

# THE WHISTLE POST

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

Number 88

Winter 2003

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## Winter Convention Highlights

### Fun for all

Our first Winter convention in I don't know how many years, was held at the Fire House in Chester NJ on January 19th and it was a big success.

We had a 75 x 75 foot room with plenty of room to move around. We asked everyone for a \$3.00 donation upon entering to help defray the cost of the hall.

50 plus members and non-members alike showed up to see what we had to offer and we did offer plenty.

Once the coffee was ready and the doughnuts opened, we started off the convention.

Not everything was ready or set up as planned but all in all it went fine. The white Elephant table was manned by Willie Butler who did a fine job and raised a few dollars for the division while helping out. You never know what treasurers you can find at these tables. Everything from Diesel Locos to books and in between was for sale on the table. The Division took a modest 10% of the sale price, again to help defray costs. The contest table was busy-

with one structure submitted by Russ Nicholson and 2 freight cars and one Steam Loco submitted by Robert M. Judging the entrees was Mel Polen, myself and Rich Laub from the Mid East Region who was a big help in training the judges as well as judging the models submitted. To be fair to all, judging took over two hours alone. Contest info can be found on page 5.

We said we were going to have videos going, but the VCR/TV was forgotten by me so that had to be passed up. For that I apologize. Two clinics went off fine. A fine presentation on freight operations of the Lehigh Valley RR in New Jersey given by Ralph Heiss and a clinic on making your electrical connections work better by your editor.

Don Jennings had his time saver module going and a number of attendees tried their hand at it.

Afterwards we held our annual meeting.

The officers gave their reports on the state of the division, They then took any

questions, then there was a report followed by a discussion of old business. One point was the continuing saga of the movement of Staten Island NY back to the Garden State Division. It hoped by all and especially the members from Staten Island that the issue will be put to bed at the next NER rep meeting in Connecticut next month.

Voting then took place for the new officers and some changes in our By-Laws and constitution pertaining to membership. Election results can be found on Page 4.

Please support the division and the officers by helping out whenever you can by volunteering help out whenever you can. Or run for office next year.

The next Division Convention is planned to be around April/May. Don't miss it. Our meeting committee is planning three conventions a year.

Check out the pictures of this one on page 7

## Message from the President

From the Director, Tom Matthews

### **The Garden State Division is turning a corner.**

As we turn the page to another year, we are also turning an important corner for the division. At the Annual Meeting, Bob McQueen became President of the GSD and is starting to set an agenda which should bring us to be the active division that so many have been working toward.

The Board of Directors will be setting a calendar of events in motion that will allow the division post a calendar of events far enough in advance that the model press will have the needed notice to post our activities. It has been a slow road till now, but with more and more folks getting on board the possibilities are innumerable. Bob

will have more on this in his column.

As Director to the Northeast Region of the NMRA, I bring you the following news.

The Board of Directors will be moving on the petition by Staten Islanders to have the boundaries moved to include them in the GSD.

The Northeast Region has obtained its tax exempt status with the Federal IRS. Work continues to get this same status with each state in the region. These tax status changes are important for the purposes of fund raising. With full exemptions the organization can accept donations from individuals. Several divisions already take advantage of this. If a member leaves an estate to the NMRA (or just a few items) the organization can sell the items and raise needed funds while the estate takes a tax deduction. Likewise, any donation would be a deductible

item for the giver.

Convention plans are well along for the NER Convention in Mansfield, MA (Boson area). This gives a unique opportunity to travel to the convention by rail. You can go directly to the web page for the convention at <http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERREG04.HTML> or see the NER page on the web at <http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERHOME.HTML> Or go through the NMRA site at <http://www.nmra.org/> and work your way through all the great stuff there. The Sunrise Trails Division is planning to host the Fall Convention on Long Island. That should be a great one too.

While were talking conventions, don't miss the National Convention in Toronto Ontario July 13-20. Information is on their site at [www.ml2003.com](http://www.ml2003.com).

## Promote the NMRA

We man a booth at local Greenberg shows to promote the NMRA as well as our division. Last time we helped out the Boy Scouts trying to earn the Railroading merit badge.

Here's some pictures of us checking out Don's module and others helping out the Boy Scouts..



(Left) Don Jennings, Bob McQueen, myself and Tom Matthews manning our booth.



