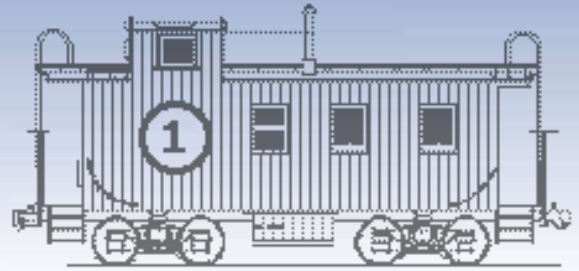


CLINKERS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION

MID-EASTERN REGION, NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



JANUARY 21, 2006

VOL. 17 ISSUE 82

Model Railroading with Household Items

by Charlie Crawford

There are many items around the house that are very helpful in model railroading, but watch they don't get you unwanted attention. Some we don't even think of using, some are so obvious that they almost jump out at you.

I read that by running real leaves through a blender and then drying and sifting them, I could have leaves for model railroad scenery. I ended up with something that looked a lot like tea leaves. We drink a lot of tea in my house. My family knows to ask me if the old tea bags should be discarded. I've got plenty of dead leaves for my model railroad now without the blender.

A roll of paper towels is always in my train room. Its uses are too many to list. When the towels are used the empty tubes have another use. While there are fine holders for painting freight car bodies, I find that I can put the car shells on the empty tubes and spray away. However, my later requests started getting me in hot water at home.

It started innocently enough. I added toothpicks to the weekly shopping list. They apply small amounts of glue or lubricants exactly where needed. I had used all we had in the house. I put them on the shopping list and they arrived without any problem.

Next were bamboo skewers. These are my all-time favorites. They work great as un-couplers, tree armatures and many other little jobs around the layout. I put them on the shopping list and they also arrived without incident.

Rubbing alcohol did attract notice. "Are you OK? Is anything wrong?"

"No," I explained that when mixed with water it worked very well as a "wetting agent" for ground foam scenery and ballast. Sprayed thoroughly on either, it soaks the small particles without moving them very much. When I drip on a 50/50 mixture of water and white glue, the soaked area has a sponge-like quality and just absorbs the glue. Despite the raised attention, I did receive the rubbing alcohol.

Things started downhill when I added hairspray to the shopping list. Maybe because I said none of those natural, lighter holding sprays would do. No, I wanted the cheapest, strongest holding stuff out there. "What are you thinking? Are you going to spike your hair? Going to try a Mohawk?"

(continued on page 5)

NEXT DIVISION MEET

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2006
9:00AM - 12:00PM**

**HADDON TWP. HIGH SCHOOL
MEMORIAL AVENUE
WESTMONT, NJ 08108**

CONTEST: STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

**CLINICS: CITIBANK NYC LAYOUT
ENHANCING BACKDROPS
MODELING TREES
IJ2006 PREVIEW**

**LAYOUTS: FRI. 7:00PM - 10:00PM
SAT. 1:00PM - 4:00PM**

New P.O. Box for Division

The NJ Division does have a new address!

Last spring, the Division started the switch over to a new P.O. Box in Trenton and started the phase out of the Haddon Heights P.O. Box.

By now, most of you have done well and used the new address (below). But we still get some mail at the old P.O. Box and I have even gotten letters and phone calls wondering what the Trenton address is for.

Please understand that all mail, whether it is renewal checks, submissions for the newsletter, or correspondence, should be sent to the Trenton P.O. box. If the old Haddon Heights box is used, there will be a significant delay in reaching us! The new address is:

**New Jersey Division
P.O. Box 8694
Trenton, NJ 08650**

CLINKERS

Official Newsletter of the New Jersey Division
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA

Editor: Mike McNamara
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Trenton, NJ 08650
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Clinkers is published 5 times a year for the NMRA members of the New Jersey Division, plus newsletter subscribers. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Division. Products and publications mentioned in Clinkers in no way constitute an endorsement by the Division.

CONTRIBUTING TO CLINKERS

Clinkers welcomes contributions from the New Jersey Division membership. Letters, articles, photos and other items may be mailed to the editor at the above address. Please include return postage if you would like materials returned.

