

FIRST CLASS MAIL

"THE DANVILLE FLYER"

DANVILLE IL 61834-1013

P.O. BOX 1013

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER



In the summer of 1992, our favorite "tower" closed forever. Right to left, Doug Nipper, Allen Cooke and Ned Cooke pose in front of the office building in the fall of that year. The next summer the building was torn down. The board and train order signal are at Rossville. The trains still run, but the crossing will never be the same.

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

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Coming Events

January 20, 2002

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

January 26 & 27, 2002

Indianapolis, IN - Great American Train Show, State Fairgrounds, 11-5 PM, \$7
Group of members planning to go Saturday, contact Dave Sherrill or Rick Schroeder if interested.

January 27, 2002

Champaign, IL - Work session and operation, Danville and Western Railroad, 9-4, everyone welcome to come work or watch, lunch served. Scenery, track, wiring all need to be done.

February 2, 2002

Rossville, IL - Saturday Operating session on the Chapter layout - beginning at 12:30 PM

February 9, 2002

Champaign, IL - Work session and operation (the wife is quilting all day), Danville and Western Railroad, 9-4, come work, or watch and then run some trains. Lunch served.

February 17, 2002

Danville - Monthly meeting at Pizza Inn

March 3, 2002

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in January 20, 2002 at the Pizza Inn. A group will be heading to the Great America Train Show at the Indiana State Fair Grounds in Indianapolis on the 26, if interested in going let the President know.

Please note the operating sessions listed in February and March at Rossville. The February session will be on Saturday, the March session on Sunday. Also, member Bill Sandusky is planning another session on his G Gauge layout the end of February. Come join the fun at Rossville (we have heat turned on). The program this month will be presented by Rick Schroeder.



Today we ride Santa's Train

This weekend (December 6) is the annual operation of the Santa Train on CNIC's Chicago Subdivision. This marks the 31st consecutive year of its formal operation.

The train had quite the interesting origin and development. Thanks to information forwarded to me by John Childs, I will recount the story of its beginnings and success.

John by the way, aside from being the train's current Caretaker is also the day-light trick, Desk 2 Train Dispatcher for CNIC at Homewood. The Santa Train is a never-ending project and has indeed become a family affair for the Childs household. John's lovely wife Susan and pretty daughter Margaret also assist in making the train the annual event and success that it is and they also deserve credit and recognition.

Back in 1967 there was an Engineer on the Kankakee/Bloomington tri-weekly local named Arvid Cook. Arvid took up to dressing as Santa at Christmas time. As the local went about its assigned duties of servicing the on-line customers, people noticed "Santa Claus" running was running the engine. Motorists in their cars would honk their horns and the children would wave. Arvid would graciously wave back and give a few short blasts on the whistle to acknowledge their greetings. At Anchor, IL, Arvid recalled a little boy who just stood on the corner across from the tracks and watched as the local spotted the elevator. This little boy, about eight, as Arvid remembers would neither come over when he motioned him to do so, nor would he wave to Arvid. However he was always back the next day on the corner when the local came south. This got Arvid to thinking.

The following year not only did Arvid dress as Santa; he came armed with a bag full of candy. When the local stopped in the towns along the line to do their switching and any little child would come by the train to see its famous engineer, Arvid would throw them some candy and wish them a "Merry Christmas". Needless to

say, it didn't take too long at any town for Arvid to start drawing a crowd. He was having the time of his life. However, not all on the crew shared in Arvid's Christmas spirit. Many a time the answer to the instructions to "take 'em ahead", was, "just a minute I'm busy". The Conductor on the job told Arvid that they were wasting too much time and if the company found out what he was doing that he would get them all fired. Despite this concern, Arvid was not about to quit.

The next year he again donned his Santa suit and brought his candy, but a new twist was added. As the local departed Bloomington, Arvid stopped the train and got off and went knocking on some doors to houses along the tracks. He passed out his goodies to all the surprised children. The Conductor thought that they were all going to be fired for sure. It was at this point that Arvid decided to make his Santa Train a legitimate concern.

