

DANVILLE FLYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS

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The **DANVILLE FLYER** is published monthly by the **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER** of the **NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** for its members and other interested persons.

The **DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS**, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$17.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$20.00 for NRHS membership. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Pizza Inn Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX, in Danville, Il. with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

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



In August the P&E Yahoo Group met in Danville at the Cooke Business Products warehouse on Williams Street. Some 30 members, from around the Midwest, got the surprise in the afternoon by seeing ex-B&O unit painted up at P&E #5620. The unit belongs to the Vermilion Valley Railroad and is the fine work of Jim Montgerard and others.

Coming Events

September 17, 2006

Danville, IL - It is that time of year again and we start our regular monthly meeting at Jocko's Depot Resturant on West Williams at Gilbert Street beginning at 1:00 PM

September 14 - 17, 2006

Rock Island, IL - Daily excursions out of Rock Island to various locations using Chinese 2-10-2's in single and double head arrangement. Trips are on the Iowa Interstate and Iowa, Chicago and Eastern Railroads. Check out www.visitquadcities.com or call 651-765-9812 for info and tickets.

September 16 & 17, 2006

Monticello, IL - Railroad Days, various rides and trains both days. **SPECIAL - UP MoPac painted unit scheduled to be on display!**

October 5-7, 2006

Terre Haute, IN - The Indiana History Train "Faces of the Civil War" exhibit on display, call 800-447-1830 for details and location.

October 7 & 8, 2006

Decatur, IL - Decatur Train Fair, downtown Civic Center on Eldorado Street, 10-5 and 10-4, admission \$4.

October 15, 2006

Danville, IL - Regular monthly meeting.

October 14 & 15, 2006

Indianapolis, IN - Great Train Expo, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 E. 38th Street, 10-4, \$7 admission.

October 28 & 29, 2006

Bloomington, IL Central Illinois Great Train Show, Interstate Center, West Market St (Rt. 9) Admission \$5, 9-3 each day.

CN to serve Alternative Energy Sources' new Illinois plant

It didn't take long for Alternative Energy Sources Inc. (AENS) to announce plans to build its second ethanol plant. Yesterday, 8-21-06, company officials said the firm will construct a 110 million-gallon-capacity plant in Kankakee, Ill., adjacent to a Canadian National Railway Co. mainline.

To be built on a 248-acre site beginning in six to nine months, the facility will be located along Interstate 57, enabling AENS to ship ethanol via rail and truck. The plant is scheduled to be completed in fall 2008.

"With both rail and truck shipping capabilities readily available, we will be able to serve national markets, as well as neighboring communities in northeastern Illinois and northwestern Indiana," said AENS President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Beemer in a prepared statement.

Last week, the company announced plans to build its first ethanol plant along a Union Pacific Railroad mainline in Boone County, Iowa. AENS officials expect to construct additional plants in the Midwest, as well as the first cellulosic ethanol facility in the eastern U.S.

Next Meeting

The first meeting of the fall will be held on Sunday, September 17, at Jocko's Depot Restuarant, corner of Gilbert and Williams Street beginning at 1:00 PM.

Last spring we sorted some of the museum records, boxed them up and delivered them to the Vermilion County Museum for preservation. This fall we need to do the

same, that is spend some time going through additional records, getting them into boxes and delivering to the museum before cold weather sets in. Our first operating sessions will be in November and we need to get the records moved prior to that time. At this meeting we will establish some work Saturday's that we can put forth a group effort to get this task accomplished.

For the program bring your slides or video of summer activities.

Operating Sessions

Rossville Sessions (see note) - beginning at 1:00 PM on Saturday's

November 4, 2006 Operators
December 2, 2006 Visitor
January 6, 2007 Operators
February 3, 2007 Visitor
March 3, 2007 Operators
April 7, 2007 Visitor

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

December 30, 2006 Operators
January 13, 2007 Visitor
February 17, 2007 Operators
March 31, 2007 Visitor

This year we're going to try something different with our operating sessions. Last year we added a new dispatcher panel and tried radio communications for the first time. This, along with a general increase in our own operating proficiency, has led to some fun sessions. We would like to take another step and reserve half of our session schedule for only those people directly involved in the operation of the railroad at any one time.

