

Celebrating Forty Years!

THE HOTBOX

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THE HOTBOX

DECEMBER 2004, ISSUE #378

EDITOR/PUBLISHER-PETER MAURATH
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST-JONATHAN SCHOEN
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST-MARK MACDOUGALL
SENIOR EDITOR- PETER MACVANMAURATH II
ART DIRECTOR- PABLO PICASSO
PHOTOGRAPHER-JAY "PAPARRAZI" MILLER
LIBRARIAN- "HAS A SMELL REMINISCENT OF EGGNOG."

CONTRIBUTIONS

Send your check to my...oops, sorry, you mean that type of contribution. We here at The Hotbox are always in need of new material. Here are a few examples:

FEATURE ARTICLES:

This is what we're always looking for. From a railfan trip, to your home layout's story, or your own story. Size can range from a paragraph to a full page. Pictures are always appreciated. New officers are too

COLUMNS:

Full of great tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons EMD is better than Alco? Start a monthly, or bi-monthly column. Size same as features.

PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS:

Got a great photo collection you want to show-off? Got a notebook full of railroad cartoons, or layout logos? Send them to the Hotbox staff for consideration.

SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS, OR HOTBOX

QUESTIONS TO:

Peter Maurath

OR EMAIL AT:

TAMRHotbox@aol.com

Listen to the flowers, they will tell you sweet secrets!

GET WIRED

Check out TAMR on the web at:

www.TAMR.org

Or Join our online yahoo news group, by contacting:
pivotpin@TAMR.org

(By joining you'll receive updates on TAMR news and events, plus be connected to dozens of other TAMR members. There's no cost to join this group, do it today!)

If you have a web site relating to trains or model railroading, why not join the TAMR web ring. It costs nothing, and provides a link for all TAMR members to find other TAMR sites. To join, send your e-mail address and web site URL to pivotpin@tamr.org.

ON THE COVER: C&O GP39-2 No. 3900 awaiting a crew at the north end of Slaty Fork yard on the Grafton and Greenbrier RR, story on page five. Chris Burchett, photo.



A message from your editor-in-chief

Another year, another holiday season! Hope everyone is enjoying the festivities this time of year brings. As for the Hotbox staff, we're still busy tallying-up the ballots of this years most important election. I hope you took the time to mail in your ballot (not like you had much excuse not too!). As I type this message the votes will be entering their final count. An official announcement should be made online through TAMRgroups@yahoo.com during the first of this month, with a Hotbox announcement following in January.

Less than two month's to go before the big winter national convention in W. Springfield, MA. It should be quite a clam-bake this year. Newton Vezina, the gracious host, has already reserved suite space for attendees, and plans are underway for clinic's, show table displays, and music video hijinks. For more info check page four.

The Hotbox article file is looking a little bare lately so new material is needed, especially model railroad material. We can also use more cover shots from all you shutterbugs out there. No offense to the regulars, but it would be nice to see some fresh names. I know we've got plenty of talent out there so lets hear from you.

Lastly, a membership update. At last count this group stood at 82 members. Not bad by our standards, but not good either considering this time last year we still had over 100. It's up to all of us to promote this group in some way, whether it be in telling a friend, handing out flyers at a show, or even performing your duties as an officer. This group has to be more to you than just a newsletter every month and \$15/20 once a year. You wouldn't buy a car and pay to maintain and insure it, if you couldn't drive it? You wouldn't buy a cell-phone and pay monthly fees if you weren't using it? The same can be said here. What do you get out of this group, if you never send in a photo? Write an article? Attend a convention or meet? Say hello to another member? A whole lot of nothing is what you get, so what's the point? The point is be a part of this awesome group of railnuts, young and old, get right in there and be a part of ALL this group can offer, because it can really be so much more than you can ever imagine. I know, I've been there. ●

Before I go let's welcome this new member from the Garden State!

