



# MRHS MAINLINE

The Official Newsletter of the  
Muskegon Railroad Historical Society  
Volume 21, Issue 9: September 2006

***A Pioneer Locomotive:  
By the Editor  
Lumberman's Gazette  
Saginaw, Michigan May 21, 1878***

***From the Carl Bagema collection  
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The first locomotive ever constructed in Grand Rapids was this week tested on the street at the Michigan Iron Works, by H. D. Wallen, Jr., the enterprising proprietor of the establishment, and proved perfectly successful. It is constructed for use in the woods on the new tramroad of S.P. Hovey & Co. at or near Baldwin, Kale County, Mich., to save the cut and skidded stock they have in the wilderness from the ravages of worm or perchance fire. It is to be called the "Pioneer," it being the first of the kind turned out in the valley, as well as the first of four the same shop has orders for and are constructing. It is of 50 horsepower, and doubtless, from the perfect simplicity of its arrangements, combined with the cheapness of its construction and its efficiency, it will attract universal commendation. The test was in the presence of visitors, whose acclaim was, "It's a perfect success," much to the satisfaction of all interested, as well as all who have worked upon it, (for it is not singular to find the workmen feeling an ardent desire for the success of his handiwork.) In prelude we would say its cost to the purchases was but the small sum of \$1,400. Its weight is 8,000 pounds, and it is attached or placed upon a rail car of four wheels, the body of which is of very light wooden fabric securely iron bound and well braced, supported in the car style by good rubber springs. The housing is a frame of inch gas pipe roofed with wood and well soldered tin material. The boiler is an upright, four feet in diameter, six feet high, crowned with an unique pipe and spark arrester. The boiler and fireplace occupies a space immediately above

**September Meeting:  
Tuesday, September 5, 2006  
7:00 PM**

**The Pere Marquette Railroad  
From Grand Ledge to Grand  
Rapids.**

**A Slide Show and Presentation  
by Kent McFaden.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Sunday, September 24, 2006**

**MRHS FALL TRAIN SHOW!**

**L. C. Walker Arena in  
Downtown Muskegon.  
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

**Open House at the MRHS  
Clubhouse from 11:00 AM to  
4:00 PM featuring 3 operating  
layouts!**

the rear axle and wheels, while the water tank, three feet in diameter and five feet high, stands over the forward wheels, and the driving apparatus, with the driver at the lever, stands between them. The motor consists of two 6x9 cylinders with link motion, placed upon an upright stand and connected to one pair of drivers by two heavy Evert chains running over the spur wheels, while the two axles are likewise connected by the same kind of chain, obviously making all the wheels drivers.

This cheap, efficient and unique engine is for S. P. Hovey & Co., the next is being built for Dennett & Nellie of Manistee, the third for Wm. Addis & Co., of Grand Rapids, and the fourth for Walworth & Rudd, of Chicago, for use at their Cedar Springs mill.

With this engine parties expect to haul on the tramroads of ordinary grade from size to eight cars, each loaded with from 1,500 to 2,000 feet of logs, and we have not the least misgiving about its capacity.

The Michigan Iron Works shops

are, outside of these locomotives, fully employed all through the day and many hours of the night. They have already sent out 60 logging cars and have orders for many more, beside their ordinary repair and new work. We would not in this little sketch say one word reflective upon the other machine shops of the city, because if we did it would be all wrong, as all of them are full of work and running long hours. B. W.

***Train Derailment Called  
Sabotage  
Monday, June 19, 2006  
By Joe Snapper of  
The Saginaw News***

FARWELL -- The derailment of a train carrying radioactive material from the defunct Big Rock Nuclear Power Plant appears an act of sabotage, railroad officials said today.

"We feel strongly there was some tampering, some vandalism going on," said Mike Bagwell, chief executive of Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railway.

Seventeen of the train's 38 cars left the tracks about 1:15 a.m. Friday as it traveled through a switch near the Renosol Corp. plant in Surrey Township, Clare County officials have said.

Authorities have no specific suspects, but the cars jumped the line midway through the switch. Two locomotives and four cars traveled safely through the line change when the switch suddenly diverted the train, Bagwell said.

The switch operates manually, but Bagwell said it was not likely that someone was present to make it occur. A green light tricked the engineer into thinking the switch was safe, he said.

