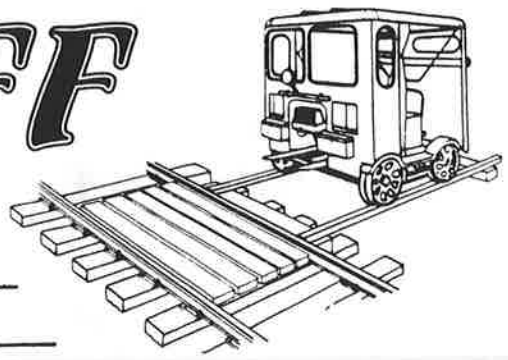


Dick Ray

# THE SETOFF



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN  
RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (NARCOA)

Summer, 1988



## WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION!

THE SETOFF needs the participation of *you readers*, if we are to continue publishing the type of newsletter that all of you folks want and enjoy. *We need photos, and articles about your track car hobby!*

THE SETOFF can use color or black and white prints equally well, and occasionally color slides. We want to know about your trips, how you restored your cars, how you got into the hobby, maintenance tips, and any other information that you would like to share with others. Perhaps you could send us histories of your cars, and where they ran (when they were owned by the railroad).

What about paint schemes?...have any of you folks had to do research on your cars? Tell us some of your tales! And, by all means, *don't be afraid to write!* We will do an edit job on your material, and still give you the credit for the material (notes in letter form are fine...don't worry about grammar, we just need your inputs).

When you make your trips this summer, remember THE SETOFF as you meander down the rails. Take a few minutes to stop and photograph your car on that neat bridge, at the tunnel portal, or alongside the old factory building...*whatever!* Let us know about any of your local meets or gatherings. The key is to *share* your hobby with other readers!

I'll let you all know in the next issue of THE SETOFF how many of you responded with some material. Remember, if there is no material contributed from *you*, it will become harder and harder to give you folks, the quality publication that you want and deserve.

## COVER PHOTOS

*Top* - The Sweet Line Railroad of Carson City, Michigan hosted its first motor car meet June 10-12, over their ex GTW Trackage in central Michigan. The lineup of attendees cars is shown on Saturday, at the railroad's interchange (with Tuscola & Saginaw Bay Railway) at Middleton. *Bottom* - A line up of motor cars awaits the return leg trip to Waterville, Ohio, on the Toledo, Lake Erie & Western Railway, during the TLE&W's first track car meet, on April 30th.

Photos By Doug Leffler

## A NOTABLE QUOTE FROM "THE TRACK INSPECTOR"

"Riding on a motor car is a lot more fun than shoveling coal on a steam locomotive."



# THE SETOFF

Volume 2

Number 2

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Additional information about NARCOA can be obtained from Joel Williams, Box 82, Greendell, New Jersey 07839. Subscriptions to THE SETOFF are \$10.00 per year, and are available from Doug Leffler, 622 Pawnee, Jackson, Michigan 49203

## THE VALLEY RAILROAD HOSTS SPRING NARCOA MEET

By Joel Williams  
(Western Maryland M-19, No. 334)

The Valley Railroad of Essex, Connecticut is a steam tourist railroad which runs on a portion of former New Haven Railroad trackage along the Connecticut River. The railroad has a connection with Amtrak at old Saybrook, and it operates as far north as East Haddam. The Valley Railroad passenger trains normally run from Essex to Deep River, where tourists can get off the train and ride a river boat.

In addition to the tourist operation, the Valley Railroad has other business to keep the revenue coming in. This includes selling coal, and moving freight near Middletown. They also sell steam locomotive parts (they are the sole U.S. representative for Chinese-built steam parts).

Several NARCOA members had expressed an interest in holding a track car meet on the Valley Railroad, so president Lynn Parrott was contacted about the possibility of a group of cars operating over the line. Lynn and his staff made the arrangements, and the meet was scheduled for April 17th.

The NARCOA run, held one week before the excursion operating season, was the first ever motor car meet for the Valley Railroad. Nineteen cars were on hand from New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. The railroad supplied pilots over the line for the day. At the end of the line, in East Haddam, a local resident supplied donuts and coffee for us. Another local resident had a sharp looking 1955 Ford out by one of the grade crossings, to pose beside our cars.

