

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION DISPATCH

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



ARIZONA
CAJON
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO



VOLUME 43, NUMBER 2 2nd Quarter, 2025

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CONVENTION NOTICE!!!!

Don't forget the PSR Regional Convention is only 2
short months away! September 3—6.

If you plan on attending get registered and make
your hotel reservations!





Pacific Southwest Express
September 3 thru 6, 2025
Hilton Irvine – John Wayne Airport

www.pacificswexpress.org

Two Months to Pacific Southwest Express

Registration Closes August 15, 2025

Register NOW: www.pacificswexpress.org

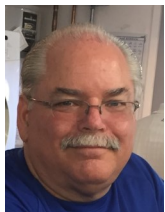
- Clinics covering subjects that interest you!
- Celebration of Models includes all categories plus:
One Square Foot Model, Two feet high or less
Include piece of track and/or rolling stock
- Prototype Tours – Los Angeles Union Station, Southern California Railway Museum
- Modular Railroads – OC Module Railroaders, OC N'Gineers, 20's 30's and Beyond
- Operating Sessions – List on the Website
- Home Model Railroad Tours
- Vendors, Swap Meet, Hobo Auction, Silent Auction
Information on the Website
- General Interest Activities
Information on the Website
- Awards Banquet
Keynote Speaker: Cinthia Priest, Editor NMRA Magazine

Volunteers Needed to help during the convention

Numerous possibilities available / Times to match your interests
One Sheet of Hobo Auction Tickets for Volunteering
Email Don Fowler at: ddfowler57@gmail.com

Register Now for the Convention and Reserve a Hotel Room
www.pacificswexpress.org





PSR President

Joel Morse, President

From the Brass Hat

“Summertime, and the living is easy”. In the summer months in many parts of the country model railroading takes a back seat to outdoor pursuits. But here in southern California where the weather almost always beckons us outside, we have learned to enjoy the hobby year-round, both indoors and out. Lucky us!

As President of the PSR, I’m always thinking about how the PSR leadership, at the Region and Division levels, can help the members get the most out of their membership. This means supporting the Divisions so that they can provide opportunities for the members to meet and socialize with others who share their passion for the hobby, create lifelong friendships and share information to improve our enjoyment of this great hobby.

And you really can’t beat your prospects for growth, education, and friendship that your membership in each Division of the Pacific Southwest Region offers you. But you can waste it. And it will be wasted if you do not participate in the events. The events and opportunities the organization provides for its’ members have no value if you don’t participate! Each of the Divisions needs you to make your personal participation in Division and Regional events a priority, by marking your calendar as soon as an event is announced and by not scheduling other things at the same time.

That means registering for the upcoming Southwest Express Regional Convention in September today! It also means staying at the convention hotel so you have an opportunity to enhance the formal convention activities with informal time meeting other members, learning something new outside the clinic rooms, or maybe even forging friendships around your shared interests in model railroading. At the Orange Blossom Special Regional Convention in 2021, I sat down with a fellow member who was having lunch alone and introduced myself. We had a nice lunch while we got acquainted and then spent some time during that convention and others that followed attending clinics

together and doing layout tours. That fellow was a new member at the time, his name is Chris Thompson, Director of the Arizona Division. I hope he is also glad that I took the chance and introduced myself.

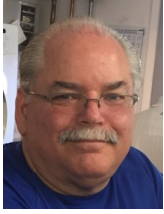
Maximizing your membership requires not only attending local and regional events but actively participating in those events. This means, at a minimum, socializing with fellow members; maybe even being a little more outgoing than usual and introducing yourself to someone you don’t know and starting a conversation by asking them a few open-ended questions while you wait for the clinic to start. For example: “Hi, I’m Joel, what railroad do you model?” Share your interests with them, you know you both are model railroaders, so you might have a lot more in common. What better basis of a potential friendship is there?

But attending and socializing at events are really the minimum level of participation. There is considerable additional value in being actively involved in the events by volunteering to be part of the organizing committee or volunteering to staff the event, or to present a clinic on a subject you know about or submitting a model just for show or even for evaluation. Maybe even volunteer to be trained as an evaluator, which will show you what evaluators look for (which can help you be a better modeler). Volunteering and presenting a clinic, evaluating models as well as submitting a model for evaluation are ways that each of us can enhance our own membership, meet other members and give back to the organization. But those actions also can earn you Achievement Awards on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader or find someone who shares your uncommon modeling interest. At the Ontario Manifest Regional Convention in 2017, I presented my first clinic, which described the New York, Ontario & Western Railway, and why I thought it was a terrific railroad to model. To my initial disappointment, I only had four people attend the clinic (granted it’s a bit of a niche subject), however, one of the attendees shared that he also modeled the NYOW. He has been a member of the operating crew ever since.

Finally, none of these events can happen if there is not a large pool of members willing to volunteer and help make the Region and each Division event more valuable for the membership. And folks, there are not a lot of volunteers offering their time but thanks to those

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PSR President

Joel Morse, President

who already step forward! The organization needs you to take the initiative to actively volunteer to help when you hear about an event. There is a lot of work behind the scenes, and the PSR and Division Boards of Directors can't do it all alone (we have other responsibilities too, just like you). Isn't the old saying: "More hands make light of the work"?

We need you to volunteer your time, knowledge and experience in the knowledge that doing so will enhance your membership and the membership of the entire organization!



PSR Vice President

Frank Kenny, Vice President

Hello Again,

It seems like it was forever ago since I wrote to you, yet it seems like last month. One thing is for sure, time is flyin' by!

