

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 \$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 2004 - Our 36th Year

PRESIDENT: Dave Sherrill

SECRETARY: Al McCoy

NATIONAL DIRECTOR: Rick Schroeder

MUSEUM DIRECTOR: Robert Gallippi

EDITOR: Rick Schroeder, rickschro@insightbb.com
1819 Coventry Dr.

Champaign, IL 61822-5239

MEMBER: Association of Illinois Museums and Historical Societies

VICE PRESIDENT: Doug Nipper

TREASURER: Allen Cooke

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN: William Darnier

HISTORIAN: Jesse Bennett

PUBLISHERS: Allen Cooke & Doug Nipper

Cooke Business Products, Inc.

John Cooke Sr., Honorary Member

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



Coming Events

January 16, 2005

Danville, IL - Chapter meeting at Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street, 1:00 PM

January 8-9, 2005

Indianapolis, IN - Great American Train Show, Fairgrounds, 11-5, \$8

January 15, 2005

Greenwood, IN - Greenwood Train Show, Knights of Columbus, 695 Pushville Road, 10-3, \$3.

March 19 & 20, 2005

Urbana, IL - Annual Train Show at Lincoln Square Mall - note change in dates for 2005

April 30, 2005

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

January and February Operating Sessions Canceled

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, January 16 at the Pizza Inn. As usual, we meet around 1:00 PM, order from the menu and start the meeting around 1:45 PM. Allen Cooke has a new video of the C&O Railroad that he will present.

Some tuckpointing work began on the building this fall. We want to thank member Larry Prosser for his donation of a newer refrigerator for the museum. The old one is an "antique" and anyone wanting it let us know soon, otherwise it will be hauled to the dump. We also want to thank the McDonalds from Montgomery, Alabama for their donation of a Danville Junction sign that has hung outside their train room for several years. We know just the place to put it. A C&EI No Trespassing sign was donated to the C&EI HS.

Note the changes in some of the operating sessions due to other scheduled events. With the winter season approaching should we have snow fall of more than 6 inches the session will be canceled.

The status of the Urbana Show noted in the last issue is that the show is on, however, the weekend will be the third weekend in March. The event may be smaller as we lost the area of the former Bergner Store and some of the other buildings may be occupied.

Operating Sessions

Grafton, Davis & Mt. Storm Ry.

Saturday, January 22nd, 2005

Saturday, February 26th, 2005

Saturday, March 26th, 2005

Saturday, April 23, 2005

12:00 to 3:00+, 309 E. Dale Avenue, Rossville

Chicago, Illinois & Eastern Railroad

Saturday, January 8 ~~Canceled~~

Saturday, February 5 ~~Canceled~~

Saturday, March 5, 2005

Saturday, April 2, 2005 last session

1:00 to 3:00+ at the Depot Museum, Rossville

Danville and Western Railroad

Saturday, January 29, 2005

Saturday, February 19, 2005

Saturday, March 12, 2005 (last session)

1:00 to 3:00 PM at 1819 Coventry Drive, Champaign.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The Officers of the Danville Junction Chapter wish you and your family a Happy Holiday Season.

Our cover photo this issue is the place card, prepared by member Jesse Bennett, for the Christmas Dinner held on December 5, 1981 at the Redwood Inn. Fay Orr,

owner of the Kankakee Beaverville and Southern was our featured speaker. Former member and Covington resident Myron Foor sent this copy to your editor. Myron moved to North Carolina back in the 1990's as job transfer and recently contacted me via the home page. He says Hi to everyone

in the chapter and is starting his train layout based on the former Wabash line from Decatur to Logansport in the late 1990's. I have been bringing him up on operations on Norfolk Southern today.

Say what you will about the Internet, this media has brought old friends together once again and further the hobby.

