



# MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

JULY 2003

## A Very Successful Spring Swapmeet and Division Meet

This year has been a very active one for the members of the San Diego Division. The monthly mini-meet layout visits are proving very popular, and the Annual Spring Swapmeet and Division Meet was quite successful. Coming up are the Summer Meet & Picnic, and the layout tours are continuing with one for each month through the end of the year. Lots of modelling, socializing and generally having a good time are in store for all.

The Spring Swapmeet and Division Meet were held at the Poway Community Center, hosted by the Poway Station All Scale Modular Club. The club did a nice

job in setting up the facility, with plenty of tables for people to spread their "stuff" on, and room to walk. The club had a couple of modules on hand (a 'G' scale trestle layout, and an HO layout),

there was a crowd of buyers and lookers, and everyone seemed to have a good time.

The Spring Meet is the official "Annual Meeting" of the Division. Every other year elections are held for the positions of Superintendent and Clerk/Paymaster for two year terms. A quorum of members being present, Ben Sevier was elected to the position of Superintendent, and Don Fowler was elected to the position of Clerk/Paymaster by voice vote. A Division business meeting was held, with reports

presented by Rodger Gredvig, Division Director, Paul Schmitt, the outgoing Clerk/Paymaster, and Dave Balsler, Mini-Meet Chairman. Afterwards a clinic was presented by Gary Robinson on a truck to rail logging transfer facility, which was well done and very interesting.

There were three well attended Mini-Meet layout tours during this past quarter. The average attendance has been 20, with everyone having a good time, and agreeing that it is quite interesting to see (and often run) layouts that help to answer the questions of "How does" and "What would

happen if".

Dave Balsler has been doing a great job of setting these tours up, and has more ready for you to attend - see his article inside. We have been inviting all NMRA members



A Successful Swapmeet!

(PSR members or not) to these meets, and you are encouraged to invite any model railroaders you know, NMRA member or not - we think they will have a good time and learn a lot about this hobby (and teach us a few things, as well).

Coming up in August is the Annual Division Summer Meet and Picnic at Rohr Park, sponsored by the Chula Vista Live Steamers. This is always great fun, with games, food and rides behind live steam! Bring your family, and we'll see you there!

## LAYOUT MEETS & TOURS

By David Balser, Layout Tour Chairman

We have another five fantastic Mini-Meets to round out the year in August, September, October, November, and December thanks to Tom McCammant, Jay Styron, "The Thursday Jazz and Pie Society", Mike Komisinski, and Dick Trotter.

Tom is modeling the Southern Pacific in the steam era and his railroad features a great collection of the famous "Cab Forwards". Tom is a master craftsman and his rolling stock, track work, buildings, and electrical systems all look and work flawlessly. His railroad is in a special room built in his house and although the scenery is not complete, this is one of the nicest model railroads in the county. A beautiful roundhouse and fully indexed turntable move the big steamers in and out the yard servicing tracks.

Jay Styron, a member of the La Mesa model railroad club, is building a prototype model of the Fryant branch of the Southern Pacific near the Fresno area. He also has built a special room on his house to build his railroad and all of the track work is in and a DCC system is used to move beautifully built prototype locomotives and rolling stock around the layout. Jay has built some very nice benchwork with the fascia extending all the way to the floor giving the "Pike" (when is the last time you used that word!) a finished look. Although the railroad is far from complete, it is well worth seeing a great piece of work in progress.

"The Thursday Night Jazz and Pie Society" is a five year project by five model railroaders who meet every Thursday night to work on The Onion Valley Mining and Lumber Company, an HO free-lance shortline running steam in 1935 from Lone Pine in the Owens Valley west into the Onion Valley of the Sierra foothills. Built in a finished two car garage, the Onion Valley is the outcome of good planning, excellent room preparation, careful lighting, a beautiful professional backdrop, first rate scenery and

excellent structures. In addition it has incorporated many innovative ideas such as a sliding transfer table for staging trains. David and his Thursday Night Jazz and Pie Society crew have very successfully captured the feel of a funky depression era shoreline. Don't miss this opportunity to see one of the best layouts in Southern California! If mountain scenery and geared locomotives is your cup of tea, then be there for some shortline operations and a piece of pie. There will be an extra special event at this tour called the "Shoobox Swap Meet". The idea is to bring one or two of your best items in a box that you carry, there will be no tables allowed, and while having a beverage nudge the guy next to you and perhaps swap or sell him a nifty item you no longer need. A lot of things fit in a small box; brass locomotives,

model kits, rolling stock, tools, detail items, motors and gears, books, electrical components, or.....?

