

# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION DISPATCH

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



ARIZONA  
CAJON  
LOS ANGELES  
SAN DIEGO



VOLUME 43, NUMBER 1 1st Quarter, 2025

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## Keeping Your Membership Info Up To Date.

By keeping your NMRA Membership Info current, you guarantee that you will receive all email correspondence, Newsletters, etc., from the NMRA National Office, the Pacific Southwest Region and your local Division. Adding your phone number if you haven't already done so, allows for a more personal outreach by the Division Membership Chairs.

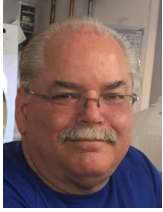
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On the home page on the blue Navigation Bar, click on Membership. Scroll down to the last menu choice, Request for Membership Info Changes, click on that choice. Complete and submit the form to request changes to your Membership Info.

If you have trouble completing and submitting the Change form, please contact your Division Membership Chair for help.





## PSR President

Joel Morse, President

### From the Brass Hat

Some news about me. I retired on January 15, 2025, and I've been in south Florida (Boynton Beach) since mid-January and I'll be here until mid-April, enjoying the Florida winter weather. My younger sister and I purchased the house in 2022; she lives here full time (my other two sisters live nearby as well), and my wife and I plan on visiting for extended periods over the next few years.

Last year I used the NMRA National website to find other NMRA members in the area and I was lucky enough to meet MMR #305 Al Sohl and his local crew, many of whom are originally from my home turf, Long Island, NY (so I fit right in). His crew meets every Tuesday afternoon at his home for train talk and informal ops on his fantastic On30 Western Bay Railroad, set in the mountains of Colorado in 1939 in a 950 square foot special built home extension ([www.westernbayrailroad.org](http://www.westernbayrailroad.org)). Last year I attended a couple of meetings and got a chance to operate; this year I've already visited a couple of times, attended a mini meet at his home (where I gave one of the four clinics presented that day), renewed my friendships from last year and met new model railroaders and operated the railroad. As a side benefit, one of the guys I met at Al's is a member of the nearby Treasure Coast Model Railroad Club ([www.tcmrr.org](http://www.tcmrr.org)) and he invited me to see and run on the club's excellent 1,500 square foot HO club layout.

I expected to keep my model railroading habit fed by engaging with the local model railroading community while here in Florida along with working on a few kits I brought along to build while I'm here, which I have yet to start. Besides having several obligations during the first few weeks of my visit, the biggest challenge to moving forward with the kits is that I discovered what it is like to live in a hobby shop desert! Let's be clear, I'm really spoiled when it comes to hobby shop

availability; I live about 10 minutes from Arnie's Trains in Westminster and 20 minutes from the Train Crossing in Costa Mesa and Brookhurst Hobbies in Garden Grove. So, I can find what I need close by. No such opportunity here! There are a few RC shops in a ½ hour radius, but no "hobby shops", with a variety of paints or MRR details, any closer than about an hour. And so, I've been spending my time on-line and driving around trying to find a source for "DL&W Green" and other necessary colors, without being able to see them in person. I never realized how sparse the choices are at Hobby Lobby and Michael's for spray paints in colors and brands suitable for model railroad projects (I eventually learned that Walmart carries Tamiya spray paint, but too late to help this time). The result is that I'm extremely thankful that I can go to a "brick and mortar" hobby shop on Saturday afternoon and bring home what I need and get started on the current project, instead of spending hours online and then waiting a week for items to show up. The point of this story? Sure, shopping online for model railroading supplies can be cheaper, but once you add in the shipping and the waiting time, did you really save a lot of money? I suggest instead that you support your local hobby shop as often as you can and do your part to ensure that they will be there next Saturday when you need that item to start or finish your latest project.



## PSR Vice President

Frank Kenny, Vice President

The NMRA, like any volunteer organization, is always starved for activities as well as new members. Both are handled by volunteers. It's a never ending requirement for any organization such as ours and it falls on every member, leadership and otherwise. The NMRA has always been in a "recruiting" mode to bring in new members and this won't change. Recruiting and events is where I see myself helping the NMRA and get ready, I'm going to ask for your help! Don't worry, it's an easy ask. But first, let's look at my view.

*Continued on page 3*





### PSR Vice President

Frank Kenny, Vice President

First, several of the Divisions have been hosting regular events. You can do the same and I'm willing to help. Most of the events are not a large event nor are they expensive. For example, I have hosted an N Scale Yard Sale at my house on several occasions. Even the HO guys showed up! This came about because of the pandemic and it was difficult to secure space for the event and the local club didn't want to do it. Tired of waiting, I simply hosted it myself in my front yard! All of the events have been well attended and fun. It didn't cost me anything and it didn't cost attendees anything either. Well, I did host a pizza lunch for everyone, but you don't have to or just ask people to chip in. Other Divisions have hosted a featured layout open house. Little, if any, money spent there either. Others have done layout tours and clinics. How about getting a group and chasing the prototype? There are a number of things you can do to keep people involved. I'm plan to visit as many events as possible too so please email me with your events as they get planned. I look forward to seeing you.

I attended the recent layout tour on Feb. 15th put on by Model Railroads of Southern California and had a wonderful time. My friend, Greg Harper was in town from Australia and I also brought another local friend, Richard Jalandoni. The three of us started the day at the Costa Mesa train show and then worked our way up to the Valley to see the layouts. In short, we saw amazing layouts built by Clark Bauman, Mike Osborne, Jeff Abbott, and Jeff Taintime. We would have seen more but we had to start with the train show in Costa Mesa so it was a lot of driving in a short amount of time but well worth it! I wish we could have caught the others before closing time so I look forward to another opportunity. I strongly recommend you join us for the layout tours and if you want to have yours on an open house, please let me know.

Membership is my second interest. The membership committees in all the Divisions of the Region have been doing what they can do to bring in new members since the NMRA started. It's a never ending job and they have done well at retaining membership. Yet there's always a little more meat on the bone and that's what I want to tackle, but I don't want it to be difficult for anyone!

With our membership level in the Region hovering in the high 900's, I believe it should be relatively simple to grow that membership to 1500 over the next two years. But Frank, that is 550 more people! Are they hiding somewhere? YES THEY ARE! In fact, I believe they are hiding right under our noses! OK, smarty pants...what are you talking about? I'm talking about the fact that at least one of your model railroad friends would be a good candidate for joining the NMRA if they were introduced to it and asked to join. Yes, that's all, just ask. It's easy to think they won't be interested but they certainly may be.

So, while there are membership committees, I ask you for your help too. Afterall, the committee doesn't have a relationship with your friend! I challenge you to simply ask one friend to join the NMRA. Do it for them! Given your relationship with them, they may say YES! And if they decline, don't be discouraged. As we say in sales, It's only a no for now. Please, feel free to ask another friend. Nothin' wrong with an over achiever, right! Honestly, if all 950+ of us asked one person and only half of us were successful at recruiting just one person, we would have almost met the 1500 member goal! What if we were 75% successful just by accident? We would exceed the goal and be at close to 1,700 members!

