



COMPREHENSIVE TRAIN SHOW INFORMATION

This document contains most all the information you'll need to establish yourself as an exhibitor at The Great Scale Model Train and Collector's Show.

While of special interest to new exhibitors, it will also be useful as a reference to those who have been with us for many years. It should, as well, be informative for show attendees who want to know more about the background and on-going operation of our shows. We believe it will also clearly identify and explain how our shows differ from others.

Always a work in progress, we welcome your corrections, additions or changes. Please email jsgeare@gsmts.com with your comments and suggestions.

Visit our website at gsmts.com.

Read from top to bottom, or **CLICK LINKS**, below to see specific categories of interest.

FAST FACTS: Capsule summary of history and current operations.

LOCATION, CALENDER AND DESCRIPTION OF SHOW: How to find us and what to expect.

WHERE DO YOU STAY? We have a hotel deal for you, and you can also park your land yacht at the venue.

REQUIREMENTS: No too many, but a few key policies you should know about. Mostly "common sense."

PRICING: The best deal of any major show, with discounts based on numbers of tables, number of shows reserved, and payment in advance. Follow link to review and print a convenient chart.

HOW TO SIGN UP and PAY: Just about any way you like!

CANCELATION & REFUNDS: The show has about the most liberal policies you'll find anywhere. We're not here to make this painful, for you.

WHAT WE PROVIDE AND WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING: A quick check list, for you.

INTERNET ACCESS: The Fairgrounds provides Wi-Fi, but it is not free. Click ***What We Provide*** link, above.

MOVING IN: We've done our best to make this as stress-free as possible, and when everyone plays nicely with others, it works amazingly well.

HOURS OF OPERATION: Exhibitors may enter early on Saturday and Sunday, and enjoy free coffee and donuts and some time to socialize.

TABLE LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT: The show map is our best effort to honor requests for table placement and arrangement, as opposed to some grand design of ours. Maps of the layout tell you exactly where you will be.

BUSINESS LICENSE? SALES TAX? You don't need a business or dealer's license to sell at the show. If you don't have a sales tax license, you will receive a temporary one for the duration of the show. Easier than you might think. Follow the link.

SECURITY: Both we and the fairgrounds take it seriously. So should you.

PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING; OURS AND YOURS: Here is what WE do, and what YOU can do, and how everyone is a "winner." Note the special opportunities we provide for promotion of your business.

EXTRAS, PERCS, SPIFFS AND MISC: Stuff you won't find anywhere else, and miscellaneous other information that might be interesting or useful.

WHO LOVES YOU, BABY? WE do! Short list of important reasons exhibitors come to our shows.

FAST FACTS:

- Show was started nearly 4 decades ago by famed rail modeler Howard Zane and his friend, fellow modeler, and business partner Ken Young. Learn more about our founder, here: <https://youtu.be/hR5P8noSdWk> .
- The basic idea was to create a show which focused on railroad interest. No dolls or toys, no games, no action figures, no cosmetics, nuts or candy, no gutter or window replacements. Just railroad and railroad related merchandise. Scale models, supplies, tools, art, wardrobe, artifacts and more. As long as the connection with railroading is there, we provided the venue to display, to educate, to promote and to sell.
- The Great Scale Model Train and Collector's Show is the largest of its kind in the Mid-Atlantic, and among the largest in the United States.
- Current owner is Makin' Tracks, LLC, a partnership comprised of John Scott Geare and Michael Joseph Militello, both of whom are avid rail modelers. Zane and Young sold the show to Geare and Militello based on the buyer's business experience, love of the hobby, and their ability to pay.
- Show is operated and managed by volunteers who are well connected with the hobby.

[Return to top.](#)

LOCATION, CALENDER AND DESCRIPTION OF SHOW:

Maryland State Fair Grounds
2200 York Rd.
Timonium, MD 21093

Directions and Map: Follow this [directions and map link](#) to a page on our web site.

