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THE HOTBOX

August 2008 Issue # 421



**the official publication of the teen
association of model railroaders
Badges must be worn beyond this point!**

THE HOTBOX

August 2008 Issue # 421

ON THE COVER: . CN 2-8-2 3254 Steams uphill past the station platforms at Steamtown,Scranton, PA, August 30th, 2007. James Lincoln, photo.



FORM 19

A message from your editor in chief.

Editor –Peter Maurath
Publisher-Peter McRath II
Contributing Columnist–
Steven Goehring
Art Director-Duh Vinci
Photographer– Jay Vecce
Librarian– Already sharpening her no. 2 pencils.

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 EMD is better than GE? 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
13212 Wilton Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44135

Or email at:

TAMRHotboxEd@sbcglobal.net

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:

pivotpin@tamr.org

I'm gonna glaze your backside young man!

Welcome to August everybody! Like it or not summer is slowly winding down, just take a glance at any store now and you'll find the "back to school sales", and just beyond that you might glimpse a Christmas Tree or two on display (they start earlier every year!). Before long it'll be time to hunker down for another school year, bundle-up for another winter, and belly-up for all the coming holidays. But why think about that now! You've still got almost a month or more (depending on your schedule). There's still plenty of summer left, and time to finish those



major layout projects, or get in another great railfan trip. There's also still plenty of time to run for office! Remember this year is an election year for us and right now I have one Letter-of-Intent, and it's for a position that's usually not even an elected position. There are eight positions up for grabs in this group open to all members under the age of twenty-one. They are the President, VP, Treasurer, and the five regional positions. If you are interested

in becoming an active part of the decision making in this group, if you have the desire, time, and intestinal fortitude (well not really just wanted to use that phrase). Then PLEEEEZ let me know by sending me your LOI, which is basically a few words telling me, and the group why you want to run for a particular office and what you'll plan to do if elected. It's as simple as that, though if you have any questions please let me know as well. By the way,

what I just wrote goes for all you incumbents as well, if you want to keep your seat, you've got to fight for it.

This month has seen a bumper crop of new members! For the first time in forever we have three, count'em, three new members coming on to our roles. Be sure to drop them an email or letter and say hello to Charlie, Jamie, and Eli (addresses are on page six).

That's all I've got for this month, highball! PC out!•



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:

What is the most scenic railfan spot you have ever visited?

Steven Goehring, Nazareth, PA: "I'll vote for the whole line west of Harrisburg all the way to Altoona or Cresson and beyond. Riding parallel to that line to get to college can be a real treat when you end up pacing an autorack train at 60 MPH!"

Chris Burchett, Fairborn, OH: "Narrowing it down would force me to select Moss Run, Virginia. Moss Run is small hamlet located in western Virginia, within a few miles of West Virginia, on the former Chesapeake & Ohio mainline between Hinton, WV, and Hampton Roads, Virginia. This spot features a cut through the hillside where one can stand atop and view the action moving through, which chiefly hosts coal drags as well as grain trains and manifest freights (and of course light helper moves downgrade, if they don't just attach to a downgrade freight for a "free ride"). Very awesome S-curve from this particular spot."

Matt Martin, Fairport, NY: "The BNSF "Transcon" in Northern Arizona. You get the pine forests around Flagstaff and Williams to flat desert near Winslow, all within about 100 miles! A few of my favorite locations are Darling, Walnut Canyon Overpass just east of Flagstaff, Maine, West Williams Jct., Canyon Diablo, the station platform at Winslow, & Cosnino Rd."

Andrew Matarazzo, Old Bridge, NJ: "It is by far El Cajon Pass in Southern California. Particularly just north of San Bernardino along the old Rt. 66. Not only does it have spectacular views of the mountain ranges, but has incredible amounts of rail traffic. I remember one spot just after the BNSF lines from Barstow and Bakersfield converge, with the UP line up about 250 ft. on the hill. You can see the BNSF line in the valley and the UP line on the mountain snake down and around the rock cuts into San Bernardino. It is absolutely spectacular. Just plan alot more time than I did."

Mark MacDougall, Stockertown, PA: "I'd say the Canadian Pacific (former Delaware & Hudson) Freight Subdivision between Binghamton, NY and Saratoga, NY is the most scenic line I've been on."

Ben Hawken, Shingle Springs, CA: "I would have to say that the UP/ex SP I-5 corridor from Red Bluff to Black Butte, CA."

Charles Warczinsky, Sandusky, MI: "Norfolk Southern's Lafayette District between Peru and Lafayette, Indiana. I guess it's more than a "spot" but the line runs through some really awesome scenery and there is a ton of railroad history to uncover along the line as well."

