

DANVILLE FLYER

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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 \$20.00 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.

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



A few years ago, Hank Sherwood sent Rick some prints of photos that he had taken as a kid at NYC's Lyons Yard near Westville. Here we see two NYC F-units sitting near the coal dump. How fun it must have been to get a loaded hopper up that ramp!

Coming Events

March 11, 2007

Danville, IL - Our regular monthly meeting at Jocko's Depot Restaurant on West Williams at Gilbert Street has been moved up one week due to the Urbana Train Show. See you at 1:00.

March 17 & 18, 2007

Urbana, IL - 30th Annual Train Show and Swap Meet at Lincoln Square Village 10-6 on Saturday and 11-5 on Sunday, admission free.

March 24 & 25, 2007

Collinsville, IL - Greenburg's Great Train Expo, Gateway Center 10-4

April 15, 2007

Danville, IL - Chapter meeting at Jocko's Depot Restaurant.

April 28, 2007

Danville, IL - Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Historical Society 25th Anniversary Meeting - Danville Area Community College. 9-9. Tour of CD&V line from Bismarck to south of Covington, IN in the afternoon.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 11, at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, corner of Gilbert and Williams Street beginning at 1:00 PM. As noted, this meeting is moved up one week due to the Urbana Train Show the following weekend.

Three chapter members have obtained their 25-year status with the NRHS. They are Harold Green of Lafayette, IN; Brian Higgins of Chicago and Richard Ward of Decatur. Congratulations to these members for their 25-year support of our chapter and railroad history.

At this year's Urbana show the society will have our popcorn machine setup at our sale tables. We need to be sure we have volunteers all day to man the table and sell popcorn along with the items we have for sale. The Lincoln Square Village has ap-

proved our sale of popcorn as a fund raiser since we do not compete with any other similar sales in the mall. Bob will probably be loading up the magazines and could use the help loading and for sure, unloading at the mall. Once again we will be in the east hallway. This year is the 30th year for this show. Fred Schlipf and a few others started this show back in the Thornburn Center in Urbana. Held in the former school this was a NMRA event for the Southern Illinois Division. Your editor became part of the show about 28 years ago and has been involved ever since. For many years 5 of us from the SID put on the show, which was moved to Lincoln Square Mall. About 8 years ago, after the SID faded away, the "fab five" obtained the help of the N Gauge group in C-U to take over the show. We continue to help in the setup but spend more time "playing with the trains" than we had in years past. This show has never been a profit making show, just one to have fun with trains and enjoy the look on the kids faces as they watch trains on layouts or on the floor. Fred and I have been putting the trains on the floor for more years that we want to count and several times think we are getting too old to crawl around putting track together. Each year we have had younger help and this year will be no exception with two great youngsters helping assemble, run and tear down the layout. I retire the end of March (will continue some part time work with the company) and Fred retires in May from the Urbana Free Library (will continue in his consulting roll to other libraries). Someday we will probably decide that the knee pads won't do the trick anymore, but for now it's lay track and run trains.

The program for March will be a video.



Operating Sessions

Rossville Sessions - beginning at 1:00 PM on Saturday's

April 7, 2007 Visitor - last one this spring

Danville and Western Railroad - Champaign, IL - on Saturday's beginning at 1:00 PM

March 31, 2007 Operators only

Last one, now with retirement maybe I can get to the layout more. However, it is spring and outside work begins.

Feds release funds for Chicago's CREATE program

After more than three years of planning, coordinating and fundraising, the public and private partners behind Chicago's CREATE program are transitioning to the construction phase.

On February 15, the partners announced the federal government has released the first \$25 million of an initial \$100 million commitment to the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency, or CREATE, program, which is designed to reduce rail and highway congestion in and around the Windy City. Now, the partners — six Class Is, the Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Railroad Corp. (Metra), state of Illinois and city of Chicago — plan to begin construction on seven CREATE projects by year's end.

Eight highway-rail grade separation projects already are in the design or construction phase, and another seven projects will get under way in 2008.

"This is good news not just for Chicago and the state of Illinois, but for the entire

nation,” said Association of American Railroads President and Chief Executive Officer Edward Hamberger in a prepared statement. “Some 1,200 freight and passenger trains a day go through Chicago. Congestion here can have a ripple effect across the economy.”

