

# DANVILLE FLYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, INC. NRHS

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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 \$17.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$33.00 for NRHS membership. 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, in Danville, IL with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.

## OFFICERS FOR 2008 - Our 40th Year

PRESIDENT: Doug Nipper

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Early in the morning of November 1 Doug Nipper caught the northbound Officers Special headed to Chicago. The officials on the train will soon be seeing the new bridge at Winter Avenue and the extension of the double track to Newell Road. Late in the afternoon, while working at Rossville, Chapter members were surprised with the return of the empty train at 69 mph by the depot.

## Coming Events

*November 16, 2008*

Danville, IL - Annual Chapter Meeting at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, 1:00 PM

*November 9, 2008*

Bloomington, IL Central Illinois Railroad Club annual train show, Interstate Center, 9-3, \$4

*November 28 & 29, 2008*

Monticello, IL - MRM operates the Polar Express for kids as a "read along story" on a train ride to the North Pole.

*December 7, 2008*

Danville, IL - ANNUAL DINNER at Jocko's Depot Restaurant beginning at 1:00 PM

*January 3 & 4, 2009*

Indianapolis, IN - Great Train Expo, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 10-4 PM, \$7

## Model Railroad Operating Sessions

Mark your calendar now for the following operating sessions that will start at 1:00 PM and end after 3:00 PM:

### *Rossville*

Saturday, December 6, 2008

**Saturday, January 10, 2009\*\*\***

Saturday, February 7, 2009

Saturday, March 7, 2009

Saturday, April 4, 2009

### *Danville and Western*

Operating Sessions, 1819 Coventry Drive, Champaign, beginning at 1:00 PM and ending after 3:00 PM

Saturday, December 27, 2008

Saturday, January 24, 2009

Saturday, February 21, 2009

Saturday, March 14, 2009\*

\*Pending Urbana train show date.

\*\*\* Date Change

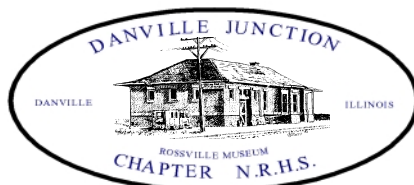
## Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held, Sunday, November 16 at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Williams and Gilbert Street, beginning at 1:00 PM.

We welcome new member Don Gilmore and his wife to the Chapter. They have moved here from Memphis, TN and Don is an HO modeler and has already worked with us on the sessions at Rossville. The last session at Rossville went well and we had great attendance. Some of the "bugs" showed up and the next session in December will be with DCC. Thanks to Mark for furnishing most of the locomotives for the sessions. If you have DCC units at home bring some with you to run.

This next meeting will be our election of officers for 2009. With Mark out of town most of the time he has decided not to accept the VP position and Dave Sherrill has volunteered to take that position. The annual dinner is noted for December 7 at our usual location and we hope to see you there. Rick will show slides of the recent Michigan trip.

If you have slides or video of trains you took this summer bring them to the meeting. No program has been set yet for November as Rick showed the video of the PM #1225 in Michigan at the last meeting.



## Indiana Rail Road eyes building line to coal mine

Indiana Rail Road Company plans to build a five-mile spur rail line south of Dugger, Ind., to serve a proposed new Peabody Energy Corp. surface coal mine, the local newspapers report.

Indiana Rail Road Company, based in Indianapolis, petitioned the federal Surface Transportation Board on Oct. 7 for an order declaring the new track a spur exempt from board approval and not construction of a line or railroad requiring board approval.

Indiana Rail Road spokesman Chris Rund told the Greene County Daily World that the new Bear Run pit mine will be located south of Dugger — south of the rail's east-west main line.

"The extension would connect with our main track near Dugger (just east of town). There have been a number of rail lines owned by both mining companies and railroads that have served coal mines in this area for many years. Tracks have been rebuilt, abandoned and/or relocated through the years as mining activity relocated and changed," Rund said. "The extension will cross Hwy. 159 and then run parallel to the road. Length of the extension is approximately 5.2 miles."

