



# THE WHISTLE POST

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

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## IN THIS ISSUE

- A View From The Observation Car  
Commentary From Our President
- In The Engineer's Seat  
Ramblings From The Editor
- 2006 Garden State Comet Convention Update
- Utilizing The NMRA Kalmbach Memorial Library
- My AP Adventure  
By Norman Frowley
- GSD Club Spotlight  
Ramapo Valley Railroad Club
- Out Of The Roundhouse  
Book Reviews  
Product News,  
And Reviews

## NEXT STATION STOP ON THE GSD EXPRESS -

### **Garden State Division Spring Meet**

Hosted By The

### **NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY HI-RAILERS CLUB PATERSON, NJ**

The Country's Largest 3-Rail Layout!

**Date: Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006 – 12 Noon to 4 PM**

A light lunch will be served along with the usual assortment of contest table, clinics and white elephant table

**This meet will be held in conjunction with the NWNJ Hi-Railers open house weekend, and GSD members will have free admission to both the N Scale and 3-Rail layouts all day.**

**This meet's entertainment will include -**

(subject to change)

**California Railroads – Tom Wortmann**

**Pixel Magic – Karen Parker**

**Also, there will be special presentations/clinics at 12:00 and 2:00 open to the general public on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor**

**See page 16 of this issue for directions**

**! SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE FOR THE**

**NEXT ISSUE IS APRIL 17<sup>th</sup> !**

## A VIEW FROM THE OBSERVATION CAR

By Tom Wortmann, GSD President

My fellow GSD Model Railroaders,

Our winter business meeting in Ho-Ho-Kus was a big success. We had the largest turnout ever since being active again, and for that I thank you. Our meets have become larger and even though the weather was not the greatest, a good number still showed up. Interest in our hobby and in the division is very heart warming.

We held our elections, had the current officers give their reports, and then we were treated to an interesting clinic by Tom Casey on making curved turnouts out of Atlas number 8 turnouts. Afterwards, the Ramapo Club did an outstanding job of providing us with trains galore to round out a great Sunday afternoon. And lest I forget, please welcome in our newest GSD Directors, Karen Parker, Anthony Piccarillo, and acting Director, Ciro Compagno who is filling out Ralph Heiss' term since he stepped down. They are here to help the rest of the BOD make the GSD a great group to be a part of, and there is always room for more help (hint, hint!).

Now we are looking forward to the rest of 2006, and what a year it's going to be! Hopefully many of you like myself will be attending the National Convention in Philadelphia this summer, and if you have said in the past that you don't like to attend a National convention because of the travel involved, well then this is the one for you, because it's right over the river in Pennsylvania. How much more convenient could it be?

But our main focus is now toward the fall, when as we all know by now, the GSD will be hosting the Northeast Regional Convention in Parsippany. We already are hearing from NMRA members in Delaware, Long Island and Canada about it, so the buzz has already started! Our location makes a prefect location for rail and non-rail activities alike, and we have contacted manufacturers, hobby shops and clubs to make sure you have a wonderful time. Please remember, if you have a layout, please open it up to us for the convention. You pick the day and the time, and remember, no layout is too small, has too little scenery, or has too little track or anything of the kind. We and the entire Region we want to see your hard work that you are proud of!

We also still need more volunteers, and people to give clinics and presentations that wish to share with others an idea or a method that they know works, so why not give it a try? We also need people to handout flyers, provide directions and all the little things like that that make things run smoothly. An hour here, an hour there, that's all we ask. Please email us at [gsdtrains@yahoo.com](mailto:gsdtrains@yahoo.com) or contact any officer as listed in this Whistle Post.

Thank you as always,

Tom Wortmann  
GSD President

The Whistle Post is published 4 times a year for the NMRA members of the Garden State Division, as well as newsletter subscribers. The thoughts and opinions expressed in the WP do not necessarily reflect those of the Division. Products and publications mentioned in the WP are in no way endorsed by the Division. Any incorrect spelling is purely accidental.

### CONTRIBUTING TO THE WHISTLE POST

The WP welcomes contributions from the membership. Letters, articles, photos, and any other prototype or model items may be e-mailed or mailed to the address below. Please include return postage if you'd like the material returned.

**! SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT WP IS APRIL 17th!**

### WP EDITOR

Ralph Heiss  
148 Hudson Street,  
South Plainfield, NJ  
07080



**Northeastern Region**

*The National Model Railroad Association, Inc.*

cnjlv@yahoo.com

## GSD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Sparta, NJ

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Ciro Compagno  
Staten Island, NY

## IN THE ENGINEER'S SEAT

By Ralph Heiss, WP Editor

Well, it's a new year, and if I do say so myself, 2006 is going to be one busy year, with the NMRA National in Philadelphia PA, the NER Regional in Parsippany NJ, the Prototype Modelers Meet in Malvern PA, and of course our regular division meets. Your truly will be busy, as I will be presenting clinics at both of these big meets, so if you plan on attending some of these meets, please stop by and say hi!

