

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

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Visit our Chapter WWW Home Page On-Line - <http://www.prairienet.org/djc-nrhs/>



Pere Marquette No. 1225, famed engine of the Polar Express, heads east after passing a group of British railfans at one of the grade crossings near Carland, Michigan. This was the second runby at this location on Saturday, September 27. Photo by Rick Schroeder

Coming Events

October 19, 2008

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

October 18 & 19, 2008

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

November 16, 2008

Danville, IL - Next Chapter meeting

November 9, 2008

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

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, November 1, 2008

Saturday, December 6, 2008

Saturday, January 3, 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, January 21, 2009

Saturday, March 14, 2009*

*Pending Urbana train show date.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held, Sunday, October 19 at Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Williams and Gilbert Street, beginning at 1:00 PM.

Check out Doug's notes about some changes on the layout at Rossville. We are updating the control system to use either conventional DC or new DCC operation. Mark has been kind enough to let us use many of his locomotives that are DCC ready. In addition, if you have DCC ready locomotives bring them up to run. The November session may be DC but time will tell if the new system is operating by then.

Also note in this issue is the listing of model operating sessions at both Rossville and Rick's railroad in Champaign. Put these on your calendar now and plan to attend. Rick has made changes in his layout this year (thanks to Bob G. and Doug N.) and we will see how operation goes. Rick has added a new staging yard for the L&N side and the old yard becomes a C&O staging. The N&W staging is longer and both the L&N and most of the N&W are now exposed. Industry changes have occurred and the first sessions will take some getting used to the revisions. Computer control has been added to most of the mainline turnouts and Doug is working on setting up the computer to control the turnouts and also maintain manual blocks better. This should help operators.

If you have slides or video of trains you took this summer bring them to the meeting. No program has been set yet for October and for November Rick will show slides/video of the recent Michigan trip.

CP purchase of DM&E wins STB approval

A new rail line to the Powder River Basin coalfields came a step closer Tuesday with the Surface Transportation Board's announcement that it has conditionally approved the Canadian Pacific's application to acquire the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad and its wholly owned subsidiary, the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad Corp. Environmental issues remain to be resolved.

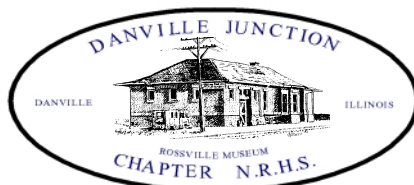
STB's decision came 13 months after CP announced that it proposed to buy DM&E for nearly \$1.5 billion in cash in a deal that could approach \$2.5 billion.

The board said its decision "addressed the potential environmental impacts of future coal train movements over the lines operated by CP and/or IC&E if CP decides to construct the new line into the Powder River Basin authorized in *Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corporation Construction into the Powder River Basin, STB Finance Docket No. 33407.*"

STB also said that it "held that CP and Soo Holding [an indirect CP subsidiary] may not transport over CP's and/or IC&E's rail lines any coal originating on the new Powder River Basin line until the agency has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement addressing the environmental impacts of those movements and issued a final decision allowing such operations to begin."

Check the Board's decision at www.stb.dot.gov and then select "E-Library," then "Decisions and Notices" beneath the date "9/30/08."

Via Railway Age 10-1-08



The President's Corner

For those who have made my acquaintance a long time, it's well known that I've been in and out of model railroading as a facet of the overall railroad hobby several times over the years. I guess you could say that I'm now back into it again, at least sort of...

What drew me back was DCC, or digital command control. Seeing what Rick had done with his layout got me fascinated in this marriage of model railroads and advanced electronics. The icing on the cake was also the ability to integrate a computer into the equation, something that was previously relegated to electronics engineers.

In order to test certain concepts, I decided to build a little "test" layout at my house. This was a nice winter project, and sold me on the idea of shelf construction. Having ready access to the underside of the framework is essential for easy wiring, and in the process I was able to use some narrow modules I had built 20 years ago.

