

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 \$14.00 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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Cooke Business Forms, Inc.

John Cooke Sr., Honorary Member

Volume 28

July-August 1996

Number 7

COMING EVENTS

No Monthly Meeting in July or August - See you in the Fall.

September 19, 1996

Monthly meeting beginning at 7:30 PM at Cooke Business Forms, 2500 N. Vermilion St in Danville.

Summer - 1996

The Rossville Museum is open for the season. The museum will be open from noon to 4 PM on Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free.

August 17 & 18, 1996

Monticello, Illinois MRM Caboose Days from Noon to 5 PM each day. DJC Wabash Caboose No. 2824 will be on the train.

August 24 & 25, 1996

Decatur Train Fair, 10 to 5 on Saturday, 11 to 4 on Sunday. Admission is \$2.

August 31- September 2, 1996

Rossville, Illinois Antique and Flea Market - Downtown Rossville - Museum open each day, noon to 5 PM.

August 25 - Sept. 2, 1996

UP Steam - #844 - Clinton to Elmhurst on Sunday, Chicago to

Milwaukee on Sunday, and Chicago to Clinton on the 2nd.

September 7 & 8, 1996

Rockome Gardens, Arthur, Il - Garden Train Show featuring the fifth largest outdoor show in the United States.

September 15, 1996

Princeton, IL - Ill. Valley Div., NMRA meet, Prouty Community Bldg, 435 E. Main St.

September 21 & 22, 1996

Monticello, IL - Railroad Days - Special trains all weekend.

November 8-10, 1996

NRHS Board of Directors Fall Meeting, Huntington, W. VA.



Conrail - Friend or Foe?

In scanning the rail enthusiast magazines of late, I have witnessed an increasing number of attacks on contemporary Class I U.S. Railroads for their perceived negative attitude towards rail preservation. It seems that every time a group or organization is denied a request for a steam excursion or donation of equipment or property that the railroad is to blame. "The railroads have no consideration for their heritage and its preservation," is a comment heard all too frequently.

For a few moments let me play the role of devil's advocate and try to see this through the eyes of the railroad. I'll use an example from this Railroader's Memorial Museum in dealing with our neighbor and partner, Conrail.

Much has been written and discussed recently concerning the need to begin charging a general user fee at the Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark. I've been hearing that Conrail is partly to blame for our needing to charge a fee after over 100 years of free access. In a sense, that is true - but here is the "rest-of-the-story."

Horseshoe Curve is unique for many reasons, not the least of which is that the site is the only spot I know of in North America where the public is invited to get up-close to a busy railroad freight mainline. In 1995 the line over Horseshoe Curve saw more than 100 million gross tons of freight everyday - broken into about 50 trains a day. With the completion of the clearance improvement project, Conrail expects to increase the 1996 traffic levels by 15-20 percent.

Consider too, that the railroad operating environment at Horseshoe is about as challenging as it can get - Sharp curve on a steep mountain grade, any number of things can,

and from time to time, will go wrong.

The facilities at Horseshoe Curve are constructed on property owned by Conrail. From the first step off the plaza to track-side at the top, it's railroad property. So the railroad asks a modest sum each year in lease payments for the privilege of our inviting the public to participate in this experience.

The railroad also requires a relatively high limit of liability insurance at the Curve site. AND, so they should. As I noted earlier, it's a difficult operating environment where mechanical failures will occur. Last June 30th, an eastbound trailer-van freight derailed right on the Curve with one car being propelled to within six-feet of the fence that separates the visitors from the tracks.

Conrail, and indeed all Class I railroads, have a fiduciary responsibility to protect shareholders. So is asking our institution for insurance inappropriate just because they're big? I don't think so.

They are acting responsibly and should be thanked again and again, for allowing the Horseshoe Curve site to be open at all.

On to the matter of heritage rail excursions on active lines, Class I railroads are becoming increasingly resistant to such operations by all but company sponsored programs. Why? - because the business is moving freight quickly and efficiently. The product they sell - their only product - is moving freight. Operations that have safety implications or can slow the pace of freight traffic are counterproductive. It affects the bottom line - and show me a business or industry in the '90's that isn't focused and motivated by the bottom line.

While rail enthusiasts are quick to attack the Class I railroads for nixing a steam excursion think of it this way...Say you were an antique buff - a fan of the 1926 Ford Model A's.

What do you think the reception would be at the Ford Motor Company in Detroit if you proposed to bring your Model-A out and stop production on the assembly line while you put your antique car on the line and watched nostalgically as your car made its way through the plant? - AND you invited over a thousand of your friends to watch. I don't think you would get too far. Is the excursion issue any different?

From the Museum's perspective, Conrail is a partner. They are more than willing to assist our endeavors in any way possible. And, as in any trust and understanding, we know when we've reached the line and work hard not to cross over it. Thanks to you, Conrail, for your support and best wishes for continued success.

By Peter Barton, Executive Director of the Horseshoe Curve & Railroader's Memorial Museum. Via Ties & Tracks

Champaign News & Etcetera

By Bruce Bird

Not much new to report in Champaign, except that occasional sitings of new units and rebuilds traveling to and from VMV in Paducah. There is a steady stream of unpainted EMDs for the UP headed south for painting. Once painted the IC delivers them to the UP at Memphis. Several rebuilt SD40-2s for the DM&E have been sited traveling north in new paint (sans lettering).

Our family went east on vacation to Ohio and I got a chance to ride and railfan the Ohio Central System. A recent CTC Board article outlined their operations and locations, so once again it was easy to railfan.