Calendar: Shows are held 4 times a year: February, April, June and October. Dates are announced on the show's website on this page: <http://gsmts.com/newdatesplaces.html>.

Property: The Cow Palace is the largest (3 and ½ acres) exhibit hall at ground level over many states. All but the June show are held here. The smaller Exhibition Hall houses the June ("Summer Show"), because the building is air conditioned.

Access and Parking: For off-loading, exhibitors may park *temporarily* near large overhead doors and many regular entrances, or pull into main aisles of the halls. Otherwise, ample free parking around the buildings is available within convenient walking distance. Most areas are paved; some have a gravel surface.

During show hours, fairgrounds personnel control attendee parking (parking is free to attendees).

The Shows: Except for the June show, we typically host over 220 vendors who occupy 750 to 1,000 tables in the Cow Palace, and these figures are gradually increasing. The February, April and October Cow

Palace shows include extensive operating layouts presented by clubs who travel from within a 100 mile radius to display with us, as well as free clinics in areas set up as dedicated classrooms.

The Summer show, owing to a smaller venue, has one or two layouts. Some vendors present clinics at their own tables, but there are no dedicated classroom spaces. The summer show typically draws 75 to 100 vendors who occupy about 375-400 tables.

Both venues include food and refreshment provided by a local restaurant and catering establishment.

Both venues have numerous electrical connections which are for the most part within 50' of your tables, no matter where you are located.

Attendance: At Cow Palace, 3,500 to 5,000, and growing. At the Exhibition Hall (summer show) 2,000 and growing.

[Return to top.](#)

WHERE DO YOU STAY: On the show web site at <http://gsmts.com/>, you'll see links to a hotel that gives our vendors and attendees a special rate.

Otherwise, if you drive a land yacht and need to hook up to utilities, the fairgrounds does have facilities for this, at a reasonable rate. Contact them at 410-252-0200.

[Return to top.](#)

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Make sure you have railroad related merchandise. This can be models, tools, books, videos, historical material, wardrobe, jewelry, art, antiques, artifacts or anything else with a railroad theme or identity. But NOT general home improvement (gutters, windows), beauty and cosmetics, games, dolls, toys, action figures, candies or nuts, nor anything else lacking a clear railroad identity. Not sure? Ask us: jsgeare@gsmts.com
2. Drape your goods before you leave on Friday or Saturday evening. If you forget to bring covers, we'll give you what you need, with our compliments.
3. Do not use planks or boards to expand the area your tables occupy ("hammocking").
4. Make sure your "helpers" are actual helpers; don't use your vendor status to sneak in attendees for "free." We issue 4 badges to each exhibitor; badge holders should write in their own names. We do not print badges with names on them. The color of the badge indicates the show for which it is valid. Attendees are identified with numbered wrist bands, also color coded.
5. If you distribute the Dealer Courtesy Discount Admission Coupons, please do **NOT** do so **outside** the show among attendees lined up to come in. You may freely distribute them **inside** the show, and we hope you will.
6. Show closes at 5 pm Saturday 4 pm Sunday. Be prepared to meet the public and do business up to those times.

[Return to top.](#)

HOW TO SIGN UP AND PAY: Sign up using the form on our web site, or by phone, or by mail or in person at a show.

Web site link is: <http://gsmts.com/newvendorpricingandsignup.html>. Note the 2 sections; a “quick section” for vendors whose information we already have, and a longer section for new vendors. After submitting the form, you’ll receive a confirmation by email and a payment link for your convenience.

Otherwise, contact us at 434-823-4809, by email at jsgeare@gsmts.com, or by post to

J. Scott Geare
3418 Meadow Wood Lane
Crozet VA 22932

You may pay using the online link we give you (credit card, PayPal) or by mailing a check or money order to the address above, or at the show.

Please note: We do NOT accept credit card payment by phone at this time. The reason is security of your personal data. If we don’t have it, we obviously can’t be “hacked” or otherwise lose it. When you pay by credit card on line, we see nothing other than the payment, itself.

