

# THE HOTBOX

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**THE OFFICAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEEN  
ASSOCIATION OF MODERN RAILROADERS**

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# THE HOTBOX

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Jonathan Schoen  
Steven Goehring  
**Art Director**—Duh Vinci  
**Photographer**—Jay Vecce  
**Librarian**—Prefers Johnsonville  
over Hebrew National.

## 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 GE is better than Lima? 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:**

### OR EMAIL AT:

TAMRHotbox@sbcglobal.net  
You don't find me repugnant do you?

## 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!)

If you have a web site relating to trains or model railroading, why not join the TAMR web ring. It costs nothing, and provides a link for all TAMR members to find other TAMR sites. To join, send your e-mail address and web site URL to:

[pivotpin@tamr.org](mailto:pivotpin@tamr.org)

**ON THE COVER:** . *It's a quiet afternoon at the former C&O depot in the small town of St. Albans, WV. Photo: Peter Maurath.*

## FORM 19

A message from your editor in chief

Wow, August already! I felt like I just wrote the May version of this column and here we are, summer winding down, Labor day less than a month away, and oh yeah,... what else is there,... I know what it is , it's on the tip of my brain, wait a minute,... oh yeah, ...BACK TO SCHOOL, HAHAAH. Sorry you'd think I'd get tired of that, but I don't. As a working stiff I gotta have something to hold over you folks still in the academic realm.

Now that I've blown off that steam, on to other issues. This is an election year for the TAMR and as of right now I have zero essays from anyone. Not from present officers, not from any other member. So if I were to hold the election tomorrow we'd have a sheet of write in's. Thankfully we don't hold the elections tomorrow and you have about a month to get off your duffs and send me your letters-of-intent. Once again for those just joining us. I NEED YOUR LETTERS-OF INTENT BY SEPTEMBER IF YOU WISH TO RUN FOR OFFICE IN THIS YEARS ELECTION. IF I DO NOT HAVE IT,

YOU WILL NOT BE INCLUDED ON THE BALLOT. ALL I NEED IS A FEW PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBING YOURSELF, WHY YOU WISH TO RUN (OR BE RE-ELECTED) AND WHAT YOU PLAN TO DO SHOULD YOU GET ELECTED. THE OPEN POSITIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS: PRESIDENT, VP, TREASURER, EDITOR, AND ALL REGIONAL REPS (NER, CR, SR, WR). This group is only as strong as it's member's and the members are only as strong as the officers who will lead them for the next two years. This is to important to ignore. If your under 21 and want to make a difference send me your letter-of-intent today.

This month is Summer National Convention month. The NY/NJ boys have put together a full fledged convention around a large train show in Edison, NJ. Complete with tours, railfanning , and I'm sure pizza. The dates are August 11-14, so if you got this Hotbox before then and would still like to go contact Convention Director Erik Romatowski at the following ad-



Tim Vermande, photo.

dresses and  
I'm sure he'll find space for you.

**Email:** [eromatowski@yahoo.com](mailto:eromatowski@yahoo.com)

We close with a welcome to a new member from the left coast, everyone say hello to Ethan!

**Ethan Doty**

**Models:** HO, HO<sub>n</sub>3, steam and diesel

Before I go-I, as well as the entire Board of Directors would like to offer our sympathies to member Joe Wiecek who recently lost his father. You and your family are in our prayers.●



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WELCOME TO AMERIKAS 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 oddest car you've ever seen in a consist?

**Ralph Burdick, Lansing, MI-** "Rolling down the highway once I caught a glimpse of a string of brand-spanking new commuter cars, most likely from Bombardier, if only I could drive and photograph at the same time!"

**Adam Traxler, Oakhurst, CA-** "It seemed really weird at the time, but I guess isn't all that strange to you folks out east, but the first time I saw a Pan Am boxcar."

**Matt Martin, Fairport, NY-** "A 40' Hy-Cube plug door box and a 40 ft. helium car with a roofwalk right next to each other. I believe the helium car was headed to the Amarillo Railroad Museum."

