck together. Something a cop really should be able to do well. But, Mark Fourbee? Naw. Don't know him. And that return address isn't right... Well, let's see what we have here anyway.

Out of the package came a folded piece of paper and an NMRA HO standards gauge. Not just any HO standards gauge but a custom modified non-shortening one. Oh? Memory tickles at the edge of consciousness.

Let's see what the note says. The piece of paper contained six step instructions for how to build your own "Non-conducting Standards Gauge", and nothing more. No "Hi Jim." No short handwritten comment or note. No signature. Nothing to indicate who/what/why. "No Short Lane – hah!"

This is all Seth's fault, of course. So I called him. He said he didn't know anything about it, and didn't know Mark. So I explained my thoughts – keen police mind kicking into gear here, working on memories a couple of weeks old and that "No Short Lane" nonsense.

I had been down at the Neumann manse along with several other members of the Northern California Nameless Group Round Robin for an op session. Seth has been "burning in" his new layout, getting ready for the BayRails operating weekend this spring. He was inviting folk over to help beat

the gremlins down on the theory that the more you operate a railroad the better it will operate as long as you keep a comprehensive bad order list and fix things between sessions as they crop up.

I was working the NUMMI job out of Warm Springs Yard with Paul Weiss. Pulls and spots, run arounds, more pulls and as we went to spot another cut of cars we came across a bit of track where cars started stumbling all over themselves. Was this something that could be quickly corrected? Would we get to see if the UP had a MofW crew handy? Or was it something for the bad order list? Since more than one car was having the problem here, and none of these cars had problems coming out of the yard earlier, I suspected a track gremlin. They're sneaky like that. I'm sure this one had been laying low for months ever since Seth put the track in place, just waiting for an op session (and not the first one, of course) to make itself known in the most embarrassing fashion possible. I asked Seth if it would be okay to borrow an NMRA standards gauge – after all, it is his railroad.

Seth handed me the gauge. Of course, no matter how careful I was to try to keep the gauge from actually touching both rails at the same time I still managed to create a short several times. Seth had apparently done his electrical work well as I only took down the power in the power section at the NUMMI plant and things recovered quickly. But that was not the point of the exercise and I muttered.

I told Seth that I must have muttered more loudly than I thought (Terri spouse tells me she never knew there was such a thing as a "command voice" whisper until she met me). Someone overheard me I guessed. Mutter, mutter, "What is the problem, oh rats, shorted again. Seth's goin' to kill me..." Mutter, mutter, "Why don't "they"

*(Continued on page 13)*

*(Continued from page 12)*

make insulated standards gauges anyhow?" Mutter, mutter, short, "Arghhh, feel like Charlie Brown here, maybe make one out of engineering plastic so it won't wear out so quickly?" Short, mutter, short, "Dammit. No plastic wouldn't work, have to maintain gauge, cut a gauge in half and glue in some plastic? How would you do that? Ah, hey Seth, got a pair of needlenose?"

"So Seth, I don't remember all the folks there, Who was named Mark?" "No one." I wanted to

say, "Seth, you sure?" But I figured that Seth really did know who had been at his op session. "Well I really want to thank Mark, who ever he is. Who might have overheard me?" Not surprisingly, this didn't lead anywhere particularly fast. We kicked

around a couple of folk who might have heard about the incident from someone there, but nothing seemed likely.

I had a number of occasions to pull out the new non-conducting gauge and use it on the SCN over the next month. Seven months of track laying, backdrop painting and scenery work have let in a whole new crew of gremlins onto the SCN. The unknown Mark was still on my mind and I chewed on the problem every time I picked up the gauge and silently thanked him as I worked to boot another gremlin off the SCN property.

I was working over one switch at the new middle crossovers at West San Jose alternately checking gauge and running the SCN 149 back and forth through it when I happened to actually look at the writing on the gauge itself. The stamped lettering informed me that I was holding an NMRA "Mark IVb" standards gauge. I laughed out loud.



Mark Fourbee, indeed.

Well, at this point I was resigned to never knowing who "Mark" was. But I still wanted to thank him. I decided I would write the story up for the "Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern" and conclude with a public acknowledgement and thanks to "Mark", whoever he or she might be. But...

As we all know, just building and testing is never enough to completely debug trackwork on a layout. This

requires operation. The SCN is no exception and the first op session of the New Year proved to be the opportunity for more gremlins from the summer and fall work sessions to make their presence known. Not what I want to happen, but not

unexpected. The session happened to be for the Regional LD/OPSIG meet which is co-sponsored by the PCR. It is an opportunity for folks to operate on the SCN who otherwise might not get the chance.

And so, when Jim Betz called out that he thought he had a gauge problem over on the main at the east switch at Zayante I was not greatly put out. I already had the bad order list going. But I told Jim, "Hey, I've got just the thing you need to see what the problem is. A non-conducting standards gauge!" I was like a kid in a candy store, getting to show off the new toy. "And," I said as I handed the gauge to Jim, "There's a good story that goes with it."

Jim took the gauge and smiled. "I know. I sent it to you. I overheard you at Seth's. I thought why not? I made 2, one for me and one for you." I

*(Continued on page 14)*

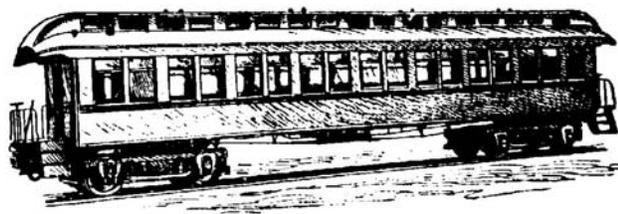
(Continued from page 11)

If you have completed all of these requirements, you submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) along with a photocopy of your NMRA membership card and you are on your way toward another certificate!

Like many of the other AP categories, many of us have completed a majority of the requirements as part of our general approach to the hobby. Maybe you have built an HO layout with at least 50 feet of completed track that includes a passing track, a spur, a simple ladder yard, some track on a grade, a turntable, and a reversing loop. If so, you have met that requirement! Even if the plan that you used to build your layout doesn't include the features required under the first category, you could easily design and draw up a layout for a larger space that included the required features. That would satisfy the first requirement. If you scratch built (i.e., hand laid) some of the track components for your layout, you might only need to hand lay a couple more to meet the rest of the requirements. Hand-laying track is really quite simple and you might be closer to receiving the Model Railroad Engineer - Civil than you think. If you are interested in pursuing this AP certificate, download them from the NMRA web page at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org).

I am happy to announce that Dave Grenier has been awarded an AP certificate for Association Volunteer and Robert Schott has been awarded an AP certificate for Chief Dispatcher. In addition, Seth Neumann has been awarded an AP certificate for Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical. Congratulations to all of you!

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 35.



(Continued from page 13)

smiled too, and chuckled. Thanks, Jim! Now if we can only get the good folks in Chattanooga to make a batch of these... Hey, the On30 folks got a combination standards and clearance gauge!

Jim Betz's instructions for making a Mark IVb-NC standards gauge:

1. Cut a rectangle of no-copper "perf" electrical project board that is smaller than the NMRA gauge on all sides. If the board covers both holes in the center of the gauge that is better because the Gorilla glue will go through the holes and lock the relative positions of the gauge and the perf board.

2. Glue the perf board to the back of the gauge using Gorilla glue. Use a minimum amount of glue so as little as possible will ooze through the holes in the perf board and the NMRA gauge. Gorilla glue foams / expands as it cures so it is important to clamp the work to keep the joint tight. Jim sandwiched his between paper towels and put a large heavy weight on top. The result is the white coating you see on the gauge in the photo – even after sanding. [*Perhaps waxed paper or plastic wrap would not stick? Ed.*] Let the Gorilla glue dry thoroughly.

3. Drill six clearance holes for 2-56 bolts through the Perf board and the gauge, three on each vertical half of the gauge.

4. Put 2-56 screws through the holes, add lock washers and nuts on the other side, and tighten as hard as you can. The 2-56 screws are to lock the perf board and the gauge into permanent alignment – do not trust the Gorilla glue because it can not get a really firm grip on the very slick surface of the gauge. The Gorilla glue is, in fact, just there to hold the Perf board and gauge in position during the drilling of the holes.

5. Use a Dremel tool with a cut off disk and grind a gap through the NMRA gauge from top to bottom to provide electrical separation of the two sides.

6. Enjoy the NMRA Mark IVb-NC (non-conducting)!

# OPEN HOUSE

The Niles-Fremont model train club, consisting of the TCSME (Tri-Cities Society of Model Engineers) and the NDHF (Niles Depot Historical Foundation) is having an OPEN HOUSE on Thursday, April 16, 2009 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. We invite the PCR Convention attendees to stop by and ?Meet and Greet? our club members, view the plans for the new location of the Niles Passenger Depot and Freight House, operate our HO or N Gauge DCC layouts, and enjoy some refreshments.