Deadline for next issue: February 15, 2005

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609-585-2902

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PJ Mattson - 856-467-0421

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Interested persons who wish to join the New Jersey Division NMRA may do so at any Meet, or may write to the address listed below. The New Jersey Division does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national, or ethnic origin.

New Jersey Division, MER, NMRA
P.O. Box 232
Haddon Heights, NJ 08035-0232
Prepaid Meets: \$10.00 (\$13 w/mailed newsletter)
Newsletter Subscription: \$5

Mid-Eastern Region, Inc., NMRA
8960 Challis Hill Lane
Charlotte, NC 28226-2686
merbusmgr@aol.com

National Model Railroad Association
4121 Cromwell Road
Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119
Dues: \$45.00 per year (\$23 w/o magazine)

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/njdivnmra/>

VIEW FROM THE CAB

MIKE MCNAMARA

Hope everyone is off to a good start in the New Year. We have 3 Meets for you until the big event, Independence Junction 2006 this July in Philadelphia. We'll be discussing this more at the January Meet. Right now you should be thinking about attending and also lending a helping hand. This is a National Convention of course, but it takes local people to make it a success. Go to the IJ2006.org web site and sign up to be a volunteer.

This edition of *Clinkers* also lets you know about some other events coming up this year, including some Division Meets up North being conducted by the Garden State Division as well as 2 NER Regional Conventions, Spring and Fall. Plenty to keep you busy!

And there is one more event to mark on your calendar, the Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet. This is being conducted in Malvern, PA, and is a follow up to the successful first event held 2 years ago. More info is on page 7. We will probably also have a few words on this event during our January Meet as many members of the Philadelphia Division are expected to be joining us. They can let us know what events will occur and what to expect.



For this past Christmas, I wanted to get some trains for our younger son for Christmas. The immediate issue of course is what to get, what size/scale, etc. I really wanted him to have something he could play with and enjoy without fear of him breaking things (he is 9). As you know many scale trains, be they N, HO, S, O or G can be somewhat delicate, especially as the scale gets smaller. An N or HO set may work, but ultimately something will break or the track will get bent, whatever. I wanted to avoid that problem if at all possible.

There is also the issue of train set versus separate, higher quality components. You can get better track (i.e. EZTrak) and better cars and locomotives than most sets, but the cost will increase.

One day I received a Lego catalog at home for holiday shopping. There was the usual Lego items, as well as some neat theme sets for Harry Potter, Star Wars, etc. My son definitely wanted the Harry Potter Graveyard set!

About half way through they had a section of Lego Trains, locomotives and cars to be assembled from Lego pieces. Pretty cool! And these could actually operate on Lego track sections. Recently introduced was a BNSF GP38-2 and a TTX two car articulated container set. They also had a Santa Fe F3 locomotive and passenger cars. These come in appropriately colored pieces to match the newer BNSF or ATSF warbonnet paint schemes. There are also accessory items including track as well as a powered wheelset (kind of like the old NWSL PDT powered truck - remember those?) and a 9 volt controller (throttle) to control it (the track is metal on top of Lego plastic ties).

I was able to take advantage of a sale plus free shipping (these items are only available direct apparently) to get an order before Christmas. In all, it costs just a bit more than a train set, but these are good size models. The GP38 is almost 12 inches long.

My son definitely enjoyed these. He spent a lot of hours assembling the pieces, but he was able to do it himself. The real payoff was assembling the track and running the train. He now has the everything together and is interested in getting more cars and a building or two from this series.

If you are looking for a gift for your child or grandchild and you want it to be train themed, take a look at the Lego train items. They are high quality and very durable, plus they can be operated and expanded. There are even Lego model railroad clubs out there and there was a Lego train display at the Cincinnati NMRA Convention.



See you at the Meet. - Mike Mc.

JANUARY DIVISION MEET

Haddon Township High School, Westmont, NJ

Friday Night Layouts

Our January Meet will kickoff with open layouts on Friday night, January 20, 2006. A map with driving directions is located on page 6. The layout owners invite you to visit them between 7:00 PM and 10:00 PM. Please drive carefully and don't take chances if the weather looks bad!

Saturday Morning Meet

On Saturday, January 21, 2006, the New Jersey Division will return to Haddon Township High School. This is being conducted as a joint Meet with our friends from the Philadelphia Division, so you'll have a chance to meet and talk with some new model railroaders and perhaps some friends you have not seen recently.

