



# The Switch Tower

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Seacoast Division NMRA [www.seacoastnmra.org](http://www.seacoastnmra.org)



## Seacoast Division NMRA Spring Event Saturday, April 6, 2024 10:00am-2:00p

James Foley Memorial Community Center

150 Wakefield Street

Rochester, New Hampshire 03867

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Top photo Models  
by Jim Gore MMR

B&M baked bean  
Factory scratched  
built by Tom  
Oxnard MMR

Photos by Tage Er-  
ickson

## The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

Greetings Seacoast Members,

We've past the two milestones that, in my opinion, mark the end of winter – the Springfield Train Show and the Super Bowl. Today's paper declared that the mud season in NH has officially begun. It's time for the snow to disappear and the weather to warm up. My layout is slowly progressing and I recently completed the helix. It took a lot of time to build, but it came out well. Look for a photo of it in a future Switch Tower.

The Seacoast Winter Event was held on Jan. 6, 2024 at the Westbrook Community Center in Westbrook ME. Thanks go out to Jay Ehlen for coordinating the event and Will Everitt for taking on the A/V operator role which resulted in much improved sound for those viewing on Zoom. Bob Kotsonis gave a slide presentation on the status of the Flying Yankee Project. There are now plans to build a new home for it on the grounds of the Conway Scenic Railroad. Tage Erickson, Chair of our upcoming *Concord Flyer* 2025 NER Convention, gave us a status update on convention planning. Jack Lutz narrated a slide presentation covering his trip last summer to the White Pass and Yukon Railroad in Skagway, Alaska. Jim Gore, MMR and Tom Oxnard, MMR each discussed recently completed projects. Jeff Goldberg, President of the Southern Maine Model RR Club discussed the recent move of the Club to the Westbrook Community Center, where work has starting on the transition from modules to a permanent layout.

The Seacoast Division 2024 Annual Meeting was also part of the Winter Event. Will Everitt, John McHugh and Glenn Mitchell were elected to three year terms as Director. I would like to thank Ralph Brown and Jack Lutz for their service as Seacoast Directors for the last 7 years and 4 years respectively. Following the event a brief BOD meeting was held to elect Glenn Mitchell as President and Jay Ehlen as Vice President. The BOD also approved the appointments of officers, chairmen and associate chairmen. The Seacoast 2024 leadership team is as follows:

- Glenn Mitchell - President and Director
- Jay Ehlen – Vice President, Director and Activities Coordinator
- Jim Seroskie - Treasurer and Director
- Will Everitt - Secretary and Director
- Jim Gore, MMR – Director
- John McHugh – Director
- Geoff Anthony - Switch Tower Editor and Director
- Guy Mason – Publicity Chairman and Director
- Tom Oxnard, MMR - AP Chairman and Director
- Peter McKenney – Associate AP Chairman
- Bruce Campbell - Membership Chairman
- Paul Lessard - Deputy Membership Chairman
- Dave Delorey - Webmaster
- Steve Russo – Switch Tower Assistant Editor
- Tage Erickson – Faulter Fund Chairman and Maine Registered Agent
- Jack Lutz - Historian

Financially, the Seacoast Division had a good year. The 2023 beginning balance was \$6529.34 and the ending balance was \$6,277.25.

The Faulter Fund made a major donation (\$3,500.00) to the Southern Maine Model Railroad Club. The money will be used to support their renting a permanent layout room at the Westbrook Community Center. The beginning balance was \$9764.11 and the ending balance was \$6314.95. If you know any young modelers who could use some financial help, have them take a look at our website where an application form is available to down load.

## The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

2023 was not a great year for increasing the Division's membership. Membership dropped from 157 to 145.

The Achievement Program awarded three AP Certificates for the year. Will Everitt earned his Golden Spike. Victor Hand and John McHugh earned their Author Certificates. Congratulations to Will, Victor, and John.

