



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 36 NUMBER 9 SEPT 2005



MATA 455 and Pyramid River Line, Memphis, TN, April 30, 2005. (Peter Smykla, Jr. photo)

Arkansas Railroader - Little Rock Chapter NRHS

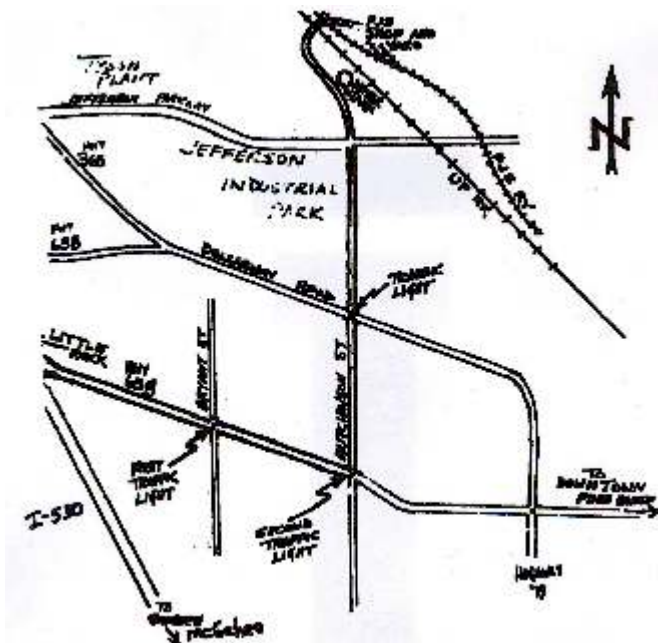
2005 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)
V-PRESIDENT - Mark Silverberg, 10524 Helm Dr., Mabelvale AR 72103, (501-455-5050), onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com
TREASURER - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826), wwalker@aristotle.net
SECRETARY - Jackie Roach, 4023 S Shackelford #142, Little Rock AR 72204 (501-225-6818)
EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, N Little Rock AR 72116-3728 (501-758-1340), ken@trainweather.com
NRHS DIRECTOR - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729), johnphotonut@aristotle.net
HISTORIAN - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington Ave #31, N Little Rock AR 72114 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '05 - Leonard Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)
BOARD '06 - Jim Wakefield, 316 Auburn Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769 (501-664-0232)
BOARD '07 - Fred Fillers, 29009 Bandy Rd, Little Rock AR 72223-9720 (501-821-2026), cffillers@aol.com
BOARD '08 - Ron Esserman, 326 Esserman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2030), shay473@cei.net
BOARD '09 - Douglas Harley, 840 Horseshoe Mountain Rd, Paris AR 72855-5543 (479)-963-2800, dharley2@cswnet.com

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sundays of most months at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in trains is welcome!

Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently \$20 a year, which includes the monthly Arkansas Railroader newsletter. If you'd like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay \$22 a year more, bringing the total to \$42 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st of each year, but you may pay at any time (membership will extend through the following year).

To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information. The newsletter editor's email address is: trains@trainweather.com The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>



Our next Arkansas Railroad Club event will be held on **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3** - the annual picnic and outing at Peter Smykla's Paperton Junction Southern in Pine Bluff. Festivities start at 9 or so. Bring your own picnic supplies. (Put map and picture of Alco here).

There will be NO regular meeting in September as the event at Peter's will be our meeting.



Future meetings: **OCTOBER 9 (Sunday)** - Robin Thomas on his trip to Cass, Virginia; **NOVEMBER 13 (Sunday)** - Outing at the newly renovated Bald Knob, Arkansas depot, now home to Arkansas Traveler Hobbies; **DECEMBER** - Annual Christmas party, Saturday December 10, 2005 at 6 p.m. at our usual meeting site, Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. It will be catered by Franke's Cafeteria like years past. Cost is \$15 per person, payable by noon on December 6 to Walter Walker (8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72227-5983 (501-225-0826), wwalker@aristotle.net)

NATIONAL NRHS DUES RISING - The national dues for the National Railway Historical Society will go up to \$22 a year, a rise of \$2 from the current \$20. So, when you renew your national dues next year, be sure to take that into account. LOCAL DUES WILL REMAIN THE SAME AT \$20. Paying local plus national NRHS dues will cost \$42 in 2006.

JOE A. HALEY of Hot Springs, a longtime Arkansas Railroad Club member, died December 29, 2004 at 95 years of age. Here's a letter from his wife received July 8, 2005:

"It is with great sadness that I write this letter to inform you that your member of long standing - Joe A. Haley (my husband) passed away on December 29, 2004. He was 95 years old.

