

# The Wayfreight

NO. 17

MAY '81

Mid - America's Railfan Newsletter



Chicago & North Western GP15-1 #4417 unloading the carferry 'Viking' at Kewaunee, WI.

Photo by Timothy J. Vermande.

# WHEEL REPORT

## THE WAYFREIGHT

is the official publication of the Central Region of the TAMR. Central Region dues are \$3.00 per year. A years membership includes six (6) issues of the WAYFREIGHT. All material is submitted gratis. Material in this publication may be used without permission by publications of a kindred genre, but with the customary credits to the author and the WAYFREIGHT.

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Hello! Welcome to the May edition of the WF. We were running a bit behind schedule for a while but if things go as we planned you should be getting this towards the end of May and then hopefully we will be able to get the June issue off by the second or third week in June. Stay with us though as we have some good items up and coming.

As the weather gets warmer and the days longer our attention is focused to outdoor activities, one of them being railfanning, at least for most of us. Take a look at our Rail Notes column since the beginning of this year and you'll notice that there have been some major happenings in prototype railroading and more will be going on all summer. This summer will be a good time for everyone to go out and look for the last F units, Alcos and even early EMD switchers and Geeps. The midwest is a great place to see all this activity in the twilight of first generation diesels. Or if you are limited to just staying in one area be sure to spend some days just going down to the nearest tracks to catch some action. Spending a day along trackside at one point can be a lot

of fun. For those of you who are a bit braver how about making plans for attending this years TAMR national convention? Our region will be hosting this years event up in the Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN area with a side trip up to the Duluth (MN)/Superior (WI) region which will include the iron-ore operations not to mention spectacular scenery and first generation units. The Minnesota Precision Wide-Vision Division is making all the plans for a great convention and we'll have the complete set of details in the next issue. For those of you who want a head start on knowing what's going on then we have provided a bit with this issue, or you can write to Tom Gasior, 11800 Pheasant Ln., Hopkins, MN 55343 and if he's not too overburdened he'll get off a reply to you. If you've missed past TAMR conventions then this one's for you!! Make plans early and we can guarantee that this will be a great time. I hope to see a good many of you there. If you plan on attending you might want to consider buying a TAMR name badge (\$2) or a TAMR button (\$1), both are available from me. See the ad for them elsewhere in this issue.

We hope you've been enjoying the WAYFREIGHT and if you have any comments please feel free to write them in. If you have any articles or ideas then we can use those too, also any black and white photos of anything midwestern. Enjoy the issue!

*Gerry*



contributions for RAIL NOTES should be marked as such and sent to the WF Editor. Photos for this column are also welcomed.



CHESSIE SYSTEM has launched an experimental solar energy program. Two solar panels have been mounted on the cupola roof of Western Maryland cab #1841 and C&O cab #90214 at Grand Rapids, MI. The panels produce 24 amps, enough to charge the cabooses batteries. --Don Leitch

SOUTH SHORE has sold the following units: #614, 615 and 618 (ex-FEC) and CSS 1501 (ex-C&O). All were sold to the D.A. Wilson Co., a locomotive rebuilding firm that is located in Ames, IA. The South Shore still holds onto seven GP7's, all are former C&O units.

HILLSDALE COUNTY Rlwy has suspended rail service to the communities of Tremont, Angola and Pleasant Lake, Indiana after the Indiana Public Service Commision cancelled an operating agreement after being notified that federal funds had been withdrawn. Michigan subsidies to the HCRC have been cut 10%. The HCRC is still interested in buying the N&W line from Montpelier, OH to Ashley, IN which the N&W wants to abandon.

The PRAIRIE CENTRAL RAILROAD has taken over operations from the WABASH VALLEY RR who operated trackage between Decatur and Paris, IL. The PCRR started operations on April 5th and five day a week service is planned. The former operator of over four years, the Morrison Knudsen Corp. found that without federal and state subsidies they could not operate the line. Craig Burroughs who owns the line now also owns the Prairie Trunk Rlwy operating from Flora to Shawneetown IL and is looking into buying the B&O line from Flora to Springfield and the Conrail line from Paris to Cairo. Power for the line may be in the form of an old GM&O RS1.

