

MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

4TH QUARTER, 2009

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

By Don Fowler

We had a wonderful time in Las Vegas at the PSR Convention hosted by the Cajon Division. There were about sixteen of us from San Diego Division. Cajon did a great job of coordinating a great event. It was fun to see old friends, attend clinics, go on tours and enjoy the awards banquet. Next year is San Diego's turn to host and we could certainly use your help. We hold meetings on the second Sunday afternoon of every month at the Peace Lutheran Church. Please join us and help plan a great convention!

While at Las Vegas, I attended my last PSR Board Meeting as your Division Director. President Sevier reported on changes that are occurring at the National level that include developing "recommended practices" for running Divisions and Regions. This is not a directive document but it will offer guidelines and job descriptions for the various officer positions at both levels. Our new San Diego Director, Gary Robinson, will assist with this. Congratulations and thanks for your commitment, Gary!

President Sevier also asked that our Divisions look at how we communicate, and develop ways to improve how we share information. To that end, he asked the Board to change the

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SUMMER MEET WRAP UP and FALL MEET PREVIEW

We were all disappointed that Poway Station's show was cancelled by the venue, but even without the opportunity to run trains, we had a successful Summer Meet. The pot luck was way more food than we could eat, and the clinics were terrific.

First up was our own Bob Moore, who presented a method to operate our layouts by timetable, without a fast clock. This method is based on "smiles" (scale miles around your pike for your scale) and prototypically correct speeds. Bob made it sound simple, but I don't think I could do it justice here, so I'll encourage you to talk with Bob if you want to understand it more thoroughly. (And don't miss the next meet!)

The second clinic was a scenery clinic by Jim O'Connell. Jim is a widely published author in the Z scale world, and has some very interesting techniques for creating scenery in any scale. The thing I came away from this clinic with was, not to quit if the scenery doesn't look the way you envisioned it. Keep at it until you get it the way you want. Don't simply throw down some ground foam and a couple of trees and call it complete, Add details until the scene looks right to you. If you saw the photos of Jim's layout in

See "Summer Meet" on Page 2

In Memoriam

Samuel Y. Dale passed September 21, 2009. Although Sam was less active with the Division lately, he had been a key member of the Mission Possible 2002 convention committee, handling the publicity that made that convention a success. He was also a Boy Scout merit badge counselor, and a member of Short Track Railroad. Donations in his memory may be made to Short Track Railroad, Christ the King Lutheran Church in Fallbrook, or the NMRA Foundation.

The Division extends its sympathies to the family, and offers its thanks for the many contributions Sam made to our success.

Superintendent's Report from Page 1

"Publications" committee to the "Member Communications" committee, responsible not only for the Region newsletter (Dispatch), but also the website and other future communication channels that could improve information sharing for our membership. If you have ideas on how we could do this better, please let me know.

Because I am now officially off the Board, I volunteered to fill the "Convention Coordinator" position. The Board accepted my offer so I will still be active there. This position does not dictate or supervise convention committees, but serves as a resource to prevent re-inventing the wheel every year. I'm hoping to develop the role of this position so that we can work smarter, not harder. I would certainly welcome your input and advice on this topic as well.

Did you know that there are 165 currently registered NMRA members in the San Diego Division? While we are the smallest Division in terms of members, we are one of the most active with events scheduled every month of the year. Most of our members are modeling in HO (82) with the next highest group in N (30). There are 8 in G, 7 in O, 4 in HO_{N3}, and the balance are in other narrow gauges or undeclared. I would certainly like to see more members join us for our events. If you haven't been to one in awhile, please consider coming out for the next one.

Our next big event will be the Fall Meet, to be held on November 14th at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum. We'll have a potluck, clinics, a Chinese Auction, door prizes, model contest, and access to the great layouts at the Museum. Please join us for a great time of model railroading fellowship! See you there,

Don



Left: An example of Jim O'Connell's finished product (although anyone who attended knows Jim is NEVER finished <vbg>). Remember, this is Z scale!

NMRA's Got Talent - Clinician Search

We are looking for volunteers to present clinics for our upcoming 2010 PSR Convention "Clear to San Diego-2010" September 15-19, 2010. Our emphasis will be on operations but if you have something to share on prototypes, electronics, scenery or any railroad related topic, we'd like to have you join our crew. Clinics are an important part of what we provide at our conventions and we are continually looking for new talent and ideas. We also enjoy and appreciate our veteran clinicians and some of their very popular topics that they have presented in the past. If you are interested, please contact me for more information.

It promises to be one of our best conventions yet, so get on board and be part of the show!

Don Fowler, Clinician Chairman

donald.fowler@sdsheriff.org

Summer Meet from Page 1

the last *Mail Hook*, you know he practices what he preaches.

The Fall Meet will be held at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum on November 14, beginning at 11:30am. We'll have a Chinese Auction following the pot luck, model displays (and judging for those who wish), and clinics. With the loss of two area modelers in the past few months, the clinic on planning for the disposition of your railroad and collection will be pertinent to us all. Use the back door, and don't forget to bring something for the pot luck. See you there!



Clinician Jim O'Connell demonstrates his scenery methods at the Summer Meet.

