

DANVILLE FLYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS

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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 \$33.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, IL with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

OFFICERS FOR 2008 - Our 40th Year

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



On December 18 the Kansas City Southern ran their Santa train into Illinois and stopped at Godfrey. Bruce Bird and son were on hand to catch the beautiful F Units backing to Godfrey. This is a classy paint scheme on a classy railroad.

Coming Events

January 20, 2008

Danville, IL - Chapter monthly meeting at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Williams and Gilbert Street, lunch at 1:00, meeting and program to follow.

January 26 & 27, 2008

Cisco, IL - Annual train show on North Eldon Street, 10-4 each day

February 17, 2008

East Peoria, IL Illinois Valley RR club trains show at Illinois Central College, Rt. 116 & 24, 10-3

February 23 & 24, 2008

Hoopston, IL - Annual train show at Hoopston Civic Center in the park, 10-4 each day.

March 9, 2008

Danville, IL - regular monthly meeting is moved up one week because of the Urbana show - make a note now.

April 6, 2008

Springfield, IL - Springfield Middle RR Club train fair, Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds 10-4

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Sunday, January 20, 2008 at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Williams and Gilbert Street, beginning at 1:00 PM.

The new extension of the CSX #2 track north from Liberty Lane is complete and in service. Doug reports that they have met trains on the new segment using the new universal crossovers at RA when a train is parked on #2 between Voorhees Street and Liberty Lane. This extension is a real benefit to the railroad by allowing the dispatcher to move trains farther south for a meet instead of waiting at Rossville. When the weather is better hopefully one of you can get some shots on the new track and we will run them in the newsletter.

You will note that the annual train show will be held in Urbana March 15 & 16 this year. The Champaign group that hosts the show was told late last year that the south leg of the mall would not be available and there was question if they could hold the show at all. The show will go on but the "high court" part of the mall will not be available. Therefore the north, west and east halls along with the new hall toward Health Alliance will be used as will all stores that are empty. There will probably be fewer layouts or at least they will be smaller. Notices to dealers went out last week and they pay for the show. The model contest will not be held this year. Last year there were fewer entries and the decision was made to drop this Sunday event altogether.

At the next meeting there will be a brief discussion about the show along with a spring trip. **The program at the next meeting will be presented by Dick Brazda on South African railroads in the late 1970's.** You don't want to miss this one as I am sure you will see steam.

Model Operating Sessions

Rossville

Once again we are setting up operating sessions on Saturdays at Rossville. For 2008 the sessions on the Chicago, Illinois and Eastern Railroad will be:

February 2, 2008

March 1, 2008

April 5, 2008

All sessions start around 1:00 PM and last until 3:30 PM.

Danville and Western Railroad, 1819

*Coventry Dr,
Champaign*

January 26, 2008

February 16, 2008

March 29, 2008

April 19, 2008

All D&W sessions begin at 1:00 PM and are for operators that are 14 years of age or older. A new dispatchers board will be in place this year so an additional person is needed and radios will be used.

Dues are due now

For those of you that are members of the NRHS your renewal statement has been sent by the national to your home. If renewing the NRHS, considering the increase, please send your check to Allen Cooke, Treasurer, PO Box 1013, Danville, IL 61834. Allen will process the renewal and forward to the NRHS. If you have not paid yet you will receive a second notice after the first of the year. For museum members the annual renewal is still only \$17 per year. We appreciate the donations that have been made this year. These donations help offset the cost of running the museum at Rossville.



31st Annual Urbana Train Show

March 15 & 16, 2008

Lincoln Square Village - Urbana, IL

Due to work that will be going on this year at the mall the large south area will not be available for layouts. Thus there may be less layouts or they will be smaller in size to allow for dealers, which pay for the show.

The President's Corner

In this column I hope you'll by now see a pattern. Rather than the "hard facts" news that pretty much makes up the rest of the newsletter, my objective is to offer a different perspective, perhaps a human-interest story or an observation of my own that is quite subjective.

