

LA Coupler

The Newsletter of the Los Angeles Division of the NMRA



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



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"Back on Track in 2022"

Life Beyond the Layout

...and more!



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On the Cover...

The 2022 PSR Convention is just around the corner!

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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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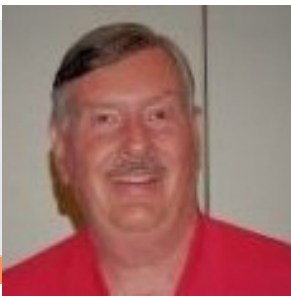
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Thank you for supporting the LA Division!



Superintendent's Report

- Vic Cavalli

Moving Forward

An update on where things stand within the Los Angeles (L.A.) Division...

In my last quarter's report, I shared the difficulty our Division continues to labor under regarding a lack of members offering to volunteer time and support for local events, and the scheduling / administration thereof. Sadly, I have not heard back from any of our nearly 200 members.

Strike One?

Coupled with a surge of positive COVID cases and **hospitalizations** attributed primarily to the highly communicable AB.4 and AB.5 subvariants, both Ventura and Los Angeles Counties – actually just about 100% of Southern California at the time this is being written – are on the threshold of returning to mandatory indoor mask usage requirements again. The Division's ability to hold, or support, public face-to-face events safely is greatly threatened. *Strike Two?*

During the July 2022 meeting of your L.A. Division Advisory Board, this latter threat was discussed at length. That is, *"If COVID constraints prohibit us from scheduling future meets or home/club layout open houses, what might we do instead? How should we proceed?"*

One idea, in particular, was met with strong enthusiasm – holding a FallRail-like event, only *virtually*. Specifically: offer a couple of live 30-40

minutes-long clinics, maybe include a video-transmitted layout tour; of course, schedule some time for members to make "show-and-tell" presentations. If a bit of extra time remains, augment the event with an NMRA Library video or two. Total time of the meet: 3-4 hours. When: likely a Saturday, or Sunday?, in early November - its National Model Railroading month you know!

If you would like to present, have an additional idea or two, or want to help with this event's planning, please contact me directly; my contact information is listed throughout each issue of the *LA Coupler*.

In closing, I'm going to repeat a request from last quarter's report: **If you care about the quality/quantity of programs and services provided in your Division, please, step up now!** I truly believe there are at least a couple of you who want to keep the Division going too. Or, are we looking at *Strike Three?*

As always, I welcome your thoughts or comments.

Until the next *LA Coupler* comes out, happy model railroading to you.

Vic Cavalli
Superintendent
Los Angeles Division
PSR, NMRA

2022 PSR NMRA Convention

- Don Fowler, MMR



Please Join us at the 2022 PSR NMRA Convention

September 7th - 11th, San Diego, CA

Have you signed up for the biggest model railroading event of 2022 right here in San Diego? The Pacific Southwest Region (PSR) presents its annual convention this year hosted by the San Diego Division. This year's convention will take place at the Four Points Hotel by Sheraton centrally located in the Kearney Mesa area.

Our Convention Committee has worked very hard to provide a fun filled week of model railroading enjoyment. Attendees will be able to participate in many activities, learn a wide variety of new techniques and experience a wonderful time of fellowship while enjoying our great hobby.

The Convention will officially open on Wednesday, September 7th with registration,

a PSR Board Meeting and clinics. That evening we will gather for a special reception with light refreshments at the world-famous San Diego Model Railroad Museum.

On Thursday, September 8th, the day will begin with our annual PSR Membership Meeting and complimentary breakfast. This will be followed by a full day of new clinics, layout tours, prototype tours, operating sessions, and non-rail activities. The evening will close with exciting games of Bingo for Trains.

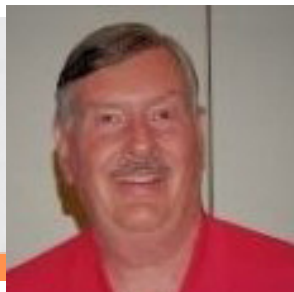
Friday, September 9th will continue with the same type of activities with the notable addition of two very large model railroad auctions. The first is our traditional Hobo Auction where we anticipate more than two hundred items to bid on. The second will be a silent auction for more exclusive model railroad items.

The Hobo Breakfast will kick off Saturday, September 10th followed by a large model railroad swap meet which is free to **venders** who bring their own tables and convention registrants. Later in the morning, the swap meet will be open for paid admission to the public with children under twelve free. All the regular convention activities will continue throughout the day. That evening we will gather to enjoy our annual Awards and Recognition Banquet with famous radio and TV celebrity Shotgun Tom Kelly as our MC.

