

THE CALLBOARD

OF THE REDWOOD EMPIRE DIVISION

Visit RED at Website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/>

January – March 2008

All Railroad enthusiasts are welcome to enjoy an afternoon of model railroading fun on Saturday, February 16th.

There is no charge to attend.

February Meeting

at the

Napa Valley Northern RR

The next meeting of the Redwood Empire Division will be held in Napa on Saturday February 16th from 1 to 4 PM. The hosts for this meet will be the Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society, operators of the Napa Valley Northern Railroad. They are located in Napa on the grounds of the Town & Country Fairgrounds, at the Third Street gate.

Doors open at noon. There will be sandwiches, snacks, coffee & tea available for purchase, furnished by MARY MOORE-CAMPAGNA, to satisfy any hungry and/or thirsty railroad enthusiasts.

The Napa Club invites you to bring your pet locomotives and rolling stock to run on their layout. The only requirement is that the equipment meets NMRA standards and has properly aligned Kadee type couplers. The decision on any questions will be at the discretion of the

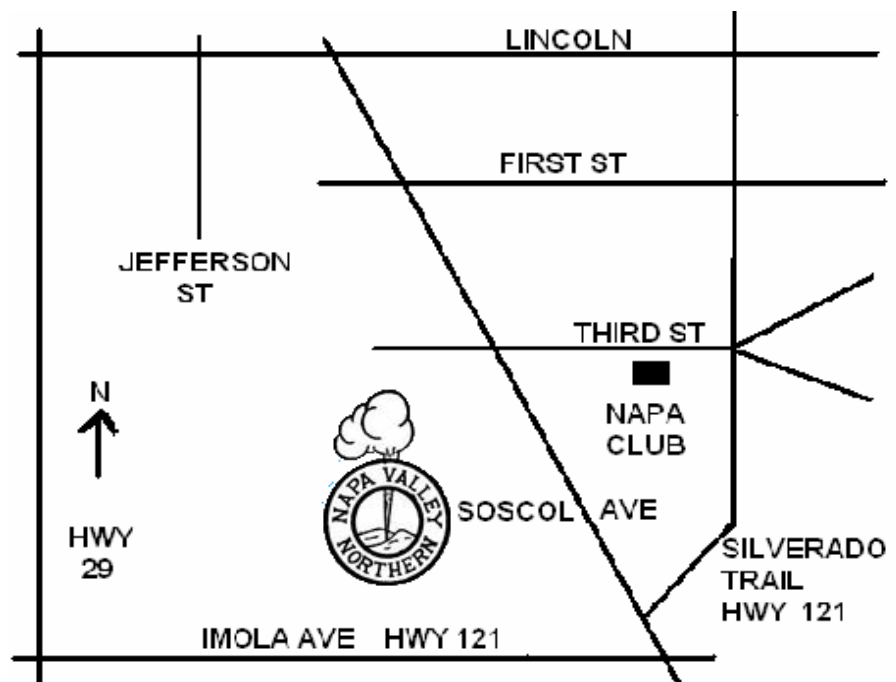
Napa Club.

Starting at 1 PM upstairs, there will be meeting announcements followed by a “show & tell” and favorite model contest of the 40 ft. box cars, with dry lettering transfers, that were distributed to attendees at the November 2007 RED meeting. At 2 PM RON PLIES will describe how the Eel River Valley Model RR Club has modeled the NWP. At approximately 3 PM, MARY MOORE-CAMPAGNA will let you know to insure your model railroad.

As usual, everyone will get a free

door prize ticket. If you are wearing your Division name badge, it will be worth an additional free ticket, as will bringing at least one guest and/or any equipment to run on the Napa Club layout. Tickets can be purchased (3 for each dollar) for the special door prize, which will be a one year subscription (or renewal) to the model magazine of your choice.

We hope to see you on Saturday February 16th before 1 PM.



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DIRECTOR'S REPORT BY CAROL ALEXANDER

Well, I hope you're all staying dry in the rainy season and getting lots of modeling done. I hope you'll bring it to the next meet and share it with us.

