

MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

2ND QUARTER, 2013

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

By Don Fowler

Summer will be here before we know it and many of you will be making your vacation plans. Hopefully, you'll be able to take advantage of some great NMRA activities in our area as well. Kim and I just returned from a wonderful trip to Kansas City on Amtrak's "Southwest Chief". If you've never taken a trip by train, we highly recommend it. The staff and accommodations were great, the food was excellent and the scenery was spectacular. You'll also be pleased to know that model railroading is alive and well in the mid-west. We visited three very nice model train stores and a very large model railroad swap meet. The people there were very friendly and interested in what we're doing with model railroading in Southern California. Whether you're planning a big trip or just staying local, don't forget to build in some model railroading fun.

The San Diego Division's Winter Meet was held on February 16th at the Clairemont Christian Fellowship Church. We had a great turnout and enjoyed a swap meet, lunch, clinics, show & tell and model judging. The swap meet was much larger

In This Issue

Continued on Page 2

Superintendent's Report	1
Spring Meet Preview	1
Winter Meet Wrap Up	1
N Scale HO Layout	3
Welcome New Members	5
Working Scale Track	5
Layout Tours	6
2013 PSR Convention	7
Events Wall Calendar	8
Events & Schedules	9
Club Car	11
National Narrow Gauge Convention	12
Clinic News	13
San Diego Division Staff	14
From the Editor	14

SPRING MEET PREVIEW

We've got a great Spring Meet coming up on May 11th! We'll start out the Short Track Railroad section house in Vista at 11am, with a clinic on ballasting by Paul Schmitt, MMR. Paul is responsible for all the ballast on the Short Track Donner Pass Exhibit (DPE), and when you see his work, you'll understand why we've asked him to present this clinic.

We'll break for a pot luck lunch. We haven't had one of these in some time, so let me refresh you on the rules. The Division will provide paper goods, plastic ware, and drinks. Everyone attending should bring a dish to share. If your last name begins with A to L, please bring a main dish (and, hopefully, not everyone will bring fried chicken), and if your last name begins with M to Z, please bring a salad or dessert. You should also bring a serving utensil, if appropriate. If your dish requires heat (electricity), please bring a power strip or extension cord. This is a lot of fun when it works.

After lunch the second clinic will be held. Pete Steinmetz and Bill Ewing will enlighten us on their methods for lighting vehicles and buildings, with LEDs. Bill has designed and built a special module

Continued on Page 2

WINTER MEET WRAP-UP

The winter meet and swap meet was held at the Clairemont Christian Church in February. The swap meet was far more successful than last year's, with a number of vendors and plenty of buyers. Some of the buyers came from out of the Division, which was good to see. Coffee and donuts were available for purchase, and that was a hit with those in attendance.

Box lunches from Subway arrived just before noon, and, miracle of miracles, we had enough to feed even those who had not made a reservation,

Continued on Page 2

Superintendent's Report *from Page 1*

than last year and we hope to keep building the size of this event every year.

Twelve members of the San Diego Division attended Cajon Division's Annual Temecula Meet on March 23-24. The event commenced on Friday night with bingo and many model railroading prizes. Saturday included clinics, contest room, layout tours, Mid-Year PSR business meeting, dinner and a large Hobo Auction. We had a great time and hope that you'll join us next year.

The first planning meeting for the 2014 PSR Convention will be held on Sunday, April 14th at Ben Sevier's home at 3 pm. We'd like to have everyone in our Division take part in the preparations and presentation of this event in some way. Please let us know how you'd like to contribute as soon as possible so that you have plenty of time to prepare. With all of us involved, it will be a great event.

Speaking of events, don't forget to register for the PSR's Annual Convention which will be hosted by the Cajon Division and take place in San Bernardino in September. A lot of your traditional favorites will be offered along with some new options as well. Check the PSR website for more details and save money by registering early.

On April 20, several of us are planning to attend Los Angeles Division's Spring Meet in Alhambra. This one day event is free to NMRA members with a \$10 charge for food throughout the day. Activities will include a swap meet, clinics, lunch and a Hobo Auction. Last year's event was great and this year promises to be even better. I hope that you'll join us.

While it was great to travel and visit with other model railroaders, it's great to be back home with my San Diego Division friends. See you soon!

Don

Spring Meet Preview (cont'd from Pg 1)

for controlling the lighting, and he'll demonstrate this for us. You're sure to pick up some tips from this clinic.

As always, the DPE will be available for viewing. If you haven't seen this layout in a while, you're in for a treat. Construction continues, with progress made in Colfax, and track now being laid in Truckee. The roadbed for the narrow gauge has been laid, and hardshell has been put down over most of the layout. Scenery is catching up to the track and hardshell, so it looks much different than it did the last time you saw it. If you bring a DCC equipped N scale locomotive, you may get to run on the great layout.

Short Track has also made some improvements to the Ntrak legacy modules, installing a swing out bridge to facilitate access to the interior of the layout (for all of us auld pharts), and planning to extend the modular layout to provide more operating interest for the second Tuesday operating sessions, which are open to the public. Questions about the meet should be addressed to Bruce Deck, at

meets@sandiegodivision.org.

