



# HOTBOX

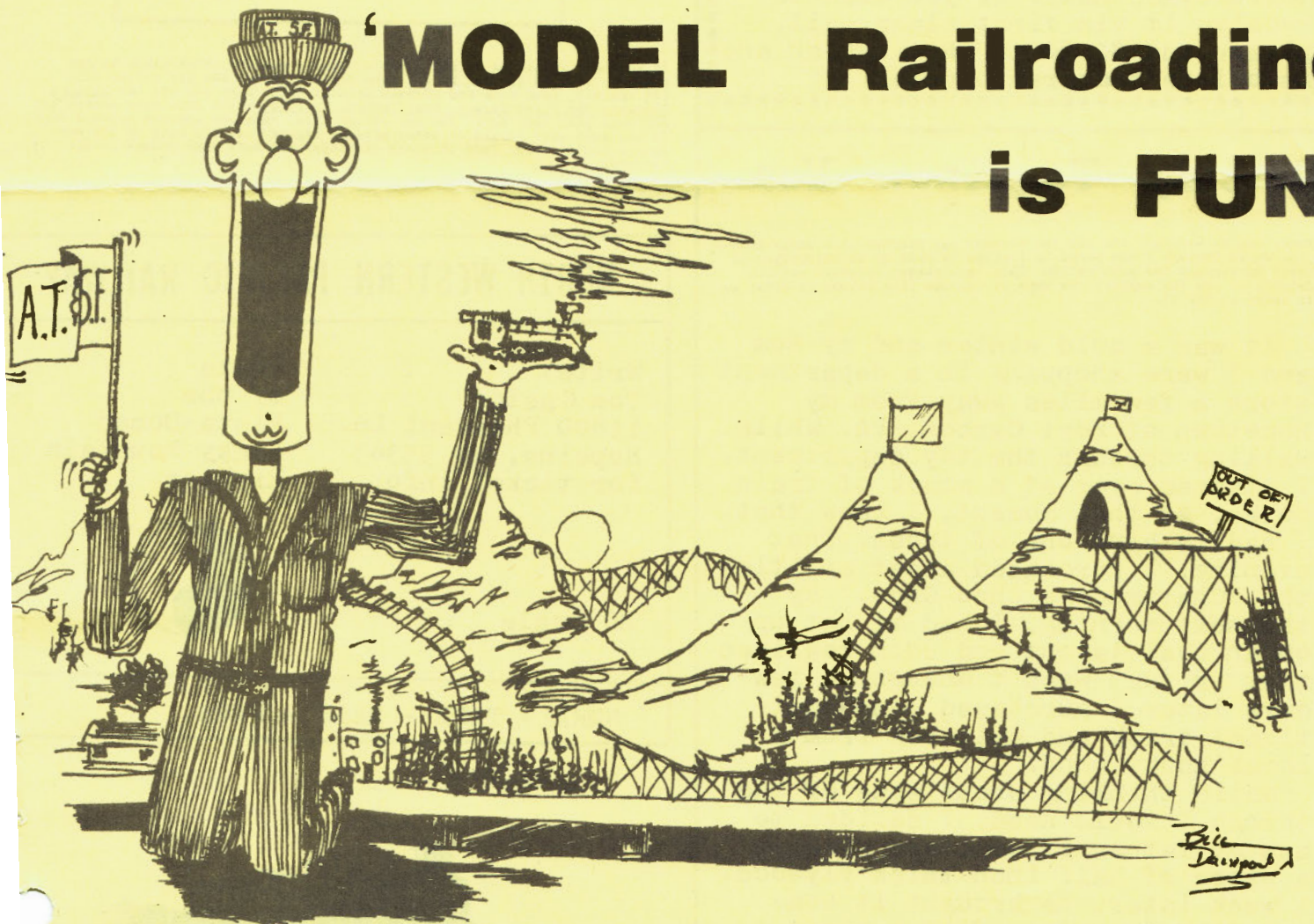
"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"

No. 162

July - August 1980

## HE SAYS:

**'MODEL Railroading  
is FUN!'**



*Bill Davenport*

\*and you know, he's RIGHT!



# HOTBOX

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION** • Tern Association of Model Railroading

Issued every other month with an additional special mailing of a Directory of Membership during the summer.

Annual dues for the TAMR are as follows:

REGULAR (under 21 years of age): \$5.00  
ASSOCIATE (21 years of age and up): \$4.50  
SUSTAINING (both Regular & Associate): \$10.00

Please address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to the TAMR Secretary.

TAMR Secretary: Gerry Dobey  
145 E. Kenilworth Ave.  
Villa Park, IL 60181

All other HOTBOX business, except where specifically noted, is handled by the Editor. Please address all comments to the Editor.

**DEADLINE:** All material for publication must be submitted for consideration by the first day of the first month of the issue (i.e. for May/June issue, material must be received no later than May 1st). The TAMR HOTBOX assumes all material is contributed gratis and no payment will be made upon publication.

HOTBOX Editor: Mark Kaszniak  
4818 W. George Street  
Chicago, IL 60641

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\* please add \$2.00 to the Regular and \*  
\* Associate membership rates. \*  
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## Getting To Know You

Any member, new or veteran, who has not already had his/her life story poured out to the world through these pages is invited to send an autobiography of about three paragraphs for publication. This is a reader oriented section which depends on you for support. We hope to include this column as often as there is material for it.

It was a cold winter and my Mom and I were shopping in a department store a few miles away from my hometown of Port Carbon, PA. While walking through the toy department, I glanced over at a stack of train boxes. At that moment, I knew that I had to have one of those. That evening, I purchased a set entitled the "Chattanooga Choo-Choo." By the next morning, I had it set up on an oval layout and soon realized that it just wasn't enough. A few days later I purchased some additional track and switches from a local hobby shop.

While thinking about some of the things I would need, I decided to ask my father if we could pick up a piece of half inch thick plywood. A week later, he brought it home and then we had to find a place to put it. Finally, a place was found to set up my 4x8 foot layout--in the cellar no less! Then I purchased a grass mat to cover the layout

and then started to lay some track.

As that year passed, another Christmas approached and my Mom wanted to know what I wanted. I suggested that I could use some illuminated structures. Eventually, I obtained about seven structures, 18 pieces of rolling stock and five locomotives. It was about this time that I began reading MODEL RAILROADER and this is where I found an advertisement for the TAMR. I wrote for some information and promptly joined. Now I'm part of the HOTBOX Staff and hold the position of Advertising Manager. Help me to become an active part of the TAMR family by submitting your ads for the HOTBOX today.

