



CALLBOARD

Redwood Empire Division PCR/NMRA

Website: www.pcrnmra.org/redwood/

Spring 2020

CALLBOARD

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Spring 2020 Issue

Welcome to the Spring 2020 issue of the RED Callboard. This may be the shortest issue on record although I will have to defer to previous RED members to verify this fact. What a difference a few months make. I was looking forward to reporting on the Spring RED meeting as well as attending the Clear to the Coast 2020 PCR convention. Instead email correspondence

and Zoom meetings have become the new normal. Our focus, for the time being, will be on ways to reach out to the RED membership through emails, Zoom meetings, Facebook and links to NMRA activities and other online sites. We look forward to the day when we can return to gathering in person. Oh, and the RED will be hosting the 2022 PCR convention!



Seattle street car—1918

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Director's Report - Giuseppe Aymar

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times....."

You all know the source of this famous line. Plagiarism is at times a form of respect; using someone else's well thought out idea for one's own purpose. I am now plagiarizing shamelessly.

This is the hardest of times for many of us financially and emotionally, having had our lives turned upside down by an invisible enemy. I just became a grandfather again yesterday yet am unable to see my grandson but by a drive-by. Au contraire this is also the easiest of times; by unconditionally being able to devote our resources to endeavors usually relegated to the bottom of the barrel. At least for me I can now safely (smiley icon goes here) spend unconditional time working on my pet projects as each day keeps us well grounded at home.

And as much as things stay the same, the world around us continues to change due to factors outside our will. It is during this tumultuous age that the position of RED Director is changing hands. Our past Director, Steve Skold, has termed out and has handed the baton to me; thank you all RED members for your vote of confidence. Seamless exchange at first glance but then, then one looks at the ramifications of COVID-19 and the upheaval it has brought to well established and reliable practices of doing business. Conventions, get-togethers have been cancelled and new forms of communications are being explored that will allow us to still meet virtually for the next year or so. Thank you Al Merkrebs for RED and Chris Palermo for PCR.

Steve had directed RED on a path to growth and excitement by helping steering the PCR's Board of Directors to a new vision for the Region. His incomparable knowledge of all things PCR and RED goes back many years to the seventies and that is going to be missed and hard to be replaced. (He does not know this yet, but I have hired him as my personal consultant, gratis). We owe a great deal to Steve for he has been a constant in a changing environment.

As the "new kid on the block" as RED Director I would like to extend an invitation to all of you in RED's country to please contact me with any proposal, worries, issues that you would like to have addressed by the Region; I will work hard (sounds like a politician, does it not?) to represent you on a level of a Steve Skold. The main job of a Director is to devote time and energy to help run the PCR; that is the requirement of a Director, period! Yet, PCR is made up of Divisions and the internal concerns of each Division need to be understood and acted on to have a smooth, healthy and progressive PCR. Divisions are made up of members, all of us, and your concerns, ideas and needs should be heard. The pyramid is built with a strong foundation. Members, then Divisions then Region.

Let's allow this wonderful hobby of ours to be a conduit for fun away from the troubles of the real world. Let's allow it to become the vessel which brings back our years of wonderment that made up our childhood.

Giuseppe Aymar, DDS, MMR
RED Director
Go RED, Go RED !!!!!

Chief Clerk's Report - Dave Grundman

The RED currently has \$5443.40 in the division checking account.

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Superintendent's Report - Scott Lockhart

It was early March and we were just starting to think about the upcoming Spring Redwood Empire Division meeting. We were looking forward to the Clear to the Coast PCR Convention in Concord, the Gateway 2020 NRMA National Convention in St. Louis as well as numerous local model railroading events. And did anyone know what a Zoom meeting was? Looking at the current PCR Master Calendar confirms that we are in another reality. The RED canceled the Spring meeting and the Summer picnic is tentative. We are investigating Zoom meetings as a way for RED members to stay in touch with one another. Al Merkrebs has taken responsibility for getting Zoom up and running and will be doing a division-wide Zoom Show & Tell presentation Saturday, June 13th with a second division-wide Zoom Show & Tell presentation in July.