He went to Champaign to speak Illinois Division Superintendent Jim Law about his concept. Arvid had an idea that this would give the railroad some good press. When Mr. Law was presented with Arvid's idea of the Santa train, it got mixed reviews. Arvid did get Mr. Law's approval with some restrictions. The company would provide an engine and caboose but the train had to operate on Arvid's as well as the crew's own time. All his help was also required to sign a waiver freeing the company of any responsibility should they be injured while working the train. Also, no one could violate the hours of service. Even with these restrictions this was more than Arvid hoped he could get. So the next year he would take the first run on the now "Official" Santa Train.

Arvid made up a schedule, amassed his volunteers, and began to make phone calls. He contacted all the mayors or community leaders along the Bloomer (Bloomington District) and told them what he wanted to do, and asked for their help and support. He got it, although not without some resistance from a couple of them. When the train pulled into each town all the children got to go up on the engine, ring the bell, blow the whistle, tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas, then go into the caboose and get a bag of goodies

from Santa's helpers. Those helpers were Arvid's fellow employees on the Chicago and Bloomington Districts, who gladly donated their time just like him.

The train operated on the Bloomer until it was abandoned. Arvid then moved to the Kankakee/Gilman turn local which operated on the Chicago District. The Santa train followed him there. By this point in time, the word got out that this was beginning to be a local tradition and the crowds were getting large. Around 200 children at Kankakee alone would come to visit with Santa on his train. The law department got worried and would not allow anyone on the train. Arvid then proceeded to purchase an old caboose from the ICG and had it painted Christmas red and numbered SC-1. He used that caboose until he retired. It sat on the extension track in front of the depot at Gilman, until it was required every 24th of December. When Arvid retired, Santa's caboose was donated to Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois.

Steve Simnick, a Chicago District Conductor, took over the train upon Arvid's retirement. He had towns along the Chicago District requesting the train make stops in their communities. Steve added a second day to the train and extended the run to Rantoul. Arvid continued to show up every year in his familiar red suit. By 1986 though, Arvid found that two days was getting to be too much for him to handle alone as by now he was seeing an average 1400 guests every year. Steve's father, Tim, an Engineer, stepped up taking over the red suit. This was also the first year the company allowed the use of the safety car. The train's consist had grown a bit now with a pair of GP10 locomotives, the safety car, and a caboose (on which the helpers to stored their grips. It also contained a stove for the helpers cook hot dogs for their lunch).

In 1989, Rantoul opted out of the Santa Train route. The town had acquired a caboose of their own and had Santa on board every night across from the passenger depot. With Rantoul dropped from the schedule, the town of Thawville was then added. This was the first year the train went out on the Gilman line. While Thawville only has a population of about 200, that first year in their little community

brought forth 275 visitors to the train.

Around 1993 Steve was unable to continue with the train and turned it over to John Childs, who has run the train ever since. The train operates the second weekend in December beginning its run at Ludlow and concluding the first day at Gilman. Before ending at Gilman though, the side trip down the Gilman Line to Thawville is made. The second day the train begins its run at Danforth making stops along the way enroute to its final destination of Kankakee. Little has changed since Arvid first started the train. The train waits at every stop until everybody has had the chance to visit with Santa. Both Steve and John agree that they don't run the train, but are really the caretakers of and preserving Arvid's dream.

In 1994 the company took on a much more supportive role in the operation of the train. They added the second safety car, which has a kitchen, for the members of the crew to use. Operation Lifesaver came on board and added a lot of extra goodies to hand out to the children. In 1997 the volunteers added a night at IC's Woodcrest Shops in Homewood where all Illinois Central employees could bring their families out to meet Santa. In 1998 and 99 the crowds were right at 3000 for the two-day run. In 2000, the overall attendance was about 3300 people.

With the proliferation of the Internet in American life, the Santa Train gets much wider publicity which in turn, draws out larger crowds. This year, the Santa Train will operate on December 8th and 9th. The schedule was posted on the Internet over a month ago. I would suspect this year's attendance will very likely break last year's record as a result.

A great deal of thanks is owed to CNIC Midwest Division Management team, the folks who manage and run Woodcrest Shops and all the loyal and dedicated employees, their families and friends whose efforts continue to make the Santa Train a continued success. Without their cooperation and participation, none of this would be possible.

