

# Hotbox

the

February 1996

Issue # 308

The official Publication  
of the Teen Association  
of Model Railroaders

*The "Un-Magazine" of Railroading*



New River Electric Railway and Lighting Co. trolley number 102 eases across a big but spindly wooden bridge over the Miami River. Editor Mike Riley shot this scene of Mike Hood's impressive kit-bashed trolley on a workbench with a bridge positioned in front of a rear projection of the real Miami River. The trolley is a heavily modified Bachmann model.

i n t h i s i s s u e :

A nice, neat work area  
Build a flasher circuit  
Focus: Brad Beaubien  
1995 treasurer's report

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*Mike Hood's layout*

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*The first of a quarterly series*

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**Submissions**

Submissions to the Hotbox will be accepted in any form, written or typed. Typed material is preferred, but not required. If you use a Macintosh with PageMaker or Quark X-Press, material on Mac-formatted 3.5" disks will be gladly accepted.

Articles should be model or train related. Model features need not be about trains, but anything that could be modeled.

Articles should be accompanied by photos or drawings or both. Drawings should be in dark black ink. The editor will draw artwork if you are unable to produce quality work. Photos should be prints, any size, slides will not be accepted. Photos should be accompanied by a description, name of the photographer, date and location of photo and any other information. They should have very good contrast, be more light than dark, be in focus, and have good composition. Write your description on the back of the photo, please.

Product Reviews should be accompanied by photos of the product, a brief description, steps of construction, any tips for construction or use, and the good

and bad points of the product.

Train Places need to be accompanied by a map of the area, directions to reach the site, a photo or two, a description of the area, approx. train frequency, good access locations, etc. For more information see the "Hot Spots" sections in *Trains* magazine.

A very welcome feature article is layout tours. Tours should be accompanied with a track plan, photos, a description of the layout, and any other information. If you want any material returned, include a self addressed envelope with proper postage.

**About the TAMR**

The Hotbox is published every month by the Teen Association of Model Railroaders. Membership to the TAMR includes a subscription to the Hotbox, an invite to all of the numerous conventions and outings we hold, and the opportunity to meet many new people and travel many new places.

Regular (21 & under).....\$15.00  
Associate (over 21).....\$18.00  
Sustaining.....\$20.00+  
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# From the Editor

Hello all! I would like to thank everyone who sent in their directory information forms, it was a big help. I only recieved forms from about half of you, which is more than I had expected but not very good. Again, thank all of you who sent them in.

I have been informed that all address changes and corrections, and new members should be sent to Brad Beaubien.

I would like to introduce to you an incredibly kind and generous man named Tom Matthews. Tom will be in charge of publishing and mailing the Hotbox from now on. Tom's efforts will not cost the TAMR a penny for now, which might just be the break we need to get back on our feet.

Tom is a semi-retired air traffic controller who lives in New York with his wife and two kids. He models the Ontario & Western, Erie, and other western New York railroads. He is an impressive modeler and scratchbuilt a number of the structures on Harry Werthwein's Erie layout which has been featured on an Allen Keller video, as well as in many of the model railroad presses.

Tom's e-mail address is OwenWRR@aol.com. Drop him a line and thank him for his support of our great organization. Thanks from me, Tom, a million times over. Your kindness won't soon be forgotten!

Jared Kenedy, of Palm Harbor, FL was the winner of the Prime Mover Hoosier Special 1996 Convention contest. Jared won by one answer to Ritchie Roesch; they were the only two who entered! David Hadley, the convention director has also informed me that if you want to do a clinic at the convention, the deadline to let him know is April first.

