



# The WIG – WAG

The Official Newsletter of the NMRA – MCoR

Cedar Rapids, Davenport & Moline Area/Division

## New Name

## New Look

## New Attitude

How do you like the new newsletter format? Gary gave me just enough rope to hang myself with this one. Frankly, I like it and not just because it was my idea.

It has good balance. It has plenty of white space. It is easy to read. It is simple. And maybe best of all, it is easy for someone like me to develop every month because anyone with the most rudimentary skills – like me – can do this.

I am anxious to hear your opinions. If you prefer to send them to Gary Zillyette, our Area Director, because you think this stinks, please do so. You can send them to me, too.

Allen Merta, armerta@msn.com

## Modeling Tip of the Month

This month's Modeling Tip of the Month comes to us from Tom Persoon. Tom writes:

*“If you use artist pastels for weathering, here is a way to keep them at the ready. After your prescription bottles from the pharmacy are empty, wash them and dry them. Take a new label or piece of paper and rub a little pastel on it, then tape the label to the bottle. Make a bottle for each color you have. When you need to use the pastel, you can scrape a bit into the bottle and then dab your brush into it and use it right out of the bottle. If you have any material left, it can stay right in the bottle for the next time.”*

Thank you for that great tip, Tom!

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## Prototype News



The Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway, the CRANDIC, was named 2005 Short Line Railroad of the Year by Railway Age magazine. The short line and regional railroad industry is comprised of more than 600 North American railroads.

Railway Age, a leading rail industry trade journal established in 1876, cited CRANDIC's exceptional achievements in productivity, safety and customer service as the reason for bestowing the distinction on the CRANDIC.

The CRANDIC Railway recently sold its repair shops on 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW in Cedar Rapids to ADM. ADM needs a second repair facility to keep up routine and scheduled repairs and rebuilding of company owned railcars.

In turn, the CRANDIC is demolishing five smaller buildings at its Rockford Road SW yard (known as CRANDIC, IA on its timetable) to construct a new, larger, more efficient repair shop.

## IAIS

The Iowa Interstate Railroad moved its headquarters from Iowa City to Cedar Rapids over the winter. The new address for the IAIS is 5900 6<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. IAIS lists two telephone numbers: (319) 362-6248 and (319) 298-5400.

## Thought of the Month

Technology. Has it gotten better or made our lives worse? Take the television for instance. People went how many years without it. Some didn't like the concept of a TV. But as time went on, people began to like them and now every home has at least two TV's.

In model railroading, there has been much technological advancement in the hobby. It started with just a simple transformer that you could control the speed and direction. Then came the power supplies that had momentum and braking features.

Now there is DCC. Like TV, many people still are unsure about DCC. But the more people I read about and talk to are switching to it. Is DCC the best thing that has happened to model railroading? I don't know if I would go quite that far as to say that. But it has opened up doors for people to operate their railroads more like the real railroads do. There are many misconceptions about DCC and it's too bad that those are flying around out there. I, for one, am a DCC user and will never go back. But I also see things with DCC that could be improved. As I think of or find these things that could be better, the top DCC manufacturers are fixing or adding these things to their line up.

The point is, if you are unsure about technology, then ask or try it out. There are many people out there that have started where you are today and that would be happy to share with you their trial and errors with the hobby. I am the type of person, who will jump right in and try something even if I shouldn't, but I do and that is how I learn. So, please try something new in our hobby if you already haven't and do not fear technology as it is getting better and better every day.

Gary Zillyette, fireman2176@earthlink.net

Editor's Note: Both the MCoR convention in Topeka and the NMRA national convention in Cincinnati have multiple clinics scheduled on DCC. Watch here for more information.

## Locomotive Problems & Solutions

These come to us from Steve Goen via Tony Bowen.

After every run from Wichita Falls, Amarillo or Lubbock, Ft. Worth & Denver engineers would fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet", which told shop personnel at Childress, Texas about problems with the locomotive. Shop workers and/or diesel maintainers would then correct the problems, document any repairs on the form, and then post it, allowing engineers to review the gripe sheets before the locomotive's next run.

Never let it be said that FW&D shop forces at Childress lacked a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by FW&D engineers during the 1950's and early 1960's and the solutions recorded by the Childress shops.

P= The problem logged by the engineer.)

S= The solution and action taken by the Childress Shops.)

P: (FW&D #554) Tire on third driver, fireman's side, has serious flat spot and almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced tire on third driver.

P: (FW&D #409) Last night's run from Lubbock OK, except worn out seat springs caused ride to be very rough.

S: Seat springs not installed on this locomotive.

P: (FW&D #605) Something loose in cab.

S: Something tightened in cab.

P: (FW&D #9981A) Dead bugs all over windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: (FW&D #9980A) When running in excess of 79 mph, locomotive experiences severe vibrations.

S: Cannot reproduce problem inside roundhouse.

## Member of the Month



**Name:** Tony J. Bowen

**Occupation:** Elementary Special Education Teacher

**Home:** Coggon, IA

**Length of NMRA Membership:** 1 year

**Model Railroad & Scale:** Corn Country Rails: N Scale Division of the Rock Island Railroad

**Experience:** I have been around trains since I was born. My grandpa, who was a conductor on the Rock Island Railroad for 38 years, influenced me the most. Hence this may be why there is such a favor of Rock Island motive power on my railroad.

I received my first N scale train set for Christmas in 1978. It wasn't long before the train set was set up temporarily on the kitchen table on Christmas Day. Within a few weeks I had build one of the Atlas track plans on a 32" x 46" board with my dad. This would be the first of many N scale layouts.

