

# The Pilot

Editor Chris Burchett

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## Message From The Central Region Rep. -

I have some great news!! The Central Region will be hosting the national convention in 2001!!! It was voted upon on Saturday night (7/10) during the nat'l convention in Texas. It will be in Logan, Ohio (kinda like the *Valley Flyer*, except on a much larger scale) and is appropriately named the *Ohio State Limited*. A new member has also joined the group!! His info is in the "CR News" section. Check that out and make him feel welcome!!! In other news, there will be a mini-convention in Dayton/Logan, Ohio. Info about that is in its own article. Also, articles are still coming along great. A lot of good ones have been sent in. So, keep sending those awesome articles in here!! Unfortunately, "LOASSB" will not be able to be in this issue, as Peter Maurath was at the nat'l convention, and was unable to send anything in. It will pick up in the next issue though. The region has also received a new logo!! It is nothing special, but it gives the region its own look at least. Check that out at the end of this issue.\*\*\*

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## ARTICLES

If you would like to submit any articles, please either e-mail me at [TAMRcentrl@hotmail.com](mailto:TAMRcentrl@hotmail.com), or snail-mail me at-

Chris Burchett

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I would be most grateful if you sent in any articles!! It can be about anything like your layout, railfanning trip you took, info about an RBU meet, ANYTHING!!!!!! The deadline for articles will be on the 15th of every two months. That way the *Pilot* can get sent out in a timely fashion. Thanks!!!\*\*\*

## Railfanning

By Andy Inserra

Hi everyone! The purpose of this series is to help people with their railfanning a little bit more, through some of my own experiences. Living in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, gives me a chance to see lots of action, without traveling very far. For the first part of this series, I'll concentrate on the Twin Cities. Later, I will talk about other areas I've visited, like Chicago, Kansas City and others.

This month, I'm featuring a shortline in the Twin Cities - the Minnesota Commercial. As I've always lived in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis / St. Paul, I feel I must feature our own Alco-loyal railroad (Alco holds the title as my favorite builder!). Originally, the Minnesota Commercial (MNNR) started life as the Minnesota Transfer. Around ten years ago, they changed their name to the Minnesota Commercial and have developed into a shortline empire here. Originally, they had two GP7's (#400-1, ex-BAR, another #66, sits dead near the roundhouse), two SW1200's (#110, #200), four SW1500's (numbered between 300-10, not all numbers used), a CF7 (#484, ex-ATSF) and a NW2 (#100). Five or so years ago, they picked up their first two Alcos - C424m's #62 and #63 - from Genesee and Wyoming. Soon after, when Alco stronghold Green Bay and Western was taken over by Wisconsin Central, the Commercial took advantage of the Alcos for sale. They traded two SW1500's for six ex-GB&W Alcos as follows: C424's #311, #313 and #314; RS27's (very rare; they are the only ones left on a

non-industrial railroad) #316 and #318; and a RS20, #307 (also rare; one of only three units left). The units kept their old numbers on the MNNR. Next came a big GE -SF30C #50 (ex-950?, ex-ATSF). Also, they acquired a slug from NRE - #01. The MNNR has added to their Alco roster more recently when CP Rail retired its MLWs. Six ex-CP units have found their way to the MNNR. They are RS23 #80 (ex-#8031); M630 #73 (ex-#4574); RS-18's #81, #82 and #83 (ex-#1812, #1839 and #1837 respectively); and M636 #71 (ex-#4711). You may recognize the last two to work for CP Rail. They were retired by CP just this past July. M636 #71 is also well known. It was the last big Alco to operate on a Class I railroad in the USA and Canada (retired in late May or early June '98)!



MNNR (ex-CP) #4711 still in it's old CP Rail paint scheme. Andy Inserra

It is also the CAT-powered one that worked out of Montreal for years. Also last summer, the MNNR picked up two RS3's - #1608 and #1604. Both are ex-LS&I. In December, the Minnesota Commercial bought their 17th Alco. It is S11 #3779 from CP; it was their old Winnepeg shop switcher. The RS3 's and S11 are so new, they've yet to be renumbered and repainted. If you're looking to see the MNNR in action, there are many possibilities. They serve most yards in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area like Northtown (BNSF) in Minneapolis and Fridley, Union ((BNSF) in St. Paul by the University of Minnesota), Dayton's Bluff (BNSF) and Pig's Eye ((CP/SOO) which are both by the Mississippi River in St. Paul). They also have their own yards - New Brighton Yard in New Brighton and Midway Yard in St. Paul, a mile or so north of their roundhouse. As well as serving most yards and operating two of their own, they do switching at yards for the owners - East Minneapolis Yard (UP/CNW) and Hiawatha Yard (CP/SOO). Both are in Minneapolis. Their engines are serviced at their rare 12-stall roundhouse on Cleveland Ave. in St. Paul! Because they have well over 12 units, they can often be found on the tracks outside the..... roundhouse, making for easy photographing! So that's the Minnesota Commercial., my favorite railroad and a big time Alco-user!

