

THE WHISTLE POST

The Official Publication Of The Garden State Division,
Northeastern Region, NMRA

August 2006

<http://www.trainweb.org/nergsd/index.htm>

From the Division President:

As you all should know by now, our Spring Meet was hosted by the Northwestern New Jersey Highrailleurs. We in the division feel trains are trains and everyone can learn something from this nice group of gentlemen as they have bent over backwards to host us. I will tell you

this is one of the bigger if not the biggest high rail layout I've ever seen. There is also a nice N scale club in the same location as well and these clubs will be open for our convention in October.

Buy now you have all heard me talking about the upcoming Regional Convention in Parsippany and there has been good reason for it.

Your staff has been going door to door, endless phone calls and I cannot count all the emails to bring you an outstanding convention and they have.

At printing COMET 2006 will have 30 home layouts, 12 clubs, 18 clinics, 5 tourist railroads, a live auction, a contest room, a video/DVD room, a welcome room, door prizes, layouts (3) on display in the hotel lobby and more. Operating sessions are scheduled at both the home and club layouts. There will also be events for spouses and significant others who are not interested in model railroads.

Also at the hotel for anyone interested we will provide you will a list of proven locations for train spotting. Now that New Jersey Transit and the Morristown and Erie have lifted their restrictions to photographs from public property, you never know what you may see.

I urge each and every one of you to attend this convention. You never know what you may see, or what you will learn. Hey your neighbor next door, down the street or in the next town may have a layout to knock your socks off and you didn't know about it, well, now you can visit it too.

Tom Wortmann

Some GARDEN STATE COMET Logistical and Scheduling Details

The schedule of events and clinics for the Garden State Comet is still being worked out so watch the Division web page and the upcoming issues of the Whistle Post for additional information.

In the meantime here is a broad outline of the events:

Friday: Welcome room opens at 3 PM. During the day there will be registration, contest entry, auction entry, layout tours and some clinics.

Saturday Morning: Last Chance for contest entry!

Saturday: Most of the clinics are scheduled for this day. There will be some clubs and layout visits.

Saturday afternoon will have the contest viewing and judging. The live auction is also scheduled for Saturday.

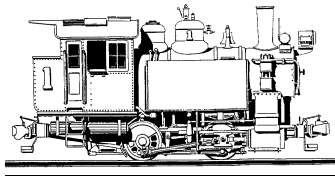
Saturday Evening: Banquet, tentative starting time 7 PM followed by an open NMRA/Hobby discussion-symposium.

Sunday: Home and club layout tours. The annual NER membership meeting.

For Non Railroading Spouses and Significant Others:

Clinics will be presented on genealogy, needlework, and Ornaments. Dates and times will be posted on the division web page or an upcoming issue of the Whistle Post

If you are planning to attend an operating session, layout visit, or other event that is held outside of the hotel, please be aware that you must provide your own transportation. If you need a ride or wish to form a carpool, please speak to one of the convention staff at the registration / welcome desk.



Clinics Scheduled for the Convention:

Wheelsets and how well they Roll. By Tom Wortmann
Un-Modeled Structures. By Tom Matthews
Locos of the Susquehanna Northern by Hal Carstens.
The NMRA's AP program and you by Paul Allard.
Signals and Model Railroads by Frank Neufeld.
Detailing Diesels by Bob Malberti
Scenery by Norman Frowley
Kitbashing by Tom Casey
Ice Harvesting and Yard Design by Charles Bisgeir
Yard Design by Craig Bisgeir
Designs for Double Deck Railroads by Tony Koester
Contest Models by Bob Hamm
Anthracite Coal Mining by John Roberts
DCC by Ray Russell and Bob Nalbone
How does a Steam Engine Work? By Karen Parker
Kit bashing in the Computer By Karen Parker
Wiring and DCC wiring of your layout By Tom Wortmann
New England Mills By Brian Whiton

Garden State Comet Operating Sessions:

A number of operating sessions are scheduled for the convention. If you have never participated in a session before, you can sign up for the The Model Railroad Clubs sessions, they are bigger and can handle beginners well.