The CEDAR RAPIDS & IOWA CITY has aquired former Rock Island GP7 #4424 from Chrome Crankshaft who put the nose of a GP20 on the unit.

MISSOURI-KANSAS-TEXAS (Katy) is seriously considering electrification 325 miles of its main line between Houston and Fort Worth. Katy would spend about \$103 million for locomotives and signaling. Lower Colorado River Authority electric company, MKT's biggest customer, would provide capital for catenary and substations in it's area, which includes about a third of the route.

CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN is investigating private financing as an alternative to government aid for coal line construction in the West and for purchase of Rock Island trackage in the Midwest. Cost would be about \$70-90 million for 900 miles of RI track in Iowa and the coal line construction would cost about \$300 million.

U.S. STEEL is installing a new rail mill at its South Works in Chicago at a cost of "several hundred million dollars" and installation time of about 24 months.

The SOUTH SHORE is asking for commuter fare hikes for as much as 77%. The line has not had a fare increase in ten years.

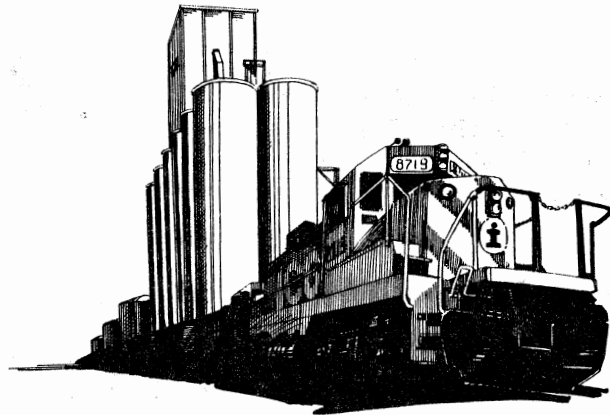
Coming next issue: Midwest Railfan's Guide, Convention news, Photos, pictures and story of Chessie's 614 in the midwest, plus Rip Track, Rail Notes and more!

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# The Rip Track

conducted by John Van

all questions, comments or  
article submissions send to  
John Van, 327 Sauk Trail,  
Park Forest, IL 60466.



## ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF DIESEL SWITCHER:

It's always been fairly easy for me to spot an Illinois Central Gulf locomotive. If you've ever seen one you'll know that they are quite colorful. The orange and white makes the unit almost impossible to mistake for any other road. With the orange and white scheme being around for a number of years now, I would have never suspected the ICG to come up with a new paint scheme, or for that matter, one that is more colorful. However, early last summer while railfanning on the ICG main line just outside of Park Forest I spotted what looked to be a Southern Pacific unit. The ICG was pooling with the SP to St. Louis all summer anyways. As the train came closer I noticed that the unit was an ICG Geep decked out in orange and gray paint with chevron stripes across the nose.

Further investigation in Markham yard revealed switchers in this type of scheme also. The yard switchers have basically the same scheme only without the nose stripes, which makes the switcher all the more easier to model.

I began the modeling project by utilizing an Athearn model of the SW1500 in the undecorated version. The model was washed in warm water (just the shell, not the entire unit!) with a little bit of detergent and was then allowed to dry overnight. The body was then sprayed with a coat of Floquil's primer and allowed to dry for one day. The reason for the primer being sprayed on is that it protects the model's plastic body from being attacked by the paint and it also leaves a smooth finish in which to work with.

