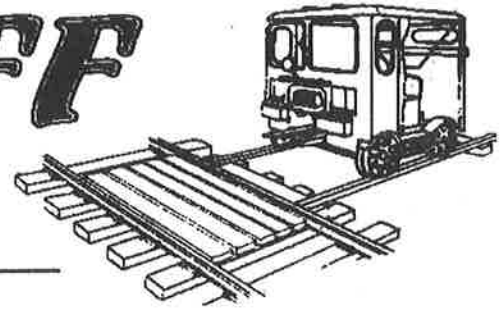


# THE SETOFF

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

March/April 1998



## "SOMEPLACE IN AMERICA"

Submitted by Uwe Geuckler,  
FREUNDE DER EISENBAHN E.V.  
Postfach 30 17 28  
20306 Hamburg (Germany)

**Ed. Note:** Copies of the *HAMBURGER BLATTER* are received regularly. It is published "for all friends of the railroad." If you wish to borrow copies to read, please let me know, and I will mail them to you. They are great reading for persons comfortable with the German language.

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## From the President

By Ron Zammit

This issue marks the beginning of our operating season, and by the time this is published most of us will be lusting after the summer's excursion offerings. I'm sure I speak for all excursion coordinators in urging all operators to make this a safe year. Last year there were a few problems, while the year before was mostly free of accidents. Let's try for a trouble free year.

As you know, one accident involved a fire resulting from a punctured motorcar fuel tank in a rear end collision. I call them smacks, and this was a bad one. I urge all of you to operate extra carefully on curves, near roads, and near other motorcars. While we can all strive to make the motorcars safer and our operating rules more inclusive, the bottom line to safety is safe operation of the motorcars by all operators.

In preparing for the operating season, you may wish to consider a gas tank protector, several of which are being offered by fellow members. These are quite reasonable in cost and easy to install. They allow an extra measure of protection for the gas tank, should a collision occur.

One of our members works in the movie industry, setting fires for a living. He has to keep them under control, and eventually put them out. He suggested that all of us belonging to groups contact our local fire departments for a short "how to do it correctly" course in putting out gasoline fires with the proper extinguishers. Mistakes can be made in putting out fires, and the contents of the extinguisher can be wasted before the fire is out. It is helpful to understand the proper methods.

Other hints and suggestions have been made about controlling fires. Most of us have ice chests; water and ice could be useful. Also know what type of fire your extinguisher will extinguish. Some fuel lines are fire resistant or fire proof, and you may wish to consider one of these. This will prevent a fire in the track ballast, caused by burning the gas line through and adding fuel to the fire, which happened in the above accident.

In other news, the rule book certification program is working nicely. I hear two complaints. One is that some groups have a certification program, and NARCOA duplicates this. Eventually, the NARCOA Board will resolve this problem, probably by giving local groups credit for their certification as being equivalent.

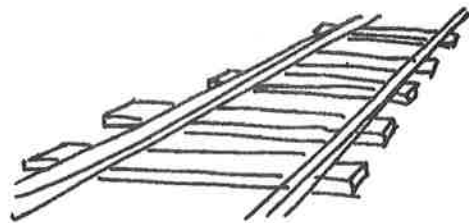
The second complaint is from some of the "old hands," folks who have operated for years, or even from a railroad. They resent being checked on the rules, since most of the rest of us are a lot newer to the operation of a railroad motorcar. For those of you in this category, I ask your understanding. The NARCOA Board does not

have an easy way to "credit" past operating experience and knowledge. It was agreed that many operators would benefit from reading the rules. No slight was intended to anyone with extensive operating experience.

In closing, I'd like to mention that I will not be running for President this fall. (The President is chosen at each fall Board meeting.) While it is tempting for me to stay on and confront a few more issues, it is time to pass leadership to someone new. I've always felt that the organization should go on with the changing of officers, and feel certain that will happen here. NARCOA will never be perfect; nothing human made is. Let's all work with the new President in 1999 to make things safer, better, and more secure for our hobby.



Photo by Wendell Stahler: "Here's our own Pres, changing the plug on Hank Brown's Fairmont....too much oil??" Ask Dave Verzi.



**Please submit materials  
for the next issue of  
*THE SETOFF*  
by May 15, 1998.**

**Send them to:  
Bill Hurtig  
*SETOFF* Editor  
410 N. Custer / Box 81  
Delphos, KS 67436-0081**

## The New Roster is Coming

By Joel Williams

What is the purpose of listing members' names in the NARCOA roster? It's simple: so members can reach each other to pass along excursion information, or form local organizations. The publishing of motorcar owners' names in the Roster is the first thing NARCOA did. This year will mark its 18<sup>th</sup> year of publication.

Ed Bush and I are working to bring out a new NARCOA roster to be mailed with the July/August issue of *The Setoff*. This 1998 edition will mark the first time members' names will be included without the motorcar or handcar information being required. In other words, all members who have given their permission to have their name published will be listed.

To that end we have put a check-off box on the renewal notices, and also on the membership forms. Next year the insurance renewal forms will have the box as well. We won't get around to everyone before the next roster, so if you were not on last year's roster and didn't get a renewal form or you renewed through the insurance and want to be in the Roster, just let me know.

Many new area codes have been added lately. (New cellular phones and fax machines are behind this.) Please let me know of any area code changes.

Here are our policies for the Roster:

- Members' names won't be published without permission.
- The NARCOA membership list or Roster won't be sold to anyone.
- The Roster is sent only to members.
- Your name and address can appear with or without your phone number.
- Your motorcar or handcar information will be listed if you include it.
- Those already on the Roster will automatically be listed.

Time is short. Send your information today. Deadline for the 1998 Roster is July 15<sup>th</sup>.

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

This issue of THE SETOFF is late; please accept my apology for its delay. During my forty-plus years as a clergyman, I have written many sermons, composed lots of articles, prepared numerous brochures, and edited countless newsletters. I approached THE SETOFF confidently.

During the past six weeks my familiarity with PageMaker software has risen remarkably, along with my humility. I think I now have perhaps 90% of the necessary knowledge to prepare the May-June issue.

Sincerely yours.....Bill Hurtig

## Guidelines for Submitting Materials For Publication in THE SETOFF

1. Our editorial policy is to cheerfully publish in *THE SETOFF* all materials received, although they may be subject to editing for space considerations.
2. Photos and materials submitted for publication in *THE SETOFF* cannot be returned 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. Written permission must be provided by the sender at the time of submission.
4. Excursion 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 12 Number 1

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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. Please address all subscription inquiries to Joel Williams at the above address.

Visit NARCOA's site on the World Wide Web. The address is:  
<http://www.narcoa.org>



## Excursions

*Members who have organized excursions 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-approved insurance is required. Send excursion notices to: Bill Hurtig, SETOFF Editor, 410 N. Custer Box 81, Delphos, KS 67436.*

*PLEASE NOTE: Advertisement of an excursion in THE SETOFF does not constitute responsibility by NARCOA and/or its officers, or THE SETOFF and/or its editorial staff for event conditions. Excursion 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 event. Events not covered by NARCOA-approved insurance are not endorsed by NARCOA and are listed for informational purposes only.*

### **HOOSIER RAILCARS:**

Hoosier Railcars publishes a regional newsletter which lists motorcar excursions in IL, MI, OH, IN, KY, and other locations. Some excursions require NARCOA insurance; some do not. To be placed on the mailing list, send \$5.00 per calendar year to Stan Conyer, 9333 St. Rd. 46 W., Columbus, IN 47201-9287.

June 13-17: Algoma Central Railroad. Another three-day rail car excursion on one of the most beautiful and scenic railroads in North America. The week will start on June 13 at Sault Ste. Marie with an optional train ride on the refurbished Wisconsin Central dome car in the regular Algoma Central Railroad excursion train to the Canyon park. The next day, our group will start our three-day trip by motorcar to Wawa and Oba, then return to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. On Friday, we will tour the ACR railroad's repair facilities. NARCOA insurance and certification is required with a 35-car limit. Cost is \$200.00 per car. Optional train ride, meals and lodging not included, but a group rate will be secured at motels. To reserve a place on the trip, send \$50.00 to Stan Conyer, 9333 St. Rd. 46 W., Columbus, IN 47201-9287, or call for more information, (812) 342-0565.

### **FIRST IOWA DIVISION**

Carl Schneider, Trip Coordinator, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona, IA 50009-2002 (phone 515/967-5181) Other contact persons: Mark Kirkpatrick 515/292-5027; Wayne

Rimathe 515/685-3019; Ed Rassmussen 402/391-0524.

May 30-31: Dakota Southern RR: Set on at Chamberlain, SD; expect to run both ways.

June 6: Nebraska Central RR: Set on at Grand Island, NE; scenic run to Ord along Loup River; 130 mi. R.T.

June 20: Nobles Rock RR: Set on at Luverne, MN; run both ways to Worthington, MN, and Manley, MN; 90 mi. R.T. New ride! Generous and receptive new owners.

July 12: Iowa Northern RR: Probably set on at Greene, IA; run to Manly, then to Cedar Falls; 104 mi. R.T.

August 8: Chillicothe & Brunswick RR: Set on at Chillicothe; pick up food at Sumner; continue through Hog Ridge to Brunswick; 70 mi. R.T.

August 22: T & K Evans Elevator RR: Set on at Elliott, IA (8/22 is town celebration day); run to just short of Red Oak 18 mi R.T.; several runs will be made, including one stretch along the Nishnabotna River.

Sept. 5: Black Hills Central: Set on at Hill City, SD; very scenic Black Hills ride; night run also; 18 mi. R.T.

Sept. 6: Nebkota RR: Set on at Gordon, NE; run both ways, to Chadron and to Merriman, NE; night run also; 160 mi. R.T.; this RR may be sold in the future; thus this may be the last chance to ride this route.

Sept. 20: Appanoose County RR: Set on at Centerville, IA; run to Albia, return to (ex-Wabash) Moravia depot for barbecue before returning to Centerville; 62 mi. R.T.