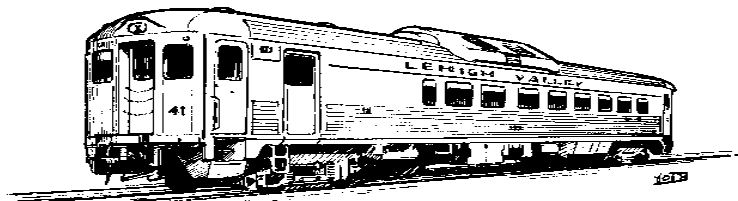
OK, so much to cover this time around, so I'll be quick – First off, a big thank you goes out to the Ramapo Valley Railroad Club for hosting our last meet, and like our President said, it was very enjoyable for a business meeting, because of the dedicated and friendly club members kept trains running for those of us with short attention spans! (yeah, that's me!) With that, I am starting a new feature in the WP, entitled "GSD Club Spotlight", which is intended to give the smaller, but by no means less interesting clubs and groups in our area a chance to be in the spotlight and strut their stuff so to speak. I hope it will be a reoccurring if not regular feature in the pages of the WP. On page 11, you'll find our first installment, appropriately covering the Ramapo Valley Railroad Club.

Second, I have been prompted to restart our own Yahoo! Group for the GSD at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gsdnmra/>, for those of you who are internet savvy. Our President and I had started this as a place for news regarding our Fall Convention awhile ago, but after seeing how successful the NJ Division has done with their group as away to allow their members to communicate with their fellow NJD members, and for the NJD BOD to communicate with their members regarding meets and other important issues in between releases of their newsletter, CLINKERS, I thought I should really get the word out to everybody. It only takes a moment to sign up (you can use your current e-mail address) and to get approved (this keeps non-members from accessing the site and posting Spam), but once logged in, you can share files, post photos, and chat with other members. This by no means replaces our website, but when things come up last minute, our esteemed President can't always be there to change the website to reflect important news. I hope you'll at least give it a chance and check it out, I think you'll find it very useful.

And as always, a big, big thank you to our continuing contributors to the WP, and please (and DON'T make be beg, people!) think about contributing to the WP if you haven't. It isn't painful, anything is fair game (my personal wish is to see more kit and book reviews, and how-to articles), and I can help you if you feel your writing skills aren't up to par – That's why they call me the Editor! OK, that's it for this month, so I'll see you at the next GSD meet in May!

Until next time, green signals ahead.....

Ralph Heiss, WP Editor



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DEPARTMENT  
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Chairman**

Bob Tumielewicz

**2006 Convention  
Committee  
Members**

Roger Oliver

Tom Wortmann

Tom Casey

Ted Dilorio

**Membership  
Chairman**

Tom Casey

**GARDEN STATE COMET 2006 CONVENTION UPDATE**

**By Bob Tumielewicz, Convention Chairman**

Hello fellow GSD members!

As you read this latest update, it's hard to believe the Convention is less than a year away. In the immortal words of our division president "It's crunch time". The convention committees continue to make positive progress. Since my last report, a few additional members and others have volunteered to either give a clinic, or open their home layout to tour, and some have even offered to do both. But we still are looking for additional clinicians and home layouts. Keep in mind, your home layout need not be 100% complete or take-up the entire basement for it to be considered for the tour. This could be a good opportunity to discuss your plans with visitors who may give you answers to questions you have or great ideas to improve your layout.

As I said in my previous update I can't stress this enough, but more volunteers are needed. We need people to help with pre-Convention activities such as publications, map preparation, handouts, just to name a few. We also will need help during the Convention itself with tasks such as staffing the Hospitality room, working the auction, and clinic coordination. No previous experience is required.

Please join us and help GSD carry off a successful convention. You can contact any of the Garden State Officers and let us know how you can help. (See this issue's sidebar and the GSD website for contact information.) As we keep saying, anything and everything you can do will be greatly appreciated. Help us make the "Garden State Comet" a success. And as always, please visit our web site - <http://www.trainweb.org/nergsd/> and the GSD Yahoo! Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gsdnmra/> for up to the minute updates.

Sincerely,

Bob Tumielewicz

GSD 2006 NER Regional Convention Chairman



**Only 7 months till the Garden State Comet Arrives!  
Be a part of it!**

**IMPORTANT  
UPCOMING  
LOCAL MODEL  
RAILROAD AND  
RAILFANNING  
EVENTS**

**March 24-26,  
2006**

**Prototype  
Modeler's Meet**  
Desmond Great  
Valley Hotel,  
Malvern, PA

**April 7-9, 2006**  
**East Coast Santa  
Fe Modeler's Meet**  
Gateway Model RR  
Club,  
Brooklawn, NJ

**May 6-7, 2006**  
**NWNJ Hi-Railers  
Club Open House**  
185 6<sup>th</sup> Ave,  
Paterson, NJ

**May 21, 2006**  
**GSD Spring Meet**  
NWNJ Hi-Railers  
Club,  
Paterson, NJ  
12:00PM

**May 18, 2006**  
**NJ Division  
Hamilton Twp.  
Meet**  
Switlik Recreational  
Building  
Hamilton Twp, NJ  
9:00AM

**UTILIZING THE NMRA KALMBACH MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

**(Reprinted With Permission From The November 2005 NJ Division  
CLINKERS Newsletter)**

**Kalmbach Memorial Library – A Primer  
By Thomas Mossbeck, Research Associate**

*This article will introduce the reader to the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) and its resources. After reading this you should have a basic understanding of the library, its contents and services, and how they can be utilized. If you need additional information about the library, or have comments, please don't hesitate to contact us.*

Welcome to your Kalmbach Memorial Library, the research library of the National Model Railroad Association. The library houses a unique collection of railroad material which is used by model railroaders and historians to gain further knowledge of the many facets of the hobby.

