



BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

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President's Message

Gene Mayer

I am writing this message in mid January approaching the end of my first term as president. My primary objective was to implement the region's long range plan. Vice President Dave Connery has done an excellent job accomplishing that objective.

However now we face an even greater task of conforming the region's organization and operations to the new NMRA regulations that were adopted by an overwhelming majority of the membership.

At the midyear meeting in Concord the Board of Directors (BOD) established a new position of Store Keeper and I appointed Steve Skold (who volunteered) to fill that position. Steve's first task will be to establish a list of all PCR-owned equipment and supplies and determine their locations. He will then keep track of loans and

transfers between parties. Please, if you have PCR-owned equipment or supplies in your possession notify Steve of that fact at (707) 539-1782 or SandCSkold@AOL.com.

The special committee which studied the possibility of PCR

Committee members will now develop a plan to facilitate an easy transition into the single membership

breaking away from NMRA as a separate independent organization concluded that we need a national organization. The committee recommended that PCR work within NMRA to cure the organization's financial problems. Committee members

will now develop a plan to facilitate an easy transition into the single membership structure.

Dave Connery and the Bylaws Committee have drafted revised bylaws that must be approved by the BOD and the membership at Concord. The PCR BOD will also need to make many revisions to our operations manual. Members

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VIEW FROM THE LEFT SEAT

By

Dave Connery, PCR Vice-president

Thanks to those who wrote to me regarding the issue of PCR finances, based on my article last issue. Every viewpoint and idea will be considered as we work through the issue of funding the region in the future. We now know beginning in September the PCR will receive \$2.00 per member per year to provide basic membership services to all NMRA members within our region. Starting in September we are also prohibited from charging any additional dues for PCR membership at the Region or Division level. Obviously there are not a lot of services that can be made available within these constraints. We will have to develop ways to fund the costs of the *Branch Line*, probably by a separate subscription fee to be collected by NMRA at the same time you pay your dues. The PCR Board will be working on this at our meeting on May 11th. These changes provide an even greater dilemma for our Divisions, whose membership (and thus costs) will nearly double in September, with no direct increase in funds.

One common suggestion for dealing with the cost of publishing the *Branch Line* (and Division newsletters) is to have an on-line edition. This was done for some time very successfully by the San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Club, but things have changed there. We understand NMRA will start making the *Bulletin* section of *Scale Rails* available on line in September, in addition to the mailed copy. An on line newsletter might work for some members, but many members want to receive a publication they can sit down and leisurely read as time permits. (Who among us has a

computer terminal at their throne?) We know many members do not have Internet access and others do not spend a lot of time in front of a computer CRT. In the foreseeable future I believe we need to continue providing a printed copy of our publication. We have had the *Branch Line* available to read or download from the Internet since early 1997. Today you can access it on the PCR web site at: <http://www.pcrnmra.org/>. From the home page simply click on Branch Line. Our Webmaster, Kevin Hurley has been doing a wonderful job of keeping the PCR site up to date and current.

Every viewpoint and idea will be considered as we work through the issue of funding the region in the future.

While at the PCR site, also take time to read the proposed changes to the PCR By-laws you will be voting on at the Annual Meeting in Concord on May 15th. (See Rich Kolm's summary elsewhere in this issue.) Once you have viewed the on-line version of the *Branch Line*, I suggest you contact your Division Director and tell them what you think of an on-line versus printed newsletter and what you would be willing to pay to have the newsletter continue to be delivered to your home.

The Regions continue to plow through some very turbulent waters. I believe PCR needs to continue our current direction, supporting activities that help our members in the many ways they enjoy the hobby, producing a high quality newsletter, holding fun filled and interesting conventions and running the PCR with enthusiasm and financial integrity. We need to work with our Divisions to help them deal with life after September 2005. We also need to keep "doing" the hobby and having an enjoyable time. I've personally

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MADE IN THE PCR

by Dave Connery

A Baldwin Production's Sierra Rwy. Jamestown General Office structure in HO

In late 1897 the Sierra Railway tracks reached Jamestown, CA and there the railroad built their headquarters, consisting of a general office building, freight shed, roundhouse, machine shop, blacksmith shop and a hotel owned by the railroads executives.

The original general office building was completed in the spring of 1898 and served the railroad until May, 1913, when it burned to the ground. A new building was immediately built in its place and served both as general offices for the railway and as the passenger depot following a fire in the adjacent hotel in 1915.

This building remained the center for the railroad's management until it too burned on Thanksgiving Day, 1978. The model being reviewed is of this second general office building.

This is company owner Jerry Baldwin's



first model railroad kit. It is nearly 100% constructed of laser cut wood parts. When I compare the completed model to photos and drawings from a Reconstruction Report, I find every detail to be correct and to scale. I don't think you could build a more accurate model of the prototype than this kit produces.

The instructions are so clear and complete I don't hesitate to suggest this kit for both the experienced kit builder as well as the modeler who has not previously built a laser kit

With my kit there were six 8 1/2" X 11" pages of detailed instructions, an HO scale drawing of each of the 4 sides and a color photo of a nearly completed but unpainted building. A photo of a complete and painted building was on the box. A total of 23 photos showing various construction steps and two photos of the prototype building were

included. On the kit plans I have, these photos are really too small for an old codger like me to see well. Jerry has assured me he has redone these pages so the photos are now larger and more useful.

I started out by pre-painting all the parts while they were still attached to the original wood sheets. For the basic light cream wall color I used a mix of 1 part Wisconsin Central Gold to 3 parts Reefer White and for the reddish-brown trim color I mixed 2 parts Roof Brown, 2 parts Reefer Orange, 2 parts Antique White and 1 part ATSF Red. Since these are all wood pieces, I used solvent-based Floquil paints to eliminate warping. Once I had removed the parts from their carrying sheets I found they all fit perfectly. I used Titebond carpenters yellow glue for all the wood-to-wood joints. While the walls were

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Made in the PCR

still flat I added the windows, doors and trim and glazed the windows with the provided laser cut clear material using MicroScale Micro Krystal Klear as an adhesive. I also added shades and curtains at this time. This is a different order from in the kit plans and I would recommend it.

The instructions are so clear and complete I don't hesitate to suggest this kit for both the experienced kit builder as well as the modeler who has not previously built a laser kit. The most difficult part was the construction of the bay window, and this went smoother than the instructions led me to believe it would. Even the internal stairway to the second floor, which is visible in a door-less alcove, went together with no hassle. Once the roof was in place I covered it with the provided paper shingles. I carefully painted the roof a deep Oxide Red color, using care not to splatter any paint on the finished model. When all the trim was in place, I used Bragdon's weathering powders to add dark and light streaks to the finished roof, front overhang and around the chimney.

Obviously, any one who is modeling the Sierra will want this signature structure on their layout. Since it is based on a prototype, all those who model a shortline and are looking for a general office building and/or passenger depot now have a great model available to them. In fact, this building would look great on any layout. The kit is available from Santa Fe Hobbies, 1609 Marston Way, Modesto, CA 95355. (209) 869-0850 and sells for \$100. You can contact Jerry at JBal2321@aol.com. Jerry indicates he hopes to produce many of the Sierra buildings in Jamestown and perhaps those in Sonora over the coming years. I sure hope he does because this kit is an absolute jewel. The Jamestown freight depot is next!

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President's Message

can download these documents from the PCR web site.

PCR Trustee Ray DeBlicek advised me that the NMRA Board of Trustees made several decisions at its midyear meeting in Phoenix to implement the new regulations. The details of these actions are described in Ray's report. While regions are precluded from charging dues, I understand that NMRA will collect an add-on subscription fee to cover the cost of the *Branch Line*.

Once again I must ask for volunteers to fill several important positions. I appointed Peter Weiglin to serve as Manager of the Membership Department last summer. However, in November Peter informed me that he was moving to Cincinnati. Thus the position is vacant again. Gus Campagna agreed to serve as nominating chair on an interim basis but we need a full time volunteer. Ultimately the future of PCR will depend upon member participation. Membership promotion must be improved to recruit new members and retain existing members. We need some one to manage the Membership Department. We also need volunteers to fill other vacancies in the region and divisions. I urge you to call me, regional and division officers or committee chairs to find out how you can help.

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View From the Left Seat

been busy with a variety of projects in HO, HOn3, On30 and Fn3 and really enjoying the model building. I hope you have also been enjoying your hobby time and are planning on attending the PCR Convention in May in Concord – I am looking forward to seeing and spending some time there with my many PCR friends that week.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Bill Kaufman

I wrote a very general Editor's Notebook about how I thought that NMRA national had shot its self in the foot, when the other shoe dropped and it stopped being theoretical.

Norm Morris's printing press broke. Norm is a member of PCR and our long time printer. He has given us terrific service and a great price over the years. He had decided to retire in the next year, but the broken machine made the retirement right now and we didn't have anybody to print BL. The first bids came in at twice what Norm had been charging us. If you are reading this, it should be obvious that we have solved the problem short term.

We are working on a long term solution, but this precipitated an immediate discussion on the future of Branch Line. In its current form and paying something closer to going rates would require a subscription of about \$10.00. Some people have been very supportive of that.

However, I do think NMRA national has got the wrong end of the stick on this one. Read Ray de Blicke's column on national board actions. They did a lot of good things to implement the new bylaws, but I think that they missed the boat when they put all the publications on a subscription basis separate from the dues.

National is having image and allegiance problems and it cuts off its one direct contact with its members. Doesn't make sense. What they needed to do was make *The Bulletin/Scale Rails* into a readable and effective voice of the national organization. Only about 10% of NMRA membership goes to the national convention. Killing off the national newsletter

will leave 90% with little contact with national and what it does. Additionally, how the 10% are supposed to find out about the conventions is beyond me. PCR does a little better with about 20% attending convention, but still there is a communication problem.

National is expecting the website to take up the slack. That seems fairly suspect. The only people who check websites are people who are already committed to the cause.

The national board has been hung up for years on the newsletter as a "member benefit."

Branch Line is backed by a very supportive PCR board that understands that we need to put out a newsletter that informs and entertains our members.

Clearly the Bull is no longer something that people look fondly on, but it wasn't created to be a freebee magazine. It told the dues paying folks what the organization was doing with their money and how they could enjoy it.

Branch Line is backed by a very supportive PCR board that understands that we need to put out a newsletter that informs and entertains our members. PCR has a few bucks, but it cannot be expected to fund this indefinitely with no matching income. We too fall under the subscription scheme unless PCR chooses to fund us some other way.

Ray de Blicke appears to have negotiated a deal where the first year regional subscription will be subsidized for new members. It's probably the best we can get at this point. Thank you Ray.

Climbing down off my soap box, the rest of the issue has a bunch of good stuff.

It is great to see Jack Burgess' book on the

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Yosemite Valley come out. He has worked long on it. The book is as well thought out and documented as the model railroad he has built. Kudos also to Tony Thompson and Signature Press for bringing it out. It is an all PCR effort.

All the usual suspects are here, the divisional reports, the OpSIG column, more of Jim Providenza's Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern, Dave Connery's reviews, and Jack Burgess Achievement Program column.

Additionally, I have asked Gerry Leone, a friend of mine and the most newly minted Master Model Railroader to write a piece on why he did it and what it was like doing it. Gerry is editor of a regional newsletter and a heck of a nice guy.

The Devil Mountain convention has a registration form and a whole series of articles on clinics and tours and the like.

The Modeling with the Masters folks have blurb about an upcoming session in the region

Jim comes back for a second bite of the apple with a nice report on what it was like to spend two days of intense operating on the La Mesa Club. Pat LaTorres too is back with more of Bieber and threatens to keep writing until we stop him.

The NWP Historical Society came through with some material to help model Duncans Mills. Very nice stuff. I took some pictures up there for Bill Schaumburg at RMC when he published an article on the area. Great little place.

Trust Ray to write the "Penultimate Trustee's Report." Excellent material on where the National Organization is headed. Ron Plies is trying to kick a little life back into the contest room and the contests.

Finally, the Elsie's, you know I have a soft place in my heart for them, have pictures and a blurb on their display in Bakersfield.