Sunday, September 11th is the last day of the Convention and will offer more home & club layout tours throughout the County.

As you can see, it will be a full week of model railroading enjoyment. If you have not yet registered and booked a room, I would encourage you to do it today (www.psrconvention.org) Hope to see you there!





Director's Report

- Vic Cavalli

Summer always seems to be a time when active model railroading takes a back seat to other family oriented activities – long vacations, local outings, family or friends parties/BBQs, weekly yard work, home repairs or upgrades that have been put off until “better” weather arrives. Yet, one model railroading event I never pass-up upon each summer is our **Pacific Southwest Region's (PSR) Annual Convention**. This year's, “*Back on Track in 2022*”, will be hosted by the San Diego Division, September 7th – 11th.

An examination of their website, <https://www.sandiegodivision.org/index/php/convention-2022>, indicates there will be more offered than any one person could possibly take in, so some “picking-and-choosing” will be necessary.

Also, per the convention's website, registration has been very popular. So much so, the convention's Planning **Community** has placed a maximum attendance limit of 200 members and their guests. The convention hotel, Four Points by Sheraton San Diego, likewise, has been fully reserved for some time now but, fortunately “back-up” hotel rooms are still available. If you haven't made your reservations yet, don't delay much longer – deadline for special hotel pricing ends soon.

While surfing the PSR's website, **www.psrnmra.org**, I decided to take a quick look at what's happening in each of the Region's other three Divisions:

Arizona, www.azdiv-nmra.org,

Cajon, www.cajondivision.org,

San Diego, www.sandiegodivision.org

Visiting our fellow Divisions' websites is something I try to do every month or two. If you don't already, I highly recommend you try it for yourself too.

For example: I learned the **Arizona Division** has started holding monthly Zoom meeting the third Saturday of each month (much like what we, **Los Angeles**, having been doing for the past year now), or that **San Diego Division** has updated its schedule for their ever popular monthly home/club layout open houses, **www.sandiegodivision.org/index.php/events/2022**, for the remainder of the year.

Something new found on the Region's Main / Home web page: a tab associated with the PSR's hosting of the 2024 NMRA National Convention, the *SurfLiner*

www.psrnmra.org/surfliner

to be held in Long Beach, CA, August 4th-11th, 2024.

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Director's Report

- Continued

Currently, a “save the date” announcement for the future event; but obviously much more will be added in the coming months. Definitely a “favorite” you’ll want to visit frequently!

Well, deadline for submitting this column to our *LA Coupler's* Editor is but a few hours away, so I'll need to close.

Should you want, drop me a line. Otherwise, happy model railroading to you,

Vic Cavalli
Director
Los Angeles Division
PSR, NMRA

Have You Visited
the Website Lately?
www.ladiv-nmra.org



Around the Division

Compiled by Vic Cavalli

Welcome New Members:

Please welcome the Los Angeles Division's newest members:

Nolan Fahnsestock of Ventura, Ca

As of July 1st, our Division's membership stands at 190.

Los Angeles Area Prototype Modelers' Meet:

A reminder: The 2022 L.A. Area Prototype Modelers' Meet will be held at the Encounter Christian Church, 10012 Ramona St., Bellflower, CA on October 1st from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. Bring your models, finished or not. Enjoy clinics. Possible win a raffle prize or two. There also will be an on-site Swap Meet starting at 7:30 am. Cost is \$20.00 at the door; \$15.00, if you bring a model(s) to display.

Annual Pacific Southwest Region's Board of Directors Meeting:

While attending the PSR's annual convention, *Back on Track in 2022*, in San Diego, September 7th – 11th, consider sitting in on the Region's Annual Board of Director's Meeting. It will provide you with an understanding of the many different services and projects being performed for your benefit. Meeting location: Room Palm C. Date and time: Wednesday, September 7th starting at 1:00 pm.

Pacific Southwest Region's Election:

By the time you read this, all PSR members in good standing should have received their on-line ElectionBuddy ballot. Offices up for election this year include the PSR President and PSR Vice President positions. Elections typically are open only for a two week period, so if you haven't voted yet, do so soon!

