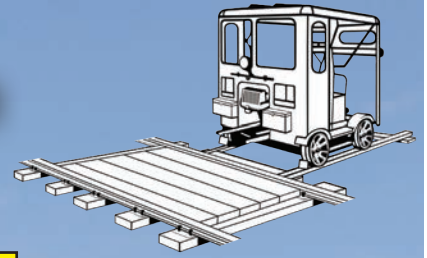


THE SETOFF



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF NARCOA
NORTH AMERICAN RAILCAR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION
SEPT / OCT 2021 VOLUME 35 - No. 5



**PALOUSE RIVER RUN
HIDDEN INFORMATION EXPOSÉ
RIDING IN THE DAKOTAS**

NARCOA COMPANY STORE



Online order processing is now available. All our popular items are available for purchase via a typical shopping cart function. Plus, we now accept credit cards for your convenience. Now it is easier than ever to get tools, hardware and all your NARCOA gear. Scan this new QR code with your smartphone or type in the new website address for instant access.

<https://narcoastore.org>



You can still place an order with a personal touch with Dan Page 6432 Mukai Ct., Huntington Beach, CA 92647-6160 Call him at (714) 847-5906 or email dan.h.page@gmail.com



NARCOA Store



NARCOA Safety Hoodie - \$45.00 each + S/H in sizes L, XL, and 2XL. and 3XL

NARCOA Hats

Safety yellow with reflectorized trim. One size fits all; embroidered with our logo. \$15 plus \$5 shipping.



NARCOA Logo Patch

Iron or sew it on your favorite jacket or shirt. 4" x 3" \$5 + S/H

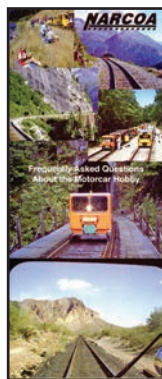
Wheel Tools, sold individually or as a set of two profiles and one caliper for \$65+ shipping.

Wheel profile with tape measure slot for gauge dimension. \$12 each + S/H

Wheel thickness calipers, SS with added washers \$45 + S/H

FAQ Brochure

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Replica Fairmont Padlocks

Made by the original supplier with solid brass cases and shackles, and are keyed alike.

\$29 per pair plus shipping.

New NARCOA Store a Hit!

Store Manager Dan Page with a small sample of the many orders received during the first weekend of operation of the new NARCOA Store. Dan says that members seem to like the convenience of online ordering using credit cards. He added, "While the usual things - wheel tools, name badges, and safety clothing - remain popular, some of the new items we added when the store went online like our new replica Fairmont padlocks, club logo hoodies and patches are also selling well."



NARCOA Name Badge
\$15 plus shipping.



FROM THE EDITOR

ROBIN DOUGLAS

I'm pleased to report the very good news that the health of Tom Norman, our former Treasurer and long-time Insurance Administrator, is improving greatly. NARCOA sent him a framed reprint from our last issue expressing our gratitude for his service. We all wish him continued progress.



Throughout this issue in the online version, I've added hyperlinks that appear as blue text for your convenience. When you find one that is not helpful, please let me know. setoff@centurylink.net

It continues to be a great year for motorcar excursions as we head into autumn. Soon I'll be working on the calendar for 2022 and I trust you've been taking some great photos. Please start reviewing them and look for the email to send them to me.



NARCOA Radio Call Sign WPHT745
Channel 1 – 151.625 MHz
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THE SETOFF

VOLUME 35 No. 5

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All subscriptions and address changes must be sent to NARCOA at that address.

All materials for publication must be sent to the SETOFF Editor (master of time, space and ink).

Materials received by the 15th of even numbered months will appear on the 1st of the next odd numbered month subject to editing and available space. Please include your e-mail address and phone number. Electronic submissions are preferred. Text files must have either .doc, docx or .txt extensions. Photo files must be high resolution with .jpg extensions. All materials are archived and not returned. We cannot reprint copyrighted material without written authorization and/or proper attribution.

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.

For more information about NARCOA, the safe legal operation of motorcars, or to find NARCOA affiliates located in Canada, the United States, and Mexico, please see: www.narcoa.org

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ON THE COVER: Motorcars running through the fields of Eastern Washington on the Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad. Photo by Trista Crossley, Wheat Life magazine

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AREA

ONE



TOM SOPCHAK

Hello Area 1 Members,

I am excited to announce new members in Area 1. Please extend a warm welcome to Paul Sykes (Oriskany Falls, NY – April 4), Lee Foster (Saranac Lake, NY – May 5) and Herman Ulrich (Corinth, NY – July 28).

When you attend an excursion, please talk to the folks in the motorcar in front of and behind you. Introduce yourself and determine their level of experience and knowledge. Make sure you know how they operate their motorcar. Do they flag? Do they use engine braking? Do their stop (brake) lights work? Where are their stop lights and how bright are they? Is there a single, double or even triple brake light on the front and back? Do they flash, wigwag, or stay on solid? Does the operator test their brakes? How? Have they adjusted their brakes? Also, please make people in that motorcar aware of how you operate your motorcar. You should cover each

of these items with the operators following and leading you. (When you "turn" your car with handles or a turntable, you'll see the brake lights and flagging of the *other* motorcar). Sure, much of this is part of the NARCOA motorcar inspection form. Some of it is "common sense". However, it will certainly help you operate more safely. You should know this information. If you see or experience a problem following a motorcar, speak up (nicely) to the people in that motorcar. Let them know what you are seeing (or not seeing). Safety is the very best policy. Make sure you do everything you can to be safe.

The NARCOA annual meeting is fast approaching. It will be a hybrid meeting (in person and on Zoom) and open to all NARCOA members. If you have never attended one of these meetings and want to experience what takes place at one, I invite you to attend. You can do this in person or from the comfort of your home. The majority of the meeting is filled with procedure but if you'd like to know what is going on, what is being discussed and why . . . please call into this meeting. My wife Terry and I will be attending this meeting in person so if you come, please say hi.

Tom Sopchak

AREA

FIVE



BILL DELMAR

Area Five welcomes new member Mark Young (Cocoa, Florida). Once again Area Five has lost a member and friend. Pete Glynn, age 73, of Ocoee, Florida, passed away on Monday, July 26th.

The June 26th run on the Mississippi Southern RR, track new to NARCOA, was well attended. We look forward to additional runs there. In July, NARCOA members and the Southeastern Railway Museum in Duluth, Ga offered rides for the public, which was well attended. On Saturday, 200 people rode on the museum's track. On Sunday, with shorter hours, there was a steady stream of riders, with people waiting in line. One couple drove from Northern Indiana just to ride, and another person, Scott Odum, drove from Nashville, Tennessee, to ride. He then joined NARCOA the following week. There were other riders that expressed interest in joining.

In February, a NARCOA bulletin explained the proposed turntable safety improvements that will be on the agenda for the Board meeting in Chicago. One item that has not received much attention is the need to upgrade the early style electric turntables with a single attachment bolt with a set screw. The Willits Safety Modification provides a “cage” to retain the foot, instead of the single bolt that comes loose. If you have the single attachment bolt, you should investigate the upgrade.

Bill Delmar

AREA

SIX



HAL JOHNSON

What an exhilarating experience to feel the fresh morning air (before the heat of the day takes over) as we are able to ride more rails this year than we may have last year. Can't you see, hear, smell, and feel mother nature at her best in those early morning hours? I sure can. One can only do so much planning, inspection, and paperwork before finally setting our car on and moving safely down the tracks for an-

other adventure.

I am thrilled to announce nine new members from our area. They include Jerry Alexander, Bourbonnais, IL; Jon Burns, Wayzata, MN; Bill Christopher, Waukegan, IL; Jack Foss, Wayzata, MN; Barbara Litsenberger, Rochester, MN; Robert Miller, Rochester, MN; Ron “Rev” Revisky, Minooka, IL; Norman Schurdak, McHenry, IL; and Jess Thew, Staples, MN. These folks, along with the two members noted in my last column, are among the new faces in our hobby and deserve our warmest welcome to the NARCOA family.