We are temporarily housed in a retired City of Fremont Firehouse located at 3723 Darwin Drive in Fremont, CA. We have both an operating HO and N gauge DCC train layouts for use as training tools for the club members. All of our club members are learning about DCC including, wiring a DCC train layout, installing decoders, programming decoders, and operations on DCC layouts. We are also teaching basic bench work, track laying, ballasting and scenery techniques to our members. Each member brings his own knowledge and interest to the train club to either learn or share with the other club members.

The TCSME and the NDHF are currently looking for new members. We invite all model railroaders, rail fans, and railroad historical and preservationists to join one or both of our organizations as we prepare to move into our new location at the Niles Passenger Depot and Freight

House within the next year. The TCSME is seeking model railroaders, of all ages, to join us in building completely new HO and N gauge model railroad layouts/displays. The NDHF is seeking new members as docents, railroad historians and preservationists to join in manning and maintaining the Niles Passenger Depot and Freight House and interpreting the many historical displays in the Museum located in the Niles Depot.

Directions to our OPEN HOUSE: From the intersection of Decoto Road and Fremont Blvd., head north on Fremont Blvd. At the second signaled intersection turn right (east) onto Darwin Drive and travel about one long block. The Firehouse is located on the left (north) side of the street at 3723 Darwin Drive.

## Oops

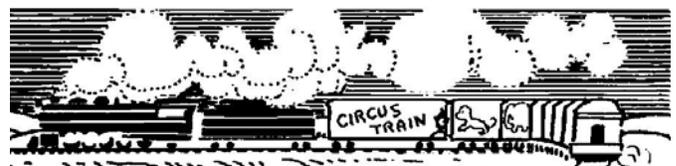
In the last issue

- In the Achievement Program column, Doug Wagner earned the Association Official certificate, not Association Volunteer, as was incorrectly stated on page 29.

- In the Daylight Division Report on page 36, one of the door prize donors was incorrectly stated as "Tami's Timeless Treasures", instead of "Terri's Timeless Treasures".

Just hate it when we mess up. Sorry about that.

Bill Kaufman



# Japan and the “Little Train That Could”.

By Giuseppe Aymar

Today we delight ourselves with wonderful model trains from Kato and Shinohara. We marvel at the high-speed bullet trains and their sophistication. We import all makes of cars and electronic products. Every day our lives are touched by items made in Japan.

But have you ever wondered (rhetorical question) where and when it all started? What was the seed at the very beginning that created this huge tide of exports from Japan to the U.S.?

Stay tuned and keep on reading; the answer will surprise you as it surprised me.

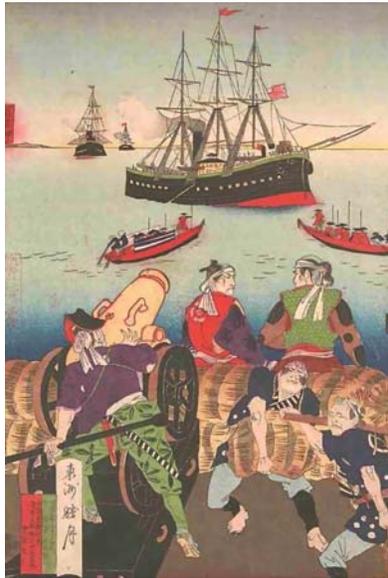
Japan, once a faraway land engulfed in mystery, a feudal system with fierce Samurai warriors defending and dispensing the laws of the land, was ruled by a long line of Emperors. Until the middle of the nineteenth century (circa 1850, around the time of our Civil War) Japan was still an isolated society, with hardly any commercial ties with the outside world due to its edict barring foreigners.

The Portuguese (once a mighty seagoing power themselves) came and traded with Japan on a limited basis, followed by the Dutch, who unfortunately were unable to continue sending ships to the Far East due to the political instability in Europe following the French Revolution and the capturing of their vessels by hostile British Man-of-War vessels. At this time the United States of America had no diplomatic or business relations with Japan.

Now, I am not a scholar of history, nor do I want to present myself as a fanatic researcher of historical facts. No, no. This bit of trivia that helped open the door to commercial trading between Japan and the U.S. just flatly landed on my lap. I

do believe in fate (and “the little train that could”). Again, keep on reading.

It is after all the evening of Christmas Eve 2008 when magical things happen to all good boys and girls (and I was a fairly good boy, I believe). While waiting to be called for our Holiday dinner, traditionally inspired by our centuries old Northern Tuscany dishes, one would find me browsing through the hundreds of beautifully bound volumes in my sister’s richly appointed library. Many of the books relate to the arts of Japan, China and Korea dealing with architecture, furniture, jade, snuff bottles etc.



One book in particular calls to me, titled: “The Japanese Influence in America” by Clay Lancaster with an introduction by Alan Priest (the well known former curator of Far Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art). It called to me because the title is counter to what I always perceived as the norm, basically American influence on Japan (especially post WWII). I quickly read the introduction and while scrolling a few pages, I landed on page eighteen. Here one finds an almanac of the beginnings of relations between Japan and the United States.

In the year of our Lord 1852, President Fillmore commissioned Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry to engage in talks with Japan with the scope of opening one or more ports for re-supplying fuel to coal burning vessels, for trade and to offer protection to American seamen. This mission did not end with a resounding success, but both parties agreed to meet again. On his second visit on March 31, 1854, Commodore Perry signed the “Treaty of Peace, Amity and Commerce”

*(Continued on page 17)*

(Continued from page 16)

granting Americans trading rights at the two ports of Shimoda and Hakodate.

During this second visit, gifts were exchanged between the two nations. Japan bestowed the United States with a collection of lacquers, porcelains and costumes now preserved in the Smithsonian Institution of the United States National Museum.

The United States presented Japan with three main gifts (now remember, this was a very important and crucial mission in the eyes of Washington). The very first gift was a model railroad locomotive, tender and carriage for which a circular track was laid. The train is reported to have “swept round and round with great rapidity, to the astonishment of the beholders”. Other gifts were an electric telegraph apparatus and a daguerreotype camera that produced pictures without the use of a pencil to create an image.

Understand the point here: at the very genesis of diplomatic and commercial relations

between these two countries a model train was at the very heart of diplomacy. The very first gift was a model train, not the telegraph nor the camera.

Canon, Fuji, Toshiba, Nintendo, Toyota, Honda, Nissan owe their gratitude to this model train that swept round and round with great rapidity.

The moral of the story? When people smile at us snickering “Oh, you play with toy trains?” go ahead, puff your chest, lift your head high knowing that these little trains were the reason we can now avail ourselves of so many imported products.

The “little train that could” was a mighty train indeed.

We could look at the gift of the little train as a prelude to our own ceremonial tradition of “giving a train for Christmas” and how this gift introduced us eventually to this great hobby and set us on the road to another type of commerce: buying trains.

## So much in store for you at HN 2009!



An exciting program of clinics, layout tours, and prototype tours is coming together for the NMRA's **Hartford National 2009**. More than **80** layouts, more than **100** clinicians providing more than **200** individual clinics, many prototype rail trips, including steam, diesel, electric, and rare mileage to choose from. **Modeling with the Masters**, the **Operations Special Interest Group**, the **Layout Design Special Interest Group**, and the **Rail-Marine Information Group** are all gearing up with extensive programs! All within reach of the major metropolitan centers of Boston and New York.

**Watch the HN 2009 web site for details.**

**Registration forms are now available at [www.HN2009.org](http://www.HN2009.org).**

**Don't wait! Sign up today!**



# Hartford National

JULY 5-11 • [WWW.HN2009.ORG](http://WWW.HN2009.ORG)



# Coast Division Report

By Tom Crawford, Chief Clerk

Coast Divisions March 1 meet had 106 attendees.

The two clinics were Installing DCC by Mark Schutzer and Basic Backdrop Painting by Dave Biondi We also had our Model railroad Roundtable chaired by Jerry Littlefield.

At the Business Meeting, Tom Crawford gave us an update on the Coast Division Banquet and the 2009 Convention.

Jim Long discussed Jack Burgess's "In Home Clinics" and the Speeder Ride schedules at the PCR Convention.

Ray deBlicke talked about the SIG meet results and the new NMRA ballots, as well as his run for NMRA VP.

Steve Williams talked about the Coast Layout Tours on March 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. We will have 10 on Saturday and 2 on Sunday. All are in the Gilroy/Salinas/Santa Cruz area. This layout tour team has done an absolutely bang up job, and this next set will not disappoint.

Dave Connery conducted the Coast Division elections. The winners were:

Superintendent: Mark Schutzer

Chief Clerk: Darrel Dennis

Paymaster: Bob Ferguson

The Business meeting ended and the Auction started at 12:35 PM. There were 325 auction items.

