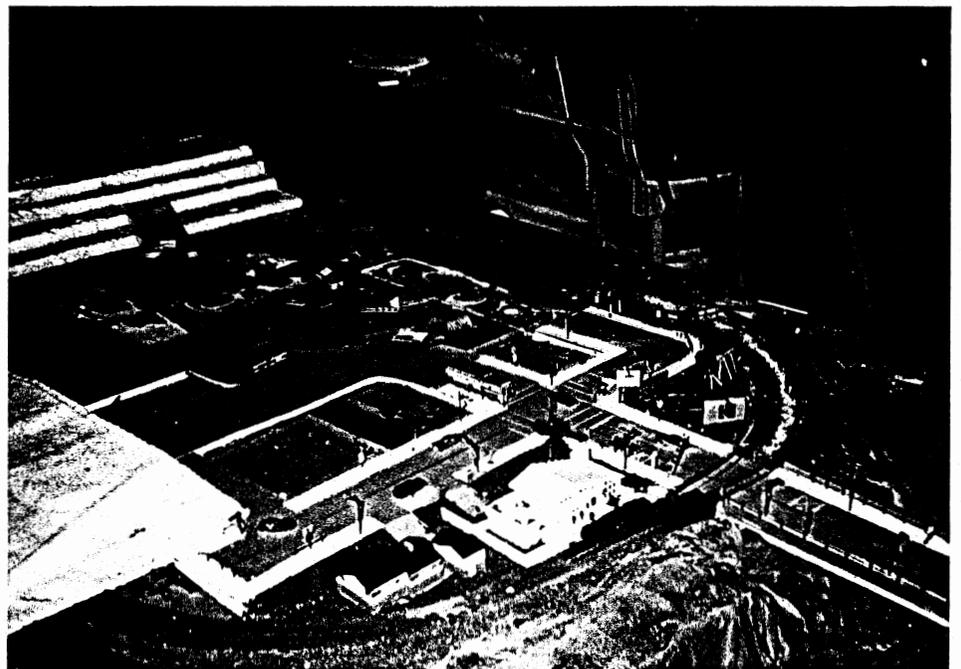
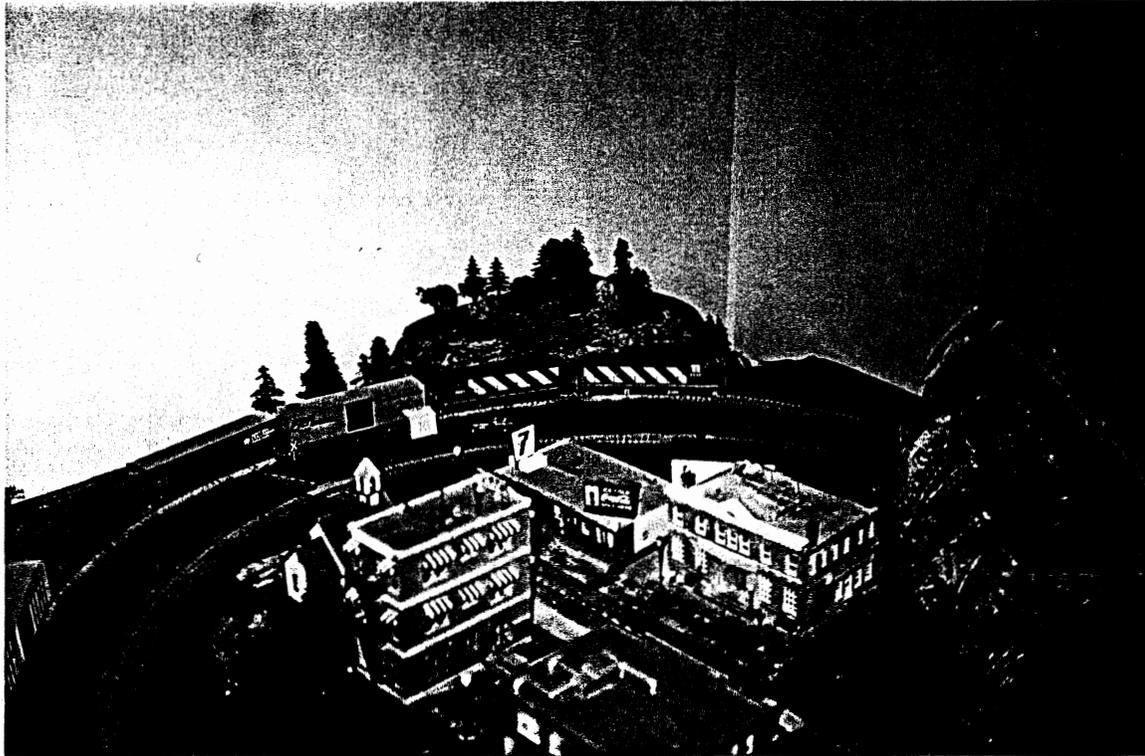


