

August 1994

Volume III, No.8

The Northern Virginia NTRAK Newsletter is produced for and by the members of Northern Virginia NTRAK. Submissions should be sent to the editor, Bernard Kempinski, 6056 Estates Drive, Alexandria, VA 22310 or by electronic mail to bkempins@ida.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

by Matt Schaefer

Aug 21 Sunday - Club operating and business meeting, Franconia Community Center.

Aug 21 to 28 - NMRA Convention, Portland.

Sept 18th - Potomac (Dixie) Division Swap Meet at NOVA Annandale Campus.

Oct 29 to 30 - Our layout at Greenburg Show, Upper Marlboro, Md.

Nov 4to6 - NMRA Fall FUNVENTION, Ramada Inn, Hagerstown, Md.

Nov 13 to 14 - Our layout at Lions Club Train Show, Rockville, Md.

Nov 19 to 20- Our layout at Landmark Train Show. ~~XXXX~~

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

UPCOMING AUGUST MEETING It is vitally important that all NV NTrak members attend the Aug 21 Business Meeting at the Franconia Government Center. The club has several important decisions to make to include changes to the by-laws, purchases of additional equipment, conversion of the club to a NMRA NTrak SIG, changes in dues, legal incorporation, liability insurance and sponsorship of the 1996 NTRAK Convention, whew! Please make every effort to attend or provide a written proxy to another member.

We have enough members interested in testing and running modules to have a loop at the Franconia Community center on Aug 21 with set up at 1 PM and run till 6 PM. The business meeting will start at 3PM. ~~XXXX~~

RAIL FUN '94

by John Cook and Brian Brendel

We packed Judie's van with Shenandoah Junction (mountains, yard, everything), Possum Point, Quantico Creek, The M & K, trains galore, a picnic lunch, all of the NV NTRAK signs we could find, our official shirts and a change of skivvies. Anxious to be on our way to the convention, we hit the road at Oh-dark-thirty on Tuesday, 5 July. In North Carolina, John lost his virginity and got a speeding ticket-his first in 42 years of driving. (The \$10 fine and \$60 court costs made it the single most expensive item on the trip.) Chastened by this tragic event, John slowed down so much that Brian insisted on doing a share of the driving. We were trapped together in the van for thirteen

hours, one of our NV NTRAK "TO THE TRAINS" signs in the back window pointing the way south. It seemed like a life sentence after a few old jokes and new lies had been swapped, but as expected we both kept talking anyway. Several perceptive NV NTRAKers have suggested we deserved each other. The authors reluctantly agree.

On arrival at Brian's dad's delightful digs in Orlando, a couple of cold beers set everything aright again. After meeting Lou Brendel, John says it's easy to understand why Brian is so shy and reserved-like father, like son. Lou was a great host and he "joined up" with us, coming to the show daily, bringing his friends by to take a look, acting as our "media advisor", and having a sensational time. When you see the video of the Orlando Channel 2 news segment: the old guy is John, and the younger one without the official shirt is LOU.

Gil went down to the convention on the Auto Train, and we met at the Altamonte Hilton early Wednesday afternoon to set up. They gave us a corner (see floor plan) and we put up our modules and banners in a flash. Surprisingly, we found that NV NTRAK is better organized than we thought - it seems other groups have just as much trouble getting started as we do! The first trains running on the layout were ours, and the last ones as well. There were at least two NV NTRAK trains running throughout the entire 3 days of the show--sometimes we had four or five running! The matching module and name tags and our trademark shirts were all big hits. (Now if we could just get John to throw away that red hat.) The Atlanta folks specifically asked us to come on down to next years convention and bring our banners and ALL OUR FRIENDS. They'll give us a prominent corner and all the room we want, so start planning. NOW!

