

Celebrating Eighty Years!

# THE TIEROD

April 2004  
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ASSOCIATION OF LAWN-DART COLLECTING**  
Discontinue if side-effects persist.



# THE HOTBOX

APRIL 2004, ISSUE #370

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LIBRARIAN- "GIVES ME STRANGE LOOKS WHEN I CHECK-  
OUT LESLIE NEILSEN MOVIES."

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Send your check or money order to my...oops, sorry, you mean that type of contribution. We here at The Hotbox are always in need of new material. Here are a few examples:

### FEATURE ARTICLES:

This is what we're always looking for. From a railfan trip, to your home layout's story, or your own story. Size can range from a paragraph to a full page. Pictures are always appreciated.

### COLUMNS:

Full of great Tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons Heisler is better than Baldwin? Start a monthly, or bi-monthly column. Size same as features.

### PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS:

Got a great photo collection you want to show-off? Got a notebook full of railroad cartoons, or layout logos? Send them to the Hotbox staff for consideration.

**SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS, OR HOTBOX QUESTIONS TO:**

Peter Maurath

**OR EMAIL AT:**

TAMRHotbox@aol.com

## GET WIRED

Check out TAMR on the web at:

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

Or Join our online yahoo news group, by contacting:  
[pivotpin@TAMR.org](mailto:pivotpin@TAMR.org)

(By joining you'll receive updates on TAMR news and events, plus be connected to dozens of other TAMR members. There's no cost to join this group, do it today!)

**ON THE COVER:** Petetrak FD E-42 #8566 pauses somewhere in western New York. Peter Maurath, photo.



Gotcha, April Fools! I always wanted to do that! If anyone should find this offensive, please understand I will do everything in my power to make you more comfortable, just read the disclaimer info on the back of this issue for more information. Now before you start flipping pages, I only had my fun with the cover. The regular HB you all know and love is just as it was before.

Next, copies of the TAMR constitution are available to anyone who wants a copy. Contact me at the address' shown in the contribution section to my left, and I'll mail it your way, free of charge (first copy only).

With over one-hundred names, address', emails, scales, birthdates, and bloodtypes to go over for last month's directory I was bound to have a few typos slip past. Please update your directories to include the following corrections:

(Corrections are in Bold)

Jeff Wondolleck-(925) 283-4838

Erik Romatowski-(732) 937-6534

Mark MacDougall- [mac61@rcn.com](mailto:mac61@rcn.com) / (610)-746-6646.

And finally, say hello to two new members hailing from opposite sides of the lower 48. Welcome to the TAMR guys!

**Jacob Klatt**

**Layout: Northern California Foothills**

**Scale: HO**

**Equipment: ATSF & Amtrak**

**Age 14**

**Collin Reinhart**

**Collin@Enter.net**

**Age: n/a**

# Ask the Noodle Guys

STARRING PETE AND CZ

**Peter:** Hey there! We're back for another month of model railroad advice. Here CZ and myself answer the tough questions, you the members ask us.

**CZ:** And we do it with style, creativity, and lots of group hugs!

**Peter:** Will you knock it off! I knew that sensitivity seminar was going to your head, especially with you wearing that ridiculous leotard.

**CZ:** Many find them to be quite fashionable, and relaxing. Besides it was in my favorite color.

**Peter:** Well I'm not relaxed at all by you wearing anything in violet. Anyway, on to today's letter. It comes from Andrew Bork, of Severna Park, MD. Andrew writes:

*"Dear Noodle Guys, love the column. Got a need to pick your brains. Where can I find cheap grade-crossing signals in N scale that look pretty good too?"*

**CZ:** In your shoes Andrew I would look deep inside myself, and wonder what does the signal want...of me.

**Peter:** Thanks CZ, that was quick and pointless. If that doesn't work for ya Andrew, try the sets of grade crossing signals from the folks at Bachmann. They can be found in sets for less than ten bucks and with a little work turn out pretty sharp. You'll also need some "X" rr signs (train-lingo for railroad crossing sign), which you can find from numerous manufacturers including Blair Line. Take some spaghetti noodle (or thin styrene tube if you prefer) and paint it silver. While that dries take the Bachmann signal and paint the flasher portion black. Try not to paint the actual red lenses, just the casing around them. Once both are dry, cut away the flasher section from the rest of the Bachmann signal and glue it to the silver painted noodle (at least an inch or more from the top). Next, add your "X" rr signs just above the flashers. Let dry, cut to the desired length, then glue in place trackside. All set to protect your grade crossing.

