

# PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION DISPATCH

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



ARIZONA  
CAJON  
LOS ANGELES  
SAN DIEGO



VOLUME 39, NUMBER 1 1st Quarter, 2021

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NMRA/PSR 2021

## 2021 PSR/NMRA Convention ORANGE BLOSSOM SPECIAL

September 8 —11, 2021

See page 5 for more information

Planning is well underway for the 2021 convention with many clinics already on board, as well as layouts and operations sessions.

Check out

[psrconvention.org/OrangeBlossomSpecial2021](http://psrconvention.org/OrangeBlossomSpecial2021)

for more information!

**Note from the Editor:** Here's the Q1 Dispatch for your reading pleasure! Remember that the Region and Divisions are only as good as the support and participation of members like you! If you are interested in participating, get in touch with your Division Director.





## FROM THE WAYCAR

Pat Raymer President

Greetings fellow PSR members!

I hope you are all faring well as we roll into this new year.

First of all, I need to apologize to PSR Vice President Gary Butts for waylaying his “From the Backshop” column title for my article in the previous issue of The Dispatch. Let’s just call it a proofreading hiccup. Going forward, my column will be “From the Waycar”. For those of you who may not speak Santa Fe, this was their term for the caboose. This was the location of the conductor’s desk, where he would go about the business of running the train.

Unlike past articles when I had to wrack my brain to come up with pertinent content, I now have a plethora of material from which to choose.

Let’s start with the Arizona Division. As you may or may not be aware, last year the Arizona Division expressed interest in separating from the PSR to form their own region. They presented their case to the National Board, and the matter was placed on the winter meeting agenda. That meeting took place on February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, at which time the Board rejected their proposal. I know there are some in Arizona that are disappointed by the decision but, personally, I am glad they are still “in the fold”.

Next up is the continuing effort to obtain non-profit status from the IRS. Most of the wheels of government grind slowly, and the IRS is no exception. As of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the IRS was working on filings from December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Our corrected filing was made on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020-and so we still wait. According to our lawyer, we may get some results in 3 to 4 weeks.

This leads to our next, and related, subject-the revision of the PSR bylaws. Your PSR Board of Directors held a special meeting via Zoom on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. During this meeting, the Board reviewed the revised bylaws page by page, creating a final draft version which was presented to the PSR membership for comment. After this comment period, the final draft was put to a vote for approval or rejection by the PSR membership. The vote was conducted via Election Buddy, the same system used by the Region

for the election of officers. 26.4% of the Region voted, with 94.7% of those voting approving the ratification of the new bylaws. I have saved all comments and suggestions that I received regarding the new bylaws and will present them to the Board at our mid-year meeting. Thanks to Elections Chair Vic Cavalli for his work on this!

The PSR mid-year board meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Please let your Division leadership know if there is anything you feel needs discussion.

If you haven’t heard by now, the National Convention “Rails by the Bay” in Santa Clara has been cancelled. They are offering a virtual version of the convention, July 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, for \$49.00. I was disappointed that I would not be able to attend the convention in person, but I also understand their reasons for cancelling. I will attend the virtual convention, at least as much as I can manage.

Speaking of conventions, our PSR Regional convention, “Orange Blossom Special”, is coming up this September 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>. I have been sitting in on the virtual planning meetings, and the team in Cajon Division is doing a great job pulling it all together. I personally am looking forward to the prototype tour to the Gemco yard in Van Nuys. This tour was originally planned for last year’s convention, and I’m glad I have a second chance to do it. Look for more information about the convention in this issue.

I am pleased to announce that Vice President Gary Butts, MMR®, has agreed to serve as interim PSR Convention Chair until the September convention. Thanks Gary!

I close this time on a sad note. Several PSR members have passed away recently. One of these members is Mike DeGhetto. Mike owned Alpine Division Scale Models, and if you didn’t know his name, you would probably recognize his face. He and his wife Linda were regulars at train shows, and for the last few years he was trying to liquidate his stock with the \$1 detail parts. I used to tease him that he had been going out of business longer than he had been in business! He will be missed. My condolences to Linda and the family and friends of all the PSR members who have passed.

That’s all for now so...

See you down the line!



