



# The Trainwire.



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## One "Big" Donation!

In case you did not see the article in the Saturday November 28th issue of the Star Beacon, I printed it in it's entirety. *Article was written by: Carl E. Feather* - Staff Writer.

Lawson Stevenson feared that the model railroad layout he built in his basement had reached the end of the line. Stevenson started building the HO-scale layout more than 30 years ago. It measures about 30-by-25 feet and is tucked inside a subterranean room of his Garrison Road house. It has hundreds of feet of track, thousands of feet of wiring, and countless buildings, boats, human and animal figures, rolling stock and accessories, most of it crafted by Stevenson. Disassembling and moving it would be a "mammoth task," said his son, Brad. Thus, the 86-year-old Lawson, who is too ill to run

or maintain the layout, figured he would donate the four Hulett unloader models to the Ashtabula Maritime & Surface Transportation Museum and sell off the rest, piece by piece. And then, Tuesday evening, members of his unnamed model railroad club and representatives from the museum met at Lawson's house to discuss the possibility of donating the entire layout, which honors the New York Central's operation between Ashtabula Harbor and Youngstown. "They started talking about (taking) the whole layout," Lawson said. "At first I didn't go for that. But I got to thinking about it and said 'What the heck.' That's the thing to do,

is to give it to them." The deal, which was been made with the blessing of Lawson's two sons, Brad and Doug, and daughter Loraine Hampton, will transfer the entire layout to the museum. The museum's director, Robert Frisbie, said the layout will have its own room in the new museum that is on the drawing board. The proposed \$4-million addition will be built adjacent to the former lighthouse keeper's home on Walnut Boulevard. Frisbie said the room housing the layout will be named in Lawson Stevenson's honor. The plan is to make the layout available to members of the railroad

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Businesses Accepting Division 5 Certificates

*The businesses listed below are currently accepting Division 5's award certificates:*



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 Chardon, Ohio  
 Perry, Ohio  
 Geneva, Ohio



*Please support these dealers!*

# One “Big” Donation cont.....

(Continued from page 1)

club that has been meeting at Lawson’s home for 20 years. The group will be in charge in maintaining and running the layout for visitors. The museum also hopes that having an operating model railroad in the museum will attract more model railroaders to the club, which, although its been around 20 years, still does not have a name. Lawson Stevenson is a Plymouth Township native who worked for the U.S. Postal Service after returning from service in World War II. He took an early retirement at the age of 49 and devoted the ensuing years to his interests — music, traveling and model railroading. “I don’t know where I got the bug for it,” Stevenson says of

his railroading interest. His first layout was for his son, Doug, who was bedridden with illness. “So we bought him a sheet of plywood and I modeled a 4-by-8-foot layout,” he says. “That got us interested. Then I got a little more interested and I met a guy in the post office who was really into model railroading, and we went from there.” His first effort was to model a mountain railroad, Northern Pacific, from Duluth, Minn., to Seattle. The only place in his house with sufficient room to create a layout was a crawl space. He

hand dug a narrow tunnel under the house, then built his layout on top of the dirt ledges along the room’s perimeter. Stevenson rigged up a grain conveyor to remove the dirt he shoveled out of the crawl space; the conveyor dumped the dirt in his pickup truck’s bed. “It was narrow, just enough room to get in and out. If someone wanted to get out of the place, they all had to go out. I said ‘That’s no good,’ so we re-dug it. This time, I got all the model railroaders over there and all my friends dug it out and hauled the dirt away,”

he says. With a larger space to work in, Lawson shifted the focus of his layout to a railroad closer to home. He learned that the Hulett automatic unloaders at Ashtabula Harbor were being dismantled, and he decided he’d like to model them for his layout. A master mechanic who worked on the unloaders gave Stevenson an insider’s tour of the mammoth machines, as well as access to their blueprints. He took hundreds of photographs and used them and the original plans to model all four of the unloaders in Plexiglas and Styrene. Stevenson considers them the crowning achievement of his layout. Although they are not motorized, the Hulett’s do have moving parts that simulate their operation of discharging