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# HOCKING VALLEY RAILWAY HISTORY - PART THREE

BY CHRIS BURCHETT

Hello again!! This month we start Part Three in the Hocking Valley Scenic Railway History series! Now we are starting to see a railroad come around and some more interesting stuff!! So, on with Part Three!!!!

Both the C&HV and the C&T had the same management (kinda an early Chessie) since 1876 and in 1878, they added a third line to their fold. The development of this line began with The Scioto & Hocking Valley Railroad. Its intended route began at Portsmouth, running through Jackson, McArthur, Logan and Somerset, to the terminus at Newark. The first train operated to Jackson on August 15, 1853 and by 1854, the road made a connection with the Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad at Hamden. With a couple of exceptions, grading at this time was almost completed to Somerset. The S&HV came under the control of the Marietta and Cincinnati, which the B&O acquired in 1882 and changed the name of the company to the Cincinnati, Washington & Baltimore. In December 1889, this company became the B&O Southwestern, which portions of are still in existence as the Great Miami & Scioto Railroad (owner - Fred Stout) and CSXT.

Next in the series was the Gallipolis, McArthur and Columbus Railroad Company incorporated in 1870. This road planned to build from Gallipolis through Gallia, Vinton and Hocking counties to Logan. By June 1874, almost 43 miles of grade had been completed when the money ran out.

The Columbus & Gallipolis Railway was organized in 1876 as a successor to the GM&L. It purchased the former road and began work on the Eagle and Campbell's Tunnels and other grading work. Money problems plagued this group as had its predecessors and by May 1878, the treasury was empty.

Next in the series was the Ohio & West Virginia Railway which was incorporated in 1878 to connect the cities of Columbus and Gallipolis. In August of 1878 the O&WV purchased the partially completed roadbed of the C&G and filed an ammendment to the incorporation papers indicating the intention to build a branch to Pomeroy. The work of building the O&WV commenced on July 10, 1879. In January 1880, the bridge over the Hocking River at Logan was completed, permitting work trains to move with the construction forces from the Logan

end. From Gallipolis end, the engine and cars used came by boat from Pittsburgh. The construction crews met at Minerton on July 28th, 1880 and service reached the Ohio River on October 15, 1880. Track laying continued along the Ohio River, reaching Pomeroy, January 1, 1881.

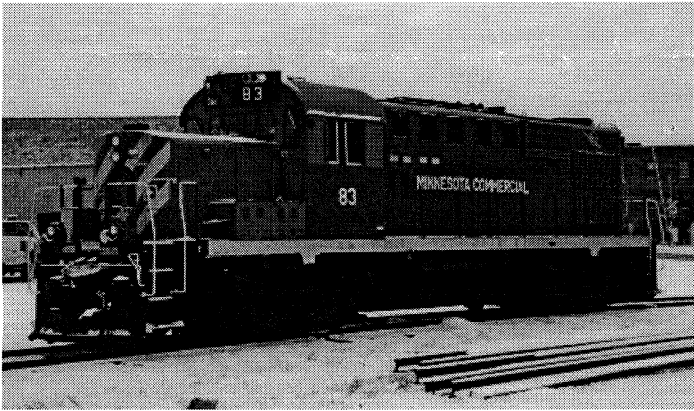
Most of the trackage which made up the future Hocking Valley was in operation by the beginning of 1881. During the early part of the year, a Cleveland syndicate and M. M. Greene entered into a scheme of financial manipulation that resulted in the creation of the Columbus, Hocking Valley & Toledo Railway. In a special meeting held August 20, 1881, the stockholders of the C&HV, the C&T and the O&WV met and ratified a consolidation agreement creating the Columbus, Hocking Valley and Toldeo Railway.

