



The Villager

The official newsletter of the Plasticville Collectors Association

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Number 1

PCA 2005 Officers

The officers of the Plasticville Collectors Association for 2005 are Joe Kutza, President, Doug Gilliatt, Vice President, and Chris Niehaus, Secretary/Treasurer. The office of Secretary/Treasurer was the only office for which a nominee agreed to accept the nomination. Chris Niehaus was also the only nominee for that office. The Executive Committee therefore decided to forego the mailing of ballots and voted to appoint Chris

Secretary/Treasurer for 2005.

Although not an appointed position, John Niehaus has agreed to continue as editor of *The Villager* for another year.

The officers wish to thank all of the members who made nominations. They also wish to thank those who inquired as to the duties of the offices with an eye towards self nomination.

Problems with Paint in New Plasticville kits

By John Niehaus

PCA member Mike Cedro posted a message to the Plasticville Yahoo discussion group January 10 concerning difficulties with the paint kits included in the new Plasticville Citizens sets.

His post read, "What's with the new paint kits in with the Plasticville Railroad People? The paint is like gum, too thick to use. The little slip of paper in with it says: 'Please add some thinner to the paint if it is too thick or dried.'"

I bought 3 boxes of Railroad People that are all in the new green litho boxes, and they were all gummy. I have tried water, oil thinner and Odorless paint thinner (Mineral Spirits), but nothing works at all. Advice???"

A posted reply to Mike's question suggested using naphtha or xylene, depending if paint is oil based or synthetic but to use outdoors as both very smelly and toxic.

This suggestion caused me some concern for the safety of one using the suggestion. Not only is naphtha and xylene toxic they are highly flammable. I contacted the

Communications Manager at Bachmann asking if they were aware of a problem with the paint kits and for their response. I received a response from the communications Manager two days later.

He stated, "Thanks for the heads up--this is the first we've heard of this. I asked (*name removed by editor*) about it, and he first suggested the very same solutions Mike Cedro mentioned.

As a result, (*name removed by editor*) is not sure what's going on--though he suggested that some distributors may unintentionally store the paint in places that allow it to freeze, in which case there's not a whole lot that can be done to fix it. You could suggest to folks in the Plasticville group that they contact our service department for help.

Or, if they're in a hurry, their local hobby/craft store should have suitable paint for the job."

Editor's note: You may contact Bachmann at 215 533-1600. This is a general offices number. Ask to be connected to Customer Service.

New Associate Editor

The editor wishes to introduce a new associate editor, Anatol Vasiliev. Not only is Anatol a new associate editor, but he is also a new member.

Anatol's first contribution, an article on the Plasticville #4603 Make and Play set in HO scale can be found in the

Along the HO Line column in this issue of the newsletter.

I am sure that between Dominic St. John and Anatol the *Along the HO Line* column will contain many interesting HO articles.

Welcome aboard Anatol.

The Villager

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<http://www.plasticvilleusa.org>

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Vice President: Doug Gilliatt

Secretary/Treasurer: Christine Niehaus

Webmaster: Joe Kutza

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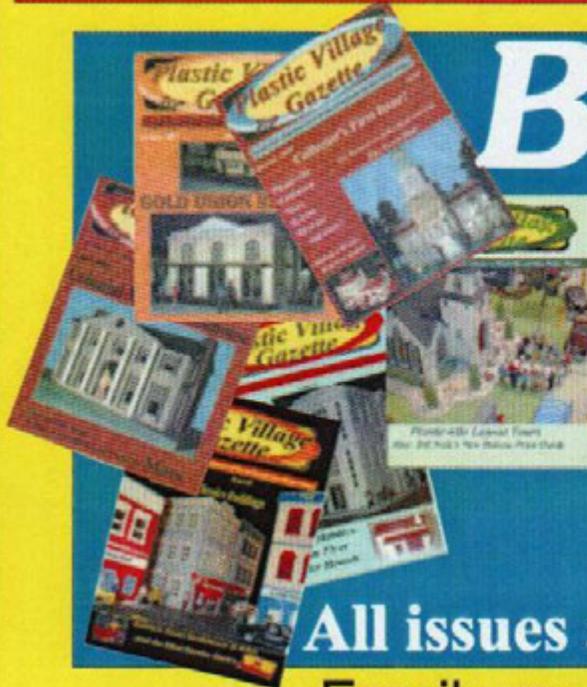
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From the President's Desk



Happy New Year to all of my fellow PCA Members. We had a less than anticipated turnout of members nominated for 2005 officers, so much that Doug Gilliatt and I will retain our posts as Vice-President and President respectively. We did achieve our main goal of relieving John Niehaus of his Secretary-Treasurer duties when his wife Chris, a long-standing PCA Member, stepped up and offered to do the job. Our thanks to Chris for accepting this important position! John will, thankfully, continue his duties as the editor for our newsletter, *The Villager*.

Other than trying to track down new officers, the last couple of months have been pretty much all quiet on the Plasticville front. I receive e-mails somewhat regularly from all kinds of places on all kinds of topics.

A writer for the *Bucks County Courier Times* contacted John and myself in November and was looking to do a story on favorite Christmas toys of the past, and needed some information on Plasticville. John helped her out quite a bit via telephone.

I had an e-mail from an "American living outside of Toronto" looking for information on Canadian Plasticville. He was knowledgeable on several aspects of toy collecting and mentioned that Marx had a factory in Canada at one time. Apparently, they made a "Fort York" playset exclusively for the Canadian market. Interesting. I will keep in touch with him and see if I can get more information for an article on Canadian Plasticville that I've been threatening to write for over two years now!

I also had an e-mail from a bank employee in upstate New York who wanted to know if we could design and produce a coin bank for their upcoming anniversary. It's surprising how many e-mails I get from people who see the PCA web site and think that we are the manufacturers of Plasticville, and not an independent collectors association!

I've received several e-mails over the years asking how to buy replacement parts, or stating that parts are missing in their sets, etc.

I even received an e-mail from a 10-year old in Australia who wanted to know who "our" distributor was in his country. I was just amazed to see a Plasticville fan from "down under".

One last interesting e-mail was a question about the fire trucks that came with the fire department. One member asked if any trucks other than those made by Bachmann

were ever included in the sets, and specifically mentioned trucks made by Wyandotte Toys. I checked with a few of the members of the Plasticville brain-trust and they said most likely not. But I'd like to hear from the rest of the membership. Have you ever run into a non-Plasticville fire truck in your set that seems like it came with it originally?

The executive committee has set some goals for 2005. Our primary goal is to get more members writing articles for *The Villager*. We would especially like to have articles submitted related to O Plasticville. It would also be greatly appreciated if those who collect Marx and other brands contributed articles also.

Another goal is to make some changes in procedures to help streamline the administration of the PCA. Suggestions to help attain this goal are to consider offering multi-year membership renewals. We are also considering a two-tier membership fee based upon whether you wish hard copies of the newsletter or the electronic version. This option would be included on the membership application.

We also anticipate moving most of the PCA website to the Members Only section. The new web site is my idea, and will take a bit of time and effort. The current site is a bit out of style and I want to spruce things up significantly. The future of the PCA is the web site and associated electronic documents.

You should also see an addition of many more pictures to the website in the near future thanks to member submissions. We would like to have additional pictures of HO Plasticville and most any picture of other manufacturers' products.