The following day, the Middletown Press published a nice newspaper story about the run, along with pictures. Reports indicate that everyone had a good time. People from the railroad commented on the careful and professional operation of the railcars by NARCOA personnel. A big "thank you!" goes out to the Valley Railroad, and president Lynn Parrott and his staff, for enabling us to participate in this event. If you are ever in the vicinity of the Valley Railroad, be sure to stop by for a visit...you'll enjoy a pleasant experience.



*Joel Williams and Dave Rose pause momentarily at Deep River, Connecticut to look over one of the steam locomotives under restoration on the Valley Railroad.*

*Photo by Joel Williams*

*The first group arrives at Deep River, Connecticut, during the April meet on the Valley Railroad.*

*Photo by Geoffrey Oates*



## MARYLAND AND PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD INVITES NARCOA TO PARTICIPATE IN K-4 WEEKEND

On August 26-28, The Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad ("Ma and Pa") based in York, Pennsylvania will host a series of steam passenger excursions, featuring the restored Pennsylvania Railroad K-4, Pacific type steam locomotive, number 1361. The K-4 is scheduled to pull seven excursions over the railroad during the weekend.

The good news for track car enthusiasts is that The Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad has invited NARCOA to participate, also. In addition to the invitation to display our track cars, The railroad has indicated that attendees will be permitted to operate over the entire 30-mile line, between steam trips. Additionally, there will be ample opportunity for track car owners to pose their cars next to the steam locomotive for photographs!

All track cars with generator-equipped headlights must use them during all movements over the line (older open cars, or historically-correct restored cars, without headlights will be allowed to operate with the group runs during the day, but will not be allowed to run after sunset). All cars will be required to carry a red flag and a red lantern (either kerosene or electric) for crossing protection, during daytime and nighttime moves respectively.

Arrangements have been made at the Quality Inn/York Valley motel for special group rate for Thursday-Monday, (\$43.00 single, \$48.00 double, \$53.00 triple, \$58.00 quad per room) The inn has an indoor and outdoor pool, and plenty of room for vehicles with trailers.

There is no charge to attendees for attending the event, however, you must register in advance before Tuesday, August 16th (there will be a 50-car maximum). All NARCOA attendees will be required to sign a release with the Ma&Pa Railroad, prior to operation. For registration, and further information, contact Ma&Pa R.R. meet coordinator Walter Matuch, at: P.O. Box 742, Bayonne, New Jersey 07002 (201) 823-4983 (business) or (201) 858-4980 (home).

## DELAWARE & ULSTER RAILROAD TO HOST FALL REGIONAL NARCOA MOTOR CAR MEET

The Delaware And Ulster Railroad of Arkville, New York will again host the NARCOA eastern regional fall track car meet, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 23, 24, and 25. Several activities are planned again for this year's meet, including day and night runs, a Saturday banquet, a night photo session, slides and video programs, and the option to ride D&U full size railroad equipment.

The D&U is nestled in the heart of the scenic Catskill Mountains, and is a beautiful railroad to ride in the early fall. For more information about the meet, write or call NARCOA roster coordinator, Joe Williams, at Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839, (201) 852 6294.

*This year's fall meet on the Delaware & Ulster Railroad will again feature runs over the active part of the line (complete with meets with the D&U passenger train) as well as some "new" trackage that will be opened up for the meet.*



*Photo by Joel Williams*



## SUMMARY OF SPRING TRACK CAR EVENTS IN THE MIDWEST

By Doug Leffler  
(New York Central, M-9, M220)

### TOLEDO, LAKE ERIE & WESTERN RAILWAY MOTOR CAR MEET

The Toledo, Lake Erie & Western Railway, of Waterville, Ohio sponsored a one-day motor car meet on Saturday, April 30th over their ex Nickel Plate Road line, which extends approximately 10 miles from their headquarters at Waterville, southwesterly to Grand Rapids, Ohio.

