

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

NMRA
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

In This Issue:

LA Membership Banquet Recap

A Tour of the East Valley Lines

...and more!

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On the Cover.... The fabulous N Scale club located at Griffith Park provides us with a photo tour. (The group submitted this article months ago, and I lost track of it. I apologize for the delay.)

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

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Submission Deadlines

Spring Issue: February 1

Summer Issue: May 1

Fall Issue: August 1

Winter Issue: November 1

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Electronic PDF Distribution:

Kevin Spady

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

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Thank you for supporting the LA Division!



Superintendent's Report

- Jeff Smith

Summer is here, and for many of us that means a little more time at the workbench, in the train room, or out visiting other model railroaders. The Los Angeles Division would love to hear what you are working on.

Do you have a home layout, finished or unfinished? Are you building a new scene, working on structures, improving operations, adding scenery, or finally tackling that project that has been sitting on the bench for a while? We want to see it. If you would be willing to share photos, a short write-up, or even open your layout for a visit, please let us know.

A finished layout is not required. In fact, seeing layouts in progress is often one of the best ways we learn from each other. Model railroading is a journey, and every stage has something worth sharing.

Thank You to Vic

The LA Division would like to thank Vic for his support and service to the Division. Due to personal reasons, Vic has had to step down as Division Director. We truly appreciate the time and effort he gave to the LA Division.

With that said, the Division Director position is now open. I am looking for an able-bodied LA Division member who is willing to step up and volunteer for this important position. If you are interested, or would like more information about what the position involves, please contact me.

Achievement Program Position Open

We also currently have our Achievement Program position open.

For those who may not be familiar with it, the NMRA Achievement Program is a structured program designed to help model railroaders develop their skills, earn certificates, and work toward the title of Master Model Railroader, also known as MMR.

The AP Program is a great way to encourage learning, recognize craftsmanship, and help members grow in the hobby. If you are interested in helping with the Achievement Program for the LA Division, please contact me.

PSR Convention 2028

The LA Division will be hosting the Pacific Southwest Region convention in 2028. That may sound like a long way off, but successful conventions take planning, organization, and leadership.



Superintendent's Report

- Jeff Smith

We are now looking for a volunteer to serve as the lead for the 2028 convention. We need someone who can help guide the planning process and work with the Division as we begin putting the pieces together.

If you are interested in taking the lead, or would like more information before deciding, please contact me.

LA Division Mini Groups

Did you know that within the LA Division we have several mini groups of modelers who get together on a regular basis?

These groups are usually made up of members who live in the same general geographic area of the Division. Some of the current groups include:

- The County Line Crew, covering the LA/Orange County line area, basically Whittier to Brea
- The Claremont area group
- The Ventura group
- The North LA County group

These smaller groups are a great way to stay connected, visit layouts, share ideas, learn new techniques, and enjoy the hobby with others.

No group in your area? Are the current groups too far away? Would you like to help start a mini group in your part of the Division? Let us know. We can help contact other NMRA members in your area and see who might be interested.

Model railroading is a lot more fun when it is not done alone. Get together with other modelers, swap operating sessions, share techniques, learn from each other, and enjoy the hobby.

The LA Division is here to support and connect model railroaders. Whether you are building your first module, operating a large home layout, working toward an AP certificate, or just looking for others who enjoy trains as much as you do, there is a place for you here.

Keep the trains rolling,
Jeff Smith
Superintendent
NMRA Los Angeles Division

LA Division Banquet

The LA Division's annual banquet was held March 14, with about 30 members in attendance. Paul Ellis from Scale Trains was the guest speaker, providing insight into the manufacturing side of model railroading. Mark your calendars for next year's event, tentatively scheduled for 3/13/27.



LA Division Superintendent Jeff Smith welcoming the group



Guest Speaker Paul Ellis from Scale Trains

LA Division Banquet



PSR Vice President Frank
Kenny



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

The 2028 PSR Convention Needs You!

The Los Angeles Division will be hosting the 2028 Pacific Southwest Region Convention and is looking for volunteers to help plan the event. If you've been to a local convention, you know it takes a team of dedicated volunteers to put it on.

We are looking for any and all members who'd like to step up and lend a hand!

Volunteer Opportunities Include:

Convention Chair

Committee Chairs

Layout Hosts

Clinicians

Convention Staffing Volunteers

etc

So, if you've ever wondered what goes into planning a convention, or have ideas on what would make a great event, please reach out to LA Division Superintendent Jeff Smith today!

superintendent@ladiv-nmra.org

You don't have to be an LA Division Member to step up!



