

The *EAST COAST CHAMPION*

January 2004

2004 DUES PAYABLE NOW

Yes, it is that time of year again! The dues for 2004 came due January 1. The National dues remain this year at \$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 the transportation surcharge and envelope by paying Bob Selle at the meeting. Don't be left standing on the station platform.

PRESIDENT'S MEMO TO STOCKHOLDERS

First, let me wish all the members a Happy New Year.....then let us proceed to one of the major problems with this holiday in the railroad business.

Rule G as most of us know is the prohibition of the use of alcohol by those 'subject to duty.) I always thought it said 'while on duty.) but upon checking the Book of Rules, there it is ... 'subject to duty.' (More on this later).

As a fireman, I usually was concerned with an engineer being 'under the influence', but there were few of these. Most of the enginemen on the ERIE and DL&W stayed on the straight and narrow when occupying the cab of a locomotive. I never concerned myself with the trainmen, conductors and switchmen since these crewmembers dealt with their own problems unless it got dangerous to all of us. One of these little exceptions was a small yard in Binghamton, New York known as "YO Yard". This small yard on the East side of the city served as the beginning of the "S&U" or the Syracuse & Utica divisions of the former DL&W Railroad. Under the EL regime, it was still a world to itself and the 3 yard crews that worked there, one on each shift. It was next to the D&H's larger yard and indeed the S&U paralleled D&H as far as Chenango Bridge at which point the D&H went east to Oneonta & Albany while the DL&W lines headed upstate.

The best time to work at YO was the night yard job. Nobody bothered you and you got the work done making up pickups for the Syracuse & Utica freight trains as well as switching the Agway and several industries. Once in a while you'd have to couple onto a cut of cars from the D&H and deliver them to the ERIE yard uptown or to the former DL&W yard in Conklin on the other side of the river. I forget the name of the elderly engineer who owned the job, but I'll never forget the conductor. 'Art' had a 'little problem' with Rule G. At 11 PM he'd be sober and efficient but as the night progressed, both these characteristics would fall off. The work would still get done, but in a somewhat reckless manner and you really had to be aware of how long a cut of cars you had hold of and where the other cars were in a track you were switching. The other two crewmen were old hands who'd worked with this man for a long time and they made a good team putting the work out and getting ahead of the job now and then so you could take a little break here and there and usually being fast enough to get an early quit too. Still and all, you had to look out for 'Art'.

YO yard had double track mainline through it going to single track at the North end of the yard and the switch crew would utilize one or the other of the tracks to sort out long cuts of cars when the yard was full (assuming there were no pending trains to or from Syracuse or Utica). At about 2 AM one night we were shoving 2 boxcars North on the Southbound maintrack guided by 'Art' who was using a fusee instead of his lantern to guide us to a coupling with other cars occupying the track. As I peered into the darkness from the fireman's side of the old S-2 Alco, I saw what appeared to be a yellow dwarf signal and called "Yellow dwarf on the Southbound track!". The old engineer immediately replied, "There ain't no dwarf on the Southbound, kid.". By now we were pretty close to 'Art' and the engineer stepped over to my side of the cab and saw the problem. 'Art' had let the fusee drip down onto the leg of the oily, old coveralls he wore and had set his pantleg on fire which I mistook for a dwarf

signal. "Art, Art, you're on fire" yelled the engineer (since the pain had not yet penetrated the alcoholic haze of our conductor who was still waving the red fusee). Finally, it hit home! "Help me, Conway (one of the switchmen), I'm on fire!!!" Jack Conway helped smother the flames and 'Art' came through it OK since he had 2 layers of clothing and only the leg of the coveralls got burned up.

I wondered how and why the Company tolerated this behavior and a year or so later was told that 'Art's' father had been a switchman and had been shot and killed by a railroad policeman who made a practice of discouraging bums by shooting them during the Depression. He took 'Art's' father for a hobo and shot him off the side of a boxcar. Included in the settlement was a lifetime job for 'Art'. I had met one or two of the Company 'Bulls' whom I could believe capable of such a thing. Hey, when people nowadays talk about 'Police brutality' they have NO idea how brutal they could really be.....especially the railroad police.