That reminds me. Why not ask to receive *The Villager* on-line only and save us the time and money associated with printing? Why read a black and white photocopy of *The Villager*, when you can download and even print a copy in full color? If you choose ePCA, we'll even send you a high-quality PCA pen, free! Contact our Secretary-Treasurer Chris Niehaus today and say "Chris, bring me into the 21st century please, I want *The Villager* on-line only!" You can reach Chris at secretary@plasticvilleusa.org.

That pretty much wraps it up for this time. Keep those e-mails coming! I'd love to hear from every member this year, even if it's just a hello. You may reach me at president@plasticvilleusa.org.

Vice Presidential Insights

First I want to say that it continues to be an honor to serve as the Vice President of the PCA for both these past years and the coming year. I think it is terrific that the PCA continues to grow and expand as an organization and as a group of friends with similar interests. The

articles and pictures that have been contained in our *Villager* newsletter continue to be informative and entertaining and I encourage all members to submit articles/stories and or pictures to share with the membership.

If you meet someone at a train meet, swap meet or wherever and they are checking out some Plasticville or another plastic building be sure to mention the PCA. This person would seem to share an interest in collecting our valued plastic buildings and might become our next member. New membership is essential to the continuation and expansion of our organization.

We find ourselves at the beginning of a new year, and it is another year of collecting and trying to find that one more rare piece for our collection. May everyone find something that they desire. And I again wish all of our members Good Luck, Health and a very Happy New Year.

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Free Box Cover Art PC Wallpaper

By John Niehaus

PCA member Charles Wilber has taken pieces of Plasticville box cover art and turned them into wallpaper for the PC. The two pieces currently offered are the 1814 Switch Tower and the 1815 Signal Bridge. He is offering both of these for downloading free of charge on his website.

Considerable time was expended when creating these wallpaper files. First, the original box art is scanned. The next step is to clean up any part of the scan that did not scan properly because of age discoloration or dirt on the original box. The painstaking task of changing the text that was on the box to colors that blend in with its surrounding colors comes next. The last step is to add additional lines to the top and bottom of the scan to compensate for the difference in proportion between the actual box art and the height and width of PC monitors. The website states that to make the Signal Bridge picture proportional for the PC monitor "478 lines of pixels to the top and 479 to the bottom" of the picture were added. Adding lines prevents distortion of the original art as would happen if one were to simply scan the original art and then size it to their monitor.

Downloading could not be simpler once you arrive at the download page. You simply click the download button next to the screen resolution you are using on your computer monitor under the desired picture.

There are instructions along with pictures that will lead you through determining the resolution of your monitor, downloading a compressed file extraction utility if you do not already have one, and instructions on how to get the picture you downloaded to display on your desktop.

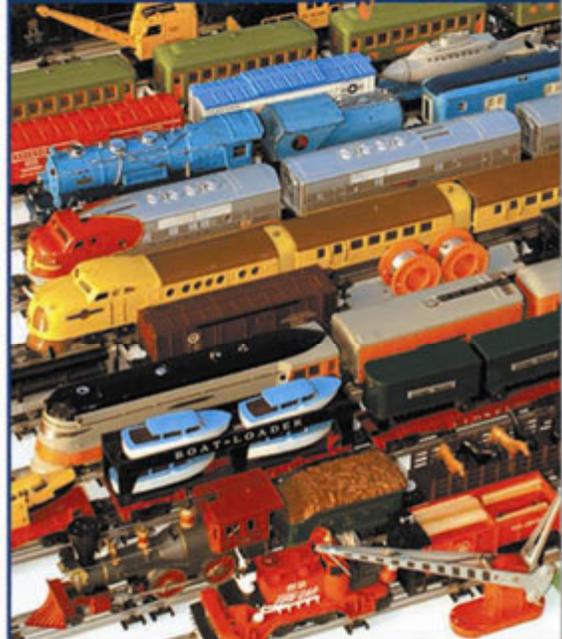
I am using the Switch Tower wallpaper on my nineteen inch LCD monitor and just love it. I highly recommend you take advantage of his generous offer.

You may download the wallpaper files from Mr. Wilber's website at www.tnadem-associates.com.

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Barn on Stone Foundation

By Mike Cedro



Adding a foundation to a K-Line barn adds realism along with making the door height closer to scale.

The K-line (Marx) Barn has a serious problem. The "big" barn doors are too short for even a man to walk through, let alone livestock. There was a similar problem with the Marx Market and Police Station as well. Here's a great fix for the Barn.

I made a floor and foundation for the Barn out of masonite and painted it flat gray to look like concrete. I made my foundation 3/4" tall, which would be 3 feet in O scale and 4 feet in S scale, but it could be shorter. Next I "wallpapered" the outside of the foundation with my "stone paper", as many old barns have stone foundations. You could also use brick paper or a concrete block print.



The addition of a foundation raises the top of the door on the K-Line barn to a more scale height.

After cutting out the door thresholds, I glued the Barn to the foundation for stability. (Remember to have something for the silo to set on.)



Don't forget to build a base for the silo.

Since this Barn has such a wonderfully large hay loft door, I installed a hay loft floor and filled it with bales of hay.

The hay bales are made 3/8" x 3/8" strip wood that is cut 7/8" long. Bunches of clippings of golden thread are randomly glued to the wood on all sides. Then the rough bale is bound with brown or twine-colored thread for tightness and form. Excess strands are cut off, but leave a few stubbles sticking out like the real thing.



The addition of a hayloft and a few bales of hay add considerable realism to the barn scene.

Pen Tips

Removing Lights Carefully

By Glenn Bowmann

When removing lamps from Post Office, Police Station, etc, use fingernail on the pins on the back side of the wall

to push them through, NEVER pull from the front.

A warehouse find that would make Indiana Jones jealous!



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Everyone thought this rare book... with all the old Sears catalog pages reproduced in COLOR... was long out of print until we recently discovered a small supply.

Toy collectors always speak about "The Big Toy Box At Sears" in reverential tones. When this nearly 1" thick book was published back in 1997 it was the first (and only time) that ALL of the boys' toys pages from the the legendary Sears Christmas Wishbooks of the 1950's and 1960's had ever been reprinted in all their original full-color glory. Even the paper stock reproduced the original. But after the initial low-key sales push "The Big Toy Box At Sears" was soon forgotten and the remaining few copies stacked in a warehouse. What a find it was when we unearthed a stash of these incredible books, still sealed in their original shrinkwrap!

A huge 8 1/2" x 11" big and 584 pages thick, this massive volume contains all the toys collectors want to remember... Marx playsets, Lionel trains, Tonka trucks, robots, slot cars, G.I. Joe, cowboy and James Bond toys and pages and pages more. These books are collectibles themselves and are certain to increase in value.

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It All Started With a Coat Hanger

(The Beginning of Connecticut Hobbies - Part 1)

by Vincent Amato

Looking back 30 years to the spring of 1968, it seems almost as if fate wanted me carry on the American Flyer Repair Parts business, but quite honestly at the time it was the last thing I would have expected doing. Of course, I was well aware of the troubles the A. C. Gilbert Company had been going through. By 1968 I had been operating several hobby shops in Connecticut for over 25 years. The Gilbert factory was just about 20 miles south of us and Flyer trains were always a featured part of our toy train inventory.