Director's Report

As I begin my term as the new Division Director for the San Diego Division, I would be remiss if I did not thank Don Fowler, our out-going Director, for his dedicated service. If I can accomplish half of what Don has done, I will consider my term a success! I'm very happy that Don has agreed to continue his association with the PSR Board by accepting the position of Convention Coordinator. Don may be taking on additional responsibilities, so stay tuned!

The past quarter has been a busy one for me. Our summer meet, although missing the layouts we had hoped for, was nonetheless enjoyable, with two great clinics. We also got to meet a few Z scalers who reside in the area, and we hope we see more of them. One of them, Jim O'Connell, gave an amazing scenery clinic. We also had three great layout visits. Ray Inbody's O scale layout was an example of what can be done in a relatively short time, when you put your mind to it. Duncan McRee's HO scale layout showed how you can find space for your layout by sharing space assigned to other uses. Both layouts exhibited high quality craftsmanship. Jack Byers' layout gave us an opportunity to see the beginnings of what will be a great HO scale railroad in a stand-alone building. Jack got some great suggestions from some of our more experienced folks, and the rest of us got ideas we can put to work on our own railroads.

Non-divisional activities included two trips to the San Bernardino AT&SF depot, which is amazing in and of itself. There's a small museum inside, and the BNSF mainline and intermodal yard right outside. In August the event was a Free-Mo set-up, with both HO and N scale layouts, then in September, it was the Western Prototype Modelers' (WPM) meet, which also featured both HO and N scale Free-Mo layouts. Both events were interesting to me personally, as I and other members of my club are considering construction of several modules built to Free-Mo standards. The modeling that was on display at the WPM was astounding. I'd like to get some of these guys to bring their models around to one of our quarterly meets, so you can all see the work that's being done. Come to the PSR Convention next September to see what I'm talking about. The WPM guys will be there!

Also in September was the bi-annual swap meet at the Orange Empire Railway Museum. I was unable to attend this year, but some guys found some bargains, as usual. The Chula Vista Live Steamers held their annual meet over the Labor Day weekend, and the local S-Gaugers had a modular display at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum.

October included the Division layout tour, the swap meet at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum (SDMRRM), the annual Train Song Festival at Old Poway Park, and the Cajon Division meet in Barstow. It's a good thing for me that my wife works Saturdays, so I have time to participate in all these events.

We have some great events coming up that will keep us busy in the next quarter also. The Fall Meet will be at the Model Railroad Museum November 14. December has the GTE twice, first in Ontario the fifth and sixth, then here in Del Mar the 12th and 13th. December 12 is the Division Layout Tour and Holiday Party at Don & Kim Fowler's, and Christmas in Old Poway Park where Poway Station will set up their new N scale modules near the new train station. In January the Division layout tour will be at Ron Tindall's Yosemite Sugar Pine Railroad. If you haven't seen this small, but highly detailed and action-packed layout, you're in for a treat.

Sadly, the Division has lost two members in recent months who both had made significant contributions to the Division over the years. Ed Hatch, the long term Achievement Program chair, passed in August. Sam Dale, a key person on the Mission Possible 2002 convention committee, passed in September. Our Fall Meet at the SDMRRM will feature a clinic about planning for the disposition of our railroads when we go to the Great Depot in the Sky. This clinic will provide tips on how to prepare for the inevitable. I encourage all of you to attend, and drag along all your model railroading buddies, kicking and screaming if necessary. This will be important information for all of us. We'll also have a Chinese Auction to lighten the mood, as well as the usual pot luck lunch, and visits to the museum layouts. Enter by the back door. And remember, parking at Balboa Park can be a challenge - give yourself plenty of time. See you there!

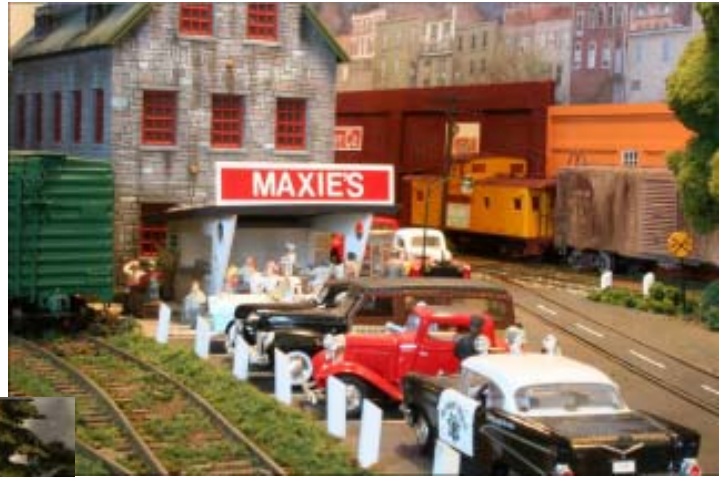
Gary

* * *

Layout Tour Summary

We've had the good fortune in the last quarter to see three layouts that haven't been on the tour before, and each was interesting in its own right. Two scales were represented, with very different approaches to designing and building a layout.

In August we visited Ray Inbody's O scale layout. Ray's layout is from the steam era up to about 1957. The primary roads we saw were the AT&SF and UP, with most of the motive power being diesel. The layout is point to point, and designed for operation. There are two main yards and some industrial switching areas, representing the route from Vernon, CA to San



Above: It's a busy noon at Maxie's lunch counter on Ray Inbody's layout. The parking lot is full, and the crew from the crummy is taking a break from the conductor's cooking.



