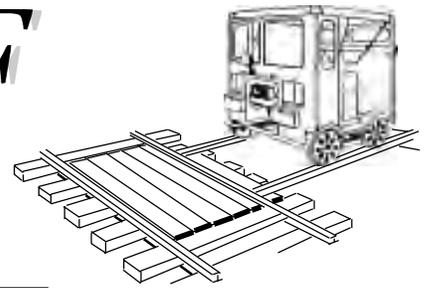


The **SETOFF**



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

November/December 2006, Volume 20 - No. 6



Stratford, Ontario, Station – Goderich-Exeter Railway Excursion
Photo by Debbie Hudson

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Please submit materials
for the Jan./Feb. issue of
The **SETOFF**
by December 15
as follows:

Letters to the Editor
All other materials
Photos

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

President's Message

In late September 2006 your NARCOA Board of Directors, Committee Chairpersons and several interested members met to discuss NARCOA business. No new rules were passed, but the two from last year were ratified after consideration of your comments. One rule covered the use of OEM fasteners, and the other the allowable wear on brake linings. This is discussed elsewhere in this issue of *The SETOFF*.

Due to the short time between the Annual Meeting and the date his issue of *The SETOFF* we were unable to provide minutes of this meeting. They will appear in the next issue.

The Board re-elected the 2006 Officers to the same positions for 2007. I wish to express my thanks to Mike Paul for participating in our Association as a Director-at-Large for the past two years, and for many more years as a Director. Mike has moved to Arizona and retired from the Board. Bernie Leadon has accepted the position as Director-at-Large.



Judicial Committee Chair, Mark Springer, has resigned and I am working to appoint a successor. Mark has performed admirably in this position for the past five years. Thank you, Mark, for a job well done.

I also wish thank all NARCOA Committee Chairpersons and members for their continuing support and work for our Association. Their jobs often go unnoticed by the membership. They do deserve the respect and support of all members.

Some members took the time this year to pass comments and concerns along to their Area Directors. These items were discussed in the course of business, and were very appreciated by the Board. A revised edition of Policy Book and Operation Handbook should be on the website by the time you read this, and copies will be mailed to all active Excursion Coordinators.

Operating members interested in acquiring insurance for 2007 should be aware that the current 2006 public liability policy expires on January 31, 2007. A new policy will be available soon that will have an effective date of February 1, 2007 and will be valid for 12 months expiring January 31, 2008. As we will be returning to a 12 month policy period from a 9 month policy period the premium will increase.

The Property Damage policy issued by United Shortline is on a different schedule and will be renewed on the same schedule as the same schedule as the 2006 policy.

The NARCOA Forum (Yahoo Groups) is being opened to permit a greater range of operation. The Forum will now carry information on the following topics.

- Motorcar Restoration

continued on next page . . .

President's Message . . . continued

- Motorcar Mechanics
- Excursion Announcements
- For Sale Ads
- Want Ads
- General Railroad Questions

This Forum is available to all current members of NARCOA. Forum members are expected to treat one another with respect and civility while participating in Forum discussions. Rich Stivers remains as the Forum Chairperson.

The electronic roster continues to grow. Don Pomplun, Committee Chairperson, reports 912 members listed with 1,355 motorcars reported. This list, in Excel format, is available to all NARCOA members.

It was noted during the meeting that approximately 34% of all NARCOA insured runs are not advertised. This, of course, is not the intent of our Association. The intent is to make available to all members all excursions/runs. Last year with the assistance of Charlene Morvay - *The SETOFF* Editor, and Keith Mackey - Webmaster, we removed any restrictions that had previously been placed on publishing an excursion in *The SETOFF* or www.narcoa.org. While the publication dates of *The SETOFF* limit a coordinator's ability to publish short notice runs, Keith has demonstrated that he can have an excursion posted in approximately 12 hours.

Beginning January 1, 2007, Excursion Coordinators must post their NARCOA insured excursions on the NARCOA web site

(www.narcoa.org) before Certificates of Insurance will be issued. Upon receipt of a Certificate of Permission, the NARCOA Regional Insurance Representative will verify posting of the excursion on the NARCOA web site. If the excursion has not been posted, the Insurance Representative will contact the Excursion Coordinator to determine the reason for the excursion not being posted. Last minute booking of an excursion is not a reason for not posting. "My buddies and I are just going for a little ride" is not a reason. "This is the first time we have run on this railroad, and they wish to see a small group in operation before allowing our group to operate," may be a reason.

If you believe the Insurance Rep. is being unreasonable, I suggest you contact me at (925) 979-1030 or by email at patcoleman@astound.net

The 2007 Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 28 and 29, 2007 at The Sheraton Gateway Suites Hotel, 6501 Mannheim Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. All members are invited to attend. The meetings are held between 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (CDT) both days. Please contact your Area Representative if you are coming, so we can have an appropriate amount of space for all attendees.

Best regards and safe running,

C. Patrick (Pat) Coleman

President



Observations On The Tracks

by Charlene Morvay, Editor

During the past six years of riding the rails, I have made a few notes that could really make a difference if put to use. Most of them are really common sense things that get taken for granted. I will list them in the order of importance (to say MY importance, not necessarily everyone's):

1. **Flagging:** Face traffic and hold up your flag. Maintain eye contact with oncoming traffic, not the railcars. (I once witnessed a person flagging while facing the railcars and using a camcorder.)
2. **Radios:** Would be a really good idea if everyone had a radio in their cars, especially if an emergency situation arose. Also helps to know if someone has broken down and needs a tow; why the line has stopped; what the holdup is.
3. **Comfort Cars (port-a-potties):** A great addition to the set-on site, along the way, and at turnaround site, if there are no convenient places to stop along the way. If towing a comfort car, make sure you check from time to time to ensure you are indeed still towing it. Nothing will get your attention (and fear) more than rounding a corner and discovering a port-a-john on the tracks right in front of you!
4. **During breaks along the way,** listen to your coordinator and make sure you do not leave your car if requested not to. Find out how long the break will last and be sure you return on time.
5. **Tailgaiting (for lack of a better word):** Maintain a safe distance between cars, but not so far that it causes large gaps, especially when the rails are slick. When raining, be especially careful, because not only are the rails oiled, they are wet, and twice as slippery.
6. **Walking on the tracks (or rails):** A definite no-no! I've seen a lot of this, especially when children are present. It's too easy to slip or trip, and it's always a terrible thing to see a child (or anyone for that matter) get needlessly hurt. Folks, please keep an eye on your youngsters.
7. **Set-off:** Seems like tempers flair during set-off. We all go through it, some of us more vocal at times than others. Everyone is in a hurry to get off the rails, especially at longer runs. It's important to keep our heads. We've spent a long time on the rails, so what's a few more extra minutes. Stay calm, set-off sensibly, with a smile and a thank you to your coordinator(s).