It was early in May of 1968, that a gentleman from The Connecticut Development Commission stopped in my store to borrow a coat hanger. He had locked his keys in



Mr. Vincent Amato the founder of Connecticut Hobbies.

his car, which by a quirk of fate he had parked in front of my hobby shop. As I helped him get his car open, he told me he was on his way to visit the liquidator of the bankrupt A.C. Gilbert Company. He suggested I go down and look into buying the

Train Repair Service Department. I laughed and did not accept.

A few hours later, he called to say he had made an appointment for me with the representative of the Walter E. Heller Company, the liquidator. At this meeting I was persuaded to put in a bid for the contents of the Repair Service Department consisting of a very large area with thousands of small bins on wooden shelving, and several tons of paper exploded views, parts lists and ledger books.

I returned from summer vacation a few weeks later to find I had bid twice as much as others. Feeling sorry for me, they also included the Service Parts for race sets!

Removal necessitated a great many trips to the factory, about twenty minutes from my store. Each trip seemed to turn up more things to buy. I inquired about a room in the factory containing what was supposed to be the archives. Upon inspection, I found very few things left in there, (according to a few employees still there most had been taken by departing workers). Since all that was left was mostly incomplete common items I offered \$1,500. The Heller representative laughed and said he was going to

have Park Bernet Auction Gallery sell the "archives". He asked me to provide a couple of hundred dollars worth of parts needed to complete some of the items. I attended the auction but because a rainstorm slowed traffic into New York, I arrived when auction was almost over. A representative of Dan Olson of Seattle had bought most of the stuff. Maury Romer later told me that after all Park Bernet's expensive work; the lot brought in about \$1,200!

TOO MANY PARTS

Besides the parts located within the repair parts department that I had purchased, the basement of the factory was full of crates of parts already manufactured when it was shut down. I inquired of the liquidator what would happen to them. He refused my offer of \$5,000 for all of it. He pointed to a big crate with thousands of armatures for the Casey Jones loco and said factory cost for that one crate alone exceeded my offer!

Later, a group of men were hired to bring all the thousands of trays and boxes of parts upstairs. They were spread out all over the empty production floor. A price of \$1.50 a tray of parts was asked. I bought several hundred trays of things I thought could be used in the next few years. Later on, I saw a scrap metal dealer emptying the trays into fifty-gallon drums. He said that all he wanted was the metal trays. He had resold them to a factory for \$4.00 each. The parts would be sold as scrap metal. Later, Harry Gordon told me he purchased several barrels of miscellaneous small parts and had his children sort them out for resale as repair parts. I doubt that the liquidator received anywhere near the \$5,000. I had offered!

TONS OF PLASTIC

Large bins of molded plastic bodies also attracted my attention. The liquidator told me it would be sold to a scrap plastic dealer. He said he would sell me any I wanted by weight. Huge amounts of plastic bodies were spread all over the factory. I was told there was 365,000 pounds of molded and virgin plastic. After researching its scrap value, I purchased it all by offering slightly more than its scrap value. I knew I could never store all of it, as it would have required a huge warehouse. Since, I had several months time for its removal, I picked what I thought I could use in the near future and made a deal to sell the balance to a plastic molding business.

Two million small plastic trees for the All Aboard, and Sears HO Race set panels were in the deal. The trees were contained in hundreds of wooden cubic yard crates. On top of the plastic cost, the liquidator wanted \$5.00 a crate if I kept them. So, instead of keeping the crates, I used the wine room in my Grandfather's cellar to store those trees. (During prohibition, he had made the legally allowed two hundred gallons of wine a year from his grapes.) Every few days, we would drive our flat bed three-ton truck the

20 miles to the factory returning empty crates and picking up another load of plastic trees. We set up a child's sliding board through a wine cellar window and just poured the trees into that room. Lots of model railroad "forests" were created in the twenty years it took to sell all those trees.

Sixteen thousand plastic buildings, houses and barns for use on All Aboard tiles were part of my bulk plastic purchase. However, no roofs could be found! The liquidator allowed me to locate and borrow the roof molds. Before I sold the unwanted virgin plastic, I had roofs molded to complete the houses. That summer, I employed a school teacher who supervised a crew who spent ten weeks bagging those sixteen thousand buildings into complete kits with roofs, windows, chimneys and doors. (*Editor's note: A paper header was attached to each of these buildings stating that it was a Connecticut Hobbies building. These buildings are now seen in auctions and antique shops.*)



A header added to sixteen thousand buildings by a schoolteacher and his crew over their summer break.

The words *FROM CONNECTICUT HO* can be clearly seen in the lower left corner of this nearly complete header.

There were five thousand shell tank car bodies all printed and ready to be put on the chassis, but once again the chassis had not been molded! I borrowed the chassis mold and had them made to complete the shell tankers. I had previously purchased all the tens of thousands of Pikemaster trucks that were left in the factory.

Andy Kriswallis, of Endicott New York was producing Kusan Box and refrigerator cars for use on Lionel O Gauge during this period. He offered to buy the three thousand or so unprinted boxcar bodies and stamped chassis I had. I wouldn't sell, but I shipped Andy the bodies. He painted and printed them and shipped me half of the finished bodies.

If I knew then what I know now, I would have borrowed more molds and had Diesel bodies, accessory

parts etc. molded. But, I didn't have a crystal ball to foretell the future and at the time everyone thought I was crazy for holding on to what I kept.

I almost melted more Gilbert plastic down during the early 1970's oil crisis. Somehow, a Korean plastic factory became aware of all the plastic I still had and offered me \$50,000 for all of it. I was very tempted, but in the end, I refused.

Thirty years later, I still have thousands of plastic



A Connecticut Hobbies ranch house with header. All pieces necessary to complete the building were placed into the bag.

tender bodies printed and un-printed. As well as caboose bodies, Atlantic Loco bodies, Casey Jones Loco bodies and lots of Gilbert Racecar bodies.

The dies, molds, etc required for manufacturing were all stored on skids in a very large area of the factory. I was told that since efforts to sell the name and manufacturing rights were not successful, these would probably be sold as scrap iron. I was assured I would be notified if this came to pass. I don't know how I would ever have handled such a large quantity of items had I had the opportunity to buy. Finally, since the liquidator was also liquidating Lionel, I was told the equipment was being shipped to Lionel's facility in New Jersey. When General Mills acquired the manufacturing rights to Lionel, the American Flyer remains also were included and ended up in Michigan.

The A. C. Gilbert machinery and office equipment was auctioned to industrialists. I did attend the auction, but purchased only a fireproof file cabinet (to store my collection of original catalogues) and a rotating shelf display showcase for my store. (*to be continued*)

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PCA Aids Member in Acquire Missing Pieces

By John Niehaus

A post by a PCA member on the Plasticville Yahoo discussion group bewailed the fact that they were having a difficult time getting replacement parts for an HO piece they had purchased on eBay. The post was in January of 2004. The post claimed that they had been in contact with Bachmann since May of the preceding year.

Further comments in the post revealed that the person authoring the post had discovered in their conversation with Bachmann that the piece had been discontinued but had recently been added back into the line due to its resurgence of popularity. The post also notes that they could not get parts as the pieces were now made in Hong Kong. One of the last comments in the post stated, "this piece is the LAST PIECE that I will EVER buy from this bottom-of-the-barrel company again". I was aware that the person making these comments was a PCA member and that it was possible that the PCA could intervene on their behalf.