We are very pleased to announce that Al Merkrebs is the 2020 Redwood Empire Division Member of the Year. Al has done a great job in putting together programs for the RED meetings that included a great presentation by the Redwood Empire Garden Railroad Society that included a visit to Doug Lodges' backyard layout. Gus Campagna, with help from Al Merkrebs, gave a presentation on installing a Tsunami DCC decoder into a Proto 2000 SD9 model from Gus's California Western layout. We are looking forward to his upcoming Zoom program next month.

The Redwood Empire Division now has a Facebook page. I encourage you to take a look at the page and feel free to add anything you are currently building, modifying, researching etc. You can view the Facebook page at [Redwood Empire Division - PCR/NMRA](#).

The Redwood Empire Division will be hosting the annual PCR Convention in 2020. We are starting the preliminary planning steps with high hopes that the quarantine will be a thing of the past and we will back to some kind of normal. More information will be available later this summer. See page 8 for more information.

RED member Ed Merrin has accepted the position of Director for the Daylight Division of the PCR. We wish Ed good luck in his new position.

One of the silver linings of the quarantine is the extra time we have to tackle those model railroading projects that have been sitting on the workbench or in the closet waiting for attention. I know modelers who are making great progress on their layouts with new buildings or landscaping. Other modelers are updating or modifying locomotives and rolling stock. I have been improving my soldering skills by working on and updating a few locomotives to DCC with sound and better lighting. And, I am looking forward to a haircut sometime in the future.

I hope everyone is well, safe, and doing their best during these trying times. Having a great hobby can be such wonderful comfort and diversion to us all in dealing while dealing with so much uncertainty. We will stay in touch. And, likewise, if you have any suggestions or comments please feel free to forward them to me and I will share them with the staff of the RED.

Scott Lockhart

Superintendent, Redwood Empire Division

Membership Report - Gus Campagna

Based on the April 2020 report RED membership stands at 128. This is down five members from the December 2019 report.

Announcing the First RED “Show & Tells” on Zoom

Hello Redwood Empire Division member,

The RED staff has been kicking around ideas about how to resume some Division activities during (and maybe even after) Covid-19. We have been working on doing our “Show & Tells” on Zoom and we are ready to announce our first live Zoom event for all interested RED members.

When: This Zoom meeting will take place on Saturday, June 13 at 11 AM.

Presenters will be:

Ed Merrin - Petaluma Bridge construction

Al Merkrebs - Brief layout tour of small, switching layout

Gus Campagna - Video of California Western Railroad Passenger Train

All RED members will soon be receiving a Zoom invitation to join this meeting. No worries if you’ve never Zoomed. Please read the attachment that has some introductory Zoom tips. Also, you can email me (alm@sonic.net) prior to the meeting with any Zoom questions.

Thank you,
Al Merkrebs
RED Events Chair



"Did you know there's a miniature woman tied to the train tracks who looks remarkably like me?"

RED Member of the Year - Al Merkrebs



During the last PCR business meeting , it was announced that RED member Al Merkrebs is the RED Member of the Year. Al has been very active in the RED since 2018. He took part in the 2018 PCR Convention, Enduring Rails and is now the Program Chair for the RED. As you can see in the following bio, Al, like many of us, has had the model railroading bug for a very long time.

I started out with a Lionel 0-27 set on a 4' x 8' plywood board in the mid 1950s in my basement. Man, I loved those cars that did things with moving pieces! That might have been what got me addicted. My cousin had the double-handle Lionel throttle and I was quite jealous.

I have a fond memory of going to a hobby shop back then with my Dad. I was about 7 or 8. I asked the attendant to show me some wood ballast pieces, which were very expensive. And I remember my Dad, standing off to the side and thinking I could not see him, waving his hand in a "no-no" gesture. We could barely afford what I already had.

Of course, as a teenager in High School, model railroading was not cool, so I played ping-pong with friends a lot down in the basement.

But, back in grad school in Ann Arbor MI in the '70s I got the bug again. I lived in a large rental home with about 6 or 7 other students. I started building benchwork in a room in that basement, and gradually more of my housemates came down to observe and even participate. I did get a decent HO layout going. My specialty was scenery, with a lake and fishermen in boats scene that was to die for, IMHO.

Well, flash forward to 1976. Lin and I decided to move to Santa Rosa, and I got the bug one last time. I started building a very small (3' x 2') layout that was mostly just a diorama. And I started buying some more HO cars.

