



*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*

## **The Unofficial Micro-Trains<sup>®</sup> Release Report Issue #331 – July, 2024**

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Hello again everyone! Well, as hinted at in the Early Edition of the June bytes, the Day Job and other obligations precluded my being able to get a supplement to the June issue with that month's Weathered Releases. So they're being rolled into this month's issue.

### **N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:**



**033 00 210, \$29.90.**

**Reporting Marks: UP 163533.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Combination Plug and Sliding Door, Union Pacific.**

Brown (including trucks) with mostly white lettering including large roadname and reporting marks on left. White "Overland" herald right of door and red, white and blue shield herald with "Union Pacific" at top right. Multicolor ACI label and white on black COTS panel at bottom right. Lowered underframe and body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period (ATP): 1972 (service date on car) to early 1980s.

This Class B-50-2 boxcar was one of 500 cars built by the Union Pacific at its Omaha shops in 1951 and 1952, but this paint scheme is a one of a kind. UP 163533's photo – bingo! – is on Page 8 of the **Union Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**. When found in February 1972, it was at the Omaha Shops, perhaps fresh out of painting; it certainly looks that way. The occasional use of the Overland herald, as on this car, was executed "on a continuing basis to insure the company's exclusive right to the design," as noted on Page 6 of the **Color Guide** with a mid-1950s photo of a forty foot boxcar done with that older version of the UP shield. What makes this a little more unusual is the further inclusion of what was then the current version of the UP shield, which did not include the word "Railway." Comparing prototype to model, we get... rivets on the real car and welded sides on the MTL 033 body style.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for October 1972 has 471 of those possible 500 cars in the series UP 163100 to 163599. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 15 feet 2 inches, and capacity 5058 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The cars were described as "Box, Steel, Staggered Doors" and end notes called out side wall lading anchors and the "flush type auxiliary side doors" provided an opening of 7 feet 2 inches. Pulling out a sample 033/33000 boxcar from the files and my N Scale ruler, we see that we're pretty close: the MTL car has a plug door of about eight feet in width and the sliding door is

also an eight foot version. The net difference is 10 inches, or 0.0625 actual inch when reduced to N Scale. The degree to which this is a “door thing” is left to the reader.

By January 1978 you’d certainly need to be thinking about running board removal. The car count in that issue of the ORER stood at 303. In the April 1982 ORER the count had slid all the way to just 25, and in the January 1985 Register that was down to a single car, UP 163406.



050 00 260, \$33.95.

**Road Number: 980020 (will be “PRR 980020” in UMTRR website listings).**

**36 Foot Wood Caboose, Offset Slant Style Cupola, Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Brown with black roof and cupola. White lettering including roadname at top center, plain keystone below roadname, and road number and “Philadelphia Region” at bottom center. Brown end rails. Yellow side grab irons. Body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: early 1960s, but see text.

Before I forget, for consistency here in these bytes, I am adding the data point that cabooses have body mounted couplers. This is not a new feature; it’s been true ever since Kadee Micro-Trains began manufacturing this type of car in June 1975 (!). What is new is my including that information in these commentaries.

Hadn’t I seen this caboose from MTL before? Not exactly. The “cabin car,” as the PRR called them, which I had in mind was released in June 2017 (Catalog 51 00 300, Road Number 981128, at right). It has a family resemblance, but it’s not on the same body style. It also has the shadow keystone, which was introduced in 1956, while this new release has the plain keystone, which came along in 1961.



This car does have the same “see text” advisory as that earlier release, however. PRR 980020, like the 981128, was a Class N6 cabin car that didn’t look much like the MTL body style. They were wood sided, to be sure, but had just two windows per side spaced fifteen feet apart center-to-center, a different looking cupola with an arched roof, and a length of just 31 feet 2 inches over the striking plates. There’s an official diagram and a floor plan of the N6B subclass on “Rob’s Pennsy Page” ([pr.railfan.net](http://pr.railfan.net)). Also there is a citation of photo of the 980020, which is an N6B as of the 1960s on Page 64 of the magazine **The Keystone**, Volume 33 Issue 1. That’s the official print journal of The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society (not to be confused with the same organization’s “Keystone Modeler” online offering). This is as close to a bingo photo as we’re going to get. It was taken in Philadelphia and has the plain keystone scheme. Without actually seeing it, I can’t be 100 percent sure that this was the reference for the Micro-Trains model, but I am fairly confident about this. Anyone who happens to have that issue of **The Keystone** is invited to provide Incremental Information.



055 00 630 and 055 00 631, \$27.95 each.

**Reporting Marks:** RDG 88209 (white panel on left) and 88030 (no white panel on left).

**33 Foot Two Bay Open Hoppers, Offset Sides, Flat Ends, Reading.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and large slant style roadname in center. Multicolor ACI label to the right of the roadname. The 88209 has a white panel at top left with black routing instructions ("For Bit Coal Service only between Newberry Jct and Bethlehem"). Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: strictly speaking, early and

mid-1970s, but can be backdated, see text.

Yes, the lower catalog number has the higher road number. It was also built later, according to what's on the cars: the 88209 was built in February 1957 and has a service date of June 1974, while the 88030 was constructed in March 1956 and has a service data of December 1972. Both of these cars have the Reading class HTx.

And both of these cars are shown on Page 42 of the **Reading Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**: the 88209 as of August 1975 and the 88030 from March 1975. These cars look to be a good match between the prototype and the MTL 055 body style. Based on what I've read, the large slant style lettering is part of the "as delivered" paint scheme as it was already in use by the build dates. The presence of the ACI Label, and the service dates, give us a "strictly speaking" ATP that is a lot shorter, but with a little paint remover and perhaps some squinting, these two can be backdated to their respective build dates. You'll probably want to remove the black on white "sideboard" on the 88209 as well. Of course, Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") always applies. That sideboard, by the way, is a reference to "Bit" or Bituminous Coal. Newberry Junction was as far northwest as the Reading got, a bit past Williamsport and where the railroad connected with the New York Central. And Bethlehem, of course, was the home of Bethlehem Steel, which we presume used a lot of Bituminous Coal, a softer coal than the Anthracite that is much more associated with the Reading and other "anthracite roads" in the region.

According to **Color Guide** author Craig Bossler, the Reading built these cars themselves in their own Reading Shops. "This class, when built in the late fifties, was part of an eight million dollar program to increase and improve the car fleet. During 1976, the numbers of this class fell dramatically."

That seems like a good segue to the ORER stash. And, well, the Reading Company didn't seem to be very good at keeping up their roster in those pages, since neither of these cars appear in either the January 1958 or January 1959 editions. (But if it's hoppers you want, there are a

whopping 4686 cars in the previous series RDG 83000 to 87999 in the January 1958 Register!) Finally, we get all 500 possible cars in the series 88000 to 88499 listed in the January 1962 Equipment Register – my copy of which once **belonged** to the late Craig Bossler as confirmed by his name and address stamped on the cover. (He lived in Reading at the time... how about that. It's an honor to have part of his collection in mine now.) The inside length was 33 feet, outside length 34 feet, extreme width 10 feet 5 inches, extreme height 10 feet 9 inches, and capacity 2145 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds.

Jumping to the April 1975 Register, the last pre-Conrail one I have, the car count was at 469. Of these, 385 were conveyed to Conrail according to the April 1976 ORER, the first in which the Consolidated Rail Corporation appears. Just two issues later, the October 1976 Register shows that car count down to 148, a more than fifty percent reduction. That's down to 112 in the January 1978 ORER and just seven in the April 1980 Register, which is where I stopped looking.



100 00 610, \$35.95.

**Road Number: 612R (will be "MEC 612R" in UMTRR website listings).**

**36 Foot Steel Riveted Side Caboose with Offset Cupola, Maine Central.**

Gold with green roof, end platforms, end rails, and side grab irons. Green lettering including small rounded rectangle "Pine

Tree Route" herald below cupola, road number below herald, and "Think Safely / Work Safely" at bottom center. White on black double COTS panel opposite cupola. Body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to late 1980s.

Here's this month's winner of the "Boy, have I spent a lot of time on this release" award. And although that included time browsing through a number of photos including on the NE Rail New England Photo Archive, finding lots of information that was personally interesting but not terribly relevant for this discourse, what I did **not** find was a bingo photo for this particular car. And so we venture into potentially dangerous territory – a review without a bingo for a type of car that is not always consistent across road numbers... and isn't in this case.

