

# DANVILLE FLYER

## Inside this issue:

Nov–Dec Meeting	1
Amtrak Midwest Grants	1
About Us–Officers	2
Dues Renewal Update	2
Railroads Rebuild	3
Amtrak Against Railroads	3
Illinois Rail Grants	4
Indiana Ports	4
BNSF Adds Double Track	5
Another Shortline	5
October Meeting Minutes	6
Santa Trains	6
Photo of the Month	7

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 1ST ANNUAL MEETING AT JOCKO'S PIZZA AT 1:00 PM. PROGRAM BY RICK SCHROEDER**

**FIRST SATURDAY IN DECEMBER, THE 7TH, AND JANUARY 4TH, OPERATING SESSIONS IN ROSSVILLE AT 1 PM.**

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

## November and December Meetings at Jocko's

**The November meeting will be at Jocko's Pizza on West Williams Street —date is Sunday the 17th. Lunch will be around 1:00 PM with meeting and program of the recent NRHS Convention presented by Dick Brazda.**

**The annual meeting will be Sunday December 1st. Rick Schroeder will present a program of depots and towers long gone.**

## Amtrak Midwest Grants

Amtrak and its Midwestern partners have been awarded up to \$300 million to improve passenger-rail service with grants from the Federal Railroad Administration's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) competitive grant program, the railroad announced yesterday.

The grants will support Amtrak priorities — such as the Chicago Hub Improvement Program (CHIP), an Amtrak-led Midwest megaproject aimed at improving passenger-rail service into Chicago — and help advance Amtrak's goal of doubling its ridership by 2040, Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner said in a press release.



The CHIP project calls for critical investments in rail infrastructure, facilities and Chicago Union Station to improve regional connectivity, reduce travel times, improve safety and connect job centers, according to a project description. CHIP is led by Amtrak in partnership with the Illinois Department of Transportation, Chicago Department of Transportation, Cook County, Metra, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

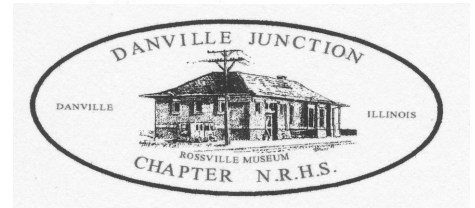
"CRISI grants will benefit several Amtrak routes in the Midwest that riders rely on every day and potential future corridors that would contribute to further growth in the region," said FRA Administrator Amit Bose in the release.

Bose was in Milwaukee yesterday to announce a CRISI grant award for another Midwest rail project that will benefit Amtrak and freight-rail service. The \$72.8 million CRISI grant was awarded to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to help fund the Muskego Yard Bypass project, which calls for reconfiguring existing track and yard facilities along the Canadian Pacific Kansas City railway corridor in Milwaukee. The project will eliminate freight

## 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 2024—our 56th 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

### 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 dues Doug sent the renewal notice via email to all members. There were some glitches in the sending to everyone and if you did not get yours let him know. Please mail in the completed form with your check or bring to the next two meetings.

In addition we welcome new member Richard L. Davison, brother of member Bob Davison, who lives in Schoolcraft, MI. Also we welcome back Conner Haley.

Doug Nipper

(Continued from page 1)

trains from passing through the Milwaukee Intermodal Station, where Amtrak trains stop for the Empire Builder, Hiawatha and Borealis routes.

Amtrak also supported \$157.1 million in CRISI grant funding for rail improvements in Springfield, Illinois; and \$1.8 million in funding to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission for the first phase of the future Midwest passenger rail project.

CRISI grant funding awarded specifically to Amtrak will support these projects:

- Wolverine and Blue Water Capacity Enhancement, Niles-Glenwood Road, \$8.4 million. Directly a part of CHIP, this project will advance final design for plans to increase capaci-

ty along a 19-mile, mostly single tracked segment of the Amtrak-owned Michigan Line; and

- Grade Crossing Shunt Enhancement Safety Project, \$58.8 million. This project includes procurement and installation of onboard shunt enhancement devices for 443 locomotives and 192 cab cars on the nationwide Amtrak-operated fleet to enhance grade crossing activation reliability.

