

# ***THE SETOFF***

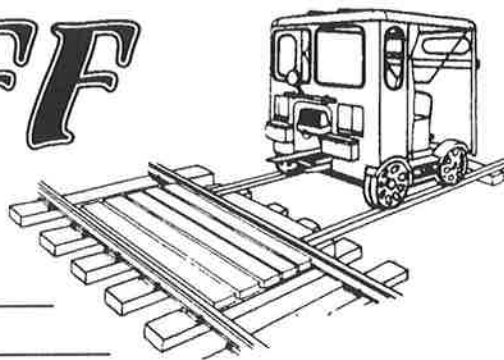
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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN  
RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (NARCOA)

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Spring 1994

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*Dallas McDowell of Lapeer, MI, sent us a photo of his M19 shown here on the Toledo, Lake Erie and Western RR in Ohio in the summer of 1991.*

## Organization News

By Joel Williams

On April 8th and 9th, a group of railcar operators representing various motorcar groups from North America met in Chicago to discuss the future of this hobby and form a truly representative organization encompassing everyone in the railcar activity. Attending were representatives from NARCOA, AARO insurance, NARCOA local chapters and independent local groups. The MCCA declined to participate. Attendees paid their own travel and lodging expenses, which indicates how important we thought this meeting was to the railcar hobby.

A proposal was made and agreed upon to use the existing NARCOA organization as the basis of the new group. The existing NARCOA Board of Directors voted to amend the current by-laws to allow the election of a new 11-member Board. The new Board will be elected on a regional basis.

The map on page 9 shows the ten regions within the U.S. The remaining region encompasses all of Canada. It was agreed that the map divisions are not perfect, but it was decided to

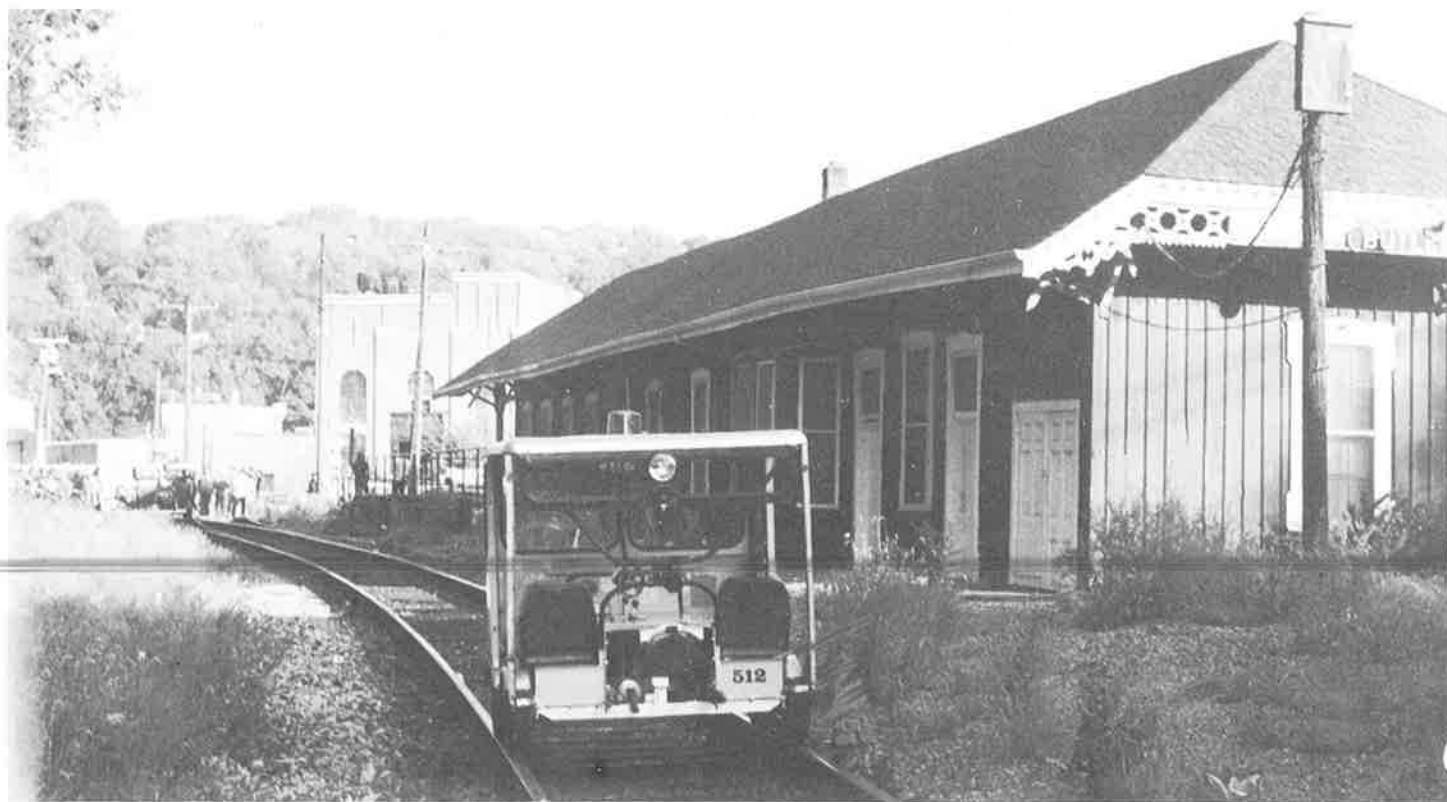
wait for the election of the new Board to redraw the divisions. The new Board of Directors will hold its first meeting on September 10th in Indianapolis. Contact Stan Conyer for details.

The NARCOA name will remain the same. A new set of bylaws will be put in place. AARO insurance will be brought back into NARCOA. We hope to increase the number of *SETOFF* issues. A lot of positive things are about to happen to keep our railcar hobby advancing.

A three-member committee was appointed to run the election for the new Board. They are Mike Mitzel of Waterman, IL; Carl Anderson of Hoffman Estates, IL; and Doug Stivers of San Jose, CA. You will be getting a ballot for your local region some time in June or July.

I realize that many members don't care about how the organization is run or who is on the Board of Directors. However, if we don't see that it is run properly and we find ourselves not able to ride anymore, then we will care who was running the operation. Please participate in the upcoming vote by sending in your ballot.

Thanks go to Ron Zammit for pushing so hard to make this meeting happen, Hank Brown for arranging and paying for the meeting room, and to all who took time to attend.



*Wray Dudley took this photo of his ex-SCL MT19 #512 at Butler, NJ, on ex-NYS&W track September 5, 1993.*

# Editor's Notes

By Gene Tucker

WE NEED YOUR IDEAS! Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find accounts of the changes discussed April 8 and 9 in Chicago to improve the motorcar community's organizations. Just as NARCOA is about to undergo some changes in the interest of better serving those who restore, own, and operate railcar equipment, there has been some discussion about changing *THE SET-OFF* to make it more responsive to the membership.

One of my thoughts would be that changes should be made to make *THE SETOFF* more useful and timely in listing upcoming meets, perhaps by publishing four quarterly *SETOFFs* as we do now, with four short editions containing, perhaps, only meets and ads in between. We welcome your thoughts about the changes you'd like to see. Send them to me at 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205-2310.

Regarding the changes to NARCOA, Ron Zammit encourages everyone to continue/renew their memberships in NARCOA and to vote in the upcoming elections!

Deadlines for future editions of *THE SET-OFF* are:

- Summer 1994: July 15
- Fall 1994: October 15
- Winter 1995: January 15

Finally, continuing thanks are due to my ever patient sister Deanna for her assistance in publishing *THE SETOFF*, and to Ernie Jeschke, who prints it, and to Hank Brown, who assists with mailings and other things. Couldn't do it without each of you!

# A Correction

By Gene Tucker

Once in a great while, we pass along wrong information (not intentionally, of course), and so, we correct a piece of information recently contained in *THE SETOFF*:

RENEWAL NOTICES are sent at renewal time, reports NARCOA Secretary Joel Williams. So, don't worry that you'll have to remember when your renewal is due. Your Editor appropriately eats some "humble pie".