A map with driving directions to the Meet is located on page 4. Please drive carefully and don't take chances if the weather looks bad! We'll get started at 9:00 AM.

Registration and Membership Renewal

When you arrive at the Meet, please be sure to register, and pick up your door prize ticket.

If you still need to renew your membership for the year, you can do so at the registration table. You can pay by cash or by check, made payable to New Jersey Division.

Contests

The contest for this Meet will be **Steam Locomotives**. Check with the registration desk about entering this popular vote contest.

Please try to get your model(s) entered by the end of the first break so that members can vote on them during this break.

Refreshments

There will be coffee, tea and hot chocolate available at no charge. Doughnuts will be available for a small fee if the hungries get to you.

Swap Tables

If you have some items to sell, there will be swap tables available. There is no charge, all we ask is for a railroad-related donation to the door prizes. Please contact Ken O'Brien at (609) 758-2135 prior to the Division Meet to make arrangements for your table.

Door Prizes and Raffle

We'll have the door prizes as usual and we'll have another of our popular raffles. As always, we could use your items to make the raffle successful.

Clinics

Paul Backentose will be presenting a clinic on **Making Trees from Goldenrod**. Paul, who will be visiting us from the Philadelphia Division, has a great PRR layout with very nice scenery, so it will be good to get Paul's tips on making tress.

Dick Perry will be presenting his video from the CitiBank Holiday Layout which is put on display each year in New York City. Dick will tell us about his trip up to New York and offer more details on this large multi-scale layout.

We will also have a short presentation on the **NMRA National Convention** for 2006 in Philadelphia and answer any questions we can. And finally, after a request from the November Meet, **Mike McNamara** will give us a short overview of his methods of enhancing his backdrop by using ground foam covered foam core "mountains".

Saturday Afternoon Layouts

Starting at 1:00 PM, there will be more local layouts for you to visit. A map will be available at the Meet. These owners are inviting you into their homes, so be sure to be courteous. The layouts will be open until 4:00 PM, unless otherwise noted on the maps.

Subscribe or renew NOW!

Our mailing labels now show an expiration date for your newsletter subscription. If you'd like to keep them coming, please use this form to do so! You can also prepay for another year of Division Meets!

Send \$13 to extend your subscription and prepay for all Meets for another year

Send \$5 to extend your subscription 1 year (You'll pay \$5 at the door for each Meet you attend)