Regards,
Walter E. Smith

MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM, December 8th 2003. President Walt Smith presided.

No guests were present.

Treasurer's Report – Bob Selle gave the Treasurer's report. George Gillette moved to approve the report with a second by Jim Reebel. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes – George Gillette moved to approve the minutes of the October meeting recorded by Chuck Billings in the absence of the Secretary. The motion was seconded and passed. Because no regular business meeting was held during the November Dinner Meeting no minutes were recorded.

Old Business – None

New Business –

- The annual election of officers was held. The slate of officers offered for 2003 were as follows:
President - Walter Smith
Vice-President - Hal Greenlee
Treasurer - Bob Selle
Secretary - Harlan Hannah
Historian - Jerry Sheehan
National Director - Tom Hammond

The meeting was opened for nominations from the floor. When no further nominations were offered, Chuck Billings moved that the nominations be closed. Chuck Beckner seconded the motion. Chuck Billings then moved to accept the slate of officers with a second from Dick Alkus. The motion passed unanimously.

- Bob Selle reminded the members that the 2004 dues were due. The new membership cards have not arrived.

Reports and Announcements –

- The secretary would like to remind members that he is collecting email addresses from those who have them. The email address will be used to quickly contact the chapter membership in regard to matters of chapter interest. Email the secretary at s2choochoo@earthlink.net.
- Chapter member Bill Robinson is still working for AMTRAK. Bill is now working out of Jacksonville on southbound trains.
- Chuck Billings offered his Kudos to Jim Heidel for his continuing service and excellent work editing the chapter newsletters. The membership offered Jim a round of applause.
- Chuck had recently visited the great Smokey Mountain railroad. There is a new Lionel dealer with a large Lionel museum near the depot.
- Fred Rose's train show is coming up December 13th.
- Proto Rails Model Railroad Convention will be Jan 9th through 11th at the Cocoa Beach Hilton. Based on the writers experiences at last years convention there is something here for everybody – modeler, rail fan, or historian. Contact Tom Hammond for info.
- The Volusia County Train Show will be January 24th at the Volusia county fair grounds.

Raffle: The raffle prize was the book *Famous Trains of the 20th Century* by Christopher Chant. The winner was Jim Reeber.

Program – The program was the video *Glory Machines, Classic Trains of the 30s-40s in the Midwest*.

STACK TALK

by Neil Moran

Hopefully, you spent a wonderful holiday season with family or friends. Maybe showing some of your films you took during the past year of trains and some scenic pictures also.

This is the time of year when there isn't an abundance of steam news to tell you about, but enough to make up a interesting column.

We now begin with some information out of British Columbia, Canada. Rumor has it that there may be a revival of passenger trains on British Columbia Rail, under an agreement signed last September with Whistler Rail Tours. VIA Rail Canada will enter into negotiations with B.C. Rail to possibly start service between North Vancouver and Whistler, B.C. The service is reported have a luxury train to serve a new development at Whistler's Nita Lake Lodge. It will also include the B.C. cruise industry. To get this project started Whistler Rail Tours must initiate negotiations with B.C. Rail which stopped passenger trains last fall. VIA has expressed strong interest in extending the proposed service to Prince George to re-create a loop through the Rockies from Vancouver via Prince George and Jasper. What maybe looked at in the future if all this works out is the possibility of a steam revival from North Vancouver to Whistler. Could this mean that the Royal Hudson might come out of forced retirement along with some other steam engines. MAYBE!! But don't hold your breath. Repairing the #2860 would be very expensive, running in the neighborhood of \$1 million Canadian. Then again would B.C. Rail consider overhauling the locomotive? Another thing to consider is the rolling stock. Where would the cars come from since VIA has sold off a lot of it's coaches? It certainly will be interesting to find out what develops as this project moves along.

