

# DANVILLE FLYER

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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 \$20.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$36.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Jocko's Depot 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 2010 - Our 42nd Year

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

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Union Pacific 5805 and 6830 lead an empty NORX coal train, with DPU on the rear, south near the top of the hill at Daily, Illinois on April 2, 2010. Photo by R. Schroeder

## Coming Events

### April 18, 2010

Danville, IL - Monthly meeting at Jocko's Pizza Depot, Williams and Gilbert Street, starting at 1:00 PM.

### April 17, 2010

Watseka, IL - Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Historical Society meeting, Watseka Depot 10 AM to 10 PM, tables, tour, dinner and speaker Mark Vaughn talking about the C&EI piggyback service.

### Apr 17-18, 2010

Decatur, IL - Decatur Train Fair 2010. Decatur Civic Center. Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4.

### May 1, 2010

Rossville - Last operating session of the spring sessions. After this session trains will be changed and we will be setup to run DC during the summer months.

### May 15-16, 2010

Homewood, IL - 7th Annual Rail Heritage Weekend. Train Show with layouts, vendors and others at the Village Hall municipal complex from 9am to 3pm; CN will have prototype equipment on display.

### June 4-5, 2010

Franklin Park, IL - Fifteenth Annual Railroad Daze. A whole host of festival-like activities, including displays by CN, IHB, BRC and Metra.

### June 26-27, 2010

Galesburg, IL - 33rd Annual Galesburg Railroad Days Train Show. Carl Sandburg College, 2400 Tom L. Wilson Blvd. Sat 9-5; Sun 10-4.

## Next Meeting

**Our next meeting will be held Sunday, April 18 at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Williams and Gilbert Street, beginning at 1:00 PM.**

By the time you read this we will have had the April train show at Lincoln Square Village in Urbana and Allen will give us an idea of how we did financially. Thanks to all members that came and helped man the tables. In addition, hopefully some of you spent a few dollars to help the vendors. With the month of May approaching we will need to plan cleanup and painting sessions at Rossville. This will be one of the topics at the meeting. In addition we will have one more operating session before we open for "summer business". Bob has been working on a new section he has built above the existing staging yards and work will continue this summer. By next fall he hopes to have the branch completed so we have another local to run. Last month we hosted a group of model railroaders from the Lafayette, Indiana area. They enjoyed the session and complimented us on the layout.

Last year Allen Cooke said he did not plan to organize another spring trip. However, if someone else wants to set up a trip let Doug know, however, you need to be the one to organize and set it up.

Dave Phillips, who works for a consultant, will present a program on high speed rail in Illinois entitled "Chicago-St. Louis 220 mph: less than 2 hours" at the April meeting. Dave is a friend of Dick Brazda and has been involved in various rail projects. You have, I am sure, been reading a lot recently of the \$8 billion the government has put in to High Speed Rail across the country. This is, of course, a drop in the bucket of what it will take to someday have high speed, or at least, higher speed trains. As noted in the last issue Illinois obtained about \$1.2 billion to increase the speed on the Chicago to St. Louis route. Remember the days when the IC, NYC or CB&Q ran their trains over 100 mph? Well, that day may come again.

## Last Rossville Spring Operating Session

Saturday, May 1 -  
beginning at 1:00  
PM

## A Project for High (er) Speed Rail

A \$133-million federal stimulus project to build a railroad "flyover" at the Metra, Amtrak and freight tracks in Englewood on Chicago's south side will untie a knot in the nation's rail system and make way for high-speed rail, government and rail officials said Friday, according to the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

"The single biggest source of delays in the Midwest is right here at the Englewood crossing," said Amtrak chair Thomas Carper, at an announcement at the project site at 63rd Street. "This project is going to fix that. That's how important this is."

The project will create a railroad bridge to carry the north-south Metra Rock Island District line over the east-west Norfolk Southern/Amtrak tracks at 63rd St., near the Dan Ryan Expy. Ground will be broken on the project later this year, and it will be completed by 2012, said U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-Chicago), who has promoted the project as part of the Chicago Regional Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) program.

The project is expected to create 1,450 jobs, improve traffic on the Metra Rock Island line and cut Amtrak and freight delays. The triple-tracked bridge will carry Metra operations over all four tracks of the Norfolk Southern, and possibly a fifth



# Danville Chapter, NRHS

## *Minutes - 3/21/10*

President Nipper opened the meeting at 1332.

The secretary's report was approved as printed for February. The Treasurer reported there was \$1614.19 in the checking account and \$3871.43 in the CD. The report was approved.

### **Old Business**

Al McCoy presented a sample of the memorial plaque for Rossville. With a cost of approximately \$200, it was approved to proceed with it, as long as all words are spelled correctly.

The Urbana railroad show will be held on April 10&11. Doug will assist in taking items over; Bob Gallippi may not be available. Rick has two tables and Bob McQuown will bring some C&EI material.