Bill Kaufman

A Book Review by Les Dahlstedt **The Christmas Train**

By David Baldacci

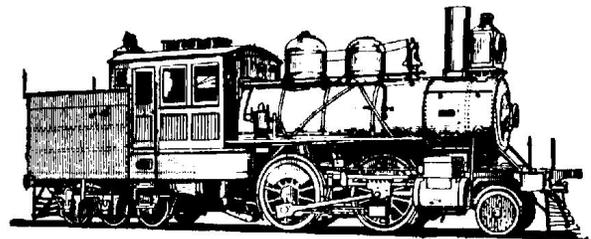
(paperback by Warner Books)

Most novels with a 'train' theme always seem to fall short of 'acceptable' in the realm of prototype accuracy. So it was with resigned expectation that I picked up a copy of *The Christmas Train* during the return leg of a recent business trip. By the time I'd read a couple of chapters, it became evident that the author could spin a good tale and had invested some quality time in rail research.

The Christmas Train's main character is Tom Langdon; a disillusioned journalist, traveling cross country on Amtrak. Along the way, Tom meets a variety of memorable (and often funny) 'on board' characters, does a little sleuth work and is forced to confront his own past. The story's plot is well-crafted and replete with enough twists, turns and surprises to make for an enjoyable read. Without going to an extreme, it tells a bit about Amtrak's plight of shared rails.

The rail-related elements of the story are exceptionally well researched. David Baldacci rode Amtrak's Capitol Limited and Southwest Chief and interviewed many of the staff of both trains, along with not less than eleven other Amtrak personnel.

The Christmas Train is one of those unique books that will be enjoyed by railfan and non-railfan alike.



TRAINS TO YOSEMITE

BY JACK A. BURGESS

Review by Dave Connery

I have been looking forward to this new book on the Yosemite Valley Railroad for several years and now it is here. Wow – this book by PCR member and Master Model Railroader Jack Burgess is brilliant. Jack is the avowed expert on the Yosemite Valley and his immense knowledge of the railroad shines through on every page. But don't think this is simply an accounting of the railroad's history and equipment, it includes this but it is much, much more. I hope every author of future railroad tomes reads Jack's book and uses it as an example of what should be included in a book about a railroad.

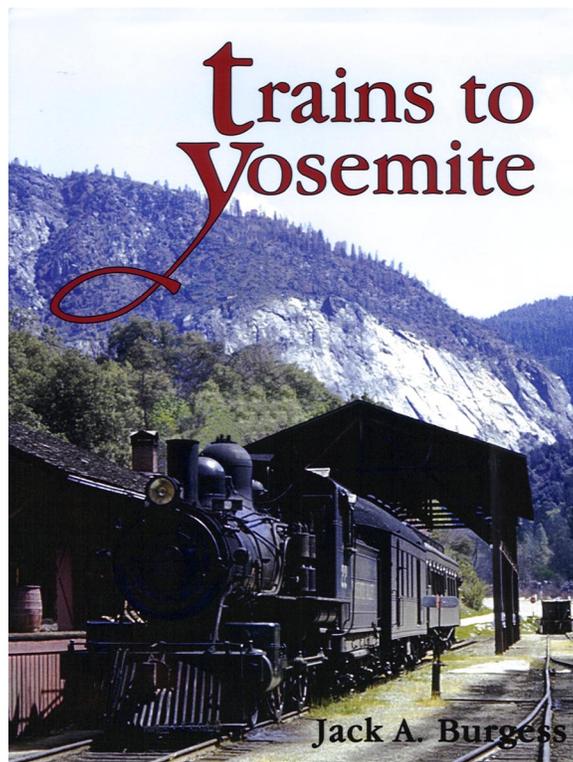
The 372 page book is lavishly illustrated with over 400 photos, including 43 color photos in the first section by noted rail fan and photographer, Al Rose, to whom the book is dedicated. But wait, the YV was abandoned in 1945, how did Burgess get color photos of the railroad? Fortunately, Al Rose began taking color photos of the YV in the early 1940's. These photos provide beautiful and rich color images – as if they were taken yesterday -- of a railroad now 60 years gone. Amazing! As I read the book I was impressed that Jack found photos to show every significant feature of the railroad. I would no sooner think, "I wonder what something looked like" and then I turned the page and had a beautiful, clear photo before me of exactly what I was wondering about.

The list of photographers is a Who's Who of

western railroad photography. In addition to Al Rose, photo credits go to Will Whittaker, Guy Dunscomb, Phil Kauke, Louis Stein, Bert Ward, Ted Wurm, Paul Darrell, Stanley Snook, Francis Guido, Gerald Best, Glenn Beier, Fred Stoes along with probably several dozen other photographers. There are numerous photos from the Yosemite Museum at Yosemite National Park, the California State Railroad Museum and particularly the authors personal collection. When you have finished reading this book you feel like you have just returned from a several week vacation riding the YV.

While this is a wonderful reference source for every facet of the railroad, it is also a grand read. Jack has included lots of sidebars noted as X25 (an extra train to the YV's timetable pulled by locomotive #25). These side-bars add great color to the history, profiling YV managers; recounting

specific events from interviews Jack did with YV employees; detailing specials, such as when President FDR rode the railroad to visit Yosemite National Park and explaining complex operations. A second type of side-bar, noted with a YVRR Brakeman's hat badge, provides copies of YV bulletins issued over the years that illustrate what the trainmen were being told about specific situations. Jack's highly readable writing style makes the pages fly by. The book is a total immersion in the subject and an



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absolute joy to read.

After an introductory chapter, there is a chronological history of the railroad followed by chapters on each section of the railroad. There is a chapter devoted to operations on the YV, covering both passenger and freight trains at various times during the life of the line. There are chapters on the locomotives and the rolling stock of the railroad and an interesting epilogue of the scrapping of the line. Finally there are drawings of many pieces of YV equipment and structures and the book ends with a glossary of terms, a complete bibliography and an index. Throughout the book, Jack has included numerous drawings and maps to illustrate his points. One of the most useful innovations Jack included are marks on the maps showing where photos found in the book were taken. What a phenomenal idea – it helps interpret the map and greatly adds to the understanding of what every area on the railroad looked like.

I think all railroad fans will love this book,

but there is one secret. Don't tell anyone, but this is really a book written for model railroaders! It covers everything a modeler needs to create an incredible model of the railroad in any of several time frames. It has the data needed to model the equipment, structures and line-side scenery. It has everything needed to replicate operations and with the color section, a layout you build based on this book will look spot on. As you probably know, Jack has built a layout of the YV, and it is perhaps the most accurate model railroad of a prototype ever created. If all new modelers were to read this book before they settled on a layout plan, I would guess half the model railroads in the country would be based on the YV, it is that powerful a book.

The book is priced at \$65 and is available directly from the author. You can see how to obtain it from him at his web site: www.yosemitevalleyrr.com/book.htm. The book is also available from the publisher, Signature Press (see sidebar) or by the time you read this, at your local hobby shop carrying a full line of railroad books.

SIGNATURE PRESS

The new book by Jack Burgess, Trains to Yosemite, is published by Signature Press. This book, like all their work, is beautifully done with excellent photo and print quality and nice clean, crisp layout. Signature Press is a PCR company and one of the two principals in the company is PCR member and past PCR Contest Chair, Tony Thompson. Tony and his partner, Bob Church, are both eminent railroad history authors and fans. Both have a railfan, historian and modelers perspective and this really shows in what they have published. The company is now in its 10th year of publishing high quality books on railroads and Western History. They own the rights to more than 50 books previously published by Howell-North, Darwin and Superior and plan on publishing a mix of new books as well as reissues of noteworthy favorites from the past. I believe they have published 22 books to date and I was surprised to note I now have 13 of these on my shelves. Every one is a book I am very proud to own. I did a review of their reprint of Gerald Best's The Pacific Coast Company in the Jan-Mar 1999 Branch Line. Since each of their books appear very relevant to me as a modeler, I hope to send our editor reviews of a number of their other works for his use in coming issues. Their web site is www.signaturepress.com, where you can learn about all their available books, as well as some future releases. You can order from them at 11508 Green Road, Winton, CA 95693 (800) 305-7942 or FAX to (916) 939-1960. Dave Connery

LAYOUT DESIGN AND OPERATIONS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS NEWS

By Seth Neumann

We've got several big operating events coming up in the Bay Area:

The first event is the annual Bay Area PCR/LD/OP SIG meet scheduled for Feb 12 and 13, 2005 at the Santa Clara depot. (Those of you receiving this electronically still have time to participate) The meet is a two day affair featuring five clinics on Layout Design and operation, a layout design challenge, layout design consulting (so bring your plans and problems), a panel of layout owners who recently started operations, layout tours and operating sessions, with priority for new operators. So if you are wondering what all the excitement is about, this is your opportunity to find out in a supportive environment! Information at <http://homepage.mac.com/jacobsen/LORM2005/>

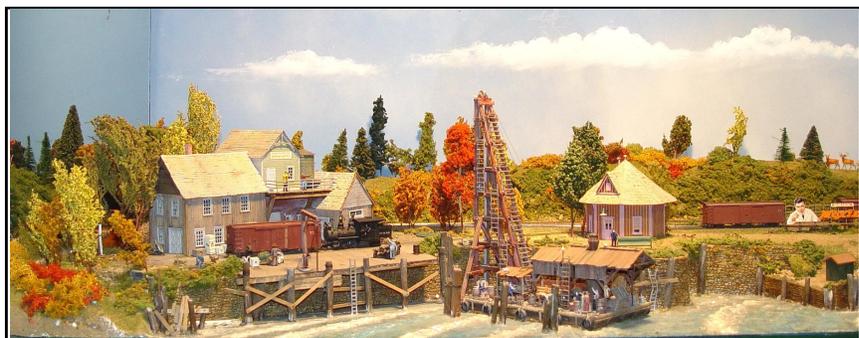
The second event has a little different focus: several Coast Division operators (including myself and your editor) have organized a Bay Area Ops Fest for March 9-11, 2005. If you are available on March 9-11 (Wednesday through Friday) and would like to help out, contact me sneumann@pacbell.net, or go to www.BayRails.com, click on contacts, and click on me. We also have operating slots open. Our objectives are to have a great time operating, showcase Bay Area layouts and especially to encourage groups in other western cities to develop their own operating events, thereby increasing the number of events and slots for all of us!

The third event is, of course,

the PCR convention: Devil Mountain 2005. David Parks is organizing Op Sessions during the convention which runs from May 11-15.

The Layout Design and Operations SIGs are planning a full program of events at the NMRA Cincinnati convention, so sign up early if you're planning to attend as the slots and tours fill up fast.

I personally have been trying a few new things lately and I've been dispatching more. I've especially stretched myself with Jim Providenza's Santa Cruz Northern under the tutelage of Jim, Dave Clemens and Linton Von Beroldingen. I've been learning how to plan waaaaay ahead in TT&TO dispatching and soon I'll even write orders to allow the locals to do their work without flagging out for protection. I also had the opportunity to dispatch (under Track Warrant authority) Jim Radkey's Pink Lady and Mike Birmingham's new SP&S. Both of these are new layouts and are adding about 10 slots of new ops opportunities each month. I also got the opportunity to run a yard on David Park's large B&O/Western Maryland Cumberland railroad, so there are lots of slots and lots of ops!



Dock from the Elsie modular display at Bakersfield

A look at the NMRA'S Achievement Program from the other side

by Gerry Leone, MMR

Take a look under that layout of yours. See that mess of wires? You probably put them in yourself, one at a time, and, to you, it kind of makes sense. Now pretend you're Joe Average down the block looking at those wires. Your first reaction would undoubtedly be, "Wow... that's so involved. I could never do all of that!"

That's exactly the same way I felt when I first looked into the NMRA's Achievement Program (AP), and the challenge of perhaps becoming a Master Model Railroader someday. Contests? Points? Certificates? No way I could do that. But I found out I could. And did. And I'm here to tell you that you can, too.

Just like those under-the-layout wires, if you take a few minutes to break it all down and study each individual part, it *will* all make sense, and, as you'll see, it *is* attainable.

Let me add a little disclaimer here: I'm no expert on model railroading or the AP. I'm no great-shakes modeler. But by getting involved with the AP I was able to raise my sights, raise the bar, and raise my abilities. I think – no, I *know* – I actually became a better model railroader because of the AP. In other words, I went from being a great "marginal modeler," to being a marginal "great modeler." That, to me, is pretty cool. And if I sound like a late night TV salesperson, I apologize. It's just that I'm truly sold on what the AP can do for modelers. Plus, I

really, really had fun doing it.

One more disclaimer: I may sound flippant about this AP stuff, but I took – and still take – it very seriously. You do need to put out some effort. You do need to make a commitment to the program, and to yourself. It's not a breeze. In fact, it's not even easy; some of it was very difficult for me. But anything that's worth anything

doesn't come free. And in the end the big winner is you: you've improved your skills, you've increased your enjoyment of the hobby, and you've got a real sense of pride and accomplishment, because what you've done has only been done by 346 other people (the current count of MMRs) in the last 44 years.

