The Daylight Observation

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Contents Director's Message 1 2 Call Board **Achievement Program** 5 New PCR Webmaster 7 Meet July 29 in Goleta 8 **Newest Members** 9 2023 PCR Convention 10 Members by County 12 A Mundane Building **13 Membership Report** 16 **Event Calendar** 17





Daylight Director's Message: Future Model Railroaders?

By Walter Mizuno, Daylight Division Director



If any of you are reading these columns regularly, you may remember one of my earlier installments chronicling the Railroad Model competition (click here) that was being conducted by Fresno State. Students from Fresno County schools were invited

to form teams covering the following grades: upper elementary, middle school, and high school. Teams normally consisted of ten students dividing up the project responsibilities to do research; design, construct, and operate the transportation system; write the reports; and make the presentations to a panel of judges. The teams were formed in the fall of 2022, with the competition held on April 29th, 2023.

Continued on Page 2

Observation Schedule

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

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A middle teacher discusses with two team members the placement of a turnout.

Sponsors for the event were the California High Speed Rail Authority, Wm. K. Walthers Inc., and Caltrans.

There were eight teams representing various schools from Fresno County. During the competition, about two hundred students, teachers, judges, parents, and friends assembled in the auditorium to cheer on their favorite teams as they operated their creations, shared their research, and made presentations.

This was an opportunity to expose young people and others to the hobby of model railroading. When many of us were growing up, we were fascinated by model trains and developed a life-long interest in them.



An upper elementary student team discusses operating strategies to score the most points.

Continued on Page 3



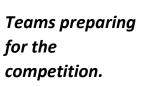
Another upper elementary school team applying their scenery to finish the layout.

As youngsters, we were first introduced to the hobby. Today's youngsters have many different options vying for their attention. Unless you have a parent or a friend who is into model railroading, it is more likely that young people will develop an interest in video games rather than trains.

Not every member on the teams will become model railroaders, in fact, because of the way in which the teams were organized, only about half the team would help with the construction and operation of their transportation system, the part that for many of us constitute some of the most interesting aspects of model railroading. In each team there were students who showed tremendous interest in laying roadbed and track, soldering rails and wires, and wanting to operate the trains. After a few lessons and some practice, most students became very good at doing these tasks, provided they were given proper supervision, tools, and some time to practice.

I would be very naïve to think that the NMRA will be gaining any new members as a result of the competition, but there were some students, teachers, and parents that were interested enough about the hobby to ask where they can buy their own locomotives, track, and rolling stock, what scale is the best and what it would take to build their own layout?

When we all got started in the hobby, I would venture to guess that being an NMRA member was not the first thing on our minds. Only after being in the hobby for a while and made aware of the organization and its benefits did we join.





For now, at least, I'm happy that I was able to share the hobby with several students (and some teachers) and spark their interest in the hobby. The teams that participated in this competition will be on our mailing lists to invite them to model railroading events to hopefully keep their interest alive. Maybe, just maybe, a few of them will become interested in model railroading.



Team awards recognition.



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Master Builder - Cars Certificate

By Dave Grenier



This time we'll be discussing the second of two certificates in the Model Railroad Equipment category, namely the Master Builder – Cars certificate.

First, we'll start with a definition. What is a "car"? A "car" is just about anything that runs on rails and is NOT self-propelled (if it's self-propelled, it's Motive Power). This includes freight cars, passenger cars, maintenance of way cars (including equipment such as cranes), cabooses, cable cars, unpowered (dummy) locomotives, etc. If you have a model which is self-propelled, but is a model of something that was designed to carry something (besides itself), such as a rail car; it can be used as one of the qualifying models for Motive Power or Cars, but not both.

To qualify for this certificate, you must build eight operable scale models of railroad cars.

"Operable" means the models must be able to roll on the track, negotiate a curve, and be pulled by something. It does not mean that every door, valve, or other moving feature of the car must work as the prototype does. (On the other hand, any operating features that you do include in your car are likely to increase your score. (More about this later.))

The models can be any scale and/or gauge. Here's a perfect opportunity to try a scale different than your primary scale. After all, the AP is about learning more about the hobby. What better way to learn something new than to try a different scale? Who knows? You might just be pleasantly surprised by the experience. Give it a try!