John Sing announced that the winners of the Model Contest were:

## MOW

- 1<sup>st</sup> Jerry Wilson, with a scratch built fire terrain car set
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Andrew Merriam with an SP MOW Gondola
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Bob Withlin with a Track Alignment Tamper

## Caboose

1<sup>st</sup> Steve Wesolowski with a Z scale logging caboose

2<sup>nd</sup> Kenneth Martin with a Burlington Caboose

## Freight Cars

1<sup>st</sup> Andrew Merriam with a Pacific Coast RR Tank Car

2<sup>nd</sup> Bob Booth with a scratch built box car (1100 parts – individual planks)

3<sup>rd</sup> Kenneth Martin with a Burlington End Door Box Car

The categories for the June meet will be "Structures", "Display", and "Self-Propelled Cars and Traction"

Pat LaTorres announced that the winners of the photo contest for "Working on the Railroad" were:

1<sup>st</sup> Chip Morningstar (photo #4) Night shot of a Passenger Car

2<sup>nd</sup> Ronnie LaTorres (photo #2) Quincy Switcher at Portola

3<sup>rd</sup> Steve Wesolowski (photo #1) UP derailment at Los Gatos

The category for June will be "Trains in Action".

In the Timesaver, the winners were:

## Brakeperson:

1<sup>st</sup> Steve Williams (6:51) (promoted to Senior)

2<sup>nd</sup> Chip Morningstar (7:47)

## Senior Brakeperson

1<sup>st</sup> Bill Burket (4:54)

2<sup>nd</sup> Tom Crawford ( 6:20)

3<sup>rd</sup> Alan Havens ( 7:18)

We had 6 door prizes.

We also had 2 raffle prizes, each for \$50.



# Daylight Division Report

By Chuck Harmon

## Daylight Winter Meet held in Visalia February 28th

Daylight Division held its winter meet on February 28 at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Visalia, California. Brewster Bird and his wife Sally hosted the event and provided breakfast and lunch.

Brewster conducted a clinic on building laser kits. STS (Small Trackage Structures / Northeastern Scale Models) N-scale and HO-scale storage shed kits were provided. 11 folks participated in the "make-it/take-it" clinic.

Brewster also put on a slide show of railroad sites around Visalia. Maps of the area were provided for those who wanted to visit the sites after the meet.

Sally Bird provided a delicious lunch of tri-tip, beans, carrots, potato salad, and cheesecake dessert.

During the business meeting with its usual tedious items, Norman Morrison presented Brewster Bird with a collector version of a Schrade Boy Scout Pocket Knife, in recognition of the work that Brewster has done with the Boy Scouts. Superintendent Dave Grenier proposed that the Boy Scout Railroading Merit badge program become a regular part of division meets.

Superintendent Grenier announced the appointment of Jay Smith as assistant contest chairman. Since this meet would include the first Daylight Division auction, Dave called for volunteers to form an auction committee for future events.

The winner of the favorite photo contest was Bob Randall with his photo of a train crossing the Mississippi River. Bob also won the favorite model contest with his flat car lumber load. Joe Paff won the \$25.00 cash door prize.

Superintendent Grenier announced that the next meet will be held in Fresno at Marlin

Costello's home in Fresno on May 2. Future meets are scheduled for August 22 at Hilding Larson's in San Luis Obispo, and in Santa Barbara in November. February 2010 is an open date.

A number of raffle items had been donated by **A-line/Proto Power West, Hobby town USA of Fresno, Hump Yard Purveyance, Atlas, Terri's Timeless Treasures/Dave's Trains of Clovis, and Visalia Hobbies**. The Bakersfield gang brought several brown paper wrapped items for our traditional and always fun White Elephant auction

Following the business meeting we held our first Daylight Division Auction. Forty-nine items had been donated to the division by Jerry Jackson. Jerry is changing to G-scale and wanted the division to dispose of the no longer needed HO scale items. A spirited bidding war was led by Bob Randall (no doubt chosen because he "hogged" the contest awards). Twenty-five attendees went away with treasures and bargains, and the division netted some much-needed cash. Thanks to Jerry Jackson and all the bidders.

## Daylight Division Hosts Layout Tours

Daylight Division has hosted two layout tours since the last *Branch Line* report. The first was on December 6 in the Fresno-Clovis area coordinated by Layout tours chairman Gary Saxton. The second was held in Santa Barbara on January 31 in conjunction with the Model Railroads of Southern California Yahoo group, Bob Chaparro, moderator.

Gary Saxton reported that nine hosts volunteered: Ron Baker, Rob Briney, Marlin Costello, Clay Cunningham, Chuck Harmon, Belmont Train Group, Jim Scheiner coordinating, Gary Saxton, Bob Sexton and Steve Silva. He said that the hosts were happy with the crowd and a

(Continued on page 20)



## Coast Division Upcoming Events

By Tom Crawford, Chief Clerk

### June 7, 2009

#### Coast Division Meeting

Computer History Museum  
Hwy 101 at Shoreline Avenue  
Mountain View

9 AM Sign In. Buy raffle tickets.

9:30 AM to 1:15 PM:

Model Contests: Structures, Display and Self  
Propelled and Traction

Photo Contest: Trains in Action

9:30 AM – 3:15 PM: Allan Fenton Switching  
Contest

10 AM Mark Schutzer – Steam Engine Tune-up

11 AM Dave Biondi – Basic Backdrop Painting

11 AM Model Railroad Roundtable moderated by  
Jerry Littlefield

12 Noon Business Meeting

1 PM Auction

1 PM Model Railroad Roundtable continuation  
moderated by Jerry Littlefield

1:30 PM Announcement of Photo and Model  
contest winners

3:30 PM Raffle, Announcement of Allen Fenton  
Switching Contest Winners

### June 13-14, 2009

#### Coast Division Layout Tours

Go to <http://www.pcrnmra.org/coast/layout.shtml>  
for specifics on these tours.

### September 13, 2009

#### Coast Division Meet

Buchser Middle School  
1111 Belomy St  
Santa Clara

(Continued from page 19)

good time was had by all. There were a total of about 65 people on the tour. The average attendance was 39 adults and 5 children.

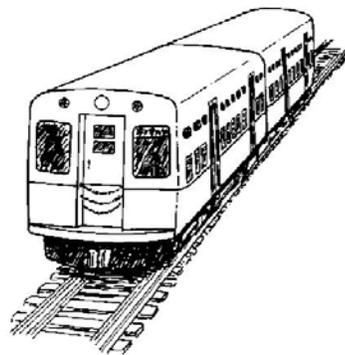
Bruce Morden filed a report on the Santa Barbara tour, which began as follows:

"Over the years, Santa Barbara has hosted many Daylight Division meets and at least one regional meet. During those meets we have opened up our layouts for a few hours for the meets, but a day-long layout tour turned out to be a different type of adventure.

Most of the layout owners spent the week before the tour tuning up their layouts – checking track work, adding scenery, making cosmetic improvements in anticipation of the hoped for crowds. Saturday, January 31, 2009, the day of the tour, became a beautiful and busy day for all of us here. The turnout was estimated at between 60 and 80 model railroad enthusiasts from as far away as Temecula and San Luis Obispo. One visitor and his friends logged over 400 miles, but said the tour was worth every mile of it. Veteran modelers and inquiring children rubbed shoulders as they navigated the 14 layouts at 12 different locations. Some of the men brought their wives who showed more enthusiasm than their husbands."

For photos and further information see the latest issue of the Daylight Observation at <http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/newsletters/Q109.pdf>.

Another tour is planned for March 14 & 15, also in conjunction with the Southern California Yahoo Group and in conjunction with the Bakersfield train show. Most Bakersfield layouts will be open only on Sunday the fifteenth.



# LAYOUT DESIGN AND OPERATIONS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS NEWS

By Seth Neumann

The year turned and the SIG events just kept on coming! The annual Bay Area PCR/LD/OP SIG meet was held the weekend of January 24-25. We had about 100 attendees for the clinic, panel and consulting program on Saturday. David Parks organized layout tours (South Bay Friday night, East Bay Saturday night) and Op Sessions on Sunday. We had 6 layouts operating with about 50 operators on Sunday.



My construction crew has been pushing ahead with scenery and electronics with breaks for operation. We ran at the SIG meet and are planning to run twice at BayRails.

There are several layouts about ready to operate in the Bay Area and some of the owners have asked: "What does it take to get your layout ready to operate?" It's a good a question and here are my thoughts:

- Not much: some track and a couple of industries will get you started
- Spending the time on benchwork, track and electrical controls up front as nothing forces you out of the moment like derailments, shorts and electrical problems.
- Some idea of what jobs you want to model (engineers, conductors, dispatcher, yard masters, agents, etc.)
- Some way to control movement cars (switch lists, car cards, tab on car) and an idea of where you want the cars going
- Some way to control train movements (track warrants, Timetables and Train orders, CTC, manual block, yard limits) and a dispatcher if the schemes call for one

- Enough motive power and rolling stock to run the session

It really isn't much, but if you're perplexed and need a hand, send me an email at [sneumann@pacbell.net](mailto:sneumann@pacbell.net) and I'll find someone to help out.

One thing I've discovered is that you need to run a periodic standards checks on your rolling stock (gauge, weight, coupler height). I recently went through my fleet and discovered about 10% of my cars had one or more problems. Best to fix these before the op session!

