

DANVILLE FLYER

Inside this issue:

Railroads make grade	1
About Us	2
January Meeting Notes	3
Sen Durbin & NS	3
765 to Joliet	4
Ferromex & FEC	4
PTC Status	5
Amtrak to Florida	5
CSX Allows Step Off	6
Wabash Photos	7
Photo of the Month	8

NOTICE
APRIL MEETING – APRIL 9TH AT Jocko’s , 1:00 PM
Last Spring Operating Session – April 15th
at Rossville

Railroads Make the Infrastructure Grade

American railroads earned a grade of B for infrastructure while the rest of the U.S. sectors got a barely-passing D+ in the latest report card from the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The quadrennial report depicts the condition and performance of American infrastructure across 16 sectors, assigning letter grades based on the physical condition and needed investments for improvement. A grade of B indicates infrastructure is “good, adequate for now,” while the D is “poor, at risk.”

The report divides the U.S. rail network’s 140,000 miles of track and more than 100,000 bridges into two categories: private freight railroads and intercity passenger rail, operated almost exclusively by Amtrak. While capacity across the Class I network is “generally sufficient to meet current needs,” demand is expected to grow amid road congestion and demand for goods increases.

While observing that capacity has been increased via double stack trains and heavier carloads – and that Class 1 railroads own their own infrastructure – the report praised freight railroads for maintaining the condition of the majority of the nation’s track, bridges, and connections at ports and intermodal facilities.

“[The railroads]... proactively maintain, replace, and upgrade systems through maintenance and capital programs. Changes in freight cargo trends in recent years have necessitated changes in the network. Coal, the most commonly transported bulk product by rail, has experienced a decline, while intermodal traffic has experienced substantial growth, requiring investment in connections to ports and truck transfer facilities.

“Freight railroads continue to upgrade their networks to support additional demand with greater capacity, added efficiency, and improved safety. This has required the rebuilding of bridges, tunnels, track, and signal systems,” the report stated.



ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICAN
RAILROADS

April 9th – Monthly Meeting to be held at the Jocko’s Pizza, Williams & Gilbert – 1 PM.

April program by Henry Schmitt

March 25th – Beech Grove, IN
Indy south Train Show at Nazarene Church, 5152 Hornet Ave, \$4

April 1 & 2 – Urbana, IL – 36th
Annual Train Show Lincoln Square Village downtown Urbana 10-6 on the 1st and 11 to 4 on the 2nd.

April 8 – Watseka, IL – C&EI
HS Annual Meeting 10 AM to 9 PM, displays, auto tour, meeting and program.

April 22 – East Moline, IL, 609
15th Ave – 2000 SF layout open house 9AM-4 PM

About Us

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 any-

one having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$30.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$50.00 for NRHS membership. Rossville Depot Museum membership is \$30 per year. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June July, August and December) at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX (former Conrail), in Danville, Il with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.



Officers for 2017—our 49th Year

- Allen Cooke – President
- Doug Butzow – Vice President
- Dick Brazda– Secretary
- Doug Nipper– Treasurer
- Dave Sherrill – Programs
- Jess Bennett – Historian
- Bob Gallippi – Museum Director
- Rick Schroeder – Editor
- Cooke Business Products - Publisher



(Continued from page 1)

The report recognized that much of Amtrak’s national passenger rail network outside the Northeast Corridor is owned and maintained by freight railroads, and that the carrier relies on them for maintenance and support.

The NEC, mostly owned by Amtrak, is a different story.

“While safe to operate, much of the NEC’s infrastructure is beyond its useful life, increasing maintenance costs and reducing system reliability,” adding that average age of major NEC backlog projects is 111 years, including 10 moveable bridges, three sets of tunnels, and one viaduct.

“Upgrades and repairs to basic infrastructure items like signals, power systems, and tracks, as well as service improvement projects to add capacity, are needed to meet growth in the northeastern economy and related travel demand. The condition of the NEC continues to deteriorate while projects are on hold pending funding. Amtrak has been left with little choice but to be reactive to maintenance issues due to inadequate funding.”

2017— March Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1345 by President Cooke.

The treasurer's report of March 16 was presented. Expenditures for the 2 months were \$240. Income totaled \$425, including some sales and the agreement with Green Frog. Earmarked donations were also listed.

With the departure of Mr. Cooke to North Carolina, a new state registered agent for the chapter is needed. Doug Nipper was approved for the position.

The minutes of the previous meeting were in the newsletter and were approved.

It was clarified that the April meeting will be the 9th due to the Easter holiday. The Urbana train show will be 4/1-2. Skyler will coordinate the popcorn set up for the event. No magazines will be taken for sale.

Rick outlined the discussions and agreement with Green Frog for Stan Chausse's films. In addition to \$150, the chapter will receive 2 DVD copies of the footage and be able to purchase copies of the programs at a reduced rate. The chapter will also assist in identifying scenes on the footage.

A rerun of the trip to Centralia was discussed as a possible trip. Another possibility would be the St. Louis line. There was discussion the Indiana RR Museum in Noblesville. Due to bickering, FRA and funding issues it is not operating. There is the possibility it may be turned into a trail.