We can be proud of ourselves. NV NTRAK club modules compare favorably with most of the ones there. Gil's D D & D Mine and Loop Mountain won second prize from the judges. He beat out THE Sugarland modules, which got third. WAY TO GO, GIL!!! John loved it when people who had taken Auto Train pointed to Quantico Creek and said "Hey, we passed that on the way down." Shenandoah Junction's design and light weight styrofoam mountain scenery received much favorable comment. Overall, we found that as a club, we are way ahead of the curve on the use of styrofoam for scenery. Several clinics extolled its virtues, and our modules were used as examples.

There were two modular layouts. One with about 14 modules from Long Island and Northern NJ was in a separate room with the manufacturers, and the larger one with everyone else was in the main ballroom with the dealers. There were just over 40 modules in an "L" shape, with a BIG yard inside one leg--a REALLY BIG yard. It

was 32 feet long, and had interlocking crossovers. An article about it will be in a future newsletter. NV NTRAK staked out the heel of the "L" by putting our banners on the two corner walls--anyone who came in and looked around couldn't miss us. Brian was situated next to the CON-COR award-winner from the NTRAK MOB in Canada. On the other side of Canada was Valley NTRAK's module from Connecticut, which took first place away from Gil. John anchored the other end of NV, and was lucky enough to be connected to a stockyard module complete with olefactory effects: a crock pot underneath the module filled with a

(John has copies of the handouts.) There was fellowship and doorprizes and an auction--and manufacturers. One in particular impressed us--DELUXE INNOVATIONS of California. They showed their new wood chip cars and bathtub bottom coal cars. 50 of the "twin tubs" were lettered for "Deluxe Power and Light" and given away as special convention prizes. (All three of us got one.) They also passed out REALLY NICE railers as freebie souvenirs. It is clear that ALL manufacturers want to hear from us about our preferences in rolling stock, but especially DELUXE. They will send you a gift if you send them some useable

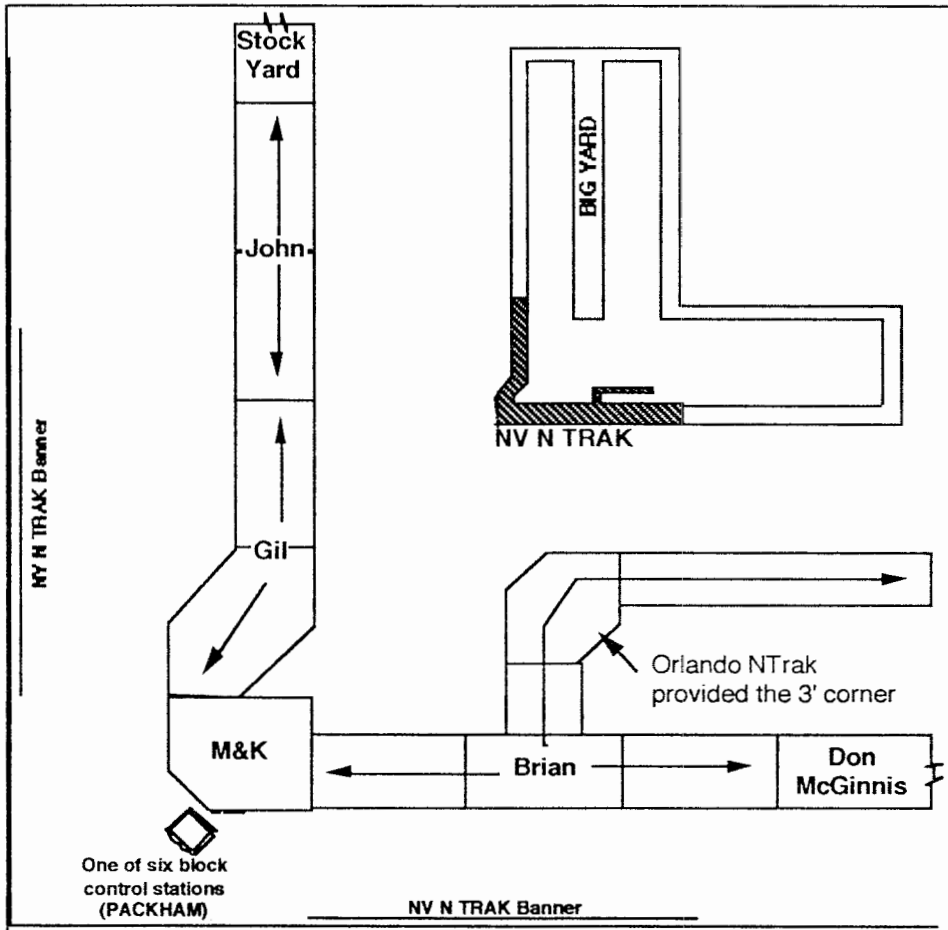
photos, (specific side, end and top or bottom shots,) esp of eastern roads or different chip car schemes. Contact them for details.

