

DANVILLE FLYER

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**FEBRUARY 16TH
MONTHLY MEETING
AT JOCKO'S PIZZA BE-
GINNING AT 1:00 PM.
PROGRAM ON SWIT-
ZERLAND TRIP BY
DICK BRAZDA.**

MARCH 7 TH— ROS-
SVILLE DEPOT MUSEUM
OPERATING SESSION,
BEGINS AT 1:00 PM

MARCH 28TH 10:00
AM TO 6:00 PM AND
MARCH 29TH, 11:00 AM
TO 4:00 PM. ANNUAL
MODEL TRAIN SHOW AT
LINCOLN SQUARE SPON-
SORED BY THE ILLINOIS
TERMINAL DIV, NMRA.

Another Call for High-Speed Rail—New York

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo yesterday proposed a new plan for developing high-speed rail service on Amtrak's Empire Corridor in New York. Cuomo will task a panel of engineers to reexamine past high-speed rail plans and recommend a new plan for how to build high-speed rail for the corridor, which connects the state through New York City, Albany and Buffalo.

Most of the state's population lives a short distance from the Empire Corridor, where speeds along the rail lines currently average 51 mph, which makes the area the slowest available for New Yorkers, according to a press release issued by Cuomo's office.

"High-speed rail is transforming economies around the world. We've been told that bringing this technology to our state is too expensive, too difficult and would take too long — that's not an acceptable attitude for New York," Cuomo said.

Previous New York governors — including Cuomo's father, Gov. Mario Cuomo — had proposed high-speed rail plans that never came to fruition. Recommendations to implement high-speed rail across the state, which have not changed much over the past two decades, have consistently estimated that projects would take decades and be unaffordable.

The new panel will review those past studies, as well as strategies in other countries have used to build high-speed rail, to develop new recommendations for the state.

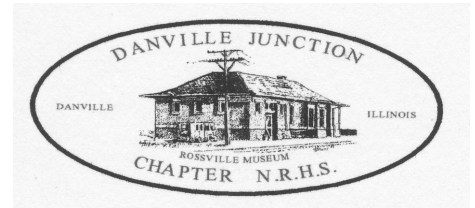
Progressive Railroading 12-27

Editor: As one person commented: "I could dig out a study from around 2001, including our speed table milepost by milepost. The corridor has potential but needs upgrades and separation from freight (underline is my comment) where possible." So, I think all of you are aware of the plans for 110 mph trains from Chicago to St. Louis. In 2009 IDOT received a \$1.95 billion dollar grant to rehab the former GM&O, not Union Pacific, between the two cities to increase speed from 79 mph to 110 mph. So far one section north of Pontiac is up to 110 mph, but south to St. Louis it is still 79 mph. While working for URS we got a contract to redesign all grade crossings for quad gates for the entire route and in some cases close crossings. That work along with track upgrades has been completed in 2015 and 2017. Today they are still working on getting PTC installed and operating not only for Amtrak but for UP and other carriers that use any of the tracks. By this summer they expect to have the segment south of Springfield to near St. Louis up to 90 mph. The new Siemens Chargers are in service, geared for 125 mph, but the cars are not and won't be delivered for several years due to other issues. The University of Illinois did a study for high-speed service from the Loop to Champaign, Decatur and on to St. Louis and the estimate is some \$22-39 billion. So, New York has a long way to go and Gov. Cuomo will probably find out once again the cost is too high. Illinois has been 10 years in the making and not done yet (and the Union Pacific now has a high speed new track segment to run stack trains on).

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 anyone 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 2020—our 52nd Year

Henry Schmitt – President
 Doug Butzow – Vice President
 Dick Brazda– Secretary
 Doug Nipper– Treasurer
 Dave Sherrill – Programs
 Jess Bennett – Historian
 Bob Gallippi – Museum Director
 Rick Schroeder – Editor & NRHS rep
 Cooke Wireless, LLC - Publisher & Distributor



The Saluki and Illini To and From Memphis?

Extending Illinois-sponsored trains from Carbondale, Ill., to Memphis, Tenn., and establishing a route between Nashville and Atlanta were ideas suggested by an Amtrak representative to a Tennessee legislative committee this week.