I think the best rule of thumb is common sense. We all have it - we must remember to use it.

See you on the rails! - *Charlie*



Submitting Materials for Publication

- 1 Materials received by the 15th of February, April, June, August, October or December will appear in the following two-month issue, subject to editing for space. Include e-mail address or phone number.
- 2 Submit hard copy, photos 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.

The SETOFF

Volume 20 Number 6

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

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NARCOA INSURANCE for 2007

by Tom Norman, NARCOA Insurance Administrator

I'm pleased to announce that we have received a renewal proposal for the NARCOA Insurance Program for 2007. Empire Insurance Services will provide a \$10,000,000 Railroad Liability Policy through Essex Insurance Company for NARCOA and our members. It will be the same policy as 2006 with the exception that the policy year will be twelve months rather than the current nine month policy period. We are back to our original policy year of February 1st to January 31st! I've always preferred the February 1st schedule, as it allows excursions to run over the Christmas and New Year holidays without needing to have purchased new insurance. Also excursions seem to slow down in January and February, and it is a slow time for me so that I can process insurance applications. The premium has gone up to \$150 compared to \$105 for 2006. Again, this is for a twelve month policy period rather than nine months.

Insurance application forms are inserted in this issue of *The SETOFF*. Please complete the application form carefully. Also be sure to sign and date the NARCOA Agreement form and return it along with the signed insurance application. As in previous years, insurance applications will only be accepted through March 31, 2007. This limited enrollment period is due to the insurance company requirement that the premium be paid in full by April 15th. No applications will be accepted after March 31, 2007. After the March 31st deadline, NARCOA will attempt to get permission to accept applications from new members on a limited basis, but cannot guarantee success.

Many NARCOA members buy optional (not required by NARCOA) insurance to provide physical damage coverage for their motorcars. This insurance has been provided by United Shortline Insurance Services. The policy expires 3/31/07. I hope to have applications and premium information in time to be included in the January/February issue of *The SETOFF*.

Additional application forms can be downloaded from NARCOA's website at www.narcoa.org or may be obtained from the Area Insurance Reps listed below:

Hank Brown, 622 Oak Street, Cottage Grove, WI 53527 Phone: (608) 839-4939 (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Manitoba, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Ontario, and Wisconsin)

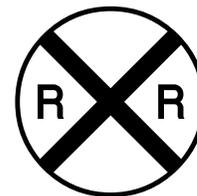
Jim McKeel, 9742 Yosemite Court, Wichita, KS 67215 Phone: (316) 721-4378 (Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas)

Tom Norman, 1047 Terrace View Drive, Alberton, MT 59820 Phone: (406) 722-3012 (Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming)

Doug Stivers, 1544 Fuchsia Drive, San Jose, CA 95125 Phone: (408) 269-5547 (Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah)

Tom Falicon, 1227 Sawmill Creek Rd, Bryson City, NC 28713 Phone: (828) 488-8063 (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee)

Dick Wilhelm, PO Box 209, Bearsville, NY 12409 Phone: (845) 679-2870 (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Nova Scotia, Pennsylvania, Prince Edward Island, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia)



Letters To The Editor



If you have a comment, suggestion, or complaint, send it to me at:

setoff@juno.com

Please put LETTERS in the subject line.

NOTE: Any views expressed or implied in this column are not those of the editor.

REMINDER: To submit photos and articles electronically, please reduce the size (from megabytes to no larger than 600 kilobytes). My old country phone lines will not handle big files.

ALTERNATIVE: Burn a CD and snail-mail to:

Charlene Morvay
17825 Route 8
Union City, PA 16438



Changes in Ads/Excursions for *The SETOFF*

In an attempt to provide ads and excursions in a more timely manner, a few changes, starting with this issue, are being made.

Rather than submitting ads and excursions **both** to the website **and** *The SETOFF*, you now only have to submit to the website.

After I complete the layout of *The SETOFF* and it goes to the proofreader, I will pull all ads and excursion notices listed on the website and list them in a separate file. These will be hand inserted at the time of distribution.

The purpose of this is twofold:

1. To ensure the most up-to-date ads and excursions.
2. To eliminate unnecessary and outdated material in the actual document, making archiving of *The SETOFF* less cumbersome.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know.

Those of you without computers can address all ads and excursion notices directly to:

Keith Mackey
9000 SE 70th Terrace
Ocala, FL 34472

I'd also like to thank Deby Springer who graciously volunteered her time to proofread *The SETOFF*. My thanks to Mike Paul for his hard work, and wishes to him for a happy retirement. Hope to see you again soon!

Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year!

- Editor

Rule Book Availability

New or replacement Rule Books are available for \$5.00. Contact:

Joel Williams
67 Julia Drive
Lock Haven, PA 17745

Phone: (570) 786-1335

e-mail: joel.williams@earthlink.net

From The Director's Desk
Area 3 (IN, Lower MI, OH)
by Bruce Carpenter

I hope everyone had another safe year on the rails, as our season is winding down rapidly.

For once, insurance is not going to be an issue for 2007. Tom Norman is working to get the insurance dates back in line where they once were at the beginning of the season (to cover a full year), instead of part way through. Our insurance representative met with us in Chicago, and all seems to be progressing smoothly for the 2007 season.

While driving home from the annual meeting I wondered what I might write about, and one topic that seems to surface constantly is safety. Our hobby isn't the safest thing one can do, since we are involved with the railroad industry. Each operator has a tremendous amount of responsibility towards other operators, passengers, ECs and host railroads. Operators should remain alert and aware of the surroundings at all times. If you let your guard down, you're going to get hurt. Here are some things to consider.

1. Are you following too close? Rear end collisions were the number one cause for incidents this year. If you are closer than 10 seconds behind the car in front of you, then you are too close. Pick a landmark and count to 10 by thousands. If you pass the landmark at less than 10, adjust your speed. Don't be afraid to let the operator behind you know if you would like some more space. Avoid tailgating.