On January 22, 1895, the Wellston and Jackson Belt Railway Company was incorporated. On June 22, 1895, the W&JB signed a contract with the CHV&T to operate the belt line with the right to operate steam trains over the line from Wellston to Jackson. The primary purpose of the belt was to operate electric traction service between Wellston and Jackson. This service started in the Spring of 1896. Steam passenger service to Columbus also began in March 1896. The addition of the W&JB to the CHV&T formed the Hocking Valley as it entered the Twentieth Century.

We're almost done with this series. One more ought to do it and we're done. I hope you've enjoyed it so far and will continue to 'til its end. Well, until Part Four, happy "rails" to you!!

## Photo Time!!

This is where TAMR Central Region members can show off their photos, whether it be the most recent, or the latest!! E-mail or snail-mail your photos to me!! If snail-mailed, I will send them back upon request. Sooo, here are some photos!!!



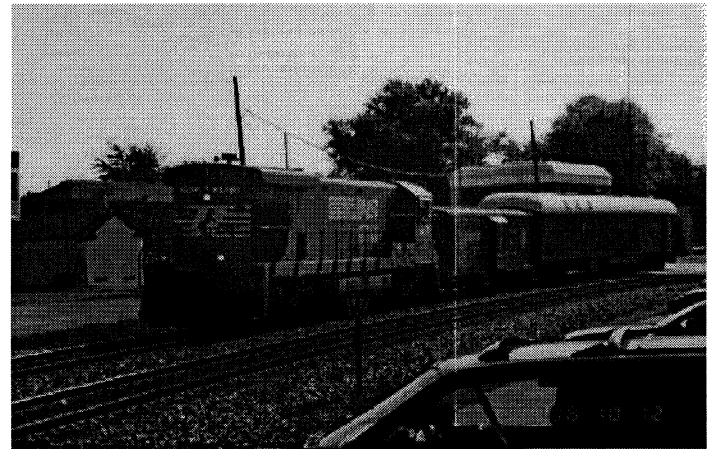
Minnesota Commercial #83 sits in the yard on a cold, snow-covered, winter day. Photo by Andy Inserra.



CSXT (ex-CR) #4022 and CSXT #8118 sit side-by-side in the yard in Huntington, WV. The OCS has just arrived and is splitting the train up for various destinations. Photo by Debbie Burchett.



HVSR (ex-LS&I) #33 sits at the depot in Canal Winchester, Ohio. This is special run over the I&OC. Also, the 33 is the direct sister engine to WMSR #734 (ex-LS&I #34). Photo by Debbie Burchett.



NS #3873 pulling the NS Track Geometry Train through Marion, Ohio. The caboose is the research car. Photo by Chris Burchett.

## central region news

**New member's info:** Chris Ahern, 12321 Beverly, Overland Park KS, 66209; Phone # - (913)269-0395.

**Write or call Chris and make him feel welcome. Welcome aboard, Chris!! Glad to have ya!!**

**Region membership count - 39**

**The Central Region website has recently undergone a face-lift. All those on the 'net, check it out. It includes info on the next issue of *The Pilot* and info on upcoming conventions!!!\*\*\***

## "Railfanning" Cont'd

Next time I will continue on with the series. If you have any comments or questions about the trains in the Twin Cities or any of the other areas I will write about or are going to one of the areas I will write about and want railfanning info, please feel free to e-mail me at : [joe\\_inserra@cargill.com](mailto:joe_inserra@cargill.com). Or snail-mail me at: Andy Inserra, 4940 Xylon Ave. N., New Hope MN, 55428.

By the way, I've found a great bunch of CD's with railroad sounds on them. They are mainly Alcos, but there are some other sounds included too. They are fantastically done with the highest quality recordings! Check them out at: <http://alcoworld.railfan.net>. They are highly recommended!

I hope you've enjoyed the first installment of "Railfanning". Hopefully you'll enjoy all the rest that will follow!

## Convention News

**Great Plains RBU:** The Great Plains RBU will hold its fall convention in conjunction with *CTC Board Magazine's* "Day in North America," and the Spud Valley Train Show, on October 23 and 24, 1999. On the 23rd, we'll be railfanning in the same spot around Fargo, and on the 24th is the train show. If you're interested, contact Lewis Ableidinger via e-mail at [soo201@hotmail.com](mailto:soo201@hotmail.com) or snail-mail at the following address: Lewis Ableidinger, 8746 4th Street SE, Kensal ND, 58455.

