I was called, (on my rest having just 8 hrs off between runs), at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon for a patch on the Valley Flyer, otherwise known as the Clemens Local. The regular 5:00 a.m. local would be dead on the law (exceeding the 12 hours of service law) at 5:00 p.m. and was tied down on the #2 main just clear of the middle crossover at Clemens. My conductor was already on the caboose as she was called an hour earlier due to a shortage of engineers. When I arrived to the train by carry-all, (company or leased vehicle used for transporting crews to and from their trains), the conductor was already deep in paperwork, planning the necessary switching moves.

My conductor, Barbara Geiger, was a new conductor on the L&N Railroad’s EK Division, (Eastern Kentucky), Ashland Subdivision, being loaned here, (called a borrow out), from Denver division just 3 weeks before. She is what would we call a “loaner or boomer.” The railroad was desperately short on experienced crews so they also...
From the Superintendent

Where has the time gone? Shortly after our meet in Ione, we lost fellow Sierra Division member Greg Duke to brain cancer. The news of Greg’s passing made me stop and realize that every second on this earth is precious. Take time to enjoy yourself, your family, and your friends. There is nothing more precious than life.

At the Ione meet, the members voted to just make informal plans to meet in Portola for Railroad Day’s. As I understand it, we will be holding a Photo Contest at our October Meet of Photos taken in the Feather River Canyon between Oroville and Portola. Speaking of October….We will have our usual business meeting, clinics, contests, and raffle, but our important task will be to elect new officers. We will be looking for a new Superintendent and Clerk, as I will be stepping down to begin planning for the 2016 PCR Convention. Bob Warner has also announced that he will be stepping down due to family obligations. This is your chance to step up and help our organization continue to grow.

If I don’t see you this summer, I hope that many of you will elect to join us in Sacramento in October.

Stay Cool Out There!

Scott McAllister

PCR Convention

Thirty-three first-timers and thirty-four spouses were among the 226 registrants that attended the San Luis Obispo convention.

I’ve included a lot of coverage of the convention and layouts in the Digital Short Line available at http://www.pcrnmra.org/sierra/index.html.

More people are switching to the digital edition each issue. Please help the division save printing costs and join us on-line. Just email me at gerber1926@gmail.com – editor.
This issue gives a look at the activities at the Pacific Coast Region (PCR) Convention held in San Luis Obispo April 30 to May 4. Besides clinics, visiting and operating on self-guided tours are a favorite activity. It’s not too early to start thinking about next year’s PCR convention: The Club Car 2015 to be held in Newark, CA, May 13 to 17. Basic registration for is only $29 (for a limited time). The Registration Package (registration, awards banquet, PCR breakfast) is $89.

Registration can be completed at their website: [http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2015/](http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2015/)

Gary Siegel’s fantastic L&N, EK Division layout in Santa Barbara was on the tour list. Unfortunately, I was unable to visit this time, but had many times in the past when I went to visit my daughter at Westmont College. If you Google the layout, there are many videos online.

Dave Bayless wrote a wonderful article when he operated on it during the 1996 NMRA National Convention. As an SP engineer (and now UP), he wrote the article to make it sound like it was a real day on the railroad and explained many of the terms and procedures. I hope you enjoy his article and really appreciate his sharing.

Bruce Morden is a regular operator on the L&N and was kind enough to send me some current photos which are included in the digital edition of Short Line.

Jim Collins wrote about his experiences as a first time attendee at a PCR Convention. Hopefully his experience will entice you to attend the next PCR convention.

Congratulations and thanks go to Mary Moore-Campagna as the 2014 Sierra Division Member of the Year. She was presented the award at the PCR convention.