Let's start with what we do know: the harvest gold and hunter green paint scheme was adopted in the late 1960s. The ATP for this particular model starts after that given the double COTS panel, which came into use in the early 1970s. On Railroad.net it was noted that "The Maine Central RR retired practically all caboose cars when the railroad was sold to Guilford Industries in 1987." That gives us a reasonable end to the Approximate Time Period. I also saw online that the original deep color – almost an orange – faded over time to more like a yellow.

A 2010 post on Trainorders.com begins with "I haven't found a definitive MEC caboose roster but did manage to put a rough one together with a little research." This post continues with the data point that the Maine Central's "buggies" numbered from 600 to 639, were various



styles of World War I-era wooden cabs rebuilt with plywood sides. A photo which illustrates this is on the aforementioned the NE Rail New England Photo Archive, showing a later day refurbishment of an MEC caboose of this type: (direct URL [photos.nerail.org/s/?p=9515](http://photos.nerail.org/s/?p=9515) ). I also saw a number of photos of cars in this general series. And in general, the MTL 100 body style is in the “stand in” category for this group of cars. The clearest delta is in the number of windows per side, and the second most obvious is the shape and height of the cupola – it looks more like the slanted one on the Micro-Trains 050 body style (see the PRR release this month, above). Although the sides on the MTL car represent steel, I think they can also represent plywood, which is just as smooth when reduced to 1/160<sup>th</sup> actual size. To be fair, there probably hasn’t been anything like these plywood sided cars in a widely available model. One post I found discussed making HO models starting with an Athearn Santa Fe caboose, which involved new sides, ends, roof and “monitor” – which I presume means the cupola. Hmm, a “buggy” with a “monitor” – that’s terminology I’ve not come across before.

As if that’s not enough, there are differences across cars including how they are painted, for example the placement of the “Think Safely / Work Safely” wording. Examples on both RRPictureArchives (MEC 603, 606, 610, 611, 614, 616, 617, 618, 621, 623, 627, 628, 630, and 631) and Fallen Flags (MEC 601, 603, 610, 617, 618, 623, 630, and 632) illustrate this. If only there were a 612... Well, I’m quite sure there is a photo of it at the Micro-Trains R&D Department.



**105 00 036 and 105 00 037, \$29.95 each.  
Road Numbers: 62872 and 62878  
(will be preceded by “SOU” in  
UMTRR website listings).**

**50 Foot 14 Panel Fishbelly Side  
Gondola, Fixed Ends, Southern  
Railway.**

Brown (including trucks) with mostly  
white lettering including large  
roadname and road number in center.  
White on black COTS panel on last  
panel on right. Coil covers included.

Approximate Time Period: 1978 (conversion date, see text) to mid-decade of the 2000s, or add conspicuity stripes and go out to at least the early decade of the 2010s.

On Page 73 of the **Southern Railway Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** it’s noted: “Pullman-Standard gondolas formed the basis of many conversions on the Southern over the years. Here is yet another coil car conversion, done at the Coster shops in 1978 and assigned to the [Southern subsidiary] CNO&TP.” That’s the Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific; well, the Southern did get to the first two of those locations. The gondolas were originally built in 1970. There’s a three-quarter overhead bingo photo of the 62878, taken in Atlanta in May 1979, which shows well one side and one end of the car and the cover. Overall, we’ve got a nice match here: a 14 panel gondola with the correct ends and the cover faithfully reproduced by Micro-Trains. The prototypes had end of car cushioning so if you’re going to body mount the couplers, you could mount them a bit outboard of the body to simulate this –

but note that a car modified in this way might not fit back in the original box without modifying its plastic insert tray as well. The only quibble is, as is typical of MTL gondolas, the model's length. The series is relatively short: 62864 to 62888.

That group of cars is combined with others to yield a larger series SOU 62864 to 62895 as shown in the July 1980 ORER. It had the AAR Designation GBSR and was described as "Gondola, Covered, Cradles, Crossbars (Coiled Steel Products), Axle Spacing 5 Feet 8 Inches, Truck Centers 43 Feet 6 Inches." The inside length was given as 52 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet 6 inches, outside length 65 feet 9 inches, extreme height 10 feet 7 inches (I presume that's with the covers), and capacity 1754 cubic feet or 170,000 pounds. The car count was 32 at the time.

Skipping to the October 1991 Register and the Norfolk Southern listing, we see the car count down just one to 31, but the series is split into 13 cars with the full description and five subsets with a description of only "Gondola" though retaining the GBSR designation. This might, or might not, mean that the covers were removed on these cars. It looks like the 62872 remained in the main series while the 62878 was in one of the "Gondola" exceptions. In the April 1997 ORER, only the fully described series is shown with a car count down to 24. That's down to 13 in January 2002, then nine in January 2006, January 2011, and April 2013, and how's that for consistency, though you'd probably consider adding conspicuity stripes if this is your pike's time period. Courtesy of RailcarPhotos, though, I can get you to July 2008 without stripes and still with the covers for the 62872. The covers are quite rusty by then. It's noted that the donor series for these cars was SOU 65400 to 65949 built by Pullman-Standard in mid-1970. Five cars remained in the January 2018 ORER, but they're gone by the October 2020 Register.



**107 00 091, \$33.95.**

**Road Number: 439752 (will be "PRR 439752" in UMTRR website listings).**

**65 Foot Mill Gondola, Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Brown (the PRR's "Freight Car Color") with white lettering including roadname and road number on left and circle keystone on right. PRR Class G26 on right. Metal wheels and body mounted couplers. Simulated H-Beam steel load included. Approximate Time Period: 1930 (build date) through the decade of the 1950s. Micro-Trains recommends a minimum 15 inch curve radius for this item.

Please see the coverage of the 090 release of this car, Road Number 439048, in the June 2022 UMTRR. Also please see the "Incremental Information" section below.



In addition to the above, the **Norfolk Southern 60 Foot High-Cube Exterior Post Double Plug Door Boxcar (123 00 120, \$51.98, Reporting Marks: NS 471161)** which was originally scheduled to be available last month, is now targeted for

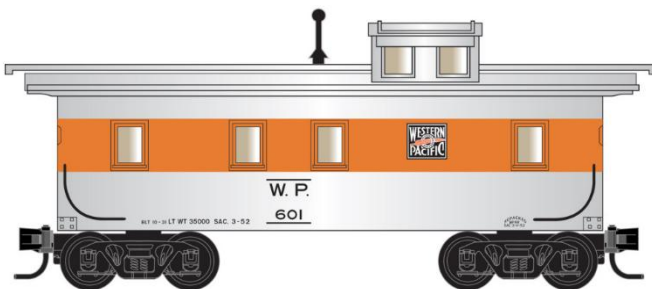
delivery mid-this month. The official photo was posted on the MTL website on July 17. I've seen it for sale online as well. This item was not on Micro-Trains dealer standing orders.

The **GATX/ Laurinburg and Southern 60 Foot High-Cube Exterior Post Double Plug Door Boxcar (123 00 080, \$51.98)** which was originally scheduled for release in mid-April, was shown at the National N Scale Convention and was also announced as available in the June E-Line Newsletter which arrived at UMTRR HQ on June 21 (while we were at the NNSC, actually). It was for sale by vendors at the NNSC and I've seen online offerings since then too.



**N SCALE REPRINTS:** There are no releases this month, but there are two pre-order announcements, one of which is for a virtual two-pack, and the other of which is for a caboose for which the first and only release was over 22 years ago.

*The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **July 31**.*



**Targeted Delivery September 2024:**  
**051 00 221, \$45.95.**

**Reporting Marks: WP 601.**

**36 Foot Wood Caboose with Offset Straight Side Cupola, Western Pacific.**

"Zephyr" Scheme of aluminum with orange band on sides and orange with aluminum zebra striped ends. Black lettering including

reporting marks in center. Black, red and white "Feather River Route" herald below cupola. Body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: 1952 to no later than 1956. Previous Release: Road Number 602, June 2002. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

When the June 2002 run (at right) was issued, it was, at the time, the single most expensive regular run car in Micro-Trains history, with an MSRP of \$33.00. The “Inflation Calculator” tells me that’s about \$57.61 today. That, let us say, raised some eyebrows. It was a very complex paint scheme, as explained by MTL



itself via a communication by its then Marketing Director. I’ll quote from it: “After careful consideration and discussion of the production issues involved, Micro-Trains management made a conscious, and calculated decision to go ahead with limited production of this model. Plainly speaking, the resulting retail price is a direct reflection of the complexity of the paint scheme, which required a large number of prints and masks. The caboose body style itself costs more to produce generally, compared to our other body styles... The price was not artificially pumped-up, but was determined by actual and normal production costs. It was a calculated financial gamble on our part, and market acceptance and sales will ultimately decide if our decision was a good one.”

