



LA Coupler

The Newsletter of the Los Angeles Division of the NMRA



Los Angeles Division
Pacific Southwest Region
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
www.ladiv-nmra.org



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Open House Double Header

The PSR Convention is Coming!

...and more!



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On the Cover.... *The 2025 PSR Convention - Pacific Southwest Express - is just around the corner! Visit the convention website to reserve your spot now!*

www.pacificswexpress.org

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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Publication Information for the LA Coupler

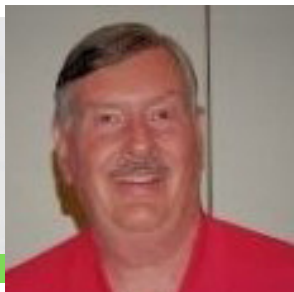
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Thank you for supporting the LA Division!



Director's Report

- Vic Cavalli

The Pacific Southwest Region's (PSR) Board of Directors (Board) held its Mid-Year meeting, by Zoom session, Sunday, March 23, 2025. PSR President Joel Morse started things off by reiterating the three (3) primary goals of his term:

1. Increase the value of NMRA membership by working with its Divisions to enhance collaboration, cooperation, and distribution of information across the Region.
2. Increase membership numbers and improve member retention.
3. Increase opportunities for members in all Divisions to share their passion for model railroading with each other.

Expansion of Region's and Distribution of Divisions' Newsletters:

Each Division, as well as the Region itself, publish and disturb quarterly newsletters. As a general rule, most members receive two (2) of these five (5) publications by e-mail currently. Improvements were offered where:

1. It might be desirable to take the "best" material from each Division's newsletters and reprint it in the Region's Dispatch,
2. Have all five (5) newsletters be sent out to all members of the Region as each is readied,
3. Simply combine all five (5) newsletters into one "bigger and better" document.

It was agreed a subcommittee consisting of the Region's Editor, as its Chair, and each of the Division's four (4) Editors be assembled to consider, evaluate, and return their recommendation(s) in time so the Board could consider them at its annual meeting this September.

Formation of a Regional Membership Subcommittee:

A second subcommittee, to be chaired by PSR Vice President Frank Kenny and consisting of the PSR's Membership Chair and each of its Division's Membership Chairs, would have the goal of:

1. Itemizing current Divisions "best" recruitment strategies and practices, and
2. Determining how newly generated NMRA National materials might be integrated into local programs.

An additional desired outcome of this subcommittee is to develop methods to increase the PSR's current membership, approximately 950 individuals, to 1,500 strong.

Director's Report

- continued

Opportunities for Members to Share More with Each Other:

Sharing published material previously distributed at the Divisional-level has already been mentioned above.

Another idea was for the Region to start sponsoring monthly Zoom (or like Internet-based application) sessions on a monthly basis. Unlike the Sand House Chat sessions currently being offered by the L.A. Division, these would be more structured, clinic-based offerings. Who would assemble, schedule, and conduct these sessions was not clear; though it was suggested each Division be responsible for holding a session on a rotating basis.

A third, though very limited, opportunity was passed on from National Headquarters. In order to increase the availability of the Modeling with the Master (MWTM) program, the NMRA is developing a process where local Master Model Railroaders (MMR) may become "certified", thus allowing them to present their Headquarters prior-approved clinics as MWTMs. As L.A. has only two (2) MMRs residing in its Division, as I said, it's a "limited" opportunity for us.

Division Directors and Committees reports were presented too, of course. But the above agenda items are those I believe would be of the most interested to you. Should you have any questions or comments regarding something presented here, please feel free to reach out to me. I'd be happy to discuss/answer any inquires you might have.

The next meeting of the PSR's Board of Directors will occur the afternoon of Wednesday, September 3rd; on the front end of our annual convention.

Members are always invited to attend.

Thanks for reading along, and happy model railroading to you.

HO & N
SCALE

July 19, 2025



Two Open Houses in Torrance!