**Jason Dobric, N. Olmsted, VT-** "I spotted this while I was at work-a GE centercab 45 tonner right in the middle of a general merchandise freight"

**Doug Engler, Fulton, NY-** "I got two for ya! The oddest car was a flat car full of Portable toilets AKA port-a-potties. The funniest duo was an Illinois Central boxcar followed by a Union Pacific Boxcar. (making the back to back abbreviations IC & UP)."

**Steve Malloy, Jamestown, PA-** "While out railfanning I once saw an old MBTA F unit towed behind the power on a CSX train."

**Ken Pruitt, Engleside, HI-** "I caught one of those all door cars once."

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



THIS BN HIGH-RAIL TRUCK WAS CAUGHT OUTSIDE OF MIKE AGREE'S APARTMENT IN SOUTH DAKOTA, JUST LAST MONTH. MIKE AGREE, PHOTO.



THE NS 31J AT CP WYOMMISSING ON MAY 7, 2005. COLLIN REINHART, PHOTO.





# Railroading Over There



*By: Jonathan Schoen & Mark MacDougall*

Railfanning is a great hobby. Well, most of the time. We all know how the thrill of watching trains can be crushed by delayed trains, weather, derailments, and worst of all, MOW (what Jonathan's friend Kyle likes to call Maintenance in the Way). These railfanning disasters happen on both sides of our nation, so without further delay lets take a visit to eastern Pennsylvania and southern California.

## MARK AND AUSTIN, EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Back in 2003, we went to Utica, New York, and among other things, railfanned the CSX Mohawk Sub for a few hours. For some reason; though we spent about four hours trackside, we only saw one train on this normally high traffic line (the two times of day we were railfanning are usually the two best times of day)! After we got back home, we discovered that CSX had a major derailment in the general area, and was detouring many of it's trains on our local Norfolk Southern line, and needless to say, we weren't thrilled about that. We've had a few more trainless or almost trainless trips on CSX, but this one is on top, although on the positive side of things, we saw our first ever BN painted SD40-2 on this trip.

## JONATHAN, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

This little event occurred back when Chris Burchett and Peter Maurath came out to SoCal last year for a week. We decided to take a drive over to the Tehachapi Loop to visit California's most famous railroading landmark. We got there and waited. And waited. And waited. Nothing happened. But it wasn't too long before we started to see some MOW dragging welded rail sections over the Loop. We watched for a good five and a half hours without seeing trains. I felt bad for Pete and Chris. They came out to California for the first time from Ohio and now they can't see a single train at Tehachapi? The most boring day of my railfanning career finally came to an end when the MOW stopped, and we saw a train every ten minutes or so for the next two hours.



ON A BETTER  
RAILFANNING  
DAY. CP-  
BLANDON ,  
PA SAT.,  
MAY 14,  
2005.  
PHOTO:  
MARK MAC-  
DOUGALL



## Amateur Radio for Model Railroaders and Railfans

By: Tim Vermande

The railroad that you listen to on your scanner, FM or AM radio broadcasts, television, and the fire or police department all use a specific section of the radio waves that are available. These specific sections are assigned to "services."

These services are governed in the United States by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). There are similar agencies in other countries. Most are members of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), which works on the worldwide aspects of radio.

In most countries, various portions of the available radio space are assigned to the Amateur Radio Service (ARS). ARS works somewhat like Citizen's Band (CB) or Family Radio Service (FRS) in that you can transmit to another user. Unlike CB or FRS, ARS has a wider range of frequencies and power options and requires a license. Licenses are issued to anyone who can pass the examinations. There is no minimum age requirement. ARS operators can use the radio system for almost any non-commercial exchange. And, guess what - that can include your other hobbies, like railfanning and modeling.

With an appropriate license, you can use a handheld radio (walkie-talkie) to talk to fellow railfans while traveling or fanning. There are many more frequencies available than on those "FRS" sets, and they're a lot less crowded. You can connect to a repeater and get directions, or listen to storm spotters. There are regular "nets," or on-the-air meetings to talk about trains.

There are other benefits. Most states which have a law restricting scanner use exempt amateur licensees (and you don't need to have an ARS radio with you, just your license). And where that's not sufficient, the FCC has exempted any licensee who uses a radio that can transmit on the ARS bands as a scanner. If that's not enough to keep you busy, after you tire of building your own DCC system, you can build your own radios. This would include remote control. You don't have

to be an electrical engineering graduate to do this, either. If you wish, you can buy everything you need, ready to go, just as with model railroading.

