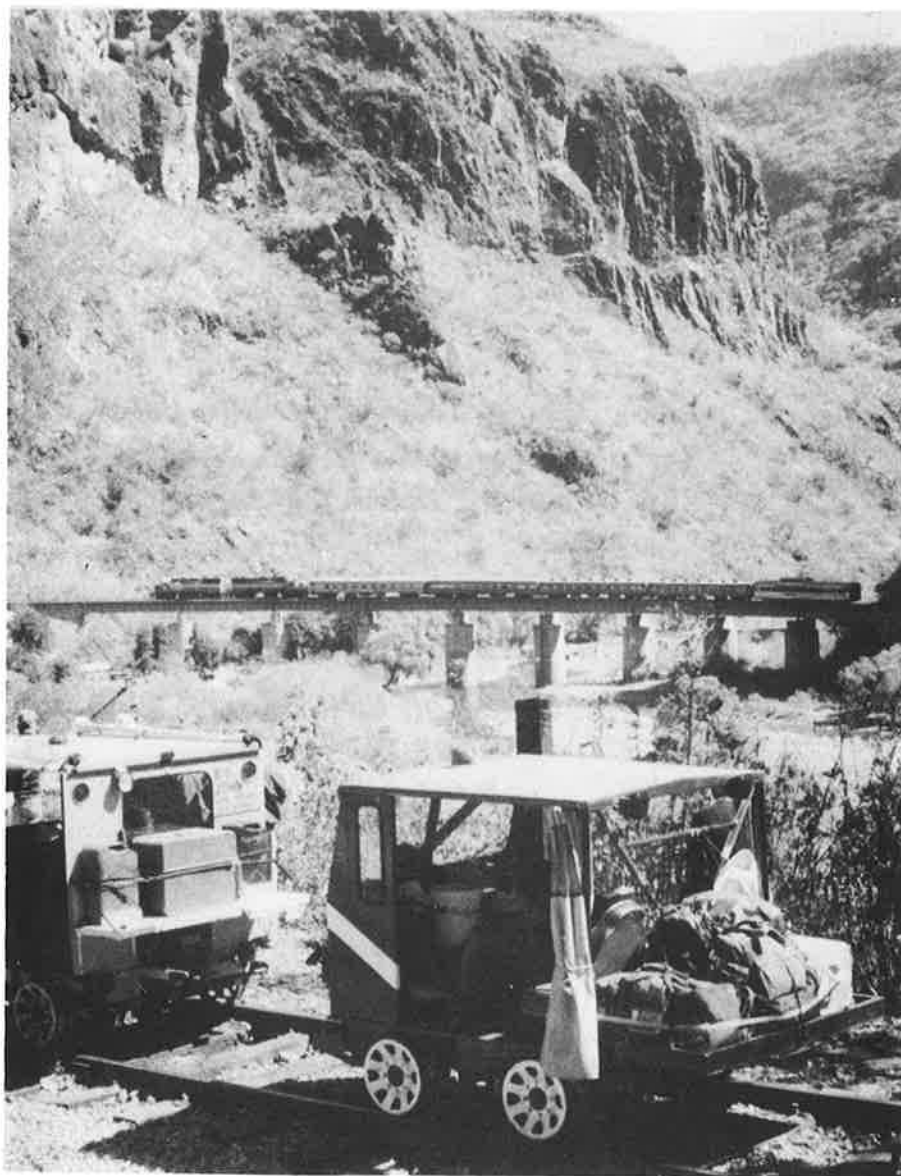
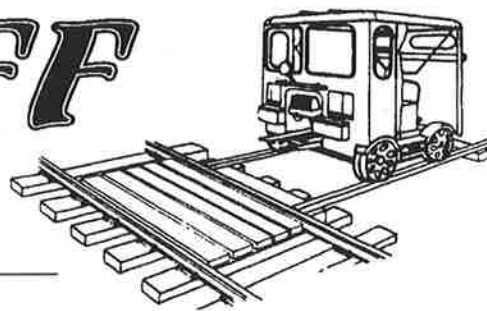


# THE SETOFF

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

May/June 1996



*Above, fully-loaded motorcars wait at Temoris for the passenger train to cross the bridge on the Chihuahua Al Pacifico Railroad. The March 1996 trip, from Ojinaga to Topolobambo, Mexico, was a once-in-a-lifetime experience over the famed "Copper Canyon" Railroad in the Sierra Madre mountains. Fourteen motorcars made this incredible journey. The story begins on page 10.*

Photo by Hank Brown

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## **From the President**

By Ron Zammit

As we enter our operating season, I'd like to ask all of our operators to make this the safest yet. So far this year, we have had no reported accidents, and it would be wonderful if we could end the year this way.

In insurance news, the liability limit for the policy has been raised to ten million dollars. This should open more railroads, as this is the common limit for many railroad excursions. (This number seems to go up all the time; CSX raised it to two hundred million.) From the list of excursions in the last *Setoff*, it appears that the policy is doing its job in making the railroads happy. We have a lot of runs from which to choose!

The agenda for the fall meeting is taking shape. The major topics proposed include chapter/(incorporated) affiliate structure for NARCOA, excursion speed limits, and operator certification. Please do not assume the names of the authors of these proposals. For example, the call for operator certification—a contentious issue—has come from three areas of the country, all east of the Mississippi. If all concerned send in their items soon, I will have an updated agenda in the next *Setoff*, in time for you to interact with your Director. Please try to help do what is best for the long term benefit of our hobby, and do not be distracted by personalities. Your Director will be pleased to hear from you.

You may wish to plan for attending the fall meeting. Mark Springer is putting together an excellent meeting. Besides the Board meeting, there will be an Operation Lifesaver presenter, who will give a sample talk. Please look for Mark's announcement elsewhere in this issue.

Our publisher, Ernie Jeschke, sent an interesting series of articles on a lawsuit involving a release. A judge from Detroit had been injured in a parachuting accident in which he suffered broken ankles. The judge sued the airport for \$725,000 claiming that even though he had signed a release, he did not know of all the dangers of the sport. According to the paper, the judge and his attorney agreed that: "the liability waiver . . . signed before (the) parachute jump was difficult to overcome." When the jury refused to award monetary damages, the paper ran a column titled: "Good Verdict," and went on to say: "signing a release form and then suing was not the way to go—even if you are injured in the process. We can hope this verdict will dissuade litigants—and their lawyers—from pressing other spurious claims in the future." (Quotes from *The Daily Telegram* of Adrian, MI, April 3, 1996)

When I first started organizing excursions for motorcars, I spoke with a legal expert in the parachuting

hobby. He firmly stated that the releases and insurance were THE main reason for their survival as a legitimate hobby.

While we do not operate in quite as dangerous conditions as the skydivers, we do have similar circumstances. We rent track, they rent the airport, planes and landing place. Our environment is regulated by the FRA, theirs is regulated by the FAA. We are both responsible for our insurance. We are both responsible for safe, injury-free activities. We both are open to spurious lawsuits. We both have the media's attention when accidents occur. We both have accidents in which people are injured, sometimes seriously. If we, motorcar excursion hobbyists, play our cards correctly as have the skydivers, then we will continue to operate and remain a legitimate, recognized hobby.

Let's all work for this goal.

***The deadline for submitting items for the July/August issue of The Setoff is July 15th.***

***Send all contributions to:***

***Deanna Baird  
Setoff Editor  
4403 Dyes Lane  
Bealeton, VA 22712***

## ***An Omission . . .***

The cover of the March/April issue of *The Setoff* showed two photographs of an event on the Duluth Missabe and Iron Range in July 1995. The photos were taken by Mark Arnold of Stacy, Minnesota. We inadvertently omitted the photo credit.

## ***. . . And A Clarification***

The March/April issue of *The Setoff* indicated that the four directors of North Central Railcars Ltd. were "formerly" members of the Mississippi Valley Division of NARCOA. *The Setoff* editor would like to restate that the four directors of NCRL remain members of MVD and continue to fully support MVD's endeavors. In addition to Michigan and Wisconsin, NCRL also has plans for meets in Minnesota.

## Editor's Notes

By Deanna Baird

This is the tenth year that *The Setoff* has been in publication, and I have the distinction of becoming its third editor following, first, Doug Leffler and then Gene Tucker. I intend to continue the fine work that has been done thus far and will try to improve upon what has been a useful and entertaining publication for NARCOA members and other readers.

Let me briefly introduce myself. During the day, I am an Information Systems Specialist in Washington, D.C. My job is to make sure the computers and computer networks work correctly at the corporate division of The Washington Post Company. In the evenings, my husband and I are finishing up the house we recently moved into after 2 1/2 years of planning and construction, a project that has kept us off the rails more than we would have liked.

I've been involved with NARCOA for about ten years now, the last five as assistant editor of *The Setoff*. Certainly the last couple of years of growth and reorganization have been the most interesting. Although we have seen some frustration and dissatisfaction among some folks in the midst of our recent organizational changes, the bottom line remains the same: we need NARCOA.

I have received many letters over the months from a few members who complain in detail about everything that is "wrong" with NARCOA. I suggest that we instead focus on what is *right* with NARCOA and unite in our support of the organization and the Board of Directors. After all, we elected the Board to help clear up some of NARCOA's "messes" and great progress has been made thus far. The Board needs the full support of each NARCOA member to continue its work.

There has been lots of debate and disagreement so far about what NARCOA should be and do, and that's good—that's how things get done. We need more discussion from all corners. You need to get involved. Vote in elections, talk to your Director, write a letter to *The Setoff*. Do your part to support NARCOA and you will be the ultimate beneficiary of these efforts.

As previous editorials have enumerated, *The Setoff* is composed almost entirely of contributions from its readers—stories, meet notices, want ads, photos, etc., sent to the editor for publication. I welcome any and all such contributions and also desire ideas and constructive criticism.

I look forward to the challenge of producing an ever-improving *Setoff*. I'm sure that together we can continue to meet the objective that previous editors established for *The Setoff*: to provide a forum for sharing ideas, experiences and knowledge about the motorcar hobby.

### 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 should be either black and white or sharp color photos. Please label the back of the picture as to its subject matter and who took the picture. Please do not send slides. Photos cannot be returned because they are archived.
3. We cannot publish copyrighted materials such as photos, posters, cartoons, or articles without written permission from the author or publisher.
4. Meet stories, technical articles and lengthy submissions should be typed or printed. Ads, meet notices, and short articles may be handwritten. Please include your phone number with your submission in case we need to ask you questions about something we don't understand. It would be very helpful if you could send articles on computer diskettes in ASCII, WordPerfect or Microsoft Word format. An e-mail text message (not an attachment) is also very welcome.
5. Send materials to *THE SETOFF* editor by the deadline, the 15th of each odd-numbered month (January, March, May, July, September, November).

## THE SETOFF

### Volume 10 Number 2

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*THE SETOFF* is the official publication of the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) and is published bimonthly 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 \$20.00 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. Include details of the trip such as time schedule, total mileage, costs, restrictions and conditions for attending. State whether or not NARCOA rules will be in effect and whether NARCOA insurance is required. Send meet notices to: Deanna Baird, SETOFF Editor, 4403 Dyes Lane, Bealeton, VA 22712.*

*PLEASE NOTE: Advertisement of a meet in THE SETOFF does not constitute responsibility by NARCOA and/or its officers, or THE SETOFF and/or its editorial staff for meet conditions. Meet attendees must exercise caution in the observance of safety conditions and rules, and must accept full responsibility for themselves, their guests and their equipment when attending any meet.*

The following meets are sponsored by regional divisions of NARCOA:

### FIRST IOWA DIVISION:

All First Iowa Division trips, with the exception of the Boone & Scenic Valley ride, are NARCOA events and require NARCOA insurance. For further information, contact Dave Pratt at (515) 674-3803 or Carl Schneider at (515) 967-5181.

June 15 and 16: Burlington Northern Railroad. Creston to Greenfield, IA. Come help Creston celebrate Iowa's 150th anniversary. We will ride this line possibly two to three times each day, 42 miles round trip. There is a Super 8 in Creston. Cost of this ride is \$10.00 per car for the two days.

June 23: Iowa Northern Railroad, Manly to Cedar Falls, IA, 135 miles round trip. Depart Manly at 7:30 a.m. with stops at the restored depots in Greene and Rockford.

August 3: Nebkota Railroad, Chadron to Merriman, NE. Beginning point will be in Gordon, NE, running both directions, 140 miles round trip. This is all that's left of the old C&NW "Cowboy Line".

August 31 and September 1: Dakota Southern Railroad. Chamberlain to Reliance, SD. Cost of this ride is \$15.00 per car for two days of riding. We will have a night run on Friday night and a morning run on Saturday. We will then drive to Murdo and have a night run there on Saturday and a daytime run from Murdo to Kadoka. The night runs will depart at 6:00 p.m. and the day runs will depart at 8:00 a.m. There are Super 8 motels at Murdo and Chamberlain.

September 14: Appanoose County Community Railroad, Centerville to Albia, IA, 62 miles round trip. Barbecue at the restored depot in Moravia.

October 12: Ft. Leonard Wood Army Base, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. Two round trips including a night run, 40 miles per trip.

October 13: Burlington Northern Railroad, Cuba to Buick, MO, 92 miles round trip. Depart Cuba at 8:00 a.m. This line is featured in the April 1996 *Trains* magazine.

