

# Teen Association of Model Railroaders

## HOTBOX

April, 1992

Issue #268

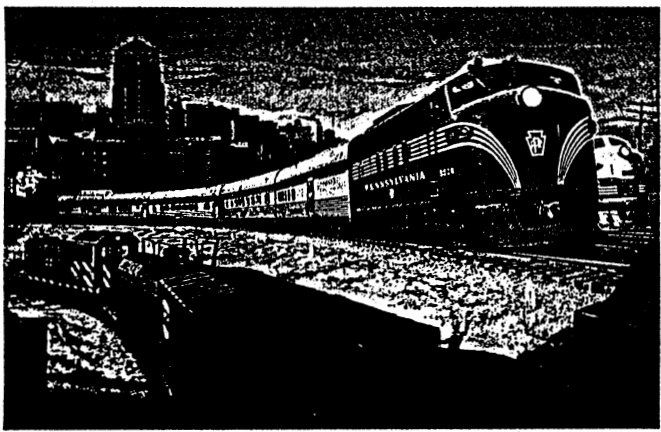


This month:  
First half  
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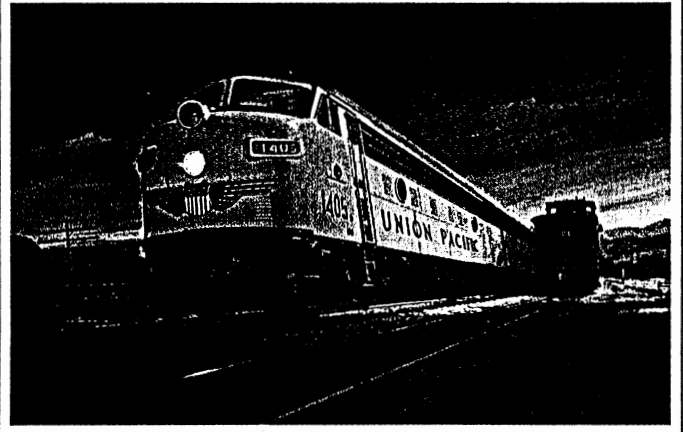


Convention news,  
Video railroading,  
N-Trak construction,  
and Train Orders!!!

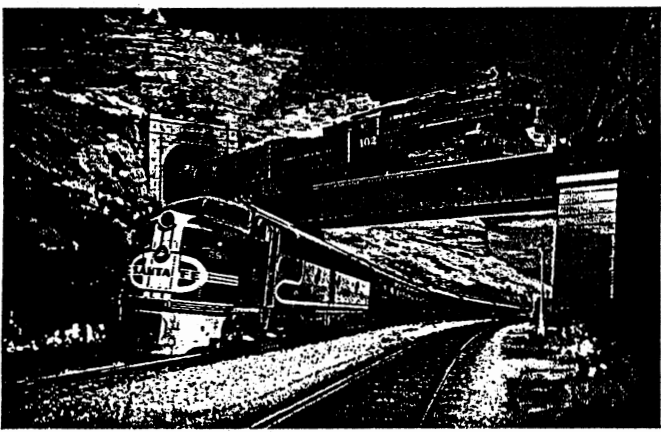
# ALL AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE PRINTS



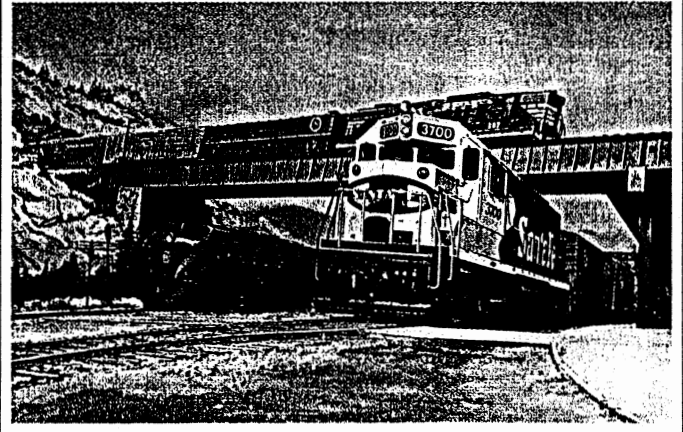
#352 - Midwest Terminal-A streamlined passenger train departs on the main track, while a small switcher is engaged in shunting its string of freight cars.



