



The WHISTLE POST

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



Thom Radice Photo



Richard Newmiller, MMR Photo



Bob Hans Photo

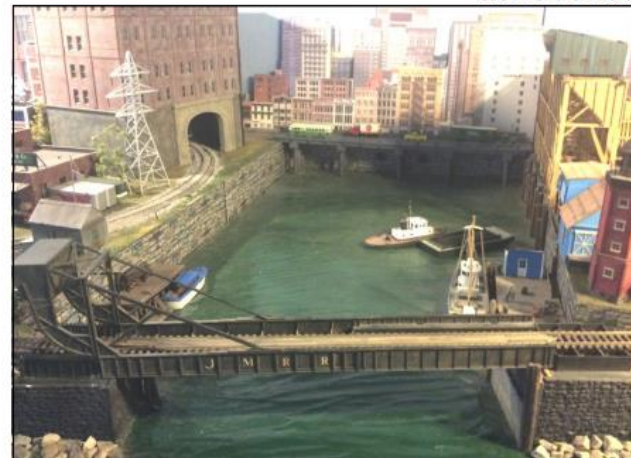
Jack Menaker Photo



William Elwell Photo



Garden State Central Model Railroad Photo



The next Event will be held in Wall, Monmouth County, on Saturday, May 4



The NERx

On March 18-21, the Northeastern Region (NER) of the NMRA produced the NERx, a four-day, sixteen-hour set of programming as a virtual convention. Starting in 2020, during the COVID shutdown, the NERx was a substitute for our live conventions, which were impossible to have due to the pandemic. Now, with the pandemic finished, the NERx has been retained as a second, virtual convention, since it was so popular. The GSD has featured prominently at each annual NERx, with members on the planning committee, production, and programming, with members giving clinics and even hosting the sessions.

The planning and production of these events consumes a significant amount of volunteer effort. It begins nearly a year in advance, with planning of programming of layout tours, clinics, roundtable discussions, and other presentations. Some clinics and all layout tours must be pre-recorded and the videos uploaded to the program server in advance. Topics must be prepared, and clinicians must be located and their work set up to be broadcast across the streaming platform. Altogether, it takes a number of months to get everything prepared correctly.

This year, being on the planning committee, I was given the task of preparing the four roundtable discussions and arranging the discussants. The committee chose the topics: Layouts in Small Spaces, the Rochester convention for 2024, Women in Model Railroading, and Working with a Crew to Build a Layout. I was fortunate to have some talented people who led the sessions: Heath Hurwitz, David Durr, Angela Sutton, and Drew James. They in turn located discussants for their sessions. Altogether, the roundtables were excellent, and I am very grateful for their participation.

I also hosted the Thursday night session. It was fun, and I was pleased to have several from the planning committee helping keep track of the various jobs that needed to be done in the background while the presentations were ongoing. For instance, there is a chatroom active during the presentations, from which questions are collected and posted on an excel spreadsheet, and from which they are later asked of the presenters. It was necessary to have three or four windows open online at a time to do this, and without their help, I would have been challenged to keep everything in order. I am very grateful for the help I received in hosting.

If you haven't watched NERx, you missed out on a valuable free benefit of membership. All the presentations from this year's and last year's sessions are available on the NMRA website for those of you who would like to see them and didn't yet do so. I encourage you to look up the NERx and watch them.[WP](#)



Did You Start the Layout Yet?

Did I start the new layout yet, am I running yet, when are you going to have an op session.....I hear this and many other variations asking about progress on the layout. Well, everything is moving along, though much slower than I anticipated. Mostly, getting the new house set up has been taking a lot of time. Other one-time tasks like putting in piping to carry away water from the exterior downspouts, which should have been done by the previous owner, have to be taken care of. Now Spring is here and there is landscaping work to be done. The good news is that improvements to the basement and layout planning are well underway.

It is always best to prepare your layout area first, whether in an unfinished basement or a spare room. Starting with a bare-bones basement provides me an opportunity to set it up the way I want it to be, which in this case will include insulating walls that are exposed to the outside and constructing a stud wall in front of that. There are many ways to finish off basement walls, and research of the best practices (both materials and methods) takes time too.