WANTED: FOR SALE OR TRADE

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

HOBBY SHOPS IN ARKANSAS - Here are a few Arkansas hobby shops that you might use when ordering any commercial books or commercial railroad stuff that you see listed in these Want Ads. Here, in plain text form, are those hobby shops: **ONE TRACK MIND**, 10524 Helm Dr, Mabelvale, AR 72103, 501-455-5050, onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com, <http://www.arkansasweb.com/onetrackmind/> ** **ARKANSAS TRAVELER HOBBIES**, 400 East Market Street, Bald Knob, AR 72010, 501-Railfan (724-5326) ** **MICKY'S MODEL WORKS**, Village Mall, 759 Hwy 62 E Ste 77, Mountain Home, AR 72653, 870-424-5765 ** **HOBBY SHOP DELUXE**, 119 North Front St, Dardanelle AR 72834, 479-229-5126, hsd@cox-internet.com ** **HOBBY SHACK**, 1200 John Harden Dr, Jacksonville, AR 72076, 501-982-6836 ** **TRACTIVE EFFORT HOBBIES**, 3061 N. Market Ave. #7, Fayetteville, AR 72703, (479) 571-8722 ** **EUREKA SPRINGS MODEL RAILROAD COMPANY**, 127 Spring St., Eureka Springs, AR 72632 479-253-2525, <http://www.railroadtrain.com/>

FOR SALE - Tom Duggan has MOPAC Employee Timetables for sale 1940-50s. All divisions except Texas. Tom Duggan ,479-756-1901.

WANTED - Usable track for a tourist railroad. The following email was received in July 2005. "Hello! I'm looking for usable trackage through scenic countryside for some tourist railroad operators, and wonder if you know of any property for sale. In particular, I'm in search of especially rural and rugged trackage that is located near large cities or destination tourist attractions. One end needs to be close to a major highway. All this is necessary for easy access by tourists on vacation.

And as it always seems to go, I also have some interesting branch line and short line railroad properties for sale, which my existing group of buyers isn't interested in for one reason or another. So, whether you might know of some railroad trackage that's for sale, or know of someone else who's currently looking to buy, please refer them.

Many thanks, Stan Underwood, Marketing RailBuys, Railroad Real Estate & Rolling Stock Brokers, Phone (USA): 720-253-8799, E-mail: RailBuys@yahoo.com

In addition to being a real estate broker handling railroad properties, I'm also brokering rolling stock. I have a number of vintage old steam locomotives to sell. Coming up from Cuba via Canada. They're all of USA manufacture: Baldwin, American and Vulcans. All are operable, varying condition, 2-8-0's and are standard or 3' narrow gauge. (*Editor's note - Peter Smykla, Jr told me Cuban sugar plantation railroads are either standard gauge or 30" gauge, NOT three foot*). Let me know if you know of anyone who may be interested. Prices will be no more than \$140,000 each plus transportation. Also - I'm looking for about 10 to 15 100-ton open-top balast hopper cars, good condition. A major railroad is the buyer, and I've been asked to find them soon. Know of any for sale? Again, here's my contact information: Stan Underwood, Marketing RailBuys, Railroad Real Estate & Rolling Stock Brokers, Phone (USA): 720-253-8799, E-mail: RailBuys@yahoo.com

WANTED - Help with Nashville, Arkansas peach industry spur lines. I am doing research on the once vibrant peach industry centered at Nashville, Arkansas. As the peaches were shipped via rail, I wonder if any of your members might have detailed information about the spur lines in Howard and Hempstead Counties. If so, I would appreciate if you could put me in touch with the person. Best regards, Jim Jackson, Texas A&M University - Texarkana, Jim.Jackson@tamut.edu (Or, just write to Ken Ziegenbein, Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock, AR 72119)

RAILROAD HISTORY HELP WANTED FOR STATE CAPITOL DISPLAY - DAVID WARE, State Capitol Historian, Arkansas Secretary of State's Office, wants Arkansas railroad memorabilia, photos, stories, etc., for a State Capitol display on Arkansas Railroad history. This display will be done in the Spring of 2006 from mid-January through May. If you have anything to loan please contact him either by phone (501-683-3187) or preferably email him at: david.ware@sos.arkansas.gov

The Arkansas Railroad Club's official coordinator for this project is Jim Wakefield, 316 Auburn Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769, 501-664-0232. If you have any questions about what to donate and how secure the site will be, or other questions, contact Jim.

RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete listings.

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register or have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met. Even though approval is granted for the railroads to abandon, it may be months or years before track is actually taken up.

