



# SHORT LINE

Sierra Division \* Pacific Coast Region \* National Model Railroad Association



The World's Greatest Hobby!

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## GERBER SUBDIVISION of the SOUTHERN PACIFIC By Gary Ray

When it was announced that the October meet would be held in Chico, I suggested that members might like to see the progress on my layout afterwards. Before I knew it, the meet had been moved to Paradise, close to where I live. I am excited to share what I am doing, but as some of you know, multiple members of my family have had serious injuries over the summer and I'm not as far along as I had hoped to be in October. It is mid-August and I'm just finishing putting up the Masonite backgrounds for my mushroom style layout. We shall see how much track gets laid.



Mushrooms & Masonite

I'm modeling the **Gerber Sub** of the **SP Shasta Division**, from Gerber to LaMoine in the summer of 1926. Why that year? I previously started a layout in the garage modeling Dunsmuir to Weed, just before the completion of the Natron Cutoff. When a new 24' x 60' building became available, I decided to keep the same year but move the location to the north end of the valley to allow for more industry.

See "Gerber" page 4



Follow this link for the expanded digital color issue of the Short Line: <http://www.pcrnmra.org/sierra/index.html>

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to volunteer to give a clinic, for mem-  
bership problems,*

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Articles, photos, tips, or ideas are heartily encouraged and will be enthusiastically accepted! The preferred format would be in Rich Text Format (RTF), with photos as JPEGs, but we will accept any format (from a PC or Mac; MS Word, Simple Text, typed, or handwritten). Send it to your editor by regular mail to **SHORT LINE**, 2260 Cherry Glenn Ct., Chico, CA

# From the Superintendent

## Drop-Dead Gorgeous Layouts

If you didn't make it to the recent August meet in Reno, you missed out on an opportunity to see some fantastic, drop-dead beautiful layouts. We had an opportunity to see and operate on Jim Petro's great D&RGW layout and to see the progress and design of the layouts by John Currie, Bob Norwich, Bob Westphall, and Al Nelson. All are in various stages of completion but they are all exceptionally well done. It was great to meet with each of them and learn a little about their layout, its design, and the progress they've made on them. See the photos elsewhere in this edition.

It was fun to give a clinic on making a static grass applicator from an electronic flyswatter. As usual, preparing for the clinic taught me way more than just watching or reading about the process. The best lessons learned usually came from the mistakes I made (but you all know how that works).

It was especially great to see Mel Jones, our director, be able to give the Member of the Year Award to Larry and Judy Champlin. They missed out on receiving it at the PCR convention as they left early before the banquet. Larry and Judy have done a lot for the hobby and all of us and are highly deserving of this recognition.

I hope you are all planning to attend our next meet in Paradise (near Chico). I want to thank Chip Meriam and Gary Ray for all their hard work in organizing and planning the meet. It will be a great one with a meeting at Mountain Mikes that includes a clinic on LED lighting for cars by Klaus Keil and, of course, pizza for lunch. We'll then be carpooling to go visit three local layouts. We should be back to Mountain Mike's by 3:30 to 3:45. Klaus has generously offered to open his layout up also and we'll be able to stop by and visit on the way out as he is to the south (which is the direction most of us will be heading). Should be a really great time.

I suppose it is something that all Superintendent's need to do. Part of the job is organizing the meets and arranging, among other things, for interesting clinics. So this is a plea to contact me if you would like to give a clinic or presentation on anything model railroading or prototype railroads. Best to contact by email: [jimcol@charter.net](mailto:jimcol@charter.net).

The International Rail Fair is just around the corner. It will be held Nov 14-15 at the Placer County Fairground in Roseville. As one of the sponsors, Sierra Division always provides volunteers, usually we help in the ticket office and also man the NMRA/Sierra division booth. We need to start coordinating this now. Until I arrange for a volunteer coordinator, please contact me if you are interested in volunteering. You can visit the IRF website for more info: <http://www.internationalrailfair.com/>.

I am also going to put in a plug for next year's PCR convention. We are sponsoring it and will need people to help. It will be held April 20-24 at the Doubletree Hotel in Modesto. Though not 100% confirmed at the time I write this, it looks very much like this will be a joint convention with the Western Pacific Railroad Historical Society (WPRRHS). Should be really great time and I encourage you now to visit the convention website and register [www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html](http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html). If you wish to help out and volunteer, please contact Dan Evans our volunteer coordinator ([mod2016volunteer@pcrnmra.org](mailto:mod2016volunteer@pcrnmra.org)) and let him know. Jobs and requirements are still being determined, but having names to work with will help Dan a lot.

As you all know, the drought is causing many problems for us in CA. I truly hope and pray that we get a ton of rain this winter. So if it's coming down in buckets in October, just be thankful and come on up to Paradise to enjoy good fellowship and model railroading. See you there.

