



The Daylight Observation

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Daylight Director's Message: Come Join the Fun!

By Walter Mizuno, Daylight Division Director

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On a cold and foggy Saturday morning in December, several brave and determined model railroaders gathered at The Train Depot restaurant in Fresno to share some stories and a hearty breakfast.



Several Daylight Division members swap stories while waiting for breakfast to arrive. From left to right: John Houlihan, Dave Grenier, Robert Sexton, Steve Lowe, Dave Theis, and Don Smith

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Observation Schedule

Issue

Winter (Jan-Feb-Mar)
Spring (Apr-May-Jun)
Summer (Jul-Aug-Sep)
Fall (Oct-Nov-Dec)

Articles Due

December 10
March 10
June 10
September 10

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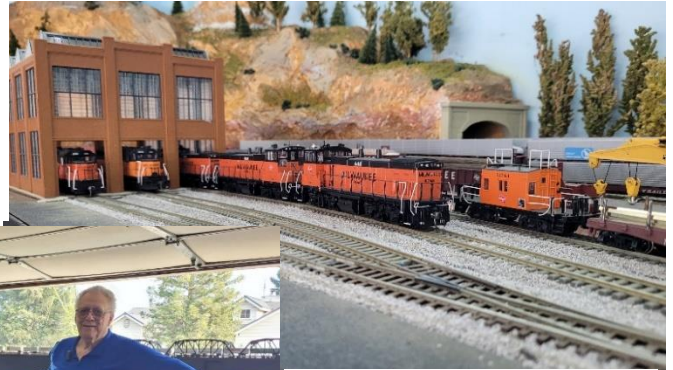
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Once breakfast was over, announcements and some division business took place before the gathering broke up. Luckily, by the time the layout tours started, the fog had burned off and everyone was treated to a warm and sunny day.

Can you tell that Steve Silva's multi-deck layout is inspired by the Milwaukee Road?



Layout owner Steve Silva (on the right) kibbitzes with Tom Sciara and Don Smith



Rob Briney points to a scratch-built structure on his Sierra, Clovis & Western layout.



All photos on pages 1,2, and 3 are by Walter Mizuno

Based on an actual structure found on the east side of the central valley along the Santa Fe tracks, the model features rough-hewn lumber and roof truss details as found on the prototype.

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Steve Lowe enjoys operating his N scale California Zephyr over the Tehachapi Loop on his layout. While not 100% prototypical, the train looked fantastic in this setting.

Steve's layout features some great looking SP Black Widow "F" units.



Robert and Sylvia Pethoud's Fall Creek Branch switching layout features realistic switching action and shows off some excellent modeling skills.

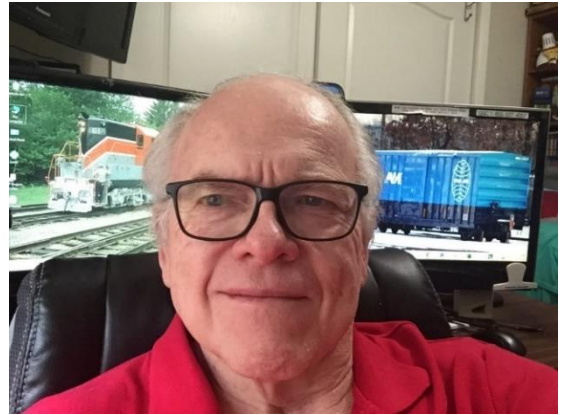
It was great fun meeting new folks in the hobby and renewing friendships from the past. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the layouts and appreciating the efforts made by the layout owners. It was wonderful seeing younger people interested in the hobby, such as Matthew (on the left) showing his dad, Adam, how much fun being a model railroader is. Thanks to all who took the time to open your layouts and to all the guests. See you in Woodlake on January 25 and at the Daylight Limited Convention in San Luis Obispo March 27-30!



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Chief Dispatcher

By Dave Grenier



In this installment we will review the requirements for the Chief Dispatcher certificate. About 50% of Master Model Railroaders have earned this certificate, showing that prototypical operation is of strong interest to serious model railroaders.

As is true with many of the AP certificates, don't read more into the requirements and make them more difficult than they are. There are basically only two requirements to earning this certificate, operations and documentation.

