

Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Engine #488 steams it up in the yard at Chama, NM on September 17, 1997. Photo by Rick Schroeder.



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.

OFFICERS FOR 1998 - Our 30th Year

PRESIDENT: Larry Prosser

VICE PRESIDENT: Jesse E. Bennett

SECRETARY: Steve Golseth

TREASURER: Allen Cooke

NATIONAL DIRECTOR: R. M. Schroeder

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN: William Darner

MUSEUM DIRECTOR: Robert Gallippi

HISTORIAN: Jesse Bennett

EDITOR: Richard M. Schroeder - Rickschro@aol.com

PUBLISHER: Allen Cooke

P.O. Box 1013

Cooke Business Forms, Inc.

Danville, IL 61834-1013

John Cooke Sr., Honorary Member

MEMBER: Illinois State Historical Society - Illinois Association of Museums

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

Volume 30

February 1998

Number 2

Coming Events

February 15, 1998

Monthly meeting: remember the new day - SUNDAY, and the new time - 1:00 PM and the new location - Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street in Danville.

March 28 & 29, 1998

Urbana, Illinois - Lincoln Square Train Show, 10-6 and 11-5, no admission.

April 25, 1998

Chicago and Eastern Illinois Historical Society annual meeting - Danville Area Community College. Watch for details in next issue.

April 25 & 26, 1998

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

May 9 & 10, 1998

Throw Momma from 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!!

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Sunday, February 15, 1998, at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Rt. 1) and Williams Street. Remember, new location - new day - new time. We will meet at 1:00 PM, have lunch first and then the meeting. Ordering is from the menu and prices range from a \$1.00 for a drink to around \$8.00 for a full meal. Remember, the decor is all railroad and we are next to Conrail's "busy" Danville Secondary (sees 1 train every other day now). The last meeting was one of the best attended in months if not years.

Last fall member Doug Butzow vacationed out in Union Pacific country. During the vacation, like all good railfans, Doug got shots of the Union Pacific in addition to



Continued on Page 8

1998 Dues

For those of you that have not sent in your annual dues you will find a second notice enclosed in this issue. Actually, this might be the final notice as the March issue is the last one you will receive.

Please complete the form and return to our treasurer, Allen Cooke. Join us again for another year of railroading. Don't let your membership in the Chapter and the NRHS, and subscription to the DANVILLE FLYER, expire.

Each year treasurer Allen Cooke processes your renewal in a very timely fashion. A recent article in the NRHS NEWS indicates that 71 chapters had not signed up a member since September. Many chapters are behind in submitting the renewals to the national office - thus leaving their members with the possibility of losing membership for a month or so. Each weekend, when Allen receives the renewals, a check is sent to the national so membership is up to date. Not many of the other chapters react this fast. We thank Allen for his timely renewal for our group.

Chicago commuter carrier sets ridership record

Chicago commuter railroad Metra set a ridership record in 1997 with 75 million passengers, the most since the agency was formed in 1983 and 1.6 million above 1996 ridership. Metra operates out of four downtown terminals on 12 routes, and has responsibility for some 20 percent of the riders of the electric South Shore Line into Indiana.

Spokesman Frank Malone told the Chicago Daily Herald that the increase

can be attributed to a robust economy, reflected in the growing number of monthly tickets bought by workers heading to and from downtown Chicago. But the figure also correlated to the growing popularity of the new North Central Service between Chicago and Antioch, opened on tracks of Wisconsin Central in August 1996. Ridership on the weekday service has grown continually, and a fifth train has been added.

Other factors include aggressive marketing campaigns and more weekend use. Metra Chairman Jeff Ladd said he believes people are tired of fighting traffic. "I think it's the result of people just finding it more impossible to commute by automobile. I used to drive 10 years ago and could get into the city in an hour and 15 minutes. Now it's an hour and 45 minutes. There's more cars out there, and the traffic moves slower." Ladd, a McHenry County resident, is a regular Metra rider..

Metra's previous ridership high was in 1994, with 74.7 million passengers. In 1980, when the Regional Transportation Authority oversaw a more loosely knit network of trains on Chicago & North Western, Milwaukee Road, Burlington Northern, Rock Island, Norfolk & Western, and Illinois Central Gulf, there were 80.4 million riders.