Teen Association of Model Railroaders

HOTBOX

November, 1992

Issue #275



FROM THE DESK OF

Phil Michaels, Editor/HOTBOX

Before I go on, I still owe one more apology. I apologize to Jeremy Amundsen, the TAMR President. In making my statements last month I unintentionally put much blame and criticism on him about the situation with our treasury, and I should have re-read my own words before printing my editorial. If anyone else was offended, I apologize to you as well. I'll try harder in the future not to be so negative and not place blame when I don't have all the facts. Now, on with this editorial.

Passenger Trains.....

What has happened to our great network of railroad passenger trains? In the United States it used to be the only way to travel was by train. Now look at what has happened. The only rail passenger service is Amtrak's meager offering of trains with a bunch of F40PH's pulling some rather dull silver cars. I can't say much for Amtrak's new paint scheme recently applied to their new B32-8W's either. I liked the silver better than I do the grey. Oh well, I guess that is just personal opinion. However, it is a fact that our nation's rail passenger system has been, and for the most part still is, in decline for quite some time.

This leaves us with a question that needs to be answered about MODELING the passenger train. How do we do it? The only respectable replica of the modern Amtrak locomotive is the Spectrum F40PH. Unless you're willing to sink in a few hundred bucks to buy an imported brass model from Overland-----yeah, right! I prefer the slightly cheaper American plastic version myself. At any rate, say you want to make a modern layout centered around passenger service. Do you really want a layout with a bunch of silver F40's running around? I know I wouldn't. Now, don't take me wrong, I am not trying to undermine Amtrak, I'm

just saying that ALL Amtrak would make for an extremely boring railroad. This is where that much-cherished word comes into play: Innovation. First of all, you could freelance your own railroad, one that offers passenger service on a local basis, with Amtrak chipping in on the long-haul trains through town. Or perhaps a prototype shortline that offers passenger service. There's many things you could do with that: For example:

The Western Maryland Scenic Railway would be perfect. It's got mountainous territory with some older locomotives in a classic paint scheme. Not only that, but it ties in with the Baltimore and Ohio (now CSX) at Cumberland, Maryland. The line is only about thirteen miles long, so you could easily represent it on a small layout. Then you could tie in to the mainline which has Amtrak trains on it. Of course, if you freelance your own railroad, you might not want to take this route. It could be easier to just run your own passenger trains without having to stick to someone else's schedules.

The last thing you need to think about is, how in the world are you going to get those big passenger cars around such tight curves. In most cases, most of us have to use 18'-radius curves and can't really afford to run cars over 60-scale feet long without some derailments happening shortly thereafter. I don't know how to answer that one, except keep looking for shorter passenger cars, scratchbuild your own cars if you can, or try to find a way to widen out your layouts curves. If none of these things work, you might just have to wait a while before running any passengers on your line. And with the way passenger service is today, that isn't such a bad idea after all, is it?

I have been a little mean to Amtrak in this article, so before any of you run off telling everyone to stop riding trains, let me just say that although the NRPC has had its troubles, it is slowly becoming a well-developed passenger system and is getting better year by year, and if I could go somewhere by rail, I wouldn't think twice about it.



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On the Cover:

TOP: CN Extra 5544 north, bound for Midlunnoware, passes through downtown Downt Falls on Mime Yan's HO scale CN Downt Falls and Midlunnoware Division. The lead unit, 5544, is an Athearn GP38-2 with a scratchbuilt widecab (See Feb. 91 HOTBOX). Unit 4001 behind is an Athearn GP35. (Photo by: Mike Yan)

BOTTOM: This is the latest addition to Peter Maurath's Sterling Lake Railroad. Peter operates the layout at his home in Cleveland, Ohio, and he is excellent at finding ways to cut costs and still make a great looking layout. For more see page five of this issue. (Photo by: Peter Maurath)

TAMR HOTBOX

Official Publication of the
Teen Association of
Model Railroaders

The HOTBOX is issued monthly, for twelve issues per year, with a special mailing of the TAMR Directory of Members in May.

