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The WHISTLE POST

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

SANDY DOESN'T DAMPEN GSD's FALL MEET

Hurricane Sandy was coming. But, over 40 model railroaders from the Garden State, New Jersey, Sunrise Trail, and the Hudson Berkshire NMRA divisions met in New Brunswick for the GSD's Fall meet. Given the number of attendees, distances traveled, clinics given, and the layouts that were on tour, this can be marked down as a successful meet.

Three interesting clinics were given at the meet, ranging from Free-Mo module construction supplemented with a bit of history on the Camden waterfront by Mike Prokop, a prototype slideshow tour along the Northeast Corridor by Jim Homoki, and a modeling clinic on how to construct an HO scale beer bottle water tower by Chuck Diljak.

The layouts in the GSD's southern territory were a fine collection to see. Joe Calderone's Delaware & Hudson and Jim Homoki's Newark Terminal layouts have been open to many NMRA events in the past and it is always a treat to see them. In addition to them, two other layouts were open: The Bound Brook Presbyterian Model Railroad Club and Ralph Heiss's Lehigh Valley layout featuring the Jersey City waterfront. Plenty of work by the Bound Brook club was visible in the scenery and Ralph has invested an incredible amount of time building the complex trackwork that supported the Lehigh Valley's marine operations. Thank you to all of the clinicians, layout owners and members who made the Fall meet a success. 



▲Mike Prokop not only gave a clinic on Free-Mo, he brought his FreeMo modules of the Camden waterfront to the meet

Photo by Chuck Diljak

Photographs of the meet are on Page 6




Raising the Bar

A much overlooked aspect of our membership in the NMRA in general and the GSD in particular is our role as ambassadors of good will and enthusiasm for the hobby of model railroading. Unlike many local modeling clubs we meet throughout the geographical area of our division rather than in one fixed location. Unlike most railroading clubs we visit each others homes for meetings or to view and discuss layouts on what we call layout tours. But most importantly we stand ready, willing and able, with our hands outstretched to welcome all comers to share and enjoy the world of model railroading.

As we move forward the NMRA will be developing and implementing a mechanism to reach out even further to the general public; to all those who may be interested in model railroading whether a member of the NMRA or not. A new education program is in the works to bring modeling skills and knowledge to all in a structured and professional way. This is an exciting time to be a member of the Garden State Division. We can look forward to the day when we as an organization will be running courses or clinics on various modeling and railroading subjects, conducted by trained members, which the public can attend and from which everyone can learn the joys of modeling.

The new education program is a big

undertaking but one I have advocated over the years as a means of teaching our craft to others in a predictable and high quality fashion. The program will provide a portal through which the interested but uninitiated modeler can enter the hobby. It will provide a basis for exciting clinics at meetings for the membership. It will afford those with interest the opportunity to learn how to conduct an engrossing and informative clinic using course materials prepared by modelers with vast experience and knowledge in the subject matter.

I am confident that the Garden State Division will be in the forefront of this new chapter in the history of the NMRA. Stay tuned for more information and specifics as they become available, but in the meanwhile keep reaching out to everyone, member or not, to spread the word. Model railroading is more fun and more fulfilling than..... I don't know. You fill in the blank. Happy modeling. 

Welcome to our New GSD Members!

- ◆ Joseph D'Agostino, Staten Island, NY
- ◆ Kai Ebinger, Newton, NJ



GSD Reaches a Milepost!


Happy New Years! On behalf of the GSD board we wish you all a healthy and Happy New Years.

While on the topic. In 2013 the GSD hits a significant milestone as the division turns 50! Not many groups can lay claim to this distinction. We will be sharing some of the history and past accomplishments within the Whistle Post on page 11. In addition the board is looking to plan a celebratory event sometime in the early summer. As this issue is being prepared the board is looking at several interesting venues and programs for this celebration. As the planning progresses we will share with you all where we are at. Please stay tuned here on the Whistle Post and on our website. On page 11 you will also find details and information on how to order an HO scale anniversary car. The model is from Accurail and features great graphics. There is a limited supply so you may want to order now!

