

# ***SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS EXPRESS***

## ***DECEMBER 2013***

Welcome to a December issue of *Susquehanna Sidetracks Express*!! Your editor and your BOD wish you all a happy Holiday season. Due to publication deadlines, we were not able to present a complete listing of 2014 events in our November Sidetracks issue, and we wanted to be sure you had as much notice as possible to plan for activities in January and February. Our Superintendent, Barry Schmitt, provides the 2014 Division Schedule below.

Our upcoming January Sidetracks will feature more coverage of the recent MER Convention, the LSOP5 session and mini-reviews of a few of the November Open House layouts that were on tour. Also, some regular features such as the Hobby Shop of the Month and a calendar of early 2014 train shows and events are on tap as well. Layout construction articles are also planned for the January and March issues.

Enjoy this time of year and I hope to see you at an upcoming event!

Ron Smith



Tis The Season to be Jolly, Thankful, and Eager to Begin a New Year!

It's that time of year when we all look forward to the holidays and a time to relax and celebrate this special time of year with family and friends. For us model railroaders we also start thinking about the year ahead and all the projects, both old and new, we want to complete and begin. A hard working team of eight Division members spent the past four months developing a very diversified and interesting series of eight – yes, eight - meetings and events for 2014. This Sidetracks Express issue is devoted to outlining each of them so you can hopefully work all or most of them into your 2014 model railroading schedule.

Two of those events deserve special mention because they are in January and February, so be sure to check them out and make plans to attend. The first is the type of activity we plan to develop further called Model Railroad Club Mini Clinics. On January 14, the E-Town and Masonic Village Model Railroad Club will present the first such mini clinic on tree making. The clinic will be held during their normal HO Tuesday night work session. Whether you are building a module, a small layout, or a full basement model railroad empire, trees are an essential scenery element that brings your layout to life and can also become a modeling segment that all members of the family can participate in. So be sure to read the event article and call Jay Green now to reserve a seat at what will be a very interesting clinic.

The second early 2014 event is Saturday, February 8, in Mechanicsburg, and includes morning clinics, a historic station tour, and afternoon layout open houses. At this event Division member and Master Model Railroader John Wissinger will introduce a new feature we plan to include at all future clinic meetings called Model Showcase. This is a very popular clinic activity that many NMRA Divisions hold and is totally attendee centered. We encourage you to bring to this first Model Showcase clinic your favorite, well, model which can be either finished or under various stages of construction. Before the start of our morning clinics all the models will be placed on display tables located throughout the meeting room and then during the set-aside clinic period you will be given the opportunity to talk about your pride and joy. The only restrictions are a five-minute limit for your discussion, it must be model railroad oriented, and it has to fit through the door. Don't be shy, it is not a contest - it is simply an opportunity to share with other modelers what interests you. And yes, even I, a new N-Scale modeler, plan to bring a recently completed styrene structure kit that someday will be on my B&O layout – nothing earth shaking, just a building I thoroughly enjoyed constructing which then inspired me to move up to the more challenging but personally satisfying laser kits. Our next Model Showcase clinic will be held May 10 at the Masonic Village Welcome Center Brossman Ballroom.

My wife Sue and I wish you and your family a joyful and peaceful holiday season!



## Susquehanna Division

### 2014 Event Program

#### Event 1: January 14 - Mini Tree Building Clinic

Location: Masonic Village and Elizabethtown Model Railroad Club

Schedule: 7:00-8:30 PM. To be sure sufficient room will be available for clinic attendees it is recommended you call Jay Green at 717-679-0067 to reserve a seat and advise how many will be attending.

Program:

Their club ace tree making team of Gary Joline and Jay Green has developed a detailed process for making all sizes of trees. Several completed and “planted” trees will be available for viewing on their layout. Their modeling method starts like most all others with Scenic Express “Super Trees” armatures and various flocking supplies. Their clinic will present step by step procedures and techniques to create trees and the various tools they use in their building process. In essence Gary and Jay have taken the traditional Scenic Express tree building process and enhanced it to build excellent looking and very durable trees that have held up very well in their club operating environment.

Specifically, you will learn how to:

Prepare armatures.

Develop the proper mixture of Matt Medium for sealing.

Use their spray painting technique.