Then, I got lonely doing model railroading by myself and started looking for local clubs. I eventually hooked up with Coastal Valley Lines (CVL) modular club around 2010. That was HUGE. Just meeting other good modelers and setting up modules and running trains in big rooms was a blast.

That boost got me to join the NMRA in about 2014 and CVL became a 100% NMRA club in about 2018. I started attending RED meetings about this time.

Another big step for me was joining the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society in 2018. I started going down to Petaluma to volunteer and, man, that was, and is, the place to learn TONS about railroads and railroading.

I have my own operating switching layout, named Alspur, in my 1-car garage. It is made from three CVL modules and is 12' x 2.5'. I hope to have RED members coming over to run Alspur at some point.

RED Facebook Page



Social media provides a variety of ways to share information. Model railroading groups have established Facebook pages to share model railroading activities. The RED Facebook group is a closed group. Closed groups only let current members view group content and see who else is in the group. A closed group requires potential members to ask to join the group. While limiting in scope it helps keep the posts on topic. If you wish to join the RED Facebook group just use the following link to access the site.

[Redwood Empire Division - PCR/NMRA](#)

A few pictures from the current Redwood Empire Division Facebook page.



Ron Kaiser's bridge project.



Adam Palmer's Stinson Pt. Reyes & Bodega Railroad

Callboard Show & Tell

Dave Grundman

What have you been working on during the quarantine? Since we are not able share our modeling activities in person, how about online? You may not be ready for a Zoom presentation but you can still share your pictures and comments with your fellow modelers. Dave Grundman, RED's Chief Clerk, has decided to get the ball rolling with his description of grain elevators found on his Great Northern layout.

Grain Elevators

Grain elevators today are monsters as compared to their predecessors, being 180 feet high by 60 feet in diameter as I found in Duncomb, Iowa (my uncle was mayor there for 30-years and I lived there in first grade). The elevators are truly prairie skyscrapers as Iowa is mostly flat so the elevators can be seen for miles away, and it is a good view from the top.

Since I model the Great Northern in the 50s (transition from steam to early diesel), I have assembled several grain elevators that might have been found in the 50's and temporally set them out on part of my layout. GN had a lot of grain trains then and now.

I also found a backdrop showing an Iowa farmland scene and installed that on a scenery divide. The cars on the backdrop are too modern so I will need to cover them with scenery material. The scenery divide was made from melamine board 24" x 96" cut down to 18-inches to match the backdrop size.

This is all coming together nicely as you can see.



2022 PCR Convention

*Insert Convention
Logo Here*

We are happy to announce that the 2022 PCR Convention will be hosted by the RED during the Spring of 2022. Denni and Cliff Baumer have accepted the position as co-chairs for the convention. The following is a synopsis of their collective experience with model railroading, full size railroading and conventions.

Cliff: Modeling since 1956

Joined NMRA 1970, RED 1975

Member of NWPRRHS, SPT&HS, SPNGHS, Friends of C&TS and others

Member of BAERA; volunteer as Operator driving trains at WRM

Denni: Member of NMRA, and RED since 2005

Member of NWPRRHS and WRM

Worked at WRM as the Events and Marketing Manager

Both: Worked on the NWPRRHS crew that restored Caboose 13, now at ROOTS in Willits

Joined NARCOA in 2005 when we bought our Speeder

Denni and Cliff have chaired conventions for between 200 - 400 attendees over a 5 - 6 day program, which included selecting and negotiating convention locations, clinics, keynote speakers, vendors, banquets, entertainment, guest programs (non-rail) meals, A/V services and outside meals and events.

Planning has started and information will be posted as it becomes available. We are all hoping that social distancing will be over by 2022 and we will be able to get together to share our enthusiasm for model railroading. There will be plenty of opportunities for volunteers to help with the convention.



Clubs in the RED

Due to COVID-19 and quarantine please contact the listed clubs before planning a visit. The RED is not responsible for changes to listed schedules.

