

DANVILLE FLYER

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May Meeting at Jocko's

For the May meeting we will be at Jocko's Pizza on West Williams Street—date is Sunday the 21st Lunch will be around 1:00 PM with meeting and program to follow. Rick Schroeder will give the program. *“Over the years involved in rail construction I have been involved in various types of projects from track to bridges and siding design and relocations. My program will cover hand construction of turnouts, welding rail, bridge removal projects and other facets of construction that I was involved with”.*

Springfield Rail Relocation Update

Illinois Officials Celebrate Progress on Springfield Rail Improvements Project Gov. JB Pritzker and other officials gathered in Springfield to commemorate the Rail Improvements Project's progress on April 5. Following an investment of \$68.3 million, work has begun on new underpasses at Madison and Jefferson Streets, as reported by NPR. The overpasses will reduce congestion and delays and reduce emergency response times by separating railroad tracks from regular vehicle traffic. “When all is said and done, \$475 million will have been invested in the Springfield Rail Improvements Program — with \$262 million already out the door,” Pritzker said. “These investments bring us another step closer to building a rejuvenated, multimodal transportation system that works for everyone.” State Senator Doris Turner (D-Springfield) said congestion in Downtown Springfield can be hectic, especially when the train crosses through town during peak traffic hours. “Emergency vehicles have been delayed getting to and from the medical district, increasing the wait time when residents need medical assistance,” Turner said. “This investment not only uplifts the city, but also takes into account the safety, livability and development of Springfield for years to come.”

Weather permitting; Madison and Jefferson Streets will be closed between 9th and 11th Streets for an estimated 14 months, with a detour planned. The project entails lowering Madison and Jefferson Streets and constructing new railroad bridges to create a set of double tracks for the existing Norfolk Southern Railroad, as well as the proposed Union Pacific Railroad and Amtrak lines. Madison and Jefferson Streets carry a combined 20,000 vehicles per day, connecting police, firefighters, and two nearby hospitals. The Federal Railroad Administration will contribute \$13.5 million, the Illinois Commerce Commission will contribute

SUNDAY 21ST, MEETING AT JOCKO'S PIZZA AT 1:00 PM. PROGRAM NOTED ABOVE NOTE THIS WILL BE THE LAST MEETING THIS SPRING, NEXT ONE IS SEPTEMBER.

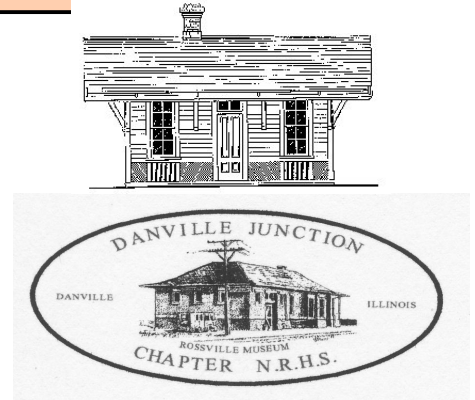
ROSSVILLE , MAY 27/28, MEMORIAL DAY WEEK-END AND OPEN MUSEUM FOR THE SUMMER

GALESBURG TRAIN SHOW OFFERS FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY & ALL AGES! KNOX COLLEGE - T. FLEMING FIELDHOUSE - 199 E. KNOX ST. SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023 - 10A TO 4P SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 2023 - 10A TO 2P

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 2023—our 55th Year

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

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\$30.9 million, and IDOT will contribute \$23.9 million, including \$7.4 million from Rebuild Illinois. Improved crossings at Capitol Avenue and Washington Street are nearing completion, as is the conversion of Monroe Street to a pedestrian-only crossing and the construction of the Norfolk Southern rail corridor. “These investments are just one of the latest in recent moves to build a stronger Illinois,” said State Representative Sue Scherer (D-Decatur). “This new construction will have a real impact for the people who call Springfield home by making their daily commutes safer and faster while increasing the range of transportation options available for travel throughout Central Illinois.”

The Springfield Rail Improvements Project, a collaboration of IDOT, Sangamon County, and the city of Springfield, aims to simplify railroad operations and reduce the impact of train traffic on the community by relocating all passenger and freight traffic from the Third Street corridor to Tenth Street, as well as building underpasses and one overpass at key crossings on the 10th and

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19th Street corridors. Underpass projects were carried out at Carpenter Street in 2016, Ash Street in 2019, and Laurel Street in 2021. Double-track rail bridges at Fifth and Sixth Streets opened in 2022, replacing single-track bridges with insufficient vertical clearance for vehicle traffic. The Springfield Rail Improvements Project is expected to cost \$475 million in total, with federal, state, and local contributions totaling \$475 million, with \$122 million coming from the state capital construction program Rebuild Illinois.

by Kyra Senese, *Railway Track & Structures newswire* (April 10) Via *Midwest Rail Scene Report*

CPKC Inks Intermodal Deal

Canadian Pacific Kansas City and Knight-Swift Transportation Holdings Inc. today announced a multiyear agreement to provide truckload intermodal services on CPKC's north-south corridor connecting Mexico, the United States and Canada.

