



## **SVGRS Newsletter May 2025**

### **2025 Calendar of Events**

<b>July 20</b>	<b>Open House – Rob &amp; Penny Segessenman 1:00pm (521 South Queen St, Littlestown, PA 17340)</b>
<b>Sept 21</b>	<b>General Meeting /Club Picnic, 1:00 pm National Apple Museum Pavilion followed by Equipment Repack for Rocky Ridge 3:00pm</b>
<b>Oct 13</b>	<b>Third Quarter Newsletter</b>
<b>Nov 10</b>	<b>Rocky Ridge Pre-Setup, Track &amp; Platforms (10:00 am)</b>
<b>Nov 15</b>	<b>Rocky Ridge Complete Setup (10:00 am)</b>
<b>Nov 28</b>	<b>Rocky Ridge Christmas Magic Opening Day</b>
<b>Dec 30</b>	<b>Rocky Ridge Christmas Magic Ends</b>
<b>Jan 10</b>	<b>General Meeting /Christmas Party - National Apple Museum (12:00 pm)</b>
<b>Jan 17</b>	<b>Rocky Ridge Tear Down (10:00 am)</b>

**Please print or cut out and put on your refrigerator for reference**

# Spring 2025 President's Message

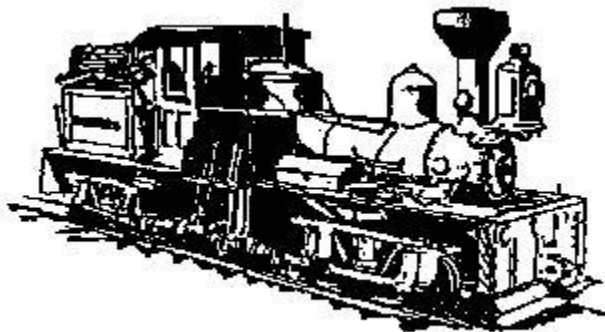
Here we are and it's almost June. I hope everyone has a chance to get out and run some trains and if you don't have a place of your own, give me a call, you can come to run your trains (or mine) at my house.

As you will see, the big topic and collection of pictures is of course the club's recent experience at the Great Lakes Large Scale Train Show. First, I want everyone to know I think we, as a club, made the right choice both to travel to a show, and to have chosen this one instead of the NELSTS in Springfield MA the week before. In advance, we all agreed this would be a test and a learning experience and I'm happy to report we passed the test, and we did in fact learn quite a bit about the logistics and the cost of building a display with live materials at a pretty great distance.

We had a wonderful turnout and great help with 15 folks attending including our former VP, Bob Winger, now living in State College. We'll have some specific finance numbers next time we get together in person, but this did turn out to be a bit more expensive than we expected. By the time we count lodging, turnpike tolls, mileage for two vehicles towing trailers and a lunch (during setup) and a dinner, we did go over budget, but I want to underscore this was a success and we learned a lot about what we can and cannot do going forward.

Overall, the first Great Lakes show turned out to be a big success with quite a bit more attendance than expected. Our display, as with the previous ones we built in York and that last year in Timonium, got rave reviews. I'm sure we will be invited back. I want to thank Turk for doing a great amount of work in coordination and preparation to get us all there with the items we needed.

Please enjoy the detailed article and pictures. We had a lot of fun and rekindled some of the reasons we work hard at Rocky Ridge so we can also do things like this! I think we even got a new member out of it all!



# 2025 Great Lakes Large Scale Train Expo

When I was given the opportunity to present our club the chance to provide a hand-built Garden Train display I had 2 things to consider. Head up to the Northeast large-scale show located in West Springfield Massachusetts versus this new show in Youngstown Ohio. The decision was slightly difficult. I knew our club was getting older and making the drive of almost 9 hours one way versus 4 hours to the new show would be a tough one. The Northeast Large-Scale show was established and run by Amherst train club which is well known. They had invited Rob and I to come up and have our club do our thing. The new Great Lakes show was just starting out. After spending some time with Andrew Fitch and his wife and discussing all the options of how to provide a quality large-scale great show that folks would want to drive and attend, I felt more comfortable recommending the club give this a try. Andrew and I had many discussions on every subject you can imagine to help build this show. Along with Nico Corbo, I made the recommendation to go for it, and I would take the lead for our club.