## Clubs around the Division

### THE RAMAPO VALLEY RAILROAD CLUB

Meets Tues. & Fri.  
620 CLIFF ST.  
HO-HO-KUS, NJ 07  
Dennis Alderman 845-359-0746

### GARDEN STATE MODEL Ry. CLUB, Inc.

Meets Tues. & Fri.  
575 High Mountain Rd.  
North Haledon, NJ 07508  
[www.gsmrrclub.org](http://www.gsmrrclub.org)  
"O" SCALE CLUB  
Meets Tues. & Fri. at above  
Contact; Karl Geffchen 973-857-2825

### NORTHERN NEW JERSEY N-TRAK

Meets Fridays  
GARFIELD, NJ  
Harry 2001-460-7290 or Ric 201-939-2134  
<http://members.aol.com/awOL/ntrak.html>  
E-mail [trackcrew@aol.com](mailto:trackcrew@aol.com)

### THE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB, Inc.

Route 22  
Union, NJ  
<http://www.tmrcc.com>  
**MEMBERSHIPS OPEN**

### STATEN ISLAND SOCIETY of MODEL RAIL-ROADERS

HO Modular Club, Round Robin Meets  
once a month.  
Contact Willie Butler  
[Pennsy39@aol.com](mailto:Pennsy39@aol.com)  
<http://members.tripod.com/MSKRR/SISMR>  
**MEMEBRSHIPS OPEN**

### NY SOCIETY of MODEL ENGINEERS

HO & O scale club  
341 Hoboken Road, Carlstadt NJ  
201-939-9212  
<http://community.nj.com/cc/sme>  
**MEMBERSHIPS OPEN**

### GARDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

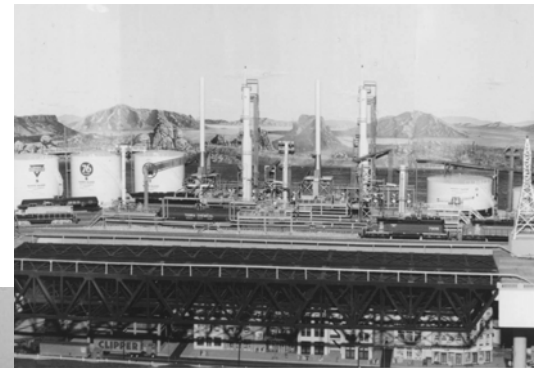
Meets Tues. & Fri.  
607 8<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Asbury Park, NJ 07

Did we miss a club? If so Please get us the information  
and we'll be glad to include it in the next issue

## Member Pics



This Issues layout pictures  
were sent by a member  
Louis Braun



## The AP program and you

Happy New Year everyone.

I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and got all the RR stuff you wanted from Santa. I cheated a little, myself. There is a guy named Mitch Brown who has had a table at the last 2 Greenberg shows. He is very skilled at modifying out-of-the-box engines to make them perform better. I have seen his N-scale engines pulling a dozen or so cars so slowly you almost can't see them move. I got a couple of matched HO engines from him at the last show and that is what Santa left me under my tree.

Rather than cover a new AP certificate this time I want to revisit the last topic – the Golden Spike Award (GSA). After I sent in my column last time, but before it was reduced to print, I sent a copy of what I had written to the regional AP Chairperson just to make sure that I wasn't saying anything that was flatly wrong. His response indicated that some of what I said did not agree with a printed document (which I did not have, or even knew existed) on the subject. When I learned of its existence, I called National and inquired about it. During that phone call, I pointed out that it appeared that the printed version differed with what was presented on the NMRA AP web site. They said that they would send me a copy of the print version and suggested that I bring the matter to the attention of the National AP manager, Pat Harriman.

So, I wrote to Pat and his associate, Frank Koch, responded, in part, as follows:

*Mel*

*The intent of the AP's GSA is to bring as many modelers into the AP as can meet the straight forward, NON-JUDGED requirements. There is a slight discrepancy in the text and the form -- detailed versus super detailed. I have always believed this should be "detailed" in both places, and will recommend to Pat Harriman, head of AP, that we make the two consistent.*

*"Detailed" is certainly more in the spirit of the whole GSA theme – demonstration of fundamental elements at a moderate level, free from judging and paperwork.*

*AP is about inclusion. Please note that both the "Written text" and the form are both on the website. There are other inconsistencies in wording that we will be correcting at some point.*

*Your article is well written*

*and accurate.*

Needless to say, I was pleased by the compliment but, more importantly, I was glad that I was not fundamentally incorrect in my presentation to you and that the program documentation, web-based and hard-copy, will be updated to reflect what truly are the requirements.