I'm just now powering up the five tortoises that will operate the mainline switches, and once this is done then computer control can be added. We hope to have some switches on Rick's layout under dispatcher control this season, and doing it with DCC is a lot easier than running wires back to a central panel somewhere. The bonus of computer control is that alterations to a layout don't require a modification to such a panel, but rather just altering some software parameters.

It's also been my pet project to see if DCC could be applied at Rossville. We are at the point of cutting in a system that will allow dual control of the layout up there; Analog for normal weekends and some operating sessions, DCC for "serious" sessions. Although I have borne much of the cost of a DCC system to use on the CI&E, getting financial help from other operators on the biggest expense of boosters and wireless throttles is wonderful. And I should also mention that without Mark Ziebart's massive collection of engines, we wouldn't have enough locomotives that were DCC-equipped to operate a DCC session.

It's an expensive proposition, and may not be a good fit for existing layouts. We are using some extraordinary measures to employ DCC on the common-rail system at Rossville. For a new layout, though, there is no doubt that DCC is the way of the future and should be considered over the old block control methods. Someone once asked me what the real advantages would be for DCC at Rossville. Primarily, you're keeping up with technology that new members might be interested in. Other than that, there are pros and cons just like anything else. My biggest worry is dirty track, which affects both methods but can be more problematic with DCC. We shall see....

Doug



Indianapolis DLRT plan moves forward

The Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council has voted unanimously to endorse a \$160 million diesel light rail transit (DLRT) line linking the state capital with Noblesville, roughly 29 miles to the north.

The operation, said to be modeled after DLRT lines in New Jersey and San Diego County, Calif., would include five or six stations in Marion and Hamilton counties, and begin service in 2012, to coincide with Indianapolis' being host to the Super Bowl. Conventional diesel multiple-unit (DMU) equipment, possibly used equipment, is being considered for initial commuter service, with DLRT gear being purchased sometime later.

The council, which is the metropolitan planning organization for eight counties, approved the measure as the first of seven possible transit lines proposed for the area. But funding remains uncertain, and Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard, though in favor of the proposal, said he wanted to consider taxation only after pursuing other options, such as private investment.

Via Railway Age 10-1-08

Only NS and Soo earned cost of capital in 2007

The Surface Transportation Board has determined that the U.S. railroad industry's cost of capital for 2007 was 11.33%, a 1.39% increase from 2006. This means that only two of seven Class freight railroads had returns on investment exceeding the cost of capital last year—Soo Line (including Canadian Pacific U.S. affiliates), with a return of 15.25%, and Norfolk Southern, with an ROI of 13.55%.

The five carriers failing to earn the STB-determined cost of capital for the industry were: Grand Trunk (including Canadian National U.S. affiliates), with a return on

investment of 10.11%; BNSF, 9.97%; Union Pacific, 8.90%; Kansas City Southern, 9.37%; and CSX, 7.61%.

In announcing its latest finding, the STB noted that it uses the cost of capital figure “in evaluating the adequacy of individual railroads’ revenues each year, as well as in various types of regulatory proceedings (such as determining the reasonableness of a challenged rail rate, considering a proposal to abandon a rail line, or valuing a particular railroad operation in certain other types cases).”

The STB’s cost of capital decision in Ex Parte 558 (Sub-No. 113) and its revenue adequacy decision in STB Ex Parte No. 552 (Sub No. 112 may be viewed and downloaded at www.stb.dot.gov under E-Library, then under Decisions and Notices under the date 9/26/08.

STB rejects CN’s petition for an expedited ruling on EJ&E deal

A final STB decision on Canadian National Railway Co.’s application to acquire a major portion of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Co. (EJ&E) will come later rather than sooner.