Rick Schroeder, Editor



Acquisitions, Abandonment's And Alike Week of 11/8:

Canadian National, Canadian Pacific Railway and Norfolk Southern jointly announced a new haulage agreement. Under the agreement, CPR trains will haul CN traffic for NS over CPR's line between Rouses Point, NY. and Saratoga Springs, NY. NS trains will then haul that traffic over CPR's line between Saratoga Springs and Harrisburg, PA. Currently, CN traffic for NS is interchanged at Buffalo, NY. A railroad spokesman said that the new agreement will cut 330 miles and up to 2 days' transit time from this traffic. (ffd: Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)

CSX filed to downgrade a portion of the signal system on its LH&STL Subdivision in Kentucky. The filing specifically requests changes to the controlled sidings at Brandenburg, Rock Haven and Bishoff attendant to the needs of the line's current operation. (ffd: USDOT)

The Nebraska, Kansas & Colorado Railroad announced that it had acquired 2 rail lines from Burlington Northern Santa Fe, together totaling approximately 89 miles of line. The one line is between Oxford, NE. and Franklin, NE. and the other is between Culbertson, NE and Imperial, NE. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

Canadian National/Soo Line filed to abandon approximately 5 miles of its West Allis Line between Milwaukee, WI. and Wauwatosa, WI. (ffd: STB)

Burlington Northern Santa Fe agreed to grant Union Pacific overhead trackage rights on its line between Tower 55 near Fort Worth, TX. and BNSF's new connection at MP 4.8 near Fort Worth, TX., totaling approximate 5 miles. The purpose of the trackage rights is to facilitate directional running by BNSF and UP in the Fort Worth area. (ffd: STB)

Progressive Rail filed to lease, from Canadian National/Wisconsin Central, and operate the line between Almena, WI. and Cameron, WI. and, also, the line between Cameron, WI. and Rice Lake, WI., altogether totaling approximately 24 miles if line. (ffd: STB)

CSX set to lease B&O, stalled on C&O deal

CSX won STB approval of its C&O line lease to a Virginia shortline Nov. 5, but the Class I railroad is still uncertain about its goal to lease the coal mine-served B&O line in West Virginia. The B&O line, at 298 miles long or 535 miles with sidings and yards, would be the fifth and largest line that CSX wants to cut this year in order to trim 1,200 miles from its 23,000-mile system.

CSX was to award the line to one of nine bidders by the end of August, but none of the bids was viable, said CSX spokeswoman Jane Covington. CSX rebid the line to five of the nine and then narrowed the proposals down to the best three, she said. A decision should be made by the end of the year, Covington said. "Nothing may change. Even to this point, we haven't found a bid that we feel is completely successful," she said.

The STB voted 2-1 to approve the lease of 199 miles of C&O line from Richmond, Va. to Clifton Forge, Va., to the Buckingham Branch Railroad (BB) for \$ 140,000 annually Vice Chairman Frank Mulvey dissented in the decision saying the lease is anti-competitive because of a clause that raises BB's rent if it interchanges with another Class I carrier above an unspecified level. He conceded the lease was voluntary between two parties, but the interchange issue was the most contentious between the two parties, he wrote. "I do not believe that the Board should continue to condone this

practice... while restrictions on interchange may be in the private interests of two railroads, they nevertheless operate as a restraint of trade and run counter to the public interest," he wrote.

Chairmen Roger Nober and Commissioner Douglas Buttrey stated that is not the case because BB's president Robert Bryant said in testimony he is satisfied the additional rent will not prevent business with other railroads and intends to interchange 1,000 cars annually with NS and the Eastern Shore Railroad.

They stated their assessment of the rent escalator clause – the details of which are not public - is consistent with Bryant's view. No shippers opposed the lease; only a railroad signalmen union testified against it. On record in support of the lease were 15 shippers including Virginia Vermiculite, U.S. Silica's Montpelier Mine & Mill, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Luck Stone Corp. and Bear Island Paper Co.