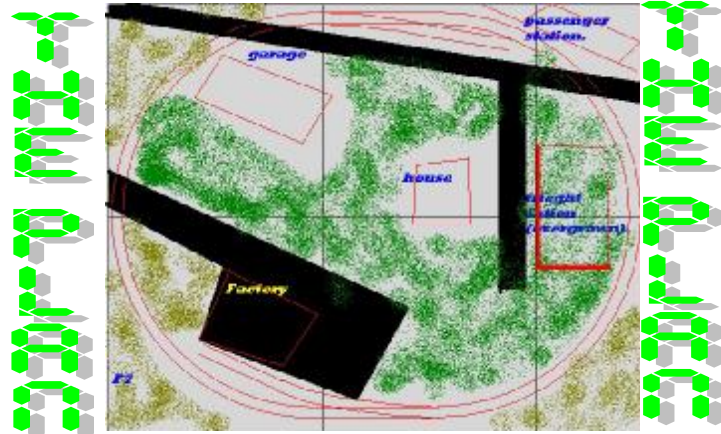
Doug Engler, Syracuse, NY: "Amsterdam, NY is a nice spot with the river behind the tracks. Rte 11 just inside PA (from NY) is great with a couple high trestles. Horseshoe Curve is always great with the mountains in the background and recently they had cut down trees so you had a better panoramic view. Also Savanna, NY is a great spot with a nice long trestle."

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



The Hotbox Layout Tour

This Month :
Sawyer Berry's Layout.



While I wait to get my new room and my new layout (a 6x6 ft. foothills Pennsylvania branch line), I've built a 2 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in. desktop layout that depicts a generic American setting because well, I wanted to keep sharp and have some fun. I'm already building a new layout w/ EZ track that is mainly a roundy-round layout w/ big grade. Highlights for this layout are: SEC Rwy. F7 #770, a small factory, and a team track. There's also an overgrown freight station, a passenger station, and a garage. The track plan is a oval and two sidings. It's one block and I use an old Bachmann trainset cab (when they put good ones in). The track is Atlas code 80, and the switches are #6s. The usual train hauls 3 cars for local industries, and some bridge traffic. I'll usually use my Atlas H-15-44, but the GP30 and GP9 will sometimes appear. The forest is really overgrown, and there are no figures or vehicles yet. I used woodland scenics trees and lichen. Here are some shots, cause a picture's worth a thousand words, and I'm done talking. ●



TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS



The Texas Eagle II

MATT ROBERTS DECLASSIFIED SUMMER CONVENTION REPORT



Action at Saginaw, TX, all photos by author.

I know, it's just a little late! But better late than never, no? Well, at least that's what I was thinking when I finally wrote this article, now you'll know what happened.

When I first arrived at Saginaw (just north of Fort Worth) to meet Tim, I saw him and Sherrie sitting in their car watching the lack of action that was occurring at the junction. In Saginaw, a pretty famous spot for DFW railfanning, I've found out; the double-tracked BNSF Wichita Falls Subdivision, the ex-Fort Worth & Denver to Amarillo crosses the single tracks of the BNSF Ft. Worth Sub., ex-Santa Fe, and the UP's Duncan Sub., see the "Saginaw Railfan Primer" on Wes Carr's *Southwest Shortlines*: [http://www.trainweb.org/southwestshorts/.](http://www.trainweb.org/southwestshorts/))



BNSF Head quarters, main dispatch center.

BNSF and UP hi-railer maintenance trucks had been doing some work accounting for the lack of ac-

tion. Didn't see a train before we decided it was about time to head over to the BNSF headquarters building in Ft. Worth proper; my mom and I followed Tim and Sherrie's car over to the beautiful campus of the BNSF building.

At the headquarters, we all met Tom Konzcol and his mom, the man from BNSF who was to guide us around the building, and browsed some of the memorabilia that the company had housed in the visitor's lobby. Before long he'd led us over to a conference/viewing room that overlooked the main dispatching room for the entire BNSF Railway. After showing a quick video about the history of the railroad, he raised the curtains and allowed us to look out on the amazing room of wonders! I'd never



BNSF rolls through Saginaw.

seen anything like it before! Dispatchers, coordinators, and offices of all kinds filled the open cubicles on the main floor. On the way out we even got shown some of the old business car fleet on campus, such as the old vista-dome rear-end observation car that they had converted to use as a cafe.

Got back to the Chamber of Commerce right at the tracks in Saginaw after; I've never seen such a grand train-parade! The only thing I'd seen previous that came close was the BNSF Transcon in East New Mexico, and there I'd seen only intermodal trains, here it was merchandise freight, grain train, rock train, hotshot intermodal galore! And to top it off, I captured a good old KCS SD40-2 ghost! Needless to say, I was one happy guy on the drive home. ●



TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS



The Top 7

By: Peter Maurath

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

Top Seven other donations received for the summer convention.