There are two basic ways that the library can be used; in person or long distance. You can either come to the library to do the research yourself, or you can have the staff do the work and mail the material to you. To submit a research or photocopy request you can call, write, fax or email, or you can use the online fill-in form on the library's website [www.nmra.org/library](http://www.nmra.org/library). Other contact information is listed at the end of this article.

Requests come in many forms. They can be as simple as a copy of a certain article that you may have heard of or seen a reference to, or they can be as complex as finding out the type of water column used on the Reading, the number of different manufacturers who have produced models of Big Boys, or information on how to scratchbuild live catenary systems. Frequently, questions also involve plans of locomotives and rolling stock, as well as information about a specific location, such as a yard or passenger station.

In order to answer these questions, the staff has a variety of source material from which to get information. I will begin by listing of some of the collections and resources available at the library then briefly discuss each one and explain their uses to the modeler.

John Kentlein – H.K. Porter Collection

Bruce Meyer – EMD Collection

Photo collection

Periodical collection

Car and Locomotive Builder's Cyclopedias

Official Guide of the Railways

Official Railway Equipment Registers

Poor's Manual of Railroads and Moody's Railroads

Book collection

Historical society, club, museum and SIG publications

Video collection



### **John Kentlein – H.K. Porter Collection**

This collection has over 780 builder's photos, catalogs, blueprints and other data chronicling the history of the premier industrial locomotive manufacturer. If you are interested in Porter locomotives, we have published a reprint of the 13th catalog *Porter Steam Locomotives, Light and Heavy*, which is available for sale at the library. The book also contains a roster of Porter locomotives including indication of the photos in the collection.

### **Bruce Meyer – EMD Collection**

If you are looking for paint diagrams of locomotives from GM's Electro-Motive Division, then the Bruce Meyer collection is for you. With over 1,400 EMD paint scheme drawings from various railroads, operation manuals and other diesel locomotive items, this collection is a valuable tool to the model railroader wishing to paint and letter EMD equipment. A complete listing of available diagrams can be found on the library website under "Our Collection", or you may call us and we will be glad to check on the availability of any drawing which may be of interest to you.

### **Photo collection**

There are approximately 100,000 prints, slides and negatives in the library's photo collection, with approximately 25 % currently cataloged. Notable is the Miller Negative Collection, which includes 4,347 images representing 110 railroads. Developed by Harold B. "Dusty" Miller, it covers the years 1934-41 and therefore documents the peak of steam power development. All views are static, and in some cases show the locomotive in stored or partially dismantled condition. The bulk of the images are of western roads, with particular emphasis on the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe and Western Pacific. Some of these photographs were highlighted in the book *Steam on the Feather River Route*, which is still available for sale at the library. We can offer prints of any photo, slide or negative in our collection. If you are interested in finding out if we have the pictures you are interested in, all you have to do is contact us and we will gladly do a search and mail you a list of relevant images for your review.

### **Periodical collection**

Over 50,000 modeling, prototype and historical society magazines, as well as vintage Railway Age, Railroad Gazette and Railway Review publications make up the Kalmbach Memorial Library's periodical collection. Most are indexed so the material is easy to locate. The periodicals can be used for copying specific articles or as sources for answering research questions. If you would like articles on hand laying turnouts we will be glad to mail you two or three examples, or if you are looking for original primary material about the electrification of the Pennsy, we can look up information in vintage publications describing the efforts to carry out this huge task.

### **Car and Locomotive Builder's Cyclopedias**

These are great for finding information about freight and passenger cars, and locomotives, and all their components. Information, drawings and photos of brake systems, under frames, boilers, wheels, and everything else that make up the finished products. We have cyclopedias from the 1880s to 1997, so all eras are well represented.

May 20, 2006

NJ Division  
Monmouth County  
Meet  
Eatontown Mall  
Community Center,  
Eatontown, NJ  
9:00AM

June 1-4, 2006

NER Spring  
Convention  
Worcester Holiday  
Inn  
Worcester, MA

July 2-8, 2006

NMRA National  
Convention  
Pennsylvania  
Convention Center,  
Philadelphia, PA

July 19-22, 2006

O Scale  
National  
Convention  
Parsippany Hilton,  
Parsippany, NJ

Oct. 20-22, 2006

NER Fall  
Convention  
Parsippany Hilton,  
Parsippany, NJ

## Official Guides of the Railways

If you are in need of passenger train schedules then this is the publication for you. Our website lists all the years in the collection so you can request specific copies. The publication lists all passenger train stations in North America, and has schedules for all trains serving those stations, sorted by railroad. Many also have maps of their lines.