There is also the sealing of cracks and joints in the floor, painting the floor, and planning for additional electrical service. The electrical is still being figured out, but at least there are spares available in the electrical panel for this.

Concepts for the layout are being put to paper and I'm getting close to deciding on that. Working out the track details while trying to maintain aisle width will take additional time.

Meanwhile, layout materials are being acquired. To this end there is a growing pile of lumber and quite a bit of flex track. Turnouts will be next, and many will be needed. The plan is for most to be hand thrown. Only those requiring an unreasonable stretch will be powered.

Striking a balance between operations, visitor comfort, scenicking opportunities, and providing enough staging are just some of the considerations that are being weighed.

So what is the answer to the title of this ramble? No, I have not, but I'm getting close![WP](#)

Upcoming Events

GSD Spring Event A joint meet with the NJ Division, May 4, Camp Evans/InfoAge Science and History Museums, 2201 Marconi Road, Wall, NJ

NERPM (Northeast/New England RPM Meet) Friday May 31-Saturday June 1, Springfield, MA Layout open houses on Sunday <https://nerpm.org/>

GSD Summer Event Saturday July 27 at The Sterling Hill Mine Museum in Ogdensburg, NJ. Layout tours in the afternoon.

NJ Division Meet August 3, Switlik Park Rec Building, 5 Fisher Place, Hamilton, NJ

NMRA 2024 National Convention Surfliner 2024, August 4-11, Long Beach, CA <https://www.surfliner2024.org/>

NER 2024 Convention Lakeshores '24 September 19-22, Rochester, NY

MER 2024 Convention Piedmont Junction October 17-20, 2024 <https://piedmontjunction.cpd13.org/>

GSD Fall Event A location in the Flemington area is being considered

GSD Winter Event A return to the Oakland library being considered



In this Issue

THE CAB AND THE CABOOSE 2

UPCOMING EVENTS 3

GSD /NJD EVENT MAY 4 4

AP CORNER 5

CLUB CAR 5

WINTER EVENT 6-7

TOOLS AND TIPS 8-10

MAP TO THE MEET 11

GSD INFO 12-13

On the Cover

Layouts to be open the afternoon of the May 4th event are shown on the cover of this issue.

GSD website
www.nergsd.com

Visit the GSD Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/nmragds/>

The slate of candidates up for election this year is as listed below:

President:: Jim Homoki
Vice President: Paul Harbord
Secretary:: Jim Walsh
Treasurer:: Ed Bush

Directors:
Andy Brusgard: (2024-2026)
Tom Casey: (2024-2026)
Scott Gothe: (2024-2026)

In addition, outgoing President Mark Moritz will remain on the Board as Immediate Past President.

Virtual events held by the NER can be found on the **NMRA's YouTube channel.**
Just look for "NERx" in the video titles.

Annual GSD/NJD Joint Event May 4

As has been the tradition in recent years, the GSD will again visit the NJD for a joint event at the InfoAge Science and History Museums at Camp Evans in Wall Twp., NJ, on May 4.

There will be a brief GSD annual business meeting, followed by two clinics, door prizes, and six layouts open for self guided tours in the afternoon. This location is great for a joint meeting as there is plenty of space and interesting exhibits. Also, the Garden State Central Model RR Club is located in an adjacent building. There will be refreshments available at we usually do at GSD events.

The clinic provided by the GSD will be presented by Richard Newmiller, MMR. It will be a Power Point presentation entitled **Scratchbuilding a Model of the Colgate Factory in HO** using historical pictures and construction progress photographs detailing the scratch built styrene structure. The prototype was the first reinforced concrete structure built in Jersey City – it stood for about 140 years. Colgate razed their entire site comprised of some 29 structures between 1986 and 1988. Rich's interpretation of this structure and its iconic 50' clock and toothpaste sign required over 2,500 pieces of styrene and wire braces for the building and its roof top steel sign structure. There are 185 windows, 179 are commercial Tichy windows that were modified prior to installation, and the 6 unique circle-top windows on the upper floor are resin castings from a scratch built master.

John V. Gallagher of the NJD will present a clinic on the economics of providing rail service to on line customers, **Model Railroad-ing Ops It's all About Economics**. It can help the model railroader justify rail service to a business and design appropriate facilities for rail services. Member participation using some simple handout forms is included, so bring a pencil, eraser, and some note paper for interactive participation.

