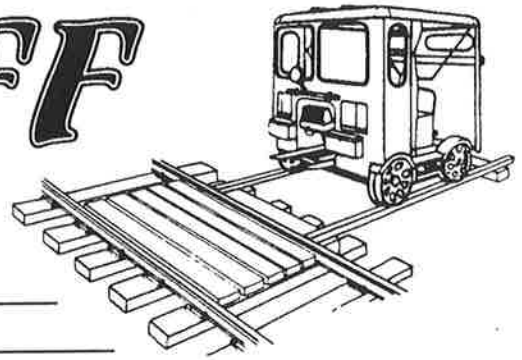


THE SETOFF

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

Summer 1994



Motorcars at Weirs Beach, NII, participating in the sixth annual Hobo Railroad meet in June. See story on pages 6 and 7.

Photo by Deanna Baird

A Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

Here's one for *THE SETOFF* . . . A home-made motorcar? Has Jim Baird been at it again?

The photo credit is: H. Reid photo, from the collection of D. Wallace Johnson, courtesy of The Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS *HIGHBALL*.

The story behind it: this picture was taken by the late rail historian and photographer H. Reid. His notes read, "Gum Neck, North Carolina, on the RCW, 1932."

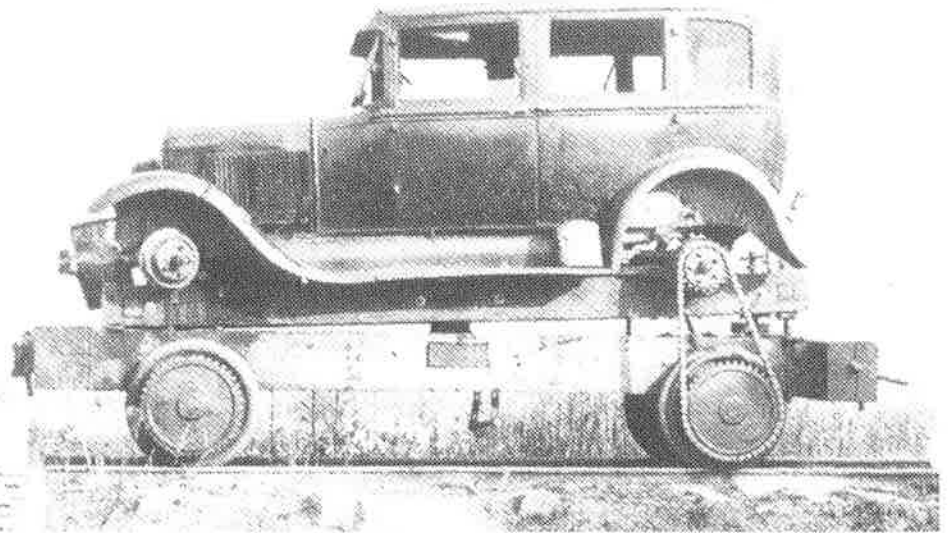
The translation and story, as best we can piece together: "RCW" means Richmond Cedar Works, a Richmond, VA-based company that exists today (in Danville, VA) making wood products such as home ice cream makers. In the 1930's, Richmond Cedar Works owned a mill at Camden Mills, VA, and logged several large tracts of land in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina. Gum Neck is in far eastern North Carolina, between the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds. RCW operated a 42-inch gauge railroad to bring logs out of the woods to Gum Neck, but since the RCW railroad did not connect to any other railroads, the logs were loaded onto trucks for the trip from Gum Neck to Camden Mills.

Back to the picture . . . The automobile is a 1931 or '32 Ford Model A. Careful examination shows the main "frame" consists of two large wooden beams with the rail axles underneath one (a log car frame?) and a center pivot point (for "turning" the automobile?) between it and the other beam, which the automobile is mounted on. There appears to be a screw jack at the rear of the Ford that forced the two main beams apart to tighten the drive chain which ran from the Ford's rear axle to the nearest railroad wheel. Note that the other railroad wheel which is visible also has a chain sprocket, indicating that the "turning" theory is correct. There is also a link-and-pin coupler on one end of the main frame beam.

The question remains, what is it, really? Was this a locomotive used to haul trains of log-laden cars out of the woods or was it a bus used

to take crews into work sites in the woods. Was it a track maintenance vehicle (note the pail on the running board), or was it some sort of official's transportation. In the 1930's, there would have been very few roads into the swamps of Tidewater North Carolina (in fact, today there are not many) so the idea of company transporation is quite possible.

Wray Dudley
Richmond, VA



A Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

The article on a grade crossing incident in Indiana which appeared in the last *SETOFF* seems to place all of the blame on the automobile driver. There is no question that the driver did several things wrong, and he probably should not have been driving at all.

However, it appears that the motorcar operator could still have prevented any incident if the NARCOA rules had been followed. Operating Rule No. 2, from the Rulebook, page 5, succinctly states, in part: "Be prepared to stop for automobiles that may run around crossing gates or flag men."

It would seem that the operator placed his trust in the gates and at 10 m.p.h. could have stopped if he had been properly wary.

Dick Ray
Randolph, NJ

Editor's Notes

By Gene Tucker

As the election process winds up for selection of a Board of Directors for NARCOA, we extend again an invitation to all members to send along their ideas for improvements to *THE SETOFF*. One idea being raised is to publish more often, perhaps as many as eight times a year, with some issues devoted solely to meet notices and want ads, and the others with meet stories, photos, technical articles, and organizational news.

Speaking of meet stories, we welcome any news you have of meets you've either organized or attended.

We'd also like to resurrect an old feature of *THE SETOFF*, our Meet This Member series. Send along a photo of your railcar, handcar, etc., and short bio of the car and yourself, and we guarantee to make you famous (at least to the motorcar community).

Another feature which hasn't appeared for awhile is our technical hints series. We intend to reprint Dick Ray's "Why Won't It Run" series as a supplement in the near future, and we welcome your ideas and hints as a continuation of that helpful work.

Finally, we'd like to conduct an informal POLL of the membership, with results to be published in *THE SETOFF* . . . Do you, or other members of NARCOA, use your railcar in support of a rail museum, shortline railroad, tourist railroad, etc. If so, would you send us a note about it, with some details on how your equipment is used, and a photo or two. We'll dub this series "Motorcars at Work".

Deadline for the Fall issue is October 15th.

A Correction

To the Editor:

The last *SETOFF* with the summary of how to keep it running was really great! However, the recommendation of a D 21 spark plug was in error. The proper plug for a single cylinder engine is a D 16.