Yours truly along with the train's caretaker John Childs and all the other helpers

will be out again in force to gladly assist Santa this year. And all of us wish you and yours a safe, healthy and joyous Holiday Season.

And so it goes.

Tuch

Reprinted with permission, Hot Times on the High Iron, c 2001 by JD Santucci

Sand Patch Tower Closes

From its lofty perch atop the "Summit of the Alleghenies" Sand Patch A Tower in Pennsylvania soldiered on in testimony to fine railroading tradition through nearly nine decades.

On November 7, it closed.

The tower, replacing an earlier wooden structure, was opened by the B&O in 1914 following the completion of the double-track tunnel currently in use - built as a modernization project to accommodate increased traffic across the mountain. The brick building has been a landmark along, the route of the Capitol Limited. A hallmark artifact of the building, visible only in its interior, was a spiral metal staircase, a space-saving feature due to the tower's tight position against a bank between the current right-of-way and the track's original alignment.

According to the book "Sand Patch - Clash of Titans," by Charles S. Roberts (1993, Barnard Roberts & Co., Baltimore), the tower housed an 80-lever GRS electric plant. Semaphores were in use until the 1940's. In 1953, a remote control machine was added to the office to assume the functions of retired Manila Tower, east of Sand Patch Tunnel.

Sand Patch had the distinction of being alone, the country's last operating Morse circuit for the exchange of train information. Until 1984, the Morse wire still extended some 64 miles from 'Viaduct Junction in Cumberland, Maryland, to Confluence, Pennsylvania. These two towers and their intermediate offices, in-

cluding Sand Patch, were often staffed by operators who had been around when Morse was still a requirement decades earlier. Those knowing Morse would generally use it as their preferred option to talking on the phone. A flood that year took out the Morse wire east of Sand Patch and it was not replaced. But it remained available on the west side from Sand Patch to Confluence, and it was in use until the day Confluence Tower was demolished by a derailling freight train in May 1987. Morse circuits have been resurrected in museums for demonstration purposes, but its use in bona fide railroad operations in this country ended at Sand Patch Tower.

The tower's closing was part of an ongoing project by CSXT to replace interlocking stations, many from the former B&O, which had been slow to modernize. Two other towers closed as part of the immediate project involving the route west from Cumberland into the mountains toward Pittsburgh included Hyndman, Pennsylvania, in November 1998, and Viaduct Junction, Maryland, in January 1997. Interlocking towers once dotted the landscape, and five-mile spacing was not uncommon. In 1928, there were seven towers westward from Viaduct Junction to Sand Patch, a 32 mile stretch. All have now been closed.

From The Bull Sheet, December 1, 2001

Editor: Member Randy Rippy and I visited the tower in 1995 on our way to the NRHS convention in Lancaster. We visited five towers on that trip, both directions from Cumberland. Sand Patch was a neat location built against the hill as noted. We got shots of trains coming out of the tunnel and some with the tower behind the train. Very few are left in the area and I have the involvement again with one that will disappear, NA in Martinsburg. Though not a "tower" the one story building does control the crossover at Martinsburg. As part of our Weverton to West Cumbo track upgrade project the office will be closed sometime in late August when the new signals are cut in from CP Shen to West Cumbo, about 1/2 of our 30 mile project.

Congress Says No Liquidation Plan For Amtrak

December 20, 2001. Congress has passed a defense appropriations bill, HR 3338, for 2002 that explicitly includes a provision saying no federal funds can be spent on a liquidation plan for Amtrak. The liquidation plan was to be drafted by Amtrak itself following a 6-5 vote of the Amtrak Reform Council (ARC) which said that Amtrak would not become self sufficient the 2002. The ARC, a highly politicized body, was created by Congress in 1997 as part of the Amtrak Restructuring act, which gave the railroad five years to become self sufficient. The ARC was invested with the power to issue a report to Congress which obligated the railroad to draw up plans for its own liquidation should the ARC find that it could not reach self sufficiency by the Congressionally mandated deadline.