Go ahead, put your toe in the water for just a second – take a look at the NMRA's website under "Achievement Program."

There you'll find explanations for each of the possible 11 certificates you can earn. You only need to get 7 to become an MMR.

Don't let all the words scare you. Under each of the certificates you'll not only see the requirements, you'll see a "plain English" explanation, highlighted in yellow, of what each requirement really entails. And you'll see the phrase "don't make this harder than it is" pop up a million times. Remember: the Achievement Program exists to help you become a better modeler; it's not some exclusive club that's trying to



Gerry is a friend of mine, editor of the Thousand Lakes Region's *Fusee*, and an all around good guy. Bill K.

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frustrate you.

Ok, so let's take an example. Just like those layout wires, let's break down one of the certificates to its simplest terms and you'll see what I mean when I tell you that you can do it. Pick one, any one. Electrical? Great.

If you've already got a small layout, you're probably most of the way to earning this certificate.

Let's start with the easy stuff. Your layout have a passing siding? Thought so. Requirement completed. Does that siding have a turnout involved (duh!) and is it wired? Great. Another requirement completed.

Ok, the requirements say you need five electrical blocks. If your layout is pre-DCC, you no doubt have done this. If you're DCC, creating blocks is as easy as taking a cutoff wheel in a Dremel and hacking the track into five sections. (If you want to get ahead of the game, make sure two of those sections are spurs.) Then make sure each of those five sections is wired to your bus wires. Insert an on/off switch into those wires. Whammo. Requirement done.

And if two of those electrical blocks above were industry spurs, you now have "facilities for storing at least two unused motive power units." Yet another requirement completed.

It's important to remember that you don't need to have all of the required equipment for "Electrical Engineer" (or any other certificate) on your layout at all times. If you're running DCC you won't be able to have an ammeter or voltmeter in-line. Instead, grab a piece of flex-track, dig out that old DC transformer, find that dog-eared copy of "How to Wire Your Model Railroad" and wire in a cheap-o set of meters (Micro-Mark has a set for under \$40; when you're finished, Ebay 'em, or pass them along to the next "Electrical Engineer" certificate-wannabe). All you need to do is demonstrate that you can do it once.

Say your layout doesn't have a reverse loop. Staple a few sections of flextrack and a turnout on a piece of plywood (remember, you're not being judged on track esthetics here; this is for wiring). Wire it up with your old powerpack (above) and you've knocked off three requirements in one fell swoop (turnout wiring, reverse loop wiring, and meter wiring).

Are you getting the point? I won't go through each of the rest of the requirements here, but you can see that some of this stuff ain't that hard.

Again, look at the NMRA website. Read the comments that are highlighted in yellow – they're there to help you earn the certificate.

And, ok, let's say you do earn the Electrical Engineer certificate. What's that prove? It proves that you've taken the time to learn (or re-learn) something. It proves that maybe you now have a little more knowledge to help Joe Average down the block who'd love to get started in this hobby, but is intimidated. It proves that you were willing to make a commitment to yourself to become a better modeler. It proves that, with a little effort, you can do it.

So go look at that mess of wires under your layout again. You did that. You can do this.

I'm MMR#346. And what that means is that I'm in total awe of 345 other folks who went before me. Someday maybe I'll be as good as them. But for now all I know is that when I started the AP I made a commitment to myself to improve, and I'm not gonna break that commitment, even now. That makes me feel pretty good about myself, and makes my hobby a lot more fun.

C'mon. Go for it.



TALES OF THE SANTA CRUZ NORTHERN

By
Jim Provenza

Naming Things 2

Watson Crick Trestle? The hardly noted, almost invisible station of Ilium? We left off last time with these places on the helix of the Santa Cruz Northern. Watson and Crick were the discoverers of the DNA double helix. Linton von Beroldingen, one of the real forces behind the SCN, and a forensic chemist, named the trestle and scene in the helix shadow box when it was first built almost 20 years ago. A great, if obscure, play on words.

Ilium is almost as good, and comes with both a prototype and family association. Ilium was a station on the Rio Grande Southern, probably my favorite of the Colorado narrow gauge lines. It is a Latin word that means “twisty”. Seems like a good start. My wife Terri is a physical therapist and contributed it as a potential station name based on her knowledge of anatomy. Given the fact that the station location of Ilium is buried deep in the bowels of the helix this is certainly appropriate!

People and their personalities have a lasting impression on our railroads. It can be a suggestion made by a one time visitor or a series of special scratch built structures by a long time crew member and friend who has moved or passed away. Sometimes it is a cumulative effect of many small bits of help here and there over many years – scenery all over the SCN would be a pale shadow of itself if it wasn’t for the efforts of our esteemed editor!

Sometimes a single comment is all it takes to begin something intangible that becomes part and

parcel of the lore, even the fabric of the railroad.

Scott Kew, one of the founding members of our local round robin, has been a member of the SCN operating crew since I first moved to San

Rafael in 1988. Scott has been an invaluable resource. As a former railroader he has knowledge and viewpoints that I have found critical to the feel that the SCN is a real railroad. More is the pity that his Black Butte Sub is gone!

But our story about Scott goes back to the day a number of

years ago that he was the conductor on the Mountain Local; they were stuck in the hole on the siding at Dougherty's. Try as he might he couldn't get the dispatcher to let him get out and make one simple runaround move so he could head back to Fallon. One train went by, then another. Still he couldn't get out. Parleying, even pleading didn't work. At some point during the last set of exchanges with the DS Scott accidentally changed his radio from “push-to-talk” to “voice activated”.

After thinking he had finished with his last transmission he was heard by everyone at the op session to mutter how the DS was treating him “just like he had all the rights of a boxcar”. There was a pause in the radio traffic and then the dispatcher responded, “And that’s just how I’m goin’ to treat you from now on!” “Boxcar” Kew has been with us ever since – a constant reminder not to mess with the dispatcher.

Very occasionally cars will go on the ground

(Continued on page 13)

**“Gomez action!
What we need
is some Gomez
action!”**

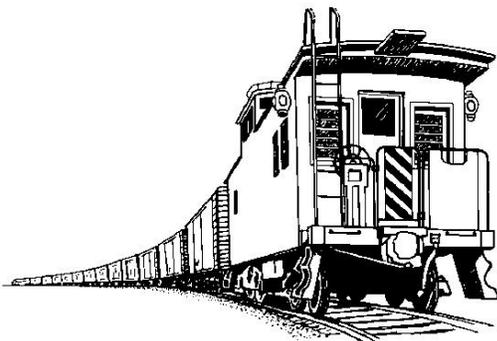
(Continued from page 12)

on the SCN. Unfortunate but true. When this happens a crew member will occasionally shout out loudly, with fiendish glee, “Gomez action”!

The guy who added this phrase to the SCN lexicon wasn’t even a model railroader, at least when he first showed up on the doorstep! Back in February 2000 Allen Keller and his crew came to film the SCN. The gripman, Josh Beach, was a neat guy. By the end of the three days of filming he was qualified as a brakeman and a student engineer. This was only the 4th layout he had worked for Keller on and I think only the first time he had ever handled cars / locos. But starting on Monday when they were shooting the trains in motion he would occasionally mutter, “Gomez action! What we need is some Gomez action!”

I was totally clueless, figured it was some sort of arcane camera crew argot. After about the third time Josh repeated the comment I asked Allen about it. He said that it was Josh’s own term that he apparently used only when working on layout shoots. And stops. So I ask Josh. He laughs. “Addams family, man. Gomez Addams sitting there, smoking his cigar, running his trains, crashing them and blowing them up. We need some Gomez action on this layout!”

For myself, I’ve always found the SCN to provide more than its share of “interesting” operational problems. I think I’ll leave the cigars and explosives behind for now.



PCR BY-LAWS TO BE AMENDED FOR NEW NMRA REGULATIONS

by Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

Proposed amendments to the PCR By-Laws will be on the agenda for approval by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting on May 15, 2005, during the annual convention in Concord. These amendments are necessary to make the By-Laws consistent with the new NMRA Regulations. They were presented by the By-Laws and Manual of Operations Committee and accepted by the Board of Directors on November 6, 2004.

The full text of the proposed amendments is available at the PCR website at <http://www.pcrnmra.org> or can be obtained from the Secretary. The following is a summary of the primary changes.

Article 1, Name and Territory: Add a brief description of the corporation and the basis of its territory.

Article 2, Membership and Dues: Add entirely new provisions to become effective with changes at NMRA—to define membership as all NMRA members living within the geographic bounds of PCR, to eliminate any separate Region dues, and to allow the Region and Divisions to establish subscription and activity fees.

Article 3, Management: Delete the section on PCR Trustee (the NMRA Board of Trustees will be replaced by the new NMRA Board of Directors in July). Add a provision regarding PCR’s representative on the new Regional Advisory Council of NMRA.

Article 5, Departments and Committees: Delete the provision that the PCR Achievement Program Manager is appointed by the PCR Trustee.

Article 6, Publications: Update the language regarding the *Branch Line* as the official PCR publication.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

By Jack Burgess, MMR

MASTER BUILDER - PROTOTYPE MODELS

This month we will talk about the requirements for Master Builder - Prototype Models. Like the other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available on the Internet at the NMRA site, www.nmra.org. You can also get a copy of the requirements by calling me.

It was a natural category for me to qualify for but others may feel that it is the most challenging category in the entire AP program. However, I think that it accurately reflects the trend in our hobby toward more prototype models and layouts. Note that the Prototype Models category has a number of requirements that seem similar to the Master Builder - Scenery category. However, there are significant differences.

To qualify for the Master Builder - Prototype Models certificate, you must construct an animated or static model of a prototype scene containing at least six models of prototype equipment and structures. Of the six models, you must include at least four different models including 1) rolling stock; 2) a railroad structure; 3) a caboose or passenger car; and 4) motive power. Two of the required six models must be scratch built and the remaining four models must be super-detailed. The prototype scene, with the six models in it, must be capable of winning a Merit Award, i.e., earning 87½ points.

In reading this singular requirement, the first difference that one might notice is that there is no minimum size requirement like there is for the Master Builder - Scenery category. Note too that the individual models do not need to be

capable of winning a Merit Award. Instead, only the completed scene is judged but it must score a minimum of 87½ points. The prototype scene is judged using the following criteria:

- Terrain (35 points)
- Structures (35 points)
- Background (15 points)
- Lighting (5 points)
- Realism/Conformity (35 points)

In addition to building the models, you must submit 2 sets of photographs (or a video tape

presentation) that will document the prototype being modeled and the model itself. In other words, you need to describe in photos and text how you have duplicated the prototype scene. You also need to prepare a written description which, along with the photographs, documented evidence and/or maps, will verify the actual prototype scene used as a basis for the modeled scene. Include in the written description the intended setting of the model railroad and describe the scenic

details used to achieve the desired effect. If at all possible, try and take pictures of your model that are from the same angle as pictures that you have of the prototype. That way you can have side-by-side pictures showing how well you have re-created the scene you are modeling. If you create your own plans (which you will often have to do) include them to, along with a description of how you developed them. This is one category in which you cannot have too much documentation!

Obviously, you need to model a scene for which you can supply prototype photos. These same photos are essential to your modeling efforts and I'd suggest some digital photos of

(Continued on page 15)

While this AP category might seem daunting to some, I see it instead as simply documentation of the ever-growing prototype approach to the hobby.



Redwood Empire Division Report

By Steve Skold

Our February meeting will be over by the time this gets to you. We were hosted by the Vallejo and Solano Western RR at the Vallejo Model Railroad Club. Harold Mentzer did a clinic on culverts and John Rolston one on Airbrushing With Acrylic Paints. The contest was a favorite model contest using the 1994 PCR Convention car kits and weathering them. At this point there have been 23 given out so we expect a large number of entries.

Nominations will be in order for the election of Superintendent and Chief Clerk/Paymaster. Nolan Alexander is running again for Supt and Steve Skold again for Chief Clerk. Ballots will be mailed out and then counted at the May meet in Napa.

The Napa meet has been moved up to Sunday May 1st at the Napa Town and Country Fairgrounds and the home of the Napa Model Railroad Club. It was moved up so it would be before the PCR Convention. The model contest will be favorite model contest and will be for Motive Power. Included will be a short vignette on how you built the model. We will also have some people available to critique models you may be entering in the PCR Contest at the Convention in Concord which is May 11th to the 16th. Included will be discussions on how you can improve the model and a review of the entry form and how that can garner you more points. You will get an additional door prize ticket for each model you bring in.