Railroadingly yours,



# Focus on Brad Beaubien

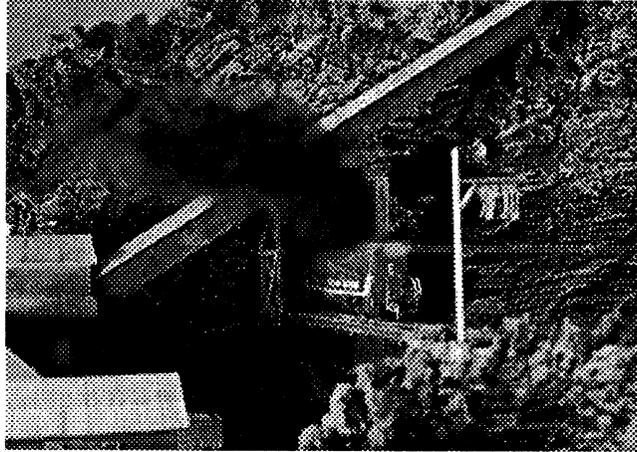
To introduce myself, my name is Brad Beaubien and I have been the Treasurer for the TAMR since the middle of 1993. I am 18 years old and live in the beautiful but modest Sergeant Bluff, Iowa, a suburb of Soix City. I'm a senior in high school and my favorite classes include shop and business. My two jobs include work at the Soix City Auditorium and work at a civil engineering firm. I have a few hobbies other than model railroading. I am an avid Coca-Cola collector, with a small collection of memorabilia. I am also into politics, with mentors being Richard Nixon and Dan Quayle. Comedy is another aspect of my life, and please, no Quayle jokes. Comedy Central is one of the most watched stations on my TV and I love the show "Mystery Science Theatre 3000" (a show where they make fun of bad movies [*it's really funny-ed*]). I watch David Letterman regularly and am proud to have lived in the Home Office- Soix City. I also regularly laugh at the FOX network and have a canned ham autographed by Bob Dole.

My layout is the freelanced HO scale free-lanced Willow Creek & a yet-to-be-determined city. Right now it's just the Willow Creek Switching District and is in the building stages. I have just completed phase one roadbed and block switch wiring. The total square footage is only about twenty-eight. After repeated molding of Perma-Scene, I have developed a recycled paper scenery base which has worked quite well. I plan to expand once phase one is operational to include a city other than Willow Creek and to double my track length. I have dual walk-around throttles which I crafted from a Dual Tech II throttle. Inspiration came from the 1994 convention. My favorite railroad is Union Pacific, being an American original and the first trans-continental railroad (I also like history). The other railroad in the area is the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe. CNW was here but the great and almighty UP took control and has since increased train activity around here drastically.

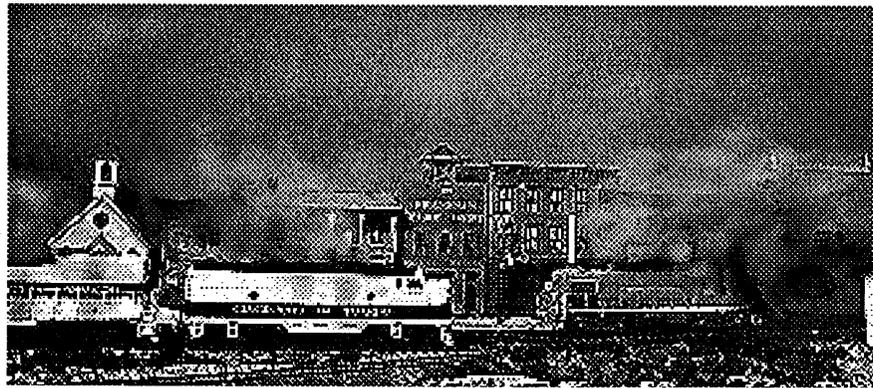
Future plans include aiding in the Iowa Legislature, attending the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, and going to college at Ball State University to major in community planning and development or landscape architecture. I also plan to develop new and exciting uses for man's best friend, duct tape. If you ever have any questions about the TAMR or the Treasury, feel free to contact me by phone, e-mail or snailmail.