Dick Ray
Randolph, NJ

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 2

Editor.....	Gene Tucker 1004 N. Kentucky St. Arlington, VA 22205
Co-Editor	Deanna Baird 2700 S. First St. Arlington, VA 22204
Contributing Editor	Dick Ray (East Coast) 5 Hemlock Pl. Randolph, NJ 07869
Contributing Editor	Doug Leffler 622 Pawnee Jackson, MI 49203
Contributing Editor	Brett Tallman (West Coast) 3354 Fuchsia St. Costa Mesa, CA 92626
NARCOA Roster	Joel Williams Coordinator Box 82 Greendell, NJ 07839

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!

August 27 - 28: 4th Annual Hobo Motorcar Meet on the Oil Creek and Titusville RR, Titusville PA. Hobo Dinner, Civil War demonstration, night ride. \$10.00 per car, no insurance needed. Phone: Ric Tritsch, (904) 454-3379 (Florida), or (412) 667-7448 (Pennsylvania). P.O. Box 62, Edinburg, PA 16116.

September 9 - 11: On September 9, 10, and 11, HOOSIER RAILCARS will host the first board meeting of the new NARCOA at the Indianapolis Airport Days Inn, 5860 Fortune Circle West, Indianapolis, IN. Reservations for the motel should be made by calling (800) 325-2525. Your reservations must be made by August 20 to get the NARCOA group rate of \$45.00 per night. Also, call Stan Conyer at (812) 342-0565 if you plan to attend the meeting. Meetings will be held on Friday night and Saturday to elect officers and set up committees to address the operation and direction of our organization. All interested NARCOA members are encouraged to attend and participate in the formulation of the Board and its agenda . . . On Sunday, September 11, Hoosier Railcars will host a motorcar meet on the Indiana Southern RR. Details are still pending, but the meet will try to cover as much track as possible and still finish early in the afternoon to allow those attending to get an early start for home. AARO insurance is required for the motorcar meet. Please plan to attend this very important meeting concerning the future of our organization. The new NARCOA board wants your input and help to see our activities continue and expand.

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 \$10.00 per car. For additional information, contact: R.R. Hixenbaugh, P.O. Box 141, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221-0141. Phone: (216) 923-0298.

October 1: Run the Delaware and Ulster RR

at Arkville, NY. Friday night run for early arrivals. No trailer cars. Handcars welcome. NARCOA rules apply. \$10.00 per car. For details: Joel Williams, Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839.

October 1: Second Annual Bellefonte Historical Railroad Track Car Meet. Saturday, October 1, Bellefonte to Vail to Mill Hall and return; Sunday, October 2, Bellefonte to Lemont and Pleasant Gap industrial track, 130 miles approx. For registration packet, contact Barry Wunz, 315 Irish Hollow Road, Bellefonte, PA 16823. Phone: (814) 353-0438.

November 16 - 17: (Tentative) Ride two railroads in southern Pennsylvania: The 11 miles of the Middletown & Hummelstown and the 18.5 miles of the Northern Central Railway line. M&H run is Sat., Nov. 16 (with possibility of dinner train that evening), and NC Ry. trip is Sun., Nov. 17. Contact: Brian Bachman, 1220 Penn Grant Rd., Lancaster, PA 17602, Phone: (717) 687-8437, or Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Rd, Red Lion, PA 17356, Phone: (717) 244-0332.

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

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, 4023 Shawnee Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50310.

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).

September 25: Chicago & Northwestern RR from Earlville, IA, to Troy Grove, IL. Send SASE to Mike Mitzel, P.O. Box 79, Waterman, IL 60559 for information.

October 8: The Indiana Railway Museum in French Lick, IN. A 34-mile trip through a tunnel and scenic southern Indiana. \$20.00 per car. Contact Stan Conyer, (812) 342-0565.

October 9: Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center. 25 miles southwest of Bloomington, IN. A 35-mile trip through the Naval base. Contact Stan Conyer (see above).

October 15: Peoria Pekin Union RR from Peoria to Pekin. Fall run through Peoria, the

yards, and across the river. Contact Dave Stroemer, 1720 Queenscourt, Peoria, IL 61614.

October 16: Iowa Interstate RR from Ottawa to Peru along the Illinois River. \$30.00 per car, plus \$1.00 per person. Contact Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527.

October 30: Commonwealth Edison Branch near Byron, IL, with 12 miles leading to a nuclear power plant. It's awesome! Send a SASE to Mike Mitzel (see above).

November 12: Kentucky Railway Museum at New Haven, KY. Contact Stan Conyer, (812) 342-0565.

December 3: Indiana Transportation Museum at Noblesville, IN. Contact Stan Conyer.

January 1, 1995: Badger Ammo Plant at Baraboo, WI, for the New Year's Day Ride. Contact Craig Bluschke, 10916 Spring Creek Road, Blue Mounds, WI 53517. It was a blast last year!

The NORTHERN CENTRAL RAILCAR ASSOCIATION conducts runs along this historic

(Lincoln rode this line on his way to deliver the Gettysburg Address) and scenic 18.5-mile mainline of the former Northern Central Ry. from New Freedom to York, PA. See the historic station where Lincoln stopped, and the Howard Tunnel, bored in 1934! All trips begin at New Freedom, PA, at 10 a.m. All NARCOA members and holders of AARO insurance are welcome. Cost is \$20.00 per car, per day, or an annual membership is available for \$50.00 per year, plus \$10.00 for additional insurance coverage. Contact Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Road, Red Lion, PA 17356 for membership or additional information. Run dates are:

August 20 & 21	September 3 & 4
September 17 & 18	October 1 & 2
October 15 & 16	October 29 & 30
November 5 & 6	November 19 & 20
November 24, 25, 26, & 27	December 3 & 4
December 17 & 18	December 24 & 25
December 31 & January 1, 1995	



The Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad Historical Society was the recipient of two locomotives given to them by the U.S. Navy this past spring. The local television news crew was on hand to film the transfer, and NARCOA member Hugh Cain also was there and took this picture of his ex-L&N MT19 on the track next to them.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL HOBO RAILROAD MEET WAS GREAT!

By Dick Ray

On June 3rd and 4th, Paul Yorkis and John Pratt put on their traditional, first-weekend-in-June, two-day motorcar extravaganza.

Every year more people attend, including those who have been there several times before. John, Paul and others put in a lot of work ahead of time clearing downed trees from the seldom used portions of the line, clearing flangeways, and setting out grade crossing warning signs.

Most people arrive on Friday, set their car on the rails in the yard, visit, and finally retire to the Millhouse Inn, the traditional headquarters hotel. This year on Friday evening, the hotel opened a conference room to us and supplied a variety of snacks and beverages. Dan Peck brought his excellent collection of winter railroad slides which he had taken in New England. He had a lot of opportunities since this last winter lasted six months!