On a separate note the board hopes that any members who may have been effected by hurricane Sandy are on the road to recovery. The hurricane had damaged the originally proposed site for the winter meet in Staten Island. Since that location is still being worked on and is being used for recovery purposes the board has reverted back to

the Marine hall. We were fortunate to get the site again given the short notice. As always please come out and visit the Staten Island gang at the meet they will have a great program!

For the winter meet I will be sharing my clinic on operations. My introduction to this aspect of the hobby was a seminal moment for me as I saw how a semi static model railroad display could be turned into a functional railroad in miniature. Much of my inspiration came after I was invited to join a round robin group in south Jersey. This group meets every Friday with several large layouts that are capable of hosting many operators.

My involvement in this group and others has provided me with helpful information which I have been able to take back and help improve my own railroad. This is especially true with track alignments, defining track purposes and prototype track usage. Whether you're interested in a particular prototype or if you have a free-lanced railroad you can find a wealth of information on the web or in print that can help you get started in operations and take your pike to the next level. Hopefully you can make it to the winter meet and hear my clinic. Would love to hear from you on this! 

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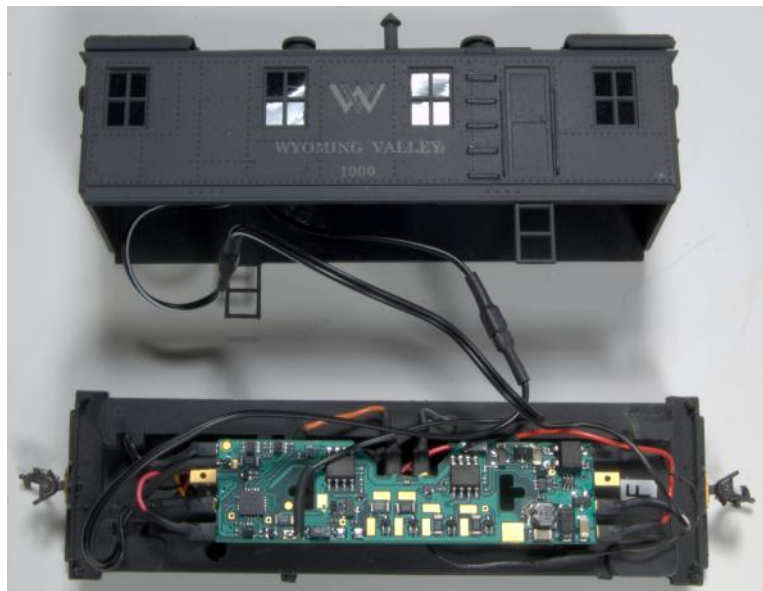
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ADDING DCC TO THE MDC BOXCAB *by Chuck Diljak*

Not long after part two of my article on updating the MDC Boxcab appeared in the Fall 2012 issue of the *Whistle Post*, I received an e-mail from *Ciro Compagno* asking how I wired the LED's. "This would make a great article," according to *Ciro*. And, here we are!

I'm a neophyte when it comes to electronics. It is an area of model railroading I do not understand. I am always happy to be able to hook up two wires to a component and be on my way. But, if you add a third wire, resistors, capacitors, LED's, or just about any other electronic component to the mix, I am lost.

As I was working on the MDC Boxcab, I realized that the A6X decoder from Train Control Systems (TCS) would be perfect for the job. The main reason I was excited about using it is that the decoder already has all of the electronic components built into it for various lighting options: 12v bulbs, 1.5v bulbs, and LED's. I wanted to use 3mm LED's from Miniatronics for the Boxcab. And, normally, when you use LED's in an application, you need to also install resistors. The A6X decoder already has the resistors built into the board. So, it was only a matter of soldering wires from the LED