Plans call for the first coal trains to move over the new line in July 2009, which coincides with the planned start-up date for the new mine, the railroad's petition stated.

Indiana Rail Road was asked to build a spur to connect the new load-out to its east-west line. The new mine is near the old mine south of Dugger, and the proposed spur will use a half-mile of the former right of way that served Dugger. According to the petition, Peabody owns or controls 3.26 miles of the proposed right of way, and INRD expects Peabody to acquire an additional mile.

Indiana Rail Road Company estimated the

*Continued on Page 3*

## The President's Corner

I am going to continue my essay on DCC this month by writing about how to choose a DCC system for your own layout. I know that at least a couple of Chapter members are looking into this, and maybe I can help.

Choosing a system is not for the faint of heart. You will be locked into the same equipment as long as you have the system, and it's expensive to change to another one. This does not apply to things like locomotive decoders or even some stationary ones that might be used to operate power switches. Once you're at "track level", the signals are very uniform and this is due to the rigid NMRA standards. Generally speaking, any system should be able to operate any locomotive. Were it not for this ability, club operation with guest engines wouldn't even be possible.

Where systems do vary is in the other sub-systems. All systems consist of three primary components: The command station is the "brains" of the system. The throttles (component 2) talk to the command station, which in turn talks to the third system component, the booster (or *boosters* [pl.] on a big layout).

The various manufacturers of DCC systems are only obligated to ensure a consistent signal from the boosters out to the track. The methods they utilize to communicate between the command station and the throttles is usually proprietary, and this is why you're stuck with one system when you start. Sometimes one brand of command station can be used to drive another brand of booster, but it is not recommended to mix brands like that unless you really know what you're doing.

My experience has been with three systems: Rick's Digitrax, my own NCE system at home and the EasyDCC system now at Rossville. For Digitrax, it has the best throttle bus system and is very adaptable to computer control. The throttles tend to be a bit complicated, but overall it's a good system. Don't skimp on using the official Digitrax fascia jacks, as Rick found out the hard way that consumer-grade telephone jacks just don't hold up as well.

NCE is also a solid system, and if you have ever read about Bruce Chubb's Sunset Valley Railroad, this is the system he uses with his C/MRI invention. The primary throttles (called dogbones for their shape) are also the main interface to the command station, but as with most high-end systems they offer "operator throttles" with limited features and simpler controls.

EasyDCC, made by CVP Products, is probably the most user-friendly system I've worked with. Acquiring a locomotive or consist is dead simple. The command station is the only place where you can create consists and manipulate other system variables, so it needs to be placed centrally to the layout. Although it can control accessory decoders to operate turnouts, it's not capable of getting layout feedback and is thus the least adaptable system to computer control.

In the table below, I've rated the three systems for various parameters. There are other systems like Lenz and low-end starter systems by Atlas and Bachman that I have no experience with, so it's not a complete comparison. My rating scale is 1-10, with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best.

<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b>COST</b>	<b>USABILITY</b>	<b>THROTTLEDESIGN</b>	<b>COMPUTERCONTROL</b>
Digitrax	5	6	5	9
NCE	6	7	6	6
EasyDCC	5	9	8	3

The ratings may be somewhat subjective, but I chose the NCE system based on its overall feature set. Since I was able to get it from Berkman Co. in Champaign at a steep discount, it also rated best on price. Easy DCC can only be purchased directly from CVP Products and therefore there is no dealer discount.

If this helps anyone decide on a system, I deny any responsibility if you don't like it! There again, if you *do* like it then send the compliments my way. ☺

*Doug*

*Continued from Page 1*

cost of the spur at between \$9 million and \$12 million. It did not say who owns the remaining property. INRR anticipates that either Peabody or Peabody's customers will enter into rail transportation contracts that will make it possible to finance the project.

The coal from Bear Run will be the only traffic on the new rail spur. Trains from the mine can go east to Indianapolis and the connection with Indiana Southern Railroad or west to Hoosier Energy Rural Electric Co-op Inc.'s Merom station and Ameren Corp.'s Newton station.