Moving eastward to the Alberta Prairie Railroad in Stettler, Alberta. Bullet Nose Betty former C.N. #6060 Mountain Class recorded some surprising excursions out of Stettler last month to Big Valley. This was in conjunction with some Santa Claus specials that the Alberta Prairie Railroad operated. The railroad also participated in delivering food and toys to the needy. Really a great idea, and some wonderful public relations. No. 6060 had quite a year in 2003. Only once did she break down on a fan trip. However that incident was quickly attended to as to not delay the following trips. Other than that, there's not any more news to report on, so we'll head down to our country.

The California Western Railroad, better known as the "Super Skunk," has been operating at a deficit for quite some time. The #45 (1924 Baldwin 2-8-2) engine that does most of the runs has been plagued with various breakdowns which has cost the railroad a lot of money. Then too, there has been a noticeably amount of less

people coming to visit the railroad since 9/11. The railroad was even considering closing down for a period last year. Riding to the rescue on a white horse came a group of business men from a Fort Bragg organization and donated \$7,500 to get through last season. The didn't want to see the operation fold, it would have been bad for all the businesses to lose income that the railroad provides from tourism. Now this group has come up with an offer to buy the railroad for \$1.3 million dollars. They presently own the Pacific Cascade Railroad a common carrier operating in the area. As of this writing no deal has been struck between the parties. Looking at this deal as an outsider, this looks like a no-lose situation for the California Western. The operation travels through some of the most beautiful countryside of California. They leave from Fort Bragg on the Mendocino Coast 40 miles inland to Willits through redwood forests. A truly exceptional ride.

Union Pacific now grabs our spotlight. They have announced that their Challenger #3985 will be making an appearance at the 2004 Super Bowl in Houston, Texas, this month . At this writing it is not known where the steam special will depart from or what date.

If you can brave the cold weather, the Nevada Northern in Ely, Nevada is running a "Winter Photo Freight" which this writer has already booked passage on. Locomotive #93 an Alco product built in 1909 will power a special freight made up of ore and freight cars. This will be a two-day extravaganza, traveling on both the "High Line" and the "Keystone" sections of the railroad. It's almost a guarantee there will be snow on the ground, and maybe flying through the air. A great opportunity awaits you on this two-day affair. Be sure to bring some winter clothing including a set of your "long johns" preferable with the "trap door" in the back. No. 93, the engine that will power your freight, is a product of Alco (1909). This Consol along with the pike's other steam locomotive (#40 -- 10 wheeler) originally ran on the Nevada Northern in their days in the sun. However presently the ten wheeler is down for repairs and will not be available. (Curses)!! The trip runs February 7&8, 2004. Be on board for this one.

Venturing down to the Cumbres & Toltec, their story in 2003 was like watching a soap opera. Just about every month we were left hanging over a cliff waiting for the other shoe to drop ending operations. Fortunately there were angels watching over the railroad as locomotive #476 managed to get through the season without a major breakdown. For this we can only doff our caps to a most reliant crew of dedicated workers who kept the Mikado in running condition for the whole season. When you only have one locomotive to keep going over a 64 mile stretch of track each way four days a week, it is a testament to the crew who keep this Mikado running. This past season they hauled slightly more than 18,000 passengers through the mountains to Antonito and back to Chama, New Mexico. The railroad was once part of the Denver and Rio Grande Western, and is now jointly owned by the states of Colorado and New Mexico. Although shamefully the state of Colorado did not contribute one dime to it's operation which almost caused the demise of the railroad. Only through the supreme efforts of the "Friends of the C&T," that this pike was able to stay afloat. The railroad ran on a limited schedule this past year due to the limited funding and only the #476 was operable. Last year they took in about \$1.1 million in revenue. As we look ahead to this year, the C&T hopes to have three locomotives ready to use. They received a \$1 million dollar guarantee to improve the boilers of the engines to ensure they will meet federal standards. The C&T hopes to run at least five days a week this year. With such dedicated workers and volunteers I have no doubt that they will reach their goal.

