



# The Interchange

Our 41st Year

Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders – OVAR

January 2002

Issue 359

## Try a laser kit, you will like it

by Grant Knowles

*(This article was prepared from a presentation that Grant made to the September meeting of the St. Lawrence Division of the NM-RA)*

**H**ave you ever considered Model Railroading to be like a play?

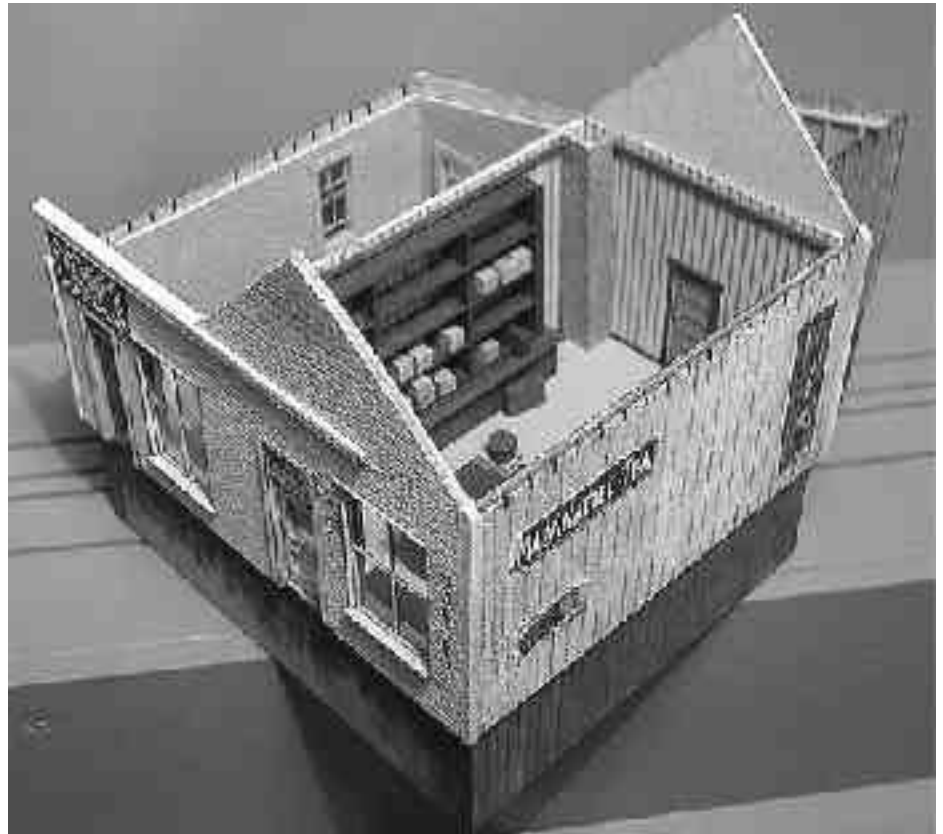
We have all the same components, a plot — the railroad operations, cast of characters — the trains and even the stage props — the scenery. It is the buildings in the scenery that help to set the stage through establishing the era and locale along with adding character, life and purpose to the railroad.

Model Railroad structures have been an intricate part of the hobby as long as model trains have been highballing down the sectional track. Until recently the wood-based kit was the cornerstone of the hobby but the advent of injection molded plastics helped to broaden the scope of structure types while increasing the ease of assembly. Over the past 15 years, this area of the hobby has undergone another evolution as resins and plaster have appeared facilitating lower volume cost effective production of unique structures — though not as simple as plastic kits to assemble, they weren't far from it.

In about the same time frame, high technology was making inroads with the structure kits through laser technology. Wood-based structure kits traditionally consisted of bundles of strip wood and sheets of milled sheet wood that often contained die cut windows and door openings. As the dies wore down, the cutouts became ragged so the modeller was required to expend more effort and skill to clean up the openings. The modeller had to possess a certain level of skill and experience to assemble some of the lower quality or more complex kits.

So just what is a Laser Kit?