Go directly to your collection of "Model Railroad" magazines and find the



Scene on Dale Barney's Layout

September 2002 edition and look on page 72. The entire story is there and I can not add another comment except to make sure you visit Mike Komisinski and his 'N' scale layout.

To finish up the year we will be visiting Dick Trotter and his complete and fully operational HO scale railroad. Operation is the key word as Dick and his crew operate the railroad in prototypical fashion twice a week. The railroad has many fine

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structures and the scenery is some of the best. Don't miss this opportunity to visit another excellent example of model railroading at his best!

A recent visitor from Texas visited our area and left greatly impressed! He told me that the model railroads in San Diego are some of the finest he has



'O' Gauge - Max Schwanda's Layout

Photo by Rodger Gredvig

ever seen and he is going back to Texas to let them know what great projects we have created here on the left coast. If his comments are indicative of the quality of our layouts then I urge you to get some value out of your membership and get out of that easy chair and come to the tours and have some fun.

Last but not least, I want to thank all the hosts we have had this year and let them know we appreciate them for letting us come to their homes and become inspired to do work on our dream "Pikes". Within one week of visiting a layout please call the host and let them know how many people in your group will be attending. I say group because you are encouraged to invite non NMRA members to introduce them to our activities. By calling ahead, the host can be better prepared

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## MONTHLY LAYOUT MEET LOCATIONS

The August Meet (8/23) will be at the house of Tom McCammant. Tom's address is 1704 Calle Jules, Vista. To get to his house, take S-78 to the Escondido Avenue Exit, and turn North on Escondido Avenue. Stay on Escondido Avenue until you come to East Vista Way, turn right. About 1.6 miles on E. Vista Way turn left onto Arcadia Avenue, turn right onto Calle Jules to 1704.

The September Meet (9/20) will be at the Fallbrook home of Jay Styron at 1647 Colina Vista. To get there, take I-15, exit at S76 Pala Road. Left on 76 Pala Road. Right on Old 395 just past gas station. Left on Reche Rd. Near top of hill, watch for speed limit sign. At the sign, hit your left turn signal. Just past crest of hill, turn left on Colina Vista. If you miss the turn, you'll have to drive down the hill to turn around safely, so watch for it. Directions from I-5: Exit at 76 East in Oceanside. Take 76 East to Gird Rd. (About 15 miles) Left on Gird to Reche Rd. Right on Reche to top of hill. Right on Colina Vista to 1647.

Park on road where marked above house, or SUV's can park where marked in field below. Note: access to layout room may be too difficult for those with limited mobility and is not practical for wheelchairs. This is a hillside home, and the layout is downhill and around back.

The October Meet (10/23) will be at the home of Dave Balsler at 2037 Country Wood Way, Encinitas. To get to Dave's house, take I-5 to Encinitas Boulevard, go East on Encinitas Blvd about 3.3 miles to Village Park Way. Turn left on Village Park and to .3 miles to Mountain Vista Drive, turn right and go to Country Wood Lane, then left to Country Wood Way. Parking is on Country Wood Lane.

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## Director's Report

By Rodger Gredvig, MMR

The Arizona sponsored PSR convention is coming along, but they have hit a couple of snags that should be worked out soon. Registration packets are a little slow getting out but should be mailed in the next week or two. There has been a change in leadership due to illness. Roger von Seeberg and Don Stewart have accepted the position as co-Chairs for the Arizona Express 2003 convention. Bob Sherlock, who is feeling better, had to withdraw from the strenuous chair position, but will continue to help as the convention draws near. Some financial decisions had to be made and the Board approved underwriting the convention due to the unusual circumstances, but the convention team has done an extraordinary job in preparation for this event, everyone is working very hard finalizing the details.