Dave Delorey continues to do a great job with our website at [www.seacoastnmra.org](http://www.seacoastnmra.org). The website has an incredible number of resource documents and clinics linked to it. Please take a look when you can.

Geoff Anthony, the Switch Tower Editor, is always in need of articles for the Switch Tower. Even a few photos of your latest project will be a welcome addition to the Switch Tower. The January 2024 edition of the Switch Tower was recently added to the website.

Four quarterly Events were held in 2023. All were live with Zoom. Looking ahead to future quarterly events, we plan to put more emphasis on member participation through presentations on member layouts and projects. We are all interested in what our fellow modelers are doing and a Quarterly Event is a great place to share our work. If you would like to participate, please get in touch with Jay Ehlen at [jayehlen@gmail.com](mailto:jayehlen@gmail.com)

Four Seacoast members attended the 2023 NER Cannonball Express Convention in Uniondale, NY. As one of the attendees, the highlight of the show was the many great layouts that I operated on or toured. Seacoast member John McHugh gave a clinic at the convention.

The 2025 NER Convention Committee, led by co-chairmen Tage Erickson, Peter McKenney and Will Everitt, continues to make progress planning the 2025 NER Convention to be hosted by the Seacoast Division in Concord, NH on September 18 - 21, 2025. The Convention committee recently completed the name selection process which chose *Concord Flyer* as the convention name. Also, in late January the NER officially signed the contract with the Grappone Conference Center/ Courtyard by Marriott for the venue. Congratulations and thanks to all the Convention Committee members who are working to make the *Concord Flyer* a great convention..

The Seacoast Spring 2024 Event is scheduled for April 6, 2024 at the James Foley Memorial Community Center in Rochester. Watch for upcoming details on the event.

The Lakeshores '24 NER Convention will be held on Sept. 19 thru 22, 2024 in Rochester New York. Clinic Coordinator Jim Fairbanks, MMR is looking for members to present clinics at the convention. If you are interested in giving a clinic at the 2024 NER convention contact Jim at [jfair7021@gmail.com](mailto:jfair7021@gmail.com).

The NMRA Board of Directors adopted a Code of Conduct at the mid-year board meeting in Springfield, MA, January 2024, available at [www.nmra.org/code-conduct](http://www.nmra.org/code-conduct). Like many organizations, the Board recognized the need to set expectations for the behaviors, conduct, communication, and interactions between members, officers and directors. The Code addresses behaviors and conduct for engaging with other NMRA members, participating in an event or meeting, engaging on a social media platform or other sponsored extension of the NMRA (whether National, Regional, or Division). Importantly, the Code also includes general guidelines on the appropriate use of social media for NMRA matters at any level. I encourage all Seacoast members to review the code of conduct.

## The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

Again, we are always looking for members to give presentations and clinics at the Quarterly Events. If you are interested contact Jay Ehlen or myself.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Seacoast Spring 2024 Event either in person or on Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Glenn Mitchell  
Seacoast Division NMRA President and Director



At the winter meeting  
This is Jack Lutz receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from Glenn Mitchell for his efforts while he was a member of the Division Board of Directors. Photo by Tage Erickson

## Seacoast Division NMRA Spring Event

**Saturday, April 6, 2024 10:00am-2:00pm**

James Foley Memorial Community Center 150 Wakefield Street  
Rochester, New Hampshire 03867 Handicap Accessible

**The Seacoast Division Spring 2024 Event will be held in person and also On-line with ZOOM. There is ample on-site parking**

### **AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS -**

**PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS – Glenn Mitchell will discuss Division happenings.**

**DCC POWER - Chris Oliver will describe how to properly install DCC power in order to achieve safe and reliable operation. He will focus on common mistakes and how to correct them. This session will be of interest to modelers considering DCC as well as current DCC operators.**

**MAKING YOUR OWN SHRUBBERY- Rich Breton will show how to make your own shrubbery from easily obtainable components and save a great deal of money in the process. His finished product compares favorably with the most expensive European offerings.**