I am in contact members of management at Bachmann on a fairly regular basis so I called one of my contacts, the Communications Manager. He asked me to forward all information I had concerning the issue to him. I received a reply two days later asking for contact information so that Bachmann could call the person making the post and work with them.

One week later I received an email from both the

Communications Manager and the person making the post informing me that things had been worked out and that replacement parts would be sent out as soon as they arrived from Hong Kong.

Part of the reason as to why it took as long as it did was due to production schedules. Demand for this building outran what was made in the last production run. It may be six months or more before additional inventory is created should this occur.

I recently made contact with the person making the post as they had not informed me of the outcome of their January 2004 conversations with Bachmann. I was informed that they were sent complete replacement buildings rather than just the needed missing parts.

Bachmann informed me that they will gladly replace parts if the piece is purchased through a retail outlet if one can produce a receipt for the item. They do not warrant pieces purchased through eBay or other on line auctions. Their logic behind this is that it is too easy for someone to open a package, remove what they need, "Seal A Meal" the remainder, put it back in the outer box, shrink wrap it and sell it as unopened.

The PCA is pleased that they could intervene in this issue and that the member got more than he requested. We hope they no longer consider Bachmann a *bottom-of-the-barrel company*.

Dimstore Dreams Vehicles Return Under New Name

By John Niehaus

I recently was in communication with Bill Hanlon. You may remember him from an article in a past issue of *The Villager* as the person responsible for the creation of the Dimstore Dreams line of retro plastic vehicles marketed by Binary Arts Company.

In May 2004 Bill was able to purchase all of the original vehicle molds and left the company. He is currently working to create new vehicles and reintroduce the line under the name American Dimstore.

As part of the purchase agreement the Dimstore Dreams name cannot be used, which guarantees those unique vehicles will never be produced again. Some of the Dimstore Dreams vehicles were produced in quantities as small as 5,000 pieces.

Having collected antique toys for over thirty-five years, Bill was careful to save all of the samples produced to test

colors, plastics, or ornamentation before going into production. Most of these were produced in 1999 and many were created in extremely small quantities when he visited the factory in China.

One thing I did learn from him is that he is now selling some of those pre-production pieces on eBay. None were ever offered to the public or collectors before now. Each piece sold on eBay comes with its own special hand-signed Certificate of Authenticity identifying the uniqueness of the vehicle and the quantity of samples produced.

If you are not aware of the type and quality of vehicles produced under the Dimstore Dreams name and soon under American

Dimstore I suggest you log onto eBay and search on either name.

In my opinion the Dimstore Dreams and the soon to be available American Dimstore vehicles blend in well with the original Plasticville vehicles.



These are a few of the new vehicles we can expect to see in the very near future from American Dimstore.

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Share your knowledge and be rewarded. Submit a "How To" or a little known fact about Plasticville, Bachmann, or any other plastic village manufacturer and receive a PCA pen for your efforts. You will receive a custom engraved PCA pen in PCA blue with gold-toned accents when the tip is published in *The Villager*. Send your tips to villagereditor@plasticvilleusa.org or mail them to Pen Tips, PCA, 601 SE Second Street, Ankeny, Iowa 50021-3207

Along the ‘HO’ Line

4603 Make and Play set

By Anatol Vasiliev

Hello fellow PCA members from a new member but not a new collector of Plasticville. I have been in the hobby of train collecting and related interests all my life, or at least since I can remember.



There is no guide other than the set box cover artwork to give a child a clue as to what colors to use on the various pieces.

Sometime during the last ten year, for a reason I don't recall, Plasticville HO got my interest fired up just when collecting Plasticville O seemed to lose my interest. I always admired early HO and I have a strong collection of Tyco-Mantua. Hence my email address of IbuyTyco@aol.com. Lionel products are still my first and foremost interest but I like to be different from the mainstream.

My favorite Plasticville HO items are the Master Sets. My all-time favorite of these is the #4603 Make and Play Set. This set contains five buildings, two paint kits, and a unique and very unusual sixteen page coloring book. There is no version of this set in the O world of Plasticville and not even anything close to it to the best of my knowledge. Needless to say finding one in mint condition today would be a real prize.

I was very happy when I acquired the one illustrated a few years ago. I haven't seen or heard of another one in this condition since then but that's no surprise considering how there seems to be but a few active Plasticville HO collectors. However, I see this changing and feel it is for the better. Now on to a description of this wonderful set.

The 4603 was catalogued quite prominently by Bachmann in their 1959 and 1960 HO consumer catalogs. I do not know if there was any difference in the contents between the two years.

The box is the standard 10" x 14" box with four cardboard inserts acting as trays. Each insert is 5" x 7" and is typical of other Plasticville inserts. What is really unique about this set is that all of the items are a natural

flesh-toned plastic generally used for the unpainted citizens. Most of the pieces in my set are still attached to the sprues.

The contents are as follows:

- 1 switch tower
- 1 watchman's shanty with a white with black base crossing gate
- 1 suburban station with additional loading platform
- 1 #2610 style freight station
- 1 cellophane sealed packet containing two paint palettes, one red paint brush, and one blue paint brush
- 1 original brown paper bag containing two original, and still liquid, Bachmann painting fluid bottles
- 1 black plastic block signal
- 1 white railroad crossing crossbuck
- 3 still sealed cellophane bags containing unpainted people and parts
- 3 black and white signs printed on standard paper for the station and platform



The box is the standard 10" x 14" box with four cardboard inserts acting as trays.

A 16 page coloring book titled, *Tommy and Tess Take a Train Trip* is also part of this master set. It is 7" x 10" and printed on pulpy paper similar to other coloring books of that era. The address of the *Association of American Railroads, Transportation Building, Washington 6, D.C.* is printed on the inside of the front cover.

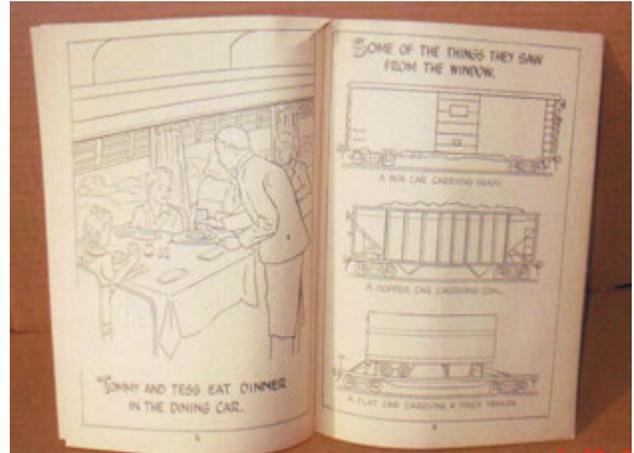
The book is basically a coloring book explaining how much fun a train ride can be for a 1950's family. My particular book is still unused and looks great.

A set like this would have given a child quite a lot of play value and really enhance their creativity. There is no guide other than the set box cover artwork to give a child



A 16 page coloring book titled, *Tommy and Tess Take a Train Trip* is also part of this master set.

a clue as to what colors to use on the various pieces. I am sure that quite a few “colorful” buildings were created as a result of this set.



