

The Semaphore

June, 2006

On Saturday, June 24 the club meeting will be held at 10:00 am, at Boney's Marketplace, 1820 Oceanside Blvd., Oceanside, Ca. Members, guest and visitors are invited.

Special points of interest:

Clinic of the month

Work Schedule

Every Thursday and Saturday are work days at the clubhouse. There are plenty of tasks to be performed.

Visitor Schedule

Every Thursday 3-8:30 PM, Saturday 9:30 AM - 4 PM are the visitor hours at the NCMRS clubhouse.

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North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS) Volume 2, 6

President's Message by Al Cuevas



At last month's business meeting a large portion of time was devoted to getting the construction effort back on track. Those members who wanted to speak out were encouraged. Many of you did speak out. Since then, the Thursday work group has started meeting with Dick Miller moderating. Construction has started back up but at a more controlled pace. While there have been some calls for faster construction it is vital that we keep quality as our number one goal.

I often wonder if we really have to go through these sorts of traumas. Could we have done better prevent to the situation and events that occurred? Hindsight is 20/20. We learn both from our positive and negative experiences. It is up to us to turn a negative experience into a positive. While I did hear from some members that they were upset, most chose to become part of the solution. The lesson that I learned is that we need more communication.

On another note, our new membership recruitment has slowed down this year. In some respects that is to be expected. Last year we were new to the neighborhood and getting a lot of media exposure. This year our walk through traffic at Boney's has probably not changed very much. A few new people will discover us but not as many as last year. The NMRA Open house will be interesting as it should bring in local NMRA members who may be potential members. Also, having the Show N Go downstairs is always a draw. Our membership drive has to be ongoing. We will always have some attrition and must keep identifying potential new members.

As you know I have been looking into upgrades for our DCC system. A number of you have given me valuable input. This has been an interesting journey. The current state of HO DCC is not exemplary by any means. We are still required to program using a language other than English (CV's). Claims made by manufactures are not always backed up by performance. Our CVP DCC support in Texas is reluctant to upgrade although he indicates that they will come out with an upgrade to allow functions 0 – 12 to be used.

He would not give me an expected release date, and, I was given reasons why we don't need to upgrade!

MTH has come out with a system similar to DCC called DCS for their ProtoSound in "O" scale. This has an English display on the throttle for all activities. No figuring out CV's. Throttles are clearly labeled with "horn", "whistle", etc. The display tells you what you are doing in English. I have not seen anything like that for HO yet. Sooner or later the HO folks will catch on and put something out like DCS.

Our latest Club upgrade is the entry way floor into our room. Jay Sarno made the original suggestion and a committee headed up by Dick Miller and supported by Leo Valley, George Benton, and Tom Bernhardt put down the new tile. This is a big upgrade over the cement and old tile that was previously there. The entry way will give visitors and members a pleasant warm feeling when walking into the Club.

That is all my brain can crank out this month. I can hear Tom Bernhardt politely asking me for the umpteenth time, "Where is the June Prez message?"

See you at the club.

Al Cuevas

President

NCMRS

The Wheeler Collection

By Tom Bernhardt

The financial rewards from our E-bay auctions are making positive postings in the NCMRS funds. And at present we are just past the half way mark in disposing of the collection. This passed week Leo Valley and I sorted the balance of the Wheeler Rolling stock by Rail Road Line. It is amazing just how many different R.R. Lines are in this collection. There are at least 15 cars for each of the major R.R. lines (about 25) and in the ones and twos there are another fifty different small R.R. Lines represented. Al Cuevas came up with the idea of sorting the rolling stock by R.R. Line.

IRS TAX STATUS

The NCMRS has received it's 501(c)3 status. This status makes the NCMRS a Community Service Organization. That means we are not a private club and our primary purpose is public outreach. Further on in the Newsletter, Jay Sarno has an article defining this function. *Please take the time to read this article.* This is the NCMRS statement to the IRS as to our function.

This is our way of assuring us, the members of the NCMRS, of a solid home base. As more of the surrounding community becomes aware of our existence here at Boney's Marketplace and more of our neighbors come to view our Model Train Club Scale Layout the deeper becomes our anchor toward permanency.

NCMRS CLUB PROFILE

It is the old "Getting to know you" theme that is being promoted here by the Editor and Web-page Master. There must be more brave men in the club other than Lorenzo La Pierre. He is the only member in the club to submit a personal resume. We would like to have your personal profile and photograph in "The Semaphore" newsletter. Let us know something about yourself, interests, family and how you got interested in model railroading. In that way we can develop a better understanding of one another as well as promote our communication skills. Thank You.

Lamy, New Mexico

On a recent trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico I was surprised to learn the Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe RR actually bypassed its namesake city of Santa Fe. In 1880 when the ATSF was extended into New Mexico it came over the mountains at Raton and continued in a southwest direction toward Albuquerque. Because of mountainous terrain it missed the Territorial Capital of Santa Fe by 18 miles to the south.



A group of Santa Fe citizens included Mr. Bishop Lamy, spearheaded the building of an 18 mile spur from Santa Fe to Galisteo where it junctioned with the Santa Fe. Galisteo Junction was later renamed Lamy.

This branch line operated until 1992 carrying freight and passengers between Santa Fe and Lamy when it was deemed too inefficient due to its low speeds and discontinued operation. A group of investors bought the branch line and formed the Santa Fe Southern RR with the intention of turning the line into a tourist railroad. Today they make the trip to Lamy every other day depending upon the season and the number of tourist that show up at the station looking for a ride. The best part of riding this railroad is that for an extra 50 bucks you can ride with crew in the cab of old #93.