Meanwhile, Amtrak was concerned that the talk of liquidation was harming its financial standing with creditors. "The Congress sent a clear message that Amtrak will not be liquidated," Amtrak spokesman Bill Schulz said. The bill also contained a provision appropriating \$100 million for Amtrak for life-safety work in the New York tunnels. And the House and Senate seem unable to agree on a stimulus package bill. The House version, which received overwhelming support from the GOP, contains no money for Amtrak. The House vote on the measure was 224-193 with all but 8 Democrats voting in the minority. Congress is now in recess. Still on the back burner is the High Speed Rail Investment Act.

Friends of Amtrak - posted 12/25 on RailPace

Quick Action Keeps UPS Failure-Free Streak Going

BNSF's goal of a service failure-free Peak Season for United Parcel Service (UPS) could have ended almost before it began, if it weren't for the ingenuity, dedication and teamwork of BNSF and UPS.

On Nov. 28, a semi-truck skidded on icy roads at Eskota, Texas, near Sweetwater, and flipped—blocking both main line and siding on BNSF's Alliance (Texas) to Phoenix Z train route. This route is an important route that carries high-priority UPS shipments for Phoenix and California destinations as well as other high-priority intermodal traffic.

The blockage, actually on a Union Pacific Railroad route used by some BNSF trains, delayed train ZALTPHX9-28 more than 10 hours. BNSF people developed a recovery plan to meet customer expectations for

delivery of 16 trailers in time for UPS's night sort in Phoenix on Nov. 29.

The plan involved operating a special train, ZCLOPHX8-29, from Clovis, N.M., to Phoenix for the delayed trailers. The special train had a very aggressive schedule, departing Clovis at 6:30 a.m., Nov. 29, and arriving at Phoenix at 10:40 p.m. that same day.

UPS was contacted and put in place its own recovery plan to handle the contents of the 16 trailers upon the train's arrival, 40 minutes after the night sort began. Before the ALTPHX began its other switching at Clovis, the UPS shipments were moved to the special train.

"The recovery train was expedited across the Kansas and Southwest Divisions and arrived in Phoenix at 10:40 p.m., on time for the recovery plan schedule," says Jim Wilson, general director, Intermodal and Automotive Operations. "Congratulations to the Southwest and Kansas division field operating, Maintenance of Way and Mechanical people and the Network Operations Center staff on a 'good save'

for UPS."

"With this type of teamwork and dedication, BNSF is well-positioned to finish this year's UPS Peak Season failure-free," says Steve Pierce, director, UPS Marketing.

Through Dec. 4, BNSF is celebrating its 39th failure-free consecutive day for UPS. UPS Peak Season runs from the day after Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve.

Via Arizona Rail News web site.

CSX & UP Team Up

CSXT and Union Pacific have announced changes to their interline service which are designed to improve transit times and service consistency. Two of those changes include the creation of new blocks of traffic moving eastbound between North Little Rock and Cincinnati, and westbound between Cincinnati and Pine Bluff. The improvements are achieved by the railroads investing in two new trains and seven new block classifications that focus freight over targeted strategic gateways. Five major gateways have been identified. They are Chicago, St. Louis, New Orleans, Memphis and Salem/St. Elmo, Illinois. Transit time reductions are significant in both short and longer haul lanes, and CSX and UP believe these services will complement the high growth markets in Texas, the Ohio Valley, and Mexico, according to a press release.

The Bull Sheet December 1, 2001

Indiana Southern lands coal contract

RailAmerica's Indiana Southern Railroad expects to handle 11,000 additional loads of coal over the next year under an agreement with Black Beauty Coal Co. that converts truck-hauled coal to rail.

The contract, announced yesterday, calls for the movement of a minimum of 750,000 tons of coal per year, or approximately 8,000 carloads, through 2006. The shipments originate at the Summerville, Ind., mine and are bound for an Alcoa plant in

Warrick, Ind., said RailAmerica spokesman Wayne August.

The agreement is a big boost for the 176-mile Indiana Southern, which hauls about 45,000 carloads annually.

“This strategic agreement is another example of RailAmerica’s commitment to providing superior short line rail service to its customers through innovative, truck-competitive solutions,” said Gary Marino, RailAmerica’s president and CEO. “In addition, this new access allows the ISSR to grow its same railroad carload business while positioning the ISSR to attract new business to its rail line in the future.”