Laser Kit is the terminology used to describe products made with laser technology. This involves the use of an X-Y Plotter that



Grant Knowles had R&H Enterprises laser-kit on display in December.

has a laser mounted in the carriage. The plotter is controlled by a computer that guides the laser over a horizontal mounted wood board as it cuts (burns) out a pattern. Thus this arrangement allows very close part tolerances as well as creating very intricate parts such as windows and staircases.

Laser technology first appeared in the late '80s when American Model Builders (AMB) used it to precisely cut walls out of scribed siding. At the same time, the level of engineering that went into these kits increased as the manufacturer took advantage of this technology. Most kits are now engineered with interlocking tabs that greatly simplify construction. Also the types of materials that are prepared by laser technology have expanded to include wood (sheet &

ply), plastic and cardboard. The lasers were not only used for cutting but to add surface details such as boards, nail holes and assembly guide lines.

AMB remains the leading producer today with kits in various scales. The term Laser  
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*plus much more*

# From the Private Car

by Denis Rule, OVAR Chairman

Now that all the excitement of the Christmas season is over, it's time to pack up the decorations and put away the G Scale North Pole & Southern train set till next year. Now I can relax and get back to the model railroad.

I can think of no better way to end a stressful day at the office than to go down to the basement and putter in the train room for a bit, assemble a kit, work on some scenery or just run a train. All these activities seem to make all the stuff in a day fade away. This is why I have embarked as a volunteer to help out in THE

WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY campaign, launched by Walthers, to promote our hobby to others.

I would like to ask for your help in assembling a slide presentation showing different aspects of model railroading be it modeling, operating or some good shots of finished scenes on your railroad. If we would all dig through our slide collections, I'm certain that as a group we can come up with a very attractive and professional show to help attract new people to our hobby. I hope you will join me and become an ambassador for our hobby.

Morris was applying for a job as a flagman/switch operator on the railroad. The chief engineer was conducting the interview.

"What would you do if the NORTHERN EXPRESS was heading north on Track 1 and the SOUTHERN CENTRAL was heading south on Track 1?"

Morris quickly answered... "Well, I'd call my brother."

The chief engineer just sat there for a second. "WHY would you call your brother???"

"He's never seen a big train wreck before."

—courtesy of Bob Farquhar

## Try a Laser Kit

continued from page 1

Kit has become the norm for wood structure kits that translates into easier, foolproof assembly.

### Technology Advantages

In a nutshell, here are some advantages of this technology:

- Computer-generated accurate information.
- Precision — tight, repeatable tolerances.
- Scales can be easily changed — magnification factor is the only change required.
- Can create/cut intricate parts like window mullions.
- Cleaner, more consistent cut than ruler die stamping.
- Laminated plys (very thin) permit complex window assembly from layers.
- Now engineered with interlocking tabs akin to ease of assembly enjoyed with plastic kits.
- Latest advance — peel & stick — first introduced by AMB.
- Since parts are now individual, can be pre painted before assembly such as building windows in layers — great for different colours.

### Disadvantages of Laser Technology

Similarly, there are a few disadvantages that you need to be aware of;

- Generally more expensive than traditional kits of equal size and complexity. Higher cost to manufacture — cutting time and effort.
- Learning curve: e.g. peel & stick, though not long or labourious, keyed parts.



- Not easy to modify kit due to the high level of engineering that has gone into the design.
- Burnt edges to wood — doesn't lend itself to be painted light colours.

Many of the traditional wood kit manufacturers have made the move to laser technology and many new firms are now on the market. Generally speaking, laser kits are of at least a good quality level. Here is a sampling of manufacturers:

- American Model Builders (AMB)
- Banta Model Works
- Crystal River Products
- Northeastern Scale Models
- Bills Train Shop (BTS)

- Fine Scale Miniatures
- Master Creations (BTS)
- South River Model Works
- Builders In Scale
- Plus many use the technology in part of their (monster) kits.

Next time you are at the hobby shop, take a look at some of these kits. If you haven't already, pick one up, give it a try, they are really lots of fun to build and as they come in all price ranges and prototypes, not doubt there is one just waiting for your layout!

In a later issue, *THE INTERCHANGE* will have some advice from Grant on building a laser kit structure.



Bill Scobie had CPR Hudsons on display, including blue 1939 Royal Train power.