Turning the P&E into a trail is in progress in Champaign County. It is expected to be completed this spring. Negotiations are still in progress with the UP regarding the track crossing at Glover.

The meeting adjourned at 1410.

Dick presented pictures from a 2015 trip to Canada, as well as some Indiana scenes.

Sen. Durbin and NS Security

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) earlier this week asked Norfolk Southern Railway to explain how it will curb gun thefts at its 63rd Street Yard on Chicago's South Side. The most recent theft took place in September 2016, when criminals broke into rail cars in the yard and stole six semi-automatic rifles and nearly 30 handguns, according to Durbin.

"It's clear that more needs to be done by Norfolk Southern to properly secure the 63rd Street rail yard and any potentially dangerous freight shipments stored there," Durbin



wrote in a March 14 letter to NS Chief Executive Officer James Squires.

In 2015, thieves stole more than 100 firearms from the yard. The year before, 13 semi-automatic rifles were stolen. Some of the stolen guns have been traced to gun violence in Chicago, local media have reported in recent weeks.

Durbin has asked NS to provide information about its plan to investigate thefts and prevent future incidents at the 63rd Street Yard.

"If you have undertaken or plan to undertake additional security measures that you are not at liberty to disclose publicly, my staff and I stand ready to meet with you to discuss this matter further," Durbin added.

Norfolk Southern did not respond to a request for comment on its security efforts at the 63rd Street Yard.

Progressive Railroading 3-17

Editor: Interesting article and comments by one of our elected Illinois officials. Theft from this yard and others in Chicago and across the nation is a national problem. Let's look at two facts. First, this yard is probably in the worst area of Chicago. How would you like to be an employee of NS and have to drive to this location each day? Second, thieves entered the fence area (this area is fenced and guarded as best they can by NS police) and stole guns. Now how did they know which container or boxcar the guns were in? Random

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

luck in finding them? I don't think so; they know exactly where they are because of "inside knowledge" of the location. I remember when the L&N was running out of Canal Street and conductors told me that they would lay in the floor of the caboose (on trains at that time) and suddenly the train would stop (thieves know how to shunt the track) and looking out the side window would see the semi-trailer back up to the track, some 15 persons come out, open doors of a trailer and load stuff into the side trailer.

A contractor working on the Blue Island third main project for us worked at 63rd Street for NS. He said outside the fences were shopping carts to haul the stuff away. If a cart had a rope on the front that was a "2-man cart" to haul the heavy stuff, one pulling and one pushing. Why not look into why the area has become a crime area and instead of saying to NS they don't provide enough security. The same contractor told me at the CSX container yard they put razor ribbon top along with barb wire and the city made them remove it because the city ordinance did not allow it. Hopefully that has changed.

NRHS and Local 2017 Dues Payment.

For those of you that are NRHS members you will be getting a notice about paying for 2017 dues. For almost all NRHS members this will be completed on line. We finally got a list of members who are recorded by the NRHS as members of this Chapter and we are down to very low numbers.

For your local renewal we sent out the renewal notice and for payment please send your check (or pay at a meeting) to the Treasurer at PO Box 1013. Renewal is required by the April meeting to continue to receive this newsletter.

NKP 765 to Joliet, IL

Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 No. 765 will head to Chicago this June for public excursions between Joliet, Ill., and Chicago on The Joliet Rocket.

On June 17-18, Nickel Plate No. 765 will pull two round trip excursions each day from the Joliet Transportation Center to a private event at LaSalle Street Station, where passengers will be treated to an extended layover event featuring live music, entertainment, re-enactors, vintage cocktails, appetizers and awards for best dressed attendees. The trips will also feature a scheduled photo runby.

Sponsored by the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society Inc. and in partnership with Metra, The Joliet Rocket excursions will offer economy coach and deluxe coach seating options. The society may also offer first class and dome car amenities as well.

Special limited railfan event passes will also permit photographers to join the event during the layover at LaSalle Street station.

Tickets go on sale March 28 at 6 p.m. Additional trips for No. 765 will be announced later this year.

Ferromex to Acquire FEC

Just weeks after acquiring Florida East Coast Industries (FECI), parent of Florida East Coast Railway (FECR), a Japanese hedge fund is close to a deal to sell the regional carrier to Ferromex, Mexico's largest railroad by mileage, for a reported \$2 billion.

Grupo Mexico, the mining conglomerate that owns 74% of Ferromex (Union Pacific owns the remaining 26%), is finalizing the details of a deal for FECR with FECI owner Fortress Investment Group, which was acquired by Japan's Softbank in February. Ferromex won out in an auction for FECR, according to Reuters, and a deal could be announced as early as this week.

Jacksonville-based Florida East Coast Railway operates 351 miles of track along the eastern coast of Florida. It was taken private by Fortress in 2007 for \$3.5 billion. It also operates All Aboard Florida, parent of Brightline, an inter-

city/higher-speed passenger rail operation running on FEC tracks set to begin service this summer.