By now, you should have received your **Branch Line** newsletter from the PCR. If you did, please open it and take out your ballot and vote. I'm running for election as Director again and I hope I can count on your vote. You'll find a letter there that explains the different name at the end of this column.

I am looking forward to serving a full term as Director and supporting our organization. I've taken on the job of helping to improve the PCR and RED web sites and I'm writing a database program for the contest chairman to use to help make the contest check-in and check-out process easier and faster.

What can I do for you? The next meeting of the PCR Board is at the Convention on April 30th but we can always communicate by other means if necessary. If you need to communicate with me you can send me an e-mail at: carolnma@msn.com or call me at (707) 537-8108.

Carol Alexander



SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT BY STEVE SKOLD

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year's. High on my list of presents was the new book on the Colorado Central. Many of the railroad books I have are a result of leaving ads near the phone for my wife to pick up and like magic, they appear for birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas.

MARY MOORE-CAMPAGNA was unable to provide refreshments for our November meet as she was mugged on the sidewalk in Oakland walking down to her hair dressers. She was able to maintain possession of her purse at the cost of a black eye. She promises not to go to Oakland the morning of our next meeting in Napa.

I keep moving my 40' boxcar around and plan on starting that project this week. Boxcars and dry transfers were given to people that attended the November meet in Santa Rosa as part of the clinic and they are to finish the cars and letter them and bring them to a favorite model contest. They should make some interesting models.

My On3 Whiskeytown and Shasta RR has made an interesting transition this past year. I have replaced most of the flex track with individual ties and rail. I have also replaced all of the turnouts with ones that do not need constant adjusting. In addition, I have been doing a lot of scenery work being inspired by Paul Scoles and his two DVD's. I also had a lot of help from Ernie Simard and Ron Buckwalter on the turnouts and wiring and from Dave Turner on the scenery. My layout will be open from 10 to 5 on Sunday February 10th for O Scale West and you are all invited to visit.

CHIEF CLERK'S REPORT BY DR. ED MERRIN

Welcome to 2008!

But before we totally kiss off 2007, we need to recap the events that took place at Monroe Hall in Santa Rosa on Saturday, November 17th.

This meeting was notable for several reasons besides the actual scheduled activities.

First, we staff had trouble getting in to set up for the meeting ahead of time because there was a dance class in there and they didn't seem to have the time right or something. They were nice people of course, but really!

Second, we made a big point in the Callboard about how food was going to be available at the Meet. Unfortunately, our plans went awry at the last minute due to circumstances beyond anyone's imaginings, let alone control.

Finally, all this had to happen for the very first time the new Chief Clerk, yours truly, had to set up all the stuff and handle registration, door prizes, and so on. What a way to run a railroad. As a result of all the commotion, my careful notes from the meeting got misplaced, including the listings of who won door prizes and who presented what at the Show and Tell. So my apologies to everyone who should be mentioned who won't be. I know it's a real gas to see your name in print, but it ain't gonna happen this time.

What I can tell you is that the meeting was very well attended. We had twenty-six names on the registration and I am pretty sure a few people escaped our net. It was also a very animated meeting. That's like when you have a successful party and all you have to do to make it work is

put all the people in the same room and they take care of it themselves. We had lots of models being shown off (I won't tell you any specifics because it would show favoritism towards the ones I remember, but there were structures, rolling stock, and photos).

The highlight was like going back to school. In fact, we had a genuine teacher, DON CLAUDER, assembling us around a big table to train us in the basics of dry transfer applications. It was just like being back in junior high shop class, and very effective. We were sent home with our own box cars and transfers (donated by RUSS CLOVER) to put on them. At our next Meet, at the Napa club in February, we have a contest planned to see what people did with them. Which reminds me, I haven't done mine yet so I'd better stop typing and get to work.

The attendees streamed out of Monroe Hall happy and satisfied, and those who still needed another model railroading fix set out to RON LEARN'S NWP layout way on the other side of Santa Rosa. This was a real treat, as Ron has done an excellent job of portraying the 1950's era NWP cruising through the Redwood Empire. He even had a train running with a video camera mounted on front so we could make fun of our friends when they showed up on the monitor. Of course, those who don't like diesels (you know who you are) had to suffer in silence. Thank you, Ron.