The OC started out as a shortline by buying a W&LE branch from Brewster to Zanesville from the N&W. They started their steam excursion program right away on

this branch running from Sugar Creek to Baltic and return, right through Amish country. It has grown to become one of the most-visited tourist spots in Ohio, and for good reason. No trains run on Sunday, diesel fills in on Monday (boiler wash day), and then the steam takes over Tuesday through Saturday. An ex-CN 4-6-0 and Buffalo Creek & Gauley 2-8-0 pull various ex-commuter coaches. The ride is enjoyable and the crew very friendly and informative. Through freights on this line handle local traffic and a daily turn from Brewster to a steel mill in Zanesville. Just north of Sugar Creek is a coal mine loadout that occasionally ships unit trains out to Conrail via Columbus. That leads us to the OC's second line acquisition, the ex-Pennsy Panhandle line from Columbus to Mingo Junction. This line was single-tracked and rebuilt right after Conrail took over. Then a few years later CR sold it to the OC. It is in excellent shape with good ballast and welded rail almost the entire distance. The Panhandle and the ex-W&LE line intersect in Coshocton and the railroad system is headquartered in the ex-Pennsy passenger station in downtown Coshocton.

Currently their locomotive facility is an open-air affair located on the W&LE on the east side of town, but a new shop complex is being built just northeast of town at the at-grade crossing of the two lines known as Morgan Run. It is a sizable facility where both steam and diesel will call home (and impeccably clean!). Two turns operate out of Coshocton on alternating days- the CBT, or Columbus Turn runs to Buckeye yard in Columbus, and the MJT- Mingo Junction Turn runs the east end of the line.

Stopping by the headquarters building will yield a friendly dispatcher willing to give you locations and possible lineups for the following day, as well as a legal release to sign to roam the property to take photos.

We were allowed right into the loco facility and to take photos of whatever we wanted (including the latest steam acquisition- an ex GTW 4-8-4 that recently was brought down from Battle Creek, MI). In talking with the crews and the other workers on the line it is quite apparent that they are very proud of the OC and like working for the company. With a friendly, open approach to railfans and easy to follow operations, this is an excellent visit for railfans visiting the area.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 19, 1996 at Cooke Business Forms, 2500 N. Vermilion Street, Danville, Illinois. Business meeting will begin at 7:30 PM with the program starting around 8:15 PM. The museum will be closed after Labor Day but there is still work to do on the building. Tuckpointing the brick and touch up painting is needed in various locations.

We welcome new member Ed Morris, 216 Prairie, Danville, Illinois. Ed visited the museum, picked up one of our brochures and joined the chapter.

UP - SP Merger Given the Green Light

Unless you have been on a deserted island you should know by now that the Union Pacific's merger with the Southern Pacific was approved by the three-member Surface Transportation Board on July 3, 1996. The ruling did set 35 conditions designed to minimize the anti-competitive aspects of the merger.

The merger will take affect on August 12, 1996. At that time another flag will fall and what used to be the "Big Seven" will be down to five. There will be two major railroads west of the Mississippi, UP and BNSF, and three east of the river, NS, CSXT and Conrail.



A number of agency's had objected to the merger and recommended that it not be allowed, or at least some duplicate lines

sold to the highest bidder. The UP had objected to sales saying they would not merge if required to sell off part of the SP, especially the lines to Texas. Conrail, and the Kansas City Southern, had been trying to convince the board that line should be sold to them or at least put on the block. No lines will be sold, just conditions established.

The UP will now control 75% of the market coming from Mexico with the BNSF basically controlling the rest. The Mexican government will offer various lines for bid late this year and the UP will go after a portion of the system.



During a recent trip to UP territory your editor noticed SP vans (crew haulers) all over the UP system. The UP began moving UP personnel into SP positions soon after the announcement of pending merger was made. SP people were cut off or moved. Much of the system is already in place.

Last year the UP took control of the CNW. We have already read about the problems that developed last fall after business increased. The UP moved out the CNW people and moved in their own. Conversations with people in Fremont, Nebraska during our trip indicated that the UP cut most of the CNW people the first day, offering them jobs on the

bottom of the roster. This happened system wide. It is now almost impossible to contact anyone on the UP and if you want a flagman for a project you have to call Omaha. If you get one you are lucky, as contractors are finding out.

As always, better get your photos now. The BNSF merger has been slow with both railroads keeping their separate systems early but starting to merge parts at a time. The UP always goes in full blast and makes total changes. Remember the CNW. Maybe this time they finally learned and will take it one step at a time. We have covered the changes expected in our area. Look for them to take place over the next year or two.

Conrail Sells - Abandons - the former P&E

The formal news announcement came on June 15, 1996 as local papers carried the story of the sale of a portion of the former Peoria and Eastern Railroad between Urbana and Bloomington, Illinois. This publication carried the story some months back as both NS and Conrail negotiated the sale price for the line.

The section from Danville to Urbana will be offered for sale to a short line, or the counties, and if no deal is made the line will be abandon. The elevators on the line have not shipped for some time. Reason, Conrail did not go in the direction of sale - either south or to Decatur and Staley and ADM. Other elevators in the area have the connections on NS or CSX.

NS will purchase the line to gain access to several locations. Anderson's Grain on the west side of Champaign, Solo Cup in Urbana (presently served by NS over track-

age rights on the IC and CR), the asphalt company in Urbana, elevator at Farmer City and most importantly close the door on the auto plant in Bloomington.