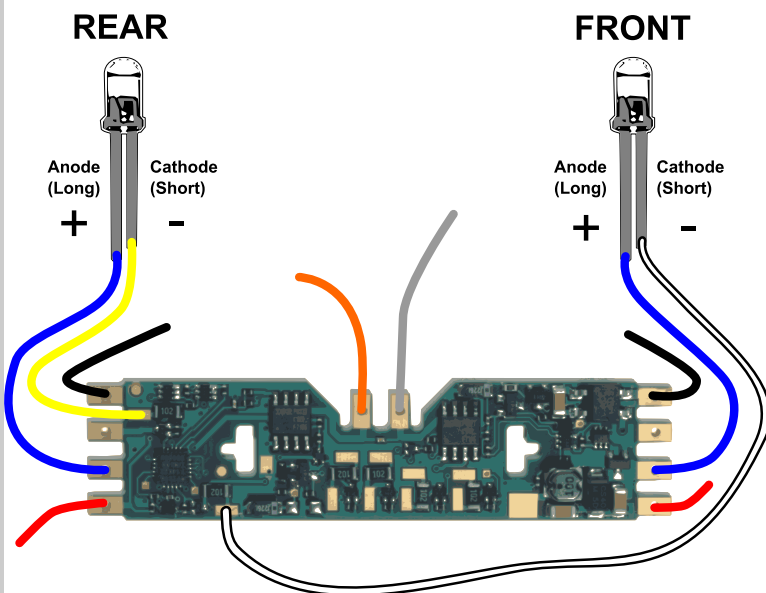


▲ The photo above shows the MDC Boxcab with the shell removed from the frame, exposing the wiring and TCS A6X decoder.

leads to the correct soldering pads on the decoder board.

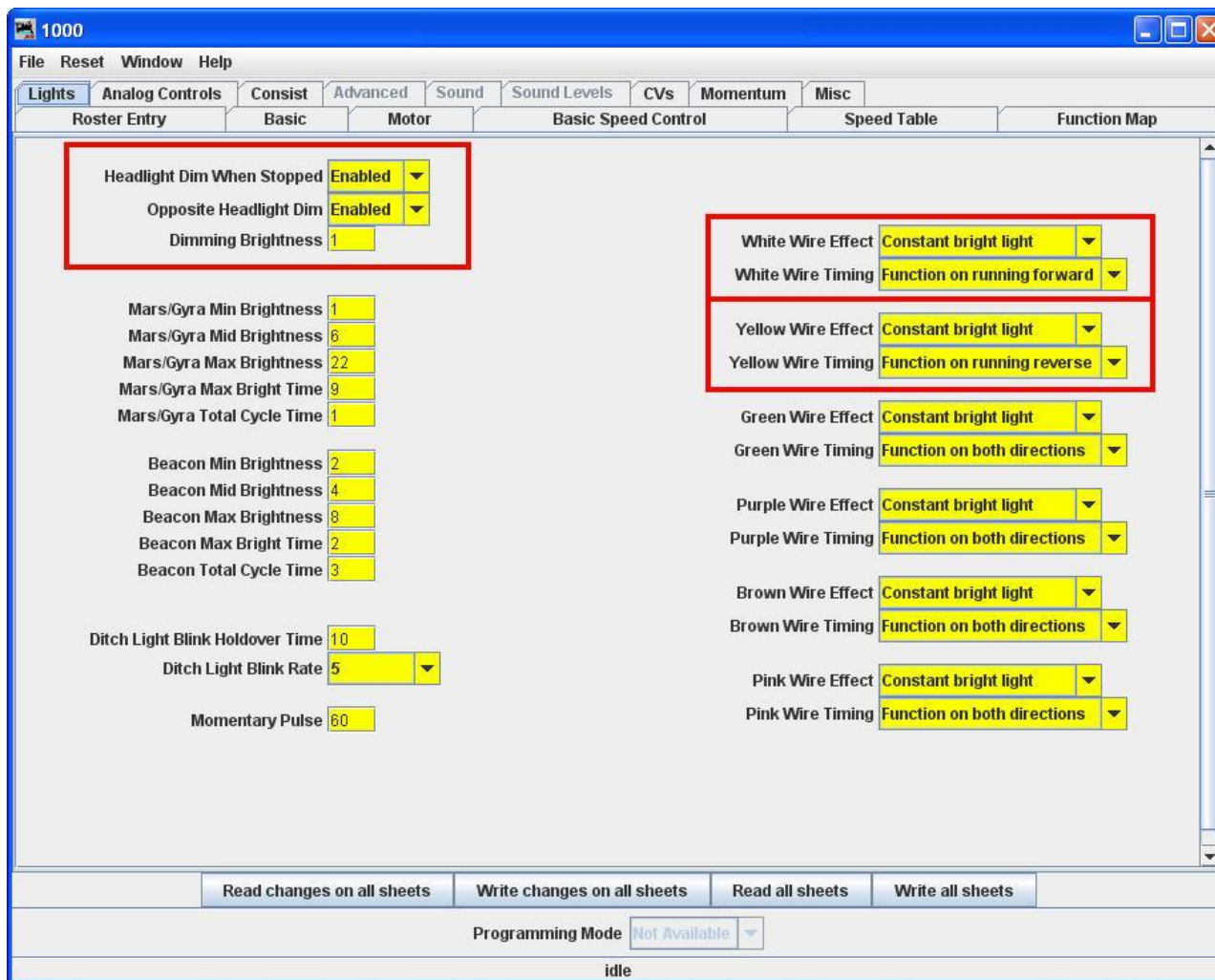
The other brilliant advantage, although minor, is the A6X decoder has two soldering pads for attaching the blue common leads from the LED's.

