

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) Thursday of each month (except July, August and December) at the Cooke Business Forms, N. Vermilion Street, next to the Central Illinois Bank, Danville, Il. beginning at 7:30 PM Central Time.

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Volume 29

September 1997

Number 8

COMING EVENTS

September 18, 1997

Monthly meeting at a location to be announced in the next issue of the FLYER.

August 9, 1997

Springfield, IL - Operation Lifesaver at the State Fair - Danville Junction Chapter and Chicago and Illinois Midland Chapter volunteers

August 16, 1997

Springfield, IL - Operation Lifesaver at the State Fair - NRHS Volunteers

August 16/17, 1997

Monticello Railway Museum, Caboose Trains - 7 cabooses (including DJC Wabash 2824) with first train at noon.

November 7-9, 1997

Fall NRHS Board Meeting - Dearborn, Michigan

July 8-12, 1998

Syracuse, NY - NRHS National Convention - Plan now.

Next Meeting

Remember, no meeting in July or August. The next meeting will be September 18, 1997 at an unknown location so far. We lost our usual meeting room and have been meeting in the offices of Cooke

Business Products until the June meeting. We are still looking for a new site and will list the location in the September issue.

The museum will be open weekends through Labor Day so come up and help. Attendance (public) has been down this year. The early cool and rainy weather kept people home and the rest of the summer so far hasn't been much better. Once July got here the heat replaced the rainy weather and kept visitors away.

Doug Butzow has started some tuckpointing again on the north side of the building. Come and help him by cleaning out some of the old mortar. We have removed the weeds from the south platform and sprayed weeds in the back of the depot as well as along the front platform. Thanks to a "mulch" donation from Brad Schroeder, we put bark mulch



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Tennessee Pass Ho!

Photos and Text by Bruce Bird

Early Friday June 6 myself and Steve Hankel from the DJNRHS as well as Brian Huang of the Bloomington N-trak group set sail for the high plains and Gibbon, Nebraska. It is here that the Union Pacific's transcontinental main merges with the Marysville Sub up from Kansas City and things get busy all the way to North Platte. We arrived at Gibbon about 5 PM and immediately saw a loaded coal train leaving down the Marysville Sub headed for KC Power & Light. Great, we thought-just wait a little bit and another train will come along. After all, this is the SUPER railroad. Well, after almost 30 minutes and no train we began to wonder if the SUPER railroad was down for supper. Shortly both a westbound and an eastbound appeared on the horizon simultaneously. I don't know if it is the combination of the wide open spaces or the low humidity levels, but once you see a headlight it seems like FOREVER before the train is actually close enough to film. Anyway, the 2 trains met in front of us and we decided to follow the westbound, as that was the general direction of our travel.

The next town of consequence is Kearney. The westbound immediately pulled up and stopped at a red signal on the east side of town. The dispatcher informed the engineer that the main was necked down to one track west of Kearney due to construction related to the installation of the 3rd track. He would have to wait for a 'few' trains until he could get clearance. We decided to press on.

What happened next was both fascinating as well as par for the course for railfans. The DS had essentially closed the main to all westbounds to run a constant stream of eastbounds past the worksite. All this, of course, while we're driving into the sunset and hoping for any westbounds in the good light. No dice. As we

drove west we essentially were following the 'yellow-block wave' as it hit all of the eastbounds. They literally were stacking up behind us in a giant Armour yellow holding pattern (I probably should say a CNW yellow holding pattern as we saw more CNW units than UP units!) Fifteen trains in all before we reached North Platte passed our lenses and every single one was calling out yellow blocks as they passed us. Make note of this as we progress into our little story here. Power consisted of just about every 3rd generation loco UP and it's minions rostered, and very little in the way of 2nd gen power. Those SD90MACs and the convertible GE AC's are VERY large locos! We reached North Platte at nightfall and crashed at the hotel to prep for the next day.

Saturday we got up and headed out for the visitors center at the UP's giant Bailey Yard. I had heard good things about the center and was anxious to see it. Once we found it the 'center' left a LOT to be desired. It consisted of a somewhat-elevated platform adjacent to the hump in the middle of the yard. It was an open-air facility, one that I can imagine is quite deserted once the winter winds begin to blow! They did have photos of various parts of the yard and a cursory map, but the audio tape button was sound of the 2800's- the ex-C&IM SD38-2s assigned to the hump here. Unfortunately it was just a glimpse as they were very elusive to the camera. We left and headed west.

SP#220 emerges eastbound from the East Portal of Tennessee Pass Tunnel with a coal train. 6-12-97 Bruce Bird

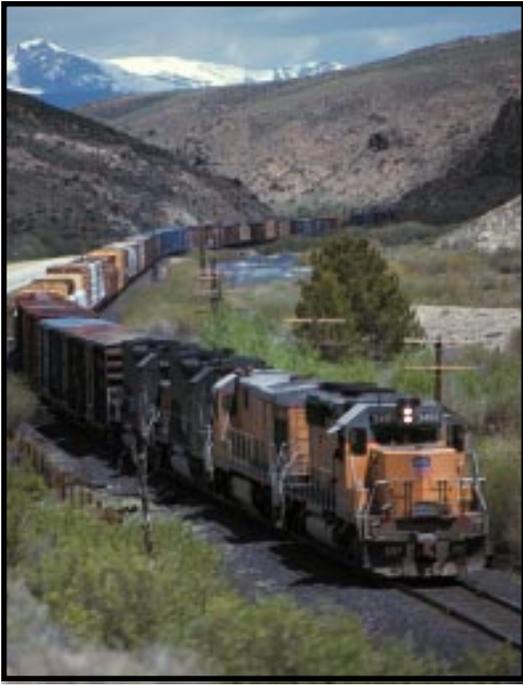


The next stop was O'Fallon's, Nebraska. The line to the Powder River Basin diverges here and a large sandhill sits just north of the tracks, providing a perfect platform to watch the action. A lot smoother today although as the trains would approach the junction they would invariably need to stop and wait on another from the other line. Again, lots of stacks, freight, and coal, with a local from Wyoming pulled by a single GP38-2 invading the turf of the AC giants. It made for quite a contrast in sound to the turbos on the AC units. We continued on west for a few more miles, caught a few more trains, and then made a bee-line for Denver, Colorado.