OPERATIONS

To qualify for this certificate, you must have participated in the operation of a model railroad, either home or club, for not less than 50 hours. A minimum of 10 hours each must have been served in three of the five categories listed below, one of which must be #5, Dispatcher.

1. Engineer (Mainline freight, passenger, or wayfreight):
 - a. Mainline Passenger or Freight Engineer:
Shall run their train in a manner that simulates the prototype, following the rules of the model railroad being used, and operating according to the signal system (if present) or by direct instruction of the Dispatcher.
 - b. Wayfreight Engineer:
Will meet the requirements of Mainline Engineer. In addition, he or she shall perform all required switching with approval from the Dispatcher in a manner not to adversely affect the overall railroad schedule or operations.

Operating in a prototype manner includes no "jack rabbit" starts or sudden stops during normal operations.

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2. Yardmaster (or station master):

a. Yardmaster:

Runs the freight yard. He or she makes up trains with the appropriate cars in the desired numbers to have trains ready when the timetable or Dispatcher requires them. Generally, the Yardmaster operates the switch engine, but in a large yard could direct other yard engineers.

b. Station Master:

Is in charge of the passenger station and all passenger switching. He or she makes up trains with the appropriate consists so that the trains are ready when the timetable or Dispatcher requires them. Terminating trains are broken down appropriately and the cars are serviced and stored as needed. Through train switching is accomplished.

3. Hostler (or power desk)

a. Hostler:

Shall run the engine facilities. He or she shall have each locomotive facing the correct direction, double-headed or lashed up, ready for the Engineer to easily leave the engine area. Service to locomotives shall be simulated. Returning locomotives are placed in their appropriate stalls or tracks. On layouts with advanced control systems, the Hostler can handle assignment of locomotives to the appropriate engineer's throttle.

b. Power Desk:

Decides what is the correct motive power for each train. Assigns throttle control to the motive power. When assignment is finished, he or she returns control of that motive power to the Hostler, or to off.

4. Towerman (or traffic manager or road master):

a. Towerman:

Operates one or more towers (control panels) on a layout. He or she sets up appropriate routes at the correct time under direction of the timetable or the Dispatcher. Reports train passings to dispatcher if required.

b. Traffic Manager:

Determines which cars come and go from each industry, and the amount and location of traffic, and specifies the route. May create a computer program to do this automatically.

c. Road Master:

The operating trouble-shooter and repair person. He or she keeps things moving smoothly. Can take track in or out of service.

5. Dispatcher:

Coordinates all train movements, either by sequence, timetable and fast clock, or other operating system.

This experience shall be accumulated on one or more model railroads having at least two mainline trains plus yard switching in simultaneous operation. Some system of freight and passenger car movements, including road switching, shall be used for controlling train activity.

For our purposes, “operation” means simulating prototype-like railroad operations on a model railroad. Simply running trains or “chasing cabooses” around the layout, or “fun runs”, although enjoyable, does not satisfy the requirements of the Chief Dispatcher certificate.

TIP:

Staple your Chief Dispatcher Record of Activities Form (page 4 of the SOQ) into a manila folder and bring it to any operating session in which you participate. The layout owner or dispatcher during an operating session can verify the tasks and time you spent operating. Though preferable, these do not have to be NMRA members if the operating sessions can be verified if needed. ‡ Remember, it is MUCH easier to get this information as you accumulate it, rather than doing it when you are getting ready to submit your application.

(‡Reference: <https://www.nmra.org/definitions#witness>)

DOCUMENTATION

The applicant shall also do the following: (the use of a computer to accomplish these requirements is acceptable):

1. Prepare a schematic drawing of a model railroad layout meeting the operating conditions described in the operations requirement and indicating all pertinent simulated distances.

Normally, this would be a diagram of one of the layouts you put in your qualifying time on - but there is no requirement that it must be. The drawing must be neat and readable, but it does not have to be in ink.

2. Develop a timetable appropriate to this model railroad, simulating prototype time, covering a period of eight hours or more, during which at least three scheduled mainline trains move in each direction.

