

# DANVILLE FLYER

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## New use for Ford Fusions—via Rail

Interesting article on smuggling dope using a train. Buy a Fusion, and get high! ~ David Yetter

A truck driver in a St. Paul, Minnesota, rail yard made a startling discovery while inspecting two new Ford Fusions shipped from Mexico: bundles of marijuana stashed in the cars' trunks. Each car had two 20-pound blocks of marijuana molded into the shape of spare tires and tucked inside plastic wrap, aluminum foil, coffee grounds and garbage bags, according to a Feb. 10 incident report from the St. Paul Police Department

The discovery was followed by another find by BNSF Railway police: the train car containing the Fusions had arrived five days earlier and 13 of the 15 Fusions were sent to car dealerships, the report stated.

A rental car agency bought three of the Fusions and sent them to a nearby airport to be rented, spurring a quick phone call to airport police. All 13 cars were tracked down, although some were as far away as 170 miles from St. Paul, and marijuana was found in each of them. In one case, a 50-pound package of marijuana was found in a car purchased by an 86-year-old man in Rochester, about 80 miles from St. Paul, according to a report from Minnesota news outlet AlphaNews. No arrests were made, and St. Paul police do not have any suspects, said department spokesman Steve Linders.

In a separate incident on March 10, BNSF police notified the police department in Dilworth, Minnesota, that marijuana was found in a Ford Fusion from Mexico. Police searched more than 400 other vehicles in the Dilworth rail yard and found 217 pounds of marijuana packaged and sealed to look like spare tires in seven new Fusions from Mexico, said Dilworth Police Chief Ty Sharpe.

St. Paul police hadn't seen an incident of marijuana smuggled inside cars on a train in at least two decades, Linders said. The same can't be said for the Arizona-Sonora border. In May 2015, the Mexican military found 430 pounds of marijuana in the spare-tire spaces of 14 new cars inside a rail car in Nogales, Sonora, according to Mexican media reports. The packages were wrapped in aluminum foil and clear plastic. The next month, 35 pounds of marijuana were found stashed among Ford vehicles in the same rail yard.

A spokeswoman for Ford said the company is aware of the situation and cooperating with the investigation, but declined to provide any more information. Fusions are made at the Ford plant in Hermosillo, Sonora, and some are shipped by rail to the border crossing in Nogales, where U.S. Customs and Border Protection statistics show 782 trains crossed the border in fiscal year 2016.

*Via Brass Switchkey Railnews #20, May 9, 2017*

**September 17th – We will hold our first fall monthly meeting to be held at the Monticello Railway Museum during Railroad Days. This event has train rides with both steam and diesel along with motor car trips. A meeting will be held in the picnic area around 1:00 PM.**

September 16-17 in Decatur is the Decatur, Mt. Zion and Southern Model Railroad Club's Decatur Train Fair 2017. Civic Center, 412 North Jackson St. Sat 10-4; Sun 11-4.

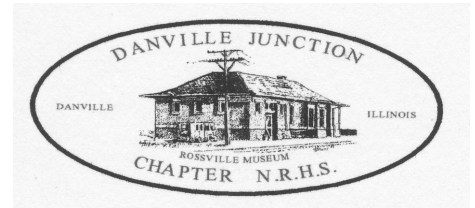
October 7th—first fall operating session at Rossville, begins around 1:00 PM

**September meeting—Monticello Railway Museum. 11:00 AM to around 3:00 PM—lunch there, train rides and meeting.**

## 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 any-

one 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 2017—our 49th Year

Allen Cooke – President  
Doug Butzow – Vice President  
Dick Brazda– Secretary  
Doug Nipper– Treasurer  
Dave Sherrill – Programs  
Jess Bennett – Historian  
Bob Gallippi – Museum Director  
Rick Schroeder – Editor  
Cooke Business Products - Publisher



## Great Lakes Basin Transportation Status

Officials with the private corporation seeking to develop a new \$2.8-billion railroad to bypass Chicago congestion said it had a net worth of \$151 at the end of 2016, according to a filing with federal regulators.

Great Lakes Basin Transportation Inc. listed \$802,000 in accounts payable for its current liabilities in 2016. Equity included \$473,573 in stockholder investment but a negative \$71,878 in retained earnings and net income of a negative \$1,203,445, according to the statement.

