

# The *EAST COAST CHAMPION*

January 2002

## 2002 DUES PAYABLE NOW

Yes, it is that time of year again! The dues for 2002 come due January 1. The National dues have increased this year to \$20 with the Chapter dues holding at \$13 for a total of **\$33.00 payable to Florida East Coast Chapter, NRHS.**

There are three easy methods to get your ticket punched by your friendly conductor: 1) Mail your check to the Chapter Treasurer, Bob Selle, 1013 Woodsmere Parkway, Rockledge, FL 32955; 2) Mail it to the Chapter P. O. Box shown on this newsletter; 3) Save your postage and envelope by paying Bob Selle at the meeting. Don't be left standing on the station platform.

## PRESIDENT'S MEMO TO STOCKHOLDERS

Let's hope Santa brought all that was on your wish list. Please bring your railroad-related gifts to the January meeting for show and tell (and to make others jealous.)

I want to thank everyone who has participated in chapter activities this past year as well as those who supported our "public relations" effort at the toy train show. A big thanks to the officers for their time and effort. A special thanks to our editor Jim Heidel who devotes a lot of time and effort to get out a really good chapter newsletter. I do not want to forget major contributors to the newsletter – member Dave Klein for the "Electric Notepad," and a big thanks to Neil Moran of New Jersey (member of the New York Chapter) for his monthly "Stack Talk."

The efforts of these people really make for a good newsy newsletter.

As you will have noted, our chapter presented the key to the FEC tool shed at the Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science last month. I will have to say I was somewhat disappointed with the lack of turnout by our members. We had a nice informal presentation and took pictures of the members who were present. I want to thank all the members who have worked on this project over the years (it has been several.) A big thank you to Jerry Sheehan who put the final touches on the display. The tools are very nicely displayed and each with a nice large label naming the tool.

A reminder that we have a special speaker for our January meeting. Mr. Carey Slack will present a history of the Chapel Rail Cars. He has a cousin from Indiana who recently restored a Chapel Rail Car in Wisconsin. This generated interest in this subject leading Carey to do extensive research. He will present the results of the research and talk about and show pictures of his cousin's restoration project. I encourage members to bring guests to enjoy this special program.

While I am on the subject of programs, I will make another request for suggestions for programs or volunteers to present a program. I hate to admit this, but some member said he would do the February program and I have now forgotten who it was. Please re-identify yourself.

We now have the long awaited name badges – you can pick them up at the meeting. The name badges cost the chapter \$4.00 each. The reimbursement to the chapter is on a voluntary basis.

Hope to see you all and your choo-choo Christmas presents at the next meeting.

Until the 14<sup>th</sup>,  
Stop, Look, and Listen,  
Chuck

## MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING

President Chuck Billings called the NRHS, Florida East Coast Chapter meeting to order on Monday, December 10, 2001 at 7:10 PM. No guests were in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - The minutes of the October meeting was approved without correction. There were no minutes recorded for November's dinner meeting.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** - Bob Selle gave the monthly Treasurer's report.

**ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS** - All incumbent officers were selected by the nominating committee to serve for another term. There were no nominations from the floor. Bob Smiley moved to accept the slate of officers. Chuck Beckner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS** - The Tool Shed has been completed and turned over to the Brevard Museum. Chuck Billings expressed the club's gratitude for Jerry Sheehan for his superb and professional job of labeling and display of the shed's contents.

Chuck Billings also reported that he had purchased a gift certificate for Butch Buczkowske for acting as our tour guide at the FEC New Smyrna Beach shop from club funds. Chuck requested that members who attended the tour donate one dollar to the club treasury to defray the cost of the gift.

Our booth at the Fred Rose train show was a marginal success. Chuck Billings, Chuck Beckner and Jim Robinson greeted the public. Jerry Sheehan also helped with the booth. Chuck reported that magazine sales were minimal.

**NEW BUSINESS** - None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** - Dave Klein and others had additional comments on the SCAT trolley routes. Dave also reports that the liability problems for Tampa trolley crossing the CSX right-of-way have been resolved. Dave says that several other issues remain before the trolleys go into operation.

