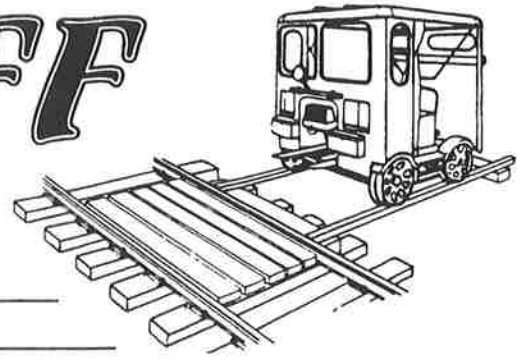


THE SETOFF

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

Winter 1992



Thomas Radoman's ex-UP MT19-B poses on the Boville Branch of the St. Maries River RR. Tom reports that this is his first year as an owner of a railcar, and he put more than 1,000 miles on his machine. Along the way, he reports that he met some wonderful people, including the Zammits, the Browns and the Van Loos. He just bought a second motorcar, an MT14, in the same condition as his MT19. Both were built in 1986 and have few miles on them. He reports that, as far as he knows, he is the only motorcar owner in the entire state of Montana. Needless to say, he has to travel a long distance to attend a meet (he drove over 7,000 miles in 1991). But, he says he's looking forward to 1992.

UPCOMING MEETS/EVENTS

March 14-22: Take a motorcar vacation with Hank Brown. Ride 6 railroads in 9 days in North Carolina and Tennessee. The trip begins on the Great Smokey Mountain Railroad. Contact: Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. Phone: (608) 839-4939.

May 2-3: Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, insurance required. Enjoy some of the best scenery in the mountains of western Maryland, tunnels, rockcuts, all this and a turntable, too. Contact: Dave Rose, 202 Center Street, Elmer, NJ 08318. Phone: (609) 358-3409. Send SSAE.

May 2-3: Work and ride at the Oil Creek and Titusville RR. Cost is \$10.00 per car. Contact: Ric Tritsch, P.O. Box 62, Edinburg, PA 16116. Send SSAE. Phone: (412) 282-6775.

May 16-17: Come ride the former Traverse City, Leelanau and Manistique Railroad in Michigan! The Leelanau Scenic Railroad hosts this meet for a distance of 16 miles past lakes, orchards, over trestles and around many bends. Cost is \$15 per motorcar. Contact: Brad Anderson, Motorcar Meet Director, 4955 Lake Harbor, Muskegon, MI 49441. Send a long SSAE.

May 30: The Tioga Central Railroad in Owego, New York hosts yet another motorcar meet. Send long SSAE to: Dick Ray, 5 Hemlock Place, Randolph, NJ 07869, AFTER April 1 1992.

May 31: Motorcar and Railroad Show at the New Castle Chamber of Commerce, Shenango Street Station. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Contact: Ric Tritsch (see above)

June 5-7: Enjoy the spectacular New Hampshire countryside from raiiside! The Hobo Railroad's scenery can't be beat in early June. Contact: Paul Yorkis, 24 Kimberly Drive, Medway, MA 02053. Send a long SSAE, AFTER April 1, 1992.

June 19-21: Not all motorcar events take place stateside! Meet at the station in Cochrane, Ontario; ride 200 miles into the tundra near James Bay. See the whales play in Hudson Bay. Watch the midnight sun set on the bay. Tour the fur processing plant established by the Hudson Bay Trading Company in the 1600s on an island in the Moose River. Contact: Hank Brown (see above).

June 27-28: Ever drive a spike or tamp a tie? It will change your appreciation for the trackage you ride on. Come join the Maryland & Pennsylvania RR Preservation Society in their second ever motorcar meet. Work on Saturday (trackwork), break for dinner, then enjoy an evening ride on some of the most curvy track in the eastern US. Sunday, we ride all day. Event open to insured NARCOA members and members of the M&PRR PS. Send SSAE to Gene Tucker, 1004 N. Kentucky St., Arlington, VA 22205.

August 22-23: The corn fields will be in full growth as motorcars converge on the Iowa Northern Railroad for a ride from Manly to Shell Rock. Contact: Hank Brown (see above).

Sept 5-6: Be a part of the Second Annual Motorcar Run and work day at the Oil Creek and Titusville RR in historic oilfield country of Northwestern Pennsylvania. No insurance necessary. \$10.00 per car. Contact: Ric Tritsch (see above)

September 27: The Algoma Central Railway in the Canadian province of Ontario is the setting for a one-day meet. Ride the 168-mile trail of the ACR through the height of the fall colors. From Searchmont through the Agawa Canyon to Eton. No limit. Cost: \$70.00. Contact: Hank Brown (see above).

October 3-4: Fall foliage will present a full palette of colors to those attending this meet on the Cuyahoga Valley Railroad in Ohio. This railroad has hosted several meets through the efforts of Robert Hixenbaugh. Contact him at: P.O. Box 141, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221-0141. Send a long SSAE. Phone: (216) 923-0298. This meet is a work/run meet.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SETOFF is happy to publish all meets organized by members. Notices of meets open to the membership should be sent to the Meet Coordinators, Dick Ray or Hank Brown (addresses given above). If time is of the essence, meet notices should be sent directly to the Editor.

EDITOR'S NOTES

By Gene Tucker

Well, it's hard to believe that it's time to publish another edition of *THE SETOFF*. Material keeps coming in . . . Just look at the number of ads and the number of meets listed in this issue. I can't remember seeing more in recent memory. Keep all that stuff coming, won't you, and everyone will benefit.

Speaking of keeping it coming, it would help Joel Williams out tremendously, I'll bet (he didn't ask me to make this plea, but I know how much he has to do to keep up with the paperwork and requests that flow in from NARCOA members), if ads and stories could be sent directly to me. That will save him the time and trouble of remailing it to me.

If you have requests for back issues, they should go to Joel, as should membership renewals and membership roster changes and the like.

If you're organizing a meet which is not just a private affair where the host railroad may not permit

(Continued on next page)

more than a few cars to operate, it should be listed in *THE SETOFF* for the knowledge and benefit of the general membership. Those notices should go to either Hank Brown or to Dick Ray. By the way, setting up and running a meet isn't that difficult, and NARCOA members tend to be understanding and forgiving types, so consider asking for permission from that railroad you may have contact with or acquaintances at to run a meet over their trackage. If you need information on what to do to host a meet, consider calling any one of the individuals who write stories about meets that they've organized. I'll bet every one of them will be glad to offer any assistance and advice you're willing to ask for.

A few things that we should note briefly:

Joel Williams didn't write an Organizational News Column this time, but did drop a note to say that he is busy with "playing catch-up" on club paperwork and other business. He reports that there are new Rule-books which have just been printed, and a new back issues list of *THE SETOFF* is available (see sample on page 19 in this issue for clipping and mailing to Joel for back issues).

Tom Schmieder of New Jersey sent along a page from Old Cars issue of October 31, 1991, which showed photos of no less than nine different models of early hi-rail geared vehicles. They dated from as early as a 1917 Model T Ford to a 1958 Pontiac Chieftain station wagon, with one photo showing a 1920s era White railbus and even a 1947 Cadillac Series 75 limousine used by Canadian Pacific officials.

Ernie Jeschke from Michigan sent along a newspaper article which appeared in the November 11, 1991 issue of The Evening Leader in St Mary's, OH, accounting the trip of a group of motorcar owners on the newly-formed Western Ohio Rail Authority to assist the WORA in evaluating the establishment of rail service over the line.

Finally, we'll take this opportunity to remind you of one or two things, and pay tribute to those who largely work behind the scenes . . .