--Richard Sonoski

## INTERCHANGE

If you have something to Buy, Sell or Trade, use the INTERCHANGE to get results. Your ad is seen by all TAMR members. Rate: 10¢ per column line (35 spaces), your name and address printed FREE. Send all ads to: Richard Sonoski, 219 First Street, Port Carbon, PA 17965. Rich will also accept ads for your pike too. Rate: 20¢ per column line, name and address printed FREE. If you want your herald or other artwork reproduced, the rate is 50¢ per square column inch. Send in those ads today and make your HOTBOX better tomorrow.

## NORTH WESTERN PACIFIC RAILWAY

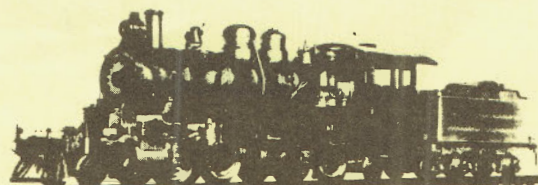
Write:  
Tom Gasior  
11800 Pheasant Ln.  
Hopkins, MN 55343  
for ticket info.

Route  
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Vista-Domed  
Rocky Mountain  
Express

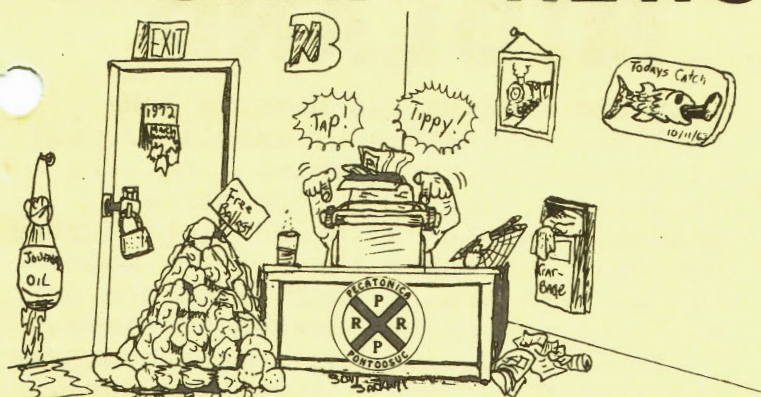
H0 Scale



NMRA - TAMR - MESS - WARS



# CRUMMY NEWS



BY MARK KASZNIAK, EDITOR

## A SUDDEN SPURT OF GROWTH

Many of you have written either the TAMR Secretary or myself expressing your delight with the HOTBOX, but also asking why it isn't larger than 12 pages an issue. Well, I have some good news for all those who have written, the HOTBOX is expanding to 16 pages effective with this issue. A major factor allowing this sudden increase in size is that we'll now be sending the HOTBOX to you via Third-class mail. This means that in most cases it will take the HOTBOX about two weeks to reach you. However, we couldn't increase the size of the HOTBOX and stay with first class mail as well so we opted for the former. Furthermore, you may be interested to learn that we are pushing our production schedules ahead by some three weeks. This will allow us to get the HOTBOX in the mail earlier so that you will receive it at about the same time you have been (the second week of the second month listed on the issue). Yet, the TAMR Executive Board has approved a special membership rate for those members who still want to receive the HOTBOX via first-class mail. This rate has been set at \$2.00 above the normal membership rates except sustaining. Thus regular members who want to receive the HOTBOX via first-class mail, will pay \$7.00 per year. Associates, \$6.50. Sustaining members will continue to receive the HOTBOX via first-class mail for their \$10.00 a year. I realize that many of you will think this is a sneaky way to increase your dues without your approval. Let me state that the Executive Board had no such intentions in mind when they passed this measure.

July/August 1980

Rising postage costs (and a threatened rate increase next year) have lead the Executive Board to this decision. Did you know that approximately one third of the cost of the HOTBOX went towards postage for mailing? Third class mail will allow us to bring you larger issues (up to 20 pages) without an unbearable rise in mailing costs.

Another matter on which I'd like to comment is that a number of you have written and asked why the HOTBOX doesn't run more modeling articles in each issue by cutting down on some of our prototype coverage. I want to assure you that we plan to do just that, but our modeling only members must remember that a substantial number of TAMR members are also interested in the prototype (for both modeling and/or railfanning purposes) and thus we can not totally eliminate all prototype coverage from these pages.

I'd also like to point out that we'll be introducing a number of new columns in this and upcoming issues. The first I'd like to mention is our "Maintenance of Way" column which will now feature products reviews by our members. Thus if you bought something recently and really liked (or hated) it, consider telling other TAMR members in M of W. Next, Dee Gilbert, chairman of our Member Services Committee, will have an ongoing column when he needs it called "MSC Report." This column will deal with the happenings of our Member Services Committee and will also appeal to you for information on subjects that the MSC can't find. Lastly, we'll be starting up a new column conducted by Tim Vermande entitled "At Trackside" which will deal with rail photography plus other items of railfan interest (techniques and practices rather than rail news items). We hope that this column will help both modelers and railfan alike to develop better photography skills for dealing with the prototype as well as providing some alternatives to enhance your normal train watching routine.

Finally, I want to end with a reminder: All the material that appears in these pages is contributed by our members. We do not have specific people who we can turn to for articles on a specific modeling subject. You, the member, are the only source of material for these pages. (cont'd on page 5).