CPRX - N SCALE & AEWRR - HO SCALE

The LA Division invites [NMRA MEMBERS](#) to join us for a day out in Torrance to see two fantastic layouts.



SCHEDULE

10:00am - 2:00pm - Frank Kenny's N Scale CPRXX Railroad

23445 Evalyn Ave, Torrance 90505

1:00pm - 5:00pm - Ron Varnell's HO Scale Any Era Western Railroad

2741 Plaza Del Amo, Suite 213, Torrance 90503 (Note: The layout is located on the Plaza Del Amo between Crenshaw and Maple, NOT the plaza Del Amo behind the high school)

SurfLiner Convention Cars



N Surfliner Car



HO Surfliner Car

HO and N Scale *SurfLiner* convention cars are still available! They can be yours for \$15.00 each (originally sold for \$30 at the convention). Each purchase includes a *SurfLiner* convention pin. Please contact Vic Cavalli for information: director@ladiv-nmra.org



Superintendent's Report

- Jeff Smith

Where Do We Go From Here? A Mid-Year Message from Your Superintendent

Dear LA Division Members,

We currently have an open election for the 2025 Los Angeles Division Director position, running now through June 29. Since no one stepped forward during the nomination period, this election is being conducted as a write-in vote.

This is your opportunity to help shape the future of our Division. If you've ever considered stepping into a leadership role—or know someone who would be a great fit—please take a moment to participate. Your voice and vote truly matter.

Strong leadership starts with engaged members. Let's work together to keep the LA Division active, innovative, and welcoming to all.

As we reach the halfway point of the year, I want to take a moment to reflect—and more importantly, to look forward. Our NMRA Los Angeles Division is full of potential, and your involvement is the key to unlocking what's next.

We've shared some great moments together already—layout tours, meet-ups, and the chance to see each other's passion for the hobby up close. One highlight was our wonderful Membership Banquet this past March, where Joe Strapac joined us as our guest speaker and delivered a truly memorable presentation. But where do we go from here?

That's the question I'm asking you.

Help Shape the Future of the LA Division

We want to shape the second half of 2025—and set the course for 2026—around what matters most to you, our members.

This is your division, and now is the time to speak up! We're inviting input from every member—whether you're a layout veteran, a scenery guru, a collector, a newcomer, or just someone who loves talking trains.

Here are a few questions to get your ideas rolling:

- What kind of events or gatherings excite you most?

Superintendent's Report

- Jeff Smith

- Are there topics or modeling skills you'd love to explore in a clinic or hands-on session?
- Would you prefer weekday evening meetups, weekend layout tours, or casual drop-ins at hobby shops or cafés?
- Do you have a layout, project, or technique you'd like to share?
- What would make the LA Division more engaging, more fun, or more welcoming?
- Whether it's a brand-new idea or a fresh spin on something we've done before, we want to hear from you.

We also plan to offer some home layout and club layout tours later this year. How about your home layout? You tell us and we'll do the rest!

- Or talk to us at the next event—we're all ears!
- Email your thoughts to: SUPERINTENDENT@ladiv-nmra.org

Let's make the rest of 2025 a time of momentum, creativity, and fellowship. All aboard!

Heading to Michigan?

The NMRA National Train Show is coming up this July in Novi, Michigan, and it promises to be a fantastic event packed with layouts, vendors, and fellow enthusiasts. If you're planning to attend, you're in for a treat!

Did you know? Novi got its name from the old No. 6 train station stop, which was part of the Michigan Air Line Railway. Local legend says the name 'Novi' came from the designation of that stop on early railroad maps—Station No. VI (Roman numeral for 6).—a little piece of railroad history right in the name!

If you'd like to talk in person, please feel free to stop by RailMaster Hobbies in Bellflower, CA. I'd love to hear from you directly!

