



Southern Tier Garden Railway Society

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STGRS Calendar:

At a glance section:

Friday and Saturday, March 26-27: The East Coast Large Scale Train Show in York, Pa.

Your Event: Anytime you would like, Hometown, USA

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AND NOW FOR THE BEEF:

Friday and Saturday, March 26-27: The East Coast Large Scale Train Show will be held at the fairgrounds, 334 Carlisle Ave, York, Pa. The hours are Friday, 9AM to 6PM and Saturday, 9AM to 4PM. Admission for the two days is \$18.00 a person and a single day admission is \$10. Children under 12 are free. This is a great place to get all sorts of items for your layout. The many vendors carry a large variety of items and you can buy anything from plants, to track, to cabooses. Every year, it was fun to watch Yogi Lawrence do his demos on making all sorts of accessories for your layout. These were made from free items you may have laying around your house or are rather inexpensive to buy products. They also have a person who shows you how to make people out of wire, aluminum foil, some sort of Sculpy. He had an article in the Garden Railway magazine not to long ago. There was only a date on the website for

seminars but as time for the show gets closer more info will be showing up. It said about 30 days before the show. For more info the web address is www.largescaletrainshows.com

Our club members meet on Friday night after the show to have dinner together. This has always been a good time to relax, talk about the show and just chat with good friends. We will do the same this year and dine at Ruby Tuesday's, 1401 Kenneth Road, York, Pa at 6:30. The phone number there is 717-767-0150 if you come down on a whim. Please let me know because I make reservations and they get us in quickly. I will also have my cell with me and that number is 607-759-7544. You contact me ahead at my home by phone, Email, stop in, etc.

For any bird lovers, there is a pond on Pennsylvania Ave that Gail and I visit where you might see the Yellow Crowned Night Heron, the Black Crowned Night Heron, or the Great Egret. You have to look up into the tops of the trees to see these birds. They come here to nest at varying times each year. We have seen different ones each year.

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Your Event: Let me know the dates and times and I will get them into the newsletter. You don't even need a layout to host an event, just a willingness to get together with some club members.

THE GREEN SPOT: by Gail Gunsalus

With spring right around the corner there are some wonderful wildflowers that would fit right in in the shady areas of your railroad garden. I will discuss four wildflowers this time and then others in next month's article.

Wildflowers are available in specialty catalogues and should not be gathered from the wild. Most are protected species. However, some plants can be harvested from the wild when an area is being demolished for building, etc. projects with permission. Many garden clubs have such information on rescue missions.

Most spring wildflowers and their leaves die back after blooming. It is a good idea for you to mark their location so you won't dig them up inadvertently.

Plants that I will discuss in this article are hepatica, spring beauty, the winter or tea berry, and the trillium. Of these, the earliest bloomer and my favorite is the hepatica or as it was called when I was growing up the May Flower. These 6 inch or so plants spring up amid the leaves from a hairy base which protects the plants from cold. The leaves are leathery textured in a three patterned leaf, not to be confused with poison ivy leaves. Usually the blooms appear first on long stems in delicate shades of pink, white, lavender, and blue lavender. The leaves follow later and store food for the following year. These tend to last through all the seasons turning a leathery brown. They are best left until the following year. This wildflower prefers dappled sunlight.

I can remember searching for Hepaticas in the early spring under a grove of maples in the Catskills when growing up. They disappeared when the trees were harvested by the new owners because the shade disappeared, and the protection from the leaf cover was gone.

Another lovely wildflower is the Spring beauty or *Claytonia Virginica*, a delicate, 5 inch, leggy, fleshy stemmed with a bloom of pale white striped with pink in a tiny cup shape. These fleshy, brittle, whitish-green stems grow long and leggy to reach from the under the leaf coverings and from under logs. The flower usually has two long slender leaves attached lower down the stem.