THE SETOFF is published using a four-page scheme, which means that sometimes we will have not enough material to fill a complete set of four pages, or, the reverse will be true, and we have more than can fill an even count of pages divisible by four. In those cases, we are forced to leave something out that simply won't fit in. If you sent in something for printing, and it doesn't appear, that's why. In that case, we make every attempt to get it in the next issue. Otherwise, our policy is to print everything that either doesn't violate the rules of safety or constitute a personal attack on someone else.

When sending photos, remember to include a caption or a short description of what it is in the photo. Also include an envelope if you want the photos returned. We are good at guessing what photos represent, but we know your information will be much more authoritative than our guessing any day.

A tip of the hat to my sister Deanna Baird, who takes the large pile of paper, photos and notes (plus the all-important computer diskette) and designs the layout and determines what photos will print well and what won't, and to my wife, Debbie, who often volunteers to enter long stories into the computer. You have to understand that this is a genuine "labor of love" since she does the same thing professionally for eight or more hours a day. And, while we're at it, we'll also tip the hat to Ernie Jeschke, in Adrian, MI, who undertakes the printing and mailing of *THE SETOFF*. These individuals make possible what you read every three months or so.

Next issue deadline is April 15th!

THE SETOFF

Volume 5 Number 3

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THE SETOFF is published quarterly by the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) to promote safe operation of railroad motor cars, and to encourage fellowship and exchange of information among motor car enthusiasts. Membership in NARCOA, which includes a subscription to *THE SETOFF*, is \$10.00 per year, and is available from Joel Williams, Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839.

SIX RAILROADS IN EIGHT DAYS (CONCLUSION)

By Hank Brown

(EDITOR'S Note: This is the conclusion of a story carried in the Fall 1991 issue of THE SETOFF.)

The next morning the sun was shining. While Carol shopped, I headed for the Milwaukee Road station, which is in the process of being restored. After several pictures, I went to the Great Northern Railroad station, which is now used by the power and light company. I picked up Carol and we were off to Helena. The drive from Great Falls to Helena is a must for anyone in the area. The mountains rise quickly. The Missouri River becomes narrow and fast moving. Unfortunately for our car, the roads are very steep, even on the interstate. However, we made it up to the top and enjoyed the trip very much.

Upon arriving in Helena we searched for the Montana Rail Link Railroad headquarters. It doesn't take much to find. The line crosses under the interstate and is only eight blocks from Highway 12. I took lots of pictures of the station and engines in the yard. After a quick gas up, we headed west over the 6,300-foot pass at the continental divide. Highway 12 parallels the main line of the Montana Rail Link, so it was a joy for me to see eight trains. Carol, on the other hand, said, "If you've seen one train, you've seen 'em all." We joined Interstate 90 at Garrison and headed up the mountains to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Turning north on Highway 41, we followed the road bed of the Idaho and Washington Northern Railroad which had been torn up from Spokane to Newport, Washington.



We arrived at 5:00 p.m. at the Newport Motel. Steve Hauff and Ron Zammit greeted us as we walked to our room. The lady who gave us our room said a man had called us and it sounded like an emergency. We spent several anxious hours trying to find out who had left the message. After a call from the Spanagels and calls to our parents and son, we gave up. We went to supper and while there, Jack Gish called to tell us that he and Elaine had called earlier and returned to Omaha so they would not be joining us for the rest of the trip. With the mystery solved, we enjoyed the rest of the evening chatting with our new friends from Washington. We felt that the trip, no matter how great, would not be complete without the Gishs or the Spanagels. They were missed.

We were up early the next morning and headed for Dalkena, where we were to meet the rest of the group. Rick Leach, the leader of this trip, gave an excellent safety talk and we were off to explore the rails of the Pend Oreille Valley Railroad. First stop was the engine facility in Usk. Bob Shanklin, the owner of the railroad, had placed his GP9 on the lead track for our inspection. The engine was painted in the old Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy colors. After the long stop, the 15 motorcars of every type headed north along the Pend Oreille River. Once this river was used almost exclusively for the logging industry, but now it supports a large tourist industry.

We passed through Cusick and then on to Jared, where they have a tourist operation. They run from Jared to Metaline Falls daily for tourists. The locals really enjoy the ride and encouraged us to try it sometime. After they inspected our motorcars, they were ready to give up on the train and join us. We left Jared and continued on to the Blueslide Tunnel. The tunnel still has the Idaho and Washington Northern Railroad letters on the entrance keystone. As we left the tunnel, the rails followed the river, giving us a breathtaking view of the box canyon we were about to enter. We finally broke free of the tunnel of pine trees and came upon the trestle, which spans the river. We made several photo run bys and took lots of video tapes of the area. The width of the canyon was about 200 feet across and the trestle was about 150 feet above the dam which generates all the power for that area.

The group headed north again for Metaline Falls. We arrived in time for lunch. The local cafe where we ate served a huge burger and everyone enjoyed the meal. We gassed up and returned to Dalkena. The return trip was beautiful! The only problem we experi-

At left, Dennis and Katie Madden coming out of Blue Slide Tunnel on the Pend Oreille Valley RR.



Above, Ron Zammit of California and Dennis Madden of Florida reenact the famous Promontory Point UP celebration of "East meets West" on Spring Creek Trestle on the Central Montana RR.

enced was near Cusick, where three children placed rocks and coins on the rails. Dennis Madden stopped just before hitting the debris. He collected the money and swept the rocks from the tracks. We found the kids and admonished them about the damage they could have caused if a motorcar had hit the rocks. They promised not to do it again and we departed. We looked back to see them trying to find the money they left on the rails.

As it was late when we arrived in Dalkena, the scheduled pizza supper was postponed until we reached St. Maries, Idaho. One by one, the cars headed south for the 120-mile run to St. Maries. We arrived in good time, checked into the Pines Motel, and headed for supper.

Up early again for the pearl of the Northwest, the St. Maries River Railroad. The SMRR runs over the old Milwaukee Road mainline from Minneapolis to Spokane. The rail is 120-pound or better from St. Maries to Plummer, with two very high and long trestles. We started toward Plummer with its gradual rise. The line follows the St. Joe River until it spills into Lake Coeur d'Alene, then parallels the Union Pacific Railroad branch from Wallace, Idaho. Both railroads wind through beautiful mountain terrain. The pine forests come right up to the right-of-way, almost encroaching, but not quite. We made several stops along the way, especially on the bridges. They provided us with the most spectacular views. We arrived in Plummer in great time, where we turned on the wye and returned to St. Maries.

Bob Shanklin was our leader, and had to be persuaded to run the branch line from St. Maries to Bovill. We told him that we had come 2,000 miles to ride this railroad, and wouldn't be denied! He agreed.

We had a hurried lunch at trackside, then started up the grade and into the canyon. We rose higher and higher, winding through this narrow gorge with its rapidly moving river beside us. The river made almost as much noise as our motorcars, often at falls and large rapids drowning out the banging of our motors. The river was never more than 30 feet from us the whole time we were in the canyon. The walls of the canyon started with a gentle slope in a wide meadow, then changed to vertical sides for most of the way. Half of the trip up the Bovill Branch was spent in the canyon. The sky had turned a brilliant blue and made picture taking perfect. Finally, reaching the top, we descended into the high meadow at Bovill. This is a town which is served by two railroads and had a population of less than 200. Of course, lumber is king in this area.

We returned to St. Maries and, sadly, ended this great railroad adventure, which had begun as a "never could happen in my lifetime" idea back in the Summer of 1989.

We enjoyed a last supper with Ron and Kay Zammit, Dennis and five-year-old Katie Madden, Rick Leach, and several other members of the Northwest Motorcar Group.