Saturday morning was spent doing the usual registration, release signing, safety inspection, and picture taking. I got several good ones from the top of Paul's caboose, including one of the quaint station/giftshop which opened early for us.

On schedule at 9 a.m. the first cars eased out of the yard and across the four-lane street in Lincoln. We had the usual flagging groups organized to get us across safely. Between Lincoln and Plymouth there is 20 miles of 75- and 85-pound rail. The dinner train stresses the northern end while lack of usage causes the southern end to deteriorate. Still, it is in good condition due to a rehabilitation in 1976.

The first stop was in Plymouth so that the steam cars could refill water tanks. The group ahead of the steamers took the empty wood sacks five

miles down to Ashland where there is a shoe-tree factory with a large pile of aromatic cedar rejects. We filled the bags with wood before the steamers arrived and left them along the track so there would be no delay.

Near Ashland, but not visible from the track, is Squam Lake, which was renamed "Golden Pond" for the movie of the same name. South of Ashland the track adjoins three other lakes which are a brilliant blue. The last one, Lake Winnepesaukee, is the largest in New Hampshire and features a fleet of paddle-wheel excursion boats, plus boats carrying mail to the islands along the western edge of the lake. These are classified as Railway Post Offices and can cancel mail and sell stamps.

We always have a long layover at Weirs Beach, named after the fish weirs that the Indians used to place across the mouth of Paugus Bay. This weekend was Bike Weekend in the area, plus professional powerboat races were in progress on the lake. I passed up the opportunity to buy a raffle ticket on a 400 HP racing boat displayed on the boardwalk, and mentally noted that only a few of the girls on the boardwalk were wearing nose-rings.

The trip back to Lincoln was uneventful with only the stop for water at Merideth and to refill wood bunkers at Ashland. This stop went quickly because most of the group was now behind the steamers and had to help before they could proceed.

We arrived back in Lincoln in time to go to the hotel, clean up, and go back to the station for the dinner train. Two classes of service were offered with one being more formal than the other. Still, the turkey dinner served to the informal (okay, scruffy) motorcar group was excellent. Since the train operates after dark the undercar side spotlights lit up the surrounding forest nicely.

After the dinner train tied up we retired to the conference room

Early morning unloading at Lincoln, NH, on the Hobo Railroad.



at the hotel for a talk by a guest speaker on some of the early history of New England narrow-gauge railroads.

Sunday's run from Lakeport, south of Weirs Beach, to Concord got off to a late start. There was the one hour-plus drive down from Lincoln and then a very time-consuming reverse move up to Weirs Beach so that everyone could cover all

the track. Once at Weirs Beach the group dispersed to photo locations, the Ben and Jerry's ice cream shop, and the best girlwatching spots.

As we went back south to Lakeport and through Laconia, the numerous busy grade crossings slowed us greatly so that by the time we got to Northfield we had missed our opportunity to get to Concord on time. We would have to wait several hours to clear the excursion train, so we elected to inspect the cabooses line at Northfield.

The 15 to 20 restored cabooses are all privately owned and the owners pay a modest storage fee to the railroad. Many have a temporary electrical hookup. From time to time the railroad operates a caboose excursion train for the owners at a fee not much greater than that for a motor-car!

The rest of our waiting time was spent on a siding at Boyce until the excursion train passed. This turned out to be a good opportunity to visit with Dennis Madden of Palm Bay, Florida, who drove up with his daughter just for this meet.

We reached the end of the run about one mile south of the Concord tower and turned our cars. Then we went six miles up the Northern Branch which was once the main line to White River Junction and Montreal. Returning to



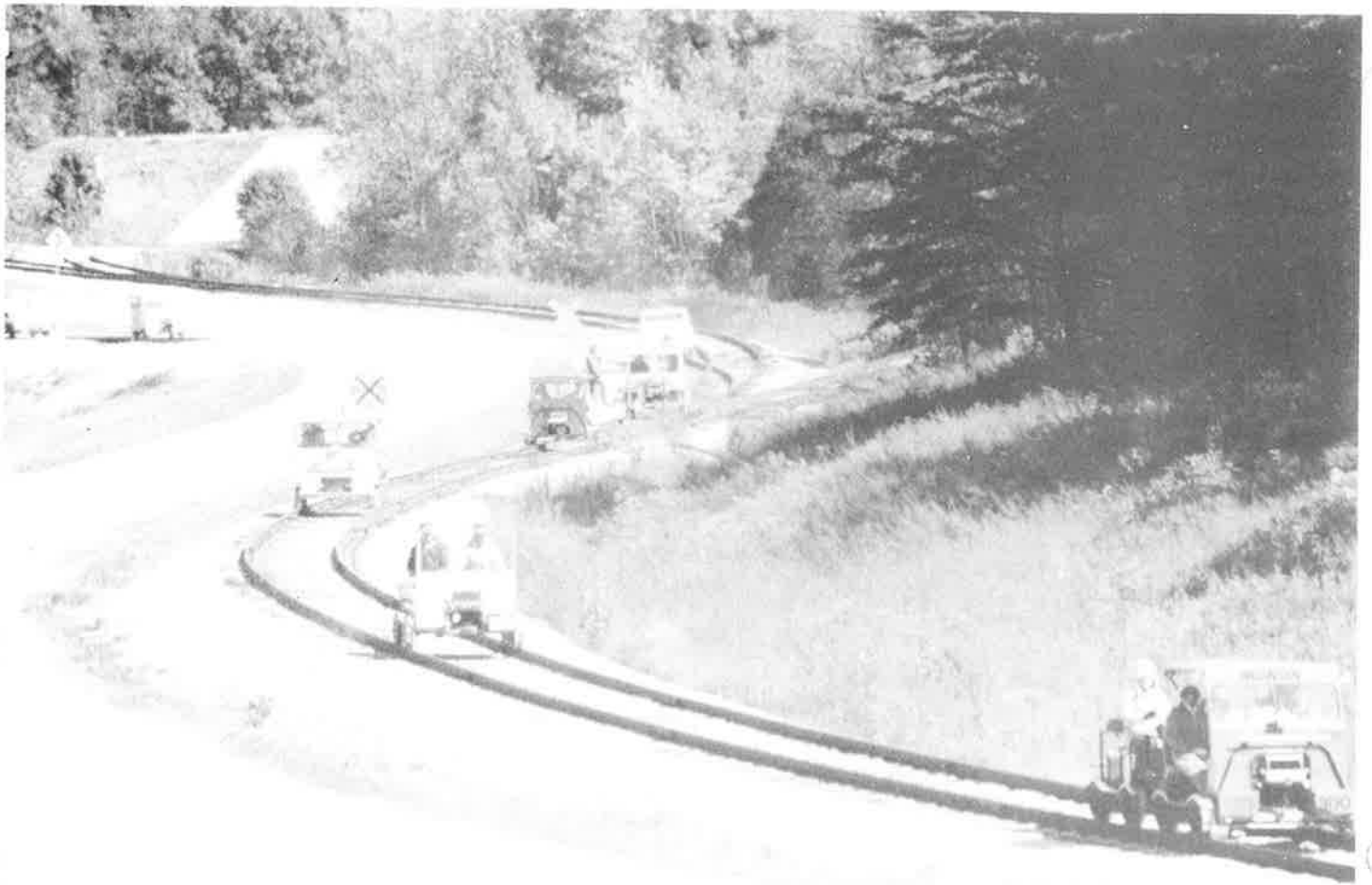
Above, Doug Heinmuller rebuilds the carb on Paul Yorkis's Northwestern while Paul steadies the front railing and John Pratt looks on. At Weirs Beach, NH, June 3, 1994.