Chuck Billings has a flyer offering a "collectible" Pendleton Blanket. Chuck also has a flyer from the Bluewater chapter for a rail tour from Detroit to the NRHS national convention at Williams Arizona by way of Colorado.

The Mount Dora Cannon Ball has a new operator and will be operating steam excursions from Mt. Dora to Taveres.

Harlan Hannah, Secretary

## STACK TALK

by Neil Moran

Well, we begin another year, so Happy New Year everyone, and hopefully you all had a wonderful holiday season. We will have a few loose ends at the beginning of this column.

Let's start with Canadian Pacific #2816; unfortunately, the proposal to run excursions out of Calgary sadly never came off. CP authorities gave no explanation for the cancellation. Unofficial reports have the Hudson going back to Vancouver in the spring to run some trips in that area. Nothing has been confirmed so far as it's a bit early in the year to be thinking about any moves.

As for B.C. Rail's Royal Hudson #2860 and Consolidation #3716, Al Broadfoot is still trying very hard to secure the three million dollars needed to repair both engines. No. 2860 needs a new boiler after she failed a high pressure boiler in last year, and #3716 still requires a rebuilt firebox and boiler. Mr. Broadfoot went on to say that "both engines have two different problems due to the fact that they haven't been operated properly." He blames the crews for their poor operation, noting that they haven't had extensive training on proper operation. According to B.C. Rail reports, Royal Hudson #2860 sustained considerable damage in June, 1998 after too much water was put in her

boiler. An investigation concluded that the crew had not paid attention to the water level and did not take notice of excessive steam and water escaping from the locomotive. Mr. Broadfoot also states that #3716 has overheated steel sheets inside the firebox, also caused by incorrect operation. Three years ago investigators advised the railroad to upgrade its steam training program for crews. "Even though these men have steam tickets, it does not mean that they understand the working of the boilers, so their operating practices are not very good. That's why the engines are the way they are," he stated. He went on, "Between marketing and poor operation, we're in the toilet. The railway does not have the ability to market these locomotives properly. They're a freight railway." Mr. Broadfoot and the B.C. Rail steam shop crews have rebuilt #2860 and #3716 for the past 25 years. He estimates that the main expense to get Conso #3716 rolling again will be labor, with a total cost of far less than a million dollars. The Royal Hudson, for its part, is in relatively good shape. The line just spent a great deal of money on the firebox and rebuilt the tender. Mr. Broadfoot says he took her out of service because of leaking tubes inside the firebox. In his strongest statement, Mr. Broadfoot claims, "When we were manufacturing the parts for CPR #2816, we also duplicated the order and got parts for #2860. We have the parts and we also have the tubes to fix the Hudson, but now it's a case of they don't want to run them. It isn't the Government so much as it's the railway that doesn't want them running." Strong words indeed!! We will keep you informed on this potboiler.

One last bit of news recently came in; last month I reported that B.C. Rail might be interested in Tom Payne's former Reading Northern #2100 which he has fixed and occasionally run out of St. Thomas, Ontario on short trips. Now comes a wild rumor that inquiries have been made about Ross Rowland's #614, presently stored in New Jersey. Mr. Rowland has the engine up for sale and would dearly love to have someone take it off his hands, but how true the rumors are is anybody's guess. This scenario is right out of a Hollywood script; as they say in Tinseltown, "the plot sickens."

Moving over to Stettler, Alberta, the Alberta Prairie Railroad announced that "Bullet Nose Betty" #6060 was set to run a Santa Claus special out of Stettler to an undisclosed location on December 16. This excursion was viewed as a "good will ambassador" to several towns along the way. Many children were set to ride the train to meet Santa Claus on board; Santa also was to visit with the folks trackside at station stops.

