

THE HOTBOX



March 2006
Issue # 392

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**THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEEN
ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS**

"Check out our newest store off route 91 in Hudson."

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Librarian- Wears a green
 derby on the 17th.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Send your check 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. New officers are too

COLUMNS:

Full of great tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons Ford is better than GM? 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@sbcglobal.net

We're your dirty socks, wash us!

GET WIRED

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www.TAMR.org

Or join our online yahoo news group, by contacting:

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!)

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ON THE COVER: . An Amish barn-raising takes place on an HO display layout at the Amherst Big Railroad Hobby Show in W. Springfield, MA., Jan. 29. Photo: Peter Maurath

FORM 19 A message from your editor in chief

Welcome to March! The worst of winters wrath is past for most of you, Spring, and the thaw it brings, is not far away. Which means I won't be subjecting you all to snow shots for much longer, so there.

Another great Winter National Convention has come and gone and if you were there, great! Glad you could make it, and if you missed it, too bad. We had a great show as always. Over 21,000 people visited this year, many of whom saw our awesome table with two operating layouts. We also had some great slide-shows courtesy of Charles Warczinsky, and Willie Roberge. Thanks again guys! It was a good time had by all who attended and I hope to see you next year!

Speaking of conventions, my ranting and raving has finally paid off as we now have a tentative Summer National Convention. Here's what I can tell you, it will be hosted by the NY/NJ division guys (Erik R., Chris Barany, John Sommer) in August around a train show in Edison? It will be called the Blue Comet and will offer everything you'd want in a train

convention, with tours, clinics, and scenic rr trips, but again it's tentative. Specifics will be made available soon. If your in the area and like to help out the NY/NJ division arrange this clambake, contact myself or Erik Romatowski directly at: eromatowski@yahoo.com .

I'll get off my soapbox early to welcome this bumper crop of new members. Everybody say hello to the newest members of our group!•

Elizabeth MacCullagh

Layout: Amherst Belt Lines
 Modular Club
 Scale: HO
 Eqp: varied

Griffin Smyth

Layout: Smythnetti Railroad
 Scale: G
 Eqp: LGB



Tim Vermande, photo.

Michael Luginbuhl

Scale: HO

Zachary Murphy

Scale: HO

Brett Zornes

Age: 15
 Scale: HO



WELCOME TO AMERICA'S SOON TO BE FASTEST GROWING ARTICLE SENSATION, *RAILFAN RANTINGS*. IN THIS COLUMN I POSE A QUESTION TO OUR MEMBERS VIA THE TAMR ONLINE GROUP AT YAHOO. AND HOPEFULLY COME AWAY WITH SOME INSIGHTFUL, AMUSING AND POSSIBLY SILLY ANSWERS. THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

What is the greatest deal you ever got at a train show?

Dave Cenci, Peck, MI- "This one is easy....It was at the 2005 Huron Modelers train show in Port Huron (which I had a TAMR table at). My partner in crime, and fellow TAMR member, Andrew, radioed to me that he had found a custom painted Port Huron and Detroit (PH&D) GP38-2! The price, \$20 I currently have it at home, and am going to add a snow plow and a 5 chime air horn to it. To add to the value (for me), the PH&D's only diesel locomotives were 3 Alco S-2's....!!!"

Chris Barany, Edison, NJ- "I got a set of Lionel ABA F3's at TCA York, for \$400. Pretty awesome deal if you ask me."

Willie Roberge, Wareham, MA- "Well since, I have so much equipment for my model railroad it's kind of hard. I have had my share of great deals as well as not so great deals (there have been times when I wanted something and money was no object!!!!) But I have been thinking of this for 3 days....I would have to say right now it would have to be at this Springfield train show. I bought a new Walthers transfer table kit for \$8!!!! I already had one but I never put it together because I never had the extension pits and buying them is next to impossible and they are usually expensive. So I got a good deal I guess.."

Andrew Matarazzo, Old Bridge, NJ- "It had to be the \$20 Atlas N Scale SD-60M's at the Springfield, MA show a few years ago. They were going for at least \$70 everywhere else at the time."