Photos by Dick Ray

Concord yard we traveled one mile up a long abandoned spur which the local group had reclaimed from the brush. This brought back memories of the old days where all we had to run on was a tunnel through the trees.

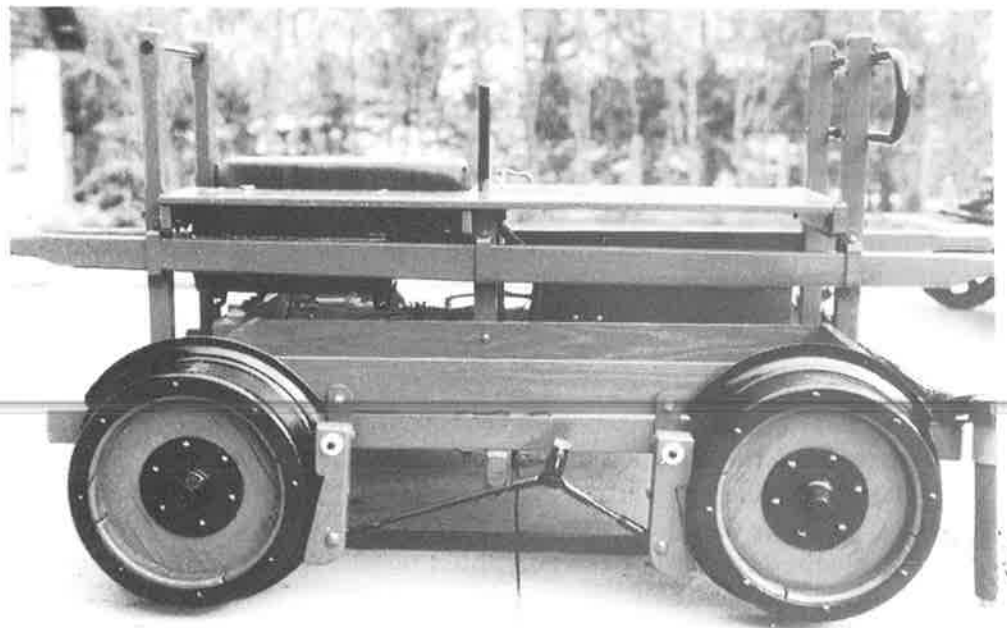
Eventually, we got started back north towards Lakeport. Soon darkness fell and we found ourselves in an unanticipated night run. Fortunately, one of the local group, Leo Boisoeneault, drove from one crossing to another and set flares to help us across. After a coffee break at Tilton we struggled on north to Lakeport, arriving at 11 p.m., six hours late. Although the loading area was restricted, the group was very courteous and we all got loaded with a minimum of fuss.

Everyone appreciates the effort involved in putting on this meet every year and we hope that Paul and John continue to do it for years to come.



Above, motorcars wind around some curvy track at the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center in Indiana in October 1993 at the Hoosier Railcars Fall Color Meet.

Photo by Stan Conyer



At right, a photograph of an Adams 110A submitted by John Beck of Mandan, ND.



At left is a photo of a railbus built by the Crane Railroad Shops at the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center in Indiana. Still in use today, it is powered by a six-cylinder Ford engine.

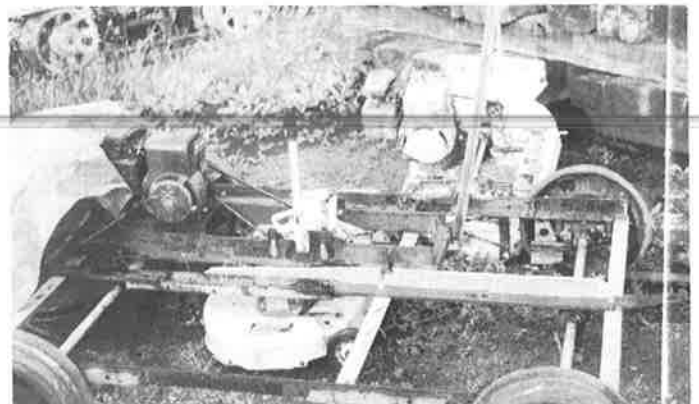
Photo by Stan Conyer



At left, Bob Schuknecht, of Saginaw, MI, is shown with his M19 waiting for the weed sprayer to catch up and take on water at the Southern Michigan Railroad.

Eric Schwandt photo

Ernie Jeschke, of Adrian, MI, sent us a picture (at right) of the weed cutter he is using on the Southern Michigan—two Sears mowing decks mounted on a larry car. He says it works.



MORE ON SAFETY . . .

By Mike Paul

In the last issue of *THE SETOFF*, an article entitled "Let's Talk Safety . . ." was published. "Safety" is one of those words that draws an amazingly wide range of responses from people. If a set of facts is put in front of a random sample of people and their responses are solicited with respect to various questions of "safety" surrounding the body of facts they have been asked to evaluate, any one question could be answered by one person as "That's extremely unsafe," and by a second person as "No safety problem at all." Issues of safety often provoke gut responses rather than intellectual evaluations, so it is no surprise that, not only are there differing evaluations on what is safe and what is not, but also the amount of "heat" that is brought to the discussions on safety as well as "light."

Fully anticipating the range of responses that could be provoked by a contrary position to last month's "Let's Talk Safety . . .", let me attempt to shed some more light on the issue of safety. One of the many hats that I wear in my day-to-day job is that of Safety Engineer. Since our company's heavy duty trucks are often sold under U.S. Army contracts, certain safety standards must be met by these vehicles or the customer will not accept them.