*Via Railway Age 10-17-08*

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## **UP to upgrade track in Nebraska, Illinois**

Union Pacific Railroad recently began two track improvement projects in Nebraska and Illinois.

The \$21.6 million Nebraska project calls for upgrading the Central Nebraska Line between Columbus and Central City. By month's end, crews will remove wood ties and install 76,700 concrete ties, replace 29 miles of rail, spread 91,350 tons of ballast, install four new switches and replace surfaces at six grade crossings.

The \$8 million Illinois project calls for upgrading the Northeast Illinois Line between Dolton and Woodland. To be completed by mid-December, the project includes the removal and installation of 53,900 ties, replacement of more than one mile of rail on curves and installation of 29,700 tons of ballast. *(This is an upgrade on No. 2 track and should be complete by the end of the month.)*

The projects are part of UP's \$3.1 billion capital spending budget for 2008. Since 2003, the railroad has spent \$869.6 million on capital projects in Nebraska and \$534.7 million on capital projects in Illinois.

## **BNSF's Ethanol Express™ expands to Dallas/Fort Worth**

On Nov. 1, BNSF will begin delivering Ethanol Express™ unit ethanol trains to Musket Corporation's new Musket Ethanol Terminal in the Mark IV industrial area in North Fort Worth, Tex. Ethanol Express™ is a 95-car unit train service specifically created to move ethanol from a single origin to a single destination. BNSF says it "will save ethanol producers and end-users time and money through increased fleet utilization, lower inventory carrying costs, and logistics coordination and support each and every day around the clock. "BNSF moves more than 370 million gallons of ethanol per year through the Ethanol Express™ program.

With storage capacity of 10 million gallons, the Dallas/Fort Worth Musket Ethanol Terminal is one of the area's largest ethanol storage facilities and is designed to meet the daily needs of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. The facility maintains its own rail spur and is designed to completely unload a unit train of 95 cars every 24 hours. Tank cars are drained via an underground piping system and ethanol is pumped directly into the four storage tanks. The ethanol can then be pumped directly into trucks for local distribution.

## **NS sets five financial records, drops operating ratio below 70 for first time**

How's this for quarterly financial results: Norfolk Southern Corp. set five records and posted a sub-70 operating ratio in the third quarter.

Railway operating revenues increased 23 percent to a record \$2.9 billion, income from operations jumped 31 percent to an all-time-high \$894 million, net income soared 35 percent to a record \$520 million, diluted earnings per share rose 41 percent

to a record \$1.37 and NS' operating ratio improved 2 points to a best-ever 69.1.

"It was an exceptional quarter for our company," said NS Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Wick Moorman during the Class I's earnings conference this morning. "It's a confirmation of the strength of our diversified business portfolio and ability to offset volume declines in the housing-related and automotive sectors."

Although coal demand was strong and NS handled record coal tonnage, continued weakness in the automotive and housing-related industries contributed to a 1 percent year-over-year traffic volume decline to 1.9 million units. Automotive volume fell 30 percent to 86,639 units vs. third-quarter 2007's total. General merchandise revenue increased 13 percent to \$1.5 billion despite a 6 percent volume decline, coal revenue jumped 52 percent to \$876 million as volume rose 6 percent and intermodal revenue increased 16 percent to \$560 million against flat volumes. Revenue per unit jumped 24 percent to \$1,527 compared with third-quarter 2007's total.

Revenue gains primarily can be attributed to rate increases and higher fuel surcharges, said Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Don Seale. Meanwhile, railway operating expenses jumped 20 percent to \$2 billion compared with third-quarter 2007's expenses. The main culprit: fuel costs, which soared 64 percent to \$474 million as the average price per gallon shot up 65 percent. Skyrocketing fuel costs have been a "consistent theme in 2008," said EVP-Finance and Chief Financial Officer James Squires.