*Progressive Railroading 11-1-24*

## Railroads Rebuild After Helene

### **Railroads Have No Choice but to Rebuild After Hurricane Helene: Commentary**

Skepticism spread throughout the railroad community after Hurricane Helene's devastating once-in-a-generation floods wiped out roadbeds, destroyed bridges, and left most of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee unrecognizable. Some in the industry expressed doubt that CSX and Norfolk Southern would invest the dollars needed to repair widespread damages. More than 40 miles of CSX's ex-Clinchfield Railroad between Erwin, Tenn., and Spartanburg, S.C., are gone, including two bridges, and many sections along 50 miles of NS's ex-Southern S-Line between Marshall, N.C., and Old Fort, N.C., through Asheville, N.C., are washed away. But railroads don't have the choice to not rebuild as they did 40 or 50 years ago.

Class I railroads have rationalized their networks to the extent that there is very little redundancy, leaving few efficient alternatives in the event of a catastrophic event like Hurricane Helene. CSX's outage on the former Clinchfield is requiring coal, merchandise, and bulk trains to detour across the I-64 corridor between Russell, Ky., and Richmond, Va., and then down the Seaboard into Hamlet, N.C., before diverting west toward Charlotte, N.C., and into the western part of the state. This adds several hundred miles. Choosing not to rehabilitate the Clinchfield would mean CSX has little through-route connectivity between Knoxville, Tenn., and Charlotte, N.C., a distance of more than 250 miles. While there is not a significant amount of carload business or through coal trains on this route compared to 40 years ago, the annualized gross ton-miles are still significant enough to justify the rebuilding, given few favorable alternatives.

NS doesn't have a choice either. It has already downsized its S-Line as a through route between Morristown, Tenn., and Salisbury, N.C., after trimming operations at its Linwood Yard north of Salisbury. Western North Carolina carloads bound for Watco's Blue Ridge Southern and NS-served customers in the Asheville region rely on NS trains traversing the Southern from Knoxville, Tenn., east into western North Carolina on the French Broad River. Through trains no longer operate east of Asheville, and south of Asheville, across Saluda Grade, is no longer an option. In order to preserve rail access to the area, NS has to rebuild in at least one direction from Asheville. NS could theoretically choose to only rebuild from Asheville west to Morristown, Tenn., and forego

repairs east from Asheville across Old Fort loops. Mixed reports from that area suggest the topography has changed around the loops due to major landslides, and the carving of a new roadbed could be difficult and time consuming. But I still believe we will see trains across Old Fort again.

Also contributing to a likely rebuild is that while there are fewer railroads today, the remaining Class I railroads are large and profitable enough to absorb the costs required to rebuild after large natural disasters.

Hurricane Agnes, which pummeled the Northeast in 1972, caused widespread damage to many smaller and less profitable railroads. Agnes played a contributing role in Erie Lackawana's decision to file for bankruptcy in 1972 due to significant damage across its network in New York and Pennsylvania. Damage caused by Agnes played a broader role in the government's intervention and the creation of Conrail, which helped repair and rebuild damaged rail lines.

These two factors are why I believe CSX and NS will rebuild. Because railroads' circumstances are different than they were a generation ago, this is possibly the first time in modern history that we'll witness a large section of a railroad being completely rebuilt.

*Chase Gunnoe, Trains newswire (October 9) via Midwest Rail Scene Report*

## Amtrak Bill Against Railroads

U.S. Reps. Chris Deluzio (D-Pa.) and Brendan Boyle (D-Pa.) last week introduced the [Rail Passenger Fairness Act](#) legislation to help [Amtrak](#) improve on-time performance across the country.

The bill would provide Amtrak the ability to take freight railroads to court to enforce current law that requires freight trains to give Amtrak trains preference when operating on those freight-rail lines. If the bill becomes law, it would help reduce Amtrak delays, hold freight railroad corporations accountable and save public money, the congressmen said in a press release.

"As a frequent commuter on Amtrak from my district to Washington, D.C., I have an acute firsthand understanding of how rail delays can adversely impact passengers and commerce," said Boyle. "This legislation will provide railway

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

passengers with additional safeguards from unanticipated rail delays and cancellations. Strengthening the rights of railway passengers only enhances customer satisfaction and trust in public transport and rail systems.”

In 1973, Congress passed the Amtrak Improvement Act, which mandated that intercity and commuter passenger rail be given preference over freight railroads in using a rail line. Freight railroads sometimes disregard the law, which results in Amtrak service delays.

Freight train interference was the cause of the majority of Amtrak’s delays in recent years; in 2023 the interference amounted to 900,000 minutes of delay for Amtrak riders, the lawmakers said.

*Progressive Railroading 10-14*

## Illinois Rail Grant

WASHINGTON — Two more awards have been announced under the Federal Railroad Administration’s Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements, or CRISI, grant program.