Jim Conway of Con Cor was there. The good news is he had one of the new Hudsons running and pulling 72 Atlas cars with Micro-Trains wheelsets in the Atlas trucks (Don't ask us why the Long Islanders do that, we don't know and were afraid to ask!). We were told it started slipping on the curves with 75 cars. It was running smoothly and staying cool and it looked real fine too. The bad news is there will probably be no N scale Granny's attic U-HAUL trucks. Too many sales are required (over 20,000) to break even on the tooling and Con Cor's agreement with U-HAUL prevents using the model for competitors paint jobs.

Jim Fitzgerald called a meeting on the future of N TRAK. It is now Jim Fitzgerald's sole proprietorship. He has provided for it to be taken over by an appropriate organization if something happens to him. But he wants to set up a corporation organization soon - before it is

needed. The group of 40-50 of us who met with him enthusiastically endorsed the idea that he select one representative from each region (see the latest N TRAK Newsletter) as an advisory group to work with him and report back at next year's conventions. By the way - one change - Northern VA and all of MD will be in the southeast rather than northeast region to help balance out the body counts. Both we and Baltimore agreed that the Mason-Dixon line was probably a good dividing line -- it worked before.

Now for the BIG NEWS most of you know already. We were asked by Jim Fitzgerald if we would sponsor the N TRAK (only) convention in '96 when the big all scale NMRA National will be in San Diego. The N TRAK clubs in Baltimore, Richmond, Tidewater, Norfolk/Chesapeake and Raleigh/Durham all offered to help with clinics, auctions, contest judging and whatever if we do it. We can



mixture of composted cow manure and water piped a realistic aroma over the livestock. Occasionally it wafted over Possum Point. Yummy. Actually it was a great module with BO-COOPS cows (200+) and many details. Dealers were told "N Scale Trains and accessories ONLY--NO other stuff." This resulted in about twelve vendors total in the vendor area--Bob of Bob's, Al of Al's, Tex-N-Rails and a few others we know. The Train Depot, an Orlando store, ran a shuttle from the hotel. In all, this was absolutely NOT Timonium, but it was nice to have vendors close by if you were struck by the urge to buy that custom painted car complete with graffiti. (By the way, the singular of graffiti is graffito--as in "I paint graffiti on my box cars one graffito at a time.")

There were layout tours which were arranged to show both completed layouts and works-in-progress. There were clinics, such as Jim Fitzgerald's "Box Beam" construction

talk to the NMRA Potomac (Dixie?) Div guys who did the MER convention (some are NV N TRAK members) and we know the guys who did the N TRAK part of the NMRA National at Valley Forge last year. We also talked to the Orlando/Sarasota guys who did this one (just like we would be doing) and the Atlanta guys who are doing the N TRAK part of the NMRA next year. All of them promised to help us all they can with lessons learned, financial data, addresses etc. We have as much to offer as Orlando in terms of club modules, prototype and layout tours etc. and certainly could do some good clinics with the help offered. The key question seems to be whether we can find a good location with lots of room at reasonable cost. ANY IDEAS??? We need to decide by SEP or OCT so they can count on us or find someone else to host it. Come to the August meeting for further info and discussion!

The trip back was uneventful. Gil slept and train watched alternately all the way home in comfort while John and Brian took turns catching up on sleep and driving and refashioning the convention. We had a great time. LET'S ALL GO TO ATLANTA!!!

COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

by Matt Schaefer

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE '96 N-TRAK CONVENTION

What a great cooks and gracious hosts Brian and Colleen are! Brian even baked a cake - and Colleen a pie for us! That got everybody into a good mood for the business meeting and we appear to have at least half a dozen club members at this time willing to put some time into the '96 eastern convention. We all agreed this is a great area to have a convention and tours and I think we need to give consideration to hotels, convention halls, pool halls, etc between Fredricksburg and Baltimore. The Northern Virginia area is expensive... I checked the Fair Oaks Hyatt and their conference space is very expensive. I am obtaining the hotel records for the 3 previous N-TRAK conventions for us to use. Some hotels require these track records for planning purposes and for references. Orlando had about 250 in the convention as the registration numbers started at 101.

SPRINGFIELD MALL SHOW The Springfield Mall is on hold until we get insurance for shoppers. The mall provided examples of other non-profit groups such as Society about Cruelty to Children which were required to have their own insurance. The mall has other dates open in October like the weekends of the 1st and 15th should we be available and have insurance. Sunday the members were receptive to considering 100% NMRA membership so we could get NMRA insurance with the membership. I have written the NMRA for info on their insurance coverage for club shows.

WORLDGATE SHOW There is room for a 20 - 25 modules in the lobby for the movie and health club. The owner of Dunn's Toy and Hobby will meet with the mall manager the end of July about having our N-TRAK layout sometime this fall.

ATLANTA CONVENTION The report from John is there will be plenty of room for all of our modules so put Atlanta on your 1995 calendar. Our highly organized club can be a force to reckon with anywhere -and more than 50 miles from home we are all experts!

PRODUCTIVE BUSINESS MEETINGS If we want to get more done in meetings we need to make some changes in the management of our meeting time. If we can't draw a quorum to meetings then the quorum rule makes the meeting a nonevent. Jim Fitzgerald suggests we publish the agenda for the meetings (like we have been doing) or by other means a least a week before the meetings and club vote is based on those that attend the meeting. These are the core members anyway. Alternatives need to be addressed.

THE CANNINGTON LAYOUT The Cannington N-TRAK layout owned and operated by Paul Fulks of Huntington WV and Bob Vensel now living in Ohio is fully described in a 6 page spread in Aug 94 Model Railroader. This is a beautiful mobile 14' X 26' layout and has a faithful reproduction of Thurmond, WV in the New River Gorge with eight feet of track on curve. One of Paul's time savers and space savers is to keep all the modules stored in a 5' X 9' trailer with racks. When you load up after one show you are basically packed for the next show! But any one module can be removed through the side doors for repair without bothering the others.