Ridership declined in 1997 on one line, the Union Pacific Northwest, by 1.9 percent through November. In part, that's because some passengers started using the North Central, according to Metra. The Milwaukee District West line to Elgin posted the biggest gain, about 4.3 percent.

Metra also posted a record number of train trips in 1997: 203,204. Four people were killed in 1997 in car-vs.-train accidents, the same number as in 1996, and 19 pedestrians were killed when they were hit by Metra trains, down 1 from 1996. Pace, the suburban bus agency based in Arlington Heights, is expecting a 1 percent ridership gain for 1997, to about 38 million passengers, spokesman Blaine Krage said.

Via TRAINS On-Line

The Calendar Cover(up) Controversy

Rumors on the railroad are about as common as rail and ballast. They're everywhere. Some rumors circulate for years while others come and go as quickly as the wind changes. Some are so absurd you know they're false while others have a hint of fact making you wonder.

A recent rumor circulating has to do with the cover of the new 1998 KCS calendar. Rumor has it that the KCS, Gateway Western and Tex Mex locomotive combination was never actually photographed with the St. Louis Arch in the background. According to the rumor, the photo was adapted from two photos: one of the St. Louis Arch and the other of the three locomotives.

Kent Smick, Manager of Locomotive and Car Operations in the Mechanical Department at Gateway Western, responded to the rumor with a chuckle. Smick and co-worker Louis Milam were standing next to Photographer Howard Ande last May when the historic shot was taken from the Route 3 exit off of Interstate 70 in East St. Louis, Illinois.

"When you don't see the Arch every day, I guess it might be easy to take it for granted. It's an imposing structure that extends 365 feet high," said Smick. "We positioned the locomotives on the Terminal bridge in the east side of the Mississippi River about one-half mile from the Arch. I can assure anyone that it looked just the way it does on the calendar. They didn't use any photo techniques to capture that once-in-a-lifetime photo opportunity."

Smick said that because Gateway trains generally only access the Terminal bridge when special trains are running into Union Station in downtown St. Louis, some may have doubts our locomotives were ever on the bridge together. He added that even though Gateway employees see their trains operating with the Arch as a backdrop every day, they are continually struck by the drama and beauty of the sight.

1998 Calendars Still Available

By now all employees for KCS transportation companies should have received a copy of the 1998 calendar. Additional copies of the calendar are available to employees and to others outside the company for \$6 each. Send your requests along with a check made out to KCSR to:

Calendar Request, Kansas City Southern Railway, 114 West 11th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64105

[Via KCS Home Page](#)

Public ignorance of railroads measured

Union Pacific reports that a study by two professors at DePaul University in Chicago shows that Americans have an appalling lack of understanding about contemporary railroad issues. One in 12 respondents to a survey thought that Amtrak was created in the 1800's rather than 1971; one-third of the respondents believed the government owns at least half of all major freight routes; and fewer than 5 percent could identify both carriers involved in a merger outside their own region of the country.

These survey results should be not all that surprising, given that most public contact with railroads beyond commuter-train or Amtrak riding is usually frustrating delays for motorists at grade crossings, or national news-media reports on wrecks, and that the carriers themselves seem to give more effort to negative-type subjects such as the noble Operation Lifesaver grade-crossing-safety program, than to even institutional advertising. Transportation is a relatively invisible topic politically, and U.S. railroads prefer to keep a low public profile.

[TRAINS On-Line](#)

St. Louis "High Line" reopens

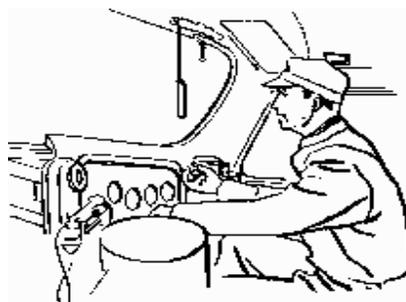
The Terminal Railroad riverfront "high line" in downtown St. Louis, adjacent to the Gateway Arch, which had been closed since late July, reopened December 31 after the former double-track steel elevated structure north of the Eads (Bi-State light-rail) and Veterans (highway) bridges was replaced with a single-track concrete structure. Just south of this structure the line passes through two short tunnels near the base of the Arch.

