

# DANVILLE FLYER

*A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS*

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The *DANVILLE FLYER* is published monthly by the **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER** of the **NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** for its members and other interested persons.

The **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS**, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$17.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$20.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, Il. with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

## **OFFICERS FOR 2005 - Our 37th Year**

**PRESIDENT:** Dave Sherrill

**SECRETARY:** Al McCoy

**NATIONAL DIRECTOR:** Rick Schroeder

**MUSEUM DIRECTOR:** Robert Gallippi

**EDITOR:** Rick Schroeder, rickschro@insightbb.com  
1819 Coventry Dr.  
Champaign, IL 61822-5239

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Doug Nipper

**TREASURER:** Allen Cooke

**PROGRAM CHAIRMAN:** William Darnier

**HISTORIAN:** Jesse Bennett

**PUBLISHERS:** Allen Cooke & Doug Nipper

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NS brush-cutting crews were out in force late this winter trying to comply with FRA regulations concerning road crossing visibility. Here we see one of the monsters at Marshfield, its booms tucked in to cross a mid-siding road. With the arms extended, the business ends can reach out into virtually any ditch or way up on an embankment. Image by Joe Cooke

## Coming Events

*April 17, 2005*

**Danville, IL - Chapter Meeting at Pizza Inn, 1:00 PM CDT, meeting at 2:00 PM**

*April 23 & 24, 2005*

Monticello, IL - MRM throttle time

*April 30, 2005*

Beecher, IL - Chicago and Eastern Illinois Historical Society annual meeting 10 AM to 9 PM

*April 30, 2005*

Monticello, IL - MRM Photographers Day, special equipment.

*May 1, 2005*

Wheaton, IL - Great Midwest Train Show, 10-3, \$7

*May 1, 2005*

Homewood, IL - Second Annual Homewood Railroad Heritage Day, 10-4 PM, Municipal Center, 2020 N. Chestnut

*May 14 & 15, 2005*

Mattoon, IL - Cross County Model Railroad Days, 10-9 & 12-5 respect.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, April 17 at the Pizza Inn. As usual, we meet around 1:00 PM, order from the menu and start the meeting around 1:45 PM. Program announced at the meeting.

Annual dues are past due now and those that have not paid this is the last issue of the newsletter. We appreciate your membership and the donations that some of you have made.

The final model operating session on the layout was held April 7. Now we have to

get the layout ready for spring opening, only a short time away. Our contractor has been working on the exterior of the building again this spring. Tuckpoint us under way on both sides of the building. This year we need to get the downspout back up and painting done on the exterior woodwork. For those of you that have visited the museum please note the fine job that member Bob Gallippi has done on the baggage cart located on the south platform. This past winter Bob, Rick and Bill Sandusky worked on scenery on the train layout. The area around the entrance to the baggage room has trees planted and has really changed the look of the layout. In addition additional trees have been planted as well as additional detail work completed by Bob and Bill. As noted in the last issue, Bill Sandusky passed away last month. Bill's wife Jean has donated some HO equipment to the museum and the Grafton, Davis and Mt. Storm will always be part of the layout.

Member Bob McQuown recently achieved his 25 years with the National Railway Historical Society. Congratulations Bob from all of us.

We appreciate the attendance at recent meetings. Rick still has the video tapes that were donated last year at each meeting so be sure to see him to check out a couple for viewing at home. Only 2 meetings left this spring, we look forward to your attendance.

## Drivin' The Dixie Day

*June 18, 2005*

A few years back a group in Homewood started an event called "Drivin' The Dixie". The event featured antique and collectors cars and was a road-rally type event. Over the last couple of years many people wanted it to be an event that allowed everyone to be a part of the special day.

Now the event includes groups from Blue Island to Danville and the event includes many cities along the famous Illinois Route 1, the "Dixie Highway". The event will end in the afternoon at the Kankakee River Park in Momence, IL where there will be events and group displays.

This year Rossville, Danville and Hoopeston will participate in the event. Rossville will have events starting at 7 AM with a breakfast at the Rossville Fire Department, a community-wide garage sale, antique merchants on the sidewalks from 9-5, historic sites open (which includes our museum) from 9-4, an antique tractor show in the downtown and various groups serving food all day. Those that are driving the highway in vintage cars will get their passport stamped at the Rossville Historical Society on west Attica Street.

This will be a great event for Rossville and we will need additional help all day at the museum.