SOUTH CAROLINA - GREENVILLE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - To abandon approximately 11.8 miles of line, extending from milepost 0.0 in Greenville, SC, to milepost 11.8 in Travelers Rest, SC (Northern Segment) and to discontinue service over 3.29 miles of line, extending from milepost AJK 585.34 in East Greenville, SC, to milepost AJK 588.63 in Greenville (Southern Segment). No stations are located on either segment. A final decision will be issued by October 12, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-490 (Sub-No. 1X, decided July 6, served July 14, 2005)

CALIFORNIA - MCCLLOUD RAILWAY COMPANY - To abandon, and discontinue service over, certain rail lines described below. - MCR proposes to abandon approximately 80 miles of rail line in Siskiyou and Shasta Counties, CA. The specific rail lines proposed for abandonment include: (1) A rail line between milepost 3.3 east of McCloud and the end of the track at milepost B-61 at or near Burney; (2) a rail line between milepost B-19 at or near Bartle and milepost B-31.4 at or near Hambone; (3) a rail line between milepost B-58 at or near Berry and milepost S-7 at or near Sierra; and (4) a rail

line between milepost B-31.6 at or near Bear Flat and milepost P-3.93 at or near Pondosa. MCR also proposes to discontinue trackage rights over a BNSF Railway Company\2\ rail line between milepost 31.4 at Hambone and milepost 0.0 at Lookout Junction, a distance of approximately 31.4 miles in Siskiyou and Modoc Counties, CA.\3\ The lines include a station at Burney. A final decision will be issued by October 14, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-914X, decided July 6, served July 15, 2005)

MICHIGAN - MID-MICHIGAN RAILROAD, INC. - To discontinue service over a 1.50-mile line of railroad, extending from milepost 157.97 on MMRR's east-west rail line to the end of the line in Kent County, MI. A final decision will be issued by October 14, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-364 (Sub-No. 10X, decided July 12, served July 18, 2005)

NORTH CAROLINA - NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO - To abandon a 2.4-mile line of railroad between milepost R-124.2, and milepost R-126.6, located in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, NC. effective on August 19, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 243X, decided July 11, served July 20, 2005)

SOUTH CAROLINA - NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO. - To abandon a 1.92-mile line of railroad between former milepost W 68.69 and former milepost W 70.61, in Spartanburg, SC. effective on August 19, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 261X, decided July 11, served July 20, 2005)

MINNESOTA - BNSF - MINNESOTA COMMERCIAL RAILWAY COMPANY - BNSF to abandon, and MNNR to discontinue service over, a 0.67-mile line of railroad between milepost 7.19, a point approximately 100 feet north of Interstate Highway I-694 in White Bear Township, and milepost 6.52, a point approximately 50 feet north of Beam Avenue in Maplewood, in Ramsey County, MN. effective on September 9, 2005. ([STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 429X) and AB-882 (Sub-No. 1X, decided August 3, served August 10, 2005)

LOUISIANA - KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO. - To abandon approximately 1.12 miles of railroad between milepost 48.48 and milepost 49.60, in Springhill, Webster Parish, LA. Effective on September 10, 2005. (STB Docket No. AB-103 (Sub-No. 19X, decided August 3, served August 11, 2005)



KCS LEASES FIVE BRANCH LINES

The Kansas City Southern Railway Co. is leasing five of its branch lines in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and Alabama to three railroads owned by short-line railroad company Watco Cos. Inc. In a written release in July, KCS said that the leased lines are:

- * The KCSR Waldron Branch from east of Heavener, Okla., to Waldron, Ark.
- * The Nashville Branch from Ashdown to Nashville, Ark.
- * The Hodge Subdivision from Gibsland to north of Pineville Junction, La.
- * The Minden Branch, which includes the Hope Subdivision from Springhill to east of Hinkle, La., and the Sibley Branch from Minden to Sibley, La.

* The Tuscaloosa Branch, which includes the Tuscaloosa Subdivision east of Columbus, Miss., to Tuscaloosa, Ala.; the Warrior Branch between Tuscaloosa and Fox, Ala.; and the Brookwood Branch from Brookwood Junction to Brookwood, Ala.

Through the lease, the Watco railroads will take over rail service to the branch lines from Kansas City Southern Railway Co. The three Watco railroads are the Arkansas Southern, the Louisiana Southern and the Alabama Southern. Watco Cos. is based in Pittsburg, Kan. The companies said they expect the transition of the rail operations to start in September on the two Louisiana lines, October on the Arkansas lines and November on the Alabama lines.

Art Shoener, Kansas City Southern Railway's president and CEO, said in the release that the leases will free up the company's resources to focus on core lines for moving NAFTA traffic.

