

North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS)

New Member Orientation Guide



NCMRS New Member Orientation v20 2025-08-30.doc

NCMRS New Member Orientation Guide

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Location and Social Media	3
3. Organization	3
4. Membership	3
5. Directors and Officers	4
6. Dues, Badges, Shirts, Keys and Access Code	5
7. Business Meetings	5
8. Operating Hours	6
9. Railroad Operations	6
10. Throttle Operations	7
11. Trainers	13
12. Behavior at the Club	13
13. First Member In Procedure	13
14. Last Member Out Procedure	13
15. Policy On Media, Club Photos and Videos	14
16. Donations	14
17. Case of an Emergency	15
18. Club History	15
19. NCMRS WebLinks	20

1. Introduction

Welcome to the North County Model Railroad Society (NCMRS). We are pleased you have joined us. We 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 questions, and feel free to share your ideas for making membership in our club a great experience.

2. Location and Social Media

Location	Heritage Park, 220 Peyri Drive, Oceanside, CA 92058
Mailing Address	NCMRS, P.O. Box 22, San Luis Rey, 92068-0022
Website	www.NCMRS.org
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/NCMRS
Email	info@ncmrs.org

3. Organization

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

- 1) for club members to build, operate and maintain an HO scale model railroad.
- 2) to hold and manage property and funds for charitable purposes.
- 3) to provide public access to a functioning model railroad and to present and teach the history and operation of railroads.
- 4) to promote knowledge of railroad safety.

4. Membership

Any person 18 years of age or older, of good character, and dedicated to the objectives 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 a spouse and dependents, under the age of 18.
- ♦ Until certified (see below) the member must run trains under direct supervision of 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 model railroad. May be a member of any committee and complete scenery, electrical or any other function or task for which they are qualified.
- ◆ Certified Member/Operator – A member or family member with all of the rights of an Uncertified Member plus operating on the model railroad. To become Certified, the member or family member must complete the Orientation Guide, Basic Train Operation Practical, and be 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, a member must become certified before their family member(s) can become certified and operate trains on the model railroad.
- ◆ Family members, until certified, may only run trains on the model railroad under the constant supervision of a 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.
- ◆ The member, certified or uncertified, is always responsible for the actions of a family member or spouse, on or off the layout.

5. Directors and Officers

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

The Board of Directors appoints club officers including the president, one or more vice-presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. At its discretion, the Board may appoint other officers.

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. A list of current board members and officers is available as a separate document. More information about the club organization can be found in the NCMRS Bylaws on the NCMRS Web Site www.NCMRS.org, under the “The Club” dropdown.

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

Dues: Membership dues are currently \$300 per year, as 3 payments of \$100.00. Payments are due on the first day of January, May and September. If you are over two months in arrears for dues you will receive a letter from the Treasurer requesting past dues payment or notice of your intention to stay in or leave the club. Non payment of dues after three months will stop your membership. Reinstatement in the club will require payment of all past dues.

Badges and Shirts: Members are asked to wear a badge at the club and at all club functions. A badge will be ordered for you at cost by the club. You can order additional badges for your spouse and dependents if you wish. Club shirts are available and you are required to purchase at least one and wear it at the club and at club events. Because the club is located at a City of Oceanside Park and is open to the public it is important for the public and other club members on Saturday to be able to easily determine which people at the club are club members.

Badges are \$10.00 each.

Shirts: Polo style: \$30.00 each

Long Sleeve: \$40.00 each

New Member dues are one time \$140.00. This includes four months dues, plus polo style shirt and name badge.

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

7. 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, 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.

8. Operating Hours

The Club is officially open to the public Saturdays 10:00am to 3:00pm.

Use of the Club Facilities is permitted any day of the week during normal business hours. Members with keys and a security code are generally at the Club on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Members who do not have keys and a security codes and wish to use the Club Facilities any other day of the week can often make arrangements with club members who have access keys and security code to join them at the club. If the park gate is closed and locked when you arrive during normal business hours, be sure to lock the gate on the way out. Do not give your security code to another member.

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

Wednesdays are work days. Members who are working have priority.

Thursday and Friday are optional run days. Additional run days will be announced via NCMRS club email.

Saturdays are a combination of work and run activities. Members who are running trains have priority.

9. Railroad Operations

In order to run your trains on the layout you are required to complete the New Member Orientation Guide and Member Certification Worksheet and complete the Member Acknowledgement and Final Member Certification. In addition, you must have your engines and rolling stock 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.

