Messages from President Darren Doss... Included with this Switchlist is your 1998 calendar. We had scheduled Issue 85 of the NEWS to also be included however a number of different circumstances prevented this from happening. This is the first time in four years that a magazine has been late and we apologize for the delay.

Please do not remit your 1998 dues until the Society has completed our obligation to you with the mailing of Issue 85. Your 1998 renewal notice will be included with Issue 85 along with a return envelope for your convenience. Upon receipt of your magazine, please remit your membership dues as soon as possible.

Our thanks to Dick Wallin and Secretary Ken Donnelly for their help with the Annual Meeting. We had an outstanding weekend in St. Louis with a room full of railroadiana and a very unusual but humorous banquet. Kudos also go out to Gene Glendinning who ably handled the door prize foray once again.

1998 Board of Directors... The following members were elected at the Annual Meeting in St. Louis to serve the Society for 1998;
President: Darren Doss of Union City, TN. (two year term)
Vice President: Dave Wagner of Chicago, IL. (two year term)
Secretary: Ken Donnelly of Joliet, IL.
Treasurer: Doug Shehorn of Lawrenceville, IL.
Board Members: Terry Quinn of Bogalusa, LA.
    John Kohlberg of Willowbrook, IL.
    Jim Blanchard of Mobile, AL.
    Jack Batton of Meridian, MS.
    Al Biggs of Florissant, MO.

Annual Spring Show & Sale... The Annual Spring Show will be held on Sunday, April 26, 1997 at the Holiday Inn-East, I-55 at the Stevenson Drive Exit in Springfield, IL. Please see the attached bright yellow showbill for additional details.

The 26th Annual Fall Meeting is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of October 10-11, 1998 in the Mobile, AL metropolitan area. As soon as our plans are confirmed, we will advise you via the Switchlist.

4:55 at St. Louis... Enclosed with this mailing is an ivory colored order form for the Society's limited run lithograph featuring the Gulf Coast Rebel and the Alton Limited. Each copy is signed and numbered by renown railroad artist Charles Amos. We introduced this print in 1988 and it was a huge success. We recently discovered a number of copies still remaining so we are again taking orders for it in the hopes that many of the 500+ new members that have joined in the last decade will avail themselves of this offer.

Limited Run China Plate offering... In commemoration of the Society's 25th Anniversary, we are proud to be able to offer a limited run China Plate. Please see the enclosed lavender form for further details.
Publications Committee Report by Dave Wagner... As President Doss pointed out, the Society is a couple of weeks behind in mailing Issue 85 of the NEWS. We had hoped to have this magazine included with this mailing however circumstances beyond our control stopped this effort a few days short. Regardless, we are planning a bulk mailing of Issue 85 by January 20, 1998. This issue will have four outstanding features including the saga of the Society's GP35, no. 631 by Phil Joseph, two different articles by Louis Saillard on the Frascati Shops in Mobile and the story of the GM&O's ore car fleet by Dwayne Hubbell.

As you know, your membership entitles you to a minimum of 80 pages of the NEWS per year. In 1997, we published a single/double/single issue format totalling 80 pages. This coming year we are planning on two double issues of the NEWS. The tentative schedule is for Double Issue 86-87 to be mailed in late March with the Spring Switchlist and Double Issue 88-89 will be mailed in early September with the Fall Switchlist followed by your 1999 calendar in mid December. Of course, this schedule is subject to change however we feel it is very realistic and we are sure that you will enjoy the stories scheduled for publication this coming year. These features include the long awaited story of the GM&O in St. Louis, a look at the GM&O's GP38 fleet, a piece on Pequot Tower, the scale test car article and a look at the railroad's predecessors in the Mobile area in anticipation of the Annual Meeting there in October as well as a number of other significant items of interest.

The Publications Committee is always looking for articles for the NEWS. This organization has the same plights as many other societies and that is a need for stories for the publication. You do not have to be an accomplished author. Just put your thoughts down on paper and we'll do the rest. Some of the finest articles that have been published in the GM&OHS NEWS through the years started as a few lines in a letter or on a scratch pad. If you are a "closet author", we need you to step forward now and tell your story.

The publishing of the NEWS is a goal shared by many dedicated individuals. I would like to thank the following people for their efforts this past year; Dick and Lorraine Wallin, Judy and Louis Akers of Jackson County Printing, John Steenwyk of Big Guy Graphics, Gene Glendinning, Bob Oliver, Charlie Volkar, Bob Schramm, Louis Saillard, John Szewajkar, John Arnold, Dwayne Hubbell, Curtis Kyger and Dave Bridges. It is because of these fine people that the NEWS is such an outstanding publication. Thanks to all!!!

Congratulations... to Fred Townsend who was the winner of the builder's plate plaque from GP35 no. 621 raffled off at the Annual Meeting this past October. The raffle of these plaques has proven to be very beneficial to the restoration of the Society's locomotive, therefore we will continue to hold them into the foreseeable future. Keep an eye open in the next mailing for a raffle form for another plaque. Rumor has it, that the builder's plaque will be from a GP30! Thanks to all the folks who participate in this bi-yearly function. Your extra support is greatly appreciated!
Modeling Committee Report by the Staff... Our thanks to all the members who were so patient in waiting for the delivery of their caboose kits. By now, all of you should have received your cars. We hope that the wait was worth it as we feel these are some of the best kits we have ever produced. Though we are sold out of complete sets, there are a few loose kits remaining. If you would like to pick one or more of them up please contact Jim Blanchard, 4060 Wesley Lane South, Mobile, AL. 36609, 334-666-3647, with your specific needs.