The coloring book pages are printed on pulpy paper similar to other coloring books of the era

Why Bachmann never attempted this type of set in O Plasticville is not known but probably the quantity of paint needed could have been a factor. It is also possible that the 4603 set sold poorly and the idea to make an O scale version was abandoned as probably also not being a money maker. It would be interesting if someone at Bachmann could provide the answer.

For those wishing to discuss Plasticville HO, please email me at IbuyTyco@aol.com. I am not on the computer constantly but often.

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Carbona Not Glue

By Joe Kutza

Were you there? In the big grassy area behind the Town Hall back in '78 when *The Ramones* came to Plasticville? Typical of most small towns, about half of the *Citizens* boarded up their houses and left for the weekend, and the other half went to the concert and had the time of their lives! OK, so the band and their crew sort of trashed the *Motel*, and took over the *Diner* for most of Sunday morning, but still, that was a super concert. My favorite song? Carbona, Not Glue..... of course!

Wondering what I'm doing tonight I've been in the closet and feel all right

Ran out of Carbona Mom threw out the glue

Ran out of paint and roach spray too It's TV's fault why I am this way

Mom and pop wanna put me away

From the early morning movie to the late late show

After it's over nowhere to go And I'm not sorry for the things I do

My brain is stuck from shooting glue I'm not sorry for the things I do

Carbona not glue

I'd guess that about half of you are with me, and the other half thinks I finally went off the deep end. This article is about the painting fluid/styrene glue that came with several of the Plasticville kits starting in the mid-1950's. Surprisingly enough, the history of this topic mirrors the development of our understanding of safety and Science over the last 50 years, as well as a little of the culture of our modern society.

All of the painting fluids supplied by Bachmann had two purposes: one was to use as a solvent for the paint tablets that also came in some kits, and the second purpose was to use as a glue. Dual purpose fluid! I suppose the best place to start is at the beginning. The first fluid supplied by Bachmann with their kits was "Trichlorethylene". This version came in a bottle with a cork stopper. This goes by the trade name "Trilene" and is still in use today. However, it's pretty nasty and is known to cause damage to chromosome 3 in susceptible people, leading to kidney tumors. It also exerts an acute narcotic effect when inhaled at medium to high doses. Habituation and addiction occasionally occurs. Trichlorethylene, with molecular formula C_2HCl_3 is stable, has a low boiling point, is virtually inflammable, and is a solvent with valuable extraction properties. But if the fluid is trichlorethylene, why am I so interested in Carbona? Even on the instruction sheet with the earliest paint kits, you will see a notice "When bottle of painting fluid is empty, use Carbona Cleaning Fluid". Bachmann was not selling their painting fluid separately at this point, so they suggested using Carbona if you needed more fluid.

Carbona has basically the same solvent properties as trichlorethylene, and was readily available at the time as a spot-remover and dry cleaning fluid.

Carbona's chemical name usually brings a knowing nod from most folks, for Carbona is none other than "Carbon Tetrachloride". Carbon tet was used for a long time by itself, or under the trade name Carbona. An effective, and popular, solvent for removing greases and oils. Mechanics often kept a bucket of it in the garage to wash their hands in. However, they unfortunately didn't know that it is a fairly potent carcinogen, and many people needlessly ended up with cancer as a result. At first there were restrictions on its usage, and an education program to inform people of its dangers, but after a while, with safer alternatives available, carbon tetrachloride was pulled from the market for commercial use. Of course it didn't help that more and more people were getting addicted to sniffing this "glue" for the high it provides. In fact, carbon tet is still available in central and south America where glue sniffing is a much larger problem than in the USA. This popularity for sniffing glue, paint, roach spray, or Carbona led to the Ramones song "Carbona Not Glue".

The next step in the painting fluid saga seems to be a mixture fluid I found in a Birds of the World model kit, from either 1958 or 1959, which contains chlorothene (55%), methylene chloride (15%), 99% isopropyl alcohol (5%), and aliphatic hydrocarbons (25%). The bottle I have is still full, and states "WILL NOT BURN" but with rubbing alcohol and aliphatic hydrocarbons (found in gasoline and turpentine) I'm certainly not going to put a match near it! However, the methylene chloride, $C_2H_2Cl_2$ is generally non-flammable even though it is a halogenated aliphatic hydrocarbon. It has the general solvent properties that we are used to seeing: degreasing agent, paint remover ingredient, refrigerant, solvent for oils, fats, and waxes. Also interesting is the chlorothene. At 55%, it is the main ingredient. Let me hold on the chlorothene comments for just one moment while I describe the next painting fluid version.

I found a large bottle of painting fluid in one of Bachmann's "Americana" line models. These were out in the late 50's and early 60's along with the Dogs of the World, and Birds of the World series. The contents of this bottle simply states: chlorothene. Synonyms of chlorothene include: methyl chloroform, methyl trichloromethane, and if we have any chemists out there, you may have already guessed.... 1,1,1 trichloroethane. Wait a second, does that sound familiar? It should, because most of the later painting fluid bottles, right up to the 70's have it as the main ingredient (along with 0.25% oil of mustard). So 1,1,1 trichloroethane was the painting

fluid of choice for Bachmann for maybe 15 years or so. Unlike it's predecessor, this stuff is Flammable! It may cause damage to the ozone layer, and is harmful via inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption. It's also used as a metal degreaser, a dry cleaning fluid, nail polish remover, and in textile processing. For those sniffing excessive amounts, it causes hallucinations, distorted perceptions, and death. Interestingly enough, closed containers may rupture and explode if heated. Something to think about if you have any Plasticville stored up in your attic. In Canada it was phased out by 1996. In the USA it was banned in the early 2000's. Good!



An assortment of Bachmann painting fluid bottles.

Well, sheesh, what CAN somebody use safely? Probably nothing, if I know people! But solvents are still out there. Just take a whiff of the paints that come with the Plasticville kits of today. They smell as potent as any of the old fluids. Of course, these are strictly paints, and not glues, to the best of my knowledge. Why do we use these things? The alternative isn't very appealing. We could be using water colors, but they just don't provide the bright, brilliant colors that we are looking for today. So we can give a little and use the water colors, or be

extra careful with what's out there and get the nice colors. Of course, who knows what tomorrow's carcinogen may be? Nobody thought carbon tet was dangerous..... Carbona Not Glue!

Lyrics are from www.lyricsdomain.com. Other references include www.osti.gov, www.intox.org, and www.inform.umd.edu.

The PCA Corner Store **Items for sale by the PCA**

Visit the PCA website to view all of the items offered.

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Do you have an idea for an item? Contact Chris Niehaus at secretary@plasticvilleusa.org or mail your suggestions to her at the address noted above.

