



# MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

JANUARY 2003

## LAYOUT MEETS Off to a Great Start!

We've now have had two of the new Layout "Mini-meets" that were announced in the last MailHook. The first one, at the house of Don Fowler in November, was a good start, with Rodger Gredvig, Ed Hatch, Paul Schmitt, Bob White, Ben Sevier and Jim Thacker all having a good time enjoying Don's nicely done N scale layout. With sound, signals, long trains, some really neat scratchbuilt structures (including a large diesel servicing facility) and lots of main line, plus lighting for night effects, Don has done a great job. Those attending got to run some trains, see how things should be done, and just "talk trains"!

*Continued on page 3*



Trix Big Boy on the High Iron! (Frank Tepedino)

## FALL MEET - GREAT FUN!

The Fall Meet was held once again at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum in Balboa Park, and it was a great success! Over 25 people showed up to chow down on the large amount of food

(amazing what shows up a "pot luck"), talk trains, get behind the scenes tours of the Museum layouts, and even run trains! The Museum clubs had volunteers in attendance (most of whom are NMRA members as well) who showed those

interested what was going on on the layouts, and it was interesting seeing the results of all the new construction.

Ken Allen gave a brief speech thanking everyone who had assisted in the Convention, and talked about some of the successes we had as a Division in putting on the Convention.

Several people brought trains to run on the club layouts, and had a fun time. Frank Tepedino brought his new Trix "Big Boy", and was able to get some long, fast runs. It's quite an engine - and shows how far plastic models have come. There were also several club members running their personal trains (including one very long one of nothing but NMRA convention cars), which gave us a chance to see how the control systems worked.

While this was largely a "social" meet (no clinics or contests) it was loads of fun and enjoyed by all.

## In This Issue

Layout Meet Report .....	1
Fall Meet Report .....	1
Layout Tours - what's coming? .....	2
MailHook & The Internet .....	2
Layout Meet Locations .....	3
Pudget Sound Layout Tour .....	4
Winter Meet Flyer .....	5
Events Wall Calendar .....	6
On The Soapbox! .....	7
WebRadio .....	7
Events Schedules .....	8

## LAYOUT MEETS & TOURS

By David Balser, Layout Tour Chairman

As your new Layout Meet/Tour Chairman I want to encourage you to attend as many Layout Tours as you can this year. The plan is to have a layout "mini-meet" monthly at a member's home or club location. Additionally, there will be other "events" centered around visiting layouts in the area to give Division members the chance to socialize and see "how the other guy does it!" This is one of the benefits of belonging to the NMRA and the Division, one that you will find worth your while to take advantage of.

### March

The Layout Meet on Saturday, March 8th is at the home of Jim Hanna. What a great HO scale Model Railroad! A brief description: three levels, large staging area, free-lanced in the transition area, Santa Fe, UP, and the SP, lots of switching, computerized switch lists, 700 feet of track and 80 turnouts, an 8 level helix, DCC using the NCE system, 20 locomotives, 175 pieces of rolling stock, 99% scenicked, and great looking buildings.

### April

The April 12th Layout Meet will be hosted by one of the best model builders I know, Steve Harris. The layout is the Rio Grande Southern in HOn3. A brief description: two level in an office trailer, upper level at West Durango is 95% complete, helix, hand built structures, hand laid track and turnouts, professional backdrop, RC/DCC/SOUNDTRAXX control, and one of the neatest workshops to be seen. Steve has been published many times. Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette - MAR 99, JAN 01, MAR 01, MAR 02, and an article in Model Railroader TBA.

Layout Tours will begin at high noon. Map links and a contact (phone number or email) are listed in the calendar and it is appropriate for you to RSVP as soon as possible so the host can be prepared. This is a great opportunity to get "value" for your NMRA dues. If you or anyone you know would like to host a tour please let me know.

FLASH! As we go to press I have just confirmed that Dick Roberts and his fabulous NEVADA COUNTY RAILROAD will be scene for the June 12th Layout Tour! Plan ahead for this one!



## MAILHOOK & THE INTERNET

Ben Sevier, Editor

With the ever increasing spread of Internet access among our members, including email, the leadership of the Division feels it is time to take advantage of technology. Beginning with the next (April) issue of the Mailhook members will be offered the option of receiving their issue via email as a "pdf" document rather than as a paper publication.

This will have several advantages:

Firstly, lower costs - printing and mailing costs have been slowly climbing, making the Mailhook the largest expense the Division has. Any reduction in these costs due to fewer being printed and mailed, will allow the Division to provide other services to the members.

Secondly, more room in the Mailhook for articles and information. With a paper issue, the more pages, the more it costs to print, and postal costs go up. In electronic format the main concern becomes the size of the document when transmitted. In addition, color becomes an option - very expensive in print, but not an issue electronically.