The "Operators Only" sessions would

Continued on Page 5



Untracked Requirements Revealed

Barriers To Innovation: How Specs Live Forever

The US Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was the gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates. Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing. Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts. So who built these old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions.

The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Thus, we have the answer to the original questions. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derived from the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. Specs and Bureaucracies live forever. So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's behind come up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back-ends of two warhorses.

There's an interesting extension to the story about railroad gauge and horses' behinds. When we see a Space Shuttle sitting on the launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are the solid

rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at a factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line to the factory runs through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through the tunnel.

The tunnel is slightly wider than a railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds. So a major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined by the width of a horse's behind.

New Refrigerated Boxcar Service Will Offer Truck-Comparable Speed

Beginning in late September, Union Pacific will begin shipping perishable food items coast to coast in just five days instead of nine, making the trip comparable to truck service. Two new refrigerated warehouse and distribution centers equipped with state-of-the-art technology will allow trains to load and unload within the facility. These warehouses in Wallula, WA, and Rotterdam Industrial Park in Albany, NY, will serve as endpoints on the 3,000-mile route to be traveled weekly by the 55-car produce unit train.

An agreement between produce distribution company Railex, Union Pacific and CSX has made this competitive service possible. UP will transport the 55-car produce unit train from the West Coast to Chicago, where it will be interchanged to the CSX. The CSX will then move the train of refrigerated and frozen goods to Rotterdam for unloading and distribution. By switching to rail, the produce unit train will save an estimated \$4.3 million a year in diesel fuel costs.

"This new expedited service will change the distribution of perishable products unlike any other service offered in the last

10 years," said Rex Vonnahme, senior business director-refrigerated products. "It will allow shippers in the state of Washington to take advantage of the economies of rail with service equal to that of truck. The service will also allow Union Pacific to penetrate the Washington market, which is one of the largest growing areas of the country."

Union Pacific is currently the country's largest owner of refrigerated cars, with more than 5,500. The company handles more than 48,000 shipments of refrigerated and frozen products each year. With the recent purchase of 1,500 new cars and a vast upgrade of more than 3,000 cars, products will be shipped with the latest in technology and energy efficient features. Boxcars are equipped with fresh air exchange, remote diagnostic testing, along with two-way remote command capability, ensuring the protection of perishable foods. The will not hold up to 50 percent more product. Trains will include global positioning satellite (GPS), which will monitor transit progress and air temperature inside the cars.

UP On Line via North Western Illinois

Indiana Rail Road reaches 20th anniversary

It's 20 years and counting for The INRD, which is billing itself "America's new regional railroad" after acquiring a 92-mile Indiana line from Canadian Pacific Railway in spring — recently reached the two-decade mark. In those 20 years, the railroad has built up traffic from the 12,000 carloads moved in 1986 on the former Illinois Central Railroad branch line.

"Within five years, we had doubled that [12,000], and in the next five years, we doubled traffic again," said INRD President and Chief Executive Officer Tom Hoback in the railroad's June newsletter. "In late 2004, we marked our 1 millionth carload. [And] last year alone, customers put ten times the amount of freight onto

our railroad as it carried 20 years ago.”

Now, INRD officials are counting on CPR’s former Latta Subdivision between Fayette and Bedford — a line the railroad began operating May 27 — to continue boosting the small road’s traffic.