Since I wanted to be able to detach the shell from the frame, if I ever needed to service the locomotive, I used 2-pin Micro Mini Connectors from Miniatronics for the wires from the LED's to the decoder board. This is optional, but I like to plan for contingencies. In order to prevent errors in re-connecting the wires, one pair of wires is oriented so that the section with the male plug is connected to one LED. The other LED has a section of wire with the female plug. If you are installing a different decoder that has only one lead for the common, twist the two blue common wires together and solder them to the decoder and use resistors.



▲ The author's wiring diagram for the TCS A6X decoder.

(Continued on page 4)



▲ A screen shot from DecoderPro, showing the Lights tab with the items modified by the author outlined in red.

(Continued from page 3)

It was also important to make sure the frame and the shell were properly identified as to which end was the front of the locomotive. I attached a label with an "F" to the top of the frame. The locomotive shell has an "F" decal in the lower right corner of the exterior, as per prototype practice, to designate the front of the engine. Both can be seen in the accompanying photo.

The wiring diagram also denotes, by color, how the wire leads from the NWSL Stanton drives are soldered to the board. The decoder board provides two pairs of soldering pads to connect the red and black wires. However, the orange and gray wires from each truck need to be twisted together and soldered to the pads near the center of the board.

Once the LED's and motor leads have been soldered


to the board, I tested the locomotive to make sure the lights worked and the engine ran. Once I was satisfied, it was time to program the locomotive.

I use Digitrax as the DCC system on my layout. And, a few Digitrax-using friends kept telling me to use DecoderPro, freeware software for programming decoders. **Check the DecoderPro website to make sure it supports your DCC system.**

To use DecoderPro with Digitrax, you need to purchase the LocoBuffer component from RR-Cirklits that connects the Digitrax Loconet to your computer. I have no idea why I waited so long to make this investment, but it sure has simplified programming decoders and I will never go back to the old days of programming through the throttle.

DecoderPro makes it easy to program the decoder without knowing which CV to update and which value to update it to. I usually start off programming a new decoder by setting the locomotive on the programming track, identifying for DecoderPro the decoder that is installed, and then assign the decoder a unique address. Placing the locomotive on the programming track prevents you from updating all the locomotives on your layout, by accident. Once you have assigned the decoder its address, you can then place it on the layout and adjust other decoder settings and see the results, quickly.

For the Boxcab, depending on the direction of travel, I wanted to have the lead headlight at full brightness and the trailing headlight dimmed. The screen shot from DecoderPro shows the tab and options I changed to make this happen. By switching to the motor tab, I also experimented with the settings for the motor to improve its operation.

Electronics manufacturers continue to make things easier for model railroaders. With improved DCC decoders and easy to use software, it makes an electronics neophyte like me enjoy this hobby more. 