Echoing maintenance concerns by Virginia officials and Amtrak, the union cited Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) fines for poor track conditions in 2002. The STB decision called the deterioration "alleged" and expressed confidence that the FRA will enforce adequate upkeep, for which BB is able to do with a steady stream of around \$2mn annually from CSX for its overhead trackage rights, the decision stated.

Western Maryland Scenic

It is with extreme sadness I report that the contracts were signed Monday and work will commence on the track relocation project on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad starting December 20th, 2004.

I first reported on this back in August but to recap, the current track 1 from Woodcock Hollow Road to about 3.4 miles west will be moved to track 2 so that the rails to trail bike path can be installed including the god-awful fence. Since some of this is already on track 2 it will be re-ballasted. If anything that's the good news as I've run the trackage in a speeder and it would

knock loose any filling you might have had.

I can't tell you how many miles I've logged on this beautiful piece of railroad since the late 90's preparing our photo locations for yet another Carl Franz Photo Special with 734. I just know it won't be the same.

I'll leave all of you with one bit of good news though. For those of us who photograph this fine engine in the winter, I have been informed that the WMSR has begun work fixing the #5%#@! steam leaks that obscured the running gear shots.

P.S. I'm guessing that everyone knows that we painted 2 Conrail 2-bay hoppers into WM Speed Lettering a couple of weeks ago.

From Bill Larduskey

Ohio Rail Plan

The Ohio Rail Development Commission is rolling out a \$3.5 billion plan to develop a passenger network throughout the state that could become self-sufficient once it's up and running.

The commission's two-year proposal for Ohio and Lake Erie Regional Rail Hub calls for using existing railroad rights of way where tracks could be added or rehabilitated to build a network. The network could be used both for new, high-speed passenger service and improved freight service, commission spokesman Stu Nicholson said Friday. From Cleveland, passengers could get to Columbus, Pittsburgh and Buffalo in about two hours - faster than driving in each case. Airports could be tied into the network as connecting points.

But don't go out and buy a train ticket just yet. More study is needed, and no construction money is available at this point, the commission said in releasing its results. "If all the stars are in alignment, we're talking nine years out before we could run the trains," Nicholson said.

Despite the lack of construction money, Nicholson said the time is right to get prepared. Currently, the Federal Railroad Administration does not provide construction money to states for such

projects, but it is an idea that has been proposed by the Bush administration, said Steve Kulm, a spokesman for the federal agency.

The concept would be similar to how the federal government treats public-transit agencies such as the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. The federal government provides money for construction but not for day-to-day operations.

"We believe passenger rail has a future," Kulm said. "There is a need. But funding is always an issue." Rep. Steven LaTourette, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, predicted that "the federal government will make the investment" in passenger rail infrastructure. As chairman of the House subcommittee on railroads in the upcoming session, LaTourette said he intends to focus on high-speed rail options.

Major transportation projects, rail or highway, often run in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

For example, the Ohio Department of Transportation's 10-year plan for major new road projects totals \$5 billion. And the two major highway-widening projects in Ohio - converting the Ohio Turnpike to six lanes from Toledo to Pennsylvania and Interstate 71 to six lanes between Columbus and Cleveland - cost about \$600 million each.

The Ohio Rail Development Commission, an independent commission within the Ohio Department of Transportation, is circulating the hub study among public officials and community leaders. The goal at this point is to secure about \$5 million to do more detailed environmental and economic impact studies, Nicholson said.

Via the Cleveland Plain Dealer

Amtrak Train Hits Suspected Chicago Burglar

Amtrak's "Southwest Chief" was instrumental in stopping a burglary in progress Wednesday afternoon near the boundary with suburban Cicero when its lead locomotive struck and killed one of two alleged thieves standing in its path as they were allegedly loading stolen goods into a pickup truck parked next to the tracks, according to a story citing police and Amtrak officials in today's Chicago Tribune.