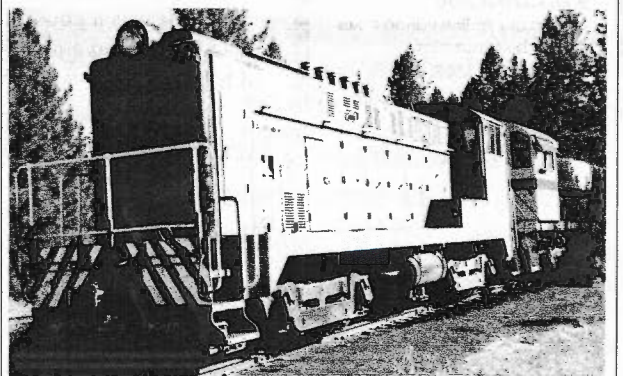
WANT TO JOIN IN THE RANTING? THEN JOIN THE TAMR ONLINE GROUP AT YAHOO GROUPS.COM. SEE PAGE TWO FOR MORE INFO.



BNSF 1030 IS WESTBOUND AT ELKHART, IN ON THE 19TH OF FEBRUARY.
PHOTO: CHARLES WARCZINSKY



DALLAS GARLAND & NORTHERN,
A.K.A. DINGO 3863 ON KCS.
PHOTO: TIM VERMANDE



VO1000 NVR SITS IN THE AFTERNOON SUN AT THE FEATHER RIVER RAILROAD SOCIETY, PORTOLA, CA JULY 10, 2005. PHOTO: BEN HAWKEN

Michigan's Receding Mileage

Part I

By: David Cenci

Let us start way back in 1971. This is when the C&O abandoned their first line since the 1947 merger with the Pere Marquette. The line was the Port Huron-Croswell Line, which ran between Port Huron and Port Austin.

Then, in 1972, the C&O, B&O, and Western Maryland merge, creating the famous (but short-lived) Chessie System.

In 1973, the I.C.C. approved the abandonment of their 12.46 mile branch from Edmore west to Lakeview.

In 1980, the C&O abandoned their branch between Williamsburg and Elk Rapids. In October 1980, the C&O ended Crosslake car ferry service between Ludington, and Milwaukee Wisconsin (later resumed in the 90's, now used for passenger cruises only).

In 1981, the C&O abandoned and removed 14.7 miles of their Mt Pleasant subdivision. This line ran between Coleman and Mt Pleasant. The C&O then gained trackage rights over the Ann Arbor RR between Clare and Mt Pleasant to service customers stranded on the last mile or so of track in Mt Pleasant. Today, the Tuscola & Saginaw Bay services these customers.

Also in 81' was the abandonment of the 15.7 mile branch to Remus, north of Edmore.

Still in 1981, the C&O closed their

26.8 mile branch between Grand Ledge and Ionia (Junction with GTW). A portion remains today to service a large grain elevator in Grand Ledge. Lastly in 1981, the C&O abandoned their Hart Subdivision. This line ran between Barry Junction

(just north of Muskegon) and Hart. There, at one time, was a line that branched off this line that ran to Pentwater.

In January 1982, the C&O car ferry "Badger" made her last run. She is now used as a passenger vessel. In February, the C&O abandons all trackage north of



Manistee (between Manistee and Charlevoix). The State of Michigan purchases the Travers City- Charlevoix, and Travers City-Grawn segment. Michigan Northern was named at the operator. Later, the line to Charlevoix was cut back to Williamsburg. Today, Tuscola & Saginaw Bay RR operates the remaining trackage. Also in February, the C&O ends all cross-lake car ferry service on lake Michigan.

In 1983, the State of Michigan removes the swing bridge in Charlevoix.

In 1984, the C&O abandoned their Kinde-Port Austin line. This was the northern segment of the Port Austin division of the Pere Marquette, originating in Port Huron.

Then, the C&O turns around from their abandonment's, and purchases the 26 mile Toledo Terminal RR, which encircled the city of Toledo.

And in another strategic move, they then purchase the Port Huron and Detroit RR. This short line that ran between Port Huron and Marine City, plays host to 2 salt plants (A Morton Salt plant, and a Diamond Crystal plant), 2 large Detroit Edison power plants, an Amoco gas storage facility, and a Chrysler parts plant, as well as other smaller shippers. CSX sells off the PH&D's 2 Alco S-2 switcher, caboose, and business car.

And lastly, the 15.3 mile South Haven branch is abandoned, between Hartford and South Haven.

We then jump to 1986. This is when CSX sold 86 miles of track in the thumb to the Huron and Eastern RR. Included in the sale: Bad Axe-Croswell, Bad Axe-Kinde, Poland (Carsonville)-Sandusky, and Palms-Harbor Beach lines, and 2 former C&O GP9's.