In an accompanying statement, the Crete, Ill.,-based company said it had no net income in 2016. The company listed \$401,544 in investment revenue from stock sales in 2016, but nothing was left after expenses. The largest category was \$312,828 for consultants, followed by \$66,360 for legal expenses. The balance sheet and income statement was filed June 21 by Great

(Continued on page 6)

## 2017— May Meeting Minutes

The meeting at the Vermilion Valley RR office was called to order at 11:57 by President Butzow.

The minutes of the previous meeting were in the newsletter and were approved.

The treasurer's report of May 21 was presented. Expenditures for the month were \$569.31, with the largest item being depot insurance. The income by account was also listed: Heat \$60, Internet \$45 and Motorcar \$270.

A report was made on the St. Louis trip on May 13. It went well until returning into Springfield, when the train hit a pedestrian. Arrival in Normal was about 2.5 hours late.

The depot cleaning is scheduled for May 27 starting around 9:00. This will begin the summer of weekend openings.

NEW-Bob Gallippi reported that while cutting the grass at the depot, the highway flasher ran behind his truck as he was backing and was knocked over. He has investigated and will remount it in an improved manner.

The next meeting will be in September and will be held at Monticello at MRM. Meetings thru December were confirmed with Jockos. Doug Butzow will present the October meeting.

Henry mentioned that Terry Bodine is building a 1.5 in. scale RR south of Covington, aiming for 2000 ft. When completed, that would make a potential program. Henry and Skyler are taking the Engine 765 trip between Joliet and LaSalle Street station in Chicago.

The meeting adjourned at 12:17.

The chapter thanks the Vermilion Valley RR for hosting us for the May program. The ride, weather, and food were all excellent! Thanks to Jim and Travis.

## CSX to Consolidate Dispatchers

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — CSX Transportation is in the early planning stages of re-centralizing all of its train dispatchers to Jacksonville. The decision would relocate approximately 355 train dispatchers from nine offices to one single office near the railroad's headquarters in Jacksonville.

"We did receive notice from CSX of its intent to relocate all train dispatchers back to Jacksonville and we have started the meeting process with the company in an effort to achieve in implementing an agreement if we can," says American Train Dispatcher Association Vice President Rory Broyles in an interview with Trains News Wire.

Broyles says the labor union received notice from CSX that outlined its intentions to have all dispatchers back in Jacksonville before the end of October 2017. The business decision would not result in any furloughed dispatchers based on the information supplied by CSX to the union, Broyles confirms. When asked about the re-centralization,

CSX spokeswoman Laura Phelps said the railroad is undertaking a comprehensive review of the company's operations and is making changes across its entire network.

"While CSX CEO Hunter Harrison mentioned in a conference call with financial analysts on April 20 that the number of dispatching offices CSX operates would be under review, CSX has not announced any specific plans to date," Phelps said in a prepared statement to Trains News Wire in early June.

"If changes are made, the company will communicate them to employees, customers and other stakeholders who may be impacted," she added.

CSX operates nine major dispatching centers categorized by its divisional territories. The centers include the Jacksonville Division in Jacksonville; Atlanta Division in Atlanta; Louisville Division in Louisville, Ky.; Florence Division in Florence, S.C.; Nashville Division in Nashville, Tenn.; Baltimore Division in Baltimore; Chicago Division in Chicago; Albany Division in Albany, N.Y.; and the Great

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Lakes Division in Indianapolis. According to a copy of the railroad's notice obtained by Trains News Wire, CSX would remodel its dispatching center at 3019 Warrington Street in Jacksonville to accommodate all of the dispatching offices.

"After the relocation, offices will continue to be responsible for dispatching the separate territories that they dispatch today," reads the notice. The document states the relocation will occur in stages.

"CSXT expects the relocation to begin in or around August 31, 2017 and be completed on or about October 15, 2017," according to the document.

Ten years ago this month, CSX management announced it would decentralize its dispatching operations in favor of a more efficient operation. In June 2007, then CSX spokesman Gary Sease told the Florida Times-Union that the relocation would improve the productivity and efficiency of train-dispatching operations.