On July 2 Norfolk Southern began installation of a wye track in the southeast quadrant of the crossing of the former Wabash line with the former P&E at Mansfield, Illinois. The diamond will be removed and service will be from Decatur to Anderson Grain, west of Champaign, and to Solo Cup. Service to Farmer City will be via Bloomington. According to engineers, no plans are now in the works to move the traffic to the P&E from the former NKP line. The new track will become part of the Bloomington District. A tie gang will move in around the first of October to re-tie the line to Urbana from Mansfield. Next year NS will rebuild many of the crossings on the line. Anderson's will now have service to Staley and ADM in Decatur.

The sale is to be completed in early August and the plan is for NS to take control on Sunday, August 4. Service has already been cut to Peoria and cars for that city are being given to NS in Lafayette, Indiana. When NS takes control of the Urbana segment Conrail will officially take the Danville to Urbana segment out of service and apply for abandonment.

Conrail will continue to serve the Danville area from Terre Haute. However, this line is for sale, now all the way to Terre Haute, and perhaps a short line will still be interested. Some business is still there, but it won't be for long. Hillary yard is now 80% empty and only one unit, sometimes two, sits in the yard. Your editor understands that NS is interested in some of the Danville cluster and that may come to pass. We will keep you posted on events.

"Chasing" Ex-C&O 2716

Monday morning July 16th fellow DJC-NRHS member Steve Hankel and myself piled all of our photo and video gear into the Lumina and headed out to Logansport, IN to rendezvous with the newest excursion steam locomotive, the ex-C&O #2716. She was going to do a break-in run on the TP&W on the local that plies the eastern end of the railroad and wasn't going to leave Logansport until 2PM. After a quick stop at the White Castle in Lafayette, we arrived in Logansport at 15 minutes before 2 PM.

We found 2716 in the yard at the east end of town. An ex-C&O SD18 working for the Central Indiana left the yard shortly after we got there and headed west (more on this unit later). A good group of railfans had gathered in various places around town. After the passage of an NS freight, 2716 pulled up to the old station and watered. While Steve was busy taking still video as they watered, a gentleman walked up to where Steve was set up, looked at him and his camera, and then WALKED RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM. Needless to say, Steve was perturbed. When Steve asked him why he did that, the man replied that *"he wasn't in the way"*. Now, you've all heard stories about people unfamiliar with railfan etiquette pulling these stunts, but this guy obviously was a veteran. He was shooting with a large-format camera and was taking extensive notes on each exposure. More on him later, too.

After watering the 2716 and her two escorts, a couple of TP&W GP20s, whistled off out of town. They made it as far as the junction on the west end of town with the ex-Pennsy line that runs south along the NS to Clymers and the grain elevators there. She had to stop and wait for that Central Indiana SD18 to finish pulling about 50

grain cars out and on west. When it was gone the 2716 pulled up and the GP20s cut off to fetch their train, another cut of 50 grain cars. When they finally returned and coupled back up, it was almost 4 PM before she finally left Logansport behind.

With the 50 cars and no help from the diesels the 2716 made quite a sight getting up and out of the Wabash River valley. The grade crested out at the entrance to a county park and here was a good setup. 2716 was really working hard and blowing cinders when she crept past. A young couple with a little girl had seen all of the people along the way and had stopped to watch her go by. Despite being asked by the video crews and her parents to keep quiet when the steamer went by, the little girl was frightened into a scream, followed by a squeal of delight as the cinders rained down on her. The chase that ensued quickly would be the unraveling of the day as it was apparent that there were easily 50+ cars in on the chase. We would only get 2 more setups before Monticello because of the traffic.

We were towards the end of the motorcade by the time we pulled into Monticello. Everyone was beating it to the highway bridge over the Tippecanoe River to set up for the shot of 2716 crossing the railroad's bridge. I managed to "kick" Steve out on the fly as we rolled slowly across the highway bridge, and then went to set up myself on the west end of the bridge. Steve got his shot, I got mine, and we proceeded out of town.

The rest of the chase during daylight hours between Monticello and Hoosier Lift at Remington was a very slow-speed affair as the track was 10 mph territory. The crowd began to thin out as the day grew

long, with a sizable photo line at Wolcott. Here we met Les Jennings from the Kentucky Railway Museum. KRM actually owns the 2716 and they reached an agreement with the Ft. Wayne group to restore the loco to running condition. Now that she's done they are running it on excursions with the proceeds split between the 2 groups.

Arriving at Remington the 2716 was to pick up a cut of intermodal cars before leaving. With the sun sinking low and the switching not even begun Steve and I decided to head for home, but after one more shot. We set up for 2716 to pull forward and out of the diesel's way for switching and as she moved forward our obnoxious friend from Logansport decided it was time to jump in front of our cameras again. After more terse words being exchanged with the affected photographers (including Steve) he once again refused to budge. This moron

has officially earned the title of "God's Gift to Railfans", and if you see a light green Riviera with Illinois "MFR" plates be forewarned: you are in the presence of 'greatness'.

We stopped by the depot in Gilman on the way home, wrote down the agent's phone number, and made it home by 10.

I called the Gilman agent the following morning at 3:45 and asked if the 2716 had left yet. He replied that she was still sitting there waiting for the eastbound local. Steve and I were back on the road at 4:15 and made it to Gilman by 5. We had just missed 2716, but she was being watered in Watseka. We asked and were told she had made it into Gilman at 12:10 AM westbound. We zipped over to Watseka and found 2716 and train on the east side of town.