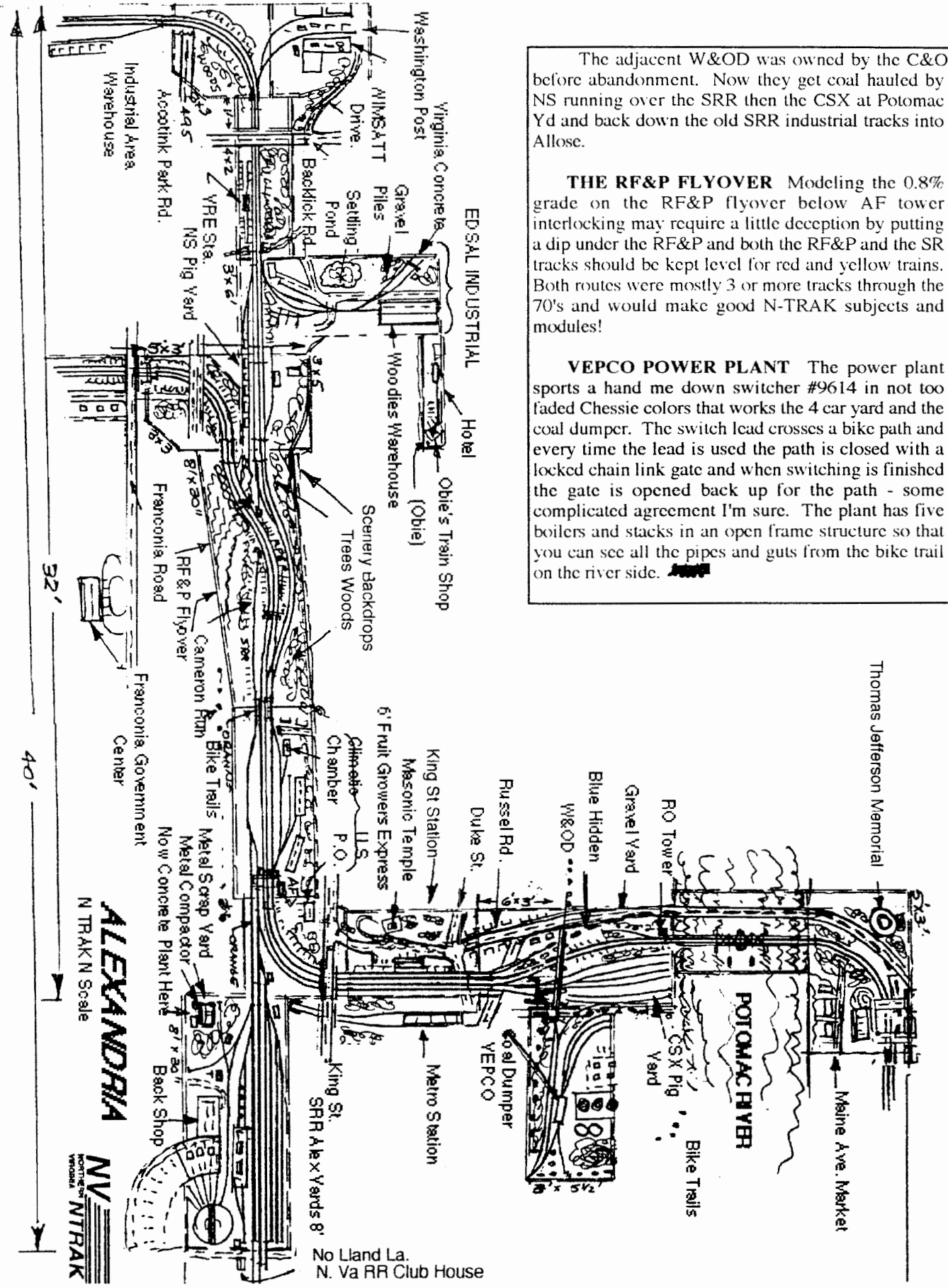
ALEXANDRIA AREA IN N-TRAK

by Matt Schaefer

In the July meeting there was talk of industries in the area that could be used for railfanning and the '96 convention. We don't have any heavy industry but we sure have lots of small industry and interesting railroads and predecessor railroads and trains - PRR, SRR, C&O, B&O/Chessie, RF&P, SAL, ACL, to D&H, Susie Q, Tropiciana, Orange Blossom Pig Train, coal drags, a fair share of wreck trains and wrecks, Amtrak, VRE, etc. You name it, we have had it. We have the added advantage that a lot of this action is along the bike trails and along area parks. See sketch.

N-TRAK OPERATIONS A group that wanted to have all the same industries (compressed) and all the same operations as in the prototype could do it in N-TRAK. Shown here are about 50 feet of modules of SRR and RF&P main lines and about 20 feet of peninsulas which includes most of the industries and sidings. With the flexibility of N-TRAK a group could start with one module and go from there adding Potomac yard and even Washington Union Station or whatever!

MAIN FEATURES The Masonic Temple up on the hill and King St Station dominate the Alex area. Options for N-TRAK modeling would be to add the King St. METRO station. Module peninsulas could be the power plant, the W&OD, and the SRR (NS) Alex Yard to the tunnel (now abandon) to the docks and warehouse area.



The adjacent W&OD was owned by the C&O before abandonment. Now they get coal hauled by NS running over the SRR then the CSX at Potomac Yd and back down the old SRR industrial tracks into Allose.

