



The WHISTLE POST

The Official Publication of the Garden State Division of the NMRA Northeast Region

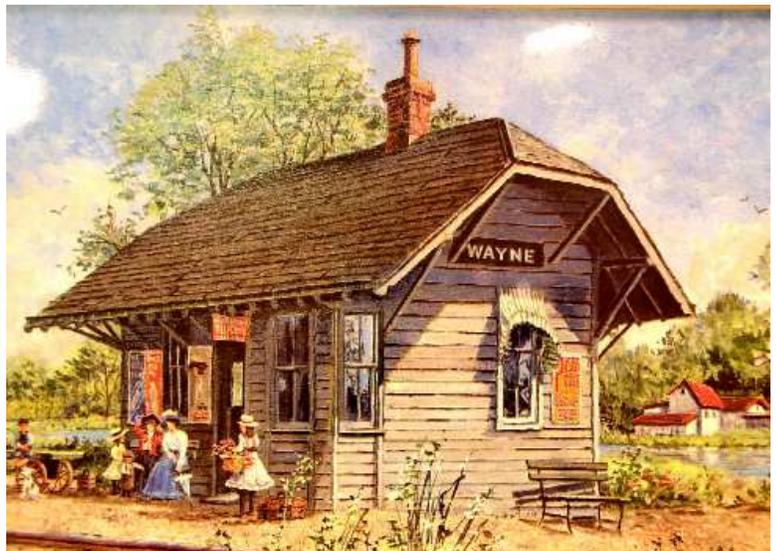
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NOSTALGIC ART

Many of us have an interest in saving railroad stations from the wrecking ball across the country. These stations represent a bygone era of architecture, history, adventure, and memories. A few years ago, I met a couple who inspired towns to restore many of the stations in our region through their artwork. Maywood, Oradell, and Demarest are a few of the stations that have been, or are in the process of, being restored.

I met Mary and Barry Shiff at a craft show in Montclair, NJ. This was the last place I expected to find anything train related. I was expecting to enjoy the beautiful day with my wife, strolling from one craft booth to the other. Jewelry, photos, and paintings are what attract our interests at these shows. But on this day, my stroll came to a halt when I walked into



the Shiff's booth. On the wall and in bins were many prints of New Jersey railroad station paintings that Mary and Barry have made over the years. Literally, there were prints from A to Z, actually W. Beginning with Allendale and ending with Wyckoff, nearly 50 in all. And on this day, I bought a print of the railroad station in Wayne, NJ, my hometown.

The Shiff's didn't begin using railroad stations as subjects, right away. At first, they focused on trains and ships. But, they didn't sell well. They started to find success when they started painting city scenes of Atlantic City, Hoboken, and Paterson NJ. Then, after creating a painting of the Tenafly railroad station, they haven't looked back.

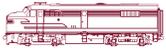
While Mary passed away a couple years ago, Barry continues the work they started. It typically takes months of research before work can begin on a painting. Barry will comb the internet, old post cards, and old picture books, looking for information on a station. The search is made difficult since many stations have been altered from their original state. For example, the Wayne, NJ station no longer exists. And, in my research for this article, I found three photos of the station. But, only one of the three shows the

"Nostalgic Art" continued on page 12

THE GARDEN STATE DIVISION

E-MAIL
GSDTRAINS@YAHOO.COM

WEBSITE:
WWW.TRAINWEB.ORG/NERGSD/



THE CAB

by President Tom Wortmann

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! And for the Garden State Division, it is looking very happy. For the first time, we have all of our meets set for the entire year. We plan on getting the dates out to the magazines and sites and they are all posted on our website as well. Plus we already mailed out your annual post card so you know all the dates too. Sadly we only mail that card to GSD members but even if you are not and wish to come, please do as all of our event dates are posted in this issue of *The Whistle Post*. We also changed the time of our fall meet to 10 AM. If this works we may change others in 2009 as well. Anything we can do to draw more members, we will.

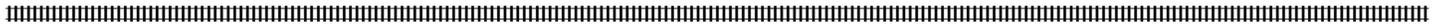
Now all we need is you, yes you, to open your home to our membership before or after the meet so our membership can see your layout, your progress, your trains. You don't have to be a great modeler, or even have a finished layout. We want to see it. You set the time and the hours and whatever you set will be a great help to us and at the same time you will be sharing your knowledge and your enjoyment of the hobby with people just like yourself and if your not care-

ful, you might even make new friends.

You can see that our new editor is doing a fine job but don't let that stop you from submitting an article or two as well. He won't turn you down and you don't have to be a writer either. He will even work with you to get your article looking the best it can be.

Besides our meets, we also hold staff meeting 4 times a year and they too are open to all members. Feel free to attend those as well to voice your ideas and hear ours. No charge and you will get to share a cup of coffee with your officers. The staff of the GSD works for the entire division and you are a part of that division. Email any staff officer for dates and directions as staff meetings are held in the homes of the staff and not in public areas - but you are still very welcome to attend we just need to know who is coming.

Remember it's your division, it's your hobby. Make it a great one. 



THE CABOOSE

by Editor Chuck Diljak

A Long Winter

You know it is a long Winter when you receive two winter issues of *The Whistle Post*, back to back. It was suggested that the issue of *The Whistle Post* coincide with the season it is published in. So, here we are, experiencing a second Winter. Keep the faith, though, Spring is just around the corner.

