

North County
Model Railroad Society

North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)

New Member Orientation Guide

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS). We are pleased you have joined us and look forward to you being an active and involved member and hope that this document will provide you with the information you need to function smoothly in the club. Do not hesitate to ask, if you have any question, and feel free to share your ideas for making membership in our club a great experience.

2. Location

On the grounds of the Oceanside Heritage Park
220 Peyri Drive
Oceanside, CA 92058

Website Page: www.NCMRS.org

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/NCMRS>

3. Organization

The club is organized under California law as a public benefit corporation whose objectives are:

- 1) to hold and manage property and funds for charitable purposes;
- 2) to provide public displays of model railroad layouts in order to present and teach the history and operation of railroads; and
- 3) to promote and teach railroad safety.

4. Membership

There shall be one class of membership in this corporation: family membership. Any person 18 years of age or older, of good character, and dedicated to the purposes of this corporation shall be eligible for regular membership upon acceptance of his or her application by the board of directors and payment of such dues and initiation fees as may from time to time be fixed by the board of directors.

- ◆ Membership will include qualifying member, together with spouse, children or grandchildren of the qualifying member.
- ◆ Until certified, the member or family member cannot run trains on the main layout unless directly supervised by a certified regular member.

From an operational standpoint, there are two levels of membership:

- ◆ Uncertified Member – A regular member or family member of NCMRS with all membership privileges except operating on the main layout. May be a member of any committee and complete scenery, electrical or any other function or task for which they are qualified. An Uncertified Member need only complete the member Orientation Class.

4. Membership (Continued)

◆ Certified Member/Operator – A regular member with all of the rights of an Uncertified Member plus operating on the main layout. To become a Certified Member, the regular member must complete the Orientation Guide and the Basic Train Operation Practical and Written Exams completed and signed off on the Member Certification Worksheet (the Worksheet will be retained in a binder by the officers of the NCMRS). Except as described below, regular members must become certified members before their family member(s) can operate trains on the main layout.

◆ Family members may only run trains on the main layout under the supervision of a certified member. Regular members who are uncertified but have passed the Member Orientation class may delegate for the purpose of running trains on the main layout only the supervision of a family member to any certified member. The board of directors, at its discretion, may approve a request for the certification of a family member under 18 years of age.

5. Directors and Officers

The club operates under the direction of a board of three Directors, one of which is the Chair of the Board, the other two are Directors. The Directors need not be residents of the State of California or members of the corporation.

The Board of Directors appoints club officers to include the president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer. At its discretion, the Board may appoint other officers.

Nominating committee. The chairman of the board, or the president if there is no chairman, shall appoint a committee to select qualified candidates for election to the board of directors at least 30 days before the date of any election of directors. The nominating committee shall make its report at least 30 days before the date of the election. The report is usually made during the November member meeting. The secretary shall forward to each member, with the notice of meeting required by Article VI, Section 4, a list of candidates nominated.

Nominations by members. Members representing 20 percent of the membership may nominate candidates for directorships at any time before the 60 days preceding such election. Members elect to the Board of Directors the three member candidates who in good standing received the highest number of votes. Voting is usually during the November member meeting. Directors serve a term of one year.

At the discretion of the board of directors, the president may create and dissolve committees as needed and appoint members to these committees and select the chairperson. More information about the club organization can be found in the NCMRS Bylaws on the NCMRS Web Site, under the "The Club".

5. Directors and Officers (Continued)

The Board of Directors – 2015

Chairman	Nick Ruddick
Directors	Bruce Sutherland
Directors	Dick Bale

Club Officers – 2015

President	Harold Helland
Vice-President	Richard Llewellyn
Secretary	Jim Gillie
Treasurer	Richard Blankinship

6. Dues, Badges, Shirts, Keys and Access Code

Dues: Membership dues are \$25 per month and due at the first of the month.

Badges and Shirts: Members are asked to wear a badge at the club and at all club functions. You can order additional badges for your spouse, children, and grandchildren if you wish. Club shirts are available and you are encouraged to purchase at least one and wear it at the club and at club events.

Badges are \$10 each.