The 2025 Great Lakes large scale train Expo was held on May 9th and 10th near Youngstown Ohio. 17 members and three trailers made the 4.5-hour trek for the show. Most of us departed the show from Turk's home. We loaded up with the club trailer along with Turk's trailer loaded with trains and an assortment of show items. In addition, we also had Heather Weikert's trailer with all the logging items, locomotives, cars, special scenery and buildings needed to build this layout. I hadn't done a logging display in over 6 years, and all the stuff was in storage. My buddy Jeff Shubert came down to help me get all the boxes and items organized. Jeff and Mel and the kids also came down to help us pack the trailer, which was super nice as well as building a rack for the plants to be transported. Our own Mark and Mary Jane Reiff provided 20 Flats of small plants which we also transported. I had been coordinating since early February with Executive Landscaping in Ohio to also provide plants for Tom and Fern McLoud so this would give us a great variety of all size plans for the design as well as mulch and stone dust for the display. They were a little bit difficult to deal with due to pick up and return times, but Tom and I made it all work. Our display area was located at the entrance of a foyer just like the old East Coast show, but it was in a triangular shape. We started work on Thursday May 8th at 10:00 am and were finished by around 4pm. Although the area has a smaller entrance, we were able to build a 14' x 21' display and make it work out better than the mock-up we did at home at the Apple Museum. Andrew Fitch, the "show director " was gracious to let us come 2 hours before anyone else, which made it very nice to have the trailers conveniently close to the entrance doors. Vendors were not allowed in till 12:00 noon. We were able to also get in till 12:00 noon so that gave us a 2-hour start ahead of all the mess of people in and out of the building. Rob and I got things started out and Kevin Adams took the helm of directing the building of the track plan. Phillips Shoop ran all the wiring and set up the power pack table for us.

The layout consisted of one large oval Loop where we ran a C-19, and a C-21 steam locomotive with passenger cars and also a small diesel engine on the siding with some freight cars.

Turk's specialized logging loop had trestles that ran an incline to a bridge with track that ran on a bridge over the pond. Featuring a double header of locomotives consisting of a three-truck Shay and a three-truck climax pulling a work box car, a log loader, and an assortment of log cars followed by a custom-built caboose. We also featured a small Thomas Loop in front of the layout where Tom and Fern made some fabulous plant displays. Due to size, Jeff and I used about half of my logging display that we normally do but still made it very busy. I was able to feature the operating sawmill with array of sidings with finished lumber and log cars which was a big hit. Rob and I both would have liked to have had a reversing unit track, but there was just not enough space. The show was attended by 1010 people including all vendors. After the first day, things went very well and the whole building was packed with 179 tables.

Prizes were given out every hour, 4 at a time because there were so many donations. Andrew worked tirelessly on this show on advertising, PR and internet plus phone calls to make this show a large scale show we can all be proud of and want to attend. Our group worked well together, and we all went out to dinner Thursday night at the Golden Corral to celebrate our success. It was great!

As for the show itself, there were many events for all interests. 7 1/2-inch scale diesel and steam engine ride outside with a large track in the parking lot anyone could ride for free. This was offered by Accu-Tie. Also offered were your own personal figure of yourself made by Shrunk 3D. They do a 3D scan of you and produce a figure of yourself in a variety of sizes such as 129 to 120.3. 3D custom parts provided by 4TrackRR. Nico Corbo offered all sorts of train parts and rolling stock. Videography was provided by Dakman Productions, Thanks Shawn!

Food was provided inside the event and was very affordable and great.