#353 - The Union Pacific Fast Freight- The drama and grace of the UP railroad, noted for speedy freight trains pulled by multiple units of diesel locomotives, is captured in this print.



#354 - Santa Fe "War Bonnet"- This popular locomotive is shown accelerating a passenger train; while on the bridge above, a heavy steam switcher wrestles with a long cut of freight cars.



#355 - Mainline Action-The Santa Fe is a freight and passenger scheme. Also shown, a Pennsylvania Railroad FP-7 loco and a Burlington Route SD-24.

## Clip & Return

| Item #    | Qty. | Title                      | Price ea. | Total |
|-----------|------|----------------------------|-----------|-------|
| #352      |      | Midwest Terminal           | 7.95      |       |
| #353      |      | Union Pacific Fast Freight | 7.95      |       |
| #354      |      | Santa Fe "War Bonnet"      | 7.95      |       |
| #355      |      | Mainline Action            | 7.95      |       |
| #356      |      | Complete set of 4          | 25.00     |       |
| Sub-total |      |                            |           |       |
| P&H       |      |                            |           |       |
| Total     |      |                            |           |       |

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ Money Order  
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# FROM THE DESK OF

## Phil Michaels, Editor/HOTBOX

Well, as you will soon find out, if you haven't already, this month is not entirely nor completely the annual election issue. We have had some problems with the election and nomination proceedings, so here's what's going to happen:

This month we are printing all current nominations and what offices are available. If you would like to nominate yourself for an office you must send in your nomination to me, the editor, at the address on this page. ALL NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY THE NINTH, 1992. Also, if you are running for election OR reelection, you need to write at least a paragraph, explaining why people should vote for you.

Next month we will be mailing the JUNE issue of the Hotbox. This will include the election ballot. Then in June you will (finally) receive the official

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NER: Bryan Shoop  
CR: Phil Michaels  
WR: Brett Lucas  
SR: Matt Caldwell

1992 TAMR Directory. Normally the directory is mailed in May and the June Hotbox in June, but because of the tardiness of nominations and elections, we will produce the June Hotbox in May, and the May Directory in June. The Directory will list all the new 1992 TAMR Administration plus all the current members. Thereafter we will keep you posted here in the Hotbox of all address changes and new members. You can find all the other information you need about elections, nominations, and offices on page eight of this issue.

Now that we have that taken care of I would like to thank all who have made contributions to the April, 1992 issue. By the way, after this issue I have basically NOTHING left to print for next month. I can't do it all myself, you know, so I would appreciate seeing some more layout letters and perhaps some product reviews, or anything else worthy

### On the Cover:

The Electro-Motive Division of General Motors (EMD) was the pioneer of diesel-electric technology and for many years was the dominant locomotive builder in North America. Still a power, although hanging on by its teeth, EMD produces mostly high-horsepower four and six-axle locomotives such as the unit pictured on the cover: Canadian National SD60F number 5541 taken at Calder Yards in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in June of 1990 (Photo by: Mike Yan).

The other photo shows Metra (BN) E9 number 9913 at Brookfield, Illinois, in September, 1990. The carbody style, almost 50 years old, is very similar in appearance to the CN unit pictured above and it is interesting to see the many changes EMD has gone through only to get back to a very similar carbody. The E9's are being replaced by new Metra F40PHM-2's during this year.

of printing in the Hotbox. Things are going pretty good for our group right now, so let's not slow it down, but rather speed it up, so that all can continue to enjoy the Hotbox and all the other benefits that the TAMR has to offer. If anyone has any ideas as to what else we can do in the TAMR, send them in! Here are this month's contributors. Many thanks to these, who continue to show their interest in the TAMR:

John Reichel  
Mike Yan  
David Coon  
Tom Matthews  
Matt Bedford

&

All those who continue to write letters of encouragement, criticism, and about their layouts and interests as model railroaders. I hope everyone has a great month, and that you keep enjoying the hobby of model railroading.

## Bill of Lading:

|                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Editorial.....                     | Page 3 |
| Convention News/Update.....        | Page 4 |
| TAMR Table at Train Show.....      | Page 4 |
| Video Railroading.....             | Page 5 |
| N-Trak Construction.....           | Page 5 |
| Pike Ads.....                      | Page 5 |
| More on Kadee Couplers.....        | Page 6 |
| Help with Ordering Frustration.... | Page 6 |
| Train Orders.....                  | Page 7 |
| Nomination/Election News&Info..... | Page 8 |

We're not sure just what is going to be in next month's issue, June 1992, because there isn't much material left. Send in an article about your railroad or anything else of interest. We do know that next month will include the election ballot and the nominee's nomination paragraphs telling us why we should elect them. There will also be interesting letters from all over the world!!!

