



THE CALLBOARD

OF THE REDWOOD EMPIRE DIVISION

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

July - September 2008

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

August Meeting

Summer Picnic at the Westside Farms

Our summer picnic meeting will be held at Westside Farms as guests of PAM & RON KAISER on Saturday, August 16th. Activities will begin at approximately 12 noon.

Westside Farms is located between Healdsburg and Guerneville on 60 acres, includes a lake, and used to be a commercial enterprise. It is a beautiful location to visit, especially with your children and/or grandchildren.

Please bring your favorite picnic lunch – and something for the pot luck; appetizers, salads, veggies or desserts. Hot coals will be provided, if you want to barbecue. Sodas, bottled water and ice will be supplied by RED.

There will be a hayride available for all visitors and for the kids a big swing, exotic birds, sheep,

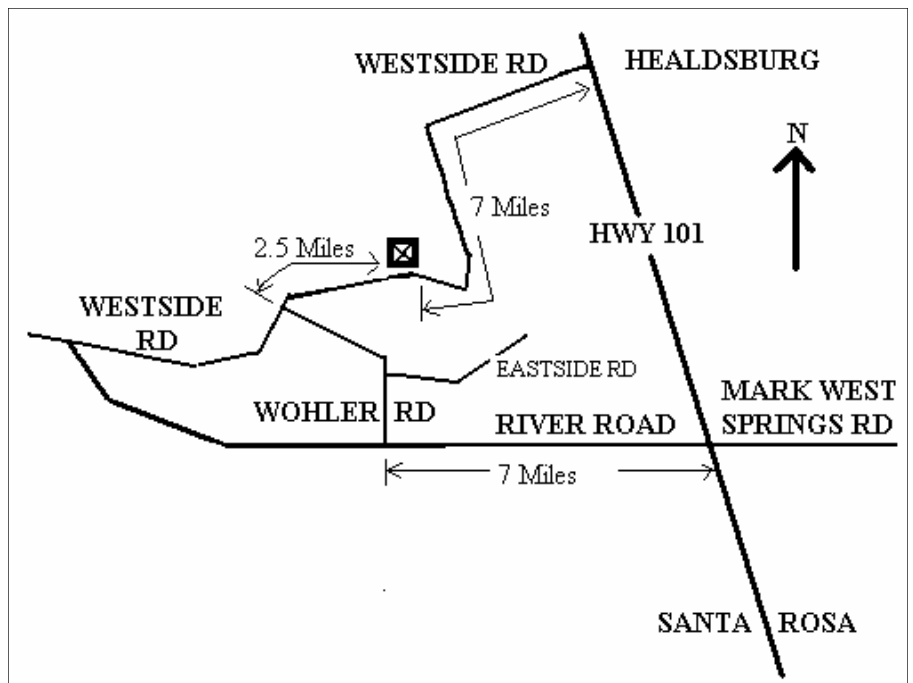
horses and a large veggie garden.

In the air-conditioned train room, you will have a chance to see RON KAISER'S new layout featuring the Western Pacific in the Keddie Wye/ Portola/Quincy area. There is more information on pages 2 & 3.

Driving instructions to the Kaiser's Westside Farms at 7097 Westside Road are: from the south, exit Hwy. 101 north of Santa Rosa at River Road, go west

7 miles (toward Guerneville), turn right on Wolher road, cross the one-lane bridge over the Russian River, turn right on Westside Road and go 2.5 miles. There is a "Westside Farms" sign out front across the road from the Kaiser's home. From the north, exit Hwy. 101 at Westside Road in Healdsburg, turn right and follow Westside Road 7 miles to the Kaiser's on the right.

A map is shown below.



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DIRECTOR'S REPORT BY CAROL ALEXANDER

There is a lot happening in the PCR and the RED these days. Your Board and President have authorized the purchase of two more LCD projectors for the Region. As more and more members embrace computer technology we need them for clinics around the region and especially at the conventions.

The Summer Picnic is coming up and lots of opportunities to travel and chase trains, whether they be model or prototype. I hope I'll see you all at our picnic and that you will have the opportunity to visit our host's layout!

