

# The Semaphore

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September, 2006

On Saturday, September 30 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:

**North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)**

**Volume 2, 9**

## 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.

## President's Message by Al Cuevas



September 2006

In my travels during the month I ran across some of the NMRA members who visited our layout in May. They all feel that our construction is moving along very quickly. They are amazed at how much we have accomplished in such a short time. For some of us who are there two or three times a week it can seem like nothing is happening but that is far from the case. We are making great strides and quality is being maintained.

Easily noticeable is the cooperation of the members in getting things done. In particular, the response by members to the turnout 122 issue was tremendous. This was not a simple fix but with the group working together it got resolved. Also, the scenery construction is proceeding on many fronts.

Tuesday night running is gaining steam. As more members bring their trains in to run we will have "growing pains" that will have to be dealt with. Adding to the en-

joyment will be a formal "Operating Session". This should be interesting. I have only participated in one operating session but it was fun and easy to learn. Look for another committee to be formed.

Public Relations appear to be back on track with the response we are getting from our last newspaper article. For those of you who were here on the Thursday following the Sunday article, you know that we had a record number of visitors. We picked up two new members from that article with the potential for more. Additionally, we are seeing "regular" visitors bringing in their children.

I will be gone for most of September but will be back in the beginning of October. It is vacation time and maybe I will get to ride on a train or two.

See you at the club.

Al Cuevas

President

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## **Brian's Train**

By Dick Miller

In the early 1990's Amtrak felt something needed to be done to reverse declining ridership on their Coast Starlight train that made a daily trip from Los Angeles to Seattle. Brian Rosenwald who worked for Amtrak at the time was selected to act as general manager of the Coast Starlight with a mandate to improve overall service and increase ridership.

Over the next few years he put in place a series of changes that made the Coast Starlight the flagship of the Amtrak fleet. A lot of things were added, afternoon wine tasting, flowers in the sleeping compartments, live entertainment, a token gift for departing first class passengers, and a unique regional menu. The most significant change Brian instituted was the addition of the Pacific Parlor Car.



Pacific Parlor Car

The Budd Co. built these Pacific Parlor Cars in the 1950's for use on the Santa Fe railroad's Super Chief and El Capitan trains that ran daily from Chicago to Los Angeles. Brian found four of these lounge cars, which had been retired by Amtrak and were stored at their Beach Groove Indiana repair facility. He spent \$3 million restoring them and they are beautiful.



Head End

A stand up bar is at one end of the car. Adjacent to that are several booth tables where you can order a light meal and drinks. The center of the car has long sectional couch seating. The end of the car opposite the bar has a group of low very comfortable swivel chairs. The car is finished in wood paneling and etched glass dividers, very comfortable. For some good interior shots check out [www.trainweb.com/accommod/parlour.html](http://www.trainweb.com/accommod/parlour.html) Click on "food service area" or "tables".

During the almost five years Brian was involved with the Coast Starlight he traveled on the train more than 200 times. He reinvented the train, maintaining that train travel is not about the destination it's about the journey. Brian wanted his train to be a "land cruise experience". All the changes he made had a very positive impact on ridership, in fact ridership increased by 77% and first class annual revenues more than doubled between 1994 and 2001 to \$15.9 million. With all this success, the train became known as "Brian's Train".



Los Angeles Union Station

My wife and I took the train from Los Angeles Union Station to Seattle in Oct of 2004 to visit my brother. We enjoyed every minute of the trip. Due to ongoing cost cutting some of the amenities like live entertainment were gone but it is still one great train ride. We very much enjoyed the Parlor Car with coffee and a newspaper in the morning, wine tasting in the afternoon and a leisurely drink before dinner.

The train follows the shoreline from roughly Ventura to Pismo Beach, offering great views of the Pacific. It crosses through the middle of Vandenberg Air Force base giving you a view of the Strategic Air Command's Western Missile Test Range that you will never see from highway 101.



Quick stop at Santa Barbara

By dinnertime we have passed through San Jose. After dinner we retired early. The gentle rocking of the train put me to sleep almost instantly. I slept like a baby.