As noted, Amateur Radio requires a license issued by the FCC (or, if you live in another country, the appropriate agency). To gain the license, you must pass an exam. In the US, the first category is "technician," which is a 35-question multiple choice test. There are two higher levels, with different exams; but everyone must pass technician first. Morse code is not required for the technician exam. All of the questions are drawn from a publicly-available pool, and many books (or software programs) are available that explain the basics. Exams are given by volunteers who are Amateur Radio operators, thus the frequency can vary. In my area, you can take the exam almost any weekend. In other areas, it may be monthly or quarterly.

Check out these links if you're interested:

**FCC Amateur Radio Service page**  
<<http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur/>>

**Radio Amateurs of Canada**  
<<http://www.rac.ca/>>

**American Radio Relay League (sort of like the NMRA)**  
<<http://www.arrl.org/>>

**W5YI, exams and study materials**  
<<http://www.w5yi.org/>> also offers exams and study materials

**AC6V's Reference Guide, portal to variety of sites**  
<<http://ac6v.com/>>

**FCC Part 97 (ARS Rules)** <[http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_01/47cfr97\\_01.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_01/47cfr97_01.html)>  
You don't need to have these, but you need to know them. You can buy a copy, but this is a lot cheaper.

**Scanner laws**  
<<http://www.afn.org/~afn09444/scanlaws>>

## The Top 7

By: Peter Maurath

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

### Top Seven railfan back-to-school tips.

**#7. Make sure your striped overalls are all neatly pressed.**

**#6. Study-Halls are a great time to work on your RR hand signals .**

**#5. Forget the apple, try an Overland Brass Steamer for the teacher.**

**#4. Make sure your laptop is updated with the latest version of Train Dispatcher.**

**#3. RR logo patches are a must backpack accessory .**

**#2. Instead of notebooks, do all your homework on blank "Form 19" sheets.**

**And the number one railfan tip for back-to-school...**

**Three words-Wooden Train Whistle .**



*Wondering where this years  
Summer convention is?*

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576

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**Need Info? Contact Erik Romatowski at:**

**Email:** [eromatowski@yahoo.com](mailto:eromatowski@yahoo.com)

**Phone:**

**Mail:**

## THE HOTBOX FUNNY NAME OF THE MONTH

PULLED AT RANDOM FROM THE NORTHERN REGION  
TELEPHONE DIRECTORY OF THE PENN CENTRAL TELE-  
CENTRAL PHONE NETWORK, "THERE IS ALWAYS TIME  
FOR COURTESY."

"beep, boop, beep, boop."

**R.E. FINK**

THIS CONCLUDES THE HOTBOX FUNNY NAME OF THE  
MONTH, PROVIDED BY THE PENN CENTRAL, TELECENTRAL  
PHONE NETWORK. "WHEN YOU ANSWER

## Teens and Their Trains

*All entries written by Jonathan Schoen*

*You know you a teen railfan when...*

- you only enjoy U.S. history when railroads are mentioned
- you feel offended when railroads are not mentioned
- you pay special attention in class while reading page 844
- you are sure that the band Smashing Pumpkins hates BNSF's Heritage II paint
- you heard on a forum that the White Stripes refers to Norfolk Southern
- you have emailed Strong Bad about trains
- you have convinced on or more relatives to take the train instead of driving
- you have convinced the same relatives to take you along
- you have gotten surprised looks from "real railfans"
- you have one or more train photos on MySpace
- one of those photos is your background
- Railroad Tycoon introduced you to folk music
- your ashamed to mention Train Simulator when talking about computer games
- the only time you'll get up before 12 during the summer is for some early morning train watching
- you have chosen Tehachapi Loop or Horseshoe Curve over a theme park
- you get blank stares when you tell friends you spent your vacation railfanning
- you think Peter Maurath is a celebrity
- the TAMR is more than twice as old as you
- you have written an essay in school about trains, and gotten an A
- you already have your train trips lined up for this summer
- you have to remind yourself that the "War on Terror" is against real terrorists, not U.P. cops
- your parents have asked you to "turn that down!!!!" while playing Train Sim
- you have read and agreed with at least half of these.

