

DANVILLE FLYER

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SUNDAY JANUARY 19TH, REGULAR MEETING AT JOCKO'S PIZZA AT 1:00 PM.

FIRST SATURDAY IN FEBRUARY, THE FIRST, OPERATING SESSIONS IN ROSVILLE AT 1 PM.

MARCH 29TH AND 30TH, URBANA TRAIN SHOW AT LINCOLN SQUARE MALL.

January Meetings at Jocko's

The meeting will be at Jocko's Pizza on West Williams Street —date is Sunday the 19th. Lunch will be around 1:00 PM with meeting. The program will be presented by President Henry Schmitt.

A reminder that our annual dues, as well as NRHS membership, are due by April 1st. If you have not paid local and attend Sunday Doug Nipper will be happy to accept your money.

CREATE Awarded Grant for 75th St Corridor Project

Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program representatives announced Dec. 13 that more than \$290 million has been awarded through the U.S. Department of Transportation to accelerate improvements to the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP), the largest rail chokepoint in the Chicago region.

Awarded through USDOT's Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant program, the federal funding will come from the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) program and Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. The grants will go toward the next phase of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project, specifically Segment A of the CREATE Project EW2, a 3-mile elevated rail corridor on Chicago's South Side.

The project entails critical upgrades and increased capacity, including reconfigured track segments, new signals at Belt Junction, a third track addition to the Norfolk Southern Railway line, and the replacement and restoration of 14 aging bridge and viaduct structures, CREATE officials said in a press release.

"Addressing this critical chokepoint will strengthen rail safety and fluidity locally while also paving the way for a more resilient supply chain and sustainable growth across the nation," said Association of American Railroads President and CEO Ian Jefferies.

A substantial portion of this project must be completed to start building the Rock Island Connection (P2) project. The capacity increase is necessary for realizing the travel time and throughput benefits of P2, allowing Metra to direct 30 SouthWest Service trains to LaSalle Street station and freeing up around 30 slots at Chicago Union Station for Amtrak and Metra service expansions, CREATE officials said.

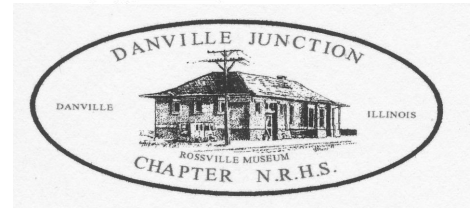
Launched in 2003, the CREATE program involves 70 projects designed to separate freight and passenger trains at six key junctions. The projects will eliminate about two dozen grade

(Continued on page 2)

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 2025—our 57th Year

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

(Continued from page 1)

crossings and increase rail capacity, speed and reliability in the Chicago area.

One of every four freight trains moving in the United States passes through Chicago, and about 500 freight and 800 passenger/commuter trains travel in or throughout the city each day.

Editor: While working for URS Corporation we, along with Hansen Engineering, received three contracts for preliminary work on CREATE projects. I was the PM on the second track connection to BNSF at McCook, the connection to the CN (GTW) north of the river at Blue Island and the 3rd Main from Blue Island to 123rd Street.

NRHS and Local 2025 Dues Payment.

It is that time of year again, Dues for the following year. We appreciate the donations that have been added to the dues check, it will be put to good use at the depot. NRHS members should have received their statement and online payment method will be offered again, or direct mail your check.

For local members a renewal notice will be sent via email. Please mail in the completed form with your check or bring to the next two meetings.

Doug Nipper

In addition the 3rd Main east out of Barr Yard to Dolton was added to our project list by CSX We did submit on other projects but were not successful in being selected, one of which was this project. As you will note in this timeline, some 21 years later, not all projects have been completed as money, permitting and environmental issues took their toll on getting the work completed. Government takes times. We did the 3 CSX siding projects in Indiana in one year from design to permitting to construction.

Metra's Homewood Station Reopened.

Metra and Chicago-area officials met last week to mark the completion of the \$21 million project to rebuild Homewood Station and improve its accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act.