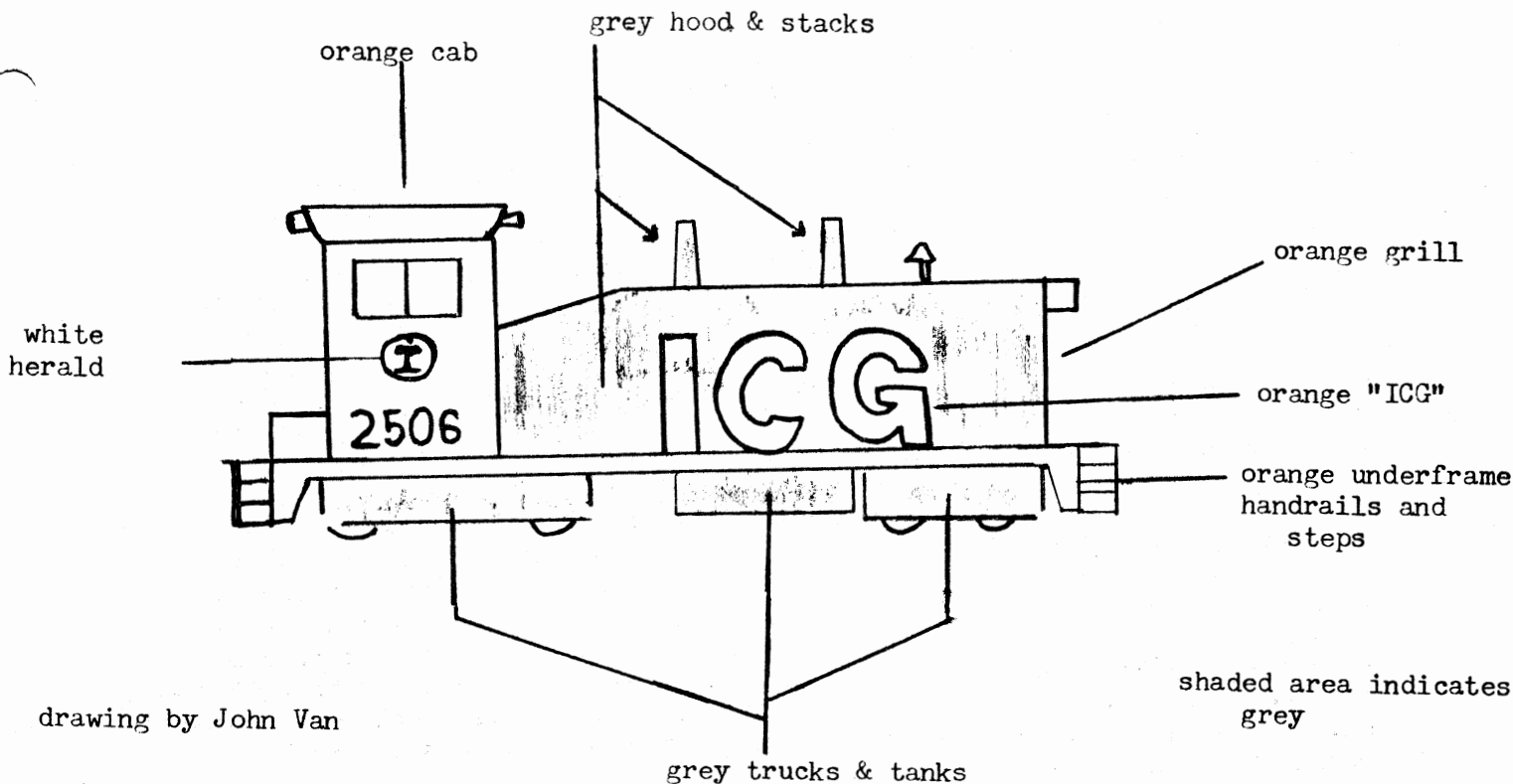
Next I started masking the body at the bottom of the hood with transparent tape, Scotch brand usually works well. I prefer the clear sharp edge I get with the Scotch tape which makes a good clean line. In most cases masking tape leaves a rough line where the colors meet. The switcher is mostly orange with the hood and trucks being dark gray. It is a good idea to spray the light colors first, thus I sprayed on Floquil's 3030 Reffer Orange. It is a good idea to leave the first coat dry for at least half a day and then go back and spray on a light second coat. Leave this dry overnight so the paint will adhere to the body of the model and won't pull off when the rest of the tape is on. Next I sprayed the entire hood with Floquil's SP Lark dark grey. I brushed the paint on the trucks and fuel tanks. When the painting was complete I let the model dry for a few days.