As always, if you have any issues that you want to bring to the attention of the region, just give me a call (707) 537-8108 or email carolnma@msn.com and I'll be sure to represent your interest.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT BY STEVE SKOLD

We have the summer picnic coming at Westside Farms on August 16th. This has been a popular event the two times we have held it here. There will be a hayride for the kids with the wagon pulled by a tractor down among the grape vines next to the Russian River. RON KAISER'S Western Pacific is in an air conditioned room which may make it a popular place to be if the temperature gets too high. RED will provide soft drinks, ice and coals so you can cook your sausages, hot dogs, chicken or whatever. Plan on bringing something to share like a salad or appetizer.

The May meet was quite successful except we had more scheduled than we had time for. We had to elimi-

nate the show and tell portion which has been quite popular. We will reinstate that at the November meeting and cut down to only one clinic. HAROLD MENTZER will be doing a clinic on culverts AFTER the show and tell. If we have time, I have a video called *Model Railroad-ing Unlimited* we can run. We can not get into Monroe Hall until 1 PM so the meeting will start at 1:30 and run until 5. We are looking for a home layout for a tour after the meeting. If you want to volunteer, please give me a call or e-mail me.

CAROL ALEXANDER was elected as Director to the PCR Board for a two year term. Our next election will be in May of 2009 for Superintendent and Chief Clerk. Nominations will have to be in by the February meeting and the ballot will be mailed in April. I have nothing to report at this time on the 2011 PCR mini convention. I need to go out and find a place to hold it which will include a PCR Board Meeting, a contest, an annual membership meeting and whatever else we decide to provide in the way of activities. Since the NMRA National Convention is in July of 2011, they would like us not to put on a full blown PCR Convention.

I am happy to report that Fortuna member RON PLIES has become Master Model Railroader number 409. Congratulations Ron for all the hard work that entailed.



CHIEF CLERK'S REPORT BY DR. ED MERRIN

After the business meeting, the Meet Proper commenced. Unfortunately, there was so much going on and so little time that we didn't get to do everything that was planned.

There were two clinics. The first was a tutorial by PCR Vice President Pat LaTorres on railroad photography. Pat showed us the type of equipment he takes with him on his photo expeditions and offered a lot of helpful tips. His presentation alternated between presiding over a table full of camera gadgets and gear and projecting images of photos to illustrate his main points. He also tried to slip us subtle messages about how to take contest winning photos. Apparently Pat is a very competitive guy beneath that smiling exterior.

Next came the McKenzie brothers, the ones responsible for that superb Sn3 layout on display at the Fresno convention. For those who missed the convention, the layout is filled with incredible trees that the McKenzies manufacture and sell. But brave souls can make them themselves, using the jig that they demonstrated in their clinic. And they are beautiful, let there be no doubt.

By the time the clinics were finished we did not have time to show off the prize winning models and photos from the Fresno convention, nor the beautiful displays brought in by members for show and tell. In the future we have vowed to time manage the agenda better. But we did have time to give out door prizes, with winners including STEVE SKOLD, RON PLIES, RON KAISER (why are there so many Rons in the world?), BILL WILLIAMS (the "ancient one" still has a few wins

left in him), STUART BENSON, TERRY STROM, and "Santa Fe" MIKE MCSWEEN. Did I forget anyone?

There were two special door prizes, a railroad book (World Atlas of Railways) and a \$25 gift certificate to the Loose Caboose in Napa. Mysteriously, both were won by MORRIS BUDGE. This was an incredible coincidence that the RED staff will be investigating. More at 5.

After the Meet the RED members gathered at the nearby layout of Skip Ruckert. Skip has an outbuilding behind his house where he is reconstructing the Northwestern Pacific in HO scale. The layout is a good-sized one and recreates a number of familiar scenes on the NWP. He was busy there picking brains for solutions to some design issues he was grappling with. Hope we didn't confuse and mislead him.

On Saturday, August 16th, RED holds its annual picnic at the Westside Farms in Healdsburg, home of RON KAISER'S Western Pacific layout in HO scale. If you haven't seen this layout in progress getting there on the 16th is an absolute must. Ron has devoted a newly built pole barn (what is a pole barn, anyway?) to the layout and recreates the WP from Oroville to Portola, with staging hidden under both ends. It is currently fully operational under DCC and has both steam and diesel power, many with sound. Ron has painted a beautiful backdrop and scenery is under construction. For the food part of the picnic, RED is supplying beverages and charcoal. All you need to bring is something to cook on the coals and anything you want to eat with it. There will also be hay rides and plenty of animals running around to keep you on your toes.