As an additional benefit, and one those who already have provided their email addresses can attest to, notices, reminders and invitations can easily be sent out.

This will be entirely optional. If you wish to keep getting your MailHook in the mail, you can. Oh, by the way - we will not provide your information to anyone for other than Division business.

If you would like to get your MailHook via e-mail, or would like to get mailings about various events, please send your name, email address, regular mail address, and whether you want your name on the MailHook list, event list, or both, to: [bwsevier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bwsevier@sbcglobal.net).

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The first Layout Meet of the New Year was held at the Club House of Short N'Trak Model Railroad Club in Escondido. In attendance were John Sigurdson, Jim Hanna, Ben Sevier, Bob Lang, Joe Delia, George Boggs, Paul Schmitt, David Balser, Tim Erdal, Jim Krater, Rodger Gredvig, Tim Woodard, Carl Chapman, David Cobbe, Milt



An Important Conversation!

Perkins, Sam Dale and Ed Darcy. The club members (all Division members) had the layout up and running, with several nice passenger trains, long freight trains, and some switching operation.

Those attending got to get a close look at how

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### MONTHLY LAYOUT MEET LOCATIONS

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The March Meet will be at the house of Jim Hanna, phone (619)444-2838. Directions: 800 Ladysmith Dr., El Cajon, CA

Take I-8 to the El Cajon Blvd. off ramp (it's the first El Cajon exit)

Take Chase Ave. from the offramp East (Right)

Go East on Chase to Mollison Ave. (6th Stop Light)

Turn right on Mollison(south)two blocks to Ladysmith Drive

Turn right on Ladysmith to 800...last (6th) house on the right.

The April Meet will be at the house of Steve Harris, phone 760-749-0423. Directions to 15236 Woods Valley Road, Valley Center at <http://www.woodsvally.com/harris.html>

**See you there!**

the N-Trak modules worked, including some interesting animation effects and very nice scenery. Dave Balser was able to get some enthusiastic advice on how to solve some electrical problems he has been having on his layout (amazing how much people learn in this hobby), and several of us got an overview of how to use animation effects from Paul Schmitt and Rodger Gredvig. Paul Schmitt also got to demonstrate his engine repair talents, while we learned the importance of really clean track to N scale operations - also got to see the neat track cleaning tool the Club uses. Personally, I enjoyed talking to people, watching trains run, and playing with my new digital camera!

Overall, I think this new format is quiet exciting! I'm looking forward to seeing layouts that I wouldn't normally get to see - including those that aren't ready for the "big time" of formal layout tours. In fact, that is part of the purpose of these events - to encourage division members to open their layouts to others regardless of the stage of completion. I don't know about you, but I'm really interested in how others solved those pesky problems that I'm hitting on my layout, or even learning what not to do. And I've noticed that when you get a bunch



Interesting Views Along the Main Line!

of us together in an informal setting like this, people discover that they each have much to contribute to the enjoyment of this hobby by others.

The next layout "mini-meet" is in March (see the details in Dave Balser's article). I'm looking forward to seeing you there! - Ben Sevier



## Puget Sound Model Railroad Tour

by Rodger Gredvig, MMR

I recently had an opportunity to see family in Seattle, one of whom was a retired switchman for the NP (later BN) for over 40 years. I'll relate that story another time. However, I took the occasion to visit a club layout at the recommendation of some NMRA acquaintances in the PNW Region.

The Puget Sound Model Railroad by the PSMRR Engineers is truly a first class HO club layout. Located in the Union Station building in Tacoma, Washington, it occupies a 25 x 80' space on the 5th floor of the renovated station, now a modern museum opened in 1996. Certainly this layout is museum quality and depicts local history superbly.

The RR models the Northern Pacific (1950-59) from Tacoma to Stampede Pass crossing the Cascades. Each scene realistically portrays an industry, historical site, or prominent geographical feature. These scenes are accompanied by a historical photo and a written description inset into a continual panel running alongside the layout. For example, they have accurately modeled the 12 stall round house and turntable that was rebuilt in 1999 and is still in use today. The Bay Head yard is shown as it appeared in the early fifties (today, it operates a cargo container facility). Well known industries like the Asarco Smelter with its huge smokestack containing 2 1/2 million bricks (Of course, the model just simulates the effect), the Leybold-Smith Shingle Mill, the Sperry Ocean Dock (grain loading), Puyallup Station, the Top of the Ocean Restaurant (burned down in 1977) and dozens of other famous or familiar structures are wonderfully displayed.

Outside of town the RR climbs through terrific northwestern scenery crossing dozens of scratchbuilt bridges, highlighted by the great "High Bridge" (viaduct 56) east of Lester just before approaching Stampede Pass. Logging sites and mining districts are seen in the distance "limning" into a skillfully drawn backdrop dominated by Mt. Rainier.

