

# 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 Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, Il. with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

## OFFICERS FOR 2006 - Our 38th Year

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

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Cajon Pass in California. The train on the left has completed its climb up the mountain and is waiting for the west-bound that is getting ready to descend on the 3% grade. The third track will start in the distance on the left.

Photo by R. Schroeder 4/18

## Coming Events

### *May 21, 2006*

Danville, IL - regular monthly meeting at Jocko's Depot Resturant on West Williams at Gilbert Street beginning at 1:00 PM

### *May 13, 2006*

Work at Rossville Museum sorting and boxing records for movement to Vermilion County Museum. Dave and Rick are working on the 21st to start the process. Hours are 9 AM to whenever. Bring large boxes if you have any.

### *May 20 & 21, 2006*

Homewood, IL Rail Heritage Days at Municipal Center

### *May 27 to 29, 2006*

**Rossville Museum opens for the season - need volunteers to be on site those days, 12-4.**

## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **May 21** at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant starting at 1:00 PM. For those of you that were unable to make the Metra trip in the Chicago you missed a great time. However, you were probably warmer as the weather was cold and windy. We plan to do the same next year taking a different route out of Chicago.

We have started sorting museum records at the museum. Dave Sherrill and Rick spent part of one day getting started and additional work is needed to move some of the records before we open the end of the month. You will note the planned session on Saturday the 13th. This will be the last sorting session as we need to move the boxes out to the Vermilion County Museum before the end of the month. Once some space has been provided on the balcony storage shelves we plan to move other material up to that section for storage. Next fall we will complete the record move before winter arrives.

In late April member Randy Rippey arrived for a Wabash Historical Society meeting

in Monticello and he and Rick toured the Danville area. Randy had read the "History and Romance of Danville Junction", reprinted by the C&EI HS, and used the book to tour the area and see how history has changed the location. In addition he wanted to see the end of Danville Junction with the removal of the P&E crossing. If you have not purchased your copy of the book you need to talk to Bob M. at the meeting.

Memorial Day weekend is quickly approaching and we need to get the museum ready for visitors. There is cleaning to do, boxes and sale items to be put away, model trains and boxes for the operating session put away and cleaning of floors in all rooms. All of the cases need cleaning on the exterior.

The May program will be by Dave Sherrill as he will show slides of his trip to Copper Canyon in Mexico.

## Metra planning automated 'safety net' for some trains

Metra, the Chicagoland commuter railroad, is planning to install an automated safety system that could have prevented a deadly derailment on the Rock Island Line last year, officials for the commuter agency said Friday, according to a story in the Chicago Sun-Times. The system, a form of positive train control that could take at least three years to implement, automatically activates a train's air brakes if an engineer fails to obey signals or if it spots obstacles ahead.

Metra characterized the Electronic Train Management System (ETMS) as a "safety net" on top of its existing signal system. The Rock Island Line, which Metra owns, would likely be Metra's first test case for the technology.



The line has had two recent derailments, both involving trains that derailed while at excess speed through a 10 mph crossover near 47th Street. An accident in 2003 injured 47 people, and then last September, Metra suffered its first-ever fatal derailment when two women were killed and dozens hurt after a train traversed the crossover there at 69 mph.

In its report on the 2003 accident, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended that Metra install positive train control on all of its lines as a safeguard when human error occurs. Some of the technology would have cost Metra as much as \$1.5 billion and taken at least 10 years to install, officials have said. ETMS is a more cost-effective option that would require one-third less time and money to install, according to Metra Executive Director Philip Pagano.

That's because ETMS works in tandem with Metra's existing methods of train operation - unlike other positive train control technology that would have forced Metra to "start from scratch," he said. Yet ETMS's safety-overlay system is more effective because it has more components, Metra said.

ETMS uses global positioning system satellites linked to computers on the train to warn engineers and if necessary, initiate braking to avoid misaligned switches, workers on the track, and other obstacles. The system also enforces speed restrictions by initiating braking when a train is going too fast.

## Membership

The NRHS and local membership dues are due now. Attached with this issues is a reminder to get them sent in. The end of May those that have not renewed will be dropped from both groups. Please send your renewal to Allen Cooke as soon as possible to keep you on the list. Normally dues are due by the end of March but we will give you a grace period until the end of April. .

BNSFRailway, which owns one of Metra's most heavily used routes, between Aurora and Chicago, has been testing the system on 130 miles of track in downstate Illinois, between Beardstown and Centralia, since 2004. Using the BNSF system as a prototype will allow Metra to cut costs and save time on its own pilot program, which must be approved by the Federal Railroad Administration, Pagano added.

Another safety improvement announced Friday was the addition of five locomotive simulators the help in training engineers. Metra shelled out \$2.1 million for the simulators, which should be in place by the end of this year.