## Model Railroad Layout Tour Northern Nevada

November 7 & 8th. Reno on the 7th, Carson City and elsewhere on the 8th.  
Contact Jim Petro for information and a tour booklet—[jpetro328@gmail.com](mailto:jpetro328@gmail.com)  
Or call Jim at 775 852 5636

# From the Editor

## **Anatomy of a Meet – (*nothing is as simple as it seems*)**

Although I was unable to attend the August 1 meet in Reno, I have a pretty good grasp of what transpired – thanks to the notes and photos I received from **Jim Collins** and **Gary Ray**. And, I was “in the loop” of the planning for the meet to the extent that I was charged with publishing maps for the meeting place and layout tours, and distributing the agenda. What I observed was a somewhat miraculous orchestration of moving parts, conflicting time elements, and unexpected venue scarcity. Somehow, our **Superintendent**, with the help of **Jim Petro**, managed to plan and execute another superb meet. So thanks to both of you for a job well done. Thanks also go to **John Currie**, **Al Nelson**, **Bob Westphall**, and **Bob Norwich** for opening their layouts for our benefit.

Now I am “in the loop” again as the October meet is deep in the planning stage. Once again, there have been conflicting times, a need to move the meeting from one location to another, and the coordination of several layout owners to provide an enjoyable tour. This time we must thank **Gary Ray** for finding a suitable meeting place, arranging for rail and non-rail tours, AND opening his layout for our visit. Also, thanks to **Klaus Keil** for offering to present a clinic and for opening his layout as well. Klaus has just joined us as a new NMRA member – so welcome, Klaus.

Speaking of new members, there have been several this past year:

David Sampson – Sparks, NV – Joined 02/01/2015  
Steven Hill – Glendale, CA – joined 03/23/2015  
Prince Flores – Woodland, CA – joined 03/30/2015  
Kathy Delevati – Woodland, CA – joined 03/30/2015  
Terry Crowley – Elk Grove, CA - joined 03/16/2015  
Andrew Rigsbee – Reno, NV – joined 05/27/2015  
William Cruickshank – El Dorado, CA – joined 05/13/2015  
Dallas Kell – Herald, CA – joining 09/01/2015  
Andreas Dierenga – Reno, NV – joining 10/01/2015  
Steve Harvath – Stockton, CA – joining 10/01/2015  
Klaus Keil – Paradise, CA – joining 10/01/2015

Please accompany me in welcoming all of these fellow model railroaders.

## **A Plea for Participation**

A quick perusal of the monthly membership report indicates we have 266 Sierra Division Members. I’m willing to bet that all 265 have never been gathered together at the same place at the same time. But there **is** a chance that all 265 might read this page this month. So, Dear Short Line reader, here is a call to attend a Division meet sometime this next year. The meets move from place to place throughout The Division so there is a good chance that one of the four quarterly gatherings will be near you. So come on out. I absolutely guarantee you’ll be glad you did!

**OCTOBER MEET SPECIAL—OCTOBER MEET SPECIAL—OCTOBER MEET SPECIAL**  
**The owner of Paradise Hobbies—491 Pearson Road—Paradise, is offering a 20% discount to Sierra Division members who stop by his shop on Saturday October 10. See the complete digital version for a map to the store. If you care to call ahead the number is 530 877 6447.**



Modification of the building was started in 2009 when I retired from teaching. The layout will have 450' of mainline with staging loops at both ends. The layout features a minimum mainline radius of 40" with Code 70 **Micro Engineering** rail and some Code 55 on **Central Valley Product** tie strips in industrial areas. Switches off the main are #8, with #6 used elsewhere. Switches are hand built laid on **CVP** ties (pages 6-7 of the February, 2011 Short Line) and thrown by **Tortoise** switch machines. **EasyDCC** wireless throttles are used in the 8 power districts. L-girder bench work supports  $\frac{3}{4}$  plywood and  $\frac{1}{2}$  **Homasote**.

**Sanborn Fire Maps** along with maps from the **SP Archives** in Dunsmuir were used to develop a prototypical track plan and industries. The major deviation has been the wye at Gerber. It would have stuck too far out into the layout room; so was moved to the west end of the yard. Very few buildings are on the layout at this point, instead I'm concentrating on completing the track.



Scratch-Built Reed's Creek Bridge—Red Bluff

Operation sessions have been held with local friends when Gerber, Proberta, Red Bluff, and Cottonwood trackage was complete. Switch lists were generated with apparently defunct **RailOp** and for the last two sessions I made the switch to **JMRI**.

The layout has been closed since June as I constructed the mushroom bench work for Anderson, Girvan, Redding, Pitt, Morley, and LaMoine along with branch lines of the **Sacramento Valley & Eastern RR** to Delamar and Bully Hill, the **California, Shasta, and Eastern** to Bella, and the **LaMoine Lumber Co. RR** to the logging sites.

I am the sole builder, and some days are better than others as I pursue my life-long dream. I am indebted to **Dennis Drury** and **Phill Simpson**



Gerber

for their help in implementing JMRI to generate switch lists. Most of all, very thankful for a wonderful wife, **Diane**, who encourages me and puts up with my getting up at 4 to work on the layout. Also for the times she helped cut wood on the table saw.



Gary Ray

See  
More  
Here !



<http://www.pcrnmra.org/sierra/index.html>

## KLAUS KEIL'S CAR LIGHTING SYSTEMS—REVISITED AN UPCOMING CLINIC

Following the publication of the article “INEXPENSIVE RAILROAD CAR LIGHTING SYSTEMS” in the April 2015 issue of **THE SHORT LINE**, I received many requests to demonstrate the construction and use of the my two lighting systems. And I will be doing so at the pleasure of the Sierra Division leadership. I shall be displaying and demonstrating the use of both the battery powered system and the track powered system. My presentation will include both systems in their various gestation stages. Circuit drawings and bills of material will be made available.