**2025 NER CONVENTATION “Concord Flyer” UPDATE – Convention Co-Chairs will announce the venue, dates and plans as we prepare to host the 2025 Regional Convention  
LUNCH - bring your own – limited local availability**

**PROFESSIONAL RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHY - Andy Dolph, a highly regarded local photographer specializing in railroad scenes, will present his work and discuss the techniques he employs**

**SHOW AND TELL - have something that you would like to show us, please bring it to the meeting and we will give you a few minutes to describe your efforts. Please contact Jay Ehlen to be placed on the agenda. If you have any modeling questions for the group, please bring them , as well. We have plenty of experts in attendance and we can certainly get you some answers to your questions.**

## Seacoast Division NMRA Spring Event

**For Sale!: There will be a table set up for any members that wish to buy/sell any surplus modeling items they may have. If you have any model railroad related items (loco's, rolling stock, buildings, etc.) that you don't need and wish to sell, you are encouraged to bring them to the meeting. Please put a tag on each item with your name and the asking price. Maybe one of your fellow members might be interested!**

**Layout Tour: MATT KAISER'S N GUAGE CSX LAYOUT**

**Matt has agreed to open his layout to visitors after the conclusion of the Event. His address is 6 Flynn Street, Somersworth, NH 03878. Directions will be available at the Event.**

**Next Event: The Summer Event will take place on Saturday, July 13 2024 at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, 144 Mill Street, Auburn, Maine**



At the winter meeting John McHugh receiving his Model Railroad Author Certificate from Tom Oxnard.

# Helix Progress by Tage Erickson

## Photos by Tage Erickson

Progress on my helix construction project has been slow for the past couple of years, but I have made a special effort this winter to get the darn thing done as quickly as possible. I am not there yet, but I have been making more progress, for sure. Once I reached the middle level, I had to make the connection from the helix to the middle level tracks. After that, I had to add ballast, some scenery, and backdrops to the track that goes around behind the helix. Doing scenery again was really fun! It had been a while since I had done any of that, so there was a lot of re-learning that had to happen. The backdrops were painted with acrylics using the dab method with large #12 brushes. I plan to add some clouds to the backdrops before I go much higher with the helix. The ballast is real rock from Arizona Rock & Mineral Co. Right now I am working on the helix connection to the other side of the middle level. This will take time because the middle level of the layout in that area has to be designed, laid out, and constructed. There are still two more full layers to be added to the helix in order to reach the upper level. I'll keep you posted. Please enjoy the picture



## What Went Here by Jack Lutz

In the April 2023 issue of The Switch Tower, I wrote about the challenge of what to put in the corner of the layout where people first enter the room. Figure 1 shows the final picture from that article and with early design for a bridge and a tractor sitting in what would likely become a hayfield or pasture. Figure 1



Figure 2 shows what that corner looks like now. The bridge is uses parts from a Rix Products modern highway bridge instead of the stone arch in Figure 1. The hill is gone and there is a white church steeple peeking above the bridge approach on the right. The tractor is now sitting in

what became a rather poorly maintained pasture and is sharing the space with some cows. It is very difficult to see in this picture, but there is a scratch-built barbed wire fence that keeps the cows from wandering out onto the railroad right-of-way. There is still more detail to be added, including a backdrop of some kind on the thermostat wall and something between the roadbed and the parking lot on the left side of the track.



Photos by Jack Lutz

Figure 2



# What Went Here by Jack Lutz



Photos by Jack Lutz



Photo by Ray Williams

## Make Some Trees by Tom Oxnard MMR

Super Trees from Scenic Express are great for making trees. They are light and airy. But they have some disadvantages as well. Their trunks or stems are narrow and breakable, and they often come out of the box bent or malformed.

A few years ago I did an article on making large foreground trees by hot gluing Super Trees onto beautiful sagebrush trunks and branches.