By morning we are just crossing into Oregon. At Klamath Falls we have climbed to an elevation of 4100 ft. About 11:00 AM we cross the Cascades at Willamette Pass, elevation 5200 ft. The mountain and valley views through this National Forest area are spectacular.

By early afternoon we are passing through Portland enjoying wine tasting in the Parlour Car. Dinner time puts us near Olympia where we are beginning to get a glimpse of Puget Sound. From Tacoma to Seattle there are lots of waterfront and beautiful bay views. We arrive at the Seattle King Street station at 9:30 PM. We are only one hour late. My brother is waiting patiently.

It was a great trip that I would recommend to anyone interested in railroading. It would be helpful if you were not a type "A" personality. Remember, it's about The Journey.

All Aboard  
Dick Miller

## Value Craft of Escondido

For all things HO, scenery materials, and tools, visit Value Craft of Escondido at 342 W. El Norte Parkway. They stock a range of HO locomotives, rolling stock, Woodland Scenes scenery materials, basswood dimensional wood, sculpting tools and a full line of railroad and scenery paint. If they don't have what you need they can order it for you.



Wendell, "The Train Man"

If you have questions relating to our hobby feel free to ask Wendell. You can find him behind the hobby counter almost every day. If you visit the store for anything be sure to say hello to Wendell and let him know that you are a NCMRS member. Value Craft supports NCMRS by prominently displaying our membership brochure on their hobby counter.

To resolve any track plan revision issues the scenery review group decided that any proposed track plan changes need to be presented to the general membership with either scale drawings or a full size mock-up. After that review any proposed changes would be presented to the board of directors for their final approval.

### **Peninsula A**

Fascia colors: We need to complete fascia color selection so fascia installation and painting can continue.

Port/Container terminal/Yard Area: The track for the port and Container terminal will be laid according to the approved track plan on the club's east wall, unless members want to present a scale drawing proposal for membership review. It was proposed that we lay sheet homasote over this entire area as a base for the track.

### **Peninsula B**

Access opening: Strip cardboard is being added to the area around the access opening. John Stevens is working this area.

Culvert: We agreed that a culvert would be added at the base of the tank farm.

Tank Farm: Thanks to George Benton's effort, work on the tank farm is progressing nicely.

### **Peninsula C**

Town Area: Bob Hunt, John Stevens and others are continuing work on a platform in this area that will serve as base for town and industrial buildings

## **Peninsula A: Mural Painting**

### **Peninsula A**

Six cameo murals comprise the painted scenic backdrop for peninsula A.

The design form of the peninsula A art work was discussed by Tom Bernhardt and Tom Brunner in mid September. As each cameo was finished, it was reviewed and modifications were made as

needed. After a period of six weeks the painting was finished and has been accepted by the Scenic Director Tom Brunner.

For several weeks we have discussed track plan revisions on the south side of "C" in the town area. John Steven has completed a full-scale layout of proposed changes, which will be reviewed by the general membership. Charlie and possibly others are interested in a modification to the Stevens plan that would extend a siding approximately 8ft. toward the toe of "C" and reconnect with the main.

The membership will select the Stevens or the Tucker plan so it can be submitted to the directors for approval.

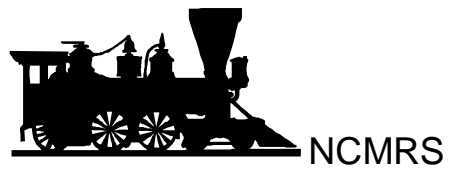
Trestle: We had some initial discussion regarding the trestle that we would like see at the tip of "C". It was suggested that it be a single long (3 or 4 feet) steel trestle with a depth of 2 feet or more.

### **Peninsula D**

Logging camp: Dan has mostly completed a full-scale mock up a revised track plan at the tip of "D". I believe he is ready for general membership review.

## **Dick Miller**

### **Scenery review group**



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**Tom Bernhardt: Editor**