**CZ:** Fantastic, nutritional bars for everybody! The solution has been found. I think I'll break into interpretive dance, if that's ok with everybody.

**Peter:** Never stopped you before big guy. Good-night folks!•

If you have a question for the noodle guys send it to:  
Peter Maurath

TAMRHotbox@aol.com

## THE HOTBOX DEFINITION OF THE MONTH Builders Plate

\'bild\'erz\'plät\ n 1 : What the locomotive designer eats his dinner off of. 2 : What Bill Derz got in his head after the bad accident with the chipper/shredder.

3



SOME VINTAGE AMTRAK ACTION CIRCA 1976. A GE P30CH (POOGH) AND AN FP45 LEAD A TRAIN THRU INDIANA ON A SUNNY AUGUST DAY. TIM VERMANDE, PHOTO.

# The Top 7

BY: PETER MAURATH

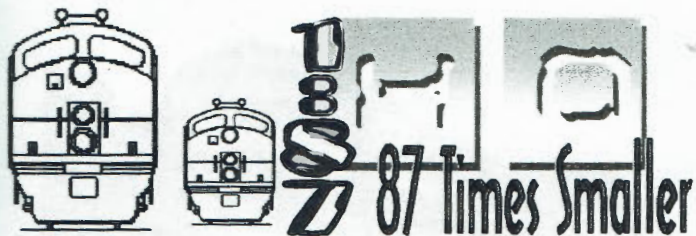
**"From the Home Office in Cleveland, OH,  
it's tonight's Top Seven List..."**

## THE TOP SEVEN FAILED AMTRAK MARKETING IDEAS.

- #7. AMBEER.
- #6. AM AND CHEESE ON RYE.
- #5. AMBURGER.
- #4. AM-ROW-OF-VENDING-MACHINES-AND-A-MICROWAVE-OVEN.
- #3. AMBURGER WITH CHEESE.
- #2. AMBUS.
- #1. "RIDE TODAY AND HAVE AN AM GOOD TIME!"



ANOTHER SHOT OF IRAQI RAILROAD ACTION FEATURING ONE OF THE FORMER DICTATOR'S PRIVATE LOCO'S AT DIWANIYA, IRAQ. RICK BERGMAN, PHOTO.



CONDUCTED BY: JONATHAN SCHOEN

Welcome back to *87 Times Smaller*, the column about HO model trains. This column was absent from the January and March Hotbox issues because of special issue on those months (anniversary issue in January and the member directory last month). The column will be monthly from here on, as long as Pete allows it. Before I get into the column, I would like to point out that in the February *87 Times Smaller*, I said that American Flyer (AF) manufactured O scale models. However, as new member George Baustert pointed out to me, AF made S scale, not O. Also, you may recall me saying that this month I would discuss how to save money by buying less expensive models. I decided to instead write the column on a totally new and fun aspect to me, merging model railroads.

No, that's not a typo. I said merging model railroads. Many real (1:1 scale) railroads have done this in the past. Now, don't get this confused with a "takeover." Often, railroads would merge together keeping relatively the same operations, just operating under a single name. (In a takeover, a railroad gets completely bought out.) This can be done with models as well. Northeast Region Representative, Mark MacDougall, and I, did just this. We "merged" my *Mojave Western Railroad* with his *Allentown, Scranton, & Northern*. (You can read more about our deal in Mark's *ASN* column.)



BNSF A MERGER OF THE SANTA FE, AND BURLINGTON NORTHERN ROLLS THROUGH THE MOJAVE DESERT MARCH, 2004.

JONATHAN SCHOEN, PHOTO.

roster and regularly have meetings with the owner of the other road. You can take the merger as far as you want.

Why do this? As the owner of a small 4x6' layout, I have been trying my hardest to have realism with what I have. I feel that merging railroads gives a unique opportunity to operate your trains under a company with some history. It adds one more element that can turn your train set into a model railroad. Another reason, most US railroads have gone through some type of merger. Plus, there have been numerous subsidiary companies such as the Cotton Belt, once owned by my favorite railroad, the Southern Pacific.

