

THE HOTBOX

DECEMBER 2006
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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEEN
ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS

"Featuring heated paper for those cold months ahead."

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Publisher—Peter Prancer II
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 Jonathan Donner
 Steven Comet
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Photographer—Rudolph
Librarian—Loves to decorate
 with aerosol snow.

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.

COLUMNS:

Full of great tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons Alco is better than EMD? 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
 Nobody gets me, I'm the wind baby!

GET WIRED

Check out TAMR on the web at: 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!)

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:

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ON THE COVER: . Conrail #3309, at South Bend IN, January 1978. Photo: Tim Vermande.

FORM 19 A message from your editor in chief

Welcome to the last issue of 2006! You may notice it has arrived a wee-bit early. Due to my busy holiday schedule I thought it best to get a jump on this issue instead of trying to do it in the midst of the chaos that is November/December and risk it being extremely late. I hope you don't mind...of course you don't mind, that's why I like you all. Even if you did I wouldn't care anyway.

On to more important business. The elections are under way. Just a few short weeks to get your ballot in on time. REMEMBER, ballots must be postmarked no more than one month after you received them, and signed in order to be counted. You should still have time, and now that I've explained how to do it, there's no excuse not to vote. I even put address labels and stamps on them for you already. As soon as you're done reading my fine column, put down this issue, pick-up the November issue and exercise your right in the TAMR, and vote.

We are now less than two month's away from the BIG ONE. The Winter National

Convention in West Springfield, MA, held around the Amherst Railway Big Railroad Show. It's worth the trip for the show, the people and the pizza, not to mention somebody's bound to mess up and wipe out on the rotary down the street from



the show. You've seen the ads, you've read the reviews in MRN, you may have even seen a video or two. What are you waiting for, instead of watching other peoples memories how about making some of your

own. Contact Newton and make your reservation today. Be a part of the fun, we'd love to have ya!

The Hotbox is still in need of material, mainly high quality cover shots (could really use some seasonal photos-fall/winter), and one page articles also. All the info you need is in that first column on the left. If you can't attend meets, help out another way by contributing to the Hotbox

Before I sign-off for the year, lets welcome the last two fresh faces of 06'. Say hello to Mike, and Fred!•

Michael Immerman

Scale: O, HO and G

Fred Freebolin

retired C&NW conductor



WELCOME TO AMERICAS 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:



which is better: summer, or winter railfanning?

Doug Engler, Syracuse, NY "They both have there up's and down's. I like winter railfanning because of the snow fall on the trains look cool and make for better photo's. Down side is it's so cold! Fortunately I know of a great railfan location where I can stay warm and still railfan effectively! The Summer time is nice because it's warm and your not depending on weather (unless you live track side or are nuts and don't mind traveling in the snow)."

Jonathan Schoen, Simi Valley, CA- "Sadly, snow is out of the question down here. Winter consists of 50-70 degree days and fog. The temperature is great, I could railfan all day. But during the summer, there's more time and its just nice to be outside and enjoy the sun and longer days. So, on average I would say summer is better."

Tim Vermande, Plano, TX- "I always winter in Indiana, with the snow making great pictures. Around here, winter is still great, since it only gets up to 70 or 80. 105 is just too hot for railfanning."

John Sommer, East Brunswick, NJ- "Well up here in Rochester NY. with temperatures damn cold in the winter, were going to see if we cant do some subzero railfanning which will be mighty cold...I say the only time railfanning is bad is when the trains aren't rolling by."

Erik Romatowski, Highland Park, NJ- "I love summer railfanning because its really nice, and its easy to get out often. On the other hand though, I love winter railfanning because of the look of photos, and the cold weather just seems to go with NJ railfanning. Heck, I just love railfanning!"

Maikha (Mike) Ly, Sydney, Australia- "Winter is the peak-season for tourist railroads and mainline steam excursion operators over here, and apart from more work for me, steam trains look fantastic when operating in the winter cold."

Charles Warczinsky, Sandusky, MI- "Summer railfanning is better. In the winter it's cold and gets dark early. In the summer it's not usually as cold, and it doesn't get dark quite so early. Personally, I'm planning a railfan day for tomorrow, but in order to take full advantage of the available light, I've gotta be up really early whereas for the same amount or more of light just a few months ago, I could have gotten a few more hours of sleep. I guess, all things considered, for the amount of traffic that can be seen and photographed, you can see more in the summer than in the winter."