Warm regards,

Jeff Smith

Superintendent, NMRA Los Angeles Division

N
SCALE

July 19, 2025

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

FRANK KENNY'S CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILWAY



Frank Kenny's N Scale Central Pacific Railway, set c. 1978, represents the rail line between Mojave and Fresno, and focuses on the modern prototypes of the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, and Frank's CPRX or Central Pacific Railway.

23445 Evalyn Ave, Torrance CA 90505

Membership Sharing Ideas

What do you expect to get out of your membership? There are many benefits but something I hear quite often is that new members signed up to find other local modelers. The LA Division is a big one. We have members from Ventura to Claremont and Torrance to Lancaster. This makes for some long drives from end to end. Sadly, the time and hassle of driving can discourage some of us to get together.

Recently I got asked about one specific area, the Santa Clarita Valley. A member wanted to know if there was anyone else in his area. Turns out that there are 7 members relatively close. I know this because I receive the monthly membership roster. Likewise there are clusters of members in other locales. I was surprised when I went through the data. We have 79 different cities indicated for our 210 members. Some are quite close together and sometimes different members refer to the same city by a different name. So, I was wondering if some would find value in knowing how many members live in the same or nearby cities.

Check out the table below. It is ranked from most to least members. But see the highlighted example for Santa Clarita. There maybe several members very near to you but living in a city with a different name.

Are you interested in knowing who is close to you? Are you willing to let others know you are nearby? I understand the NMRA used to put out a directory of member locations. Can we find a way to get to know who is nearby without disclosing private information? What about this idea? Send me an email and tell me you are open to sharing your information with nearby members. You could even specify the cities. I can email those other members to contact you. They can accept or decline, of course. If you want all to be able to find you we can post your information in an upcoming newsletter if you specifically request that. We can help you find local members who want to connect. Finally, we can survey all members and find out who want to be included in a member directory. Only if you opt in, we will include your information and send you a list of members who also decided to participate. Such a directory could include your preferred scale, prototype or freelance, time period modeled, etc.

What do you think?

John McGreevy
LA Division Membership Chair

Membership Sharing Ideas

City	#	City	#	City	#	City	#	City	#
Los Angeles	17	Bellflower	3	Porter					
Pasadena	15	Cerritos	3	Ranch	2	Encino	1	Redondo	1
Long Beach	14	Littlerock	3	S Pasadena	2	Glendora	1	Rosemead	1
		Rch Palos		Van Nuys	2	Granada Hills	1	Santa Clarita	1
Torrance	10	Vrd	3	West					
				Covina	2	Hawthorne	1	Santa Monica	1
Simi Valley	8	San Dimas	3	Westlake					
Ventura	8	Acton	2	Vlg	2	La Canada Flt	1	Santa Paula	1
Glendale	7	Camarillo	2	Alhambra	1	La Mirada	1	Sierra Madre	1
				Arcadia	1	Manhattan Bch	1	Studio City	1
Claremont	6	Carson	2	Canoga		Manhattan			
				Park	1	Beach	1	Tarzana	1
Lakewood	6	Culver City	2	Canyon					
Redondo		Hacienda		Country	1	Montrose	1	Temple City	1
Beach	6	Hts	2	Castaic	1			Thousand	
Burbank	5	La Verne	2	Compton	1	N Hollywood	1	Oaks	1
Lancaster	5	Monrovia	2	Covina	1	Newhall	1	Valencia	1
				Diamond		Northridge	1	Walnut	1
Whittier	5	Moorpark	2	Bar	1	Norwalk	1	West Hills	1
		Newbury							
La Crescenta	4	Park	2	Downey	1	Palmdale	1	Winnetka	1
Oxnard	4	Ojai	2	Duarte	1	Pls Vrds Est	1	San Gabriel	1
Agoura Hills	3	Pacific Plsds	2	El Segundo	1	Port Hueneme	1		

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION
2025 CONVENTION
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST
EXPRESS