Designed to eliminate bottlenecks, boost grade crossing safety and improve commuter-rail service, the CREATE program calls for creating five rail corridors (including one primarily for passenger trains), grade separating 25 crossings, building six flyovers and underpasses, and removing a downtown rail corridor.

Under an initial \$330 million funding pact, the federal government authorized \$100 million in SAFETEA-LU, the state of Illinois committed \$100 million, the six Class Is agreed to provide a combined \$100 million and the city of Chicago pledged \$30 million. The entire program — first proposed in June 2003 — is estimated to cost about \$1.5 billion.

“CREATE stands out as a prime example of what a public-private partnership can accomplish,” said Hamberger. “The projects that are part of CREATE might never be built without a public-private partnership.”

Via Progressive Railroading

Editor: Our firm is involved in design of three of the CREATE projects for CSX. The first is the third main track in Blue Island/Alsip, IL from CP Francisco (Blue Island Junction) to 123rd Street. Second is the CP Vermont connection between CSX and CN (ex-GTW) just north of the Cal Sag Channel at Blue Island Junction. The third is Dolton, IL where a 3rd track will be added to the CSX mainline out of Barr Yard and continue across the IHB to the UP line. This new alignment along with changes for NS, the IHB and UP will eliminate Dolton Tower. CP Vermont is scheduled for 2008, the third main for 2009 and a schedule on Dolton has not been set.

Chicago Railroad Fair 2008-2009?

A consortium of museums and historical organizations are in the preliminary planning stage of a what could wind up as a reenactment of Chicago’s railroad fairs of 1948 and 1949. They were the last major international fairs Chicago has hosted and drew an estimated half a million visitors to the lake front to see what turned out to be the railroad industry’s final efforts at building public support for a business that was suffering from competition from trucks, cars, and planes.

Since there are only seven major railroads serving Chicago today, contrasted to 22 in 1948, the proposed anniversary fare would be on a smaller scale than the originals. However, the organizers of the 2008 fair hope to have hands-on displays of railroad locomotives and cars, including some old steam engines as well as modern diesels, Amtrak coaches, and some antique trolleys.

The fair could also include movies of long-gone railroads, books, and seminars on railroad history. The organizers have not selected a site but a number of railroad supply facilities, both active and abandoned, might be available. As many as 39 railroads and 30 equipment manufacturers chipped in \$12 million to sponsor the 1948 fair. It was held on a 50-acre site in Burnham Park between 21st and 31st streets a site now partially occupied by McCormick Place. The railroads built temporary tracks in the park and to the adjacent Illinois Central Railroad to get their equipment on the display.

Among others, the fair was attended by Mrs. Casey Jones, the widow of the legendary railroad engineer, and Walt Disney, who used the fair to get ideas for Disneyland, his planned amusement park in California.

Chicago has not had a major fair since 1949. Since then, an attempt to organize a world’s fair was unsuccessful and the city is awaiting a verdict on whether it will be the site of the 2016 Olympics. Museums in the Chicago metropolitan area with railroad equipment on display include the Chicago History Museum, Museum of Science and Industry, Illinois Railway Museum (Union, Ill), Fox Valley Trolley Museum (S. Elgin, Ill.), and the East Troy Electric Railroad.

Representatives of most of those facilities and of various railroad historical societies attended a meeting Jan. 27 in Lake Forest, to discuss the possibility of a 2008 railroad fair to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the first one as well as the 160th anniversary of the first railroad in Chicago. That was the Galena & Chicago Union, which ran from Chicago to Oak Park. Its original locomotive, the Pioneer, is on display in the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St.

Editor: In January, prior to the meeting noted above, a friend told me about the meeting and that several railroads were interested and owners of steam locomotives have been contacted and were interested in coming. This could be, as Ed Sullivan said, "a really big show" for not only railroad history but railroads of today and tomorrow to show the public what railroading is all about.

Amtrak posts double-digit ridership growth on Illinois, Acela Express trains

Through fiscal-year 2007’s first four months, Amtrak carried 8.2 million passengers system-wide, up 4 percent compared with the same period last year. Between October 2006 and January 2007, Acela Express ridership totaled more than 1 million, an increase of nearly 20 percent compared with the same FY2006 period.