Left: Burns' Texaco does quite a business with Helms Bakery in the background, across the tracks.

Pedro, CA. The layout is housed in a stand alone 10'x 20' building. Ray has been building the layout for only about 2 ½ years, but in that time he has developed a highly-detailed, good-looking railroad that is fun to operate.

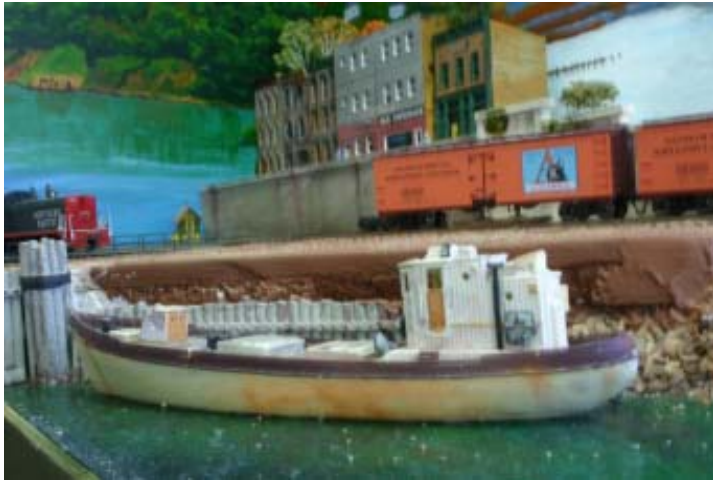
September found us visiting Duncan McRee's HO Southern Pacific layout, coincidentally only a few blocks from Ray. Duncan has created a series of vignettes as the railroad travels from the master bedroom through



Left: A Southern Pacific cab forward takes on coal from the FM coaling tower on a chilly morning in late winter on Duncan McRee's layout. Evidence of the last snowfall can still be seen.

the walls into two adjoining bedrooms. The shelf layout uses the space above the dressers and beds. Still in progress, several of the scenes are nearing completion. The mountain section was my particular favorite, but there are also engine service facilities with a reefer icing dock, and a small waterfront. Trains run smoothly through the layout, which features servo-powered turnouts of Duncan's own design.

Continued



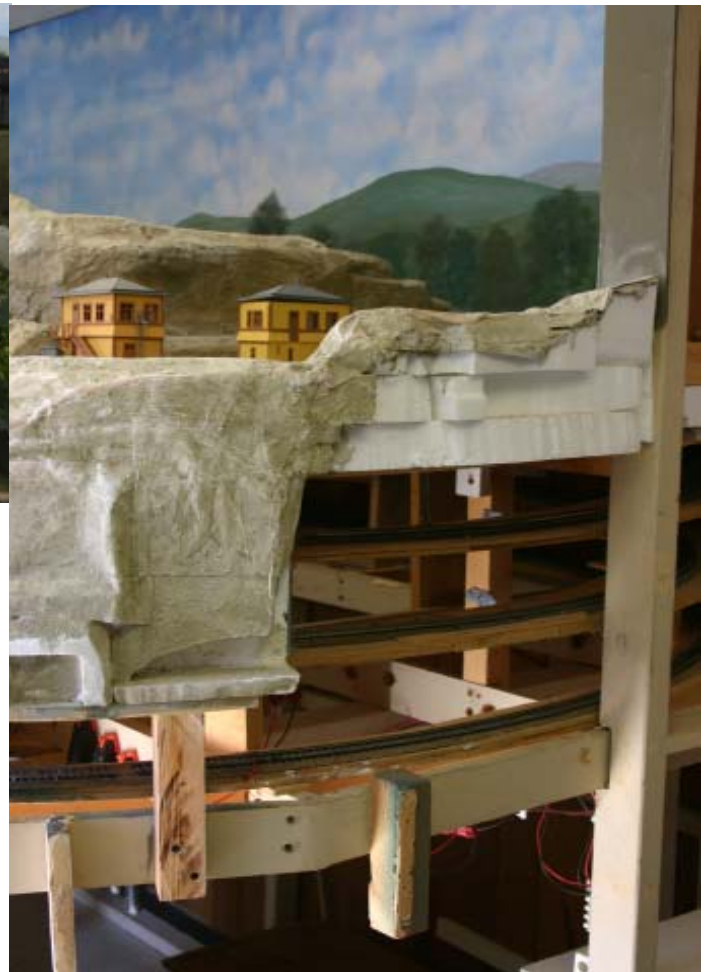
Above, left and right: Waterfront scenes from Duncan McRee's layout.

In October we made the trek north to Escondido to visit Jack Byers' B&O West End layout. This HO layout is housed in its own 12 x 42 foot building that includes a workshop at one end. A four-loop helix anchors the around-the-walls track plan, with a center peninsula that will be the site of the town of Grafton, WV. Grafton included a major engine servicing terminal during the steam era, and Jack intends to reproduce this. Jack is in the early stages of construction, but the potential is there for a great layout. We'll be sure to check Jack's progress from time to time.



Above: Mikado 4518 starts across the high bridge with a cut of coal hoppers destined for Grafton on Jack Byers' layout.

Right: A good view "behind the scenes" of Jack's four-loop helix.



Breaking out of the same old loop.