"It was set to change," Bagwell said. "It gave the appearance (it was safe) and then something changed."



**Train Derailment Called Sabotage Continued**

None of the six cars carrying crushed concrete and soil from the Consumers Energy owned Charlevoix nuclear plant that shut down in 1997 overturned, Bagwell said. Workers carefully sealed the radioactive shipments and they were tamper-proof, he said. Bagwell was unsure what degree of radioactivity the shipments possessed. He was also at odds with reports from Clare County's emergency management director that the shipments were actually wastewater once used to cool the plant. Bagwell also said that despite the sabotage, he did not believe the train was targeted because of the radioactive shipment. No one was injured in the wreck. The Saginaw News could not reach Clare County Sheriff Jeffery V. Goyt or 911 Emergency Management Director Sgt. William J. Larson for comment this morning. Bagwell said railway crews were en route this morning to retrieve the remaining cars. Workers completed rebuilding about 500 feet of track Saturday.

**Member News and Donations**

It the August Mainline newsletter, it was incorrectly stated that the wooden model train display that was donated by Noel Black was already at the Depot. The train display is at the MRHS facilities, but details for the display at the depot are still being worked out. Watch for details on the installation of the display at the depot and how you can help!

**Party in the Park Wrap Up!**

The MRHS Party in the Park, held on July 28, 2006 was a great success. Final numbers are still being tallied, and preliminary reports are looking like a nice profit was made. A very special thank you goes to Tom Anderson for chairing the party and Kent McFaden for his high volume volunteer recruitment and overall work on the party. Thanks go to Andy Busard and Jason Bach for making sure we had representation at the meetings and to everyone that helped make it a fun, enjoyable, and profitable evening for the MRHS.

**Points For Profit Program Conclusion!**

During the month of July, the final programs and meetings of the inaugural year of the Points for Profit program were held. The MRHS ended up receiving \$425 from the program, ranking 8<sup>th</sup> out of 24 groups that participated. We have also applied for a 100% match from the Wal-Mart Community Grants program. A very big thank you goes to Kent McFaden for his work on the program. Additionally, your Board of Directors has decided to discontinue participation in the program because we simply did not have any member willing or able to fill Kent's roll as coordinator.

**Bylaws and Policies Committee Update**

On Tuesday, August 29, 2006 at 7:00 PM, your MRHS Bylaws and Policies committee will be meeting to finalize approximately 12 policies that coincide with the bylaws passed earlier this year. If you would like to have your opinions heard, bring them to the meeting.

**Member Classifieds:**

**From Member Tom Buettner (616) 554-9672**

Complete HO scale California Zephyr train consist with two (2) like new highly detailed LifeLike Burlington E-7/8 A units and 12 Con-Cor California Zephyr passenger cars. Bachman HO nickel silver E-Z track system track sections. 56 straight and 13 22-inch radius curve sections.

**URGENT REQUEST Articles Requested for the MRHS Mainline Newsletter**

Do you enjoy reading the feature articles in the Mainline Newsletter? Do you have stories or articles to share? The MRHS Mainline newsletter relies entirely on the voluntary submission of articles and stories. Please submit your railroad related articles and stories to the editor right away.

**Web Site Update Pictures Needed**

Photo galleries of the O gauge, HO gauge and N scale layouts are about to be launched. If you have pictures you are willing to share, contact Thomas Van Bruggen, MRHS Webmaster.

**Calendar of Events**  
Tuesday, August 29, 2006  
MRHS Bylaws/Policies Committee  
7:00 PM  
Tuesday, September 5, 2006  
MRHS General Membership Mtg  
Tuesday, September 19, 2006  
MRHS Board Meeting  
Sunday, September 24, 2006  
MRHS Fall Train Show  
LC Walker Arena Annex in  
Downtown Muskegon  
Tuesday, October 3, 2006  
MRHS General Membership Mtg  
Friday through Sunday  
October 13 to 15, 2006  
Grand Rails 2006  
See the web site  
<http://ncr2006.ncr-nmra.org>  
for more information  
Tuesday, October 17, 2006  
MRHS Board Meeting

**DUES...DUES...DUES**  
Discounts, Library Access, Layout  
Access to name a few...  
Get your dues in so you don't  
lose these privileges of  
membership.  
If you have a check mark by your  
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**Individual Membership:**  
**\$20/Year**  
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