#7. A stack of *Benigans* gift cards.

#6. Amtrak Toilet Paper.

#5. Operation Lifesaver Coloring Book.

#4. Box of Penn Central Pens (only 3 work).

#3. A jar of Ballast.

#2. Heavy Duty Dual-Tie, Main Line, Switch, and Production Tamper, with Integrated Turn-out Rail Lift system.

And the number one other donation received for this years summer convention!

The Tracks Ahead Anthology.

The Extra Board

New Memberships-4!

Jamie St. Onge
P.O. Box 264
198 Elm St.

Cape Vincent NY 13618
dstonge1@tvcny.rr.com
Cape Vincent Southern RR, HO & O-3 rail
b. 1993

Charlie Wood
470 Kendall Rd.
Churchville NY 14428
cwood004@rochester.rr.com
b. 1996
GL&B Systems - O 3-rail

Eli Blumen
1881 Bay Rd.
Sharon MA 02067
esb440@comcast.net
b. 1995
Pawtucket, Eastern, & Midland
HO

B. J. Karnavas
8840 Breezewood Dr.
Pittsburgh PA 15237
karnavas@comcast.net
Penn Logging & Mining Rwy. (N)

Renewals-3

Ben Neal
Mark MacDougall
Austin MacDougall

Expiring Memberships-6

Matthew Roberts
Vincent Buccigrossi
Philip Sakalik
Brent Johnson
Ethan Doty

Present Member Count- 54↑



TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS



Trains to Nowhere

By: Steven Goehring

Take it outside

We're always learning something new in this hobby. That's so universally true that I think the traditional learning curve has become a learning treadmill. Luckily for us, we're at least still in control of the rate at which we tackle the lessons.

One such lesson that I dove into recently is taking model train photos outside. Of course, it's a skill that not all of us can use, since it requires a moveable diorama, a sunny day, and a decently clear backdrop, which if you live in the city or the deep woods, you may not have. Luckily, my house is surrounded by cornfields, grasslands, low trees, and even has some cement industry buildings visible from a distance, so I guess I'm very lucky having such a variety of backdrop choices and a clear backyard from which to shoot.

Provided you have the clear space, the small layout or diorama, and the camera to try outdoor photos, there are still a few small things you might want to get together before going outside. For one, you'll want to keep your diorama off the ground, because I guarantee you that your grass is not 1:87, 1:160, or even 1:48 scale. I use old cardboard boxes for this job. I also keep a piece of scale grass mat on hand in case I want more of a foreground in my pictures, since my compact model railroad that I use outside is very narrow. Finally, I find that a few loose metal weights are very useful to put behind rolling stock to keep the wind from turning your photo shoot into a moving target shoot. Unless you or your family are really full of hot air, you probably wouldn't consider wind as a model railroad hindrance, but once you're out of the basement and on the lawn, it's a problem for most any scale of trains.

Finally, you're ready to set up your shot. Because I work in N scale, I try to keep the subjects all about the same distance from the camera, so that they can all be in focus despite the very finicky small-scale focus problems. Larger scales would have an easier time with this, but you can see how keeping the subjects in a line worked well in the picture on this page. If you're using a regular digital camera, it helps to set the light settings or shutter speeds to suit your conditions. Auto settings work OK, but when the quality of your picture matters, I prefer to explain everything to my camera ahead of time.

Then shoot away! You'll find that the shots come out with better contrast, color balance, and brightness. Some models may seem to take on a whole new appearance outdoors, with the more natural lighting either highlighting details you hadn't noticed before, or highlighting just how wrong the factory paint job looks on that old train show bargain bin find. Oops, back to the workbench! The learning treadmill just doesn't stop!●



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STEVEN GOEHRING
TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS



The TAMR is a non-profit organization created to promote, foster, and encourage young persons in the hobby of model railroading, the activity of rail fanning, 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.

Membership to the TAMR includes an eleven month subscription to the Hotbox, the annual directory of members, quarterly regional newsletters and an election 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:
Tim Vermande, TAMR Pivot Pin, 11667 Tidewater Dr, Fishers, IN 46037, USA

Offer good why supplies last, negative equity applied to new loan balance, must take delivery of dealer stock, see store for complete details. No purchase necessary, void where prohibited. For a complete list of rules, regulations, and the best darn restaurants in Bryan, OH send a SSAEBDR to the above address. If you are at all unsatisfied with this hotbox, please return unused portion for a complete blow-off by our staff. Thank you!

COMING SOON TO **THE HOTBOX:**

-Ben Hawken takes us on a trip down the Shasta City & Berber Line.

COMING SOON TO **THE TAMR:**

-TAMR Elections, this November, are you running?



The Teen Association of Model Railroaders

"Putting the future of model railroading on the right track."

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Before I go...