Continued on Page 6

There must be at least four different types of cars represented in the eight models, one of which must be a passenger car. This is to show that you can model the different types of cars, not just variations of the same type of car. For example, a 40' boxcar and a 36' reefer are two different types of cars, but a 40' boxcar and a 50' boxcar would be the same type of car, unless there were significant differences in the construction methods used to build each car. On the other hand, a steel-decked flat car and a wood-decked car would be considered the same type of car, but a regular flat car and a depressed-center car would be considered different because it is a substantially different kind of car to build. You can even build 4 identical boxcars, plus a flat car, a reefer, a gondola, and a passenger car and still meet the requirement for four different types of cars.

Each of the eight models must be superdetailed with either commercial parts or scratch-built parts, which earn extra points. When considering which parts to super-detail, consider removing the molded-on ladders, grab irons, and brake wheels the car came with and replace them with separately applied parts. Don't forget the car's underside details, as the judges will be looking for the underframe brake details. This also earns extra points.

In addition to being superdetailed, at least four of the eight models must be scratchbuilt, while the remaining cars can be commercial models that you have super detailed. To be considered as "scratchbuilt", at least 90% of the model's pieces and/or parts must be constructed or fabricated by the modeler. Use of commercial detail parts will not disqualify the model as being "scratchbuilt."

The following items are specifically excluded from the "scratchbuilt requirement": wheels; couplers; light bulbs and electronics; trucks; brake fittings; marker lights and drumheads; paint, decals and the like; basic shapes of wood, plastic, metal, etc. Basic shapes are things that builders of the prototype would have used as raw materials. For example, an "I" beam would be a basic shape, but a commercial door or window casting would not. Also consider that although these parts are exempt from the scratchbuilt requirement, they may be scratchbuilt to earn up to 15 additional bonus points.

AP Merit Award judging can be done in one of two ways: 1) at an NMRA-sponsored contest at a convention or division meet; 2) arrange for judging at another time separate from a convention or meet. You can bring your work to where the judges are, or they will even come to you!

When you're ready to have your models merit judged, contact the Daylight Division AP Chairman (me!) to setup a time and place. My contact information is listed in the *Daylight Observation* and on the Daylight Division website at: http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/callboard.html

The final requirement for the Master Builder – Cars certificate is to submit a Statement of Qualification (SOQ), which includes detailed descriptions of each of the eight model and photocopies of all of the Merit Award certificates. The detailed descriptions must identify all scratchbuilt features, all commercial components used, and materials used in building the model. Copies of the plans you used are not required, but may be submitted. If the model is a kit, whose kit is it? Photos of the models are helpful, but not required. Also include a copy of your NMRA membership card. Submit the completed SOQ and all materials to the Daylight Division AP Chairman, Dave Grenier (me again!). My contact information is listed in the *Daylight Observation* and on the Daylight Division website at: http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/callboard.html

For a couple of great articles on superdetailing cars, look at the May 2014 issue of *Model Railroader*. On pages 52-57 there are step-by-step instructions for scratchbuilding a caboose. In the March 2008 issue of *Scale Rails*, there is an article on upgrading an Accurail hopper car by removing the cast on details and replacing them with separate commercial parts and brass wire.

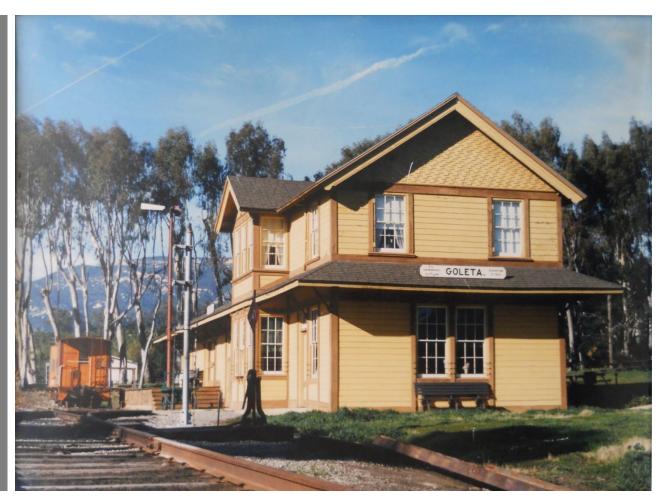
For more information about the Master Builder – Cars certificate, visit the NMRA website at https://www.nmra.org/cars. Also refer to the articles "Master Builder - Cars," NMRA Bulletin, February 1992, and "Merit Award Winning Cars" NMRA Bulletin March 1992. Don't hesitate to contact me for more details. I think by now you know where you can find my contact information.

Next installment: Master Builder – Structures Certificate



ANNOUNCEMENT: New PCR Webmaster

As of June 1, 2023, Michael Eldridge of Sierra Division assumed the role of PCR webmaster from Dave Grenier, having served since 2013. Dave is still the Daylight Division's webmaster for the foreseeable future.