## Paul Stringham Dies

### *Illinois Rail Photographer, Historian, And Author*

Paul H. Stringham, 92, pioneer central Illinois railroad photographer and historian, and the author of several railroad books, died March 28 in his hometown of Peoria. Paul, a traction fan at heart but one who did not ignore steam or diesel, was a lifelong bachelor. He became “hooked” on trains at age 6 when for Christmas 1919 he received an electric trainset.

He soon became a train-watcher with his grandfather, but trains were in his blood as his father was a streetcar motorman and carbarn foreman for Illinois Power Co. Paul began shooting railroad photos as a teen with a Kodak 120 box camera, soon replaced by a 120 folding Kodak. In 1931 he received for high school graduation a postcard Kodak, which he used until that size film became scarce. Early on, he also became interested in rail historical research. In the 1950s, he collaborated on maps in Central Electric Railfans’ Association publications, and his first book, “76 Years of Peoria Streetcars,” was published by Electric Railway Historical Society in 1965. For the better part of 70 years, Stringham traveled with three other traction fans: W.C. “Bill” Janssen, Hulin Cross, and the late Bob Mehlenbeck.

Stringham had early connections to *TRAINS* Magazine. In the 11-page “Favorite Railroad Photos of Paul Stringham” gallery in the November 1977 issue, Editor David P. Morgan said, “Stringham is to Illinois what Otto Perry was to Colorado.” In fact, Stringham himself appeared in *TRAINS*’ first issue, November 1940, on page 20, in a photo taken on May 28, 1939, by the late George Krambles of a group of CERA members beside an ex-Cincinnati & Lake Erie inter-urban on the Cedar Rapids & Iowa City. Paul would hang around the newsstand in Peoria’s Rock Island station, waiting for the arrival of each new “Railroad Man’s Magazine” (later “Railroad”), which led in 1933 to his being hired work at the stand. He became the newsstand manager in

1940, and of course stocked and prominently displayed the new *TRAINS*, which pleased founder Al Kalmbach in 1942 when he dropped by on a trip through Peoria and was reminded that Paul’s stand was selling 60 copies a month. Stringham’s first photos in *TRAINS*, of Illinois Terminal electric freight and passenger trains, appeared in the September 1941 issue.

The Rock Island eventually closed the stand, so Stringham went to work for the Peoria Camera Shop, and later for Peoria’s Methodist Medical Center, from which he retired in 1978. Stringham collaborated with Richard Wallin and John Sz wajkart on Golden West Books’ “Chicago & Illinois Midland” in 1979. Stringham’s “Illinois Terminal, the Electric Years,” was published by Interurban Press in 1989, and his most recent book, “Toledo, Peoria & Western,” by Deller Archive of Peoria in 1995. — J. David Ingles

*Ed: Paul took a lot of C&EI photos and I have two great ones hanging on the wall in the basement train room*

## Rochelle, Illinois derailment

On March 14 a Union Pacific rail-grinding machine working west through town on the north mainline track struck an east-bound BNSF intermodal train at the busy diamond crossing about 7:45 p.m. Friday. The collision tied up both UP’s Geneva Subdivision, its main line linking Chicago to Omaha and points west, and BNSF’s Aurora Subdivision, a.k.a. “the C&I,” its main line linking Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul and points west. No rolling stock derailed, although some containers on the BNSF train — symbolized Z-SSECH-8-09 and bound from South Seattle, Wash., to Chicago — were ripped open, their contents spilling out along the right-of-way. There were no reported injuries or hazmat concerns.

Both railroads were reopened early Saturday morning, but the Rochelle Railroad Park, a city-owned public viewing area east of the diamonds that is normally open 24/7, was closed during the day to allow clean-up activities to be finished.

The incident is under investigation by both railroads. Rochelle is 75 miles west of downtown Chicago via the UP and 83 miles via the BNSF.

## North Carolina DOT celebrates 100th grade-crossing closure

RALEIGH, N.C. – The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has announced its 100th public railroad crossing closing since 1993 as part of a long-term statewide program to reduce train/vehicle collisions as well as improve overall crossing safety. The 100th closing, at Liberty Street in China Grove, between Salisbury and Charlotte, is on tracks owned by the North Carolina Railroad and leased to Norfolk Southern. Coincidentally, the first recorded grade-crossing closure of the program was also in China Grove.

With more than 4350 public grade crossings in the state, candidates for closure or elimination include those where a high number of crashes have occurred, those with a reduced sight distance, where vehicular traffic can be safely re-routed, and crossings within a quarter mile of one-another.

Statistics indicate the effort is paying off. In 1993, NCDOT said there were 167 collisions involving 16 fatalities. In 2004, North Carolina recorded 76 collisions and 12 fatalities.