Don't miss it.

CONTEST/DISPLAY REPORT BY GIUSEPPE AYMAR

...And so it came to pass that the NMRA Convention in Anaheim is over. What a Convention it was, for this was my very first and I felt like a wide eyed kid allowed to enter the hallowed walls of a storied man's club. I recognized a few old faces and met many new ones. Right away I saw GUS & MARY MOORE-CAMPAGNA and their mere presence made me feel at ease. Seeing friends away from home has a very calming and reassuring effect. Every one made me feel welcomed and actually I was recruited to do volunteer work (in the silent auction room). I won't tell you how much that ended up costing me on bids that I won!).

The clinics were superb and the caliber of the presenters very high. How good were the clinics? I'll let Mary tell you: attending a hands-on clinic she learned to paint and letter a boxcar. Was she grinning when she showed me the final model! It came out beautiful!

Yes, I also volunteered to be a judge for the model contest so that I could improve my judging abilities when representing our RED Division. Some of the best modelers in the country displayed their models; it was a treat sharing the contest tables with them. Entries ranged from N scale houses to scratch built steam locomotives to an "O" scale replica of a German WW2 cannon called "Olga". This was a massive model measuring five feet long and two feet high riding on rails for deployment. It seems that the Contest is getting a second wind, in that twice as many models were entered as at last year's Convention and plans are under way to increase the number for next year. Since it all starts at the grass root level, you will hear me encouraging more participation at our RED meetings.

Our Division did very well: Mary won an award for her efforts, Ron Plies was awarded the plaque for Master Model Railroader (MMR) which is the highest

(Continued on page 6)

THINK SMALL #57

Are Your Signals Green ?

These articles seem to multiply like mice. I put one problem to rest and its cousin teases me a year or so later. Leafing thru a favorite book, after THINK SMALL #48, led me to the wood block boxcars (THINK SMALL #52, 53 & 54.) The May 2008 **Model Railroader** magazine has an article featuring LED's that stresses their LOW current requirements. For me it was a new way to think about LED's. Some three years ago I shared my adventures with LED signals to control traffic thru the tangle of tracks leaving my Bodega terminal. (THINK SMALL #44 thru #47.) I am happy with the signals. They solved my problems and continue to do their jobs; but they could be more efficient. That is the pesty mouse sitting on my notebook today.

In the Redwood Empire, GREEN is today's style. We are proud of our green attitude. I was a bit smug about my train room fluorescent tubes having illuminated the layout for many years. Then I looked up. The room lights were old reliable 60 watt incandescents. To catch up with the current style, and my PG&E bill, three 13 watt CFLs now provide room lighting from the ceiling. $3 \times 13 = 39$ vs. $3 \times 60 = 180$ is a 78% reduction of energy use! LED signals offer a similar percentage of energy saved if we think GREEN.

Many years ago we learned that electricity has firm rules. Volts measure pressure or push. Amps measure quantity of flow. Watts are a measure of work done. We green folks are committed to using fewer watts. To calculate watts just multiply volts times amps.

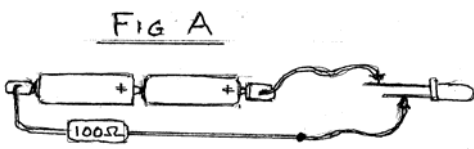


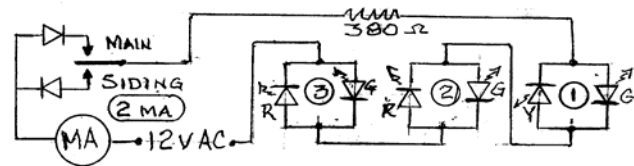
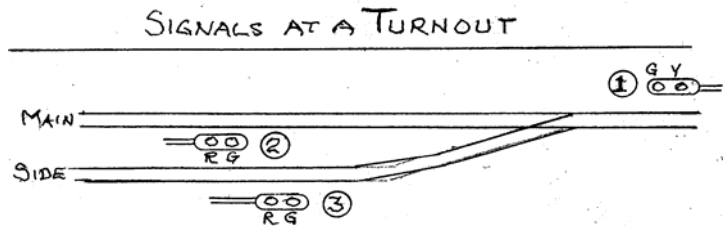
FIG A