# COLORADO

# MIDLAND

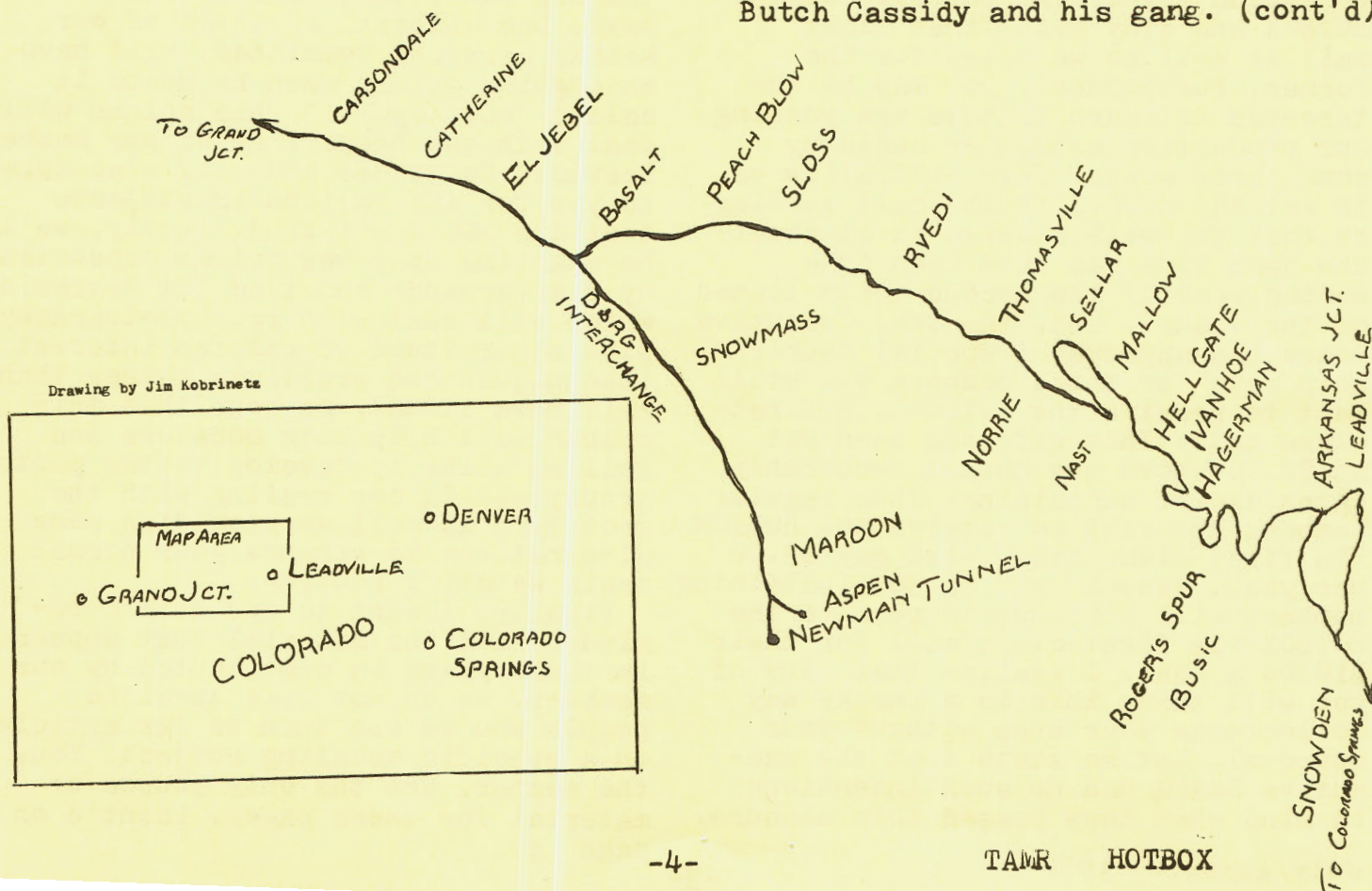
If your "shopping list" for a road to model looks anything like mine when I was a teen, it calls for:

- 1) Sharp curves and steep grades (due to space limitations).
- 2) All features relatively small (towns, yards, industries, etc.).
- 3) Transcontinental pretensions (plenty of interchange).
- 4) A wide modeling era (equipment from the 1880's to 1920's).
- 5) Interesting on-line industries (not just logs or coal).

If this sounds like an impossible list to satisfy with one railroad, then you should learn about the old Colorado Midland. Begun in 1886, it was the first standard gauge line to cross the Colorado Rockies and ran from Colorado Springs to Grand Junction (see map). The railroad accomplished that crossing with the highest standard gauge trackage and tunnel in North America, at Hagerman Pass (named for James J. Hagerman, the dynamic "founding father" and first president of the road). The

Colorado Midland was never a long railroad (298 miles of mainline), but it was a transcontinental link. The railroad's three and four percent grades, together with its tight curves necessary to snake through the mountains, kept trains short with one or more helper engines needed at times.

The Colorado Midland's main business was precious metals, supplying coal, mining machinery and other necessary supplies to Leadville and Aspen as well as hauling ores and concentrates to the smelters. However, a wide variety of other on-line traffic demands kept things interesting--solid stock or reefer trains in season, a quarry, a plaster plant, the first shale oil recovery plant (it didn't work very well, but that was 1917), beautiful resorts, coal mines, coke ovens--all in all quite a bit for the potential CM modeler to choose from. The railroad also had a colorful history which included spectacular wrecks, blizzards that challenged the biggest rotary plow, landslides and even an attempted train robbery by Butch Cassidy and his gang. (cont'd)



The road also had a reputation for treating its employees fairly and the crews reciprocated with a fierce loyalty that helped overcome many formidable obstacles in order to keep the Midland operating.

The Colorado Midland is gone today; it shut down in 1918 and was abandoned in 1921 with the last straw being the incompetent management by the Federal government during the USRA days of World War I. Toward the end of its life, the Midland had to operate such old equipment that it was said to resemble an operating railroad museum. If the Colorado Midland were running today, many Midland fans concede that it would most probably be a part of the Santa Fe which owned it from time to time and almost bought it at the end.

So, for those who don't have the space for a big Class I railroad, a single track mountain railroad can be just the ticket with steep grades forcing you to run short trains that look natural in a mountain setting. Does a three car train stick out both ends of your tunnels? The Midland had a number of those short tunnels. Also, alas, a lot of scroungy trackwork. Its transcontinental connections meant plenty of interchange freight traffic as well as Pullmans to tack onto the passenger trains.

Th era can be anything from 1886 to the present--if you don't mind a little imagineering. For instance, I run ten-wheelers and consolidations with turn-of-the-century rolling stock on my railroad, but my boys are diesel fans and when they fire up the layout, the Santa Fe SD's, GP's and F units come out along with the fifty foot cars and steel cabooses. It all hangs together somehow and it's a lot of fun.

If you'd like to learn more about the Midland, try to dig up a copy of Morris Cafky's book, Colorado Midland, which is fantastic, but now out of print. Or you could look it up in Lucius Beebe's Mixed Train Daily, Len Shoemaker's Roaring Fork Valley or the newer Model Railroad Handbook #1, by Robert Schleicher which is now in most hobby shops and has some track plans based on the Midland. I know

that both Walthers and Herald King print Midland decals; there may be others. Good luck and good modeling!

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The Member Services Committee can help you solve your problems; both model and prototype. Help is just a letter away. Write: Dee Gilbert, MSC Chairman, Box 132, Harrison, AR 72601.

Interested in promoting the TAMR in your area? If so, write: Greg Dahl, TAMR Auditor, 1649 Euclid St., St. Paul, MN 55106 for further details. Help recruit a new member today!

Looking for an unusual boxcar for your pike as well as something to let others know you're a TAMR member? Well, TAMR boxcars are now available. These are standard HO Athearn 40' boxcars painted boxcar red and lettered for the TAMR along with our famous logo. To receive your's, send \$5.00 to: Jeff Wilke, TAMR boxcars, 38115 Park St., Oconomowoc, WI 53066.