Around the Division

- Continued

On-Line “Chat” Sessions:

The L.A. Division begins its **second year** of holding interactive, Zoom-based Sand House Chat sessions the first Thursday of each month, starting at 7:00 pm and lasting for approximately 1-1/2 hours. All Division members are welcome to attend. Recently discussed/shared subjects included: how to modify dental “picks” making them uncoupling tools, an update on a 0-4-0 steam locomotive scratch building project, and how a “folding” layout might enlarge ones’ limited garage space. To learn more about Sand House Chats, contact Vic Cavalli at VicCavalli@comcast.net.

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)

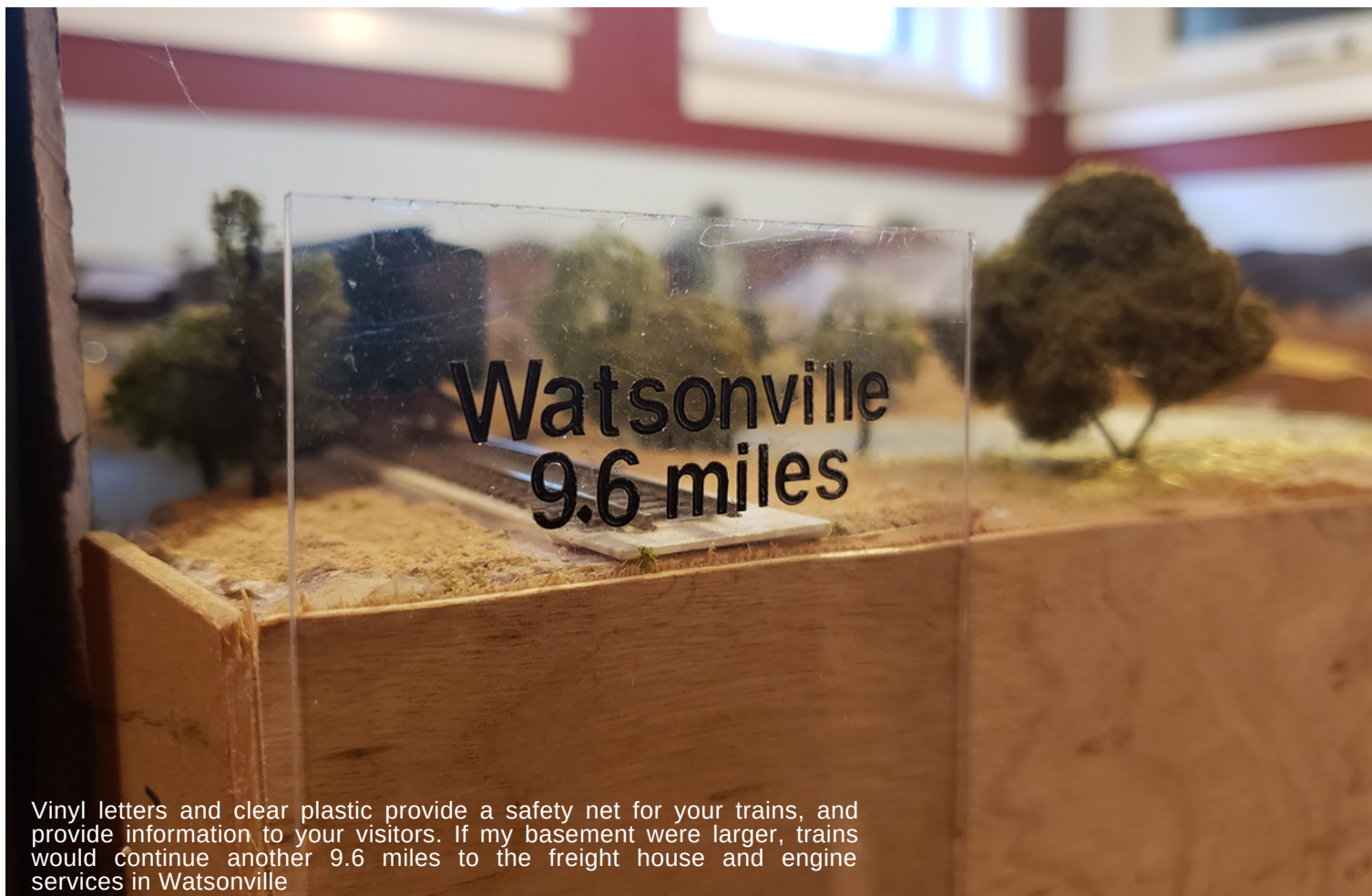
FORMAT: Roundtable style, very informal, no agenda ...via the Zoom app

WHO: Available to all members of the Los Angeles Division

HOW TO JOIN: Contact superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org for your *free* link

Life Beyond the Layout

- Nick Lisica



Vinyl letters and clear plastic provide a safety net for your trains, and provide information to your visitors. If my basement were larger, trains would continue another 9.6 miles to the freight house and engine services in Watsonville



I didn't have room to model the entire Pacific Steamship Co.'s wharf, so I put this sign up to let visitors know what was missing, and to prevent cars from falling to the floor.

