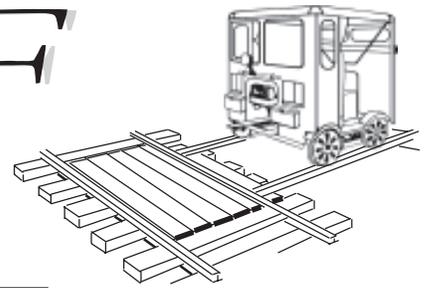


The *SETOFF*



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

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*July/August 2004 Volume 18 - No. 3*

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**Please submit materials  
for the September/October  
issue of**

The **SETOFF**

**by August 28  
as follows:**

**Classified Ads  
Excursion Announcements**

Bill Coulson  
964 Williams Lake Road  
Colville, WA 99114  
[wcoulson@surfbest.net](mailto:wcoulson@surfbest.net)

**Letters to the Editor  
All other materials  
Photos**

Charlene Morvay  
17825 Route 8  
Union City, PA 16438  
[golfnuts@velocity.net](mailto:golfnuts@velocity.net)



## Cover Photo

*The cover image is a  
photo taken by  
Bob Knight,  
Chairman, Safety  
Committee.  
See story, page 6.*

## President's Message

Summer is upon us and runs seem to be occurring successfully throughout the United States and Canada. I hope you have been able to enjoy one or more runs this year.

Carl Anderson, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, advises he is receiving a good turn out of votes this year. He points out that 44% of you have taken the time to vote. That is great for you and our Association. Please accept our thanks for participating.

Association business has been fairly quiet, although we have had several incidents and accidents. Folks, we need to be aware of the very important necessity of this hobby – insurance. We need to be protective of the insurance and we can do that by operating wisely and safely. No one enjoys rolling down the tracks more than I do. Please recognize the need for safety while doing so. Without our liability coverage, the ability to conduct runs can cease. Please also be aware that your actions on and off the tracks reflect on NARCOA. We recently had an incident where a NARCOA member did some unauthorized operating on rails without permission and was caught. His actions were immediately pointed back to NARCOA by the railroad staff. Had we not been able to show his runs were not within NARCOA rules and without our approval, we would have received a serious black mark on our record by the railroad and its contacts. Our Judicial Committee's quick and thorough investigation of the incidents allowed us to show the professionalism of our Association.

While on the insurance subject, I believe excursion coordinators will be more diligent in asking to see your NARCOA license and insurance card, not to hassle you, but to ensure that all operators have current coverage. Were an uninsured operator to be found after an accident occurs would be putting our association coverage at risk.

We make available to you two types of insurance. The Liability portion is mandatory for run participation. This is purchased by you each year that you wish to operate and insures the railroad. The other is optional for property damage and does not provide you the ability to operate on NARCOA runs. Failure to show your license and insurance card to an EC will result in your not being to operate on one or more runs.

NARCOA Board of Directors have not passed any new rules since the last board meeting in December 2003. For some reason, I keep hearing that we have passed a new rule or rules. This is not a goal or necessity of the Board. If we are considering a rule change, it will be posted in The Setoff for your consideration and comment to the Area Director. It will then be voted on by the Board after discussion. Rule changes are handled in the same manner. We value and need your input.

Have a safe and enjoyable  
summer.

Best Regards,

Pat Coleman  
NARCOA President



## Photos for 2005 NARCOA Calendar

It's that time of year again. I am again collecting sharp color or black and white photos for the 2005 NARCOA calendar.

Prints should be horizontal to better fit the format of the calendar. Try to include interesting scenery in your photos. Also remember that motorcars run in all seasons, not only in summer.

The deadline for submissions will be October 15, 2004.

Please send prints to:

Bob Schuknecht  
516 1/2 N. Charles St.  
Saginaw, MI 48602-4037

I should be able to make prints from photos sent by email this year. Send submissions by email to:

rjschuknecht@yahoo.com



## Submitting Materials for Publication

- 1 Materials received by the 28th of February, April, June, August, October or December will appear in the following two-month issue, subject to editing for space. Include email address or phone number.
- 2 Submit hard copy or jpeg images, clearly labeled as to subject and photographer.
- 3 Electronic submissions are preferred for text.
- 4 We cannot reprint copyrighted material without authorization. Include permission to reprint with all copyrighted materials.
- 5 Originals are archived, not returned.
- 6 Letters to the Editor must be signed and include email address or phone number for authentication. "Name withheld upon request" may be substituted when the letter is published. All such letters will be printed as discussed in the NARCOA policy book.

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## The SETOFF

Volume 18 Number 3

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Editor	Charlene Morvay 17825 Route 8 Union City, PA 16438 golfnuts@velocity.net
Publisher	Ernie Jeschke 4106 N. Adrian Hwy. Adrian, MI 49221 ejeske@tc3net.com
NARCOA Membership	Joel Williams Box 802 Lock Haven, PA 17745 joel.williams@earthlink.net

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 \$24 per year and is available from Membership Secretary Joel Williams at the above address.

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Visit NARCOA's Website at:  
<http://www.narcoa.org>

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## Area News

by Tom Falicon



Area Four

Hi all of you Area Four people! We're right in the middle the summer season, the kudzu is growing a foot a day, excursions are being run everywhere and that means the potential for accidents abounds. Many of the excursions we attend are located near places that attract other tourists. This means added highway traffic at many crossings, and it means that there will be many drivers that are being distracted by yelling at the kids, or by trying to figure out where they made that wrong turn a while back. Being the safety conscious motorcar operators that we are, we all need to use extra caution and alertness when we approach each crossing. Unless your motorcar is the size and weight of a locomotive, you're always going to be the one that loses when you make contact with a car. At the excursions that I host, it is required that each car come to a complete stop at each crossing no matter what size it is. Sure it's a pain in the ass, especially for the belted cars. But the alternative is worse . . . serious injury or having the hosting railroad tell me they don't want us back because we didn't use enough caution at a crossing.

There are plenty of miles of crossing-free tangent rail for us to run on. The stop at each crossing is just a very small price to pay for a day free from accidents. I try to host an excursion that does not put the RR out one bit. For instance, if I see that the RR's dispatcher doesn't come on duty until 7:00 a.m. and I wanted the excursion to be rolling by 7:00, I just move my departure time back a half hour and the RR doesn't have to pay the dispatcher overtime or have to think about getting someone in early just for the motorcar group. Being considerate is the key to keeping the hosting RR's happy. We should all be very considerate by using the extra effort to run safe and not give the hosting RR anything else out of the ordinary to think about (especially a grade crossing incident).

Phil Raynes has had a health scare regarding his heart, but things look positive and with his good attitude, Phil will be back on track in no time. Even though Phil doesn't reside in Area Four, we consider him an "honorary member" because he ran his first NARCOA-insured excursion with us in Area Four last year. We all wish you a quick recovery Phil!

If any of you Area Four members have any news that you'd like me to announce, I'd love to include it in this column. You guys have got to be tired of just hearing about me; let's hear from some of you other Area Four members. Just give me a call, or you can email your Area 4 stories, news or points of views.

Those of you that are interested in custom-built or highly modified motorcars, our Custom-Built Committee has a rough draft of the guidelines completed. Look for details about the guidelines in a future issue of the SETOFF.

Not much more going on around here but work. It seems like any which way I turn there's a pile of work waiting for me. I guess I spoke a little too soon in my last Area 4 Newsletter about being done making steam loco parts for this year. The GSMRR steam loco that I machine parts for developed a boiler leak a few weeks ago and I got to experience the "thrill" of riveting boiler plates back together (my ears are still ringing!). Thomas the Tank engine will be coming in later this month and he'll spend each afternoon looking over my shoulder as I turn parts on the lathe. I must admit, Thomas is the perfect gentleman. He just sits there and watches me work and never even pops off his steam relief valve which could cause me to ruin a part.

I'm outta here guys . . . be good and be safe. Talk to you again in the early fall.

Tom (Rail Dawg) Falicon



They say that sometimes “NO news is GOOD news”. This, of course is not true with an organization such as ours.

However, I have absolutely nothing to report here that is particularly Canadian, or of importance to our international members only.

And that is sad, so to those members of Area 8, I ask you to communicate with me about your likes or dislikes, your concerns or your endorsements of the club, or perhaps your adventures in this great hobby.