Andrew Reitz

Age:14
Scale: HO

2004 SUMMER CENTRAL NATIONAL CONVENTION REPORT, PART I

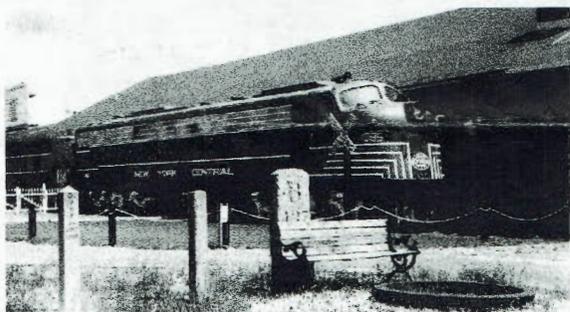
By: David Cenci

DATELINE: AUGUST 13TH, 2004

We departed Charles Warczynsky's house at around 5am..early for me, and headed for the final frontier..Indiana.

We started rail fanning at breakfast...McD's in Durand MI, a world famous railroad town,...eating at the depot. We waited for about 20 minutes..but nothing..back on our way. We got off of I-69 at Coldwater, MI to see if the Michigan Southern RR was running....nothing at Coldwater, or Sturgis..but struck gold at White Pigion..where we saw Pioneer Rail Corp GP7M#908 switching the small yard..after a fow pic's of the 908..and a few of the old MSOR alco switcher's(looked to be S-1's) sitting around the show..we headed out..but not before finding some interesting equipment at the Little River Steam RR on the west side of town.

After cruising around..we finally got to our first destination, the NYC



NYC MUSEUM, CHARLES W. PHOTO.

current railroad magazines..oh, and did i mention that the museum is an old NYC freight house...it uses the freighthouse..and some old passenger car's..connected with regular structural design to make the museum.

Outside is an interesting collection of old NYC rolling stock...including an exNYC E-8..used to pull the last run of the 20th Century Limited, A NYC Niagara steam engine, an old NYC(later PC&CR) big hook(steam powered wreck crane), caboose, and some other old NYC passenger car's and freight equipment.

Also on the ground's in an old PC GG-1, Milwaukee Road interurban car, a small railfan deck, and an picnic area....best \$3 I ever spent!!!!!!

While at the museum, and right before lunch, we caught our first train in Indiana..in the form of an NS westbound, lead by NS 5423. The second train..not to long after (further interrupting lunch), we saw an eastbound NS lead by UP 7146, which I photographed from the cab of the E-8. It preceded a westbound NS local lead by 2 MP15DC's..cool!!

After 3 train's in 20 minutes...the sun came out(it had rained most of the morning), and we ate lunch..and not to soon after..an NS eastbound, lead by NS 5713, started the parade. It was followed by westbound NS 9004 and her train, and eastbound NS 8963 and her train.



THE NS 9004 AT ELKHART, IN.
DAVID CENCI, PHOTO.

eastbound NS intermodal train, lead by BNSF 4636.

The last 2 we caught in Elkhart was a westbound NS intermodal, lead by BNSF 4197, it, followed by another NS westbound, lead by NS 8414.

We then went to a nice hobby shop in Mishewauka..housed in an old NYC freight house..still trackside!!! We were there for about a half hour..and 2 trains came by, but we were to engrossed in the awesome supply of HO scale rolling stock and locomotives...and a nice O scale layout.

After looking at Elkhart yard again..we departed for Granger..and the KOA up there to set up camp. Now, the campground is about 1/4 miles west of the CN Toronto-Chicago line(in this area..it's called the southbend sub)..and while we were settling in...there were a few going by..and we would run about 100ft so we could see the train's through a clearing in the wood's..and one perked out interest.....so we chased it south and around Southbend..catching it on a remote dead end paved road(with one house on it's 1/2 mile length...and it wasn't a driveway)..it was lead by WC(exAlstom lease)SD40-3#6909, and DWP SD40#5905!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It was still in GT blue and red with DWP logo..sweet!!!!!!

We ate dinner at the Granger Burper King(next to the CN line..nothing moving) and settled in at camp..then another came by.....with 6 locomotives..4 in GT blue and red(dang it all), one in CN paint, and an SD75L..but we were all to tired..so we sucked it up, and went to bed.

To be continued...