2. Do your passengers know how to stop the car in the event of an emergency? Show them where the brake lever is and how to use it. Let them know a properly adjusted brake will kill any engine and stop the car.
3. Seatbelts. If your car is not equipped, please consider doing so before the start of next year. Some incident/injuries that occurred this season could have been prevented or lessened with use of seatbelts. It should be noted that no one was seriously injured this season, but seat belts probably would have reduced what minimal injuries we had to ZERO.

Help keep Area 3 safe!

P.S.: Thanks to all who voted for me to represent Ohio, Indiana and Michigan for another two years!



From The Director's Desk **Area 4 (KY, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)**

by Tom Falicon

Area 4 Director

Winter's here and it's time to pull out the coats and start bringing in the fire wood. There's nothing quite like looking up at a brilliant blue winter sky with the smell of a hardwood fire burning off in the distance.

I have been back from the annual NARCOA Board meeting for a few weeks now. The meeting seemed to be the smoothest running I've ever attended. I realize that we didn't have many big issues to work out this year, but everyone put their heads together and talked things through. If I remember correctly, we just about agreed and voted the same way on every issue.

Area 4 now has "dual representation" throughout the year and at the annual NARCOA Board meetings. Bernie Leadon of Nashville, TN, has been appointed to the position of non-voting Member-at-Large. Bernie takes the place of Mike Paul, who has retired and moved to Arizona. Bernie has taken to our hobby like a dog to a steak bone. This year alone Bernie has traveled over 12,000 road miles, and has run over 3,000 miles on the rails at NARCOA excursions! If you have any NARCOA concerns or ideas, you can share them with Bernie or me, and we will convey your thoughts and ideas to the other board members. Bernie brings a new slant to our area by seeing it as a relatively new, but well traveled member. We all congratulate him on his appointment, and are happy to have him hail from our area.

Our NARCOA Secretary, Joel Williams, supplied us with the latest membership figures and Area 4 is number one in member growth. Area 4 membership totals 170 out of our 1,806 members. While other areas numbers declined by as many as nine members, Area 4 grew by 17 members as of September 2006.

I would like to thank NARCOA members: Les Keegan, Mugz Falicon, Jay Boggs, Bill Stringfellow, Kenneth and Jean Huffines, Jim and Olga Macy, Phil Kennedy, Gene and

Leann Lail, Alan Reigler, Jim Massfeller, Larry Robb, Mac McMillin, and John Nagy. These guys traveled to Bryson City, NC, at their own expense and volunteered their time, motorcars, and fuel in order to give rides at the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad's Railfest 2006. Through their hard work we managed to give 108 "M-Style" motorcar rides and 126 "A-Car" rides creating a revenue of \$972 for the railroad. I can't say enough to commend these guys for their hard work and the great public relations they created for the railroad and NARCOA . . . thanks guys!!!

In my last newsletter I told you of TN member James Poe's grave illness. I am sorry to say that James passed away towards the end of August. James will be sadly missed by many of us in and around Area 4. He truly loved our hobby and I loved to see his smiling face as he enjoyed many of our GSMR excursions. I am dedicating each of my excursions to James this year. Each of us has a favorite railroad to run on and a favorite spot on that railroad. The next time you're running down the track and you reach your favorite spot, take the time to think of James and let him know that you're thinking of him and wish him well. Goodbye James. We've lost a key member of our motorcar family!

Those of you that know Mugz and me know that we have been building a house for the past six years. Well . . . we finally moved into what I affectionately call the "damn house" on October 19th. A date that will go down in history at the Falicon household!

As I close my last newsletter of 2006 I'd like to thank all of you guys in Area 4 for being no nonsense, straightforward members. I am fortunate to be the director of the best Area around. Mugz and I would like to wish you and your family the best Thanksgiving ever, and hope you have a Merry Christmas and a very prosperous New Year.

We'll talk again in 2007.



From The Director's Desk
Area 5 (MS, AL, GA, FL)
by Bobby Moreman

Hello everyone. Hopefully in this issue you will find the minutes of the September Annual Meeting. If not, they will be in the next issue. If you have any questions from the minutes, or for any other issue that may be on your mind, please let me know.

All of the elected board members and officers were re-elected. Bernie Leadon, of Nashville, TN, is our new non-voting Director-at-Large. All chairpersons were reappointed except for Judicial. Mark Springer decided to step down from chairing the Judicial Committee. I, for one, wanted to refuse his resignation because he has worked so hard, and been so successful in chairing this important committee. At this time, President Pat Coleman has not announced the new Judicial Chairperson.

PLEASE, the next time you see a director, officer, chairperson, or a member of any committee, tell them how much you appreciate all the work they do for your organization.

Remember that the NARCOA Board of Directors meets each September in Chicago, and we want your attendance. After every meeting I hear, "Wow, I did not know ya'll did so much in such a short amount of time," from new member attendees. Take a trip to Chicago next September and get "wowed".

2006 was very successful for members in Area 5. We had mostly sell out excursions, both in Georgia and Florida. Alabama and Mississippi excursions just did not happen. If anybody knows a railroad that would honor us with an excursion, please let me know who to contact.

I would like to call to your attention the unsung heroes of my excursions. I just could not do all the work it takes to successfully put on an excursion without a lot of great help. This includes registration, safety, inspection, and group leaders within the excursion itself. Kathy and Charlie Pults, Lola and Jim Hughes, Kenneth Huffines, and Bill

Stringfellow are the ones that make Brenda and me look good. If it were not for them, there just would not be any excursions in our area.

Plans are underway for at least six major excursions next year in Georgia and Florida, plus Carl Hyman's Saturday or Sunday excursions during the year.

Brenda and I have been doing NARCOA excursions for 16 years, and are proud to have been the excursion coordinators on 10 different railroads and over 100 excursion days. I have plans in 2007 for five different railroads, and am looking at two more. After that, it will be time to slow down and start visiting other excursions around the country. If you have thought about coming south, next year would be a good year to visit us in Florida and Georgia.

I hope each of you have a wonderful holiday and a Merry Christmas. Brenda and I send our warmest personal regards to each of you.

Safe trips everybody.

