

DANVILLE FLYER

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September Chapter Meeting Will Go On at Jocko's

It has been a long time since our last meeting and, after checking with Jocko's Pizza, we will hold our September meeting in their back room as usual. **The date is September 27th at 1:00 PM (Note the date change).** Hopefully many of you will attend, however, we understand if you choose not to. We will follow all requirements of the IDPH and the Vermilion County Health Department along with requirements of the restaurant (mask must be worn to enter, removed during the meal).

At this time a program is not planned but we may use the time to plan future meetings, operating sessions at Rossville, and as we always say "in the good of the order" discussion for any railroad related activity.

Amtrak Status

Amtrak announced yesterday (8-13) positive train control (PTC) has been implemented on all Amtrak-owned or controlled track.

The final piece of the PTC project recently concluded with the installation of a mile of slow-speed track in the Chicago terminal, Amtrak officials said in a press release.

"As leaders in PTC implementation, Amtrak is pleased to achieve this milestone, and we will continue to work together with all of our partners to improve safety across the rail network," said Executive Vice President and Chief Safety Officer Steve Predmore.

Amtrak continues to work with partners across the industry to advance PTC on host infrastructure, officials said. In addition, it's working with tenant railroads that operate over Amtrak infrastructure to complete interoperability testing. The national intercity passenger railroad is on target for all tenant trains to be operating with PTC before the federally mandated deadline of Dec. 31.

To date, Amtrak has advanced PTC implementation across Amtrak-controlled routes and

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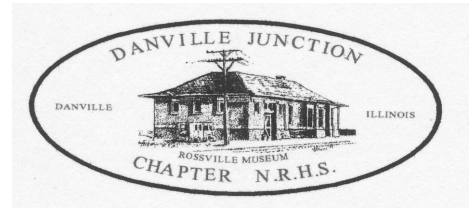


SEPTEMBER 27TH MONTHLY MEETING AT JOCKO'S PIZZA BEGINNING AT 1:00 PM. AGAIN, THIS IS A PLANNED MEETING AND WILL HAVE MORE INFORMATION AFTER WE ARE HAVING OPERATING SESSION AT THE MUSEUM IN ROSSVILLE. FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH, START AROUND 1:00 PM

About Us

The DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad. Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of

railroading. Dues per year are \$30.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$50.00 for NRHS membership. Rossville Depot Museum membership is \$30 per year. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June, July, August and December) at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX (former Conrail), in Danville, Il with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.



Officers for 2020—our 52nd Year

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



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equipment for the following:

- All (550) owned locomotives are fully equipped and PTC operable;
- All (11) installation/track segments are completed;
- All (160) radio towers are fully installed and equipped;
- All employees who require training to support PTC operations have completed training; and
- 898 of 898 route miles are in PTC operation.

Progressive Railroading 8-14

2020 — Meeting Minutes

As you are aware, we have not had a meeting since February and our planned trip on the Vermilion Valley Railroad canceled. We will be meeting in September and hopefully in October we can still have our ride on the VVR. We will be planning for November and the first Sunday in December for our usual meetings..

Amtrak Triweekly Schedule Changes

Amtrak will phase in triweekly operation of its long-distance trains over a three-week period beginning Oct. 5, according to a message to employees obtained by Trains News Wire. Trains moving to triweekly schedules as of Oct. 5 are the California Zephyr, Capitol Limited, City of New Orleans, and Crescent. The Coast Starlight, Lake Shore Limited, Southwest Chief, and Texas Eagle will become triweekly on Oct. 12, with the Empire Builder and Palmetto triweekly as of Oct. 19. Auto Train will remain daily, while the Cardinal and Sunset Limited will continue their current triweekly operation, and frequency reductions have already occurred for the Silver Star and Silver Meteor.

Amtrak has said that the switch to triweekly operation is because of financial losses reflecting decreased ridership because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but could be avoided if a funding proposal passes Congress [see "Amtrak CEO: Appropriations proposal would preserve daily service, avoid job cuts," Trains News Wire, July 13, 2020]. Earlier this week, the company released the metrics that it will track to determine if trains resume daily operation in spring or summer 2021 [see "Amtrak releases criteria for restoring long-distance service," Trains News Wire, Aug. 11, 2020].