After the model was dry I sprayed the entire body with Testors Gloss Coat. I let this dry overnight in order to get a smooth, clean surface for applying decals. I used Herald King decal set #L-253. I applied them and then gave them a few drops of Walther's Solvaset. However, I found that it took several applications of the Solvaset to finally get the decals to conform to the surface of the model. After I finished with the Solvaset I allowed the model to dry and then took a Q-tip dipped in warm water and removed the excess glue that was released from the decals backing. When the model was thoroughly dry I sprayed it with a coat of Testor's Dull Coat to hide the film of the decals and to give the model an overall flat look and smooth finish.

The ICG switcher is a fairly easy project to do and makes a great looking unit to add to the roster when completed. --JV (diagram on next page)

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CUSTOM PAINTING AND SUPER-DETAILING at discount prices. If you need any decaling, painting or detailing work done then write for price list and information. TAMR members receive a 25% discount on all work. Write: Custom Painting, c/o Steve Masih, 1525 9th Ave SE., St. Cloud, MN 56301.



RAILFUN '81---RAILFUN '81---RAILFUN '81

TAMR CONVENTION sponsored by the Precision Wide-Vision Division of the Central Region-TAMR. Exact dates to be announced in the next issue. Come on up to the land of 10,000 lakes for a spectacular convention which will include seeing the best of Minneapolis/St. Paul prototype railroading, clubs, hobby shops. See industrilas, tour BN's NORTH TOWN yard, with a side trip up to Duluth, MN to see the exciting iron-ore operations of the DM&IR, the Alcos of the DW&P, perhaps the last BN F units, Oliver Iron Mining Baldwins, ore docks, spectacular scenery and the Lake Superior Transportation Museum complete with a DM&IR Yellowstone (2-8-8-4).

Perfect for conventions:

TAMR BOTTONS: a 1-3/4" diameter button painted white with the famous TAMR logo in blue on the face. Professionally made. Price is only \$1 each.

TAMR NAME BADGES: 3 1/4 by 1 1/2" white on blue with TAMR logo screened on and name engraved are available for only \$2 each. You have a choice of 2 styles:

1. Name only, with first name or initials on top line, last name on bottom line.
2. The above with a third line of your choice, possibly in smaller type depending on how long line is.

Either style sells for only \$2 ea, delivered. Allow approximately two to three weeks for delivery. PLEASE PRINT YOUR COPY PLAINLY. Send your copy and money to:

TAMR Secretary  
Gerry Dobey- 145 E. Kenilworth, Villa Pk., IL 60181

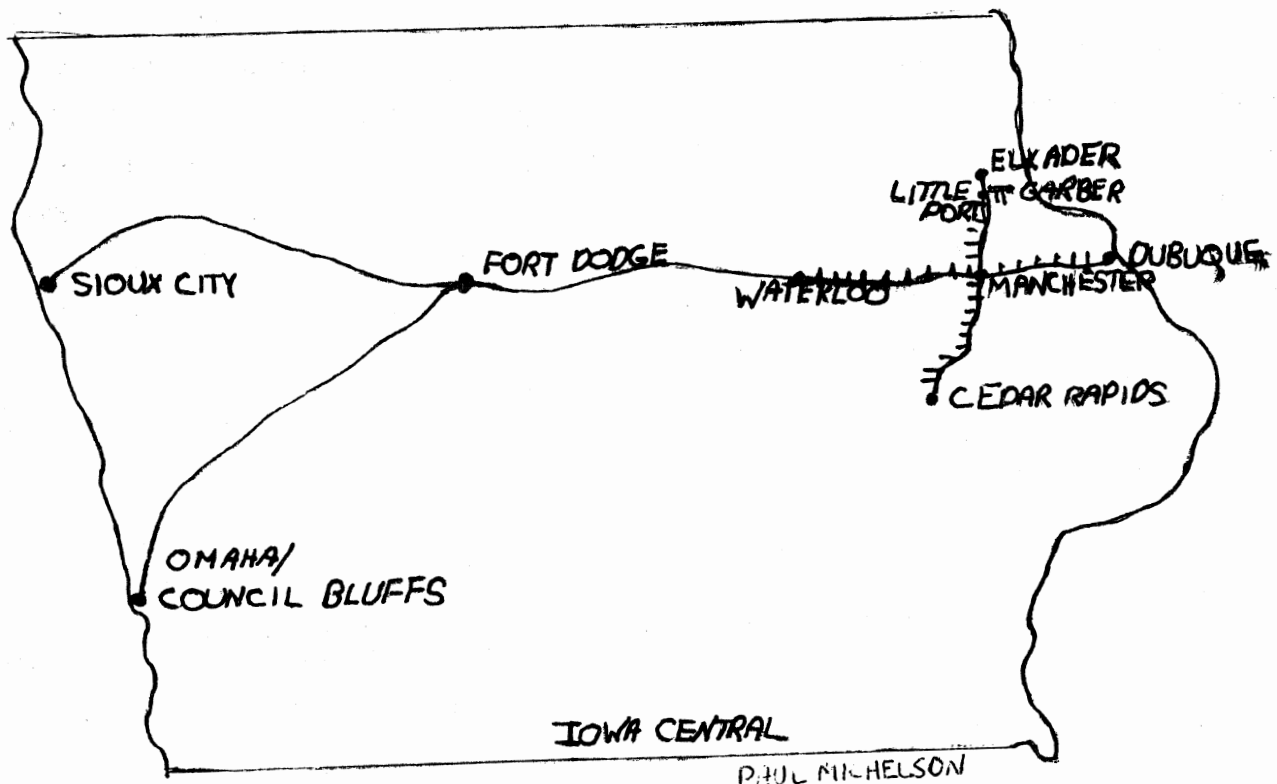


## The IOWA CENTRAL RAILROAD SYSTEM -- History

The present day Iowa Central Railroad was formed on June 1, 1975 from trackage bought from the Illinois Central Gulf RR. The reason being that the ICG was in a financial crunch and had to cut down on its route miles that included unprofitable lightly used lines. IAC's main line runs from Dubuque, IA to Fort Dodge where the trackage splits (see map). One line goes to Omaha, NB while the other goes to Sioux City, IA. As for branch lines there is a branch out of Waterloo which goes up to Albert Lea, MN. Manchester (IA) has two branches leading out of it, one going north to Elkader, IA and the other leading to Cedar Rapids. On the Manchester to Elkader line there is another branch going off to Garber (8 miles to the East) from Littleport.

The system headquarters are located at Waterloo along with the locomotive and car shops. I don't model the entire Iowa Central system, I am mainly concentrating on the main from Dubuque to Waterloo and the branch lines to Cedar Rapids, Elkader and Garber. The Iowa Centrals traffic is about 50% originating on line and the other 50% is bridge route traffic (I'm in desperate need for traffic from roads from all over the US and Canada. Write to me so we can set up an interchange system. I would like to incorporate some coal trains and some container trains like Sealand. Regular freight traffic is fine too.) I am still in the planning stages of the IAC with some benchwork being done on the Garber branch. The IAC guarantees quick, safe service across Iowa, so write for interchange information.

## IOWA CENTRAL RR SYSTEM MAP:



III PORTION MODELED

## The Making of a MESS

This will be my final MESSy NEWS column. Now that the MESS map is rolling and the first installment (the MESS Guide) is completed, it is up to you to keep the MESS going. Of course there will always be the need for a coordinator to keep things going and to make sure you get the proper information, but I will not be that person. The TAMR's national publication beckons for increased attention now that you've voted to go monthly and thus it is with much regret that I tender my resignation as MESS Coordinator. I hope my successor has as much fun as I did over the past three years.