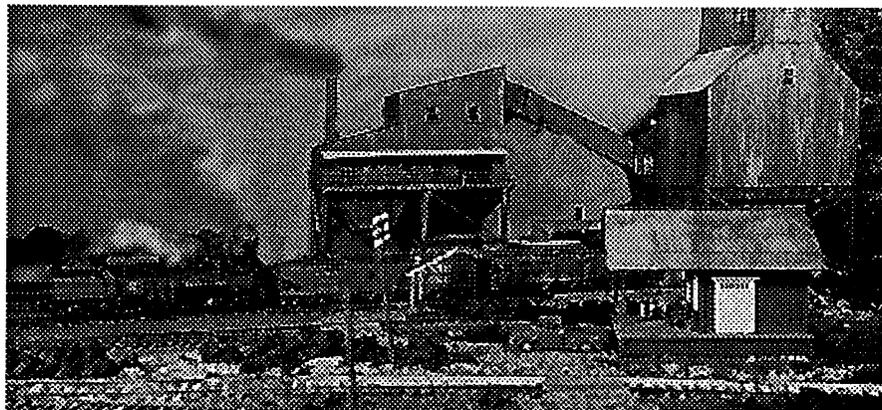
# Photo Section



It's early morning as a Cumberland Southern BL2 bursts from a tunnel above a coal mine on Mike Hood's HO layout. The diesel is an old AHM model which Mike's dad, Steve kitbashed and painted for his own railroad. He added a high nose to the engine and repowered it. *Photo by Mike Riley*



A Cincinnati & Toledo train led by F7 no. 5700 meets a Cumberland Southern local in Franklin. The CS unit is an Atlas RS3, while the C&T F& and GP30 are both by Athearn (yes, Athearn did make a GP30). *Photo by Mike Riley*



Calvin Coal Co. Shay no. 2 switches the loading area just east of Franklin. The Shay is a MDC kit, and the mine structures are kitbashed from a few California Model Co. kits. The wood structure in the foreground is scratch-built. *Photo by Mike Riley*

The other day, I received a letter from Southern member Ritchie Roesch requesting information about a Texas railroad called South Orient. He tells me that he has seen their locomotives a few times. According to the 1994-95 edition of the Locomotive News and Rosters book, the South Orient is located in San Angelo, TX and rosters 3 ALCo S2s and 7 EMD GP7s. The South Orient RR was once the Texas Central RR, which is probably better known to some of you. After pouring over my roster books for a few hours, this was the only information I could come up with. If anybody has more information on this shortline, please write to Ritchie. His address is in the front of this issue.

#### **Product News:**

Walther's Trainline B40-8's have been released. So far, I have seen standard-cab Norfolk Southern, CSX, and LMX (Leasing Management Systems), the standard cab Conrail, the wide-cab Amtrak, and wide-cab Union Pacific (which are incorrect as UP never even had B-B trucked Dash 8s). The overall detailing on the units was good, and the paint was the same, good. They ran great, what with a nice can motor and flywheels. Their top speed was way too high, but the slow speed (what is more important) was excellent. Just don't turn the throttle up to full and you're all right. They retail for \$59.95, see your dealer.

Canadian National paint schemes have been released on the Athearn Dash 9.

Atlas has released their 53' double-plug-door boxcar. They look very nice and the paint was crisp and clear.

Atlas recommends a 22" radius for this car, not because it is big (which it isn't) but because the body rides very low on the trucks. When the car goes around sharp curves, the wheel's are limited as to the amount they can swivel. It is prototypical, though.

DeLuxe Innovations has announced that they will, in the near future, release N scale RoadRailer bimodal rail-trailers. They have also released N scale TwinTub coal gondolas (Very, very similar to the Coalporter or Bethgon). They are available painted for NS, CSX and Conrail, as well as painted silver or black with dimensional data. I inspected an NS car and came to the conclusion that they are the best painted cars ever made in N scale!

NuComp Miniatures has released a number of HO and N scale house-trailers. The kits have easy-to-build cast polyester parts. A bit of cleaning up of flashing is required for a nice fit, but they build up nice. Painting must also be done. I'm building a few for the hobby shop I work for and must say that they are impressive little structures.

Walthers has also released their new Coal Floodloader. I haven't built one but plan to. They look like very nice representations of modern coal loading facilities. They sell for \$29.95.

Congratulations to Jared Kenedy of Palm Harbor, FL. Jared entered and won David Hadley's Prime Mover contest. The prize is a free admission to the 1996 TAMR National Convention, the Hoosier Special to be held in Anderson, IN.