## THE PSR BACKSHOP

Gary Butts

Things are finally starting to look up! I hope this newsletter finds you in good health both mentally and physically. Fortunately, we have our hobby to keep us off of the television so that helps with the mental part. As of this writing, the Covid numbers are coming down and, if they continue, I am looking forward to increased in-person NMRA activities. Unfortunately, the National Convention in Northern California had to be cancelled, but the PCR is still holding out hope for their end of April Regional convention. I understand the decision will be made soon relative to cancellation.

Our Cajon Division is putting together plans for another Covid sensitive meet in Buena Park on April 17<sup>th</sup> similar to the meet they held last October. If it is a go, It will be held primarily outdoors with temperatures taken, masks required, mandatory social distancing, etc. I hope it happens, because the last one was really fun. See the Cajon Web site for the latest on that meet as we get closer to April.

The San Diego Division is continuing with their Zoom based meets, clinics and tours during this time. If you have a chance, visit their web site to get the latest and take part in the model Railroad activities.

Work continues on the Region non-profit corporation push and it is finally starting to look good. Our PSR By-Laws needed to be changed, in form, to fit the California State tax laws for non-profits but the changes were essentially nil to our purposes. Although relatively exhaustive in wording, the actual changes in the way we conduct our Region business were essentially mute. Along with the By-Laws changes, Our Manual of Operations has to be changed to fit the new By-laws but these changes are very minor wording issues. The MOO is the detailed guide to how our Region is organized and run and is not part of the State or Federal requirements. These changes will go to our PSR

Board of Directors for approval at the upcoming Board meeting in March. Hopefully, we will have final confirmation and paperwork certifying our Region's Federal and State non-profit status by then.

The 2021 Pacific Southwest Region Convention is going ahead, full Steam! Pre-registrations are high with members anxious to get back to normal. The convention web site is up and running and you can view the schedule, register and manage your registration all on the site. The convention hotel is centrally located in Orange County next to the John Wayne airport and the convention Hotel room block is filling up. Don't delay in making your Hotel reservations to take advantage of the low room rate. Parking and a 20% menu discount are included in the convention registration. With Covid vaccinations due to be available to all by the summer, we should be able to enjoy this convention in a more normal way. I can't wait! See you there.

Gary



### MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

A quick reminder that because of the current "stay at home" requirements, that NMRA National is not in the office and as a result membership renewals may be processed more slowly. If you have the ability to renew online this will be processed much more quickly than mail-in renewals, as mail is only being accessed periodically by National staff. Also, just don't forget to renew!



## Cajon

Richard Hock, Director

### Beauty Lies in the Eyes of the Beholder

This famous quote, from Greek philosopher Plato, describes and attaches perceived meaning and value to a photograph, painting, diorama, and all other forms of artwork and design. Just what does it mean? Beauty and value are subjective? Only the viewer or creator, artist can place perceived qualities, as a whole, in reference to combinations of shape, color, form, or motion that pleases the senses of sight... what looks nice.

Pablo Picasso is one of the most dynamic artists of the past century, noted for his contribution to the art movements of Surrealism, Expressionism and Post Impressionism. Surrealism was the post World War I movement of abstract imagery of the unconscious mind. Expressionism was the movement of distortion for the emotional effect of mood and ideas. Post Impressionism was the movement against of naturalistic depiction of color, light and shapes. The terms I wish to put emphasis on are expression and impression. Expression, making know one's feelings, emotions or experiences. Impression, the display of the expression.

Greetings from the Cajon Division! It is hoped that this newsletter finds everyone healthy and safe.

So why the art lesson? I am going to borrow an underlining thought from model railroader and author, Lance Mindheim. That is the title of his book, Model Railroading As Art. On page four of his introduction, titled Why?, he outlines the gratification that we get by taking a pile of styrene plastic and transforming it into a static representation of real life scenes, history or experiences of the subject material. We do this on our model railroads. The same way we view artwork, photographs and architecture. So, a model railroad is art, whether we know it or not. I also consider a kit, a pile of styrene plastic. In fact, Tony Koester, in his clinic presented at the PSR Convention in Arizona, proclaimed that a kit is just a bunch of parts. Not just a scratch built structure.

