

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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The SurfLiner2024

MOW Vehicles Come to Town

...and more!



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On the Cover....

Vic Cavalli shares what he found at Knott's Berry Farm

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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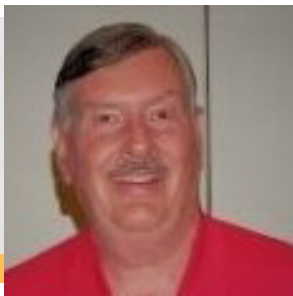
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Thank you for supporting the LA Division!



Director's Report

- Vic Cavalli

Normally, my first report back to you upon attending a Pacific Southwest Region (PSR) Board of Directors (Board) meeting would be a summary of highlights and/or decisions that occurred. But a far more vital issue has recently surfaced I feel needs to be addressed instead.

The Region is in urgent need of tax filing assistance. Specifically, the PSR requires someone familiar with filing of IRS 990-EZ and associated State annual forms.

If you can perform this service, or know of an individual/firm that specializes in non-profit, 501(c)3 tax preparation, please contact me immediately. By phone: (805) 680-5826 or e-mail: Director@LADiv-NMRA.org

Some background: On Sunday, June 23rd, I received an e-mail from PSR President Pat Raymer. Its contents indicating a special meeting needed to be called as "Treasurer [Joel] Morse has requested a meeting of the voting members of the Board regarding the financial matter attached."

The substance being: "... the Board of Directors [is requested to] approve this request and ... enter into the attached Consulting Agreement with Cabrillo Compliance, LLC for ... services, not to exceed \$5,590.00. And that the Board direct that the costs of this Agreement be assessed as follows: Each Division shall reimburse the region \$750.00 from their Division funds, and the Region shall pass the balance ... from the Region fund."

The reasoning being: "In April 2024, the PSR Treasurer began to review [IRS] Form 990-EZ and 990 ... with the intent of doing them in-house, only to discover that the Forms were substantially more complex than anticipated. Ultimately, the Treasurer concluded that the forms proved to be more technical, nuanced and complicated than anticipated, and exceeded the Treasurer's ability to confidently complete... Additionally, it became clear that the organization [the PSR] also had to prepare and submit additional State Tax Forms for California, Arizona, and Nevada."

The Board met Wednesday evening, June 26th, by Zoom app.

The Board didn't doubt the sincerity of Treasurer Morse's explanation for assistance in preparing the PSR's tax filings. Several individuals did, however, voice concern over the cost of the recommended preparer; along with a concern this might become a reoccurring annual expenditure.

Director's Report

- continued

To put it into a “local” perspective. The L.A. Division typically brings in \$350.00-\$400.00 annually. This single “chargeback” would be more than DOUBLE our annual income! Due to parameters associated with 990-EZ filings, over a four (4) year period, our bank balance would gross a minimum loss of \$1,500.00 since divisions are linked to the Region’s 501(c)3 license as “child”. Neither a sound nor fair way to govern an organization in my view. The \$750.00 assessment called out the proposal seems more arbitrary than based on any logic.

For now, Treasure Morse’s proposal has been tabled; to be re-examined at the PSR Board of Directors’ Annual Meeting, being held during SurfLiner 2024, next month’s NMRA National Convention. Therefore, the opening plea for other options. Hopefully one of you will have an idea/solution I can pass onto the PSR for their review/perusal.

Thanks for reading along. Until next quarter, happy model railroading to you.



NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION

SURFLINER

NMRA 2024

LONG BEACH, CA
2024

AUG. 4 - 11, 2024

LONG BEACH, CA

WWW.SURFLINER2024.ORG

REGISTER TODAY!

nmra.org

Pacific Southwest Region
NMRA

The graphic features a central oval logo for 'SURFLINER' with a blue and white train engine on tracks, set against a beach scene with palm trees and a sailboat. The text 'NMRA 2024' and 'LONG BEACH, CA 2024' is positioned below the train. To the left is the 'nmra.org' logo, and to the right is a smaller circular logo for the 'Pacific Southwest Region' featuring a yellow train. A large blue arrow points from the bottom right towards the registration information.



Superintendent's Report

- Jeff Smith

I am proud to announce that the LA Division membership increased by six people in the month of June. This is excellent progress, and I would like to continue that growth. If you know a fellow model railroader, encourage them to get involved in the NMRA. If they are in the LA Division area, so much the better. We are a team, all of us, and we are what makes the LA Division strong.

Events

August

NMRA National Convention

Long Beach, CA

August 4 - 11, 2024

National Train Show

Long Beach, CA

August 9 - 11, 2024

October

LA Area Prototype Modelers Meet

Bellflower, CA

October 5, 2024

Members' Ideas

We strive to host a division event at least once a quarter. We would love to get input from you, our members, on what activities or events you would be interested in. Here are a few questions to get you thinking:

Would you like us to organize clinics? If so, what subjects would interest you?