Note the discount we allow for paying prior to a show.

[Return to top.](#)

CANCELTATION AND REFUNDS: Stuff happens. We will either refund your payment, or bump you to a future show -your choice! You will NOT lose your place at the show. That said, any vendor who consistently reserves and then cancels (again and again) will be banned from the show. We would appreciate as much advance notice as possible.

[Return to top.](#)

WHAT WE PROVIDE AND WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING:

The show provides:

- The space.
- Tables and chairs.
- Electricity
- Freight carts to move your goods in/out.
- Free parking.
- Security.
- Promotion and Advertising.
- Various “extras” (see them [here.](#))

You should bring:

- Your inventory, of course.
- “Opening cash,” so you can make change.
- Drapes or sheets of some kind to cover your merchandise while show is closed (if you forget, we can give you some with our complements).
- A 50’ extension cord, if you need electricity (which is free). If you forget the cord or need another, borrow one of ours.
- Internet access. You may purchase this (\$25) from the Fairgrounds. Fill out and send the form [here](#) or contact them at (410) 252-0200.

We recommend, but do not require:

- Table covers. These change the bare surface of a worn table into a much more visually attractive presentation and lend a “quality” emphasis to your display.
- An overhead banner or sign to identify you.

[Return to top.](#)

MOVING IN: Move-in starts Friday, and runs from 10 am to 8 pm. Please arrange to be here in accordance with the following schedule:

Group	Venue	Fri.	Sat.
Layouts	Cow Palace North Hall	1 pm - 8 pm	7 - 9 am
	Cow Palace All Other Exhibition Hall	11 am - 8 pm	
Vendors 8+ Tables	Cow Palace North Hall Cow Palace All Other Exhibition Hall	10 am - 8 pm	
Vendors 1-7 Tables	Cow Palace North Hall Cow Palace All Other Exhibition Hall	1 pm - 8 pm	

The schedule above is based on the most trouble-free timing and organization we've been able to design.

Please Note: If you drive in to the building, remain only for so long as it takes to off-load your goods at your tables. Then remove your vehicle as soon as possible, and return on foot to set up.

We do have freight carts available for you to wheel in your goods. Unload them as quickly as possible, so others may use them.

With so many people and so much going on, the move-in can be stressful. Be courteous.

[Return to top.](#)

HOURS OF OPERATION: On Saturday, the show opens to the public at 9 am and closes at 5 pm. On Sunday, the hours are 10-4.

On Saturday, exhibitors may enter as early as 7am, and on Sunday, as early as 9 am. The show provides complimentary coffee (regular and decaf) and donuts at our registration tables.

Although vendors may do some preliminary organizing for the move-out on either day, all vendors should be "open for business" until the show has been closed to the public.

[Return to top.](#)

TABLE LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT: We do our best to give you the location you want, in the arrangement you desire. And if we can't hit it on the button, we'll get it as close as we can. Quite reasonably and logically, legacy exhibitors of longstanding with many tables or elaborate displays occupy their spaces on a "permanent" basis. The show is built around these "anchors."

This does not mean that everyone else is placed randomly, or forced into a master plan whose geometry we think is visually pleasing. But it might mean you are moved some short distance from your previous location, but relatively in the same place with respect to other vendors. In general, we are better able to place vendors at the same location when they are here on a regular basis, or have reserved several shows in advance.

Suppose you need space, but no (or only a few) tables. No problem. We'll look at the area you need to occupy, calculate the table space this represents, and then apply a discount based on tables you don't need. Talk to us.

Each show is "baked to order," and reflects our best effort to place people in accordance with their preference. The show is a blend of all those preferences.