"We're taking these dispatching functions out of headquarters," Sease said in 2007, "and putting them into field offices, closer to where the train operations occur."

At the time, CSX management said the realignment would result in more effective and efficient decision-making, improved system reliability, and improved train performance. It was soon thereafter that CSX began retrofitting its divisional offices with technology and infrastructure to accommodate the realignment. CSX dispatchers have since been dispatching trains from those divisional offices.

In January 2016, CSX announced it would dissolve its Huntington Division in Huntington, W. Va., and relocate dispatchers and other union employees to adjacent divisions. The decision affected more than 120 management and union employees. Many of those dispatchers were relocated to adjacent territories governed by offices in Indianapolis, Baltimore, Atlanta, and a small dispatching center near Cincinnati. It is not yet clear whether CSX may look to sell the commercial properties that house their current dispatching centers or if the railroad could re-use the buildings.

*TRAINS On-Line 6-26*

## CSX Additional Changes

CSX Transportation continues to make operational improvements as new CEO Executive E. Hunter Harrison rolls out precision scheduled railroading across the system.

The railroad's customers are adjusting well to the changes, Chief Marketing Officer Fredrik Eliasson told an investor conference on Wednesday. Eliasson acknowledged that some service hiccups resulted from converting seven of the railroad's 12 hump yards to flat-switching facilities over the past three months.

Shippers responding to a Cowen & Co. survey in April said their top concern was the potential for service disruptions related to changes Harrison was implementing at the railroad. CSX is committed to proactively communicating with customers about service changes and seeks their feedback, Eliasson says.

But it's not always possible to touch base with shippers before operational changes are made because of Harrison's unrelenting pace, Eliasson adds.

"It is hard to stay in front of it," he says.

Concerns about Harrison's health — the CEO frequently relies on supplemental oxygen due to an undisclosed medical condition — have been "overblown," Eliasson says.

Harrison is actively involved and has an unparalleled sense of urgency, Eliasson says.

"I thought I had a sense of urgency prior to meeting Hunter," Eliasson says. "I did not."

By closing hump yards, reducing car handlings, and adjusting its operating plan, CSX has taken nearly a day out of transit times for merchandise carloads. The drop to a five-day average transit time, from 5.9 days, is a 15-percent improvement. CSX also has sped up coal train cycle times, reducing loaded transit time to 2.3 days, down from three days in March. Transit time variability also is down since Harrison became CEO on March 6. Through the end of May, on-time originations have improved 12 percent, while on-time arrivals improved 36 percent. Premium intermodal trains are arriving on time at a 97-percent clip in the second quarter to date.

"For our customers this is a big deal," Eliasson says. Eventually, the combination of reduced transit times and

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*How tomorrow moves*

(Continued from page 4)

more consistent service should enable the railroad to capture business from trucks.

CSX also has made changes to its intermodal network. Before Harrison arrived, about 25 percent of CSX's intermodal trains operated seven days a week. Now half of intermodal trains operate every day as part of Harrison's emphasis on running a balanced network, Eliasson says. In some cases, trains have been combined where it makes sense from volume and scheduling standpoints.

"There's no doubt that precision scheduled railroading will strengthen our service execution levels," Eliasson says.

CSX continues to reduce the number of trains it needs to move roughly the same amount of tonnage. The railroad now has 700 locomotives stored — up from 551 in May — and has disposed of more than 24,000 freight cars through storage, scrapping, or returning them to lessors, Eliasson says. The railroad won't need to order new locomotives in the foreseeable future. "Overall, we are good on locomotives," Eliasson says.

CSX second-quarter volumes are up about 1 percent to date in the second quarter, which is slightly weaker than expected. CSX expects volume to improve in the second half of the year as trucking capacity tightens.

Via *TRAINS On-Line* 6-15-17

## GE to Close Erie Locomotive Plant

Leading locomotive manufacturer General Electric is shifting production of its diesel-electric locomotives from its facility in Erie, Pa., to Texas, and cutting 575 jobs.

The company in a statement said the move comes on domestic sales of locomotives that have dropped 10%, and higher international orders.

