



Coast Dispatcher

#196

June 2017

Coast Division Web Site: <http://www.pcrnmra.org/coast>

Pacific Coast Region Web Site: <http://www.pcrnmra.org>

Next Coast Division Event

June 4, 2017

Boy Scouts of America Headquarters

1001 Davis St, San Leandro, CA.

9:00 AM.....Doors open. Free Door Prizes.

9:30 AM.....Get Auction Cards.

10:00 AM....."Re-motoring and Re-gearing Brass Locomotives" by Ray Davis

11:00 AM....."Timbered Tunnels" by John Stutz

11:15 AM Model Railroading Round Table moderated by Howard McKinney. Bring your issues and questions.

12 Noon.....Business Meeting

~12:30 PM* ...Model/Photo Contest Results

~12:45 PM* ...Auction starts, Roundtable continues

3:30 PM.....Timesaver Results,. Afterward Auction continues if required

9:30 AM – 12:15 PM:

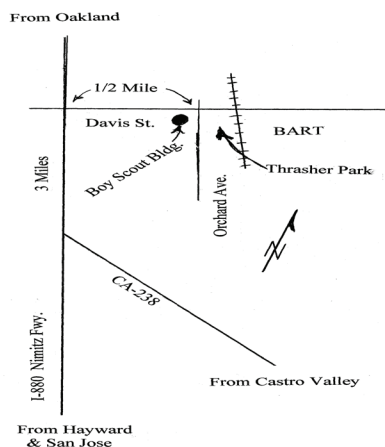
Model Contest– Diesel and others, Freight Cars, Display/Diorama and Caboose

Photo Contest– Favorite Photos

Allen Fenton Timesaver Switching Contest (until 3:15)

* Contest results immediately after business meeting. Auction actually starts immediately after contest results.

Directions to the Boy Scout Headquarters



From the North:

Take Highway 880 south.

Take Exit 34, Davis St.

Turn Left on Davis. Go 0.7 miles to the BSA Headquarters, 1001 Davis St.

From the South:

Take Highway 880 North

Take Exit 34, Davis St.

Turn Right on Davis St. Go 0.7 miles to the BSA Headquarters, 1001 Davis St.

Coast Call Board

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Editor's Notes.**Model Railroader Magazines**

We received a donation from California Trolley and Railroad Corp (CTRC.org) of hundreds of Model Railroader magazines dating back to 1941 and going to 2001.

Some are in binders, and some are loose.

We will be auctioning them off at the June Coast Event. In the box or bag they came in. We will have a list of what is in each one.

Any which do not get bought will be donated to the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society.

Quartermaster Needed

We need a new quartermaster. See our Superintendent's article on this on page 7.

Dispatcher Issue 200

You may have noticed that I have started putting the issue number on the Dispatchers again. Issue #1 of the Coast Dispatcher was issued in August 1968 (equivalent to our September issue). Issue 200 will be the June, 2018 issue. We will be working with people to make issue 200 memorable (whatever that means.)

Stay tuned.

Coast Division Superintendent Report

By Doug Smith

You may notice a new name at the top of this column. One of the outcomes from the March 5th event was the election of officers. Bob Ferguson was re-elected to the Paymaster position, Dan Rom is our new Chief Clerk, and I was elected as Superintendent. Thanks to everyone for your support and encouragement. It should be both fun and challenging. Thanks to Frank Markovich for his 4 years of service as Superintendent and for enabling a smooth transition for me. He continues as our Director on the PCR board.

The March event at the Alameda Elks Lodge was another success. Attendance was a bit lower than the recent normal with 74 folks, 68 from Coast, 4 from RED and 2 Sierra members. The clinics were excellent as usual. Mike Blumensaadt and Frank Markovich demonstrated layout construction with foam materials, and Pete Birdsong walked us through an On30 locomotive scratch build. Howard McKinney led a Modelers' Roundtable group downstairs. The business meeting included Dave Connery conducting the election of the new Division officers listed above. Several announcements were made regarding final plans for the PCR Convention in Bakersfield in mid-April. Display and contest participants were recognized, more on that in a few pages. Also welcome to our new members Dakota Szabo and Richard Greenspun. Please feel free to ask questions of any of the officers or members. Introduce yourself around the room every chance you get.