Checks and Balances: Richard Hoker

For the period from 5-31-80 to 6-30-80

Beginning Balance	\$472.55
Income	+ \$ 29.50
Expenses	- \$200.36
Ending Balance	+ <u>\$301.69</u>

CRUMMY NEWS (Cont'd from page 3)

I realize it isn't easy for some of you to write an article, but give it a try. We are the ones that transform your hen scratching and crudely drawn sketches into neat typed columns and detailed illustrations. The ideas are what's important and it's our job, not yours, to see they're packaged in an attractive format so others can understand and use them. So why not make your writing debut in the HOTBOX discussing a subject in which we all have a deep personal interest, namely model railroading from the teenage point of view. I think it's about time we show what we are doing in this hobby.

# INSPIRATION

Dick Knotts, president of the Troll & Elfin RR and TAMR Associate member, sent us these pictures of his famous pike in hopes that they'll provide some much needed inspiration during these long summer months to get some work done on your pikes.

(TOP) An overall view of the town of Troll. Notice the numerous "people" not only at the station, but through out the entire area. Also notice a little tongue-in-cheek humor in the name of the hotel on the left side of the photo.

(MIDDLE) Here is a close up view of the Griffen Copper Works shown in the background of the first photo. The elaborate sign, attention to detail and realistic scenery almost make this scene look real.

(BOTTOM) In this photo, we have a couple more examples of Dick's tongue-in-cheek humor which will be instantly recognizable to most NMRA members. On the left, the Phread & Needil Quality Leatherwork shop is named after frequent NMRA BULLETIN contributor Phread Henderson. On the right, the Sima gas station is named after Bud Sima and his Prospect and Upper Ridge Railroad or PURR for short.



# WYNOT CENTRAL

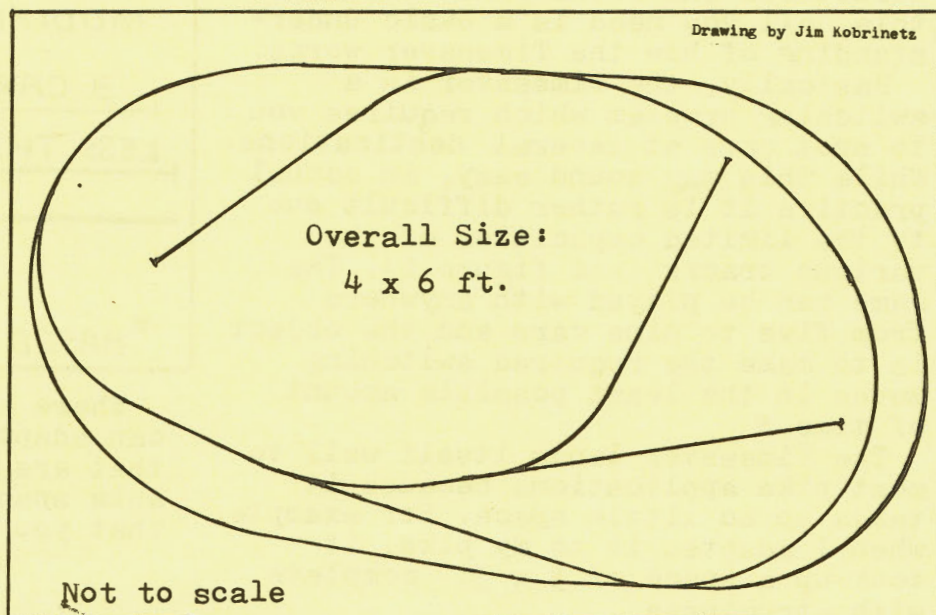
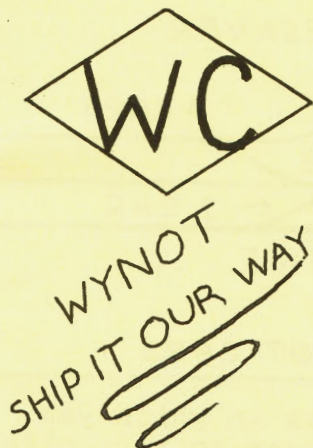
Imagine yourselves standing beside the main attraction of Wynot, the old sandhouse, but of course you can't because I haven't told you about my railway, the Wynot Central. As it stands, the line is owned by the Burlington. Yet the railroad was actually built in the late sixties and Santa Fe owned until late seventy three when a roundhouse fire destroyed most of the equipment except for a few engines. The Santa Fe left most of the bad equipment with the railway and because the Wynot railway did not have enough funds to repair the track and equipment, the railway lay dormant.

In July of 1976, railway officials invited some prospective buyers from the Burlington to the railroad's bicentennial celebration where the big event would be the closing of the old railroad hotel. The buyers upon arriving gawked at the big waste of track that could become an integral part of the Burlington system and arranged to purchase the railway.

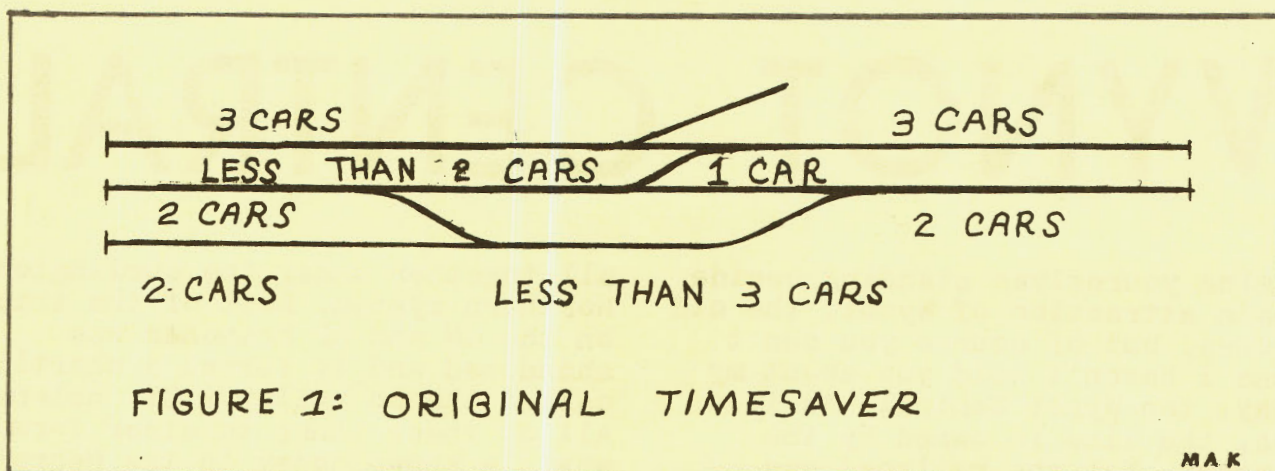
There are three branches of the Wynot Central Railway and the merger of the GN, NP, SP&S and CB&Q brought

all together under the Burlington Northern system. Most of the track on the GN and NP branches was abandoned and it formed a shortline called the Bo Valley & St. Helena RR. All of these lines together form what is known today is the Nebraska System.

