

Next Meeting:

February 6, 2004

- See program notice below. February 14, 2004
- West Carrollton Civic Center
- Meeting time 7:00 PM

Program Notice....

The program for this month's meeting is a theme night: "Luckiest shot I ever took."

Each person who participates can share up to one Kodak/Fuji box plus their stories about the luckiest photos they've taken (hopefully, more good than bad!). Please feel free to bring additional material to share in case time allows after the main program.

Steve Fuchs

CSX News...

Virginia Derailment ...

The derailment of Q410-16 (Richmond to Philadelphia freight) in Alexandria, VA on December 18 played havoc with passenger and commuter service operating south of Washington D.C. The train derailed 19 cars, which blocked both main tracks of this busy route.

The derailment forced Amtrak to cancel most of its service south of Washington, D. C. except for the Auto Train, which originates at Lorton, Va., south of the derailment site. Passengers traveling on northbound trains headed for Washington were bused around the derailment. All Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter operations were also canceled. Passenger service was completely restored by the morning of December 19.

Markers ...

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) will rehabilitate about 16 miles of track on the former L&N "Old Line" between Etowah and Copper Hill, TN. The work will be completed by February as TVA needs to use the

line to move some large parts to its Appalachia Power Plant ... There are still a pair locomotives roaming the system in CSX predecessor paint other than Conrail. SD40 4601 is still in Seaboard System paint while SD40 4617 still wears C&O Enchantment Blue. The short and long hoods of both engines are yellow with the blue CSX logo ... A historical segment of the old Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton original main line in Cincinnati was removed from service during December. This mile and a half segment of railroad serves only one customer who receives car on a sporadic basis. Track conditions require repairs, which CSX is not willing to perform for such a low yield in business ... CSX derailed a dozen cars of coal at the north switch of Latham siding in Hopkinsville, KY on the Henderson Subdivision on December 26. The busy line between Nashville, Evansville and Chicago was reopened by the afternoon of December 27. Some traffic detoured around the accident via Louisville .. 3.5 inches of rain fell on Central and Southern Ohio over a 36 hour period on January 3 and 4 resulting in flooding which closed the Central Ohio Subdivision between Newark and Cambridge, Ohio. The Northern Subdivision (Russell, KY to Columbus, OH) and the Columbus Subdivision between Columbus and Delaware, OH, were under a high water alert, which resulted in slow orders and frequent track inspections ... CSX is among the railroads that managed to win the USX ore contract into the Edger Thompson mill near Pittsburgh. The DM&IR and BNSF handle the trains from Minnesota to the CSX at Chicago. Last year, CN and NS handled this season business that results from the winter closing of the Great Lakes shipping lanes.

NY Crossing Confrontation ...

The crew of train Q418 (Camden/Pavonia Yard to Selkirk) was arrested in West Nyack NY for illegally blocking a grade crossing on

December 8. According to Clarkstown police, a train (Q418) was sitting unoccupied blocking the Pineview Road crossing, which prevented any emergency vehicles or cars from getting to any of the 20 single-family houses located on the dead-end street. The Clarkstown officer investigating found the two crew members eating breakfast at the West Nyack Deli, which is near the crossing, and ordered them to move to the train. The officer arrested the two engineers because they didn't listen to him and were unconcerned about blocking the road. The two CSX employees were charged with obstructing a railroad crossing, a violation of railroad law, and second-degree obstructing governmental administration, a misdemeanor.

Q418 had been put into the siding at Nyack (CP-22) on the River Line Subdivision to clear for Q271, a Newark, NJ to Buffalo rack train. The crew admits to blocking the crossing but that they claim when they tried to re-board the train to move it, their path was blocked by the Clarkstown Police. Ultimately, the crew spent about 6 hours in jail.

NS News...

New Coke Plant....

A new coke plant will reportedly be built by Sun Coke Company at Haverhill, Ohio, about halfway between Ironton and New Boston. The plant is expected to receive 800,000 tons of coal a year and ship 50,000 tons of coke to International Steel Group steel plants in East Chicago, Cleveland, and Sparrows Point MD. Heavy industry still persists along this section of the Ohio river in both Ohio and Kentucky.

Toledo Tower Closed....

The NS closed ex-W&LE Ironville Tower in Toledo on Jan 19. The interlocking is now controlled by Toledo Terminal train dispatcher in Dearborn, MI. This info from the Conrail Tech Society email.

New Coal Trains Added To New Castle District....

In the past few weeks NS has started running 2 Northbound coal trains on the New Castle District. NS 776 operates from Ensley, Alabama to the IHB's Gibson Yard. NS 86Z operates from Mobile, Alabama to the EJ&E at Van Loon. Trains have been appearing a few times a week. From the Fort Wayne Railfan web site.

More DASH 9s

Norfolk Southern plans to spend \$810 million in 2004 for capital improvements, including \$517 million for roadway projects and \$258 million for equipment. Included in the equipment budget are 100 new DASH 9-40CWs from General Electric. The tentative delivery schedule calls for 75 units to be built and delivered between March and May. The remaining 25 units will be delivered during the fall. NS had considered ordering an additional group of SD70Ms from EMD, but chose not to follow through with an order.