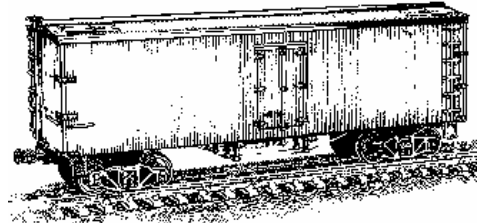
That's it for this time. See you in Napa on February 16th, and don't forget your boxcar!

CONTEST/DISPLAY REPORT

BY GIUSEPPE AYMAR

WOW!!!! What a tremendous show of support towards making "show and tell" a success at the last RED meeting. I knew there was a great deal of talent out there and sure enough it proved evident. Butthat is not enough: (just like when we go to the hobby shop to buy one item but see all the other stuff beckoning to be bought. How, how you tell me, can we stop at just that one item, how?

So, it is, that I am throwing you all a challenge. Forget technical abilities, forget reputations (good or bad), forget even all those perennial excuses we are good at fabricating. Remember that old "Putnam cars" radio commercial that went something like this: "bring your husband, your wife, your pink slip...." ? Well, this time bring your model of that boxcar with the dry transfers to



show what you did.

It is amazing how even an unfinished project could actually become the catalyst for someone else's idea on how to improve or change something they are planning on doing. Don't be shy, let's all have fun with this project.



THINK SMALL #55

My Pet Skunk

The holidays are over. We are in the second month of a new year that is just a bit "spooky". The word "depression" keeps popping up in the news media. A visit to the gas station for fuel or to the grocery leaves little in your pocket for model building supplies and other desires. Skipping the glazed donut or your morning latte will improve your health and aid the budget. Staying active hobby-wise is important and need not shock that budget. With today's constraints in mind, I pulled a slender book off the shelf: Volume I of *Model Railroader*, Jan-Dec 1934 (a reprint of the magazine's first year). At 10 cents a copy it was a valued item in my 9th grader's budget those many years ago. Ten cents equaled two ice cream bars in the 1930's, proof of the magazine's importance in my eyes. As a kid I was hooked on little trains. As an old man I am still addicted to trains, large and small.

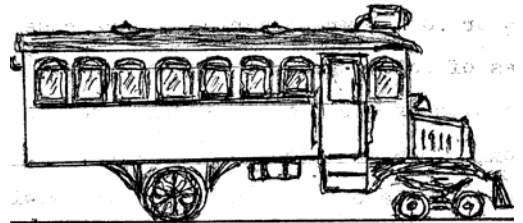
Model railroading is a different hobby today. The ancient stuff looks crude compared to the slick offerings in today's catalogs. However, we have the same goals as the pioneers who gave us two rail track and realistic operations in spare rooms, garages and gardens. Unlike the 1930's modelers, we do not make trains from cheese boxes, defunct clocks, door bells and tin cans. Upgraded toy trains were common during the early days of our hobby. Model trains required lots of time and effort from those pioneers.

The January 1934 issue has pictures and a story of an O gauge garden railroad. Pictures show an electric locomotive powered by overhead trolley pulling a six car train. There was a trestle crossing a lake and

industrial sidings. Oh yes, this pioneer model railroad was built and ran in Geyserville, California! The same January issue has pictures of a 2 1/2" gauge trolley line in New Jersey with 110 volts on the overhead trolley wire. No one messed with that man's 350 feet of track !