My simple LED tester has two dry cells to provide three volts. We assume the LED uses two volts to excite its innards and glow bright. The 100 ohm resistor dissipates heat to get rid of the extra volt that would damage the LED's innards. All the parts are in the same path. 2/3 of the energy is used to light the LED and 1/3 heats the resistor. Not too shabby for a device used intermittently. However, we are tuned to 12 volt supplies for our railroads. We think of power in 12 volt packages. Quite often there are supplies of plus and minus and/or AC at 12volts common to our layouts or modules. When we energize one LED from a 12 volt supply the common formula found in the hobby press for many years tells us that the series resistor is $(12-2) \times 100$ or 1000 ohms. One sixth of the energy used makes light. Five sixths of the energy is wasted as heat in the resistor. The GREEN police will soon tell us to mend our ways. Recycling the aluminum cans and plastic bottles is not enough! Without the resistor the LED will die in a flash, but we can get smarter with our circuits. LED's have dainty appetites that will help our trains run greener if we use some smarts. A few simple tests opened my eyes. Our LED's will

be happy to do their jobs with a lot fewer electrons.

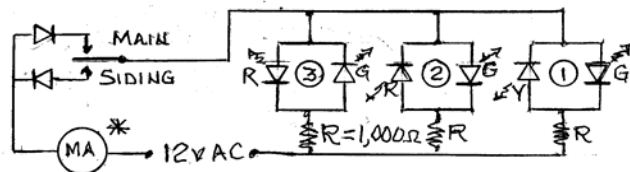
I tried higher series resistors with a millimeter in the circuit and ordinary 3mm red and green LEDs powered by 3volts of dry cells. If you make a tester (per Fig. A) and your millimeter measures milliamps you can play the game with spare LED's from your parts bins. When I considered the narrow viewing angle commonly required for signals, even the weak green of test #6 would probably be adequate in many settings. Certainly 2ma is plenty of current to power LED signals.

The other side of the coin is the way we wire our signals. We have a house wiring mindset.

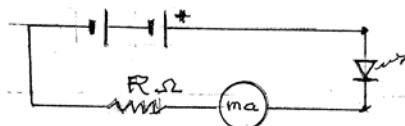


THINK SMALL #47 JAN-MAR 06

* I ADDED A METER TO MEASURE 10.6 MA (MAIN)



Our LED's will



TEST	COLOR	R	ma	VISIBILITY
1	R	100	2.7	GOOD
2	G	100	5.6	GOOD
3	R	470	1.9	GOOD
4	G	470	1.5	LESS
5	R	530	1.75	GOOD
6	G	530	1.37	WEAK

A simple signal application is one end of a siding or a spur off the main line. I provided AC power from the 12 volt connection of a vintage transformer (all I have from my childhood train set), two simple diodes and three sample signals from Think Small #46 Class II and III. This time I put on my

(Continued on page 5)

(THINK SMALL Continued from page 4)

GREEN glasses, wired the signals in series, instead of parallel, and increased resistance until I measured two milliamps with the higher voltage requirement of two green and one red signal indication. By thinking GREEN -wiring the signals in series - I reduced the power required five fold! I was hooked. Why not look at signals for a siding on a single track main line?

A simple lever switch on the fascia can control parallel wired turnout motors at the ends of the siding. With all signals in a series string, a single set of SPDT contacts (Tortoise or other turnout drive or micro-switch on a turnout lever) will take care of all signals. This can include a pair of LED's on the fascia near the turnout lever switch that do double duty. After all, they are diodes!!

To test the series signal circuit I added a voltmeter across my 12 volt AC source and a millimeter into the series string.

The signals worked fine with just a SMALL reduction in glow when I reduced the current to a tad less than 2 ma and with the voltmeter reading 12 volts AC.

Going GREEN with signals that only

use a few milowatts of energy is more than just minimalist fun is more than just minimalist fun.

1. Those common plug-in cube transformers provided with household gadgets, that we discard, are almost always the sturdy part of the package. A power supply for signals with SMALL appetites for amperes may be on your junk shelf and cost the railroad NOTHING !
2. One small transformer can supply power for all the signals on most home layouts and modules.
3. Voltage drop worries fade away as you THINK SMALL when wiring the LED's for your signals. (Voltage drop = resistance of wiring times current thru the wire.) When a SMALL current flows the voltage drop is SMALL.
4. A few signals can tap into an existing power supply with a very SMALL chance of causing an overload when we think series and choose the maximum series resistor that still provides sufficient brightness for the LED signals.