The multinational sale comes at a precarious time for relations between Mexico and the United States. President Donald Trump campaigned on promises to build a wall between the U.S. and its southern neighbor, and the Administration has already begun actions to tighten enforcement of laws aimed at restricting the flow of illegal immigrants from Mexico. Trump has also proposed dismantling NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and imposing tariffs on goods Mexico exports to the U.S.

Rail Group News – 3-28

Status of PTC on Nations Railroads

As of Dec. 31, 2016, freight railroads had positive train control (PTC) active on 16 percent of tracks required to be equipped, up from 12 percent in third-quarter 2016, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced today.

The report was the FRA's latest update on the industry's PTC implementation. Based on railroad-submitted quarterly data, the latest report shows that freight railroads are continuing to make "consistent progress," while the passenger-rail industry is progressing more slowly, according to an FRA press release.



Passenger railroads had PTC active in the fourth quarter on 24 percent of tracks required to be equipped, up from 23 percent in the third quarter.

Due in part to Amtrak's "significant progress" on PTC, 41 percent of passenger-railroads' locomotives are now fully equipped with PTC technology, compared with 29 percent in third-quarter. Freight railroads' percentage of

fully equipped locomotives rose to 42 percent in the fourth quarter, up from 38 percent in the previous quarter.

"We continue to closely monitor railroads' progress implementing positive train control," said FRA Executive Director Patrick Warren. "With less than two years remaining to complete the implementation process, it is imperative that railroads continue to meet implementation milestones."

Congress requires Class I railroads, intercity passenger and commuter railroads to implement PTC systems by Dec. 31, 2018. Only if some key implementation and installation milestones are met may railroads be eligible to obtain an extension to no later than Dec. 31, 2020, subject to the U.S. transportation secretary's approval.

Progressive Railroading 3-15

Amtrak to Florida Again?

Amtrak CEO Wick Moonman reiterated his railroad's commitment in a letter to seeing rail service restored along the Gulf Coast.

The letter was issued at the first 2017 quarterly meeting of the Southern Rail Commission (SRC) and was presented to Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards by Mark Murphy, Amtrak vice president, long distance services business development.

The SRC said the letter "may be Amtrak's strongest showing of support in print for states' efforts for passenger rail service." The Amtrak letter includes references to the Gulf Coast service in addition to longer-term SRC goals for new routes from Baton Rouge to New Orleans and across Central Mississippi and Northern Louisiana through Eastern Texas.

Moonman's letter read in part:

"We are committed to operating both the long distance and corridor services on the Gulf Coast route as soon as the necessary funding can be arranged, and the necessary agreements are in place to implement the service...Amtrak strongly supports these projects and will continue to do everything we can to work with you to bring these services to completion. I am committed along with the rest of the Amtrak team to working with the Commission and the Gulf Coast states to obtain the necessary commitments from the

host railroads to determine the capital and operating needs of each service, in order to advance all of these important projects."

Gov. Edwards voiced support of the SRC's work and noted that during the 2015 election, all gubernatorial candidates were in favor of a Baton Rouge to New Orleans rail. He stated the need for a regional approach to economic competitiveness for workers commuting between jobs along the river, as well as access to sports arenas in both cities and service to the new airport terminal in New Orleans.

Via Rail Group News 3-13

CSX to Allow Step Off

CSX Transportation workers are now permitted to step on and step off moving equipment while switching freight cars on the railroad's system. In an employee document obtained by Trains News Wire, railroaders can make the moves on locomotives and other track equipment at a walking pace not to exceed 4 mph.

The bulletin, which took effect at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, applies to trained employees who have been qualified by a supervisor regarding the rule change and have demonstrated proficiency in the task, the bulletin reads.

The new rule change includes a checklist of items that must be performed before an employee can mount or dismount moving equipment, including scanning the area for obstructing objects, maintaining three points of contact, staying clear of adjacent tracks, and first applying a boot to the bottom step or ladder rung to verify proper footing before continuing with the mount or dismount.

According to the bulletin, the new rules supersede existing CSX "safe way" rules and will be a part of broader revisions that will be implemented in the new CSX employee operating manual that will take effect on April 1, 2017.

Sources familiar with the rule tell News Wire this is one of the first rulebook modifications implemented under E. Hunter Harrison's leadership at CSX.

Trains News Wire has reached out to CSX for additional comment.

April Date Changes
Regular Meeting—April 9th 1:00 PM
Rossville Operating Session
Last one this spring
Saturday April 15th
1:00 PM to around 3:30 PM



C&EI RR Historical Society
Annual Meeting – April 8, 2017
Watseka, Illinois Union Station
Sales and Displays 10 AM to 12:30 PM
Auto Tour to Momence and KBSR Railroad
1:00 PM to 4 PM
Dinner at local restaurant 5 to 6:30 PM
Annual Meeting 7:00 to 7:30 PM
Program 7:30 to 9:00 PM
Photos from the C&EI Archives
by Rick Schroeder and Bob Gibson





Westbound at Attica, IN, photo by Wade Frasch



Eastbound Wabash 1 mile east of Riverside, IN , photo by Wade Frasch



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We're on the Web!
www.danvillejct.org

Photo of the Month