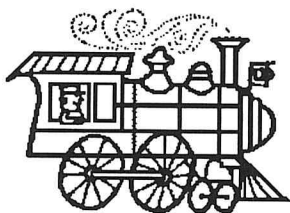
The sun was just coming over the horizon and clouds left over from storms early that AM were providing dramatic, low-level lighting and a brilliant high-contrast background for the 2716. It's too bad that most of those chasers gave up and headed home the previous night because they missed the real show! With Rich Melvin at the throttle the 2716 marched out of Watseka around 5:40 under an impressive sky and an even more impressive plume of smoke from the stack. Rich was really letting it all hang out. Once the chase was underway the few in the motorcade (only about 6-7 cars) were treated to the most visually stunning display of excursion steam pacing that I've seen. With the rising sunlight glinting off of the 2716, Steve and I paced her for about 8 miles with her smoke plume trailing directly over our car. Steve was the only one present with professional video equipment and I'm sure he will put together a dynamite package of this portion of the run. Absolutely beautiful.

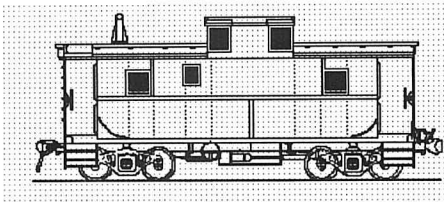
With the small number of chasers and the early hour keeping the 'local yokels' at home the chase was a very enjoyable one. Getting great shots was like shooting fish in a barrel, and I'm sure other DJC - NRHS members in on this chase can attest. Steve and I gave up after shooting 2716 on the Monticello bridge again, and we were able to make it back to work by the afternoon. A very profitable morning.

The 2716 is a great looking and performing engine, one that will thrill C&O fans and any fan of steam for many years to come.

Bruce Bird

(Editor..... we know that members Jesse Bennett, Doug Nipper, Allen Cooke, Bill Darner, Dave Sherrill and Bill Wright were on the chase. Anyone else? Your editor had to work!!!!!!!)





Wheel Report

IC has closed the Gilman depot with its operations transferred to the Homewood Operations Control Center. Included in this move are Intermodal trains #105/106 operating between East St. Louis and Chicago via Gateway Western, out of Venice, and IC, out of Moyers Intermodal, exchange at Springfield generally around 6 am in the morning.

Apparently a problem has surfaced from BNSF merger in that a short line operator, Keokuk Junction Railway, is not able to meet the needs of the large Roquette America, Inc. Plant in Keokuk. The KJRY was granted the switch duty with the merger evidently. Roquette, more recently known as the Huber Corp., is the line's largest customer, manufacturing corn syrup and sweetener, and accounting for the bulk of the line's 6,000 annual car loads of freight. By the way, KJRY had its beginnings in 1857 as a terminal railroad as part of the Keokuk & Des Moines Valley, which was later acquired by the Rock Island.

The TP&W continues to leave East Peoria at 1 am, entering BNSF's Salesburg yard around 8 am and returning in mid-afternoon after switching the line homeward.

The Burlington Junction Railway has been awarded contractual switching operations inside city-owned industrial park at Mt. Pleasant, IA. Beginning on May 1, the BJRY repainted their GE44-Ton #44 into a fresh red, with a black underframe and white stripes to serve as power.

Via Midwest Rail Scene Report

Arkansas & Missouri Rare Mileage Trip will be held on October 25 through November 1, 1996. The Little Rock Chapter is sponsoring the trip beginning in St. Louis on October 25 and traveling behind UP 844 to Little Rock. The next day trip to Russellville will be behind E-units while the Sunday trip to Bald Knob will be behind #844. On Tuesday the train will leave for Branson behind the E-units, layover two days, and complete the trip to Kansas City on Friday behind the E-units. Contact the Little Rock Chapter, PO Box 9151, N. Little Rock, AR 72119-9151

New Passenger Train Begins

The "Madison County Zephyr" special began running on May 10 out of Bureau, about sixty miles north of Peoria. Eighteen trips are planned, with passengers being bused from Chicago to Bureau for boarding at 7 pm on Fridays. The train runs a leisurely 25 mph to Earlham, IA, arriving about 7 am on Saturday morning. Passengers are bused to Winterset, Pella and other points for an overnight stay, followed by reboarding on Sunday morning for the return. Departure is at 10 am in Newton.

A stop is made near Amana Colonies for a four hour visit. At 5 pm, passengers are reboarded for an overnight trip back to Bureau, where on Monday morning they are bused back to Chicago. The Iowa Interstate provides the engine pulling a five car train, which is stored in Rock Island when not in use.

Via Midwest Rail Scene Report

CN Announces GTW Line for Sale

After two years, they finally made it official! On April 15th, Canadian National announced it was offering

for sale the former DT&I from Diann (Junction), Michigan to Cincinnati. CN says the line is marginally profitable but is too far outside their priority rail line - Montreal to Chicago. The assets being offered for sale include 230 miles of rail operations with 50,000 annual carloadings. The sale will affect seventy five train crews and forty six ground personnel. It's been reported that people will be given the opportunity to relocate to other parts of the system. CN expects the line to be purchased by a smaller railroad, but CN will still retain about 10% interest in the line. The sale is expected to be completed by fall.

Via Ties & Tracks

Metra Facts

It's almost out of control, folks. Now that this newsletter is slapped onto the World wide Web, we get mail from all over; especially since we suggested selling our expired, unsold tickets as collectors' items. From a Connecticut reader:

"I collect railroad tickets as a hobby, and have well over 130,000 of them from over 80 countries, mostly from commuter rail.. The Metra monthly tickets are among the most artistic and creative that I have ever seen."