**Mini-convention(s):** The convention will be held the first two days in Dayton, Ohio, and the rest will be held in Logan. It will be held in conjunction with the Great American Train Show the first two. The dates are set for July 17th through the 22nd. There will be plenty of railfanning and even a trip to Cleveland is planned with a layout tour of Peter Maurath's N scale. A ride on the Hocking Valley Scenic Railway is also in store on Monday (19th). If you're interested, contact Chris Burchett via e-mail at [TAMRcentrl@hotmail.com](mailto:TAMRcentrl@hotmail.com) or via snail-mail at the following address: Chris Burchett, 30150 Ilesboro Road, Logan Ohio, 43138.

## Valley Flyer Regional Convention Report

By Chris Burchett

On the first day (Wed. 2nd), we rode a special train on the Hocking Valley Scenic. When we arrived at my house, we had lunch and watched a couple videos. Afterwards, we operated my Logan Southern Rail System HO scale layout. Then we had dinner. After dinner, we took off for Lancaster and stopped at the video arcade and played a few games of air hockey and other cool stuff.

The next day (Thurs. 3rd), we took off for Marion. On the way to Marion, we stopped by "The Train Station" (a hobby shop specializing in trains only). When we arrived in Marion, we got a layout tour of the Marion Model Railroad Club's HO scale layout. It is a huge layout!! After the tour, we railfanned NS, CSXT and the Conrail line (now CSXT). By the way, all this is at the Marion Union Station, which has two sets of diamonds all around it. We then headed for Galion and Crestline. At Galion, we saw a CSXT train and a couple of old CR engines, one of which was in "Labor Management" paint!!! In Crestline, we talked with a nice old guy from the area and saw a CSXT train. Also got to witness the beginnings of a signal. We then returned back to Logan.

The following day (Fri. 4th), we started the day off with breakfast. Afterwards, we headed north to Bellevue. While in Bellevue, we stopped at the Mad River & NKP RR Museum and did some railfanning. Got some grub at Arby's in Bellevue and then got a highball to Cleveland. In Cleveland, we spent the night at Peter Maurath's house. We got a layout tour of his layout and did some surfing on the 'net. Talked with Josh T. (Southern Region Rep.) and Ben Lee from MA. Got a call from Doug Engler (TAMR VP) and Ben Rosen. We also enjoyed videos of "Mystery Science Theater 3K" and Mr. Bill (ooohhh nnooo!!).

The next morning (early!(Sat. 5th)), we headed for Nelsonville, home of the HVSR. When we arrived at the HVSR, we met up with Lone Eagle Payne. Toured some of the cabooses while waiting around. Then we rode two full excursions on the line. After the rides, we toured the HVSR's small yard in Nelsonville. We then headed back to my house for a bit. Then me, my parents, Newton V. and Pete M. headed for "Fantasy Golf" for a game of mini-golf. Then we headed to CSXT Parsons Yard and got some pizza too!! We then headed back to my house.

(Cont'd on next page)

## Convention Report Cont'd

**O**n the last day (Sun. 6th), we had some more breakfast. We then proceeded to watch some "Looney Tunes" cartoons. After the cartoons, we did some layout operating on the LSRS with Newton, Pete and me. Also checked out my smaller N scale layout, which is currently on loan to the Central Region for touring at train shows. We then had some fun on the computer playing Sim City 3K. Then we had some dinner and watched "Killer Shrews" from MST3K. Then we headed to Circleville with my parents, me, Newton and Pete. On the way, we stopped at a great ice cream place in a small town nearby that serves hard-pack ice cream!!! When we arrived in Circleville, we saw two CSXT trains, one of which was lead by a Conrail unit!! Then we went over to the NS tracks, in hopes of seeing some action there. Unfortunately, we didn't see any trains. However, we did see one lone NS unit at the very, very small yard there on NS. We went all over that (but we didn't go on it!) and got some pictures of it. After all this was said and done, the convention ended.

**S**pecial thanks goes out to Lone Eagle Payne, Newton Vezina, Peter Maurath, my parents and the Marion Model Railroad Club. Thanks a lot guys!!

**W**e also got plenty of video shots, so if you would like a copy of the video I'm going to put together, please let me know either via e-mail or snail-mail. Thanks a lot and see you next time for the *Valley Flyer 2!*\*\*\*\*\*