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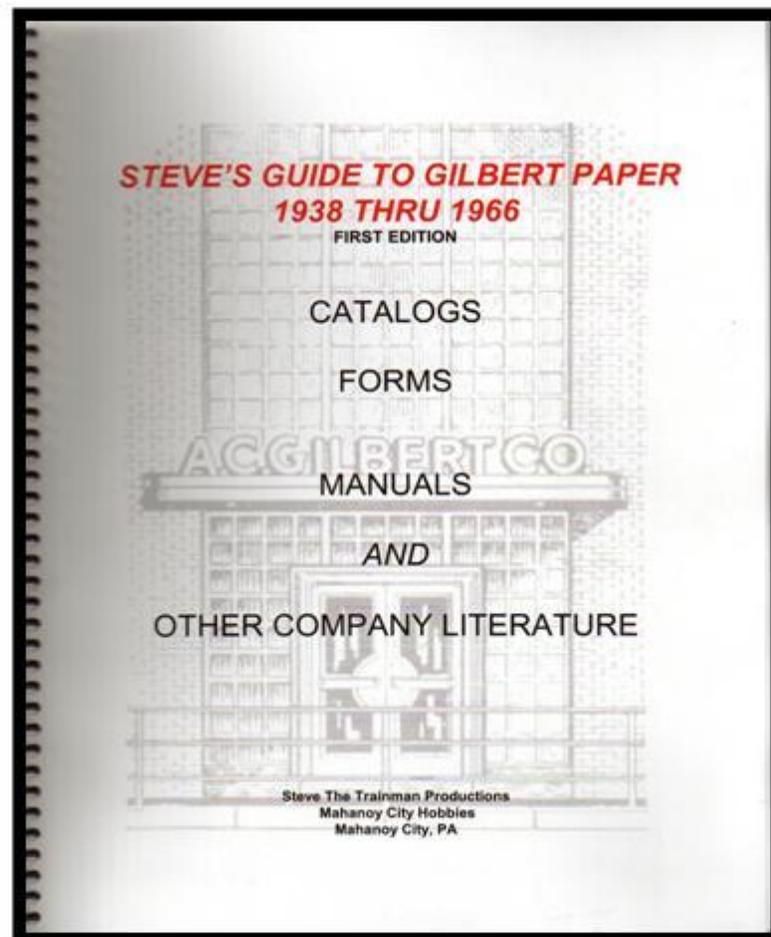
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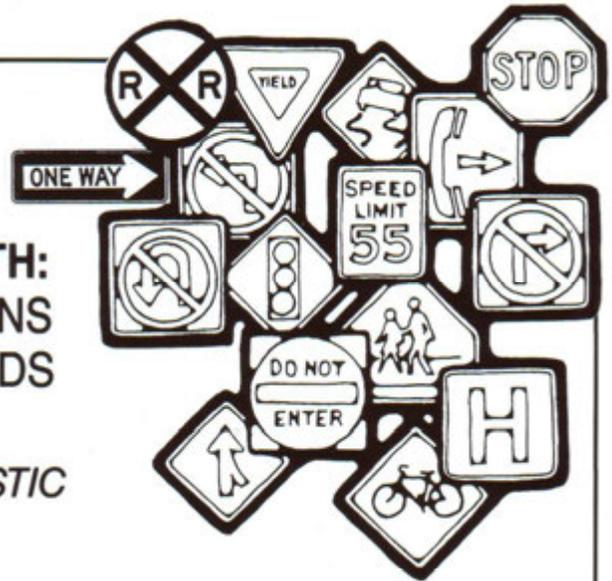
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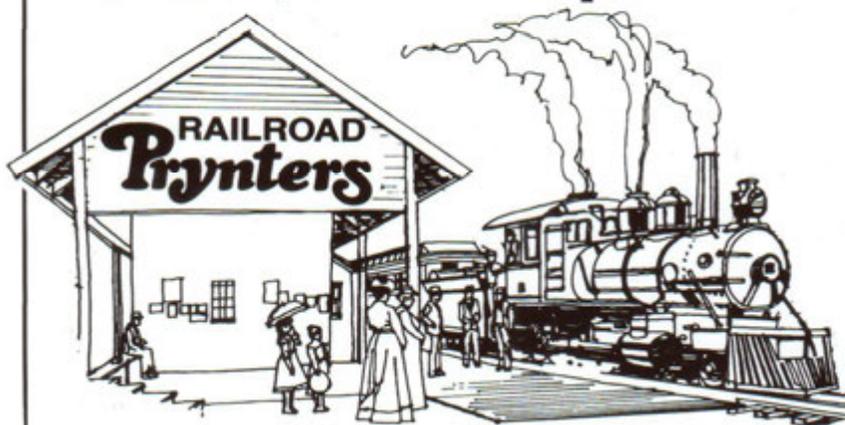
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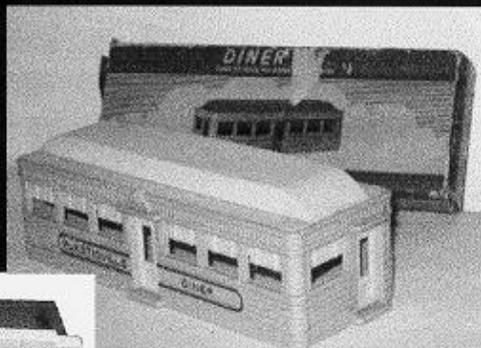
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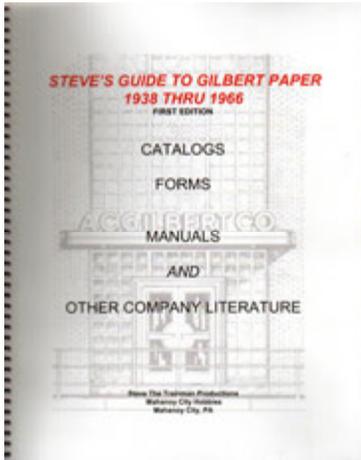


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Product Reviews



Steve's Guide to Gilbert Paper, 1938 thru 1966, Catalogs, Forms, Manuals, and other Company Literature, 1st edition, published by Steve the Trainman Productions.

When I received a copy of this book my first thoughts were, "why I would want to review a book on Gilbert paper in a newsletter of a club

that studies plastic buildings?". It then struck me that many of our members not only collect and model Plasticville but they also model and probably collect trains and related ephemera.

The book is spiral bound and runs to over 130 pages. The covers are shiny white cardstock. I could not get my scanner to drop the shadow shown in the accompanying illustration. Be assured the cover is white with red and black text.

I must compliment Steve on his adding a disclaimer to the first page of the book. The disclaimer states that he is aware that errors may have occurred in production and to

please contact him if one is found by the reader.

The book lists all paper of which Steve is aware in numerical order by year. There are instances in the book where a document is listed twice. The author explains his reason as follows, "numbers were assigned in sequence but not always used in sequence". His listing include not only train related paper but also paper relating to Erector sets, chemistry labs, and any other papers of which he was aware. This is definitely a monumental listing of documents.

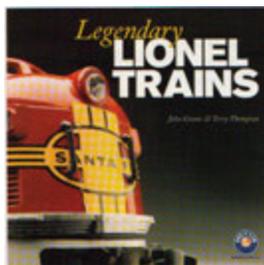
Throughout the book are included copies of old photographs of the factory in addition to documents and advertising pieces. This breaks up the listing and gives added value to the book.

An index of all documents in the book along with the page or pages upon which its description can be found is at the back of the book.

The last page of the book contains a request for additional information as the author states he has listed those in which he has come in contact and that, "I'm sure there are many more like these somewhere out there".

I know of no other Gilbert paper book that is currently available so if you have A.C Gilbert paper and wish to verify its age this is the book for you.