and loading bulk material from the holds of freighters. Building the Hulett’s and a model of an ore carrier proved to be seminal events for Stevenson’s model railroad. He switched it to an A&B Dock/New York Central layout that tracks the movement of coal from the mine to the freighters at Ashtabula, and the movement of iron ore from the freighters to the blast furnaces of Youngstown. The layout includes an ore bridge plus operating coal machines that dump coal cars. One of them is a side dumper that unloads coal into the blast furnaces; another dumps its coal into a power plant model. We’re talking real coal here, too. “We haul the coal from a mine at the other end of the layout,” Stevenson says. “We

dump coal into the mine, unload it into the cars, then haul it by train clear around the layout to the other end where we dump it.” Stevenson said he never intended the layout to get as large as it did, with its multiple blocks of tracks, freighter models, coke ovens and rolling mills, rural scenes, roundhouse and city streets. And despite its size and complexity, he says a railroad modeler’s layout is never done. He speaks as a recognized expert. He has received numerous certificates from the National Model Railroading

Association and in December 2006 was named a Master Model Railroader by the organization. His layout has been featured in several magazine articles, and Brad says fellow model railroaders from all over the country have visited his father just to see his layout. “It’s been a wonderful hobby for him,” says Brad, whose own interests run toward woodworking rather than model railroading. Brad says being able to keep the layout intact in a museum is very special to the family, although he has no idea how all of it

will be moved out of the tight space. His father says the models are built so they can be picked up and moved without disturbing the layout. That will be the easy part. Removing all the track, wiring and associated equipment won’t be as easy, however. Frisbie says they plan crate the perimeter portions of the layout and store it in a climate-controlled area until the new museum is ready to receive it. The center portion, which models the Harbor, will be put on display in the existing museum, perhaps as early as next spring. The museum is delighted to receive the donation, says Frisbie, because it not only depicts and preserves local history, but also preserves the story of Lawson Stevenson’s passion for model railroading.

## UPCOMING DIVISION 5 MEETINGS

Division 5 monthly meetings normally start at 7:30 PM.

### December

Location: Hambden Town Hall

Program: TBA

Bring & Brag: Snow

### January

No meeting - Holiday Party

### February

Location: Hambden Town Hall

Program: TBA

Bring & Brag: "I got it @ a flea market - this is what I did with it"

## SCHEDULED EVENTS

**Lakefarm Park Country Lites** **December 3 - 23**

Lakefarm Park

Kirtland, Ohio

**WRMRRM Holiday Open House** **December 5 & 6**

7230 Justin Way

Mentor, Ohio

**Youngstown Model RR Open House** **December 5 & 6**

**Lakeland All Scale Train Show** **December 19 - 20**

Lakeland College

Mentor, Ohio

**Division 5 BOD Meeting** **December 21**

Hambden Hall

Hambden, Ohio

### 2010

**Division 5 Holiday Party** **January 9**

Hambden Hall

Hambden, Ohio

### The Western Reserve Model Railroad Museum

**7230 Justin Way**

Mentor, Ohio 44060

### Fall Hours

**Monday thru Thursday 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Friday — Closed**

**Saturday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**Sunday Noon - 5:00 PM**

Contact Rick @ 440-251-0350 for more information.

[www.wrmrrm.org](http://www.wrmrrm.org)

# Division 5 Minutes

November 6, 2009 7:30 pm

Assistant Superintendent Dale Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm at Hambden Town Hall. Approximately 25 members and 2 guests were present.

Since we are no longer storing Division equipment at the museum, we need a place to store the refreshment supplies and equipment. We will try using the Railfest storage locker to see if that works out logistically.

The Western Reserve Model Railroad Museum is in the process of moving to a section of the old Caterpillar/Towmotor building on Tyler Boulevard in Mentor. The museum will now have 19,000 sq. ft. compared to 7,500 sq. ft. in the old building. Approximately 13,000 sq. ft will be for layouts. They will be moving all during the month of November. They plan to be open in the new location for their December 6<sup>th</sup> open house.

Dale Smith and Bruce Lutheran went over why we decided to cancel the Div 5 Promo Day for this year. They then presented the plans for Promo Day 2010 to be held at Lakeland Community College. This will be in conjunction with Bob Frieden's O-scale train show at the college on the same day. The O-scale show will be in Gym B and the Div 5 Promo Day will be in Gym C.

The upcoming Div 5 layout tours were discussed. Mike Buehner had maps available at the meeting.