Daylight Summer Meet July 29 at the Goleta Depot

By Bruce Morden

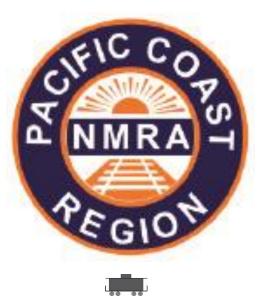
Save the date of July 29 because you are invited to the beautiful Santa Barbara area. We will be meeting at the South Coast Railroad Museum at the historic Goleta Depot. At the time of this writing, we are not sure what will be on the program; maybe a clinic from Bob Chaparro. Maybe a clinic on building a 7 1/2" gauge locomotive out of wood. Maybe a repeat of the history talk and tour of the 1901 Depot. Come and find out or check back on the Division's "Next Meeting" page: http://www.pcrnmra.org/daylight/nextmeet.html

If anyone reading this has a clinic and is willing to step forward, we would welcome that also. Contact Bruce Morden at brucedmorden@gmail.com.

Concluded on Page 9

Of course, we will have our famous White Elephant auction and maybe some door prizes. Attendees can stay after the meeting and ride the museum's 7 1/2" gauge miniature railroad or visit the museum's shop.

At this time, we have four railroads to visit after the meeting. We are working on more so save that date! We are also discussing some way of live streaming the meet so those in Mariposa, Merced, Fresno or Bakersfield don't have to make the long drive. No promises but stay tuned. Only the meeting will be streamed and maybe one of the clinics. Train rides and layout tours will not be streamed.



Daylight Division's Newest Members				
<u>Member</u>	City/Sate	Date Joined		
Larry Wines	Mojave CA	3/17/2023		
Kyle Fogle	Bakersfield CA	3/30/2023		
Randy Gallemore	Bakersfield CA	3/30/2023		
Kevin Krahn	Reedley CA	3/30/2023		
Todd Lopes	Fresno CA	3/30/2023		
Dan Mitchell	Taft CA	3/30/2023		
Tom Osterdock	Bakersfield CA	3/30/2023		
Will Robertson	Dos Pales CA	3/30/2023		
Zack Trome	Bakersfield CA	3/30/2023		
Bart Van Dyke	Tulare CA	3/30/2023		
Stephen Zelen	Bakersfield CA	3/30/2023		
Laurence Young	Goleta CA	4/2/2023		
Welcome aboard!				



2023 PCR Convention in Sacramento

Photos by Walter Mizuno

The photograph above shows operators at the Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society during an SMRHS run session. Learn more about this exciting group at the following website: (https://www.smrhs.com/about/)



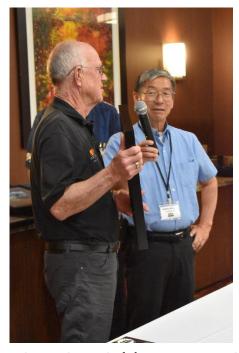
View of the narrow gauge layout of the SMRHS.



Phil Edholm's award-winning scratchbuilt model of the Spreckel's sugar warehouse in Moss Landing



Neil Fernbaugh (R) accepting his contest plaque from Mike Hamlin (L)



Neil Fernbaugh (L) accepting the Daylight Division Member of the Year on behalf of Doug Wagner



The dinner banquet crowd.



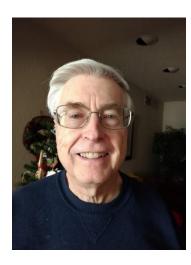
Daylight Membership by County			
<u>County</u>	# Members		
San Luis Obis	po 22		
Kern	22		
Fresno	17		
Santa Barbara	15		
Tulare	6		
Merced	4		
Madera	3		
<u>Mariposa</u>	2		
Total Member	s 91		
Welcome Aboard!			

Daylight Division Membership Gauge		
May 31, 2013	144	
May 31, 2022	90	
June 30, 2022	86	
July 31, 2022	85	
August 31, 2022	85	
September 30, 2022	84	
October 31, 2022	83	
November 30, 2022	82	
December 31, 2022	82	
January 31, 2023	83	
February 28, 2023	83	
March 30, 2023	93	
April 30, 2023	91	
May 31, 2023	91	

A Mundane Building

By Robert Pethoud

Just over three years ago, I reviewed Lance Mindheim's book, *Model Railroading as Art*; see Daylight Observation 2019, issue number 2 (April-May-June). One of the reasons Mr. Mindheim's model scenes are so realistic is his liberal use of empty space and nondescript structures to highlight the few important buildings. On page 73 of the



book, the author states, "In order for a scene to work there has to be a balance of mundane and key elements. And, that balance has to be steeped in favor of the mundane."

