

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 2006 - Our 38th Year

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MUSEUM DIRECTOR: Robert Gallippi

HISTORIAN: Jesse Bennett

EDITOR: Rick Schroeder, rickschro@insightbb.com

PUBLISHERS: Allen Cooke & Doug Nipper

1819 Coventry Dr.

Cooke Business Products, Inc.

Champaign, IL 61822-5239

John Cooke Sr., Honorary Member

MEMBER: Association of Illinois Museums and Historical Societies

Visit our Chapter WWW Home Page On-Line - <http://www.prairienet.org/djc-nrhs/>



Late fall of 2005 was the timeframe for this shot of a westbound Triple Crown at Marshfield, IN.

Photo by Joe Cooke

Coming Events

April, 2006

Danville, IL - NO CHAPTER MEETING THIS MONTH DUE TO THE RAIL TRIP ANDEASTER.

April 22 & 23, 2006

Arcola, IL Rockome Gardens model train show, 10-4

April 21 & 22, 2006 & May 13, 2006

Work at Rossville Museum sorting and boxing records for movement to Vermilion County Museum. Dave and Rick are working on the 21st to start the process. Hours are 9 AM to whenever. Bring large boxes if you have any.

May 21, 2006

Danville, IL - Next regular Chapter meeting and last one before summer break.

May 20 & 21, 2006

Homewood, IL Rail Heritage Days at Municipal Center

May 27 to 29, 2006

Rossville Museum opens for the season - need volunteers to be on site those days, 12-4.

April 30 & May 1, 2006

Monticello, IL - Photo trains at the MRM, 4 scheduled runs.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **in May** at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant as the normal meeting date falls on Easter, we are taking the rail trip to Chicago on the 8th and therefore decided at the last meeting to move the business part to the train trip. Hopefully, by the time you read this, you were on the trip. Allen Cooke lined up a great trip and we are hoping for good weather..

The first sessions for sorting museum records are noted in the Coming Events column. On the 21st Dave Sherrill and Rick

plan to spend the day starting to go through records and putting in boxes. Anyone that is off that day is welcome to come and help. We need help to write a brief description of the records boxed and box numbers. The VCM will also record the items we deliver but we need to have an idea what has been sent. In addition this will give us a better chance to review what we have and what we want to keep at Rossville. There are numerous large books that will go and this will free up some space. All records will be stored in the middle room until the quarantine period is over and then moved to VCM. This will be done on Friday, May 26. Hopefully we will need a couple of trucks to move the records. The balance will be reviewed this fall and moved at a later date. While volunteers are at the museum on May 13 we need to clean up the building and get it ready for the Memorial Day opening.

Have you gotten your copy of the "History and Romance of Danville Junction", reprinted by the C&EI HS, yet. If not you really need to pick up one and Bob M. may have some at the meeting. The May program will be by Dave Sherrill as he will show slides of his trip to Copper Canyon in Mexico.

April 21 - 23, 2006

Champaign, IL - Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Show at the Uoff Assembly Hall

Why you ask would this be listed in the Flyer? The RBB&BS train will arrive the day before and depart the morning following the show from the CN tracks located along South Neil Street in Champaign. Good chance to see the train on Thursday and depart on Monday morning.



Operating Sessions

Rossville Museum, CI&E, 12:30 to 3:00 PM

No more sessions this spring. The next one will be the first Saturday in November.

Danville and Western Railroad, 1819 Coventry Dr, Champaign 12:30 to 4:00 PM

Saturday, April 15, 2006 (pay your taxes before you come). This is the last one until late this year.

Illinois Terminal Division, NMRA

Meeting May 9

Starting up again - check out <http://id IllinoisTerminalDivision.org>

Membership

The NRHS and local membership renewal forms have been sent out to you. Please send these back to Allen Cooke as soon as possible to keep you on the list. Normally dues are due by the end of March but we will give you a grace period until the end of April..

AAR launches ad campaign to promote railroading as a public-benefiting industry

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) is trying to get the word out that railroads are safe, modern companies that benefit the public. The association recently launched an advertising campaign to inform the public that railroads use the latest technology to improve safety, offer a fuel-efficient way to move freight and are connected to the global economy.

Ads will appear on television and radio, and in print. As part of an integrated communications campaign, the AAR also will implement media outreach programs and send out targeted electronic mailings.