Also in 1986, CSX shuts down their Ludington Subdivision between Baldwin and Midland (officially abandoned in 1988).

CSX then takes the southern portion of the old PH&D out of service. The line is later removed south of the power plants.

Continued on the next page→

In 1988, CSX sells the Elmdale-Paines (via Greenville and Edmore) to the new Mid Michigan RR (Rail Tex). The line between Greenville and Elwell is never used.

CSX then sells their Hartford-Paw Paw branch to the new Kalamazoo Lake Shore & Chicago (KLSC) RR. Today, the West Michigan RR operates this line.

Then the Tuscola & Saginaw Bay RR purchased 2.6 miles of former CSX track in Clare Michigan. Clare was the site of a union depot and interchange between the PM(C&O) and the Ann Arbor, later CSX and the TSBY.

The Huron and Eastern then purchased the 56 mile Bad Axe-Saginaw line, as well as adding 2 more exC&O GP9's.

In 1989, CSX abandons 9.8 miles of its Port Huron subdivision, between Wadhams and Avoca. The main cause was a trestle in great need of repair. In 1995, CSX and CN (GTW) car floats at Port Huron tie up for the last time. They were needed to shuttle excess height freight cars between Port Huron and Sarnia, the new CN tunnel relieves the need for the ferries.

We now jump to 1998, when CSX sells a portion of their old Port Huron sub to Rail America's new Saginaw Valley RR. They purchase the Saginaw-Brown City portion. The

Brown City-Avoca segment is purchased by Detroit Edison for equipment moves. CSX & NS then upgrade the little used Conrail Lincoln branch between Dearborn and Carleton.

In 2002, CSX abandons the Hamilton branch. The line runs between Holland and Hamilton. The Hamilton CO-OP elevator purchases the line, CSX operates it.

In 2003, where CSX abandoned the easternmost 2.8 miles of the Port Huron sub between Wadhams and Tappan (junction with GTW). The entire right of way between Avoca and Tappan has become a rail trail.

2005, Rail America's Mid Michigan RR begins operations on the former CSX line between West Olive and Fremont (via Muskegon).

Then, the new Saginaw Bay Southern (a division of the lake State RR) begins operations on the former CSX line between Mt Morris (Flint) and Bay City (via Saginaw), including the Midland branch.

And finally, the new Marquette RR begins operations on the former CSX line between Comstock Park (Grand Rapids) and Ludington (via Baldwin), as well as the Manistee Branch.

Next time, we will cover the Grand Trunk Westerns shrinking mileage. •

The Top 7

By: Peter Maurath

"From the Home office in Cleveland, OH, it's tonight's Top Seven List!"

Top Seven other names considered for the "Worlds Greatest Hobby" promotion.

#7. Like trains or we'll kill you.

#6. Fun with expensive plastic.

#5. Having fun in the basement .

#4. The fat, middle-aged guys hobby.

#3. \$2000 for a locomotive!

#2. Trains are da bomb, yo.

And the number one other name considered for the WGH promotionj...

Model Trains are Spec-track-ular!



SMILE!

ATTENDEES MUG FOR THE CAMERA AT THE TAMR TABLE DURING THE 2006 WINTER NATIONAL CONVENTION IN SPRINGFIELD, MA. HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AMHERST BIG RAILROAD HOBBY SHOW. PHOTO: PETER MAURATH

ODDBALLZ

BY: BEN HAWKEN

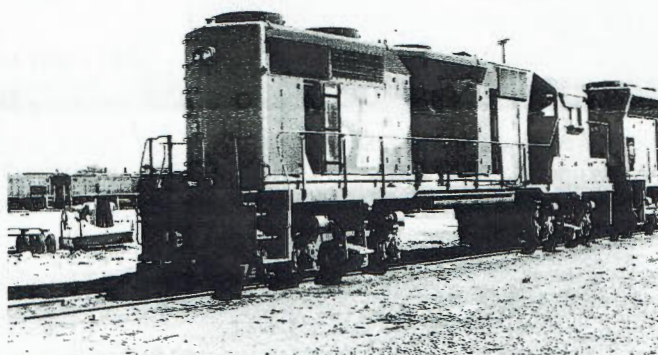
I was just thinking the other day and I got the greatest idea. To get away from the seriousness of railroading why not a column in which people can share rail-fanning stories of something that was funny or a funny picture of a piece of railroad equipment. I will start this off with a couple of pictures that I found in my Dads photo collection.