Two of the key items in terms of evaluating hazards than affect safety are the concepts of severity and probability of occurrence. Severity is classified into the following groups: Class 1 - Catastrophic (can cause death or severe injury), Class 2 - Critical (can cause serious injury or major damage to equipment), Class 3 - Marginal (can cause minor injury or minor damage to equipment), and Class 4 - Negligible (not likely to result in injury or damage to equipment). Probability is classified into the following groups: A - Frequent (very likely to occur), B - Reasonably Probable (likely to occur), C - Occasional (will sometimes occur), D - Remote (not likely to occur), and E - Improbable (very seldom occurrence).

In order to apply the hazard severity and probability classifications, the hazard must be identified. Since the article "Let's Talk Safety" specifically addressed motorcars and grade crossings, the identifiable hazard is "collision between motorcar and highway vehicle." Before we get

into a discussion of applying the hazard classifications, let's take note of several things basically related to physics (that high school course we all hated and promptly forgot!). Motorcars generally range in weight from 800 lbs. to 1,500 lbs., say from an M9 to an A4. Highway traffic generally ranges in weight from 3,000 lbs. to 40,000 lbs., say from a Ford Escort to an 18-wheeler. Physics says that in a perfectly elastic collision (which only exists in textbooks, by the way) such as the collision between two billiard balls, momentum will be preserved (momentum being the product of mass and velocity).

An example of widely differing masses in an approximate elastic collision would be shooting at a motionless billiard ball with a hard pea from a pea-shooter. We all know what to expect, and we also know to wear eye protection if we conduct this experiment at home! The same analogy could be expected if an elastic 40,000 lb. 18-wheeler struck an elastic 800 lb. motorcar!

Real life doesn't always work like textbook examples, so let's look at a more real situation, inelastic collisions where some of the energy of the impact is absorbed by some crumpling of the vehicle structure. It doesn't take much imagination to determine the outcome of an 800 lb. motorcar being struck broadside by a 40,000 lb. 18-wheeler: the truck may get by with scratches on the front bumper, whereas the motorcar would likely be flattened! Although this is an extreme example, it can generally be stated that highway vehicles offer much greater structural integrity in a collision than a motorcar does. Furthermore, highway vehicles offer occupants additional protection through restraint devices, such as seatbelts and shoulder harnesses. All these highway vehicle protection devices are due to highway safety standards that mandate certain levels of crashworthiness that increase the odds of survival if a collision occurs.

Back to hazard severity and probability classifications. The worst likely outcome in terms of severity in a collision involving a motorcar and a highway vehicle is death, and the occupant of the motorcar in such a collision is the likely person to die. Thus, Class 1 (Catastrophic) is the appropriate hazard severity classification for a grade crossing collision between a motorcar and highway vehicle.

Next to consider is the hazard probability classification. Like all classification systems
(Continued on next page)

MORE ON SAFETY . . .

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devised by man, there is no such thing as a perfect system. So the probability classification will likely result in some back-room "discussions" (not "arguments", hopefully!). Having been apprised of the grade crossing incidents that have affected our hobby in the last several years, I would classify the probability of a motorcar/highway vehicle collision as D - Remote (not likely to occur).

This twofold classification results in a hazard that is classified as a I-D hazard. The U. S. Army will not accept a residual hazard that is classified I-D. This is due to the fact that the Army ranks severity of a hazard much more highly than probability. "Death" is not an acceptable outcome unless the hazard is improbable. Railroads are not the U.S. Army, you say. That is correct, but as far as their insurance companies are concerned, "death" is an outcome that insurance companies do not like, particularly when they have to insure against it.

Let's now return to the thesis of "safety" which was the real issue of the article "Let's Talk Safety" in last month's *SETOFF*. The author of that article suggested that one "safety thing" they did was to wire the motorcar wheels to ground so as to set off grade crossing signals. My experience with "wired" motorcars is that they provide a poor electrical path across the rails. This was amply demonstrated several years ago on a shortline railroad in Minnesota. This railroad had a grade crossing that was guarded by crossing gates, and due to the combination of rusty rails and a light rail vehicle, intermittent contact between the opposite rails resulting in what I described at the time was "dancing crossing gates." The gates would go down, then start back up, only to go down again, go up again, and the whole sequence would repeat. A similar phenomenon with grade crossings guarded only by lights would be an intermittent light activity. But let's disregard this phenomenon for the moment.

Let's say that perfect contact is made between the opposite rails and the gates and/or lights stay activated while the motorcar is in the crossing signal's track circuit. Pretend now that you are the average highway vehicle driver who is not a railfan. You are driving down the highway and, as you approach the grade crossing, the

gates come down and lights come on (or at a non-gated crossing, the lights come on). The normal reaction is to start slowing down and look to either side for a train. This is very important: the average highway driver is looking for a train, not a motorcar!

Since I am a motorcycle driver as well as a railroad motorcar operator, I can say that the reason I am alive and well today is that I expect the other drivers not to be expecting a motorcycle! The most common motorcycle/automobile collision is one where the auto driver turns left in front of the motorcycle and the motorcycle hits the car. The auto driver invariably states to the police afterwards: "I never even saw the motorcycle!" The reason those drivers never saw the motorcycle is that they were not looking for a motorcycle!

The same logic prevails at railroad grade crossings. The highway vehicle operator is looking for a train, not a motorcar, when the crossing signals are activated. Hence the operator of the highway vehicle may not even see the motorcar, because he/she isn't looking for one! So, what will the average highway operator think and do when he/she doesn't see a train when the grade crossing signals are activated. The operator reasons that "no train is coming" so he/she decides to cross the tracks.

Returning to the logic espoused above for classifying hazards, my evaluation is that motorcars with grounded wheels increase the hazard probability! The severity is the same (I - Catastrophic, since death can occur), but the probability of occurrence has increased from D - Remote to C - Occasional). In the specific grade crossing situation that was reported in "Let's Talk Safety," the driver of the automobile admits that he drove around the crossing gates because he "saw others do it." Implicit in that statement is that the automobile driver never saw a train. Had he seen a train, he likely would have stopped! So, here we have a situation where activating the crossing gates can actually make the probability of hazard occurrence greater than if the gates had not been activated!

This increasing of the hazard probability by a motorcar activating crossing signals was demonstrated on the first-ever Wisconsin Central motorcar trip on June 18. As Meet Coordinator, my safety meeting instructions prior to leaving the starting point included an announcement

(Continued on next page)

MORE ON SAFETY . . .