Lastly, I would like to point out something about the AP requirements in general. Most of the AP "Master" certificates require us to construct a number of models as part of the qualifications for the certificate. In each case, some portion of those models must be go through a judging process and receive a score equal to or greater than some minimum. As an example, for Structures, we have to build 12 structures and 6 of them must be judged and receive a score of at least 87 ½ points. They don't have to win any contests – they just need to be judged.

By the way, it was nice seeing you at the GSD Winter Convention. If I missed you, I hope we meet in the future, if you missed the convention, Well, I hope we'll meet at the next one.

Mel Ponton

## Elections

At the Winter Convention we held our annual elections. Here are the results.

For the office of President; Vice President McQueen has moved up that office per our constitution.

For the office of Vice President, Tom Matthews has taken this slot until July 2003 when he moves to PA.

For the Office of Trustee; Don Jennings has been re-elected. The Change to our Constitution was voted in. Now **all** members have voting privileges.

The Change to our By-Laws amendment was also voted in to read that **any** member paying the annual dues shall have voting rights at all meetings of the GSD.

Now it's clear that we will need a new Vice President by this summer.

Things are always changing and help is needed in every aspect of our division. Won't you please help us out? Volunteer, Help out, Run for office. Remember, the division is only as good as you make it. So lend a hand OK?

Thank you.

## The Contest Table

During our Winter Convention ( [www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion](http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion)) on which can be found the rules and guide lines for contests.

Judging followed strict NMRA judging standards and the judging was done by three judges. Mel Ponton, Richard Laub and Tom Wortmann. All pints given were then averaged out and awarded to that model.

All the models submitted were fine looking and judging was not easy. Anyone who has questions, I suggest they check out the National Website, ([www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)) and the Regional site

Winning third place in Structures was a free-lance brewery kitbashed by Russell Nicholson.

Winning third place in Motive power, Steam Engine was a fine looking Pennsy 2-8-8-2 by Robert Malberti

Taking second place in rolling stock, freight cars was a Pennsylvania poul-

try car also by Malberti

Also for display only was a great looking Pennsy Dormitory car, a Pennsy Tower and a operating block signal.

Thank you to all the contestants.



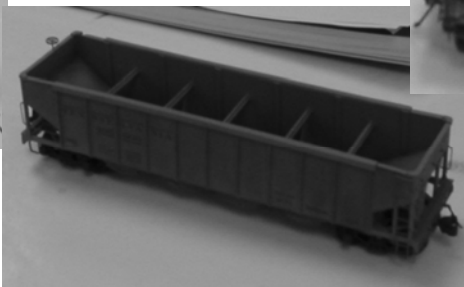
(Above) 2nd place in rolling stock, a Pennsy Poultry car.

(Below) 3rd place structures, A freelance Brewery.



(Above Middle) The judges review the National's rules on Judging before getting down to business.

(Below) A fine model of a Pennsy Hopper that the judges simply ran out of time to judge. Sorry Bob



(above and below Right) Two fine models brought in for display only



## Model Train Operations

Two years ago at the National Convention in San Jose, Robert A. Clark gave a great clinic on the subject of passenger train operations, and their application in model railroading. He said that Passenger trains have been discounted as a basis for a personal layout because 85 foot passenger equipment does not look good on the small radius curves used by many modelers..... and much of the situation may be due to a lack of information as the era is past. He then goes on to detail all the interesting possibilities passenger oriented layouts could provide.

I can see why a lot of people are not interested in passenger operations. Most of you guys and gals grew up in an era when passenger trains equaled old broken down cars and thoughts of The Sunset Limited six hours late in the middle of Texas, with a bunch of senior citizens eating their lunch out of paper bags. Most people got hooked on trains when they were about five years old, and for most people that means freight and modern diesel power.

There are a few of us who can remember big time passenger operations as a class act (no birthday questions please). Imagine stand-

ing at the arrival tracks at the Southern Pacific Oakland Pier as a big Daylight type GS-4 arrives with The San Joaquin Daylight, bell clanging, steam hissing, scaring the devil out of little kids and all concerned. Controlled mayhem, baggage trucks at the ready, fancy people running for the San Francisco Ferry, and a couple of tracks away, The City of San Francisco, pristine in Union Pacific yellow, getting ready to depart. Now that's something to try to model, and that finally is the point of this column.

Passenger ops and N Scale can go together like mom and apple pie. Those of us working in N Scale know the advantages it gives us as far as space is concerned. A ten car passenger train with a three unit PA on the head end is about 6.7 feet long in N Scale and over 13 feet in HO. What may be out of the question in HO is possible in N. Add DCC, so you can do a lot of switching in a terminal area, and you have the foundations of a plausible passenger layout.