Since it is a long Winter, how about warming things up a little beginning with this issue? I've started a new feature, which I hope becomes a standard in these pages. The feature is called "Point/CounterPoint".

No, this isn't a Saturday Night Live parody of 60 Minutes. Instead, this feature is intended to provide information from both sides of a subject. The opposing viewpoints should be presented in a fun, constructive, and informative way. If you are expecting "flaming," you will be disappointed. I think the internet provides more than enough opportunities for "flaming" and I do not welcome it within these pages.

You will see that in this issue, Tom and I have started the ball rolling with the first topic of computerized switch lists. It is a topic that both of us have some experience with. I continue to use computerized switch lists and Tom does not. Hopefully, the objective of this column is reached and you

are a more informed reader if you are in the position of deciding to use computerized switch lists or not.

For this column to be successful, I need readers to provide subjects and their positions on these subjects. I'm sure each of you has plenty of both and express them, everyday. All it takes is for you to step on to the platform and write it down.

Future issues will bring other new features, as well. I am planning to dedicate one or two pages for photos from the readers of *The Whistle Post* that focus on a theme in each issue. The theme for the photo page in the Spring 2008 issue is "Bridges" and is identified in *The Whistle Post* column, as shown on page 11. Submit photos you have taken of prototypes or models that fit this theme and submit them to *The Whistle Post*. These ideas have the intention of showcasing what our division members are doing in the World's Greatest Hobby.

My mailbox has unlimited capacity, and right now the needle is pointing to empty. So, drop me a line, article, or photo at gswdwhistlepost@yahoo.com.

Is it Spring, yet? 

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If you remember your first day of kindergarten, you probably remember being terrorized by the thought of remembering all those colors, letters, and shapes. Oh, the stress of a five year old.

Fast forward to today. You need a special sign for your model, but none exist. So you have to create it. But, instead of paper and crayons of those kindergarten days, you need to use a computer. Oh, the stress of being an adult.

But, it really isn't that hard! Stop using that expensive piece of furniture for only sending and receiving e-mails. Start exercising its electrical circuits to their fullest potential by making a sign. I bet when you look back at those kindergarten days, you think learning shapes, letters, and colors really weren't that difficult. Hopefully, by the time you finish this article, you will feel the same way about making a sign on your computer.

A friend of mine posted a sign on one of the many model railroad forums for Lehigh Valley Anthracite (Figure 1). This sign is just what I need for my layout due to my interests in the Lehigh Valley and coal mining. But, I didn't want to use it since there were glare spots on it and it was skewed. So, I decided to create

my own. Let's pick this sign apart into its components before we build it. To start, there is a black dia-

mond, over a red rectangle, over a white square with black text. There are your colors and shapes. Notice the four different text fonts: "We sell", "Lehigh Valley Anthracite", "LV", and "Coal that satisfies" are made from different fonts. There are your letters. Now, let's start building the sign and put these individual components together.



Figure 1. Prototype Sign

The first thing I do is determine the software to use. My computer came with PictureIt. It is a photo editing software that has additional features that can be utilized for sign making. I can add shapes, letters, and colors, easily. And, when I add these objects, they are added as their own layer in the image. By stacking each object, or layer, you can build your final image. Objects can be brought forward or sent backward so that they overlay other objects in the proper order. Another advantage of each object being in its own layer is that you may need to resize it, change the color, or change another property of the object. There are other packages that have this ability as well. Check out your computer to see what programs you may already have for editing photographs.

Each software program works differently. You may need to perform some reconnaissance on your software program to find the functions I will use with PictureIt. Look over each of the menu options in your program to find these functions.

To begin, I started with a white square with a border around it (Figure 2). In PictureIt, I used the menu at the top of the screen by selecting: Insert ▶ Shape

"Simply Signs" continued on Page 4

“Simply Signs” continued from page 3

Then, I selected the shape I wanted from a visual menu. In this case, I selected a square/rectangle.

PictureIt placed the shape in the work area. When you look at the shape, it has four points in the corners and four points at the midpoints on each side. Using these points, you can shrink or expand the shape of the item using your mouse and dragging the point to where you want it.

After setting the size of the shape, I needed to add a border. Using the mouse, I right clicked on the shape. This brought up a menu where I selected:

Change shape or line ▶ Line thickness

For this sign, I changed the line thickness to be “4 pt.”

The next step is to add a red rectangle to the image. Just repeat the same steps as before, only this time, you want the rectangle to be exactly the same width as the square you created before. And, the



Figure 2. White box with black border

height should be less than the height of the square.

Create a black border for the rectangle in the same way the border was created with the square.

The last step is to change the color of the rectangle. I did this by selecting: Change shape or line ▶ Fill Color

A palette of colors will appear. And, I selected the red color (figure 3).

The next step is to add a black diamond to the center of the red rectangle. I followed the same steps to add a shape, but

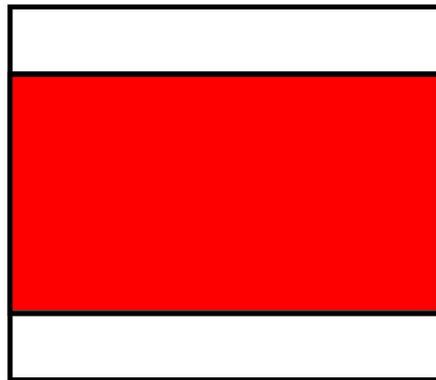


Figure 3. Red box with black border

instead of a square/rectangle, I added a diamond.