The ballots will be counted and the winners will be presented at the Annual Meeting. The meeting will be short and sweet and probably last less than 5 minutes. Then we can all go operation on the Napa Valley Northern. See you there.

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your model scene from the same angle to document your success in duplicating the same scene.

While this AP category might seem daunting to some, I see it instead as simply documentation of the ever-growing prototype approach to the hobby. For example, assume that you build some rolling stock, a structure or two, and a locomotive, of which a couple are scratch built, all based on an actual prototype. If you enter them in Divisional, Regional, or National modeling contests, so much the better...if they score Merit Awards, these awards can be used toward the other categories for Cars, Structures, and/or Motive Power. Then build up a module or diorama (or better yet, a portion of your layout) to duplicate a specific scene which could include these models (especially the structures!) and you might be on the road to award of this AP category.

However, I must warn you (with tongue in cheek) that prototype modeling is addictive! First you find a few photos of your favorite prototype, then you find that you need more information, and 30 years later you publish a book on your favorite prototype. That is how my new book, *Trains to Yosemite*, came about. (Ordering information for that book is on my website at www.yosemitevalleyrr.com.)

Once you have satisfied all of the requirements, submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) which includes the required descriptions and photos. Send the completed SOQ to your Divisional AP representative, **along with a photocopy of your NMRA membership card** and you are on your way toward another certificate!

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.

PCR CONVENTION DEVIL MOUNTAIN - 2005

May 11 - May 15, 2005.

By Nick Dann

The 2005 PCR Convention will be held at PCR Annual meeting at the hotel, and then a the Concord Hotel and Convention Center in “**Banquet in the Park**” to close the Concord, CA, May 11th through 15th, 2005. convention. The “**Banquet in the Park**” will The Convention is being hosted by the **Walnut** be held at Larkey Park in Walnut Creek, site of **Creek Model Railroad Society**, home of the the WCMRS. The cost of your “**Banquet in Diablo Valley Lines**. As promised, a full **the Park**” is included in the price of program is being planned for the PCR Conventioneer, and his or her guest.

Aha, you noticed that name change! The ‘Sheraton’ became, for a brief moment, the ‘Radisson’, and then (suddenly) to what we referred to as the ‘No Name’ hotel. Seems the owners couldn’t cut the right deal with Radisson, and are now negotiating with another nationally recognized ‘brand’. Rather than mention that name and be wrong again, let’s just say the Concord Hotel and Convention Center, SAME address (same rates and all), but don’t be surprised by a new name by May 11th!

The hotel owners have, in spite of this confusion, have been very accommodating, and promise, still, a fine venue. Good fun, good eats, and lots of places nearby to see and explore. If you haven’t had a chance, check <http://www.officetimes.com/ChambersofCommerce.htm> for nearby city web sites that will detail local attractions, (but we promise to keep you busy enough, you may not have the time!)

Call now for reservations. The reservation number is **925-825-7700**. The room rate has been confirmed at a very reasonable \$89.00 per night plus tax.

As a reminder, the last day of the convention, Sunday May 15, there will be the



In conjunction with the Banquet, the adjacent WCMRS railroad will be available to *all registrants* to operate *your* equipment on our railroad. We’ll set you up in a cab and coach you while you operate your train over the *Diablo Valley Lines*.

Convention Registration

Registration may be made in advance using the form that follows, or at the door. Rates are:

Adult Fare (pre-registered before January 31st):
\$85.00

Adult Fare (after January 31st, or at the door):
\$95.00

Spouse (non-rail) Fare:
\$55.00

Youth Fare:
\$45.00

Convention Web Site

For the latest information concerning the Devil Mountain 2005 Convention, please visit www.wcmrs.org, and click on “Devil Mountain 2005”.

Convention Car

The Devil Mountain 2005 Convention Car is a specially built (RTR) Southern Pacific

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DEVIL MOUNTAIN

Non Rail Activities

Suzanne Fox, Chairperson

The Non-Rail Fare is \$55. Saturday's lunch and Sunday's "Banquet-in-the-Park" are included in the Non-Rail Fare. All other meals are no-host. Also note that some planned Non-Rail activities at the hotel and off-site may require a nominal fee to cover admission and/or docent-led tours.

Non-rail activities include:

Hospitality Room (sign up here for all activities)

Wednesday 1 pm – 5 pm, and 6 pm – 9 pm

Thursday 8 am – 12 noon, 1 pm – 5 pm, and 6 pm – 9 pm

Friday 8 am – 12 noon, 1 pm – 5 pm, and 6 pm – 9 pm

Saturday 8 am – 12 noon, 1 pm – 5 pm, and 6 pm – 9 pm

Historic Benicia – Thursday 10 am – 4 pm

Glass-blowing studio(s) (free), Benicia Capitol State Historic Park, 1853-'54, docent-led tour (\$2); lunch (no-host)

Gardens and Museum of Walnut Creek – Friday

10 am – 4 pm Ruth Bancroft Gardens docent-led tour (\$7) – yuccas and cactus should be in bloom, Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum (\$3), boxed lunch (no-host)

Bingo (On-site Event) – Friday evening

Martinez and Antiques on the Carquinez Strait –

Saturday 11:30 am – 4 pm. Lunch (included in Non-Rail fare), John Muir Historic Site, Martinez antique hunting

Movie and Popcorn (On-site Event) – Saturday evening

Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek – Sunday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. The Museum is in Walnut Creek located in Larkey Park,

which is conveniently located next to the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society.

Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm Admission: \$6/ adult and \$5/senior

Banquet in the Park – Sunday starting at 11:30 am

As a reminder, please bring your donation projects such as quilts, crochet blankets, etc. to the convention. Baby blanket projects would be a nice addition if you were looking for a new project. A representative of the Contra Costa County Regional Medical Center will be our guest for lunch, and we will present our projects to them for their outreach programs.

Look for more complete schedule, list of events, and updates on the convention web site or in the newsletter that will be sent to Non-Railers in April.

(Continued from page 16)

sugar beet car. There will be five unique road numbers that will never appear in any other production model. Convention cars will be sold for \$30.00 each, and a pack of five cars with individual numbers will be \$140.00. A special sugar beet load will be available at the convention for separate sale.

Convention cars may be pre-ordered (recommended) using the registration form.





DEVIL MOUNTAIN

Clinics

Our clinic committee is still busy arranging a comprehensive list of clinics presented by recognized local and nationally known experts. These workshops and seminars will be sure to educate and entertain all model railroaders, from beginners to seasoned pros. Among the list of clinics to date:

American Built Narrow Gauge Mallets – John Stutz. A step through time as John chronicles the 50 year history of 30” and 42” gauge mallets by Baldwin and Alco.

Around the Narrow Gauge Circle – Bill Fleisher. Researching the existing remains of the D&RGW.

Decoding Brass Locomotives – Schutzer. In this third and final part of the series, we’ll look at installing DCC decoders in older steam locomotives.

Great Northern Passenger Trains in the 60’s – Bill Fleisher. A review of the makeup and operation of passenger trains in the 1960’s.

How to Fix Up HO Rapid Transit BART Models – Jon Kwei. Jonathan will discuss fixing up the 1970’s BART models and how to install NWSL power trucks.

It’s Not Prototypical – Bill Fleisher. This slide clinic will dispel the myth that 1:1 railroading was straightforward

Let’s Make a Movie – Kermit Paul. Kermit will discuss using digital video to make DVD movies with Adobe Premier Elements software.

Lighting and Detection – Pete McCorkell

Making Turnouts Electrically Reliable – Rich Kolm Solving electrical problems at turnouts and a look at the special DCC requirements of switches.

Milk Cars and Trains – Robert Clark.

Reviewing the unique connection between the dairy industry and railroading. A display of the variety of lettered equipment will be shown.

Model Railroading in the Bronze Age – Glenn Joesten. A look back at how model railroading evolved through the era of scratch-building kits and wood parts made by trained beavers.

On30 and the Yosemite Short Line – YSL Operators (Jim Long et al). The Yosemite Short Line operators will present how the conceived and built an exquisite On30 modular railroad which will be on display in the Trade Show.

Operations Using Shipit at the SVL – David Griffy. A discussion of computer-based operations on the Silicon Valley Lines club using the ShipIt software package.

Rebuilding Brass Locomotives – Schutzer. Now that you’ve found the problems, let’s fix the problems here in Part Two of the series.

Rust, Grime and Other Filthy Stuff – Dick Witzens. Basic weathering without an airbrush.

Shaking the Box – Dick Witzens. Tips not given in the instructions to assemble and improve basic plastic rolling stock and structure kits.

Slab Foam Layout and Scenery Construction – Dick Witzens. Layout and scenery construction using foam sheets.

Standard Gauge Steam at Alamosa – Bill Fleisher. A look at the standard gauge

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National Model Railroad Association

PACIFIC COAST REGION

PCR OFFICERS BALLOT

Instructions for Election:

1. Election starts with receipt of ballot (Branchline mailed approximately March 1, 2003).
2. All ballots must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2003.
3. Vote only for one candidate for each office.
4. You may write in a candidate of your choice. However, the candidate must be willing to serve if elected.
5. Voting for more than one candidate in an office will void your ballot.
6. Do not make any other marks on the ballot.
7. Fold in thirds so that the return address is showing, and tape the ballot closed.
8. The ballot is considered a first class letter, and requires 37¢ postage.

PLACE AFTER YOUR CHOICE FOR EACH OFFICE.

PRESIDENT <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i>	VICE PRESIDENT <i>(Vote for ONLY one candidate)</i>
Gene Mayer <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Connery <input type="checkbox"/>
WRITE-IN CANDIDATE <input type="checkbox"/>	WRITE-IN CANDIDATE <input type="checkbox"/>

(fold here)

Postage
37¢

PCR Ballot Chairman

Jim Providenza

16 Drake's Cove

San Rafael, CA 94903

(fold here)

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steam trains that frequented the narrow gauge D&RGW at Alamosa.

Sugar Pine Logging by Rail in the Sierras – Steve Polkinghorn. A look at the heyday of lumber railroading in California on the Sugar Pine Railroad

The State Belt – Bill Kaufman. Researching and developing a layout based on the State Belt of California. The prototype didn't use standard railroad procedures to operate trains!

Timber Lined Railroad Tunnels – John Stutz. A photo tour illustrating the design and construction of timbered railroad tunnel linings and portal structures.

Troubleshooting Brass Locomotives – Schutzer. Finding the common problems with older brass locomotives. The first of a three part clinic series.

Tunnel and Town Talk – Bill Schaumburg (Railroad Model Craftsman). The tunnel is finished!! Bill will discuss his years long project railroad.

Working with Structure Roofing Materials – Dave Connery. Working with most all types of roofing materials to make the most visible part of a structure look real.

Working with Structure Siding Materials – Dave Connery. Techniques for modeling a variety of building siding materials, weathering and the tools required.

Look for an updated list of clinics on the convention web site.



DEVIL MOUNTAIN Prototype tours

Dick Fox, Chairperson

Devil Mountain 2005 will present an extensive program of prototype rail events at outside venues including the following:

Niles Canyon Railway: Speeder rides, as well as normal operations on Saturday and Sunday.

Roaring Camp and Big Trees Railroad: Tour of facility and operation.

Napa Valley Wine Train: Discounted lunch and/or dinner train (pending sufficient interest).

South Pacific Coast Railroad: Still alive and well in Ardenwood Park and offers vintage narrow gauge cars with the possibility of steam operation next spring.

Redwood Valley Railroad: The number two revenue passenger railroad in the East Bay. Tours and operation over the line.

BART/ACE/CalTrain/MUNI-LRV: A complete circle around the South Bay riding four different rail systems (one twice) and two surface transit lines.

These self-guided tours, with maps and detailed instructions provided, will be presented at no additional fare for convention attendees, other than the cost of the respective tickets. Tours will also include a list of local hobby shops. We plan to make extensive use of carpools and public transit since many of the tours can be planned on-the-spot with few time-restricted exceptions.

Look for updates on the convention web site.



DEVIL MOUNTAIN

Vendor and Modular Layout Show

Ed Chambers and Steve Blanc, Chairpersons

On Friday, the Vendor and Modular Layout Show will be held for convention registrants only. There will be many model railroad vendors and modular layouts on display for all to enjoy. On Saturday and Sunday morning, the show will also be open to the public for a nominal fare - \$5.00 adults, \$3.00 for children ages 6 to 12 (under 6 free) and \$15.00 family.