### Official Railway Equipment Registers (ORERs)

Published quarterly, the ORER is a complete listing of freight cars owned by the railroads and private car companies. Cars are sorted by railroad and listed according to their numbers. The following information is provided for each listing: AAR mechanical designation, markings and type of car, numbers, inside and outside dimensions, door dimensions, capacity, and the number of cars in each series. Freight connections and junction points are also listed, as well as a recapitulation of all the freight car equipment for an easy overview of the total number of cars sorted by mechanical designation. The website lists all the ORERs in the library's collection. Again, it is just a matter of contacting us and letting us know which railroad(s) and year(s) you would like copies of, and we will mail them to you. This information is useful when trying to accurately number your freight cars, finding out which cars were owned by a given railroad, and for putting together a prototypically accurate freight car mix on your layout.

### Poor's Manual of Railroads and Moody's Railroads

These publications have great information on the railroads' finances, track mileage, equipment holdings, traffic, histories and comments on operations and finances. The amount of information varies with the size of the railroad, but everyone should be able to find useful data in these publications.

### Book Collection

The library is home to more than 7,000 books and manuals, spanning all areas of model and prototype railroading. The books are classified according to the Drury system, a railroad-specific classification system named after former Kalmbach Publishing librarian George Drury. Books can then be categorized by such subject matters as Cars, Engineering, Locomotives, Model Railroading and Model Building, General Railroading, Specific Railroads, Traction, and Foreign (non-North American), just to name a few. We rely heavily on the book collection, as well as the periodical collection when conducting research.

The collection is constantly growing due to the generosity of members who donate books they no longer have a use for, and from families who are looking to dispose of a material following a member's passing. We are also receiving a fair amount of newly published books from publishers who in return get their books announced in the monthly Library Car column in Scale Rails.

### Historical society, club, museum and SIG publications

We have more than 275 different publications from railroad historical societies, clubs, museums and NMRA SIGs (special interest groups). We also have an extensive collection of NMRA region and division newsletters. The historical society and SIG publications are great sources for in-depth articles on narrow subject matters. Chances are if an article on a particular subject has appeared in a one of these publications, this will be the single best source of information on that subject, excluding books.

## IMPORTANT WEB SITES

### Garden State Div. Home Page

[www.trainweb.org/  
nergds/](http://www.trainweb.org/nergds/)

### Garden State Div.

### Yahoo! Group Home Page

[http://groups.  
yahoo.com/group/  
gsdnmra/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gsdnmra/)

### Northeastern Region Home Page

[www.trainweb.org/  
northeasternregion/  
NERHOME.HTM](http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERHOME.HTM)

### Metro North Div. Home Page

[www.  
metronorthnmra.org  
/index.htm](http://www.metronorthnmra.org/index.htm)

### New Jersey Div. Home Page

[http://mywebpages.  
comcast.net/  
njdivnmra/](http://mywebpages.comcast.net/njdivnmra/)

### Philadelphia Division

## [Home Page](#)

<http://www.phillynmra.org/>

## [Mid Eastern Region Home Page](#)

<http://members.cox.net/chyde/MER/MER.html>

## [NMRA Home Page](#)

[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)

## [RPM Valley Forge Meet](#)

<http://www.phillynmra.org/RPMMeet.html>

## [NMRA 2006 National Convention Home Page](#)

<http://www.ij2006.org/>

## [O-Scale 2006 National Convention Home Page](#)

<http://www.2006oscalenat.org>

## [East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet](#)

[http://www.gatewaymodelrr.org/index\\_](http://www.gatewaymodelrr.org/index_)

## KALMBACH LIBRARY CONT.

### Video collection

Over 500 videos make up the library's video collection. They are divided into three categories: Modeling, Prototype, and Clinics. Just like photos, videos are a great source of inspiration and prototype information to the modeler. Whether you are looking for videos on railroading in general, railroad- or area-specific videos, or modeling and how-to clinics, chances are the video collection has something for you. The best part is that they are all available for rent. The price for members in the United States is \$5.00 per tape, postage paid (note that some titles have two or more tapes, in which cases the price is multiplied accordingly). You can find a complete listing on our website, or we will be glad to mail you printout if you do not have internet access. For members outside of the U.S., please contact your local A/V Dispatcher for price and availability.

I hope this article has provided you with insight into the library, its collections and how to use them. In coming issues of this newsletter I will go deeper into these resources with examples of modeling and research applications. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me any time.

### Contact information:

Thomas Mossbeck, Research Associate

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4121 Cromwell Road

Chattanooga, TN 37421

Phone: 423-894-8144 / Fax: 423-899-4869

Web: [www.nmra.org/library](http://www.nmra.org/library) / Email: [kalmllibresearch@aol.com](mailto:kalmllibresearch@aol.com)

## MY A/P ADVENTURE, PART 1

### By Norman Frowley

Like most middle aged model railroaders, my interest in the hobby has its roots in childhood. I too, like many, had the Lionel O27 gauge trains with an oval on a plywood board. But as time passed I too, as almost everyone, developed other interests in life which interfered with the pursuit of modeling. Fast-forward to my son's thirteenth birthday. I bought him a starter set of Marklin trains, and when he lost interest two or three years later, guess who inherited them. But this time I was going to do it right. I bought Marklin equipment and started building a layout. But was I doing it right?