Note that when the diamond is created, the points for expanding or shrinking the shape are just like the locations on a square/rectangle. However, PictureIt creates the diamond by connecting the midpoints on each side of the rectangle.

Once the diamond was created, I made the rectangle the same size as the red rectangle. This will center the diamond perfectly within the red rectangle.

The next step is to modify the line thickness, the line color, and the fill color of the rectangle. Using the steps earlier, I made the line thickness “2 pt” instead of “4 pt”. Using the steps outlined above, I changed the fill color to black. To change the line color, I selected from the menu:

Change shape or line ▶ Line color

In this case, I changed the line color by selecting white from the color palette.

At this point, all of the shapes and colors have been added to the sign (figure 4).

The last step is to add text. Finding a font that matches a prototype sign is tricky. But, I usually find something close on two websites I use for fonts:

www.1001fonts.com
www.fonts101.com

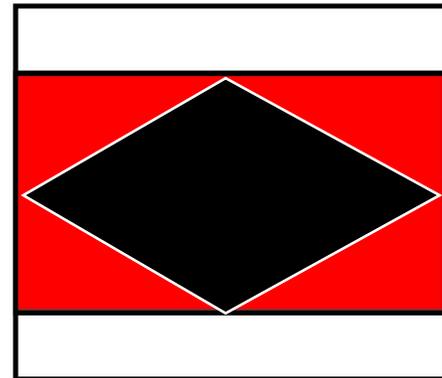


Figure 4. Black diamond with white border

There are many fonts to choose from and install on your PC. For this sign, I used four fonts:

Arial: “LV”

Britannic Bold: “WE SELL”

Loki Cola: “The Coal that Satisfies”

Pop Warner: “LEHIGH VALLEY ANTHRACITE”

Adding the text to the image is very simple. I selected from the menu:

Text ▶ Insert Text

I created five separate text boxes, one for each line of text. I inserted the appropriate text in each box. To change the font and the font size, I selected from the menu:

Text ▶ Font

There are a couple other features of these software products that you may want to take advantage of.

The first is called grouping. If you have multiple objects in your sign and need to move them in unison, you can group them together so that their position, in relation to each other, is frozen. In PictureIt, I do this by holding the shift key down and selecting each object with the mouse. Then, to group the objects, I select:

Edit ▶ Group

The other feature you may need to take advantage of is the layering of objects.

Frequently, you may add an object and need to place it behind another object.

“Simply Signs” continued on Page 11

THE CLUB CAR:

GARDEN STATE CENTRAL MODEL RAILROAD CLUB
607 8TH AVENUE
ASBURY PARK, NJ 07712
WWW.GARDENSTATECENTRAL.COM/
100% NMRA CLUB

GARDEN STATE MODEL RAILWAY CLUB
575 HIGH MOUNTAIN ROAD
NORTH HALEDON, NJ 07508
WWW.GSMRRCCLUB.ORG

MODEL ENGINEERS RAILROAD CLUB OF NEW JERSEY
569 HIGH MOUNTAIN ROAD
NORTH HALEDON, NJ 07508
WWW.ANGELFIRE.COM/NJ4/MERRC-NJ/

THE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB
295 JEFFERSON AVENUE
UNION, NJ 07083
WWW.TMRCL.COM

NEW YORK SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS
341 HOBOKEN ROAD CARLSTADT, NJ 07072
WWW.MODELENGINEERS.ORG/

THE RAMAPO VALLEY RAILROAD CLUB
620 CLIFF STREET
HO-HO-KUS, NJ 07423
WWW.MEMBERS.AOL.COM/RVRRCLUB

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF THE NMRA MID-EASTERN REGION
WWW.NJDIVNMRA.ORG/

SEND CLUB INFORMATION TO
MEMBERSHIP AND CLUB CONTACT:
TOM CASEY
TCASEY@CO.BERGEN.NJ.US

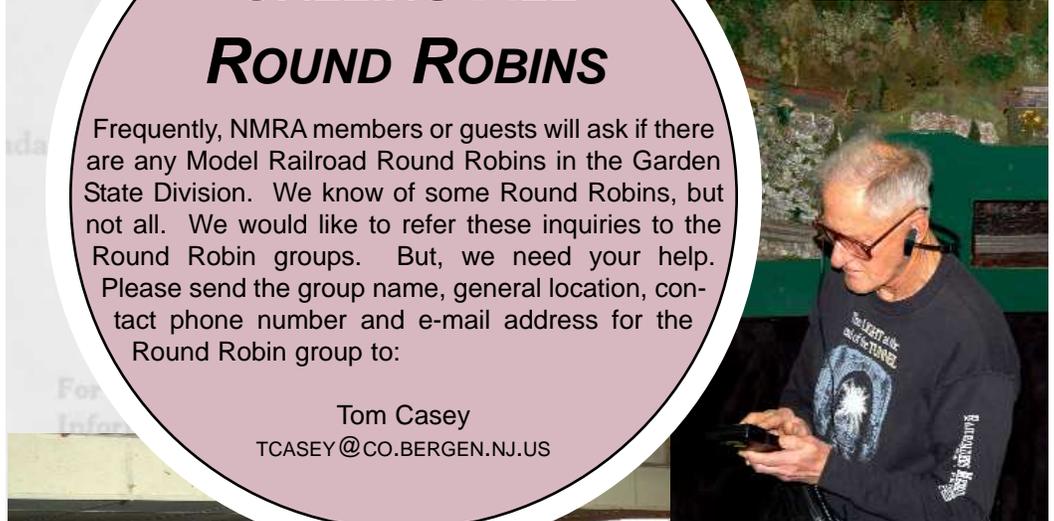
GSD Winter Meeting:



CALLING ALL ROUND ROBINS

Frequently, NMRA members or guests will ask if there are any Model Railroad Round Robins in the Garden State Division. We know of some Round Robins, but not all. We would like to refer these inquiries to the Round Robin groups. But, we need your help. Please send the group name, general location, contact phone number and e-mail address for the Round Robin group to:

Tom Casey
TCASEY@CO.BERGEN.NJ.US



Operations and...



