

FIRST CLASS MAIL

"THE DANVILLE FLYER"

DANVILLE IL 61834-1013

P.O. BOX 1013

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER



When the IC(G) closed their signal school on the second floor of the old Champaign, IL depot, some items got filed away and forgotten. When the building was vacated by the IC, some local railfans were invited to help clean out the leftovers. Included were some interesting slides, such as the example above of a CTC dispatcher at work, probably in the 1970's. Not sure where or which railroad; the names are too small to read on the slide. Does anyone recognize? From the collection of Doug Nipper.

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.

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Volume 34

February 2002

Number 2

Coming Events

February 17, 2002

Danville, IL Next regular monthly chapter meeting at Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street next to CSX.

February 16/17, 2002

Mattoon, IL - Cross County Model Railroad Days, Cross County Mall at SR 16 and I-57, Sat. 10-9, Sunday 12-5.

February 23, 2002

Rossville, IL - Saturday operating session on the Grafton, Davis and Mt. Storm Railroad, 309 Dale Avenue, 12-4 PM

March 3, 2002

Sunday Operating Session at chapter layout in Rossville - begin around 1:00 PM

March 9, 2002

Rossville, IL - Saturday operating session on the Grafton, Davis and Mt. Storm Railroad, 309 Dale Avenue, 12-4 PM. Note change in date for operating session.

March 17, 2002

Danville, IL Next regular monthly chapter meeting at Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street next to CSX.

March 23/24, 2002

Urbana, IL - Annual Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet, Lincoln Square Mall, Saturday 10 AM - 6 PM, Sunday 11 AM - 5 PM.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in February 17, 2002 at the Pizza Inn. Discussion will be decision to proceed with replacement of the roof on the museum in Rossville. (See item this issue). In addition, the Urbana Train Show is coming up and plans will be made to setup the tables at the show. Also, future operating sessions will be discussed. Please note the operating sessions listed for March and April at Rossville. President Dave Sherrill is planning to revive some of the rail trips we have taken in the past and is planning a trip to the Chicago area this spring.

Member Bill Sandusky is planning additional sessions on his G Gauge layout in Rossville and please note the change in date for March that was handed out at the



last meeting. Come join the fun at both locations in Rossville.

We welcome some new members to the Chapter. Harry Bormann of 3220 Independence Dr, Apt. 204 in Danville has joined the museum. In addition, we welcome back Ken Strain, former member, living at 916 Wakley in Danville. The program this month is a video presented by Al McCoy.

Illinois Central bell to University of Illinois

Each Saturday Bob Swisher of the News-Gazette has an article about antique collecting in Central Illinois. On January 26 Bob related a story about a bell from an Illinois Central steam locomotive.

After dinner one evening in 1962 Marian Martin, wife of then U of I Dean of Engineering Ross Martin, was reading the local paper and noted an article about the last of the Illinois Central steam locomotives going through Champaign to face their demise in the scrap yard. A photo in the article showed one of the steam locomotives and the "bell" stood out to the reader. Marian read the article, observed the photo and said to her husband that all she wanted for Christmas was a large brass bell off a steam locomotive. Ross knew Wayne Johnson, then president of the Illinois Central, and some arm twisting and \$60 shipping costs, delivered the bell to his wife as a Christmas present. The bell resided with pride in the family all of those years.

Ross Martin has since passed away and the family has donated the bell to the university. The U of I, world know for its railroad engineering, is in the process of cleaning and restoring the bell and it will be placed somewhere on the civil engineering campus of the university. A piece of railroad history was saved and Ross Martin must be smiling knowing that the bell will be a part of the university he loved.

C&EI RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPRING 2002 MEETING TO BE IN TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

C&EI and Haley Tower Societies to Sponsor Joint Meeting

The C&EI Railroad Historical Society in cooperation with the Haley Tower Historical and Technical Society will hold its spring 2002 annual meeting on the campus of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, located on the East side of town, in Terre Haute on **April 26 and April 27**.