The train, Amtrak No. 3, operates from Chicago to Los Angeles on Burlington Northern Santa Fe tracks. The incident occurred 6 miles out from Union Station on BNSF's Chicago Division, sometimes known as "the Raceway," the former Burlington Route to Aurora, Ill. The second man was unhurt, but charges of theft and trespass were imminent, police said. The target of the burglary was an auto shop, Automotive Rebuilders Supply, 4401 W. Ogden Ave., just north of the tracks. The men were unarmed. There were no injuries to Amtrak passengers or crew. The train was delayed for almost three hours. Metra commuter trains, whose BNSF Line trains to Aurora use the same multiple-track route, incurred slight delays in passing the site.

Metra to finally open Palos Heights station

Commuter railroad Metra is printing new schedules to include the times when trains will finally stop at its new station in Palos Heights on the SouthWest Service line, according to a story in last Sunday's Chicago Daily Southtown. A dedication ceremony has been set for 10 a.m. on December 20; four years after Metra broke ground on the station at 114th Street and Southwest Highway.

A series of delays and complications pushed back previous projections for the

opening of the station, which was initially projected to take 14 months to complete and cost \$5.9 million. As of August, it was \$3.4 million over budget.

The Palos Heights station is part of Metra's \$198 million expansion of the SouthWest route, which runs on Norfolk Southern tracks into the city en route to Union Station. The expansion includes extending the outer terminus from its present endpoint of 179th Street in Orland Park to the village of Manhattan, southeast of Joliet. By the end of next year, Metra intends to increase from 16 to 30 the number of trains running each weekday on the line. The route someday may switch its Chicago terminus to La Salle Street station, presently used only by Rock Island District trains from Joliet and Blue Island. Currently, SouthWest Service runs only Mondays through Fridays.

Palos Heights aldermen voted two weeks ago to approve an agreement with Metra in which the city will be responsible for routine maintenance of the 1,760-square-foot depot, including cleaning it, mowing the lawn, and plowing snow from the parking lot. The city will use the \$1.25 parking fee to cover the costs.

Palos Heights Mayor Robert Straz, who was elected a year after the project got started, was underwhelmed by the light at the end of the tunnel, which has been in sight before and faded away. "It's been four years," Straz said. "The excitement has kind of lost its luster." But he reiterated that the city's access to a commuter rail line is an "asset we should have."

Montana Rail Link orders EMD SD70ACe's

Regional railroad Montana Rail Link (MRL) announced the day before Thanksgiving that it will take delivery of 16 4300 horsepower EMD SD70ACe locomotives, to be delivered before the end of 2005. A set of five CSX pre-production SD70ACe's toured MRL in October and November, providing a fuel savings of more than 20 percent over the road's current roster of pre-owned, second-generation EMD lo-

comotives. Five of the new units are expected to replace eight older units on a typical MRL freight. The new units meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Tier 2 engine emissions standards.

The new MRL SD70ACe's will also be equipped with IntelliTrain, Electro-Motive's remote monitoring and diagnostics system that enables technicians in the office and maintenance facilities to access locomotive health and operational data while the locomotives are at work. Historically, regional carriers such as MRL have depended on the used-locomotive market for their motive power, versus spending money on expensive new locomotives.

Via TRAINS On-line

NS Details 2005 Capital Spending Plan

Norfolk Southern has announced it plans to spend \$938 million in 2005 for capital improvements to its railroad operations and subsidiaries. The anticipated spending includes \$671 million for right-of-way projects and \$225 million for equipment. In right-of-way improvements, the largest expenditure will be \$438 million for rail, crosstie, ballast, and bridge programs. In addition, \$23 million will go to communications, signal, and electrical projects; \$22 million for maintenance of way equipment; and \$14 million for environmental projects and public improvements such as grade-crossing separations and crossing-signal upgrades.

