



# The Milepost

September 2017  
Volume 37  
Issue #9

**NEXT MEETING: Friday, September 8th, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Sand Creek Police Station, 4125 Center Park Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado (southeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy Boulevards).**

### **Don't Forget:**

If you have any model railroad cars, models, books, etcetera, that you don't want, consider donating them to the monthly meeting raffle to help raise money for the Division!

**This Month's Presentation:**  
J.B. Thislewaite will have a presentation on soldering.

## AUGUST 2017 MEETING MINUTES

### **August 11th, 2017 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Pikes Peak Division of the National Model Railroaders Association.**

The meeting was brought to order by Joe Costa at 7:00 PM. There were 32 people in attendance and the following visitors: Gary Myers (RMR), Jim Foster (models On30), Chris Fox (models HO), Ted Johnson (HO - New York Central Railroad), and Jamie Fuerstenberger (daughter of Mark and Amber). The minutes of last month's meeting were approved as written in *The Milepost*.

Frank Pareso gave the treasurer's report. Please bring in any model railroad cars, models, books, etcetera that you don't want to help support the division.

Dusty reports we are looking at December 16th, 2017 for the next PPD-NMRA swap meet at the church (Trinity United Methodist Church, 701 North 20th Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado, near the King Soopers grocery store at Uintah Gardens). Dusty mentioned that he has been doing the swap meet setups for the past six-years. This coming swap meet will be his last one. Someone else needs to step forward to volunteer for this chair-position.

Kristin reports that they are looking at Chapel Hills Mall for the next TECO show. More information to come on that.

Tonight's program is by Irv Johnson (Summertime live steam lay-out trip up by Denver).

Contest was for *Online Structure*. First place was Tony Pawlicki, second place was Mark Fuerstenberger, and third place was Dennis Snyder. Next month's contest is *Passenger Car*.

Gary Myers awarded Dennis Snyder the NMRA Certificate Of Achievement for Association Volunteer.

J.B. Thislewaite discussed the upcoming trip to the model railroad museum in Greeley, Colorado. Please see him for details.

Kristin and Joe would like to host the picnic this year. The idea being the club to purchase drinks and a 50-piece chicken meal from Safeway grocery store and then each member brings a side-dish. Kristin and Joe live in the area of Powers/Barnes/Iron Horse Trail, in Colorado Springs.

Kristin talked about layout open houses.

John Emmot and Jerry Hanz have produced many videos throughout the years — all put on a terabyte hard-drive. A motion was made by Wade Mountz, and seconded by Kristin, to have the club purchase the hard-drive. The motion was passed by voice vote by those present.

Special thanks to everyone donating models for the monthly meeting door prizes.

Youth In Model Railroading will now have a modular classroom over at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, on the west end of the school.



Dennis Snyder receives Association Volunteer award.

## INFORMATION

*The Milepost* is published monthly and is the official journal of the Pikes Peak Division, of the Rocky Mountain Region, of the National Model Railroad Association. Our meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month at the Sand Creek Police Station, 4125 Center Park Drive (southeast of the intersection of Fountain and Academy), Colorado Springs, Colorado, at 7:00 PM. Please come to one of our meetings. We'd love to meet you. All scales are welcome. Besides our monthly meeting, we have swap meets, train shows, and other model railroad activities.

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## PIKES PEAK N'GINNERS

**By Mike Peck**

September 30 and October 1, 2017 — The PPNG will be running trains at the Florence Senior Center — Denver & Rio Grande depot. Saturday 10am to 4pm and Sunday 10 AM to 3 PM. Money collected goes toward the Senior Center and the Museum in Florence, Colorado.

October 14, 2017 — PPNG will be celebrating our 28th anniversary - 5:30 PM at the IHOP restaurant on Stetson Hills Drive just west of Powers, in Colorado Springs.