I have always approached my model railroad from that point of view since the days that I got involved with modular railroading. I have never had the luxury of dedicated rooms or garages for a layout. So what I build is intentional and condensed. I leave the impression of an industry with the elements selected to model. It tells the story and

provides the function for my railroad. Full scale modeling of an expansive industry is not an option. Don't have the room for thirty coal hoppers at a power plant, let alone hauling a three to four mod-ule section to become part of a modular club layout on display at a show. Partaking in this hobby is a matter of what will fit on a 2 x 4 board and the expression of an industry aspect that leaves an impression.

What can you fit on a 1 x 1 board? With the PSR 2021 Convention just six months away, a challenge has been given out... the One-Foot Challenge. What is the One-Foot Challenge? It is a one-foot square diorama to show off your creativity, modeling skills and tell a story through the scene.

How can I participate? Construct a diorama. The rules are quite simple. The diorama must be a square 12 inches by 12 inches and can be any scale, any era, and any railroad related theme. The diorama must include a railroad track of any length. The diorama must have a flat bottom, stand on its own, be easily moved and nothing can overhang the edge. The diorama must be new and not have been entered in any previous contest. You must be a member of the NMRA to enter the challenge.

Create your diorama to tell a story of railroad history. Invoke a mood of the hard work of a railroad maintenance of way train, the past glamor of pristine service of a passenger train or the thunder of motive power.

Diorama judging is by popular vote of the members attending the convention. Cash awards will be given for first, second and third place.

Let's behold the beauty of model railroading!



## Arizona

Frank Baker, Director

Covid continues to cancel any meetings for our division. That being said, I believe that there is some light at the tunnel, no pun intended. I believe that a May meeting will be doable as the cases of Covid in Arizona continue to decline and many member have gotten or will be getting their phase I and phase II shots. Meet location appear o be opening around the May timeframe. Richard Petrina and I will be discussing the location and date in the coming weeks. We have submitted a letter to the Arizona Membership to ask for candidates for Director and Superintendent. Richard terms out in June and I term out in September. If you are interested, please send you name, address and qualifications to Lenny Smith, [nomchair@azdiv-nmra.org](mailto:nomchair@azdiv-nmra.org). Any questions, please feel free to contact Richard or myself.

**Arizona Report—Continued from page 4**

On a more interesting note, I received the following email from the NMRA Board of Directors regarding our request to become a self reliant region.

**PROPOSAL FROM ARIZONA DIVISION OF PSR TO FORM A NEW REGION****DECISION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE WINTER BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2021**Background

The Board was approached through our Secretary Rick Coble in October 2020 by the Arizona Division President Frank Baker with a proposal to form its own Region. Frank Baker told us that Arizona members had been circulated and asked to give their views. He said there was support amongst its membership for the proposal. It seems somewhere between 60 and 75 members had expressed support (membership of the Arizona Division is approximately 330).

The reasons for the proposal, supported subsequently by a petition signed by a good number of the relevant members, are:

1. Distance to Region events in other Divisions in PSR and an ageing membership (6-7 hours) and the associated costs including overnight stays for members on fixed incomes;
2. Events at Cajon and Los Angeles Divisions were few;
3. Membership numbers could be grown if they were a Region;
4. The new Region would have greater control over its financial resources;
5. New Divisions would be better able to drive greater State-wide activity; and
6. The proposal had the support of the PSR Board.

Subsequent to the receipt of the proposal, the NMRA Board of Directors prepared a series of questions for Frank Baker to glean more information. As a consequence also Frank Baker and Pat Raymer, PSR President, attended a Board Monthly Work Session to openly discuss the proposal. Following a frank exchange of views and questions/answers, President Pete Magoun advised that the Board of Directors would consider the proposal/petition at its Winter Business Meeting on Saturday 21 February 2021.