The first of what Washington state’s two senators said will be 122 grants totaling \$2.477 billion were announced late last week [see “Announcements of 2024 CRISI grants begin,” *Trains News Wire*, Friday, Oct. 25]. Members of Congress or other local elected officials generally have the opportunity to announce the awards for their area before Federal Railroad Administration releases the full list of grants.

Add to the list of previously reported awards:

— \$157.1 million for the final segment of the Springfield Rail Improvement Project in Springfield, Ill., which consolidates rail lines from Third Street to 10th Street and includes several grade-crossing separation overpasses and underpasses. The project also includes other track improvement and realignment, and construction of a new Amtrak station. (Note: The press release from U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, and U.S. Rep. Nikki Budzinski does not mention the CRISI program, but the timing presumably indicates this is a CRISI grant.)

— \$1.48 million to Bedford, Va., for environmental studies and

preliminary engineering for an Amtrak station, announced by U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffin. Bedford is roughly midway between Roanoke and Lynchburg, Va., served by four *Northeast Regional* round trips daily. WSET-TV reports that an earlier study has identified 11 possible sites for the station, which could cost \$21.4 million to \$23.2 million, not including land acquisition.

A calendar on the FRA website indicates CRISI announcements are due in October, so the full list of announcements should come in the next four days

*TRAINS Newswire 10-28*

## Indiana Ports

The Ports of Indiana has launched a new business venture, called Indiana River & Rail Terminals, which will become the largest general cargo operation on the Ohio River.

The venture is a partnership between Ports of Indiana and stevedore Superior River Terminals Indiana that handles cargo at two Ohio River ports in Jeffersonville and Mount Vernon. The business will manage all the general cargo facilities at the inland ports, including six docks, six warehouses, multiple rail transload facilities and logistics services for more than 40 existing customers within the ports’ 2,200 acres, ports officials said in a press release.

Superior River Terminals Indiana has operated separate Jeffersonville and Mount Vernon facilities for years; the new agreement expands the existing operations and brings multiple barge, rail and warehouse facilities at two ports under one operator, ports officials said.

In addition, Ports of Indiana is building two new rail yards and adding a \$3 million heavy-lift crane arriving in 2025 to support the venture. The terminals have storage and fleeting capacity for 300 rail cars and 500 barges, and handling capabilities for steel coils, slabs, steel plates, wire rod, containers, automotive components, supersacks and project cargo.

Operating in the greater Louisville and Evansville metropolitan areas, the new business will serve the busiest inland port in the United States — the Southern Indiana Port District — which ships 27.7 million tons of cargo via barge annually

*Progressive Railroading 10-15*

## BNSF Adds Double Track

BNSF Railway this week (10-28) placed 12 additional miles of second main track into service on its Emporia Subdivision in Kansas as part of its Southern Transcon double-tracking project.

The new section of double iron, which runs between Augusta and Rose Hill, Kan., includes the seventh and eighth segments of the nine-segment project that's been in the works since 2019.

Work is still under way on the final segment of the 50-mile project, a 3.5-mile section between Rose Hill and Mulvane. As long as the weather cooperates, BNSF aims to have that stretch completed by the end of November.

The cutover of the 12-mile stretch was done in two phases, BNSF spokeswoman Kendall Sloan says. On Friday, Oct. 18, all traffic was moved over to the new main line (Main 2) between Augusta and Rose Hill. Then crews worked through the weekend to prepare the old single main track to be converted into new Main 1. The final cutover for segments 7 and 8 occurred on Tuesday.

The first revenue train over the new trackage on Friday was a westbound Z-train bound for San Bernardino, Calif., from Willow Springs, Ill.



"Multiple years of expansion investment have opened up an additional 12 miles of double main track capacity near Augusta, KS – putting BNSF Railway's one of a kind 2,200 mi Southern Transcon between LA and Chicago at 99.995% double, triple or quadruple tracked," Jon Gabriel, BNSF's group vice president of consumer products, wrote in a LinkedIn post today.

"This commitment to growth through investment over the past several decades is one way we make intermodal service more "truck-like", as just like a highway, we can run traffic both directions simultaneously with passing lanes when needed," Gabriel wrote. "This unmatched capacity is how we run multiple priority intermodal trains per day in and out of SCAL between key markets like Chicago, DFW, Kansas City, Memphis and beyond...no need to stop a train every 10 miles to meet another throughout the trip."

Once the Emporia Subdivision project is complete, the South-

ern Transcon will have just two short sections of single-track: About 1.5 miles at Sibley, Mo., where BNSF crosses the Missouri River, and about 3 miles at Alva, Okla., the crossing of the Salt Fork River.