Upon arriving in Denver we headed for Caboose Hobbies, the greatest train store on the planet. After a 2 hour visit we packed up and headed for our condo in Avon, which is just down the road from Minturn. Minturn has been the helper base at the foot of Tennessee Pass for almost 100 years and is very much a railroad town in contrast to it's neighbors of Vail and Beaver Creek. Upon arriving we watched midtrain helpers being cut into the middle of an eastbound loaded coal train and we decided to follow it up the mountain. We got several photos before the light gave out but Steve caught it all on videotape, including a spooky nighttime view shot at 1/8th of a second using natural light and the van's headlights at Mitchell. We headed back to Avon to prep for the show tomorrow.

Sunday morning was spent trying to find a mechanic on duty in the Eagle-Vail area. It seems that a strange sound had developed from the area of the brakes on the van. We ended up driving to a Pep Boys in Denver to have it looked at while we ate lunch at Wynkoop Brewing Company. The great thing about the WBC is that it is right across the street from the Denver Union Station and they brew an excellent beer called Railyard Ale.

After lunch and picking up the van (Pep Boys said the brakes were fine) we headed down the



UP #3466 leads four units on Eastbound MROHN at Kobe, CO. 6-11-97 Bruce Bird

joint line to Palmer Lake to take in the action. A good mix of coal, freight and pigs was shot in cloudy, sometimes rainy with hail conditions. The highlight was the evening northbound SP train from Pueblo with 2 of the 3 DRGW GP60s on the point. We tripped back up into the mountains for a shot at Tennessee Pass on Monday.

Monday began with cloudless, beautiful blue skies. We loaded up and were out the door headed for Minturn by 7AM. On the way up the on-ramp to I-70 the transmission gave out on the van. Altogether now-"I left my transmission, in Colorado." (My apologies to Tony Bennett) We spent the rest of the morning getting the van towed back to a garage and arranging for a rental car. The only car Enterprise had available was a brand new Pontiac Grand Prix Wide Track. Now THAT's a good car to chase trains in! Despite our false start we made it up to the Pass to see 3 trains and 2 light helper movements before the sun gave out. The weather was to remain relatively predictable for the remainder

of the trip- sun in the morning with clouds building by noon with scattered showers. Sometimes the scenes would be lit perfectly while others would be washed out entirely. With the snow still on the Sawatch Range to the west and dramatic clouds overhead the opportunity for dramatic photos was available.

We attempted to run up the Craig branch on Tuesday to catch some of the coal trains coming down through the Crater Loops, but incessant rain drove us back down to the Pass. After watching movements for 2 days it became apparent a predictable pattern was developing: 2 eastbounds going up the pass could always be expected- a lumber train and an empty autorack train. The counterparts of those 2 would leave Pueblo about the same time and be on the approach to the Pass just after lunch. Coal trains and taconite trains would

appear randomly, but you could count on at least 2 during daylight hours. Add in the helper movements and you have a rather busy stretch of railroad.

For the next 4 days we didn't stray far from the Pass, and proceeded to film and shoot ourselves out of media. With US 24 not venturing far from the railroad and the slow speed of the trains both going up AND down the hill it was very easy to chase and set up for spectacular shots. We hiked into the Eagle River canyon at Belden siding, as well as the wide open Eagle valley between Red Cliff and Pando siding. We also climbed up to Deen Tunnel above Camp Hale and managed to find the wreck site from the runaway that occurred about a year and a half ago. It was an eerie sight but the cleanup cleared out some trees and provided an excellent vantage point for an eastbound train exiting the tunnel with a panoramic view of Camp Hale. In short we worked at completely covering the line and getting views that can't be had by jumping out of a car and snapping a photo. We were exhausted by the end of

the day, but it was completely worth it.

In review the time spent on Tennessee Pass was great. Operations were predictable and thus easy to plan a day. You could always count on a great show in great scenery, especially if you were chasing one of the coal or taconite trains. But during the whole week I began to ask myself how and why the UP would want to give this line up. It would seem that a certain type of traffic would be a natural for this route: Colorado coal, Pacific lumber, and other bulk items that you wouldn't want clogging the main through Nebraska. Steve Lee (the UP's steam guy) has mentioned many times in posts on internet discussion groups that the UP has plenty of capacity in Wyoming and that the traffic will be assimilated easily, but from what we witnessed on the line across Nebraska, all it takes is a small maintenance window and the line is plugged! Maybe if the line is triple or quadruple track from O'Fallon's to Gibbon then maybe it could handle the traffic. It would seem that the Pass could provide an excellent bypass ala the Montana Rail Link with the BN in Montana. No, once you travel out west and view things for yourself then you begin to realize that the only reason that the UP is dropping the Pass is to permanently eliminate a viable competitor to a small portion of it's traffic base. Moves such as this have come back to haunt other railroads: let's hope it doesn't happen again.

Equipment that was photographed was interesting as well. The helper units that were stationed in Minturn were always 10 new GE AC units, with most being the SP units but a few UP units mixed in as well. I can safely say that a yellow UP unit just doesn't wear the famous 'tunnel soot' as well as an SP or Rio Grande unit! The through trains had everything under the sun for motive power: the coal and taconite trains rated the new SP units, the lumber and auto rack trains had anything from new UP SD90MACS to a Rio Grande GP30!

Lots of fans were there from California, Nebraska, New Jersey, Missouri, Ohio and Minnesota. The 2 from Minnesota were dispatchers on the Soo Line and had



A Dodge Ramcharger lies at the bottom of a cliff next to Belden siding. Hopefully not a railfan looking for a "close

spent 3 days on Soldier Summit in Utah. They reported that nearly ALL of the trains out there were running with Rio Grande power exclusively- "Looks just like 1985" one of them said. A video crew from Pentrex was there the whole week shooting for a farewell video to the Pass, so look for the Pass (and us) to appear on a TV screen near you.