Oct. 10: Ft. Leonard Wood RR: Set on at the army base; day & night runs through MO fall scenery; 40 mi. R.T.

Nov. 7: Boone & Scenic Valley RR: Set on at Boone, IA; season closer; annual "Halloween" night run & cookout.

### **MOTORCAR OPERATORS WEST (MOW):**

June 27-28: NWP, Willits-Petaluma. Overnight in Petaluma. Details not worked out yet.

July 11-12: NWP, Willits-Ft. Seward (Fish & Game). Details not worked out yet.

July 12: Niles Canyon; Dave Towle, coordinator.

July 24-26: Yreka Western and McCloud. Coordinator, Gary Cousin.

Aug. 29-30: Willamette & Pacific/Portland & Western RRs: Northern OR; est. 220-280 mi. R.T. Deadline 8/15.

August 30: Niles Canyon. Coordinator, Dave Towle.

Sept. 12-13: Third Annual Handcar Races and Roots of Motive Power Festival; Willits, CA.

Sept. 19-20: Pacific NW Tour; RRs to be announced.

Oct. 31-Nov. 1: California Western RR: Willits, CA, to (overnight in) Fort Bragg; \$100/car.

Nov. 22: Niles Canyon: Dave Towle, coordinator.

#### **NORTH CENTRAL RAILCARS:**

NCR rules: All motorcar operators must be NARCOA members, have NARCOA insurance, and must operate in accordance with NARCOA Book of Rules No. 4. Also, all motorcars must be equipped with automatic brake lights.

Note: The railroads listed below do not sponsor the excursion(s) that take place on their property. These railroads specifically disclaim any responsibility for injuries or damage sustained by anyone on account of such excursion(s).

May 16: Wisconsin & Southern RR. Oshkosh-Markesan-Waupun and return, \$60/car. Send application for registration w/check payable to North Central Railcars to: WSOR Spring '98, North Central Railcars, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904.

July 18-19: Combined Wisconsin Central/Lake Superior & Ishpeming excursion. Ride Negaunee to Baraga (WC) Saturday; ride LS&I's whole line Sunday, including the ore dock; \$100/motorcar for both days. No prorate will be given for one-day registrations. Send check payable to North Central Railcars with your application to: WC/LS&I, North Central Railcars, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904.

August 15: Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, Spring Green-Prairie du Chien and return, \$60.00 per car. Send application for registration and check payable to North Central Railcars to the following address: WSOR Summer '98, North Central Railcars, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904.

September 26-27: Wisconsin Central, Marengo Junction to White Pine on Saturday, Ashland to Park Falls Sunday; \$150/motorcar for both days. No prorate for 1-day registrations. Send check payable to North Central Railcars w/application to: WC Fall Colors, North Central Railcars, 1780 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904.

#### **OHIO VALLEY RAILCARS:**

All motorcar operators must be NARCOA certified and have NARCOA insurance to participate in OVR excursions. NARCOA rules apply; additional equipment restrictions may apply. Only factory-built equipment may be used. NARCOA members may join OVR for \$5.00 annual dues (OVR mailing list; voting rights). Send LSASE to OVR, 10059 Aldridge Dr., Columbia Sta-

tion, OH, 44028, for excursion registration forms.

May 24: Ohio Central RR (former PRR Panhandle route); set on at Dennison, OH, 7:30 a.m. 130 Mi. R.T. Turn & eat at Newark. 50 car limit; register only if your car is in excellent condition, capable of 30 MPH ave. speed. Cost \$65.00, registration deadline May 9.

July 11: Oil Creek & Titusville RR (former Erie/Lackawanna main line); set on at Corry, PA, 7:30 a.m. 84 Mi. R.T. Turn & eat at Meadville. 35 car limit, NARCOA rules. Cost \$45.00, registration deadline June 26.

Sept. 19-20: SWPRR (former PRR Southwest branch & former B&O and PennCentrl subdivisions); Saturday (58 mi. R.T.) set on at Sony yard, New Stanton, PA, 7:30 a.m. Run south to Broadford, PA; turn, run north to Scottdale, Youngwood, and Radibaugh; then head back to Youngwood Railroad Museum for lunch break. Then run south to former PennCentral Bullsken branch; turn, run back to Sony yard for set off. Sunday: (Set on location to be announced later.) Run to Fayette County end of SWP, from Green Junction, PA, through Dawson, Mt. Braddock, Uniontown, and (turn at) Fairchance. Cost \$58.00, registration deadline Sept. 5.

#### **.EXCURSIONS SPONSORED BY OTHERS:**

May 30: Lycoming Valley RR, Williamsport, PA, 80-mile R.T.(former Reading and NY Central. Possible tour of Kopper's tie plant in Muncy. NARCOA insurance and rules apply. Hard hats and safety glasses will be required for tour. Send check for \$35.00 to Larry Maynard, RR1, Box 351, New Columbia, PA 17856; phone (717) 538-9050 before 10:00 p.m. EST.

June 5-7: Hobo & Winnepesaukee Scenic RRs: Tenth Anniversary New Hampshire Track Car Extravaganza: Runs to Weirs Beach, etc.; barbecue, swap meet, train rides, embroidered hat incl. w/registration \$45. Make checks payable to Paul Yorkis, 24 Kimberly Dr., Medway, MA 02053 (phone 508/533-4848)

July 18-19: North Shore RR (86 mi.) 7/18; from Northumberland to Berwick (former Reading and Erie Lackawanna); Shamokin Valley RR (50 mi.) 7/19; from Sunbury to Excelsior; also Sat. night the Central PA Chapter NRHS will host meal & slides of local RRs at the station in White Deer. Send \$55 (total fee) to Larry Maynard, RR 1 Box 351, New Columbia, PA 17856 (phone 717/538-9050 before 10:00 p.m.).

Aug. 2-3: Smith Falls Rwy Museum, Smith Falls, ON: Second Annual Jigger Festival: Exhibit your motorcar; then join 2:00 p.m. parade. Contact Robert Vaughan, Curator, PO Box 962, Smith Falls, Ontario K7A 5A5 (phone 613/730-1721).

(Continued on page 6)

## Excursions

(Continued from previous page)

Aug. 29-30: Escanaba & Lake Superior RR: First time in 5 years this RR is available! Contact Mike Soork (e-mail: M19SOORKB@Prodigy.Net)

Oct. 14-22: Copper Canyon of Mexico: Eight days, 7 nights in first class hotels; 5 nights, 6 days on the track (750 mi. ribbon rail, 87 tunnels, 36 bridges, and a loop). Tentative hotel reservations being made; refundable deposits \$100 accepted for participation lists. NARCOA ins. required; adults only. Approx. cost \$2,000, which incl. 3 meals/day, RR fees, and Spanish interpreters. Contact Al McCracken, excursion organizer: (phone 408/249-2953; FAX 408/249-3120).

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### *Excursions on the Web*

By Rich Stivers

The NARCOA internet web site ([www.narcoa.org](http://www.narcoa.org)) now lists NARCOA-insured excursions. These excursions are also sorted by NARCOA area of representation.

Please submit your excursion announcements to *THE SETOFF* editor as usual, and then the editor will forward excursion announcements to me to put up on the web

--Thank You!--

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### *Photo by Dave Verzi*

*Taken September 27, 1997; motorcars were making their exit from the Sony yard of the Southwest Pennsylvania RR, New Stanton, PA, site of the former VW plant. They were en route to Greensburg, PA.*



## *My SETOFF is Missing!*

By Joel Williams

Every time *THE SETOFF* is mailed a number of them are returned because they are undeliverable. If your address changes, the Post Office will forward your mail for a year. After that, God himself couldn't get them to deliver it.

Did you get your *SETOFF*? Of course, or you wouldn't be reading this. But have you moved and does it still have your old address on it? Are you living at the same old place, but the Post Office has changed your address?

If your address has changed, please let us know. Please don't send a renewal with your new address on it, without pointing out that it has changed. These are the ways to let us know:

1. Send the change of address card obtainable from the US Post Office.
2. Mark the new address on the renewal notice when you send it back.
3. Call 908/852-6294; please leave a message if no one is at home.
4. E-mail: [joelwilliams@lucent.com](mailto:joelwilliams@lucent.com)
5. FAX: 973/386-8098: "Att: Joel Williams"
6. Let Tom Norman know when you renew your insurance.

Do you know where these members are? Duane Plenge, Keith T. Koch, John T. Bailey, James D. Beville, Tom Borrall, Chad Newman, G. Brent Horney, Thomas B. Freeman.

## Letters to the Editor

*We welcome letters from readers for printing in THE SETOFF. Published letters may be lightly edited for space considerations, etc., and may also include a reply from a NARCOA committee member if the subject warrants it. Letters to the editor of THE SETOFF will not be published unless they are signed and a phone number is indicated. This is necessary to permit the SETOFF editor to authenticate that a letter is written by the person signing it. However, the letter writer can request that his/her name not appear in THE SETOFF, and "Name withheld upon request" would appear in such instances. Send your letter to the SETOFF editor by the next issue's deadline.*

To the Editor:

In response to last issue's announcement of Deanna Baird's passing the flame of Editor, I want to say what a tremendous job she did for the organization.

THE SETOFF is an enjoyable, informative asset to the organization, which I'm sure everyone enjoys receiving. Many thanks to the staff for a continued effort.

Jeff Shelton  
Roanoke, VA

To the Editor:

Regarding the front cover photo in the November/December issue of THE SETOFF:

The Illinois Central photo appears to be on the

main line between Chicago and Gilman, IL. I was born and raised in the area and it seems to me this is a view from US-45, looking south toward Ashkum, IL. It's been a few years since I was at this particular location. However, I do get back to Illinois almost every year, and if you don't determine the actual location before next summer, I will check it out for you.

Al Janssen  
Stuart, FL

Ed. Note: Mr. Janssen is a former ICRR employee.

To the Editor:

I enjoy motorcaring as a hobby and recreational activity. I am not retired and must plan my vacation time carefully. I think many club members rely on THE SETOFF excursion roster to plan time for attending a particular event. However, I have noticed the coordinators often include only the name of the host railroad and sometimes the state. It is extremely frustrating, trying to decide whether the road mileage is comparable to the track mileage.