On the health front, (and I am not trying to preach to you) I believe COVID-19 will not be defeated until more people are vaccinated. In the meantime, we cannot let our guard down relative to the safety of our guests and ourselves. If you are near aging and/or health compromised people, please consider wearing a mask for their sake. We've come too far to fall back into the stress-filled experience of 2020.

Typically, in the upper Midwest, we imagine only a few more weeks of operation until we move our motorcars indoors for protection over the winter. That usually means by mid-November, when we feel a little more chill in the air and note the leaves falling, we

conclude the season in our part of the world and consider traveling to our neighbors in the south and west for excursions before the season ends.

Of course, the NARCOA work continues year-round, including the forthcoming annual member meeting on October 1-2 in Chicago. All are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. Just let Bob Hastings, our NARCOA Secretary know of your interest ASAP by emailing him at – narcoasecy@gmail.com

Call me or e-mail your thoughts if there is anything I can do to help serve your needs. Thank you!

Hal Johnson

AREA

SEVEN



CARL SCHNEIDER

I hope you are all enjoying several motorcar trips this summer as we continue to provide many opportunities to shine up those wheels. The First Iowa Division has had several successful excursions so far this year and at this writing, we are looking forward to a 2-day trip

on the Ringneck & Western Railroad out of Oacoma, SD. This line was formerly known as the Dakota Southern and has undergone many track improvements in the past several years, so it isn't the same railroad we have ridden for nearly 30 years. It's in much better condition as all bridges and rail have been replaced to handle heavy grain trains. It's perfect for motorcars!

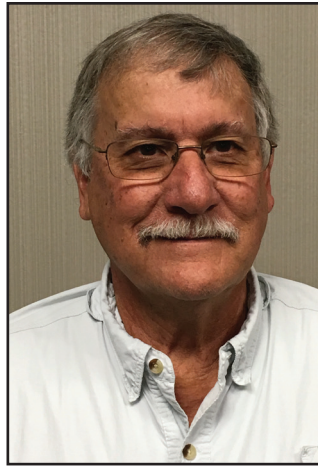
The First Iowa Division has lost another member as Mel Beaver from Melcher, IA passed away on July 23rd of pancreatic cancer. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Barb and his entire family.

The NARCOA annual Board and membership meeting is going to be held on Oct. 1 & 2 with an in-person meeting as well as the opportunity for you to join via Zoom. This will be our first face-to-face meeting since the pandemic began. Watch for details on how to join via Zoom as the meeting date gets closer.

As our season continues, keep in mind that safety is our main goal for successful excursions. Watch the cars in front and behind you to avoid collisions and stay alert at all times. Let's make this a safe and incident-free year. See you on the rails!

Carl Schneider

AREA NINE



LELAND STEWART

Greetings Area 9,

It's been a bit quiet in Area 9 this summer. As is typical for this time of year, most of us take a break from the heat except for the occasional work session. We do have some good runs coming up this fall.

In September, the Rocky Mountain Division is hosting a run on the Leadville, Colorado, and Southern RR in Leadville, CO on 9/17 to 9/19. Right behind that is the narrow gauge run on the Durango and Silverton on 9/20 – 9/26. In October, the Oklahoma Railway Museum is hosting a run on the A-OK RR between Midwest City and Shawnee, OK on 10/9. To wind out the month of October is the annual fall run by Railroad Partners, on the Llano Branch out of Llano TX on 10/30.

The Oklahoma Railway Museum is planning a 2-day run on the Farmrail RR in Clinton, OK on 11/6 and 11/7. Another fall run is anticipated on

the Texas State RR but a date has not been confirmed so stay tuned.

I would like to welcome back a returning NARCOA member, Dave Elwood of Albuquerque, NM, back into the fold. Give Dave and Barbara a big welcome when you see them on the rails.

As we get back to running this fall, I would like to touch on a subject that would be helpful to our EC's. The topic is the importance of keeping the EC informed of your plans to attend an excursion (or work session) and advising him of any changes. There are many details involved in the planning of excursions that require a headcount and idea of the equipment attending. EC's need to know the size of the group in order to properly execute the excursion. By knowing the group size, the EC can plan for extra help in registration/inspection, where to place radios in the consist, arrange flaggers, make a headcount for lunch, prepare handouts, arrange parking for vehicles/trailers, accommodate special requests, rest stops, potential breakdowns, etc.

In conversations with other EC's, I have noticed a trend lately of some folks waiting until the last minute to say they are coming or even just showing up unannounced. We all know that things do come

up that cause late changes to plans, and that is completely understandable. EC's will gladly make every effort to accommodate the change. This is simply a reminder to keep your EC in mind as you plan your attendance. It will go a long way to making the excursion experience better for everyone.

That's all for now so let's get out and keep those wheels shiny. Don't forget to watch your following distances, and stay alert, and do your part in eliminating rear end collisions.

See you soon.

Leland Stewart

AREA

TEN



BILL ANDREWS

I'm really glad to be a part of Area 10's busy excursion season! It's great to see run participants and new operators enjoying our hobby. Welcome to some of our newest members from Oregon: Tom and Sara Diedrich, Bryan Franklin, Dave Kroesen, and Alan Kindel, along with Terry Vitez from Washington. Glad to have you with us. I've talked with you but look forward to seeing you; call if I can help.

Some just completed excursions: EC Roger Farrell organized his Northwest runs, 10 days and 470 rail miles including the Palouse Scenic in Colfax, WA, Wallowa Union in Joseph, OR, and The Great Northwest Rail in Lewiston, ID where he welcomed eastern NARCOA operators and mentorees George Inness with his daughter Libby Williamson from Yakima, WA and Tye Tomchak, from Idaho Falls, ID.

Many of NARCOA operators have had to deal with extreme heat this summer! It's physically tough on us and mentally tiring...so be sure to make a conscious effort to stay alert! Keep your attention on the *rail*, especially in the afternoon .

The NARCOA Board of Directors, continuing to increase their transparency, has added Safety Bulletins from actual Judicial Committee incident reports to the Members Only section on the website. Secretary Bob Hastings has sent members access instructions. Incident locations and participants names are withheld; the Safety Chairman comments on some steps that could possibly have prevented each incident. Be sure to check out these reports, especially to see how easily a rear-ender can happen with operator inattention.

I'll be heading for the Annual Meeting in Chicago the end of Sept. Please get in touch with any concerns or questions. I'll

be glad to help you by carrying your concerns, solutions, and ideas to the BOD.

EC Guy Howard just led us on another great Coos Bay trip in August with a good turnout of faithful Northwest/California operators. Don't forget to check out our Coos Bay posting for the Teddy Bear Toy Express, Oct. 7-10. Join us in the holiday spirit of giving, collecting new toys on the rail from communities on our journey to the ocean. Last year was a great success and lots of fun! Hope you can be there.

Enjoy the ride!

Bill Andrews

AREA

ELEVEN



STEVE PALUSO

I would like to send a shout-out to all our new Area 11 members. If any of you have any questions or concerns about NARCOA please feel free to contact me.

At the time of this writing, we are getting ready to go up to the Coos Bay run again. This is PRO's 2nd Coos Bay run this year. And I know that Bill Andrews' is starting to take sign-ups for his Coos Bay Ted-

dy Bear run in October.

California and Oregon are once again going through droughts and extreme fire danger. Please make sure that your spark arrestors are up to par. Also because of the COVID spikes, please be very sure to check applicable state and local mandates in the area where any runs you are attending are being held.

The NARCOA annual meeting will be held on October 1 and 2 in Chicago. We will also be zooming this meeting so please look for the information on how to sign up if you are interested in participating.