Our thanks to Alex Huff of the Dakota Southern RR, Dr. Authier of the Deadwood Central RR, Bob Warder of the Black Hills Central RR, Carla Allen of the Central Montana, Bob Shanklin of the Pend Oreille Valley RR, R. D. Schlappy of the St. Maries River RR, George Harper of the Montana Rail Link, and Rick Leach and Dana Davis. Without their generous support, this trip never would have happened.

MANY NORTHWEST RAILCAR OUTINGS WERE HELD IN 1991

By Roger Sackett

After receiving the last issue of *THE SETOFF* and reading the detailed accounts of the many speeder meets in other parts of the country, I realized the Pacific Northwest had not been adequately heard from (the promise of a continuation of Hank Brown's "Six Railroads in Eight Days" in the next issue helps to alleviate this deficiency).

The collection of NARCOA members in this part of the country, known as Northwest Railcar, had quite a season. Beginning in March, various members and their equally various collection of speeders traversed nine different lines on five railroads, with meets spread over 11 days through September. Accumulated mileage approached 800 miles. Participation varied from six railcars to 17, with most of the members coming from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. On one trip, there were speeders from Florida, Wisconsin, and California as well.

The season began with an annual brush clearing

expedition on the Mt. Rainier Scenic Railroad. This March 3rd trip to Morton from Elbe on the former Milwaukee Road branch in Washington found the lead car breaking trail through snow on the higher portion of the line. The following day, after a fresh snowfall, the Morton trip was repeated, as well as a round trip west of Elbe to Eatonville.

In late April, we journeyed to Eastern Washington for two days of operation on the former Milwaukee Road lines. Saturday, the 27th, speeders were set on at Dalkena, north of the Newport, WA, terminus of the Pend Oreille Valley RR. Fifty miles north, the end of the line at Metaline Falls was reached and a tour of the facilities was provided by member Bob Shanklin, the Manager of the POVA. After returning to Dalkena and loading the cars, a 100-mile drive brought us to St. Maries, ID, the site of Sunday's trip on the St. Maries RR. Because of work on the Bovill line of the STMA, activities on the 28th were limited to operating over the old main line track to Plummer. After lunch and a turning maneuver on the



St. Maries River RR yard, westbound on the Old Milwaukee main line in April 1991. Several of St. Maries' 500 log cars are sitting on the main line.

Photo by Rick Leach

wye at Plummer Junction, the group returned to St. Maries in early afternoon, making the long drives home less strenuous.

In June, Hank Brown and other distant travellers joined the group for what turned out to be the highest mileage event of the year: 244 miles in two days. On Saturday, the 22nd and Sunday, the 23rd, Northwest Railcar returned to the POVA and the STMA for two full days of speeder riding. In addition to the 100-mile Dalkena - Metaline round trip and the 40 mile St. Maries - Plummer jaunt, the 15-plus railcars also travelled 104 miles to Bovill, ID, and back to St. Maries. An action-packed weekend, considering most of the participants drive in excess of 300 miles to get there (and return, plus 100 miles between sites).

July 13th, operations switched to the Chehalis Western RR, a Weyerhaeuser entity based in Western Junction, WA. The event began with a round-trip to Vail on the old logging line. Returning to Skookumchuck Yard, the cars were switched to the former Milwaukee Road rails that extend to Chehalis, where the entourage passed the excursion steam train that runs to Centralia. From there, we travelled on the historic Curtis, Milburn and Eastern tracks, nearly to the end of the line at Curtis. A picnic near the Chehalis River Bridge interrupted the 45-mile trip back to Western Junction where wye trackage was used to negotiate the transfer from ex-Milwaukee Road rails to the CWWR.

In August, we were back to the Mt. Rainier Scenic for a day of fun and frustration. Sunday, the 25th, the group elected to head west from Elbe because they had not experienced the track beyond Eatonville. Shortly after setting on at the highway crossing, the lead car encountered fallen trees across the track, left by a clearing crew that believed the line to be unused. Fortunately, a chainsaw was among the equipment carried, and our crew spent the next hour clearing the way. High weeds and filled flangeways were par for the course enroute to Eatonville (plus an encounter with a tethered goat whose rope stretched across the track). Beyond Eatonville, the high weeds turned into higher weeds, and eventually into small trees. Several delays were incurred, and towbars were connected to solve the problem by double-heading. Near Lake Kapowsin, the group unanimously consented to head for home, and the assembled Brush Busters turned their cars around for the trip back to Eatonville. The ubiquitous vegetation posed difficulty on the upgrade return trip, and so double-heading was again employed to make headway and to entertain visiting railfans from Colorado and Pennsylvania.

After the jungle excursion, the intrepid speeder riders felt they deserved better, and another outing on the Mt Rainier Scenic RR was scheduled for the Saturday after Labor Day--this time on the line to Morton.

Later in September, the final meets of the season were scheduled. Saturday, the 28th, saw a large contingent of operators set their railcars on the tracks of



Roger Sackett on his M9-G in April on the Pend Oreille Valley RR near Metaline Falls, Washington.

Photo by Rick Leach

the Mt. Hood RR at Hood River, OR. The uphill run to Parkdale was punctuated with the negotiation of a single switchback and the requisite turning of speeders. Because of an unscheduled late departure, this event also served as an opportunity for the diesel-powered excursion train to pass the string of railcars. Two meets were also required later in the day to accommodate our presence on the two-trip-per-day passenger operation.

On Sunday, many of the Saturday trip participants journeyed across the Columbia River to Longview, WA for a trip on the Weyerhaeuser Woods RR (including the Columbia and Cowlitz trackage). On a 42-mile round trip, the group travelled over many scenic trestles to Green Mountain Mill, at the confluence of the North Fork and the South Fork of the Toutle River. Much evidence of the mud flows associated with the eruption of Mt. St. Helens was visible on this route, not previously experienced by organized speeder riders.

After this most eventful season to date, Northwest Railcar members are looking forward to the 1992 season. While return visits to old haunts are anticipated and enjoyed, it is hoped that some new sites can be explored in the New Year.

YOU NEED TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR BATTERY

By Jay Boggs, E. E.

With the winter season here, is your motorcar stored and forgotten about? Even if your car ran perfectly last year, there are some things that need regular attention, even in the winter.

If your equipment uses a lead-acid battery, it is preferable to start it once every month and let the engine run for 10 to 15 minutes. This will accomplish three things:

1. It will charge the battery
2. It will keep the engine lubricated
3. It will evaporate any moisture that may accumulate in the crankcase.

Remember to add enough fresh fuel to keep the tank full. This will prevent condensation and rust.

The key to this exercise is the battery. If the charging system is working properly and the battery is in good condition, then all should go as planned. The

dirt on top of the battery, combined with acid, causes a short circuit between the posts that slowly drains the battery, even if it is removed from the car and stored elsewhere.

SAFETY NOTE: Battery acid is dangerous! Always use eye protection. Rubber gloves are a good idea, too. A warning label is required on all batteries. Read it carefully!

First, check the condition of the case: The top and sides should be clean. The brackets or clamps that hold the battery in place should be tight. One of the causes of battery failure is excessive vibration caused by loose clamps. The cables and connections should be clean and tight.

If the battery needs cleaning, it is best to remove it from the car. Use soap and water to clean the case and use baking soda to neutralize any acid that has dried around the terminals and formed a white powder. With the battery removed, check the battery tray and clamps for rust and corrosion. Clean everything and repaint, if necessary.

Most batteries will hold a charge for three or four months if everything is clean and the electrical system is in good condition.