“Railroads have a very strong story to tell,” said AAR President and Chief Executive Officer Edward Hamberger in a prepared statement. “We believe that the more people learn about freight railroads, the more they will see the advantages of moving even more goods by train.”

BNSF shows off the Transcon for press representatives

To provide print media representatives a glimpse into its double-tracking efforts on the Chicago-Los Angeles “Transcon” main line between Kansas City and Albuquerque, BNSF Railway last Thursday operated, for invited press guests, a six-car passenger special with “theater” (tiered seats, full rear window) observation car Glacier View” on the rear.

Matt Rose, BNSF chairman, president, and CEO, led and narrated the tour, which focused on construction projects near Wellington, Kans.; Vaughn, N.Mex.; and Abo Canyon, a difficult stretch of New Mexico track on a 1.25 percent eastbound grade, where double-tracking efforts are

complicated by the area’s rugged terrain and a waterway.

The railway has finished double-tracking about 97 percent of the entire Chicago-L.A. route for its ever-growing container trade from the Far East, BNSF officials said. In the next two years, the final single-track “bottleneck” gaps will be eliminated, boosting the line’s capacity from 80 to 120 trains each day. Work at Abo Canyon is expected to begin later this year, once all final permits are in place.

The need for the expansion was apparent at Fort Sumner, N.Mex., where the special passed two westbounds and four eastbounds waiting to negotiate one of the last stretches of single track.

Even as Rose spoke on the trip, BNSF was being designated as one of the top performers last year on the Standard & Poor’s 500 stock index, according to a story in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. But Rose knows that success can be just as treacherous as adversity, although the railroad now is having to deal with its success. Last year, BNSF enjoyed a record profit of \$1.5 billion, not to mention a stock price that has climbed from the mid-\$40 range last summer to more than \$80. In the past two years, BNSF has increased its traffic volumes by 1.5 million carloads.

“Frankly, our service isn’t what we want it to be,” he said aboard the train. He noted that the railroad’s on-time average had fallen in recent months from above 90 percent to around 80 percent. Systemwide average train speeds had dipped below 20 mph, indicating that traffic on BNSF’s 32,000-mile system has slowed. In the old days, such cost-generating slowdowns were the product of deferred maintenance by cash-starved railroads. Today, for the first time in the memory of even the oldest railroaders, the nation’s carriers have too much business.

“This is a world-class problem to have, but one that we must deal with,” Rose said.

“That big intermodal business is the key to BNSF,” says Darius Gaskins, the former chairman of the old Interstate Commerce Commission who was president of the Burlington Northern before it merged with

Santa Fe in 1995. “BNSF has taken advantage of a terrific franchise. They don’t have to depend on coal and grain as they did in the past.”

Rose has told BNSF’s 40,000 employees — a number that has increased by about 11,000 in the past three years and is expected to go up 3,500 this year — that “velocity” will be the watchword for BNSF this year.

“This is a volume business,” Rose said as the train sped over newly laid concrete ties. “The better the system is moving, the more volume we can handle. It’s as simple as that. Our biggest problem has been understanding market growth, which has been greater than anticipated. You couldn’t get anybody to believe that traffic could rise by 10 [to] 15 percent annually, but that’s what happened beginning in 2003.”

Rose is the first to admit that customers are less than thrilled with slowdowns in service, combined with higher prices. The most influential shipper group, the National Industrial Transportation League, said in a report that “many of the changes [since deregulation] have resulted in greater market power for the railroad industry and decreased competitive options for shippers.”

Rose said that “in a typical year, more than 200 businesses make a conscious decision to locate on our lines and use our shipping. I’m not going to apologize for what the industry has done,” he says. “Unlike the highways and the airports, our track and yard systems are privately owned. We pay for all of our improvements.”

TRAINS On-Line 3-27

Rossville Museum
Opening

Memorial
Weekend in May

Grand Canyon Railway to be put up for sale

After proving naysayers wrong, the owners of the Grand Canyon Railway have decided to move on, according to an article in Phoenix's Arizona Republic newspaper. GCR owner Max Biegert says he will be the first to admit that he nearly lost his shirt in the first seven years after he brought the Grand Canyon Railway back from the dead. He and his wife, Thelma, were advised against buying the 65-mile railroad. Critics said people wouldn't purchase tickets for a ride that was pricey and not picturesque.