One thing about going to conventions; you come back energized with lots of ideas. I built a couple of dozen California oak trees by modifying a clinic idea (see contest winners). I also was encouraged to start doing scenery, or at least the base for it. Grass and water coming soon. I had one large bridge to build over Reed’s Creek in Red Bluff, CA. Working from photos, I modified Central Valley truss bridge and deck bridge kits and added scratch-built girders to build the 24” structure. I needed to shorten the deck bridges to 40’ instead of 60’. The girder deck is a prototypical 100’. I found basic dimensions in Bruce Petty’s Southern Pacific Lines Common Standard Plans, Vol. 3, from an accident report in 1911 where someone fell from the bridge. So, by 1926, (the year I model) I assumed a walk had been added, but it was not yet ballasted. Just have to install it and make the columns from the truss deck and weather deck bridge a little more. I’ve already cast the cut stone abutments. Still have to modify the benchwork. I hope to share a photo of the completed project in the next issue (now there is pressure to finish).
brought in emergency transfers off another division of the L & N Railroad and supplied them with only minimum training of the territory before releasing them on the road. The regular engineers were told to help coach them along and keep an eye on them. I was no stranger on the job so was able to provide the necessary coaching to get the job done. If there was a loaner engineer on the job and a regular engineer was assigned to help, the regular engineer was called a "Pilot", got paid the same but was there to instruct on the “territory” who would be running over.

Clemens is located at the end of multiple main track, just before the line climbs the Berry Hollow grade, disappearing around the mountain and into a tunnel. The Cumberland Subdivision joins the #2 main, (the two main tracks are not "Double Track" here which would be signaled in only one direction and have a “Current of Direction” assigned to each track, but instead signaled in both directions with No Current of Direction assigned, hence “Multiple Main Track”), about 5 car-lengths south of the switch leading to single track. There is a couple of trailing point spurs at Clemens and a pulpwood loading spur off the east end of the wye out on the start of the Cumberland Sub.

Our first task was to clear the main so the dispatch could run a northbound passenger train by us. I called the DS, (dispatcher) and received “Work and Clock Time” for about 45 min on the #2 main until the varnish was due. The conductor and I went over the work to be performed. We had to pull a couple of empties (MTS) and spot a tank car (which was a facing point move for us). Because of the limited available track in the area, I suggested that we stay on the main and go in light (with the engine only) to get all the pull cars so that we would not have to work with such a long handle., (too many cars between the engine and spot car).

The conductor thought that we should clear the main as the dispatcher wanted. I explained that if we do that, we would never get it back. I knew that besides the passenger train coming (with engineer Gurin, "coordinator of the LDSig" of all people), train #261 off wye leading to the Cumberland Sub, was grinding to a halt, because we had him blocked due to our train occupying the #2 main and middle crossovers. And after the passenger train there would be a parade of southbound freights which the dispatcher liked to bring down to Clemens for the passenger train meet because of the longer multiple main lines leading to the yard at Ashland.

Happily, the conductor saw my point and agreed. So we started doing our work. As we moved into each track and coupled onto our cars, I explained where the head and rear brakeman would be located as well as what each brakeman would be doing, (the conductor always stays between both brakeman.) The rear man ties down the heal, (the brakes of the rear several cars on the downhill end of the cut of cars or train), releases the rear brakes and controls the spots, (directing the movement of cars from the ground, to be spotted at industries). The conductor usually gets the switches between the head and rear men unless he/she is preoccupied with waybills and paperwork. The head man stays with the power to make the coupling, pulls pins for kicks/drops and aligns switches close to the engine. With each move, we gave time to lace up the air, release hand-brakes, pull the train up to the switch before lining it, unless the brakeman was already there, and ran at slow prototypical speeds.

It took us 35 min to get our pulls and return to the main. The dispatcher was calling for us to clear the main in his usual growling, impatient voice. The conductor started to talk to him but then handed the phone to me saying, you tell him we won't get off the main, yet we still have some work to do! (Now this is my kind of conductor!) I was ready for another confrontation with the dispatch when I told him we could not clear the main yet; that we needed more clock time and had cars scattered all over the place. I suggested that he run the varnish, (the crack passenger train), around us on the #1 main and set up the meet with the freights up at the summit, called Eldridge Camp. He said it was too late since the passenger train was flagging the block behind us and the first freight was already passed the Summit Tunnel.