The Georgetown Loop Railroad is our next stop, and this spectacular scenic railroad has recently completed a good year financially. When I was out there in early October, the last week-end of it's season they had to fire up two Shay engines to accommodate the huge crowd of people who came in to see the fall foliage show that was at it's peak. People came from as far as hundred's of miles to witness the aspens and cottonwoods in glorious colors. They even had to schedule an extra train that Saturday so that everyone who showed up could ride through the extraordinary mountain scenery. The two Shays #12 and #14 put on an spectacular show belching forth extreme black smoke as both the engines are oil fired. The crew in the cab not only poured out the smoke, but also gave a concert on the Nathan chime whistles of both sidewinders. The one thing I didn't see run was the recently restored #40 a 2-8-0 Baldwin (1920). She was sitting in the yards up at Silver Plume near the recently built engine house which was much needed to keep the locomotives stored inside from the very harsh winters. Fortunately I did see the #40 run when several of us went up to the White Pass & Yukon in 2001 to see her put on a great show on that pike. For those of you who have never seen the Georgetown Loop, you are missing an experience you'll not soon forget. The reconstructed Devil's Gate High Bridge is a marvel in itself. Then there's the majestic scenery that awaits you no matter what time of year you go. But the best time is late September or

early October when Mother Nature turns on the colors full blast. One can call 1-800-691-4386 or on the Web at www.georgetownloop.com.

Off now to Austin, Texas where the rebuilding of former Southern Pacific #768 continues. Just about every part of the 1916 steam locomotive has been rebuilt. The centerpiece of the overhaul is the replacement of it's "cylinder saddle," a massive ten ton assembly that is literally the heart of the engine. It was the metal flaws in the #768 existing cylinder saddle. The saddle includes the engine's steam cylinders and valve chambers. Plus holding up the front of the boiler, that necessitated removing the locomotive from active service in the first place. Back in July 1999, cracks which apparently started some time ago were discovered in the cylinder saddle and a decision was made to pull the #768 from service until the defect was fixed. After disassembly of the engine revealed more extensive cracks in the saddle. ASTA's staff then determined the unit could not be fixed, but had to be replaced. The group then spend several month's searching for a contractor who could handle the unique task of fabricating a replacement unit. Engineering and design of the new saddle is currently being performed by the Strasburg Railroad in Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, the #768's boiler and firebox have been removed from her frame and dispatched to the Holman Boiler Works in Dallas. The exact timeline of the engine's return to service would be no more than an educated guess. The most important point is that the work is steadily progressing and the task will be accomplished. Which is what we want to hear.

Pushing eastward and deep in the South, we next have some not so good news on the restoration of ex-Southern Pacific #745. As mentioned in last month's column the machine didn't run last month's as proposed. This update of her problems is due to cost overruns associated with her restoration. The boiler and firebox keep coming up with additional headaches and the progress is slow moving. Mr. Bruce Brown of the Louisiana State Tourism Association and Board President has stated that though deeply disappointed, LASTA was encouraged by the show of support from all involved. The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism wants the scheduled tour to happen. This is also echoed by each town the train was to stop. The Association has decided to rename the project "The Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Train." Sometime in the spring of 2004, the #745 will be ready to power the exhibit train around the state. They are also looking into the suggestion of being an "Ambassador Train" from Louisiana and travel through the Midwest to Kansas, and possibly continue on to Missouri for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration. This looks like a very ambitious plan put together for this year. No doubt they will need more than one engine to do all this mileage. Plus will other railroads consent to let steam run over their lines? Then again with the nation's needing a lot of publicity of good will and propaganda to try and make the people forget at least for a short time our predicament in Iraq, the railroads might see this as great publicity for them and for our nation. This will be interesting to watch.

Moving north to the Cass Scenic Railroad has already made new plans for this year. There will be a new train schedule plus new options for patrons. For example, folks will be able to ride the train to the old logging town of Spruce, rent a caboose for a day trip or stay overnight atop the mountain. Possibly even to rent a mountaintop cabin and arrive by train. For instance on Wednesday, also known as Wilderness Day, the train will haul you and your bicycle, camping gear etc. to the top, and then pick you up another day, providing the bears don't eat you (just kidding). Down at Cass itself, there are more operating geared locomotives than anywhere else. This year the railroad will have Shays #2, 5, 11 in service. Shay #4 is undergoing boiler repair in the shop. It's projected return to service will be in early 2004. Shay #6 will be stripped down this month and should be returning to service also in the spring of this year. Shay #7 still resides in the deadline, stripped for parts. As for their Heisler #6 which returned to service back last October, just a little tweaking here and there should have her shining the rails this year too. For more information call 1-800-225-5982.