The great thing is this. Imagine what our events and our conventions would be like! Think of all the additional talent that would be brought into our local organization! Think of all the undiscovered talent that would be brought into our local organization! Imagine everything you could learn from all these new members! It would be a new Region of the NMRA like nothing we have ever had before!

*Continued on page 4*







## PSR Vice President

Frank Kenny, Vice President

So there you go, I've put out the challenge for you to ask one new person to join the NMRA. Will you accept? Please feel free to share your successes with me and contact me with any questions you may have. I'm happy to help you! And by the way, if you are wondering what you would promote as the benefits of the NMRA then look no further than the NMRA Membership page online. All the details are there! And if you are one who needs more motivation, I have a bribe...a \$100 gift card with your name on it for the person in the Region who recruits the most new members by 12/31/25! LET'S GO! Invite someone now and register them in the NMRA!



## Cajon

Harold Helland, Director

The Cajon Division is responsible for the 2025 Pacific Southwest Region Annual Convention which will be held at the Hilton Irvine - John Wayne Airport. The convention, "Pacific Southwest Express" is scheduled from September 3 through 6, 2025. The convention will feature modular railroads at the hotel which will include operating sessions, home layout tours, prototype tours, home operating sessions, numerous clinics, general interest activities, and an Awards Banquet. Currently most of our clinicians are from outside of the Pacific Southwest Region. Please encourage your division members to consider presenting a clinic. There will be opportunities to find something new for your home model railroad from Silent Auction, Swap Meet, Hobo Auction, or the Vendors Booths. The convention will conclude with the usual Awards Banquet with our guest speaker Cinthia Priest, Editor of the NMRA Magazine. We are planning four days packed with model railroad fun.

Prototype Tours include Los Angeles Union Station and the Southern California Railway Museum. In addition to the normal fun at the Southern California Railway Museum, we will be focusing on Santa Fe 5704 which recently joined the museum. There will also be an opportunity to drive a diesel engine. The Los Angeles Union Station tour includes a behind the scenes tour of areas not open to the public. The original ticket counters and the original Fred Harvey restaurant will be included in the tour.

The convention will end with an Awards Banquet and our guest speaker, Cinthia Priest, Editor NMRA Magazine. The NMRA will be celebrating 90 years of service to model railroad enthusiasts, and I am sure Cinthia will have plenty of information for an interesting presentation.

The Cajon Spring Meet will be held at the Messiah Lutheran Church in Buena Park on April 26, 2025. We are planning a full day of fun including lunch, Swap Meet, Hobo Auction, Celebration of Models and the general membership meeting.

I hope to see everyone in September at the Pacific Southwest Express convention.



*BNSF evening at Flagstaff AZ.—Photo by Kevin Spady*





## Arizona

Chris Thompson, Director

Hopefully all of our friends in California are safe and well after the recent fires in the Los Angeles area. This is a tragedy unimaginable for most of us, and our hearts and prayers go out to all those who suffered losses.

The last activity for the Arizona Division in 2024 was the December Saturday Zoom meet. Our guest speaker was Steven Lasher who was a career railroader with the Rock Island Line. Steve talked about his career with the Rock Island and how he eventually progressed to engineer. In our January Zoom meet we had a clinic on using polymeric sand for scenery. Polymeric sand is a very fine sand with additives and binders that was developed to be used with outdoor pavers. It is available at home centers at a relatively inexpensive cost and is easy to use as a landscaping base. It is available in multiple colors and sets up solid after mixing with water. In February we had Steven back to share more stories from his railroading career. It's always interesting to hear about the experiences that stick with people over their careers and some of the unexpected things that occur along the way.

The Arizona Division was fortunate to again this year have the Cactus Clinics conducted by Modeling with the Masters© instructors and MMR's Clark Kooning and Peter Youngblood. The Cactus Clinics are all day hands-on classes like you would see at National and some Regional conventions. Our January clinic was about building a basic laser kit structure. The clinic included a small laser cut kit designed specifically for a one-day build. The February clinic covered scratch building a live stock pen. This would be a typical live-stock pen you would see on any railroad to hold and load / unload animals from stock cars. The Cactus Clinic season wrapped up in early March with a two-part clinic that covered making telephone poles more realistic, and Signs and Lettering for structures and other areas on your layout. There are always loads of

great tips and techniques in these clinics, and we thank Clark and Peter for presenting them!

As I write this, our next in person meet is in Tucson on March 29. There are several clinics planned and layouts open for visits. It looks to be another great meet organized by the team in Tucson. For more information, check the calendar on the Arizona Division website for the full schedule. Hope to see you all there!



## Los Angeles

Vic Cavalli, Director

Almost a quarter of the way through a new year already?!?! How time flies. Yet, I'm happy to report it has been a period filled with many NMRA sponsored and non-sponsored of activities for our (and neighboring) members.

While January was quite overall in the Division, February more than made up for it. What was initially scheduled to be one of Los Angeles' (L.A.) quarterly layout open houses, ended up becoming one of **Bob Chaparro's** coordinated *Layout Tours of Southern California* extravaganzas – focusing on private and club layouts near/around the Burbank and San Fernando Valley area. In total, approximately dozen layouts were available for viewing the morning and afternoon of February 15<sup>th</sup>. I, personally, had the opportunity to visit 4 great layouts!

That same weekend, February 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> found the *Great Train Show (GTS)/World's Greatest Hobby* exposition entertaining modelers and public alike just south of the Division's boundaries; at the Orange County Fair and Events Center in Costa Mesa.

Should one missed this GTS "show", a "second chance" occurred March 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, especially for our more northern membership, at the Ventura County Fairgrounds, Ventura. L.A. was in attendance manning our NMRA recruitment table.

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## Los Angeles

Vic Cavalli, Director

While not yet held at the time this is being written, the L.A. Division's annual *Membership Meeting and Dinner* will occur March 15<sup>th</sup> at Frantone's Pizza and Spaghetti Villa, Cerritos, with special guest speaker **Joseph Strapac** – noted western railroads authority, historian and author. Expect there to be plenty of good times; plus door prizes too.

Ending the quarter, will be another of the *Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society* quarterly swap meets and club open houses – held at Santa Susana Park, Simi – the morning of March 22<sup>nd</sup>. As usual, volunteers from our Membership Committee will be in attendance manning our NMRA recruitment table.

As stated earlier, it's been a quarter full of activities. But I would be amiss if I don't remind you our Division-sponsored monthly *Sand House Chats* are the first Thursday of each month. "Chats" are open to any and all NMRA members. If you've got a question, or want to share a new/on-going project and/or event, consider joining us during one of our Zoom-based sessions.

Last, but not least, don't forget to check the [Upcoming Model Railroad and Prototype Events](#) column found at the rear of every issue of the **PSR Dispatch** for additional shows, meets, conventions, etc...

Until next quarter, happy model railroading to you!



## San Diego

Tim Foote, Director

### ACTIVITIES OF THE SAN DIEGO DIVISION

The San Diego Division holds activities every month. It also issues a quarterly newsletter, *The Mail Hook*, covering club activities, informative articles on railroading and model railroading layouts and modeling techniques.