## A Royal Trio

Ian Cranstone photos

The fabled tuscan and gray paint scheme that adorned the leading members of Canadian Pacific Railway's steam fleet has always been a show stopper. OVAR members got a special appreciation of it at the December meeting thanks to Hugh Laing and Bill Scobie.

Hugh had three CPR Hudsons on display. One was the standard one that we have all seen at least in books and will be able to experience live if the rebuilt 2816 ever gets this far east. Next was the B.C. Rail version that is coming to an end due to spending restraints by the provincial government. The third was the blue Hudson that pulled the Royal train in 1939 and went to the World's Fair in 1939.

Hugh obtained a few of the Weaver models O scale CPR Hudsons that were found in storage in the United States and knew he had to have one painted in the blue scheme to round out his collection. Enter Bill "Rembrandt" Scobie who spent hours and hours tracking down all the details needed to get the right shade of blue and the correct crests for King George VI to mount on the locomotive.

The idea for the blue Hudson, a paint scheme that lasted only nine months, came



from a picture that Hugh's mother in law gave him some years ago. "We finished the research this September," he recounts. "The locomotive is as authentic as we can make it." Later this year Bill will have five Lionel passenger cars painted in CP livery to give the locomotive a train to haul around his layout. "It will be close to what CP operated."

Weaver, through the Korean builder Samhongsas, built several hundred brass

models of the Hudsons in O scale lettered for CPR and BC Rail. Hugh has lots of fun running the CPR and BC Rail versions on his O-96 layout. Now he has a unique trio of the Hudsons that he says will be his legacy to the hobby.

The display that and Bill had at the December meeting was a mini history course in heraldry and steam engines. It was a treat to see such beautifully rendered steamers.



# CPR expands Holiday Train to U.S.

CPR Press Release,  
dated December 4, 2001

Canadian Pacific Railway's Holiday Train, a 1,200-ft. freight train decorated with thousands of Christmas lights, will begin its spectacular cross-continent journey in New York City tomorrow with a special ceremony to honor the fallen heroes of September 11.

"CPR's 17,000 Canadian and American employees were deeply moved by the events of Sept. 11 and wanted to show their sympathy for New Yorkers," said CPR President and CEO Rob Ritchie. "The Holiday Train has become a symbol of employee pride and caring, and we're taking it to New York to show our support."

The CPR Holiday Train begins its 400-mile U.S. journey through the northeastern U.S. at Fresh Pond Junction Rail Yard in Queens where all New Yorkers can come and view the illuminated train and special holiday entertainment.

At 4 p.m. EST, Rob Ritchie will ring the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange to commemorate CPR's recent listing, simultaneously lighting the train's 8,000 Christmas lights. The lighting will be fed live via satellite directly to the trading floor of the NYSE and will be available to all North American broadcasters.

Representatives from the NYSE, New York City officials, community leaders, the families of the fallen heroes of September 11 and New Yorkers will join CPR officials at the Holiday Train. CPR's partner in the Holiday Train, General Electric, which supplied the lights and other support, will also take part in the tribute.

In addition to an earlier \$100,000 donation to the NYSE Fund for Fallen Heroes, CPR will donate Canadian Christmas trees to families of the firefighters and police officers who lost their lives in the September 11 rescue. Handmade wreaths will be presented to city officials, police and fire commissioners.

After leaving Fresh Pond, the train will stop briefly on the Hellgate Bridge at approximately 7:00 p.m. EST for a photo opportunity against the New York skyline and then head north through New York State. The train will stop in Saratoga Springs, Fort Edward, Whitehall and Plattsburg on Dec. 6 for special charity events in each community before crossing the Canadian border and ending its journey in Montreal, Quebec.



U.S. Midwest Holiday Train crosses into Canada.

A second Holiday Train will begin its Canadian journey the next day, visiting 50 communities along the CPR network between Montreal and Vancouver, British Columbia. A third train, travelling through the U.S. Midwest, leaves Chicago on December 8. Food and cash raised at all event stops will be donated to local food banks.

CPR has approximately 1,100 employees in the northeastern U.S. The company was spun off from its parent company, Canadian Pacific Limited, in October. CPR trades under the symbol "CP" on the New York and Toronto stock exchanges.