I told him he violated our protection and couldn't do that since we still had work and clock time on the track he was flagging the varnish on. Realizing his safety critical mistake not to mention an embarrassing situation and not wanting to talk about it further over the radio, he gave us a little more time to make a run-around move using the #1 main so we could get our facing point spots on the east end of the power. We quickly made this move stopping to line the
switches back to normal, (closing the gates), closing the lock boxes, (the mainline ones), and clearing both mains to run down towards the Cumberland Sub, after which I released our Work and Clock Time. I’ll bet engineer Gurin on the passenger train was sure glad we finally got out of his way. He was going to have to make up time on his schedule today. Even though he was unhappy with the situation, he said later that he understood why we held the main so long and said he would probably do the same if he found himself in a similar situation.

It always seems that when you work a local, you are the “black sheep” of all the trains. Nobody likes you because you always seem to be in the way. That’s why they call us a “way freight.” My conductor was concerned with some cars located at Clemens without waybills which were also not shown on her switchlist. She called the Ashland yardmaster several times, before he would answer, to find out what to do with them, but he wasn’t sure either. They were cars that had just "gotten lost in the computer" and he would have to send out the mud hop, (the clerk who walks along the ground to record the location of every car in the yard and industry tracks). I told her that if they were not on the switchlist, to leave them alone. She should just report it when we get back to the yard and the clerks will figure out where they go, and what to do with them, then they will probably be added to tomorrow’s list. She agreed that would be the best course to take since we already had too many cars and that it would take too long to pick them up.

After the passenger train had cleared, we got more “Work and Clock Time” on the #2 main so we could finish our work. The conductor struck a deal with #261’s conductor to uncover a couple of MT pulpwood cars from the east end of our power and spot them for us at the pulpwood spur off the wye while we went in and spotted the tank farm, (facing point spur), freight house and kaolin spur, (both trailing point spurs).

With the help of #261 taking care of the pulpwood spot, we saved considerable time. #261 gave us another helping hand by pulling the remainder of our train (left west of the industry spurs and tailing out onto the #2 main), east of our power, while we waited in the clear on the freight house spur. This move saved us another 30 min from making a run-around move on the main. The dispatcher was already mad at us and this helped us stay out of his way by not using the #2 main. And this helped #261 get on his way since we had him blocked as well.

We called the dispatcher to get clearance to head back to Ashland yard running southward on the #2 main, (which is normally used for northbound trains, but is signaled for bi-directional traffic). The conductor received verbal authority to occupy the #2 main while I changed ends on the power and the brakeman laced up the air. At that point, we had the caboose located right behind the power and our pull cars behind the caboose. The brakeman placed a portable red marker, not an ET device, (End of Train device, or FRED as they are normally called by many trainmen), on the rear car’s knuckle to mark the end of our train. The conductor was surprised that we could return to the yard this way, explaining that the sub-division she normally works on usually puts the caboose on the rear. I told her that although many conductors like to do that, it only causes excessive switching, but there was no rule against it. The marker is what defines the end of a train, not a caboose, that she would get a smoother ride and it would expedite the switching back in Ashand. We made an Initial Terminal Airbrake Test on the cars picked up and departed.

It was getting dark and we hadn’t gone to beans yet. As we approached Ashland, the yardmaster had the herder line us into 2-rail. We were instructed to tie down the train, caboose and all, at the south end of the yard track and take the power back to the house. When we stopped at the south end of the yard the rear man hopped off to start tying handbrakes while the headman cut the engine off and herded me back to the house, (lined switches ahead and rode the front footboards of the power.) The conductor walked across the yard to the yard office to turn in the paperwork. She and the rear man caught a carry-all ride back to the locker room, (crew’s quarters, the on-off duty point for train crews), located close to the engine facilities. The power was spotted on the inbound engine lead. The headman helped me tie the power down and then we walked over to the locker room.