I don't want to claim ownership of this idea, but I did want to pass it along for those who haven't seen it done before.

I have a few locations on the layout where I had to cut the track off before a natural stopping point. Rather than having the track stop at the edge of the layout without an explanation, I decided to put a little bit of information on a piece of clear plastic.

This serves two purposes. 1) It keeps trains from driving off the edge of the layout. 2) It lets visitors know where that track goes. This helps add a bit to the realism, giving the trains an additional sense of purpose on where they're headed (even if there isn't room to get there).

This is an easy addition, keeps things safe, and lets your visitors envision the world just outside of the layout's edge.



LA Division Backshop

- Gary Butts, MMR

OK, you've joined or are considering joining the National Model Railroad Association and I guess the question is: why? I doubt that you joined to help consolidate the model railroad standards that the NMRA is famous for and that we all benefit from. Nor do I think you joined solely for the subscription to the great little monthly NMRA magazine or our LA Division Coupler newsletter. If you are like most model railroaders, you joined or are thinking about joining to see if membership could enhance the enjoyment of the little spare time set aside for your model railroading hobby.

If you are like most modelers, you enjoy making or operating your models and many of us enjoy doing this in somewhat of a "vacuum". We model away, have a look at what we accomplished and it puts a smile on our face and renews our desire to repeat the efforts to enhance and continue with our modeling. Typically, joining any hobby association is a direct response to this desire to make the experience more fulfilling- It can and does, for many.

The catch is that simply joining an association and not taking advantage of what the association has to offer does little to enhance anything. OK, you get the magazine but is read in an hour or two and that alone will not usually produce the desired hobby enhancement a modeler is looking for.

The modeling experience enhancement you may be looking for in joining a hobby association comes directly from the interaction with other like-minded modelers. In our case: model railroaders. If you think that looking at what you have accomplished or are contemplating doing by yourself brings enjoyment to your spare time, consider what it is like to have someone else appreciate what you have done. "What a great model" goes a long way to adding to that smile and also opens up the door for more interaction and more interest. It's simple, it's easy and it is right there. All you have to do to magnify your model railroading experience is to take advantage of what is already offered.

The NMRA is a unique association in that it is broken up into small relatively manageable groups called Divisions. Ours is the Los Angeles Division. With less than 200 members our group is comfortable, friendly and interesting. It is not possible to attend one of our meetings and not make friends that you will see again at a following meet with even the smallest of effort. If you don't talk to anyone, it won't work but just make a comment about any model railroad subject to anyone at the meet and off you go.

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LA Division Backshop

- Continued

For many of us already through the initial stages of membership, the social side of the hobby comes to be a significant contributor to the enjoyment of the hobby. Don't take the "Social" to mean exclusive in any form because it is not. All model railroaders that join the association are open for conversation and interaction with anyone with a desire to share. It is in the nature of the model railroader.

If you really want to expand your hobby, consider expanding the "social" side. There are at least two easy and fun ways to do this. The first is obvious. Get involved. Just give it a try. If you noticed in our last issue of the LA Division Coupler, there are several "managerial" positions open. These are not 40 hour/week jobs. Many require less than an hour or two per month but the big payback is that you automatically become a member of a small group of really fun model railroader individuals that meet once a month as a group to keep the Division on track to have fun. If you can contribute or can learn how to contribute to one of these functions and have a desire to try it, it is a simple matter of letting anyone listed on the Team, Committees and Chairs list in the Coupler, at any time, and it will get to our Superintendent, Vic Cavalli. He will contact you directly to discuss your interest level and area.

The second easy way to expand your hobby with the NMRA, if you don't want to spend even an hour or two on a zoom meet, is to get involved with the modeling side of the hobby. Again, you have to come to our meets, but this is where the modeling side comes out. There are usually great clinics that you can attend to learn new modeling techniques and you can interact with like-minded modelers. Or consider presenting a clinic yourself. In parallel to this is the models themselves. Most of our Divisional and Regional meets feature a model showcase room. You can bring models to the meet for others to appreciate and learn from your modeling and you can see what others have done. Sometimes a short "Show and Tell" session is added to really get some of the modeling details.