The idea for the meet was put together by Victor Geckel, a long time supporter and officer of the railroad, as well as several other track car enthusiasts from the TLE&W. Additional support for the meet was provided by several regular volunteers. Safety first was the order of the day, as each motor car was dispatched from the terminals at five-minute intervals, (to keep the cars from running too close together). Several of the NARCOA members present at the meet found that this novel new way of running their track cars (at organized meets) was very efficient, and welcome. In addition, TLE&W volunteers flagged all the major crossings to ensure safe passage at those points.

Two runs were made over the railroad during the meet; one at 10:00am, and one at 1:00pm. The attendees had a lunch break, in between runs, at Grand Rapids. One of the highlights of the meet was the opportunity to cross the Maumee River at Grand Rapids, over a neat multi-span truss bridge.

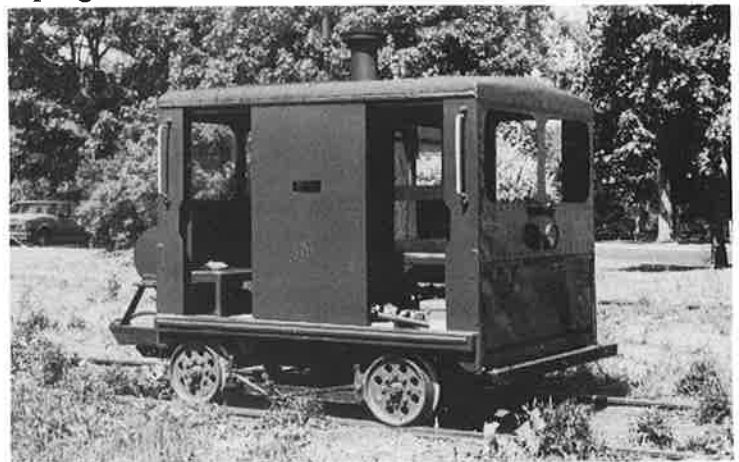
The officials and attendees both agreed that the TLE&W's first meet was a huge success; so much so that the railroad is considering having another meet in the fall. I can honestly say that not only myself, but many other NARCOA members in the midwest will surely look forward to riding the TLE&W rails once again.

## SOUTHERN MICHIGAN RAILROAD SOCIETY SPRING MOTOR CAR CONVENTION

The Southern Michigan Railroad Society, Inc., (SMRS) of Clinton, Michigan sponsored a Spring track car convention during the Memorial Day weekend, over the Society's 11.5-mile long, ex New York Central trackage in southeastern lower Michigan.

The convention drew many NARCOA members from several surrounding states, and Canada. Estimates of the number of cars in attendance were hard to judge, however, it seemed as though the car count topped the previous convention count of 43.

The SMRS operated its motor car train and caboose train coincident with the motor car convention, and attendees had the opportunity to ride these trips, as well as the scheduled motor car trips with their own cars. The convention featured day and night runs over the railroad, as well as the usual SMRS Saturday evening buffet, and slide and video program.



One of the highlights of this year's convention was the first time appearance of Jim Baird's home-built steam powered motor car! The car has a vertical boiler, with a Chrysler V-4 engine to power it. The car is painted a forest green color, that looks just right for a steam car. Several of the NARCOA members expressed an interest in seeing Jim's car run again at future meets.



## SWEET LINE RAILROAD HOSTS ITS FIRST MOTOR CAR MEET

The Sweet Line Railroad of Carson City, Michigan hosted its first organized track car meet on June 10-12, over their ex Grand Trunk Western Railroad trackage between Carson City and Middleton.

June 11 was the busiest day for the railroad, since most of the attendees ran their cars on Saturday. Numerous runs were made on Saturday, beginning with a breakfast run to Middleton, as well as other runs throughout the day. The Sweet Line Railroad also gave free track car rides to many of the area visitors who were celebrating Carson City pioneer days. Over 300 people had the chance to ride the railroad, and inspect the individually-owned track cars (many of whom were NARCOA members) in attendance for the meet.

The Sweet Line operates trackage that was abandoned by GTW, in order to provide service to Kellogg Elevator Company. Sweet Line President Harold Kellogg, and Vice President, Treasurer Dennis Kellogg indicated that they were impressed with the track cars, and they hope to hold additional meets in the future on the line.