We have several upcoming Ops and Design related events:

- BayRails 2009, March 19-21, 2009 – This meet is focused on operators traveling to the Bay Area, but we need locals to assist and fill in. Go to [www.bayrails.com](http://www.bayrails.com) for more information. You can join the BayRails helpers list and stay up to date on BayRails activities: [BayrailsHelpers-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:BayrailsHelpers-subscribe@yahogroups.com)
- Rails Across The Bay, Fremont, April 15-19 2008. We'll be holding our traditional Thursday SIG track including LD and OP SIG meetings in the evening.
- Hartford National NMRA convention, July 5 - 11, 2009. See Layout Design Journal 39 the publication of the LD SIG, and the January 2009 Dispatcher's Office or check [www.ldsig.org](http://www.ldsig.org) and [www.opsig.org](http://www.opsig.org) for more details

That's it for now!



# Travelin' Around

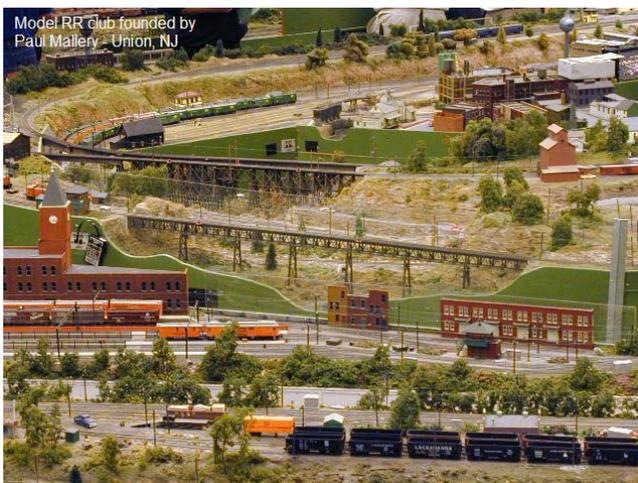
By John Sing, Coast Division

This quarter is a preview of the clinic I'll be giving at upcoming "Rails Across The Bay" PCR 2009 Convention. It's called "John Sing's Worldwide Model / Prototype Railroad Photo Tour" - a tour of American, European, and Asian model and prototype railroad layouts and sites the world over. Gather ideas for future travels - or just save the expense and see it at the convention. Follow the sun, traveling from the East Coast of the US west to Asia and ending in Europe. A fast-paced "you-are-there" photo and multimedia show! Hope to see you at the convention.

### East Coast: Model RR shop,



### Paul Mallery's club,



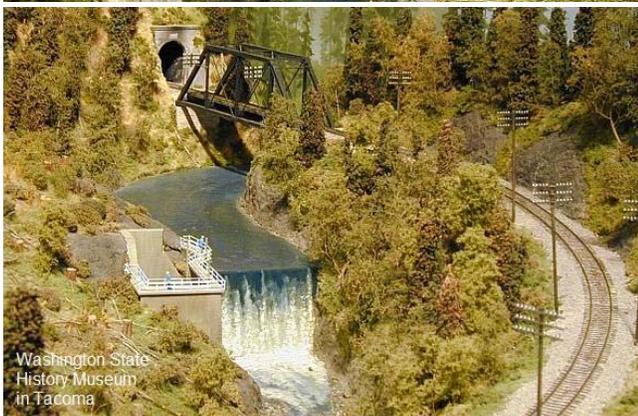
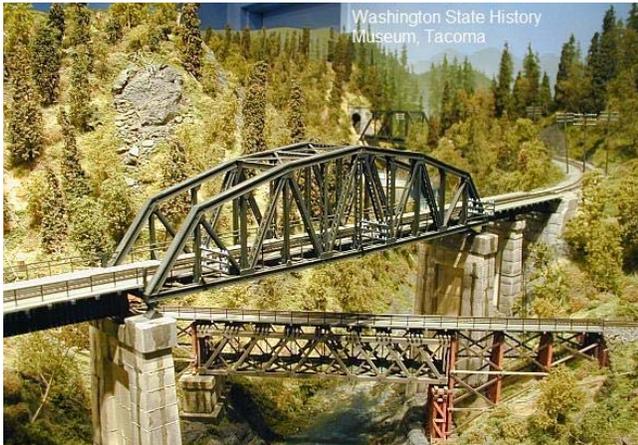
### Paul Dolkos B&M layout Midwest: Caboose Hobbies in Denver:



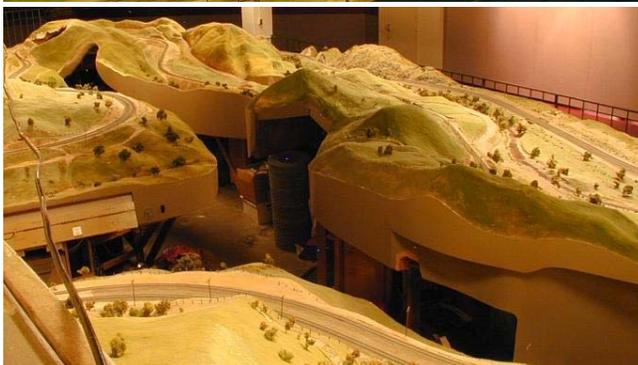
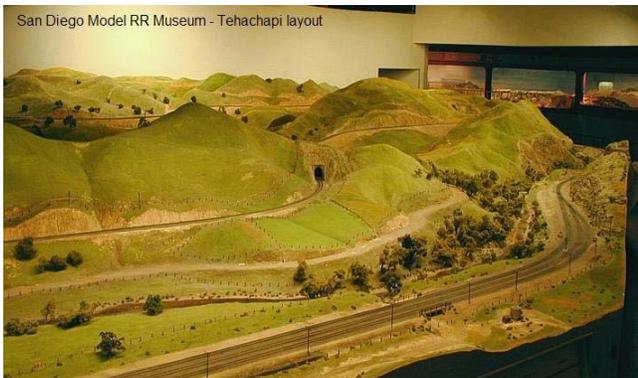
(Continued on page 23)

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### West: Washington State History Museum



### San Diego Model RR Museum



### Across the Pacific to N scale in Hawaii



### A NMRA member's home layout, located on the Hawaii North Shore:



### Japan: Kato Showroom:



(Continued on page 24)

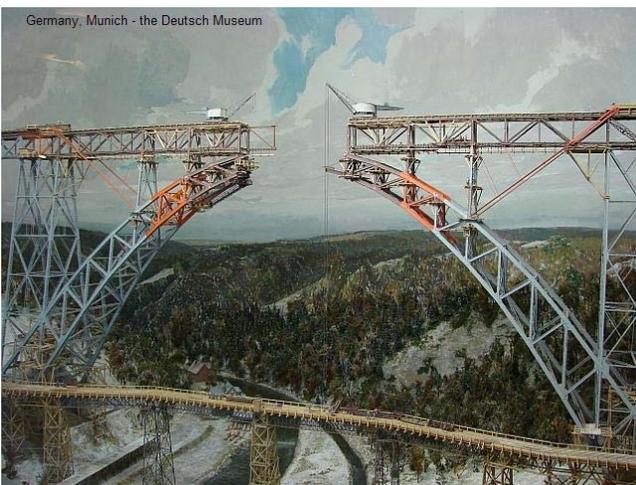
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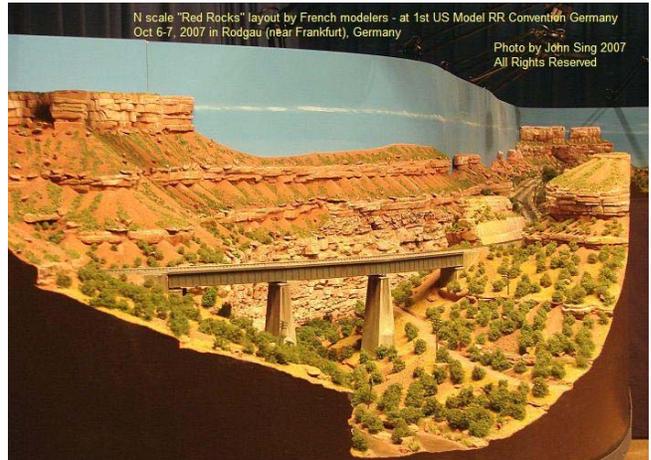
### And then on to Europe: Hamburg Miniature Wonderland