A total of 39 vendors and 179 tables of items were on hand. There were seminars included as well. They also had a modeling contest featuring buildings, engines and rolling stock. Yours truly was lucky enough to win the grand prize with my Bachmann custom fire engine truck built from a Bachmann rail truck.

Also featured for the kids: Steve and Malinda from Making Trains Fun invited the kids to build their own train car so they could learn about large scale railroading. That was all free. Tons of vendors provided everything from track, trains, cars, buildings, 3D printing and usual oddball specialties if you are looking for something different.

Many of our members monitor the layout and answered questions and we had very few problems or derailments, which was great for once.

I am happy to report that the show folks paid us a donation of \$500.00 for our display. That's an additional \$100.00 more that we had agreed upon. YEA!!!

Saturday provided another good day, which is not always the norm. The show ended at 4:00 p.m. and our club had dismantled and taken the whole display down and packed up in the trailers and packed up in the trailers by 6:10 pm. Luckily, we had some wheelbarrows and extra crew to help. Barry McNew's son Sean McNew flew in from California and was a great assistance and helped us dismantle the layout and get things organized for me in the logging items since Jeff had to go home early to work college graduation.

Many thanks to the following members for all your help and participation: Bill and Dee Simmons, Bob and Janet Hyatt, Fred Wendling, Jeff Shubert, Tom and Fern McCloud, Bob Kluck, Philip Shoop, Bob Wenger, Kevin and Aaron Adams and Barry, Linda and Sean McNew. A big thanks to my buddy and organizer Rob Segessenman. We are a great team, and I could not do all of this without your help!

