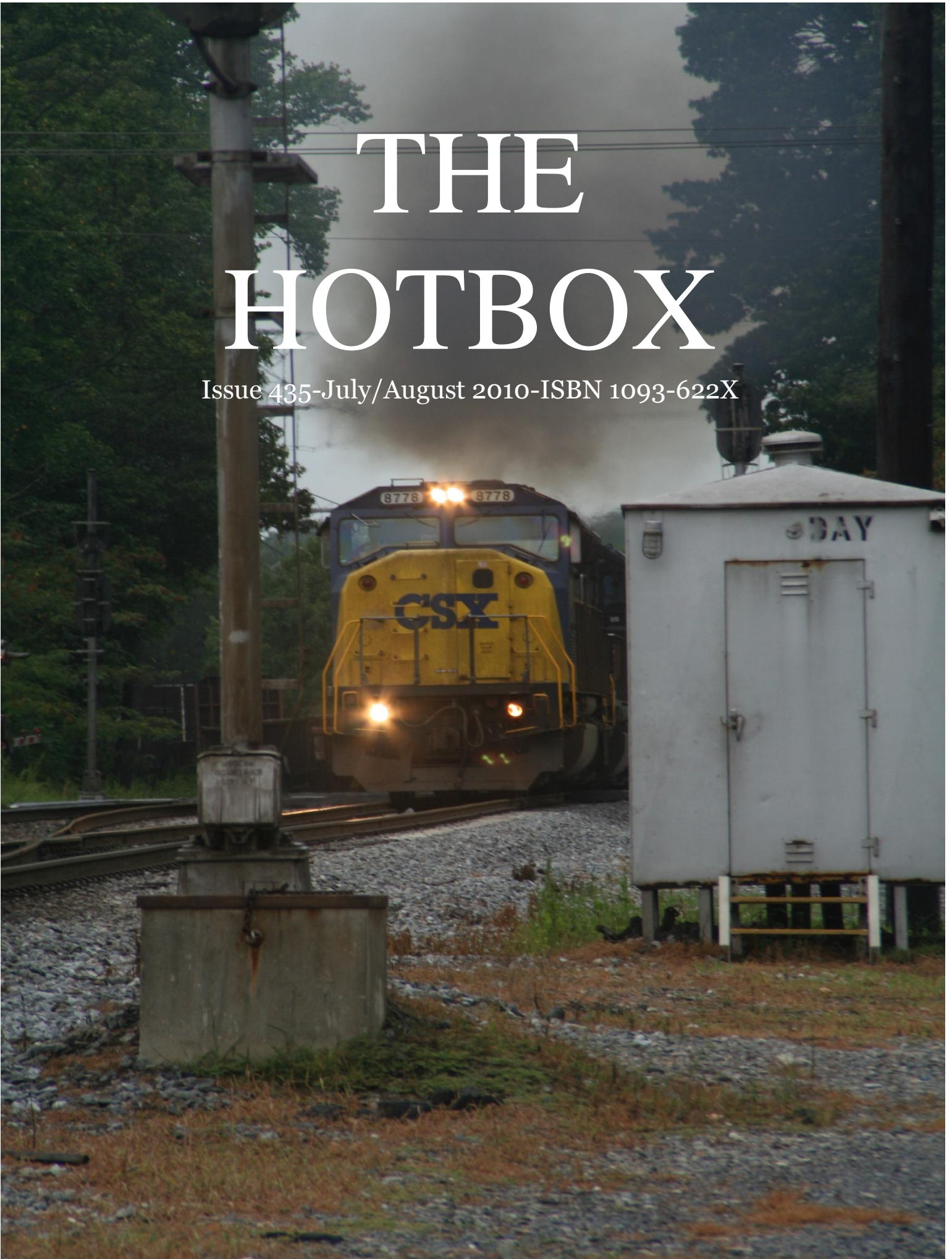


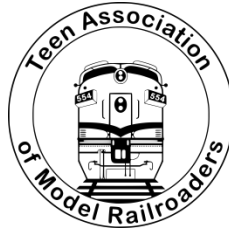
THE HOTBOX

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The Hotbox

Editor: Ben Rechel
Contributors: Hopefully you!



FORM 19

From the Editor

Contributing to The Hotbox:
We are always in need of new material; your submissions are welcome and greatly appreciated!

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 few pages. Pictures are always appreciated.

Columns:
Full of great tips on layout improvement? Got a million reasons EMD is better than Alco? Start a monthly or bi-monthly column.