And finally, much has been said about the dangers of chasing the 844 over the Pass given the treacherous US 24 route up and over Battle Mountain. On one of our hikes into the Eagle River canyon we came upon an interesting sight: a relatively new Dodge Ramcharger that had slid off US24 and plunged over 300 feet down the cliff walls to come to rest about 10 feet from the track! It appeared that the wreck had occurred only a few months earlier and that the passenger compartment was relatively unscathed, but I wouldn't have wanted to be on board! Given what we're used to during steam chases I can't help but wonder if someone is going to get hurt on this one.

All in all it was a great trip- a once in a lifetime trip. If you can get some time to head out there this summer I definitely would try to- it won't last much longer.

Editor: The Union Pacific now says that they will move all trains off Tennessee Pass by September 1. Most will be gone before that and the last traffic may be down to one train each way per day.

Continued from Page 1 under the sign, around the trees and along the north side of the building. Of course, Bill Pearson keeps the yard mowed much to the pleasure of all who used to push the mower around the yard.

Labor Day weekend should be our busy weekend again. We will be open Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Please stop in and help on one of the days. Rossville has the antique flea market

downtown and with the Sweet Corn Festival at Hoopston we will have tourists traveling within two blocks of the station.

We have prepared new brochures for the museum. Doug Nipper has created an outstanding brochure complete with photos. The front has been changed to allow the brochure to stand in holders and still read where we are. Photos of the layout as well as a display have been included along with additional information. The first ones will be used at the Illinois State Fair.

Fey Orr - Kankakee Beaverville and Southern

On July 16, 1997, Mr. Fey Orr, owner of the Kankakee Beaverville and Southern passed away at the age of 85.

When Conrail decided to abandon a portion of the Indianapolis to Kankakee line of the former New York Central, Mr. Orr was to be left without rail service to his elevator in Beaverville, Illinois. He decided to purchase the line from near Sheldon to Kankakee. Locomotives, Alco's, were kept on the siding at Beaverville. Later he acquired the former Milwaukee from Danville to just north of Iroquois, thus giving access to CSX and NS at Danville. When NS decided to abandon the former NKP line from

Gibson City to Lafayette, Indiana he purchased the line and along with already having the former NYC to Lafayette, he now had a railroad operating from Kankakee to Danville and Lafayette.

In past years the Chapter operated their motor cars on Sunday afternoons with permission of Mr. Orr. One steam trip was operated on the line in the 1980's, an excursion that left a bad taste in Mr. Orr's mouth.

I remember one cold and windy winter day, back in the late 1980's, I was in Danville and heard the KBSR coming into town at Newell. I went out to the NS interchange knowing that member Jess Bennett operated the locomotive on some days. They had shoved a cut up the hill and were north of Winter Avenue. A man was walking down the NS interchange, fur parka pulled up around his head to block the cold/snow wind, from the set out. I rolled down the window and ask if Jess was on board. The man pulled the hood back, looked at me as "why ask on a day like this" and said no. It was Mr. Orr.

He built the KBSR to what it is today. The railroad is highly respected by the major carriers and the railroad contributes a large volume of freight movements to NS, the IC and CSX.

Members Jess Bennett and Bob McQuown have worked for Mr. Orr in the past. Jess continues to operate the Alco's on an as needed basis. Jess designed the lettering scheme used on the KB&S. The future remains bright for the railroad. We have heard that other offers have been made in the past for the line and with the passing of Mr. Orr this may come about.

Lets hope the KBSR lives on in Mr. Orr's honor and that the Alco's always rein over eastern Illinois and western Indiana.

Rick Schroeder

NS and UP Offer New Interline Intermodal Service

Norfolk, VA and Omaha, NE — Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Union Pacific Railroad are offering fourth-morning interline intermodal service beginning in June between Columbus, Ohio, and Los Angeles, California, to compete with current Chicago rail/truck competitive service.

The new interline service operates over NS between Columbus and Kansas City, Missouri, and on UP between Kansas City and Los Angeles. This Monday-through-Saturday service reduces the current schedule by two days. Service improvement is made possible because trains will operate through Kansas City without being switched or held in either railroad's terminal in the Kansas City area.

[Via NS Internet Home Page](#)

Texas Eagle Regains Full Consist

Effective with the June 7 Chicago and June 10 San Antonio departures, Amtrak's *Texas Eagle* was restored to its full consist of two sleepers, three coaches, a lounge and a dining car. Departure days have changed to connect at San Antonio with the *Sunset Limited*, which also slightly shifted its schedule. The *Texas Eagle* now leaves Chicago on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. There are no through cars with the *Sunset Limited*, although Eagle coach and sleeper passengers making the connection at San Antonio may remain on board in their seats or rooms as they wait for the *Sunset*, complimentary snacks are offered.

Amtrak, on May 14, announced that the Eagle will continue until at least September 30 as a result of a \$5.6 million bridge loan provided by the state of Texas. Amtrak Intercity has promised to place a high priority on securing mail and express revenues needed to keep the Eagle running permanently, without additional state support.

Panel Suggests Splitting Amtrak

A blue ribbon panel studying the future of Amtrak and rail passenger service has issued a report calling for a new structure for passenger rail operations, creating a new company to manage passenger in-

frastructure while different companies would compete for the right to operate passenger trains.

The 13-person panel was appointed by leaders of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and its railroad subcommittee. The Amtrak panel said it "believes that intercity rail should be placed on the same structural footing as other modes of transportation. This would include a stable and permanent commitment by the federal government to fund the infrastructure costs of intercity passenger rail. It would also mean the elimination of operating subsidies for operators of passenger rail and the introduction of competition among these operators."

