

The Telegraph Key

An NMRA Sunshine Region Monthly Publication

March 2025



Sunshine Region - NMRA

Where modelers come to share, develop, and learn new skills.

Welcome to the best region under the sun!

2023 Sunshine Region Convention
Convention Registration

WWW.NMRASunshineRegion.org



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Sunshine Region Officials

- President, Andy Zimmerman:
ssrpmez@nmra.org
- Vice President, Mark Lewalski:
vwtrainsailor@gmail.com
- Secretary, Eric Menger:
emenger77@gmail.com
- Treasurer, Glenn Kopriva:
glennkopriva@yahoo.com
- At Large Director, Robert Leonard:
leonardstrait@gmail.com
- At Large Director, Ken Hoot:
hootk@bellsouth.com
- At Large Director, Paul Beckstrom:
paulbeckstrom1948@gmail.com
- At Large Director, Jeff "Ski" Guzowski:
jguzowski@bellsouth.net
- Northern Div. Super, Robert Feuerstein:
photobob321@gmail.com
- Eastern Div. Super, Jim Moore:
Unfilled
- Southern Div. Super, Richard Berger:
rwberger@comcast.net
- Western Div. Super, Don Wetmore:
stjoeterminal@mail.com
- Achievement Program, Ken Hoot:
hootk@bellsouth.net
- Model Contest, Carl Smeigh, MMR:
- Journal Box Editor, Robert Leonard:
leonardstrait@gmail.com
- Telegraph Key Editor, Mark Lewalski:
vwtrainsailor@gmail.com

Editor's Message



Happy March everyone, I hope you all are in good health and good spirits.

This month will find me (hopefully) re-working the benchtop on my little shelf layout to enable the shadow box style that I have always wanted from the get-go and incorporating the flip up staging yard. I'll let you all know what's actually accomplished next month.

Also, in a week, I get to visit Greg and Gail Komar's West Virginia Northern layout for an operating session. I am always thankful to be there and just love the switching job, which I often gravitate to. Such a beautiful and well running layout. I'm definitely looking forward to it.

So, I wish you all a great month ahead. Thanks, and take care.

Mark Lewalski

Vice President and Telegraph Key Editor

President's Message



Dear Members of the Sunshine Region,

As we move forward into another exciting year for model railroading, I want to take a moment to reflect on our progress and share what's ahead for the Sunshine Region. Our community continues to grow in numbers and stronger by the day. I am impressed with what we are accomplishing, and your passion for the hobby keeps driving us to

new heights.

Building on Success

Last year was shaping up to be a record-breaker for the Sunshine Region, with Iron Horse convention attendance on track to surpass previous years! Despite some disruptions, the momentum was undeniable, and we can't wait to see what 2025 brings.

Iron Horse 2025 – Volunteers & Clinicians Needed!

Planning is well underway for the 2025 **Iron Horse Regional Convention in October**, and we need **your** help to make it an even greater success. Volunteers and clinicians are the backbone of every great convention, and we're looking for members willing to share their knowledge, assist in organizing, and help create an event to remember. If you have an idea for a clinic or want to lend a hand, let us know!

National Convention in Novi, Michigan

Looking beyond our region, the **NMRA National Convention** is set for **July 2025 in Novi, Michigan**. This is a fantastic opportunity to experience world-class clinics, tours, and fellowship with fellow model railroaders from across the country. If you've never been to a national convention, this is a great year to make the trip!

Calling All Writers – Telegraph Key Editor Needed

As we continue to expand our outreach, we're looking for someone to take on the **editing duties for The Telegraph Key**. If you have a talent for writing and a keen eye for detail, we'd love to hear from you! This is a great way to get more involved with the region and help keep our members informed and engaged.

Stay Connected

Keep an eye on **The Telegraph Key** for updates on division events, all-hands membership meetings, and upcoming virtual and hybrid clinics. Whether you join us in person or online, there are plenty of ways to stay engaged with the Sunshine Region.