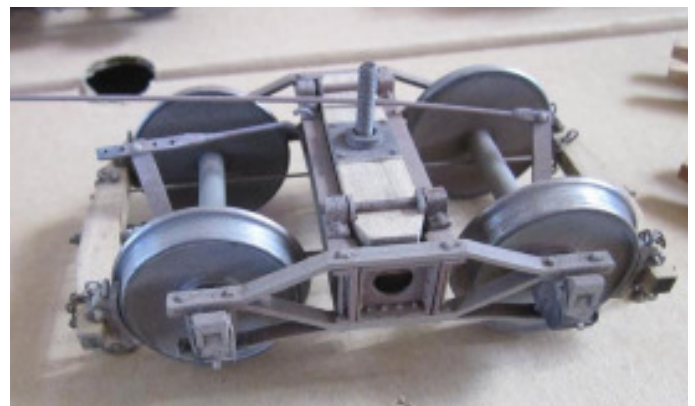
See you on May 11 !

Winter Meet Wrap-Up (cont'd from Pg 1)

so everyone was happy.

Clinics were given after lunch, by Bill Keller, who gave us some tips on building turnouts by hand without using Fastracks jigs, and Rob Teates, who showed us some great Fn3 (1:20.3) scale work he's done, including trucks with working brake rigging. He also had passenger and freight cars to display, as well as a deck truss bridge, and a steam donkey on a skid. This was all fine scale work. Quite impressive.

* * *



Rodger Gredvig, MMR, photo

N-Scale HO Layout

by Alex de Koster

The Short Track model railroad club in Vista, CA, designs its own buildings for their N-Scale *Donner Pass Exhibit*, to ensure the buildings are prototypically correct. The club then laser-cuts the building parts for members to assemble. I built an L-shaped house and a matching garage (Figure 1 shows the overview of the scene. Ed.). The garage has open front and side doors, to show internal details (Figure 2 shows the open garage door, and you can see the end of the train table in the doorway. Ed.), such as a workbench and a drill

press. My wife had a great idea: put a model railroad in the garage. Yes! (Figure 3 shows the overhead shot, where you can see the train table, the workbench, and the drill press. Ed.)

It needed to be an HO layout, because, in the period modeled, N-scale was not yet popular. An HO 50-foot boxcar is only 0.043" long in N-Scale. That's very small; too small to model in N scale. Instead of building a layout, I



Fig. 1

decided to use a small picture of a layout and glue it to an appropriate size model railroad table. A 5x10-foot table would leave adequate space between the layout and the garage walls, and measures 0.375" x 0.750" in N-Scale.

Making the small picture was straightforward: first I selected a color layout picture, then I photographed it with a digital camera, and reduced the photo to the desired size with photo-editing software. Then, I printed it with a color printer, and glued the small print to the N-Scale 5x10-foot table.

I found a color picture of a suitable layout plan¹ in a model railroad magazine. I liked the plan mainly because all track was drawn as double lines. This would cause the track to be more visible when reduced in size.

To keep the plan to be photographed flat, I placed an 8" x 10" glass plate on the magazine page. A very bright task lamp on either side of



Fig 2

N-Scale HO Layout *from Page 3*

the camera illuminated the page. The two lamps shone onto the page at 45-degree angles to provide even illumination without reflections.

My digital camera² set to "close-up" mode, and at maximum resolution, was hand-held directly over



the layout picture at a distance such that the layout filled the viewfinder as much as possible. I made several exposures to ensure at least one very sharp photo. I then copied that photo to a computer³ containing photo-editing software, such as Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0⁴.

Now I needed to know the size of the final small layout picture in pixels, which depends on the resolution of the color printer to be used. My old 4" x 6" color photo printer⁵ has 401 pixels/inch resolution. Therefore, the desired 0.375" x 0.750" layout picture has to be 150 x 301 pixels.

I'm no Photoshop expert, so I used trial and error, read many help screens, and spent a Sunday afternoon to reduce the magazine picture to the correct size. Back up your work often, to be safe.

In "full edit" mode, I first used a "straighten" command to make the layout in the photo horizontal. Second, I trimmed the photo with a "cropping" command to show only the layout. Third, in "resize" mode, I specified the desired 0.375" x 0.750" dimension at 401 pixels/inch and requested that the image be "resampled". The photo now shows only the small layout in the desired size!

I was disappointed with the resulting print the first time the photo was printed. It was exactly the right size, but very pale and without contrast. One could barely see the track.

To improve the print, in "edit" mode, I used a "brush" command to draw on the photo. I filled the space between track lines with black, added bright red to some roofs, and used bright green to highlight trees and bushes. After this touching up, the printed photo showed "detail", had contrast, and one could readily recognize the track plan on the layout. It looks even better after covering the glossy print with flat clear paint. This is it!

To make the 5x10-foot table, I used a 0.375" x 0.750" piece of 0.050" thick matte board, and 0.025" diameter brass rod for the four legs. I drilled four 0.028" diameter holes in the corners of the table and matching holes in the garage floor. To trim the small layout picture to the correct size, I placed the photo print on the 8" x 10" glass plate and cut it to size with a very sharp knife. Cutting on glass leaves clean crisp edges.

N-Scale HO Layout *from Page 4*

Finally, after gluing the picture to the table, attaching the legs, painting the table edges and legs “wood brown”, I glued the table legs into the matching holes in the garage floor. The N-Scale HO Layout is done.

I'm quite happy how it turned out. Next time, I may place tiny pieces of material on the table to simulate buildings and trees for a more three-dimensional look.

(Footnotes)

¹ Model Railroader's *102 Realistic Track Plans 2008*, pg. 23, track plan 25, “Spokane Valley & Northern”, originally published May 2002

² Nikon Coolpix S9300 16-Megapixel camera

³ Toshiba Satellite M110/M115 laptop computer, Windows XP

⁴ Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0, 2006

⁵ Sony Digital Photo Printer DPP-EX5, dye sublimation process

* * *

Welcome New Members

New members keep our organization vital by bringing new ideas and enthusiasm to our group. Each month, we list the new members since the last issue, and run a short background on those who are willing. This may help both the new members and existing members identify those in the group with similar interests. To submit background, contact me or Ray Inbody, Membership Chair. Ed.