Moving down below the 49th Parallel we'll move west to the Golden Gate Railroad Museum. This group had to scrub a November excursion with former Southern Pacific 4-6-2 #2472. They cited axle bearing problems uncovered during a test run on October 14, when temperatures rose on the No. 1 axle. After an inspection at Redwood City during the run, the Pacific returned under its own power to its base at Hunters Point Naval Station in San Francisco. "We were very disappointed to have to cancel our trip, but the museum has a reputation for excellence and we simply cannot run this trip until we are 100 percent sure that the #2472 is ready," said Michael Mangini, the museum's executive director. The locomotive performed flawlessly with the exception of the axle overheating. Boiler time runs out in April, 2002, and there is not enough time to arrange another steam excursion. The museum needs donations to keep the Pacific repaired and running. Please send them to Golden Gate Railroad Museum, POB 881686, San Francisco, CA 94188.

Staying in the land of milk and honey, the Orange Empire Railroad Museum in Parris, California has dedicated its new narrow gauge turntable. The 56-foot turntable is a faithful reproduction of a standard 1880s Southern Pacific design, and a replica in appearance to the SP installation at Lawes, Cal. on the old Owens Valley slim gauge line. Notables at the dedication included Ward and Betty Kimball, who helped fund the turntable project. The Kimballs have their own slim gauge Grizzly Flats Railroad at their home in San Gabriel. Many of you are well acquainted with them from the TV series *Tracks Ahead*.

On Union Pacific's recent steam outing down to Houston, Steve Lee was really a good will representative for the railroad. On the return trip the crowds along the track were bigger than expected; even some schools had decided to bus children to trackside to see Challenger #3985 roll by. Instead of just waving, Steve brought the train to a stop and allowed the crowd time to admire the big engine before whistling off. In addition to the kids, onlookers included some of the older generation who once saw steam in regular service. Mr. Lee noted that these were the "bigger kids looking for over." UP spokesman Marc Davis said that as soon as Steve spotted a school bus from afar, he came to a stop as quickly as possible, a good public relations gesture that won't be forgotten for a long time. To see this largest steam locomotive still operating was a jaw-dropping experience, or, in the words of the kids, "Awesome!"

Now on to a big deal between Steamtown and the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM). Last year several pieces of equipment in the Steamtown collection were moved from Tobyhanna, Penn., to the Steamtown yard. These included several passenger cars, Canadian National Pacific #5822, Canadian Pacific 4-4-4 #2929, and Kansas Southern F9M #4061. CN #5822 has now been sent to the TVRM in Chattanooga, after a deal was

struck between the two operations. In return, Steamtown will receive future wheel work on Boston & Maine Pacific #3713 along with other engines. No. 5822 was built by Montreal Locomotive Works in 1919 and originally was numbered 516. It was renumbered in 1920 and for many years ran on the Central Vermont in the St. Albans area. She was last shopped in November 1957 and then stored serviceable at CN's Montreal facilities until her retirement in February, 1960. Then Nelson Blount came along and purchased it for display at his Steamtown in Bellows Falls, Vt. Steamtown began some rebuilding on the engine in 1973 for possible excursions, but the project was stopped in favor of rebuilding CP #2317. TVRM has long been after a Pacific type so when the opportunity arose to acquire this engine they jumped at it. She's had little use since her last overhaul and is in excellent condition, including running gear, firebox, and boiler. The tender, however, will require a serious overhaul. Project Manager G. Mark Ray says the museum will begin work on her soon. But first the museum's Southern 2-8-0 #630 and Kentucky & Tennessee 2-8-2 #10 will be refurbished and placed back in service. TVRM has recently completed restoring ex-U.S. Army 2-8-0 #610. During the winter the crew will remove #5822's boiler jacket and lagging, and perform a thorough assessment of the boiler. If everything goes as anticipated the Pacific could return to steam within a few years, and would be a fine addition for the museum.

