



# LA Coupler

*The Newsletter of the Los Angeles Division of the NMRA*



**Page 6**

## *In This Issue*

LAMRS is On The Move

LA Div Open House

...and more!

Los Angeles Division  
Pacific Southwest Region  
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.  
[www.ladiv-nmra.org](http://www.ladiv-nmra.org)





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## On the Cover...

*A new home for the Los Angeles Model Railroad Society*

See page 5

## LA Coupler Deadlines

## Publication Team

*The LA Coupler is always looking for submissions, articles, photos, or ideas. Please reach out to the Editor for more information:*

**Lisican@gmail.com**

### Submission Deadlines

*Spring Issue: February 1*

*Summer Issue: May 1*

*Fall Issue: August 1*

*Winter Issue: November 1*

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**Kevin Spady**

## ***Publication Information for the LA Coupler***

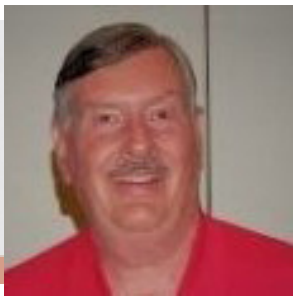
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Thank you for supporting the LA Division!



# Superintendent's Report

- Vic Cavalli

## Help Wanted: LA Division Superintendent

As some of you may already know, I spent Thanksgiving last year (and, then some) hospitalized due to complications related to Type 2 Diabetes. Or, so I thought.

As it turned out, yes, my diabetes had risen dangerously high; which a new regiment of medications has brought back under control, thank you – but a new health complication also was silently emerging, chronic heart disease. Specifically, Congestive Heart Failure.

For the last several months, I have been in-and-out of hospitals and doctor offices for consultations, examinations and/or procedures.

Within days of the time I am composing this report to you, I will be having a dual chamber, internal defibrillator installed. It won't cure anything, but could provide a bit of protection should I go into Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

This background, although long-winded, leads me to the point of this quarter's message: I must curtail most of my NMRA Divisional (and Regional) responsibilities – including acting as your Los Angeles (L.A.) Division Superintendent. During our monthly Advisory Board (Board) meeting, held April 13, 2023, I shared with the Board my newly recovered health issue(s) and the impact it/they might have upon you, our members. To a person attending, each offered

to “step up” and take on a bit more workload in hopes of keeping the Division alive and moving forward. I don't know the right words to express just how proud they made me feel, so I will simply say THANK YOU!

None, however, felt they possessed the skills, talents, and/or time required to assume the role of Superintendent. Therefore, our Division enters a period during which we are leaderless. This doesn't mean L.A. is going-away or will be “falling off the face of the earth” any time soon – your Board isn't ready to give up that easily! You shouldn't expect as many events, meetings, tours, surveys, etc... forthcoming either though.

As laid out in our Division's By-Laws (as well as the Region's too), Pacific Southwest Region (PSR) President Pat Raymer, Vice President Gary Butts, and Board of Directors have been notified of the position's vacancy. Should you have interest in becoming L.A.'s next [interim?] Superintendent, please contact PSR President Raymer at [president@psrnmra.org](mailto:president@psrnmra.org).

I would like to close by stating it has been honor and privilege serving as your Superintendent for the past 3+ years, and am hopeful I'll be able to return as an active NMRA volunteer soon.

My best wishes to you. Happy Model Railroading,

Vic Cavalli  
(Retired) Superintendent, LA Division, PSR, NMRA

HO  
SCALE

# June 24, 2023

10:00am ~ Round Trip Pass ~ 2:00pm

## SUSQUEHANNA & BLUE MOUNTAIN RAILROAD



All Los Angeles Division Members (and guests!) are invited to tour Chuck Fisher's terrific HO Scale Susquehanna & Blue Mountain Railroad. The layout, set in Northeastern Pennsylvania following WWII, models a small town railroad doing what it can to survive.