Were the structures I was building done well? How about my scenery? Did it measure up? And most important of all, who could I talk to about trains. My wife, who at bottom really couldn't care less (although she does make an effort to seem interested!) My friends, who thought I was somewhat peculiar in this regard? The answer came in the form of membership in the Garden State Division of the National Model Railroad Association and in turn my involvement with the NMRA's Achievement Program (AP).

The Achievement Program is a way in which a modeler can improve his skills in various areas of the hobby and get awards and Certificates of Achievement in the process to boot.



There are certificates for excellence in scenery, structures, electrical and civil model railroad engineering, and in building prototype models, railroad cars and motive power, to name a few of the types of Achievement Certificates one could earn. If you receive seven certificates in all from various categories, you become a Master Model Railroader, which is somewhat of a big deal since there are not that many around who hold that title.

I read about the AP program on our Division's website and got in contact with the Division's AP chairman, Mel Ponton, who was both effusive in his enthusiasm and extraordinarily affable in his demeanor. We discussed the program in general and I sent him some digital photos of the work I had done on my layout. He got back to me quickly and praised me profusely for what I had done. He suggested I start with the Golden Spike Award, the easiest award in the AP program. To qualify for the Golden Spike one has to do the following:

- (1) Display six units of rolling stock one has constructed (scratchbuilt, craftsman or detailed commercial kits);
- (2) Construct a minimum of eight square feet of layout containing structures and scenery;
- (3) Construct five structures (again, scratchbuilt, craftsman or detailed commercial kits), and
- (4) Display three different types of properly ballasted and installed trackage, such as a turnout or crossing. The trackage must be correctly wired to allow two trains to operate simultaneously and you must also exhibit one additional electrical feature, such as lighted buildings or powered turnouts.

My layout technically qualified for the award. Mel visited my home with another member (indeed officer!) of the Division, Tom Wortmann, and the paperwork was completed. I was on my way, but little did I know what an adventure it would become. With the Golden Spike Award Certificate neatly mounted on the wall near the "control tower" of my layout, it inspired me to greater model railroading heights.

I set my goal at going all the way in the AP program, no matter how long it took. I started with something I had then been doing for years on my layout: building scenery. Little did I know when I began work on the scenery Achievement Certificate how much I would ultimately learn.

To qualify as a Master Builder of Scenery, and that's the title with which you are dubbed when you earn the certificate, I was required to construct to completion thirty two square feet of HO scale layout containing the necessary scenic elements of terrain, structures, background, lighting and realism/conformity, and this scenery had to be judged and earned 87 out of a possible 125 points under NMRA guidelines. Any construction judged under NMRA standards which receives 87 points is awarded a Merit Award, or is of Merit Award quality. Well, my layout seemed to technically qualify from the get go.

But it wasn't that simple, since the scenery had to be judged and meet certain criteria. For example, there are 35 points in total which may be awarded for terrain. This means you must show natural features such as rocks, water, trees, hills and depressions, as well as man made features such as roads, cuts, fills and streets. If different scenes are exhibited you must use backdrop dividers or other vision blockers to separate them. To score high the scene must show different types of vegetation, the effects of animals and weather, and in urban areas oil stains, ruts in roads, cracks, drainage ditches or sewers etc. In other words, your work must have the details which make every layout come alive.

**GSD AREA  
HOBBY SHOPS**

**Hi-Way Hobbies**  
highwayhobby.com  
Ramsey, NJ

**The Big Little  
Railroad Shop**  
biglittle.com  
Somerville, NJ

**The Model  
Railroad Post  
Office**  
modelrailwaypo.  
com  
West Milford, NJ

**The Model  
Railroad Shop**  
themodelrailroad  
shop.com  
Piscataway, NJ

**Rails To  
Cottages**  
railstocottagesinc.  
com  
Rockaway Boro,  
NJ

**Kenvil Hobbies**  
Kenvil, NJ

**All Aboard**

## MY AP ADVENTURE CONT.

Knowing these requirements forced me to reexamine my layout and give it a closer look. Where there were separate complexes of buildings, I laid out more trees to create more intense vision blockers. I rutted and more heavily weathered my roads, enhanced their shoulders and created drainage ditches around some. I added rocks in sundry areas which might otherwise be sparse to create visual interest and enhanced the vegetation, adding varieties and growths of subtly different colors. The improvement was dramatic.

As another example, one can earn up to 20 points for the way structures are situated and installed. According to the NMRA judging standards, structures for the Scenery Certificate are considered from the standpoint of prototypical suitability, placement and appearance as scenic effects. The judges look at bridges, buildings and all other types of structures to see if they are "in the ground" and not sitting on top of it, and whether the structures are appropriate to the scene.