Equipment spending includes \$154 million to purchase 52 as-yet-to-be-specified six-axle locomotives, the upgrading of existing locomotives, certifying and rebuilding 300 multilevel automobile rack cars and purchasing 317 bi-level racks at the end of their lease. Equipment spending also includes \$44 million for projects related to computers, systems and information technology which will improve operations efficiency and equipment utilization.

2005 Dues

We noted in the last issue you were to receive the renewal notice for NRHS and Museum dues, due by the end of March. I would assume from the questions your editor received, you realized you did not get the notice. The National had been sent out 3-4 weeks earlier according to notice received, however, by the time we were ready to mail the Flyer the notice had not been received.

Thus in this issue the Museum dues notice is enclosed while Treasurer Allen Cooke has mailed the National dues notice to you under separate cover. We urge you to complete the forms and send your check to Allen Cooke at the address listed. We appreciate your prompt attention to renewal and look forward to having you as a member for another year. We also want to thank those of you that made a donation to the chapter. Over \$300 has been received to date and we really appreciate it. These donations will be put to good use to maintain the museum in Rossville.

Business development initiatives total \$107 million and include spending for increased track capacity and access to coal receivers, bulk transfer facilities, and vehicle production and distribution facilities; and investments in intermodal terminals and equipment to add capacity to the intermodal network.

Twelve Days of a Railroad Christmas...

On the first day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the second day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the third day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the fourth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the fifth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the sixth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the seventh day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the eighth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; eight broken crossings that need to be flagged; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the ninth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; nine cars on the ground, dragged through the ties and two switches; eight broken crossings that need to be flagged; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the tenth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; ten misroutes, that have to be setout at the nearest side track; nine cars on the ground, dragged through the ties and two switches; eight broken crossings that need to be flagged; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the eleventh day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; eleven lazy pool engineers, all laid off sick; ten misroutes, that have to be setout at the nearest side track; nine cars on the ground, dragged through the ties and two switches; eight broken crossings that need to be flagged; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

On the twelfth day of Christmas, my railroad gave to me; twelve P.O.'ed crews, all stuck away from home; eleven lazy pool engineers, all laid off sick; ten misroutes, that have to be setout at the nearest side track; nine cars on the ground, dragged through the ties and two switches; eight broken crossings that need to be flagged; seven broken rails to keep it entertaining; six slow orders, all ten miles an hour; five Form Bs joint with other trains; four railroad managers hiding in the weeds; three lousy Yardmasters ducking behind a window sill; two grouchy dispatchers with trains in every hole; and one junk freight with zero point two horsepower per ton.

From an Amtrak engineer



Montana Rockies Rail Tour cancels 2005 season

Montana Rockies Rail Tours has announced it will suspend its 2005 tour season and is in the process of developing plans to deal with rising fuel and insurance rates for an expected 2006 season. CEO Marcia Pilgeram explained that the company is looking at other markets with a larger population base and easier air accessibility to extend its operating season. Pilgeram stressed the company is not shutting down and that its excursion passenger-car fleet will remain intact.

Montana Rockies Rail Tours began as an LLC with four partners in 1995. In 2000 the company was purchased by RailQuest America, a corporation formed by a small group of investors to operate the Montana Rockies Daylight excursion train on Montana Rail Link, a regional carrier, 478 miles between Sandpoint and Livingston, Mont. MRL provides the diesel locomotives and operating crew, while MRRT operates and staffs the fleet of passenger cars, mostly built by the Budd Company from 1947 to 1955. Two restored 4-8-4 steam locomotives based in Portland, Oregon, Southern Pacific 4449 and Spokane, Portland & Seattle 700, have made guest appearances on the route.