Once back to the locker room, we tied up and congratulated the conductor for a job well done. We had spent about 6 hours and 30 minutes on this job, not
bad for a patch. She said she had learned a few good tricks which she will be utilizing back home. Sometimes working on the railroad is not even work at all, but rather fun and enjoyable. Now, if only somebody could make a model of this railroad and simulate the Valley Flyer, it would sure be a neat train to run.

Note: This was an actual local ran by Dave Bayless and Barbara Geiger during an operating session at the NMRA’s Long Beach National Convention in 1996. Thank you Barbara for an enjoyable time working with you on this local.

Many more photos of the L&N are in the digital version of the Short Line. Think about switching if you haven’t already done so. Thank you—ed.

**May 24 Ione Meet**

Twenty members were present. There were several vendors and a live steam loop set up outside and the Sacramento Modular Club set up a huge layout. The club has many well done modules.

We had a delicious lunch catered by Dickies BBQ. Our meeting started at 1:30 with Deborah Cook doing an oral presentation telling the early history of the Amador Central Railroad. Ms. Cook is an historical archeologist and has just published her third book with Arcadia Publishing: Images of Rail, Amador Central Railroad. A short business meeting was held and it was decided to cancel our August 9th Chico meet to allow members to attend Railroad Days in Portola. The next meet will be October 11 in Sacramento. There will be a January 31 meet at the Sacramento. Also on the horizon is the Sierra Division sponsored International Rail Fair in Roseville November 8th and 9th. Think about volunteering to help.

Elections will be held at the October 11 meet. Superintendent Scott McAllister is stepping down to focus his attention on the Sierra Division hosted 2016 PCR Convention. Chief Clerk Bob Warner has announced that he will not be running again. Paymaster Al Rowe is interested in continuing on. If you would like to be a candidate for one of these positions, please email Scott McAllister at scooter923@att.net.

Winners of the black and white photo contest were: Gary Ray (1st), Jim Collins and Gary Ray (tied for 2nd), and Gary Ray (3rd). Winners of the caboose contest were: Pat LaTorres (1st), Jim Collins (2nd) and Pat LaTorres (3rd). Awards in tree construction went to Gary Ray (1st) and Jim Collins (2nd).
Rt. & Mid.—Pat LaTorres won 1st place with this On30 Tower Lumber Co. caboose. Interior is scratchbuilt. (Jim Petro photos on left)

Above—Pat’s 3rd place winner.

Gary Ray made the CA oaks and Jim Collins the fir trees. Judy Champlin selects from BBQ pork and beef for lunch.

Above—Jim Collins 2nd place caboose. Peyton and Benjamin of Ione are excited about the Sac. Modular Club layout. Dick Witzens’ circus train on his module.
FIRST TIME OBSERVATIONS

by Jim Collins

Though I have loved model railroading since I was a kid, I have never attended an NMRA convention (division, national, whatever). Consequently, when I signed up for the PCR Convention that was held in San Luis Obispo (April 30 – May 4, 2014), it was with both excitement and a little trepidation (not knowing exactly what to expect). As it turns out (and no great surprise) I had a fantastic time! Allow me to review the days I was there and the activities I participated in, with a few comments and observations.

I don’t know who chose San Luis Obispo (SLO), but they should definitely be congratulated. It is a beautiful town, not that difficult to get to, and the main convention/hotel was easily accessible from the freeway. It was a relatively long trip there for me from Modesto, but I know there were others who had to travel even farther (such as our editor). Of course, there were some who were smart and avoided the drive and traffic and took the train – our Superintendent for one. What a great way to go to a model railroad convention.

The weather, though a little hot sometimes, was overall really beautiful. SLO is just over the hills from the ocean, but there was no invasive fog or cold. I suspect it would have been even hotter if we were further inland.

I was also very impressed overall with the organization and advance work done to prepare for the convention. Though I have a couple of suggestions for improvement, they are really very small and negligible when you consider the size of this convention and the amount of planning and preparation it required. I was especially impressed with the website. It was well laid out and information on any topic was easy to find. The schedule of clinics and presentations was regularly updated along with any other changes or additions to activities and regular email notices were sent out announcing them. Communications were really excellent. As I write this, the website is still up, if you’re interested: http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2014/index.html.