# Convention News...

Have you made plans yet to attend the 1992 TAMR National Convention? It will be held July 22nd-26th in the San Jose, California area. Don't worry if you can't attend the whole five days, but there will be something going on for everyone who can make it during that time period.

A few changes have been made since we last told you about the convention: We won't be having a table at the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) Convention, which is being held at the same time, because there won't BE any tables! Our Pivot Pin, John Reichel, mistakenly assumed that the NRHS convention would be like the Railfair in Sacramento in 1991, with dozens of tables for historical groups and a huge gathering of public citizens. But it turns out that the NRHS Convention isn't even open to the public: you have to be an NRHS member.

But don't worry! All is not lost! First of all, TAMR members are welcome to join the NRHS (John can send you an application). Then, for a fee, you can attend the NRHS Convention. There MAY still be tickets available for steam excursions, but bring lots of money!

Second, we'll be able to photograph the steam excursion trains all over the Bay Area, not just at the Convention grounds. SP 2472 and 4449 and UP 3985 will be leading various excursions to Sacramento, San Francisco, and Watsonville Junction.

Third, we'll have the opportunity to see these trains as they come to the convention (3985 will go from Cheyenne, Wyoming, through the Feather River Canyon, and on to San Jose) and as they leave to go home.

Fourth, because the TAMR Convention sponsors, Brett Lucas and John Reichel,

won't be committed to staffing a table every day, there will be more opportunity to drive TAMR members around to see all kinds of trains around the Bay Area.

Those of you who are thinking about going to the TAMR Convention should contact Brett or John soon. We are setting up plans for places to stay, and it's possible that some of you will be able to stay at a member's house at no cost. Considering that the convention itself is free, that's quite a deal! Hope to see many of you there!

(For convention information, contact John Reichel at the address on page three).

## TAMR TABLE AT GREAT AMERICAN TRAIN SHOW

Western Region Representative Brett Lucas and Pivot Pin John Reichel spent a weekend promoting TAMR at the Great American Train Show at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, on February 15-16. Brett and John talked to over a hundred young model railroaders and their families at this event, one of the biggest train shows in the United States.

Brett and John brought a huge stack of TAMR brochures, application forms, Western Region "Daylight" newsletters, and various handouts to distribute, and almost everything was given out. Several young modelers and even adults who were starting out requested help.

Since most of the train show visitors live in Northern California, Brett and John were able to reach a large number of potential attendees to the TAMR convention and tell them why they should come to the San Jose area for it on July 22-26. Of course, we hope people from all over the United States and Canada will come, but we expect the majority

will be from California.

Brett and John also talked to many young modelers involved with modular clubs, such as Peninsula N-Trak, that operated at the show. We've noticed that some young model railroaders who are already involved with train clubs think that TAMR doesn't have much to offer them, because they're already past the beginner stage. We convinced them that TAMR can help their clubs attract more young members, and that we aren't just a club for beginners.

Some of you may remember some friction between our group and the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) several years ago. Well the people at the NMRA booth were very helpful at this show by placing a stack of brochures at their table and giving John some old TAMR promotional material from eleven years ago! Back in 1981, TAMR had a nice eight-page promotional brochure, with photographs, and it's worthwhile to try to come up with something like that again.

Thanks to John Claudino, whose company, Aztec Manufacturing, puts out N-scale track-cleaning cars, boxcars with operating EOT's (End-of-train devices), and special-run cars, for donating table space to TAMR.

# Video Railroading

Have you ever tried to show someone what your layout looks like using photographs? If you're using an autofocus camera and you're a mediocre photographer like myself, then photographs may not give a true impression of your work. The solution to this problem is the merging of model railroading with one of today's fastest growing technological trends: home video. Capturing your trains on video tape can be fun and has many advantages over photos or slides.

First, moving trains are much more exciting to watch than still photographs are. This is especially true for non-modelers, who like to see trains in action but may not know what to look for and appreciate in a photograph. A video will make people WANT to see your layout and not just feel obliged to politely glance at your pictures.