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that grounded (shorted) wheels would not be permitted. WC's policy on hyrails is: 1) hyrail wheels are not grounded, and 2) any accident involving a hyrail on the rails and a highway vehicle is always the hyrail's fault. At least one person on the WC trip felt it was his prerogative to set off grade crossing signals in violation of my instructions, and the only gated crossing on the whole trip was involved in an incident due to this rogue operator. The lead hyrail escort vehicle had stopped just short of the grade crossing to bunch up our entourage, so that the whole group could be flagged across the grade crossing.

Our entourage had gotten "stretched out" prior to this crossing, and the lead hyrail and two or three motorcars were waiting short of the crossing for the rest of the group to catch up. As the next group of motorcars approached the crossing, the grade crossing gates and signals were activated. Since no movement across the crossing was yet taking place, the flagman proceeded to wave highway traffic around the downed crossing gates. One vehicle cut the corner too short and clipped one of the gates, bending it out of position. An attempt was then made to straighten the gate arm by pushing it back in position. When all the motorcars were bunched up and were proceeding across the crossing, a gust of wind broke the bent gate and flung it across the face of a motorcar. Thank goodness for safety glass, as the windshield on the motorcar was shattered, but the safety glass remained intact.

A Michigan highway patrol officer who had just completed a Norfolk Southern Operation Lifesaver safety course witnessed the accident and stopped our entourage so he could investigate for possible injuries to riders on the motorcar with the shattered windshield. The officer said the crossing had been gated several years previous due to four fatalities at that crossing. Since WC train #35 was running one hour behind our entourage, the trailing WC hyrail had to stay at the crossing to flag for #35. A signal maintainer had to be called out to fix the gate, and due to the distance he had to travel, he had seven hours on a weekend to be billed for repairing the gate, and that's neglecting the parts cost of repairing the gate. This incident would never have happened if

some renegade operator with "hot wheels" hadn't decided to thumb his nose at our operating rules. If the crossing gates had not been activated, this incident would never have occurred.

In conclusion, I believe that shorted (grounded) wheels increase an already hazardous situation at grade crossings. This is why I require disabling any device on a motorcar intended to set off grade crossing signals on meets where I am the Meet Coordinator. If other areas of the country feel that negotiating grade crossings is safer with grounded wheels that activate crossing signals, that is their prerogative. But please, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" and honor the rules and operating practices of the host railroad and Meet Coordinator. Violation of local rules and practices is a sure way to have a railroad decide not to invite us back, particularly when such a violation results in an accident.

HERE'S AN EASY WAY TO CALCULATE YOUR SPEED ON MOTORCAR TRIPS

By Dick Ray

Most of us are aware that timing our motorcar between two mileposts will tell us how fast we are going. For instance, four minutes is 15 m.p.h., three minutes is 20 m.p.h., two minutes and 24 seconds is 25 m.p.h., and two minutes is 30 m.p.h.

This method requires a stopwatch or good concentration to remember when the timing started. You also need two to four minutes at constant speed, and a table of time conversions to m.p.h.

There is a little-known but easier method for calculating speed. Simply count rail joints on one side for 26 seconds. The answer you get is your speed in m.p.h.!

Of course, we assume 39-foot-long rails, which is okay since 98% of our operation is over these rails. A watch with a sweep second hand is much more convenient than one with a digital display. The accuracy of the above method is within one m.p.h. since our count is probably off by only one rail joint. Even on a curve with the occasional short rail, the additional error is only one half of one mile per hour.

FOURTH ANNUAL WALKERSVILLE SOUTHERN MEET HELD

By Hugh Cain

The Walkersville Southern Railroad was again host to a small group of motorcars on June 18th, 1994. The railroad was originally formed to save the piece of track through Walkersville ending in Frederick, Maryland, and motorcars were the first rail vehicles over the line in many years. Now, however, the railroad is being readied for freight service again.

Over the past several years I had kept track of the steady progress being made by the track gangs and work sessions. Now the progress was evident, brush cut away from the right-of-way, a new siding, and replacement ties scattered awaiting installment by the work crew. One "small" reconstruction project awaits state funding, the bridge replacement across Monocacy Creek.

This particular Saturday was just as hot and humid as the past few had been. By the time I arrived from Norfolk, the sun had a BBQ factor of about 11 on a scale of 10. Out came the SPF-25. Next year I may add a little Worcestershire sauce to the sun block.

Vaughn Rockney, the railroad's president and chief source of inspiration, was already at work on one of the two motorcar clinic cars. The WS 103 needed seat bracket replacing and Vaughn had a head start on that project. "The guys are out on the line for the first run," quipped Vaughn. Sure enough, in a few minutes here came the cars from their first trip down the track.

A short "technical discussion" session ensued, while some watched Vaughn work on the seat bracket, and then we all decided it was cooler down by Fountain Lake Park, so we piled back in and on the cars for another trip. We returned to the Walkersville station long enough to get our lunches then motored back to the park for the very welcome shade and coolness. On the way to the park, Wray Dudley and I discussed the finer points of shade and heat relief.

Upon returning back to the station area, I saw the second reason for driving up here. My next project car, a Woodings CBI, had arrived from Canada via Pennsylvania. While Mike Billet and I were looking "the PUNKEN" over, the rest of the gang joined us in our inspection.

Overall, we had an enjoyable day of motorcar

rides (despite the heat), some good fellowship, and had seen some wonderful scenery. Thanks to Vaughn and the Walkersville Southern for having us back this year. I can hardly wait until the trains are rolling in freight and tourist service. Hope to do this again next year.



Above, Gene Tucker (facing the camera) and "the gang" at the Walkersville Southern Railroad next to Ed McNulty's get-a-load-of-them-horns, ex-U.S. Army A-4. Below, motorcars line up next to the railroad's headquarters getting ready for a run. Photos by Hugh Cain



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!

FOR SALE: Kalamazoo Model 27 Railcar, 2-cylinder, in-line, water-cooled engine. Friction disk drive. Needs complete rebuild. Wheels good. \$300.00. Contact: Jim Baird, P.O. Box 69, Bealeton, VA 22712. Phone: (703) 439-3357.

WANTED: A source for 6-volt batteries that will fit a Fairmont hand lantern #M8404. Contact: Bob Schuknecht, 512 N. Charles Street, Saginaw, MI 48602-4037. Phone: (517) 793-0685.

FOR SALE: FAIRMONT M19-F, needs restoration, \$475.00; FAIRMONT M19-D, minus engine, \$275.00; PORTABLE TURNTABLES (2), \$150.00 each; FAIRMONT F3825 Belt, new \$50.00. Contact: Jeff Levengood, 2189 Oak Tree Drive, Dover, OH 44622. Phone: (216) 343-3407.

