

years of service (right). Both my mother's side of the family and the New York Central had deep roots in Central Illinois."

Here's something a little different for our cover this month. Co-publisher Doug Nipper says: "My great-grandfather James Busby and his brother Elbert both worked for the Big Four system as agents between Mattoon, Illinois and St. Louis. Among the items in my collection are the postcard view of the Butler, Illinois depot (above) and Elbert's Certificate of Service that he received upon his retirement in 1928, after 41



DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 1013
DANVILLE IL 61834-1013

"THE DANVILLE FLYER"

FIRST CLASS MAIL

DANVILLE FLYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC, NRHS

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 \$12.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$17.00 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 Conrail, in Danville, Il. with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

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Volume 30

April 1998

Number 4

Coming Events

April 19, 1998

Monthly meeting: Sunday beginning at 1:00 PM in the train room of the Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street in Danville.

April 25, 1998

Chicago and Eastern Illinois Historical Society annual meeting - Danville Area Community College. Tour, swap tables, Rossville open, slides and models. Begins at noon and runs until 10 PM.

April 25 & 26, 1998

Monticello Railway Museum - throttle time on Wabash #1189 - contact the museum

May 9 & 10, 1998

Throw Momma on the Train - Monticello Railway Museum.

July 8-12, 1997

Syracuse, NY - NRHS National Convention - Plan now to attend as summer is on the way - really!!

August 15 & 16, 1998

Thomas the Tank Engine will be running both days at Monticello. Bring the kids to ride the special train. For adults, an additional train will be operating the same days.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Sunday, April 19, 1998, at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Rt. 1) and Williams Street. We will meet at 1:00 PM, have lunch first and then the meeting.

This month we feature Bruce Bird and Steve Hankel, members from Champaign area. Last year they ventured to Colorado to witness the last trains over Tennessee Pass. Shortly after their visit the UP shut the line down for good. Now you can see photos in *Trains* magazines, or at our next meeting.

Spring is getting close (we hope) and the museum will be open soon for the summer season. You will note that the C&E IHS will be meeting in Danville in a joint meeting with the New York Central Historical Society. As part of the meeting the group



will conduct a tour of ex-NYC lines, stopping at Rossville on the way north. We need to get the building ready for the tour group. In addition, we need to start planning for cleanup and opening day, less than 2 months away.

Haley Tower, Terre Haute, IN

Following is an excerpt from an e-mail I received from a friend who is one of CR's V.P. of Engineering regarding the future of Haley tower. I am posting it for those who are interested. Some may receive it more than once because you're on more than one mailing list. Much of this is in the filing NS & CST made with the STB, but I don't have the \$100 to shell out for a copy.

"Sounds like the plan you're hearing from the local M/W and C&S are not too far off. CSXT published the plan for the connection in the operating plan they filed last summer. The engineering details are just being designed, but overall it will eliminate the slip switches and replace the interlocking with a new interlocking of 4 no20 turnouts. That will allow CSXT Chicago (C&EI) moves at 40 mph. Last plan I saw was to remove the CSXT main from Haley to Locust Street. That may change some with time. I am not sure when they will actually construct it all.

I have heard nothing about keeping the operator for a while. One of the reasons the tower is still there is CR and CSX could not agree on control of a remoted interlocking. There are so many road crossings on both roads that CR and CSX have wanted control of the signals. Of course the crossover configuration will provide the 40mph connection.

When this is over, CSX will control both routes, but the east/west and north/south sides will probably be different service lanes under different general managers. For now the CR side will still be dispatched from Indianapolis and the CSX side from Jacksonville."

Via Bill Foster

Software glitch snarls NS automotive mixing centers

A computer software glitch turned Norfolk Southern's Ford automotive mixing centers into mixed-up centers after their January startup, clogging the innovative hubs with vehicles and auto racks.

The four mixing centers—where vehicles from a variety of assembly plants are unloaded from railcars, sorted by destination, and loaded back onto auto racks with different models bound for the same ramp—were designed to cut assembly plant-to-dealer transit time by a third. Instead, their startup hit a rough road until March due to problems with the information system that monitors a fleet of 15,000 auto racks and tracks the movements of every Ford vehicle from assembly line to dealer.

The Kansas City and Chicago mixing centers began receiving vehicles the week of January 5. The Fostoria (Ohio) and Shelbyville (Ky.) centers were brought on line the following week. And by January 19, all 21 of Ford's North American plants were shipping through the centers, which are expected to handle 3 million vehicles annually via a network of 19 new daily NS multi-level unit trains.