Now you don't have to be geographically close to a person with a layout to do this. Take Mark and I for an example. Mark lives in eastern Pennsylvania, and I live in southern California! Yet, we have come up with an interesting deal that I encourage you to read about in Mark's *ASN* column. In a sense, his is the sequel to this column and it should give you a good example of a model railroad merger. Please contact me with the information below if you decide to or have done this very thing. I will mention those you do in an upcoming *87 Times Smaller* or *Trackside Fans*. Stay tuned next issue when I will talk about how to save money and have just as much fun by getting less expensive models. Until then, contact me at

[JonathanHTD@yahoo.com](mailto:JonathanHTD@yahoo.com) or:

87 Times Smaller  
1573 Casarin Ave  
Simi Valley, CA 93065



BY: MARK AND AUSTIN MACDOUGALL

Have you ever been in a real moving engine? We have, and will tell you about what two tourist railroads look like from the cab.

The first time we ever rode in the cab of a moving engine was at the East Penn Scenic Railroad in (very) late 2002, we our volunteers at the EPRY so that's how we were allowed to do that. Here a quick tour of the line,

we start at Kutztown, PA at a ex-Reading (pronounced Red-ing) Station in town (photo at left). We cross route 222 and pick up speed, we cross another crossing and soon leave Kutztown. We soon approach a dense forest and then find ourselves in Amish (Pennsylvania German) county passing many farms. We soon cross a crossing and roll by a gravel plant. We are soon in Topton and to the right we see Norfolk Southern's Reading Line and many houses. the engine soon runs around our train and the train heads back to Topton.

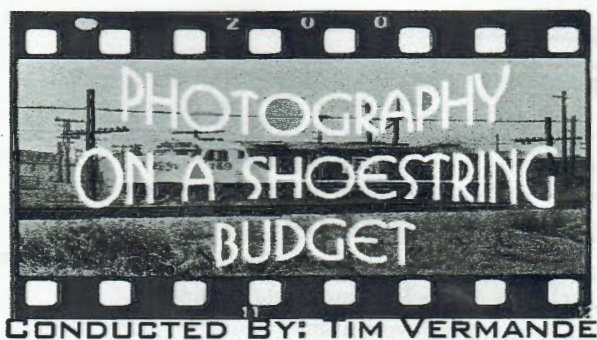


MARK MACDOUGALL, PHOTO.

Another cabride we took was on the Adirondack Scenic Railroad from Utica, New York to Old Forge (we have a relative who is a railfan and volunteers there so that's how we got to ride this railroad). We start our trip at Amtrak's Utica station. The F units throttle up as we depart the station, cross a bridge and leave the city. We soon enter the Adirondacks crossing many huge trestles and small towns along the way. We were surprised that most (if not all) of the stations along the line were still standing. We arrived in Old Forge, (photo, right) explored the town, then took the train back to Utica to end the trip. We got lucky to get a cabride on both railroads and wish to thank them for having to deal with us and giving us great memories. So long!•



AUSTIN MACDOUGALL, PHOTO.



In a previous column, I commented that how you get film processed (or scanned, or how you get digital files printed) is important. It's a stage at which you have little control, other than where you go or saying "no" to a bad job at the end. It's also a stage to be chosen carefully, because a botched job can destroy your work: film and file damage is hard to reverse. So is complete loss of the material you brought in. Either of these possibilities can cause a lot of grief that will outweigh any short-term monetary savings.

No small part of the problem here is that the only way to find out how a lab works is to use it. So--if you're using film, don't take a roll from some big trip to a place you're unfamiliar with. And even when you are familiar, take only half or a third at a time. Yes, it takes longer, but if something happens, you won't lose it all.

When you have a roll of film to be processed, there are several ways to go. You can go to a manufacturer's lab, such as Kodak's Qualex. Fuji, Agfa, and other manufacturers also have their own or affiliated labs. This is one of the more expensive ways to go, but the standards are usually high. If you are just starting out or are in a new or unfamiliar location, this is the safe path.

In larger cities, you can go to a custom or professional lab. This is also expensive, especially for printing, but these labs also use highly-trained people and practice scrupulous maintenance. One problem is finding such a lab--they may work only on a wholesale basis, or only with large customers, and aren't interested if you have a roll a week.