*Via Progressive Railroading 10-22-08*



## CTA releases 2009 budget recommendations

In proposing his budget recommendation for 2009, Chicago Transit Authority President Ron Huberman said that the CTA would manage its way through the economic downturn with a performance-based budget that focuses available resources on continued improvement in the customer experience. Huberman said service would be maintained at 2008 levels. With resources directed at operations, administrative and support staffing will be reduced by 396 positions compared to 2008. In addition, due to a reduced capital program, 236 positions that were funded by capital projects will be eliminated, for a total workforce reduction of 632. Huberman said he also has made the difficult, but fiscally responsible, decision to recommend a fare increase for 2009.

Ongoing challenges such as the slowing economy and significantly higher prices for fuel, power and materials impacted the budget for 2009. Although new State funding mechanisms are in place, anticipated revenues will not achieve desired levels until the economy improves. Likewise, unanticipated free ride programs reduced projected fare revenues. These factors are exacerbated by the lack of a State capital program, which adversely affects the CTA's bottom line. Without designated capital resources to replace aging equipment and infrastructure, the CTA has to devote additional operating funds to make necessary maintenance and repairs.

The proposed 2009 operating budget is \$1.324 billion, which is \$115.0 million higher than 2008. The CTA expects to generate \$601.1 million in fares and other revenue and anticipates \$723.3 million in public funding.

The new performance-based budget process examined the activities of each organizational unit to understand which could be made more efficient, reduced or eliminated. The process was guided by two key principles: first, that safety would remain the top-most priority, and second,

that service levels would remain the same as last year. Quality service was the central focus for all departments.

This proposed 2009-2013 Capital Improvement Program totals \$3.0 billion, with \$2.9 billion in projects focused on the goal of eliminating slow zones, renewing the CTA's assets, overhauling and replacing the fleet, and bringing the system to a state of good repair. In addition \$40.0 million is programmed for the completion of the Brown Line Capacity Expansion Project, a vital system expansion. This includes a projection of \$300.0 million each year during 2010-2013 from a successor to the Illinois FIRST program. The RTA has advised the CTA to anticipate that a State capital funding program will be in place by 2010. The program does not divert scarce capital funds to balance the operating budget. The transfer of capital funds to operating would cause additional critical projects necessary for continued progress to a state of good repair to be delayed or cancelled.

Funding identified in the CIP will only partially meet the CTA's needs to bring its system into a state of good repair. An estimated \$6.8 billion remains unfunded over the five-year period of this CIP. This is due to the continued aging of assets and the lack of a new State capital program. Although a proposed new State funding program is projected to begin in 2010, projects that may be funded with these capital dollars will remain a part of the CTA's unfunded need until a State program is passed and funds are appropriated.

In addition, to meet the needs of future growth in the region, the CTA is requesting \$4.3 billion for expansion projects such as the Circle Line, and the Red, Orange and Yellow Line extensions. Maintaining the existing bus and rail system is a top priority; however it is also important to improve the connectivity and usefulness of the system by adding strategic connections and line extensions.



A rare sight, two former Conrail units on one train. Eastbound at Danville the morning of November 1st, by Doug Nipper

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## Iowa Interstate

IAIS entered a new phase of the railroads' history Oil September 18, when the first pair of ES44AC locomotives were received from ICE at Rock Island. WS 502 and 510 were put on a late-running BICB 17, which departed Rock Island at 1600 hours. Consist was WS 709, 707, 510, 502 and 468. The GE'S were dropped off at Iowa City and prepped for entering service on September 19. Their first assignment was on ICCR 19 to make a Cedar Rapids turn. Two more ES44's followed from ICE on September 26. These were IAIS 507 and 509. WS 506 was delivered by the IC&E at Davenport in early October.

With the new power arriving, look for units to be stored temporarily. All the remaining 400-series geeps are at Council Bluffs, as well as SD38-2 150 and GP382 713. Rumor has it the stored units will be reactivated when expected traffic increases occur next year.

The new GE's can often be found running in DPU mode. All unit ethanol trains to Chicago have been running in a 1x1 configuration. At least two loaded coal trains have been pulled out of Peoria with a GE and an EMD SD38-2 on the front and a GE on the back. ...