Because of a software bug in the Ford and NS computer systems, mixing center operators didn't have the information they needed to send vehicles and railcars on their way. That plugged the centers. "We got behind quickly," one Norfolk Southern manager told *TRAINS*; he added that the problems did not reflect a fundamental flaw in the mixing center concept nor Union Pacific-style operational gridlock. Other factors also contributed: the need to break in new contractor crews and a backlog with a haulaway trucking company.

Teething problems at the mixing centers spilled over onto other railroads, and when combined with UP's woes, exacerbated the already tight supply of auto racks. At the peak of the slowdown, in late January, NS had 4000 more auto racks on its system than would normally be expected.

And when there's a car surplus on some

railroads, there's a shortage somewhere else. Conrail and CSX at one point had only about 70 percent of their normal complement of auto racks as the double whammy of slow car velocity on UP and NS stretched car supply. As a result, some vehicles that would normally be shipped by Conrail—from Canada to New England, Dayton to the East Coast, and Louisville to Newark, for example—were instead trucked to their destinations. CSX also experienced similar diversions of traffic to highways. Some GM and Chrysler shipments, meanwhile, sat at assembly plants waiting for auto racks. And the Ford-laden auto racks NS interchanges with Conrail at its Cleveland multi-level hub did not follow their usually predictable volumes. "We've seen a couple of surges hit our railroad," a Conrail manager said in early February.

To ease the pressure, Ford assembly plants in some cases reverted to loading auto racks by destination. And to bail out the centers, NS relied on its own nearby yards and other railroads. In Kansas City, UP handled westbound auto racks as they became available, rather than in solid unit trains as planned. In Chicago, Indiana Harbor Belt, which lost Ford business with the opening of the mixing centers, gained it back temporarily. At Hammond, the IHB handled some 100 auto racks per day for a couple of weeks and a trainload per day in late February, switching cars for the Chicago center and blocking solid trains to bypass the Kansas City center, IHB General Manager Chuck Allen says.

NS yards in Detroit and Bellevue, Ohio, assembled blocks of load-to-destination auto racks to bypass the Fostoria or Chicago mixing centers, which helped clear those centers over President's Day weekend.

Spokesmen for NS and Ford would not comment on the startup beyond saying that by early March the system was nearly up to speed. But NS CEO David Goode had this to say in a January 28 meeting with financial analysts: "This is the larg-

est transportation project ever undertaken by Norfolk Southern and its design, construction and implementation was completed in a period of only 16 months. ... Never before have we been asked to develop and implement such an extensive transportation project by a customer—and never before have we had the opportunity to coordinate and execute such complex train service... “Goode noted that the mixing center network involves 1,100 train schedules on NS and six connecting railroads. “Naturally, we have had a few start up challenges, but the system is up and running—on time, on budget, and with the technology in place.”

Although the mixing centers may be the largest project NS has undertaken, it may not be as large and complex as the railroad’s plan to divide Conrail with CSX. The Conrail acquisition involves more than 130 new or changed train schedules on the expanded NS system alone, far above the 19 new mixing center trains. And if similar information system problems are encountered in the opening days of the Conrail carve-up—as some merger critics say is inevitable—it would take much longer to straighten out a much larger mess.

*Bill Stephens, Via TRAINS On-Line
3/21/98*

NS-CR collision in Indiana kills one railroader

The unmarked grade crossing of Norfolk Southern and Conrail main lines at Butler, a small town in northeastern Indiana, was the unlikely site of a fatal train collision at 4:47 a.m. March 25, as NS’s Detroit-Kansas City RoadRailer 255 apparently ran a red stop signal and crashed into the side of Conrail’s double-stack train TV-220, passing through the intersection en route from Chicago to northern New Jersey.

One NS crewman was killed as the 88-car NS train’s diesels, 6508 and 1640, struck the moving Conrail train at about the sixth car and crossed through the consist, rupturing their fuel tanks and derailling on their sides. The Conrail locomotives, 3314

and 3370, did not derail. The accident site is at the southeast corner of the town.

Contractors were summoned to clean up the spill, as well as wrecking crews from R.J. Corman and Hulcher to clear the main track. Train TV-220 continued east at 10:50 a.m. with the crew off train TV-61. Amtrak detoured the westbound Capitol Limited and Lake Shore Limited via the Michigan Line from Toledo through Detroit, and Conrail also detoured at least four priority freights between Elkhart, Ind., and Toledo via Detroit.