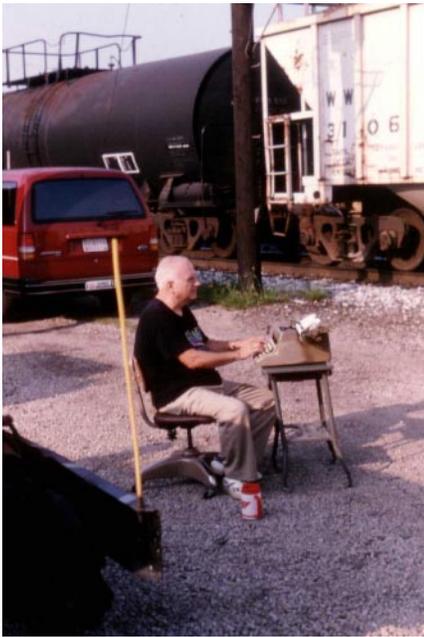
The event will begin on Friday evening starting at 7:00 PM and lasting until around 10:00 PM with a social mixer sponsored by the Haley Tower Society for the C&EI society members. This will be your opportunity to talk "trains" and meet the members of both the C&EI Society and the Haley Tower Society. The mixer will be held at the Signature Inn motel, site of the two-day meeting.

Saturday will have a full program and tour of railroad sites of interest to C&EI fans. The program begins at 9:00am in the Kahn Room on the Rose-Hulman campus, 5500 Wabash Avenue, in Terre Haute. Swap and display tables will be available at the meeting location. Tables are free for members, \$10 for non-members. Presentations will continue throughout the morning and may include video presentations on the coal industry, past and present, around the Clinton-Terre Haute area, the Spring Hill Tower preservation, and an update on the Haley Tower restoration. The afternoon will be devoted to a field tour of Haley Tower, the Clinton depot and museum and train watching. The evening program will include a business meeting, slides, and other items of general interest.

Members are encouraged to arrive on Friday night so that they will not miss the full day planned for Saturday. A special motel rate of \$59.95 per night is being offered by the Signature Inn and the free use of their meeting room on Friday night. You may make reservations by calling the Signature Inn at 812-238-1461 and mentioning that you are with the "railroad historical society meeting." The Signature Inn is located at the junction of 1-70 and U. S. 41 in Terre Haute (behind the Bob Evans restaurant).

Food service will be offered on the Rose-Hulman campus. Lunch will be on your own at the Memorial Union cafeteria. The Society is arranging a buffet dinner for the evening in order that the members can avoid the "Saturday night rush" on local restaurants.

For more information contact society President Doug Christensen, 301 West Goebel Drive, Lombard, IL 60148, or call Doug at 630-629-4067.



This year marks 10 years since North Yard closed in Danville. On June 21, 1991, we find operator, friend and chapter member, Bob Barker, sitting outside typing the consist of a cut the yard crew was pulling into North Yard. Bob is retired and living near Indianapolis.

Reform Council plan would privatize an Amtrak service immediately

Although the Amtrak Reform Council's plan for restructuring intercity passenger rail service would give Amtrak a two- to five-year transition period before potentially flinging open the doors of competition, the plan contains one notable exception.

It calls for the immediate franchising of one segment of Amtrak operations. That could be a corridor, long-distance trains, or merely a single train.

The rationale, the Reform Council says, is to demonstrate a commitment to change.

And presumably that would constitute a shot across the bow of Amtrak, which would have a minimum of two years to

become more efficient and more able to compete with private companies. Ultimately, the Reform Council hopes all of Amtrak's operations could be privatized with continued government subsidies.

Amtrak has not commented on specific ARC proposals. But none of this sits well with the National Association of Railroad Passengers.

"The parallel between what ARC is proposing and what the British did is much too close for comfort," says Ross Capon, NARP's executive director. The British privatized their rail passenger system in the mid-1990s, and it has since plunged into crisis.

The immediate franchising of a portion of Amtrak's service would likely upset the freight railroads, Capon says. "The freight railroads are unlikely to sit still while the right of access is transferred to parties other than Amtrak," he explains.

The railroads may fear that having other private companies operating trains on their track could provide ammunition to advocates of open access for freight companies.