"Commutation tickets used on the three NYC regional rail carriers are extremely devoid of character when compared to Metra's. Congratulations on your originality!"

No, that wasn't a typo. We found a guy who actually has 130 thousand tickets, not one of which would get you from one side of Zone A to the other! Our Internet address is <http://www.metrarail.com> Write to us if you want to be contacted later when we decide how to sell our "collectibles".

Did You Know...

That roughly 49,250 Metra passengers arrive at and depart from Union

Station on an average weekday, accounting for almost 100,000 daily passenger trips?

That approximately 45,000 passengers arrive at and depart from Metra/Union Pacific Passenger Terminal, accounting for 90,000 daily passenger trips?

That the two busiest weekday routes in the Metra system are the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and the Union Pacific Northwest Line with approximately 25,000 and 19,000 daily passengers, respectively?

That Metra averages about 136,000 customers each weekday, equating to more than a quarter-million passenger trips?

That Peak Period/Peak Direction commuters account for 82% of the weekday trips taken on Metra?

That the average length-of-trip for the Metra commuter is 20.8 miles (Zone E)? (Zone E fares: \$94.50 for a monthly; \$29.75 for a 10-Ride; and \$3.50 for a one-way.)

That Naperville, on the BNSF, is the busiest of our 211 stations with 3,270 boarding each weekday?

Via Metra's Keeping Track

RailTex Buys the I&O

On June 3, 1996, RailTex, Inc. announced it had signed an agreement with the Indiana & Ohio Railcorp (The I&O Railroad) to purchase 100% of the I&O stock for \$9 million and the assumption of approximately \$3.5 million of debt. The I&O was founded in 1979 and maintains its headquarters in Cincinnati. Through its subsidiaries, the I&O operates ten line segments totaling 230 miles of track in mostly Southwestern Ohio and Southeastern Indiana.

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BNSF Enables Amtrak Trains to use a Single Chicago-Galesburg Route

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation (BNSF) construction of a new track segment west of Galesburg, IL, will lead to a consolidation of Amtrak passenger train routes between Chicago and Galesburg. All Amtrak Trains will use the Burlington Northern Railroad route to Galesburg instead of operating over both the Burlington Northern and the Santa Fe Railway, effective Aug. 1.

In August, BNSF will discontinue use of a short segment of Santa Fe track primarily used by the Southwest Chief in Chicago and no other route in available. The cost to Amtrak to acquiring or maintaining the track segment could not be justified. The change will save Amtrak and estimated annual expense of more than \$100,000 by reducing labor costs as the Southwest Chief will operate over a faster route and by eliminating some station expenses along the former route.

"The Southwest Chief is one of our premier trains," said Don Cushine, General Manager of the Western Business Group at Chicago-based Amtrak Intercity. "We have had favorable operational results over the current route and we expect the result of the change to be further improvement."

The Southwest Chief, a daily Superliner train to and from Chicago and Los Angeles, will begin serving Naperville and Princeton and will discontinue serving Joliet, Streator and Chillicothe. Joliet will continue to be served by daily trains on the Chicago-St. Louis route.

"The agreement we have reached with Amtrak to move the Southwest Chief onto the BNSF line between Chicago and Galesburg via Naperville and Princeton is mutually beneficial," said D.J. Mitchell, BNSF Assistant Vice President, Passenger Services. There are slight changes to the schedule of the westbound Southwest Chief (Train #3) between Chicago and Ft. Madison, Iowa and to the eastbound Southwest Chief (Train #4) between Galesburg and Chicago. There are no changes to the route or schedule of the Southwest Chief west of the Mississippi River.

The route consolidation will also eliminate customer confusion in Galesburg, where Amtrak trains have stopped at a depot along the Santa Fe at Broad St. or at a depot along the Burlington Northern at Seminary St. All Amtrak trains through Galesburg will stop at the Seminary St. station, effective August 1.

The change in Southwest Chief routing between Chicago and Galesburg will have no effect on the scheduling of the California Zephyr (Trains #5 & #6), Desert Wind (Trains #35 & #36), Pioneer (Trains #25 & #26) and Illinois Zephyr (Trains #346, #347, & #348) to and from Galesburg and Chicago. The Southwest Chief will not carry Amtrak passengers originating in either Chicago or Naperville or either Princeton or Galesburg, with those customers instead offered service on the Illinois Zephyr.

"While it is always difficult to withdraw service along a route, the financial realities are huge costs for track expenses and train operations over the current Southwest Chief route versus benefits to most customers and definite financial savings from the consolidations along a single BNSF line in northern Illinois." said Cushine. Please see an authorized Amtrak travel agent, visit a staffed Amtrak station or call 1-800-USA-RAIL for details on these or any other Amtrak services.

An important freight mover, the I&O in 1995 transported 19,000 carloads and generated revenues from freight operations worth approximately \$7.1 million. The railroad currently provides passenger service through a wholly owned subsidiary. Under the terms of the sale to RailTex, passenger operations will be retained and continued through one of the sellers, former I&O president, Tom McOwen, under the I&O rail Passenger Corporation. The I&O enjoys a broad customer base and serves customers in the aggregates, paper, farm products and chemical industries.

The sale transaction closed on June 4, 1996. Commenting on the acquisition, Bruce Flohr, RailTex Chairman and CEO, stated, "the acquisition of the I&O is significant in that it represents the first major acquisition of an existing short line railroad. In addition, the I&O has solid prospects for growth, and it has been solidly profitable and well managed in the past. We also expect to gain certain administrative efficiencies by having the I&O as part of the RailTex portfolio."