For generators, clean and tight is the rule, too. A loose belt will prevent the generator from fully charging the battery. Carefully remove the cover and check the commutators--the small brass bars that the brushes run on. It should be a burnished brass color and have a smooth surface. If it is black or dirty, it may be carefully cleaned with fine sandpaper. If it is grooved or pitted, the commutator should be resurfaced in a lathe. Be sure to clean the grooves between the segments.

For regulators, remove the cover and clean with a small brush or compressed air. Be careful not to bend any of the contacts, as this will affect how the regulator works. If any of the contacts are badly burned, they may be carefully cleaned with a point file. Be sure the cover gasket fits well to keep out dirt and water. Regulators were originally adjusted for a regular battery. If a maintenance-free battery is installed, a charge may be required occasionally, because it requires a slightly higher voltage for full charge. Check the battery voltage while the engine is running. It should read at least 13.2 V DC.

Check all wiring, especially where there are tight bends. If the insulation is cracked, replace the wire.

To keep your car's electrical system working, the general rule is: Clean and Tight!

NORTH AMERICAN
RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

**NARCOA
MEMBER**

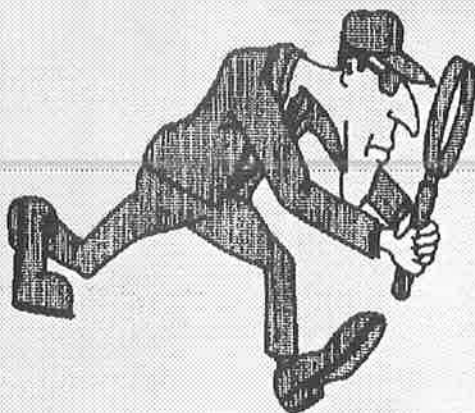
MEMBERSHIP PLATES ARE STILL AVAILABLE

NARCOA membership plates are still available. In the exact style as Fairmont plates, these will look right on your car. They cost \$2 for the first plate, \$1 for each additional plate in the same order. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your order. One stamp ships four plates. All orders will include literature on other available plates. Make checks payable to NARCOA and send with your order to:

NARCOA Plates
P.O. Box 82
Greendell, NJ 07839

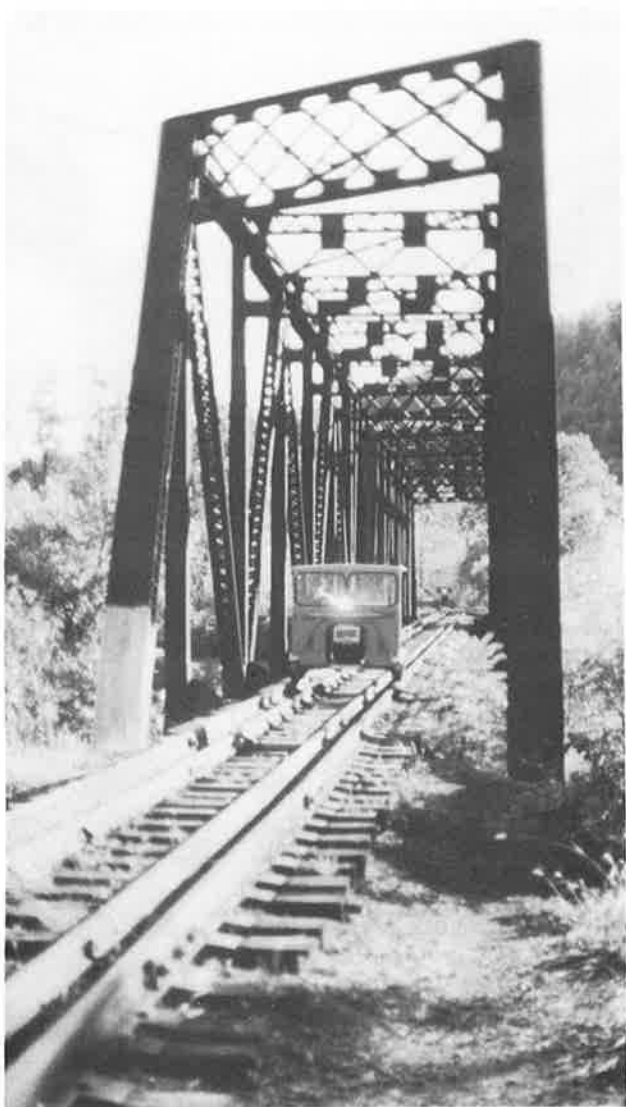


David Rose and Deborah Stout were married on July 6, 1991 at St James Lutheran Church in Pitman, NJ. Holding the motorcar crank arch are Ken Kurdt, Julain Williams, Joel Williams, Bruce Makely, Stan Bielski, Dick Ray, John Hall, and John Eppler. The newlyweds honeymooned in West Virginia at the Cass Scenic RR, and then went on to ride in the motorcar meet held on the South Branch Valley RR.



THE TRACK INSPECTOR SEZ:

With most vehicles, the smell of gasoline indicates trouble. With motorcars, the lack of a gasoline smell indicates something is wrong.



Above, one way to learn the value of maintenance in nice weather . . . At left, Ric Tritsch's photo of one of the iron trestles on the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad, Fall 1991 . . . Below left, Kelley Morris of Snohomish, WA, sent us this picture of a trip on Weyerhaeuser line in September 1991.





Above, a retrospective photo taken in the early days of the organization at Liberty State Park, Jersey City, NJ, on June 5, 1988. Recognize anyone?

Below, a Fairmont M19 owned by Dennis D. Deeser of Canton, Ohio. The car has a B&S engine with snowmobile variable speed transmission converted by C&O shops.

Below, David Thebado sent us a photo taken at a May 18 trip in Boone, Iowa.



THREE RAILROADS IN TWO DAYS

By Dave Rose
Western Maryland M19 No. 329

It all started by chance in November 1990. On a trip through Cumberland, Maryland, I stopped by the Scenic Western Maryland Railroad station in Cumberland to see what was going on. I was able to meet the new General Manager, Mr. John Hedrick. I explained what NARCOA was about and what we did, asking if it was possible to have a meet on the railroad. The opportunity to ride the railroad was granted! The meet was to be held on April 27th, 1991, and would be covered by insurance.

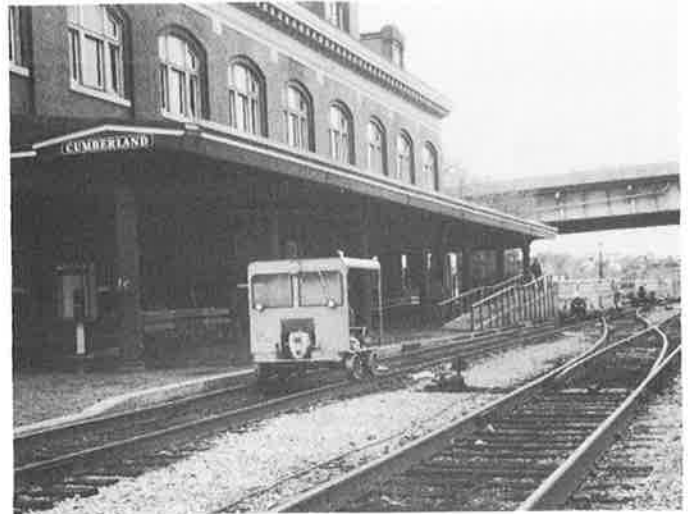
Just about the time I was going to do the mailing, the phone rang. Mr. Hedrick informed me that it wasn't going to be possible to hold the meet. Over the winter, the railroad had changed train operators and was qualifying new crews, and had a washout to fix. The weekend was needed to get things ready. The next chance would be in December. "December!"