Part of the planned schedule is shown to the right. This is a developing story; follow Trains News Wire for more information as it becomes available.

Changes as of Oct. 5

California Zephyr

Westbound No. 5	Departs Chicago	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday
Eastbound No. 6	Departs Emeryville, Calif.	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Capitol Limited

Westbound No. 29	Departs Washington D.C.	Wednesday, Friday, Sunday
Eastbound No. 30	Departs Chicago	Monday, Thursday, Saturday

City of New Orleans

Northbound No. 58	Departs New Orleans	Wednesday, Friday, Sunday
Southbound No. 59	Departs Chicago	Monday, Thursday, Saturday

Crescent

Southbound No. 19	Departs New York	Tuesday, Friday, Sunday
Northbound No. 20	Departs New Orleans	Monday, Thursday, Saturday

Changes as of Oct. 12

Coast Starlight

Southbound No. 11	Departs Seattle	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday
Northbound No. 14	Departs Los Angeles	Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Lake Shore Limited

WB No. 49/449	Departs New York/Boston	Wednesday, Friday, Sunday
EB No. 48/448	Departs Chicago	Monday, Thursday, Saturday

Southwest Chief

Westbound No. 3	Departs Chicago	Monday, Thursday, Saturday
Eastbound No. 4	Departs Los Angeles	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Texas Eagle

Southbound No. 21	Departs Chicago	Tuesday, Friday, Sunday
Northbound No. 22	Departs San Antonio	Tuesday, Friday, Sunday

Changes as of Oct. 19

Empire Builder

Westbound No. 7/27	Departs Chicago	Monday, Thursday, Saturday
Eastbound No. 8/28	Departs Seattle/Portland	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Palmetto

Southbound No. 89	Departs New York	Monday, Thursday, Saturday
Northbound No. 90	Departs Savannah, Ga.	Wednesday, Friday, Sunday

Second Section—

BNSF Railway has introduced the first of what it says will be 10 locomotives with special paint schemes marking the railroad's 25th anniversary. On its Facebook page, the railroad posted four photos of GE ES44AC No. 5828, with a "25th Anniversary" label on the nose and side, as well as logos of predecessor railroads. BNSF says the other nine units will have the same scheme. The railroad says the first locomotive will be operating as of tomorrow (8-19-2020) Via Trains

NRE consolidating operations to two sites. NRE, which sells and leases new and remanufactured locomotives and components, and provides overhaul and maintenance services, will consolidate operations to its headquarters location in Mt. Vernon, Ill, as well as its shops in Paducah, Ky. Operations at Dixmoor, Ill., Silvis, Ill, and Milwaukee will relocate to those locations, and the company's Hagerstown, Md., operation will move to a new facility adjacent to the Paducah shop to provide services including manufacture and rebuilding of diesel power assemblies. Pat Frangella, executive committee leader, said in a press release that the plan "will significantly streamline our operations, while maintaining all of our service

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CP, UP and Illinois Tollway

Agreements have been reached between Canadian Pacific, Union Pacific, and the Illinois Tollway in a years-long dispute over access to railroad property in and around the CP's Bensenville Yard northwest of Chicago, officials announced Thursday.

The agreements call for the mutual exchange of property rights necessary for construction of a new multibillion-dollar tollway with interchanges creating new access into and around O'Hare International Airport, and will enable improvements to rail operations in the Chicago Terminal area, according to a statement from the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority.

The agreements include \$250 million in costs to the Toll Authority to account for the necessary land acquisition, construction access rights, air rights, business impacts and future structural maintenance costs associated with the I-490 Tollway project, the agency said.



UP, in a statement, said the project will allow the railroad to "protect its Chicagoland operations and support future needs, while allowing the public to enjoy the benefits of a new highway system."