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 all!

Send all submissions or questions to:

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On the cover: CSX EMD SD60M
#8788's exhaust is reminiscent of that of a steam locomotive

Yes, *The Hotbox* is back!

Though the summer months are upon us, model railroading doesn't have to go on the back burner until the wintertime. The model railroading hobby can be enjoyed almost anywhere at any time of year. I'm a member of several online fora and chat groups, and they seem to be rather quiet these days.

But I love model railroading, even during the summer heat. When my family went to a jazz concert in the park, I brought my trackbuilding tools along. Call me crazy, but I filed switchpoints in my lap in time with the Duke Ellington tunes from the bandstand. Yes, I wore a t shirt with a picture of a locomotive on it, and a tool apron that read "Track Maintenance Crew" in large letters. I'll admit it; I looked like a total dork. Nevertheless, I kept my mind off the heat and enjoyed my favorite hobby.

Clear summer skies are also great for railfanning. The next time you get back from a railfan trip, send your favorite photos in for publication in *The Hotbox*.

That's enough of my ramble. Here's the newsletter.

-Ben Rechel

Working on the Railroad Tools That Make It Easier

By BJ Karnavas

Certain tools can make model railroading more fun. Especially in smaller scales, the correct tools let you make fewer mistakes and do things faster. It's always tempting to blow your money away on rolling stock (I personally always ogle the locomotives on every trip to the hobby shop), but you might take a look around your hobby shop for some of these tools, too, which I wish I knew about when I began modeling.

By far my favorite tool that I have used has been my trusty pair of rail shears. First off, they trim rail instantly. Before, I used a cheap "razor saw" from Atlas to cut track, and the results were messy, even after a minute of frantic hacking, leaving gouges in the rail when the saw skipped off the proper groove.

Furthermore, the shears do more than just cut rail. I have used them extensively to cut Masonite and very thin wood, open those annoying plastic blister packs, trim my fingernails, remove plastic kit pieces from their molding, and shorten wires. And that's only the beginning. In summary: Best. Tool. Ever.

After the rail shears, tweezers are my most useful tools. If I modeled in O scale, or G, I suppose I wouldn't need those as much. But I model N -- well, you get the (tiny) picture. Also, I love to make every detail on my layout perfect (granted, at that scale I can only have so much detail anyway; all the more incentive to get it right). But in HO, too,

you've just got to have something smaller than your fingers to manipulate items with.

I started with just an old pair of cross-locking tweezers I found lying around the house. The cross-locking tweezers press themselves closed unless you squeeze them open; sometimes useful, but often a (crushing) nuisance. Recently I bought a five-piece set of tweezers, which gave me a more balanced assortment of tweezers for different uses. In addition to the cross-locking tweezers, it had some regular tweezers, fine tweezers, bent nose tweezers (great for reaching tight places), and flat-ended tweezers. The latter instrument is excellent for holding little figures when placing them in a scene. I've found uses for each pair of tweezers -- especially when I've gotten splinters from the wood in my layout!

And speaking of fine points, my third favorite tools have to be a couple of fine paintbrushes I happened to buy just a couple weeks before writing this. I am still painting track on my layout, and used to use an old Crayola watercolor-kit brush with large, plastic bristles to do the job. I had to wedge the bushy bristles in between ties when painting, which slowed me down. Finally, on a lark, I bought some slender, fine-tipped, one dollar brushes at the hobby shop, and they sped things up tremendously. I could control where the tip went more easily, and now I'm painting many times faster, speeding up the rails like a runaway locomotive. Plus, I'll probably use these brushes again when I build kits, weather railcars, or paint anything with any detail. And the price... best three dollars I've ever spent on the right tools.

While these three tools aren't the only ones you need to build a layout, they will enhance the experience like a video game power-up, giving you more control over your layout while building. The shears let you cut things quickly and accurately, while good tweezers allow you to place the fine details (like tiny tie ends glued on the outsides of flex-track rail joiners) that can complete a scene. The fine brushes were cheap, but still improved the quality of my paintwork over crude, improvised brushes. If I had to restart from scratch, and choose brand new tools to work with, these three would certainly top the list.

Railfan Rantings

"What is your first or fondest train memory?"

"I think my fondest train memory was when I turned 16 last year. My dad gave me his brass HO scale C&O 4-8-2 Steam locomotive. It was one of the first model trains I can remember from when I was little. The catch was that it had to stay in the family; I can never give or sell it to anyone. My dad said I trust you with this son, and you should take care of it. I know what you are thinking but yes he is still alive and the family tradition is that once the oldest son turns 16 he gets the train and that's the rule of the rails.:

-Raddison M.