As first reported in the Nashville Tennessean, Amtrak Senior Director of Government Affairs Ray Lang's appearance Tuesday before the Tennessee House Transportation Committee was meant to kick off conversations with states and communities that currently have little or no Amtrak service as discussions with Congress over the company's reauthorization begin.

Amtrak President Richard Anderson and Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer Stephen Gardner have repeatedly said that they want to begin serving shorter-distance corridors with fast, frequent daytime trains, but a major impediment is the lack of federal operating and capital funds under current Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act provisions.

(Continued on page 6)

2020 — January Meeting Minutes

The Jan. 19, 2020, meeting opened at 1349 at Jockos.

There were no corrections to the secretary's report.

Expenses included postage, PO box rent and utilities totaling \$453 for the 2 month period. Income included dues, sales and donations of \$410. Closing balance is \$5981.48. Currently there are 29 members.

For 2019, income totaled \$3267. Expenses for the year were \$3419.63, for a net loss of \$152.13.

Skylar has received gaskets for the motor car and will begin installing them. After that work will proceed on the head gasket.

The Urbana train show will be March 28-29, 2020. The chapter will receive one free table and will pay \$30 for a second one. The next operating session will be Feb. 2.

Henry mentioned the possibility of a spring trip, if anyone has ideas. The Vermillion Valley has invited the chapter again, this time **for the April meeting**. The VV also had a nice article in the Vermillion advantage magazine.

The meeting was adjourned at 1402.

Nickel Plate Express Trip—11-2019



Club members Dick Brazda, Jack Enos, Dave Sherrill, Skylar Brown, Aden Barron, and Henry Schmitt with friend Nick Roderick rode on Nickel Plate Express from Atlanta In, south of Tipton, to the north side of Noblesville and back. It was an hour and a half round trip. We were served a free donut and orange juice, water, or coffee. We rode in the upper deck of a former Santa Fe coach. The train was pulled south by a F unit that was reconditioned at Vermillion Valley shops near Covington. A small 1940's style GE engine was on lead end on the train north.

After the train ride, the group visited Mr. Muffin's large O Gauge layout in Atlanta. There were twenty five plus trains running and many more engines and cars on the walls. There is much scenery and several levels. The layout is still being expanded. Then, we visited an O Gauge retail train shop in Atlanta. There was also a small train swap meet at Atlanta's community center, mostly O Gauge.

The group ate pizza next to the Old Nickel Plate tracks in Tipton. On the way home, we followed the Norfolk Southern (formerly the Nickel Plate) from Tipton to Frankfort, In. This line use to go to St Louis through Veedersburg and Cayuga In. We went past the old Nickel Plate falling down round house and turntable on the west side of Frankfort.

The Nickel Plate Express is having good ridership and hope to fix tracks to downtown Noblesville. They have several children themed train rides and a few adult type food and drink trips.



Driving the Chapter and Museum

By Doug Nipper

No, the title of this article isn't about golf. It's about the movers and shakers that the club has had over the years. Maybe some of them would better be served by the phrase: "The squeaky wheel gets the grease." That seems to be the way that some of the "Drivers" operate.

Before I joined, I know that Rick Schroeder was a big driver of the club in its early years. Along with guys like Dave Sherrill, Jesse Bennett and others, they built the museum above the tavern in Catlin and started a couple of model railroads, one of them being Rick's O-scale setup. And of course I have to mention that other than the very early days and a few years when I was editor, Rick has done the newsletter for most of the 52 volumes that have been issued!

Going back to when I joined the Chapter, the late Stan Chausse was a huge driver. Stan was a classic member of the "Greatest Generation", but I don't think he ever served in the military in any capacity. However, he was still a guy that knuckled down and got things done. Ever wonder how the ceiling got installed in the baggage room? That was Stan's project, and quite a few members helped him with it. However, on the balconies on either side of the entry door into the baggage room, Stan built them by himself while he was in his mid-60's. We all worried about him at the time, but he got it done.

On the administrative side, Stan was always looking out for the club. His knowledge of how things work in the business world got us a couple of grants from the Gannet Foundation, parent of the Commercial-News local newspaper at the time. This allowed us to get the banisters back up on the back platform. It also helped with the cost of replacing the soffit around the building and installing vents in the new material. I thought of Stan as a mentor, and still practice his way of doing the treasurer's job.