UP says no to rail photographers

Union Pacific announced that it would no longer allow photography of trains from Chicago commuter rail stations on UP lines. A UP spokesman said, “This stuff about UP not liking railfans is not true. But we have to be as safe and secure as we can.” The policy contrasts somewhat with that of Chicago commuter rail operator Metra, whose spokesman said that “as long as photographers are in areas accessible to the public, are acting in a safe manner, and are willing to provide identification if asked by authorities, Metra has no problem with them taking photos.” Legal experts suggested that UP might be on “shaky legal ground” if it attempts to enforce the ban.

Via TRAINS

\$60 billion annually in road tie-ups

Trains answer to U.S. transport crisis

This country is facing a transportation crisis. Highways around most large cities are jammed. Drivers must wrestle with at least 10 urban bottlenecks between Boston and northern Virginia. Between Tampa and Detroit, truckers must thread their way through at least six major tie-ups. Even outside urban areas, interstates such as Route 95 are overcrowded and often closed because of accidents or breakdowns.

Although most people do not realize it, a jammed transport system can seriously

impair the nation’s economy. Our leaders worry for good reason about the possible impact on America of terrorists, but they fail to recognize that growing highway congestion can also wreak serious damage. Fortunately no lives are lost, but the nation’s economic strength does suffer.

The tie-ups grow longer each year. The Texas Transportation Institute estimates that the cost of traffic congestion grew by 469 percent between 1982 and 2003. As one example, this costs the residents and businesses between Providence and New Hampshire roughly \$1.5 billion each year. Inevitably, the economy will suffer. Every major delay inflates the cost of the goods carried by trucks, which bring much of what the American public consumes. It also causes employers to lose man-hours, pushing prices up further.

Experience has shown that building more highways only attracts more traffic. The major solution is the railroads. They are both the most fuel-efficient mode of transport and the most environmentally friendly. Congestion, combined with labor and fuel savings, is already causing many truckers to divert trailers and containers going more than 300 miles to intermodal trains, which are operated by investor-owned freight railroads.

More trucking companies need to move to rail, for both long and short hauls. Each time a fully loaded container train leaves the yard, it diverts 280 trucks from the highways.

The growth of congestion may be stopped if more trucks go by rail, but congestion won’t disappear. Thus it is equally important that people be diverted to rail, as well, and that’s where Amtrak, our national passenger-train system, comes in. Besides easing highway congestion, a viable intercity passenger-train network can provide a crucial alternative, in case highways and airports are closed in some natural or man-made catastrophe.

Some argue that motorists should fly, but rising plane fares, lack of amenities, and undependable service make the airlines a grim alternative. Recently, thanks to delays and cancellations, it took me nearly 12 hours to fly from Jacksonville to Washington — a trip that would have taken only

two hours longer in the comfort of a railroad sleeping car.

To lure more motorists onto trains, states and the federal government need to subsidize more intercity and commuter trains. And commuter trains should be made more frequent. Often states reduce service in the evening or eliminate it on weekends, forcing many commuters to use their cars.

Money should be made available for Amtrak to have more Auto-Trains, one of its most popular offerings. If there is track capacity, Amtrak might consider adding Auto-Train sections to its Florida train, and introducing the service between the Midwest and Washington.

States, helped by federal dollars, need to finance extra tracks alongside the freight lines for high-speed short-haul passenger trains, in such overburdened corridors as Washington-Richmond. Although the freight railroads are willing to work with the states, their own tracks are nearly filled to capacity with trains hauling such cargoes as containers, coal, and grain. Moreover, we have the finest freight-rail system in the world, but it can deteriorate if freight is forced to share the tracks with a heavy flow of passenger trains. Europe, for example, has an incredibly good passenger-rail network, but that excellence is at the expense of freight trains.

Many states are investing in trains and improvements in rights-of-way, but some are lagging behind. So is the federal government. In fact, the government is the worst laggard of all. Those states with congestion problems need to commit their own dollars, unite, and pressure Washington to ante up its share.

Unfortunately, our national leaders ignore both the economic threat posed by highway congestion and rail’s potential for solving the problem. Every so often, the federal Department of Transportation issues a statement decrying highway congestion, but little money comes forth for diverting people to rail.