Brenda and Bobby Moreman



From The Director's Desk **Area 6 (IL, MN, WI)**

by Hank Brown

Once again Area 6 hosted a great two-day meeting of your Board of Directors and committee members in Chicago. Thursday night everyone arrived, and there was the usual exchange of conversation centered on the wonderful year we are having. I was pleased to see Carl Anderson and Bob Knight at the meeting because they are members of our region and committee chairmen. We had three visitor members attend most of the meetings: one from our area, one from Area 3 and one from Area 5. I encourage all our members to attend these meetings. Everyone gets heard, and it is always open to all our members.

Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. we spent in meetings to discuss many issues. One of the main issues that came before the Board was the insurance. Our agent was present to discuss the problems with insuring a group like ours. Tom Norman presented a rosy future for us and the results were that we will have insurance beginning on February 2007. So we will head back to a full year of insurance instead of nine months.

Last year I was given the task of updating the Operations Manual. The project is finished, and will be on the website for everyone to see this month.

I was given two other projects, the first being to update the Policy Book for NARCOA, and to start a new mentoring program.

Several of Area 6 members called to ask why all the excursions were not advertised in *The SETOFF*, or on the website. I did some digging and discovered that 34.6% of the rides that were covered by NARCOA Insurance were not advertised. I sent the list to Pat Coleman, our president, who responded by helping me to develop a plan for making sure that any excursion coordinator who wants to hold an excursion must first advertise the excursion before the Certificate of Insurance is issued. Hopefully this will give ALL the members a better chance of riding on the railroads they want to ride on. It is this type of input that

directors need to make this a better hobby for everyone.

Beginning in January, anyone wishing to be a certified Excursion Coordinator will have to be mentored using the new form. The process will be sent to all active Excursion Coordinator before this program takes place. It has become very clear that not all Excursion Coordinators are doing the job as required by the Operations Manual. It is the Board's hope that Coordinators will change the way they run excursions to provide a safer place for us to ride.

I still sit on the Judicial Committee, and feel we have lost a very valuable member of that committee. Mark Springer stepped down as chairman. The new Chair has not been named. However, whoever takes Mark's place will have a hard time filling his shoes. Mark did a fabulous job of leading the investigations into the incidents that occurred this year. If you see Mark on an excursion, make sure you thank him.

There were not many excursions in our region this year. The Canadian National, Union Pacific, Canadian Pacific, and Wisconsin Southern have not had their doors opened, yet. As the area Regional Insurance Representative, I processed 61 Certificates of Insurance for an area within 300 miles of Cottage Grove. That means there were more rides in an eight state area than in any other part of the country. We are working on several railroads in Minnesota and Illinois. Next year might be a great year for riding in our region, so stay close to the website.



From The Director's Desk
Area 7 (ND, SD, NE, IA)
by Carl Schneider

I know most of you are unaccustomed to hearing from me in *The SETOFF*, but every once in a while I come up with some news that should be sent out to more than my usual newsletter recipients. Such is the following:

It is with deep sadness that I must report the loss of one of our members on Oct. 2 from a battle with pancreatic cancer. Larry Breuer, who lived in Lawrence, KS, was actually a member of Area 9 and the Heart of the Heartlands, but he was also very much involved in rides with the First Iowa Division in Area 7, which is why I have elected to write this article about him.

Larry participated in almost every run FID sponsored, and despite his deteriorating health condition, was a big help on the Sept. 15th and 16th rides at Baldwin City, KS, on the Midland Railway where he has been an active member for many years. Larry, along with his caregiver, was our escort on the

Midland runs, and handled the crossing protection over busy Hwy 59 near Ottawa, which made that crossing much safer.

For many of you who have never met Larry, you might remember all the safety items, such as flags, vests, and gloves that he had for sale on the website, and in *The SETOFF*.

I personally will think of Larry every time we have a night run and all of those bright fluorescent flags come out ahead of me at the crossings. When we left Larry that weekend after our motorcar excursion, he said he was planning on taking Amtrak to Chicago, for the NARCOA annual meeting on Sept. 28-29, to get in one last train ride, and also see NARCOA in action while he was still able. It's unfortunate he was unable to fulfill his wish.

We will miss Larry in Area 7!



From The Director's Desk
Area 9 (AR, CO, KS, LA, MO, OK, TX)
by Mark Springer

As many of you know, we have just returned from the annual meeting in Chicago. One of the requests made by our Safety Committee was that each area have a "MOM" or Manager of Mentoring. I have asked Jim McKeel to take on this position, and he is willing to take on this job. Thanks, Jim!

Even as our motorcar season winds down, it is never too late to remind ourselves of the need for Safety First. Many of you know that I have been Chairman of the Judicial Committee for NARCOA for the last few years. It is a position that has been very stimulating, but at times was time-consuming. I did resign from this position at the Board Meeting due to the time needed for that job. I still remain dedicated to representing Area 9 to the best of my abilities, and hopefully this change will let me

spend more time on the rails with all of you. As always, feel free to contact me with any issues that are related to Area 9 or NARCOA.

And lastly, I will close on a sad note with the passing of a friend, Larry Breuer, who was in this hobby for the last few years. Besides riding many miles on the rails in his hy-rail, Larry added to the hobby by selling flags with a reflective X, NARCOA stickers, and other useful items often under the name "Flexhaul". Larry will be missed. Memorials may be made to the Midland Railway, Baldwin City, KS 66606-0005, or Midland Hospice Care, 200 SW Frazier Circle, Topeka, KS 66606.



From The Director's Desk **Area 10 (WA, OR, ID, MT, AK, WY)** by Jim Spicer

We have just returned from the NARCOA Annual Meeting in Chicago.

There have recently been two successful fall excursions. We missed the short notice Tillamook trip; we had to leave for Chicago that weekend. We did take our motorcar to Montana, and drop it off in Denton on way to Chicago. We then ran on Montana Central on the way home. It was a very successful, well attended trip. Unfortunately, Pat had a stomach problem, so we missed Sunday.

The good news is, the rash of incidents we had this spring did not continue into summer. On the CMR trip, Area 10 Safety Officer, Jim Morefield made the comment that he was watching spacing, and was very happy to see we were all keeping proper distance. On CMR, with its many loops and open terrain, it is pretty easy to watch spacing. Good job guys, keep it up.

The three Affiliates that operate in the Northwest are all having Board meetings in late October. I have seen the PRO schedule; they have some exciting trips planned. I am looking forward to seeing the schedules for all three. I hope they can work together on scheduling so the dates don't conflict.