THE HOTBOX DEFINITION OF THE MONTH TelItales

\ 'tel-tāl\ v, pl -tales : What your uncle Leonard likes to do when asked about his fishing trip SEE ALSO : fib, exaggerate, lie thru his teeth

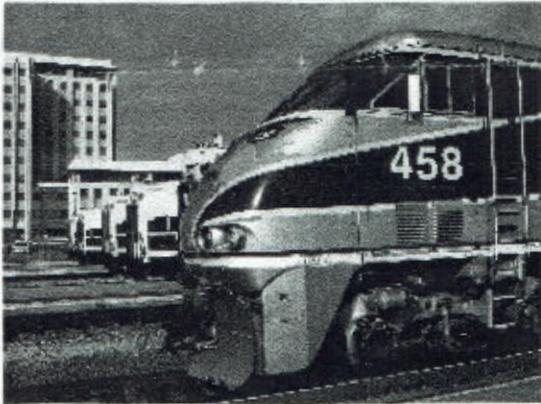
THE LAST OF THE GREAT TERMINALS

Modern Day Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal

BY: JONATHAN SCHOEN

This month, I decided to take a break from *87 Times Smaller* to write about my favorite place to watch and photograph trains. Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (LAUPT) was built in 1939 to unite the passenger operations of the three class one railroads in Southern California; Union Pacific, Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe (ATSF), and Southern Pacific. The Southern Pacific was the largest user, with several trains departing and arriving daily.

During the 1960s, with passenger traffic dwindling, the number of trains arriving and departing was significantly reduced. That number continued to fall until the creation of Metrolink in 1992. As more people started to realize the advantages of train travel over driving, both Metrolink and Amtrak started expanding services. On June 1st, 2000, Amtrak California (a partnership between Amtrak and the State of California) began operation of its new Pacific Surfliner between San Diego (SAN) and Santa Barbara (SBA) via Los Angeles, with limited service to San Luis Obispo (SLO) several miles north of Santa Barbara. What's more, Amtrak has recently added another train (in addition to the Pacific Surfliner and Coast Starlight) to and from SLO and Los Angeles. This train may one day see service to San Francisco as well.



A PACIFIC SURFLINER ON TRACK B IS PHOTOGRAPHED ALONGSIDE A STRING OF METROLINK TRAINS ON TRACKS 3-7. JONATHAN SCHOEN, PHOTO.

The 10 tracks at Union Station accommodate the arrivals and departures of over 200 Metrolink trains, 42 Pacific Surfliners, trains 799 and 798 to and from San Luis Obispo, and arriving and departing

Coast Starlights, Southwest Chiefs, and Sunset Limiteds. Also visible from the platforms are the Metro Gold Line light-rail trains that are constantly arriving and departing.

The photo opportunities at the terminal are endless. One can stand and the end of the track and photograph incoming and out going trains, or photos of several trains lined up awaiting the highball out of the depot. The fact that all Metrolinks push in and most Surfliners pull in makes for variety as well. One can also go to the other end of the platform and watch trains pull and push through the maze of switches leading into the terminal. It is also fun to go to photograph the trains as they load, more than often beside other trains. Another interesting spot is the Gold Line platform.

This platform is higher than the regular ones to accommodate the trains. I must note, though, that Metrolink is now restricting photography some. They now require that you have written expressed permission from them in order to take photos. This is evidenced by the now much higher security presence at Union Station. To get the permit, write a written request to: Southern California Regional Rail Authority; 2558 Supply St; Pomona, CA 91767.

In short, LAUPT is an excellent place to watch trains and I highly recommend visiting there if you are ever in the LA area. For more info on LAUPT visit www.metrolinktrains.com or www.amtrak.com. To see more photos in addition to the one in this column, visit my site at www.freewebs.com/jonathan_schoen. •



It'll be here before you know it! That's right, we've gone national again, as the TAMR will hold its annual convention around the unbe-cool-lievable Amherst Railway Society train show. Come join us for three days of layouts, clinics, slide-shows, and enough pizza to bury Boston. Meet TAMR member's Peter Maurath, Chris Burchett, and other's. Be a part of the TAMR table at the show (featuring a working layout)! You could even wind-up in the convention music video!

To reserve your discount hotel space at the convention, set-up a clinic or for more information contact convention director Newton Vezina at

TAMRVideo@aol.com, or
Newton Vezina

The Hurd's Monthly Tips!