Both of these varieties of dedicated labs are in the photofinishing business full-time, and live or fail according to their product. They expect to have customers who know the difference between good and bad work, and who know when their being fed a line of bull.

But for most of us, concerned about cost and time, getting a roll of film developed or prints made means a mini-lab. They have sprouted up just about everywhere: camera stores, grocery stores, discounters, freestanding kiosks: about the only place I haven't seen one yet is a restaurant. But there's a problem--the level of quality at these places varies widely. Many mini-labs are not operated by people with any knowledge of photography. They were told by a salesperson that the materials cost very little and the machines are automatic. Training is minimal and overlooks the fine points of how to monitor chemicals, adjust color balance, and how to properly clean the rollers that can scratch your film.

The best way to try a lab out is to take in a small order. If it's digital media, copy it before you go. If it's film, take something you can stand to lose. Look carefully at the results for problems. If you have film developed, use a magnifier to look at it for scratches

and water spots (if you have a scanner, make a big scan and look for purple lines). Some of these can happen in a camera (dust can scratch film and blank out pixels), so if you see a problem, try another place and see what happens.

Many labs offer their services by mail. But first, call your shipper or visit them on the web to make sure they don't do a security check that might harm your film or erase files.

Labs sometimes change over time. So if your pictures lose their snap, try another lab!●

## The TAMR wants you!

TO BE THE NEXT TREASURER, OR REGION REPRESENTATIVE. THIS AND OTHER POSITIONS ARE STILL OPEN. DO YOUR PART FOR THE TAMR AND HELP OUT. IT'S A GREAT WAY TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS, AND GET MORE OUT OF THIS GROUP THAN JUST SENDING IN THE FIFTEEN OR TWENTY BUCKS EVERY YEAR. CONTACT THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT TODAY AT :

[TAMRPREZ33@CHESWEB.COM](mailto:TAMRPREZ33@CHESWEB.COM)

POSITIONS AVAILABLE:

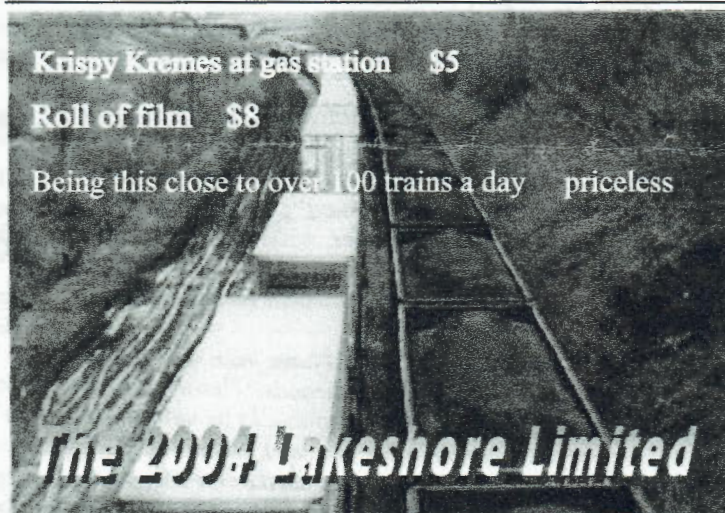
TREASURER

HOTBOX EDITOR

PROMOTIONS

SOUTHERN REGION REPRESENTATIVE

INTERNATIONAL REGION REPRESENTATIVE



THE TAMR'S FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY SUMMER CONVENTION IS TAKING PLACE THIS YEAR IN LOVELY HAMLIN, NEW YORK, JULY 5<sup>TH</sup> TO JULY 10<sup>TH</sup>. STOPS INCLUDE BUFFALO, NY, ROCHESTER, NY, AND ALTOONA, PA, JUST TO NAME A FEW. SHOP TOURS, AND LAYOUT OPERATING SESSIONS ARE PLANNED, ALONG WITH PLENTY OF SHORTLINE AND CLASS ONE RAILFANNING ACTION. CLINICS AND SLIDESHOWS SPACES ARE STILL AVAILABLE, BUT GOING FAST.