Highlights of NARCOA board meeting. Tom Norman arranged for our insurance agent to attend the meeting. He gave us some good information, and answered questions. We were all encouraged by his talk; hopefully, we will have a long term relationship with our carrier. From now on all events will be available on the NARCOA web and in *The SETOFF*, if time allows. Hank Brown said that

thirty-five percent of events were not reported on NARCOA web or *The SETOFF*. I applaud this decision; for all of us to not have access to events is unacceptable. Policy book item 19 was tweaked to eliminate the judicial review of incidents that happen in areas not covered by NARCOA insurance. The rule covering work parties and non-NARCOA events was relaxed somewhat. There is now a form for new Excursion Coordinator mentoring and a hy-rail inspection form.

I am still getting comments from Excursion Coordinators that people are arriving at events without forms filled out or prior inspection done. The Coordinators do a lot of work to get things lined up so we can run. We need to make their job as easy for them as possible. Do your homework, come prepared.

Now is the time to do all those things to your motorcar that you put off this summer. New windshield or new side curtains, change out the brake shoes that were getting close. Get your car winterized to make that Spring trip easier and safer.

The holidays are fast approaching. Have a great Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.



The Safety Comment: Safety Items from the 2006 Annual Meeting

by Bob Knight, Chairman, NARCOA Safety Committee

The NARCOA Annual Meeting for 2006 is now history. As we reflect back on that meeting, I thought it might be of interest to you to share many of the items from the Safety Committee Report.

The first item was a summary of all the to-date 2006 incidents (accidents). The results were:

Six incidents: too fast for conditions

Three incidents: low speed collisions

Two incidents: equipment failure

One incident: inattention

A summary of the above incidents, and how can we slow down our members and/or help better read and anticipate track conditions is in the future. In light of the above incidents, a discussion was held concerning the time of each incident. There is some thought that a corollary can be made between the heat of the day or afternoon, or just having eaten, or the rush to return to the setoff for the drive home. There will be more to come on this subject.

There also was a discussion about developing a procedure for proper flagging, as the procedure varies from different parts of the country.

The subject then moved to a seat belt discussion which was left in the Safety Committee hands to inform the membership by publishing articles about the use, installation, and value to the members and/or their riding passenger(s).

The next item of interest was to develop a list of all area Managers of Mentoring (MOM's) and consider an "Area Safety Officer". These individuals would serve as a more "local" contact for our membership in the areas of

mentoring, safety incident coordinator, help with the publishing of area safety newsletter subjects, and work with the NARCOA Safety Committee.

The report next moved to a distribution of a DVD/CD produced by member's John Leynes and Jay Boggs concerning the NARCOA Book of Rules and a safety video. The area directors are in the process of reviewing this for a possible addition to our website. Also discussed was a big thanks to the various members that have stepped up to the safety plate and helped share safety subjects of interest to the membership both in *The SETOFF* and area publications.

A mentoring report was given which included a map of the United States and Canada, summarizing the mentoring program to date. As of this date, 14 more members have been added to the 67 for 2006 as reported at the meeting. This makes a total of 201 mentored members since the beginning of the program approximately three years ago. Good Job!!

The final item is to list the Safety Committee members and their current contact information. Please share with them any safety issues and concerns so we as a committee can continue to make it . . . "SAFETY FIRST ON THE RAILS".



Happy Father's Day or Warren's World of Welding

by Warren Riccitelli

A few months ago, a lot of us guys celebrated Father's Day. It's our day, a day we can sit back and watch our wives cut the lawn, and we can legitimately procrastinate on all those projects we had been telling our wives we were going to do for them for the past year. It's a day we sit back and look at the fruits of labors, hours of hard work, and pray we don't get another necktie as a symbol of bringing our kids into the world.

This year was a little different. I got the gift I was always looking for. Over the past 30 years, I had told my wife at least twice a year that if she ever saw a course at a votech school or community college on welding, I would be interested. I don't really know why, but I would be interested. Being a husband, home owner, and father has caused me to learn more than they ever thought of teaching us in school, but this was in the back of my head for many years. Maybe I knew 30 years ago I was going to get into a hobby that "might", repeat "might require welding".

This Father's Day, I was greeted with a different style of envelope. Upon opening it, I found a certificate for a "Welding Weekend at the Steel Yard" from my two sons. Reading on, I found it was for the three of us to go to "Welding School for a Weekend." Could there be a greater gift than to spend the weekend with your sons, learning something new, enjoying yourself, and cringing when you get home as your wife your points you to the shower?

This was the weekend. Saturday morning we drove to the site of the old Providence Steel Company in Providence, RI. After going out of business in 2000, it has become a non-profit organization geared to the arts. For 150 years prior, it was a major steel company in our area, providing fabricated steel for thousands of buildings and fabrication for everyone that needed any type of steel fabrication in the Northeast. An old industrial icon that now has become another piece of history. Today, the Steel Yard.org sits as a non-profit artist com-

munity in Providence, offering workshops in blacksmithing, welding, aluminum and bronze casting, ceramics, glass making, and any other artsy crafts that you can come up with. It is fueled by many of the artists that had attended many of the art colleges in the area.

Anyway, on our first day I was a little apprehensive. I had the phobia of being electrocuted while welding. Joe, my youngest, and I picked up my oldest son on the way to class. We arrived and found ourselves wandering through a piece of history loaded with brakes, shears, milling machines, punches, and crucibles with patent dates that were before my Great Grandfather came to this country, and three foot squirrels that were just cast awaiting shipment to a park in Iowa, and an eight foot clay elephant that was getting ready to be cast.

We headed through the Blacksmith Shop only to find that the three of us were half the class. Our instructor was great. He came from a similar community group in Dallas, TX. From his descriptions, these community workshops are in most major cities in the U.S.

We did the usual; we had a safety meeting on the hazards of this environment. Each piece of equipment was gone over with reminders that we should be good neighbors to all. Instructions were given for each piece of equipment we would use. We were shown the metal stock piles that we could pick from. All was recycled from better uses years ago, but to the artists and their artsy projects, it was free. I called it junk, but my sons spotted what were to be their treasures.

After lunch, it was on to MIG welding, introduction to styles, types of wire, and voltages. Now it was time to show our stuff. Dressed in helmets and gloves thicker than my shoe soles, we practiced, practiced and practiced. We welded and welded. Joe said our practice session looked like a cat, so it was refined into an artistic project that now is in my garden.