It would be helpful for coordinators to state the point of departure, the track mileage, and specify whether it means one way or round trip. This is vital information to anyone planning time off from work who wishes to avoid traveling 300 miles, only to run a 10-mile round trip line. Not every reader understands what the excursion coordinators write. Please use another line or two, to provide necessary information.

Pete Loscalzo  
Cherry Hill, NJ

### **Photo by Tom Healy**

Taken August 9, 1997  
The motorcar was participating in the South Branch Valley Meet, Moorefield, WV.

The trestle is over the Potomac River, near Romney, WV.



## Hy-Rail Insurance Coverage

By Tom Norman  
NARCOA Insurance Administrator

In the last issue of *The Setoff*, there was a brief note stating that hy-rail vehicles cannot participate in any NARCOA Railroad Motorcar Insurance program. Why the sudden change in policy? Actually, hy-rail vehicles were never covered. Because NARCOA never specifically asked about hy-rail coverage, the insurance company never mentioned that they were excluded.

Why are hy-rail vehicles excluded from our physical damage coverage? To begin with, a hy-rail is considered an automobile, since it is subject to motor vehicle registration. A railroad motorcar is considered railroad rolling stock, and is covered by our commercial inland marine insurance. Inland marine insurance essentially covers specialty or unique property that cannot be covered under other insurance, such as home-owners or automobile policies. With hy-rails subject to motor vehicle registration, NARCOA would need to purchase commercial auto insurance, which is not economically feasible for our members.

NARCOA's commercial inland marine insurance provides the member with \$2,500 of physical damage coverage on the railroad motorcar (\$250 deductible). Damage from collision, vandalism, fire, and theft is included. Reliance paid out \$2,500 as a physical damage claim, for instance, resulting from the motorcar collision that occurred last October. If a hy-rail had been involved, the motorcar would be covered, but the hy-rail would be covered only if the owner had a personal auto policy that had collision coverage for the vehicle.

What is railcar liability? NARCOA's insurance program provides commercial general liability coverage for railcar liability. Each participant is covered up to \$500,000 for claims of bodily injury or property damage the member may become legally obligated to pay.

This coverage applies only to operation, maintenance or use of the described railcar. The described railcar is defined as railroad rolling stock or locomotives, and does not include hy-rail vehicles.

If a hy-rail owner has a personal auto policy for that vehicle, then liability coverage would exist for those claims arising out of the ownership or use of the vehicle. That coverage would extend to all on-highway use of the hy-rail; but when on-rail use occurs, coverage should be verified with the owner's insurer.

What is commercial general liability? NARCOA has a \$10,000,000 aggregate limit commercial general liability policy that pays damages for bodily injury or property damage to a third party. Rupp's *Insurance & Risk Management Glossary* defines bodily injury liability as: "liability for physical harm or death of a person

caused by negligent or intentional acts or omissions of an insured." Physical damage liability is "coverage for the obligation to compensate another person for lost use or destruction or damage to that person's tangible property. Third-party liability is "the obligation to compensate another person harmed or injured by a negligent or wrongful act or omission. A person other than the parties to a liability policy (i.e., not the insurer or the policyholder) is a third party. When an insured (the first party) causes a loss, the insurer (the second party) assumes the insured's liability up to the policy limit."

This \$10,000,000 coverage applies only to liability for NARCOA's activities or activities performed for NARCOA by our members, or members' liability arising out of and at the premises of an event NARCOA sponsors. In other words, this coverage applies only at NARCOA-insured motorcar excursions where NARCOA issues a Certificate of Insurance to the host railroad, and all operators are insured NARCOA members.

There is no exclusion for hy-rail vehicles under this coverage WHILE ACTUALLY SUPPORTED AND OPERATING ON THE RAIL, and if operating specifically in an event insured by NARCOA.

The Bottom Line? Hy-rail vehicles can operate at NARCOA insured motorcar excursions, if the owner can provide evidence of primary automobile liability insurance for the hy-rail vehicle. The owner must also be a member of NARCOA, and belong to NARCOA's insurance program. The owner must be aware that his/her personal auto policy is the primary coverage, that NARCOA's coverage is excess to that, and that NARCOA's liability coverage is only during on-rail use of the hy-rail.

In order to allow hy-rails at NARCOA-insured motorcar excursions, a member must notify me at the start of the insurance year that he/she intends to operate a hy-rail vehicle. The member must provide proof of personal auto liability coverage on the vehicle. The owner also should be aware that there is no physical damage coverage on the hy-rail, unless it is part of his/her personal auto policy.

At certain NARCOA insured excursions, host railroads ask that we assume contractual liability to hold the railroad harmless. This requires NARCOA to assume the railroad's liability arising under, or because of the contract. Sometimes the contract provisions will require NARCOA and the members to have physical damage coverage for their railcars. There is automatic coverage for the member's railroad motorcar, but not for the hy-rail vehicle. The hy-rail owner must be aware that he/she may be excluded from that NARCOA insured motorcar excursion if the owner does not have proof of physical damage coverage on the hy-rail, or if the railroad will not accept the owner's personal auto insurance policy.



NARCOA's insurance program has always been set up for the motorcar owner and operator. An exception can be made to allow hy-rail operation if the above conditions are met. I ask that all hy-rail operators specifically indicate to NARCOA's Certified Excursion Coordinators that they intend to bring a hy-rail rail vehicle to an event. Allow plenty of time for the excursion coordinator to verify that there are no host railroad restrictions or contract provisions that will exclude hy-rail operation.

I hope that the explanation of our insurance policy is helpful. As I am only a volunteer administering the program, I am offering the information above, based

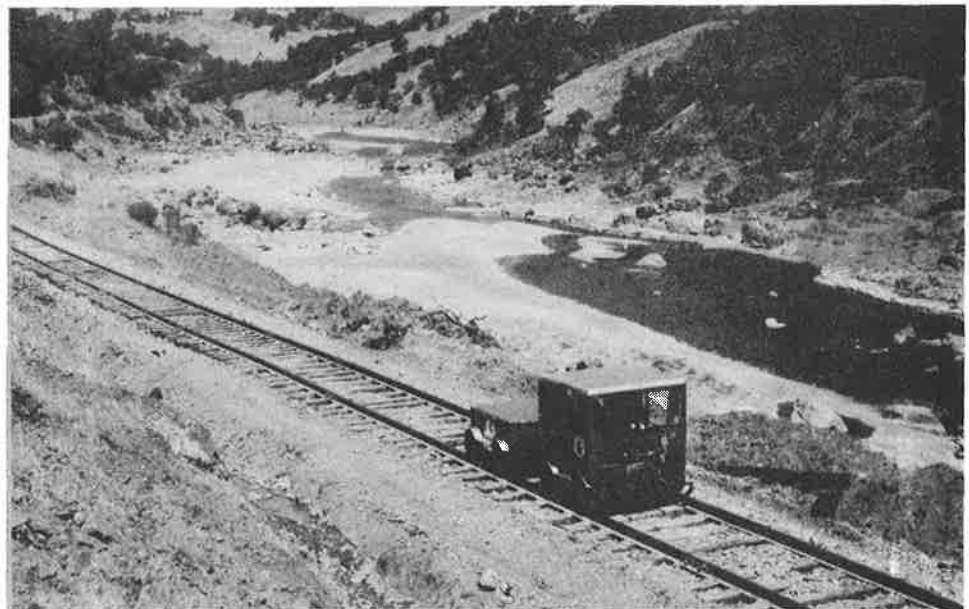
on my understanding of the policy language. If members have questions or need further clarification, I can contact our agent, United Shortline Insurance Services, Inc. Members should contact their agents regarding personal liability or hy-rail vehicle policies.

*If it can be done  
safely, do it.*

***Photo by John Shubert***

*Taken August 9, 1997  
John's MT19 and Push Cart*

*California Fish & Game  
assisted with the run on  
the Eel River.*



***Photo by Dottie Wershing***

*"Kudzu Panorama"*

*Georgia Northeastern RR  
near Ellijay, GA*



## Why Won't it Stop?

By Dick Ray

In the spring, 1991, *Setoff*, the "Track Inspector Sez" said, A THOUGHTFUL MOTORCAR MEET PARTICIPANT ALWAYS CHECKS THE BRAKES OF THE CAR BEHIND, AND THE FUEL LEVEL OF THE CAR AHEAD.

This was supposed to be humorous. After all, who would appear at a meet without enough gas or without properly adjusted brakes? It seems a few still do!

Running out of gas causes, at most, a slight delay in the tour; but bad brakes are a safety hazard. At those meets where I have assisted with safety inspection, I have always paid particular attention to the brake adjustment of each car. When improper adjustment was discovered, the owner was usually not aware of it. If the car had stopped properly before, the owner assumed it would stop properly again. In all cases so far, we were able to properly adjust the brakes before starting out.

The NARCOA Rulebook has "Brakes" as the first item under "Mechanical Standards," and says: "The brake lever must not be against the stop when brakes are fully applied. Brake end arms shall not be in danger of going over center with full application." The Rulebook has always contained this statement, and the MOW Rulebook says substantially the same thing. This seems clear to me, to the Rulebook authors, and to the vast majority of owners who maintain their brakes properly.

Perhaps the few whose brakes are out of adjustment do not know how to do it correctly. This article is intended to educate owners and safety inspectors on the adjustment process, and is specific for Fairmont M or MT series cars. However, the principles apply to other models and makes, since they have similar systems.

The first goal is to have the brakes hold the car so it cannot be moved when the brake-operating lever is in the first notch. This is about half the total available travel. The second notch is provided so wear occurring on a long run does not use up the available range of brake lever effectiveness. The lever travel space beyond the second notch is for another purpose, covered later.

The second goal is to avoid any possibility of the brake shoe operating rods descending below horizontal, because this removes all braking action. When the brakes are properly adjusted, and the lever will hold the car firmly in the first notch, this second goal will be satisfied, unless the car has some other type of wear which affects the brakes.