"Given these market realities and the need for cost competitiveness across our global markets, GE Transportation announced its intent to transfer production of locomotives and kits for international customers to the GE Manufacturing Solutions facility in Forth Worth, TX from Erie, PA. The move is necessary to drive efficiency, better compete in the increasingly competitive global market, and preserve U.S. jobs."

General Electric has produced locomotives at its plant

in Lawrence Park, Pa., since 1910, most recently as GE Transportation. The facility will continue to operate in design, engineering, prototype development and components production, said GE Chief Executive Jamie Miller in a letter to employees.

Railway Age 7-28

## NS Consolidates Divisions again

Norfolk Southern will dissolve its Central Division operations into three surrounding divisions by early November, a railroad news release announced on Tuesday. The move will reduce NS' operating divisions to nine territories.

The consolidation effort will relocate railroad dispatchers and other positions from NS' Central Division offices in Knoxville, Tenn., to the Alabama Division in Birmingham, Ala.; Illinois Division in Decatur, Ill.; and the Lake Division in Fort Wayne, Ind. The move will affect a total of about 50 employees who report to the Knoxville office in management, dispatching, and clerical positions. Train dispatchers will have the opportunity to transfer to one of the neighboring divisions or apply for vacant positions across the system. Administrative and clerical workers will be offered opportunities to apply for vacant positions elsewhere, according to the railroad.

NS' Central Division is mainly responsible for railroad operations in Kentucky and Tennessee, including the railroad's Cincinnati, New Orleans & Texas Pacific Railway, or CNO&TP route. The former Southern Railway-operated route runs from Cincinnati, Ohio, south to Chattanooga, Tenn.

The division also manages other ex-Southern Railway lines including the Louisville District to Louisville, Ky., and other secondary routes and coal branches running east and northeast of Knoxville.

Norfolk Southern representatives say yard and field operations will continue unchanged despite the Central Division closure. The railroad will continue to employ more than 250 workers in Knoxville in train service and other operational roles. It is not yet clear how the main line and secondary routes will be divided up among neighboring divisions.

*TRAINS On-Line* 7-17

(Continued from page 2)

Lakes Basin with the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, which had requested the information earlier this month.

Great Lakes Basin also filed a list of its 10 top shareholders, led by Frank Patton, the chairman, who controls slightly more than 87 percent. Patton founded and managed Portfolio Dynamics, a software company, according to a company biography on Great Lakes Basin's website.

The next largest shareholder, with five percent, is James T. Wilson, the vice chairman. Wilson worked for 18 years for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, and 20 years as a railroad industry consultant, according to his biography.

The disclosure followed the board's rejection of Great Lakes Basin's claim that its list of principal stockholders was "highly confidential" and should not be released.

Great Lakes Basin officials seek authority from regulators to build and operate a 261-mile rail line around the Chicago area from southeast Wisconsin and northwest Illinois to northwest Indiana. The line is intended to relieve Chicago's rail congestion and would interchange with each major rail line operated by the six Class I carriers serving Chicago, along with six regional railroads, at 26 points.

The proposed project has drawn extensive grass-roots opposition, according to filings with the board. Opponents include at least six groups from at least four Illinois counties, the Illinois Farm Bureau and six county farm bureaus, and the Chicago-based Environmental Law & Policy Center. Kevin Brubaker, deputy director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center, pointed to the disclosure that Great Lakes Basin claimed a net worth of \$151.

"That's enough to buy about ten used railroad ties," Brubaker said in a statement to *Trains News Wire*. "It is hard to imagine how they will demonstrate financial fitness to the Surface Transportation Board."

According to Great Lakes Basin's application with the board, the proposed rail line would allow a train to travel between any two of those points of interchange in eight hours or less. Great Lakes Basin also states that construc-



- Legend
- Class I Railroad
- Class II Railroad
- Class III Railroad
- Class IV Railroad
- Class V Railroad
- Class VI Railroad
- Class VII Railroad
- Class VIII Railroad
- Class IX Railroad
- Class X Railroad
- Class XI Railroad
- Class XII Railroad
- Class XIII Railroad
- Class XIV Railroad
- Class XV Railroad
- Class XVI Railroad
- Class XVII Railroad
- Class XVIII Railroad
- Class XIX Railroad
- Class XX Railroad
- Class XXI Railroad
- Class XXII Railroad
- Class XXIII Railroad
- Class XXIV Railroad
- Class XXV Railroad
- Class XXVI Railroad
- Class XXVII Railroad
- Class XXVIII Railroad
- Class XXIX Railroad
- Class XXX Railroad

tion of the line would create new capacity, permitting up to 110 trains per day to bypass the existing Chicago terminal and allowing the existing rail infrastructure to move freight and passenger trains originating and terminating in Chicago more efficiently and reliably.