TRAINS On-Line 12/19/01

CP Trains No Longer Run Through Niagara Falls, Ontario

Canada’s two national railways and civic and Ontario government officials held a “spike-pulling” ceremony here today to mark the end of freight trains traveling through the city’s busy downtown and tourist area. Rail crews will begin lifting track tomorrow in a 6.6-mile (10.7-kilometre) railway corridor that cuts through the city. The track removal - a key municipal objective for more than half a century - will help to spur redevelopment of prime real estate in the tourism and downtown areas, eliminate traffic congestion and improve road safety, and generate new rail efficiencies at an important international gateway for Canada-United States trade.

Today’s ceremony was made possible by a trackage rights agreement between Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway, and the acquisition of CN’s and CPR’s jointly owned rail corridor through the city’s inner core by the City of Niagara Falls and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLGC), an Ontario government agency. CPR trains that used the downtown line now take CN’s track to and from the United States via a new connection near Brookfield Road in Welland, Ont. The connection moves

CPR trains onto a 12-mile (16-kilometre) section of CN’s Toronto-Buffalo main line to reach CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern and other railroads in Buffalo via Fort Erie, Ont., and CN’s International Bridge.

CP via Steve Benkovitz - posted 12/20 - RailPace

ITC Models

Whilst browsing for some bargains, I came upon these brass Illinois Terminal models on Chuck Lambuth’s website. I have bought some brass items from Chuck before and have found his items to be represented accurately and fairly priced. His website address is: <http://www.chucksbrasstrains.com>

The Illinois Terminal items he has listed are:

ITC SUYDAM Class C freight motor, propainted green/brown #1590, can motor, trolley pickup, good gears \$325

ITC SUYDAM Class C freight motor, unpainted, Orion model, 1 gear gone all others good, tarnish \$250

ITC GHB Combine, propainted orange/brown #261, can motor, trolley pole pickup \$260.

ITC GHB 3 car train, powered #260 combine, powered #524 coach, Owl sleeper trailer “Illinois”, all propainted dark green/gold lettering, can motors, trolley pole pickup, MU connections SET \$650

ITC GHB 4 car train, powered #273 combine, powered #535 coach, Owl sleeper trailer “Edwardsville”, ILLMO observation, “Monticello”, all propainted dark green/gold lettering, can motors, trolley pole pickup, MU connection SET \$900

ITC GHB 4 car train, powered #281 combine, powered #518 coach, Owl sleeper trailer “Springfield”, ILLMO observation, “Lincoln”, all propainted orange/brown, black lettering, can motors, trolley pole pickup, MU connection SET \$950

I talked to Chuck and he promised to have pictures on the website of each of the items.

Happy Holidays, Wayne Stump, MN

Norfolk Southern Announces Planned 2002 Capital Spending

NORFOLK, VA - Norfolk Southern Corporation plans to spend \$705 million for capital improvements in 2002.

“We completed many of our major investments in line capacity, rail terminals and information systems in 2001, and that has enabled us to increase the resources devoted to maintaining our rail infrastructure,” said David R. Goode, chairman, president and chief executive officer.

“We are continuing our solid commitment to safety and service during challenging economic times with spending levels designed to keep our system strong and our service steadily improving.” The anticipated spending includes \$482 million for roadway projects and \$173 million for equipment.

In roadway improvements, the largest expenditure will be \$366 million for rail, crosstie, ballast and bridge programs. In addition, there is \$31 million provided for communications, signal and electrical projects and \$17 million for environmental projects and public improvements such as grade crossing separations and crossing signal upgrades.

Other roadway projects include \$43 million for marketing and industrial development initiatives, including increasing track capacity and access to coal receivers and vehicle production and distribution facilities, and continuing investments in intermodal infrastructure.

Equipment spending includes \$102 million to purchase 50 six-axle locomotives and upgrade existing locomotives. Equipment spending also includes \$57 million for projects related to computers and information technology, including allocations for additional security and backup systems. “Our equipment spending, which is lower than in previous years, reflects improved fleet management and asset utilization,” Goode said.

