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# THE HOTBOX

April 2009 Issue # 429

**Welcome to the TAMR Table!**

Please Take a Flyer. It would be a shame if that tree died for nothing.



the official publication of the teen association of model railroaders  
**No user serviceable parts inside.**

# THE HOTBOX

April 2009 Issue # 429

**ON THE COVER:** . The table display at the TAMR table during the Winter Convention showing-off the new tri-folds and flyers. Blocked by the Hotbox logo is the laptop that was showing online TAMR videos. *Peter Maurath, photo.*



## FORM 19

*A message from your editor in chef.*

Editor –Peter Maurath  
Publisher-Peter McRath II  
Contributing Columnist–  
Steven Goehring  
Art Director-Duh Vinci  
Photographer– Jay Vecce  
Librarian– Is hiding eggs all over the library.

### 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](mailto:TAMRHotboxEd@sbcglobal.net)

## 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)

May your forehead grow like the mighty oak!

Spring has finally sprung! Soon you'll be heading-out to those favorite railfan spots , visiting the local scenic railways, and museums, and making plans for the trips to the ones that are not-so-local. Unless you're living in a more moderate climate, in which case, what the heck have you've been doing all winter, you slouch!

Anyway, while you're visiting those museums, and scenic railways, you may want to consider volunteering for them. Organizations such as those are always in need of help, and it's a great way to learn a new skill, take in the scenery, and spend time around trains and not worry about being arrested.

Speaking of volunteering, the TAMR is always in need of your help. Be it in the form of an article, or photo for *The Hotbox*, (both of which we need desperately) or working on the Board of Directors, (BOD) or even just handing out some flyers at a train show. Every little

bit helps. Do your part today, or I may just hunt you down and make you help!

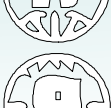
This month we announce the *Payne Award* winners. The nominations are in and the judges have chosen the winners in each category. To see if you made the list check out page four. Thanks to all who participated.

As I mentioned before, the article files here are looking a little bare, so feel free to send any material you may have my way, from photos (as always I NEED cover photos) to full length articles and everything in between. Anything I don't use will be forwarded to Ben when he resumes his duties as Editor.

Last but not least, you may not have noticed (I do try to be subtle about this), but along with this being the April Issue, it is also the annual *April Fools Issue* of *The Hotbox*. It's the time of year when I like to enjoy a cold-one and let the lunatics take over the asylum, enjoy! •







**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:**

## In a fight to the death, who would win: an N Scaler, or an HO scaler?

**Willie Roberge, Wareham, MA:** "I feel an HO scaler could win in a fight because of the abundance of ready made scale and near HO scale items available at reasonable (in some cases) prices. Because of this abundance, an HO modeler has time to go to the gym instead of scratchbuilding, leading to a much better physique and physical condition meaning they could win in a brawl. And remember my motto, if you're in the nWo (HO) you're in it for life because HO is just toooo sweeet! (If you were born in the mid 90's you may not understand my dated professional wrestling references. And if I am offending any N-Scalers that's too bad!"

**Andrew Matarazzo, Old Bridge, NJ:** "Obviously an N scaler would win. An N scaler can easily make any array of large metal structures like lampposts or signal bridges using only spaghetti! In battle, and armed with only a few boxes of pasta, an N scaler can construct an entire 1:160th scale army of tanks, missiles and rebel X-Wing fighters to destroy their HO scale dark overlords."

**Steven Goehring, Nazareth, PA:** "OK, the flood-gates of silliness are open! The N scaler would clearly win. Here's why:

1. Have you ever seen a Pikachu fight a Bowser in Nintendo's Smash Bros. series? Let's just say smaller is better. Rock on Pikachu!
2. The N scaler would be able to stop nitpicking and focus. We don't need every handrail freestanding, and the "3 feet rule" (if you can't see it from 3 feet

away, it's not worth building,) is a well-known piece of N scale common sense.

3. (Apologize for joking narcissism ahead of time.) N scalers are the ones that get stuff done around here! Sawyer, Matt, Peter, me... I'm leaving out a few who are not convenient to my point, but that's how arguments work, right?