The NMRA has a program especially designed to enhance the model railroad hobby for the model railroad modeler. By that, I mean those individuals that enjoy building models. It doesn't matter if the models are kits, scratch built or detailed commercial models, scenery on a module, laying track or running wires. This program is called the NMRA Achievement Program or "AP" for short.

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LA Division Backshop

- Continued

Just as the Boy Scouts have their “Eagle” program, the AP has its “Master Model Railroader” program. Similar again to the Scouts Merit Badge awards, the AP has “Achievement Awards”. There are only 11 of them and earning seven earns you the title. Achieving the MMR title is not the goal, but the reward, for having experienced a significant amount of modeling fun and having contributed in some small way to the hobby enjoyment by others. Each Achievement Award is an accomplishment in itself and something you can be proud of.

If you want to look into the NMRA AP program, simply go to the NMRA web site and follow your nose around the “Achievement Program” tab or catch me at any Division or Region meet or on one of the Cajon Connection zoom groups offered each month.

In any case, the rewards for your membership will magnify if you simply “Get Involved” at any level. Just give it a try.

Gary Butts, MMR
LA Division AP Chair



September 7 - 11, 2022
San Diego, CA
www.PSRConvention.org



Los Angeles Division PSR NMRA



NEEDS YOUR HELP!

The Los Angeles (L.A.) Division of the Pacific Southwest Region, NMRA currently has the following volunteer positions open. Each appointment is open ended, i.e., offered without any long-term obligation. Your participation and contribution of time will be greatly appreciated; helping to insure the continued success of the Division; possibly earning you some AP points too!

Assistant Superintendent (new) – working with, and as an extension of, the L.A. Division Superintendent, the assistant superintendent performs tasks assigned him/her that are normally completed by the Superintendent himself. These assignments may include budget generation/review, event definition/approvals, conducting Division Advisory Board meeting in the absence of the Superintendent, as well as performing many other duties of the office.

Assistant Webmaster – working with the L.A. Division Webmaster, the assistant webmaster helps to keep the Division's website working smoothly, its contents up-to-date; adding new or removing outdated contents to its pages in a timely fashion.

Division Events/Calendar Tracking Coordinator (new) – a member of the Membership Committee Team, this individual oversees the creation, scheduling, organizing, and advertizing of events held or sponsored by/within the L.A. Division.

Newsletter and Website Contributors – all L.A. members are encouraged to submit articles and/or photos of their model or prototype railroading interests. Contact lisican@gmail.com (LA Coupler Editor) or kspady@att.net (Webmaster) for details.

Division Historian – responsible for physically collecting and archiving Division history, as well within the pages of the Division's quarterly newsletter, the LA Coupler, and/or on the pages of the Division's website. History may include, but not limited to, previously published issue of the LA Coupler, tracking of members' honors (such as MMRs, Officers, Golden Spike recipients, Member of the Year recipients), or photos from meets, conventions and/or gatherings.

Contest/AP Evaluators (new) – working with the Division Contest/AP Chairperson, Evaluators are taught how to assess models and/or layouts per NMRA Achievement Program standards. Contact gary.cajon@gmail.com for details.

Please Contact Superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org



Financial Report

8/01/2022

-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
\$16,722.82	\$ 188.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,910.82	Balance 6/01 - 7/29
\$ -					\$ -	
	\$ -				\$ -	
	\$ 188.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
				Total	\$ 16,910.82	Consistent with statement 7-29-2022

The *NMRA Magazine* Has Gone Digital!

Did you know that starting in April, 2022, you are now able to access the *NMRA Magazine* digitally?

That's right! From your phone, computer, or tablet, you can now enjoy everything the *NMRA Magazine* has to offer. Don't worry, the print addition isn't going anywhere.

However, if you would like to access the magazine digitally, you will need to register with www.NMRA.org. This is *free* for NMRA members and only requires an email address. Once subscribed to the website, you'll have access to all of the conveniences of a digital magazine.

