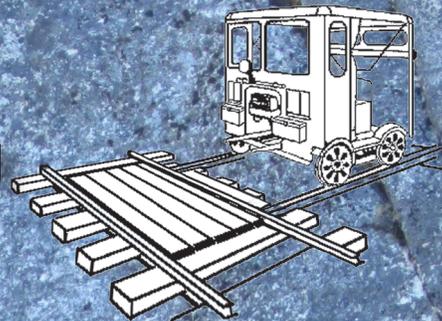


THE SETOFF



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF NARCOA
NORTH AMERICAN RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION
JAN / FEB 2016 VOLUME 30 - No. 1



MOW/PRO TRI STATE TOUR
TOYS FOR TOTS IN PA
RAILCAR RADIOS

THE SETOFF

VOLUME 30 NOV 1

The SETOFF is the official publication of the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) and is published bimonthly to promote safe legal operation of railroad motorcars, and to encourage fellowship and exchange of information among motorcar enthusiasts.

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Letters to the Editor must be signed and include an e-mail address or phone number for authentication. All such letters may be printed as discussed in the NARCOA policy book.

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ON THE COVER: Bill & Susie Pardee pass through East Portal tunnel No 5, one of the shortest tunnels in the United States. Carol Balestreri photo.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BOB KNIGHT



Greetings to all of you in NARCOA land and a happy 2016!

Do our changing times equal opportunities for our hobby? Did you know you are a very valuable part of our hobby? Each one of you as a NARCOA member are the eyes and ears to help assist our hobby in finding new host railroads. I am sure you have observed the changing landscape of the railroad industry as it faces some new challenges almost daily it seems. The changing and collapsing coal and oil markets are making changes in the Appalachian area as well

as the central parts of the US and in some Canadian areas. This is not new as railroads have rail-banked, mothballed or leased to shortlines/regional railroads in the past. As you have heard and read, some changes are in store for the Clinchfield (CSX) now and it was the same several years ago with the Rio Grande and even back to the Milwaukee days to mention a few. Recognizing this changing landscape might develop an opportunity for us to find new rails and/or host railroads to make contact with.

With this future thinking in place, your board of directors have formed a new "New Host Railroad" Task Force. This new direction is being chaired by Area Director, Mark North, who is the Director of Area 2 (NJ, PA, DE and MD}. This new unique planning/seeking/discovery group will be seeking and working on developing new railroads and railroad hosts that might support new motorcar excursions. In no way is this task force being developed to undo any of the great relationships our present Excursion Coordinators have in place now. The primary goal is to add to and/or supplement our very successful EC's excursion knowledge and help them with new leads and referral/contacts that might lead to new rails for us as members to travel.

Now this is where we need your eyes and ears as you can be on the "watch" and "listen" for possible new contacts that might fall out of the new landscape mentioned above or maybe just your knowledge you need to share. If you hear of a contact or referral, please get that information to Chairman, Mark North (marknorth15@gmail.com), or your Area Director, so important follow up can be made. Your information is critical for us to grow and replace some of the popular excursions we have lost due to the changing railroad landscape.

Thanks for your valuable help.
President, Bob Knight

RADIO EQUIPPED

NARCOA Radio Call Sign WPHT745
 Channel 1 - 151.625 MHz
 Channel 2 - 151.505 MHz
 Channel 3 - 158.400 MHz

FROM THE EDITOR

BRIAN DAVIS



Hello NARCOA!

Don't be alarmed, it is not Halloween. The Board would like to put a 'face with the name' for the folks on the board and those of us down in the "engine room".

We are always trying to improve *The SETOFF*, so if you have an idea for an article please contact me and we'll see what we can do.

Gary Smith and Frank Hubley are first time contributors featured in this issue! Thank You fellows!

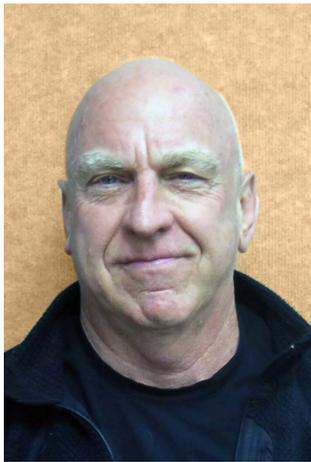
We'll see you on the rails!

Brian Davis

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AREA FOUR



BERNIE LEADON

Happy New Year, Area 4 members-

As we begin a new year, I encourage us all to try to improve being Vigilant about Safety, in NARCOA activities, and in life in general. Stay alert, watch our surroundings, and be alert for what could happen. Take appropriate precautions.

In NARCOA, be alert at Set-on and Set-off loading and unloading of motorcars and equipment. Many operators are distracted and focused on their equipment during this time. Trucks and trailers are being moved all around us while we are focused on our equipment. Winch cables, ramps, and moving equipment on inclines are all around. Motorcars may be exiting an enclosed trailer, and we can't see that it's about to appear. Things can be unpredictable, and we need to stay alert.

Another safety topic which has reappeared, is the need to be aware of weight distribution on these lightweight motorcars. If the car only weighs 1000 pounds or less, and the operator weighs ¼ of that, sitting over the left rear wheel, alone in the car, then that makes the right front wheel lighter, if the ground or rail under the car is uneven.

Imagine a car in this condition goes across a gravel grade crossing,

and encounters a rock in the flange way on the crossing. The right front wheel could more easily ride up over the flange way, and when the car exits the crossing, derail.

Or such a car could be moving on a track curving uphill to the left, and if given too much power while encountering a kinked rail joint, with a higher than average joint bar on the inside of the outside right rail, climb the joint bar and derail.

How can we compensate for uneven weight distribution? First of all, be aware of the potential problem. Compensate by loading gear in the right front area of the motorcar.

If we have a light motorcar, and one or two heavier than average people riding in rear seats, it probably is not a good idea to place heavy coolers and other equipment on a platform extending behind the car body, supported by the lift handles. The car was not designed to put weight on the back of the car on the life handles, and obviously, this could make the front wheels have less weight on them, making it problematic on uneven rail. It also reduces the braking ability of the front wheels.

Take some time during this winter offseason to examine our motorcars or hi-rails, and look closely at our equipment, how we use it, and maybe some of our assumptions. Try to see where we can improve both equipment setup, and our operating awareness.

Look ahead of our rail vehicles while operating, like a track inspector would, and keep an eye on track profile and conditions. Look for track problems which could affect our rail vehicles, and when in doubt, reduce engine power until past any problem area. Stay alert

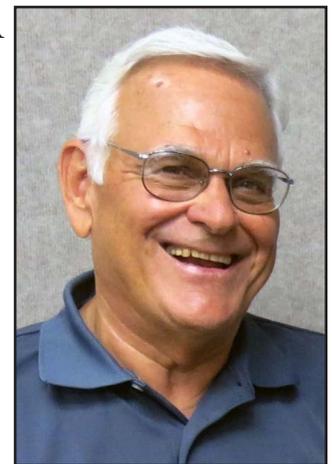
for the car ahead of you slowing down or stopping, and maintain a safe following distance. Remember, Rule 4.15 "Following" now states basically the same requirement as the "Restricted Speed" Rule 4.17. Both rules state that we must be able to stop in HALF the sight distance between us and any other object.

Please take the time to read the Rulebook again during this winter, and think about maintaining proper weight distribution, especially in the lighter small motorcars.

Stay safe, Bernie

AREA

SIX



BOB KNIGHT

Greeting to all the members of Area 6. I am glad to report we closed out the 2015 Great Lakes Railcar season with a great "Christmas Ride with Santa", excursion from Noblesville, IN to Tipton and return in late November. Again it was a fun day planned by EC, Andy Sargent and his Co-EC in training, Jim Dragstrem. Santa provided a lot of excitement for the children that met the excursion in several towns along the way.

Once again, our NARCOA Secretary, Bob Hastings has been busy sending notice of new members to the Area 6 membership list. Way to go members, as we have added four new members since the last issue of the Setoff. First, we have a long time member, Elias

Lesko from Brodhad, Wis returning to active member status. The other three new members are Charles Wyndham from Poplar Grove, IL., Paul Johnson from Chippewa Falls, Wis., and Colton Verzi, from Woodridge, IL. A special note here has to mention that Colton is the son of Dave Verzi, our NARCOA Board Affiliates Chairman.”

Now as we move into the winter months, I hope you have formed your “To Do” list for spending this extra time on motorcar items like going over the total car for loose or missing nuts and bolts. A great additional check list is the NARCOA Rail Vehicle Inspection Form found on our NARCOA website under the headings of documents. An added thought is your understanding that you are now responsible for the total compliance of your motorcar or hi-rail related to NARCOA equipment standards. This may include additional special standards that are in effect for a specific excursion. Please do check this list as a good reference tool.

Please Keep it safe on the rails,
Bob Knight

AREA

SEVEN



CARL SCHNEIDER

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very prosperous 2016 and hope that the past holiday season was enjoyable and exciting for you and

your families.

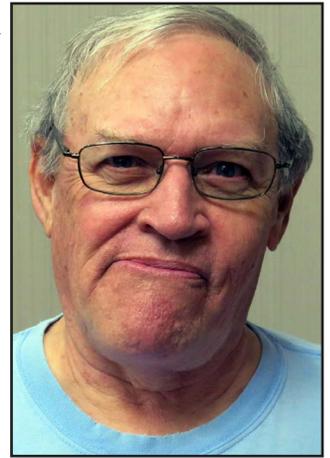
The First Iowa Division had another successful and safe year in 2015 and I wish to thank all who rode with us throughout the season to make this a reality. We mentored several new members during the year and welcome them to the First Iowa Division and NARCOA. It’s always nice to see new faces and share our love of this hobby with others. With our membership getting older, it’s refreshing to see younger people joining our ranks to keep the motor car hobby alive.