Since this past spring I have added some additional cars to my lighted model fleet:

A US Army Transportation Corps European Theater caboose was outfitted with American end of train marker lights powered by an A23 battery lighting system. This system was chosen because it required the least effort to construct, required the least amount of space to install, and because the LED marker lights consume only a minute amount of battery power.

A German 1930 caboose, many of which were captured and used by the USATC, was lighted with the track power system because the interior had ample room for all components, and the LED lighting strip does consume more power.



USATC European Theater Caboose with Marker Lights



German 1930 Caboose with Interior Lighting

I hope the information I plan to share will benefit you.

See you in October!

*Klaus*

Editor's Note: Klaus Keil will be presenting his Railroad Car Lighting System clinic/workshop at the October meet in Paradise.





**Mel Jones Presents Larry and Judy Champlin  
With the 2015 Member of the Year Award**

## **IEWS FROM THE RENO MEET**



**Jim Collins Builds a Static Grass Applicator  
a' la Bug Zapper**



**Klaus Keil's WW2 Era Military Trains**



### **Sierra Division Report Jim Collins, Superintendent**

The Sierra Division held its summer meet on August 1 in Reno where, in addition to the normal meeting with one clinic, we saw some really great layouts and had a chance to meet some outstanding modelers in the Reno area.

The meeting was held in the Sparks public library's meeting room – a very nice room at a great price (\$20). But before the meeting, there were five layouts available for tours and one for operations from 10 am until about 1:30. . Jim Petro opened his superb HO scale layout of the D&RGW circa 1950s for viewing and for operations. There were at least a 12-15 people who took him up on the offer and they all had a great time for several hours.

Additionally, John Currie's S scale layout of the Northern Pacific (circa 1955), Al Nelson's HO scale Santa Fe (circa late 1960s), Bob Norwich's narrow gauge HO scale post-war Nevada (circa 1930s), and Bob Westphall's HO scale Western Pacific (circa 1950s) were all open for tour. These are all exceptional layouts with some really fine modeling and scenery. All are still in work (well, what layout isn't) but each has some particularly well done scenes and equipment. The next time we do this, I highly recommend that you attend if at all possible, you will not be disappointed. Note that the annual Reno layout tour is being organized now – look for information in the PCR calendar (end of Oct/beginning of Nov timeframe).

The meeting included discussion about changing the Sierra Division newsletter, the Short Line, from its current 10 page printed format to a single sheet printed two sides. While this won't cut down on the mailing costs, it will help reduce the current printing costs and hopefully will encourage more to shift to the (much larger, full-color) digital version. It was noted that other divisions send print versions only by special request and this may be something looked at in the coming year. The meeting was well-attended with 27 folks.

The clinic by Jim Collins showed how to make a static grass applicator from an inexpensive electronic bug swatter. While there are several versions of the procedure available in the hobby press and YouTube, it seemed many were not familiar with it and all the inserts Jim made (molded plastic resin) went quickly.

New member Andreas Dierenga received his Sierra Division gift of an NMRA Standards Gauge in his scale (HO). Several other folks who had not received theirs in the past also received one.

The photo contest was for black and white prototype photos and results were: 1<sup>st</sup> place – Tom Van Horn, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dave Bayless and Jim Collins, 3<sup>rd</sup> – Dave Bayless. The modeling contest was non-revenue cars and results were: 1<sup>st</sup> place – Jim Petro, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> – Dave Bayless.

Mel Jones, Sierra Division Director, presented the well-deserved and beautiful member of the year award to Larry and Judy Champlin.

The next meet will be in Paradise, CA at the Mountain Mikes pizza on October 10 from 10am – 2 pm. Lunch (pizza, of course) will be \$5 per person and includes a soda. Currently Klaus Keil will be giving a clinic on LED car lighting. After the meeting there will be opportunities to visit four area layouts.

The next PCR convention, sponsored by Sierra Division, will be held in Modesto at the Doubletree Hotel (April 20-24, 2016). The website is up and accepting registrations: [www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html](http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2016/index.html).

For the fifth consecutive Festival a Model Railroads of Southern California layout tour will be offered as one of the official events of the Central Coast Railroad Festival. The tour will take place on October 1- 4 throughout San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties. This will be MR of SC's forty-fifth layout tour since 2006.

There will be thirty layouts in all major scales at twenty venues for this free, self-guided layout tour.

Use this link to view the tour schedule with layout locations and descriptions:

<http://ccrrf.com/2015/MRSC-Layout-Tour-45.pdf>

Be sure to visit the Central Coast Railroad Festival website ([www.CCRRF.com](http://www.CCRRF.com)) to view other Festival activities, which include a rail excursion to a winery, prototype exhibits and display, educational activities, a bike ride along the old Pacific Coast Railway right-of-way and more.