Michael Ayers	Vista	Jan Bauer	Chula Vista
Cliff Callender	Clairemont	Herbert Cook	Spring Valley
Bill Ewing	Encinitas	John F Fleck	Santee
Russell Hedges	Hillcrest	Joel Hendricks	Chula Vista
Kenneth G Sadlock	Chula Vista	Cliff Smith	Downtown San Diego
Rodney K Stuart	Scripps Mesa	Les Turner	Julian

Please introduce yourselves to these new members at our next event, and make them feel welcome.

* * *

Working Scale Track - An Improvement for Your Layout

by Bruce Deck

A year or so ago I attended Don Fowler's clinic on clever additions to his layout. During the clinic, he described a working scale track that he had built on his layout. He used this scale track for weighting cars to NMRA Recommended Practice (RP) 20-1. He installed the track on a foam block, on top of an inexpensive scale, such that he could push a car onto the scale with an engine, from a yard track above his workbench.

I had been thinking about doing this for some time, but the location of my tracks would not allow the reading of the balance/scale under the layout, unless the display was wired separately from the load cell and was movable. The early scales I found would not allow this.

Recently I ordered some very inexpensive scales from Harbor Freight, and finally got around to opening them. Incredibly, not only are the load cell, battery, and display all wired separately, the unit can be cut to allow the display to be at distance from the load cell. While I have not tried the installation yet, I thought I would pass the info on for any of you faced with a similar situation.

If you are interested, the Harbor freight numbers are 97920/60332, and/or 93543 (I have looked inside both, and either will work).

* * *

LAYOUT TOURS

This article summarized the layouts we've visited since the last Mail hook, and previews the next two coming up.

Past

March - Frank Tepedino

Frank's HO layout is designed for big trains in continuous runs. He loves to see long strings of cars pulling through wide curves and long straight tracks. His railroad is built in a special 25x25 foot room above his garage. The wiring is DC block control, and the time frame is 1930 to 1950. This allows running of a lot of heavy steam, including Big Boys and Challengers, with some diesels. Many lines are represented on the roster, including UP, SP, ATSF, and Pennsy. Hundreds of pieces of rolling stock are weathered, along with the many fine structures. Recently Frank has added an upper deck with four mainlines, for even more fun. Frank has a quiz he gives to visitors to help them identify the many detailed scenes on his layout.

April - Steve Seidensticker

Steve's Gopher Canyon Line (GCL) wasn't originally scheduled, but he agreed to fill in when the scheduled modeler had to cancel. The GCL is an outdoor # 1 scale (1:32) short line, spun off the Chicago and North Western (CNW) in Southern Wisconsin. The goal from the beginning has been to accurately represent a small but busy standard gauge railroad in the 60s and 70s. This includes first generation diesels, no steam, short trains, and lots of switching. Adding to the spirit of accurate modeling are broad curves, code 215 rail, and careful ballasting of all track.

The scenery depicts the area in and around the small town of Ashippun, Wisconsin. Features include route 67, a concrete highway that runs the length of the layout, a replica of St. John's Lutheran church, a model of the house in which Steve grew up, and various commercial buildings.

The garden setting is Jan's domain. She has planted and maintains a variety of trees, ground covers, and a few specimens that defy description. Her favorite activity is to trim and shape the trees to keep them interesting and in scale. Many of the 2-3 feet tall trees are 20+ years old.

Steve has operating sessions the third Saturday afternoon of every month. Three crews assemble trains in the Gopherville yard, then traverse the railroad setting out and picking up cars at various industries and towns along several routes. Crews use switch lists and manifests generated by JMRI Operations software. If you would like to participate in these sessions call or email Steve at 619-283-2849 or sseiden@cox.net.

Coming Up

June - Jack Byers - HO

The West End of the B&O was in the early stages of construction the last time we visited. The bench work and helix for this bi-level railroad were done, and some track was down. Now the DIGITRAX DCC system has been installed. The West End is housed in its own 12X42 foot modular building, and you'll be interested to see how Jack has planned his railroad.

The West End is set in central WV, the coal country served by the B&O, with Grafton as the central point. It portrays the early 50s, depicting the transition from steam to diesel. Big steam still fights the long grades. There are mountains, long grades, long viaducts, several coal mines and a lumber mill. The background scenery is essentially complete. The main line covers more than 300 feet on two levels and is functional. One mountain conceals a helix that takes the traffic up to the second level. One staging area on the second level is complete. The sidings, industrial and business developments are still under construction.

This HO scale railroad is turning out to be quite something. You won't want to miss it!

July Tom Heiser - Lionel

The 2 Brothers Railroad began in 1952, when brother Don was born. A Lionel locomotive, coal car, track and transformer were delivered to the hospital. Ever year after a car or accessory arrived on his birthday. After brother Tom came along and got older, the two of them spent many hours operating the train. As time went by, the teenage years arrived, and the train was put into a box and tucked away. Then as adults the train bug hit again. That box with the old Lionel train was found and set up on a 4'X 8' piece

Layout Tours *from Page 6*

of plywood.