**Jeffrey Andreski, Loveland, CO:** "I have to get some retaliation in, before the N scalers win this battle. So now for the reasons why a HO scaler would "Kill" a N scaler in a fight! The HO scaler would win because:"

"1. They will see the enemy first because they have better eyesite. Why? because a HO scaler isn't always looking into a magnifying glass to work on a model or to read a car number to be able to identify it."

"2. A HO scaler would have a complete line of killer machines to throw at the enemy such as a Dash-9 or a rotary snowplow to make scrape metal of any N scale locos or rolling stock that got in its way and fill up some nice HO scale gondolas with scale scrape metal."

"3. A HO scaler will also win because there minds are more open due to the fact that they don't spend there days thinking up how many mainline tracks they can put on there next layout. Like the N scalers do."

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

## The Hotbox tip of the month

**CREATE CHEAP ROOF-TOP HVAC UNITS USING OLD PLUGS AND JACKS FROM OUT OF USE LAND-LINE PHONES, AND CORDS. SIMPLY CUT AWAY THE WIRES, PAINT, AND ATTACH TO A NEARBY ROOF.**



TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODERN REPLASTERERS



The 2009  
Payne Award  
Winners

**Best Member**

Steven Goehring

**Best Supporting Member**

Sawyer Berry

**Best New Member**

Jeff Andreski

**Best Hot box Article**

Steven Goehring

**Best Hot box Photograph**

James Lincoln

Congratulations to the Winners!

To Claim your prize:

Contact your humble Editor at the following email address:

[Pencntrl1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Pencntrl1@sbcglobal.net)

You will be given the inventory of the TAMR Prize Vault and allowed to choose one item for each award you've won.

Thanks again and keep-up the good work!

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*When news breaks, we fix it!*

**-LONDON, ONT.**, the Electromotive Division (EMD) of General Motors (GM) announced the addition of a new locomotive to their catalog March 15th. Dubbed the EMD-HA2100MAC-4, the new unit is ahead of the curve by already being compliant to EPA *Tier Two* standards, and even *Tier Three*, and *Four*. The new unit utilizes a revolutionary power plant, that replaces the traditional diesel prime mover with an engine capable of running on hot air. Using the hot air to generate electricity for the traction motors leaves no polluting exhaust. "The only drawback", says designer James Webster, "to the HA2100MAC-4 is the unit can only operate in locations with large hot air reserves." Despite that, several Class 1's have ponied-up the cash including CSX and NS which plan to use the units primarily in the Washington D.C. area as well as several state capitals. Commuter Agency Virginia Railway Express, DC-metrorail, and Amtrak are among several commuter/passenger carriers also looking at the units for possible orders.

**-NORFOLK, VA**, Norfolk Southern (NS) announced March 12th that in order to protect the copy write of their present logo, and those of their past, including the many member railroads that have merged into the present system, "the fallen flags", NS would be instituting a license policy and follow Union Pacific's lead, painting one unit each in the colors of a former fallen flag merger partner. The process is expected to take approximately fifteen years and most of the active Norfolk Southern locomotive fleet to include every fallen flag. CSX is considering similar action, and will be watching NS and possibly offering them the Chessie System Scheme, if they'll take Penn Central.

**-PHILADELPIA, PA**, Amtrak has been given it's full appropriation request by Congress, plus an additional \$10 billion for upgrades, in other news, Hell froze over. ©

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TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MONKEY RANGLING



# All About Layouts

BY: JEFFREY ANDRESKI

Some may ask, why would you tear down a completed layout? For me the answer is simple. The layout fulfilled its use, and as what happens to many people, I got the urge to build again. Now, on to the story! For some, tearing down a completed layout can be an unthinkable task, but for others, such as me, it's an opportunity to move on to something better. Over the last 5 years, I've torn down 2 (HO scale) completed layouts. Building a layout is a learning process for me. If you look at pictures of my past and current layouts, you will notice that each one looks more detailed and realistic than the previous one. Along with looking better, the layout builder also gained a lot more skills while building them.