Freight railroads have stated that Amtrak's access to their tracks on an incremental cost basis is the result of a unique agreement that applies only to Amtrak and cannot be transferred to other rail passenger companies. They have also argued for some protection against unlimited liability. The report acknowledged these concerns but didn't address them directly.

"Amtrak's payments to the freight railroads for its use of their right-of-way is specified by formula in federal statute according to incremental costs. The freight railroads claim this forces them to subsidize Amtrak service," the panel noted.

It also pointed out that "current law and judicial interpretation of access agreements gives the freight railroads no protection against unlimited tort liability

that comes with the presence of passenger trams on their tracks."

The panel contrasted the relationship between Amtrak and the freight railroads with that which exists between freight railroads and commuter railroads. "Commuter railroads negotiate with freight railroads at arms' length on a case-by-case basis with no federal statute compelling mandatory access. Compensation levels are established by mutual agreement and in most cases, state law limits tort liability that can arise from a commuter rail accident."

Rep. Bud Shuster (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said the committee will consider the recommendations of the working group at July hearings on Amtrak's future. The AAR said it "looks forward to participating in that process which will explore all the issues raised in the working group's final report."

AAR's Train It - June 26, 1997

UP Trains Collide in Kansas

On the heels of its tragic June 22 head-on collision south of San Antonio, Texas, Union Pacific suffered its second fatal crash in 10 days, at Rossville, Kans., on the busy Marysville Subdivision 15 miles west of Topeka on July 2. The Texas crash, which claimed the lives of two crewmen and two transients riding the train without authorization, was initially blamed on dispatcher error. At the root of the Kansas collision might well be crew fatigue.

The Kansas accident occurred around 2 a.m. on the single-track, CTC-controlled Marysville Sub as 42-car eastbound priority train ZSEME from Seattle to Memphis was meeting 85-car westbound train MKSNP from Kansas City to North Platte, Nebr. As the eastbound was arriving on the main line for the meet, its crew noticed that as MKSNP was entering the siding its crew did not dim the headlights. The crew of ZSEME apparently flashed their headlights, then repeatedly sounded the horn as the locomotives

passed. The conductor of MKSNP jumped from the train and wound up with minor injuries, but the engineer, still aboard, perished as MKSNP, apparently not lowering its speed, ran through the siding and crashed into the cars of ZSEME which had not yet cleared the west switch. The crew of ZSEME was not hurt. Twenty cars derailed, and small quantities of hazardous materials, including corrosive liquids and bromine chloride, spilled. This and the small fire resulting from the burning of diesel fuel spilled by the impact resulted in a temporary evacuation of 1000 area residents.

TRAINS News Wire - 7/9/1997

Pennsylvania Makes Itself Heard on Conrail Jobs

While Pennsylvania's biggest cities are bracing for the loss of more than 2800 jobs from the sale of Conrail, a different picture is emerging in Altoona, the Journal of Commerce has reported. Represented by powerful Republican Congressman Bud Shuster, the Altoona area is slated for a windfall of 161 new railroad jobs assuming the \$10.2 billion purchase of Conrail by CSX and Norfolk Southern gets approved by the Surface Transportation Board.

Nearly half of the 6113 jobs abolished and transferred in the Conrail sale will come from Philadelphia, CR's headquarters, and Pittsburgh, site of its customer service center. Shuster, a powerful transportation leader in the Rouse, has said for months he would closely watch the proposed break-up of Conrail. Based on specifics of the deal released recently, Shuster's concerns seem to have been addressed. The Altoona area, rather than being hurt, figures to pick up about 161 new jobs. As laid out by CSX and NS, Philadelphia will lose 1080 management jobs and 875 transfers, and Pittsburgh faces 407 lost jobs and 448 transfers.

Announcing the terms of the deal in his district June 21, Shuster said he was giving the NS-CSX agreement his support, provided NS commits to a multi-

million-dollar investment in shops in Altoona and nearby Hollidaysburg. Conrail overhauled 333 locomotives and 5000 cars in the Altoona area last year, but officials estimate at least one-third more business could be accommodated. CSX is contributing to Altoona's good fortune by agreeing to send 1000 freight cars and 195 locomotives to the area's shops for repairs during each of the next three years. That agreement is reflected in a June 17 letter from CSX Transportation President A.R. "Pete" Carpenter to NS Senior Vice President Steve Tobias.

In addition to promising the transfer of 140 union posts and 21 managers to Altoona, the \$67 million NS is investing will be earmarked for capital improvements on buildings still in use after 108 years. Conrail has more than 1450 people working at facilities in the Altoona area, and is the largest employer in the region.

NS also pledges to expand efforts to bring work into the shops. About 10 percent of Altoona area shop jobs are for work that is "in-sourced" from locomotive manufacturers, transit operators, rail suppliers, and foreign railroads, according to Conrail officials. All transfers into Altoona are coming from NS's Pegram Shop in Atlanta, which will be closed. The NS operating plan identifies Hollidaysburg as the new home for programmed repairs to freight cars now being done at locations in Ohio, Illinois, and West Virginia that will be closed. NS says, however, that a wheel shop in Hollidaysburg or a similar one in Knoxville, Tenn., will be closed at an indefinite future date.

TRAINS News Wire - 7/9/1997

Construction Projects

This summer has been the busiest I have ever had with the company. Conrail and Norfolk Southern have been keeping the projects coming our way. As of the first of July 1, I had 42 active projects, some just starting while others are getting finished. They range from small painting projects to the major Lafayette project.

For the last 3 months I have kept 5 of our employees busy. Last spring we hired another employee in Ohio and he works 2-3 days a week now.

Lafayette

The Segment 5 project is moving along with about 30% of the 80 foot fill completed by the first of July. Bridge work has started with pile driving and pier construction. The contractor hopes to set the steel in late August or early September. He still expects to have his project completed by November, but painting and cleanup will occur next year.

The Route 25 structures have been awarded and that contractor will begin work around the middle of August. The one year project will involve stage construction and closing Route 25 down to two lanes. One double-track bridge and one single-track bridge will be constructed in stages. The bids were about \$600,000 under the estimate and this will help for funding of the next roadbed segment from Route 52 to Ninth Street, planned for award in 1998.

