

The
CLEARBOARD

The Official Publication of The Model Railroad Club, Inc

Hudson, Delaware & Ohio Railroad
Trenton Northern Transportation & Light Company
Rahway River Railroad
Mauch Chunk Terminal Railroad
Jersey Shore & Western Railroad
Public Service Interurban Rapid Transit Company

“Information and Ideas, By and For Our Members.”

Issue # 472

July 2007



A very satisfied Paul Preuss services his 1-1/2-inch scale live steam engine after an afternoon of running on the New Jersey Live Steamers on Sunday, April 29, 2007. The Club was a guest of the Live Steamers and a good number of members were on hand to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of steam. Photo by Don Kern.

The CLEARBOARD

EDITOR: Don Riss
COPY EDITOR: Bob Nalbone

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Eric Callender, Martin
Harriss, Carlos Langezaal,
Ed Majury, Peter Ezzard,
Bob Nalbone

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DISTRIBUTION:** Bill Jambor

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SUBMITTING ARTICLES & EDITORIAL POLICY
The Editors of *The Clearboard* welcome articles
and photographs submitted by members. We will
try to publish articles in a timely manner. When
submitting an article for publication in *The
Clearboard*, we ask that you follow these
procedures:

- The Board of Director's requires all articles to be bylined. No anonymous submissions will be published.
- We prefer computer disk files to typewritten or handwritten pages. All typewritten and handwritten submissions must be double-spaced with one-inch margins on either side.
- If you submit an article by disk, we prefer Word 2000 format, but we can use submissions saved as text files.
- Include, if possible, a hard copy of the article. If we destroy your disk, we are willing to put in the effort to retype your article if we have something to type from.
- You may email articles to:
TMRCi_Clearboard@TMRCI.org.
Scanning services for photographs are available. Submit photographs in *The Clearboard* editor's mail box .
- All editorials are the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Club or the Board of Directors

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From the Editor:

As you know, it's been a few months since the an issue of *The Clearboard* has been published. There are two main reasons for this: first, the Club's server crashed (and it's still off-line), forcing us to go to back-up files. *The Clearboard* is produced in Publisher® and my laptop did not have Publisher® loaded on it at the time of the hand-off. Thus the transition has not gone as smoothly as had been hoped. Second, I have been recovering from several annoying (and very painful) medical issues the last couple of months. This has slowed down and delayed the hand-off of editorial duties.

Hopefully we'll be free from mishaps for a while and be able to resume a regular publishing schedule. In the meantime, please e-mail *Clearboard* submissions to me at: organogre@prodigy.net

- Don Riss

Clearboard Commentary

By Don Riss

The Model Railroad Club, Inc.

Founder: Paul Mallery (1918-2004)

What's in a Name?

During my high school years I spent a lot of time riding in a caboose with my father after he had enough whiskers to hold down a conductor's job in the Southport (Elmira, NY) pool. The pool jobs handled trains EC2 and EC3 south (railroad east) from Southport to Newberry (Williamsport, Pa) and EC3 and EC2 north (west) to Sodus Point on Lake Ontario; plus trains with 70+ loaded hoppers north and 70-90 empty hoppers south every 3 hours or so, on single track with two passenger trains (always with the right of way) each way, each day.

An interesting sidebar

My mother was an operator on the Pennsy until I was born. Before I was a year old, the railroad asked her to return to work because the war was decimating the railroad's work force. She refused. A few weeks later, I have been told, they told her they would make her a dispatcher if she came back to work. She told me it took her about 30 seconds to say "yes" because it was the best way she could think of to tell my father where to go!

So, I rode cabooses a lot. I wanted to use something like "The View from the Caboose" as a title for this column, it was too long to place on one line. So I tried to remember other names I heard for the caboose; such as cabin, crummy, and hack. Hmm... hack; that's an interesting pun - I'll use it. Read "View from the Hack" next month for more.

end

Dept. of Corrections

The January-February, 2007 issue was incorrectly numbered "Issue # 471." It should have been #470. The March, 2007 issue was correctly numbered, as is this issue. We regret any inconvenience. - *The Editorial Staff*

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Club Mailing Address

PO Box 1146, Union, NJ
07083-1146

Telephone: (908) 964-9724

Website: www.tmrcl.org

E-mail Addresses

<u>Board of Directors:</u>	TMRCi_BOD@TMRCI.org
<u>Clearboard Editor:</u>	TMRCi_Clearboard@TMRCI.org
<u>Webmaster:</u>	Webmaster@TMRCI.org

Jersey Shore & Western Railroad Company News

By Eric Callender

This is a combined April through June report of the activities of the N Scale Department.