**HOTBOX  
NEWS 10**

from the Hotbox Weather Center Featuring Octo-Doppler 10,000, the National Publication Weather Service has issued a Severe



# One Railfans Lament

By: Willie Roberge

This weekend at a train show I purchased a locally produced video about the Bay Colony RR as well as Cape Cod's Tourist/Passenger operations. It was awesome and nostalgic for me to look back at those videos of the engines and equipment I remember so well.....

Bay Colony when they ran Alco's (an S-2, S-4 and an RS-1) unfortunately I at the time was more interested in the GP-9's and now the Alco's are gone.....

If only I had taken more pictures.....

The Cape Cod Railroad.

When I first started railfanning they had F-units in a beautiful Great Northern inspired scheme..... I did take pictures of them but I took them for granted as I thought there place was secure and that they would be on Cape Cod for some time to come, then in late 1997 the Cape Cod Railroad shut down, and the "GN" F-Units were gone.....

Starting in the Summer of 1986 Amtrak ran the "Cape Codder" to Hyannis, MA this continued to be a summer weekend tradition until 1996, when the State of Massachusetts stopped it's funding and the Cape Codder was gone.....

No more F40's or Amfleet on Cape Cod,. When I was younger I thought the Cape Codder would continue to run to the Cape, maybe even see Genesis's but it ended.....

The First Year Cape Cod Central Ran on Cape Cod (they started tourist trains on the cape in 1999 after the

Cape Cod Railroad ceased operations in late 1997) they ran with ex CN M420's, but that was for 1 season and they too were gone.....

Conrail was the local "Big" railroad in town. I used to ride my bike 16 miles to see Conrail locomotives sit in the yard and look at B23-7's. All of the sudden in 1998 the CR B-23's were sublettered for "PRR" and in 1999 they were gone and another operation had escaped me.

Another Massachusetts shortline was the "Mass Central". They ran with quite a mix of power GP-9's, an NW-5, an Alaska RR F-7, an Alco RS-1, as well as An Alco C424 and a C425. Now they just have the common Geeps and the Rare NW5, everything else has left, and other locomotives have gotten away.

I remember when railfanning in Palmer with friends they weren't as inclined to explore as me and I remember hearing the crews on the scanner talking that they were in the ARR F-7 ("# 1508 @ Bondsville..... Ok prepare to take it Back.....") Well I missed my chance to see the Alaska RR F-7 and I later on found out that she was gone.....

Another Case in point, Amtrak F-40's. They are all almost (or may be already) gone, scrapped, sold or turned into "Cabbages". They were once so common, now they are gone.....

Older Railfans Despised Diesels because they displaced their beloved Steam, and ignored many now rare diesels on the presumption that they all looked the same, or would always be around. Later on they were wishing for the days of diesel variety

with locos from F-M, Lima, Baldwin, Alco, G-E, and EMD.

Other Railfans upon the creation of Penn Central despised it for displacing the Pennsy, New York Central and the New Haven. Now it is beloved and railfans are wishing for the good old days of the PC wishing they had spent more days trackside.....

Younger Railfans in the waning days of steam, ignored small steam operations trying to catch the bigger railroads nice new diesels or a hotshot piggyback or express knowing it would be a sure thing to railfan, and thus missed out on these smaller ops with steamers or other vintage power. Years later looking back wishing they had taken time out for these now passed operations.....

My point here is this try to railfan what you can when you can.....

You never know when things will unexpectedly change.....

Or when a favorite locomotive will have a failure or be sold.....

Or when a railroad will merge or cease to exist.....

You will find yourself wishing you had taken the time to take a few more pictures or had gone out to see them operate.

Remember what is common today will not be so common tomorrow and what is reviled today may be cherished in the future.

Fellow Railfans take care, and I hope to see you trackside!•



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. REPRINTING OF THE HOTBOX IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS.

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TIM VERMANDE, TAMR PIVOT PIN,

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## COMING SOON TO THE HOTBOX:

- Notes from the railfanning capital of Ohio!
- Trains to Nowhere expands.

## COMING SOON TO THE TAMR:

- Decision 06' November is election time, are you running?
- The month of June.

We're on the web!  
[www.tamr.org](http://www.tamr.org)



Teen Association Of Model Railroaders  
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