The prototype for these cabooses was discussed on a Yahoo Group called “wp-list” (which apparently did not make the transition to groups.io) not when the MTL car was released, but before that, when a very similar custom-painted car was. That prototype was known as the “Gould Standard,” a design shared with the Rio Grande and Missouri Pacific. Haskell and Barker built at least some of these cabooses in 1910. These have a taller, narrower cupola, three windows per side, and quite ornate and unusual steps down from the platform, described at least once as “tender steps.” That differs from the Micro-Trains wood caboose model, which is the “Harriman Common Standard Design” used by the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific. Micro-Trains believed that their caboose was a reasonable match to the model, and they have so far correctly projected that there wouldn’t be a closer match widely available in N Scale. Certainly I haven’t seen one, though I can’t hope to keep track of 3-D printed offerings which may have resulted in a “Gould Standard” caboose by now. MTL cited photos of the Sacramento Northern cabooses of this type in the **Western Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** for the end painting (it was the same as parent WP’s) and a black and white image of WP 602, which was the exact car released in 2002. That photo appeared in the 1994 calendar of the Portola Railroad Museum, now the Western Pacific Railroad Museum, which rosters every style of WP cabooses.

The flashy—and complex—“Zephyr” paint scheme on this car, inspired by the California Zephyr passenger train which began service in March 1949, appears to date to 1952, as that’s the service date on both the original run WP 602 and the artwork for the forthcoming WP 601. Lettering details differ between the two cars, and in June 2002 Micro-Trains had not yet begun including plastic windows with its cabooses, so this run is a nominal “not a reprint.” The “Zephyr” scheme was short lived, as all “Gould Standard” cabooses were off the WP roster by 1956, though they did last a bit longer on the Sacramento Northern.





### *Targeted Delivery November 2024:*

123 00 021 and 123 00 022, \$51.98 each.  
Reporting Marks: TBOX 667028 and 667107.

60 Foot High-Cube Exterior Post Double Plug Door Boxcar ("TBOX" car), TTX (Logo Version 2).

Yellow with aluminum roof and black doors. Mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. Red, blue and black "Next Load/Any Road" logo on left.

Red post-2008 TTX logo on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. Orange vertical conspicuity stripes at various points along sides. Tops of ends are white (denoting excess height car) with black reporting marks. Metal wheels and body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: 2013 (build date) to present. Previous Releases: The 993 01 850 Three Pack, with these individual items: 123 51 020, 667101; 123 52 020, 667188; 125 53 020, 667833. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Here's the previous run of this paint scheme, the September 2021 Three Pack (at right). The forthcoming two additions are both from the prototype series 667000 to 667724, built by National Steel Car in 2013. These belong to the TTX Class XNH61.



The October 2014 ORER has this series with all 725 cars. The key dimensions were: inside length 60 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 13 feet even, outside length 67 feet 2 inches, extreme height 17 feet, door opening 16 feet, capacity 7258 cubic feet, and gross rail weight 286,000 pounds. The January 2018 Register showed 719 cars and the October 2020 ORER had a car count of 712.

RailcarPhotos has a bingo on the 667028 as of November 2013, possibly on its first trip out to La Mirada, California after having been built. The same site has a February 2014 view of TBOX 667107 rolling through Newark, California. The cars were both very clean when photographed, with nary a bit of, ahem, unauthorized incremental decoration.

**N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:** No releases this month, but there is a group of pre-order announcements that I'll take together since they fit a common theme:

*The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **July 31**.*



**Targeted Delivery December 2024:**

**144 00 300, Chapel Car, No Lettering, \$32.95.**

**144 00 301, Baptist Church Chapel Car "Grace," \$32.95.**

**144 00 302, Catholic Church Chapel Car "St. Peter", \$32.95.**

**Heavyweight 3-2 Observation Cars.**

Each car is Pullman Green with black roof, underframe and ends. Item number 144 00 300 has no lettering and no trucks but includes a 3-D printed chapel entrance façade (not shown here). The other two cars have six wheel trucks. Gold lettering: the 144 00 301, "The American Baptist Publication Society & The American Baptist Home Mission Society" across letterboard and "Chapel Car / Grace" at bottom center; the 144 00 302, "The Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States of America" across letterboard and "Chapel Car / St. Peter" split by red, white and yellow crest at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1915 to 1946 for the "Grace" and 1912 into the 1930s for the "St. Peter."

File this under I Learned Something when researching these three items. I didn't need to go far, as they are covered quite well on Wikipedia, well, at least two of them. The car without trucks and couplers is more of a "repurpose" that might have taken place after rolling chapel cars were retired from service. For example, though it's a wood car, the "Herald of Hope" was found in West Virginia serving as an office following its time on the rails.

The two cars here that are for transport on rails are from the Baptist and Catholic denominations, but the idea of outfitting a railroad car to serve as a mobile place of worship in the United States came from a Episcopal clergyman, William David Walker... and he got that idea after seeing it on the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1889. Walker was the Episcopal Bishop of North Dakota, which at the time had settlements that were more temporary than permanent. Establishing a church there was not necessarily practical if the town around it wasn't going to

survive. But a church that could travel to people where they were might work. The church raised funds including from Cornelius Vanderbilt, then President of the New York Central Railroad. In 1890, the car, named "The Church of The Advent - The Cathedral Car of North Dakota" was delivered by The Pullman Company. It served its purpose from then until 1899, being pulled without charge by railroads from town to town in North Dakota. From then until 1901 it was based in Carrington, North Dakota, after which it was sold.

The Baptists were next to begin using chapel cars, starting by 1891. The car "Grace" that is being represented here was actually the last of the seven chapel cars in service for the Baptists, and the only one to be constructed of steel. It was named in memory of the daughter of the Conaway Family, who donated the car to the church. It was built by Barney and Smith in 1915. The Wikipedia page on "Railroad Chapel Cars" has an image of the outside of the car, an interior view, and a drawing of the floor plan. How's that for a bingo? The real "Grace" was an observation car, but its window arrangement was more like the MTL paired-window coach than the 3-2 observation. A little more than half the inside was used for the chapel, while the rest served as accommodation for the clergy who traveled along with the car.

The Catholic Church Extension Society was founded in 1905, and in its magazine, Father Francis Kelley asked, "If the Baptists can do it, why not the Catholics?" He asked for cars to be donated and got three, one of which was the "St. Peter," built by Barney and Smith in 1912. It, too, had a window arrangement that differed from what I'd call a typical observation car--if there is such a thing. It appears from a photo of the interior that a large proportion of the car was used for the chapel. It had a sanctuary section not unlike that of a typical Catholic church of the time. At the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, the "Grace" and the "St. Peter" were displayed coupled to each other. I expect that there are photos of that "meeting" but I'll need to leave the exercise of locating those images to the reader.

For further reading, there is also a scholarly review of all thirteen chapel cars and the overall history of this part of railroad history. It's called **This Train Is Bound For Glory**, written by Wilma Rugh Taylor and Norman Thomas Taylor, and published in 1999. An online edition is available: [www.chapelcarsofamerica.net/online\\_book.html](http://www.chapelcarsofamerica.net/online_book.html).

**N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** As noted above, we're catching up with June before heading into the July releases. As of "press time" all of these June items were still available from Micro-Trains.

The following items were announced via the MTL E-Line Newsletter about **June 15**:



092 44 351, \$33.95.

**Reporting Marks: CSXT 226712.**

**Two Bay Center Flow Covered Hopper, CSX Transportation.**

Base car is beige with mostly black lettering including large reporting marks on left and CSX logo on right. White on black consolidated stencils on right. Heavy weathering and rust effects on entire car; no

graffiti (not allowed under CSX licensing agreements with model railroad manufacturers). Approximate Time Period: 1990s to early decade of the 2010s. Previous Releases (unweathered): Road Numbers 226880 and 226691, February 2017.