A little news from the Ohio Central Railroad. Jerry Jacobson has acquired another steam locomotive #33, a 2-8-0 from the Hocking Valley Railroad. Also, the Ohio Central Steam Department may host a winter photo special this month or in February.

One last item, if your planning to go down to the Western Maryland Railroad to ride or chase the #734 be advised that the organization that will be installing a fence close to certain parts of the railroad. They have already begun putting in fence posts along the right of way. This means the very famous Helmstetter's Curve will have the horrible fencing alongside of it quite soon. Curses -- again!!

It's time to thank the following people for their input in this month's column. John Biehn and Don Clark (Dayton Railroad Chapter), Steve Barry (*Railfan & Railroad Magazine*), Mike Eagleson (Glen Ridge, N.J.), and your most obedient servant in steam.

Happy New Year, everybody!! UNTIL OUR TRACKS CROSS AGAIN.

INTERESTING RAIL NEWS

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

Russia's longest railway tunnel to enter service

IRKUTSK, Russia – The Severomuisk tunnel on the Baikal Amur Mainline (BAM) railway, said to be the longest tunnel in Russia, was put into operation on December 1, 2003, according to an article in Tass. A State commission had signed a deed of acceptance in Severomuisk Township, 300 km east of Lake Baikal, on November 30.

The Severomuisk tunnel, which has an overall length of 10 miles, has been under construction since the late 1970's. It runs through a mountain range at a depth of almost 1300 feet. The first work train traveled through the tunnel two years ago. Since then, engineers have completed systems for water takeoff, ventilation, communications, and seismic protection. Regular train traffic is scheduled to begin December 4.

Topeka wins, West Burlington loses in BNSF shop consolidation

TOPEKA, Kans. – The battle is over. Yesterday, Burlington Northern Santa Fe announced it will consolidate all locomotive overhaul work at its Topeka, Kans. Locomotive Shop effective immediately. As a result, BNSF notified West Burlington (Iowa) Locomotive Shop employees that 89 of the 133 union-represented jobs there will be abolished, effective no sooner than March 5, 2004. Positions at Topeka will be available for all affected West Burlington employees. Topeka is a former Santa Fe shop, West Burlington a former Burlington Route (and Burlington Northern) facility.

Ninety calendar days' notice of the transfer of work is required under conditions imposed by the Surface Transportation Board in approving the BNSF merger in 1995. Between now and March 5, 2004, the earliest date at which the work can be transferred, BNSF will negotiate implementing agreements with the unions representing employees affected by the transfer of work. According to BNSF, the amount of overhaul, heavy repair, and related work has declined to the point where two shops are no longer required.

Florida Tri-Rail offering N scale version of its car fleet

MIAMI, Fla. – In an unusual way to promote its commuter rail service, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Tri-Rail is selling N scale models of its Bombardier-built coach and cab cars decked out in the line's swaying palm tree paint scheme set against a blue sky with white clouds.

Order forms are available at Tri-Rail stations or by writing to Tri-Rail Marketing, 800 NW 33rd Street, Suite 100, Pompano Beach, FL 33064. An order form can also be found at www.tri-rail.com. Orders must be received by December 12 in order to ensure delivery by December 24.

CN and BC Rail invite proposals for operation of third-party passenger tourist trains

VANCOUVER, British Columbia – Canadian National and BC Rail Friday invited proposals from qualified parties to operate third-party passenger tourist trains over BCR's system between North Vancouver and Prince George, and on CN's line between Prince Rupert, Prince George, and Jasper, Alta. All communications and/or questions and/or requests for clarification regarding the RFP must be directed to Paul Ouimet, Senior Vice-President – Business and Strategic Planning, InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. at (604) 717-1803.