*Ed: Now if we could just convince more citizens of Illinois to close crossings and save lives.*

## Union Pacific To Invest \$1.3 Billion

Union Pacific announced on March 30 it is spending \$1.3 billion this year on track improvements across its 33,000-mile system, including replacing 4.4 million ties - 3.7 million wood, 355,000 concrete, and 215,000 composite - spreading 6.8 million tons of ballast and replacing 1,055 miles of rail. The railroad will also spend \$295 million to increase capacity on its main line in Arizona and in the North Platte, Nebr. area, as well constructing new sidings in Texas, Utah, Oklahoma, California, and Iowa.

*Editor: CSX will spend some \$10 million on their one system capacity improvement project this year for Evansville and Princeton, Indiana.*

## Intercity Passenger Rail News Conference

***Detroit, MI, March 24, 2005***

Good morning. I am pleased to be in Detroit today to discuss the Bush Administration's plans for Amtrak, plans that will help complete the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative by creating a meaningful federal-state partnership for rail travel in America.

I had the opportunity to go over those plans this morning with Richard Harnish, the executive director of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association. Let me just say that, as the Secretary of Transportation, I am excited by the growing enthusiasm for passenger rail here in Michigan and across the Midwest. And I believe that the federal government ought to be doing more to help. Unfortunately, with the broken system that we have today, we cannot.

Every year, the taxpayers have been anteing up more than one billion dollars for Amtrak.

And Amtrak, instead of making prudent

investments in support of passenger rail service, insists on using these funds for routes that have long since faded from use. These investment decisions leave little money to improve service along corridors where there is such clear public support. As a result, the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative and similar innovative approaches to intercity passenger rail around the country are starved for funding.

Moreover, Amtrak continues to delay desperately needed maintenance of the infrastructure that it already owns. This neglect leads to unreliable service and unacceptably slow travel times between places like Detroit and Chicago. Two out of every five trains on the Wolverine line arrived late last year and that was the best performance among Amtrak's passenger lines serving Michigan. And if people cannot depend on the trains to get them where they need to go, they naturally turn elsewhere, causing increased traffic on I-94 and at Metro Airport.

We have a different vision, a vision where travel by train from Detroit to Chicago is fast, efficient, and reliable; a vision where a vibrant and viable passenger rail network connects Midwesterners and links them to business and educational opportunities throughout the region; and a vision where competition and a new federal-state partnership are building a stronger rail network and attracting new riders in thriving markets across the country. This vision is at the core of our Passenger Rail Investment Reform Act, which I will submit when the Congress reconvenes during the week of April 4th.

Our plan will breathe new life into passenger rail by leveling the playing field, providing healthy competition for better rail service, and supporting the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative by creating a true federal-state partnership for investing in improved passenger rail service. Under our plan, Amtrak will focus on its primary mission of running trains on time.

Today, Amtrak is a dispatching company, a real estate business, a track repair firm, and a reservation system. If Amtrak were in the aviation business instead of passenger rail, it would be assuming the role of airline, travel agency, airport, and the

FAA all rolled into one.

Our plan fixes that by freeing Amtrak from having to worry about a hot dog stand that is late on its rent or a commuter train that is off schedule. Under our plan, Amtrak will be able to focus on getting people to their destinations comfortably and reliably.

We accomplish this by transferring the tracks and stations owned by Amtrak today to state and local control. Commuter trains constitute the majority of traffic on Amtrak's tracks, so it just makes sense to put state and local officials in charge of the tracks and stations that are so vital to their economies.

Our plan introduces healthy competition for passenger rail service. Today, Amtrak may in fact be America's last monopoly. Right now, if Michigan wants service options to operate the Blue Water train from Port Huron to East Lansing, it can only choose Amtrak or Amtrak. Our plan will instead allow states to choose who runs their intercity trains.

Imagine how service would be revitalized if states could truly shop for the best intercity rail service for their money.

Amtrak will compete with private companies and public operators to run routes. And this healthy competition will give Amtrak incentives to run the trains on time, to keep them clean, and to provide better service.

And under our plan, the Department of Transportation will continue to invest in passenger rail. But instead of handing the taxpayers money to a company in Washington, D.C., we will partner with states so that investments are made in repairing, rebuilding, and improving the Nation's networks of tracks, tunnels, bridges, and stations. Under our plan, all states will be eligible for federal matching grants to improve rail systems. This means that Michigan won't have to go it alone.

I know that the state has already invested tens of millions of dollars to improve tracks, signals, stations, and equipment. Under our plan, for the first time, the federal government will have a clear program established to match Michigan's and other states investments dollar for dollar.