About the middle of September, I called Mr. Hedrick to see if December was still on. The answer was yes, but CSX was talking about renting the railroad on December 7 and 8 for an employees special. We could have our meet the following weekend on the 14th or the 15th. I chose December 14th, and started praying for good weather.

In talking with John Nolan, he mentioned the possibility of a meet on the Everett Railroad in Claysburg, Pennsylvania. I got in contact with the owner of the railroad, Mr. Alan Maples. Mr. Maples said that we could run both railroads if we wanted. Both railroads! The Everett operates the Morrison Cove Railroad, which is just over the mountain from the Everett's operation. Great, we will do that, too! Pray for more good weather.

But wait, where is everyone going to eat, where are we going to set on at, where are we going to turn around, and where are we going to stay? Time for a road trip!

On October 18th, Debbie and I loaded up the Honda and headed west. On Saturday morning, we met with Roy "Ed" Hunt. Ed was to be our pilot for the meet on the Everett. He was going to take us around and show us the railroad, so we could find the set-on points and how to get there. With everything taken care of, we headed down to Bedford, PA, to locate the motels and restaurants in the area. Then it was on to Cumberland, Maryland. On Sunday morning, we checked out the motels and restaurants at Cumberland, and went to the station to take the train ride to Frostburg. With everything finished in Cumberland we headed home with our information.



Vaughn Rockney's Fairmont S2 in front of the Cumberland, MD, station of the Western Maryland RR, December 14, 1991.

Photo by Dick Ray

The mailing for the meets went out a week later. Then the big wait. Will I get enough cars to hold the meets? Both meets required insurance, and they were being held two weeks before Christmas. As the date got closer, the pile of registration forms got thicker, 22 cars for Saturday and 15 cars for Sunday. Two people signed up for insurance just for these meets. Pray for good weather.

Saturday, December 14th was finally here. We were going to motorcar the Scenic Western Maryland, or better yet, the Western Maryland Railway. I own Western Maryland No. 329, and the chance to ride on home rails was worth all the homework and wait.

Twenty motorcars met at Cumberland, Maryland. The weather was clear and in the upper 40s. We lined the cars up in front of the station for photos and a safety meeting. With all the cars running, we headed west for Frostburg. A short distance west of the station, the railroad starts a 1.75% climb toward Frostburg. We headed through The Narrows, which is only 300 yards wide, yet the CSX double-track main, old Route 40, Wills Creek, and the Western Maryland Railway all pass through the gorge.

Our first stop was at Cash Valley Road to set up the photo runby around Helmstetter's Curve. With the camcorders running and shutters clicking the cars motored around the curve. With everybody picked up, we were on our way.

On the way to Frostburg, we passed through Brush Tunnel which is 914 feet long. Since reopening the line in 1987, the Railroad has done a good job of cutting back the trees to open up some beautiful overlooks to the valleys below. Several times you could look across the valley and see the motorcars climbing

up the other side. The comment was made, "This isn't a railroad, it's a corkscrew," because of all the twisting and turning the tracks did.

At switch #9 we left the Western Maryland Railway main and headed on to the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad. The Western Maryland Railway had bought the C&P in May of 1944, and in September of 1953, merged it into its own system as the C&P branch. On the C&P, the grade increases to 3.08% for 1 1/2 miles to the Frostburg station.

Upon reaching Frostburg, the motorcars were turned on the turntable for the return trip to Cumberland. The turntable was installed at Frostburg by the Western Maryland Scenic so they can turn the engines for the trip back to Cumberland. The turntable came from the former WMRy facilities at Elkins, WV. With all the cars turned we headed to the Old Depot for lunch. The station at Frostburg has been renovated into a restaurant and gift shop. A former passenger car attached to the restaurant was reserved for our group.

After a good meal and a round of motorcar bull, we started down the mountain to Cumberland. The temperature had changed at least 15-20 degrees while we were at Frostburg. The weather was different around every bend: wind, rain, sleet, snow, and a little sun. We made a photo stop at Brush Tunnel. Everyone had a chance to pose their motorcar at the tunnel portal. Just after the last photo was taken, the sky opened up with a downpour that got everybody back to their cars quickly.

By the time we got back to Cumberland, the temperature had dropped 30 degrees and the wind was blowing. With everybody loaded up, we said our goodbyes to those who were heading home. For the rest, plans were made to meet for dinner at Bedford. The Super 8 Motel's parking lot was full of motorcars when we arrived. After a quick clean-up, it was across the parking lot to Ed's Steak House for dinner and another round of motorcar bull. Back at the motel, a room was set up with a VCR for everyone to watch tapes of the day.

Sunday morning was cold with a very strong wind. After a quick trip back to Ed's for breakfast, we headed to Claysburg for the first part of the day's trip. With all the cars on the track, a headcount was taken to make sure all were present. With 12 cars counted, a safety meeting was held. It was explained to everyone how we were going to flag the grade crossings. The cars were divided into two groups, with the flag person coming up from the last car

to protect the crossing. With all the cars running and everyone trying to stay warm, we were off.

The Everett Railroad owns 7.9 miles of the former Conrail secondary, Bedford to Brooks Mills, then south to Sproul. South of Sproul, the line was pulled up by Conrail in the early 1980s. The line has numerous grade crossings, which made the running slow. At Brooks Mills the cars were turned for the return trip. A photo stop was made at the bridge over the Juniata River. We stopped at the engine house for more photos, then returned to Sproul.

The group dropped down to just five cars for the second trip, as most decided to head home early. The long weekend and the cold had taken their toll.

The hardy five headed over the mountain to Curryville to run the Morrison Cove Railroad. The Everett operates the 6.8-mile long Morrison Cove for the "on-line" shippers that own the railroad. It's a wye-shaped line with a wye at the junction. We ran to Martinsburg first, then to Roaring Springs, and back to Curryville. With just five cars we made good time running the line. With everyone loaded, we said one last round of goodbyes, and were on our way home by 4:30. Boy, did the heater in the truck feel good!

Our thanks are due to Mr. John Hedrick of the Scenic Western Maryland, as well as to Mr. Roy "Ed" Hunt and Mr. Alan Maples of the Everett Railroad. Without their gracious hospitality, none of this would have been possible.



Several cars at a time were turned on the turntable at the end of the Western Maryland Scenic RR line in Cumberland, Maryland, in December 1991.

Photo by Deanna Baird

WHY WON'T IT RUN?

By Dick Ray

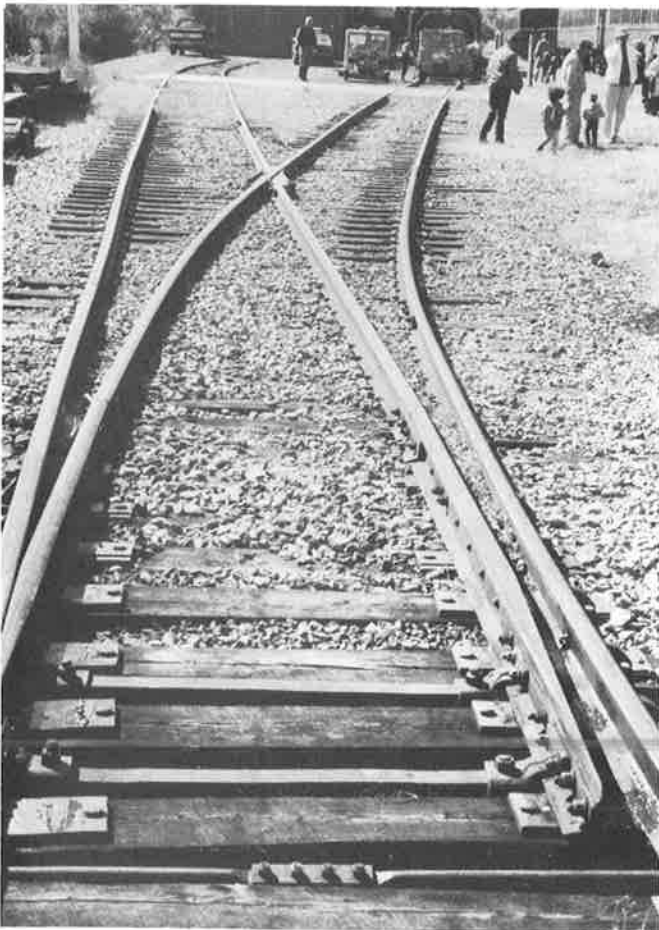
Western Maryland M9 No. 67

One reason we have observed is the improper use of the timer lever.