This month I'd like to talk about winter and the railroads. No other season in this part of the country has quite the impact that winter does. Snow gets into switch points and won't let them throw. Cold air makes brake lines freeze, rails break and in general makes it hard for any employee to work outside. Winter simply puts a hardship on *everyone*.

However, it always impressed me how hardy and tough some of the railroad men were back in the late 70's through the early 90's when I was hanging out at North Yard. They would come into the office to warm up after sweeping a switch, or the yard crew would take "beans" after making the trek up from Brewer. In those days, it was common for a section man to ride with the switch crews to clean switches on-demand.

One of my favorite shots in the slide collection I have is the one (hopefully included on this page) of the caboosie of the Watseka switcher (now known as J714 or the north local) passing North Yard in a snowstorm and the conductor snagging his orders from the hoop. It really gives you the feel of what it was, and to some degree still is, like to work on the railroad in winter.

In those days, North Yard was a great place to spend those short days of the winter season. You could step outside briefly to grab a shot like this, or perhaps of an N&W train going over the diamonds with snow swirling in his wake, then run back inside to the warmth of the office. Hot chocolate was always available thanks to Bob Barker, and the camaraderie shared with the section men and switch crews and operators that shared this space was in retrospect somewhat warming to the heart.



On January 27, 1979 the Watseka Switcher heads north at North Yard in Danville. The rear brakeman is probably the one grabbing the orders while the conductor looks on. Photo by Doug Nipper

Nowadays, the section men follow the remote jobs around in their trucks. I suppose safety regulations prohibit them from riding engines under remote control. I don't even know if the crews have heat on their "shoving platform", a.k.a. caboosie, but surely they can still climb on the engine to get some warmth while waiting on a signal or whatever.

So here's to the men and women who have always been there to keep the trains running in the adverse conditions of winter. It was a pleasure to watch you at work, and listen to your stories of past winters. Human beings are often at their best when facing a challenge, and winter certainly challenges people who work for the railroad.

Doug

STB sets hearings for CN/EJ&E Acquisition

The Surface Transportation Board has announced the public hearing schedule for the Environmental Impact Study of

CN's proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway. CN anticipates using the EJ&E to bypass Chicago rail traffic congestion. Residents in the region have expressed concerns over increased freight volumes.

All hearings will occur from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the following dates and places in Illinois and Indiana.

Jan. 8 - Mundelein, Ill., Crowne Plaza Hotel North

Jan. 9 - Barrington, Ill., Makray Memorial Golf Club

Jan. 10 - Joliet, Ill., Jacob Henry Mansion

Jan. 15 - Matteson, Ill., Holiday Inn Hotel

Jan. 16 - Gary, Ind., Genesis Convention Center

Jan. 17 - West Chicago, Ill., St. Andrews Golf Club

Jan. 22 - Chicago, Crowne Plaza Chicago-Metro

CN buying rail link to Alberta oil sands

CN announced that it will acquire the 202-mile Athabasca Northern Railway (ANY) for C\$25 million and will invest an additional C\$1135 million in upgrading the line “to preserve a critical rail link to the oil sands region of Northern Alberta.” CN said its plan is premised on long-term traffic volume guarantees that it has negotiated with three shippers: Succor Energy, Inc.; OPTI Canada, Inc.; and NEXEN Inc.

CN President and CEO E. Hunter Harrison said the plan “will allow the parties to maintain important rail service to Lynton, Alta., a point near Fort McMurray, home of existing and future oil sand sands development.”

Harrison added: “While ANY’s current traffic volumes are too low to keep it going as a stand-alone operation, we and our shipper partners see ANY playing a critical role in one of the world’s largest construction projects—the oil sands reserves in Northern Alberta are second only to Saudi Arabia’s, and industry is expected to invest \$100 billion over the next decade in oil sands development, construction, and infrastructure upgrading.”

