

# The Mud Ring

The Newsletter of the Cinder Sniffers Inc.

Winter 2007 Issue

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This fall I distributed a Club Questionnaire. Due to some problems with the Fuse network not all of you received it. If you would like a copy please let me know.

The response to the Questionnaire has been generally positive with about 20% return rate. 10% is considered good. Some returns came through the internet and some at a club meeting. Several people have asked my reasons for initiating a Questionnaire. My reason was to get feedback from the membership about what they liked and didn't like, and what activities the club should undertake. In looking at the returns it is apparent that the active members are pretty happy with the club activities. What do the rest of you think? Why aren't you active in the club? Please fill out the Questionnaire and return it to me so you have a voice.

Results so far:

**How often do you visit the club track?** *10 times per year was the average*

**If you own an engine how often do you run it at the track?** *6 time per year*

**If you don't bring your engine, why not?** *Weather, lazy and working on new one*  
**What is your vision for this club?** *Growing, fun runs and new land*

**Where do you see it going?**

*Nowhere and downhill,*

**Do you support the idea of having guests on run days?**

*Yes: 12, No: 0, Invited only: 2*

**If we didn't have guests would you support a 50% increase in dues?** *Yes: 3, No: 10, Not relevant: 1*

**Would you support special club runs such as prototype operation?** *Yes: 8, No: 1, some: 3*

**Comments from some of the members:**

- *Need activities for children while waiting for the trains*
- *Go to other clubs as a group*
- *More publicity*
- *Actively invite others clubs to our track*
- *Prototype operation*

As you can see our members have some good ideas. I would like to encourage you to step forward and make these things happen. I have taken on the idea of Prototype operation and will try it out in the spring. Carl Schwab has taken on the idea of more publicity by organiz-

ing our attendance at the Duke Energy Christmas show. What interests you most? Are you willing to step forward and champion it?

**Please remember...**

### Safety First

Why is Safety so important? Because you can never go back and put things in the order they were in before. I recently completed a refresher course in First Aid, CPR and AED and I was surprised by the changes that have occurred since my last course in the late 1990's. The bottom line is to provide proper help as quickly as possible. In case of a heart attack, 5 minutes is too long. I estimate that it would take 15 minutes to get a paramedic to the track, and possibly 20 minutes for an ambulance. Could you wait?

## Notes from the Corresponding Secretary – Elect

Thanks for your confidence in electing me for the 2008-2009 term as corresponding secretary. Bill and I met, and he provided me access to the Cinder Sniffers web site, so I have made a few updates thus far. The meeting and run schedules for 2008 are available, as well as the last two issues of the Mud Ring. You will also find information regarding the Duke Energy Christmas display in which we will be participating. In the coming months I hope to make additional enhancements, such as a brief history of who we are and the incorporation of some recent activities, and photos. I'm open to suggestions for content on what you'd like to see on the web site. My limited knowledge of web design and server space may not permit implementation of all suggestions, but I'd love to hear your ideas.

Take a look at the 2008 schedule [ [www.cindersniffers.org](http://www.cindersniffers.org) ] and select which dates work for you to host a meeting or be run chair. Requests will be accepted first requested, first granted; otherwise, you'll have to wait in **the long line** at the next meeting to sign up for the next available date. Don't delay!

If you aren't currently receiving emails with meeting notices and other announcements, or if your mailing address, email address, phone number, or other personal information has changed, please drop me an email, telephone call, or letter with those changes. I plan on having an updated roster to hand out at the January meeting, and would like to make every effort to prepare an accurate list, as well as being able to communicate any club news in a timely manner.

In closing, I'd like to extend a personal "Thank you" to Bill Pollack for serving as Corresponding Secretary over the last several years.

I may be contacted by phone at (513) 385-6599, mail: 9846 Skyridge Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45252, or e-mail: [cshughes@cinci.rr.com](mailto:cshughes@cinci.rr.com) through the end of this year, and [corrsec@cindersniffers.org](mailto:corrsec@cindersniffers.org) beginning in January.

Submitted,  
Charlotte Hughes

*I would like to take a moment and thank H.O. Kyler for 15 years as Grounds Superintendent. During his tenure the track setting has been maintained in excellent condition and I could always count on his consistent answer that the "grounds are still there" when asked for a report. H.O. has been an important member of the Wednesday gang, a group that consistently amazes me with their ability to get things accomplished with no complaints. H.O.'s wife, Merita has spent many years ably assisting Martha in the diner and has recently retired also. Thank you both, for your time and support,*

*Vincent*

## Steam Engine Operation

Recently there has been some correspondence among the membership about the safe operation of a steam engine. Cinder Sniffers has had boiler inspections for many years but are boiler inspections enough to ensure safe operation? The answer is definitely no. In my experience the theory about operation is simple enough. Build a fire, boil water, create steam, open the throttle and off you go. The reality is that there is much more to it. Take a moment and watch somebody operating an engine, then watch somebody else etc. You will find that on a given day some people have little or no problems while others are stopped on the main every half lap trying to get up enough steam to move. In some cases it is a mechanical problem, in others it is the coal, and sometimes it is the operator. Steam engine operation requires you to do and think about several things at the same time. Miss any one of them and problems occur. Adequate water in the boiler is the most important thing. What do you do if you have let it get too low?