As the day ended, I realized this had been a great day. My sons gave me the perfect gift and I was with them all day. No girls, but my wallet was lighter from buying them breakfast,

continued . . .

lunch, and ice cream on the way home. My thoughts that evening were about what would be my big project on Sunday.

On Sunday morning, I got up early to go to Lowes for some clean steel. My project was not to be artsy, but to build a new tow bar for one of my motorcars. I would duplicate one of the bars I had bought from Les King. I figured that was some good simple welding that would be practicable, and I would have a good use for it. Both sons were taking the artistic approach, Joe by making sheep and whales, and Warren making garden flowers.

As the day progressed, I walked around just watching the boys do things they dreamed of. I showed Joe, how to use a grinder, and then set up the chop saw for him. Twenty minutes later I walked into the grinding room to see sparks flying and Joe doing it all. The hardest

thing I ever saw him cut was butter for the bread at the kitchen table. Warren was the opposite. He was with a cutting torch for most of the day and only started to put it all together in the afternoon.

The day ended and we all had our projects in hand. A few pictures were taken of our projects, others in the class, and the instructor, and we were on our way home.

I will never forget this weekend . . . a Father's Day gift that was sharing guy stuff with the guys. It was better than a necktie any day, and we all have mementos from the weekend. I learned something with my sons and shared two days doing it.

Can it get better than that? Yes, it can. I got home to find my wife had cut the grass and only destroyed two sprinkler heads!



Left: Joe is busy at his project and making sparks.

Photo by Warren Riccitelli, Jr.

Right: Josego, Warren III, and Warren, Jr. with the fruits of their labor.



Replacing the Fairmont Hydraulic Pump and Scavenging for a Fairmont Turntable.

by Wayne Parsons

Technical Assistance: Roger Lee and Tim Von Rader

Replacing the Original Fenner-Stone Pump

If you have an original Fairmont turntable and your pump goes bad, you must replace the entire hydraulic unit. Roger Lee of Agoura Hills, CA, learned this when he purchased his MT-14M motorcar and discovered that the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) turntable would not lift the car properly. The 12 volt motor ran, but the submersed plastic pump in the tank was worn out and would not generate enough pressure.

Tim Von Rader, at Taylor Hydraulics in Oxnard, CA (805-492-7868) tried to find the plastic pump. It was originally considered a "throw away" pump to be replaced as a unit, and for which individual replacement parts are not stocked. Tim says the pump is no longer made. To double check this information, the writer made a call to Fairmont, who had contracted with Fenner-Stone to make the Fairmont hydraulic units with a custom one quart fluid tank. Fenner-Stone says they no longer make the unit, and Fairmont has none in stock anywhere.

Tim installed a Fenner DC-30 power unit in Roger's car (Bailey.net.com number 251-081) that included motor and pump in place of the hydraulic unit. This Fenner unit must move forward on the mounting plate so that the 3 quart tank does not stick out the back of the car. The Fenner DC-30 uses 3/8" NPTF fittings that match the original pump fittings and enables the use of the original 90 degree elbows and hoses. Use caution when hooking up the hoses. If hooked up backward, the Fairmont control valve will get blown out! Either use help from the local hydraulic shop for the original hook up, or rebuild the blown valve.

Scavenging for a Fairmont Turntable

The Fairmont turntable design, using a hydraulic cylinder to provide lift, goes higher and operates much faster than the screw jack design. This superior performance is justification for the expense of a hydraulic unit. Complete Fairmont turntables are available from time to time as "take off" units when someone parts out a car.

In 1998 such a unit cost \$1,500 when installed in my first car. After purchasing another MT-14M last year, nothing less than a Fairmont design turntable would do for it, too. However, no complete unit was available for sale. Instead a scavenger hunt for individual parts began.

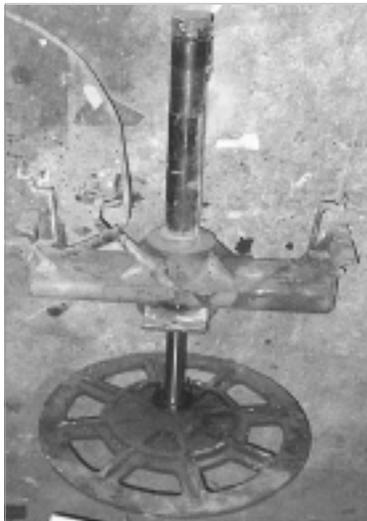
The wanted listings on the NARCOA site produced an assembly which included the turntable support bracket (410203), hydraulic cylinder (410212), and turntable base (410220). Today, these used parts are available from Newman Machinery in Phoenix, AZ (602-952-0035). A new old stock (NOS) hydraulic unit mounting plate (410231) came from Brown Railroad Equipment, Inc (618-797-5484). The price for this NOS mounting plate may seem high, but having a welding shop fabricate the "Z" shaped plate with its many holes, notches, and other angle cuts, would be just as expensive. By the way, Dan Brown has most of Fairmont's NOS inventory. With the original control valve and pump out of stock, my scavenger hunt had come up short.

Tim Von Rader, at Taylor Hydraulics, found the pump and valve replacement solution that enabled the project to be completed. Tim installed a Monarch Dyna-Jack 12 VDC Power Unit, manufacturer number M-310, Bailey.net.com number 250-528. This hydraulic unit comes with a 4-way valve and cam-actuated motor start switch. The operator just moves the double acting lever up or down and the motor runs creating 2000PSI. The reservoir holds 2.1 quarts; the unit weighs 35 pounds, is 18 inches long, and attaches easily to the Fairmont mounting plate after drilling three additional holes. The control valve and the

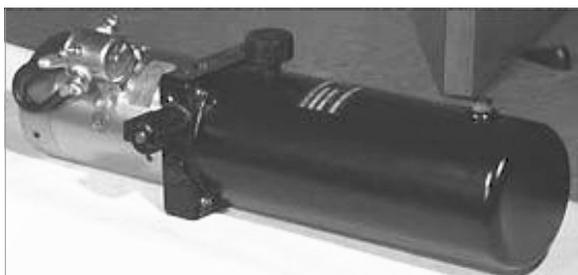
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pipng to the pump required some modification to fit in the available space. Taylor Hydraulics can make up a unit and ship it, or you can use the attached photos as a guide. The only wiring needed is a heavy cable from the solenoid to the positive side of the battery.

