



Volume Twenty NumberOne

January/February 2009

## Southern Tier Garden Railway Society

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### **STGRS Calendar:**

#### **At a glance section:**

**Friday and Saturday, March, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2009:** The ECLSTS in York, Pa.

**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>:** Garden tour including Mike Ledley's layout in Duaneburg, NY.

**Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>:** National Model RR Convention from Hartford, Conn. at Mike Ledley's home in Duaneburg, NY.

**Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> :** Open house at Ray and Elma Taylors in Bainbridge, NY.

**Friday and Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> :** The second ECLSTS in York, Pa.

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#### **And now for the beef:**

**Friday and Saturday, March, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2009:** The ECLSTS will be held at the Fairgrounds, 334 Carlisle Ave, York, Pa. from 9AM to 6PM both days. The cost of the tickets are \$10 for 1 day and \$18 for both days. There will also be seminars and many vendors to visit and buy from. You can visit the website for more info at [www.largescaletrainshows.com](http://www.largescaletrainshows.com). Also, while at the show, don't forget to visit Yogi.

There are many motels to choose from in York which you can scout out on-line. We will meet on Friday evening at Ruby Tuesday's, 1404 Kenneth

Street, York, Pa. at 6:30 for dinner. I need to know who will be coming so I can make reservations. We have had a really good time together after the show.

The phone number for Ruby Tuesday's is 717-767-0150 and if I don't know you are coming and you go to York last minute or need to cancel, please call me on my cell at 607-759-7544.

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**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>:** Mike's layout will be part of a garden tour in his area that will be a fund raiser for the Soropimist's, a women betterment organization. This is a multi garden tour that runs from 10AM til 4PM (rain or shine) but, his is the only garden railroad. There is a cost of \$12 for tickets for the tour. Mike's layout has had pictures and articles written about it in newspapers and magazines. It is a great layout to visit! For more info you can contact Mike at 518-895-2926 or [PMJRR@princetowncable.com](mailto:PMJRR@princetowncable.com)

**Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> :** This open house will be part of a drive yourself tour by the National Model RR Convention of Hartford, Conn. There is no cost to visit this event and the hours are from 10AM to 4PM and also rain or shine. Let's hope for the shine part. There will be no food at either event.

**Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup>** : The Taylors will be hosting an open house at their home in Bainbridge, NY. They feature the "East Guilford Railway" which sits under a tree in the back yard. You can set this date aside and more info will be coming in the future newsletters.

### **THE GREEN SPOT:** by Gail Gunsalus

There are a group of plants called Alpine plants that are a perfect size for a garden railroad. Alpine plants are from mountain areas around the world and are found below the snow line but above the tree lines. Most are a hardy plant, but still have specific growing requirements with some needing more moisture than others and with most needing well drained, gritty soil or a dressing of grit or gravel. Many need the roots kept cool from the sun. This type of soil can be found or created in your layouts between rocks and in the crevices. Some ~~Alpine plants sprawl over the landscape or~~ down rock faces. Some are tiny and compact and will nestle nicely in the crevices. Alpine plants come in many sizes, and many are the appropriate size for garden railroads. Some Alpine species include members of the gentian, saxifrage, aster, and stonecrop families.

Edelweiss is one Alpine plant which I started from seed. It is a member of the aster family with grey-green leaves and a white fuzzy flower head. The plant is about 6" high, but it does not have overly attractive flowers, but adds texture to your scenery.

Ajuga is another Alpine plant most of you have heard of. The leaves of this plant are a mixture of purples, topped by a blue flowered spike. Ajuga is a very attractive plant, can be very invasive, but it is used by many people as ground cover in a layout. I

keep mine contained.

Did you know the columbine is an alpine plant? I thought it was a woodland plant...surprise!! There are a few mini columbines which are great in a layout and just the right size. The foliage and colors are very attractive. They like some shade. Some other plants you may be familiar with and will find fairly easy to purchase are: rock jasmine, anemones or windflowers, rock cress and sandwort. Most range about 6" tall, but widths vary. Also most of you are familiar with pussytoes. Jerry introduced me to these and they did very well, but suddenly the whole population was wiped out one summer. They spread slowly but are susceptible to disease.

Some other Alpine plants are as follows: sea thripts, tiny grass mounds with lollypop blooms that fit nicely in crevices. Campanulas or bell flowers come in pinks, blues and white and have flowers in shapes of bells or stars. Some are creepers. Phlox are Alpine, desert or woodland plants, but need a richer soil. These drape nicely over rocks. Most bloom once a year, but I have a repeat bloomer with needle-like leaves on a trailing stem with a nice texture. Then there is the primrose, an Alpine plant which can be grown near a water feature. Some types prefer a dryer area. Most primroses need shade. Some Primrose foliage lasts the growing season while others' foliage disappears until next year. The foliage comes in many textures, even fleshy, succulent. One of my favorites is the drumstick primrose which has a lollypop bloom in lavender blue. The foliage dies back so you need to remember or mark where you plant it. They divide nicely. Another favorite because of the foliage, is the saxifrage whose leaves grow in little mounds. They are many different shapes and sizes. They have tiny flowers floating

above the leaves on thin, wispy stems. Saxifrage are harder to grow as they like moist, well-drained roots with an addition of lime to the soil. They like to be tucked in between rocks.

There are many more Alpine plants suitable for our area. The internet has so many places to visit and plants to choose from. It is just a trial and error growing process with a garden railroad. But,,great fun!

### **Anniversary Party by Gail Gunsalus**

Our annual Christmas and anniversary dinner was held at the Park Diner in Binghamton on February 7th . 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! Thanks go to Elma and Donna for organizing the event.

It was nice to get together, talk and eat, 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 book written by Charles Breiner on the O&W Railroad and a mail bag holder made by Mike Ledley . Jim created and played a slide show presentation on our clubs year in review. It started with our layout at the Phelps Mansion for Christmas 07. Then came the shows at Roberson, the Newark Valley Days, the Southern Tier Historical Society train show at the Kallurah Shrine in Endicott, and finally our set up at the Southern Tier Healthlink in The Lackawanna Train Station in Binghamton.

A brief meeting was held. The club has a balance of \$263.47 in the Dues fund and \$239.56 in the Display fund. The cost per month to send newsletters is about \$23 depending on the membership role. We discussed that a way to save postage would be to send the newsletter by email but with some still preferred the mail. You can notify Jim of your decision by email or other at a later date. We first need to get a format for sending the newsletter by email.

We also asked for input on places to display our Club train layout as where we usually display are no longer an option. They have closed or decided not to hold shows at this time. One suggestion is at local garden shows and another was at the Broome County Fair. Please let us know of your suggestions for these shows to display our club.

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 19 times in celebration of our 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We also added 1 more for good luck.

**Dues:** It is time for the annual dues to be paid. I feel we can stay at \$5 for this year. Many have paid, but a few have not. Please check the front of the address page to see how current you are. Let me know if there are any problems and all my contact info is at the top of the newsletter. Thanks.

**End of the line:** The deadline for the next newsletter will be April 4<sup>th</sup> . Please, I hope to see some articles, info, or whatever.