This TRRA trackage is used by Amtrak's Chicago-St. Louis trains, which detoured between WR junction in Granite City, Ill., and Gratiot interlocking east of the Amtrak St. Louis depot via other TRRA freight trackage through Venice and East St. Louis, Ill. Passenger trains also used the MacArthur Bridge across the Mississippi River instead of Merchants Bridge, usually with no loss of time. BNSF trains also use the route to connect former Burlington and Frisco trackage.

You know you're a railfan when you find yourself looking for old locomotives and color schemes during obligatory chase scenes through the rail yards when you are watching old cop shows and movies on TV.

The concrete box girders were lifted into place with their ties already attached, speeding construction of the new structure, which is just under a mile in length. Decades before construction of the Arch, the entire line was elevated along the Mississippi River waterfront. Although the old iron works were interesting, the new construction is considered less of an eyesore to the restored Laclede's Landing commercial area just north of the Arch grounds and Eads Bridge.

[Via TRAINS On-Line](#)



Avon Observations

By Bob Burns

I spent about 5 hours, from about 5:30 to 9:30 pm EST, on Saturday, January 17, watching the activities at Conrail's Avon Yard. Here are some observations:

1. I mentioned in an earlier post that radio channel assignments had changed in this area. The Indianapolis Terminal Dispatcher now operates on Ch.2 (161.070) instead of Ch.1 (160.800). The Indianapolis Terminal Dispatcher handles all movements on Conrail lines in the terminal area (roughly Marion County) plus the Crawfordsville Secondary. The Lawrence defect detector has been heard on this channel, so it's possible that the Indianapolis Line Dispatcher also is now using this channel. The St. Louis Line Dispatcher has been on Ch.2 for some time now. Since the defect detectors at Danville (Indiana) and Reno are on this channel, you can get a good overall picture of activity into and out of Avon without having to scan.

The interesting change is that inbound and outbound trains to and from Avon Yard also talk to the Terminal on Ch.2. They used to contact the Terminal on Ch.4 (160.980), the Avon Yard channel, to get clearance into and out of the yard. The change definitely reduces the radio traffic, and confusion, on the yard channel.

Ch.4 is still pretty busy, especially if there are multiple trains getting air tests, doubling up, departing, arriving, etc. I'm surprised CR hasn't found a way to further separate the radio traffic onto different channels.

2. For those keeping track of these things, there were apparently two Puller crews working last night with engines 6931/1109 and 6928/1116. The first number is the road number of the SD38 loco and the second number is the MT-6, former Alco, slug. There was a "rip job" working last night with engine 1605, a GP15 that appeared to have been recently washed or maybe it had fresh paint. I didn't get down to the west end of the yard, so I have no idea what was working the hump.

3. When I got to my train watching spot,

just east of the refueling station on the main, a coal train was blocking my view. It left soon after I arrived. The symbol was UGS-?. The engines were CR, but I didn't note the numbers. It was headed westbound on the St. Louis Line. The cars were all CR bottom dump hoppers and were loaded. Anybody know the origin or destination of this train?

(Wow. I wonder what's so special about Allegany (or is that Allegheny) coal that causes Geneva Steel to ship it across country when Wyoming coal is much closer. It's either significantly cheaper or there's some metallurgical benefit. "Information from Bill and Brian")



4. I heard on the scanner a CSX grain train (empty?) getting a Form D to go west on the Crawfordsville Sec.

5. I also heard on the scanner an ML-460 making a pickup at Transfer Yard.

6. Here's a rough line-up of trains at Avon Yard while I was there (all engines CR unless otherwise noted):

SWPI inbound

PIIC in 6764+1

STBN in/out 5557, 6223 (One of the screwier moves of the night. The inbound crew came down the Controlled Siding and pulled through a Departure Yard track. At the west end, they doubled their inbound BN-Valley Park block over to another track where they were supposed to turn the train over to the outbound crew. But there wasn't enough fuel on the engines, so they cut the engines off, swung over to the main at AN, and backed down the main to the refueling station. The outbound crew got on there and took the engines back to the west end to get on their train.)

WSAV-40 out 3343, 1618, 1616, 1606 (a clerk I used to work with in the Avon hump office is now a yard engineer and was running this train) ICPI out 6703 +1 (doubled out of the Arrival Yard)

INTO out 6057, 6594 (These guys took forever getting out of the yard. They had a double to make in the Departure Yard and there was a bad order in the first cut.