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tcasey@co.bergen.nj.us

YOU MIGHT ALREADY QUALIFY

BY BRUCE DE YOUNG A.P. CHAIRMAN

In the GSD this year, we have been lucky to have individuals open their layouts for member visits on the days we have had our quarterly meets. That means that I have seen members' work 'up close and personal' on a level that I had not seen before.

On one layout I saw some magnificent hand laid track work that included hand laid turnouts, crossovers, and crossings. It was not only beautiful, it was functioning flawlessly. I told the member that he had already completed one of the harder requirements for the Civil Engineering Certificate in the Achievement Program. All he had to do was write it up and have us come to formally evaluate it.

In another basement I saw several fantastic scratch built and kit bashed structures, all highly detailed and tastefully weathered. I asked the member if he had ever thought to have them evaluated for the Structures Certificate. He said that he had, but was worried that they weren't 'good enough'. They were.

Another member was clearly into super detailing steam engines and he showed me several that were made from kits that he had super detailed, re-motored and weathered. I mentioned that although they weren't scratch built, two of them could be evaluated for the Motive Power Certificate.

Several of the layouts would certainly earn the owners both the Golden Spike Certificate and in all likelihood, the Scenery Certificate. All that was needed was the paperwork and a call to me to set up an 'official' visit.

You get the point. Many members of the GSD have models and scenery on their layouts that already make the grade for a Merit Award in the A.P. Program. All that they would need to do is to fill out the paperwork and set up a date/time for a small group of A.P. examiners to come evaluate their work.

I have said this before and it bears re-stating. The paperwork is really not that bad and we have GSD members who can help you if you have questions.

Resources

NMRA AP website info can be found here:
<http://nmra.org/education/achievement/>

AP masters series:
<http://nmra.org/education/achievement/midx.html>

AP awards:
<http://nmra.org/education/achievement/apa.html>

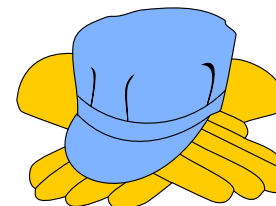
Railroad Line Forums:
http://www.railroad-line.com/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=24676

Garden State Division AP:
<http://www.nergsd.com/achiev.html>

Bruce DeYoung, Garden State Division AP Chairman
bdeyoung@optonline.net

Forms:
<http://nmra.org/education/achievement/apforms.html>

So, look around your modeling bench, your shelf of completed models, or your layout. I'll bet that there is something there that already makes the grade. You might already qualify for a Merit Award! 🏆



FALL MEET PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos by Chuck Diljak



▲ The GSD had a great turnout for the meet with over 40 in attendance from 4 divisions.

▼ Mike Prokop provided the group with an interesting clinic on Free-Mo modules which he brought several to share.



Different layouts, but similar scenes. ▲ Ralph Heiss's HO scale Lehigh Valley Harbor Terminal features a model of the well known float bridge in Jersey City and ▼ Jim Homoki's float bridge on his HO scale Newark Terminal.



WINTER MEET

FEBRUARY 9, 2013 9:00 AM

LOCATION

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
46 ONTARIO AVENUE
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10301

DIRECTIONS

- STATEN ISLAND EXPRESSWAY TO CLOVE ROAD EXIT.
- TURN LEFT ONTO CLOVE ROAD.
- TURN LEFT ONTO OSWEGO STREET.
- TURN RIGHT ONTO ONTARIO AVENUE.
- THE CLUBHOUSE IS ON THE LEFT.

FOR A GOOGLE MAP, CLICK ON THE GOOGLE LOGO, BELOW:



AGENDA:

9:00– 12:00 NOON

BUSINESS MEETING AND BOARD ELECTIONS

CLINICS, 50/50, WHITE ELEPHANT TABLES, BRING 'N BRAG, DOOR PRIZES, MODEL JUDGING
1:00 PM TO 5:00PM

OPEN HOUSE LAYOUT TOURS

COST:

\$6.00

WINTER MEET, STATEN ISLAND

Chuck Diljak: Stained Glass

As a teenager, Chuck built an AHM church kit that had paper inserts for stained glass. He liked the idea of stained glass to introduce some color to his layout, but the results were less than satisfactory. Years later, Chuck bought a new church kit that he wanted to spice up with stained glass. But, he was uncertain how to accomplish it after his previous failure. While doing some research on modeling stained glass, he fell back on the memory of something else he had done in the past. Chuck's clinic will talk about the different methods he found and how he successfully modeled stained glass in his new kit.