However, I would like to speak for ALL the members of this Area, when I thank Jan Taylor for her tremendous efforts these past years as our Editor of the Setoff. Jan gave our newsletter a professional make-over that we can ALL be proud of. She has done a great job for us and we wish her well as she expands her involvement in another area of railroading interests.

Also, I would like to welcome Charlene Morvay, who is taking over from Jan as Editor, and I look forward to some great issues from her as well. Let’s help her get started by sending in that article that you have been thinking about writing, or photos that you have been collecting over the years.

Let’s change that old adage to “SHARING news is GOOD news”!!

## Area News

by Ken Annett



Area Eight



## Editor’s Note

by Charlene Morvay

Wanted to take a moment to say hello to everyone and assure you all that future issues of The SETOFF should arrive in a more timely fashion. The transition has been a real learning experience.

Thanks to Jan Taylor for putting up with my many emails requesting graphics, templates, etc., for my new role. I’ll try to do as good a job as she did.

Just a note to PLEASE, when submitting articles for The SETOFF via email, put SETOFF in the subject line. With all the spam (let alone the viruses and Spyware) out there, I delete everything that looks questionable. I can’t even begin to know all the members of NARCOA, so that would be a great help to me and ensure that your articles are included in The SETOFF.

When submitting photos electronically, please make them small (under 1MP). If your camera has a choice of settings, please use 1MP. I have OLD country phone lines and can’t get DSL, so your cooperation would really be appreciated. The alternative to using a lesser MP setting would be to whittle them down before sending (in a photo program).

Snail mails and photos requiring scanning were placed aside for future issues. I did receive some, but due to the handover, found it impossible to include in this issue.

I welcome any comments and suggestions that would make this a better communication, so let `em rip.

Thanks, and see you on the rails!



Area 10 members, please welcome Charlene Morvay, Union City, Pennsylvania, as the newest editor of *The Setoff*. Charlene has agreed to assume the position after our own Area 10 member Jan Taylor steps down after five years. Thanks to Jan for the many hours of volunteer labor to provide NARCOA with an excellent news publication, and to Charlene for stepping up to the plate as new editor!

That prompts a few thoughts on Area 10 representation and volunteer positions. NARCOA, and the hobby in general, are dependent upon volunteers to provide countless hours of effort to coordinate excursions, solicit host railroads, process necessary paperwork, and act as officers, directors and committee members for NARCOA and our affiliates. Now that Jan has stepped down as editor, Area 10 has lost some representation at the NARCOA officer, director and committee level.

If your current involvement in the hobby is just attending an excursion or two, consider volunteering time in the NARCOA or Affiliate associations. NARCOA has eleven directors that represent geographical areas of states, each director elected by members in those states. Two nonvoting directors at large can be appointed by the president. I'm currently Area 10 director, treasurer and insurance administrator. NARCOA's bylaws require only the president and vice president to be elected from those directors, while secretary, treasurer, editor, committee chairs and committee members do not need to be directors but can be selected from the general NARCOA membership. So step up Area 10 members and let the NARCOA president know that you would like to volunteer for a position. For instance, Area 10 could be represented by a new director, and I could continue to volunteer as treasurer, or insurance administrator, or any other combination, or volunteer to be on a NARCOA committee. This would give Area 10 more representation at NARCOA board meetings, not to mention spreading responsibility over more members.

If you aren't interested at volunteering at the NARCOA level, offer your assistance at the affiliate level. Affiliates have committees that need to be manned, excursion coordinators need assistance in planning and operating excursions. If we all contribute our time and talent to our hobby, we can accomplish many tasks with less effort, resulting in more opportunities to operate our motorcars!

Thanks!

Tom Norman



## **Area News**

by Tom Norman



**Area Ten**

## The Safety Committee Update

by Bob Knight, Chairman, NARCOA Safety Committee



Do you remember the first time you actually operated a motorcar? Was it done with great anticipation powered by adrenalin, or was it with fear? I remember my first time as I was being mentored by my good friend, Mike Mitzel. We used my almost rebuilt 1943 M19 (cover photo – before turntables) and all went well for the first three miles, than disaster struck! The old wiring caught fire, followed by the discovery of a dripping gas line. Not a good combination! Thank goodness we had the wire problem under control before any gas got involved. When the situation returned to a more normal condition, we decided not to try to restart the car, but to push it back the three miles (with over a mile of grade) and I soon discovered that railroad ties are not to the same spacing as one's pace!

Why talk about the first motorcar run? Because every one of us has a fond memory about that first run. I'm sure some have been more hair raising than the one above.

The first run is all about that new member and one of the reasons the BOD gave the Safety Committee the task of designing and implementing a mentoring program that could be used by all affiliates for the benefit of new members. To date, the veteran members have mentored 36 new members from all parts of the U.S. Canada has also joining the program. Comments have been excellent and encouraging stating that the new member has ended the mentoring session with new found knowledge, information and assurance about their motorcar and operational procedures. The most recorded comment is that new operators have ended the mentoring session with "a renewed and greater respect for operating procedures and safety on the rails".

Another task was to expand the membership of the safety committee to better represent the geographic scope of the committee.

The committee membership now consists of the following:

1. Robert (Rob) H. Piligian of Whitehall, PA, who was recommended by board director, Warren Riccitelli.
2. Victor (Brent) Gordan of Roseville, CA, who was recommended by President, Pat Coleman.
3. Kenneth Huffines of Stone Mountain, GA, who was recommended by past president, Tom Falicon.

We are presently working on a representative from Canada and another within the railroad industry. This group will soon be reviewing the several accidents that have occurred this season. Our job is to review each one for study of how it might have been prevented. A recent interesting point was made by Kenneth Huffines concerning the "time" during a motorcar excursion when accidents are likely to happen. He asked if there is a relationship between the return leg of a run when the operators might be tired and not as observant as the first part of the run. An interesting point to research while reviewing accident reports.

The safety committee will continue to inform you with interesting and informative information concerning safety issues of interest. Please send us your ideas, thoughts and stories. Talk to the committee members; they appreciate your input.

Remember to keep it safe on the rails for the rest of the season.



## Want Ads

The SETOFF is happy to print all ads received from members. There is no charge for placing an ad. All ads will run for three issues; please notify if item is sold. No full page ads are accepted.

Send ads directly to **Bill Coulson, 964 Williams Lake Road, Colville, Washington 99114-9617, or email [wcoulson@surfbest.net](mailto:wcoulson@surfbest.net)**

### For Sale

**Fairmont 1949 M9G** – Car and ROC engine were rebuilt in 1993, all new gaskets in carburetor. Electrical system has been converted to 12 volts with alternator. Car is complete with aluminum flooring, lift handles, belt, brake shoes, wheels, and flashing brake lights. There is a 12-volt halogen headlight installed. Also installed are Fairmont mud flaps and a flat Fairmont side muffler. One seat mounted on the left side, other side is loose. Nice car to convert to NG. Car has been faithfully stored indoors. Asking \$3,000. Also available is an original deep-dish roof for an M9. Asking \$100. Contact Jeff Mast, 43779 Oakbrook, Canton MI. Tel: (734) 459-5181 Monday to Friday 7:00-9:00 pm or weekends or email: [jmascp@wwnet.net](mailto:jmascp@wwnet.net). SO04

**Fairmont Railway Motor Car** – Master M2 and a predecessor to S2 style. Belt driven, 20" wheels, metal front with 2 windows, metal running boards, 8 HP, Type HP QBA, Group E, Special 1, Mak HP 13, Engine #82573. Car in running order and all in original form as when retired from the High Point, Thomasville & Denton RR Co. Also an original turntable goes with car. One piece of turntable missing. Price is \$2150. for both items. Contact Ray Hinkle, Box 1127, Welcome NC 27374 or Tel. (336) 731-4231 or email: [HINKLEHERE@AOL.COM](mailto:HINKLEHERE@AOL.COM). SO04

**NARROW GAUGE (36") MT-19 CHASSIS & RUNNING GEAR ONLY** – Needs Onan engine, Fairmont transmission, brake shoes, and linkage. Complete with drive sprocket, gas tank, running board extenders, fenders, two seats, and seat belts. Photo available. Asking \$300. Contact R.W. Sackett, Tel: (425) 643-0669. SO04