Yesterday, the board announced it rejected CN’s petition for an expedited procedural schedule. The Class I sought a final decision on the transaction’s transportation merits by Oct. 15, prior to the completion of an environmental review. CN plans to acquire a 198-mile EJ&E line encircling Chicago from U.S. Steel Corp. for \$300 million and rename the operations the EJ&EW West Co.

The STB denied CN’s petition because a “procedure that gives CN control over EJ&EW before the board rules on the environmental issues violates National Environmental Policy Act principles and regulations,” board members said in the Sept. 8 decision. In addition, CN failed to demonstrate that its proposal would be

Danville Chapter, NRHS - Minutes 9/21/08

The meeting was called to order at 1340.

The Treasurer’s report shows the following balances:

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Checking | \$1175.19 |
| Savings | \$4636.13 |
| Total | \$5811.22 |

Don Gilmore was introduced as a visitor. He recently moved to Danville and has modeled in N scale. He was warmly welcomed.

Old Business

The museum was open all scheduled days during the summer. It was reported there were pretty good receipts from the concession. Visitors appeared to be somewhat more numerous than the prior year. Bob Gallippi was the most frequent host at the museum.

It was reported a somewhat smaller show may be held in the spring at Lincoln Square Village in Urbana. Nothing is certain at this point.

Bob reported that C&EI Society photos and timetables were moved to the Vermilion County Museum. There is only a small amount of material left at the Rossville depot which could go to the museum.

New Business

The first operating session is scheduled for Nov. 1.

It was reported that UP is replacing signal cabinets, including one displaying C&EI. They are working upgrading the CTC, both north and south of Woodland Jct.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1401. In lieu of a program, many moved to the Cooke warehouse for some rail observation.

“workable” and maintain the environmental status quo, they said.

“The agency’s former policy of conditionally approving proposals for the construction of a new or extended rail line before completion of the environmental review process does not support CN here because no authority was granted in those cases until the board subsequently issued a decision on the environmental issues,” the decision states. “Here, in contrast, CN seeks more than a declaration from the board that the transaction would not substantially lessen competition, create a monopoly or restrain trade in freight surface trans-

portation in any region of the United States.”

The STB expects to complete the environmental review process in December or January and issue a final decision soon afterward. CN officials previously stated they would consider petitioning the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to compel the board to issue a final decision before year’s end if the expedited procedural schedule request was denied. If the deal isn’t completed by Dec. 31, there’s a “substantial risk” U.S. Steel will terminate the deal, CN officials have stated.

Progressive Railroading 9-9-08



Senate bill would require freight, commuter railroads to implement PTC

In light of last week's (this written on 9-17) Metrolink/Union Pacific Railroad train collision in California — which killed 25 people and injured 138 — Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) introduced legislation that would require all major U.S. railroads to install positive train control (PTC) systems.

National Transportation Safety Board officials have said that a PTC system could have prevented the crash. The Rail Collision Prevention Act (S. 3493) would require freight and commuter railroads to develop plans for PTC systems within one year of the bill's enactment.

The legislation also would: • set a deadline of Dec. 31, 2012, for the systems to be in place on rail lines designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as high risk, and those used by major freight and commuter railroads; • set a deadline of Dec. 31, 2014, for installation of PTC on all major rail lines, with priority given to passenger-rail lines or those used to transport hazardous materials; and authorize the U.S. transportation secretary to assess fines up to \$100,000 for railroads that fail to comply.

"It should be totally unacceptable to the American people that we have rail systems in which two trains going in opposite directions share a single track — with only a signal light to stop a collision — when technology exists to prevent a crash," said Feinstein in a prepared statement.

However, PTC systems aren't yet ready to be implemented on all railroads, said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Boardman during a press conference held earlier this week. The various systems are not inter-operable, have to be adapted to stop trains of different size and weight, and are very costly, he said. In addition, railroads must secure radio frequencies for the systems.

Via Progressive Railroading

Editor: Note the system is not ready to be implemented yet and there is no provision for helping railroads with the cost. The estimate has been over \$2 billion from what I have seen in reports. I think the government should also require PVC on all automobiles and trucks, that way there would be no accidents.