And while the railroads wouldn't mind if Amtrak's right of access goes away, Capon says that the freight railroads' attitude is the devil you know is better than the devil you don't know. So if there must be passenger trains on their rails, they'd rather have them be run by Amtrak than an unknown operating company, Capon surmises.

The ARC plan also calls for federal subsidies to continue to cover the red ink on long-distance trains. But after the two- to five-year transition period, the states would have to pick up the tab for operating losses on existing and new corridor trains.

The private train operators would be responsible for financing new equipment purchases. But ARC envisions federal funding of new long-distance equipment and state financing of corridor equipment if that becomes necessary.

The Reform Council also envisions eventually franchising Amtrak's Mail and Express business, either separately or as

part of train operations.

The organization that would be created to oversee passenger rail, dubbed the National Rail Passenger Corp., would own and operate Amtrak's shops during transition the transition period, and then could either retain, lease, or sell them.

The Reform Council's final plan is due to Congress on February 7. It is only a recommendation — it will be up to Congress to determine what shape passenger rail will take.

BNSF to replace Burlington, Iowa, swing span with lift bridge

Burlington Northern Santa Fe will spend about \$30 million to rehabilitate the former Chicago, Burlington & Quincy moveable bridge across the Mississippi River at Burlington, Iowa.

The swing span will be replaced with a 356-foot lift span that is safer for navigation, The Hawk Eye newspaper reported. The federal government will reimburse BNSF for the bridge work, since the span has been declared a hazard to navigation. Replacement of the span is still a couple of years off. A few miles downstream, the BNSF bridge at Fort Madison is also a candidate for rehabilitation. The Burlington bridge is used by BNSF freights and Amtrak's *California Zephyr*.

CN Motive Power changes

The first Alstom owned KCS power by the mile SD40-3 has been renumbered into the GTW 5900 series. KCS 6621 became GTW 5938 today, 24 January. It had the big red "KCS" on the car body painted over, the "KCS stop signs removed from the cab sides, a large CN crooked noodle applied to the car body and IC style numerals applied on the cab. A plain GTW was

applied below the road number. This unit along with its 19 siblings, are on a nine year lease to CN from Alstom.

These units will all be assigned to the US side of operations. Was told there are no immediate plans to repaint either these units or the LMS owned C40-8W's into CN colors. The KCS renumbering plan is as follows:

- 6621 to 5938 done 24 Jan 6631 to 5948
- 6622 to 5939 6632 to 5949
- 6623 to 5940 6633 to 5950
- 6623 to 5941 6634 to 5951
- 6624 to 5942 6635 to 5952
- 6625 to 5943 6636 to 5953
- 6626 to 5944 6637 to 5954
- 6627 to 5945 6638 to 5955
- 6628 to 5946 6639 to 5956
- 6630 to 5947

None of these units will have an assigned shop. They will be able to receive scheduled and unscheduled maintenance at any CNIC shop.

The CN 4700 series GP38's are being sent to North Fond du Lac Shops for modifications to place them into service on the WC. The 4712 and 4714 went north Sunday 20 January on train T219.

The latest word on the ex-BNE9A's 9922 and 9923 long stored unservicable at Woodcrest is that they are planned to be parts sources. All of the current fleet of IC and CN E9A's retain their HEP system. Don't know if the system is still operable, but the equipment is still all there.

E9A 103 sits in A Building still in primer. No word as how it will be painted or when it will be finished. Seems to be on the back burner right now. Another CN slug is in A building at Woodcrest in primer. Saw no number on it.

Add to the stored WC units at Woodcrest, 2055, 2056. Add SD40's DWP 5902, 5906, 5909, GT 5921, 5927, 5934, CN 5015, 5020, 5028, 5210, 5217, 5218 to the list of stored units at Woodcrest. No word if any of these units are stored serviceable.

The following GP40 series units are stored at Woodcrest for Alstom:

- GT 6414, 6417, 6422, 6423, CN 9400, 9417,

- 9419, 9447, 9448, 9456, 9469, 9479, 9481, 9484, 9534, 9548, 9552, 9564, 9587, 9605, 9613, 9631.