The CSX bridge over future Route 231 is complete and the NS bridge is receiving its final coat of paint. The roadway portion from the Wabash River to Route 25 will be bid late this year.

Norfolk Southern

Other projects underway are Springfield, Mitchell and St. Thomas, Illinois, Van Loon, Logansport and Belfast, Indiana along with completing a project in Cleveland, Ohio. A new 3 year construction project on I-280 will start in Toledo in September.

Conrail

This railroad has given us the most public project work we have ever handled. We have 3 bridge projects in Illinois including the Tilton timber bridge. In Ohio we have 12 active bridge projects, most in the Cleveland area including I-71, East 9th St and Lorain Road. Two major projects in Columbus have started and we now have two projects in Charleston, West Virginia. We are handling projects for the Pittsburgh,

Dearborn and Indianapolis Divisions and with all of the pipe boring projects we keep three to four people busy daily.

By the time you read this our company will have been sold to a major engineering firm. URS Greiner has purchased WVP Corporation. We are now part of a 3200 person firm with over 60 offices around the world. URS Greiner is number 2 in the *Engineering News Record* list of the top 400 engineering firms. URSG is looking to expand their market in this area and we will gain additional work. They also plan to expand the railroad market area thus getting me more involved with railroad projects. We will still keep our three offices with our Columbus office moving to their office in downtown Columbus. This is their first offices in Illinois and Missouri and they want to expand westward to close the gap between Missouri and their offices in Denver and the west coast.

DM&E Wants to Expand into Powder River Basin

“Can another significant new coal railroad be built in the environmentally contentious world of the mid-1990’s?” This was the opening sentence of “Battle of the Tongue River Railroad” in April 1995 TRAINS. Despite some permits being issued in the 1980’s and a line extension being sought in 1989, nary a rail has been laid on the proposed Tongue River Railroad, a 131 -mile shortcut from Burlington Northern Santa Fe’s former Northern Pacific main line to coal fields in southern Montana’s Powder River Basin. The big holdup: an unusual alignment of conservationists and area ranchers. In the southern PRB, BN opened its new 100-mile “Orin Line” in 1979, a full seven years after proposing it.

Now comes 1100-mile Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern with a plan to build west from its line near Rapid City, S.Dak., to the PRB, which—depending on destination—would involve from 100 miles to 250 miles of new railroad, plus the

Benefits to Intermodal Transportation - The New Norfolk Southern

For intermodal customers, New Norfolk Southern System (New NS) single-line routings will significantly improve service and reliability on lines linking current Norfolk Southern markets in the Southeast and Midwest with Conrail markets in the Northeast. For example, customers will save six hours transit time between the Southeast and Northeast through better routing of Norfolk Southern’s bimodal RoadRailer operation. The restructuring will provide shippers with a competitive alternative to truck transportation. Today, with the absence of integrated rail service, over 60 percent of all manufactured goods shipments between the Northeast and Southeast move by truck. The restructuring will eliminate more than one million truck trips — diverting 589,000 truckloads annually to the New NS alone, most of it to intermodal.

The New NS will operate one of the two competitive single-line routes between New York and the Southeast - likely to become one of the nation’s fastest growing intermodal lanes. The New NS will use Conrail’s existing freight rights on the Amtrak-owned Northeast Corridor to improve RoadRailer service between the Northeast and the Southeast. The New NS intermodal network will have high capacity doublestack-cleared routes between almost every important market in the eastern United States.

While the New NS will not operate any of the Conrail lines serving New England, it will establish an intermodal presence there through a haulage agreement with a Canadian Pacific Railway Company subsidiary and a connection in Albany to Guilford Transportation Industries.

Most of the principal NS-Conrail intermodal routes in the combined network are already cleared to handle domestic doublestack containers, and the New NS operating plan calls for clearance of the few remaining gaps in the system: between Harrisburg, Pa., and Baltimore; between Riverton Junction and Roanoke, Va.; and between Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio.

The New NS intermodal trains will have shorter, faster routes than current NS routes. For example, customers will save 14 hours between Norfolk/Hampton Roads and Detroit because of a New NS route that will be 200 miles shorter.

The New NS plans to invest about \$200 million in capital improvements for intermodal service, including substantial improvements in conventional intermodal and Triple Crown facilities to handle increased traffic. In Pennsylvania, the New NS will invest \$65 million for construction of a new intermodal facility in Harrisburg, expansion of an existing intermodal facility and a Triple Crown RoadRailer terminal in the Philadelphia area, and expansion of intermodal facilities in Allentown and Pittsburgh.

In Tennessee, the New NS will invest \$20 million to expand terminals in Memphis and Knoxville. The New NS will invest \$3 million for a RoadRailer terminal in Charlotte. In Ohio, the New NS will spend \$40 million for expansion of terminals in Toledo, Cincinnati and Columbus, and construction of a new Triple Crown terminal in Bellevue.

In addition, the New NS will invest more than \$25 million to expand and improve intermodal facilities in northern New Jersey. It will also invest \$10 million for construction of a new RoadRailer facility and expansion of an intermodal terminal in Baltimore and more than \$8 million to allow doublestack service to the Port of Baltimore.

Norfolk Southern’s hub-and-spoke intermodal operation, based in Atlanta, offers

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customers the widest possible combination of geographic origins and destinations. Norfolk Southern has demonstrated success in growing intermodal markets between 500 and 1,000 miles, in part through development of its bimodal Triple Crown RoadRailer service. Since 1988, Norfolk Southern intermodal traffic has increased 94 percent—more than double the industry growth rate. Norfolk Southern has captured a high percentage—27 percent—of this very truck competitive traffic within its territory, about twice Conrail’s market penetration within its territory.

[NS Home Page](#)

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total rebuilding of its 650-mile line from Rapid City east to Winona, Minn. The project is estimated to cost \$1.2 billion, but in its June 9 announcement, DM&E revealed no specific would-be investors.