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3. Develop an operating train chart (graph) which interprets the above schedule for timetable operation of the model railroad. Indicate at least one train meet on the schematic drawing required above in #1. Show the positions of the trains involved and describe the action, giving pertinent time and movement data to effect the meet.
4. Develop or adapt a system of operation for the layout, including all the necessary forms and explanations for their use for controlling car movements, train makeup, and operation in a prototypical manner.

Members of the same club or home layout operating group who are applying for the Chief Dispatcher certificate can use copies of the same paperwork for requirements 1 and 4, but each must develop and submit their own timetable and train chart (even if they are all copies of the same one). Another possibility would be to have all the members who qualified submit their application at the same time. and just use one set of the paperwork for items 1 & 4.

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATION

After completing the above requirements, submit a completed Statement of Qualification form, [2006-soq-dispatch](#), which shall include the following:

1. Forms and drawings meeting the above documentation requirements.
2. Description of the jobs held and the approximate number of hours in each.
3. The signed witnessed "Certification of Operation Form" showing that all the requirements have been met and the applicant has operated a model railroad in a prototypical manner.
4. A copy of your NMRA membership card.

Submit the required documentation to the PCR Achievement Program Manager, Jack Burgess.

The full requirements for this category are available on the NMRA website at <https://www.nmra.org/dispatcher>. You can also get a copy of the requirements by contacting me, either by phone, e-mail, or letter.

Look at *Scale Rails*, September 2008 issue, page 10, for a very long, but informative article, complete with drawings and samples of what it takes to earn this certificate. Don't be overwhelmed by this article, as it presents much, much more information than is actually needed to earn the AP Chief Dispatcher certificate.

Since my last report, Paul Deis has been awarded the following Achievement Program certificates: Model Railroad Engineer - Civil, Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical, and Master Builder – Scenery. Congratulations to Paul for these well-deserved awards!

If you have any questions or want to learn more about the Achievement Program or Golden Spike Award, call me at (408) 431-8989 or e-mail me at grenida@pacbell.net.

Submitted by,

Dave Grenier

Next installment: Association Official



Daylight Division Membership Gauge

November 30, 2014	132
November 30, 2023	84
December 31, 2023	80
January 31, 2024	74
February 29, 2024	79
March 31, 2024	79
April 30, 2024	85
May 31, 2024	87
June 30, 2024	87
July 31, 2024	88
August 31, 2024	90
September 30, 2024	90
October 31, 2024	88
November 30, 2024	84

Daylight Membership by County

<u>County</u>	<u># Members</u>
San Luis Obispo County	21
Fresno County	18
Santa Barbara County	14
Kern County	14
Tulare County	9
Madera County	4
Merced County	3
Mariposa County	1
<u>Kings County</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Members	84



