

Next Meeting:

April 2, 2004

- See program notice below. April 10, 2004
- West Carrollton Civic Center
- Meeting time 7:00 PM

## ***Program Notice....***

Cliff Scholes will be presenting vintage color slides from the late steam and early diesel era. Cliff is a recent new member of MVR and has a great collection of older slides from both his and other photographers' efforts.

Steve Fuchs

## ***CSX News....***

### **New EMD Locos Ordered ...**

CSX Transportation has placed orders for two models of locomotives from EMD. Fifty-five SD70MACs will be acquired to become the final supplement to CSX's current SD70MAC fleet. These units will be assigned to the 4776-4830 numbering series. CSX will also acquire 20 of the SD70MAC's successor, the SD70ACe, and number them in the 4831-4850 series. The SD70ACe was first introduced by EMD last summer and the model is designed to surpass the EPA's new emissions standards that become effective in 2005. The delivery schedule for both models was being finalized at press time.

With new power from previous orders on the property, CSX has returned some of its fleet of leased locomotives to the lessors. Units returned include 49 CEFX SD40-2s and 47 LLPX SD40-2s. This left 47 CEFX SD40-2s still on the railroad going into March. However, reports indicated that these units would be returned to the lessor by March or April, with several of this batch bound for the UP.

### **Operations Update ...**

CSX commenced operations of double-stack

service into Philadelphia in February with the inauguration of trains Q190/Q191 between South Kearny, NJ and Philadelphia's Greenwich Yard. Since CSX's own route into the City of Brotherly Love has clearance issues, these trains utilized trackage rights over NS's Morrisville Line to Norristown, PA, where a connection to NS's Harrisburg Line was made to reach Philadelphia. As mentioned in an earlier column, CSX's primary route into the Philadelphia from the west, the former B&O Philadelphia Subdivision between Baltimore and Philadelphia, has low clearances through the Howard Street Tunnel in downtown Baltimore that prohibit the operation of double stacked containers.

Q566 between Cincinnati and Lima, OH, has been abolished as part of the tweaking of the blockings on trains operating over the Toledo Subdivision between Toledo, Willard and Cincinnati.

### **B&O Museum Reopening ...**

Despite a fire that damaged a small section of the roof, the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore is planning on a grand re-opening on November 13, 2004, 634 after two feet of snow collapsed a segment of the roof and forced the museum to close. The refurbished museum will feature a new entrance, exhibition gallery and living history center.

The circular roundhouse, a 45,000-square-foot, 120 year-old national landmark, is being reconstructed to look the way it originally did, but with structural upgrades. A restoration shop is also being built so the museum can repair locomotives damaged by the roof's collapse.

The entire project will cost nearly \$30 million and that two-thirds will be paid by insurance. The museum's fund-raising efforts are halfway to meeting their goal, with \$5.1 million to go to help cover the work.

The museum, which had been trying to boost its image and customer appeal before the collapse, also lost a huge tourism opportunity because of the damage. The museum was to have played host last summer to the Fair of the Iron Horse, an international railroading festival. The event was expected to boost the museum back to national prominence but it had to be canceled.

### **Penn Central Flashback ...**

One day during February, Selkirk to Boston intermodal train Q168 departed Selkirk on time and was making good time over the Berkshire Subdivision when someone figured out the train's UPS consist was billed to North Bergen, NJ, not to points east of West Springfield, MA. The power ran around the train at West Springfield and then again at Selkirk, before heading down the River Line to arrive at North Bergen several hours late. A similar "rescue" had to be performed on the Boston section that was headed for North Bergen.

A communiqué from Albany Division management following the misrouting exhorted all employees to pay close attention to serving the needs of all customers, but especially UPS since that business is now at risk of being lost. This mix-up was just the latest in a series of troubles at Selkirk in recent months, including many weather related problems and several work slow-downs by frustrated yard crews. One official from a connecting Northeastern railroad told a major paper customer that CSX's service had even fallen below that of the Penn Central's final days!

### **NS News...**

#### **Operations ...**

Intermodal train #24R has traditionally operated between Columbus and Maple Heights, OH, making a connection with Norfolk-bound #228 for eastern destinations. This train has now been extended to terminate at Harrisburg, PA, where it now makes connections for the East Coast. The train still originates on Tuesdays and Thursdays, departing Columbus at 18:00, Maple Heights (Cleveland) at 05:00, Conway, PA at 08:25, and arriving Harrisburg at 16:45.

NS has abolished the Macon-Birmingham ID crew district begun last year for trains #334 (Memphis, TN-Macon, GA) and #335 (Macon-Sheffield, AL). Crews were frequently unable to cover the distance in 12 hours, thus both trains are once again changing crews in Columbus, GA.

Piedmont Division trains #341 (Alexandria-Montview Yard/Lynchburg, VA) and counterpart #342 are now symbolized as locals P97 and P98. They still perform essentially the same work and carry the same traffic mix. However, the change better reflects their function as long-distance locals.

NS has also revised numbers on its coal trains destined to Mirant Energy (former PEPCo) facilities in the Washington, DC region. For example, a recent train from Bluefield to Alexandria, VA ran as #88M. A recent Chalk Point train was designated as #84R from Bluefield to Roanoke, VA, and then as #86R from Roanoke to the CSX interchange at Benning Yard. In recent years, Alexandria coal trains typically ran as #896, and the Chalk Point, MD trains ran as #89A. Some other new numbers have been heard on these trains, but not yet confirmed.