On a sad note, I was recently informed that long-time NARCOA member, Rob Finch of Nevada, has passed away from complications of COVID. Rob

was a fixture on runs with his Sheffield. I remember he always brought his two very cute dogs, Snoopy and Bandit. He was a really nice guy and always willing to help anyone with anything they needed.

Please take care of yourselves and see you on the rails.

Steve

SAFETY



RICH GUNN

I think all too often we forget one of the basic rules of operating a motor car: *Make sure your passengers know how to stop the car in the event of an emergency.*

This may not seem like something to be concerned about but these cars, as we know, have controls in different places than standard motor vehicles. If the motorcar operator were to suddenly encounter a medical emergency, it is important that all passengers have an understanding of how to stop the car. Knowing how to take the car out of gear, apply the brakes and shut off the ignition are things that may save the

lives of anyone in the motorcar or other cars in the consist. It's always a good idea to have this safety chat even if someone has ridden with you before.

Probably the biggest concern on all motorcar excursions is rear end collisions. I have reviewed collisions in the last two years and found that almost all are rear end collisions. The common thread seems to be lack of attention, whether it's driving too fast, being too tired to operate attentively or paying attention to everything else but what's going on around you. If you are paying more attention to your passengers than the environment around you, you are at risk as are the others operating near you.

The Board of Directors tasked me with reviewing reported motorcar collisions occurring over the last two years and creating safety bulletins so that lessons could be learned. These bulletins are being posted in the Members section of the web site. The response to

these bulletins has been very positive. We've done our best to make these postings a learning moment rather than pointing a finger at anyone. Please read them and, hopefully, pick up some pointers to keep us all safe.

Speaking of keeping us safe – let's take a moment to think about set on and set off. At the beginning of the excursion all the operators and passengers are excited to get cars on the rail and get going. At the end, we can't wait to get our cars off the rails, onto trailers and head for home. Let's really focus on safety at these two points of the excursion as well as at turning movements. Don't move a railcar unless it's yours or you have specific instructions or permission from the owner to move the car. Make sure that there is nothing and no one around the car before you start to move or turn it.

**Remember –
*Stay Alert, Stay Safe!***

INCREASING TRANSPARENCY IN NARCOA

To improve the transparency of the actions of the NARCOA Board of Directors, the Board has decided to share insight into what goes on in the management of our organization. To do this, the Board has decided to post the minutes of Board working executive sessions on-line.

Background: The NARCOA Board of Directors held its first ZOOM Annual Member meeting on December 13, 2020. Based on that first experience conducting a virtual meeting, the Board decided to hold virtual ZOOM working sessions throughout the year instead of conducting Board business through emails. The Board has voted to share the minutes of these working executive sessions with the NARCOA membership.

The minutes of the working sessions have been listed in the Members section of the NARCOA Electronic Database (NED). They document the ongoing work of the NARCOA Board.

It is easy to reach NED:

1. Start at the NARCOA web site -

www.narcoa.org

2. Click on “Members Only” on the right side of the row of dropdown menus.

3. You are on the Home page of the NARCOA Electronic Database (NED – that’s a clever name!)

4. Click the gray “Log in” button and enter your email and NED password. Then click the “Log in” button that appears below the password.

5. No password - no problem. Just choose “Forgot password” and NED will let you create a password.

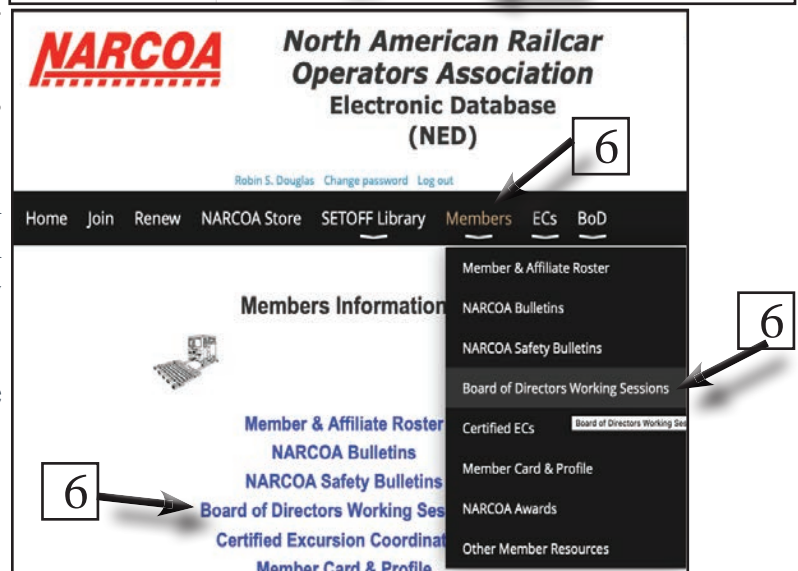
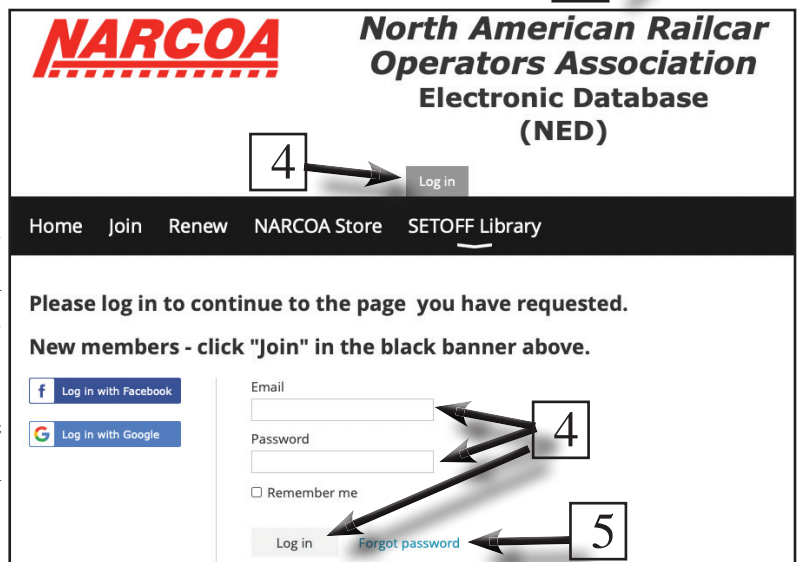
6. Once you log in, you will see a “Members” dropdown menu in the black banner. Click it and choose “Board of Directors Working Sessions”, or the blue direct link.

Members may view the executive session minutes from this page. All sessions are in pdf format. Click on a session label to view the minutes of that session.

Let us know what you think. Drop a note to me at narcoasecy@gmail.com

See you on the rails.

Bob Hastings NARCOA Secretary



PALOUSE RIVER & COULEE CITY RAILROAD

BY ROGER FARRELL

The Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad (PCC), located in Eastern Washington state, is a busy and hardworking railroad. That said, they are also amenable to our hobby, and I have enjoyed working with them arranging excursions. The PCC serves a large grain terminal at Endicott, WA. When the Union Pacific delivers a 100+ unit grain train, all sidings and the main are full as hopper cars are shuffled in and out of the elevator. When that transpires, traffic is impeded between Colfax and Endicott, and beyond. Many times, they pull in with only a few days' notice. I started excursion negotiations in February knowing this could occur. As luck would have it, three days before the set on date, it



did. Then I started scrambling! The railroad escort suggested we set on in Winona on Saturday and see what the progress of the grain train was at that time. I emailed all the excursion participants to advise them of the change. I asked that they continue to the original set on location, on the date and time originally planned, which was Friday afternoon. We could sign all the necessary paperwork, and operators could store their motorcars in the railyard overnight. They would then pick them up Saturday morning, and proceed to Winona, 31 miles away. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and I was reminded what a great bunch of people I share this hobby with!