The book is priced at \$25 plus \$3.85 for Priority Mail or \$1.42 for Media Mail. Orders may be mailed to Steve the Trainman Productions at PO Box 178, Mahanoy City, PA, 17948 or by phone at 570-773-2349.



Legendary Lionel Trains, by John A Grams and Terry D Thompson, published by Kalmbach Books.

The book is hardbound in a 10-1/2 X 10-1/2 format and runs to 128 pages.

The authors were very careful to ensure that this piece

was not "just another Lionel book". They stated in the preface to the book that they wanted to dwell more on the facets of the trains rather than on the catalog numbers, condition ratings, estimates of rarity, etc. They have done a wonderful job of doing just that..

The numerous color photos all the way through the book are superb. After the Introduction page I don't think a single page is all text. One thing that caught my eye was the fact that some of the pieces pictured are not in pristine condition. That in itself was refreshing.

The book is broken up into three broad categories, Early, Golden Era, and Contemporary. These can be likened to the current designations of pre-war, postwar, and modern eras. The Early and Golden Era sections are further broken down into three sub-sections.

I found the text very easy to read. It does not have all of the technical information that is usually found in books of this sort. I do not believe the text would even bore a person totally disinterested in Lionel or model trains in general.

The majority of the time I would look at a new book about Lionel trains with a bit of a yawn.. I am glad I didn't in this instance.

Legendary Lionel Trains may be purchased from Kalmbach Publishing Company, 21027 Crossroads Circle, PO Box 1612, Waukesha, WI, 53187-1612. 262-769-8776. The price is \$29 plus shipping. You may also be able to purchase it from your local hobby shop.

Welcome New Members

The following individuals' names have been added to the Plasticville Collectors Association membership roster

Charles S Wilber, Whitmire, SC
Anatol Vasiliev, Vineland, NJ
Ed G Commander, Oklahoma City, OK
Richard J Manzano, Bronxville, NY
Michael J Denuty, Spokane, WA

as of January 1, 2005. Their names are now listed in the on line roster.

Tom J Landis, Dover, PA
Gregory M Czaja, Highland, IN
David R Grider, Decatur, IL
John Magno, Lindenhurst, NY

Proposed Members

The following have applied for membership in the Plasticville Collectors Association. The names of all proposed members must be published for the review of the general membership before being accepted as

William R Samsell, Falling Waters, WV
Fil Fillion, Troy, NY
William A Mazzoni, Vineland, NJ
Mark A McKibben, Hutchinson, KS
Geraldine E Scott, Englewood, FL
Debra K Deming, Davison, MI
Richard Ravella, Lutz, FL
Ray W Jackson, Winston-Salem, NC
Richard A Woelkers, Bristol, VA
Dennis J Palazzolo, St Louis, MO
Norbert A Steinhardt, Indianapolis, IN

members in accordance with the bylaws of the PCA. All names listed below will be added to the Plasticville Collectors Association rolls if no objection to such action is received prior to April 1, 2005.

Dennis F Call, Portland, OR
Jim Rodemaker, Carbondale, IL
David I Moshier, Burke, VA
Ronald W Dise, Glen Rock, PA
Thaddeus C Kosick, Parsonsburg, MD
Brock L Robertson, Yorktown, VA
Joseph P Scilla Jr, Marlboro, NY
Allen D Harn, Omaha, NE
Reginald F Henry, Belfair, WA
Greg Nicholas (Nick's Trains), Aliso Viejo, CA
Timothy J Debelak, Chula Vista, CA

Notes from the Secretary Treasurer

Hello my name is Christine Niehaus and I am your new Secretary/Treasurer for 2005. If the last name is familiar it is because my husband is John Niehaus. My involvement with the PCA began at the time the club was incorporated. My member number is 02-122. I enjoyed

the behind the scenes involvement and it seemed like a natural progression to assume responsibilities of Secretary/Treasurer. I will look forward to serving in this position.

Incorrect Email addresses

Please send me your current email address if you did not have not been receiving email messages from me or the PCA secretary. Your lack of notification probably indicates that I have an incorrect email address. The email address listed after your name is the one currently in our records. Please help me keep our records accurate.

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The Villager Classified Ads

Note:

Member information such as name, address, email address, and member number should not be considered part of the word count. Telephone numbers will be included in the ad only if they are part of the submitted ad.

Classified ads run for four consecutive issues unless a change is made to the ad or notice is given to remove it. The month and year at the end of each ad notes the last issue in which that particular ad will appear.

For Sale

Plasticville parts for sale: Please visit my eBay store, "North Pole Rail Road". Good used parts: walls, roofs, windows, and doors. Many priced at 99¢. More added every week. Thank You. beaglema@myshorelink.com #04-248, Robert Y Anderson, 119 Dundee Ave, Chester, MD 21619. (May 05)

Varney HO parts catalog listing original and reproduction parts. \$15.00 postpaid. #01-81, Chris Rossbach, 135 Richwood Dr., Gloversville, NY 12078 518-725-4446 11 AM to 3 PM. No night calls, please. (May 05)

Election Special! Don't know who might win? Don't trust either one? Beef up your own homeland security with a Jr. Chief, 198, for \$325. Get your own Interceptor Squadron, 5607, for \$425. Direct it all with colored citizens (whose vote you can take for granted) centrally – with your own public buildings, PB-8, for \$400 and grandstand from, 1890, Racing Accessories \$750. #02-154, Robert Spivey, Box 33484, Decatur, GA 30033. (404) 633-6777 (Aug 05)

For Trade

My green walled Storytown Humpty Dumpty for your yellow walled version. #02-183, Charles Swanson, PO

Wanted

Red Roof New England Rancher. Boxes: 1707, 1611, 1607 & 1614. Misc. "N" play sets or parts. Storytown shoe complete or parts. Littleton ranch, red walls, maroon roof. Marbled Plasticville work car. #02-183, Charles Swanson, PO Box 33042, Knoxville, TN 37930. 865-693-5740 (May 05)

Megow, Ideal, Skyline cardstock structure buildings in HO scale. Ideal kits as follows: B5 Water Tower, B27 Barn and Outbuildings, B8 Factory, B37 Meat Packing Plant, B43 Paoer Mill, B1 Combination Station, B7 Roundhouse, B38 Two Stall Engine House, B31 Railroad Terminal, B41 Icing Plant, B42 Hedge. #01-81, Chris Rossbach, 135 Richwood Dr., Gloversville, NY 12078

It is suggested that the names of pieces being offered in the classified ads follow the names found in reference material such as price guides or catalogs.

Ads may be edited to conform to both the suggested naming convention and to bring them to fewer than 50 words if payment for the excess words is not included with the ad.