#### December, 2024, Holiday Party and Model Railroad Layout Tour



Wayne Pierce's Minierton Railroad & Lumber engine house.

*Picture credit: Mike Hampson.*

The model railroad is based on the fictional Minierton Railroad & Lumber Co. that purchased a defunct section of one of the railroad lines in 1952 from the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad.

*Continued on Page 7*







## San Diego

Tim Foote, Director

### Holiday Party:



There was an Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest, Reindeer Games and a gift exchange at Jimmy's Restaurant. The dinner and the holiday games made for a very festive time for everyone. We were joined in the festivities by radio host Shotgun Tom Kelly and his wife.

### January, 2025, Dick Trotter's Model Railroad Layout Tour:



The New Year was celebrated with Dick Trotter's HO scale freelance Coyote Pass and Northern Railroad layout. This large home layout is fully developed and well designed. The freelance Coyote Pass and Northern Railroad was first started in 1972. Dick has operation sessions on a regular basis at the layout each month. Some of his operations crew have been working the layout for over twenty years.

### February, 2025, Saturday - Winter Meet.



San Diego Trolley 1002 at the San Diego Electric Railway Association in National City.

Two clinics were presented: How to Give a Clinic by Pete Steinmetz, showing the mechanics of how to organize, structure and make a clinic for new clinicians. The second clinic was a presentation by Gene Forbes of his home layout inside a professionally built backyard shed and based upon the Stockton Sub which is a subdivision of the ATSF Railroad. There were also a silent auction, door prizes and a model railroad layout tour of the Trolley Museum's O scale layout.

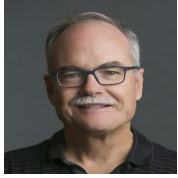
### March, 2025, Layout Tour:



San Diego Director, Tim Foote presented his

HO scale freelance layout Desert Highlands Railroad. It is based on California's High Desert rail line from Barstow, California to Kingman, Arizona during the transition period in the 1950s and 1960s. The layout tour included railroad operations and Ops training. The Ops include a manifest system that takes approximately two hours to complete. The layout is sufficient to run 3 to 4 trains during operations. The layout tour included lunch for the attendees.





## Treasurer

John McGreevy, Treasurer



## Awards Program

Carl Heimberger, AP Chairman

### PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION 37 TREASURERS SPRING DISPATCH RE- PORT

**John McGreevy - Treasurer**

#### SUMMARY:

There were several PSR financial transactions during the period December 1, 2024, through February 28, 2025. Revenue of \$4,135.60 consisted of two transfers from SurfLiner Account. The calculated SurfLiner Region profit was \$3,619.44. The other transfer was the ending balance in the SurfLiner account (now closed) of \$516.16.

Expenses totaled \$1,314.27. A payment of \$1,000.00 was made to Cabrillo Compliance for tax consulting services. Additional expenses included payments of \$43.19 to Bruce Petrarca for Gold Spike and other awards, \$35.97 for In-motion website hosting, \$105.00 to the Department of Justice for raffles held in 2023 and \$130.11 to UPS for shipping convention cars to the divisions.

Deposits of \$4,135.60 were made during this period. Net cash expenses this period: \$1,314.27. The on-line Bank Statement indicates that the Region had \$33,382.54 on 2/28/2025.

#### PSR Wells Fargo Checking Account:

**Region Only Cash as of November 30, 2024:**  
**\$30,561.21**

**Region Only Cash as of February 28, 2025:**  
**\$33,382.54**

**Change this period: \$2,821.33**

### PSR Awards Program Report

For the first quarter of 2025 we have two members who received Awards Program Certificates'

Terry Fearn from Arizona received Official and Civil

Chuck Molnar from San Diego received Civil and Structures

Congratulations to both Terry and Chuck and I look forward to seeing more certificates from both of you.

Just letting you know there are some changes coming to the Awards Program besides changing Judging to Evaluation. They are mostly in the Author section on how to give credit for stuff shared on the internet. Once finalized it will be posted on the NMRA web site.

The other thing I want to stress is when you fill out the required SOQs for various certificates, please spend some time to completely fill out the required SOQ and some follow up documentation. This may take you a few hours of your time but compared to the thousands you have spent enjoying this hobby. That is kind of insignificant. The one thing I want to stress is please work with your Division AP manager to be sure all the required paperwork is correctly done and signed when you submit it. This will save both you and me a lot of unnecessary wasted time.







# Education Report

Mike Allee—Education Chairman

## STATION STOP

Ten years ago I wrote a column called "STATION STOP" for the LA Division Coupler. I retyped "how to" articles from stencil graph pages stapled together I'd received from Bill Topham, a couple of years after I joined the Glendale Model Railroad Club (now Society) in the mid '70s. By that time stencil graph had been replaced so it most likely came out of the '60's or possibly the '50's. Notice how space was saved. To correct an error you rolled the stencil up on the type written and applied green solution let it dry and then rolled back down. Mimeograph was a little easier to correct. Then came correction tape and photocopy machines.

I have digressed enough, GRAFFITI has been around for a long time only the method and subject has changed. In the railroad world before spray cans and artwork on the side of car there was chalk graffiti scratched on the sides of cars by yard crews giving information about the car for crews down the line. Here's a little history, the way/where it was done and how to replicate on your model from a time that plastic wasn't in the railroad model world:

### "GRAFFITI - THE DIRTY WORDS ON YOUR BOX CARS"

There have been several articles on graffiti. I don't think they took the pictures on a railroad. They certainly weren't the same cars I've looked at for years. Graffiti usually comes in two types: railroad oriented, (destination, repair, instructions), and that which is beyond all propriety. You will note that the latter words of iniquity are usually in the majority. If you are offended by such writing now would be a good time for a break. I will show you some graffiti that would turn a Straits of Molacca parrot livid red. Not that I advocate X rated box cars, that just the way it is.

When modeling a car how far do we want to go? Will the judges accept a really complete model? The pictures

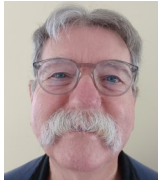
will show weathering and technique. (No pictures were included—Ed.)

Let's take a good look at the types of chalk used (in reality-Ed.). First the regular blackboard style and then the heavy tapered sticks of industrial chalk about 1" diameter. The latter leaves a wider line with a slightly lemon yellow cast, about 3/4" wide (.012 in HO). The regular chalk leaves a mark about 3/8" to 1/2" in width (.006 to .008 in HO). Mostly we see the finer white chalk or the wider lemon yellow used. The fine white chalk remains fairly stable but you find that the heavier chalk will weather down the car side. Most graffiti is clear and concise. My may occasionally see other colors, brighter yellow, blue and rarely red, but never black like the graffiti sets you buy. You are more likely to see white on a light car. Most graffiti is found low on a car, adjacent to ladders or on doors. Most will be found above 3 scale feet and below 7 scale feet. Where a man can stand a write with not too much effort. Occasionally you will see one made standing on the coupler pocket, like "Kadee Coupler" with an arrow pointing down. Honestly I saw one like that on a cushion coupler box and didn't have a camera. Sharpen your pencils, then make them sharper on a fine wet or dry 400 grit sandpaper.