[Via North Western Chapter - The Track Bulletin, October Edition.](#)

## TV Series to spotlight “Extreme Trains” and those that handle them

Coming soon to The History Channel: “Extreme Trains,” an eight-part series about the “biggest, most powerful and most awesome trains in history.”

So says a press release the cable TV network. **The series will premier Nov. 11 at 10 p.m. (EST).**

What’s an “extreme” train? According to The History Channel, a coal train moving through Pennsylvania and the Allegheny Mountains, an intermodal train making its way from Los Angeles to Dallas/Fort Worth and Amtrak’s Acela train running from Washington, D.C., to Boston fit the bill. Also making the network’s grade are a Union Pacific Railroad refrigeration train, Ringling Bros. circus train, Amtrak’s Empire Builder, and the “Transcontinental” and “Steam” trains. All eight will be featured in separate episodes.

The series will be hosted by Pan Am Railways Conductor Matt Bown, a “genuine insider with an infectious enthusiasm for trains,” according to the press release. He will show how the Extreme Trains played a key role in U.S. history — from train robberies to World War II events — and continue to be vital to the nation today. The History Channel also says the show celebrates the men and women rail workers who “often perform tough, gritty jobs in extreme conditions just to keep America moving.”

## Six CREATE projects under way in Chicago

On Friday, organizers of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program issued an update, which shows six of the program’s 78 projects are under construction and 43 projects have entered the Phase I engineering stage.

The following projects are under way:

- B-3 (UP) — Melrose Park, Bellwood. In the Proviso north Departure Yard, west of 25th Avenue between Lake Street and St. Charles Rd., a second rail connection will be added between the yard and the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Co.
- B-6 (CSX) — McCook. East of East Avenue between I-55 and 55th Street, the length of the existing rail connection between BNSF Railway Co. and the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad will be extended. In addition, a second southwest rail connection is being constructed between the two lines.
- B-8 (CSX) — Bridgeview, Bedford Park, Summit. West of Harlem Ave., North of 71st Street to the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, a computerized signal system will be installed.
- GS-7 (Metra) — Downers Grove. At BNSF’s tracks near the Belmont station at Belmont Rd., a highway underpass will be

built to route Belmont Road under the three-track BNSF mainline. In addition, two new parking lots, a pedestrian tunnel, an underwater retention system, two passenger boarding platforms and two seven-foot walkways will be constructed.

WA-3 (NS) — Chicago. Between “Ogden Junction” (Ogden Ave. and Western Ave.) and Union Street near Pershing, a computerized signaling system will be installed and an additional mainline track along Ashland Avenue Yard will be built. Viaducts will be rebuilt at Halsted, Emerald and Union streets near Pershing.

- WA-5 (BNSF) — Chicago. South of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, east and west of Pulaski Road, track and signals will be upgraded. Corwith interlocking and remote-controlled Corwith tower also will be upgraded with modern signal technology.

The \$1.5 billion public/private CREATE program is designed to reduce train delays and congestion throughout the Chicago area. Focusing on five rail corri-

dors, the program calls for creating 25 new roadway overpasses or underpasses and six new rail overpasses or underpasses to separate passenger and freight trains; improving viaducts; enhancing grade crossing safety; and completing extensive upgrades to tracks, switches and signal systems

*Editor: In addition, the B-12 project - adding a 3rd track on the IHB from Blue Island Junction to 123rd Street, the B-11 project - connection between the CN (GTW) and CSX (B&OCT) at Blue Island Junction, north of the Cal Sag Channel, and WA2 - the TCS/track and bridge project from 75th Street to 20th Street on the Blue Island Subdivision are in the final design stages. Our work on the WA-11 project at Dolton is still in the preliminary design phase with changes from the original CREATE program..*

## Danville Chapter, NRHS

*Minutes - 10/19/8*

President Nipper opened the meeting at 1355.