This is the first of a series of articles on operations that will run leading up to the 2010 convention. Ed

You've finally finished your dream layout. You've laid the last track, finished the scenery, and installed the last buildings and detail parts. Trains are running, but where are they running to? Is there an origin? Is there a destination? Why are the trains running? HOW are they running (what are the operating rules)?

These are some of the questions many of us have been asking ourselves over the past several years. Once the fun things, building and preparing, have been completed, is there more that the trains can do than simply go around and around that same old loop? Maybe you're a person who likes to sit back and just watch the trains go around and around, and if you do, that's fine. I'm the kind of person who gets bored with that after a time, and if you are too, maybe you should consider getting involved with one of the local operating layouts.

A group of us get together fairly regularly to operate a layout, just the way a real railroad does. We make up and break up trains, take them out "on the road" to make pick-ups and set-outs, all while following realistic railroad practices. You can use your own equipment on some lines (after approval by the layout owner – your equipment must be "up to snuff"), or use the equipment that "lives there." Operating layouts include examples from N scale up through garden size (#1 scale - 1:32). Sizes run from 4x8 with a drop-leaf extension through club-sized. These layouts are all over the county, so there's bound to be one near you.

Real railroads have a purpose: transportation of goods and people from place to place. Since we're modeling railroads, perhaps we should be modeling what they DO, as well as what they ARE. There are presently at least seven layouts in San Diego County, public and private, that host regular operating sessions where freight and (scale) people are moved from one point to another, just like on the real thing. These layouts run the gamut from very basic operating rules to full Timetable and Train Order sessions using an actual day from the Southern Pacific Railroad. At least one layout has multiple operating sessions each week, but most are monthly, and one is about twice a year.

There are Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that can help you solve the "endless loop" problem, if it exists on your layout. Three primary SIGs that can help you overcome this problem are the Operations SIG (OPSIG), the Layout Design SIG (LDSIG), and the Digital Command Control SIG (DCCSIG). Let's look at these SIGs in a little more detail.

In our dedicated group of operators here in San Diego, many are members of the OPSIG. The OPSIG's purpose, as stated on their web page (<http://opsig.org/>), is "...to discuss, develop and disseminate ways of operating model railroads to realistically emulate practices of the prototype railroads." These folks know all the tricks for condensing real railroad operations into your miniature world, such as loads in/empties out arrangements.



Above: Dick Roberts, Nevada County Railroad Superintendent, and Matt Bauman, dispatcher for the evening, discuss the evening's session at the new Dispatcher's Board.

Continued on next page

Another SIG that applies to operations is the Layout Design SIG (LDSIG). As you would expect, this group's objective (according to their web page, <http://ldsig.org/>) is "...to further the art and science of model railroad track planning and model train layout design." This group will help you design a layout (or modify an existing one) to provide realistic and interesting operations. Perhaps you want to operate realistically, but also want to provide for continuous running for open houses. They'll help you design a layout that will do that.



Above: Dispatcher's Board on the Nevada County RR.

with lowering water spout and appropriate gurgling noises as the tender's tank is filled. DCC can be used to control turnout motors as well, providing route selection with a single throw of a switch. The DCCSIG (web page: <http://jdb.psu.edu/nmra/dccsig.html>) will help you with all of this. (There are also other on-line discussion groups that deal with DCC. Yahoo and Litchfield Station are two that come to mind. Ed.)

These SIGs have reasonable membership fees, and provide periodic newsletters. They have various resources for members, including a reference list and design critique services. You can get a lot out of membership in one of these groups, but you don't have to belong to them to do operations. There is a lot of local expertise, and everyone I've met in this group is more than willing to offer advice and constructive criticism, or just camaraderie.

Those of us who participate on the local operating crews get a lot of enjoyment from our involvement. We get to runs trains, sometimes our own, on some great layouts. We meet a bunch of folks who are interested in the same things we are. The social interchange with other crew members can be very educational, as well. If you think you might be interested in joining this group, contact the editor, and he'll hook you up. Also, we're always looking for new layouts to operate, so if you think your layout is ready for operations, or if you might be able to use some help to get it ready, let us know. Finally, if you have an operations story you'd like to tell, there's always room to share here in *The Mail Hook*.