## Guidelines for Submitting Materials For Publication in *THE SETOFF*

1. Our editorial policy is to cheerfully publish in *THE SETOFF* all materials received, although they may be subject to editing for space considerations.
2. Photos and materials submitted for publication in *THE SETOFF* cannot be returned.
3. We cannot publish copyrighted materials such as: photos, posters, cartoons, or articles without written permission from the author or publisher. Written permission must be provided by the sender at time of submission.
4. Meet stories, technical articles and lengthy submissions should be typed or printed.
5. Ads, meet notices, and short articles may be handwritten.
6. Photos should be either black and white or sharp color photos. Photos print best when the subject of the photo is large. A picture of a motorcar sitting atop a bridge, for example, where the image of the motorcar is very small, or blends in with the background of the picture, doesn't print well. Please label the back of the picture as to its subject matter and who took the picture.
7. Finally, send materials to *THE SETOFF* editor by the published deadline.

# THE SETOFF

Volume 8 Number 1

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*THE SETOFF* is published quarterly by the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) to promote safe operation of railroad motorcars, and to encourage fellowship and exchange of information among motorcar 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.

## Meets

*Members who have organized meets are encouraged to advertise those events here. We will publish all notices received. Send materials to: Dick Ray, 5 Hemlock Place, Randolph, NJ 07869, or to: Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. If time is short, send them directly to the Editor. Thank you!*

July 23 - 24: Central Pennsylvania Weekend: On Saturday, ride the 86 miles of the North Shore RR, including the former lines of the Philadelphia & Reading and the Erie Lackawanna RRs, from Northumberland, PA, to Beech Haven, PA, and return. On Sunday, ride the Shamokin Valley RR, 50 miles from Sunbury, PA, to Shamokin and return. On Saturday evening the Central PA Chapter, NRHS, will host the group at the White Deer Station and Museum for slides, videos, snacks, and perhaps a midnight caboose ride. Cost for the weekend is \$50 per car. AARO insurance is required. NARCOA operating and safety rules apply. A block of special rate rooms has been reserved at the local Comfort Inn. Contact Larry Maynard, RD #1, Box 351, New Columbia, PA 17856. Phone (717) 538-9050.

August 20: Run the scenic South Branch Valley RR along the Potomac River in beautiful West Virginia. This 105-mile round trip runs from Moorefield to Green Springs, WV, with an optional side trip to Petersburg. Cost is \$30 per car, and preregistration is requested. Contact Wray Dudley, 1116 Vickilee Road, Richmond, VA 23236. Phone (804) 276-5228 (evenings).

September 24 - 25: Cuyahoga Valley Scenic RR is the site of this work/run meet. Work will consist of light trackwork, litter pickup, and brush clearing. Cost is \$10 per car. For additional information, contact: R.R. Hixenbaugh, P.O. Box 141, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221-0141. Phone: (216) 923-0298.

HOOSIER RAILCARS offers the following meets. Contact the coordinator listed for each meet for additional information.

July 4: Burlington Northern. For location and details, contact Dave Pratt, Box 34, Colfax, IA 50054.

July 9: Indiana Southern, Plainville, IN, to Evansville, IN, 136 miles round trip. See all that southern Indiana has to offer: hills, flat land,

woods, swamps, and most of it on welded rail. \$20 per car; AARO insurance required. Set on at Plainville Mill between 8 and 9 a.m., lunch available at Evansville. Motels: Therof's, Washington, IN, (812) 254-4279; Twilight, Washington, IN, (812) 254-5816. Contact Phil Childress at (812) 339-8542.

July 23: Lake Superior & Ishpeming RR. For location and details contact John Valek at (906) 863-7747.

July 24: Wisconsin & Michigan Railway. Those of you who weren't able to run this neat little northern Wisconsin shortline last year will have the opportunity to do so this year! The 64-mile round trip begins in Ironwood, MI, runs east to Bessemer, MI, and west to Mellen, WI. AARO insurance required. No car limit. \$40 per car, plus \$1 per person. LSASE to: Mike Paul, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Phone: (414) 235-2607.

The MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION of NARCOA announces the following meets. Contact the coordinator listed for additional information.

July 31: Burlington Northern RR from Council Bluffs, IA, to Baird. Cost is \$30 per car and \$1 additional per person. Contact Tom Sharratt, 4023 Shawnee Ave, Des Moines, IA 50310.

August 6: Twin Cities and Western RR from Minneapolis west 120 miles. Contact Mark Arnold, 6345 335th Street, Stacy, MN 55079.

August 13: Great Miami & Scioto Railway from Richmond to Oak Hill, 170 miles round trip. Contact Bob Mense, 436 Hermay Drive, Hamilton, OH 45013.

August 20: Badger Ammunition Plant, Baraboo, WI, 26 miles. Contact Craig Bluschke, 10916 Spring Creek Road, Blue Mounds, WI 53517.

August 28: Iowa Interstate RR from Iowa City to Davenport with the possibility of crossing into Illinois on the Rock Island Bridge over the Mississippi. Contact Tom Sharratt (see above).

September 17: Burlington Ammunition Plant, Burlington, IA. Contact Tom Sharratt (see above).

September 18: Appanoose County RR, Centerville, IA, to Albia. Contact Tom Sharratt (see above).

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## Meets

(Continued from previous page)

The NORTHERN CENTRAL RAILCAR ASSOCIATION conducts runs along the historic (Lincoln rode this on his way to deliver the Gettysburg Address) and scenic 17 mile mainline of the former Northern Central Railway from New Freedom to York, PA. See the historic station where Lincoln stopped, and the Howard Tunnel, bored in 1834! All trips begin at New Freedom, PA at 10 a.m. All NARCOA members and holders of AARO insurance are welcome. Cost is \$20 per car, per day, or an annual mem-

bership is available for \$50 per year, plus \$10 for additional insurance coverage. Contact Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Road, Red Lion, PA 17356, for membership or additional information. Run dates for 1994 are:

July 2, 3, & 4

July 30 & 31

August 20 & 21

September 17 & 18

October 15 & 16

November 5 & 6

November 24, 25, 26 & 27

December 17 & 18

December 31 & January 1, 1995

July 16 & 17

August 6 & 7

September 3 & 4

October 1 & 2

October 29 & 30

November 19 & 20

December 3 & 4

December 24 & 25



***Don't  
forget!***

***VOTE  
for your area  
representative to  
NARCOA's  
Board of Directors***

***Details in this issue.***

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETS IN CHICAGO TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF N.A.R.C.O.A. AND THE MOTORCAR HOBBY

By Hugh Cain

Ron Zammit had invited 35 motorcar operators and event coordinators to meet with him in Chicago on April 8 and 9 to work on starting a "new" national motorcar organization. Due to last minute commitments, only 20 or so finally showed up at the session.

Friday night was devoted to getting the "baggage unloaded". We spent about six hours voicing concerns and problems, and then working out an agenda to follow on Saturday and named our group the steering committee.

Once reassembled Saturday morning, John Nolan and Dana Fuller proceeded to give us the "ins and outs" of AARO insurance. They were followed by Joel Williams, who gave insight into the original NARCOA founding and its by-laws.

Ideas and suggestions flew; comments, criticism and counterproposals were made and solutions were found to the problems that had arisen.

During the lunch break, some began to check out from the motel while others actually went to lunch. Joel agreed to contact the existing Board of Directors and get a vote by phone on the issues we had covered to this point.

The morning session had been smooth, too smooth for some, I suppose. The afternoon session proceeded just as quickly and efficiently as the morning's. By 4:30, Joel was only one vote away from approval of our suggestions by the present NARCOA Board.

During the day and a half we:

- redrew the boundaries of the divisions of NARCOA and made Canada a separate division,
- nominated persons to Board of Directors positions (a NARCOA-wide election will be held **very shortly**),
- recommended a new set of by-laws to be adopted by the Board of Directors,
- reappointed Joel as Secretary of the Board, and
- established an election committee and decided on what committees would be necessary to give NARCOA national prominence.

We don't intend to make the motorcar rules difficult to understand or too involved to mess

with; we plan to keep NARCOA-sanctioned events as enjoyable as they have been in the past. To do this we all must realize safety is a common goal. Also, to continue being able to operate our motorcars, we will need ONE voice/organization to represent us to the numerous railroads we run over, the FRA, our insurance carrier and others.

The new NARCOA intends to do just that. We did not and have no plans to strip or dismantle NARCOA. Quite the reverse, we want more rides and more doors to open, and we feel this new group will be able to do that.

### MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING IN CHICAGO

- Date: April 9, 1994  
 Time: 8:00 a.m.  
 Place: Days Inn, Manheim Road, Schiller Park, Illinois  
 Purpose: To discuss the possible formation of a single unified motorcar operators' association

The meeting was called to order by Ron Zammit, the person who set in motion the idea of a single motorcar operators' association that would address the common needs of the numerous existing motorcar organizations, particularly from the perspective of addressing national regulatory agencies (e.g., Federal Railroad Administration), the national concern of the railroad industry with safety (e.g., Operation Lifesaver), and the national concern of our motorcar fraternity with the ever-increasing numbers of railroads that will invite motorcar trips only if the motorcar owners have liability insurance coverage.

The meeting attendance roster was signed by the following people: Carl Anderson (IL), Michael Mitzel (IL), Mark Arnold (MN), Mike Paul (WI), Stan Conyer (IN), Tom Johnson (NC), Doug Stivers (CA), Dennis Madden (FL), Dana Fuller (CA), John Nolan (NJ), Ron Zammit (CA), Joel

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## MEETING MINUTES

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Williams (NJ), Hugh Cain (VA), Mike Billet (PA), Tom Norman (MT), Robert Hixenbaugh (OH), John Valek (MI), Hank Brown (WI), Jon Knight (IL), Jack Whitt (FL), and Jerry Obert (IL).

After Ron Zammit's welcoming address, Joel Williams was given the opportunity to address the group at 8:10 a.m. He suggested that, rather than starting a new organization from scratch, why not remake the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) to be that new organization. The advantages proposed were that NARCOA already has an existing membership base and operating funds, and that the name "North American" is already part of its title which covers the desire that the new organization embrace Canada as well as the United States.

Joel pointed out that, at last year's annual NARCOA convention, it was determined that a new slate of Directors was long overdue according to NARCOA bylaws. He said that there existed the possibility that the current NARCOA Board might embrace a resolution by our meeting (if

such a resolution was passed) to amend its current bylaws to accept a slate of candidates for a new Board of Directors as might be initiated at our meeting. This would then set the stage for a new Board of Directors that would support the idea of a truly national motorcar operators association as stated in the first paragraph, and that the new Board would adopt a new set of bylaws as our meeting might later propose be adopted.

After much discussion, a motion was put forward and seconded that the new national organization be NARCOA, if approval was forthcoming from the current NARCOA Board of Directors to amend its current bylaws as stated in the previous paragraph. Motion carried with one dissenting vote. It was noted by Ron Zammit that, with adoption of this resolution, all persons present were now acting as a steering committee to the current NARCOA Board, to wit: neither the action just approved, nor any future action by those present has any force other than as a recommendation to the current NARCOA Board of Directors.

The next issue to be discussed was the  
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*The steering committee which met in April of this year to discuss the future of NARCOA included, from left: Ron Zammit, CA; Rich Stivers, CA; Tom Norman, MT; Mike Paul, WI; Mark Arnold, MN; Dennis Madden, FL; Dana Fuller, CA; John Valek, MI; Bob Hixenbaugh, OH; Hugh Cain, VA; Mike Billet, PA; Jon Knight, IL; Carl Anderson, IL; Joel Williams, NJ; Stan Conyer, IN; John Nolan, NJ; Tom Johnson, NC; Mike Mitzel, IL; and Hank Brown, WI.*

Photo submitted by Hank Brown

## MEETING MINUTES

(Continued from previous page)

proposed bylaws for the new national organization. Prior to the meeting, draft bylaws had been drawn up and distributed to several people who recommended draft changes which were subsequently incorporated in a final draft which had then been mailed to meeting participants. It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously that the final draft bylaws, as amended to change the proposed name of the national organization from Motorcar Operators of America (MOA) to NARCOA, be presented for adoption by the new Board of Directors which is to be elected this year.

Next to be discussed was dividing the Canadian/U.S. geographical entity into voting territories such that the makeup of the new NARCOA Board might have a fair geographical representation. After much discussion, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed that it be recommended to the current NARCOA Board that the new NARCOA Board be composed of one nonvoting Director-at-Large representing AARO to be chosen by the President of the new Board, plus 11 voting Directors comprised of one member from each of the following geographical areas as determined solely by the vote of NARCOA members in those respective areas:

- Area 1: ME, VT, NH, NY, MA, CN, RI
- Area 2: PA, NJ, MD, DE
- Area 3: OH, IN, MI (Lower Peninsula)
- Area 4: VA, WV, KY, TN, SC, NC
- Area 5: MS, AL, GA, FL
- Area 6: IL, WI, MI (Upper Peninsula)
- Area 7: MN, ND, SD, IA
- Area 8: Canada
- Area 9: NE, CO, KS, MO, AR, OK, TX, LA
- Area 10: MT, ID, WY, WA, OR
- Area 11: CA, NV, UT, NM, AZ

It was next moved, seconded, and unanimously passed that an Election Committee composed of Mike Mitzel, Carl Anderson, and Doug Stivers be recommended to the current NARCOA Board with the further recommendation that said committee draw up 11 individual ballots representing the following slate of candidates for the new NARCOA Board of Directors which would be inserted in the next issue of *THE SETOFF*:

- Area 1: \*Steve LaBonte (NH), Dick Wilhelm (NY)

- Area 2: \*Joel Williams (NJ), \*Mike Billet (PA), Rick Tritsche (PA)
- Area 3: \*Stan Conyer (IN), Jeff Mast (MI), \*Bob Hixenbaugh (OH)
- Area 4: \*Hugh Cain (VA), \*Tom Johnson (NC), \*Harris Harper (TN), \*Gene Tucker (VA)
- Area 5: \*Jack Whitt (FL), \*Dennis Madden (FL)
- Area 6: \*Hank Brown (WI), \*Mike Paul (WI)
- Area 7: Dave Pratt (IA), \*Mark Arnold (MN)
- Area 8: \*Bob Layfield
- Area 9: Jean O'Dell (KS), Charlie Anderson (MO), Bill Pollard (AR), John Linda (TX)
- Area 10: \*Tom Anderson (MT), Rick Leach (WA), Roger Sackett (WA)
- Area 11: \*Ron Zammit (CA), \*Rich Stivers (CA)

\* Nominee has agreed to serve if elected.

It was further determined that the Election Committee would solicit short resumes from each candidate, and that the 11 individual ballots would be ready by May 31 for loose-leaf insertion in the next issue of *THE SETOFF*.

At 11:30 a.m., the meeting adjourned for lunch, and resumed business at 1:00 p.m. When the meeting resumed, Joel Williams reported that he had contacted several members of the NARCOA Board, and that one more affirmative vote was needed to adopt the change to the current NARCOA Bylaws as had been recommended by the Steering Committee.

It was next recommended that the following agenda be taken up by the new NARCOA Board:

1) Date and Place of Board Meeting: Steering Committee recommendation is Indianapolis (first choice) or Chicago (second choice) on Aug. 13, 1994. [*Editor's Note: This date was later changed to September 10, 1994.*] If Indianapolis is chosen, Stan Conyer would set up a motorcar meet on Aug. 14.

2) Appointment of AARO Director-at-Large

3) Election of Officers (suggested: President, Vice President, Secretary-Meeting, Secretary-Minutes, Treasurer)

4) Committees: Editor, Safety, Events

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# MEETING MINUTES

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(standards, rules, operations), Membership, Liaison (Operation Lifesaver, FRA), Audit.