Frank Fleener gets help setting on in Winona, WA

I thought I had everything worked out. Then I remembered the portable toilet was to be delivered to the Colfax yard. I called the provider and asked if they could deliver it on a highway trailer. At that time, I still wasn't sure of the status of the grain train, and I had the option of moving the toilet if needed. The toilet was delivered to Colfax on a trailer, and my wife and I had a date night as we towed it to Winona Friday evening.

There is a wye at Winona. One leg becomes the Pleasant Valley Sub, and the other continues to Hooper. We set on between 8 AM and 10 AM. The crossing was well maintained and there was ample room to park trailers on railroad property. This is rural Washington, so highway traffic was light. We did have to accommodate some farm machinery, however.



Following the safety meeting, we traveled to Thornton on the Pleasant Valley sub, past freshly cut hay fields and “green waves of grain.” We had a decent breeze to help cool us off. At Thornton, we turned our motorcars, and returned to St. John for lunch in the shady grass. St. John was lively with sprint boat races that Saturday. Following lunch, we returned to Winona, set off, and returned to Colfax. The majority of the operators set on in Colfax that evening, and the remainder did so Sunday morning.

I called for an early safety meeting Sunday morning. We got good news; the grain train had cleared Endicott and Hooper, and we had the main! We arrived at Hooper around noon and turned our motorcars. Not much is left in Hooper, but it’s shady, the grass is well maintained, and we enjoyed a long lunch break. The McGregor family owns most of the remaining buildings. Alex McGregor is a NARCOA member and usually joins us for this excursion. He was unable to this time. His family owns the old general store which has been renovated and turned into a venue and local area museum. Alex arranged to have the building opened for us and was kind enough to provide cold drinks for thirsty operators. The McGregor family homesteaded in Hooper, and Alex spent some of his childhood here.



Bob McCoy turns his motorcar at Thornton, WA

All photos courtesy of Trista Crossley/ Wheat Life Magazine



The return trip was uneventful, and the weather only slightly warmer than normal. Descending the 3% grade back into Colfax is always a thrill.

Due to a good working relationship with the PCC, and good attitudes by the operators, we were able to provide two fine days on the rails as promised. I'm already looking forward to next year!



Above: Frank Fleener, a wheat farmer from Viola, ID, shows a rider what a canola plant looks like up close.

At right: John Zampino, from Virginia, spent several weeks towing his speeder around the western U.S. and joining NARCOA excursions.

Below: Crossing the Palouse River.



F.I.D. EXCURSIONS IN THE DAKOTAS

BY TOM SOPCHAK



Recently my wife and I attended both the Red River Valley & Western and the Dakota, Missouri Valley & Western excursions held by David Voeltz of the First Iowa Division. This weekend represented a lot of work for David and the excursion coordinators, but David purposely scheduled these excursions back-to-back to allow those of us traveling greater distances more opportunity to enjoy excursions and track in the First Iowa Division area. Consequentially there were members from all over the USA including Georgia, Alabama, Texas, Vermont and California. These were both first class excursions and

I highly encourage everyone to take advantage of these next year. The excursion coordinators were David Voeltz, Carl Schneider, Don Schoeb and Stuart Remmers.

Everyone arrived in Lamoure, North Dakota at the Red River Valley & Western Railroad like clockwork. Seton went very smoothly and Dan DeWispelaere, First Iowa Division, looked over all motorcars, providing a secondary motorcar review for everyone that hadn't already



been through a First Iowa Division excursion in 2021. Dan pointed out a few items that operators might want to look into but all motorcars were acceptable. Clearly, the First Iowa Division has a focus on safety! After Dan completed looking over everyone's motorcars, FID 2021 stickers were placed on the windshield.



There were motorcars of all kinds and sizes. I only noticed a single hi-rail however there were 14's, 19's, Fairmont and Onan engines, custom and fairly standard motorcars. There was even a pumpkin car. Following seton there was a brief safety meeting where David went over all the details of the Friday evening excursion and included a discussion about reducing rear end collisions. There were no accidents or incidents of any kind during the either of the 2-day excursions.

Lamoure, ND officially has a population of 889 according to the 2010 census. By North Dakota standards this is a very large town as most towns here are 4 grain silos and a house. Following the safety meeting we left Lamoure and traveled west through Berlin, Medberry and ended at Edgeley traveling some 21 miles. We were spoiled with continuous weld railroad for nearly this entire excursion. This part of the country is all about wide open spaces and land, lots and lots of land. On other excursions I have attended you'd be hard pressed to see half a mile in distance, here your vision is only limited by your eyesight and curvature of the earth. We

rail is the only viable way to transport it. It is important to understand that when I say "grain silo" I would estimate these structures to be 60' to 80' in diameter and 50' to 70' in height. They vary in size fairly dramatically but they are all



VERY large! There are always rail sidings next to these in order to park some hopper cars next to them for filling.

We returned to the rail station in Lamoure as it was starting to turn to dusk (9:30pm?). Despite Lamoure, ND being a metropolis and all, there isn't much in the way of hotels in the local area.

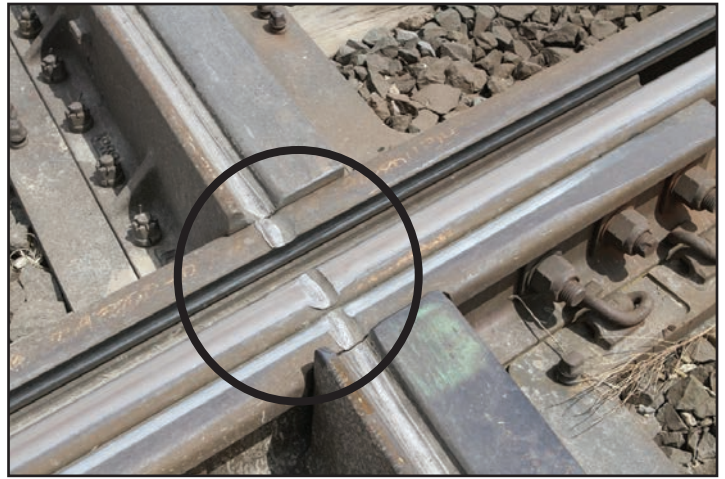


were easily able to see grain silos 3 – 5 miles away. It is also very easy to see who or what is generating all this railroad traffic and use. The grain silos dwarf the rail cars and we saw untold numbers of these grain silos. Wheat, corn, barley- there is simply a massive amount of it and

I would encourage you to make reservations early and follow David's (the EC's) suggestions. Also, if you have an RV of any kind and can bring that, all the better. At least 3 or 4 operators attending the excursion did this. There is plenty of room to use your RV to set on and park it right by the motorcars at night (no matter the size of your RV). All of the motorcars were tied down for the evening at the train station at Lamoure.

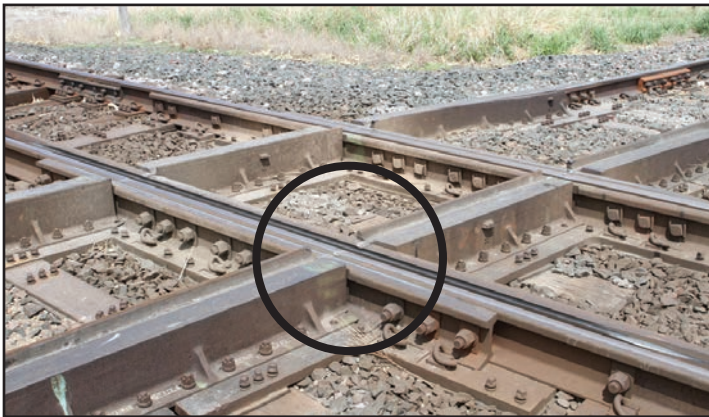
Saturday morning was a lot more relaxed with all of our motorcars already set on and exercised. Everyone showed up, started their cars and warmed them up. Bathroom facilities (always critical) were provided by the Red River Valley & Western Railroad at their station. We had the safety meeting and we again started out to explore this area of North Dakota and the Red River Valley & Western.