Light Refreshments Will be Provided

**1338 Misty Ct., Diamond Bar, Ca 91765**

Please RSVP by June 21 to Chuck Fisher (909)-239-2147 / [ChuckFisher43@gmail.com](mailto:ChuckFisher43@gmail.com)

## The Past Becomes the Future



### It Was A Question

A question from The Model Railroads of Southern California groups.io page ([groups.io/g/ModelRailroadsOfSoCalif](https://groups.io/g/ModelRailroadsOfSoCalif)) led to a response that a new club was forming in the San Pedro area. Was it a new club that was forming or an old club relocating to a new area? A reply suggested that the responses may reflect a conflation of several not connected issues. Yes, there was an HO club in the distant vicinity and yes there was a new layout being built in the San Pedro area. Perhaps the writers were referring to the relocation of the Los Angeles Model Railroad Society from its former location in Hawthorne to its new location in Harbor City.

### A Brief History of the Los Angeles Model Railroad Society (LAMRS)

The Los Angeles Model Railroad Society (LAMRS) was founded in 1971 as the Pacific Coast Train Club. In 1971 the club was approved as a California non-profit organization dedicated to benefiting the community through its members' interests in model railroading. The club's railroad is a hypothetical model operating between the Great Lakes and the Pacific, hence its name Great Lakes and Western Railroad (GL&W). The railroad has been featured twice in Model Railroader Magazine and has been included in many model railroad association tours, publications, national television shows, commercials, even a music video. For more that 27

# The Past Becomes the Future

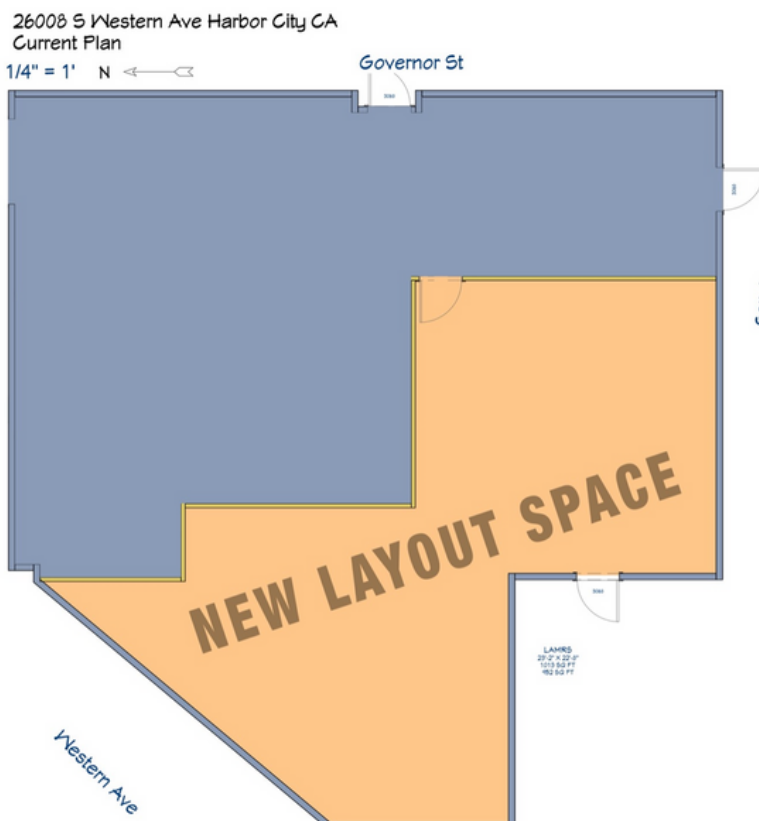
- Robert Myrtle

years it was located in leased space in Hawthorne California. Unfortunately, the death of a benefactor who allowed the club to reside there under beneficial terms changed the arrangement when the building was sold to a new owner forcing the club to find a new home or pay market-level rents.

## It Ain't Over Until it is Over

Rising to the challenge of “what’s next”, the membership weighed several options but ultimately determined it was time to find a new location. The search was guided by four key requirements. These were: 1) first floor with wheelchair access, 2) safe location, 3) available parking and 4) A/C and heating. A number of different options were evaluated, partnerships explored, and even modular layout concepts considered. Even though Covid seemed to limit the Club’s efforts, the belief that “Somethings are Worth Saving” became the motivating force to overcome these obstacles. Finally, passion and persistence began to payoff.