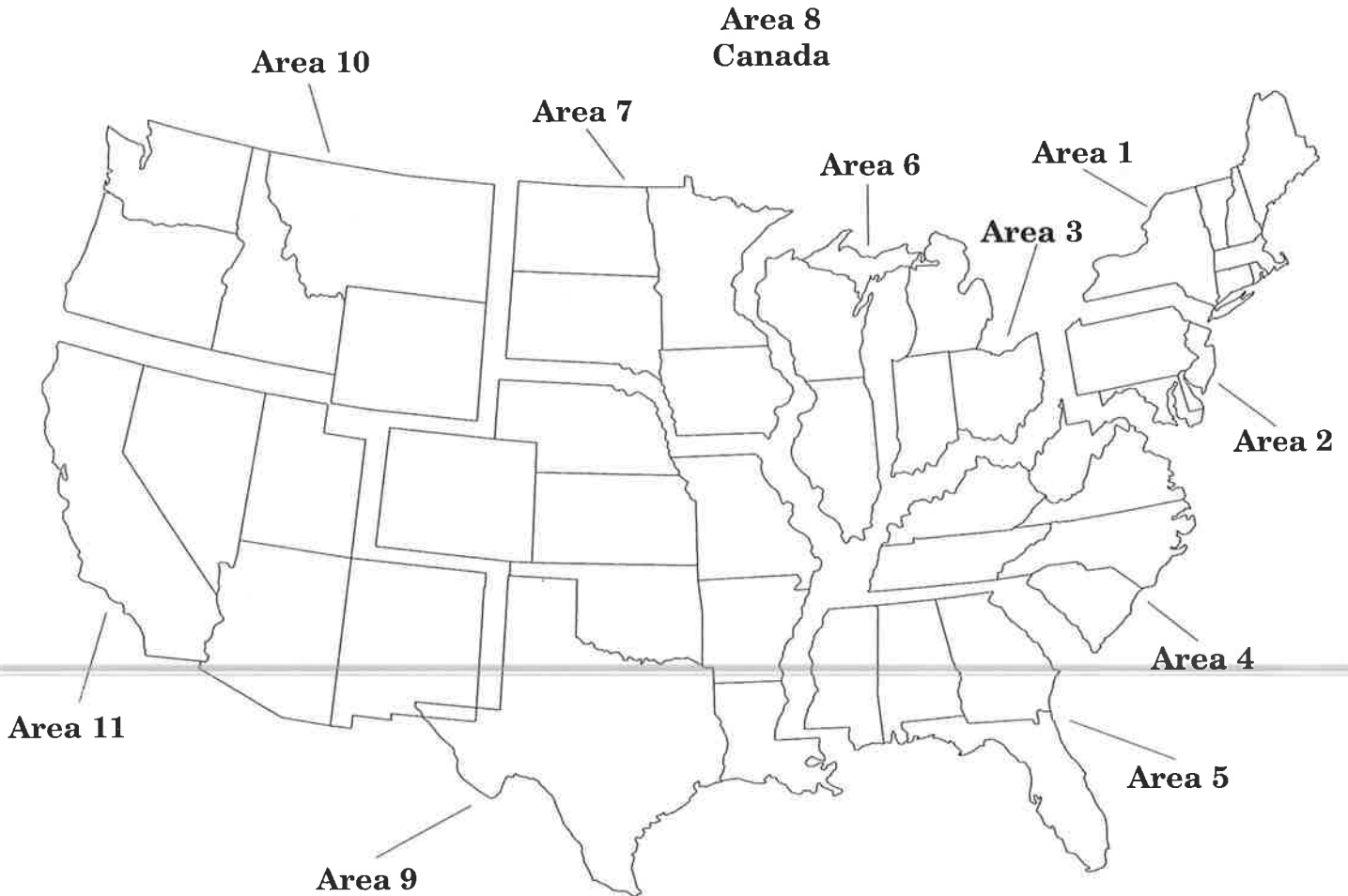
- 5) Board travel expenses
- 6) Tax status
- 7) Dues: Recommended separate dues for NARCOA and AARO.
- 8) Insurance : Minimum limits, minimum set of rules, policing unit, membership in AARO requires membership in NARCOA.
- 9) Approval of new NARCOA bylaws as recommended by Steering Committee.
- 10) Run publicity: Should address general publicity, railroad's desire regarding publicity, and crisis management in case of accident (position with regard to accident publicity)
- 11) Releases and Agreements
- 12) Health restrictions with regard to motorcar operation.

Although no formal motion was made relative to the above suggested agenda for the new NARCOA Board Meeting, no objection was raised during any of the discussion, so it is presumed that, if a motion had been made, it would have been seconded and passed.

At 2:30 p.m., Joel Williams reported that he was still seeking approval from a seventh member of the NARCOA Board of Directors to adopt the Steering Committee's recommended change to the NARCOA Bylaws as stated above. Seven affirmative votes is required for adoption.

All business of the Steering Committee meeting having been concluded at that time, the meeting was adjourned with Hank Brown volunteering to steer willing committee members to some interesting railfanning sights in the Chicagoland area.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Paul  
Steering Committee Recording Secretary

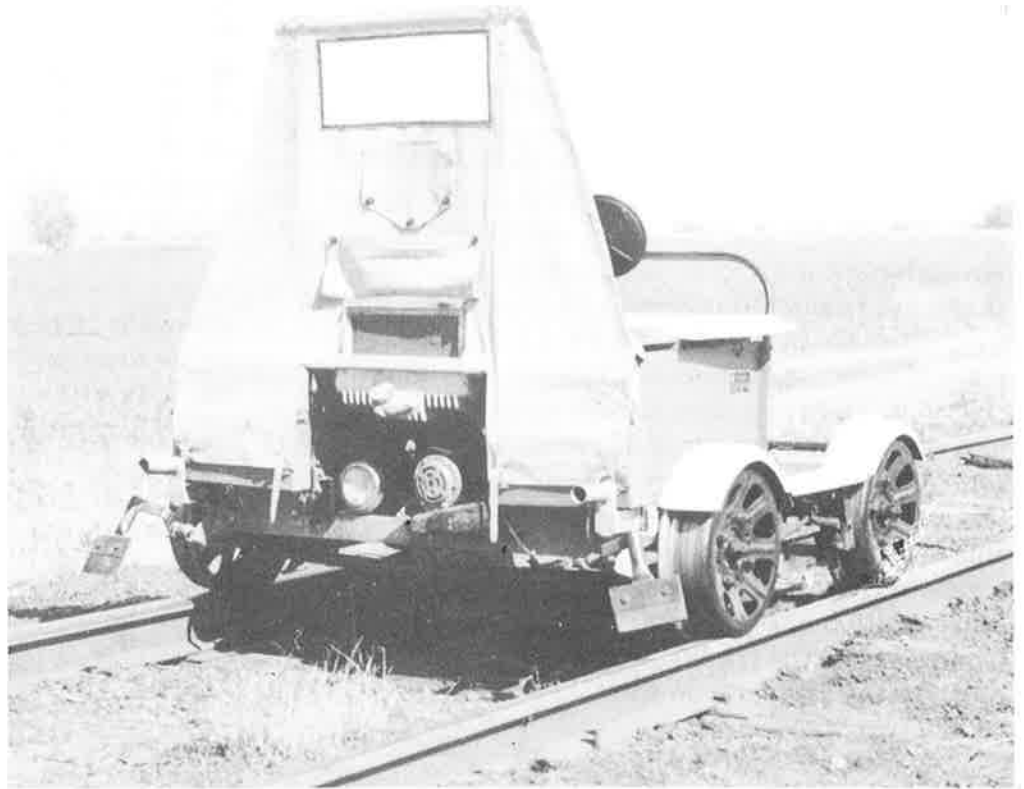


*This map shows the proposed geographical areas of the U.S. and Canada that would comprise the new NARCOA organization.*



*In the photo at left, Dallas McDowell stands next to his 1945 M19 at Stone Mtn., GA. The photo was taken by Eric Schwandt in the fall of 1992 on a run on CSX rail.*

*In the photo at left below, the lineup takes a break on a spring 1989 run on the Little Traverse Railroad in Petuskey, MI, in a photo by Dallas McDowell.*



*In the photo above, owner Eric Schwandt's M19 sits on the Toledo Lake Erie & Western RR in Ohio.*

*The bottom photo shows Dave Haugan's M19, also on the Toledo Lake Erie & Western RR.*

Dallas McDowell photos

## LET'S TALK SAFETY: GRADE CROSSINGS AND MOTORCARS

*Editor's Note: The following is an open letter to the NARCOA membership written in response to a report of an incident that occurred last summer at a meet in Indiana.*

Many of you will remember the story in the summer issue about the 4th of July meet in Indiana, the Firecracker 300. In the story, there was a report of a car-train wreck, the train being a motorcar, me. The motorcar was cleared of any wrongdoing both by the police and the railroad. I thank my friend, Stan Conyer, for the story.