The order form for Div 5 hats and shirts is available at meetings or on the Div 5 website.

Dale Smith will be coordinating the Lake Farmpark HO module setup. We do not know the specific dates yet. They should be published in the December Trainwire.

Reminder that the Div 5 Holiday Party will be on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 pm at the Hambden Town Hall. A signup sheet was started at the meeting. The cost is not know yet.

Div 5 2010 Budget will be finalized at the November Div 5 BOD meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

We need program suggestions as well as volunteers.

The Geneva Winterfest will be held on Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup> in Geneva and Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio. Part of the activities will be held at the Geneva Lodge where we will be holding the 2011 convention. This might be a good time for Div 5 members to visit the Lodge and check out the facilities. The Lake Erie N-scale Society will have their N-Trak modules set up at the Lodge on both Saturday and Sunday of this weekend. There will also be an F-scale modular layout set up.

The Div 5 2011 convention is now accepting early registrations. The website is now fully active. Registrations can be made through the website or via paper registration form. Hotel registrations can now be made. Dale Smith has talked to the NOARS group and they are interested in supporting our convention in some way.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Division 5 Minutes cont.....

August 7, 2009

*(Continued from page 4)*

Bruce Lutheran is soliciting ideas for the next Div 5 car project. He would like to have our next car project done in time for the 2011 convention. We are looking for prototype cars that would have been in our area around the 1961 time-frame to follow our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme. One idea was to have a somewhat generic flatcar but put a load on it that represented a specific industry in our area.

Railfest 2010 preparations are going well. We have 60 to 65 tables sold so far.

Bring & Brag: Theme was "Railroad Promotion / Advertising"

Dale Smith

Ken Stroebel

Bill Smith

Bill Berger

Steve Kaplan

Don Bittner

Rich Kacprzak

The program for the evening was a video on model railroad operations.

Submitted by Matt Kross, Division 5 Clerk

## Welcome New Division 5 Members.

Division 5 wishes to welcome the following new members who have joined us in the last six months:

David Golden

Madison, OH

John Diczhazy

Munson, OH

Edwin Acevedo

Mentor on the Lake, OH

Eric Hansmann

Madison, OH

Jared Efantis

Conneaut, OH

Peter Ness

Chagrin Falls, OH

Dennis Walker

Ashtabula, OH

Wayne Radziewitz

Mentor, OH



# Division 5 BOD Minutes

November 16, 2009

**Attended:** Lenny Kessler, Don Bittner, Mike Buehner, Al Cap, Dale Smith, Wayne Lette, Bonnie Lette

**Budget** – was reviewed and discussed. Dale motioned to accept the budget as it stands now; Wayne 2<sup>nd</sup> – no objections. A copy of the budget will be available at the February 2010 meeting. Copy of the budget will be sent to the BOD.

**NOARS** – Dale reported about the NOARS meeting that he attended in October. He felt it was very interesting. They had Division 5's convention on the agenda. Blaine Hayes stressed that they are to assist us where they can. They discussed what NOARS could do for us. There is talk of a 16-20 page brief history of the 7 class one railroads that ran in our area in 1961. They are going to get Dale in contact with some of the higher ups in NS to talk to them about tours and some other items that would help the convention. Both Dale and Matt have the emails of these people and will be in contact with them soon. Dale thought it was a very positive discussion.

**Promo Day 2010** – discussed the flyer for this event, suggested changes were made. Dale to complete and get copies to Bob Frieden by his December show at Lakeland

**Programs and Bring N Brag** - were discussed. March - Doug Nichols will do a program for us but it is still to be determined. April – Chuck Klein – will have the last steam operation out of Cleveland. There was a suggestion of having a hands on operating session as a program (to see how it is done and to earn points for the Achievement Program)

The subject of **Railfest** was brought up and some suggestions were made on how to improve operations. However with the Chairman not at the meeting these items will be discussed at a later time.