Shirts: Polo style: \$25 each
Long Sleeve: \$40 each

Keys and Access Code: Keys and access codes to Club Facilities will be issued in limited number and at the discretion of the president.

Use of the Club Facilities is permitted Monday through Sunday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Members with keys and access codes are generally at the Club on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Members who do not have keys and access codes and wish to use the Club Facilities any other day of the week should make arrangements with club members who have access keys and codes to join them or provide access to the club. DO NOT ask the park caretaker for access to the facility.

The alarm system is directly linked to a monitoring company. The system logs user entry and exit from the premises.

Activity within the club premises is strictly limited to that which is consistent with the objectives of the club.

7. Work/Run Days

Wednesdays are work days (this means that those members who are working on the layout have priority to the layout).

Saturdays are a combination of work and run activities (this means that those members who are running trains on the layout have priority to the layout).

8. Railroad Operation

In order to run your trains on the main layout you are required to complete the New Member Orientation Guide and the two Basic Train Operation Elements found on the Member Certification Worksheet and complete the Member Acknowledgement and Final Member Certification. In addition, you must have your engines checked by the Equipment Test & Certification Department for compliance with club standards. Note, any of the procedures referenced in this section can be found on our website at www.ncmrs.org.

Each of the following two Railroad Training Elements must be completed and acknowledged by a Certified Training person. These Elements are:

- 1) Practical Training Exam: Cabs, Programming and Layout Operations
- 2) Written Examination

9. Trainers

◆ Certified Trainer – A member who has all of the rights of a Certified Member/Operator and who has completed a special training class to train members on the Main Layout may be designated a certified trainer. These Certified Trainers will ensure that members are not “partially trained”.

◆ Specialty Trainers - A member who has a unique understanding of various training elements and may present and sign-off those selected modules. All sign-off must be recorded on the Member Certification Worksheet to be effective.

General Trainers:

1. Leo Valley
2. Charlie Tucker
3. Kevin Harper
4. Terry Kirkpatrick
5. Harold Helland
6. Rich Blankinship
7. Rich Llewellyn

Specialty Trainers:

1. Rick Keefer - Orientation
- 2.
- 3.

10. Kid's Caboose – Duties and Responsibilities

Every Saturday (except certain major holidays), the Club is open for visitors and the Kids Caboose is open for kids to operate trains on the Trains 4 Kids layout. Two NCMRS Members are assigned duty either from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm or from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm.

You can determine if you have duty by either of two different methods:

- NCMRS Web Site, under the “The Club”; or
- By looking on the bulletin board in the Train Operations Room or on the wall in the Kids Caboose Rooms

If there is a conflict between the two methods, the Web site information prevails.

10. Kid's Caboose – Duties and Responsibilities (Continued)

Duties and responsibilities of a member in the Kid's Caboose room are:

- The first members need to assume your duty on time:
 - ◆ Turn on the two light switches inside the right hand door.
 - ◆ Turn on the Motion Detector. If you are going to perform other duties (i.e., not remain in the Kid's Caboose room), then go into the Train Master's Room and turn on the Motion Detector audible alarm.
 - ◆ Turn on the Farris Wheel with the light switch next to the center support beam.
 - ◆ Turn on the individual Trains (on each control box).
 - ◆ Set up the environment and clean the tracks.
 - ◆ Clean the locomotive and rolling stock wheels as necessary.
 - ◆ See that there is a supply of handouts and pamphlets available.
 - ◆ Insure locomotives are operational and set up trains on the four Tracks.
 - ◆ Greet visitors and provide orientation to train operators.

- Maintain control of the trains:
 - ◆ Do not allow the trains to be operated at high speeds.
 - ◆ Do not allow reversing trains in motion (switch is covered by duct tape).
 - ◆ Do not run trains in reverse (engine last – pushing the cars).
 - ◆ Do not allow guests to touch the layout (beyond the plexiglass screen).

- Be polite, courteous and do your best to answer guest questions.