Since the meet, and now even more since the story, I have been reflecting on what happened that day. I feel it is time to talk about the event and what can be done to make crossings safer.

The wreck: I was lead car and in charge of the group. I had been on the line before and as such, was aware of the crossings, speed, and condition of the tracks. Phil Childress was the trailing man and also the lead man on the return trip home.

One safety thing we did on the meet was to wire our wheels to ground. This caused crossing lights to be set off and gates to come down. At the crossing where the wreck happened there were both lights and gates. As I approached the crossing, both lights and gates were working. Track speed is 30 m.p.h. I was moving at about 10 m.p.h. so as to keep the group bunched up going through the town.

The car that hit me was operated by an 89-year-old man. He had stopped at the crossing, then suddenly drove around the gates. I was too near to him to stop and slid into the side of the car. My car hooked onto his car with the lift arms in front and was jerked off the tracks.

The driver of the car never looked down the tracks at me and never stopped, even after we hit. I was not hurt and when I looked up after my car stopped moving, I saw the auto was not stopping; he was still driving away. I started to chase the auto down the street on foot. I got near enough to get his plate number, but he drove off.

When the police arrived, they were able to track down the auto. The driver said he drove around the gates because he saw others do it once. He also said he did not stop because he was

not hurt and he wanted to get home. The last I heard, he was cancelled by his insurance and lost his license.

Damage: The auto had big dents and scratches along the whole side. My motorcar had the front axle bent, one rail wiper bent, the other wiper torn off, two windows broken, both lift arms bent and broken, cab bent and twisted, and my new paint scratched up.

Was there anything I could have done to have prevented this? Well, not really. I had slowed to 10 m.p.h., my flashing red and yellow lights were on, I was blowing my air horns, and the RR lights and gates were working.

Then what can we do at crossings? Look, look, look, look, slow down, slow down. And never assume the other guy is going to stop, or that he sees you. Most cars never look, let alone stop. On my home line, the Indiana Transportation Museum, nearly all grade crossings have stop signs for the autos. But even when I am in an F-7 or the NKP 587, cars still run in front of me.

We as a group need to take steps to protect ourselves and prevent accidents at all times. To this end, I have listed what I feel are some of the better things we can do.

1. LIGHTS ON at all times when moving. Locomotives are required to have their lights on, why not a motorcar?
2. FLASHING LIGHT, yellow warring type.
3. LOUD HORN and bell.
4. BRAKES in very good order, not just passing, but best.
5. GOOD, CLEAR VISION; driver's vision not blocked by others in the car.
6. OPERATOR'S MIND on his job and his responsibility.
7. DEFENSIVE DRIVING. Don't trust the other guy.
8. A PLAN if an accident happens--how to get help, first aid, reporting.

I know there are other things, but these are my key points. I would also like to see a regular section on Safety in our newsletter.

**SAFETY FIRST!**

John Sims  
Brownsburg, Indiana



## Tech Tips

By Gene Tucker

In the last issue of *THE SETOFF*, we passed along a technical tip from STAN CONYER in Indiana to the effect that PISTON RINGS for an Oliver farm tractor will fit a Fairmont RO-C engine. Tips like this are especially helpful as some sources of original parts begin to dry up.

This month, we pass along two more tips (along with saying that we welcome any helpful bits of information you may have discovered along the way. Send them in and we'll print them).

TOM VAUGHN from LaPorte, IN reports that he needed WINDSHIELD WIPER MOTORS for his Fairmont MT14. The price for a replacement motor at various marine or electrical supply stores ranged from \$65 to \$85. Finally, he checked the J. C. Whitney/Warshawsky Automotive Catalogue out of Chicago. He found the motor there for \$27. The motor is available in 6- and 12-volt versions, and various shaft lengths. This company will send a catalogue if you call

(312) 461-6102, or readers can contact Tom at (219) 324-3494 for additional information.

HUGH CAIN, Norfolk, VA, passes along his solution for rigging AIR CHIMES on motorcars: He reports that his Fairmont A3 had the basics for an air horn, but that they were removed last year, and the key part he required was a 12V pressure switch. Most of those available were designed for 110V and don't work on 12V. He found, with the help of a friend who works in an electrical supply house, that a Pumptrol brand compressor switch did the trick, for less than \$20. Three different part numbers are key to the different pipe thread sizes available: The FHG-12 has 1/4" NPSF connections, the FHG-13 has 3/8" connections, and the FHG-19 has 1/2" fittings. The cut-out range is from 70 to 150 PSI, with a code number of J-55.

HUGH CAIN also passes along a PAINT TIP for motorcars: He reports that Rustoleum brand paints make an industrial coatings line in its "Hard Hat" line, which is very reasonable in cost (He bought a 15 ounce spray can for less than \$4). The 2148 Equipment Yellow is a verry (*spelling is Hugh's...ED*) close match for the Fairmont Yellow.

## HOW TO AVOID CONSTANT SPARK PLUG FOUL-OUTS

Some motorcar operators swap spark plugs several times during a one-day run and some operators only twice a year.

Why the difference? What can you do to avoid constant spark plug foul-outs while operating your motorcar?

Well, we consulted the experts on this one and came up with a list of hints for keeping spark plugs functioning well for a long time.

Many of the suggestions that follow were made in various "how to" articles that have appeared in *THE SETOFF* over the years. You may want to refer back to these articles (*noted below*) for more details.

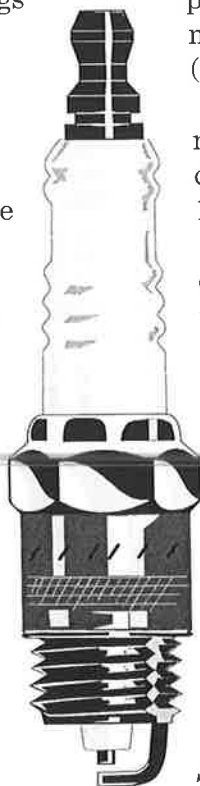
Other suggestions were made by NARCOA members who have had good luck avoiding frequent foul-outs in their own motorcar operations.

Here's our list:

- Do not use a dry cell lantern-type battery; use a lead acid battery instead. (*THE SETOFF*, Winter 1992)
- Remember to advance the timer in

proportion to the speed of your car using maximum advance only at higher speeds. (*THE SETOFF*, Winter 1992)

- Use quality two-cycle oil, not 30-weight motor oil as the manuals suggest; it burns cleaner and better. (*THE SETOFF*, Summer 1988)
- Adjust the mixture correctly: smoking cars are the result of improper mixture control. Once the motorcar has warmed up, close the mixture control until the engine starts to quit, then reopen a 1/8 to 1/4 turn until the engine picks up again and leave it there.
- Use copper-core spark plug wire, not suppression wire.
- Use Champion D21 spark plugs gapped at .035. (*THE SETOFF*, Fall 1989)
- Adjust timer points on the engine but don't forget that the vibrator points also need adjusting. (*THE SETOFF*, Fall 1990 and Spring 1989)
- Do not use automotive coils. (*THE SETOFF*, Fall 1990)



## MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGION'S FIRST WINTER RUN WAS HELD ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1994

By Craig Bluschke

As we crept along the highway at 30 miles per hour in four-wheel drive bucking the blinding snowstorm, I was really beginning to doubt my sanity. This seemed like a good idea a month ago when it was 45 degrees and sunshine, but did I really want to go on a motorcar run this badly? Why wasn't I at home putting the finishing touches on my snack menu and settling in to watch our Wisconsin football team play in the Rose Bowl for the first time in 31 years? Or better yet, why wasn't I in warm Pasadena watching the game in person?

Such were my thoughts as we headed toward the Badger Army Ammunition Plant to participate in the Mississippi Valley Region's first winter run, held on New Year's Day.

Turning into the parking area, the snow seemed to be letting up a little but I wondered whether all five car owners registered for the trip would make it given the slippery road conditions. I was somewhat surprised to see Mike Mitzel, who had the longest drive of anyone, already waiting outside the plant entry gate. Normally, Badger Plant security personnel occupy the main

gate guard house, but due to reduced holiday staffing, this wouldn't be the case today. Plans called for us to wait just outside the gate until everyone arrived and then we would contact the security staff via telephone so they could drive over, open the gate, and register each person entering.