Use the following colored pencils: Prismacolor's are water soluble and some of the weathering can be done with water with a little soap added. Prismacolor white, yellow, dark red, venus-thin line lemon yellow, Colerose 1276 blue.

Working with a magnifying glass may be helpful. Most graffiti is from 3 to 5" tall (.034 to .057 in HO). Occasionally around mill and mine complexes there is car repair graffiti put on cars with paint, it is usually oxide red, orange or dark grey. Paint for this may be mixed from Grumbachers Hyplar tube acrylics using polymer matte medium and water to thin. Perhaps a touch of Hy-slo to retard drying. The graffiti may be put in with colored pencil, then transparent weathering wash may be put on using Hyplar, Hy-slo, and H-gel for transparency. Put the paint, grey to white. On sparingly with and alm most dry brush. Clean the brush, dip in water then blend and drag the color down until it almost disappears. If the color should get too hard before you are done, use denatured alcohol to soften the film. Us a 5/0 spotting brush for thie work and a #2 sable water color brush to blend the weathering.





## Membership

Rudy Spano, Membership Chair

As of February 2025, our Regional membership is 946 members strong. This compares to 947 members in February 2024. Arizona continues to lead our Divisions with 317 members, followed by Cajon with 258, Los Angeles with 223 and San Diego with 149. The Los Angeles Division saw the greatest increase in membership from 2024 with 14 new members.

Each Division has continued to provide value to their members, helping to maintain our membership numbers. Arizona has used both Zoom meetings as well as in person meetings and layout tours. They have subdivided their Division to allow for more participation in local events without the need for travel across the state. Thank you Terry Fearn, Stephen Drees, James Spice, Jim Dennis, Rick Watson and all of the Arizona members who have stepped up to volunteer.

The Cajon Division was very active at the World's Greatest Hobby Train Show in Costa Mesa, California. Paul Stoner and other members of the OC Ngeiners and Allen Kershaw, Brandyn Simmering, Carl and Travis Heimberger and other members of the OCMR were present with their modular layouts. Showing prospective model railroaders what the hobby actually looks and sounds like can bring in new members. Paul Lambert, Mona Raymer, Pat Raymer, Steve Cole and others manned a recruiting table at the show. Thank you to all of these Division volunteers for working to publicize model railroading and to build our membership in the Region.

What talents or skills, time or energy could you bring to your Division to help create new and exciting events for our members as well as increasing our model railroader membership? Consider getting involved in your Division.



## Historian's Report

Brian Neeley, Historian

Brian has received a collection of HO train cars from past conventions. Not all are cars pertaining to the PSR. Consideration is being given to holding them as a collection within the PSR or donating them to the NMRA display at the California State Railroad Museum. He is also planning on starting a per-issue article in the Dispatch discussing NMRA History. Should be fun to see how much he can dig up! - Ed.

### Calls for Clinics for the Pacific Southwest Express Convention

We are looking for individuals to present clinics at the PSR 2025 Pacific Southwest Express Convention September 3-6, 2025, at the Irvine Hilton which is across the street from John Wayne Airport. If you are interested in showing others your model railroad knowledge we want you. Suggested topic areas are:

- 3D Printing, Laser Cutting and Other Computer Modeling Methods
- Achievement Programs and Standards Setting
- DCC, LCC, Wiring & Other Electronics
- Layout Design and Construction
- Layout Operations
- Modeling Techniques and Ideas
- Prototype Railroads History
- Any Other Areas of Interest

If you are interested in presenting a clinic at the PSR 2025 Pacific Southwest Express Convention, we request that you complete the online form, for each clinic proposal, as soon as possible. You can find the form using the link at >

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdEkTYlnT677hBO3XrZXqtWYvCl8wqyRU\\_Q7T9K6RUEJDefw/viewform?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdEkTYlnT677hBO3XrZXqtWYvCl8wqyRU_Q7T9K6RUEJDefw/viewform?usp=sharing)

If you have any questions or problems, please contact us at [pacificswexpress@gmail.com](mailto:pacificswexpress@gmail.com)



## A simple scratch building construction project, the Delhi Team Track Loading Platform

By Joel Morse

On my N-scale New York, Ontario and Western Railway layout, one of the regular crews' favorite jobs is the "Delhi Turn". This 7-car train is headed by two first generation EMD NW-2's and travels up the Delhi Branch from the yard at Walton. The Turn services four customer spurs in Delhi, plus the Freight Depot spur and the Team Track spur, providing plenty of work for the Turn crew. **Photo 1**



1—Delhi Overview—Before

I've been slowly adding scenery to Delhi over the past year, but up until now, a "stand-in" Team Track platform was being used. A few years ago, I decided that if I wanted to complete the Delhi scenery, I needed to scratchbuild a proper loading platform for the Delhi Team Track.

The new Delhi Team Track loading platform was a simple structure to scratchbuild, and it went together pretty quickly once I got started. I'm very pleased with the result. This is a good "first scratch build" project, if you want to try your hand. Follow along as I walk you through the process of building this simple loading platform.

For me, each scratch building effort includes a number of specific steps, once I've decided on the structure to build and done any necessary research. Step 1: Determine the size and shape of the structure, the Team Track Platform area has been cleared of scenic materials in **Photo 2**;