**FAIRBANKS-MORSE 40-B Railroad Motor Car**, 2-cylinder air-cooled engine, friction drive. Car in running order and all in original form as when retired from the Winston-Salem Southbound Railway. An original turn table goes with car. Price is \$2150 for both items. Ray Hinkle, Box 1127, Welcome NC 27374 or Tel. (336) 731-4231 or email: [HINKLEHERE@AOL.COM](mailto:HINKLEHERE@AOL.COM). SO04

**FAIRMONT M19 AA** – This car is a rare, original 1963 Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, with the RKB twin cylinder hit & miss engine. Car has the aluminum windshield with roof and appears to have had low usage and no damage. Included is an operations and parts manual plus the build sheet. Call for price. Walter B. Powell, 345 West End Ave.# 9 Manheim PA 17545. Tel: (717) 629-1390. No calls after 8:00 PM, please. SO04

**1993 Chevrolet Hy-Rail** – This vehicle is an ex-BNSF signal maintainers truck equipped with a Fairmont Tampo Harsco guide wheel assembly. These wheels are 9" cast with bonded rubber tires and are manually operated. The truck is a 2500 series, 3/4-ton pickup, with a 350 engine, automatic over-drive transmission and good 8R19.5 tires that are possibly 12-ply and F-rated. Also equipped is a Stal service box that is very well built. Vehicle does have high mileage at 164,000 plus miles, but rides and sounds great. There are a couple of dings on the body Asking \$50,000. Vehicle is located near Abilene TX. I can email pictures and more information upon request. Contact Loren Little Tel: (936) 377-5214 or email: [LLITTLE85@ISP.COM](mailto:LLITTLE85@ISP.COM). SO04

**Two FAIRMONT MT19As** – These two cars are some of the last Fairmont "flat top" cars on the market today. These cars are railroad condition, fresh off the Utah Railroad. Mechanically sound, good wheels and brakes with CCKB engines. Buy now and be ready for spring. Available in Washington State. Pictures are available upon request. Asking \$3,000 each. Contact Terry Wade Tel: (360) 893-2290 or email: [railstails@yahoo.com](mailto:railstails@yahoo.com). JA04

**FAIRMONT MT-14s, MT-19 cab, RKB, and RQD motors, block signals**  
Two MT-14s with one "Les King" - new never started 20-HP Briggs conversion kit. These cars are rough, but mostly all there. Neither car has its original Onan engine or transmission. All glass is good, intact and usable. The supplied clutch and pressure plate are "used" but appear to be in good condition. The supplied transmission checks good with no bad gears. Price for these two cars and one new engine is \$2,700-OBO. Free delivery to any Arizona border. Also offered an MT-19 cab only. Cab is missing one door, but is in fair shape, including the glass. Asking \$150-OBO. Also offered an RKB engine, for an "AA" car. I have not started the engine, but it looks good. The manifolds are not broken, condenser looks great, and it has most of the original equipment. Asking \$1,350, includes free shipping within mainland USA. Or I will take requests for parts, and let this engine become a "donor." Also available two RQD engines. One offered at \$500 and one offered at \$200-OBO. These engines are also offered as a "donors." I also offer motorcar "block signals" like those featured in July/Aug The SET-OFF These are un-restored projects, but mechanism is guaranteed to work and includes new glass. Asking \$50 to \$100 each. Contact Dave Myers, Tel: (928) 567-6285 or email at [dmyers@verdeonline.com](mailto:dmyers@verdeonline.com). JA04

**VELOCIPEDE** – Sheffield No. 1, this museum quality artifact has been completely remanufactured from oak and Sheffield hardware. Also included with this piece is an extra three-foot gage extension arm with rigging. Price is \$3,000 FOB Reno NV. Contact Fred Lienhard Tel: (775) 323-0928 JA04

**Equipment Road Trailer** – One motorcar 4'x6' equipment trailer, built in the late 60s or early 70s but the actual age is unknown. Trailer has an all-metal undercarriage with a wood deck. This trailer is complete in good condition and is fully functional with hand brake and hitch points for pulling. Photo's of the trailer are available upon request and must be picked up in Sturgis, South Dakota. Asking \$150, contact Alan Drews, tel:(970) 523-2055 (please leave message) or email ajdrews2 @msn.com JA04

**FAIRMONT M19** – I have two Fairmont M19s for sale. One is a 1953 model, and the other is a 1943. Both are single-cylinder 2-stroke. See pictures on the NARCOA ad website. Also included is a large lot of speeder parts, all for \$4000. Contact Bill Young, Rt 4 Box 230, Bruceton Mills WV 26525. Tel: (304) 379-7784 JA04

**CURTAIN SET** – Side and rear curtains for a Fairmont MT 19A. New, still in box. Price \$200. Contact Mr. Paul Beddoe, P.O. Box 8, Lenni Road, Lenni, PA 19052 Tel: (610) 358-0633 JA04

**Hy-Rail Wheels** – I have a complete set of Hy-Rail wheels that will fit a three-quarter ton Ford, Chevrolet or Dodge etc. I will sell or trade for a speeder. Contact Tom Tucker 93941 Blind Sough Station Road Astoria, Oregon 97103. Tel: (503) 458-6345 ND04

**C-5 and C-8 Rebuilding and Parts** – I have Weatherseal and Hy-Duty timer parts and head gaskets for ROC, OD, RQ & QBA. Gasket kits for ROC & OD engines. Contact Carey Boney 1605 Powers Rd Wallace NC 28466. Tel: (910) 285-7489 or email: careyboney@earthlink.net ND04

**ROC Crankshaft** – New with all bearings and races. Priced at \$650.00 Contact Rod D. Whitney 10 North Street Willits, CA. 95490. Tel: (707) 459-2025 or email: policespeeder@instawave.net ND04

**MT14 Fairmont. Soo 7700-33.** Original number with new paint. Yellow to match original as close as possible. Two Fairmont and two boat seats with belts. Open car with front windshield, roof, rear uarter panel with windows. \$5,000 OBO. Nice trailer available. Located in Washington State. email: candrews@qosi.net ND04

**Fairmont A6 Motorcar.** In poor condition. Would make a good project car. Price negotiable. Located in Stockton, CA. Currently owned by Stockton Terminal & Eastern Railroad. Contact Mr. Greg Carney (209) 466-7001, or email: greg@sterailroad.com ND04

## Wanted

Looking for 16" heavy-duty steel cast wheels. I can use two, four, or even six of them! Contact Tom Falicon, 1227 Sawmill Creek Rd., Bryson City NC 28713. Tel: (828) 488-8063 or email: raildawg@gte.net JA04

**Fairmont A-5 Rear Axle** – Contact Bill Schmaltz 330 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street New Richmond, WI 54017 or email: wschmaltz@aol.com ND04

**Fairmont "Super-Lite" Lantern** – as referred to in Bulletin 708. Will be happy to negotiate price. Also looking for an ST2-belt, part number F6574. Contact Nic Doncaster, Box 609 North Adelaide, South Australia 5006. Tel: 61 418 807954 or email at nldoncas@chariot.net.au JA04

**Casey Jones information.** I would like any information available regarding the Casey Jones "railcar. Do any exist, if so where? Please advise contact information of their owners. Contact Mr. Stan Rankin, 1212 Foothill Dr., Champaign, IL 61821. Tel: (217) 352-2705 or email stanr@uiuc JA04



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## **Excursions**

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 insurance is required. Send meet notices to: Bill Coulson, 964 Williams Lake Road Colville, Washington 99114-9617 or email [wcoulson@surfbrst.net](mailto:wcoulson@surfbrst.net)

**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.

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### ***South Branch Valley Railroad Saturday, August 14, 2004***

ARE is sponsoring a 1-day run on the SBV August 14. Participants will travel approximately 104 round-trip miles between Petersburg and Greensprings WV. We would like to invite you to attend this annual summer running. Stops include the "The Trough" to see the eagles, and we will enjoy lunch at Romney's Potomac Eagle Wapacomo Station. Trip fee is \$50 per car with a 40-car limit. Large cars must be able to turn on a small gravel crossing. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and ARE rules will be in effect. For trip details or to register, send remittance to Appalachian Rail Excursions; include your NARCOA membership number and insurance number and car type to: John Gonder, RR 2 Box 426, Ruffsedale PA 15679. Tel: (724) 696-4544 or email [UP3706@msn.com](mailto:UP3706@msn.com)