**Holiday Party** – Carl has quoted us the same price as 2008. There was discussion on the price to charge members. Bonnie motioned - \$8.00 each for Member & 1 guest; \$10.00 each for any additional guests; Wayne 2<sup>nd</sup> – there were no objections. The Holiday Party is January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 – 4:00 PM at the Hambden Town Hall. We will have food, desert, guest speaker, Loser Raffle, and 2 Chinese gift exchange (\$15.00 value) (Railroad & Non-Railroad (guests))

**Lake Farm Park Country Lites** – they will run December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5:00 – 9:00 PM. HO Modules will run from 12/3-12/12 and LENS (N-Trak) will run from 12/13-12/23. HO Modules will setup on December 2<sup>nd</sup> time to be determined, but will most likely be in the evening – Al will contact those that signed up at the October meeting, if interested in helping with setup, running of trains, or tear down please contact Al. Tear down of the HO Modules will be on 12/12 at 9:00 PM. The Special Needs group will be coming to Lake Farm Park on 12/17 and they have requested that trains run from 10:00 am – 12:30 pm (which LENS will be setup at that time)

**Division 5 Layout Tours** – were reported to be doing OK. Mike Buehner is looking for layouts to be open in the Spring 2010 (most likely some time in April but still to be finalized)

**Brad White of Erie** has offered to do an operating session on his HO-DCC home layout. Date to be determined. Please contact Dale with your preferences to a date.

**Submitted by** Bonnie Lette, Treasurer

# My New Amtrak Adventure.

By: Linda Kacprzak

You may remember that my trip to Florida with my daughter and grandsons last year was a fiasco (see the Nov 2008 *Trainwire*). Upon arriving home, I wrote a letter to Amtrak detailing my problems and concerns, and received a voucher to use for a future trip. My first plan was to take the train with my husband, Rich, to Grand Junction, Col. and rent a car there. That

idea fell through when I found out that, due to track work, the trip was by bus between Denver and Grand Junction, which should have been the highlight of the train ride. I really wanted to use my voucher, so I asked my sister if she'd like to go somewhere with me by train. It didn't take much arm-twisting for me to agree to go back to Disney World. This time, I didn't take any kids along because Elaine and I

decided that we would be the kids. The first good news on the evening we left was from "Julie", Amtrak's automated system – the Capitol Limited from Chicago was running on time! Rich drove us to the Cleveland Amtrak station and we were soon on our way to Washington, DC. Unlike last year, it was too dark to see much in Ohio. We arrived in Pittsburgh around 5:00 am, when it was still dark enough

to see the lighted bridges and buildings reflecting in the river. Beautiful! On this entire trip we spent very little time sitting on passing sidings and never slowed down because of heated rails. When we passed through the historic area in West Virginia, we heard an interesting educational narrative that pointed out an old B&O roundhouse



and car shops in Martinsburg, near Harper's Ferry. We arrived in DC about half an hour late, but we still had 5-1/2 hours to spend walking around the Capitol mall and have dinner in Union Station before boarding the Silver Meteor for our overnight ride to Florida. Sleeping in coach class is a lot like falling asleep in your recliner at home. The seat backs recline much farther than air-

line seats, and there is a lot more room between seats to stretch out, with an adjustable support for the backs of your legs as well as a footrest. In fact, many people on the train sleep half the night in front of their laptops or DVD players in blue screen or demo mode, after the movies, TV reruns and video games end. After 10:00 pm the attendants enforce quiet – headphones for

electronic equipment and no loud talking. When we headed for breakfast the next morning, most of the people in the coaches were still sleeping. As we watched the passing scenery from the café car, we were surprised to see the condition of the station at Jesup, Ga. I've noticed that train stations can be everything from historic landmarks to little more than a platform

alongside the tracks. After a service stop in Jacksonville, Fla., an announcement was made that the train, which was scheduled to arrive in Orlando at 1:30, was running 35 minutes late. Nevertheless, we were checked in at Pop Century Resort by 3:00 and for the next six days and nights, it was nonstop fun. We went on every ride, saw every show

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Amtrak Adventure cont....

By: Linda Kacprzak

*(Continued from page 7)*

and attraction, and watched all of the nighttime parades and fireworks extravaganzas. The highlight of the thrill rides was the train ride from Anandapur on Expedition Everest, when the yeti tore out the track. I had to check out the garden railway at the German pavilion in Epcot again, and discovered some changes. Elaine and I really did run around like a couple of kids, just like we did at Euclid Beach Park when we really were kids.