## About Canadian Pacific Railway

Canadian Pacific Railway is North America's first transcontinental railway and is the only transcontinental carrier with direct service to the U.S. Eastern Seaboard. CPR's 14,000-mile network serves the principal centers of Canada, from Montreal to Vancouver, and the U.S. Northeast and Midwest regions. CPR's track feeds directly into the Chicago hub from the East and West coasts. Alliances with other carriers extend CPR's market reach beyond its own network and into the major business centres of Mexico. For more information, visit CPR's website at:

[www.cpr.ca](http://www.cpr.ca)

For more information on the Holiday Train visit:

[www.cpr.ca/holidaytrain](http://www.cpr.ca/holidaytrain)

## Canadian Holiday Train

The Holiday Train left Montreal's St. Luc Yard on Dec. 7, travelling west on CPR's mainline to end its journey in Port Coquitlam, B.C. on Dec. 21. The Holiday Train's corporate sponsors include: Hudson's Bay Company, General Electric, Canadian Tire and All Star Entertainment, and the following Canadian unions: Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, United Transportation Union, Rail Canada Traffic Controllers, Canadian Auto Workers Local 101, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, CP Police Association and United Steelworkers of America, Local 1976.

## Midwest Holiday Train

Leaving CPR's Bensenville yard in Franklin Park, Ill., on Dec. 8, it travelled west on CPR's mainline, stopping in 14 Midwest communities including Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minn., and Minot, N.D., before ending its journey in Moose Jaw, Sask., on Dec. 14 when it met the Canadian Holiday Train in a special ceremony. The U.S. Holiday Train's major sponsor is IMC Global Inc. of Lake Forest, Ill. Other sponsors include United Sugars Corp. of Moorhead, Minn., and Schneider National Inc. of Green Bay, Wis.



Canadian Holiday Train (left) and U.S. Midwest Holiday Train meet on Dec. 14.



Holiday Train crosses Hellgate Bridge with New York City skyline in background on Dec. 5.  
January 2002

# T&NO takes prize

Ian Cranstone photos

**Bud Nelson** was basking in a bit of reflected glory after the December meeting. He brought out an On3 coach, painted and lettered for the Temiscaming & Northern Ontario by his son Craig. The model was selected for the CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE award. TNO was a predecessor of the Ontario Northland and my sainted father can recall his boyhood days in New Liskeard watching TNO trains puff by. A neat model.

The theme for the December display was passenger cars that one might have ridden in on the way home for Christmas.

**Alex Binkley** brought out four S scale passenger cars. Two of them, painted in the classic CNR green and black, were built by the late **Marcel Sierolaski**. The other two were coaches made by American Models and painted for the Union Pacific and New York Central. All the cars need some interior detailing, grab irons, etc. More than one wag wondered how many OVARIans ever rode in an UP coach at Christmas. There's probably a few who wished they did.

**Peter Joyce** displayed an O scale Montreal & Southern Counties electric car that could have taken him home to St. Lambert. Peter noted that it is a model of a car built by the Ottawa Car Co. in 1909 and is made from a LaBelle kit with some bashing, Q Car trucks and Q Car and Wagner detail parts. We have seen a lot of your M&SC models Peter. Now we need to see a layout to go with them.

**Brian Earl** had a couple of N scale items. One was a Budd Car painted in the livery of the English Great Western Railway. His story is that American money bought out the troubled company and naturally wanted some Budd cars on the line. Brian also had an 0-4-2 and autocoach which he said were on branchlines of the GWR where the loco-



**Bud Nelson took CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE with On3 T&NO coach.**

motive could not be turned. In this case, the steamer could be controlled from the coach.

Also in N scale were a couple of British trains brought out by **Jim Jarrett**. One is a scratchbuilt weed clearing train that Jim said was scratchbuilt to reflect a train used by LMS in the 1930s. He also had a breakdown train, complete with big hook, another scratchbuilt project based on an LMS train from the 1930s.

**Greg Stubbings** had an HO CNR mail/express car that he said should be delivering Christmas parcels and mail on his layout. However his shop forces are a bit slower than that and the job is only 80% complete. It is being made from Bethlehem Car Works kit.