## Modeling Contest Winners—Non-Revenue Car



**First Place**

Jim Petro



**Second Place**

Dave Bayless

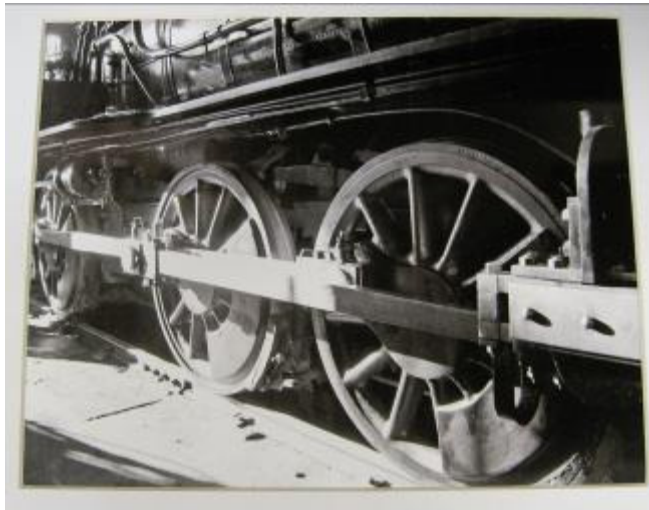


**Third Place**

Dave Bayless



## Photo Contest Winners—B&W Prototype



**First Place**  
Tom Van Horn



**Second Place  
Tie**

Dave Bayless  
left

Jim Collins  
right



**Third Place**  
Dave Bayless

# SIERRA DIVISION

Next Meeting: Saturday, Oct. 10

9:00 Paradise Hobbies (optional)

10:00AM

**Mt. Mike's Pizza**

6626 Clark Road—Paradise

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Carpool/Caravan Layout Tours

## TIMETABLE

Oct. 10 ~ Paradise

Nov. 14-15 ~ Roseville

April 2016  
PCR Convention

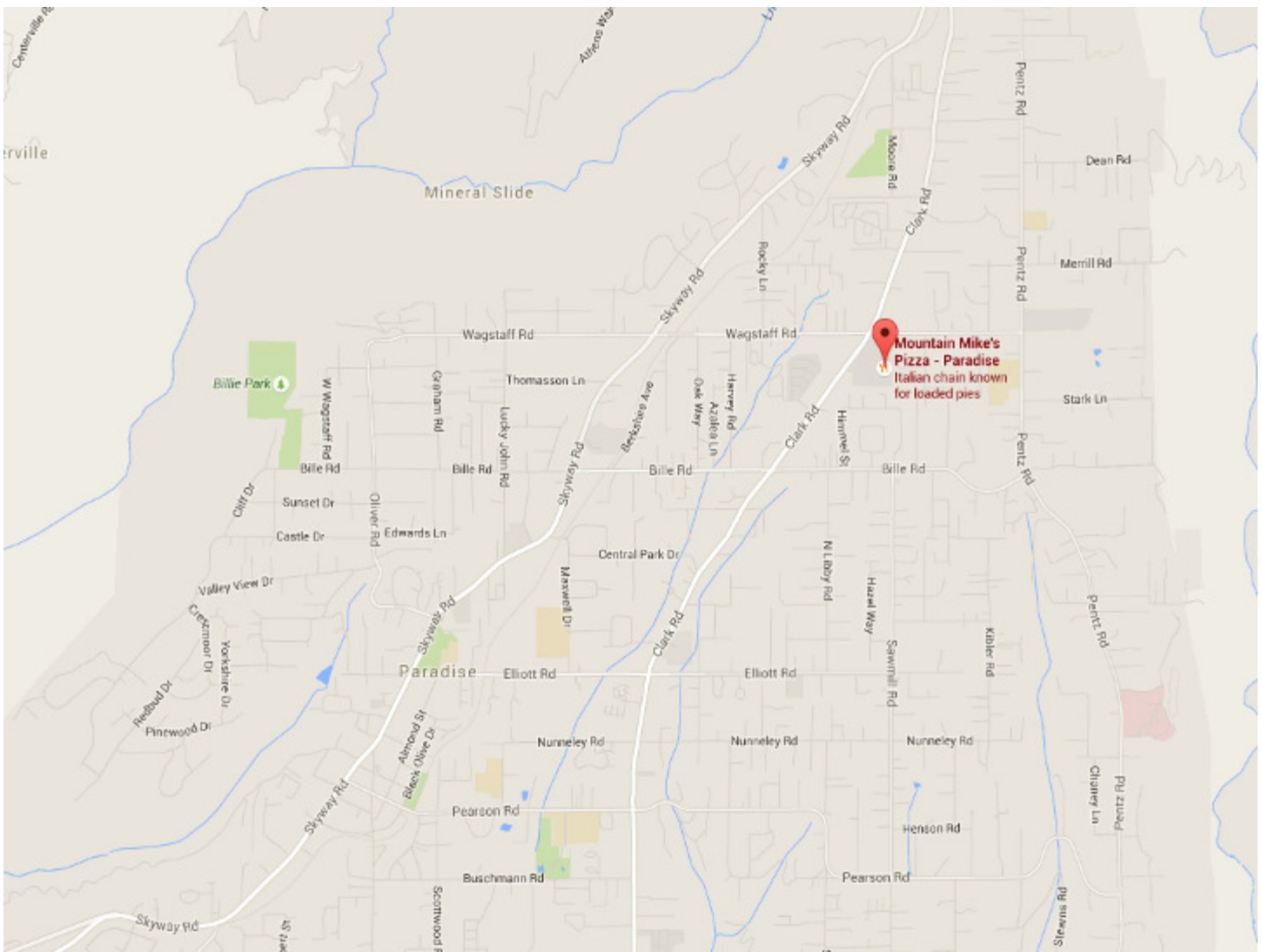
**International Rail Fair—  
Placer County Fairgrounds—  
Roseville, CA**