NEWPORT TO GET ADDED TRACK

(Newport) - The U.S. Department of Commerce has given a \$1 million grant to Newport to construct a railroad spur and industrial access roads to the Jackson County Industrial Complex. It is estimated that this investment will create 240 jobs and spur \$25 million in private investments. (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette July 22, 2005)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS a E F E E Z

LAST TRAIN TO FARMVILLE

(Farmville, Virginia) - On July 15, the last train to use the Norfolk Southern track from Crewe west to Farmville, Virginia left Crewe about 10 a.m., arriving in Farmville between 12:15 and 1 p.m., said Norfolk Southern spokesman Robin Chapman. Railroad officials have said the stretch is an unprofitable branch line. By August, the railroad will begin pulling up the tracks and using the rails on other lines, Chapman said. The railroad will abandon the 34-mile long corridor, which runs from Burkeville north to Farmville and then west to Pamplin City, and hand over the deed to the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The railroad right of way is slated to become a long, thin state park for hiking, biking and horseback riding. The proposed park includes High Bridge over the Appomattox River, about 15 minutes east of Farmville by rail. The bridge was built 150 years ago and played a role in the Confederate retreat to Appomattox in the final days of the Civil War. The southern rail route from Pamplin City to Burkeville, which roughly follows the southern boundary of Prince Edward County, will remain in service.

SMI Steel built its Farmville plant partly because of the availability of a rail spur to the facility, said plant manager Curtis Raven. The plant received about 200 rail-car loads per year. "Norfolk Southern was involved in the negotiations to bring us here . . . so we were a little disappointed" about the track abandonment, Raven said. The plant's outgoing shipments have always been by truck, he said, but the rail line was the most efficient way to bring in the 60- and 64-foot pieces of metal rebar that the plant remilled. SMI Steel now plans to ship by truck or by a combination of truck and rail from locations in Pamplin City or Buckingham, Raven said. "It's going to

increase our inbound materials cost substantially," he said. Twenty-eight trucks with over-length trailers would carry the same amount of steel bar as seven rail cars, he said.

SMI Steel tried but failed to persuade the railroad not to abandon the section of track between Farmville and Pamplin City. *(One reason I printed this story was to ask anyone why a shortline operator couldn't have taken over this route. Another reason is the 150-mile High Bridge over the Appomattox River used in the Civil War will now be abandoned).*

PAGE TWO - RAILROAD REACTIVATED

(Pittsburgh, PA) - On July 21, 2005, the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad line that will haul coal to the Homer City, Pennsylvania Generating Station was reactivated. The Homer City Generating Station, operated by EME Homer City Generation LP, is one of the biggest power plants on the eastern seaboard, and burns 17,500 tons of coal a day, providing power to Pennsylvania, Maryland and New Jersey. Gov. Ed Rendell said reactivation of the 16-mile line from Indiana County helps the region retain 700 jobs and create 70. Rendell said the \$9.6 million railroad infrastructure improvement project was financed with state and federal grants and private funds from the B&P Railroad. **The start of service will mark the first time in about a dozen years that trains have crossed Indiana streets and nearby rural roads.**

BIG TAX MONEY FOR ROADS/AVIATION

According to Norman Mineta, the US Transportation Secretary, the FY2006 transportation bill provides \$40.1 billion for highway construction -- more than \$5 billion above Bush's request -- as well as \$8.2 billion in transit subsidies and **\$14.8**

billion for the Federal Aviation Administration. According to the xxxx , xxx passengers flew last year. That would amount to a Federal tax subsidy of xxx per airline passenger. Now I know that the best way to judge costs is NOT costs per passenger (like so many do with Amtrak), but cost per PASSENGER MILE (that is, how much it costs to move one passenger one mile). I'm trying to find out what the cost per PM is for aviation and Amtrak. Can anyone help? (Ken Ziegenbei, editor) - July 27, 2005)

"Aibohphobia - The fear of palindromes."

UNION PACIFIC ANNOUNCES HERITAGE SERIES LOCOMOTIVES

OMAHA, Neb., July 30 - Union Pacific Chairman and CEO Dick Davidson today unveiled an unprecedented new Heritage series of locomotives that will honor the people and the railroads that have made the company what it is today. Each locomotive will feature a unique paint scheme, incorporating elements of one of the six major railroads that have merged with Union Pacific.

"It is important that we take an historical perspective of who we are and how we got here," Davidson said. "Our reputation as America's greatest railroad has been strengthened by the many lines that have become a part of the UP. It is time we pay homage to those railroads and the generations of men and women who helped to build a great nation and the foundation for our future."