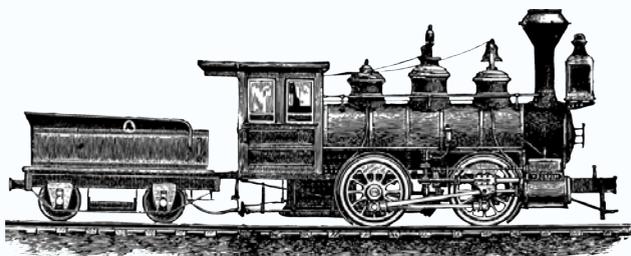
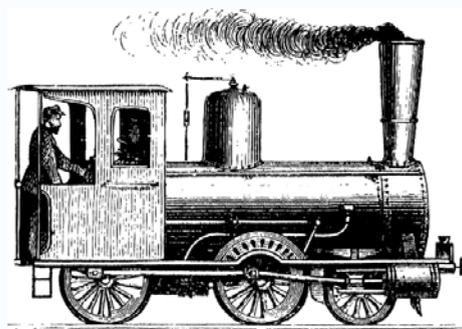
October 20 & 21, 2017 — PPNG will be running trains at the Brookdale, Village at Skyline. Friday 10 AM to 4 PM and Saturday 10 AM to 3 PM.

## MODULE BACKDROPS

*By Michael D. Weidner*

Another source for consideration for possible module backdrops:

[https://www.ebay.com/sch/affordablemodelrailroads/m.html?item=322547746764&rt=nc&\\_trksid=p2047675.12562](https://www.ebay.com/sch/affordablemodelrailroads/m.html?item=322547746764&rt=nc&_trksid=p2047675.12562)



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[ OPEN ]

# SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES

By Joe Costa, Superintendent of PPD-NMRA

Kristin and I would like to thank Lester Coburn and the Engineers who hosted and participated in the BSA Railroading Merit Badge Day at the club layout in the old Rio Grande Station on Sierra Madre. Five boys and four parents were there for the presentation. They enjoyed seeing the layout and watching the trains that zoomed by in both directions. Normally we do the Merit Badge at TECO shows but we were out of state for the April show and didn't have a show this summer. But seeing how big and fast real trains are up close really gets the message across --- something you just can't experience in an exhibit hall.

In June of this year, a woman was killed crossing the tracks below the Bijou Street Bridge just south of the depot. In August, a man lost his leg on a railroad bridge over Tejon Street further south when a BNSF train came by and died in the hospital later that day.



On the Thursday before the August Meeting I had the opportunity to visit the Greeley Model Railroad Museum again but with my grandsons for the first time. They played the Seek and Search game --- one activity involved finding several dinosaurs hidden on the layout.



I must confess there were a couple signs salvaged from old Ca-boose Hobbies which made me feel a bit nostalgic.



After visiting Greeley we stopped at the Sweetville Zoo, which is an amazing (and free) sculpture garden of what you might call junkyard art. Among my favorite pieces, one was railroad related.



On the Train Show topic, Dusty made our reservation for December 16 at Trinity Methodist for the Division Swap meet. For TECO. We are finalizing the paperwork to have our fall show on October 28 and 29 at the Event Center in Chapel Hills Mall.



# MODULAR MUSINGS

By John Emmot, Chairman of Module Group

A lot has happened since last month. We have gone from not knowing when we might have a module setup to having two dates before the end of the year. It was discovered that the Chapel Hills Mall had opened an events center for public use. The space is the lower level of the old JC Penney store in the Sears wing of the mall. It has around 22,000 square feet of open space and is a significant change from the space at the Freedom Financial Expo. TECO has committed to a weekend show on October 28 and 29. We get a setup day on Friday, October 27. We should clear the space following the Sunday closure (3 PM) of the show. The space is access controlled off of the main concourse, so security is not an issue. The Mall is open for entry from about 7 AM to 10 PM each day (business hours are 10 AM-10 PM). There are two avenues of vendor/display access to the lower level space. You can enter the lower level via the public doors on either side of Dick's Sporting Goods store on the south side of the Mall. Or you may enter from the upper level on the north side of the Mall east of the Sears store at the Service 17 entrance. This door leads directly to a large freight elevator to the lower level. Parking is much more open on the north side of the Mall (most participants should plan on parking on the north). However, unloading space is more confined here and some "traffic management" will be required for efficiency. That is, unload your vehicle and move it as soon as it is empty so others may unload. From the elevator, there is a long, private corridor to the show site.

Because of the distance to the site, we will need all of the extra help we can muster for the setup and tear down. If you are a member who has never supported a train show, please consider if this might be your time to start. If you have done it before, please come back. It won't necessarily be hard labor. Folks will be needed to hold doors and monitor materials in transit. There will be plenty of flatbed carts for the non-wheeled material, but trusted folks will be needed to move them in and out and assist the vendors and layouts. I hope that a schedule of arrival can be made so that unloading can be spaced out and appropriate support will be available for everyone. At this time, the Mall does not have as many vendor tables available as we will need. We will have to rent the bulk of them and move them into the site on Friday. Help will be appreciated with this task as well. It is possible that the Mall may have enough tables by the show date, but we shouldn't depend on that. More details next month. See other entries in this issue for more info.