The Nebraska System is an imaginary system as this is an imaginary history. However, although the history may be imaginary, the Wynot Central is an HO scale pike in my basement. The WC's only rolling stock is an old Penn Central boxcar that it purchased, otherwise the railroad is run by the BN. Presently a variety of motive power can be seen in the Wynot area due to leasing agreements and such. Lately, along with the Wynot Central's F7 and GP35, a BN F45, SW1500 and Conrail GP35 have been seen not to mention two industrial switchers. The railway is almost like a belt line in a sense, but there are rumors circulating that some big changes are in store for the WC. Perhaps in the near future you won't be able to sit by the main crossing of the WC and see cattle, piggybacks and boxed cargo being pulled by a BN diesel?



Drawing by Jim Kobrinetz



# Is it Really a "Timesaver"?

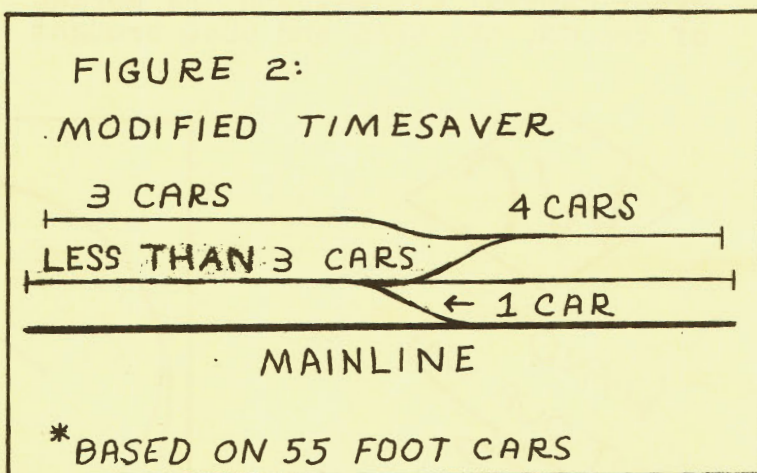
Do you want an industrial switching district on your pike, but aren't sure how to design one? Designing is made easier when you have a basic idea of what you want or can adapt something to your needs from an already published plan. One way to find such plans is to go through old issues of the HOTBOX as well as other model magazines. That's what I did and came across a switching game developed by John Allen called the "Timesaver."

While it is true that the Timesaver is meant to be a fun switching game, it can be adapted to your pike with structures and scenery. To do all this, all you need is a basic understanding of how the Timesaver works.

Basically, the Timesaver is a switching problem which requires you to spot cars at several destinations. While this may sound easy, in actual practice it is rather difficult due to the limited capacities of the various tracks (see figure 1). The game can be played with anywhere from five to nine cars and the object is to make the required switching moves in the least possible amount of time.\*

The Timesaver lends itself well to most pike applications because it takes up so little space. For example, when I adapted it to my pike, it took up a space of 5 x 56" complete with structures.

Even though the Timesaver was designed for forty foot cars and a smaller engine, you can stretch the plan to make it suitable for fifty to sixty foot cars. Figure 2 shows how I adapted the Timesaver to my layout. Most of the cars that I operate are fifty footers, but there is still plenty of room in the Timesaver. In addition, on three of the tracks, I have placed a total of five structures and there is room for two cars at almost every industry.



There are many ways in which you can adapt the Timesaver to your pike that are limited only by your available space and imagination. I suggest that you try it for yourself and see.

(cont'd on page 9)

## INDUSTRIAL SWITCHING TIMESAVER (cont'd)

Now for a few words about operating the Timesaver itself: If you plan to include a Timesaver type design in one of your switching districts, be fair warned that it won't be easy to switch and will take a lot of time. Therefore, I suggest you plan accordingly in your operating schedule. In addition, you may want to set a limit as to the number of cars you want in the district at any one time until you become proficient at switching it. Believe me it is quite easy to get your locomotive trapped while your on line shippers are loading/unloading their cars. Perhaps you can develop some sort of time limit for the loading or unloading of cars with the stipulation that once a car is loaded or unloaded, it can be shifted at will by the local wayfreight. All in all, the Timesaver makes an excellent switching district, as long as you have a lot of time on your hands, that is.

\* If you wish to learn more about the operation of the Timesaver as a game, I suggest you pick up a copy of the October 1976 issue of MODEL RAILROADER where Russ Cain showed how it could be adapted to snap track.

## At Trackside



Good news for all you would-be-35 mm-but-don't-have-any-money-photographers! Pentax has stirred up the photo world with a single-lens reflex, with interchange lenses, that takes 110 film and doesn't cost a lot.

The Pentax 110, with normal lens, can be purchased for around \$200 and the lenses: a wide angle and telephoto for \$50 to \$75. This camera is fully automatic and a joy to use. It will fit in your pocket, even with the auto winder as it doesn't weigh much at all. It is not a camera, of course, which you'd use to make eight by ten or larger prints consistently, but for the slide shooter or a person happy with standard prints, it's just the thing. When a first picked it up, I laughed, but after playing with it, I could see some good uses for it. Those of you who want to get into photography without a lot of money could do well to start with this.

In addition, you have a telephoto available to you. The telephoto, at 50mm which roughly corresponds to 120 mm in 35mm, is already being offered as part of the complete system. This means you don't have to shell out the research for a 50-300 zoom or something like that when you do buy it. Of course, if the camera catches on, expect to see more lenses become available.

If you want a full technical review, the camera magazines have taken care of that, so give them a reading. Yet I will assure you that from my experience, you might well consider getting this camera if you're after one.

Oh yes, one last item: Due to the increased availability and popularity of the new fully automatic 35 mm cameras, many of the manual SLR's (where you set shutter speed and lens aperture yourself with the aid of a light meter) are being offered at lower prices. This type of camera is likely to be around for years to come as most experienced photographers still use them and there are others in the photography field that prefer to have a bit more control of the situation when they are shooting. Thus, of you are interested in getting into 35mm photography to show off your modeling endeavors or capturing your favorite prototype, this is an excellent time to consider doing so.