RailTex is North America's leading shortline railroad organization, providing freight service through more than 3,300 miles of track in the United States and Canada and Mexico.

Apart from Tom McOwen, who has retired as I&O president, all other I&O employees are being retained. They have been asked to stay on the job by Bill Stevens, the railroads' General Manager appointed by RailTex. Present I&O rail operations will be continued. Mr. Stevens comes to the I&O already familiar with the railroad after having worked on it as an independent consultant hired by Mr. McOwen. Because of this knowledge, Stevens, a former Norfolk Southern mid-level manager, was hired by RailTex as an employee to run the I&O.

According to the sale agreement, Tom McOwen's I&O Rail Passenger Corporation has the right to run passenger excursions anywhere on RailTex's I&O system, not just the present passenger excursions out of Lebanon. This is unofficial, but the T&T has heard the RailTex is negotiating with Canadian National to buy the former DT&I line be-

tween Lima and Springfield. If this 50-mile mainline did become part of I&O, it would theoretically be available for passenger excursions, along with the I&O lines in the Springfield area. The ex-DT&I tracks' principal value, however, would be serving as a bridge line for rail traffic from several railroads between Detroit/Toledo and Cincinnati. It is conceivable that the CN could continue to use it if they decide to continue their Atlanta trains.

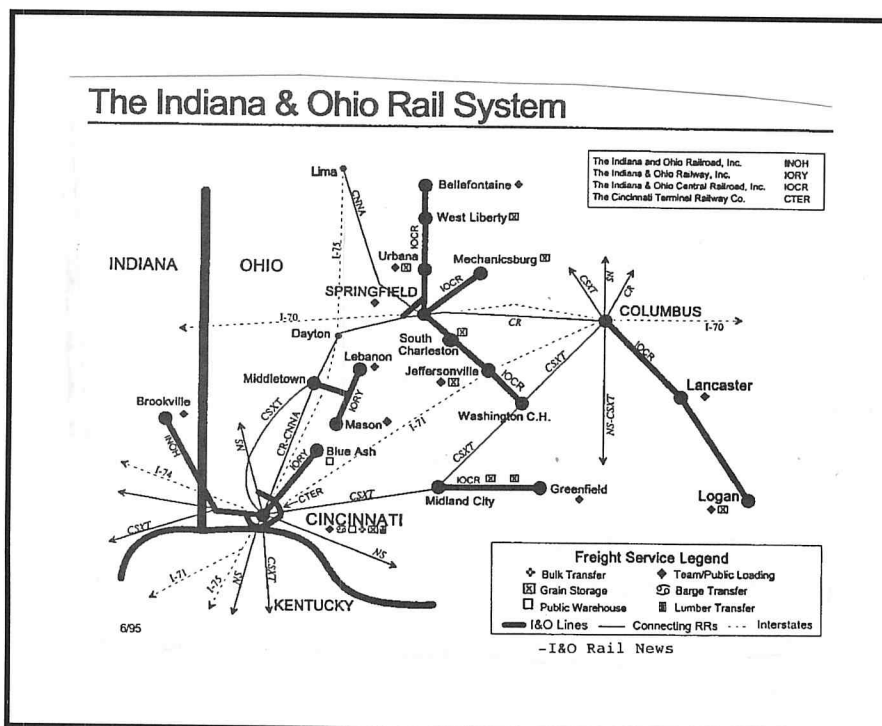
Via Ties & Tracks

Museum Notes

The summer started off slow. The cool and damp weather kept travelers home, then the heat came in and everyone stayed in the air conditioning. In recent weeks we have seen an increase in visitors and income - much to our pleasure.

Several donations have been added to the collection. New member Ed Morris gave us several old Railroad Magazines from the 1950's. They added to our collection. Ed will be moving this fall to Pennsylvania and decided they might not make the move. A train order hoop, one of the original hoops, was given to John Cooke Sr. and John donated it to the museum. Lynn Stallings of CSX has moved from the Rossville area to Kentucky and obtained valuation maps from the C&EI, all dated around the 1960's when CTC was continued north from Clinton before the L&N took over. The maps cover all lines from Woodland Junction to south of Terre Haute, the line from Danville to Terre Haute and branch lines. Missing is the Rossville section, however, we have the original from 1915. In addition we received three paintings from Dorothy Metz of Hoopston. They are of W&A #3, NYC #999 and B&O #80. A photograph of the Findlay, Ohio station was donated through Bob McQuowen.

Recently your editor was at the museum on Sunday. We had sev-



eral families with kids and most stayed an hour or so. Hard to get the little ones away from the trains. One family was from Champaign. The father had two small boys and stayed over an hour. He, and the kids really enjoyed the museum, looking over displays and the layout. He said our building was one of the best he had ever been in. Makes you feel good with comments like that. The donation jar gained weight that weekend.

We have had good attendance by members this year and we appreciate your help. Remember, while there be friendly and run trains for the kids. We have a lot of repeat business - kids bring the parents back.

Metra Start-up

August 19, 1996

The new Metra passenger service, the first in the Chicago area for over 70 years, will begin on August 19 between downtown Chicago and northwest suburbs up the Wisconsin Central to near the Wisconsin border. The new service will add 53 miles to Metra's network and raise their route miles to 500.