Thank you all for your enthusiasm, support, and commitment to the NMRA and the Sunshine Region. Let's make this year one to remember! Best regards,


Andy Zimmerman

President

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Cell - (904) 616-8110
fcmrs46@gmail.com



The Western Bay Railroad is a 950 square ft On30 layout in Port St Lucie. We meet almost every Tuesday evening. We are looking for new members to join our group. There are OP sessions & scenery that we are still working on. If you're a

modeler and serious about learning, give us a try! Go to our website or contact Al Sohl MMR als0622@yahoo.com

***'No dues, just a great experience'*
westernbayrailroad.org**



Treasurer's Message



Happy St Patty, Paddy or Patrick day in advance – may the green beer flow!

I hope everyone is doing well and am pleased to say that I didn't receive a single email about our financials. Either I was very clear in my article or you simply skipped the page. 😊

In a more serious subject, we recently had a member receive an email asking for him to make a payment of \$428 on behalf of the Board. The email stated it was from our president, Andy Zimmerman!! It also stated that we would reimburse him by Friday.

This was clearly a phishing email but definitely looked legitimate until you looked closer at it. Some of the items within the email can help you identify this as fraudulent:

- 1) The Board will never ask you for money or to pay a bill on our behalf.
- 2) Look at the sender's actual email address – in this case Andy's name was spoofed but the actual email address was not Andy's.
- 3) If you know Andy, he has a laundry list of titles under his name, he never uses just PRESIDENT.

Email fraudsters are getting more and more creative and with AI (artificial intelligence) are able to make these emails look really good. My rule of thumb is if I don't know the senders' email it goes to the trash. NEVER send anyone money without speaking to them personally to verify that they really need your assistance. My kids would never waste time sending me an email if they needed cash, my phone would ring asking me to Zelle them some cash (Fortunately, they are grown now so we are past those days 😊).

Keep yourself safe, below are some key warning signs to look out for to identify phishing emails:

The Telegraph Key

March 2025

1. **Unexpected Sender:** Be cautious of emails from unknown or suspicious addresses, even if they look legitimate. Look at the actual senders email address – is it known to you.
2. **Generic Greetings:** Phishing emails often use generic greetings like "Dear Customer" instead of your name.
3. **Urgency and Threats:** Scammers create a sense of urgency, pressuring you to act quickly, often threatening account closure or legal action.
4. **Spelling and Grammar Mistakes:** Look out for poor grammar, spelling errors, and awkward phrasing.
5. **Suspicious Links and Attachments:** Hover over links to see the actual URL before clicking. Be wary of unexpected attachments.
6. **Requests for Sensitive Information:** Legitimate companies won't ask for sensitive information via email.
7. **Unusual Requests:** Be cautious if the email asks you to verify your account or update your password through a link.
8. **Mismatched URLs:** Check if the URL in the email matches the official website of the company. Phishers often use similar-looking URLs to trick you.

If you ever suspect an email is a phishing attempt, it's best to avoid clicking on any links or downloading attachments. Instead, contact the company directly using their official contact information.

Stay safe out there! If you have any more questions or need further assistance, feel free to ask.

Glenn Kopriva

Treasurer



Grouper Helps You Access Benefits to Cover Group Activities



Benefits With Friends

Research has found that staying active and having fun with friends is a winning combination. If you're 65+ with a qualifying health plan, Grouper provides an annual \$50 payment and additional \$20 payments every three months for continued in-person group activities with NMRA Sunshine Region, Inc. Check it out at GrouperGroups.com/SSR-NMRA and join the movement!

Achievement Program



We have one (1) AP for the month, and it is. Kevin Page Sr. for Model Railroad Engineer Electrical from Ponte Vedra, Florida from the Northern Division.

I made a mistake last month in the listing of the Achievement Program Statement of Qualifications with Master Builder Cars and it should have been Master builder Structures.

So, this month lets continue with the Achievement Program Statement of Qualifications with Achievement Program Master Builder Scenery.

To qualify for this certificate, you must:

1. Construct a completed section of a model railroad of at least sixty (60) scale feet in O scale, or forty-five (45) square feet in S scale, or thirty-two square feet in HO scale, or eighteen (18) square feet in N scale or other scales in proportional relationship to HO scale. This completed section must contain the necessary scenic elements of terrain, structures, background, lighting, ad realism/conformity as combined to achieve a realistic effect using applicable NMRA standards in that particular model railroad scene. The intent of this category is the prototypical rendering of the scenic elements from the ground up. The definitions of the various elements (which may be combined to combined to comprise the setting for the model railroad) shall be.
 - TERRAIN- The ground and all natural features such as rocks, water, trees, hills and depressions as well as manmade features such as the railroad roadbed, cuts, fills, drainage ditches, embankments, streets and roads.
 - STRUCTURES- Structures are considered from the standpoint of prototypical suitability, placement and appearance as scenic elements. (The quality of construction is covered under the Master Builder Structures category). Structures include bridges, trestles, culverts, buildings and all other types of structures (towers, power lines, signs, fences, etc.), track and right-of-way appurtenances (such as turnout controls, signaling structures, crossing gates and shanties etc.), turntables and other service structures. The items described above are a few examples and additional features are encouraged.
 - BACKGROUND- Treatment of wall, backdrop or ceiling to realistically depict depth and distance horizon and sky.
 - LIGHTING- Illumination effects from three (3) aspects: railroad cars and signals, etc.: buildings, streets and roads, etc.: overall lighting effects- day and /or night. An entirely daylight scene is acceptable. This lighting information must be included in the material prepared for Section four (4) below.
 - REALISM/CONFORMITY- General overall impression that the scene is a believable, miniature representation of prototype railroad.
2. Prepare a set of photographs or a video and a written description clearly describing the intent setting of the model railroad and the scenic details including towns or cities in the area being evaluated.
3. Prepare a description of the materials and methods of construction used in the creating various features of terrain, background, and lighting.

4. Attach a copy of materials in section 2&3 to the Statement of Qualifications for use by the evaluators in determining the effectiveness of the craftsmanship displayed by the member requesting certification.
5. Earn a Merit Award of at least *8.5 points on the section of the layout being evaluated.
6. Submit a completed Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) including the attachments for Sections 2 & 3 and the signed Merit Evaluation forms from Section 5.

That is all I have for this time around.

Ken Hoot

Achievement Program Chair

Northern Division



From Richard Paul -

The FCMRS_First Coast Model Railroad Society in Jacksonville continues to run informal Run sessions

When: Saturday, March 01, March 08, March 22, and March 29, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Where: FCMRS layout 1414 Millcoe Road in Unit 2105.

Bring your own trains to run at these sessions, or can run club equipment.

Guests & Visitors welcome. Contact [fcmrs46@gmail](mailto:fcmrs46@gmail.com) for more info

From Richard Segall -

The North Central Florida Model Railroad Club has expanded its website to recognize work done by non-members who have shared their work in the hobby with us.

Information and layout photographs are available at ncfmrc.org under Featured Layout.

This work helps the club fulfill its educational mission as well as expand its reach into the broader community.

From Sam Miller & Neal Meadows -

The BBMRA, Big Bend Model Railroad Association

Andy Millott is coordinating the annual Layout Tour, which will take place on Saturday, March 22, 2025. Again, Joe Haley, Doug Guyricsko, and Tom Rush have agreed to showcase their HO displays for our club.

Again, it has featured a new lot since last year. Other club members are considering the tour. Andy will announce the final details a little later. Contact Andy at (850) 443-0781 to sign up for the tour.

Look at NMRA.org Calendar: <https://www.nmra.org/calendar> for county-wide and worldwide events.

Northern Division Clubs:

Big Bend Model Railroad Association <https://bbmra.club/>

First Coast Model Railroad Society <http://www.fcrrs.club/>

Flager Model Railroad Club <http://www.fmrrc.com/>

The North Central Florida Model Railroad Club <https://ncfmrc.org/>

Robert Feuerstein calendar@nmra.org

NMRA.org Calendar Website Support

Robert Feuerstein

Northern Division Superintendent

Eastern Division



Eastern Division Superintendent Resignation & Path Forward

To our Eastern Division Members,

Last Month we regrettably needed to inform you that Jim Moore had stepped down as Superintendent of the Eastern Division, NMRA Sunshine Region. We sincerely thank him for his service and dedication during his tenure and appreciate his contributions to the division and the greater SSR community. Jim Stepped in for Benita Jameson who stepped up in at a critical time to keep the division moving forward. Unfortunately, life has a way of disrupting the best of plans and family and personal health need to come first. We appreciate their dedication and willingness to serve.

With this transition, we encourage members of the Eastern Division to take this opportunity for introspection. Leadership is vital to the growth and success of our organization, and now is the time for those passionate about model railroading and the NMRA to step forward and help guide the division into the future. The continued success of the Sunshine Region depends on the engagement and support of its members, and we urge you to be part of that momentum.