As the NJD usually has, there will be a popular vote model contest. The topic for this event will be Non Revenue equipment. The winner gets a certificate and a voucher for the yearly NJD meet fee, so dig out an interesting model to bring and display.^{WP}



Above: A view of the completed Colgate building on Rich Newmiller's layout. Rich's presentation on Colgate in Jersey City will include a history of the plant and construction details of the model.

Recent Achievement Program Awards

AP Corner By Tom Wortmann

At the recent meeting in Park Ridge, I was asked some questions, and paperwork was one of them.

Besides the NMRA forms that you need to download from the National website, you need to explain to the judges what you built. Let's say for instance that you made a self-loading vertical package stacker. You know what that is but do the judges? Tell us a little about it, show us pictures of what the phototype looks like, give us some simple plans on your model. And you're good. When you do that, you educate the judges and proved your model, all at the same time. The next time those judges see a self-loading vertical package stacker, they can get right to work. But please, we don't need or want Webster's unabridged encyclopedia of package self-stackers. And you also don't need to include every photograph and drawing known to man. Just enough to prove your point.

The only certificate that does require a bit of paperwork is Dispatcher. Always check the requirements on the National website and download the necessary forms.

I was also honored to be able to hand out three AP certificates and one Golden Spike. It is great to see people working on their hobby. People gaining new skills and getting better at this hobby of ours. I would like to think that 90% of us are working on a layout or a module, be it theirs or a clubs, and in doing so enjoying your hobby. But at the same time, you are learning new skills, improving old ones of maybe helping another modeler. If you don't have a

layout, try to make one or a part of one; failing that, work on a club layout. Because having a layout covers many issues in the hobby that working on just one aspect, does not. Members can create the most detailed structure ever seen but can't wire a layout. Yes, working on a layout can open up all kinds of insights into this hobby. Try it, expand your knowledge. Remember, if you have the will, you have the skill.

The award winners at the Winter meet are pictured below, from left to right, Stephen Scharfstein - Electrical, Brian Scharfstein - Golden Spike, Bob Dennis - Scenery and Douglas Chadwich - Chief Dispatcher. Congratulations to all.**WP**



CLUB CAR

Garden State Model Railway Club
575 High Mountain Road, North Haledon, NJ 07508 www.gsmrrclub.org

The Model Railroad Club
295 Jefferson Avenue, Union, NJ 07083 <http://www.themodelrailroadclub.org>

Staten Island Society of Model Railroaders, Train Club Room, 3rd Floor,
Staff House, Seaview Hospital, 460 Brielle Avenue, Staten Island, NY
<http://sismrinc.tripod.com/index.html>

Sussex County Railroad Club informal meetings and modular model railroads
www.sccrc.com

Pacific Southern Railway Club
26 Washington Street, Rocky Hill, NJ 08553 www.pacificsouthern.org
Show information at www.rockyhilltrains.org

Ramapo Valley Railroad Club, Allendale Community for Senior Living,
85 Harrenton Road, Allendale, NJ www.ramapovalleyrailroad.com

New York Society of Model Engineers
341 Hoboken Road, Carlstadt, NJ 07072 www.modelengineers.org

NJ Hi-Railers Train Club Paterson NJ <https://www.njhirailers.com/>

Morris Plains Model Railroad Club Morris Plains, NJ
<https://www.facebook.com/MorrisPlainsModelRailroadClub>

WHAT WE DID AT THE WINTER EVENT

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JIM WALSH

The Garden State Division got together again to have a hands-on approach to learning model railroading skills. This was our third make-and-take event and our second one featuring a kit from Mine Mount Models. This kit was more challenging than the last one but like before, Ron Klaiss was there to guide us. As the owner of Mine Mount Models, Ron not only provided instruction and tips on building the Utopia Cafe kit but he also brought the completed Crown Transfer kit. It is his first limited edition kit and his build of the structure and the diorama is inspirational. To complete the day, we had the opportunity to visit some fine club layouts in the area.[WP](#)

Right: Ron Klaiss of Mine Mount Models provided the GSD some instruction and tips for building the Utopia Cafe kit.