The ground cover utilizes fake fur, steel wool and poly fiber to effectively depict the dense undergrowth common to the area. A sign says the club has modeled 1000 trees, but it must be a typo, because there are easily 10,000 trees! While there is a modest amount of mainline (by club standards) 580 feet, there are 2,298 feet of track in

all! The layout is designed as both a working layout (Digitrax controlled), and a show piece for the public. Most of the layout is visible from the viewing aisle, stepped in 3 levels, with staging yards hidden on a 4th level below the layout. Even the backside of buildings facing the public are modeled, with the back wall removed to reveal complete interiors!

This is an outstanding layout and worth the \$7 Museum entrance fee, which includes interesting and cleverly rendered displays on Indian culture, logging, fishing, and geographical features, with hands-on activities for families. It is open 10 am to 4 pm daily in the Union Station building in downtown Tacoma. If you travel to the Pacific Northwest (host of 2004 NMRA Convention) be sure to see the Puget Sound Model Railroad.

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### SD DIVISION ON TV!

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On November 15, members of our Division participated in a Live TV interview (KNBC 7/39) promoting the "World Greatest Hobby" and "Take your Model Train to Work Day". Marie Ann Kuishe interviewed Rodger & Greg Gredvig (Boy Scout) and Jim Krater, who displayed two Boy Scout NTrak modules and Jim's Z scale layout on the KNSD morning show.

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### ELECTIONS!

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Elections are coming! At the Spring Meet in May there will be elections for Division Superintendent and Clerk/Paymaster. Since the current office holders have hit term limits, now is your chance! If you are interested in running for one of those positions, or would like to nominate someone (please check with them first!), contact the Nominations Chairman, Ed Hatch, at 858 274-2283.

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SAN DIEGO DIVISION PSR-NMRA  
**WINTER MEET**

Saturday, February 8th - 11:00 AM

Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait Street, San Diego

*CLINIC ON DCC!*

*DOOR PRIZES!*

*FAVORITE MODEL  
CONTEST!  
(JUDGING AVAILABLE)*

*TIPS & TECHNIQUES!*



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F TO L: APPETIZERS OR SNACKS

M TO R: SALAD OR MAIN DISH

S TO Z: MAIN DISH

*Bring your own serving utensils - drinks, plates & eating utensils supplied*

## February 2003

# San Diego Division - Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Fall Meet Peace Lutheran Church 11:00 am
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	

## March 2003

						<b>1</b> Perris Swap Meet - OERRM
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Layout Meet Jim Hanna 12:00 Noon
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23/30</b>	<b>24/31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>

## April 2003

		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Div Business Meeting TBA	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Layout Meet Steve Harris 12:00 noon
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>			

## ON THE SOAPBOX

Letters to the Editor

*(To submit letters to this column, send them by email to [bwsevier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bwsevier@sbcglobal.net), or to Ben Sevier, Mailhook Editor, 12793 War Horse Street, San Diego, CA 92129. The opinions expressed in this column are those of the authors, not the editor, the SD Division or the NMRA)*

**Dave Balser, Encinitas:** I want to take advantage of my first amendment rights and throw in my two cents about what you “GET” from the NMRA. In the NMRA Bulletin each month for the past year there have been many comments, articles, and editorials about the price of membership and the value we are getting for our membership dues. My suggestion for those who think the dues are too high: quit! This is a volunteer organization and we do not pay enough dues to demand services. I think what the NMRA provides for less than \$1.00 a week is plenty. The basis for any volunteer organization is to “GIVE”! If you want the NMRA, PSR, and the San Diego Division to be an environment where “Model Railroading is Fun” then get out of your easy chair and do something! Attending monthly membership meetings may sound boring, but it gives you an opportunity to meet with people who share the same hobby you have and to exchange ideas and knowledge. How much value is that? Being able to go into someone’s home and see their “MODEL RAILROAD” is the most valuable part of our membership! I would pay \$50.00 a year for that alone. Being an NMRA member for many years has given me the chance to meet and make friends with many wonderful people in our division. What value can I place on meeting members and having them share their time and knowledge with me? John Sigurdson, Paul Schmidt, Bob Schimmel, Rodger Gredvig, Chuck Hart, Steve Harris, Jim Hanna, Duane Dibble, Tom Mohr, Ed Hatch, Ben Sevier, and many others. These people are priceless as compared to our NMRA dues!

## TRAINS ON THE WEB (RADIO)

Rodgerr Gredvig, MMR

The San Diego Division has been contributing to a new feature on the WS web Radio program, “Let’s Talk Trains”. The station has added a new segment dealing with model railroading. Normally, they discuss prototype interests and interview industry leaders or authors. However, with the new segment that airs every Saturday morning (10-noon) modelers have the last half hour devoted to the scale model portion of the hobby.