That was 17 years ago. Today, with a lot of business savvy and a boost from their opening, in 1995, of a hotel next to their station in Williams, the couple has built the vintage railroad into a healthy enterprise. It has nearly 500 workers, revenue that has almost doubled to nearly \$40 million since 2000, and likely ranks third in the U.S. in tourist riders carried.

TRAINS magazine, in a sidebar to its May 2006 cover story on Alaska's White & Pass & Yukon Route, the country's top tourist-hauler, reported that the Grand Canyon Railway carried 222,000 riders in 2005, placing it third in the U.S., behind second-place Strasburg Rail Road, a historic line in Pennsylvania's "Dutch" country.

Now the Biegerts are ready to go out on top. They are putting the railroad, which provides daily tour service from Williams, on Interstate 40 and old Route 66, to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, on the market. They're trying to ensure that the railroad retains its Wild West theme - daily rides feature an old-fashioned shootout and train robbery - and that their future development plans for Williams will be realized. Max Biegert said a price has not been determined.

"If I was 20 years younger, you couldn't pull me away from this, and I'm going to be extremely careful in who I let buy it," said Biegert, 78. "We think we are going to have quite a few choices in buyers."

The railway's 469 employees, along with others in the city, were told of the planned sale on Friday. "There's a lot of concern here because anytime there's a change in by far your Number 1 economic driver, everyone wants to know what it means for the future," Williams City Manager Dennis Wells said.

The Biegerts have hired Phoenix investment banking firm Peacock, Hislop, Staley & Given to locate a buyer within the next two years. In addition to the Williams depot, railroad equipment, and track and right-of-way, the Biegerts own a restaurant, the 300-room hotel, and an RV park within the city. All that would be sold as part of the railroad. Biegert said he also would like to see the buyer follow through with a master plan for more than 100 acres of railway property east of the depot.

The Biegerts never intended to get into the rail-tour business. They thought they had retired in the early 1980s after making a fortune in aerial crop dusting and, later, the day-care business. But money they lent to an investor trying to redevelop the railroad in the mid-1980s wasn't repaid and, in a settlement, they became the new owners.

According to the company Web site, the line was built to transport ore from the Anita mines, 45 miles north of Williams, in the late 1800s. Prospectors flocked to the area with dreams of riches, but the boom went bust when there was not enough ore to fulfill those dreams, and the railroad ran into financial trouble in 1899.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway took over the line and completed it to the Grand Canyon in 1901, which, besides being a tourist destination, became a lifeline for area ranchers and lumbermen. Santa Fe stopped passenger service to the Grand Canyon in 1968 after ridership declined due to the rise of automobile travel. The line was reopened for passenger service on September 17, 1989, by the Biegerts.

Via TRAINS On-Line

BNSF closes 3,000th grade crossing since 2000

BNSF Railway announced the closure of its 3,000th grade crossing in its continuing program to improve railroad safety. The latest to be shut down is at Belle Plaine, Kans., 25 miles south of Wichita. Since 2000, BNSF's grade-crossing incident rate has decreased more than 30 percent, from 3.34 incidents per million train-miles in 2000 to 2.33 in 2005, according to Federal Railroad Administration data.

Across its 32,000-mile system, BNSF has approximately 31,500 crossings, including overpasses and underpasses. Of these, about 27,500 are at-grade highway crossings, including about 18,000 public, 9,300 private and 200 pedestrian crossings.

Editor: Each time a crossing is closed the railroad saves money from liability issues. Each incident reduction is a saving to the railroad in costs and to the traveling public in lives. Closing is difficult in areas where the public demands access and does not want to travel a longer distance to get to their destination. I have been involved in cases where the next crossing was only 300 feet away and the protest forced the railroad to back down.

Rail Projects **CSX**

We recently completed our siding design for Carlisle, Smith (Vincennes) and Hazleton, Indiana projects. These are 3 of 20 that are under construction from the CE&D Subdivision south to Georgia. In addition there are 2 project in New York along the Hudson River. All are under construction with work on ours to start around April 3. Most of the issues have been resolved, however, some still remain but should be resolved by the middle of the month.

CSX is looking at additional project for their capacity improvement on the Chicago to Florida corridor. Some have been awarded to consultants and some in our area are pending, for which I cannot give locations. The signal and track department will also upgrade some of the existing sidings on the CE&D, which will provide faster moves into the sidings than presently exists.