We will share updates on the next steps for Eastern Division leadership soon. In the meantime, we ask for your input, involvement, and commitment to ensuring the division remains strong and active. If you have thoughts or are interested in taking on a leadership role, please reach out.

Thank you for being part of the NMRA Sunshine Region. Let's work together to keep it growing and moving forward.

Sincerely,

Andy Zimmerman

President

Western Division



The next NMRA event will be a free guided tour of the Mulberry Phosphate Museum in Mulberry, FL on April 26, 2025. See the flyer for more details.

Our Western Division AP Chair Joe Gilmartin is ready to help you move forward in the NMRA Achievement Program and answer any questions you may have. You may contact Joe at 224-637-5965 or jgilmartin@mac.com

If your club would like to host a one day workshop, please contact me directly to work out the details.

Don Wetmore

Western Division Superintendent



NMRA Sunshine Region Western Division Free Guided Tour



101 SE 1st Street, Mulberry, FL 33860

Saturday April 26, 2025 10:30 am

Located in historic Mulberry Train Depot

Learn the history of phosphate mining in the Bone Valley

View prehistoric fossil collection

See 1880s Manchester Locomotive buried for almost 80 years

See Seaboard Coast Line Caboose

Dig for shark teeth in the Dragline Dig Pile (bring a bucket & shovel)

PLEASE RSVP to Jeff "Ski" Guzowski

(954) 401-0804

jguzowski@bellsouth.net

<https://www.nmrasunshineregion.org/>

Southern Division



Now that the holiday season is behind us, the frequency of club events is decreasing although not gone altogether. So, I thought I would diverge a bit this month to discuss the various club layouts in the Southern Division, since I had the opportunity to visit some of them recently.

First, I'll provide the current updates in club news. The Florida Citrus Model Train Society (FCMTS) plans to reopen their display at the Plantation Museum in July 2025 although the specific dates are not finalized. Please contact Ken Sargeant at (954) 253-0413 for any additional information. Their web site is found at www.fcmts.org.

The East Coast HO Exhibitors Society (ECHOES) club is continuing to prepare a room at the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, with the immediate goal of moving their modular layout into the facility, the club estimates that another 2 months of effort is required to prepare that space. It will be slowly replaced by a permanent layout, freeing up the modular layout to travel to shows and conventions. The club has tentatively scheduled a running session for March 28-30th, once again at the St. Andrews church at 14260 Old Cutler Road, Miami. For additional information, please contact Rick Diaz, rickdiaz@att.net or Tracey Sanders, tassailor@mac.com.

The Palm Beach Model Railroaders completed their intense 17 days of open houses during the Palm Beach County fair and the club is winding down from that before planning additional events. The club meets weekly on Tuesday evenings 6-9 PM at the South Florida Fairgrounds, 9067 Southern Blvd, West Palm Beach, 33411. They can be contacted at PBMRclub@gmail.com for additional information. The club's web site is www.pbmrr.org.

The South Florida Railway Museum (SFRM) at the Deerfield Amtrak and Tri-Rail station on Hillsboro Road plans their next open house on March 8th with visitors welcomed from 11 AM through 4 PM. The club maintains a Facebook page in lieu of a web site. For additional information, contact Bob Leonard, leonardstrait@gmail.com.

Now on to discussion of the club layouts. The ECHOES club layout is a modular HO scale layout with dual mainlines. The layout includes a yard that is set up to assemble trains to go in either direction on the mainline, and there is a junction module that leads to another multitrack section designed to set up and remove trains from the layout. The modules include sidings and industries that support more intense operating sessions when not being used in continuous loop display mode at shows. During formal operating sessions, each train runs with a two-man crew and switch lists are generated to support switching moves during the session. The layout ran completely reliability during the time I attended, attesting to good maintenance.