In my last column, I wrote about the events the Divisions host. While I would like to get to all of them, I obviously can't so if you have an event and want to give me an update after the event, I'd happily mention it in this column. Any updates?

Staying with events, I attended a few over the past few months and I'll keep a couple of them nameless to protect the innocent. My only comment is that I walked into the event (club open house), looked around at the trains, and walked out without one person saying hello, welcome, can I help you, or anything! I was surprised. May I recommend that when you see new people at your event, at least just give a simple hello or welcome. By missing this opportunity, you could be missing out on your next great club member or NMRA member.

The event that was very well done was the So Cal N

Scale Meet held in Lomita, CA. Yes, I model N scale and no, I did not host this one. The other Frank, Frank Hinojosa, hosted this FREE event and it went really well and was well attended by N scalers from all over California. Frank had it all, from modular clubs, to vendors, to swap meet vendors, door prizes, and more! Even the Lomita Railroad Museum had a table. Next year promises even more surprises so whether you are in N scale or not, come on out and visit on the last Saturday of May!

Another event I went to was the Santa Fe Railroad Historical and Modeling Society convention in Chicago. The trip started out with an Amtrak trip from Los Angeles to Chicago and the convention was really well organized and completed by Andrew Bobis and his crew! It was one of the best conventions I have been to with all of the typical convention activities. If you are interested in the Santa Fe, I recommend this group.

Operations is another of my favorite things to do. Several others and I host operating sessions on our layouts. If you would like to operate or learn more about operating a model railroad, please reach out and I'd be happy to either help you get started operating your layout, or invite you to operate on ours. In fact, we have op sessions available for the Regional Convention coming up in September.

Other than operations and events, my interest is membership, NMRA membership specifically. You may recall that each Division has a membership committee that works very hard to bring in new and retain current members and it's a never ending job. Last column I stated that membership was hovering in the mid-900's and I proposed a membership goal of 1,500 over the next two years, adding about 550 more people. Here are the current stats:

As you will notice, there is a decline in membership numbers since 2024 and of course there are many reasons. Rather than get wrapped up in the why's of the past, let's focus on increasing the numbers because that is what WE, yes all of us, have control of. In the last issue of The Dispatch I proposed a challenge to you, asking you to ask just one person to join the NMRA. Did you do that? How did it go? Did they join? If not, why not? If you didn't ask, what got in the

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PSR Vice President

Frank Kenny, Vice President

way of asking? How could you overcome that obstacle? Just asking is simple and it's ok if you get a no. Their response could have been a no for now, or a no forever, and either is ok as there is no shortage of people to ask! The important thing is to be asking. Please let me know how this challenge is going for you and what questions you have or what help you need. You could also review the NMRA membership page online before you ask them for important membership information that would help you when asking.

As for me, I asked 4 people, two have joined and two said they would consider it. One that joined is a great friend of mine in Sedona, Mike Stoner. Mike is an amazing modeler and has an incredible N scale layout that he just started hosting operations on. His layout is SPSF and set in 1988 and he even hand lays his turnouts! Reach out to Mike if you are ever going to Sedona, AZ and visit his beautiful layout. Look for Mike's work to show up in the model press, the NMRA, and in future clinics!

The other new member is Richard Jalandoni. Not even 20 years old yet, he is the manager of the Lomita Railroad Museum in Lomita, CA. He also models in Live Steam, being a member of several of the live steam clubs, and he also models a OO European prototype. Yes, he's very active in the hobby! You will also see and hear more from Richard in the hobby press, the NMRA, and in future clinics!

Welcome to both Mike & Richard! They will be at the PSR Region Convention coming up in September so be sure to say hi and welcome. See elsewhere in this issue for details of the convention and of course, please register! Do you have any new members you want to spotlight? Let me know.

OK, that seems to be all I can think of to report to you in this issue. I'm sure I forgot two or three things! Have a great time railroading and I'll see you at the Convention in September in Irvine! Please say hi.



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. Planning for the convention is basically complete, so we are moving toward execution of the convention plans.

The convention will feature modular railroads at the Hilton Hotel including OC Module Railroaders, OC N'gineers, and the 20s,30's and Beyond. The OC Module Railroaders will also feature Operating Sessions at the Hotel. There are also five home model railroads that will hold Operating Sessions. We will have home model railroads on tour for everyone to enjoy.

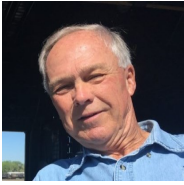
Currently there are fifty, (50) clinics which will provide interesting knowledge for everyone. Clinics include computer modeling, Achievement Program, electronics, operations, modeling techniques, and prototype railroad history. There is something to interest everyone.

The Los Angeles Union Station tour is a guided behind the scenes tour of areas not open to the public. The tour will include the original Waiting Room and Ticket Counter, the original Fred Harvey restaurant and the Streamliner bar. The Southern California Railway Museum is also a guided tour of the 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.

There will be opportunities to find something new for your home model railroad from Silent Auction, Swap Meet, Hobo Auction, or the Vendors Booths. As something new this year, we have several vendors

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Cajon

Harold Helland, Director

There will be opportunities to find something new for your home model railroad from Silent Auction, Swap Meet, Hobo Auction, or the Vendors Booths. As something new this year, we have several vendors who will set up at the Hilton Hotel to provide access to their products.

The Celebration of models will include all the “normal” categories, plus a One Square Foot Model challenge. The model must be one square foot base, no more than two feet high and include a piece of track and/or a freight car.

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.

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

Have a great day.



Tunkhannock Viaduct, PA.