# Tips to improve your models

C O N D U C T E D   B Y   M I K E   R I L E Y

Hello again! This month's topic is creating a nice and neat working environment. You need to have a work environment that is clean, neat and organized, and away from other distractions like a TV or computer. It is best to pick a site in your house that is near a window or some type of external ventilation (if you don't have a window please use a fan to circulate the air-some fumes are toxic), has a wall on at least one side of it (walls on two or even three sides is better still), and is roomy and comfortable. If you have a large bedroom like me, that is a good place to put it. A lot of people like to put their workshops near their layouts, but I chose my room because it is close to my computer, TV, bathroom, and other stuff like that. Before you put in all of the things that make a workshop a workshop (table, tools, etc.) you need to prepare the area.

To prepare the area, tack up some corkboard or a bulletin board around most of the walls or where you think you will need to hang photos, instructions and other things of that nature. Hang shelves everywhere possible because you will need them. I didn't hang any shelves because I have several of those neat modular organizers. The modular organizers are a very good alternative to shelves, and they are available at most home improvement centers.

Next you need a table or workbench. Do not, I repeat, do not go out and buy one of those expensive tables. Look around at garage sales and places like that for an older, ratty looking table that is very inexpensive. I found mine in the attic, and it already was badly scratched and chipped. It was an old computer desk, which is a good choice. Computer desks are nice because they have plenty of shelf space and drawers, as well as a nice big shelf that extends up the wall for the monitor. You need an old desk that is already in not-so-good condition because no matter how hard you try, you will always spill some paint or glue on it or slice up the surface with a knife. Even if you use a mat or cutting surface, there's no way of getting around the fact that you will ruin the surface of the desk.

Go out and buy some of those little paper trays that stack on top of each other, as well as a few Rubbermaid containers and desk organizers that hold pencils and rulers (both the kind that sit on the desk and the kind that go in the drawers) at an office supply store. While there, pick up a floor mat that's used for rolling office chairs (it doesn't matter if the chair has rollers or not, this makes it easy to find pieces that you drop), one or two extension lamps that can stretch out over your work area, a power strip with an on/off switch (the boxes that have multiple outlets on one

# Tips to improve your models

long strip) , and a trash can.

Situate everything in your work area so that it is all within good reach, lighting is excellent, and it is easy to find anything you are looking for. X-Acto sells a little device that clamps to your desk to hold knives. I recommend you buy one of these and put it close to whatever hand you use (right-handed or left-handed).

On the stackable paper trays, place items like sheet plastic, decals, boxes (three Athearn, Walthers or MDC boxes fit perfectly across with room left for a few other items), and even cars and locomotives. Place tools in the plastic organizers and then in the desk drawers. Try to keep all alike tools like pliers and cutters together so it is easy to just reach down and grab one without having to dig. Don't put your knives in the drawer because their tips will break from sliding around and sometimes, when you reach in, you'll poke yourself.

Screw the power strip to the surface of the workbench out of the way along one side. Do this because it is easier to remove plugs from a secured one than an unsecured one. A word of caution about having a power strip on your desk: take extra care not to let any liquids or small parts get into the outlets. That's usually not a problem if you locate the strip out of the way, though. Now you can plug and unplug everything in without having to break your back trying to dig around under your workbench. It's a good idea to just flip the power switch on the strip off when you're done to be on the safe side.

Arrange all of your glue bottles and your most frequently used paint bottles in front of you in a single row so you can see the labels. This saves valuable storage room as well as time spent hunting for the bottles. Along one