The above units were sold to Alstom in 2001. They are likely awaiting an improved economy before undergoing any significant repairs and being returned to service in lease service or sold to shortlines. With BNSF and NS announcing the intent to begin shedding lines this year, new shortline start-ups may start hunting for power and some of these units may fit right in nicely.

Also still stored at Woodcrest is GP10 8295. It has all IC markings blanked out. IC GP40R 3120 remains stored although looking like it's paint job was touched up. CCP SW13 1301 is inside A Building.

Reporting from Northwest Indiana, Tuch

BNSF to run RoadRailers behind conventional intermodal trains

The Federal Railroad Administration is nearing final written approval of Burlington Northern Santa Fe's request for a waiver that would allow the railroad to tack RoadRailer equipment on the rear of its conventional intermodal trains.

The agency has already notified BNSF that it will approve the railroad's request within the next couple of weeks, said Grady Cothen, a deputy associate administrator at the FRA. The move will be a boost for RoadRailer traffic in general and BNSF in particular.

Placing RoadRailer trailers behind intermodal trains made up primarily of articulated equipment will enable BNSF to offer more frequent Ice Cold Express RoadRailer service, which now runs twice weekly in dedicated RoadRailer trains. It also will allow BNSF to introduce RoadRailer service in new lanes where RoadRailer trainload volumes wouldn't materialize overnight. And it offers the potential for steel-wheel interchange with Eastern railroads, although that would

require another waiver.

BNSF hopes to begin this so-called co-mingling of equipment in the second quarter, spokeswoman Suann Lundsberg said. Currently, BNSF offers Ice Cold Express RoadRailer service between Southern California and Chicago. That would also be the first lane to see intermodal trains with trailing RoadRailer trailers, she said.

Other potential lanes for the co-mingled trains include service between Chicago and Northern California, the Pacific Northwest and Dallas/Fort Worth. BNSF also operates RoadRailers for trucking company Swift Transportation in the I-5 Corridor between Portland, Ore., and Los Angeles, and for Norfolk Southern's Triple Crown Service between Kansas City and Dallas.

For more than a year, Triple Crown has co-mingled its RoadRailers with intermodal equipment on Mexican railroad TFM between Nuevo Laredo and Mexico City. The arrangement produced no problems, Triple Crown President Jim Newton says. Mexico is, of course, beyond the reach of the FRA's authority, so no waiver was required there. The Triple Crown trailers are trucked between Dallas and the border because there isn't sufficient volume to support a RoadRailer train.

Canadian National, which operates RoadRailers between Toronto and Montreal, has also expressed an interest in co-mingling RoadRailer equipment with conventional intermodal trains.

TRAINS On-Line 1-31-02

Grafton, Davis and Mt. Storm Railway Company

Operating Sessions, 309 Dale, Rossville 12 PM to 4 PM

February 23

March 9

April 27

Norfolk Southern Opens New Thoroughbred Bulk Transfer Facility in Chicago

NORFOLK, VA — Norfolk Southern Railway Company today announced the opening of a new Thoroughbred Bulk Transfer (TBT) terminal operation in Chicago. Bulkmatic Transport Company has been selected to operate the facility. TBT facilities handle the transfer of bulk products, such as plastic pellets and liquid sweeteners, from one mode of transportation to another. Bulk transfer permits off-rail shippers and receivers of varied commodities to combine rail's long-haul efficiencies with truck's convenient door-to-door delivery.

"Bulkmatic has a reputation for quality service and experience gained through running 14 other TBT facilities across the Norfolk Southern system," said Mike Webb, manager of MODALGISTICSK, Norfolk Southern's new supply chain and distribution services group. "The equipment and services provided by Bulkmatic will enable shippers to increase distribution in the Chicago area with truck-served customers and allow them to gain the benefits of rail economics."

Bulkmatic has won numerous customer awards, including being chosen four times in DISTRIBUTION magazine's "Quest for Quality" survey as one of the top four "best of the best" bulk carriers. The Chicago TBT facility has 60 car spots with room to expand. The facility handles both dry and liquid bulk products and features paving, security, full fencing, lighting, 24-hour access and truck scales. All TBT terminals are open facilities and allow haulage by qualified motor carriers.