Since we had 15 minutes to wait until we were due to sign in, we busied ourselves scraping ice and snow off motorcar windshields. I never thought an ice scraper and snow brush would be required equipment for a motorcar meet! We signed releases, secured side curtains, and did all the other preliminary tasks that precede a meet. As our sign-in time approached, I was relieved to see everyone had arrived safely, including Hank Brown's wife, Carol, who made a spectacular entrance sliding around the corner sideways in her car, narrowly missing a fire hydrant and motorcar trailer before coming to a stop.

As if on cue, two plant security officers magically appeared, unlocked the gates, and began the entrance registration process. Minutes later everyone had been cleared through and,

(Continued on next page)

*With power plant #1 as a backdrop, Badger Ammunition Plant industrial engineer (and NARCOA member) Don Hartmann, far right in photo, supervises departure preparations.*





## MISSISSIPPI VALLEY'S FIRST WINTER RUN

(Continued from previous page)

with the gates locked behind us, we drove the short distance to our set-on point, a rail crossing along the main road about a block inside the plant. As our group busied itself with unloading our motorcars, setting them on the track, and parking our vehicles, I noticed that the heavy wet snow had completely stopped, leaving behind a beautiful white frosting over everything including, of course, the rails upon which we were about to ride.

A short safety meeting was held where discussions centered on the vastly increased stopping distances we would be dealing with due to the snow, then everyone boarded their cars and we were off . . . well, at least that was our intention. Much to my surprise, my leading MT-19 loaded with three people had virtually no traction! With about one inch of wet new snow deposited on the railhead, the front car wheels merely turned the snow to slippery mush, causing the rear driving wheels to sit on the rail and spin. We tried obvious tricks like redistributing the riders towards the rear for more weight and giving the car "human-aided acceleration" (a push) to gain some initial momentum, but all was to no avail.

A trackside pow wow then ensued during which someone came up with the bright idea of doubling up the two front cars for more traction. Seconds later a towbar appeared. My car was coupled to the second car in line, Dave Dettman's MT-19, and we were off again. This was a big improvement! As the first car was pushed along, its wheels turned the railhead snow into slushy water which left the second car enough traction to keep us moving generally at a fast walk.

With our "doubleheader" breaking the trail, we began our excursion around the plant's six-mile main loop of track. Progress was somewhat slow but steady except for several sharper curves and steeper grades which were more than our limited traction could overcome. At these times, we found ourselves grinding to a halt, then backing up several hundred yards on clear track to get a running start past the obstruction.

Our route initially took us through part of the plant's production area with its maze of buildings, connecting piping, and dozens of short

*Below, Mike Mitzel's M9 follows Dave Dettman's MT19 through the woods along the Wisconsin and Southern connecting track.*



rail sidings branching off in every direction, but as we continued farther toward the interior of this 7,000-plus acre facility, the terrain became more rural in nature with rolling hills and forested areas.

Soon we had negotiated the first of four wyes we would encounter on our trip, and several minutes later passed over one of two standard gauge/narrow gauge crossings that are contained in the plant's 27 miles of standard gauge railroad and 40 miles of three-foot narrow gauge trackage. Several times, the clattering of our motorcars disturbing the peaceful winter day scared up deer which darted off down the track in front of us before disappearing in the woods or between buildings.

All too quickly it seemed that we were once again nearing the more industrialized areas near the front of the plant and soon found ourselves back at our starting point. With still over two hours until Rose Bowl kickoff, the decision was made to continue our tour, but since we'd be venturing into more remote areas of the plant with even steeper grades than previously encountered, the consensus was to shuffle the order of our lineup so that Dan Hiller's heavier MT-14 with its icebreaker wheels was in the lead. Utilizing a convenient siding, this switching maneuver was easily accomplished and once again we were off.

(Continued on next page)

## MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGION'S FIRST WINTER RUN

(Continued from previous page)

Since the first several miles duplicated trackage that we had cleared earlier in the day our five cars rolled along at a brisk pace with everyone enjoying the pristine countryside and its unbroken snow cover.

Nearing the halfway point of our original route, we slowed to a stop so the diverging switch could be thrown, then once again found ourselves on snow-covered rail. Crossing the narrow gauge line a second time, our route curved sharply behind

Power House #2 on a steep upgrade then continued upward on a lesser grade for another half mile before leveling off along the highest elevation reached by rail in the plant, so this would be a real test of the MT 14's tractive abilities. Starting to move, the car picked up speed quickly to give us a running start at the curve and hill, but as the curvature and grade increased, our forward speed slowed to a crawl. With wheels spinning, we crept along inch by inch, never quite coming to a full stop until, much to our amazement, we had topped the steepest part of the grade and were beginning to pick up speed again.

Even though our passage had reduced the railhead snow to slushy water, a quick glance to our rear confirmed that the following cars were having problems, too, with spinning wheels and several people walking behind giving additional pushing assistance. Eventually, everyone's persistence was rewarded as all of our group reached the ridge top and its spectacular view of the Baraboo Bluffs and Wisconsin River Valley spread out below us.

Continuing on, our route took us gently downgrade past a material storage area, around one leg of yet another wye, and then out onto the

*Below, expedition members are ready to retrace their route after turning at the Wisconsin and Southern Plant gate.*



Chicago and Northwestern connecting track. Situated in a far corner of the plant's property abutting Devils Lake State Park, the track ducks through an area of rock outcroppings, traverses a high fill above the plant's private lake, then runs through a wooded area before reaching the closed gate marking the extent of Badger's trackage. As we turned our motorcars on the access road which runs just inside the perimeter fence, the wild surroundings made it hard to believe that we were still within the confines of an industrial facility designed to produce tons of high explosives!

Following a short break to stretch our legs, we boarded our cars and began to retrace the scenic route back to civilization, our destination being the plant's other outside rail connection, a distance of some seven miles from our present location. After stopping briefly to throw another wye switch, we found ourselves once again on snow-covered rail, but fortunately, gravity was working to our advantage this time as we drifted easily down a mile-long grade without any traction problems.

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## MISSISSIPPI VALLEY'S FIRST WINTER RUN

(Continued from previous page)

Passing through the Chicago and Northwestern classification yard, the scenery at first consisted mainly of warehouse buildings and storage yards but soon became rural again as we began to traverse snow-covered corn fields located on plant land which has been leased to area farmers.

After briefly rejoining trackage which we had cleared earlier in the day, another wye switch routed us on to the Wisconsin and Southern (formerly Milwaukee Road) connecting track where we had nearly two miles of running across open countryside and through the W&S classification yard before a closed gate marking the Badger property line brought us to a stop. Turning our cars was quickly accomplished on the convenient perimeter access road and we began retracing our route through the Wisconsin countryside. As we passed the snow covered Wisconsin and Southern loading tracks, actually a series of covered platforms set along short sidings, it seemed hard to picture 20 motorcars and some 65 NARCOA members and guests enjoying a warm summer day picnic at this location during last year's meet.

Following a long stretch of straight and level track, we swung around one leg of another wye then passed the massive water filtration plant and coal unloading facility before stopping again to throw a switch which would divert us once again onto new trackage.