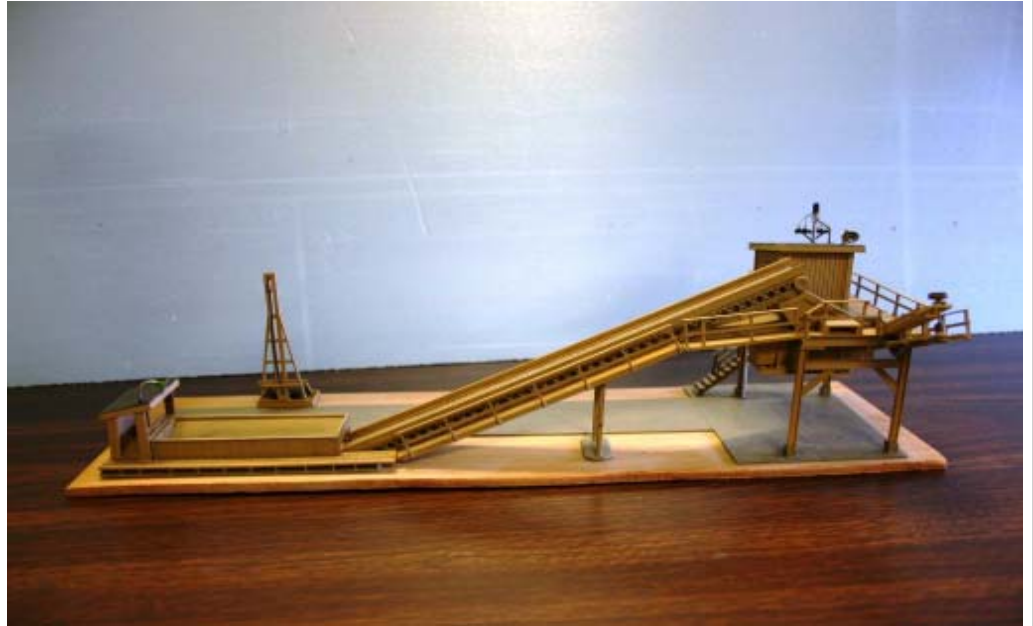
Above: Ron Walker (rear) and Jack Eiermann wait for the passenger train to clear before resuming their switching moves.

Next issue: Take a ride with a Nevada County Crew.

Sugar Beet Loader by Don Ham

The sugar beet dump and loader is modeled after a typical sugar beet loader located in the central California area. I used an article in Model Railroad Craftsman Magazine by John R. Signor, November 2008, Page 58 as a reference. I am modeling the central California coast, the hub of sugar beet industry, and this model will fit well on my layout. This platform is an older and well used unit.

The model is 95% scratch built with some commercial parts, including door and window castings, Central Valley lattice girder bridge beams, Central Valley stairs and modified girder bridge sides. Deck planking, hand rails, electrical service, stairs and ladders, overhead lights, loader conveyor, window and doors in equipment shack, A-frame crane, beet hopper, pivoting loading chute, and waste hopper are all scratch-built. The overhead lights on the loading platform and the loading hopper have grain of rice bulbs that are wired and functional.



I laid out all assemblies on graph paper and used the drawings to cut, fit and assemble the different structures. My model built in styrene and bass wood. I constructed it in three sections: the dump hopper, the conveyor, and the loading platform tower. I used .040" styrene for the concrete base and to mount the different assemblies on. The hopper is made from modified N scale girder bridge sides and styrene sheet stock. The base is channel with bass wood strips for the decking. The A-frame lift for dumping the beet delivery trucks is made of stock styrene shapes. The conveyor is made of sheet and strip shapes of styrene with Central Valley lattice girder bridge strips for the sides. The cat walk is made of bass wood planking and strips for the hand railing. The loading platform is made up of styrene and bass wood. The equipment shack is made of sheet and strip wood with the roof made of craft paper painted grimy black. The waste hopper is made of sheet and shaped styrene.

I air brushed the base with Folquil concrete and the structure with Folquil used concrete. The roof is grimy black. I also used old silver, and insignia green for details. I weathered with water color washes and powdered chalk. Signs are a mixture of decals and computer-generated.



Left: Duncan McRee's WKLO Radio diorama. This scene was displayed at the Summer Meet in August, then seen again when we visited Duncan's layout in September.

November 2009

San Diego Division - Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 SD Div Planning Meeting	9	10	11	12	13	14 SD Div Fall Meet
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	28	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2009

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Multiple Events
13 SD Div Planning Meeting	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2009

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 SD Division Layout Tour
10 SD Div Planning Meeting	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Assembled 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. Division-sponsored events are listed in **bold** typeface.

2009

November

- 8 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 14 **San Diego Division Fall Meet**, San Diego Model Railroad Museum, 11:30 - 3:00; Pot Luck, Chinese auction. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 21 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**, Joel Shank, Brawley, CA 1-5pm Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org

December

- 12 **San Diego Division Layout Tour & Holiday Party**, Don & Kim Fowler. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org
- 13 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

2010

January

- 9 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**. Ron Tindall. HO scale Yosemite Sugar Pine RR. Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org
- 10 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

February

- 13 **San Diego Division Winter Meet**, TBA
- 14 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

March

- 13 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**. Dan & Lise Conway, Carlsbad. Noon - 3pm. Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org

2009

November

- 1, 3 Slim Gauge Guild Model Railroad Club Open House. 300 S. Raymond Ave. (Basement), Pasadena, CA 91105. 11/1 : 10am – 6pm, 11/3 : 6pm – 10pm. Information: Jeff Smith (818) 590-1729 or www.slimgaugeguild.com
- 7-8 Operations, San Diego Society of N Scale (SONS), Model Railroad Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego. 9am - ?? both days. More info: sseiden@cox.net or 619-283-2849. Also see <http://www.sdsons.org>
- 7-8 Highland Park Society of Model Railroad Engineers Open House, San Gabriel, CA. <http://highlandpacificrr.com/>
- 7-8, 14-15 Pasadena Model Railroad Club Open House, Los Angeles, CA www.pmrcc.org
- 14-15 Chula Vista Live Steamers Meet, Rohr Park, Chula Vista, CA. Special Needs run on the 14th. : <http://www.chulavistalivesteamers.com>