After Stan died, we had kind of a lull in the drivers phenomenon. Not to say that others didn't kick in a lot of time and effort, but they didn't stick out as squeaky wheels. One that came along in the mid-90's was Bill Sandusky, also now deceased unfortunately. Were it not for him "complaining" to Bob Gallippi all the time, we would not have a permanent fur-

nace in the baggage/model railroad room. Those of us that recall heating with oil stoves and smelly, kerosene-fueled salamander "jets" certainly appreciate that!

Allen Cooke, our treasurer for many years before he moved out east, was another big driver in the group. Always taking care of the funds, and also doing things like stocking the refrigerator each spring. In 1998, he spearheaded the effort to have our meetings changed to Sunday afternoon at Jocko's. We last met at the Cooke Business Products office in November of 1997, and even then a few times after the switch when they didn't get our reservation recorded in the book they keep for such things. But it was a good move in the end, and increased our attendance greatly. Most of the passenger equipment that still resides on the layout belonged to Allen, and he generously donated it all to us. Some stuff we sold, and that helps with the bottom line. He enjoyed coming up on weekends to help staff the museum, and running his passenger trains. We ought to run one or two in our operating sessions to re-live those days sometime.

Bob and Doug Butzow spearheaded the construction of the dispatcher's panel on the work desk in the layout room. This was before DCC was in place, and they worked out a way to have a set of rotary block switches on that panel that still allowed the main panel to operate. Doug has also been our go-to guy for structural work, like roof repair and platform drain renovation. And Bob, well, where would we be without Bob? His most recent project was re-doing the water service into the building. It was quite an endeavor, and we maybe don't appreciate something so "mundane". But without heat full-time in the depot, we have no choice but to shut water off in the winter months, and Bob's work made that a lot easier. His work on the train order signal foundation was also a huge effort.

Quite a few people also stepped up to help when the windows got broken two years ago, but it was Bob who had the time to get new glass put in the frames while the boards were over the window openings. His branch project on the layout also made for a real enhancement to the visual aspect of the pike.

Of course, on the other side of this equation are the "Resistors", those that resist change. I have been somewhere between the drivers and resistors, and count as one of my own accomplishments the conversion of the layout to DCC, with dual-mode capability. LED lights (and panel indicators)



are also a passion of mine, and that's something I've tried to make happen over time.

Someone I have to mention as a recent driver is Henry Schmitt, our current President. Henry was largely inactive when he was still working, but in retirement he has become active again, and thank goodness! We needed some fresh ideas and a new take on things, which he provided. The 50 year picnic was all his idea, implementation and expense. He shows up for every meeting and always has an agenda to work with.

So in summary, it's been a pleasure to work with all the fine members of the group over the years. I'm afraid that the club "phenomenon" is dying, since many young people don't want to join clubs. But we'll keep it going as long as we can, and maybe some of them will come around.

Oh, and many of the drivers not mentioned above, well, their names are on the memorial plaque at Rossville. Look at it sometime and think of the guys that have gone before us, but made a mark in the railway preservation movement. All of our names will be on it eventually...

Second Section—

OmniTRAX has announced that its Illinois Railway has become one of the first short lines to implement fully-functional positive train control.

'We are delighted to be a first mover on PTC in the short line industry and are making our railroad even safer than it already was', said CEO Kevin Shuba on October 24.

Three IR locomotives have been fitted with Wabtec PTC equipment, which communicates with lineside units on BNSF tracks that are shared with Chicago commuter operator Metra between Aurora and Eola.

A grant awarded under the Federal Railroad Administration's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements programme covered 70% of the cost of deployment, which was completed in less than a year.

'The PTC system on the IR is state-of-the-art for a short line railroad and will work to keep the citizens of the area safe while enabling our customers to continue efficiently moving their freight', said Chief Operating Officer Sergio Sabatini.

Union Pacific has completed the implementation of Positive Train Control on all sections of its network where federal rules require the safety system to be deployed.

'PTC is one of the biggest rail industry breakthroughs, designed to keep our crews and communities safer through technology', said Greg Richardson, General Director, Operating Systems & Practices, on December 16.