Dues for membership in the TAMR are as follows:
Regular(21 and under).....\$15.00
Associate(Over 21).....\$18.00
Overseas(Outside N.Amer.).....\$20.00
Sustaining(Reg. or Assoc.).....\$20.00

Please address all renewals, membership applications, and address changes to the TAMR Secretary.

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Guidelines for Submissions:

Style, content- Your own writing style is fine with us; remember, you are among friends. Do you have grammar trouble? Let the editors worry about that. The ideas of what you write are what is important. As for content, we will accept almost anything on modeling, painting, scenery, electronics, layouts, and the prototype. Just make sure that it will be of interest to a majority of readers.

Typing- Typing is not required, as most everything we receive is retyped into a computer. But it will save the eyes of the editors, so please do so if you can.

Artwork- All drawings and artwork are preferred to be done in black ink, but it is not required. Please send two copies if possible.

Photos- Black and white photos generally work best, but color prints will come out fine also. Photos taken in low light just don't print well, so try to send brighter photos. Also, make sure that they have good contrast. Please send caption material with your photos. Caption material should include the location, date, and any other essential information.

Next Month:

The article file is almost empty. We might be able to run a feature on the Lake Superior and Ishpeming next month if the photos arrive by then. We've been wanting to print it for awhile but it is hard to obtain photos of this rare ore carrier. The regular features will be back, and updates on All Aboard In '92 will be given. Let's get that membership up! If anyone has material, just send it in and soon after you can see YOUR words in print in the HOTBOX!!!

Submissions

The TAMR HOTBOX depends almost entirely on its readers for its material. If you have articles for publication or want to respond to one of our columns, send them to the following people:

Modeling Tips.....	Mike Yan
TAMR Clinic.....	John Reichel
The Traction Motor.....	Zachary Gooch
All other submissions.....	Phil Michaels

T.A.M.R. Clinic

By: John Reichel

Welcome to another edition of TAMR Clinic. Write to me with any questions you have. If I can't answer them, I'll find someone who can.

Q. What does it mean when a diesel model has "dynamic brakes"?

A. On a real diesel locomotive, dynamic brakes assist in slowing a train going down grades in mountainous territory. In effect, it's kind of like downshifting your car (for those of you who drive and know how to use a stick!). There is a grid built into the locomotive that converts some of the excess energy into heat and keeps the train from running away.

Usually, only railroads that traverse mountains pay the extra money for dynamic brakes. For example, you'd find them on Rio Grande engines in the Rocky Mountains, but not on the old New York Central "Water Level Route". Some railroads have bought some engines with and some engines without dynamic brakes.

But your question has to do with model trains, not real ones. On a model presence of dynamic brakes does absolutely nothing! The dynamic brake detail, which is typically a bulge surrounding a large fan about halfway between the cab and the rear of the long hood (on EMD's), is just there so your model will look like a real locomotive that does have dynamic brakes. Models (and real locomotives) without dynamic brakes have a smoother look along the top of the long hood.

On some newer EMD diesels (such as SD50's, SD60's, and SD70's, but not there "GP" counterparts---Ed.) the dynamic Brake grids are along the side, so there's no telltale bulge on the top. On GE diesels, I shamefully admit that I don't know how to tell you if they have dynamic brakes. If any of you know

please tell me! (I think that this would be a good question for Central Region Representative Zachary Gooch, the old GE diehard himself. If he doesn't know, no one will!---Ed.)

Q. I have some old Lionel and American Flyer trains that my dad used to own as a kid. I want to paint them into my own railroad's paint scheme. Is this a good idea?

A. Definitely check with you dad first! Many old toy trains have a great deal of collector value that would disappear if you repainted them. Many others, however, are pretty common, and you might as well repaint them.

Check a Greenberg's guide or other toy train authority for an indication of the rarity of your trains, or check around with your local train stores.

You might be better off to buy newer second-hand equipment at a low price at a train show or flea market, than paint away! And be sure you have good ventilation, and also make sure paint doesn't get all over the table you use!