The project has been in the planning stages for several years. Nine years ago the former Soo Line track saw just two trains a day. Now the WC operates 20 trains a day and sometimes 30 a day. The addition of the 14 Metra trains will add to the lines congestion. As part of the project new signals were installed, sidings constructed and other sidings lengthened. The capacity of the line has been increased to take care of existing business and the future business from both Metra and the WC.

Communities along the route constructed new stations to serve commuters. Metra, and the WC, con-

structed the track improvements. Parking lots were constructed adjacent to the depots and the villages and cities look forward to increased business. Metra expects riders from nearby line to move to the new track, however, this will be a small portion of the expected ridership. Discussions are already underway to extend service into the communities across the state line.

NS Wins Seventh Year

Norfolk Southern Corporation captured the E. H. Harriman Memorial Safety Award for the seventh straight year. CSX won the silver for the sixth year and the Santa Fe won the bronze. Among the railroad with 4 to 15 million employee-hours the New Jersey Transit won the gold, Illinois Central won the silver and the Kansas City Southern won the bronze.

Railroad with fewer than 4 million employee-hours saw the Duluth, Winnipeg and Pacific taking first, the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern took the silver and the Guilford Rail System and Springfield Terminal Railroad won the bronze.

Switching companies and terminals - the Belt Railway of Chicago won the gold, the Philadelphia, Bethlehem and New England won the silver and Port Terminal Railroad Association won the bronze.

Through the first four months of this year Norfolk Southern is leading again followed by the Santa Fe and then CSX. The Santa Fe has been improving each year at a much faster rate than other railroads.

R.J. Corman Operations in West Central Ohio

Business on the Western Ohio lines has been increasing with the addition of new customers. Trains now run Monday through Saturday with a crew on duty at one of three locations: Precision Strip in Minster, St. Mary's Station or Celina Yard, a distribution center between St. Mary's and Celina on Riley Road. As a rule, if need, they run west to the Norfolk Southern connection in Portland before going to Lima. Runs to Portland are two to three times per week. During the heavy grain business in summer, two trains may operate. A crew is on duty between 0600 and 0800. The radio frequency is 160.455.

After a lot of red tape, Corman is finally going to operate the Spencerville & Elgin (the former Erie main) between Lima and Glenmore, Ohio. The second rail of the original double track will be taken up and used to replace the eighty pound rail on the Minster Branch. The S&E also has three miles of Conrail track-age rights in Lima. At present, the S&E's two RS-3's are stored serviceable at the engine house in Ohio City. Elsewhere, Corman has purchased Conrail's Greenville Industrial Track, a thirteen mile line between Ansonia and Greenville.

Via Ties & Tracks

Ed: For you railfans- R.J. Corman has a GP-7 stationed at Shelbyville, KY at the Budd Company. Find it by using the industrial drive off Route 55.

***Come ride our Wabash
caboose, # 2824 during
Caboose Days, August 17
& 18, Monticello Railway
Museum, Monticello,
Illinois***

Construction Projects

Lafayette...

The Ninth Street bridges are nearly complete. The contractor has been painting the NS and CSX structure. The inspectors from HNTB and WVP have been having difficulty getting the contractor to get enough mils of paint on the bridges. Thus it is taking longer than anticipated. Wabash bridge have been painted, however, the same problem - not enough paint. They should be finished by the middle of August. All other work is complete and final cleanup should complete this phase of Segment 5 by the end of the month.

On July 1 NS moved back to the original alignment and onto the new bridge over the future Route 231. The next day CSX line over to the temporary track and the contractor began removing the fill in preparation of bridge construction. Pile driving is set to begin the first of August with concrete work to begin in late August. The contractor hopes to complete the two-span through plate girder bridge this fall. Roadway construction will begin next year when bids are let for the 4-lane portion south of the Wabash River. Also, INDOT plans to let the contractor to build a new underpass for the KBSR in West Lafayette next year.

In September the City of Lafayette will let contracts for the Route 52 bridges, the new entrance to CSX yard and gravel pit and the 1 million cubic yard embankment for NS mainline and switching lead. In 1997 contracts will be let to put Route 25 under the future NS track.

Decatur - CSX has completed most work on the 11 bridges east of town. Next year they plan to let contracts for the other 11 bridges plus one box culvert. We have also been ask to design some new slope

protection for their embankment over Lake Decatur. Construction will be next year.

Conrail is keeping your editor very busy. We are now working for the Dearborn Division in addition to the Pittsburgh and Indianapolis Divisions. Though small, some projects require on-site people 2-3 weeks. They have ranged from Toledo to Cleveland including Port Clinton and North Ridgeville. I have 1 to 2 men out most of the time. We will also be working for both the Pittsburgh and Indianapolis Divisions in West Virginia. One of our employees is working 3-5 days a week in both Indiana and Illinois on various projects. He covers pipe borings plus the overpass at Effingham and the underpass at Wabash, Indiana on Route 24.

Running Extra

I have received word that member **Randy Rippy** will be leaving the area this fall. Randy's wife has accepted a job in Minneapolis and he will be moving to the area in September. Randy has been with Illinois Power at Clinton for several years and has been looking for a career move. The time is now and we wish him and Mariam best of luck up north. We, and the Wabash HS, will miss his help. Randy and your editor have been friends since the high schooler came to the Catlin museum many years ago. We will keep in touch by E-mail and will continue to plan trips if his time permits.

Have you seen the new **Norfolk Southern** wood chip cars being built in Danville? The division of Johnstown America located in the former C&E Oaklawn Shops, later Danville Industries, later Itel, Inc., has been building the 69 foot cars for other clients. The NS cars are "big and black" but really look good when new. They are moving to the southeast for service.