One of our members, found a place in Harbor City that he wanted for office and storage for his business. It had 1000 ft of space he was not going to use and so the club leased it from him. It met our requirements; ground floor, HVAC, parking and a decent neighborhood, but a screwy shaped space, or that was what we thought at the time.

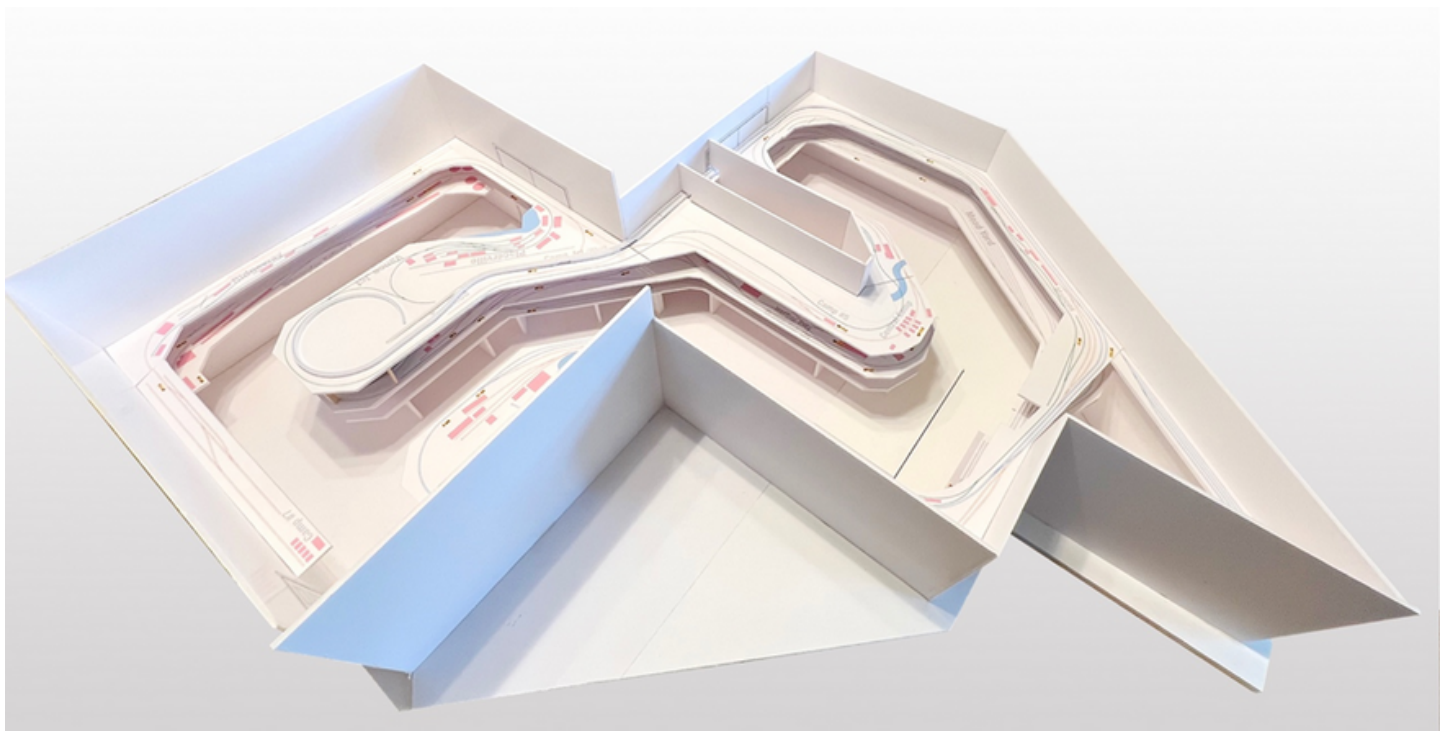


Ideas, concepts and discussions began to transform the “impossible” into the “possible”. Several layout design concepts were considered. That was narrowed down to three competing concepts. A years-long effort of weekly Zoom and in-person meetings enabled the membership to refine each design and to select a front-runner while the space was being prepared for tenancy. The membership voted and selected one of the designs and various work groups formed to translate vision into reality.