Editor: On a recent trip to Toledo, 3/30, I stopped at the site. They were still picking up some of the containers and contents. Route 6 was closed on the east edge of town as NS crews repaired the crossing. R. J. Corman trucks were still there as were about 10 trucks from NS and CR. Train traffic was operating at 10 mph.

Amtrak gains in Illinois, North Carolina

Amtrak ridership and on-time performance is up on its Illinois and North Carolina short-haul trains. On trains serving Chicago and downstate Illinois, year-to-date ridership increases range from 12 to 18 percent, and February on-time performance for the three routes was 95.9 percent, with only 8 late trains out of 193 operated under a contract between Amtrak and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Amtrak and IDOT are in the first year of a fixed-fee, three-year agreement that sets the state’s financial contribution and provides further incentive for Amtrak to improve the financial performance of the service. The contract also features on-time performance incentives and penalties. Trains include the Illini, State House, and Illinois Zephyr.

Amtrak recently announced a plan to spend \$2.4 million to improve the cars used in the Illinois service, including upgrading the interior decor, replacing seating and floor surfaces, modifications to

car entrances, and exterior improvements.

Amtrak’s state-supported rail services in North Carolina also have much-improved on-time performance and ridership through February. These trains, the Raleigh-Charlotte Piedmont and the New York-Charlotte Carolinian, continue to have some of the highest customer satisfaction scores in the Amtrak system.

From October 1997-February 1998, the on-time performance for the Piedmont was up 48.6 percent over the same period last year. The on-time performance for the Carolinian was up 22 percent over this same period last year. The Piedmont uses cars and locomotives owned by the State of North Carolina, and both the Piedmont and the Carolinian are operated by Amtrak under a contract with the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT).—Friends of Amtrak

Illinois tests safety nets at grade crossings

Driving around lowered crossing gates will soon be impossible in some areas of Illinois, because the gates and flashers will be augmented by safety nets to physically hold vehicles back if they don’t stop when a train is coming. The equipment is part of an experiment by the Illinois Department of Transportation to see if the nets are effective in reducing accidents at grade crossings. The first three crossings to use the nets will be along Amtrak’s Chicago-St. Louis route, part of which is being upgraded for higher speeds.

Editor: Check out the crossing under construction at Hartford, IL and the one completed north of Normal. I checked out the one at Hartford and really don't see how it will work. Guess we will see once in place and active.

It’s Back! UPS Chicago-Dallas Business Returns

Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and KCS are once again handling United Parcel Service (UPS) business between Chicago and Dallas. As you may recall, BNSF and KCS began moving the business last

October after Union Pacific (UP) intermodal service deteriorated between Chicago and a number of points in Texas due to severe congestion problems. The business returned to UP in January after its operations began showing signs of some improvement. But when the congestion problems peaked once again in February, the business came back to BNSF and KCS.

Beginning on February 23, BNSF resumed intermodal train service between Chicago and the Dallas area.

Although the service is dedicated to UPS, trains accommodate other intermodal shippers as space permits.

"Even though our role is small, it provides an important service for UPS."

The train service is initiated by BNSF from its Willow Springs facility, just outside of Chicago. BNSF runs the train to Metro Junction north of Dallas. KCS then transports the train from Metro Junction to its Zacha Yard. Containers and trailers are then transported via truck to the nearby UPS sorting facility in Mesquite.

Intermodal Business Unit Vice President Vaughn Short said that the length of haul is not as important as how the overall product meets UPS' needs. "Even though our role is small, it provides an important service for UPS. They've told us they intend to keep the business with BNSF and KCS as long as its service requirements are met," emphasized Short.

KCS News, 3/3/98

Boise Locomotive, EMD form alliance on low-horsepower diesels

MotivePower Industries, Inc., through its subsidiary Boise Locomotive Co., and EMD, the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors, have formed a strategic alliance to design, manufacture, and market low-horsepower switching and branchline locomotives in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

Under a marketing and supply agreement, Boise will be the exclusive manufacturer of EMD's 1500 h.p. and 2000 h.p. locomotives for the NAFTA market. Boise will continue to market other D.C.- and A.C.-traction locomotives below 4000 h.p. under its own brand name. Boise believes that through the alliance it may be able to achieve sales of 10 low-horsepower units in 1998 and as many as 30 units annually by 2000. Caterpillar all-electronic 3500-B diesel engines apparently will be available in these units.