NS has established the following unit grain train schedules: #54K (Bluffton, IN-Chester, SC via Bellevue, OH and Altavista, VA); #55N (Fostoria, OH-Loudon, TN via Columbus, OH); #84N (Sheffield, AL-Valdosta, GA via Columbus, GA); #84Q (Fostoria, OH-Greensboro, NC via Bellevue and Altavista); and #88Q (Chicago, IL-Statesville, NC via Knoxville, TN). The following coal trains have also been added: #84G (Elmore, WV-Brickhaven, NC via Altavista); #86J (Portsmouth-Conneaut, OH); and #88K (Portsmouth, OH-Indian River, DE).

On February 17, NS loaded a second #668 Mexican coal train at Shade Creek, PA routed to the BNSF at New Orleans via Cincinnati and Birmingham. This follows the initial run during the first week of February as reported in last month's column. BNSF handles this new move to the Ferro-Mex interchange at Eagle Pass, TX for furtherance to the consignee at Ciudad Frontera.

Wheeling & Lake Erie power continues to appear on Virginia Division grain trains. A colorful example was W&LE train #416 (New Washington, OH-Hagerstown, MD/NS) received at Hagerstown on February 27. The 47-car train made its run down the Shenandoah Valley route as NS #53A (Hagerstown, MD/W&LE-Harrisonburg, VA) behind W&LE-6381/6382/3067 (2 SD40-2s/SD40-3). The 6381 still had its EMD maroon and gray scheme, the 6382 was in EMD blue and white, and only the 3067 was in full Wheeling black and orange.

### **Triple Crown and RailRunner ...**

During the first quarter of 2004, traffic on RoadRailer trains #251 (Sandusky, OH-Jacksonville, FL) and #264 (Jacksonville-Chicago) was especially strong. NS had been able to absorb most of its additional business in recent years by employing longer train lengths. However, the latest surge on this Triple Crown route has increasingly resulted in second sections of both trains, especially on weekends. There is speculation that if traffic levels continue at such levels, a second pair of trains will be added north of Atlanta's East Point terminal.

One event that might trigger the addition of new trains in this corridor is the inception of RailRunner service. RailRunner, Inc. is a Georgia based company that has spent years developing a RoadRailer-style truck bogie that is designed to handle both domestic and ocean containers. The company's technology has three components: A specially designed RailRunner container chassis with identical coupling adapters at the front and rear; an intermediate rail vehicle bogie that supports and connects two RailRunner chassis and provides an air-suspension ride; and a transition unit which connects the first RailRunner chassis to the back of a train or locomotive.

In the spring of 2002, NS, Triple Crown and RailRunner conducted successful tests runs of this equipment on the rear of RoadRailer trains between East Point, GA and Fort Wayne, IN. Commercial service between Fort Wayne and Jacksonville, FL is expected to begin as soon as the FRA grants a waiver for NS to operate the RailRunner equipment on the rear of its Triple Crown trains. The companies involved hope that they can serve a niche market for international traffic that currently moves over the road. For example, they are targeting manufactured products moving from the Fort Wayne area destined to the Caribbean. RailRunner has a goal of handling 30 containers a week by late 2004.

### Shorts ...

NS DASH 9-40CW 8986 is now stenciled with the name "City of Bluefield" ... Work continues on the trestle that carries NS' Birmingham, AL-Columbus, GA route over the Birmingham-Atlanta mainline at Leeds, AL. Crews are replacing the wooden piling with steel beams. As of March, they had completed roughly 300 feet on the east end of the trestle ... NS recently opened a new Thoroughbred Bulk Transfer terminal in Greer, SC. Transplastics will operate the terminal, which features 50 car spots with separate tracks for food stuffs, and other dry and liquid bulk

products. NS will market the new terminal for handling construction materials and food-grade products in the Spartanburg area ... During February, heavy traffic volume was resulting in tight power supply at terminals across the northern part of NS. At one point, Bellevue had ten trains held for power and nearly as many trains were delayed at Elkhart, Buckeye, and Conway. By March, the situation had reportedly improved noticeably ... With NS' cooperation, the town of Orange, VA is planning to renovate its old Railroad Avenue business district. The project involves reinstalling the sidewalk that once paralleled the former Southern's Washington-Atlanta mainline through town, and adding extensive landscaping and a four-foot wrought-iron fence ... Amtrak recently donated retired F40PH 307 to the North Carolina Transportation Museum at the former Southern shops in Spencer, NC. NS donated transportation of the locomotive from Cincinnati to Spencer via Chattanooga.

### *Dues Are Due.....*

Please check your address label.....

If it shows a '04 you are now paid up, if not please send your dues to....

MVR Dues  
4103 Elliot Ave  
Dayton, OH 45410-3420

Or see me at the meeting....

Ace....



Conrail Inspection Train With Conrail #4022, Passing Tates Point Interlocking Tower, Spring 1984. Photo By Aubrey "Ace" Flock

The Miami Valley Railfans is a loosely knit group of railfans that meet to discuss, exchange views and show slides and movies about railroads, We meet between the months of November and July, usually the second Saturday, at The West Carrollton Civic Center. Anyone interested is surely welcome!

**Dues are \$10 per Calendar Year**

**MVR Web Site [www.qsl.net/n8qnp/mvrpage.htm](http://www.qsl.net/n8qnp/mvrpage.htm)**

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