Name: _____

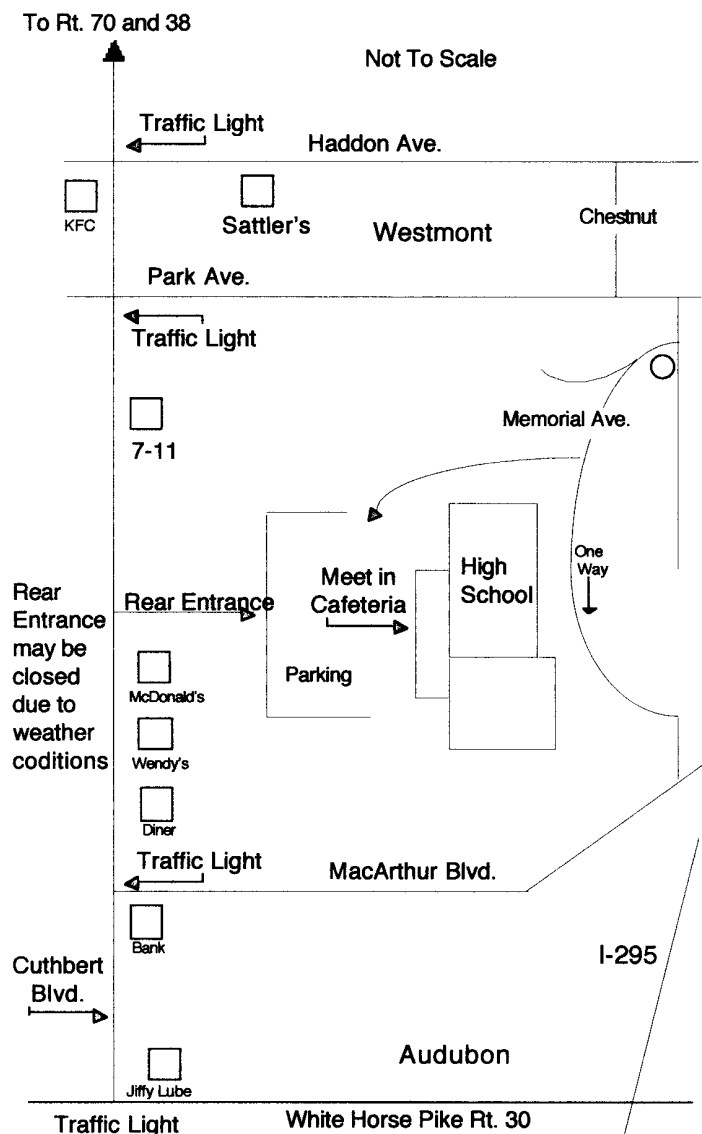
Address: _____

E-mail: _____

NJ Division Number (on the label) _____ NMRA Number _____

Mail to: New Jersey Division, P.O. Box 8694, Trenton, NJ 08650

MAP FOR THE JANUARY DIVISION MEET



Directions to January Meet:

The Saturday morning Division Meet will be in the cafeteria of Haddon Township High School.

From Interstate 295, take exit 29 for Rt. 30 West, White Horse Pike. Travel West on Rt. 30, passing through Haddon Heights, Audubon and into Oaklyn. Look for a Jiffy Lube on your right and a Commerce Bank on your left. This traffic light is Cuthbert Blvd. Make a right. Pass by the 1st traffic light and then a McDonalds. The High School is next on your right. This is the rear of the school and there is rear entrance here. Turn right into this entrance and follow it to the parking lot. The Meet will be in the cafeteria.

If the rear entrance isn't open (because of snow), travel past the Acme and 7-11 to the next light. This is Park Avenue. Make a right onto Park Avenue and travel to Briarwood Avenue on your right (about 1/4 mile). Make a right and then make the next right immediately onto Memorial Avenue. Follow this one way road around to the school. Enter the parking lot and travel around to the back of the school. The Meet will be in the cafeteria. Refer to the overall map on page 6 and the close-up map to the left.

Please Drive Carefully!

If the weather looks bad, don't take chances!

If you are uncertain about the status of the Meet, call 856-824-0879 after Thursday, January 19th for a pre-recorded message regarding the status of the Friday Night Layouts and the Saturday Meet.

Gateway Model Railroad Club

Annual Open House

Date: January 14th & 15th 2006

100 E. Browning Road
Brooklawn, NJ 08030

10 AM til 4 PM

\$3 donation

Contact: Nicky Caccavo
8 Forrest Drive

Turnersville, NJ 08012
Phone: (215) 514-6591

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HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

(continued from page 1)

Not at all, I was finishing two modules that would need over a hundred trees apiece. I prepare an armature, paint it and put on some stretched poly fiber. It is then sprayed with the hairspray and ground foam is sprinkled on the tree. If the fiber is stretched enough and then sprayed, the foam will adhere to the spray droplets giving the appearance of leaves. I'm not sure that I completely made my case, but the hairspray arrived and all is well with the world.

Matters took a definite turn for the worse when I asked for old stockings. No, I wasn't going to commit a robbery. No, I wasn't changing my wardrobe. Old stockings make great strainers for both paint and dirt. Yes, both paint and dirt.

Usually my model paint has been around for too long, way too long. It's just too lumpy to go through an airbrush. I just hold a piece of stocking over the brushes jar with a rubber band and pour the paint through. All the lumps are caught and the airbrush works fine.

I use real dirt on my modules. I just sift it through the stocking to get the finest particles on the scene. I've taken to spraying the area to be "dirtied" and then sifting the now fine dirt onto the wet area. The dilute white glue is carefully dribbled onto the dirt. A quick shot of dull coat will kill any shine on the fine dirt particles.

After a stare and raised eyebrows, the old stockings were turned over for their "re-use" as modeling tools.

Then two of my wide-flanged locomotives were having problems getting over the frogs on my modules. A couple of the guys in my club suggested painting the point of the frog with clear nail polish to stop the momentary short. I'm sure that the polish would work, but I stopped short.