THE RF&P FLYOVER Modeling the 0.8% grade on the RF&P flyover below AF tower interlocking may require a little deception by putting a dip under the RF&P and both the RF&P and the SR tracks should be kept level for red and yellow trains. Both routes were mostly 3 or more tracks through the 70's and would make good N-TRAK subjects and modules!

VEPCO POWER PLANT The power plant sports a hand me down switcher #9614 in not too faded Chessie colors that works the 4 car yard and the coal dumper. The switch lead crosses a bike path and every time the lead is used the path is closed with a locked chain link gate and when switching is finished the gate is opened back up for the path - some complicated agreement I'm sure. The plant has five boilers and stacks in an open frame structure so that you can see all the pipes and guts from the bike trail on the river side.

RUMOR BIN
by G. Andy Dancer

Tom Reid was spotted by our gallant editor while Internet Surfing. Looks like he's living in Blacksburg, VA at Virginia Tech. If anyone has any further information please pass it on.

The New River overflowed its banks on 26 July in Franconia, VA (at least in my basement it did. A broken water pipe was really the culprit). When your daughter says, "Gee daddy, I turned on the lights but water came out of the fixtures instead," you know you have a problem. Damage to the layout was minimal, but the ceiling and carpet are in for some heavy repairs.

RAILNEWS

Interesting TidBits from rec.railroads on Internet

CURRENT US LOCOMOTIVE BUILDERS

1. **Electromotive Division of General Motors (EMD)** New Locomotives like the GP60(M), SD70MAC, SD80IMAC. Rebuilt EMD Locomotive: BL20-2
2. **General Electric Transportation Systems (GE)** New Locomotives like the Dash9-44CW, AC4400CW. Rebuilt GE Locomotives: Super7 series
3. **Morrison Knudsen (MK)** New Locomotives: MK5000 (Caterpillar engine). Also does in-kind rebuilds Alco and (more commonly) EMD locomotives. Currently contracted to rebuild several hundred EMDs for SP.
4. **Republic Locomotive Works (RLW)** Originally, Republic was a rebuilder. In the late 1980's, they planned to enter the new locomotive market using Caterpillar engines, and produced a few orders of CAT-powered RL2000's (?) for SEPTA and Cogentrix. Then few years ago, they apparently dumped CAT and signed on with Detroit Diesel. They currently have a Detroit-powered demonstrator running around (see recent issues of Extra 2200 South)
5. **Peoria Locomotive Works (PLW)** A few years ago, they produced a Caterpillar-powered switcher for demonstration. I don't know if they've received any orders

as yet.

6. **Plymouth Locomotive Division of Fate-Root-Heath Company.** Builder of many of the ubiquitous 4- and 6-wheel industrial "critters," Plymouth is still in business. They reportedly still make small locomotives from time to time.

If you want to call rebuilt locomotives "new," add:

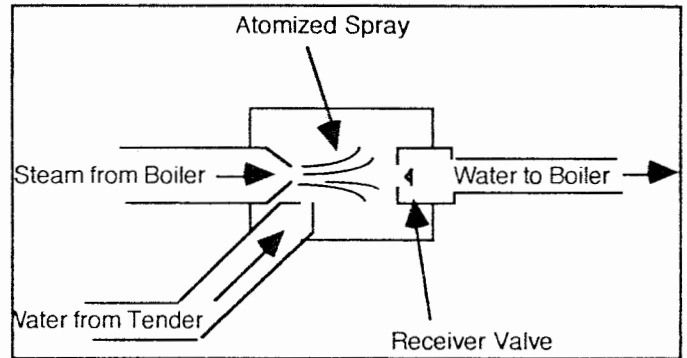
7. **VMV-Paducah** Rebuilds old EMD engines like BN's GP39V's.