Too soon, it was time to head back to the Orlando station for the trip home. The Silver Meteor was on time as it approached Orlando, but it had to wait on a siding just south of the station for a late southbound passenger train to pass. When we finally got on the train and settled in, we checked to see if we had accidentally boarded the Polar Express. It was really c-c-c-cold! Sweatshirts and jackets were being pulled out of carry-on bags everywhere you looked, and Amtrak quickly

sold out of all the \$15 souvenir blankets. We discovered that it was more comfortable in the dining car, so we had a very long, leisurely dinner. Our dinner companion was a fascinating man from Arizona, who works as an inspector in the southwest for the Mine Safety Administration and loves to ride the rails. He was traveling to Salt Lake City, with stops in Florida and New York City, and explained that his layover in DC before going on to New York is due to a switch from diesel to electric

engines to curb exhaust problems in the tunnels. We had a longer look at the station in Jesup on the way north, because they were doing track maintenance in the area. The station was also under renovation. We rode in our coach with forty members of an extended family from Connecticut, who also were returning from Disney World. They were surprisingly quiet, especially all the children, but they were probably as worn out as we were. It was a silent night on the polar express. (Sorry,



couldn't resist.) We arrived in Washington, DC at 7:00 am, almost an hour early! Since we now had an almost nine-hour layover, we decided to go sightseeing by Tourmobile (our feet thanked us). It was a relaxing way to spend the time we had, and we were able to get on and off for a closer look

at some of the memorials before heading back to Union Station. The Capitol Limited left DC at 4:20, about fifteen minutes late. I noticed more old buildings through West Virginia that looked familiar. I think I've seen them on a lot of layouts. We rode through on-and-off rain showers until

we arrived in Cumberland, Md. just after the front moved through and it had stopped raining. From the lounge car, we could see an entire rainbow over the city. The top of the rainbow was visible through the curved windows of the dome car. Awesome! We passed the time reading and

working puzzles until the train arrived in Cleveland, and our excellent adventure was over. Let's see, where can I go next time?





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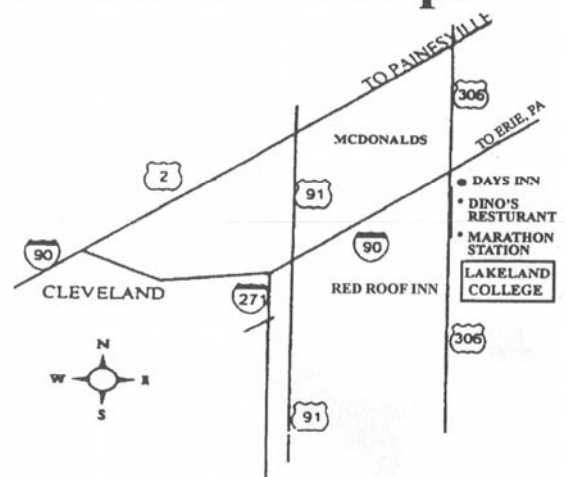
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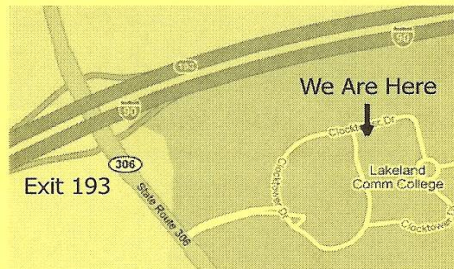
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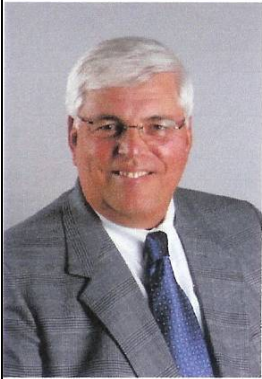
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- HO scale Western Reserve RR Reefers @ \$12/each  
N scale Western Reserve RR Reefers (two numbers) @  
\$12/each or two for \$22
- Division 5 Pins @ \$2/each
- Division 5 "Pentagon" Patch @ \$2/each  
Division 5 Hats @ \$10/each

**Team Track**[www.MCR5.org](http://www.MCR5.org)

## Division 5 Officers

(Terms expire June 2010)