The tea berry or checker berry or partridge berry is a tiny trailing vine that creeps across the forest floor and even forms colonies. The ½" flower is actually five stamens, not a flower, with 2 green sepals. They spring up on stems about 4 inches high along the vine and are pale pinkish white to purplish shades. These produce edible red, pink berries, and the shiny, dark green leaves have a wintergreen taste and are a brittle texture. This is one of the few edible spring flowers or plants. The others we suggest are poisonous.

Most wildflowers prefer a loamy rich soil with mulch protection for the winter. Tucked in a sheltered, shaded corner of the railroad garden they will provide a nice surprise in the early spring. You can interplant them with longer blooming varieties for color year long.

The last plant today is the trillium or nose bleed plant. When we were kids we were told that if you smelled the blooms you would get a bloody nose. These plants come in two heights, ground type or taller than 5 inches.

Lowe's sold root packets which I started in pots early, and I had great luck with them. One was a toad trillium, which produced a tiny purple bloom in the center of a molted leaf. The lily pad type leaf is close to the ground, really neat. The taller types come in colors of yellow or purple, the Wake robins, white, the painted trillium which is white with painted streaks of maroon, and a pink, the Catesby, which starts as white in color. They can grow 78-12 inches tall with large umbrella style leaves. Trilliums usually have three tiny leaves below the bloom, except for the toad trillium, and

three larger leaves set a little lower on the stem below the bloom. A shady patch in your RR Garden, under a tree would look great with a variety of these wildflowers. Add impatiens for color when the blooms die.

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Anniversary Party by Gail Gunsalus

Our annual Christmas and Anniversary Dinner was held at the Park Diner in Binghamton where we dined overlooking the Susquehanna River. Some of us lined our tables up end to end while others enjoyed the view of the river at single tables. Everyone had their choice from the restaurant menu, and for dessert we had a beautifully decorated train cake made by Elma. It tasted great too! Everyone vied for the roses. Thanks to Elma.

It was nice to get together, talk and eat, and have a very relaxing time to catch up with each other. A drawing was held after the meal with numerous winners. Some prizes were donated by the club and others by members which included a railroad book, an insulator and a mug with their railroad picture on it by Charles and Iris Breiner. Mike Ledley donated a carrier he had made. I am sorry if I forgot any other donations as I didn't write them down.

A brief meeting was held. The club has a balance of \$360.21 in the dues fund and \$239.65 in the display fund. We discussed purchasing new straight track, but some members offered to give some track to the club and save us money. The dues fund goes towards the expenses of the club newsletter and other expenses that may come along during the year.

We also asked that people let us know of any open houses they are planning. Please check with Jim to see if anyone is holding one and when they are scheduling. It is a fun time to get together, check out each others' layouts and eat a potluck lunch.

At the conclusion of our dinner the train circled the track 20 times in celebration of our 19th anniversary. We also added 2 more for good luck.

My special thanks to Donna Morehead for her work to make this dinner a success. I'm sorry I couldn't make but a brief appearance.

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Welcome aboard!!! As a result of the Roberson Train show we have 3 new members in our club. They are: Douglas and Crystal Thomas of Endicott, NY, Mr. and Mrs. Siegers of Apalachin, NY, and a mother and 3 yr old son, Lori and Noah Henehan of Binghamton, NY. We are glad to welcome you to our club and we will be glad to help assist you in learning about garden railroading. Keep watching for events and we look forward to meeting you in the future. Again, WELCOME!!!

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Dues Due: The annual dues will remain at \$5. There are only a few who have not paid. When you do, *PLEASE make the check out to James Gunsalus and NOT the train club.* I deeply apologize for not getting the checks you have sent cashed but, I now have an M&T Bank right next to the new store I have been assigned to. I will cash them this week.

Website Information:
I do want to mention and thank Ray Taylor for doing a great job on the website for the club. The address is <http://www.ray-taylor.com/stgrs/> Ray does a fine job on keeping the site up to date. You can see photos from the dinner, other club member photos, see older newsletters or just look around. Have fun!!

End of the Line:
That brings us into the station. I hope you enjoyed the ride. The deadline for the next edition will be April 10th. Gail and I will be planning on going to York so maybe I will see some of you there.