In other words, you probably won't score by placing a high rise building in the middle of an open field. Moreover, switch machines have to be properly disguised if not under the table. In this respect I faced a challenge which I met during initial construction of my Marklin C Track layout. The track, which consists of pre-molded plastic ties and ballast, is not overly realistic. To hide the turnout mechanisms I ballasted the entire trackage, in effect camouflaging the turnout machinery in the process. It was tedious, since the ballast had to be carefully cleared from the pre-molded ties and the diluted white glue used to fix the ballast had to be kept away from the turnouts themselves to avoid electrical shorts. The effort was worth it!

Other elements judged are the backdrop you use, the lighting employed in the structures cars, signals and overall to illuminate the layout scenery and the realism/conformity of the scene. I overdid it with the lighting by installing a professional lighting board and multiple spots and other lights. But I feel that lighting is critical to creating the illusion of reality. Cold fluorescent lighting is fine for many purposes but it simply won't do if your object is to recreate an afternoon or evening scene. I admit I went overboard with the lighting but it's something I have a pet peeve about. If you can't see the layout's details what's the purpose of building the layout in the first place? So I was ready to be judged, and with a degree of trepidation I called Mel and asked him to come by with other judges to see if I measured up. The judges visited my home and spent quite some time ogling my creation.

To my surprise, not only did the scenery qualify for the Certificate, I received a Merit Award for my work as well. Another award to hang on my wall! Tom made some very valuable recommendations as to where I could improve even further. Some of the screws used to fix in place my switch lights, which are Veismann three-arm lighted semaphores, were still visible despite some ballast placed around the light's base plates to conceal them. There were small separations between my roads and the surrounding shoulders which had to be closed and Tom recommended that I use some alcohol stain in the crevices of the rocks to bring out the details even more.

I was encouraged by the experience and I set about to work on the Electrical Engineering Certificate. My adventure was to continue into the weeks and months ahead. - **NF**

**Norman will continue share his travels on the path to Master Model Railroader in an upcoming issue of the Whistle Post**

Hobbies  
Ledgewood, NJ

F&M Hobbies  
Denville, NJ

Millburn Train & Hobby  
Millburn, NJ

Tony's Train Town  
Cedar Grove, NJ

Larry's Model Trains  
Midland Park, NJ

Hudson Shores Model train Depot  
Blauvelt, NY

Gene's Trains  
Brick, NJ

The Depot  
Harrington Park, NJ

Old And Weary Car Shop  
Tappan, NY

The Model Shop  
Ridgefield Park, NJ

## GSD CLUB SPOTLIGHT

### Highlighting The Clubs And Groups Of The GSD

In this new feature, we'll be taking a look at some of the model railroad clubs and special interest groups that make up the GSD, and maybe even some that aren't in the GSD member area, but are at least close by. And what a better way to kick this series off than with a look at the club that was host to our last GSD meet, the **Ramapo Valley Railroad Club** in Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey!

I was lucky enough to corner club Treasurer and GSD Director Tom Casey after our meet, and he was kind enough to take some time and talk with me and show me around the layout. As we walked around the layout, he gave me a little background into the club's history and also about the design process behind the layout. The club itself was formed in 1961 in a strip mall along Rt. 17 in Ramsey, NJ. This was their home for about 25 years, until reconstruction forced them to find a new meeting place and layout home. Then about 1992, they were fortunate enough to strike a deal with the Ho-Ho-Kus VFW, and have been there ever since. The club currently has 25 members and always welcomes potential new members.

As for the layout itself, it was that after many plans had been put forth for a vote, that the basic track plan you see today won by just one vote! The plan was further refined to include elements that some members felt were lacking. Coincidentally, it was Tom Casey who's design was chosen! The layout room itself is approximately 40X40, with the layout taking up a slightly smaller dimension, to allow for adequate aisle ways to conform to local fire codes. Like most contemporary layouts, this HO scale layout is built upon the classic L-Girder style of bench work. The layout is of a walk along design with an eye level scenic divide used to focus attention on the immediate environment of the train. The layout was built using code 83 commercial track, with code 100 only in the staging areas, and #8 turnouts as a general standard, with #6's used in industrial areas where necessary. Most mainline curves are greater than a minimum 30-inch, and no grade exceeds 2.25% maximum. Caboose Industries ground throws are used on turnouts off the main line, but on the main and at remote locations, Circuitron's Tortoise switch machines are used.

The general theme of the layout is Northeastern New Jersey, Southeast New York, west of the Hudson River, but no specific towns have been modeled. The layout is roughly divided into two "divisions", the Hill Division, and the Water Level Division. They are connected and are operated end-to-end during timetable operations, but can be run separately during public open house sessions. The various towns or scenes have been built by various teams of members to model as they see fit, within the general constraints of the layout design. Like any layout, certain members are interested in, or are good at, particular aspects of the hobby. Member and WP contributor Fred Gemmill along with Dennis Alderman and others enjoy scenery, while club members Mike Schroll, Steve Zeff, and Tom Von Recklinghausen enjoy the electrical aspect of the hobby. Club President Chris Freeman enjoys timetable operations and local switching. Computer aided signal detection has been a new and important part of the layout, using GSD member Anthony Piccarillo's CTI system, and CTC dispatching is also being implemented for the future. Lest I forget to mention the method of getting those trains over the road, the club chose the NCE DCC system to operate their trains. Tom also made a point of mentioning that one aspect of the original DC power system is the use of feeder wires to each and every rail section of track, and not to rely on rail joiners alone to transmit power, has indeed proven to be the better choice.

