



# BRANCH LINE

NMRA'S FIRST REGION

USPS 870-060 ISSN 07449771

VOLUME 62 NUMBER 4

Oct — Dec 2005

## President's Message

Gene Mayer

The new NMRA regulations that took effect September 1<sup>st</sup> established an organizational structure that presents serious challenges and problems to our region and divisions. As I said before, my biggest concern is funding the region's ongoing programs. During the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meeting in Cincinnati regional presidents expressed major concerns concerning funding regional and division activities.

We must promote local activities to reverse the downward membership trend, attract new members and retain existing members. I believe NMRA needs to provide more financial support to regions and divisions. At least two PCR divisions need financial help now.

Every NMRA member should receive the quarterly division newsletters. PCR needs to find a way to subsidize the divisions. As reported in the last issue, I appointed a special committee to study the problem and submit a report to the Board at our November 4 midyear

meeting. I hope you have contacted your representatives—Chuck Harmon (Daylight), John Rolston (RED), Rod Smith (Coast) and/or Dick Witzens (Sierra)—to give them your ideas and suggestions.

Recently the PCR Yahoo Groups "chat room" has seen numerous comments, observations and sug-

**We must promote local activities to reverse the downward membership trend, attract new members and retain existing members.**

gestions from members concerning the future of NMRA and PCR. Typically I do not respond to individual email messages, I read them and save or print out those of significant interest. Member suggestions have ranged all the way from

(1) reducing the dues and doing away with Scale Rails to (2) increasing the dues and expanding the magazine. The proposed subscription fee for the regional publication is a major concern of many members. I hope they will convey their comments to the special committee members.

I believe NMRA should provide greater support to regions and divi-

## Table of Contents

President's Message	1
View from the Left Seat	2
Written in the PCR	3
Achievement Program	5
2005 MMR Photo	6
Sierra Division Report	7
Coast Division Report	8
Coast Activities—Thoughts	9
Redwood Empire Div. Report	10
Daylight Division Report	11
Non-Rail Activities	11
Timesaver Update	13
Tales of the SCN	14
River City Express	16
RCE Registration Form	17
Made in the PCR	18
LD/Op SIG News	20
Featured Layout	21
NMRA Library	25
Club Info	28
Callboard	31
Calendar	32

sions. The 2005-2006 PCR budget does not cover our operational expenses. Projected receipts from the \$6 subscription fee, \$2 NMRA subsidy and bank interest results in a deficit. The *Branch Line* which is the primary contact most members have with the region is the biggest

*See PRESIDENT (Continued on page 6)*

# VIEW FROM THE LEFT SEAT

By

**Dave Connery, PCR Vice-president**

We certainly have some strong evidence of growth in the hobby. We see plenty of new products, a number of new manufacturers and a rush of new technology. All these are published in the national hobby media – what we don't see are announcements of companies and products that just stop appearing on hobby shop shelves. I really don't know if our hobby base is growing or not (although I have a feeling it is not). But I think things may seem worse than they are because the hobby keeps growing "wider" rather than "deeper". By "wider" I refer to the many specialized ways many of us "do" the hobby today. We have groups tailored to our specific area of interest (SIGs), we have groups interested in our specific prototype (Historical Societies), we have an abundant list of scales that are becoming popular (Z, Nn3, HOn30, Sn3, On30, all the many scales on G-Gauge track, 7/8" scale and the numerous Live Steam scales, all on top of the traditional scales of N, HO, HOn3, S, O and On3. We also have the new interests of Virtual railroading on the computer along with computer railroad games and computer discussion groups. All of these specialties somewhat obviate the need for our organization in the minds of many.

The evidence is clear our organization – the National, Region and Divisions – have been losing members steadily for nearly a decade. It is hard to know just how long the losses can continue and still have the organization remain viable. While a smaller organization is certainly sustainable, we are like a 300 pound person who diets down to a trim 180 pounds but fails to change their clothes. We are looking quite silly. Our organizations continue to have all the trappings of a group 1 ½ times our size and this is true at all three levels of the organization. This can not continue, the cost to support such a large organization spread over fewer members means a growing financial burden on

each of us.

Our world is changing. I tend to think people need the creative and expressive outlets our hobby provides, today more than ever. But today people seem to have more on their plate than in the past, they mostly feel they don't need more meetings, more activities and they expect the activities they do participate in to be tailored to their specific desires and constraints. With these pressures of life, modelers are turning more and more to ready-to-run and built up models to save time or turning to the computer based activities. As a result, they are missing many of those important creative and expressive opportunities and in the long run may not realize how modeling can improve their life. The one group that seems to be still "into" the traditional aspects of the hobby are older modelers, especially retirement aged modelers. Thus the hobby has "grayed".

**Growth in the Hobby and Growth in our Organization is a common topic of discussion at Meets and Meetings.**

What does all this mean for us?

1. There are a lot more pieces to the Model Railroading pie these days, so even if the hobby stays the same size, each piece will be smaller. We need to find ways to tailor our organizations and activities for this multitude of specialties.
2. The attractiveness of other uses of our time means we need to package our activities better and communicate the values rather than assume everyone will know the value from just announcing the activity.
3. We need to think through what we are doing and spend more time on the content of our activities and less on the organization itself. We need to focus our recruiting efforts on who our potential new members are, namely parents and grandparents who want to share an activity with their kids, adults who are looking for a hobby (bachelors) and I think we should particularly aim much of our recruit-

# WRITTEN IN THE PCR

## *A Beginner's Guide to Creative Effects for Your Model Railroad*

By Paul M. Newitt

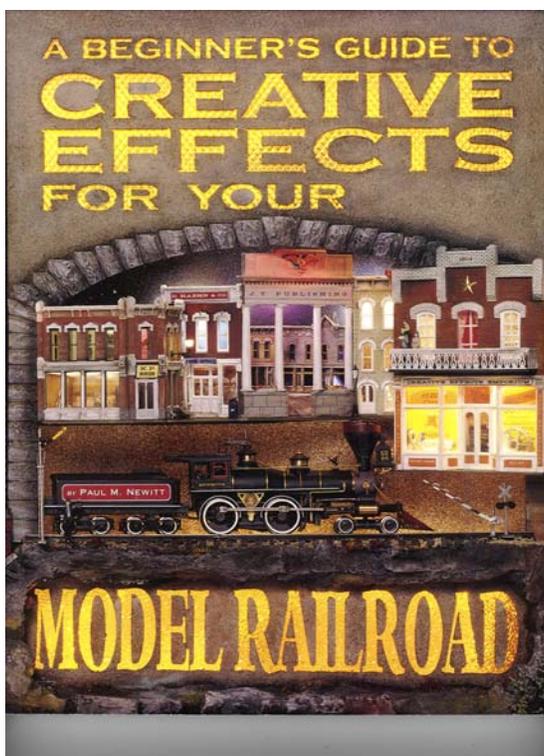
Review by Les Dahlstedt

Imagine having innovative layout features such as sequential room to room lighting in your structures, flickering gas lamps on a turn of the century business district, smoke coming from a slash burner on your narrow gauge logging layout or vehicles rumbling down a country road amid the sounds of birds chirping in the trees. Some modelers choose to add such creative elements to their layout in order to make it singularly unique. Up to now, not much has been written about the way to go about adding such elements, thus leaving all but the most innovative modelers scratching the heads.

A Beginner's Guide to Creative Effects fills in a lot of gaps for modelers wanting to develop special effects for their layout. This well-written 200 page soft cover book is authored by Paul Newitt, with technical assistance provided by PCR Director Kermit Paul, MMR and scale sound assistance by Jim Wells. In short, it is well worth owning. In a hobby that generates a considerable number of 'how to' books every year, it is unusual to find one that meets the needs of both basic *and* advanced skill modelers with as much clarity as this one.

A Beginner's Guide opens (quite appropriately) by paying homage to the roots of creative effects in model railroading...the animated accessories offered by Lionel and American Flyer as early as 1938. Its ten following chapters cover a broad array of topics, with the content generally increasing in depth as one delves further into its pages.

Chapters One and Two are aimed at the beginner and



are entitled Electrical Primer and Wiring Techniques. Many excellent topics are covered, including discussions of power packs, various types of electrical switches, fuses, relays, diodes, resistors, electrical tools, wire types and sizes, wiring methods and wiring troubleshooting. Chapter Three is devoted to a huge range of lighting effects, from the most elemental of lighting a structure to advanced topics of traffic signals, strobe light circuits and simulating a structure fire. Chapter Four details what are called "Track Effects" - such things as train detection, signal systems, crossing gates, semaphores, train order boards, switch machines, turntables and automated track circuits. Chapter Five covers animation effects - starting with commercially available items and ranging through a variety of things you can build with some creative kitbashing. Chapter Six is devoted to sound effects; both commercial as well as the home brew variety. Chapter Seven discusses such scenery effects as smoke and mirrors (couldn't resist that one), along with faux flames, using real water and creating effects with polarized light. Chapter Eight focuses on Theatrical Effects, including layout lighting, thunder and lightning. Chapter Nine brings it all together through discussing how to unify all of your special effects into a cohesive plan as you operate your layout. It also touches upon using DCC to control special effects. Finally Chapter Ten provides an extensive listing of sources you can use for obtaining materials and information. Also profiled in this chapter is The Lone Pine & Tonopah; Kermit Paul's layout - numerous photos

(Continued on page 4)

**DENISE SHOWALTER**

On Monday, August 22, 2005 we lost a very involved member and many of us lost a dear friend. Denise Showalter passed away after a long and heroic battle with cancer. If you have been a member over the past 15 years you have certainly been touched by Denise and her innumerable contributions to our hobby and our organization. Denise was interested in nearly everything but she poured her heart into researching and starting a model of the Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Company. She was a fount of historical information on this interesting narrow gauge railroad. Denise conducted interviews with survivors and family members of those involved with the line, dug through library files and scoured internet sources, making her one of the true experts on this rail operation.



from 1993 to 1998 and was assistant Editor of the *Coast Dispatcher* from 1993 to 1997. She served on the 1994 PCR 50th Anniversary Convention Committee as Publicity Chair, on the 1995 PCR Convention as Program Editor and Asst. Prototype Tours Chair, on the 2000 and 2003 PCR Conventions as Program Chair. She was Editor of the *“Rail Enthusiasts Guide to the Pacific Coast Region”* for the 2000 NMRA Convention and was an early supporter of the 2004 National Narrow Gauge Convention – where she was a charter member of the committee and produced the program. In 2000 Denise was presented with the Coast Division “Member of the Year Award”.