Friends in Railroading, your orthopedic show coordinator  
Turk Russell

## **The planning stage:**











**Three trailers loaded and ready to go.**





# Unloading





## Getting started with setup













## Adding all the finishing touches









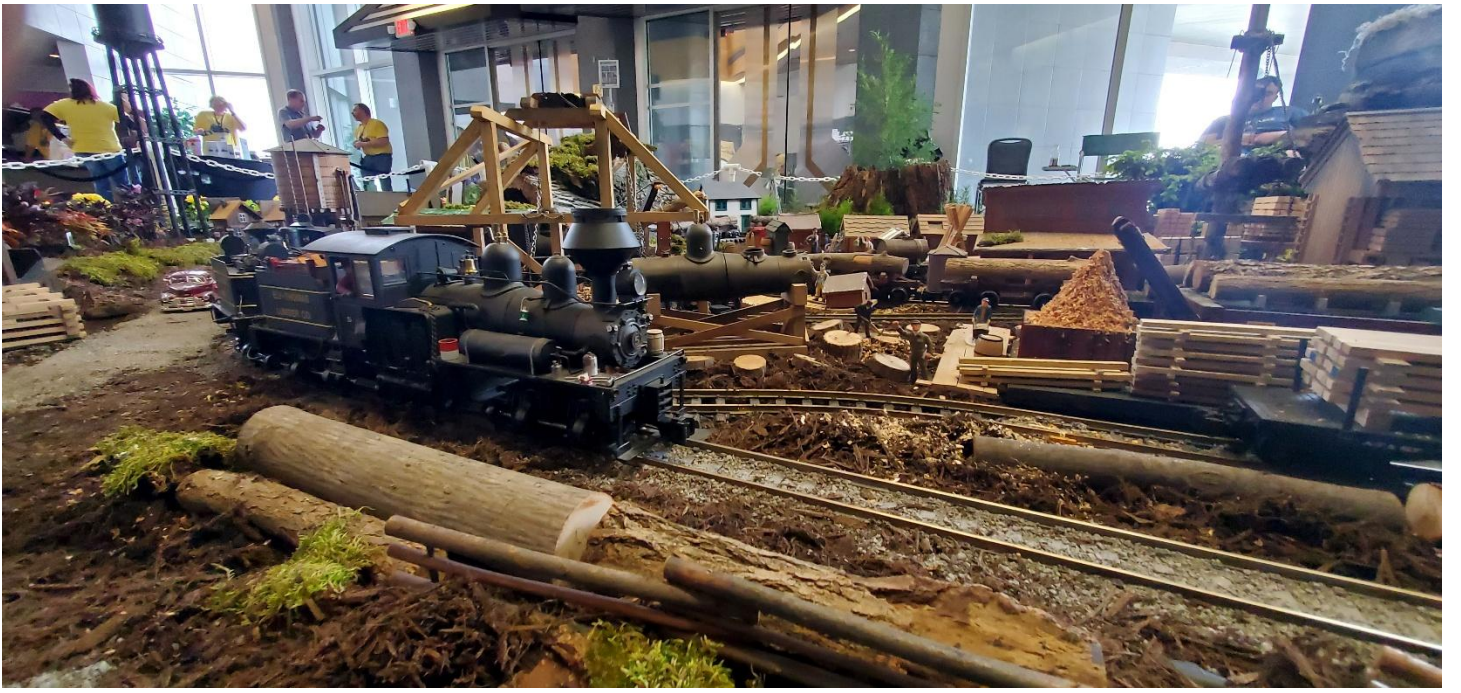




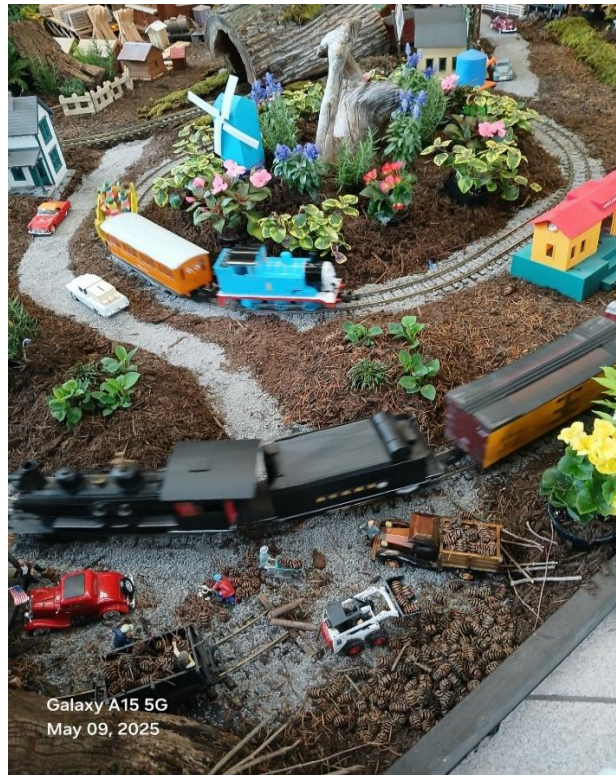


Galaxy A15 5G  
May 08, 2025













## Our SVGRS members at the Great Lakes Large Scale Train Show





## **Tear down begins.**



## **Removing and selling the plants**







**The teardown continues.**







**Time to call it a day and rest before the trip home**



# **The Great Lakes Large Scale Train Expo thru my eyes**

**Submitted by Bob Kluk**

I had always admired the craftsmanship and precision intricacies of a garden railroad. For many years I attended the Rocky Ridge Christmas Magic event and marveled at what the Susquehanna Valley Garden Railway Society displayed. It offered a well-deserved distraction from everyday stress, and I set a personal goal for designing and building my own railway someday.

About 3 years ago I finally called the SVGRS club and joined as a member. It started a path-way towards learning as other members would share their knowledge at open houses. But I remained distanced from designing and building my own railway. The premier barrier, not having equipment. Sure, over the past three years, I did collect freight cars during club events. I was still absent an engine, track, switches, scenery, and a power supply. This spring things started to change. A neighbor offered me more than a dozen of her father's garden scale houses and buildings, a few sections of track, a power supply and miscellaneous pieces and parts. As said many times, timing is everything. During this same period the club was offered an opportunity to build the premier display for the Great Lakes Large Scale Train Expo in Youngstown Ohio, something I had never experienced and was determined to participate in. With vacation plans approved and hotel reservations confirmed, I was off to Ohio.