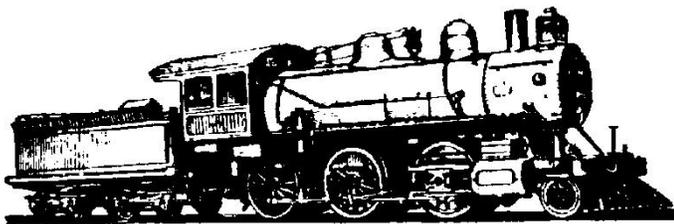
Vendors as of the end of January include:

- Bob's Trains and Toys
- Bragdon Enterprises
- Daylight Sales
- Northeastern Scale Models

Modular Layout Displays include:

- Yosemite Short Line -- On3
- Bay Area Ntrak -- N modular
- NorCal FreeMo -- HO modular, DCC control
- Coastal Valley Lines -- HO modular

Look for an updated list of vendors on the convention web site.



DEVIL MOUNTAIN

Layout tours

John Wondollek, Chairperson

The Devil Mountain 2005 convention will provide an opportunity to observe many operating layouts. Tours will include indoor and outdoor layouts of all scales. Among the layouts to be made available are:

Devonshire, Snail Path, and Petunia Railway (D, SP & P) - Garden railroad - Bill Baldock

Sierra Railroad - HO - Dave Biondi

Rio Grande Southern - Garden - Stephen Bull

Yosemite Valley - HO - Jack Burgess

South West Side Lumber Company - Garden - Dave Connery

Sierra, Carson, & Truckee - HO - Dave Connery

Western Pacific, 3rd Subdivision - HO - Jim Dias

Ambitious & Tiring - Garden - Bob Ferguson, a modern-era mainline garden railroad

Denver & Rio Grande Western - O - Bill Fleischer

Harper Valley - Sn3 - Don Harper

Reliez Valley Lines - HO - Pete McCorkell, modeled after the Erie & Susquehanna

Denver & Rio Grande Western - O - Dr. Miller

Lone Pine & Tonopah - HO - Kermit Paul

Refuge & Respite - Garden - Ryan Platt

Black Diamond Lines - HO - Club

Golden State Model Railroad - various scales - Club

Diablo Valley Lines, Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society - HO - Club

NMRA Modeling with the Masters

Session 12

Dates: Thursday – Saturday, March 31, April 1, 2, 2005

Location: Sacramento, Ca.

Modeling with the Masters Concept

During several NMRA events, participants wanted more than just a “how to clinic,” however, this was difficult to provide due to the high number of members attending our programs. The Modeling with the Masters program was developed with a hands on approach to modeling in mind. By limiting the number of participants to 24 members, placed in small groups, you will receive personal instruction by a NMRA Master Model Railroader.

Skill Level

Our program for the 12th session in our series is geared to the beginner or intermediate level modeler. We will cover topics on an introductory basis but will include some techniques that are advanced. Since the whole idea is to teach you new skills by “doing” you will amaze yourself what you will accomplish.

Program

The program outline is a basic guideline only. A full outline will be sent to all participants prior to the event date.

Participants will be presented with a clinic in each of the following.

- Introduction to Making Master Patterns and Making Molds
- Introduction to Painting and Weathering Rolling Stock
- Introduction to Plaster Structures
- Scenery Specialties: Rock Work and Water Projects

In addition to all of this, in our evening project in which each participant will learn to build handlaid track with a such a simple method any-

one can do it and in any scale. Plus the usually evening programs of tips and tricks. Close to 30 hours of hands on Instruction by NMRA Master Model railroaders

These clinics will provide background on the history of the subject, current available materials, kits, and methods of construction, and an outline of the hands on projects. After watching a lesson, the participants will build a small project based on this lesson material. A staff of Master Model Railroaders will be available to assist the participants during the full session. At the end of the course, the participants will have a several items to take home.

The MMR's for this session will include Clark Kooning and Al Boos. Additional instructors are currently being confirmed.

We have tried to do our best to give you great value at a reasonable price. The base cost for the weekend is \$495.00 US per person for NMRA members. This includes three nights lodging - with shared accommodations, two lunches, refreshments, and all materials costs. The estimated value of your take home materials will be approximately \$75.00 to \$100.00. For those who live locally and do not require lodging a reduced registration fee is listed. Registrations will be limited to 24 participants and will be taken on a first come first serve basis.

For further information:

Please contact the NMRA “Modeling with the Masters” Manager

Clark Kooning, MMR

6989 Glory CT., Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5N 7E2 (905) 824-6247

E-mail ckooning@sympatico.ca

November on Tehachapi

Operations on the La Mesa Club

By Jim Providenza

I flew down with Verne Alexander Friday evening and we met up with another 4 guys from the Bay Area - including Seth Neumann, Rick Fortin and Ray de-Blieck for a 20 hour 1952 TT&TO session on Tehachapi spread over two days - a total of 4 five hour sessions. My four shifts included: Bakersfield Yardmaster (mgmt position, with 4 crew jobs under me), Hill Pool, Caliente Train Order Operator, and Hill Pool. BAK YM was tough.

They hadn't had time to stage the yard in prepping for the session - removing all the modern era public running equipment takes a lot of time right. Anyway, the 17 track yard was "dogs breakfast". While we managed to get the proper trains out reasonably on time we couldn't get ahead at all. The second Saturday trick finally got things sorted out for Sunday.

One of my jobs, a real one, was to take the car count of each eastbound, determine tonnage rating of road power and then figure the needed helpers if not already assigned. Their cars are all weighted about double NMRA specs and so a single F or GP is only rated at 9 cars up the hill. And they mean it!

I ran one train Sat. afternoon, a 50 car SCX, eastbound uphill Santa Fe drag. We "departed" Bakersfield 3 different times... and almost had to try it a fourth... a long story, but a lot of fun with your head screwed on right, frustrating if you're not willing to "play the game" with the delays. Dan Thompson ran the helper on the SCX, cut in 3/4 of the way back. The club's change to DCC has made a tremendous difference in train handling, and a lot of the power has sound as well.

Sunday first trick I was the Caliente operator, probably one of the choicest jobs on the railroad. You are involved in the TT&TO stuff without having to sweat the issues the DS has, are not quite as busy as the operators at Kern Jct (Bakersfield) or Mojave, and you have an eye

level view of the world as all these great trains go by swinging around the horseshoe curve and starting the climb up to Tunnel 2. Get to talk with the public at your back, which is really neat. Jim Schweitzer was the DS that trick, and one time he rang up all three ops to cut an order. Ring. "Kern." Jim: "Kern, copy 3 east." Ring-ring. "Mojave." Jim: "Mojave, copy 4 west. Brapp. Me: "Caliente". Jim: "Caliente, copy 1. (Hey, guys, you know, this is soooo cool!)"

Relieved of the op job by Eric Willer, I grabbed a quick half sandwich and a coke and went to mark up on the hill pool again. Got grabbed immediately to replace Eric who had been marked up for a BK-OK-R, a large MTY reefer train returning from the east to the Central Valley. Hadn't gotten out of Mojave before changeover. I ended up working with Greg Luiz, one of the old heads at the club. It took us two hours to get the train together and get clearance to leave with 3 orders. We tripled the train together... Greg had a 4 unit set of Black Widow F's on the head end and I had a cab forward, the 4294, cut in 6 cars ahead of the caboose. Yes, a helper to move the train DOWN Tehachapi - it was 131 cars long. Solid reefers. Over 75 actual feet in length. We needed a swing brakeman to watch for slack and pass signals. Took 2 minutes shy of 2 hours to get across the road with 7 meets. We were non-clearing even at the lap siding at Allard / Bealville... and we met a 70 car loaded ATSF reefer train with two helpers cut in on the way! Met two trains at Cliff (#4 and the X3051E), three trains at Allard / Bealville, sawed by one at Caliente and met a final one at Ilmon.

It was a great time and a learning experience about the time it really takes to run an operation that large and how what you expect out of something can really influence how you feel about what happens.

Duncans Mills

Layout Design from the Northwestern Pacific Historical Society
By Allen Tacy

Over most of its railroad life, Duncan Mills served as entrepot for three industries: (1) timber, primarily Duncan Mills Land & Lumber Company; (2) tourism; and (3) ranching interests to the west that shipped butter boxes, cheese, wool, hides and stock by rail. While these three industries provided carloadings consistently, the railroad serving them was something else. It was consistently changing. The railroad thought for the better.

Shown here are two maps based upon tracings of real NWP station maps. The 1909 map is enhanced to accent changes. The 1913 map shows a specific moment in time. You can choose a version that most appeals.

To understand the changes follow the chronology.

1868-1877. One single track, represented on the map

regular freight engine. Baldwin 4-4-0 class 8-18-C's the passenger.

1882-1886. N.P.C. builds Markham branch to serve new sawmill at Markham using the old tram road right of way. Reconnects as narrow gauge the old line labeled Markham-Cazadero so DML&L can move logs from Markham line to the Duncan mill.

1886-1909 (map date) N. P. C. acquires DML&L tram, builds Cazadero line. Adds wye track noted "1886" on map. Passenger trains now terminate at Cazadero but freights still originate Duncan Mills after gathering cars from the various branches. Outbound loads include lumber, tanbark, charcoal sacks, and cordwood.

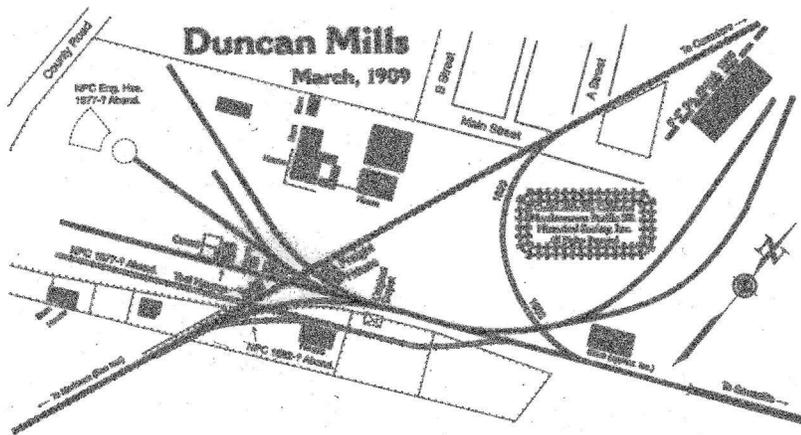
Baldwin 3 ft. ga. 0-4-0t Tyrone logs for DML&L. Hotel El Bonito built to right of depot site.

April 18, 1906 earthquake. Hotel El Bonito collapses. Shortly thereafter depot burns, replaced temporarily by old narrow gauge coach and Carter boxcar. Next few years Russian River sawmills work overtime to rebuild San Francisco. NWP assigns helpers to freights between Duncan Mills and Occidental. Summer passenger travel soars, requiring double headers and second sections.

November 1909-1926 (1913 map next page). Standard gauge (4'-8.5") extended from Guerneville to Duncan Mills with dual gauge between Monte Rio and Duncan Mills. Austin Creek line to Cazadero

remains three foot. Most freight traffic, and a good deal of the passenger, switches to the standard gauge. Freight locals out of Petaluma or Santa Rosa lay over nights at Duncan Mills, as does the evening passenger. Two passenger trains a day via standard gauge, later three. One daily narrow gauge passenger. Narrow gauge loco, usually No. 86, assigned to work slim gauge branches. Sacks of chrome ore from Cazadero, and magnesite from World War One-era two-foot gauge, transload at Duncan Mills. Cazadero truck gardens originate produce shipments. New depot, which has been completely restored, built in 1910. Passenger train timetable to Cazadero includes 20-minute halt at Duncan Mills for standard gauge connection. Crew frequently wyes consist, pulls tender first to Cazadero rather than

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by the Markham-Cazadero line. Traversed by DML&L's logging tram, 5 ft. 5 in. gauge, taking logs from Austin Creek timber, to the right, to a dump on the Russian River to the left. In 1875 a gear-driven, San Francisco-built locomotive took over log hauling chores.

1877-1882. Narrow gauge North Pacific Coast throws a bridge across Russian River, lower right of the map. DML&L rafts its sawmill five miles upstream to meet the railroad and rebuild the sawmill on the map site. They abandon the part of their tram between the mill and the log dump, but continue using it into the Austin Creek woods. Julian's Hotel built on ground where the 1886 wye appears on the map. N. P. C. passenger trains terminate here, and the railroad builds a three-stall roundhouse. Mason-bogie No. 8 is the

struggle with armstrong turntable there. Huge forest fire 1923 wipes out timber industry. Duncan sawmill closes.