Steaming up at Strasburg, PA. (See page 24)



Arizona

Chris Thompson, Director

Our spring in-person meet was in Tucson with the shuffling of our schedule that was implemented last year. The group in Tucson usually have a railroad trivia contest that is always informative and a lot of fun. Plus, whoever answered the most questions correctly got a door prize. We had a clinic on John Allens Time-saver switching puzzle followed up with an opportunity to try your skill on the actual puzzle brought by one of the members. In the afternoon we had a clinic on the history of railroads in Arizona. It's always interesting to see where the first railroads went and how that evolved into what is in place today. The day ended with some layouts in the area open for tours. I had a chance to visit a couple of them. One was a fairly large N-Scale layout that had a lot of mainline running and switching opportunities available. This railroad has operating sessions regularly, and

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Arizona

Chris Thompson, Director

it looks like it would be great fun to operate there.

We just wrapped up our summer meet in Prescott, and it was great to get out of the Phoenix valley and take a break from the heat of the summer. We had a great clinic line up here, with three presented during the meet. The first was about integrating photo backdrops into your layout. I'm planning to do this so I found it particularly interesting, and came away with a better understanding of how to make it look better on my railroad. The next clinic covered some unique Southern Pacific narrow-gauge cars. Railroads always like to re-purpose cars for special situations, and there were some interesting examples shared. The final clinic of the day covered building turnouts freehand without any jigs. This was an interesting approach to constructing special purpose trackwork to fit wherever you need it on your railroad without having to wedge in standard track pieces. The sample pictures shown were impressive.

Our Saturday Zoom meets have continued in the months we don't have an in-person meeting. We are in need of folks to present clinics during these meets, so if you have something you would be willing to share, please reach out to our Superintendent Paul Buhrke. We have show and tell with what is on your workbench or new on your layout, sharing of tips and tricks, and open model railroad discussions time permitting. It's a good opportunity for some model railroading fellowship.

The next model railroading event in Arizona is the Beat the Heat Swap Meet up in Prescott. I'm hoping to try to make up there on July 26, everyone tells me it's a really great show. Some of our members will have a table there sharing the new NMRA rack cards, so hopefully that will attract some new folks to the NMRA in Arizona.

This year the Division is hosting the Cactus Crawl

Layout Tour again. The dates are November 15 and 16. Initial information is on the Division website home page, and later we will add the layouts that have volunteered to participate in the event. Anyone in the Division who have a layout is invited to share it during this event, organizer contact info will be communicated soon to our members. Wishing all in the Arizona Division and the PSR a fun and safe summer!



Los Angeles

Vic Cavalli, Director

Second quarter 2025 was a bit quiet from a Division-sponsored point-of-view. That doesn't mean there weren't events to attend however!

Monthly, numerous area clubs open their doors to the public. These include the *Los Angeles Model Railroad Society* (HO) – who also celebrated their “golden” spike ceremony in June – Congratulations!, *Belmont Shore Model Railroad Club* (N), *Gold Coast Modular Railroad Club* (HO), and *Pasadena Model Railroad Museum* (HO). [Refer to the [Upcoming Model Railroad and Prototype Events](#) column at the rear of each issue of the **PSR Dispatch** for specific dates and times.]

Others clubs that held open houses this quarter included the *Slim Gauge Guild* (HOn3 and Sn3) in May, *Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society* (HO) – including quarterly swap meet where you will always find volunteers from our L.A. Membership Committee manning a NMRA recruitment table, also in May, and *California Southern Model Railroad Club* (HO) in June.

A new, and hopefully annual, event held at the end of May was the *Southern California N Scale Meet* in Lomita, CA. On display were a dozen modular layouts, along with a similar number of vendors offering their goods and wares. Along with PSR President Joel Morse and Vice President Frank Kenny, both proud

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Los Angeles

Vic Cavalli, Director

N Scale modelers, members of the L.A. Membership Committee were again available to promote the values of joining the NMRA. I really enjoyed my time spent here; viewing fine modeling, renewing old friendships, even making a few new ones.

On the Save-the-Date front, make sure to blank out, Saturday, July 19th, for an event you won't want to miss – our next *Layouts of the L.A. Division* open houses. Yes, that's "houses", as in plural. The Division will hold its first "Double Header!" Frank Kenny's *Central Pacific Railway* (N) layout in the morning/afternoon, followed by Ron Varnell's *Anywhere East & West Railroad* (HO/HOn3) in the afternoon. Each layout is only a short distance from each other; both in Torrance, CA. Snacks and drinks are also planned to be served.

L.A. might even be able to squeeze in one more open house (no promises, but we are working on a few things) before the PSR's biggest annual event – its 2025 Regional convention, *Pacific Southwest Express*, September 3rd-6th, this year hosted by the Cajon Division at the Irvine Hilton - John Wayne Airport in Irvine, CA. If you haven't registered and/or made your hotel reservations yet, hurry! *Times a wasting*, and everyone knows Cajon always puts on a GREAT show.

Thereafter, expect at least one more *Layouts of the L.A. Division* open house, Railmaster Hobbies'-sponsored annual *Los Angeles Area Prototype Modelers' (and Swap) Meet*; as well as a couple more swap meets to end the year.

Look for me at the convention! Until then, happy model railroading to you.



San Diego

Tim Foote, Director

ACTIVITIES OF THE SAN DIEGO DIVISION

San Diego Division Membership count:

April 2025: 147

Pacific Southwest Region Convention 2026

We continue to have committee meetings every month in preparation for the PSR convention in San Diego for 2026. We have most of the convention leadership positions filled. We have contracted with a nice hotel in Mission Valley and hope that you consider signing up at the 2025 convention in Orange County. Thereafter, we will start publicity for the 2026 convention.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SAN DIEGO DIVISION:

The San Diego Division holds in person 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.