Note: Please refer to the accompanying illustration, from Fairmont, Page 39A – Bulletin 415.

First, drop the rods (M33222, M28351, and F7106) from the vertical links (M18456), loosen the lock nuts (F2702), and unscrew everything for cleaning and lubrication. Measure the length of threads available on each of the threaded pieces (2 on each side of the car) (7106 and M28351), and write it down, referenced to the location (front, rear, left, right). You will use these dimensions later, to make sure there are enough threads inside the tubes (M33222) to allow for future adjustments, as the brake shoes wear. Coat all threads with grease or anti-sieze, so that you can easily adjust the linkage in the future. Inspect the rest of the parts for excessive wear, and reassemble everything into approximate adjustment.

Now note where the brake lever is, relative to the first notch criterion. (You won't want it so tight you have difficulty getting it into that first notch.) With the lever effectively in the first notch, look carefully at each pair of vertical links (M18456) connecting the brake operating arms (M30124) to the brake shoe operating rods on each side.

The ideal position for the vertical links is vertical when the lever is in the first notch and the shoes are firmly against the wheels. This gives each brake shoe the same mechanical advantage, and therefore the same force on each wheel when the brakes are applied. To achieve this ideal, remove the lower pin (M28761) and adjust the length of the rods on each side until the links are approximately vertical when assembled, as shown in the illustration.

If this cannot be achieved, there are several possible causes: 1) Wrong operating rods; 2) Someone modified the rods before you got the car; 3) Wrong brake shoe assemblies; 4) Unequal wear on front and rear brake shoes.

In any case, the cause must be found before the proper cure can be applied. There is no use going further with the process, until the above adjustment is accomplished. In the end, you will need at least a half-inch of the threads screwed inside the rods (which are actually tubes with a nut welded to one end). An additional half-inch is necessary, to allow for wear when you are starting with new wheels and brake shoes. You can measure the length of threads outside the tubes, and subtract it from your previously measured total length figures.

Once you have the links approximately vertical, you can now adjust the brake shoe clearance on each side. It needs to be equal. This will equalize the braking force on each side of the car. With the brakes fully released, slide a flat-bladed screwdriver between one shoe and its wheel, to take up the clearance on both front and rear shoes. Make a mark on the screwdriver blade at the edge of the brake shoe. Repeat the procedure and make the measurement on the other side of the car. The distance the tapered blade of the screwdriver goes in be-

tween the shoe and the wheel should be equal for both sides of the car.

Before adjusting the rods on one side tighter, or the other side looser, make note of the position of the brake lever when the brakes are applied, and decide whether you need the overall system tighter or looser. To avoid moving the links away from vertical, adjust the front and rear rods (on the side you are changing) an equal amount. The threads are either 3/8-18 or 1/2-12, so a half-turn each on the front and rear rods moves the shoes 55 to 83 thousandths of an inch. If any operating rod must be lengthened by more than several turns, you will need to measure the exposed thread length again, to make sure sufficient threads extend inside the rod.

When everything is properly adjusted, tighten all four lock nuts (F2702), wipe excess grease off everything, and install new cotter pins, preferably of stainless steel. They don't rust and fall out. This adjustment should last for several years. If not, maybe you are using the brakes too much by approaching grade crossings, switches, and similar hazards too fast!

Normal stops require only minor pressure on the brake lever. However, it is necessary to have a lot of extra braking capability available for an unplanned sudden stop. Shiny wheels on dry shiny rail have a lot of traction, and it takes a lot of pressure on the brake shoes to make use of that traction in an emergency.

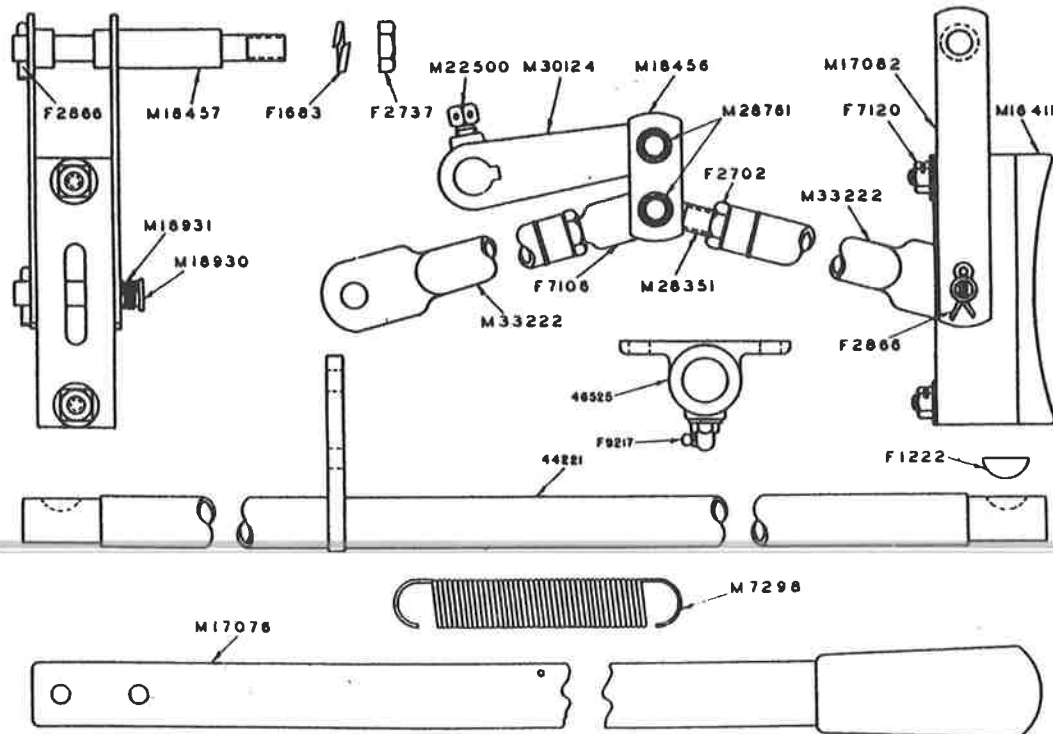
Every part in the brake system has some flexibility. The brake lever bends, the cross shaft twists, and

the axles bend. All these require the brake lever to move beyond its normal braking position, which is why we want the first notch to be the normal braking position. If you find that, despite the static adjustment described above, you often need to go beyond the first notch when braking, the car may have other problems.

Worn wheel bearings may be detected by applying the brake at rest while someone is watching to see if any wheel moves slightly as the brake shoe presses on it. With enough force, you can bend the axle slightly, so care must be used to tell the difference between bearing wear and normal deflection of the axle. It is also conceivable that bearing assemblies could become loose in the frame, from the drive belt or chain pulling on the axle and the brakes pushing on it. When problems are identified, a proper cure must be achieved.

The wood blocks on the brake shoes are also important, because they determine the point at which the operating rods push on the brake shoes, and they therefore affect the length of the operating rods. If the blocks become rotten, they may compress during application of the brakes. Also, if someone installed replacements consisting of "improvements" over the factory design, or used an otherwise inadequate material, the adjustments may not insure proper braking.

**Note:** The foregoing is the opinion of the author only, who claims no expert knowledge, and it does not represent any official position of NARCOA or other organization.



## Mt. Shasta and Back

A Railroad Speeder Run in Winter

By David I. Dana

(Submitted by Mike Paul)

"What is that thing?" A bright yellow 5-foot cube on wheels, sporting lights and horns, trailed behind our white Chevy pickup. This was a Fairmont MT14 railroad inspection car, also known as a signal maintainer's car, section car, or gang car. Trainmen call them "speeders." Wayne Parsons and I were re-fueling on our way to Siskiyou County, Northern California. There, Wayne's speeder would join others for the Winter Speeder Run on the McCloud Railway lines, between Mt. Shasta Village and Lookout. "It's a hobby thing!" Wayne told the curious gas station patron.

Over 1,180 railroading hobbyists in the United States and Canada belong to NARCOA, the North American Rail Car Operators Association; regional clubs also span the country. Railway companies no longer use speeders, preferring "hy-rails," modified pickup trucks. So fans like Wayne and the 310 club members in Motorcar Operators West (MOW) bought the speeders, fixed them up, and ride in them.

These railroaders are in love, like others love yachts, speedboats, or automobiles. On average, eleven speeder excursions a month run on little-used tracks in North America. These runs can take from one to ten days.

"How did your husband get involved in this?" I asked the wife of a jovial man in railroader's bib overalls. "He retired and got bored, so we were looking for something to do. We went to a model railroad show, and there was this speeder on display. That did it! Charlie was hooked. I've been on 35 runs with him."

As we drove north, Wayne told me how he found his speeder. "Fairmont built it in 1985, for the Missouri Pacific Railroad. That's why you see the MoPac logo on the car. It looks like it wasn't used much. Union Pacific took over MoPac; in 1992 UP auctioned it off to Newman Machinery, a dealer in maintenance-of-way equipment. Newman traded it to Wickham Rail Car for a track undercutter. They fixed the brakes and dents, made seat cushions, painted it, and offered it for sale. I heard about the car and called. Wickham said, 'Make me an offer!' I did, and got it. I couldn't have done better with a mask and a gun!"

This will be Wayne's fourth run. Like all the members, Wayne had to make sure his speeder meets the safety requirements MOW and NARCOA have set. He bought a trailer. He passed a MOW test, bought insurance, and found a mentor. Every new MOW driver must have a mentor, an experienced operator, to accompany him or her on the first run.

Four new members will be mentored on this run. We met a first-time operator, Bob, on highway 99, near Redding, CA. His speeder had no sides or rear cover. Bob had no fear of freezing. What was he most looking forward to on his first run? "Operating the thing."

A 2-cylinder, 20 horsepower gas engine powered Parsons' MT14-M speeder. Hand levers in the cab controlled it; brake and throttle were the two most used. Two shift levers set the gears at high or low, forward or reverse. The clutch pedal was on the floor. The cars can hit speeds up to 40 miles per hour on a smooth track. Of course, most tracks for these guys are not smooth. Rail joints cause bumps, rails can be warped, roadbeds uneven, especially in the mountains. "She'll be rippin' along, about 25," Wayne said, "and it's Mr. Toad's wild ride!"