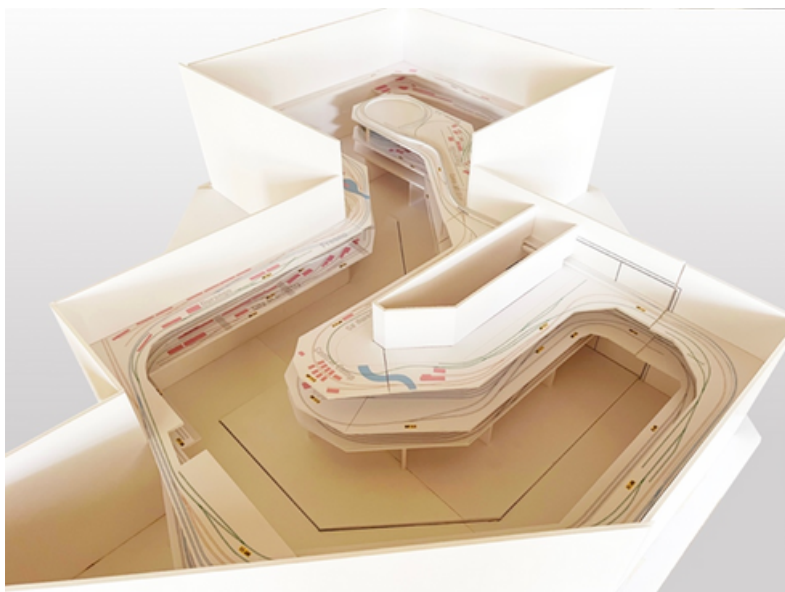
# The Past Becomes the Future

- Robert Myrtle

The unique arrangement of rooms in the building available for lease presented an opportunity to "think outside of the box". As was the case in the original layout, it was important that the layout design make it possible for easy access and viewing by both operators and the viewing public. The walk-around design features both point-to-point and continuous running, encourages active involvement in the operations of the layout, maximizes the use of the space, and provides a long mainline run! While the freelance railroad is the the *Great Lakes and Western*, the new layout focuses on the Western operations from the Sierras to the Los Angeles Harbor.



A Top Down View of the Multi-Level  
Layout Design (Scale 1" = 1')