*Via TRAINS On-Line 4/24*

## **Trash on Railroad Right of Way**

*Opinion by your editor:*

There are some recent articles about the trash on various rights of ways. Special articles about Amtrak out east and CSX in southern Florida note the problem and blame the railroads for the unsightly trash along the line. Both carriers state they are trying to stop the problem but with open right of way are difficult if not impossible.

In Florida the public and county want CSX to fence the right of way with chain link fencing. They are willing if someone else will pay for the fence, which your editor agrees.

Last year I had a site visit in the Toledo area for a project the city is looking at for drainage that involved NS and CSX. We traveled along some abandon right of way to the point of crossing of the two railroads. The road was littered with garbage including appliances that were dumped in the middle of the road. The track supervisor with us said they keep trying to stop but it occurs at night and usually on weekends. We all know this is a major problem on the railroads, has been and always will be.

Communities need to take some action themselves to stop the dumping. County and city government has taken action

along roadways and they need to assist the railroads in a similar manner. Don't blame the railroad. When you can dump for free (and not get caught) as opposed to paying a dumping fee of \$20 or more, where do you think people will go?

*Rick*

## **Appalachian & Ohio switching parents**

Employees of Watco Companies Inc. were notified in an internal memo on April 20 that CSX has asked the Appalachian & Ohio Railroad — featured in the May 2006 issue of TRAINS Magazine — to turn over operations to Four Rivers Transportation Inc.

Watco, based in Kansas, had been negotiating — unsuccessfully, it turns out — to keep operating the leased 117-mile line between Grafton and Cowen in West Virginia's coal country. The biggest issue was car supply to the mines. A&O had planned to lease 1,500 hopper cars to alleviate the supposed strain on CSX's car supply, but the cars just were not available.

“CSX is aware that Four Rivers and Watco are in discussions regarding a potential change of control,” CSX spokesman Gary Sease said.

Four Rivers, a Delaware Corporation, is a holding company jointly owned by CSX and the management of the 165-mile Paducah & Louisville Railway in western Kentucky. CSX has a stake in the P&L, a former Illinois Central property linking its namesake cities.

Four Rivers also operates the newly created (Jan. 6, 2006) 124-mile Evansville Western Railway, formerly CSX and earlier the eastern segment of predecessor Louisville & Nashville's line to St. Louis, Mo. The right of way on the west end of the old L&N route, from the Belleville, Ill., area into East St. Louis, now hosts the Bi-State light-rail system serving the metro area.

*Bob Withers via TRAINS On-Line*

## **GrandLuxe Rail Journeys new name for American Orient Express**

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill. - American Orient Express, a posh rail tour operator, changed its name to GrandLuxe Rail Journeys earlier this month, according to a story in Travel Week, a travel industry newspaper. The change was effective immediately in order to better describe the product and distinguish it from the U.K.-based Venice Simplon-Orient-Express.

GrandLuxe Rail Journeys offers luxury train tours across North America, while the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express offers two-day rail tours between European cities such as London, Venice, Rome, Paris, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, and Istanbul.

American Orient Express began operating in 1997. A private company, it operates independently of Amtrak and the freight railroads, working closely with Amtrak and the host carriers for motive power and route access.

**Rossville Museum  
Opening**

**Memorial  
Weekend in May**



A Union Pacific trains struggles uphill toward Cajon Pass in California.

## Cajon Pass

The week of April 17 I had a URS rail meeting in Rancho Cucamonga, CA. Twelve of us from the rail group from around the country gathered in California to discuss our rail business. To spend the day I had to leave on Monday for the Tuesday meeting but could not get a flight back that day that would get me home, thus I stayed over until Wednesday morning.

Tuesday evening after our meeting I headed up to Cajon Pass, some 20 miles from our meeting site. The Rancho Cucamonga and Los Angeles offices are designing the third track for BNSF. URS did the early environmental work and are now working on the plans for the new track, which is scheduled for start in 2007 and be completed that year.

Old Route 66 parallels much of the route and present Interstate 15 is nearby. The office had provided me with some good locations, which I made good use of. From about 4-7 PM I spotted some 10 trains on the hill. Most were BNSF but some UP trains were in the mix. Also noted were several Norfolk Southern units on various trains.

A back road will lead you to the pass and there is a parking area at the top of the cut. The cover photo is taken from the top of the cut looking toward the summit. As noted the train on the left was stopped and was there for some time. One track, which is newer, is a little over 2% grade with the original track being over 3% in some locations. Thus the new track will parallel the 2%.

There are numerous environmental and geotechnical issues for the new track. There are numerous endangered species and at one location the track will cross the San Andres Fault. The ground is a former lake bottom and is sand/rock with numerous wash areas. Not the best place to build a railroad, but the only place to come between the mountain ranges.

I would like to have spent more time and been there for better sun angles. But at least I made a location I had always heard about and did remember to take the camera.