"It was the start of a new year, one decade after y2k. I had plans. Big plans. Ever since I had started Boy Scouts, I wanted my dad to teach the Railroading Merit Badge. I had waited 3 some years for that, so it was time to take matters into my own hands. In January, I was determined to do this. I started researching what I could do on the Union Pacific Railroad website. I sent an email asking for some help. February, I talked with the boy scouts to see what I could do. I managed to get a date set, the first friday and saturday in April. That same month, Mr. Daniel Harbeke from the Union

Pacific Railroad Public Affairs division replied to me. In the original email, I mentioned I was a Model Railroader. In his reply, he thanked me "for my association with the industry." March was planning. I got everyone who was going together and gave them the details.

The first Friday in April, at 4 PM, nearly half the Boy Scout Troop gathered in my basement to do half the Merit Badge. Everyone liked my model railroad. The next day, at 12, all the scouts left for Salt Lake. 45 minutes later, at the Union Pacific's Roper yard in Salt Lake City, Allen Carter from the Ophir, Tintic, & Western Model Railroad club, and a Union Pacific Railroad employee, Larry Carter, also from the club and present from last night, Mr. Daniel Harbeke, from the Union Pacific Railroad, and Pablo, the Union Pacific Railroad Western Division Manager, all gathered the scouts together, gave everybody a safety briefing, and then took us all out to the yard. Our first stop was the dispatcher's office. Here, we were showed overhead video camera shots of the yard, how trains are made and broken up, and all the rail lines in Utah.

When we were finished there, Pablo took us to a storage track behind the MOW building. There was the magnificent GP38-2, #578. We were given an amazing all access tour to the locomotive. They taught us how to properly get on and off a train (pause at the last step or before getting on, and put the trailing foot down first or bring it up last respectively), and they let us ring the bell and blow the horn.

To put an end to the marvelous day, they brought us back to the yard, and took us up on a catwalk. Here, we saw the entire yard. The scouts were quizzed on types of rail cars which they learned the night before, and saw trains being switched and made up. Suddenly, a quartet of Trooper (fast freight) locomotives came rumbling in with snow up to the cab doors on their front. Pablo immediately reported that a) they came from a manifest freight from Wyoming, and b) the Wasatch Mountains had heavy snow falls.

This, I can safely say, was the most memorable experience. I had set this all up myself. Daniel Harbeke said this kind of

stuff could not have been set up on a short notice, and he congratulated me on my planning. I can not say thank you enough to Larry and Allen Carter, Daniel Harbeke, and Pablo (I never learned his last name), for exceptional help in making my boyhood dream a reality beyond what I could have ever comprehended. Long Live the Union Pacific Railroad!”

-John G.

“My first train memory is being about 2 or 3 years old and visiting a static display steam locomotive in Connecticut.”

-Sawyer B.

“According to my mother, my first reaction to a train ride was a terrible one. As soon as the train started moving, I started crying, constantly and painfully. A visit to the doctor the next day revealed an ear infection, which combined with the rocking of the Pullman car had caused me quite some discomfort. (I do not remember any of that first train ride.)

Fortunately, future trips to the Housatonic Railroad were quite enjoyable. Courtesy of a kind crew member, a rail anchor now sits atop my layout. The hunk of iron makes a handy weight for gluing down roadbed.”

-Ben R. [Yours truly, the editor]



Announcing the 2009-2010 Payne Awards! (take II)

We are looking to recognize members who have contributed greatly to the TAMR!

Please send in your nominations for:

- Best member
- Best member runner-up
- Best new member
- Best Hotbox article
- Best Hotbox photograph

Please submit your votes by September 30th, 2010 to:

Peter Maurath 3099 Kirklevington Dr.
Lexington, KY 40517
pencntrl1@sbcglobal.net

Should there be a tie, Peter Maurath and Tim Vermande will judge. The winner for each category will receive an item of his or her choice from the TAMR prize box.

An important note from the Board of Directors:

To reduce postage costs to the organization, we are switching to an online version of *The Hotbox*. If you would like to receive this newsletter via postal mail, please contact the editor. Thank you.

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. Reprinting of the Hotbox is prohibited without the express written consent of the Teen Association of Model Railroaders. 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, and Iron Horse-\$25+ To become a part of the TAMR, or to renew your membership, contact:

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Indianapolis, IN 46268 USA