HOW DOES A FEEDWATER INJECTOR WORK?

by Doug Jones (Jones@cs.uiowa.edu)

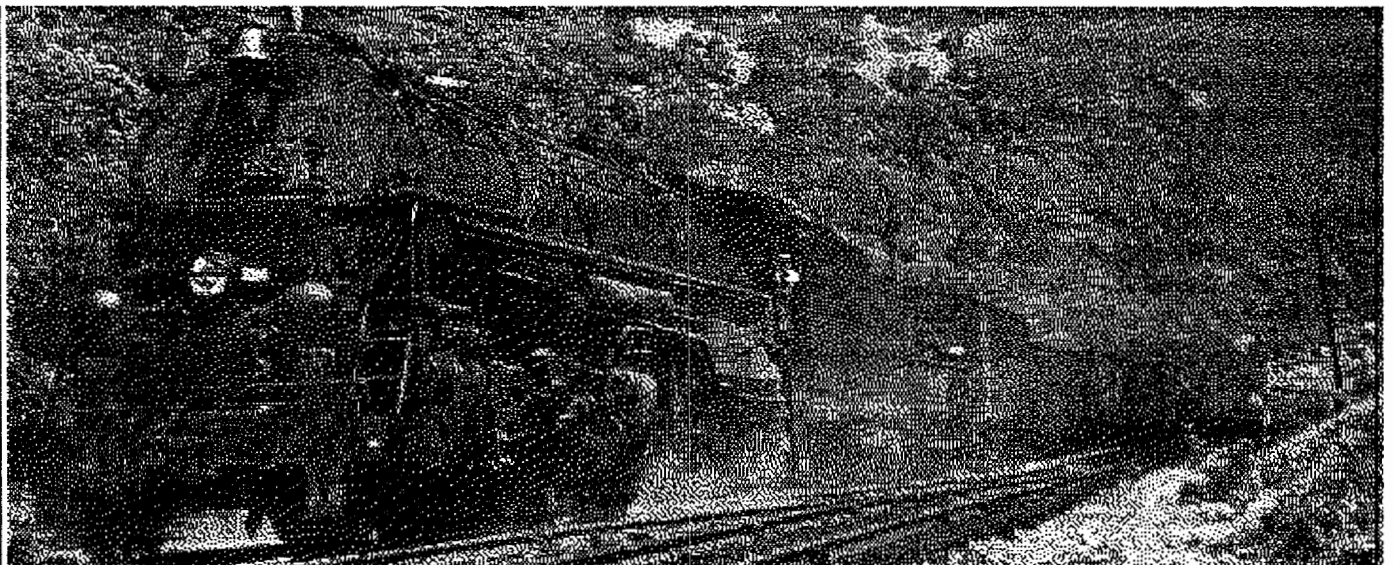
Injectors are the simplest mechanism known for forcing water into a boiler under pressure, but they aren't as efficient as a pump.

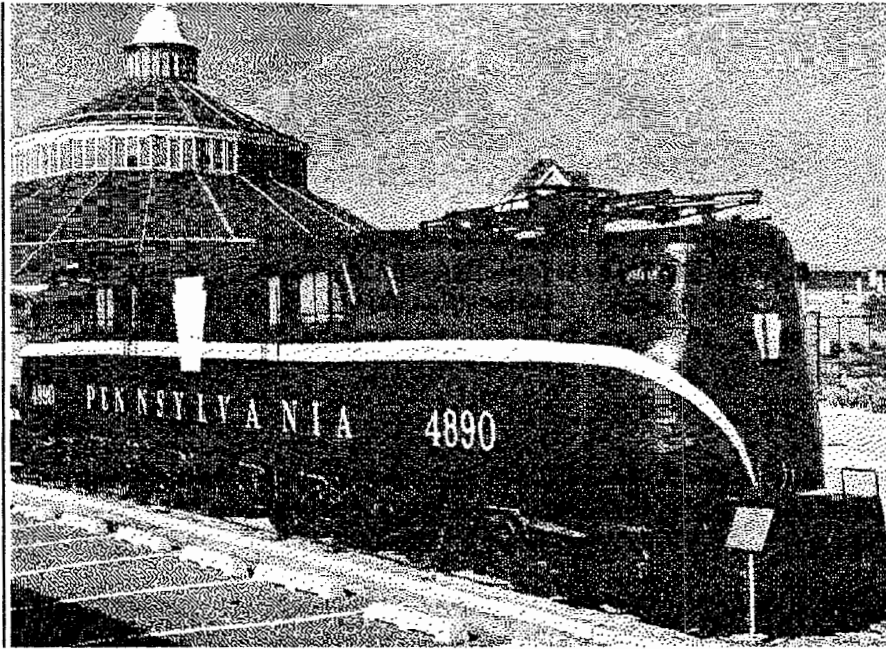
Essentially, the steam from the boiler blowing through the nozzles runs a very high powered atomizer. The water droplets in the jet of atomized feedwater have enough kinetic energy that when they slam into the one-way valve