Joe Calderone: Operations Primer

Joe will present a lighthearted and informative look at an interesting aspect of the hobby. Joe will share what you need and how to get going with operations. Find out how to get more from your layout no matter how small or how big a pike you may have. Practical examples and ideas will be presented.

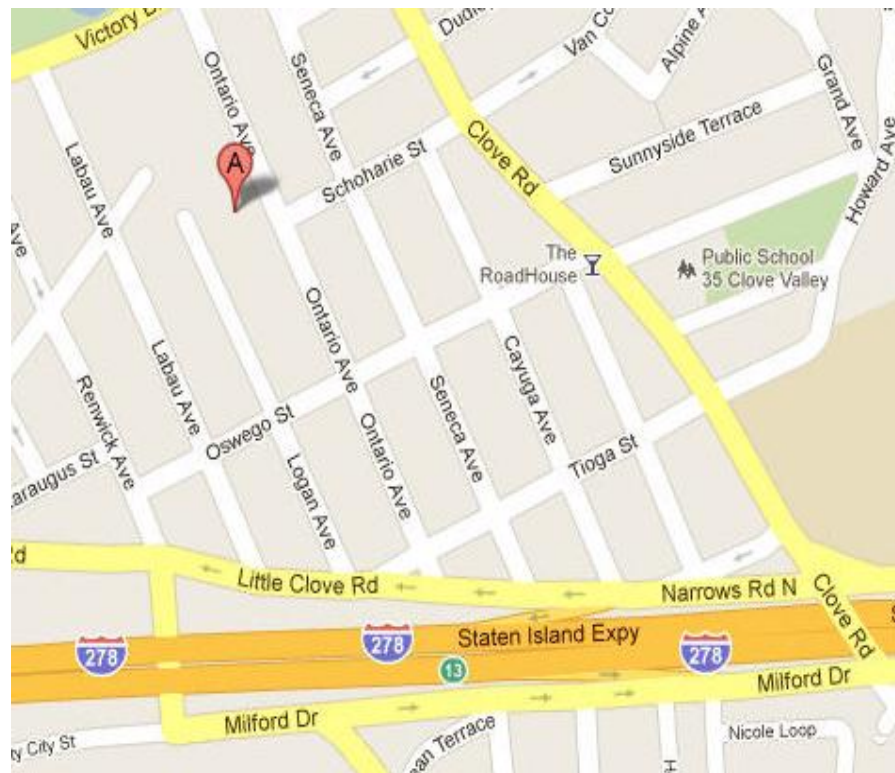
Layout Tours:

There will be four layouts open with three new layouts open for tours. Please visit the GSD website for more information on the meet and a video at: <http://www.nergsd.com/upcoming.html>


Anniversary Cars:

Please note the Anniversary box cars shown on page 11 will be available for sale at our Winter Meet (\$25.00) while they last! Also if you pre-paid for a car and did not yet receive it, please contact Tom Wortmann at this new email address at;
miskyrails@msn.com

Same Location
New Layouts!



WINTER MEET, STATEN ISLAND

Some new layouts along with several layouts from last year will be open for the winter meet. Tour maps will be provided at the meet 



West meets East on **Frank Russo's** modern era HO-scale Rio Grande Railroad. Frank's railroad features well done scenery.



Joe D'Agostino will share his expansive HO scale Pennsylvania Railroad. Joe's layout features great scenery with great classical Pennsy steam power.



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The Meeting Minutes and Infonet have now been moved to the GSD website. Clickable links provided below. Also links have been inserted for the hobby dealers on the right panel. Please click on any of the pictures to link to the dealers.