CN, which is taking over BCR, hosts VIA Rail Canada passenger trains on the Jasper-Prince George-Prince Rupert line, and privately operated trains, as well as VIA Rail trains, on its Vancouver-Jasper main line. BCR operated its own passenger trains on its North Vancouver-Prince George route.

Link Museum to open next month

ROANOKE, Va. - A museum devoted to the work of the late O. Winston Link, one of the 20th century's most acclaimed photographers for his dramatically lit black-and-white photographs of trains and railroad towns, will open in the newly renovated Norfolk & Western Railway passenger station in downtown Roanoke in January.

The 15,000-square-foot museum will house the largest collection of Link's work, including 190 signed prints, 85 estate prints, and all 2400 of Link's negatives. The collection also is expected to include recently recovered stolen prints, some of which have never been seen by the public. The prints were recently recovered after they appeared on an Internet auction site. In addition to Link's work, the museum will exhibit his photographic equipment, prints not on formal display, and N&W Railway artifacts. A virtual rail experience will allow visitors to "take a trip" to the towns he photographed.

Wisconsin DOT reallocates \$1.2 million for Racine station

MADISON, Wis. - The state Department of Transportation says it has reallocated \$1.2 million in federal funds for renovating Racine's former Chicago & North Western station for a proposed commuter rail line between Chicago and Milwaukee, according to an Associated Press report. The city of Racine had been counting on the \$1.2 million as part of a \$6 million project to create a downtown transit center for its Belle Urban System buses and possibly Metra commuter trains. As part of that project, the city bought the old C&NW depot and is renovating it. The commuter-train proposal would extend the present Chicago-Kenosha Metra service north through Racine and several other communities to Milwaukee, on track owned by Union Pacific.

Amtrak Palmetto strikes automobile in Florida

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Amtrak train 90, the northbound Palmetto, struck an automobile at a grade crossing just north of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. at 4:25 p.m. yesterday, killing the driver. No one on the train was injured. The train, consisting of GE P42 122 and six cars, was terminated and reversed to Ft. Lauderdale to allow passengers to be bused to Jacksonville. Corresponding train 89 was terminated at Jacksonville to haul passengers north, and 89's passengers for points south to Miami were bused.

CSX crew arrested for going to beans while their train blocked grade crossing

WEST NYACK, N.Y. - Two CSX employees who left their southbound Hudson River Line train unattended to eat breakfast, while it was blocking a grade crossing, were arrested Monday morning by an officer of the Clarkstown, N.Y. police department. They were charged with obstructing a railroad crossing and obstructing governmental administration, second degree.

According to police department spokesman Sgt. Harry Baumann, the men, Reginald Henderson of Edison, N.J. and Arthur King of Dumont, N.J., were found at the West Nyack Deli. When approached by the officer, they seemed unconcerned about the blocked grade crossing on Pineview Road, a dead-end with no other way in or out for 20 single-family homes. "They were not even forthcoming on identifying themselves," said Baumann. The men were transported to police headquarters and arraigned at 4 p.m. that afternoon. They were released on their own recognizance. According to city documents, CSX sent a relief crew to remove the train at 9:45 a.m.

"We certainly regret any inconvenience experienced by the community as a result of the blockage," said CSX spokesman Bob Sullivan. "We very much appreciate the work law of enforcement agencies throughout our system and try to cooperate with them in every way possible. As to the events of Monday, we are in the process of reviewing what occurred, talking to police, talking to the crew, reviewing records, and will take whatever internal actions are appropriate." According to Sullivan, the train was stopped due to track maintenance farther down the line. West Nyack is 20 miles north of New York City on the west side of the Hudson River.

Transcontinental school bus movement completed on prototype freight cars

LOS ANGELES, Calif. - Pacific Harbor Line (PHL) announced yesterday the completion of the first transcontinental movement of alternative-fuel Thomas Built school buses in prototypes of a new unilevel freight car built by TTX Corp. and Trinity Industries. Four buses were driven from the Thomas Built Buses factory in High Point, N.C. to Norfolk Southern's vehicle loading facility at Winston-Salem, N.C., where they were loaded into the cars and routed through a Union Pacific interchange in Kansas City, Mo. The buses were off-loaded at Wilmington, Calif., for delivery to BusWest in Whittier, Calif. and eventual delivery to their customer First Student, Inc.