Please keep in mind that some of the hobby stores listed above have been kind enough to supply the GSD with door prizes for our meets, so please go out and support them, and tell them you read about them here in the Whistle Post!



## GSD CLUB SPOTLIGHT CONT.

The popularity of the club in the last few years has been nothing short of spectacular, as they have been featured in several of Bergen County's most popular local news magazines including 201 and Bergen Health and Life. This publicity in part helped bring in nearly 1600 visitors to their 2005 holiday show! If you haven't had a chance to see this layout, make tracks to the town with the curious Native American name, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ, and check them out! Better yet, if driving is problematic, just hop onto New Jersey Transit's Main or Bergen Line to Ho-Ho-Kus, walk down the hill, and you're right there! You won't be disappointed!

The club can be visited during any Friday night work night, except for the first Friday of each month, which is their regular business meeting. You can get directions and contact info from Dennis Alderman at 845-359-0746, or by visiting their website at - <http://members.aol.com/rvrrclub>. - RH

### GSD AREA CLUBS

#### **Ramapo Valley Railroad Club**

[aol.com/rvrrclub/](http://aol.com/rvrrclub/)  
Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ

#### **Garden State Model Railway Club, Inc.**

N. Haledon, NJ

#### **Northern NJ N-Trak**

[members.aol.com/  
awOL/ntrak.html](http://members.aol.com/awOL/ntrak.html)  
Patterson, NJ

#### **Northwest NJ Hi-Railers**

[njhirailers.com](http://njhirailers.com)  
Patterson, NJ

#### **The Model Railroad Club, Inc.**

Union, NJ

#### **Staten Island Soc. Of Model Railroaders**

[members.tripod.  
com/~MSKRR/](http://members.tripod.com/~MSKRR/)



Some of the great scenery work of member Fred Gemmill.



This is one of the Editor's favorite scenes, and also happens to be one of those member-created scenes on the layout.



SISMR.htm  
Staten Is., NY

**NY Society Of  
Model Engineers**  
modelengineers.org  
Carlstadt, NJ

**Garden State  
Model Railroad  
Club**

geocities.com/  
CapeCanaveral/  
Launchpad/6611/  
Asbury Park, NJ

**Packanack Lake  
Model Train Club**

packanacklake.  
com/ Organizations/  
TrainClub/  
TrainIndex.htm  
Wayne, NJ

**Gateway Model  
Railroad Club**

http://www.gateway  
modelrr.org  
Brooklawn, NJ

If you know of a club, or are a member of one in our area (or is at least reasonably close by!) and aren't listed here, please contact the Editor, and we'll include them in the listing next issue!



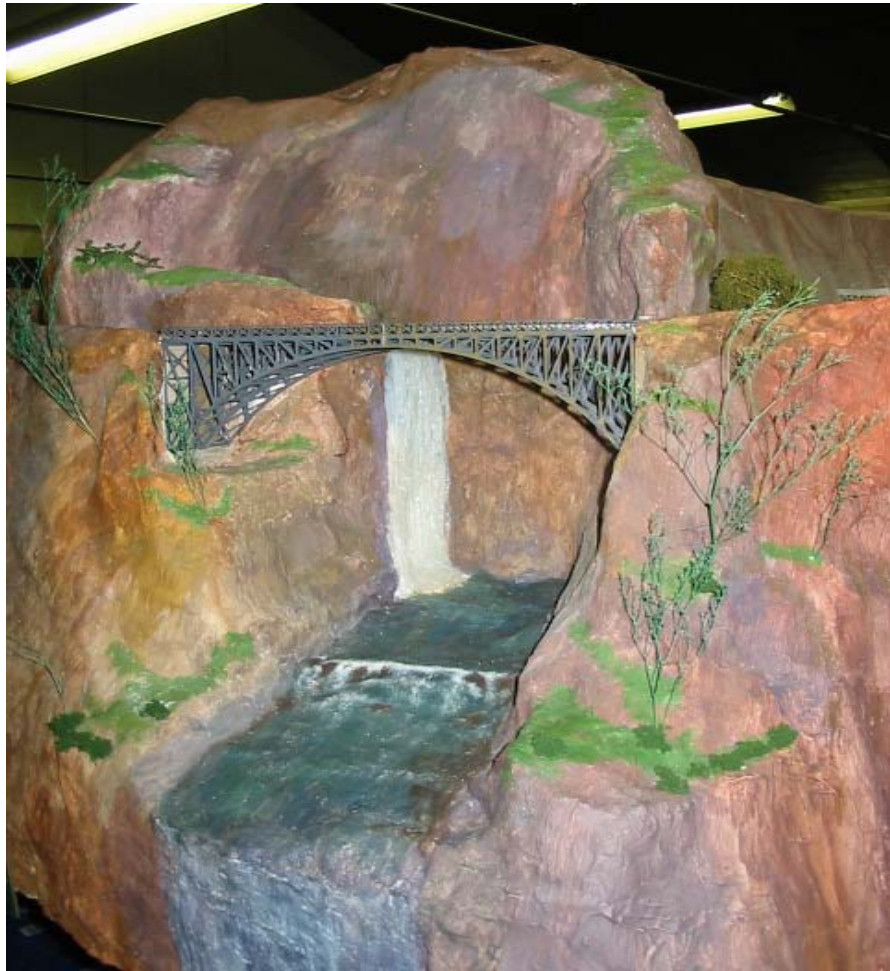
A good shot showing the Hill and Water Level Divisions of the layout.