Now we are just living the fantasy, going to as many train shows as possible looking for that special car, locomotive or accessory we just can't live without, and still visiting that place dad used to take us to get something fixed or something new, Frank the Train Man. The 2 brothers' layout has grown from that 4'X8' into a 14'X 9' three tiered layout that has encompassed 47 remodels/expansions. The layout is the result of our imagination and us asking the question "what else can we do that is different." The basic concept behind our system is that our accessories and some of our cars operate. We are 99% Lionel O Gauge, three rail. We do have 1 MTH train in the system. Most of the system is post war with some modern area equipment blended in.

September – Bob Treat, Fn3

October – Ben Sevier, HO

* * *

Pacific Southwest Region Convention **San Bernardino, September 25-29, 2013**

The Pacific Southwest Region Convention will be held in San Bernardino, California, September 25-29, 2013. The convention hotel will be the Hilton, with a rate of just \$89.95 per night, plus tax. Located along the 10 freeway, it's just a short drive from the San Bernardino Depot and Museum. Room reservations are now being accepted.

The convention features more than 50 different clinics, by some of the top pros from 5 different states. Joe Warren, of Showcase Miniatures, is scheduled to host Modeling with the Manufacturer. Clinics begin Wednesday evening, and continue through Friday afternoon.

Layout tours will run Thursday afternoon and all day Friday. There will be an operating session Wednesday afternoon and Thursday afternoon on a superb layout that has never been opened before!

HO and Z scale modular layouts will be running Wednesday night through Saturday afternoon at the hotel. Friday night is the famous Hobo (formerly Chinese) Auction, where you can find many treasures in the more than 200 items that will be available. The Roundhouse Gang and the Railroad Prototype Modelers will co-sponsor a Saturday morning swap meet, if you still haven't gotten what you wanted.

There will be prototype tours to the Union Pacific hump yard, the Victorville CEMEX plant, and the Columbia Park Live Steamers, with a BBQ. Columbia Park has operating models of both a Big Boy and a Challenger! In addition, the banquet, contest, and prototype tours you've come to expect will be available. Don't forget the annual membership meeting Sunday morning. All this for the low, low registration rate of \$65, which INCLUDES the banquet!

The guest speaker for the banquet will be Stuart Forsythe, a perfect choice to complement the theme of this convention, "Gateway to Cajon Pass." Stuart has been researching the Cajon Pass since 1959, and there may not be a more expert individual on the subject. Stuart helped to create the California State Railroad Museum, and serves on the Archives Oversight Committee of the Santa Fe Railway Historical and Modeling Society's Western Archives.

How can you go wrong? Sign up today, at <http://www.psrconvention.org/sb13/index.html>. Contact Bob Mitchell at CajonDivision@coastinet.com if you need more information.

* * *



May 2013

San Diego Division - Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Short Track Clinic, AGSEM
5	6	7	8	9 Short Track Ops Session, AGSEM	10	11 Multiple Events
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 SD Div Convention & Plng Mtg	20	21	22	23 Short Track Clinic, AGSEM	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2013

						1 Short Track Open House, AGSEM
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 SD Div Layout Tour
9 SD Div Convention & Plng Mtg	10	11	12	13 Short Track Ops Session, AGSEM	14	15 Spring Show, AGSEM
16 Spring Show, AGSEM	17	18	19	20	21	22 Spring Show, AGSEM
23 Spring Show, AGSEM	24	25	26	27 Short Track Clinic, AGSEM	28	29
30						

July 2013

	1	2	3	4 Old Fashioned 4th, Poway	5	6
7 SD Div Convention & Plng Mtg	8	9	10	11 Short Track Ops Session, AGSEM	12	13 SD Div Layout Tour
14 NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION, ATLANTA, GA (THRU SATURDAY, JULY 20)						
15	16	17	18	19 NMRA NATIONAL TRAIN SHOW, ATLANTA, GA		20
21	22	23	24	25 Short Track Clinic, AGSEM	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

From various sources. Events may have been submitted by sponsors. Send corrections, additions, and future events to the editor at mailhook@sandiegodivision.org. Events should be of interest to San Diego Division members. List not all-inclusive. Division-sponsored events are listed in **bold** typeface.

2013

May

- 11 **San Diego Division Spring Meet & Pot Luck.** Short Track Railroad, Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, 2040 N. Santa Fe, Vista, CA. 11am-3pm, Contact Bruce Deck, meets@sandiegodivision.org
- 19 **San Diego Division Convention Planning Meeting,** 3-5pm, 12793 Warhorse, San Diego, CA. Contact Ben Sevier, sddiv@sbcglobal.net

June

- 8 **San Diego Division Layout Tour.** Jack Byers, B&O West End, HO scale, Escondido. Contact Don Ham, layouts@sandiegodivision.org
- 9 **San Diego Division Convention Planning Meeting,** 3-5pm, 12793 Warhorse, San Diego, CA. (C) Contact Ben Sevier, sddiv@sbcglobal.net

July

- 7 **San Diego Division Convention Planning Meeting,** 3-5pm, 12793 Warhorse, San Diego, CA. (*Date tentative*) Contact Ben Sevier, sddiv@sbcglobal.net
- 13 **San Diego Division Layout Tour.** Don Heiser, Lionel, Encinitas. Contact Don Ham, layouts@sandiegodivision.org
- 14-20 **Peachtree Express** National Model Railroad Association National Convention, Atlanta, GA, including National Train Show, 19-20. More info at <http://www.nmra2013.org/>

August

- 10 **San Diego Division Summer Meet** Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park. Details TBA. meets@sandiegodivision.org

September

- 14 **San Diego Division Layout Tour.** Bob Treat, Fn3, North Park. Contact Don Ham, layouts@sandiegodivision.org
- 25-29 **Pacific Southwest Regional Convention,** San Bernardino, CA. www.psrconvention.org

