

PNR President's Report May 16, 2020

This is my final President's Report. It has been an honor to be part of the PNR Executive, and I hope my efforts reflected the commitment that we promise to provide to our members. What a year this has turned out to be. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect we would be having our board of directors meeting virtually, and that not only our regional convention would be cancelled, but almost all regional conventions and the national convention would be cancelled.

Recruiting and Retention

The efforts of the divisions across the region continue to help us maintain our overall numbers relatively even from year. The Office Manager, Ed Liesse will provide the year to year details in his report so there is no reason to duplicate the numbers here. Needless to say, recruiting has become rather difficult to process without train shows, conventions, spring meets etc.

Hopefully we will see recruiting increase when we come out the back side of this pandemic.

Member Benefits

Russ Segner, 4th division Superintendent, put together a short write up in the 4th Division newsletter this week on the benefits of membership. I recommend you take a look

<http://4dpnr.com/on-line-sharing/>. One of the silver linings of the world-wide stay at home orders is the

amount of sharing that has been going on. Not only are people working on projects and layouts, they are

sharing their efforts on-line with other members of the community. Jim Betz started an on-line group for

Pacific Northwest modelers to share experiences and questions. It has grown exponentially and has

people from across the NMRA. NMRA held their virtual NMRA-X convention—3 days of continuous

streaming videos on the NMRA Facebook page. While I am not personally a fan of Facebook and have

not had an account for 4 years, the amount of work that went into producing the virtual convention was

impressive. It really highlighted the advantages of being a member of NMRA.

Partnership Program: NMRA continues to add names to the NMRA Partnership program. A list of participating suppliers can be found on the NMRA website in the Members Only area.

Region and Division Newsletters: A great resource available to members are the articles written by members that only show up in these newsletters. You can access them through the NMRA website. I have downloaded and read articles from regions and divisions around the world. They serve as an avenue into seeing what others in the organization are doing. They also provide a potential way of discovering what might be happening in a state that you might want to participate once we are allowed to travel again.

Layout Registry: The layout registry is a great way to

visit fellow modelers when you are traveling and see layouts that are not normally available outside conventions and tours. If you have a layout and you aren't listed, please consider signing up (It is available on the "members only" page). The map shows the locations of layouts currently registered in the PNR.

Communications

We all realize that effective communication is one of the most important elements of retention. The president and vice-president have divided up the job of contacting people early and late at the regional level to welcome them and to remind them to keep their memberships active. I send out welcome letters to each new member and Bob sends out reminders at the 6- and 3-month point prior to their membership expiration date (see details in VP Report). Hopefully the Superintendents are also sending out welcome letters to their new members and reaching out in any way possible to make sure they know they are welcome. The PNR has an active list of communications. These include The Switchlist, Train Orders and divisional newsletters. These supplement the national publications like the NMRA eBulletin, Turntable and the NMRA magazine. The difficulty comes with those members who do not have email for whatever reason. As the NMRA and the regions have gone to more and more electronic communication avenues, we need to remember those members who don't have email and figure out ways of keeping them informed of local events and opportunities. We also need to continue pushing people to include their emails on applications. The pandemic has opened new ways of communicating with those members who have a computer, whether they have provided us with their email addresses or not—virtual conferencing—whether it is a group meeting or a one-on-one session. In fact, I would suggest that divisions look at ways of exploiting these opportunities for mini-clinics, divisional meets, etc.

Elections and Candidates

This is an election year for President or Vice President, and even numbered division leadership. I'm pleased we have two candidates for Vice President and one for President. I truly wish we had more, but at least we had multiple inquiries after my last screed. There is absolutely no reason that each division cannot find at least one qualified candidate for any position. With membership over 1600 we should be able to find more than one person nominated for leadership positions. We need to nurture new faces. We cannot continue to pick from the same dwindling pot of "long-term" members. This is an issue at the divisional, regional and national levels, but my responsibility is to the region. We like to complain that the hobby is full of old *arts, but we need to nurture our younger members. They have new ideas, new skills and the ability to become the new face of the hobby. Search them out, mentor them and convince them that they are right person to take a leadership position.

Final Thoughts

This is my last Annual Report and I truly wish I could have given it at the convention in Eugene. I had looked forward to seeing many of you again, and meeting some of you who were unable to attend the convention in Cranbrook. I want to thank all the Division Superintendents, elected and appointed officers for their assistance over the course of these two years. We have had some challenges, but we have worked together to get the job done. Thank you all for your support.