We arrived at the McCloud Rwy yard about 3:00 p.m. Saturday, February 14, St. Valentine's Day. The 14,000-foot Mt. Shasta volcano loomed invisible above us, covered in snow and clouds. El Nino-driven storms threatened to dump rain and snow on us.

The McCloud Rwy runs tourist excursions, and hauls lumber and paper between two Union Pacific main lines. It hosted our excursion. MOW paid about \$50.00 a speeder for one day on the track. The club had to coordinate closely with the railroad, which was about to allow 26 small motorcars, run by strangers, to operate on its property. Organizing an excursion is sometimes complicated. The landlord, track lessor, and train operator may not all be the same entity. Every mile of track may have a different owner-operator arrangement.

Why does a railroad allow this activity at all? "They make money." Wayne explained that speeder hobbyists mostly use short lines that were pinched off larger lines, as they became uneconomical. Railroads rarely abandon track totally, but might not use a length of it for a time. Some lines are short lines, like McCLOUD, that haul freight and run excursions. They are willing to make money when track is unused for their business.

Another benefit to the railroad is that organized speeder groups, such as MOW, also help control "bootleggers." Bootleg operators running without track warrants are illegal and dangerous. Organized motorcar excursions provide a safe outlet for hobbyists; for the railroads, they provide insurance and traffic control.

Wayne turned in signed release forms, and his car passed a safety inspection. Required safety items include head and rear lights, a brake light, an "audible warning device," a tow bar, signal flags, spark arrestor, brakes on all four wheels, safety glass, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, flashlight, and helmets for children. Wayne's brakes were double-checked, and his insurance coverage was confirmed.

He backed the trailer over a yard track in front of the engine house. He pulled two light steel beams from within the trailer's frame, and set them on the

track. A mild push allowed the speeder to roll down on to the track. It was easy, and the speeder was ready to run.

Others did the same. Some had trouble with balky equipment, but everyone calmly took turns getting on the track. Men renewed their acquaintances from previous excursions. Wives were busy, too, dispensing coffee and advice. Soon there was a line of 26 yellow and orange speeders facing the engine house. The weather would determine which way they left the yard.

"I don't know how far we can get tomorrow," Greg Brahms, Meet Coordinator, advised. "The storm could put too much snow on the tracks. We'll probably follow the excursion train out to Bartle or Curtis, then come back for lunch. We'll see about the afternoon." We went to bed, concerned that the excursion might be canceled, or drastically shortened. We could not see the volcano.

### SUNDAY – THE RUN

The morning didn't dawn; it sort of just got lighter. Overcast skies still hid the mountain and the sun. But there was no rain, and it had snowed only very lightly. We returned to the McCloud yard at 7:30 a.m., for the "Safety Meeting."

Greg Brahms assembled the group of about 50 men, women, and children. Everyone wore jeans and ski parkas, plus a variety of hats, including cowboy, railroad, baseball, wool, and fur. I had long johns on under my jeans.

"We will go to Bartles or Curtis, about 20 miles, depending on the snow conditions. It's not plowed beyond Bartles, so we can't go on to Lookout. Then we'll return for lunch and potty, and see what will be possible then." Because many had hoped for a 70-mile run to Lookout, a murmur of disappointment spread through the crowd.

"Remember the crossing procedures." The track intersects several highways. Greg divided the speeders into groups of ten. Each group was to designate two flaggers, who would stop auto traffic until the speeders passed the intersection. "Be sure to slow at every crossing. Even if the road is not plowed, there might be snowmobiles! The tracks are wet; they are slippery. So be sure to keep twice the recommended distance between cars." Greg's manner was serious and a bit nervous, I thought. How dangerous was this going to be?

Speeders, when used for maintenance-of-way, operated on a closed block of track, with no traffic around. When used as hobby cars, they run in groups. This difference makes safe operation paramount. Any kind of accident could be serious, both for the persons involved, and for the group's reputation with the rail-

roads. MOW insists cars keep 100 feet apart for each 10 miles per hour, and farther apart in wet weather.

"Hot rail!" A huge diesel switch engine quietly, if that were possible, slid into the siding and headed for the assembled safety meeting. General scurrying resulted, and the meeting hastily and informally adjourned a few feet back, to make room for the diesel.

Next, Greg introduced McCloud Rwy's President, Jeff Forbus. Jeff welcomed everyone, and reiterated the safety messages. "We're really into safety here! We want everyone to have a good time!" Then Jeff dropped another change of plans. "We wanted you all to go out ahead of our No. 25 excursion train, but plans have changed. No. 25 is ready to go, so we ask you to wait until she gets down the track toward Bartles, then follow her. This will help clear the track for you, too!" Greg thanked Jeff, as did many others.

To add some levity to the serious meeting, Greg had some awards. One was for the person who traveled the farthest: from Anchorage, AK. Another was for the person longest in the hobby: 15 years (actually, Greg has been in for 27 years); 4 first-timers also were recognized.

Two blasts from No. 25's steam whistle got our attention. Several ran to look and take pictures. Belching black smoke into frigid air, a steam locomotive chug-chugged into the yard, and passed by the 26 speeders lined up on a sidetrack, ready to go. Bundled tourists on the open excursion car waved as they passed. No. 25 steamed into the distance, and soon passed out of sight in the woods to the northeast.

The speeders might actually go faster than the excursion train, so we waited until just before 9:00 a.m. Then quietly the first motorcar moved out. One by one, the idling cars slid into gear, backed on to the main line. Someone threw a switch, and off we went after No. 25, 26 speeders, all in a row.

Inside Wayne's MT14-M, I bucked and rattled; I rocked and lurched; my teeth clenched. Something banged again and again and again. Every rail joint jolted the car. The expression, "white knuckle," was made for this.

"Does it get any better than this?" Wayne hollered over the clattering, his eyes wide with excitement, and a wide grin across his face. "What?" I yelled. The noise made conversation impossible. Wayne pulled out a pair of earmuffs to deaden the banging. At the first mile marker, Wayne clicked his stopwatch. "Sixteen miles an hour!" He grinned wider and nudged the throttle forward. Snow began to fall.

"Flag! Flag! Stopping! Stopping!" I grabbed the red signal flag, opened the door, and stuck my hand and flag into the blizzard-like air. "What's up?" "I don't know." We slowed to a stop close behind the car ahead of us. Wayne, like many operators, had a radio scanner

(Continued on Page 14)

in the cab. Soon we heard Greg in the lead car. "Doug, it looks like No. 25 stopped up ahead! I'm trying to find out what's happened." Wayne looked crestfallen. He could see this run turning into one disappointment after another. It was still snowing, too.

"A woman on the train has been burned by spilled soup. They're waiting for an ambulance. What do you want to do, wait?" Greg waited for advice from the voice on the scanner. "OK, we'll go back to McCloud. Pass the word."

Running backwards, the speeders started for the yard, about three miles back. Speeders are not made for going backwards, but they can. A split front axle allows the wheels to take curved rails. Backwards, the solid (driving) rear axle tends to ride up on curves, and can derail. Running in reverse is much slower. Wayne's face fell. Back we went.

We arrived at the yard in due course. The snow had stopped. Greg delivered the new plan: "We'll go over to Mt. Shasta. We can't turn at the switchback, so we'll have to run backwards the 10 miles over the mountain from there. Then we'll have lunch and come back, running forward."

Off we went in a new direction. The Mt. Shasta line rose up the volcano's slopes, with the summit still hidden in clouds. At its highest point, the line reached about 4,000 feet in elevation. Fifty-foot Spruce, Douglas Fir, and White Pine trees blanketed the mountain. Newly fallen snow covered everything.

"Whooooeeeee!" Wayne was back in his element. His hands flew over the controls, setting them for the long miles ahead. He put his feet up on the engine cover, and settled back. As we climbed up and up, the snow grew deeper and deeper. The grade was steep; the car ran well. I was getting used to the rattling and banging. The mountain air, fresh snow, and pristine woods surrounded us. No need for high speed here. I absorbed the mountain atmosphere, and remembered skiing years ago in snow and forest like this. I reveled in the pines. We passed a little waterfall, falling clear into an ice-covered pond. Rabbit tracks trailed into a thicket.

"Flag! Stopping!" We had reached the switchback. Greg's 18-year-old son, with a lifetime of experience on the speeders, had hopped off and stood by the switch, waiting for all the cars to come up. Snow was piled as high as the cars. Our track had been cut into the hillside. Somewhere under the whiteness, the ground dropped off thousands of feet. Endless forest filled the valley below. Snow-covered mountains framed the far horizon.

A steam whistle! A locomotive was coming up the grade behind us! Actually, it turned out to be the last speeder, with an air horn that sounded like a steam whistle! "We're up; let's go!" said the radio scanner.

Greg's son threw the switch, and the line of speeders moved out backwards.

Up some more; more forest, more snow. Getting deeper and deeper. The plowed snow banks rose higher above us as we rode higher up the mountain. The rails reached out ahead of our car like shining black ribbons. No cross ties, no ballast, no rust or rocks or debris, things that normally characterize railroads. Just white. Clean white. Clean white snow.

We reached the highest point on the line. Heavy snow lay on the pine branches. Sunlight touched the tree tops. The "luster of mid-day" brightened the snow in the trees, contrasting with the shadows below. We passed through sunlit patches. I squinted to shut out the glorious glare. The line of speeders (I began to think of it as a train) came to a halt at the top. Everyone got out to enjoy the day. Sun warmed the air. The biting cold had left. Word came down that one of the motorcars had popped a chain.

The motorcar's power train is like that of a bicycle: a chain from the transmission powers the rear axle. The car would have to be towed the rest of the way. After some snowball fighting and complimenting the weather, the speeders set out again.