2013

May

- 3-5 S Fest West 2013 @ Embassy Suites Arcadia , CA. <http://www.ggafc.org/flyers/S%20Fest%20West%202013.pdf>
- 4 Weathering with Your Airbrush hands-on clinic, Short Track Railroad, 2040 N Santa Fe Ave, Vista, CA. 10am. Space is limited, priority to Short Track members. RSVP to Pete Steinmetz, peter.steinmetz@att.net
- 4-5 Railroad Days, Fullerton, CA. More info at <http://www.scrpa.net/>
- 11 Swap Meet, San Diego Model Railroad Museum. More info at www.sdmrm.org
- 12 Fairplex Garden Railway open to public. 11am to 4pm. See <http://fgrr.org/calendar.html>
- 18 Model Railroads of Southern California layout tour #38. Long Beach - South Bay area. More info at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Model_Railroads_Of_Southern_California/
- 18 Thomas Family Day, San Diego Model Railroad Museum. 11am to 3pm. More info at www.sdmrm.org
- 18-19 Joint Open Houses of Belmont Shore Lines (N) and Angels Gate Hi-Railers (O) model railroad clubs. 3601 S. Gaffey St., San Pedro, from 10 am to 4 pm. Swap meet on Sat. only 8 am to Noon. Free admission. For more info contact Bill Costley, 310-831-1140 or president@belmontshorerr.org
- 18, 19, 21 California Southern Model Railroad Club Open House . Sat 10 AM to 8 PM, Sun noon to 6 PM, Tue. 7 PM to 9 PM. 12140 E Firestone Blvd, Norwalk, CA 90650 (562)863-3156
- 24-27 Los Angeles Live Steam Spring Meet. Griffith Park, 5202 Zoo Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90027. Info: contact Martha @626-232-7053 Mention you are a Railfan or Modeler at the registration booth for entry. This is tentative because there is road construction planned.
- 25, 26 Santa Susana Depot Swap Meet and Open House 7am to 10am. Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Adults \$2.00, kids free. Depot Open House 10am to 4pm. SP Depot and HO layout are open each Sat and Sun

See the San Diego Division web page calendar for Other Events of Interest for other dates. Ed.

SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS (cont'd)

October

12 **San Diego Division Layout Tour.** Ben Sevier, HO scale, Rancho Penasquitos.

November

9 **Fall Meet,** San Diego Model Railroad Museum, Balboa Park

December

14 **Holiday Party,** Don & Kim Fowler's

* * *

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST (cont'd)

1pm to 4pm. This classic SP Depot at 6503 Katherine Rd., Simi Valley, CA Vendor table reservations \$12.00 and are on a first come, first served basis. Bring your own table for use outside the pavilion \$10.00. No reservations will be made without full payment. Vendors who do not arrive by 6:30am will be subject to forfeiture of their reservation and payment. David Putnam 661-753-6006

<http://www.santasusannadepot.org/swapmeet.htm>

<http://www.santasusannadepot.org/Foundation/Home.htm>

<http://www.rsrpd.org/park/santasusanadepot/santasusanadepot.html>

June

1 Open House and Swap Meet, Short Track Railroad, Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, 2040 N Santa Fe Ave, Vista, CA. Contact modeltrains@AGSEM.com

1-2 Big Train Show, Ontario, CA. www.bigtrainshow.com

3 Glendale Model Railroad Club Open House, 1930 - 2200 www.gmrrc.org

9 Fairplex garden railway open to public, 1100 - 1600, <http://fgrr.org/calendar.html>

15-16, 22-23 Spring Tractor Show, Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, 2040 N Santa Fe Ave, Vista, CA. 9am-4:30pm each day. Short Track Railroad open, antique tractors, trucks, and steam engines on display. Steam-driven blacksmith shop open. Admission: \$10 Adults, \$9 seniors. www.AGSEM.com

22 (Tentative) Roundhouse Gang Model RR Club Swap Meet 8am to 12pm, Santa Fe San Bernardino Depot 1170 W. Third St., San Bernardino, CA \$4.00 donation at the door, Spouses and under 18 are free. Vendor tables \$12.00 when reserved in advance, or \$14.00 at the door if still available. For vendor reservations contact Larry at 951-686-7890 or Gary at 909-794-3153.

July

1 Glendale Model Railroad Club Open House, 1930 - 2200 www.gmrrc.org

4 Old Fashioned Fourth of July, Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Road, Poway, CA. Steam train rides, Poway Station modular layout. Fun for the whole family! More info at <http://www.poway.org/Index.aspx?page=110>

14 Fairplex garden railway open to public, 1100 - 1600, <http://fgrr.org/calendar.html>

27 Roundhouse Gang Model RR Club Swap Meet 8am to 12pm, Santa Fe San Bernardino Depot 1170 W. Third St., San Bernardino, CA \$4.00 donation at the door, Spouses and under 18 are free. Vendor tables \$12.00 when reserved in advance, or \$14.00 at the door if still available. For vendor reservations contact Larry at 951-686-7890 or Gary at 909-794-3153.

August

4 California Express (Summer) Railroadians & Transportation Show. 0900 to 1500. UFCW Hall, 8550 Stanton Ave. Buena Park, CA www.californiaexpress.net

5 Glendale MRC Open House 1930 - 2200 <http://www.gmrrc.org>

24, 25 Santa Susana Depot Swap Meet and Open House 7am to 10am. Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Adults \$2.00, kids free. See further details at May 25 above.