Left: A view of members focused on building the Utopia Café craftsman kit.

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Above: Crown Transfer is the first limited edition kit from Mine Mount Models and Ron displayed it during our meeting. He did a great job building the structure and the diorama. It is truly inspirational.

Below: A scene on the current layout of the Garden State Railway



Above: This photo shows the progress of the helix construction on the new layout of the Garden State Railway Club in North Haledon.

Below: The HO and O scale layouts of the New York Society of Model Engineers in Carlstadt were also open for members.

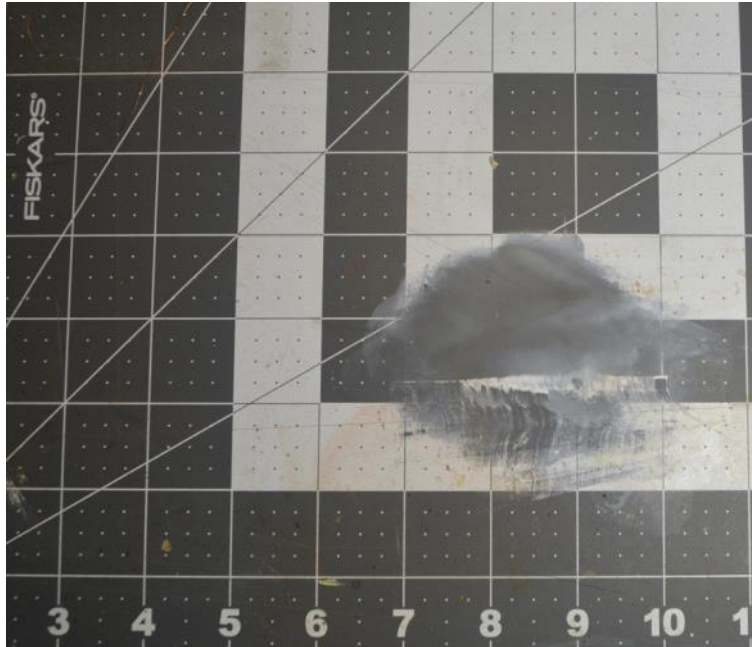


Tools and Tips: Anti-Tipping Tips

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JIM WALSH

I am not against providing a gratuity for good service but I am really against bottles tipping over. I will relate some ideas to prevent bottles from falling over and spilling contents. This could avoid a little mess or a major catastrophe.

Since I retired I became aware that retired people have the time to make the mistakes that others learn by. We can always learn from mistakes - you can learn from mine. Not attending to the stability of a bottle of MEK resulted in a spill that damaged the finish on a cutting mat but it could have severely damaged the table beneath the cutting mat. Fortunately there were no plastic model parts in the path of the spill. Now I use holders or stands to keep bottles from tipping over.



Some bottles are stable but others are accidents waiting to happen. Recently, I bought a Vetro weathering solution at the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show. When I got the bottle home, I realized that it would easily fall over. However, I discovered that the bottle fit into the cardboard core from most types of tape. When mounted in the tape core, the bottle fits snugly and is prevented from falling over. Some other products are packaged in bottles that are short and wide and are not prone to tipping and spilling.

Good work habits can prevent a catastrophe but just working with an open bottle is a potential spill. Therefore, I like to have it mounted in a stable base before opening the container.

Making a stand is easy. Most stands make use of wood scraps and end cuts and are simple to make with a Forstner bit, hole saw, jigsaw or even a coping saw. The Forstner bit can make a blind hole with a flat bottom but the other tools cut through holes. In that case, you can cover the bottom with a thinner solid piece. I also made some stands from plastic materials that I had available.

Most of the time, these stands hold a bottle upright but there are times when you want to hold it upside down. Aleenes Tacky Glue is available in an inverted bottle similar to some ketchup bottles. However, for the more traditional bottles, I fabricated a stand to hold the bottle inverted.

My suggestion is to always use a holder with a bottle and prevent a messy spill or even more damage.**WP**

Left: I learned a lesson when a bottle of MEK spilled leaving this stain on the cutting mat. Although it was messy, it could have severely damaged the table or plastic parts.

