

DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1013

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"THE DANVILLE FLYER"

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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 \$15.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$17.00 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 Conrail, 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/>

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Coming Events

February 20, 2000

Danville, IL—Monthly chapter meeting at Pizza Inn, Gilbert and Williams Street next to CSX. Lunch at 1:00 PM and meeting after lunch.

March 5, 2000

Kankakee, IL—Kankakee Model Railroad Club swap meet and show, Governor Small Civic Auditorium, 895 S. 8th Avenue, 9:30 to 3 PM, \$3.

March 12, 2000

Wheaton, IL — Great Midwest Train Show, DuPage County Fairgrounds, 10-4 PM, \$6.

March 25 & 26, 2000

Urbana, IL — Annual Train Show and Swap Meet, Lincoln Square Mall in downtown Urbana, 10-6 PM and 11-5 PM. No admission.

DUES DUE

Some of you have a reminder attached to this newsletter. For NRHS members if you see a RED mark on your address label your 2000 dues are due. Please return the section of your renewal form to the treasurer so you don't lose your continued status.



Next Meeting

The next chapter meeting will be Sunday, February 20 at the Pizza Inn, corner of Williams and Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) in Danville. Discussion will be the train show that is coming up in March at Urbana's Lincoln Square Mall.

We have heard that member Andre Chambers of Urbana is no longer working for the Union Pacific. He has taken a job with the CN/IC out of Champaign. Looks like Andre will have to repaint his UP units just as the IC is getting the black motive power changed to the CN scheme.

At the last meeting in Danville we found a sweatshirt left on one of the chairs. Doug Nipper took the shirt to Cooke's. **The sweatshirt is green and has a Green Bay Packers patch on it.** Please give Allen or Doug a call, they will try to bring it to the next meeting.

Two members had special occasions the past two months. Bob McQuown and his wife celebrated 50 years of marriage in December and Bill Darner and his wife celebrated 60 years on the 25th of January. We wish both wives the best for putting up with these railroaders all of those years.

Program this month will be a videotape of the Illinois Terminal presented by Danny Honn. Next month Rick Schroeder will present a slide/drawing program on the preliminary design of the Keystone rail extension in Pennsylvania for Norfolk Southern.

A special note about our home page on the World Wide Web. As you know, this page has been in existence for several years now and we are linked in numerous locations. At the same time we come up in a search if someone looks for railroading and Illinois. Each month I get about 2 inquiries for information about the chapter or local history. Recently I got a request from a lady in Virginia concerning train order hoops. She is 85 and remembered her father hooping trains from a station near Pana. I sent a note that we had the old original hoop that she remembered and she asked for a photo. She was writing a history of her life and wanted to include photo. I got a couple of shots of the hoops and sent them to her. Her reply was fantastic and indicated she would donate to our group.

A request came through for information on the C&EI for a school project. I forwarded the note to Bob, he contacted the individual and sent a copy of one of the publications to the gentleman in North Carolina. Our newest member from Rossville found our site and recently I had an inquire from a young man moving back to Danville for information about model railroads in the area.

I am not sure how many "hits" we receive each month but it must be quite a few. Doug has done a great job on the homepage and each inquire says how nice it is. Doug does post photos so if you have any recent shots you would like the world to see get them to him for scanning and placing on "WWW".

Rick Schroeder

Locomotive gets new paint scheme before heading to Panama

On January 5, officials from Kansas City Southern, Mi-Jack Products, and the Panama Canal Railway Co. (PCRC) were at KCS's Shreveport (La.) yard for the unveiling of the first locomotive to be put into operation on the PCRC. In 1998, PCRC, a joint venture of KCS and Mi-Jack, was awarded the contract to operate Panama's only railroad.

The GP10 unit was freshly repainted and renumbered from KCS 1068 to PCRC 1855, acknowledging the year of the founding of the original railroad in Panama. The locomotive features a distinctive yellow, red, and black paint scheme that resembles the original KCS Southern Belle passenger train livery. Its name—City of Colon, highlighting the strategic port city in Panama—is prominently featured in the paint scheme. The unit, built by EMD in 1956 as a GP9 for Illinois Central, was rebuilt by IC into a GP10, and was in the 1908's was transferred to Mid-South Railroad Corp., an IC spinoff regional carrier later purchased by KCS to form its east-west "Transcontinental Route" between Shreveport and Meridian, Miss.

The locomotive was to be shipped to Panama via ocean vessel from the Port of Houston on January 17. Included in the shipment were to be several railroad cars, equipment, and materials that will be used to rebuild the 47.6-mile line across Panama. Construction will begin in February and will be celebrated with a groundbreaking ceremony in Panama. PCRC is expected to be operational by mid-2001.

The engine will be the workhorse that rebuilds the railroad, said KCS President and CEO Mike Haverty, who was on site to inspect the locomotive along with Mi-Jack President Mike Lanigan and PCRC President Dave Starling.