"GSD Winter Meeting" continued on Page 9



MEETING MINUTES

BY SECRETARY CIRO COMPAGNO

Purpose:

Garden State Division (GSD) Meeting

Date/Time:

November 11, 2007 at 9:30 AM

Place:

Home of Roger Oliver in Denville, NJ

Attendees:

Tom Casey, Ciro Compagno, Ed Fraedrich, Norman Frowley, Roger Oliver, Anthony Piccirillo, Bob Tumielewicz, and Tom Wortmann

Convention Committee Report

The Fall Meet was debriefed, which was held in conjunction with the *All Scale Swap Meet* hosted by *The New York Society of Model Engineers* in E. Rutherford, NJ. Members reviewed the successes and areas of needed improvement. The single clinic, *Computerized Switch Lists* by Chuck Diljak, was well received. Two other planned clinics did not take place.

Ed Fraedrich provided a nicely made wooden caboose donation box for this event. A few improvements were suggested to better advertise the donation box at future GSD events. No donations were collected.

The next Greenberg show in Somerset, NJ will take place at the Garden State Exhibition Center on January 5-6, 2008. Bob Tumielewicz will follow-up with Greenberg Shows regarding the set up of a GSD Table. It was agreed that, if allowable, a table located just outside the main floor would be ideal to catch visitors entering and leaving the show.

Bob Tumielewicz was asked to solicit clinicians for the upcoming Winter Meet.

Home Depot Committee

The committee was formed to have a GSD event at the Riverdale, NJ store in 2008. The committee consists of Ed Fraedrich, Roger Oliver, and Anthony Piccirillo.

Whistle Post Report

The need for a standardized *Whistle Post* format and its mission statement were reviewed. Roger Oliver volunteered to prepare a draft. Once completed, the GSD Board and Directors will review and implement going forward.

Roger Oliver requested that a reminder be put on the front and back of *The Whistle Post* indicating that all subscriptions renew in January 2008.

A draft copy of the new *Whistle Post*, emailed to the President was briefly reviewed. All were extremely pleased and the staff requested some changes and additions.

Treasurer's Report

Roger Oliver indicated there was minimal activity.

Education Committee and AP Reports

Norman Frowley proposed a scoring system to determine winning of the annual *The Paul Mallery Award*. Suggested improvements were made. Ideally, the award is presented during each Winter Meeting. Roger Oliver accepted the offer to provide sample wording for the wooden plaque.

Secretary's Report

It was suggested that the Secretary e-mail a meeting reminder to all Officers and Directors and attach the last meeting minutes. It was also suggested that Anthony Piccirillo send the reminder to all GSD members to boost awareness and participation.

It was suggested to review and update the Officers and Director's Contact Information.

Calendar for 2008

GSD events were reviewed and updated:

Winter Meet

Sunday, January 20, 2008, 12:00 pm at *The Ramapo Valley Model Railroad Club* in Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ. The snow date is Feb 17, 2008. The annual business meeting

takes place followed by an operating session hosted by the club. Tom Casey needs an approximate headcount participating in the operating session before the event.

Spring Meet

In April or May 2008, at *The Model Railroad Club* in Union, NJ. Roger Oliver will approach club.

Summer Meet

Sunday, August 24, 2008, 12:00PM at *The Garden State Model Railway Club* in North Haledon, NJ. Ed Fraedrich will confirm with club.

Fall Meet

Saturday, Oct 25, 2008, at the *New York Society of Model Engineers* in Carlstadt, NJ. It was suggested that this meet start earlier as not to run out of time.

GSD Nominating Committee

The committee reviewed the slate of qualified candidates for election of Officers and Directors in 2008:

President

Tom Wortmann 2008-2009

Vice-President

Norman Frowley 2008-2009

Secretary

Ciro Compagno 2008-2009

Treasurer

Anthony Piccirillo 2008-2009

Directors

Andrew Brusgard 2008-2010

Tom Casey 2008-2010

Ed Fraedrich 2007-2009

Roger Oliver* 2007-2009

Bob Tumielewicz 2007-2009

* Completing Anthony Piccirillo's term

All officers and two directors are up for election.

The next meeting, the winter meet, is scheduled as noted above.

Meeting adjourned around 12:30PM.

MODELING TIP:

BACKGROUND:

Using alcohol washes with Dullcote often result in disaster.

PROBLEM:

A modeler often uses Dullcote to seal the decals or weathering powders they just applied to their model. Then, in order to weather the model some more, they apply a weathering solution that is alcohol based, such as alcohol and ink or Rust-All. This results in a white residue appearing on the model.

SOLUTION:

Apply a second dose of Dullcote to the model. This will eliminate the white residue. Oddly enough, you can also use this problem to your advantage. This white residue looks like mineral deposits left by water, which is perfect for weathering locomotive tenders.