### ***Southwest Pennsylvania Railroad Saturday, Sunday, September 25 - 26, 2004***

ARE is sponsoring a 2-day excursion on the SWP Sept. 25-26. Participants will travel approximately 90 miles between New Stanton and Fairchance, PA over the 2-day period. We will operate over the branch lines of the former B&O, Penn Central and PRR. We have a planned stop at the Youngwood Railroad Museum. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and ARE rules will be in effect. No cars larger than an A4 by the railroads order. Trip fee is \$60 per car with a 35-car limit. For trip details or to register, send remittance to Appalachian Rail Excursions; include your NARCOA membership number and insurance number and car type to: John Gonder, RR 2, Box 426, Ruffsedale PA 15679. Tel: (724) 696-4544 or email [UP3706@msn.com](mailto:UP3706@msn.com)

### ***West Virginia Central Railroad Saturday, Sunday, October 23-24, 2004***

ARE is pleased to sponsor a 2-day excursion on the WVC October 23-24. Participants will travel approximately 120 round-trip miles from Elkins to Spruce, WV. Sunday we will travel to Tygart Jct. and return, for an additional 75 round-trip miles. Come and enjoy the fantastic fall color scenery. Trip fee is \$125 per car with a 50-car limit. No hy-rail equipment will be permitted. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and ARE rules will be in effect. For trip details or to register, send remittance to Appalachian Rail Excursions; include your NARCOA membership and insurance numbers and car type to: Paul Rujak, RR3 Box 81, Weirton WV 26062. Tel: (304) 797-9779 or email [rooster26062@earthlink.net](mailto:rooster26062@earthlink.net)

## **Excursions**

### **Stourbridge Railroad Saturday, September 18, 2004**

CPE is pleased to sponsor a 1-day run over the Stourbridge RR September 18. Participants will travel approximately 48 round-trip miles from Honesdale to Lackawaxen and back. This is the former Erie Railroad line. We will walk across the famous Roebling Delaware Aqueduct, an 1,848' suspension bridge that supported a canal over the Delaware River. Proof of NARCOA insurance will be required. All CPE rides are rain or shine. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will be in effect. Trip fee is \$50. For trip details contact CPE, P.O. Box 145, White Deer PA 17887. Tel: (570) 538-9050 or email: [Imayn@jdweb.com](mailto:Imayn@jdweb.com)

### **Juniata Valley Railroad Sunday, September 19, 2004**

CPE is pleased to sponsor a one-day run over the Juniata Valley Railroad on September 19, 2004. Participants will travel approximately 16 round trip miles from the former PPR rail yard in Lewistown to Burnham and back. This is a former PRR line. There are five blocks of street running. We are attempting to arrange a tour of the refurbished PRR Station in Lewistown. There will be a limit of 20 cars for this ride. Proof of NARCOA insurance required. This is a NARCOA insured excursion where all NARCOA and CPE rules will be in effect. Trip fee is \$50.00. For details contact CPE, PO Box 145, White Dee, PA 17787. Tel: (570) 538-9050 or email [Imayn@jdweb.com](mailto:Imayn@jdweb.com)

### **Wellsboro & Corning Railroad Saturday, October 9, 2004**

CPE is pleased to sponsor a 1-day run over the W&C October 9. Participants will travel approximately 70 round-trip miles from Wellsboro, PA to Gang Mills, NY and back. This is the former New York Central line. Proof of NARCOA insurance will be required. All CPE rides are rain or shine. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will be in effect. Trip fee is \$50. For trip details contact CPE, P.O. Box 145, White Deer PA 17887. Tel: (570) 538-9050 or email: [Imayn@jdweb.com](mailto:Imayn@jdweb.com)

### **Union County Industrial Railroad Sunday, October 10, 2004**

CPE is pleased to sponsor a 1-day run on the UCI October 10. Participants will travel approximately 25 round-trip miles from New Columbia to Winfield and Mifflinburg and back. This is the former Reading & Pennsylvania. Proof of NARCOA insurance will be required. All CPE rides are rain or shine. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will be in effect. Trip fee is \$25. For trip details contact CPE, P.O. Box 145, White Deer PA 17887. Tel: (570) 538-9050 or email: [Imayn@jdweb.com](mailto:Imayn@jdweb.com)

### **Red River Valley & Western Railroad Saturday, September 4, 2004**

FID is sponsoring a 1-day ride on the RRV & W September 4. Participants will ride from LaMoure, ND to a destination still undetermined and return. Total mileage is estimated at 100 miles. Trip fee is \$40. This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and FID rules will apply. For trip details contact Carl Schneider, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona IA 50009-2002. Tel: (515) 967-5181 or email: [motorcarl@netins.net](mailto:motorcarl@netins.net)

## **Excursions**

### **Sisseton & Milbank Railroad**

**Sunday, September 5, 2004**

FID is sponsoring a 1-day ride on the S&M September 5. Participants will travel approximately 70 round-trip miles from Milbank to Sisseton SD and return. Trip fee is \$40. This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and FID rules will apply. For trip details contact Carl Schneider, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona IA 50009-2002. Tel: (515) 967-5181 or email: [motorcarl@netins.net](mailto:motorcarl@netins.net)

### **Appanoose County Railroad**

**Sunday, September 19, 2004**

FID is sponsoring a 1-day ride on the ACRR September 19. Participants will travel approximately 70 round-trip miles from Centerville to Albia IA and return. Trip fee is \$40. This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and FID rules will apply. For trip details contact Carl Schneider, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona IA 50009-2002. Tel: (515) 967-5181 or email: [motorcarl@netins.net](mailto:motorcarl@netins.net)

### **Ft. Leonard Wood Army Base**

**Saturday, October 23, 2004**

FID is sponsoring a 1-day ride at Ft. Leonard Army Base Oct. 23. Participants will travel approximately 80 round-trip miles representing two trips from Ft. Leonard Wood MO to Bundy Jct. and return. Trip fee is \$40. This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and FID rules will apply. For trip details contact Carl Schneider, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona IA 50009-2002. Tel: (515) 967-5181 or email: [motorcarl@netins.net](mailto:motorcarl@netins.net)

### **Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad**

**Saturday, November 6, 2004**

FID is sponsoring a 1-day ride on the B&SV Nov. 6. Participants will travel approximately 96 round-trip miles representing 4 trips from Boone to Wolf IA and return. Trip fee is \$20 plus a current membership in the Iowa Railroad Historical Society (\$25). This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and FID rules will apply. For trip details contact Carl Schneider, 1302 6th Ave. SE, Altoona IA 50009-2002. Tel: (515) 967-5181 or email: [motorcarl@netins.net](mailto:motorcarl@netins.net)

### **Hoosier Southern Railroad**

**Sunday, August 8, 2004**

GLR will sponsor a one-day excursion on the Hoosier Southern Railroad on August 8, 2004. Participants will travel approximately 35 plus miles between Lincoln City, IN and Tell City, IN. Set on will be at the south crossing next to the Lincoln State Park at 8:00 AM CDST with a departure at 9:00 AM. We will travel to Tell City for lunch and return to Lincoln City by 3:00 PM. Trip fee will be \$45.00 with a no car limit. Seatbelts are required. Accommodations in Dale, IN are at the Baymont (800) 301-0200 or the Scottish Inn (800) 251-1962. This is a NARCOA insured event where all NARCOA and GLR rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Stan Conyer Tel: (812) 342-0565 or email: [stanconyer@hotmail.com](mailto:stanconyer@hotmail.com)

### **Illinois Railnet**

**Saturday, Sunday, September 18-19, 2004**

GLRC is sponsoring a 2-day run over Illinois Railnet September 18-19. Participants will travel approximately 115 round-trip miles between Ottawa and Oswego IL on Saturday and on Sunday between Rockford and Flagg Center IL. We will be operating along the Fox River and over the Rockford Line. Trip fee is 140 or \$85 for Saturday's run, and \$65 for Sunday's run. There is a 30-car limit. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and GLRC rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Fred Lonnes, P.O. Box 92, Western Springs IL 60558-0092. No phone calls please, but you may email [FredLonnes@Flash.Net](mailto:FredLonnes@Flash.Net)