Advisory Board Contact List

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Nick Lisica

Lisican@gmail.com
(831) 594-7640

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viccavalli@comcast.net (805) 680-5826

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bob.SFSCRR@yahoo.com (562) 760-5387

Membership Services Chair - Mike O'Brien

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L.A. Division Assistant Webmaster – Vacant

Publicity/Graphics Manager – Vacant

Achievement Program Chair – Gary Butts, MMR

gary.cajon@gmail.com (714) 842-4980

Contests Chair - Vacant

L.A. Division Historian - Vacant

Nominations and Elections Chair - Vic Cavalli

VicCavalli@comcast.net (805) 680-5826

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: 8/01/2022

Due to the ongoing public health concerns, we recommend checking with organizers to confirm event status.

Recurring

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 "Sand House Chat" Zoom Session

2nd Saturday of Each Month (starting October 2022) - Trains & Coffee Swap Meet, Placentia

3rd Thursday of Each Month - 2024 NMRA National Convention, the *Surfliner*, Zoom Planning Sessions

3rd Saturday and Sunday of Each Month (weather permitting) - Orange County Model Engineers Train Rides, Costa Mesa

4th Sunday of Each Month - Southern Pacific Division of TTOS Meet, Anaheim

Last Thursday of Each Month - "Cajon Connection" Zoom Session (w/ Breakout Groups)

Last Saturday of Each Month - "Model Railroad Fellowship Day" - RailMaster Hobbies, Bellflower

2022

August 27 - Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Simi Valley

September 7 - 11 - PSR Annual Convention, *Back on Track 2022*, San Diego

September 24 & 25 - Pasadena Model Railroad Club Open House, Pasadena

October 1 - Los Angeles Area Prototype Modelers' Meet, Encounter Christian Church, Bellflower

October 6 - 9 - Central Coast Railroad Festival and Layout Tours, San Luis Obispo

October 8 - North County Model Railroad Society Model Train Show and Swap Meet, San Diego

October 15 - Roundhouse Gang Swap Meet, San Bernardino

November 5 - Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & open House, Simi Valley

November 12 - San Diego Division Fall Meet, San Diego Model Railroad Museum, San Diego

December 10 & 11 - Pasadena Model Railroad Club Open House, Pasadena

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 via PayPal at losangelesdivision@gmail.com

Please contact the editor prior to submitting any payments. Funds from advertising go directly toward supporting your Los Angeles Division of the NMRA.



Come join us at the 2022 Pacific Southwest Region Model Railroad Convention in beautiful San Diego, California!

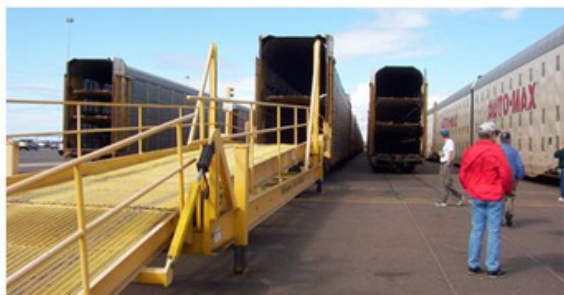
The convention will be hosted by the San Diego Division of the National Model Railroad Association on Sept. 7th to 11th, 2022.

The opening event of the convention will be at the famous San Diego Model Railroad Museum, Located in Balboa Park. We will have a presentation there and refreshments.



Layout Tours: The San Diego area has some excellent layouts to visit. Descriptions and pictures of the layouts offered for touring are available at the convention website: psrconvention.org/BackOnTrack2022

There will also be operations sessions held at many of the layouts which will give you an opportunity to run trains under the guidance of expert model railroaders.



Prototype Tours: One of the feature prototype tours will be at the Pasha car loading facility which is the largest on the west coast. We will also have tours of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum in Campo, California, the BNSF Railroad Yard, the San Diego Trolley Yard and Maintenance Facility, The Poway Midland Railroad (and more).

Clinics: Our own NMRA Manager of Standards and Conformance, Pete Steinmetz, has put together an excellent array of clinics including topics of The History of the San Diego Trolleys, Special Effects with Arduinos, Dead Rail, Store Fronts and Interiors, Modeling with Balsa Foam, Animation, Freight Loads and others to be announced.



Awards Banquet Speaker: "Shotgun" Tom Kelly. Tom is a famous radio announcer and TV personality who's father was a railroad engineer in San Diego. Tom is a member of the San Diego Model Railroad Association as well as the NMRA. Tom is a very entertaining speaker. He has won two Emmys and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Additional events and exhibits: Hobo Auction, Swap Meet, Achievement Program Judging, Contests and Modular Layout Displays

Convention Location: Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 8110, Aero Drive, San Diego, CA 92123

Sign up today at our convention website: psrconvention.org/BackOnTrack2022



**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!