NS News Release

STB Construction Review

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan announced today that, consistent with an evolving trend in recent years, there is an unprecedented number of railroad line construction proposals—11 in all—currently under Board review. The proposals vary in size, scope, and location, and involve both Class I and shortline railroads. These rail construction projects have been proposed to enable railroads to continue to provide safe and efficient freight transportation service by adding freight rail infrastructure.

Pending Cases. The construction cases currently before the Board are as follows:

1. A Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) proposal to construct a 7.8-mile rail line to provide alternative rail service to the Union Carbide Corporation industrial complex in Seadrift, Texas;
2. An Illinois Central Railroad proposal to construct a 3.2-mile line in East Baton Rouge Parish in Louisiana to provide alternative rail service to an Exxon/Mobil chemical plant;
3. Norfolk Southern Railroad proposal to build 4.75 miles of new track and rehabilitate 11 miles of an existing line to provide alternative rail service to the Keystone Electrical Generating Station in Shelocata, Pennsylvania;
4. A 1.8-mile construction proposed by CSX Transportation, Inc. in Walbridge, Ohio to connect the former Conrail Stanley Yard Eastern Running Track to a CSX main line;
5. Dakota Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corporation's proposal to build approximately 280 miles of new line and rehabilitate 600 miles of its existing line to provide new rail access to the low-sulphur coal reserves in the Powder River Basin;



6. Midwest Generation's proposal to construct a rail line approximately 4,000 feet long to the Joliet power station in Illinois;

7. The Alamo North Texas Railroad's proposal to provide new rail service to limestone quarries in Texas by constructing a rail line approximately 2 miles long;

8. The San Jacinto Rail Limited-BNSF proposal to provide alternative rail service to the Bayport chemical complex near Houston, Texas by constructing a 12.8-mile line;

9. A Six County Association of Governments proposal to construct a 43-mile line between Salina and Levan, Utah to provide rail service to shippers in the region;

10. A Pemiscot County Port Authority plan to construct a 5-mile line to connect Port Authority facilities with a BNSF line at Hayti, Missouri;

11. The Great Salt Lake and Southern Railroad's proposed construction of a 32-mile line in Tooele County, Utah ancillary to the creation (subject to approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission) of an interim storage facility for spent nuclear fuel.

Overall Standards for Consideration of Construction Proposals. Under its governing statute (the ICC Termination Act, or "ICCTA"), the Board is responsible for reviewing proposals by railroads to construct new rail lines to determine whether such projects are in the public interest. The Board has noted that Congress intended to facilitate rail construction in amending section 10901 of ICCTA by shifting the emphasis from whether a project is consistent with "public convenience and necessity" to whether the project is inconsistent with public convenience and necessity. To give full effect to Congressional intent, the Board has stated that rail constructions are to be given the benefit of the doubt, and that there is now a presumption that rail construction projects will be approved.

Environmental Review Process. In addition to considering the transportation-related aspects of a rail construction pro-

posal under the ICCTA, the Board must also take a hard look at the potential environmental impacts of such a project, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), before making any final decision. The environmental review required by NEPA is broad in scope and directs agencies to evaluate potential project-related impacts in such areas as safety, transportation, noise, air and water quality, land use, and biological and cultural resources. In most cases where the Board approves a rail line construction, it has required the railroad to comply with specific measures designed to mitigate environmental impacts identified during the Board's environmental review process.

Via Surface Transportation Board

(Editor: Interesting to note that items 3 and 4 are our design projects. The NS project is 95 % complete on design of the track and structures. The filing with the STB has been many months ago and you would not believe the paperwork that is required. NS is ready to bid the project this spring.

The CSX project is scheduled for 2003. We are starting the right of way survey and documents the end of January. Design will be approved late 2002 or early 2003. The connection will be across farmland about 2 miles south of the Ohio Turnpike.)

Urbana Train Show

The upcoming Urbana Train Show will be held at Lincoln Square Mall in downtown Urbana, Illinois on March 23 and 24, 2002. Doors will open Saturday at 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM and 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Sunday. The chapter will have two tables again so plan to attend to help, run trains on Larry and John's layout and buy "stuff".

Wheel Report

I talked to Don Mills who is a retired (whatever they call a trainmaster today) He has been to the yards a few times recently and has heard talk as follows....