October 26: Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad, Boone, IA. Join our annual Halloween ride. Three trips, 20 miles per trip. Cookout at the Frasier Siding/Park.

### HOOSIER RAILCARS:

For meet information, contact Stan Conyer, 9333 St. Rd. 46 W, Columbus, IN 47201; phone (812) 342-0565.

June 15: Madison Railroad, North Madison to North Vernon, IN, 44 miles round trip. \$20.00 per car. NARCOA rules and insurance.

July 13 and 14: Kentucky Railway Museum and Big South Fork RR Double Header Weekend. Saturday, New Haven to Boston, KY, over 20 miles round trip, \$20.00. Sunday, Sterns, KY, to the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, 14 miles round trip, multiple trips planned, \$20.00 per car.

August 31: Indiana Southern Railroad, Spencer to Mooresville and Worthington, IN, 87 miles round trip, \$20.00 per car. NARCOA rules and insurance.

September: Date pending. Whitewater Valley Railroad, Connersville to Metamora, IN, 34 miles round trip. Two trips planned.

October 12: Crane Naval Warfare Center, 30 miles round trip through the naval base, \$20.00 per car.

June 1997: Algoma Central Railroad. If you would be interested in a three-day trip on the Algoma Central, contact Stan Conyer. NARCOA insurance and rules. Planning for the meet will begin if there is enough interest.

### ILLINOIS DIVISION:

For information on the Illinois Division of NARCOA, send \$5.00 for meet list and newsletter to Michael Mitzel, Illinois Division NARCOA, P.O. Box 79, Waterman, IL 60556, or call (815) 264-7979.

July: Date pending. Kankakee, Beaverville & Southern. The run last year was so successful, they invited us back to try another line towards Indiana this year. NARCOA insurance required.

September 22 and 23: Monticello Railroad Museum. Annual Railroad Days. NARCOA insurance not required.

October 20: Commonwealth Edison, Byron Branch Fall run, 14 miles round trip. With large bridge over the Rock River. NARCOA insurance required.

### MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION:

Contact Craig Blushke, 10916 Spring Creek Rd., Blue Mounds, WI 53517.

August 10: Badger Ammunition Plant, Baraboo, WI.

October 5: Board meeting and motorcar meet at Green Bay RR Museum.

### OHIO RAILCARS:

September 1: Wheeling & Lake Erie out of Akron, OH. Travel to Congress Lake, Falls Jct., and Ravenna with stop at Kent for dinner, 86 miles total. Fee is \$60.00. NARCOA insurance, with 40-car limit. LSASE to Dave Verzi, 10059 Aldridge Dr., Columbia Station, OH 44028, or e-mail to wm340@aol.com.

The following meets are sponsored by motorcar organizations or by individuals:

### MOTORCAR OPERATORS WEST:

August 31 and September 1: (Pending) Historic Fifth Annual Nevada Northern RR, Labor Day Weekend tour Ely to Shafter to Ely, NV, 284 miles. Popular traditional trip with no car limits. Camping at Shafter, with very limited accommodations at Currie. NARCOA insurance and MOW license required. \$60.00. LSASE with extra LSASE to: Denny S. Anspach, 710 Coronado Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95864. Deadline August 17th. Please, no phone calls! (MOW license information: LSASE to MOW, 8678 Fairmont Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95678).

### NORTH CENTRAL RAILCARS LTD.:

June 22: North Central Railcars Ltd., a newly-formed Wisconsin non-profit corporation, proudly announces its first excursion on the Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad, from Marquette, MI, to Republic Mine. Motorcars on the ore dock is a distinct possibility! NARCOA insurance required, and motorcars must be equipped with automatic brake lights. Cost is \$45.00 per motorcar with a 25-car limit. Send long SASE for details and application for registration to LS&I - Summer '96, c/o Mike Paul, 1780 Maricopa Dr., Oshkosh, WI 54904.

July 13: North Shore Scenic Railroad and DM&IR Railroad, Duluth, MN, to Two Harbors, 52 miles round trip. \$45.00 per motorcar. NARCOA insurance and automatic brake lights required. Make checks payable to NCR. Contact Terry Grace, 19260 Lander St. NW, Elk River, MN 55330, or phone (612) 241-0796.

August 17 and 18: Wisconsin Central Ltd., Merrillan E. Winona on Saturday, Merrillan / Plover on Sunday, 262 miles round trip. \$145.00 per motorcar, 30 car limit. NARCOA insurance and automatic brake lights required. Buffet banquet Saturday night (\$9.95 per person) with featured speaker Tim Kelly, Wisconsin Central Vice President, Transportation. Banquet seating

limited to 60 persons. For further information only, send LSASE to the address below. To apply for registration, send \$1.01 in loose postage, and a check in the amount of the registration fee. To apply for banquet seating reservations in addition to applying for excursion registration, enclose an additional check for the total banquet fee (\$9.95 x no. of people). Address all correspondence to: North Central Railcars, Wisconsin Central '96, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904-8234.

September 28: Ride the first-ever Fall Color Tour on the Lake Superior & Ishpeming RR from Marquette, MI, to Republic Mine, and return, 80 miles round trip. This excursion is limited to 25 cars by LS&I. Cost is \$45.00 per motorcar. NARCOA insurance and automatic brake light(s) required. For further information, send long SASE to: North Central Railcars, LS&I - Fall Color Tour, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904.

### WILDERNESS TOURS:

Wilderness Tours sponsors only NARCOA-insured tours. Please call Hank Brown, (608) 839-4939, or write for details, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527.

June 25: Central Montana Rail, Moccasin to Geraldine, MT, 164 miles.

June 27: Alberta Prairie Excursion RR, Ferlow Jct. to Dinosaur Jct., Edberg to Stettler to Munson, Alberta, Canada, 216 miles.

June 29: Canadian National RR, Kamloops, British Columbia.

July 2 - 6: Canadian National RR, Roma Jct. to Hay River, 764 miles. Flight to the Arctic Ocean. Six spots remain for the northwest territories.

October 15 - 22: Ferrocarriles Chihuahua Al Pacifico, Mexico. Chihuahua to El Fuerte, 760 miles. Copper Canyon Tour.

July 7: Sunday Summer Railcar Meet on the Walkersville Southern RR, Walkersville, MD. At least two round trips from Walkersville south to Route 26 across the newly-rebuilt Monocacy River bridge (approximately 8 miles per round trip). Registration fee \$10.00 per car. Prevailing operating and safety rules apply; no insurance required. Information sent upon receipt of LSASE and check made payable to Walkersville Southern. Contact Bill McCullough, Walkersville Southern Railroad, P.O. Box 651, Walkersville, MD 21793.

July 20 and 21: Central Pennsylvania Weekend, North Shore and Shamokin Valley Railroads. On Saturday, ride the 86 miles of the North Shore RR from Northumberland to Beech Haven, PA, and return. In the evening, the Central Pennsylvania chapter of the Railway Historical Society will host a get-together at the White Deer Station and Museum for slides, videos and snacks. On

(Continued on next page)

## **Meets**

(Continued from previous page)

Sunday, ride the 50 miles of the Shamokin Valley RR from Sunbury to Shamokin Valley, PA, and return. Cost is \$50.00 per car for the weekend. NARCOA rules and insurance required. Send LSASE to Larry Maynard, RR #1, Box 351, New Columbia, PA 17856. Phone (717) 538-9050, FAX (717) 538-9184.

**August 31:** OHI-RAIL, "Former NYC", Minerva to Hopedale, approximately 75 miles round trip. Set on at Minerva at 7:30 a.m. Cost is \$30.00 per car, with a 30-car limit. NARCOA rules apply; no insurance required. For information, call Bob Gold, (330) 499-5676, or send SASE to Les King, P.O. Box 164, North Lawrence, OH 44666; phone (330) 833-2868.

**September 14 and January 1, 1997:** Great Smoky Mountains Railway. Runs start in Bryson City and Andrews, NC, and cover the full length of the line, more than 60 miles. There is a tunnel, a high bridge, white-water river gorge, and a 5.5% grade three miles long. All runs will be limited to 30 cars total. NARCOA insurance is required. Cost is \$25.00 per car. Contact Randall S. Dyer, Box 489, Jefferson City, TN 37760; phone (423) 475-9539. Or call Charley Davidson, (423) 745-2331.

**October 12:** Autumn Leaf Ride, Wellsboro and Corning RR. Cost is \$30.00. NARCOA rules and insurance required. Sends LSASE to Larry Maynard, RR #1, Box 351, New Columbia, PA 17856. Phone (717) 538-9050, FAX (717) 538-9184.

### ***The Track Inspector Sez:***

**A high point in the life of a  
two-cycle car owner is  
getting to tow a broken  
down Onan-engined car back  
to its trailer.**



## ***Come Up With a Winning NARCOA Safety Slogan and Get Free Insurance for a Year***

NARCOA needs a safety slogan. With NARCOA's renewed emphasis on safety, the Safety and Rules Committee is sponsoring a contest to get ideas on what will become the official NARCOA Safety Slogan. The person submitting the winning slogan will receive a prize in keeping with our hobby: a one-year membership to NARCOA and one year of NARCOA insurance ABSOLUTELY FREE.

Safety slogans can be serious in nature or of a humorous nature, but safe operation of motorcars must be the main theme of the slogan. After the winning slogan has been chosen, all suitable entries in the contest will be published in *The Setoff*.

All contest entries must be received by Bill Holdren before September 30, 1996, to be eligible. The 10 best entries will be chosen by the NARCOA Safety and Rules Committee and printed in *The Setoff*. The winner of the contest will be chosen by the members of NARCOA by a mail-in ballot which will be sent with the January/February 1997 issue of *The Setoff*. The winning Safety Slogan will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval as our official NARCOA Safety Slogan. The winner of the slogan contest will be chosen in March 1997 and will receive a certificate of credit to cover one year of NARCOA membership and insurance starting April 1, 1997.

Remember, NARCOA is YOUR organization, so send your ideas to us and we will have a majority vote decide on our official NARCOA Safety Slogan.

Send all Safety Slogan suggestions to the following address:

Bill Holdren  
115 Hartford Drive  
Ladson, SC 29456  
FAX (803) 824-6170  
FAIRNUT1@aol.com

***It's great to be out on the railroad, but is my  
family adequately protected? Stop, Look  
and Listen!***

**NARCOA Insurance Program  
1047 Terrace View Drive  
Alberton, MT 59820-3012**



## Revised "NARCOA Agreement" Is Available

By Ron Zammit

The latest versions of the NARCOA Release and Agreement were published in *The Setoff* by Mark Springer in the Nov./Dec. 1995 *Setoff*. The Release is to be signed by all meet participants, while the Agreement is to be signed by all operators, specifically those on NARCOA (insured) excursions.

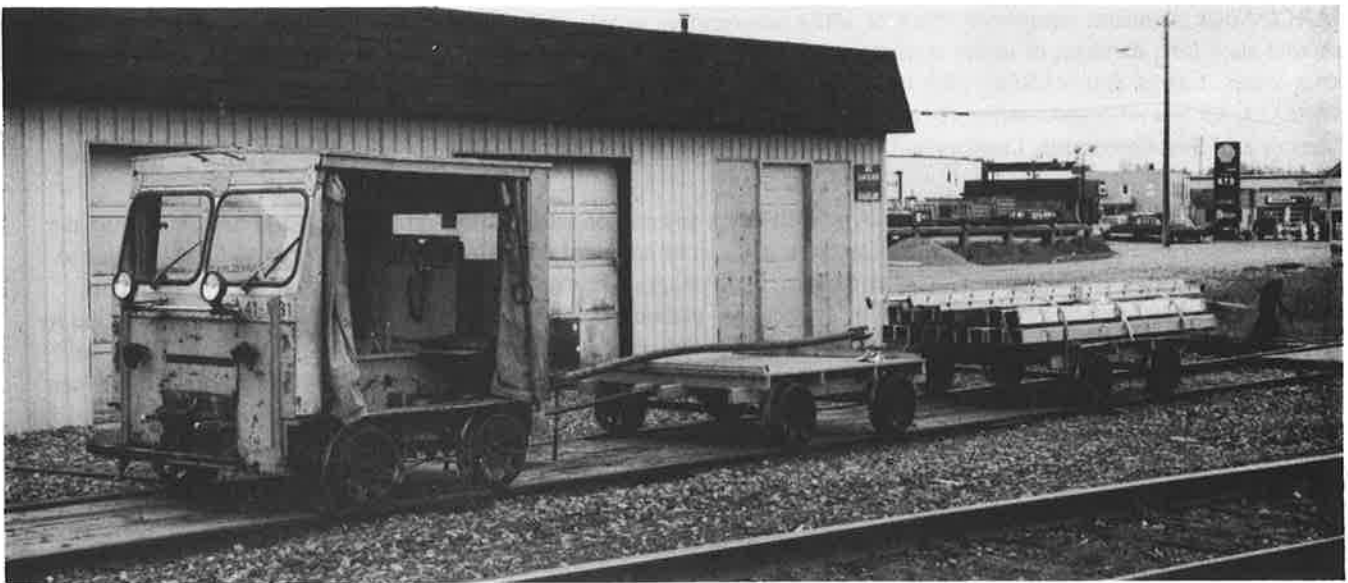
There have been several members who suggested changes to the Agreement when they signed and filed it with Tom Norman. These changes relate specifically to an operator indemnifying the railroads and other operators from third party claims. This section is to protect all of us from an operator who may bring people on an excursion and does not make certain that all his/her guests have signed the release.