When the virtual two-pack of this car was run, MTL helped out quite a bit with its car copy noting that these cars were originally built in 1970 for the Western Maryland. The **WM Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, which I've not cracked open in some time, has two photos of these cars. The first is WM 604962 in its "as delivered" speed lettering scheme; the second is WM 604999 in Chessie System paint with a "face" added to the "Ches-C" herald, not unlike MTL's own Weathered Release of an open hopper in 2015 – and I wonder where they got that idea. The Western Maryland Class C-19 was originally in cement service from a plant in Maryland according to the **Color Guide**. Of the various components of CSX, only the WM had this exact model of Center Flow.

The ORER for January 2000 isn't going to tell us how many of the series CSXT 226673 to 226720 were actually repainted, but it does tell us that there were 41 cars in a total of twelve subsets, the reason for which I have no clue. The key dimensions are all identical: outside length 39 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 2970 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. (Inside dimensions aren't listed.) So why are there twelve subsets? Some questions just aren't answered, folks...

While conspicuity stripes would have been required starting in 2005, and at least the 226720 had received them as of 2010 according to a photo on Fallen Flags, only two cars of the original series remained as of the January 2018 ORER. They are gone by the October 2020 Register. Given CSXT's obvious lack of interest in repainting these cars, I'll call the start of the ATP as the 1990s, but only with some hesitation.

There are two bingo photos on RRPictureArchives.net, from November 2005 and February 2008. The later one appears to be the closer to how MTL depicted this car, which is to say it's got more rust. The former WM 605990 was in Dolton, Illinois. The fresh COTS stencil on the Micro-Trains model aligns with what we see in the prototype photo.





993 05 073, \$59.95.

**Reporting Marks: CEFX 501348 and 501357**  
(Catalog Numbers 027 44 510 and 027 55 510).

**CIT Group Weathered Two Pack.**

Jewel box packaging. Consists of two 50 foot exterior post boxcars with plug doors. Base color of both cars is blue. The 501348 has yellow lettering, the 501357 has white lettering on patch panels, each with

reporting marks on left. Small white on black COTS panel at far right. Light to moderate weathering. Scrawl and multicolor graffiti on both cars. Cushion underframe and body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: 2011 and 2012, plus or minus. Previous Releases: None.

I could simply cite the chronology of these cars, courtesy of RailcarPhotos, and that might be enough for a commentary here. They began as part of the Class B-70-67 for the Cotton Belt, built by FMC from April to June 1973, the series SSW 66000 to 66528. When constructed these had sliding double doors. (There have been Micro-Trains releases of similar Cotton Belt cars, Catalog 30060, but they're not from the same prototype series.) The cars went to the Golden West Service enterprise at some point, where they were refurbished and given Ventura County Railway reporting marks, VCY 767500 to 767509. Instead of going back to the Cotton Belt when the Golden West Service sunset, they went to the Atlantic and Western as their series ATW 81000 to 81045. Notice how there's a lot fewer cars than we started with! From there they went to CEFX 501219 to 501364, a group of only 46 cars which would be the maximum that could have come from the ATW. Somewhere along the way, the cars double sliding doors gave way to a single twelve foot plug door... and yes, that is a "door thing" versus the MTL 027 body style, which has an eight foot plug door.

The bingo photos of both cars are also on RailcarPhotos, the 501348 from April 2012 and the 501357 from October 2011. It's noted in the caption for both cars that they are leased to Cargill Salt, and rut-roh, we know what salt does to freight cars. The shot of the 501348 shows what looks like the apparatus for a cushion underframe, including the cylinder near the center of the car, and there is extended draft gear present as well.

I call a narrow Approximate Time Period here based on the date of the bingo photos and the service to which they were assigned, though with the "plus or minus" that I sometimes append to these stricter dates. In the October 2014 ORER, there is a series CEFX 501334 to 501364 which takes in both of these road numbers, but it's down to seven cars, and they are all gone by the January 2018 Register. The January 2006 ORER is the first place I see these cars (the series isn't in the October 2004 Register, and that's before conspicuity stripes anyway), and there were only nine of them back then. The dimensions were: inside length 50 feet 7 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 10 inches, outside length 57 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 12 feet, and capacity 5243 cubic feet with a gross rail weight of 220,000 pounds.



993 05 074, \$64.95.

**Reporting Marks: GTW 102606 and 102611 (Catalog Numbers 092 44 011 and 092 45 011).**

**Grand Trunk Western Weathered Two Pack.**

Jewel box packaging. Consists of two Two Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers. Base color is blue with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large "GT" herald on right. The

102606 has restenciled reporting marks on a black patch panel. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Light weathering and rust effects. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s into the decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases: Unweathered, Road Number 315060, October 1993, Road Number 315065, November 1999, and Road Number 315066, August 2010; Weathered, Road Number 315063, May 2011.

I would have expected that these cars would carry a new catalog number, but they don't. They are "not a reprints" from the previous runs (the latest unweathered version at right), not least because they're not from the same road number series. There are differences in the lettering as well, including that the "GT" is not the same as on the previous runs; this time, it's "taller" and "thinner."



The bingo photo for GTW 102611 was taken in Vaughn, Ontario (part of the Greater Toronto Area) in April 2001. It's posted to both Fallen Flags and Canadian Freight Car Gallery. Fallen Flags also has a bingo for GTW 102606, found in Moraine, Ohio in July 2011. From the photos we can see – and this is a lot harder to describe than to just see in the photos – that the hopper portion of the car doesn't reach all the way to the ends. Put another way, there is a gap between the end of the hopper and the end frame which holds the ladders. This is a spotting feature of the rather uncommon 2700 cubic foot cars built by American Car and Foundry, and is a delta to the MTL 092 body style. (Other manufacturers have used their center flows to represent CF2700s also, in multiple scales; I don't think anyone's actually modeled one.) The only railroads that bought them were the Baltimore and Ohio, Chesapeake and Ohio, and the Detroit and Toledo Shore Line, which had fifty constructed in June 1976 numbered 2600 to 2649. The D&TSL went into the Grand Trunk Western after the GTW purchased the Norfolk and Western's half-ownership in 1981. The N&W got its half from the Nickel Plate Road.

The October 1991 ORER is the first one in which I see the series GTW 102603 to 102649, which could hold almost all of the former D&TSL cars, but has just five. The other 43 remaining cars, well, remain, in the series DTS 2600 to 2649. They have identical dimensions, namely, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme width 10 feet 8 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 2700 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. Jumping to the January 2002 Register to closely

intersect the bingo photo of the 102611, there are still only five cars in the GTW series while the car count is down to 35 in the DTS series. (And that count is more than all of the other DTS cars left on the GTW roster at that point.) Jumping again to the January 2011 ORER to intersect the bingo photo of the 102606, there are just two GTW cars and 19 DTS cars. The two Grand Trunk cars are gone by the next Equipment Register in the Research Accumulation, April 2013 – but 14 DTS cars remain.

I mostly kept the DTS in the picture here because some of those Center Flows were in new paint by then, which was modeled by MTL in July 2006 and August 2011 (Catalog 092 00 220, the latter at right; the former was used by this byte slinger as the base for a few UMTRR Tenth Anniversary cars). There is a slim but non-zero chance that the freshly painted CN/DTS cars could be run in a train with these GTW cars, and even with some very weathered “as delivered” Detroit and Toledo Shore Line cars... which you’ll need to procure from another source.



The following was released in July 2024 as part of the regular start of month lineup.



**030 44 320, \$30.95.**

**Reporting Marks: CIC 8008.**

**50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Double Door, Cedar Rapids and Iowa City/ ex-Oregon and Northwestern.**

Release #4 in the ex-Per Diem series (pre-orders were not taken for this series).

Yellow with aluminum roof and mostly black lettering. Large black, orange and white herald on left and large Oregon and Northwestern Railroad roadname on right. Black restenciled CIC reporting marks on yellow patch panel on left. Moderate to heavy weathering. Scrawl and multicolor graffiti. Approximate Time Period: as early as 1997 to no later than 2022, but more narrowly, 2012, plus or minus, based on photo evidence. Previous Releases: None, but see below. This item has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

Well, I don’t have to cover the “to” road here, as I spent a fair number of bytes on the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City aka the “Crandic” in my coverage of Per Diem Series car #2 in May (see that issue of the UMTRR). So we’ll focus on the “from” railroad this time, which makes sense since the Oregon and Northwestern has never received a regular release N Scale car from the folks in Talent – although there was a Z Scale car in the “25 Years of Z Scale” set back in 2010 and as we’ll see later, an N Scale special run.