Amtrak Blue Water arrives at Niles, Michigan station. If you are in the area you need to stop and visit this restored 1897 Michigan Central station.

Photo by Rick Schroeder

Michigan Trip

By Rick Schroeder

Friday September 29 Steve Henkel, Bruce Bird, Walt Baselt and I headed north to do some train watching in Michigan. Heading north out of Champaign we got off I-57 as we had passed a northbound train around Paxton and decided to catch it farther up the line. At Onarga we caught the train with IC 1023, a CN and WC unit in tow. At Danforth we shot NS 8927 and 8905 going south with train #317. We traveled across to Momence on Route 17 and caught UP 7127, 6625, 8183 and 5679 delivering a coal train to NS bound for the Wheatfield power plant. Over in Indiana we caught ex BNSF 1653 still in Santa Fe paint at the Malden elevator. In Chesterton we shot westbound NS 33E with 9346 and UP 4547 followed by 21G with 7530 and two BNSF units.

We decided to follow the South Shore and started at Route 49. We soon caught up with a local headed by 2000 and 2005. We stopped at the west end of Michigan City where they start the street running and caught a 6 car commuter train westbound. Soon the local followed and we got them heading down the street parallel to the cars. A stop at the shop area found the pair switching and heading into the yard.

On our way into Michigan we stopped at Niles, home to an outstanding Michigan Central depot built in 1897. We just missed the eastbound Amtrak and waited to catch the westbound with baggage unit #90200 on the lead, #127 on the rear. Heading toward Battle Creek we found the neat depot at Dowagiac and then in Battle Creek caught CN heading west.

We stayed overnight here and in the morning caught #399 coming into the yard with CN 8017 and IC 6030. At Charlotte we caught the westbound Amtrak with the same power we saw go east the night before. We continued north toward Durand, just missing a westbound freight on the way, and decided to go to Owasso first. We found the Steam Institute, home to Pere Marquette #1225, and went into the museum. Upon asking if the engine was available to be seen we were told it was "out on the line by special charter".

They could not tell us where it was for sure as a group from England had chartered the train for 2 days and it was being kept somewhat secret. However, after paying the \$5 entry fee one of the gals followed us outside and told us what line to check out (former Ann Arbor) and what town we might find it.

About 70 railfans from Britain, Scotland and other countries had chartered the train for \$600 per person per day. They had flown into Chicago on Thursday, rented cars and driven to the museum. Thursday night was a night photo session, Friday they had the train all day on the former MC line and Saturday they went up the former Ann Arbor as far as Carland. We headed northwest and soon found the train backing up for another photo run at a grade crossing. The road was parked full of rented vehicles and the railroad had volunteers out to keep traffic away from the area. We setup at a bean field and caught 3 runbuys. They had old cars setup at the crossing. The next runby they came up and stopped with a boxcar at the crossing. After blowing the whistle for the stop a truck backed up to a boxcar, two guys in coveralls unloaded a couple of boxes into the truck, closed the door and then the engineer called in the rear brakeman. After a short time he whistled off and headed east. Steve had moved near the track in the bean field and got the whole sequence on HD - a shot he showed us the other night and it was great.

The group continued west stopping at each good crossing. The train of old freight cars would back up (engine was headed east), have 2 or 3 runbuys with vehicles at the crossing and then go west again to another crossing. They were scheduled to be back for lunch around noon and by 1 PM headed back to town. We got a great shot on the way back.

