

DANVILLE FLYER

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October Meeting at Jocko's

The October meeting will be at Jocko's Pizza on West Williams Street —date is Sunday the 20th. Lunch will be around 1:00 PM with meeting and program presented by Rick Schroeder.

Amtrak New Chicago to Florida Service

A new Amtrak service will connect North Carolina and Chicago, starting Nov. 10, but it won't be a fast trip.

Passengers who board the *Floridian* at Raleigh's Union Station at 9:08 a.m. will arrive at Union Station in Chicago at 8:45 a.m. the next morning. The train will stop along the way in Richmond, Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, and Cleveland.

North Carolina passengers can also hop on in Cary, Rocky Mount, Southern Pines or Hamlet. Amtrak offers coach seats, roomettes and bedrooms. Dining car and café services are also offered.

The *Floridian* is part of Amtrak's plan to divert trains from New York, so it can rebuild a 100-year-old tunnel underneath the East River. What was originally a northbound route will now head west from Washington so Amtrak can work on each of the tunnel's four tubes. Amtrak's *Silver Meteor* service will continue to operate between Miami and New York, with several stops in North Carolina.



The arrival of the *Floridian* comes as North Carolina continues to invest in inter-city passenger rail. Over 342,000 people rode the state-supported Raleigh-to-Charlotte service in the first half of 2024 — a 20% increase over the same period in the previous year, according to NC By Train.

"Just on our regular services between Raleigh and Charlotte, and Charlotte and New York every day, we've seen a 38% increase in growth since 2019," said Jason Orthner, director of passenger rail for the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

In June, NCDOT operated a first-of-its-kind train service to the U.S. Open golf tournament in Pinehurst. The state also broke ground on a project that will shorten travel times between Raleigh and Richmond.

Meanwhile, the city of Charlotte recently purchased a freight rail line for a new commuter service to Iredell County.

North Carolina Public Radio 9-24

SUNDAY OCTOBER 20TH MEETING AT JOCKO'S PIZZA AT 1:00 PM. PROGRAM BY RICK SCHROEDER

FIRST SATURDAY IN NOVEMBER AN OPERATING SESSION IN ROSSVILLE AT 1 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 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

New Mount Vernon Railroad

OmniTRAX and Ports of Indiana yesterday announced the creation of the Mount Vernon Railroad to serve the southwest Indiana port.

The new railroad will be operated by OmniTRAX, which was selected from a group of 19 railroads that submitted proposals to manage rail operations at Ports of Indiana-Mount Vernon and provide switching, sorting and various rail services for port customers.

The railroad will coordinate rail connections and assemble outbound trains for interchange with the Mount Vernon-based Evansville Western Railway short line, which provides

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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 be receiving their statement this month and online payment method will be offered again, or direct mail your check.

We are going to try something different this year on the dues renewal statements. Since I am (mostly) retired now, and have the time to pursue this, we will be going to e-mail delivery of the dues renewals, at least for those that we e-mail the Flyer notifications to. So, look in your Inbox toward the end of October to the beginning of November for a message about dues from djc.nrhs@gmail.com. That is the address they will be sent from. If you have any issues at all getting it this way, please send an e-mail to the same address, and I will investigate it. A reminder that we depend on dues, and more importantly donations, to keep the museum running. I know times are tough now, so we really appreciate anything extra you can give.

Doug Nipper

UP Tree Trimming—from the air

Union Pacific Railroad recently increased spending on its vegetation-management program, particularly its use of helicopters, according to an article on UP's Inside Track website.

The helicopters are equipped with suspended saws to trim hard-to-reach tree limbs in dense or rugged terrain.

"Helicopter removal is an efficient and safe method of controlling brush in areas a hyrail brushcutter could not reach," said Tanya Buck, manager-track program vegetation. "By proactively minimizing the risk of fallen trees at high elevations, we can restore service more quickly following hurricanes and other natural disasters."



The program also uses hi-rail trucks and other on- and off-track equipment to spray weeds and cut brush on the ground.

UP has treated vegetation surrounding more than 19,000 crossings across its system so far in 2024, according to Patrick Mills, UP senior manager-vegetation.

"Our vegetation program successfully reduces the risk of wildfires, controls noxious weeds and promotes growth of low-growing vegetation species that help control erosion and allow for the free flow of rainwater," Mills said

Progressive Railroading 8-28

Editor: Several years back, while still working, I attended the AREMA conference in Chicago and one of the seminars was trimming trees along the Clinchfield using a helicopter. Amazing to watch and the cost of liability insurance must be on the high side

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direct access to BNSF Railway Co., CSX, Norfolk Southern Railway and Union Pacific Railroad, OmniTRAX and port officials said in a press release.