Twenty-seven two-stroke Fairmonts have climbed the long three percent grade and disappeared over the top, but your car has bogged down, unable to get moving again. What's wrong?

Some operators adjust the timer lever only according to the limited information on the timer instruction plate. This has only two points--START and RUN--for each direction. The instruction plate elaborates: "Partially advance spark for slower car speeds. Use full advance only for higher speeds." The last sentence is overlooked by some operators who don't realize that excessive spark advance costs engine power at low speeds.

It helps to understand just how timing affects engine performance. When the spark ignites the mixture, it does not explode, but instead burns in a finite amount of time. The burning causes a rapid rise in pressure in the cylinder, which, of course, is the desired objective.



The self-guarding frog, like the one pictured above, must be approached with caution.

Photo by Dick Ray

The greater the pressure, the more push on the piston and the more torque at the axle to get you up the hill.

If the mixture is ignited when the piston is at the top of the stroke, burning will take place while the piston is moving downward, which reduces the maximum pressure. For this reason, it is beneficial to start the ignition and mixture burning process a little early so that the pressure rise peaks out when the piston is at top center. This gives the greatest push on the piston. As engine speed increases, it is necessary to start sooner, which translates into increased timing advance.

Thus, the rule of using full advance only at maximum engine speed.

Do you ever accidentally reverse the engine while starting or on a grade crossing? This is the engine telling you that the timing is too far advanced.

If you use excessive advance at low speed on a hill, the car may eventually stall. This is because the high pressures in the cylinder, caused by igniting the mixture too soon, is trying to run the engine backward! More energy is consumed by working against this

(Continued on next page)

BEWARE OF SELF-GUARDING FROGS!

By Dick Ray

Western Maryland M9 No. 67

It is possible that more than a few railcar owners do not realize the hazard presented by self-guarding frogs. The accompanying photo shows that a self-guarding frog has no guard rail alongside the outside rail to guide the back of a wheel. Instead, it guides by having bosses cast into the frog which guide the outside face of a wheel. The problem is that our wheels are too narrow to ever touch this guide.

Following the straight route in either direction through this frog seldom causes any problem. Following the curved route through a trailing point switch is also reasonably safe at the low speed recommended by the NARCOA Rulebook, because the wheel flange is presumably near the outside rail.

However, at a recent meet, two cars derailed at low speed while taking a diverging route through a facing point switch with a self-guarding frog. You can see from the photo that there is nothing to prevent the left front wheel from taking the straight route through the frog and letting the right front wheel fall between the rails.

A low speed derailment at a switch can shatter a rear pulley or bend a rear sprocket when the car falls on the rail. You can bend an axle when the wheel falls between the ties of a typically lightly ballasted switch. Of course, the opportunity for personal injury exists, and we want to prevent that, most of all.

The moral is obvious: Go slow through all switches and beware the self-guarding frog!

pressure on the upward stroke than is recovered by expansion on the downward stroke.

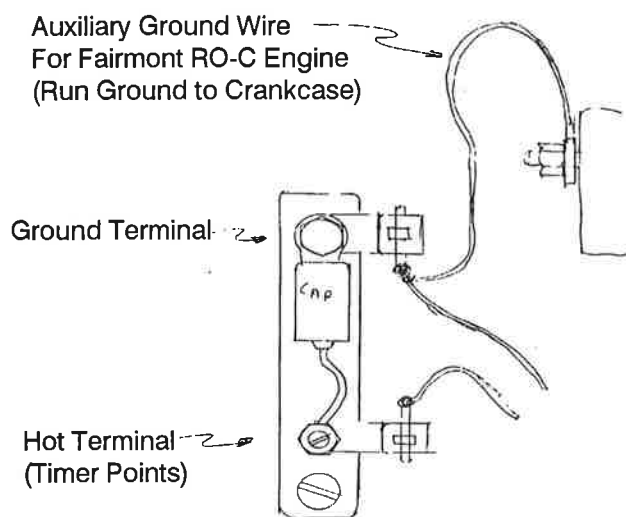
In addition, the plug can overheat and foul. Even though it looks okay, the high temperature has caused the center insulator to become conductive.

An experiment which you can perform will clearly demonstrate the value of proper spark advance. With the timer lever well forward of where you usually run, slow the car to the lowest possible speed, and then open the throttle all the way. You will detect very slow acceleration. Now bring the timer lever back toward center and notice that your motorcar now accelerates quickly. This assumes that your timing is accurately centered. If not, we'll cover that in a future installment.

Question: How can you tell an operator who has mastered the proper use of the timer lever?

Answer: You can't. They have all disappeared over the hill and into the distance.

Fairmont "Weatherseald" Timer Block



Drawing by Harry Riblett - 11/13/91

A BAD GROUND COULD CAUSE IGNITION PROBLEMS

By Harry Riblett
Fairmont M19-F No. 201015

After struggling with a nagging ignition problem on my Fairmont M19 RO-C engine for over two years, I finally found the problem, which I'm happy to pass along to fellow NARCOA members.

Due to the design of the timer block, the ground circuit to the engine is not reliable. Accordingly, I added an auxiliary ground wire from the ground terminal on the timer block to the closest stud on the crankcase, and this now provides a reliable ground. The wire should be long enough to have a sizeable loop in it, since it flexes when the timer lever is moved. What a difference it makes!

NOTES FROM ARKVILLE

By Dick Ray
Western Maryland M9 No. 67

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Last issue, we ran several photos from the September 1991 annual meet in Arkville, NY, but didn't run a story on the event. That's because the U. S. Postal Service took two months to deliver the story from the writer to the editor. It seems that the government decided to run a lottery to allow immigrants to remain in this country, and, in its infinite wisdom, decided to use the main postal service center in Northern Virginia as the repository for the entries. Along with the many, many thousands of entries received in the process, were several thousand pieces of other mail that mistakenly got mixed in with the lottery mail. All of this collection of lottery mail and mistakenly mixed in mail sat in a warehouse while the lottery was being conducted. We hope that the memories of that weekend are still fresh in your minds.)

The Arkville, New York, meet is the longest-running annual meet in the classic three-day format with multiple runs, awards, an elaborate Saturday evening group dinner, night runs (two!) and a maintenance clinic. In an era of impersonal rack-up-the-miles events, this meet has become somewhat unique, yet it retains the format established years ago by Doug Leffler.

A few of the noteworthy events of the weekend:

One Best Car award went to Tom and Bob Schmierer of Long Valley, New Jersey, for their M19 with aerodynamic steel cab with the canvas covered roof. This is one of the best examples of authentic restoration that we have seen in a long time. It also runs perfectly.