Relationships Can Drive the Hobby

Article by Dave Theis,
Daylight Division, PCR, NMRA

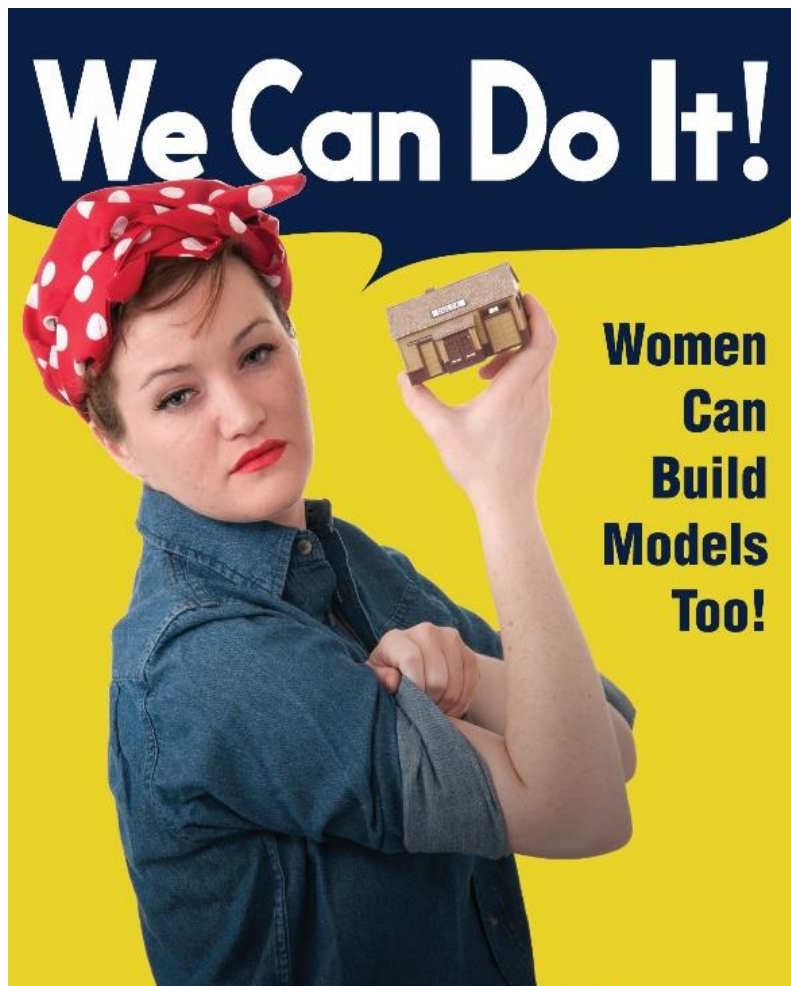


As someone who has only been a member of the NMRA for about two years, one of the unexpected benefits that I have enjoyed as a member, and as a member of the Daylight Division of the Pacific Coast Region, has been the opportunity to meet new people and develop some very important relationships within the hobby. I have truly appreciated that since joining the group I have been welcomed as if I were an old friend and given the opportunity to participate in events that have helped me and allowed me to grow my skills and abilities as a model railroad hobbyist. To me this has been the true benefit of being a part of this organization, and I wanted to take a moment to encourage all members, both long term or new, in how you can be part of this maintaining and even growing this fellowship as we move forward into the future and enjoy being part of the world's greatest hobby: Model Railroading.

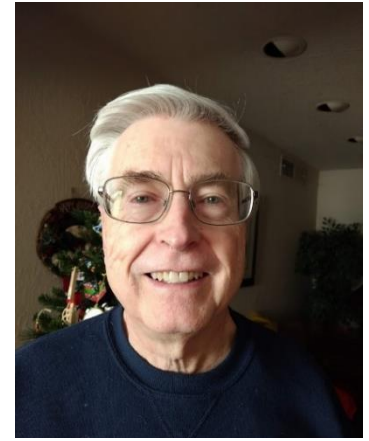
For many, and in particular for new members who don't really know anyone yet, the very thought of making new friends can be a very daunting undertaking. Our goal, especially for those who are long term members, is to help them overcome these concerns by finding ways to contact and connect with them and by looking for ways to make them feel like they are welcome and part of the group.

For me it started when I joined the local Daylight Division and was invited to participate in their weekly zoom meetings. This was a great way to break the ice and I got to know many of the folks in the hobby who lived in my area. Again, they were very welcoming and I soon developed a number of new contacts with people who were genuinely interested in me and helping me with my questions. Because of their efforts I soon felt comfortable in in other activities, such as being part of the Layout Design Special Interest Groups, attending both Regional and National Conferences, and I recently traveled to the Central Coast Train Festival where I met with some of my club friends for an awesome lunch and great conversation.

Fortunately, if we are truly serious about making people feel welcome and creating new friendships, then there are a number of activities that are available that can help us to achieve this goal: with opportunities at the National, Regional, and Local levels. Maybe it's as simple as inviting them to our Zoom meetings, or even just inviting them to a lunch and local gathering of members. Whatever the activity, when we make the effort to help people to integrate into the group, we are creating the environment that can help us to make new friends: friends that can become lifelong relationships with great people who share a common appreciation of this wonderful hobby that we all love and enjoy. All it takes is a little effort on our part, and who knows, we might just meet some really cool people along the way.



International Railfair 2024 by Robert Pethoud, Daylight Division Member Aid Chair



Just after Halloween 2024 we modelers were treated to the latest edition of International Railfair at Cal Expo in Sacramento, November 2 and 3. The second year after the move from the Placer County Fairgrounds in Roseville, this long-running annual model railroad event drew thousands of visitors to see the many operating modular layouts (from Z scale to LGB), vendors, activities specifically for children, and opportunities to do some freight switching in miniature. Enjoy some photos of this popular event below:

All photos of International Railfair 2024 are by Robert Pethoud



The Sacramento Modular Railroaders have long been a mainstay of International Railfair. Their many members continue to produce outstanding models.