Original Handy Holders

Ergonomically designed to protect your rolling stock

N Scale Handy Holder "Pro"



- Overall dimensions 11 3/4"L x 8 7/8"W x 3"H
- Main channel: 11 3/4"L x 3/4"W x 1/2"D
- Second channel for holding parts
- Angled channel for detailing/weathering
- 2 convenient tool holders

HO Scale Handy Holder "Pro"



- Overall dimensions 11 3/4"L x 8 7/8"W x 3"H
- Main channel: 11 3/4" L x 1 7/16"W x 1"D
- Second channel for holding parts
- Angled channel for detailing/weathering
- 2 convenient tool holders

O Scale Handy Holder "Pro"



- Overall dimensions 18"L x 7"W x 3 1/4"H
- Channel dimensions 18"L x 2 7/16"W x 2"D
- Birch wood base with non-slip feet
- 3 convenient tool holes

G Scale Handy Holder "Pro"



- Overall dimensions 21"L x 10 1/2"W x 5 3/4"H
- Channel dimensions 21"L x 4 1/2"W x 3 1/4"D
- Birch wood base with non-slip feet
- 3 convenient tool holes



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www.SantaClaritaRailroad.com

*Pictures for illustration only, products do not include trains and tools.



East Valley Lines Tour

(Apologies to the East Vally Lines, this was provided for publication in an earlier issue and I lost track of that. - Editor)