The station serves passengers on the Chicago commuter railroad, as well as Amtrak and Pace riders. The project's final stage, the eastern entrance to the Metra station, officially reopened to riders on Dec. 9. Metra's project

followed a significant investment by Amtrak to rehab its part of the shared facility, Metra officials said in a press release.

The revamped station now includes an ADA-accessible east headhouse with a ramp, a renovated platform, wind breaks, warming house and gatehouse. Upgrades also included new drainage, ventilation, lighting and interior finishes in the existing tunnel; and replacement of the elevator and stairs connecting the tunnel to the platform.

The project was funded in part by a Federal Transit Administration Shared Transportation Program grant and formula funding totaling \$13.6 million. Additional funding came from the Regional Transportation Authority, Cook County, Pace and Metra.

Progressive Railroading 12-16

Norfolk Southern Adds Shippers

In 2024, 94 shippers began shipping or expanded existing shipping service through Norfolk Southern Railway, the Class I announced.

This increase in rail use is an example of the growing importance of rail in industries such as intermodal, automotive, manufacturing, agriculture, chemicals, consumer goods and more, NS officials said in an "Story Yard" article on the railroad's website.

"We're grateful that these valued customers are trusting

Norfolk Southern for their supply chain needs," said Ed Elkins, NS executive vice president and chief marketing officer. "We're producing [a] service that customers can count on every day, delivered by people they can trust. That is our goal. This is how we expand our partnerships and support the growth of critical and emerging industries here in America."



NS's growth has tracked with overall rising U.S. rail traffic trends in 2024, NS officials said. U.S. freight railroads hauled 6.6% more carloads and intermodal units year over year in the week ending Nov. 2, and nine of the 10 commodity groups tracked by the Association of American Railroads posted an increase in traffic, NS officials said, citing AAR data.

Progressive Railroading 12-17

Red Deer Railway

Genesee & Wyoming Inc. yesterday marked the launch of its first railroad in western Canada, the Red Deer Railway Limited (RDR).

The railroad operates between Jackson and Homeglen, Alberta, and uses operating rights over Canadian Pacific Kansas City from Red Deer to Chigwell and to Prentiss, Alberta. A direct interchange with CPKC in Red Deer provides access to the North American freight-rail network, while RDR's rail-car storage capacity as well as rail car-to-truck transloading and rail-car switching capabilities offer broader logistics services, G&W officials said in a press release.

The railroad's 10 employees serve customers in the energy industry.

"RDR can tailor our service package and operations plans based on the individual needs of area businesses along our 43-mile route," said Rick McLellan, president of G&W's Canada operations.

RDR acquired its assets and other rights from CPKC as part of a previously announced transaction between G&W and CPKC, company officials said.

Progressive Railroading 12-3

CPKC New Motive Power

Just shy of two years after the CPKC merger, the Class I railroad has purchased its first “new” locomotives. The eight General Electric ET44ACs were originally an order for Baffinland Iron Mines located on Baffin Island in Canada. The new-build mine project to haul iron ore to seaport via rail has been delayed many times, and the company decided to terminate the lease in September 2023 on the eight units.

The locomotives wore red paint with Baffinland colors and BMIR road numbers 7001-7008. The units were selected from a group of ET44ACs in GE's fleet, numbered GECX Nos. 2025, 2028, 2030-2032, 2020-2022, respectively. As built, GECX 2020-2022 were Tier 4 pre-production, field-test units built in 2013 and 2014 while GECX Nos. 2025, 2028, 2030-2032 were production field-test units built in 2014.

Following the purchase by Baffinland, GE upgraded the units for service high above the Arctic Circle, where they would be operating in the harsh winter climate. The model was changed from ET44AC to ET44ACAT, with the AT denoting arctic modifications that were made.

After CPKC's purchase, the units were moved to Wabtec's Albia, Iowa, facility for modifications prior to delivery. This included removal of arctic modifications, removal of the hump above the prime mover on the long hood, and a coat of fresh paint. The locomotives now have CP reporting marks and carry Nos. 7430-7437.

The first two ET44ACs released from Albia made their first revenue trip in late November when CP Nos. 7431 and 7433 were in the consist of train 253 from Kansas City to Chicago.