About 2 weeks before each show, we publish a floor plan on our web site which shows your location. You can see the maps here: <http://gsmts.com/newshowmaps.html>

[Return to top.](#)

BUSINESS LICENSE? SALES TAX?: No special *business license* is required. Everyone from an individual with a personal collection to a large commercial enterprise is welcome, regardless of business registration, legal status, etc. "Y'all come!"

An established business with a *Maryland Sales Tax license* may collect and remit taxes under their existing license. Please let us know your license number, and we will **not** put you on the dealer list we remit to the Great State of Maryland.

Everyone else who is selling will receive a *temporary sales tax license* from the State of Maryland, based on the dealer list we *are required* to send the state. It is entirely possible you won't receive the license itself until after the show is over, because we don't send the list until about a week before the show. With it is a form to report your sales, calculate the 6% sales tax, and remit the tax to the state.

Easiest way to calculate the tax.: Rather than collect small change at the show, collect even dollar amounts (such as \$5 instead of \$5.30). After the show, divide your total sales by 1.06, and subtract the answer from the total sales. That will give you the tax amount to remit to the state. Example:

Sales of \$739.00
\$739.00/1.06 = \$697.17
\$739.00 - \$697.17 = \$41.83
Report Sales of \$697.17 – Report and pay tax of \$41.83.

There is no connection between the Maryland Sales Tax administration and the IRS. Your sales figures are not reported to any income tax agency that we know of. However, when preparing your income tax returns, your records of sales will help you substantiate your claimed income, and the sales tax paid is a deductible expense (as of this writing).

[Return to top.](#)

SECURITY: This term applies not only to deterring property crimes such as theft, but also to public safety in case of an emergency.

Don't block the exits. An exit is identified by a sign over a door which spells it out: EXIT. Usually, but not always, there are painted lines on the floor in front of the door that defines an area which must be kept clear and not impinged by tables, chairs, stocks or property or anything else. If you are near such an exit, please protect it and make sure nothing violates it. Be prepared to direct people to the exit should the need arise.

There are also many doors that are NOT designated as exits; for example the numerous overhead doors. But if a mass exit is required, be prepared to move your tables and goods out of the way so these escape paths can be used if needed.

Be aware that our show floor plan is scrupulously studied, and the show itself is audited, by life-safety officers to assure our compliance. We are very proud to say that our show floor plans have been praised for their accuracy and inspections have all been very affirming. And we want to keep it, that way.

And don't block fire lanes. Authorities will cut you some slack during the unloading process, but after the dust settles, move your vehicle to a regular parking area. The license number of a vehicle parked in a fire lane will be announced on the PA system; if it's your vehicle, take the announcement seriously and promptly move.

Protection of Property, other threats, and personal emergencies: After hours, the venue is occupied by uniformed fair grounds personnel who are in direct contact with public safety agencies, should the need arise. They are present until relieved by us the following day.

Otherwise, Maryland State Police Officers on our payroll are present during the show. They don't wear State Police uniforms, but are easily recognized by their tactical attire and clean-cut, military grooming and appearance. You'll see them floating around the show. They are prepared to deal both with criminal and personal emergency situations. They carry radios to stay in contact with show management. Their presence is indicated by official State Police vehicles parked in clear view of the entrance to the shows.

We take security very seriously.

[Return to top.](#)

PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING; OURS AND YOURS: Getting the word out takes many different forms:

Postal Mail and Email: We send notices to over 9 thousand people who want to hear from us. Their names and contact information come to us from web site sign-ups, door prize entries and requests during the show. Every one of them hears from us prior to a show. And not just with a post card or brief message. Postal contacts receive an actual letter. Email respondents receive similar. We highlight special features of an upcoming show and award them with a discount on attendance if they present their postal or email notice when they come in.

Major and Minor Media: We spend "big bucks" on broadcast and cable television, magazines, and newspapers. We also post notices on the many web sites, such as Railserve, which carry lists of upcoming shows. And in addition, we hand out our flyers at other shows. Locally, we are working with businesses up and down York Rd to place our flyers.