Still there is one more responsibility that I feel compelled to act on before I relinquish this position. That deals with the history of the MESS. The official history of how this thing started has never been chronicled and since it is an interesting story (which the Editor assures me will take up a large chunk of room in the WAYFREIGHT so as to make his job easier) and I thought you might like to hear it.

The MESS began with a name. The Mid-Eastern Shortline System and its admittedly humorous acronym, MESS, was first mentioned by Tim Vermande in the November/December 1975 issue of the TAMR HOTBOX. However, the name itself was developed jointly by Tim Vermande and Terry Burke one afternoon while railfanning. You see, the name of Terry's railroad was the Mid-Eastern Shortline and apparently Tim and Terry got to discussing the possibilities of a system. This idea might have been spurred on by an article that was to appear in the Nov/Dec 1975 issue of the HOTBOX entitled "Family of Lines". This article explained how a group of Allegheny region (now part of the Northeast region) members got together in one of the member's basements to model a set of related roads out East.

Anyway, I read both the article and Tim's idea in the HOTBOX and became interested although I never got around to writing Tim about it further. It's a shame too, because if I had, the MESS could have begun a lot sooner. But at the time I was chasing other windmills. The HOTBOX needed a typist (and later an Associate Editor) and then there was a two year stint as TAMR Auditor. Still it's hard to keep a good name down and buried and it lay dormant until the May/June 1978 issue of the HOTBOX where in a Crummy News article, I was discussing how many modelers prefer to build freelanced pikes rather than sticking to a specific prototype. Then I related how I established the concept for my Pecatonica & Pontoosuc RR and suggested that perhaps a model network could be established incorporating the MESS name.

I thought no more about the idea until I received a letter from Ted Bedell asking if I was serious about the MESS idea. I wrote back and told him I was and that perhaps we could get something going. While waiting for his reply, I discussed the idea with Tim Vermande and Gerry Dobey and they both agreed it was a good one. Then on July 29, 1978 while a bunch of us were railfanning, the subject of the MESS came up again and we decided to officially found the organization (this was also the day the Lake Shore Railfan Protection District was also founded, so we were quite busy). The original founding members were Gerry Dobey, Tim Vermande, Ed Moran, Doug Johnson, Ted Bedell (who wasn't present, but told me in a letter that he was interested in forming such a group) and myself. We drew our respective systems on a highway map of the Midwest and Doug Johnson agreed to draw up a separate MESS map with all our lines. The next time we got together, we got a Xeroxed copy of the first MESS map.

About this time, Gerry Dobey (busy as TAMR Secretary, but unstoppable nonetheless) was seriously considering the revival of the Central Region. He mentioned his plan to me and I thought that we should do it. So in November 1978, the region was officially revived with a special issue of the WAYFREIGHT that was sent out in every TAMR member's HOTBOX--an obvious promotional gimmick that worked to our advantage.

(continued next page)

MESSy NEWS (cont'd from last page)

In that special issue was a little something about the MESS. You see in the meantime Gerry and I decided to expand the MESS concept to include the entire Central Region. Thus any TAMR member who modeled a railroad who's line ran somewhere in the Central region and was willing to subscribe to the WAYFREIGHT (pretty sneaky) could join the MESS.

Well, you pretty much know what happened after that. The Central Region grew and so did the MESS. Let's hope it continues in that fashion. The MESS is important to the Central Region because it brings some much needed modeling emphasis to an otherwise prototype based region. The MESS helps to unify Central Region members through a common interest--model railroading. As long as we keep Messing up, I can't see where we'll go wrong.

All for now--

Mark.

--anyone who is interested in heading up the MESS can write to your beloved editor with the usual list of qualifications, work experience and social security number and we'll contact you if you get the job--GD

In case anyone noticed, my Wheel Report was obviously wrong as this issue will also be late (by about a month). We'll be working extra hard to try and get caught up in record time. If you have anything to contribute please send it in today!

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