Decision

The Board is very clear in its deliberation on this matter that it does not agree the proposal. There are two principal reasons for this:

1. *There was no evidence produced to show that a new Region could create more activity for its members than the existing Division could; and*

2. *Distance to Region events in other Divisions is not itself a justification for the creation of a Region – many Regions have greater distances from one end to another.*

*It would be helpful to all concerned to expand upon the above reasons. Arizona is a Division that has a somewhat geographically polarized membership. It is divided by inhospitable terrain and a lack of suitable highways through sparsely populated areas. There is a clear need for the existing Arizona Division to be organized by reference to its geography and population centers. However it is not for National to dictate how a Region or any Division is organised. Therefore we can only recommend that the Region and Arizona Division give some thought as to how it can best serve its members across distant parts. Is it possible to organise around locations such as Yuma, Tucson, Phoenix, Prescott and Flagstaff?*

*Further, the Board wishes to say that it will offer all assistance it can to help Arizona Division reach out to all of its members. This might mean planning events in those distant areas or setting up new equivalents to “sub-divisions”, referred to as ‘clinics’ or ‘yards’ by some Regions. Help and support will be there if needed.*

*It is appreciated that this decision will disappoint the proposers. If in the future there is evidence produced that a clear majority (for example 67-70%) of all Arizona Division members support the application the Board will consider the matter again. A statement of the benefits that a Region can bring but a Division cannot should also be provided. We must also be assured that PSR as a Region is in support of this and there would be no adverse financial and administration consequences.*

NMRA Board of Directors

21 February 2021

While this is their decision, this may continue to be discussed with the Arizona membership. Due to the change of officers in the coming months, I recommend that any decisions to move forward should occur under the new division team. They bring up some interesting points including the locations becoming division. This would also include Yuma / Quartsite becoming a division. More about these factors in the coming months.

I hope all this Covid time has allowed everyone to work on their railroad.



# PSR Treasurer

Joel Morse, Treasurer



# Los Angeles

Mona Raymer, Director

## PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION 37

### TREASURERS FIRST QUARTER 2021 DISPATCH REPORT

#### SUMMARY:

During the period October 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021 there were very few transactions by the

#### Region.

The January 31, 2021 Bank Statement indicates that the Region has \$31,931.47 in the Region

#### Checking Account.

There were only a few transactions during this period:

- Payment of \$2,804.00 to the Los Angeles Division to assist them in recouping nonrecoverable-costs associated with the cancelled Regional Convention due to COVID.
- Payment of \$643.13 for Dispatch Printing, Mailing, Postage and Awards.
- Payment of \$240.00 to Cajon Division for Rental Space for 2021

#### Wells Fargo Checking Account:

Region Assets as of October 1, 2020: \$35,435.27

Region Assets as of January 31, 2021: \$31,931.47

Net Change this period: -\$3,503.80

Hello PSR friends!

With the 2020 holiday season now firmly behind us, I hope you were all able to enjoy the celebrations you had and filled them with wonderful new memories. I also hope that this new year is off to a good start and that this first article of 2021 finds you safe & healthy!

The Los Angeles Division Advisory Board had our first Division meet for our membership virtually via the ZOOM app on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020. It was very nice to be able to see our Los Angeles Division friends again, even though it was not in person. Attendees presented a number of great show and tells to let everyone know what they have been working on during the Covid-19 lockdown here in Los Angeles County.

By the time you are reading this we will have had our second virtual meet on February 20<sup>th</sup>. This meet will have included the Los Angeles Division annual membership meeting which is usually held at our banquet which we were unable to have as an in person meeting due to current Los Angeles County restrictions.

The Los Angeles Division has a new addition to our L.A. Coupler team, which has been working diligently to bring a new look and format to the Division newsletter. Welcome to the team Nick Lisica!!

We are also in discussions to update our website with a new look, make it more vibrant and user friendly. We are currently looking for someone that is tech savvy and is willing to volunteer their time to help with this venture. If you are interested and able to assist, please do not hesitate to contact us. Membership in the Los Angeles Division is not a requirement!!

Due to the continued restrictions in the County of Los Angeles we will not be able to have our annual SpringRail event but are discussing the possibility of having a similar event in the fall, restrictions allowing. I look forward to being able to seeing all of you sometime in the near future.

Until next time....Happy modeling, stay safe and well!





## Achievement Program

Carl Heimberger, AP Chairman

With the start of a new year comes new opportunities, last year had its challenges but I am optimistic that many opportunities will open up this year to members working on the Awards Program. Yes, some Regional and the Nation Conventions have been canceled for 2021 but as of this writing there are still 2 conventions on the west coast still proceeding. First is the PCR this April in Fresno and second is the PSR next September in Irvine. So, start doing the paperwork on all those projects you have been working on for the last year and bring them to the contest room for evaluation.