Dave Cenci, Peck, MI- "Well, both can be good, just depends on the situation. Summer is good because it warm, and it is light till a little after 9 PM. Winter is good because the snow can help make for some nice shots. Also, railfanning at night is better in the winter because I find that the snow, in well lit areas, reflects the light making everything brighter. But I have been know to railfan in blizzards, downpours, dawn, blazing heat. If I can go and watch trains, you better bet I will be there!"

Ben Hawken, Shingle Springs, CA- "Winter. If Donner Pass gets enough snow up top that means the old work horses (SP rotary snowplows) will be pulled out once again. Do I have to say any more?"

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

THE HOTBOX FUNNY NAME OF THE MONTH

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

J.D. WHOLGENMUTH

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



Railroading Over There

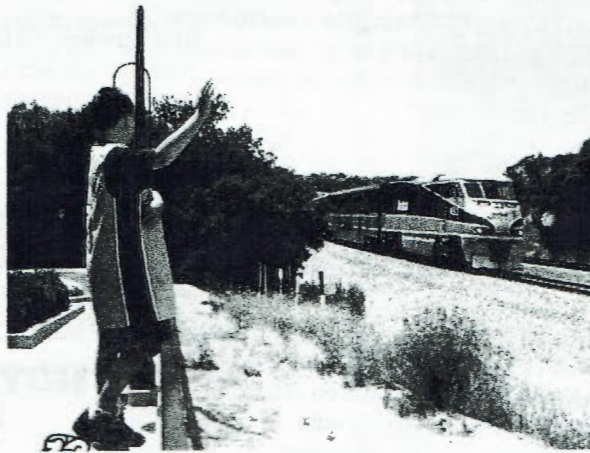


By: Jonathan Schoen & Mark MacDougall, with special guest Maikha Ly.

Here's an obvious statement: the Teen Association of Model Railroaders is all about teens and young railfans. The young in the hobby are spread throughout the world enjoying their hobby in different ways and in different quantities. This brings us to this month's ROT topic. This month the writers discuss the teen train enthusiast population in their locale. We'd also like welcome Maikha Ly to this month's ROT. Maikha, residing near Sydney, Australia was recently appointed International Region Representative and will pop up here on ROT occasionally to offer his unique perspective on railroading. So, without further due, Here's this month in Railroading Over There.

JONATHAN, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Most of the railfans in my area are in the 50 plus age range, and it is rather rare to see a young railfan. I did meet a 16-year-old once at Los Angeles Union Station, but such occurrences are few and far between. The only place I have seen young railfans consistently is at the Santa Susana Pacific model railroad club in Simi Valley. The club meets in the now defunct and relocated SP Santa Susana Depot that once served Simi Valley. I have met a few kids there over the last two years upon visits. Most are around 13 give or take a couple years, and most seem to have a good knowledge about trains, some more than others. Mark Speer was ten when I met him, and he surprised me with his knowledge of railroading. He could do more than discern Amtrak from UP from BNSF, he knew what a Genesis was, the specific differences between paint schemes and many other details that only railfans would get. He had a passion for trains, but this was a passion that I can't really see in a lot of the other club members. Most seem to be there because their father is in the club, and seem to enjoy running the trains. But more often than not, they don't seem to care about railroading in the broad sense. I was talking to a young member named Ricky who often runs models at the club. He enjoys modeling and playing Trainz Railroad Simulator, admittedly has no interest in train watching. Personally I find this saddening, as to me train watching is the heart and soul of the railroad hobby as a whole. Perhaps its because I grew up train watching, but as much as I play Train Simulator, no feeling can compare to the 3 second thrill I get from watching a Pacific Surfliner race by.



After squealing to a stop at Los Angeles Union Station, the I walk through the cab car doors of Metrolink 110 and step on to the platform between tracks 3 and 4. I instantly hear the familiar whining of the many EMD F59PHI's idling in preparation for departure of their respective Metrolink and Pacific Surfliner runs. Some of my first sights tell me that the day will be interesting. On one track sits a Pacific Surfliner made up of all Horizon cars, and on another track are two Pacific Surfliners with GE P42's instead of the normal F59PHI's. The day I have ahead of me is nothing compared with that of two young boys I had an encounter with. The northbound Coast Starlight

has two private cars on the rear, one of them an open-air observation car. It is on the deck of this car that stand two very young boys, brothers I assume, with what appears to be their grandfather. "Where are you going?" asks on of the boys. I explain to those on the deck that I simply watching trains that day, and through inquiry find out that the group is taking the entire trip up to Seattle, Washington. I envy those kids as they stand waiting for the train to depart. They would have an incredible trip and their train raced along the Pacific Ocean and through the Shasta Mountains as they traveled through California, Oregon, and Washington.