1926-1935. Paved auto roads built to Russian River area. Cazadero line standard gauged. Narrow gauge retreats, abandoned 1930. Duncan Mills yard standard gauge. Cazadero abandoned 1933; last train to Duncan Mills November, 1935.

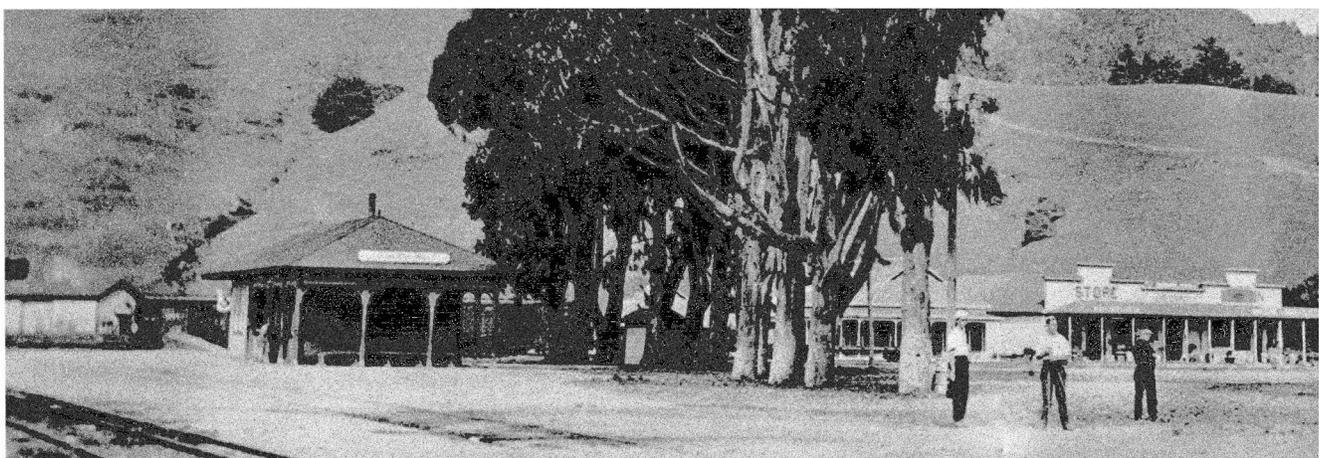
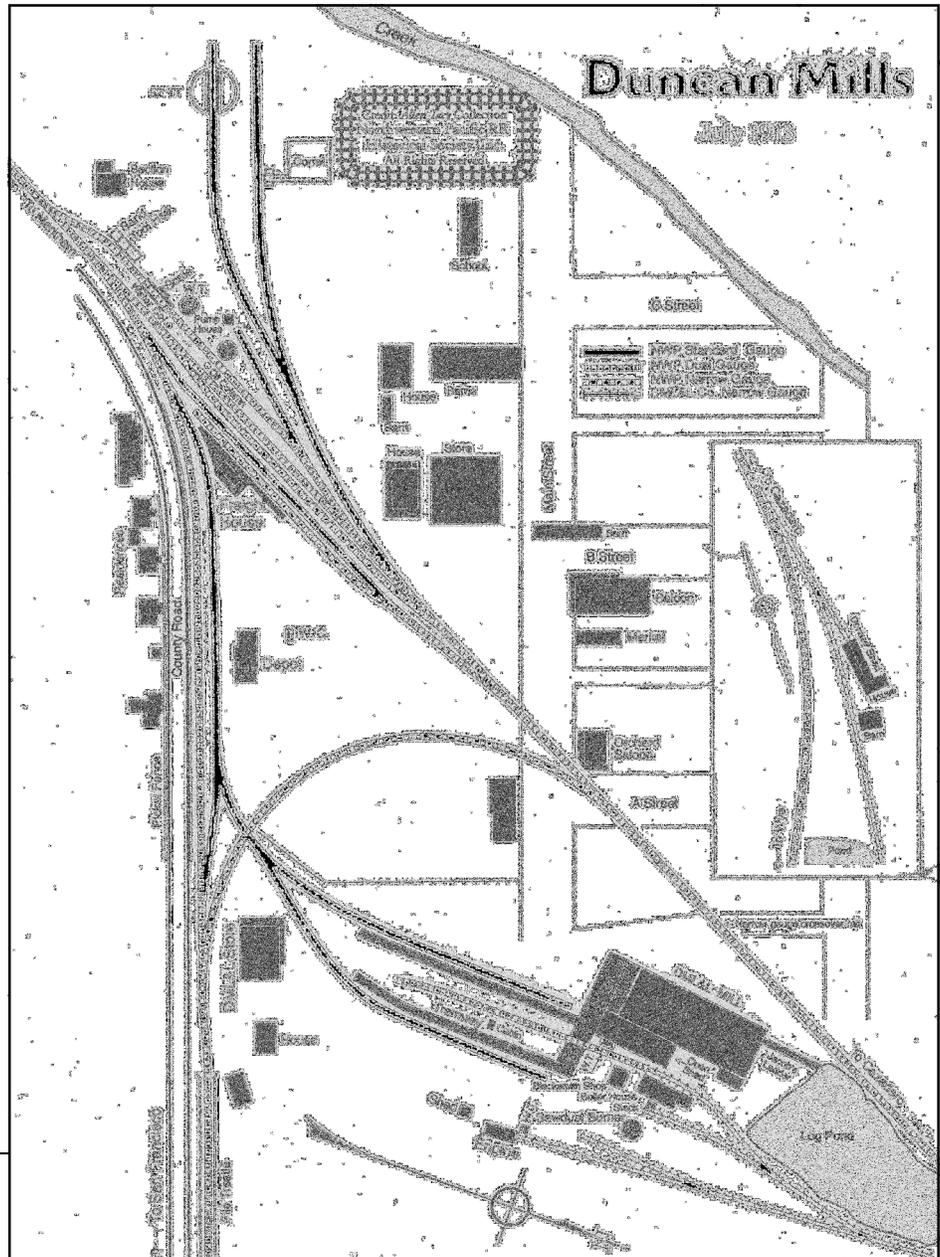
Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society has hundreds of tracings of NWPRR station maps covering nearly all the stations on the railroad. The two here reproduced represent a treasure house of layout design ideas. Use them to model a prototype or simply for freelance inspiration.

Write NWPRRHS at P.O. Box 667, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

or visit the Society's Library in Rohnert Park with over 12,000 catalogued records including maps, 6,500 photos, plans.

Open Saturdays, 1-5 PM, see NWPRRHS.org for direction map and info on activities.

Photo. Duncan mills in 1917 by W. A. Silverthorn. Depot, left of trees. Freight house far left



THE PENULTIMATE TRUSTEE REPORT

Ray deBlieck, PCR Trustee

The 2005 midyear meeting of the NMRA Board of Trustees took place in Phoenix January 13 through 15. It was an interesting meeting. To start, seven out of the 17 Trustees were attending their first meeting as a member of the board. In the four years I've been a member of the board, we have never seen that large of a turn over. With the new regulations taking effect in July, this was also the last meeting for most Trustees.

Of all the agenda items we dealt with, the decisions made on single membership implementation is undoubtedly of most interest to members. After years of debate, we are now ready to proceed with single membership.

First off, BOT did not vote for a dues increase. Any current NMRA member who receives the magazine, will continue at the same \$45 rate. There will be no effect on current Life Members.

Rates for membership were set as follows: (this is directly from the minutes, motion MBOT-19)

1. The Dues and Communications Fees for all members except those residing in the Australasian Region, the British Region, or Canada shall be as follows:
 - a. Dues – All classes of membership are set forth in the Regulations (Article IV). The annual dues to be collected for each class are (in US Dollars):
 - 1) Member dues: \$33.00
 - 2) Family Member dues: \$7.00
 - 3) Student Member dues: \$24.00
 - 4) Patron Member dues: \$100.00
 - 5) Corporate Member dues: \$175.00 or more
 - b. Subscriptions – Subscriptions to *Scale Rails* are available to all members for \$12 per year, invoiced and paid concurrently with the re-

newal of dues. Subscriptions to *Scale Rails* are terminated when membership lapses or when a member notifies the Administration Department. Subscriptions to *Scale Rails* will not be made available to non-members.

- c. Region Allocation – The amount to be paid by the Administration Department to the Region Treasurers is described in Article IV (Dues), Section 4, Subsection D of the Regulations. The amount will be \$2.00 per dues-paying member (dues-paying, Life, and Honorary Life) residing within the Region boundaries. The Administration Department will make two payments per fiscal year – half the first week of September and half the first week of March. The NMRA data base will be the basis for establishing the number of members residing within each region's boundaries (Article VIII).

A couple of clarifications; All current NMRA regular and affiliate members will now fall under the category of "Members." A separate structure has been setup for all foreign regions, under which all dues collection will be administered in the foreign regions and in that currency. The \$2 Region Allocation is not a separate fee, but is included in the membership dues.

One of the real sticking points in reaching agreement on single dues has always been how to devise a means to allow members to make one payment for dues while also allowing the regions to set rates for their own operations. This is how that was solved; (Again, this is directly from the minutes.)

MBOT-23 was moved by PCRT deBlieck and seconded by NCRT Thornton to add the following to Section O (Membership Service Department) of the Executive Handbook:

The cost for the Region publication allowance

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will be a single rate for the first year of membership that is uniform across the NMRA in North America and will be set by the Region Advisory Council. Upon renewal, the amount set by each region will be collected. The appropriate fees collected through this process will be remunerated to the Regions.

Regions and divisions are free to define and collect additional fees for other purposes as they see fit.

The effect here is that the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) will set a single regional publication rate for the first year of membership. All regions will agree on this amount for first year members only. Upon all renewal (second year, and all current members), national will collect all national dues and sub-

scriptions as well as the regional publication rate, which will be set by each region. The latter amount will be in addition to the Region Allocation of dues. All fees due the regions, including dues and publication fees, will be sent to them by national.

Several membership categories have been eliminated. Mainly memberships with publications were eliminated. Reason was that BOT felt that the subscriptions should stand alone as a product, and was not appropriately a membership factor. The sale of new life memberships has been eliminated, and the sale of Rail Pass memberships has been extended one year.

Starting in September 2005, the Bulletin will be available in electronic format. It will continue to be part of Scale Rails. While it inevitably will become available only in electronic format, there is no date set to do so as of this time. Frankly that is years away.

After several years in negotiation, an agreement that will allow the Canadian, British, and Australasian Regions to handle their own administration, including collection of dues, was reached, and approved by the board. This is a major deal that will eliminate the subsidy of foreign postage and eliminate almost all of the past issues related to exchange rates.

Whenever such major changes as the new Regulations are adopted, there are oversights. One such oversight was in the nominating process as they applied to foreign districts. Due to this, changes were made to the nominating process in the

(Continued on page 30)



Front Row, (L to R) - Bob Gangwish - Sunshine Region Trustee, Bill Jacobs - Pacific Southwest Region Trustee, Ray deBlieck - Pacific Coast Region Trustee, David North - Australasian Region Trustee, Clark Kooning - Niagara Frontier Region Trustee.

Second Row (seated) Steve Park - British Region Trustee, Howard Smith - Mid-Central Region Trustee, Jim Anderson - Mid-Continent Region Trustee, Les Breuer - Thousand Lakes Region Trustee, Bob Beaty - South-eastern Region Trustee, Paul Allard - Northeastern Region Trustee.

Top Row (standing) Tom Draper - Treasurer, Jack Hamilton - Pacific Northwest Region Trustee, Dave Liesse - Secretary, Roger Cason - Mid Eastern Region Trustee, Mike Brestel - Vice President, Dave Thornton - North Central Region Trustee, John Roberts - President, Jim Packer - Lone Star Region Trustee, Reid Kahrs - Mid West Region Trustee, Frank Gerry - Canadian Vice President (missing - Kurt Kramke - Rocky Mountain Region Trustee)

(Continued from page 29)

Atlantic and Pacific Districts.

The lots to determine the length of the initial terms of the new Directors were drawn. The results were; One year terms - Eastern District, Pacific District, and North American at-Large. Two year terms - Western District, Atlantic District, and Worldwide at-Large. Three year terms - Central District, Canadian, and RAC.

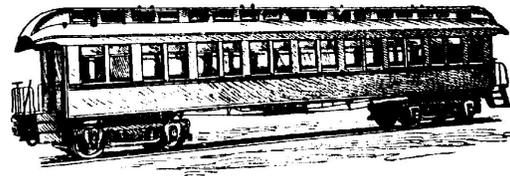
There were several other motions dealing with the Executive Hand Book. This was all designed to bring the EHB into compliance with the new Regulations. This is seen as an ongoing process and will likely take some time to complete.