Getting back to Steamtown itself, the historic site will curtail its excursion season in 2002. This move will cut costs and give shop personnel a chance to catch up on maintenance of the site's two road engines, CP Pacific #2317 and CN Mike #3254. There has been light ridership on Sundays, so there will be only one round trip between Scranton and Moscow. Acting Superintendent Harold "Kip" Hagen and his team wanted to be able to rely on a backup steam engine instead of their Nickel Plate GP-9, as they were forced to do this last season. He stated, "we really want to get on our feet again so that we can rotate an engine out and not take away a locomotive, particularly on the weekend. Our goal is to cycle the engines in and out of service, and do routine maintenance." Since none of the runs to Moscow begin until the July 4 weekend, Steamtown will use one of its road engines on its yard excursions from May until that date. Mr. Hagen hopes that this scaling back will be confined to 2002, and will help Steamtown to cut costs. He said, "We're a little short of money right now as part of this year's tourism turndown. We will also lower the price of admission from \$8 to \$6. The Moscow trips will be down to \$10 from \$12, along with the combination ticket, which will be reduced to \$14." Steamtown's trio of operating locomotives will be in good shape for this year. No. 3254, last year's workhorse, and #2317 are undergoing regular maintenance in the shop; both will be available this year. Baldwin 0-6-0 #26 is also undergoing a complete overhaul, and should be ready by this September. The proposed schedule for 2002 is as follows: Departures will be from Scranton for Moscow at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Saturday, July 4 through Labor Day, Sept. 2. On Sundays there will be a single departure for Moscow at 2 p.m., July 7 through Sept. 1. From Sept. 7 through Sept. 29, trips to Moscow will leave on Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. And from October 4-27, there will be 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. departures on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. A special Fall Foliage schedule will be run on Columbus Day, October 14.

Our final steam news this month comes from good friend Ben Young of the Sunrise Trail NRHS Chapter on Long Island. He relates that the Railroad Museum of Long Island (RMLI) has made a down payment on an 86-foot through truss turntable, to be acquired from the Arcade & Attica Railroad. This will be a key piece in the development of the museum's site at Riverhead. The total cost is \$25,000 and the museum has started a campaign to raise the necessary funds. Another \$15,000 will be required to move the turntable to Riverhead; the museum has until July 1, 2002 to remove the table from A&A's property.. When it arrives RMLI intends to install the table partially over the site of the original turntable at Riverhead. Eventually a building will house the best of the museum's rolling stock collection, plus a restoration and maintenance shop. Even without a building, they will be able to move equipment onto their fenced-in site.

In other Long Island news, last August Long Island Rail Road #35 came back to Oyster Bay with the use of several trailers. Shortly after arrival, the boiler and tender were unloaded and placed on cribbing so they can be worked on in the future. Other trailers carried the locomotive frame, tender frame, cab, pilot truck and assorted wheels. The move was paid for by Nassau County. No. 35 currently sits on property owned by Long Island Rail Road, but which will be turned over the Town of Oyster Bay once a crew facility building currently under construction is completed. We are forever thankful to Bob Michele and his crew of Sunrise Trail Chapter members who saved this valuable bit of LIRR's heritage. Always a pleasure to end the column on a high note!!

Lots of people to thank for this month's news: Steve Barry (*Railfan & Railroad Magazine*), Ed Bergen (Camden & Amboy Society), John Biehn (Dayton RR Society), Ed Emery (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), Ben Young (LI Sunrise Trail Chapter NRHS) and John Bobsin and Bruce Russell (NY Chapter NRHS). I remain your most obedient servant in steam . . .

**UNTIL OUR TRACKS CROSS AGAIN.**

## INTERESTING RAIL NEWS

from trains.com "News Wire" (www.trains.com)

### **FLORIDA TO FUND AMTRAK SERVICE ON FLORIDA EAST COAST**

Florida will spend \$82.5 million to inaugurate Amtrak service between Jacksonville and West Palm Beach on the Florida East Coast Railway, Gov. Jeb Bush said the week of December 16. The first trains will roll 10 to 12 months after the state begins releasing funding, Amtrak spokesman Kevin Johnson said. Amtrak has not yet received word on when the funding will commence, he said.

Earlier this year, the state had said it would not be able to fund the project. But the September 11 terrorist attacks changed its transportation spending priorities. "The September attacks on our country showed us that we must fully develop alternative modes of transportation in and out of Florida," Bush said at a meeting with a group of mayors from cities and towns along Florida's East Coast. "This restored passenger rail service is just the ticket."

Service is expected to be fully implemented by 2006, with six daily trains in each direction between Jacksonville and Miami. The project consists of laying about 23 miles of new track for new and lengthened passing sidings, building a connection between FEC and CSX/Tri-Rail line in Palm Beach County, and building new stations at St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, Vero Beach, Ft. Pierce, and Stuart. The last passenger service on FEC ran in 1968.