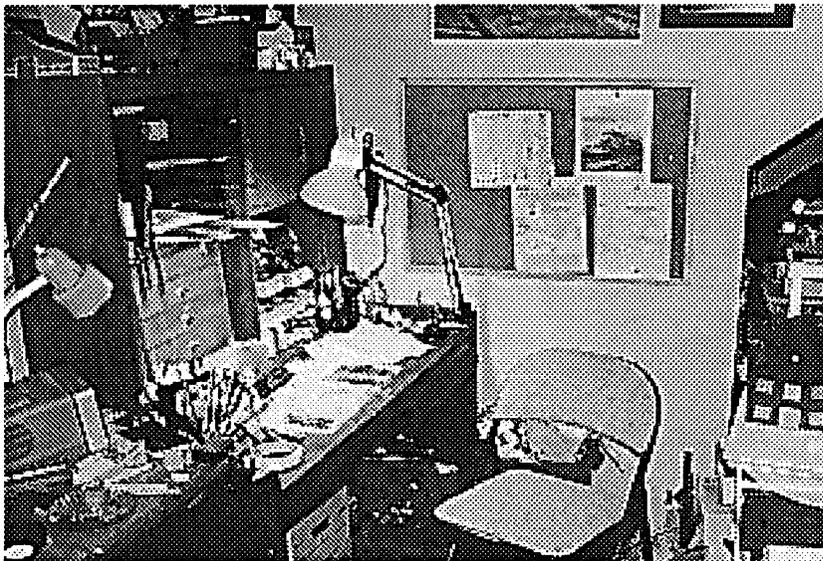
shelf or on the wall or somewhere in front of you at near eye-level, tack a few finishing nails in a row to hang your most frequently used tweezers, pliers, cutters, etc.

Store scrap parts in the Rubbermaid boxes. Label each one with their contents: Structures; Cars and Locomotives; Wood and Plastic Stock; Details; Misc. . Store these on one of the shelves with the labels facing out so you can see them.

The most important thing about having a nice and neat working environment is keeping it that way. Always put everything away when you are done with it. Keep everything in the same order as when you started so nothing is misplaced, and completely clean everywhere every other week. It's also a good idea to rearrange the workspace every-so-often so you don't get bored with it.

Next month my topic will be about planning your layout. As an example, I will be constructing a simple 16" x 6' module which will also be used as a traveling display for train shows. I hope to use it as a promotional device for the TAMR. See you then!

Oh, by the way, if you have any questions about trains or model railroading, direct them to me. Myself or David Hadley (the Prime Mover) will answer them, depending upon their subject. Any, all and everything will be answered.



Wiring Made Easy

M i k e H o o d

This flasher circuit is reliable yet easy to build. Mine measures 2" x 2" x 2.5", so it can be put up under the layout, in a control panel, or just about anywhere else. The circuitry is simple enough that anyone can understand it. It will add excitement and detail to your layout.

#### How it Works

The circuit works by using capacitors which are similar to rechargeable batteries and electromechanical relays which are switches controlled by an electromagnet. When it is switched off, capacitor 2 (C2) is charging. When the switch is thrown on, C2 discharges into relay 1 (RL1). RL1 comes on charges C1. When C2 is completely discharged, RL1 goes off and allows C1 to discharge into RL2 causing it to come on and charge C2. When C1 discharges and RL2 goes off then C2 discharges into RL1 causing the cycle to repeat itself over and over until it's turned off. When it is turned off, C2 is removed from the circuit causing everything to come to a halt.

The lights work by having the relay points hooked up so that each time they switch, they reverse the current to the LEDs (Light Emitting Diode) which only light if the current is flowing in a particular direction and are hooked up in opposite direction of each other causing them to flash. When it is turned off, the points, one set on each relay, both go to the positive side causing the LEDs to have the same charge on either side causing nothing to happen.

#### Construction

To build the circuit I used two relays (4PDT, 12VDC) and two capacitors (470 uF 16V Min.). These are available at Radio Shack. Do not use the PC Board mount relays, as the current drawn by the capacitors can ruin them. I also used solder, wire, a SPDT switch, two small red LEDs (two needed for each signal) and some electrical tape. It will be hard to describe how to build the circuit in words, so just read the schematic drawing or the regular drawing, which you can use if you don't know how to read schematics.

Be aware that the capacitors *must* be hooked up correctly or they may explode. The polarity is always marked on the side. After assembly, I arranged all the components as they are in

Build a Crossing Signal

the picture and wrapped electrical tape around them. I mounted the SPDT switch in my control panel.

