

The Semaphore

North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)

On Saturday, July 26, 2008, the club meeting will be held at 10:00 am, at Boney's Marketplace, 1820 Oceanside Blvd., Oceanside



Work Schedule

Thursday and Saturday are work days.

There are plenty of tasks to perform.

Visitor Schedule

Thursday 3-8:30PM

Saturday 9:30AM*-4PM

*11:00AM meeting days

Upcoming

Operation Dates

Tuesday, July 8

Tuesday, August 12

Tuesday, September 9

Setup time 1:00 pm

First Departure 4 pm

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President's Message by Dick Miller

Change

It is inevitable that as our club grows we can expect change. Someone a lot smarter than I am said that, "The only thing certain in life is change." We have definitely seen many positive changes in our club in the three plus years that we have been at Boney's.

We are currently going through a physical change at the club that is very visual. Thanks to many member's material donations and hard work, we are nearing completion of the 900 square foot expansion at the back of the club.

Work to spruce up the entry is continuing. When this work is completed the club's physical facility will have a much more finished and professional look. When completed we can all feel pride in what we have done.

As well as the physical changes we are also in the process of making administrative and procedural changes.

Last year we released a ProCab Startup Procedure and a Layout Operational Checkout Procedure. Every member is required to complete the training outlined in these documents prior to operating on the layout. If you are not checked out on both of these procedures make an appointment with one of the club's certified trainers and complete your checkout.

Our Rolling Stock Standards document was rewritten and released in October of 2007. As part of this standard members are required to have their rolling stock checked for specification compliance prior to use on the layout. The mechanical department is getting geared up to handle this new requirement.

Before programming any new locomotive you are required to register your engine, to make sure your loco number has not already been taken. In addition you are encouraged to register your rolling stock's identifying marking.

Our track cleaning procedure is currently being updated to include instructions on how to operate the

clubs new track cleaning Maintenance of Way (MOW) car.

In April we released a document titled "Information for New Members". The title is misleading. It should probably be "Information for All Members". The document outlines what is expected from each of us, so that we can all live together and build and operate our model railroad.

Just this month we posted "To Do" lists that cover general house keeping requirements. Each of us needs to sign up for these weekly and bi-monthly chores. We can't continually expect one or two members to vacuum and clean the coffee pot, or generally clean up after us. Please sign up and do your part.

We have made lots of changes to our facility and our operating procedures; however, meaningful changes must come from each of you.

It's up to you not to run two or more trains on a busy Saturday, with lengths that exceed the length of our railroad's passing sidings. You need to agree to not block the upper and lower main in the fiddle yards. If you want to run a lighted passenger train you need to determine how many lighted cars you can have in your consist without shutting down the layout. It's up to you to run a track cleaning train before an operating session. It's up to you to complete the "Last member out" procedures prior to leaving the club.

These kinds of things will never be totally covered in our written procedures, and no one wants to have the job of enforcing common courtesy. That's not what our model railroad club is about! So change and our ability to interact and work together is up to every one of us.

If we expect to grow our membership to 50 and beyond, individually we will have to make changes.

All aboard

A Message to All Members

A gentle reminder that there are lists of things to do around the Club. They are posted on the new bulletin board above the middle of the fiddle yard. The Weekly and Bi-Monthly tasks run from Saturday to Saturday and include the Thursday afternoon Open House. Please look them over and write your name on any of the tasks that you can help with. Even if you could only help on one of those days a week, sign up and I will try to find someone for the other day. If you have questions, please ask Tom Bernhardt or myself. On the next page there are helpful directions about track cleaning — one of the most important periodic tasks that must be done.

— Leo Valley

Answer to the Railroad Quiz

"As a bullet seeks its target, shining rails in every part of our great country are aimed at ???.
Drawn by the magnetic force ... day and night great trains rush toward ... dive with a roar into the two-and-one-half mile tunnel ... and then ???.
Crossroads of a million private lives! Gigantic stage on which are played a thousand dramas daily!"

If you are ancient (like your editor!) you may remember this as the introduction to the weekly 30 minute radio drama "Grand Central Station". The show always began with two or more people (often strangers) meeting at GCS, and then going on to significant events in their lives. The present day equivalent, which might end with "...and then ... O'Hare International Airport", somehow doesn't sound as spine tingling.