Inside Promotion and "skin in the game:" Attendees who enter the show have numerous ways to walk away with serious winnings. In addition to "prize table" winnings of merchandise, we have added "Merchandise Certificates" which are denominated like "real money," and may be spent like "real money" at the shows. Thus the winner of \$25, \$50 or \$100 has the equivalent of cash in hand to be spent with vendors at the show – and ONLY at the show. In this way, the show directs a portion of our gate income directly back to the vendors. That's our "skin in the game," what we give back to those who have given to us. Attendees may win because of a door prize drawing or because of a "lucky number." But, either way, the winning are not trivial.

Dealer Promotion: We have two important programs in place to support dealer advertising and promotion:

- **Dealer Courtesy Discount Admission Coupons.** These coupons give the holder the maximum discount on admission to the show, and are available ONLY from show vendors. Each coupon

carries your name and spaces for the holder to enter their contact data. For the attendee, there is no better deal, anywhere. When the coupon is presented at the show, the attendee enters at a lower cost than anyone else. And WE (the show) pay YOU (the vendor) a bounty for each coupon.

The program costs you nothing.

- Insert your special offer in our 9 thousand postal mail and email show reminders we send out before each show. The cost of \$40 covers our additional cost of postal mail. Attendees clip the coupon and present it to you at the show. Your cost per contact is about ½ cent.

For either of the above, please contact me at 434-823-4809 or jsgeare@gsmts.com.

[Return to top.](#)

EXTRAS, PERCS, SPIFFS, HINTS AND MISC: There are a number of features with us that are all part of the service and cost you nothing extra.

- **Free Coffee and Donuts** on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Gather round our administration tables early, treat yourself to Dunkin Donuts' best, and meet and greet other exhibitors in a friendly, convivial atmosphere.
- **Discounts at Area Restaurants:** Look for flyers and coupons from local restaurants who extend substantial discounts to our vendors; many such establishments are very close to the fairgrounds.
- **Special Hotel Rates:** On various places our web site (gsmts.com) you'll see links which give you the rates and contact information for a hotel which gives our people their lowest rates.
- **Electricity is FREE!** Forget the surcharge demanded by others. Power is free to us, so we pass it along to you for free.
- **Forget Something?** We've got loaner extension cords if you forgot yours or need to stretch a little further. We have gaffer's tape to keep the cord safely bound to the floor. We keep a kit of some hand tools, and have first-aid kits for any minor injuries.
- **Your Best Sale or Best Buy Might Occur Before the Show Opens.** There is a great deal of commerce before the show opens, so feel free to transact business with other exhibitors. Some vendors come into the show with large collections they purchased from estates or store closings, and they are happy to sell in lots on a wholesale basis, as opposed to individual retail sales during the show. Other have some inventory which really isn't within their specialty or product focus, and are pleased to sell it to an other dealers, where it would be a better "fit."
- **Bag it!** At every show, we distribute hundreds of cloth shopping bags imprinted with our logo, similar to the ones you see in stores which usually charge \$1.00 for them. But from us, they are free to vendors and attendees "while supplies last."

[Return to top.](#)

WHO LOVES YOU, BABY? The main reason is that we operate the shows more as a “co-op” as opposed to a business. This takes shape in numerous practical ways:

- We don't charge extra for things which cost us little or nothing. We don't charge you for electricity, because we don't pay extra for it, ourselves. Likewise, if you forgot table covers, we won't charge you for them, because the cost to us is trivial. Nor do we charge extra for tables located along a wall –table rates are at the same rate no matter where the tables are.
- We provide some convenience features you won't find elsewhere. Need gaffer's tape to keep an electrical cord tight to the floor? We're got it. Did you forget to bring an extension cord, or do you need an extra? Borrow ours!
- We give you a price break based on number of tables you rent, and shows you pay in advance. This helps us fill the show and plan ahead, and should be recognized in the price you pay.
- We don't keep money that doesn't belong to us. If you need to cancel a show, we'll use your advance payment for a future show, or give you a refund. Not everyone else does this.
- We won't take away your customary space because you need to skip a show.
- We share revenue by directing a portion of gate income into merchandise certificates which may be spent like real money with vendors at the show. These are awarded to attendees as door prize drawings and raffle style lucky numbers. And that's in addition to the merchandise people also win.