The second date is our own Pikes Peak Division swap meet scheduled for December 16 at the Trinity United Methodist Church. This one is familiar to the group and no format changes are planned. We have plenty of time to prepare for it.

These are both opportunities to be involved and participate in the activities of the Division. Plan to help and come run trains on the layout at one or both of these events. You don't have to have a module to be part of the group.

Along those lines, the PPD is in possession of two four foot modules belonging to Dan Castillo who moved to Texas. They are currently in storage at Kristin's house. If we could find a 'foster parent' for them, they could be used in our setups. They require a pickup or large van for transportation. They can be stored at Kristin's or stay with the guardian if they have a good space. The guardian would transport, set them up and monitor them during setups. They would remain the property of Castillo unless other arrangements are made. Any volunteers?

Hope to see everyone at the meeting.



## Down At The Depot

By Dennis Snyder

### Free Electronic Magazine

I just scanned the YouTube Modeler Builder's latest issue at <http://youtubemodelbuilders.com/emag/download/YTMBMagR16.pdf>. If you have any interest in using microcontrollers like Arduino, PI, JMRI, etcetera, then you will probably want to look at this issue. There are a couple of worthwhile articles on Arduino Turntable Control, Track Planning and the UP Rail Truck Service. Hey, it's my kind of pricing — free!

### Gator Board

At one time, my at-work neighbor was a sign shop. When I walked out of my warehouse, their dumpster was right next to my dock and I couldn't help looking into it (scrounge that I am). I discovered that sign shops use all kinds of interesting materials — for model railroaders. At the time, building another model railroad was a dream of that future day when I had the time. However, I was always collecting and learning.

This is when I discovered Gator Board. Back in my marketing days, I had displays made of Foam Core that is two sheets of paper laminated to a thin, polystyrene foam core. It was flat, lightweight, fairly rigid, and great for mounting posters. However, with the paper front and back, I could never see much use in model railroading wherever water would be used. I have used it for making building mock-ups but little else. Gator Board has the same foam core, but the paper is replaced with a sheet of thin wood pulp mixed with fiberglass plastic. The sheet is impervious to water, puncture "resistant", much stronger, rather hard, resistant to warping, and glues easily. It is available in 3/16" to 2" thicknesses. As you can imagine, the 2" thickness is very warp resistant and the wood veneer gives it high structural strength. It is very strong and durable, and readily glued with water based glues.

In checking the Gator Board site, [www.gator-board.com](http://www.gator-board.com), I found that they now offer it in white, black, black and white, and Kraft colors. Moreover, they have an Ultraboard that is even stronger than Gator Board with a high-impact polystyrene surface.

My other discovery was Midwest Signs. [www.midwestsign.com](http://www.midwestsign.com). They carry Gator Board and many other great materials. After checking with their warehouse in east Denver learning that they sell to walk-ins, I hopped in my little SUV and took a trip. I bought a 3/16" "second" that had a few dings in it for under \$40... did I mention that this was a 4' x 8' sheet? Blinks Art sells 32" x 40" sheets for \$34.59 plus handling fees and postage. Now, how did I get a 4' x 8' sheet home in my little SUV? I had them cut it lengthwise into two 2' x 8' sheets that did fit. No extra charge for the first cut.

I know the larger scales, people use Gator Board for their structures, but 3/16" thick is about 16.7" in HO. However, 3/16" turns out to be the same thickness as cork roadbed. I mount my switches on Gator Board with latex caulk or Aleene's, and my tortoise switch machine under it. The Gator Board cuts easily with a utility knife and I can poke a hole in it for the throw rod wire. I use short screws and latex caulk to hold the switch machine to the board. When I mount the board on my layout's 2" foam base, I cut a square hole for the switch machine to fit in. Mount those wires that you have to add after isolating the frog for DCC operation smoothly under the board by using a common screwdriver to press a channel in the board. When I ballast and douse everything with wet water and white glue, I do not worry about the Gator Board.