Very shortly the Convention web page will have updates and new additions, so keep an eye on this web site: <http://www.getnet.com/~dickg/nmra/psr/2003conv.html> If you haven't already registered, do it now; Sept. 9-14 is less than 2 months away.

On the national level, many of you may have already heard that the NMRA has a plan to consolidate the fee structure so we won't have to pay two sets of dues (national and regional). There will be one fee and you are automatically part of the region and division. We look forward to these changes. Your suggestions have been heard. Please let me know if you have questions or wish to make suggestions. Contact information is printed elsewhere in this newsletter on the officer page. We want to hear from you.

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## PAYMASTER'S REPORT

by Don Fowler

Following is the status of the San Diego Division's treasury as of 6/30/2003:

Petty Cash:	0.00
Operating Account:	\$96.52
Investment Account:	<u>\$14,456.81</u>
Total Balance:	\$14,553.33

The primary expenses this year are the quarterly printing and mailing of the "MailHook", and the monthly reminder cards for the Mini-Meet layout tours.

## Superintendent's Report

By Ben Sevier

As the incoming Superintendent for the Division, I would like to thank the membership for honoring me with this responsibility. I would also like to thank Ken Allen, Paul Schmitt, Chuck Hart and all the others who worked so hard to bring the Division to the strong position it is in today.

To paraphrase the NMRA mission, the NMRA's purpose is to promote and teach the art and craft of model railroading by:

- Setting standards for evolving technology,
- Educating members for ongoing development,
- Archiving reference material for research, and
- Providing a fellowship for members to communicate, develop, & share skills.

These were the reasons the Association was formed and the reason it continues in existence today.

As the Superintendent it is my job to promote education and fellowship within the Division, and provide a means where the members (that is you) can learn how to use new technologies, get needed information, and find (and keep) friends that will help you to enjoy this great hobby. To accomplish this I will need your help, time and ideas. There are many things that need to be done to keep an organization like this running smoothly, from recruiting new members, sharing your knowledge through clinics, layout tours, articles and just answering questions, assisting with meets and shows, to the most important - making a little of your time available through attendance at the various events and meetings during the year. If you are interested in actively assisting with the Division operations, there is always a need for people to fill "official" positions or be part of committees those people head. In fact, there are several "Chairmen" positions open (see the Division Staff listing at the back of this issue) that need you, today.

There are many fun events planned for the rest of the year, events that are designed to help you increase your enjoyment of the hobby by learning new (and old) skills, meeting new people, and helping young people discover what the hobby "model railroading" is all about. I look forward to seeing you at these events, learning from your successes (and mistakes), hearing your ideas on how to keep the Division interesting and relevant, and just having a good time together. After all, Model Railroading is Fun!



# SAN DIEGO DIVISION PSR-NMRA

# Summer Meet

Saturday, August 9th, 2003

Rohr Park, Chula Vista, CA

11:00 am 'til 3:00 pm

**FOOD! GOOD COMPANY!**

**CHULA VISTA LIVE  
STEAMERS WILL PROVIDE  
TRAIN RIDES!**

**SIXTH ANNUAL BOCCE  
BALL TOURNAMENT  
STARTS AT 1:00 - OPEN TO  
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BBQ GRILLS AVAILABLE - SD DIVISION WILL PROVIDE CHARCOAL, CHIPS AND SODAS, PAPER PLATES, PLASTIC UTENSILS AND NAPKINS. BRING YOUR OWN FOOD TO COOK AND ENJOY!

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Directions: Take I-805 to Sweetwater Road East (National City area). Stay on Sweetwater Road (watch for the jog at Willow!) to Rohr Park Gate "B". Park in the parking lot and look for Pavilion 12, near the Chula Vista Live Steamers roundtable, inside the tracks.