Knight-Swift's Mexico customer base will be able to use CPKC's rail lines, terminals and cross-border access to make service more reliable and competitive, railroad officials said in a press release.

"This agreement creates compelling new transportation solutions for Knight-Swift's current and future customers looking for optionality and increased capacity in their supply chains," said John Brooks, CPKC executive vice president and chief marketing officer. "As Knight-Swift transitions their Mexico-U.S. traffic to CPKC starting in mid-May, we will focus on growth between [the] Chicago, Texas and Mexico markets."

Knight-Swift is one of North America's largest and diversified freight transportation companies, and provides truckload transportation and logistics services, CPKC officials said. CPKC already operates the International Railroad Bridge over the Rio Grande River at the U.S.-Mexico border in Laredo, Texas. A second span to expand the bridge's capacity is under construction and slated to open by 2024's.

Rail News 4-25



New Amtrak Equipment

CHICAGO — After being delayed for several years by production setbacks and acceptance issues, the first of 17 state-owned Siemens Venture business-class cars are now hosting passengers on Midwest Amtrak routes.

The semi-permanent coupling of the 1B coach on the left and the business class/coach on the right means they always operate in pairs.

They are not being advertised, however, and you only need a regular coach ticket to ride the cars. They feature three wider seats in a two-and-one configuration in each row, rather than the four two-by-two seats in a standard coach. Premium fares are not currently required because the Venture café cars, which are intended to provide business-class beverage amenities, won't be available for some time. And so, instead of being semi-permanently coupled to the café cars or "1B" Venture coaches, as eventually will be the case, they are currently paired only with the coaches. Keeping together these cars, with a standard coupler at one and the semi-permanent coupling at the other, ensures a seamless passage through the Ventures' wide vestibules.



Unaware that a premium-priced fare isn't required for the new cars, *Trains News Wire* demurred earlier this week when the lone conductor of

Amtrak train No. 381, the Carl Sandburg for Quincy, Ill., offered business-class seating in the Horizon Cafe. No thanks. "No problem," he said, "Just sit wherever you want." Wider seats are appreciated.

The Venture cars made initial runs more than a year ago [see "First look: Siemens Venture coaches debut ...," *News Wire*, Feb. 2, 2022]. After being withdrawn intermittently to fix post-production maladies, they have pulled assignments alongside Horizons and Amfleet I coaches and cafes on most Midwest routes.

The business-class seat in the foreground is 21 inches wide from armrest to armrest, compared to 18.3 inches for the coach seats in the background. The seat pitch (distance

(Continued on page 4)



Illinois Zephyr No. 380 from Quincy, Ill., glides past Metra's BNSF Chicago coach yard on April 7, 2023. The first Venture car behind the SC44 Charger is a business class/coach now being used for coach seating. It is coupled semi-permanently to a "1B" coach. Both cars have standard couplers on the opposite ends. The trailing Horizon Cafe continues to accommodate up to 18 business class passengers, who are entitled to a free beverage from the cafe. Bob Johnston

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between seats) is 39 inches in business class, 36.7 inches in coach. Bob Johnston

Past experience with the Venture coaches' firm and narrow seating compared to the older equipment prompted a number of passengers, including Pat Young and Jenny Arbin, to walk through the first empty car, "to see if there was something more comfy up front," as Arbin puts it.

Settling into a single business-class seat, Young, a professor at Macomb's Western Illinois University, appreciates the additional cushion width and legroom, but thinks the seat seems "hard and unrelaxing and it doesn't recline that much. It feels like a commuter car and does not give me a luxury feel. I expect comfort if I'm going a longer distance," she adds. Finding the 110-volt socket for her laptop placed in a hard-to-reach position under the single seat's armrest, Young soon moves to a table in the car's coach seating section for the rest of the trip.

Jenny Arbin and Kenny Washington were pleased to find the wider seats in the business class car. Arbin and Washington came to appreciate the firmer, wider seats and especially the big windows. Bob Johnston

Arbin, traveling with her boyfriend to visit family in Princeton, Ill., initially has the same impression that the business class seats "are not as soft as those in the car we moved to when we took the train to New Buffalo (Mich.)." But quizzed later in the trip after looking out the big windows, getting snacks from the

cafe, and relaxing in the wide seats, she admits, "This train is growing on me. We love taking Amtrak."

Luisa Andrade, returning from Plano, Ill., to Quincy University with fellow student Isaac Bourge, thinks the business-class cars' dual armrests are a plus. "I don't like sharing an armrest with someone I don't know," she says, having experienced that on previous Venture journeys. Both Andrade and Bourge are able to find comfortable positions in their wide seats and soon fall asleep.