By: Andrew Hurd

TIP #9

DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY ON TRACK CLEANER LIQUID, BUY A CONTAINER OF RUBBING ALCOHOL, AND SOME PAPER TOWELS.

The GRAFTON AND GREENBRIER RR.

One of Ohio's best kept secrets

By: Chris Burchett

ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHOR
A RIDE ON THE TYGART VALLEY LOCAL
PART I

[author's note: Please use some semblance of an imagination with this article, as many times within there are references to real-life experiences, etc. The "ride" actually took place during the September 15, 2004, operating session on Lin Young's HO-scale layout.]

INTRODUCTION

On September 15, 1984, I was privileged with the opportunity to ride along with the crew of the Tygart Valley Local on the Grafton & Greenbrier. This train operates from Slaty Fork to Beverly, West Virginia, as a turn, setting off and picking up cars in Couch and Beverly. Our power for the day was B&O GP40-2 4226, B&O GP40-2 4804, C&O GP39-2 3907, and N&W GP40 4155. The crew remarked to the yardmaster, before departing, how nice it was to have this much power for a local while the coal drag down the line was barely cresting the hill with two SD40-2's. Oh well, such is life on the railroad and the G&G is no different.

THE RIDE

The morning of September 15 dawned beautifully, though the threat of rain in the mid-afternoon was forecasted by Charleston's Channel Four news. Even so, I'd be inside a locomotive cab on this day, having received permission to do so by the G&G corporate offices in Grafton. Those were the days, eh? Anyway, I arrived at the Slaty Fork yard office at 8:05 A.M. as instructed in the letter. Walking into the office, a holdover from the late 1950s, I was greeted by Trainmaster Nev R. Again. He looked over my papers and said that I was indeed expected, and then escorted me to his company truck where he drove me deep into the yard toward the engine servicing facility. There on the pad set the power to be used on the Tygart Valley Local: three Chessie units and one N&W motor. Not to often one finds power from the late N&W, then having just passed into the new Norfolk Southern. The crew soon arrived in the taxi and put their grips on the lead unit, B&O 4226. The rear-end crew was already working to get their caboose in order for the day's trip.

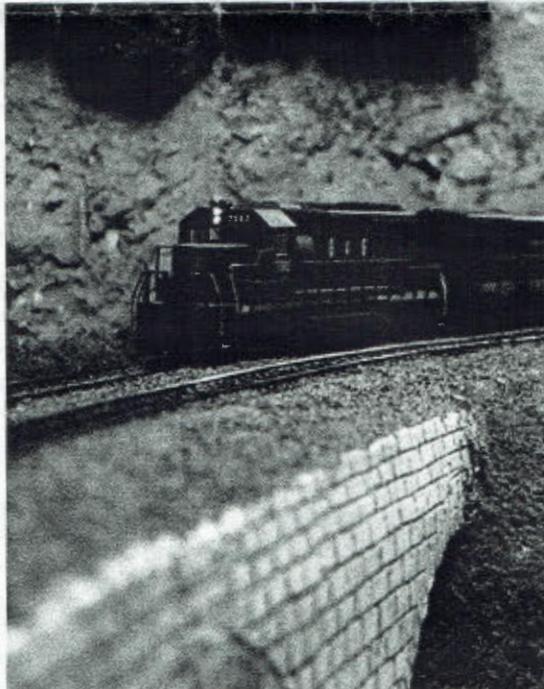
After boarding the 4226 and performing the required inspections, we received permission from the yardmaster to tie onto our train, located on Number Four. The power of all four EMD's could be felt as the 4226 rumbled on to Four Track, the cab vibrating subtly all the while. After tying onto our train of sixteen cars, five of which were for Couch, we performed our terminal air brake inspection (the caboose has already been attached to rear by the yard crew), and despite only two pounds of leakage, we had a good air test. Once everything was found to be in order and good to go, the yardmaster gave us the go ahead to "pull down to JD Cabin and get mainline clearance from the dispatcher."