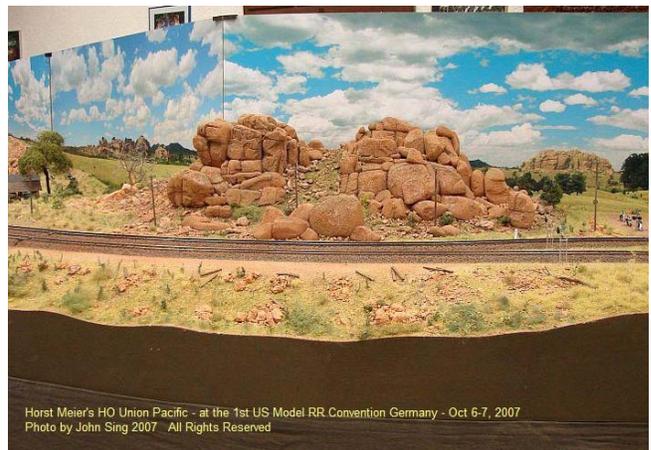
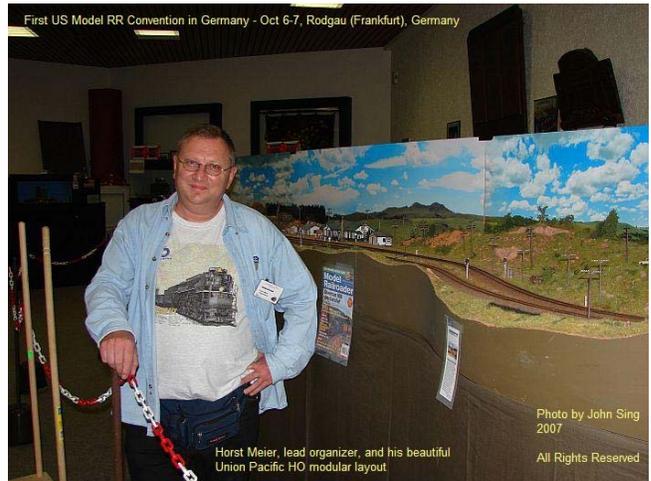
### Munich—the Deutch Museum



### N Scale “Red Rocks” at a US modelers convention



### Horst Meier’s UP modular layout



The PCR Convention is always a great event. Clinics. Layout Tours. Proto Tours. Contest. Fellow local modelers. Come on out for all the events! Invite guests who'd be interested in NMRA! Hope to see you there.

**BAYRAILS  
2009**



BayRails will have finished its third session by the time you read this. In late March seventy people will have spent an intensive weekend operation on most of the operations oriented layouts in the Bay Area. Most flew or drove in, but there were locals involved too.

Dave Adams' D&RGW Durlin Branch, Robert Bowdidge's SP Vasona Branch, Jack Burgess' Yosemite Valley, Cal Central Club's California Central Lines, Jim Dias' Western Pacific 3rd Sub, Steve Hayes' Western Pacific, Bill Kaufman's State Belt, Otis McGee's SP Shasta Division, Don Marenzi's Copper Pass & Western, Seth Neumann's UP Niles Canyon, Bob Osborn's Chicago & Mackinac RR, both David Parks' Western Maryland and his B&O, Kermit Paul's Lone Pine & Tonopah, Jim Providenza's Santa Cruz Northern, Jim Radkey's Pink Lady (BNSF), the Silicon Valley Lines, and John Zach's Sierra RR.

The purpose of BayRails, beside the overall fellowship and fun of operating, is to increase operations in the Bay Area. Every time we have done this there are more layouts open and more people come. See you in two years.



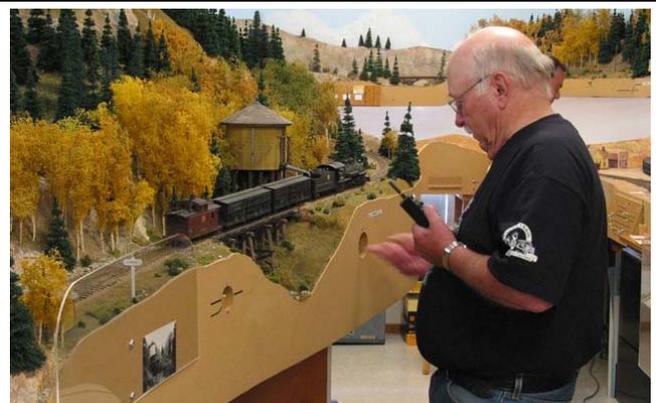
Steve Hays dispatching at Seth Neumann's on a practice run for BayRails



Beautiful tipple at David Parks, one of his two open for BayRails operations



Log loading scene from Jim Dias' WP layout



Jim Vail puzzling out what switch to throw at Dave Adams'

# Spotlight Corner

by Karen Keifer

Welcome to the new 'Spotlight Corner'! This section will introduce you to PCR members and focus on the personal aspect of their lives. I hope you will enjoy reading about other train enthusiasts and hopefully will share your own stories. I would like to encourage all of you to send me your email address so I can send you a questionnaire and possibly 'spotlight' you in one of our future issues!

I will start this first column by introducing myself. My name is Karen Keifer and I'm a fairly new PCR member, joining in 2005. I was born and raised in Fresno and was the middle of three girls. My dad always had me by his side when he was doing a 'project', which was quite often, and taught me all my survival skills. My first building experiences were making bridges for my cars and trucks, which maneuvered around in Mom's flower beds.

After graduating from High School, I went to Beauty College and received my Cosmetology license, which I still have. I raised four children in Clovis and now have five grandchildren, 4-17 years. I also taught piano for 25 years, then took two years of architectural drafting at Fresno City College. Divorce and remarriage necessitated my move to the Sacramento area, where I went to City College for two more years, but changed my major to fashion design.

I now live in Roseville and work as an Instructional Assistant in special education at a middle school. I also care for my 90 year old mother who has lived with me for the past five years.

My interest in model trains began only a few

years ago, when I went to a Roseville train show and fell in love with an N-Scale Mogul, which of course I had to have. From that day, I've just been 'out-of-control' adding more cars and steamers, and more cars! I began making kit structures for my non-existent layout, then began creating my own buildings from scraps, after I couldn't find what I wanted. One of my favorites is the log cabin

I built from dead twigs I found in my yard. Very tedious, but enjoyable!

With encouragement from the employees at the Roseville train shop, I entered several of my structures at the convention in Fresno last year. Then with their encouragement, I went on to the Anaheim National. I really had a good time at both conventions and am now planning my trip to the Hartford, CT Convention next July.

My N-Scale buildings are a long way from the 12<sup>th</sup> scale dollhouses I was making. My five foot (tall) masterpiece is still not finished! Those were taking up too much room, so I scaled down to 144<sup>th</sup>, then to the present 160<sup>th</sup> scale.

I am trying to get more involved with the PCR and am overwhelmed by the friendliness of everyone I have met! I hope everyone will help me make this column a great success and I hope to meet some of you at Fremont in April!

Please email me at [kkkay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kkkay@sbcglobal.net)



# Final Call: Rails Across The Bay, PCR2009

Steve Wesolowki

As you read this, PCR2009's Convention, Rails Across the Bay, at the Silicon Valley Marriott in Fremont, California, is about a month away. Luckily, it also means you still have time to register for all the fun planned!

As I explained in my editorial in this April Railroad Model Craftsman, local conventions like PCR'09 are your Best Buy. After subtracting the value of the included Banquet and Sunday breakfast from a \$99 Registration, your real cost for 3.5 plus days of convention fun is about \$50, less than 1 day at most theme parks! First Timer, Spouse and Youth Registrations are even better deals, after subtracting the same meal values.

Just visit our website, <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2009/> to see all the fun we've planned. 55+ Clinics, 4 days of Layout Tours, many fine Operating Sessions, a Swap Meet, Model and Photo Contests and more! Our website has the most current Daily Schedule, lists all Clinics and other fun, so I won't repeat everything here.

Another Best Buy is our Niles Canyon Railway Steam Train Ride, Shop Tour and Photo Run By for \$25; it even includes a bag lunch! It costs much less than half what NCRy normally charges for any train ride which includes a Photo Run By, and also includes an excellent docent led Brightside Shops tour and bag lunch!

We have enough Niles Canyon Speeder Rides (also only \$25!) to probably have some by the time you read this! They last about an hour, and bring you more Up Close and Personal to

riding the rails than any other form of rail transportation. If you have never ridden a speeder before this is your chance: Do it!

A special feature of PCR2009 is Prototype Operating Sessions where novice operators have first choice, to give all who've never tried operations a chance to enjoy them! Our local Ops SIG's wants to show you how much fun Ops are, hoping to 'hook' you and grow their ranks for even more Ops sessions in their future! The upside is many new operators can sample Prototype Ops, which I know is real fun! If you've ever wanted to try Prototype Ops, this is your chance, with experienced operators available/on hand to help you enjoy and learn easily & quickly.



Another feature of PCR 2009 will be Open Play time and Learning/Help with the John Allen Timesaver, in addition to the usual times to play against the clock. We encourage anyone who wants to learn how to play and enjoy this switching puzzle, because we want to share how fun and educational it can be. Try it!

I also hope everyone attending PCR 2009 brings Model, Photo and/or Show & Tell entries to share, for us to enjoy and learn from. I most enjoy seeing work of those I've never seen before because I always learn something new. So, Please bring some of your favorite Models and Photos for Show & Tell and/or Contest judging.

Also, Donate: If, like most Model Railroaders, you have at least one new/unused RTR model, kit, or book you've realized by now you will not use, consider donating it as a Door

*(Continued on page 28)*

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Prize: maybe an unopened package of evergreen trees or fall color Scenic Foam you'll never use on your Tropical Summer layout. If you donate, we only need items in New/Unused condition. For example, I'm donating a prize I won in a scale I'll never use. Rod Smith, Door Prize Volunteer, recommended I suggest donating books because information is scale independent.