Nationally, highway tie-ups cost more than \$60 billion a year in lost work hours and wasted fuel. Yet Congress and the administration reluctantly give Amtrak an

infinitesimal fraction of that sum. Part of the problem stems from a historical lack of commitment by Congress and the Office of Management and Budget.

When Amtrak was founded, in 1971, to take over the deficit-ridden passenger trains from the investor-owned railroads, Congress failed to commit the government to long-term subsidies for the company. Now is the time for that commitment.

The White House and many members of Congress seem locked in an ideology that passenger-rail transport is not the responsibility of government. But there is nothing wrong with subsidizing Amtrak. Governments have always underwritten transportation; it is the cog that makes a nation's economy go.

I have just written a book, *The Men Who Loved Trains*, that describes how the Nixon and Ford administrations, facing a massive Northeastern transport crisis, put aside their laissez-faire ideology and restructured the region's rail system into a single freight railroad — Conrail — and then committed the government to long-term subsidies to keep that railroad running till it turned a profit.

As the book describes, these were men of unique vision — strong men, who put duty ahead of political philosophy or personal power. That's what we need today.

We also need to unshackle Amtrak. It cannot provide us with the network we need if Washington continues to meddle in its affairs. Past administrations have placed political friends on its board, or tried to cut off its funding. Only a few months ago, after David Gunn, one of Amtrak's best presidents, had dramatically reduced its losses, the Amtrak board members, reportedly at the direction of the Bush White House, fired him.

My book, which describes, among other things, how Amtrak was formed, explains how Congress created a totally independent body to deal with the Northeast's freight-rail crisis and establish Conrail. Something similar might be done with Amtrak's board of directors, making it virtually independent of the executive branch and free of interference from Congress.

However it is done, whatever the solutions, there is little question that the federal and state governments must appropriate the necessary rail-operating subsidies and make long-term capital commitments. The state governments should join forces to create the grassroots political pressure that would force Congress to do its part. Otherwise, our highways will jam up even tighter, and that none of us can afford.

Rush Loving Jr., an occasional contributor, is a former associate editor of *Fortune* magazine and the author of *The Men Who Loved Trains*, just published by Indiana University Press.

Baltimore Sun, By Rush Loving Jr

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Metra runs out of gas

August 25, 2006, among the many woes of Chicago area commuters, here's a new one: The train ran out of gas. A Chicago-bound Union Pacific North Line train sputtered to a stop at Central Street in Evanston about 7 p.m. Wednesday leaving 82 passengers stranded. The problem was traced Thursday to a Union Pacific employee, said Metra spokeswoman Judy Pardonnet.

"An employee was told on a number of occasions to refuel the locomotive and failed to do so," she said.

Metra riders reported that even the crew sounded bewildered when announcing that the train, which departed Kenosha at 5:51 p.m., had run out of fuel.

"I could hear them saying in disbelief, 'We're out of gas.' ... Like they were trying to register it themselves," said Chicago resident John Hines, 45, who was on the train.

Some stranded passengers waited an hour for the next train or used their cell phones to arrange for rides home. Others walked to their destinations or hopped on a Chicago Transit Authority train to finish their ride into Chicago. Despite the inconvenience, several riders got a chuckle out of seeing a locomotive engineer in a predicament that usually befalls absent-minded or cash-strapped motorists.

"I thought they were only joking," said Joan Ellis, 43, who takes the train nightly from her baby-sitting job in Lake Forest to her Evanston home.

Typically, locomotives on that line are filled with diesel fuel in a Chicago yard

before heading north on the rail route, which runs between the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Kenosha, Pardonnet said. But on Wednesday, the Union Pacific employee never filled the tank, Pardonnet said. The train left Ogilvie at 4:13 p.m. and made it to Kenosha without any problems. But on its way back to Chicago, it ran out of fuel north of the Central Street stop in Evanston and "sort of limped into the station," Pardonnet said. Another train had to push the disabled one back to Chicago, she added. Union Pacific, which operates Metra trains on the North Line, apologized to riders.