"The communities we serve are important partners to OmniTRAX and our team is excited to begin building long-term relationships in Mount Vernon," said OmniTRAX Chief Commercial Officer Ryan Higgins. "As we serve the Ports of Indiana, port companies, and the community, we are excited to bring new business, new investment and new jobs to Mount Vernon for years to come."

The Mount Vernon Railroad will operate two 2,000-horsepower model GP38-2 locomotives, built in 1968 by the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors. Both locomotives have received major engine overhauls and will get new paint schemes including the Mount Vernon Railroad logo.

In 2023, the port handled 40,000 rail cars and 6.7 million tons of total cargo shipments. Rail-served companies operating at the port include Consolidated Grain and Barge, Valero Renewable Fuels, Nutrien U.S., Nutrien Ag Solutions, Mount Vernon Transfer Terminal, Consolidated Terminals and Logistics Co. and Cimbar Performance Minerals

Progressive Railroading 9-26

Editor: The port of Mt Vernon, Indiana was originally served by the C&EI branch that left the mainline at Ft. Branch, Indiana. The port started as a coal facility and after the south end acquisition the L&N served the port. In recent years CSX cut off the line to St. Louis and in the process the Evansville and Western Railroad took over the lines west of Evansville. This is another case where the C&EI served an area that today is a major transportation location.


CN Renames Homewood Shops

CN recently renamed its Woodcrest Shops in Homewood, Illinois, the Harris Shops to honor former Chief Operating Officer Ed Harris.

He began his long railroading career — which spanned more than 40 years — at the shops. Harris served Illinois Central Railroad (IC) and CN for more than 30 years, including a recent stint as COO and then a consultant at CN.

In 1998, he was vice president of operations at the IC when the railroad was acquired by CN. Harris joined the IC in 1968 and later held positions of increasing responsibility in communications, materials control, labor relations and transportation. His IC service was interrupted by a four-year tour with the U.S. Marine Corps.

Later at CN, Harris served stints as VP of the Midwest Division and chief transportation officer. He left CN in 2007 after a long career with the Class I, lastly as executive vice president of operations.

 Harris retired a number of times late in his career, but then ultimately accepted executive or consultant roles at various Class Is. He served as COO of Canadian Pacific from 2010 to 2012 and EVP of operations for CSX from 2018 to 2020.

"Ed's contributions have set a standard for excellence not only at CN but within the rail industry, and we are so proud to celebrate his legacy in this meaningful way," CN officials said in a LinkedIn post.

Progressive Railroading 9-3-24

California Clean Air Regs

U.S. Rep. Troy Nehls (R-Texas) has introduced legislation that would repeal a waiver exemption for California in order to stop other states from adopting that state's in-use locomotive emissions rule.

Nehls' proposed "[Stop California from Advancing Regulatory Burden Act](#)" would repeal the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) waiver exemption from the federal Clean Air Act that would allow it to enforce its in-use locomotive rule, which requires switching industrial and passenger locomotives to be

zero-emissions by 2030 and freight line-haul locomotives to be emissions-free by 2035.

CARB has requested a waiver from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that would allow it to adopt those new emissions standards. CARB has over 100 active waivers that set higher emissions standards than the EPA, and none of them are subject to congressional review, according to a press release issued by Nehls' office.

His proposed "Stop CARB Act" would repeal Section 177 of the Clean Air Act, which allows other states across the nation to adopt the California emissions standards. The bill also would nullify any active or pending waivers and clean up references to the waiver in other statute.

"California will not govern the great state of Texas," said Nehls, who chairs the House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials. "The liberal state of California should not set egregious standards for the rest of the country."

U.S. Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) is leading the companion bill in the Senate.

"The Stop CARB Act will ensure that California's regulatory reach stops at its own borders. We must restore balance and accountability to our regulatory system," said Lee.

[The American Association of Railroads](#) and [American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association](#) oppose CARB's in-use locomotive rule. They have said the CARB regulation would require railroads to follow the in-use locomotive rule even if they're not based in California but operate trains there. In addition, the rule would be cost-prohibitive for some short lines and could possibly force them out of business.

Moreover, the associations have argued CARB's rule requires a type of technology that's not yet readily available

Progressive Railroading 9-16

Editor: I have reported on this issue in previous newsletters. As written it would require Class 1's to use locomotives in the state of California that have not been developed yet. In addition it would require the various shorelines to eliminate many of their older locomotives that would not meet the requirements. As such, the cost is high for new motive power and would probably put some of them out of business, which would move freight hauling to trucks. The basic response from the California board is "so what, clean air is better than moving freight for the public".

Freight Train Length

Railroads have safely managed long freight trains for the past 80 years, while still improving the industry's safety record, the Association of American Railroads said yesterday in response to a new government study on the safety of operating freight trains longer than 7,500 feet.