- Last members need to:
 - ◆ Afternoon shift empties the trash and straightens the environment.
 - ◆ Turn off the individual Trains (on each control box).
 - ◆ Turn off the Farris Wheel with the light switch next to the center support beam.
 - ◆ Turn off the Motion Detector. If the Motion Detector audible alarm in the Train Master's Room was turned on, then turn it off.
 - ◆ Turn off the two light switches inside the right hand door.

11. Business Meetings

Monthly business meetings take place at the club on the last Saturday of each month at 10 AM. Exceptions may be made by the President. This usually occurs if there is a conflict because of a holiday. Members are expected, but not required, to attend these meetings. For voting purposes, our bylaws specify a minimum of one third of the membership is required to have a quorum (minimum number needed to call a meeting to order). If you cannot attend a meeting you have the option of giving a written proxy to another member. This means that the member with your proxy can cast your vote, as he or she sees fit.

12. Behavior at the Club

Expected behavior: You are expected to be cordial and friendly to your fellow members, our guests and visitors.

Property: Members may not use another member's property (engines, rolling stock, tools, etc.) without approval. Exception: member's rolling stock left on the layout may be moved. Member's rolling stock should not to be left anywhere on the layout.

Intoxicants: No intoxicants or smoking material of any kind are allowed on the club premises. The city park is a no-smoking environment.

Visitors: From time to time and especially on Saturdays, we will have visitors. Be a good host. You are expected to be friendly and attentive, answer questions, show them around, explain our layout, and invite visitors with children to utilize the Train 4 Kids layout inside the Kids Caboose.

13. First Member in procedure for entering any of the rooms in the club's realm

If you will be the first one to enter Train Operations Room, the Trainmaster's Office or the Kid's Caboose, you must first enter the Train Operations Room and make sure to turn off the alarm system.

14. Last-member-out Procedure

If you are the last one to leave club premises including any of the rooms in the club's realm, make sure the following things have been done:

- General tidying up and putting things away
- Coffeemaker filter and grounds are placed in trash, filter basket rinsed, pot emptied and rinsed, spilled coffee and grounds wiped up
- Trash emptied
- Track power in the Kid's Caboose layout and in the Train Operations Room are switched off
- Programming track power switched off
- Fans off, music off, TV, VCR off, lights off
- The security system armed

Even if you are not the last member, please help your fellow club members by assisting with the items on this list.

15. Policy on statements made to media and club photos and videos

Members should direct inquiries from reporters or professional photographers to a club officer or, if one is appointed, to the member specifically responsible for media relations.

15. Policy on statements made to media and club photos and videos (Continued)

Periodically the club creates promotional material including photos and videos of club members. Your membership automatically gives the club permission to use your photograph or video in any promotional material approved for release by the club board or officers. You may opt out of this permission by notifying the Publicity Chair before the photos or videos are taken.

16. Donations to the Club

NCMRS has been granted tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Tax Code by the IRS effective on August 22, 2005. This means that contributions to the club may be deductible.

The club is required to issue a letter (by one of the club officers) acknowledging cash gifts of \$250 or more. The letter must state the name and tax ID number of the club, the amount received, the name of the person or organization giving the gift, and the date received.

We also must issue a letter acknowledging non-cash gifts stating the name and tax ID number of the club, the name of the person or organization giving the gift, a detailed description of the gift, and the date received. The club will not state a value for non-cash gifts.

A form letter is available for both types of donation.

17. Contacting the Park Caretaker or in Case of an Emergency

NCMRS is located on the City of Oceanside historical Heritage Park grounds. There is a grounds keeper, John Andrade. If you need him, contact John at 760 801-0645.

If there is a fire or medical emergency, call 911. Use a cell phone or go to John's cottage located at the entrance to the park and call from there.

There is a 1st Aid Kit in the Train Masters Room on the wall, next to the external door for minor medical attention.

18. Club History

- History 1990 through 2002: Written by Co-founder Cyrus Grimshaw. Cyrus Grimshaw, John King and Jeff Warner formed the club in January 1990.

The three of them had been visitors at Bob Bethel's American Hobby Supply in San Marcos asking whether there was a train club in the area that they could join. Bob's answer was that none existed, so why not start one? He put them in touch with one another and it was quickly decided that a modular approach would be the best way to go since modules would be easy to assemble, disassemble, move, and store.