## **Excursions**

### **Coopersville and Marne Railway**

**Saturday, October 9, 2004**

GLRC is sponsoring a 1-day run over the C&M October 9. Participants will travel approximately 42 miles in 3 round trips between Coopersville and Marne MI. Trip fee is \$25 per car and will include all railroad costs. No car limit. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and GLR rules will apply. For trip details contact Jeremy Winkworth, 1701 West B Ave., Plainwell MI. Tel: (269) 388-5058 evenings or email: jeremy@winkworth.us

### **California Western Railroad**

**Saturday, Sunday, August 14-15, 2004**

MOW is sponsoring a 2-day excursion over the CW August 14-15. Participants will travel approximately 120 round-trip miles from Willets to Capella to Fort Bragg, CA. Plans are to set on in Willits, travel north over the steep Ridgewood grade to Capella, turn and return to Willits, then turn west clamber over the summit, through the switchbacks, and down the Noyo River Canyon and overnight in Fort Bragg, returning to Willits on Sunday. Belt cars are welcomed. No minors will be permitted. Make your lodging requirements early. Trip fee is 225 with a 30-car maximum. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and MOW rules will be in effect. For trip detail contact Ted Hoheisel, P.O. Box, 45195 Seattle WA 98145 or email: M9speederguy@msn.com

### **Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad**

**Friday-Sunday, August 6-8, 2004**

NBRS is again pleased to sponsor a 3-day run over the P of TB August 6-8. Participants will travel approximately 160 round-trip miles between Banks and Tillamook OR. On Friday night we will have "dessert on the beach." Saturday we will have a trip to the Tillamook Cheese Factory. Deadline for registration and payment is Thursday, July 15, 2004. Trip fee of \$200 per car includes all railroad costs. There is a minimum of 20 and maximum 30 cars. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and NBRS rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Wally Burton, 43400 Carol Dr., Nehalem OR 97131-9513. Tel: (503) 368 6496 or email: wallyburton@hotmail.com or bud58@nehalem.net

### **North Shore Scenic, BNSF, Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroads**

**Sunday, August 8, 2004**

NCR is pleased to announce a 1-day excursion over the NSSR/BNSF/LSMR August 8. Participants will travel approximately 88 miles around Duluth and up to the city of Two Harbors MN. We will be utilizing all 3 railroads. Complete details will be sent upon receipt of the trip fee. Trip fee of \$100 (based on two people) includes all railroad fees, morning coffee and sweet roll break on the LSMR, buffet bar-be-que lunch at the NSSR shop in Duluth, museum admission, shop tour, and related excursion costs. Additional lunches and/or museum admission may be purchased in advance. There is a 25-car limit. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will apply. To register or obtain more information contact Michael P. Ford, 7712 Carpenter Ct., Plainfield IN 46168-8035. Tel: (317) 839-9320 or email: mpford@iquest.net

### **Minnesota Northern Railroad**

**Tuesday and Wednesday, August 10-11, 2004**

NCR is pleased to sponsor a 2-day excursion over the MN August 10-11. On Tuesday we will operate from Thief River Falls to Roseau (126 miles). On Wednesday, we plan to run a "U" from Crookston to Ada, MN, then Crookston to Perley, MN, for a total of 150 miles. Total mileage for both days is approximately 276 miles. Excursion fee is \$75 per day or \$150 for both days and includes all fees and related excursion costs. There is a 25-car limit. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will apply. For trip details contact Michael P. Ford, 7712 Carpenter Ct., Plainfield IN 46168-8035. Tel: (317) 839-9320 or email: mpford@iquest.net

## **Excursions**

### **Otter Tail Valley Railroad**

#### **August 13, 2004**

NCR is pleased to sponsor a 1-day run on the OTV on August 13. Participants will travel approximately 100 round-trip miles from Fergus Falls to Moorhead, MN and return. There could be a scheduling conflict with a shuttle train off the BN at Fargo, ND; the trip may have to be moved to Saturday, August 14, with a very remote possibility of Sunday, August 15, 2004. If so there will only be 2- or 3- week notice. Plan your schedule accordingly. Trip fee is \$100 and includes all railroad fees and other related excursion costs. There is a 25-car limit. Information and registration materials will be mailed upon receipt of your trip fee. This excursion is a NARCOA-insured event, where all NARCOA and NCR rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Michael P. Ford, 7712 Carpenter Ct., Plainfield IN 46168-8035. Tel: (317) 839-9320 or email: mpford@iquest.net

### **Canadian Pacific Railway**

#### **Saturday-Sunday, October 2-3, 2004**

NCR is pleased to sponsor a first-time, 2-day excursion over a portion of CP's Latta Subdivision October 2 & 3. Participants will travel approximately 176 miles over 2 days, between Bedford and Terre Haute in beautiful south-central Indiana. Registration materials and complete details will be sent upon receipt of the excursion fee. Each participant is expected to bring and wear a hardhat, safety eyewear/glasses, high visibility vest, and steel-toed boots. This is a strict CPR rule. No exceptions. Excursion fee of \$250 includes all railroad fees, bus transportation in Terre Haute, hotel room for Saturday night, and continental breakfast Sunday morning. There is a 25-car limit. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will apply. For more information, contact Michael P. Ford, 7712 Carpenter Ct., Plainfield IN 46168-8035. Tel: (317) 839-9320 or email: mpford@iquest.net

### **Great Miami & Scioto Railway**

#### **Saturday, August 7, 2004**

OVR is hosting a 1-day excursion on the GM&S August 7. All participants will travel approximately 100 round-trip miles between Jackson OH and 3 or 4 radial points. The Great Miami & Scioto Railway is comprised of the former B&O, C&O and DT&I lines. Trip fee is \$50 with a car limit of 50 cars. This is a NARCOA-insured event where all NARCOA and OVR rules will be in effect. For trip detail contact Phil Dawson, 8532 Franklin-Madison Rd., Franklin OH 45005. Tel: (513) 423-3098 or Dave Verzi, 10059 Aldridge Dr., Columbia Station OH 44028. Tel: (440) 236-3374 between 6-9 PM or email: WM340@aol.com

### **Indiana Northeastern Railroad**

#### **Saturday, Sunday, August 21-22, 2004**

OVR will host a 2-day excursion on the IN August 21-22. Participants will travel approximately 200 round-trip miles between Ashley IN and Litchfield MI and then between Ashley South Milford IN. Lunch stops will have food services available for Saturday, but plan on bringing lunch for Sunday's run. Restroom facilities will be provided in several locations along trip. No A-series cars will be allowed, however Hy-railers are welcome. Trip fee is \$130. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion where all NARCOA and OVR rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Ohio Valley Railcars c/o Bruce Carpenter, 10241 Co. Rd. 25, Wapakoneta OH 45895 Tel: (419) 738-5384 or email: bnsf89@bright.net

## Excursions

### **Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway Sunday, September 5, 2004** FULL with WAITING LIST

OVR is hosting a one-day excursion on the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway, September 5, 2004. Participants will travel approximately 135 miles round trip from Orrville, OH and Monroeville, OH. Available food will be limited. No trailer cars permitted. No attendees under 14-years. Long pants and over-the-ankle work boots required at all times while on RR property. This includes exiting your tow vehicle to unload your motorcar. Safety glasses or side shields for eyeglass wearers required. Hy-rail operators must contact coordinator prior to registration. The registration deadline is August 20, 2004. Trip fee is \$85.00, 40-car limit. This is a NARCOA insured excursion where all NARCOA and OVR rules will be in effect. For trip detail contact Jeff Levingood, 2189 Oak Tree Dr., Dover, OH 44622. Tel: (330) 343-3407

### **Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Sunday, August 20-22, 2004**

Patrick Smith is sponsoring a 3-day motorcar excursion on the D&S August 20-22. Participants will travel approximately 56 round-trip miles per day, between Silverton and Rockwood CO. Set-on will be in Silverton August 19. Car fee is 350 with a 20-car limit. No pets. Registration after April 1, 2004. This is a NARCOA-insured event, and all NARCOA rules will apply. For trip details contact Patrick Smith, 20799 Sumpter Stage Hwy., Baker City OR 97814-7753. Tel: (541) 524-9428 or email [smitty@oregontrail.net](mailto:smitty@oregontrail.net)

