

The Semaphore

A publication of the 2nd Division of the Pacific Northwest Region of the NMRA

Free Beer!

Richard Kürschner, editor

Do I have your attention? Great! Keep reading, I'll get to that in a moment.

Thanks to the Wu-Flu, as member **Bill Decker** likes to call it, we along with every other organization canceled our annual meeting. Superintendent **Jeff Shultz** is looking into options to virtually hold a meeting, but the board decided we should not wait for sending out our annual reports. So that is the focus of this issue: all the "stuff" we would have covered during the business portion of our Annual meeting. There are also a couple other items of interest after the reports.

As for the beer, yes, it is real. Just keep reading!

Annual Reports

Superintendent's Report - Jeff Shultz

Second Division maintained a membership level in the 140s through 2019 and 2020. In 2019 **Robert Leatha** replaced **Fred Kaser** on the Second Division Board of Directors. **Stu Cato** remained Asst. Superintendent and **Dave Holden** (Treasurer) was re-elected. In 2020 **John Sparrow** was elected to replace **Craig Larsen** as director. Jeff Shultz remained as Superintendent and **Richard Kürschner** (Secretary) was re-elected. Throughout the year, Richard Kürschner, with input from the rest of the Board, worked on a policy manual to accompany the new Bylaws that were adopted in 2019.

Over the summer, several members of Second Division joined First Division for a mini-meet in Eugene.

Second Division meets were conducted in October 2019 and February 2020, with each meet consisting of several clinics and \$150 in gift certificates as door prizes to encourage attendance. Attendance at the February meet was noticeably up, so we may have succeeded in that. We also started a Boxcar Shell contest at the February meet, which was intended to end at the May Annual Meeting. Since the May Annual Meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19, judging will be done at a later date.

James Knabb of the Trinity River Division invited Second Division to join the San Diego Division and the Cajon Division in a multi-division virtual meet that took place on May 23rd. There were 52 people connected via Zoom and 25 more who watched live on YouTube. As of today, the video of the meet at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SYyqXPI9Pc&feature=youtu.be> has had 317 views.

The Division newsletter, The Semaphore, was published in November, February, and March. They are available online at <http://2dprn.org/html/semaphore.html>

Second Division Board of Directors:

Jeff Shultz, Superintendent jeff@shultzinfosystems.com

Stu Cato, Asst. Superintendent slcato@centurytel.net

Richard Kurschner, Secretary rckurschner@yahoo.com

Dave Holden, Treasurer dholden@pobox.com

Bob Leatha, Member rleatha38@gmail.com

John Sparrow, Member jsparrows@yahoo.com

Secretary's Report - Richard Kürschner

As the organization's Secretary, there is little to mention of note that happened in 2019. Meeting notices were sent, meeting minutes were taken, and an election was held, all as expected by the By Laws.

My primary focus in 2019 was the drafting and beginning of reviews by the Board of Directors (BOD) of a Division Policy Manual. No, we are not attempting to create more bureaucracy, rather it is an attempt to organize and streamline our procedures. We will write stuff down once and then never have

to think about it again except to improve it. Maybe “Playbook” is a better description. As of this writing, we have reviewed and implemented 9 sections out of 12. Soon as it is done, we will post it for all to use. Finally, you will know exactly what it is that a Director or a committee chair is supposed to do!

Treasurer's Report - Dave Holden

The Division balances are:

	Key Bank Checking	Key Bank Savings	Chase Bank Checking
Balance June 1 st , 2019:	\$1,266.19	\$3,111.34	\$7,072.88
Balance May 25 th , 2020	\$1,109.57	\$3,541.87	\$7,072.88

During this period, the 2nd Division received \$1,180 from the PNR as dues allotment including unpaid amounts from previous years. During the same period the Division had these significant expenses:

- \$85.00 Postage, business registration renewal fee
- \$200.49 Camcorder
- \$188.00 Venues for Division meets
- \$300.00 Gift certificates for raffle

Achievement Program - Ross Ames

Max Magliaro earned his final Car Merit Award which resulted in him finishing his AP Cars certificate. Max currently has the 2nd Division N-scale fast track jigs and as soon as he can complete the three hand-laid track work elements will earn his Civil AP and MMR.

Richard Kürschner has submitted his Volunteer AP paperwork and it has been sent to Jack Hamilton who is currently processing it and will be submitting it to National shortly.

I have had numerous inquiries from members on different AP's with several stating they will eventually start working on some.

We were on a pretty good roll I think, until this virus derailed all of us!