To build the crossing signals I used the cheesy Bachman crossbucks. Remove the lenses and install the LEDs with rubber cement. I bent the leads over toward each other so that the short one of one LED was with the long one with the other. I soldered them together and cut off the excess lead. Make sure that the two connected leads don't touch the other two or shorts will occur. Next I soldered two thin brass wires to each lead and glued them to the pole with cyanoacrylate (crazy glue).

### Modifications and Adjustments

The capacitors I used cause the diodes to flash a little bit too fast. To slow down this rate, you will have to use capacitors with a smaller uF rating. To speed up the rate, use a larger uF rating. To use items other than LEDs you need to use the spare sets of points on the relays. To have light bulbs blink, you need to connect the circuit through the common and Normally Open on opposite relays.

To have more than one crossbuck that flashes, connect a wire from each of the terminals on the relays that the original LEDs are connected to. Put a 1000 ohm resistor before each set of diodes or they will not work. You can run as many signals you want to from the circuit as long as you have a resistor on each one.

### Hook-Up

To hook the circuit up to a power supply, you need to attach the leads marked on the diagrams to the corresponding binding posts on the transformer. *Do not hook it up to the AC posts.* If the polarity is not marked but the transformer says DC then the positive is probably on the left and the negative on the right.

### Troubleshooting

If you have trouble with your circuit, check the following things:

-If both LEDs light at the same time then one is hooked up backwards or the circuit is hooked up to the AC.

-If the capacitor is smoking then it is hooked up backwards, is at too high a voltage, or it is hooked up to AC.

-If the capacitors behave funny, check to see the connections aren't touching each other.