2—Delhi Team Track Platform Location

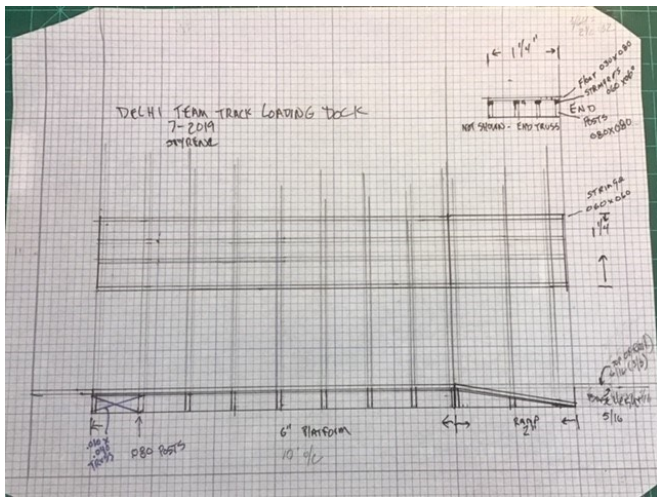
*Continued on Page 12*



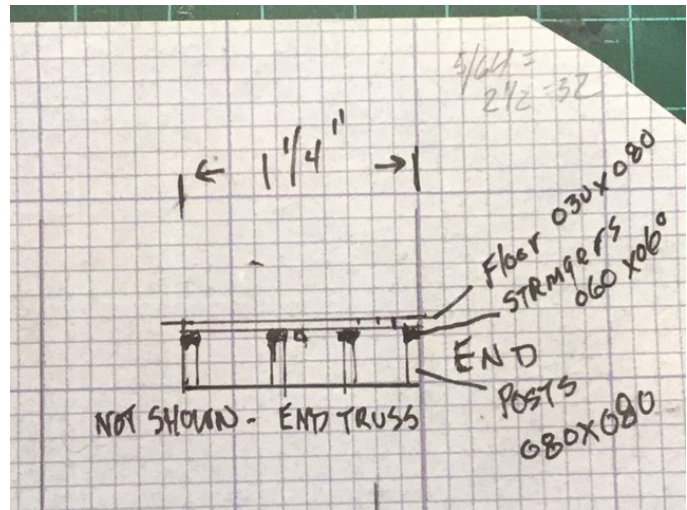


## PSR DISPATCH

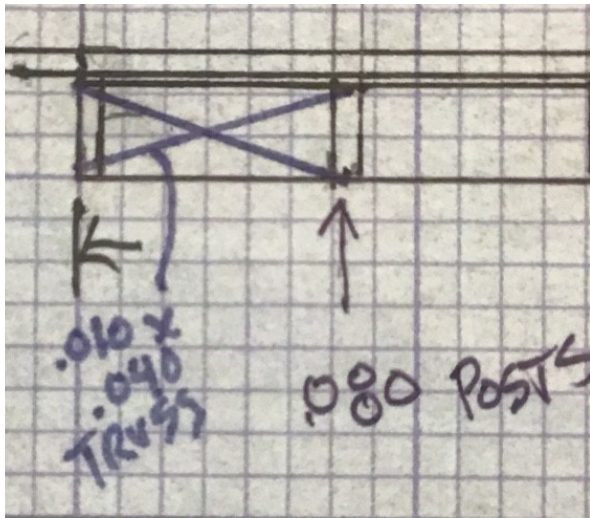
Step 2: Identify the material to be used for the structural components, and the appropriate scale dimensions for each component. In N Scale, Step 2 also includes determining how close you can come to the appropriate scale dimension with available materials. I decided to build the platform from styrene, although wood construction would have been a fine choice for this structure too. Step 3: Draw a plan, I typically draw them to scale (plan view, profile view, end view) **Photos 3, 4 and 5**. Drawing the plan to scale will allow you to use it as a template for laying out the assemblies, an additional bonus is that if you are considering submitting your scratch-built project for Merit Award consideration a scale plan will add points to your total. A to-scale plan is not required if you expect to use the plan simply as a road map; all you really need is enough information to identify all the pieces, understand the dimensions of all the pieces, how they fit together and check compound dimensions. Finally, Step 4: Construction. Note that all dimensions in this article are scale dimensions, so this platform could be built in any scale. All the parts were cut to size using a Northwest Short Line Chopper.



3—Platform Plan



5—Platform Plan—End Detail



4—Platform Plan—Crossbrace Detail

Continued on Page 13

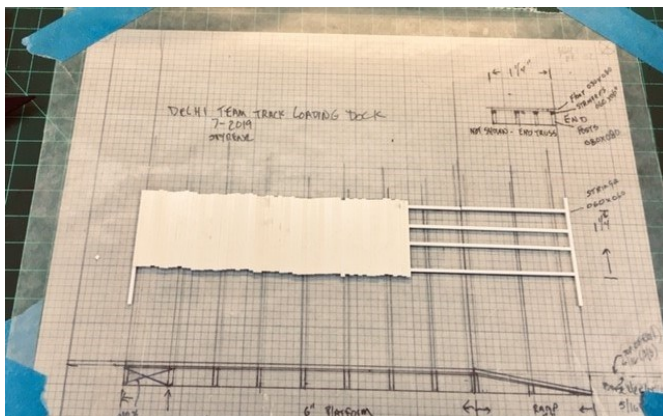


The space I had available for the Delhi loading platform shown in Photo 2 was a scale 17' wide and 108' long. The platform consists of the following individual components: 1) 8" x 8" Deck Posts; 2) 10" x 10" equally spaced Stringers; individual 4" x 12" Deck Planks (sheet styrene could be used instead); 4" x 4" Guard Rails and 2" x 8" Cross Braces. When drawing out the plan note that the loading platform really consists of two assemblies; the main platform and the platform Ramp. I built these as separate components and then glued them together during the final test fit, just prior to painting.

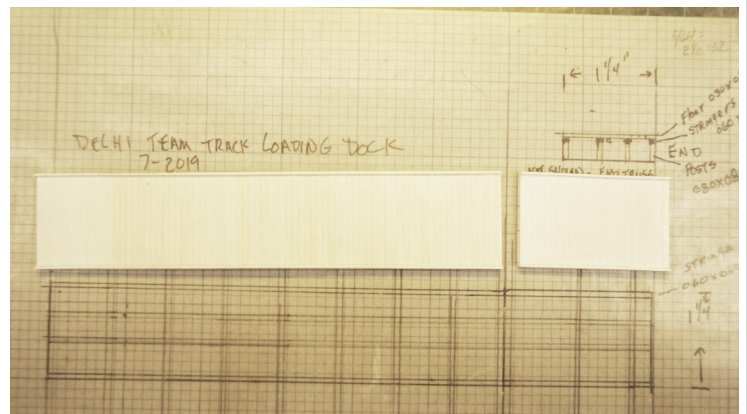
You might wonder how I determined the size of the platform itself and the dimensions of the individual construction components. For the width of the platform, I used the width of a Chooch resin platform I'd been using for the stand; the length was based on the measured space on the layout for the platform; the height was determined based on the NMRA Gauge and the Chooch platform height; for the dimensional lumber, I reviewed kit plans or prior scratch build plans, to see what was used for those projects. The idea of the Guard Rails came from close examination of the Chooch platform, which includes this feature.

If you are using your plan as a template, construction always begins with covering the plan with wax paper, to allow you to glue parts together over the template. (There is very likely a roll of wax paper in your kitchen drawer.)