ACTIVITIES THIS TERM: April 12, 2025, Model Railroad Layout Tour.



[Santa Fe Z scale freight train. Picture credit: San Diego Division Webmaster]

David Lancaster presented his Z scale (1:220) modules, model trains, buildings and other Z scale electronics and equipment for the San Diego Division.

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San Diego

Tim Foote, Director

May 10, 2025, Spring Meet.



[Excellent modeler, Chuck Molnar received a number of awards at our Spring Meet. Photo by Tim Foote.]

The meet was held at the North County Model Railroad Society which is located in Oceanside, California. Two excellent clinics were presented: Clinic 1: Open Car Loads by Bob Chaparro. Bob provided a narrated slide show of loaded freight cars, flat cars and gondolas with detailed descriptions and ideas for modeling car loads. Clinic 2: Weathering by Pete Steinmetz. Pete provided hands on advice for weathering cars using Pan Pastels.

June 14, 2025, Model Railroad Layout Tour



[One of Justin Rasas' very authentic dioramas. Picture credit: San Diego Division Webmaster]

The model railroad layout tour was hosted by Justin Rasas with a permanent shelf layout and multiple micro-layouts. He models HO scale, HOn3 scale and On30 scale. He uses the Foam Only Module Approach technique, also known as FOMA, for his micro-layouts. Justin's numerous diorama's show his artistic realism.



Treasurer

John McGreevy, Treasurer

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION 37 TREASURERS SUMMER DISPATCH RE- PORT

SUMMARY:

There was only one PSR revenue transaction during the period March 1, 2025, through May 31, 2025. Revenue of \$869.00 was the membership rebate from National. Please note this is the second of three rebate payments that will not be allocated to the Divisions as a means of offsetting the cost incurred to file PSR's tax return for the year ending 12/31/23. The third rebate payment that will not be allocated to the Divisions should be received by the end of 2025. Subsequent rebates will revert to allocation to each Division based on the number of members in each Division.

Expenses totaled \$103.47. A payment of \$31.53 was made to Amazon for rack cards to hold the new NMRA promotional material. Additional expenses consisted of two payments totaling \$71.94 for In-motion website hosting.

Deposits of \$869.00 were made during this period. Net cash expenses this period: \$103.47. The on-line Bank Statement indicates that the Region had \$34,148.07 on 5/31/2025.

PSR Wells Fargo Checking Account:

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

Region Only Cash as of May 31, 2025:
\$34,148.07

Change this period: \$765.53





Awards Program

Carl Heimberger, AP Chairman

The second quarter of 2025 has been very productive for the PSR with five members receiving certificates.

Vic Cavalli – Cars

Jack Debolt – Civil

Wayne Pierce – Cars

Pat Raymer – Author

Carl Heimberger – Cars, Civil & MMR

So, why is there an Awards Program? For one to recognize members who have helped run the organization by volunteering their time. Also to recognize members who have accomplished various model building skills such as car, motive power, scenery, structures, etc. And all of that is good but for me it was the learning experience that pushed me out of my comfort zone to achieve MMR. Never in my wildest dream after I got my first merit award would I have thought I would ever archive MMR. For one, I am actually an introvert, second, I despise writing stuff, and I am just kind of a low-profile guy. But I am also an achiever and when I see a need I step up the plate.

Yes, there is a reason that out of the current world wide NMRA membership of around 16,000 there are only a little under 800 MMRs. My guess if first the perception of the program it is NOT a test but in reality, a way to push you out of your comfort zone and try things you never thought you would even want to try. Have you ever built a passenger car? Myself no but after building one I had so much fun I built three of them. As a teenager I built my own turnout as I did not have the money for commercial ones. Building the ones for civil was a great learning experience. Would I do it again sure but not in HOn3 with code 70 rail. Maybe in O or G so I could see what I was building. As far as structures I love building them and in 25 years went from 89 to 124 points by just again pushing myself and I learned a lot of new structure building techniques.

So, what is my point? Life is full of opportunities and it is all about learning exciting new stuff. This is not

about you competing against others but about you competing against yourself. Even if you never achieve your MMR, you will not regret the journey, the new skills you will learn, and the new friends you will make along the way.



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. 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.



Membership

Rudy Spano, Membership Chair

As of May 2025, our Regional membership is 916 members. In May 2024 our membership stood at 963 members. In February of this year our membership was 946 members. We have lost 47 members in the space of a year and 30 of those members in the last 3 months. Some of that is due to members aging out of the hobby, dealing with illnesses such that they are not renewing their memberships and in the worst case, passing on.

The Arizona Division still leads the region with 307 members. The Cajon Division is next with 254, followed by Los Angeles at 212 and San Diego at 143.

Thank you to everyone who has worked to bring in new members and to those who have made those new members feel welcome.



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.

A Request for a change to your Membership Information must be made by you on the NMRA Website. No one else can change your Membership Information, even if you make a request for change to Division or Regional personnel.

In order to change your Membership Information, log on to the NMRA.org website with your username or email address and your unique password.

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.

Some individuals have noted that they have not been receiving Dispatch issues or other updates that have been sent out via MailChimp software. Since MailChimp is the primary tool we use for mailings and notifications for the Region (and most Divisions) this is of significant concern. After some investigation, we have discovered that the MailChimp mailing lists were not being updated each time National issued membership reports after the beginning of this year. This has been resolved and I will be taking over the updates to the mailing list in future. This should minimize the missing emails for new members and others.