Even with the stay-at-home restrictions being in place this last quarter we have had a few members successfully achieve some Merit Awards and AP Certificates by doing remote and social distancing evaluations.

Congratulations to the following PSR members.

- Bob Granger AZ for completing his Civil Certificate.
- Paul Buhrke, AZ for completing his Scenery and Prototype Model Certificates.
- Morrie Fleishman, Cajon for completing his Electrical Engineer Certificate.
- Harold Helland, Cajon for completing his Civil and Cars Certificates.

As you can see there are ways to have your work evaluated following Covid safety protocols, so if you have work you would like evaluated contact your Division AP Manager and develop a plan to have your models/layout evaluated.

I encourage all of our members to stay safe and get the vaccine so we can finally get back to normal and have some face-to-face events. I am look forward to next September and the 2021 PSR Convention Orange Blossom Special in Irvine, so bring all those projects you have been working on and let's fill the contest room.

If you have not already signed up for the 2021 PSR Convention take a look at the website [www.PSRConvention.org](http://www.PSRConvention.org). there are some great clinics and prototype tours planned and do not forget the contest room.

Hope to see you there.



## San Diego

Pete Steinmetz, Director

The San Diego Division has been very active with our monthly Zoom Meets. They happen on the second Saturday of the month at 1:00PM Pacific Time.

All members of the PSR are invited.

We have had good layout tours and interesting clinics along with show and tell and discussions.

Anyone that wants to show their layout, give a clinic, or participate in Show and Tell respond to one of the E Mails. We are always looking for new presenters.

We have been making the most of offering value to our members.

San Diego Division has a monthly Zoom BOD meeting on the last Saturday of the month. It gives us a chance to plan our meets, discuss what we are working and generally brainstorm.

With the continued Covid situation, San Diego keeps pushing back our quarterly in person gatherings. May looks doubtful. August is still up in the air. It will be interesting to work our Zoom presentations into a live meet format.

The Southern California Railroad Museum in Perris is hosting their Spring Swap Meet on March 6. They will require Social Distancing, and Face Masks. Sellers will have hand sanitizer on all the tables. The September meet was well attended and a lot of fun. With the large outdoor area, distances were not a problem.

Until we can meet in person.

### NMRA YouTube Channel

If you have access to the internet take a minute to check out the NMRA YouTube Channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBbDHVLodgxn8otpnudMsHdQMucCzcTWD>

There are over 75 videos available from the NMRA-X event held during the week of July 12th. While it is challenging to watch videos live during the week if you are a working person, these video recordings of the presentations give you access to the events. Take a few minutes to browse the library and see what interests you!



## The Show Room

James Keena, PSR Contest Chair

We are not out of the woods yet, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions are still raging and is causing the cancellation of many scheduled events, even though the rollout of vaccines is proceeding at a slow pace. The latest model railroad events to fall victim due to safety concerns is the April Los Angeles Division SpringRail and the NMRA National that was to be held in Santa Clara in July. This is due to difficulty in arranging the use of facilities, because of limits or outright prohibition of holding events in doors. Arranging transportation is outright difficult for tours due the uncertainty and layout owners are reluctant to open their homes for tours or operating sessions because of safety concerns.

Outdoor events are slowly returning with restrictions on physical distancing and the wearing of masks. The next outdoor event that is scheduled is the Southern California Railway Museum railroadians and model railroad swap meet to be held in Perris on March 27, 2021.

Online virtual Zoom meeting events that are being held by the NMRA, local Divisions and some Model Railroad Clubs. Many of these events, tours and presentations have been archived and can be accessed, streamed or downloaded from the NMRA U-Tube channel.

There is one bright side to the staying at home restrictions. There has been an increase in sales of model railroad items according to Walthers as well as other hobby related items. According to Jeff Smith, owner of RailMaster Hobbies he has seen an increase in the purchase of model railroad train sets by parents wanting to have their children involved in a hobby rather just having them on their smartphone, video gaming sets or watching television. This is providing an introduction to the hobby of model railroading to a new generation. It has also giving those of us additional time to focus on our hobby of model railroading. If you are working on

entries for the Show Room, this gives you additional time to complete the associated paperwork for your models. If you need help in filling out the entry forms, feel free to contact your Divisional Contest or Achievement Chairs and they will be more than willing to review your forms and offer insights and assistance to improve your submittals. The next scheduled opportunity to enter items into the Show Room for merit evaluation will be at the PSR Orange Blossom Special in Irvine, California, September 8 to 12, 2021.