on the receiver, they push it open against the back pressure from the boiler.

When the injector parts are aligned just right, most of the water actually gets into the boiler, and lots of steam and some of the water spray get blown all over the place as they bounce off the receiver valve. To prevent this from





GG-1 RIVETS? by Frank Kastenholz

The first GG1 built (4800?- It's preserved at the PA state railroad museum at Strasburg) had a riveted body- all of the other GG1's had welded bodies. Why?

Raymond Loewey did the industrial design for the GG-1 body. The first one that was out-shopped was, riveted. Mr. Loewey derisively commented, "What are all those buttons doing on the outside of my engine?" (or something to that effect). As the GG-1 was a very-high-prestige project, and Mr. Loewey was already quite famous for his industrial design, the PRR decided that they would satisfy him and welded the rest of the bodies. (Ref. "The Locomotives That Baldwin Built" by Westing)

becoming a hazard, the entire thing is enclosed in a housing, and a fairly large diameter vent tube directs the exhaust down towards the ground.

Railroads had some strict rules about injector use. For example, in cold climates, use of injectors over switch tracks was strictly forbidden because the overflow water could contribute to icing problems in the points and flangeways. Similarly, use of injectors on bridges over roads or sidewalks was forbidden because the it's not polite to blow hot water and steam down between the ties at the people below. The latter would be akin to opening the cylinder cocks while running the engine past a crowded station platform.

If the water from the tender is hot enough, particularly if you have superheated steam, the steam will boil some of the water, and you'll have fewer droplets and more steam in the jet. That means you'll inject less water and vent more steam towards the ballast.

OBIE'S CORNER

News and Gossip from the Hobby Industry

Lots of new and stuff in the shop.

Atlas New cars arriving every 30 days. LV, NP covered hopper, Lackawanna, 40' Growers Boxcar. Keep up the good work Atlas.

N.J. International . Road Crossing lights in stock.

JMC International B&O National Limited Set \$249. Smoothside cars w/DL-109 engine on the way.

Concor Steam engines and stand alone cars will arrive Sept. PA-1s are arriving slowly.

Micro Trains: CNJ 40' Box car, \$9.65, GTW 50' Rib side box car \$11.15. MP 89'4" TOFC Flat car \$17.15, SF 3 packs \$43.05. Lots of new Coupler starter kits. Here it is! a N-Scale parts catalog, \$3.95. Hint: Truck restraining springs are so simple. Install #1953 Truck restraining springs to solve underisable back and forth undulations of light cars at the end of a long string of cars. At least one restraining spring on each car in your train will eliminate the oscillations. Only \$1.35 per dozen.

Kato Will soon release a SD-45's. Probably in the fall. Yowser, Yowser!

Bachman SD-40-2s should be on the shelf smoking from the heat when you read this. Woah! Summer! Heater!

Life-Like: They have been doing a great job with the GP-18. The HO E8 is great and will be produced in N scale by December. The price and quality is excellent with superb paint and laser technology. New LifeLike buildings include Williams country store, rural church, police station, downtown hotel and fire company.

Fine Scale Products is producing many new items like highways curbs and gutters and old wood side cars.

BevBel will probably go out of business soon.