The auction went very smoothly thanks to our dedicated auction committee. About 500 items crossed the block, most finding ways to a new home. A new procedure was tried for this auction, eliminating the "No Bid Table" sales at the end of the day. That worked very well, enabling both buyers and sellers were able to check out more efficiently at the end of the day. We will continue with that procedure in June. So if you want to bid on something, follow along with the proceedings and be ready on your item when it comes up. Bob Ferguson has a column further along in this issue about this and other auction news. Make sure you give it a read.

One other change is that Earl Girbovan is stepping up as the Coast Division achievement program chairman. Earl is an accomplished modeler and had been instrumental in the recent modeling clinics held by the Division. He is also a regular judge and entrant at PCR convention contests. Many thanks are also extended to Kermit Paul for his service to the Division in this capacity since 2002.

Next up was the PCR convention in Bakersfield. There were 174 attendees, 58 from Coast Division, as of Friday afternoon. Great clinics, well organized tours of large and small layouts, good food at the hotel and in town - all the things you'd expect at a PCR. Layouts hosting operating sessions ranged from Robert Pethoud's 3-module switching empire at the hotel with a clever switching scheme and eye-catching scenery to the Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society (GEHAMS) in town where 50 car HO consists look just right in the impressive main-line scenes and working through the smooth running yards. I've got a lot of clinic notes and pictures to go through, and quite a few new things to try. There were a lot of smiles as folks got off the bus from the Tehachapi Loop tour. A very impressive contest room produced 10 merit awards. Also a lot of smiles at the welcome reception and dinner Wednesday evening at Temblor Brewery, a quality micro-brewery in town. A great job by all of the committee volunteers from all of the PCR divisions, thanks to all. Planning is well underway for next year's gathering in Rohnert Park. Even a year out it looks like the team has good things in store for us.

All for now. Hope to see everyone June 4th in San Leandro.

Director's Report

Frank Markovich

The PCR board met in Bakersfield. Following are some of the highlights of the board meeting and the general meeting.

Proposal to have Division Superintendents become voting members of the PCR failed by a 47 to 42 vote with 2/3rd's voting yes to approve the proposal. This was just 53% for.

Board approved PCR co-sponsoring a number of events such as the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Sacramento in 2019 and the Bay Area Prototype Modelers.

Next year's convention will be in Rohnert Park the first week in April.

Decided to go with electronic voting moving forward. This was discussed at length and as it stands groups in the NMRA that have gone to electronic voting have increased participation by orders of magnitude.

Member of the Year for the Coast Division was Mike Blumensaadt.

Discussion of using Constant Contact for email to members – a final decision was not made yet.

Decided to get something new to display the photos. The current racks are hard to move and hard to store. If someone has a good replacement let us know.

Will be asking for members of the Coast to help out with the NMRA National in Santa Clara. Just a few years away. Get your layouts ready.

Had a couple from the National talk about some issues such as recruitment and retention. I was on that National committee. More to follow.

The PCR convention went very well. Lots of clinics and some great layouts. Contest room was full of models and photos along with arts and crafts.

We have a few things coming up such as O Scale West – Memorial Day weekend. My layout will be open on May 26th from 7:00 PM until 9:30 PM. It will be open for the convention and for others. Address: 1904 Chula Vista Dr., Belmont, CA 94002.

Auction Report

John Ameling

Here is the Auction Committee report for the March 5th 2017 Division Train Event and the Board of Operations meeting on Jan 9th

Total Items Sold	372
No Bid Items	137
Auction net	\$ 418.50

At our last meet the Auction Crew was dealing with several problems which the board feels needs some correcting. There are several related items I would like to discuss with you, as Coast Division members.

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Help needed – We need at least one additional member to work “behind the Auction Committee” – moving items to the back table after the bidding into the appropriate buyers pile or the “no-bid” sellers pile. If you are willing to help see either John Ameling, Auction Chairman or myself. This help is important and if we cannot find someone to step up and regularly help at this task we will have to slow down the auction to prevent mistakes from being made.