0400 Mobile home, cream/blue, mint \$60 HS-6 Hospital, complete, missing one tab on steps, tattered box \$30 AD-4 Air administration building, incomplete, good for parts \$10 Above prices plus shipping. factlf@juno.com #02-87 Lawrence Fachler, 6 Bosko Drive, East Brunswick, NJ 08816-4542 (Nov 05)

6 REALISTIC HO scale model kits. All kits are unassembled, never used and are in their original boxes. Boxes are in excellent condition. Kits are #338---Small Town church, #391---2-Story House, #392---Cottage, #395 Ranch House, #557---L-Shaped Ranch House, #558---Bungalow. I am not familiar with this manufacturer and can offer no further information outside of color combos if needed. \$75.00 for all. Contact Shirley Hunter at email Yoginugen@yahoo.com. (Nov 05)

Box 33042, Knoxville, TN 37930. 865-693-5740 (May 05)

518-725-4446 11 AM to 3 PM. No night calls, please. (May 05)

My Cathedral steeple cap for your Union roof. My short union step rail for your long railing. My AD-4 ladder for your H20 ladder. My union clock for your mansion chimney. My apartment antenna for your N.E. antenna. My crossing shanty lamp fixture for your crossing shanty lamp fixture. My BarBQ for your Maple trees. #02-154, Robert Spivey, Box 33484, Decatur, GA 30033. (404) 633-6777 (Aug 05)

Porch roof and porch floor for red w/dark grey roof LH4 2-story Colonial house. 2 yellow farm implement wagon

stakes. K-Line catalogs. Figures and accessories for K-Lineville buildings. Loading dock roof for K-Line factory. johnln@netins.net #00-3, John Niehaus, 601 SE Second St., Ankeny, IA 50021-3207 (Nov 05)

Suburban Station in Ex #1616 box and/or Ex #1954 box. Switch Tower in Ex 1631 box and/or 1951 box. Watchman's Shanty in Ex 1633 box and/or 1816 Ex box. Ranch House in Ex 1705 and/or 1812 box. #99-01, Contact Joe Kutza at jkutza@comcast.net or 301-528-6679 (Aug 05)

Any marbled walls, etc, for the switch tower, workman's shanty, and the water tower, etc. #02-93, Gerry Fuglewicz, 11262 Sunrise Dr, East Aurora, NY, 14052, GFuglewicz@aol.com 716-655-0223 (Nov 05)

I am looking for figures from the animal sets: cats and standing ducks. I will buy or trade. (I have some pieces of the dairy barn and ranch house.) E-mail me at pjb@mich.com #02-100, Paul Buczkowski, 422 N Huron, #2, Ypsilanti, MI, 734-485-0134 (Nov 05)

Your discarded, miscellaneous Plasticville walls, roofs, parts, pieces. Glued or unglued. Large or small. HO or O. For scratchbuilding an O and HO layout. #02-158, Michael Kingston, 3345 Fox Wood Ct, West Bloomfield, MI, 48324. PH.248-363-3167 (Nov 05)

Where is your free *For Sale, For Trade, or Wanted* classified ad?

Why not take advantage of more of your membership privileges? All members are allowed one free classified ad in each of the three classified ad categories per issue. The ad is free for up to 50 words. Your email address, membership number, name and address are not counted in the free 50 words either! Only the body of the ad is counted.

Use the classified ad form included with this newsletter to place your classified ad. They work!



Become an ePCA member for 2005 and a pen like the one shown will be sent to you with your 2005 membership card. The pen has the new "soft grip", comes in fine point with black ink and gold-tone accents and three lines of gold engraving. Send a note to secretary@plasticvilleusa.org indicating that you wish to get your 2005 newsletters off the PCA website instead of printed copies through the mail. She will send you the pen along with a user name and password for access to the Members Only section of the website as soon as she gets your message. (Please note that the light stripe along the blue area is from camera flash. It is not on the actual pen.) Those who have already indicated they want to be ePCA members will be getting their pens very shortly.

BILL NOLE

PVMAYOR@COX.NET

Bill Nole, 10073 E. Bryonwood Lane, Tucson, AZ 85730 - Telephone: 520-722-3835

Kim Nole, 319 Oak St., Dunmore, PA 18512 - Telephone: 570-343-2236

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BB-9 Billboard and Frame \$3 each; 4/\$10.

1623 Cattle Pen \$75.
1302 Farm Implements \$95.
1923 Roadside Stand - Sealed - \$85.
DE-7 Diner (Red or Yellow) \$30.
1800 Gas Station \$45.
FB-1 Frosty Bar \$30.
1877 Sitting People \$275. MINT
SA-9 Outhouse, Dealer Box of 12 - \$175.
ON-5 Outdoor Necessities \$250.
5002 Picket Fence, Blister Pack \$150.
HF-2 House Fence, Dealer Box of 12 Packs - \$250.

PLASTICVILLE NO BOX - COMPLETE

CC-9 Church \$8.
BN-1 Barn \$10.
1620 Loading Platform \$10.
1616 Suburban Station \$12.
1303 Log Cabin \$10.
1703 Colonial Mansion (Red Roof) \$25.
0550 KING Add-A-Floor (Red) \$10. ea. or 3/\$25. MINT
0550 KING Add-A-Floor Brown \$15. ea 3/\$39. MINT
SC-4 School \$15.
DE-7 Diner \$18.

BK-1 Bank \$25.
FH-4 Fire Dept. \$15.
FB-1 Frosty Bar \$15.
SM-6 Supermarket (small) \$18.
Misc Windmill (Silver/Brown) \$15.
MOBILE HOME Assortment - No Box - \$20. ea 6/\$99.
(Cream/Teal, Cream/Pink, Cream/Blue, Teal/Cream, Pink/Cream, Pink/Blue, Blue/Cream, Blue/Pink, Blue/Silver) Make your own MOBILE HOME PARK.

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5000 3 Men In A Tub (Red or Yellow) \$250.
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5010 Castle (Yellow, White or Blue) \$250.

5012 Jack & Jill (Yellow or Red Well) \$250.
5013 Gingerbread House \$300.
5011 Old Lady In A Shoe (Red, Yellow or Green) \$600.

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Bank: Red Light \$2. ea; Front Canopy \$3. ea; Side Canopy \$4. ea.
Fire Department: Siren \$3. ea; Chimney Corner \$3. ea; Chimney Cap \$3 ea.
Police Dept: Red Light \$2. ea; Chimney Cap \$3. ea; Chimney Corner \$3 ea;
Antenna Set (2 pieces) \$5.
House Under Construction: Shovel, Hoe, Bucket, Rake, Saw Horse \$3. ea.
Air Administration Building: Ladder \$15.; Canopy \$12.; Handrail Set \$12.
Jack & Jill: Pail (white) \$5. ea; Shrub (red, yellow or blue) \$5. ea; 1 of ea \$12.

School: White Light \$2. ea; Weathervane \$2. ea.
Air Hanger: Windsock \$3. ea.
Windmill: Ladder \$15; Wheel \$8.
Log Cabin: Chimney \$3. ea.
Cattle Pen: Cross Bars (2 holes or slot) \$5. ea; Set of 3 - \$12.
Gingerbread House: Brick (white, tan or chocolate) \$6. ea.
3 Men In A Tub: Oar (red or yellow) \$5. ea.
Castle: Flag or Chain (red, yellow, blue or white) \$5. ea.
Old Lady In A Shoe: Clothes line (red, yellow or green) \$15. ea.

SHIPPING INFORMATION: \$4.00 FOR THE BOOK ONLY. \$5.00 IF ORDERING BUILDINGS, PARTS, AND TRUCK



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A church bell rings, and the doors open wide to welcome the people with warmth and peace against the winter's chill. After services, family and friends join together to watch the big game or enjoy a hearty meal on a lazy Sunday afternoon. These are our snapshots of the past. Recapture your yesterdays with the O Scale *Plasticville*® U.S.A. Cathedral (Item No. 45981).

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