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*The Sweet Line Railroad provided free track car rides to the public during their first motor car meet at Carson City, Michigan. The photo below shows the participants waiting on the siding for the passenger trip to pass in the clear, before proceeding east on one of the many trips to Middleton.*



*President Harold Kellogg, of the Sweet Line Railroad definitely has his eye on motor cars, as he "reflects" on the day's activities during his railroad's first motor car meet.*



## THE ENGINE OIL CONTROVERSY

By Dick Ray  
(Western Maryland, M-9, No. 67)

Recently, there have been a number of discussions between NARCOA members about the pros and cons of different types of engine oils for two-cycle, single-, and twin-cylinder motor cars. These discussions have centered primarily upon the advantages and possible disadvantages of using either "standard" 30-weight, non-detergent oil (as recommended in Fairmont operating manuals), or modern two-cycle (outboard type) oil, such as Pennzoi, Kendall, Castrol, and many others. With this article, I am presenting to you my findings and opinions, after having spent a reasonable amount of time researching the subject.

Up front, I will state that I use a modern two-cycle oil, mixed 16:1 (one quart of oil to four gallons of gas), for my Fairmont single cylinder M-9 motor car, instead of the 30-weight, non-detergent oil recommended by Fairmont.

During a recent inspection of my 1951 Fairmont RO-C engine, with perhaps 4000 miles of my own mileage on it, I discovered that there was no significant accumulation of carbon in the exhaust ports, and the rod bearing clearance was still in the 2-3 mil tolerance, suggested by Fairmont. Additionally, all of the piston rings were free in their grooves, and the piston crown had very little carbon buildup. Immediately, I had the feeling that my use of two-cycle oil was the reason for such good engine performance over the years, as well as the "clean" condition of my engine.

Although I was personally convinced that two-cycle oil was the way to go, I decided to contact some oil industry experts, to get some other opinions. I wound up talking with several staff engineers at three major oil companies to get their recommendations. I described our Fairmont engines, and our type of operating conditions.

All of the engineers agreed that "regular" engine oil would certainly work at providing satisfactory lubrication of the bearings (as does two-cycle oil), but none of the engineers would recommend using it in our engines. Their reasoning was that regular, non-detergent oil is difficult to mix with gas into a uniform mixture (as some NARCOA owners have found). They also stated that even non-detergent oil will leave ash and deposits that can foul plugs, and cause cylinder wear, preignition, and carbon buildup.

One engineer, Mr. Charles Pross, of Castrol, Inc., discussed the oil question with service department personnel at Fairmont, and afterwards, recommended that an oil with a TC-W (two-cycle/water cooled) rating be used for our engines. This is the highest rating of the Boating Industry Association (BIA). These oils are ash free, and contain more concentrated lubricating additives. He stated that they could be used in smaller concentrations than 16:1 (up to 50:1), however, I would be reluctant to use concentrations less than 16:1, since our engines need oil lubrication while descending grades with the throttle mostly closed. I feel that if there is little or no carbon buildup in the ports or in the innermost portions of the engine, then there is no harm in providing this extra lubrication safeguard.

Incidentally, an easy way to mix these two-cycle oils with your gas is to leave one or two quarts of gas mix in the can, then pour in the oil and head for the gas station. The mixture will then mix easily when the "new" gas is pumped into the can.

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## PLANNED AND PROPOSED TRACK CAR EVENTS

### KLS&C MOTOR CAR MEET

A one day motor car meet will be held on Saturday, July 30th, 1988, on the rails of the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railway (KLS&C), at Paw Paw, Michigan. The KLS&C is one of Michigan's newest shortline railroads, formed in 1987, from one of the "cast off" branch lines from the former C&O Railway (now CSX Corp.). The meet will feature two runs over the approximately 11 mile long railway, as well as optional passenger train rides. The cost of the event will be \$15.00 per track car. For more information, send SSAE to: Doug Leffler, 622 Pawnee, Jackson, MI 49203, or call (517) 782-2073 evenings.