DM&E President Kevin V. Schieffer says the project would take until 2002 to complete. The traffic potential is huge, though. BNSF and Union Pacific moved 180 million and 110 million tons of coal, respectively, out of the basin in 1996. DM&E estimates it would handle 40 million tons in 2002, rising to 100 million tons within five years. Preliminary applications have already been made to the Surface Transportation Board.

DM&E was formed in 1986 when Chicago & North Western spun off its line linking Winona, Minn., and Rapid City plus associated branches. C&NW had nearly abandoned the western portion in 1983. In 1996 DM&E bought from UP the 201 miles of ex-C&NW track north from Rapid City to Colony, Wyo., and south to Crawford, Nebr. The Colony end originates bentonite clay used in, among other things, pelletizing iron ore into taconite pellets; the Crawford end provides an interchange with BNSF. DM&E now has 1100 miles of track whose traffic, most of it grain, produces annual revenues of about \$60 million.

While the regional has spent nearly \$90 million over the last decade, some of it in loans from South Dakota, to rehab its

track, much of it still has jointed rail and a top speed of 25 mph. To become a coal “conveyor belt,” it would need a top speed of 49. Schieffer says transit time from western South Dakota to Winona would drop from the present 150 hours to under 24.

This is the same dilemma that Chicago & North Western faced. Its 405-mile “Cowboy Line” from Fremont to Chadron across northern Nebraska was unfit for heavy coal trains. With Powder River dreams of its own, marginally profitable C&NW could not come up with money to rebuild the route, hence signed up wealthy BN competitor Union Pacific as a partner; UP, of course, eventually bought C&NW in 1995. C&NW abandoned the Cowboy Line’s east end, which resulted in its Rapid City line being physically “orphaned.” DM&E tried to buy it, and finally did so from the UP.

DM&E’s apparent target is the Gillette, Wyo., area, whose mines are currently captive to BNSF, but Schieffer was careful to say that DM&E’s new coal business would come from future growth, not existing business. With the deregulation of the utility industry and the new Clean Air Act Amendments, DM&E calculates that the market for PRB coal will double in the next decade, and if it captures just 5 percent of the market it will pay for the project and cover operating expenses. UP and BNSF offered no comments to the DM&E plans but can be expected to oppose it.

[Steve Glischeinski - Trains OnLine News Wire 6/12](#)

CSX - NS File Conrail Acquisition Application

CSX Corp. and Norfolk Southern formally filed with the Surface Transportation Board on June 23 their joint application to acquire Conrail and split most of its lines between them.

The STB has set a 350-day schedule to consider the application, meaning a final decision would be made no later than

June 8, 1998.

The two carriers filed an eight-volume application detailing what they said would be nearly \$1 billion in annual public benefits from the transaction. The 15,000-page application lists dozens of service and infrastructure improvements they plan to make in order to provide customers with more reliable and efficient service. Their plan calls for NS to take over about 58 percent of Conrail’s operations, with CSX getting about 42 percent.

In presenting their proposal, the companies said they will spend a combined \$1.2 billion in capital improvements over three years for such things as track improvements, added capacity, new or expanded freight terminals, clearance projects and new automobile distribution centers.

In their application, the companies said the plan will create balanced competition in the East, extend their reach into new markets and replace Conrail’s monopoly with head-to-head rail competition. They claimed it will stimulate growth in the Northeast by improving transportation options for industries throughout the region.

“For the first time since the 1960s, we will have two balanced Class I railroads competing throughout the eastern United States,” said John W. Snow, chairman, president and CEO of CSX Corp. “This new era of competition will be between two vigorous companies that have a proud record of seeking maximum efficiency and good rates for customers.”

David R. Goode, chairman, president and CEO of NS, said, “The transaction ... will create two new Northeast/Southeast rail systems that will do their utmost to best each other in the marketplace every day. This will bring about a blossoming of rail competition the likes of which the Northeast has not experienced in decades.”

The carriers estimated that within three years the transaction annually will save 120 million gallons of diesel fuel, eliminate more than one million truck trips, reduce truck traffic by more than 780 million miles and save about \$94 million

in highway maintenance costs.

CSX said it plans to spend more than \$488 million, including \$83 million for Conrail route improvements, \$151 million for corridor upgrades, nearly \$76 million for expansion or improvement of intermodal and automobile facilities and more than \$77 million for merchandise terminals, with the remainder being invested in mechanical facilities and other projects.

NS said it will invest about \$729 in major capital improvements, including \$220 million on intermodal facilities, \$130 million for corridor upgrades, \$70 million to improve existing Conrail routes, \$30 million for new automobile facilities, about \$100 million to improve mechanical facilities, \$26 million for track connections and \$98 million for new equipment.

From AAR Train It - June 26, 1997.

BNSF puts Office Cars on Display at Headquarters

Fort Worth's most unique decorations, and perhaps the largest—four passenger cars—have been placed on permanent display tracks at Burlington Northern Santa Fe's headquarters. The cars—repainted silver with dark green lettering and pin stripes, the paint scheme for BNSF's business-car fleet—will be used for special events such as customer dinners and business meetings, and will be available for tours upon request.

They are: Yellowstone River, a 1955 lounge car; Canadian River, a 1947 dining car; James J. Hill, a 1912 business car; and Cyrus K. Holliday, a 1918 business car. The interiors of the lounge and diner have been remodeled in hues of greens and golds and trimmed with mahogany woodwork. The dining car has a full-service kitchen, and the lounge is equipped with a television and VCR; each car seats 40 guests. The business cars were remodeled in 1990.

CSX Rail Proposal Provides Chicago Area with \$70 Million In Rail Enhancements

Jacksonville, Fla. - June 23, 1997 - CSX Corp. and Norfolk Southern Corp. today filed a joint application with the federal Surface Transportation Board for regulatory approval of their \$10 billion purchase of Conrail Inc.