Next column: Scanners

AT TRACKSIDE is a column that explores the hobbies of rail photography (for modeling purposes or preservation) & railfanning. Please address all comments and questions on this column to: Tim Vermande, 51528 Fond Street, South Bend, IN 46637.

# HELPERS

Do you have any helpful hints for making your model railroad look more realistic that don't take a lot of time and/or money? If you do, consider submitting them to the HELPERS column. All suggestions are to be sent to the HOTBOX Editor.

## Rebuilding a Boxcar

This is a simple project that can be done on the two nights of a weekend. The hardest part is that of collecting all the materials. The items that are needed are as follows: a boxcar or reefer, a door and a couple of windows. I used six windows because my model represents a temporary living space for employees. In addition, you will also need some thin cardstock or styrene.

The first thing to do is to remove the trucks and couplers from the car. These were then saved for a future project. Next I separated the car body from its floor. This made it easier to cut the window and door holes. The hole for the door is easy, but the window openings present a little more of a problem. I solved it by first drilling a hole in the car side and then enlarging it to the proper size of the window with a knife and file.

With all the openings cut out, I started to add the windows and door. It was then I discovered that the windows were too small for the openings I had cut. I considered for a moment how the prototype would solve this problem. Since this was to be an old broken down, cheap storage house building, why not cover the gaps with sheet metal as the prototype would probably do. Thus I took a piece of cardstock, painted it a "tin" color and then proceeded to cover up the gaps.

After these alterations were made, the car was given the worst paint job possible, but it still looked too good for what I wanted. So I roughed up the sides with some fine sand paper and sanded near the logo so the old one showed through. Then two pieces of heavy lumber (by HO standards) were placed under the ends to support my "new" facility. A pipe was then added to the roof to indicate that the building had a stove and some steps were added below the door. The final touch was a good washing of dirt and

dust. The completed structure was then placed on the layout amid a few old oil drums and a broken railroad sign to give it that "lived in" feeling

--Greg Dahl

## CREATING THE EXECUTIVE CAR

Most railroads at some time or another had their own private car. The purpose of the private car was to accommodate the president or other top officials of the railroad. These cars were either ex-passenger cars or they were custom built to suit the taste of the top brass. Even with Amtrak, various railroads still have their own private cars. The ICG uses a Harriman style observation car painted in Amtrak colors, but with "Illinois Central Gulf" on the letterboard. The C&O operates a standard observation similar to those produced by Athearn painted in Chessie colors with brass railings on the back.

Private cars are usually operated at the end of a train. Today they are coupled to the rear end of Amtrak trains or even fast freights. At times, the railroad may even be required to make up a special train with various private cars and one of their locomotives for the inspection of the track. More than likely this type of train will have its own diner (and maybe sleeping accommodations) for the convenience of the top brass.

If your railroad is mainly freight, an executive car can provide an excellent opportunity to sneak in some passenger service. When not in use, the executive car is usually kept on a station siding or a spare yard track. For my HO scale models, I utilized a Con Cor slumbercoach and Athearn standard observation. Now you can go ahead and paint the car in your railroad's colors or a standard color such as Pullman green. You can then letter the car for your railroad and even give it a special name as was the practice on most passenger trains. For a few unique finishing touches add a few figures inside the car such as porters, cooks, maids, etc. and maybe even have the top officials standing on the rear platform of the observation!

Once you have finished, you have a car that is quite interesting and although it's a passenger car, it doesn't have to be operated like one.

--John Van

TAMR HOTBOX

# MAINTENANCE OF WAY

M of W is a product review column written by our members on model railroading and railfanning items that may be of interest to you. All the opinions presented are those of the reviewer and are not necessarily those of the TAM or the HOTBOX. Please submit reviews to the HOTBOX Editor.

Design Handbook of Model Railroads  
by Paul Mallery. Carstens Publications, P.O. Box 700 Newton, NJ 07860. \$5.00 postpaid. 68 pages. Softcover.

Some time has passed since a new softcover modeling book has appeared in the hobby shop. Therefore, when Carstens Publications announced Paul Mallery's new book, I was excited. Not only because Carstens displayed the courage to release another ship amid the sea of Kalmbach How-to-do-it books, but also because the book deals with designing of model railroads--a subject which has been touched too lightly in the past.

Mr. Mallery has produced a book that is chocked full of ideas ranging from developing a concept for a model railroad to the different types of passenger, freight, yard and engine facilities. In his preface, Paul states: "a model railroad should be a model of some part of a real railroad, not just a collection of tracks over which trains spin aimlessly." "It should be capable of being operated in duplication of the methods of the prototype for the mere running of trains does not deliver the full enjoyment possible from this hobby." The book then goes on to show how this has been accomplished with many model and prototype examples. Furthermore, Passenger, yard and engine facilities are virtually dissected track by track and the purpose of each clearly explained. This part of the book is especially helpful when you are trying to decide just what features to incorporate on your own pike.

However, if you're looking for trackplanning ideas, then don't turn to this book. Aside from the many prototype and model examples in the numerous illustrations (including a look at John Allen's second pike plus some glimpses of the Model Railroad Club of New Jersey), you will find very few trackplanning tips.

After all, it is a design handbook and thus you should turn to it for an explanation of prototypical trackage arrangements and model design ideas, not actual trackplanning hints.

--MAK

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N Scale Decals Microscale Decal, Krasel Industries Inc., 1821 Newport Circle, Santa Ana, CA 92708. Sheets include SP, CP Rail, Cotton Belt, CN, Rock Island ("Rock" scheme), N&W, Santa Fe and Dimensional Data. \$2.00 per sheet.

One of the things that amazes me most in this hobby is the growing collection of decal sets that are being offered the modeler. I believe that one of these days, the manufacturers will have produced every variation that has ever appeared on the prototype and then they will start bugging the railroads to change their designs just to keep them in business. However, the manufacturers are not there yet and you can add to the growing decal lists these new releases from Microscale decal.

These decal sheets are capable of lettering about three cars each--much more with the dimensional data sheets--and they all have excellent color rendition. In addition, the lettering on all the sheets, except for the smallest dimensional data items, is clear and sharp. Another feature also apparent on these sheets is that the numbers for cars and locomotives are mixed and therefore you don't have to cut out each number individually and position them all. This way, you can pick a number combination that you like and affix it to the car all in one piece.

If you are interested in the other decals that Microscale has available, you can send 50¢ to the above address for their HO-N catalog.

--MAK

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INTERCHANGE (cont'd from page 2)

Wanted: Lionel #412, 413, 414 and 416 passenger cars in Excellent condition. Will pay \$4.00 for matching set in green or brown. Contact: Anthony Cassamassima, 62-48 84 Street, Middle Village, NY 11379.