The first two locomotives in the series were revealed Saturday in Omaha. The locomotives, which pay tribute to the men and women of Missouri Pacific and Western Pacific, will operate across the UP system. (Photos elsewhere)

The Missouri Pacific and Western Pacific locomotives will be followed in coming months by locomotives painted in

the style of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (Katy), Chicago & North Western, Southern Pacific, and Denver & Rio Grande. Through the years, a series of mergers helped Union Pacific create the strongest rail franchise in North America. The addition of Missouri Pacific more than doubled UP's route miles, Western Pacific track led UP to the Ports of San Francisco and Oakland, Katy gave UP access to Texas through Oklahoma, Chicago & North Western brought UP to the Windy City, and Southern Pacific and Denver & Rio Grande Western provided the famous Sunset Route and a direct route through Colorado.

"Thousands of Union Pacific employees will soon reach retirement age and to continue to meet our service demands, thousands of new employees will be hired to take their place," Davidson said. "We want to instill in these new employees the importance of UP's rich history and the major role each of these railroads played."

The Heritage Series marks the fifth time in company history that Union Pacific has painted locomotives in colors other than the traditional UP "Armour Yellow" paint scheme. Previously, locomotives were custom made in 1991 to honor UP employees serving in the Persian Gulf War, in 1994 to call attention to the United Way Campaign, in 1996 for the Atlanta Games Olympic Torch Relay Train, and in 2002 for the Salt Lake City Games Olympic Torch Relay Train.

Union Pacific Corporation owns one of America's leading transportation companies. Its principal operating company, Union Pacific Railroad, links 23 states in the western two-thirds of the country and serves the fastest-growing U.S. population centers. Union Pacific's diversified business mix includes Agricultural Products, Automotive, Chemicals, Energy, Industrial Products and Intermodal. The railroad offers competitive long-haul routes from all major West Coast and Gulf Coast ports to eastern gateways. Union Pacific connects with Canada's rail systems and is the only

railroad serving all six major gateways to Mexico, making it North America's premier rail franchise. (For more information, contact Gene Hinkle at (402) 514-9406 or (402) 880-8052).

UNION PACIFIC ANNOUNCES DIRECTOR FOR HISTORIC PROJECTS

Omaha, Neb., July 25, 2005 – Union Pacific has named John Bromley as director historic projects, a new position. Bromley, who has been director public affairs, has worked as a media spokesman for the railroad for more than 25 years. In his new position, he will work at the Union Pacific Museum in Council Bluffs. He will be responsible for the railroad's extensive archive materials and will help identify other historic opportunities to support the railroad's preservation efforts.

A 1964 graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno, and a Navy veteran, Bromley has been a life-long rail enthusiast and a noted painter of rail scenes. A former newspaperman, he joined Union Pacific in 1980. A replacement for the public affairs position has not yet been named.

For further information, contact Mark Davis 402-544-5459

BNSF CONSTRUCTING SECOND LINE IN OK

(From member Phil Moseley) - BNSF will build a second main track in Northwest Oklahoma. The second track will double the number of trains rumbling through the small communities along the route, and community leaders hope the new infrastructure will boost the area economy. The double track rail line will stretch from near Alva to Shattuck and will allow more than 100 trains to pass through the state as part of the BNSF transcontinental mainline that runs from Chicago to Los Angeles, said Joe Faust, railroad spokesman. Eventually, the double track project will be extended through Kansas to Chicago, Faust said.

Traffic on the double track from

Waynoka through Oklahoma to Amarillo, Texas, began last week. Already communities on the route are seeing the benefits. The railroad shut down two crossings in Woodward and Shattuck and invested in improving infrastructure at the remaining crossings. The company also improved drainage at one crossing in Woodward and added an underpass near a closed crossing in Shattuck.

More trains traveling faster initially may have been a cause for worry, but state records show train fatalities in the sparsely populated areas of northwestern Oklahoma were few. Since 1995, three people have died after being hit by a train in Woodward County. No fatal train accidents

have been reported in Ellis County since 1995, according to numbers compiled by the state

Transportation Department.

Shattuck City Manager L.R. Holley estimates that 90 to 95 trains go through his town each day.

Before the double track was installed, most people knew if they were trying to get somewhere in Shattuck in a hurry, they probably would run into a train. Now with the double track, trains are moving through town at a faster clip, opening up access in the community of about 1,300 near the Oklahoma-Texas state line.