CSX will have production tie gangs on the subdivision around the end of May with work scheduled on No. 1 & 2 track north of Voorhees scheduled for late June. During that time the railroad will setup curfews, which will see some trains delayed or moved to other routes.

CREATE

We are bring assigned three more of the CREATE project on the south side by CSX. Two will be in the Blue Island area and involve CP Francisco on the CSX/IHB line north of the tower and on the CSX Blue Island Sub at CP Vermont. The CP Vermont project will involve a new connection with the CN (ex-GTW) trackage that is 50 feet west and parallel. The 3rd project involves Dolton Junction. A third main will extend from Barr Yard to the crossing of the IHB and connection with the UP. Additional work involves cross-overs on the CSX and IHB lines and eventual closing of Dolton Tower. This work would be 2008-2010 if funding is available.

BNSF

We have submitted a proposal for 3 siding extensions or new sidings on the BNSF line from Memphis to Springfield, MO and west. The railroad is looking to add additional capacity on this critical corridor.

Rick

Tracks Ahead
Saturday, 4:00 PM
on WILL, Channel
12, the University of
Illinois station.

Indiana Coal Mines

Recently the Sunrise Coal Company announced plans to open a coalmine about ½ mile south of Carlisle, Indiana adjacent to CSX CE&D Subdivision. Our siding project, originally planned for the west side of the existing track, was moved to the east side to accommodate the connection to the mine loop.

The Indiana Railroad was to build a connection to CSX in the southeast quadrant of the crossing in Sullivan, Indiana. In addition a siding was to be built south of town and then the INRD was to have trackage rights to Carlisle and the mine connection. Even though the railroad is majority owned by CSX an agreement could not be finalized on the plan. We were then directed to move the siding back to the west side to avoid moving 2 miles of pole line, fiber optic lines and right of way issues.

The mine is proceeding with opening, which is scheduled for sometime in 2007. There will not be a coal loop at this time and all coal will be trucked, as is a similar procedure in some other nearby mines. At Carlisle we did realign the track so the new track built on the west side will be the mainline and the existing mainline will become the siding. The north end will require some alignment shifts and the south end will see reverse curves to get the mainline back “on-line” prior to the south end turnout.

At some point a connection may be made for now the deal that the INRD announced a few months back will not take place.

Wheel Report

Ft. Wayne, IN – March 26 - NKP 765 ran live mainline test trips Saturday and Sunday on the Chicago, Fort Wayne and Eastern Railway. This is a Rail America property, which operates the former PRR mainline through Fort Wayne. The test runs were eastbound from Fort Wayne (Adams Tower) and Van Wert, Ohio and return. Two round trips were operated each day. The test train consisted of the 765, our #701 tool car, and a dynamic brake equipped diesel unit to supply a simulated load for our locomotive.

We were picked up by the NS at the east gate of Casad Depot, which is the spur that serves our shop facility and delivered the 765 to the CF&E at Piqua junction on the old PRR. The CF&E added their diesel unit to our consist and we headed at once for Van Wert. Speeds were limited to 25 MPH for the first day. We wanted to give our expensive running gear bearings the opportunity to properly wear in. As the day progressed, the load was increased by adding dynamic braking from the diesel. Stops were programmed about every ten miles to take temperature readings of all the journal and rod bearings. These were entered into a spreadsheet format in order to look for any trends developing in a particular bearing. We were very happy with the results. The bearings stayed around 30 degrees above the ambient temperature of around 40 degrees.

The second day, speeds were increased to 40 MPH, which is the maximum speed allowed for this part of the CF&E. We totaled nearly 60 miles of running at 40 with the diesel generally in full dynamic and bearings remained cool. We totaled slightly over 300 miles during the two-day period.



The locomotive is very square. The exhaust timing is virtually perfect. A sharp, cracking, Lima exhaust. Grand!

The ride is much smoother than the old days. With no pounds, knocks or other objectionable noises. The entire mechanical crew got the opportunity to ride in the cab. There

were smiles all around!

The management team from Rail America had much praise for the Society and the obvious efforts, which have gone into making the 765 into one fine machine

Sunday PM - Eastbound through Convo, Ohio. 765 at 40 MPH, Diesel in full dynamic, 765 throttle on the roof.

Thanks to the Norfolk Southern mechanical and operations folks for their help in getting us to the CF&E. A tip of the old 765 hat to Chuck Browning of the NS car department for steering us through several departments, which oversee these special movements.