# CARD

# ORDER

# OPERATION

Frank Ellison, one of our greatest model railroaders, once compared model railroading to a stage play. The track was the stage on which the performance was held; the actors were the trains, each playing his part amid a stage setting of tunnels, stations and landscapes and the plot was the operating schedule. The effectiveness of the play depended on how well the actors (trains) and setting (scenery) could be used to create an illusion of reality. Yet most people know that a play, no matter how good the actors or props, will lack something if the plot is not convincing.

Furthermore, the plot can't be convincing unless it came from a good script which in model railroading can be described as your operating system. If your trains do not perform like real trains--at least in the eyes of your audience--your play will be a flop.

However, a model railroader does not need an elaborate operating system to give the illusion of actually operating trains in a prototypical manner. Still some system is needed. Here Frank Rudowski presents a card order system that can be adapted to most pikes. Give it a try on your's and perhaps you'll soon be ready for an opening performance. Curtain going up!

--Mark Kaszniak, Editor

I will begin by describing a simple card-order system that works well on small to medium sized pikes. A card order is usually a thin piece of card-board such as a 3x5 inch filing card. The size really isn't important just as long as the necessary information can be held in one hand.

You can start by cutting the card-board to the desired size. Then, think of all the places on your pike--stations, mills, factories, warehouses, sidings, teamtracks, etc.--where you can spot a car. Write these down on a sheet of paper. Next write down on a separate sheet all the different kinds of rolling stock you have on your pike. Now simply list all the places where a piece of rolling stock may be spotted (see fig. 1). For example, an ore car could be spotted at a mine or refinery, but would look out of place at a chemical processing plant or grain elevator.

Once you have finished this, make up as many lists as you have cars being sure to leave room at the top for a heading which will identify each piece of rolling stock (see fig. 2).

For the heading on the top of each card put the following information: an abbreviation for the type of car it is (e.g. box for boxcar, gon for gondola); the railroad's reporting marks (e.g. DT&I, UP, CNW) and also the car's number (e.g. 133666. 20423). Now your form is complete (see fig. 3) and all you have to do is put a paper clip along the side so that it partially covers up one of the places on your list.

To use this system, place all the card order cards in a small box and attach it to the side of the layout. To make up a train, pull out at random a number of cards then find these cars in your yard, assemble them in an order which will make it easy for you to switch them on the mainline and attach a locomotive to be on your way. Proceed to the first stop and set out those cars which have the paper clip covering the name (cont'd)

## Boxcar

Grogs furniture  
B&H warehouse  
Cal's machine shop  
F&R mfg.  
Teamtrack A  
Teamtrack B

## Flatcar

Grogs furniture  
F&R mfg.  
etc.

## Tank Car

Grogs furniture  
BASF chemicals  
etc.

Figure 1:

Figure 2: Partially completed card order card.

Grogs furniture
F&R mfg
B&H warehouse
Cal's machining
Teamtrack A
Teamtrack B

Then move on to the next location and set out some more cars. When you have finished switching all your cars, take the cards and move the paper clips down one space, then place the cards back in the box for the next operating session. To pick up the cars you set out before, make up a regular consist as usual except that if a car you need isn't in the yard, determine where it is located on the main-line and make arrangements to have it picked up and delivered to its next intended stop when you come upon the particular industry where it is located while doing your other switching chores. If you happen to have to spot a car at an industry which already has a car spotted at it and is not scheduled to be moved during this present session, simply spot the new car after removing the old car. This car can then be taken back to the yard at the end of the run to await its routing to its destination.

The only flaw that I can find in this system is that some cars may be left in the yard for long periods of time while others may be used every time you operate as this system mainly depends on how you pick the cards. You can get around this however by dividing your storage box into two parts and place the cards you used in the last operating session in a different section than those you

didn't use. This way you can draw among the cars that you didn't use last time plus add some additional ones that you did if you want a longer session.

Figure 3: Completed card order card

Box DT&I 133666
Grogs furniture
F&R mfg
B&H warehouse
Cal's machining
Teamtrack A
Teamtrack B

In addition, you can use these kind of car cards for motive power and cabooses as well. Try to include information such as the type, make, builder, number and anything else you think is particularly important (see fig 4)

Figure 4: Card order card for locomotives (and maybe even cabooses)

Type - Consolidation
Number - 666
Builder - Baldwin
Last serviced - 2/16/80
Remarks -

MAK

You can also add remarks about servicing and any problems you may have so that your system can double as a maintenance record as well. Then all you have to do is add a locomotive and caboose to every consist you make up and get set for operating fun!

# TRAIN ORDERS

TRAIN ORDERS is a letters column in the TAMR HOTBOX where you can express your views on the TAMR, its publications and its officers. All letters for this column should be sent to the Editor of the TAMR HOTBOX.

Your HOTBOX is the best and I'm looking forward to more of it. Perhaps in the future I will write an article about some of the experiences I've had on my layout or while railfanning. I haven't wasted any time in letting people know that I've joined the TAMR.

--Carl Larsen  
Pocahontas, AR

I would like you to hear my opinion on the TAMR--I think its GREAT! The HOTBOX is more than I thought it would be and I enjoy it. I also plan on joining WARS and promoting the TAMR. Even though I only have a 4x8' layout, I enjoy the hobby just the same as anyone else.

--Frank Martin  
Hermiston, OR

I just received my HOTBOX and as usual I was disappointed in its contents. The article on soldering helped me out very much since I just received a soldering gun and wasn't sure how to use it properly. Yet back to the point, I personally feel the HOTBOX should contain more teenage material. Sure railfanning is great, but every issue? Come on, you can come up with something a little different or you're in deeper trouble than you think. Here are my personal suggestions:

- 1) More articles about teen's model railroads.
- 2) Students opinions of model railroading.
- 3) Articles on scenery and equipment. Most students can afford good products so tell us how to use them properly to get the most for our money.
- 4) Run an article on maintenance of locomotives as this is currently my biggest problem.

--Mike Sullivan  
Bakersfield, CA

I find the HOTBOX a railfanning magazine. I might not renew my membership.

--- Ed Marsh  
St. Petersburg, FL

Just a quick note here. Finally received my HOTBOX, you guys did a great job. Loved my article (I'm so vain) and you did a terrific job of putting together the deluge of material I sent you.

By the way, on page 7 of the March/April HOTBOX, the night shot of the RGZ, I don't recall a huge paper clip coming down out of the sky at the time I took the shot, maybe I was drunk!

--Gary Gardner  
Salt Lake City, UT

(Editor's Note: Gary, I don't think you were drunk, but I do think the printer was playing an April Fool's joke on us.)