They made their double and then dropped the bad order in the "Long Pocket". What didn't make sense to me was that when they cut off the bad order, the conductor didn't turn the angle cock on the east end of the cars they cut away from. So, once they got the train back together, they had to wait until the air pumped up in the entire train before they could get an air test. By that time, they were trapped by inbound ELIN, PISW, and TV-3. Once they got out of Avon, they had to go to Transfer Yard for a pickup. Long day.)

WSAV-24 in

INTR out 5563, DRGW SD40T-2, SSW 8089

PIHO in 6771, 6471 (yarded in the Departure Yard)

ELIN in 6131+1

PISW in/out 6245, 6232 (tight fit between the refueling station and MY interlocking at the east end of the yard)

ASIN in, TV-3 in/out

PIIC out IC 1015, IC 1013

Not bad for 4 hours of train watching. If anyone wants directions to my train watching spot, drop me an E-mail. Bob Burns (RLBURNS@compuserve.com)

Construction Projects

Norfolk Southern

We are progressing on the siding projects. Plans for the five sidings will be completed by February 15 for contractor bidding. The railroad plans to bid the grading work to one contractor. NS will do all track work including cutovers and signal work. The construction work will begin around April 1 and all sidings are to be in service by the end of September.

Lafayette will see major work begin around March 1 once the winter weather is over. One-half of the State Route 25 bridge was set in January. In the spring roadway work will continue with grading and paving.

Once the south-half of the highway is complete, traffic will be moved to that half and work will begin on the north part of the bridge. The contractor plans to set the north half around August with project completion in October.

Route 52 will see bridge painting when the weather improves along with final grading. Most of that project should be complete by the first of June.

Other projects we will be involved with this year is completing the overpass in Springfield, completion of the westbound lanes of I-94 near Michigan City and completing the I-270 bridges at Mitchell and St. Thomas, Illinois. Projects starting will include a two-year underpass project at Toledo where a NS branch crosses over I-280, a one year project for the reconstruction of Detroit Avenue over NS in Cleveland, a new bridge over NS at Wheeler, Indiana including 1 mile relocation of the former PRR line and reconstruction of I-94 at Van Loon, Indiana.

In addition we have been ask to provide construction services on the siding projects that will take three people most of the summer.

Conrail

A majority of our work is in Ohio this year. Bridges include Youngstown, Rush Run, Columbus, Alliance, 2 in Brook Park, North Ridgeville, Revenna, Ashtabula and Findlay. In West Virginia we will be finishing up a bridge at Dickinson and starting one in Charleston. Other work will include pipe projects in all states including Michigan.

It is getting more difficult to find Conrail personnel that "really care" about what happens on the railroad. As you have read, some continue to leave for NS and CSX and this will continue until July 23 - decision date. The railroad expects to operate as Conrail to sometime in September. How this will affect our work is not known - but a majority of our projects will go to NS, a railroad that we do most of our work for.

We are all looking forward to another busy summer.

Wabash National receives \$25 million RoadRailer order

Wabash National Corporation of Lafayette, Ind., has received orders for \$25 million in RoadRailer equipment from Triple Crown Services Company. Triple Crown, an intermodal transport company owned by subsidiaries of Norfolk Southern and Conrail, has placed orders for 940 RoadRailer 53-foot trailers and a number of RoadRailer rail bogies for delivery in 1998.



Triple Crown added over 900 trailers in 1997. A portion of the 1998 orders are slated to replace older 48-foot RoadRailer vans. With the addition of this equipment, Triple Crown will operate approximately 5300 RoadRailer trailers averaging less than three years old, 96 percent of which will be 53 feet long.

Wabash National designs, manufactures, and markets standard and customized truck trailers under the Wabash and Fruehauf trademarks.

Memphis Street Car

The Memphis street car system is a lot of fun. On Sunday (Jan 11, 1998) we took a short ride on the Memphis Trolley system. There are two lines. The Main Street line runs up and down Main Street from the trolley barn near Auction Ave on the west side of Main Street down to just South of Calhoun Ave at the Amtrak (Illinois Central) Station. The station is boarded up and appears closed. The City of Memphis has decided to build a new station for joint service with the Greyhound Bus company. The fare is only \$.50. Senior citizens, children and disabled persons pay only \$.25. There is a special noon time fare of \$.25 (11 am - 1:30 pm) for everyone to get people who work downtown to take the trolley to lunch. The motorman cannot make change so exact fare or more is required.