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Brand new to Railfair this year was the group called Sac BB, for Sacramento Brick Builders. The bricks, of course, are Lego bricks, which are used to build the structures, the terrain (notice the climbers on the huge Lego mountain), and even the track, rolling stock, and locomotives!



The Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society had an impressive large-scale layout on display. Visit their website at SVGRS.org



International Railfair 2024



The Bay Area Z scale modelers were back with their huge layout and tiny trains. Their scenery is very realistic and their long freights are quite convincing.



The Bay Area S scale guys were back for their fourth (5th?) time with their very impressive switching layout. As with my Fall Creek Branch, they encourage visitors to do the switching themselves.



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Another long-time attendee at Railfair, the European Train Enthusiasts had a well-crafted and impressive display.



Perhaps the largest in area was the layout of the Sacramento FreeMo N scale group. Finely crafted scenery, structures, and rolling stock made for a display that will not soon be forgotten.



Great Train Show

Saturday & Sunday, February 8 & 9, 2025
[Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, 344 Tully Rd, San Jose, CA 95111, USA](#)

Great Train Show

Saturday & Sunday, February 15 & 16, 2025
OC Fair & Event Center
88 Fair Dr, Costa Mesa, CA 92626, USA

Great Train Show

Saturday & Sunday, February 22 & 23, 2025
[Cal Expo, Sacramento, 1600 Exposition Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95815, USA](#)

Great Train Show

Saturday & Sunday, March 8 & 9, 2025
[Ventura County Fairgrounds and Event Center, 10 E Harbor Blvd, Ventura, CA 93001, USA](#)

Daylight Limited PCR Convention

Thursday-Sunday, March 27-30, 2025
[Embassy Suites by Hilton San Luis Obispo 333 Madonna Road San Luis Obispo, California 93405 USA](#)

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The Daylight Observation is published quarterly to inform members of division activities and to provide educational articles for the advancement of railroad history and the art and science of model railroading. It is distributed to all members of the Division and to officers and newsletter editors of other divisions in the PCR.

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Daylight Limited PACIFIC COAST REGION CONVENTION

MARCH
27-30
2025



SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF.

Coast Toy Train Club Monthly Meetings

Fourth Wednesday 7:00 PM / Coast Toy Train Club / Wood Glen Hall, 3010 Foothill Rd (at Alamar), Santa Barbara, CA / Lots of collecting in S, O, and Standard gauges. / Contact: Ken Kelley, e-mail: kenatttr@thirdrail.com

European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) Sacramento Chapter

First Saturday 12:30 PM (HO, Hom, N) 3600 J Street, Sacramento, CA, Contact: Dusan Petras (650) 300-9504 or Helmuth Nixdorf (916) 481-0991, e-mail: dusanpetras@aol.com / See the website for additional information: www.ete.org.

Sacramento Modular Railroaders Operating Session

Third Saturday (HO) Sacramento, CA, Scott McAllister, e-mail: scooter923@att.net

San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association Monthly Meetings

Third Monday 7:00 PM / [San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association](http://SanLuisObispoModelRailroadAssociation.org) (all)
Oceano Depot, CA / Dennis Pearson, e-mail: info@slomra.org or 805-929-3062

Tehachapi Loop RR Club

Second Saturday 10:00 AM, Tehachapi, CA, Tom O'Brien, email: threerail@earthlink.net
661-822-1546

Visalia Electric Monthly Meetings

Third Tuesday 7:00 PM / Visalia Electric Model Railroad & Historical Society / Meets at Ryan's Place Restaurant, 3103 South Mooney Blvd, Visalia, CA / Cecil Eppler, e-mail: cecil_eppler@sbcglobal.net

GEHAMS Weekly Meetings

Every Tuesday & Thursday 7:00 PM / [Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society](http://GoldenEmpireHistoricalandModelingSociety.org) (HO, N)
Bakersfield, CA / Doug Wagner: carldw@aol.com or 661-589-0391 / Club phone 661-325-5820

Thursday Nite Boomers Weekly Meetings

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

Fresno Model Railroad Club Weekly Meetings

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





The Daylight Observation

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Pacific Coast Region

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