These capital grants are the key to revitalizing passenger rail travel in America. Our grants will give the states a powerful incentive to invest in better tracks and more reliable equipment. These improvements will cut travel time and improve reliability. Today, even where there is natural demand between cities like St. Louis and Kansas City, Cleveland and Pittsburgh, and Grand Rapids and Chicago, Amtrak does not sell enough tickets to cover the cost of operations. As a result, states like Michigan that want service pay Amtrak an operating subsidy.

When the Nation's tracks are maintained, when they can handle state-of-the-art passenger train service, when service is reliable, then ridership will increase, making trains more popular and more profitable and decreasing the need for operating subsidies.

Even with all of these positive features to improve rail service under our plan, there are still those who claim that the President and I are out to kill Amtrak. I have a message for these critics: Stop writing press releases and start reading our plan.

Read about how we will save Amtrak; make the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative a reality; and create, for the first time, a meaningful federal-state partnership for passenger rail travel.

And I have a message for the millions of Americans who use Amtrak and the many millions more who would take the train if it were faster, more reliable, and more responsive to travelers needs.

This is my message: We all know that Amtrak and intercity passenger rail will die if it doesn't get help and soon. Join us in finding a solution. Bring your ideas to the table. Let's work together, using our bill as the starting point. I will work night and day to convince the Congress to pass the reform that is so vital to saving Amtrak and putting passenger rail travel back on track in America.

Thank you.

*Remarks For The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary Of Transportation*

## Explore FDR's America

Amtrak and The History Channel (THC) are partnering to promote the new THC four-hour special of "FDR - A Presidency Revealed." An avid and frequent train traveler, Franklin D. Roosevelt used the first designated presidential rail car, and advanced legislation that expanded railroad service in many towns in America.

The program will air in two segments April 17 and 18. Under the partnership, The History Channel developed and produced "Explore FDR's America Guide," a fun, unique travel guide, available to passengers at select Amtrak stations, ClubAcela and in coach seats on select trains, including the Auto Train.

The specially designed guide, which contains travel activities and games tied to Roosevelt, will also promote THC's online sweepstakes for a trip for two to "Explore FDR's America." The sweepstakes winners will fly to Baltimore/Washington, DC, via Southwest Airlines to visit the FDR Memorial and other historical sites. From there, they will travel to New York via Amtrak's popular high-speed Acela Express and connect to the Empire service to visit FDR's mansion in Hyde Park, NY. Amtrak will also provide taxi transfer and hotel accommodations at Beekman Arms, the oldest operating inn in America and the site of many FDR speeches.

Amtrak's partnership with THC includes on-air promotional spots on The History Channel, The Biography Channel, The History Channel International, and radio stations in 10 major markets. Additionally, Amtrak Guest Rewards® members will receive 20 percent off the purchase of over 700 History Channel DVD titles.

*Via RailPace – from Amtrak - 4/01*

## Chicago Shootout

Two men were dead and a Norfolk Southern Railway police officer was critically wounded early Sunday in an exchange of gunfire on Chicago's South Side that also involved a Chicago police officer. The railway police officer was in a vehicle shortly after midnight when he saw an armed man chasing, then shooting a man dead, said Chicago police department spokesman Hector Alfaro. "The officer gets out of the vehicle, orders the offender to drop his weapon," said Alfaro. "He refuses and fires at the officer, striking him multiple times" in the 5900 block of south Normal Avenue.

At the same time, a Chicago police officer on his way to work saw the railway policeman gunned down, said Alfaro. "He gets out of his vehicle and announces he is a police officer and orders the offender to drop the weapon," said Alfaro. Instead, the man allegedly pointed the gun toward the officer, who shot and fatally wounded the gunman. The wounded officer is in serious condition after surgery at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn.

The Chicago policeman was not hurt. Hugh McCormack, 34, was injured in the line of duty, said Norfolk Southern Railroad spokeswoman Susan Terpay. He been on the railroad's police force for six years and was in the canine unit, Terpay said. Norfolk Southern police are licensed officers who carry guns while they patrol the rail lines and the area surrounding it, Terpay said. Alfaro said police have no idea why the man with the gun was chasing his victim. "The only two people who know that are dead," he said.

*Via RailPace from Conrail Technical Society-3/28*

## Dog Walkers Killed

Brookston, Indiana - Two women were struck and killed by an Amtrak train while walking their dogs along the railroad track. White County Chief Deputy Coroner Pat Jones says 58-year-old Bette Lou May and her daughter 28-year-old Brianne May were killed instantly today. The women were from Tully, New York.