Club engines and rolling stock regularly on the club layout are generally meant to provide layout ambiance. With prior club officer approval, this club model railroad equipment may be available for use by newly certified club members for a short period of time. Club members are expected to acquire, certify and maintain their own engines and rolling stock for use at the club.

10. Throttle Operation

Go to Settings. Connect to WiFi Network

Network Name is **ncmrswifi**

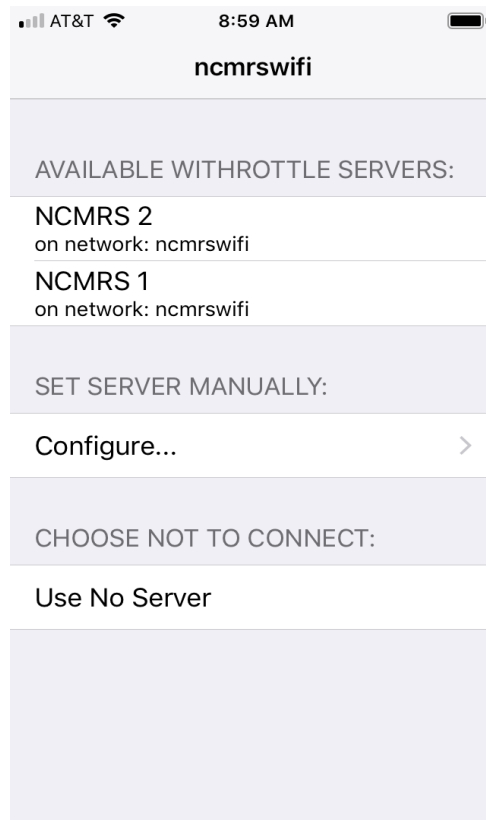
Network Password is **bigboy4884**

Your device should automatically connect on subsequent occasions

Engine Driver for Android

There is only one app for Android devices and it's free. Use a smart phone or other Android device to download Engine Driver from Google Play store.

1. Open **Engine Driver** on an Android device
2. The first screen shows **Discovered Servers**. Choose NCMRS 1 or NCMRS 2



- The next screen is the **Throttle**, but there is no locomotive selected, and all the controls are greyed out. Press where it says '**Press to select**'



- Next is the **Select Loco** screen.
 Tap in the **Address** box, enter locomotive number and press **Acquire**
 Or you can select from **Roster/Consist Entries**
 Or you can select from **Recent Locomotives**



5. Back on the **Throttle** screen, with the Locomotive number displayed and the controls active. Choose Forward or Reverse. The Green line shows direction currently in use. Slide the Blue dot to the right to increase speed, or use the arrows (if displayed). The Red Stop button will bring your locomotive to a halt by decelerating slowly.



6. After you have finished, press on the **Locomotive** number. This will take you back to the **Select** Loco screen, where you press **Release**.

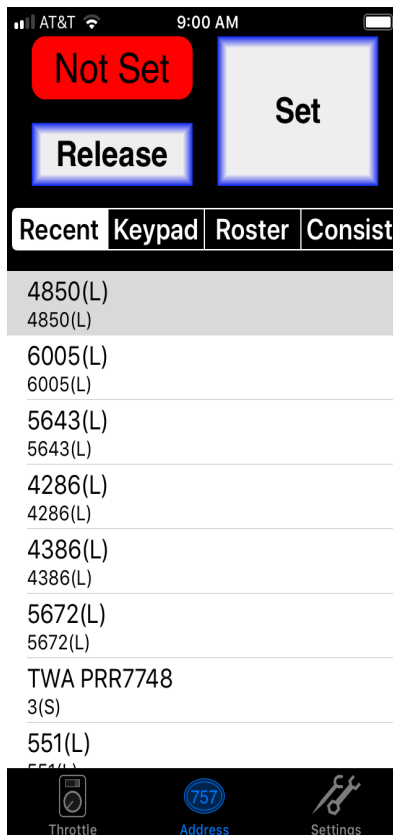
7. If you are using a club phone, put it back on the shelf and plug in the charger cord when you are done. Thanks!