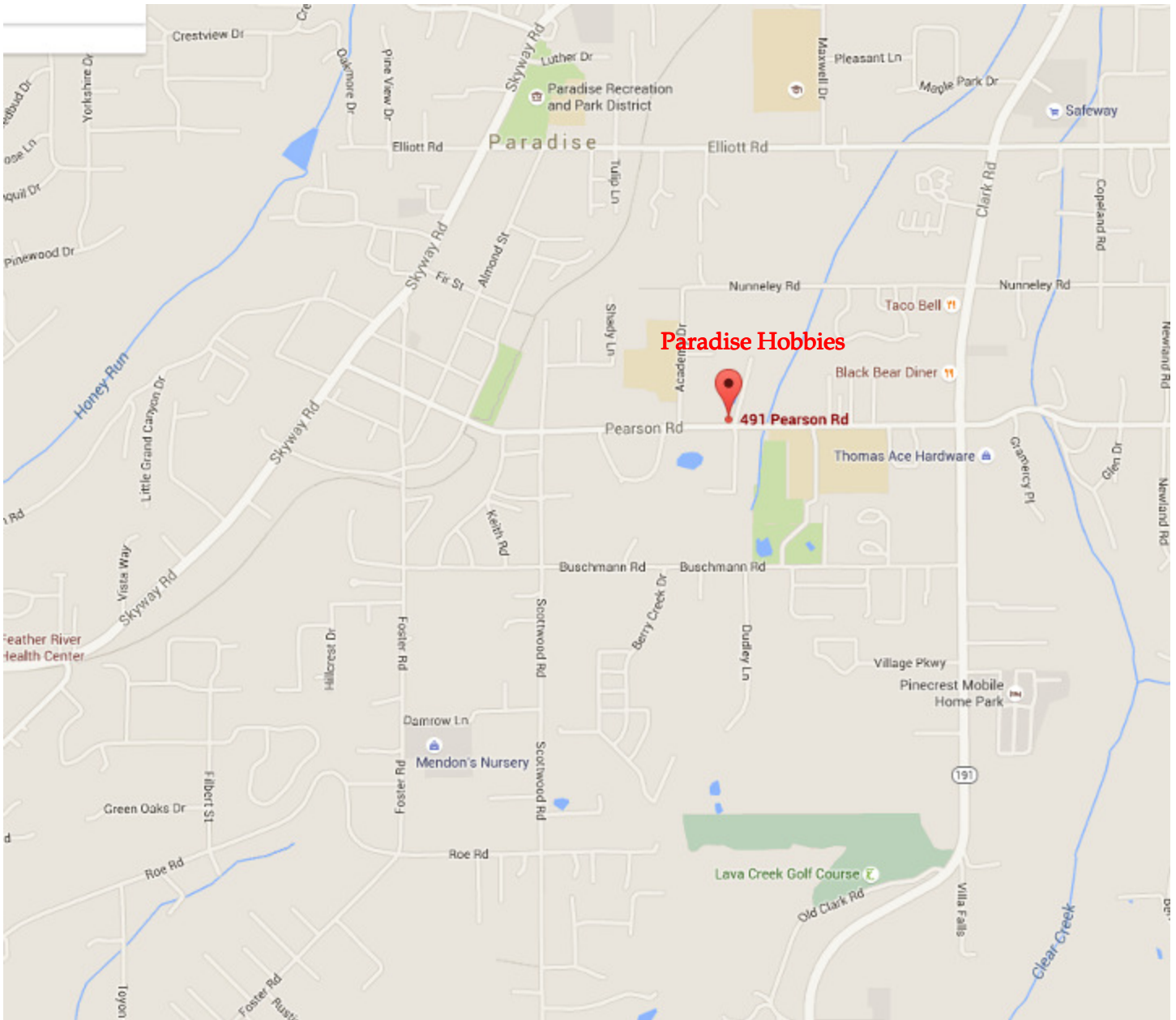
Saturday, Nov. 14  
10:00AM—5:00PM  
Sunday, Nov. 15  
10:00AM—4:00PM

## FOR NON-RAILS

### A VISIT TO PARADISE

Paradise is a wonderful place to visit for members and non-rails. Along with the Sierra Division Meet, we would like to invite non-railroading wives to carpool to Paradise's many antique shops, craft stores, and quilting and knitting stores. Maps will be available at the beginning of the meet showing locations and some of the restaurants that are available. There will be a 5 ½ hour period where the many shops can be explored before meeting back with those who attended the meet.