Prior to the merger, Kansas City Southern last purchased new locomotives in 2019 and Canadian Pacific in 2012.



CPKC train 253 is led by ET44AC No. 7431 as it makes its way across northern Illinois toward Chicago on Nov. 26, 2024. Chris Guss *Trains 12-17*

CPKC Completes Crossing Bridge

Canadian Pacific Kansas City yesterday announced construction has been completed on the second span of the international rail bridge linking Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Kansas City Southern broke ground on the \$100 million construction project in late 2022, before the merger between KCS and Canadian Pacific in 2023. Built to accommodate growing trade between the United States and Mexico, the structure is now known as the Patrick J. Ottensmeyer International Railway Bridge. Ottensmeyer, who died in July, was the last president and CEO of KCS prior to the merger.

"Pat's leadership and vision were instrumental in the development and successful completion of this project," said CPKC President and CEO Keith Creel in a press release. "His legacy lives on in the work we do at CPKC each and every day, enabling growing international trade across three great nations — Canada, the United States and Mexico."

Completion of the structure more than doubles CPKC's capacity to move freight through the border at the largest international trade port of entry in North America, Creel said.

"By linking expanding markets for our customers, this CPKC investment will accelerate growth between the industrial heartland of Mexico and points across the United States and Canada," he added.

Key features of the new structure are:

- a total length of 1,170 feet;
- a ballasted deck plate girder bridge built with six reinforced concrete piers;
- a second track bridge constructed on the right-of-way roughly 35 feet from existing track bridge, allowing trains to operate in both directions at the same time;
- 4,500 feet of new track; and
- enhanced border security investments, including a new VACIS X-ray rail-car inspection system and surveillance cameras.

The Ottensmeyer bridge is the only railroad bridge crossing the Rio Grande River linking Laredo and Nuevo Laredo across the international border, according to CPKC. The U.S. Presidential Permit for construction of the new bridge span was received in July 2020.

Rail News 12-18

NS Hurricane Helene Update

Norfolk Southern Railway yesterday announced it adjusted its projected timeline for completing Hurricane Helene cleanup on its AS Line, which travels through western North Carolina and into Tennessee.

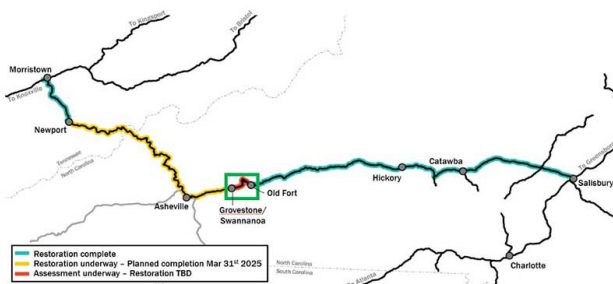
The section of track running east from Newport, Tennessee, through Asheville to Grovestone, North Carolina, is now projected to reopen March 31, 2025, later than initially anticipated. The portion of the line that runs between Grovestone and Old Fort remains under assessment, NS officials posted on the company's website.

In late September, Hurricane Helene moved through the Southeast, bringing historic flooding and unprecedented damage. Hundreds of NS railroaders worked to reopen all core routes affected by the storm within 72 hours of landfall, clearing over 15,000 trees, deploying more than 400 generators and repairing multiple washouts. Restoration of service in and out of Asheville will mark a milestone in the region's recovery, according to NS.

In addition to providing rail service for numerous businesses, the AS Line also serves as a critical connection for the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad, a local short line that serves the Hendersonville and Waynesville areas.

"We know how many community members are waiting for the line to reopen, and our teams have been working tirelessly since Sept. 27 to restore the service needed to help rebuild the local economy," said NS Vice President Engineering Ed Boyle.