More experienced operators and members of the Operations Special Interest Group can sign up for any of the sessions.

If you have never tried it, now is the time!

Operating Session Schedules:

Jerry Dziedzic 6 openings for Saturday, 2 PM - 5 PM
Ted DiIorio 8 openings for Friday, 6 PM - 10 PM
Phil Chiavetta 4 openings for Saturday, 1 - 5 PM
Craig Bisgeier 4 openings for Saturday, 7 - 11 PM
Phil Monet 10 openings for Sunday 10- 1 PM
The Model RR Club 20 openings for Saturday from noon to 4 PM
The Pacific Southern Club 5 openings for Thursday 7 - 11 PM

Some Notes on Other Notable New Jersey Comets.

A Really Brief History of the Blue Comet

The Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) operated for a brief period (February 21 1929 to September 28, 1941) a train named "The Blue Comet" from its Jersey City Terminal to the Atlantic City Terminal. The train covered the 150 rail miles in initially 2 hours and 45 minutes making

six intermediate stops which was later improved to 2 hours and 15 minutes, and finally deteriorated to nearly three hours before it was discontinued. At this time Atlantic City was a highly desirable vacation destination and the CNJ was competing with the Pennsylvania who operated several extra fare trains in this market. While the Blue Comet offered reserved seating, there were no parlor or sleeping cars. However the Observation Cars featured parlor car like seating open to any passengers use without any additional fare.

Initially there were two Blue Comet consists. Each consist made a single day time round trip each day. One consist started in Jersey City and the other started in Atlantic City. After the merger of the Pennsylvania and Reading lines in South Jersey into the Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Lines on July 25, 1933 service was reduced to one round trip a day. Equipment for the Blue Comet was drawn from the CNJ's existing equipment pool renovated (and were not especially built new for this train) and repainted for the Blue Comet. The exceptions were the observation cars, which were rebuilt from coaches. Equipment painted for the Blue Comet included: baggage cars, combines, coaches, diners and observation cars.

While the baggage and dining cars road on six-wheel trucks, the rest of the consist rode on four-wheel trucks. All cars assigned to the Blue Comet were all steel cars except the diner. The CNJ being mostly contained in New Jersey did not have any passenger runs long enough to warrant full dining cars. The CNJ did have some café cars to provide food service on a few trains. In a period when dining service was a feature used to attract passengers, The CNJ apparently felt they needed a full diner to serve their patrons on this short run. They rebuilt a 1905 wooden arch window, truss rod café car, which had 24 dining seats and 14 parlor seats into a 36 seat steel plated full dining car.

Five heavy pacific's were painted for the Blue Comet service. The consist used in publicity photos had the pacific followed by a baggage, combine, coach, diner, coach and observation. This is a nice sized train for a moderate sized model railroad.

The sides of the cars dedicated for the Blue Comet were painted in a color scheme to represent the sand, sea and sky of Atlantic City. The car sides were a two-tone scheme of Packard Blue with the window band area painted Jersey Cream. The roof, car ends, step wells, truck side frames and underbody were painted Royal Blue.

The cars (except the baggage cars) were named after comets. The two combine were named Halley and Encke. The eight coaches painted for the Blue Comet were named: Broesen, D'arrest, Faye, Holms, Spitaler, Westphal, Winnecke, and Tuttle. The dining car was named Giacobini. The three observation cars were named: Biela, De Vicp, and Tempel.

Two baggage cars were painted for the Blue Comet. These cars showed up in publicity shots and early photos but as time went on they were replaced by the combines. Presumably there was not sufficient business for them.

With the exception of the dining car, Bethlehem Car Works produced accurate models of the cars used in the Blue Comet. While AHM used a Blue Comet paint scheme on a set of its 1920 heavy weight passenger cars, none of the cars were similar to the prototype. The AHM heavy pacific appears to be a good match for the steam locomotives used on the Blue Comet.