# 20% Discount

SIERRA DIVISION MEMBERS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

*PARADISE HOBBIES—491 PEARSON ROAD—PARADISE*

*530 877 6447*



## Open House—Klaus Keil

My layout is an oval 10 X 20 feet, which replicates a fictitious area in Southeastern Germany and, depending on the type of equipment displayed, is either an early 1950 or mid-1980 setting. The models are standard HO rolling stock featuring steam, diesel or electric locomotives, replicating the German Federal Railroad, US Army Transportation Corps and Czech National Railway. All are powered by either direct current or digital command control. The layout is about 65% complete. It includes many highly detailed scenes and cars. I am currently super detailing U.S. Army loads on flat cars. Much of the layout has catenary wires overhead. I have done many workshops for our group and I am a member of the European Train Enthusiasts. I have recently joined the Sierra Di-



MISHAP: An accident investigation board was appointed and the track cleared immediately.



EMERGENCY LANDING: A vintage air show participant came in for a hard landing.



SAW MILL: Business seems to be flourishing.



CONSTRUCTION SITE: A private residence is erected near a rail line.

## Open House—Norm Morris

I don't model any particular place or any particular industry. My main theme for modeling is Southern Pacific as this is what I grew up with.

This is the third layout that I have started. The first one was demolished to make room for my grandson who came to live with me. The second was an N Scale layout that I built in my enclosed front porch.

The third (present) layout is all built in HO Scale. It is back in the living and dining rooms, plus I am expanding it into the front porch room. The portion built in the living and dining rooms is 98% scened with trees and buildings. The enclosed front porch area, connected to the other portion by a helix, has only about 10% of its scenery installed.

Mainline trackage is in place for the Southern Pacific. There is a main station with a two-track passenger yard that is separate from the main yard. The main yard will have an interchange with the Sacramento Northern with overhead wire. As of now I do have some S N track in place, but no overhead wire yet..



The photo at the left shows some of the photographic backgrounds Norm made for his layout.

See Short Line, February 2014 pg. 1, 4-5, 18. (ed.)

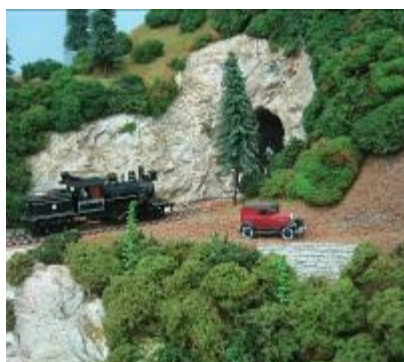
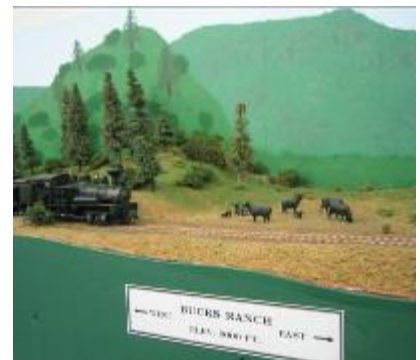


## Open House—Phill Simpson

The Sugar Pine Creek Railroad is a California short line railroad that extends from a small river port (Oakville) into the Sierra Foothills (Sugar Pine Creek) with a branch to a logging camp in the Sierras. The SPCRR interchanges with the Santa Fe Railroad at Oakville. It is set in the spring of 1939 when both the community and the railroad are recovering from the effects of the depression, so maintenance is still behind and the railroad is making do with whatever equipment is on hand.

The layout is in a 12' by 17' room. It is primarily on one level with a second level on one wall for the logging branch and hidden staging for AT&SF trains on the opposite wall. Track work is 100% complete, basic scenery is about 50% complete, buildings are just mockups or partially constructed at this point. The layout is powered with DCC (EasyDCC) and all engines use Soundtraxx sound decoders. There are multiple power sections using PSX circuit breakers to identify and isolate faults. All switches are controlled using Tortoise switch machines. Kadee 58 couplers are used. Uncoupling magnets are located around the layout, each magnet is activated with a pull string on the fascia.

Daily operation begins with switching the industrial area of Oakville, gathering up all loaded cars destined for the Santa Fe or for the morning peddler freight headed to Sugar Pine Creek. An east or west bound Santa Fe freight then arrives to deliver and pick up cars. After the Santa Fe freight leaves, the Peddler Freight is made up and leaves town. Then the yard engine switches any remaining industries. During the morning, a westbound Santa Fe passenger extra may make an appearance. There is also activity on the logging branch from the mill to the forest. A local peddler also services two towns along the logging branch spur. JMRI Ops with Switch list Creator is now being used for occasional operations sessions.