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You may not have noticed, but most of my contest entries are on pieces of Gator Board. I like to “embed” my buildings in the scenery rather than set them on top of the scenery. However, nothing is permanent and if I want to remove a building later, I just cut the scenery away from the base’s perimeter without destroying the building. If I fasten the building base to the layout, I do not use anything stronger than Aleene’s Tacky Glue.

I have an extended area in which the track curves under a mountain. To keep the area clear for the track, I used a piece of Gator Board and built the mountain on top of it. I suspended the board with a couple of pillars for support. I could have used foam, but I did not want to add another ½" height.

My time favorite use of Gator Board is the base for my 2' x 8' yard. Since 2" foam typically comes in 2' x 8' panels, I used that in constructing my yard and then laid a 2' x 8' piece of Gator Board on top of that. Remember I said that I mount my buildings on the Gator Board? After making my buildings, I place them where I want on the yard and cut their base’s outline in my yard’s Gator Board. The buildings then fit flush in the “ground” and are easily blended into the scenery as I add it. This worked out nicely with my turntable too. On the other hand, if I truly know where I am going to place the building, I can cut out a section of Gator Board and use that for the building’s base.

The major city on my layout is in the center of a 44" semi-circle (22" radius) and is difficult to reach all parts of it. With great planning, I backed it up against a mountain making it even harder to reach with my short arms. My solution is to put a large sheet of paper on the layout, marking the outline of the city on the paper and then cutting a similar piece out of Gator board. I have to admit that I have not done this yet, but the plan is to pull the entire city out and work on streets, sidewalks, etc. on the workbench. Building, street, and sign lights will be mounted on, and the wires pushed into the Gator Board. I am not planning anything more elaborate than providing one 12-V source for the entire city that will connect through a 2-wire plug. Wires will run flush to the bottom of the board to this plug. I did have the foresight to complete the mountain before the city.

Not everyone can use a 4' x 8' sheet, but as a club, several could get together and split the cost. It doesn’t take many small pieces purchased at the art store or hobby shop to pay for an entire 4' x 8' sheet. There are a few other materials that I found in the sign shop dumpster that I will cover later. By far, my favorite is Gator Board.



Figure #1. Heavy plaster building on Gator Board.



## ITEMS FOR SALE

By Wade Mountz

A good friend of mine has an old luggage cart from the Rock Island depot here in Colorado Springs. It has been setting in a covered garage in Colorado Springs since sometime in the 1960’s.

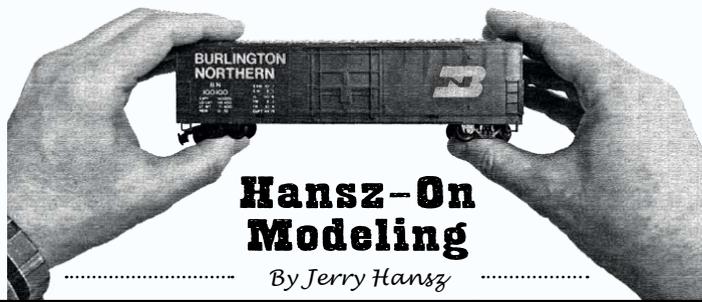
He has seen these advertised for close to \$500.00 He wants to sell the luggage cart because he is selling the garage.

Would the Rocky Mountain Region or Pikes Peak Division be interested in advertising this cart to the membership - right away? It should stay somewhere and with someone that will appreciate railroad history. This a piece of Colorado railroad history that deserves better than rotting away into oblivion somewhere.

I have seen the luggage cart that my friend has and it is in VERY good condition. Tires and wheels are very good with little deterioration to the rubber tires. The body has had a piece of 4' x 8' plywood laid across the top of the body. The end-braces look original, wood is very good - as does the tongue. Basic paint is red although this probably was a Santa Fe piece per owner. This would be an ideal addition for any railroader who may have the room for it somewhere. I would hate to see it setting in front of a greenhouse and not a railroad related organization.

Please call me at: 719-380-9060 or e-mail me at [w.mountz@yahoo.com](mailto:w.mountz@yahoo.com) if you are interested. I can get you in contact with the owner. Photographs of the cart are shown below.





## Hansz-On Modeling

By Jerry Hansz

### Fixing Life-Like Locomotive Axles

I have two Life-Like GP30 locomotives with the apparently common “cogging” problem.(I call it cogging. It’s the thump, thump sound heard with the locomotive is moving.)