Finally, some people have used Haladex hydraulic units available from NorthernTool.com and BaileyNet.com. These units have design drawbacks compared to Fenner and Monarch. First, some Haladex units must be ruled out because they are lowered by gravity, and therefore unsuitable for getting the turntable all the way back up. Second, some Haladex units use switch control of solenoid operation that provides 100 percent power in both up and down operation with no valve regulation of pressure/speed. The Haladex units that do have a valve control are more expensive than Fenner or Monarch



The longer piston in the hydraulic cylinder enables a higher lift than the screw jack turntable design.



The suggested replacement unit is a Fenner DC-30, has no valve, a three quart tank, and a 12 VDC 1-terminal motor that generates 2500 PSI. Measures 21x8x7" and weighs 32 pounds.

based on web site price comparisons. Third, all Haladex units use SAE 6 ports (9/16-18) that require adaptors or new hoses for hookup to the OEM fittings.

In summary, if you already have an OEM design turntable and the pump fails, replace it with a Fenner DC-30 (BaileyNet.com number 251-081). You can assemble a Fairmont turntable by scavenging for support brackets, turntable bases, etc., and adding a new Monarch power unit. It is three to six inches shorter than the Fenner unit. Refer to the last four pages of the Fairmont MT-14M manual for turntable diagrams and parts listings. The only difference between the MT-14 and MT-19 Fairmont turntables are the mounting plates the hydraulic units sit on and the support plate for the turntable lock handle. With slight modifications they will all work in either car. Good hunting!



OEM Fenner-Stone unit with one quart tank. Since the plastic pump inside the tank is no longer available, the unit is replaced whole.



If building turntable from parts, particularly if the OEM control valve is not available, the suggested unit is the Monarch M-310 Dyna-Jack power unit. It ships thus: 18" x 5" x 12-1/2" and must be modified.



The mounting brackets have a complex shape which makes fabrication difficult and expensive. It is much easier to buy a NOS bracket.



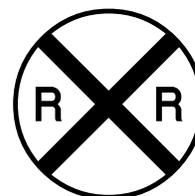
Moving the lever up or down manually operates the valve and the cam-actuated motor switch (located on the far side of the assembly). Three of the four fluid connections are visible in this view. The two hoses go to the top and bottom, respectively, of the hydraulic cylinder. Note that the top fitting on the valve now clears under the car body opening.



From inside the car looking down on the motor. The fourth fitting on the valve is visible in center frame. In the lower frame is the power cable from the solenoid to the battery positive terminal.



This angle shows how the control valve just fits in the available space behind the rear gas tank mounting bracket and inside the rear wall of the car.



Getting The Best Performance From Your Two-Way Radio

by Frank Hubley

The installation of a two-way mobile radio in your railcar can provide several benefits:

1. You can be in contact with the NARCOA excursion coordinator and his assistants.
 - a. You can report any mechanical breakdowns or hazardous conditions, such as people or off-road vehicles that are near the railroad right of way.
 - b. You can discover why the railcars have stopped moving without having to stop your engine and walk up the track.
 - c. You can obtain emergency assistance if a member or rider needs medical assistance.
2. You can monitor NOAA weather transmissions for any significant weather changes.
3. You can monitor the operating channels of the host railroad.

There are several problems I have observed regarding the use of two-way radios on NARCOA excursions that tend to reduce the use of this equipment.

The most significant reason some railcar operators are unable to hear other units on their radio is related to the attempt to use small speakers in the railcar environment. Most railcars have a significantly elevated acoustic noise level when the car is rolling down the track. Some of the noise is from the engine and transmission, while another significant component is contributed by the steel wheels on the rails. Attempts at correcting this problem by using industry standard 5" speaker mounted at the railcar operator's ear level only provides a "moderate" increase in the ability to receive messages.

An obvious solution is to resort to the use of an aviation headset for the railcar operator. This style is not without its own problems. The railcar operator is also bound to implement an aviation intercom box and additional headsets, so he can communicate with his crew members. With aviation headsets costing more than

\$100 apiece and the intercom box (and related radio interface) costing about \$200, it is easy to see that the correction of the man/machine interface can cost about the same as the two-way radio.

Another common problem is the tendency of railcar operators to "shout" into the standard radio microphone. Shouting actually causes a significant reduction in the readability of the transmission at the receiver's location.

There is a lot of confusion regarding the use of specific styles of antennas on railcars. The best antenna is a unit that is known as a 5/8 wave whip, measuring about 49". The most economical antenna is a simple 18" whip (known in the radio trade as a 1/4 wave antenna). The previous antennas are designed to be mounted on the roof of a standard automobile and work best when mounted on a horizontal ground plane of 18 gauge aluminum or galvanized steel that would be about 36" in diameter. (The exact shape and size is not of great importance, just as long as there is about 18" of metal on all sides of the central whip.)

NOTE: There is a "modified" version of the 48" whip that does NOT require the use of a ground plane. This style can be mounted on an aluminum bracket at an elevated location on the rear of the railcar and provide performance similar to the 5/8 wave antenna.

The cast aluminum Excaliber antenna is a very rugged device; however, it has very poor electrical performance outside the 161-162 MHz railroad band (particularly on the 151 MHz NARCOA frequency). In effect, it acts like a filter, reducing the possible railcar / railcar range considerably. Given that this style of antenna costs upwards of \$200, I would recommend that serious consideration be given to the above referenced center mounted whip antennas which can be purchased for \$25 to \$75 dollars and provide superior performance.



Goderich – Exeter Railway, July 2, 2006

by Mark Hudson

(photos by Debbie Hudson)

When the notice for the trip on the Goderich-Exeter Railway trip was posted on the NARCOA website, I immediately copied it and took it home to the wife. Upon seeing the trip notice she immediately replied, "We're going!" You see, my wife is from Canada, and we would be traveling through her hometown of Seaforth, Ontario. She immediately went to the phone, called her mother, and her mother called relatives in Canada.

I, too, was looking forward to this excursion. We had visited Debbie's hometown on several occasions. I had taken pictures of the line from Stratford to Goderich, Ontario, upon which we would be traveling. One April, we were visiting her relatives and I was able to take some pictures of the Goderich-Exeter locomotives as they made their way from Stratford to Goderich. As luck would have it, it was the first day of operation for the line, as CN had turned the operation over to shortline operators.