I’m sad to announce the unexpected passing of one of our most enthusiastic railroad contacts just two days after our final run of the year on the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad. Fenner Stevenson was the general manager of the railroad, my contact for setting up the rides on the B&SV, and also the easiest person to work with every year. When I called him to set up our two annual trips, I was always told that he already had us on the calendar and he was anxiously waiting our arrival. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Less than a week after Fenner’s death, we lost another member, Dick Ross, who also lived in Boone. Unlike Fenner, Dick had been in failing health for quite some time and hadn’t been well enough to join us on the rails in many years. We also lost one other First Iowa Division member unexpectedly this summer not long after he joined us on an excursion on the Iowa Northern Railroad. Gordon Djuren had only been a member for a few years but he enjoyed the hobby and was a familiar sight with his Milwaukee Road M-9. May all of these ‘railroaders’ enjoy clear signals on the tracks ahead!

Carl

AREA

EIGHT



JOHN BROWN

First of all I would like to welcome Rudy Boonstra from Calgary, Alberta to the NARCOA family.

Rudy is in his mid 40’s and tells me he is an electrical engineer in Calgary. Rudy has been participating in model railway shows for the past eight years, predominately with LEGO so that his kids can “help” him out. The club site is cltc.ca and Rudy mentions he has built a number of speeders for their last show at Heritage Park this past September. Rudy didn’t mention if they were LEGO speeders or not, but I am assuming they were.

Rudy says he does not have a motor car as yet, but has been looking. Rudy says he is trying to decide whether to fix one up from scratch and putting in a Honda motor or the safer route and buy a compliant car.

Either way I am glad to see Rudy join the NARCOA factory and mentioned he read my column in the last Set Off and liked the way I introduced new members, So that is one person plus myself that reads my column in the Set Off. Great!!!!!!!!!!!!

Also at this time Bill Andrews the Director for Area 10 went through I would consider major heart surgery and is on the mend. That is also great news to hear that a fellow member

is doing well and hopefully get back home were the food and caretaking is always better.

By the time NARCOA members should be getting this edition of the Set Off in the mail I would think we will have from Tom Norman the cost of insurance for the 2016 year of motorcaring.

As you are reading my column I hope you have had a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and you have not gained any weight due to the Christmas sweets that seem to appear before our eyes at this time of year.

As of Dec in my area just had 2 feet of snow on Nov 29 and it is all gone now and the temperature is in the 50's, kind of unheard of up here for Mid Dec. Great as I would rather be model railroading then shovelling snow. Motor car on the rails come April if all goes well.

I do hope to see many of my friends I have not seen last year come this year once the snow is gone and warmer weather.

John Brown Director Area 8

AREA ELEVEN



BILL SHERTLE

Although most of Area 11 has mild winter weather we normally don't have much going on excursion-wise until Spring. However, there

are a couple of planned events like a February run on the "Movie Railroad" also known as the Fillmore and Western in Southern California and a breakfast run in January on the Placerville and Sacramento Valley RR in Central Cal. Otherwise, most of our time is spent planning for the Spring, Summer, and Fall. We anticipate a Spring run on the combined railroads of the Santa Cruz and Big Trees and the Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay. Plans are also being made to work with our colleagues in Area 8 to run three railroads on Vancouver Island in June. We will also return to Arizona in the Fall to run the Grand Canyon RR together with a possible run on the nearby Copper Basin. Let's plan for a safe and enjoyable excursion year in 2016. Happy New Year!

Bill Schertle - Area 11 Director

DEFINITION OF SPOUSE- INSURANCE

BERNIE LEADON COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

At the Annual Meeting this past September your Board of Directors updated the definition of who is a Spouse of an insured Member. The definition list listed in the Policy Book, as item 8.1, and also is quoted in the annual Insurance Application Form.

It now reads: *"The definition of spouse is a legally married person including a person of the same sex. A spouse in a common law marriage is not permitted to operate under the member's insurance coverage."*

To explain in more detail: The reason a "legally married person" now includes persons of the same sex, is to bring our policy into conformity with the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on same

sex marriage.

The reason that common-law marriages are not recognized for purposes of NARCOA insurance coverage under the Spouse provision, is that while common-law marriages may be recognized as legal in some U.S. states, they are not in other states and jurisdictions. Since this inconsistency in the legal status of any common-law marriage could invalidate your insurance coverage, we must state that we do not recognize common-law marriages.

A partner in a common-law marriage may still obtain insurance coverage, by the simple action of that person purchasing

their own individual NARCOA insurance coverage. This is also the solution for any persons living together but not married under the NARCOA definition.

And legally married couples who want to operate two rail vehicles at the same time, on a NARCOA insured event, must also individually purchase insurance, as two married persons sharing the same insurance coverage may only operate one rail vehicle at a time.

Hope that makes sense. But it is very important to understand, both for insured members, and for Excursion Coordinators.

Stay safe out there on the rails.

JOE SPEEDER

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2016

Here we go! It would be a nice, easy paced winter ride. There is some snow on the ground and it's a frosty morning but the sun is shining bright! Set-on goes well. The paperwork is completed and they were under way. What a great day! Some of the snow that fell a couple of days ago still hangs in the trees. Apparently due to the snow and the cold weather there is a small turnout for this ride, only eight cars. Joe's ended up being placed right behind the leading car in the group.

The excursion gets underway and heads into a long stretch of track lined with trees. This is a beautiful ride with the snow on the ground and in the trees. What a pleasant change from most of the rides. The excursion approaches the first road crossing. Joe watched the lead car slow to stop at the crossing as a car swooshes across the tracks in front of them. Joe applies his brakes. Nothing is happening! He pushes harder on the brake lever! Still, nothing is happening! He pushes harder on the brake lever and then realizes that his brakes are locked up and his wheels are sliding! Finally – the wheels grip the rail and he comes to a stop – inches behind the lead car that was still stopped at the crossing waiting on other highway traffic.

Joe immediately checked behind him to see the status of the car following him. He sees that the car is safely coming to a stop behind him. Whew! Joe's heart is beating now! What happened? Joe then realizes there

was some frost on the head of the rail along that stretch of track still shaded by the trees. Joe finally starts to breath normally again. That was too close for comfort but a tragedy was averted – barely! Joe had just become aware of yet another hazard that he, and all operators, need to watch out for when riding the rails during the winter months. Motorcar operators must be aware of the possibility of frost or snow on the rail during that time of year because it will definitely increase the distance needed to come to a safe stop.

At the lunch break and turn-around point, Joe mentioned his incident with some of the other motorcar operators. He found it somewhat embarrassing, but he felt it was something that everyone needed to be reminded about. It was certainly not as embarrassing as it could have been had he not been able to stop when he did.

The rest of the ride went well and everyone really enjoyed the spectacular winter scenery during the run. When they got back to the set-on location Joe loaded his car on the trailer and got in the driver's seat of his vehicle. He took a deep breath, letting it out slowly. He was sure glad that his wheels finally found some dry rail and he wasn't the cause of a bad incident that would have caused some damage and possibly some injuries. Joe headed toward home as a little wiser operator and he looked forward to the next great motorcar excursion.

MENTORING REPORT

JOHN BECKER - MENTORING CHAIR

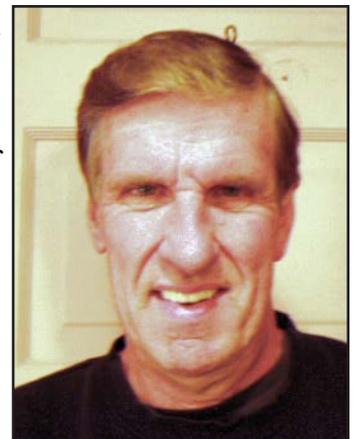
When I first joined Narcoa nine years ago the mentoring program was just starting. My mentoring included a short talk on keeping my distance from the car in front of me, an emergency stop and 25 miles of driving my motor car. By the end of the day I was qualified for my driving certificate. I had no idea how to set on or off, what spare tools to bring, or how to flag correctly. It was kind of learn as you go. Since then the program has changed so much for the better. The new member is now shown how to unload and load you speeder from the trailer, what spare parts to bring with, how to properly store and secure spare gas, what you flagging responsibilities are, towing procedures, general motor functions and repair, and common sense procedures

that the new licensee might not be aware of. The more the person learns before he starts driving on the rails the better it is for the whole group and the safer our hobby will be.

I look forward to keeping this program a key part of a new licensee's learning process by keeping them as educated as possible about our fun hobby.

Regards,

John Becker.



TWO MORE SHINY WHEEL AWARDS TO ANNOUNCE: BRIAN DAVIS AND DAN PAGE

It's a great honor to recognize members for their tireless efforts to keep the gears of NARCOA turning smoothly. For the month of October, we feature Brian Davis, our Setoff Editor. Brian is a certified Quality Engineer and works with Johnson Matthey where he is the site Quality Manager in the Ravenna, Ohio technical center. He enjoys a long history of volunteer work with the Boy Scouts of America and presently serves Great Trail Council as on the Eagle Scout advancement committee and as Council Training Chairman.

Brian found an MT14 advertised on our website in 2008, and along with his wife, Jane was instantly hooked on the hobby. After they met and were encouraged by member Ken Annett and his wife, the purchase of their first motorcar was made and he joined NARCOA in Jan, 2009. Brian, Jane and their two children and several grandchildren always plan to attend eight or more excursions a year.

He volunteered to become the Editor of the Setoff "for a year or two" back in mid 2009! He also has become an EC in 2012 and is an active member with the OVR Affiliate. Thanks, Brian for continuing to be our NARCOA Setoff Editor.