To emphasize the cannery which I recently built for the town of Bullfrog, I wanted such a "mundane" structure, not served by rail, in the space between Cascade Canning and the Bullfrog Lumber Company's planing mill. What features should we build into such a structure, in order that our eyes will pass over it without its drawing much attention?



Continued on Page 14

First, its location should not be prominent. Situated between the two large industries in Bullfrog, potentially it could be quite prominent, but it is against the backdrop and can be de-emphasized. Next, its shape ought to be ordinary, such as a simple rectangular box. We will want no unusual roof lines or odd angles to spark visual interest. Its height should be less than our signature structures. The building's color ought to be a muted pastel so as to fade into the background. Finally, there should be a dearth—or complete lack—of signage and few details, such as fire escapes, downspouts, and utility meters. In summary, here are the features we want in a "mundane" building:

- Location: not prominent
- Ordinary shape
- Lower than important structures (but not necessarily smaller in footprint)
- Muted pastel color, with focal point structures warmer and/or darker in color
- Lack of signs
- Few details

The photo above shows what I came up with. It's a simple rectangle with few details and no signs, lower than the cannery and placed at the back of the layout. To construct this unremarkable building, I began with a 1/8" hardboard wall to which I added a 3/8" square poplar frame to the back. I found a few plastic windows, a cargo door, and a manway door from Tichy or Grandt Line and created a whole in the wall for the cargo door, but none for the other details.

The next task was to create the boards from Starbucks stir-sticks. I was able to get three 16-scale-foot long sections from each one after cutting off the curved ends. Then I sliced each section in two lengthwise to get boards about 9 HO scale inches wide, instead of 18" wide. This step can be skipped if you build in 1:48 scale instead of 1:87. When I had enough of these boards, I stained them with 1 tsp. of India ink in a pint of 91% isopropyl alcohol.

Before attaching the boards to the wall, I drew both horizontal and vertical lines on the hardboard to help place those boards. The vertical lines are placed two scale feet apart for the wall studs, while the horizontal lines are simply to keep the boards lined up all the way from top to bottom. Then I clamped a styrene strip ¼" above the bottom of the wall and slathered DAP Wallboard Joint Compound below the strip to represent the concrete foundation. When dry, I removed the styrene and painted the "concrete" a medium gray with craft acrylic paints.

Finally, it was time to attach the boards to the wall with yellow carpenter's glue. I worked from the bottom up, being careful not to have adjacent boards end at the same stud. See the photo illustrating this process. After the siding was completed on the main wall, I added a 1/16" square trim piece at each end to serve as a guide for placing the boards on the two short side walls. Then, before attaching the doors and windows, I painted all the boards using a brush with a little water to stretch the white acrylic craft paint. The result, I hope, is a well-weathered finish.

The windows were painted white with a Rust-Oleum Gloss White rattle-can. When dry, the window muntins were covered with blue painter's tape before I sprayed the windows—and the two doors—with Rust-Oleum Gloss Dark Gray, chosen because its hue essentially matches that of DecoArt Crafter's Acrylic Slate. That way, I can spray the dark gray color and touch it up with a brush, if necessary. Before attaching the windows with Formula 560 canopy glue, I cut small squares of black 35 mm photographic film to fill in for glass in the window panes.

To finish off the structure, I cut 14 corbels from ¼-round wood stock, crown molding from ¼" thick stripwood, and an overhang from 1/16"-thick basswood.

As I continue with the cannery scene, I will put a fence and some bushes and trees between this mundane building and the tracks, which should further deemphasize its importance. So, I've just spent a whole column on a structure which, with luck, no one will actually notice. Until next time, you may reach me with comments and/or questions at pethoud@comcast.net





We Want to Find These Daylight Division Members

by Doug Wagner,
PCR Membership Manager



Do you have any information? We are attempting to find any information on the following Daylight Division members. They are NMRA Lifetime members who have no email nor have left any forwarding address. If you can provide any information, I would greatly appreciate it. The following Lifetime NMRA Daylight Division members we are attempting to find any information on are as follows:

•	Richard Christ	Lompoc, California
•	Donald J Dixon	Rosamond, California
•	Darrell C Harbin	Fresno, California
•	Robert Mitchell	Taft, California
•	Charles Thorpe	Goleta, California

If you can provide any information to any of the above listed members, please contact Doug Wagner via email at carldw@aol.com or by phone at (661) 589-0391.