### **Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Narrow Gauge Railroad Tuesday, Wednesday, August 24-25, 2004**

Patrick Smith is sponsoring a 2-day run on the C&T August 24-25. Participants will travel approximately 128 round-trip miles from Chama NM to Antonito CO. Set-on will be August 23 at Chama. Trip fee is \$300 with a 20-car limit. No pets. Registration after April 1, 2004. This is a NARCOA-insured event, and all NARCOA rules will be in effect. For trip details contact Patrick Smith, 20799 Sumpter Stage Hwy., Baker City OR 97814-7753. Tel: (541) 524-9428 or email [smitty@oregontrail.net](mailto:smitty@oregontrail.net)

### **Central Oregon and Pacific Friday September 24 - 26, 2004**

SWRC is pleased to sponsor a 3-day run over CORP September 24-26. Participants will travel approximately 161.4 round-trip miles between Weed, CA and Ashland, OR. We will set on in Weed. Trip donation is \$330 includes railroad costs. Fuel, meals and lodging are not included. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will apply. For trip details contact Southwest Railcar Limited, P.O. Box 664, Alamo CA 94507 or trip coordinator Tom Phair (530) 713-9582 or email: [tomphair@comcast.net](mailto:tomphair@comcast.net)

### **Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad Friday-Sunday, October 1-3, 2004**

SWRC is hosting a 3-day excursion on the CORP October 1-3. There will be 1 layover day. Participants will travel approximately 230 round-trip miles between Eugene and Coos Bay, OR. Seton will be in Eugene on Thursday afternoon. All operators with a current NARCOA license and insurance are welcome. You do not have to be a member of Southwest Railcar Limited to participate. Run Fee is to be determined. For trip details contact Tom Phair, P.O. Box, 664 Alamo CA 94507. Tel: (530) 713-9582 or email: [tomphair@comcast.com](mailto:tomphair@comcast.com)

**Excursions**

**McCloud River Railway**

**Saturday and Sunday, October 23-24, 2004**

SWRC is pleased to sponsor a 2-day run on the MCR October 23-24. Participants will travel approximately 160 round-trip miles from McCloud to Burney CA and then from McCloud to Shasta City CA. Seton will be in McCloud starting Friday afternoon. You do not have to be a member of Southwest Railcar to participate. Run fee will include a Saturday evening meal. This is a NARCOA-insured excursion, and all NARCOA rules will be in effect. Trip fee is \$195. Mail check with NARCOA license and insurance number. For trip details contact Tom Phair, P.O. Box 664, Alamo CA 94507. Tel: (530) 713-9582 or email: [tomphair@comcast.com](mailto:tomphair@comcast.com)

**Western Maryland Scenic**

**Sunday, August 15, 2004**

Join us as we ride this scenic mountain railroad. We set-on at the engine house in Ridgeley, WV, and travel past the former Western Maryland RR station, through the narrows and up the mountain to Frostburg. We'll await the arrival of the steam train, turn the speeders on the turntable, and return. Approx. round trip is 34 miles. This will be a great way to complete the weenend for those riding the SBVRR excursion 8/14/04. This is a Northern Central Railcar Assoc. excursion. All NARCOA rules will be enforced. All cars will be inspected. \$40 per car. Phone (717) 227-9628; email [Gshrey@aol.com](mailto:Gshrey@aol.com)

**Northern Central RR**

**Saturday, October 30, 2004**

It's time again for our annual Halloween excursion. We'll have two runs on the NCRR. Both runs will leave from the Franklin Street crossing, next to the station in New Freedom, PA, and go to a mile South of York, PA, for a total round trip distance of approx. 36 miles each trip. The second run will be a night run and will include a cookout in Howard Tunnel. Bring your own food and drinks. Only the fire will be supplied. Cars may be left on the tracks between excursions. This is a NARCOA excursion. There is a 30 car limit. Price is \$25 per car for one or both rides (no charge for 2004 NCRA members). For information, contact Dean Grote (717) 637-7647



## The Trucker in All of Us – Jumping to Class 8

by Michael H. Heaton, Chester, NH



In the wide world of RR enthusiasts, every one of us, certainly those likely to be reading this, crave some aspect of railroad. There are modelers, spotters, photographers, mileage markers and timetable collectors. Our particular subgroup is drawn to the industrial railroad environment itself; our fantasies do not play out correctly on a tabletop. We are drawn to track cars because, as Ron Zammit so aptly put it, “few of us will ever own a locomotive, much less a railroad. This is as good as it gets”.

Consider also you may have the unique qualities of a section man or gandy dancer, or even superintendent of track, but for many of the hours and for most of the miles, what you are before all things (railroad), is a trucker. For the

track car enthusiast, some sort of truck is critical to the mission. If you hate to drive, your experience in “Speederworld” may be limited.

So far trucks most familiar to Americans come in three varieties: classes 1 to 3, known as half, three quarter and one ton respectively. These are the haulers that we are all familiar with; the ones designed for ownership by individuals. They are as much a part of the American landscape as the newspaper. Class 4; few vehicles above class 3 are privately owned for non-commercial use. In our society we generally entertain just one spouse at a time and private ownership of trucks stops at class three. It is important to recognize that at least in the case of trucks; these are arbitrary limits; part of our culture. The comparison to monogamous relationships is valid because there are about as many class 8 trucks in private use, as there are men with multiple wives. Suffice to say, it is rare in our town. However, if you buy a new Power Stroke or Cummins powered one-ton every few years for dedicated use with the track car, there may be new options for you to consider. If not consider then at least ponder in light of the economy and world events. But why skip from 3 to 8 in one jump? Wouldn't this be digging a big hole?

I am one of those people who, though not buying a new truck every year, have escalated in this hobby to the point where I have a dedicated truck for motorcar activities. This truck, a 1985 GMC named Mr. Pockets (it's service body is filled with small compartments) that I have owned for 4 happy years and 60,000 miles, is dying. It will still make it to the dump twice a year with my 30-year-old red horse van (Trailer Trash) full of recyclables, but it is no longer reliable enough for longer trips. I would not want to have it die in North Dakota on the way to Alberta.

Last year, while shopping for a new truck to replace Senior Pockets, I observed a curious phenomenon. As the nation's economic machine cools, the top class of trucks, class 8, seems to have depreciated far out of proportion to the others. Prices for the “\$100 to 120K new” class eight tractors have hit about \$10K at age five at about 450K to 550K miles. Though a class three truck would already be returning to the United States as a kazoo at this mileage; the design life for class 8 trucks is about a million miles. About five times that of class 3. Though there is certainly no sense paying for more for capacity, comfort, and power and hill speed than needed, the price for the utility remaining caused me to re-think this issue. These trucks, operated at 1/5<sup>th</sup> their design gross weight, would have speed, power, agility and most importantly, service life that will take a one toner's breathe away.

Having had extensive experience with such machines in the past I began to ponder: Would this type of truck be a good fit as a speeder chariot? Was there a way to economically operate such an apparent over-killer in this roll? Of course cost would have always been the limiting factor in the past but if the truck were half as expensive as the alternative class 3 truck, *including fuel consumption*, what else is there to consider?

There are a lot of plusses to these ships. Class 7 and 8, especially class 8 trucks (generally 10 wheel tractors) are driven by professionals and designed for just one job: pulling the largest loads over long distances at high average speeds. In this roll they are, by some margin, the more pervasive method by which the nation's freight moves.

Inside are beds, TV, computers of several varieties and seats that make the chair in your office feel like a tree stump. Driving one is a pleasure that is hard to describe. The view is commanding, eye level is around 8 feet, and there are

## **The Trucker in All of Us . . . cont'd.**

four separate air chambers (tires, frame, cab and seat) stacked between you and the road to smooth your ride. A class 8 truck will carry you and your motorcar up the steepest interstate grades (and safely down the other side with engine braking) at the speed you choose or where ever the cruise control is set.