Be GREEN. THINK SMALL. Ignoring possible series connections or pushing excess electrons thru your LEDs does not match today's GREEN style. Going GREEN with signals can be fun and educational.

Enjoy more GREEN along your shiny rails. You probably have a millimeter that has a series of milliamp meter ranges. If not, I purchased one with a

digital display just a couple of months ago for less than \$15. A handful of resistors with assorted values from 100 to 1000 will cost far less because 1/4 watt resistors at 5 cents or less will have no problems with the dainty currents needed by LED's. You probably have the third ingredient: that bundle of assorted colored wires with alligator clips at both ends. The essential fourth ingredient: red, yellow and green LEDs, in 3 or 5 mm size, which sell for 10 cents or less. Experimenting with LED's is AFFORDABLE!

The rules for this game are simple.

1. Always start testing with a resistance far greater than you think you need and the milliamp meter at a higher milliamp setting than you expect.
2. Remember that LED's are DIODES -they will only pass current in ONE direction! The tester (Fig. A) can be a help here.

Have fun. Be GREEN when you think SMALL.

Bill Williams The Ancient One



EDITOR'S NOTES

October – December CALLBOARD

Staff Meeting: 7:30 PM, October 14

Text Deadline: October 21

Mailing: October 28

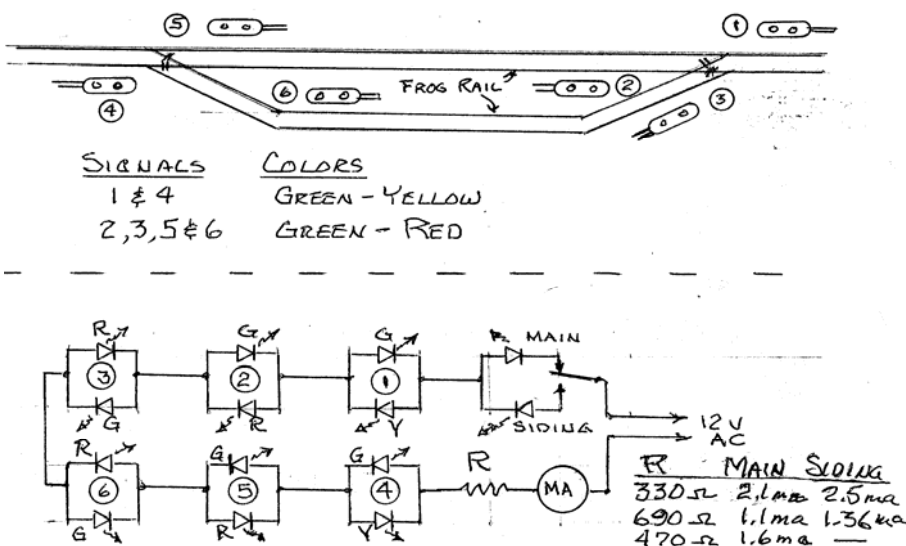
Meeting: Saturday, November 15

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.

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.



(CONTEST REPORT Continued from page 3) award in modeling. Only about 400 have been given in all these years Nationally and Internationally, so you can imagine how proud he is of his accomplishment.

Personally I did well, having received two first places (diesel and MOW), two second places (diesel and freight car), one third place (structures) and one honorable mention (freight car). Testor Corporation also awarded me the " best painted model " plaque and a brand new super-duper airbrush.

Our PCR (region) also did very well with Bob Booth winning many awards as well as Pat and Ronnie La-Torres both of whom won first place in their respective photo classifications. Remember them? they came at our last meeting and taught us how to start taking good photos.

Which leads me to a self evaluation of our small group in RED : we should be mighty proud of our efforts. All in all, I feel privileged to have been part of the NMRA Convention and encourage everyone to take part at least once, as time and money permits. By the way , in 2011 the NMRA

will be in Sacramento! How much closer can it get to our doorsteps?
In conclusion: Go RED! Go RED!

ANOTHER NMRA CONVENTION REPORT

BY GUS CAMPAGNA

I just got back from Anaheim and the NMRA National convention. I counted eleven RED members at the event: DAVID NORRIS, BILL & KITTY WELLS, JIM PROVIDENZA, BILL KAUFMAN, GIUSEPPE AYMAR, DAVE CROSHERE, RON PLIES, JOHN ROLSTON, TOM COMBS and myself. Jim and Bill gave a couple of clinics, Giuseppe took a bunch of awards in the contest room and Ron was a tour-bus guide for a couple of tours.