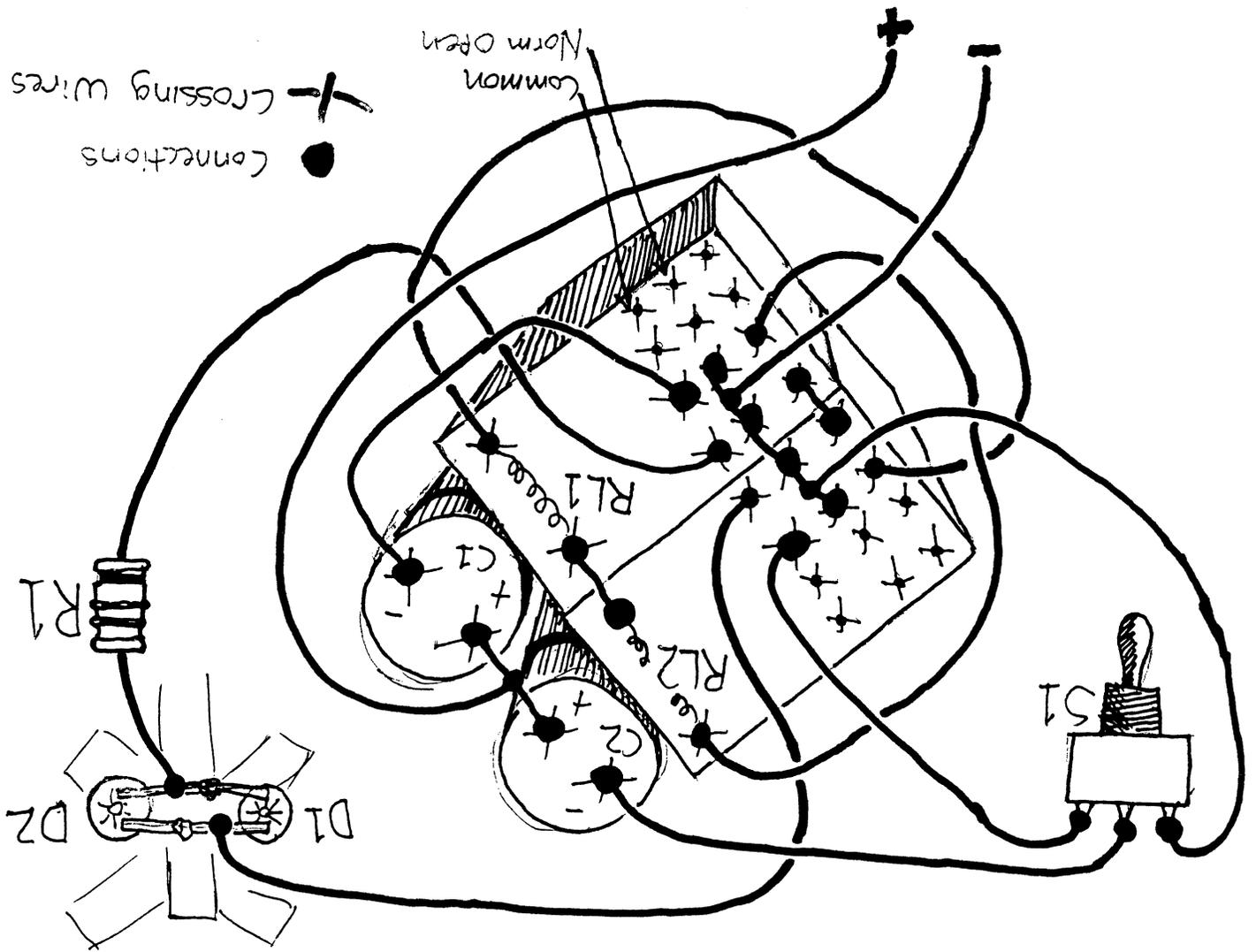
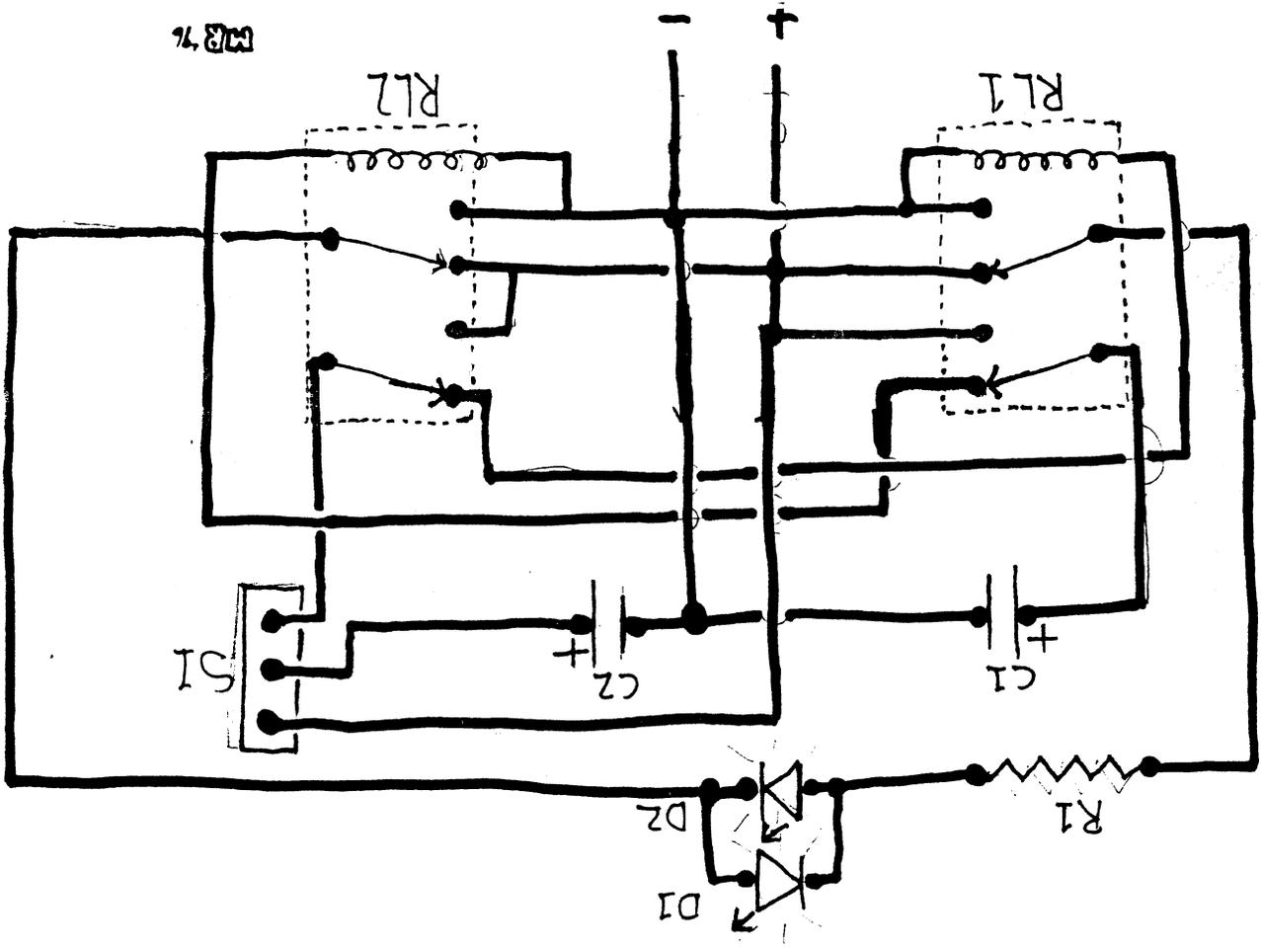
Dats oll fokes!!!