If you have a question for John, write to him at the address listed on page three. He'll be happy to help you in any way he can. This column is meant to help out many of the beginning modelers in our group, but that doesn't mean that those of you who feel you have a little more experience can't ask him some tougher questions that you might have.

I will just say again that I appreciate all that John Reichel has done for the TAMR these last few years and if you have some time I encourage you to sit-down and write him a letter, telling him what a great job he's done!

Canadian Railway Modeller Magazine: Reviewed by Mike Yan, Canadian Region Representative and Modeling Tips Editor.

At last! This is what Canadian model railroaders have been waiting for! Canadian Railway Modeller is a magazine consisting of purely Canadian content, written by Canadians and published by Canadians. Actually, CRM has been around since May 1990, and the eleven issues published since then have been fantastic. A single CRM issue probably contains as many articles on Canadian prototypes and layouts as Model Railroader and others have featured in the last ten years!

For example, the September/October 1991 issue (or train 2 track 3 as they call it) was a pleasure to read. It contained a new products column, letters to the editor, a listing of Canadian railroading events, and a Canadian hobby shop directory among other regular columns. The articles in this issue featured such interesting topics as modeling a CN comfort cab in N scale, modeling CP Rail's, "The Canadian", building CN sectionmen's speeder, and much, much more.

CRM is published six times a year and is available at local hobby dealers or by subscription. The magazine has not been on schedule lately, much like the HOTBOX was, but hopefully this will be changing.

CRM is perfect for any model railroader, Canadian or not, who wants to read about Canadian railroading and is tired of waiting for the sometimes meager offerings of the other mostly American magazines. What more can I say? Canadian Railway Modeller is a dream come true!

NOTE: This might make a great Christmas present, it's that time of year!---Ed.

Modeling Intermodal Trains

By: Jason Eminian

It seems the more railfan trips I take, the more it becomes evident to me that container and piggyback trains dominate the mainline of many railroads today. Here in Southern California, one can see intermodal trains tackling Tehachapi Pass, Cajon Pass, and Beaumont Hill. While spending a recent day at Tehachapi, the ratio of intermodal trains to other trains was about four to one.

For those, such as myself, who model today's modern trains, this leaves us with no choice but to model intermodal trains. Unfortunately, it isn't easy modeling anything that Trailer Train makes, such as double-stack cars, spine cars, 89-foot flat cars, etc. But with the recent introduction of Athearn's Impact cars and Walther's double-stack cars, the process of modeling intermodal trains, at least in HO-scale, is much easier. Both firms offer easy-to-build kits that accurately resemble the prototypes. There are even new 45-foot trailers from Athearn and 40-foot containers from Walthers that look perfect.

After building several of both kits, I now have enough to make a decent looking modern intermodal train. These new HO kits are a must for those who model today's modern intermodal trains.

Some of the Walthers and Athearn kits can be pretty expensive if you're on a low budget. So for those of you with little income, I suggest you try scratchbuilding, or, more reasonably, rebuilding some "regular" Athearn flat cars into intermodal cars. Cars for containers just need something on the ends to hold the container on, while piggybacks would need a little more work. Look for an upcoming article about rebuilding 40-foot flats into streamlined piggyback cars.-----Ed.

Making Rock Molds

By: Matt Bedford

A few weeks ago I was looking for some masking tape in the basement of my house. While I was looking I came across something silicone waterproofing sealant, and then I had an idea. It looked like something I might be able to use to make rock molds from. So I got it out and squirted some onto a rock that I found in Alaska last year. The rock was extremely jagged, so it seemed a good choice because it would show more defined results with the final product. I then spread the silicone with my fingers over one side of the rock and formed the mold into a cap-like shape so that it would contain the liquid plaster I would use to fill it. I let it dry overnight, then I peeled off the silicone mold and I was quite surprised to find that it had turned out rather well. However, for this to be a successful experiment I would have to make a good plaster cast. I then proceeded in making a cast the way I would with any other kind of mold. The cast itself turned out nicely and I was, of course, pleased.

Silicone sealant can be purchased at your local hardware store. It comes in an eleven-ounce caulk-gun-type tube which runs between two to four dollars per tube. But if you or someone else in your household do not have a caulk-gun, and in most cases a caulk-gun is a household item, you can purchase a squeeze tube of it, but it would be more costly if you were making more than just a few molds. However, caulk-guns aren't that expensive anyway, so I would suggest obtaining one if you plan to make a good number of molds.