Actual construction begins by cutting the 10" x 10" Stringers to length and gluing them together to form the grid base of the platform deck and the separate platform ramp. I only used four Stringers for this 17' wide platform, which are (supposed to be) just over 4' on center. The Stringer will support the Deck Planks, and will be supported by the Deck Posts. Since the Stringers are covered completely by the Deck Planks on top, and the spacing is covered by the end Stringers, getting this dimension perfect isn't critical. **(Photo 6)** Do note that the short end Stringers are butted to the ends of the long Stringers; and also note that the plan calls for two separate sets of end Stringers where the main platform and the ramp meet, as these are separate assemblies. Next, measure, cut and glue the Deck Planks across the Stringers. Just a drop of glue on each Stringer under the Plank, is all that's needed. Note that the Deck Planks and the end Stringers are purposely cut a bit longer than needed; these will be trimmed off flush with the edge of the outside Stringer once construction of this component is completed. The Chopper is a great time saver here because there are a lot of Deck Planks. **(Photo 7)** It is critical to keep the main Platform and the Ramp section separate at this stage, so you can create the Ramp slope. **(Photo 8).**



6—Layout out the Stringers

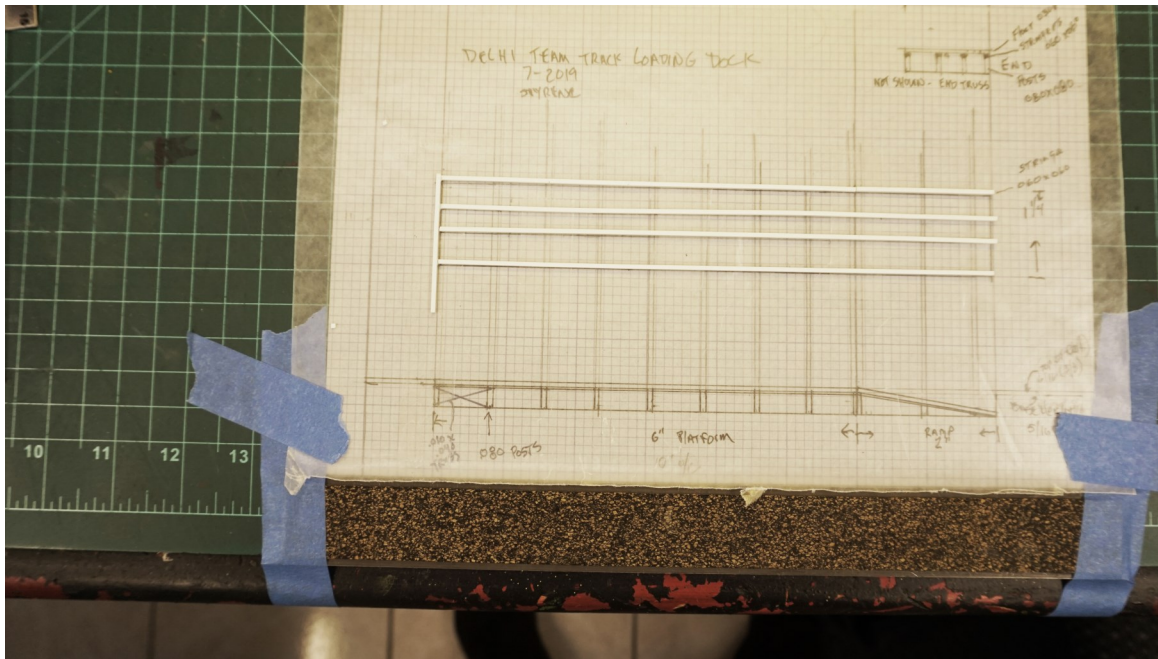


7—Laying out the Platform

*Continued on Page 14*







8—Main Platform and Ramp

Once the Deck Planking is glued to the Stringers on both the main platform and the platform ramp, it's time to do a little pre-weathering of the Deck Planking, to give the styrene a wood grain, or to increase the grain, if you used wood for the build. To do this, I first used 100 grit sandpaper sanding with light pressure, with single strokes, parallel with the decking, to simulate the decking grain, followed by single strokes of the 200 grit to soften the grain. Before cutting the Posts, Cross Bracing and Guard Rails, sand these, by pulling the sandpaper along the length of the styrene or wood strips before cutting into individual pieces.

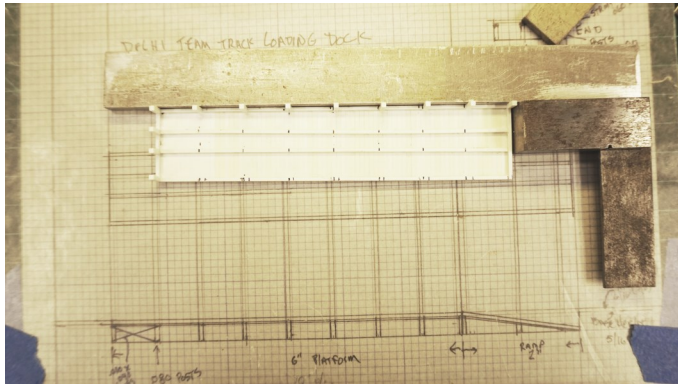
Now let's move on to measuring, cutting and gluing the 8 x 8 posts. A little grade school math is in order to determine the appropriate lengths of the Platform Posts and ensure the Platform is at the correct height when completed. The finished Platform height is a combination of the thickness of the Decking Planks (4") plus the thickness of the Stringers (10") plus the Post height. So, you will need to cut the Posts equal to the Platform finished height, minus 14 scale inches. It's probably smart to cut the first four posts and install them at the corners of the Platform (before you cut the rest), and check that your math worked, and the Platform is at the correct height. Obviously, it is not structurally necessary to place Posts under the Stringers at all 44 potential locations (although I did), but you should add enough Posts so that it gives the impression they are all there. **(Photo 9)**

Note that the Platform Ramp will need some custom length Posts to accommodate the ramp slope from the finished Platform height to the ground. So, once the Posts are installed on the main Platform, determine the Platform Ramp slope, cut Posts to fit, and glue the Platform Ramp Posts. The top of the Posts where the Ramp will be attached to the Main Platform must be angled when they are glued to the Stringers, to accommodate the Ramp slope and ensure that the Posts remain perpendicular to the ground. Once you are happy with the Ramp slope, attach the Ramp Posts and glue the Ramp to the main Platform. There will be a space in the Planks where the main Platform and Ramp meet because of the slope (I didn't anticipate this). Planks will need to be custom trimmed and fit, to address the ramp change in elevation. In N-Scale, the custom trimmed Planks are not noticeable, but would take on more importance in a larger scale. This is also when the Guard Rails should be installed along the sides and end of the Platform. Note that I did not pay adequate attention to the ramp slope, and as a result, there is a gap between the ramp and the ground. I solved this by gluing a piece of .010 sheet styrene to the underside of the ramp and using this styrene to hold a layer of gravel road material, which nicely hid the gap. **(Photo 10)**

*Continued on Page 15*







9—Adding the Posts to the Main Platform



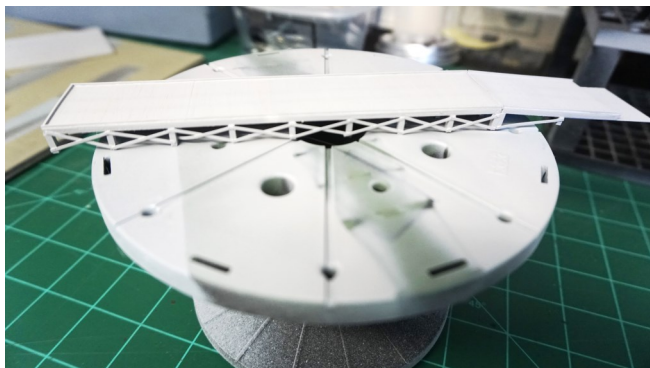
10—Test Fit

Once the fit of the Main Platform and Ramp are attached, it's time to add the Cross Bracing. **(Photo 11)** Again, the Chopper was handy, however, in N-Scale, the material used for the bracing is so thin and the lengths so short, that I needed to create a “fence” to improve the way the styrene sat in the Chopper. To install the Cross Braces, I turned the Platform on one side and braced it between two machinists’ squares, and glued the Cross Braces to the side facing up with a dab of glue at each point of connection. Once the glue dried, I turned it over to complete the other side. I also installed Cross Bracing at the end of the Platform.