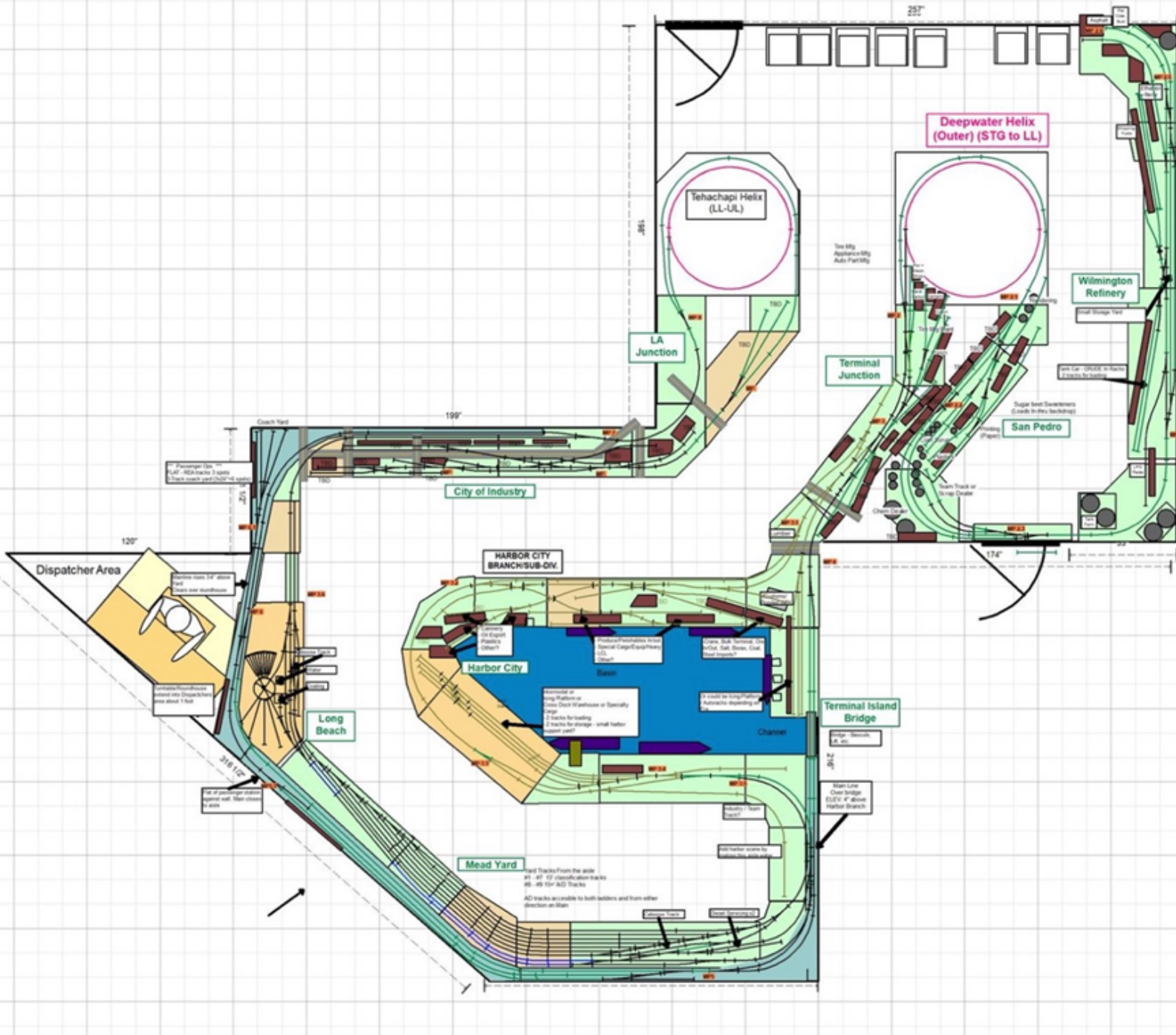


Another View of the Great Lakes  
and Western Layout Design



# The Past Becomes the Future

- Robert Myrtle



Great Lakes and Western Track Plan

# The Past Becomes the Future

- Robert Myrtle

As shown in the 3-dimensional models (see pictures above), the layout is an around the room double-deck shelf layout with staging underneath part of it, connected by two helixes. The lower-level and the upper level are designed to feature both train operations and yard activities. Standard gauge operations include mainline running, logging operations and several branch lines. Narrow gauge operations on the upper level include six towns along the Rio Grande Southern (RGS).

Other design requirements include: 30" minimum main line radius and 24" minimum for branch lines and narrow gauge. Maximum grades on the whole layout are 2%. All turnouts and double crossovers are hand laid using Fast Tracks jigs, Micro Engineering code 83 rail and flex track. Digitrax DCC is used for train throttle control and LCC (Layout Command Control) is used to operate turnouts, block detection and signaling.

## **Creating the “New” and “Improved Great Lakes and Western Railroad**

Work is underway to bring the vision of the layout into reality. Portions of the two levels have been installed and the first of the two helixes has been constructed, connecting the two levels together. Track laying progresses rapidly and the helix has already been tested.

The previous layout was very mature and was in maintenance mode for the better part of the last decade. No significant redesign projects or construction had happened on the old layout. Meanwhile, a handful of LAMRS members have their own layouts, but the vast majority do not. Couple that with implementation of LCC, a fairly new technology, multiple helixes, 3 levels, and the need to be able to move and salvage key portions of the layout should another move be necessary, and the effort to build the layout becomes exponentially more complicated.