**Gord Bellamy**, CEO of the Lake of the Woods Navigation and Light Railway, had on a display an On30 Porter 8 ton 0-4-0T. It came from Bachmann and is being rebuilt by the LWNLRY shop forces with an auxiliary tender. It looked like a very interesting project and hopefully we will see it when it is done. Gord also had a scratchbuilt telephone booth inspired by a plan in the March/April NARROW GAUGE AND

SHORT LINE GAZETTE.

**John LeBlanc** had a model of the CNR 6060, a 4-8-2 Mountain, that is being offered as part of this year's President's Choice train set at Loblaws Stores. There's an article about the unit in the latest CANADIAN RAILWAY MODELLER.

**Grant Knowles** had another structure on display (see page 1). This time it was an HO scale laser-kit produced by R&H Enterprises as part of their Red Mountain series. It is called The Jefferson Stores and will end up on his HO On3 layout when complete. Grant is building it as part of the structure program that the St. Lawrence Division is offering this year. Grant had added a lot of interior details, which could be seen as he left the roof off. He notes that it is unusual for a frontier structure as it had a basement but that will work to his advantage on the layout.

**Hugh Laing** brought a operating manual for a full-sized GE Dash 9. A brief glance through it showed that GE tries to write its loco manuals just like it does for the ones that accompany its appliances except that the train one is a bit thicker.



**Brian Earl showed push-pull GWR steam locomotive and autocoach.**



**Peter Joyce kitbashed M&SC interurban from LaBelle kit.**



**Gord Bellamy is rebuilding Bachmann On30 Porter.**

# The train to Blainville

by Normand Levert  
photo by the author

There is a neat treat for railfans visiting Montreal; it is the Societe des Transport de la Communaute Urbaine de Montréal (STCUM) train to Blainville, running on CPR tracks. The service is a combination of old and new; the locomotives are the brand new FP59HI while the train is former GO Transit single level coaches.

The train operates push-pull with the locomotive at the east end when leaving Windsor Station. The neat part is that one can walk up to the control cab car and have a good view ahead when riding out to Blainville. This is about 40 miles one way, with a very interesting variety of scenery, rail vignettes and modellers' inspiration.

Train 175 leaves Windsor Station at 08:05, with 09:10 arrival in Blainville, which is North of Montreal. The consist returns from Blainville as train 180\* (the \* indicates connection with Trainbus 935), departing 09:20 and arriving in Parc (Jean-Talon) station at 10:04. Parc station is a platform beside the former CPR Jean Talon Station, which is now a library. You then hop on the Métro or Trainbus 935 to get back to Windsor Station. A return trip costs \$10.

The trains first runs west to Vedome, (08:11) which is also a transfer station on the Métro, and on to Montreal West. This portion of the line used to be triple track, but is now double track, still with jointed rails. At Montreal West, the train swings north and joins the double track freight line going around Mont Royal. Train 175 does not stop at Montreal West. The scenery is industrial and the line gradually turns toward the east. After running over the north portal of CN's Mont Royal tunnel line, where with luck you should be able to glimpse the new electric trains, your train runs by the CPR yard and junction between the line to Hochalaga and Montreal Harbour and the line north to Bordeaux, Ste-Therese, Latuque and, nowadays, interchanges with the Quebec & Gatineau.

Train 175 takes the north wye and heads north. The next station is Parc (Jean-Talon), (08:28) which is just past Jean Talon Boulevard. You then run over highway 40 (Le boulevard Métropolitain), then under CN's single track elevated freight line. There used



FP59HI makes for an ungainly combination with ex-GO coaches.

to be a connection between the two railways, but it is being gobbled up by industrial development. The double track line is in very good condition and as you run north, you would observe a mixture of industries and lighter residential district, with stretches of light woods. The next station, Bois-de-Boulogne, (08:32) is just before reaching the north Shore of Montreal Island. A neat operational feature is the gauntlet track on the bridge across Riviere des Prairies. There is as well a pedestrian sidewalk on this bridge.