She was a member of a round-robin group in the East Bay from its inception in 1993 until her passing. A large group of her model railroading friends attended the services for her on August 26<sup>th</sup>. She will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

Her contributions to this region and Coast Division are immense. She served as Chief Clerk of Coast Division Dave Connery

(Continued from page 3)

of which were used throughout the book.

I’ve always considered the value of a ‘how to’ book to be directly proportional to its ability to entice me to frequently revisit its pages and see something I’d not noticed before. This one is certainly such a reference work.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention that Paul’s book was published and edited by Joan Saunders. For those who don’t know Joan personally, she’s owned and operated Just Trains in Concord, CA for almost two decades. A *Beginners Guide to Creative Effects for Your Model Railroad* can be purchased from Just Trains (925) 685-6566 and is priced at \$28.95. You can learn more about the book and order it at the official website [www.modelrrcreativefx.com](http://www.modelrrcreativefx.com)

Post Office Form 3526 **Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

Publication Title BRANCH LINE  
 Publication Number 870-060  
 Filing Date 10-01-2005  
 Issue Frequency Quarterly  
 Number of Issues Four  
 Annual Subscription \$6.00  
 Mailing address of Known Office of Publication  
 Gus Campagna, PCR Publications Manager  
 PO Box 609, Soda Springs, CA 95728-0609  
 Mailing Address of Headquarters  
 530 Fig Tree Ln, Martinez, CA 94533-4113  
 Publisher: Bob Ferguson  
 530 Fig Tree Ln, Martinez, CA 94533-4113  
 Editor: Gus Campagna  
 PO Box 609, Soda Springs, CA 95728-0609  
 Managing Editor: Gus Campagna  
 PO Box 609, Soda Springs, CA 95728-0609  
 Owner: Pacific Coast Region, National Model Railroad Assn.  
 40 Live Oak Ln, Danville, CA 94506  
 Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders: NONE  
 Tax Status: Has not changed in the last 12 months.  
 Publication Title: Branch Line  
 Issue date for circulation data below: Jul Aug Sept

	Average	single issue
a.	975	1000
b.1	862	826
B.2,3,4	0	0
C	862	826
D. 1,2,3	0	0
E	0	0
f	0	0
g	862	826
h	113	174
I	975	1000
J	100%	100%

Publication will be in the Oct Nov Dec Issue  
 Signed by Publication Department Manager: Gus Campagna 10-01-05

## **ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

By Jack Burgess, MMR

Continuing our discussion on various AP certificates, this month we'll re-review the requirements for Author, with an emphasis on the newest way to share information, the Internet. Like the other certificates, the full requirements for this category are available on the Internet at the NMRA site, [www.NMRA.org](http://www.NMRA.org). You can also get a copy of the requirements by calling me.

For this category, points are awarded for published articles or drawings, developing web sites, or presenting live clinics. In all cases, the subject **must** be model railroading (i.e., articles or clinics on a railroad prototype do not count toward the total score unless it includes significant information on how to model the particular prototype). To earn a certificate for Author, you need to accumulate a total of 42 points. The number of points awarded for your efforts is dependent on the type of publication and the type of article or drawing as shown in this table.

Keep in mind the following guidelines:

A "page" is approximately 1200 words. Credit may be claimed for partial pages down to quarter pages.

NMRA Publications (including SIG publications) with a circulation of more than 2000 may be considered National Publications; those with a circulation of more than 1000 may be considered Region Publications.

Material published in 100% NMRA Club publications earns half the number of points as for an NMRA Division publication.

No more than half of the total required points (21) may be claimed for Division or 100% NMRA Club publications.

In the case of articles for one of the commercial publications, you do not need to wait for actual publication. A copy of the submitted article and a copy of the acceptance receipt is sufficient. However, you might find that the final article is actually longer than anticipated once you see the article in print which might impact your points.

Note that you can also receive credit for presenting live clinics but that is outside the extent of this article.

You can also get credit for publishing material on the Internet. This material earns credit at the same rate as Published Articles in Region publications as listed in the table. All photos, drawings, etc. are treated as 1/3 of a page. Material that is published in more than one place or way (for example, both in a magazine and electronically, or in multiple electronic formats) can only earn credit once.

The address (URL) of the material must be included with the certificate application. Material which is published on a non-publicly accessible forum (e.g. a

*See ACHIEVEMENT (Continued on page 7)*

Points Earned Per Full Page				
Item	National Publication	NMRA National	NMRA Region	NMRA Division & SIGs
Article or Column	3	3	2	1
Photos or Art Work	3	3	2	1
Scale Drawing of Prototype	6	6	4	2
Scale Drawing of Track Plan	3	3	2	1
NMRA Data/RP Sheet-One Subject	-	6	-	-



At the National Convention in Cincinnati last Summer a gathering of MMR's took place. The names are listed below thanks to Rick Shoup, MMR.

**First row left to right:** Gerry Leone [TLR] Pat Harriman [MCoR], John Lee [MCoR], Mary Miller [MER] John Roberts [MCR], Rutger Friberg [BR], Pete Smith [MCoR], Jim Beatty [SSR], Dick Briggs, [MCR]

**Second row left to right:** 1. Wendell Greer [MCR], 1a Howard Smith [MCR] (Slightly behind him), 2. Bill Hammer [MER], 2a Dave Messer [MER] (behind him), 3. Noll Horan [MER] (slightly back from Hammer), 3a. Bob Chait [SSR] (between Horan and Monroe Stewart), 4a. Monroe Stewart [MER] 4. Bob Beaty [SER] (with mustache), 4b. Bill Miller [MER], (directly behind Beaty), 5a. Gordon Varney [PNR] (to right and behind Beaty), Jim Whaley [PNR] (With Glasses), 6a. John Wissinger (behind left of Whaley and right of Wolhon), 6b. Mary Barstow [PSR] (between Wissinger and Lawrence Wolhon), 6c. Lawrence Wolhon [NCR] (tilted head), 7. John Widmar [RMR] (silver hair around sides of head), 7a. Harry Sage Jr. [MCR] (to left of and behind Stan Seeds), 8. Stan Seeds [SSR], 8a. John Wilkes [SSR] (to right of Seeds), 9. Dean Freitag [MCR].

**Back row left to right:** 1. Allen Gross [PSR], 2. Didrik Voss [PNR], 3. Jack Hamilton [PNR], 4. Kermit Paul [PCR] (Chin obscured by Dave Messer), 5a. Bob Hamm [NER] (in front of and to left of John Johnson), 5. John Johnson [MER] (flat top haircut), 6. Jim Packer [LSR], 7. Deane Mellander [MER], 8. Gil Freitag [LSR], 9. Larry Smith [SER], (Chin obscured and eye glasses glinting), 10. Larry Alfred [MCoR], 10a. Ron Gough [SER] (In front and to right of Larry Alfred), 11. Jerry Schoenberg [LSR] (large head), 12. Marty Vaughn

---

*PRESIDENT (Continued from page 1)*  
expenditure.

I recently renewed my NMRA membership for \$45 . There was no mention of the \$6 regional subscription fee on the application form. I was advised the new headquarters computer program will not be completed until next January. Thus PCR will not receive subscription fees for members who renew in the mean-

*VICE PRESIDENT (Continued from page 2)*  
ing effort at the "over 40 crowd".

Change is hard, but it is happening despite what we

time. We will need to send out separate billings.

NMRA directors Ray DeBlicke, Bob Ferguson and Charlie Getz have written Email explanations of the headquarters administrative problems. They and NMRA officers have also described the single membership implementation plan in Scale Rails and the Branch Line.

may wish. We need to use change for our benefit and not just be rocked by it when it occurs. The opportunity for growth is there, but can we be creative and flexible enough to grab it?



# Sierra Division Report

By

Dick Witzens

## Show Volunteers to Get Good Benefits; Deadline October 24

This year, the Northern California Model Railroad Show (presented by International Railfair) will be in Roseville on November 12th and 13th. This is the area's largest annual show. Sierra Division makes most of its operating budget money for the year. Every year we need lots of volunteers.

As in years past, volunteers will get a lot of satisfaction in helping out the Division. You'll also get a pass good for both days of the show, free parking, and a ticket for the Saturday evening banquet. Here's your chance to have dinner with old friends, meet new ones, and maybe get to take home some of the many excellent door prizes. In order to get a full volunteer benefit package the **deadline is October 24**. But why wait? Call (916) 684-1987 now for your best choice of available shifts.

This year we'll staff the ticket booth for the whole weekend. We'll collect parking fees on Saturday from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. We'll also staff the Division's NMRA information area, with our On30 Timesaver, the small switching layout where the public gets to try their hand at some switching. We also expect to have a small

wooden railroad for the toddlers. We'll need AT LEAST two volunteers in each of the three positions (parking, ticket sales, and info area) at all times.

You **MUST** volunteer **no later than Monday, October 24**, so that we can mail your passes and pay for your banquet ticket on time. Mark your calendar now for both the show and the October 24 deadline. Better yet, **call now** and volunteer. Volunteer with a friend or significant other, and **each** of you gets the goodies. If slots are still available after October 25, you're still welcome to volunteer, but you may not get goodies. Volunteering is easy. Just e-mail Dick Witzens at [witzrr@frontiernet.net](mailto:witzrr@frontiernet.net), or call **(916) 684-1987**.

In other doings, Sierra Division had a good meeting on September 24. we had an excellent clinic by Ed Pultz on improving stock turnouts for better running and reliability. For future events, we're planning on having our annual banquet in January, either at Frasinetti's Winery and Restaurant (the same location as last year), or the Sacramento River Train (formerly the Yolo Short Line). We're also checking into an April 1 or 2 meeting at the Western Railway Museum in Rio Vista Junction, a sum-

*See SIERRA (Continued on page 16)*

*ACHEIVEMENT (Continued from page 5)*

private BBS or as e-mail) is not eligible for credit. In addition, no more than half of the total required points (21) may be claimed for publications on the Internet. Because of the nature of the web, final determination of what material is acceptable for credit, and how much credit it earns, lies with the AP Department Executive Vice Manager. For material that is the work of more than one person, each person may claim 1/2 of the applicable points, provided that they did at least 40% of the work involved.

Of all of the AP categories, Author might be the easiest to document. Simply attach photocopies of the particular articles to your Statement of Qualifications along with a summary of your points for each item.

I am happy to announce that Rod Smith has been awarded an AP certificate for Association Volunteer. Ron Plies is getting close to becoming an MMR and has been awarded an AP certificate for Association Official. Marlin Costello is also been working steadily and has been awarded an AP certificate for Model Railroad Author. Jack Verducci has been very busy documenting the work that he has done over the years on his garden railroad and has been awarded AP certificates for Master Builder - Structures, Master Builder - Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical, and Model Railroad Author. Congratulations to all of you!