Secondly, the video camera has a greater range than the average 35mm autofocus camera. This allows you to take breath-taking close-ups that, if taken from the right angle, can be difficult to distinguish from the real thing. Also, the zoom lens on a video camera makes most any location on a layout accessible at the touch of a button.

And then there is the financial advantage. A quality VHS cassette costs about four dollars Canadian, whereas a 24-exposure roll of Kodacolor 400 costs five or six dollars. Add processing and G.S.T. and it comes to over twenty dollars. So, in these hard economic times, video is clearly better than photos are. It can be used for railfanning, hobby shows, home layouts, or for other non-railroading activities.

If you don't own a video camera, you could borrow one. They're really marvelous machines, and videos can give you a truer representation of your layout, and it could look better! Have fun!

# N-Trak Modules

What is an N-Trak module, you may ask? For those of you who don't know about N-trak modules, they are, simply put, four-by-six, or four-by-eight sections of a modular N-scale layout. The term modular layout refers to a layout made of sections called modules. Each module is built to a set of specifications and the module can be put in almost any part of the layout. The number of modules that can be hooked together is limited only by the space or the number of modules available. Most of the time, you only have to build a straight four foot, six foot, or eight foot module with three mainlines and can connect it to any existing layout.

There are clubs in almost every major city that have N-Trak setups. The modules are so easy to connect and hook up, that my club in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, took a few down to New Orleans and in minutes we were able to hook ours up to those of people we had never met before. As long as there are four corner modules, there can be an N-Trak setup or layout.

To find out more about N-Trak, you can write to Jim Fitzgerald, the head of N-Trak at:

2424 Alturas Road  
Atascadero, CA. 93422

Send him one dollar to receive THE N-TRAK MANUAL with full specifications for building modules, or send nine dollars to get the MODULE "HOW-TO" BOOK with over fifty module track plans and photos, plus chapters on design, carpentry, track laying, wiring, scenery, operation, and much more. Over 100 pages. Contact your local hobby shop to find out if there is an N-Trak club or group in your community. If not, check in nearby communities. You may wish to start one yourself by leaving signs wherever N-scale products are sold near you.

# Pike Ads

Pike ads are a fantastic way to let other people know about your freelanced, or prototype, model railroad. In case any of you don't know what a pike ad is, let me take this time to tell you about them and all their great benefits.

The term "pike ad" refers to an advertisement for a model railroad layout. Or, in other words, your railroad pike, and thus the term, "pike ad". You can refer back to page two of last month's HOTBOX to see a great example of a pike ad. The ad was for Zachary Gooch's Pittsborough, Marietta, and Ironton Railroad, which was featured in the January and February 1991 issues of the Hotbox, under the editorship of Peter Schlierloh. If anyone would like reprints of these articles I can send them to you for one dollar including postage. Anyway, the ad looks really good and it was a great way for Zachary to let other people know about his freelanced railroad.

Pike ads don't necessarily HAVE to be for freelanced railroads, however. You can place a pike ad even if you model a prototype road, or many prototypes. All you need to do is think of a nice way to distinguish your layout from the prototype. I am planning on running an ad for my railroad, the Detroit and Ohio very soon.

Pike ads really are great for promoting your railroad. They also can get other people interested in you and your modeling capabilities. Maybe you could make some new friends, and that's what this association is all about! If there are TAMR members who live close to you, they might be able to come visit your layout for an operating session. And all because of a pike ad. Granted, they may not do all this, but they still are a great deal, because all pike ads in the Hotbox are run at free-of-charge! If you want to run a pike ad, or want to work with me on doing one, let me know!!



# More On Kadee

## Couplers

Take a look at the Kadee #4 coupler sometime. It's main difference from the #5 is the shank. Instead of using a stamped copper spring like the #5, it has a coil spring to cause centering. This spring also gives a fantastic back and forth cushion which looks like cushioned draft gear in operation, just like the prototype. It's great watching a long train start and the engine being up to ten miles per hour before the tail end starts, and if you're using a caboose (What's THAT?) the crew will not be wearing their coffee.

The Kadee #4 is a little tricky to set up in its pocket, but they make a nice jig to help you with it. Here we go again, it costs a few dollars but it is well worth it to obtain good operation.