We have had to organize ourselves by creating “workstreams” headed by those with experience and skills in that area to lead members who are just now developing those capabilities. What we find is that new challenges arise and all of us, no matter the years of experience, are learning as we go! The excitement of DOING the hobby, actively participating, has breathed new life into our members. We started with focusing on one section of the layout with the intent to get it to operational before moving to the next. This allows making mistakes, learning, adapting, and providing lessons learned for the next sections we build. Humor, frustration and patience all play a role but that seems to also bring us together as many daytime work sessions involve a group lunch at one of many local eateries.

# The Past Becomes the Future

- Robert Myrtle

Building a new layout provides exciting opportunities for folks interested in creating a new model railroad. The benchwork is approximately 25 percent completed. The electrical work is just beginning and ideas for scenery are being considered. Structures that have been in storage will need to be refurbished, and new structures created to complement the scenic concepts and the extensive switching areas. All of this provides a wide range of opportunities to participate in recreating the "New and Improved" Great Lakes and Western Railroad.

## Interested

We have work parties on Mondays and Thursdays from 10am to 3pm as well as Tuesday evening meetings from 7pm to 9pm (except the first Tuesday of the month). Feel free to stop by and poke your head in. Chances are you might end up with either a hammer or a throttle in your hand.

We will be happy to put you on our private email list if you wish. You can follow us on Facebook or check out our website at [www,LAMRS.org](http://www.LAMRS.org).

**Address: 26008 S Western Ave, Harbor City, CA 90710**

Contact: [lamrsinfo@gmail.com](mailto:lamrsinfo@gmail.com)

Phone: +1 (424) 333-9477 for messages or texts

**Follow us on Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/Los-Angeles-Model-Railroad-Society-LAMRS-20067816631539](https://www.facebook.com/Los-Angeles-Model-Railroad-Society-LAMRS-20067816631539)

**Website:**

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





# N Scale Yard Sale

**Join Us for a day of buying and selling  
Locomotives, Rolling Stock, Passenger Sets.  
While at the train sale, visit the Central Pacific  
Railway located at the same address.**

**June 3, 2023**

**9:00AM –12:00PM**

**23445 Evalyn Ave**

**Torrance, CA 90505**

**Vendors Welcome**

**RSVP please email**

**[CPRXmodelRR@gmail.com](mailto:CPRXmodelRR@gmail.com)**

**or call: (310) 344-9145**



**Hosted by: Central Pacific Railway - CPRX**

**Frank Kenny**

*Note that this event is not hosted by the LA Division of the NMRA*

# Around the Division

Compiled by Vic Cavalli

## **Welcome New Members:**

**Please welcome our newest Los Angeles Division members:**

**Clark Bauman** of Burbank, CA. Clark joined 2/1/2023  
**Gregory Fancher** of Ojai, CA. Gregory joined 3/1/2023  
**Chris Gunn** of Simi Valley, CA. Chris joined 3/1/2023  
**Darrel King** of Simi Valley, CA. Darrel joined 3/1/2023  
**Jeff Morris** of Ventura, CA. Jeff joined 3/1/2023  
**Todd Thierry** of Oxnard, CA. Todd joined 4/1/2023

As of May 1st, our Division's membership stands at 195.

## **Don't Forget to Vote:**

Have you voted in the Pacific Southwest Region's (PSR) Division Directors election yet? Show your support for the candidate of your choice. Polls remain open only through May 21st. Don't put it off any longer!

## **PSR Annual Convention is Less Than a Month Away:**

Hurry, PSR's annual convention, the Grand Canyon Special 2023, is only a few weeks off, Wednesday – Saturday, June 7th – 10th in Flagstaff, AZ. Check the convention's website for details: [www.azdiv-nmra.org/psr2023convention](http://www.azdiv-nmra.org/psr2023convention).



**The 2024 NMRA National Convention  
“SurfLiner 2024”  
will be in Long Beach from August 4 to 11, 2024**

Did you know that the Pacific Southwest Region will be hosting the National NMRA Convention in Long Beach in 2024? Do you have a layout that you would like to share during the convention layout tours?