With high fuel prices, railroads expect they will handle more freight. In its second-quarter earnings report, the railroad estimated freight revenue will increase 12 percent to 15 percent in the next three months. Increased rail capacity also is helping businesses along the route. More predictable train schedules are helping Johnston Enterprises, an Enid-based grain hauler, reduce the overtime it pays workers. Johnston Enterprises uses the railroad near Shattuck to bring

corn into feed lots in the Texas Panhandle and send wheat to Mexico or international ports in Houston and Galveston, Texas, on a 110-car train.

ALASKA RAILROAD ASKS PUBLIC TO KEEP WATCH

The Alaska Railroad has worked for the past eight months to tighten security measures along the state's 611 miles of track and now it is asking the public for help. Railroad officials announced August 2 the launch of a public awareness campaign to get passengers, employees and neighborhood residents to report suspicious activity near the railroad. The Track Watch program is being run in coordination with the Transportation Security Administration. "We're asking everyone to take a critical look at rail activities and report anything suspicious," said Tim Thompson, spokesman for the railroad.

The railroad mailed out 22,000 packets about the program to residents living near railroad tracks. The railroad maintains its own security personnel and has contracted with a private company for additional security since 2004. Railroad employees and tour guides will also provide a safety briefing to passengers as part of the Track Watch program.

The railroad is asking anyone who notices anything out of the ordinary to report it using its toll-free hot line: 877-RAILCOP (877-724-5267).

RUSSIA'S FIRST PRIVATE, LUXURY PASSENGER TRAIN

On August 3, 2005, Grand Service Express, Russia's first private, luxury passenger train, ran from Moscow's Leningrad terminal bound for St. Petersburg, Russian Railways Company said.

The train consisted of 14 passenger cars (called wagons in Russia), including two Grand Deluxe compartment wagons, two Grand, two Premium, seven first class, and an officer's wagon. All wagons are equipped with LCD televisions and satellite receivers. Passengers will be allowed to use hot and cold water, showers, and bathrooms even during train

stops. Each compartment has an electronic lock with an electronic key-card.

Grand Service Express will run daily between Moscow and St. Petersburg, a nine-hour trip. The departure and arrival times are 11:24 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. from Moscow to St. Petersburg, and the return trip departs St. Petersburg the following day at 11:47 p.m. and arrives 8:30 a.m. in Moscow. The train service is a joint project of the Grand Service Express transportation company and its subsidiary the October Railroad.

The majority of passengers on the Moscow-St. Petersburg route are executives of large state and private enterprises, who frequently use overnight trains. Almost 100% fare sales for luxury class cars shows that passengers are ready to pay more for additional travel comfort.

HIGHWAY BILL HELPS SOME RAIL

(George Schmidt, club member from Virginia Beach, VA, sent me the following, from the Virginian-Pilot, August 5) - A series of rail projects that will help Hampton Roads compete with other East Coast ports, boost Norfolk Southern Railway and remove worrisome rail crossings in Portsmouth and Chesapeake will receive \$143 million from the federal highway bill passed in late July by Congress. They're all pieces of the Heartland Corridor, a \$266 million project both the Virginia Port Authority and Norfolk Southern Corp. have promoted as a necessary upgrade to Virginia's rail system.

The federal government will provide \$90 million to raise overhead clearances in 29 tunnels and modify 24 bridges, wire lines, and other obstructions along Norfolk Southern's rail lines between Hampton Roads and Columbus, Ohio, a major freight center along the route to Chicago. The total project may cost \$40 million more to complete. The changes will open

a more direct route for double-stack container trains, which require more than 20 feet of clearance. Such trains currently have to detour to Harrisburg, Pa., before heading to the Midwest, and port officials say the changes could cut a day and a half and 235 miles off the trip to Chicago.

A related project to replace rail lines that cut through Churchland-area neighborhoods of Portsmouth and Chesapeake with new rails in the median strip of Interstate 664 and Va. 164, received \$15 million in federal money – a quarter of the final estimated cost of \$60 million.

The relocation would eliminate more than a dozen railroad crossings that the port authority and local residents have said are dangerous.

The Maersk terminal is expected to generate as many as six long trains a day when it opens in 2007, and perhaps twice as many once it is fully operational. The \$286.5 billion Transportation Equity Act leaves \$123 million of the corridor's \$266 million estimated cost unfunded. The states of Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio, along with Norfolk Southern and the port authority, will have to figure out how to make up the rest. Such projects, tacked onto bills by legislators for their constituents, are often criticized as pork. And the federal transportation bill is no exception, **passing with more than 6,300 special projects – an all-time high** – including the partial underwriting of the Heartland Corridor.

(Comments: Ken: An excellent article in today's paper. The new Maersk terminal will be a boon to our area and NS' upgrade will complement that - and, of course, will also boost NS. Of particular interest locally, building new track in the medians of two local freeway/intertate routes is (to me) a novel idea.)