We traveled from Lamoure east through a “Y” at Independence Junction, onto Verona, Englevale, Elliot, to Lisbon where we enjoyed a comfort break. We left there and traveled through Buttsville, arriving at a rather unique diamond (at Ransom Junction). There we had a brief delay as David tried to work with our pilot from the Red River Valley & Western Railroad. We needed authority to cross the diamond section of track and proceed onto Sheldon and Leonard, ND where David had arranged with a small local business to provide us with lunch. The cross track was owned (or operated by) Canadian Pa-



Mary) in the hi-rail truck. Following lunch, we returned to Lamoure for setoff. Most operators headed south to a seton in Britton, SD following the setoff.

In Britton, SD we started seton Saturday evening, following the Red River Valley excursion. Many of the members who attended that excursion also attended the Dakota, Missouri Valley & Western excursion. Everyone arrived on a foggy Sunday morning. Stuart Remmers



cific. If you look closely at the diamond you’ll see that it “lifts” the train cars on our leg and the train cars travel up and over the Canadian Pacific tracks. I have never seen a diamond like this. There was live traffic on the Canadian Pacific leg, so we were unable to get track authority to proceed for lunch. David decided to send the hi-rail truck into Leonard to pick up our lunch and we turned our cars and returned to Lisbon. We arrived in Lisbon and enjoyed the lunch that was picked up by folks (Jeff and David’s wife

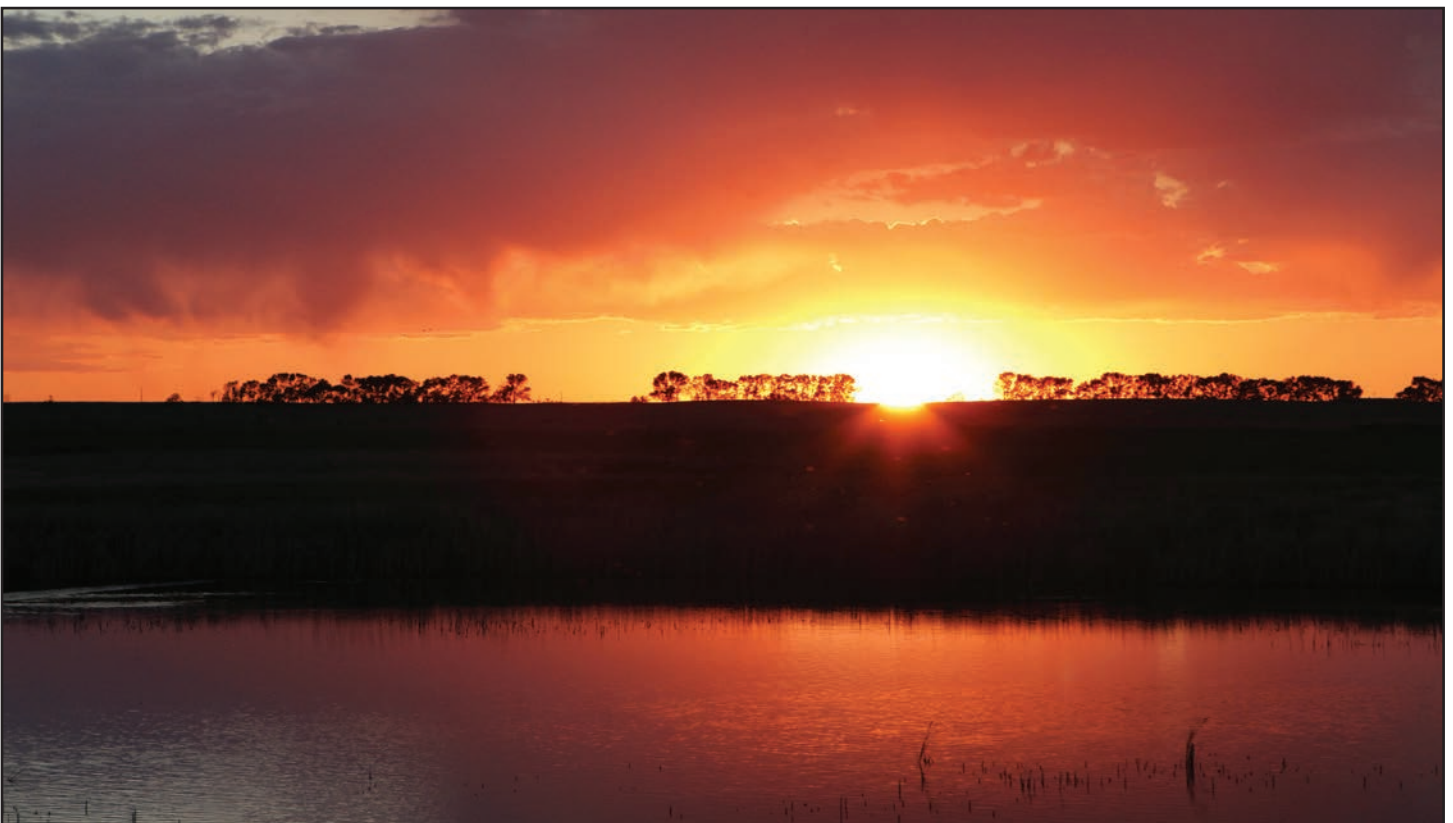
(EC) along with his father had constructed a brand-new potty cart. This excursion was to be its maiden voyage. The excursion was nice and long on Sunday. Leaving Britton we traveled northwesterly to Jarret Junction, around a semi-circle and then southwest towards Aberdeen via Amherst, Claremont and Putney. We crossed the James River at Tacoma Park and turned our motorcars just shy of BNSF tracks (Aberdeen). We traveled back the way we came and stopped in Claremont where we walked around the



town. We took some photos of an old Burlington Northern caboose that had been moved to its final resting spot at a park in town. After this we headed back to Britton and went around a loop track at a unit train facility. We parked our motorcars on the tracks and enjoyed a rest. That evening, we again mounted up and returned to Amherst for a dinner that David again arranged with a local business. Following dinner we traveled northeast through Jarrett Junction, Kidder, Havana and finally Rutland where we turned our motorcars and headed back to Britton for the night. That Sunday evening nature put on an awesome display of fire in the sky, treating

everyone to a sunset they won't soon forget. It was an incredible day on the rails for everyone!

On Monday we again headed northeast out of Britton, through Jarrett Junction, Kidder, Havana, stopping in Rutland. We visited a Senior Center there and enjoyed a bathroom break along with some wonderful home-made treats such as banana bread, cookies and coffee. We were able to check out some of the local history of Rutland and the area. Heading out again we continued on towards Cayuga and Geneseo where we turned our motorcars and performed a backing movement to Geneseo Junction before heading back to Britton and the setoff. If you are used to piles of grade crossings, frequent stops to look for traffic and not being able to see a quarter of a mile in any direction, I would suggest you give some serious consideration to attending one (or both) of these springtime excursions. The excursions were very well run and offered everyone an opportunity to explore an area of the country most of us don't often see. We had a great time!



RESTORATION DISCOVERIES

TWO CARS IDENTIFIED BY HIDDEN MARKINGS

BY MIKE SIERS

WMRY 62

When I purchased my first car, I was told that it might have been a Western Maryland car (with the windshield mounted in front of the bars); the two issues were that the car number plates were gone, and the engine had been swapped. WMRY 62 had also been disassembled by a previous owner in preparation for a restoration, and it had then changed hands a few times.

One saving grace was that the front still had its road number painted on it, but everywhere else on the car had been painted over multiple times. My goal was to restore it back to “railroad condition”. During some of the work I started sanding on the side panels of the engine and noticed some lettering starting to come through the paint. I switched over to a finer pad on the sander and a lot lighter touch with the sander. Gradually “Western Maryland Railway Co.” became visible. A second line was unreadable.

(I took pictures of the lettering so it could be recreated later; ruler was used for scale.)