PCRC will provide ocean-to-ocean transshipment service between ports on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans on the railway, which runs parallel to the Panama Canal. The joint venture plans to invest

about \$75 million to rehabilitate the railway, construct terminals and purchase terminal equipment. In its first full year of operation, PCRC is expected to transport 75,000 containers between the Panamanian ports.

TRAINS On-Line, 1/19/00

Citing safety, FRA seeks to end train-horn bans

Under a Federal Railroad Administration rule proposed January 12, communities will no longer be able to enact railroad horn bans unless they take steps to make grade crossings safer.

The quiet zones no doubt improve the quality of life for residents living near the tracks in the nearly 250 communities nationwide that have so-called whistle bans. But the irony is that by aiming to improve the quality of life, the horn-ban communities are courting death.

That's because grade-crossing collisions between trains and vehicles increase 84 percent at crossings where train horns are banned, the FRA says. In 1998, 431 people were killed, and 1303 injured, in 3508 grade-crossing collisions.

"The proposed rule requires train horns because they are effective safety devices to warn drivers and pedestrians of an approaching train," said Federal Railroad Administrator Jolene Molitoris. "At the same time, the rule provides safety criteria for communities wishing to establish quiet zones while keeping crossings safe.

"This isn't just about statistics," she said. "It's about real people." That includes not only the dead motorists, she said, but the "forgotten victims"—the railroad engineers and conductors who are traumatized by seeing the people who are about to die under their locomotive.

The FRA's move was prompted by a law Congress passed in 1994 requiring train horns be sounded when a train approaches and enters a public highway-rail grade crossing unless certain exceptions are met to establish a quiet zone.

Under the FRA proposal, horn bans can be retained or adopted if communities add safety features to affected grade crossings. The measures include the use of four-quadrant gates, medians at crossings to prevent drivers from weaving around gates, crossing closures, or photo enforcement to deter violators. The rule also proposes an upper volume limit for train horns.

So-called wayside horns—stationary horns placed at the crossings themselves and activated by approaching trains—are not among the proposed additional safety measures, but could be added to the list after a public comment period, FRA spokeswoman Pamela Berry says. The effectiveness of wayside horns, which are being tested on Union Pacific, is still being evaluated. Their advantage is that they are quieter than locomotive horns and blow in the direction of traffic, minimizing the impact on neighbors' ears.

The regulation will become effective one year after a final rule is issued, providing communities time to establish quiet zones. The FRA is accepting public comment on the proposed rule through May 26, 2000, and will hold public hearings in Ohio, Massachusetts, Florida, Illinois, Oregon, Indiana, California, and Washington, D.C.

TRAINS On-Line - Bill Stephens 1/19/00

NS begins hauling pig iron to steel mill

As part of a venture with a barge line and logistics company, Norfolk Southern is now hauling pig iron from Naples, Ill., on the Illinois River between Springfield, Ill., and Hannibal, Mo., to a steel mill in Crawfordsville, Ind.

The pig iron, a component in the steel-making process, comes from Brazil and Japan. It enters the U.S. at the Port of New Orleans, and is hauled up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers on American Commercial Barge Line barges to Naples. There, the pig iron is offloaded at a new Consolidated Terminals and Logistics Co. terminal and loaded onto railroad cars on NS's adjacent former Wabash main line.

CSX and Norfolk Southern lease more motive power

CSX and Norfolk Southern have both leased more locomotives, but don't expect to see them on CSX and NS rails anytime soon. The units will be running off horsepower hours that CSX owes Union Pacific and that NS owes Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

CSX and Locomotive Leasing Partners (LLPX) have retained 25 EMD SD70M's that were coming off lease to UP and were being readied for shipment from Roseville, Calif., to dealer VMV at Paducah, Ky.

NS, meanwhile, has leased 46 additional SD40-2 locomotives from CIT Group, which carry subsidiary Capital Equipment Finance Corp. (CEFX) reporting marks. These units were formerly owned by Helm Leasing and were leased to Burlington Northern and later BNSF. The six-month lease began December 18.—*Conrail Technical Society*

TRAINS On-Line, 1/12/00

Construction Projects

Normally this time of year work slows down. However, the nice winter weather has seen some projects continue and some startup. Our workload has increased with a couple of new projects coming to the company.

Norfolk Southern

The big projects are under way. As you have read, Bison Yard is in service and receiving trains. This spring they will construct the yard office and set the light towers. The bids were taken recently and work should begin on some of the projects by early February. Parking lot and building will be later. The double track project between Bellevue and Columbus is under way in two areas. South of Delaware and at Flat Rock grading is complete and most of the track work is done. Our survey crew was to complete the work between Marion and Delaware the third week in January and the railroad planned to show the project to contractors the last week of the month. Grading work should begin, weather permitting, around the middle of February. Capacity is driving this 27-mile double track project.