ANY connects with CN at Boyle, Alberta, 101 miles north of Edmonton. CN said its plans for the line “will preserve market access to existing and potential receivers along the rail corridor—today sulphur and petroleum coke move southbound, and increased volumes of these commodities are expected to move over the line in future. CN’s line rehabilitation program, including upgraded rail, ties, bridges and new ballast, will allow greater volumes of northbound shipments of construction materials and machinery to support oil sands development.”

Without the commitment by CN, Succor, OPTI Canada, and NEXEN, the rail line faced abandonment this month, said the railroad.

The ANY acquisition is CN’s third short-line transaction in northern Alberta in two years. In January 1006, CN acquired the

Mackenzie Northern Railway and Lake-land & Waterways Railway for C\$26 million, and in December 2006 CN acquired the Savage Alberta Railway for C\$25 million.

Railroads still move near record tonnage

The Association of American Railroads reported that U.S. railroads originated 16,952,288 carloads in 2007, the second highest annual total ever, with 2006 being first, Logistics Management reported. AAR Director of Editorial Services Tom White said these 2007 volumes reflect a decline in the housing and automotive sectors, which began late in 2006 and continued throughout 2007.

“The key to what happened in 2007 is the housing industry and the construction industry being negative this year, and the automotive industry doing poorly again,” said White. “Those are very important parts of our traffic base, and if you take a look at the numbers that is a very high percentage of the reason why our total volume was down.”

Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility Update

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) today announced the release of the Economic Assessment Report on the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility. The report concludes that the intermodal facility, as part of the Heartland Corridor initiative, could provide significant economic benefits for the Roanoke region, including an increase in annual employment of up to 2,900 jobs and tax revenues of up to \$71 million annually. Additional public benefits identified in the report include 189 million gallons of fuel saved, 1.9 million trucks removed from Virginia highways and over

700,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions avoided in the first 15 years of operation. The rate of return on the Commonwealth’s investment in the Heartland Corridor project and this facility would be over 20 percent and the project would pay for itself within five years.

“This assessment confirms the project’s merits and the vision of local elected officials who have supported the project as part of the Heartland Corridor initiative,” said Matthew O. Tucker, Director of DRPT. “The Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility has the potential to deliver seven dollars for every state dollar invested.” The benefits of such a facility are largely dependent upon successful integration into the community. A significant step remaining before the project can advance into construction is the selection of a project site, and DRPT is nearing the completion of its site evaluation process. The Economic Assessment Report of the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility is available on DRPT’s Web site at www.drpt.virginia.gov/special/roanoke.aspx.

About the Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility The Roanoke Region Intermodal Facility is part of the multi-state Heartland Corridor freight rail initiative, which will increase capacity and reduce freight shipping time between Hampton Roads, Va. and Chicago by up to 1.5 days. Intermodal facilities serve as a transfer point for freight shipping between trucks and rail. Just one intermodal train has the equivalent carrying capacity of 200 long haul trucks, providing a competitive shipping option and reducing the number of trucks on highways.

Via RailPace

Got some news? Send me a note as I am running out of steam!

Editor

Freight Car Facility to Close

FreightCar America, Inc. today (12/19) said it will close its Johnstown, Pa., manufacturing facility, affecting about 390 employees. The company previously had warned it might be forced to do so, citing outdated and costly infrastructure involved.

"Although we entered into decisional bargaining with the union representing our Johnstown employees regarding labor costs at the Johnstown facility, we and the union did not reach an agreement that would have allowed us to continue to operate the facility in a cost-effective way," said Chris Ragot, president and CEO. "We will continue to focus on strategic initiatives and cost control to remain competitive despite a challenging railcar market."

With the closing, the company expects to record a pre-tax restructuring and impairment charge for the fourth quarter of 2007 of approximately \$34.3 million. FreightCar America expects its manufacturing facilities at Danville, Ill., and Roanoke, Va., to address its requirements in the future. The company's Johnstown, Pa., administrative offices also will remain open.