After asking around on one of the Facebook Groups, I was put in contact with Dick Ray who also has a WMRY M9; he put me in contact with Bryan who had a copy of the WMRY equipment list. This gave me a car number. The car number was sent to Fairmont /Martin County Historic Society for the “Birth Papers.” The birth papers matched up with the windshield (51349) and the upper line of the stencils. The info from the birth papers gave me what I needed to have reproduction tags made that are engraved with the car’s info.

Car Class	M9-G-1	Car No.	62
Trans. Type		Trans. No.	
Shipped to	Western Maryland Railway Baltimore, Maryland		
Shipped to	E. K. L. Muse, Sig. & Tel. Engr.		
Address	Hagerstown, Maryland		
Date shipped	9-11-49	via	C&NW
SA Order No.	6-622	Invoice No.	54957-S
Paint color	Area Yellow T&P Yellow (T&P Yellow)		
Spec. Lettering	Stencil "Western Maryland Railway Co. Signal & Teleph		
Spec. Equipment	51349 alum. windshield (applied)		
	49739E No Bat. Gen. Hd. & t. l. ass. "		
Net Wt.	635*	Handle Wt.	
Inspected By	[Signature]	Date	9/14
Record additional information on back side.			

WMRY 62 went from a “it might be a Western Maryland car” to being identified as a Western Maryland Car. I was able to get the previous owner to write down his knowledge of its history and I have added to it as well.



SAL No 1

I received a message on one day about a parts car that might help me with completing WMRY62. I drove down to Maryland to take a look. The car was complete, but the engine was stuck, and some wood parts were rough to say the least.



When I was checking out the car, I came across some tags that were attached with safety wire. The car was numbered SCL 1, but one of the tags had SAL No. 1 on it along with who I am assuming it was assigned to. The second tag showed it still being used in 1987. The car had been overhauled on June 29, 1981 according to the paint stencils.



(Asset tags with the first operator and assuming the last operator before the car was sold off in Hamlet, NC)

Originally, I had not intended to take this car too far but decided to after I sanded through the floorboard. When I dismantled it, I took each of the panels that might have been marked originally but painted over, and did a slow sand through the many layers of paint. Note that there are three different stencils on here.



The big moment came when I was working on the small toolbox mounted in the rear. It had so many coats of paint on it that I put it in my E-tank to try and loosen the paint.

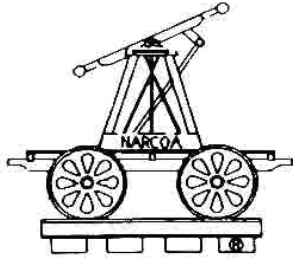
(See The SETOFF Mar/Apl 2021 for an article on Mike's reverse electrolysis paint removal method. -Ed.)

The next day I took it out to scrub it and noticed something coming through the paint, after a little sanding I found "SAL. NO 1" on the toolbox on the first layer of paint on the box.

The original lettering was measured and a new stencil created for use during the repaint, see work in process photo below.

I am happy that this "parts" car was saved so it can get back out on the rails. My encouragement to all of you is to be observant when restoring an old motorcar. Take your time when refinishing. Look for numbers and original markings underneath those faded layers of paint. You just might discover a bit of history.





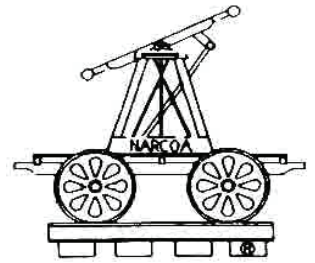
NARCOA EXCURSIONS

AS OF AUGUST 20, 2021

Please submit all excursions and ads directly to

webmaster@narcoa.org

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



Sep 11 - CA posted 07/05

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

Rides for the public from Lane's Station, Ione CA, weather Permitting. \$10.00 per seat, children must be 5 years or older E.C. Mark Demler 925-708-5488

Sep 11 - DL posted 07/16

Wilmington & Western Railroad

Appalachian Rail Excursions is hosting a one-day trip on the Wilmington & Western. We will run the line from Hockessin to the engine house and return, then meet the train and run the line several times. EC's John Gonder, Eric Clark. Details <http://www.areexcursions.com/>

Sep 12 - PA posted 07/05

Strasburg Railroad

Appalachian Rail Excursions is hosting a run on the SRC. Two trips followed by displaying cars. Come watch the 611 and the rest of Strasburg's stable of steam. Coordinators are John Gonder, Eric Clark. Wilmington & Western in Wilmington DE will be run the day before. Details <http://www.areexcursions.com/>

Sep 12 - 16 - ON posted 12/01 **Cancelled**

Ontario Northland Railway

Great Lakes Railcars is hosting a 5-day, 646 mile motor car excursion in northern Ontario between North Bay and Kapuskasing. EC is Michael P. Ford.

Sep 17 & 18 - SD posted 02/11

Black Hills Central Railroad

First Iowa Division is hosting a 2-day ride

at Hill City, SD. We will ride the line from Hill City to Keystone 6 times over the two days. Total mileage is approximately 18 miles for each trip. Cost is \$80. EC is Dave Voeltz.

dvoeltz@pie.midco.net Details

<http://www.firstiowadivision.com/ride-schedule.asp>

Sep 17 - 19 - CO posted 06/23

Leadville, Colorado & Southern RR

Rocky Mountain Division. Leadville, Colorado. Limit 15 cars. 85 miles (approx.) \$100/three days, \$55/one day. EC Jerry Geiger, jerryggeiger1@msn.com 719 568 7966. Details <http://www.rockymountaindiv.com/>

Sep 18 - 19 - NY posted 07/06

Ithaca Central RR and Owego & Harford RR

Southern Tier Weekend. Ithaca Central for approx. 80 mile round trip on Saturday, Owego & Harford for approximately 50 mile round trip on Sunday. Lunch on Sunday at Newark Valley Depot included. \$215 for both days. Eastern Railcar Association. Rob Piligian robhp@verizon.net, EC

Sep 20 - 26 - CO, NM posted 08/12 *New*

Schedule Change **FULL - Waiting List Started**

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge RR and Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR

The Rocky Mountain Division 359 mile tour. 3 days on the D&S RR followed by a move day then 3 days C&TS RR. No Mentoring. 20 car limit. Price estimated \$740/car. Deposit \$350 per car with registration form required

to reserve a spot. EC's Philip Walters & Alan Borchardt.

Details <http://www.rockymountaindiv.com/>

Sep 25 - CA posted 07/05

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

End of Summer run. Two round trips from Ione to Martel. This is a NARCOA sanctioned run for motor car operators and their friends and family, *not* a «Rides for the Public» run. Run Fee is \$50.00 per motor car. Tom Correa
[209-296-4356](tel:209-296-4356)

Sep 25 - VA posted 06/23

Fort Eustis US Army Transportation RR

US Transportation Corps RR loop track Fort Eustis with side trips on harbor branch, with tour of the port and line along the river. Approx. 25 miles. NCRA excursion. \$50 Dnt'n. EC Jamie Haislip. jamieh@haislipcorp.com
Details <http://ncraspeeders.org/events.html>

Oct 1 - 2 - IL posted 01/28

2021 NARCOA Annual Meeting

Sheraton Suites - Chicago O'Hare Airport Hotel, 6501 Mannheim Rd, Rosemont, IL 60018. Meeting open to all NARCOA members. Members wishing to participate in the meeting, add items to the agenda, or secure a room at the NARCOA rate contact secretary Bob Hastings, by email narcoasecy@gmail.com or postal mail at NARCOA, P.O. Box 9035, Cincinnati, OH 45209. The meeting is held with a Zoom virtual connection for members unable attend.