FOR SALE: FAIRMONT MT14-A, runs good, new custom curtains, ready to go, \$1,850.00. TRAILER, single axle heavy duty, set up for motorcar use, \$550.00. Contact: Tom Vaughn, 2016 Village Road, La Porte, IN 46350. Phone: (219) 324-3494.

FOR SALE: NARCOA Flags, only 23 left, clearance priced at \$11.00. Flag is yellow with black and red graphics and lettering. Flag is double stitched, heavy duty flag material with brass grommets. Can be tied or screwed to flag pole. Size is 12 X 18 inches. Contact: Warren Chiesa, 1195 Summerhill Drive, Lisle, IL 60532.

FOR SALE: Fairmont MT14, ex-CN. Doors and body have been repaired and painted. Onan engine runs well and ready to go. Contact: Lloyd Downing, 711 East North Street, Madrid, IA 50156. Phone: (515) 795-2851.

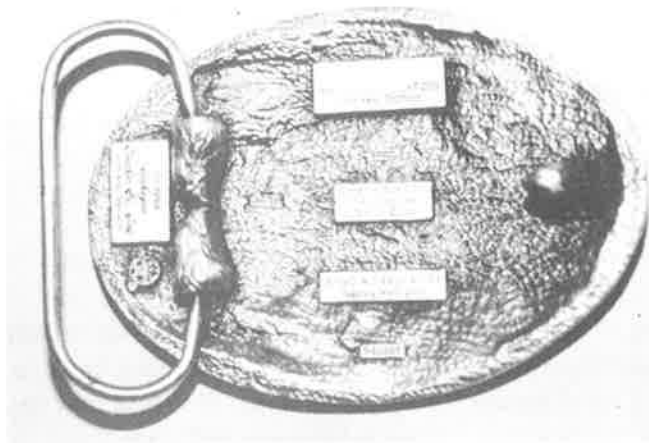
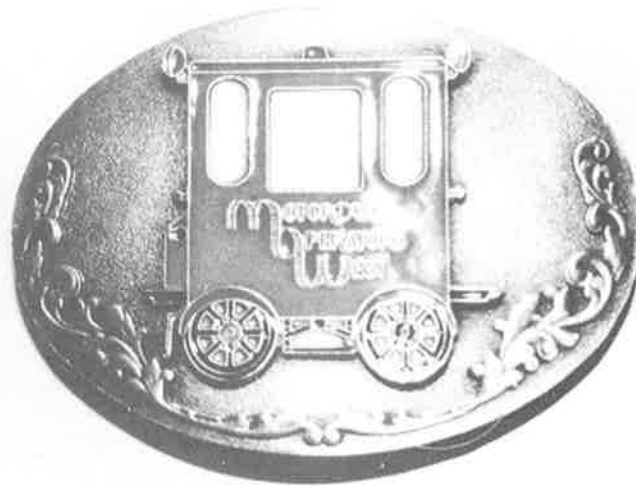
WANTED: 20 Inch Fairmont Wheels for pump car, with or without axles. Contact: Steve Richardson, 2 Maybelle Avenue, Auburn, MA 01501. Phone: (508) 832-8136

FOR SALE: Two new Fairmont wheels, 14 X 3 3/8, part # CW17178(?). Cost \$102.00 each, sell both for \$150.00. Also have two HUBS and AXLE for above, \$120.00 for both. May deliver. Phone: (908) 832-2186.

FOR SALE: Ex CP WOODINGS motorcar, ready to run, just needs gas and battery, \$2,285.00, including parts and service manual; ex-CP FAIRMONT MT14, Onan B48G engine, full cab, ready to run, including parts and service manual, \$2,150.00; ex-MP FAIRMONT ST-2, roof and front, needs glass and paint,

runs, \$1,200.00; ex-CN FAIRMONT MT14, Onan CCKB full fiberglass cab and doors, needs TLC, \$1,400.00. Contact: Mike Billet, 1010 Felton Road, Red Lion, PA 17356. Phone: (717) 244-0332.

FOR SALE: Motorcar Operators West Belt Buckles!! (See photos below.) Cast in pewter, limited run of 200 pieces. \$20.00 each, including postage. Artwork was completed using a design from Nancy Van Loo. Order from Mike Raposa, P.O. Box 50908, Palo Alto, CA 94303-0673. Phone: (415) 917-1224.



WANTED: Atlantic Coast Line RR Items, paper to motorcars. Contact: Ric Tritsch, P.O. Box 2008, High Springs, FL 32643. Phone: (904) 454-3379.

WANTED: Handcar, will pay cash. Contact: Ric Tritsch (see ad above).

FOR SALE: 1983 Chevy Crew Cab/hyrail pickup, new paint and bodywork. Interior good, just tuned up, 350 CID V8, former B&LE, \$4,900.00. Truck located in Pennsylvania. Contact: Ric Tritsch (see ad above).

FOR SALE: 1986 ex-SP Fairmont MT19-A railcar with

turntable. In exceptional mechanical condition and appearance, with many extra Fairmont options. Complete owner's factory manual set. Tandem hauling trailer set up for one man unloading, \$2,995.00. Can ship! Contact: Jim Lookabaugh, 5832 NW 82nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73132. Phone: (405) 722-5046 evenings, (405) 722-7797 days.

FOR SALE: Motorcar video of the NARCOA run through the White Mountains on the Concord to Lincoln NH line (Hobo RR). Over 90 minutes of super VHS action taken in June 1994, also covers the June 1992 meet. There are over forty different motorcars on this tape (including steam powered cars). Please send \$25.00 check or cash to Richard Ouellette, 327 East Road, Hampstead, NH 03841.

FOR SALE: Fairmont C5 CARBURETORS, expertly rebuilt to look and perform as new, \$215.00; RO-C TIMERS \$65.00; both \$6.00 UPS. Also CRANKSHAFT REBUILDING available. Contact: Doug Heinmuller, 115 West Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. Phone: (207) 288-4332 evenings.

WANTED: Fairmont M9, late series with cab. Complete in restorable or running condition. Also want M19 WHEELS in new condition. Contact: P. A. Griffin, 325 East Walnut Street, Corydon, IN 47112. Phone: (812) 738-2884.

WANTED: Fairbanks Morse Model 28 or 30 speeder, or parts. All letters answered. Hollis Button, 1025 West Parr Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008.

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 \$875.00 - \$1,750.00. 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: Fairmont S2 speeder (has the larger single lung engine) from Paducah and Louisville RR (Kentucky). Asking \$600.00 or offer/trades. For more information, contact: Gary Brogan, 907 Kraak Road, Marshall, WI 53559. Phone: (608) 655-4188 evenings.