Wheel Report

It appears that Horizon Hobby is quickly becoming the UP of the model train business. On Intermountain's website they posted yesterday that Horizon has become the exclusive distributor of their products. They haven't bought them, they are just the exclusive distributor. There is an interesting note in the release, though. Those that currently get their items directly from Intermountain can continue to do so. Via Bruce Bird

Canadian National and Union Pacific announced a series of routing protocols, including the following: traffic moving between Western Canadian and Texas

will be blocked for interchange at Superior, WI.; traffic moving between Wisconsin, Arkansas and Texas will be blocked for interchange at Salem, IL.; and traffic moving between Eastern Canadian and the South-Central U.S. will be blocked for interchange at Memphis, TN. A spokesman for the 2 railroads said that changes will improve transit times for this traffic by bypassing the Chicago gateway.

Metra SouthEast Line planning moves forward

A proposed new 35-mile Metra commuter route, the SouthEast Line, originating at LaSalle Street Station in Chicago and heading south to Dolton, South Holland, Thornton, Glenwood, Chicago Heights, South Chicago Heights, Steger, and Crete, with a suburban terminal near Balmoral Race Track south of Crete, has almost made its way through the local planning stages, according to a story in the Chicago Daily Southtown on Wednesday.

As proposed, a Metra train bound for Chicago from the southeastern suburbs would use Union Pacific's former Chicago & Eastern Illinois route to the vicinity of 91st Street in Chicago, where a new connection would take the trains onto Metra's Rock Island District for the run into La Salle Street.

Phil Pagano, executive director of Metra, said the agency has hired seven consultants to work on the project, which includes initial studies on alternative uses, ridership, finances, and engineering. The SouthEast line is one of the projects eligible for funding under the current federal transportation bill. The bill has yet to be approved by Congress, but Pagano is hopeful that a number of Chicago-area projects will be part of the final federal package.

Pagano said Metra enjoyed the support of the Illinois Congressional delegation in its effort to obtain funding and noted that U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr. (Dem. -2nd) of Chicago was particularly interested in furthering the SouthEast project. The route would fill a void between two other com-

muter rail routes, Indiana's South Shore Line and the Metra Electric District along the old Illinois Central.

Pagano said federal funds would probably pay 60 percent of the cost of construction, and that state and local sources would have to be found for the remaining share. Under the best of circumstances, planners feel it will be eight to 10 years before trains start rolling on the projected SouthEast Line, but local efforts to speed the process are under way, with some communities purchasing land for stations and parking and implementing preparatory zoning and planning decisions. The 495-mile Metra system currently serves 230 stations in Cook, DuPage, Lake, Will, McHenry, and Kane counties. Union Pacific operates Metra trains into Kenosha, Wis., and South Shore Line trains utilize trackage rights on Metra Electric to reach downtown Chicago.

Union Pacific's old C&EI line, later Missouri Pacific, is jointly used with CSX into the Chicago area. The Rock Island District is government-owned, with freight rights held by Chicago Rail Link. By way of history, north of Dolton, C&EI trains used the rails of Chicago & Western Indiana (in time, also absorbed into UP) to reach Dearborn Station, which C&WI owned, near Chicago's Loop. Any new SouthEast Service won't be Dolton's first commuter trains, for C&WI operated its own trains as late as the 1960's linking Dolton and Dearborn Station.

Before Amtrak, a half dozen intercity passenger railroads used Dearborn, but its last service was Norfolk & Western's lone commuter train from Orland Park, which moved to Union Station in the 1970's after Amtrak was formed. The N&W train was the origin of today's Metra SouthWest Service, which is about to be extended from Orland Park to Manhattan, Ill. Dearborn's head house building survives amid condominiums in Chicago's growing "South Loop" district.

Via TRAINS On-Line 12/10

Dubai Ports International buys CSX ports

Dubai Ports International is buying the foreign port operations of CSX World Terminals, part of CSX Corp., for \$1.15 billion in cash, the companies jointly announced today. The sale is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2005. CSX World Terminals is a container terminal developer and operator in Hong Kong, China, Australia, Germany, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela. Its portfolio currently consists of interests in nine terminals with 24 berths.