### About the Author:

16 year-old Mike Hood lives in Carlisle, OH, along both a CSX and Conrail mainline. He is a very good friend of mine and is a very good modeler. He is also knowledgeable about electronics.

Mike's 12'x24' HO layout, the Cincinnati & Toledo, is set in the 1950s and is very impressive. Mike believes that it is not necessary to spend hundreds of dollars to build a layout. He scratchbuilds and kit-bashed almost all of his structures. Most if not all of his cars and locomotives are used, he picks them up at swap meets. He fixes up everything and repaints a lot of things. Contrary to my first thought when I heard his modeling methods, his layout looks like a million bucks! Look for an article about his layout in a future issue of the Hotbox. A photo of his layout appears in the photo section of this issue, also.

-Mike Riley



# Department of the Treasury

The following is the annual financial report required to be published by the TAMR Constitution. -Mike Riley

## Previous Ballance on Dec. 31, 1994:

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Checking Balance | \$138.11 |
| Savings Balance  | \$582.06 |
|                  | <hr/>    |
|                  | \$720.17 |

Total income during 1995: +\$890.42

Total expenses during 1995: 

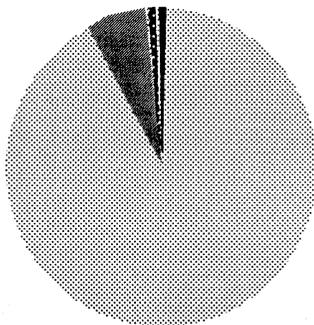
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-\$906.66

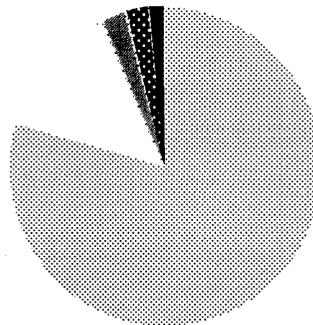
## Tot. funds avaiable on Dec. 31, 95:

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Checkings Balance | \$121.90        |
| Savings Balance   | \$582.03        |
|                   | <hr/>           |
| <b>Total:</b>     | <b>\$703.93</b> |

Breakdown of Income



Breakdown of Expenses



|                                   |        |                              |     |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|-----|
| ■ Dues.....\$827.00               | 92.88% | ■ Publishing.....\$697.95    | 77% |
| ■ Contributions.....\$50.00       | 5.62%  | ■ 95 Convention.....\$128.61 | 14% |
| ■ Interest.....\$7.42             | .83%   | ■ Regional Budgets...\$31.94 | 4%  |
| ■ Kalmbach Profit Share....\$6.00 | .67%   | ■ Promotions.....\$26.58     | 3%  |
|                                   |        | ■ Administration.....\$21.58 | 2%  |

I, as TAMR Treasurer, assure these figures as true and correct. Signed this twenty-sixth day of January in the year 1996.

*Brad Beaubien*

# 1995 Annual Report