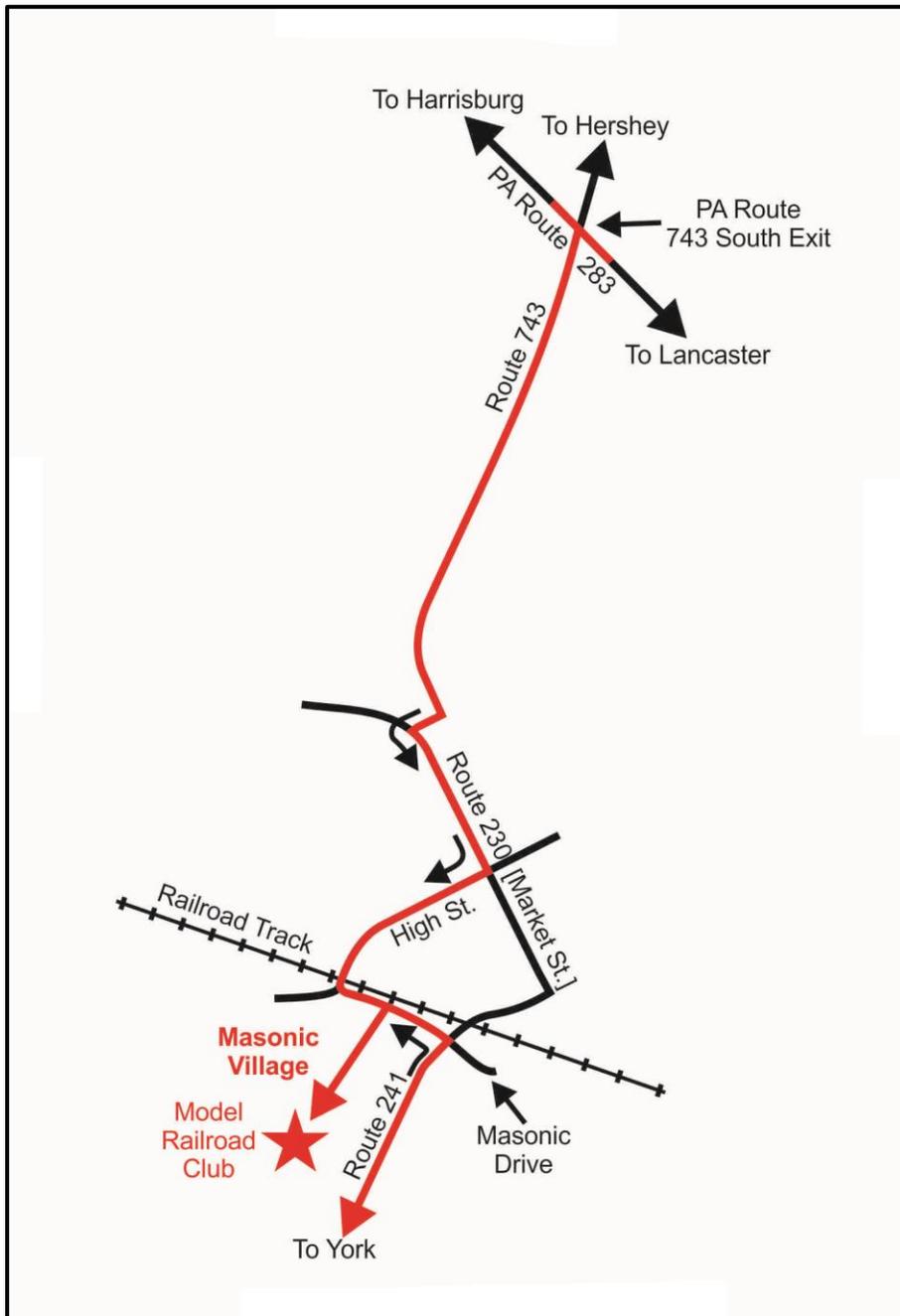
Use various flocking materials.

Tree placement considerations for your layout.

Come prepared to have fun, learn one method of building high quality trees, and leave with all the information you need to build what they believe is the “best” way to build great looking trees next to Mother Nature herself of course!

Directions: A map from the intersection of PA 743 and PA 283 to the club follows. The driving distance from the 283/743 intersection to entering the Masonic Village campus is 3 miles. You will enter the campus on Free Mason Drive – the tree-lined main entrance road just to the south of the E-Town Amtrak station. Follow that road until you reach a “Y” intersection and bear left, drive past the

large Cultural Center on your right, drive past the Ben Franklin printing press statue on your right, and then turn left into the Model Railroad parking lot - easily identified by the flashing railroad cross-bucks sign. After entering the campus there are signs along your route on your right directing you to all sorts of places of which one is the Model Railroad Club. The distance from entering the campus to the Club parking lot is ½ mile.