If you are interested in the AP Program or Golden Spike Program, contact me for more details. My phone number, and e-mail address are listed in the Call Board on Page 27.



# Coast Division Report

June, 2005

By Tom Crawford, Chief Clerk

Coast Division's last meet was held on September 11, 2005 at the Buchser School in Santa Clara. 90 members and friends attended. 2 were members of Coast Division who attended for the first time, 4 were guests from Redwood Division, and 1 was a guest from Sierra Division.

The clinics included "What's new in DCC" by Don Fiehmann and a Model Railroading Roundtable chaired by Jerry Littlefield.

The Rainbow Girls provided their crowd pleasing fare of polish dogs and chili for lunch.

The business meeting was called to order at 12:10 by Superintendent John Marshall.

John reported that Denise Showalter, a stalwart supporter of the Division for years, has passed away.

Seth Neumann reported that the Operations and Layouts Special Interest Group will meet on February 11 and 12, 2006 at the Santa Clara Depot. The SP Historical and Technical Society is planning its next meet for July 13-16, 2006. We will put a full report in the appropriate Coast Dispatcher.

Dave Connery noted that the next PCR BOD meeting is in November.

Bob Ferguson reported that the single membership implementation will be delayed until Jan 1, 2006. He will provide a synopsis for the next Coast Dispatcher.

Bill Burket put forth the idea of an annual banquet, and asked for a show of interest. About 35 hands hit the sky, so we took that as a positive. Bill will find a place. He is searching for a co-chair. Contact Bill if you are interested.

The business meeting was adjourned at 12:35.

At the start of the auction, Bill Burket announced that auction cards now cost us 38 cents a piece for an order of 10,000 cards. For this reason, the minimum bid is now \$1.00.

547 items were auctioned off.

The winners of the Model Contest were:

1st place Steam Locomotive - Mark Schutzer

1st place Diesel Locomotive - Steve Wesolowski

1st place Passenger Cars - Bob Kessler

December's theme will be "Favorite Models." We have a new Model Contest Chairperson, John Sing, who has already brought some innovative ideas into the position. As John figures out where we are going here, this could get very interesting.

In the photo contest, Mark Schutzer won First Place, Seth Neumann won Second Place, and Tom Van Horn won Third Place.

December's theme will be "Trains in Action."

In the switching contest, Pete Savoy won the Junior division, followed by Nick Brisco. John Sing won First Place Brakeperson, followed by Steve Wesolowski and Ed Ness. For Senior Break Person, Bill Burket took first, followed by Tom Crawford and Mark Schutzer. Things in Senior are getting really competitive with the difference between first and second place being 4 minutes and 14 seconds vs 4 minutes and 24 seconds. Bill has the magic touch and is still the man to beat, but we are closing in on him.

We had a very wide selection of door and raffle prizes, and a great time was had by all.

## THOUGHTS ON HELPING AT A TRAIN SHOW

Mainly for those who couldn't attend, I want to relate how great I thought Both the BAZ and NorCal Nn3 modular groups looked at the show this weekend. Both groups Gave Really Great Show, as did the Lego and the N track groups. I think every modular group's hard work was worth it (easy for me to say)!

Because I was volunteering at the PCR Coast Division tables, mainly helping some enjoy the TimeSaver, I couldn't see a modular setup without walking a few feet, but I visited/saw both the BAZ & Nn3 groups many times both days. They usually were crowded/busy.

### Coast Division Upcoming Events

**Dec 4, 2005**

#### Division Meeting

Computer History Museum  
Hwy 101 at Shoreline Avenue  
Mountain View

The following clinics will be offered:

- 10 AM "Update on DCC Sound"  
Ogden Lamont
- 11AM "Animation Update"  
Kermit Paul
- 11AM "Model Railroad Roundtable"  
Jerry Littlefield

12 Noon Business Meeting  
1 PM Auction  
3:30 PM Raffle

All day long:

Photo Contest: Trains In Action  
Model Contest: Favorite Model (Open Category)  
Allen Fenton Switching Contest

**March 5, 2006**

#### Division Meeting

Buchser Middle School  
1111 Bellomy St.  
Santa Clara

The following clinics will be offered

- 10 AM To be scheduled
- 11AM To be scheduled
- 11AM "Model Railroad Roundtable"  
Jerry Littlefield

12 Noon Business Meeting  
1 PM Auction  
3:30 PM Raffle

All day long:

Photo Contest: TBD  
Model Contest: Freight Car, Caboose, Maintenance of Way  
Allen Fenton Switching Contest

I cannot say enough how great I thought Jeff's and Robert's new/revised Z modules both looked and RAN.

I always think that having some modules not quite finished shows how easy they can be to build: having at least one module in progress at public shows demonstrates how modules enable more people to participate/enjoy/run trains, even with limited space, without years spent building a layout. I overheard several comment that with these scales/gauges they could model in limited spaces: an idea both groups conveyed. I wasn't at Friday Setup, so I dunno how hard/easy it was. BAZ running always looked pretty flawless, with one main DC, the other DCC. The Nn3 group was also running smoothly every time I stopped by there.

Saturday, Michael came by with his \$35 'hacked' Z video car and several of us watched it travel the BAZ tracks via video screen; I thought that was a big WOW!

Sunday, one MT GP35 had run several hours when Robert stopped to feel its temp, we both felt it: room temp/cool. Nice!

The BAZ group added at least 4 members: Matt from San Jose said to me he thought he was the Only Z guy in SJ when he saw my BAZ Shirt while at the PCR/NMRA tables. So, I led Matt via the Nn3 setup to the BAZ setup, where he was amaZed to learn both groups were running DCC; Matt didn't know DCC was possible in Z/Nn3. Kim's DCC Z sound car and Z garage animation were also eye-openers for Matt (and many others). Jim immediately signed Matt into the BAZ group via Jim's WiFi laptop.

I didn't have that much time to spend with either group, but overheard comments around both setups that they opened eyes to new modeling possibilities. I always saw at least one train running on each setup, so no one left w/o seeing how well they run, and how beautiful modeling is in both scales.

Some helpful cross-pollination also occurred. During take-down, Bruce Hunt and the BAZers compared how ugly older turnout wiring could be. Overhearing Dave Connery wondering how to build over 100 G scale Acrylic double-hung windows for a long outside structure, I got him talking with Robert about laser cutting using Kim's new/used laser. We'll see what happens. I got some new ideas, bought enough Z, N & HO stuff to dent my wallet & was worn out both nights afterwards.

*Steve Wesolowski*



# Redwood Empire Division Report

By Steve Skold

Our next meet will be on Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Tiburon Railroad and Ferry Museum. Bill Kaufman will be doing his clinic on the San Francisco Belt Line Railroad. Please bring any pictures or information you have on this railroad. He is building a model of most of the old San Francisco waterfront.

The museum features an HO scale model of the NWP facility as it was at the turn of the century, including two yards and several ferry slips. Parking is limited to 10 spaces with city parking several hundred yards away. Parking is about \$7.00 for 3 hours. You should also bring camp chairs as there are only about 6 chairs in the museum. We are working on having an Open House by one of the Marin County model rail-

roaders after the meeting is over. Doors will open at noon and the meeting begins at 1PM. More details will be in the November 1<sup>st</sup> Callboard which is available from a link from the online PCR Branch Line.

The next RED meet will be in Santa Rosa at the Monroe Hall on College Avenue. It will be February 19<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 4 PM. Since my last report, Don Cabrall's Hessel & Lone Pine has been dismantled as Don moved from Sebastopol to Rohnert Park. Parts of it has been salvaged but Don is not sure if he wants to incorporate it in a new layout or just start over. The Sonoma County Hi-Ballers have operated on this layout monthly since the late 1970's and it will be missed by all of us.



*It looks like Don Cabrall is reading his eviction notice. The layout is gone, all that remains are the clouds and our memories of a fine layout.*



**Independence Junction**

**2006**

**Philadelphia, PA**

**National Model**

**Railroad Convention**

**July 2 to July 9, 2006**



## Daylight Division Report

By

Doug Wagner

The Daylight Division Meet was held on Saturday, August 27th, in San Luis Obispo. Hilding Larson, and his wonderful wife, Mary Carole, allowed us to invade their house for a great meet.

3 great clinics were given at the meet. The first was, presented by Mary Carole Larson, and was on How to Paint Trees on a Background. Mary allowed us to try our artist abilities during the clinic. Now I remember why I didn't become an architect! Kurt Brown, of Bakersfield, gave the second clinic on low-cost sound installation in HO locomotives. Now, if someone could figure out how to do that in N scale. The third clinic was presented on a computer program that has actual railroad yards and then you go and take your switch list and make and break trains. This is for the modeler that doesn't have room for a real railroad--Virtual Model Railroading!

After the clinics, Mary Carole and Hilding put on a great tri-tip lunch, including desert--all for only \$5.00! Then after the Daylight's Business Meeting, it was on to the layout tours. As usual, there are so many layouts I was unable to make it to all of them! But we did get some fun in on Hilding's Union Pacific HO scale layout and got some ideas for operating on our own club's layout.

The Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society will on November 19, in Bakersfield, host the next Daylight Meet, at their downtown Bakersfield Clubhouse. We hope to make of it a good meeting so that everyone can get time to make it up to the biggest layout on earth--the Tehachapi Loop! The February meet will be held in Fresno.

Until November 19, we'll see you in Bakersfield!

## *Non-Rail Activities*

By Mary C Moore-Campagna

“Non-Rail activities?? What’s a Non-Rail activity??” This is a question that has been asked at conventions, at division meets and at railroad-related shows – usually by people who are either unfamiliar with the NMRA’s Non-Rail program, or who remember the “Railettes” of yesteryear and their somewhat, shall we say, structured programs, and can’t figure out how that would fit into the lives of modern railroaders and their families.

The answer, in this case, is “any activity which is designed to meet the needs and interests of those who accompany a model railroader to an event where there are likely to be opportunities to meet friends, demonstrate current skills and learn new ones, and have fun as part of an individual or group experience within the context of model railroading.” But it’s more than just the dictionary definition of the work: non-rail activities encompass all sorts of pastimes to suit people with

extremely diverse interests. There can be craft-oriented activities, tours, discussion groups, public service projects, skill-building clinics, entertaining speakers and performers, games, hospitality sessions, and more – whatever appeals to the participants. The common denominator, in this case, is that these are people who share their lives with a railroad aficionado – and who may be railroaders themselves – and who want to ensure that the same possibilities for learning and socializing are available to all event attendees.