The advantages of using silicone outweigh the disadvantages. First of all, it's inexpensive. Secondly, one coat is all it takes, and third, it's easy! The only disadvantage is the bad smell, so be sure to be in a well-ventilated area or outside when doing this.

How To Build A Layout On

A Shoestring Budget

-----By Peter Maurath

Hello, if you don't know me I'll introduce myself. I'm Peter Maurath. I'm 14 years old and operate the N scale Sterling Lake Railroad. I run this layout on a tight budget and I take many shortcuts, so to help others build the layout they want for less money, I will let you in on some of my money-saving shortcuts.

This month's tip mainly pertains to N scalers, but there will be more forthcoming universal tips:

Here is an object most of you have somewhere in your kitchen. It is an uncooked spaghetti noodle. That may seem strange at first but it actually works very well for these reasons:

One, painting it is no hassle because any paint will cover it. Two and three are that cutting and gluing are very simple. You need no experience, just a fair amount of patience, and you can create many additions such as the "sign pole". First, paint it the desired color. I choose Pactra acrylic millitary green. Cut it to the desired length and then drill a hole, 5/64" works well and makes a tight fit. Attach your desired sign, there are many on the market. Apply glue (optional) and insert. Voila! You have a sign support!

That's all for this month's tip. I'll be back again next month on how to have professional signs without all the professional costs. If you have any questions or suggestions for this or upcoming articles, write to me at this address:

Peter Maurath
3119 W. 100th
Cleveland, OH.
44111

T.A.M.R. News

Convention Update:

-----Submitted by John Rossi III

Hello to all TAMR members. I have been working on arranging to have the 1993 Convention in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the NMRA Convention. If you think this is a good idea, or are interested in joining the convention committee, then drop me a line. My address is listed in the front of the HOTBOX. Listed below is a tentative schedule of events:

August 6th, 1993:

- table set-up at the train show
- arrival of members, all day long
- informal get-together at around 5pm

August 7th, 1993:

- table set-up at the train show
- attend a rail tour (Strasburg R.R. or a R.R. museum)
- attend NMRA clinics
- evening party
 - pizza
 - railfan, layout videos

August 8th, 1993:

- table set-up at the train show
- tour display layouts
- closing remarks (4 or 5pm)
- everyone can depart for home

From the Desk of the TAMR Secretary, David Thompson:

TAMR received two renewals and three new members in the month of October. The renewals came from Eric Boone and Brad Beaubien. Our new members were Chris Wagner, Mike Grondz, and Allesandro Bonis, from Italy. Regional Reps: Add these names to your mailing lists.

The Central Region has now taken the lead in the All Aboard in '92 campaign with two new members, increasing its total to four members. The Western and Canadian/International Regions each have two new members while the Northeast has one. [What happened to the people in the Southern Region, let's get with it! ---Ed.]

New TAMR Members:

Chris Wagner 616 S. Ashland La Grange, IL. 60525	Mike Grondz 10191 Forest Lakes Dr. Middlebury, IN. 46540
-----------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------

Allesandro Bonis
Via Desiderio da Settignano 58A
Florence, Italy
50135

Canadian/International Region Update:

I don't mean to sound like I'm making excuses, but considering the enormous size of the Canadian Region and our low membership, as well as the distance between members, organizing regional activities is virtually impossible. There has, however, been interest expressed in starting a regional newsletter. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time to be editor, but if anyone out there does, or if anyone has any suggestions, please let me know, and I'll help organize the newsletter. Our next-to-newest member, Michael Blusson of Vancouver, has some great ideas for an article on BCR rolling stock that would make a great regular feature in a regional newsletter. Please write to me, Canadian members, if not to offer suggestions, then at least to prove that you're still alive!

Last weekend, October 17th, 1992, was Edmonton's annual hobby extravaganza "Hobby Mecca '92". I spent most of the

Saturday there handing out flyers to unsuspecting teens. Unfortunately, the big "Star Trek Convention" happened to be on the same weekend, so there probably weren't as many teens there as there could have been. I also met Larry Fredrickson, a fellow TAMR member from New Norway, Alberta. Too bad Marty Iftody wasn't there that day, or we would have had our first meeting of the "TAMR Alberta Division".