**Below:** A prototype lease engine at LaGrange Park, Illinois on the Indiana Harbor Belt in 1989. GSCX (GATX) #6350 is an SD40-2 in GATX's nice blue and white paint scheme. This photo was before the yellow frame stripe now standard on GATX's painted lease engines.



**Above:** Also at LaGrange Park was this IHB SW9 #9004. This photo was taken in March of 1991. The Indiana Harbor Belt is Chicago's major belt line and most Chicago roads use its rails. The IHB would be neat to model. Both photos are by Chuck Janda, as well as the BN E9 on the cover, not mentioned earlier.

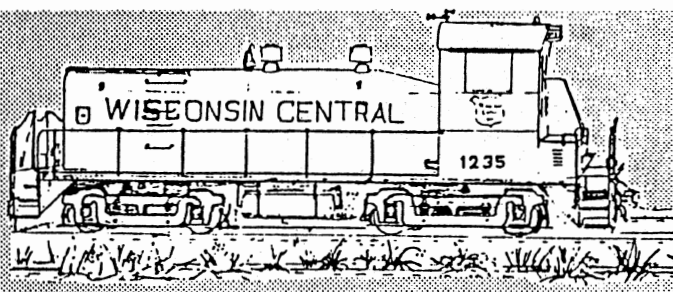
Ordering model railroad supplies and materials can be very frustrating. Whenever I order anything from Walther's I have to call my hobby shop to fill out an order form. Sometimes they mistake the order, and after all this my order comes in six to eight weeks late. Usually the order doesn't come all at once. But I have had good luck with Standard Hobby Supply, a company in New Jersey. You may order by phone, fax, or mail. If you order by phone be sure to have a credit card handy. You should receive your order within six to eight business days if you order by phone. Standard Hobby Supply advertises in Model Railroader, but here's the address for a two dollar catalog.

Standard Hobby Supply  
P.O. Box 801  
Dept. MR  
Manwah, N.J. 07430



# Train

# Orders



Here at the Hotbox we haven't been getting many letters so the first thing up this month is an article about train orders, the things that this column is named after. The article is by John Reichel, who, coincidentally, has been the major contributor to the Hotbox so far. If you get a chance, write him a letter and tell him about the great job he's been doing as the TAMR Pivot Pin:

Do you know what train orders are? They're becoming a thing of the past, if they aren't already completely extinct. Now Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) and similar systems are used to control train movements and keep everything in order.

In the days of train orders, an engineer would have to pick up a thin piece of tracing paper, nicknamed a "flimsy", at a station before proceeding to the next stop. Having to physically hold on to the train order avoided the problems that could occur if oral communication was used instead. Those of you who've listened to scanners know that it's sometimes difficult to hear exactly what's being said on railroad radio channels.

Besides giving clearance to proceed, train orders gave information about track conditions and any other factors that could concern the crew.

It wouldn't be too hard to design a train order system for your layout. You can make it as simple or as complicated as you want. This is a practical way to warn visiting operators of dangerous spots in the trackage. For example, you could say:

No scenery between Sacramento and Roseville to prevent trains from crashing to the floor. Speed limit is 30 mph.

Do not exceed 50 mph when passing over

we switch on mainline.

Track work near Niles. All trains must stop before entering Niles block, then proceed at 25mph until Decoto.

If you design your own train orders, why don't you send the Hotbox a copy. Happy railroading!

\*\*\*\*\*

Here's a letter from Darin Smith, who lives in Laurens, Iowa:

My railroad in the basement has really grown. I have exoanded considerably. I've hooked on a four-by-six foot board adjacent to the exisiting layout board. I have a track that runs all the way around the perimeter.

I went to my dad's friend's house, and he sold about \$1,000 worth of HO scale trains. I was the first one to get there and bought about \$30 worth of cars and engines, including an Athearn GP50 diesel. He sold all of his equipment because he's going to N-scale. Now the only thing I need is a Tech II Locomotion 2500 [power pack]. I also got Ka-dee couplers for all of my rolling stock.

Since school started, I really have not had time to do much with my railroad in the basement. I was able to get something done during Christmas vacation though. When I'm not studying or working on my layout, I like to chase Chicago and North Western trains through Laurens.

Well, that's all for now. I'll update you with more progress as soon as I progress!

\*\*\*\*\*

It sounds like you've got a really

great layout started, Darin. It also looks as if you got in on a good deal at your dad's friend's house. You never know where you might find model trains! We'll all be looking forward to hearing more about your layout!