## Reno Layout Tour—Al Nelson Layout





## Reno Layout Tour—Bob Norwich Layout



# Reno Layout Tour—Bob Westphall Layout

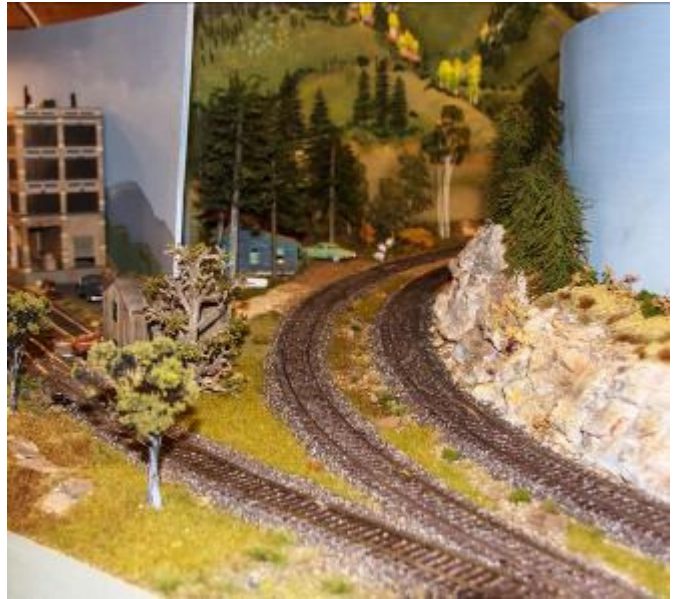




## Reno Layout Tour—Jim Petro Layout



## Reno Layout Tour—John Currie Layout





## Reno Layout Tour—OPS—Jim Petro





## More from Gary Ray

Here is a compilation of notes and photos that Gary submitted with his layout story. In order to fit a cohesive story about the Gerber Subdivision in the printed version of The Short Line, I had to leave all of this out—but most of this is good information, ideas, and suggestions that deserve to be shared. So follow along as we see what other tidbits Gary has to share.....

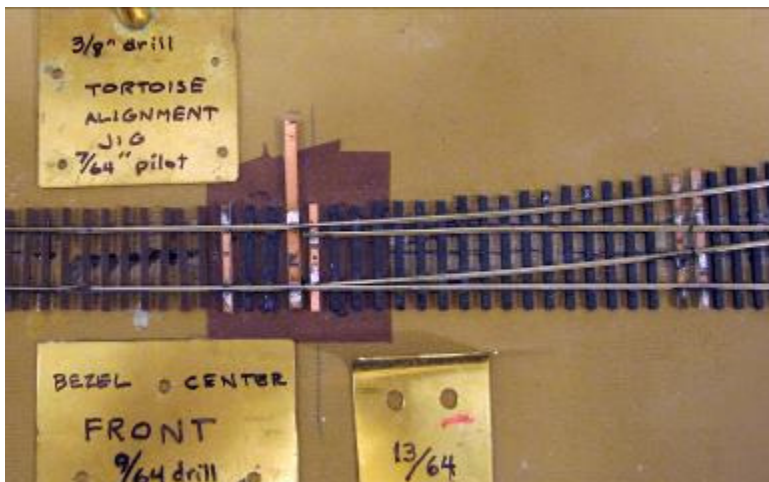
**Sanborn Fire Maps** along with maps from the **SP Archives** in Dunsmuir were used to develop a prototypical track plan and industries. The major deviation has been the wye at Gerber. It would have stuck too far out into the layout room; so was moved to the west end of the yard.

Layout planning was done with 3rdPlanIt and then printed full size on ledger size paper. A pounce wheel was used to transfer the pattern.



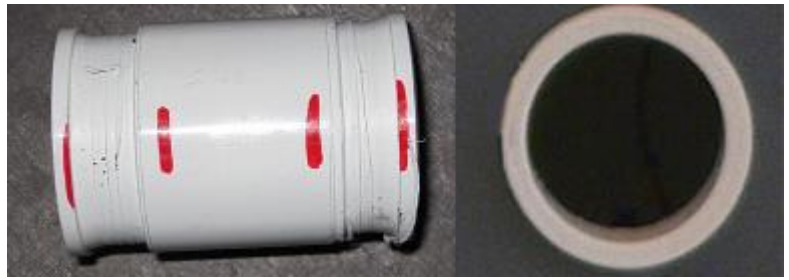
Mushroom bench work was constructed right on the pattern as L-girder glued and screwed for strength. By having the full size plan, I know the location of switch motors ahead of time. Very few buildings are on the layout at this point, instead I'm concentrating on completing the track.

As mentioned, I made all the switches. I cut apart **CVMW** tie strips for jigs and built the first 100 switches before installing any. **DON'T!** It had been years since I build any switches and assumed the jigs were accurate enough. Wrong! My crew spent several sessions leaving nasty green notes so I would correct clearances. Now every step of the way is checked with a **NMRA** gauge as I assemble the next 100 plus.