The Palm Beach Model Railroaders club layout is a permanent HO layout that has been operating for 50 years and is continuously maintained and enhanced. With that long history, it's no surprise that some sophisticated features have been incorporated. For operations, there is a computer-controlled dispatchers station half a floor above the layout to provide a good view. The screen has full information about what is occurring on the layout, including the location of each train. There is a marvelous motorized lift bridge to enter the layout that includes train detection so you cannot open the bridge when a train is closing in on it. The incredible reliability of this bridge structure is in part due

to the full steel construction of the bridge underside, eliminating the problems of warping. The layout includes a full backdrop and there are computer-controlled lighting and sound effects that allow for thunderstorms and even fireworks shows. The effect is dramatic and a true crowd pleaser when opened to the public. The layout also includes several trains running in point-to-point mode just to add interest. I visited there during the Palm Beach County Fair for over 8 hours and was very impressed that the two mainline trains running on the dual mainline never faltered or derailed during that entire period.

The SFRM club has two permanent layouts, one in HO and the other in N scale. The HO scale layout is themed to a location somewhere in Appalachia which aids in its implementation using a helix to traverse between the main layout level, an upper level, and staging on a lower level. A very picturesque canyon surrounds one side of the helix. The main level features an engine terminal that is nearing completion. The N scale layout is themed roughly to the state of Florida. It has an elevated city on one end with a large passenger terminal and several animation features. The other end features a port with a large container ship, the perfect location for intermodal traffic. Next to that is a large Tropicana plant.

All of these club layouts are worth the visit, so if you have a chance look into going to seeing them in 2025. Check the club web sites for information on open sessions and locations.

I will be traveling next month, so my predecessor, Bob Leonard will jump in to provide the column for April. Thanks in advance, Bob!

That's all for now. Let's make 2025 a great year for model railroading.

Richard Berger

Southern Division Superintendent

Ski's Tidbits



UPCOMING EVENTS

On Saturday, April 26th, 2025, at 10:30AM, the Western Division will be hosting a free guided tour of the Mulberry Phosphate Museum in the Historic Mulberry Railroad Depot, in Mulberry FL. The city of Mulberry is known as the Phosphate Capital of the world and the Museum is located at: 101 SE First St., Mulberry, FL 33860.

The Museum houses an outstanding collection of fossilized remains, area memorabilia and educational exhibits on the phosphate industry. There is a 44-yard drag line pile where visitors can dig in and look for sharks' teeth and prehistoric animal remains and what you find you can keep, so don't forget your shovel and bucket. Also, there is an 1880s Manchester 4-4-0 Locomotive and a Seaboard Coast Line Caboose. The locomotive was thought to be buried around the 1930s and spent almost 80 years underground before being found in 2012.

In the first Phosphate Gallery, visitors will learn all about the Phosphate industry and how it is essential to our world today. The Fossil Gallery is in the Mulberry Historic Train Depot and is home to a Prehistoric Fossil collection that was acquired from the Bone Valley Fossil Collection in Bradley, FL. Fossils of sea and land creatures include whales, dolphins, sharks, land creatures such as tortoises, rhinos, giraffes and arrowheads, all dating back millions of years. Your visit will also be an introduction to the relationship of animals remains with the modern-day Phosphate Industry.

If you would like to go on the free guided tour, email or call me so I can add you to the list.

On Saturday, May 10th, 2025, there will be a Northern Division Meet at the West Branch Lake City Library, in Lake City. Three (3) Clinics will be presented, and the doors open at 10AM, along with coffee and donuts. Also, if we have time, Allan Scott will open his layout to attendees. More info will be forthcoming in the April Telegraph Key. If you would like to give a clinic or have any questions, you can contact Alan or me (see my info at the bottom of the page). Allan Scott's cell phone (386) 623-3030, email is alco54@Hotmail.com.

The Annual Sunshine Region Convention will be held at the Hilton in Ocala, on Thursday through Saturday, October 9th-11th, 2025.

Jeff Guzowski

Sunshine Region At Large Director

Spotlight On...