The whole point here is to run these shows as a cooperative enterprise, unfettered with penalties or rigid policies that get in the way of doing business and having a good time. When the exhibitors are comfortable, relaxed and pleased with the show management, they naturally transmit that same feeling to the attendees, which encourages a lively and productive marketplace. And that's what we're all about.

Please contact me at 434-823-4809 or jsgiare@gsmts.com if you need more information. (Note: if calling on or after Wednesday before the show, use my cell: 301-221-7996.



[Return to top.](#)

GREAT SCALE MODEL TRAIN SHOW PRICING

Our pricing is designed to be affordable for every vendor, large and small. Discounts are extended based on number of tables rented, days you will be here, when you pay, and pre-payment for 4 shows in advance.

The chart below shows pricing for up to 20 tables.

Beyond 20 tables, pricing is negotiable. We also welcome aggregators who buy from us on a wholesale basis, and re-sell to others who are part of a group. Contact us at 434-823-4809 for details.

TABLE AND SHOW RATES EFFECTIVE 2/1/2017

(Select table quantity at left, then read pricing per show and per table, left to right).

	Sat Only Paid at Show or Prepaid				Sat & Sun Paid at Show				Sat & Sun Prepaid				4 Shows Prepaid			
	Regular *		Wide *		Regular		Wide		Regular		Wide		Regular		Wide	
Tbl	▼ ▼ ▼ Pricing Per Show / Per Table ▼ ▼ ▼															
Qty	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl	Show	Tabl
1	50	50	55	55	80	80	85	85	75	75	80	80	59	59	63	63
2	95	48	105	53	150	75	160	80	140	70	150	75	108	54	116	58
3	140	47	155	52	220	73	235	78	205	68	220	73	157	52	169	56
4	185	46	205	51	290	73	310	78	270	68	290	73	206	52	222	56
5	230	46	255	51	290	58	310	62	270	54	290	58	205	41	220	44
6	275	46	305	51	346	58	370	62	322	54	346	58	244	41	262	44
7	320	46	355	51	402	57	430	61	374	53	402	57	283	40	304	43
8	365	46	405	51	458	57	490	61	426	53	458	57	322	40	346	43
9	410	46	455	51	514	57	550	61	478	53	514	57	361	40	388	43
10	455	46	505	51	570	57	610	61	530	53	570	57	400	40	430	43
11	500	45	555	50	626	57	670	61	582	53	626	57	439	40	472	43
12	545	45	605	50	682	57	730	61	634	53	682	57	478	40	514	43
13	590	45	655	50	738	57	790	61	686	53	738	57	517	40	556	43
14	635	45	705	50	794	57	850	61	738	53	794	57	556	40	598	43
15	680	45	755	50	850	57	910	61	790	53	850	57	595	40	640	43
16	725	45	805	50	906	57	970	61	842	53	906	57	634	40	682	43
17	770	45	855	50	962	57	1,030	61	894	53	962	57	673	40	724	43
18	815	45	905	50	1,018	57	1,090	61	946	53	1,018	57	712	40	766	43
19	860	45	955	50	1,074	57	1,150	61	998	53	1,074	57	751	40	808	43
20	905	45	1,005	50	1,130	57	1,210	61	1,050	53	1,130	57	790	40	850	43

Reg. Sunday Tables are \$25 ea. / Wide are \$30 ea. (+ \$5 show surcharge for either)

* **Regular** Tables are 8 feet long by 2 ½ feet wide. **Wide** Tables are 8 feet long by 3 feet wide.

[Return to top.](#)