The track is doubled all the way on the Mains Street line except at the ends where the trolley parks while the operator reverses the poles and takes his handle to the other end of the car. He also has to flip the seat backs. The cars are single truck Brill type rescued from Portugal. The tracks were mostly uncovered by removing the asphalt that had been paved over them. Automobile traffic is barred most of the length of the line north of Beale Street. Much of downtown is depressed, but there are highlights along the line. The Orpheum Theater at Beale Street has been

handsomely restored and enlarged for the production of Broadway Shows by the traveling companies. Across from the Orpheum is the Elvis statue in a small public park.

Handicapped access to the cars is provided by wheel chair lifts built into the sidewalk at each and every station stop. The lifts are paved with the same brick surface as the surrounding sidewalks.

The "loop line" uses center door double truck cars imported used from Australia. The loop run west to the river from the car barn, south to the pyramid (the sports arena), south on the IC tracks along the river to the IC (Amtrak) station at Calhoun Ave, east to Main Street and then north on Main Street to the North end of the line where the loop is repeated until the end of the day.

Hours of operation are M-Th 6am - 12pm, Fri 6am - 1am, Sat 9:30am to 1am, and Sun 10am - 6pm. They try to maintain a 10 minute interval between cars. Since the loop cars run North on Main Street, there is a 5 minute interval for northbound traffic on Main Street but 10 minute intervals for southbound traffic.

At 61 South Main (a few doors North of Union on the West Side of the Street) is the MATA office and a Trolley Store that sells books, mugs, pictures and other trolley souvenirs. There are daily, three day and monthly passes available. The one day pass is \$2.00, three days \$5.00

Donations

This year has been exceptional for donations by members of the Danville Junction Chapter. A total of \$283 has been donated by January 16 and the officers of the chapter want you to know how much we appreciate the donation. We want to thank the following:

**Steve Golseth
Brian Higgins
Gregory Grady
Jess Bennett
Randy Rippy
Robert Lehnen
Doug Butzow
Allen Cooke
Bill Darner
Andrew Koval
Tom Holmberg
Richard and Cindy Hall**

As editor I always wonder if anyone reads the newsletter and really cares about us. Every once in-a-while, while talking to a member, I find that the newsletter is read cover-to-cover as soon as it arrives in the mail. Makes me feel good. The donations by the members you see listed, many that are unable to make the meetings, lets me know that you really care about the newsletter and the Danville Junction Chapter. As editor I want to thank you for your support all of these years and we look forward to another great year - 1998.

Rick

and the monthly pass is \$10.00. Store hours are 8 to 5 M-Sat and closed all day Sunday. There are plans to extend the line northward. I think they will have to build some more cars if they expand very much.

The ride is well worth the trip and the equipment is well maintained.

From Fred Hubbard

UTU Backs Conrail Acquisition Plan

The United Transportation Union in mid-January broke rail labor's solid opposition to the CSX-Norfolk Southern plan to acquire Conrail by agreeing to support the \$10.2 billion deal. The largest rail union with 76,000 members, UTU said that in exchange for dropping its opposition, it won strengthened job protection and certification commitments for members who would be harmed by the Conrail breakup. The Surface Transportation Board will vote on the Conrail split this summer.

In addition to boosting the already strong likelihood of STB approval, the UTU deal could become a blueprint for future agreements with other unions, the Journal of Commerce reported. UTU and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers are locked in a bitter fight over representation of train crew members. That battle began last week when UTU took steps to seek a vote by members of both unions on a plan that would create a single union for train crew members now represented by one of the two unions.

Rail labor has been united in opposition to the NS-CSX plan for nine months as union officials claimed the Conrail breakup would reduce jobs, compromise safety, and damage service quality. NS and CSX dispute those allegations, saying that job losses would be modest; they have emphasized long-term plans to hire more train crews.

A UTU spokesman said that the agreement means that members know where they will be working after the sale, how much seniority they will have, and which collective bargaining agreement will apply to them.

The agreement with NS and CSX could become a political issue in the UTU vs. BLE battle, the Journal of Commerce said. By being the first to sign an agreement that touts enhanced job protection, UTU could bolster its claims that it would offer better member representation. BLE also is negotiating with NS and CSX, raising the prospect that it could reach the same agreement, a better deal, or break off talks and condemn the UTU's deal. Some ob-

servers believe both railroads have strong incentives to sign identical agreements with both unions to avoid any perception of bias or favoritism.