### **New Business**

Bill Wright returned to his residence last week.

Discussion was held on items copied off cable TV and work on a washout at the Stone Mountain RR.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1359.

A historical video and a video of UP Big Boys was shown.



## The President's Corner

At the end of my column last month, I mentioned Rick's signaling project on his layout and how it was kind of hard. We've made a lot more progress, and hopefully by the time his next (and last for this season) session rolls around, those of you who operate on his pike will see the benefits of a full-CTC signal system on the D&W side. Just remember, stop at a red signal. Go with any other color present!

You've probably seen model railroad magazines from the past where advanced modelers were interfacing computers to their layouts. Even with my electronics and computer background, it always seemed a daunting task to me. You had to build your own circuit boards for each signal and switch, and also all the I/O (input/output) boards for the computer.

I've also got copies of a series of articles written in 1992 in Model Railroader about building an APB (Absolute Permissive Block) signal system using custom made circuit boards. Rather than using a computer, this system used dedicated logic circuits, and in many ways was closer to a real APB system. The drawback was, of course, building all the circuit boards and then hooking them up to your signals. Block detection was still required, and this required even more circuit boards. Once again, I viewed it as too tedious to really consider.

It was the arrival of software like JMRI and a few other packages that really opened things up, especially with DCC becoming more and more prevalent. We are now to a point where signaling a layout is comparatively easy when contrasted against the past methods. But were it not for those pioneers like Bruce Chubb who envisioned the original computer to layout interface, things may not have evolved the way they did. And who would have thought that some of the best software to control a layout would be absolutely free? We may complain a lot about the state of the world, but the Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) movement has been a great benefit to the model railroading hobby. And by the way, C/MRI is alive and well, and companies still build boards for it. It also interfaces nicely to JMRI.

And while you think that signaling is all that JMRI can do, keep in mind that this is just one facet of the program. One of the other primary components is Decoder Pro (as compared to Panel Pro) that allows you to program your DCC locomotives and stationery decoders with relative ease. Adjusting all those CV values by hand is virtually impossible with a modern sound-equipped locomotive. Some purists (Bob!) still keep trying to do it by hand, but even those people eventually give up and come to the dark side!

One of the things that are so valuable about Decoder Pro is the ability to save a locomotive's configuration to a file on the computer. That way, if it gets messed up in some way, you can just restore the last good configuration. Another facet of this capability is to "clone" a locomotive's configuration to another one. This is very handy with diesels, especially with an identical manufacturer and model. You only need make the settings once and then use that locomotive's file to program the next one.

*Doug*

track for a high-speed intercity passenger rail connection to points east and/or south. The flyover is also a first step toward future CREATE projects that would cut delays on Metra's Southwest Service line, according to Lipinski.

The crossing sees 78 Metra trains, 46 freight trains and 14 Amtrak trains daily. "With all that traffic, it is unavoidable that we have conflicts and delays," Lipinski said.

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## **CN Gets Good Effort Marks in EJ&E use**

The Canadian National Railway has made a good start communicating with towns along the EJ&E railroad, but there's room for improvement, a federal audit concludes, according to the *Daily Herald*. And, it says, municipalities that have not yet struck deals with CN are critical of how it's handling the transition.

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board hired consultants HDR Engineering to survey towns to see if CN was living up to conditions regulators imposed on the railroad when they approved its purchase of the smaller EJ&E in 2008.

The merger will ease freight congestion in Chicago by moving trains from CN's crowded tracks to the underused EJ&E, Canadian National argued and the STB agreed. The decision angered towns along the EJ&E that feared extra trains would lead to more noise, safety problems, traffic and environmental issues.

The consultants' report released this week states "CN has initiated extensive communication with the affected communities" that in most instances "has been consistent with the board's conditions."

CN has signed mitigation agreements with 21 towns along the EJ&E in which it funds fixes for noise and safety concerns. Thirteen towns are holding out and of those, seven responded to the survey.

On the question of train delays, a majority of the seven towns said CN had not notified their police or fire dispatchers when crossings were blocked by a train for more than 10 minutes. With the exception of Deer Park, most municipalities also said CN had not given them an emergency response plan. But a majority noted CN had provided their emergency dispatching departments with a monitor to see real-time train locations.

HDR noted CN needs to follow through on giving towns copies of emergency response plans, providing more information on how it's working with municipalities regarding quiet zones and notifying authorities about train blockages.

This is the first of several reports on CN's performance

*Railway Age - 3-18-10*

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## **NS & KCS view Improvements on Meridian Speedway**

Senior executives from Kansas City Southern and Norfolk Southern recently made their annual inspection trip across the Meridian Speedway to see the capital improvements that have been made to increase capacity and improve transit over the line from Shreveport, La. to Meridian, Miss., *KCS News*, the company newsletter, reports.