A typical consist includes a Pullman coach, a gondola / observation car, a boxcar or two, and maybe a caboose. Switching along the way is part of the experience. The consist is headed up by aging, oil dripping 1952 EMD GP-16.



If you model Santa Fe and are interested in the Lamy station, the January issue of Model Railroader has a "how to" article on the Depot as it appeared in 1909 and as it appears today.

If you are interested in being an Engineer for the day, you can learn more about the Santa Fe Southern and their schedule of events at www.sfsr.com.

All Aboard!

Dick Miller



NCMRS

North County Model
Railroad Society
Boney's Marketplace
1820 Oceanside Blvd.
Oceanside, Ca. 92054
(760)-722-7366

www.ncmrs.org

By Jay Sarno

The North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS) presently has two members who are certified as presenters with Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI). OLI is a national not-for-profit organization with chapters in all states except Hawaii. Its mission is to promote railroad safety through education, engineering safety improvements, and encouraging enforcement of existing laws. More can be learned about OLI by visiting their website, www.oli.org.

We plan to have several more members go through the training process and become certified in the next year. Our organization is located in an area of Northern San Diego County served by the commuter rail services of the North County Transit District, a public agency. The rail line utilized also hosts almost two dozen Amtrak trains each day and several freight trains each week. It is currently the third busiest rail corridor in the Amtrak system. Furthermore, the transit district expects to open a second line running high-speed commuter rail services sometime in 2007. This second line runs through several densely-populated areas that have never seen trains moving faster than 25 miles per hour, and only then three times per week late at night.

Both of these rail lines present tremendous public education challenges. The transit district recognizes the problem, and understands the need to use the OLI program to reduce injuries and fatalities on these increasingly busy rail lines. It is the intention of the NCMRS to play a major role in this public education effort working alongside transit district personnel. Neither the transit district nor NCMRS charge for providing safety training sessions.

Currently, some of the requests the transit district receives for presentations are passed along to NCMRS personnel. For example, last year an NCMRS presenter provided rail safety training to 177 boy scouts during a one-day event. A similar event is planned for this year. Once the opening of the new rail line is imminent, all elementary schools along the rail line will be contacted. Presentations will be arranged at the schools for as many of the children as the schools will allow to participate.

In addition to these and other outreach efforts,

NCMRS holds safety trainings at our club's location for youth groups, social organizations, and any other group that is willing to visit. The club's operating model train layout serves as a draw to encourage groups to come for the safety presentations.

The club also owns a fully-operable traveling model train layout that is used for outreach functions. An example of this would be a weekend spent at the Carlsbad (a nearby city) Children's Museum last December. This layout is configured to allow children to operate the trains in an interactive fashion.

At this time, the club is open to visitors on Thursday evenings from 3:00 to 8:30 PM, and Saturdays from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Groups can contact the club to arrange tours and presentations at other times. Club information is readily accessible on our website, ncmrs.org.

Additionally, it is the intention of the club to create interpretive displays that depict the history of railroading in San Diego County as well as its social and economic contributions.

No fees are charged for any presentations or admission to the club. Donations are strictly voluntary. OLI and the transit district provide handout and display materials for the safety presentations to NCMRS at no cost.

Presenters are not compensated for their work. At this time, they donate any expenses incurred. The NCMRS now has a 501 (c)(3) status. NCMRS will be able to solicit donations, apply for grants to fund a part-time outreach coordinator and pay for office supplies needed to support these educational efforts.

At this time, the educational efforts represent a relatively small part of the club's total activity as the club is in the midst of constructing a suitable operating layout. Also, as stated above, while some outreach work is being done now, major educational efforts are about one year away when the new commuter rail line nears completion.

These activities further our exempt purpose by providing education about railroading, and fostering safety. The OLI program has a dramatic demonstrated history of saving lives, and NCMRS will play a part in bringing its message to the people of San Diego County.

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Show & Go May, 2006

During the weekend of May 20 the North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS) had the pleasure of displaying its portable “Show & Go” HO Model Railroad layout. This layout is unique in that its design allows four guests to operate independently a train of their choice.

The age range usually goes from 4-12 years old. With a short training class the operator learns to stop, start, reverse direction and control the train speed. The setup time is about four hours. Below is a photo of four NCMRS members on station at the “Show & Go”.



Holding down the fort for the NCMRS from left to right are Burt Grey, Kevin Harper and Dan Conway. George Benton did another excellent job in mustering a crew to assist in putting on the “Show & Go” activity. **By the way, shown below is why we do the “Show & Go”.**



NMRA pays a visit to NCMRS

The NCMRS hosted the NMRA on Saturday May 29, 06. Our guest began to arrive at noon and stayed to about 4.00 in the afternoon. The NMRA members gave the NCMRS a big thumbs up on our new facility and layout and they also thought highly of our “Show & Go”. So much so that the NMRA invited NCMRS to take our “Show & Go” to the Fall NMRA South West Regional Convention to be held at Kerny Mesa, San Diego, California. The photo below shows NCMRS member Jay Sarno exchanging views with NMRA guests.



On top of all this activity the NCMRS had about ten visitors from the Boney’s Marketplace weekend “Show & Go” viewers, I’d like to mention that only one guest name was entered into the guest log book. It is the responsibility of every NCMRS member to invite guests to sign our Visitor Log Book. Obtaining names in our Guest Log Book is a part of our community outreach program!



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