New Jersey Transit's Comet Coaches.

When the original Pullman Standard built push pull cars started operating on the Erie Lackawanna lines out of Hoboken, NJDOT requested names for the cars. The name chosen was "Comet Cars" even though they weren't operating on CNJ trackage.

My submission of HOPPER Cars (Hoboken Operation Push Pull Equipment Rail Cars) in recognition of the importance of coal transport to both the Erie and the Lackawanna wasn't even given dishonorable (much less than honorable) mention. Over the years this name may have morphed to "Jersey Comet Cars".

Tom Casey

Everything To Gain And Literally Nothing To Lose

Model contests seem to intimidate, but, in my opinion, for no good reason. Our goal as model railroaders is (or at least should be) to get better at what we do. We start off with simple projects and hopefully develop enough skill to move on to complex, more difficult ones. Model contests serve to help us along that path. On a regional level we have teams of judges so that no one person's opinion controls entirely. The models entered in the contest are judged not only on the basis of what could have been done better, but are applauded for work done well. In that way the entrant learns whether they've been doing things right and how to improve their modeling techniques.

It's my opinion that no one should enter a model contest solely for the glory of winning. If you do, you set yourself up for disappointment. Rather, I suggest everyone enter model contests for the purpose of learning. If nothing else, you can learn how model contest judges think, and then enter a future contest having taken that thinking into account. You'll probably score higher the second time around and in the process learn something new. You simply can't lose by entering a contest.

I urge all members of our division to enter at least one model they've built at the model contest to be held at the upcoming convention in Parsippany organized by our division. We want our division to shine and having multiple entrees in the model contest will help to assure that.

If you have any uncertainties about the required forms to fill out, don't hesitate to contact me. I'll lead you through them. Although they are somewhat self explanatory, there are tricks to filling them out correctly which will give you an added advantage in the judging. I know. I've been a judge.

You can find the necessary forms by going to:

<http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERMCONT.PDF>

See you in October!!

Norman Frowley
Garden State Division
AP and Model Contest Chairman

Now that you have been inspired by Norman's comments, here are the guidelines for entering models at the Garden State Comet:

1. Go to <http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERMCONT.PDF> and print out the entrance forms.
2. Bring your model to the contest room either Friday night or Saturday morning. Judging will be Saturday afternoon. (If at all possible, please bring the model Friday night, this will make life easier for the judges!)
3. If you have a model that you want to display at the convention (but not enter in the contest), please bring it to the contest room.
4. Have fun!
5. Awards will be given out at the banquet Saturday night.

Are you a new member of the NMRA?

If you are new to the NMRA and the Garden State Division you should know that as a member of the National Model Railroaders Association (NMRA), you are also automatically enrolled as a member of the Northeast Region (NER) and the Garden State Division (GSD). The NER's publication "The Coupler" will be mailed at no additional cost.

The Garden State Division, which has approximately 250 members. The division has been holding two local meets a year at varying locations. These are generally hosted by model railroad club. Most meets have at least one modeling clinic and one prototype clinic, a white elephant table (an opportunity for one to dispose of excess models, etc.). A tour of the hosting clubs facility and layout. An annual meeting to elect officers and conduct necessary business is general held in January weather permitting.

Thomas Casey

Congratulations!

GSD member Chuck Diljak won 3rd Place/Offline Structures at the NMRA Philadelphia Convention. The structure is a model of a coal mine's mine fan house. A fan house houses a steam powered blower used to send fresh air into the mine. Chuck's highly detailed model was kitbashed from DPM modular wall sections and contained complete interior details. Chuck also wrote a 2-part article about the fan house's construction, which was published in the February and March 2006 issues of Railroad Model Craftsman.

GSD President Tom Wortmann took 2nd place in the National Pass Contest as well.

Gerry Leone, MMR
Deputy Chair
NMRA Membership Services & Promotion Dept.