One of the laments that can often be heard at a division meet, a regional or national convention, or just a gathering of model railroad aficionados is the “the hobby is graying...younger people aren’t getting interested...people want to spend more time with their families.” All of these things are true – but they don’t necessarily have to mean that dedicated modelers have

*See NON-RAIL (Continued on page 12)*

*NON-RAIL (Continued from page 11)*

to make a choice between their hobby or their family. There's another option – find ways to make the hobby into a family activity and get everyone involved.

Even if the spouse, partner and/or children have never operated a model train before – and may have stated repeatedly that they have no interest in doing so – there are still opportunities for them to participate in ways that may serve their own interests. One of the most intriguing aspects of model railroading is that there are so many different ways to approach it. It can be seen as an exercise in historical accuracy; it can be an opportunity to create an imaginary world in which the operator has complete control over everything that happens there; it can provide a chance to demonstrate and improve mechanical and technical skills; it can be a forum to display artistic talent – or it can be some combination. Regardless of what a person's interest may be, there is bound to be a way it can be met somewhere in the grand scheme of model railroading.

And in addition to the hobby itself, there are many opportunities for involvement that come out of the organizational structures defining many different railroad-related groups. If it's a formal group, there is bound to be a need for administrative talent, publishing expertise, leadership abilities, and possibly cooking skills (many groups feature refreshments as one of the drawing cards to encourage people to come to meets). Even if it's a loosely-organized group, it's still helpful to have someone who knows how to contact the members and prospective members, and to help spread the word about how enjoyable this activity can be.

The reason this is becoming an area of increasing interest is that with a decreasing amount of time available for discretionary activities, many more people are choosing to devote that time to things they can do with their families. And railroad activities can be an excellent source of family involvement for people of all different ages: there's motion and lights and sound, the thrill of making a train move back and forth and go around on increasingly complex track routes, the fascination of researching – or creating – the history of a certain railroad and its equipment, the artistic challenge of mixing creativity with available materials to

create items which are both attractive and useful...the list goes on. There are lots of opportunities for individual and group participation, regardless of talent or skill level.

One of the attractions offered by NMRA – and by the PCR – is the existence of a Non-Rail program which lends itself to customization according to the needs of the members. The contests at both the national and regional conventions feature the Art and Craft category, an official NMRA contest category which offers non-member convention attendees the opportunity to compete in the contest, since the only criterion for eligibility is attendance at the event where the contest is being held. The clinics offered to the Non-Rail attendees range from personal development topics to educational forums to entertainment sessions to group participation efforts, as well as some non-structured social interaction and hospitality for both newcomers and seasoned conventioners.

But the Non-Rail program can encompass much more than simply a set of events at a regional or national convention. Since every division has a series of meets and a (for the most part) regular newsletter, these present additional opportunities to describe how a modeler's family members can participate in the hobby in many different ways. Depending on the interests of the local non-rail population, there may be opportunities for tours, workshops or contests that will attract people to the meetings and encourage their continued participation.

Over the past few years, I've seen a number of non-rail activities in various parts of the country, all of which took into account the people who would be attending them and what those people might enjoy. I've been fortunate enough to participate in self-defense training, American Sign Language classes, various craft workshops, a sing-along of railroad-related music, tours of different local historical sites, opportunities for community service and action through donations to local charitable groups, energized bingo games – the list goes on. And the thing that keeps occurring to me is that while the connection to a model railroader may be the reason people initially partake in the program, the fellowship and camaraderie is the

*(Continued on page 13)*

*(Continued from page 12)*

reason they continue to come back. It's a chance to enjoy favorite activities and learn new ones as a part of a group that will welcome you with open arms, a smile, and an invitation to become involved in whatever way – and to whatever degree – makes sense for you.

But the key is to recognize the possibilities and help to make them happen for everyone. If a division meet is trying to attract more members, they may be able to present a program which includes some “non-rail” activities to be sure everyone in attendance – including the families – will feel welcomed and have a great

time. Each convention committee has a new opportunity to discover some of the interesting sights and activities that might appeal to the non-rail attendees (especially in an area with a lot of interesting garden railroad layouts). Special non-rail door prizes can be offered (See's candy is always a big draw), and special non-rail “goodie bags” provide an opportunity to make them feel even more welcome and included. All it takes is someone – or, actually, many someones – who will support the idea of family participation in the hobby of model railroading, put their specialized knowledge and creativity to work, and help to make participation rewarding for everyone.

## *Timesaver Update*

By

Mark Schutzer

As many of you know we haven't seen much of Tom VanHorn at the recent Coast meets as he has been busy running his Tom's Trains hobby shop. Tom Crawford has been filling in for the last few meets, but as both Chief Clerk and Switching Contest Coordinator he is doing more than his share of the work. Tom approached me and with a little encouraging I volunteered to take over as Switching Contest Coordinator.

All those who regularly try their hand at the switching contest know that half the battle is switching cars and half the battle is getting the couplers to do what you want. There is nothing more frustrating than having a good time spoiled by finicky couplers.

I set out to see what I could do to improve the reliability of the couplers and discovered a few things along the way. It turns out that it's not just the couplers but a combination of several items that caused the performance to be erratic. I want to pass along some of the things I discovered.

The first thing that needed fixing were the wheelsets on the rolling stock. The cars on the Timesaver are all very old Athearn or Roundhouse models that use steel axles. The steel axles and magnetic uncouplers don't get along well as the magnets tend to drag the cars around when they are near the uncouplers. To get

around this problem wire was wrapped around all of the axles to provide drag to keep the cars in place. These wires were tricky to adjust and provided either too much, or too little drag.

To solve this problem I went through and replaced all the wheelsets with Proto 2000 non-magnetic wheelsets. With non magnetic wheelsets the cars will reliably couple and uncouple with much less drag on the wheels. At the same time I removed the wires wrapped around the axles. To provide a controlled resistance I drilled a small hole in the center of each truck, and added a spring steel wiper that presses against each axle. With the new wheelsets very little added rolling resistance is needed.

Another area that needed improvement was the tracking of the locomotive. Since Tom Crawford was using his personal switcher on the layout, I went out and bought a new Proto 2000 switcher that I will loan for use on the switching layout. Just as with Tom's switcher there was a lot of variability in how the couplers lined up. One time they would work great, the next time they would be misaligned.

Well it turns out that there is a LOT of side to side travel in the wheelsets of the locomotive. As the Timesaver consists of a lot of wyes the locomotive is

*See TIMESAVER (Continued on page 15)*

# Tales of the Santa Cruz Northern

By  
Jim Providenza

## Names III

Ah, the Cementipede! Old heads on the SCN will occasionally mark up for this train, but more often scurry off into dark corners when it is next on the list of jobs to bid on. Instead they will sit back and wait for some poor souls, clueless, more or less, to make the effort to get the train over the road in a timely and efficient manner. Some have said running this train is like herding cats. Others, less charitable perhaps, have likened it to trying to push string...

In any event, everyone waits for the new crew to announce they have figured out the perfect new way to switch out the train at the Santa Cruz Portland Cement plant on the Damsite Branch. And then they take side bets on how long this new evolution with delay various first and second class trains! The SCN's receiver believes completely in management's way of doing things, as laid out in the job briefing that management supplies with the plastic case holding the waybills for the train. It must be admitted that there is a difference of opinion about this however. This is attested to the fact that there is a set of relatively extensive "old head notes" that have somehow also found their way into the train packet! Current examples of both are included for your reading pleasure.

But we were talking about names, I think, before we were so rudely interrupted last column by some more talk about sound decoders and such. It was Dave Clemens who hung the "Cementipede" tag on the cement train. It doesn't matter, it seems, whether it is the loaded or empty movement, uphill or down, an Espee train or (every five years) an SCN train. It is still the Cementipede.

But really what train is it? Well, that depends on who you are and what you are doing on the railroad. If you are the Marketing Department, it is the Cement Loads

East or Cement Empties West. If you are the Operating Department or the Train Dispatcher writing up a Train Order, you might be the Extra SP4390 East. And to the crews on the ground, and to everyone else struggling to get it over the road one more time without fouling the path of the East and West Drags and the Suntan, it's truly the Cementipede. Relatively long, relatively slow, segmented... if caterpillars were gray, this would be one. I've always figured that is what inspired Dave to hang the moniker on the train. At least for me, however, the name also conjures up images of John Armstrong's articulated 3 bay cement car, an association of sorts I'll always treasure.

**It was  
Dave Clemens  
who hung the  
"Cementipede"  
tag on the  
cement train.**

Well, enough for tonight. Catch you next time – maybe the Cementipede will be first out on the board!

## Cement Train (Mgmt's job de-

### scription)

**Originates SP Xing with cement MT's. Picks up coal loads at San Jose. Runs to San Vicente via Damsite Jct., swaps loads for empties. Returns to Espee via SP Xing after setting out coal MT's at Mac St. Yard.**

### Other Specific Instructions:

"Grays and Reds" – the key to switching the Cement Train is in the color coding. Arriving at Sergeants, cut out your helper and leave the coal loads and the cabooses in the siding. Take the covered hoppers down the branch, swap gray for gray, spotting inbound cement cars on loader spurs.

Return to Sergeants, swap cuts, leave cabooses behind, being sure you have authority from the DS to occupy the main if the covered hoppers won't fit in the siding. Return down the branch, swap red for red.

SCN (Continued from page 14)

Return to Sergeants, couple up to your train, get authority to run to Fallon where you can run around your caboose if you haven't done so already.

**Impaired Clearance:** Bulk loadout has impaired side and overhead clearance; locomotives will not fit under it.

**\*\*Employee notes on the management version.** The problem with this job bulletin is that you have to follow exactly what it says at one end of the run and ignore it completely at the other, and "they" don't tell you which is which. Of course! When you get the Cementípede up to Santa Cruz Portland Cement, follow the special instructions to the letter. Trust me on this one. But down at SP Xíng...

If you are lucky your helper or the local switcher - the Crusher - is available to do most of the work. If

you aren't then you won't pick up your helper until you are at the Apricot Spur in E. Rica and the Crusher will be busy elsewhere. It is then misery for both you and the yardmaster at Mac St. You end up having to run around a bunch of stuff a couple of times in the middle of his yard.

Send the helper (if you can get away with it, its an extra day's pay for the helper crew) or have the Crusher go over to WP Jet. and collect the coal cars. When it gets back, have the power pull out onto the main and back up to the absolute signal at SP Xíng. Have the local or helper tack the Espee hoppers on the power. Entrain the helper between the cement and the coal. If you aren't picking the helper up until E. Rica, then back the train down on the coal cars and finally have the local tack the crummy on the back, then get out of town.

TIMESAVER (Continued from page 13)

always coupling and uncoupling as it is entering or exiting curves. With the side to side slop in the wheels the couplers tend to drift to the left or right of the track centerline as the locomotive negotiates the curves.