CSX Chairman Michael Ward said that the transaction was another in a continuing effort to focus on the firm's railroad business. CSX acquired Sea-Land Corporation in 1987 and has, for the past several years, sold off parts of those international ocean-shipping assets. This transaction would complete that divestiture

Explosive Devices Removed from Angolan Railroad

LUANDA, Angola – The government of landmine-contaminated Angola announced Friday that clearance teams have successfully completed operations on the Benguela Railroad between the highland provincial capitals of Huambo and Bie, according to a story from China's Xinhua News Agency last Saturday. The National De-mining Institute said a total of 337 landmines and other explosive devices had been removed from the 125-mile stretch of track linking Huambo City and Cuito in a six-month period. Landmines have proliferated in Angola since 1975 when a civil war erupted after the country gained its independence from Portugal.

Two other small stretches of the 815-mile Benguela Railroad, spanning Angola from the Atlantic port of Lobito to the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, were cleared of mines earlier. With repairs under way on western portions of the line,

railroad officials have said trains from the coast could reach Cuito, the capital of Bie in central Angola, by the end of 2006. Angola is on the west coast of Africa.

UP-Metra Trespassers in Chicago Suburbs will face Sticky Thicket

Using a relatively simple method to fight a potentially deadly problem, Union Pacific announced this week it will plant hundreds of prickly rose bushes and barberries along its North Line to prevent trespassers from crossing its tracks, according to a story in the Chicago Tribune. UP owns the tracks and operates trains for commuter agency Metra under contract on three routes (North, Northwest, and West), and it's trespassing near schools and Metra stations that has prompted UP's taking action.

Racing against winter weather and a year-end deadline to spend federal funds, UP crews will dig holes along the right of way in Highland Park and Lake Forest for 300 bushes that will be planted near the municipalities' high schools. The \$6,500 in plantings are part of a federally funded pilot program that the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) hopes will create an effective and aesthetically pleasing solution to a deadly problem: trains hitting pedestrians crossing the tracks.

While it appears to be a simple task, implementing it was no easy matter. Officials spent months consulting with botanists and railroad management to pick the right shrub and the best places to plant them. Ultimately, officials chose barberries and the white, pink, and purple flowering rugosa rosebushes for their hardiness, height, and most importantly, dense thorny branches that should be a menace to would-be trespassers.

The plantings will cap a year of several high-profile incidents of trains striking and killing pedestrians, including several children. While one of those incidents was a suicide and another happened at a

Metra station, they were enough to prompt Metra to launch an educational campaign last spring and spend tens of thousands more this fall to try to keep children from crossing tracks in illegal places. They also sparked discussions among the ICC, Metra, Union Pacific, and Burlington Northern Santa Fe to determine what else could be done about trespassing, a common occurrence when people try to save time. In the past, agencies have tried to deter behavior by working with law enforcement to ticket trespassers. In some cases, Metra has erected fences. (BNSF, like UP, owns the tracks and operates Metra trains by contract; the other seven Metra districts are either owned by Metra or operated by trackage rights.) But installing metal fencing along 11,000 miles of track in Illinois is not only cost-prohibitive, it's not effective because people will quickly cut holes through the fences. So officials came up with another idea: thorn bushes.

It's not the first time shrubs have been planted along tracks to stop crossings. Union Pacific did a similar program in the Milwaukee area in the late 1970s, but it appears to be a first in the Chicago region, which has a high concentration of grade crossings. Officials consulted with plant experts at the Chicago Botanic Garden to choose the right shrubs, which needed to grow in wind-blown, dirt-poor, rocky areas around railroad tracks that receive only natural water. The shrubs also needed to look nice.

Editor: Interesting idea. Fencing was installed along the Lafayette corridor and within weeks holes were cut for access across the corridor. In Springfield we installed fencing and overnight the kids would cut it down. I guess Metra and the UP had not heard of hedge cutters. Should not take long for the trespassers to carve a notch where they want to cross. As rail fans we have seen this in many locations of dense brush, even deer cut the path for their access.