Well the first thing to do is to get rid of the heat source quickly. How you do it depends on the fuel the engine it is using. Propane and kerosene are easy; just turn off the fuel. But coal is another matter. Here you must dump the fire or put it out with water. Do you know how to dump the fire on the engine you are running? Each engine should have a way of dumping the ashes; some are easy and some are not. If you are running somebody else's engine it should be one of the things you ask before taking off. If all else fails shovel out the fire and dump it on the ground. The worst that can happen is you will need a tow by a diesel, or you have to push it in. Steam engines need lubrication in the cylinders and running gear. The cylinders get steam oil and the running gear usually gets 30 weight motor oil. Some engines have lubricators which take care of the cylinders needs, while others you

housing. If you hear squeals or things don't seem to move easily then it may be time for some lubricant.

Let's talk about operation. As I said before there are several things that need to happen while you are moving. Water in the boiler, fuel in the firebox and keeping an eye out for traffic. Yes you can run into another train. It has been done. A public run day is not the best time to learn to run a new engine with all the traffic out there. Pick a quiet time and you will enjoy it much more because your stress level will be lower.

There are several devices on steam engines that need to be used; injectors for filling the boiler and a blower for creating draft. Injectors can be tricky and finicky. They are subject to corrosion build up which ultimately prevents their operation. Injectors have a minimum pressure below which they will not feed the boiler. Do you know what that is on the engine you are running? When do you use the blower? The time varies on the engine and what you are trying to do. Blowers can use a lot of steam, so if you are trying to build pressure, little blower use is better than a lot. Blowers are very useful going down a grade. With the throttle closed there is no exhaust from the cylinders so the fire may be starved for air. Turning on the blower will clear the stack by adding draft and oxygen.

One area I haven't mentioned which can get you in a lot of trouble quickly is braking. Some steam engines have good brakes but most don't. Yes they can still stop but you will have to reverse the engine and feed steam via the throttle. In the nineteenth century brakes on steam engines were not all that common. The engineer relied on reversing the engine for stopping but if the train was long then there would be brakemen tightening the brakes on the cars. The advent of the Westinghouse air brake definitely improved the situation. On miniature steam engines you will find various

means including tender brakes, steam brakes and screw brakes. Make sure you understand what you have and that they work effectively. Some steam engines are very leaky and have lots of oil and water on the wheels. This liquid will render the brakes weak at best and reduce traction if you are engine braking.

I would like to encourage anyone with an interest to try operating a steam engine. Make sure you understand what to do before driving off. I would suggest that you spend time around the steaming bay asking questions and observing what is going on in engine preparation.

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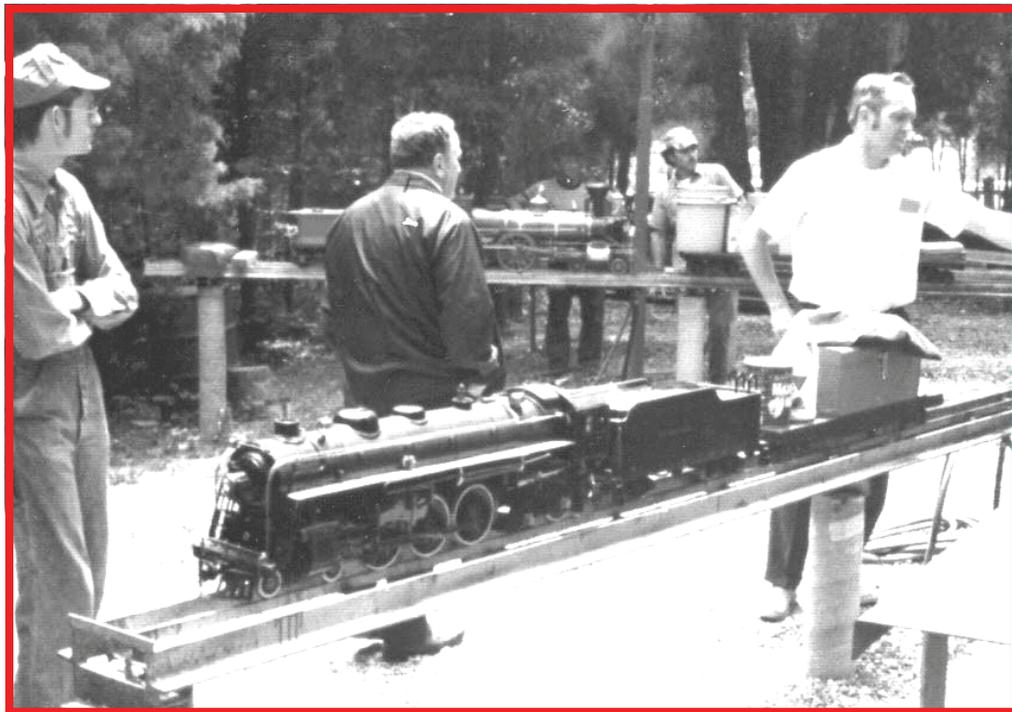
## CHARLOTTE'S PAGE



Dennis's engine is in trouble again. Perhaps he should ask Carl if he can letter his equipment "Trouble Lumber Company"? The transfer table collapsed under his engine.



The yard is now completed and operational. Thanks to all the hard work of many people including Carl Schwab, Ray Hughes, Ed Hable, and the Wednesday Gang.



Lou Lockwood submitted this photo with a question. Can you identify the people in the picture? Perhaps the engines will help with the identification ...

The answers are: Denis Larrick, Richard Schmidt, Carl Rauschenberger, Greg Korner and Chuck Balmer  
Thanks to all who replied but Denis was first.

**If you have pictures from our track or others that you'd like posted, send them in.  
Thank you.**