*Rick*

## Tazwell & Peoria - Illinois & Midland

Swapping Power: Another railroad in the Genesee & Wyoming family sent at least one of their units to the T&P recently. Apalachicola Northern SW1500 #715 was at the Illinois & Midland shops in mid-March. It wears "T & P" initials on the side of the cab. The report was that traffic was down on the old AN and the unit was sent north. Additional AN units could be coming up to the Peoria/Springfield area. The unit is pretty nice looking, in a blue and silver paint scheme.

The ex-P&PU SCI5's (the Cat-powered switchers built on ex-IC SWI4 frames) are about all retired. There were three of the engines built, but only the Peoria & Pekin Union rostered them. The 800 and 80I are out of service at East Peoria, leaving only the 802 as still active as of early April. The I&M 81, an ex-C&IM SD20 (originally an ICG rebuild project), is currently in service on the T&P. It usually is teamed up with one of the T&P's ex-P&PU GP35C's (another Cat-engined rebuild) running grain and coal trains to and from the IAIS and the T&P yard around Peoria. Sister SD20 #82 was spotted coming south on the CN out of Chicago in late March. The unit had been in service running on the Inland Stone industrial railroad in the U.P. of Michigan for the past several years. It was likely being returned to the I&M in Springfield.

*Via North Western Illinois Chapter*

## Drivin' the Dixie

*June 17 & 18, 2006*

Once again the special event will see old and collector cars on the road between Danville and Homewood, IL. The museum will be open from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM for this special occasion and we need help on these two days.

## Soo Line & Indiana Railroad - New Power:

With the Indiana Railroad taking over the CP's old Milwaukee Road trackage in southern Indiana in the next few months, the regional railroad will need additional locomotives to serve the new line. It appears that those additional locomotives will be ex-SOO Line SD60s.

The lease on the first batch of 21 units, SOO 6000-6020, is coming up for renewal and they will go back on lease. Some of the units are being stored up in the Twin Cities presently. The INRD will reportedly get about 11 locomotives from this batch. It is not known which locos will be selected by the INRD.

*Via North Western Illinois Chapter*

## Railroads' coal delivery performance questioned

Chief executives from the American Public Power Association (APPA), National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Edison Electric Institute (EEI) recently sent a joint letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requesting that the federal agency address concerns about railroads' coal delivery performance.

The execs question the reliability of rail transportation and are concerned that a minor railroad accident or equipment failure at a coal mine could have serious consequences to the power-generation marketplace, according to the letter signed by APPA President and CEO Alan Richardson, NRECA CEO Glenn English and EEI President Thomas Kuhn. In addition, late coal deliveries are causing some coal-fired plants to curtail production, which could increase utilities' and consumers' energy costs, they said.

The execs asked FERC commissioners to

schedule a meeting to discuss the issues or conduct a public workshop focusing on railroad coal-delivery challenges and their impact on power reliability.

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) also is urging the FERC to hold a public workshop, but not to solely analyze rail transportation of coal. The workshop also should examine utilities' management of coal inventories, power plant's unloading capacity, coal producers' ability to meet rising demand, transmission line and waterway transportation capacity, and the impact of high natural gas prices and investment in gas-fired plants on the coal industry.

The rail industry welcomes any opportunity to have high-level strategic discussions with its partners in the electricity-by-coal process, said AAR President and CEO Edward Hamberger in a prepared statement.

Tracks Ahead  
Saturday, 4:00  
PM on WILL,  
Channel 12, the  
University of  
Illinois station  
and on  
Wednesday night  
at 7:00 PM on the  
Eastern Illinois  
University  
station.



“It’s a complex, interconnected issue that involves the complete supply chain, from production to transportation to the receiving end,” he said.

CEOs from railroads, coal companies and utilities already have instituted bi-monthly calls and meetings to coordinate logistics efforts.

“And these efforts have paid off,” said Hamberger.

After moving a record 415 million tons of coal from the Powder River Basin last year, railroads are on pace to move 450 million tons in 2006, according to the AAR.

## Bull Mountain Coal to construct rail line in Montana

During the next 90 days, Bull Mountain Coal Properties Inc. (BMCP) will begin building a rail line in Grandview, Mont., between a new mine and a BNSF Railway Co. mainline.

The company recently obtained necessary rights of way and financing for the line, and received a 150 million-ton mine permit. BMCP plans to mine 12 million tons of coal underground and 4 million tons of coal from the surface annually.

Earlier this year, the company entered into a joint venture with Genesee & Wyoming Inc. to build and operate the line, which will be completed about 15 months after construction begins. “We will now finalize our existing financing proposals, sales orders and equipment purchases so both the rail line and underground mine will be in full operation well before the end of next year,” said BMCP Chairman Dort Cameron in a prepared statement.

*Via Progressive Railroading On Line*