I can hear the questions already. No, I'm not going to wear nail polish. I guess it just looks bad. Hair spray, stockings, skewers, nail polish. What's he doing down there anyway? I think I'll just cut gaps in those frogs and forget the nail polish.

Charlie has earned his Master Builder - Cars certificate and received his first merit award for a structure at the SER Convention. He is a member of the Atlanta Interlocking Model Railroaders modular group and a Piedmont Division Director-at-Large. Rumor has it that Charlie has never purchased items specifically for the hobby, but the household budget has shot through the roof.

**Reprinted from the July-September 2005 issue
of the Piedmont Division Timetable
Piedmont Division SER-NMRA**

GARDEN STATE DIVISION

Upcoming events of our friends to the North, the Garden State Division NER-NMRA:

January 8, 2006 - Annual Business Meeting

12 noon

Meeting, Clinic, Slideshow, White Elephant Table
Ramapo Model RR Club
620 Cliff Street, Hohokus, NJ

May 7, 2006 - Spring Meet

12 noon

Meeting, Clinic, Slideshow, White Elephant Table
Hohokus Fire Department
Meeting Room
Hohokus, NJ

October 20-22 2006 - NER Fall Convention

See Page 7

For more info, go to <http://www.trainweb.org/nergsd/>

NER SPRING CONVENTION

There will be no MER Conventions this year due to the National Convention being held in Philadelphia this July. If you still want to go to some Regional Conventions this year, check out the Northeastern Region's offerings. In addition to the Fall convention in Parsippany, NJ this October (see page 7), there will be a Spring convention in Worcester, MA.

The Northeastern Region's 60th Anniversary Convention "Thrifty Sixty" will be held in Worcester, Massachusetts June 1st through 4th, 2006. Location of the four day event will be the Holiday Inn, 500 Lincoln Street in downtown Worcester. The hotel is located just off Interstate Route 290.

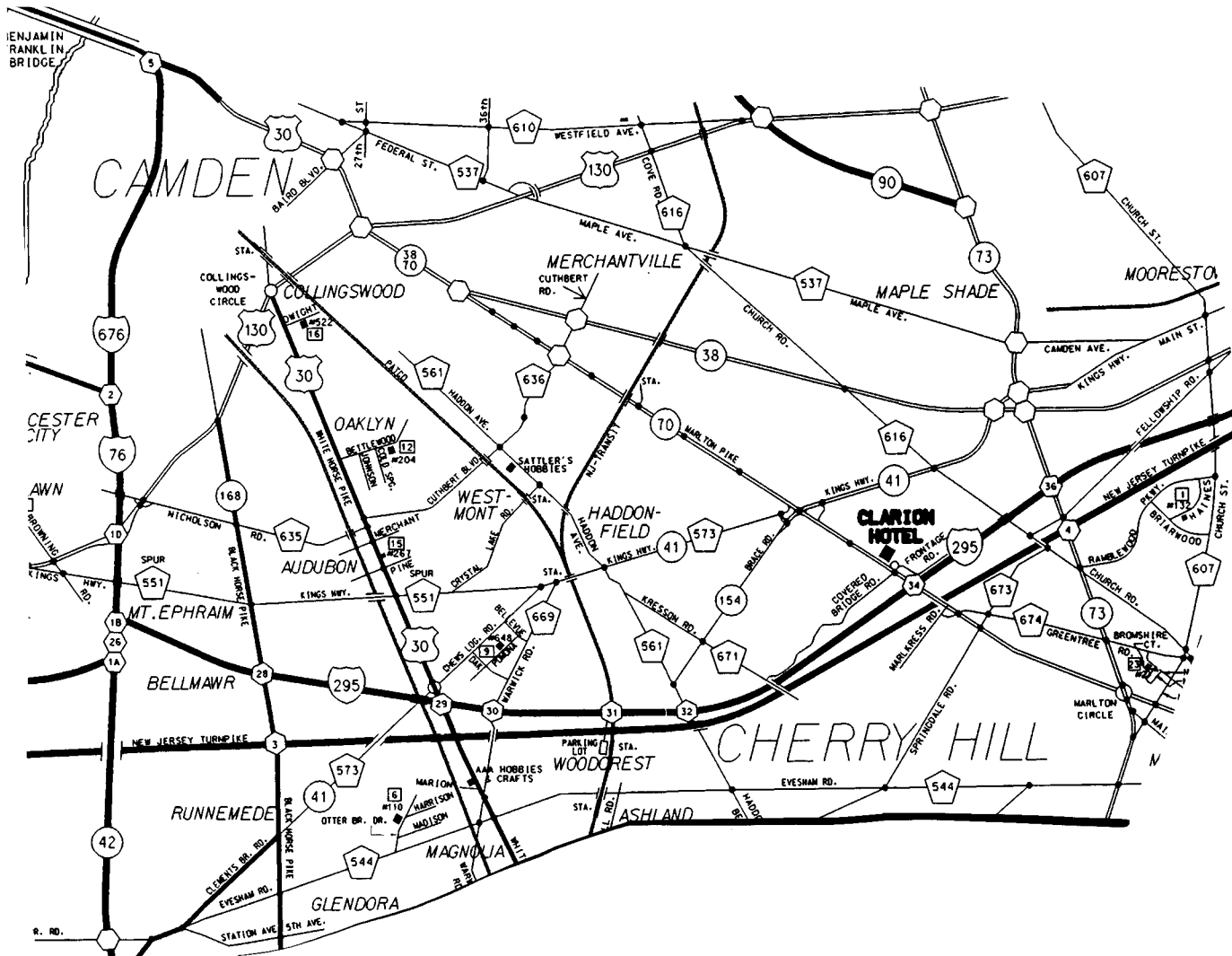
Each of the days will feature a theme with Thursday June 1st being "Layout Day." Layout Director Mike Tylick has scheduled both Operating Sessions and traditional layout visits starting at 2 PM and concluding at 10.