Above: Bob Knight and Brian Davis, photographed by Dan Page; (both images taken at the WNY&P excursion seton in Meadville, PA)

Now for the month of November, it is another honor to feature Dan Page. Dan is our present Nominations and Election Chair, helps edit the member Bulletins and Notices along with being the manager of the NARCOA Store. He teamed up with our Secretary, Bob Hastings, together to make NED a reality.

Dan lives in Huntington Beach, CA with his wife, Gail and they have two adult sons. He is a retired officer of the US Army, a Army helicopter pilot and retired marketing manager of the Boeing Company.

Bob Knight presents the award to Dan Page, photo by Tom Kasper



Dan was bitten by the motorcar bug while traveling with his Dad, Harvey, in the Oil City, PA area when they came across a NARCOA excursion. Dan and his dad were mentored by Warren Riccitelli in April of 2007 and were assisted by Bob Hastings and Ted and Rita Posse for the mentoring experience. For the next five years, Dan and his Dad spent many great weekends participating in NARCOA excursions. Dan became a NARCOA volunteer in 2008 as he offered his computer and project management experience to help with our new online data system, NED. Thanks Dan, for sharing your technical knowledge with our hobby.

AMADOR CENTRAL RAILROAD NEWS

BY GRANT VOGEL

I received a call a little over a month ago that sent chills down my spine. It was from a chief inspector at the FRA and all I heard was “Mr. Vogel we need to talk”. We met along with his signal inspector and talk we did. Apparently when we bought the railroad it was not reported as sold but abandoned and they had no idea we were here until a series of events had them searching the Internet and we were found. I made a big discovery that day in that the FRA is really there to help fledgling railroads and the big ones as well. I was told that we would probably be classed as a non insular tourist railroad and be subject to their jurisdiction. My first thought was “big brother” but the more we spoke my feelings changed and I realized these guys were here to help and bringing us into the FRA’s framework of rules and regulations and an extra set of eyes on our operation and plant would be a good thing. Last week I received a note that read in part:

Congratulations, the chief consul in Washington has granted you a non insular tourist railroad classification. You have chosen to use the Amador Central Railroad as your name and AMC as your acronym and this has also been reactivated. We will meet soon and discuss the procedure to bring you into the ‘fold and get your operation in line with our standards.

We met today and these gentlemen that presented the information were cordial, understanding, factual and more than willing to help us into the mainstream. They checked out one signal and a little bit of the tracks, offered a suggestion or two (and they were right) asked when we could meet again so a run of the RR was offered and accepted. This way they can get a look at our whole operation.

What is the strange part of this event is we are the only owned motorcar railroad recognized by the FRA as a “real” railroad. So here we go. Our new 111 year old railroad is coming into a new life of its own as an affiliate of NARCOA.

Grant Vogel President RRCHS

2016 NARCOA MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION CAMPAIGN

The NARCOA Membership Expansion Campaign (NEW AND EXPANDED) is designed to encourage active members to go ‘hunting’ for new members. The NARCOA Membership Committee will pay a bonus to any current member who brings in either a new member or a past inactive member.

Purpose: Expand NARCOA membership

Communicate the unique experience of NARCOA to the greater Railroad community

Involve the current NARCOA members in the growth of NARCOA

Timing: January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

Reward: A TWO MONTH Membership Bonus will be added to the renewal date of any active member who brings in a new member or a past inactive member.

EXTRA SUPER BONUS – all active members who bring in THREE new or past inactive members within the contest period will receive a **TWELVE MONTH**

extension to their membership! **HOLY COW!!**

Rules: NARCOA will extend the membership of any active member who brings in either a new member or a past archived member.

The new member or returning member must pay a full annual membership and MUST include the referring member’s name on the membership application.

The membership bonus will only be applied to the identified referring member (no trading on the black market).

A valid past member must have been inactive for a least two calendar years prior to rejoining.

Please don’t scam the system. Anyone suspected of cheating will have their name misspelled in NARCOA forever!! ;-))

Bob Hastings, Dan Page and Bill Delmar

NARCOA Membership Team

NATIONAL TRAIN DAY 2015

JAMESTOWN, NEW YORK

BY STUART & CATHIE EDMONDSON



In early April Brian Davis sent out an e-mail to OVR members wanting to know who would come with their motorcar and big smiles and best public attitude on May 9th to Jamestown, NY's Gateway Train Station. I was already part of National Train Day the Saturday before May 2nd, with Phil Linne and other OVR members at Toledo Ohio. I sent Brian back an email offering myself and Cathie, and Woodings. We attended 4 public events last year and were used to talking to the public about the motorcar hobby, and it sounded like fun.

The event was to celebrate National Train Day and the renovated historic Gateway Train Station. National Train

Above: Erie Railroad Gateway Station main entrance; Below: Interurban car on display in the station. All photos in this article by Stuart Edmondson



Day was started in 2008 by Amtrak to help promote education about travel by rail and to let the public see what the modern coaches and rolling stock, and to see the train stations today, all over America. Starting this year the holiday will change name to 'Amtrak Train Days' from here on. The holiday is held each year as close as possible to May 10, the date in 1869 that the Golden Spike was driven in Promontory, Utah that completed the first transcontinental railroad.

The Jamestown station was built in 1930 for Erie Railroad and from 1960-1976 it was called the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Station. From 1976-1999 it was part of Conrail. Its original use was a stopping point for the trains running from Hoboken, NJ to Chicago IL and back. The last passenger train was in January 1970 but the station continued to house the local railroad offices until the tracks and the station became part of the Conrail System. The station and engine house were then transferred to private ownership and gradually declined until 2000 when Jamestown took back ownership and started planning for future depot uses. In 2003 the station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which opened up new options and revenues. In 2010 Senator Charles Schumer announced a 12 million dollar grant to restore the station and grounds. The beautifully restored station was open to the public in October 2012. Although there is still no passenger rail service the station is a stop for Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach buses taking passengers to Buffalo's Amtrak Station. Let's hope someday Amtrak trains will again be stopping on the tracks.

The original Erie engine house will begin a full restoration and will be open next year to the public as a



museum.

Brian wanted a mix of motorcars manufactures and types for this event. I brought the only Woodings, Ted Poesse had the only Beaver Car, the rest where all Fairmonts, open and enclosed. The weather was perfect and the set on of nine motorcars went smooth without a problem. At set on we were greeted by the (WNYP) Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad President and General Manager Mr. Carl Belke who discussed the day's events with Brian. Mr. Belke introduced Nick Williams who would escort us to Jamestown station and the other direction we were to go that day. After the safety meeting Mr. Belke gave Nick a track warrant to Corey and back.

Nick escorted us from the Falconer Train yard to the station where we park our motorcars so the visitors to the station that day could walk up and down looking at all our motorcars and ask questions about our hobby and about NARCOA. I had NARCOA color brochures to hand out to serious people interested in the motorcar hobby, and extra copies of *The SETOFF* were also handed out .

Above: Our cars are on display on the unfinished riverfront side of the station. Below: Inside Gateway Station; Right: the group at the turnaround & break in Corry PA.



The best part was letting children sit in the motorcars smiling and parents taking photos. We visited the very nice station and looked at the displays inside and had lunch. Soon the call came to move our motorcars so another display could be brought out to put on display. Viscose Company Steamer #6 brought a vintage caboose owned by the WNY&P railroad to the station for visitors to see.

We departed westbound to Corey. The weather was perfect and the countryside to Corey was wonderful, wetlands on both sides of the tracks and wonderful scenery.

Just before Corey our peaceful trip was disturbed by two small dogs playing in the gauge. We were coming up on them fast and they showed no sign of moving off



the track. With , my wife's heart and mine where in our throats, I applied the brakes and hit the 125db Nathan air horns they both jumped clear, but one jumped back in again! Seconds before the dog and we were going to have a bad day the dog cleared our motorcar with maybe by three feet to spare. Wow! Cathie had the HD video camera running all day and that event was recorded too.

When we arrived in Cory we turned our motorcars, relaxed, some ate, all talked, and had good fellowship. Then after 45 minutes we returned back towards Jamestown again scenery and weather perfect, (no dogs) then to Falconer Yard for an easy setoff, the wrap up to a wonderful even and a wonderful trip.

Many thanks to Mr. Carl Belke of the WNY&P, our escort Nick Williams for making this trip a success, and to Brian Davis for arranging it.

Stuart and Cathie Edmondson
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PS: To see the event from a drone's perspective use this link:



MOW/PRO TRI STATES TOUR

SEPTEMBER 10-29, 2015, BY CAROL BALESTRERI

The Tri states tour 2015 was a successful collaborative effort. To coordinate an 1100 mile rail trip involving ten railroads and have it mesh into a smoothly run three-week tour on the rails, it needed the four experienced ECs from two affiliates, as well as a host of support



volunteers. Pacific Railcar Operators and Motorcar Operators West joined forces with Bill Andrews, Dave Balestreri, Will Krasselt and Rich Wilkins, Event Coordinators making the arrangements.

We began the tour with a marvelous three days out to the Oregon coast and back on the Coos Bay Rail Link, ably led by Bill Andrews. We set-on Thursday afternoon at the Rosboro Lumber Company plant at Noti, 19 miles from Eugene, and ran 100 miles west and south to Coos Bay. This is such a beautiful, interesting run. You get a little bit of everything as you run through forest, and sand



dunes, beside lakes and rivers, and over bridges and islands, and many tunnels. At one point we went through a tunnel, over a bridge, through another tunnel, and over another bridge, all right in a row. The most unusual feature of this trip is the swing span bridges we crossed.