Item quality – the number of “no-bid” items have been noticeably increasing in recent auctions. One of the reasons is we have seen a growth in “junk items” – things that no longer are needed by the seller and are things no one really wants. If we want the auction to remain vibrant it is up to all sellers to be sure the items they are offering for sale will be attractive to prospective buyers. The nature of our hobby is changing and things that might have attracted a minimum bid in years past are no longer viable in today’s hobby.

Buying “no-bid” items - Items that are “no-bid” and then purchased off the “no-bid” table cause delays for the Auction Committee and can lead to mistakes. As of the March Meet we no longer sell “no-bid” items for the starting bid. Once an item has passed through the bidding process that item is complete and it returns to the seller. If you want an item you need to be alert and bid on the item when it is offered

Thanks

John Ameling
Auction Committee Chair

Pricing Your Auction Items

Bob Ferguson

What has prompted this article? Well, as the Division Paymaster and the person entering all of the auction transactions into the computer, I have seen a marked increase in the number of auction items that do not receive a single bid (a no-bid item). This observation at the last meet prompted the auction accounting committee to review the items on the no-bid table near the end of the auction and the quantity was staggering. There were some items of value for more than \$1.00 but simply no one was interested in them or the starting (minimum) bid was too high. But the majority of the no-bid items were truly not worth even \$1.00.

What is the solution? Packaging your unwanted trains, train parts, tools, electronics, etc. to be the most appealing to the Coast Division members in attendance at an auction is the solution. So you ask, how can I be sure that my items will sell? This is a question that every member placing items in the Coast Division auction seems to ask themselves...well, at least they should be! Remember, you’re putting these items up for auction because you don’t want them anymore and the last thing you want to do with them is take them back home.

So, what do I have to do to be sure they will sell? First thing to remember is that the minimum bid for any auction item in our auctions is \$1.00. Keeping that in mind, look at your items and ask yourself if YOU would pay at least a dollar for the item you are entering. If you won’t pay a dollar for it, then most likely no one else will either and you are taking it home. Again, how can I be sure that it will sell? If the item isn’t worth a dollar, then package it with another or several other items that will ensure that it will be desirable

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to someone. The adage that “One man’s junk is another man’s treasure” is very applicable to auction items; but it has to look and feel like a bargain to the bidder.

If you have a bunch of old electronics parts to sell, remember there are not many modelers who dabble in electronics parts. You will need to enhance the value of those parts with something of general interest to several people; like adding a car kit or two along with the electronics item. Remember, YOU don’t want to take it home; you want someone else to do that.

On the other end of the minimum bid spectrum, placing a minimum bid at or near retail value will not garner any bids. Setting a minimum bid that is near retail simply says to a potential bidder that you really don’t want to sell the item. If you have a Athearn “Blue Box” locomotive that cost \$16.98 and you put a minimum bid of \$20 on it, you don’t really want to sell it. Be realistic with your minimum bids.

In today’s environment, eBay and deep discount internet retailers are handling the resale of nice, high value items. These venues are keeping most of the brass models and expensive plastic models away from our auctions. We are left with the lower value items that our members still want to sell. In order to sell your items you must do all that you can to make them at least appear to have a value worth bidding on.

Because of the large number of no-bid items, we have had to eliminate the sale of no-bids during and after the auction. It has become too difficult and time consuming to locate the desired item in the piles of no-bids. The best way to ensure that you get that item is to pay attention to the auction and bid on it when the item is active with the auctioneer. Let’s say the item you want is item 250 and the auction is at item 75, you want to duck out for a smoke, lunch or conversation, ask a friend to come and get you when item 240 goes up for auction. It is not the auction committee’s fault if you miss the item you couldn’t live without. We (the auction committee) miss a lot of items we want because we are too busy moving sold and no-bid items to the tables or recording the sales. We see the item pass by us after the item has been sold.