To fix this problem I turned some plastic bushings on the lathe and added a spacer bushing on both sides of the four axle gears. As the bushings are inside the enclosed gearbox they keep the axle gear, and the axle centered.

With this fix in place the locomotives couplers now always follow the centerline of the track. The variable in tracking is now gone!

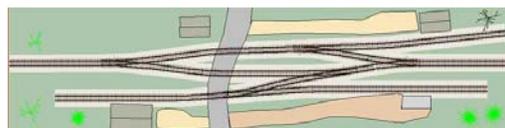
With these two fixes the performance of the coupling and uncoupling was vastly improved, but there still seemed to be a couple of consistent trouble spots on the layout. These troublesome spots occurred where the uncouplers were placed right at the transition of a curve. The uncoupler on the Boxcar spur was especially troublesome.

After looking at the opposite end of the layout I noticed that the couplers were not quite symmetrical. On the Reefer spur the uncoupler was one tie width further away from the switch when compared to the Boxcar spur. One tie width doesn't sound like much, but it makes all the difference in the world.

As the final piece to the puzzle I moved two of the uncouplers by one tie location and now the layout works as it should. You can now reliably couple, uncouple, and delay at all of the uncoupler locations! For the next meet we are throwing away the uncoupler pick.

Now we all just need to figure out how to beat our perennial champion, Bill Burket J

Please come back and try out the new Timesaver at the December Coast meet. It's a lot of fun, and as Tom VanHorn says "You need to try it because it's FREE!"

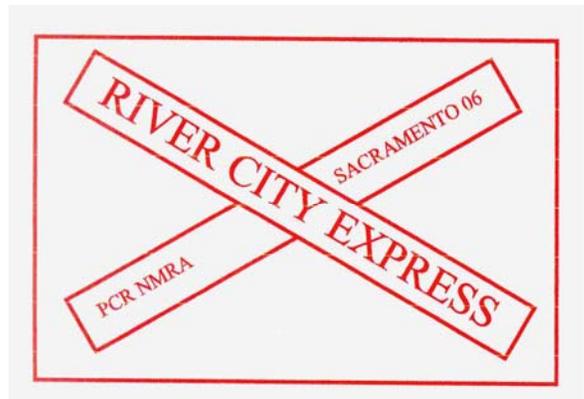


# River City Express

## The 2006 PCR convention

### Planned Clinics

- #1 Troubleshooting and repairing brass steam locomotives - Mark Schutzer
- #2 Rebuilding Brass Steam Locomotives - Mark Schutzer
- #3 Union Pacific in a 14' X 18" bedroom - Dave Clemens
- #4 Trackwork – Doing it Right - Rich Kolm
- #5 Scratch Building Layout Sound Systems & Sound Tracks – Jim Wells
- #6 The 1950's – The last of Steam – Dave Mussatti
- #7 Revisiting Rail Fair 1999 – Dave Mussatti
- #8 Layout and Prototype Tours at the 2004 NMRA & Narrow Gage Conventions – Dave Mussatti
- #9 Logging and Sawmills: Equipment and methods 1890-1927 – Jim Zeek
- #10 DCC Basics- Systems & components available – Mark Gurries
- #11 Decoder Hardware & Installation – Mark Gurries
- #12 Decoder Software: Features and Options – Mark Gurries
- #13 DCC Wiring for your layout – Mark Gurries
- #14 “R” is for Railroad – Sacto R Street Corridor – Tom Campbell
- #15 Hazardous Materials Markings 1908 to present – Paul Dies
- #16 SP Box cars – Tony Thompson
- #17 Planning & Building for Operations and Rural Scenery – Patrick Lana
- #18 Special Trains on the Crandic Route – Patrick Lana
- #19 Decker Meat – Prototype and Modeling – Doug Harding
- #20 Meat Plant Operations & Traffic – Doug Harding
- #21 TBD – Bill Schaumburg RMC
- #22 TBD – Michael O’Connell Cooch Ind.
- #23 The SP Sacramento Shops – Bob Pecotish
- #24 Light Rail in Sacramento – Greg Austin
- #25 Sacramento’s New CAF Cars- Greg Austin
- #26 Systematic Model Building – Neil Pfafman
- #27 Thinking about the BOX – Operations focused layout planning – Phil Gulley
- #28 Backdrop Painting – Darryl Huffman

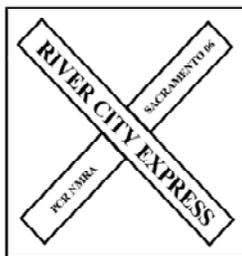


SIERRA (Continued from page 7)

mer event in Paradise, CA to check out the railroad history of the area, and a fall lunch train on the Sierra Railroad.

One of our members reported on a good meal opportunity for those railfanning in and near Roseville. This is at the Roundhouse Deli, on Church Street, right across

from the locomotive maintenance facility. It's owned and run by Sal and Maria Herrera. Sal was a maintenance of way worker on "The Hill" (Donner Pass) for some years, and appears in the video "Battle for Donner Pass," about winter and snow removal on "The Hill." Maria was a crew caller for several years at Truckee. Besides serving good food at good prices, their shop has a collection of Donner photos and other railroad items.



**PCR/NMRA**  
**RIVER CITY EXPRESS**  
**Convention 2006**  
**DoubleTree Hotel**  
**Sacramento, Ca**  
**May 3-7, 2006**

RETURN FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

RIVER CITY EXPRESS  
 Ed Pultz, Registrar  
 211 Cedar Lane  
 Woodland, CA 95695  
 E-Mail: epultz@juno.com

Hosted by: **Sierra Division, Pacific Coast Region, National Model Railroad Association, Sacramento Modular Railroaders** and the **Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society**

WEBSITE: <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~rivercityexpress/index.htm>**REGISTRATION FORM**Please **PRINT** Information

<b>Last Name</b>		<b>First Name*</b>		<b>Registration Date</b>		<b>Committee Use</b>			
<b>Address</b>		<b>City</b>		<b>State</b>		<b>Zipcode</b>			
<b>Home Telephone</b>		<b>e-mail Address</b>		<b>NMRA Number</b>		<b>PCR Number</b>			
<b>Registration Type (Please check one)</b>				<b>NMRA Region (if other than PCR)</b>					
Model Railroader    Non Rail    Youth									
<b>Primary Scales and Interests (Check all that apply)</b>		HO    S    N    O    G    Narrow Gauge    Other:							
<b>ADDITIONAL REGISTRANT(S) LIVING AT SAME ADDRESS (Use another form for more than 1)</b>									
<b>Last Name</b>		<b>First Name*</b>		<b>Registration Date</b>		<b>Committee Use</b>			
<b>Registration Type (Please check one)</b>		Model Railroader    Spouse    Youth							
<b>FARES: Please fill in and total</b>				<b>QTY</b>		<b>@</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>Early-Bird Registration (before 1/31/2006):</b>						<b>60.00</b>			
<b>Regular Registration:</b>						<b>70.00</b>			
<b>Spouse Registration:</b>						<b>30.00</b>			
<b>Youth Registration (12-18 years or student; Under 12 Free with parent.)</b>						<b>30.00</b>			
<b>Non NMRA Member, must join the NMRA, in addition to Regular Fare DO NOT USE WITH SPOUSE; USE BASE REGISTRATION FARE</b>						<b>At present time,</b>			
						<b>Contact NMRA</b>			
<b>One Day Registration (Circle One) Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun</b>						<b>35.00</b>			
<b>Shirts **(Check Size) L XL</b>						<b>22.00</b>			
<b>Shirts** (Check Size) XXL</b>						<b>25.00</b>			
<b>Convention Hat (one size fits all)</b>						<b>14.00</b>			
<b>Convention Car – WP Wood Reefer (HO Only) for 1 only</b>						<b>14.00</b>			
<b>Convention Car – WP Wood Reefer (HO Only) for 2 or more</b>						<b>12.50</b>			
<b>Total from Extra Fares Form (When Available)</b>									
<b>Payment by</b> Check***    Cash    Credit Card(use WEBSITE)						<b>TOTAL:</b>			

\* Name desired on badge    \*\* Golf Type with Pocket and Logo    \*\*\* Make check payable to "Sierra Div. PCR Conv. Comm."

DoubleTree Hotel \$98.00/night/room for 1 or 2 and \$108.00/night/room for 3 or 4. 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, Ca 95815 (916-929-8855) Use rate code PCR.

WEBSITE: [http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/private\\_groups/rlsadt\\_pcr/index.jhtml](http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/private_groups/rlsadt_pcr/index.jhtml)NMRA WEBSITE: <http://www.nmra.org/>

# MADE IN THE PCR

by Dave Connery

## Fantasonics Scale Magic CD Soundtrack

Adding sound to model railroads is certainly not something new. Sixty years ago I remember whistles in the toy trains of the day and various sounds had been a part of the hobby long before my memory begins. As with so many aspects of the hobby, sound availability has really expanded in recent years. Today there are at least three approaches to providing sound on the layout. (1) Most of us are familiar with the tiny sound chips (especially associated with DCC) that provide onboard sounds emanating from the locomotive itself. There are systems that can produce animal sounds in stock cars or peoples voices in passenger cars and cabooses. (2) We also are familiar with event sounds such as the clanging of the bell as the crossing gates drop to protect a passing train. I've also heard dogs barking when a train passes or the sound of water gushing out of a tank when the train stops to water-up. (3) The third type of sound used on layouts are background sounds. That is the type of sound being produced by FantaSonics.