*Editor: I am not sure but I believe the Missouri River crossing has a bridge designed and may be under construction. This is not too far from Ft. Madison, IA. I am sure plans are in the process for the other river crossing, thus the line will be double track from Chicago to LA..*

TRAINS Newswire 10-24

## Another New Short Line

Savage Tooele Railroad (STR) officials yesterday marked the start of construction of a new short line that will serve tenants in Lakeview Business Park in Grantsville, Utah.

When completed, the short line will be Utah's first new railroad in decades, STR officials said in a press release.

In April, the Surface Transportation Board granted approval for STR to construct, rehabilitate and operate 11 miles of rail line in Tooele County, Utah. The rail line will be built to connect tenants of the 1,700-acre master-planned logistics park to the global market.

Providing a rail alternative to truck transportation will lower emissions and reduce fuel consumption and wear-and-tear on roads. Construction of the rail line also aligns with a broader vision for economic development within the Tooele County region, STR officials said.

The park includes direct truck connections to Interstates 80 and 15 complemented by an interchange with Union Pacific Railroad. The new short line will operate from UP's Shafter Subdivision mainline to the park.

"Union Pacific is excited about our partnership with Savage and the opportunity to provide rail service to the Lakeview Business Park," said Dan McLaughlin, assistant vice president of marketing and sales at UP. "Our 32,000-mile network, with its nine international gateways to Canada and Mexico, will provide new opportunities for market growth and expansion for those that choose to develop new warehouses, facilities and other businesses in the park."

Progressive Railroading 11-8



## October Meeting Minutes

The October 20, 2024 meeting opened at 1259 at Jockos.

The secretary's minutes were accepted as printed.

The treasurer's report included utility expenses and the annual rental payment to CSX for the depot. The checking account balance is \$2533.18.

Doug N. reported that Mark Ziebart staffed the depot the most times during the summer with 32, followed by Skylar Brown with 30. Thanks to those two as well as the other members who took part.

The next operating session will be November 2. Doug N. has put up the plastic, preparing the depot for winter. Dick will provide pictures of the NRHS convention for the November program, while Rick will provide the program at the December meeting on the first.

Henry and Skylar visited Chicago to ride Metra on an all-day pass. They enjoyed their outing, starting in Joliet. Various members plan to attend the Danville IN train show and the Milwaukee Train Fest on November 23. Rick reported the C&EI calendar will be mailed this week and the next magazine should be out shortly.

Dick reported on his trip north on #22 from Lincoln to Chicago and return on 10/10. The SB was delayed an hour due to police activity ahead. Dave reported attending the Wabash convention. Henry reported visiting the National Railway Museum in Green Bay, which is planning a large new building.

The meeting was adjourned at 1309.

Rick presented pictures of fallen flags from his collection

## Santa Trains

Several railroads this week announced holiday train stops as part of charity efforts for local communities.

CSX announced yesterday its Santa Train will make a special stop in Erwin, Unicoi County, Tennessee, on Nov. 21 to bring area residents affected by Hurricane

Helene the Santa Train's usual toys and essential gifts and a one-time only event featuring a performance by singer Drew Holcomb.

CSX's annual CSX Santa Train makes over a dozen stops in Appalachia to distribute over 15 tons of toys and essentials to local residents. The train stops are made in partnership with Appalachian Power, Food City, the Kingsport Chamber in Tennessee and Soles4Souls.

Meanwhile, Chicago commuter railroad [Metra](#) run its Holiday Trains on six rail lines during four Saturdays in November and December. Metra will donate tickets to children from Boys &



Girls Clubs of Chicago. Trains on the Metra Electric, BNSF, Milwaukee District North, Rock Island, Union Pacific Northwest, and Union Pacific North lines will be decorated and visited by holiday characters.

In San Diego, North County Transit District's (NCTD) Coaster Holiday Express service operate two weekends in December. During its stops, NCTD will collect donations for the North County Food Bank. Santa Claus and carolers will be on board for singing and storytelling



**This will be the last newsletter for 2024. As usual I will not put another one together until the first part of January. As we all get older the year goes by faster and I am sure you will agree.**

**We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting on December 1st and to your renewal of membership.**

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

Phone: 555-555-5555  
Fax: 555-555-5555  
Email: someone@example.com

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

## Photo of the Month



It is March 2019 and the interchange point between Norfolk Southern and Kansas City Southern has a westbound waiting for a crew to head west to Ft. Worth on the Meridian Speedway. Rick Schroeder photo.