In May 2006, KCS and closed on a joint venture to increase capacity and improve service on the line, which is an important direct rail connection for moving rail traffic between the southeast and southwest U.S. The joint venture involves the contribution of KCS' 320-mile line between Meridian and Shreveport to the joint venture company, MSLLC, and an NS investment of \$300 million in cash, substantially all of which is being used for capital improvements to the line.

To date, Centralized Traffic Control has been installed on 250 miles; 281,000 ties have been installed; 100 miles of rail has

been relayed; more than 100 crossings have been rehabilitated; surfacing, including ballast renewal and undercutting, has taken place over 240 miles and 1,500 joints have been eliminated. In addition, bridges have been rebuilt and sidings have been constructed or extended.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, additional capacity projects will be completed and a planned maintenance program will ensure that capacity and service benefits are maintained.

"KCS is pleased with our partnership with NS and with the progress both parties saw on the line," said Mike Haverty, KCS chairman and chief executive officer. "The improvements we've made are benefiting customers using this very important trans-continental corridor. This partnership is another key element in KCS' overall strategy to develop the franchise, not only north and south, but east and west.

*Railway Age 3-24-10*

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## **Public hearing on Ogden Ave over CN (EJ&E) held.**

By 2014, the Illinois Department of Transportation hopes to start separating the railroad crossing at Ogden Avenue in Aurora, Ill., the *Sun-Times Media Group* reports. But at this early stage, officials aren't certain just how they're going to do it.

That's why IDOT held the first in a series of public meetings on the issue, looking for input and ideas from the people who live and work near the crossing.

Ogden Avenue is one of the most well-traveled crossings along the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern rail line, which was purchased last year by Canadian National Railway. At last count, in 2008, the Ogden Avenue crossing saw roughly 36,400 cars trundle over it each day. The possibility of traffic

backups there led the federal Surface Transportation Board to demand the crossing be separated, and that CN would pay 67 percent of the cost. The railway company has challenged that order in court, but the case has not had a hearing.

Currently, CN sends about 16 trains per day over those tracks. However, the company has announced plans to up that figure to 40 per day by 2012. With that in mind, IDOT has set up a multi-year schedule, one of which could see the crossing completed by 2015 or 2016. According to Project Engineer Jessica Feliciano, the difference might be whether IDOT builds an overpass or an underpass.

An overpass, for which IDOT would build a new road over the railroad tracks, would take between one and two years to build. An underpass, which would see a new railroad bridge built over Ogden Avenue, could take two to three years. IDOT has not estimated costs for either option, Feliciano said.

Feliciano said IDOT plans two more public meetings, one in the summer and one in the fall, before finalizing plans.

*Editor: URS Chicago is the design engineer for this project. Rail issues will be handled by our Decatur office. We are on an expedited schedule to determine method and costs and then prepare final plans.*

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## **Illinois moves in upgrade for HrSR.**

Illinois is already investing to make way for a high-speed rail system expected to spread across the Midwest and hasten commutes between its major cities, *The Christian Science Monitor* reports. The projects are in preparation for the \$2.6 billion President Obama promised the Midwest in January to modernize its transportation network with high-speed rail. That money is part of a larger \$11-billion high-speed rail package made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

State lawmakers in the Midwest have jobs on their mind.

Last week Gov. Pat Quinn announced \$133 million in federal stimulus funds to build a railroad “flyover” in Englewood, one of Chicago’s poorest neighborhoods. It will untangle the existing Metra, Amtrak, and freight tracks there so they can connect with a future high-speed rail line.

Federal officials said the project is expected to create 1,446 jobs.

Governor Quinn is making high-speed rail projects a component of plans to get the state — which has a \$13-billion deficit — back into financially sound shape. Illinois is set to receive \$1.2 billion in stimulus money for building the Chicago-St. Louis corridor, which Quinn says will create 6,000 Illinois jobs.

Another project getting under way to prepare for high-speed rail in Illinois is the renovation of Chicago’s Union Station, the 85-year-old historic facility located in the heart of downtown. Last month Amtrak petitioned several architectural and real estate firms in Chicago and on the East Coast for ideas on how to redevelop the building, which serves both Metra and Amtrak rail lines. It expects to announce a winner by the end of May.

The announcement was seen as a way for Amtrak to prepare for how to deal with serving as a hub for high-speed rail across the Midwest. While it’s uncertain how the station will fit into plans, the facility needs an upgrade, especially because it is known for being overcrowded during rush hour.

“Union Station is the gateway to the city of Chicago,” says Kevin Brubaker, deputy director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center, which has been promoting high-speed rail for several years. “This is the time for us to carefully study its pros and cons.”

Brubaker says that whatever facility is used as the central hub to the Midwest’s high-speed rail system, it will probably serve five million people a day.