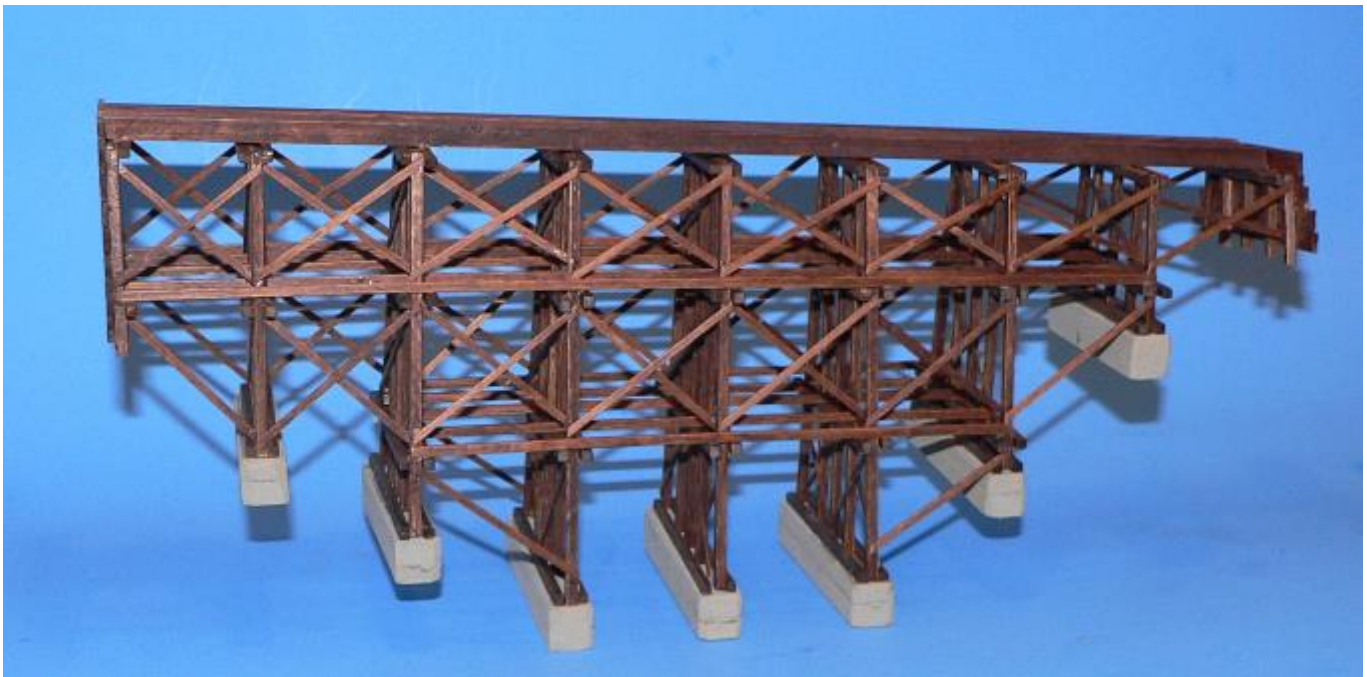
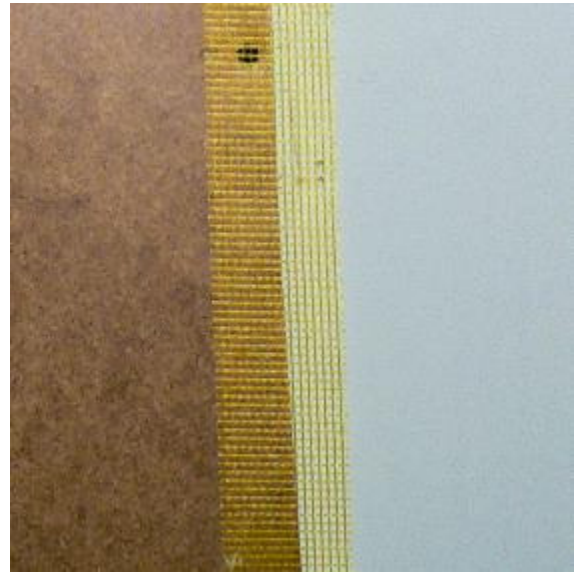
Slide switches control each **Tortoise**. Push away from you and points go away, pull and points come toward aisle. Operators requested LED's showing position in the main yard in Gerber. I added those along with LED's for any diverging route off the main.

I wanted nice bezels for the slide switches controlling the **Tortoises**.



I made about 300 on a lathe for just a total investment of about \$15 by turning 1" PVC couplings.

I had some gaps between the 1/8" hardboard fascia and the layout and filled them with expanding foam which was easy to carve even with the contour. Background was either sheetrock around the perimeter of the building and 1/8" hardboard everywhere else. Joints are taped and sheet rock mud applied.



I've been making my own strip wood using a small hobby table saw and **Midwest** 4" by xx basswood from the local hardware store. Very efficient. I've built cars and trestles with this.

I used wadded up newspaper for terrain covered by plaster impregnated gauze. Hobby brands are expensive. I checked on **eBay** and found a couple of sources for about ¼ the price with much more plaster in the gauze. Final ground cover before adding vegetation is real dirt.

I ended up with tennis elbow from swinging around a 10 pound battery drill while screwing in over 2000 screws. Then I discovered the **Black & Decker Gyro Drill**, fits in the palm of your hand. Twist clockwise to screw, counterclockwise to unscrew. Very light and I discovered very powerful. Sure helped the elbow. Only \$15 at **Lowes**.



Perhaps some of these ideas can be of use to you. It is always great to visit other layout, whether to tour or operate. Several visits to **Joe Fugate's** layout convinced me that a mushroom style layout was viable. The bezel idea came after visiting **Jack Burgess'** layout. A discussion with **Tony Koester** about his carpeting led me to order the same direct from a mill in SC. This option seemed better than carpeting the whole area at once due to my raised floor. A recent op session as yardmaster on **Jim Petro's** layout made me realize that I should not have assigned yard tracks for sorting cars, but flexibility as needs change. I hope to put a magnetic display at each end of Gerber yard to enable this. There is so much to learn from others and that is the advantage of visiting others. I hope you will be able to visit and see the progress I am making and am looking forward to getting back to operation sessions.

Check out the track plan on the following two pages, then come see the under-construction layout October 10. I'll be open for tour.

**Gary**