Friday's main theme is "Clinic's" and Clinic Director Pete Watson has lined up numerous top notch programs. The featured non-rail event of the day is an all day trip to Boston using the MBTA's Commuter Rail from Worcester. Friday evening's main event will be a visit to the newly renovated Palmer station, which Train's Magazine listed as one of the nation's "Rail Hotspots."

Saturday's theme of the day will be "Prototype Visit". The feature event is a ride behind the Valley Railroad's Baldwin built 2-8-0 # 97 in Essex, CT. Saturday evening will feature a social hour, followed by the 60th Anniversary Banquet.

The Hub Division, sponsors of "Thrifty Sixty" hope to see you all in Worcester on June 1st. Watch for additional info at <http://www.trainweb.org/northeasternregion/NERHOME.HTML>. We guarantee you'll long remember the NER's 60th Birthday Party.

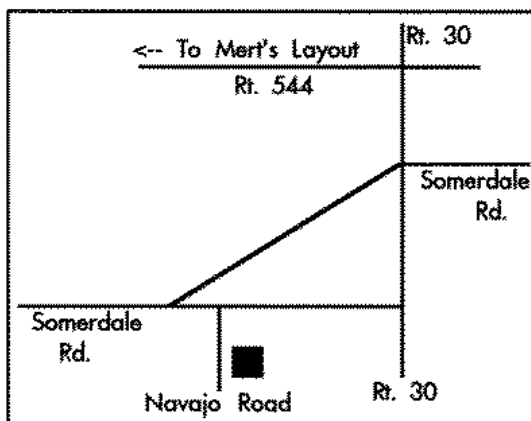
MAP TO FRIDAY NIGHT LAYOUTS



MAP TO LAYOUT #36

Here is a map to John McLaughlin's layout which is open on Friday night only.

From Mert's layout, get back on Rt. 30, White Horse Pike East. Travel to Somerdale Road. Continue to next intersection and turn right. Make left onto Navajo Road, go to #9.



- #1 Tom Brown
132 Haines Road
Mt. Laurel, NJ
- #6 Mert Gardner
110 Otter Branch Rd
Magnolia, NJ
- #12 Rev. Dick Kitz
204 Bettleground
Ave.
Oaklyn, NJ
- #15 Dr. Charles Patti
267 White Horse
Pk
Audubon, NJ
- #36 John McLaughlin
9 Navajo Rd.

Note: Only these layouts are open. Other layouts on the map identified by a number will NOT be open!