Someone had a great idea to take them along. Maybe they'll discover the romance and excitement of railroading and, who knows, one might even become the next president of the TAMR. California doesn't seem to have a lot of young railfans, but we do have some. Some take their hobby seriously and aren't afraid to show it, others keep it to themselves and hope no one notices when their heart rate increases at the sounding of a horn.

Continued on next page

MARK AND AUSTIN, EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

We've come across plenty of teen train enthusiasts in our area in the few years. Some of them we have met while railfanning (especially at places such as Horseshoe Curve, where there always seems to be at least one teen railfan), and we've met others at places such as train shows and hobby shops. We have kept in touch with some of them by exchanging emails and we have become good friends. A few of them have also contributed several articles and photos to various railroad magazines, and some of them also operate railfan websites.

One of the many young railfans we've met is Collin Reinhart. We first met Collin two years ago while railfanning and have kept in touch with him through phone calls, emails, and by railfanning together. Collin is also a TAMR member and has contributed some nice photos to the Hotbox. In addition to Collin, we have met a teen member of the local model railroad club that we used to be members of named Chad. He mostly modeled UP in HO scale. Also, in the last couple years, we've met another teen railfan named Scott on numerous Saturday morning railfan trips on Norfolk Southern's Lehigh Line. These are just a few examples of younger railfans and model railroaders we've met, and hopefully that number will continue to grow!

MAIKHA, AUSTRALIA

Well, where do I start? To all you yanks over there, Australia is a completely new land, where every railroad encounter is something new and exciting to you all. We have a peculiar railfanning community here, very diverse in interests and how they enjoy the railroads. In terms of teen enthusiasts, there are many, although a lot more out there than we know about. Jonathan has invited me to share an insight into the railfanning community here in Sydney, and Australia in general, and I hope in doing so, shows you all that the interests in Railroads is a universal thing.

Mainly there are a lot of teen enthusiasts, and it is much like how you fellas over in the US go about it. The small sized area of the capital cities like Sydney (Where I live), a lot of railfanning by teens is done by catching public transport, in terms of trains. And why wouldn't you? It's the cheapest, fastest and efficient way to do it, and all your trains are there to railfan! It is mixed amongst railfans the types of trains they would be after, most would spend the day travelling to select parts of the network to photograph various passenger trains, whereas many others would find locations to 'park' at for a few hours to photograph a parade of freight trains. Some may even be smart enough to find a location where they can get a variety of both!

But in general, this is the most common way for railroad enthusiasts to enjoy the hobby, and with the one-time investment in a digital camera, it's even gotten cheaper. I'm unsure what you American fellas use for words, but the general word in Australia

to describe a railfan is a "Gunzel". Its origin is debated a lot, however this term is the widely used and accepted term to describe an individual with a railroad interests, and actively participates in the hobby.

Two other activities which teen railroad enthusiasts here also participate in is Model Railroading. To describe Australian model railroading will require a future article of its own (That's alright with you Pete?), although we have a large and rising community of Australian model railroaders, modelling our local prototype trains through kits and R-T-R items. Cost has been the main factor which has prevented more younger model railroaders, however, over the course of the past year, has seen a virtual 'underground' movement of Australian teen model railroaders begin to form bonds and associations with each other, with the overall goal of taking over and hijacking the Model Railroading hobby, and possibly for future world domination.

The next activity, which I am a big advocate for, is volunteering with local tourist railroads and heritage railroad societies. It has become a trend in the past few years amongst teenage railfans of the satisfaction and the enjoyment that is to be gained



out of volunteering for a railroad society, and more importantly, the strong fellowship gained with other young railfans you work with. I speak very highly of this work, as I have spent most of my hobby doing so, and encourage many others to follow suit from the experiences I have gained. The diversity of our tourist railroads is also enough of a subject on a future article

(That's also alright with you Pete?), although the main attraction to teens are tourist railroads that either mainly operating steam trains, provide the opportunity to work in real full-sized railroad operations... or both.

Continued on the next page.