GSD Board

Meeting Minutes



We seek members who would like to give a clinic at our Division Meets. If you can present a clinic, **ANY topic, prototype, modeling or general interest**, you will be helping your fellow model railroaders enjoy their hobby and have fun while doing it! A video camera and projection screen will be available to assist your presentation. Fancy graphics are not required, just be prepared to demonstrate and explain the topic. We'll even help you set up your presentation to get you started. Did you know Clinics count towards Author and Volunteer AP credit?

We are currently looking for more clinics to fill up our meet schedule for the year. In addition we need new meet locations! Please contact Jim Homoki at the email address below Thanks! 📧

heavyelectric@netscape.net



NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE

The following Garden State Division members have been nominated for office for the GSD 2013.

Nominations can still be emailed to Joe Calderone at jcaldero@cisco.com.

The election of officers will take place during the annual business meeting. 📧

Office	Candidate
President	Ciro Compagno
Vice President	Chuck Diljak
Treasurer	Robert Dennis
Secretary	Anthony Piccirillo
Director	Jim Homoki
Director	Joe Calderone
Director	Bruce De Young
Director	Tom Wortmann
Director	Jim Fawcett

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AROUND THE DIVISION

THE ABC'S OF AN RPM MEET

Acronyms. The world is full of them, including the model railroad world. We have the NMRA, the NER, the GSD, the NJD, the AP, TT&TO operations, LDSIG, OPSIG, DCC, and now, RPM.

Many GSD and NJD NMRA members attended the fifth annual Northeastern Fallen Flags Railroad Prototype Modelers (NEFFRPM) meet at the Ted Blum 4-H Center in Bridgewater, NJ on September 29. That's a lot of acronyms in one sentence!

Misconception #1

I will admit, until recently, I avoided RPM meets. I used to think RPM meets were attended by rivet counters just as many NMRA and non-NMRA members consider the NMRA contests and Achievement Program to be filled with rivet counters. I couldn't have been more wrong.

I discovered that RPM meets are a place to showcase what you have been working on, network with fellow modelers, absorb information from clinics and other modelers, and maybe purchase an item or two from the vendors who are present. This isn't a contest. It is a learning experience.

Misconception #2

The aspect of the hobby I enjoy most is structure building, and I expected the models displayed at RPM meets would be mostly locomotives and cars. While there were many locomotives and cars on display, there were plenty of structures to keep a guy like me happy.

Misconception #3


I also did not know why I should attend an RPM meet if I already attend NMRA meets. The short answer: It gives you another avenue to meet some fantastic modelers. The RPM meet connected me to people who share my modeling interests. Until the RPM meet I only knew them through articles in the model railroad press. Now, I enjoy conversing with these new friends and my existing NMRA friends to learn more about this hobby.

So, if you are interested in attending next year's RPM meet in Bridgewater, there are two things you can do:

1. Join the Yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/neffrpm/>

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHUCK DILJAK

2. Bookmark the http://www.hansmanns.org/neff_rpm/

And, just to close with an acronym, I look forward to meeting you at next year's NEFF RPM! 



▲ *Chadd's Ford Junction, an intersection of the Pennsylvania and Reading Railroads, as modeled in HO scale by Lou Whiteley*

▼ *This Erie Lackawanna transfer caboose was modeled by Ben Bartlett in HO scale.*





Mileposts 1967

1963 Paul Mallery proposes an organizational meeting at the Summit-New Providence Model Railroad Club in Murray Hill on March 20. A petition to form a division was signed by 19 members present. The "Garden State Division" name was proposed by Len Frankel and adopted and Paul Mallery is appointed chairman. The flyer mailed to members was named the *Whistle Post*.


1964 Don Howd is named chairman of the division.

1965 The Garden State Division hosts the NER's Fall convention in Newark at the Robert Treat Hotel with 217 in attendance.

1966 Staten Island joins the Garden State Division. The number of member reached 177, by October and a *Whistle Post* subscrip-

tion cost 50¢ for two years for 10 issues.

There were 217 members as of March and Rix Beals is named chairman of the division. A joint meet with the Sunrise Trail Division is held at Sailor's Snug Harbor on Staten Island with an attendance of 75 members.