Upon arrival at the yard they cut the engine off and proceeded to the service facility and turntable. She was placed next to the roundhouse building, ash dropped and the tender filled with water. After about 2 hours they moved back onto the table and turned her west to be heading west into the sun. Out in the yard they cut the caboos and put on the rear of the train, then headed out for an afternoon of

westbound runs. We caught them at two more locations with the last being the elevator at Carland. Here two old trucks were parked outside the elevator and two "farmers" in coveralls, standing talking, were the scene as #1225 blew by. This was the last of the day for the group. They were heading to Detroit for a flight to New Mexico, then 2 days on the Cumbres and Toltec, then to Wisconsin for Soo Line 1003 runs. In all some said it cost 3,000 pounds and this did not include room, board or rental cars. This was a picture-taking trip - no train rides.

We headed north to Saginaw for the night and in the morning went up to Bay City. Here we caught Huron & Eastern and Central Michigan power in the yard. The Lake States power was in a gated area and thus not accessible. On the way back we stopped at the former CSX yard in Saginaw and shot some of the power from an overhead bridge. We headed to Durand and caught CN 2601 with a stack train about a mile east of town. In Durand we caught H&E 8802 and 5036 along with Central Michigan 8804 and 8903. \$396 came into town, cut off the train to the west, traveled to the Detroit line and backed into the H&E to setoff cars. This took over an hour and was the only train in town. We left town, followed the Detroit line and shot the Holly station, in state of restoration, and the tower where CSX crosses the CN. We made it to Monroe, MI that evening and then headed out to try to catch some action before nightfall. South of Monroe there are 2 former Conrail lines, parallel and about 2 blocks apart, a former GTW line and then CSX is about ¼ mile to the west. We kept missing trains as we thought they would be on one only to look and see them either east or west of us. We did catch an empty Wyoming coal train with BNSF power. Our conclusion, Sunday was not the same a Saturday - and probably never would be.



Westbound UP 6694 passes the tower at Doshler, OH. The tower is not used for train control but for an office, in the lower area, for signal maintainers.

Monday morning we headed to Toledo area. We caught CSX trains on the way and the Ann Arbor working out of the south end of their yard. We went to Front Street where the former NYC line crosses the Maumee River. We had heard there was a ship coming and thought a good chance to get the bridge opening. As we arrived two trains were crossing the bridge with ship about a mile away. After the eastbound cleared another eastbound trailer train with NS 2775 and 2778 drug a "long" train over the bridge to the point the grain cargo ship had to stop. After catching the ship going through the bridge we headed south to Fostoria. He we caught 6 trains including two moves of shoving garbage cars to the C&O side and final delivery to the landfill south of town. We caught Q200 west of town as we headed to Doshler.

At Doshler there is now a picnic area with cover, soda machines, area for cookout, radio speaker going all the time, porta-potty and even wifi for your computer. A guy was there with his computer and the ATS of the area. He knew every train, where it was going and kept us informed on all activity in the area. We saw 10 trains in about 3 hours while we were there and power included CSX, UP, leased and CN.

Rain was coming in and we still had a long way to get home. We headed west through Fort Wayne and Lafayette, watching or listening to trains on the way. We had a great time - but there was no way to top our Saturday visit to Owasso, Michigan.

Illinois college obtains federal grant to study locomotive fuel usage, emissions

Northern Illinois University's (NIU) College of Engineering and Engineering Technology recently received a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to help the U.S. rail industry find ways to improve locomotive fuel efficiency and reduce emissions.

The college has partnered with Norfolk Southern Railway to facilitate the project. Faculty teams, assisted by students, will explore fuel cells to power long-haul road locomotives, focusing on high-temperature fuel cells; alternative fuels, such as bio-diesel; alternative materials, including ceramics, high strength steel and aluminum, titanium and composites, to improve the durability and performance of diesel locomotives; and methods to reduce emissions and heat loss. A team of nine NIU engineering professors also will study the efficiency of current rail lubricants to reduce wear and increase operating efficiency under diverse conditions

Driver blames GPS for train/car crash

BEDFORD HILLS, N.Y. - A driver whose car became stuck on Metro-North Railroad tracks and was hit by a train is blaming his global positioning satellite unit for the incident, the Lower Hudson Journal News has reported. It's the second time this year the crossing, Green Lane, has been the site of a driver whose car became stuck on the tracks allegedly after following the directions of a GPS unit. Bedford Hills is located on Metro-North's electrified Harlem Line. The road that crosses the tracks intersects with the Saw Mill River Parkway, a busy highway running parallel to Metro-North's rail line.