“We have worked hard to improve the onboard experience and reliability of the Acela

Express trains,” said Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer Alexander Kummant in a prepared statement.

On-time performance increased to more than 88 percent for the October-through-January period. Amtrak has taken over maintenance responsibility for the trains and recently completed track and signal upgrades along the Northeast Corridor. In Illinois, Amtrak ridership rose significantly due to state-sponsored service that was added at the beginning of FY2007. The state of Illinois and Amtrak added four trains between Chicago and St. Louis, and two trains each between Chicago and Carbondale, and Chicago and Galesburg. Ridership between Chicago and St. Louis rose 29 percent to 13,882; Chicago and Carbondale, 35 percent to 81,285; and Chicago and Galesburg, 25 percent to 59,124.

Meanwhile, Amtrak’s five-year-old Downeaster service between Portland, Maine, and Boston continues to grow. For the four months ending Jan. 30, almost 110,000 passengers used the service, a more than 4 percent increase.

The President’s Corner

Some random topics this month... Is there a real future for rail history and preservation groups? In the last NRHS News they laid out the need for more volunteers at the national level. In this article and prior ones, Greg Molloy predicted a rather dismal future for the NRHS unless things change. This included cutbacks in programs, services and perhaps even the dissolution of the whole organization in the worst case. The problem, it seems, is that no one from the Chapters will volunteer to do anything for the National.

Welcome to the global economy, I say. Tell me about one person who isn’t distracted by modern technology every minute of their waking lives. Perhaps not all of it is work-related, but family concerns fill in the blanks. How many people do you see driving with a cell phone up to their ear the whole time? With this level of activity, and the accompanying stress, how would anyone find time to volunteer for anything except the simplest functions of a local organization? There is also a generational gap that may produce less people willing to serve as volunteers for anything. Even on the financial side, most Chapters will see what funds their members can spare going to local coffers rather than the NRHS.

I’m sorry the NRHS is suffering. It’s been a privilege to be associated with the premier national railway history organization. But unless it evolves, I don’t know how it will last in the long run. Mr. Molloy has been very eloquent in laying out the reasons for the National’s shortcomings in recent years. I wish I could offer some great idea that would save the day, but I don’t have one. I hope someone does...

Speaking of technology, I mentioned in last month’s cover caption that I had a new slide scanner and was just trying it out. I have the ultimate goal of scanning *all* my slides and negatives, but initial tests with this scanner are still coming out with **too much** time spent on each slide. I had hoped the process would be faster with a newer model, but it’s still very labor-

2007 Dues Renewal

The NRHS renewal statements were mailed to all members the end of November. Please review the form, complete the ones noted to be mailed back to the Chapter, write your check and return to our treasurer Allen Cooke as soon as possible. As always, we really appreciate donations to the chapter to help with expenses at the museum. Museum members renewals were mailed out with the December issue of the newsletter. Please return all renewals as soon as possible to Mr. Cooke. This issue will be your last if you have not renewed.

intensive. The new one can do things like automatic scratch and dust removal, which is a great feature for older slides. It can also restore lost colors and restore brightness levels on dark or faded slides. All this takes time, though, and there’s the rub. I don’t know if I’ll live long enough to scan everything, but that’s the goal! At least it is a finite collection now that the film-based camera is retired. But then there are all those digital images to manage...

What about your slide and photo collections? Any thought to making them last beyond the short term? I have the idea that getting them out there on the web promotes copies being circulated worldwide, and I can’t think of a more efficient way to have a distributed backup of your images once they’re turned into digital files. You can only hope that the information about each image stays with it on its travels in cyberspace.

Doug



Urbana, Illinois Train Show and Swap Meet

Lincoln Square Village

March 17 & 18, 2007

10-6 PM and 11-5 PM

Admission Free

Members - plan on helping both days at our Chapter tables.

Danville Chapter, NRHS Minutes

Meeting called to order on 2/18 at 1340 with 13 in attendance.

In the minutes of the prior meeting Doug noted that Fred Hubbard was working on C&EI Historical Soc. legal work, not Danville chapter.

Treasurer Allen Cooke noted several memberships past due.

Old Business:

An April session to work on records was discussed. Rick suggest removal to the Vermilion County museum by the end of May.

For a fan trip Allen suggested riding Amtrak. Allen will develop itinerary for next meeting.