The track led us down into Mt. Shasta Village, a mountain town of motels and craft shops, "Where Heaven and Earth Meet." Drivers checked their cars. Everyone is very helpful. On a run, there is a tool or expert for just about anything. Wayne repaired a slipped door hinge. The popped chain got put back on its sprockets. "I can fix that engine idle," boasted one operator, as he listened to one sputtering. He lifted the engine cover. "Oops, that's not like mine!" He went off to find an engine like his to help adjust.

Fruit, soup, coffee, sandwiches, sodas, and cookies came out for lunch. People mingled about, traded stories and advice about speeders. Newcomers learned; old-timers felt important. They admired each other's cars.

At 12:30 p.m. the line moved out, back the way we had come, this time running forward. "I've never run so long backwards," Wayne confessed. "It wasn't so bad, but it's better to go up forward." A return run through the same gorgeous forest took us to the switchback, then a backwards run to the McCloud yard, where we had started, four hours and about 35 miles ago.

Greg delivered the afternoon plan: "As soon as No. 37 pulls in, we can go to Bartles. It will be a short wait. We should be back here about 5:30. There are no facilities in Bartles, so get ready for the afternoon."

A long line formed up by the Port-a-Potty. "I miss the 'Presidential Suite,'" a jumpy lady told me, and then described it. "They cut a Port-a-Potty in half, so they could trailer it on the railroad, then added paper holders, paneling, and steps, put it on a flat (tool) car,

and tow it behind their speeder. There's a half-moon in the door, and a name board: 'Presidential Suite.'"

Soon No. 37, a diesel with freight cars, came into the yard. Wayne and I got ready. "MOW, highball to Bartles!"

This time the road was straight, and the track smooth and clear. There was less snow than on the mountain. The track cut through the pinewoods, passing places named Esperanza, Bigelow, Swore, and Algomah. Nothing remained of the towns. The names probably memorialized railroad workers and events. Beyond Bartles, even more colorful names are to be found: Slagger, Chippy Spur, Hambone, and White Horse.

We stopped on a long, gradual curve, for the meet photograph. Doug traipsed out into the knee-deep snow with a camera. Everyone stood by their cars and waved. In the back-ground, Mt. Shasta was still lost in the clouds.

"Highball!" and we were off again. With level travel, the cars spread apart. At times we seemed to be the only one on the track. The lurching and banging disappeared, replaced by the familiar, romantic "clickety-clack, clickety-clack." Actually, it was more of a clickety-clunk on the left side, and clickety-click on the right side. But the MT14-M's little engine purred.

We highballed the full 18 miles to Bartles, a highway intersection in the woods, where we stopped, gathered, and turned around. On the mountain, the snow had been too deep and the ground too soft for turning. Here, the intersection was paved between the rails. Those with turntables turned easily. A small "foot" under the car dropped to the ground, hydraulically raising the car off its wheels. The car was then easily spun around, then eased back on to the rails, headed the opposite way. Not all cars had the hydraulic turntables, though.

Wayne's car and about half the other speeders needed to be manually turned. Lifting handles are pulled out of recesses in the car. Two strong men, or more, grabbed the handles and tilted the car up on its two front wheels like a wheelbarrow. With a good bit of yelling, grunting, and cursing, they spun it 180 degrees, then set it down. With luck (or more hefting) it was on the track, ready to go.

As each car turned it sped off, back to McCloud. For Wayne, it was another highball run, virtually alone on the track. This was the ultimate speeder run. "Clickety-clunk, clickety-clink, clickety-clunk, clickety-clink, clickety-clunk, clickety-clink." At a milepost, Wayne clicked his stopwatch.

"We just made 32 miles an hour!" He sat back, his hands folded, and his feet up on the engine box. He was fulfilled. We were back to McCloud in no time. We had traveled about 68 miles through snowfields and forests, in a day at one of California's most scenic spots. I was exhilarated from the crisp air, snow, cold, and a fun group of interesting, unique people.

Thanks to Wayne's masterful job backing the trailer on to the track, we were among the first loaded and ready to leave. Wayne and I thanked Greg Brahms and Jeff Forbus for putting on a wonderful and successful excursion in difficult conditions. A veteran of three previous winter runs said, "This was the best winter run of all!"

We drove out of the McCloud yard, the speeder trailing along behind, and headed south for home into El Nino clouds whose bluff we had called. They never carried out their storm threats, but instead gave us a brilliant red sunset.



**Sam Powers Photo**

*Mike Foran and his ex-CP M9 on the Main Central Calais branch, now owned by the State of Maine.*

*Motorcars can operate (with caution) over 65 miles of the 120-mile branch. The rest waits to be cleared.*

## **SOUTHWEST TOUR** March 22-26, 1998

**Report by Wayne Parsons**

The Southwest Tour was a combined effort of Wilderness Tours event coordinator, Hank Brown, and Motorcar Operators West (MOW) event coordinator, Doug Stivers. The excursion ran on four railroads in New Mexico and Arizona, 22-26 March.

On Sunday, 22 March, approximately 23 cars set on at the historic station, mile post (m.p.) 18, in Santa Fe, NM. The Santa Fe Southern is a short line, 18 miles long, branching off the ATSF main line at our destination of Lamy, NM. The group departed Santa Fe at 9:30 a.m. The RR provided 4 flaggers, who leapfrogged crossings, enabling the speeders to cross safely and keep moving. Scenery along the route is mostly the suburbs of Santa Fe, including one home that looked like Fred Flintstone's house, set in a rocky hillside.

The Santa Fe Southern is struggling to keep up the track. A ribbon of new welded rail has been installed on the outside of many curves, leaving the old sectional track on the inside. All the bridges are in good shape. The signals in town are in great shape, including one that appears to have complicated electronics in a new control box.

We arrived in Lamy (m.p. 0) at noon, to have lunch at the Legal Tender Saloon. This site has had a bar under one name or another since 1881. In its rush west, the ATSF main line went south of the namesake city. The Lamy station served Santa Fe for many years, until a branch line was built north to the city. Sadly, Amtrak signs promise passenger trains that no longer come!

Our group departed at 1:30 p.m., and arrived back in Santa Fe at 3:45 p.m., for setoff. Along the way we saw curious children and some horseback riders. Many people jog, or ride bicycles along the right of way. They enjoy (we, too) many distant vistas of rolling hills and a few snow-capped mountains.

Our group now began a re-position to Hobbs, NM, with most people arriving around 11:00 p.m. On Monday, 23 March, 24 cars set on at the Main Street crossing (m.p. 83.5) of the Texas & New Mexico RR. The land here is flat; the track is straight.

Departing at 8:00 a.m., we ran north to Lovington, paralleling Route 18. There were many crossings, but road traffic was light and seemed accustomed to rail activity. One major crossing was flagged, but otherwise it was "slow and go." We passed oil wells, an oil loading facility with many sidings, a feed lot, and finally a grain storage facility in Lovington.

We turned our cars at Avenue D, then backed to just north of the crossing at m.p. 104.5 and rested for half an hour. North of here, the track has been aban-

doned. At 10:00 a.m., we returned south to Hobbs, taking the same 90 minutes to make the distance.

At 12:15 p.m., after a lunch break, we started south to Monahans. The scenery is sandy, oil patch country. We passed one refinery with two gas burn-off flares close to the track, and a chemical plant with many sidings. We stopped for a potty break at Jal, NM (m.p. 42), just 5 miles from the Texas border.

After crossing into Texas we went "in the hole" at Kermit, to wait for the daily northbound "oil can" freight. It was slightly delayed, due to a trackside fire started by a fragment of carbon blown from the stack of the TX & NM RR locomotive. We returned to the main line, and a few miles south found county fire trucks hosing down the trackside brush. We reached Monahans at 5:30 p.m. Two freight cars blocked the way (m.p. 1.5) into the UP yard, so the hy-rail and one car began ferrying people to a toilet.

High thin clouds reflected the red and orange sunset as the last motorcar started back north at 6:30 p.m., on an 82-mile night run. The sky was clear; the star field stretched all the way to the horizon. Jupiter was the brightest object in the heavens, off to the southwest. Road traffic could be clearly seen at the crossings, so "slow and go" was the rule.

The only big problem occurred when an overloaded MT14 broke its rear axle. The car was towed three miles at slow speed, and set off at Jal. There were a few other short stops for minor fixes and adjustments to equipment. We arrived back in Hobbs at 11:30 p.m. At 206 miles, this was my longest day on a railroad, an endurance test for operator and equipment. I can't wait to go again!

We used Tuesday, 24 March, for a daylong re-position of over 600 miles, to Kearny, AZ, north of Tucson. Several people arrived as late as 11:30 p.m.

On Wednesday, 25 March, 23 cars set on at the Tilberry Street crossing (m.p. 993) of the Copper Basin Railway. The terrific combination of curves and grades here made this the training area for Southern Pacific engineers, when SP operated this track. Today, CB Rwy is a freight operation, which primarily hauls ore from two copper mines to the smelter in nearby Hayden. The railway is in the black, and has a profit-sharing plan with all 53 employees.

CB Rwy has mostly recovered from a 1993 flood. We saw ample evidence of ongoing repairs and upgrades, including a track gang working on a bridge. The rail was in gauge; it was the best we traveled on this tour.

Leaving Kearny, we ran west. After passing through one tunnel, we saw one of the two mines. After another tunnel, we were in the canyon. The mountainsides were covered with little grasses and large cacti of every kind. Scattered on the hills and right down to the



tracks, are yellow, orange, and purple wildflowers. On the distant horizon are mountains of sedimentary rock, rising from what was once an ocean floor.

At 11:00 a.m., we stopped at the townsite of Cockrin (m.p. 974.5). CB Rwy General Manager Jack Jacobson acted as our tour guide. Now, only the building foundations remain, but in the distance we could see four beehive-shaped coke ovens. Rolling again, we began to parallel the Gila River. We traversed two steel bridges and two more tunnels, to emerge into the farming country west of the canyon. We stopped at m.p. 959 for lunch and a potty break.