## **Event 2: February 8 – Mechanicsburg PA**

Event Project Officer – Ron Smith

Location: Grace United Methodist Church, 216 S. Market Street, Mechanicsburg PA 17055

Schedule:

09:00 – 09:30 Registration, Welcome, New Member Introductions, and General Division Information

09:30 – 10:20 Clinic 1 – Operations with Industry – Clinician: Ron Smith

10:20 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:15 Clinic 2 – Model Showcase – Facilitator: John Wissinger (MMR)

11:15 – 11:25 Break

11:25 – 12:05 Why I Scratchbuilt a HO Chimney Rock Quarry Shay Locomotive – Clinician:  
Alan Mende

12:05 – 12:15 Closing

12:15 – 1:00 Historic Mechanicsburg Train Station Visit

1:00 – 1:45 Lunch (on your own)

1:45 – 3:45 Layout Visits:

Ron Smith's N-Scale Layout

Bob Charles (MMR) HO Layout

Model Showcase Comments: With this event we are introducing a new segment that will be included in all future events that have a clinic segment, and it is called Model Showcase. We are dedicating a period during the meeting where you can bring in a model for display and, if you wish, you can describe the model (5 minute limit), its features, and why it is special to you. This can be any model related to model railroading - rolling stock, motive power of any kind, scenery, structures, control equipment, or anything else related to the hobby of model railroading. This is not a contest and do not be afraid that you will be belittled or over shadowed by another model or modeler. So, go to your layout, grab a model or go to the hobby shop and buy that item you have had your eye on and bring it to the February meeting.

**Event 3: May 10 – Masonic Village, Elizabethtown PA**

Event Project Officer – Barry Schmitt

Location: Masonic Village Welcome Center, Brossman Ballroom (same as Apr 2013)

Schedule:

09:00 – 09:30 Registration, Welcome, New Member Introductions, and General Division Information

09:30 – 10:25 Clinic 1 – East Broad Top (EBT) Story – Clinician: Lee Rainey

10:25 – 10:40 Break

10:40 – 11:35 Clinic 2 – Dead Rail – Model Railroad Operations of the Future – Clinician: Steve Sherrill

11:35 – 11:45 Break

11:45 – 12:30 Model Showcase

12:30 – 12:45 Closing – handout layout maps

12:45 – 1:30 Lunch (on your own)

1:30 – 4:30 Layout Open Houses

**Event 4: Jun 28, 2014 - Rockhill Furnace, Huntington County**

Event Project Officer – Lee Rainey

Location: Key focus is East Broad Top (EBT) Railroad, Rockhill Trolley Museum, and Bricktown Model Railroad Club – approximately 80 miles and 2-hours west of Harrisburg.

Planned Event Schedule:

A detailed event schedule cannot be established at this time due to the uncertain nature of the EBT Railroad which is in the process of changing ownership and associated operating plan. The prospective new owner hopes to operate in 2014, but there are still many things that could delay that goal. At a minimum, we can expect a guided walking tour narrated by the leading EBT historian. That walking tour will include visits to the various shops, roundhouse, and yard. At best, we can expect all those walking opportunities plus a steam train ride. The walking tour takes about 90 minutes, and, if the train is running, it will take about 90 minutes. The exact EBT segment of the event may not be known until just prior to the event; however, we know the minimum segment will be the 90-minute walking tour.

The second phase of the event is assured – a visit to the nearby Rockhill Trolley Museum. This part of the event includes a trolley ride, informational talks about the equipment and location provided by the motorman and conductor, a guided car-barn tour, and a visit to the museum store. This part of the event takes at least 90 minutes.

The third assured part of the event is an open house at the Bricktown Model Railroad Club which is located in Mt Union PA. This HO/Hon3 layout represents the PRR from Horseshoe Curve to Mt Union with some EBT narrow trackage planned as well. The club mainline operates very well with yard trackage currently under construction. The layout includes several excellent industrial structures. The scenery phase of construction has not yet started.

This all-day event will begin at 10:30 to allow time for our more distant members to travel to this western part of our Division. The event is centered on Rockhill Furnace which is located in Huntington County – 17 miles north of the Fort Littleton PA Turnpike exit via US Route 522. Mt Union is located 10-miles north of Rockhill Furnace also via US Route 522.