Are you interested in visiting home layouts?

If you have a layout, would you be willing to open it up for visits?

Please share your thoughts and ideas. Your feedback is invaluable in shaping our future events.

Showcase Your Work

The LA Division would like to feature your model work in the Coupler. If you have any pictures of your layout or projects you are working on, please submit your photos along with a short write-up. We would love to publish them so that others can appreciate your work.

In Memoriam

This past month, we lost a fine LA Division member, a great model railroader, and a very nice person. Mike O'Brien passed away earlier this month. Mike and I were both members of the Slim Gauge Guild in Pasadena at one time. Mike will be missed for all he did for the LA Division and the NMRA.

Until next time.

Jeff Smith

Division Superintendent

NMRA LA Division

Remembering Mike O'Brien

The Los Angeles Division is saddened to announce the recent passing of Mike O'Brien.

Mike was born on January 20, 1943. He joined the NMRA as a teenager in 1956. He was heavily involved with in model railroad clubs, and the NMRA, for most of his life. He attended most of the NMRA National Conventions since 1987, was a past president of the Layout Design SIG, he served two terms as L.A.'s Superintendent (2016-2020) and was named its Division's Member of the Year in 2010.

An avid supporter of "Ops" and Layout Design, he was a member of both the Operations and "LD" Special Interest Groups (SIG) – serving as a Contributing Editor for LDSIG - and the Chairperson for SIG Activities at this year's NMRA National Convention.

Mike also was a fine model builder, having won 1st place in the Diesels category at the 1989 Houston NMRA National Convention.

At the time of his passing, he was working on a new, large HO gauge layout in the basement of his home and looking forward to sharing it with the Division at an open house planned for later this year. He was also a long-time member of the Slim Gauge Guild model railroad club and Glendale Model Railroader Society.

His company and his enthusiasm will be missed by those who knew him.



Modern Day Maintenance on a Local Narrow Gauge Line - Vic Cavalli



Gone is the day of gandy dancers "layin' 'em in and tyin' 'em down." No longer are tools such as "rail dogs" (to carry rail), spike mauls (to drive spikes), lining bars (i.e., crowbars), ballast forks (to move ballast), or tamper bars and picks (to fine-tune that ballast) used. Just ask the folks at Knott's Berry Farm amusement park.

Off and on during the first quarter of 2024, their Ghost Town and Calico Railroad – a 36" gauge attraction running full-size, "heritage" equipment – was closed for right-of-way maintenance; reportedly along the back side of the park (along Western Avenue). Work was performed by Sharp and Fellows, Inc. – a contracting firm that specializes in the installing and maintenance of railroad track, and its infrastructure, for both large and small, private or public railroads across the southwest portion of the United States.

Performing services since 1877, Sharp and Fellows headquarters is located locally in Gardena, California. Their motto: "The best way to prevent breakdowns is to keep your track well maintained." [Isn't that true even on our model railroads?]

An additional interesting side point: One of Sharp and Fellows' earlier construction locomotives, #7 - a steam-powered 2-6-2 "Prairie", can still be viewed today at the Travel Town Museum in Griffith Park, Los Angeles, CA; donated by F&S to the city in 1955. But that's a story for another day...



Financial Report

6/30/2024

-Kevin Spady

U.S. BANK SILVER - BUSINESS CHECKING

U.S. Bank National Association

Account Summary

Beginning Balance on Jun 3	\$	15,798.37
Ending Balance on Jun 30, 2024	\$	15,798.37

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

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

LA Coupler Assistant Editor - Vacant

Social Media (Zoom) Manager - Kevin Spady

kspady@att.net (818) 644-7170

L.A. Division Webmaster - Kevin Spady

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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: 7/01/2024

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

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

August 24 - A&M Garden Railroad Train Run, Orcutt/Santa Maria

September 7 - Orange County Model Engineers Open House, Costa Mesa

September 10 – Swap Meet, Adobe Mountain, AZ, 9:00 a.m.

September 11-14 – National Narrow Gauge Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

September 14 – Chuck Molar's "Rio Grande Southern" Layout Open House, San Diego area

September 28 – Cactus Fall Train Swap Meet, North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, AZ, 9:00 a.m.

October 5 – Los Angeles Area Prototype Modelers & Swap Meets, Encounter Christian Church, Bellflower

October 5-6 – Great Train Show, Del Mar Fairgrounds, Del Mar

October 12 – Trains & Coffee Swap Meet, Placentia, 9:00 a.m.

October 12 – Ryan Di Fede's "Southern Pacific Railroad Cascade Line" Layout Open House, San Diego area

October 19 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Swap Meet, Old Santa Fe Station, San Bernardino

November 9 – San Diego Division Fall Meet at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego

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, 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.

	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!