Before arriving at JD, the conductor had already radioed the Grafton dispatcher for a train order to Beverly. I did manage to get a copy of the order, which read like this: "Order No. Six, today's date 09/15/84, to C&E of engine 4226 at Slaty Fork. Line Two, engine 4226 run extra Slaty Fork to Beverly. Line Three, Extra 4226 meet Extra 6821 South at Pipe Falls. Extra 6821 South holds Pipe Falls No. Two. Other information, Extra 3527 North is ahead Slaty Fork to Beverly and protect against the 5713 and 3900 at Couch. Dispatcher is ELY." With a made complete time of 10:03 A.M., we were on our way onto the mainline.

As we worked our way up the hill to Pipe Falls, we passed by the defect detector, receiving a positive report of "no defects." The going was rather easy with sixteen cars and four GP40's pulling, the crew remarking how they hadn't had it this easy in quite a while. Sometimes the locals pay off, but the time and work involved usually cancels out anything positive, not mention being one of the lowest priority trains on the line.

As we enter Number Two track at Pipe Falls, Crescent Valley SD40-2 No. 6821, pulling a train of empties south, was already waiting for us. Not bad for us, as we were able to breeze right on through, the crew of the CV train lining all switches for our movement. As the rear passed, the head-end crew of X6821 South called us and said we had "a good roll by." Our engineer, finally passing the CV caboose, radioed their head-end and gave the same report. Thank God for roller bearings. I didn't realize it at the time, but I should've gotten more photos of that CV cab—it and others were removed from service five years later due to "modernization." Times change all too quickly.

As we came down the hill into the Burdette Valley, we crossed the



large curved trestle that spans Burdette Creek. What a sight that is from the trestle! The valley is a long ways down, giving a very different meaning to the phrase "shock and awe."

The going had been relatively easy as we traveled on toward Couch, entering the area of the Burdette Creek siding. At this location, there is a spring switch located on each end of the siding, which allows for very fluid movement of trains. Even so, as we came to the north end of the siding, we were greeted with a red order board at the Couch depot.

TRACKSIDE FANS

BY JONATHAN SCHOEN

This month in *Trackside Fans*, we begin a first ever 3-part series on the George Town Loop Railroad in Colorado. Here to give it to us in Shane Schabow.

When I am on the Georgetown Loop Railroad, I am in heaven. It feels like heaven on earth, as I have always loved that railroad and always will. On last year's trip, I originally thought #40 was running. As we came near Silver Plume on I-70, we saw the smoke from the 1:20 train just cresting the upgrade trip and entering the Silver Plume yard. As we got closer to Silver Plume, the train came into view. From behind the engine, so to speak, the exhaust pattern looked like that of a rod engine, or #40. But as we drew alongside the locomotive, I saw that the locomotive was shay #14. As we turned on the exit ramp, I saw how beautiful #14 really was. I have always sort-of disliked the shays because I wanted #40 to run instead. I got a real good look at #14, as for a moment, the train and our mini-van were moving at the same speed. I now regret not taking a picture or video at that moment, as that is now going to be the most remembered part of last year's (1999) trip. As always, I was eager to get into the yard. As a result of the new building for #9, there is very limited parking in the Silver Plume yard, so we parked on the exit ramp side of I-70, where there is public parking that I have never noticed before, until now. While I was waiting for my parents, I looked toward the yard. #14's smoke from the last stretch of the upgrade climb was clearly visible and the smell washed over me in a wave. To me, it is a very pleasant odor. When I smell that odor or something like it in the city, it always takes me back to Georgetown, and "the Loop", but **NOTHING** surpasses the actual odor of oil smoke in the Georgetown-Silver Plume valley (the Morrison Valley). As we walked under the I-70 underpass to get to the yard, which is on the opposite side of highway than the town of Silver Plume, I saw #14 taking on water at the Silver Plume tank. When we neared the first siding of the yard with shay #8 on the front, I could see that the new building was almost if not completely finished. I was a half expecting as well as hoping to see #9 and the three passenger cars inside the building. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. Before we explored the yard and went into the Silver Plume Depot gift shop, we watched #14 couple onto the train, pump up the air, and leave.