AMTRAK NEWS

AMTRAK INCREASES CAPACITY FOR AUTO-TRAIN

WASHINGTON - Amtrak announced it has increased the vehicle capacity of its popular Auto Train between Northern Virginia and Florida and may now accommodate as many as 120 minivans or SUVs on a single train. Previously, the maximum number of minivans and SUVs that could be accommodated was 29.

The capacity increase is made possible by the recent purchase of 80 automobile carriers manufactured built by FreightCar America in Johnstown, Pa. Amtrak's Auto Train offers daily service in both directions between Lorton, Va. (about 18 miles south of Washington, D.C.) and Sanford, Fla. (about 25 miles north of Orlando). The train carries passengers and their automobiles over the approximately 900-mile stretch on an overnight trip along the Eastern Seaboard, eliminating the need to drive on I-95, a heavily-traveled and congested route.

Passengers may choose coach accommodations or upgrade to a variety of sleeping accommodations. On-board meals are included in Auto Train fares. The train is especially popular among vacationing families, as it allows them to drive their own vehicle during their vacations (avoiding hundreds of dollars in rental car costs). It also helps them avoid wear and tear on both vehicle and passengers by eliminating about 900 miles of driving along the I-95 corridor.

The automobile carriers allow Amtrak to handle more vehicles and adjust capacity according to vehicle type booked for each Auto Train departure. The auto carriers increase the maximum number of sedans carried from 187 to 250 and the maximum number of minivans and SUVs carried from 29 to 120. The new carriers' greater capacity results from a new design, which also allows flexibility in how each auto space is used, whether for a car, SUV or van. Previously, such flexibility was not an option.

Auto Train Auto Carrier Capacity: Old carriers (187 cars, 29 Vans/SUV's); New carriers (200-250 cars, 80-120 SUVs) (*Thanks to Daryl Stout for emailing me this story*)

PASSENGER RAIL INVESTMENT & IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

The following bill was introduced July 27, 2005:

WASHINGTON, DC - Senator Trent Lott (R- Miss.), Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee's Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Subcommittee, and Senator Frank Lautenberg (D- N.J.) today introduced S. 1516, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005. The Amtrak reauthorization bill, which is co-sponsored by Committee Chairman Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), Co-Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) centers around three themes: reform and accountability, adequate funding for intercity passenger rail, and passenger rail service improvement. The bill is scheduled for markup by the Full Committee on Thursday at 10 a.m.

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act is a six-year reauthorization bill (FY 2006-2011), which provides for Amtrak's capital and operating needs to maintain current operations, upgrade equipment, and return the Northeast Corridor (NEC) to a state of good repair. Over the life of the bill, Amtrak's operating subsidy is reduced by 40 percent through cost cutting, restructuring, and reform while capital funding is increased. The bill creates an intercity passenger rail capital grant program for the States.

"Our bill improves how Amtrak works and ensures that the taxpayers' money is used more effectively," Senator Lott remarked upon unveiling the bill. "It cuts the Amtrak operating subsidy by 40 percent and creates a new rail capital grant program that states can use to start new intercity passenger rail service. Amtrak as an organization must change culturally to think and run more like a business. That is why our bill requires Amtrak to develop a much better financial systems and be held accountable for its use of federal funding."

"National passenger rail service isn't a luxury - it's a necessity for giving Americans another transportation choice, while reducing traffic, air pollution and our dependence on foreign oil," said Senator Lautenberg. "We have that choice in the Northeast - Amtrak carries four million passengers a year in New Jersey, and just as many passengers ride trains between New York and Washington as fly. But all Americans deserve the choice to ride passenger rail."

"I commend Senator Lott for his leadership on this very important piece of legislation," Senator Stevens said. "He and other members of the Commerce Committee, including Co-Chairman Inouye and Senator Lautenberg, have worked in a bipartisan fashion to deliver a bill that I hope will gain the support of our Committee and the Senate. Amtrak reform is essential not only for passenger rail users on the East Coast, but all Americans. I look forward to considering the bill and reporting it out of Committee

at our markup Thursday."