NS also plans to lease 15 prototype Evolution Series (tm) locomotives from General Electric. Delivery of these units will start sometime in March or April. The Evolution Series(tm) locomotives feature new 12-cylinder GEVO(tm) diesel engines that produce 4,400 horsepower, the same as existing 16-cylinder engines on GE locomotives, while emitting 40% fewer pollutants and enhancing fuel efficiency. This new prime mover will also allow railroads to meet the EPA's more stringent Tier II emission standards required in 2005. UP and BNSF have already been testing the AC versions of these locomotives, but the NS units will feature DC traction motors. They will also be painted in the NS scheme.

Power Leasing ...

As it waits delivery of its latest order for new DASH 9 locomotives, NS has elected to lease six-axle EMD locomotives in order to help support healthy traffic volumes. Helm Leasing is providing most of these units, including the following HLCX units: one SD40-2CLC (6077), three SD40-2s (6228, 7183, 8151), and 26 SD40M-2s (9001, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9008, 9012, 9013, 9015, 9016, 9017, 9018, 9019, 9020, 9023, 9025, 9026, 9032, 9033, 9035, 9037, 9038, 9041, 9042, 9044, 9046, 9047). The SD40M-2s wear a variety of Helm, M-K and MPI markings.

Following a joint inspection by Montana Rail Link and NS officials in Livingston, MT on December 22, NS took lease of the following ten MRL units: one SDP40-2XR (290), four SD45-2s (302, 307, 317, 351), and five SD45s (344, 359, 360, 375, 377). Two noteworthy units include the 290, which features the Montana Centennial logo, and the 317, a "flared" SD45 upgraded to SD45-2 standards. As of mid-January, NS was interested in leasing an additional 10 units from the MRL. However, this was not expected to happen unless BNSF returned some of the 40 MRL units they have had on indefinite lease. Making matters confusing to the trackside observer (and probably even NS' operating team!) is BNSF's leased MRL

power is coming on to the NS system as run-through power.

Conemaugh Derailment ...

At 05:30 on Monday, January 5, NS experienced a major derailment on its Conemaugh Line east of Pittsburgh, PA. The power and 16 cars of eastbound grain train #54W-03 derailed between CP-Apollo and Truxall, PA. The crew escaped without serious injuries, but one of the locomotives slid into the Kiskiminetas River and spilled diesel fuel. The units involved were the 9371/8311/6596 (DASH 9-40CW/DASH 8-40C/SD60).

Crews spent all of Monday and much of Tuesday containing the fuel spill and also cleaning up the spilled corn. Making the effort more difficult was the high water that resulted after several days of heavy rain. In fact, the rain and saturated roadbed were high on the list of potential causes of the derailment. This particular #54W originated in Bellevue, OH with 45 grain loads on the head end and 62 cars of mixed freight on the rear. NS crews had the route back in service by Wednesday.

Hoosier News ...

During December, NS completed improvements at Hugo interlocking, located on the Huntington District (former Wabash main) in Fort Wayne, IN. Previously, there was a single-track bottleneck on the Huntington District between the west end of double-track and the connection with the New Castle District mainline towards Cincinnati. Under the new arrangement, the connection track has been extended east and tied into the double-track. This will allow simultaneous movements of trains on the New Castle connection track and the Huntington District main towards Peru. A set of universal crossovers was also placed in service.

Last month, we noted that the new connection track was in place at Red Key, IN, allowing the large grain elevator west of town to be served from Muncie instead of Marion. As a result, NS has now retired a section of the former Conrail Red Key Secondary track (Red Key-Marion) between milepost 131 and 139, west of Dunkirk, IN. The section from the elevator west towards Dunkirk appears secure for now. NS has laid out new ties from Red Key to about a block west of the State Road 167 crossing in Dunkirk. NS serves a Saint-Gobain glass container plant on the east side of Dunkirk.

Shorts ...

The December 28, 2003 derailment of a Reading & Northern train in Pittston Township, PA, resulted in NS briefly detouring Buffalo-Allentown trains #40T/#41T south of Binghamton, NY via Sudbury and Harrisburg, PA. CP also detoured several trains this way ... NS is preparing to replace the PRR signal bridge and position light signals that govern westbound moves through Alliance, OH. Just east of the depot, a new cantilever signal bridge with color light signals was in place on the mainline, but not yet activated as of early January ... Trackwork on NS' Whitethorne District, the former Virginian between Narrows and Roanoke, VA, has resulted in NS detouring some eastbound coal and grain trains over the parallel Christiansburg District. Thus, NS has established a temporary pusher job based at Christiansburg in order to help tonnage trains over Christiansburg Hill ... During December, NS finalized the sale of six miles of right-of-way between Scaleybark Road and I-485 to the Charlotte Area Transit System. The \$14.75 million sale will allow CATS to proceed with plans for light-rail service from I-485 to Seventh Street in uptown Charlotte. The agreement also allows NS to operate its Charlotte-Columbia trains on the southern portion of the corridor using separate tracks ... Beth Intermodal has submitted plans to local government agencies proposing to relocate to a 91-acre complex on the site of the former Bethlehem Steel coke works. Beth Intermodal operates an intermodal terminal for Norfolk Southern and subsidiary Triple Crown Service. The move would help make room for the proposed Bethlehem Commerce Center industrial park ... NS equipment budget for 2004 includes plans to rebuild 390 multi-level automobile racks and purchase 212 bi-level racks at the end of their lease.

Dues Are Due.....

Check your address label, if you have paid your dues for 2004, there is a '04 after your name. Please send your dues to the address on the back page or see me at the next meeting.

Ace

Feel free to send me any news reports which you feel would be of interest to group to my e-mail address listed on the back page.

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

Check you address label, if there is no '04, you have not paid your dues yet.

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