In addition, CSX filed a separate operating plan outlining the benefits that CSX's expanded route network will bring to Illinois. The plan includes more than \$70 million in capital investments for the Chicago area in the form of track upgrades, expanded yards, terminals and related facilities.

The plan also gives Illinois shippers access to several key CSX routes that will improve rail freight service to nearly every market in the East and South. This expanded access will come from the routes CSX plans to acquire from Conrail.

"CSX is ready to extend the benefits of a larger network to a larger customer base. The consolidation of Conrail routes into the new CSX network offers an unprecedented opportunity to improve freight transportation in the eastern United States where, freight traffic is heavy, highways are congested and the need for more competitive freight rail is obvious," said A. R. "Pete" Carpenter, president and CEO of CSX Transportation Inc. (CSXT), the corporation's rail unit. "This signals a new era of competition not just in freight rail, but in the entire transportation sector."

Illinois will be served by six key CSXT service routes that will offer enhanced service to the East and South. These routes are:

NORTHEASTERN GATEWAY SERVICE ROUTE - Chicago to Cleveland, Boston and New York.

EASTERN GATEWAY SERVICE ROUTE - Chicago to Pittsburgh, Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

ST. LOUIS GATEWAY SERVICE ROUTE - St. Louis to Pittsburgh, Cleveland and the East Coast via Vandalia and Effingham.

MICHIGAN-CHICAGO SERVICE ROUTE - Chicago to Grand Rapids and Detroit.

CHICAGO GATEWAY-SOUTHEAST SERVICE ROUTE - Chicago to Nashville, Miami via Danville and Terre Haute, Ind.

ALTERNATE CHICAGO SERVICE ROUTE - Chicago to Cleveland via Fort Wayne, Ind.



Under the CSXT plan, the Northeastern and Eastern corridors will provide two high-capacity routes between Illinois and the East. Rail customers will benefit from the St. Louis gateway route, which is 100 miles shorter and 24 hours faster than existing CSXT lines to the East.

Benefits provided by the new routes to Illinois include:

- * Illinois grain producers will gain access to new markets in the South.
- * The state's coal producers will be able to reach a greater number of electric utility customers in the Eastern states.

Direct benefits to the Chicago area include:

- * Approximately \$31 million will be spent in the Chicago area to upgrade track, improve connections to other railroads and modernize yard facilities.

* An additional \$39 million is earmarked for intermodal projects.

* Development of a major intermodal facility at an inactive yard near 59th Street to handle traffic originating and terminating in Chicago and to improve the interchange of intermodal shipments with other railroads.

* Expansion of intermodal facilities at Bedford Park (71st Street and Harlem Avenue, Bedford Park) and Forest Hill (at Western Avenue and 71st Street in Chicago) yards.

* Reduction of the current volume of truck transfer of rail freight shipments between railroad yards in Chicago.

The expanded rail system includes benefits for key commodity groups that make up a majority of rail freight traffic: coal, steel, automotive, grain, wood, paper products, chemicals, minerals and general merchandise traffic. Routes and connections were designed with customers in mind to facilitate commodity flows to expanded market areas created by the acquisition.

“CSXT customers will be able to reach new markets for their products and expand their options for obtaining raw materials and components,” Carpenter said. “A fundamental advantage of the new system is its ability to link major producing markets in the South with consumer markets in the Northeast and Midwest with single-line service. The result will be a faster, more flexible and cost-efficient network.”

CSXT’s Chicago-Greenwich, Ohio, main line will be upgraded and double-tracked to create a world-class, high-capacity corridor between the Midwest and East Coast. A route from Chicago to Cleveland via Fort Wayne, Ind., will be acquired from Norfolk Southern and used for trains carrying bulk commodities such as grain and coal.

CSXT’s operating plan is not expected to have an adverse impact on commuter passenger operations in the Chicago area. The only projected route abandonment in Illinois is a 29-mile Conrail line from Danville to Paris. Freight customers at

Danville, Chrisman and Paris will continue to receive rail service via other CSXT routes. No freight customers will lose rail service.

CSX’s Internet Address: <http://www.csx.com>

Wheel Report

BNSF had some freshly repainted freight cars at the dedication of the enlarged Argentine Yard outside Kansas City. The cars were painted in mineral brown with white lettering, the Santa Fe way of painting equipment. BNSF announced that all freight cars subsequently repainted will be in mineral brown. Recently the BN shop in Havelock, Nebraska had turned out some cars in BN green with white lettering and emblem (editor has spotted these in the Cleveland area) and black gondolas with no emblem.

NS GRAY CARS - have you spotted the Norfolk Southern gray high-cube box-cars lately. A couple have been spotted with black NS lettering and the horse, of course, on the car. First time that the NS horse has been observed on equipment other than locomotives.

CONRAIL has released the two EMD demonstrators 8000 and 8001, SD80MAC’s, into service as 4128 and 4129 on May 13. It is reported that the railroad may purchase 30 more of the “Big Macs” providing it is approved by NS and CSX. These two railroads will be dividing up the Conrail fleet and must approve of purchases.

CSX UPGRADES B&O IN INDIANA - a friend of your editor is the project manager for CSX on the upgrade of the former B&O lines from Chicago to Greenwich, OH. This is a big responsibility - to manage and spend around \$200 million in the rest of 1997. Conversations with him, and a bridge supervisor, indicated the work is underway on all fronts. The former B&O line in Indiana used to be double track. CSX removed about 10 miles every 10 miles or so, leaving long passing sidings. Bridge steel was left in place and replacement of bridges will be the minor expense. Not only are they adding the second track but they are

upgrading the existing track, turnouts and signal system. CSX crews are working on one track while contractors are working on the adjacent grade. While still running 30 trains a day CSX crews are finding there isn’t much time to work and not interfere with each other. Also, the small towns along the route are beginning to file complaints about increased traffic, increased speed and add tracks at grade crossings.

A recent conversation with a ranking CSX official indicates that they expect the “NS acquired double track from Cleveland to Chicago to dry up in 5 years.” Should be interesting to say the least.