CONGRATULATIONS:

GOLDEN SPIKE
BRUCE DE YOUNG
WEST MILFORD, NJ

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL
ROGER OLIVER * NER 444
DENVILLE, NJ

MASTER BUILDER-SCENERY
BRUCE DE YOUNG * NER 447
WEST MILFORD, NJ

* FIRST CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

MODELING TIPS CAN BE SENT TO
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM CHAIR:
NORMAN FROWLEY, MMR
NORMANFROW@AOL.COM

GO FOR THE GOLDEN SPIKE!

by Bruce De Young

As those who receive Scale Rails know, 2008 has been designated "The Year of the MMR", and the magazine will feature articles each month that focus on one of the eleven certificates that are available in the MMR program. The December 2007 issue of Scale Rails contained a "History of the NMRA Achievement Program (1961-2007) by C. J. Riley. In that article, I learned that the Golden Spike Award was instituted by the NMRA in 1987. So, in celebration of its 20th Anniversary, let's take a closer look at the Golden Spike Award.

The Golden Spike Award, although not one of the eleven awards that can be applied to



Figure 1: An Athearn Gondola



Figure 2: Scratchbuilt wood-sided gondola on an MDC frame

the MMR, is often mentioned as a great way to enter the program. That is exactly the way I viewed it as I decided to put my toe in the waters of the Achievement Program.

The Golden Spike does not require the level of expertise in the various areas of the hobby

that the Master Modeler Awards require, but it does require the modeler to demonstrate basic modeling skills in several areas: Rolling Stock (Motive Power & Cars); Model Railroad Setting (Structures & Scenery); and Engineering (Civil & Electrical). Since I just went through the process of getting ready for the Golden Spike, I thought I would show you quickly how straightforward it is. Let's look at each of the three areas in sequence.

Rolling Stock:

The requirement here is to display six (6) units of rolling stock. (You can display these units at a Division meeting or just on your layout/module when the team comes to see your work. They do not have to be judged in a contest!) To qualify, the rolling stock can be scratchbuilt, built from craftsman kits, or be detailed commercial kits. (A 'shake the box' kit by itself, will not qualify.) To give you some ideas,

here are some things I did.

An Athearn gondola received wire grabs, a scratchbuilt load, and some weathering (figure 1); another Athearn kit (a flat car) got a weathered deck and a scratchbuilt lumber load; I built a boxcar from a wood craftsman

"Golden Spike" continued on page 12

STEAM LOCOMOTIVE PARTS

F L U E S U D R I V E R S
 L E P Z A F U F G H P A C
 S L D T N C R E L I O B I
 M T A T D Y A A L V R N C
 O S E V D L D O M O J O Y
 K I H A O I T E T E M S N
 E H S L M N Z A C P D N S
 B W S V E D R T R U H H N
 O V O E E E O E N M S O O
 X F R G N R S M L P R J T
 R J C E S S I D E R O D S
 B W G A O T E N D E R B I
 F F I R E B O X L Y J A P

WORDFIND CLUES:

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 COMPRESSOR
 CROSSHEAD
 CYLINDERS
 DRIVERS
 FIREBOX
 FLUES
 FRAME
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 PISTONS
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 WHISTLE



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NEXT DIVISION MEETING:

TIME:
NOON

DATE:
MAY 4, 2008

LOCATION:
THE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB
295 JEFFERSON AVENUE
UNION, NJ 07083
WWW.TMRCL.COM

DIRECTIONS:
ROUTE 22, BEHIND THE HOME DEPOT. FOR DRIVING DIRECTIONS, VISIT:
WWW.TMRCL.COM

AGENDA:
MODEL JUDGING
CLINICS
SHOW AND TELL
WHITE ELEPHANT TABLE
LIGHT LUNCH
MASSIVE OPERATING SESSION

COST:
\$5 ADMISSION FEE

CLINIC CONTACT:
IF INTERESTED IN PRESENTING A CLINIC AT A DIVISION MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT EVENT CHAIR:

ROBERT TUMIELEWICZ
RTUMIELEW@AOL.COM

WELCOME TO NEW GSD MEMBERS:

BERT EDWARDS
HILLSBOROUGH, NJ

MICHAEL MAZZEO
RAHWAY, NJ

PERRY SQUIER
NEWTON, NJ

ROGER SUHR
EDISON, NJ

"GSD Winter Meeting" continued from page 5

...Clinics

If you didn't make it to the Winter

Meeting at the Ramapo Valley Railroad Club in Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ, in January, you really missed something!

Yes, we had reports from the various departments. And, yes we had elections of officers. But, after that things got much more interesting.

Norman Frowley presented Achievement Program awards to Roger Oliver and Bruce De Young.

Meredith Taylor, from the Friends of the High Line, presented a clinic on the preservation and reuse of the High Line, a 1.5 mile elevat-



Norman Frowley (l) presenting an AP certificate to Roger Oliver

ed railway that runs along the west side of Manhattan.

Kevin Olsen presented a clinic that covered the beginning of steam locomotives.

The clinics were followed by an operating session on the Ramapo Valley Railroad. The dispatchers, Chris Freeman and 13 year old Jimmy Brennan, successfully routed trains operated by GSD members over the club layout. That is no easy task.

Now, a normal railroad would not send all of their trains out over their lines with rookie engineers. But, that is what the Ramapo Valley Club did. We may not have made money for the railroad, but we sure had fun. A big thank you to the club for hosting the GSD!