Jose Silva, 43, of White Plains, N.Y., told police "he did what he was told" by his

GPS unit and got his car stuck just before 8 p.m. "At least he had the sense to get out of the car and call 911," said M-N spokeswoman Marjorie Anders.

He didn't call in time. Silva said it was five to seven minutes after he reported being stuck on the tracks that the train struck him. Nobody was injured in the collision, but it stranded passengers for an hour and a half, and three other northbound trains also experienced delays.

Via TRAINS On-Line

Rail News

Both BNSF and Union Pacific announced (Sept 12) record coal loadings for trains moving out of Wyoming's Powder River Basin coal fields. BNSF said that they moved out a record 24 million tons of coal in August, breaking the previous monthly records of 23.9 million tons set in March. Union Pacific said that they loaded out a record 1,190 trains in August, surpassing their previous high of 1,174 trains in July. Together, the two railroads dispatched a total of 2,197 trains out of the PRB in August, also a new record. (Ed - note that this is about 70 trains per day).

On Oct. 7, CSX Transportation plans to take the wraps off a GenSet locomotive at its 59th Street Terminal in Chicago as part of a 2008 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Leaders Partners meeting. CSXT was the first railroad to join the EPA's Climate Leaders program and will become the first railroad in Illinois to use GenSet locomotives, the Class I said. CSXT plans to use five GenSets in various Illinois operations next year. GenSets are designed to reduce nitrous oxide and particulate matter emissions by 80 percent, and carbon dioxide emissions by 50 percent, and cut fuel usage compared with a conventional switcher.

The most comprehensive rail safety legislation proposed in 34 years is heading to President Bush's desk. Yesterday, the Senate passed the Rail Safety Enhancement Act of 2008 (H.R. 2095/S.

1889) by a 74-24 vote. The measure — and its companion bill, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 — previously passed the House. The packaged bills now move to the White House, where President Bush is expected to sign the measure into law, according to the United Transportation Union. H.R. 2095/S. 1889 would tighten rail worker training standards, require conductor certification, and mandate installation of positive train control on lines used for passenger trains and to move hazardous materials no later than 2015. The bill also would create a new high-level chief safety officer position within the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), add 200 federal rail safety inspectors and instruct the USDOT to develop a long-term strategy for improving rail safety, including an annual plan for reducing the number and rates of rail accidents, injuries and fatalities. In addition, the legislation would reauthorize the federal rail safety program through 2011 and enable the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to regulate rail workers' hours of service — providing the FRA that authorization for the first time. The bill would replace hours-of-service laws first enacted in 1907 with comprehensive, scientifically based regulations to address worker fatigue, the FRA said.

Meanwhile, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act would reauthorize Amtrak for five years at a total of \$13 billion. Amtrak's previous authorization expired in 2002. During next five years, Amtrak would receive \$2.9 billion in operating subsidies and \$5.3 billion for capital projects, such as new cars and infrastructure upgrades. The national intercity railroad also would receive \$1.9 billion to develop new state passenger-rail corridors. In addition, the measure includes a provision to authorize \$1.5 billion in federal funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority over 10 years for capital improvements and critical maintenance work.

