



## Southern Tier Garden Railway Society

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### STGRS Calendar:

#### AT AGLANCE SECTION:

**Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** Greene Model Railroad Club Show in Greene, NY.

**Friday and Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>:** The East Coast Large Scale Train Show in York, Pa.

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>:** The Binghamton Sertoma Club Model Train Show and Million Dollar Antique Show in Binghamton NY.

**Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>:** MEA Spring Meet in Scranton, Pa. This info is further down in the newsletter.

**Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>:** The Miller's Open House in Corning, NY

#### AND NOW FOR THE BEEF:

**Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** The Greene Model Train Club is having a train show from 9am until 4pm at the Berean Bible Church Fellowship Hall. The church is located at the intersection of Route 12 and County Route 2 which is about 2.75 miles south of Greene. There will be vendors and exhibits for you to look at. The charge is a free will offering.

**Friday and Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>:** The East Coast Large Scale Train Show is almost here and this is the first I have mentioned it. I must be getting older! It will be held at the York Fair Grounds, 334 Carlisle Ave, York Pa. The cost of a

two day admission is \$18 and a single day is \$10. Children 12 and under will be free. The show is open Friday from 9-6 and Saturday from 9-4 The seminars will be posted online at [largescaletrains.com](http://largescaletrains.com) sometime after March 1<sup>st</sup>. I always enjoy going to this show and just looking around even if I don't buy anything. To Gail's delight last year there were three different plant displays.

At the anniversary meeting I didn't even ask if we wanted to get together on Friday evening after the show. If you would like to, I will make reservations again at Ruby Tuesdays 1401 Kenneth Road, York, Pa. Please let me know if you would like to get together by calling or emailing me. The time would be at 6PM. My info is at the top of the newsletter for advance notice. I am also including a cell phone number that I will have down in York for any last minute change of plans. It is 607-321-7451. I hope to see some of you there.

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>:** The Binghamton Sertoma Club Model Train Show and Million Dollar Antique Show at the BU Events Center, Binghamton NY. The hours are Friday 5pm-8pm, Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 10am to 4pm. If you go on Friday the cost is \$10 for all three days. Saturday and Sundays admission is \$7 per day.

**Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Cliff and Pauline Miller will be hosting an open house at their home in Corning, NY. I do not have any other info at this time but please set the date aside for this event. I will have more by the next newsletter.

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**THE GREEN SPOT:** by Gail Gunsalus

I'm trying to go to a warm and comfy place by concentrating on this article. The snow is coming down fluffy white, steadily, and growing by inches so, I will concentrate.

I thought I would share information about tiny groundcover plants we have in our railroad called "stepables". These tiny plants are so-called because they can be walked on one to four times a day without suffering any damage, but that is not why I have incorporated them into our lay-out. I like the mini size of them although some can be invasive if not controlled. I find that by restricting them to certain areas and different kinds of soils that this will keep them in check. However, some of these types of plants spread readily by seeds.

Choosing these plants is a matter of taste. I tend to lean towards the ones with tiny leaves and flowers that create miniature mounds in parts of my landscape, but lean towards the grasses and ferny types in other areas. Really invasive plants I avoid.

The Black Pratts fern is classified as a stepable. There is also a green, bronzish variety. These plants resemble tiny ferns which spread well, but have small roots making them easy to keep in check and easy to transplant to other areas. They spread by runners and thrive in sun and shade.

The Blue Star Creeper is a dainty, vine spreading, fragile looking plant. It has tiny blue flowers and will grow in sun and shade. There is also a white variety.

I have two types of short grass stepables about 2-4 inches high. These are mondo grasses in black and green. They will spread, but can be removed and put in other spots in the railroad garden. They resemble a miniature lily turf grass and the black has tiny pink flowers once a year. The black is really striking with other colored flowers. I have a larger, 6" black mondo grass that grows much slower. I had a hard time locating this plant several years ago. I saw it at the water garden place and the owner said it was for Zone 6, but that he had had good luck wintering it over. I begged him to sell me some. Now it is popular at many plant places and catalogues and rated at Zone 5. Did the weather change?

Irish moss and Scotch moss are a nice addition to the railroad garden and so soft looking and feeling. They tend to brown out in spots, but come back and spread all over by seed. The Irish moss seems to be hardier in my garden.

Woolly thyme is one of the few types of thyme I appreciate in the railroad garden. The others tend to take over and the roots are very hard to remove. However, the woolly thyme has been hard for me to winter over. It is tiny and fuzzy with pink flowers. I really like the soft look.

My favorite stepable is the miniature moneywort with miniature leaves and yellow flowers. Because I grow it in dry, coarse soil, it tends to form tiny clumps of foliage resembling bushes which enhances my landscape. It spreads readily by tiny seeds borne on the wind. Different soil conditions will bring different growing and spreading results for all of these plants and require different pruning or thinning to keep them in check.

Jerry Spandine and I tried some of the larger variety, Ajuga and pussy toes. I find Ajuga too invasive and we both lost the pussy toes to a blight.

Lowes carries some of these plants in the spring, and others can be purchased through plant catalogues or on line. I got my original plants at

Howard's Florist and I still bemoan their closing. They were \$4.00 each and I still have them.

Try a few stepables in your railroad garden. Happy spring!!!