UNION PACIFIC has a welded rail gang working north from Glover to near Ellis. New rail is in place and many of the road crossings have been reworked with new rail and ties. Look for traffic to run at night when the work starts. Railfanning during these times can be frustrating.

A few years back I was in Atlanta to visit NS. After the meetings I decided to stay an extra day and watch trains. The CSX line from Atlanta to Chattanooga is a busy line and I decided to spend a few hours in a good location. One hour, two hours, finally three hours and no trains. Also, no scanner talk. What a bummer! Finally a crane and flat car came by - I decided to check north and drove about a mile up the line. Here were two crews, equipment and cranes and the installation of a new turnout was underway. Needless to say, I left.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN NEW TRACKAGE - Many questions have been ask about the connection with the abandoned Conrail line near State Line, Indiana as well as other track work in Illinois. As far as I know, NS has not formally decided to build a one-mile connection east of the small town. The cost of rebuilding the NYC line as well as purchase some of the trackage that has been sold will add a high cost to their plans. They are still looking at traffic patterns and contrary to CSX’s moves, are more conservative and will build track as the traffic comes about.

They are building a new siding at Bement to handle the Peoria traffic. At the present time trains must occupy the main track to make setouts. The new siding will allow through train movements while another train setouts.

The NS Home Page indicates that \$5 million will be spent at Tolono, Sidney and Kankakee for interchange tracks. More than \$11 million will be spent in capacity improvements at Catlin, Sloan, Bement and Reddick (look for the double track to be extended from NT Jct. to the west end of Ryan Siding). Key interchange points will be the IC at Tolono, UP at Sidney (4 trains each way per day) and BNSF at Streator.

NS has indicated they will spend \$30 million plus on the Cleveland to Kansas City corridor. Much of this will be in siding extensions and double track work. A new siding will be built at Marshfield, between Attica and Danville. Additional siding work will be at Attica, Rockfield and Andrews.

As you will note in other articles - there are 11 months left before the split up of Conrail. As work develops on both railroads we will keep you posted. Of special interest is the haulage rights that CSX has on NS from Lafayette to Bement to Gibson City to Bloomington, IL. (Note that CSX will abandon the former NYC line from Danville to Paris, probably including Hillary Yard.)

The split up of Conrail is marked as "equal competition" in the eastern part of the U.S. How will the mileage end up? In Illinois NS will have 1,264 miles, CSX 1,056; In Indiana NS will have 1,565 miles, CSX 1,772 miles; in Ohio NS will have 2,147 miles, CSX 2,174 miles; in Michigan NS will have 560 miles, CSX will have 843 (74 miles shared); and in Pennsylvania NS will have 2,194 miles while CSX will have 1,006 (101 shared).

MAKING A CASE - Maybe you saw the recent photo in the paper of the U. S. Postal Service filing the documents for a 1 cent rate increase. In the photo the postal service worker was preparing the 100,000 page documents for delivery to the Postal Rate Commission. The photo

appeared to show that the documents were part of at least 60 volumes of reports.

I find it interesting that a government agency takes 100,000 pages to request a 1 cent increase in first class postage and two railroads, NS and CSXT - spending \$10.5 billion for Conrail, need only 8 volumes and 15,000 plus pages to convince the STB, Congress, business and the public that they should be allowed to spend that kind of private money for another railroad. Maybe they don't have to justify their jobs.

IC to team with DM&E on Powder River deal?

Illinois Central is taking a hard look at a partnership with regional Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern to create a third rail route for shipping coal out of Wyoming's Powder River Basin, the Journal of Commerce has reported. E. Hunter Harrison, IC's chief executive, told securities analysts in New York that his firm is poring over two volumes of background information on the ambitious \$1.2 billion proposal by DM&E. The regional carrier needs a financial partner and a major railroad connection such as IC to deliver any Wyoming coal it originates.

Because IC has the most efficient operating performance of all major railroads and offers a route to Chicago and the South, it could be a logical partner for DM&E. As a publicly held company with annual sales of nearly \$700 million, IC also might have better access to debt markets than the privately held DM&E.

The two systems don't truly connect, but they come close enough to consider a deal. IC's subsidiary Cedar Valley and DM&E both reach Albert Lea, Minn., over short stretches of Union Pacific (former Chicago & North Western) track-age rights, CV from the south and DM&E from the north. A bypass main line in the countryside around the town would seem to be a logical and attainable possibility.

Harrison also commented on the pend-

ing Conrail split, saying he believed IC could reach an agreement with CSX to preserve current interchange points. IC, which may lose up to \$10 million in revenue from the Conrail sale, needs those agreements to preserve existing routes and assure that its share of multi-carrier shipments is not reduced.

Via Trains Internet News Wire 7/23/97

White Pass Route reopens 27 miles

The 3-foot-gauge White Pass & Yukon Route in Alaska and Canada on July 11 reopened 27 more miles of its long-dormant main line, from Bennett, British Columbia (at Milepost 40.6), north to Carcross, Yukon Territory (MP 67.5), and further work is underway to reopen the remainder of the north end into Whitehorse, Yukon's capital, by the year 2001. Carcross hadn't seen a train in 15 years, when freight and passenger service ceased.

WP&Y continued to operate passenger excursions out of the port of Skagway, Alaska, first up to the Canadian border and then on to Lake Bennett, the former meeting point for trains when the entire 1 1/2-mile line was in service. Steam locomotive 73, a 2-8-2, was removed from display at Lake Bennett, restored, and put on the excursion trains as a showpiece in Skagway between the cruise-ship dock and the railroad shops. WP&Y's GE and MLW diesels perform the road-haul duties.

Via Trains Internet News Wire 7/23/97

Have a great summer, what is left of it that is. If you have any news from your trip drop your editor a line and we will let everyone know what you saw. For those on the Web, send us an E-mail message and will add direct. Our thanks to Bruce Bird in this issue for his fine photos and story. Check the Chapter's home page for more photos of his trip.

Rick