The U.S. Department of Transportation-funded study, which recommended that Congress and federal regulators address the challenges and operational demands of managing long freight trains, was released yesterday by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. The Committee on the Impact of Trains Longer than 7,500 Feet conducted the study.

At the same time that railroads have safely managed long freight trains for decades, the industry's safety record has "dramatically" improved, with the latest data showing the Class I mainline accident rate down 42% since 2000, AAR officials said in a press release.

"Safety is at the center of every decision on the railroad, and train length is no different," said AAR President and CEO Ian Jefferies. "As operations continue to evolve, railroads are pulling on three key levers – technology, training and infrastructure – to further enhance safety and reliability. Railroads' goal will always be delivering for our employees, communities and the economy – and to do it safely every day."

The study has several "shortcomings," according to the AAR.

"First, it arbitrarily focuses on trains exceeding 7,500 feet, despite acknowledging a lack of consensus on the appropriate definition of a 'long' train," the press release states. "The study followed a congressionally defined threshold without uniform agreement on its appropriateness."

Additionally, the report of the study noted that the committee was unable to reach conclusions about the potential impacts on communities of emission reductions or from occupied crossings by longer trains, the association said.

Factors that railroads consider when determining train makeup include commodity mix, track conditions and terrain. Many railroads rely on advanced train-builder algorithms that analyze various operational factors, guiding car placement and ensuring trains are operating as safely as possible, AAR officials said.

Improvements to train building best practices have delivered even stronger safety results in recent years and will continue to be an area of intense focus for the industry, they added. Railroads also deploy locomotives at key points throughout the train using a method known as distributed power. This common practice helps manage in-train forces to reduce operational risk.

In distributed power train consists, locomotives are connected by closed communications systems that maintain constant connection to the lead locomotive and its highly qualified engineer, according to the AAR.

Moreover, engineers undergo comprehensive training to ensure they are both adept with in-cab technologies like distributed power and familiar with the specifics of their unique territory, AAR officials said

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CN Conversions DC to AC Power

Canadian National is receiving its next DC-to-AC rebuilds this summer. The first conversions already on CN's roster are 50 former Canadian National C44-9Ws converted to AC-traction AC44C6Ms by Wabtec in its Ft. Worth, Texas, facility in 2022 and 2023.



The latest group of rebuilds on order include additional AC44C6Ms and EMD SD75IACCs from Progress Rail. The Wabtec group is part of an order for 60 rebuilds, utilizing former BNSF C44-9Ws sourced from Wabtec's inventory of second-hand locomotives. CN planned to use some of these C44-9Ws last year in trail-only service, having several renumbered to CN 1800-class locomotives before canceling its plans to use them before rebuilding. This order will be numbered CN 3350-3409 behind the first batch of AC44C6Ms.

The EMD SD75IACCs are a long-awaited group of DC to AC rebuilds using CN SD75Is as core locomotives. The 50-unit order will be numbered CN 8300-8349. This makes Canadian National only the second Class I railroad to order DC-to-AC rebuilds from both Wabtec and Progress Rail. Norfolk South-

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September Meeting Minutes

The September 15, 2024 meeting opened at 1329 at Jockos.

The meeting opened with everyone introducing themselves and relating where they saw the Big Boy as it traveled through Illinois.

The secretary's minutes were accepted as printed.

The treasurer's report included utility expenses, concession and office supplies and postage. Dues, donations, sales and interest brought in \$418.12. The checking account balance is \$3303.18.

It was agreed that the treasurer would send out email dues notices this year to all who reported emails. This will save on postage costs.

It was reported the summer operating sessions went well. No session will be held in October.

The field trip on the South Shore RR to see the new double tracking was successful. The group rode from Hammond to Hudson Lake and back. While in Hudson Lake, 2 Norfolk Southern westbounds were photographed after a short walk. Lunch with ice cream was available at a local diner.

Terry and Donnie Bodine are having an operating day on Saturday, Oct. 12 for those interested in their outdoor railway.

Rick will provide the program at the October meeting.

Jim reported on the NRHS national convention in Harrisburg, PA. Rides were taken on the Strasburg Railway, the East Broad Top, the Reading and Northern and the Middletown & Hummelstown. There were also several interesting presentations and tours of Harris Tower and the former Pennsylvania Power Control office.

Tim Lowe donated 2 engines to the chapter, which will be sold.

Next weekend are the annual railroad days at the Monticello Museum.

Aden reported the end of the Triple Crown service between Detroit and Kansas City. The replacement will employ EMP containers from Toledo to Kansas City. They are still running with a single engine and going through Danville at about the same time. The Norfolk Southern CEO was replaced by the former CFO.