Layout work: The wiring of the Upper] West End storage/interchange yard has been completed by John Cicero and Mark Juchniewicz has been completed and the Digitrax UP-1 was installed by Don Magee. Don is also working on constructing the benchwork for an N-Trak module. Stuart Keil's work on the Harrisburg engine facility is ongoing and installation of lighted high-tension pylons, renewing the water at Port as well as other scenery is being done by Claude Kelsoe. Cleaning and track improvements in the Newark and Port Reading freight yards is being done by John Ashby. Ira Heisler has been and will continue to provide direction and insight into track planning.

Operations: Freight and passenger operations for the June 2, 2007 invitational operating day were scheduled, manifested and run. On the following Tuesday (June 5), technical difficulties hit the HO layout, forcing a cancellation of their regularly-scheduled operating session. Crews from the HD&O, Trenton Northern and Rahway River operated on the JS&W! Thanks go out to Bill Jambor, Mike Briante, Jeff Peal and Paul Preuss for their insights and experience. It was a learning experience for all. The N-Scale members are sure to participate "downstairs" more often. In addition, work operation (such as cleaning switch points and track, etc.) will proceed to ensure smoother operations on our layout.

The N Scale Department hosted an "N-Scale Steam Day" and barbeque on Saturday, June 16. All of the public show trains were steam powered, some with sound. The HO layout also got the steam bug and decided to run all its show trains with steam power as well. We had a great time and hope more members will participate the next time we have a special event like this.

In the near future, re-wiring of the scenery around Harrisburg station will be a priority. Any help would be appreciated.

Special thanks to Brian Cicero for helping out removing materials stored in the old trailer outside the Club building and from under the HO layout.

Finally, as always, I must remind all members to keep their dues responsibilities current.

end

Operators Wanted

Operations is one of the most interesting and fun aspects of model railroading. It is also a great way to learn how the prototype did (and does) move goods and people. Operating positions are available every Tuesday night from 7 to 10 pm, so come down and have some fun!

HO Department News By Martin Harriss

On May 19th a number of members from the HO Department attended the invitational operating session on the GATSME Club layout in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. As always, the GATSME Club members were most gracious hosts and a good time was had by all.

On June 2nd, the Club held its eighth (yes, eighth!) invitational operating session. We ran two complete sessions and enjoyed a barbeque between session. Visitors came from Pennsylvania, New York and as far as the Boston area. I'm pleased to report that there were no problems with the layout or the equipment, largely due to the extensive preparation undertaken before the sessions. A big "Thank You" to Bob Nalbome, Pete Ezzard, Dick Kunig, Carlos Langezaal, John Wilkens and everyone else who helped out with the event. Also thanks to all the regular HO operators who helped our guests find their way around the layout. From the comments we received after the session, everyone had a great time and appreciated us hosting the session.

In other HO Department news, work continues on the new Gilberton yard. You will notice that the new turntable pit is in place and track is being laid from the main line at the east end of Gilberton up to the turntable. Thanks to Rich Cornell and Ralph Kristeller, who are working on this. Additionally, Rich and Paul Preuss have been busy with modifying the benchwork. One of the ongoing projects is to work out the correct grade for the hump to ensure smooth rolling of all the cars, so the final grade of the hump may not be settled until some of these details are worked out. It's possible we may have to change the car standards to ensure smooth hump yard operations. Keep watching this space for updates and details!

Meanwhile, Paul Preuss is installing the 110-volt wiring under the new layout section.