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

FOR SALE: Fairmont M19-D with cab, ex-Norfolk &

Southern, totally rebuilt in 1992 to like new condition, single cylinder ODB engine, fresh paint, horn, lights, strobe light, ready to set-on, perfect condition. \$2,800. Contact: Ken Luckenbaugh, 247 West Walnut Street, Yoe, PA 17313. Phone: (717) 246-3438.

FOR SALE: Fairmont C-8 carb, \$40.00; CVT GRS "W" marker signal, \$75.00; NKP US&S "R-2" 3 color block signal, \$75.00; PRR US&S position light dwarf signal, \$165.00; Erie US&S "H-2" searchlight signal, \$120.00; RSA train order semaphores, incl. mast, base and cranks, \$500.00. Contact: Joe Shaffer, 35166 Jason Drive, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Phone: (216) 353-0764.

FOR SALE: New 16 inch Fairmont and Tamper Wheels, \$70.00 each, or two for \$120.00; new wheels with ice ridge; Le Roi engine parts: pistons, rods, rings, etc. Contact: Bruce or Franz Von Riedel, 5852 North Shore Drive, Duluth, MN 55804. Phone: (218) 525-4088.

FOR SALE: Fairbanks Morse Sheffield Model 40B, sandblasted frame, wheels, and all steel. Painted black, new wheel bearings, new SS hand rails, mostly all SS bolts and nuts, new wood and SS gas tank. Magneto rebuilt. Engine very good condition, new brake linings. 95% rebuilt and complete. Price: \$1,400.00. Contact: David Klumpp, Blackhorse Road, Box 194 RR 4, Chester Springs, PA 19425. Phone: (215) 458-5494.

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

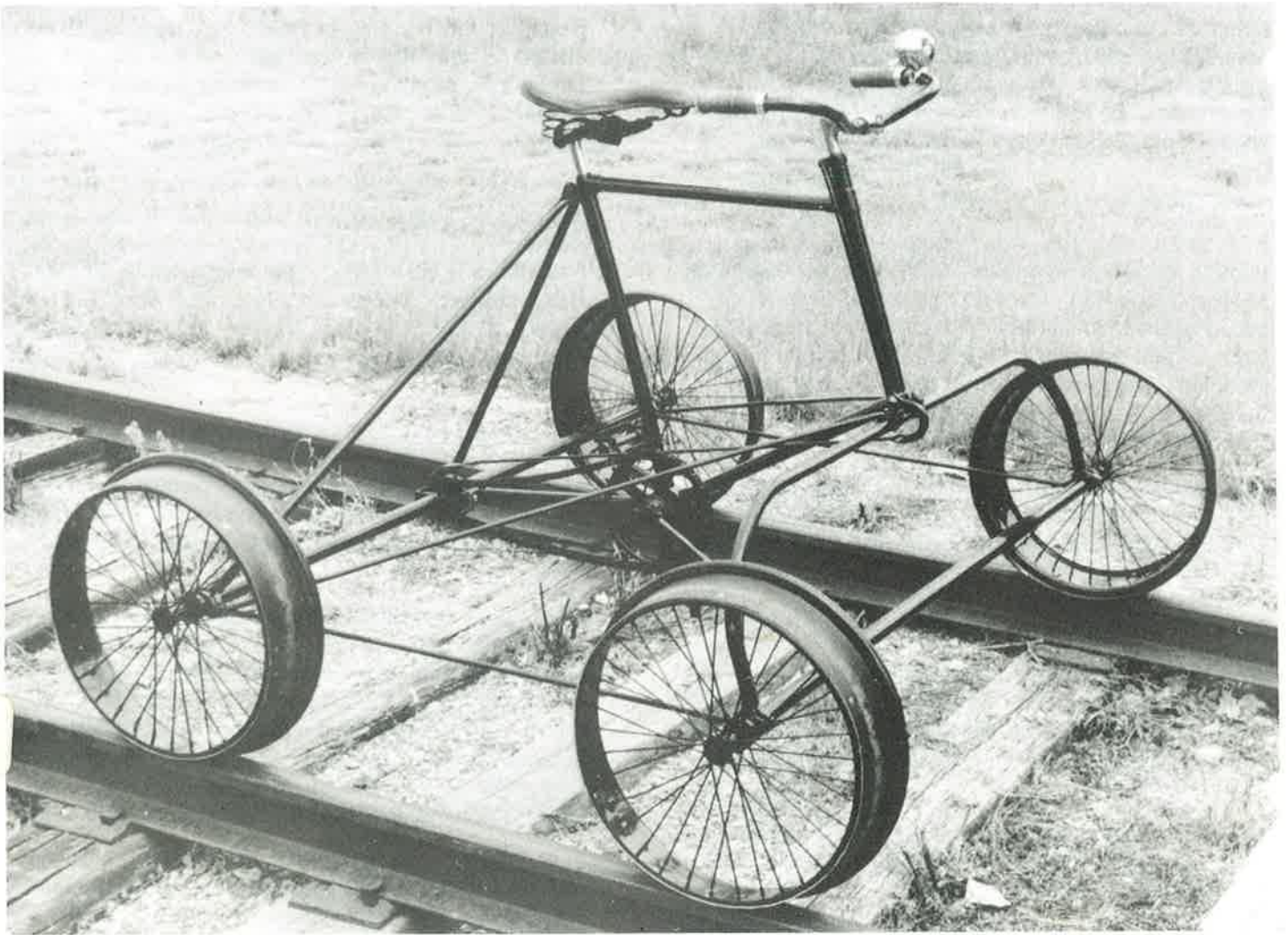
SO THAT'S WHAT THAT WAS!

John Schubert, of Guerneville, CA, informs us that the picture on the back of the Spring 1994 issue of *THE SETOFF* is a 1923 Model T Ford, circa 1925, owned by Pacific Spruce Corp., located near Toledo, Oregon.

THE TRACK INSPECTOR SEZ:



YOU CAN
NEVER BE
TOO RICH,
TOO THIN, OR
OWN TOO MANY
BUNGEE CORDS!



The Teeter rail bike shown above was recently restored by its current owner, John Beck of Mandan, ND. The bike, made by Light Inspection Car Co. of Hagerstown, IN, was purchased as a used vehicle in 1940 by Louis Beeten, Great Western RR agent at Johnstown, CO.

Photo by John Beck

THE SETOFF

Box 82, Greendell, NJ 07839

DICK RAY
NJ



POSTMASTER: IF UNDELIVERABLE, PLEASE RETURN TO SENDER.