Great Lakes Basin also filed more detailed information on its proposed route, including the counties and municipalities whose boundaries it would cross, and the rail-

roads with which it seeks to connect. Great Lakes Basin said it chose the route to "minimize environmental impacts" and has avoided cities and existing homes to the maximum extent possible. Great Lakes Basin said it has not yet entered into any agreements with any railroad regarding operations, interchange of traffic or rates.

*TRAINS On-Line 6-26*



DJC members and WV crew pose next to the railroads P&E caboose in Foster, Indiana after the annual May trip to the WV facilities and office near Covington, IN



## CSX Reporting to the STB

CSX has revised the way it calculates its service metrics to more accurately reflect the Class I's operational performance, company officials announced yesterday.

The revised metrics address train velocity, terminal dwell and cars online.

"CSX is transitioning to precision scheduled railroading, which focuses heavily on service to customers and asset utilization," said President and Chief Executive Officer E. Hunter Harrison in a press release. "These revised service metrics give us a more accurate understanding of how we are performing and where there are additional opportunities for improvement."

The revised metrics are as follows:

- **Train velocity** now includes a train's end-to-end time, and accordingly, speed. The previous definition only counted time on line of road, and excluded intermediate dwell time for crew changes, freight car pick-up or set-off, or other work events at an intermediate yard. The updated definition includes intermediate dwell, reflecting the true speed of a train from origin to destination, and will help identify all opportunities to move trains faster and more reliably from origin to destination.
- **Terminal dwell** now includes all car dwell time encountered on an end-to-end trip. The previous definition excluded the amount of time a car spent at a terminal during an intermediate work event if it arrived and departed on the same train. The updated definition includes intermediate car dwell for terminal work events when a car arrives and departs on the same train.
- **Cars online** now measures the number of active freight rail cars on rail lines operated by CSX. The previous definition included all cars that were last reported on a line operated by CSX, which counted several categories of inactive freight rail cars.

To help users analyze the company's performance history, CSX restated its 2016 and 2017 train velocity and terminal dwell performance data using the definitions. The data, along with 2017 cars online data, are available on the

company's website

Yesterday's announcement follows recent reports of shippers' complaints and regulators' concerns about a deterioration of CSX service as the railroad restructures under Harrison's leadership.

In a letter to the Rail Customer Coalition last week, Harrison said CSX is "addressing aggressively" its customers' service issues.

Progressive Railroading 8-23

## South Shore gets new Coil Cars

The Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad (CSS) has added 100 covered steel coil cars to support the shipping needs of Burns Harbor, Ind.-based ArcelorMittal, its largest customer. CIT Rail is leasing the 100-ton-capacity cars to CSS.

Noting that steel coil cars "are in tight supply," CSS turned to the railcar market to obtain this specialized equipment, according to Greg Dougherty, CSS Director-Sales and Marketing. "South Shore and ArcelorMittal share a business partnership that has been going strong for more than a decade. Adding equipment to support our biggest customer was the right and timely decision."

The Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad, better known as the "South Shore," is based in Michigan City, Ind., and is one of six railroads operated by Anacostia Rail Holdings. It operates 127 route-miles of line providing rail freight service between Chicago and South Bend, Ind., and hosts intercity passenger rail service provided by NICTD (Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District). CSS connects with all Chicago railroads and serves the Port of Chicago. Anacostia's other lines are the Gulf Coast Switching Co., Louisville & Indiana Railroad Co., New York & Atlantic Railway Co., Northern Lines Railway, and Pacific Harbor Line.

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**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.danvillejct.org](http://www.danvillejct.org)**

## Photo of the Month



CSX 4053, SD40-3 south of Chrisman, IL—Dick Brazda photo