Oct 7 - 11 - OR posted 04/06

Coos Bay Rail Line

Pacific Railcar Operators 3-day Teddy Bear Express excursion from Vaughn to Coquille, 250 RT miles, 2 nights in Coos Bay. \$510 fee includes some meals. Contact EC Bill Andrews. railsnrods@msn.com [541-295-5631](tel:541-295-5631)

Details <https://www.pro-online.org/>

Oct 9 - OK posted 08/01

A-OK Railroad

The Oklahoma Railway Museum will host a trip between Midwest City and Shawnee. Seton at Harrah which is mid-point, West in AM, East in PM, total of 66 miles RT. Set on fee \$50. EC Drake Rice, [405-478-225](tel:405-478-225). Details <https://www.oklahomarailwaymuseum.org/events/motor-car-excursions/>

Oct 9 - CA posted 07/05

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

Rides for the public from Lane's Station, Ione Ca., weather Permitting. \$10.00 per seat, children must be 5 years or older. EC Mark Demler [925-708-5488](tel:925-708-5488)

Oct 13 - 15 - AZ posted 04/17

Grand Canyon Railroad

Williams AZ to the Grand Canyon 134.8 miles \$1,044.00 includes two nights lodging, Details <http://www.mowonline.org/> EC Joe Schnyder [623-332-0238](tel:623-332-0238)

Oct 15 - 17 - VT posted 03/29

Vermont Rail

White River Junction to Newport and return, approx. 210 RT miles. Early seton available Friday evening. This non-mentoring excursion has a 40-car limit, fee is \$470. Details <https://www.nerex.org/excursion2021.htm#vt2> Hyrail and gang car approval by NEREX EC Tom Sopchak ONLY [802-578-7427](tel:802-578-7427)

Oct 16 - MO posted 05/03 **Cancelled Due to Track Work**

Ft. Leonard Wood Army Base

First Iowa Division is hosting an excursion at St. Robert, MO on the Ft. Leonard Wood Army Base. Round trip mileage is approximately 80 miles for the day. Cost is \$50. EC is Stuart Remmers. stremmers@hotmail.com

Oct 16 - MO posted 05/03

Columbia Terminal (COLT) Railroad

First Iowa Division is hosting an excursion at Columbia, MO on the Columbia Terminal Railroad. Total trip mileage is approximately 90 miles for the day. Cost is \$50. EC is Stuart Remmers. stremmers@hotmail.com Details <http://www.firstiowadivision.com/ride-schedule.asp>

Oct 30 - TX posted 08/20

Capitol Metro Transportation

Fall Run. Llano to Scobee Spur – Approx. 54 miles RT. Seton in Llano. Contact EC prior to run. Fee: \$40. Details <http://www.railroadpartners.org/> EC Leland Stewart [210-863-5397](tel:210-863-5397) poppermaker@gmail.com

Oct 30 - CA posted 07/05

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

History/Geology Run from Bryant Station, Ione, to Martel and back for operators and the public. This is a combined History and a Geology run. If you can provide seats to “sell” then no run fee. Otherwise, fee is \$50. Tickets are \$25 per seat for the public. Tom Correa, [209-296-4356](tel:209-296-4356)

Nov 6 - 7 - OK posted 06/07

Farmrail System

Oklahoma Railway Museum two days of runs out of Clinton, Oklahoma on the Farmrail System. Approximately 120 miles per day. Set on fee \$130 covers both days. EC Drake Rice. drake.rice@cox.net Details in September.

Nov 6 - IA posted 02/11

Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad

First Iowa Division - Boone, IA. We will ride the line from Boone to the end of the line at Wolf and back three times during the day and a night run. Round trip mileage is approximately 20 miles. Cost is \$30. EC Carl Schneider motorcarlm9@gmail.com

Details <http://www.firstiowadivision.com/ride-schedule.asp>

Nov 20 - PA posted 08/12

North Shore Railroad

86 miles RT from Northumberland to Berwick and return. As part of the fee, please bring a new unwrapped toy for a boy or girl. Bring several if you wish. The public will be invited to see your cars and drop off toys. Registration fee - \$75 EC Larry Maynard. Details <http://www.centralpaexcursions.com/excursions.html>

Nov 21 - PA posted 08/12

Union County Industrial Railroad

30 miles RT from New Columbia to Allenwood to Winfield and return. We will be stopping at an antique mall on way to Winfield. Registration Fee - \$40 EC Larry Maynard. Details

<http://www.centralpaexcursions.com/excursions.html>

Dec 3 - 5 - FL posted 01/05

Florida Central RR, Florida Northern RR

Save the date. 3 days of running on these railroads. Keith Mackey. EC.

Dec 4 - CA posted 07/05

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

Christmas Toy Run

Weather Permitting. Two runs. This is a NARCOA sanctioned run for motor car operators and their friends and family. Run fee is \$25 if you bring a new, unwrapped toy. Fee \$50 without toys. Prize for the best decorated motorcar. Tom Correa, [209-296-4356](tel:209-296-4356)

Excursions Held On A Regular Basis

Feb 1, 2021 - Feb 1, 2022

Capitol Metro Transportation

Railroad Partners, Inc. will host NARCOA motorcar runs and work sessions on various dates from Llano, TX to Scobee Spur, TX – Approx. 54 miles RT. Details

<http://www.railroadpartners.com/> EC Leland Stewart
poppermaker@gmail.com 210-863-5397

Feb 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2022 - PA

Northern Central Railroad

Excursions on the Northern Central Railroad from New Freedom, PA to York, PA on various dates. EC Dean L. Grote call [717-637-7647](tel:717-637-7647) or e-mail for details dizzydean55@embarqmail.com

Feb 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2022 - PA

Stewartstown Railroad

Excursions on the Stewartstown Railroad from New Freedom, PA to Stewartstown, PA on various dates. Northern Central Railcar Association EC Dean L. Grote call [717-637-7647](tel:717-637-7647) or e-mail for details dizzydean55@embarqmail.com

Feb 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2022 - GA

Cater Parrott Railnet

South Eastern Railcar Operators, Inc. will have work sessions on Cater-Parrott Railnet between Madison, GA and Newborn, GA. Barnesville, GA and Thomaston, GA Valdosta, GA and Willacoochee, GA on various dates. EC Frank Ahouse Ahouse.frank@yahoo.com [229-886-4707](tel:229-886-4707)

Feb 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2022 - CA

Amador Central Railroad, RRCHS

RRCHS will be having NARCOA motorcar runs open to all licensed and insured motorcar operators and work parties from Ione to Martell on various dates throughout the year. Details <https://www.amadorcentralrailroad.com/> or contact Tom Correa, [209-296-4356](tel:209-296-4356), for information and times/dates on the work parties and runs.

Feb 1, 2021 - Jan 31, 2022 - GA

St Marys Railroad

SERO will be having motorcar car runs on the St. Marys RR from St. Marys to Kingsland on various dates. Contact EC Jay Boggs boggsrr@bellsouth.net [904-910-5648](tel:904-910-5648)

2021 NARCOA ANNUAL MEETING

FRIDAY, OCT 1TH AND

SATURDAY, OCT 2ND

Sheraton Suites Chicago O'Hare
6501 Mannheim Rd
Rosemont, IL, 60018

The NARCOA Annual Meeting is open to all NARCOA members. The meeting will be a 'hybrid' consisting of both an in-person meeting at the Sheraton Suites in Chicago (*under COVID-19 protocols*) coupled with a real-time virtual ZOOM meeting for those members who are unable to travel to Chicago. All NARCOA members are encouraged to attend, either virtually or in person.

Any member wishing to address the Board or add items to the agenda must contact Secretary Bob Hastings at e-mail narcoasecy@gmail.com at least two weeks before the meeting to be added to the agenda.

If you would like to attend the meeting virtually, you will be able to listen and watch the proceedings using ZOOM. You must install ZOOM on your device of choice prior to the meeting. Once you have installed ZOOM, you will need a ZOOM meeting ID and a passcode to join the meeting at the scheduled time. Watch for an official NARCOA bulletin that will be sent on a date closer to the meeting. The bulletin will have details with the meeting ID and passcode.