ANYONE INTERESTED IN HOSTING A CLINIC OR SLIDESHOW, OR YOU JUST WANT MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT CONVENTION DIRECTOR NICK

WILSON AT THE ADDRESS BELOW:

[TAMRNEREP@FRONTIERNET.NET](mailto:TAMRNEREP@FRONTIERNET.NET)

OR

NICK WILSON



CHECK OUT THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE @  
[HTTP://WWW.TAMR.ORG/2004](http://www.tamr.org/2004)

# TRACKSIDE FANS

BY: JONATHAN SCHOEN

Welcome to another issue of *Trackside Fans*, or "Proof That You Are NOT the Only Teen Railfan". I don't know about you, but I like the name *Trackside Fans* better. Anyway, on to the column. This month I asked Austin MacDougall of eastern Pennsylvania to tell me about being a railfan (and yes, Austin is the NER Rep's brother). He calls this story, *Being a Railfan; The Good and the Bad*.

"I've had lot's of fun being a railfan, although sometimes it can be disappointing. I will explain both sides."

"First, I'll discuss the bad side. My dad said, 'Railfanning is like fishing, somedays you get a lot, other days you get nothing.' I definitely agree, having seen seven trains in 56 minutes, which is a record for me. But I have spent four hours and have seen nothing. Finally, when four trains came with a half hour, it was to dark and my pictures didn't come out, which was very disappointing. I've spent two hours at the tunnels in Gallitzin, Pennsylvania, and have see nothing (I never seem to have any luck there). Of course, I here lots of trains on the other side of town, which is inaccessible."

"However, 95% of the time, I enjoy railfanning. I have seen lots of SD40-2s, Dash9s, and SD70Ms, in paint schemes like Conrail, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, and Santa Fe. There are tons of varieties, even on the all black Norfolk Southern, which has been very good when it comes to foreign power, while Conrail seemed to lack foreign units. Over the years, I figured out spotting features on most diesels, and have picked favorite railroads and engines."

"There are times when I think, 'I should have been a railfan in the '50s, when steam was active on major railroads.' However, now I realize that railfanning in the '50s had drawbacks as well (like there were no online groups to explain what you saw). In the '70s, when most of the engines I like roamed the rails, such as GP35s, there was the Penn Central bankruptcy in the northeast. Therefore, despite the rainbow of Conrail power I would have seen toward the later part of the decade, it would be hard to be a railfan (still no internet). Because of this, I am still happy being a railfan in these times, even though I never caught pure Conrail power."

Thank you, Austin, for sharing with us this story. Before I go, I must make a point. *Trackside Fans* is obviously a feature that cannot exist without member contribution. I am disappointed to say that contribution has been lacking severely. All you have to do to keep this column alive is send in a story. It can be anything that describes what you think about being a railfan. The purpose of this column is for to meet other railfans and for other railfans to meet you! You don't have to be a writing expert, just a railfan or model railroader! That's all it takes! So feel free to send stories to

[JonathanHTD@yahoo.com](mailto:JonathanHTD@yahoo.com)

or

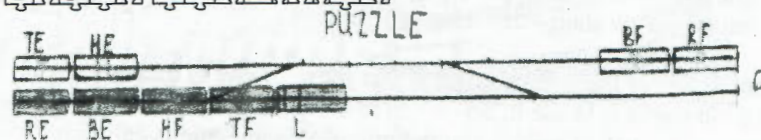
Trackside Fans

## THE PUZZLE LAYOUT

Conducted By: George Baustert

Hi, my name is George & I've been modeling railroads for over 60 years. I'd like to share with you, a small layout (4" x 64"), that is called The Puzzle, because it takes 54 moves to complete the operation, due to the restrictive size of the layout, using 40' cars and an SW switcher. The operation consists of swapping the cars of a four car train, on the main, with four cars spotted on the two stub sidings, at the rear of the layout & ending up with those cars and the loco reassembled into a train that is headed in the opposite direction from the start position.

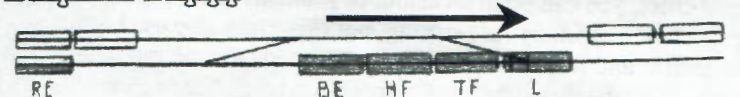
### START CONDITION



The start condition, at 0, has the industry cars spotted, left to right: TE is Tank (empty), HE is Hopper (empty), BF is Box (full) and RF is Reefer (full). The train line up, from the loco back is the same except for the empty/full designation, since they are replacements.