Though this was my first NMRA convention, I have been to plenty of other conventions (professional, trade, etc.) so was not surprised that there were always more clinics and other activities scheduled than any one person could possibly take part in. As always, it required a careful review of the schedules to plan out my activities for each day. As noted, the website had everything so pre-planning was a snap.

Though there were a lot of layouts to see on the tours, I decided to forego those this time and concentrate on clinics plus one operating session.

The clinics and presentations, at least the ones that I attended, were uniformly excellent. All the presenters were knowledgeable, comfortable speaking, and had good to great slide presentations or, for the hands-on clinics, good and plentiful materials. Here are the presentations/clinics I heard with some brief comments:

- **An Adventure in Layout Design** – George Pisching. Great discussion of planning for an designing a model railroad. Nothing earth-shattering new but several good points made and excellent handouts provided.
- **Using Sanborn Maps & Aerial Photos** – Bruce Morden. Now this was an eye-opener. I’ve heard of Sanborn maps but seeing some and how much great information they can provide was really great. Bruce carefully explained how to go about acquiring them through state libraries, which was very helpful.
- **Right of Way Details, part 1** – Bob Chaparro. Another really great presentation. Bob had a really outstanding selection of slides showing every kind of prototype detail you could think of (and even a few maybe you couldn’t, such as, for me at least, torpedoes). Plus, things went so smoothly that he actually made the full presentation (parts 1 and 2) in the time scheduled for just part 1. This allowed those folks interested to see it all again during the second period.
- **Cheap Trees** – Bob Pethoud. This was a clinic for making deciduous and conifer trees. Making the trunk for deciduous trees from twisted wire was the hands-on part. It was the subject of a Model Railroader article in Jan 2014. I had read the article but seeing and actually twisting the wires made it much more understandable. An easy and enjoyable way to make some trunks while sitting in front of the TV.
- **Sagebrush Trees** – Lloyd Lehrer. A hands-on clinic. I have read about making deciduous trees using sagebrush, but seeing and practicing the technique and the different results everyone else gets makes it much more meaningful.
October 11 Contests

MODELING ~ Buildings — Enter one of your favorite buildings; can be kit, kit-bashed, or scratch-built.

PHOTOS #1 ~ Prototype track and/or structure in color. 3 entries per person.

PHOTOS #2 ~ I’ve added this second contest due to the cancellation of the August meet. Members are encouraged to take photos at the Portola Railroad Museum. They are having their Railroad Days from August 8—10. However, photos do not have to be taken then. Any photos from the museum or of the line through the Feather River Canyon including Reno to Oroville can be entered. 3 entries per person.

PHOTOS ~ Pictures need to be at least 5” x 7” but not over 8” x 12”. Photos can be color or black and white.

Furnace Filter Trees – Lloyd Lehrer. Another hands-on clinic. Also, something I’ve read about many times but the experience shows how easy, yet realistic, these are to make.

I also attended three of the Modeling with a Master clinics. These were highly enjoyable and instructive. If you have never attended one and they are offering them at a convention you will attend, I strongly recommend signing up. Clark Kooning was the master for our clinics and he is both knowledgeable and a very fun guy. The clinics were exceptional. Even if you have been modeling for many years, I would just about guarantee you will learn something new at one of these.

The Fast-Tracks clinic with Clark and Tim Warris (owner of Fast Tracks) was exceptional also. Once I built a turnout (something I never expected to be able to do) I learned how easy it is with their kit and promptly purchased one (can’t beat the discount at a convention) for future work.

I also attended an operating session at Hilding Larson’s home. He has a beautiful layout and a very relaxed manner that made this easy and enlightening. Not having really operated before, it was both a learning experience and a fun time. I had a bunch of problems with my loco and one turnout in particular and, unfortunately, kept shorting out one section. I know it was annoying to Hilding after a while but he was very gracious. Thank you, Hilding! You are a gentleman.