Special thanks to Rail America for their splendid cooperation to get the 765 proof tested for many more years of service. Another tip of the old 765 cap to RA VP Preston Claytor, RA Regional Manager Bill Hundran, and CF&E Trainmaster Will Carney for their outstanding support.

The 765 arrived back at our shops 9:00 PM Sunday. The crew intends to keep the locomotive hot overnight and begin a thorough shut down on Monday.

See you on the mainline,

Glenn – Ft. Wayne Historical Society

Milwaukee Road 261 Lined Up For Midwestern Trips This Year

Those of us living in the upper Midwest will have it “good” again this summer in regards to operating mainline steam fan trips. The North Star Rail group’s Milwaukee Road 4-8-4#261 is scheduled to pull two sets of fan trips on local lines this summer.

The engine and its consist of mostly matching Milwaukee Road-painted passenger cars will be running out of Milwaukee, WI in late June. The trips are being sponsored by Amtrak and will run over the Canadian Pacific’s ex-Milwaukee Road lines.

The one-way positioning move will occur on Wednesday, June 21, as the train will run from Minneapolis to Milwaukee. The train is scheduled to make all regular Amtrak station stops as it heads to Milwaukee. Passengers will be allowed to board at any of the stops: Red Wing and Winona, MN; La Crosse, Tomah, Wisconsin Dells, Portage and Columbus, WI.

No events are scheduled for Thursday, but on Friday evening, June 23 the steam engine will pull a round trip dinner train excursion from Amtrak’s Milwaukee station south to Sturtevant, WI and return. The train will turn on the wye at Sturtevant.

On Saturday, June 24 and Sunday, June 25 the engine and its train will run a round” trip excursion each day from Milwaukee to Wisconsin Dells.- From the Dells the train will continue up to New Lisbon where it will be wyeed. The Milwaukee-Dells roundtrip and the Dells-New Lisbon round trips will be sold as separate trip legs.

The train will include a number of authentic ex-Milwaukee Road passenger cars, including business car Montana, Super Dome lounge car 53 and Hiawatha Skytop observation car Cedar Rapids.

Tickets are scheduled to go on sale March 20 and will be available at <www.261.com>. Before then, a priority ticket list is being established. To get on the list, send an email to <milw261@msn.com> or mail a postcard to them at Friends of the 261, 4322 Lakepoint Court, Shoreview, MN 55126

In September 2006 the engine will be coming to the Quad Cities for the 150th anniversary of the first railroad bridge across the Mississippi River. Plans are being made to operate over the Iowa Interstate and the Iowa, Chicago and Eastern Railroads. RiverWay 2006 will see the steam train in addition to riverboat cruises.

Tickets are not available for this event as of yet but should be available in late April.

The proposed schedule has the train arriving in the Quad Cities on September 15 with an evening welcome in Rock Island. On Saturday the train will operate from Silvis to Geneseo and back on the Iowa Interstate. That night there is a planned

dinner train crossing both rail bridges.

On Sunday the train will run from the Quad Cities to Muscatine, IA and back. The riverboat Celebration Belle will meet the train there and riders can take the riverboat or train back. Monday will be the first leg of the return trip to the Twin Cities. Check out www.visitquadcities.com for more information.

Via North Western Illinois Chapter

CTA to test Pink Line route between Chicago’s west side and downtown

On June 25, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) will begin operating an additional route on what is now the 54th/Cermak branch of the Blue Line for a six-month test period.

To be called the Pink Line, the route will connect the former 54th/Cermak branch to Chicago’s downtown Loop via the recently restored Paulina Connector. Currently, the 54th/Cermak branch runs along Cermak Avenue, turns near Paulina and joins the Forest Park branch along the Eisenhower Expressway to access the Loop through the Dearborn Subway. Under the test service, CTA will reroute 54th/Cermak trains to new elevated tracks near Paulina Street. Trains will continue to travel along Paulina via the new connector tracks and join the Green Line at Lake Street to travel into the Loop.

The new route will improve connections to other lines, and enable CTA to create faster and more frequent service.

The Pink Line is one of several test services planned for Chicago’s West side and suburbs based on results of a West Side Corridor Study. CTA also is increasing service on the Forest Park branch of the Blue Line.

Progressive Railroading 4/4/06