WINTER NATIONAL CONVENTION 1.26.07

Although Australian law dictates minimum ages to be conducting some of the jobs involved (18 years), training can begin a lot early, and valuable learning and experience is gained in this time, something which many teenage railroad enthusiasts take advantage of. To the average railfan described in my 2nd paragraph, who mainly set out to photograph trains, it is a secret inhibition to one day be the subject of those photographs and crewing such trains. To the dedicated railroad volunteer, they are in that position already.

If there's something y'all see me write about a lot, are my diverse experiences in my time as a volunteer, mainly because it has grown into such a passion and life centred activity for me. My work involves working for a short haul tourist railroad as a steam train conductor, as well as also for a mainline steam excursion operator. It is the BEST position you can have! You travel places, you meet people, you experience new things, see a lot of beautiful scenery, and for teenagers, it is a very valuable stepping stone for learning about life experiences while they're growing up. Best of all, it looks good on the resume! It is hard work, it is difficult work, and it is definitely not glamorous work, but this work is enjoyed for those made for it.

The community of Australian railfans is a mixed bunch. It is a small community, and you are known to everyone based on how 'active' you are, not only as a railfan, but in other activities like your work or other railroading involvements, usually through communities like online railfan groups, or publications in railroad media. Amongst teenagers, very close-knit friendships and bonds are formed through common interests in railfanning, photography, model railroading and volunteering. Unfortunately with the older enthusiasts, it is without denial there will be some minority of hostility that goes on, but it is no different to any other technical hobby out there.

In my time in the hobby, I have made some really good friends at a lot of places, now to add the United States to my list! Us Australians are generally a friendly bunch, so if anyone from TAMR just happens to be 'down under', give me a buzz, and I'll be happy to show you how the railfanning goes in this country myself.

I hope you enjoyed reading my introduction to one of many railfanning experiences over in the Land Down under. I also wish to thank everyone at the TAMR for making me feel welcomed into this organization, as it's good to get to know how our counterparts across the Pacific operate, much like we do here! If you wish to know more about Australian railroads, or just want to chat a bit more, my email address is supplied. •

maikholy@yahoo.com.au

WINTER CONVENTION 07

Greetings from tropical Springfield, MA! The month of January is closing fast meaning only one thing, the **2007 TAMR Winter Convention!** Come see why this has been the longest running event in TAMR history. Come meet the friendly people behind so much of this groups activities. Come for the slide shows, operating layouts, hundreds of model vendors, hobby shops, as well as the TAMR's own table. The fun will begin on Friday evening, January 26, 2007 and continue until Sunday evening, January 28, 2007.

By popular demand, the winter convention hotel will again be the Residence Inn, 64 Border Way, West Springfield, MA. , 413-732-9543. A multiple room suite has been reserved for TAMR members that need a place to stay over night. The cost for each person will be \$30.00 per night, including a full breakfast



There will be a HUGE model railroad show, including a TAMR table with operating layouts on both Saturday and Sunday at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield. For more details regarding the show, check out the Amherst Railway Society at: <http://www.amherstrail.org/show/show.htm>

Mark your calendars! We are expecting another awesome winter convention! Only 2 months away!!!! To reserve your space at the hotel, or to just let us know you're coming please contact me at the information below.
HAPPY RAILROADING!!

Newton Vezina

Phone:

Email: TAMRVideo@aol.com

WINTER NATIONAL CONVENTION 1.26.07

Trains to Nowhere

BY: STEVEN GOEHRING

Spread the fun around!

So, do any of you out there think you're an accomplished model railroader? Got a big layout? Know every locomotive class in the US?

With the Christmas shopping season in full swing, Trains N' Lanes Hobbies (place where yours truly works to earn his layout budget) is mobbed with Christmas shoppers, most of whom are looking for train sets to either put under the tree, or to start a friend out in model railroading. The hobby could always use more followers, so while I have my train set talk in mind, I'll share it in hopes that visions of model trains begin dancing in some potential newcomers' heads.

Now comes the hard part for me... I should really give you a basic definition of our hobby. Umm... (Can I have a lifeline?) Well, to sum up, four+ years of serious training* have led me to the conclusion that...