Finally, as you can see from the title of my column, this is the second to last Trustee Report I will ever write. The reason for this is that starting in July, there will no longer be Trustees. While much of the reason for that change is due to Ohio Corporation Laws, it is somehow appropriate that such a name change occurs simultaneous with major changes in our corporate structure.

Ever since NMRA was first formed we

have been governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of one representative of each individual region. Starting in Cincinnati, that will cease to be the case. It was with a certain amount of nostalgia that we saw the gavel fall on the final Trustee Meeting at about 11 PM on January 15. To commemorate the occasion, we decided to take some pictures of the final board of Trustees. That photo appears in this Branch Line.

I will have more to say about this in my next report, but for now, I want to thank everyone in PCR for allowing me to serve you in this capacity, especially the PCR officers, Gene Mayer, Dave Connery, Rich Kolm, and Larry Altbaum, who have been so supportive. I have been honored to serve you. I will be on the ballot for Western District director and I hope my work as a Trustee has earned your vote for that Director's seat. Whatever you do decide, I do ask that you all vote. Thanks.





Pacific Southwest Region, NMRA®
2005 Convention — September 7-11, 2005
Radisson Resort Knott's Berry Farm
Buena Park, California
Presented by the Cajon Division, PSR

Model Railroading Fun at Its Best!
Clinics, Model Contests, Auctions,
Layout Tours, Train and Trade Show

Details & Information: www.psr-nmra.org
Convention Chair: Jan Wescott, (702) 566-0856, wescvegas@cox.net

CONTESTS: "TO BE OR NOT TO BE?", THAT IS THE QUESTION

Ron Plies

We have been having a dialogue on the PCR list as to what to do with the contests at the PCR convention. The reason for this discussion is that I have been requested to make a proposal to the PCR board at the next meeting in May as to how we can improve contests to get more people to show their models. There have been a number of great suggestions from the on line group but their input is limited due to the number on the list.

One of those suggestions was that I write an article for the Branchline, as there are about ten times the number of people who receive it over those on the PCR list, and request input from the general membership. The reason I brought up the question is that over the years there has been a declining number of models being shown in the contest room at the PCR conventions. I am looking for ways to see this trend reversed. I for one, enjoy seeing other people's work and would like to see a contest room filled with models. This is not to take away from those who enjoy the current system and bring their delightful models for all of us to see and enjoy.

We are also in need of a contest room for those who wish to be part of the achievement program and need to have their models judged. As an example of a program that seems to be working is the recent Prototype Models Western Convention in Oct. of 2004 down in La Habra where the attendance was 138 people with over 700 models displayed for just a one day event. Wouldn't that be nice to see even a quarter that number at the next PCR convention?

What I am hearing from our on line mem-

bers is that we would see an increased number of people bringing models to the contest room if some changes were made and I will be happy to share those response with you later as not to influence you input now. So here are some of the burning but not all of the questions that need to be address by the membership.

- 1.) If you could change the current contest system what would you suggest?
- 2.) What will it take to get you to bring a model to the next convention in Concord, May, 2005?
- 3.) If these changes are made, WILL you bring a model to the convention?
- 4.) Rank the things that you feel are the most important part of the contest. The point system, the competitiveness of the contest, seeing the models and sharing of ideas, or as some have said bring and brag, the achievement program, etc.
- 5.) Anything else you feel would be important for us to know.

Please reply in 30 days at one of the following: Ron Plies, P.O. Box 950, Fortuna, Ca. 95540, rplies@cox.net. or you can call me at 1-707-725-9063.

Looking forward to all of you giving some kind of feedback on this subject and thanking you in advance.

Ron Plies
PCR Director

To Bieber, or Not To Bieber (Pt.II)

By Pat LaTorres

It seems that some imprudent members of the PCR actually went so far as to send me personal emails complimenting part I and asking for the second half. Some folks NEVER learn! So in spite of the wishes of the Silent Majority, here comes Part II -- That'll teach you to keep silent. As an added bonus (?), I'll be tacking some tales of my recent journeys along the overland route as a postscript to this dissertation.

As we left the Dynamic Duo (or the Three Amigos, minus one), Pat had just faded from the land of the living. Jim later told me, we were talking and suddenly I was no longer there. The next morning I remember Jim asking me, "Where are the car keys?" It seemed he wanted to go out for his morning run, but his running shoes were locked up safe in the car.

After he left, I faded back out for a while. About 8:00 AM, almost twelve hours after I checked out, I finally woke up and hit the showers -- ah the smell of well water when permeated with sulfur -- I think I prefer the smell of pine from our trip along the Feather River a bit more. After we got ourselves together we drove over to the Red Barn to grab some Hostess "Breakfast Food". OK, I won't say our entire trip was fine dining. At this point (about 8:30) the outside temperature was a balmy 44 degrees.

Having grabbed sustenance, we drove over to Nubieber to try and locate the road that ran down to the Pitt River Bridge from the north. Working from this end, we had the same success that we'd experienced the previous day -- a closed gate. So for now this bridge is still on my list of places to see. I've since found out that it's not that bad of a hike down the tracks, so maybe next time.

Heading back into the Nubieber yard, we spent more time just exploring. We found the wye and what looks to be some sort of car loading rack. We never did come up with a definitive answer as to what it is, but we did come up with some interesting ideas. Also while walking around the yard we came across a number of interesting items -- ALL of which are still there! Actually, I didn't want to risk the paint on the new car by trying to tie a switch stand onto the roof rack. By 10:30AM, when we were getting ready to head out, the temperature had progressed to a blistering 42 degrees (yes, you did read the change correctly). It was a wee tad brisk.

Not having any better ideas and having the USGS maps, we decided to head north just a little bit farther to see what we could see. Heading north we came, and passed through, the thriving metropolis of Lookout. After traversing several more miles of dirt roads we arrived at the interchange with the McCloud River RR, where we found a MOW train parked, as well as a number of pre-fab bridge sections. It appears that the wooden trestle just north of Lookout was going to be replaced with a concrete deck bridge. We were lucky enough to get there while the trestle was still pretty much untouched, so we got several photos of the trestle and the new bridge segments. Unfortunately, we were still trying to find a train in action -- only having caught two the day before.

Jim and I took our time looking around at just about anything railroad related at Lookout (and a few things that probably weren't), including the empty speeder shed and a rather large scrap pile -- we were getting desperate.. While inspecting the crane

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(Continued from page 32)

on the MOW consist, the scanner finally came alive. A call to the dispatcher came over from BNSF 2820 South, approaching Lookout. We quickly grabbed our cameras and assumed our positions to catch this train. As it came into view, the first thing I noticed was that 2820 was a GP30. The second unit in the consist was BNSF 2887, which I think is a GP38. By this point Jim had finally figured out that his new (as in two days old!) digital camera/video camera works SO MUCH better when the lens cap is removed! The neat part was the train they were pulling. They were hooked up to a string of eight or ten flat cars loaded with various pieces of track laying equipment. As we heard the engineer make arrangements to set out their train at Nubieber, Jim and I quickly got in the car and headed back towards the "Big Town".

While heading back down the highway, we listened in on the three way conversation between the engineer, the dispatcher and the roadmaster about setting the train out on the siding just south of the yard. We arrived in the yard and got set up just as they were getting ready to head back north, by running through the yard. How very considerate of them. As an added bonus, we found out there was another train about ten miles south of us, also headed northward.

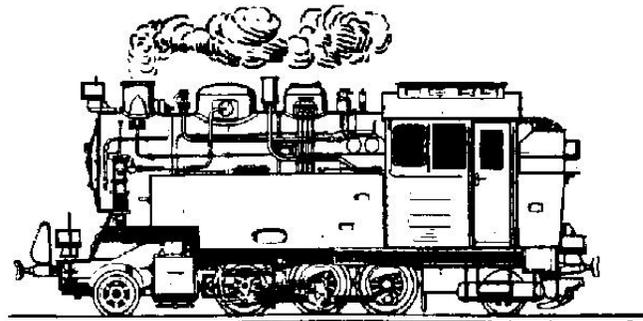
I did manage to get some nice shots of the crew as the two locomotives were traversing the yard. After BNSF Extra 2820, now 2887 headed back towards K Falls, Jim and I got set up to catch the alleged north bound freight, which had been at Little Valley. We soon spotted the headlight across the valley to our south. This turned out to be BNSF 4691 in pumpkin paint, followed by 6760 still in blue and yellow Santa Fe paint, and 4991 also in pumpkin, pulling a mixed freight which included a bunch of tank cars towards the head end. Figuring it was getting on in the day and dealing with a light drizzle, we decided it was

time to start towards home. after taking a look at the map, I decided we'd head out towards Redding and down Hwy 5. The drive out to Redding was fairly quiet, but Jim pointed out some abandoned mill sites across the river from us as we got a ways west, One more reason to head back up here.

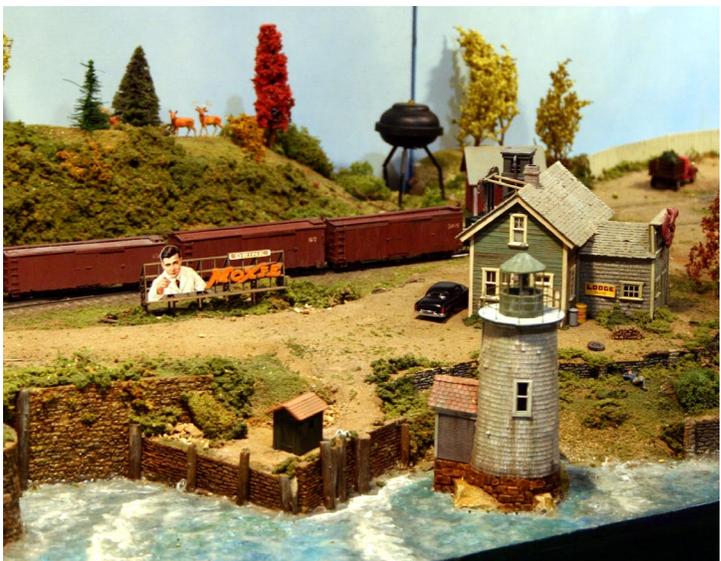
When we hit Redding, we cut into town to try and find the S.P. mainline, finally ending up at the depot. We spent a little time taking shots of some locomotives parked at the depot and noted some interesting detail items for modeling purposes. Not getting any traffic on the scanner, we finally decided to head down the valley towards the Bay Area and home.

The trip home was pretty much routine, though we did have to deal with a couple of good cloud bursts around Vacaville. Otherwise a nice quiet drive home. By the way, I didn't have ANY problems getting the seat belts undone on this trip! After dropping Jim off in Albany, I headed down to Mountain View, finally walking in the door at about 8:45 PM. Pretty much a day well spent and a well spent Pat. Stay tuned as I'm sure another journey into the unknown is just down the road. Until then, go out and take some pictures! They won't end up getting on film (or pixels) unless you get out there and do it. And, if you don't like our adventures, go out and have some of your own!

Hope to see you along the mainline.



BAKERSFIELD



This year marked the fifth consecutive year that the Left Coast Hon30 Modular Group has participated in the Bakersfield Model Railroad Club train show at the Kern County Fairgrounds. This year's event took place over the Martin Luther King weekend and saw the group put together a fine display of 16 modules. Variety was the name of the game as the setup included modules with themes such as West Coast narrow gauge lumbering, oilrigs, several Maine coastal scenes, the US Festival, and even the Bridge Over The River Kwai! Participating in this years event were: Al Sandrini from B&F Hobby in Bakersfield, Bert and Sharon Greeley, Siles Bazerman, Keith and Joy Glaab, Tom Osterdock, Bill and Faith Wilbanks, Roberto Lombardi, Ken Lunders, Steve Wesolowski, and Keith Wandry.

This event marked the first showing of the group's modules since they took a very creditable 3rd place honors for modules at last years National Narrow Gauge Convention held in Santa Clara, California.



Sierra Division

By Dick Witzens

Next Event

Sierra Division's next event will be Saturday, February 26 at 1:00 PM. We have arranged a presentation and tour of the shops at the Sacramento Light Rail facility at 2700 Academy Way. Since this is an industrial facility, we'll of course have to behave and dress appropriately, including closed shoes. For more information on Sacramento Regional Transportation and the light rail system, check www.sacrt.com

From the Capital City freeway (aka Business 80), exit Marconi Avenue West. Cross the overpass and turn left on Kenwood

Street then take the first left onto Academy Way.