By agreeing to indemnify these guests, the operator has a great incentive to make sure his/her guests sign the

release and, therefore, the operator is no longer liable for their problems. This protects ALL of us from having a guest on track who did not sign a proper release. It does not, nor was it ever intended, that the signing operator assume the liabilities of the group's actions, or the guests of others.

The Agreement has been given some clarifying language to specifically indicate that the operator is indemnifying only claims caused by his/her operation and only from guests he/she invites to the excursion.

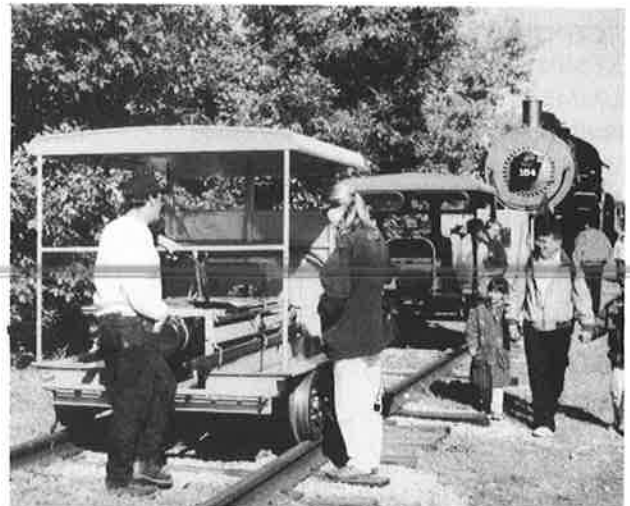
The new Agreement appears on the next two pages of *The Setoff*. After reading the new Agreement, if you wish to replace your present Agreement filed with Tom Norman, fill out the new Agreement and mail it to Tom and he will destroy the old one and keep the new one on file. If you want the old one back, include a long self-addressed, stamped envelope.



*Waiting patiently. Above, an Ontario Northland Railway railcar and trailers in a siding at Kapuskasing, Ontario, June 11, 1995. NARCOA railcars eastbound from Hearst were on the main line. The ONR operator said he was in no hurry for us to leave town as he would have to go back to work.*

*At right, Chuck Pearson tells an interested passer-by how railcars were used when in railroad service. Chuck's S-2 and about a dozen other railcars were on display during the 1995 Railroad Days at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. Several NARCOA members display their cars each year the last weekend in September at the Village.*

Photos by Bob Schuknecht



## NARCOA Agreement

In consideration of North American Railcar Operators Association ("NARCOA") its officers, board members, judiciary committee members, meet coordinators, agents, servants, employees, and lessors, and the railroads from which NARCOA contracts for the use of track for excursions, their officers, agents, servants, employees, and lessors, hereinafter collectively and individually referred to as "NARCOA/RR" allowing \_\_\_\_\_ (please print your name) to utilize the facilities and participate in the motorcar<sup>1</sup> excursions and related activities of NARCOA/RR it is agreed that:

1. **ASSUMPTION OF RISK.** I know and understand the scope, nature, and extent of the risks involved in motorcar operation on track, related motorcar activities such as set on and off, and in general the dangers of the railroad environment. I freely and voluntarily choose to incur such risks understanding that those risks may include injury and/or death. I agree that I am responsible for educating any guests who I bring with me onto railroad property of all risks. Before allowing my guests onto the railroad property, I will determine that they understand all risks and that they freely and voluntarily choose to incur such risks. (      ) Initial

2. **EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY.** I exempt and release NARCOA/RR from any and all liability, claims, demands or actions or causes of action whatsoever arising out of any damage, loss or injury to me or my property while upon the NARCOA/RR premises, equipment, track or while participating in any of the activities contemplated by this Agreement, whether such loss, damage, or injury results from the negligence, either active or passive, of NARCOA/RR or from some other cause. I agree that NARCOA/RR has no responsibility for my acts or safety during motorcar excursions, and that NARCOA/RR has no responsibility for the acts or safety of other operators and guests during motorcar excursions. By entering into this Agreement, I understand that I am giving up legal rights which I may otherwise have. (      ) Initial

3. **COVENANT NOT TO SUE.** I agree never to institute any suit or action at law or otherwise and hereby instruct my heirs, executors and administrators never to institute any suit or action at law or otherwise against NARCOA/RR nor to initiate any nor assist in the prosecution of any claim, for damages or cause of action which I, my heirs, executors or administrators may have by reason of injury or death to my person or property arising from the activities contemplated by the Agreement. I understand that if I institute any suit or action at law for any claim from damages or cause of action because of injury or death to my person or property due to the activities contemplated by this Agreement, this waiver can and will be used in court and that waivers of this type have been upheld in courts in similar circumstances. (      ) Initial

4. **INDEMNITY AGAINST THIRD PARTY CLAIMS.** I will indemnify, save and hold harmless NARCOA/RR from any and all losses, claims, actions, or proceedings of every kind and character, including attorney's fees and expenses, which may be presented or initiated by any other persons or organizations and which arise directly or indirectly from the activities contemplated by this Agreement. (      ) Initial

5. **CONTINUATION OF OBLIGATIONS.** I agree and acknowledge that the terms and conditions of the foregoing EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY, COVENANT NOT TO SUE, AND INDEMNITY AGAINST THIRD PARTY CLAIMS shall continue in full force and effect now and in the future at all times and shall be binding upon my heirs, executors and administrators of my estate. (      ) Initial

6. **REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES.** I represent and warrant that I am on no medication or drugs, or have no physical infirmities, chronic ailment, or injury that individually or together would impair in any way my ability or judgment in the safe operation of a railroad motorcar.

---

(List impairments. If none, state "none".)

(      ) Initial

---

<sup>1</sup>For the purpose of this agreement, the term "motorcar" refers to all rail based equipment operated by the above named person.



7. **INDEMNITY AGREEMENT.** I hereby unconditionally agree to indemnify NARCOA/RR against any and all liability, loss, costs, damages, fee of attorneys, loss of funds advanced and other expenses which the undersigned may sustain or incur of or in consequence of the undersigned and/or my family and friends from the uses of the above mentioned NARCOA/RR property including, but not limited to sums paid of liabilities incurred to third parties and in settlement of and expenses paid or incurred in connection with claims, suits or judgments resulting from the undersigned's use of NARCOA/RR property as aforesaid. This agreement shall inure to the benefit of NARCOA/RR, their officers, directors, and members, and successors and assigns of the undersigned. (      ) **Initial**

8. **VENUE.** Any disputes arising from the activities contemplated by this Agreement will be interpreted under the laws of the State of Delaware and will be submitted to arbitration in accordance with the rules and procedures of the American Arbitration Association, with exclusive venue for such proceedings in the State of Delaware. (      ) **Initial**

9. **MECHANICALLY SAFE MOTORCAR.** I agree to operate only a mechanically safe motorcar. The sole and ultimate responsibility as to its safe mechanical condition rests with me, regardless of any inspections or lack thereof by NARCOA/RR. I agree that NARCOA/RR may inspect my motorcar for any reason or purpose but has no obligations to do so. Such inspections by NARCOA/RR do not certify mechanical safety, which is my responsibility. (      ) **Initial**

10. **OBEY NARCOA RULES.** I have studied the NARCOA Rule Book and understand the content and logic for each of the rules. I agree to follow the rules in the operation of my motorcar and behavior of my guests. I agree that I am subject to actions of the NARCOA Board and/or its Judiciary Committee which may result from any incident where I or my guests do not follow the rules of operation as set forth by NARCOA. I exempt and release NARCOA/RR from any and all liability, claims, demands or causes of action whatsoever arising as a result of their performing the duties and operations of NARCOA. I hereby agree, as an operator and NARCOA member of good standing, that I will not operate on any railroad without proper track authority (proper permission). I hereby agree that acquiring and verification of such proper track authority is my responsibility. I understand that to use a railroad without proper track authority, regardless of the circumstances surrounding such use, and regardless of civil and criminal actions taken or not taken against me for such use, may result in the loss of my NARCOA operating privileges for at least one year. (      ) **Initial**

11. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This agreement sets forth the entire agreement between the parties and can be altered or amended only by subsequent written instrument duly executed by each of the parties hereto. It is agreed by the signing parties and NARCOA/RR as defined in this agreement, that the term "activities contemplated by this agreement" in paragraphs 2, 3, 4, and 5 (insomuch as 5 includes references to the other paragraphs) in this NARCOA agreement refers to and applies only to the direct acts of the undersigned operator on excursions and related activities of NARCOA/RR. In these and in any other paragraphs in the agreement above, there is no liability of any kind whatsoever assumed for the acts or the consequences of the acts of any other person or persons. It is further agreed that paragraph 7 applies only to the family members of and those individuals who are specifically guests of the undersigned operator on a NARCOA event, and to no other person or persons. (      ) **Initial**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Operator's Signature

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
NARCOA Officer or Board Member

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Motorcars on the Siskiyou: Crossing Over the Mountain

By Denny S. Anspach

When an embodiment of the very might of the railroad is demanded, one can go no further than to picture giant freight trains of lumber and other forest products being pushed, pulled, and cajoled across the Southern Pacific Railroad's Siskiyou Summit, common in the days of steam with a routine five 2-10-2 steam engines ("Decks"), and later with many more diesels. With its long and tortuous approaches (both sides), and its long stretches of 3.3% - 3.86% grades, one can also do no better than to quote Brian Solomon (in a recent *Pacific Railroad News* issue) to the effect that "The Siskiyou was the railroad mountain grade against which all others might be measured".

The SP's line over Siskiyou Summit from Dunsuir/Black Butte, California, north to Ashland/Medford and Eugene, Oregon, has captured the imagination of generations of railroaders and railroad enthusiasts alike. However, the very operational difficulties that make this line so inherently fascinating caused this rugged 1887



*Sixty motorcars at the set-on site at Weed, CA, on the Central Oregon Pacific Railroad prepare for departure on April 20, 1996. Tom Lucier's DM&IR A-3 is in the foreground.*

Robert Church photo

main line that first tied together the Pacific Coast states, to be bypassed in 1926 by the SP's new and purpose-built more gentle Cascade line (passing far to the east through Klamath Falls).

Although the "Siskiyou" continued to be a major route for shipment of forest products to and from central Oregon, the decline of the forest industry in the 1980's, and the subsequent recession of the 1990's, forced the railroad to first mothball the line over the summit in 1992, and then sell the line in late 1994 to Railtex, the highly successful and professional Texas-based national short-line operator. Railtex subsequently reopened the line in June 1995 as an extension of its already existing Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad (COPR) operation.

After experiencing a mutually-successful two-day motorcar run with Motorcar Operators West on the COPR's Coos Bay line in July of 1995, Mr. Don Green, the railroad's Manager of Operations, invited MOW to organize a trip over the Siskiyou from Weed, California (just north of the nearby Black Butte junction with the current SP Cascade mainline), 97 miles north across the summit into the Rogue River Valley of Oregon. He proposed that we would tie up for the night at Medford, the largest town in the valley. It was to be the very first revenue passenger carrying movement over this section of the railroad since the retirement of the last passenger train in 1953.

The initial announcement of the trip by coordinators Janet and Gil Dominguez was met by an overwhelming response. Even though 60 cars were to be accommodated, a large number had to be left on the waiting list.

Because of the large number of cars, operators, and passengers, and the adverse terrain to be covered, a number of new operational ideas were put to use and several special conditions had to be met: 1) Only "seasoned" cars and operators were to be allowed. 2) The group was to be divided into six semi-autonomous groups of ten cars each, each separate group to be both topped and tailed by radio-equipped co-leaders. 3) The groups would leave Weed at 10-minute intervals, and would function independently within the overall plan of the day. 4) Rest stops were scheduled only at Montague (27 miles), Hornbrook (45 miles), Siskiyou (69 miles), and Ashland (86 miles), where at each place portable toilet(s) were placed in advance. 5) In addition to the standard mechanical inspections demanded at the beginning of all MOW excursions, a special repeat brake check/inspection was to be undertaken in Medford prior to return. 6) A [controversial] request by the railroad that "no belt cars be allowed" was honored.

The Dominguezes prepared exemplary written materials for both the governance of the run as well as for the enjoyment of the participants. The former was in the form of a 44-page, spiral-bound booklet for each leader containing detailed sectional maps of the line enlarged from Geodetic survey materials, each map of

which had marked very clearly the grade crossings to flag, those to just cross carefully, and those to be shunted (a choice requested by the railroad. In this regard, each group carried with it a standard new railroad shunt cable with clamps).

For each operator a 60-page separate booklet was supplied with instructions, maps, a detailed historical description of the line by milepost numbers, a COPR Employee timetable, and an overall history of the line (in addition to the map materials already listed above).