After the train had left, we went into the gift shop in the depot. As we entered the gift shop, the familiar wood smell came to my nose. The inside of the depot smells of wood from the wood floor and ceiling. As with the oil smoke, the smell always takes me back to the Loop. I had \$50 with me and I wanted to buy everything I could. I ended up spending about \$43 and buying a lot of stuff. These included: Several postcards, a bandana with a map of the "Loop" on it, a railroad spike with a pewter train on it, a hat pin, a key chain, rock magnet that has #44 on it, a pen, and a box of iron pyrite.

After going in the gift shop, I left my newly purchased items with my parents and explored the yard. As I did, I saw an odd sight inside the engine house. There was another D&RGW long caboose in the engine house in addition to #12, which had a fan on top of her smokestack (probably for sucking out the soot from inside the smokebox). And this was not the Rio Grande caboose that the Loop already owns. It was a weathered, non-lettered (except the number '0574' on the front above the front door) caboose that was being fixed up to be used on the railroad. Caboose 0586, the caboose already in use on the railroad, was going in the building with #9 and the three passenger cars that came with #9 from South Dakota. As I moved on to see more of the yard, I saw, on the shop track next to the engine house, **BEAUTIFUL** #40. This was the first time I had ever seen her on the shop track (except for the 1998 trip, when her tender was on the shop track, while the rest of her was having some running gear work done on it in the engine house). I found out later that #40 was being readied to go up to Alaska to run on the White Pass & Yukon Route. This explained why the side rods connected to the cylinders, as well as the bell and whistle had been removed. The cab decking was folded up and the engine and tender were separated. She is supposed to be in Alaska for about a five-year loan, but she could be there longer, as my dad has said. I was sad to hear this, for #40 is my **FAVORITE** locomotive on the "Loop". I will certainly miss her for the next five trips or so, and will have to settle for the shays (which certainly won't be too much of a problem, as I am beginning to **REALLY, REALLY** like them). So long, for now #40! See you in five years! I hope!!!!

Eventually, I had to wrap up exploring and taking pictures of the yard, as it was almost 3:45, which is about when the 2:40 train is due back in Silver Plume. I went back to the waiting area on the west side of the Silver Plume depot, where my parents were waiting for me. As we were waiting, all of us heard the soft but unmistakable sound of #14's **beautiful** whistle echoing up the canyon toward Silver Plume, which meant that the train was on the upgrade part of the trip now, and that the train must be getting close to Silver Plume. As far back as I can remember, on every trip we have taken on that railroad, I have heard a whistle echoing up the valley to Silver Plume as we were waiting for the train to arrive. Because of this, I can not place that sound with any one trip in particular, except on this trip I am pretty sure I heard it. It is a sound I have never and will **NEVER** forget. This trip, my dad brought his new scanner with him so we could hear what the train crews were saying. This would have been handy last year, as on the train right before ours, the 2:40, on its way back upgrade to Silver Plume, #14 broke down, and we, including Jeremy Higdon who came with us that year, had to ride behind the diesels. We also never found out what exactly went wrong. A little while after we heard #14's echoing whistle, we heard on the scanner, "Silver Plume, we're coming in", and just after the transmission ended, we saw #14's smoke coming over the hill just east of the yard.

Stay tuned until Part II of Shane's story about the GTLR. Until then, send your story to JonathanHTD@yahoo.com or

Trackside Fans

THE PUZZLE LAYOUT

Conducted By: George Baustert

Hi, my name is George & I've been modeling railroads for over 60 years. I'd like to share with you, a small layout (4" x 64"), that is called The Puzzle, because it takes 54 moves to complete the operation, due to the restrictive size of the layout, using 40' cars and an SW switcher. The operation consists of swapping the cars of a four car train, on the main, with four cars spotted on the two stub sidings, at the rear of the layout & ending up with those cars and the loco reassembled into a train that is headed in the opposite direction from the start position. Let's start with last month's final move.

move no. 19 (From Last Month)



The loco moves forward through the right hand crossover to the right end of the mainline, clear of the crossover turnout. (Move # 19).

move no. 20



The loco backs up the main line to the left end & clears the left hand crossover turnout, but does not couple onto the empty refer car that is spotted at the end of the mainline. (Move # 20).