Owner Jim Wells has been providing Clinics on scale sound at PCR Conventions since at least 2001 and I vividly recall back to 1999 when I first met him and he was installing sound on an N scale layout for display at the 2000 NMRA Convention. Actually, Jim entered the model railroad industry about a decade ago doing custom layout sound installation work after a career doing sound engineering in the theme park environment. Today, in addition to his custom work, Jim is producing a series of background soundtracks for layout use and new tracks are coming out regularly. Recently Fantasonics announced a partnership with PRICOM Design to produce and sell an all digital solid state background sound system. Jim also served as a technical adviser on sound systems for the "Beginner's Guide to Creative Effects for your Model Railroad" reviewed else where in this Branch Line.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. This review is of the Scale Magic background sound CD. The specific sound I was looking for was of an early steam driven



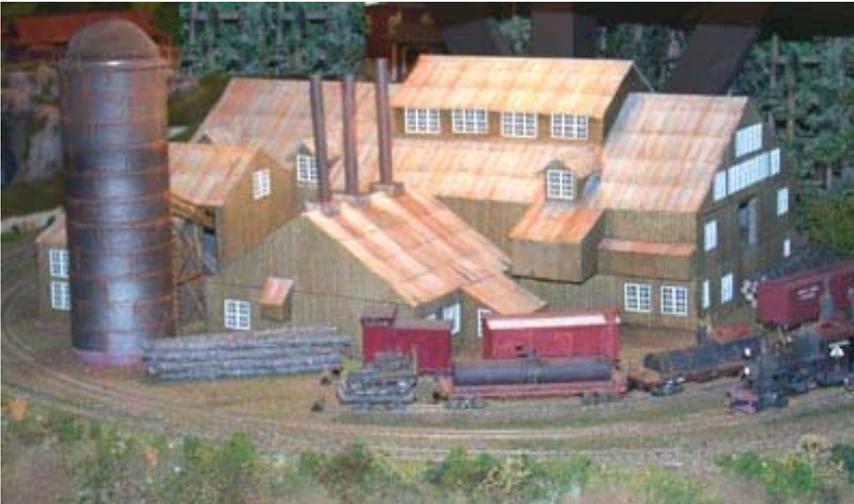
*The CD player and power supply, Scale Magic CD, speakers and Scale Magic Owners Manual*

saw mill for my West Side Lumber Co. mill so the CD I got is for the just released Pre-1920's Sawmill – perfect for me since I am modeling 1929 but the mill was originally built in 1900.

There are 24 sound tracks now available and they include: Big City in 3 eras (Turn of the Century, WW II and Diesel era's), Big Port Harbor in same 3 eras, Roundhouse / Switchyard in same 3 eras, Quaint Fishing Harbor, Wayside Station, Small time Mine Operation, Farm, Ranch, Wild West Saloon, Waterfalls & Rivers, Streams and Creeks., Night & Day, Pre-1920's Saw Mill, Pre-1920's Logging Camp, Pre-1920's Logging Operations. Jim indicates they are now working on a Post-1920's Saw Mill, a Post-1920's Logging Camp and a Mining and Stamp Mill CD.

You get a 35 page Scale Magic Owner's Manual with your first CD. I immediately read mine and learned a whole lot about background sound and its application to a layout environment. (I've also attended Jim's clin-

*(Continued on page 19)*



*A view of the West Side mill model that has the background sound added beneath it*

*(Continued from page 18)*

ics twice – he is very good and I just might attend again!) By all means, make reading the manual your first step in installing sound on your layout. Once I had read the manual I headed out to purchase the equipment to “play” the CD I had just purchased. After checking several stores I headed to Fry’s Electronics where I picked up their most inexpensive CD player, one by GPX for \$14.99. Since this was battery operated I bought a variable output COBY wall transformer for \$6.99 and a set of COBY mini-stereo speakers for \$4.99

Because the saw mill is quite large and open at both ends I elected to cut two holes beneath the two ends of the building and mount the speakers in their small enclosures directly under the layout. When the holes had been drilled with a hole saw I mounted the speakers using DAP Alex Plus Acrylic Latex Caulk plus Silicon. I built a mounting platform for the CD player and wired in a 110 outlet to serve the sound system. After testing the system I re-installed the saw mill and was done.

I find the Scale Magic sounds appropriately muted – I am running the CD player with the volume on high but driving the two speakers with only the headset electronics and surprisingly, it seems to work just about right. It is loud enough to be heard when you are near the mill but I don’t think the sound will ever become over bearing. Time will tell – one of the critical elements of background

sound is keeping it in the background – loud enough to be heard but not so loud it competes with the real actors on the stage, your trains. I tried adding an amplifier between the player and speakers and while it can really boost the sound output, I think the right level is with just the player alone.

The sounds on my CD are rather generic. I expected to regularly hear the ear-splitting whine of a log ripping through the saw – a sound I experienced at a steam sawmill in New Zealand last year. Instead there are lots of different noises, birds, steam engine sounds, banging, boards dropping, machines ratcheting, dogs barking, men shouting, blades sawing, all mixed in a multitude of ways so it really is all the background sounds. This installation was so easy I am looking for another spot to add background sound without turning my small layout room into a cacophony of noises.

Scale Magic soundtrack CDs are \$29.95 plus \$3.00 shipping for the first CD, which includes the Owners Manual. Added CD’s are \$24.95. Fantasonics can be reached at 900 Hartford Street, Cambria, CA 93428 (805) 927-0586 their web site is [www.fantasonics.com](http://www.fantasonics.com) and their e-mail is [engineers@fantasonics.com](mailto:engineers@fantasonics.com).



*One of the two holes sawn in the layout beneath the mill site with the speaker attached below.*

## Layout Design and Operations Special Interest Groups News

By Seth Neumann

As I write this column I'm on a consulting assignment in Truckee a few feet from the original trans-continental mainline. Although I don't have a window, several times a day I can *feel* the UP moving heavy tonnage, with helpers, over the hill. Work certainly gets in the way of good railfanning!

It's fall and that means it's time start planning the annual Bay Area PCR/LD/OP Sig meet. The date is set for February 11-12, 2006, (weekend after Super-bowl) at the Santa Clara depot. Donation is \$5.00, refreshments included. The format is similar to what we've been doing for the last few years:

- Friday Evening
  - o No host dinner at a local restaurant
  - o Saturday (day)
  - o Clinics
  - o Bird of a Feather
  - o Panel Discussion
  - o Layout Design Challenge
  - o Consulting Program
  - o Saturday (Eve)
  - o Layout tours
  - o Sunday
  - o Operating Sessions

Layout Tours

This year the theme returns to presentations about how modelers found their prototype (or developed a freelance one) and reduced it to a workable layout and operating design. If you've recently gone through the process, please contact me at [sneumann@pacbell.net](mailto:sneumann@pacbell.net) and we'd love to have you present a clinic on it! If you're about to start and want to some advice and inspiration, we'd love to see you at the depot!

The Op Sessions give priority to those who are trying to find out what's it all about (very supportive environment) and out of town visitors, although there are plenty of slots for all. Again, if you've been interested but didn't know who to ask, here's your

chance!

Looking a little further ahead, to May 3-7, Kent Williams and David Parks are planning an OP SIG program for the Sacramento PCR convention and we'll have the usual clinic track and SIG forums, so make plans now and register early if you can.

One other thing, if you are working through the AP program towards your MMR and you operate, consider the "Chief Dispatcher" certificate! If you enjoy operating you will most likely find you've done everything but the paperwork. Check in with Kermit Paul and Jack Burgess or see the NMRA website for details!

That's all for now, my Niles Canyon Layout is getting closer to operations and I need to fill out some car cards and waybills!

### **SIGs at the River City Express**

The Operations and Layout Design Special Interest Groups (LD/OP Sigs) will have a number of clinics and activities at the River City Express PCR convention hosted in Sacramento, CA May 3 – 7, 2006. The OPSIG is looking for layouts within an hour or so of the convention site (Arden Fair mall area) which can host special operating sessions during PCR convention. Interested parties should contact Kent Williams via email: [kent@ownry.com](mailto:kent@ownry.com). Visit the convention website at <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~rivercityexpress/>

## Featured PCR Layout

### *Sierra Railroad*

Story and pictures by John Zach

It all started over an innocent comment by Rick Mugele, a BNSF engineer and layout designer. It was at least seven years ago after an operating session when Rick asked why didn't I use more of the unfinished portion of the basement were my Sierra Railroad layout is situated in. The layout was occupying just over 1,000 sq ft of the basement and I was already using a part of the unfinished basement for the SP Merced staging yard.

The unfinished basement ran the full length of the house, 52 ft, had an exposed dirt bank and as Rick called it a big ugly heater and hot water tank right in the middle of it. Since I was still building the layout and extending it in every nook and cranny of the finished basement Rick's suggestion just lingered in the back of my mind for a couple of years. But the more I thought about it the more I realized by utilizing this space it not only would extend the mainline but would also help improve a couple of other operating issues that had developed over the years. I quickly sketched out some track plans for the new room. But there were several major hurdles to figure out first. The main one was how to dig out the dirt bank that was over 5 ft high at one end and over 3 ft high at the other end of the unfinished basement. Once this was done then the next problem was how to cover the dirt floor and then what to do with all the exposed A/C ducts and plumbing lines.

In the fall of 2002 with many of these issues still unresolved I went ahead and rented a jack hammer and invited a couple of friend over for a digging party. Over the Thanksgiving weekend we dug out about a third of the dirt bank at the 5 ft high end. We wheel-

barrowed the dirt out through basement door winding our way through the existing basement and layout. With this part of the basement dug out I built a temporary staging yard to represent SP Stockton. The layout room would remain in this configuration for all of 2003. The main focus of 2003 was converting from the old DC block system to EasyDCC. But how to finish this part of the basement was always in the back of my mind. Now that I knew we could get the rest of the dirt out the big question was still how to cover the dirt



*looking out of the new room from the entry into the new room - on the right is the town of Melones on the Angels branch, on the lower left is the Sierra mainline running up to HH Jct (the scenery base has been added but not colored) and the upper deck is the Sierra mainline running towards Ralph. through the doorway is the crew lounge.*

floor.

By the summer of 2004 the decision was finally made to have a concrete slab poured by pumping in the concrete through an outside air vent. So over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend we had another digging party. This time I borrowed a friend's pneumatic hammer which was a lot easier to handle than the full size jack hammer.

*SIERRA RR (Continued from page 21)*

Over a couple of weekends we finished the excavation of the basement ending up with a space that was 8 ft wide and 52 ft long. Even Rick Mugele made it back for one of these sessions to help finish what he started several years earlier. In August we built a two high block wall the length of the room. This would act as a small retaining wall against the vertical dirt bank and would keep any dirt from falling down against the wall that was to built the length of the basement.

The following week we had 4 yards of concrete pumped into the basement. Viola we know had a concrete floor in place. That weekend the work crew returned and a 2"x 4" stud wall was built on top of the block wall. Once the studs were in place the insulation and sheetrock were put in place.

By now it was early September and except for a few small projects the work on the new room was halted for the year. The last big hurdle was how to deal with all the A/C duct work and plumbing lines hanging down into the new room.

In early May of this year the remaining sheetrock was installed. The decision was made to box in the A/C duct work with 1/4" plywood and this was finished by mid-May. After an adventurous trip to Modesto to Lowes Home Improvement Center we had all the material for the drop ceiling. The ceiling was put up as another friend, a retired electrical contractor, repositioned and added additional lighting fixtures. The room was basically completed and ready for the next stage - layout construction.

Layout construction was delayed as I was still trying to figure out which level of track to start with. Across the doorway into the new room were two lift sections of track. The lower section had the SP mainline on it that ran from Merced through Oakdale to Stockton.