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Upcoming Events

Edison, NJ
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The Great Train Expo
NJ Convention & Expo Center
97 Sunfield Ave
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The Whistle Post Gets a New Editor

My name is Kevin Olsen and I am the new editor of the Whistle Post. I have been a member of the NMRA for about two years and have enjoyed participating in the division events. I am looking forward to learning more about the division and its members as future issues come out.

From time to time I would like to publish letters and short essays from members about specific topics in model railroading. The Whistle Post (and its editor) depends on members of the division contributing items of railroad news, preservation notes, and modeling. Please send electronic submissions to OlsenKBCE@Juno.Com or hard copy to:

Kevin Olsen
Room 359 Richardson Hall
Montclair State University
Normal Avenue
Montclair, NJ, 07043

Special Topic for an Upcoming Issue: Should local governments have jurisdiction over waste transfer facilities for solid waste trains? Please write in with your opinions.

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Prototype News

New York Central Tug Number 16's Final Voyage?

At the time this newsletter goes to press former New York Central tugboat number 16 is threatened with demolition. The tug was moved to Cape Cod and later hauled up on land to become a roadside restaurant. The pharmacy chain CVS bought the land where she was sitting but was willing to donate the boat to anyone who could preserve her.

Charles Schneider has led a coalition of preservationists trying to save it. They have found a home with the city of Bayonne, but lack funds to move the boat to a pier for further transport. (Since part of its hull was removed years ago, house movers must be used to ensure no further damage to the structure.) At this time, about 25,000\$ of the 100,000\$ needed for the move has been raised. Steve Trueman, a maritime collector from Kingston, NY, has made a separate arrangement with CVS to salvage parts for a ship in his collection.

The *New York Times* carried a story about the tug on July 3rd, 2006.

Pequannock Township moves ahead with bicycle and walking path on former Greenwood Lake Branch

Using New Jersey Green Acres funding and funds raised through local taxes, Pequannock Township has purchased the former Erie station in Pompton Plains. The station was built sometime in the late 1800's or early 1900's and was used until passenger service was discontinued on the branch in the 1960's. The station building survived as office space before being purchased for use as the township's museum. (Any readers of the Whistle Post who have copies of the Erie Railroad's standard station plans from this era are urgently requested to share them with the township.)

For over a decade plans have been in the works for a walking and biking trail running parallel the the tracks of the former Greenwood Lake Branch from Riverdale in the north, through Pequannock, and ending at New Jersey Transit's station in the Mountain View section of Wayne Township. The total length of the path would be about 7 miles. Because the tracks are still in place, the path would have be about 25 feet away. It has not been announced if there will be a fence between the path and the tracks.

The plan has faced stiff opposition from CSX, parent company of the NYS&W. The Susquehanna has operated freight trains on the northern end of this track. The freights serve a pipe distribution company and a bulk liquid transfer facility in Riverdale. Although Norfolk Southern has been relatively silent on the plan, it is expected that they too will oppose it because a portion of the line in Wayne Township is used when switching the Totowa Industrial Track.

This month the path took a major step forward when Morris County, Pequannock, and Wayne Townships established a joint insurance fund to cover liability costs. Wayne Mayor Scott Rumana recently reiterated his own support of the plan.

In contrast, the town of Riverdale has announced concerns. Citing the existing and unlawful use of all terrain vehicles on the existing right-of-way, Mayor William Budesheim expressed fears that the new path would only serve to encourage this activity.

A story on the path was printed in the Bergen Record on July 27, 2006.

Coast-to-coast produce trains to speed delivery, cut fuel costs

ROTTERDAM, N.Y. - Buildings large enough to move a freight train through, and refrigerated cars tracked and monitored by satellite, are the key components in a plan to move fresh produce quickly from the West Coast to Rotterdam, N.Y., 15 miles west of Albany, according to a story in the Albany Times Union.