The movement resulted from discussions with PHL, BusWest, and Union Pacific concerning the difficulty of moving full-size alternative fuel buses from one side of the country to the other. Limited availability of fuels makes driving the buses across country difficult, and their size made transportation by truck too expensive. Since the transportation plan involved a number of companies, PHL joined with Progressive Rail, Inc. of Lakeville, Minn. to coordinate arrangements, provide insurance services, and present a single invoice to BusWest. Progressive Rails' Rail Retrievers Logistics division specializes in such movements involving multiple vendors.

Model trains to operate at Union Pacific Museum

OMAHA, Nebr. - The Omaha N-Trak model railroad club will display and operate its traveling N-Scale train layout at the Union Pacific Museum on Friday, Dec. 19, and Saturday, Dec. 20. The display will feature locomotives and rail cars from Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads, with as many as three trains running simultaneously. The Union Pacific Railroad Museum, at 200 Pearl Street in Council Bluffs, is a collaborative effort between the City of Council Bluffs, Friends of the Union Pacific Museum and Union Pacific. It is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is free.

B&O Railroad Museum receives grant

BALTIMORE, Md. - The B&O Railroad Museum, undergoing reconstruction from the heavy damage caused by February 2002's record snowstorm, was awarded a \$300,000 Community Legacy grant yesterday in Annapolis, according to a story in the *Baltimore Sun*. The grant - one of the largest announced at a State House ceremony - will be used to build a restoration facility for the repair of historic trains damaged when the museum's roundhouse roof collapsed from the heavy snow. Work on the 27,000-square-foot facility, which will cost about \$5 million to construct, could start as early as mid-spring. The Museum remains closed during reconstruction.

New Georgia Power coal train completes first run

FORT WORTH, Texas - The first low-sulfur coal train under a new Burlington Northern Santa Fe contract with Georgia Power arrived in Juliette, Ga., today, according to the railroad. The 117-car train, the CJRMMHS-901, was loaded last week at the Jacob's Ranch mine in Wyoming's Powder River Basin and moved via Alliance and Lincoln, Nebr., Kansas City, and Springfield, Mo., arriving in Memphis, Tenn., last Monday where it was interchanged to Norfolk Southern for its final destination at the Robert W. Scherer power plant 40 miles north of Macon. While the contract does not officially begin until Jan. 1, this move will help to transition the service. Eventually, this new business will add about six coal trains daily - loaded and empty - to BNSF's traffic mix. Annually, BNSF/NS will move 13 million tons of Powder River Basin coal to Georgia Power.

Houston celebrates 2004 by opening light-rail line

HOUSTON, Texas - Houston's 7.5-mile MetroRail light-rail line will make its inaugural run January 1 with festivities, including four days of free rides from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. on January 1 and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on January 2nd through 4th. Service will officially begin after Mayor Lee P. Brown and members of the Metro board of directors cut the ceremonial ribbon at 10 a.m. at the Fannin South Station. The street-level MetroRail trains will stop at 16 stations from downtown Houston southwest to Reliant Park near Interstate 610.

Beginning Monday, January 5, MetroRail will begin collecting fares of \$1 per person. Service will be available from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. through January 25. Transfers to and from local buses will be free. Permanent hours of operation begin Monday, January 26 from 4:20 a.m. to 1 a.m., Monday through Friday; 5:25 a.m. to 1:30 a.m. Saturdays; and 5:25 a.m. to 1 a.m. Sundays. Houston thus becomes the 20th U.S. metro area with an urban light-rail transit system. (In addition, there are a few more with small vintage trolley operations, plus others with "heritage" trolleys geared for tourists).