Negotiations over access to the railroad property have been ongoing for years but turned into a legal battle in federal court and before the Surface Transportation Board. There, the Toll Authority sought the green light to condemn railroad property, deeming it vital for the new tollway.

CP had argued that the proposed condemnation would "indisputably interfere with current rail operations and that interference could prove disastrous to CP, its customers, and to the national rail network as a whole," according to a filing with the STB. At one point, CP's CEO Keith Creel told Illinois Congressional leaders that negotiating away "irreplaceable rail capacity is not an option."

According to Thursday's announcement, the agreements will allow construction of the new tollway (known as I-490) to cross the Union Pacific Railroad at several locations, including where western access into and out of O'Hare International Airport is planned, as well as near the site of a new interchange between Interstate 490 and the existing Interstate 294.



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The new I-490 tollway is also planned to cross over the Canadian

Pacific at several locations including where western access to the airport is planned and in the Bensenville Yard, which is operated by CP's subsidiary, Soo Line Railroad Co. The project will require relocating Canadian Pacific trackage south of the yard, the announcement said.

The agreements would also provide the Toll Authority with property rights that will further local highway projects, eventually leading to the replacement of the at-grade crossing at the Union Pacific Railroad with a new bridge that will relieve congestion and improve access to the north side of O'Hare, the announcement said.

Specific details of the agreements and additional comments from the railroads were not immediately available.

CP had reportedly asked for \$114 million for land acquisition and improvements to the Bensenville Yard in March 2014. The Toll Authority reportedly offered CP as much as \$3.3 million for the easement rights at one time.

"The mutual benefits flowing from these agreements

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are the result of cooperation and respect for one another's needs," Canadian Pacific's Executive Vice President of Operations Mark Redd said in the announcement. "We are excited that the agreements will help the Tollway meet the needs of the traveling public of Northeast Illinois and enable improvements to the rail network which will contribute to Chicago's economy and help position Canadian Pacific to meet future demand for freight rail service."

"Negotiations for these long-sought agreements began in 2012, and their complexity reflects the importance of the area to the railroads, as well as our own efforts to complete the Move Illinois Capital Program," Toll Authority Executive Director José Alvarez said in a statement. "Our cooperation represents a substantial step toward the modernization of Illinois' road and railway infrastructure to invigorate the communities and businesses in the region."

The Toll Authority, commonly known as the Illinois Tollway, had asked the STB in 2017 for a declaratory order clearing the way for it to condemn property in order to build the new toll road on bridges over CP's rights-of-way and, eventually, through CP's Bensenville Yard.

CP had argued that it would be "significantly and permanently damaged" if forced to grant the easements on its right-of-way.

The STB had urged the Toll Authority and CP to resolve the dispute through mediation, but both sides responded that they were independently seeking a settlement. In 2018, CP and the Toll Authority announced they had signed a letter of intent creating a "framework" toward resolving the long-standing dispute. *Trains May 21*

CSX Cancels Santa Train

The CSX Santa Train, an Appalachian tradition for more than seven decades, will be sidelined this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, at least in its traditional form.

CSX and the Kingsport, Tenn., Chamber of Commerce announced Thursday that the Santa Train, held annually the Saturday before Thanksgiving in Eastern Kentucky, Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee, will not operate across CSX's former Clinchfield Kingsport Subdivision due to concerns with the escalating pandemic. The Chamber says that, rather than

Santa riding the rails to deliver gifts at more than a dozen designated stops, gifts will be distributed in a drive-through process from retail stores along the route operated by regional grocery giant Food City, one of the event's primary sponsors. The new plan is being billed as a "reimagining" of the Santa Train. The decision halts a 77-year-old tradition of Santa riding the high iron to deliver gifts to Appalachian communities.

"The health and safety of our employees, volunteers, attendees and the community is always our top priority when we are planning the Santa Train. We decided it was in the best interests of all parties to rethink this year's event amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," CSX Corporate Communications Vice President Bryan Tucker said in a statement. "We worked closely with our partners and are pleased to be able to provide a safe alternative to the traditional Santa Train that will bring joy and lift spirits during this challenging time."