But is it fun, and as interesting as moving freight around? That's a question only you can answer, but here are a few ideas for your consideration. In passenger opera-

tions, the big action takes place in the terminal area. It isn't possible to accurately model a complex big city terminal, but in N scale, you can get a reasonable compromise in a realistic amount of space. You might need a four or five track terminal, a small coach yard, an engine terminal, and a balloon track to turn the varnish. Now if you're out of space just run the main line out to a hidden staging area (Boston? Chicago? your choice).

So what about the action? Oh, it's there believe me! I tried making up a little schedule on a layout like this with six trains arriving and six departing. This gave an astounding number of movements what with light engines, baggage car shunting, actual departures, etc. I couldn't get it done in an evening, even though I was busier than that well known one legged man in that proverbial contest.

Granted, this is a specialized type of modeling. As somebody once said, You gotta dig it, which brings up another subject. Is anybody home out there? Are you reading this stuff? Send comments along with a box top from a Wheaties package to sanonja@nji.com. See you next time.

Rich Brown

## Railroad News

I heard that the East Broad Top Railroad is in serious trouble money wise. It's the narrow gauge railroad that we've all heard about located at Mt. Hope Pa. and if you haven't had a chance to see the railroad, now is the time to give it some thought as it may not be around much longer until some miracle occurs. Now I'm not saying that it won't but going there and buying a ticket will help. So few railroads still exist that we can ride and visit. As modelers and rail fans we should support the ones that are left. If they all pass on what will be left for our

grandchildren to see? Imagine a generation of people that never saw a steam engine puff, the sound of a live whistle or the smell of the live steam.

Now for a little good news. NY State and NYNJ Port of Authority are planning to adapt NY Metro North train line to for use as a freight line as well.

They expect this to allow 6 to 8 102 car freight trains access into NYC. People all over are praising the plans as it will greatly reduce the number of trucks on the road and that will help clean up the air. A number of Doctors are already pre-

dicting that this alone will reduce the amount of asthma cases in the state.

The one problem is that the only existing Hudson River crossing is way up at Selkirk NY near Albany.

It is hoped that someday another crossing will be created or that the State or the PA will finally give the OK to repair the railroad bridge near Poughkeepsie NY, that old Lehigh and Hudson River RR crossing that had a minor fire oh so many years ago. Well at least some politicians are thinking in the right direction. I know, Miracle of Miracles.

## Spring Meet Chester NJ



(Above left) Members check in.

Everyone seemed to have a good time at the Garden State Division's Winter Convention



(Above Right) Don Jennings explains his time saver module.

(Right and Below) Members attending Ralph Heiss's fine clinic on the Lehigh Valley Railroad.



### ***“Next Convention”***

**May 4th, 2003, 11AM  
Knights of Columbus Hall,  
Rochelle Ave-  
Next to the Post Office  
Rochelle Park NJ**

## **The Whistle Post**

Tom Wortmann  
68 Carmel Ave.  
Staten Island NY 10314

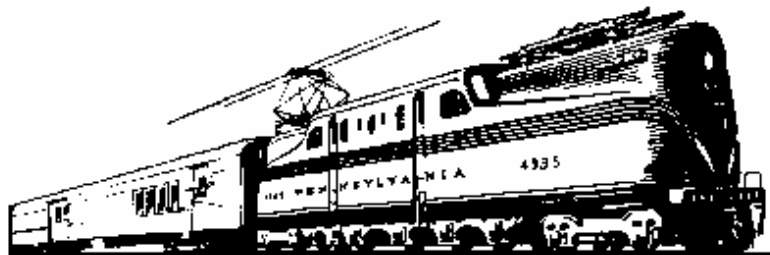
<http://home.att.net/~gsd-ner/home.htm>  
Email: [gsdtrains@yahoo.com](mailto:gsdtrains@yahoo.com)



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### **THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GARDEN STATE DIVISION**

The Whistle Post is now published quarterly and will soon be  
available on our web site in PDF form on our website



#### **Greenberg Show**

March 15th & 16th  
Edison Convention Center  
Come join us at our table

#### **GSD Spring Convention**

May 4th 2003  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
Rochelle Park NJ  
Clinics, Videos, Guess Speaker  
Watch for further details as they develop.

#### **North Eastern Region Spring Convention**

May 16-18th  
Manfield Mass.  
[www.trainweb.org/northeastregion](http://www.trainweb.org/northeastregion)

#### **NMRA National Convention**

Toronto, Canada.  
July 13th to July 19th, 2003  
E-mail: [registrar@ml2003.com](mailto:registrar@ml2003.com)