Most of us were unaware that the bridges are usually open to allow water traffic and have to be closed to allow rail traffic. That was us! We had a relaxing 2 day stay at the Red Lion Inn in Coos Bay, right across the street from where the motorcars were parked. The evening we arrived, we all shared a very nice buffet dinner, which was a great way to get to

meet with everyone. The second day we ran down to Coquille, had our box lunch from the hotel and came back to Coos Bay for a nice little dinner down on the boardwalk. Then back to Noti on Sunday and hit the road toward Hood River! Monday morning Rich Wilkins led set-on in Hood River, Oregon, the Northern terminus of the Mount

Hood Railroad, where the line interchanges with Union Pacific Railroad. The line starts out parallel to the Hood River for the First Three miles until it reaches a switchback.

Switchbacks used to be common, but this is now only one of five remaining railroad switchbacks in use in the United States. After we reversed direction by turning in the switchback, we continued south through the communities of Pine Grove, Odell, and Dee before reaching the southern end of the line at Parkdale. The total length of the line is just over 21 miles.

We passed through active pear orchards, which along with the lumber operation at Dee, used to be the primary customers of the line when the Union Pacific owned it. When local industries switched to truck based transportation, a group of local investors purchased the railroad and began to offer passenger excursions to augment the freight

Left above: Leaving Coos Bay bound for Coquille; Lower left: Sand dunes encroach on rail; Below: Mt. Hood looms in the distance. All photos by Carol Balestreri.



business. The line was sold again in 2008 to Permian Basin Railways, a subsidiary of Chicago-based Iowa Pacific Holdings. Today the railroad offers four-hour scenic tours through



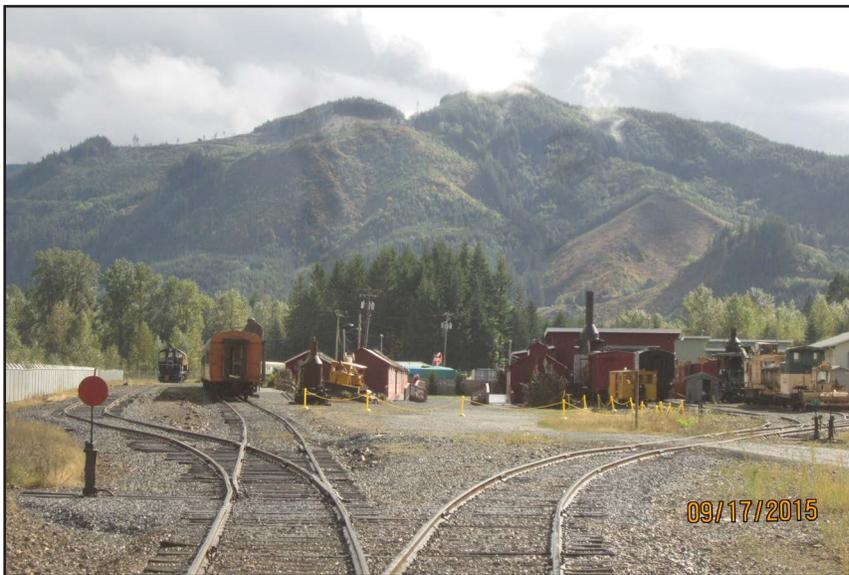
the Hood River Valley, and narrated historic excursion train tours. There are great views of Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams along with the surrounding orchards and farmland of the Hood River Valley. Although we got a breath taking view of Mt. Hood the day we ran, Mt. Adams was hiding behind a cover of cloud.

Tuesday we set on the Battle Gound, Yacolt & Chelatchie Prairie Railroad (BYCX) in the friendly little town of Yacolt, Washington. Dave Balestreri took the reins for the next few days and began by leading us to Chelatchie and back to Yacolt for

lunch, provided by the Railroad from The Whistle Stop restaurant. After lunch we ran past Wall, where the tourist train stops and on to Heison and back, twice before setting off for the day. We made a rest stop at Moulton Falls State Park, with enough time for those interested to hike down to view the falls. Very pretty.

Wednesday was a travel day to Frederickson, just south of Puyallup, Washington, where Dave had arranged a secure set-on site Thursday morning in the Pacific Steel and Recycling yard, the only day it rained! Tacoma Rail, Mountain Division, (TRMW) is distinct from

Rail under contract to the City. The Mountain Division is the tail end of the former Milwaukee Road; it was operated by Weyerhaeuser as the Chehalis Western Railroad before



being briefly operated by the Tacoma Eastern Railroad. Tacoma Rail started operating the Mountain Division in November 1998.

The Mountain Division consists of 132 route miles extending from Tacoma through Frederickson, where it splits with one line

the rest of Tacoma Rail. It is, in fact, considered a separate railroad, as the track is owned directly by the City of Tacoma – not by Tacoma Public Utilities and is operated by Tacoma

from Eatonville to Morton, and another to Centralia and Chehalis. On day one we ran to Eatonville, where the rail became the Mt. Rainier Scenic Railroad, which we took to their shop switch at Divide, where we turned and went back to Frederickson.

On Thursday, day two on Tacoma Rail, our second contingency plan had been to run to Rainier and back. However, cars are stored on much of the track, which is quite common as it pays so well. The Railroad graciously offered us the alternative

of running into Tacoma, first time ever for speeders! So that is what we did. Once back to Frederickson, we set-off and most of us drove down to Western Junction to set-on again and run on this portion of the Western Washington Railway down toward Blakesley, where we turned

Top: Safety meeting with Whistle Stop restaurant and RR Station in background; Middle: Mt Rainier RR shops near Mineral, looking toward Storm King Mtn, where we turned around; Below: Reardan Museum with speeder lineup. All photos by Carol Belestreri.





Above: In Govan Wa on the Eastern Washington RR we went in the siding to wait for the train to go by; Below: Rest stop at Coulee City, WA. Photos by Carol Balestreri



between Essex and Lakeside, and returned. We then drove to Chehalis for the night.

Friday, day three on Tacoma Rail, we set-on in Chehalis to run on the Western Washington Railway again, as well as the Chehalis Centralia Museum Railroad. We ran to Blakeslee and back, then to Curtis and back, with a stop at the Museum

where they opened the shop building to show us their project in progress: completely rebuilding the boiler on one of their steam locomotives.

Saturday, Sunday and part of Monday were travel days for everyone to get to Wilbur, Washington with time for sightseeing, visiting or just relaxing in between.

Will Krasselt had set-on well in hand Monday afternoon on the Eastern Washington Gateway Railway (CW Subdivision). Tuesday, we ran to Medical Lake and back, with a stop to peek through the fence at the Reardon Museum. And on Wednesday we ran to Coulee City and back to Wilbur for an early set-off.

Thursday, the 24th was a travel day to get to Island City/La Grande, Oregon. Friday Dave took over again and we set-on in Island City on the Elgin Subdivision of the Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad, ran to Elgin where we got new escorts when the line becomes the Wallowa Union Railroad, and from there to end of track in Joseph.

The Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad Company (INPR) is a 120 mile property composed of two former UPRR branch lines operating in southwestern Idaho and Northeastern Oregon. The INPR serves and switches customers in Southwestern Idaho. Shipments are predominately forest products, agricultural products and chemicals. The INPR also operates a tourist train, the Thunder Mountain Line, on its Cascade Branch.

The Wallowa Union Railroad, aka Joseph Branch is 63 miles long and connects Elgin in Union Co with Joseph in Wallowa County. As is typical of the Northwest's major trunk lines, the WURR follows the region's waterways. The railroad uses the pathways of the Grande Ronde and Wallowa Rivers. When freight service to Joseph stopped in 1996, abandonment of the line above Elgin was approved. But after several years of debate the line was rescued when the Oregon Legislature authorized \$2 million for an intergovernmental partnership



again!) We enjoyed an excellent buffet, included with the trip, as a farewell dinner. Our trip back Tuesday put the finishing touch on a great trip with a barbecue brisket lunch provided by the railroad and served at their facility at Banks. You could even pan for semi-precious gems in their sluice box if you so desired. Thanks to all of the experienced operators and helpers, the final set-off in Fruitland was accomplished without a hitch and we all went our separate ways. Hopefully we'll see each other again on the rails!

Carol

between Union and Wallowa counties, which formed the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURR) and purchased the line in 2003. Eagle Cap Excursion Train rides use the new Elgin Depot, which was completed in 2012. We stopped and visited the new Depot on our way out and back.

Saturday we had a day off to enjoy Wallowa Lake, where the annual Alpenfest was taking place. Or we could take a trip up Mount Howard in the tram for lunch at the top, or take the shuttle into the cute little town of Joseph for some shopping! Sunday we returned to Island City to set-off and travel down to Fruitland. It was the perfect opportunity to view the total eclipse of the moon while we drove. Amazing sight!

On Monday we set-on for the last time in Fruitland, to begin our trip on the Payette and Thunder Mountain Subdivisions of the Idaho Northern & Pacific Railroad. We ran 95 miles to Cascade, with lunch provided by the Railroad at the depot in Horseshoe Bend. Once there we stayed overnight at the charming Ashley Inn, which is right beside the tracks. The nice folks at the Cascade Senior Citizen Center had sent a van to pick up those who were not foolhardy enough to climb the levy up to the speeders. (They came back next morning to transport



Top: The excursion follows the Payette River, Above: In Govan Wa on the Eastern Washington RR we went in the siding to wait for the train to go by; Below: Rest stop at Coulee City, WA. Photos by Carol Balestreri



TRAINS FOR



BY GARY SMITH



Saturday, December 5, was circled on many operator calendars in the northeast as it marked the end of the motorcar season and was also the date for the annual *Toys of Tots* Excursion on the North Shore Railroad. 2015 was the 10th year the run has been held with an 86 roundtrip miles between Northumberland and Beach Haven, PA. Although the track mileage is nice, the real bonus for the day is the opportunity to assist in the collection of toys and funds for the local chapter of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves.