Other impressions: Display screen on ceiling of railcar showing train route and ceiling mounted displays show the train's progress.

One feature delaying Venture use on specific routes was a malfunctioning information display system, which shows route and "next stop" messages while delivering pre-recorded destination advisories over

the public-address system. During this trip on the Carl Sandburg to Galesburg, Ill., it performed flawlessly; the conductor was also able to make clear announcements about delays waiting for other trains, a welcome change from the subpar scratchy audio on older equipment.

At other times, the display shows the next station, with an estimated time of arrival, although the time is in such a small font that it is hard to read. Arrival times are not included in automated voice announcements.

The only drawback is that the arrival time for the next station, when shown, is so small that it is extremely hard for many passengers to read. It also confusingly lists the departing station long after the train has left; arrival times are not announced.

Like the regular coaches, the Venture business class/coach ride is comparatively quiet and smooth through track crossovers and has great ventilation, good lighting, and large windows that make any trip more enjoyable. The extra-wide aisle to accommodate passengers with disabilities adds to the spacious ambience of this car, even if it contributes to the narrowness of coach seats.

Though patronage was light leaving Chicago on a Monday morning, the short train filled up substantially at the next two stations, LaGrange Road and Naperville. Those aboard cited comfort, convenience, lack of alternatives, and travel times "more than an hour faster than driving" as reasons they take the train.

TRAINS 4-12 - Bob Johnson

CN Inks Intermodal Connections

Editor: Last month I noted the story that CN was denied by the Surface Transportation Board in obtaining the entire line or even trackage rights on the former Gateway Western, KCS line from Kansas City to East St. Louis. The same day that CPKS announced their new North American service the CN, UP and GMTX announced a deal. Routing out of Chicago will either be on the former GM&O or the former C&E routes.

CN, Union Pacific Railroad and Grupo Mexico Transportes yesterday announced the creation of Falcon Premium, a Mexico-U.S.-Canada intermodal service with a rail connection in Chicago, Illinois. The new service will directly connect all CN origin points within Canada and Detroit to the GMXT terminals in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon and Silao, Guanajuato, Mexico.



The service will benefit intermodal customers shipping automotive parts, food, freight of all kinds, home appliances and temperature-

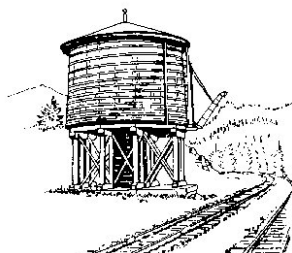
controlled products, according to a jointly issued press release. Falcon Premium will benefit from: GMXT's transit times between Silao and Eagle Pass, Texas; UP's Texas-to-Chicago route; and CN service connecting Chicago to Canada via the E]J&E Chicago bypass, the companies said.



BUILDING AMERICA®

The CN/UP/GMXT intermodal service will compete with Canadian Pacific Kansas City, the entity formed by the now completed merger between Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern. The merger created the first single-line railway connecting Canada, the United States and Mexico. CPKC recently reached agreements with Schneider National and Knight-Swift Transportation Holdings to jointly provide intermodal services that connect points in the three nations.

Rail News 4-25



Quest for Tennessee Pass Ends

Colorado Pacific Railroad, the rail enterprise of Colorado billionaire Stefan Soloviev, is no longer pursuing purchase of the former Denver & Rio Grande Western Tennessee Pass line, according to the nonprofit website Colorado Newslines.

The railroad's general counsel, William Osborn, told the site Soloviev — a major New York developer and chairman of Crossroads Agriculture, which Newslines says is the 26th largest landowner in the U.S. with holdings in Colorado, New Mexico, and Kansas — instead purchased the former San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad. Colorado Pacific purchased that former Iowa Pacific property in a bankruptcy auction last year [see "Late bid leads to new owner ...," Trains News Wire, Nov. 19, 2022]. It is now operating as the Colorado Pacific Rio Grande Railroad. The company also operates the Colorado Pacific, a former Missouri Pacific line from Towner, Colo., near the Kansas state line, to NA Junction, some 27 miles east of Pueblo.

Colorado Pacific and parent company KCVN at one point offered Union Pacific \$10 million for the out-of-service Tennessee Pass line, then attempted to force UP to sell them the route in 2020. That effort was rejected by the Surface Transportation Board [see "Regulators toss out effort ...," News Wire, March 18, 2020]. They sought to block a UP lease agreement with Rio Grande Pacific to operate the line announced the following year [see "Colorado Pacific files objections ...," News Wire, Jan. 11, 2021]. That plan has been dormant since Rio Grande Pacific's request for an exemption to allow the transaction to go forward was rejected by the STB [see "Federal regulators reject short line plan ...," News Wire, March 26, 2021].