In Pennsylvania the power plant extension is in preliminary design. In early December the project manager and I spent a Sunday and Monday walking the hills in search of a profile location. Some of the

area had clear-cut trees and this made walking difficult. At the same time, some of the property was not accessible which required us to cross Blackleg Creek to get back. There will be 4 structures on this line, two of them major over a highway and a ravine.

The Scioto project in Columbus has preliminary plans in to the railroad for review by them and ODOT. The bridge project is progressing slow so final plans are not needed for a few months.

In the public project area the bridge at Bryan came down over Thanksgiving with yours truly on the site. At Archbold the contractor is trying to get the track built and by the time you read this the trains should be on the temporary alignment. In Burns Harbor they started taking down the old Route 249 bridge, at Wheeler the project is on hold due to construction problems, at Richmond and Lydick, Indiana the work is on hold until spring and in Cleveland all projects except for I-77 are done.

Holes Creek at West Carrollton went well except the contractor over ran his time by 6 hours. The railroad ran the last train around 10 PM and removed the track by midnight, 2 hours ahead of schedule. The contractor started work on the removing the old bridge and at 5:45 AM they shot the structure. It came down as planned and all went well until roll-in. The procedure started about on time but rolling the bridge some 60 feet caused the 75-foot

structure to become wedged. Rollin took about 4 hours longer than planned and the railroad was not back in service until about 5 AM the next morning, 5 hours past due time.

CSX Transportation

The Lafayette project is on hold for the winter. The contractor was waiting for washers for the retaining wall and then the snow and cold weather hit. Work on the wall and fill should resume when the weather breaks. Wheeler and Garrett are also shut down. The bridge at Wheeler has a construction problem and the modifications are being discussed. The Garrett project shut down for the winter due to roadway work. The bridge is finished except for minor work and painting.

Our newest project is a 7.9-mile double track project in Evansville. CSX will be making changes to the north and south end of Howell Yard. The south lead will be extended south about a half-mile and new crossovers installed. The north end will see new track alignment and crossovers. A new 10,000-foot fueling and inspection track will be built on the west side. North of the yard a second track will be added through town to connect with the Harwood siding. This will require modifications to bridges and new street crossings. Design work will take place this year with the bulk of the work in 2001. Work at Howell will take place this year.

Competing railroad bosses, largest union oppose BNSF-CN combination

In advertisements run January 11, the chairmen of Union Pacific, Canadian Pacific, CSX, and Norfolk Southern stood united against the proposed merger of Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Canadian National into the continent's largest railroad system.

The ads, placed in the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, and the Journal of Commerce, said the merger was premature because of ongoing service problems from

recent mergers. The rail chiefs said that if the merger is approved, they would be forced into defensive mergers that would ultimately create just two major systems.

The chairmen of the four railroads—David Goode of NS, John Snow of CSX, Richard Davidson of UP and Robert Richie of CP—state in the ads, “We have serious concerns with the potential impact of the BNSF-CN merger on the future structure of the rail industry. We agree with the Surface Transportation Board that the BNSF-CN proposal may trigger another round of railroad consolidations, resulting in two large rail systems serving North America. History teaches that this will happen.”

BNSF and CN rejected the contentions of the four chairmen and said they will prove to the board that their combination will provide an efficient, high level of service that will benefit shippers while still maintaining two operating companies over a common network.

“This is not a situation where a parallel competitor is eliminated, an existing railroad is divided, or key personnel eliminated,” said BNSF Chairman Robert D. Krebs and CN Chairman Paul Tellier in a joint news release.

“Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern and CSX have struggled to implement their recent combinations and have damaged the credibility of all railroads to meet their customer needs,” they said. “BNSF and CN shouldn't be penalized because they are now the competitive leaders.”

Surface Transportation Board Chairman Linda Morgan told Don Phillips, the Washington Post's transportation reporter and a *TRAINS* columnist, that shippers must make their wishes known because the merger proposal places the industry at a crossroads that will determine its future. “If it [the CN-BNSF merger] plays itself out to the endgame that some feel it will, this is the final round,” she said. “At the other end, there will be no more [mergers].”

Also January 11, the United Transportation Union announced it is opposing the merger, becoming the first rail union to do so, said Charles Little, its

international president. Little told an annual meeting of the union's international officers that North America's largest rail transportation union will “continue in the U.S. to oppose this merger.”

Little cited the BNSF's “availability policy” for train crews and the carrier's “serious problems with rail labor” as one of the reasons behind the UTU's opposition. He also raised concerns about the future management structure of the merged CN-BNSF.

TRAINS On-Line, 1/12/00

Shippers rail against CSX, Norfolk Southern service

Two very different views of the Eastern rail service problems emerged at a Conrail Shippers Forum held January 11 in Philadelphia, proving that sometimes ugly can be in the eye of the beholder. The forum, sponsored by the Conrail Transaction Council, was held in the former Reading Company station that now serves as a convention center.

Officials from CSX and Norfolk Southern acknowledged that service woes stemming from the June 1 breakup of Conrail continue to plague them. They said, however, that all indications—from increasing average train speed to decreasing terminal dwell time—point toward a service recovery in former Conrail territory as well as on their original systems.