The Class I also is pursuing additional transload facilities in the region to offer customers shipping solutions while construction continues, NS officials said. PR 12-18



From My Office Window

Looking out my window today (Monday the 6th) I see nothing but white snow. We planted a number of conifers and they provide the green or green/yellow look during the dull winter months. Of course now I have a clear shot to the CN mainline some 600 feet away. When the storm hit on Sunday CN had no moves and the Amtrak trains were canceled. Around 8:30 that night we had a southbound, first one of the day. Today there has been 3-4 trains and the NB Amtrak was 2+ hours late. As you know southern Illinois was hit hard with snow and ice and thus causing a lot of problems via switch points at sidings and probably signals.

Saturday the 4th we had our first session for the new year at Rossville and it was well attended by some 11 members. Bob, Doug and I sat this one out and we enjoyed watching everyone else have fun running trains. Considering that the layout was built in the 1970's, the temperature in the baggage room goes from around 10 degrees to 100 degrees throughout the year it runs well with only one or two bugs popping up each session. The original track was laid with fiber ties and thus a problem when ballast was installed. Each winter Bob and I, along with some others, would spend weekends relaying sections of track with wood ties and hand spiked rail. Stan Chausse (deceased) was the driving force on the layout at that time and without his push we probably would not have gotten the layout to the point it is today. A special thanks to Doug Butzow and Doug Nipper who one of them manages to get the session setup for the next one. Also, a special thanks to all that contribute to the "heat fund" each time as Bob turns the heat on the night before so we all enjoy the session.

Each year the C&EI HS holds an annual meeting in April. This year we will hold our annual meeting at the Vermilion County Museum on Saturday, April 12th. Sue Richter had suggest giving a program about the C&EI to the public and in the discussion I suggested our annual meeting at the same time. We will have our usual vendors and displays setup on the first floor. On the second floor we are going to setup 2-3 display cases with C&EI material including models. The displays will be there from March to the end of April. An afternoon program open to the public will include Dave Forbes talking about the passenger trains out of Danville. I will present a program on Oaklawn Shops. Put that on your calendar now.

Rick

California High Speed Rail

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — California Gov. Gavin Newsom and California High-Speed Rail Authority CEO Ian Choudri joined local officials and workers just outside of Bakersfield on Monday, Jan. 6, to mark the start of track laying on a 22-mile stretch of the state high-speed project.

The event — which included officials driving spikes into a ceremonial section of track — also marked substantial completion of the southernmost 22-mile section of the project's original construction.

"No state in America is closer to launching high speed rail than California," Newsom said in a press release. "... We're moving into the track-laying phase, completing structures for key segments, and laying the groundwork for a high-speed rail network."

The event also noted other progress in 2024, including completion of environmental reviews for the full 463-mile Los Angeles-Bay Area route, new federal funding, and trainset selection in progress.

Choudri also noted work to ensure interoperability with Brightline West and the proposed High Desert Corridor — which would connect the California high-speed route with Brightline West between Palmdale and Victorville, Calif.

"We're committed to working collaboratively," Choudri said, "and ultimately developing a modern, interstate high-speed rail network that will not only boost ridership in the Southwest part of the country but bring to the forefront the possibility of delivering high-speed rail benefits sooner."

The 22-mile segment highlighted during Monday's ceremony extends from Poplar Avenue in Wasco, Calif., to approximately 1 mile south of the Kern/Tulare county line. Major construction projects including overpasses, underpasses, and viaducts on that segment are now complete.

"Finally, we're at the point where we're going to start laying down this track in the next couple of years," Newsom said, according to a Fresno Bee report. He also referenced the opposition the project faces at the federal level from President-elect Donald Trump, his advisor Elon Musk, and others in the Republican party.

"No one's naïve about the headwinds that are coming our way, but we withstood those a few years back," Newsom said, "and

we were able to continue to move forward. And I have all the confidence in the world that we will move forward." He also acknowledged the issues that have plagued the project saying there is "a lot of humility about the past" but that those involved are also "very prideful that we are finally here announcing this railhead project, moving forward to lay track."

The Bee reports that the four segments in the initial construction package were projected to have been finished by August 2019 at a total cost of about \$2.5 billion. Completion is now expected in late 2026, with a total cost estimate at more than \$8.1 billion.