WiThrottle for iPhone

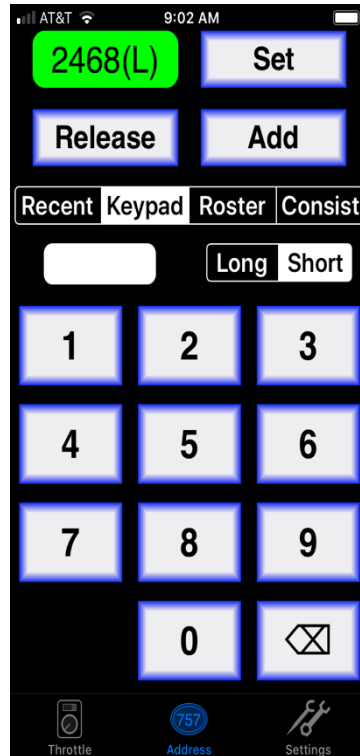
There are two versions of WiThrottle - Free and Pay. The pay version provides locomotive consisting and other options not available in the free version.

Use iPhone or other Apple device to download either application from App Store. To download from the App Store you will need an iTunes account and password.

1. **Open WiThrottle on the Apple device.** If a screen appears showing 'AVAILABLE WITHROTTLE SERVERS' choose either NCMRS1 or NCMRS2.
2. The **Address** screen is displayed, but the Red '**Not Set**' shows no locomotive is selected.



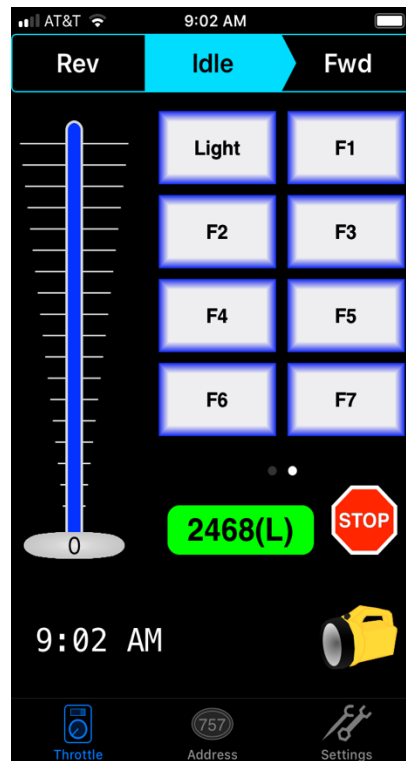
3. **Either** press the **Keypad** button to enter the locomotive number manually, or select your locomotive from a list by pressing the **Recent**, **Roster** or **Consist** **Button**.

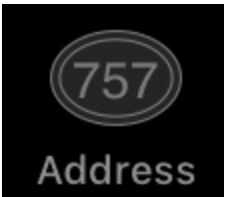


4. Once your locomotive number has been entered or selected press the **Set** button. The **Address** screen changes to show the locomotive number.

Select Throttle		from the bottom of the screen
------------------------	---	-------------------------------

- The **Throttle** screen is displayed. Two screen formats, **Road** and **Yard** are available. The one shown here is the **Road** throttle. Press the Fwd and Rev buttons to change direction. Slide the button up and down to increase and decrease speed.



When you have finished, select		at the bottom of the screen.
--------------------------------	---	------------------------------

- Press the **Release** button, and close WiThrottle.

11. 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 Layout may be designated a certified trainer. These Certified Trainers will ensure that members are not “partially trained”.

12. Behavior at the Club

Expected behavior: You are expected to be cordial and friendly to your fellow members, our guests and visitors. Always remember that the NCMRS layout is located on City of Oceanside Park property which is open to the public. Activity within the club premises is strictly limited to that which is consistent with the objectives of the club.

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 to sign the visitor log.

13. First Member In Procedure

Authorized members entering the NCMRS Club facility must first deactivate the alarm system. Make a casual inspection of the interior premises to see if anything obvious needs to be reported to Police or a club officer right away.

14. Last Member Out Procedure

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

- General tidying up and putting your trains and tools 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 Train Operations Room is switched off

- Fans off, music off, TV, VCR off, soldering equip. off, lights off
- The security system properly activated and all doors locked
- Storage container closed and locked.

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 Media, Club Photos and Videos

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

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

Due to the club's Federal and State tax exempt status the club is required to maintain certain information and is subject to specific rules regarding donations received. The preferred policy is that all donations be accepted by the Swap Meet or eBay committee, or a board member/officer. However, any member can accept a donation on the club's behalf if none of the above club personnel are available at the time of the donation.

The Club Donation Intake Form provides space for donor's name and a reasonably detailed list of what is being donated. One of the important lines on the form asks if the donor wants a donation receipt for tax purposes.