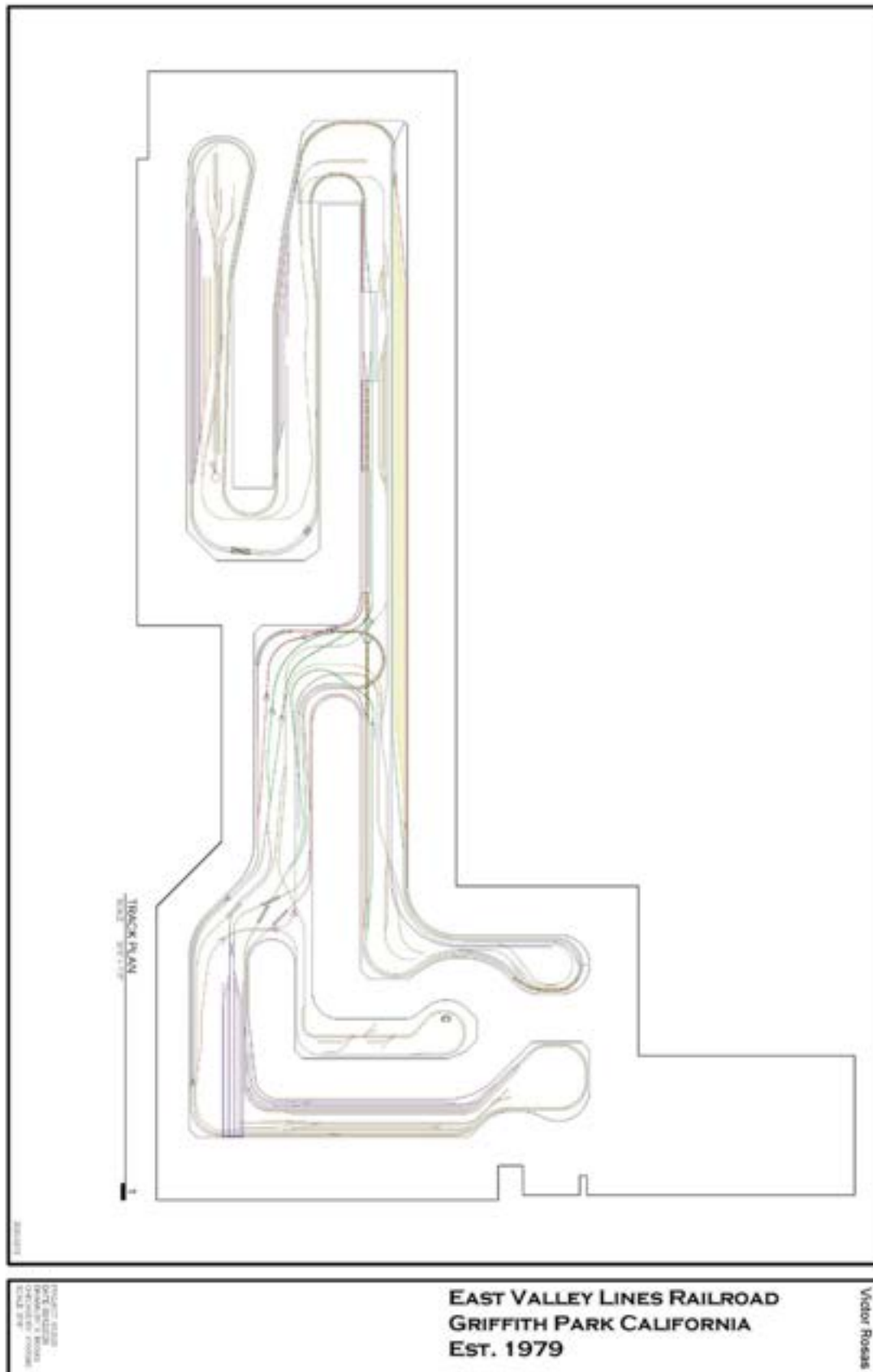


On a very rainy Saturday, the East Valley Lines club members welcomed NMRA's L.A. Division and guests to visit its layout. Attendance was diminished somewhat due to the rain, however those of us who braved the roads were rewarded with a close look at this N Scale layout housed at Travel Town in Griffith Park (Los Angeles) California.

The club has been in existence since 1976. The layout has gone through changes including a complete redo started about 15 years ago. Currently, mainline track power is supplied by DC, but progress is being made to allow DCC on a separate loop. Eventually, the plan is to allow for a choice of DC or DCC over the entire layout. There are multiple control panels with two sets of cab controls; one for each mainline. In regular operation, the mainlines run in opposite directions.

Most of the members enjoy running their trains as "railfans". Operations are possible using the mainline blocks that have been set up. The layout can be divided into as many as 4 loops. Trains can run continuously; this is very helpful as the club is mandated by its agreement with the Park to run trains for the general public each Saturday. A viewing window allows visitors to view most of the layout and get a close-up view of the trains.

East Valley Lines Tour



East Valley Lines Tour



Van explaining the layout for us.

Members bring their own locomotives and rolling stock. The club allows each member to determine what equipment will run well on the track. We saw a mix of Scale Trains, Kato and Atlas power. During our visit, Chris, Dale and Dennis ran trains while Van gave the tour and answered questions. For the most part, trains ran very smoothly during our visit. The track is all code 55 and in great shape.

The close-up tour also allowed us to see work in progress and see the supporting details (benchwork and wiring, for instance). It is inspiring to see how a beautiful layout like this is built.

East Valley Lines Tour



The layout is over 2000 square feet. That's a lot of N-Scale. There are many details to be seen along the way. Currently, a riverbed scene is being worked on. That is near the large yard. A military base is also in progress. There is a partial model of the 1939 built L.A. Union Station. There are many smaller structures, several with lighting. There is some whimsy, subtly placed, and award-winning models made by the members.

We had a great time. We hope you will join us on the next tour.

East Valley Lines Tour



Chris Greenwood with his award winning meat packing plant.

East Valley Lines Tour



Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal

East Valley Lines Tour



Calling Orson Welles!