As noted above, it is critical that you keep your contact information updated on a regular basis.

Kevin Spady, Editor

PSR Membership Trend

Date	LA	Cajon	San Diego	Arizona	Total PSR
8/31/2024					
12/31/2024	220	263	152	321	956
2/28/2025	223	258	148	316	945
5/31/2025	212	254	143	307	916
% since 12/31/24	-3.6%	-3.4%	-5.9%	-4.4%	-4.2%





Education Report

Mike Allee—Education Chairman

What's the Model For?

I recently operated at La Mesa. Being the Contest (Celebration) Chair for Cajon & PSR I have an interest in looking at structures from an evaluation point of view. It occurred to me that there can be difference between a model that is constructed for evaluation and a model constructed to be placed on a layout. The La Mesa models are very good the outside detail, craftsmanship is first class (you might say museum quality). There may not be any interior detail, the three foot rule really applies here. The interior will never be seen, it would be up to the modeler and their pride to included that detail. Some of these models are more than ten feet away from the viewing public. Some are not even viewable by the public, hidden in the deep unknown. (Took me more than a day to learn how to get from one place to another and I was still learning when the session was over.)

A museum quality model may not be an award winning NMRA Achievement Program model. There's no interior detail or because of the distance from the viewer fine exterior detail is not included on the kit. The Achievement Program is designed so a modeler shows all of his/her modeling ability and to encourage them to improve those abilities. Models can be privately evaluated by an AP Manager or more likely at an NMRA show in the Celebration Room by a group of evaluators (judges). Both contest and judge are terms that probably shouldn't be used when models are being evaluated.

There can't be a contest for one simple reason, variables, the models aren't the same and therefore different levels of abilities and techniques would be used to complete the model. It is how well the modeler's abilities accomplish the techniques that are being evaluated, not judged. The judging is not judging, but rather

evaluating and therefore should be referred to as evaluation. And judges should be referred to as evaluators.

Since the models are not the same, even though in the same category, they are not being evaluated against each other. The scores the modeler receives represent their ability to use the techniques needed to build the model. Of course, a complicated model having been chosen by a modeler and constructed with well learned techniques will receive a high score. Yet, the less complicated model constructed with techniques being learned will be scored appropriately. Moving from the later example to the former is what the Celebration Room (NMRA has changed Contest Room to Celebration Room) is all about. Giving those that wish to have their abilities analyzed and suggestions where improvement could take place or where advanced or exceptional work has occurred.

Evaluation of rolling stock, be it a caboose or locomotive, or anything in-between, the evaluation process is the same. Take some time and visit NMRA website (nmra.org), click on Education (dark blue column). A column to the right has an index of all sorts of education items. We're interested in Contests (should be Celebration). Click on Forms then left click on D, Model Contest Judge's Score Sheet. This is Form 902, the form we use in the Cajon Div. and the PSR with a slight modification, I'll explain later. You can see there are five categories your modeling abilities are evaluated under. You fill this out carefully and completely. No prose, use bullets even though it says to describe, do it as briefly as possible. If you provide pictures to show conformity but the pictures show the present condition and you show it as it might have been in it's prime, so state.

The evaluators have a copy of AP Judging (Evaluation) Guidelines, click on it. These guidelines describe to the evaluators what to consider in the category. At the bottom of each category description you will find a Point Matrix. The rows go from easy to difficult and the columns from a little to a lot. Once the evaluators agree on a score it is recorded on

Continued on page 13





Education Report

Mike Allee—Education Chairman

Form 902. This is where Cajon and PSR form differ from the NMRA form. The rows are numbered and the columns are alphabetized. Rather than have a single box for the score ours has three the row, column and score are recorded. Which provides more information about your modeling. The evaluators or supposed to write comments about your model. These would be comments about your abilities and suggestions were you could improve, I suggest you use these matrices to score your self ounce you finished the model. If your score is fifty or better your model could receive a place. If the model scores more than eighty-seven and half you will receive a Merit Award.

There's one more place you can go to get information about your modeling abilities and that of others. Become an evaluator. The NMRA says "experienced judges" will do the evaluation. "Experienced judges" have to starts as unexperienced and that is were Divisions and Regions come in. A inexperienced evaluator is teamed with an experienced evaluator. It never fails that after the evaluations are over learners will express how much they learned. Many evaluators return again and again. I'm sure there are several reasons but one of them must be that they get to look carefully at the models.

If you're considering, or all ready working on, your Master Model Railroader (MMR) it would behoove you to volunteer to evaluate. Not only will you get to look closely at the models, you'll learn what to include in your descriptions on Form 902 and learn more about our modeling techniques. Fill the form out at home. There's not enough time at the show to complete the form besides you more than likely will forget to include import information. If you're not sure how well you completed the form there will be an experienced modeler, usually an AP Mgr., in the room to review your form and offer suggestions. If you're still not confident enter the model in Display Only. You've made the first step in having your work looked at. The next show will be much easier to enter. Evaluate!



Model this Strasburg Coach interior!