When the glue dries, construction is now complete, and it's time to paint, weather and install the Platform on the layout. To paint the Platform, I used Tamiya Fine Surface Primer in a Light Grey Color (I also frequently use Rustoleum Auto Primer – Light Grey). A light coat is all that is needed to create the base weathered wood color. **(Photo 12)** Once the paint is dry, I decided to try Bragdon Weathering Powders to create the weathered wood color I was trying to achieve. This was my first experience with this product; historically I weather structures with India Ink and acrylic paint washes. I thought the powders worked well, and I am pleased with the result. **(Photo 13)**



11—Cross Braces Applied



12 -Painting the Completed Platform



13—Weathered and Detailed

*Continued on Page 16*





## PSR DISPATCH

The Delhi Team Track Platform is now ready for installation on the layout. I put the Platform next to the track, double checked clearances with the NMRA Gauge and a couple of cars, and glued it to the plywood with a dab of white glue on a few of the posts. Next, I added the gravel approach by painting the ramp approach with full strength white glue, and sprinkling on Arizona Rock and Mineral #130-1 (Medium Grey Granite), which is what I used for the gravel roads in Delhi. Then I added 2 mm static grass and ground cover. **(Photo 14)**

The final touch was to add details to the Platform itself; two men lifting a crate into the bed of a truck, a farm tractor waiting for pickup by the purchaser, and random barrels, crates and a hand dolly. **(Photos 15, 16, 17)**. But there are a few more things to do to finish off the scene; I plan on scratchbuilding an overhead lamp on a pole, adding a big tree in the grassy area between the Platform and the Dairy next door, and spreading additional detail materials, such as old pallets, barrels, trash, wood, etc. in the grass. I hope you will try this simple scratchbuilding project and let me know how it turns out.



14—Static Grass and Ground Cover Applied



15—Completed



16—View from Above



17—Finished





## **Pacific Southwest Express**

**PSR 2025 Convention  
September 3 thru 6, 2025  
Hilton Irvine – John Wayne Airport**

**[www.pacificswexpress.org](http://www.pacificswexpress.org)**

The Pacific Southwest Express planning is well under way and the convention will have something for everyone.

Do you like to see home model railroads to learn how the owner has accomplished something that you like? Do you like to learn new ideas from the home model railroad owners? If yes we will have numerous home model railroads to visit and learn directly from the owner. Many of the home model railroads will be self-drive, (you can team up with a friend) and one guided tour of home model railroads. We will have several modular railroads set up at the convention for viewing and learning something new.

Do you like Operating Sessions? We have four home model railroads committed to run operating sessions and one modular club that will run operating sessions at the Convention Center.

The Pacific Southwest Express will offer several opportunities to acquire something new for your model railroad. Several vendors are planning to set up at the convention which will provide the opportunity to purchase the latest in model railroading. Of course, we will have the Hobo Auction and Swap Meet to allow you to decide which items you cannot live without. Another new feature will be a Silent Auction which will allow attendees to decide how much they would like to pay to add something new to their collection.

Clinics are always a big hit among attendees. Our clinics will provide historical information, knowledge on building all phases of a model railroad, and prototype information. We are planning for over 80 clinics presented by modelers, historians, manufacturers and MMR's with the most popular being presented twice. Stephen Priest will present a clinic on the restoration of SF 5704, an SD45-2, to the 1976 paint scheme. He will also discuss the process for moving a new model from an idea through planning, production and finally to distribution. We will all learn the importance of the Pre-Order portion of the process. In total, 294 requests for a clinic have been sent to previous presenters. I am sure you will find some clinics that will be of interest to you.

If you like Prototype Tours, we have something for you. The Southern California Railway Museum has the West's largest collection of railway locomotives, passenger cars, street cars, and interurban electric cars. The tour will

*Continued on Page 10*





# PSR DISPATCH



include SF 5704, which was refurbished to the 1976 paint scheme. If you always wanted to drive a diesel engine, this tour will provide the opportunity.

The Los Angeles Union Station is the main railway station in Los Angeles and the largest railroad passenger terminal in the Western United States. This is a behind the scenes tour that includes the historic ticket counter and the original Fred Harvey Restaurant. Los Angeles Union Station is included on the National Register of Historical Places.

Celebration of Models is always my favorite portion of our conventions. We will include all the “normal” categories for viewing and evaluation. In addition there will be a special contest for a one square foot model. The model must be no larger than one foot square and not over two feet high. The model must include track and/or a freight car. Photographs and Arts and Crafts will also be included in the model contest.

We will end the convention with an Awards Banquet and our Keynote Speaker, Cinthia Priest, Editor NMRA Magazine. Since 2025 is the 90th Anniversary of the NMRA, I am sure Cinthia will include some of the key events in the development of the NMRA. She may also hit the highlights of her Destination MMR articles.

It is time to reunite with model railroad friends and associates. We will include plenty of general interest activities for spouses. Come and join us for an interesting, knowledgeable and fun four days at the Pacific Southwest Express convention September 3 through 6, 2025 at the Hilton Irvine. Register at [www.pacificswexpress.org](http://www.pacificswexpress.org).

Harold Helland, MMR  
Chairman, Pacific Southwest Express

**Register Now for the Convention and Reserve a Hotel Room**  
**[www.pacificswexpress.org](http://www.pacificswexpress.org)**





## Pacific Southwest Express Activities

### Welcome Reception

Reunite with Friends

### Model Railroads

Modular Railroads  
Home Model Railroads  
Operating Sessions  
John Allen Timesaver

### Add to Your Model Railroad

Swap Meet  
Silent Auction  
Hobo Auction

### Celebration of Models

Display  
Evaluation  
One Square Foot Model

### General Interest

Activities for All

### Prototype Railroads

So Cal Railway Museum  
Los Angeles Union Station

### Clinics

Educational  
Hands On

### Awards Banquet

Delicious Dinner  
Keynote Speaker  
Cinthia Priest  
Editor NMRA Magazine  
Awards

**Register Now for the Convention and Reserve a Hotel Room-**  
**[www.pacificswexpress.org](http://www.pacificswexpress.org)**





## PSR 2025 Regional Convention Highlights

**Model Railroads  
Modular Railroads  
Operating Sessions at the Hotel  
Home Model Railroads  
Home Operating Sessions**

### **Clinics**

**Currently most clinicians are from outside PSR  
Represent PSR by presenting a clinic  
Contact Patrick Rogan at: [patrick.rogan@gmail.com](mailto:patrick.rogan@gmail.com)**

**Celebration of Models  
One Square Foot Challenge  
Two Feet High  
Must include a piece of track and/or freight car**

**Prototype Tours  
Los Angeles Union Station  
Southern California Railway Museum**

**Delicious Banquet  
Guest Speaker - Cinthia Priest, Editor NMRA Magazine**

### **STAY AT THE HILTON HOTEL AND SAVE ON TRAVEL**

The Hilton Hotel Rate is \$155 per night plus the mandatory California Tourism Fee of \$3.40 for a total of \$158.40 per night. Reserve your room through our convention website.