1968 Charles Gerow Jr. is named chairman of the division and Rix Beals replaces Paul Mallery as editor of the *Whistle Post*. A joint meet was held with the New Jersey Division in Camden. Attendees at the June meet at the Watchung Valley Model Railroad Club at Iselin station watched the passing of Robert F. Kennedy's funeral train during the meet. The division attempts to bid for the national convention in Newark. The presenters of the bid did not make it to the San Francisco convention in time to make their presentation. The 1971 convention was awarded to Great Britain, instead. There were 280 members as of March. 



It's taken us 50 years to make this car.

It's the official GSD 50th Anniversary car inspired by the Central Railroad of New Jersey's "Coast Guard" scheme from the 1960's. By basing it on the CNJ, this car will easily blend with your existing car fleet. This special HO scale 40 foot single door steel box car by Accurail features the GSD logo and car markings. The kit also includes a second number, 2013, as a decal.

Order your limited run car today. Just \$25 plus \$6 shipping or save the shipping and buy it at a GSD meet. We expect this car to sell out fast!

Make checks payable to the NMRA Garden State Division. Mail your check and this form to: Tom Wortmann, 68 Carmel Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10314

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Quantity _____ Amount Enclosed: _____



THE TIMETABLE

NMRA Garden State Division Winter Meet, Marine Corps League Clubhouse, 46 Ontario Avenue, Staten Island, NY, 10-5PM. See page 7 of this issue.

Sunday, 1/27/13, Northwest Jersey Train-O-Rama, Dover High School, 100 Grace Street, Dover NJ. 9AM-3PM. \$5 if preregistered or \$6 at the door. For more information: www.dovertrainshow.com

Sunday, 1/26-27/13, The Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show, Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds (The Big E), West Springfield, MA. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-5PM. Adults \$10, children 15 and under Free, parking \$5. For more information: www.railroadhobbyshow.com

Saturday-Sunday, 2/2-3/13, Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD. Saturday, 9AM-4PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. General admission \$9, children under 15 Free, Family \$18. For more information: www.gsmts.com

Saturday-Sunday, 2/23-24/13, Allentown Train Meet Associates Spring Thaw, Allentown Fairgrounds Agricultural Hall, Allentown, PA. Saturday 9AM-4PM, Sunday 9AM-3PM. Adults \$7, children 12 and under Free. For more information: www.allentowntrainmeet.com

Sunday, 3/3/13. Jersey Central Railroad Historical Society Railroadiana & Model Train Show, Mother Seton High School, Clark, NJ. 9AM-3:30PM. Adults \$5, children under 12 are free. For more information: jcrhs.org/rshow

Saturday-Sunday, 3/16-17/13, Greenberg's Train & Toy Show, New Jersey Convention & Expo Center, 97 Sunfeld Ave, Edison, NJ, 10-4PM. Adults \$7, Children 12 and under, Free. For more information: www.trainshow.org

Sunday, 3/24/13, Northwest Jersey Train-O-Rama, Dover High School, 100 Grace Street, Dover NJ. 9AM-3PM. \$5 if preregistered or \$6 at the door. For more information: www.dovertrainshow.com

Saturday-Sunday, 4/13-14/13, Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD. Saturday, 9AM-4PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. General admission \$9, children under 15 Free, Family \$18. For more information: www.gsmts.com

Friday-Saturday, 5/31-6/1/13, New England/Northeast Prototype Modelers Meet, Canton Community Center, 40 Dyer Avenue, Collinsville, CT. For more information: www.neprototypemeet.com

Saturday-Sunday, 6/22-23/13, Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD. Saturday, 9AM-4PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. General admission \$9, children under 15 Free, Family \$18. For more information: www.gsmts.com

Sunday-Saturday, 7/14-20/13, NMRA National Convention, "Peachtree Express," Atlanta, GA. For more information: www.nmra2013.org

Thursday-Sunday, 10/17-20/13, NER Regional Convention, "Tracks to Lakeport 2013", Laconia, NH. For more information: <http://seacoastnmra.org/seacoastWelcome.html>



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