PSR DISPATCH



Pacific Southwest Express
September 3 thru 6, 2025
Hilton Irvine – John Wayne Airport

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Sell Bingo Sheets

Hobo Auction

Sell Hobo Auction tickets

Set up Hobo Auction

Disperse prizes during the Hobo Auction

Celebration of Models

Monitor the room

Model check-in and check-out

Evaluation of models

Prototype Tours

Bus Captains

General Interest

Monitor room as needed

Clinics

Monitor rooms

Award Clinician Certificates





**Pacific Southwest Express
September 3 thru 6, 2025
Hilton Irvine – John Wayne Airport**

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- Railroads included in the collection: Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, Santa Fe, Los Angeles Railway (streetcar system)
- Includes Santa Fe 5704 which was recently refurbished to 1976 paint scheme
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Fly Fishing on the West Branch of the Delaware River – Joel Morse

The Catskill Mountains of New York are famous for excellent fly-fishing locations; mention the Beaverkill, the Salmon, the Neversink and the Delaware Rivers to an eastern fly fisherman, and he or she will probably have a story about the trout they caught on one of these rivers. I had my early fly-fishing experiences on the Beaverkill when I was a kid. The West Branch of the Delaware River is well stocked with steelhead trout, and happens to run through the town of Delhi on my N-Scale New York, Ontario and Western Railway layout (as it does on the prototype). I had a corner spot at the edge of Delhi (6 inches by 6 inches by 2 ½ inches deep) that I always planned to do something with but didn't know what it would be, so I put off for a long time. Here's how I created the fly-fishing scene in Figure 1, out of a small, wasted space at the end of the benchwork.



Figure 1 Two Fly Fisherman on the West Branch of the Delaware (the second is wearing chest high waders on the right).

When I created the fascia, I knew I would do something with this area, so I cut the fascia to allow for some kind of depressed scene. When the first layer of scenery went down in Delhi, I envisioned this area as a wooded ravine, maybe with some hikers or a hobos/campfire. It stayed as nothing more than a plaster slope with some grass cover for several years (Figure 2).

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Figure 2 Basic scenery, the area looked like this for years.

One day I was sorting through my collection of home-made plaster rock castings, and I came across a sedimentary rock face, that was just about the right height to reach from top to bottom of the space and long enough to span across the back of the space. The beginning of a scene began to form in my mind, and I was still thinking of a wooded ravine until I placed the rock face in the location; at that point it became obvious this needed to be a creek or river. Although the prototype NYOW crosses and recrosses the Delaware River and numerous creeks; I hadn't modeled any water features on the layout except for crossings at the high steel girder bridge between Sidney and Maywood, and at Maya Creek, so a water scene it would be.

The first step in construction was to cover the fascia and figure out how to make the transition area between the upper level of Delhi proper and the river scene, where there was both a vertical and horizontal gap. Most of the layout scenery is plaster soaked paper towels over cardboard lattice, but the gap here was too small to use that technique effectively without making a major plaster mess and possibly ruining the rock face in the process.

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Figure 3 Basic shapes created

I needed an alternative for the transition, and I happened to have a small block of green floral foam laying around, which turned out to be the perfect solution! I cut the piece to rough size with an old carving knife (my favorite foam tool), and once both the foam and rock face were hot melt glued to the base, it was fast and easy to get the profile I wanted by drawing a razor saw horizontally across the foam (Figure 3).

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Figure 4 Sculptamold added for base texture.

The next step was to add the base texture using Sculptamold. Since this was supposed to be the woods around the creek and was going to be covered with ground cover, smoothing it out wasn't necessary. The Sculptamold was scrapped up before it hardened at the top of the slope, as that area was going to be a road along the top of the cliff (Figure 4).

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Figure 5 Painted Sculptamold, ground cover, trees and shrubs along the riverbank

I painted the Sculptamold a medium brown color (it turned out darker than I wanted) and covered the top of the cliff with layers of ground cover, including home-made dried ground-up maple tree leaves. At the base of the cliff, I added commercial trees and shrubs along the riverbank beyond the high-water mark. At the top of the cliff, I added a storm water drainage pipe, consistent with the lack of environmental regulation before the signing of the Clean Water Act; this detail was inspired by admiring John Allen's stonework over the years (Figure 5).

In nature, you will often find surprisingly large boulders, rocks and tree trunks lodged along the outside bend of a riverbank, which were carried downstream when the river was flowing high and fast during the spring thaw in the mountains. These boulders, stones and deadfall become visible when the river goes down later in the year, and since I model the summer of 1954, I wanted to simulate those riverbank details. I used a commercial material in my scenery stash labeled "Scree" to simulate the rocks dropped along outside of bend of the river, as well as some stems from my leaf grinding efforts for the deadfall. Additionally, to simulate the larger boulders and native cliff stone eroded smooth from the river over the millennia, I glued in a few appropriately colored and sized pebbles from my garden (Figure 6).



Figure 6 Stream bank details

Continued on Page 21



To simulate the water itself, I painted the plywood black in the area representing the deeper parts of the river, then shades of green and blue, and finally tan along the banks to represent the sand revealed by the low flow of the river in summer. Once the paint was dry, I brushed on 5 layers of Woodland Scenics “Water Effects”. I was happy with the result initially, but after a while, the edges curled a bit, and the gloss finish dulled. The curling is not noticeable because of the fascia along the edges of the benchwork, but I may go over it again with another product to get more texture and sheen (Figure 7).



Figure7 Delaware River water at low flow

Continued on Page 22



To finish off the scene, I added two commercial Fly Fishermen figures, one is standing on the big boulder working his way down to the water's edge. The other fisherman is up to his thighs wearing waders, working a small, shaded eddy under the trees (Figures 8 and 9).



Figure 8 Fisherman works his way to the water's edge

Continued on Page 23





Figure 9 Fly fishing on the West Branch of the Delaware River

This scene is located on a very busy corner of the layout and is protected from inadvertent elbow damage by operators watching and working their trains, by a pair of acrylic shields are screwed to the fascia. Figure 10.