28-31 33rd National Narrow Gauge Convention, Pasadena, CA. <http://www.33rdnngc.com/>

CLUB CAR

This feature will run every issue that I receive input from the clubs. Use this space to keep us up to date on your current activities. Submit announcements to the editor at any time for the next edition.



Construction continues on our Donner Pass Exhibit. Visitors will see quite a few changes in scenery and structures.

We have plans to make some significant changes to our Ntrak modules. We plan on adding different modules to give us more operational choices. We are now able to operate the Ntrak modules completely on DCC, whereas we formerly had only DC on the Yellow and Blue lines. This new capability helps us during our monthly operating sessions.

Short Track will host the NMRA Spring Meet on Saturday May 11. There will be two clinics. Paul Schmitt, MMR will give his "Track Ballasting Clinic". This is a very well done clinic on all aspects of ballasting track. Bill Ewing and Pete Steinmetz will give a clinic titled "Lighting Structures and Vehicles with LED's"

On Saturday June 1, Short Track will host their first open house and swap meet. Full details will be posted at www.shorttrackrr.org

The Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum Spring Tractor Show will be held two weekends in June (June 15 & 16 and 22 & 23). There will be plenty of activities and great food for the whole family.

The public is welcome at the following monthly events:

Clinics on the 4th Thursday at 7PM and on the 1st Saturday at 9AM; and

Operating Session on the Second Thursday at 7PM.

Short Track recently celebrated our 21st anniversary! Stop by and wish Happy Anniversary to the Short Track group! For 21 years, our motto has been "If we're not having fun, then we're doing something wrong!"

Check out our new web page (<http://shorttrackrr.org/>) designed by Superchief John Morrison. It will let you know the latest news and upcoming special events. As always, group members can usually be found at the Section House on Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings.

Pete Steinmetz

* * *

CSC is off to The Big Train Show (BTS) next, June 1-2. We will have a 40' x 30' Layout and a number of new modules on display for the first time. This is our last show before the National Narrow Gauge Convention in August.

After BTS, we are off to the 33rd National Narrow Gauge Convention, which is coming to Pasadena on August 28 – 31, 2013, at the Hilton Hotel. For more info go to <http://www.33rdnngc.com/>. We will be hooking up with groups from other states to form a 44 x 44 layout with over 60 modules. Modules from 6 groups and multiple states will make up the On30 layout.

If in the area during any of the shows, stop by to see us and say hi, and run your On30 DCC trains with us. The group is still free to join and there are no dues. So, if you want to join in and build a module, our standards are posted on the Yahoo site. You just have to follow the hook up standard and get the module checked out before the first show. See you at the show, the train show.

We are One Narrow minded group and we are looking for a few good men, and women, and young people..... and in no set order!

Our Yahoo site: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CSCModOn30/>

Dain Leese



Cont'd...

Club Car (cont'd)



The San Diego S Gaugers recently participated in the World's Greatest Hobby On Tour (WGH) show in Del Mar in February. In addition to having our layout set up, we represented the National Association of S Gaugers (NASG) by staffing their booth for both days of the show. We also used our new Entry/Exit module at WGH for the first time, and it operated flawlessly. This will be a boon to us as club members age.

Raulf Polichar is designing a system that will provide precision alignment of modules and facilitate future set ups. Parts have been ordered for the prototype. We're looking forward to implementing this system.

The window layout draws almost one thousand hits each month. It shows people are interested in the layout. We just need to figure out how we can convert these visits into some new members.

We've been accepted as hosts for National Train Day, May 11, 2013. This will be our second year as a host. We're also looking into ways to advertise club events in local media.

See our web page for more information, at <https://sites.google.com/site/sdsgaugers/>.

Poway Station just completed a display at the Train Song Festival in Old Poway Park. We used our new loop-to-loop set up, including a Free-Mo (HO) module. It went very well. We had more modules on display than we were able to include at the Worlds' Greatest Hobby On Tour (WGH) in February, where the basic concept was debuted. Use of these loops will allow us much greater flexibility in the layouts we can display.



We're trimming down the number of modules owned by the club, and requiring each member to own at least one module. This will mean less repair to be done at set-ups, allowing us to get operating more quickly. We hope some of our members without modules will "adopt" one or more of our legacy modules.

We've also started to set up some modules each month, whether or not we have a show. This allows us to test module configurations in advance of any show. In March we set up in a member's driveway to prepare for Train Song Festival in April. We will decide on a May location at our next business meeting. Our next scheduled display will be in Old Poway Park for the Old Fashioned Fourth of July. We hope you'll come out and see us. You can always check our web page at www.powaystation.org.

National Narrow Gauge Convention Comes to Pasadena

The National Narrow Gauge Convention comes to Pasadena, CA, this year, on August 28-31, 2013. This is a great opportunity to see some unbelievable modeling, and meet the modelers who created the models. Registration is still only \$95, but goes up to \$110 after June 1, so register now! Spouse's registration is complimentary.

In addition to the modeling, there will be prototype tours, layout tours, clinics, and events of general interest. There is a full list on the web page, <http://www.33rdnngc.com>, of vendors who will be in attendance.

The convention hotel is the Pasadena Hilton, with a rate of \$159.00 per night, plus tax. The alternate hotel is the Pasadena Sheraton, with a rate of \$149.00 per night, plus tax. This hotel is about a block from the convention hotel. Other accommodations are a little farther away.

They're still filling the clinic schedule, but the tour schedule is up on the web page. If you'd like to give a clinic, they'd love to hear from you at clinics@33rdnngc.com. Judging from the quality of the modeling, the clinics are sure to be top notch.