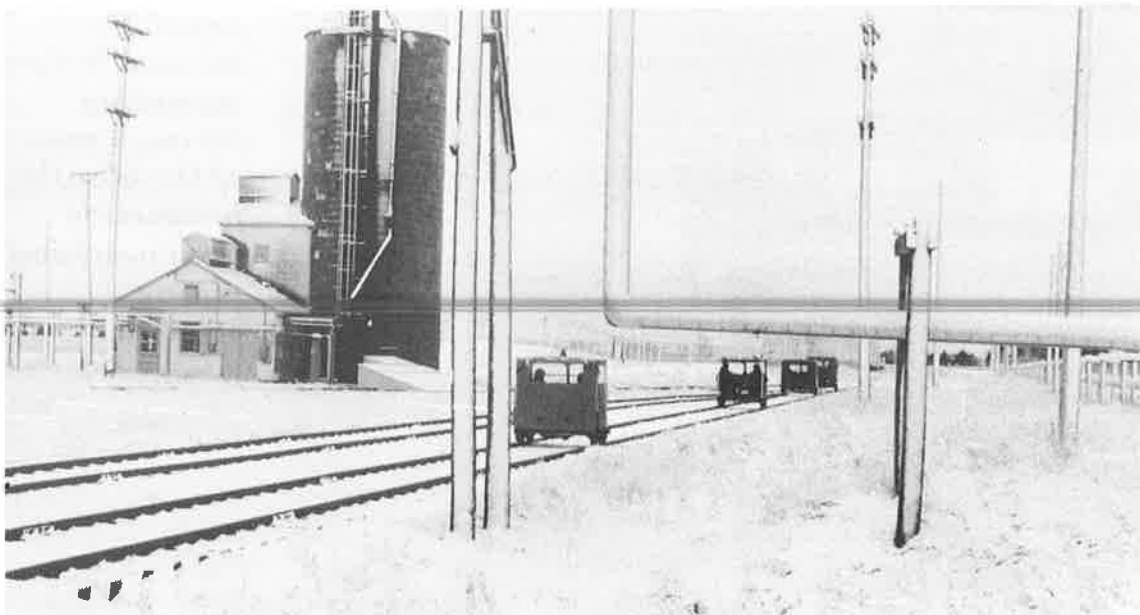
Starting along our new route, a snow-packed road crossing initially caused some traction problems but after passing this obstacle, we found the going relatively easy thanks to warmer mid-day temperatures which had done a good job of melting most of the railhead snow except for an occasional short drift. In contrast to our rural settings through much of the last hour, we now found ourselves passing amidst several of the plant's propellant production lines with their maze of tightly packed buildings, overhead piping, and power lines.

Nearing the plant's fire station, which is open and staffed 24 hours a day, we decided to take advantage of an opportunity to stretch our legs and warm up a bit. Everyone wished we could continue our run, but with Bowl Game kickoff rapidly approaching and other holiday appointments to keep, the decision was reluctantly made to end our excursion as soon as we could return to our set-on point.

Although by road our destination was less than a block away, we once again boarded our cars in favor of a longer, all-rail route which would continue our tour through more of the plant's industrialized production areas before ending our trip. After an all-too-short mainline run, we braked to a stop at the junction switch, lined the switch points to the opposite position, and reversed direction for the short trip back to our starting point.

As everyone busied themselves loading their

(Continued on next page)



*At left,  
motorcars  
running  
through one of  
the production  
areas.*

## Want Ads

*EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from the membership. Please send ads directly to: Gene Tucker, SETOFF Editor, 1004 North Kentucky Street, Arlington, VA 22205-2310. Thank you!*

**WANTED:** Parts for an MT19-A1 Fairmont: seat and frame for right side, left Fairmont tan side curtain, springs for front (heavy) and rear for axle suspension, plastic "Fairmont" rear logo for seats, front windshield safety glass. Contact: John Wilson, Rte. 1, Box 81M, Stoddard, WI 54658. Phone: (608) 788-7305.

**WANTED:** Fairbanks Morse model 28 or 30 speeder, or

parts. All letters answered. Hollis Button, 1025 West Parr Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008.

**FOR SALE/TRADE:** 1957 Pontiac-Fairmont A-34 Hyrail station wagon. Northern Pacific B-89. One of four known to exist, this is the only original, running, complete example. Car is dependable, needs restoration, has original paint and interior. Asking \$10,000, or interesting non-railroad trade, as in 1949 Mercury chop top, restored B Model Mack Truck, or restored '46 - '62 Dodge Military Power Wagon. Buy/trade Hyrailler and for \$2,000 get running M9, M14, M19, and S2, two lightweight motorcar trailers, Fairmont parts, railroad memorabilia, signs, and a beer case full of railroad locks and keys. Contact Eric

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## MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGION'S FIRST WINTER RUN

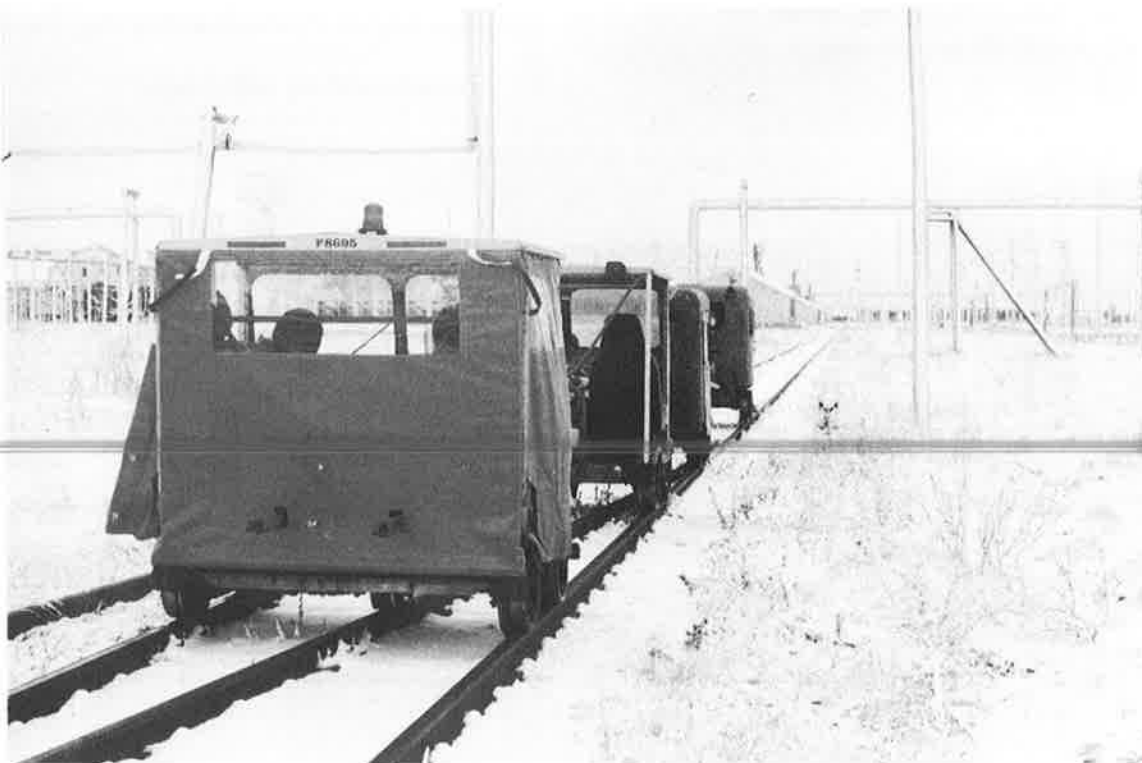
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motorcars for the trip home, it seemed like the decision to end our run now was particularly well timed since the wind was beginning to increase and along with a noticeable drop in temperature, it was becoming downright unpleasant to be outside. Within minutes, our goodbyes were said and a general retreat was made to the warmth of our vehicles.

As our caravan started toward the security check point, several security guards once again

appeared as if on cue to unlock and swing open the main gates allowing us to exit the plant, bringing to a close a successful New Year's Day motorcar event.

Our thanks go to the Badger Army Ammunition Plant staff and, in particular, Mr. Don Hartmann, Industrial Engineer, and Mr. David Fordham, Commander's Representative, for hosting a successful trip and allowing us to run on the plant railroad.



*At left, pausing a moment before threading through some of the plant's production area overhead piping.*

## Want Ads

(Continued from previous page)

Schwandt, 5472 Far Rd., Dundee, MI 48131. Phone: (517) 451-2175 (evenings).

WANTED: Motorcar in complete and running condition. Contact Gary Sohlstrom, 6400 County Rd 8 SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304. Phone: (612) 253-7319.

FOR SALE: CN and CP MT19-A and MT14-A, plus one MT14 with turntable, some have cabs, some have fronts. All have glass, and run great. From \$875 - \$1,750. Contact Dan C. Bryan, Box 485, Carthage, IL 62321. Phone: (217) 357-3128 days, (217) 357-6610 evenings.

FOR SALE: Motorcars, trailer cars, and other maintenance of way equipment. Send LSASE for current list. WANTED: motorcar manuals. Southeastern Rail Service, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503.

FOR SALE: MT19, ex-UP #2433, with turntable, air compressor, 3-chime Leslie horns, curtains, new wheels, many, many extra parts; FAIRMONT M9-G, Chicago, Central & Pacific #101, frame off restoration, professionally painted, new belt, new 6V alternator & Deep Cycle battery, 2 seats with storage compartments, many extra parts; TRAILER, professionally built aluminum, 6 inch drop center axle, rubber suspension, winch, lights, break away switch, spare tire. For additional information, contact Jon Knight, 325 Iroquois, #1, Rockford, IL 61102. Phone: (815) 965-7648 (after 5 p.m.)