'While Union Pacific began its first PTC operations nearly four years ago, we have now completed our initial implementation and continue supporting other railroads in our mutual efforts to achieve interoperability and safely operate on our rail lines.'

Union Pacific currently hosts 25 freight and passenger operators which must achieve PTC interoperability by December 2020. So far 16 are compliant, encompassing 85% of Union Pacific's interoperable PTC train-km.

Union Pacific said it would 'continue working with partner railroads on their interoperability efforts' to reach full interoperability by mid-2020.

Both via Railway Gazette 2020

APRIL 19TH MEETING WILL BE OUR ANNUAL RIDE ON THE VERMILION VALLEY RAILROAD. MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW.

Mergers?

Class I railroad mergers are not the sure path to efficiency gains that they once were within the industry. So says Canadian National President and CEO JJ Ruest at the winter meeting of the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers in Lombard on Thursday.

Ruest notes that as the entire industry has lowered its operating ratio, realizing gains from mergers becomes difficult. He gives the example that merger savings could be realized by acquiring a railroad with higher operating costs, and then realizing gains by rolling out the cheaper operating structure across the larger property. Now that most railroads have adopted some form of PSR, the returns of mergers have

(Continued on page 7)

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Trains

Southern California's San Bernardino County Transportation Authority has awarded Stadler a contract to supply a Flirt H2 hydrogen fuel cell powered multiple-unit to enter passenger service in 2024, with an option for a further four units.

Stadler said the contract announced on November 14 was 'a major milestone in bringing zero-emission passenger rail technology to the USA'.

The Flirt H2 unit will have two cars with a total of 108 seats and 'generous' standing room, plus a central power module holding the fuel cells and the hydrogen tanks. It will have a maximum speed of 79 mile/h (127 km/h), the federal limit above which additional signalling systems are required.

It is to be deployed on the Redlands Passenger Rail Project, a 14.5 km passenger service which is being developed on a former Santa Fe freight railway alignment between the University of Redlands and the Metrolink commuter rail station in San Bernardino.

In 2017 SBCFTA ordered three diesel-electric Flirt units for the line, which is currently being built by Flatiron Construction Corp. The 'Arrow' branded service is expected to launch in late 2021.

The order for a hydrogen unit 'is an excellent example of how we are demonstrating our commitment to the next generation', said SBCFTA President Darcy

McNaboe. "The hydrogen Flirt will help us address the commuting needs of today while preserving our environment for a better tomorrow."

'Stadler is committed to designing and building green technology for the transportation industry', added Martin Ritter, CEO of Stadler US Inc. "We have an excellent relationship with SBCFTA, and it is a great honour to partner with them to bring the first hydrogen-powered train to the USA."

From the Railway Gazette 1-20



(Continued from page 2)

The company has yet to publicly unveil specific changes it seeks in new legislation, but is making outreach efforts to enlist future support from states now underserved by outlining what routes might be viable, Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari tells Trains News Wire.

"We are also talking to current state partners regarding how additional frequencies might be implemented," says Magliari.

He notes that the day-time southbound Chicago-Carbondale, Ill., Saluki and northbound Illini would be relatively easy to extend because trained

Amtrak crews already run the overnight City of New Orleans on the same Canadian National tracks. But the states of Kentucky and Tennessee would have to shoulder any additional operating, equipment, and rail infrastructure costs because the route is under 750 miles.

For possible service to Atlanta, Lang told the legislators that new Tennessee stations would have to be constructed in Nashville, Murfreesboro, Tullahoma, and Chattanooga and the state "could be on the hook for several million dollars a year" in operating expense.

Intercity trains stopped at Nashville's former Union Station, now a hotel, until Amtrak discontinued the Chicago-Miami Floridian in October 1979 budget cuts, but the company never operated regular service over CSX Transportation's ex-Louisville and Nashville rails to Atlanta. That 285-mile route was last served in 1971 by a coach-only remnant of the line's overnight Georgian, which was scheduled for a seven-hour trip.