### **CONGRESS TO AMTRAK: DON'T PREPARE LIQUIDATION PLAN**

Congress, as part of negotiations on a defense appropriations bill that includes other spending, barred Amtrak from spending any of its funds for preparing a liquidation plan. When the Amtrak Reform Council found November 9 that Amtrak would not meet the congressional deadline for reaching operational self-sufficiency, it triggered a 90-day clock under which Amtrak has to prepare a liquidation plan. Simultaneously, ARC must prepare a passenger rail restructuring proposal for Congress.

Assuming the president signs the bill, Amtrak won't have to prepare a liquidation plan as Congress had contemplated as part of the 1997 Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act. Amtrak was pleased with the measure, which will help smooth relationships with its creditors and suppliers. "The Congress sent a clear message that Amtrak will not be liquidated," Amtrak spokesman Bill Schulz told The Associated Press.

The defense bill also included \$100 million for safety improvements in the tunnels leading to Penn Station in New York, far less than the \$900 million Amtrak had sought. Meanwhile, Amtrak critic Rep. John Mica, a Florida Republican, last week introduced a bill that would force Amtrak to spin off the Northeast Corridor and the Virginia-Florida Auto Train. It is one of several bills likely to be filed as Congress takes up debate on what to do about Amtrak and passenger rail.

### **FLORIDA'S MOUNT DORA CANNONBALL BACK IN ACTION UNDER NEW OWNERS**

The Mount Dora Cannonball, a steam-powered tourist train linking Orlando and its namesake Mount Dora, returned to service over the weekend under new ownership. The railroad's 2-6-2 Baldwin had been chained to the tracks for nearly a month after the former owners, the Mount Dora, Tavares & Eustis Railroad, defaulted on lease payments to the Apalachicola Short Lines Railroad, which owns the former Atlantic Coast Line branch the tourist train uses.

Thanks to the investment of its new owners, the line reopened on Saturday as the Orlando & Mount Dora Railway. "Now we can keep our beloved railroad running, to the delight of families, railroad buffs and our own community," said Bill Ingalls, general manager of the Orlando & Mount Dora.

The new operators will run four excursions daily except Monday behind the 1913 steam locomotive. Previously a 1928 Edwards Railway Motor Car – the Dora Doodlebug – operated on weekdays, and steam was reserved for weekends.

#### **UP-NS JOINT BLUE STREAK SERVICE EXPANDED TO MIAMI AND CHARLOTTE**

The *Blue Streak* is streaking a bit farther. Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern extended the double-stack hotshot December 13, which initially ran between Los Angeles and Atlanta, by adding connections to Miami and Charlotte.

Miami receives both eastbound and westbound connections to the train via Florida East Coast, while Charlotte service is westbound only. Loads are available the sixth morning in each direction for Miami and fifth morning for Charlotte westbound shipments. On October 29, the *Blue Streak's* route was extended to Jacksonville, Fla.

The train symbols on UP are:

Eastbound – ZLCNS2 Tuesday; ZLCNS Wednesday through Saturday; and ZLCNS7 Sunday.

Westbound – ZNSLC Thursday through Saturday; and ZMELC Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday.

On NS, the trains are symbolized 226 and 225. Between Atlanta and Jacksonville, the symbols are 209/210. The railroads exchange the traffic through the Memphis gateway.

Since its October 1 inception, the *Blue Streak* has boasted a 99 percent on-time performance for SuperFlyer and Premium-level traffic. The service rides existing trains.

But for SuperFlyer traffic, UP and NS reduced transit time by pushing back the cutoff and moving up the availability at terminals. By being the last shipments loaded and the first grounded at the destination, the SuperFlyer containers offer service that's up to 12 hours faster than standard containers riding the same train.

The trains revive what's arguably the most famous named freight train, the *Blue Streak Merchandise*. Union Pacific discarded the name of the former Cotton Belt/Southern Pacific hotshot shortly after it acquired the SP in 1996.