FOR SALE: Kalamazoo motorcar (similar to MT 14 type). Asking \$1,200.00. Contact Jay Slinde, 21550 Watertown Road, Waukesha, WI 53186. Phone: (414) 789-0184.

WANTED: MT14 Glider Kit. I have a good Onan engine, transmission, and rear axle. I need the rest of the car. Please contact Tom Pennick, RR 11, Box 612, Bedford, IN 47421. Phone: (812) 275-3940

FOR SALE: Large list of motorcar manuals, bulletins and info. Send LSASE for listing. Southeastern Rail Service, 510 Austin Street, Norfolk, VA 23503.

FOR SALE/TRADE: Leslie air horn, 5 chime \$300; S2 aluminum lift handle, \$60; B&O, NYCS tall globe lanterns, \$125/pair. Contact: David A. Verzi, 10059 Aldridge Drive, Columbia Station, OH 44028-9639. Phone: (216) 236-3374.

FOR SALE: SCL Fairmont S2, open, two speed rear, runs strong, RTR, s/w PA, FOB 100 miles. \$900. Contact R. Culp, (412) 745-2399.

FOR SALE: IC S2-F-3 #7785; CSTMS&O Ry. M19-F-1, \$1,500.00 each. Woolery tie cutter, Milw. Road, Fairmont 5 - 8 HP ROC engine, Fairmont push cart, \$300 each;

20-man gang trailer, \$1,000; 2 small collapsible push carts, \$100 each. All items have been restored and are in running condition. Contact Joe Moth, P.O. Box 178, Pecatonica, IL 61063. Phone: (815) 239-1383.

FOR SALE: Fairbanks Morse Sheffield Model 40B, \$1,800. Contact Hollis Button, 1025 W. Parr Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008. Phone (408) 378-0436 (no collect calls, please).

FOR SALE: Fairmont M19 motorcar. New belt, new 12V system. Car is in very good condition. \$750. Call Dick Cumberland (919) 247-7137, or Evan Roderick (919) 726-2895. (NC)

WANTED: Pump car; will pay cash. Contact Ric Tritsch, (904) 454-3379 (collect).

WANTED: Rail artifacts and equipment from SAL and ACL RRs. Contact Ric Tritsch, P.O. Box 62, Edinburg, PA 16116.

WANTED: Anything pertaining to Atlas 50-ton Center Cab Locomotives. Contact Ric Tritsch, 920 NW 6th Avenue, High Springs, FL 32643, or Phone (904) 454-3379, or (412) 667-7448.

WANTED: One aluminum setoff lever for M19. Contact Ric Tritsch (see above).

FOR SALE: Ex-Toledo, Angola & Western Ry. Fairmont M14, RKB twin, restored, new curtains, lights, etc. Runs great, \$2,200. Also 7 1/2 inch gauge live steam miniature railroad. Call for details. Al Spencer, Road 2, Box T-187, Liberty Center, OH 43532. Phone: (419) 832-0133.

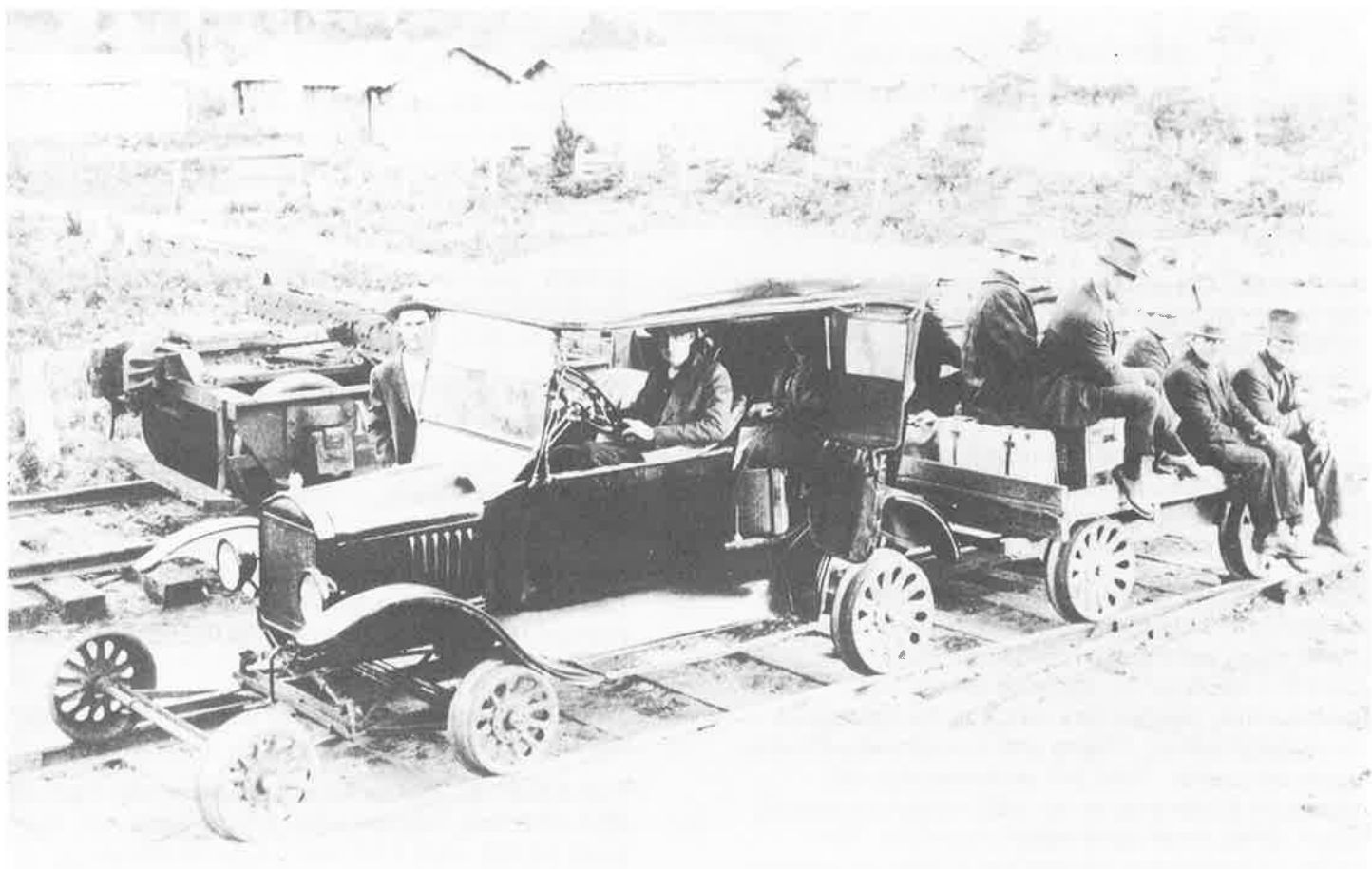
FOR SALE: Stereo audio cassette "Fairmont Highiron", vintage M19 runs the Indiana Southern RR "Firecracker 300" in July 1993. Great sounds! Available from John L Uher, P.O. Box 383, Coshocton, OH 43812. \$5.50 plus \$1 postage.

WANTED: Belt-driven air compressor pump. Contact John Uher (see ad above).

WANTED: MT19A-1 right side seat and frame; 1969 Fairmont plastic seat backs, original tool kit. Contact: John Wilson, RR#1, Box 81M, Stoddard, WI 54658. Phone: (608) 788-7305.

FOR SALE: Fairmont S2 speeder (has the larger single lung engine) from Paducah & Louisville RR (Kentucky). Asking \$600 or offer/trades. For more information, contact: Gary Brogan, 907 Kraak Road, Marshall, WI 53559. Phone: (608) 655-4188 (late evenings).

FOR SALE: Fairmont MT14 in running condition. Needs a little work to make it look beautiful, but it's a runner. Asking \$1,000.00. Contact: Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. Phone: (608) 839-4939.



*Walter Mattuch of Bayonne, NJ, sent us this old photo, subject and date unknown.*

# ***THE SETOFF***

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