December

- 5, 6 Great Train Expo. Ontario, CA Convention Center. <http://www.trainexpoinc.com> or <http://www.greattrainexpo.com>
- 12 Christmas in the Park, Old Poway Park, Midland Road, Poway. Santa arrives on the (Baldwin 0-4-0T) steam train and tree lighting; Arts & Crafts; Poway Station N scale modular layout (TBD), 4:30 - 8:30pm. More info at <http://www.ci.poway.ca.us/Index.aspx?page=620> or <http://www.powaystation.org>
- 12, 13 Great Train Expo. Del Mar Fair Grounds, Jimmy Durante Blvd, Del Mar, CA (off I-5 near San Diego) <http://www.trainexpoinc.com> or <http://www.greattrainexpo.com>
- 12-13 Chula Vista Live Steamers Meet, Rohr Park, Chula Vista, CA. Santa's Christmas Run on the 12th.: <http://www.chulavistalivesteamers.com>
- 18 ERHA Monthly Meeting. 1930 (7:30 PM) to 2130. Community Room of the South Pasadena Library, 1059 El Centro Street in the

Both columns continued next page.

SCHEDULE OF PSR-NMRA EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Both columns continued from previous page.

2010

March

14 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

April

10 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**. Bruce Deck. HO scale Olive & Homer RR. Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org

11 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

May

8 **San Diego Spring Meet and Annual Meeting**. Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

9 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

June

12 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**. Bob Moore. HO scale Chicago Western. Contact: Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org

13 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

July

10 **San Diego Division Layout Tour**. Frank Tepedino. HO scale. Contact Gordon Miller, layouts@ssandiegodivision.org

11 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

August

8 **Division Planning Meeting**, Peace Lutheran Church, 6749 Tait St, San Diego, CA. 3pm – 5pm Contact: Don Fowler, superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

2009

December (cont'd)

city of South Pasadena. (between Diamond & Fairview Avenues) <http://www.erha.org/erhainfo.htm>

January

2, 3 Great Train Expo. Anaheim, CA Convention Center. <http://www.trainexpoinc.com> or <http://www.greattrainexpo.com>

February

13, 14 Worlds Greatest Hobby On Tour. Long Beach Convention Center <http://www.greatesthobby.com/>

14 The California Express Railroadiana & Transportation Show. Buena Park, CA 9am- 3pm UFCW Hall, 8550 Stanton Ave. (Corner of Stanton Ave and Crescent Ave.) Buena Park, CA Regular Admission \$8. Info: <http://www.californiaexpress.net/index.html> vendors <http://www.californiaexpress.net/contract.html> and <http://www.californiaexpress.net/coletter.html> Renee Orton 626-281-7500 reneeorton@hotmail.com or Paul Orton lampandlanternhead@hotmail.com

March

April

28 to 5/2 Pacific Coast Region 2010 Convention. Sparks, Nevada <http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2010/>

May

1-2 Railroad Days (formerly Fullerton Railroad Days), Brea, California. Southern California Railway Plaza Association. More info: <http://www.scrpa.net/index.html>

29,30,31 Los Angeles Live Steamers Annual Spring Meet. Griffith Park, LA

June

5, 6 The Big Train Show, Ontario Convention Center, CA. ALL SCSALES <http://www.bigtrainshow.com/> On Track Productions (949) 679-0616

LAYOUT TOURS

By Gordon Miller

The following layout tours have been scheduled for the coming months. If you'd like to get your layout on the tour, contact Gordon Miller at membership@sandiegodivision.org.

November: Joel Shank 11/21/2009 Sn3

Joel's layout is a rendition of the Rio Grande Southern in 1939, in Sn3. Portions of the Northern division are modeled. It is housed in its own dedicated climate controlled building with a layout size of 32x33. It was completed in 2000 but detail work continues as well as an up-grade to DCC control. Ship-it is used to schedule both a Northbound and a Southbound train as well as to track cars controlling loads and empties including loading/unloading times. It is a very smooth operating layout and a pleasure to run and show.

December: 12/12/2009 Don & Kim Fowler N & G

Don's highly detailed N scale SP layout is one of the finest in the county. Don and Kim have combined to build a great G scale layout also. Add in the Division holiday party, and it's sure to be a lot of fun.

January 1/9/2010 Ron Tindall HO

The Yosemite Sugar Pine Railroad is modeled on the Yosemite Valley Railroad in Northern California. The YV ran from Merced to El Portal. Merced has recently been completed on the Yosemite Sugar Pine. The YSP can keep four crews busy during an operating session, even though it is basically a 4x8 railroad with additions! But then, the Gorre & Daphetid was originally 4x6. Don't miss this one!

February (No Tour)

March 03/13/2010 Dan & Lise Conway HO

It is 1955. The South Fork RR still uses steam locomotives, but a second-hand 44-ton diesel works the mines at Gold Hill. The South Fork interchanges with the Southern Pacific, and with the Virginia & Truckee RR in Minden, NV. Other branches serve gold mines and agricultural industries. A logging line uses a Shay to haul logs to a sawmill at Sierra City. The South Fork has an unusual track plan featuring long runs. Of note, the South Fork features buildings built by Lise, who has added highly detailed, scratch-built interiors to many of them. Come watch some classic short line railroading: small steam locomotives hauling short trains up steep grades to the towns and mines of the region it serves.