In connection with the Gilberton yard construction, the HO Department is procuring the engine terminal buildings specified on Ira Deutsch's plan. One member has generously agreed to procure these buildings at no cost to the Club.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone to take care when using step ladders around the layout. Recently a member fell off a ladder and sustained some injuries while trying to rerail a train that was inside a tunnel. We should also be mindful of the dangers of negotiating the aisle ladders around the layout. We all need to be on the lookout for the safety of ourselves and others. Please take care!

end

ATTENTION MEMBERS:

Please make sure you keep your contact information current. Write (legibly, please) any address changes or other updated information on a piece of paper and drop it in the mail slot in the lobby of the Club building, attention "Roster Clerk." Thank You.

LOCKERS AVAILABLE!

A limited number of lockers are now available. Please contact Ed Majury for more information.

Member T-Shirts Now Available!



Sizes S thru 3XL

(VERY limited quantities of small & medium.)

Price: \$9.00 each

Welcome Aboard!

Russ Fiero — HO Scale
Bruce Gottlieb — HO Scale
Pat Romano — HO Scale

Campaign21SM

*Funding a New Century of Excellence
Contributions received through 6/23/07:*

\$1,538

Is your contribution part of the total?

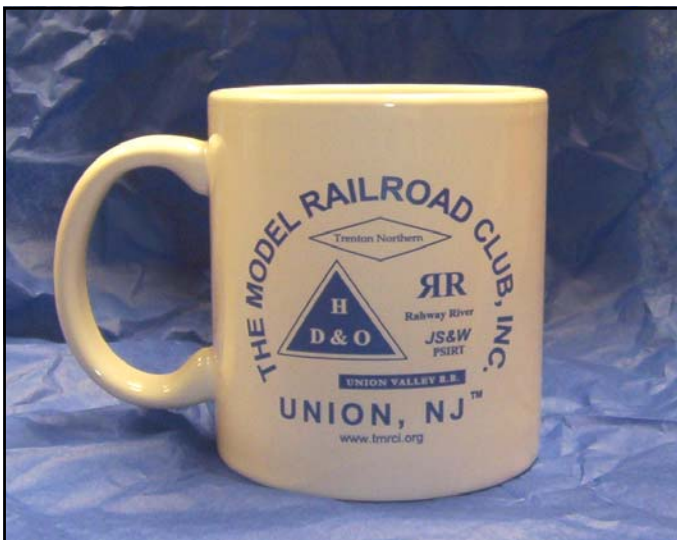
CLUB CALENDAR

July 7: HO Department Operations Committee Meeting - 6:30 PM

July 14: Board of Directors Meeting - 5:00 PM

July 28: HO Department Quarterly Meeting - 4:00 PM

Nice Mug...



11oz. White ceramic coffee mug with Club logo printed in blue on both sides. Dishwasher and microwave safe.

MEMBER PRICE: \$5.00

(Price includes 7% NJ sales tax.)

Get Yours Today!

Club News

Compiled by The Clearboard Staff

CAMPAIGN 21 GOES PUBLIC

Direct Mailing Sent to Over 1,000 Families - Far Short of Total on Mailing List; Shortage of Available Funds Hampers Effort

Campaign 21, the Club's official long-term fundraising project, made its public debut with a direct mail appeal made to a small portion of the Club's mailing list at the end of May. The campaign was initially rolled out to the membership in the fall of 2006. Club Vice President and Development Department Head Bob Nalbone coordinated the project and, with the exception of some help from Bill Jambor, Martin Harriss and Bruce Gottlieb (who was an applicant member at the time), printed, folded, stuffed, stamped and sealed the mailings. Nalbone also designed the pledge card and wrote the beg letter and an accompanying flyer insert.

The campaign was supposed to be rolled out in March, but kept getting delayed due to other Club issues the VP had to deal with - many of which involved departments other than Development. In addition, the Board of Directors budgeted just \$700 for the campaign and limited the number of mailings to between 1,000 and 1,500 - a fraction of the total number of names on the Club's mailing list. The delay in the roll-out ended up increasing the cost per mailing by four cents a piece because by the time the mailings were sent out the U.S. Postal Service had increased rates. In the end, a total of 1,030 individual mailings were sent out in the first phase of the appeal.