The “from” line is the subject of an “Images of Rail” book from the folks at Arcadia Publishing. They’re the company that has released hundreds of paperbacks on various subjects, mostly towns and neighborhoods, utilizing vintage photos and short captions along with a few blocks of text here and there. (I have five that focus on some aspect of Rochester, for example, and

that's not all of them.) **The Oregon and Northwestern Railroad** was written by Jeff Moore and Wayne I. Monger, and published in 2013. There is a copy of this book in the UMTRR Research Accumulation.

The history of the line effectively began with a United States Forest Service sale of timber logging rights, specifically what became known as the 1922 Bear Valley Timber Sale. Part of the requirements for the successful bidder was the construction of a common carrier railroad from the town of Crane westerly toward Burns and then more or less north to Seneca, all of these points within Eastern Oregon. At Crane, connection would be made with the Union Pacific. It was also specified that all lumber from these logs had to be sawed within the boundaries of Harney County. The first attempt to harvest timber from the Bear Valley included the Malheur Railroad, but that venture failed before it began. In 1928, the contract was rebid and the Edward Hines Western Pine Company took over, finishing the job of building the infrastructure needed to harvest and process 890 million board feet of timber across 67,400 acres of government land. That infrastructure included the Oregon and Northwestern Railroad, which was the common carrier needed to fulfill the contract. Most of the O&NW's business was hauling timber from Seneca although it did have other work later in its history. Equipment purchases included Caboose Number 100, which came from the Union Pacific and is a match to the MTL 050 Slant Cupola Caboose body style (!), 100 flat cars from the New York Central, and both new and used steam locomotives. In addition to the O&NW, there were private logging railroads radiating around Seneca. The lumber milling operation at Hines, Oregon, a bit south of Burns, was not something easily modeled: one massive shed was a half mile long – about 16 ½ feet long if reduced to N Scale!

The Oregon and Northwestern dieselized starting in 1955, completing the change in 1957. The roster consisted of four Baldwin AS-616s and two Alco S-3s. In 1978, the company signed a lease with Brae Corporation for 250 Incentive Per Diem boxcars, which forms the basis for this month's release. These cars were built by Fruit Growers Express – now that's different – in February and March 1979 and were numbered 5001 to 5250. RailcarPhotos has images of two of these cars as built and painted, the 5164 from October 1979 and the 5168 as of August 1986. I'm still not sure of the origin of the herald on the left of the car. I suppose it has something to do with the Edward Hines Lumber Company, but I see an "H" and a "P" in there, not an "E" and certainly not an "O" or "N" or "W." Perhaps "Hines Pine"? Comparing prototype to model using these images and others on RRPhotoArchives, there's the unusual combination of the typical exterior post sides with ends that look more like they belong on older boxcars like PS-1s. That's a delta to the MTL 030 body style, and probably every other widely available x-post model of this type. The double sliding doors are offset to one side and there are four posts to the left and seven to the right of these doors; these details match the Micro-Trains car.

The ORER for July 1980 has the series described as "Box, Steel, Cushion Underframe, Nailable Steel Floor, 50K" with AAR Designation XM and these dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet even, outside length 55 feet 8 inches, extreme height 15 feet 5 inches, door opening 16 feet, and capacity 5277 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. Reporting for these cars was to go to Brae. At the time, the company also listed 130 log flats.



Business on the full length of O&NW was steady through the decade of the 1970s, but in 1979 the parent company elected to truck logs to the mill complex at Hines, removing most railroad traffic on the Seneca to Hines portion of the line. The death blow came in March 1984, when rising waters of Malheur Lake submerged parts of the Union Pacific connection. The UP shut down the line, stranding the O&NW and some of its IPD boxcars, which were trucked out (!) for disposition. The O&NW was salvaged in 1988, ending its history.

As was the case with other shortline railroads, the termination of operations didn't mean the end for their leased boxcars. Burlington Northern got at least some of them, as evidenced by images on RailcarPhotos and RRPictureArchives, but I can't say for certain how many as the BN's series 223197 to 223668 was "a mixed series of second-hand late 1970s fifty-foot double-door boxcars of different make built for several different railroads" to quote from RailcarPhotos. BN 223330 and 223375 were among the former O&NW cars, photographed in August 1988 and May 1987 respectively with BN restenciling only.

Similarly, CIC 8008 is part of the series 8000 to 8049, a mish-mosh of x-post double door cars from various sources and "from" railroads, including the O&NW, Seattle and North Coast and Galveston Wharves. I first see this group in the ORER for April 1997, and the 8008 is among those in a subset of 5277 cubic foot cars. A photo of the 8008 is on RailcarPhotos, dated September 2006. There are **seven** more photos of the car on RRPictureArchives, dated from April 2007 to April 2013. All of these images show the car without conspicuity stripes, which were required starting in 2005. A shot from February 2012 shows a replacement door, though in the left hand position versus the right hand position on the model. It's noted that this car was originally O&NW 5047, then became BN 223355, and is now on the Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern roster as RBMN 82200. A photo of the car in the black and white livery of that line is also on RRPictureArchives, dated August 2022, so it's definitely not "to present" for this car.

I mentioned earlier that while there have not been any N Scale regular runs of this car, there was a special run. It was commissioned in 2003 on the MTL 30000/030 body style, reporting marks ONW 5088 and N Scale Collector number 03-71. Our special correspondent David Grothe sent over his photo of that car (at right).



*The following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on July 16.*



**027 44 520, \$29.95.**

**Reporting Marks: LV 8319.**

**50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Lehigh Valley.**

Green with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large

roadname on right. Red, black and white flag herald on door. White on black double COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" at bottom right. Extensive rust effects and weathering. Cushion underframe and body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: strictly speaking, early 1990s based on photo evidence; overall, 1969 to early 1990s. Previous Releases: None. This item has a cushion underframe and body mounted couplers.

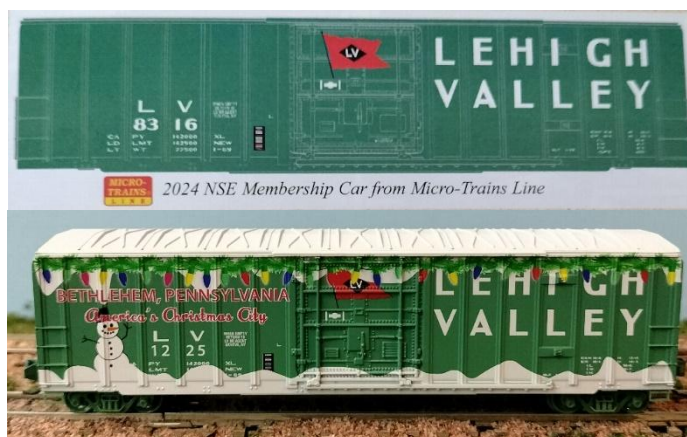
It might have been a bit cheeky for the Lehigh Valley Railroad, which had been 85 percent owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad since 1962, to have boxcars built by the Despatch Shops of East Rochester, New York, a subsidiary of the Pennsy's arch-rival New York Central. Ah, but by then Despatch Shops, which was already beginning to wind down operations, was part of the Penn Central, the ill-fated merger of the PRR and NYC, so this order was still all in the family. The series 8300 to 8399 was Despatch Shops Lot 157, constructed during 1968 to 1969. These cars were exterior post like the MTL 027 body style, but the prototypes had a different roof and distinctive "Despatch Ends" which look more like a pre-x-post design style than what's on the Micro-Trains car. There are also seven posts either side of the door, and the roof differs as well. A good topside look from October 1974 of sister car LV 8318 as of October 1974 is on Fallen Flags (URL [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org)). There's been a more accurate model of this car available from another manufacturer.

Don't leave Fallen Flags, though, because just below that image of LV 8318, there are four bingo photos of this month's release, ranging from August 1981 to April 1994. (One image is posted twice.) You could put these in chronological order by amount of rust without too much effort. The shot of the 8319 that appears to most closely match the model is from February 1991; by the April 1994 photo the reporting marks on the side and end we can see are restenciled on boxcar red (brown) patch panels. By that time the car was well into the Conrail era.

The ORER for April 1970 has all 100 cars in the group LV 8300 to 8399. They are described as "Box, Steel, Cushion Underframe" with AAR Designation XL. An end note calls out plug doors and two Evans Load Dividers per car. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 7 inches, inside height 9 feet 9 inches, outside length 57 feet 10 inches (so the extended draft gear couplers on the model are appropriate), extreme height 15 feet, door opening 10 feet 6 inches, and capacity 4720 cubic feet or 142,000 pounds. The April 1976 Equipment Register shows that 96 of the cars were conveyed to Conrail. The very last car still with Lehigh Valley markings in the April 1995 ORER was from this series. Was it the 8319? I guess we'll never know. Meanwhile, these LV cars became part of Class X65 under Conrail and received several different paint schemes and road numbers in the 229000s, possibly 229759 to 229854.