“This is the time for us to open up the

process to get these ideas on the table for where and how the station that is going to have five million people in and out of it, can do it most effectively and do it right,” he says.

The high-speed rail lines promised for the Midwest include five corridors: Chicago to St. Louis, Chicago to Milwaukee, Milwaukee to Madison, Chicago to Pontiac, Mich., and Cincinnati to Cleveland.

Because high-speed rail is considered more efficient and involves minimal pollution, environmental groups hope the initial start-up investment leads to continued investment by the federal government and everyone else, so that progress on high-speed rail doesn’t stall.

*Via Railway Age - 3-19-10*

*Editor: My employer, URS Corporation, is the program manager for all of the Amtrak work under the recent funding package. Over the past 3 weeks our survey crews have been working in Union Station and all yard facilities surveying the existing track and structures. Work is to start as a design-build contract around the middle of April. Most of the track will be rebuilt, turnouts upgraded and some building work will be completed. It is always interesting how the note jobs are created - actually our 20 some people assigned to the project are already employed and thus assigned to the project, just like any other project, and URS has not hired anyone new for the work. The only work to occur will be the DB contractor work and there some jobs will be union jobs and thus bring in some employees that may have been, or have not been, working.*



## High-speed rail picks up speed in Illinois

Illinois Secretary of Transportation Gary Hannig meet April 1 with Union Pacific officials in Omaha, Neb., to talk about using the freight company's rail line for high-speed trains heading from Joliet to St. Louis.

"We want to make sure that we can get the trains to arrive and depart on time," he said at a Joliet Regional Chamber of Commerce luncheon at Harrah's Casino. "We also need a commitment from Union Pacific that those tracks will be maintained and that we can run 110 mph high-speed rail up and down the line."

The Illinois Department of Transportation and Union Pacific will have to work out an agreement on signals and dispatching issues, too, Hannig added. The federal government has given Illinois \$1.1 billion to get the project moving. The high-speed rail will stretch from Chicago to St. Louis with several stops along the way. The first stop out of Chicago will be in Joliet.

High-speed trains will use Canadian National freight lines from Chicago to Joliet, but Union Pacific lines from Joliet to St. Louis, said Joliet City Manager Tom Thanas.

Thanas said he was happy to hear the project is moving forward. "I think it will open up tremendous economic development opportunities for downtown Joliet," he said. "Companies make money by saving time." Thanas said businesses will want to locate near the high-speed rail line, which could mean more development and jobs for the city.

IDOT wants to have the line up and running by 2012, Hannig said. Initially there will be five trains on the line with a possible expansion to eight. Hannig said the trains will run at 110 mph at first then increase to 220.

*Editor: Interesting, the last sentence anyway. You cannot run trains at 220 mph on a line that handles freight at*

*50 mph. Curves that will be designed for 110 mph will begin to have problems when you handle freight at an average of 50 mph. When you set superelevation for the higher speed and run lower speed you wear the low rail due to the weight. In order to ever have 220 mph trains on the St. Louis corridor they will be on a separate alignment with no at-grade highway or rail crossings and a totally fenced right-of-way. As noted in previous comments by your Editor, it has been some 7 years to get one segment up to 110 mph and doing the entire route in 1.5 years will probably not happen. The EIS will start first and will take at least a year to complete before any changes are started.*

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## Rail News:

IC 6071, the SD40 test-bed body- the one on an SD35 frame, was sitting at the locomotive track in the CN yard in Decatur on Masrch 18. The numberboards have been removed and "ETF" stenciled on the fuel tank. This unit is being moved to the Monticello Railway Museum, which has accepted the CN's donation of the 6071 to MRM's collection. Another IC unit is saved. Via Bruce Bird and John Roma

In testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, Amtrak President Joe

Boardman asked for \$446 million additional to the \$2.1 billion Amtrak has already requested for Fiscal Year 2011, so that the railroad may begin adding to and replacing its locomotive and car fleet. Mr. Boardman said that Amtrak is looking to acquire 334 new locomotives and 1,200 new cars over the next several years. In his testimony, Mr. Boardman noted that, "Between 2002 and 2008, Amtrak increased its ridership 32 percent without buying a single piece of new rolling stock... That's a remarkable accomplishment, but one that cannot be sustained indefinitely.

Trains Magazine reported that Montana will lease the Otter Creek coal tracts to Arch Coal, which it said will clear the way for construction of the 106-mile Tongue River Railroad over the next several years. The Surface Transportation Board gave approval in 2007 for construction of the railroad, the cost of which is expected total approximately \$550 million. BNSF will operate its trains over the line. (Editor: To give you an idea how long a project can take, in August 1997 I visited this line with other URS personnel along with Carter Burgess Engineering to plan the line. Permitting, funding, STB approval and purchase of right of way has taken this long to get the project going. At that time the estimate was somewhere around \$300 million for the project.)