Please Drive Carefully!

If the weather looks bad, don't take chances!

If you are uncertain about the status of the Meet, call 856-824-0879 after Thursday, January 19th for a pre-recorded message regarding the status of the Layouts and the Meet.

Railroad Prototype Modelers Valley Forge

Sponsored by Philadelphia Division, MER, NMRA

March 24-26, 2006

at the
Desmond Great Valley Hotel & Conference Center
Malvern, PA

- Clinics
- Model Displays
- Vendors' Room
- Home Layout Tour (Sunday)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND UPDATES
www.phillynmra.org

OR
Paul Backenstose
103 West Uwchlan Avenue
Downtown PA 19335
(Please include an SAE for a reply)
prpaut@aol.com or (610) 269-2763

INTERESTED IN PRESENTING A CLINIC?
Jim Dalberg
610-648-0089 or jedalberg@aol.com

VENDOR INFORMATION
Bud Kaiser
856-428-6898 or budkaiser@comcast.net

NER FALL 2006

The Garden State Comet is coming!

Next Fall, the Garden State Division of the NER will be hosting the NER Fall Convention. This will be in the Parsippany Hilton, which is less than a 2 hour drive from Cherry Hill, located just off I-287 on Rt. 10.

This convention is being chaired by Bob Tumielewicz, a regular at our NJ Division Meets. Bob is actively working out the activities and schedule for this convention. Mark the dates of October 20-22 on your new 2006 calendar now so you can plan to attend.

The Garden State Division web site will be a good resource to keep up-to-date on this convention. Go to:

<http://www.trainweb.org/nergds/>



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So few bucks.**

NJ DIVISION TIMETABLE

January 20-21, 2006

Haddon Twp. Division Meet
Clinics: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Layouts: Friday and Saturday
Contest: Steam Locomotives

March 18, 2006

Hamilton Twp. Division Meet
Clinics: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Layouts: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Contest: Kitbash/Scratch FrtCars

March 24-26, 2006

Prototype Modelers Meet
Valley Forge
Desmond Great Valley Hotel
Malvern, PA
More info: phillynmra.org

May 20, 2006

Monmouth County Div. Meet
Clinics: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Layouts: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Contest: Caboose/Cabin Cars



July 2-8, 2006

NMRA National Convention
Philadelphia, PA
www.ij2006.org

*We'll have more information
and some forms for this
convention at the Meet!*

NJ DIVISION AREA HOBBY SHOPS

Don't forget that NMRA membership may entitle you to a discount on your purchases from the area's leading model railroad retailers! Be sure to present your NMRA card whenever you visit one of these fine hobby shops and ask about their discount program.

DK & B Hobbies

602 E. Mercer St.
Hightstown, NJ
(609) 448-5070
www.dkbmodels.com

Jackson Hobby Shop

West County Line Road
Jackson, NJ
(732) 364-3334

Gene's Trains

1889 State Hwy. 88 East
Brick, NJ
(800) 840-9728

M & G Hobbies

2902 Rt. 130, Tenby Plaza
Delran, NJ
(856) 461-3553
www.mandghobbies.com

H & R Railroad Supply

331 Tilton Road
Northfield, NJ
(609) 646-8792

Sattler's Hobby Shop

14 Haddon Ave.
Westmont, NJ
(856) 854-7136

NJ DIVISION AREA CLUBS & GROUPS

The following model railroad clubs participate in NJ Division activities. Contact these clubs to find out about open houses, special events and membership opportunities. If you know of a club or group not listed, please let us know about it (see page 2).

Burlington County MRC

808 Pomona Rd.
Cinnaminson, NJ
www.electronicsolutionsco.com/bcmrc/index.htm

NJ Southern N-Trak

Collingswood, NJ
www.geocities.com/Heartland/Woods/3636/

Gateway MRC

1 Railroad Ave.
Brooklawn, NJ
www.gatewaymodelrr.org

Northern Burlington MRC

Bordentown, NJ
(609) 298-7337

Garden State Central

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

Patcong Valley MRC

Bargaintown, NJ

Jersey Valley MRC

Kuser Mansion Park
Trenton, NJ
www.jvmrr.org

Strasburg MRC

Marlton, NJ
www.trainweb.org/smrcl