"We regret that and certainly apologize to the commuters and those who were affected," said Union Pacific spokesman Joe Arbona. "It was not our intention."

Train crews are responsible for monitoring fuel levels, said Arbona, who did not provide details about the incident. He would not say if the employee who failed to refuel the locomotive or anyone else was suspended or fired.

"That's a personnel question and obviously we keep those private," he said.

It was the first time in recent memory that a locomotive had run out of fuel during a passenger run, Pardonnet said. Union Pacific senior management officials told Metra Thursday that they were taking steps to ensure it would not happen again, she said. Chicago resident Herman Surjono, 33, laughed when he heard the announcement that the train was out of fuel.

"It was kind of funny," said Surjono, who takes the train nightly from his Lake Forest job to his home on Chicago's North Side. "I guess I was surprised. I mean how could this have happened? I thought public transportation was supposed to be more reliable."

The incident caused several commuters to seek alternate ways home, but it posed a different problem for Hines, who snapped photographs as proof that it had occurred.

"The most difficult part for me was trying to convince my girlfriend, Kathy, that I was going to be late because the train ran out of gas," he said. "That's why I took the pictures."

New Amtrak President And CEO

WASHINGTON - The Amtrak Board of Directors today (8/28) appointed Alexander Kummant as President and CEO. The veteran railroad and industrial executive will assume duties September 12. Kummant previously served as a Regional Vice President of the Union Pacific Railroad, overseeing 6,000 transportation, engineering, construction, mechanical, and other employees supporting an 8,000-mile rail network. He also served as the Union Pacific's Vice President and General Manager of Industrial Products, a \$2 billion revenue business. In leading both units, Kummant was responsible for substantially improved customer service, on time delivery of client products, and significant gains in financial and operational performance.

Additionally at Union Pacific, Kummant held the role of Vice President of Premium Operations, overseeing the intermodal and automotive network performance. Most recently, Kummant served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer of Komatsu America Corporation, a division of the second largest supplier of construction equipment worldwide. He has a continuing record as an adaptable change agent in diverse environments.

Kummant's first job on the railroad came at age 18 in Lorain, Ohio, working on a track crew for the Lake Terminal Railroad at the U.S. Steel Lorain Works.

"Alex Kummant has the outstanding credentials and experience to lead a changing Amtrak that is more customer-focused and fiscally responsible," said Amtrak Chairman David M. Laney. "His appointment fulfills the board's commitment to select an extraordinarily strong and capable leader for Amtrak's future, building on the growing national desire for more and improved passenger rail service."

Kummant fills a position that has been held by David J. Hughes on an interim basis since November 2005. Formerly Chief Engineer of Amtrak, Hughes will continue to serve with the railroad in a yet to be specified capacity. "For the past nine months, David Hughes has stepped in and performed exceptionally in leading our strategic reforms and operational improvements," said Laney.

"On behalf of the Amtrak Board of Directors, he has our deepest admiration and respect, and we are delighted that he will continue to play an important role in Amtrak's future."

Operating Sessions - continued from page 1

involve just the dispatchers, yardmasters, engineers, and backup engineers/conductors operating the railroad during those sessions. It's hoped that the absence of extra people would streamline the situation, reduce crowding in otherwise narrow isles in a small room, and otherwise enhance the session even more for those who are getting more serious about operations. Visitors, small kids, and other people not directly involved in operations would be encouraged to attend the other half of the schedule known as the "Visitor" sessions. During those sessions we'll carry on just as we always have and everyone can join in and enjoy the experience just as they have in the past. This is an effort to accommodate the interests of a lot of people. This year we are also going to use Switch Lists instead of car cards and thus only one item to carry, not a pack of cards. We'll give both a try and see how it works. Bob Gallippi