JD reported Jim Montgerard uncovered a plastic sleeve which was creating a ground fault on an engine he was working on.

The meeting was adjourned at 1353.

Revenue Adequate Railroads

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) recently determined that three Class Is were "revenue adequate" in 2023.

The designation generally means those railroads achieved a rate of return on net investment equal to at least the current cost of capital for the railroad industry. For 2023, the STB determined that the railroad industry's cost of capital was 9.87%.

By comparing this figure to the 2023 returns on investment, calculated from data reported in the carriers' Annual Report R-1 Schedule 250 filings, the STB determined a revenue adequacy figure for each of the Class Is that were in operation as of Dec. 31, 2023.

The revenue adequate Class Is in 2023 and their respective rates of return are: BNSF Railway Co., 10.63%; CSX, 14.27%;

and Union Pacific Railroad, 15.98%.

Norfolk Southern Railway, Grand Trunk Corp. (including CN's U.S. affiliates) and Soo Line Corp./Kansas City Southern Railway (which includes U.S. affiliates of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Ltd.) achieved 2023 rates of return of 8.03%, 7.81% and 5.10%, respectively, so they were not deemed revenue adequate

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ern, a longtime user of GE/Wabtec rebuilding, was the first to buy rebuilds from Progress, converting its standard cab SD70s to SD70ACCs back in 2018.

Canadian National's class SD75IACC, CN No. 8300, was released from Progress Rail's Muncie, Ind., shop in July and routed to Progress Rail's former EMD facility in McCook, Ill., for emissions testing. Delivery of the order to Canadian National should commence shortly.

All new DC-to-AC traction locomotives are scheduled to be used in system service wherever AC locomotives are used today. A small group of AC44C6Ms appear to be destined for captive service on in upper Minnesota for ore service. CN No. 3323 has been converted to straight air and has been testing in 2024 *TRAINS Newswire 8-20-24*

CNs DC to AC locomotive fleet:

AC44C6M

3300-3349 (Former CN C44-9W) – Delivered 2022-2023

3350-3409 (Former BNSF C44-9W) – Delivering now

SD75IACC

8300-8349 (Former CN SD75I) – Delivering soon

Siemens High Speed Train Sets

Siemens Mobility will produce high-speed trains at a new manufacturing plant in Horseheads, New York, for the future Brightline West high-speed rail line, the companies and U.S. Sen. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) announced yesterday.

The Horsehead location will become home to a first-of-its-kind facility that will produce the "American Pioneer 220," which will operate on the Brightline West line linking Las Vegas and Southern California, Siemens officials said in a press release. Production is slated to begin in 2026.

"Continuing our more than four-decade legacy of building trains in America, the American Pioneer 220s will be American-made in New York by a team of more than 300 skilled team members," said Siemens Mobility North America CEO Marc Buncher.

When fully operational, the new plant will span nearly 300,000 square feet and create around 300 jobs, including electro-mechanical assemblers, quality management, quality control, industrial production and test engineers, project management, supply chain management and logistics employees.

Earlier this year, Brightline selected Siemens to build the trainsets. And in December 2023, President Joe Biden formally announced a \$3 billion grant award to the Nevada Department of Transportation for development of the 218-mile Brightline West route, which will be a fully electric, zero-emission system. The grant was funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act legislation that Biden signed into law in 2021

Progressive Railroading 9-10-24

From My Office Window

Chapter members turned out to photograph the UP Big Boy, No 4014, at various locations on the former C&EI Villa Grove line. I got photos at an elevated location north of Royal and then the following day at West Ridge located west of Villa Grove. Carol from the Watseka museum noted they had a big crowd there. There were hundreds of fans and general public at every location to witness something we might not see again in our area.

When the Missouri Pacific took control of the C&EI, before the L&N acquisition of the line south of Woodland Junction, they started removing various parts of the railroad. One item they planned to remove was the water crane at Oaklawn Shops. DJC could not afford the liability insurance to remove it so they hired Mervis Company to scrap the crane. Bob Block saved the day, it was delivered to his house by Mervis and a short time later we gave it to the Monticello Railway Museum. It laid in the weeds for several years and was erected as a "static" display. This year the museum completed construction of a new water tank and in the process restored and moved the water crane to near the passenger loading area. The crane is back in service and used to water their steam engine. The last C&EI steam engine dropped the fire on May 5, 1950 in Vincennes, Indiana. Some 74 years later the crane discharged water into a steam engine tender, a sight I never saw I would ever see happen. Robert Block is smiling in heaven.

Rick

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

Photo of the Month



On a rainy day, September 22, 2024 the Monticello Railway Museum #401 takes on water in preparation of the days scheduled runs during Railroad Days. Rick Schroeder photo.