I have several smaller background trees that I made a long time ago from green and black polyfiber. This was pulled out into balls, coated with hairspray, and then sprinkled with various colors of coarse ground foam. The classic "puff ball". I felt it was time for an upgrade, and new improved smaller trees.

This will be a similar process as before but I start with small branches cut from my blueberry bushes. I chose 1/8" to 3/16" branches and cut these down to 3 to 4 inches with my pruners. Add a sharp point at the bottom for planting.



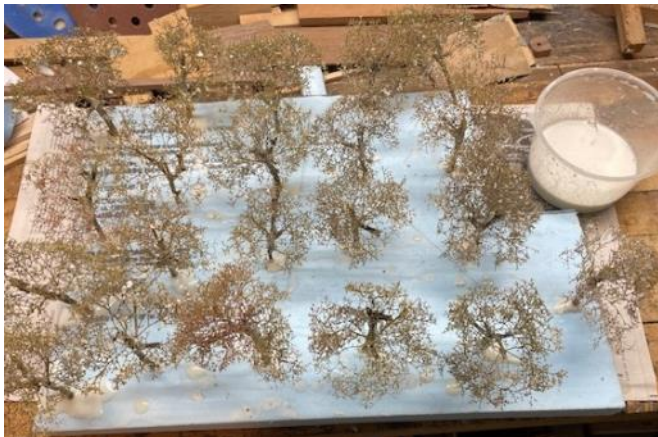
Super Trees come out of the box dry and somewhat brittle. Remove the dead leaves. I then cut up the large trees into pieces of various sizes. Fire up the hot glue gun and start gluing pieces onto the bare trunk. Its nice if there are forks in the trunk where you can rest a new branch. I glue on 6 to 8 pieces of the Super Tree branches. It takes 15 to 20 seconds for the glue to cool. Keep adding until it looks like a tree. When finished I may use scissors to shape the tree as needed, getting rid of protruding branches.

I briefly soak each tree in dilute matte medium and let dry standing upright stuck into a Styrofoam board. This makes them stronger. At this point the trees are fairly unsightly with wrong-colored trunks and limbs, and lots of visible glue. I paint the trunks with Concrete, a nice gray-brown color.

The trees are now ready for leaves. I use Super Leaf (SE6123), a spring green leaf from Scenic Express; and Noch Olive Leaf (07140). I have painted on dilute white glue with a brush, but it is easier to use a spray adhesive on the outer tree as long as you don't spray the trunk. Then sprinkle on the leaves.

# Make Some Trees by Tom Oxnard MMR

When all the foliage is on the trees you can't see any imperfections on the trunk or glued areas. I find this a better way to make smaller and background trees. They are light and airy like real trees and far superior to puff balls.



## Northeast Region Convention Sept 19-22 Rochester NY



# LAKESHORES '24 NMRA Northeastern Region Annual Convention

Rochester, NY. Throughout its history, Rochester has acquired several nicknames based on local industries; it has been known as "the Flour City" and "the Flower City" for its dual role in flour production and floriculture, and "the World's Image Center" for its association with film photography. In 2024, Rochester will be known as the Northeastern Region's Convention city!

The Lakeshores Division is hosting the convention, Lakeshores'24, on September 19-22. This will be the first time the division is hosting an NER convention since joining the region. So everything will be a new experience for attendees to the convention.

And what a convention it will be! There will be layout tours not only in the Lakeshores Division, but also in neighboring Central New York and Western New York Divisions. While the Western New York Division is not part of the NER, it has some great layouts to see in the Buffalo area. There will also be operating sessions arranged for many of the layouts in the Lakeshores Division.

There will be a "Build-It" clinic program, where participants will start constructing a boxcar during the NERx virtual convention in March and finish it during Lakeshores'24, all under the guidance of Jim DeMarco, MMR®. Read more about the program below.