The lift section out above that one had the Sierra mainline on it between Hetch Hetchy Junction and Chinese. In both cases the new design would eliminate these lift out sections so that the respective trackage on each level could loop into the new room and run around the walls and then loop back out to the existing layout room. The 3 ft of track on the lift out section between HHJct and Chinese would be replaced with over 100 ft of new Sierra mainline track.

The original concept was to build all the new benchwork and track for all the levels except the connecting points between the old room and the new room. But I was still not happy with the re-design of the lowest level, the SP mainline between Merced and Stockton.



*looking into the new room. From the bottom to top against the back wall you see 1- the re-positioned Stockton temporary staging yard. 2- the Sierra mainline at Keystone which is between HH Jct and Chinese. 3- Sierra mainline to Tuolumne, 4- the Pickering mainline at the left you can see the Shay loco from the log train photo. The sections of benchwork in the lower forefront is the old SP mainline that ran across the new opening. The SP track will curve into the new room just as the Sierra main does now.*

Also the lift out section between HHJct and Chinese was causing more and more problems with derailments so finally the decision was made to redo the Sierra mainline trackage between HHJct and Chinese first even if it meant keeping the lower lift out section around a little longer. So in early July I started the

*See SIERRA RR (Continued on page 23)*

*SIERRA RR (Continued from page 22)*

benchwork for the new Sierra Mainline. The first step was to verify the original track design to the actual finished dimensions of the new room, lay out the placement of the supporting arms and finalize the grades.

Since our regular operating sessions are held on the Sierra every other Thursday evening the construction of the benchwork had to be planned around the sessions so there would be no interruption to the sessions. By July 7<sup>th</sup> the basic benchwork was in place along with the plywood sub-roadbed and some of the Sound Board roadbed. The session on the 7<sup>th</sup> was held with the trains running over both lift out sections. I now had two weeks to finish the roadbed installation, put down the new track, Code 83 Walthers flex track, wire the track and re-align approximately 30 ft of old Sierra mainline from the lift out section into Jamestown. This re-alignment removed the trackage at Chinese from above SP-Oakdale, which was a aisle blocking operating problem, and moved it into the new room just on the other side of the wall. The width of the second deck in this area was also cut back by 6 inches which significantly opened up the access and visibility of the SP Oakdale trackage below it. Working 7 to 8 hours a day and 4 days a week I was able to complete all the tasks prior to July 21<sup>st</sup>.

On July 21<sup>st</sup> the Sierra trains used the new trackage in the new room. As mentioned earlier this added 100 ft to the Sierra mainline. Everything worked great and the extra length of the mainline between Jamestown and HHJct helped smooth out some of the congestion along the SP-Oakdale aisle and at HH Jct. The SP lift out section was still used but the SP operator only had it in place to get his trains over it, the remaining time

it was out making for easy access into and out of the new room. I had some fun with the SP operator by having him sign a 'contract' stating it was his sole responsibility to ensure that his trains did not end up on the floor. Since the use of the SP lift out section was going to be a short term problem, 2 to 3 operating sessions in duration I did not take the time to wire in a detection block in each direction.



*overview of the Tuolumne end of the room. The area to the left of the Tuolumne, in the foreground, will be the location of the Tuolumne WSLCo mill. In this view all four decks can be seen, from bottom to top - SP staging, Sierra mainline west of Chinese, Tuolumne and at the top the Pickering.*

The next task was to build the next two decks, the Sierra mainline from Ralph to the Tuolumne and the extension of the Pickering Railroad logging line from Ralph out to the woods. The current trackage had the Tuolumne mainline leaving Ralph and connecting to the Pickering trackage creating a end of the line reversing loop. The new track design has the Tuolumne line running down the full length of the new wall and terminating at the Wye in Tuolumne. Tuolumne will also be the site of the West Side Mill and the narrow gauge WSLCo Railroad. The Pickering will be directly above the Sierra trackage to Tuolumne on its own deck. Again I had a two week window to com-

*See SIERRA RR (Continued on page 24)*

*SIERRA RR (Continued from page 23)*

plete this stage of the expansion.

Although there would be less benchwork and track to lay in this stage the process would be complicated by having to build the Tuolumne Wye tail tracks first but even before they could be installed the Pickering track above Tuolumne had to be built first. The Tuolumne trackage extends out in the room far enough that the Pickering track would be very difficult to build if Tuolumne would have been built first. The Pickering benchwork and track was installed. The track ran across the back end of the room and about 12 ft down each wall. With this trackage in place I could start on the Tuolumne trackage. Earlier I had built an alcove extension at the end of the room to hold the three tail tracks. Now I built about half of the Tuolumne benchwork, that portion that abutted up to the alcove area. With the wye turnout too far from the front edge of the benchwork I installed a Tortoise switch machine and wired it to handle the reversing action of the Wye tail track. With this work done I moved on to finish the remaining benchwork on the Tuolumne line and the Pickering. With a day to spare all the track was installed and wired. If I had not converted to DCC and had to wire all those old DC block controls and control panels I would still be wiring the deck between HH Jct and Jamestown.

The Sierra trackage is now complete. The line runs from Oakdale to Tuolumne just like the prototype. The prototype was 57 miles long and my mainline now is 10.63 scale miles long, or about 645 ft long. After taking about a week off to catch my breath and to get few other things done around the house I'm about to start the last phase of construction. The rebuilding of the SP Merced and Stockton staging tracks and their connecting tracks in the new room. This phase will be done at a slower pace and might actually be broken up into two parts. The first part which

should be completed by mid- September will be the re-building of the Riverbank and Merced staging tracks and will eliminate the SP lift out section. With this part done the last part, the rebuilding of the Stockton staging, might not get finished until next summer.

So it been a very busy summer on the Sierra but the dream of expanding the layout to its fullest extent has been realized, thanks Rick for planting the seed so many years ago.. And thanks to all those that helped in building the room, Steve Hayes, Gerald Hanford, Peter Jelito, Stuart Hince, Ed Ellefsen, Steve Bechtold, John Lloyd, John Scott, Larry Lund and Rick Mugele. It friends like these that make this hobby so special.

As mention earlier we operate on the Sierra every other Thursday night. The Thursdays we are not operating on the Sierra we are operating on Steve Hayes' WP layout, which only has 644 ft of mainline by my last count but who is counting. Steve and I also have 2 or 3 weekend operating sessions a year for those living outside the immediate area. So if you are interested in operating on either of the layouts let me know via e-mail at [jzach@hrblock.com](mailto:jzach@hrblock.com) .



*Overview of the new bench work for the Merced staging yard. At the end of the room two decks above the SP staging is the town of Tuolumne, the end of the line for the Sierra.*

## Railroad Research for the Modeler – Official Registers

### By Thomas Mossbeck, Research Associate

When you need comprehensive freight, passenger and intermodal equipment information, then the various official registers are the number one source. The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER), the Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment (ORPTE) and the Official Intermodal Equipment Register (OIER) make up the collection of official registers. This article will deal only with the ORER, but similar information for the other equipment types can be found in their respective registers.

#### Why use them?

I was once told that “you don’t *enjoy* a book like this,” but the information contained within each volume gives complete insight into the equipment holdings by each railroad in a given quarter of the year, something I both need *and* enjoy for research and modeling purposes. Note that there is also information pertaining to private car owners, such as oil, steel, chemical and other companies. You can find a complete listing of the library’s freight, passenger and intermodal registers on our website, [www.nmra.org/library](http://www.nmra.org/library), under “Our Collection.”

#### At a glance

Let’s take a look at the January 1943 ORER. The first thing we see is “The Pennsylvania Railroad” and the PRR herald. Below are the railroads which this listing applies to, in this case “The Pennsylvania Railroad Company,” “Baltimore and Eastern Railroad Company,” and “Waynesburg and Washington Railroad Company.” Reporting marks are “PRR,” gauge is 4 ft. 8½ in., and we also learn that the Railway Express Agency and Pullman Company operate over this line. Next are the main sections: “Refrigerator Cars,” “Freight Equipment,” “Passenger Equipment,” “Miscellaneous and Work Equipment Cars,” “Recapitulation of Car Equipment,” Notes, and “Freight Connections and Junction Points.” The practice of listing passenger cars in the ORER is inconsistent from railroad to railroad, and the ORPTE should be considered the best resource on this subject since its introduction in March 1943.

#### Individual freight equipment

Equipment is listed in ascending numerical order with the following information given:

A.A.R. Mechanical Designation, Markings and Kind of Cars, Pennsylvania System-Class, Numbers, Dimensions (inside length, width and height, outside length, width and height from rail, side and end doors where applicable), Capacity (cubic feet and pounds or gallons, and finally, the number of cars in each series.

Looking at the listing for the pictured car number 793164, we find that it is listed as a gondola with steel underframe, wood sides, drop ends,

**ORER:** “Showing by car numbers, the marked capacity, length, dimensions and cubical capacity, of cars used to transport freight.”

**ORPTE:** “Containing – a list of passenger train car equipment of railroads in the United States and Canada. Showing by car number, serial numbers or names, information as to type, length, seating capacity and special features of the equipment and mileage and per diem rates applying thereto.”

**OIER:** “Containers, trailers, chassis and bogies in intermodal service.”



32	GB	"	"	Drop Ends, Flat Bottom.....G22a	775475 to 775754	45	6	9	3	3	48	10	1	10	1	6	5	6	5	.....	7	4	1289	140000	lb.	280	
33	GB	"	"	Tight Ends, Flat Bottom, Wood Floor.....Note R④	775755 to 775966	41	6	9	5	4	42	11	10	3	10	3	8	4	8	4	.....	8	4	1826	100000	lb.	182
34	GB	"	"	Steel, Drop Ends, Flat Bottom, Wood Floor.....G25	775968 to 776029	46	...	9	6	3	48	7	10	4	10	4	6	8	6	8	.....	7	4	1811	140000	lb.	60
35	GB	"	"	Steel Underf., Wood Sides, Drop Ends, Flat Bot., Wood Floor.....Gra	792473 to 793373	40	6	8	9	2	43	...	9	4	10	1	6	1	6	5	.....	7	3	897	100000	lb.	444
36	GB	"	"	All Steel, Tight Ends, Flat Bottom.....Gs	793375 to 793457	38	2	9	3	3	40	...	9	10	10	...	3	7	7	2	.....	8	1	1831	100000	lb.	54
37	HB	"	"	Tight Ends, Drop Bot.Note SS①Gsa	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	.....	"	"	1379	"	"	5
41	GB	"	"	Tight Ends, Flat Bottom.....Gs	795001 to 795308	38	2	9	3	3	40	...	9	10	10	...	3	7	7	2	.....	8	1	1831	100000	lb.	251
42	HB	"	"	Tight Ends, Drop Bot.Note SS①Gsd	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	.....	"	"	1379	"	"	15
43	GB	"	"	Steel Underf., Wood Sides, Drop Ends, Flat Bottom, Wood Floor.....Gra	799456 to 799549	40	6	8	9	2	43	...	9	4	10	1	6	1	6	5	.....	7	3	897	100000	lb.	98
44	GB	"	"	All Steel, Tight Ends, Flat Bottom.....Gs	799556 to 799568	38	2	9	3	3	40	...	9	10	10	...	3	7	7	2	.....	8	1	1831	100000	lb.	9
45	GB	"	"	Tight Ends, Flat Bottom.....Gs	800001 to 801000	38	2	9	3	3	40	...	9	10	10	...	3	7	7	2	.....	8	1	1831	100000	lb.	714

(Continued from page 25)

flat bottom and wooden floor. The AAR mechanical designation is GB, which refers to "an open top car, having fixed sides, fixed or drop ends and solid bottom, suitable for mill trade." The PRR-system class is Gra, part of the series 792473 to 793373. It is 40 ft. 6 in. long, 8 ft. 9 in. wide, and 2 ft. 6 in. high on the inside. Outside it is 43 ft. long, 9 ft. 4 in. wide at the top of the sides, and 10 ft. 1 in. extreme width. Its extreme height from the rails is 7 ft. 4 in. (we'll leave out other dimensions in the interest of space). It has a capacity of 897 cubic feet and 100,000 lbs. maximum, and there are 444 cars in the series.