Having read this far I am going to speculate that you secretly enjoy your role as a trucker and, though you may have a difficult time getting to this in therapy (discussions with other rail fans) you are just slightly excited when you see the big rigs fly by piloted by young men (or women). I know that feeling; I have been there. Forget driving when you are too tired, dealing with receiver fiefdoms, over loaded rigs with too little power that climb hills at 20-30 miles per hour; all of the factors that can make driving a truck the job from Hell are absent here.

There is no rational reason for these units to be sold at a 90% discount before reaching less than half of design life, but that is exactly what has happened. The reasons seem to be both the market and design. Economically, there are just too many of them right now as the freight traffic falls. The design part comes from a self serving factory tweak of the form factor, apparently trying to snuff out the after life for these units, which affects new truck sales.

This afterlife follows tractor's first role as a log distance hauler. Generally, the driver is a specialist; he drives. He is not a mechanic. Nor would the owner want him to perform maintenance on the truck. It is a substantial investment that must work continuously. The job of a tractor in its first life is to function for five or six years remotely with scheduled maintenance but without close examination and hopefully without repairs.

In the past when the tractor phase was complete (read: the loan is paid off) the unit moved into the middle aged City Tractor or straight truck phase; usually close to home. It would spend most time holding up the nose of a trailer while it was being loaded or unloaded. The sleeper box, as it was then known, was simply removed and discarded and a window installed in the space. The tractor now became a "day cab" and began a new life as some sort of specialty or 'vocational' truck equipped for just one mission. That might have been a wrecker or a cement mixer. Perhaps it was a lumber or sheet rock delivery truck.

This 'phase two' has now nearly vanished with the redesign of the cab. The melding of the sleeper box of years past into a unit cab has eliminated the city tractor (or dump truck or cement mixer etc.) phase of life and there is little market for these ex-road tractors. Much to the joy of the truck builders, the vocational bodies that used to benefit from these cast offs now get new chassis. Who ever saw a cement mixer with a sleeper?

Lastly, best drivers are attracted most to a new unlived-in truck and therein lies yet another problem: The industry needs fewer trucks and the ones they need are new ones.

A year ago, seeing the 6 year old tractors dipping to \$10K, I began to consider having a motorcar transporter that would carry my near 3 ton A-6F not on a trailer but right up there on the frame eliminating, once and for all, that aerodynamically deadly space between the tow vehicle and the trailer. That space makes you two separate vehicles in any kind of crosswind. Huge savings in fuel should accrue here.

Saving half on the tolls by eliminating the trailer wouldn't hurt either. Loss of the trailer weight could only be better.

**The Trucker in  
All of Us . . .  
cont'd.**

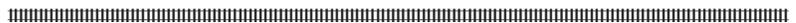
Designed in the extreme for fuel economy some of the fleet tractors of today have rather marginal horsepower for their mission. However, at about 20% of the design Gross Combination Weight all class 8 trucks will have plenty of power for the speeder mission.

The smallest engines available in this class exceed 1300 Ft Lbs of torque, yet the fuel consumption, could be better than a class three truck with trailer. Is this possible?

All class 8 tractors have 10 wheels. No speeder fan needs this kind of lifting capacity. That capacity costs money too. A certain amount of the fuel burned by any truck is used to operate its own components.

What if, I thought? Get rid of the heavier and much more complex front drive axle and move the rear one, air springs and all, into its place? This is easy as the axels are identical from the (air) bags up (but not below!). There go 3,000 pounds, 4 tires and 4 wheels. Now shorten the frame so that the center of gravity of the motorcar, if placed backwards on the truck frame, is right where the trailer supporting 5<sup>th</sup> wheel would have been.

Since we are now 80% lighter in the gross weight department why not slow the engine to a less powerful speed and save still more fuel? This would be the equivalent of discarding the lowest gear and adding a new "Big Hole" at the top. In reality this is accomplished by changing the final drive ratio with a new ring and pinion. Our economy engine will now run much more slowly and burn still less fuel. Typical ratios found in class 8 are in the area of 4.56 to 4.11:1. Switching that to 2.91:1 will give 53 mph per 1000 rpm, very fast! But since these the engines involved all electronically controlled with an operating range from (in the case of the CAT 3176B) 1000 to 1850, each gear can be governed separately. So, with our now way-too-fast truck lets adjust that giant mill's brain to limit the lower 9 gears to 1800 (for engine life and further economy) and the top gear to 1550 (78 mph). Then reset the fuel pump (done in a few minutes by a CAT Engine dealer with a laptop computer) to give max torque rise in the lower middle of the range instead of the top and there you have it. A truck that will run at 65 mph at 1200 rpm at 1/4 the design load (1/5<sup>th</sup> without a trailer) and, hopefully get 12.5 miles per gal. Now some of you may be getting slightly better mileage but are you having fun? Is your inner trucker thriving?



On March 20, 2001 a friend and I flew out to Denver to pick up this dream truck, complete with the modifications described here. Our subject hauler was crafted from a 1995 Freightliner FLD 112 tractor with integral 70" Condo/sleeper (Age: 6 years and 450,000 miles) with the miserly (everything is relative here) 365 HP, 10 liter, CAT 3176B Engine (1150 ft lbs of torque) and RT-910 ten-speed transmission.

The RT-910 is the simplest transmission used in class 8 trucks. It is a 5-speed with a little plunger on the stick just below the knob. Assuming a heavy load, you use each of those 5 speeds then, while in 5<sup>th</sup> you pull up the plunger and shift back to 1<sup>st</sup>; only now with the plunger up, 1<sup>st</sup> becomes 6<sup>th</sup> and so on up to 10<sup>th</sup>.

In the end, I had gone for a new coat of youth enhancing white Imron paint (the truck had been black), a touch of chrome to replace what was originally chromed (no flashing mud flap ladies please). The conversion was rounded out with a wrecker body (booms and cables removed) suggesting a pickup truck heritage and to keep the tire spray from getting all over the mounted motorcar.

## **The Trucker in All of Us . . . cont'd.**

Inside, this is not your father's one-stack Mack with a window in the back. Just turning 90 degrees to the right in the driver's seat it is two steps to bed. How many times in another life I had just put my head down right on the steering wheel, too tired to take those steps.

It had been 12 years since my last time behind the wheel of such a truck but everything came back quickly. At first the engine seemed so small but I slowly realized what was small was the noise I remembered from the past. Back then your trailer was big and long and the tractor small. Short tractors hip hop on the bumps. Tractors this long were then effectively banned by the length rules. This Freightliner had none of these problems.

Looking to the right is a computer display, now standard in many cars, that tells all about the operating efficiency of the truck. There is instant fuel mileage that ranged from 3.4 mpg accelerating up a hill in a lower gear to 5600 mpg coasting down the other side against the governor in the 'big hole'. It was obvious that neither of these figures meant very much.

Driving from our point of origin in Denver to Lincoln, Nebraska was such a rush I hardly thought of fuel which had now crept down to about 3/4 on the gage. I was really anxious to see what kind of mileage we were getting but the average function on the computer was obviously set for a thousand or more miles and still read just 8.9 mpg; understandable as most of the last 1,000 miles had been in the role of a tractor pulling 80K pounds of fish and crushed ice over the mountains. Finally in the middle of the middle of the night we stopped some place in Iowa and filled the tanks. When the calculations were done it showed 13.55 mpg for the trip from Denver to Des Moines. This was a bit better than I had expected and it seemed that with the car up on the frame I should be able to hit the target of 12.5 mpg.

From there my partner, Dick Dowst, drove and I slept as Indiana's steel mills slipped by.

We detoured twice on the trip to see track car people who might be interested in this concept and they were very polite. In Michigan, Gary Greenwood said it might not fit in the drive way and the other who did not have that option allowed as how he would rather have a new truck. Too bad! His new Class three truck may cost about one third to one half more than this class 8 Freightliner.

Getting the motorcar up on the body of the truck is going to be a separate challenge and even as I sit here in a chilly motel room in Altoona, PA, on the second trip with the Freightliner, the motorcar on its old trailer for now, I am dreaming of an entirely new type of track to get from the ground to the frame. Stay tuned.