CSX spokesperson Cindy Schild tells *Trains News Wire* that the change in format is specifically for this year amidst the ongoing pandemic. She says the decision is "not cancelling the train, it's not cancelling the tradition." Schild also says the railroad is committed to putting the Santa Train back on the tracks in 2021 if it is safe to do so.

"This is a decision that is being made for this year," Schild says. "The Santa Train has been running for 75 years and right now, there are no plans to end this long-standing tradition. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we decided to reimagine how this train is experienced to spread some holiday cheer along the route in a safe way. That was the nature of the decision for this year and we're glad we're still able to spread some cheer and hand out some gifts on the route."

The Santa Train tradition was started in 1943 by Kingsport Chamber and the Clinchfield Railroad. The train's modern-day route extends from CSX's Shelby Yard in Pikeville, Kentucky, south along the Kingsport Sub. Along the 100-plus-mile route to Kingsport, the train stops in several communities and draws massive crowds which gather in tight proximity at the rear of the train in an attempt to catch soft gifts tossed from Santa and others.

Last year, the train ran in rainy weather pulled by CSX's F40PH2 locomotives. On the rear of the train, Santa stood and tossed gifts from the former Clinchfield office car No. 100, owned and restored by the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum in Johnson City, Tenn. The train's 75th running in 2017 featured restored Clinchfield Railroad No.

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800, an EMD F7 which was the Clinchfield's first diesel-electric locomotive, and Clinchfield SD45 No. 3632 led the train. Also memorable was the 1992 Santa Train, which featured Union Pacific 4-6-6-4 Challenger steam locomotive No. 3985, dressed up as "Clinchfield No. 676." It led the Santa Train and several other trips over the former Clinchfield route.

Trains On-Line 8-18-2020

Traffic Still Down—Intermodal Up

Although U.S. rail traffic declined 5.8 percent in August compared with the same month a year ago, total intermodal volume rose 3 percent to 1,122,954 containers and trailers, according to Association of American Railroads (AAR) data.

U.S. railroads logged 898,227 carloads last month, down 14.9 percent from August 2019, while total combined volume fell to 2,021,181 carloads and intermodal units. Still, the monthly U.S. intermodal volume gain was a highlight in AAR's August traffic report.

"For U.S. railroads, August 2020 was the best month in terms of intermodal loadings since October 2018, and the fifth best intermodal month ever," said AAR Senior Vice President John Gray in a press release. "Much of what's inside the trailers and containers on an intermodal train ends up on the shelves of stores, or finds its way to consumers' doors via e-commerce merchants."

Meanwhile, only two of the 20 carload commodity categories tracked by AAR each month posted gains in August: grain, up 5.6 percent, and farm products excluding grain, up 5 percent.

Commodities that logged carload decreases included coal, down 25.8 percent; crushed stone, sand and gravel, down 25 percent; and petroleum and petroleum products, down 14.3 percent.

For the first eight months of 2020, U.S. carload traffic totaled 7,448,257 units, down 16 percent, while intermodal volume totaled 8,610,477 units, down 7.7 percent compared with the same 2019 period.

"Despite the pandemic and the associated economic dislocations, an enormous amount of freight continues to move on railroads and other transportation modes," Gray said.

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offerings for our customers around the globe.

"Sometimes a major fire needs to be fought with a locomotive." BNSF is supplying a firefighting train to help battle the Evans Canyon Fire. The train can transport firefighters to hard-to-reach areas in the Yakima River Canyon. The locomotive holds 30,000 gal of water and comes equipped with a hose that can reach flames 30 ft away. In comparison, a fire truck can hold just 500 gal of water. BNSF owns two firefighting trains, and both are based in the state of Washington. Last week one of those trains was working through the Yakima River Canyon and moving through the upper canyon. Trains are protecting railroad property and the right-of-way that is being impacted by fire. Via RT&S

In the process of planning a move to a new house I have been going through boxes of stored items and found a "bundle" of negatives of both railroad and not railroad items. I scanned a number of them, some were not worth the effort,

and here are a few of the depot I thought you would like to see. After we acquired access to the Rossville depot we had to install a ceiling. Stan Chausse built the balcony to hold much of



the C&EI material we had acquired and then a group of us started building a layout in the baggage



room. Hard to believe it really looked like this one time..