The secretary's report was approved as printed for September. The Treasurer's report was unavailable. Don Gilmore was recognized as a new member, along with his wife Rhonda. Al Hintz was recognized for his attendance as a long-time member.

### *Old Business*

Rick Schroeder announced the Urbana train show would be the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in March at Lincoln Square. Space will be limited compared to last year.

### *New Business*

President Nipper announced that elections would normally be held next month. He indicated the current offices would be willing to serve another year, with the exception of Mark Ziebart. Anyone interested in serving should contact Doug Nipper. Dave Sherrill has indicated he would run for the Vice President spot.

The winterizing of the Rossville depot will likely start on Oct. 31, before the first operating session on Nov. 1.

The DCC installation is continuing on the layout, with the main line complete.

The Dues Notice for 2009 was sent out. Even though the national NRHS was notified about the increase in chapter dues, the increase was not included in the notices.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1403.

Rick presented a video tape from a trip on the last weekend of September to Michigan. By accident, he came upon a private excursion of Pere Marquette 1223 out of Owosso and taped the locomotive.

## CP absorbs two subsidiaries

Canadian Pacific Thursday (10-30) formally absorbed two U.S. subsidiary roads, the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corp. and the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern. The two railroads officially came under the control of Canadian Pacific at 12:01 a.m., in accordance with approval granted by the Surface Transportation Board Sept. 30.

CP in September 2007 agreed to buy Dakota Minnesota and Eastern Railroad Corp. for \$1.48 billion in cash and contingent payments of up to \$1 billion, after DM&E failed in its attempt as a large regional railroad to access the Powder River Basin. CP remains interested in competing for the coal traffic the PRB generates. The IC&E system was included as part of that purchase.

"We acquired the DM&E and IC&E railroads because of the opportunity for sustained double-digit top-line and EBITDA growth," said CP President Fred Green. "Given the year-to-date performance, and our current outlook, we are anticipating that it will surpass our estimate of \$0.15 to \$0.17 contribution to our 2008 earnings per share."

STB's merger approval says CP cannot move PRB coal over IC&E or CP routes until an environmental impact statement is conducted. CP's former DM&E subsidiary, however, was granted permission to extend its main line into the PRB

*Via Progressive Railroading*

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## Rail News

CN orders 232 new iron ore cars, starts 500-car rehab program

CN is acquiring 232 rapid-discharge ore cars from National Steel Car and is refurbishing 500 existing ore cars as part of a long-term plan to upgrade the company's car fleet for transporting pelletized iron ore produced in the Upper Midwest. Delivery of the new ore cars will start in January 2009, permitting the retirement of the same number of older cars.

The refurbishment of 500 existing ore cars is under way and includes the installation of new trucks and couplers, modernizing the braking system and repairing outlet gates. CN's existing iron-ore fleet consists of almost 2,200 cars. CN foresees acquiring more new iron ore cars over the next three to five years and refurbishing another 500 cars next year. In the years ahead the new cars will permit the retirement of an equivalent number of cars. CN hauls pelletized iron ore in unit trains from three mines in northern Minnesota and one in Michigan primarily to Great Lakes ports for transportation to North American steel producers. Some traffic moves on all-rail routes, and some is moved to export position for overseas markets

*Editor:*

*Our Annual Dinner will be held on December 7. I hope all of you can attend. The next newsletter will be in January. In years past I have tried to put one out in December/January as a combined issue, but this year, since I am trying to get some work done on the layout, I will not get one ready until just before the next meeting. In addition I am selling a couple of collections on Ebay for other individuals and that takes some time. I hope all of you have a great Thanksgiving, a wonderful Christmas (hope you get lots of trains stuff) and I look forward to seeing you in 2009.*

*Rick*



From the camera of Joe Cooke... Above: Dead engines belonging to Indiana Boxcar Corp, parent of the Vermilion Valley Railroad, take up space at the Flex-N-Gate plant (formerly Olin) near Covington, IN. Below: A Rail America (TP&W) train switches the elevator at Goodland, IN with an ex-SP "Tunnel Motor" and a former CSX unit.