The folks in Talent are getting a lot of mileage out of this base paint scheme. There's this car, of course. An unweathered version with road number 8316, from the same prototype series, will be the N Scale Enthusiast's 2024 Membership Car (MTL artwork at right, actual product may vary), provided to each member in good standing sometime later this year. (Joining this year and receiving this car is still possible; see [www.nscaleenthusiast.com](http://www.nscaleenthusiast.com) for more information.

Shameless Plug/Full Disclosure: If you join, tell them I sent you on your application and I get a little "spiff" for it.) And finally, at the National N Scale Convention in Bethlehem, there was a Christmas-Themed Car available from the NSE folks (see above). We'll see those "Christmas Lights" again a bit further in these bytes...



**993 05 076, \$109.95.**

**Reporting Marks:** BNSF 406020, 406088, and 406225 (Catalog Numbers 092 44 590, 092 45 590, and 092 46 590).

**BNSF Weathered Three Pack.**

Jewel box packaging. Consists of three Two Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers. Mineral red (brown) with white lettering including reporting marks on left and circle cross herald on right. White on black COTS panel at

bottom right. Yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes along bottom sill (position varies slightly by car). Heavy weathering especially on tops of cars. Scrawl and multicolor graffiti. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes to mid-decade of the 2010s. Previous Similar Releases: Catalog 092 00 190, Road Number 406031, November 2005, Catalog 092 50 190, Road Number 406116, May 2012 (part of Runner Pack #63 which was a variety of BNSF cars); then Weathered Release 092 44 290, Road Number 409164, January 2019. These previous releases are more like the 406088 and 406225 numbers in this set than the 406020.

We might have with this particular coverage a record for the number of images, mostly official, of previous Micro-Trains releases that are relevant to a new one! And yes, I am far too lazy to check this. This is partially thanks to the fact that the three cars originated from two different series from two BNSF predecessor railroads, although they carry almost identical paint schemes (note the smaller reporting marks and circle cross on the 406020 than on the other two cars). Holy Family Tree, Batman! Oh, wait, Robin, old chum, I think that's been done...



Let's get some information from RailcarPhotos.com. The 406020 and 406088 are from the BNSF series 406000 to 406088, previously the Burlington Northern series 435700 to 435799, originally Northern Pacific series 75000 to 75099 built by American Car & Foundry in November 1967. Micro-Trains has done a virtual two-pack of these cars in NP paint (Catalog 092 00 23x, Road Numbers 75023 and 75052 December 2008, at right) and a Weathered Release with partially "knocked out" road number on one side (Catalog 092 44 230, August 2009, in fact the first 92000/092 car released in Weathered form).



MTL has also done these cars in Burlington Northern paint (Catalog 92080, Road Number 183925, December 1997, reprinted as Catalog 092 00 080, Road Number 435755, June 2007, at left). Meanwhile, the 406225 is from BNSF series 406200 to 406285; previously BN series 435900 to 435987, originally CB&Q (Burlington) series 183900 to 183987 built by AC&F in

July 1968. Micro-Trains has done those Burlington cars as well (Catalog 92070, Road Number 183925, March 1995, and Road Number 183922, April 1996, photo of the latter from my accumulation at right since Micro-Trains wasn't yet posting pictures on their website-- come to think of it, they didn't have a website yet!)



And here are the official MTL images of the previous three BNSF cars in this general scheme, left to right in chronological order of issuance. These aren't the same Catalog Numbers used here – in fact, the Weathered Release doesn't carry the same catalog number as the first two "clean" releases. And they are from different prototype series from each other and from this new three pack. The "clean" cars didn't have conspicuity stripes, meaning that this new three pack consists of "not a reprints" even without the weathering and graffiti.

Well, that's just great, George, but how about some prototype photos? We have you covered there. All three are available on RRPictureArchives: BNSF 406020 as of January 2006 and January 2013, BNSF 406088 and 406225 together in a photo uploaded April 2007 (the photo date of 1/1/2000 is suspect since the cars have conspicuity stripes), and BNSF 406225 by itself from October 2011. RailcarPhotos has the 406020 as of May 2011 – interestingly, without conspicuity stripes or graffiti-- and the 406225 from December 2008 – interestingly, without any graffiti. And BNSF 406088 is on Canadian Freight Car Gallery as of June 2013. All three are CF2970 Center Flows, early version, which matches the MTL 092 body style. And all three



have the considerable residue of something – I’m thinking it’s cement – that is rendered on the Micro-Trains cars. I’m thinking that the RRPictureArchives images are closer to what MTL used for these Center Flows. I’ll also note that this mineral red and white scheme with BNSF circle cross co-existed with the later gray and black with BNSF wedge within these groups of cars.

We’ll begin ORER lookups with the January 2006 issue as that’s the first in the Research Accumulation that follows the 2005 mandate for conspicuity stripes. And just for fun, the groups noted by Railcar Photos don’t match the groups in the Equipment Register. The 406020 and 406088 was in the series BNSF 406000 to 406133, which had 86 cars at the time, while the 406225 was in the series BNSF 406210 to 406281, which had 33 cars at the time. Given photos from the early 2010s I went next to the January 2011 ORER, where the car counts went **up** to 100 and 40 respectively – probably resulting from catching up with cars still painted for predecessor railroads. In the April 2013 Register the car counts had settled back to 86 and 33, and in the October 2014 ORER they were 71 and 18. By the January 2018 Register there were no cars remaining from 406000 to 406133 and just two in the series 406210 to 406281.



**N SCALE MULTI-PACKS:** Runner Pack #225, also known as the Pacific Fruit Express Refrigerator Four Pack (983 00 225, \$129.95, Jewel Case Packaging; 993 00 225, \$114.95, Foam Nest Packaging) is now available, confirmed through online sale listings. UMTRR Pre-Order Coverage was in the February 2024 issue. The individual Catalog and Road Numbers are: 059 51 111, 902; 059 52 111, 908; 059 53 111, 917; 059 54 111, 923. These are the second through fifth releases of this item.



Expected mid-month and confirmed available via online sale listings is the **Northern Pacific Weathered Three Pack with Sugar Beet Load** (983 02 248, \$111.95 with Jewel Cases, 993 02 248, \$99.95 with Foam Nest Packaging). UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the February 2024 issue. The individual Catalog and Road Numbers are: 084 44 051, 118542; 084 45 051, 118551; 084 46 051, 118583. These are the third through fifth releases of this item.

Also expected mid-month and now available, confirmed via online sale listings, is the **CSX/ex-Clinchfield Weathered Three Pack** (983 02 249, \$101.95 with Jewel Cases, 993 02 249, \$89.95 with Foam Nest Packaging). UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the February 2024 issue. The individual Catalog and Road Numbers are: 045 44 770, 10124; 045 45 770, 10131; 045 46 770, 10133. These are the first through third releases for this item.



Now, a bit of catching up on the individual catalog and road numbers for last month's multipacks, which I omitted to get the June "Early Edition" out the door.

- For Runner Pack #224, also known as the Chesapeake and Ohio Hopper Four Pack (993/983 00 224), they are: 091 51 030, 126000; 091 52 030, 126766; 091 53 030, 127039; 091 54 030, 127917.
- For the Louisville and Nashville Heavyweight Passenger Car Five Pack (993/983 02 246), they are: 140 51 570, Railway Post Office, Road Number 1116; 147 52 570, 70 Foot Baggage Car, Road Number 1447; and 160 53 570, 160 54 570, and 160 55 570, Single Window Coaches, Road Numbers 2507, 2510 and 2512.
- For the Northwest Oklahoma (NOKL) Weathered Bulkhead Flat Car Three Pack with Tire Load (993/983 02 247), they are: 054 51 410, 725121; 054 52 410, 725300; and 054 53 510, 725422.

There are official photos for the Runner Pack and NOKL pack but not for the L&N Passenger Set at this writing. I'll post what is available to the "2024 Month by Month" page on the UMTRR Website, when I can next update it...