**Short Line  
Railroad Operators  
Recognize Value of  
Organized  
Motorcar Activities**  
*by Larry Bowler*

For owners and operators of short-line railroads, the decision of what to do with branches that are no longer used is of concern. Simple abandonment of the tracks and right-of-way are frequently not an acceptable consideration. Although the price of salvaged rails is increasing yet there is practical and emotional reluctance on the part of railroaders, who have lived railroading for years, to abandon a corridor.

Residential neighbors to the corridor frequently have a love-hate relationship to the tracks. There develops a sense of ownership for their rails, a phenomena based in part upon the mystique of rail travel. Airport management recognizes this mystique with some of those who enjoy hanging around the airport environment. There is something that draws people to the mystique of travel, whether by train or by airplane.

Most often neighbors to rail corridors do not want to see a resumption of frequent railroad traffic with its noise and whistles on corridors that have been inactive for extended periods of time. They do, however, like the existence of the rails. Rails seem to add to the ambience of their communities.

Short line railroad operators, who are concerned with neighborly relations, are frequently willing to make an effort to satisfy their neighbors while protecting their fiscal resources. This creates a dilemma that procrastination will not solve.

The Recreational Railroad Coalition (RRC) was created recently in California to present an option for short line railroads facing this issue. Drawing from the community of rail motorcar operators, RRC has organized to make opportunities for its adherents to put life back onto otherwise dormant rails in the form of speeder cars.

The Stockton Terminal & Eastern Railroad (ST&E) owns a 10-mile branch from its yard in Stockton to the agricultural town of Linden, CA. This Linden Branch has not seen freight service for over nearly 20 years. It had become a liability to the railroad company and an eyesore to the community of 74 neighbors along the right of way. RRC approached ST&E and made an offer to lease the branch, cut the trees which had grown in the center of the tracks and the weeds alongside, clear and upgrade the crossings, ties and rails to a standard which would facilitate the comparably lightweight of the rail motorcars and to put a rolling presence on the tracks.

The activities of operating motorcars established a security presence for the company and have served to discourage trespassing, dumping and the myriad of violations to their private property and right of way. In addition to this service the presence of RRC has reestablished a life form on these formerly dead tracks. Residents and neighbors wave a welcome to the colorful motorcars as they pass by on their tracks. The Linden Branch has been transformed from a public relations liability to a welcome recreational railroad corridor.

**Short Line Railroad  
Operators Recognize  
Value of  
Organized Motorcar  
Activities ... Cont'd.**

The question of insurance is dealt with in the package offered by the North American Rail Car Owners of America, a national association. NARCOA requires all members of legitimate regional motorcar clubs, (there are 4 on the West Coast) to be licensed and insured under a commercial general liability insurance program, designed to protect the NARCOA member and the railroad company from liability. This insurance program provides a \$10,000,000 per occurrence liability limit with a \$20,000,000 general aggregate.

RRC is not a motorcar club but a coalition of individual members of legitimate, certified clubs. Club membership, licensing and insurance are a prerequisite to operating a rail motorcar on the Linden Branch. To obtain a license an operator must take a written test and demonstrate practical proficiency and safe practices to the satisfaction of an assigned mentor.

Safety supercedes all other considerations while on the rails. Not only with the operation of the railcar but with any personal movement in proximity to the rails. RRC works closely with the railroad in exercising its maintenance of way responsibilities. Many motorcar operators are professional, fulltime, railroad employees.

In exchange for the security, public relations, light maintenance of way and rebirth of life to otherwise dead tracks, the ST&E railroad company grants access for recreational railroad use, a mutually satisfying trade-off and an option to the dilemma of what to do with unused and unsightly tracks.



# North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA)

## OFFICERS

**President** Pat Coleman | **Secretary** Joel Williams  
**Vice President** Ken Annett | **Treasurer** Tom Norman

**Area 1 Director**  
(ME, NH, VT, NY, MA, CT, RI)  
Warren Riccitelli  
39 Jacksonia Drive  
North Providence RI 02911  
Tel: (401) 231-5640  
wriccitelli@ids.net

**Area 2 Director**  
(NJ, PA, DE, MD)  
Joel Williams  
67 Julia Drive  
Lock Haven PA 17745  
Tel: (570) 893-1610  
joel.williams@earthlink.net

**Area 3 Director**  
(IN, OH, Lower MI)  
Stan Conyer  
9333 West State Road, 46  
Columbus IN 47201  
Tel: (812) 342-0565  
stanconyer@hotmail.com

**Area 4 Director**  
(WV, VA, KY NC, SC, TN)  
Tom Falicon  
1227 Sawmill Creek Road  
Bryson City NC 28713  
Tel: (828) 488-8063  
raildawg@gte.net

**Area 5 Director**  
(MS, AL, GA, FL)  
Bobby Moreman  
3520 Cold Springs Lane  
Chamblee GA 30341  
Tel: (770) 457-6212  
moreman@mindspring.com

**Area 6 Director**  
(MN, WI, IL, Upper MI)  
Pat Rock  
6745 County Road A  
Amherst WI 54406  
Tel: (715) 824-6285  
patrock@ieee.org

**Area 7 Director**  
(ND, SD, NE, IA)  
Carl Schneider  
1302 - 6th Avenue S.E.  
Altoona IA 50009  
Tel: (515) 967-5181  
motorcarl@netins.net

**Area 8 Director**  
(Canada, Mexico, Australia)  
Ken Annett  
3483 Church Street  
Windsor ONT N9E-1V6  
Tel: (519) 969-8695  
kannett@mnsi.net

**Area 9 Director**  
(CO, KS, MO, AR, LA, TX, OK)  
Jim McKeel  
9742 Yosemite Ct.  
Wichita KS 67215  
Tel: (316) 721-4378  
jdmckeel@prodigy.net

**Area 10 Director**  
(WA, OR, ID, MT, AK, WY)  
Tom Norman  
1047 Terrace View Drive  
Alberton MT 59820  
Tel: (406) 722-3012  
alb4961@blackfoot.net

**Area 11 Director**  
(CA, NV, UT, AZ, NM, HI)  
Pat Coleman  
1989 Robin Ridge Court  
Walnut Creek CA 94579  
Tel: (925) 979-1030  
patcoleman@astound.net

**Director at Large** (non-voting)  
Mark Springer  
143 North Arcadia  
Wichita KS 67212  
Tel: (316) 721-4804  
lospinos@cox.net

**Director at Large** (non-voting)  
Dave Verzi  
10059 Aldridge Drive  
Columbia Station OH 44028  
Tel: (440) 236-3374  
WM340@aol.com

**Recording Secretary**  
Lee Wilhite  
8505 East County Road 300  
Plainfield IN 46168  
Tel: (317) 838-7240  
LBW1@indy.net

**The SETOFF**  
Charlene Morvay  
17825 Route 8  
Union City, PA 16438  
Tel: (814) 438-7104  
golfnuts@velocity.net

**Nominations, Elections**  
Carl Anderson  
1330 Rosedale Ln.  
Hoffman Estates IL 60195  
CarlAnderson@sd54.k12.il.us

**Safety**  
Bob Knight  
1212 Vale Street  
Sandwich IL 60548  
Tel: (815) 786-3096  
lmk1212@indianvalley.com

**Operations**  
Hank Brown  
622 Oak Street  
Cottage Grove WI 53527  
Tel: (608) 839-4939  
wilderness@inxpress.net

**Rule Book Certification Test**  
Al McCracken  
2916 Taper Avenue  
Santa Clara CA 95051  
ALNETHE@aol.com

**NARCOA Web Master**  
Bill Stringfellow  
204 Lake Court  
Woodstock, GA 30188  
(770) 751-1257  
webmaster@narcoa.org

**NARCOA Forum & Communications**  
Rich Stivers  
1548 Fuchsia Dr.  
San Jose CA 95125-4833  
rich@stivers-bros.com

**Judiciary**  
Mark Springer  
143 North Arcadia  
Wichita KS 67212  
Tel: (316) 721-4804  
lospinos@cox.net

**Rules**  
Jim McKeel  
9742 Yosemite Ct.  
Wichita KS 67215  
Tel: (316) 721-4378  
jdmckeel@prodigy.net

## Committee Chairs

**Affiliates** ..... Dave Verzi  
**Custom-Built Motorcars** ..... Tom Falicon  
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**Rules** ..... Jim McKeel  
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