Come to the Spring Meeting in Union, NJ on May 4 to continue the fun. Details are to the left of this article. 



Meredith Taylor from Friends of the High Line

Show and Tell

Beginning with the Spring Meeting at The Model Railroad Club, in Union, NJ, there will be a new segment to the program called "Show and Tell."

The objective of "Show and Tell" is to share with other members of the GSD a project you completed or are currently working on. No paperwork, PowerPoint presentation, hand outs, or judging. Just bring in a model and tell us about it. How did you build it? Is there a prototype for the model? What interested you about this

model? What did you learn from building the model? What details did you add to the model? How did you paint and decal the model?

The idea is to share with everyone what you have done and not be overwhelmed by giving a clinic or having the model judged.

So bring some of those prized model to the May 4th meeting and tell us all about them. Details about the meeting are to the left of this article. See you there....with your models! 

“LOVE ‘EM”

By Chuck Diljak

Tom is probably going to write about how laborious it is to work with a computer program that generates switch lists for your operating sessions. And, while creating car cards and waybills only needs to occur once, so does setting up your railroad in a computer program. However, developing the switch lists for each operating session in a car cards/waybills environment could also be perceived as laborious. So, maybe both systems are a "push" when it comes to laborious.

"But what about all the setup time for the program when you start?" may be Tom's quick rebuttal. While it is true that the setup of your railroad in the program at startup is time consuming, just remember that you only need to perform this task once. Then, when you generate each operating session, it is just a matter of clicking a button and printing the switch list. With car cards and waybills, you don't invest nearly the amount of time in the beginning to get this system going. However, in between each session, you need to flip the waybills and create the switch lists for the next operating session.

"Yes, but car cards and waybills are self correcting!" could be Tom's next argument. What is "self correcting?" In car cards and waybills, the card stays with the car. So, if an operator misses picking up a car, it is no big deal. Another train in the current session or a future session can pick the car up then. With computerized switch lists, it is generally believed that the computer pre-determines where cars need to be ahead of time in order for trains to pick them up. As a result, trains cannot deviate from their schedules. That was probably true in the days Tom played with his old DOS program. But, today, many of the leading programs offer real-time operation. So, if a train misses a car or is behind schedule, it is no problem. Even if you miss the car, you can always update the car's location in the program for the next session.

"But what about the poor guy who isn't computer-savvy? Some of these programs have a learning curve!" may be Tom's strongest argument. However, many of the software companies provide support. And, there are even user forums where you can get help from other users. Just remember, every user started at the same point.

So, don't dismiss computer switch lists without trying them. Many of the programs can be downloaded and tried on a trial basis before you purchase. See which ones work for you and which ones don't. In the end, either way you decide, you are operating your railroad. And that is a card Tom and I both like to play. 

“HATE ‘EM”

By Tom Wortmann

Well Chuck got the page heading correct if nothing else. I'm a diesel fan and a diesel over my head looks fine to me. I would have used an Alco, but what the heck.

Computers are great. For people like me who have no clue how to spell they are wonderful, once I figured out what the wiggly red lines meant. Of course now I'm dealing with green wiggly lines, I work on those at another time.

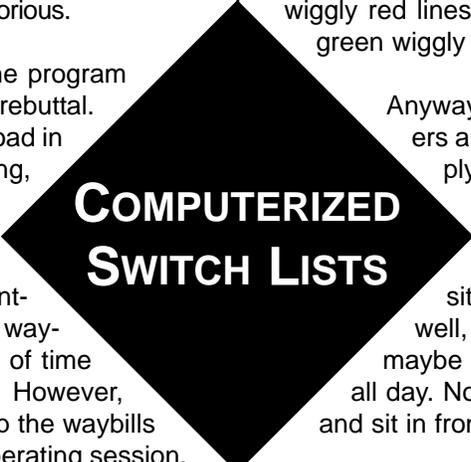
Anyway, People do seem to forget that computers are stupid, they don't create data they simply work with data, YOUR data. The data you inputted. The computer is not smart, it's really stupid. Now if you're not good with a keyboard or just not crazy about sitting in front of a computer, for hours, well, then you could have real problems. Or maybe you're the guy who works on computers all day. Now isn't that what you want to do? Come and sit in front of it again? Oh the joy.

Also understand that unless you are a computer whiz, you will need to buy a program in which you input all your data in (for hours). They run from expensive to very expensive and then there are the updates, will it work 5 years down the roads with 98, XP or VISTA's replacement? Will the company go put of business next year or so? Well, don't worry about that. Just buy more computers like Chuck. Now you have work to do and don't make a mistake or you may have to re-input all that data again or spend more time wondering why ladies underwear keeps getting delivered to the meat packing plant in covered hoppers. Hmm maybe you did make a mistake. Chuck will tell you that you only have to input the data once, yea right, just don't buy any new cars or locos, don't add or change industries, add track or heaven forbid – remove something from the railroad.

Ok, now lets assume that you spent all that time, you don't make any mistakes, everything is perfect. So now you are off and running. Congratulations. I'm impressed. Personally I would have rather spent that time working on the layout but that's just me, not Chuck. Also since Chuck does not know what self correcting is, let me try to explain; you toss the old card or waybill and fill out another one, whenever you please.