Via Railway Age Internet

Rail News

Union Pacific gave out free Starbucks coffee and scones at two Denver, CO light rail stations that temporarily lost service the previous week when a UP coal train derailed on an adjacent track. The derailed train spilled coal and derailed cars onto the light rail line, which in turn was run into by a light rail train, which derailed but without injuries to any passengers. A UP spokesman said that the railroad ordered enough Starbucks coffee and an equal number of scones, orange juice, and candy canes. "It's something we wanted to do to say 'thank you' for the commuters' being understanding," said the spokesman.

Congress passed a transportation spending bill for Fiscal Year 2008, which President Bush said that he would sign (and did, a few days later.) The bill provides \$1.325 billion in FY2008 funding for Amtrak, a 2.4 percent increase over the previous year. The bill also repeals a long-standing ban on subway tunneling under Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA that was passed in 1986 following a fatal methane gas explosion there. The following day, Los Angeles officials held a news conference hailing the repeal and calling for the start of planning and funding for a new \$5 billion subway line running approximately 12 miles from Wilshire and Western Avenue to Santa Monica and the Pacific Ocean.

MARION, Ill. - The Delta Regional Authority granted the Crab Orchard & Egyptian Railroad \$154,580 to fix its track, according to a story in The Southern newspaper. The money will go to improve track around several industries, including Natural Enrichment Industries in Marion and East Side Lumber in Herrin. CO&E operates 13 miles of track that serve several customers and connect to Union Pacific and BNSF Railway lines. The Delta Regional Authority issues grants to improve quality of life in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, and Illinois.

ST. PAUL, Minn. - The Minnesota Transportation Museum has restored former Burlington Northern SD9 No. 6234 to its Cascade Green paint scheme. The unit emerged from the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad paint shop at Horicon, Wis. on Dec. 7. The interior of the cab was also repainted.

BN6234 was built by EMD in April 1959 for Burlington Route subsidiary Colorado & Southern as C&S 839. It was among the first group of new Burlington locomotives to be painted in the "Chinese" red scheme, and was among the last SD9s produced before EMD started SD18 production. A total of 471 SD9s were produced by EMD between January 1954 and June 1959.

The 6234 retains its as-built high-hood SD9 appearance with only a few minor external changes: the MARS light housing on the front of the locomotive was removed leaving only the lower headlight, the front and rear pilot foot boards were removed, ditch-lights were added to the front and rear walkway decks, and the front and rear steps were changed from four to five steps.

The 6234 received its first coat of Cascade green paint in 1971. It was retired and donated in 2003. The museum chose to restore the locomotive to the BN scheme since that was more relevant to the time the locomotive spent in Minnesota. No. 6234 is the second former BN diesel locomotive preserved and repainted in the Cascade Green scheme - the other is U30C No. 5383 at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Ill.

It is not a question of being sorry for the railroads. It is a matter of making sure that we will continue to have them to serve us. Passaic, NJ Herald-News

Class I railroads employed 165,803 workers in mid-November 2007, 1.65% below the November 2006 level but a gain of 0.3% over October 2007. The biggest numerical decline during the 12-month period was among transportation (train and engine) employees, whose numbers dwindled 3.91% to 69,147, reflecting a decline of around 3% in traffic. The biggest percentage decline was among transportation (other than train and engine) workers, where employment was off 5.31% to 6,871. There were modest increases, all of less than 1%, in the executive, professional, and maintenance categories.



CSX to pay penalties

CSX Transportation has paid the price for violating more than 100 federal safety regulations — to the tune of \$349,265 in civil penalties. But the Class I will pay a stiffer price, both monetarily and operationally, if it doesn't make a long-term commitment to instilling a safety culture and boosting safety performance, said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Boardman in a statement released yesterday.

"CSX has made significant strides in the short term to lay new rail, increase its own inspections of track and equipment, and install trackside detection systems in more locations to identify potential problems early," he said. "But CSX cannot make this a one-time fix. The FRA expects CSX to make a sustained commitment to continuously improve safety for the benefit of its customers, its staff and the public."