Superintendent	Al Cap	440-729-1458	<a href="mailto:Super@MCR5.org">Super@MCR5.org</a>
Asst. Superintendent	Dale Smith	440-286-4932	<a href="mailto:AstSuper@MCR5.org">AstSuper@MCR5.org</a>
Treasurer	Bonnie Lette	440-298-3075	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@MCR5.org">Treasurer@MCR5.org</a>

## Division 5 Trustees: (Terms expire June 2010)

Mike Buehner	440-428-0137	Bruce Lutheran	440-257-2105
Wayne Lette	440-298-3075	Don Bittner	440-257-7555

Division 5 Board of Directors: [BOD@MCR5.org](mailto:BOD@MCR5.org)**Division 5 Appointed Positions:** (Terms expire June 2010)

Clerk	Matt Kross	440-729-3045	<a href="mailto:Clerk@MCR5.org">Clerk@MCR5.org</a>
Railfest Chairman	Jim Wendorf	440-357-8890	<a href="mailto:Railfest@MCR5.org">Railfest@MCR5.org</a>
Promo Day Coordinator	Bruce Lutheran	440-257-2105	<a href="mailto:PromoDay@MCR5.org">PromoDay@MCR5.org</a>
Achievement Program	Bill Brodie	216-780-0938	<a href="mailto:AP@MCR5.org">AP@MCR5.org</a>
Contests	Bill Brodie	216-780-0938	<a href="mailto:Contest@MCR5.org">Contest@MCR5.org</a>
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HO Module Coordinator	Bill Eville	440-974-9230	<a href="mailto:ModuleCoordinator@MCR5.org">ModuleCoordinator@MCR5.org</a>
Trainwire Editor	Lenny Kessler	440-478-6661	<a href="mailto:Trianwire@MCR5.org">Trianwire@MCR5.org</a>
Refreshments	Ron Biddell	440-352-3730	<a href="mailto:Refreshments@MCR5.org">Refreshments@MCR5.org</a>
Membership Roster	Matt Kross	440-729-3045	<a href="mailto:Membership@MCR5.org">Membership@MCR5.org</a>
Convention Co-Chairs	Dale Smith Matt Kross	440-286-4932	<a href="mailto:Convention@MCR5.org">Convention@MCR5.org</a>
Webmaster	Wayne Lette	440-298-3075	<a href="mailto:Webmaster@MCR5.org">Webmaster@MCR5.org</a>
Company Store	Al Cap	440-729-1458	<a href="mailto:CompanyStore@MCR5.org">CompanyStore@MCR5.org</a>

**December Division 5 Meeting**

December 4, 2009.

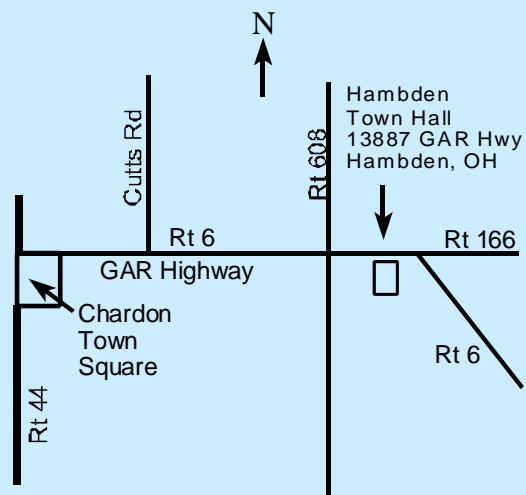
Division 5 monthly meetings normally start at 7:30 PM.

**Location:** Hambden Town Hall  
13887 GAR Highway (Route 6)  
Chardon, Ohio

Located on Rt. 6 between the intersection of Rt. 608 and Rt. 166 next to Hambden Elementary School east of Chardon.

**Program:** TBA**Bring & Brag:** Snow

*Reminder: Bring & Brag entries **DO NOT** have to adhere to the Bring & Brag theme for the evening. The themes are meant to add some variety to the types of model work shown and to encourage members to work on something they may not have tried otherwise. The themes are not meant to discourage you from bringing in other model work that you have completed in the last 6 months. By all means, bring it in and show it off!*



Map to Hambden Town Hall

**January Trainwire Deadline  
December 20th.**



# The Trainwire Newsletter

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## *The Trainwire*

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## The Western Reserve Division 5



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