Hey, things are rolling, cars are being picked and delivered and goods are being shipped. Wow, it works. Then it happens, that 50 box car with computer parts derails. It's a bro-

“CounterPoint” continued on page 12



ABOUT THE WHISTLE POST

THE SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR THE WHISTLE POST:

- JANUARY 10
- APRIL 10
- JULY 10
- OCTOBER 10

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Photo Theme for the Next Issue: Bridges

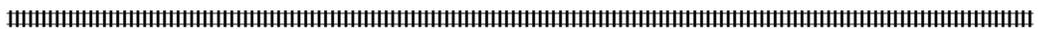


Stone arched bridge on the Ramapo Valley Railroad Club's layout in Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ

Each issue of *The Whistle Post* will feature a page or two centered on a theme.

For the Spring 2008 issue, the theme will be "Bridges."

Please submit model or prototype photographs you have taken, along with a description, to gsd-whistlepost@yahoo.com that fit this theme!



"Simply Signs" continued from page 4

For example, what if I created the diamond after creating the "LV" text object? Without doing anything, the diamond will overlay the "LV", making the "LV" invisible. To bring the "LV" to the top, I select:

Format ▶ Move Forward or Backward ▶ Bring to Front

Besides "Bring to Front", there are also options to "Send to Back," "Bring Forward," and "Send Backward."

And, now you have a completed sign. Now it is a matter of saving the sign, just as you would do with any other document. However, I saved my original image as a ".png" image. This will allow me to change any of the objects in the image that I want. However, to use the image for decals and signs, save a second version of the image as a ".jpg" or other standard photo format.

Give it a try with your software!

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**“Nostalgic Art”
continued from page 1**

awning over the end window depicted in the Shiff’s painting. It is this attention to detail that I admire in their work.

Today, many towns are beginning to notice the beauty in these old stations. Chances are the station is currently in sad shape. But, when local citizens and officials see the paintings the Shiff’s created of their railroad station in its prime, many towns are willing to restore them. Some towns have converted restored stations into museums, quaint little shops, or use them for civic events.

If you are interested in displaying a print of your local station or stations from your favorite railroad in your home, you do not need to wait for a local craft show. You also don’t need to wait for the next Greenburg Train and Toy Show in Somerset or Edison, where Barry often has a booth. Instead, call Barry at (201) 944-1813 or e-mail him at BarryShiff@gmail.com. Barry will be happy to tell you what stations he has in his catalog.

If you are wondering about pricing, the smaller 6x9 prints sell for \$40.

Even though I bought my painting after the station met its demise, many visitors to my layout comment on the print. Maybe I’ll buy a print of a station that still exists, next time. Who knows, maybe it will get restored. 

“CounterPoint” continued from page 10

ken coupler, looks like the box let go. Hmm, you can’t finish the job with a car like that. Me? I’d take it off the road and replace it with another. Car card and all, oh wait, you can’t do that can you? So you stop the session, run upstairs, turn on the computer and tell it that the car is bad ordered and you replaced it with what? You can’t just take a car out of the drawer, you have to assign it? Oh wait, how did it get there? I guess you can fudge that right? Just hope it doesn’t mess up the next session. Ok, update

“Golden Spike” continued from page 7

kit (Main Line Models) and added some brake rigging; I stripped the lettering from an Athearn work caboose, re-painted and decaled it for the Susquehanna, added a wood deck and wood sides, and details like wire grabs and non-working marker lights; I scratchbuilt a wood-sided gondola on an MDC frame (Figure 2); and I added homemade decals to an undecorated refrigerator car.

You get the idea. All you need to do is add some weathering, details, decals, or loads to a 'shake the box' kit, and it will qualify. It is also a great way to get started in this aspect of the hobby!

**Model
Railroad
Setting:**

The Golden Spike requires you to build eight (8) square feet of layout (or an 8 square foot module) and construct five (5) structures. Here you want to display some basic skills in building structures and

adding scenery. As with the rolling stock, the structures have to be a bit more than a styrene kit built straight from the box. Once again, they can be scratchbuilt, built from craftsman kits, or simply be commercial kits to which you have added weathering and details. However, scratchbuilding is not required and neither is building a huge craftsman kit. You can meet this aspect of the Golden Spike by painting, weathering, and adding details, just as you did with the rolling stock. Remember, bridges are considered structures, too. Now



Figure 3: Roundhouse scene in rail yard

building structures is probably my favorite aspect of the hobby, so I had a lot to choose from. By the way, the yard

“Golden Spike” continued on page 13

So, back up stairs, fire up the computer if you were foolish enough to shut it down wait OK, Oh the heck with it, you don’t run the RDC. Besides you’re running out of coffee.

Now I could go on, but the computer, because of capabilities is great for PRINTING the waybills, great for PRINTING the car cards, (have you ever seen my handwriting)? But for the actual operation? No thanks, I like to have fun, instantaneous fun and all that work is not fun. 

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"Golden Spike" continued from page 12

area of my layout was the first to receive ballast and scenery, so this was the focal area for the Golden Spike. I did have some scratchbuilt structures to choose from, but my Walther's roundhouse (weathered, detailed, interior lighting), my Walther's Coaling Tower (painted/weathered); an IHC sanding facility to which I had added a wood sand bin, would all have qualified. I also included an overhead crane (Campbell Kit) and some small scratchbuilt structures as part of the five required (Figure 3).

This picture shows a small scratchbuilt brick structure, the Campbell Traveling Crane, the side of my roundhouse, and some simple scenery to hold it all together.