On July 29, 1996 the Soo Line Railroad, through CP Rail, filed notice of intent to abandon or discontinue trackage rights over Conrail from Gibson, Milepost 4.3, to Danville at Milepost 104.9. This will allow to begin removal to abandon trackage as soon as the actual notice is published and no protests received in 10 days. Removal of track should occur this fall. Portions have already been sold to the Bee Line Railroad and other shippers on the line. In addition the TP&W is operating a section in Kentland.

Word comes from Brian Carlson of the **Monticello Railway Museum** that **NKP #587** has been moved to track #5 in the yard in preparation of a contractors arrival to begin repairs to the locomotive. Hopefully the work on the locomotive will be completed in August and the engine will be available for Railroad Days in September. The locomotive will stay at Monticello until next spring with some additional trips in the planning stage for this fall and next spring. These trips will be used to raise money for the museum and the owners, the Noblesville group. We will keep you posted.

We wish to thank member **Doug Nipper** for climbing on the roof and fixing the scanner antenna. Seems like the weather had fouled the connection. After cleaning the radio picks up trains in Danville. Another item failed this year. The timer on the signal display quit and all signals indicated "stop". Again, Doug came to the rescue and now they go through their paces again. Next item to be fixed is the telegraph key - tape needs repair.

Want to see a train wreck? Check out our home page, museum section, and check out the wreck at Stewart. Wonder if A. Cooke has looked. Also, check the next page for news of the upcoming picnic.

*Hope you had a great
summer.*

Chapter Picnic

On Saturday, September 21, 1996, the chapter will have a picnic at the Depot Railroad Museum in Rossville. We will begin around 11:00 AM with hot dogs to be ready around 1:00. All members and spouse or friend are invited to attend. The Chapter will furnish hot dogs and buns, plates, napkins and drinks. We ask that you bring a covered dish or chips.

The museum will be closed for the season. However, we plan to run the model train layout in the afternoon for modeling members of the group, maybe even a short operating session if enough are interested. Also, we get to watch the "real thing" in front of the building.

We will take a count of who will be there at the September meeting, but if you cannot attend but plan to come on the 21st be sure to call President Larry Prosser at 217-446-9769.

House Singles out Amtrak for Funding Cuts

Amtrak's Fate Rests with Senate

The House of Representatives early this morning approved a 1997 transportation appropriations bill slashing Amtrak funding 28%, to \$542 million. In contrast, other transportation was held almost level (transit \$4 billion, no change; aviation \$8 billion, down 0.7%; highways \$19 billion, down 2.6%). The bill is for spending in the fiscal year which begins October 1, 1996.

The 28% funding cut comes on top of the 25% hit Amtrak took this year, and even though Amtrak will borrow to finish the current fiscal year. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation may mark up its bill the week of July 15. The subcommittee (and full committee) chair is Mark Hatfield (R-OR); the ranking Democrat is Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ).

"The American people want a good train system. They oppose the House's fly-and-drive-only approach to transportation," said Ross B. Capon, executive director of the National Association of Railroad Passengers. "A nationwide poll we commissioned last year found 63% favoring earmarking a full penny of the federal gasoline tax for 'long-term Amtrak improvements.'"

It is not clear whether Amtrak could survive if the House figure stands. Amtrak has been engaged in an intense review of options for service eliminations and additions just to live within Amtrak's own operating-grant request (\$250 million). The House approved only \$200 million for operations—30% below this year's level and 49% below the 1995 level of \$392 million.

The service changes Amtrak is studying would come on top of last year's major service cuts, which included a 17% reduction in train-miles. One change the Amtrak Board rejected last year probably is under consideration again: elimination of the *Pioneer* which links Seattle, Portland, Eastern Oregon, Boise and other Idaho points and Wyoming with Denver, Omaha and Chicago (the latter two cities served by through cars carried in the *California Zephyr/Desert Wind*). Also, Amtrak says that the House bill would halt work both on extension of electrification to Boston and on projects needed to maintain existing Northeast Corridor service.

It long has been clear that Amtrak needs adequate funding and reforms

in its authorization law to have any chance of reaching operating "self-sufficiency." Thus far, the reforms are stalled, with no sign of the Senate even passing a reauthorization bill. Meanwhile, funding levels are dropping faster than contemplated earlier. The House's \$542 million (total Amtrak funding) compares with the current level of \$750 million and a 23% increase (to \$919 million) requested by President Clinton. Also, last year's budget resolution envisioned \$922 million for Amtrak in 1997; this year's budget resolution foresaw a freeze (\$750 million) for 1997.

House Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Frank Wolf (R-VA) said during floor debate that Amtrak "is dead" if Congress fails to provide a dedicated funding source. In a May 23 test vote, the Senate voted 57-43 in favor of earmarking one half cent of the federal gasoline tax for Amtrak, but the ultimate fate of that proposal remains unclear.

NARP is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan membership group dedicated to educating the public about the benefits of rail travel. It was founded in 1967 and has 12,000 members.

Via NARP News

Rumor Department

The UP acquisition of the Southern Pacific is "old" news now and the new rumors begin to fly. The Wall Street sources indicate that the BNSF will go after NS now that the UP is getting delayed for a year with CNW and SP takeover (also interested in Mexico's railroads). Some doubt this acquisition, however, a couple of years ago the rumor was out that NS was going after BN. Will Conrail fall? Stock prices fell but are on the way up, thus making acquisition by NS a harder pill to swallow. Needless to say, the year 2000 there will be many changes in the rail industry.