SEPTEMBER 3 - 6, 2025

HILTON HOTEL IRVINE - JOHN WAYNE AIRPORT

WELCOME RECEPTION

CLINICS

PROTOTYPE TOURS

CELEBRATION OF MODELS

MODEL RAILROAD VISITS

AWARDS BANQUET

OPERATING LAYOUTS

NON-RAIL ACTIVITIES



WWW.PACIFICSWEXPRESS.ORG

Welcomes & Anniversaries

January – June, 2025

New Members

Daniel Genuth, Rancho Palos Verdes

John Hanes, Walnut

Arahant Giri and Family, Torrance

Jesse Morgan, Ventura

Richard “Joseph Soriano” Jaladoni, Torrance

Herbert Hailey Family, Bellflower

Mark “Dave” Crittenden, Camarillo

10-Year Anniversary

William Knox, Ventura

70-Year Anniversary

James R Baker, Whittier



Financial Report

5/31/2025

-Kevin Spady

NON PROFIT CHECKING

U.S. Bank National Association

Account Summary

	# Items		
Beginning Balance on May 1		\$	15,718.92
Other Deposits	1		0.03
Other Withdrawals	1		6.50-
Ending Balance on May 31, 2025		\$	15,712.45

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 VicCavalli@comcast.net for your free link

HO
SCALE

July 19, 2025

1:00pm ~ Round Trip Pass ~ 5:00pm

RON VARNELL'S UNION PACIFIC LAYOUT



Set between the late 1940s and early 1970s, this 1,400 square foot layout features both standard and narrow gauge. It features logging, oil extraction, strip and gold mining, plus numerous other rail served industries. Bring a favorite HO or HOn3 layout to run!

2741 Plaza Del Amo, Suite 213, Torrance, Ca 90503

Advisory Board Contact List

OFFICERS

Director Vic Cavalli director@ladiv-nmra.org (805) 680-5826	Superintendent Jeff Smith superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org (562) 867-5627	Paymaster Kevin Spady kspady@att.net (818) 644-7170	Chief Clerk Nick Lisica Lisican@gmail.com (831) 594-7640
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TEAMS, COMMITTEES, and CHAIRS

Members' Services Team

Team Chair and Membership Recruitment/Retention – John McGreevy

membership@ladiv-nmra.org (805) 907-2367

Members' Services Chair - Vacant

Events Scheduling - Vacant

Communications Team

Team Chair and LA Coupler Editor - Nick Lisica

lisican@gmail.com (831) 594-7640

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 - John McGreevy

Non-Rail Coordinator - Vacant

Upcoming Model Railroad & Prototype 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: 12/31/2024

Recurring

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays - Los Angeles Model Railroad Society "Work" Sessions, Harbor City
Saturdays - Belmont Shore Model Railroad Club Visitation, San Pedro
Saturdays - Corona Model Railroad Society Open House, Corona
1st Thursday of Each Month - Los Angeles Division Sponsored "Sand House Chat" Zoom Session
2nd Saturday of Each Month - Trains & Coffee Swap Meet, Duke's Cafe Parking Lot, Placentia
3rd Saturday of Each Month - Arizona Division Zoom Session
Last Saturday of Each Month - "Model Railroad Fellowship Get-Together" - RailMaster Hobbies, Bellflower

Upcoming

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

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

Upcoming Model Railroad & Prototype Events

- 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

*For inclusion, please send announcements at least 3 months in advance to:
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

Publishing guidelines for ads are as follows:

Ad space is sold on an annual basis (four issues, published quarterly), for a full, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{1}{8}$ 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.

	Full Page Ad	Half Page Ad	Quarter Page Ad	Eighth Page Ad
Annual Cost	\$100	\$60	\$40	\$25
Minimum 2 Issue Commitment	\$50	\$30	\$20	\$12.50
Full Year Discount (less 10%)	\$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

Special Thanks to Railmaster Hobbies

*9812 Belmont St.
Bellflower, CA 90706
(562) 867-5627
www.railmasterhobbies.com*

Thank you for supporting the LA Coupler!