Here are some of the subjects that have been and will be addressed:

On Nov. 2, Ben Sevier discussed the structure and function of the NMRA;

Nov. 9, Paul Schmitt described the advantage of participating in an Ntrak club;

Nov. 16, George Boggs spoke on large scale and live steam.

Nov. 23, Tom Ilas explained the how multi-scale Museum clubs function.

Dec. 7, at the GATS show — Del Mar Fair Grounds, the ShortN’Trak Club (100% NMRA) displayed their layout, and Paul Schmitt was interviewed live on WS Radio at the show about their club and concept.

Dec. 21, Rodger Gredvig interviewed on the first of a series of segments on building a layout, by discussing three types of basic construction techniques — tabletop, open grid and L-girder.

Jan 4, Ben Sevier interviewed on segment 2, Basic Scenery foundations: soft-shell, hard-shell, and Styrofoam.

Jan 18, Model RR Photography by MMR, Dan Lewis of Detroit, MI

Jan 25, Preparing articles for publication in the model press, also by Dan Lewis, MMR

Let’s Talk Trains is always looking for people to interview on any number of railroading or model railroading subjects. If you are interested in participating, contact Richard Hamilton <[richard@sandiegorail.com](mailto:richard@sandiegorail.com)> for general subject matter; or Rodger Gredvig at <[pgredvig@nethere.net](mailto:pgredvig@nethere.net)> with topics on the scale model aspect.

### Volunteers Needed!

Looking for a way to help your division? There are many openings for volunteers to help put on Division events and activities. If you would like to help, contact any of the division staff.

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## SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

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### February 2003

Feb 8 - Sat 11:00 am - **S.D. Division Winter Meet** -  
Peace Lutheran Church, Linda Vista

### March 2003

Mar 8 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
Jim Hanna, oartrack1@cox.net, 619-444-2838

### April 2003

Apr 7 - Tue 7:00 pm - **SD Division Business Meeting** - TBA

Apr 12 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
Steve Harris, sharris@cts.com, 760-749-0423.

### May 2003

May 10 - Sat 10:00 am - 12:00 noon - **S.D. Division Annual Swap Meet** - Poway

May 10 - Sat 12:00 noon - **S.D. Division Spring Meet & Elections** - Poway

### June 2003

Jun 14 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
Dick Roberts, rroberts44@cox.net

### July 2003

Jul 12 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
TBA

### August 2003

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

### September 2003

Sep 20 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
TBA

### October 2003

Oct 11 - Sat 12:00 noon - **Monthly Layout Meet** -  
TBA

### November 2003

Nov 8 - Sat 12:00 noon - **S.D. Division Fall Meet** -  
TBA

## OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

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### March 2003

Mar 1 - 9:00 am to 2:00 pm - **Spring 2003 Railroadiana Swap Meet** - Orange Empire Railroad Museum, Perris, CA

### May 2003

May 3 - 7:00 am to 11:00 am - **San Diego Model Railroad Museum Swap Meet** - SDMRRM, Balboa Park. Contact: Pete Munoz, 619-293-0162

### October 2003

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

### 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: January 18, 2003; April 13, 2003; July 12, 2003; October 11, 2003; January 10, 2004



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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, Ben Sevier, 12793 Warhorse Street, 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)

### **SAN DIEGO DIVISION STAFF**

Superintendent:	<b>Ken Allen</b>	760 744-2769	kenallenea@cox.net
Chief Clerk/Paymaster:	<b>Paul Schmitt</b>	760 940-8000	flyers@inetworld.net
Director:	<b>Rodger Gredvig MMR #218</b>	858 571-7118	pgredvig@nethere.net
<u>Mail Hook</u> Editor:	<b>Ben Sevier</b>	858 538-9863	bwsevier@sbcglobal.net
Contests:	<b>John Sigurdson MMR #236</b>	760 747-1152	jtsig@cox.net
Achievement Program:	<b>Ed Hatch</b>	858 274-2283	
Member Aid:	<b>Bob Schimmel MMR #193</b>	858 273-8511	
Layout Tours:	<b>Dave Balsler</b>	760 436-6139	dbalsler@adelphia.net
Meets:	<b>Ed Hatch</b>	858 274-2283	
Convention:	<b>Chuck Hart</b>	858 748-6816	pce@cox.net
Membership:	<b>Ben Sevier</b>	858-538-9863	bwsevier@sbcglobal.net
Nominations:	<b>Ed Hatch</b>	858 274-2283	
Clinics:	<b>Tim Erdal</b>	760 945-7230	



# MAIL HOOK

## LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST NEWS!

- Layout Meets Off To a Roaring Start!
  - Fall Meet Report
    - Winter Meet details!
      - Interesting Articles!  
Details in this issue!



## MAIL HOOK

c/o Ben Sevier, Editor  
12793 War Horse Street  
San Diego, CA 92129

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