Lastly, please consider donating some time as a Volunteer. Volunteering on line is a new feature of PCR 2009. After downloading the Schedule and planning your RATB "Must Do" fun, if you find an hour (or more) still free, visit our website's Volunteers page. Our Volunteers page lists types of volunteering; you can sign up for something you enjoy doing, like Contest Judging, working the Switching Contest, even hosting in the Non-Rail Hospitality room. To reduce costs, PCR 2009 has No buses, so carpool volunteers are needed, too. Volunteering helps renew old friendships, make new friends, and makes YOUR convention the best it can possibly be.

As my last PCR 2009 Publicity piece, I thank every one who suggested ideas. I hope to see you in Fremont if you can attend: we'll have some train fun! And, file your taxes by April 14, so you won't miss any of RATB!

Steve Wesolowski, Publicity Volunteer



Ray de Blicek and Mike O'Brien operating at Jim Radkey's Pink Lady at a previous BayRails



## Sierra Division Report

By Bob Warner

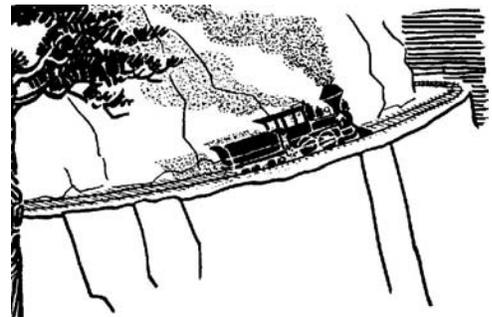
The Sierra Division was well represented at Sacramento's version of "The Great Train Expo" early in January. Many volunteers helped set up the Division's Timesaver switching puzzle, manned the booth for the two days of the show, and transported a display for "Rails Across the Bay," April's Pacific Coast Region annual meeting and trainfest. Many attendees stopped by to check out the switching puzzle and get some information about the NMRA and the PCR convention.

The Timesaver is always a hit with the kids. The littlest ones need some help with the concept and the train handling, but they watch with rapt interest. The older kids catch on quickly and you can almost see the gears working in their heads as they try to plan the moves needed to get the engine and cars through the maze.

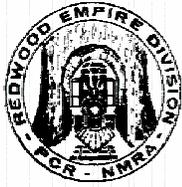
The show featured many booths by sellers from across the region. They offered the typical assortment of new and used trains in all scales, clothing, and railroad related toys for the tots. Even a lonely-looking Boston and Maine Railroad milk car found an eager buyer and was soon reunited with some long lost comrades.

There were also modular setups by operating groups. Perhaps some moms, dads, and kids found the inspiration they needed to get started in building a layout.

Among those helping with the Sierra display were Superintendent Jim Long, Steve Wesolowski, Jim Manley, Joe Melhorn, Karen Kiefer, John Ktallah, Dick Witzen, Jim Reynolds, and Dan Mahoney.



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# Redwood Empire Division Report

By Steve Skold

The Winter Meeting was held in Napa on Saturday Feb 21<sup>st</sup> at the Napa Valley Model RR Club. The meeting opened with short messages from PCR President, Ron Plies and Director Carol Alexander.

Ed Zakareckis called for nominations from the floor for election to Superintendent and Chief Clerk/Paymaster. Incumbents Steve Skold and Dr. Ed Merrin were nominated and nominations were closed. Ballots for the election will be in the next issue of the Callboard. Mary Moore-Campagna set up the refreshment bar with sandwiches and coffee.

The first clinic was presented by award winning modeler, Giuseppe Aymar on filling out the contest forms to maximize the points in contests. He used our new projector and made his first power point presentation including sound effects. The second clinic was by Mary Moore-Campagna on how to prepare and present a clinic. She was doing this as a preview for the clinic she is presenting at Fremont at the PCR Convention in April. If you want to learn how to do a clinic, do not miss hers at Fremont.

We did our popular Show and Tell feature where people bring models and photos and in this case, a painting and explain what they have done. Those participating were: Brice Benson, Giuseppe Aymar, Tom Swearingen, George Bush, Steve Skold and Dr. Ed Merrin. Special door prize winners were Stu Benson who won a \$25 gift certificate to the Loose Caboose and Dave Croshere winner of a black and white print by Don Cabrall that was donated by Liz Cabrall.

We had one new member join us. He had just joined NMRA and got our Callboard and decided to drive down from Sea Ranch to see what we were about. He won a regular door prize so we hope to see him at our next meeting.

Our next meeting will be May 16<sup>th</sup> at Monroe

Hall in Santa Rosa. Jerry Porter will be giving a clinic on designing a layout using the Northwestern Pacific as the prototype. We will also have our annual meeting and election of officers at that time. Our special door prize for May will be a one year subscription to the Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette donated by Bob Brown.

## GUY DUNSCOMB BOOKS

by Ed Leisse

At the 2008 PNR convention in Chilliwack, BC, I found a vendor at their train show selling some books that someone in PCR might like to have in his/her collection. These are all books by Guy Dunscomb with two of them co-authored with Fred Stindt. All of them are inscribed to the grandfather of the vendor's wife. The grandfather was an SP telegrapher until the job was eliminated and he became a claims adjuster.

The books are: 1) *Western Pacific Steam Locomotives, Passenger Trains and Cars* by Dunscomb and Stindt, 1st printing of 2300 copies, 4/12/80, signed by both authors. \$175.00 US; 2) *Northwestern Pacific Railroad* by Dunscomb and Stindt, 1st edition, 11/1/64, signed by Dunscomb. \$125.00 US; 3) *A Century of Southern Pacific Steam Locomotives* by Dunscomb, copyright 1963, signed by Dunscomb, includes SP maps. \$210.00 US; and 4) *Locomotives of the Western Pacific* by Dunscomb, softcover, signed by Dunscomb 10/18/54, includes an original flyer for the book. Excellent condition. \$75.00 US.

The first three books are hard cover with slip covers. The SP slip cover has some minor tears at the edges. If you're interested in any or all of these books, please contact me ([eeliesse@aol.com](mailto:eeliesse@aol.com)) for the e-mail address of the vendor. He is open to offers. The prices being asked all seem reasonable from the quick checking I did on the internet.



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Fill out this form, include your payment of \$9.95 (U.S. funds only) and mail it to: NMRA - Rail Pass Membership, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119. Or sign up online at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org).

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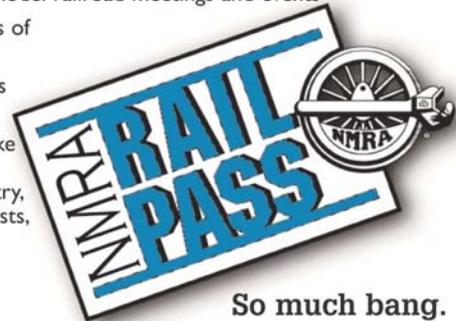
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\*Rail Pass offer is good in the U.S. only and is for new members and those who have not been NMRA members for two years or more. Individuals can only join at Rail Pass rates one time; membership renewal will be at the regular membership rate. Rail Pass members can vote, attend conventions and participate in contests, but cannot hold office and will not receive a New Member Pak.

- Have easy access to one of the world's largest railroad libraries...which includes over 100,000 prototype photos, 6,000 books, and over 50,000 modeling, prototype and historical society magazines
- Experience the fellowship and fun of getting modeling help and discussing the hobby with other members in your area
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- Get admission to local model railroad meetings and events
- Receive 6 monthly issues of *Scale Rails* magazine
- Have access to standards info and data sheets
- Be a part of programs like "Modeling With The Masters," the Pike Registry, Estate Counseling, contests, clinics, the Achievement Program and more!



Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) to see what you're missing!

**So much bang. So few bucks.**

## 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. (Double-track main, single-track main with sidings, and block or command control).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Provide one additional electrical feature such as powered turnouts, signaling, turnout indication lighted buildings, etc.

Member \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA# \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Scale \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Pike \_\_\_\_\_

# Club Info

**ALAMEDA COUNTY CENTRAL RAILROAD SOCIETY**  
ACCRS is located at the Alameda Co. Fair Grounds, Pleasanton. A 30 by 100 foot room has O and HO layouts. Open to the public every Friday, 6 to 10 PM, they operate continuously during county fairs and special events. Annual dues: \$24, \$15 initiation fee; Jr membership for ages 12 to 18 (with sponsor), free. Contact: Gary Lewis 925-455-8135 E-mail: glgslewis@comcast.net  
Web: [www.pleasantonmodelrr.org/index.html](http://www.pleasantonmodelrr.org/index.html)

## **ANTIOCH MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The Black Diamond Lines is an HO club located at 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch. Scenery is 95% complete and there is a lot of operating action. In 2006 we celebrated our 25th year of operation (anniversary cars available). We meet Tues. and Fri., 7:30 to 10:00 PM. Runs are the 3rd Fri. of the month. Contact: President Tom Lutrel, 925-609-7093

Web: [www.blackdiamondlines.org](http://www.blackdiamondlines.org)

## **BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

BANTrak MRC invites N scale modelers to visit us at the Wells Fargo Express Room, Southern Pacific Railroad depot, 902 Loring Ave., Crockett, on Wed. and Sat., 10 AM to 3 PM. Contact: Bob Lewis, 925-283-6838

E-mail: [BobLewis1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:BobLewis1@sbcglobal.net).