Eastern Division Operating Session: Western Bay Railroad

On March 1, 2025, the Western Bay Railroad held an operating session for members of the Eastern Division and friends at large. Fourteen people turned out to enjoy 3 clinics put on by club members and 2 hours' worth of fast-clock operations on the layout. Clinics started at 9:00a on topics such as scenery, modeling for merit awards, and timetable/train order operations. After lunch, which was provided by the club for a \$10 donation, the participants enjoyed realistic railroad operations on the WBRR (based on 1939 prototype railroads of the Colorado narrow gauge). Each train was operated by newcomers and old-timers alike, with club members providing oversight and timely suggestions to keep the trains rolling according to the schedule. NMRA AP Certificate holder and Chief Dispatcher Robert Raymond from Orlando led the effort, and WBRR Superintendent Al Sohl, along with his wife, Eva, hosted the event. A great time was had by all! ~ *Eric Menger, Eastern Division AP Chair*



March 1st, 1939-25 Rev 1			
ASSIGNMENT		All trains	posted
Al Sohl	Station Agent for Denver, Dolores & Alpine Stations		
Jim Mathis	Station Agent for Placerville and Dulce		
Jim Mathis	Station Agent for Navajo and Placerville Jct.		
Robert Raymond	Chief DISPATCHER		
	Dispatcher in Training		
Richard Webster	Hidden yard Master	Trains to be out	& ready
	Hidden yard Alamosa	15 Min.	Prior to
		Departure	Time.
Bev F	#1 Lv Ala 7:05 AM Arr 8:25	Eng.	473
Evan	#1 Lv 7:05 AM Arr Den 8:25	Ala.	6:45
	Steve		
Ken F	#22 Lv Dur 7:00 AM Arr Ridg 8:30 AM	Eng.	462
Steve K	#22 Lv Dur 7:00 AM Arr Ridg 8:30 AM	Dur.	6:45
	Joel		
Jack	#2 Lv Den 7:45 AM Arr 9:30	Eng.	47
Terry	#2 Lv Den 7:45 AM Arr Ala 9:30	Den	7:30
	Eric		
Ken F	#123 LV Ala 9:00 Arr Den 10:55	Eng.	479
Steve K	#123 LV Ala 9:00 Arr Den 10:55	Ala.	8:45
	Chip		
Jack	#124 Lv Den 10:00 Arr 12:25	Eng.	475
Terry	#124 Lv Den 10:00 Arr Ala 12:25	Denver	9:35
	Eric		
Bev	#21 Lv Ridg 10:15 am Arr Dur 11:30	Eng.	461
Evan	#21 Lv Ridg 10:15 am Arr Dur 11:30	Ridg	10:00
	Joel		
Jack	Extra Eastbound #51	Eng.	51
Ken	Extra Eastbound #51	Ala.	EXTRA
	Steve		
Bev	#391 Lv Ala 1:15 Arr Dur 3:00	Eng.	453
Evan	#391 Lv Ala 1:15 Arr Dur 3:00	Ala.	1:00
	Chip		
Jack	#392 Lv Dur 2:15 Arr Ala 3:35	Eng.	455
Terry	#392 Lv Dur 2:15 Arr Ala 3:45	Dur.	2:00
	Eric		

Photos: Western Bay Railroad

South Florida Railway Museum

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Open Dates for 2025

11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Museum is Open on the 2nd Saturday of the month

**01 - 11, 02 - 08, 03 - 08, 04 - 12,
05 - 10, 06 - 14, 07 - 12, 08 - 09,
09 - 13, 10-11, 11-08, 12-13**

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Facebook page

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Big Bend Model Railroad Association

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Sat & Sun
T-TRAK-Z
Z-Scale Modular Railroading

34th Annual

Tallahassee Model Railroad Show and Sale



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E.C.H.O.E.S is a modular model railroad club located in Miami-Dade, Florida, dedicated to building and displaying our HO scale model railroad layout. Our purpose is to enjoy and promote the hobby of model railroading and preserve the history of railroading in South Florida. The club was started in the summer of 1985, with the goal of presenting a HO scale modular model railroad layout for display at "The Harvest Festival". Throughout the years, the layout has been displayed at regional conventions, four NMRA National Train Shows (Atlanta twice, Ft. Lauderdale, FL and Orlando), and other events in Miami Dade and Broward counties. We do running/operating sessions several times a year and welcome guests to join us. Membership is open and we welcome anyone who shares an interest and passion for Model railroading.

For more information, please contact:

Rick Diaz	rickdiaz@att.net	305 496 9266
Tracey Sanders	tassailor@mac.com	786 514 5667
Herb Ford	ehf640@gmail.com	786 375 1424



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You are receiving this email because you opted in when becoming an NMRA member.

Our mailing address is:

NMRA Sunshine Region, Inc.

4621 Bexley Village Dr

Land O Lakes, FL 34638