Membership - Craig Larsen

Between April 2019 and April 2020, 8 new members were added, and 9 members were lost, for a net loss of one. Our membership stands at 142. Two members passed during the year, **Tammi Alburg**, member since 1994, and **Richard Gemeinhardt**, life member since 1991.

The membership committee continues to contact and welcome new members as they join the division. Tickler emails are sent to those who come up 60 days past due for renewal. Future direct recruiting and promotion activities might include table participation at selected swap meets for personal interaction.

Ed. Note: Larry Nunn will be replacing Craig as the 2nd Division Membership chair.

Financial Review - Bob Leatha

Between March 26th and April 16th, 2020, the Financial Review Committee, Bob Leatha, chair, and Richard Kürschner, reviewed Division banking records for January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 and found the records to be satisfactory.

The committee made 6 recommendation to the Division board, including consolidating the two checking accounts and maintaining a minimum balance to avoid banking fee charges. Also included was a recommendation to establish a Division Asset Tracking List with the location of all division assets.

Besides the recommendations, 3 suggestions were also made to improve the Division banking methods, including investigating other banking institutions for better interest returns on Division dollars and to upgrade our banking method to use more modern electronic banking.

An opportunity to model... and get paid for it!

John Sparrows has been engaged to build a 5x19.5 foot layout with a 4x3 foot dogleg on one end in a restaurant in Estacada. Due to recent surgery, John is now limited to lifting more than 25lbs with a limited range of motion in his right arm, and needs assistance on the project. He has a person lined up to work on scenery, and would like to get one or more people to work on benchwork, wiring, and tracklaying. Wiring is DC - it will be a "push button to start - timer to stop" layout, with an attached backdrop and provisions for a plexiglas shield.

The restaurant owner desires to get started on this project since things are opening up now and hopes it will be an additional draw to the restaurant. According to John, her father has made some beautiful HO scale buildings for the layout, which notionally goes from Philip Foster farm and train trestle over Eagle Creek to the town of Estacada with the dam, lumber camps and hot springs. Note: the business owner is deaf, but does lip read and use American Sign Language. John and Harriett will assist with any communication needs.

This is a paid project. If you are interested, please contact John at 503-631-7793 or jsparrows@yahoo.com

Notes from the Caboose

Richard Kürschner, editor

Virtual Meets

2nd Division Annual Meeting – Canceled

PNR 2020 Convention – Canceled

NMRA 2020 National Convention – Canceled

Plus a whole lot more model railroading events in every other division and region. The year 2020 will go down as the year with no model railroad conventions, meets, or clinics.

Or maybe not. Quite a few virtual meets have sprung up in their places. Personally, I have attended at least seven sessions so far through Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom. All have been enjoyable and informative. Got there early for a couple of them and had nice chats with other modelers I never would have met.

In this one sense only, COVID-19 has been good for us: It has shaken up our status quo, and forced us to look outside of the box, to find new ways of connecting members. I think virtual meets are here to stay. They are easy, they are inexpensive, and they offer a wide reach. I'm quite familiar with watching live presentations on Facebook and YouTube, and I've gotten the pleasure of learning Zoom. Not one of these events have cost me any money

to attend, neither registration fees nor travel/food/lodging. And a recent event included a clinic by Trevor Marshall (RMC & TrainMasters TV contributor) attended by over 180 people. I've never seen that many folks in a clinic room! (Maybe I'm just a lousy presenter?). NMRax is routinely seeing >150 people viewing their presentations at a time.

Will it replace "real" conventions? I hope not and I don't think so. There are some growing pains as people get used to new technologies for registration, viewing, and presenting. There are real world distractions to the virtual clinics that you don't find at a convention, from cats running across the layout during a virtual tour, to forgetting that tonight is a one-hour presentation, to your enabler suddenly remembering your honey-do list. And because there are no bus rides or carpools to tours, no banquets, no ice cream socials and fewer bull sessions, the connections you make here are not as deep as the ones at a convention. While officially I go to a convention for the clinics, it is the people I've met and talked with that make them memorable.

Should you consider attending? Yes! While I know that there are some people who abhor Facebook, and have never used Zoom, I would still suggest trying. I'd never used Zoom myself before last week, but I was able to figure it out quick enough. Where else now are you going to get access to live clinics by nationally known modelers? And what do you have to lose? At most 10 minutes, because if you don't like the presentation, you can leave; unlike an in-person clinic, no one will notice if you log out!