E-mail correspondence with Walthers customer service shows that replacement geared axles should be available in February 2017, with a price per truck of \$6.98. That’s \$13.96 per locomotive, plus shipping. They suggest ordering through your local hobby shop.

I wondered if there was another way to fix the problem. Looking at You Tube, I saw a modeler who replaced the bad axle gears using parts from an Athearn F7B. Watch the You Tube video for good tips on replacing the axles, checking for good bearing freedom, proper wheel spacing with the NMRA gauge, etcetera.

Whee! I pulled a couple of my F7Bs, and examined the axles. Sorry, my unpowered units didn’t have a geared axle. He must have sacrificed a powered unit. My only powered units are F7As! Not gonna sacrifice them!

I also wondered if I could fix the broken gears using the recently advertised Lazer Bond laser-cure system.



So, into the fray! I pried the bottom cover off the trucks on ATSF 1243. A narrow X-Acto blade worked well. TAKE IT SLOW!



Gentle persuasion with tweezers freed the axles. Slight rotation helped free the axle gears from the idler gears. Close examination with my magnifiers showed a hairline break across the axle gears. I dropped all the axles into isopropyl alcohol chemical to get rid of the accumulated oil and grease.



After the axles soaked for a while I washed them with hot water, then disassembled the axles and the gears.



I tried to fix the cracked axle gears with the Lazer Bond. The Lazer Bond didn’t cure. The instructions said to use a very thin film, which I couldn’t get right on the small gears. I started over. I removed the uncured Lazer Bond and cleaned the gears of residue. I then applied Gorilla super glue over the splits, and let it cure overnight.

I then cleaned glue from the gear teeth, reassembled the axles and checked for free bearings and correct gauge.



I replaced the axles and snapped the truck covers back in place. After a brief break-in, ATSF 1243 ran reasonably well. There is still a slight noise, but not as pronounced as before.

In conclusion. The approach I took is a reasonable temporary fix, until the Walthers replacements are available. Time will tell how long the fix will last.

# CONTEST CORNER

At each monthly PPD-NMRA meeting, a contest is held. A contest must have at least three entries for voting. Jack Sousa mentioned that contest entries *must have the proper write-ups*. Please see him for questions. Below is the 2017 contest schedule:

- September . . . . . *Passenger Car.*
- October . . . . . *Judged & Open Contest.*
- November . . . . . *Kitbash Anything With Multiple Kits.*
- December . . . . . *Christmas Party (no contest).*



Tony Pawlicki won first-place with this huge HO-scale model of a grain elevator complex.



Mark Fuerstenberger won second-place with his HO-scale model of a Germany warehouse.



Dennis Snyder won third-place with this HO-scale model of the Colorado Central Railroad water tower in Beaver Brook.



Wade Mountz entered this HO-scale grain elevator (backdrop building), from "anytown", Kansas in the 1950's-1960's.



Robert Allen entered these HO-scale gate tower, gates, and shed models from 1975.