A layout just isn't complete without some big bridges!



GSD CLUB SPOTLIGHT CONT.



Beautiful scenic vistas abound on the Ramapo Valley RR.



One of the work horse home road units of the Ramapo Valley RR

## OUT OF THE ROUNDHOUSE

### Book Reviews, Product News And Reviews

"From The Roundhouse" is the place to tell us about that book that you just couldn't put down, or about that kit that was fun to build, that you want to tell everyone about it!

I'm sure everyone got something train related this year for the holidays, and in this installment, I'll be reviewing a book I got this season, "Train Wrecks Of New Jersey's Railroads, 1910-1940".

#### **TRAIN WRECKS OF NEW JERSEY'S RAILROADS, 1910-1940 - SPECIAL EDITION COVERING CNJ AND CRP WRECKS TO 1958**

Written By – Benjamin L. Bernhart

Published by – Outer Station Project Publications, Dauberville, PA

Released – Fall of 2005

Book Type – Soft cover, standard layout, B&W, 138 pages

MSRP – 20.00

OK, while admittedly not a particularly pleasant title or subject, this well done, self published book, comes in two versions - One printed for general release, and another one of a run of 300 exclusively for The CNJ Historical Society and the Model Railroad Shop in Piscataway, NJ. While it is possible to get one of the special expanded versions without being a member of the CNJ Society or by making a road trip to Piscataway, it's worth finding if still available for the extra content.

As for the book itself, it covers, by railroad, word for word the Railroads, State Public Utilities Commission, and Interstate Commerce Commission's accident reports of everything from rear-enders, to head-ons, to automobile-train "interactions", and of course the occasional regrettable employee death. The earlier reports are interesting in regards not only to trackage or locations that no longer remain, but more so to the equipment involved, and sometimes even the lame excuses offered up by the crews themselves for why their train fell off the tracks or didn't stop in time! Reading these reports will show that malicious mischief is nothing new, and just how deadly it was to be an engineer or fireman upon an old Camelback steam locomotive.

When available, Author Bernhart has included the railroad and government drawings used to show how the accident occurred, much like the police report when get have a car accident, and the use of archival photos of the equipment in question. The glossy paper and well done photo reproduction is top notch. There is surely everyone's favorite railroad featured in this book, from the PRR, CNJ and Lackawanna, to the more obscure West Jersey And Seashore Railroad (PRR) and Atlantic City Railroad (Reading). For those of you who know me well, my hunger for railroad history was well satiated by this book, and I feel it is truly a window back in time, not just about New Jersey railroads, but railroading as a whole. - **RH**

# Directions To GSD May Meet

Northwest New Jersey Hi-Railers Club,  
185 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Paterson, NJ 07524



Fenced in parking, very accessible from Routes 80, 208, 4 and 20

Due to the many different ways to get to the club available, we cannot reprint every possible set of driving directions. The starting point is to get yourself onto Rt. 20 NORTH (accessible from Routes 80, 4 and 46). Starting from Rt 80, take Rt 20 North **4** traffic lights (you will pass Krauses Candy Shop, cross under Rt.4, and go past a Burger King and Dunkin Donuts), before you come to the 5<sup>th</sup> Ave U-Turn traffic light. This is where you will be making a **left** hand turn across Rt. 20, go up the hill, and at the stop sign, make the **left** onto 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. Now go **3** traffic lights and two blinking lights (passing a funeral home and a Wachovia bank), and crossing over the railroad tracks. As soon as you cross the tracks, make the **left** at the traffic light onto River St. Then make your very first **right** onto 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, and the big white building on your **right** side is the club. You may park on the street, or at the end of the block, inside the fenced in parking. As you face the building, go to the door to the left, down the hallway to the elevators and proceed to the 2nd floor, which will bring you out just outside the meeting room door. For more directions, please consult your favorite driving direction webpage, or visit the GSD

Yahoo Group at -<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gsdnmra/>

for more directions from Routes 4, 208 and the Garden State Parkway.

Or visit <http://tinyurl.com/7ha2j> for Mapquest directions from your location of choice, or the NWNJ Hi-Railers website at - <http://www.njihirailers.com/>