"This facility meets all required standards for handling food-grade products as well as plastic pellets," said Larry Smith, Bulkmatic senior vice president of sales. "Transfers can be done by air, pump or machine, depending on shippers' requirements."

The Chicago TBT terminal is located at 1702 E. 103rd St., Chicago, and has convenient access to Interstates 90 and 94. Norfolk Southern has 23 TBT and other bulk transload facilities in 14 states. Additional TBT terminals are located in Atlanta and Dalton, Ga.; Baltimore; Buffalo, N.Y.; Charlotte and Winston-Salem, N.C.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Chicago; Cincinnati, Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio; Jersey City (Croxtan), Elizabeth and Paterson, N.J.; Miami and Jacksonville, Fla.; Mobile, Ala.; Petersburg, Va.; Pittsburgh; Spartanburg, S.C.; and Willis, Mich.

NS News Release 1-2-02

New BNSF train between Kansas City KS and Remington IN

A new train schedule was instituted last week, the VKCKREM (Vehicles, Kansas City KS to Remington IN). This basically will replace the P KCKREM that has run for several years now as a run-thru agreement with the Toledo, Peoria & Western RR (Now part of Rail America Inc) between these two points.

When the old TP&W operated west to the BNSF connection on the former ATSF

transcon line at Lomax IL, the train was routed that way, with TP&W operating between Lomax IL and Fort Madison IA on a trackage rights' agreement, using TP&W crews. Power was always unpredictable, for awhile TP&W power was run thru the entire route, but in the past couple of years, BNSF provided the power.

Since the TP&W mothballed their line between LaHarpe IL and Lomax, the train has been routed thru old BN Galesburg Yard, using a long pool BNSF crew between Kansas City and Galesburg, and then a TP&W crew operating the train over the BNSF's Peoria branch from Galesburg to East Peoria IL, thence home rails to Indiana.

Of course, the Keokuk Jct Rwy has recently bought the former TP&W line between LaHarpe IL and Lomax IL, and intends on handling traffic on it again to Ft Madison via BNSF, where they will obtain rights to yard trackage, and perhaps more trackage rights' over the BNSF (former CB&Q) Hannibal Sub between Ft Madison and their base of operations at Keokuk IA.

The VKCKREM will handle stack cars and vehicle assembly just-in-time parts for central Illinois, as well as intermodal destined to the "Hoosier Lift" facilities at Remington IN and points short of that on the old TP&W.

It also handles manifest traffic, and is a favorite train to be used for shuttling power back and forth between Ft Madison and Galesburg.

The train will depart Kansas City Argentine Yard daily except Sunday about 1430, with an arrival at Remington IN on the next day in the early evening.

The westbound counterpart of this move, the P REMKCK / P EPEKCK (EPE=East Peoria IL) trains, will continue as well. These trains between KCK and Remington are usually powered with GP30/35/38/39 type engines on the BNSF, and Rail America power east of East Peoria or Galesburg.

Internet from Pat Flynn, KC MO

Time for U. S. Commitment to Rail Service

To all NARP members, February 1, 2002—

The following is a news release from NARP, from, Ross B. Capon, Executive Director

Friday, February 1, 2002

Today, Amtrak President & CEO George D. Warrington announced the layoff of 1,000 employees (700 agreement; 300 non-agreement), reduced staffing hours at 73 stations, and a number of other actions aimed at enabling Amtrak to make it to

September 30, the end of the fiscal year.

He said Amtrak needs a \$1.2 billion appropriation for FY 2003 in order to avoid "substantial route cuts" on October 1. He told a news conference that a \$521 million appropriation would mean only the Northeast Corridor "would have an opportunity to run." He indicated plans to post the legally required six months' advance notice of discontinuance March 28 for all long trains, to prepare for the possibility that Congress would not provide the needed funds.

The National Association of Railroad Passengers strongly believes that the existing system is "skeletal," (to use Warrington's own words) and should be continued in its entirety. We believe that the general public — particularly since September 11 — agrees with the importance of maintaining and improving our national passenger rail network, especially through cooperative federal/state investment in short-distance corridors around the nation. In December, for example, passenger-miles on Amtrak rose 3.8% while domestic aviation fell 13.2%. (On Amtrak's sleeping cars, passenger-miles rose 7% and revenues rose 13%.)