Walking into the Metroplex Expo Center was like stepping into a world where passion and imagination converged. The exposition was a milestone in my journey. An opportunity to forge into the hobby that had long been just out of reach. The thrill of finally participating, rather than observing from a distance was both exciting and frightening.

As I explored the expo, each vendor spoke to me as if we were old friends. They were not just salespeople; they were enthusiasts eager to gift their knowledge with only a handshake and a thank you expected in return. Each conversation uncovered new insights on track size selection, power supply options, wheel and coupling choices, tips on selecting the right switches and track connection for seamless operation. Their courtesy and willingness to guide me through the overwhelming choices now felt manageable. The only thing standing between me and a dream now was the ATM and most importantly crafting an indisputable and convincing justification to Joanne for the investment I was about to make towards my new hobby and passion.

Now, allow me to back up a few paragraphs and talk about that premier display needing to be constructed prior to the opening of the exposition. Some of the club members had pre-engineered the layout and did a dry run fit up at the Apple Museum months prior in preparation. Track sections, trains and scenery had been repacked and labeled and systematically packed in trailers. Arrangements for the garden supplies required were coordinated with a local landscaper in Youngstown. After all, a garden is a critical element in Garden Railroading.



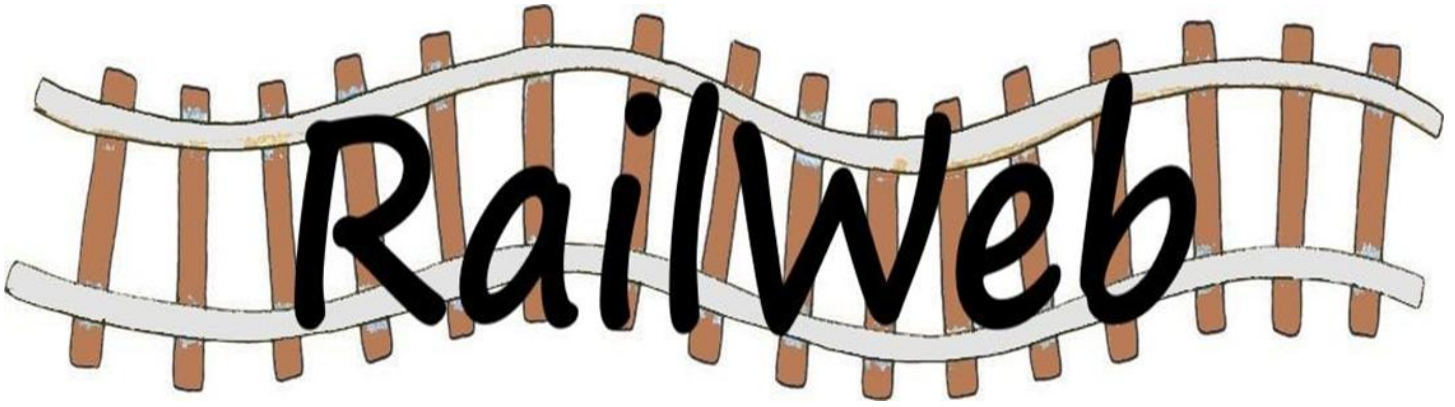
The club arrived at the Expo Center on a Wednesday afternoon. We were permitted entry, just long enough to get visibility of the space, take final measurements, tape an outline of the perimeter, unload critical materials for the first phase of construction – track layout, and stage the trailers. The serious work would start mid-morning Thursday.

When we reconvened Thursday, every activity was incredibly choreographed. Each member was assigned a task and the magic started to happen. A tarp was taped in place to protect the floor. Rail clamps were added to track sections as the various loops were roughed out. Power was run to track and switches. Final inspection of clamps was made, the track was cleaned and tested. Landscaping materials started coming in, mulch was spread, ballast added to the track, and water filled the basin under the mountain waterfall. Buildings, features, figurines, and props were meticulously positioned. Dozens of flats of colorful flowers were inserted and surrounding the layout. Finally, the plastic chain fence was strung. We finished in time to enjoy an early dinner together as a club family. What followed the next two days were hundreds of children and experienced enthusiast enjoying watching the trains pass through a timber-filled landscape scenery.