Residents along the Tennessee Pass route are concerned the line, if revived, would be used to transport oil from the planned Uinta Basin Railway in Utah, which also is a Rio Grande Pacific project. Rio Grande Pacific has said it has no such plans, and was willing to have the STB exclude transport of oil as part of its exemption to operate the line. Eagle County, Colo., and a coalition of environmental groups have sued over the STB's approval of the Uinta Basin project [see "Environmental groups sue ...," News Wire, Feb. 14, 2022]. Colorado Newslines reports the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington last week heard oral arguments in that case last week.

Montana Export Coal

WASHINGTON — Navajo Transitional Energy Co.'s request for an emergency service order that would force BNSF Railway to handle more of its export coal would jeopardize service for other Powder River Basin coal producers, a mining company and the Crow Tribe have told federal regulators.

NTEC, in a complaint filed with the Surface Transportation Board last month, says BNSF has failed to provide adequate service from the Spring Creek Mine in Montana to the Westshore Terminals at Roberts Bank in Delta, British Columbia. The coal company, in a separate filing, also seeks an emergency service order from the STB that would require BNSF to handle 29 loaded trains per month beginning May 1.

BNSF handled 17 NTEC trains in February and 22 in March, which NTEC says was below the 24 to 30 trains per month that the coal company sought as part of a Nov. 1, 2022, service request. The coal is exported to customers in Japan and South Korea.

But Global Coal Sales Group, which arranges the sale and transportation of coal produced at the Signal Peak Mine in Roundup, Mont., told the STB in a May 5 filing that an emergency service order for NTEC "would have significant economic, operational, and safety impacts for Global."

The Crow Tribe, in a May 5 regulatory filing, told the STB that it would be affected by an emergency service order because it's been seeking BNSF service to export coal. "I write to express our deep concern that an emergency service order entered by the Board could significantly impact our plans to begin exporting coal as early as 2Q 2023 as well as our ability to trade in the export coal market. As such, I urge the Board to carefully consider such competitive impacts in evaluating NTEC's request for an emergency service order and to take no action that would limit our ability to export Crow coal," wrote Conrad Stewart, energy director for the tribe.

BNSF and NTEC filed supplemental briefs with the STB on Friday in advance of their May 10 oral arguments before the board.

BNSF has urged federal regulators to reject NTEC's request for an emergency service order, arguing that its desire to take advantage of the hot export coal market does not constitute an emergency.

BNSF also says it's still experiencing capacity constraints in the Pacific Northwest, and that ordering BNSF to increase service to Spring Creek mine would require the railroad to reduce service to other Powder River Basin customers. BNSF argues that it is entitled to prioritize coal moving under contracts when capacity constraints began to limit the total amount of coal that could be transported to Westshore.

NTEC has asked the board to determine that BNSF has failed to provide adequate service, to define the scope of BNSF's common carrier obligation, the restoration of adequate service, and unspecified monetary damages.

In a supplemental brief filed on May 5, NTEC said BNSF has agreed to increase its June coal train allocation to 22 trains, up from the 16 it previously forecast. NTEC says that still falls well below its need.

TRAINS Newswire 5-8



History in the making. 31 years ago Doug Nipper, Bob Gallippi and Jesse Bennett (deceased), with the help of a crane, installed the train order signal we got from the North Yard. The tower was closed in the summer of 1992, a base was built outside of the Rossville Depot Museum and the crew spent a cold day installing the signal. Bob McQuown photos.

April Meeting Minutes

The April 16, 2023, meeting opened at 1307 at Jockos.

The secretary's minutes were accepted as printed.

The report from the treasurer showed two large expenses during the month, \$200 for Rossville utilities and \$218 for a new popcorn machine. The Urbana show grossed \$188. Closing balance is \$8812.96. Total chapter membership is 34.

A trip to North Judson is planned for this summer, but the steam operation schedule is still not determined. Dates will be determined later.

The C&EIHS meeting on April 15 in Watseka was a success. The Society took in over \$700. There was a fine presentation on the history of the Toledo, Peoria and Western.

Rick will provide the program in May.

An Amtrak trip was scheduled for May 20 to Centralia. [This was subsequently canceled as the southbound train was sold out.] Henry rode an Easter train from Noblesville to Atlanta with the same equipment as when DJC rode the train. Easter trips were also popular in Monticello. They're also working on a new water system for steam locomotives.

The Vermilion Valley RR was sold and the sale was expected to close May 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 1322. Henry presented a video about the Ashtabula, Ohio bridge disaster of 1876.



**Last FLYER you will receive until
September**

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

Photo of the Month



GATX 62 located at the GATX Maintenance Facility in Terre Haute, IN Dave Sherrill photo