## **BAY AREA Z MODULE COOPERATIVE**

BAZ is a group in the SF Bay Area interested in developing and displaying Z scale modules. Members are building them to the "Z-Bend Track" Module miniModuleZ specs Anyone in Northern California interested in Z Scale railroading is welcome to join us. We meet Sundays 10 AM to 5 PM at members' houses.

Contact: Robert Ray [pray59@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pray59@sbcglobal.net)

Yahoo group: [groups.yahoo.com/group/BAZ\\_modules](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BAZ_modules)

## **CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The CCMRC is located in the old Agnew depot (Santa Clara) of the Southern Pacific (4185 Bassett St.) directly across from the Lafayette St. gate of Agnew State Hospital. The theme of the 15' x 50' HO club is western railroading running from the Bay Area to Southern Oregon. We meet Fri., 7:30 to 11 PM. Operating sessions the 1st and last Fri. of the month. Contact: 408-988-4449 (operating nights), or Wayne Cohen, 408-779-0707.

## **CARQUINEZ MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY**

Formerly the Vallejo Model Railroad Club, we moved from the Solano Co. Fairgrounds, and are developing a track plan to fit our 36' x 60' room, located on the 2nd floor of the Odd Fellows (IOOF) Lodge, 645 Loring Ave. We are deciding if we will model a prototype or freelance road. We meet Wed., 7:00 to 10:00 PM. Contact: 510-787-6703 (recorder) Mail: P.O. Box 4057, Vallejo, CA 94590-0405

E-mail: [LoggingRR@aol.com](mailto:LoggingRR@aol.com) or [LambertRP61@comcast.net](mailto:LambertRP61@comcast.net) Place "Carquinez Model RR Society" in subject line.

Web: [www.CarquinezMRS.org](http://www.CarquinezMRS.org)

## **COASTAL VALLEY LINES**

The CVL is an informal association of novice to advanced model railroaders who live in Sonoma County. We meet at 7:00 PM the 1st Thu. of the month. We operate our HO modular railroad at local public shows. Contact: Brad Squires, 707-568-4298 or Don Hanesworth, 707-823-9615 Web: <http://cvl.hobby-site.com>

## **EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS**

The Eel River Valley is an HO club with a NWP-layout series of modules under construction. We meet Fri., 7:30 PM at the

Humboldt County Fair Grounds Commercial Building NW corner, Ferndale. Contact: Ron Plies, 707-725-9063 Mail: P.O. Box 950, Fortuna, CA 95540

## **ELSIE**

The Left Coast (Elsie) HO30 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, 661-322-7955; John Spelce in Martinez, 925-228-3279; or Ken Lunders in Cupertino, 408-777-9572.

## **EMPIRE BUILDERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB (Oakland)**

Starting over after a warehouse fire destroyed our layout, we are a small friendly group now constructing an HO layout of no specific origin based in the early 50's era. The mountain division is laid and operating, with a reasonable size yard well along in construction. Work days are Saturday and during summer Tuesday nights. Us retired members also show up occasional weekdays. Centrally located by I580 and 35th Ave. Dues \$10! Call 510 339 0550 (Bob) for an invite to see/chat/join....

## **GOLDEN EMPIRE HISTORICAL & MODELING**

**SOCIETY**, Bakersfield GEHAMS, founded in 1987 and in their current location since March '94, is dual-scale with a 30' x 100' HO, and a 18' x 80' N based on SP's route from Bakersfield to Mojave with Tehachapi Loop. Though under construction, mainlines are in with monthly operations. Contact: Doug Wagner 661-589-0391 email: [carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com)

GEHAMS web: [www.gehams.com](http://www.gehams.com)

## **GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM -- EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY**

The Museum is located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park at Point Richmond. Visit us during weekly public hours as shown on our website or to meet members, inquire about membership and behind the scenes tours come Friday evenings between 7:30 and 10 PM (first Fridays are meetings); behind the scenes tours are also available most Wednesdays between 11 AM and 3 PM when work is going on. New members are welcomed in all Scales – O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction. For general information check the website or call (510) 234-4884 (recording); for membership inquiries call (510) 236-1913 (to 8 PM). For other information or to schedule special events, email PR Director and Museum Secretary John Edginton:

[publicity@gsmrm.org](mailto:publicity@gsmrm.org). Website: [www.gsmrm.org](http://www.gsmrm.org).

## **HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The HB&EMRC meets at their clubhouse and layout at 10 West 7th St., Suite #C in Eureka, on Sat., 7:00 PM. Visitors are always welcome. Business meetings the 1st Sat of the month, 7:30 PM. Contact: David Berriman P.O. Box 915, Arcata, CA 95518 707-825-7689

## **MOTHER LODE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The MMRC meets every Mon., 11:00 AM in the old historic primary school building in Sutter Creek. Additional open houses are normally held the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM. We are a fully DCC operating HO club with a large layout. Contact: Joe Stafford, 209-245-5016

## **NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Located at The Napa Valley Expo, (fairgrounds), 575 Third St., Napa, our railroad runs from Napa to Ukiah with off line

*(Continued on page 34)*

(Continued from page 33)

connections to Stockton and Portland, has 700 feet of main line, and large classification yards at each end. The layout is never finished, as we are always rebuilding and improving! Era is 1940 to present. Member-owned rolling stock stresses reliability and realism. We meet Fri. 7:30 PM to 12, with formal runs the 2nd Fri. of the month. Info: John Rodgers 707-226-2985 E-mail: NapaJohn@napanet.net Web: www.nvmrc.org

#### **Nn3 ALLIANCE**

Our 700 members in nine countries model narrow gauge in "smaller scales". Nn3 describes 3', 3'6", and meter gauges, modeled in N or 2MM Scales. Our local portable exhibition layouts and modules regularly appear at conventions and shows. The Nn3 Handbook, 140 pages with 400 illustrations, covering all aspects of small scale narrow gauge, is available through the address on the web site. Official mailing address: The Nn3 Alliance, PO Box 6652, Chesterfield, MO 63006

Web: www.Nn3.org <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nn3/>

#### **SACRAMENTO MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Ave., Sacramento. Modeled as the Sierra Central RR, both HO and HOn3 layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Tues. and Fri. nights, 7:30 PM. Contact: 916-927-3618 E-mail: d.megeath@comcast.net Web: www.smrhs.com

#### **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. Contact: Dick Witzens, 916-684-1987

Web: <http://saccentral.railfan.net/>

#### **SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY**

The SJVGRS was founded in July of 1995 to promote the joy of building and operating Garden Railways. We have grown to over 70 families in the Central Valley, meeting monthly at members' homes to spend the afternoon sharing our hobby, weather permitting. Dues: \$25 a year for a family. Contact info: Richard Emerson 559-439-7173 E-mail: emerson.r@worldnet.att.net Web: <http://home.att.net/~sjvgrs/train/>

#### **SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY**

The SLHRS models the SP 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, located at 1302 Orchard Ave., San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions Sat. 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM and Tues. 7:30 - 9:30 PM, business meetings the 1st Fri. at 7:30 PM. Contact: Pat LaTorres, 510-276-3121 E-mail: duhnerd@pacbell.net

#### **SAN LUIS OBISPO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

SLOMRA members are actively engaged in HO, N, O and On30 scales. Work & run sessions on our N-scale modular layout monthly, and we are actively seeking new members to join us! Evening meetings on the 3rd Mon. of every month - 7pm at the Oceano Depot in Oceano. Contact info: Web: www.slomra.org

Email: info@slomra.org. Emailing list: [groups.yahoo.com/group/SLOMRA](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SLOMRA). Jim Keating 805-458-8734

#### **SILICON VALLEY LINES**

The SVL is located at 148 E. Virginia St., San Jose. We meet Fri. 7:30 to 11:30 PM, with business meetings the 1st Fri. and operating sessions the last Fri. of the month. Our HO layout utilizing DCC for realistic operations, computer-generated train orders and radio-based dispatching. E-mail: svl@siliconvalleylines.com Web: www.siliconvalleylines.com

#### **SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY**

SBHRS invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Ave., Santa Clara, Tues. 7:00 to 10:00 PM or Sat. 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Contact: 408-243-3969

#### **SOUTH COAST SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS**

We meet every 3rd Tues. at 7:30 PM, and other times. The club has no address, but consists of enthusiasts of all scales and prototypes in the Santa Barbara area, and has a collection of railroad books and videos for loan to members. Activities include operations and work sessions at member layouts, and field trips. Membership is \$2 per month. Contact: Secretary Walter Naumann, 805-564-1359 E-mail: WINaumann@aol.com