If you, like me, have been hearing for years about how great the National Narrow Gauge Convention is, this is your chance to see for yourself. Pasadena isn't that far, maybe even just go for a day to check it out. You'll be able to see the model contest, that I'm told always has a lot of fantastic models. Judging from the work you see in the Narrow Gauge & Shortline Gazette, I can easily believe it. Ed.



Clinic News!

Pete Steinmetz, our Division Clinic Chair, has been working hard on the San Diego Division Clinic Schedule . Here are some of the thing he has scheduled for the remainder of 2013.

Spring Meet – Saturday May 11, at Short Track Railroad in Vista, beginning at 11am.

Paul Schmitt, MMR – “Ballasting Track”

Paul will give a definitive clinic on the subject of track ballasting. He will include selecting ballast colors, laying out ballast, and gluing. He will discuss turnouts and how to correctly apply ballast that doesn't interfere with smooth operation.

Bill Ewing and Pete Steinmetz – “Lighting Structures and Vehicles with LED's”

Bill and Pete will discuss selection of LED's. Creating light blocks in buildings. Creating special effects using a lighting control module designed by Bill. They will also discuss effective lighting of vehicles, how to control different light combinations in vehicles, along with various special effects.

Summer Meet – Saturday August 10, at Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park, 13134 Midland Road, Poway, time TBA

Starting this meet, we will expand to 3 clinics per meet.

Robin Becker - "Using Smartphones and Tablets for Throttles and Panels with JMRI"

Robin has been a junior programmer on EngineDriver, the Android throttle app for JMRI, for several years. The principle programmer prepared a clinic that he will be doing at the NMRA National Convention in Atlanta, and Robin has been given permission to present this clinic in San Diego. The clinic is on Using Smartphones and Tablets as Throttles and Panels for your DCC railroad with JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface). There are screenshots of the WiThrottle app (iPhone), EngineDriver app (Android) and InControl (any browser) throttle in the presentation. Things are moving beyond just throttles, so there are images and discussion of Control Panels, Train Manifests, Conductor Windows, and even Engineer Views. We will talk about changes in how those types of screens get updated, as recent work has created near instant response. There is some general background on what it takes to use smart devices.

Mike Pflub - "Using Battery Power and Radio Control to Run Trains"

Mike, a member of the Dead Rail Society, will talk about advances in technology that have made it possible to have battery power and radio control in locomotives as small as HO scale. This can be a boon to modelers, as cleaning track, reversing loops, and frog polarity will no longer be of concern. Several local modelers are active in On30 with this technology, and some garden railroads have been using it for years.

Jimmy Simmons - "Weathering Structures"

Details on this clinic are still being finalized, but we can always count on Jimmy for a great presentation.

Fall Meet – Saturday November 9, at the Model Railroad Museum – Balboa Park

I'm working on the theme “Operations”

I look on clinics as a draw for meets. When I hear about a meet, my first question is, “What are the clinics?” I became a real pain in the a** to the PSR San Diego leadership. They finally said, “Why don't you handle the clinics and leave us alone”. They didn't really say “leave us alone”, but I know they were thinking it. So I did.

Clinics are about sharing and teaching. My goal is to bring interesting clinics with top presenters. Stay tuned.

Pete Steinmetz

* * *

SAN DIEGO DIVISION STAFF

Director:	Gary Robinson	760-839-5877	director@sandiegodivision.org
Superintendent:	Don Fowler	619-258-3529	superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
Chief Clerk/Paymaster:	Ben Sevier	858-538-9863	paymaster@sandiegodivision.org
Achievement Program:	Paul Schmitt, MMR #342	760-744-6424	ap@sandiegodivision.org
Clinics:	Pete Steinmetz	760-943-0590	clinics@sandiegodivision.org
Club Liason:	(vacant)		clubs@sandiegodivision.org
Contests:	Rodger Gredvig MMR #218	858-571-7118	contest@sandiegodivision.org
Layout Tours:	Don Ham, MMR #491	760-747-7727	layouts@sandiegodivision.org
Mail Hook Editor:	Gary Robinson	760-839-5877	mailhook@sandiegodivision.org
Meets:	Bruce Deck	858-270-3916	meets@sandiegodivision.org
Member Aid:	(vacant)		
Membership:	Pete Steinmetz	760-943-0590	membership@sandiegodivision.org
Yahoo Group Moderator	Pete Steinmetz	760-943-0590	psrsandiego-owner@yahoogroups.com
Publicity:	Byron Densford	619-456-9543	publicity@sandiegodivision.org

Mail Hook

The "Mail Hook" is the official publication of the San Diego Division, Pacific Southwest Region, National Model Railroad Association (NMRA®), and is published quarterly in San Diego, California. The "Mail Hook" is available to all members of the NMRA® who live in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Responsibility: Except for official reports, all opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the San Diego Division or its parent organizations.

Subscriptions: The "Mail Hook" is available in hard copy (paper) by subscription at the following rates: \$6/year for NMRA® members, \$10/year for non-NMRA® members, and is mailed First Class.

Delivery: The "Mail Hook" is available in hard copy (paper) format through paid subscription and at San Diego Division events. Normal distribution is through email delivery or on the Division and PSR websites.