Shippers were skeptical. Many of the 300 shippers in attendance—fed up with unpredictable service, lost and delayed cars, and transit times that have doubled in some cases—said they were frustrated by the railroads' inability to pinpoint exactly when service would improve to pre-merger levels. “If you're not going to be able to get back to Conrail service levels, you need to tell us that,” said Doug Kratzberg, a manager for Exxon Mobil.

Citing how a fundamentally changed rail system makes it difficult to make accurate predictions, railroad officials did not give anticipated recovery dates until pressed

by shippers. Clarence Gooden, CSX Transportation's system vice president, said his railroad should reach pre-merger service levels by March 31. Tony Ingram, northern region general manager for NS, was less specific. "We are just now getting to the point where we can set goals," he said. "We don't know what we will be able to give you going forward."

The National Industrial Transportation League, the country's largest shipper group, released the results of a shipper survey that gave the railroads low marks. No shipper considered service to be good since November 1. Lost and delayed shipments ranked as the most frequently cited problem, with 92 percent experiencing delays on NS and 90 percent on CSX. Average transit times on both railroads, in an October 1999 vs. October 1998 comparison, jumped from 8 days to about 13 days. The service woes forced 85 percent of the survey respondents to shift business to trucks.

Shippers identified NS's main problem areas as Buffalo, N.Y., Elkhart, Ind., Chicago, Conway Yard near Pittsburgh, Roanoke, Va., Decatur, Ill., and both of the New Jersey shared assets areas. CSX's prime trouble spots, shippers said, were Chicago, Selkirk (Albany) and Buffalo, N.Y., and Toledo and Willard, Ohio. In other surveys, shippers said CSX service is now worse than Norfolk Southern's.

CSX and NS say they've improved service since the survey was conducted. Indeed, NS's performance measures have been improving in steps since the rollout of new computer systems began in former Conrail territory, and particularly since October 15. CSX, which weathered an exceptionally heavy fall traffic peak, began recovering in December. "We pulled it off without locking up," said Tom Schoenleben, CSX assistant vice president for marketing strategy and support, referring to the gridlock that Union Pacific faced in Texas in 1997. Significantly, both CSX and NS posted failure-free intermodal service for United Parcel Service's holiday shipping peak between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Nonetheless, the railroaders acknowledged that service improvements were

spotty, and that reaching train velocity and terminal dwell time goals was no guarantee that service everywhere would be acceptable.

Shippers knew that from experience, and trotted out some horror stories:

+ A Kentucky to Pennsylvania shipment of scrap metal got to within 8 miles of its destination, only to be misrouted on a journey through several states.

+ A gondola loaded with scrap metal was shipped in August to a destination just 9 miles away, only to be returned to the shipper in December, still loaded.

+ A Cleveland metals firm had 50 carloads of scrap sold by CSX after the railroad couldn't determine who owned the loads. "This shouldn't have happened," Schoenleben said.

+ A bi-level auto rack loaded at the Subaru-Isuzu America plant at Lafayette, Ind., on October 15 and bound for Selkirk, N.Y., went through Selkirk and wound up in Canada. By January 7, it still had not been delivered. Overall, transit times for automobile shipments have doubled in the East, according to the automakers' trade group.

+ Intermodal marketing companies, which sell third-party intermodal service, sold customers on the benefits of the merger, which promised to take a million trucks off highways annually. Instead, they've been disappointed as rail shipments are diverted to highway and highway-to-rail diversions have yet to materialize due to poor service.

+ Printer R.R. Donnelley said only 2 of the 170 boxcars of paper it received in December from NS at its Lancaster, Pa., plant were on time. "If you do TV Guide a week late, it's no good," said the company's Wade R. Smith.

Several shippers said the railroads' performance measures—such as average train speed, terminal dwell time, and cars on-line—should include goals and objectives. Without them, shippers are left to wonder how close service improvement lies. "They don't mean jack to me," one shipper quipped.

CSX's average system velocity goal is 19.5 mph; NS's is 20.4. Both railroads emphasized that they are making significant progress, and noted actions planned or already made to improve service.

In December, CSX rolled out a simplified operating plan that stole a page from the Conrail playbook. Conrail had used Elkhart to hump (sort) westbound traffic and Conway to hump eastbound traffic. Both those yards went to NS, however. So now CSX is using its Willard Yard, on the double-tracked former B&O Chicago line, to hump westbound cars. It humps eastbound cars at Cumberland, Md., particularly those bound for Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Jersey. The changes have eased the burden on Selkirk, the key yard in eastern New York State, which has been strained by CSX receiving 70 percent of the business out of the North Jersey Shared Assets Area. Combined, these changes have clipped two to three days off transit times, Gooden says.