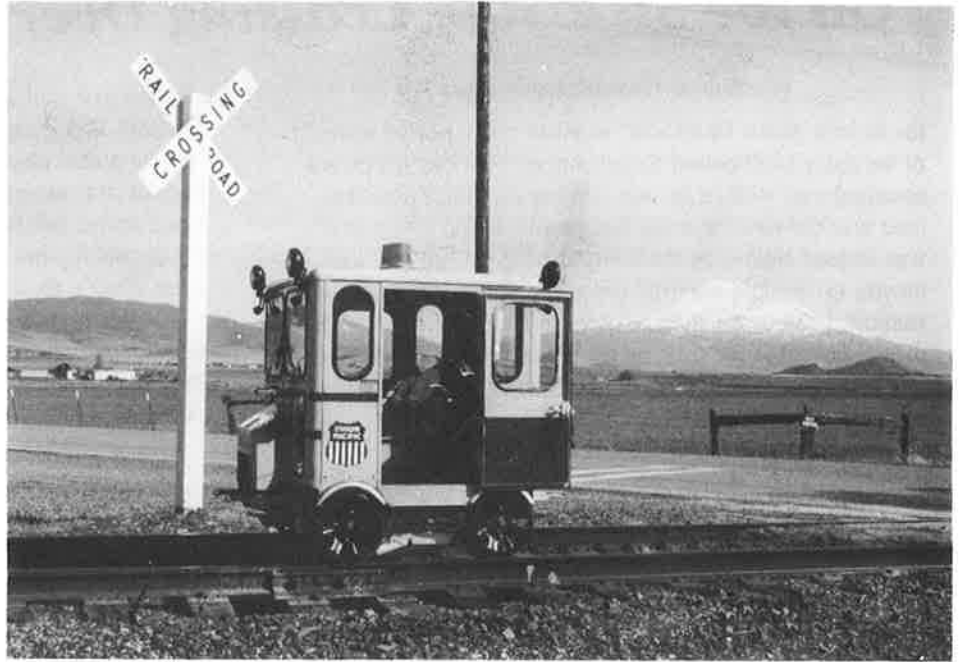
The groups were "pre-sorted," and by nightfall on Friday evening April 12th, all but a few cars were on the track in the Weed yard (MP 348.4), and lined up for northbound departure the following morning. A new inspection procedure had its first (and successful) test: each operator attested to the safety and good mechanical condition of his/her car on a checklist mailed beforehand. The inspector then used his/her judgment as to what extent a complete inspection was or was not needed. It saved much time.

The night was very cold, and snowflakes came floating down.

A few did not arrive until early Saturday morning (author included), but after a detailed safety meeting, and a very friendly greeting by COPR's Mr. Green (accompanied by Mrs. Green), the first group departed at 9:10 a.m. on the markers of the railroad's hy-rail truck. We immediately started a 2.2% (ruling grade) descent through the trees to the former helper station at Edgewood. The day was brisk but gorgeous and, although Spring is always late in this high country, much green grass and new skunk cabbage dotted the right-of-way, the clearings and, eventually, the ranch fields.

We were the tail car in Group #1. My car for this run was my rebuilt/restored 1963 Union Electric Company Kalamazoo 56W section car (a car that had spent 28 years going no further than a mile in each direction on the Mississippi River power dam in Keokuk, Iowa). Gary Putman was in the lead with his handsomely-modified MT14. Gary also towed behind him his portable motorcar turntable assembly (single axle), a device that would make life easy for all of us in Medford.

NARCOA's Tom Norman and Mrs. Norman were welcome participants in our group with their (very) neat MT19 (the famous coffee pot was in place). (In fact, all other cars in our group were also MT19s.) My compan-



*Above, Ron Zammit's Tomah cab Milwaukee Road MT19 with Mt. Shasta in the background.*

Photo by Ron Zammit

ion in arms for the day was Dr. Bob Church (practicing dentist *extraordinaire*, book publisher, Famous Author, qualified steam and diesel locomotive engineer, *bon vivant*, and accomplished grade-crossing shunt installer).

A number of families and photographers awaited us at Edgewood (MP 353.6), now a bucolic village with little hint of its railroad past. We briefly stopped to look back at and to photograph our cars against looming Mt. Shasta, the "holy mountain" whose 15,000-foot peak towered over us in the morning sun. A well-dressed man with a camera pointed out that the swirling lenticular cloud cap over the snow fields and glaciers at the very top was a sign that the spirits of the mountain were cavorting with aliens that had landed from their UFO in the protection of the mists. I nodded sagely as he went on to describe his "beachfront property in the Mojave Desert."

We now broke out into the open ranch spaces of the intermountain (Cascade and Siskiyou ranges) Shasta Valley. The track was excellent and very heavy, with long segments of welded rail. Although there were some long tangents, they were bracketed with numbers of sharp, and often reverse (but superelevated), curves. It was motorcar *heaven*, and we covered the ground without fuss or feathers.

We arrived at Montague (27 miles along at MP 375.5 and the limit of our track warrant) and went into

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## On the Siskiyou: Crossing Over the Mountain

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the hole at about 10:45 a.m. to await the expected arrival of the daily southbound freight out of Medford which we assumed was well on its way. What we didn't expect to hear was the news that the freight (47 loads, seven units) was instead stalled on the summit grade ahead and was having to "double the hill" (take one half the train to the summit, back down light to pick up the second half, and then reassemble the train again at the summit). We were blocked, and all six groups tied down together until the line was cleared.



*Above, motorcars await a COPR freight train at MP 375.5.*

Photo by Robert Church

Montague is/was a picturesque old lumbering/mill town, that serves as the junction for the Yreka Western Railroad, and as a local center for surrounding ranches. In the warm months, the town serves as one terminus of the Yreka Western Railroad's "Blue Goose" steam passenger train. Fortunately, the day was sunny, and (as always) the companionship and sociability was good, and although everyone was anxious to be underway, little grouching was heard. The town was still in winter hibernation, although a kind citizen opened up the lovely old preserved SP depot for us which the community had moved across the street.

I spread out Mrs. Anspach's famous lace motorcar tablecloth over the engine casing, and Bob and I joined the others in a more than ample lunch.

Time was whiled away by some for car repairs/maintenance. Tom Lucier hitched a ride with a friendly Montague citizen to Yreka (seven miles away) to pur-

chase a new coil at a NAPA store for his beautiful DM&IR A-3 gang car. Bill Owen helped me install on my car a new electronic circuit for a one-clang-per-second roof-mounted bell. We were also pleased to see good friend Jeff Forbis, the McCloud Railroad's owner/CEO, making his first motorcar trip (as a passenger in Tom Phair's diesel four wheel drive Beaver)

Just at three o'clock the head and ditch lights of the southbound freight were in view and minutes later, the lead unit braked to a stop just alongside the hy-railer.

After some delay in getting satisfactory communication with the dispatcher in Eugene to obtain new track warrants, they then highballed out of town in an impressive display of power (to beat "going dead on the law" before eventually tying up in Black Butte [MP 344]). In turn, we too then "got out of town" (but not before having to undergo a quick re-rail of the hy-railer, which had failed to negotiate some switchwork!).

The broad Shasta Valley is like a shallow bowl, and we now had a gentle ascent up the north slope to Snowden (MP 380.8), another former helper station (but now without even a semblance of any former

community). We did, however, identify the former station intact on a nearby ranch, and we could see very well where a wye had once been (replacing an even earlier turntable). We then spiraled down through a series of gentle defiles into the Klamath River valley.

When we approached former remote site of Ager (a siding retired before 1960), the local grade crossing was seen to be protected by a rare "wig-wag" signal. Dr. Church put his agile mind to it and, using Solomon-like thinking, judged that the two or three automobiles likely to cross this rural area each day were a sufficient potential hazard that the wig-wag should be shunted immediately for everyone's protection.

This was wise, inasmuch as each motorcar stopped to be photographed in front of the ancient clanging signal and all three of those automobiles decided to show up (including a disreputable old station wagon containing what looked to me like coops filled with fighting cocks).

Subsequently, we swung westward into the valley floor of the Klamath River, one of the Pacific Coast's most beautiful, if somewhat remote, major mountain

waterways. After following its south bank for several miles, we turned abruptly north at MP 390.9 and crossed the river on a distinctly undramatic deck girder bridge.

We soon halted for a rest stop at Hornbrook (MP 393.1), an abandoned-appearing community at the foot of the mighty climb to the Summit itself. At one time, Hornbrook was a busy terminal that was home to rafts of helper locomotives and 25 helper crews, every trace of which disappeared almost instantly in 1927 after the opening of the new Cascade Line. (Even *then*, helpers, both steam and diesel, continued "big time" into modern days, but they all usually ran on through to Black Butte, or even Dunsmuir. Occasional "turnarounds" continued to use a wye, constructed to replace the Hornbrook turntable).

In the interests of time, the approaching late afternoon, and the long line waiting at the portapotty, the men present were invited to "inspect the horse" in the back of an adjacent section house.

Almost immediately after leaving Hornbrook, a 3.3% ruling grade began in the Siskiyou foothills, and after crossing nearby Interstate Highway #5, we surmounted notorious Bailey Hill (MP 400.0), an experience not unlike "going over the top" on a roller coaster. This well known vertical curve was the bane of steam locomotive engineers (and firemen) when the water glass levels would disappear as the boiler water would seem to slosh forward off of the crown sheet when the locomotive would lurch from sharp ascent to sharp descent (during the days of the 2-10-2s, only locomotives with special long water glasses were regularly assigned here for this reason).

The ensuing descent was short, however, and the major climb began once again at Hilt (MP 401.8). Until 1972, a major lumbering/logging operation was centered here (hardly a trace of which now remains), and at one time, a 50-mile logging railroad trailed off into the rugged mountains to the west and north. The daily SP Hilt-Weed "logger" was the only train that was allowed to use articulated power on *any* portion of the line between Hornbrook and Ashland (usually one of the "simplified" early 2-8-8-2 Mallets).

We crossed the Oregon border at about MP 403. We now began a series of seemingly endless layers of mounting spiraling curves, with the tracks just traversed visibly falling away far below us. The vistas were gor-



*Above, Kalamazoo 56W owned by the author at the Wall Creek trestle, Oregon MP 414.1, on April 21, 1996.*

Photo by Robert Church

geous, with ever more distant glistening Mt. Shasta bathed in the early evening sun.

The ubiquitous Fairmont Onan-powered motorcars dominating the trip do not do well on long steep grades at low speeds (an area where the big two-cycle QB belt cars can and do excel!). Plugs foul out, and the absence of a sensible middle gear makes keeping above the power curve difficult. As a result, the plan for the summit entailed keeping up the fastest track speed that safe operation would allow. It worked, and only on several short segments did several cars have to downshift. Even on the 3.86% segment, speed and good headway was maintained by all.

At MP 411.3, we entered the 3,100-foot summit tunnel (#13), the actual crest a vertical curve within the tunnel itself. We braked to a halt at Siskiyou itself, several sidings just north of the tunnel mouth. After a short rest stop, we immediately began the seriously-intense 3.3% descent.

We passed through two more tunnels, including the famous curved #14 (the loading gauge restrictions of which have prevented any and all passenger train movements since 1953, even detours). We crossed the immense spidery Wall Creek trestle, then doubled back over Interstate 5 to the site of the original famous curved Dollarhide trestle (now a fill), where we once again doubled back as the railroad continued to drop into the Rogue River valley (still far below).

As a stellar example of ultra-modern motorcar culture at its best, I rung up my wife Carol (who was

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## On the Siskiyou: Crossing Over the Mountain

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waiting for me in Medford) on my cellular phone to let her know that I was to be late, my voice carrying over the roar and howl of the flanged steel wheel on the steel rail.

We had already dropped almost 2,200 feet when we once again recrossed Interstate 5 on the outskirts of Ashland, Oregon (MP 429.1), a lovely and very busy college town, and well-known home of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Like a dash of cold water, we knew that the free mountain running was over as we began to encounter seemingly endless numbers of urban grade crossings, more and more of which we had to flag and/or shunt.

A lighted green searchlight signal beckoned us on in the approaching evening light.

In the interests of time, we rolled right on through Ashland. We then encountered for the first time pairs of the well-known Siskiyou upper quadrant semaphore signals (now inactive), six or seven sets of which were still in place between Ashland and Medford. Notes were made for photos the following day.

At about 8:15 p.m., group #1 tied up at Kane siding, (MP 441.8) on the edge of Medford, but only after each car had been turned on Gary Putman's turntable. Each of the other groups were in turn "turned" as they arrived, all to be lined up ready for the return journey the following day. A security service had been hired to provide all-night security. Although everyone else retired to the Best Western motel, I retired to the hospitality of my wife's family in nearby Jacksonville.

At 8:00 a.m., Gil gathered us together for a brief safety meeting, and soon after, the first group of ten (group #6 of the previous day's run) left southbound on the hy-railer's markers. At ten-minute intervals, the other groups left. Although still "group #1", we were now at the rear, and Bob and I commanded the lead car. Coordinators Gil and Janet Dominguez slipped their pretty SP "tomato-nose" MT 19 on to the very rear to ensure resetting of a derail and proper alignment of the switches as we left Medford yard (they were also in radio contact with the hy-railer on the COPR, rather than the MOW, frequency).

We were soon out into the midst of small farms and orchards, the right of way cutting a swath through dense lines of blackberry bushes. Every group had made notes the night before of good sites for photos of the upper quadrant signals, and Bob Church had picked out an excellent set of three with a fine pastoral background. We stopped for photos with the entire group framed between the signals, and then each took photos of his/her car as it came through.