In January 2007, the FRA conducted "safety oversight" inspections across CSXT's network after the Class I suffered a series of serious train accidents and incidents between November 2006 and January 2007. Inspectors identified about 200 safety regulation violations. The FRA's Office of Chief Counsel determined 166 of the violations were "legally sufficient" for assessing civil penalties. To date, 141 of the violations have been resolved by the FRA and CSXT. The FRA agreed to collect a total of \$349,265 from CSXT to close out civil penalty cases surrounding the 141 violations. The administration expects to address the remaining 25 violations at an annual settlement conference to be held with CSXT later this year.

The railroad is heeding the FRA's call for a renewed focus on safety, CSXT officials said in a prepared statement. "CSXT is committed to continuing its strong safety improvements through prudent, long-term investments in infrastructure and technology, as well as through diligent inspections and training," they said.

Via Progressive Railroading

BNSF in '07: new coal loading record, another 'perfect' peak season for UPS

Last year, BNSF Railway Co. set a coal loading record and logged another holiday season without a service hitch for United Parcel Service.

The Class I loaded 291.1 million tons of coal system-wide, up 1.4 percent from the previous record of 287 million tons set in 2006. Coal carloadings totaled a record 2.5 million units, a 0.5 percent increase compared with the previous high-water mark, which also was established in 2006.

In the Powder River Basin, which includes Wyoming and Montana mines, daily coal train loadings averaged 50.2, up 1 percent year over year.

"Credit this achievement to cooperation among BNSF, the mines and our utility customers to maintain velocity of the coal train network despite some challenges from flooding and winter weather," said Steve Bobb, BNSF group vice president-coal, in a prepared statement. "BNSF's investment in capacity expansion during 2007 also helped us set this record."

Meanwhile, the Class I completed a "perfect" peak shipping season for UPS, BNSF's largest intermodal customer. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the railroad handled more than 34,000 UPS trailers, delivering the freight to sorting facilities on time and damage-free. The railroad now has logged perfect seasons eight times since 1995 (including 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004).

BNSF achieved perfection despite three washouts and more than 40 mud slides along 30 miles of track between Everett and Seattle, Wash., that were caused by storms dumping more than 11 inches of rain, and ice storms that downed trees and cut off power in the Ottumwa Subdivision.

A look back

It is hard to believe that 40 years ago we formed the Danville Junction Chapter, NRHS. Also hard to believe my son will be 39 and I am past 65, but that is another story. A lot has happened since we formed the group and thank goodness, some of us that were the first members are still around. A lot of outstanding members have passed on and our plaque at Rossville is a dedication to those members that were a part of our history preservation.

This chapter was started from the Family Model Railroad Club. We used to meet in members homes and then we met at the C&EI station for a few years along with the Palmer Bank, Cooke Business Products and the Danville Fire Station on north Griffin Street to name a few (I am sure I left some out). We had the museum and train layouts, both O Scale and HO, in Catlin for a few years above Mary's Tap. Upon being forced to move we lucked out and got to move into the Rossville station at the same time. At that time the L&N was the owner of the line and most helpful in letting us rent the building. A lot of members did a lot of hard work to get the building ready for use and if we were to do the same today I am not sure we could accomplish it.

We acquired historic records of the C&EI from the Missouri Pacific and had it not been for Bob Block they would have been destroyed. Most of them are now preserved at the Vermilion County Museum. There are still some at Rossville that probably should be moved and we need to spend time this spring deciding what should go.

The early Flyer was a one page newsletter. Later we used mimeograph and at one time owned the machine. Doug N. and I don't want to talk about that era, but it was the only way to publish at that time. Thank goodness computers, word processors and the Internet came along - how much easier it is today to turnout a great publication. Hopefully during the year we can bring you some pages from the early newsletters and bring back some history of the chapter.