In addition to "Build-It", there will be a full slate of clinics at the convention hotel. Also at the hotel, a switching layout featuring the O-scale cars and structures from Harold Russell, MMR® and a Free-Mo layout will offer hours of entertainment and challenges to attendees.

As for prototype tours, NCE will open its doors for a tour. And, a train ride on the [Genesee Valley Transportation Company](#) system to the [Medina Railroad Museum](#) and tours of the [Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad Museum](#) will be part of the convention program.

Need a diversion from trains? Tours of the [George Eastman House](#) and the [Genesee Brew House](#) will be offered.

## Northeast Region Convention

### Sept 19-22 Rochester NY

Throughout its history, Rochester has acquired several nicknames based on local industries; it has been known as "the Flour City" and "the Flower City" for its dual role in flour production and floriculture, and "the World's Image Center" for its association with film photography. In 2024, Rochester will be known as the Northeastern Region's Convention city!

Convention Headquarters will be at the RIT Inn and Conference Center in Henrietta, NY, just south of the city. On-site activities will include the usual clinics, contests and a raffle, plus the Interchange Room with vendors, switching layouts (including FreeMo), and round-table demonstrations/clinics. Off-site, there will be layout tours, operating sessions, prototype tours, and non-rail venues. Local model train shops and at least one eatery are offering discounts to those registered for the convention. Here are some of the special events, both on-site and off-site. Most of these are set, and the specifics will be coming:

#### Thursday Morning and Afternoon

CNY layout open along travel routes

- **Thursday Evening** Welcome Reception
- **Friday Morning** Railyard Switching Observation ,WNY-NFR Layout Tour
- NCE Open House, George Eastman House Tour
  - **Friday Afternoon** Rochester Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, Genesee Brew House Tour, WNY-NFR Layout Tour
  - **Saturday Morning and Afternoon** ,Rail Excursion to Medina Railroad Museum, Edgerton Model Railroad Club Open House, Hemlock Train Show
  - **Saturday Evening**, Convention Banquet with Keynote Speaker
  - **Sunday Morning**, Awards Breakfast and Annual Business Meeting
- Hemlock Train Show
  - **Sunday Afternoon**
- CNY layout open along travel routes
- Hemlock Train Show

**A.P. Report Tom Oxnard Ap Chair**

**Peter McKenney Associate Chair**

## Timetable

Nothing to report this quarter but Tom and Peter will be working on items this summer . Get your name into Tom or Peter to have your items reviewed

April 6 Dover NH Great Northern New England Chapter Show Dover Elks Club 282 Durham Rd Dover 10-3

April 13 Taunton MA North Shore Club flea market Clarion Hotel 10 –2 pm

April 13 Westbrook ME Southern ME Model RR Show Westbrook Community center 425 Bridge St Westbrook 9-2 pm

April 20 Raynham MA open house Old Colony RR Club Raynham Depot 770 Broadway 10-2

April 27 –28 West Springfield Northeast Large Scale Show Eastern States [www.neists.org](http://www.neists.org)

April 27 Topsham ME Great Falls Mode RR club show 68 Eagles Way Topsham 10-2

May 18-19 North Shore open house. 404 Main ST Wakefield MA 1-5 pm

## Editor's Ramblings

Heading into Spring here on the coast of Maine , already have flowers coming up seems a little early and we have had much more rain then snow this winter. Still plugging away on various projects. Got to go to Springfield this year and was overwhelmed by the number of people. Saw some stuff but mainly was at the club table. I did not see a lot of used stuff this year. Will be at both shows in Maine this spring so stop by and say hello. Will be working on selling off some stuff that I wont need in the future , trying to get down to specific era and time , Its so hard when you like so much. That's about it from here, Please keep us in mind to do an article or just some pictures of what you are working on . You can start on your authors A.P. that way. Be sure to check NERX on you tube there some great content on there . Till next time keep it on the rails .

# Seacoast Division NMRA Leaders



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