This should be an interesting day, with plenty of opportunities for finding interesting modeling subjects, and even railfanning. The Light Rail tracks run right next to Union Pacific's mainline between Sacramento and Roseville.

The light rail system has recently expanded, and you may want to take part of your day for rides on your own to check out the new trackage. (Fares are \$1.50 or \$3.50 for a daily pass, seniors 62 and up, half price.

Tickets are available from vending machines and all light rail stations. Exact change needed.)

Bruce's Train Shop, a large hobby shop, is close by at Marconi Avenue and Fulton and there are other hobby shops in the area

For more information contact Dick Witzens at 916-684-1987 or witzrr@frontiernet.net.



Club Info

BAY AREA NTRAK MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

COASTAL VALLEY LINES

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

EEL RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROADERS

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

ELSIE

The Left Coast (Elsie) HOn30 group invites anyone interested to join us. We use existing standards for module construction but are not merely a modular group. Contact Al Sandrini in Bakersfield at 661-322-7955, John Spelce in Martinez at 925-228-3279, or Ken Lunders in Cupertino at 408-777-9572.

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM/ EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

Located at 900-A Dornan Drive in Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point Richmond, CA. Club meetings and

behind the scenes tours, to which you are welcome, are Friday evenings from 7:30 to 10 PM, and Wednesday afternoons from 12 to 4 PM when work on the layouts typically is done. We welcome new members in all our scales, O, HO and N, including narrow gauge and traction enthusiasts. For information, a map and to see photos view, www.gsmrm.org. Telephone: (510) 234-4884; or, (510) 758-6228 (to 8 PM). For other information or to schedule special shows, email John Edginton, EBMES President, at jedginton@edg-law.com or use the communication section of the website.

HUMBOLDT BAY & EUREKA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

MOTHER LODGE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

NAPA VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society meets at The Napa Valley Expo (fairgrounds) at 575 Third St. in Napa every Friday from 7:30 pm to midnight. Visitors are always welcome but must be at least 14 years old to join. Our railroad runs between Napa and Ukiah with offline connections to Stockton and Portland. We have large classification yards at each end of our system, which includes about 700 feet of mainline. Scenery is about 80% complete. The layout is never really finished, because we are always tearing part of it down and rebuilding it! As there are 80+ members with varied interests in our group, the time frame is compromised at about 1940 to present. The rolling stock on the railroad is member owned with emphasis on reliability and realism. Our schedule normally calls for a formal run session the second Friday of every month. Info: John Rodgers (707) 226-2985 napajohn@napanet.net <http://www.nvmrc.org>

NITTY GRITTY NARROW GAUGERS

The Nitty Gritty Narrow Gaugers is a round robin group of On3 modelers that meets bi-weekly in members' homes in or near the Santa Clara Valley. Individual

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members construct modules following basic guidelines. We display our modular railroad twice a year. There are no officers, no dues and no bylaws. Contact Fred Verrier, 889 Brookgrove Ln., Cupertino, CA 95014(408) 253-9669

SACRAMENTO MODEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1948, the SMRHS is located at 1990 Grand Avenue, Sacramento, CA and can be reached at 916-927-3618 or email to dmegeath@aol.com; web site <http://www.smrhs.com> Modeled as the Sierra Central Railroad, both HO and HO_{n3} layouts. HO layout is being rebuilt to depict SP/WP prototype. Open Wednesday and Friday nights, 7:30 pm.

SACRAMENTO MODULAR RAILROADERS

Most of our events are operating sessions, where we make up trains in our large switch yard, and send road crews out to switch cars into and out of industries at the towns along the main line. The club owns a large main yard, the corner modules, some special modules, and some rolling stock. Members own their own modules and rolling stock. For the latest club information, check out our web site at <http://saccentral.railfan.net/>, or call Dick Witzens at (916) 966-4592.

SAN LEANDRO HISTORICAL RAILWAY SOCIETY

The San Leandro Historical Railway Society models the Southern Pacific from Oakland/San Leandro to just east of Norden using the tri-level Donner Pass plan featured in the March '98 *Model Railroader*. It's housed in the former S.P., San Leandro depot, now located at 1302 Orchard Ave. in San Leandro (just off Davis St.). Work sessions are Sat. 9:00 am - 1:30 pm and Tues. 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm, business meetings on the first Friday at 7:30 pm. Contact: Pat LaTorres at (510) 276-3121 or email at duhnerd@pacbell.net

SILICON VALLEY LINES

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

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The South Bay Historical Railroad Society invites interested modelers to visit us in the historic Santa Clara CalTrain Depot, 1005 Railroad Avenue, Santa Clara, CA.

on Tuesdays, 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm or Saturdays, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Phone (408) 243-3969 for more information about our group.

SOUTH COAST SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

Santa Barbara, California. We meet every third Tuesday at 7:30PM and other times. The club consists of enthusiasts of all scales and prototypes. Membership is \$2 per month. The club has no address, but activities includes operations and work sessions at member layouts and field trips. The club has a collection of railroad books and videos for loan to members. Email the club secretary, Walter Naumann at wjnaumann@aol.com or phone at 805 564 1359.

TRI-CITIES MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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

VALLEJO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

The Vallejo Model Railroad Club, founded in 1976, takes its theme from the environs of the greater Vallejo and Solano County region, with diversions into mountains, logging, and mining. The Club is home to the two thousand (2000) square foot HO-scale layout Vallejo and Solano Western Railroad. The club currently meets every Wednesday evening (with exceptions for Holidays). Doors open by 7:00 PM. It is located in the Civic Building, Solano County Fairgrounds, 900 Fairgrounds Drive, off Interstate 80 at Highway 37, in Vallejo, California. Enter the fairgrounds at the main gate on Fairgrounds Drive, at the traffic light. The Sage street gate is now permanently closed. The Club welcomes all model railroad hobbyists and enjoys visits and tours, with prior arrangements. Contacts may be to PO Box 4057, Vallejo, California, 94590-0405. The Club's telephone, which has an answering machine, is 707-643-1809. E-mails may be to either loggingRR@aol.com or lambertrp@earthlink.net

WALNUT CREEK MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY

The Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society open on the last Friday night of every month from 8 pm to 10 pm for operations. Fares are \$1 for 6-12 and seniors over 60 and \$2 for adults. Membership in the Society is always open to all modelers interested in HO scale. The Society is located at 2751 Buena Vista Ave, Walnut Creek, CA 94597. (925) 937-1888 (recorder). Visit our website at www.wcmrs.org



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2/05
PACIFIC COAST REGION

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ NMRA # (if a member): _____

FAMILY MEMBER NAME(S) _____

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

- PCR and NMRA for one year at \$51.00
- PCR and NMRA for five years \$235.00
- NMRA Affiliate and PCR at \$29.00 (No NMRA Newsletter)
- NMRA YOUTH and PCR at \$36.00
- PCR only (requires NMRA membership# above) at \$6.00
- PCR only - five years (requires NMRA # above) at \$25.00
- PCR Family Associate at \$1.00 (Must have Regular PCR member as sponsor)
- Check here if this is a renewal PCR# _____

Life Memberships in both the NMRA and PCR are available. Contact the Member Services Chairman for actuarial quote.

Send Application form and remittance to: PCR Member Services, 530 Fig Tree Lane, Martinez, CA 94553.

Allow 3-6 weeks for processing.

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 _____

Verification by _____ NMRA# _____

PCR CALLBOARD

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

• President	L.E. "Gene" Mayer (916) 359-6934	GeneFWRR@aol.com
• Vice-President	Dave Connery (925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Treasurer	Larry Altbaum (925) 736-8160	emerbaum@msn.com
• Secretary	Rich Kolm (510) 538-8973	IronhorseK@comcast.net
• Director, Daylight Division	Doug Wagner (661) 589-0391	CarlDW@aol.com
• Director, Coast Division	Kermit Paul (925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Director, Sierra Division	Jesse Menefee, Jr. (916) 363-6640	(no e-mail)
• Director, Redwood Empire Div.	Ron Plies (707) 725-9063	rlplies@cox.net
• Director, Hawaiian Division	(vacant) --- ---	
• Trustee, NMRA Board of Trustees	Ray deBlicek (510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	L.E. "Gene" Mayer (916) 486-0934	GeneFWRR@aol.com
• Budget & Finance Committee	(President, Vice-President, and Treasurer)	
• By-Laws & Manual of Opns.	Dave Connery (925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Nominating Committee Chair.	(vacant) --- ---	
• Ballot Committee Chairperson	Jim Providenza (415) 472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
• Honors Committee Chair.	Ray deBlicek (510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com
• LRP Implementation Chair.	Dave Connery (925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Audit Committee Chairperson	Bill Swindell (925) 372-6996	Bill.Swindell@clorox.com

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

• Manager	(vacant) ---	
• Member Services Chairperson	Bob Ferguson (925) 228-6833	BobPCRC@aol.com
• Membership Promotion Chair.	(vacant) --- ---	
• Member Aid Chairperson	Rod Smith (510) 657-3362	Railgeez@aol.com
• Education Chairperson	Chuck Mitchell (925) 462-0291	cbmtrains@comcast.net
• Special Interests Coordination	Dave Parks (650) 961-7644	westernbear@msn.com

PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT

• Manager & Publisher	Gus Campagna (415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Editor of the <i>Branch Line</i>	Bill Kaufman (415) 491-0543	whk58@pacbell.net
• Circulation Manager	Norman Morris (530) 742-6930	normanmmorris@aol.com
• Webmaster	Kevin Hurley (831) 728-1934	kmhurley01@pcrnmra.org

CONVENTION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Dennis Stokely (925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
• Convention Host Committee Chairpersons:		
• 2005 Concord	Bill Swindell (925) 372-6996	Bill.Swindell@clorox.com
• 2006 Sacramento	Bob Warner (916) 772-7502	bwarner1@softcom.net
• 2007 (in Coast Div.)	(interim planning Kevin Hurley and Dave Loveless)	
• 2008 (in Daylight Div.)	John Houlihan (559) 435-0874	rubyjohn@comcast.net

CONTEST DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Bill Scott (559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Division Contest Chairpersons:		
• Daylight Division	Bill Scott (559) 298-7715	vallyflyer@aol.com
• Coast Division	Al Dalcher (408) 358-1071	dalchera@aol.com
• Sierra Division	Norman Morris (530) 742-6930	normanmmorris@aol.com
• Redwood Empire Division	Steve Skold (707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Hawaiian Division	(vacant) --- ---	
• Model Contest Chairperson	(vacant) --- ---	
• Photo Contest Chairperson	(vacant) --- ---	

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Jack Burgess, MMR (510) 797-9557	jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com
• Division AP Chairpersons:		
• Daylight Division	Brewster Bird (559) 732-6096	mec569@yahoo.com
• Coast Division	Kermit Paul, MMR (925) 935-1859	(no e-mail)
• Sierra Division	Dave Bayless (530) 887-8880	---
• Redwood Empire Division	Harold Mentzer (707) 226-5153	HSMentzer@aol.com
• Hawaiian Division	(vacant) --- ---	

NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Mary Moore-Campagna (530) 426-9055	marycmoore@campagna.com
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Calendar

March 6, 2005: **Coast Division Meet** at Buchser Middle School in Santa Clara.

March 9 -11, 2005: **Bay Rails** Operating sessions

March 12-13, 2005: **Woodland Mall Train show**, Woodland Modular Railroaders.

March 12, 2005: **Winterrail**, Stockton.

March 19, 2005: On30 **Pacific Coast Conspiracy meet** Sacramento Hofbrau Watt & El Camino.

April 15-16, 2005: **Western Pacific Historical Society Convention**, Tracy CA

April 21, 2005: **NWP Whistlestop Program**, San Rafael, 7:30 PM

April 23, 2005: **Westside Modelers Meet**, Sonora

April 23-24, 2005: **GWTS** Bakersfield

April 30, 2005: **Bay Area Prototype Modelers Meet 2005**, 10 AM to 5 PM, Newark CA

April 30-May 1, 2005: **24th Annual Dolbeer Donkey Days** at Fort Humboldt State Park in Eureka.

May 11-15, 2005: PCR Annual Convention "**Devil Mountain**" in Concord

June 5, 2005: **Coast Division Meet** at the California School for the Deaf in Fremont.

June 10-12, 2005: **Logging Modelers Conference**, Roots of Motive Power, Willits

July 3-9, 2005: NMRA National Convention, "**Cincinnati Limited**", Cincinnati OH.

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