The federal government this year will spend \$33 billion on highways, \$13 billion on aviation, but only \$570 million on intercity passenger rail. Moreover, the federal government offers 80% matches to encourage states to focus their investments on highways and aviation. Federal matches to support state investments for intercity passenger rail are virtually nonexistent.

This "anti-rail" funding bias has helped put Amtrak in its present situation. At best, Amtrak's clear statement today may

be a step toward ending the anti-rail bias in federal funding policy. It is painful to see valued employees laid off in a business that should be growing, but we understand Amtrak's decision not to seek a supplemental appropriation. Such an effort would be time-consuming, with no assurance of success, and would be a distraction from the central issue before the public: the long-term future of a connected, intercity passenger rail system.



Two things should be clear regarding elimination of the long-distance network:

- * It would be a decision "for all time" and virtually impossible to reverse in a later, more enlightened era, and
- * The result would increase the cost of operating state-supported short-distance trains, which no longer would share facility costs — or connecting passenger revenues — with long-distance trains.

Passenger Rail:

Note the articles in this issue about Amtrak and the fate of our passenger system in the United States. There are also a couple of interesting remarks in the column, "Wheel Report". No other country has a self sufficient passenger system and for some reason a small minority, along with Congress, feel that in this country it would be possible.

If Congress has its way, following recommendations by a commission, Amtrak long distance may cease to exist. I urge you to support all forms of rail transportation in this country and to let your congressmen know that it must be a vital part of the U. S. transportation system. September 11 proved that fact and we will never know what the future will bring. Like abandon rail lines, as the article says, once it is gone it will never come back.

Rick Schroeder, Editor



Raise the Roof Campaign

In 1979, after moving into the museum at Rossville, a group of us (much younger at the time) installed a new roof on the depot. Now, after 20 years, much of the area has started to deteriorate to the point that within a few years it would need replacement. At the last meeting we discussed replacement and member Bob McQuown contacted a contractor that had repaired his roof. A price was quoted and then quickly reduced when the contractor found shingles at a very reduced price. On February 1 the officers made the decision to replace the roof. The project will cost \$4,800 plus additional for replacement of sheeting that is in poor condition.

As a result, the "**Raise the Roof Campaign**" has been initiated. To date, with previous donations from members that renewed, we have a total of \$1,100 toward the replacement. We intend to sell additional stock certificates we have in the collection to a collector in the west coast. This should bring in a few thousand to add to the campaign. However, at this time we would like to solicit donations from all members to assist in preserving the depot museum.

We also plan to pursue with CSX Real Property Incorporated an additional reduction in rent at the museum. As many of you know, this rent is extremely high for a museum. Rick Schroeder is presently working on three CSX projects with the director of CSXRPI and hopes to convince him that, especially with the cost of repair, that it would be a public relations benefit for CSX to reduce our annual rent.

In any event, we urge you to donate to assist the chapter in roof replacement. Send your tax deductible check to Treasure Allen Cooke at the post office box and mark it for roof replacement. We look forward to your continued support.

The Officers and Staff of the Danville Junction Chapter

Wheel Report

KBSR Motive Power - Geep #1501 is being returned to lessor Mid-America Locomotive. When KBSR acquired the Pioneer-leased Geep #1616, that increased the roster to eight locomotives—one more than needed. The idea was that 1616 would either replace an Alco that was on its last legs or 1501. Since then, all five Alcos have been performing well, so 1501 will leave the roster instead—good news for Alco-holics.

Also, in addition to C420 #315, RS11 #321 has been repainted (I've posted a photo of it and 315 leading a train near Montmorenci). RS11 #312 is next up for new paint. All three will continue to operate indefinitely, i.e. until they reach the point where repair is not feasible. So far, they are doing fine.