New business:

A work session will be scheduled in May to get the museum ready to open.

Barb Curl, Ray's wife, died 2/16/07.

Mark Ziebart's BNSF job was held up by paperwork and medical snarls, now scheduled after April.

Adjournment at 1355 with a slide show was presented by Rick Schroeder.

Midwest storms bring out snowplows in Iowa

FORT DODGE, Iowa - March 2- A large snowstorm that began Wednesday and continued into this morning closed down highways and airports throughout the Midwest, and interfered with railroad operations in the Hawkeye State. Iowa Interstate closed the west end of the railroad yesterday from Newton to Council Bluffs, Iowa, due to snow and low visibility. IAIS planned to send a snowplow west out of Newton today to clear the line if a train crew could make it to Newton. Power was to be two GP38s, with a third unit to be picked up at Des Moines on the way west.

To the north of the Iowa Interstate, Canadian National planned to run a snowplow extra out of Fort Dodge this morning to clear its 128-mile former Illinois Central Cherokee Subdivision to Sioux City.

In Minnesota, the Duluth area was particularly hard hit, with more than two feet of snow and wind gusts over 60 mph at times. CN was using helpers yesterday on both its former Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range and Wisconsin Central lines out of Superior, Wis. One train without helpers, train Q-119, stalled on the ex-Missabe Steelton Hill and a yard crew had to push the train north. Given the blowing snow, one CN crew reported they couldn't see 20 feet on either side of the tracks.

The wind was so strong a CN switch crew working to unload cars of taconite ore on the former DM&IR dock in Duluth was overhead saying, "We will dump on inside Track 3 because the wind is too strong on Track 1." When the crew was dropping down Proctor Hill, a seven-mile run from the yard at Proctor to the Duluth docks, they reported they were coming down the hill at extremely restricted speed since they couldn't see a car length in front of them.

BNSF was using light engines to ferry crews in and out of the terminal area and west to Cass Lake, Minn., since no travel was advised on area roads. Only light snow was predicted for the area today, although the wind continued to limit visibility. - Some information from Dave Schauer and Scott Carney.

Via TRAINS ON-LINE

Amtrak Superliner anniversary

It seems hard to believe, but some of Amtrak's double-deck Superliner cars are almost 30 years old. Amtrak accepted the first Superliner car on Oct. 27, 1978, but none entered revenue service until Feb. 26, 1979 - 28 years ago today - when they began running on Midwest corridor trains. Superliners did not enter long-distance service until the Chicago-Seattle Empire Builder was re-equipped with the new cars on October 28, 1979.

The first Amtrak Superliner order for 235 cars was placed with builder Pullman-Standard on April 2, 1975. This was increased by 14 cars on July 29, 1976 and again on Nov. 24, 1976 for 35 more. Total cost of the order was \$241 million. The 284 cars came in five basic configurations: coach, coach-baggage, sleeper, diner, and café-lounge (also known as "Sightseer" lounges). In 1991, Amtrak ordered 195 more Superliners from builder Bombardier including transition-dormitories, coaches, diners, lounges, and sleepers.

Of the 479 total Superliner cars constructed, 63 cars were out of service at the end of 2006; 22 cars have been scrapped - 11 coaches, eight sleepers, two diners, and one dormitory car - and another 41 cars are stored pending rebuilding or scrapping - 17 coaches, seven sleepers, five diners, five lounges, and seven dorms. At least 42 Amtrak Superliner sleeping cars from the 1970s order were re-manufactured by Amtrak at its shops in Beech Grove, Ind., between 2004 and 2006.

Via TRAINS ON-LINE 2-28

UP Removing GM&O (B&O) signals on the St. Louis to Chicago line

The last remaining old color position light signals on the former Alton Railroad (later Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, Illinois Central Gulf, Chicago, Missouri & Western, and Southern Pacific) are in the process of being replaced by Union Pacific's 30-man signal suspension gang this week. The signals are being removed between Bloomington and Lincoln, the last stretch with a significant number of CPL signals on UP's Joliet-St. Louis route (CN owns the Chicago-Joliet portion). Plans were to work on the remaining segment of active CPLs between McLean, Ill., and Athol siding (north of Lincoln), on Tuesday, Feb. 27, and Wednesday, Feb. 28 with the goal of having new tri-color signals in service by Feb. 28.