The GEXR's original mainline runs from Stratford, Ontario, to the lake port of Goderich, Ontario. A "branch" runs from Clinton, southward through Exeter, ending in Centralia. The line's major customer is a rock salt mine which runs underneath Lake Huron for several miles. The GEXR actually runs out on a dock to the salt mine for loading of rock salt. There are also several grain and bean elevators along the line. You see a lot of covered hoppers at any time during the year.

In recent years, the GEXR expanded, purchasing the Canadian National line from Georgetown, Ontario, to London, Ontario. VIA Rail has two passenger trains serving Stratford on a daily basis.

As the "relative underground communications network" was working full time, many of Debbie's relatives were aware of the excursion. One of her aunt's had worked for a local newspaper, *The Huron Expositor*, at one time, and she wanted to know details of the trip so the paper could provide coverage.



Station and yard at Goderich, Ontario.

We were fortunate that we made contact with the GEXR excursion organizer, Ken Annett, on the Huron & Eastern trip early in June. He gave me some additional information about the trip. We were concerned about getting the payment in on time and how to pay - U.S. or Canadian funds. With that worked out, we made plans for the journey to Canada.



At set-on, and after thunderstorm, at Stratford, Ontario.

One of the things that we have discovered is the curious looks and questions we get from people as we travel, pulling our motorcar on the trailer. The nice lady at Canadian Customs in Sarnia, Ontario, was no different. The usual questions were asked. "Where are you going?" "How long are you staying?" "What citizenship?" etc, etc. Then we got to the railcar. "What do you call that?" "This is a first for me. I've never had one of those things." "Is there any possibility that you will leave the car

continued, next page . . .

in Canada or sell it to a relative?" When I answered, "NO", the nice lady looked at me and said, "This is your baby, isn't it?" That got a real good laugh from the wife and the customs lady!

With many of my wife's relatives living in the area, we stayed with a cousin in Seaforth, Ontario. We traveled from Kentucky on Friday, June 30th. We used Saturday to rest and to enjoy Canada Day festivities with friends and family. The journey from Seaforth to Stratford was a nice forty-minute drive. I like those nice, straight highways in this part of Canada. No hills and curves like in Kentucky.



Wooden overpass near Mitchell, Ontario.

We set-on right in front of the station at Stratford. What a beautiful building! I had been at the station taking pictures before, but had never had the full view from trackside. The building is used by VIA. I really hope no one gets the idea of tearing it down and putting up a "shack" for passenger use.

The 10 cars on the excursion left a little past 8:00 a.m. We had to crossover the GEXR Georgetown-London line to get to the Goderich Subdivision. The morning VIA passenger train was due in close to 8:30 a.m., and we had to clear in plenty of time.

As we left the Stratford area, I noticed the rail was different. At first I thought it was welded rail. It was a very smooth ride. Then I noticed there were some joints. We were riding on lengths of 78 foot rail. This is only the second time I had seen this type of rail. I have never

seen, or noticed, 78 foot rail in the U.S. The only other time I had seen this rail was on the Algoma Central on the 2005 excursion. This rail went on for about 10 to 12 miles. After that, we were on 39 foot rail. From there to Goderich we were on 39 foot jointed rail. We saw many low joints, but were able to make good time.

The closer we got to our planned rest stop of Seaforth, the more people we noticed at track side. People stopped at crossings to watch us pass. Whole families were on their decks and porches waving and smiling. At Seaforth, Ken had planned a 30 minute rest stop, but it amounted to about an hour. We had a good crowd of on-lookers in this small town. We had noticed a small article in the *Huron Expositor* from the previous week telling of our "jiggers" traveling through town. Evidently a lot of people in the district read this weekly newspaper. We had a lot of curious people wanting to know about our cars. A lot of pictures were taken. Best of all, Debbie got to visit with relatives.

We couldn't have asked for better weather. Even though the temperature was a little cool at the start and we had a thunder storm during set-on, the sun appeared and it soon warmed up; nothing but clear skies for the rest of the trip.



Rest stop with crowd of onlookers at Seaforth, Ontario.

continued, next page . . .

Goderich – Exeter Railway, July 2, 2006 . . . cont'd.

At Goderich we went past the beautiful station there and journeyed down the hill to the dock area. There are two very large grain elevators along with the salt mine. The elevators were once served by two railroads: the CN branch which is now the GEXR and a former CP branch that is now abandoned. The quaint CP station is still in the dock area and used as a tourist office. I was fortunate enough several years ago to get some pictures when the CP track was still in place.



Parked for lunch and turnaround at Goderich, Ontario.

We had lunch at a nice restaurant right along the docks. Good food, but slow service; but it was Sunday, their busiest day. Once again, the wife got to visit with relatives; two aunts, two uncles, and a cousin, plus some of their friends.

The trip back was great. At the rest stop in Seaforth there were additional curious people. Upon arriving back at Stratford and after loading the car on the trailer, we had the good fortune to visit with four more of my wife's relatives at a local pub.

Even though we traveled 8-1/2 hours one-way to get to our destination, this turned out to be one of our most enjoyable trips. Great weather; beautiful Ontario farmland; meeting some new friends in the motor car hobby. But best of all, my wife Debbie had a great time,



Ontario farmland.

seeing relatives at each of our stops. A great trip!

Special thanks to Ken Annett for organizing the trip. I also want to thank the employees of the Goderich-Exeter Railway for allowing us to travel their railroad.



Grain elevators at Goderich, Ontario.





Sophie. Pitts, Georgia, 2005

"You lay a hand on this truck, I'll bite your ear off!"



Mallet. PNW Tour, 2006

"Let me know when we get there."



Molson. PNW Tour, 2006

"Don't worry . . . I dry off fast."

Paws On The Tracks: Dog Talk

by Alan and Karen Wilber
photos by Alan Wilber

Have you ever wondered what dogs would say if they could talk? Here's our thoughts:



Sam. PNW Tour, 2006

"I know you've got food in there."



Miss Teddy. PNW Tour, 2006

"No dogs allowed in dining room? Please, please, please let me in. I promise I won't eat very much."



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Data and Computer
Compatibility Pat Coleman
FRA Ron Zammit
Legal Forms Mark Springer

NARCOA Licensed Radio Call Sign
WPHT745 – 151.625 mHz

RADIO \ EQUIPPED