* * *

PSR CONVENTION



The PSR 2010 Convention will be held right here in San Diego September 15-19, 2010, at the Handlery Hotel and Resort on Hotel Circle. We're planning now, and expect to have a great convention! We could use your help, though. Don Fowler, the Clinic Chair, has asked for volunteer clinicians elsewhere in this publication. There will be plenty of other opportunities to help out as we get closer. Contact Ben Sevier, the Convention Committee chair, if you'd like to pitch in. "Many hands make light the work."

The focus of this convention will be on operations. Clinics will cover the general areas of operating rules, layout design for operations, operation schemes (such as timetable, car card, waybill, or software-developed switch lists), and preparation for the session. Of course, several notable local layouts will host operating sessions for conference attendees. Many of these layouts have appeared in the national model railroading press, but there are some lesser-known gems included, too.

The Railettes will have a full program as well. Kim Fowler, the local chair, and Janet Spooner, the regional chair, are working on assembling a great program. Watch the web site and the next *Mail Hook* for further details. Web page: <http://www.psrconvention.org/2010/index.html>

Finally, San Diego is a great tourist destination, with several terrific beaches, Sea World, the Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum, Seaport Village, Balboa park and all its museums, and the world-famous San Diego Zoo all within a short distance from the convention hotel. (*Hotel reservations at the group rate should be available after the first of the year. Ed.*)

Also, don't forget the convention registration discount that expires on January 1! You know you want to attend, save yourself some money. See the registration form on the next page. Send a check today!

* * *



Clear to San Diego 2010

Pacific Southwest Region, NMRA® 2010 Convention

September 15-19, 2010

Presented by the San Diego Division, PSR, NMRA®
Handlery Hotel and Resort, San Diego, California

NMRA #: _____ Registration Date: _____

Name(s)*(1) _____ (2) _____

**As you want it to appear on your badge*

Address _____ Phone (pri) _____

City _____ State & ZIP _____ Phone (alt) _____

E-Mail** _____ ***E-Mail is the preferred communication method*

Region & Home Division _____ Primary Scale _____

Registration Type

Registration Type	Qty	Each	Total
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg Only (09/07/2009-12/31/2009)	@	\$55.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg & Banquet (09/07/2009-12/31/2009)	@	\$90.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg Only (01/01/2010-03/31/2010)	@	\$60.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg & Banquet (01/01/2010-03/31/2010)	@	\$95.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg Only (04/01/2010-07/31/2010)	@	\$70.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg & Banquet (04/01/2010-07/31/2010)	@	\$105.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg Only 08/01/2010 or after	@	\$80.00	
Adult Rail (NMRA Member) Reg & Banquet 08/01/2010 or after	@	\$115.00	
Non-Rail, Spouse, or Adult Family Member, with NMRA member, Reg Only	@	\$40.00	
Non-Rail, Spouse, or Adult Family Member, with NMRA member, Reg & Banquet	@	\$75.00	
Youth (10-17, with paid adult), Reg Only	@	\$15.00	
Single Day - Indicate Day [] Thur [] Fri []	@	\$30.00	
Non-NMRA member surcharge (applied to Rail Pass)	@	\$10.00	
Extra Fare from reverse (when posted)			
Total			\$

Would you be interested in helping out while at the convention? _____ Yes _____ No, thanks

Would you be willing to give a clinic? Topic: _____ _____ Yes _____ No, thanks

Operating session interest? _____ Yes _____ No, thanks

Make checks payable to: San Diego Division Send registration form and payment to:

Gary Robinson, PSR 2010 Registrar, 2319 Conway Drive, Escondido, CA 92026

Registrar's contact information: Email: grobbedobbie@yahoo.com Phone (760) 839-5877

Convention Hotel: Handlery Hotel & Resort, ^{950 Hotel Cir N,} San Diego, CA 92111

Reservations: 619.298.0511 <https://www.reservations-page.com/C00180/H00189/be.ashx?> - Room Rate \$109.00

Reg #: _____

Registrar's Use Only: Cash \$ _____ Check \$ _____ # _____ Date: ____/____/____

Registration # _____ Posted: ____/____/____

Cancellation policy: Full refund, less \$5.00 fee per registrant, when requested in writing (or email) before September 1, 2010

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.



The San Diego Society of N-Scale <<http://www.sdsons.org/>> will host a two-day open operating session at it's Pacific Desert Lines layout in the San Diego Model Railroad Museum Saturday and Sunday, 7 & 8 Nov 2009, from about 9am until everyone is too tired to run. Everyone interested in model railroad operation is invited. No experience is necessary. If you are a novice you will be paired with an experienced crewman. Come when you can and leave when you must.

Prototype operation will be simulated with RailOp generated manifests and switch lists. Train movement will be coordinated by a dispatcher issuing track warrants. Two person crews will handle through freights, locals, and passenger trains. 25-30 operating positions will be available continuously. Control is DCC using NCE hand held throttles. Coffee and doughnuts will be available, compliments of the club.

The Pacific Desert Lines is one of the largest N-Scale layouts in the U.S. It represents the rail lines between Los Angeles and Yuma via San Diego and El Centro with a branch line to Escondido. If you have never seen it you have a treat in store. Come, enjoy the experience, learn the operations side of model railroading, and HAVE FUN!