So what can we do now? Well, we have information about the car's materials and its interior and exterior dimensions. We also know what use the car was suited for which can assist us in choosing industries for our layout, and knowing how many of them there were will help us put together a prototypically accurate mix of freight cars, if that is what you are after. If you are working from a photo or drawings with no measurements, the information contained in the ORER is a huge step towards building a model freight car.

### Recapitulation of Car Equipment

In this section, the PRR lists all its Class X, box cars and Class S, stock cars. Note that the practice of listing recapitulations varies from railroad to railroad; many, especially smaller roads, do not include such a listing. The interesting thing about a recapitulation is that you can easily see how many cars of each type (AAR mechanical designation) the railroad had, including their capacities. For example, the PRR had 28,114 40 ft. 6 in. type XM box cars with a capacity of 3056 cubic feet each, and just one type XM box car measuring 50 ft. 6 in. Clearly, you want to keep these ratios in mind when putting together a consist so that you don't see a string of cars of which the railroad owned only a few.

RECAPITULATION OF CAR EQUIPMENT.				
Class X—Box Car Type.				
AGGREGATE AND AVERAGE.				
A.A.R. Mech. Design.	Inside Length ft. in.	Number of Cars	Capacity of Cubic Feet	Aggregate Capacity Cubic Feet
XM	40 6	28,114	3056	85,916,384
XM	50 6	1	3780	3,780
XM	40 6	999	3836	3,832,164
XM	50 6	1	4800	4,800
XA	40 6	4	3577	14,308
XA	40 6	1	3607	3,607
XA	40 6	232	3651	847,082
XA	40 6	2,375	3713	8,818,375
XA	40 6	500	3898	1,949,000
XA	40 6	1,499	3960	5,936,040
XA	50 6	1,714	4629	7,934,106
XA	50 6	2,391	4937	11,804,867
XA	70 6	1	6176	6,176
XAB	40 4	1,963	3268	6,415,084
XAB	40 5	542	3250	1,761,500
XAP	40 6	7	3098	21,686
XAP	40 6	86	3713	319,318
				Total 79,209
				261,805,126
Average cubical capacity per car (for Commodity Loading). 3305				
Cars Equipped with Auto Loaders (Included in above)				
XAR	40 6	143	4629	661,947
XAR	40 6	1,072	5435	3,682,320
XAR	50 6	234	4282	1,001,988
				Total 1,306
				5,035,126
Average cubical capacity per car (for Automobile Loading). 3855				
Class S—Stock Car Type.				
A.A.R. Mech. Design.	Inside Length ft. in.	Number of Cars	Capacity (Pounds)	
SM	40 6	25	100,000	
SC	40 5	1,420	100,000	
SC	40 6	992	100,000	
SF	40 5	1	100,000	
				Total 2,438

### Freight connections and junction points

Here you will find a list of railroads and cities with which the PRR can interchange. Some, like the Baltimore & Ohio, New York Central, and the Nickel Plate, had many cities, while others, like the Ann Arbor, Belt Railway of Chicago, and the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac only had one or two. This information is helpful when planning which cities to include on a layout to facilitate interchange with some of your other favorite railroads.

### Final note

The NMRA has published reproductions of the January 1943 and 1953 issues of the ORER. Both are still

(Continued on page 27)



# 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 am and 3 pm. For additional information please contact: Bob Lewis, 925-283-6838; or via e-mail at [boblewis@ix.netcom.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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 LODE 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](mailto:napajohn@napanet.net) <http://www.nvmrc.org>

### **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](mailto:dmegeath@aol.com); web site <http://www.smrhs.com> Modeled as the Sierra Central Railroad, both HO and HO<sub>n</sub>3 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:wjnaumann@aol.com) or phone at 805 564 1359.

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

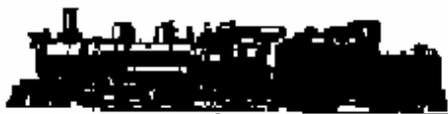
The Tri-Cities Club meets in the restored Niles Depot at 36997 Mission Blvd., Fremont. The club has both N and HO scale layouts. Work nights are Friday, the business meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month and operating session are on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. For more information contact Stanley Keiser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

### **VALLEJO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

The Vallejo Model Railroad Club has moved to Crockett and is now the "Carquinez Model Railroad Society". We completed our move from the Solano Co. Fairgrounds in July, and are in the process of getting our new building ready to accept a large model railroad. In the coming months, we will be deciding all of the "good stuff" of planning a model railroad. i.e. location modeled, era modeled, etc. We need to develop a track plan that will fit into our 36' X 60' layout room. We need to decide if we will model a prototype railroad or a freelance one. We are located on the second floor of the inactive "Independent Order of Odd Fellows" (IOOF) Lodge at 641 Loring Ave. (actually, the second floor has its own address as 645 Loring Ave). The walkway to the second floor is on the west side of the building. Our club still meets every Wednesday evening from 7:00 pm until about 10:00 pm. Since our secretary still lives in Vallejo, we are maintaining our mailing address as P.O. Box 4057, Vallejo, CA 94590-0405. Our new telephone number is (510) 787-6703 and it has a recorder so you can leave a message if you call while we are not there. E-mails may be sent to either [LoggingRR@aol.com](mailto:LoggingRR@aol.com) or [Lambertrp@earthlink.net](mailto:Lambertrp@earthlink.net). Please state "Carquinez Model RR Society" in the subject. We are developing a new website at [www.CarquinezMRS.org](http://www.CarquinezMRS.org). Presently it is limited in its information, but it will include much more as we grow. New members are welcome. Get in from the start, assist in the design and construction of a dream layout, and enjoy the hobby with new friends.

### **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](http://www.wcmrs.org)



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION** **5/05**  
**PACIFIC COAST REGION**  
**NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

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 is part of membership in the NMRA.

- PCR and NMRA for one year at \$51.00
- NMRA YOUTH and PCR at \$36.00
- NMRA Affiliate and PCR at \$29.00 (No NMRA Newsletter)
- Branch Line Subscription (requires NMRA membership# above) at \$6.00
- PCR Family Associate at \$1.00 (Must have Regular PCR member as sponsor)

Check here if this is a renewal PCR# \_\_\_\_\_

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)	<i>Hawaiian Division is not active</i>	
• NMRA Regional Advisory Council	L.E. "Gene" Mayer	(916) 359-6934	GeneFWRR@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 Committee	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com
• Nominating Committee Chair.	<i>[no permanent chairperson; interim appointments are made as needed]</i>		
• Ballot Committee Chairperson	Jim Providenza	(415) 472-6715	rrjim@aol.com
• Honors Committee Chair.	Ray deBlieck	(510) 521-9778	RaydBCS@aol.com
• Storekeeper	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• Audit Committee Chairperson	Bill Swindell	(925) 372-6996	Bill.Swindell@clorox.com
• LRP Implementation Chair.	Dave Connery	(925) 735-0134	deconnery@aol.com

## MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

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

## PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Publisher	Bob Ferguson	(925) 228-6833	BobPCRCD@aol.com
• Editor of the <i>Branch Line</i>	Gus Campagna	(415) 990-3777	campgus@earthlink.net
• Circulation Manager	(vacant)	---	---
• Webmaster	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	kmhurley01@pcnrmra.org

## CONVENTION DEPARTMENT

• Manager	Dennis Stokely	(925) 828-1990	stokely4@aol.com
• Convention Host Committee Chairpersons:			
• 2006 Sacramento	Bob Warner	(916) 772-7502	bwarner1@softcom.net
• 2007 Santa Cruz	Kevin Hurley	(831) 728-1934	kmhurley01@pcnrmra.org
• 2008 Fresno	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	(vacant)	---	---
• Sierra Division	Norman Morris	(530) 742-6930	normanmmorris@sbcglobal.net
• Redwood Empire Division	Steve Skold	(707) 539-1782	SandCSkold@aol.com
• 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	(vacant)	---	---
• 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

## NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

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

BRANCH LINE  
530 FIG TREE LANE  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

SECOND-CLASS POSTAGE  
PAID  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553



# Calendar

November 12-13, Northern California Model Railroad Show (**RAILFAIR**) at the Placer County Fairgrounds in Roseville.

November 19, 2005: **Daylight Division Meet** in Bakersfield, Contact Doug Wagner at (661) 589-0391 or at [carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com), for further information

November 20, 2005: **Redwood Empire Division Meet** in Tiburon, Marin County.

December 4, 2005: **Coast Division Meet** in Mountain View at the Computer History Museum off Shoreline Blvd.

January 14 & 15, 2006: **Golden Empire Historical and Modeling Society**, model train show Bakersfield

February: **Daylight Division Meet** in Fresno.

February 11-12, 2006, **Bay Area PCR/LD/OP Sig meet**, at the Santa Clara depot.

February 19, 2006: **Redwood Empire Division meet** in Santa Rosa's Monroe Hall.

May 3-7, 2006: **River City Express**, PCR's Convention, Sacramento.

July 3-9, 2006: **Independence Junction** NMRA National Convention, Philadelphia, PA

July 3-9, 2006: National Garden Railway Convention, Santa Clara Convention Center

Gus Campagna is trying to keep an updated calendar at <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/#projects>. Email him with any regional, divisional, or otherwise interesting events.