#### **SISKIYOU MODEL RAILROAD CLUB,**

located at the Yreka Western RR Depot, 300 East Miner St., Yreka, CA 96097. Passenger operations, and club layout open, begin June 7, Wednesdays thru Sundays. at about 10:00 am. Meeting Night is Thursdays at 7:00 pm. Exit 775 from I-5. Info Glenn Joesten, 530-340-2537 or Tom Brass, 530-842-4921, or email glenn476@4fast.net

#### **TIDEWATER SOUTHERN RAILWAY HISTORICAL**

**SOCIETY INC.**, Manteca, formerly the Manteca Model RR Club (org '73), TSRHS reorganized and incorporated in 1990. Located at the San Joaquin Fairgrounds, Building 1, (corner of Airport and Charter Ways (Hw 4), Stockton), a 2,400 sq. ft. alcove houses a large HO layout depicting the Tidewater Southern, several Valley towns, and museum display cases. We meet 6 - 8:30 PM Thursdays. Contact: Ben Cantu, 209-825-7215 Mail: PO Box 882, Manteca, CA 95336 E-mail: bcantu@SQ50.com

#### **TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The TCSME is temporarily without a home or layouts. The Niles Depot in Fremont is being moved by the City of Fremont back to its original location in downtown Niles. It will be part of the new Niles Plaza complex. We are in the process of designing new HO and N scale layouts. The N scale layout will be in the Niles Depot with an expanded footprint. The HO scale layout will be housed in the renovated Niles Freight Building, also part of the new Niles Plaza. We are looking for new members that are interested in helping us design, build, and run on the new layouts. Please contact Stanley Keiser, 510-791-1504, sbkeiser@juno.com for more information. Also visit our website at <http://nilesdepot.railfan.net>.

#### **WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY**

The WCMRS, located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, is open the last Fri. of the month from 8 to 10 PM for operations. Fares are \$2 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$3 for adults. Membership is always open to interested HO modelers. Contact: 925-937-1888 (recorder) Web: www.wcmrs.org

#### **WEST BAY MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**

meets at the former baggage building near the Menlo Park Railroad Station. The address is 1090 Merrill Street next to the tracks. The club meets every Wednesday from 7-10pm. Business meetings are on the second Wednesdays of the month and operating sessions, open to the public, are on the fourth Wednesdays. There are O, S, and HO Scales on a large layout. Our Annual Christmas Show is held on the second weekend of December. Admission is free. Donations are greatly appreciated. Contact: West Bay Model RR Association 650-322-0685 and visit our web site at : [home.earthlink.net/~pesce/westbay.htm](http://home.earthlink.net/~pesce/westbay.htm)

If you would like your club listed, send a brief description and contact information to whk58@pacbell.net or Bill Kaufman, 32 Salvador Way, San Rafael, CA 94903

# CALLBOARD - PCR

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)			
• President	Ron Plies, MMR	(707) 725-9063	ron@ronpliesinsurance.com
• Vice-President	Pat LaTorres	(510) 317-7456	duhnerd@pacbell.net
• Treasurer	Larry Altbaum	(925) 736-8160	emerbaum@msn.com
• Secretary	Rich Kolm	(510) 538-8973	IronhorseK@comcast.net
• Director, Daylight Division	John Houlihan	(559) 435-0874	oscalejohn@gmail.com
• Director, Coast Division	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
• Director, Sierra Division	Mary Moore-Campagna	(415) 672-4806	marycmoore@campagna.com
• Director, Redwood Empire Div.	Carol Alexander	(707) 537-8108	carolnma@msn.com
• Director, Hawaiian Division	Eric Minton	(808) 947-5147	train@ericminton.biz
ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT			
• Manager	Ron Plies, MMR	(707) 725-9063	ron@ronpliesinsurance.com
• Budget & Finance Committee	[President, Vice President, and Treasurer]		
• By-Laws & Manual Comm. Chair.	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Ballot Committee Chairperson	Jim Providenza	(415) 472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
• Honors Committee Chairperson	Ray deBlieck	(510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com
• Storekeeper	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Audit Committee Chairperson	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT			
• Manager	Doug Wagner	(661) 589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
• Member Services Chairperson	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRC@aol.com
• Asst. Member Services Chair.	Jim Long	(530) 676-1798	jimclong@sbcglobal.net
• Membership Promotion Chair.	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Aid Committee Chair.	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
• Education Committee Chair.	Chuck Mitchell	(925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• Special Interests Coord. Chair	Dave Parks	(650) 961-7644	bearwestern@comcast.net
PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT			
• Manager	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Editor, <i>Branch Line</i>	Bill Kaufman	(415) 491-0543	whk58@pacbell.net
• Webmaster	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	khurley@pcrnmra.org
CONVENTION DEPARTMENT			
• Manager	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
• 2009 Fremont -- Chairperson	Chuck Mitchell	(925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• 2010 Reno/Sparks -- Chairperson	Raymond Rich	(775) 358-8571	ray@ritch.net
• 2011 Santa Rosa -- Chairperson	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
CONTEST DEPARTMENT			
• Manager (see Div. chairs below)	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM DEPARTMENT			
• Manager (see Div. chairs below)	Jack Burgess, MMR	(510) 797-9557	jack@yosemitevalleyr.com
NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT			
• Manager	Mary Moore-Campagna	(415) 672-4806	marycmoore@campagna.com
DAYLIGHT DIVISION			
• Superintendent	Dave Grenier	(559) 297-1345	grenida@pacbell.net
• Chief Clerk & Paymaster	Suzanne Paff	(559) 645-5145	suzanpaff@comcast.net
• Editor, <i>Daylight Observation</i>	Chuck Harmon	(559) 299-4385	harmonsta@aol.com
• Contest Chairperson	Bill Scott	(559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Dave Grenier	(559) 297-1345	grenida@pacbell.net
• Membership	Doug Wagner	(661) 589-0391	carldw@aol.com
• Member Aid (Key Contact)	Bob Pethoud	(559) 438-7705	pethoud@comcast.net
COAST DIVISION			
• Superintendent	John Marshall	(925) 461-0206	ntrak@sbcglobal.net
• Chief Clerk	Tom Crawford	(510) 790-0371	Crawford.Tom@sbcglobal.net
• Paymaster	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRC@aol.com
• Editor, <i>Coast Dispatcher</i>	Tom Crawford	(510) 790-0371	Crawford.Tom@sbcglobal.net
• Contest Chairperson	John Sing	(650) 372-0765	singj@us.ibm.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Kermit Paul, MMR	(925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Membership	(vacant)	---	---
• Member Aid (Key Contact)	Rod Smith	(510) 657-3362	Railgeezer@aol.com
SIERRA DIVISION			
• Superintendent	Jim Long	(530) 676-1798	jimclong@sbcglobal.net
• Chief Clerk	Bob Warner	(916) 772-7502	bwarner1@softcom.net
• Paymaster	Al Rowe	(916) 961-9911	hofunar@aol.com
• Editor, <i>Short Line</i>	Don Schmitt	(530) 742-0929	dschmitt911@aol.com
• Contest Chairperson	Norman Morris	(530) 872-3894	normanmorris@sbcglobal.net
• Achievement Program Chair.	Dave Bayless	(530) 887-8880	davebay@pacbell.net
REDWOOD EMPIRE DIVISION			
• Superintendent	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Chief Clerk & Paymaster	Ed Merrin	(707) 542-3620	edmerrin@earthlink.net
• Editor, <i>Callboard</i>	John Rolston	(707) 938-5478	jrolston@pacbell.net
• Contest Chairperson	Giuseppe Aymar	(707) 584-1477	Giuseaymar@aol.com
• Achievement Program Chair.	Harold Mentzer	(707) 226-5153	HSMentzer@aol.com
• Membership	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
HAWAIIAN DIVISION			

Hawaiian Division offices and positions are currently vacant.

BRANCH LINE  
530 FIG TREE LANE  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

# Calendar

April 4 & 5, 2009 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Spring Train Show and Open House, South Bay Historical Railroad Society, Santa Clara Caltrain Station, Santa Clara, CA. (408) 243-3969.

April 4 & 5, 2009 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, 2009 Annual Spring Show, Black Diamond Lines Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA April 4th only - 8:00 am to 12:00 pm - Swap Meet

April 15 to 19, 2009 - Rails Across the Bay 2009 - PCR Convention, Marriott Fremont Silicon Valley, 46100 Landing Pkwy, Fremont, CA.

May 2, 2009 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm - Daylight Division Meet, Marlin Costello's home, Fresno, CA. White Elephant Auction, Clinics, Layout Tours

May 8, 2009 - Sierra Division Meet, Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society, 1990 Grand Ave, Sacramento, CA.

May 16, 2009 - Redwood Empire Division Meet

June 7, 2009 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Coast Division Meet, Buchser Middle School, Santa Clara, CA

June 13 and 14, 2009 - Coast Tours - North East Bay Area.

July 5 to 11, 2009 - Hartford National 2009 NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Hartford, CT