Enter the museum via the private entrance at the rear (south side) of the building. You will not have to pay the museum entrance fee. The San Diego Model RR Museum is in Balboa park, the cultural center of San Diego. See <<http://www.sdmodelrailroadm.com/images/map.gif>> for map and directions. Enter the parking area via Space Theater Way off Park Blvd just south of the Reuben Fleet Space Theater. The lot at the very end of the street is just outside of the private entrance to the museum. Come early if you want a space in that lot. Other lots off Space Theater Way are available and within a five minute walk.

If you have questions or need more information contact Steve Seidensticker at <sseiden@cox.net> or 619-283-2849.

It's that time to get excited and join us for the most

unique display of trains ever seen. Out of thousands of LEGO's come and see new skyscrapers, cities, and of course trains!!! The Southern California LEGO Train Club displays at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum from Nov. 24, 2009 to Jan. 15, 2010.

* * *



Short Track Railroad is sad to report the passing of Samuel Y. Dale, a founding member. He will be missed by all.

Progress continues to be made on the Donner Pass Exhibit (DPE) by a dedicated core of members. We were fortunate to be filmed by the Fox 5 news crew, who promised to return for a more in-depth story. We look forward to that, and have started to experiment with "night" running to increase the drama.

Short Track is open to the public on all Museum special event days, and every Saturday morning. Drop in and see what we're doing. It's guaranteed to be different than the last time you saw it!

* * *

Poway Station just completed a successful run at the annual Train Song Festival in Old Poway Park. The highlight of this set up was two new 8-foot modules built by member Steve Studer. These modules represent a great plains scene, with grain elevators a prominent part of the industrial switching area. These modules are lightweight, and include a "back track" that will allow connection to other modules featuring this track, and provide for more operating possibilities.



We also set up our N scale layout two weeks later, adding members' modules for the first time. It was a little slow going as we figured out how everything fit together, but once we solved that, the modules operated well together. Seeing everything set up allowed us to plan for future expansion, and identify areas where we need to develop additional standards.

Next up will be the Great Train Expo in Del Mar, the second weekend in December. We'll set up our HO layout there. Also that same weekend, we'll have the N scale back in Old Poway Park for Christmas in the Park. We'll probably be setting up adjacent to the new station the city built for the Poway Midland Railroad. It promises to be a memorable affair!

Membership is always open. Contact Ron Walker, at president@powaystation.org for more information or to be added to our mailing list.

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	760-744-6424	ap@sandiegodivision.org
Clinics:	Don Fowler	619-258-3529	donald.fowler@sdsheriff.org
Club Liason:	Jack Eiermann	858-547-4410	jceiermann@msn.com
Contests:	Rodger Gredvig MMR #218	858-571-7118	pgredvig@nethere.net
Layout Tours:	Gordon Miller	619-857-6908	membership@sandiegodivision.org
<u>Mail Hook</u> Editor:	Gary Robinson	760-839-5877	mailhook@sandiegodivision.org
Meets:	Jim Campbell	619-741-1906	warbonet@cox.net
Member Aid:	Bob Schimmel MMR #193	858-273-8511	
Membership:	Gordon Miller	619-857-6908	membership@sandiegodivision.org
Nominations:	(vacant)		
Publicity:	(vacant)		

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

Wow, what an issue! When I began to assemble the first galleys, I didn't think I could fill the original ten pages. Turns out, the print issue was 14, and this web issue is 16!

This issue begins a series of articles on operations, leading up to the convention in September. The theme of the convention will be operations, and this series will introduce those of you who may not be into it to what some of us are doing.

We have the Fall Meet coming up, too. It's always fun to visit the San Diego Model Railroad Museum (SDMRRM), and this time we'll have an important clinic on planning for the ultimate disposition of your railroad collection and layout when the inevitable happens. Don't leave it for your heirs, they'll be nervous about doing the right thing, and it will cause them a lot of stress. Make it easy on them, learn how to plan ahead.

Several division members are actively pursuing their Master Model Railroader designation, and we're fortunate to have an article by Don Ham about one of the models he built for the program. I'd like to see more of this from more of you. I know you're all building and doing. Write something up, I'll help you with the editing, and photography if necessary.

November is Model Railroading Month. Take in an activity somewhere, and introduce someone to this wonderful hobby! It's a great time of year to bring your children and grandchildren to an event. The SDMRRM will have trains running all month, and the special Lego display is always a hit with the kids! It will open November 24 and continue through January 15. Bring the kids to see the toys, and stay to see the scale models for yourself.

Apologies to Paul Schmitt on two counts. First, I'd misspelled his name (it's now correct), then I incorrectly credited his excellent railway gun to Frank Tepedino in the last issue. Apology also to Steve Harris, whose RGS layout was described as a D&RGW layout. I should have known better!

Happy holidays to all!

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

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

North County Model Railroad Society (HO)

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

Poway Station All Scale Modular Club

Info: www.powystation.org

Short Track Railroad Club (N)

Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, Vista

Info: www.shorttrackrr.org

San Diego Garden Railway Society

Info: www.sdgrs.com

ZoCal Group (Z)

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

San Diego S-Gaugers

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

Online - Web Sites of Interest

NMRA: www.nmra.org

PSR: www.psrnmra.org

NMRA National Convention <http://www.nmra75.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



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Military \$2.50, Tuesdays free to all