UP Challenger to make month-long sojourn to Super Bowl

OMAHA, Nebr. - Union Pacific's 4-6-6-4 3985 will make a nine-state, 3500-mile tour beginning January 12 from its home in Cheyenne, Wyo., to Houston, Texas, arriving on January 23, when it will go on public display during Super Bowl XXXVIII activities. No public riders are planned, but en route, the locomotive will be on display in Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo., and Pine Bluff and North Little Rock, Ark. The 3985 will leave Houston February 3 and return to Cheyenne February 12. The 3985 was built in 1943 for fast freight service. It was retired in 1959 and later put on display by the Cheyenne depot. In 1981, it was restored to running condition by UP employee volunteers for special service. For the complete month-long schedule and a route map, go to the Union Pacific website.

Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 261 to be part of Grand Excursion 2004

SAINT PAUL, Minn. - Grand Excursion 2004 announced plans for train excursions to complement the Grand Flotilla, which will travel from Chicago to Rock Island, Ill., and then from the Quad Cities of Illinois and Iowa up the Mississippi River to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/Saint Paul from June 25 to July 5. The original Grand Excursion of 1854 was a steamboat expedition celebrating the first railroad connection to the upper Mississippi.

To commemorate the original event, former Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 261 has been enlisted to carry passengers from Chicago to Rock Island, Ill., on June 25. The following day, passengers will have the option of boarding the vessels in Bettendorf, Iowa, for harbor cruises, port-to-port cruises headed up river, or continue on various rail excursions along the flotilla route. The train trips will offer two basic types of excursions: circle tours that originate in Rock Island the weekend of June 26-27 and in Saint Paul, Minn., the weekend of July 2-4; or point-to-point rail excursions that follow the riverbanks for 400 miles.

Train packages will be available by Jan. 30. The circle tours originating in Rock Island on June 26-27 offer trips visiting Clinton, Iowa; Savanna, Ill., and Geneseo Ill.; while the circle tours originating in the Twin Cities July 2-4 offer options touring Trempealeau and La Crosse, Wis.; Winona and Red Wing, Minn.; as well as various shuttle rides from both Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

For those wishing to travel up river by rail, point-to-point rail excursions will be offered from Davenport to Dubuque, Iowa, on June 26; from Dubuque to La Crosse, Wis., on June 29; and continuing from La Crosse to Saint Paul, Minn., on June 30. The planned rail route will include operating over CP Rail; Burlington Northern Santa Fe; the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern, and the Iowa Interstate. For more information on the Grand Excursion, visit its Web site. Information on the 261 trips will be available after Jan. 30. Amtrak operates the trains under a contract with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

PROGRAM MANIFESTS

UPCOMING CHAPTER PROGRAMS & EVENTS

JANUARY – MONDAY the 12TH, 7PM – Harlan Hannah will show the video *Steam over Tennessee Pass – Train Ride Special*.

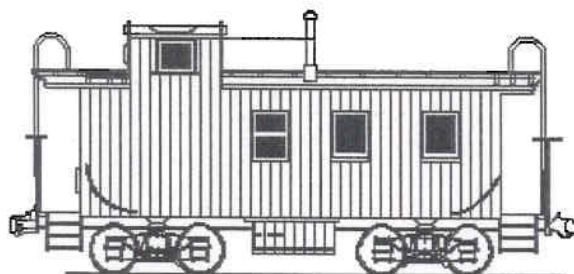
FEBRUARY – MONDAY the 9TH, 7PM – To be announced.

CURRENT & UPCOMING FLORIDA EAST COAST EVENTS

MARCH – SATURDAY the 6TH, 9am - 2pm. Train & Toy Show, Azan Shrine Center, 1591 West Eau Gallie Blvd., Melbourne. Admission - \$4.00. Children under 10 free with parent. (321) 453-4125 or (321) 453-7031.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS
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http://www.ribbonrail.com/art/images/wood_cab.gif

**Florida East Coast Chapter, NRHS
P.O. Box 2034
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NEXT MEETING: Monday, January 12, 7:00 p.m.

Central Brevard Library & Reference Center
308 Forrest Avenue, Cocoa (321) 633-1792

PROGRAM: Harlan Hannah will show
the video *Steam over Tennessee Pass*
– *Train Ride Special*.