***WE NEED LAYOUTS FOR THE LAYOUT TOURS!!!!!!!***

If you would like your layout to be on the tour or, if you are building a layout and think it will be tour ready by August of 2024, please contact Kevin Spady at [Layout\\_Chair@surfliner.org](mailto:Layout_Chair@surfliner.org) (818-644-7170), or Morrie Fleishman at [mefleishman@cox.net](mailto:mefleishman@cox.net) (949-351-7715) to get your layout added to our layout list. We will be reviewing all potential layouts over the next year to develop our layout tours and are looking for those awesome layouts that are hiding away in your basement or spare room! Detailed requirements for inclusion in the layout tours will be coming out in the next couple months. This is a first call for layouts and there will be plenty of time to finalize your participation over the next year.

This convention is attended by a huge audience from around the globe and this is a chance to show off your modelling skills and railroad creations! In addition to the recognition of your peers, your layout may qualify for an NMRA Golden Spike award and can earn credit for other NMRA MMR Achievement Awards.

If you, or anyone you know, may be interested, please have them contact Kevin or Morrie.





# Financial Report

5/06/2023

-Kevin Spady

Los Angeles Division - Pacific Southwest Region - National Model Railroad Association Banking Reconciliation						
Starting Balance	Deposits This Period	Checks Cut This Period	Checks Cleared This Period	Outstanding Checks This Period	Ending Balance	Notes
\$17,090.82	\$ 221.51	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,312.33	Membership reimbursemnt & advertising income
\$ -		\$ (1,173.01)			\$ (1,173.01)	Storage Unit annual cost & Event Promo
	\$ -				\$ -	
	\$ 221.51	\$ (1,173.01)	\$ -	\$ -		
				<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 16,139.32</b>	As of May 6, 2023

## *First Thursday of the Month* Sand House Chats!

**WHAT:** Sand House Chats is your chance to find out what others in the Los Angeles Division have been up to the previous month

**WHEN:** Held the first Thursday evening on each month starting at 7:00pm (chats typically last about an hour)

**FORMAT:** Roundtable style, very informal, no agenda ...via the Zoom app

**WHO:** Available to all members of the Los Angeles Division

**HOW TO JOIN:** Contact [superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org](mailto:superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org) for your *free* link

# Advisory Board Contact List

## OFFICERS

**Director**  
**Vic Cavalli**  
director@ladiv-nmra.org  
(805) 680-5826

**Paymaster**  
**Kevin Spady**  
kspady@att.net  
(818) 644-7170

**Chief Clerk**  
**Nick Lisica**  
Lisican@gmail.com  
(831) 594-7640

## TEAMS, COMMITTEES, and CHAIRS

### **Superintendent - Vacant**

#### Members' Services Team

**Team Chair and Membership Recruitment/Retention – Mike McGreevy**  
membership@ladiv-nmra.org (805) 907-2367

**Members' Services Chair - Mike O'Brien**  
mike@corbu.us (626) 487-8768

**Events Scheduling - Vacant**

#### Communications Team

**Team Chair and LA Coupler Editor - Nick Lisica**  
lisican@gmail.com (831) 594-7640

**LA Coupler Assistant Editor - Vacant**

**Social Media (Zoom) Manager - Kevin Spady**  
kspady@att.net (818) 644-7170

**L.A. Division Webmaster - Kevin Spady**  
kspady@att.net (818) 644-7170

**L.A. Division Assistant Webmaster – Vacant**

**Publicity/Graphics Manager – Nick Lisica**  
lisican@gmail.com (831) 594-7640

**AContests/Achievement Program Chair – Gary Butts, MMR**  
gary.cajon@gmail.com (714) 842-4980

**L.A. Division Historian - Vacant**

**Nominations and Elections Chair - Vacant**

**Non-Rail Coordinator - Vacant**



# Schedule of Events

## Areas Covered:

Counties of Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Mono, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara & Ventura + National Conventions