The club must maintain records of what has been donated, by whom and what the actual value of the donation is. So, if the donor asks for a tax receipt, explain that with regard to railroad or railroad hobby materials, a receipt cannot be sent until the value of the item(s) are determined or the item(s) sold. At that time the donor will receive a signed receipt showing an actual value, mailed to the name and address provided on the completed club Intake Form. Cash should go to the treasurer or a club officer, or be placed into the locked donation box along with the intake form for the donation. The materials donated to the club should be placed in the club storage container or other secure place at the club. Notify the Swap Meet committee and/or club officers that a donation was received.

If the donor does not ask for a tax receipt, the filled out donation form goes to the club treasurer or club officer. Write "Anonymous" in the name/address portion of the intake form.

Donated railroad items are not to be sold or distributed to anyone except by the Swap Meet or eBay Committees or a board member/officer.

17. In Case of an Emergency

NCMRS is located on the City of Oceanside's historical **Heritage Park** grounds. If there is a fire or medical emergency, call 911.

There is a 1st Aid Kit in the Train Masters Room on the wall, next to the external door for use as appropriate for minor needs.

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.

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 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.

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 Thurs days. 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.

· History January 2011 through December 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. It include 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 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 Foods 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 December 2019: Written by Harold Helland

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 known as Train Operations and the Kids Caboose. Our Heritage Park space was approved by Oceanside Parks and Recreation on January 14 approved by Oceanside City Council on February 19.

The club model railroad was designed to follow the former California Southern Railroad which ran from San Diego through Oceanside, over to Fallbrook, Temecula and north to Colton. Model railroad track planning continued for many months. However, the planning process came to a point that we could start construction of the current track plan on June 18, 2014. During construction, changes and modification to the track plan continued by the planning committee. In March 2015 we acquired the adjacent space which became the former Trainmaster Office and the expansion to the Kids Caboose room. By the end of April, we completed moving into the space. Scenery on the main model railroad started on June 17, 2015. Improvements and upgrades to the scenery will continue for many years as improvements are suggested and completed by members. On September 26, 2015, our Train Depot sign was unveiled by Oceanside Mayor Wood at a ceremony held in Heritage Park.

On January 12, 2016, NCMRS resumed holding Train Operations Session. These sessions are an important part of model railroading as they imitate railroad operations. Railroads moved freight cars with raw materials to manufacturing plants and from there to warehouses and private businesses. Scenery development continued throughout 2016 and 2017. By 2018, our membership was growing and there were ideas developing to modify several sections of the main model railroad.

Also, several members were promoting expanding the model railroad into the next room which at the time was the Trainmasters Office. Revisions to Perris, Colton and Camp Pendleton all came up in discussion and redrawn track plans were developed to support the changes.

The end of 2018 resulted in the next major changes to the NCMRS Model Railroad. Revised track plans for Perris, Colton and Camp Pendleton were all approved by the membership. In addition, the membership voted to eliminate the Trains 4 Kids room, move the Trainmaster's Office into that room and expand the model railroad in the former Trainmasters office.

January 2019 began with teams developed to make the changes. The Trains 4 Kids room became the Trainmasters Office including the train operating system, engine certification, decoder programming, club library, and the club lounge. The track planning committee started to develop the track plan for the expansion of the model railroad into the former Trainmasters Office. During the planning process, the modifications to Perris and Colton were completed by the track and scenery teams. Later in the summer of 2019 the revision to Camp Pendleton was completed by the track and scenery team. By March 2019 the track plans were approved, and construction started on the model railroad expansion into the new space. By June of 2019, the scenery team was anxious to start developing scenery on the new model railroad and began planning and installing scenery. Track installation was completed and all track in the expansion was powered by the end of September 2019. Scenery, electrical and controls installation continued through December 2019.

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

- Home
- The Club
 - ◆ 501 (c) (3) papers
 - ◆ Location
 - ◆ New Members Introduction
 - ◆ NCMRS Directory
 - ◆ NCMRS By-laws
 - ◆ Facebook Group
- Newsletter (Semaphore)
- Operations
 - ◆ Operations Overview
 - ◆ CS Time Table
 - ◆ Club Operating Rules
- NCMRS 2014/2016
- Links
 - ◆ NMRA
 - ◆ Operation Life Saver
 - ◆ Videos of the layout
- Misc
- NCMRS Calendar
- Recent Posts
- Categories
 - ◆ Construction
 - ◆ General interest
 - ◆ Members layouts
 - ◆ Swap Meet
 - ◆ Uncategorized
 - ◆ Welcome
- Meta
 - ◆ Log in
 - ◆ Entries RSS
 - ◆ Comments RSS
 - ◆ WordPress.org