**REGISTER NOW!!** [www.pacificswexpress.org](http://www.pacificswexpress.org)





**NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
2025 National Convention**

# **STATION No. VI**

**Hosted by:  
the NORTH CENTRAL REGION**

## **July 14-19, 2025**

Open to ALL model railroaders! You do not have to be an NMRA member to attend! **REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!**

Our location – Sheraton Detroit-Novi, MI  
A suburban location with FREE parking!

### **CONVENTION GOALS and HIGHLIGHTS -**

Our main objectives are to provide events of value, items attendees will see as worth their money, all at the lowest possible cost. \*\* We will honor the traditions of past conventions but at lower cost and with greater flexibility. \*\* This convention will be shorter, starting at 1 PM on Monday and continuing through Saturday afternoon with a banquet Saturday evening. \*\* Note that registration includes all layout visits and operating sessions, and all activities at the hotel except Modeling with the Masters, and admittance to the National Train Show. \*\* We will support all the traditional activities of the SIG's. \*\* The National Contest will be fully supported. The contest will be in a prominent room and will be run by the National Contest team. There will be space for model displays, modular layouts and other functions. Those putting their models on display will have the option of entering the People's Choice Contest. \*\* We will have several prototype tours which may include a Ford plant tour and a cruise on the Detroit River with an emphasis on the industrial aspects of the waterfront. \*\* We expect to have at least 90 clinics. The clinics will be varied, and each will be given twice. \*\* We expect to have at least 60 layouts open for visit. Most layouts will be at least 900 sq. ft. in size running to over 3,000 sq. ft. in one or more cases. All layout visits and op sessions will be self-guided so you may take your time.

**<https://nmra2025.com/>**





# Cajon

Division- NMRA  
Spring - 2025

Saturday  
April 26, 2025



8:30 AM-4:30 PM

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Clinics**  
**Swap Meet**  
**Hobo Auction**  
**Modelers - Show & Tell**  
**Celebration of Model Railroading**  
**General Membership Meeting**  
**Awards Ceremony**

### TARIFF

#### Event Registration

- NMRA Member: \$10.00
- Non-Members: \$15.00
- 18 and Under Free with Parent/Guardian Only

**Pizza and soft-drink lunch provided**

#### Swap Meet Space:

- Free for NMRA Members
- Others: \$5.00 / 6' space
- Bring your own tables, chairs, shade

**MODELS:** Bring a model for contest, AP judging or Show & Tell and get one free Hobo Auction ticket sheet!

**Messiah Lutheran Church**  
**Courtyard**

**6625 Dale St, Buena Park**

**Near the 5 and 91**

**Free parking**





**Free Event**

**N Scale Swap Meet**

**N-Trak layouts**

**T-Trak Layouts**

**Raffle**

**Modeling Contest**

**Snacks & Drinks**

(Concessions sold by Church Children's)

**Vendors :** \$20 Donation to Church

**Contact:** Frank Hinojosa

(714)209-3051

fhinojosa21@hotmail.com

**SPECIAL INITIATIONS:**

- Belmont Shore Model Railroad
- CPRX Model Railroad
- Group 160 N-Trak
- N-Trak Express
- East Valley Lines Model Railroad
- N-Land Pacific Free-Mon
- Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society
- San Diego Society of N Scale
- Short Track RR
- Orange County 'N' Gineers

**Date:** May 31, 2025    **Time:** 8AM-4PM

**LOCATION:**

Calvary Assembly of God—Lomita (Gymnasium)

25501 Oak St, Lomita, CA 90717





## Upcoming Model Railroad and Prototype Events

**Area Covered:** Counties of Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Mono, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura plus the PSR's Arizona Division; also including selected Regional/National Conventions

Updated 3/10/2025

### Reoccurring

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays – Los Angeles Model Railroad Society “work” sessions, Harbor City

Tuesday & Saturdays – San Diego S-Gaugers’ Open House, Grossmont Shopping Center, La Mesa, noon – 6:00 pm

Saturdays – Corona Model Railroad Society Open House, Corona Heritage Park, Corona, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

Saturdays, July-May – Belmont Shore Model Railroad Club Visitation, San Pedro

1st Tuesday of each month – L.A. Division Sponsored “*Sand House Chat*”, starts at 7:00 p.m.

1st Saturday of each month – Gold Coast Modular Railroad Club Open House, Camarillo, 10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.

3rd Saturday of each month – Arizona Division Monthly Zoom Meet, starts at 10:00 a.m.

3rd Sunday of each month – Pasadena Model Railroad Open House, Los Angeles, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Last Saturday of each month – Railmaster Hobbies’ Model Railroad Fellowship Get-Together, Bellflower

### 2025

March 15 – Los Angeles Division Annual Membership Meeting & Banquet, Frantone’s Pizza & Spaghetti Villa, Cerritos

March 18 – Tim Foote’s HO Scale model Railroad layout Open House, San Diego County

March 22 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Santa Susana Park, Simi

March 27-30 – PCR Annual Convention, *Daylight Limited*, San Luis Obispo

April 12 – David Lancaster’s Z Scale model Railroad layout Open House, San Diego County

April 12 – Coachella Valley Model Railroaders Meet, Riverside County Fairground, Indio

April 26 – Cajon Division (NMRA) Spring Meet, Messiah Lutheran Church, Buena Park

May 3-4 – Hobby Show, Ontario

May 17 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Santa Susana Park, Simi

May 23-25 – O Scale West, S Scale West, Narrow Gauge West Meet, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Santa Clara

May 31 – Southern California N Scale Meet, Calvary Assembly of God, Lomita

Continued on Page 25



## Upcoming Model Railroad and Prototype Events

June 14 – Justin Rasas’ multiple scales modules Open House, San Diego County

July 14-19 – NMRA National Convention, “*Station No. VI*”, Novi, MI

July 26 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, San Bernardino

August 23 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Santa Susana Park, Simi

September 3-6 – PSR 2025 Convention, Hilton Irving – John Wayne Airport, Irvine

October 18 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, San Bernardino

November 1 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Santa Susana Park, Simi

### 2026

September 8-13 – PSR Annual Convention, Double Tree Hotel, San Diego/Mission Valley

Please send announcements at least 3 months in advance to: [VicCavalli@comcast.net](mailto:VicCavalli@comcast.net)





*Cumbres & Toltec (Ex D&RGW) #488 K-36 2-8-2 Mikado at Chama*

*Photo by Kevin Spady*

Kevin Spady, AIA, Editor  
NMRA Pacific Southwest Region  
727 Luton Drive  
Glendale, CA. 91206