#### **PROJECT WILL REROUTE CSX MAIN LINE THROUGH WAYCROSS, GA.**

Two miles of CSX tracks will be rerouted around downtown Waycross, Ga., thanks to a \$5 million line relocation project. The city voted last week to approve its share of the funding, paving the way for the removal of tracks and 14 grade crossings. At other crossings, improved signals and grade-crossing protection will be installed. Four subdivisions converge in the southeast corner of the state at Waycross, site of a major CSX hump yard.

#### **CSX MAY LEAD U.S. CLASS 1'S IN REMOTE-CONTROL PLUNGE**

CSX may lead the industry in the deployment of remote-control locomotives among the U.S. Class 1's, and reportedly has signed a deal to purchase 100 RC units from Pennsylvania-based Cattron-Theimeg. The other big three American systems have ordered or already purchased only a handful of remote-control packages each for use in yard operations. Union Pacific has purchased five units from Cattron. Norfolk Southern has split its orders, purchasing a pair of Beltpacks from Canadian National subsidiary Canac and two units from Cattron. Burlington Northern Santa Fe has also purchased two Canac Beltpacks.

An industry Web site, ProgressiveRailroading.com, yesterday reported that CSX would acquire 100 RC packs from Cattron-Theimeg. Neither CSX nor Cattron returned phone calls today seeking confirmation of the deal. Last month, Trains.com reported that CSX would buy 30 units from Cattron. But CSX spokeswoman Kathy Burns said at the time that the railroad would buy "substantially less" than 30.

The Class 1's this month filed a Locomotive Engineer and Remote Control Operator Certification Program Submission to the Federal Railroad Administration, said Union Pacific spokesman John Bromley. "What this does is amend the existing engineer and hostler program to include remote control," he said.

The FRA in February issued minimal guidelines for the use of remote control. In October, the United Transportation Union and the National Railway Labor Conference – which represents BNSF, CSX, KCS, NS, and UP – signed a memorandum of understanding that gave the UTU bargaining authority regarding remote control. The NRLC and UTU will sit down next month to negotiate the terms of RC use. February would be the earliest the railroads would likely begin remote-control pilot projects, but that hinges on the outcome of the negotiations.

Remote-control systems allow a locomotive to be operated from a portable controller that is worn by a crew member or crew members working on the ground. The control packs – essentially miniature control stands – transmit radio signals to a receiver installed on the locomotive. Some railroads have used the technology to reduce crew size, while others have used RC to increase productivity by having an extra crew member on the ground to throw switches or uncouple cars. And all say they've seen safety benefits that flow from improved crew visibility – the operator of the train can often see where all crew members are – and the elimination of potentially confusing hand-signal communication between brakemen and engineers in the locomotive cab. In Canada, where CN and Canadian Pacific have used RC for a decade, the accident rate in yards with remote control is half that of yards without it.

#### **CSX NAMES LOCOMOTIVE IN HONOR OF ENGINEER AND HIS SPOTLESS RECORD**

CSX has named GP38-2 No. 2745 "Nick's Engine" in honor of East St. Louis-based engineer Nick Goebel, who has an injury-free record in his more than 50 years of service.

Goebel hired out with the Pennsylvania Railroad. His locomotive, a former Conrail unit repainted in CSX colors, says "NICK'S ENGINE" in white letters beneath the cab window. "Nick has always been extremely concerned about safety, along with all other aspects of work," District Superintendent David Hagerman told CSX Today, the railroad's employee publication. "He has arrived an hour early for work ever since I have known him, rain or shine. He is a great role model for all of us."

#### **QUOTABLE**

"Saluda grade drops the jaws of railroad hobbyists in much the way that one of Mark McGwire's super-long home runs astonished baseball fans. They are both off the charts."-- Bob Loehne, railroad video producer, quoted in the Charlotte (N.C.) *Observer* in a Saluda Mountain story by Charlotte *Observer* reporter Jim Wrinn.

"I cannot overemphasize the importance of this success, because what it really says is if you give people first-class, modern high-speed service, they will come by the thousands."-- Michael Dukakis, chairman of Amtrak's board, quoted in an Associated Press story today about the one-year anniversary of *Acela Express*.