The accident occurred about 13 miles north of Lafayette, at Brookston, where the women were visiting Bette Lou May's mother. The train's engineer says he tried to stop and blew the horn to get the women's attention, but they froze. The dogs also were killed. The train was en route from New York to Chicago and wasn't damaged but was delayed nearly five hours. Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari says it was carrying 220 passengers and the railroad speed limit in Brookston is 50 miles-per-hour.

## Appalachian And Ohio Railroad

The Appalachian and Ohio Railroad (A&O) is located in the heart of the historically lucrative Gauley coalfields of West Virginia. The 158-mile segment of track runs from Grafton, WV to Cowen, WV, on former B&O territory. Also included in the 158 miles is the former Pickens Subdivision, running from Hampton, WV, south to Alexander, WV. Previously a CSX property, Watco Companies took over operations March 25, 2005, and expects to move 90,000 carloads the first year. Formerly known as the Cowen and Pickens Subdivisions of the B&O, this rail line produces a large portion of the coal trains from the northern West Virginia area. Coal makes up 95% of the route's traffic, mainly steam coal for power plants in the North and Mid-Atlantic states. A small percentage is exported.

"Old Heads" of the railroad refer to the northern section as "The Funnel", which includes the line from Grafton, WV south the Hampton Junction. Additionally, the southern section from Hampton Junction to Cowen is known as "The End of the World." The Pickens Subdivision, located south from Hampton Junction to Alexander, runs along the south bank of the Buckhannon River. The A&O is a unique segment of railroad because of the customer base and the geography.

Passing through some of West Virginia's most scenic and rugged terrain, the A&O intends to provide the most efficient and affordable transportation packages avail-

able.

The A&O has commenced operations with a fleet of 16 locomotives. The fleet consists of 12 SD50 locomotives acquired from National Railway Equipment (NREX) that were built new for the Chicago & Northwestern in November and December 1985 and later became part of the Union Pacific fleet. The locomotives are being renumbered into the 5100 series and carry WAMX reporting marks for WATCO affiliate Webb Asset Management. The A&O fleet currently rosters WAMX 5101, 5102, 5103, 5104, 5105, and 5111 along with NREX 5073, 5083, 5086, 5091, 5092, and 5093 which are likely to be renumbered into the currently vacant WAMX 5100 series slots. Four former Bangor and Aroostook GP38's round out the fleet and these still carry their BAR reporting marks and road numbers; 350, 353, 355 and 363.

*Via RailPace from Conrail Technical Society-3/27*

## Wheel Report

**PASSENGER RAIL** - the American Public Transportation Association said that U.S. public transportation ridership totaled 9.6 billion trips in 2004, an increase of 2.1 percent over the previous year. An APTA spokesman said that light rail experienced the greatest increase, 8.2 percent, due in part to the addition of several new systems and expansion of several existing systems. The spokesman added that heavy rail had the next highest increase at 3.0 percent, followed by commuter rail at 0.3 percent. (*Editor: Wonder what the increase is now with gas prices going up?*)

**RAIL TRAFFIC INCREASE** - For the period January 1 through March 26, 2005, U.S. rail volume grand totaled 376.4 billion ton-miles, up 3.4 percent from the comparable period last year. Also for this period, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 2.6 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 8.5 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 1.6 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 6.0 percent, all when ranked with the comparable period last year.

BNSF agreed to grant temporary overhead trackage rights to Keokuk Junction

Railway over approximately 4 miles of line between Blair Jct., IL. and Bushnell, IL. The purpose of the temporary trackage rights is to allow KJRY to bridge its trains until the diamond crossings at Bushnell are restored.

## Construction Projects

The "orange barrels" (they used Illini colors) are out again on the roadways, therefore, spring must be upon us. The projects involving NS and CSX are starting up again and we are becoming very busy. Late last month we and CSX officials showed the Princeton and Evansville projects to contractors. Bids have been taken and the preconstruction meeting will be the middle of this month. Contractors should start moving in early May with completion of the new 4-mile segment at Princeton completed by November of this year.

CREATE has started (finally) with mapping being furnished for the UP and BNSF/CSX segments. We have had site meetings and started preparation of preliminary plans. We are in the process of arranging meetings between our signal subconsultant and the various railroads to get that part started. The UP third main track south of Proviso yard will be the most complicated of the three projects we have to design. The new track will begin east of the IHB overhead and extend west to just west of the interstate overhead bridges.

*More next month. Rick*