Below: The MEK spill could have been prevented by mounting the original bottle in a stable holder as seen on the left. This one was made by inserting some foam pipe insulation into a container lid. Another option would be to put the MEK into a more stable bottle as shown on the right.



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Right: The bottle of Vetro solution on the right is stable by being snugly mounted in a cardboard core from a roll of tape. On the left is an assortment of tape rolls that all use the same size cardboard core.

Below: Although the Forstner bits shown on the right are ideal for making a stable bottle holder, the hole saws or even the coping saw can be used to make one.



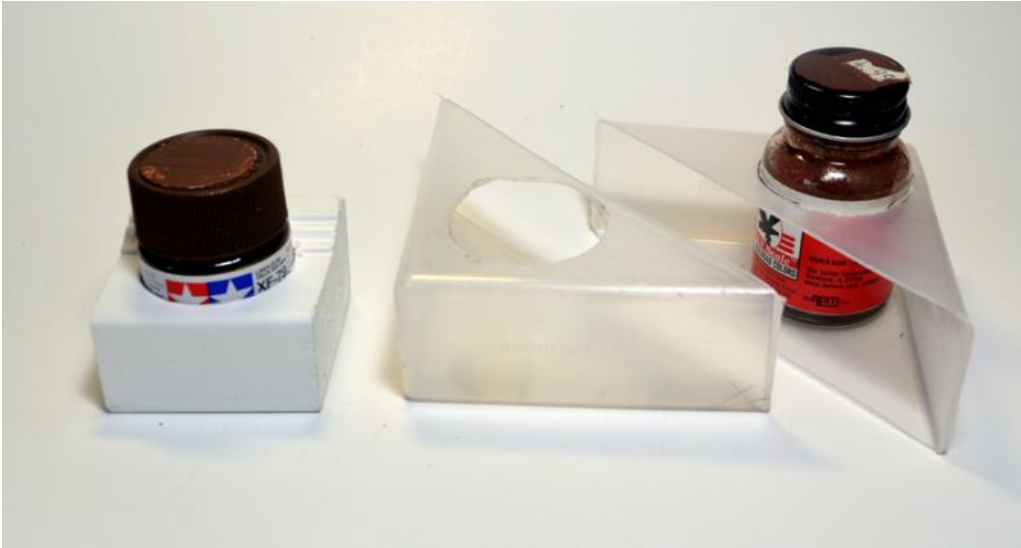
Below: Some products are packaged in bottles that are short and wide. These bottles are not prone to tipping.



Above: Here are some bottle holders made from leftover wood pieces. The two in the middle were made using hole saws and covering the bottom with hardboard like Masonite.

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Above: A Forstner bit was used to turn some leftover PVC Window and Door Trim into the bottle holder on the left. The other two were made by repurposing corner protection packaging from a picture frame.



Above: Aleenes Tacky Glue is available in an inverted bottle but this stand was made to hold a regular bottle upside down. The glue is ready to use anywhere on the layout.