*The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **July 31**.*



**Targeted Delivery December 2024:**

**983 00 230, \$119.95.**

**Reporting Marks: C&O 460238, 460268, 460395, and 460447.**

**Chesapeake and Ohio Runner Pack (Runner Pack #230).**

Jewel box packaging. Scheduled to consist of four MTL 073 series forty foot boxcars with Youngstown doors, without running boards, with high brake wheel and full side and end ladders (body style to be confirmed upon release). Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and "For Progress" herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label and black on yellow sideboard at bottom right. Lowered underframe and body mounted couplers. Approximate Time Period: 1969 through the decade of the 1970s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Page 26 of the **Chesapeake and Ohio Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** has a whole string of these cars. Most visible among these is C&O 463817... which is not one of the four cars in this Runner Pack! In the accompanying caption it's noted, "Freshly painted 40 foot C&O boxcars in 1969 seem out of place." And that might be so, but it was the result of the leasing of second-hand boxcars from Chicago Freight Leasing Company, numbered in the series 460000 to 460999. According to the **Color Guide**, these came from a group built in 1947 for or by the Burlington, and possibly the Pennsylvania Railroad also. As part of the reworking done by Chicago Freight Car, the running board was removed and the roof was replaced. That's their "CFC" in the service stencil below the reporting marks. I tried to locate the original Burlington boxcar series in the **CB&Q Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Service**, but didn't see anything obvious, although it was noted that the CB&Q also leased boxcars from Chicago Freight Leasing Company in 1968!

These cars were likely not PS-1s which are the basis for the Micro-Trains model. The bottom sills are different, for example. The sides are riveted, not welded, but under a shiny new coat of paint that's going to be hard to pick out when reduced to N Scale. What's not obvious from the photo in the **Color Guide** is the brake wheel position: high or low. What is obvious is that



we don't have a "door thing" here as the prototype door opening was six feet, same as on the forthcoming MTL cars.

The Fallen Flags site has bingos on two of the four cars. There is a shot of C&O 460268 as of April 1977, clearly showing a high brake wheel. If my observations are correct, this should mean that this Runner Pack will be of the MTL 073 body style... but we'll of course wait for the actual release. There is also a photo of C&O 460395 as of June 1972, in glorious black and white.

To get to the overall group of leased boxcars cited in the **Color Guide**, the April 1970 ORER has three separate series of cars, 460000 to 460499, 460500 to 460799, and 460900 to 460999, or put another way, skipping numbers 460800 to 460899. All of the key dimensions are the same with one exception: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 3 inches or 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 14 feet 10 inches, and capacity 3898 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. The third series has a seven foot door while the other two have a six foot door. It all adds up to the maximum possible 900 cars.

All four of the cars in the coming Runner Pack belong to the first series, 460000 to 460499, so we'll focus on just those now. In the April 1975 Equipment Register, there were 352 cars in the main series, plus one car equipped with a "door bulkhead" and in salt service (C&O 460059), and four more that were hauling "Empty Milk Cans" (460072, 460075, 460078, and 460079). Reflecting the general obsolescence of forty foot boxcars, the group was down to just 23 as of the July 1980 ORER, then ten in the April 1981 ORER, and seven in the April 1982 ORER, which is where I stopped looking.

We turn back to the **Color Guide** for one more data point: a real life "oops." When first supplied to the C&O, these cars were numbered into the "wrong" series. Instead of the 460000s, they were incorrectly given numbers in the 463000s and 464000s. Before being corrected, a photo of C&O 464102 was snapped in June 1969, a month after its repainting. Note to the folks in Talent, Oregon: this is **not** a good recommendation for a future April Fool's Car...

## N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



The **Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) Boxcar (038 00 650, \$28.95, Reporting Marks: MTLX 524)**, scheduled for mid-month release, is now available (confirmed via online sale listings). UMTRR pre-order coverage was in last month's issue.

Oh, and I mentioned in last month's UMTRR that I really should write down my own Northern Lights story. I did, and it's here: [www.irwinsjournal.com/ijonline/ij\\_lights.htm](http://www.irwinsjournal.com/ijonline/ij_lights.htm).





of the car. Something to keep in mind if your pike has **really** close clearances.

The first of the “Honoring Class 1 Railroads Series” modified boxcars is now available, for the **Union Pacific (102 00 844, \$29.95, Reporting Marks UP 6224)**. The simulated granite insert really is an “insert” which goes into the door opening. It’s not flush with the side



The **Iowa Interstate 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Boxcar (102 00 300, IAIS 6424)**, targeted for mid-June delivery, is confirmed available based on online sale listings. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the January 2024 issue.

*In addition to the above, the following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **July 31**.*



Orange sides with yellow and black bands. Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Black BNSF “wedge” herald with yellow outline. Red, white and blue American flag at top left. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom sill. Simulated granite plaque with BNSF circle cross herald in door opening. MTL preliminary artwork shown; actual product may vary.

**Targeted Delivery May 2025:**  
**102 00 848, \$29.95.**

**Reporting Marks: BNSF 9524.**  
**Modified 60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar, BNSF Railway “Honoring Class 1 Railroads.”**



Blue with thin yellow stripes at top and bottom of sides. Yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and “CSX Transportation” herald on right. Red, white and blue American flag at top left. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes along bottom sill. Simulated granite plaque with CSX “boxcar” herald in door opening. MTL preliminary artwork shown; actual product may vary.

**Targeted Delivery March 2025:**  
**102 00 849, \$29.95.**

**Reporting Marks: CSXT 4024.**  
**Modified 60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar, CSX Transportation “Honoring Class 1 Railroads.”**

This should wrap up the Honoring of Class One Railroads by Micro-Trains unless one of two things happens: first, a car honoring Amtrak, which is technically a Class One; second, a look back to dozens of Class Ones of the past begins. There were once dozens of Class Ones so this would take a while. I don't think either will happen, however.

If it did, though, I could do something that I can only do exactly once now: name check locations in the United States. (Unless you count "Canadian" and "Pacific," which I don't.) With the collapse of Burlington Northern Santa Fe into BNSF (growl) and the merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern into something called CPKC (grumble) there's only Norfolk Southern remaining as the single Class One with a city in its official title. Winding back a few decades, there would be companies like the Louisville and Nashville, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Denver and Rio Grande Western, the Spokane, Portland and Seattle, and of course, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. Oh, well, I guess that's progress. By the way, there are two excellent books called **Merging Lines** and **Main Lines** that together cover the period from 1900 to 1970 and from 1970 to 2002 respectively. They're not inexpensive but they are available at larger libraries and probably through interlibrary loans.

MTL did have a nice touch on these forthcoming releases, using two different heralds on each of these two cars. Before there was the "wedge" of BNSF there was the last version of the circle cross of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (and that's still two cities in the original name...). And as much as I don't like having CSX be the originator of Initials as Names, I do like the "boxcar" logo.



*Targeted Delivery October 2024:*

993 21 388, \$249.95.

**MT&L (Medford, Talent and Lakecreek) Railroad Christmas Set 2024.**

Jewel case packaging. Scheduled to consist of one 987 Powered FT-A Diesel (Road Number 1975) three 145 series Paired Window Heavyweight Coaches with four wheel trucks (Road Numbers 158, 199, and 169, and one 144 series Heavyweight 3-2 Observation Car with six

wheel trucks (Road Number 177). All items are painted in the MT&L “70s/80s” scheme of red with yellow lettering. The FT-A has the MTL herald and roadname across side, road number at rear and white on black numberboards. The paired window coaches have the roadname across the letterboard, the MTL herald, roadname and “Route of the Rogue Valley” slogan at bottom left, road number at bottom right, and car name at bottom center (“Christmas Valley,” “Mistletoe Lake,” and “Nutcracker Hill,” the last two as “temporary” car names in yellow on brown). The observation car has a larger MTL herald, roadname and slogan at bottom left, car number at bottom right and “temporary” car name “Reindeer Trail” at bottom center in yellow on brown. All items have multicolor strings of Christmas lights, green garland and green Christmas wreaths at various points (the locomotive doesn’t have garland).

It **must** be Christmas in July, because my iTunes keeps randomly selecting holiday songs for me. Look, I enjoy The Chipmunks as much as everyone else does...OK, maybe not “everyone else” ... but I do restrict my Holiday Music to the Thanksgiving to Epiphany time period. (Note to Radio Station Programmers: There are Twelve Days of Christmas, and perhaps if you didn’t start playing holiday songs right after Halloween we wouldn’t be sick of them by December 25 and you could actually play them during the appropriate season!)