"The whole thing has been really frustrating," said Nalbone. "It's a guaranteed flop because you don't leave out over eighty per-cent of your mailing list in a direct fundraising appeal and expect to do well. I think it shows our lack of experience and sophistication about these things. We're still learning how to play the '501c3 non-profit game.'"

"I understand that the Club's cash situation is very tight," he continued. "But we must understand that year-long fundraising is a reality of life. Our mailing list is a primary fundraising tool and we must use it as often as possible in order to keep the list current, thereby saving money by reducing the number of returns for bad addresses, and to keep the Club in the mind of the public. That will eventually translate into greater public financial support. Remember, every single person on our mailing list got there because they visited the Club. We don't buy or rent mailing lists. It's all ours. We also need to grow the list."

Nalbone points out that all not-for-profit organizations make liberal use of their mailing lists and make multiple appeals for donations.

"They're fools if they don't! For those who went to college, just look at how many times your Alma-Mata or your alumni association sends you financial appeals each year. Same goes for other 501c3's."

So far, a total of \$1,538 has been raised in the Campaign 21 appeal for 2007, with \$1,300 of that coming from contributions from members. In the three weeks since the limited public mailing went out, \$238 in donations have been received. The appeal so far has cost \$587 dollars. \$70.

FAMILY SUMMER SAVINGS PROGRAM RETURNS

The popular "Family Summer Savings Program" will once again be offered this year. Under the promotion, all children aged 12 and younger will be admitted free of charge on Saturdays from June 23 through August 25.

"We are pleased to once again offer this program," said Club President Carlos Langezaal. "With the price of gas being so high we want to offer the public an incentive to visit an enjoyable, affordable attract-

(Continued on page 12)

RULES TIGHTEN FOR DONATIONS

By Bob Nalbone

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has, or is in the process of, issuing new and revised guidelines that impact charitable donations. The Pension Protection Act passed by Congress in 2006 and signed into law by President Bush made significant changes to the rules governing tax deductions for charitable giving. In addition, the IRS has been scrutinizing the tax-exempt sector in the wake of some very high-profile scandals. The Club, which is still in its advance ruling period, is currently classified as a public charity by the IRS.

Some of the changes, as well as list some reminders of rules that have not changed, are highlighted below. This is by no means a complete list and members who itemize their deductions are urged to consult the IRS website (www.irs.gov) or their financial advisor for more information.

Cash Donations

- You must have a bank record or a written communication from the charity in order to claim a deduction for cash donations. The prior law allowed you to use items such as personal bank registers, diaries or notes to back up your donations, but those are no longer allowed.
- All individual monetary donations less than \$250 now require a "statement of proof," such as a written acknowledgement letter from the charity, a bank statement or a canceled check (the Club already issues dated acknowledgement letters for all cash donations received through the Development Department, regardless of amount). The new law does not change the requirement that you get a written acknowledgement for individual cash donations of \$250 or greater.
- Contributions are deductible in the year you make them. For example, if you make a contribution in 2007 by check and send it by mail, it must have a 2007 postmark in order for you to claim a deduction on your 2007 return.
- A new provision that was available in tax year 2006 that is also available in tax year 2007 allows an IRA owner who is age 70 ½ or older to directly transfer up to \$100,000 to an eligible charitable organization (the Club is an "eligible charitable organization," as defined by the Internal Revenue Code). Distributions from employer-sponsored retirement plans (including Simple IRAs and SEP plans) are not eligible.

Non-cash (In-Kind) Donations

- Clothing and household items (such as electronics, furniture, appliances) must be in good used condition, or better. There is an exception: a taxpayer may claim a deduction of more than \$500 for any single item, regardless of its condition, if the taxpayer includes a qualified appraisal by a qualified appraiser of the item with the return (please note that the Club is prohibited from appraising anything).
- Taxpayers are required to obtain a qualified appraisal by a qualified appraiser for donated property when the deduction claimed is more than \$5,000.

(Continued on next page.)

Clearboard Deadlines:

August 2007 Issue: July 21. *Publication on or about August 15th.*

September 2007 Issue: August 18th. *Publication on or about September 12th.*

THE CLEARBOARD

PO Box 1146

Union, NJ 07083-1146

FIRST CLASS MAIL