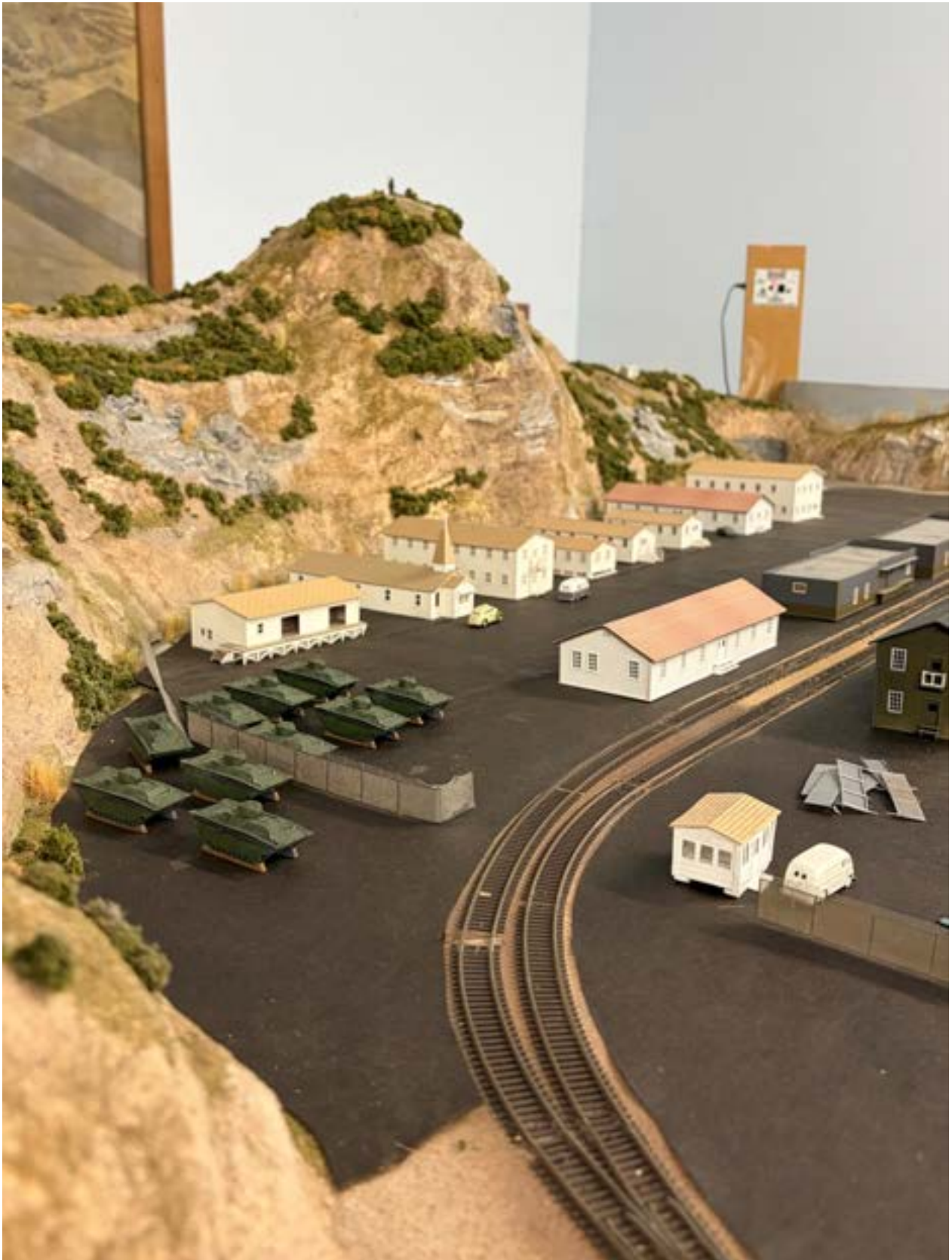
East Valley Lines Tour



East Valley Lines Tour



East Valley Lines Tour





Pacific Southwest Region 2026 Convention National Model Railroad Association

Presented by: The San Diego Division

September 9th to 13th, 2026

Come join us in beautiful San Diego for the PSR 2026 Model Railroaders Convention.

The convention has many model railroad activities including an array of clinics, prototype tours, contests,

layout tours, hobo breakfast, hobo auction and a swap meet. The introductory event will be held at the famous Model Railroad Museum in Balboa Park. The final event will be the Banquet. The speaker will be SP Author & Historian Jeff Cauthen.

The San Diego Division has some excellent layouts, many of which have been published in popular model railroad magazines. You will be able to view those layouts during the convention. Clinics will include Modeling with the PSR Masters led by Gary Butts, MMR and special guest clinics via Zoom. There will be activities every night of the convention.



Sirius Satellite Radio Show: Well-known radio personality and Hollywood walk of famer, "Shotgun" Tom Kelly will interview model railroaders attending the convention which will be aired on his radio show.

The convention will take place at **the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel San**

Diego-Mission Valley at 7450 Hazard Center

Drive, San Diego, California. The hotel is near a trolley stop that provides access to most areas of San Diego. Mission Valley is a centrally located area with access to popular areas of San Diego including restaurants, shopping centers and the beaches.



The convention registration direct link is here:

<https://sandiegodivisionpsrnmra.regfox.com/all-aboard-for-2026>

Additional information and the link for the hotel reservation is here:

<https://www.sandiegodivision.org/index.php/convention-2026>

You can also book a room by phoning 800-222-TREE. Make sure to mention that you are booking to attend the Pacific Southwest Region Model Railroaders Convention.