The auctions at every meet are nearly the sole supporting activity of the Coast Division. The only other income is the net from the food service and the NMRA rebate of about \$400 per year. That will pay for one of four meeting sites. The auction supports the other three meeting sites (yes, we pay to rent the space), the postcard meeting notices (\$600/year), contest awards, etc. Packaging your auction items to sell provides the Coast Division with 10% of what it sold for.

From a personal observation, I have often heard complaints from members about a few buyers at the auctions who are buying to resell at train shows in their retail booths. Remember first that these persons are dues-paying NMRA members with every right to purchase at our auctions. Secondly, these persons are buying to **RESELL** the items at a later date. They are NOT going to pay too much for anything or they can’t make a profit (their end-game). If you really want the item, then bid until you win! You’ll still get it at a reasonable price and you’ll be supporting your Division.

Let’s see an auction June 4th at the Boy Scouts Center in San Leandro that has a minimum of no-bid items.

Registrar's Report

Ronnie LaTorres

Here is the Meeting Attendance from the March Division Event

Coast Division	70
Daylight Division	0
Redwood Empire Division	4
Sierra Division	0
Guests	4
Total Attendance	74
First Timers	7

Income:

2 Badges @\$5 \$10.00
Ticket Donations \$10.00
Total Income \$20.00

Expenses:

Prizes -\$50.34
Total Expenses -\$50.34

Clinics for June

Richard Brennan

Here are the clinics for June

10:00 am : "Re-motoring and Re-gearing Brass Locomotives" - Ray Davis

Ray will share his approach(es) to the sometimes daunting task of re-motoring and re-gearing brass engines.

11:00 am: "Timbered Tunnels" John Stutz

A survey of existing timber lined tunnels... with models, cutting tools and jigs to illustrate model variation and construction methods.

Help Wanted: Quartermaster

Coast Division is looking for someone to take over from Stanley Keiser as Quartermaster. The biggest duty, and the only one at this time, is storing the PA system and getting it to each Coast Division gathering. A little space is needed both in your vehicle and for storage at home. It's not a big system. See me at San Leandro if you can help. Thanks.

Thanks, Doug

Model and Photo Contest Report

Jim Eckman

Steam

No entries



Traction

No entries

MOW/Non-Revenue

1st Place – Kenneth Martin's C&S Bunk car, heavily modified from a freight car kit.

Structures

1st Place – Tom Vanden Bosch's Spring Lake Depot and Platform. The depot was a laser kit while the platform was scratchbuilt.



Other entries

Bob Wirthlin's working scratchbuilt windmill, he made his own mechanism, the fan blades are made from soda straws.

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Marc Parsons's Hog Heaven Saloon & Terry's Harley Shop.

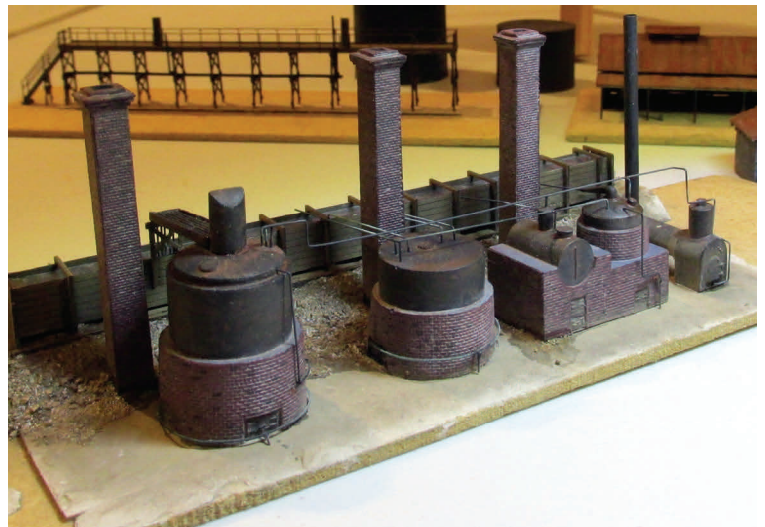


Photo Contest – Track and Structures

1st Place – Earl Girbovan's *Rural Gas Station*.

Show and Tell

Tom Knapp brought structures and documents for an old time historical refinery that will be shown as a diorama at Bakersfield.