## August 2003

# San Diego Division - Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Poway Station Show
3 Poway Station Show	4	5	6	7	8	9 Division Summer Meet & Picnic
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 Mini-Meet Tom McCammant Vista
24 / 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

## September 2003

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 <i>Arizona Express 2003 - Phoenix, AZ</i>	12	13
14 <i>AE 2003</i>	15	16	17	18	19	20 Mini-Meet Jay Styron Bonsall
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## October 2003

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Mini-Meet & Business Meeting Dave Balser Encinitas
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## DOUBLE-TRACKING THE MAIN LINE

*By Frank Tepedino (continued from last issue)*

**Flextrack Connected to Fixed Track:** In my construction of the new main, I laid out several 6-foot sections of flex track around a curve. At the intersection of the curved 6-foot flextrack sections, I ended up a bit short. No problem. I simply soldered a short piece, (probably a 2-inch section), of sectional Atlas track between two 6-foot sections of flextrack. Wow! I think you want to be careful here. After soldering it all together it was evident that there was a distinct radius inconsistency at the interfaces between the flextrack and the small track piece. My locomotives and long cars violently objected to going over this section of track... I had to go back and cut out the fixed track section and install a larger piece of flex track, to smooth out the curve. (Another "Oh, Dang")

**Crossings and turnouts:** In the past I had always used Atlas turnouts. It's what I started with years ago, and due to inertia or whatever I stayed with them. My plan for the new main line would make use of (ingeniously, I thought), an already installed "run around" and freight car storage yard. The yard included five interconnected parallel tracks and was peppered with #4 Atlas turnouts. (#4 Atlas turnouts was my railroad standard for yards). Using this section would allow the new main to cross four parallel tracks and connect into the other end of the main line. Wow! Some straight forward track work and Voila! Oh Yeah? FAGEDABOUTIT!! My 4-8-4's and 4-8-8-4's and even some of the lighter steams just wouldn't go through the #4's, particularly when they are hooked up, as they are here, turnout to turnout to turnout to turnout. Now what? Stymied, I rummaged around in my spare parts box and found a new Pico left hand, long radius turnout. I decided to install it as an experiment, in another section of the new main

line. Wow! Was I impressed. My locos and cars seem to go through the turnout with little or none of the typical rocking, bouncing, thumping, and jerking that I had come to expect. Plus, there seemed to be no irritating loss of power to the locos. (Wow - I thought that lousy operation was just part of having turnouts - no one ever told me about this. Someone ought to tell the Atlas turnout design engineers ... perhaps I will). I promptly bought and installed four, right handed, long radius, PICO turnouts. Eureka! Note: the Picos have different dimensions than the Atlas and costs substantially more. Because of the dimension differences, I had to replace some track, install some flextrack and realign the lead in and lead out tracks, and relocate and shorten some adjacent stub tracks.

**Track Ballast:** When I originally built my layout, I used a white glue-water mix to affix the ballast and track. Thank goodness for that. Now, by using a spray of water, mixed with alcohol, I got quick release of the dried glue and ballast and easy removal of the old track and turnouts. Hint: Keep ballast off the shoulders of the ties. I allowed too much ballast build up on some tie shoulders and it interfered with my track cleaner cars. Also, some times ballast will adhere to the inside, flange face, of the rails - this is not so good. I now try to run an Exacto blade along the inside rail face to clear out stray ballast.

**Electrical:** My railroad is block controlled. With the addition of the new main utilizing the in-place trackage, much power supply rewiring and the addition of new wiring, was necessary. Thank's to the past urging of Bob Schimmel, I used a color coded wiring system and name tags on the many power leads and feeder wires under my layout table. The job would have been incredibly monstrous without them, trying to identify what was for what, and what went where. Even with the color-coding and name tags, and a flashlight, it was no picnic. (My knees aren't what they used to be.) To run everything, the old main has a Sound & Power with about 60VA, and the new main is powered by a Chicago Model Industries, about 100VA. Each power source output flows through separately installed voltmeters and ammeters, and works through its own Aristocraft Train Engineer for remote control of train speed and direction. There should now be no issues with power or control, right? Find out next time!