Membership Report

- John McGreevy

Our Groups Are Growing!

As they say, “when we last met our heroes” we had a thriving Ventura group and a newborn group with a New Name making headlines. Well folks, they aren’t slowing down.

LA/Orange County Line Group

Let’s look at the newest group. In a very short amount of time Mark Schoenberger’s initiative has grown to 7 members. Here’s what he reports:

The report from the County Line Crew!

We are a new collaboration of Train Enthusiasts located on both sides of the LA / Orange County Line.

We pulled out of the station in March and already there are members as far West at Paramount, as far North as Diamond Bar, and as Far East as Brea, with room for more.

The group has already experienced:

Layout tour events,

Operating Sessions,

Carpools to Train Stores,

And a visit to the Slim Gauge Guild Open House in Pasadena June 9th.

We normally grab lunch at a restaurant close to each event, just to enjoy each other's company.

The Crew endeavors to host events weekdays and weekends for those who have those days off.

And some of us are registered for the Pacific Southwest Region NMRA Convention.

We keep in touch by a group text and email.

If you are interested in having a ton of railroad fun,

We want to get to know you!

Not bad considering Mark is a new member of the NMRA. Still, what these groups need are enthusiastic member participation. Way to go County Line Crew!

Membership Report

- John McGreevy

Ventura Group

The Ventura group continues to roll along with regular meetings and frequent group emails. Irwin Nathanson has provided excellent leadership and has several members who are instrumental in making the group go.

For instance, here is the latest report from Ken Ninomiya:

Activities and plans of the West Ventura round robin group of the LA Division, NMRA PSR We had a good meeting at Mike Knox's home in April. In attendance were Jim, Tom, Wayne, Ken and his mom, Steve, and Irwin. We saw Mike's 16-foot-long S scale layout which took up half his two-car garage. Mike's not sure whether to rebuild it or not, because he and his wife aren't sure if/when they're going to move into a retirement community. We also saw some of his collection of rolling stock, including some wooden models he made from kits years ago...they were pretty nice. We also went home with some luscious oranges from his backyard! While there, those in attendance voted to keep going over the Summer but to take a break in July. Thanks again, Mike! For the May meeting of the West Ventura round robin group of the LA Division, we met at Cathy and Peter Ely's home overlooking Santa Paula. Those in attendance were Ken and his guest (mom of 106 years young), Jim, David and his guest (wife Barb), and our presenter Tom and his guest (Rob). The meeting began with a great selection of finger sandwiches provided by Cathy. While everyone sat and enjoyed the pre-meeting treats, there were conversations about railroading, of course. After a formal business meeting, Tom Fratello gave a slide presentation about the McCloud River Railroad using photos he'd taken from around 1984. David Bednarczyk, who worked as an engineer for the SP out of Dunsmuir at the time, and Peter gave added insight into the, now defunct, railroad. Thank you's go out to our great hosts Cathy and Peter, and to Tom for an entertaining presentation. We have activities in the planning stages for future meetings which will include a June, or possibly July, visit to the Pasadena Model Railroad Museum. Following that, we have two layout design clinics in the works. One clinic, by Bruce Morden that is lined up for August, will be a general interest layout design topic. The second, to be presented by John Young after September, will be a discussion of his N scale modular layout. This, in-construction layout, is a product of lessons learned from John's experience with the original Ho scale "Operations Roadshow" layout. Stay tuned for final announcements regarding dates and locations.

Membership Report

- John McGreevy

Claremont Group

Meanwhile, it's been a while since we have checked in on the Claremont group. Here is an update from Charley Hepperle:

Hi John,

Yes, we're still meeting as a local NMRA coffee group. The local NMRA informal get-together for the Claremont area is going well. We get together about once a month. The most recent one was April 14 here at Rev'd Up Coffee. So far, we've met at a different place each time. I'm working on setting up the next one for next week. We've been having four or five (plus me) at each one.

North LA County Group

Mark Cheer reports he continues to help out at the Pasadena Museum club. Ventura member Peter Ely also is part of that group and I know several other NMRA members who are active there. If you are also interested let them know!

here's the club page and general contact info for inquiries:

<https://www.pmrrm.org/>
info@pmrrm.org

LOMITA N SCALE SHOW

In other news, many members enjoyed the second annual N Scale Train Show hosted by our own NMRA member Frank Hinojosa. It was a great event with many individual vendors, display layouts and clinics. I think I counted a dozen NMRA members among the group. We even gained a new member, Anthony, even if he is a Cajon Division resident. Thank you, Joel Morse (PSR President) for showing Anthony the benefits of membership. I want to thank Frank and the host facility – Lomita Calvary Church.