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Welcome to the NMRA InfoNet News (Infoblast) For April, 2017

By Tom Draper

Free boxcar shells for clinics

A large collection of boxcar shells has been generously donated to the NMRA, for use in Educational Department clinics such as airbrushing, weathering, and decaling. A variety of decorated and undecorated boxcar shells are now available to NMRA members through the NMRA Company Store.

Simply click on the Reg & Div Education Shell tab on the left side of the NMRA Members Only Company Store webpage to view and order from four selections, **all available at no charge.**

Please visit NMRA.org to take advantage of this valuable opportunity.

New Director appointed at California State Railroad Museum

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – A new executive director will soon be in charge of the California State Railroad Museum. Ty Smith has been appointed as top leader of the Sacramento museum. He will be responsible for the operations and exhibits, as well as to help develop a new railroad technology museum in the historic shop building of the Sacramento railyards, the Sacramento Business Journal reports.

Smith is the operations manager at Hearst Castle, which is another property managed by the California State Parks system near San Simeon. The location draws annual attendance in excess of 700,000 people.

Smith, who begins his new role in April, says he looks forward to extending the railroad museum into the historic shops building and adding to the museum's existing attractions.

The California State Railroad Museum has about 600,000 visitors annually and is considered one of Sacramento's largest tourism attractions.

From Trains Magazine

2017 Elections Report – John Stevens NMRA Secretary

There were three national positions and two NMRA Canada positions up for election for 2017. One national position was the RAC Director which has a different schedule than the other four and was completed in late 2016 with Steve August returning in that position. This election was run electronically.

Three of the remaining positions were NMRA Canada President, NMRA Canada Vice-President, and Canadian District Director. NMRA Canada Ballot Committee Chair Stephen Wood ran the election using a combination of electronic voting (87% of membership) and paper ballots (13% of membership). He used election buddy

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to send an electronic voting invitation to all of those members who had supplied NMRA Canada an email address. He also mailed a paper ballot to those members of NMRA Canada who have not supplied an email address.

Approximately 35% of the membership voted with 38% of those offered electronic voting submitting a vote and 21% of those offered a paper ballot submitting a vote. The results of the election were:

President: Steve McMullin

Vice President: Ed Molenkamp

Canadian District Director: Fred Headon

The last position up for election was the Central District Director. This election also utilized paper and electronic ballots. HQ supplied the paper ballots and they mailed every member living in the Central District a paper ballot with 4320 paper ballots mailed.

Assistant Secretary Rick Coble ran the electronic voting via election buddy. We had 3534 members (82% of membership) who had provided us with email addresses.

The electronic voting ended on 3/1/17 with 20.6% of the membership who were invited to vote electronically doing so. The results of this part of the election were known within a couple of hours of the election ending.

The paper ballot deadline was 2/28/17. The members were allowed to have their ballots postmarked as late as 2/28/17 with the ballots to be received at HQ NLT 3/10/17. The ballots were mailed to National Ballot Committee Chair Dave Liesse and he and his committee processed them on 4/1/2017. The final vote was very close with Bill Neale defeating Steven Kaplan by a mere 21 votes.

We did have 50 members who voted by both paper ballot and electronically. It said right on the paper ballot that if you voted by paper ballot and electronically that the paper ballot would be deemed invalid and the electronic vote would be used.

We are planning to use more and more electronic voting. Electronic voting is cheaper for both the NMRA and the membership. The results of the electronic portion of the election are known within hours of the completion of an election rather than waiting for 30-45 days to get the results.

If you wish to vote electronically in the future, you need to provide the NMRA with an email address. If you have already been on the NMRA website, you can update your information by going to the MEMBER INFO section of the website. You can update your information by clicking the UPDATE box on the right hand side. If you have never been on the website, you need to log on and request to join. You will be contacted when you have been allowed access to the MEMBERS ONLY section of the website.

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If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You will find those addresses at www.nmra.org or in the NMRA Magazine

If the person holding a region or division office changes, or their email address changes, please contact me at tcdraider@aol.com with the corrected information.

Regards,

Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA, MSA, PA
Director – Support Services