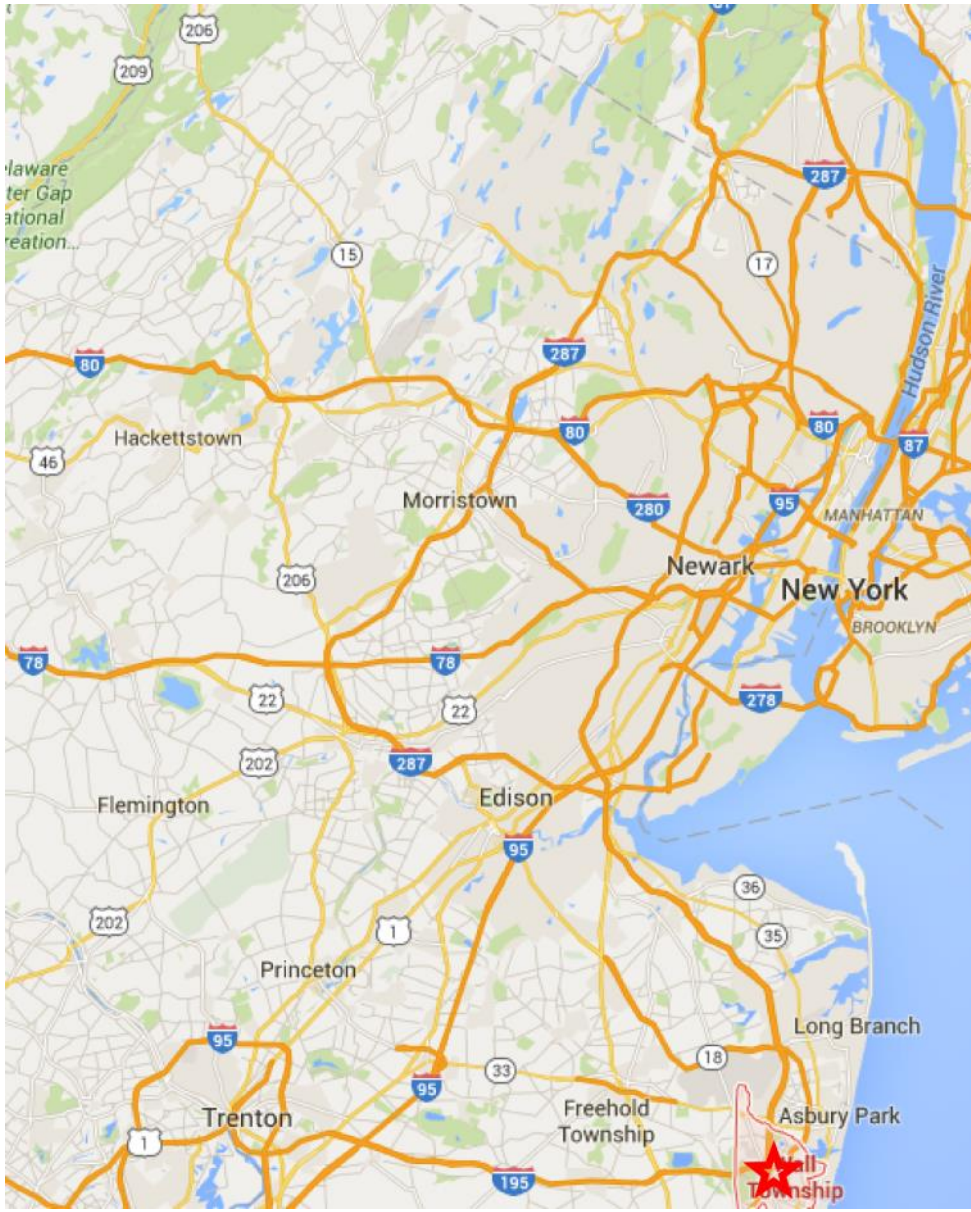
Right: There were no woodworking skills or tools required to build this stand to hold an inverted glue bottle. It only requires assembling two threaded PVC pipe fittings.