Mary and I had just returned from an AMTRAK trip on the Starlight to Seattle, where we stayed four days and then returned on the South-bound Starlight. Both trains ran on time and were very comfortable.

As with most, if not all, conventions there was more to do each day than could fit in 24 hours.

We took the Athearn/Allied Models tour which was interesting. One company buys most of its product from

China, while the other makes all of their products in a small 25' X 70' shop. Athearn does do custom painting at their plant and was working on a large order of G scale cars for Disney. I passed on any other tours, as this was a relaxation period for me and I slept a lot.

I enjoyed the clinics and visiting with other modelers. The National Train Show was not as big as others I attended, but the layouts were very good. They ranged from G scale down to Z scale. There was a very large Lego contingent as well. I also noticed some nice new goodies, but had to refrain from any purchases since the new house is eating all of the money we can find. I discovered a new local manufacturer and added his website to the RED links section. Check out **Glacier Park Models** on the RED website.

The Banquet speaker was Michael Broggie from the Disney Company. He could have gone on for another hour and no one would have walked out. His talk was very interesting and brought back many memories. RON PLIES received his MMR at the dinner as well, he is MMR #409. Congratulations Ron!

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.

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,

CLUB SCHEDULES

2630 Cleveland Ave., Santa Rosa. Call Brad Squires (707) 568-4298 or Don Hanesworth 823-9615

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

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

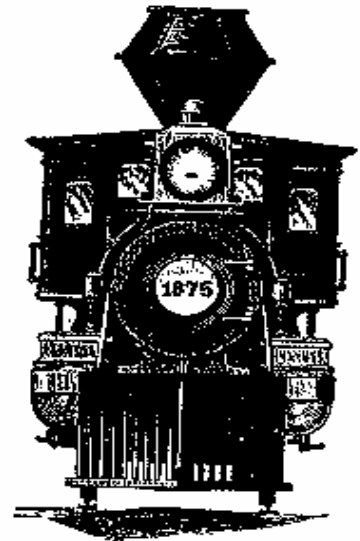
Redwood Empire Live Steamers. A new group is forming with the goal to build a 7 1/2 inch track facility in a local park. For information, call Don or Ann Bruner Welch at (707)578-4414 or write to PO Box 4594, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 www.redwoodempirels.org

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

Mendocino Coast Model Railroad & Historical Society, a Fort Bragg area

COMING DOWN THE LINE

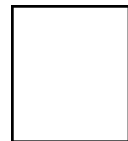
- August 2-3: **Coastal Valley Lines** train show at Oakmont, Santa Rosa. #
- Aug. 2-3, Sept. 6-7 & Oct. 4-5: **Redwood Empire Live Steamers** will be running at Youth Community Park, 1725 Fulton Rd., Santa Rosa. #
- August 7-17: **Eel River Valley Model Railroaders** open house at the Humboldt County Fair. There is a fair admission cost. #
- August 9: **Sierra Division** picnic meet at Rio Vista. www.pcrnmra.org/sierra
- August 16 : **RED** picnic meeting in the Healdsburg - Guerneville area. See page 1.
- August 16: **Napa Valley Model Railroad HS** swap meet at the Napa Fairgrounds. #
- August 23: **Daylight Division** meet in Goleta. www.pcrnmra.org/daylight
- August 24: **Redwood Empire Garden RR** meeting at the Emison home in San Rafael. #
- September 7: **Coast Division** meet in Santa Clara. www.pcrnmra.org/coast
- September 10-13: **Narrow Gauge Convention**, Portland, OR. www.28thnngc.com
- Sept. 20-21 & Oct. 18-19: **Sturgeons Sawmill** in Sebastopol will be running on steam. www.sturgeonsmill.com
- September 28: **Redwood Empire Garden RR** meeting at the Corbett home in Novato. #
- October 26: **Redwood Empire Garden RR** meeting at the Cahill home in Santa Rosa. #
- November 15: **RED** meeting in Santa Rosa
Contact information is listed on page 6
- Visit RED at Web site: <http://home.earthlink.net/~campgus/>



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