With manufacturing plants in La Grange, Ill., and London, Ontario, EMD serves markets in more than 60 countries, and its services include full-service

maintenance. MotivePower Industries, formerly part of Morrison-Knudsen, manufactures and distributes engineered locomotive components; provides locomotive fleet maintenance and overhauls, and diesel engine overhauls; manufactures new switcher, commuter, and mid-range locomotives up to 4000 h.p., and manufactures components for power, marine and industrial markets.

Boise has four 1200-h.p. switchers testing on BNSF and UP in Los Angeles that burn liquefied natural gas as fuel. Except for a few dozen passenger locomotives, EMD in recent years has built only high-horsepower, six-motor road freight locomotives.

Boise Locomotive also has been awarded a \$7 million contract by California's Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board to build three new locomotives for the CalTrain commute service out of San Francisco. The 3200 h.p. units are to be delivered in late 1998

Via TRAINS On-Line, 3/11/98.

UP's Smart Start

After comprehensive testing, UP is equipping 200 low-horsepower locomotives this year with Smart Start control systems that shut off inactive locomotives after 30 minutes when temperatures climb above 32 degrees and restart them when it falls below 32 degrees.

Smart Start monitors a locomotive with sensors that indicate if the locomotive is left in idle mode for 30 minutes. If battery condition and outside temperature permit, the locomotive is automatically shut down. If the battery condition is weak, the Smart Start application won't permit the shutdown.

At zero degrees, Smart Start will move the idle up from low idle to fast idle to protect the diesel engine from getting too cold to run properly.

UP's decision to equip the low-horsepower units was made after a field test in Kansas City from September 1996 through April 1997 using a SW1500 yard switch engine. In addition to field testing, the Mechanical group performed additional quality assurance analysis to confirm Smart Start's mechanical reliability.

The low-horsepower locomotives are primarily used in yard and industry switch service. Future plans call for equipping up to 1,100 engines.

Via UP Update, 3/12/98

Latta Laments: Tales of the CTHSE

The other night I was talking to an acquaintance and sharing some of my experiences as a dispatcher here in Terre Haute, and it dawned on me that I might share those experiences with others. So I decided to try to put together a journal of sorts. I cannot put this out every day but I will try to do one at least once a week.

The Frozen Tundra: Terre Haute to Bensenville

Yesterday I had the honor of ushering a 781 coal train on its way to Calumet Park. 781's are typically a big train, in the 100+ car range and this one was no different. My Latta radio rings up and I answer. The crew advises me that the train is put together, air tested, and ready to go. So I get his track warrant ready on the Brain Box. While I'm doing this, to stall for time I ask him for his counts. I already know loads and empties (108-0). The conductor comes

back. I show 108-013,955 on the tons and 5900 on the footage with the power, over". I then look at the power. 3 CP SD40-2. Hmmmm. Things might get interesting. I took a look at my CTWC and then the panic light slowly comes on. The train has to stop and hand line the North Siding Switch Keller back to normal (I had a meet there earlier).

"CP Indiana Dispatcher to CP 5825 North, over"

"5825 North, over"

"Well, I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that I can take you up to the tower with no opposition. The bad news is that you will have to stop and line the North Siding Switch Keller back to normal, over."

There was an ominous pause. Keller is in a small dip and with such a heavy train and only 3 motors....well, you get the idea.

"OK dispatcher, we'll stop at Blackhawk and my conductor will go ahead and line the switch and then we'll start'em up, over."

"Sounds like a winner to me. Those motors will get you moving OK from Blackhawk in a timely fashion, over?"

"That's why they have 8 notches and sand, over."

"All right. I'll be looking for you soon. CP Indiana dispatcher out."

So I line up the CTC at Blackhawk and wait. And wait. And wait. No sign of this train. Hmmmm. Maybe he fell into the Hoosier Triangle. I put my Spring Hill radio in monitor mode and listen for clues. It's ominously quiet. Then, about the time I'm ready to send out the search party, they hit up on the approach. Whew! I had already ordered the outbound crew and the CSX was ready to move the train, so it looked like the plan was going to work out pretty well after all. Another train on the move. The outbound crew arrives at Double Road crossing as the train pulls up! I guess the moral is never doubt your reliable train crews.