This year, CSX will invest \$80 million in capacity improvement projects, including adding three sidings to the River Line along the Hudson between Selkirk and North Jersey and two on the Philadelphia Subdivision between Philly and Baltimore. New sidings or crossovers are also going in on the old West Point Route between Atlanta and Montgomery, Ala., and the former L&N between Chicago and Nashville, Tenn. With the operating changes and pending capacity improvements, "We feel very positive," Gooden says.

NS has refined its operating plan to bypass bottlenecks such as Allentown, Pa., and Decatur, Ill., and is working on changes to improve operations at Hagerstown, Md., Roanoke, Va., and Linwood, N.C., north of Charlotte. On the Penn Route, NS's main line between Chicago and New Jersey, improved fluidity restored Amtrak on-time performance to pre-merger levels in December. NS also has eased volumes at Elkhart and solved the problem of double-classifying some shipments at Conway. Improvements in Buffalo, including the opening of a rebuilt Bison Yard and the leasing of a yard from regional carrier Buffalo & Pittsburgh, have made traffic flows current on the Southern

Tier route between Buffalo and North Jersey, and improved local service and interchange in Buffalo, Ingram said. The railroad doesn't have plans at this time, however, to add trains to the underutilized Southern Tier route, he said.

NS has a host of capacity improvement projects under way. Those, combined with new computer systems that provide accurate car data, mean NS is in position to exploit the potential of its new system. "Make no mistake," says Walter Trollinger, NS vice president of distribution and automotive service. "The new NS is a fantastic franchise."

TRAINS On Line, Bill Stephens 1/12/00

Historical society aims to save, relocate Griffith (Ind.) tower

Since its closure on December 31, 1999, Griffith tower, at the junction of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern and Canadian National (Grand Trunk Western) lines in Griffith, Ind., has stood as a silent sentinel to a fading era of railroading. On January 12, people interested in saving one of the remaining 177 or so towers still standing in North America met to plot their strategy, reports the Hammond-Gary Post-Tribune.

The tower was donated by the EJ&E to the Griffith Historical Society, which is setting out to raise the money needed to move it across the tracks to a new home at the Griffith Historical Park and Depot Museum, housed in the relocated former GTW depot. "It's going to take more than bake sales to save the tower," Historical Society President Delores Smessaert told the newspaper. EJ&E and GTW are contributing \$10,000 each, money the railroads would have spent to tear down the structure.

The local historical group must move the tower by July 31, or lose it. Once it's moved, it will sit in the same public park as the refurbished depot, two EJ&E ca-

booses. and a 1943 Pullman troop sleeper. Tim Latko, vice president of the group, said it's going to take more than the moral support of the community to come up with the remaining \$38,000 needed.

TRAINS On-Line, 1/19/00

Runaway CSX coal train derails on 17-Mile Grade, killing teenager at home

A 10,000-ton CSX coal train barreled down 17 Mile Grade on the old Baltimore & Ohio line from West Virginia at 55 mph on January 30 before derailling and plowing into a house in Bloomington, Md., killing a teenager inside. The track speed limit in the area is 25 mph.

"We have initial speeds of event recorders at 55 to 56 miles per hour, but we do not yet have that confirmed as the actual speed," said National Transportation Safety Board Rail Safety Engineer Russell G. Quimby.

NTSB laboratory analysis of locomotive recorder data was to be completed soon. "Until the lab confirms data on the recorders, we are looking at several causes and what caused the train to attain that speed," Quimby said. Among the factors the NTSB is investigating: train handling by the three-man crew, weather conditions, and possible mechanical failure.

CSX train V986-26, a loaded coal train from Grafton, W. Va., to Herbert, Md., was led by former Conrail SD80MAC 806, Burlington Northern SD70MAC 9481, and CSX SD60 8666. All but four of the train's 80 cars derailed near the base of the 2.4 percent grade. The locomotives remained on the rails; the crew was unhurt.

The 7:20 a.m. derailment demolished a home near the tracks that was occupied by Eugene Liller, 32; Amanda Liller, 13; Libby A. Holstein, 35; Brandy N. Holstein, 18, and Eddie Rogers, 15, the Cumberland (Md.) Times-News reported. Rogers was killed, and his mother, Libby Holstein, suffered a broken leg. The family was able

to climb out of the house after the wreck, but Rogers remained missing in the debris for 12 hours.

TRAINS On-Line, 2/2/00

Illinois delegation sounds alarm over FRA's train horn proposal

House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, R.-Ill., has blasted the Federal Railroad Administration's proposal to ban community locomotive horn bans.

"This bureaucratic approach is a classic example of a 'Washington knows best' philosophy that shows profound disrespect to the good work being conducted at the state level," John McGovern, a spokesman for Hastert, told the Chicago Sun-Times.

Staffers for Hastert, Rep. William O. Lipinski, Rep. Judy Biggert, and several other members of the Illinois delegation have met with FRA officials to discuss the proposed rule, which was announced January 17.

"This will save lives," said FRA spokeswoman Pamela Barry. Indeed, studies have shown that grade crossing accidents jump more than 80 percent at crossings covered by horn bans.