As with the night before, the grade crossings were endless, but it was Sunday morning and the traffic was light. This saved the flaggers a good deal, as we were able to either safely shunt some crossings, while many others were so quiet that we could just stop, look both directions, and safely cross. We came up on the markers of group #2 in Ashland (who in turn had been on the markers of group #3). They moved forward to give us clearance in front of the old station site, which had been redeveloped as a city park, complete with very handy, very clean, bathrooms. We also opted for a leisurely lunch, not only because we were already hungry, but



**The potential cost of the trip is nothing compared to the potential cost of the risk.**

**NARCOA Insurance Program  
1047 Terrace View Drive  
Alberton, MT 59820-3012**

*An antique wig wag signal protects an Ashland, OR, crossing.*

Photo by Ron Zammit





*Motorcars preparing to leave Medford, OR, April 21, 1996.*

Photo by Ron Zammit

because we also wanted some space in front of us before we began our imminent assault of the summit grade.

We gave group #2 a ten-minute headway, and when we heard on the radio that they had cleared the last road crossing at the edge of town, we too began to roll. We had gone several miles when Jim Boyd's pretty Union Pacific MT19 failed. The usual intensely concentrated (and highly-motivated) battery of promptly-volunteered advice/expertise/guesswork failed to solve the problem (failure of a pushrod on a brand new "foolproof" Onan electronic ignition system), and a drawbar was produced for a tow. We ran about a half mile on to the lower reaches of the mountain grade with the towing MT19 not being able to get out of first gear. He signaled for a stop, and after some palaver, we coupled up *both* MT19s on the drawbar of my Kalamazoo.

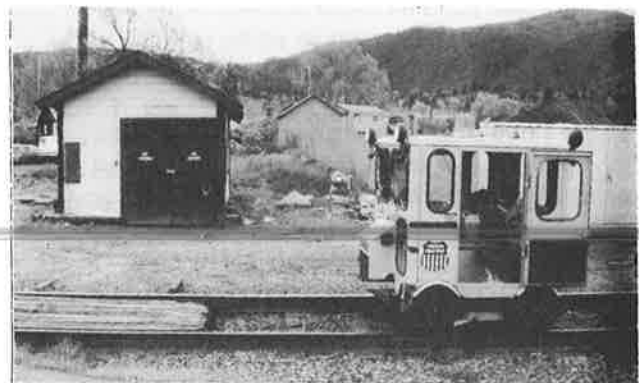
The plan was this: to maintain the power curve, to not bog down, and to keep the schedule, we were to keep **up track speed as much as possible so as to stay in high gear**. My flashing brake light was mounted high enough on the rear panel that when it was on, it was the signal for both towing cars to apply brakes as well (to be supplemented by standard hand signals).

We whistled off and began the 2,200-foot ascent in earnest. What a ride! The MT19 just behind was in run 8 (with the coupling drawbar on the stretch between us),

until it too began to falter, and *then* we intermittently were towing two motorcars "dead in train." Even so, we never did leave high gear, and the Kalamazoo never operated with the throttle fully open (one began to experience first hand why the Kalamazoo's two-cylinder Wisconsin HD engine may have been one of the best four-cycle engines ever to power a motorcar).

With the engine now throwing off waves of heat by this time (the engine fortunately protected by a thermo-

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*A motorcar shed near Medford, OR.*

Photo by Ron Zammit



## On the Siskiyou: Crossing Over the Mountain

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couple on the head connected to the ignition), we continued right up the hill. At MP 414.6 we hit the sharp curve entering (also) curved tunnel #14, and suddenly we were speeding through a pitch-black sewer. I grabbed off my sunglasses, and because I still could see *nothing*, made a strong brake application. As my mind was still swirling as to what possibly could be going on (what, *unseen*, might be in the tunnel in front of us?), with great relief we burst into the open (I had accidentally knocked off the master light switch, so neither head nor taillight had been on!).

At MP 414.1 we rolled to a photo stop on the curved Wall Creek viaduct, and with that, the engine quit (the main gas tank had been completely emptied, 3-1/2 gallons in 14 miles!).

We positioned our cars for photos, and we tried to get the second MT19 going for the final four-mile push to the top. It continued to falter, but even so, we were able to carefully and deliberately accelerate to a track speed of about 15 - 17 miles per hour until we reached Siskiyou at MP 412.2. We rested for a few minutes before entering the summit tunnel, and after cresting the grade, commenced the descent into California.

We continued the three cars *en train*, so that we had good braking power. The graceful spiraling grades *down* were as exhilarating as the spiraling grades *up*, as our ten cars glided down the mountain with about a 500-foot stretchout. We had a brief rest stop at Hornbrook, and another special wig-wag signal stop at Ager.

Near Snowdon (MP 380.8), we caught the first distant glimpse of the markers of John Shubert's MT19 trailing group #2 on the horizon. We came up on them at Montague (where in turn they were halted on the markers of Group #3).

We then more or less operated as single larger groups of 20 for the final miles to Weed, stopping once for photographs of Mt. Shasta in the late afternoon light. Soon after 5:00 p.m., we rolled to a stop in the Weed yard. I pulled the Kalamazoo up on the tail track of the wye, where this heavy car could be most easily removed from the track.

By 11:00 p.m., we were home in Sacramento.

Epilogue. For many, this was one of the most exciting of trips: the heaviest of heavy mountain grades with highly-maintained trackage—not the usual experienced by motorcar groups (certainly not by ours). This, and gorgeous scenery too! The operation of a large group in semiautonomous segments, separated by time, was extremely popular, and for the most part worked quite well. It is an operational concept that does demand well-defined leadership, good communications, and disciplined execution. It greatly eased the grade crossing

problems, and avoided the bunching up and melee at the rest stops. Best of all, it allowed the “small group feel” to survive (even *thrive*) quite well in the middle of one of the largest of all groups.

Providing leaders with maps detailing road crossings and other cautionary areas (with suggestions or directions as to how to handle, i.e., “slow”, “flag”, or “shunt”) was extremely handy. The use of track shunts remains controversial, but less so than in the past. As a “stand-alone” means of motorcar grade crossing safety, they do not suffice. They do demand the use of good judgment, the approval of the railroad, and the “shunter” should definitely do double duty as a flagger.

The distributed portable toilets once again made this a comfortable and civilized trip for the many families whose presence and active participation makes these trips the ultimate success that they have become.

The relationship with the railroad was one of business first, and pleasure second. The railroad was an excellent host, and we were willing guests. It was obvious then, and certainly obvious now, however, that no motorcar operation would have been allowed if our group had not had an already-proven and documented track record of disciplined professionalism, not the least of which included a system of formal mechanical inspections, formal documented operator qualifications, and the superb system of NARCOA liability coverage.

After first requesting, and then inspecting our rulebook, we were specifically perceived by the management “to have a concern for safe operations on a par with theirs,” and thus were welcome. We would not have been allowed to operate, however, without the common sense application of head, tail, operating brake lights, and lawful spark arrestors. Also, we would have not been allowed to operate without an emergency plan.

Will we do it again? Most assuredly, if we are invited. The long term plan proposed to COPR is (tentatively) to plan a two-day trip through the mountains, lakes, dunes, and bays of the railroad's gorgeous Coos Bay line in 1997 (as we did in 1995), and then return to the Siskiyou in 1998.

*Will you be with us?*

**There's a great motorcar trip coming up,  
but can I afford the risk?**

**NARCOA Insurance Program  
1047 Terrace View Drive  
Alberton, MT 59820-3012**



## *Unique Hy-Rail Vehicles Were Custom Built For Use in Field Welding of Rail Sections*

**By Mike Paul**

Shown above is a picture of a custom "hy-rail" vehicle built to specifications by my employer, Oshkosh Truck Corporation, for the Railweld Division of the Holland Company in Chicago Heights, IL. The first vehicle, pictured here, was so successful that Holland ordered two more. The first one was built in 1979, and the last two in 1980. It is believed that all vehicles are still in service, since parts were ordered for one of them within the last two years.

Notice the hydraulic jack/turntable underneath the vehicle. Since the vehicle could not be driven by a conventional truck drive train, the vehicle engine, located in the forward portion of the cargo body, was coupled to the transmission in the aft end of the cargo body by hydraulics, with the transmission coupled to the drive axles by a drop box off the back end of the rear axle. When it was desired to go from rail use to

highway use, the hydraulic jack would be lowered at a grade crossing, elevating the rail wheels clear of the track. The vehicle would then be rotated so that it was aligned with the roadway, and six tire/rim assemblies would then be bolted to the circumferential disks outboard of the rail wheels at each axle end. The hydraulic jack would then be raised, and the truck was ready for highway use!

These trucks were specially built for field-welding of rail sections, which would then later be installed in place of existing jointed rail. Current techniques seem to favor the method of making ribbon-rail sections at factories, putting the long ribbon-rail sections on a string of flat cars which then deliver the ribbon-rail to the installation site. Nevertheless, these three vehicles likely represent the only contributions of Oshkosh Truck to the nation's universe of hy-rail vehicles.



## **Safety: Signaling a Stop**

**By Stan Conyer**  
**Chairman, Safety and Rules Committee**

I have received some requests to clarify one of the new safety rules in regard to the method motorcar operators should use to signal their intent to slow down or stop motorcars operated at NARCOA sanctioned events. Section 2, Operating Rule #13 of the NARCOA Book of Rules, Number 3, states, in part: "STOPPING: Show a red flag, flashing red light, or a stop light to signal the following cars of a stop." Under this rule, a flashing red light on the back of a motorcar is a signal to the following cars of a stop. This is not a new rule. To have a red light flashing continuously (like a FRED) on the back of a motorcar would be confusing to all of the cars following the car with the light.

The Safety and Rules Committee and the NARCOA Board of Directors made changes to the rule book in an attempt to bring some consistency and better signaling procedures to the way our members equip and operate their motorcars at motorcar events.

In the past, there have been many rear-end collisions at motorcar meets resulting in anything from minor fender benders to those requiring emergency medical attention for injured passengers. It was felt that a better method of signaling a stop might have prevented some of these accidents.

In a perfect world, simply reminding operators to pay attention, keep proper distances, and obey the speed limit would eliminate the problem. But all you have to do is drive your car down the street and it is obvious we do not live in a perfect world. We do not use our motorcars for the purpose for which they were originally designed, so our operating rules and equipment standards are an attempt to regulate the safe use of these machines for the way we use them. To ignore this fact would be irresponsible and might jeopardize our insurance coverage and our reputation for safety.

There are three accepted methods to signal a stop:

1. A red or red orange flag at least 12" by 12" should be displayed outside the car when the car is either slowed or stopped. The flag should be kept inside the car at all other times so the operator of the following car will not be confused as to your intent.

2. A flashing red light at least 2" in diameter and activated manually with a switch when the car is either slowed or stopped. These lights should only flash upon a brake application.

3. A red stop light at least 2" in diameter and activated automatically when the brakes are applied. This light would be operated by a switch that applies power to the light when the brake handle or pedal is moved from its resting position. These lights may flash.

These are minimum standards, and larger flags or lights are acceptable and encouraged. There are no standards for bulb wattage or light location but common sense would dictate that the light be bright enough and located in a position that it can be seen clearly by the following cars.

The flashing red lights or stop lights may be one or more added to the standard equipment lights or a dual filament bulb or fixture may replace the standard tail lamps. If dual filament bulbs are used, the light should burn dimly for the tail light and brighter when the brakes are applied (just like in the standard automobile). The normal standard for motorcar tail lights is that they be visible from at least 500 feet during darkness.

If the operator wishes to draw even more attention to his intent to stop, he may have the brake light flash or flash alternately (like a railroad crossing light) when the brakes are applied.

Section 1, Equipment Standards #12 states that Stoplights (as defined above) are required for motorcars operated at NARCOA-sanctioned events during hours of darkness. This is the only new rule concerning signaling a stop. Since any time we place our cars on the rails there is a chance that it might be dark before we take them off the track, it would be a good idea to equip all motorcars with stop lights. Especially during darkness, you need all the notice you can get that a car in front of you is stopping.

If you take your car to a meet where it is known in advance that you will be operating after dark, your car should have stop lights. Although this is the only change to the rules on this subject, it is good that attention be drawn to this area of operation and a new consciousness may result in a drop in the frequency of rear end collisions.

The use of automatic stop lights is an easy and sure way of letting the guy behind you know you are slowing down or coming to a stop. It does not insure that he is paying attention and will stop before he hits you. It is your job to cover your rear as best you can and the job of the guy following you to pay attention. Safety must be everyone's first concern every time we set our cars on the track. Having fun runs a close second.

The Safety and Rules Committee and Board of Directors are trying to make our events as safe a place as possible to operate our motorcars. The cooperation of all NARCOA members is requested in this matter.

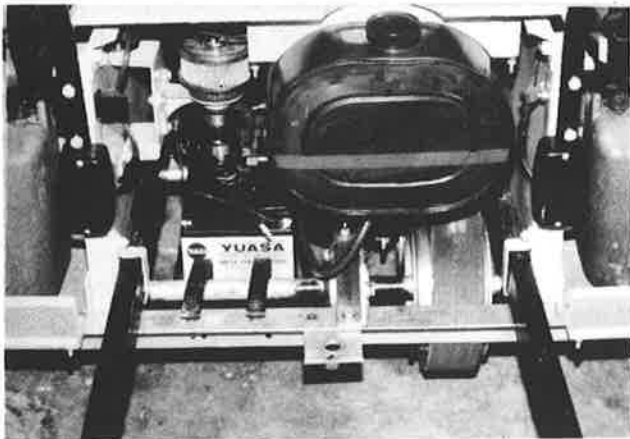
# 

By Stan Conyer

I have installed brake lights on all of my cars. It was a very simple installation, and I have had no problems with the lights for over eight years. The photo at right shows a new installation on a Fairmont M9-G my son and I restored last year. I installed a NAPA #SL169 stoplight switch on a piece of angle aluminum so that when the brake handle is at the resting position, the button on the switch is depressed and the lights are off.