Via TRAINS On-Line January 22.

Prairie State has new short line: Illinois Railnet

With the sale of Burlington Northern Santa Fe's former CB&Q branch from Montgomery, Ill., near Aurora, through Ottawa to Streator, Illinois has a new short line: Illinois Railnet.

A subsidiary of North American Railnet, which also has several hundred miles of ex-CB&Q in Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado, Illinois Railnet (reporting marks IR) began operation on December 13 on its 56.7 miles, plus 7 miles of trackage rights from Montgomery through Aurora to BNSF's Eola Yard. IR uses the old "sheep yard" in Montgomery, and its corporate office is in Ottawa.

Daily service is provided between north of Ottawa and twice weekly to the south. Motive power includes a GP7 and two leased ex-Norfolk Southern B23-7's. IR interchanges with CSX and Iowa Interstate at Ottawa, as well as BNSF.

Via TRAINS On-Line

Conrail

Conrail reported net income for the third quarter of 1997 of \$139 million, excluding merger-related costs, compared with \$138 million for the same quarter of 1996. For the first nine months of 1997, Conrail's net income was \$331 million excluding merger-related costs, compared with \$278 million excluding voluntary separation costs for the first nine months of 1996. Merger-related costs were \$16 million for the third quarter and \$420 million for the nine-month period.

Freight traffic volume in units for the third quarter increased 4.4 percent over the previous third quarter. Intermodal was the largest gainer with an increase of 10.6 percent in traffic volume. Conrail's

board has approved the 1998 operating plan which calls for a 79% operating ratio (the ratio of operating costs to operating revenue). The 1996 ratio was 79.7 percent.

In 1998 Conrail expects to hire around 500 employees in train and engine service. Non-agreement jobs have been frozen but craft jobs are still needed to run the railroad.

Via Philadelphia Chapter Cinders

Northern Plains gets its own units

Northern Plains Railway, which has been operating by lease Soo's "Wheat Lines" across northern North Dakota since January 6, 1997, has received its first painted locomotives after relying on leased Soo Line power. OmniTrax's shop at Loveland, Colo., in December outshopped GP35's 3501-03, painted in a Santa Fe-like blue and yellow. Named City of Devils Lake, City of Warren, and City of Fordville, respectively, for on-line towns, they are ex-DRGW 3033, 3036, and SP 6631. NPR, headquartered in Devil's Lake, leases 383 miles from Thief River Falls, Minn., to Kenmare, N.Dak. (both junctions with Soo main lines), which a branch from Fordville to Devils Lake.

NPR management includes individuals with an extensive background in marketing and operations. President Gregg Haug has more than 10 years of marketing experience on U.S. railroads including CP, while Robert Irwin, vice president, operations, brings 32 years of experience to the new railroad, more recently from Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern.

Northern Plains provide pickup and delivery to customers on the line and is responsible for track and equipment maintenance. CP provides freight cars and does marketing, sets rates, and handles customer service. The lease is similar to one governing the operation of over 350 miles of Soo Line



routes in North Dakota and Montana by the Dakota, Missouri Valley & Western Railway since 1990.

The Wheat Lines were built in stages by Soo Line from 1905 to 1912, the last major construction project for Soo in North Dakota. Soo's mainline between Fairmount and Portal was completed across the state in 1893, and construction on branch lines in the southern half of the state through Bismarck were in place prior to construction on the Wheat Lines. Grain has been the most important source of carloadings in the territory and in 1995 comprised 90 percent of the more than 12,000 carloads of traffic moving to and from the Wheat Lines.

[Via TRAINS On-Line](#)

Amtrak Weighs Dining Service Changes

In addition to "family style meals" served between New York-Washington and Jacksonville-Miami on the *Silver Palm*, *Star*, and *Meteor* ("Trains Travel Tips," February 1998 *TRAINS*), Amtrak has undertaken other initiatives on a trial basis to trim food service costs.