Latta: The Heart of the Matter

But about the time you pat yourself on the back for a good job done, a mess develops. I had a Maysville Turn making tracks to Linton to pick up cars from the Indiana Railroad (INRD) and take them on to Maysville on the Indiana Southern (ISRR). So I give the train its warrant and off he goes. Meanwhile, an Odon Turn is going to meet the ISRR at Beehunter and grab cars for Blackhawk. My Latta radio chimes up and I answer. The Odon is looking for a track warrant south. The Maysville still has his to the south yard limit at Latta so until he moves I can't move the Odon. Sensing a certain amount of railroad constipation coming on, I use 110 watts of Motorola power and summon (actually, more like coax) the Maysville into talking.

"CP Indiana Dispatcher to the Maysville Turn, SOO 4452, over."

"Soo 4452, over."

"I was checking to see how your work is progressing. I have the Odon ready to depart and would like to get him moving towards Beehunter, over."

"Well, we planned on meeting the INRD here, but they're no where to be found. Have they said anything to you, over?"

"No. Let me make a few phone calls and see where they might be and I'll call you back, over."

"4452 standing by, over."

I now fire up the communications network. The planner tells me they told him they would be there to meet our guy. I call the INRD. No answer. I get this funny feeling south of the border, if you know what I mean. I look in the informal Latta Sub telephone directory and page the INRD manager of operations. About 2 minutes later my phone rings. The INRD!

You're where? Sullivan? Trapped by the CSX? Won't be to Linton for about 2 hours!! Grab the 54 cars out of the yard and go? OK. By this time the Odon is hot to trot. So I tell the Maysville to get in the clear in Linton Yard and let this Odon by. About this time the Crane radio chimes up.

It's the ISRR ready for a warrant north to interchange with the Odon. Then the Bedford radio chimes up. It's 241 coming into Bedford and looking for a warrant. Yikes! I see a traffic jam at Beehunter very soon. And if that isn't enough, the B & B people working at the tunnel at Crane replacing the brick liner need to get equipment in place for about an hour! Couple that with about 4 track inspectors wanting to inspect and one crane operator needing to move his crane and, well, it gets kinda hairy sometimes. This sub makes it's money in a small area, from milepost 190 to milepost 224. And it seems like everybody wants to be there all at the same time. And how did my dilemma work out? Well, everyone got to where they needed to go, and we'll leave it at that!

Monon Misery: The South End

The south end has been heavily congested lately, and the CSX CF dispatcher has been having a hard time moving traffic to and from Louisville. He had 3 dead trains on the main and our trains kept getting stuck in behind them! It took 3 crews to move a train from Bedford to Louisville! That's about 100 miles or something like that! Hmmmm. Not good. The one bright spot I've found down there is that in Bedford semaphores still guard the MILW-Monon diamond! And I have dibs on them too!

Notes:

Power - The CSX power is gone (7081 and 8044); Soo 2008 booster unit is gone too (no cab interior); Maysville power Soo 4452-Soo 4400; Kindill Power CP 3019-EMDX 189-Soo 4512; Hawthorn Power Soo 4405-Soo 2041-HATX 111-HATX 402-Soo 4435; Farmersburg power CP 5864-CP 5829-SOO 6400; XL power CP 5730-CP 6411; XL power set 2 SOO 6620-CP 5024 (GP-35!)-CP 5699; Soo 2041; Soo 2066; Soo 4443; Soo 4445 Hulman engine

By Mike Dettmers

Union Pacific, BNSF **Open Joint** **Dispatching Center**

Spring, Texas, March 13, 1998 — The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) today announced that a joint regional dispatching center for Gulf Coast operations will begin operating Sunday, March 15, in Spring, a Houston suburb.

The center will control train operations between Houston and New Orleans over more than 340 miles of track to be jointly owned by both railroads, as well as main line trackage formerly operated by the Houston Belt & Terminal Railroad and a portion of the Port Terminal Railroad Association in Houston. The center is designed to improve coordination of train operations and communication among all the railroads serving the Houston area, as well as improve the efficiency of yards serving the area.

UP and BNSF agreed Feb. 13 to establish the joint dispatching center and to exchange half interests in the two pieces of the former Southern Pacific line between Houston and New Orleans. As part of the agreement, both railroads will now have access to all customers, including chemical, steel, gas and other companies, along the entire line, including former SP branch lines and spurs along the route. The agreement carries out the Surface Transportation Board mandate that railroads operating in the Houston area work together to find joint solutions to rail congestion problems of the last several months.