OK, so it’s not really Christmas in July, but we do have from the folks in Talent a passenger train all decked out for the holidays, with the nice touch of temporary renaming of three of the passenger cars to something a little more December-like. (The road numbers for these cars, 109, 179, and 199 have not actually been run before by MTL.) Just the thing for the Santa Claus Special, or the December Dinner Excursion, or whatever else the Passenger Train Department over at the MT&L have in mind. It’s a Freelance Railroad, so Rule #1 absolutely applies!

What I like best about the decorations here are the Christmas lights. For me, it’s more than a bit reminiscent of the “Light Up The Night” Christmas car from back in 2000 (at right) which remains my favorite of all cars of this type... sorry, Micro-Mouse. It’s noted in the pre-order description of this set that “all cars come with a snowy roof decoration.” That’s not in the preliminary artwork and it’ll be interesting to see what that looks like.



**Z SCALE:** No releases or pre-order announcements this month.

**HO SCALE:** There are no releases of the “Grit N’ Grime” series this month, but there are two new preorders, see below. The July Micro-News has in its “Pre-Order Review” section that the CSXT Three Bay Center Flow (2000-001, \$49.95) and the two Rio Grande Two Bay Center Flows (2200-005 and 006, \$49.95 each) are still available for pre-order with targeted release in September.



*In addition to the above, the following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **July 31**.*



**Targeted Delivery September 2024:  
2000-002, \$49.95.**

**Reporting Marks: SP 496071.**

**Three Bay Center Flow Covered  
Hopper Kit, Southern Pacific (Union  
Pacific) / ex-Golden West Service.**

**"Grit N' Grime" Release #9.**

Blue with white lettering and yellow and red roadname and block logo on right. Black restenciled reporting marks on gray patch panel. Vertical conspicuity stripes at six points along side. The 496304 has horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along bottom of side. Moderate weathering and streaking and fading effects. Pre-production assembled kit shown in photo. Approximate Time Period: 2008, plus or minus. Previous Releases: None. Note: This car was released in N Scale as one of the SP/Golden West Weathered Two Pack (993 05 970, October 2021).

We go right to RailcarPhotos.com for bingo photos for this car, both taken in 2008. SP 496071, previously GVSF 512037, was found in Wichita, Kansas, in February 2008 and again in November 2008, this second time with some, ahem, additional decoration.

This car started in the SP series 496000 to 496199, built by American Car and Foundry in 1965. After their Golden West Service they were restenciled back into the original Espee series, possibly with the exact same numbers that they started with. The original class was H-100-12 but the 496304 was rebuilt to Class H-100-12R. I'm not sure what was done during that rebuilding process. According to the Railgoat website, these cars had three section longitudinal hatches and a capacity of 4460 cubic feet. The Accurail website has their 2000 series body style as a model of a 4600 cubic foot hopper.

I'm giving 2008 as the "plus or minus" central point for the Approximate Time Period. The unwinding of Golden West Service was already underway at that point. However, the start of the ATP is bound by the use of conspicuity stripes on these cars, which started in 2005. Only two cars of the initial 200 remained in the January 2011 ORER, so the "plus" part of the ATP isn't going to be too far out either.



**Targeted Delivery September 2024:  
2000-003, \$49.95.**

**Reporting Marks: UP 76029.**

**Three Bay Center Flow Covered  
Hopper Kit, Union Pacific.**

**"Grit N' Grime" Release #10.**

Gray with mostly black lettering including large roadname in center and reporting marks on left. Vertical conspicuity stripes at



eight points along side. Multicolor ACI label and white on black COTS panel at far right. Moderate to heavy weathering and rust effects. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes to as late as the present. Pre-production assembled kit shown in photo. Previous Releases: None. Note: Released in N Scale as one of the Union Pacific Weathered Four Pack (993/983 05 052, July 2023).

There are bingo photos for this car from March and September 2020 on RailcarPhotos.com. It's noted there that the 76029 is in the series UP 75850 to 76149, built by American Car & Foundry in 1976. These were given the UP's Class CH-100-30 and were originally listed as 4600 cubic foot capacity cars, which should match the Accurail 2000 body style. The bingo photos appear to be the basis for the Micro-Trains model except that the, ahem, additional decoration, present wasn't reproduced—the Union Pacific doesn't allow graffiti on models of any of their equipment.

Since there are conspicuity stripes, the Approximate Time Period can't be any sooner than 2005, at least Strictly Speaking. So out comes the January 2006 ORER, where the car count is 251 out of a possible 300. Only the outside dimensions are given: length 60 feet, width 9 feet 7 inches, height 14 feet 11 inches. These had a Gross Rail Weight (car plus lading) of 263,000 pounds. Given the photo evidence I jumped from there to the October 2020 ORER, where 78 cars remained in the listing. Does that mean an Approximate Time Period to The Present? Well, in 2020 these cars would have already been 44 years old. The long-standing "forty year rule" for equipment now has a myriad of exceptions, and only applies to cars in interchange service. The UP has plenty of its own right of way on which to use these cars. I can also tell you that the most recent image of any car in this series on RailcarPhotos is from April 2024. That's of UP 75987 found in Enid, Oklahoma, still in the original paint scheme with large roadname.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** August is the target for the first release of the MTL 134 Series 60 Foot Wood Deck Modern Flatcar. No roadnames yet! The car is based on a Thrall prototype. It will have a diecast body, body mounted couplers, and metal wheels. Details include tie down channels, a side mounted ratchet brake wheel, and modeler-installed cut levers and air hoses.



The above pre-production image was part of the Micro-Trains "handout," available on the MTL website at this writing.

MTL CEO Eric Smith talked about the forthcoming flat car at the Manufacturer's Breakfast during the National N Scale Convention in Bethlehem last month—the first time that Colleen and I attended this event. (Note to NNSC organizers: It works a lot better having the Manufacturer's Breakfast on Saturday instead of Sunday. Yes, I know you heard that a lot.) Most of the rest of Eric's remarks were about current or soon to be released products of which we're already aware, but there was something new: Billboards. The folks in Talent are current

working on single and double sided versions. They'll initially include advertising appropriate for said billboards – and there is a lot to choose from, no? – but they're thinking about opening things up for custom artwork submitted by modelers... "within reason," says Mr. Smith. That caveat got an understanding bit of laughter from the attendees.

Also at the NNSC, the annual gift from Micro-Trains to attendees of the closing Banquet (which really is the last event now that the Manufacturer's Breakfast has been shifted to Saturday) was



something that not only fit the location, but was based on a prototype car. LV 37024 was part of a series of sale/leaseback gondolas from United States Railway Equipment. If it looks familiar, perhaps it's because this car has been done twice as regular releases. I bring this up mostly because the distinctive "Pinion Gear" load included with the Banquet Car is now available as a separate two pack (499 45 025, \$14.95).

Available from MTL this month is an undecorated version of their 50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar with Single Youngstown Door (025 00 000, \$15.25, at right). The car comes unassembled, which is something I've always appreciate – no need to disassemble for the painting process. As always, colors may vary.



**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** The rebuilding of the MTL website continued as this month's bytes were being assembled. I'm going to give it until next issue before I reactivate the Bye-Bye Board. It seems prudent to wait just a bit longer for the website to settle down before compiling a list of what's left the building and updating the UMTRR Release Tables. It's certainly more important for MTL to be able to sell what they have than to note what's sold out and discontinued. I suspect this will result in an extended list of what's outta here and therefore some overtime here at UMTRR HQ.

The good news for me is that I still got "bye-bye board," "outta here" and "left the building" included in this section...

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** A bit of a compromise I'd missed on this month's and last month's Pennsylvania Railroad mill gondolas (107 00 090 and 091) was pointed out to me: the real PRR cars rode on Dalman trucks or National B-1 trucks, not the Bettendorf trucks used for the model. However, it was also noted that the mill gondola model has a special narrowed version of the Micro-Trains Bettendorf truck, since their current roster of truck styles (which does include both Dalman and National B-1 versions) wouldn't fit correctly on the mill gondola. That's because the real mill gondolas were narrower than usual in order to remain within clearances.

**OOPS PATROL:** Nothing specific this month, which should not imply that I didn't make any mistakes in the June issue.

**AND THAT WRAPS UP AND CATCHES UP:** We're all caught up with the information not included in the June "Early Edition" and of course all of the July News and Views. We'll return to whatever passes for normal around here for August.

Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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