Veteran passengers who survived similar economizing in 1981-82, when the company stored its china in favor of paper plates and plastic utensils, cut wait staff, and went to microwaved, pre-packaged entrees, will recognize similarities in the experiment implemented in off-peak periods beginning last October on the *California Zephyr*, whose dining cars now feature disposable polymer dishes. The china dishes and glassware, and the additional crew member whose principal duties are washing them, returned on the *Zephyr* for the Christmas holidays when the train handled peak loads, but were displaced again after the New Year. Customer reaction will be gauged on the change, but so far the move to plastic is not "permanent" or slated to move systemwide. Individual product line directors are making other changes which may result in lower costs. The new *Southwest Chief* menu, for example, fea-

CSX upgrade project ahead of schedule

CSX Transportation says it ended 1997 ahead of schedule on its \$220 million capacity expansion project between Chicago and Greenwich, Ohio (near Cleveland). When complete, the entire former Baltimore & Ohio route will be double-track, and, in some locations, triple-track. The line, single-tracked in some sections over the last couple of decades, will be the westerly segment in CSX's Chicago-New York/Boston main line if the Conrail split proceeds as anticipated.

Carl N. Taylor, CSX executive vice president-operations, said that during 1997, 47 miles of track was installed of the 113 miles necessary to double-track the segment from Chicago to Greenwich, which is just east of CSX's big Willard terminal.

The Chicago-Greenwich upgrade is part of a half-billion dollar capital improvement program CSX is planning over and above its regular capital spending to integrate roughly half of the Conrail system into its own.

On the B&O route, 48 public and 40 private highway-rail grade crossings were reconstructed where new rail has been replaced. Seven new railroad bridges have been completed, and four others are under construction. Work crews have upgraded track and highway-rail grade crossings on the existing main rail line in both Indiana and Ohio.

Next year's effort will also involve completing a nearly \$35 million yard expansion project at Willard, and an upgrading of CSX's yard at Garrett, Ind.

[Via TRAINS On-Line](#)

tures fewer selections at all meals. Burgers at lunch have been dropped in favor of only open-faced sandwiches. The *City of New Orleans* is again serving full breakfasts into Chicago (while retaining the evening reception southbound instead of a full meal); service was too slow with part of the crew turning at Memphis, so the full staff is going all the way—but they will work 3 days on and 2 off instead of 3 on and 3 off. The managers and employees will be watching customer reaction closely while trying to improve the bottom line where possible.—Bob Johnston

[Via TRAINS On-Line, January 22](#)

Terre Haute (and other locations) Spottings

[By Bill Foster](#)

EIRC 454 was spotted in the CR yard at Effingham 1/16, disposition unknown.

CSX has been giving Haley Tower some TLC. For those who have been in the tower, the walls were a combination of faded white paint on drywall and dirty

brick. The whole place is getting a face lift with fresh paint and some cleaning. Hope they don't clean too much, because the brick might crumble. :) (Editor: Anytime a building is repaired on the railroad that means it will close soon.)

Also on CSX, CSX has been enduring a 25MPH slow order on the diamond at Dewey since mid-December. I overheard a conversation the other day about the subject in which Jacksonville is raising Cain about train delays. CP's welder says the slow order will stay until new frog inserts arrive. So much for flexing the corporate muscle.

CP is continuing to upgrade or downgrade signals along the Latta Sub. The CTC is now all gone between Springhill and Fayette. Crews are installing new crossing flasher equip. at various locations along the line; the newest of which is at Lewis on SR 159. This crossing was just re-habbed a few months back.

Also CP, Z-486, 12,000 tons of northbound coal for Inland Steel had locomotive failures just out of T. Haute on Tue. 1/14. Power was two SD 60's and 40. Both 60's died and the train was stuck in the siding at Clinton, 15 miles from where the

train got on the CSX. The trains sat at Clinton for some 5 hours before Z-452, 241's train was dispatched north with 7 units; two for Z-486. Problem was the two units, SD-40's and trailing to boot, were set up facing the wrong direction. SO, musical locomotives was the name of the game for about 1 1/2 hours at north Clinton. All the while tying up CSX's main. Also called about the same time as the Z-452 was a relief crew for Z-486. They took over after the locomotive swap and headed north. It's nice to see CSX and CP getting along so well.

ISRR has started to break from tradition and is using GE motive power in addition to the GP-40's. I didn't realize there was much of a market for second hand GE's. I guess if it runs, it will do the job these days. Several B30's have shown up, some with NS high hoods. Don't forget, the AMAX units from Mount Vernon, IL are also on the ISRR roster.