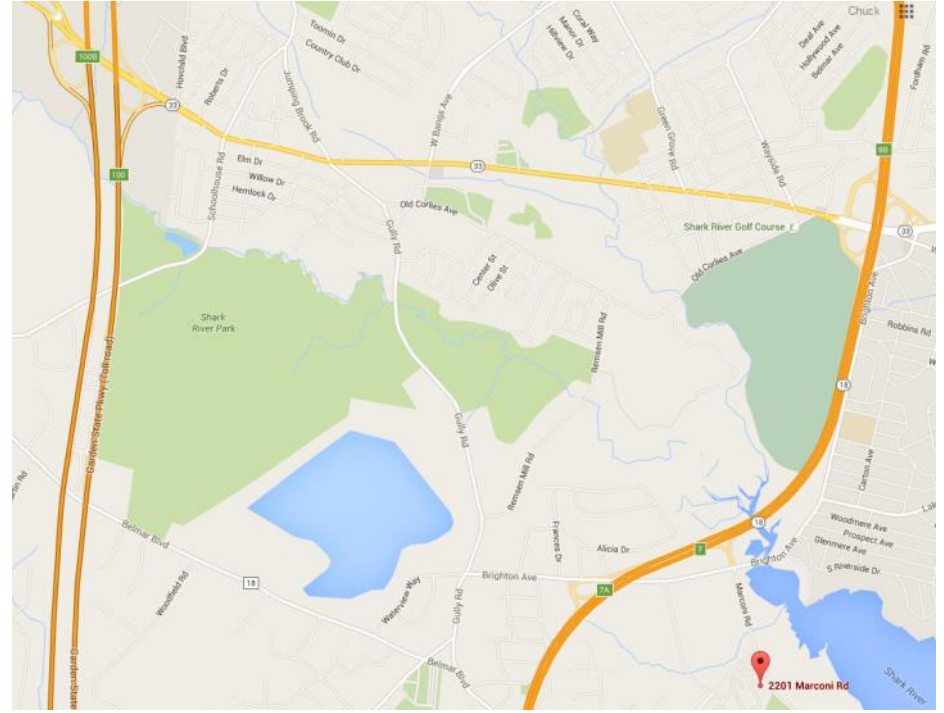
MAP FOR THE SPRING EVENT

InfoAge Science and History Museums
2201 Marconi Road
Wall, NJ 07719

SATURDAY, MAY 4
DOORS OPEN AT 8:30
EVENT STARTS AT 9:00



From the north, taking the Garden State Parkway or Route 18 South will be best way to get to the event. [HTTP://INFOAGE.ORG/](http://infoage.org/)



NEXT DIVISION EVENT

INFOAGE SCIENCE AND
HISTORY MUSEUMS

TIME:
9:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON
DOORS OPEN AT 8:30 AM

DATE:
SATURDAY, MAY 4

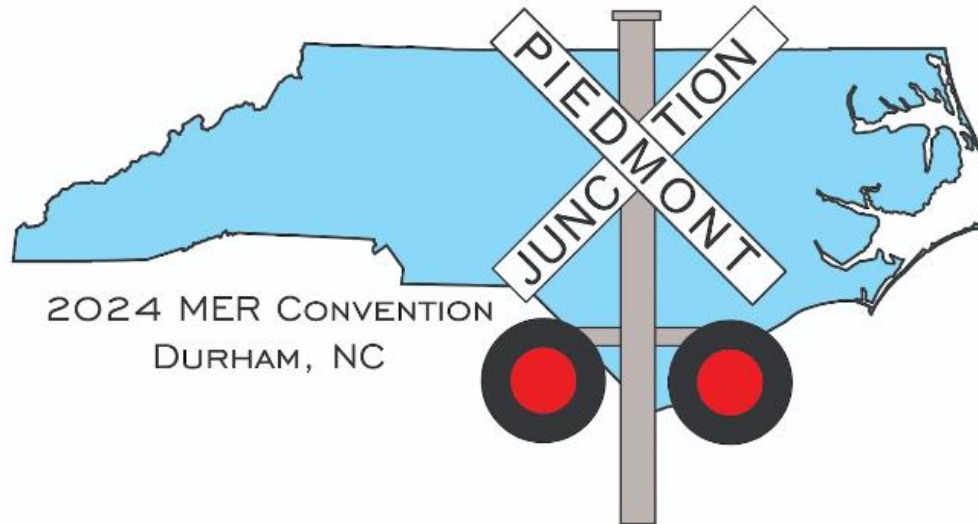
LOCATION:
2201 MARCONI ROAD
WALL, NJ 07719
SEE THE MAP ON PAGE 11

COST:
\$5 EVENT FEE
REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED

WEBSITE FOR MEETS:
SEE PAGE 3
[HTTPS://WWW.NERGSD.COM/](https://www.nergsd.com/)

AGENDA:
INTRODUCTION
GSD BUSINESS MEETING
TWO CLINICS
MODEL CONTEST
DOOR PRIZES
LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
AFTERNOON LAYOUT TOURS

<https://piedmontjunction.cpd13.org/>



NORTHLANDZ

THE WORLD'S LARGEST MINIATURE WONDERLAND

AT THE THROTTLE

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Deadlines for submissions to the Whistle Post are four weeks prior to the next Division event, as announced in the prior Whistle Post.

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Gatorfoam
Great Decals!
Green Frog Productions

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Hot Wire Foam Factory
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Mine Mount Models
Miniprints
Model Rectifier Corp (MRC)
Model Train Catalogue
Modelers Decals & Paint
Motrak Models
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