W. T. Slinkard of Denver, CO, a former Southern Pacific train management officer, has been appointed to supervise the center as the neutral joint director. Reporting to Slinkard will be four corridor managers, two from UP, and two from BNSF as well as two supervisors of terminal operations and two train dispatcher territories, one each from UP and BNSF. The train dispatchers will all be located in the same room, operating from the same system. They will be located in Spring, currently the location of UP's southern regional

office and Houston Command Center.

In conjunction with the joint dispatching center, a consolidated dispatching center will be established at Spring where UP and BNSF dispatchers will control their respective lines along the entire Gulf Coast region from New Orleans through Houston to Brownsville and radiating north and south from Houston. Provisions have also been made for Texas Mexican Railway dispatchers to operate out of the consolidated center, which is expected to begin operating by the end of April. Coordination with the joint dispatching center should further assist in expediting Gulf Coast train operations.

Union Pacific is filling its dispatching positions with personnel from its Omaha Harriman Dispatching Center. Similarly, about 20 dispatchers from BNSF's Network Operations Center in Fort Worth will be relocating to Spring. BNSF and the American Train Dispatchers Department of the Brotherhood of Locomotives Engineers reached a cooperative agreement that permitted the dispatchers to transfer. Dispatchers from both the Houston Belt & Terminal Railroad and the Port Terminal Railroad Association will be located at the center also.

To help further ease the congestion along the Gulf Coast, BNSF is leasing 15 high horsepower and 15 medium horsepower locomotives to UP to be used in service beginning March 15 between Houston and New Orleans, and between Houston and Pine Bluff, AR. While UP anticipates leasing the locomotives for several months, the temporary loss of these units is not expected to adversely impact BNSF service.

UP News Release

UP starts **Directional Running**

UP's directional running helps, but there's a way to go Union Pacific's directional running program between Texas points and southeastern Missouri has yielded improvements to service in the road's troubled Gulf Coast region. In this pro-

gram, northbound trains generally use UP's former Missouri Pacific while southbounds use the former Cotton Belt, which was a subsidiary of UP's Southern Pacific. UP credits the new operating patterns with helping to reduce congestion at the two main terminals in Houston, Englewood and Settegast yards, as well as at Centennial Yard at Fort Worth and Livonia Yard in Louisiana. UP also instituted directional running between Houston and Beaumont, Texas., on the route to New Orleans; Amtrak's Sunset Limited was a participant for a time, but has resumed running in both directions on the former SP line (no intermediate stations are affected).

Despite directional running, UP's systemwide numbers show the railroad is not nearly out of the woods. After improving in the fourth quarter of 1997, many key indices—car inventory, average train speed, car dwell time in terminals, trains held (for motive power or congestion)—have worsened in recent weeks, and still compare poorly with numbers for the same period a year ago. For example, there was a daily average of 345,130 cars on UP rails during the week ending March 20, vs. 303,513 in March 1997. Average train speed for the March 20 week was 12.4 mph; a year ago it was 19.1. Congestion accounted for about 1411 hours of train delays each day last week; last March the figure was only 73 hours.

Editor: The Union Pacific put out the word that service was improving and about the time the news hit the media, things fell apart for the railroad. As you will note in Bruce Bird's article, service problems not only hit Texas but landed in Illinois. The articles you read here will help service down the road - but the UP still has a long way to go.



Norfolk Southern and Guilford Rail Plan New Intermodal Service

NORFOLK, VA - Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) and Guilford Rail System today announced agreement on the creation of competitive new intermodal service for New England.

Beginning in mid-summer, New England Thoroughbred Intermodal Service will link Guilford Rail's newly-constructed terminals at Devens Commerce Center in Ayer, Mass., and at Waterville, Maine, with Norfolk Southern's network of 34 intermodal terminals. The service will operate via the newly-established interchange between Norfolk Southern and Guilford Rail at Mechanicville, N.Y., near Albany. Norfolk Southern reaches Mechanicville and the Albany area through a haulage agreement with Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

New England Thoroughbred Intermodal Service will be marketed as a single line Norfolk Southern service to both Ayer and Waterville, offering customers "one-stop shopping" for their intermodal requirements to and from New England.

After completion of Norfolk Southern's joint transaction with CSX Corporation to operate Conrail Inc. routes and assets, the service will be expanded to include the new Norfolk Southern / Conrail network. This will give customers access to seamless intermodal service to the West and Southwest, as well as options to truck service currently using the Interstate 95 north-south corridor that runs from Maine to Florida.