Central PA Excursions Coordinator Larry Maynard called the safety meeting at 8:30 am. All participants were previously asked to bring an unwrapped new toy. A pile quickly grew in the parking lot, a nice start for the day's efforts. After covering rail conditions and the day's schedule, Larry explained how residents were aware of our trip and planned to meet us along the tracks to donate toys. All were advised they were free to give out candy or small presents to children along the route.

Time was then taken to present a special award to NSRR Marketing

Director Todd Hunter for his 20+ years as the liaison between NARCOA and the Railroad. Todd is also a NARCOA member and has his own railcar. Next, the judges presented gift bags to the top three decorated motorcars. The competition was stiff, but the Bellefonte Central car being pulled by reindeer and owned by Barry Wunz was given 1st prize.

Last item before leaving was the passing of hats to collect cash among the attendees. Wallets and pocketbooks were opened producing \$680 from the 28 motorcar operators and passengers. That would be added to other donations from area businesses and citizens – totaling \$2,640. Funds would be used to purchase more toys at a discount from local retailers including Walmart. USMC Reserve coordinator Dean Beaver was present with his staff to start processing the toys. All gifts will be passed on to the Salvation Army and other similar organizations for distribution to the needy in the central Pennsylvania region.

Once out on the rails, residents immediately started appearing

trackside bearing gifts. Not sure who was enjoying it more – the givers or the receivers. Smiles were all around and that pattern continued throughout the day. At one stop a dozen people were waiting with arms full of toys. In previous years, each railcar accumulated gifts until they were full. The large gang cars were an easy target and were usually overwhelmed quickly. This year thanks to the craftsmanship of fellow coordinator John Gonder, space was not an issue. He constructed a wooden toy chest on wheels – complete with gift wrapping and an integral red stop light. It would come in handy, as by sunset the overall toy count was 1,056 and would fill two large pickup trucks!

Upon leaving, “Merry Christmas” and “Happy Holidays” greetings were being passed between friends

Above: Safety meeting at the seton, Northumberland PA. photo by Alfred Mottola; Below: John Gonder's New Toy Chest, Photo by Itchy Mead



and fellow operators. The day had been a huge success, and it capped off another season of safe and enjoyable rail riding in the northeast.

Gary Smith

TOYS FOR TOTS NORTHUMBERLAND TO BERWICK PA, DECEMBER 5 & 6, 2015

BY JOHN GONDER

Let's start out by saying the weather man lied. The forecast was to be Sunny and in the low fifty's. Wrong. We were blessed with heavy fog and temps in the upper twenty's to low thirty's, Ice on the track and very slippery conditions. After decorating



Barry Wunz of Bellefonte PA was the First Place winner, photo by John Gonder

and working on the railcar and trailer for several weeks, I and co-pilot Ed Summers set-on at Northumberland PA, home to the North Shore Railroad. Today's journey will take us along the Susquehanna River from Northumberland to Berwick about 35 miles away and return. Coordinator and host, Larry Maynard had been in contact with the U.S. Marine Corp." Toys for Tots program and advertised in the papers and on radio and TV that we would be out today collecting new unwrapped toys to be distributed to the needy or less fortunate children in and around the area. All participants decorated their cars and brought toys also. A contest for best decorated car went to Barry Wunz, second to John Gonder, and not sure who got third. I had my toy box trailer along to carry the collected toys in along the route. Twenty Eight brave cars

left after the safety meeting, arriving at checkpoints along the way where the public met us and gave us toys and cash donation. The day was so successful that \$2600.00 and two truckloads of toys were gratefully picked up by the Marines. Thank you to all that participated, donated, or helped with this event. Special thanks to Larry and Carol Maynard, Todd Hunter, and ALL the great folks at the North Shore Railroad for making this possible.

Perhaps the rest of the affiliates across the country could coordinate a weekend trip in early December or late November and we could have a National Toys for Tots weekend with runs all across our nation. What a great way to make Christmas a special time for the kids and us too.

Day two we are on the Union County Industrial RR from New Columbia PA to Winfield PA. and return. A short ride planned with a stop at Duncan Donuts for breakfast and then Christmas shopping at the Rolling Mills Antique and flea market. Wow so many things to look at and spend money on.

The weather again held us up as the rails were so icy we couldn't even move. We lashed two cars together and put sand on the tracks but the ice built up like snow in front of our wheels. The fog had deposited water and ice on the track overnight. About an hour later

things started melting and we got underway, first going north to the Central PA Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society's station then turning and going to Milton PA, home of Chef Boyardee where they make the spaghetti o's. Then on to the main line to Duncan Donuts where the frozen operators made a mad dash for COFFEE and donuts. It was hard to get everyone back out in the cold but we pushed on to the Rolling Mills. Our people made donations to them in the form of purchased antiques etc. After shopping we finished the trip turning around in Winfield PA. We all made the trip safely both days, collected lots of stuff and money for the kids and survived the cold. Yes we had a wonderful time doing it and look forward to next year. Thanks again to the North Shore and Union County Industrial Railroads for their hospitality and help.

Ho-Ho-Ho, Merry Christmas everyone!!

John Gonder

Operator elf! photo by Ackerman Photography



THE HISTORY OF THE RAILROAD RADIO

PART I BY; STUART A. EDMONDSON

Let's talk about the history of railroad radio; its development, implantation, and radio's uses today in the railroad and transportation industry. The development of the radio was always about communications which is why railroad radios always where, and remain today, about **SAFETY**.

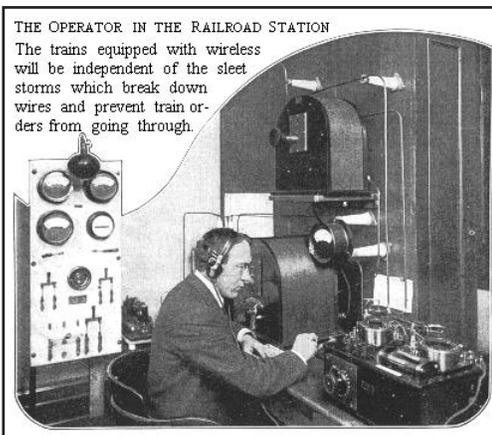
I will briefly cover some of the history and events that I thought where important. There are books on the subject with great details for reading if you like, but it all can't be cover completely in the SETOFF.

In the beginning of the railroad industry, communication with moving trains was hard. All the railroads had was the telegraph system that went from station to station if the wires where connected and bad guys and Mother Nature didn't take them down. If a train's engineer or conductor needed to communicate with a station, the train had to stop, the conductor either climbed the closest poll to connect his hand-set or he walked down the track to the closest connection point.

We NARCOA members have all seen the very old phone boxes at critical points along the tracks where train crews used them to call in train orders, breakdowns, emergency's, in the years before radios. Section gangs with their motorcars where responsible to keep the wire up and working. Everybody wished for better systems but technology had to evolve.



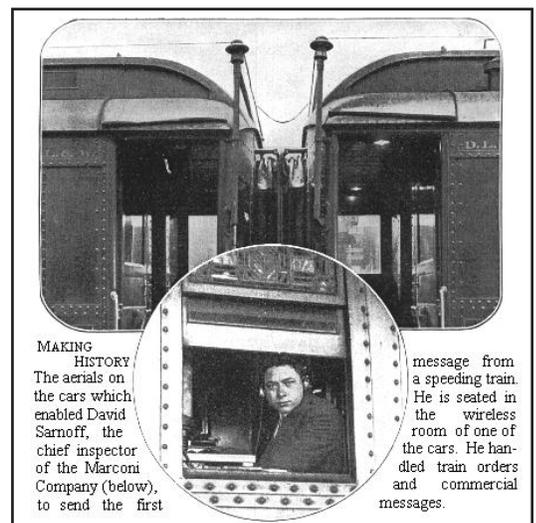
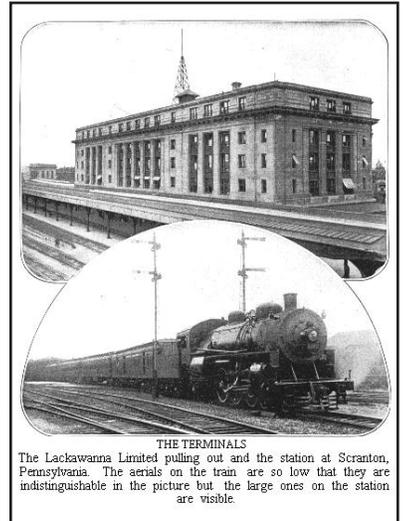
So when did better systems start? In England in 1881 a system called inductive telephony was created. This was a non-radio system that used electromagnetic couplings using standard telephone equipment. Then in 1883 another English man, Willoughby Smith, buried coils under the tracks for his technology. Now 1885 Thomas Edison started working with Mr. Smith and in 1887 they had a working system on the Lehigh Valley between N.J. and PA.



the Lackawanna Limited near North Scranton, PA an unfamiliar crackling sound was heard by passengers on the train was coming from a small cubby hole in the front of one car. A Marconi (telegraph) operator was sending and receiving wireless communications on a train moving at over 60 mph. This was history was in the making!

The Lackawanna spent \$6,800 to erect towers at Scranton, PA and at Binghamton, NY and to purchase the Marconi equipment for the train and the stations. Would the system work? One of the unknowns was whether using the rails as a ground for the system would work. Another was whether the generators running of the train's wheels have enough power. The answer to both was yes, and the experiment worked! News of Lackawanna's success spread quickly through the railroad industry and the technology was off and running.

