



# The Semaphore

On Saturday, March 31 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.

North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)

Volume 3, 3

Special points of interest:

## President's Message by Dick Miller



**DCC** My kids think I am stuck in the 50's. Maybe I am. Maybe I like it there. I wish I still had the 50 Ford convertible I drove from Indiana to California. in 1955. What a great car.

The benefits of DCC are obvious and wonderful. I learned that clearly when I visited Dick Trotters railroad for an operating session. I especially liked the feature on his throttles that allowed you to toggle back and forth between the road engine and the local switcher. The benefits of having DCC are substantial but the work necessary to get there sounds almost impossible. Not only that but the working conditions (under the bench work) are awkward.

Then there is the electrical part. In college I passed my electrical courses by making a fluid mechanics analogy. I knew something was flowing in a pipe but I was never sure about what was going on inside an electrical wire. It's hard to believe but when I went to college there were no semiconductors or computers. Still we were able to put a man on the moon with a slide rule.

Then there are my locomotives. I have several small diesel switchers, two ALCO RSD5's, and a collection of GP7's, FT's and F7's. These and several small brass engines complete my roster. None of these locomotives are DCC ready. What's worse is there is not a single un-powered unit in the lot which might give me a place for a sound system. Like Charlie, I never wanted to be underpowered. If I make the change to DCC I expect I can find some dummy Stewart Kato B units on E-bay. I have a Model Railroader wiring guide printed in 1996. The chapter in the book on digital command control is all of seven pages. Pretty general stuff. I think I need a more current and more complete book. Maybe there is a book out there, "DCC for Dummies". Changing over to DCC sounds overpowering (no pun intended). I guess I will head for my workbench and weather my two new Walthers wood reefers. I'll think about this tomorrow

So this partly explains my 1952 era DC analogue, Santa Fe model railroad. I have a two-cab common rail system, with some 16 blocks. The whole layout is about one half wired. So how could I possibly change my existing system to DCC? Do I try to have both DC and DCC on the same layout? That sounds like a bad idea. Do I pull out all the existing wiring and start from scratch? Do I need a feeder buss for an 80 foot mainline? How many power districts do I need? What system is appropriate for a bedroom-sized layout? All of my turnouts have insulated frogs that are not powered. Is this a problem? Three of my turnouts are hidden and would be impossible to rewire. How would I add additional drops and solder the rail joiners in the hidden track area? This all sounds very complicated.

All aboard.  
Dick Miller

I have talked to several club members who have DCC on their home layouts. They make it sound like a no-brainer. Just attach a few wires here and there, install a few decoders, program your engines and off you go.

### 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.

### Operation Schedule

2nd Tuesday monthly

Setup Time 5:30 pm,  
Run Time 6:00 pm—8:30 pm

### Inside this issue:

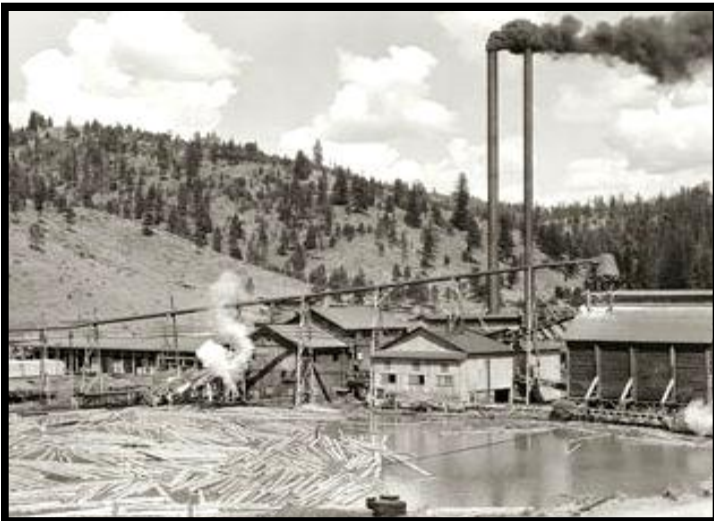
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**Forward Motion** The design of Peninsula C has moved from the software stage to the hardware phase. As commented on last month an existing short branch is now installed. It winds its way up the mountain ridge with a short water service junction that will support several western structures as well as the water tank.. The spur travels upward with a right 180° turn ending up about 90 feet (HO scale) higher facing the lower entrance junction. At the terminus of the branch there is a short junction ending at a small mine.

**Quarry Facility** The yard for the Quarry is now installed and construction of the Quarry area will proceed with the mountain ridge development. We have on hand the major rock crusher facility and some ancillary buildings.

**Lumber Facility** The log pond and Lumber Mill area has been defined and track bed is installed. Design is well along on the Lumber Facility.

**John Allen Trestle** The trestle span, at the end of Peninsula C, is a big challenge. The supporting wood structure for the cascading waterfall side of the scenery has been cut down to ten inches from the floor and cut cardboard bulkheads have been installed also initial cardboard streamers are in place. The back support structure of the highest waterfall also has been installed. The intention is to present a really rugged mountain terrain with cascading water falling under a five foot span trestle. The view below shows some possible ideas for the river approach to the mountain ridge where the river wraps around the rock face on its way to the John Allen Trestle waterfall.



**All in the Details** When a job is well done it is because the details have been taken care of to the end.

As the detail work reaches its end in the Bay Bridge area the look of realism takes place. Below is the dock of a business end of a small industrial work station.



The container freight yard is a dazzling white. Since this picture was taken all the white plaster area has been painted a concrete color and etched with the lines of well used aged concrete.



## **Palomar College Visit**

The North County Model Railroad Society received two groups of senior citizens (55 and older) from Palomar College in the month of February. All told there were about 60 classmates from the college who were studying "What's Going On in North County". They consisted of two groups of about 30 students on Friday the 9th and Wednesday the 14th of the month.

On each day they were broken up into four groups and were given lectured tours by the attending NCMRS members. The enthusiastic response was gratifying to say the least. They were interested in every aspect of our "Museum quality model display".

The amazing reality is that just after two years our effort in building a new club layout at Boney's Marketplace has resulted in an outstanding showpiece of museum quality. Every member of NCMRS should take pride in the achievement in building our club scale layout. As we continue to build, our efforts will only reach greater levels of accomplishment. A job well done by all the Club's committees.

The contact for the Palomar College tour came from the instructor of the class. This implies that our message announcing the presence of our Club, as a community service, is reaching people in North County.

**Club Member Talk** Al Cuevas wrote an e-mail to William (Bill) Peters after noting that we had not seen Bill around the Club. Al received a welcomed response from Bill stating that trains had taken a back seat in his venue of activities for the time being. He also indicated that in the near future things will open up allowing time for trains.

**Club Rolling Stock** Lorrie La Pierre has a partner in performing maintenance on the Club rolling stock. Tom Bernhardt has received training from Leo Valley on couplers and truck repairs. He will apply his forty years of modeling airplanes and trains to bring our rolling stock up to Club standards.

**Club Track Cleaning Cars** In our wall mounted train rack we now have a row set aside for Track Cleaning Cars. Members operating freight consists are asked to include a Cleaning Car to their train. Please return Cleaning Cars to the rack. Maintenance will keep the cleaning pads clean. Thank you.

**North County Model  
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