CR business in and out of Terre Haute has been booming lately and motive power has been getting interesting too. The same night Z486 was having problems, CR was loading Duane yard, much to the yard crew's dismay. INSL had 72 cars to set out and HIIN had about 24 or so too. The yard only holds about 75 cars!! GP-15's, which I thought had all gone east have been migrating to the YSTH-43, T.Haute switcher off and on for a couple months. It's rather interesting listening to what is essentially a re-manufactured GP9 pulling on a long cut on the grades around T.Haute.

NS tidbit: Road Foreman Anderson road 256 from Decatur to East Yard/Lafayette and I255 back on Wednesday. I255's power was SD40 1602, which seemed to have a set of badly worn springs and plates. Talk about hunting at speed. I'll bet the sucker was banging too.

More CSX: Mr. Hill, 1st trick disp. was explaining to a train crew the other day why the new radio code system fails so much in the Terre Haute area. His explanation was quite interesting and colorful as always. It seems there is a hospital in T.Haute that has a paging system operating on the same frequency or band CSX's radio code uses. According to Mr. Hill, every time they page some one, it kills his

code and things go crazy. He also mentioned he can set off pagers by trying to line certain signals. How's that for high technology. In his words, " Ah, we don't need the hospital any way. So we'll just take way their pagers." Good thing nobody from the hospital was listening. :)

BNSF Enters Little Rock

The Arkansas capital city of Little Rock and its port, formerly served by Union Pacific and Southern Pacific, lost SP with the UP merger but now has gained Burlington Northern Santa Fe as a merger condition. In a January 16 ceremony, Arkansas Governor Gov. Mike Huckabee and other state and local officials and area customers celebrated the beginning of direct BNSF service between Little Rock and Pine Bluff, Ark., where the new service connects with existing BNSF service to and from Memphis, the Gulf Coast, Northeastern connections and the rest of BNSF's system., via trackage rights on UP.

BNSF freights will operate into Little Rock six days a week, originating and terminating on trackage owned by the Little Rock Port Authority. In addition to customers served by the Port of Little Rock railroad, the new service also provides a BNSF connection to customers served by the Little Rock & Western Railway, which operates a portion of the former Rock Island Railroad.

Via TRAINS On-Line January 22

***Next Meeting - continued
from page 1***
the parking lot. Doug will also fill in with some slides shot in recent months. Come visit us in February.

We have two new members this month. Danny Honn of Koehn Drive in Danville visited the museum and joined at the Janaury meeting. Danny has been out of model railroading for a few years and is ready to get back into the hobby. Our second member is Larry Nilles of Danville, Indiana. We welcome both the chapter.

Wheel Report

According to Traffic World magazine, the Environmental Protection Agency has issued final rules on locomotive emissions that the agency says will add \$250,000 to the price of locomotives early in the next century, but will significantly reduce pollution from the previously unregulated source. The rules will be phased in between 2000 and 2005 and cut emissions of nitrogen oxides by as much as 60 percent by 2040 according to the EPA. The rail industry and locomotive manufacturers worked closely with the agency in developing the rules, which one industry spokesman hailed for creating a national standard as opposed to a patchwork of state and local regulations.

If you read *TRAINS* March issue you noted that the KB&S has a new diesel on the roster. This time EMD won and the railroad has leased a Geep from the Keokuk Junction Railroad. No. 1606 is on the roster since RS11 #301 had a crankshaft failure. The ex-California Western RS11 #1100 has been renumbered #324.

The new Ford mixing center in Kansas City began operations the first week of January. The center is receiving vehicles of all types from various Ford assembly plants. They are then grouped by destination for delivery by UP to 13 destinations in the West and Southwest. The mixing center concept is a marked departure from the traditional practice of shipping assembly plant vehicles individually to dozens of destinations. The new concept is designed to cut order-to-delivery time from about two months to 15 days. Additional sites will be on-line this month - Shelbyville, Kentucky and Fostoria, Ohio - joining the Kansas City and Chicago sites in the Ford mixing center operation.

Norfolk Southern will begin operating at least one train each way per day to the sites once the business gets the bugs worked out. At the present time traffic is being handled by normal trains with extras being added. Additional trains will be added as the business increases and total system comes on line.