🌀 *To Be Continued in the Next Issue* 🌀

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## SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

### **August 2003**

Aug 2 & 3 - Sat 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sun 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. **Poway Station All Scale Modular Railroad Club** - Public Show. San Rafael Parish Hall, 17252 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego. Admission by donation.

Aug 9 - Sat 11:00 am - **S.D. Division Summer Meet & Family Picnic** - Rohr Park, Chula Vista - Family Event!

Aug 23 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** - Tom McCammant (Vista)

### **September 2003**

Sep 11 - Sep 14 - **Arizona Express 2003 - PSR Annual Convention** at Embassy Suites Hotel Phoenix-North, 2577 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Contact Debbie Draper, Registrar. 602-953-1681 (Phone); 602-953-0751 (Fax). Online forms at: <http://www.trainnet.org>

Sep 20 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** - Jay Styron (Bonsall)

### **October 2003**

Oct 25 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet & Division Business Meeting** - Dave Balsler (Encinitas)

### **November 2003**

Nov 8 - Sat 12:00 noon - **S.D. Division Fall Meet** - Model Contest, Potluck, Clinics - TBA

Nov 15 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** - Jay Komisinski (San Diego)

### **December 2003**

Dec 13 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** - Dick Trotter (El Cajon)

### **January 2004**

Jan 10 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** - Don Fowler (Santee)

## OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

### **August 2003**

Aug 17 - 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. **The San Diego Model Railroad Museum** presents a Family Fun Day for all ages! Bring the whole family for a day of railroad arts and crafts, face painting, refreshments, and the grand opening of our new toy train gallery featuring Lionel operating trains, animated buildings, and collectibles. Admission is \$5 for adults, children under 15 are FREE.

### **October 2003**

Oct 4 - 9:00 am - **Cajon Division - Hemet Meet** Bruce Hall at United Methodist Church, 530 S. Buena Vista, Hemet.

Oct 18 - 7:00 am to 11:00 am - **San Diego Model Railroad Museum Swap Meet** - SDMRRM, Balboa Park. Contact: Pete Munoz, 619-293-0162

### **November 2003**

Nov 1 & 2 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm - **LA Division - Train Show** LA County Arboretum, Arcadia, CA - \$5 park admission.

### Submissions

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 floppy disk, 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 2003/2004: July 12, 2003; October 11, 2003, January 10, 2004



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Youth (under 20)	\$30.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$2.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$32.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Affiliate (no bulletin or local publications)	\$23.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$4.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$27.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$ 9.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$10.00 <input type="checkbox"/>

\* You **MUST** be a member of the NMRA to be a PSR member

For information on NMRA activities, contact the San Diego Division membership Chairman:

Ben Sevier, (858) 538-9863

Please send this application and your check or money order made payable to "Pacific Southwest Region, NMRA". Mail to: PSR-NMRA Membership, Gary Robinson, 13928 Barrymore St., San Diego, CA 92129

*Cut along this line, and mail to the above address with your payment*

#### Online - Web Sites of Interest

Train Net: [www.trainnet.org](http://www.trainnet.org)

NMRA: [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)

PSR: [www.getnet.net/~dickg/nmra/psr/psr.html](http://www.getnet.net/~dickg/nmra/psr/psr.html)

Arizona Express 2003 Convention: [http://www.trainnet.org/documents/az\\_express1.htm](http://www.trainnet.org/documents/az_express1.htm)

San Diego Division: [www.getnet.net/~dickg/nmra/sdiego/sdiego.html](http://www.getnet.net/~dickg/nmra/sdiego/sdiego.html)

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Clinics:	<b>vacant</b>		



# MAIL HOOK

## LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST NEWS!

- Layout Meet Schedule
    - Summer Meet/Picnic Details
    - Reports
      - Interesting Articles!
- Details in this issue!



## MAIL HOOK

c/o Ben Sevier, Editor  
12793 War Horse Street  
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A quarterly publication of the **San Diego Division**  
of the **Pacific Southwest Region**  
of the **National Model Railroad Association**