The other Best Car award went to Alan Bullock of Washington, New Jersey, for his exceptionally clean ex-Southern Railway M19.

The nomination for Worst Grade Crossing in the State goes to the Route 30 crossing above Margaretville, New York. This is a long, long, extremely shallow crossing of a fast, two lane road full of automobiles who don't like to stop for the excursion train or motorcars. The biggest problem is that the flangeways are filled flush to the pavement with a heavy rubber strip which keeps bicycles and motorcycles from getting caught in the flangeway. The rubber compresses under the weight of the train, but doesn't for railcars. The result is railcars going off left and right onto asphalt and people pushing them back onto the track.

For the maintenance clinic, Don Jones brought an M19 in from Scranton, Pennsylvania. This car had not run in perhaps ten years! We went through the ignition system wiring, vibrator point adjustment, and the fuel system. The carb was so bad that the float would not move. Thanks to many people--especially Charlie Hulsizer--the carb was made functional and the car completed a full tour of the line.

WANT ADS

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SETOFF is happy to publish any ads sent to the editor by the membership. Ads should be complete, to include addresses and telephone numbers, where appropriate.

FOR SALE: Ex-ATSF and Milwaukee cabooses, wide, center, and rear cupola models available, \$3,500 - 7,500, FOB Fairfield, IA. Motorcars: Fairmont MT19As: 2 cylinder gas, \$650 - 1,600 (several available); Fairmont MT14s: \$850 (several available); Fairmont A3 (model D and C): \$3,500 (several available). Custom made trailers for motorcars also available. Contact Anderson Steel Flange RR Equipment Co, 700 West Grimes Ave, PO Box 2042, Fairfield, IA 52556. Phone: (515) 472-2020.

FOR SALE: Fairmont M19s and parts, also other motorcar parts and complete machines. Send SSAE to Hugh Cain, Southeastern Rail Services, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503. Phone: (804) 588-6579.

FOR SALE/TRADE: Fairmont M14 axles, bearings, idler assembly, roof, RQ-A hopper. NEEDED: S2 belt, curtains, RQ-D #F 6823 condensor. Contact Dave Verzi, 10059 Aldridge, Columbia Station, OH 44028. Phone: (216) 236-3374.

FOR SALE: Parting out several mid 80s MT19s. Lots of heaters, wheels, axles, frame rails and other running gear. Enclosed cab fronts, backs, qtr. panels and doors. Parts are expensive, but less than half of what Fairmont gets. Also have running cars from \$995. Contact Tom Shelnut, 735 N. Farragut, Portland, OR 97217. Phone: (503) 286-5325.

FOR SALE: Fairmont A3 motorcar, ex-IC RR. Waukesha engine runs good, body fair, \$475. A3 one piece metal ends and top (ex C&O RR), no glass, good condition, \$75. Aluminum front and roof for A3, fair condition, \$150. MT14 transmission (2 spd), \$65. Also other miscellaneous parts for MT14 available. Contact: Ernie Jeschke, 4106 N Adrian Hwy, Adrian, MI 49221. Phone: (Evenings) (517) 263-1322.

WANTED: 2-axle gang car and Lister Petter diesel engine for A3. Contact: Ernie Jeschke (see above).

WANTED: Fairmont drive belt # 5513 for M19. Contact: Ted Monck, S-10, C-1, RR#1, Keremos, BC, VOX 1N0 Canada. Phone (Evenings): (604) 499-5441.

FOR SALE: One 4 wheel flatcar, 20 inch diameter pressed steel riveted wheels, wood frame and deck with two spare matching wheel and axle sets, \$300; One screw-type rail bender made by Aldon Co., Chicago "Samson #3" for small rail \$100; one screw-type rail bender made by WVTW Co., for 75 - 85 lb rail, \$150; both rail benders are very old. Also large quantity of railroad track tools. Contact for updated list: Dave Williamson, 333 Lancaster Avenue, Apt 204, Fraser, PA 19355. Phone: (215) 296-5584.

WANTED: Rebuilding Fairmont M19B car with PH-

A engine. Need following parts: P-6 piston rings (for A 950 piston), M 19866 17 inch diameter 2 pc. wheels - taper bored, or M 19868 - straight bored; M 6572, M 6562 engine bearers, M 6505 axle bearing casings; F 3000 (3 inch) or F 3080 (2 1/2 inch) X 62 inch belt; other miscellaneous parts for M19B/PH-A pieces. Contact: Kelly Morris, 11008 210th Street, SE, Snohomish, WA 98290. Phone: (206) 668-1100.

WANTED: Rubber tired wheel for Fairmont M9, new or lightly used. Contact: Ron Zammit, 626 Evans, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Phone: (805) 544-9010.

FOR SALE: Ex-NW/Southern M19. Aluminum frame, front and top. Equipped with alternator. Condition: as disposed of by NW. \$450. Contact: Al Spencer, Road 2, Box T-187, Liberty Center, OH 43532.

FOR SALE: 1984 Fairmont MT19-A3 with full aluminum cab and hydraulic turntable. Ex-UP RR # 2497 is in the original RR livery, and is in fine running condition. \$1,750/firm. Contact: Mike Paul, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Phone: (414) 235-2607.

FOR SALE: 1984 GMC P30 stepvan/tool box body, as used by track inspectors. Auto, PS, PB, V8, work spot and revolving lights. A true railroad truck! Has Fairmont 0307 railgear, which needs to be installed, includes instructions and mounts. \$1,950. 1983 Chevy C20 Suburban, auto, PS, PB, air conditioned, seats 6, fog spot and strobe lights, air horns, Motorola railroad two-way radio, 0307 railgear. Nice shape. Ride in style with the classiest hy-rail truck around! \$7,200. Motorola PT 500 lunchbox portable two-way radios. 8 channel, 5 watt, with carry strap, uses D calls. As used by railroad conductors/brakemen. Ideal for coordinating at NARCOA meets. \$350/pair. Contact Jeff Ciccone, PO Box 431, Absecon, NJ 08201. Phone: (609) 641-2594.

FOR SALE: Curtains for Fairmont M9/M19 motorcars, made from original material, does not include hardware. Full set for cars with rear panel \$265, full set for cars without rear panel \$315, side curtain sets (no back curtain) \$215. Storage covers for M9/M19 motorcars, made of heavy-duty cotton canvas with brass grommets, full cover down to the wheels \$250. Travel cover for Fairmont M9/M19 motorcars, made of heavy duty 13-oz. Army duck, reinforced in front and corners, full cover with provisions for tying down while on trailer \$375. Curtains and covers for other types and sizes of motorcars can be made. Contact: Dave Rose, 202 Center Street, Elmer, NJ 08318. Phone: (609) 358-3409