As I said, I do have a couple of improvement recommendations. Both are relatively minor. One that many folks mentioned was the small size of several of the conference rooms. People were forced to stand outside and try to hear from there because there was just no room. I also noticed that there was a room upstairs that had a name on it as if it was going to be used, but never was. I don’t know if it was bigger or not.

The other thing also concerns the conference rooms. It would have been very helpful if there was a map of some sort showing where each of the rooms were located. A lot of people spent a lot of time wandering around and asking, especially the first day. The hotel staff could not help because the rooms are actually just numbered A, B, C, etc. The convention renamed them with words such as Owl, Lark, and Starlight. Doing so meant the staff could not provide directions because they had no idea which room those names were assigned to.

Space is limited here so I’ll just end by saying that if you’ve never attended a Pacific Coast Region Convention before, you are truly missing out on a terrific experience. I highly recommend you plan to attend “The Club Car,” the convention in Newark scheduled for May 13-17, 2015.
Gary Ray’s McCloud Fiver RR. picture won first place in the photo contest.

Gary’s photo of 884’s drivers taken in Auburn tied for 2nd and the picture below was voted 3rd.

Al Rowe and Scott McAllister enjoy lunch.

Membership Chair, photographer and author Jim Collins.

Motorcar rides on the Amador Central were offered, but I’m not sure how many went. Unfortunately, the twilight run planned to ride was cancelled.
Above — Author and our guest speaker Deborah Cook relaxes at her booth.
Below — Attendees listen as debra tells the history of the Amador Central RR.

Superintendent Scott McAllister shares the switch he made at the PCR convention using “Fast Tracks.” Members are encouraged to share at the next meet.

Bottom — “On the Brink Live Steamers” had an operating display.
Here are some of the beautiful work the Sacramento Modular Railroaders have done on their Sacramento Central Railroad. Be sure to notice the painted backdrops. Hopefully you will get some ideas for your layout. Enjoy!
Besides setting up for public shows, the Sacramento Modular Railroaders have operation sessions using computer generated waybills. The club owns a large switching yard, corner modules, end loops, the Digitrax DCC system and some locos and cars. New members can get started on a club built module for as little as $50 and advanced members will help them to progress. For more information, visit their website at: http://saccentral.railfan.net/.
COAST REGION PCR CONVENTION PHOTO MEMORIES

by Gary Ray (unless noted)

In the Contest Room
(Photo of SP 6037 and SP 6146 courtesy of Giuseppe Aymar, MMR)
In the Non-Rail Activity Room

(Top two photos courtesy of Giuseppe Aymar, MMR)
The Awards Banquet

Chuck Harmon received his Master Model Railroader certificate becoming MMR # 529.
(Photo courtesy of Giuseppe Aymar, MMR)

Proud hubby Gus takes a photo of Mary as she receives her award.

The contest winners received their awards.
OBSERVATIONS FROM PAGE 9

Clinic overflow.

Right—Working on my deciduous tree and I'm done.

Moe invites attendees to try switching on the Coast Division's Time Saver layout.

Right—Short Line editor Gary Ray shoots trees.

Far Right—Clinician Lloyd Lehrer.

Below—Bob Pethoud’s Nn3 layout.
Thanks to Gary Siegel, Dave Bayless and Bruce Morden for sharing material.

The photos on this page of Clemens were taken by Dave Bayless in 1996 as part of an operation session.

Bruce Morden took the photos of various locations on the layout that start on page 26 in May of 2014.
Eldridge Camp

Glenbrook

Hanging Clothes

Harlan Junction Road Crossing

Harlan Junction Yard

Island Springs
I hope you have enjoyed this issue of the Digital Short Line.

More people are switching to the digital edition each issue. Since you were able to download this issue, please help the division save printing costs and join us on-line subscription only. I will notify you when it becomes available—usually a week or more before the printed issue is mailed. Just send an email with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line to gerber1926@gmail.com.

Thanks,
Gary Ray• editor