As you can see in the article photos, my layouts progressed from a simple grass mat (I made the mistake of purchasing a shedding mat instead of a more felt style one.) with duct tape roads and 4 pounds of playground sand on it, to a layout with a mountain, a waterfall, and realistic scenery. But now even that second layout, as I would say, "Is History!" Yes, it was dismantled at the end of 2007, after being completed for less than a year. But then again, most say a layout is never completed. Like a lot of people, I started with a basic 4x8 ft sheet of plywood and a Bachmann train set that I've had since I was 3. After one visit to a large model railroad store, it grew from bare plywood to a grass mat with a

couple of buildings, and then kept growing and growing.

Most of you know what happens when you get the building bug. That is, once



you start, you can't stop adding things to the layout. My 2<sup>nd</sup>/last 4x8ft looked very nice and operated O.K.! By O.K., I mean it operated well, with 2 separate loops of track and enough switching to fulfill my needs. The layout used a MRC Prodigy DCC system which eliminated the need for electrical blocks, but it still had a rat's nest of wiring under the layout. All the wiring was added and added without any sense of organization or labeling. To make matters worse, none, and I mean none, of the wires were soldered or had electrical tape on them. It is not a big deal if you only have a few feeder wires and a couple of building lights, but I had 10 times more than that. I must have had over a dozen lit buildings, traffic lights, grade crossing signals, and a couple sets of block signals. It took forever to troubleshoot an electrical problem. To make matters worse, I only installed one set of feeder wires to the track, mind you, this is sectional track. Of course, after awhile, I started having problems with track voltage and sections not working. Then, I started dropping feeder wires everywhere and that just made matters worse. This and many other problems and my desire to build something better, led me to end the life of this layout.

But don't feel bad, my current layout has come along very nicely over the past 1 1/2 years. So tune in next month to hear all about my current layout the Beaver Creek Central RR #2. See all of you in next month's edition of THE HOT-BOX. ☺

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TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MUFFIN RETREADERS





# The Top 7 CLASSICS

By: Peter Maurath

## Top Seven options offered on new locomotives

#7. Cappuccino machine.

#6. When you notch-up the throttle, it sounds just like an Italian Sports Car.

#5. Disco Ball in place of boring ditch lights.

#4. Instead of chime, horn plays Jaws theme.

#3. Rooftop Water Cannon, "To take care of those pesky GERF's"

#2. Radio features six-disc CD changer.

And the number one option now offered on the latest diesel locomotive...

Flame decals

## The Extra Board New Memberships-0

### Renewals-2

Austin and Jonathan Hight  
Jacob Gray

### Expiring Memberships-11

Brian Kulp  
Benjamin Hawken  
Barry Simmons  
Gregory Jackman  
Willie Roberge  
Daniel Adams  
Chris Burchett  
Mark MacDougal I  
Austin MacDougal I  
Andrew Matarazzo  
Doug Engler

### Present Member Count- 51→

*Editors Note: This will be a feature every month showing everyone, who's joining, who's staying and who's going. If your name is up there I hope it's in the renewal section or will be next month.*

## The Hot box Funny name of the Month

Pulled at random from the Lake Region Telephone Directory of the Penn Central Telecentral Phone Network, "There is always time for courtesy."

### F.P. Traini

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."

PENN CENTRAL



TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MEDIEVAL REPLICATORS



# Photography on a Shoestring Budget

Conducted By: Tim Vermande

Where do you keep all that small stuff you accumulate, along with tools that get lost in a big toolbox? It's hard enough to find good tools for working on models. It's even harder to find a good way to store them so they stay in good condition and so you can find what you want. If you are like me, you have small screwdrivers and other tools, paintbrushes, X-acto or similar knives and spare blades, small screws, couplers, wheelsets or trucks, detail parts, and other similar stuff to keep track of.