"One of our key objectives in the Conrail transaction is to help bring competitive rail service to the Northeast," said Norfolk Southern Chairman, President and CEO David R. Goode. "Today's agreement will allow us to introduce Thoroughbred competition to intermodal customers throughout New England."

David A. Fink, chairman, president and CEO of Guilford Rail System, said, "Norfolk Southern brings to New England a long legacy of commitment to safety, quality service and competitive pricing. We share their goals to grow our business handling both domestic and international cargoes, and we look forward to a long and prosperous partnership."

*Norfolk Southern Corporation World Wide Web Site — www.nscorp.com
Guilford Rail System World Wide Web Site - www.guilfordrail.com*

Champaign Area News

The weekend of March 14 & 15 was an interesting one for the UP in and around Villa Grove. The morning of the 14th Steve Hankel and I were out doing some fanning and noticed a northbound in the siding at Block (first siding north of Villa Grove), broken into 3 sections and obviously stored waiting to move somewhere. The next day I ventured down to Villa Grove and Tuscola and found 5 northbounds sitting in the yard at VG and one southbound dead in the siding at Tuscola. I spoke with an employee at Villa Grove

who stated that virtually every siding between VG and Watseka was filled with a northbound waiting to get into Yard Center at Dolton. I asked about the southbound at Tuscola and he laughed and said "It's probably waiting to get into Houston!" By the following Monday all of the trains were gone from Villa Grove and the sidings.

It was interesting to note that out of all of the motive power on the trains sitting in Villa Grove most were SP units- GP60s, SD40s, and a GP38-2. One of the UP SD40-2s had yet to have its numberboards painted over on the long hood end and was actually missing the entire number boards- just a hole with bare bulbs show-

ing. It looked like someone had duct-taped something to cover the hole but it had long ago fell off. Maybe if they had used some of that NASCAR-approved 'hunnerd-mile-an-hour' tape it would have stuck!

Apparently most fans over the years have missed the saga of Rio Grande caboose #1506, an all-orange wide vision car that has spent the last 5 years or so marooned in and around Villa Grove. It appeared in the yard one day way back with a broken draft gear and was promptly shoved onto a yard track. Since then it has spent some time being pushed around Villa Grove and the branch to Broadlands. Apparently the DRGW, then the SP, didn't know or care where their caboose was. When the UP realized that it finally owned the car it tried to find a way to get rid of it and I'm happy to report that it will be saved. The Villa Grove dentist that lives on Ill. 130 south of town with the 0-4-0T saddle tank switcher in his yard has bought the car (at scrap price) and is in the process of getting it shipped the few miles to his house. It currently is sitting in the yard in Villa Grove off of its trucks with a set of high-way tandem wheels and a temporary hitch welded to the other end. It is to be moved as soon as a stretch of track can be constructed at its new home.

Bruce Bird

Editor: Bruce tells us of the UP woes in this area. The North Western Illinois Chapter reports that the UP has run trains from West Chicago to Belvedere to get them out of Proviso Yard (westbounds) or off the main track (eastbounds). This has happened over the past month and averages 4-5 times a week. Trains are parked for at least a day until crews are available or the yard opens for the traffic. During a recent trip to St. Louis I had to stop at a bridge project in Springfield. After looking at the new overhead bridge under construction over NS I headed down Route 4 and followed the ex-GM&O/SP line. At Auburn I caught a northbound coal train in the siding, 3 4400's and no crew. At the next siding, Girard, another NB coal train sat, no crew. At Carlinville there was a northbound merchandise train

waiting, the dispatcher told them they had to wait for 3 hours for a SB. The dispatcher said all sidings from St. Louis to Bloomington had trains parked in them.

At Shipman two CNW units were on the front of a SB merchandise train, dead. At Godfery, the last siding, a SB train with UP, WC, Amtrak and UP power sat at the home signal, again dead and no crew.

I stopped at Mitchell to check out a NS bridge project on I-270. I caught NB coal train with UP power at Lennox tower, waiting 2 hours for the SB SP train. In addition, I caught a KCS (GWWR) train and NS #440. I left and went to St. Louis for a meeting with a GWWR attorney for a grade crossing closure case. I left about 2:30 and headed for Carrollton. On the way I followed Route 3 and found the same UP coal train at Wood River. They had moved about 10 miles in 4 hours. Not a bad speed record.