Engineering (Civil & Electrical):

There are really three sub-categories to the Engineering requirement.

First, you must show three types of trackage, all properly installed and ballasted - all can be commercial trackage. By 'types of trackage', the NMRA suggests turnouts, crossings, grade elevations, etc. To make things even easier, there is no requirement that you display three different types of trackage. Three turnouts would meet the requirement. In my case, I had many turnouts (since I was using my yard area for the Golden Spike). I also had a double crossover near the entrance to the yard, and the track leading up to the coal dump for the coaling tower was a 'grade change'.

Second, you must have your track wired so that two trains can be operated simultaneously. You could do this with DCC, or with block control in DC. You can also do it a simply as having a passing siding where you can 'park' one train while operating a second train - then park that one and run the first again. I met this requirement by having two blocks and two cabs. I also had sidings where I could park a train and cut the power.

Finally, you have to provide one additional electrical feature such as powered turnouts, signaling, lighted buildings, etc. This can be as simple as adding some lights in your buildings. Again, because I used my yard area, I had powered turnouts as well as

some dwarf signals and lights in some buildings.

The Visit:

Once I thought I had met all the requirements for the Golden Spike Award, I wrote up a simple description of the rolling stock, the structures, and the engineering features that I thought met the requirements, and included some photos showing them as well. Then I contacted Norman Frowley to set up a time for Norman and his team to visit my layout to evaluate it for the Golden Spike. Norman serves as the Chairman of the Achievement Program for our Garden State Division. Norman also encouraged me think about any other aspects of the layout that I might want his team to evaluate.

Because I had completed about forty (40) square feet of scenery in the yard area, I also completed the paperwork for the Master Builder: Scenery Award and decided to have the team evaluate some of my structures as well.

The Sunday in early December 2007 that we had chosen for the visit dawned with an accumulating snow falling. That didn't stop Norman and his team (Tom Wortmann and Tom Casey) from heading 'up north' to West Milford. The team spent over four hours in the basement by the layout! (Okay, there was a coffee break and a lunch break, but these guys were 'on task' for a considerable amount of time.) In the end, I had earned my Golden Spike Award - my original goal. I also qualified for the Master Builder - Scenery Certificate and four of my structures earned Merit Awards. Wow, what a day!

I really had fun preparing my rolling stock and my layout for the Golden Spike evaluation. It gave me the motivation I needed to head downstairs and work in a focused way. If you have a layout, or a module with track, I encourage you to consider the Golden Spike Award as well. Who knows, you might already qualify for that and more! More information about the Golden Spike Award can be found on the NMRA website at this address:

www.nmra.org/achievement/gold.html . 



Chuck Diljak
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THE TIMETABLE

Friday-Sunday, 3/28-3/30/08, Railroad Prototype Modelers Valley Forge, Desmond Great Valley Hotel & Conference Center, One Liberty Boulevard, Malvern, PA. Forty prototype clinics, vendor rooms, display room for attendee's models, and Sunday layout tours. For more information: www.phillynmra.org/rpmmeet.html

Friday-Sunday, 3/28-30/08, 4/4-6/08, 4/11-13/08, The New York Society of Model Engineers Spring Exhibition, 341 Hoboken Rd, Carlstadt, NJ. Friday evenings 7-10PM, Saturday and Sunday afternoons 1-6PM. Adults \$5, children \$1, children under age 5 Free. For more information: www.modelengineers.org/

Saturday, 4/12/08, Model Railroad Spring Meet, Sunrise Trail Division, St. David's Lutheran Church, 20 Clark Blvd., Massapequa Park, NY. 10:00AM to 4:00PM. \$2.00 for NMRA/STD Members. Others \$3.00. For more information: www.sunrisetraildiv.com/

Saturday-Sunday, 4/12-13/08, Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD. Saturday, 9AM-4PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. General admission \$7, children under 12 Free, family \$14. For more information: www.gsmts.com

Sunday, 5/4/08, NMRA Garden State Division Spring Meet,

The Model Railroad Club, 295 Jefferson Avenue, Union, NJ. 12 Noon. For directions: www.tmrcki.com/

Saturday-Sunday, 6/28-29/08, Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD. Saturday, 9AM-4PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. General admission \$7, children under 12 Free, family \$14. For more information: www.gsmts.com

Sunday-Saturday, 07/13-19/08, NMRA National Convention: Anaheim Special, Anaheim Convention Center, 800 West Katella Avenue, Anaheim, CA. For more information: www.nmra.org/2008

Sunday, 8/24/08, NMRA Garden State Division Summer BBQ, Garden State Model Railway Club, 575 High Mountain Road North Haledon, NJ. 12 Noon. For directions: www.gsmrrclub.org

Thursday-Sunday, 09/11-14/08, NER Regional Convention: Empire Junction, Holiday Inn, 441 Electronics Parkway, Liverpool, NY. For more information: www.empirejunction.org

Saturday, 10/25/08, NMRA Garden State Division Fall Meet, in conjunction with the The New York Society of Model Engineers Fall Exhibition, 341 Hoboken Rd, Carlstadt, NJ. 10 AM. For more information: <http://modelengineers.org/>

Thursday-Saturday, 11/13-15/08, Craftsman Structure Show 2008. For more information: www.css08.com

TO HAVE A SHOW OR MEET LISTED, PLEASE E-MAIL THE INFORMATION TO GSDWHISTLEPOST@YAHOO.COM