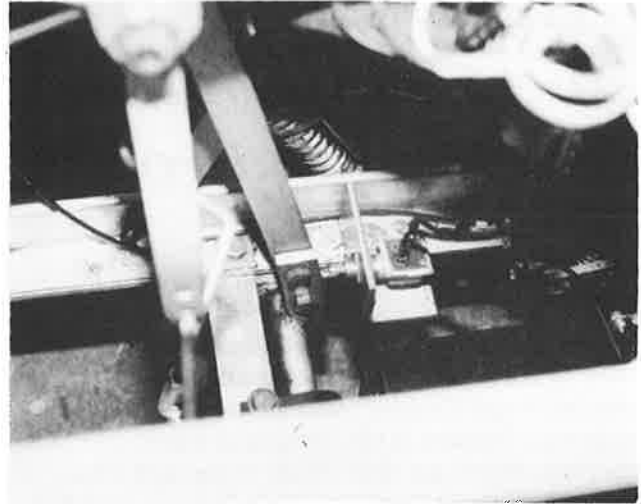
A wire should be connected from one side of the switch to the battery voltage through another switch (so the lights can be turned off when the car is stopped for an extended period of time) and a fuse. From the other side of the switch, connect the wire to your brake light(s).

On my other cars, I use standard automotive stop/tail lights. Motorcar owners that want to keep their cars historically correct can install a dual filament socket in their original tail lights. Cars without original lighting equipment can use portable battery lights.



*The photo above shows two Peterson #V306 stop, turn, and tail lamps (purchased at WalMart) mounted on the support angles of the engine housing. The lights measure 4 1/4" by 2 1/4" and have a dual filament bulb that can be used as both a tail light and a stop light.*

Photos by Stan Conyer



*The photo above shows a NAPA #SL169 stop light switch installed on the right engine sill of a 1946 Fairmont M9-G. The brake handle has moved to the first notch on the control panel, the handle has moved away from the switch and the brake lights are on. The switch should be adjusted so the brake light comes on any time the handle is moved from its resting position.*



*Here's an idea for a headlamp. That's a Fairmont M8408 two-cell hand lantern being used as a headlamp on Brian Fox's M9. Restoring the car was a real family project: while Brian restored the car from the ground up, his mother made the windshield. The top is a tractor umbrella.*

## Viva Mexico! On the Chihuahua Al Pacífico Railroad

By Hank Brown

It was a gut-wrenching decision to try to gain access to the famed Chihuahua Al Pacífico Railroad which runs from Ojinaga across the border from Presidio, Texas, to Topolobambo, Mexico, and through the spectacular Copper Canyon. After all, everyone had seen the movies, *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* with Humphrey Bogart and *High Plains Drifter* with Clint Eastwood. Weren't there a lot of gunfights, murder, and banditos trying to stop our heroes at every turn?

Then it happened that Dick Ray sent us a video produced by Pentrex featuring the train ride from Chihuahua to Los Mochis through the Copper Canyon. Shortly after viewing the tape, Wade and Linda Myers, NARCOA members from Florida, sent the itinerary of their caravan ride over the Chihuahua al Pacífico. They had placed their motor home on a flatcar and ridden from La Junta to Los Mochis through the canyon. With all this information, we were hooked. We felt we had to try.

Carol and I tried all the travel agencies that sponsored rail rides through the canyon to find prices and options they offered. None of them could fathom what we wanted to do. Finally, with the help of a Mexican friend who works with me, we found the Balderamas Travel Agency in Los Mochis. They organized our train ride through the canyon so we could check out the food, motels, stopping places, security, extra fare tours, and people. They did a remarkable job.

In April we arrived in Chihuahua to meet with the railroad officials to discuss the possibility of riding our motorcars over the great "Copper Canyon" Railroad. We met the head of the passenger service over dessert in our hotel and discussed the probability and logistics of such an adventure. We left the meeting feeling the trip was possible. There was one major concern that could not be eliminated. A first class train with 300 passengers was robbed in 1992 by 14 bandits. Although no one was injured, it left a bad image on a railroad that was trying to promote tourism. Knowing this, I asked Carol, "Why would anyone want to ride in such a dangerous area?"

Over the course of the next six months I had occasion to ask myself that question many times. However, one thing kept me going forward with our plans. It was the thought of experiencing one of the most spectacular railroads in North America. Then the approval came from the railroad with instructions in Mexican. That caused a whole new set of problems. We don't

speaking any language but English. We went back to my Mexican friend for translations. With his help we kept a steady stream of communications with the railroad. With all the logistics worked out with the travel agency and the railroad, we headed to El Paso and arrived on March 5 with our motorcar in tow.

We met most everyone else at the Motel 6 on Raynold St. on Friday. By Saturday at 5:00 p.m. everyone had arrived and we headed to the Cattlemens Restaurant in Fabens, TX, for a banquet and our last night in the United States.

The next morning we gathered at U.S. Customs to have our registrations signed. It caused quite a sensation among the customs agents to see 14 motorcars going south. It took about an hour to process the forms for everyone. Then it was the Mexican customs agency's turn to inspect us at Juarez. That was the easiest part of all. Their customs official saw us and, when an English speaking agent questioned us, they let all of us through without inspection.

Next we drove 25 miles into the Chihuahuan Desert to the customs stop. Here we "imported" our cars, trailers, and motorcars into the country. The officials checked our cars and paperwork, and eventually our group was permitted to go. The fact that we were a tour group helped. As a group only one or two of the cars was inspected. The customs officials were very generous and kind.

We headed to Villa Ahumada and lunch. Bobby Moreman from Georgia pulled into the parking lot and promptly got stuck in a pot hole. Everyone pitched together and picked up his trailer and he pulled it ahead to clear the hole. Everyone enjoyed their first Mexican meal. The group then headed to Chihuahua. We arrived about 7:00 p.m., at dusk. We were warned by our Mexican insurance carrier not to drive in Mexico after dark. I wonder whether they insured us after dark; maybe I'll read the policy some day.

The sun rose early at the Casa Grande Motel where we stayed. We left the motel at 6:30 and proceeded through the sleepy city to the railroad station.

Everyone unloaded and prepared to depart on one of the most incredible adventures ever sponsored by NARCOA. We had our safety meeting followed by

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introductions of the railroad officials who made this trip possible. One of our hosts was Jaime Flores, who was the conductor we met on our train trip in April the year before. It was great to see him again. He had been very helpful in getting me a locomotive ride into the Copper Canyon last April.

The excitement was at a peak when Señor Luevano, head of the passenger service, told us the tracks were clear from Chihuahua to Creel. We wished him goodbye and mounted our motorcars. The railroad provided a large 10-passenger gang car as our escort. They led us out onto the main line. After clearing the station we were on welded 115-pound rail with concrete ties. The wheels sang beneath our cars as we headed southwest to our first destination. We began to climb through central Chihuahua. We were instructed to sound our horns as long and as loud as we could. Warren Chiesa was in heaven; he finally could blast his five-chime horns at the crossings without any complaints.

We climbed all day battling a 20-mile-per-hour head wind. The Onan cars felt the strength and fury of the wind as they slowed to 25 m.p.h. Bob Arnold, in his ST-2, had the most trouble trying to keep up with the

group. The railroad motorcar kept a 25 to 30 m.p.h. pace which most of us worked very hard to keep up with. Crossing the Chihuahuan high plateau is difficult because the wind never stops.

Within the first 50 miles we encountered our first two tunnels. The climb to Cuauhtemoc, a Mennonite city noted for its produce, provided us with the first spectacular views of ranches and missions. The quaint villages with their adobe houses and stone fences were better than I remembered on the train trip. From Cuauhtemoc to La Junta is almost flat wide open space and some of the most difficult and challenging terrain to cross. The wind caused us many problems. Two of our members had to give up their motorcar trailers. Fortunately the railroad motorcar could pull them without difficulty.

La Junta was our first official stop. It is the junction point of the north-south line from Juarez and a main repair shop for locomotives.

There are 14 tracks in the yard and seven bays in the engine repair facility. We had to wait for the first class passenger train headed eastbound to pass us before we could proceed. Then the railroad decided to permit the second class passenger-mix freight train headed to

(Continued on next page)



*The Mexican motorcar which escorted the NARCOA group.*

Photo by Hank Brown



## On the Chihuahua Al Pacifico Railroad

(Continued from previous page)

Chihuahua to pass us. Now it was our turn to begin the long climb to Creel and our final destination for the night. We had climbed from 4,700 feet at Chihuahua to 6,775 feet at La Junta and had to continue to climb to 8,000 feet at San Juanito. San Juanito was established for its logging and cattle business, and measures the coldest annual temperature in Mexico. Leaving San Juanito we dropped through the continental divide tunnel and into Creel at 7,500 feet.

Our bus was ready to pick us up for the short ride to Casa de Margarita. However, the railroad had other plans. Before us was a freight train headed eastbound blocking our way. Or rather we were blocking its way. With many hand motions and loud voices everyone moved to clear the tracks. Once the train was gone we backed up and headed west on the mainline to the station. We stored our luggage there and headed west to another switch. We backed into the spur and stored our motorcars for the night. The bus, which was racing to catch up to our group, finally gathered the group and we headed to our motel and many pitchers of margaritas. I know I was tired after 185 miles and nine hours of hard riding.

We were up early the next morning. Margarita's kitchen staff prepared a wonderful breakfast of orange juice, coffee, eggs, sausage, and fruit—in the dark. The motel had blown three circuits and few had electricity. They furnished us with a box lunch for the day's ride to Bahuichivo. We left Creel on time and climbed to the continental divide for the second time. We crossed it at Los Ojitos at an elevation of 8,071 feet. Then we dropped down through the loops. This is where we crossed under ourselves. This was a great place for pictures. We continued to Pitorreal (Fertility Rock) for our first stop. The view is grand but nothing like what was to come. After Pitorreal we stopped at Divisadero at 7,450 feet. Everyone left their motorcars and walked down the steps to the overlook, where you get a spectacular view of the Copper Canyon.

From Divisadero we began our long drop to El Fuerte at 350 feet. Our next stop was the division point at San Rafael. The rail yard is surrounded by mountains. There are two openings, one for the trains to enter and the other to leave. We lost our first crew and gained a new one. For the next 30 kilometers there wasn't a straight section of track. The railroad curved sharply around every mountain following a small river. The tunnels became more numerous. The canyon walls became higher. The caves of the Tarahumara Indians were more noticeable. The walls of the caves could be distinguished by the black soot from the cooking fires which had been inside. We continued westbound

through some beautiful mountainous country to Bahuichivo. This is a small bustling lumber town which supplies the other communities in the area with mining supplies. We stored our gear and boarded a bus waiting to take us to Cerocahui. The ride to Cerocahui was an adventure in itself. The bus climbed out of town at the break neck speed of five miles per hour. Then it kicked up dust for the next seven miles over switch-backs and narrow dirt paths. Finally, after an hour we arrived at the Mision Hotel in the center of town.

The hotel was typical of Mexican hotels in the area. It featured private tiled bathrooms, wood stoves, and comfortable beds. The main room contained the dining room, a large fireplace, and a great bar. Electricity is available from 7 to 9 a.m. and from 6 to 10 p.m. Hot water for showers is available when you can get it. If you work it just right, you will get a wonderful and quite welcomed hot shower.

We arrived at 2:00 p.m. so there was time for the three-hour walk to the waterfall. The walk started by crossing a small river at the base of the town. Then it continued through several homesteads where livestock is free to roam. We began to climb over low hills and crossed another river before the walk turned into a hike. The weather was magnificent. The sky was an exotic blue filled with a warm sun. The trail narrowed to a walking path as we climbed. Finally, after several stops we came to the waterfall situated in a box canyon. The water cascaded over rocks about 70 feet above our heads. The water was cold and clear. Several of the group lingered for quite some time to enjoy the serenity of the location. It was very peaceful to hear the soft sounds of water and the wind whistle through the trees. It made us forget the rest of the world.

Carol and I began to retrace our path to Cerocahui. We came upon two horsemen, Mike Paul and George LaRue. They had rented horses to make the trip to the waterfall. Mike and George posed for pictures and then raced off in the distance. We continued at a leisurely pace until we came upon two desperados. Butch Casualty (in the disguise of Henry Herrman) and The Some Dunc Kid (in the disguise of Larry Moore of Pennsylvania) riding their mounts to rob another unsuspecting person. They were joined by Dave Smith, alias Cisco, and Ervin Shredrick, alias Poncho. They joined forces and were then known for the rest of the trip as the FOUR AMIGOS.

Meanwhile back at the Mision Hotel, the supper was spread family style in front of everyone. We ate some of the best food in Mexico. After supper, the hotel treated us to a Mexican fiesta of drinks and good music. Everyone enjoyed the evening.