After lunch we continued west, almost to Florence. The wind kicked up, creating dust clouds that obscured the distant mountains. At 1:40 p.m., we turned the cars on a crossing at m.p. 951. Back in the canyon, protected from the wind, we made several photo stops. Near the bridge, next to the longest tunnel, Mr. Jacobson was again our tour guide. We walked to the remains of a two-room stone structure. According to Jake, this was a border guard post between Mexico and the U.S. prior to the 1853 Gadsden Purchase of land south of the Gila River.

The group arrived back at the set on point at 5:15 p.m., with one car in tow, due to a lost axle-bushing key. The Copper Basin Rwy had the best track, and our day spent there offered the best scenery and best weather of the tour. The evening was spent re-positioning to Bisbee, AZ.

On Thursday, 26 March, 19 cars set on at the San Pedro & Southwestern RR depot (m.p. 1.3). The weather consisted of drizzling rain off and on. Our 10:00 a.m. departure was moved up to 9:25 a.m., to accommodate locomotive movement for the tourist train.

We ran south, ahead of the train. The area has seen several waves of human habitation. First came the Spaniards, to establish a Presidio in 1775. Next came miners who worked the Tombstone area. More recently, in this century, farming has left the area with little more than short grasses, sagebrush, and cottonwood trees for flora. Gone are the cactus and wild flowers of yesterday. However, the country has its own beauty, punctuated by the celery-stalk green of the fresh cottonwood leaves.

Our first stop was for a photo run-by at the m.p. 11.5 trestle. The second stop was Fairbank (m.p. 18.8), settled around 1882 as a railroad supply point. Today a cat and a snake occupy the former post office and general store. The small rattlesnake was visible on the floor, through the front door glass. The white cat gains entrance using a tree stump to vault into a hole in the adobe wall. What truce the cat and snake have arranged is unknown.

Turn-around and lunch were at Charleston Road (m.p. 26.1), at 11:50 a.m. The day was cold, but the sky cleared and it warmed a bit as we ate. We waited while the tourist train engines switched around, using a siding, and headed back north. Originally, the motorcar tour would have gone another 23 miles south, to Naco, AZ. However, the San Pedro & SW has filed for abandonment past our lunch point. The rail is blocked with a locked derail.

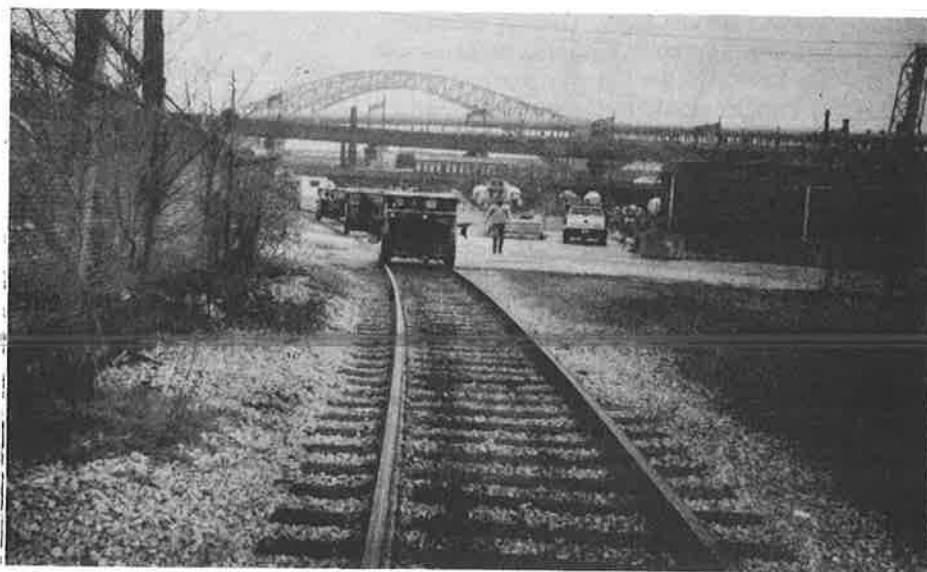
Just as we started our engines at 1:15 p.m., a cold, blowing rain, mixed with hail, hit us. One car wouldn't start, due to a broken starter. I took the MT14-L into tow, and invited the occupants into my enclosed car. We returned to Fairbanks for a potty stop, but the weather discouraged any more stops. We set off at the Bisbee depot around 3:45 p.m.

My thanks to all the event coordinators and the railroad officials who made this tour possible. Thank you for hosting us!

*Photo by Goodells*

*May 17, 1997*

*Cleveland Flats*





## Want Ads

*Editor's Note: THE SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from members. Send ads directly to: Bill Hurtig, SETOFF Editor, 410 N. Custer Box 81, Delphos, KS 67436. 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:** Fairmont ROA engine for an M9 from 1939. Good parts engine or for rebuild, \$200.00. Also, a windshield and roof with back bracket for an M9. Original Central Vermont, all aluminum, \$150.00. Contact Brendan Matthews, 526 High St., Middletown, CT 06457; phone (860) 344-8464.

**FOR SALE:** Why not have a spare axle bearing assembly on hand, just in case? I have several new, old stock, axle bearings (assembled), part no. 55607, on special sale now through May 31, 1998, for \$80.00 each, and I'll stand the shipping. Fairmont's 1993 Repair Parts Price List quoted \$156.75, so you figure the savings!. Contact Jim Dobbins, RR2, Box 105, Goff, KS 66428; phone (785) 868-2388.

**WANTED:** Velocipede plans. I am looking for the plans for a Kalamazoo model No. 14. This is the one with the removable wooden tray. Contact Mike Snetsinger, 417 Euclid St., Whitby, Ontario, Canada L1N 5B7; phone (905) 668-0536.

**FOR SALE:** Motorcar theme caps. Over 35 different designs. Send LSASE for color illustrated brochure with prices. Can also custom make hat with your car and Fairmont logo. Contact Dallas McDowell, 5253 Hattie Nolan Rd., Middleburg, FL 32068-3135.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont self-stick logo made from 2 mil., high quality vinyl. Sticks to any smooth surface. Looks like original Fairmont decal, 10" long. Available in black or red, \$8.00 each, or two for \$15.00, includes postage. Contact Dallas McDowell, see ad above.

**WANTED:** One or more of the following Fairmont parts for M9-G: M17081 brake shoes; M33628 axle bearing cover; right side rail skid with brackets, 1 3/8" x 1 15/16" x 39 7/8" long. Parts for ROC engine: F7339 piston rings, copper head gasket, gasket between water tank and crankcase. Contact Vic Cross, 3282 Old Quarry Rd., Wever, IA 52658; phone (319) 528-4369.

**FOR SALE:** Fairmont MT19-A-1, built 1975, ex-Chicago & Northwestern car. In excellent condition. Rubber wheels on back, equipped with flange brakes (extra brake shoes included). Full cab with curtains, good glass, amber osc. light on top, red strobe on rear. Onan CCKB engine, \$2,500.00. Fairmont M9-G2, built 1958, ex-Illinois Central. Completely restored except for engine. ROC engine. Has two Fairmont seats, windshield and roof, no curtains. Have set of new 14" wheels (extra \$175.00), \$2,200.00. All aluminum motorcar trailer. Built to carry M9, M19, MT19 and have hauled MT14. Heavy-duty single axle, equipped with electric brakes and break-away brakes. Winch, ramps, dolly wheel, spare tire/wheel (14") and full light package, \$2,000.00. Miscellaneous parts for Fairmont motorcars: 2 condensers for ROC engine, 2 C-5 carbs, C-8 carb, various curtains with hardware (could be used for pat-terns), original switch buttons for light switches, oval gas tank for M9 or MT19, front axle for MT19, some used 16" wheels, 4 rubber treads for 16" wheels, heavy duty tow bar, and other additional parts. Contact Ken Ward, 1401 Woodcliff Dr., South Elgin, IL 60177 (phone 847/741-1827 EVENINGS)

**WANTED:** Handcar, complete, restored or project. Sheffield, Sylvester or other comparable manufacturer. Contact Chris Baldo, 220 Franklin Ave., Willits, CA 95490; phone (707) 459-4549 work, (707) 459-2600 home, (707) 459-0775 FAX. Or e-mail wlltsrwd@zapcom.net.

**FOR SALE:** Track charts and profiles. Railroad-issue map books of graphic and technical information highlighting track arrangements, gradients, curve degrees, bridges, signals, facilities, stations, crossings, abandoned lines, etc. Short lines to major roads, past and present. Large catalog, \$2.00. Contact Dave Cramer, 2114 Sheridan Drive, Madison, WI 53704.

**WANTED:** Fairmont MT19, ex-CN or ex-CP car. Contact Dave Dumont, 757 Lick Street, Groton, NY 13073; phone (607) 898-3300 days, (607) 898-3388 evenings.

**FOR SALE:** MT14-L-2, ex-CN. Full cab with four boat seats, new paint, new windows, auto greasers on axles. Plus single axle trailer. Runs great, entire rig, \$2,000.00. Pictures available. Contact Douglas Exline, 404 Westchester, Topeka, KS 66606; phone (785) 272-3533.

**FOR SALE:** Limited number of brand new Fairmont OEM seats. Walnut vinyl, black hinged tube frame. Back rest, \$48.00; seat, \$47.00; tube frame, \$39.00. Complete seat assembly, \$129.95, plus shipping and handling. Contact Clinton Andrews, 892 Beaconsfield, Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230; phone (313) 822-2000.

**FOR SALE:** Used heavy duty tow bar, \$75. #M34724 used differential axle; \$100. #166-0535 used 12-V Onan coil; \$10. #102895 new idler sprocket & support; \$100. #M34724 used differential axle w/ 2, 16" wheels & 2 bearings mounted on axle; \$150. 2 #M34724 used axles w/ bearings; \$75. 2 new electric cab fans; \$35. #26VFIS-1

Solex carburetor; \$150. Used red 12-V strobe light; \$20. New #1374 oil filter (Onan #122-0323); \$3. 4 used 16" wheels; \$50. #P6578 belt pulley; \$30. New #F7978 drive belt; \$75. 2 #76991 brackets; \$1. 8 #46526 brake brackets; \$5. #M32736 arm; \$5. #M37040KA belt pulley; \$50. 3 new aluminum roof canopies (42"long X 61" wide) w/ back braces (fit M9 or other); \$100. #69636 curtain bracket; \$25. 3 S2 motorcars; \$500; M19 motorcar; \$400; 2 MT19 motorcars; \$1,200. W64 derrick crane; \$800. T11 trailer; \$400. All items F.O.B. Burleson, TX. Contact M.W. Kirby, 215 Tracy Lee Ct., Burleson, TX 76028; phone (817) 478-0773.