18. Club History (Continued)

Displays were arranged in 1990-1991 at the Carlsbad Train Station, American Hobby in San Marcos, Short Lines Junction (now Reed's) in Escondido, Pacific Southwest Region Convention in San Bernardino, and the Great American Train Show in San Diego. Additional members were recruited and by 1991 the club was ready to rent a small storefront to allow permanent set-up of the modules and to serve as a meeting place for the members.

The first location was at 817 San Marcos Boulevard, only two doors away from American Hobby Supply. There was room for about a dozen modules in the rear and a small meeting area in front. That front space soon disappeared when two N-Scale modelers asked for module space and got quick approval for it. By 1992 the number of members had increased to where additional space would be required. Thanks to Dan Reid, one of the club members, we moved into new quarters at 2642 Oceanside Boulevard and were able to expand to almost 1800 square feet of floor space. We doubled the size of the N-Scale layout and split the HO-Scale into Eastern and Western Divisions. 1994 brought about the temporary loss of the Oceanside Boulevard location, and all modules were placed in storage while a search went on for a new home.

Fortunately, Cy Grimshaw made contact with the Palm Tree Plaza management and an agreement was reached on one of the storefronts at the corner of South Melrose and Cannon Road in Oceanside. The club moved into Suite 2H in the spring of 1994 and remained in the Plaza until January of 2001. The management was very supportive of the club and while we had to move into different suites over the years, we never lost a space until January 2001. To complicate our move, we even put up an N-Scale layout display at the Dec. 2000 Great American Train Show.

We were again able to locate an agreeable management and moved into 1360 East Mission Road in Jan. 2001. We struggled for a while with no power while an electrical panel was modified to provide 110 volt power and in April 2001 had a "Grand Reopening" with almost 400 plus visitors over a weekend. The club was again off and running. In 2002, the club voted to redo the HO-Scale layout to emphasize railroad-type operation and construction of all-new modules and control systems began. About that time, dwindling interest in the N-scale layout resulted in a decision to abandon N-scale and focus the club's resource solely on HO.

- History 2002 through 2006: Written by then Club President, Al Cuevas.

The club, then known as North County Modular Railroad Society, remained in the San Marcos location until late 2004. In 2004, the club applied for a 501(c)(3) status. This was approved and became effective in mid-2005. At the same time the club received a notice to vacate the current location in east San Marcos. After much searching, an agreement was reached with the owner of Boney's Supermarket in Oceanside to lease a small area of their upstairs warehouse.

18. Club History (Continued)

In December of 2004 the club moved to the second floor of Boney's. By mid-January 2005 we had built our room, installed lights, set up our traveling layout and were working on developing a plan for our permanent layout. In April 2005 the layout was finalized and construction began on our new permanent layout. The summer of 2005 brought word from the IRS that the club's application for a not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) status was approved and became effective. During this time we had a very active membership recruitment campaign. A number of new people joined the club bringing our membership to just under forty members. Some of these people have become very active.

In late 2005 our mainline track had been completed to the point that members could run trains. Scenery was being developed along the first peninsula.

During the first half of 2006 scenery work continued and a few areas started looking complete. Members ran their trains not only for their own enjoyment but to test the track. A four camera monitor was installed to allow engineers to see into the blind areas when running trains through the partition. Since our beginnings at Boney's we have been holding open houses on every Saturday from 10 am until 3 pm. That has expanded to Thursdays. We have been featured in two cable TV shows along with newspaper articles in the San Diego Union Tribune and North County Times.

As the Sprinter approaches operational status, some of our members will be conducting "Operation Lifesaver" classes. The purpose of these classes is to inform the public about rail safety. Target audiences will be schools, Boy and Girl Scout groups and people located along the Sprinter route.

- History 2006 through April 2008: Written by Dick Miller

Our club continues to be very active. In December of 2007 we celebrated our third anniversary at Boney's. Since we have moved to Boney's we have doubled our membership to 48. Two of the four peninsulas on the layout are nearly complete. Construction and scenery work continues on the two remaining peninsulas.