Figure 10 Acrylic shields protect this finished scene from damage

As they say, a “Bad day fishing is better than a good day working”. Sounds good to me! Do you have a small blank space on your layout waiting for a signature scene?

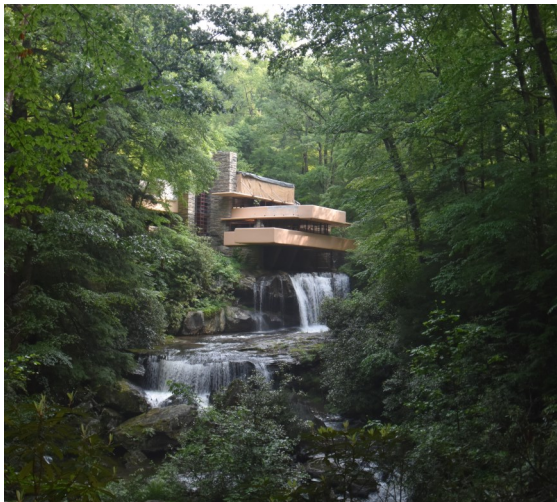


Visiting Pennsylvania by Kevin Spady

Photos by Kevin Spady

For many years I have wanted to visit Pennsylvania, a center of railroading for decades. I finally got the spark and made the commitment to take a week off, shutter busy work environment issues, and spend the time travelling the rural roads of the state to see what I could find that was railroading related. Trust me it wasn't hard to find things to see!

I flew into Pittsburg and made my way to Altoona, after a short but soul satisfying stop at Frank Lloyd Wrights Fallingwater house. Literally a breath of fresh air there! I stayed off the main highways and found myself overwhelmed by the greenery of the state. The entire state looks like someone laid a green carpet over everything. I guess Southern California has definitely embedded itself in my consciousness as the "greenness" was almost overwhelming!



Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright - 1939



Kings Bridge - 1802

I was planning on going to the Railroaders Memorial Museum but, unfortunately, I hit Altoona on a Monday which I had forgotten was the day most museums and attractions are closed! So after photographing several buildings I hung out at the mainline through Altoona, watching massive consists of freight cars pulled through by Norfolk and Southern locos. So I visited Horseshoe Curve National Park (also closed), Tunnels Park Museum and Cassandra Overlook and then hit the road to Scranton.



Railroaders Memorial Museum Roundhouse -2002



Scranton

In Stranton I stayed at the beautiful Raddison Hotel which is located in the original Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Depot. This is a massive building that retains almost all of its original character, both inside and out. It has a gorgeous lobby with Italian marble walls and floors, a stained glass ceiling and tile decorative murals on the walls. I felt like I had stepped back in time.



Original DL&W Depot in Scranton -1908



RR Crossing posting

After a good nights sleep I headed out to Steamtown. The Steamtown National Historic Site is a federally run museum located on the old Scranton yards of the DL&W RR. The museum is built around a working turntable and includes a roundhouse, a portion of which is original to 1932, shops and adjacent yard areas. The displays are excellent and I went on a shop tour of the facility (which I will always recommend doing anywhere you go.) There is an active N&S yard immediately adjacent to the facility that you can access a portion of, and they had switching and track maintenance in progress while I was there. I did not count but there must be 30- 40 locomotives and many rolling stock examples, some in running condition and others cosmetically restored. And there were a few that are just rotting away, waiting for restoration as well! Everything from a Class B Shay (dismantled for restoration) to #4012, a 4-8-8-4 Big Boy. The Electric City Trolley Museum immediately adjacent that has several fine examples of early trolleys on display.



Union Pacific #4012 4-8-8-4 Big Boy



Steamtown Trolley Museum



PSR DISPATCH

Steamtown Images



Track maintenance



Rahway Valley #5 2-8-0



Delaware & Lackawanna MLW M630



Steamtown roundhouse



This one needs some TLC!

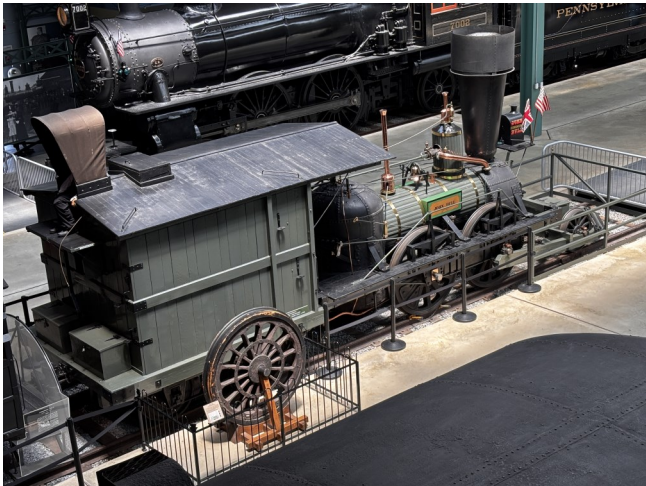


Steamtown shops



Strasburg

After leaving Scranton, I did day trips out of Harrisburg. First day out was to Strasburg RR and the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. The RRMP is excellent and rivals the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. The museum is over 100,000 SF and has over 100 locomotives and rolling stock covering much of railroad history in and around Pennsylvania. There are everything from a 2-4-0 John Bull replica to Pennsy EMD #5901 A1A-A1A. All the displays inside the building are extremely well restored cosmetically, although some of the exterior locos were in need of a lot of TLC.