Submissions: Contributions of articles on any railroad or model railroading topic of interest to the membership are welcome. There is no compensation, but published articles can be credited to the NMRA® Author Achievement Certificate. If you are interested in submitting articles, event information, or other information of interest to members of the Division, please follow these guidelines:

1. Preferred method is by email to the editor, with the submission attached as a text document. Also accepted are: text document on diskette, printout from laser or ink jet printer, or typed using new ribbon.
2. Keep in mind that submissions may be edited for length or formatting, or not used, at the discretion of the editor.
3. Submission deadlines for publication: January 2, April 1, July 1, and October 1.
4. If you wish submission materials returned (i.e., photos), please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your submission.

From the Editor...

What a great Spring it's been! There've been so many railroad-related events I haven't been able to keep up. And this issue reflects some of that activity, with more modeling articles than I've had in some time. Not only that, but the summer and into the fall seem to be on the same track.

Alex de Koster's HO Scale Layout in an N Scale Garage is amazing! First of all, to come up with the idea, then to execute it as he has. I think you'll really enjoy this.

Bruce Deck shares some information about a new scale you can use to make weighting your cars to National Model Railroad Association Recommended Practices a part of your railroad operations. The item he introduces allows you to place the scale anywhere on your layout and have the read-out at your workbench.

Pete Steinmetz, the new Division Clinic Chair, has done a fantastic job of setting up clinics for the next couple of meets, and they promise to be interesting. Great subject, great presenters – way to go, Pete!

I missed Club Car articles from some of you this time. I hope you can contribute next time. Be sure to check the publication deadlines in the left column. I usually send out one reminder as the deadline approaches, but I don't have the time to follow up with each of you. Your help on this is greatly appreciated.

I hope many of you can take advantage of some of the great opportunities that will be available in Southern California this year for sharing information about model railroading. The Big Train Show, the National Narrow Gauge Convention, and the Pacific Southwest Region Convention are all in SoCal between now and October. See you there!

Model Railroad Clubs in San Diego

San Diego Model Railroad Museum

Balboa Park, San Diego

Info: www.sdmodelrailroadm.com

La Mesa Model Railroad Club (HO)

Info: LaMesaClub@att.net

San Diego 3-Railers (O)

Info: (858) 538-0930

San Diego Model Railroad Club (HO & O)

Info: www.sdmrrc.org

San Diego Society of N Scale (N)

Info: www.sdsons.org

North County Model Railroad Society (HO)

*If you would like your club listed, contact
the Club Liason, San Diego Division*

Oceanside. Info: (760) 722-7366 www.ncmrs.org

Poway Station All Scale Modular Club

Info: www.powystation.org

San Diego Free-Mo (HO)

<http://sdfreemo.org/>

San Diego Garden Railway Society

Info: www.sdgrs.com

San Diego S-Gaugers

Info: <http://sites.google.com/site/sdsgaugers/Home>

Short Track Railroad Club (N)

Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, Vista

Info: www.shorttrackrr.org

ZoCal Group (Z)

Info: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ZoCal>

Online - Web Sites of Interest

NMRA: www.nmra.org

PSR: www.psrnmra.org

NMRA National Convention <http://www.gr2012.org/>

San Diego Division: <http://www.sandiegodivision.org/>

Arizona Division: www.azdiv-nmra.org

Cajon Division: www.cajondiv.org

Los Angeles Division: www.ladiv-nmra.org/

San Diego Model Railroad Museum: www.sdmodelrailroadm.com

San Diego Rail: www.sandiegorail.com



MONSTER

model & laser works

The Monster is in the Details

<http://monstermodelworks.com/>

REED'S HOBBY SHOP

• Exclusively Trains •



Steve Bovee, Owner

www.reeds-hobbies.com

E-mail: reeds@abac.com

8039 La Mesa Blvd. La Mesa, CA 91941
(619) 464-1672 Fax (619) 464-6087

HOBBY CENTRAL

www.hobby101.com

858-693-0373

"San Diego's Ultimate Hobby Store"

9705 Carroll Centre Road, Suite 103 • San Diego, CA 92126
Email: hobbycentral@hotmail.com



San Diego Model Railroad Museum

World's Largest Operating Model Railroad
Museum

1649 El Prado, Balboa Park

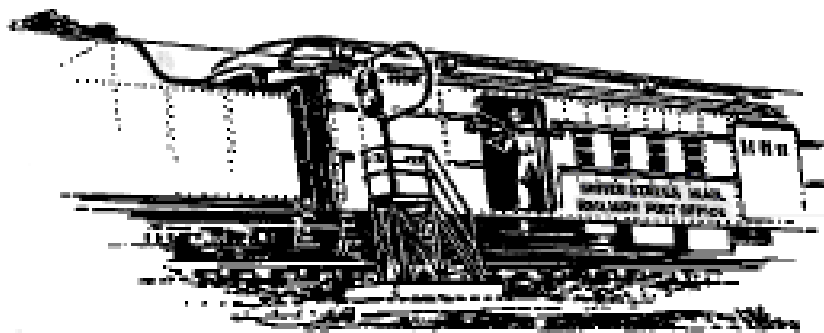
Open to the Public

Tuesday through Friday 11:00 - 4:00

Saturday - Sunday 11:00 - 5:00

Admission: Adults \$8, Students \$3, Seniors \$6

Military \$4, under 15 free; first Tuesdays free to all



MAIL HOOK

LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST NEWS!

- HO Layout in an N scale Garage!
 - Upcoming Layout Tours!
 - Meets, Meets, Meets and Clinics!
- Look Inside!



MAIL HOOK

c/o Gary Robinson, Editor
2319 Conway Drive
Escondido, CA 92026



A quarterly publication of the **San Diego
Division** of the **Pacific Southwest Region**
of the **National Model Railroad Association**