Thank you!





July 28, 2023 • 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. • MAP

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society (WCMRS) operates the Diablo Valley Lines (DVL) model railroad, one of the most mountainous and one of the largest exclusively HO scale model railroads in the United States. This model railroad features standard gauge, narrow gauge, and interurban (overhead electric) freight and trolley lines.

Fares:

- \$5.00 Adults
- \$3.00 Seniors & Children (6-12)
- Children under 6: FREE

For information call: (925) 937-1888

Visit our website: wcmrs.org

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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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e-mail: pethoud@comcast.net

July 29, 2023 - 10:00 am, <u>Daylight Division</u> Summer Meet, <u>South Coast Railroad</u> <u>Museum at the Historic Goleta Depot</u>, 300 North Los Carneros Road, Goleta, CA. • <u>MAP</u>

Bruce Morden is working on getting the presentations/clinics and layout tours organized, so please be sure to check out the latest Daylight Summer Meet information by visiting the Next Daylight Meet webpage.

Please consider joining us in Goleta on Saturday, July 29th, for the Daylight Division Summer Meet. Besides, for you Valley members, it's a great excuse to escape the Valley's summer blazing heat!!! Besides, we'd greatly appreciate seeing you folks once more!

August 20 – 26, 2023 - <u>Texas Express 2023</u>, NMRA National Convention, Hosted by <u>Lone Star Region</u>. Convention Hotel: Gaylord Texan, 1501 Gaylord Trail, Grapevine, Texas, USA • MAP

August 25, 2023 • 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, <u>Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society</u>, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. • MAP

For information call: (925) 937-1888

Visit our website: wcmrs.org

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/wcmrs

August 26 – 27, 2023 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, <u>Carquinez Model Railroad Society</u>, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. • <u>MAP</u>

Come visit this HO scale tri-level 36' x 60' model railroad depicting the Southern Pacific/Union Pacific railroad as it traverses California from Oakland, California through the picturesque East Bay before climbing through the dramatic scenery of the Sierra Nevada mountains to Sparks, Nevada. Our walk-around model railroad allows you to closely follow a train as it traverses the railroad from Oakland to Sparks.

Admission: \$5.00; children under 16 free when accompanied by an adult. Info: president@cmrstrainclub.org or secretary@cmrstrainclub.org

September 10, 2023 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, <u>Carquinez Model Railroad Society</u>, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. • <u>MAP</u>

September 16 & 17, 2023 - 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Weekend Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. • MAP

September 29, 2023 • 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, <u>Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society</u>, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. • <u>MAP</u>

October 6 – 8, 2023 - Central Coast Railroad Festival, San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara Counties, CA. Hosted by San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, 1940 Santa Barbara Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA. MAP

October 14 – 15, 2023 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA. • MAP

October 25 – 28, 2023 - <u>SPH&TS Bakersfield 2023 Convention</u>, Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bakersfield, 3100 Camino Del Rio Court, Bakersfield, CA • <u>MAP</u>

October 27, 2023 • 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Monthly Model Train Show, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society, in Larkey Park, 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA. • MAP

November 11 & 12, 2023 - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, <u>International Railfair</u> Model Railroad Show. **NEW VENUE:** Cal Expo, Building C, 1600 Exposition Blvd, Sacramento, CA <u>MAP</u>

The International Railfair show is run by members of the <u>Sacramento Modular</u> <u>Railroaders</u>, the <u>Sacramento chapter of the European Train Enthusiasts</u>, <u>Roseville Roundhouse Model Railroad Association</u>, and the <u>Sierra Division</u> of the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA. We've been putting on model railroad shows for over forty years!

We display operating model railroads to the public and educate the public about model railroading, railroad history, and prototypical railroad operations. We want to share the best family hobby in the world with you and your family! The two-day show is called "International Railfair" because one of our sponsor clubs, European Train Enthusiasts, specializes in building and operating European model railroads.

Today our show has become a county fair of model railroad activities. International Railfair offers many operating model railroads. The show will be filled with operating model railroads of different scales and sellers who sell model railroad and railfan products. The Rainbow Girls will operate snack bars during both days of the show.

Kids love model railroads. So do adult kids! Be sure to bring your cameras and plan to spend a day full of fun for you and your family! If you have any questions while at the show, please feel free to ask our members wearing green International Railfair vests.





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

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