The second layout that I built while in middle school was a shelf type railroad, built high enough so that it went around a bedroom leaving room for a bed, desk, and dresser. The railroad allowed for longer running trains, but with the

layout only being 18" in depth it had some limits as to what I could do.

During my high school years I tore down the railroad and packed the N scale items away. However, I kept my interests in trains by joining a HO club in Cedar Rapids, Iowa until I went off to college. In college I kept my interest in the hobby by working at Caboose Stop Hobbies in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

After graduation there were no railroads, as the apartment my bride and I moved into did not offer any space. However, plans were already being sketched out of "Day-Dream Track Plans" that some day might be reality.

Sure enough in 1997 my wife and I started the plans for building a house. Of course, like most modeler's basement space was the important part in the planning. Since I was in the planning stages of our home from the beginning, I requested those items in a basement that can be a model railroader's worst obstacle such as the furnace, water heater, water meter, etc...etc, to be centrally located, and out of my "right-of way."

**Status / State of Completion:** In the fall of 1998, I started my current railroad, the Corn Country Rails: N Scale Division of the Rock Island Railroad. The railroad is basically a free-lance depiction of the Rock Island Railroad between Rock Island, Illinois and West Liberty, Iowa. The railroad is about 16' X 21' and goes around three walls with a peninsula that fills in the center of the room. In addition there is a hidden yard in an adjacent room. The layout has a double mainline that is about 125 feet long. There is also a branch line that is operated as a point to point. The railroad is controlled with three DC Control Master 20s walk-around throttles with memory, by MRC. The switches are Peco and the track is Atlas.

There are three main yards on the railroad. The first is the hidden yard that is housed in a storage room, which shares a wall with the train room. The hidden yard is 2'X16' and has 10 staging tracks, two long passing sidings for each mainline, and a long interchange track between the

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east and west mainlines. This yard can hold about 225 freight cars. In addition there is also room for a coach yard for passenger equipment that is currently being planned.



**1) The hidden yard is where trains are staged for operating sessions. The waybill boxes in the background go with each individual yard track.**

The second main yard is at Rock Island. The yard itself has seven classification tracks and can hold up to 125 freight cars. The Rock Island Yard is also where the locomotive and car repair shop are, a turntable is also located there.

The third yard is located at West Liberty, and primarily serves the branch line. This yard can hold about 40 cars and is basically used to house cars coming off the mainline to be shipped to industries on the branch line.



2)

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**2) On the branch line a local Rock Island switch engine sets out two boxcars at Five Start Manufacturing.**

**Modeling Philosophy:** I do not consider myself an expert modeler on the Rock Island nor am I set out to model every tree, milepost, or structure along the right of way. However, I do want to create a feel for the area I am modeling. I do a lot of research and adapt it to what I can do with the space I have. I also do a lot of my own custom painting for motive power and cabooses which helps in making it possible to have the realistic engines and rolling stock that would have traveled the rails in the area I am modeling.



**3) A kit-bashed Rock Island transfer caboose using part from a Dimi-Trains boom car kit and scratch built handrails.**

**Satisfying Model Railroad Moments:** In January 2003, I started a small Round Robin Group with other modelers. The Round Robin approach has gotten me into operations using a Car-Card System with boxes mounted on the fascia of the railroad for set outs or pick-ups for operating crews. In addition, I am expanding the operating sessions to using a timetable, train orders, and an extra board crew-calling list. Currently during a normal operating night, five people can run the railroad and be kept busy for several hours.

(Member of the Month Cont.)

**What I Hope to Gain:** The Corn Country Rails Railroad still has a long ways to go before it is completed. However, I am truly enjoying the time I spend on it and I am in no rush to complete it within a certain time frame. I joined the NMRA in 2004, and I am a member of the Rock Island Technical Society and serve on the board of directors. I enjoy spending time visiting with other model railroader's, sharing ideas, and hearing new ones.



**A Custom painted Alco FA represents the paint scheme of the 1956. Alco / EMD rebuilds that were done for the Rock Island Railroad.**

**Other Interest:** My wife, Jennifer, and I enjoy spending time with our two young daughters who keep us pretty busy and on the go. I also enjoy reading, drawing, bike riding, photography (mostly of trains), collecting railroad memorabilia, and gardening.

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Editor's Note: I'm looking for the next Member of the Month. Just a word of warning. You can approach this in two ways: volunteer and get it over with or someone will show up on your doorstep. Of course, we could always appoint you to chair a committee!

## More Locomotive Shop Humor...

P: (C&S #9952A) Evidence of leak in steam generator.

S: Evidence removed.

P: (FW&D 458) Grip lock causes Johnson bar to stick.

S: That's what they're for.

P: (C&S 701D) Sander inoperative.

S: Sander always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: (FW&D #9980A) Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: (C&S #9950A) While climbing Wheatland Hill locomotive began to shut down. A running inspection was performed by fireman who reports that the Number 2 engine was missing.

S: Number 2 engine found after brief search.

P: (FW&D #750A) Locomotive handles funny.

S: Locomotive warned to straighten up, run right, and be serious.

P: (C&S 703A) Cab radio hums.

S: Reprogrammed cab radio with lyrics.

P: (FW&D #9980A) Mouse in engine compartment.

S: Cat installed.

P: (FW&D #859) Noise coming from under control stand. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget.

P: (C&S #9952A) Throttle sticks whenever locomotive operates over 79 MPH for an extended period of time.

S: Then don't go so damn fast.

P: (FW&D #701D) Mars light inoperative.

S: Have asked John Glenn to pick one up on next trip to space.