Amtrak Cuts Service—Employees

Amtrak last week announced plans to furlough 1,950 workers and cut 100 management positions due to contracted operations and pinched finances.

For several weeks, the railroad conducted a thorough review of its fiscal-year 2021 operating plan and planned service levels, which revealed reduced staffing needs for the next fiscal year, Amtrak officials said in a prepared statement.

“While we have implemented initiatives to minimize the number of furloughs and involuntary separations, significant reductions remain necessary due to the slow recovery of ridership and revenue,” they said.

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen (BLET) leaders are urging members to ask their U.S. senators to adequately fund Amtrak, provided the railroad maintains full daily services to prevent the nearly 2,000 job cuts. The furloughs will impact about 400 BLET members.

“Earlier this summer, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Moving Forward Act, which would have tripled Amtrak funding to nearly \$29 billion,” BLET officials said in a press release. “It conditioned the extra funding on Amtrak maintaining service levels no lower than in 2019, and bars furloughs.”

The layoffs are unacceptable and avoidable, said Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO officials in a statement.

“Congress must immediately provide this carrier with the funding it needs to preserve its operations and keep its employees on payroll. If lawmakers fail to do so, Amtrak won’t stop at 2,000 jobs,” they said. “The carrier could ultimately lay off nearly 50 percent of its staff, leaving communities in both urban and rural areas without a vital transportation lifeline, and sending 10,000 workers to the unemployment line.”

Meanwhile, Amtrak last week also announced a new partnership with Lysol maker RB that will help strengthen disinfection protocols for trains, stations and lounges. The protocols first will launch in Northeast Corridor stations and Pacific Surfliner trains before expanding across Amtrak’s network.

RB will supply Amtrak with disinfection solutions, including those proven to be effective against the SARS-CoV2 virus that causes COVID-19. The products will be used in high-touch and high-traffic areas where germs are most prevalent.

Progressive Railroading 9-8-2020

Vermilion Valley RR, others sold by Ind Boxcar

Midwest & Bluegrass Rail LLC late last week announced it finalized the purchase of Camp Chase Railway, Chesapeake and Indiana Railroad, Vermilion Valley Railroad and Youngstown and Southeastern Railroad from Indiana Boxcar Corp.

The four short lines operate a combined 105 miles of branch line and industrial track and haul a wide range of commodities, including agricultural products, fertilizer, recyclables and construction-related materials.

The acquisition will add to Midwest & Bluegrass Rail’s growing portfolio of rail, logistics assets and operations, company officials said in a press release. Midwest & Bluegrass Rail plans to continue to pursuing economic development and transload opportunities.

“[We are] proud to welcome this group of four short line railroads to our expanding footprint,” said Midwest & Bluegrass Rail Chief Commercial Officer Dustin Shaver, “We are excited to ... usher in even more opportunities for customers and communities along the rail lines.”

Formed in 2019 as a full-service rail company, Midwest & Bluegrass Rail is focused on identifying, acquiring, marketing, developing and operating railroads across the United States.

A commitment to customers, employees and communities will lead to traffic growth on the four short lines, which were faced with low traffic density or abandonment, said Midwest & Bluegrass Rail Chief Operating Officer Brian Miller. “[We] believe the acquisition helps position the company for additional growth opportunities in the Eastern U.S.,” he said.

Now exiting the short-line business, Indiana Boxcar plans to focus on its locomotive and freight-car leasing business.

Progressive Railroading 9-8-2020

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We're on the Web!
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Photo of the Month



Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad engineer Don Wright leans out the window to watch for hand signals while switching at North Yard. Don was the brother of former member Bill Wright, and a long time friend and railfan. Doug and I used to ride sometimes with Don when he was at North Yard and above photo was taken on a cold winter day as they switched the P&E interchange track. Photo Rick Schroeder.