Membership Report

- John McGreevy



Membership Report

- John McGreevy



Membership Report

- John McGreevy



Membership Report

- John McGreevy



Membership Report

- John McGreevy



County Line Crew

- Mark Schoenberger

Greetings from the County Line Crew,

Already seven interested Model Railroaders located along the LA / Orange County Line have been meeting together.

We have met at two of the members layouts, and have two more events on the calendar, one for May and one for June.

It has been a blast getting to know each other and visiting some fantastic models.

There is air in the brakes and the signal is green. This train is already out of the station and on its way!

Yet, we still could use you. We have members from Paramount to Diamond Bar to Brea.

Contact me if you are looking for a fun, informal, group, to talk and run, trains.

Mark Schoenberger
cousin.jasper@yahoo.com



Financial Report

6/30/2026

-Kevin Spady

NON PROFIT CHECKING

U.S. Bank National Association

Member FDIC

Account Number

Account Summary

00	Beginning Balance on Apr 1	\$	16,388.47	Interest Paid this Year	\$	0.24
	Other Deposits	1	0.06	Number of Days in Statement Period		30
	Ending Balance on Apr 30, 2026	\$	16,388.53			

Other Deposits

Date	Description of Transaction	Ref Number	Amount
Apr 30	Interest Paid	3000005548	\$ 0.06
	Total Other Deposits		\$ 0.06

Balance Summary

Date	Ending Balance
Apr 30	16,388.53

Balances only appear for days reflecting change.

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 Vacant director@ladiv-nmra.org	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

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kspady@att.net (818) 644-7170

L.A. Division Webmaster - Mark Fischer

mark@the-fischers.org (818) 644-7170

L.A. Division Assistant Webmaster – Vacant

Publicity/Graphics Manager – Nick Lisica

lisican@gmail.com (831) 594-7640

Contests/Achievement Program Chair – Vacant

L.A. Division Historian - Vacant

Nominations and Elections Chair - John McGreevy

nmrapsrlajohnmc@gmail.com (805) 907-2367

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: 2/11/2026

Recurring

Tuesday & Saturdays – San Diego S-Gaugers' Open House, Grossmont Shopping Center, La Mesa, noon – 6:00 pm
Saturdays – Corona Model Railroad Society Open House, Corona Heritage Park, Corona, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Saturdays through January 3rd – Christmas Tree Lane Model Train Society Open House, Altadena, 5:00-11:00 p.m.
1st Tuesday of each month – L.A. Division Sponsored "Sand House Chat", starts at 7:00 p.m.
1st Saturday of each month – Gold Coast Modular Railroad Club Open House, Camarillo, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
1st and 3rd Saturday of each month – Glendale Model Railroad Society Open House, Glendale, 1:00–4:00 p.m.
3rd Saturday of each month (except October) – Arizona Division Monthly Zoom Meet, starts at 10:00 a.m.
3rd Sunday of each month – Pasadena Model Railroad Open House, Los Angeles, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Admission charged.
Last Saturday of each month – Railmaster Hobbies' Model Railroad Fellowship Get-Together, Bellflower

2026

July 25 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, San Bernardino

July 27-August 2 – NMRA National Convention, 2026 Scenic City Express, Chattanooga, TN

August 22 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Simi Valley

September 9-13 – PSR Annual Convention "All Aboard for 2026", Double Tree Hotel - San Diego/Mission Valley, San Diego

September 26 – Los Angeles Model Railroad Society Open House & Swap Meet, Harbor City

October 17 – Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club Swap Meet, San Bernardino

November 7 – Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet & Open House, Simi Valley

November 11 – San Diego Fall Meet at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego

December 5 – Los Angeles Model Railroad Society Holiday Open House, Harbor City

December 12 – Layouts of the San Diego Division – Wayne Pierce's On30 Minicition Railroad & Lumber Co., Dinner & Holiday Party, Santee

Please send announcements at least 3 months in advance to: VicCavalli@comcast.net

NMRA



PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION



For more information on the NMRA
please visit www.NMRA.org

Special Thanks to Railmaster Hobbies

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