But as we approached the 1920's inductive communications was viewed as good technology and New York Central had a working system too. Our government was also watching and Congress saw that the radio was important to the railroads and Americas infrastructure and put in place the 'Radio Act of 1927' this gave the Federal R a d i o



Commission, now called the FCC, authorization to exempt the railroad radio system from the commissions regulations.

In 1928 the Pennsylvania Railroad developed its 'Trainphone' with General Electric (Thomas Edison) and Union Switch and Signal (US&S). During World War II General Electric continued improving and using their system which used 2 frequencies, 80 kHz for inter-train and 144 kHz for line-side communications.

Our government wanted to keep up and in the 'Communication Act of 1934' recodified the 'Radio Act of 1927', and those laws are still on the books today!

In 1934 the very cool looking Zephyr made the famous Chicago to Denver run while in constant telegraph communication, allowing higher speeds and increased train safety!

When was the first VHF radio put in? The B&O put a VHF system into use in 1946 in their New Castle, PA classification yard.



In 1949 the Erie Railroad installed a mainline radio system from Jersey City NJ to Marion, Ohio, whose coverage stretched over 885 miles. This was the most extensive and expensive radio communications system on any railroad in in the world! Erie believed that freight trains, passengers, crews, and equipment would move over those miles with efficiency, dependability, and [safety](#).

The Lackawanna and Erie Railroads where very proud of their big investment in VHF radio technology's. They wanted to show this [safety](#) investment to their

employees and the public by painting a stylized lightning bolt with the words 'Radio Equipped' above it on many locomotives!

Now a little more information about [safety](#). According to The Bureau of Labor Statistics the railroad working environment is [safer](#) than other transportation modes. Railroad employees enjoy a lower injury rate than their colleagues in the trucking, busing, and aviation industries. This highly successful [safety](#) record stems in large part to the use of the radio to coordinate train



movements and to warn of hazardous conditions. In 1992 Congress passed the 'Rail Safety Enforcement Act' giving the Secretary of Transportation the power to prescribe regulations and issue orders in regards to the use of radios in connection with railroad [safety](#). Then the Department of Transportation (DOT) adopted regulations covering the use of radios for [safety](#) related purposes in the rail industry. These DOT regulations covered design and installation of one and two radios and end-of-train equipment that has radio transmission features. In 1997 Congress again recognized the dependence of the railroad on the non-commercial spectrum, when it added railroads together with pipelines and utilities to the definition of 'Public [Safety](#) Radio Services'

Many of us owner operators have radios in our motorcars and HyRailers. They are **SAFETY** equipment and should be considered for all motorcars used on commercial railroads, in my opinion. We NARCOA members follow other FRA rules and regulations, so why not the radio one?

In part II we will talk about the ARR, narrow banding, radios for motorcars, installation.

Be safe, treat others well, and have fun!

Stuart A. Edmondson

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OPTIMIZING YOUR RAILCAR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

BY FRANK HUBLEY

On a number of excursions, I have noticed that some railcar operators have great difficulty keeping in communications with other railcars that are located less than a mile from their location. There are several reasons that can cause railcar people to experience “unreadable” transmissions from a railcar not a great distance down the track.

The most common cause of exceptionally short range involves an inefficient antenna system on the railcar. The antenna on a radio system is like the transmission that couples your engine torque to the drive wheels. The basic antenna for our VHF channels is a whip that is about 18” long. Such an antenna should be mounted on the rooftop, clear of any significant metallic items like air horns or light bars. In order to be efficient, this antenna needs to be mounted on a significant metal “ground plane” with a radius of about 18” (think of something about the size of a traffic sign). Unfortunately many railcars do not have enough clear space on the roof to meet the requirement for a classic ground plane. A compromise ground plane can be created by applying two 36” strips of metal foil tape in an X pattern, with the antenna base mounted at the intersection on a small aluminum plate. In the instance of a railcar with a small roof area, one can utilize a special type of antenna that is designed to work without a ground plane. This is known as a half-wave antenna and is about 38” long at 151 MHz. A third possibility that has worked well on

cars with a fiberglass cab is to mount the antenna on a right angle mount towards the rear and incorporate 12 gauge 18” long wire in the vertical plane inside the cab. The 18” wire is attached to one of the mounting studs with an appropriate crimp lug – the lower end is left floating. There is another style of stainless steel whip antenna that can actually increase transmit and receive signal levels. This 5/8 wavelength (about 46” long) antenna still requires the presence of a good ground plane to operate correctly.



Above; VHF “Linebacker” antenna

Avoid low profile antennas which have very narrow bandwidth because they cannot efficiently cover both the 151 MHz NARCOA channels and the 162 MHz RR channels. If these low profile antennas were purchased as a “used” item, there is an excellent chance that they were originally tuned to something different than the 151 MHz part of the VHF band. This would cause their performance to be like operating your railcar with the brakes locked in notch one!

A common antenna system problem is related to the cable having either a shorted or open connector or a crimped coax cable. Coax connectors can be difficult

to assemble correctly. Coax cable should never be kinked, pinched or spliced without the proper connectors. If you have questions about your antenna, contact a radio technician to have your system analyzed using an appropriate in-line watt-meter.

There are several operational procedures that can be used to greatly enhance the ride for all excursion participants.

The Excursion E.C.’s should have the lead and tail railcar operators call out each milepost as they proceed down the track. (This procedure will provide reassurance that the entire consist is located with a few miles of the lead railcar).

Every time the excursions’ progress down the track comes to a stop, someone with a mobile radio should advise the Excursion E.C. of the reason for the stop. On many excursions, the line of railcars will stop and for some reason all the operators and passengers will dismount and walk toward the front of the line. It is much safer and more efficient if someone near the front of the pack would make a brief transmission and explain the reason for the stop.

Mobile radios should be wired so that they are “powered up” for the duration of the excursion, rather than being connected thru the ignition switch. Use a master power cutoff switch installed in the positive wire from the battery to insure that no loads are left draining the battery when the car is tied up overnight.



Above left: Exterior mounting of Type B antenna; Right: interior view of same antenna. Not the ground wire which is important to performance with a fiberglass cab. Below: A waterproof external speaker is very useful at rest stops.

Note: Do NOT install the cutoff switch in the negative lead as this can result in radio damage, as the radio is still connected to chassis ground via the coax shield conductor, bridging the cutoff switch.

When the line of railcars have stopped for either a planned or unplanned event, it would be best if one more of the railcars were equipped with an external speaker. Many times when a participant is attempting to contact the E.C.s they can hear the call on one of these external speakers. Note: External Speakers are "Standard Equipment" on railroad owned M.O.W. equipment

Always use proper microphone technique. Hold the microphone about 1" from your lips at a 45 degree angle and speak in a moderately strong level. Shouting into the mic will cause your message to be distorted! Receiving transmissions

from others in the noise prone railcar environment with the standard mobile speaker is difficult. A better solution is to use headsets, which can also significantly reduce the ambient noise level from engine and track noise.



Most railcar people are unaware of the inefficiencies that are associated with portable two-way radios. With a portable, one can usually hear transmissions from a distance five times greater than a portable radio can transmit to. This is caused by the inefficiency of the typical portable antenna (6" and no ground plane!)

plus the fact that the portable is usually located at the chest or belt level.

Most Important - Check that the Antenna connector on your coax cable is properly connected to your radio! This is a commonly seen problem with the 3/8" Mini-UHF connectors that are used on recent Motorola mobiles. It is essential that the outer barrel of the coax connector is tightly engaged with the connector on the back of the radio. A loose or cross-threaded connector will cause your radio to have very short range! The additional information is the result of some tests I have made on installed railcar radios in the last few years. I discovered that 4 out of 9 radios that I inspected had improperly tightened antenna connections.

Frank

WILL THE REAL MOUNTAIN PULLEY PLEASE ROLL FORWARD?

OR: SHOULD FAIRMONT HAVE LABELED ONE "ROCKY MOUNTAIN PULLEY" AND THE OTHER "APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN PULLEY"?

BY: RICHARD REIFF/ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIVISION

Living in Colorado I wanted to get a narrow gauge car for some time to supplement my MT19A. However the prices of transmission based conversions lead me to obtaining a used Les King fabricated copy of an M15M. The second "M" stands for magneto, which I soon found out was barely adequate for running on the Durango & Silverton, but it did not have the ability to manually adjust spark advance, an essential need to make the 4% grade up Cumbres Pass on the C&TS. Changing out the motor for a conventional ROC with timer ignition almost did the trick, but with two riders I was still not able to maintain a satisfactory speed (at least to the EC's standards) up that severe grade, especially approaching the 10,000 foot summit. As with any run, I received a plethora of advice from experts, from getting a larger rear pulley (not possible without major frame surgery due to a shorter than standard wheelbase and interference with the idler pulley) to doing some major "hopping up" of the ROC motor by increasing compression. (I didn't like that option as doing such things tends to severely reduce the life of other internal engine components). The standard advice was "get a mountain pulley".

However, just what is a mountain pulley, and what size is it? After measuring of mine and others at various meets it turned out I had a 3.5" pulley, as measured at the outer center diameter of the pulling face. The slight crown on all ROC pulleys

reduces the diameter about 1/16" on the outer edges of the pulling face.

In talking with the trackside experts, I was told that there were others who had machined or fabricated smaller "mountain pulleys". Over a 6 month period I was referred to and subsequently spoke with half a dozen 2 cycle and ROC experts. Everyone had a different opinion (actually, each claimed theirs was not an opinion, but a firm knowledge of a fact) as to what constituted a "Mountain Pulley". The jury of experts was virtually evenly split as to what a Mountain Pulley should be as far as diameter at the pulling face.