A Long Island-based produce distributor, Ampco Distribution Services Management LLC of Riverhead, N.Y., is nearing completion of two new warehouses, one in Wallula, Wash., the other in Rotterdam Industrial Park. They will serve as end-points on the 2,800-mile route for the weekly 55-car produce express trains.

Until now, the fastest freight trains took up to nine days to go from coast to coast. But Ampco has an agreement with Union Pacific and CSX to cut the trip to five days, comparable to truck speeds. The first train is expected to roll in late September.

The 200,000-square-foot, climate-controlled building is under construction next to a \$15-million Golub Corp. frozen-foods warehouse that was completed in December. The new produce distribution center will employ as many as 300 people when in full operation.

Union Pacific will operate the trains between the West Coast and Chicago, interchanging with CSX, which will take them to Rotterdam.

New Jersey light-rail subway extension is open for business

NEWARK, N.J. - Newark's light-rail city subway extension has started operation. According to a story in the Newark Star-Ledger, the light rail cars are running from Newark Penn Station to New Jersey Transit's Broad Street Station.

The \$207.7 million light-rail extension of Newark's city subway enables passengers on NJ Transit's Montclair-Boonton and Morris & Essex commuter rail lines, which serve the old Erie Lackawanna Broad Street Station, to reach Newark Penn in 10 minutes or less without walking or taking a bus. Combined with the renovation of Broad Street Station and the widening of Route 21, the new line is expected to improve commuting to downtown Newark.

New Jersey Transit expects that the line will attract 2,000 daily riders by summer 2007, with 3,550 riders a day by 2010. The existing subway line, which stretches through Newark from Penn Station to Branch Brook Park and two stations at Franklin Street in Belleville and Grove Street in Bloomfield, carries 18,450 passengers a day.

Susquehanna freight derails, cars hit barbershop and car wash

PATERSON, N.J. - A 66-car New York, Susquehanna & Western freight train derailed eight cars Tuesday night in Paterson, sending rolling stock into a barbershop and a car wash and forcing authorities to evacuate about 75 families, according to a story in the New York Times and information from the Associated Press. Paterson is 20 miles northwest of New York City.

The derailment, which occurred shortly before 9:30 p.m. at 12th Avenue and East 16th Street, dumped loads of industrial garbage into the street. No injuries were reported. The Susquehanna train was bound from Ridgefield Park, N.J., to Binghamton, N.Y.

NJ Transit coming to Pennsylvania?

PHILADELPHIA – New Jersey Transit chief George Warrington is pitching a new rail service between Philadelphia and Newark, N.J., with the goal of giving central New Jerseyans a quick, cheap ride into Philadelphia's Center City, according to a story in the Philadelphia Inquirer. But the trains, which could be running within a couple of years, also would give another travel option to Philadelphians always on the lookout for a good deal into New York.

In an interview, Warrington outlined his plan for extending the line that links Atlantic City with Philadelphia's 30th Street Station. Eleven of the 14 daily trains would continue north, stopping in Trenton, Princeton Junction, and Hamilton on their way to Newark Penn Station or possibly Hoboken Terminal. NJ Transit is also in talks with the casino industry to create a service along a similar path to shuttle gamblers directly between New York and Atlantic City. NJT gained an exclusive on Atlantic City rail service when Amtrak pulled out of the market in 1995 after six years.

Both proposals are far from done deals. Warrington still has to hammer out agreements with the casinos and with Amtrak, which owns the Trenton-Philadelphia route and provides its own service. That portion of the Northeast Corridor is also served by commuter trains of SEPTA, the Philadelphia-area transportation agency. Many riders choose an all-commuter-train ride between Philadelphia and New Jersey points north of Trenton, connecting between SEPTA and NJT trains at the Trenton station, over Amtrak.

If all goes well, the casino shuttle, which would be paid for by the gambling industry and operated by NJ Transit, could be running by fall 2007. The earliest the service to Newark would be available is 18 months from now, Warrington said.

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The Whistle Post, Newsletter of the Garden State Division NMRA
Please inform us of any address corrections