I say "Hello" to you and wish to say a few things which are not meant to be rude or mean. To start off with, I am kind of disappointed with the TAMR seeing that "all the benefits" were the HOTBOX and a yearly convention which is beyond my getting to. Another thing is I like to get the HOTBOX every other month, but I'm disappointed to find that I can read through it in a half an hour. Since you probably have many articles to be printed, perhaps it would be possible to make it thicker or print once a month.

--Brent Irvine  
Ontario, CANADA

I am writing to say how much I like being a member of the TAMR. I do not write many letters, but after receiving the March/April HOTBOX, I had to write to commend the entire HOTBOX Staff for doing a superb job. Each issue of the HOTBOX has been better than the last and I find myself looking forward to the next issue and digging into it as soon as I get it out of my mailbox.

I think the TAMR is the best thing that has ever happened to us teenage model railroaders. Yet there is one thing that I'd like to criticize right here and that is the lack of participation in elections and other voting situations. Only 25% voted for the Constitution and by-laws. Come on you guys! You can do better than that! I am basically a forgetful fellow, but I do manage to get off my voting ballots. It's your association, only you can make it work.

--Mark Wilson  
Albany, GA

## TRAIN ORDERS (cont'd from page 14)

Today everything is on the rise from food to gas, A to Z. Every single thing except for our railroads. One by one, company after company drops away from the railroads and switches to one of its biggest competitors--the truck. Flatbed, reefer, any type of truck. You name it, they've got it. Today big business relies on the speedy delivery of the truck. It's quick, easy to load and tops the old fashioned, slow moving long train. While it is true that trains are out of their glory days, the railroad will eventually be the underdog in today's energy fight. It may not be as fast, but it's a heck of a lot cheaper and much more energy efficient.

However, it still might be a few more years until big business realizes that railroads are more energy efficient than trucks. Yet we don't really have a few more years for two basic reasons: fuel and bankruptcy.

Fuel. Today's gold. People use it for just about everything. House, cars, trucks, businesses. You name it and we'll fuel it up and use it. They say that we use our weight in oil every two days. At that rate, we probably won't have any left by 1985. Is it our parents fault that we've become so energy oriented? Nobody knows and it's too late to find out now.

Furthermore, Airplanes, trucks and cars have proven to be the real killer of the railroads. Every year at least ten railroads merge or declare bankruptcy. Our government is just beginning to realize how important railroads can be. They see the cost of fuel sky rocketing and say to themselves, what can we do to stop this?

For starters, leave the railroads alone. I feel that Amtrak was a big government boo-boo. The White House thought it was doing something good for our nation, but instead gave the nation one big headache. Rotten service drove away passengers and then the big car boom began. If that was not enough, Federal encouragements to build new highways brought semi booms--AGAIN driving away would be customers.

The railroads finally started to fight back. Falcon service, Sprint service, piggyback service. It spread like wild fire to most of the railroads, but increasing government funds to build even better highways, left the railroads again in the cold.

Next boo-boo, President Carter's protest to the Soviet invasion. Stock piles of grain at elevators, add to this the problem of the grain handlers strike last summer in the Twin ports and you have one hell of a mess. Too much grain for too few. The farmers and the railroads pretty well gave up on that score.

Oh yes, the increase in the prime lending rate. Another harsh, almost crippling blow to the railroads. Money for repairing track suddenly becomes unavailable and the physical plant of the railroads starts to deteriorate. Our government has chopped the heck out of our country building transportation system network that was vital in the winning of the Civil War for the Union and settling our Western States.

First the government takes over all the major railroad's passenger service, totally disgracing most of modern day railroading and then it takes disastrous steps to eliminate the railroads themselves. Yet now when gas is a \$1.50 at the service station, our government begins to see its mistake. Now what do they do? Pump money into no good causes like the Rock Island and Milw. Road. Why can't the government help the railroad? --Randy Rivers

(Editor's Note: This item doesn't really belong in this column, but I included it to provoke some comments on the subject)

## INTERCHANGE (cont'd from page 11)

WANTED N scale locomotives for running or parts (no Model Power, please), cars with kadee couplers. Peco turnouts, Atlas flex track and anything else in good condition.

RR COLLECTABLES FOR SALE: Employee & public timetables, lantern, locks, sign and other stuff. SSAE for list. RR COLLECTABLES WANTED: Anything from any Southeastern railroad. Please contact: Bill Niemeyer, 808 NE 21 Drive, Wilton Manors, FL 33305.

FRONT COVER: Everyone likes a good laugh now and then and so on the cover of this issue, Bill Davenport pokes a little fun at one of the great truths of model railroading.

## MARKERS:

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Dee Gilbert returns with yet another article. Only this time he's not talking about derailments, but timber trestles. Learn how to build these impressive structures for your layout. Dwight Anderson takes us on a tour of his Cheyenne & Northport Rk which will eventually become a multi-level system. Claude Morelli gives us a history of his Rio Grande, Santa Fe & Pacific Railway which is set in the southwestern United States and the HOTBOX Staff reviews solderless connectors and how they can cut down the various soldering jobs on your layout. All this, plus our regular columns--CRUMMY NEWS, HELPERS, TRAIN ORDERS, M OF W and AT TRACKSIDE--will be coming your way in the consist of the September/October issue of the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading. Who could ask for more?

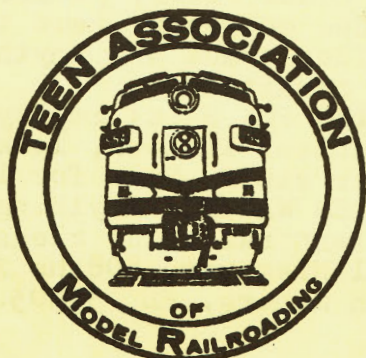
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NARROW GAUGE AND LOGGING LINE NEWS: Of any of you are interested in or model any sort of narrow gauge or logging line, then the Narrow Gauge and Logging Line Modelers Division of the TAMR (or the NGLLMD-TAMR for short?) is for you. We are a newly formed group, operated as a regular TAMR region is, with dues and a newsletter. For further information, contact: Claude Morelli, 2236 Dietz Place NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107

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1980 TAMR NATIONAL CONVENTION: This year's convention will be held on Long Island, NY., August 15-17. Many activities are planned including club layout tours and area railfanning plus our traditional banquet. The registration fee is \$5.00 and the total cost for the convention--including meals--is approximately \$50.00. Further information and registration can be received from: Ted Tait, Convention Registrar, 16 Evergreen Drive, Syosset, NY 11791.

TAMR HOTBOX, "the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"  
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