The Act's major provisions:

- * require a financial accounting system for Amtrak operations and a five-year financial plan. The system is monitored by the Department of Transportation Inspector General.
- * direct the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation and Amtrak, to negotiate the restructuring of Amtrak's debt within one year. If a restructuring results in significant savings, the Secretary of the Treasury may assume the restructured debt, with the full faith and credit backing of the Treasury. If no restructuring is possible, Amtrak must pay the debt. Such debt is then solely the responsibility of Amtrak, without any implied federal guarantee.
- * require the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Amtrak, in consultation with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) and the operating freight railroads, to develop metrics and standards for measuring the performance and service quality of intercity train operations. Such metrics and standards shall include cost-recovery, on-time performance, ridership per train-mile, on-board and station services, and the connectivity of routes. The FRA will publish a quarterly report on train performance and service quality.
- * provide authorization of tax-credit bonding authority for the states and Amtrak for capital projects to improve intercity passenger rail service. This funding would be in addition to the amount authorized and provides a multi-year, dedicated source of funds for rail capital projects.
- * require Amtrak to develop a capital spending plan to return the NEC to a state of good repair by 2011. A newly established advisory commission made up of representatives of Amtrak, the FRA, and each state in the NEC will develop recommendations for the NEC's operation and future infrastructure needs. Amtrak and the states must develop a uniform cost allocation methodology to assign costs and determine compensation for use of NEC facilities.
- * require FRA to retain a consultant to develop and recommend objective methodologies for route and service decisions. The methodologies shall give consideration to cost recovery and on-time performance of existing routes, connections with other routes, transportation needs of communities not served by other public transportation, and the methodologies used by rail service providers in other countries. Amtrak shall consider adoption of the methodologies recommended by the consultant.
- * require Amtrak to develop, after consulting the States and the FRA, a methodology to assign costs and determine compensation for State-supported services. If Amtrak and the States don't implement the proposal developed by the commission, the STB is authorized to impose restructured compensation rates.
- * direct the FRA, in consultation with Amtrak, to develop system-wide performance metrics for all Amtrak services in 2006 to evaluate financial and on-time performance, and customer satisfaction of each train. In 2007, Amtrak is required to establish performance improvement plans for five worst-performing long-distance routes (a third of the 15 intercity passenger trains). As Amtrak develops these plans, it must consider restructuring the route, improving on-board service, changing amenities such as sleeper car service and food service, and changing the frequency of the trains. In 2008, Amtrak must implement the plans. By 2011, Amtrak is required to implement improvement plans for all long-distance routes.
- * establish a competitive bid program allowing freight railroads to bid to operate select long-distance and state-supported routes.
- * create a new State Capital Grant program for intercity passenger rail capital projects. The program makes grants to a State, or a group of States, to pay for the capital costs of facilities and equipment necessary to provide new or improved intercity passenger rail. The federal match is 80 percent. Projects are selected by the Secretary of Transportation based on economic feasibility, expected ridership and other factors.
- * include the Amtrak and passenger rail security and tunnel life/safety provisions from the Rail Security Act of 2004, which passed the Senate last year.

ACTIVITIES OF OTHER RAIL GROUPS

To join/renew membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club (Little Rock Chapter National Railway Historical Society), fill out the form below. **Annual dues are \$20** for local dues (plus **\$22** for the national NRHS dues if you want to join the NRHS through our chapter, a total of \$42 for both local and national dues). Send to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ EMAIL _____


Send check, made out to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for more information or visit us on the web at <http://www.trainweather.com> and click on *Arkansas Railroader*. Our email is trains@trainweather.com.



Cotton Belt depot at Gillett, Arkansas, July 1970. Gene Hull photo.

DEPOTS IN ARKANSAS - GILLETT (Cotton Belt)

by: Gene Hull

The Texas & St. Louis, which became the Cotton Belt in 1891, built through Stuttgart, Arkansas in 1883. On 21 November 1888, the Stuttgart & Arkansas River R.R. was incorporated to build from Stuttgart to or near Arkansas Post on the Arkansas River. The rails stopped at Gillett, 34 miles southeast. It was sold at foreclosure to the Cotton Belt on 3 January 1901. A mixed train (freight cars and a coach) served this fine plantation area in the 1940s. (*In November, 1929, mixed Train No. 463 arrived from Stuttgart at 10:45 a.m. and Train No. 464 left for Stuttgart at 11:05 a.m. - editor.*) 





This is the new UP MoPac Heritage locomotive UP painted and released on July 30, 2005 (see story elsewhere in this issue) *(Used by permission, from UP's website)*



Marshall, Arkansas Railroad Depot - August 1903 - August 2005

St. Louis & North Arkansas Railroad 1903-1906; Missouri & North Arkansas Railroad 1906-1921; Missouri & North Arkansas Railway 1922-1935; Missouri & Arkansas Railway 1935-1946 *(information from Jim Wakefield).*

*(August 11, 2005 photo of the burned depot by Jim Wakefield ** 1964 photo of the depot on its original site by Clifton E. Hull)*

Arkansas Railroader - Little Rock Chapter NRHS