So send me your picture's or stories to:

Odd ball pictures and stories
3366 WebWob Way
Shingle Springs, Ca 95682

Or at: southernpacificfreak@yahoo.com

The first one is SP GP35 #6660 in the Sacramento Locomotive Works (SLW) w/her sister's hood in the merger scheme #6619 in July 1989.



The second one is a 60' boxcar #20000 for Golden West Service in a white paint scheme instead of a blue paint scheme.



The Hurd Monthly Tips

By: Andrew Hurd

#3

For passenger cars, and any cars with windows save any clear plastic pieces like the clear packaging on a battery box. For bathroom windows find a tinted plastic. Saran wrap or any flimsy wrap won't work.

#4

When you first buy a brand new engine and it comes with a parts list, buy extra screws and lights and wheels. It would be a good idea to buy steps and ladders that might break off.

Trains to Nowhere

BY: STEVEN GOEHRING

Maintenance of Model Trains

Imagine yourself in the following situation: you just got your favorite old locomotive at a train show, but it's covered in cat hair, badly corroded, and when tested on your layout, it doesn't move. What do you do?

Well, after you're done banging your head on the workbench in frustration, pick up this, your prized March 2006 *Hotbox*. Why the *Hotbox*, you ask? Well, read on and learn, you will.

I got a bunch of old N scale locomotives from another N scaler who didn't need the old locomotives and cars anymore. The collection included several locomotives in different states of disrepair. I restored an SD-40 to full working condition and made an ALCO C-420 into a useful non-powered "dummy" engine.

The CSX SD-40 caught my attention right away, because it had a blinking warning light on the cab roof, as well as some interesting roof detail rarely seen in N scale. However, it didn't run.

Rather than just conclude that what I had was just an old Botchmann piece of junk not worth running, I chose to give it a complete overhaul and see what the results were. Welcome to extreme makeover, SD-40 edition.

The steps I took to clean the loco are important and simple, for me. First of all, I had to figure out what parts carry the electricity to the motor, and give each a complete cleaning with a bit of WD40 on a paper towel. It helps to take the locomotive apart completely before trying to clean anything. After cleaning the contacts, look at the motor. There should be some point at which the brushes (small springs or metal bars that deliver power to the motor) touch a round shaft between the motor windings and the dog-bone/drive shaft. Clean the bar that the

brown mess. Once you have cleaned the whole electrical contact system, put the mechanism back together again and apply a tiny bit of grease to each gear. Also, look for spots where moving parts touch non-moving parts. Put a little oil at each friction point, but make sure your oils and greases are plastic compatible and don't get any lubricant on any electrical contacts or motor windings.

If your loco still won't run, you may want to consider dummifying your engine. What's that mean? **Look it up for, goodness sakes!** After wasting several hours looking in a dictionary and trying to find a thesaurus (no, they are not a type of dinosaur!*) you will read here that I made that word up and you will promptly bang your head on the table. And I, meanwhile, will laugh.

To make an engine into a dummy unit, you simply remove the motor, all electrical contacts, and any gears not used for holding the wheels in place. This was easy for me in my C-420, since the old engine had very few gears in it. I added some oil to the axles, just to make it roll easier. I now run this

non-powered engine with a powered C-424 for some added realism of double-heading with ALCOs! I have plenty of dummy engines, and I like them just as much as the powered ones. On long coal trains, it looks great to have three locomotives running the train, when you only need one powered loco to pull!

Anyway, best of luck to all in finding bargains at train shows and making them useful. One person's scrap is another person's workhorse. ●

A typical model train motor:

Drive shaft (dogbone)

Motor Windings; also called the armature

Brushes

Brushes

Drive shaft (dogbone)

This is the contact you need to clean.

brushes are touching with more WD40 on a Q-tip. Then, use a dry Q-tip to clean the dirt off the contact. You'll be amazed at how much filth you remove with this simple step.

Next, you need to clean the back of the wheels and the wheel treads. You only need to rub the back of the wheels against a paper towel to get the grit off. Then, take a clean paper towel to the wheel treads, or the bottom of the wheels. Scrape around the wheel using your fingernail covered with a paper towel, rubbing off any visible black or

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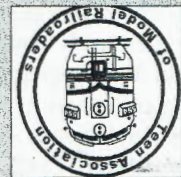
COMING SOON TO THE HOTBOX:

- Page after amazing page of the best material \$38 can buy! .
- Joe Bohannon takes us down memory lane.

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- Summer convention will be here soon!
- Life, but not as we know it!.

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