Beyond the technical aspects, this journey deepened my appreciation for patience and problem-solving. Garden railroaders tend to always consider going bigger. When we arrived Wednesday morning, it was recognized that we could extend the track several more feet. It is not as simple of an adjustment as you would think. Reminding me anything worth having requires determination and effort. There were moments when tracks needed realignment, or power to the trains was not as expected, but overcoming these hurdles only made the final creation more satisfying. Seeing the finished indoor garden railroad—the trains weaving through a meticulously designed “Turk’s Sawmill Company” was a moment of pure joy. It was not just a display; it was a miniature world built with our own hands, and I helped. You learn by doing. And I was surrounded by many qualified club members as coaches. My hands became plenty dirty and my knees sore. A small price for the satisfaction of being part of a satisfying experience. More than anything, it reinforced the beauty of blending nature and railway, inspiring me to continue my personal journey. A journey of learning, collaboration, fellowship, and inspiration.

Oh. By the way. If you ever need a convincing reason for explaining to your spouse why you spent a chunk of money, play the “I did it for our grandchild.” It may not get you full absolution, but it does ease the path towards it.





## Videos and Websites

TRACK 101: How does track work?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOWt9NnsOXM>

DJs Trains <https://www.djstrains.com>

RAILROAD YARD EXPLAINED by ENGINEER (Look at this nonsense, lol)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=004Sh7Zk10g>

The 16mm Railroad Movies of John M. Prophet III

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHxbg4-bskw>

History of the East Broad Top

<https://uncoveringpa.com/east-broad-top-railroad>

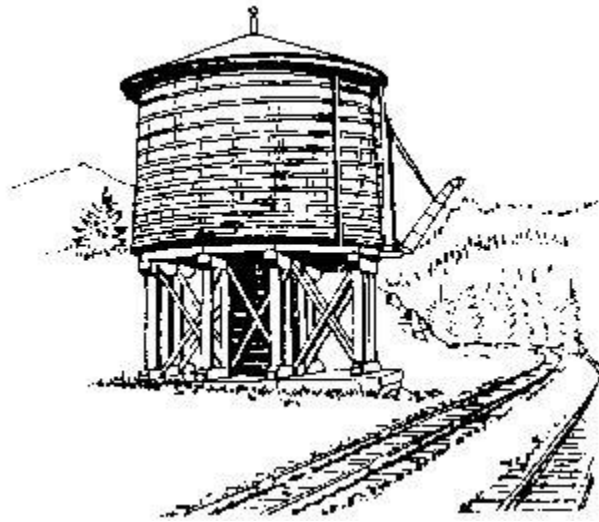
Cass Scenic Railway & the Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad

[https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/west-virginia/cass-scenic-railroad-wv/?utm\\_source=pinterest&utm\\_medium=social](https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/west-virginia/cass-scenic-railroad-wv/?utm_source=pinterest&utm_medium=social)

Manufacturing Process for Heavy Railway Wheels

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hBeeZ1Pvsg>





## **SVGRS Club Officers**

**President - Rob Segessenman (717) 359-8515 [rob@robtronics.com](mailto:rob@robtronics.com)**

**Vice President - Robert Kluk (440) 364-8385 [jokatson@msn.com](mailto:jokatson@msn.com)**

**SVGRS Secretary – Kevin Adams (717) 465-5852 [captain49a@mcast.net](mailto:captain49a@mcast.net)**

**Treasurer – Jeff Shubert (717) 729-0267 [shube@comcast.net](mailto:shube@comcast.net)**

**Newsletter Editor – Dee Simmons (717) 424-0610 [dustydeemk@yahoo.com](mailto:dustydeemk@yahoo.com)**