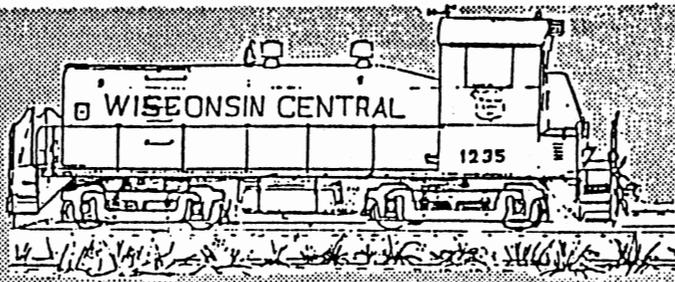
In terms of membership, the Canadian Region is on the upswing. We've gained a few members since the summer and hopefully with "All Aboard In '92" in effect, this trend will continue in the upcoming months. I have been mailing promo flyers to hobby shops across Canada to give the TAMR some exposure in cities where members do not live. Also, there has been some international interest from Australia and Italy. Now we finally deserve the "International" part of our region name. Well, that's it for now.

-Mike Yan

Some other news that may be of interest to TAMR members is that although our membership totals have been slowly declining up until the "ALL ABOARD IN '92" campaign, our treasury, which has been losing money for a long time, is finally starting to make the financial turnaround that we've been waiting for. If this continues, many good things will start to happen because of it, and member benefits will increase. For example from January 1st to July 20th, TAMR lost \$311.11. But from July 20th to November 15th TAMR gained around \$64, so we are beginning to make the turn around financially. Other news is that Jennifer Dooley resigned as WSR Rep. due to the start of the school year. We are now looking for a replacement for that position. To volunteer, just let us know!!

Train

Orders



Here is a very nice letter from a new TAMR member. How about writing to him and encouraging him to get involved?

....My name is Chris Wagner. I am 14 years old. I have had a model railroad since 1981 (Since he was 3! Impressive.--Ed.) when my dad gave me a Bachmann set for Christams that year. Since then I've had two different layouts. I model in HO scale.

I haven't gotten into scenery or weathering yet, but I do like to build rolling stock and like to connect the lights in my town. I also like to switch my freight from the yard to the sidings. I haven't fully converted to Kadee couplers yet, but at least 75% of my cars have Kadees.

Most of my rolling stock is Athearn but I do have the Con-Cor Superliners (Amtrak Phase II) pulled by a Spectrum F40PH. With the exception of an SDP40, the rest of my freight is handled by geeps (GP35, GP38-2, and a GP50). For switching, I have two SW7's, but I also use an F7A.

I use my outside track for the Southern Pacific and my inside for the Burlington Northern. The idea for my layout came from an Atlas book....

....I'd like to hear from TAMR members who have help or advice they could give me. Thanks!

Chris Wagner
616 South Ashland Ave.
LaGrange, IL. 60525

Shortly after John Reichel received the letter above, I received another letter from Chris that I thought he said he would like printed, so with that here are some more of his thoughts:

In response to the article in the September issue of the HOTBOX regarding the loop-virus, it's contagious!

I myself have an HO 4#8 layout which I copied out of an Atlas idea book. I have been keeping a notebook of ideas for a new and larger layout for a long time. After I read Zachary Gooch's article, I flipped through what I call my "railroad notebook", and noticed that with all the ideas for a new layout I came up with, almost all of them had a basic loop like my 4#8 layout.

I've come down with the loop virus. Is there a cure?

If any club members would like to send me ideas for a new layout, I would be glad to accept them. The room I have to work with is about 10 by 20 feet....

I'm really glad to see that we have an enthusiastic young member in our club and I would hope that he would be an example to all of what the TAMR is all about: Contributing knowledge and ideas to share with others in order to make our hobby better for everyone, especially teenagers.

Next is a letter from TAMR's new Treasurer, Brad Beaubien, of Sgt. Bluff Iowa....

My name is Brad Beaubien and I recently became the TAMR Treasurer. I live in Seargetnt Bluff, Iowa, just outside of Sioux City. You may remember Sioux City from the crash of United Flight 232 a few years ago. My dad works for the post office and my mom is a secretary. I am a freshman in high school and I also have two younger brothers and a sister. My two main hobbies are model railroading and Coca-Cola collecting. I began model railroading

two years ago. The progress on my layout has been slow but fun. I caught Coke fever when I was young and my dad started buying Coke machines and signs. Since then my room has been transformed into red and white.