In the meantime, keep safe and enjoy your modeling and time together with your family.

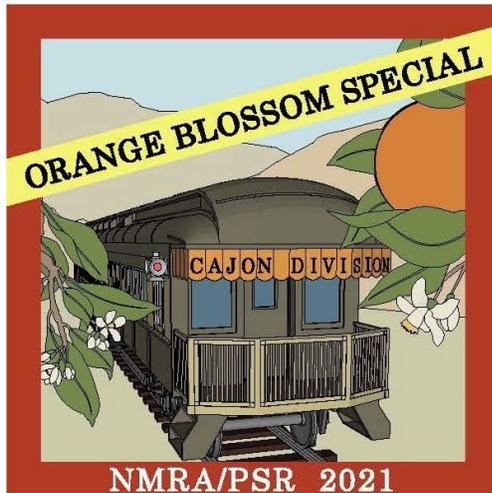


## Historian's Report

Per Harwe, Historian

Per did not have anything new to report this month, but this is a reminder that he is still looking for patches and cars from past conventions.





National Model Railroad Association  
Pacific Southwest Region

2021

“Orange Blossom Special”

# MODEL RAILROAD CONVENTION

September 8 – 11, 2021

Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport Hotel  
Irvine, Ca

❖ Operating Sessions

Featuring:

10+ Layouts

❖ Prototype Tours

Including:

A Tour of **The UPRR Gemco Yard**

❖ Non-Rail Activities & Tours

Including:

**Whale Watching & The Nixon Library**

❖ Welcome Reception

❖ Private Layout Tours

❖ Railroad Modeling Clinics

❖ Hobo Breakfast

❖ Model Railroad/Railroadiana Swap Meet

❖ Railroad Model Contest Room

❖ Model Railroad Auction

❖ Awards Banquet

**Hotel Reservations:** You can now reserve your room on-line by going to the convention website and clicking on the ‘Hotel’ link. The convention rate rooms at the Hilton are guaranteed to fill up, and you don’t want to miss out on the discount, or worse, be trying to find a last-minute hotel deal. Hilton Reservations: 949-833-9999 – Group Name: 2021 PSR Convention / Group Code: PSRC

**Convention Tours:** Convention staff is working on securing additional rail and non-rail tours. Currently, the list of tours includes the UPRR Gemco Yard in Van Nuys, as well as a trip to the Nixon Library and a Whale Watching Tour for the non-rail attendees. Check the website for additional information and updates.

**Convention Goodies:** Don’t forget to check out the Company Store, where you will find shirts, pins, patches, as well as our special run model railroad cars.

**Registration:** The full fare rate of \$125 covers your convention registration and the awards banquet. See the convention website for complete registration and convention details.

[www.PSRConvention.org](http://www.PSRConvention.org)

# 2021 PSR Convention Update

Nick Lisica

With the constant change surrounding the last year, including the cancellation of the Van Nuys Local 2020 PSR Convention, I am sure many of you are wondering about the status of this year's convention. The convention committee has been closely monitoring the status of the local health guidelines, and has worked closely with the convention hotel, to ensure that a safe, fun, and enjoyable convention can be held in Irvine CA, this September 8 - 11.

I encourage everyone who hasn't already registered to visit our website, [www.psrconvention.org](http://www.psrconvention.org), where you can learn more about the many offerings at this year's convention. You can also find information about the special room rate we have set up with the Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport Hotel, right across from the John Wayne Airport.

As of February, we have numerous personal layouts lined up for tours, at least ten layouts set up for operating sessions, numerous clinics, including many how-to modeling clinics (for an additional small fee to cover the cost of materials).

You won't want to miss our tour of the UPRR Gemco Yard. A bus will take members from the convention hotel to Van Nuys, where we will be given a private tour by Mike Osborne, a conductor for the UPRR for 41 years. The tour is limited to 46 people, includes a box lunch, and costs \$55, so reserve your spot today!