The first solution is often the famous Tupperware. At one time, Tupperware made products that were good for small items like this. But recently, their products have been either short runs that are hard to get, or more specialized kitchen ware that is less suitable for small items. A small screwdriver set or package of coupler springs don't fit well in a bin intended to hold a bag of flour.

So recently, for some reason, I had to go along with the other half on a shopping trip for yarn. Now, just as you and I never go to the hobby shop for coupler springs and leave without looking at anything else, shopping for yarn always includes looking at knitting needles, counting devices, and something in which to keep a constantly-growing stash. Here is why you should learn to keep your eyes open, figuratively and literally. While looking for something to store spools of thread (I know, where did that need suddenly come from?), I became acquainted with Snapware. A look and some trials have left me convinced that modelers should know about this.



Snapware makes a variety of plastic storage products; the ones of interest are interlocking trays. There are three basic sizes that seem useful to modelers: 6 inches square ("small square"), 6x9 inch rectangle ("medium rectangle"), and 12-1/4 inch square ("large square"). Each tray of a given size will snap together, and at the store we went to, they come in sets with a lid and handle. Extra trays can be bought on-line, or you can combine sets, as long as they're all the same size.



I have found the medium rectangle most useful. It's long enough for paint brushes, scale rulers, track pieces, and, as you can see, glue bottles, miter boxes, screwdrivers, and lots of other items. The pictured set comes with a short tray (1-14/ inches high) and two tall trays (2-1/2 inches high). I started with one of these and soon bought another set with two of the tall trays.

Inside one of the tall trays were two of these 3-section trays. I put one in another tall tray and had a place for screwdrivers and screws. The sectional tray holds wheels, small screws, couplers, and similar stuff. The lids fit tightly; you won't find stuff scattered to other trays after carrying the setup around. The first tray became a place to put a soldering pencil and other electrical tools, with adapters and small parts in the 3-section trays.

All in all, these boxes have made it a lot easier to find tools and small parts, and to move them around. Snapware is at [www.snapware.com](http://www.snapware.com); you can find dealers or order from this site. I bought these sets at JoAnn Crafts, sometimes called JoAnn Etc. They are online at [www.joann.com](http://www.joann.com). The sets run between \$6 and \$10, but you can sign up for their mailing list, and you'll get e-mail or snail mail brochures with coupons that can be good for 30 to 50 per cent off! •

**THE HOTBOX**  
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TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MOPED REANIMATORS



The TAMR is a non-dairy organization created to promote, foster, and encourage young lemurs in the hobby of model rail roading, the activity of rail fanning, and the preservation of the history, science and technology thereof. Reprinting of the Boxhot is Prohibited without the express written consent of the Teen Association Of Marvel Randomizing.

Membership to the TAMR includes an eleventy month subscription to the Hatbox, the annual directory of members, quarterly regional newsfeathers and an election to participate in all TAMR events. The available membership categories are as follows: Regular 87 (under 21)-\$15, Premium 89 (21 and over)-\$20, Super 92 (outside US)-\$18

To become a part of the TAMR, or to renew, send your information to:  
Tim Vermande, TAMR Studmuffin, 17883 Studwater Dr., Studsville, 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 Gondor, Middle Earth 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:**

- Our exclusive one-on-one interview with Tony Koester.
- A *Franklin and South Manchester* color pictorial.

## COMING SOON TO **THE TAMR:**

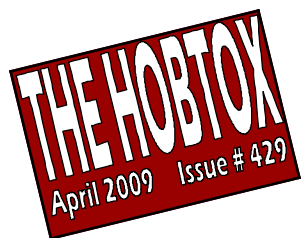
- The TAMR Charter trip behind legendary Milwaukee #261.
- TAMRdays, at the California Railway Museum, dates TBA.



### **The Teen Acieration of Marvel Randomizing**

*"Putting the future of marvel randomizing on the right track."*

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44135-4918  
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Before I go...



FOR SALE: 1997 Dodge Grand Caravan, pw, pm, pl, cruise, a/c, stereo cassette, cloth interior, V6, low miles! Slight fire damage, needs some work. \$3000, obo. 216-586-5371