move no. 21



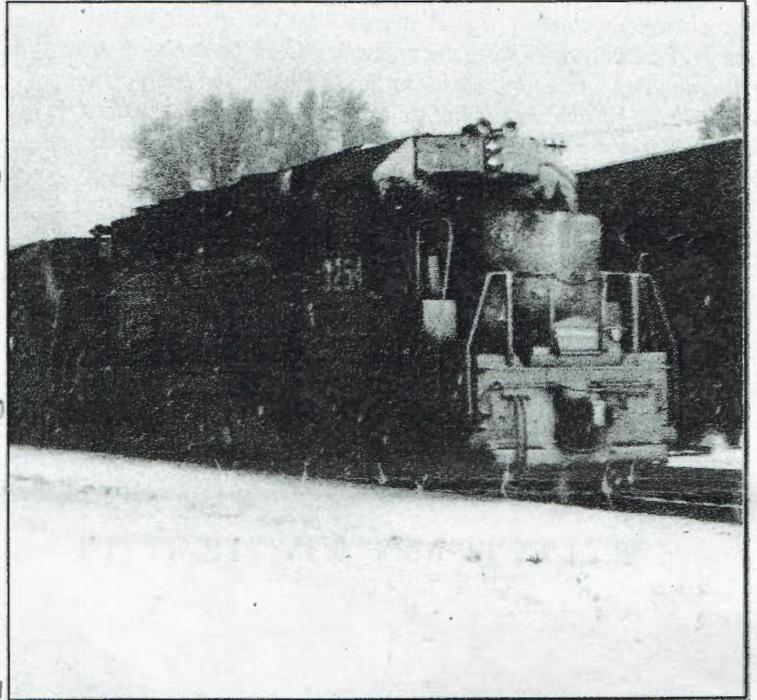
The loco moves forward through the left hand crossover & picks up the empty cars (HE & TE) spotted on the runaround, on the fly, & pushes them through the right hand crossover & onto the right hand end of the main line. (Move # 21).

move no. 22



After spotting the cars at the right end of the mainline, the loco backs up through the right hand & the left hand crossovers, to get onto the main line, again not coupling onto the refer car spotted on the right hand end of the mainline. (Move # 22).

From
all of us
at the
Slotbox Staff...



*We wish you a Merry
Christmas
And a Happy New
Year!*

Can you figure out what the next move is? Find out in January! ●

THE TAMR IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CREATED TO PROMOTE, FOSTER, AND ENCOURAGE YOUNG PERSONS IN THE HOBBY OF MODEL RAILROADING, THE ACTIVITY OF RAILFANNING, AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THEREOF.

MEMBERSHIP TO THE TAMR INCLUDES AN ELEVEN MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO THE HOTBOX, THE ANNUAL DIRECTORY OF MEMBERS, QUARTERLY REGIONAL NEWSLETTERS AND AN ELECTION TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL TAMR EVENTS. THE AVAILABLE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES ARE AS FOLLOWS: REGULAR (UNDER 21)-\$15, ASSOCIATE (21 AND OVER)-\$20, INTERNATIONAL (OUTSIDE US)-\$18

TO BECOME A PART OF THE TAMR, OR TO RENEW, SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO:
NICK WILSON, TAMR TREASURER,

OFFER GOOD WHY SUPPLIES LAST, NEGATIVE EQUITY APPLIED TO NEW LOAN BALANCE, MUST TAKE DELIVERY OF DEALER STOCK, SEE STORE FOR COMPLETE DETAILS. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY, VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF RULES, REGULATIONS, AND THE BEST DARN RESTUARANTS IN MENTONE, CA SEND A SSAEBDR TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS. IF YOU ARE AT ALL UNSATISFIED WITH THIS HOTBOX, PLEASE RETURN UNUSED PORTION FOR A COMPLETE BLOW-OFF BY OUR STAFF. THANK YOU!

COMING SOON TO **THE HOTBOX** :

- Part two of the summer national convention report.
- The Grafton and Greenbrier, a TAMR exclusive, continues.
- Election Results.

COMING SOON TO **THE TAMR** :

- February will be here before you know it, join the party in West Springfield, MA for the Winter National Convention, Jan 28-30.