For those wanting to take a break from the railroad, a whale watching tour has been set up (\$25), as has a personal tour of the Nixon Library (\$35). There will also be a number of non-rail clinics and activities open to all attendees.

If you can't enough of the clinics, we have about 35 different options for you to choose from. A number of these are carry overs from the 2020 convention, so I am sure you'll find more than enough to fill your schedule.

Speaking of the schedule, we are planning the convention so you don't have to choose between layout tours or clinics. Instead, we will offer clinics during the first half of the day, followed by layout tours in the afternoon. We hope this helps everyone get the most out of their time.

And finally, when the convention is all said and done, I'm sure you'll want a souvenir to remind you of the fun you've had. Head on over to our website where you will find convention shirts and limited-edition HO and N scale boxcars.

Please monitor the website for updates, and reach out if you have any questions.:

[www.psrconvention.org](http://www.psrconvention.org)



Sun City Model Railroad—2019 NMRA PSR Convention  
Photo by Kevin Spady

## IS YOUR MODEL "C" OR BETTER? Mike Allee Contest Chair

The PSR convention, *ORANGE BLOSSOM SPECIAL*, is in September, organized by the Cajon Division. It would be a great time for you to show what you've been modeling to fellow modelers in this time of little or no socializing. You are pleased and proud of what you've created and have shown it/them to your family and maybe a close friend or two. The NMRA/PSR membership is a family of railroaders many of them modelers. Share your models with your railroad family at the convention.

You may be apprehensive or not, about having others look at your work. Is your model worth a "C" in your mind? The Merit Award, title used to indicate a model that has met the Achievement Program (AP) acceptable point value. The acceptable value is eighty-seven and a half out of one hundred and twenty-five possible points. Well,  $87.5/125=0.70$  or 70%. In my grade book, as a high school biology teacher, that was a "C" it was the lowest "C". Surely your model deserves at least that grade.

Now let me ask, you see those Master Model Railroader (MMR) letters following those many names of NMRA members. Did they earn the distinction by being an exceptional modeler? Some are but not all of the six hundred plus members. There are eleven categories of which an MMR must exceed in seven to earn the MMR.

There's a way to determine if your work is worthy of display considering "C" is "good enough". What the evaluators use in evaluating a model is available to you. Go to the NMRA website ([nmra.org](http://nmra.org)), at the top of the page is a burgundy row. Click on [Contests](#), to the right below the three colored rows is a blue table of contents box, click on [Guidelines](#). In "2. Judged Contest -" find [Achievement Program Judging Guidelines](#) click on it. Here you will find guidelines for evaluating each category evaluators use to arrive at a point value. As Contest Chairman for the Cajon Division I've seen scores below "C". Almost always the modeler did not do a good job explaining how they built the model, not that the model wasn't worth 87.5 points. I've seen points one hundred and twenty-five (the maximum). I've even seen a model not receive a merit even though it was worth

well over a hundred points. It is a rare/exceptional model that receives all the points. The solution is in the paperwork.

"The infamous paperwork" that goes along with a model to be evaluated isn't hard. Once the technique is learned it only takes a few minutes. The guidelines will outline what you need to cover. Looking from the evaluators position, what do they want on your description? They don't want prose. In fact they'd rather you didn't prove you passed English. What they want is the brief yet complete description. Sounds like an outline to me. Evaluators have a very limited amount of time to evaluate your model make it easy for them to know how you built the model.

By entering your model(s) you will receive an evaluation score but better yet, you receive from your peers that carried out the evaluation, comments on what you might have done to make the model and future models better. Making you even a better modeler.

At recent PSR conventions and division meetings clinics have been offered to assist members in making paperwork complete, understandable, yet brief. Taking the "infamous" portion out of the paperwork. Set that model in front of you, read the guidelines again, print the judges evaluation form for the specific guideline, and score your model writing down the descriptions you thought of to create the point value as you do so. Bring it to a clinic and modify as needed and submit your model.

You're on your way to receiving personal satisfaction, peer praise, and a Merit Award.



Baggage cart at Caliente NV Depot—photo by Kevin Spady





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