The next morning at 9:00 we left for what was to



be the highlight of the trip. We boarded two cars and a bus for the hair-raising trip up the canyon wall from Cerocahui through the ponderosa pine forest to the overlook 4,000 feet above Urique. We had a group picture taken by our guide, Umberto. Then we descended into the canyon. The bus used low gears for the entire trip. The switch-backs and gravel road created many comments from our group. Of course, praying was necessary and mandatory.

After two hours of driving down this gravel road we arrived in Urique. We drove along the narrow road, avoiding burros and other objects, to arrive at the swing suspension bridge spanning the Urique River. The temperature was rising and the sky was clear. The water was so inviting, everyone crossed the bridge and then waded back through it. We stayed for an hour and headed back to Urique for lunch. We stopped in a local park and enjoyed the box lunch the motel had provided. After lunch we took a leisurely stroll through the town, stopping at the many little stores which featured everything from diesel fuel to fruit.

About 3:00 p.m. we began our long climb up the steep road and back to Cerocahui. Our luggage had been transferred to our new motel, the Paisana de la Oso. It was about a mile from town and set in a lovely valley. The evening began with a bonfire and pizza. Lots of pizza. Then the music began. It was one of the most romantic settings I have seen in Mexico. With the great music, the clear starlight sky, good food, a warm fire, and friends having a wonderful time I thought, what could possibly better than this.

We rose at 7:00 the next morning for a breakfast of



***"Butch Casualty" (Henry Herrman of Pennsylvania) traded his motorcar temporarily for "El Diablo."***

Photo by Hank Brown

scrambled eggs, Mexican style, juice, coffee and plenty of toast. By 8:30 our luggage was loaded on the bus and we headed back to Bahuichivo. We were sad to leave such an incredible place. Jaime Flores told us that if we hurried, we could catch the first class passenger train climbing the hill at Temores. So we packed our motorcars and off we went. Down and around, through and across the next section of track. The grades varied from 2 to 3 1/2 percent. The tunnels increased in length and frequency. When we arrived at Placa Commemorativa, which is the place where east met west on November 24, 1961, we paused for pictures. Here one could see down the canyon. However, the highlight was seeing where the railroad would eventually take us. We could see three levels of track. Beginning from where we stood, the track traveled southwest for about a mile then disappeared into a tunnel. When the tracks reappeared they were heading back toward us. They passed Temores Station then curved across a curved trestle to the next level of tracks heading southwest again. We took our pictures and followed the tracks into the 180-degree tunnel. We dropped down to the next level and into the station where we waited for the eastbound passenger train. Within 25 minutes we could hear the diesel locomotive straining to climb the hill. Soon we saw its headlight as it struggled up the grade. The cameras were clicking away as it passed us. We waited patiently for it to reappear from the 180-degree tunnel, which it did. The cameras again were active. Finally the best shot came when it passed behind the Placa Commemorativa and into a tunnel where we lost sight of it.

The tracks were then clear for us, so we headed down the canyon, following the river to our next stop at the Rio Fuerte Bridge. This is one of the great bridges on the line. It is 1500 feet long and rises 350 feet above the river. It offers an incredible view looking up.

The temperature rose as we left the mountains. Cactus replaced the ponderosa pine. We began to see people in little villages. For over 150 miles we had not encountered a grade crossing except in Bahuichivo.

We arrived at the El Fuerte Station about two hours early. There wasn't any bus to take us to the hotel five miles away. Jaime Flores to the rescue again. He had the operator in the station call Los Mochis which in turn called the Balderamas Travel Agency, which in turn called our hotel in El Fuerte. Within 30 minutes every cab in town began appearing at the station. Our group of 31 filled eight cabs with all our luggage and gas cans. The trunks were so overloaded that strings, ropes and bungee cords were used to keep everything in.

El Fuerte is a charming, attractive city which was the state capitol back in the early history of Sinaloa. The group had a couple of hours to explore the town. The village square, cathedral, and municipal buildings were exceptional. About 7:00 our dinner was set up on the  
(Continued on next page)

## On the Chihuahua Al Pacifico Railroad

(Continued from previous page)

patio next to the swimming pool. We were offered large crawfish (look like lobster) and chicken. The meal was excellent. Most of us turned in early. It had been another wonderful day.

The next morning we boarded our bus and headed to the gas station. It was hard to believe that they permitted gas to be transported by bus. Next we headed to the station to receive our instructions for the day. As I approached the operator's cage, I could hear what

sounded like a telegraph machine clicking out the message for the operator. I walked into the area and listened to the variations in the clicks. I watched as the operator wrote a message on form 31. It was like stepping back into the early times in United States railroad history. I could hardly wait to stop at the next station for more instructions.

We waited for the second class passenger train to depart, then it was our turn to hit the high iron. We retraced our tracks across the desert to the Rio Fuerte



### **How To:** **Unspring a Gas Cap**

By Rich Corbell

Attention all MT14 and MT19 operators with enclosed cabs. Is the gas cap on your motorcar a twist on and off type? If so, go read someone else's article. This article is for those of us with that stupid spring that connects the gas cap and the filler tube into one miserable unit.

The question is, are you tired of fighting to keep your spring action gas cap open and in the upright position while refueling? Well motorcar operators, let's unite and put an end to this madness and remove this obstacle from our lives, the dreaded gas cap that wouldn't stay open while refueling.

I called the Fairmont parts department looking for some kind of relief in securing my gas cap up while refueling. My questions fell on deaf ears because Fairmont has been manufacturing this spring loaded gas cap for eons and they are not going to reinvent the gas cap for us hobbyists. So, what am I to do? (Stand-by, thought process in action). Ta!!! Da!!! I'll call our own resident MOW Research and Development Coordinator and Chief Engineer of nonsense, Chuck Harrison.

Chuck came up with 3 excellent ideas which I would like to share with you on how to keep our gas cap secure and in the upright position while refueling.

# 1. Your OEM (Original Equipment Manufacture) motorcar contained 2 heavy duty springs, one

located on each side of the filler tube. These springs were designed by Fairmont to secure the gas cap and to prevent foreign material from freely entering our fuel system. Remedy number one, simply remove one of these two springs, or . . .

# 2. Replace the two OEM springs from your gas cap with less tension springs purchased from your local hardware or auto parts store; or, (this is the one I like. . .)

# 3. You will notice that there is a roll pin that appears to be too long that connects the gas cap to the filler neck. The first step is to tap out this roll pin by using a hammer and a slightly smaller size bolt or large nail. Don't remove this bolt/nail after the roll pin falls out because this bolt/nail will act as a guide for reinstalling the shorter length roll pin, and at the same time, you don't have to remove either springs. Now, that's a mouth full.

Next, cut off the excess roll pin by using the gas cap hinge as a template for length (or approximately 2 and 3/8 inches) and then reinstall the roll pin. As you tap the modified roll pin into position, your guide bolt or nail will fall out. The time needed to complete this procedure is less than 10 minutes from beginning to end and Chuck personally guarantees complete satisfaction and trouble-free refueling problems from now on.

Good luck on embarking upon this simple procedure! DO NOT take any short cuts by using a handheld, high-speed drill with a grinding disk because the thermo friction by the grinding disk creates high temperatures and sparks. With gas fumes in close proximity, you are at high risk of igniting your motorcar's fuel system. Now, igniting your fuel will make you very upset, that I guarantee. But most of all, always use common sense whenever working around any flammable source says Smoky the Bear and Capt. Glenn Ford, C.D.F. (MOW operator and resident Fire Marshall).

*(Editor's Note: This article was reprinted with permission from the author. It originally appeared in the MOW newsletter, the Lineup, dated February 1996.)*

Bridge. This time it didn't seem so scary. We crossed it and continued on to the 5,966-foot tunnel at kilometer post 755. If you haven't been in a tunnel that is a mile long, you have missed something. The tunnel seems endless. Course, it doesn't help that it isn't straight. Therefore, you can't see anything except what your headlight wants you to see for about four minutes. At this point we had risen from 350 feet to 1,500 feet. We continued to climb, passing through the many tunnels and crossing the many bridges until we reached our stop at Temores. The morning coffee hit everyone. So, again Jaime Flores helped us. He opened the engineer's house and everyone felt better as they left it.

Departing Temores, there isn't a straight section of track for the next 50 miles. The grades began to cause one of our group to have problems with a fouling plug. Eventually, it was towed. The ST-2 did very well until the carburetor came apart. Bob Hixenbaugh towed it to Divisidero. We were held in the hole for a number of trains as we made our way up the mountains. At San Rafael we changed crews, which took about 45 minutes. We couldn't figure out the delay. But it didn't really matter. We got a chance to see the yard and watch the operator type out messages. Once the new crew arrived, we were off to Posada Barrancus. Upon arrival we unloaded our motorcars and the operators headed up the grade to Divisidero to store them for the night. We were happily delayed by a Mexican Army train. Poor Señor Flores didn't know when it was due to arrive because they run in silence. Finally, at 8:30 it arrived and we closed up our cars and headed for the bus and the motel for dinner.

Dinner that night was in the Posada Barrancus Mirador Motel. It is situated overhanging a steep drop to the canyon below. It has an excellent view of the Copper Canyon. After dinner we could see the camp and cooking fires of the Tarahumara Indians along the canyon walls. After our visit to the Mirador we boarded our bus and returned to our hotel by the tracks and a good night's sleep.

Our schedule changed many times in the course of this trip. Senor Flores informed us that if we left by 9:00 we would be in Creel by 11:30. That meant plenty of time for shopping and touring the village. Everyone seemed excited to finally get a chance to do some shopping. Bobby Moreman from Georgia has a great story on how he and Wade Myers of Florida fixed his gear box in Creel. You should ask him. Upon our arrival in Creel we spent about an hour waiting for instructions from the operator before we could store our cars. He was waiting for a freight train from La Junta to pass. It had to pick up a flat car loaded with an automobile bound for Los Mochis. Once he arrived, everyone moved the cars and walked to the motel.

We were up early the next and last morning of our

trip. We had to cover 185 miles by nightfall. To do that we left at 8:00 a.m. with a frost covering our windows. We passed through the continental divide tunnel at the entrance of the town and climbed past the loops to another pass over the continental divide at Trevino with an elevation of 7,300 feet. We drifted down the east side of the mountains to Minaca which means "sleeping lion." After an hour wait for a westbound freight train we descended into La Junta. We waited for orders to come from the dispatcher in Chihuahua then headed out across the farmland to Cuauhtemoc. From there we dropped down from 7,200 feet to Chihuahua City at 4,700 feet and the end of an incredible adventure.

Carol and I went back to the railroad office the next morning to thank our host. As we drove up, we saw a Union Pacific Railroad hy-rail inspection and measurement truck on the tracks in front of the station. My heart sank into my shoes. We walked into Señor Luevano's office and found out that the Union Pacific has an interest in the Chihuahua al Pacifico. Which means that this may have been the only time we will be able to ride this spectacular railroad. Only time will tell!

I would like to thank my wife, Carol, who inspired me to help make this trip happen. Also, a huge thank you to Señor Jaime Flores who made the trip easy and accommodated us in every way he could. A special thanks goes to Señor Oscar Luevano, the head of the passenger service for the Ferrocarriles Nacionales de Mexico, who had faith in us enough to permit this wonderful opportunity. And a super thanks goes to the 29 people who went on this ride. We will always remember the first group who dared to challenge the Sierra Madres and Copper Canyon!



*A Union Pacific maintenance-of-way truck inspecting the rails after our trip.*

Photo by Hank Brown



## Want Ads

*Editor's Note: THE SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from members. Send ads directly to: Deanna Baird, SETOFF Editor, 4403 Dyes Lane, Bealeton, VA 22712. There is no charge for placing an ad, just send it in. If you want your ad to run for more than one issue, please indicate how many issues. Thank you.*

**FOR SALE:** Videos. Chihuahua Al Pacifico, Copper Canyon by motorcar. Thinking of making the October trip? This video of the March Wilderness Tours trip to Mexico will convince you to pack your bags. This is the premier motorcar adventure. Fantastic, non-stop scenery, 87 tunnels, 37 bridges over the backbone of the Sierra Madres. Recorded from 8MM video. Full trip, 6 hours standard play, 3-tape set, \$49.95; Full trip, 6 hours extended play, one tape, \$29.95; Condensed highlights, 2 hours standard play, \$21.95. Contact William A. Kozel, 23 Lee Ave., Rexford, NY 12148; phone (518) 399-5836.

**FOR SALE:** Several early S-2 and ST-2 motorcars with RQ-A and RQ-B engines from the Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad. Prices range from \$1,500.00 to \$2,500.00. For more information, contact Carey Boney, 1605 Powers Road, Wallace, NC 28466; phone/FAX (910) 285-7489.

**FOR SALE:** MT19, fully restored, new curtains, paint, aluminum, seats, windshield. Custom rail trailer, shop manual. \$3,400.000 OBO. Contact John Carter, 233 W. Chestnut St., P.O. Box 246, Puryear, TN 38251; phone (901) 247-5567.

**WANT TO RIDE THE WISCONSIN CENTRAL?**  
Exclusive: NARCOA's 1996 insurance policy now includes \$10,000,000 NARCOA motorcar liability coverage. For more information: NARCOA Insurance Program, 1047 Terrace View Drive, Alberton, MT 59820-3012.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont MT14, 90% restored. New metal, new paint, runs good. \$2,000.00. Contact Barry Elikor, 1187 Stingley Rd., Greenville, OH 45331; phone (513) 548-0169 evenings.