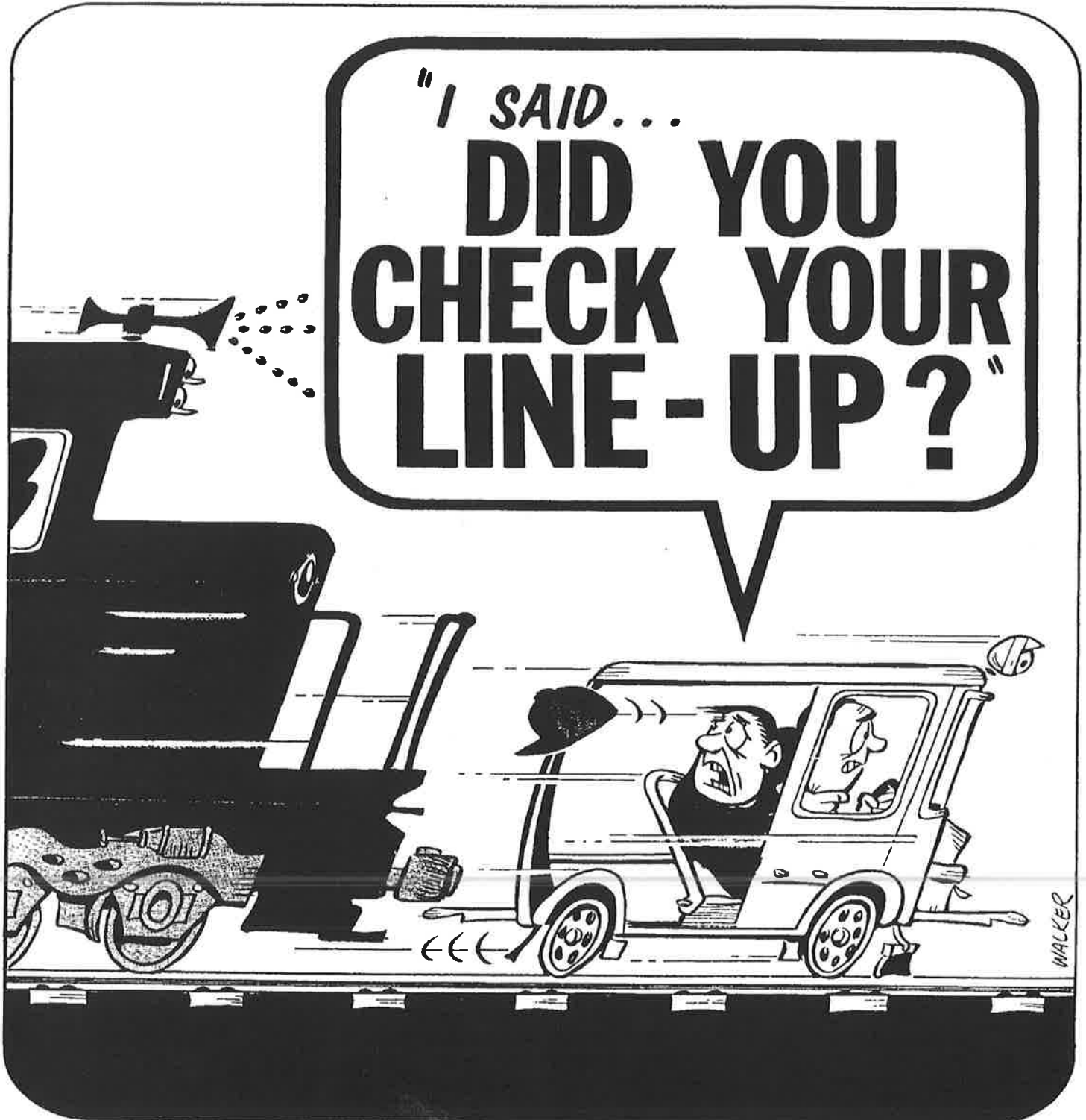
FOR SALE: Kalamazoo 27 AWF gang car, four-cyl. Ford JE engine, ex B&O, have extra transmission, engine and reversing gearbox. Needs work, \$750. 14" rubber wheels (M32437) with flange and spoke disk (M32438): one pair fair condition, \$100; one pair good condition, \$150; one pair excellent condition, \$200. One rubber tread new (M32437), \$75. Six flanged brake shoes and wood blocks (M32741), \$20 each. Contact: Dave Rose (see above).

FOR SALE: Motorcar parts and railroad memorabilia. For list, send SSAE to Joe Math, Box 178, Pecatorica, IL 61063.

WANTED: Owner's manual, pictures, Kalamazoo catalogue, service information on a 1966 Kalamazoo motorcar Model 27AWF, Cor #01FG18. Contact: Tom Wiprud, 257 Gauger St, Hutchinson, MN 55350. Phone: (612) 587-4283.

FOR SALE: Fairmont Railway Motorcar parts for 35% or less of list price. New & used parts. Send LSSAE for list to: Richard Wilkins, 3901 191 Place, SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036.

FOR SALE: Northwestern Model 561-B gang cars. early 1930s vintage. Powered by Ford Model B engines, Casey Jones Model. Two available. \$1,000/each. Contact: Donald R. Deitemeyer, Box 210, Doniphan, NE 68832. Phone: (402) 845-2246.



HOW TO BUILD A MOTOR-CAR LUBE/WORK RACK

By E. Lloyd James
C.N.W. M19 No. 2452

How many times have you wished there was an easier way to work underneath your motorcar?

Well, there is a way, very simple and inexpensive. Most all of us will service our cars either before, or right after a motorcar meet. Fairmont's instruction and parts manuals say that for excellent maintenance, motorcars should be lubricated, and any needed adjustments made, each 100 miles.

The Motorcar Lubrication and Work Rack, works well with either open frame or closed deck trailers. You simply use your trailer ramps against the ends of the racks' wooden rails, or just lay them atop the ends of the racks' wooden rails. Either way, it will be a fairly smooth roll-over joint.

To build this rack, go to your favorite building

specified premium-grade material. This piece is cut in half to give you two pieces 7' long. (Note: These 2x4x7 pieces are for cars weighing no more than 1400 lbs. Cars of greater weight require two pieces 4x4x7.)

These wooden pieces rest on the flat surface on top of the concrete block piers. Making sure the ends of them come even with the end of the piers, use your measuring tape to make sure you have 56 1/2" between the inside edges of these running rails. Make sure they are parallel. It is also suggested to have these wooden pieces rest in the middle of the piers, as the piers are parallel to the wooden rails.

There is no need to place any kind of gauge bar between these running rails, since the objective is to make all four sides an easy entry underneath your car. If you have levelled the blocks properly, there is no need for any gauge bar.

When you use the methods outlined here, an underneath working clearance is obtained equal to two feet. This rack can be built on a blacktop or other smooth surface. It is easy to crawl under or roll under with a mechanic's creeper.

Once you have your motorcar rolled onto this rack, be sure to set the handbrake, and chock the wheels both front and back. You will have to release the brake if you are going to adjust the brakeshoes or replace them.

Complete lubrication jobs, brake adjustments, cleaning under the car body, and other service operations can be performed totally unobstructed.

For \$15 or less you can buy the materials for this rack depending on your location in the country. If you elect, your car can be left up on the rack, with brakes set, and wheels chocked, until the next meet comes up. This prevents weakening your trailer's springs, as your trailer is empty, and not under a constant load. The trailer can be painted and serviced, too. Then simply back the trailer to the rack, load up and off you go.



supply yard. Purchase eight concrete blocks, 8" X 8" X 16". These blocks will be your corner piers, in four corners. They are placed two blocks high, no mortar is needed. These blocks must be leveled in the corners. They are placed so the gauge of 56 1/2" can be attained between the racks' wooden running rails.

Also purchase at the yard one piece of pressure-treated PREMIUM GRADE lumber, 2" x 4" x 14' long, making sure there are no large knots in it. This is why I

The photograph above was taken by Lloyd James of his motorcar loaded onto his work rack which he built to make working from underneath his motorcar easier.



Start 'Em Young! Fours months of age is not too early to introduce the next generation of railcar enthusiasts to the joys of railroading. Harry Riblett is shown here with his grandson, Nicholas Calvin Rohm, on his ex-SAL M19-F3 inspector's car on the Wilmington & Western RR, near his home. Although the day was blustery, "Nicky" seemed to enjoy the soothing clickety-clack for a short trip on the local tourist line's trackage.

THE SETOFF

Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839

POSTMASTER: IF UNDELIVERABLE, PLEASE RETURN TO SENDER.