Coastal Valley Lines Modular Railroad

The Coastal Valley Lines Model Railroad Club of Sonoma County, LTD (CVL) is an association of novice-to-expert model railroaders from around the Sonoma County, California area. We operate our HO modular railroad at public and private events, and also gather for clinics, work sessions and regular monthly meetings. Visit the website for additional information. [Coastal Valley Lines Modular Railroad](#)

Eel River Valley Model Railroad

It is the purpose of the Eel River Valley Model Railroad to preserve the rich history of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad along with the history of the North Coast of California. This is done through a series of modules depicting several areas of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad between Schellville and Eureka California. It is our goal to preserve the rich heritage of the railroad and the North Coast through these representations of the past. Please go to the club's website for information on visiting the layout.

[Eel River Valley Model Railroad](#)

Lake County Model Railroad Club

The Lake County Model Railroad Club runs trains on a 60'x25' layout, double track HO scale, a dual gauge branch line and a HO_{n3} mining branch line. The theme is California in the transition period and is reflected in rolling stock and in the layout scenery. The club is located at the Lake County Fairground, 423 Martin St, Lakeport, CA 95453

Hours: Noon - 4:00 to 5:00 PM, every Wednesday. Summer hours extend to 8:00 PM.

The Humboldt Bay and Eureka Model Railroad Club

The Humboldt Bay and Eureka Model Railroad Club is the largest, most active model railroad club in Humboldt County. It has existed in the same location for about 40 years. The large layout is freelanced but with many scenes based on NWP locations. The club typically meets each Saturday night at 7:30 pm. Visitors are welcome. Open house occurs during Veteran's Day and Rhododendron Days Weekends. The club is located at 7th and A Streets in Eureka, CA.

[The Humboldt Bay and Eureka Model Railroad Club](#)

Mendocino Coast Model Railroad and Navigation Company

See logging history brought to life at this walk-around large G-Scale layout representing a history of logging and the railroads located in the Redwood Empire. Over 1300ft of track - equivalent to 6 miles with views of a mill, logging camp, town, pier, bridges and trestles.

Hours: 10:30 - 2:30 pm: Every Day except Tuesdays and Thursdays.

[Mendocino Coast Model Railroad and Navigation Company](#)

Continued on the next page.

Clubs in the RED

Due to COVID-19 and quarantine please contact the listed clubs before planning a visit. The RED is not responsible for changes to listed schedules.

Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society

The Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit organization which operates a 4600 square foot model scale railroad exhibit that represents the agricultural and industrial heritage of the Napa Valley. Check their Facebook page for open house dates and times.

[Napa Valley Model Railroad Historical Society](#)

North Coast Historical Model Railroad Society (NCHMRS)

The club operates an HO scale layout based on the Northwestern Pacific Railroad as it ran in the 1950's through Sonoma County to Ukiah. The club is building the layout as a display for the Depot Museum and will be located in the historic Healdsburg Freight Depot. Stop by on the 3rd Saturday of each month as we open the doors to the depot. [North Coast Historical Model Railroad Society](#)

Redwood Empire Live Steamers Interactive Museum

The Redwood Empire Live Steamers is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Sonoma Counties Railroad history through the re-creation, in miniature, of railroad equipment and historic landmarks.

[Redwood Empire Live Steamers Interactive Museum](#)

Sonoma Short Line Modular Group

The Sonoma Short Line modular group that is loosely based on the Southern Pacific branch line from Sonoma through Glen Ellen and Melitta Station to the old Santa Rosa Depot on North Street. They are currently looking for new members. Contact Steve Lewis for more information. Phone: 707-527-0396,

Email: sdlewis@cds1.net

The Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society

The REGRS is a loosely knit club of garden railroad enthusiasts from areas north of the famous San Francisco Golden Gate Bridge who share an interest in model trains. Our members are primarily located in Sonoma County and Marin County. Contact the club for public tours and shows.

[The Redwood Empire Model Railway Society](#)

Comin' Down the Line

2020

Due to the ongoing modification to the PCR Calendar we are posting the link to the PCR Calendar page on the PCR website to provide the most up to date information.

<http://www.pcrnmra.org/pcr/calendar/calendar.shtml>

2022

PCR Convention hosted by the Redwood Empire Division.

Stay tuned for details!

Miscellaneous

How do you turn a locomotive and tender when they are too long for the locally available turntable? Maybe something for your next operating session?