To reserve a room at the Sheraton at the NARCOA rate, contact Bob Hastings at e-mail narcoasecy@gmail.com. Please note, the cut-off date for a room reservation is Friday, August 27th, 2021, to qualify for this year's NARCOA single or double room rate of \$99.00 per night, plus taxes.

See you at the 2021 NARCOA Annual Meeting.

Mark North - NARCOA President

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](tel: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.

ThunderHill Services, thunderhillservices@gmail.com and thunderhillservices.com [857-302-3135](tel:857-302-3135). Sean McInerney Quality brake assemblies for Fairmont A-3/4/5, S2/ST2, M/MT-14/19, M9 and all Woodings. Oak brake blocks (incl. fasteners) also sold separately. All components manufactured in New England.

Fairmont parts, majority are NOS, all OEM, no reproductions, most came from Brown Railroad Supply – Phil's Motorcar Parts - Operated by Philip Hopper, 6126 Bear Branch Drive, San Antonio, TX 78222, Phone: [210-845-4119](tel:210-845-4119) from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Central Time, weekdays. Personal visit by appointment only. Email at royalrubyman64@gmail.com or visit my website for details on the listings at: <https://www.philsmotorcarparts.com>

Railroad Motor Car Resource Library / Doug Cummins, doug@rrstuff.net 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](tel: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.

Fredericksburg Shops, fredshops@earthlink.net or www.fredericksburgshops.com or 209 Creamery Rd., Fredericksburg, Ohio 44627, phone: [330-465-0713](tel: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. Fifth Avenue Internet Garage, 415 Court Street, Clay Center, KS 67432. phone [785-632-3450](tel:785-632-3450). fifthaveinternetgarage.com or email fifthavegarage@gmail.com

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

Dave Myers at: dave@redspeeder.com or [928-380-7056](tel: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 phone [\(925\) 820-4159](tel: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.

Complete, restorable Fairmont motorcars for sale. Models range from M9 up to A4 including two and four stroke engines, belt and transmission drives. Also parting out several motorcars; please call for more details. David Staggs, [812 545 9684](tel:812-545-9684), Mitchell, Indiana.

Onan CCKB Engine, rebuilt. Onan OEM parts only, no off-shore parts. Built to Onan standard of quality. Built by master engine builder. Shop run-in time 30 minutes. Re-torqued, timing and valves checked. \$1,310.00 with qualified engine exchange. Norm McKeen, NARCOA member, text [417-839-3300](tel:417-839-3300).

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HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE HOBBY? BY TOM GRIGGS

I come from a railroad family. My grandfather retired as a clerk, my father retired as a conductor, and with almost 20 years in train service I retired as a locomotive engineer. My brother, John Griggs, has had an MT-14 for several years and talked about his excursion trips; they sounded fun. In 2019, when it was determined he could no longer operate his motorcar, I offered to run it for him. My first excursion was in Ely, Nevada and ran on the Nevada Northern with Joe Schnyder as the EC. We then traveled to Idaho Falls, Idaho to operate on the Eastern Idaho Railroad. Last year on Labor Day my wife, Linda, accompanied us on the Eastern Idaho Railroad run from Idaho Falls to Menan, ID and back. On all of these excursions I have found everyone to be extremely helpful, kind and considerate. I have been impressed that there is no one-upmanship. Everyone is there to have an enjoyable time. When Linda went, she was talking to another lady from California who was talking about the Coos Bay, Oregon run. After that day we decided to restore an MT-14 that was given to me by my brother John.



Our motorcar in April 2020. Notice the curtains; it had been used as a playhouse. It was literally a "tin can" with nothing inside or outside and no motor.

Here it is a year later in April 2021. There is still some detail work to be done but the car is nearly rail ready.



In the restoration process once again, I have found everyone to be generous in their time and offers to help. Bill Phoenix and Richard Hawkins, both of whom live in Idaho Falls, have been extremely helpful, and because of them the car made its maiden run in Denton, MT, June 4-5, 2021.



The restoration has given me a desire to once again operate on the rails, and as the restoration progressed, I could hardly wait for the opportunity to operate my own car. One thing I have enjoyed is spending time with my brother and wife. When Linda and I go together she will get to see country that cannot be enjoyed by any other form of transportation. We are looking forward to many years in the hobby and rubbing shoulders with some really fine people.

Our motorcar June 5, 2021, on the rail in Denton, Montana. Runs like a top and purrs like a kitten. We had a lot of help from friends on this project.

GET TO KNOW YOUR SUPPLIERS

-SEAN MCINERNEY-

THUNDERHILL SERVICES

The “safe, legal operation of railroad motorcars” depends upon keeping them running properly. We are grateful to our suppliers who produce, procure and sell critical parts as well as provide services. Here’s another one who helps us to make it safely down the line.

Sean, how did you get involved with motorcars?

“What’s a speeder?”, I asked. The next thing you know this Granite Stater is driving to Longbranch, New Jersey with an empty snowmobile trailer to buy his first railroad motorcar. My partner in crime, Doug is riding shotgun. When I get there and he opens the barn door I’m saying to myself, “It’s the most beautiful belt car in existence,” in my mind anyway. That was 21 years ago. It’s been a great hobby for me. I like mechanical things. I like being outside. I love the history that



Molten iron being poured in New England at Enterprise Casting; photo courtesy of Eliza Trauger at www.Carefree-Creative.com

I see every day that I am out on the New England rails. I guess there was writing on the wall that someday I would step in deeper, but I was having too much fun with my new toy to think about that.

So...you took notice of the message?

Perhaps; maybe it was my destiny. A few years ago, within a week of my retirement, an opportunity arose through a friend that wanted to sell his fledgling Fairmont brake business. My wife Kathy was not so sure, but I said, “Yes!”

Within a few weeks the deal was done, and we were in the motorcar brake business. My predecessor had done an excellent job of laying the groundwork and setting the foundation for the business, but it would be up to us to continue to grow and maintain it. I had been an operator for nearly twenty years and knew my brake systems, but I would never look at motorcar brakes the same way ever again.

There was a lot to learn?

Oh, yes! First, I set about acquiring all the specifics regarding motorcar brakes. I had to learn about casting iron. I had to learn about pattern making. I had to learn about the details of parts that I had more or less taken for granted over the years. Things like fasteners, brake rigging adjustments and woodworking.



You have quite a variety of brake products at Thunderhill Services.

We do now; I started with Fairmont M/MT and A3/4/5 assemblies. We added Woodings within a few months and then S2/ST2 a few months after that. Later, we added M9 tread brakes and over this past summer added M9 flange brake assemblies.

Master pattern maker Bob Berry, left, brings over 50 years of experience making sure Sean McInerney, right, is able to produce accurate Fairmont M9 flange brake castings.

Fairmont brake assemblies for A3, A4 and A5 gang cars are ready for packaging.

What is the best part?

I really enjoy my time spent in the shop. Whether it's assembling brakes for an MT19, grinding and drilling new cast liners from the foundry or just listening to music while Kathy and I are coating the wood blocks with spar urethane. I enjoy all the aspects of the work. One thing that I never really thought of ahead of time was how much I would enjoy speaking with the customers. I love hearing about how they got into the hobby and especially listening to the stories new enthusiasts talk about how they just purchased their first car. They seem to come from all walks of life. I've spoken with ex-UP conductors, chiropractors, electrical engineers and candy salesman. You name the career and there's at least one in the hobby.



Any final thoughts for us?

The front page of our website says, "Stopping is our business" but we hope to do more than provide just brake parts in the years ahead. We enjoy the hobby and want to see it stay vibrant and grow. To do that, you need a strong community of enthusiasts and suppliers. We're happy to be a part.

For more information check out www.thunderhillservices.com

If you'd like to share your story, please contact the editor at setoff@centurylink.net or 661-713-9295