"We're going to have to load up again in Boston. All of our Legal Seafood's clam chowder is gone."-- An Amtrak café car attendant, quoted in Maine newspaper Foster's *Daily Democrat*, on the first trip of *Downeaster* service linking Boston with Portland, Maine. To capture regional flavor, Amtrak has made an effort to offer local fare on some of its trains.

"Amtrak just doesn't deserve any more of the government largess it has managed to fritter away over the decades. Despite billions in subsidies from Congress and countless breaks on paying its bills, the rail service today is nearly insolvent, burdened by high costs and meager traffic, and unable to lift itself out of a morass of its own making." -- Joseph Manich, author and Amtrak critic, in an op-ed piece in *The Washington Post*.

#### **THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE TRACKS, cont'd**

from <http://www.ironrails.com/humor.htm>

#### **APPLYING FOR JOB AS YARD CONTROLLER**

A man is applying for a job as a yard controller. The yard master asked him a few questions to see how well he could handle emergency situations that might arise. The yard master asks him "What would you do if you were in the tower and you saw the eastbound 202 limited passenger train and the westbound 719 freight heading towards each other on the same track?" The guy says "I'd throw a switch and route one of the trains off to another track."

The yard master says "And if the switch doesn't work?" "Well I'd grab flares and flags and run down to the switch, and try to throw the switch by hand." "And if the switch won't move?" "Well I'd light the flares and try to flag down the trains to stop." "And if they don't see you?" The man immediately responds, "I'd call my uncle Charlie." The yard master is surprised, he exclaims "YOUR UNCLE CHARLIE! WHAT COULD HE DO?" The man replies, "Well, nothing, but he just loves train wrecks."

#### **COMMENTS OR CORRESPONDENCE?**

Gentlemen:

I have been riding trains daily for the last two years, and the service on your line seems to be getting worse every day. I am tired of standing in the aisle all the time on a 14-mile trip. I think the transportation system is worse than that enjoyed by people 2,000 years ago.

Yours truly, A Commuter

Dear Sir:

We received your letter with reference to the shortcomings of our service and believe you are somewhat confused in your history. The only mode of transportation 2,000 years ago was by foot.

Sincerely, The Railroad

Gentlemen:

I am in receipt of your letter, and I think you are the ones who are confused in your history. If you will refer to the Bible, Book of David, 9th Chapter, you will find that Balaam rode to town on his ass. That, gentlemen, is something I have not been able to do on your train in the last two years.

Your truly, A Commuter

#### **WALKING THE RAILROAD**

A passenger train is creeping along, painfully slowly. Finally, it creaks to a complete halt. A passenger sees a conductor walking by outside. "What's going on?" she yells out the window. "Cow on the track!" replies the conductor.

Ten minutes later, the train resumes its slow pace. Within five minutes, however, it stops again. The woman sees the same conductor walking by again. She leans out the window and yells, "What happened? Did we catch up with the cow again?"

#### **A FEW DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS...**

A mother was working in the kitchen, listening to her son playing with his new electric train in the living room. She heard the train stop and her son said, "All you sobs who want off, get the hell off now 'cause this is the last stop. And all of you sobs who are getting on, get your butts in the train 'cause we're leaving."

The mother went in and told her son, "We don't use that kind of language in this house. Now, I want you to go to your room for two hours. When you come out, you may play with your train, but I want you to use nice language."

Two hours later, the son comes out of the bedroom and resumes playing with his train. Soon the train stopped and the mother heard her son say, "All passengers who are disembarking the train, please remember to take all of your belongings with you. We thank you for riding with us today and hope your trip was a pleasant one. We hope you will ride with us again soon."

"For those of you just boarding, we ask you to stow all of your hand luggage under your seat. Remember there is no smoking except in the club car. We hope you will have a pleasant and relaxing journey with us today."

"For those of you who are pissed off about the two hour delay, please contact the b@!#! in the kitchen."

#### **TEXAS LAW**

It is the law that when two trains meet each other at a railroad crossing, each shall come to a full stop, and neither shall proceed until the other has gone.