The results of the Poll: Everyone agreed the factory standard ROC pulley is 4" diameter at the center pulling face. About half of the 2-cycle experts were firm that a Fairmont Mountain Pulley is 3.5" diameter, while an equal number were firm at stating that the Fairmont standard Mountain pulley is 3.25" diameter. Each group was emphatic that the other size (3.5" or 3.25") was not a Fairmont standard, but some oddball special size. One person actually had machined a 3" pulley, but I determined that in order to fit one would also have to machine the cone on the flywheel.

As I needed just a little bit more power to get up that nasty 4% grade, I figured by replacing my 3.5" with a 3.25" should do the trick. However, no one seemed to have one for sale, so I started by making a sketch of the pulley that I wanted and bringing

that to several local machine shops. All indicated they could do that, but wanted a better diagram or a real sample. As I have to remove mounting bolts and tilt my motor to remove the existing 3.5" pulley from my car (due to sidewall clearances), I borrowed a standard 4" pulley from our local 2-cycle guru (RMD president - Doug Summers).

After bringing the 4 inch pulley to some local machinists the green light was given: "sure we can do that, but if you want the pulling face smaller, what size is the inside hole?" With this encouragement I removed my 3.5" pulley to check all dimensions in detail and found an interesting (later obvious) fact: all pulleys have an inside hole diameter 0.5" smaller than the outside pulling face. (Refer to photo 3) However the 3.5" also had a bit of extra clearance against the cone/neck of the flywheel in the form of a chamfer. A 3.25" pulley (with an even smaller inside diameter) might not fit. The problem is that as the outer pulling face diameter decreases, the center hole diameter also must decrease to maintain sufficient material between the mounting flange and inside pulley wall. So, before spending lots of money to machine a 3.25" pulley I wanted to make sure it would fit against my flywheel. Fortunately one of the 2-cycle experts I was directed to (Richard Ray) not only had a 3.25" pulley, but was willing to let me borrow it to check its fit. After waiting for USPS to deliver the sample I quickly bolted it on

and made a check run, everything seemed to fit and work. So it was off to the machine shop with an authentic Fairmont Mountain Pulley (3.25" version) with the order to "make me an exact copy of one of these", but with three minor changes. I requested: 1. the fillet radius between the pulling face and mounting flange be a bit larger (factory version was about 1/32", mine is about 1/16") to reduce the stress riser factor where force is transmitted to the flange; 2. The outer flange was to be made about 1/16" thicker just for more strength; 3. The chamfer on the inside hole to mounting flange where it fits against the flywheel was made slightly larger to ensure clearance.

Figure 1 shows the borrowed factory 3.25" pulley next to my shiny new machined pulley. Note this was machined out of a solid 6 1/4" x 6 1/4" x 5" block of steel, the smallest stock the machine shop had on hand that would work. The mounting flange on all pulleys is 6" in diameter, thus the need for a 6"+ block of steel to start with. Included in the copy is the curved pulling face needed to keep the belt centered on the pulling face.



Figure 1 Above: Machined copy (left) next to original Fairmont 3.25" factory pulley (right). All photos by the author.

Figures 2 and 3 (page 24) show all three pulleys lined up. Left to right: 4", 3.5" and 3.25". All three look like factory made pulleys, and appear to be machined from a casting. Note that the 4" and 3.5" are very similar, with the 3.25" having a smaller diameter outer flange in relation to the pulling face diameter than the others. The differences are more apparent from the backside view (photo 3). One advantage is

I can install or remove the 3.25" pulley without the need to remove mounting bolts from my motor.

So what happened at Chama this year? The results proved to be successful. I was able to maintain 17 – 22 mph on all the 4% sections of the run up Cumbres Pass, and kept up with the other ROC cars, even those with no passengers. On one trip I even caught up to the group ahead of me and had to hold back on the few 2% segments to give them some running room. Starting torque was noticeably better, and I could pull away from a stop and get to running speed quicker, with very little need to slip the belt. Once I got moving, even on the steep grade, I did not need to slip the belt to keep the motor from stalling. As an example of speed, the first severe

grade is near the start below Labotto Siding. With my former 3.5" pulley I normally would slow to 16-17 mph at this grade, with the 3.25" installed I easily kept a 20-22 mph speed. Higher up the pass, just prior to Coxo road crossing (at about 9800 feet) there is a very long 4% grade where I would either stall or get down to 5-8mph using the 3.5" pulley. With the 3.25" pulley I dropped to 16-17 mph, keeping up or catching other ROC cars on the run. No, I never

approached the speed at which the AA or transmission powered cars could do, but that was not the intent.

A few downsides: My Les King built car does have some unusual compromises, one of which is a smaller wheelbase, which also translates to a shorter belt. The belt that came with the car was labeled/ stamped "M15 L12", however after several years of running was slightly stretched and worn. In the worn state it measured 69 1/2", but no one seemed to have a replacement that came close. Anything longer would not work as the smaller pulley and stretched belt made the idler pulley close up free space even more. I ended up with a pinned belt ordered from Smitty, which worked well over 7 days of running on the D&S and the C&TS. The other downside is a slightly lower top speed. The smaller pulley, of course, makes the engine run faster at any given speed and my top end on the flat seemed to be about 25-26 mph, while with the larger pulley I could easily get 28 mph on the flat.

So, was it worth it? Keeping the engine and other mechanical parts standard (or at least unmodified) was a plus for me. The higher torque at a given engine speed was just enough to keep me going at speed, thus the minor issues of belt size and limited top speed were a small price to pay. Plus, I learned a lot more about pulleys than I ever wanted.

Richard Reiff

Images continue on Pg 24



Figure 2: Left to right: 4" Standard, 3.5" and 3.25" pulleys. Note the curved pulling face on all pulleys, needed to keep the belt centered. All photos by the author.



Figure 3: (ref file 6250) Back side of figure 1. 4", 3.5" and 3.25". Note the chamfer on each pulley, regardless of size.



Figure 4: Measurements showing center hole diameter is 0.5" less than outer pulling face diameter. Left pulley is standard 4" pulley (shows 3.5" inside diameter), right is 3.5" pulley which shows a 3" inside diameter).

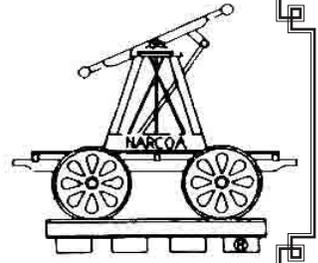
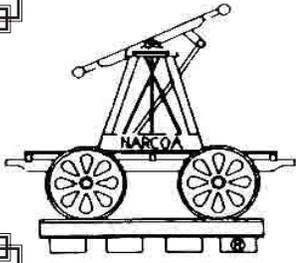
NARCOA EXCURSIONS

AS OF DECEMBER 21, 2015

Please submit all excursions and ads directly to

webmaster@narcoa.org

The *SETOFF* downloads directly from the website
for the most current information.



Jan 9 - 10 - GA posted 11/17

Heart Of Georgia RR / Cater Parrott Railnet

Saturday - Preston to Cordele, approx. 100 RT,
Sunday - Willacoochee to Valdosta, approx. 90 RT.
Cost \$155.00 weekend. SERO Event. Contact: [Will Thompson](mailto:WillThompson@narcoa.org) 229-359-5701

Jan 9 - 10 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
RPI EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Jan 23 - 24 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
RPI EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Jan 31 - CA posted 12/04

Placerville and Sacramento Valley Railroad

Breakfast run to Latrobe and Motorcar Operators West
board meeting. The MOW board meeting will follow
our return to Folsom. Cost is \$35.00 and \$6.00 at the
door for breakfast. Registration and check to EC [John Haverty](mailto:JohnHaverty@narcoa.org). 916-9331126

Feb 6 - 7 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
Railroad Partners, Inc. EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Feb 20 - CA posted 12/21

Fillmore & Western Railway

Fillmore, - 51 miles. Meet the train in Santa Paula for
lunch. Run fee is \$82.50 includes one lunch. Limit 24

cars. No passenger trailers or home-built cars. [Wayne Parsons](mailto:WayneParsons@narcoa.org) EC, 3161 Country Lane, Simi Valley, CA 93063. (818) 631-4805. .

Feb 20 - 21 - TX posted 12/21

Border Pacific Railroad (former Missouri Pacific)
Railroad Partners, Inc. 60 RT miles between Penitas,
TX and Rio Grande City, TX each day. Track parallels
the Mexican border along the Rio Grande River.
Hyrails welcome. Trip fee of \$50.00. EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Feb 27 - 28 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
Railroad Partners, Inc. . EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Mar 5 - 6 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
Railroad Partners, Inc. EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Mar 12 - 13 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.
This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to
Railroad Partners, Inc. EC [Leland Stewart](mailto:LelandStewart@narcoa.org) 210-863-5397

Mar 19 - 20 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or
McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual
location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run.

This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to Railroad Partners, Inc. . EC [Leland Stewart](#) 210-863-5397

Mar 26 - 27 - TX posted 12/21

Capitol Metro Transportation

Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. or McDade to Giddings – approx. 44 miles RT. Actual location to be determined. Contact EC prior to run. This will be a cleanup ride. Fee: \$30 membership to Railroad Partners, Inc. EC [Leland Stewart](#) 210-863-5397

Jun 17 - 18 WA posted 12/21

Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad Excursion/ Dayton Depot Days

West Coast Railroaders Group excursion in Dayton. Two runs from Dayton to Bolles Friday. Saturday six runs from Dayton to Longs Elevator and return. Open to all motorcar owners, NARCOA membership/insurance not required. Excursion subject to new railroad operator approval.