#### Event Pricing:

The pricing model is as follows: The Bricktown Club visit is free but donations are welcome. The 2013 trolley ride and tour is \$8 per person. Firm EBT 2014 pricing has not been established. If tour pricing remains the same as 2013, it will be \$10 per person with a \$200 minimum for our group. Steam train ticket prices will likely be in the \$15 per person range if the train is running. Therefore, the total event pricing estimate is between \$10 to \$25 per person for the EBT segment and \$8 for the Trolley Museum segment or an estimated maximum of \$33 per person for all three event segments based on 2013 pricing. Obviously, as soon as 2014 pricing is known that will be provided to our members in Sidetracks announcements or a last minute email.

#### Event Pre-Registration:

The EBT train, if running, can accommodate over 200 people per run. The trolleys, operating as single cars, carry fewer folks but they will run more than one car if the group is large enough. The shops and roundhouse tours get crowded with more than 25 people but groups of 40 have been handled. Lee Rainey, our event project officer, believes he can line up an additional tour guides and the groups can be staggered where some ride the trolley and others take the tour and reverse the process. The ideal number would be 50-60 attendees. For early planning purposes we will survey those attending our Feb and May events to get an idea of potential turnout numbers. An added factor in gauging attendance must consider how many non-Division members will attend since we will be advertising this event in the NMRA magazine, the MER Local, and emails to surrounding Divisions.

The practical solution to properly staffing this event is pre-registration. Developing such a pre-registration program will be accomplished in the next few months and will be explained in future Sidetracks and our event advertising.

**Event 5: Jul 10, 2014 - Bowser, English, and Weaver**

Project Officer: Howard Oakes

Location: Bowser and English in Montoursville and Weaver/ScaleCoat in Northumberland

Tentative Jul 10 Event Schedule:

7:45 – Depart Enola for Bowser (Montoursville), 92 miles, 1 hr + 45 min

9:30 – Arrive Bowser, tour facility and English Hobby Shop

11:30 – Lunch (location TBD)

12:45 – Depart for Weaver, 35 miles, 45 min

1:30 – Arrive Weaver, tour facility

2:30 – Depart Weaver for Enola, 54 miles, 1 hr + 20 min

3:50 – Arrive Enola

Comments:

The Jul 10 date is firm but specific details are still being finalized. The event cannot be scheduled during a weekend because their facilities are closed on weekends.

Attendees from our central and southern areas will gather at a to-be-announced location in Enola and then proceed north. Attendees from other areas are welcome to meet and join the group departing from Enola or find their own way to Montoursville. Business addresses, an area map, and suggested lunch eateries will be included in an event information package that will be provided to each attendee in early June

A pre-registration process will be developed due to the relatively small attendance allowance. The company initially advised that 20-25 attendees would be an acceptable number but a final number is still being fine-tuned. The registration process will be developed over the next few months and the process will be presented in generalized terms in the Mar Sidetracks initial event announcement and the detailed registration process outlined in the May issue.

Howard plans to make a visit to all three locations in the spring to firm up plans with each facility. He will also confirm their photo taking policy and ask if attendees can provide order forms at the beginning of the ScaleCoat tour and pick-up their orders when leaving like was done at the last visit several years ago.

## **Event 6: Sep 20-21 - Mainline Hobby Supply Layout Open House**

Project Officer: Barry Schmitt

Location: Blue Ridge Summit, PA

Planned Event Schedule:

Sep 20 – Man NMRA table to advertise/sign-up prospective members in MER Rail Pass program from 10:00AM – 3:00PM

Sep 21 – Man NMRA table to advertise/sign-up prospective members in MER Rail Pass program from 11:00AM – 3:00PM

Comments:

We have supported this event for many years and became an official co-sponsor in 2013. While Mainline Hobby Supply of Blue Ridge Summit is not physically in our assigned Division area they are less than a mile from our closest county line. More importantly they provide exceptional support to many of our Southern Sub Division members. Also, in 2013, seven of the 21 total participating layouts were located within our Division.

Sometime in April we will be contacting those layout owners and clubs who participated in the September 2013 open house program and requesting their continued support for the 2014 project. If you would like to open your layout for the 2014 event please contact Barry at 717-877-1810. A new feature in 2014 will be an area map that we are developing that will allow attendees to see all the layouts on a broad area map to better develop a visitation plan.