We are currently investigating several possible models for production as GM&O kits in 1998. Though we have a number of cars in mind, no firm decision has been made yet. Rest assured, the Society will have another prototypically correct car on the market by the Spring Show.

The big news that we have to report is that Proto 2000 will be producing their soon-to-be-announced HO scale PA1 lettered for the GM&O. Numbers 290 and 291 will be in the third run due to be released in early Summer 1998. The Modeling Committee has been in contact with Larry Grubb of Proto 2000 and he promises that the GM&O enthusiasts will not be disappointed.

The models will feature the mid 1950's to retirement scheme of red and maroon with the 20 inch tall road numbers on the carbody side, black pilots, white handrails, small number boards, lack of dynamic brake grids and most importantly, roof top number indicators.

We met with Mr. Grubb at the Hobby Show in Chicago in October and inspected the Delware and Hudson, Erie and Nickel Plate Road paint schemes and found them to be crisp as well as prototypically correct. The model features the usual high quality running mechanism found in previous Proto 2000 engines as well as a laundry list of additional details. Proto 2000's PA1 could easily be the best detailed plastic model on the market today. As we mentioned earlier, the GM&O version should be available by late May, early June 1998.

A BIG thank you to the GM&OHS modelers who participated in the Annual Model Display at the Annual Meeting. Among them were Ken Donnelly and Dave Wagner who displayed several of their HO scale models. A special thank you to Fred Townsend of Fullerton, California who brought nearly two dozen O scale models to the show. There were several positive comments about the display and we will look forward to next year's event. Thanks again to all that visited the display and participated in it. If we forgot anyone's name, our apologies.

Special Request... GM&OHS member C. Merle Parry is seeking information on a turn of the century wreck at Chenoa, Ill. Details are sketchey at best but it seems that a Chicago & Alton locomotive derailed near the TP&W crossing and demolished the interlocking tower. The tower, though brand new, was not yet in operation and a new structure had to be erected after the accident. Fortunately there were no serious injuries to the crew or townsfolk. If you have any information on this incident, please contact C. Merle Parry, 308 South Fifth Avenue, Chenoa, IL. 61726.
FOR SALE: Slides, negatives, back issues of Trains, Railfan, PRN, X2200S, The Short Line, C&NWHS/L&NHS/GM&OH NEWS, etc. For lists, send 8x10 envelope with 3 units of postage and mention GM&OHs. WANTED: Current timetables, track charts from any line, blue globe kerosene lamp and any marked globe. T.N. Colbert, 13609 Colony, Burton, OH. 44021

FOR SALE: Color slides of GM&O and most other railroads. Incredibly massive selection of diesel, steam, electric, caboose, freight and passenger cars. See before you buy! List for large SS&E. Wallin's Approval Slides, P.O. Box 1784, Springfield, IL. 62705

FOR SALE: GM&O custom decals, HO scale, first generation diesels and passenger cars. SS&E for list. David Johnston, 5365 Rolling Oaks Dr., Memphis, TN. 38119 or call 901-682-7345

WANTED: GM&O Annual Reports, model/toy trains for GM&O and IC from the 1940's thru 1960's-all scales. Have GM&O HO for trade or sale. SS&E for list. Kevin Feeney, 831 New Norwalk Rd, New Canaan, CT. 06840-6443 or call 203-966-5175

FOR SALE: One of a kind roster now available listing 2,000 engines that SP has run over its Chicago to St. Louis (former GM&O) line. Roster includes SP/SSW/DRGW, class 1, regional and leased units. $55.00 postpaid. Joel Krystofik, 105 W. Cypress St, Normal, IL. 61761

FOR SALE: Custom painted models; GM&O, Wabash, IC, ICC, RI, BN, CSX, UP, ATSF, MP, SL-SF, Southern, L&N, NS, KCS, Shortlines and more. For in stock list write or call S&J Custom Models, P.O. Box 1207, Biloxi, MS. 39533, 601-392-3167

WANTED: Overland Models HO-scale brass items; OVL#1289 IC extended vision caboose, OVL#1290 IC extended vision caboose, OVL#3906 GM&O wide vision caboose. Daniel Kohlberg, 3587 Argonne Forest, Florissant, MO. 63034, 314-838-8162 E-Mail: paducah@stlnet.com

INFORMATION WANTED: Information and photos, slides or prints, of C&Alton/GM&O facilities in Willow Springs, Lemont, Lockport, State Prison, Joliet, Elwood, Wilmington, Braidwood, Braceville, Drummond, Pequot, Coal City and Gardner, IL. Will correspond with anyone willing to sell/trade information and photos. Bill Molony, 2009 Boehme St, Lockport, IL. 60441-4611

FOR SALE: Modeling the GM&O, Vol. I and II, 25 cars in each book. $15.00 each postage paid. GM&O custom decals for revenue and work equipment available in HO or N scale. For free information, write or call Trent Johnson, RR#1, Box 124, Bloomington, IL. 61704, 309-378-2951

WANTED: Track charts, condensed profiles, engineering and signalling plans, station maps, blueprints, technical information, tourist books and miscellaneous paper. Dave Cramer, 2114 Sheridan Dr. Madison, WI. 52704, 608-244-2916

INFORMATION WANTED: Photos and information on the roadrailers that ran on the ICG. Also looking for seller and/or trader of slides and photos of GM&O, IC and ICG material. Tom Mann, 414 E. Mountainview Rd., Apt.#905, Johnson City, TN. 37601, 423-926-4013