John Bull replica



EMD #5901 A1A-A1A

Across the street from the museum is the Strasburg Railroad. It is a functioning excursion railroad with shop facilities that do major restorations for groups and private parties. I did their shop tour, but they would not allow photos in the restoration shop as they consider their clients confidentiality important. The excursion ride was a very pleasant, slow, rolling amble through the Lancaster County countryside. For those that don't know, this is Amish county and I saw immaculate farms and countryside everywhere as we travelled.



Strasburg Railroad



Cupola Ride





Strasburg Railroad



Lancaster County Countryside

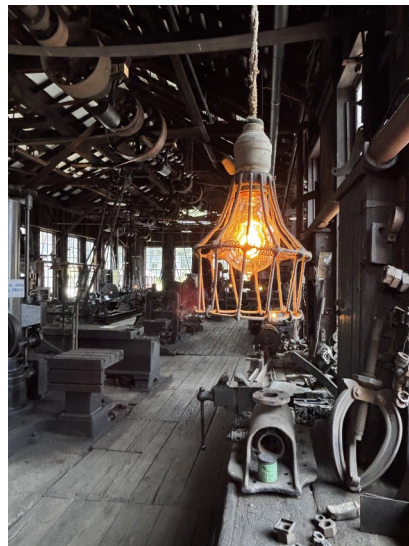
East Broad Top/Orbisonia

The next day was a visit to the over 150 year old East Broad Top RR. If you ever have a chance to visit this railroad give it a go. We left Orbisonia Station early in the morning and I rode in the cupola of the caboose which is always fun. The ride is not long, but again it's an amble through Pennsylvania countryside. The conductor stayed with the caboose for much of the trip and we were regaled with a lot of local history of the railroad. After the train ride was over I went on the shop tour. You MUST do this tour if you ever go there. The shop facilities are frozen in time at around the 1930's. All the original belt driven equipment, tooling, boilers, smithy, and miscellaneous support buildings are still there and carefully preserved. Absolutely fascinating to see the history there. The Rockhill Trolley Museum is also in Orbisonia right next to the EBT shops. The trolley system was developed to carry folks from Orbisonia to Mount Union and the ride gives you an understanding of the history of the region including the development of the coal, iron and firebrick industries that are now just ruins in the woods.

Mount Union was a major interchange point due to the development of 3 massive fire brick companies that became a mainstay of the EBT after coal and iron gradually died away due to availability of superior grades of ore from the upper Midwest. There are over 170 hopper cars still on site, many built right in Orbisonia.



East Broad Top shops



PSR DISPATCH

East Broad Top images



EBT Orbisonia Station - 1871



Brill M-1 car built in Orbisonia



EBT Roundhouse - 1872



EBT Gondolas



Rockhill Trolley



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I ended the trip by attending the Harrisburg On30 Narrow Gauge Meet. This was created by Al Judy who sadly passed away last year. He has left a committed team of people who are carrying on the tradition of the event. I presented a clinic on the construction of the Wandering Spruce Railroad layout with Sean Williams which I will be presenting again at the PSR Regional Convention in September. This meet focusses almost solely on O scale narrow gauge modelers. Al Judy's wife accepted an award on his behalf after an eloquent speech about Al's passion for the hobby. A picnic dinner finished the day. It was a blast to finally meet folks I have only known through the internet, but never actually met. I ended the last day by doing a bit of trainspotting at the N&S Enola Yards in Harrisburg. Great fun to see modern equipment at work.



Vendor displays



Picnic with fellow modelers



Cathi Judy acceptance



Norfolk & Southern at Harrisburg Enola

This was a great experience and I enjoyed every minute of it. I loved the Pennsylvania countryside and the rural environment reminded me very much of where I grew up in Oregon. Best of all, or course, was the smell of coal and oil, the lonesome whistles in the distance, and the deep sense of history that this region is steeped in. Again, I encourage you to visit all these locations if you are ever in Pennsylvania.



**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/>



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 6/20/2025

Recurring

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.

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 (except October) – 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. Admission charged.

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

Saturdays - North County Model Railroad Society Open House, Heritage Park, Oceanside 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

2025

July 12 – Layouts of the Cajon Division – Corona Model Railroad Society Open House, Corona

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

July 19 – Layouts of the L.A. Division “Double Header” – Frank Kenny’s *Central Pacific Railway* (N) and Ron Varnell’s *Anywhere East & West Railroad* Open Houses, Torrance

July 26 – “Beat the Heat” Swap Meet, Prescott, AZ

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

August 9 – San Diego Division Summer Meet, Linda Vista

Continued on Page 35



Upcoming Model Railroad and Prototype Events

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

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

September 3-6 – National Narrow Gauge Convention, St. Louis, MO

October 11 – Los Angeles Area Prototype Modelers' (and Swap) Meet, Imago Dei Church, Bellflower

October 11 – Layouts of San Diego Division – Gene Forbes Layout, San Diego County

October 18 – Arizona Division Meet, Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ, Scottsdale, AZ

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

November 8 – Arizona Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet, Glendale Christian Church, Glendale, AZ

November 8 – San Diego Division Fall Meet, San Diego Model Railroad Museum, San Diego

November 8, 9 & 11 – California Southern Model Railroad Club Open House, Norwalk

November 9 – All Gauges Tucson Model Trains Swap Meet, Gadsden Pacific Division Toy Train Operating Museum, Tucson, AZ

November 15-16 – “Cactus Crawl” Layout Tours, AZ (state-wide)

December 13 – San Diego Division Model Railroad Tour, Dinner & Holiday Party, Santee

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





Pennsylvania Stone Building— Photo by Kevin Spady

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