The signals date to the 1930s-40s period when the Baltimore & Ohio owned the Alton Railroad. During this period of ownership, much of the Alton's signaling was done per the parent company's standard.

Some of the CPLs around Springfield and north of Dwight, Ill., were replaced during ICG ownership, while the signals between Springfield and Alton were replaced as part of a major rehabilitation project when Southern Pacific owned the line in the early 1990's.

The color position lights north of Bloomington were removed a few years ago as part of an upgrade for high-speed rail. This week's retirement of the color position lights is the next phase of this process. Safe for the time being is the staffed Ridgely interlocking tower in Springfield, where UP crosses the Illinois & Midland. It is the last "armstrong" (or "strong-arm") manual-lever plant on the UP system. - Steve Smedley

[Via TRAINS ON-LINE 2-27](#)

Think Amtrak loses money? Try airlines

You hear it all the time - Amtrak is "money-losing socialism," since the government subsidizes the national passenger railroad. However, the airline industry is often viewed as group of noble capitalists. In fact, some Amtrak opponents have suggested it would be cheaper to buy Amtrak passengers an airline ticket than keep passenger trains running.

However, a recent article in the Washington Post provides food for thought. According to the article, the Air Transport Association reports that since 1947, the first year for which the ATA has profit-and-loss figures, the U.S. airline industry has lost a cumulative \$14 billion. That's including up to \$3 billion the ATA estimates that airlines lost last year. It turns out that airlines are an unforgiving business that has been a net money loser for 60 years.

"Grocery stores give you better returns," Michael Boyd, a Colorado-based airline consultant told the Post. "Airlines are a crummy business, and will always be a crummy business. ... When people ask about starting an airline," Boyd said, "first, we say no. Then, if they still want to do it, we say, 'Only if you're using your ex-wife's money.'"

It was widely reported that on Feb. 14, JetBlue Airlines had an operational meltdown in New York City. It shut down service to such markets as Richmond, Va., Raleigh-Durham, N.C., and Portland, Maine, all relatively easy one-day drives from New York, and let those passengers sit at JFK Airport for days instead of chartering buses. JetBlue said it was because the company felt that roads were unsafe for days after the storm. Interestingly, Amtrak runs trains from New York to Richmond, Raleigh, and Portland. Maybe JetBlue should have put its passengers on those money-losing trains.

[Via TRAINS ON-LINE 2-27](#)

Wheel Report

Chicago commuter rail operator Metra announced that it would phase out its remaining snack bar cars over the next two years. The cars, serving alcoholic beverages, snacks and other refreshments, are currently operated only on Metra's Milwaukee North line to Fox Lake, its Milwaukee West line to Elgin and its Rock Island line to Joliet. "We want to utilize the full capacity of every car," said a Metra spokesman, "and its [generates] only minimal revenue that isn't worth taking up the additional seating."

Canadian National/Illinois Central granted overhead trackage rights to BNSF between 1) its connection with BNSF in Centralia, IL and its connection with BNSF in Memphis, TN, 2) Maxon, KY and Memphis, TN, and 3) its connection with the Paducah & Louisville Railway in Chiles Jct., KY and its connection with BNSF in Memphis, TN, altogether totaling 437 miles of line.

Canadian National/Grand Trunk Western granted overhead trackage rights to BNSF over approximately 3 miles of its Elsdon Subdivision. The purpose of the trackage rights is to move specific traffic between Corwith, IL and Railport, IL.

CSX Projects - The Winter Avenue bridge replacement project will be bid in April this year. For 2007 work will include the Winter/Bowman Avenue intersection. In 2008 the CSX bridge will be replaced. For 2007 CSX will extend the double track north from RA Junction (near Poland Road) to just north of Newell Road. Universal cross-overs will be installed at Liberty Lane. This will allow one track at Winter to be taken out of service to build the bridge. The double track bypass around Brewer Yard from Rt. 136 to RB Junction will take place in 2008. The King Yard south of Princeton will be a 2007/2008 projects. Atherton, IN siding and the extension of Ingle, IN siding will be 2008 projects as well.

Due to the meeting being one week earlier this month, your Editor had to shorten the newsletter due to lack of time for preparation. In other words, just didn't get to it!