## THE FUNNY SIDE OF THE TRACKS

from <http://www.ironrails.com/humor.htm>

### THE MATH/COMPUTER SCIENCE CONVENTION

A math/computer science convention was being held. On the train to the convention, a bunch of math majors and a bunch of computer science majors were on the train. Each of the math majors had his/her train ticket. The group of computer science majors had only ONE ticket for all of them. The math majors started laughing and snickering. Then, one of the CS majors said "here comes the conductor" and then all of the CS majors went into the bathroom. The math majors were puzzled. The conductor came aboard and said "tickets please" and got tickets from all the math majors. He then went to the bathroom and knocked on the door and said "ticket please" and the CS majors stuck the ticket under the door. The conductor took it and then the CS majors came out of the bathroom a few minutes later. The math majors felt really stupid.

So, on the way back from the convention, the group of math majors had one ticket for the group. They started snickering at the CS majors, for the whole group had no tickets amongst them. Then, the CS major lookout said "Conductor coming!". All the CS majors went to the bathroom. All the math majors went to another bathroom. Then, before the conductor came on board, one of the CS majors left the bathroom, knocked on the other bathroom, and said "ticket please."

### AN ENGINEER, A TRAINMASTER AND A ROADMASTER...

An Engineer is said to be a man who know a great deal about very little and who goes along knowing more and more about less and less until finally he know practically everything about nothing.

A Trainmaster on the otherhand, is a man who knows a very little about a great deal and keeps knowing less and less about more and more until he knows practically nothing about everything.

A Roadmaster is a man who begins knowing practically everything about everything, but ends up knowing nothing about anything, due to his association with engineers and trainmasters.

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## PROGRAM MANIFESTS

### UPCOMING CHAPTER PROGRAMS

JANUARY – MONDAY, the 14<sup>TH</sup>, 7PM. Mr. Carey Slack will present a history of the Chapel Rail Cars. He will also show pictures of his cousin's recent Restoration of a Chapel Car.

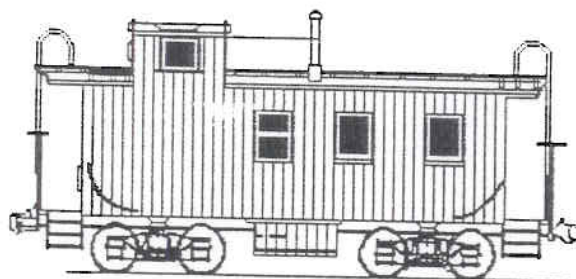
FEBRUARY – MONDAY, the 11<sup>TH</sup>, 7PM. Program to be announced.

### CURRENT AND UPCOMING FLORIDA EAST COAST EVENTS

MARCH – Train & Toy Show, Eau Gallie Civic Center, 1551 Highland Ave, Melbourne. 9am - 2pm. Admission - \$3.00. Children under 10 free with parent. (321) 453-4125.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS**  
**FLORIDA EAST COAST CHAPTER, NRHS**

President	Chuck Billings	(321) 783-7049
Vice-President	Jim Sleeth	(321) 267-5839
Treasurer	Bob Selle	(321) 632-0944
Recording Secretary	Harlan Hannah	(321) 636-7986
Historian	Jerry Sheehan	(321) 452-8649
Newsletter Editor	Jim Heidel	(321) 259-0641
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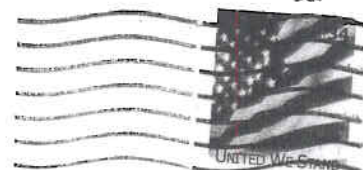


credit goes to Ken

found at [http://www.ribbonrail.com/art/images/wood\\_cab.gif](http://www.ribbonrail.com/art/images/wood_cab.gif)

Houghton Rail Images.

Florida East Coast Chapter, NRHS  
P.O. Box 2034  
Cocoa, FL 32923



*Bob Selle  
1013 Woodmere Pkwy  
Rockledge  
FL 32955*

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, January 14, 2002, 7:00 PM  
Central Brevard Library & Reference Center  
308 Forrest Avenue, Cocoa (321) 633-1792  
**PROGRAM:** Mr. Carey Slack - History of Chapel Rail Cars