TRAINS On-Line 1-7-24

UP—BNSF Long Trains in Southwest

QUINCY, Mass. — RailState, which monitors rail traffic using a network of sensors placed on public property along main lines, has provided a snapshot of long trains rolling along BNSF Railway and Union Pacific main lines in the Southwest during December.

Although only 1% of freight trains in the U.S. exceed 14,000 feet, RailState data shows that BNSF and UP operate a significantly higher percentage of long trains in and out of Southern California, the company said today. All of the long trains were intermodal trains, some of which exceeded 16,500 feet.

On UP's Sunset Route between Los Angeles and El Paso, Texas, the railroad in December operated three or four trains per day that were over 2.5 miles long, which translates into 10% of the traffic on the route.

On BNSF's Southern Transcon between Southern California and Texas, the railway ran three to four trains per day that

were over 2.5 miles long. Because of BNSF's higher volume, that translates into 6% of the trains on the Southern Transcon.

"In December, BNSF ran more trains at the higher end of train lengths than UP. RailState identified 23 trains longer than 3 miles," the company said.

Class I railroads say the use of longer freight trains increases main line capacity by reducing the number of trains in opera-

(Continued on page 7)

November Meeting Minutes

The November 17, 2024, meeting opened at 1249 at Jockos.

The secretary's minutes were accepted as printed.

The treasurer's report included utility expenses of \$200. Income from dues and donations totaled \$1605. The checking account balance is \$3938.20.

The operating session on November 2 was successful. The next session will be on December 7.

Rick will provide the program at the December meeting. Henry will provide the program at the January meeting.

Henry and Dave plan to attend the Danville IN train show while Skylar will attend the Milwaukee Train Fest on November 23.

The meeting was adjourned at 1253.

Dick presented pictures of the NRHS annual convention in Harrisburg.

(Continued from page 6)

tion at any one time. Rail labor leaders have been critical of the practice, which has allowed railroads to reduce the ranks of engineers and conductors because traffic is moved on fewer but longer trains.

The train length data can be useful for transportation officials who are seeking to minimize the impact of long wait times at grade crossings, RailState says.

RailState sensors captured an intermodal train traveling from Los Angeles to Texas on Union Pacific on



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Dec. 20 and 21. "With five locomotives and 260 well car platforms, the train clocked in at just over 3 miles long," RailState said.

Along the journey, RailState captured the train at La Puente, Calif., traveling at 52.3 mph; Mecca, Calif., 41.8 mph; Wellton, Ariz., 30.8 mph; Tucson, 13.6 mph; El Paso, 14.7 mph; and Buford, Texas, 43.1 mph.

"Traveling at 52 mph, the train takes 3.5 minutes to pass by," RailState notes. "At other locations, the time it takes for this train to pass was significantly longer. At its recorded speed in Tucson (13.6 mph), this train would take nearly 14 minutes to pass."

Communities experience these kinds of long delays at road crossings on a regular basis but until recently access to information about long trains has been nearly unavailable, RailState says.

Road crossings blocked by long trains are an increasing source of delays and frustration for commuters and can impair quick emergency responses. With comprehensive train length data, RailState says traffic engineers can estimate blockage times more accurately, improve management of road congestion, deploy signals to suggest alternate routes when a crossing is likely to be blocked for an extended period, and notify and reroute first responders to avoid delays during emergencies.

Accurate train length data also can give transportation officials the information they need to identify problem grade crossings and prioritize remediation investments, RailState says.

TRAINS On-Line 1-7-24



Dave Sherrill and Henry Schmitt setup a Chapter/C&EI HS display/sale table at various train shows. The most recent is the well attended show at Danville, Indiana. Thanks guys for the advertising and sales.

Danville Junction Chapter, NRHS
PO Box 1013
Danville, IL 61834-1013

Phone: 217-552-6514
Email: rickschro1@gmail.com

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

Photo of the Month



The time is around 1940 and steam still rules on the C&EI. Oaklawn Shops, built 1903 to 1906, are located on the east side of Danville. Today part of the facility is occupied by Mervis Industries, a car scrapping area, and Cathcart Rail, a major car repair shop.