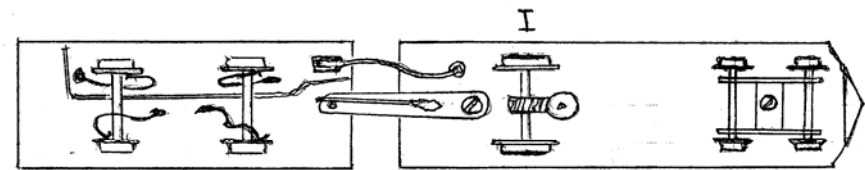
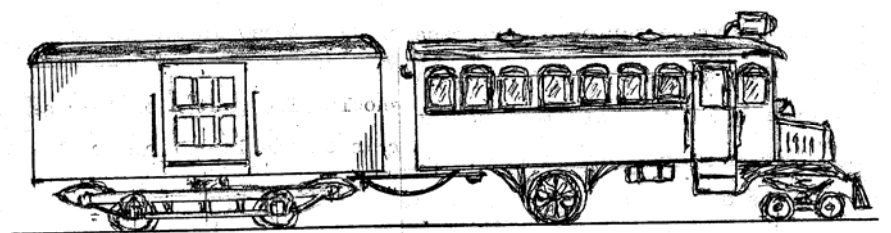
We Ancient Ones sometimes need first aid for shock when we leaf through magazines running big advertisements featuring Athearn HO locomotives for \$399.98, passenger cars at \$59, HO 2-10-2's for \$425 and HO hopper cars at \$29.98 each. My "Band-Aid" was to rotate the Bodega turntable to garden track 14 and take my HO Skunk up Knob Hill's 6% grade and through the tunnels to Pozo. The M-6 is a Red Ball Mack-Brill rail-bus. The purchase price was \$17.25 in 1971. She is honest brass - not plastic. I painted her tuscan red and locomotive black. Lectraset gold rub-on letters identify her as Bodega Western M-6.

Power pickup via the single driver on

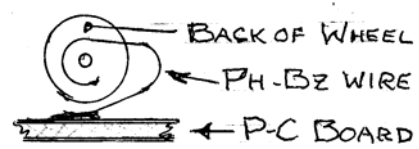


one rail and two tiny pilot wheels on the other rail made her quite fussy about clean track. It was July of 1976, her fifth year on the roster, when the worm end motor bearing came loose and a trip to the shop was necessary. Not to worry, those old motors were crude. A bit of jiggling with needle-nose pliers and solder gun soon put M-6 back to work sniffing out places where a bit of track cleaning was needed.

April 1994, almost 18 years later, is the built date for baggage-mail trailer B-6. The Bodega shop force (me) built her on a Red Ball trolley truck supporting a PC board floor. The body is scribed styrene with a balsa wood roof. The weight to hold her on the rails is a small slab of lead. Phosphor bronze wire wipers on all four wheels provide more



0.010" PHOSPHOR BRONZE WIRE CONTACTS TO WHEELS I = WHEEL INSULATED AT AXLE

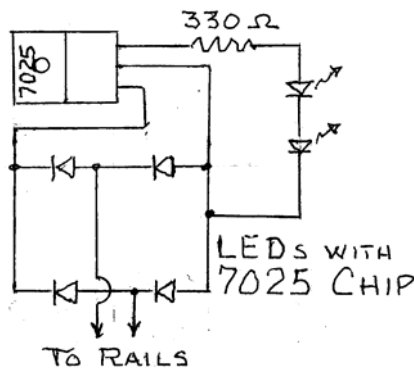


(Continued on page 5)

(THINK SMALL Continued from page 4)

reliable current pickup for M-6's ancient motor. A jumper wire and the tow bar pass the electrons from B-6 to M-6. Stalls became rare when B-6 became part of my Skunk Train.

The B-6 also added a bit of style. She has two red tail lights to complement M-6's working headlight. Tiny LED's were a tempting / novelty for me. The tail lights (markers ?) were the frosting on the cake as I sketched out the details of the trailer for rail-bus M-6. The little red lights were strange new fangled low voltage devices. Track voltage would be swinging from zero to 12 volts and reversing polarity. I was sailing in strange waters. After some research, a circuit with a voltage regulator and diodes was found and installed in B-6. The tail lights are still doing their job after more than 13 years. The

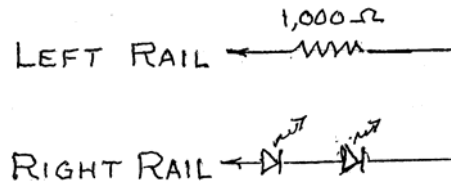


worm end motor bearing failed again in 1997. The quick repair was good for 21 years. The second repair was a bit more careful; it should outlive me.