Excursions Held On A Regular Basis

Feb 1, 2015 - Jan 31, 2016 - PA

Northern Central Railroad

Excursions on the Northern Central Railroad from New Freedom, Pa to York, Pa on various dates. E.C. [Dean L. Grote](#) call 717-637-7647 or e-mail for details.

Feb 1, 2015 - Jan 31, 2016 - PA

Stewartstown Railroad

Excursions on the Stewartstown Railroad from New Freedom, Pa to Stewartstown, Pa on various dates. Northern Central Railcar Association E.C. [Dean L. Grote](#) call 717-637-7647 or e-mail for details.

Feb 1, 2015 - Jan 31, 2016 - GA

Heart Of Georgia–West Railroad

Southeast Railcar Operators, Inc. will be having NARCOA Motor Car runs and work days on the HOG West Railroad from Richland, Ga. to Omaha, Ga. on various dates. Contact [Will Thompson](#) E.C. 229-723-8231 Home or 229-359-5701 Cell Or Larry Crowe, E.C., Home 229-776-5882, Cell 229-326-3736.

Feb 1, 2015 - Jan 31, 2016 - GA

Cater Parrott Railnet

SERO will be having motorcar car runs on the Cater Parrott Rail net from Valdosta to Willacoochee and

from from Madison to Newborn on various dates contact EC's [Will Thompson](#) EC Home 229-723-8231 or Cell 229-359-5701 or Frank Ahouse 229-886-4707

Jan 1, 2015 through Feb 1, 2016 - TX

Capitol Metro Transportation

Railroad Partners, Inc. will host NARCOA motorcar runs from Llano, TX to Scobee Spur, TX – Approx. 54 miles RT. or McDade, TX to near Giddings, TX – approx 23 miles RT on various dates. Details [HERE](#). (EC)[Leland Stewart](#) 210-863-5397

Feb 1, 2015 through Feb 1, 2016 - MS

Mississippi Delta Railroad

SERO will be having NARCOA motorcar runs and work days on various dates on the Mississippi Delta RR between Swan Lake, Clarksdale and Lula Mississippi. Contact E.C. [Chris Thompson](#), phone (251) 463-3270.

Feb 1, 2015 through Dec 31, 2015 - CA

Amador Central Railroad

RRCHS will be having NARCOA Motor Car Runs open to all licensed motorcar operators and Work Parties from Ione to Martell on various dates throughout the year for members. Please contact EC [Tom Correa](#) for information and times/dates on the work parties and runs.

NARCOA NAME BADGES FOR SALE

Badges are jeep yellow, the NARCOA logo in red, your one line name in black. They are approximately 2 inches by 4 inches and have a clasp hitch on the back. All badges are \$14.00 which includes first class shipping. This order is only open until March 1, 2016. I will then place the order to the name badge folks and you should receive them in about 3 weeks.

Please send \$14.00 for each badge to Bobby Moreman, 3520 Cold Spring Lane, Chamblee, Ga. 30341. 770-457-6212.

IMPORTANT: Please print carefully the name you want on each badge. Also include an address where you want the badge shipped.

This will be the only badge offer for 2016.

Thanks, Bobby

SUPPLIERS

If you are a supplier of motorcar parts and wish to be included here, please contact the Editor. No endorsement is made of the products, services, or vendors. All listings are for members' consideration only, and are at the discretion of the Editor.

Carey Boney, Careyboney@embarqmail.com or Carey Boney, 1605 Powers RD. , Wallace, NC 28466 phone 910-285-7489. Engine parts for RQ,QBA,ROB,ODB, ROC and parts for F-4,C-5,F-6 and C-8 carburetors. Frame and some body parts.

Brown Railroad Equipment www.brownrr.com. 4 Amersham Court, Glen Carbon, IL 62034. (618) 288-6698. The entire remaining Fairmont factory inventory of motorcar parts was bought by Brown when Fairmont stopped making motorcars in the early 1990's. Web site has NOS inventory look up by part number. Over 200 cars for sale. Se habla espanol.

Railroad Motor Car Resource Library / Doug Cummins, rrstuff@hawaiihost.us 1146 W. 27th St. Independence, MO 64052-3222. Library of rail motorcar manuals, performance sheets, parts lists, maintenance instructions.

H & H Mfg. CO. hhimaparts@aol.com (707) 887-7181 Full service machine shop and manufacturer of after-market Fairmont parts. Large supply of new and used Fairmont and Onan parts including transmissions, engines, brake and drive sprockets. Frame and aluminum door and side panels. Assorted rail motorcar project cars for sale.

Tom Falicon Raildawg@gte.net 1227 Sawmill Creek Rd, Bryson City, NC 28713 ph: 828-488-8063 after six. Fairmont Billet Shift Knobs.

Fredericksburg Shops, fredshops@earthlink.net or www.fredericksburgshops.com or 209 Creamery Rd., Fredericksburg, Ohio 44627, phone: 330-465-0713 2PM-6PM Eastern time. Newly manufactured motor car parts and accessories. Many original producers identified, and their parts are again for sale. Shop also does car repair. Formerly Les King & Company.

Model T coils for 2-cycle cars Improved design Model T ignition coils for all Fairmont 2-cycle motorcar applications. These coils are built inside of a sealed plastic weatherproof case with the proper wiring clips to match the timer clips. These are top quality USA made and will work on either 6 or 12-volt applications. No ballast resistor is required. \$110.00 each. Please add \$10.00 for shipping via priority mail. Randy Rundle, Fifth Avenue Antique Auto Part, 415 Court Street, Clay Center, KS 67432. phone 785-632-3450. fifthaveinter-netgarage.com

L&S Speeder Repair and Restoration heatmor@itctel.com 17504 438th Ave., Henry, SD 57243 phone (605)532-3470. Custom motorcar trailers - will build to your specifications.

Dave Myers at: dave@redspeeder.com or 928-380-7056 MT-19 Temporary Axle splint. Fairmont transmission sprockets, and special sprockets of interest when re-powering a car with non Onan engines.

Tom Phair tom@phairs.net (925) 820-4159 Complete line of the David Clark Company Intercom systems and railroad type Motorola Radios; new double chain sprocket kits, large inventory of NOS Fairmont parts. Some motorcars for sale.

Fairmont OEM seats. These are the original seats manufactured for Fairmont U.S. cars Black, folding tubular frame with walnut Naugahyde and dual density foam. The most comfortable seat you will ever find. \$199.95 plus USPS shipping. Also available are seat backs, (\$84.95) and seat cushions (@\$99.95) and seat frames (@\$117.00.) Call Clinton Andrews (313) 822-2000 or ClintonAndrews@comcast.net. Note: Because of manufacturer's price increases, this is the last batch at this price

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NARCOA COMPANY STORE

NARCOA has combined everything into a one stop shopping location for all your NARCOA gear. To place an order please contact:

Dan Page 6432 Mukai Ct. Huntington Beach CA 92647-6160
(714) 847-5906 dan.h.page@gmail.com Credit Card use is available.

Narcoa Safety Vest - \$15.00 + S/H each in sizes M, L, XL, 2XL, and 3XL.



Reproduction Fairmont Data Plates - These plates fit on the engine cover. They are correct for late 1930's to late 1960's cars. M9 M14 M19 S2 ST2 A3 A5 59C - maybe others. \$6.00 per plate except Membership plate which is \$3.00 + S/H.

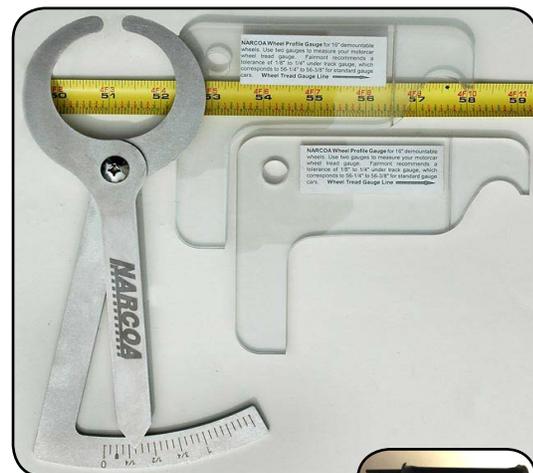


Wheel Inspection Tools - The clear plastic wheel profile is necessary to determine if the wheel is flat, thin in the flange area, or has wear between the flange and the flat section of the tread. Use the wheel profile as your first step in diagnosing "hunting" on the rails. Use two of the clear plastic wheel profiles to determine track gauge. The stainless steel caliper is necessary to determine if you have the required 1/8" minimum wheel thickness.

One plastic wheel profile is \$11 + S/H.

Two plastic profiles are \$17 + S/H.

Stainless steel wheel calipers with laser printing (they'll outlast your grandson!) are \$30 each including+ S/H. One plastic profile and one stainless steel wheel caliper go for \$35+ S/H. The new calipers have a bold mark at the 1/8" minimum. The new stainless steel calipers are shown below.



NARCOA Lanterns Trainman's lanterns produced by Star Headlight and Lantern. They are the model 292, which features a bright halogen lamp along with a conventional bulb. A standard 6 volt lantern battery is required (not included). The body is orange plastic with the NARCOA name, motorcar logo, and "Safety First" imprinted. The lamps are an effective tool for night signaling and make great presentation items for our railroad hosts. Cost is \$29.00 each + S/H

Special purchase - add \$5.50 to each lantern purchased if you would like a D cell x 4 battery adapter which eliminates the need to use the 6 volt lantern battery. There is no additional shipping cost for these adapters when purchased with a lantern.

NARCOA now has an LED version of the lantern. The LED is brighter, lasts longer and uses less energy. Also increased vibration resistance will extend life of the LED bulb. LED version is \$39.00 + S/H and comes in safety green. Regular lanterns are available is safety orange and yellow.