### NEVADA NORTHERN MOTOR CAR MEET

A proposed motor car meet over the Nevada Northern Railway is in the works by William Kaminsky. Permission to operate over the line has been granted, however, William needs to know the "head count" of persons interested in participating in the event. If you think you would like to make the run, contact William Kaminsky at 11818 Burns Ave., Grand Terrace, CA 92626 (include SSAE for reply info).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## WE'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THIS NARCOA MEMBER...

Dudley Newman  
4726 East Calle Del Norte  
Phoenix, AZ 85018

"As a young boy, I can remember going to pick up my father after a run on the Southern Pacific, and riding in the cab of many a steam engine," so says our NARCOA member for this issue, Dudley Newman. "We would arrive early; that way I would get the chance to ride, as they switched out the passenger cars." "When asked as a child what my father did, I would always say that he would drive an engine...he would always correct me by saying that you *run* an engine!"

Dudley's railroad background as a youngster continued on into his own adult life, when he became a railroad contractor. This contracting business entailed not only construction, but also removal of track as well, providing numerous opportunities to operate track cars over the discontinued lines during the removal process.

This venture as a railroad contractor continued for 15 years when he became involved in consulting work for financial institutions regarding maintenance of way equipment. He later began selling used MofW equipment (including many pieces from the defunct Rock Island Railroad), up until the present. His highly successful Newman Machinery Company is testimony to Dudley's perseverance and hard work. Newman Machinery buys, sells and leases maintenance of way equipment to railroad contractors, shortline railways, regional railways, and industrial railways.

Dudley's enftuation with track cars was a natural result of his involvement with MofW equipment. He has just begun buying and selling motor cars in earnest over the last couple of years. "I have had a lot of inquiries due to my type of business, as well as referrals by motor car manufacturers." "Of course, I also have a great interest in NARCOA motor car trips and meets."



*The entire Newman household loves to go on motor car trips. The above photo shows the bunch out for a day trip on two of Dudley's cars.*

*Photo by Dudley Newman*



*Last February, Dudley participated in the track car gathering on the Sonora-Baja California Railway (along with Brett Tallman, Terry Durkin and others). The above photo was taken with Dudley at the controls at the "Great Loop", near Valle Redondo, Baja, Mexico.*

*Photo by Dudley Newman*



*The backyard of Dudley's home features a "railroad garden", complete with a motor car for all the neighborhood youngsters to play "railroader" on!*

*Photo by Dudley Newman*



## PLANNED AND PROPOSED TRACK CAR EVENTS (CONT.)

### PORT STANLEY TERMINAL RAILWAY MOTOR CAR MEET

The Port Stanley Terminal Railway, of Port Stanley, Ontario, Canada is interested in hosting a motor car meet, either in the Fall of 1988, or Spring of 1989, *IF* there is enough interest from regional track car owners. The line runs from Port Stanley, on Lake Erie, north 7 miles to St. Thomas, Ontario. Port Stanley is about half way between Detroit and Niagara Falls. The line is very scenic, and the accommodations in the area are first rate. The meet will be scheduled only if there is interest from you owners. If you would like to see a meet in Canada, on the PSTR later this year or early next year, contact Mr. Edwin Smith, c/o the Port Stanley Terminal Railway, at P.O. Box 549, Port Stanley, Ontario, Canada N0L 2A0.

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*Attendees at the Toledo, Lake Erie & Western Railway motor car meet turned their cars on the old NKP setoff at Waterville for the afternoon run to Grand Rapids.*

*Photo by Doug Leffler*



*The SMRS caboos train passes several motor cars in the clear at Tecumseh, during the 4th annual motor car convention.*

*Photo by Doug Leffler*

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### FOR SALE

Track car T-shirts  
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*Here's the ideal way to set your motor car on the rails, without a backache...IF, you have the right kind of equipment! NARCOA member Bob Bixler of Apple Creek, Ohio has it made, as he eases his ex C&O M-9, with 5-note Airchime K5LA horn, onto the rails at Roseville, Ohio, during a 2-day gathering on the Ohio Southern Railroad, over the Independence Day weekend.*

*Photos by Rose (Rusty) Hines*

# THE SETOFF

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