As the years have gone by LED's have improved and the hobby has pushed a few bits of knowledge into my thick skull. If and when M-6 and B-6 find their way back into the Bodega shop, those two red tail lights on the back of B-6 will be

replaced with today's brighter extra-small red LED's. A simpler circuit will supply the juice and turn the lights on sooner.

The phosphor bronze wheel wipers



might need adjusting and I wonder how many years are left in that old motor. But, at \$17.25 my little HO skunk was certainly a good buy! Those trips to the shop for repairs provided a lot of good hobby time. Why? Because the problems were fixable with ordinary tools in the hands of an ordinary klutz.

M-6 is "my skunk" and she illustrates a change in the hobby over the past 35 or so years. Today a rail-bus would be sold painted, lettered and ready to run, with sound and perhaps even smell. Motor and gears would be smooth and quiet. If trouble should develop, the odds are that you could not fix it. Today's rule is "just buy another one". We have become collectors of fine rolling stock and builders of scenery. My skunk is a treasure. It is unique and treasured because of my success with repairs and additions.

Little M-6 with its shop-built trailer is filling a need on the Bodega Western, carrying a few passengers, the mail and some LCL freight to the mine town of Pozo as the daily accommodation train through the tunnels and switchbacks. The B-6 brings the Sears orders, mail and daily newspapers to folks on farms back in the hills and glens. M-6 is welcomed by the hill folks. She provides transport when they need it and her driver often greets them by name and shares a snippet of news from the other side of the hill. The little skunk does this

with just one employee and a few gallons of gas per trip.

What is today's model railroader to do if the family budget is distressed? You have choices: 1) repair some of those cars on the RIP track, 2) clean and lube your motive power, 3) try scratch building a simple car (See Think Small #52, 53 & 54), 4) if you have been procrastinating, make a clear electrical diagram of your layout, or 5) use cardboard or styrene to build SMALL sheds, out houses and other SMALL buildings for your layout. Cheap paints from a craft store and white glue or MEK from a hardware or paint store are not expensive. This list could go on for pages. You do not need to shell out big bucks to model railroad !

A hobby increases in value when it blends activities of hands and mind. When we create something of our own design with our own hands we generate a warm feeling inside. Times of tight budgets can be a plus. The cluttered workbench is a pleasant place where you learn to solve problems mechanical, electrical and mental. Use it!

If it is broke and you find that you can fix it, you have added the personal touch and that is a big plus.

Bill Williams The Ancient One





EDITOR'S NOTES

Future **CALLBOARD** schedules are:

April – June **CALLBOARD**

Staff Meeting: 7:30 PM, April 15

Text Deadline: April 22

Mailing: April 29

Meeting: Saturday, May 17

July – September **CALLBOARD**

Staff Meeting: 7:30 PM, July 15

Text Deadline: July 22

Mailing: July 29

Meeting: Saturday, August 16

October – December **CALLBOARD**

Staff Meeting: 7:30 PM, October 14

Text Deadline: October 21

Mailing: October 28

Meeting: Saturday, November 15

Submit all articles, calendar items, adds, comments and corrections to the Editor.

Attention **CALLBOARD** readers:

Please advise if you are willing to read future newsletters on-line at the RED web site (vs. reading a printed mailed copy). Any or all pages can be printed by you at any time. We've started a notification list to advise, by email, when future issues are available at the web site.

Please send your "ok" by email to the Editor at: jrolston@pacbell.net List "Yes Notification" on the email subject line. No message is required **except** your first & last name. Send it again IF your email address ever changes.



CLASSIFIED ADS

This is where we run classified ads from members and non-members. There is no charge for Redwood Empire Division members to place an ad. Non-members will be asked to pay a nominal charge of \$2.50 for each 4 lines.

Permanent clip-on RED nametags are available for \$8.00 each. Please order yours from Chief Clerk Ed Merrin at the next RED meeting or contact him using any of the methods listed on page 2.

Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society (REGRS), No. 1 gauge, various scales. If you are interested call Ken Brody at (707)526-0195 or email westie@sonic.net

Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society, HO layout. Meets Fridays 7:30 PM at Napa Fairgrounds, 575 Third St., Napa. For information call: Clubhouse (707)253-8428 or Ron Rogers (707)224-4040 or John Rodgers (707)226-2985. www.nvmrc.org

Lake County Model Railroad Club, HO layout. Meets Wednesday at 7:00PM in the old National Guard Building at the Lake County Fairgrounds on Martin Street, Lakeport. Call Mike Ernst at (707)263-4949

Coastal Valley Lines, HO modular. Meets 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM at Sam's For Play Café, 2630 Cleveland Ave., Santa Rosa. Call Brad Squires (707) 568-4298 or Don Hanesworth 823-9615

<http://cvl.hobby-site.com/>

Sonoma County Model Railroad Soci-

CLUB SCHEDULES

etym (SCMRS) is looking for members to help create a large permanent HO scale model railroad display to be located in Sonoma County. Modeling items are currently stored at the historic Healdsburg Railway Depot building. Contact Dave Gibbons at (707)526-2057 or email rrgibbons@sonic.net

NPC Operators. An On3 operating group meets one Sunday each month. Contact Steve Skold (707)539-1782 or email SandCSkold@aol.com

Redwood Empire Live Steamers. A new group is forming with the goal to build a 7 1/2 inch track facility in a local park. For information, call Don or Ann Bruner Welch at (707)578-4414 or write to PO Box 4594, Santa Rosa, CA 95402
www.redwoodempirels.org

Bay Area S Scalers. Contact Lee Johnson at (925)943-1590.

Mendocino Coast Model Railroad &

Historical Society, a Fort Bragg area group that promotes the hobby of model railroading. This group meets the 3rd Saturday of each month. The layout is G scale and is constructed outdoors. Contact Phil Miller at (707)937-3605 for more information.

North Coast Live Steamers, a group, from the Fort Bragg-Willits area, that promotes the hobby of large-scale railroading and other steam related history. Contact Bill Shepard at (707)961-0329.

Eel River Valley Model Railroaders, HO Scale layout. Meets each Friday evening at 7:30 P.M. at the Humboldt Co. Fair Grounds, Ferndale, CA. Write to P O Box 950 Fortuna CA 95540 or contact Ron Plies at (707)725-9063 or email rlplies@cox.net for more information.
www.eelrivervalleyrr.org

Humboldt Bay & Eureka, HO layout, Eureka, CA. Contact David Berriman, PO Box 915 Arcata, CA 95518. (707)825-7689.

COMING DOWN THE LINE

NWP Centennial Exhibition Schedule:

Web site: www.nwprrhs.org

June 1, 2007 – into 2008: Mendocino County Museum, 400 Commercial St., Willits
W-Sun 10-4:30

Nov 9, 2007 - April 12: Marin County History Museum, 1125 B St., San Rafael,
11-4 T-F + 2nd & 3rd Sat

Dec 1, 2007 – Feb 29: Healdsburg Museum, 221 Matheson St., Healdsburg T-Sun 11-4

February 7 - 9: **O Scale West +S**, Santa Clara Web site: www.oscalewest.com

February 16 : **RED** meeting in Napa. Details on page 1.

April 30 to May 4: **Pacific Coast Region** Sierra Memories Convention, Fresno, CA

Information is in the PCR **Branch Line** newsletter

Web site: www.pcrnmra.org/conv2008

May 17: **RED** meeting in Santa Rosa

July 4: **Roots of Motive Power** Frontier Days Steam Up, Willits

Web site: www.rootsofmotivepower.com

July 13 to 19: **NMRA National Convention**, Anaheim, CA

Information is in the **NMRA Scale Rails** magazine

Web site: www.nmra.org/2008

August 16 : **RED** picnic meeting in the Healdsburg area.

November 15: **RED** meeting in Santa Rosa

Contact information is listed on page 6

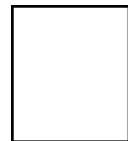
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Many of the art items used in this newsletter are courtesy of Ken Houghton Rail Images or came from the web site: www.rrhistorical.com

CALLBOARD

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FIRST CLASS