The UP has been picking up CNIC trains at Griffith, IN to go down south somewhere. I guess it takes about eight hours to get a train through Chicago and so they have come up with the idea to put in a connection at Kinmundy and get there trains there. I suppose their crews would come on into Salem Yard. We would lose the road haul from up there, but supposed to get more trains which would make up for it. If they can bypass Chicago, they will have much better delivery time.

Don said that they still have lots of trains that make the full run from Chicago to Benton. *Via Jack Storment*

(Ed: Later reports indicated a new auto train will begin this spring using the connection coming off the CN in the Chicago area, taking the IC line south and then onto the UP.)

CN/IC Champaign News - Two more St. Lawrence & Atlantic GP40's are in Champaign this morning. Units (3203 & 3206) are in bright yellow with black trim and sublettered LLPX. That makes at least six SL&A units — all GP40's — that have been through here over the past couple of months. Presumably VMV is rebuilding or reconditioning them, but I don't know their heritage.

Also on hand today were KCS 6639 and an LLPX GP38 in CSX Mof W orange. The KCS units are showing up after a six months absence. On Friday, another KCS unit was on the Champaign/Decatur local. (While switching in Tolono, the brakeman ID'd the train as "CPDE" which is the pre-CN train ID.)

Also noted in Tolono was that NS had replaced the dwarf signal at the end of the siding east of town ("Martin") with a new two headed signal for trains on the siding. The dwarf signal really only showed which way the turnout was thrown.

Walt Baselt, 12/22

Norfolk Southern will lease the LaPorte,

Indiana depot, a former New York Central building constructed in 1909, to the city for \$1 per year. NS cannot sell the station due to restrictions surrounding the sale of the former Conrail property. This is the same railroad that told me (Editor) that if they owned the Rossville station they would lease to us for less than \$100 per year, as opposed to the way CSX Real Property Inc. does us.

Unit Snow Train heads South

Tonight CSXT train X-400-02 arrived in the North Jersey Terminal, powered by CSXT 8768 and CSXT 9031, with 86 loads of snow from Frontier Yard in Buffalo, NY. 2,952 tons of snow in a 5,401 foot long train. This is the second move of snow originating at Frontier Yard in Buffalo, N.Y. CSXT train X-401-30 already departed for Jacksonville, FL. This train, powered by CSXT 7856 and CSXT 7848, consisted of 88 loads of snow that totaled 3,035 tons. Another unit snow train is expected to operate. (Conrail Technical Society E-mail Update - posted 1/03)

This month's candidates for my Media Blooper Award for Railroad Coverage (keep those nominations coming to bstephens@trains.com):

- The Daily News Online of Bowling Green, Ky., in a story on the Kentucky Cardinal test train run between Nashville, Tenn., and Louisville, quoted an official as saying: "Then there is the construction of sittings. They are tracks that parallel the main line and allow for either a passenger or freight train to stand by while the other train passes. These are just some of the issues we must look at." If anyone sights a siding being sited, please let us know.

Model Railroading

Over the past two years we have seen an increase in the model railroading part of the Chapter. You will note several activities listed in the Coming Events column. You are welcome to come to a session at anyone's home or at the Rossville museum. In these times when venturing out to a railroad area could be questionable, and besides the weather is cold, model railroading in the warm comfort is the way to go.

You will note that the Danville and Western will be hosting some work and train running days in January and February. I plan to work on the layout in the morning and you are welcome to come help or watch. In the afternoon there will be some train running - not an operating session. The industry tracks and cards are not setup yet but running trains and doing some switching will help find the "bugs" and get the layout revised before too far along.

Rick

2002 Dues

March is dead-line

The 2002 dues notice was sent with the November newsletter. We thank many of you for sending your payment so quickly this year. We also want to thank those of you that have donated over a total of \$300 to the chapter. We really appreciate the donations.

Remember to get your check to Allen so he may forward the NRHS portion to the national office. Send your check to the Post Office Box as soon as possible - only 2 more issues of the Danville Flyer will be coming your way.

With this issue if your address label has a "yellow" mark it means that your dues are still due for 2002..