This information was supplied by Kevin Stroo, president of KBSR. *Bill Gustason via Illiana List*

Norfolk Southern Crews - I just learned the NS has established a dedicated pool for train crews operating trains to and from the UP at Villa Grove via the new Sidney connection. Effective January 2nd, any crews in this new pool will run only Peru to Villa Grove and return. I understand 6 crews have been assigned to this pool with home terminal at Peru. Crews resting at Villa Grove will stay in Tuscola (Super 8 Motel, I think), which is the same facility UP crews utilize. Five to six trains operate daily on this route. *Illiana List via Jim Sinclair*

NS shaves more time of Chicago-Atlanta intermodal runs - Norfolk Southern has shaved up to three hours off the schedules of its intermodal trains operating between Chicago and Atlanta. With the July 30 opening of its terminal in Austell, Ga., NS immediately chopped three hours off the schedules of trains 215 and 216. Now, after five months of 100 percent on-time service with the trains, NS is making southbound traffic available at Austell two hours earlier. Northbound traffic will be available three hours earlier at Landers Yard in Chicago. The railroad offers second-morning service between Chicago and Atlanta.

Via Trains On-Line, 1/16/02

Thoughts by Bill Stevens of Trains -

“While it’s anyone’s guess what Congress will do about the future Amtrak and inter-city passenger rail, how it handled Amtrak’s security funding request may hold a clue. Amtrak asked for \$3.2 billion to improve tunnels and security and beef up capacity in the wake of the September 11 attacks. But by the time the request made it through the legislative meat grinder, it had been reduced to a paltry \$100 million. And the only way Amtrak got that is because the funding was attached as an unrelated rider on must-pass legislation.”

“You know you’re getting old when you put away the Lionel set around the Christmas tree and you realize that every freight car bears the logo of a fallen flag. What’s worse is that the cars my kids watched this year were built as late as the mid-1980s, and bore the road names Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, Burlington Northern, and Rio Grande.”

Winter storm slows, but doesn't stop, railroads

The ice and snow storm that raked the Midwest hampered operations on the Class 1s, with delays to traffic ranging between 12 and 24 hours.

The biggest headaches seems to be ice, snow, and downed power lines and trees, some of which are affecting signal operations.

BNSF says its operations are affected from Amarillo, Texas, all the way to Chicago. The railroad this morning was staging some trains between Kansas City and Springfield, Mo., while crews cleared debris from tracks. It has advised some customers they may experience delays of up to 12 hours, but intermodal service is largely unaffected, BNSF says.

UP spokesman John Bromley said the railroad is in good shape aside from some downed trees and power lines. Icy road conditions are, however, making it difficult for crews to report to work.

In Detroit, CSX has issued a Level 3 winter weather alert – its most serious type. In the Conrail Shared Asset Area of Detroit, operations have been severely affected, and only critical trains are running. A Level 1 alert was issued for operations stretching from Chicago to Willard, Ohio, plus all of Michigan, meaning weather may affect scheduled service.

Norfolk Southern this afternoon said the storm was beginning to affect its operations in the region, especially between Decatur, Ill., and Kansas City. KC was hardest hit on NS, and the railroad said intermodal traffic from Kansas City to the Northeast and Southeast would experience a 24-hour delay due to ice and snow. In addition, crosstown connections with other railroads were delayed due to the ice.

The weather slowed down NS operations elsewhere, although not as dramatically, and the railroad warned customers that shipments moving through St. Louis, Decatur, Elkhart, Ind., Chicago, Detroit, and Buffalo, N.Y., may experience delays. Amtrak trains experienced weather-related delays ranging from 30 minutes for regional trains to 3 hours and 30 minutes for the *Southwest Chief*, spokesman Kevin Johnson said today.

The *Southwest Chief* was the furthest behind schedule because its route follows the path of the storm, Johnson said. The *California Zephyr* also was running behind because of storm-related slow-downs en route.

Service between Kansas City and St. Louis also was running late. The westbound *Capitol Limited* and *Cardinal*, as well as the eastbound *Pennsylvanian*, all were delayed by signal problems in Northern Indiana that were attributed to power failures in the area, Johnson said.

Amtrak fared better than the airlines, however. Some flights into Chicago’s O’Hare Airport — where more than a foot of snow fell — were delayed by six hours or more.

TRAINS On-Line, 1-31-02