Now, about the current layout letter contest. I was not given a specific issue that the contest would end with, but I would think it would be appropriate to end it with next month's issue. So, if you still want to tell us about your layout, and maybe even win a prize, then hurry up and get your letter in and postmarked by May the fifth, 1992. All the letters that we here at the Hotbox have received so far have been really great, and it has been very interesting to read about some of the TAMR member's layouts. I think that it would be neat if some of you who have written about your layou would like to do feature articles for the Hotbox in the future. So far, since I have been editor, we really haven't spotlighted anyone's layout yet. I am planning on doing a feature on my own Detroit and Ohio later this year, but many of your layouts seem so interesting that it would be terrific if you did a feature article. If you need help please let me know. I'm willing to work with anyone about their ideas for the Hotbox and for columns, articles, etc.

We're looking forward to seeing many great letters next month, and as always, let us know how we're doing and what kind of improvements we can make to the Hotbox.



# Nominations/ Elections

O.K., here it is, as plain and simple as possible. The following is a list of all offices up for election, the current nominations for those offices, and what the responsibility of their offices are, as found in the TAMR by-laws:

## President:

### Current Nominations:

Jeremy Amundsen, Roger Balwinski

## Duties:

To take bids for the sight of the annual convention; to oversee the regions and lend assistance as well as reporting on their progress; to identify and present the major problems in the TAMR and work with other officers for the solution to those problems; to report on the status of TAMR periodically through the pages of its publications. Also, to work with the auditor and treasurer in appointing an editor and secretary when necessary.

## Auditor:

No Current Nominations

## Duties:

To be in charge of promoting TAMR on all levels as well as making known noteworthy events of TAMR members; to perform a yearly audit of the TAMR's finances; to prepare an annual report reviewing promotional and recruitment efforts of the past year to be put in the TAMR's publication. Also, to work with the president and treasurer in appointing an editor and secretary when necessary.

## Treasurer:

No Current Nominations

## Duties:

To keep a record of all funds received and all funds paid out by TAMR; to balance his book every six months and prepare a written financial report for publication in the Hotbox; to arrange

for his books to be reviewed by the auditor at the close of each year; to allot money from TAMR's funds for the necessary functions of the TAMR. These funds go to officers only.

If any of these duties are not understood by anyone who wants to nominate themselves and run for office, just ask the current officer. And don't worry, they will be very helpful in sending you all the information you need. These offices really aren't all that complicated or difficult, and they are actually much fun to be involved with. Here's the regional nominations (you must be in the particular region to vote on any of its officers):

### Northeast Region Representative:

#### Current Nominations:

Bryan Shoop, Mike Thidemann

### Central Region Representative:

#### Current Nominations:

Zachary Gooch

### Western Region Representative:

#### Current Nominations:

Brett Lucas

### Canadian/International Region:

#### Current Nominations:

Mike Yan

### Duties of Representatives:

To maintain connection between TAMR and the regions; giving recommendations from the region to the TAMR; to provide information on regional activities to interested and/or prospective TAMR members; to submit an annual report to the president on regional activities of the past year; to act as chief executive officer of the region. Also, to help in coordinating regional activities and publications.

According to the TAMR Constitution all these offices are to be of a 2-year

duration. But we have become quite off-track in our elections. There will be a vote on the ballot to determine what to do about this situation. There will also be some other issues to be voted on.

I don't want to use this space to scare anyone out of running or nominating themselves. Really, the officer positions aren't too difficult and shouldn't take up too much of your time for those of you with busy schedules. But you do have to be dedicated to what you're doing in order to make this association work well.

Remember, I have to have all the nominations in plus all the paragraphs by MAY 9TH, 1992. This is imperative for the elections to run smoothly. For once, we need things to go smooth. So please, those of you who want to or need to reply, do so by the above date. Make sure to allow time for the post office to get everything here. If you have any questions whatsoever, you can contact the editor or the Pivot Pin of TAMR:

#### Nominations:

Phil Michaels  
522 S. Tompkins St.  
Howell, Mi. 48843

#### Questions:

Phil Michaels  
or  
John Reichel  
1800 E. 38th St.  
Oakland, CA.  
94610



**Come to the 1992 TAMR**

**Convention, to be held in**

**San Jose, Ca., July**

**22nd-26th, 1992. It's**

**going to be a great time that  
you don't want to miss!!!!**