Once on Ile Jesus — the city of Laval — the line runs through many junctions. By now, the scenery is changing to lighter industries and suburbia. The next stations are St-Martin (08:40) and Ste-Rose (08:50). Ste-Rose is a junction. If memory serves me correctly, it is about at that point that the former double track line becomes single track — the traffic from the GM plant in Ste-Therese is less than it used to be. The end of double track is a spring switch so southbound train run right hand without stopping to throw the switch.

Rosemere station is next (08:54) and then Ste-Therese (08:59) At Ste-Therese the train takes the east wye to Blainville. This line was always single track. On your left as you take the wye you will see a large monument to the victims of the Air Canada DC8 crash in the 1960s. For the next 10 minutes, you will be running through agricultural countryside that in many ways has probably changed little in the last 50 years, to reach the bedroom community of Blainville, full of post-modern development. The facilities

are minimal — one can buy a ticket from a machine, but no coffee. Be wise; buy some in Montreal.

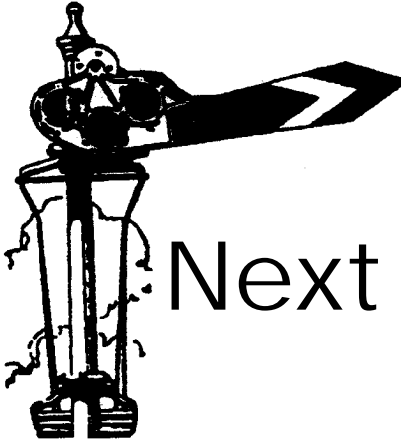
Unfortunately, you won't be able to ride in the cab on the way back — at least not without some prior arrangements. There weren't many passengers on Train 180 for the first half of its run but it filled up as we went through Laval. The former GO single level cars have large windows and afford a very good view on either side as you roll back toward Montreal. Photography would be easier on the left hand side as you travel north as this side is in the shade after Montreal West. The rail lines are in very good condition and you may catch freight trains on your trip. All and all, a very pleasant two hours but bring your own coffee and nibbles. One could also ride train 189 leaving Windsor 15:35, arriving at Blainville at 16:42 and returning as train 190 (16:55) all the way back to Windsor.

## TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

**Feb. 24: COPET OWN – CANADIAN MODEL RAILWAY SHOW**, details in next THE INTERCHANGE.

**July 13-20, 2003: TORONTO – MAPLE LEAF 2003 NMRA National**, International Plaza Hotel, 655 Dixon Rd. Info: David King (905) 560-6414, e-mail: dlking@wchat.on.ca <http://www.ml2003.com>



# Next Meeting

to be  
announced

*presented by*

**David Frost & Ken Goslett**

**Display**  
Topless freight cars

**Tuesday, February 12**

St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall  
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa  
(just off Preston Street at the Queensway)  
Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

**Admission: \$20.00**

Includes dinner, facilities, program expense, taxes and gratuities.  
Free parking.

***Please note:***

If you cannot attend the meeting after saying you would, please call Peter Joyce at 841-1950. Thank you.



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<b>Chairman:</b>	Denis Rule	613-823-3440
<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	Fern Leroux	613-830-9979
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mike Shore	613-829-8867
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Vic Dohar	613-825-7328
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<b>Webmaster:</b>	Denis Rule	613-823-3440
<b>Web Site:</b>	www.ovar.ca	

### THE INTERCHANGE

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#### Editorial Staff

**Features, Story Ideas,  
Comments and Complaints**

Alex Binkley  
152 Ivy Cres., Ottawa, ON K1M 1X6  
Phone: 613-749-7633  
e-mail: alex.binkley@sympatico.ca

**Prototype Railroadng, Photographs,  
Regular Departments:**

Ian Cranstone  
34 Baneberry Cres., Kanata, ON K2L 2Y4  
Phone: 613-831-0883  
e-mail: lamontc@nakina.net

**Distribution and Mailing:**

Stan Conley  
2194 Valley Drive, Ottawa, ON K1G 2P8  
Phone: 613-523-8237  
e-mail: stanley\_conley@carleton.ca

**Submission of Articles:**

THE INTERCHANGE welcomes your submissions that may be of interest to club members. Please send them to one of the departments listed above. Material submitted can be handwritten, typewritten, on floppy diskette, or sent via e-mail.

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