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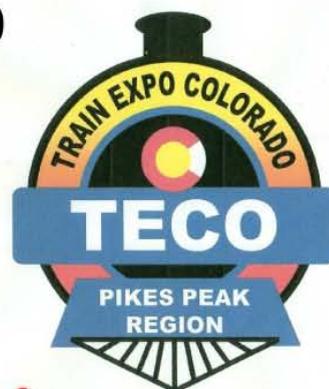
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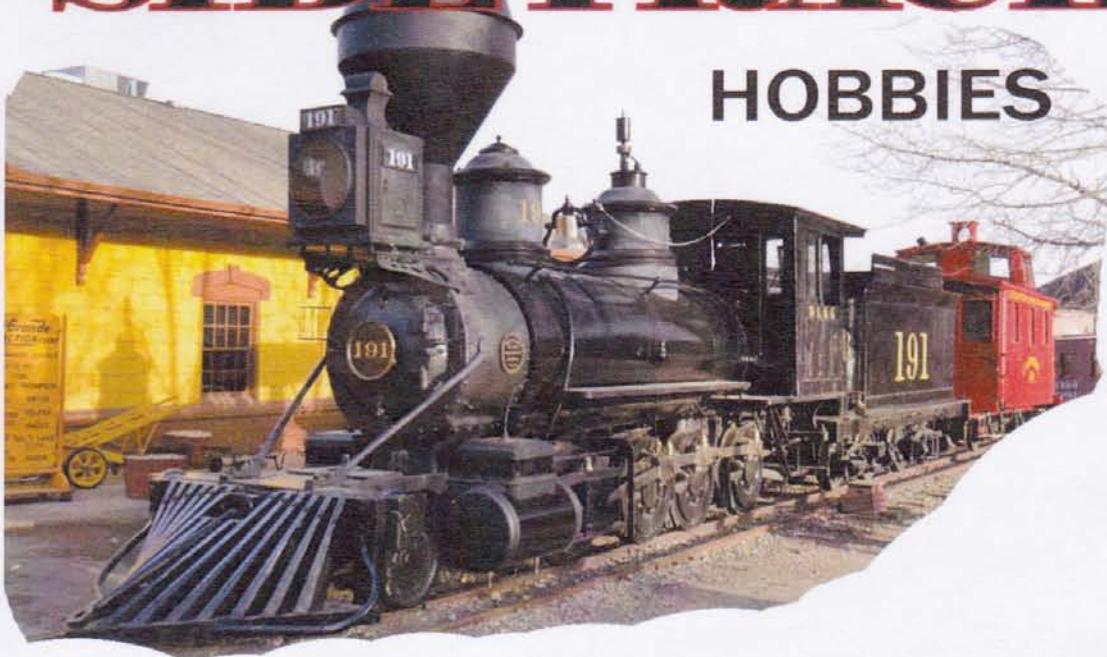
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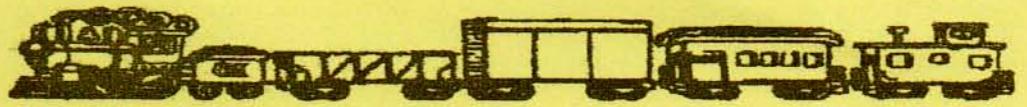
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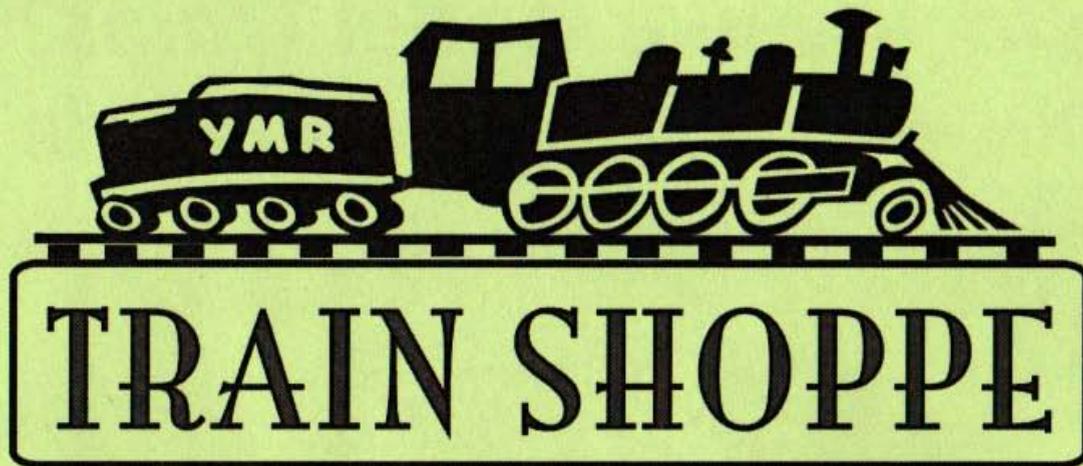
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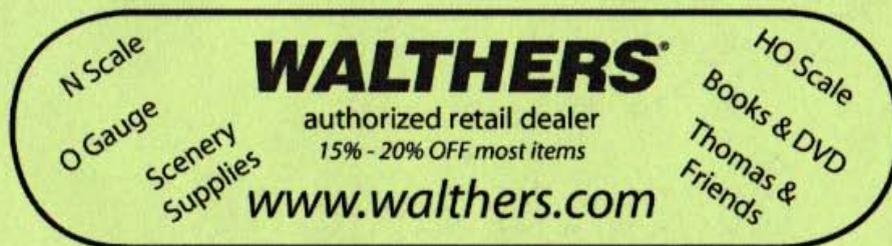
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