How do you find out about these events? Mostly by keeping your eyes open. Jeff has sent out registration announcements for both the Cajon/San Diego/PNR 2nd Division meet in May and the PNR 7th Division meet series that is ongoing. NMRax has put on some 12- to 24-hour (yes, HOUR) events and is expecting to put on more. Join the Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nmragroup> to stay abreast of their activities. (Don't worry, they publish their agenda in advance, so you know when to tune in.) MMR® Jim Kellow is also coordinating his "ZOOM Mentoring Meetings" a couple of times a week. Follow him at <https://www.facebook.com/Jim-Kellow-MMR-107123997469688> to know about the next one. These start out as normal clinic presentations and sometimes end up as wide ranging bull sessions. I've also seen that

FastTracks (<https://www.facebook.com/FastTracksHobbyworks>), Caboose (<https://www.facebook.com/CabooseHobbies>), and Bar Mills Scale Model Works (<https://www.facebook.com/barmillsmodels>) have been doing clinics and live sessions as well.

The TrainWorld train store is also doing hosted events (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/TrainWorldLLC/events/>) and videos of their past events can be found on their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/TrainWorldLLC/videos/>). You do not need to belong to Facebook to view the videos.

I do miss seeing you all at our mini-meets and I can hardly wait to get back to having meets and conventions. But until then I am going to attend as many of the virtual meets as I can, and I encourage you to do so as well.

Cha-cha-changes!

As has already been reported, Richard Kurschner was reelected to the BOD, and John Sparrows was added to the BOD as Craig Larson has decided to retire from several years of service to the Division. The Board of Directors wish to thank Craig for his outstanding service to the board and to the members.

Our other BOD candidate, **Larry Nunn**, has graciously volunteered to be the new Membership Committee chair.

Thank you, John, Larry, and welcome aboard!

Next meet

Life appears to slowly be returning to normal, but we don't yet know when our next face-to-face meet will be. As our get-togethers are reasonably small, we would likely be able to meet as soon as restrictions are lifted. However, we have found that events held in the summer usually have light turnout (see below about **free beer**), and there is the concern that folks may not yet be willing to attend even a small gathering due to COVID concerns. So, it is unlikely that we would have a formal meeting before September.

One other item to note, the Boxcar Contest is still on! We will just hold off until

the next time we meet face-to-face. But there is nothing stopping you from working on yours now. If you didn't get your boxcar shell at the February meet, contact Jeff (jeff@2dprn.org) or myself (secy@2dprn.org) to pick one (or three) up. While we won't mail them, you are welcome to come pick them up from our front porches, contactlessly. Jeff's in Stayton, I'm in Beaverton. Holler at me (secy@2dprn.org) if you need a refresher on the rules!

AP on hold? No way!

Far be it from me to argue with our illustrious Achievement Program Chair, **Ross Ames**, but I'm going to pick a nit with him. This COVID-19 halt should have no effect on and could be beneficial to your AP progress. If you are retired, being off work is meaningless. If you are still working, well working from home means no commute, right? More modeling time! If you are working from home, no one can look over your shoulder if you draw up plans for your next model while listening to that boring staff meeting, so sketch away! If you have been laid off, you have my heart-felt condolences. But if I may offer, the one time I was laid off, keeping busy in the evenings was what helped me remain sane. So don't spend money, but dig into that hobby shop's worth of kits and raw materials you have laying around and have at it! Don't waste the time you have available today: when this blows over, let's inundate Ross with tons of models to evaluate. Or, work on articles for the Semaphore for your Author AP credit. I'm always looking for your tips, ideas, progress reports, and product evaluations. So, keep working on your AP progress, keep a sense of normality, and give us lots to talk about at our next meet!

Free Beer (finally)!

OK. Enough teasing. Yes, I'm serious. I will buy you a beer or other beverage of your choice at a location of your choice. (Full disclosure, since this is coming out of my pocket, I reserve the right to put a cap on it, so no 70-year-old scotch!) What's the catch? You must talk to me! About the Division. How we can make it better for you, how we can attract more members, how we can keep the members that we have, how we can get more members to show up at

Division meets. You don't need answers to all these questions, or even any of them. But I sure would like to know what you're thinking.

This is a limited time offer, so act now! I'll pay for the first drink for the first five of you that respond. And if more of you respond, well, I'll still meet you. But you'll have to pay your own way (or get Jeff and Dave to cough up Division

funds ).

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the Semaphore. As always, comments and suggestions are appreciated, send them to secy@2dpnr.org. Talk with you on the next run!

The 2nd Division is on Facebook
at <https://www.facebook.com/PNR2ND>

The 2nd Division website is located
at <https://www.2dpnr.org>