Bad Railroad Jokes (Members: If you don't want to see this column again, contribute an article!).

What was the lawyer's favorite railroad?
The SOO Line.

Using Centerline Track Cleaners

By Leo Valley

Items Required to Use Centerline Track Cleaners:

1. Two Centerline Track Cleaning Cars (see Figure 1)
2. One Boxcar Shiner Car (see Figure 2)
3. Package of Roller Strips (see Figure 3)
4. An eyedropper or syringe for applying cleaning fluid
5. A bottle of 99% isopropyl alcohol (IPA)



Figure 1

One Centerline in Storage Container



Figure 2

Shiner Car (one of several types the Club owns)

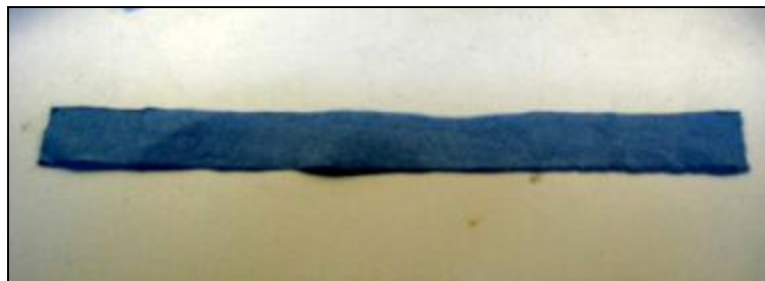


Figure 3

One Fiber Roller Strip

Note – The strip is fabricated from Blue Shop Towel material. A towel is torn off the roll and cut into strips $\frac{7}{8}$ " wide by the length of the towel, approximately $10 \frac{3}{8}$ " long

Inspect the Shiner Car before use. If it is dirty, clean the wiper as follows:

- Rubber-based wiper – Use a cloth, saturated with IPA, and clean off the contamination.
- Masonite-based wiper – Use a cloth, saturated with IPA, and clean off as much of the contamination as possible, then use the small wire brush in the Centerline Car box to slightly roughen the wiping surface.

Be sure to clean the Shiner Car wiper before placing it back on the storage rack so it is ready for use next time.

Using Centerline Track Cleaners (continued)

Cleaning Procedures:

1. The configuration for using the cars is as follows (see Figure 4):
 - Place a "wet" cleaning car in front of the locomotive;
 - Place a "dry" cleaning car behind the locomotive;
 - Place the Shiner Car behind the "dry" cleaning car.



Figure 4

In this example, the locomotive will move forward to the right

2. The cleaning setup is as follows (refer to Figure 4):
 - Wrap each cleaning car roller with a roller strip
 - Drop the roller into the car openings. **IMPORTANT:** Note the orientation of the strips on the rollers. They must be positioned so that they do not unravel while moving forward and both rollers must rotate while moving.
 - **CAUTION:** NEVER LET THE BARE BRASS METAL ROLLERS TOUCH THE TRACKS. THIS CAUSES A SHORT AND MAY DAMAGE THE DCC SYSTEM!
 - Thoroughly wet the front "wet" roller and then run the locomotive forward at a moderate speed. **IMPORTANT:** The front "wet" roller must be kept saturated with cleaning fluid at all times. This means following the cleaner consist around the layout to keep the "wet" Roller Strip saturated.
 - As the "dry" Roller Strip becomes contaminated (dirty), the top layer must be torn off or the Strip reversed end for end so an uncontaminated surface wipes the track. When the Roller Strip is thoroughly used up, replace it. A dirty Roller Strip will only recontaminate the track.
 - It may take four or more complete passes to thoroughly clean the track. To judge, note the amount of contamination the "dry" Roller Strip picks up at the end of each round.
 - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Because the raised plastic area of a re-railer is above track level, re-railers must be hand cleaned with a cloth saturated with cleaning fluid.
3. After completing the cleaning process, return the cleaning cars to their respective containers as shown in Figure 1 of the previous page. If there are no Roller Strips left, prepare a batch of new ones, using the directions under Figure 3, and set them aside for the next user.