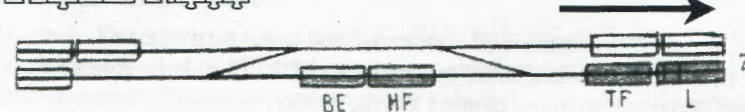
That means the tank car replaces the tank car, exc.exc.exc. However, the empty tank & hopper must be removed, before the full tank & hopper can be spotted in their place. In order to make room for the empty tank & hopper, the train must be moved.

### move no. 1



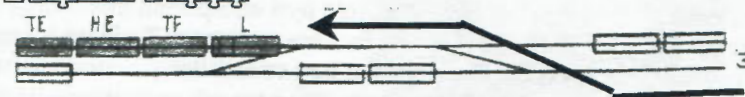
Because there is only so much room on the layout, the train is broken up by leaving the last car, the empty reefer, at the left end of the layout & then the train moves to the right & drops off the next two cars, the empty box & full hopper, in the middle of the runaround, at the center of the layout. (Move # 1)

### move no. 2



Next, the loco & full tank car move to the right end of the layout clearing the right hand turnout of the crossover. (Move # 2).

### move no. 3



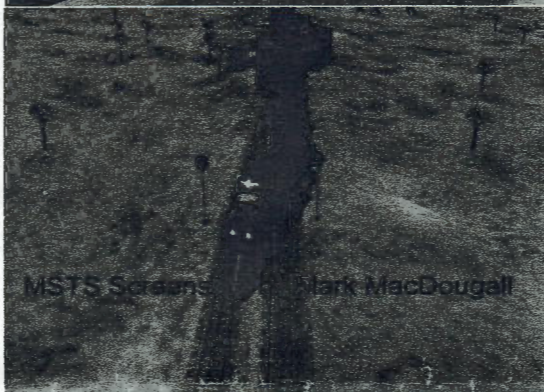
Now the loco moves the full tank car back through the crossover & couples onto the empty hopper & tank car. (Move # 3). See you next issue with another set of moves so you can compare your own with the Puzzle answers. •



Photo by Tim Vermande



Photo by Austin MacDougall



MSTS Screenshots Mark MacDougall



Photo by Jonathan Schoen



Photo by John Riechle

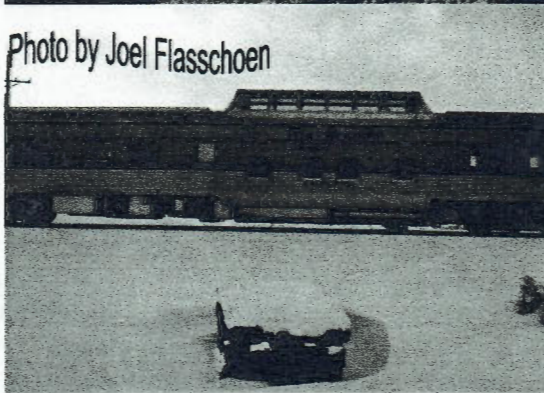


Photo by Joel Flasschoen

Want your work to be seen in The Photo Special?

Send photos and RT3, MSTS or Trainz screenshot as prints or JPG files to:

JonathanHTD@yahoo.com

OR

The Photo Special

THE TAMR IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CREATED TO PROMOTE, FOSTER, AND ENCOURAGE YOUNG PERSONS IN THE HOBBY OF MODEL RAILROADING, THE ACTIVITY OF RAILFANNING, AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THEREOF.

MEMBERSHIP TO THE TAMR INCLUDES AN ELEVEN MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO THE HOTBOX, THE ANNUAL DIRECTORY OF MEMBERS, QUARTERLY REGIONAL NEWSLETTERS AND AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL TAMR EVENTS. THE AVAILABLE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES ARE AS FOLLOWS: REGULAR (UNDER 21)-\$15, ASSOCIATE (21 AND OVER)-\$20, INTERNATIONAL (OUTSIDE US)-\$18

TO BECOME A PART OF THE TAMR, OR TO RENEW SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO:  
NICK WILSON, TAMR TREASURER,

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## COMING SOON TO THE HOTBOX:

- We take a tour of Erik Romatowski's railroad empire, *The New Jersey and Pennsylvania*.
- The Puzzle Layout, continues.

## COMING SOON TO THE TAMR:

- The dates are set. *The Lakeshore Limited*, TAMR's Summer national convention will be taking place this July 5<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup> in western New York. More juicy details coming soon!