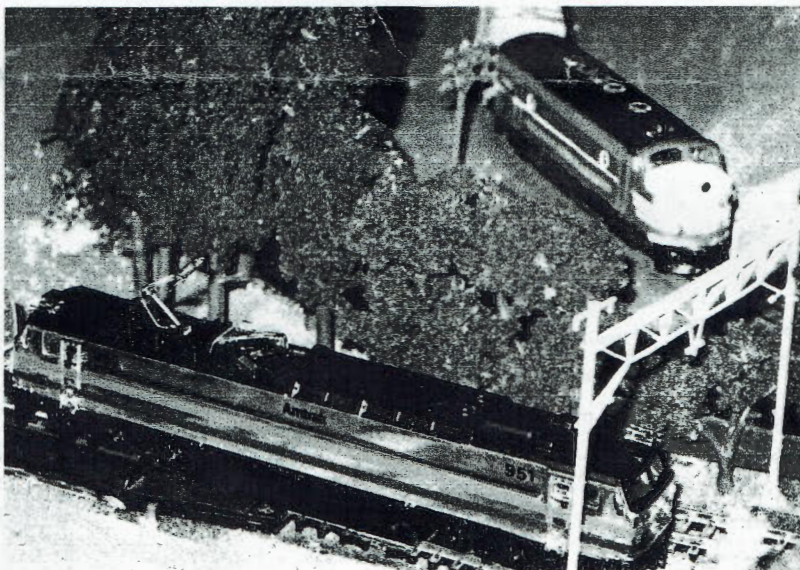
Model Railroading (mê'-duhl ræl-rö-ding). n. -the hobby of creating a railroad transportation industry in a

smaller scale and operating it for pleasure.

...There, can I get off this darn soapbox yet? Oh, fine, NONE SHALL PASS, eh? Well, I'll just have to bore you with more rambling then.

I'll now move on to the subject of train sets. Let's face it; they're the best way to get started. However, here's the fine print that no companies bother to print: you can't start someone out with a junky set and expect the newcomer to stay in the hobby. How do you tell if a set will hold up? Talk to other model railroaders, that's how. Introducing someone

Loc Track, nice engines, and even some scenery. Model Power sets are similar with regular track, which is better for people who could possibly move on to a full-size layout eventually. At-learn has been releasing a lot of nice sets recently, and they're definitely worth a look. Some of Bachmann's Spectrum sets make the cut quality-wise, but a non-Spectrum set is a bit of a risk. On the other hand, I recently saw a regular Bachmann set featuring two Reading SD-45's that changed my opinion of Bachmann sets, at least the ones with larger (and newer) engines. They really are acceptable, if not absolutely perfect, for new model railroaders. I guess the old nickname "Botchmann" doesn't have much truth left in it.



MY TWO TRAIN SET LOCOS THAT ARE IN REGULAR SERVICE. WAG F7 NO. 2000 WAS ORIGINALLY A C&D F7 FROM A KATO SET; THE E-60 IS FROM BACHMANN'S "CENTENNIAL" SET, AND IT'S A RARE GEM OF ELECTRIC MOTIVE POWER IN N SCALE. PHOTO BY AUTHOR.

For people going into larger scales, asking a more experienced modeler about which train sets are best is the best way to get started. Some G, O, or S scale sets are plain junk, while others may be a bit too much for a beginner in the price department.

Just remember the golden rule of starting people into model railroading: Tell them right away that you get what you pay for with model trains.

There you have it: how to recommend a train set to a friend and hopefully get them into model trains. While you're giving

to the hobby for the first time should be a team effort on the part of several local model railroaders.

Do I have any suggestions for good starter sets? Well, Life-Like's Proto 2000/1000 or Rail Legends sets are great, with simple, yet durable Power-

ing sales pitches, why not recommend the TAMR? Cool website, nice officers, and a great monthly newsletter, what's not to like about it?

Get out there and spread the fun around!•

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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TO BECOME A PART OF THE TAMR, OR TO RENEW, SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO:
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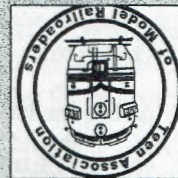
COMING SOON TO THE HOTBOX:

- The Payne Award; make their Hotbox debut.
- The TAMR election results.

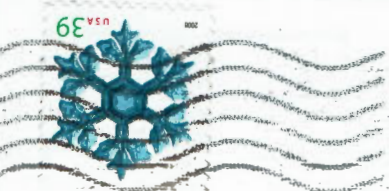
COMING SOON TO THE TAMR:

- Election results; after the first of the year.
- The 2007 Winter National Convention in sunny Springfield, MA!

We're on the web!
www.tamr.org



Teen Association Of Model Railroaders
"Putting the future of model railroading on the right track"



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