## **Event 7: Oct 3-4, 2014 - LSOP6**

Project Officer: Wayne Betty

Location: Central Susquehanna Valley and Allentown/Lehigh Valley areas

Planned Event Schedule:

Allentown/Lehigh Valley:

October 3 and 4: Three operational layouts – one on Friday evening, October 3, and two Saturday October 4 - one in the morning and one in the afternoon

Layout owners: Jim Hertzog, Larry Reynolds, and Gale Smith

Specific operating schedule – see comments below

### Susquehanna Valley:

October 3 and 4: Three operational layouts – one on Friday evening, October 3, and two Saturday October 4 – one in the morning and one in the afternoon

Layout owners: Steven Mallery, Mike Hartlett, and Wayne Betty

Specific operating schedule – see comments below

### Comments:

One lesson we learned from LSOP5 is the critical need for effective advanced advertising. For our 2014 event our minimum advertising goal is to have ads beginning in Mar and run monthly or every other month all the way to September in the following model railroad media: NMRA Magazine, MER Local, OPSIG newsletter, and possibly Model Railroader Magazine. To meet their editorial deadline policies our ads must be at their Editors a minimum of 60-days before ad appearance.

For other helpful information about this great hands-on event, background information and operating schedules for all six layouts, registration procedures and the registration form, and a host of other LSOP6 issues, questions, and answers, kindly review the event website and link at:

<http://www.susquehannamra.org/LSOP/LSOP6/default.htm>

## **Event 8: Nov 1-23, 2014 – Susquehanna Division Grand Tour**

### **Layout Open Houses In Support Of National Model Railroad Month**

Project Officer: Barry Schmitt

Location: Division-Wide

#### Planned Open House Schedule by Sub Division:

Nov 1-2 – Northern Sub Division layouts (NSD)

Nov 8-9 – Western Sub Division layouts (WSD) (PSU football away at Indiana)

Nov 15-16 – Eastern Sub Division layouts (ESD)

Nov 22-23 – Southern Sub Division layouts (SSD)

### Comments:

As was done in 2013 the Division Grand Tour will be cover all 32 PA counties located within our Division territory. To make it more manageable and help you develop efficient area visitation plans we will again divide our Division into its four Sub Divisions, each hosting open houses over designated Saturdays and Sundays. For 2014 the Division Grand Tour schedule with associated counties is as follows:

November 1 and 2 – Northern Sub Division: Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties.

November 8 and 9 – Western Sub Division: Blair, Cambria, Centre, Huntington, Juniata, Mifflin, Snyder, and Union counties.

November 15 and 16 – Eastern Sub Division: Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Monroe, Pike, Northampton, and Schuylkill counties.

November 22 and 23 - Southern Sub Division: Adams, Cumberland, Perry, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, and York counties.

In 2014 we are adopting another new policy – layout owners will be permitted to be open on either Saturday, Sunday, or both days. Our previous only-open-on-Saturday policy eliminated several layouts from the 2013 program. Also, several members stated our previous policy prevented them from visiting any layouts due to Saturday work schedules and/or other unchangeable commitments. The option of being open either or both days has proven very effective in the annual Mainline Hobby program.

Sometime in April we will be contacting those layout owners and clubs who graciously opened their layouts in our 2013 open house program and request their continued participation for the 2014 project and to begin deciding which days you want to be open. If you did not open your layout in 2013 but would like to do so for our 2014 Division Grand Tour program please contact Barry at 717-877-1810.

A new feature in 2014 will be the distribution of four Sub Division maps currently under development that will allow attendees to see all the layouts, by day, in each Sub Division. This combined with individual layout maps and addresses will allow you to more effectively plan your visits.

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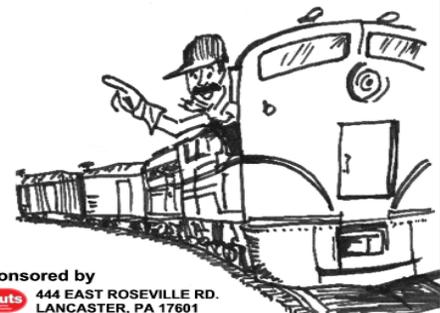
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## MODEL TRAIN DISPLAY SHOW SCHEDULE

	November	December-2013										Janua	
	30th	1st	7th	8th	14th	15th	21st	22nd	28th	29th	4th	5th	
<b>SHORT LINE MODEL RR CLUB</b> 11 S. State Street Ephrata PA Open 1pm -4pm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>MODEL RR CLUB of YORK</b> 381 Wheatfield St. York PA Open 1pm - 5pm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>C.H.I.P.S.</b> 19-21 N. 2nd ST. Columbia PA Open 1pm - 4pm		X		X		X		X		X		X	

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The Susquehanna Division is located in the central portion of Pennsylvania. The Counties served are: Adams, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Carbon, Center, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mifflin, Monroe, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Perry, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Union, Wayne, Wyoming, and York.

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**Susquehanna Sidetracks**

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