Genesee & Wyoming Inc. says it has completed its acquisition of 10 short line railroads known as the Ohio Central Railroad System (OCR) for \$234.3 million in cash, subject to adjustment for final work-

ing capital. GWI also said it has acquired the Georgia Southwestern Railroad, Inc. for cash consideration of approximately \$16.5 million and the assumption of \$5.4 million in debt, subject to adjustment for final working capital. Ohio Central Railroad operates over 445 miles of track and owns 64 locomotives. The railroads handle approximately 140,000 annual carloads, primarily in the coal, steel and solid waste industries. Georgia Southwestern owns 10 locomotives and operates over 220 miles of track between White Oak, Ala., and Smithville, Ga., between Cuthbert, Ga., and Bainbridge, Ga., and in and around Columbus, Ga. Georgia Southwestern connects to GWI's Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad in Saffold, Ga., via trackage rights. It interchanges with Norfolk Southern, CSX, and the Heart of Georgia Railroad, carrying about 10,000 carloads per year, primarily serving customers in the peanut, general agriculture, aggregate, animal feed, and ethanol storage markets.

E Unit to Soda Shop - DUANESBURG, N.Y. - Joe Merli is working to convert a former Pennsylvania Railroad E8 diesel into a soda fountain, the Schenectady Daily Gazette has reported. The unit now wears New York Central paint and pin-stripes, and will soon be a replica of a 1950s malt and soda shop on the inside. Merli owns a cluster of historical artifacts and buildings he calls the Canal Street Historical Society, and the locomotive will join that collection. The exterior renovation is completed. Over the next few years, he plans to install a countertop for the malt shop and connect it to a nearby train station. "We'll have a full image in here of a 1950s soda shop," he said. Merli eventually plans to donate the site to a non-profit group.

CSXT, UP introduce California-to-New York produce train

CSX Transportation and Union Pacific Railroad have launched a perishable produce service between California and New York. Yesterday, October 6, the first train carrying 55 refrigerated box cars loaded with citrus products, celery and carrots departed Delano, Calif., beginning a 3,300-mile, 128-hour trip to Schenectady, N.Y. UP will move the train to Chicago, then interchange with CSXT, which will complete the trip to a Schenectady refrigerated warehouse.

The service offers southern California perishables shippers a high-speed, reliable transportation alternative, CSXT and UP said. The service also will target other commodities — such as cheese and frozen food — heading to East Coast markets. Each train carries the same amount of produce and perishable items that would be moved by more than 200 trucks, saving 100,000 gallons of diesel per total shipment. "What is exciting about this new service is that we're carrying produce, such as peppers, grapes and celery, that we haven't carried in rail cars since they built the interstate highway system," said John Philp, UP assistant vice president-food and refrigerated products, in a prepared statement. The California-to-New York train follows a produce unit-train service CSXT and UP launched in October 2006 between Wallula, Wash., and Schenectady. The Class Is marked that service's 100th produce train in September.

Via Progressive Railroading

Restricting Improper use of Electronic Devices by Railroad Workers

"Today's announcement by the National Transportation Safety Board regarding the tragic Metrolink crash has made it clear that the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices must be immediately addressed. The bottom line is railroad operating employees cannot focus on their critical safety functions while engaging in phone conversations, texting or any other form of unessential electronic communication, often in violation of railroad operating rules. "The consequences of inattentiveness and distraction are simply too catastrophic to be addressed at the operator or state level alone. As a result, we will issue an emergency order explicitly prohibiting the use of personal electronic devices by railroad employees while operating trains and in other settings. Everyone involved with rail travel deserves the full attention and focus of train operators, without exception and without excuse." (FRA - posted 10/02)

Urbana Train Show

Inquiring minds want to know. Well, at this time our group in Champaign/Urbana are looking at two options. The mall is still available. However, for a two-day show it must be held in the east-west and the north hallways along with any empty stores. This limits the number and size of layouts. The "high court mall" area is not to be used for a two-day show. If the group decides to hold a one-day show on Saturday then we can use the entire mall. With the new piano bar that has the entrance in the south mall area a security fence is erected each night across the north end of the big area, thus no two day events. The group is checking with some vendors and layouts about a one-day show and we should know in a few weeks of the decision. Many of us are leaning toward a one-day show this next year.