*Last updated: 05/10/2023*

## Recurring

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays - Los Angeles Model Railroad Society "Work" Sessions, Harbor City  
Saturdays - Belmont Shore Model Railroad Club Visitation, San Pedro  
1st Monday of Each Month - Glendale Model Railroad Society's Verduga Valley Lines Open House, Glendale  
1st Thursday of Each Month - Los Angeles Division Sponsored "Sand House Chat" Zoom Session  
2nd Saturday of Each Month - Trains & Coffee Swap Meet, Placentia  
3rd Saturday of Each Month - Arizona Division Zoom Session  
3rd Saturday and Sunday of Each Month (weather permitting) - Orange County Model Engineers Train Rides, Costa Mesa  
Last Thursday of Each Month - "Cajon Connection" Zoom Session (w/ Breakout Groups)  
Last Saturday of Each Month - "Model Railroad Fellowship Get-Together" - RailMaster Hobbies, Bellflower

## 2023

May 13 – San Diego Division Spring Meet, Vista  
May 20 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet and Open House, Simi Valley  
May 21 - Pasadena Model Railroad Open House, 1:00 - 5:00pm, Pasadena  
May 26, 27 – O Scale West (O, S, and Narrow Gauge) Model Train Show, Santa Clara  
  
June 7 – 11 – PSR Annual Convention, the “Grand Canyon Special”, Flagstaff, AZ  
June 24 – L.A. Division Sponsored Open Layout – Chuck Fisher, Diamond Bar  
  
July 15 - Cajon Division Layout Open House (Details TBD)  
July 22 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, Moreno Valley

# Schedule of Events

August 20 -26 – NMRA National Convention, the “2023 Texas Express” and Train Show, Grapevine, TX  
August 26 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet and Open House, Simi Valley

October 5 – 8 – Central Coast Railroad Festival and Layout Tours, San Luis Obispo

October 21 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, Moreno Valley

October 21 - Cajon Division Fall Meet, Buena Park

October 25 - 28 – Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society Convention, Bakersfield

November 4 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet and Open House, Simi Valley

November 11, 12 & 14 – California Southern Model Railroad Club Open House, Norwalk

## **2024**

August 4 - 11 - NMRA National Convention, the "*SurfLiner 2024*" and *Tran Show*, Long Beach

**For inclusion, please send announcements to: [VicCavalli@Comcast.net](mailto:VicCavalli@Comcast.net)**

# Advertisement Guidelines

## *Interested in Advertising in the LA Coupler?*

Please note that advertisements in the *LA Coupler* need to be related to the hobby of model railroading (including prototype railroading). All ads are to be supplied by the owner and published at the discretion of the *LA Coupler* editor and/or the LA Division Advisory Board. If you have questions about the guidelines, please reach out to the editor at [Lisican@gmail.com](mailto:Lisican@gmail.com)

Publishing guidelines for ads are as follows:

Ad space is sold on an annual basis (four issues, published quarterly), for a full, ½, ¼, or ⅛ page sized ad

A commitment for two issues is requested up front (totaling 50% of the total costs), a full year commitment would receive a discount of 10% on the price.

	<b>Full Page Ad</b>	<b>Half Page Ad</b>	<b>Quarter Page Ad</b>	<b>Eighth Page Ad</b>
<b>Annual Cost</b>	\$100	\$60	\$40	\$25
<b>Minimum 2 Issue Commitment</b>	\$50	\$30	\$20	\$12.50
<b>Full Year Discount (less 10%)</b>	\$90	\$54	\$36	\$22.50

Payments are to be made to the LA Division NMRA. Please contact the editor for details.

Funds from advertising go directly toward supporting your Los Angeles Division of the NMRA.



**For more information on the NMRA  
please visit [www.NMRA.org](http://www.NMRA.org)**

*Special Thanks to Railmaster Hobbies*

*9812 Belmont St.  
Bellflower, CA 90706  
(562) 867-5627  
[www.railmasterhobbies.com](http://www.railmasterhobbies.com)*

Thank you for supporting the LA Coupler!