### **We Want to Know:**

We talked at the anniversary meeting about trying to find out when and where the current members joined the train club. I have information from Ray Taylor about some of you. Also, Joan Spadine has also been busy gathering info on this subject which I will have for the next newsletter. I have Ray's info as follows:

#### 21st STGRS Anniversary Party

On Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, 17 members of the club met for our annual Anniversary Party. It was the 21<sup>st</sup> this year. During the party, a discussion of when some of us joined the club brought up lots of questions as most of us couldn't remember when we did join.

John & Boots Gordon always included the names of the new members in the current newsletter, and Ray happened to have most of them, since we joined, and the list below is what we found:

1996- Mike Ledley -Sept/Oct

1996- Ray & Elma Taylor Nov/Dec

1997-John Skibitzki Jan/Feb

1998- Wil & Laura Decker Jan/Feb

1998-Jim & Gail Gunsalus Nov/Dec

1999-John & Jane Conklin Nov/Dec

1999-Frank & Donna Moorhead Nov/Dec

2000- Dave & Sandy Campbell

2002- Al & Louis Zubal- Sept/Oct

2002-Cliff & Pauline Miller-Sept/Oct

If anyone else has any history of the club that they would like to share- Jim would appreciate the info, so he could add it to the newsletter. **(So true)**  
We aren't sure just where we signed up, but it most likely was at a club demonstration like the Roberson Show

It has been a good experience being part of the group, who has at times been very helpful. We have met a lot of nice people that we most likely otherwise would not have met.

We have attended a number of different open houses that we found very enjoyable and have hosted a few ourselves.

Will and Laura Decker went home, took it to heart and wrote this up about their club joining.

Sometime in the Fall of 1997 we were shopping at Sam's Club - each going our own way. When we returned to the car, Will asked if I had seen the beautiful train set. I told him I hadn't and he raved about it. Every once in a while he would talk about that train set so I decided to make a quick trip to Sam's and purchase it. I hid it away for Christmas (another story) and he continued to look at the set each time we went into Sam's.

I happened to notice in the Binghamton Press that there was a garden railway train display by the local club at the Endicott Agway and told him I would like to go. I know I talked with Joan Spadine there but we also went to a show at Roberson a short time later and Joan and Jerry were there too and greeted us once again. I believe Joan gave me the paper to fill out and I signed up for membership in the club. Will asked what I'd done that for - he wasn't going to go to any meetings. I told him we'd go once and if he didn't like it, we wouldn't go again.

Christmas came and he was shocked that I had managed to get the train set and had never even given him any idea he would be getting it. Shortly, we received a notice from STGRS that they would be having a meeting at the home of the Tom James' in Johnson City. As I recall it was a breakfast meeting and club anniversary. Everyone was so

welcoming and Joan and Jerry took us under their wings. Needless to say, he enjoyed it very much and was anxious to attend other meetings and open houses.

In the Spring of 1998 we laid 62 feet of track and have continued to add things through the years. We've tried to be supportive members of the club taking part in club activities and hosting open houses.

Between 2005 and 2010 we had several major changes in our lives - losing our home to fire, being displaced for 8 1/2 months, a new home, a major illness and two complete hip replacements within a year of each other, so we were unable to continue as we had been doing. Things aren't kept up like they used to be, but we still enjoy our railroad. We now hope to be able to participate more. It's a great club with great people.

If your name is not here don't panic. All current member will be here next time, I hope. You can still let me know when and where you joined because it is always good to hear from you!!!

**Welcome Aboard:**

We want to welcome back Bill and Pat Campbell from Harpursville, NY. They were members when the club was first formed and have rejoined. We are so glad to have you and look forward to meeting you and talking about the good ole days of the club. Again, welcome aboard.

**MEA SPRING MEET: SUNDAY APRIL 17, 2011 AT ELECTRIC CITY TROLLEY MUSEUM ON GROUNDS OF THE STEAMTOWN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN SCRANTON, PA**

ECTM 300 Cliff Street, Scranton, PA 18053:  
Museum open 9am to 5pm

The perfect site for train enthusiasts with two full

rooms that have been renovated since our October meet. The grounds of Steamtown are crowded with diesel and steam locos, passenger and freight cars. Spring time means a great variety of activities and sights in the area.

As in October we are working with the Electric City Trolley Museum to stage this meet thus our special admission and there is plenty of parking.

ADMISSION RATES (includes MEA Meet and Trolley Museum): Adults \$8 -with trolley ride\$ 12; Child (4 - 17) \$4 -with trolley ride \$8; Child (3 and under) free -with trolley ride free.

PLEASE NOTE TROLLEY SCHEDULE IS PENDING.

QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION CONTACT  
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DO NOT MISS THIS ONE, BIGGER AND BETTER ! SEE YOU SUNDAY APRIL 17, 2011.

**Dues Time:**

There are still a few who have not paid the \$5 dues. newsletter. Make the check out to me, *James Gunsalus* and mail to the address in the letter head. This is the last mention for dues.

**Website Information:**

Thanks Ray Taylor for keeping the website going. The photos that were taken of the Anniversary Dinner are posted on the website.  
<http://www.ray-taylor.com/stgrs/party2011.html>

**End of the Line:**

That's it for this edition. I will be doing the next newsletter at the end of April so get me your articles ASAP. The deadline will be April 23rd. It was great to get some articles to put in this newsletter. Remember, it is your newsletter, so sent me info to put in.