FOR SALE: Small marker lights as used on the WP and other lines, made from original Pyle National molds. Wired for 12-volt operation. Ideal for motorcars, \$250.00 a pair with brackets for each. Include \$10.00 for shipping. Contact Glenn Beier, 6697 Long Ave., Placerville, CA 95667; phone (916) 622-9644.

FOR SALE: ADDRESS LABELS: Put *your motorcar* on personalized, computer-generated address labels: 2 sizes available: 1/2" X 1-3/4" (76 labels/sheet); 1" X 2-5/8" (30 labels/sheet); 1st sheet \$5.00; additional sheets @ \$3.00. Send check or M.O. with your address (as you want it on the labels), picture (or detailed description: i.e. type, color, special features) of your motorcar to: David E. Jordan, 64109 Columbia River Hwy., Deer Island, OR 97054.

FOR SALE: Cheap, effective foot protection: (Steel-tipped safety shoes/boots are expensive and uncomfortable!) Protect your toes while wearing any normal street shoe by using heavy duty plastic toe protectors, which slip on over nearly any shoe or boot. Light weight; really work! One size fits all; gov't surplus (new, unused): \$5.00/pr. + postage (\$7.50/1 pr; \$13.00/2 pr; \$18.50/3 pr; \$24.00/4 pr). Also .30 cal. military ammo boxes (make excellent tool boxes), used, excellent condition, no rust @ \$2.00 + postage (\$8.00/1 box; \$11.00/2; \$13.50/3; \$16.00/4). Tom Sharratt, Rt. 1 Box 104A, Westby, WI 54667 (phone 608/634-2118)

FOR SALE: Flashing LED Buttons featuring a Fairmont motorcar in bright safety yellow with a LED light in the car's headlight. LED flashes when you pin on the button. Replaceable watch batteries last over 100 hours. Button measures 1 1/4" in diameter and has a white background with black outline. These very popular and attractive LED Buttons make excellent fund-raisers for Motorcar Clubs. Retail orders, send \$4.95 per button plus 75 cents per button postage. We stock over 50 various LED Button designs; send for your free list. Dealer inquiries also to: Railfan Specialties, P.O. Box 10245, Wilmington, NC 28405; phone (910) 686-2820.

FOR SALE: Back by popular demand! Scale plans to build your own replica Sheffield 2-4 person hand pump car. Includes all drawings & bill of materials to build your own car. \$60 per package, postage paid. Send to Bruce Carpenter, 10241 Co. Rd. 25A, Wapakoneta, OH 45895 (phone 419/738-5384)

FOR SALE: Canadian National MT14-L motorcar (completely restored, ready to run); also, new trailer, professionally built; \$3,900 OBO. Kaye Juhl (phone 707/448-7123) (e-mail VACAFARM@AOL.COM)

FOR SALE: Full-size 3-chime locomotive air horn; automatic bell as currently used on locomotives. Tom Falcon (Rail Dawg) (phone 813/447-7900 or 828/488-8063; FAX 813/796-3132).

FOR SALE: Hy-rail pick-up: 1986 Ford Ranger w/Fairmont hy-rail gear; 2.9L V6; automatic OD transmission; AM-FM/Cassette; power steering; power brakes; saddle toolbox in rear, spare w/Fairmont rim; more! Fred Lonnes, PO Box 92, Western Springs, IL 60558. (phone 708/246-3666 evenings)(e-mail lonnesfd@flash.net).

FOR SALE: 1981 Fairmont MT14 w/completely enclosed aluminum cab; 4-seater (front 2 easily removed); Onan engine; single chain drive; added brake pedal; fuse panel; lights (dome, strobe, ditch, stops, backup, markers); vinyl weather front. Very clean, dependable, ready for the rails. Ask about delivery. Photos & references available for serious inquiries. Also: H.D. (motorcar) push cart trailer axles w/bearings & hubs; one trailer complete. Also: Fairmont caps, good quality; embroidery in yellow/gold on black, red, blue, green: \$15.00 + \$2.00 S&H. Jeff Shelton, 1348 Carlos Dr. Roanoke, VA 24019 (phone 540/362-2774; FAX 540/563-2932)(e-mail JSHELTON@AOL.COM)

FOR SALE: New parts for Fairmont cars: M9 brake shoes & liners @ \$20; M9 flange brake shoes & liners @ \$20; M14, M19 flange brake shoes & liners @ \$20; M14, M19, MT14, MT19 brake shoes & liners @ \$12.50; #46500-46501 setoff skids @ \$30; #46556 lift handles @ \$75; #98397 lift handle bracket @ \$6; #M-18457 brake pivot stud @ \$12.50; #M-17082 brake shoe hanger @ \$12; #M-18930 brake hanger pin @ \$6.00; #46565 fuel tank (4-1/2 gal.) @ \$110; 6-gal fuel tank @ \$125; #F-13212-F9085 black seat cushions @ \$32.50; folding seat frame @ \$35; non-folding seat frame @ \$27.50; M19 & MT19 seat mounting brackets @ \$30/set; M19 & MT19 side curtains @ \$175/3 pc. set. Les King, 1835 Alabama Ave. NW, North Lawrence, OH 44666 (phone 330/833-2868; FAX 330/830-5213)

FOR SALE: Fairbanks-Morse 40B car #48239, engine #27119; good condition; runs; lights; needs paint on wood parts; (cab included for parts or pattern only). Lynn Heintz, Box 190, Berber, NY 14416 (phone 716-768-6984 message; 716/343-3873 after 9:00 p.m.)

FOR SALE: Fairmont A3; Wukesha ICK engine; new wood & paint; w/front windshield & top; \$1,500. Tom Jenness, 5479 R Ave., Cherokee, IA 51012 (phone 712/225-2614)

FOR SALE: 1981 Chev. hy-rail: club cab; very good condition; less than 2,000 mi. on rebuilt hy-rail gear; bed liner; AM/FM radio; tow hitch; good tires; 3-speed manual transmission. Former BN; now painted CNW colors w/door decals: \$6,000. Call Ralph 920/437-7623 days; 920/692-9006 evenings. (e-mail bart1@execpc.com)

WANTED: Water hopper for RO-B, or complete engine; also: large hand or foot gong. Jim Spicer, 91375 Coburg Rd., Eugene, OR 97408 (phone 541/344-3079).

FOR SALE: TRACKCAR VIDEOS w/music & narration (standard play on VHS): Peace River, Alberta to Coppermine & return; 3-1/2 hrs. \$25; Central Montana & Alberta Prairie RRs; 96 min. \$15; CN cab ride: Peace River, Alberta to Roma Jct. & return; 86 min. \$15; Copper Canyon, Mexico; March 1996; 2 hrs. \$15; Copper Canyon, Mexico, March 1996; Chihuahua to El Fuerte & return; 3 tapes; 6 hrs. \$39; coming soon: North Bay to Swastika & Ottawa Valley 1997. Credit card or check to: Picture This/William Kozel, 23 Lee Ave., Rexford, NY 12148-1209 (phone 518/399-5836).

FOR SALE: FAIRMONT PARTS: #A692 engine belt pulley (C7, M14), new \$35; #A1127A idler pulley ass'y (C7, M14), used \$50; #A11224 complete timer ass'y for OD engines, brand new w/points, cond. & #A1225 castings, new \$100; #A1225 mounting castings only (OD engines), new \$30; C5 carburetors: completely rebuilt w/new parts to perform & look as new, \$300; #F5254 drive belt (C7, M14), new \$125; #M16718 brake shaft (C7, M14, MT14), new \$75; #QB-13A bronze bearing cap (S2, ST2), new \$60; #QB-13B bearing insert (S2, ST2), new \$50; #45553 complete "Weathersid" timer for RO engines: incl #57309 block w/gasket, points, cond. & #57306 castings, new \$95; #45554 timer mounting castings for early non-adjustable timer, new \$40; #49646 axle bearing casing w/bearing for 1-7/16" axle (C7, M14), new \$45; #57309 timer block only w/gasket, points & cond. for "Weathersid" timer #45553, new \$50; #70231 control panel, complete (S2, ST2) new \$60; #100132 trans. shift lever (MT14, MT19), new \$20; #100137 exh. pipe (MT14), new \$30; #100152 complete control panel (MY14), new \$60; motorcar semaphore indicators: cast iron case w/ glass window protecting small semaphore blade actuated by 12-VDC magnets. (These mounted next to track on 3' post for correct height to be seen from a motorcar, and protected the motorcars from approaching trains by indicating the position of the block signals, allowing the section crews time to exit the track.), ex. used \$250; all items + UPS shipping. Doug Heinmuller, 115 West St., Bar Harbor, ME 04609 (phone 207/288-4332 after 7:00 p.m. EST)

FOR SALE: Woodings & Fairmont motorcars: running condition: 2-seaters from \$1,450; 4-seaters from \$1,650. Also a few others @ \$550 US, as is. Grant Sweetnam (phone 604/850-9166 FAX 850-9220)(e-mail grant@pnrail.com)

FOR SALE: 1937 Fairmont S2 (CRIPRR #MC-717); needs restoration; has aluminum windscreen & top; engine turns; also incl. misc.spare parts. 1993 Fairmont MT19-A (SPRR); 95% restored (needs to have windshield, wiring, and lifting handles installed); 16 HP Onan w/chain drive & 2-speed trans.; alternator; fully enclosed cab. Fairmont S2, converted to gang trailer. Cars are located in Houston, TX. Mark B. Edwards, e-mail: iam/941022@iamerica.net

**IF IT CAN BE DONE SAFELY, DO IT!**

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