Illinois has by far the most local bans on train whistles, nearly all of them in the Chicago area. "We are organizing a plan of action to come up with a better solution," said Michael McLaughlin, an aide to Lipinski.

Much of the concern is over the cost of required safety improvements and how much the federal and state governments will pay. Greg Harshaw of the FRA said there is a "false assumption" that all the solutions had to be costly. He said his agency will offer technical expertise to local governments.

TRAINS On-Line, 2/2/00

Amtrak News

Amtrak signs up for 350 reefers

Amtrak has signed a 15-year agreement with ExpressTrak, LLC to add as many as 350 rebuilt refrigerated boxcars to ExpressTrak's service moving perishable commodities in cars attached to regularly scheduled Amtrak passenger trains.

ExpressTrak has successfully test marketed its new concept for more than 15 months, using dry and refrigerated RoadRailer vans for the service. The 57-foot refrigerated boxcars are being secured and rebuilt by ExpressTrak, with the first examples to go in service by April 2000. Volume production of the cars is slated for third quarter 2000, at the rate of about one car a day.

George Warrington, president and CEO of Amtrak, and Robert A. Walker, chairman of privately held ExpressTrak, said the expanded ExpressTrak service will help Amtrak more fully utilize its infrastructure and new facilities and generate additional revenue in line with Amtrak's business plan objectives.

R. Franklin Unger, president of ExpressTrak, projects that the investment in rebuilt cars will pay for itself in a short time due to the high demand for expedited service. ExpressTrak specializes in moving temperature-sensitive commodities such as fresh fruits and vegetables from centers such as Jacksonville, Los Angeles, and Oakland, to major cities, primarily east of Chicago.

Because perishables will move at passenger-train speeds, up to 90 mph, on tight, consistent schedules, the service will ensure fresh delivery for buyers in distant markets. In addition, commodities move most efficiently over land by rail. Amtrak trains can conveniently expand in length and remain fuel efficient, making the new ExpressTrak service environmentally friendly. Local truck cartage is used to bring commodities to intermodal and trans-loading centers where they are loaded into the refrigerated boxcars. At the destination city, the cargo is transferred to trucks for local delivery. About three truck-

loads of perishable commodities can be carried in each box car.

ExpressTrak, which is currently in operation using Amtrak facilities in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Jacksonville, plans—in some cases partnering with Amtrak—to develop facilities in Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland, Salinas, and Bakersfield, Calif.; Portland, Ore., and Seattle. Plans also call for additional facilities in Toronto; Springfield, Mass., and the New York area. Facilities will also be developed to serve markets such as Harrisburg, Pa., Albany, N.Y., Sanford, Fla., Toledo, Ohio, and Grand Rapids, Mich.

ExpressTrak was formed in 1999 in Detroit by Walker, formerly vice-president, corporate with Canadian National, and Unger, formerly an independent railroad trustee.

Amtrak mail and express revenue booming

Amtrak's growing mail and express business ("M&E") achieved \$98 million in revenue in fiscal year 1999, which ran from October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999, an 18 percent increase over fiscal year 1998 when it earned \$83 million. M&E showed particular strength in the final two months of the fiscal year, as additional equipment has permitted Amtrak to meet the growing demand for this service

The express portion of Amtrak's business (the expedited transportation of time-sensitive shipments) grew by 93 percent in FY 1999, as Amtrak formed strategic alliances with freight railroads including Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Norfolk Southern, as well as with companies such as Mark VII and with premium motor carriers such as Swift.

Amtrak's mail business revenue, primarily the movement of periodicals for United States Postal Service, grew by 9 percent in FY 1999 as Amtrak expanded its service offering to include more direct service to the Area Distribution Centers of USPS, which is Amtrak's largest commercial customer.

M&E facilities around the nation were expanded to accommodate the growth, with new built in Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, Springfield, Mass., and Harris-

burg, Pa. Numerous additional M&E facilities will go on line in FY 2000 and several current facilities will undergo expansion.

Amtrak operates a variety of equipment to meet the full range of expedited service needed by its M&E customers, with the board of directors recently having approved acquisition of 200 more RoadRailers and 100 new Express boxcars. These will be added to the current fleet of 456 RoadRailers and 250 boxcars. Further, more than 200 privately owned RoadRailers are now qualified to operate on Amtrak trains

Amtrak News Releases & TRAINS On-Line

Programs and Articles

You will note in the last two issues we have had some programs advertised in advance. We thank those individuals that volunteered to give a program and thank them for letting me know in advance.

Now for articles and news. You will also note that many of the news items come from Internet sources. Why? Well, most of the reason is quick turnaround of the event to get the news to you. But the real reason is the time, or lack thereof, your editor has to produce each issue.

Work load over the past 3 years has increased as I have made you aware. This past 6 months we have had more rail work than ever before. I am involved in the marketing group for URS Corporation and am responsible for marketing CSX and NS. This will take me to both of their offices a couple times a year. In addition, we are now, or will be involved in projects from various offices from New Orleans to Denver to points east. The result is lack of time to pursue my one hobby, building a train layout. All I ask is that local members send some news of the railroad scene, via mail or e-mail, to help with the newsletter.