**WANTED:** For Northwestern 561-V8 (early thirties) sales literature, parts/service manual, pictures, lettering information (copies okay). Need fuel tank, transmission, clutch and bell housing, lights, any small parts. Contact Ed Taylor, 4297 Royal Oaks, Lincolnton, NC 28092; phone (704) 732-6317.

**FOR SALE:** Single-cylinder class S-2 car, series F, group 3, serial #171577. Average condition and

appearance (was running when we got an MT14 about a year ago). Shedded and have spare parts and extra wheels to go with it. All for only \$500.00. Contact Graydon "Hunk" Anderson, 10893 Grand Ave., Greene, IA 50636; phone (515) 823-5689.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont parts new: starting cranks M16420, \$60.00; lift handle 46556, \$75.00; lift handle tube, \$30.00; lift handle end, \$24.00; seat cushions F13212, \$32.50; seat cushions F9085, \$32.50; folding seat frame, \$35.00; control panel 46573, \$45.00; throttle lever 98405, \$22.50; timer control lever 46561, \$27.50. All castings, extrusions, and panels for Fairmont aluminum cab 98399 and 69691. Also other new and used parts. Contact Les King, 1835 Alabama Ave. N.W., P.O. Box 164, N. Lawrence, OH 44666; phone (330) 833-2868.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont and Woodings track cars. Several models available, some restored. \$400.00 - \$2,250.00. Used wheels also, \$20.00 - \$40.00. Contact Tom Kowalski, 689 Podunk Road, East Brookfield, MA 01515; phone (508) 867-2188 before 9 p.m. EDT.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont M19, ex-SCL, good condition, all original. No cab. Also new custom-made trailer with ramps and winch. Both \$1,300.00. Contact Bill Cselle, 6708 Margaret Drive, Blackshear, GA 31516; phone (912) 449-5473.

**FOR SALE:** Reducing collection! MT14, M19s, M9s, Kalamazoo 27 w/spare engine and parts. O.D. engines in various conditions. Fairmont parts used and new available upon request. Serious inquiries only, please. Cars must be seen. Also large 20 x 35 tarp garage, heavy duty tube frame, \$250.00. Contact Ken Kurdt, Chelsea Valley Shortline Company, 118 East Caroline Drive, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590; phone (914) 831-1170.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont MT14, ex-Soo car, completely rebuilt and painted two years ago. Onan engine, lots of parts, \$3,200.00. Trailer available. Contact David W. Smith, 330 Ridge Road, York, PA 17402; phone (717) 741-9330.

**FOR SALE (reluctantly):** Rare Portec model F railcar, ex-Union Pacific. Excellent condition. Kohler 18 hp, three speeds forward, one reverse, chain drive. Hydraulic turntable, Hunter heater, good wheels and brakes, brake light, locking doors and ignition. Plenty of glass for viewing and seats for riding, 5' by 4' by 6" high locking storage area underneath. One of five known, serial #142. Complete manuals. \$4,500.00. NW Rail, Washington state, (360) 678-4488.

**FOR SALE OR TRADE:** Four bearing assemblies including hubs and set collars for MT14. Trade for parts for MT19 or M19, or will consider any reasonable offer. Contact Tom Weaver or Dawn Autio, 1939 Tomahawk Road, Okemos, MI 48864; phone (517) 347-7967.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont PHN on sliding base, brass J&L carb, brass tag on hopper, '20s, \$500.00. Contact

Joseph Shaffer, 35166 Jason Dr., N. Ridgeville, OH 44039; phone (216) 353-0764.

WANTED: Four BUDA riveted (non-demountable) 16" wheels. Have 20" wheels for trade or ? Contact Joseph Shaffer; see ad above.

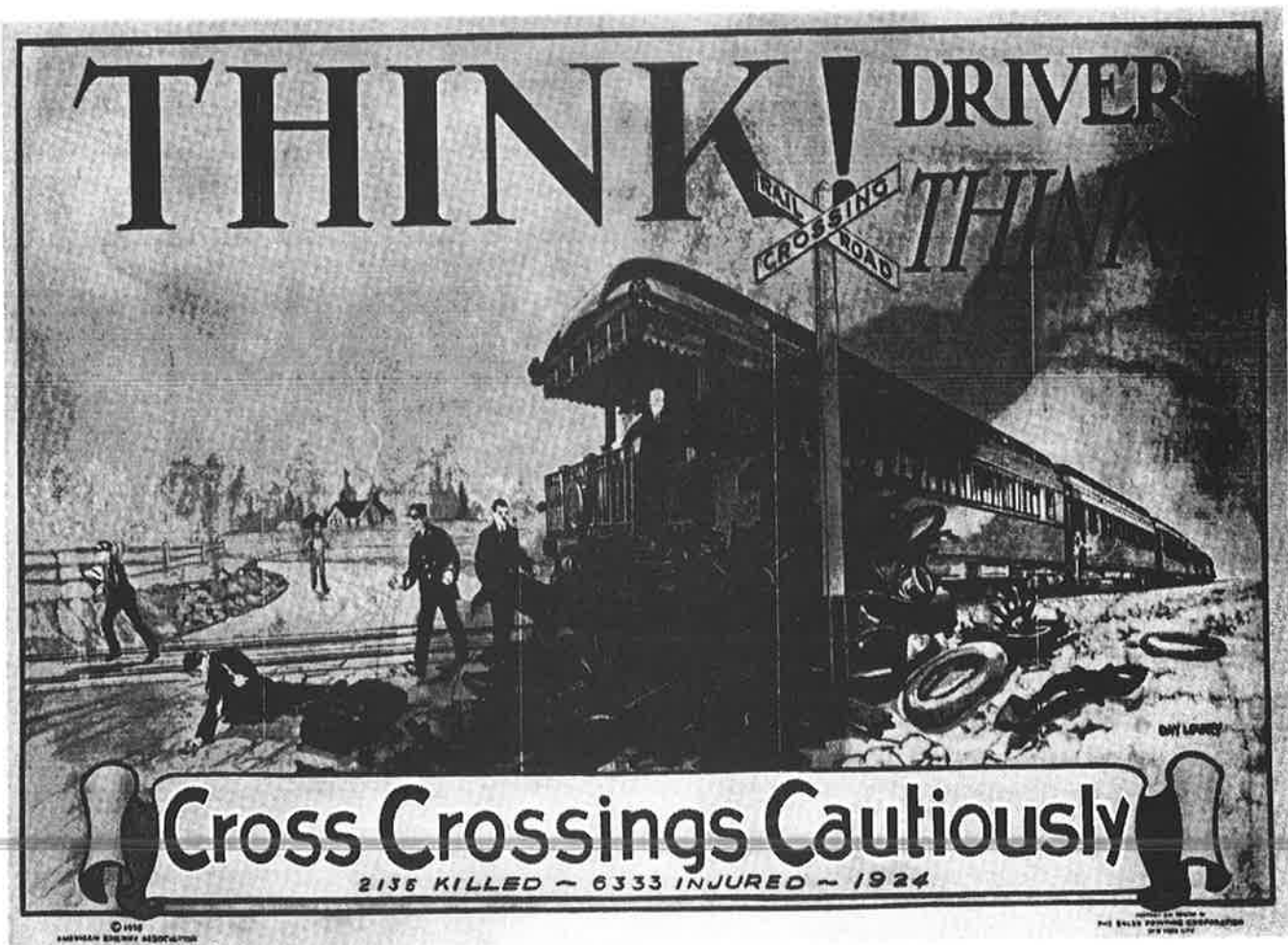
FOR SALE: Fairmont M19, formerly C.P. from Northern Ontario, fiberglass cab, good running order when taken out of service. Partially restored, \$1,000.00 Canadian. Also Fairmont/Woodings parts available for sale or swap. Contact Mike McCormick, 1179 Bruce Ave., Windsor, Ontario, Canada N9A 4Y5; phone (519) 977-7756.

WANTED: Running Fairmont M19 or M14 in good mechanical condition. Will consider other makes and models. Reasonably priced. Contact Andy Zeller, 104 Turtle Street, Shorewood, IL 60431; phone (815) 725-2886.

FOR SALE: Fairmont ST2, ex-Lehigh Valley gang car with company-made cab. Complete, needs repair. \$1,000.00. Contact Jim Delong, Box 75, Bowers, PA 19511; phone (610) 682-2095.

FOR SALE: Fairmont A-4, 1971, 4-cyl. engine, runs good. Contact Wes Belcher, Berkeley Springs, WV; phone (304) 258-3905.

FOR SALE: Fairmont S2H, 1949. B&O Kalamazoo cab, RQD engine, 6-volt alternator. Completely rebuilt, good condition. Custom-built, single-axle trailer with electric brakes. Both \$3,200.00, or will sell separately. Also for sale, S2 drive belt F7978, new \$135.00; four Fairmont used wheels, M11404K good condition 16 x 5/16 x 4 1/2, \$140.00; eight new brake shoes and liners M16411, \$70.00. Contact John Mowrer, 112 Fulton St., Hanover, PA 17331; phone (717) 632-0982 (9-2 daily).



13. Original in 1925 was 24 x 13 inches. Contributed by Audre H. Balogh, Honorary Member, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, Cleveland, Ohio. Reprinted by Norfolk Southern Corporation, 1992.

## ***Board of Directors Meeting Planned for September 6-8***

The fall Board of Directors meeting will take place September 6th through 8th, 1996, in Wichita, Kansas. The meeting will be at the Ramada Inn - Airport, 5805 West Kellogg, and all NARCOA members are invited to attend.

The meeting will start on Friday, September 6th, at 6:00 p.m. Meetings on Saturday will begin at 8:30 a.m., and any remaining work will be completed on Sunday, hopefully by noon.

In addition to regular meeting agenda items, we will have a presentation from Operation Lifesaver, as well as a short presentation and question-and-answer session with the lawyer who reviews our releases and other forms.

Reservations at the Ramada can be made by calling (316) 942-7911. Be sure to mention NARCOA, as we have a special group rate for the weekend. There is a free shuttle from the airport or, if you are driving, go north on Airport Road to Kellogg, turn right and go approximately one mile on the frontage road. The motel is on the right.

All meals will be on your own. There is a restaurant at the motel and a Shoney's within easy walking distance. Other restaurants are within short driving distance.

### ***An Election Reminder***

**Folks in odd-numbered districts will find a ballot enclosed with this issue of *The Setoff*. Directorships for these districts are due for renewal beginning in 1997. Please vote for the Director of your choice and return your ballots to Carl Anderson of the Election Committee!**

**There is a space for write-in candidates as well as the person(s) who agreed to run.**

**If you did not receive a ballot, contact your current Director who will make sure you get one.**

### **North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA)**

#### **Officers:**

**President - Ron Zammit  
Vice President - Stan Conyer  
Secretary - Joel Williams  
Treasurer - Tom Norman**

#### **Board of Directors by Area:**

**Area 1  
(ME, NH, VT, NY, MA, CT, RI)  
Dick Wilhelm  
P.O. Box 209  
Bearsville, NY 12409**

**Area 7  
(ND, SD, NB, IA)  
Carl Schneider  
1302 6th Ave. SE  
Altoona, IA 50009**

**Area 2  
(NJ, PA, DE, MD)  
Joel Williams  
Box 82  
Greendell, NJ 07839**

**Area 8  
(Canada)  
Rick Shaw  
175 Talbat Road E., RR 3  
Foitan, Ontario, N0R 1B0  
Canada**

**Area 3  
(IN, OH, MI)  
Stan Conyer  
9333 West State Road 46  
Columbus, IN 47201**

**Area 9  
(CO, KS, MO, AR, LA, TX, OK)  
Bill Pollard  
3005 Baxter Drive  
Conway, AR 72032**

**Area 4  
(WV, VA, KY, NC, SC)  
Ed Taylor  
4297 Royal Oaks  
Lincolnton, NC 28092**

**Area 10  
(WA, OR, ID, MT, AK, WY)  
Tom Norman  
1047 Terrace View Drive  
Alberton, MT 59820**

**Area 5  
(MS, AL, GA, FL)  
Jack Whitt  
1018 W. Dixie Ave.  
Leesburg, FL 34748**

**Area 11  
(CA, NV, UT, AZ, NM, HI)  
Ron Zammit  
469 Campana  
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420**

**Area 6  
(MN, WI, IL)  
Mike Mitzel  
P.O. Box 79  
Waterman, IL 60556**

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**Director at Large (non-voting)  
and Recording Secretary:  
Mike Paul  
1780 Maricopa Dr.  
Oshkosh, WI 54904**

**Director at Large (non-voting):  
Tom Johnson  
115 Ridgecrest Rd.  
Asheboro, NC 27203**

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#### **Committee Chairs:**

**Insurance: Tom Norman  
Judiciary: Jack Whitt  
Safety and Rules: Stan Conyer  
Safety Subcommittee: Mike Mitzel**

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**THE SETOFF:  
Gene Tucker  
1004 N. Kentucky St.  
Arlington, VA 22205**

**Nominations (Elections):  
Carl Anderson  
1330 Rosedale Ln.  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60195**

**Operations:  
Hank Brown  
622 Oak St.  
Cottage Grove, WI 53527**

**Legal Forms:  
Mark Springer  
143 N. Arcadia  
Wichita, KS 67212**