"This is the first we're seeing of this," CSX State Government and Community Affairs VP Jane Covington told the committee members. The Tennessean reported that she understood Amtrak was there "to simply gauge the state's interest," but Covington warned the lawmakers that "introducing passenger trains to heavily used freight lines will be a complex, costly process," and, "we want to make sure you do it in a way (that) doesn't backfire and divert freight off the rails and onto the highway."

TRAINS On-Line 1-21



Freight Cars Moving to Storage

As Precision Scheduled Railroading sweeps the rail industry its effect is also being felt throughout the rail supply industry. Around 408,000 North American freight cars are stored. Some of that is attributed to a 5.1 percent decline in traffic in 2019, but some can also be attributed to the operational changes coming from the implementation of Precision Scheduled Railroading by Class I railroads, says Greenbrier Cos. President and Chief Operating Officer Lorrie Tekorius. PSR can be critical to the need for freight cars: A 1 mph change in overall velocity can affect 50,000 railcars as fewer or more are needed to meet demands. Industrywide, rail velocity is up 3.7 mph compared with 2018.

The outlook for railcar construction in 2020 and 2021 is considerably lower, according to projections by FTR Transportation Intelligence, as cited by Tekorius. As a whole, car-builders are projected to produce around 38,200 units in 2020 and 35,825 units in 2021. That is down considerably from 50,803 units built in 2018 and 82,296 units built in 2015. The losses are expected to come out of coal, intermodal, and box-car production.

However, there are some bright spots, she says. Energy-related tank cars – crude oil, ethanol, and propane – are being pulled from storage in early 2020, showing a possible market change in those markets.

Union Pacific President and CEO Lance Fritz mentioned company assets, and specifically freight cars, as key component of implementing the railroad's "Unified Plan 2020," its program for PSR.

Union Pacific's network now sees about 6.8 freight cars per carload generated, which is a historic low rate because PSR has brought a fundamental shift in railcar needs. "For us, it's probably going to be (around) forever," he says, noting that intermodal cars could be driven lower "because of how they turn."

"We're all going to be storing cars," Fritz adds. "I'm storing UP cars now that we're going to need a lot more business to bring out again and run."

Editor: The CN has some 3 tracks full of center-beam lumber cars at Champaign. KBSR has gondolas, center-beam cars, hoppers and other in storage. The Watco shortline at Onarga has a siding full of center-beam cars. MRM presently stores cars for ADM (rent helps the bottom line for them). Find a siding open and someone will move cars there for storage.

(Continued from page 5)

lessened.

But expansion is still on the mind of the industry. "I think all of us like to have a bigger footprint, a bigger franchise," he says.

One route to that is through acquiring (or re-acquiring) short lines, transactions that are often viewed differently by regulators. He says that CN went through a phase of pruning marginal lines that require too much capital at the time but have since become ideal for operation in-house again, including some lines in southern Ontario recently.

When acquisition is not an opportunity, like with the Indiana Rail Road, CN will look to develop long-term partnerships. "We would love to make more deals like we did with the INRD," he says. Ruest compares such deals to a fast food franchise, noting that the deals need to ensure the Class I railroad's standards will be in place throughout the shortline operations.

And Ruest is optimistic about the future, noting that much of what railroads haul is cyclical. "Commodities goes up. Commodities goes down," he says. "We're probably in one of the tougher times right now."

He's looking forward to more traffic from international trade, too. He calls the pending United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement trade deal "a slam dunk," but notes that there's a "long, long road to go" to normalize trade with China.

The way forward, he says, is to focus on the consumer economy, which is growing. That includes moving freight "door to door," and getting "closer to the real freight buyer."

Technology is still a large part of CN's growth strategy. That includes finding new technology to increase capacity on existing infrastructure, such as roving automated boxcars instead of human track inspectors. He also hinted at the use of more automated dispatching or computer-assisted decision-making for human dispatchers. "There's more than one way to add capacity," he says.

There could be more customer-facing technology, too. "The experience of the individual customer is what allows you to grow – or not," he says, noting that customers are more concerned about the movement of their individual cars than company or industry averages.

TRAINS On-Line 1-17

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We're on the Web!
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Photo of the Month



Chapter members rode in the upper deck of a former Santa Fe coach on the Nickel Plate Express in November. The train was pulled south by a F unit that was reconditioned at Vermillion Valley shops near Covington. Photo by Dick Brazda