Thanks, Rick Schroeder

PS - We could use some additional programs and advance billing.

Rossville Roundhouse Construction

Member Jesse Bennett contributed the following photos, which were loaned to him by the Rossville Historical Society. The entire series will span this issue of the FLYER and the next. The images show the construction of the EJ&E roundhouse south of Rossville, Illinois between 1912 and 1913. These facilities were used by EJ&E coal trains that traversed the C&EI to reach the coal mines of Central Illinois and Central Indiana. Not only were engines serviced here, but also the coal hoppers. It was the only "off line" facility owned by the EJ&E, some 100 miles south of their homerails. The C&EI was the only way for the EJ&E to reach a plentiful coal supply for the steel mills of the Chicago area, and Rossville was about the midpoint of these runs.

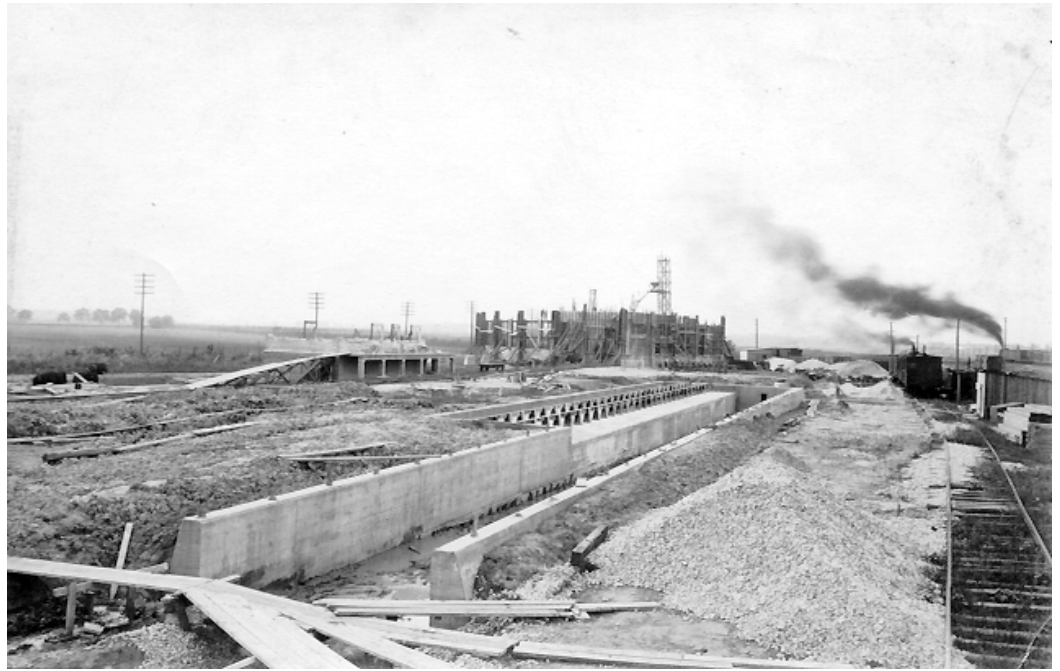
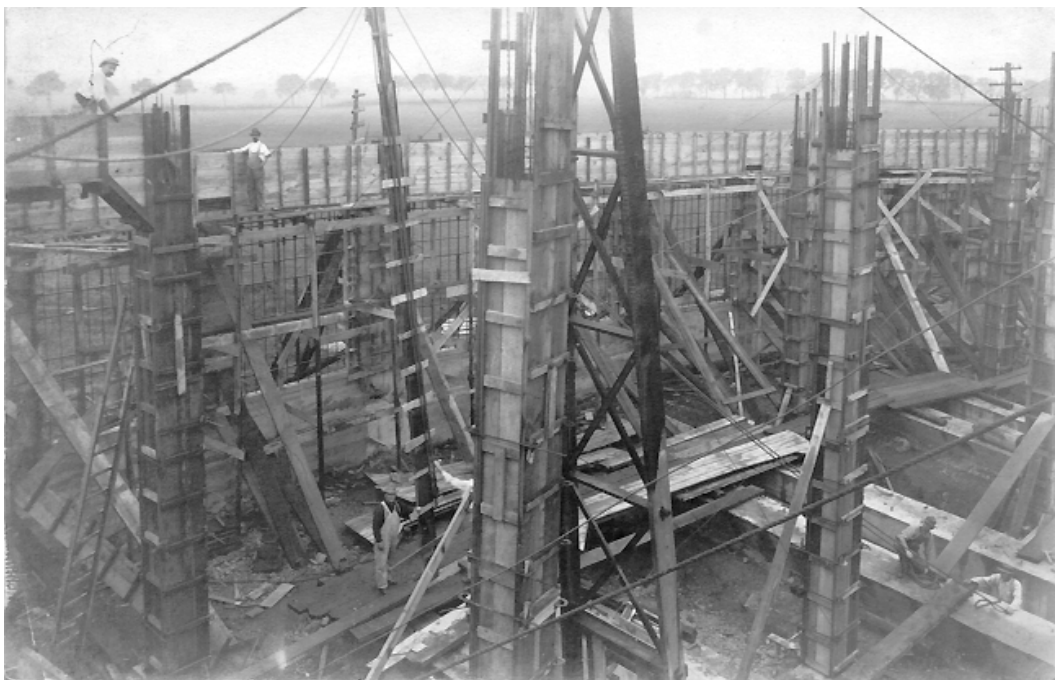
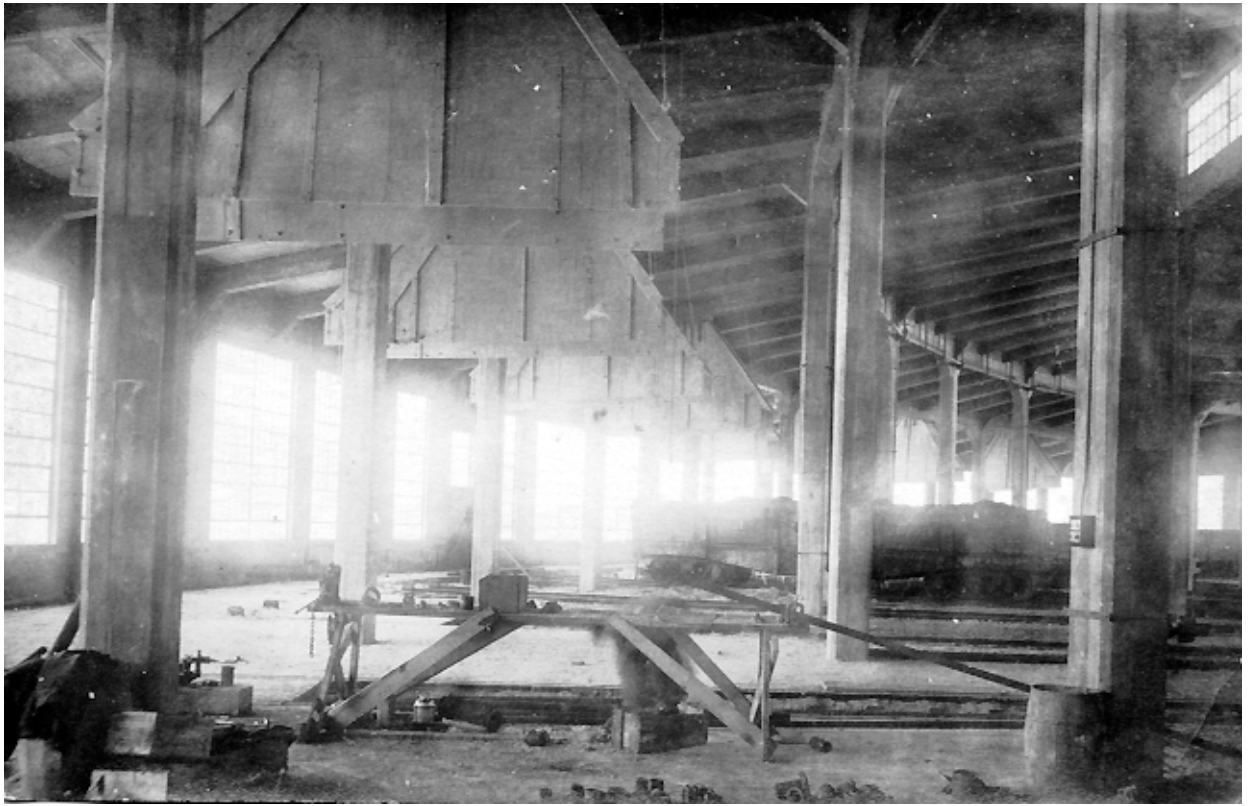


Photo above taken in late summer of 1912. The ash pit has been constructed and the supporting ironwork for rails has been installed. The oil and supply house foundation and platform have been completed and a few courses of blocks have been laid to the window sill level. Steel window and door framing is in place. The roundhouse column forms are in place and some pouring of concrete has started. Note the C&EI train backing cars into the siding.

Below, we see a scene taken from the #1 stall on 9-17-1912. Forms for the support columns are up as well as re-bars. The rear walls at the end of the stalls have been poured up to the top window sill line. The casement window frames are in place as well.





Above: Photo dated 1-29-1913 show the roof deck has been poured, window glazing is in place, and they are outfitting with smokejacks as well as air and steam lines. Some of the electrical has been installed.

Below: Outside view of the nearly completed roundhouse with 80 foot turntable in place. Some fill is present around the pit ring. Tracks are laid in for stalls 1-7. New water tower has been installed, but no well drilled yet.