Wheel Report

ILLINOIS TRACTION SOCIETY will have a railroadians swap meet at the Riverton, Illinois KofC Hall, 400 South 4th Street on Saturday, May 2, 1998. Admission is free and hours are 9 am to 4 pm.

CHICAGO AND EASTERN ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY and the **NEW YORK CENTRAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY** (West Division) will have a joint meeting at Danville Area Community College, 2000 East Main Street, Danville beginning at 9 am on April 25. From 11 am to 12 noon a lecture on AC Locomotives, "What's this AC Stuff", will be given by Darwin Simonaitis. From 1 pm to 2 pm Mark Vaughan will lecture on the history of the P&E. From 2:30 pm to 5 pm Rick Schroeder will give a guided auto tour of NYC/P&E and C&EI facilities. The tour will visit the chapter's museum in Rossville. Dinner will be from 5-6:30 pm with business meeting from 6:30 to 7:30 and slide show/discussions beginning at 8 pm. There is no charge for admission.

CONRAIL is now working the Paris to Danville segment out of Paris instead of

Hillary. The Paris to Danville train is called at 4 pm at Paris, works to TeePak and Central States on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. They work to Danville Junction 5 days a week, working customers on the way. Most of the time the train makes it back, however, sometimes they tie up at TeePak. Hillary yard is now empty except for one caboose and one boxcar.

UNION PACIFIC is taking delivery of the AC6000 CW convertibles during the first half of the year. The new units are numbered 7300-7335 and are being placed in service by Conrail. On a recent trip to Toledo your editor caught 7313, 7307 and 7311 on a westbound TOFC train. Units are marked C6044AC on the side of the cab.

TP&W 2003 has been repainted and re-numbered by NYSW's shop in Utica, NY. The unit, now GP 20, 2052, is painted yellow and black.

Steam in the Midwest

No doubt about it, the **Milwaukee Road #261** will be the Midwest's star performer this summer on both BNSF and Wisconsin Central. The season kickoff for this 4-84 will be an excursion on the Twin Cities & Western from Minneapolis to Glencoe, Minnesota on both May 16 and 17. During the passenger layover at Glencoe, the train will move 40 miles farther down the track to Olivia, where there is a wye to turn on. This year, like last, the 261 will be the main attraction at the annual Railroad Days festival at Galesburg, Illinois on June 27 and 28. On each day, the 261 is expected to run an excursion over the former BN three-track mainline from Chicago to Galesburg out of the south end of Chicago's Union Station. A passenger stop en route is scheduled at LaGrange Stone Avenue. You can get tickets and information by phoning (773) 836-9203.

Getting to Chicago from home base Minneapolis, the train will travel over the Wisconsin Central with overnights at Fond du Lac (or Neenah) and Schiller Park. Similarly, the train will use WC tracks to run non-revenue from Chicago up to Green

Bay, where the steam train will power several short excursions over the WC from Green Bay to Chester over the Independence Day Weekend. Then it's back to Minneapolis for about a month's rest -- before setting out for a long, cross-country trek for BNSF that will take the steam train as far as Topeka, Kansas, where it will be a static attraction at the annual Railroad Days festivities, September 4-7.

Then, on September 11th the 261 will begin three days of one-way passenger trips back to Minneapolis, running from Topeka - Kansas City - Lincoln, Nebraska on the 11th. Lincoln to Sioux Falls, South Dakota on September 12, and Sioux Falls to Minneapolis via Wilmar on September 13th. All 261's operations this summer will total close to 10,000 rail miles, which compares to what N&W J#61 I used to rack up in the glory days of the NS Steam Program. Again, we remind you that, as of March 1998, none of these trips have yet been finalized, although BNSF and WC have already approved them in principle. For the latest #261 info, call (612) 688-7320.

NKP 587

The former NKP #578 is expected to be covering much of Indiana during 1998. The season kickoff for operations on the former NS/NKP line between Indianapolis Fairgrounds, Noblesville and points north will get underway on May 2-3 with short trips Out of the ITM museum grounds at Noblesville, on May 30 short trips, Fishers Station to the ITM, and on May 31, the "Picnic in the Park" train from 38th street in Indianapolis up to Noblesville for a catered picnic, then return to 38th St.

True mainline operations may begin in July with appearances by #587 at Logansport for the Iron Horse Festival and at Kokomo for the Haynes Apperson Festival. These trips are now being discussed.