In school I get good grades and after I graduate I plan on going to Iowa State University to become a landscape architect. My dream is to have a large outdoor layout after college or a full-basement set.

I hope to serve as TAMR Treasurer for years to come and if you have any questions regarding my office, feel free to write to me.

Brad's address is listed on page three for anyone interested. Letters ahev been a little slower in coming lately, so let me just remind everyone of what this column is about.

Train Orders is a page for reader expression. TAMR values the input, comments, questions, and criticisms of all of its members and that is why we devote a full page every month to letters. It isn't just something to fill up space or a way to try and keep everyone entertained, but it is place for you, and that means anyone, whether you are an official, an associate member, a new member, or whatever you are, to tell us what you think of TAMR and the HOTBOX. It is here to encourage participation in the organization. That is the key thing to having fun in TAMR. If you sit at home and receive your twelve HOTBOXes each year, you may think that TAMR is just an average group that if you have money for you'll belong in. But if you write letters and ask questions and get involved, you won't even question renewing, you'll just do it! So write us, tell us what you think!

The Traction Motor

Conducted By: Zachary Gooch

Fellow modelers, we, as you know, live in the era of the mega-railroads. These modern transportation networks possess endless miles of trackage, vast fleets of locomotives and rolling stock, and have dominated the railroad scene for decades. Through mergers, they have swallowed up our "fallen flag" railroad favorites of the past.

Although modern corporations like Union Pacific, CSX, Conrail, Southern Pacific, Burlington Northern, and the rest seem like major steps forward in the rail industry, success does have its price. In recent years, the railroads have come to realize that maintaining small branchlines and other secondary lines is just not worth it. The result: Spin-off railroads. Pioneered by Conrail, this process of slimming down a rail system by selling off unwanted trackage to new railroads has come to benefit both the original owners and the new operators of the trackage.

If anyone is fortunate enough to own a copy of the excellent American Shortline Railway Guide, you'll notice that nearly every shortline in the book was spun-off by a major railroad. This is how spinning-off originally began, but it did not remain restricted to obscure branch lines for long. Enter Soo Line. After the failure of their attempted Lake States Division, Soo sold the line off because of its seasonal traffic patterns. This led to the birth of the Wisconsin Central Limited, one of the United States' first regional spin-offs. As the name of the WCL implies, the railroad dominated the state of Wisconsin and is very close to being considered a Class 1 Railroad by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Large regionals like the WCL are now becoming commonplace. Included on this ever-growing list of big spin-offs are the new Wheeling and Lake Erie,

Montana Rail Link, Gulf and Mississippi, Ohio Central, and many others from all around the country. These railroads greatly benefit the areas they serve by providing more localized service to their customers. Unlike the Class 1's, they're willing to build sidings and branches that benefit regional industries. The Class 1's also benefit from spin-offs by getting rid of unprofitable lines and slimming down their systems so that they can concentrate on improving their main routes.

Look for more of these unique regionals to emerge soon, and if you're upset that the Wheeling and Lake Erie and Wisconsin Central folded years ago, you can now model them all over again!

Next month: Locomotive Rebuilds: Upgrade Those Old Diesels.

BELOW: An excellent example of regional railroads and especially the new spin-offs is, as mentioned in the article, the Wisconsin Central. The Wisconsin Central may be becoming even larger

soon if their acquisition of the Fox River Valley Railroad and Green Bay and Western becomes complete. The only other major forces in Wisconsin are the Soo Line and the Chicago and Northwestern.

Shown here are WCL SDL39's numbers 586 and 588. The photo was taken by Jeremy Amundsen, TAMR President, quite a few years ago. The following is the caption that goes with the photo:

Notice how small the fuel tanks are compared to other locomotives. And the "39's" are oddly fitted with six-axle trucks even though they were designed for shortline service!

The photo was taken around the WCL's yard in Wausau, Wisconsin, where Jeremy lives. The WCL has since also acquired a fleet of SD45's and GP35's which are being replaced on some trains by "new" rebuilt GP40's.

If anyone would like to send in some photos of other regionals that you live near, feel free to do so, and we'll be sure to include them soon!