In 2007 we upgraded our DCC control system to NCE. The user friendly NCE throttles are well liked by the membership.

On January 1, 2008 the club acquired an additional 900 square feet of space. This expansion added a business office, a maintenance area, a work area, a lounge, and additional layout space. Spring of 2008 saw the entry area overhauled to make the club more inviting and visitor friendly.

18. Club History (Continued)

- History 2011 through 2013: Written by Harold Helland

In 2011 the club began design and construction of the track expansion into the newly acquired expansion area on the second floor of what was now called Earthgrown Market Place. The new space included a freight yard with a mainline loop from the original space through the freight yard and back to the main space. By March of 2012 the electrical work was complete and scenery began in earnest. An artist was hired to paint landscape backgrounds for the main layout and the work was positively received by all club members.

In January of 2013, work started on the first revision of the main layout. The work included a logging area which was requested by several members. Late in May of 2013, NCMRS received notice that Earthgrown was moving and would be out of the building by June 15. New construction for Frazier Farms Grocery would begin soon after that and would continue for several months.

We put in place a plan to cover the layout to keep as much dust off the layout as possible. By August, we were told that NCMRS was no longer welcome by Frazier and we would have to vacate the property. September was a difficult month for many members as we began dismantling the layout and saving as much as we could for future use. Nick Ruddick made a nice picture book of the layout just before we started the dismantling process. The rest of the year was spent looking for a new location for the club.

January 2014 to July 2015

January 2014 found the club in negotiations with the City of Oceanside Parks and Recreation Department for space in Heritage Park. We leased the space currently known as Train Operations and the Kids Caboose. Our Heritage Park space was approved by Oceanside Parks and Recreation on January 14, 2014 and approved by Oceanside City Council on February 19, 2014.

The club layout was designed to follow the former California Southern railroad which ran from San Diego through Oceanside, over to Temecula and north to Colton. Layout planning continued for many months, but came to a point that we could start construction of the current layout on June 18, 2014. During construction, changes and modification to the layout continued by the planning committee. In March 2015, we acquired access to the current Trainmaster Office and the expansion to the Kids Caboose room. By the end of April we completed moving into the space as it is today. Scenery started on June 17, 2015 and will continue for several years.

19. The following links can be found on the NCMRS website, www.NCMRS.org :

- Home
- The Club
 - ◆ Location
 - ◆ History
 - ◆ New Members Introduction
 - ◆ NCMRS By-laws
 - ◆ Newsletters
 - ◆ Trains for Kids Schedule
 - ◆ List of Tasks
- The Layout (pictures and videos)
- The Blog
- Recent Posts
- Recent Comments
- Archives
- Categories
 - ◆ Construction
 - ◆ General interest
 - ◆ Members layouts
 - ◆ Trains for Kids
 - ◆ Uncategorized
- Meta
 - ◆ Log in
 - ◆ Entries RSS
 - ◆ Comments RSS
 - ◆ WordPress.org

20. Reference Material in the Trainmaster's Room

General use information:

- Powering Up the Main Line System (out of date)
- NCE Power Pro System Reference Manual
- NCE Pro Cab Operation Manual, Ver. 1.3
- NCE Power Cab System Reference Manual
- Using the Maintenance NCE Power Cab System
- CV Settings Log
- NMRA Manual
- Powering Up the Show-N-Go Layout (out of date)
- DCC for Beginners by Tony's Train Exchange

Specific use information:

- Using the Digitrax Zephyr DCC System
- Digitrax Mobile Decoder Manual & PR-1 Decoder Program
- Digitrax Zephyr Command Control Starter Set Manual

Member Certification Worksheet

Member Name: _____

Member Orientation

Completion Date: _____ Trainer Name: _____

Member Acknowledgement

I have reviewed all of the training material, NCMRS policies and procedures and understand the importance of following the established practices. Further, I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction and understand all of the material. I have completed all the Orientation requirements and can start Basic Train Operation.

Completion Date: _____ Member's Signature: _____