

Next Meeting:

5 February, 2006

- **Slides by members. 11 February, 2006.**
- **West Carrollton Civic Center. West Carrollton, Ohio**
- **Meeting time, 7:30 PM.**

February Meeting....

The February meeting will be presented by Rich Behrendt from Columbus, Ohio. He will provide a program on the B&LE along with a program on the EL in the New Jersey area..

Looking Ahead...

For the April Meeting we will be having our first ever "Digital Night". The evening will begin with a few digital shows that were given at Summerail. One will be by Chris Haines on modern railfanning across the USA. Next will be a short program that was a tribute to Summerail created by Ron Flanary.

Following these shows, we will have open time for members to show their digital images or shows. There should be plenty of time for anyone who wants to bring something to show. Members can bring digital images for a short talkie program, a sound show compiled in something like Photodex ProShow, or a short DVD movie that they made. We do not want to resort to any commercially made DVDs.

The talkies should be under 50 images (either digital images or scanned slides or prints), with the sound shows or movies being kept to 20 minutes or shorter.

We will be providing the projector and the laptop used to show the images. Files should be brought on CD, DVD or USB Memory stick. Photos right from the camera or scanner can often be very large, so it is a good idea to convert the files to Jpgs and resize them to around 1024 x 768 for optimal viewing. If you are unsure how to accomplish this, need some help, or have other questions relating to Digital Night, please contact Chris Haines at chris@westernohiorails.com.

The Marion Star/Bill Sinden

MARION - An intermodal facility at the Marion Industrial Center would make the area more attractive to business and industry, an economic development official said.

Motorists traveling Ohio 309 east of the city also may notice more train and truck traffic if a local businessman's effort to build the intermodal facility succeeds.

Whether such a facility, where freight trailers can be transferred from trains to trucks and from trucks to trains, appears will depend on a decision today by the Ohio Rail Development Commission.

The commission is considering Ted Graham's application for a \$750,000 grant and loan package. The commission's staff recommended approval of the project, which would rebuild or rehabilitate more than 14,000 feet of rail at the Marion Industrial Center, which Graham owns.

Graham said he's been working toward upgrading railroad track at the center to an intermodal capability since he refurbished and opened the former

Marion Engineer Depot in 1990.

"I would say ever since we started developing the depot I felt it would be an ideal intermodal site," he said.

Currently, the center is used as an off-loading, storage and distribution facility for thousands of new cars and trucks brought in by rail.

Other customers using the rail there trans-load lumber products for Boise-Cascade and vegetable oil for ConAgra. It's also home to six businesses, including a ConAgra microwave popcorn plant and a General Mills distribution facility.

Dave Claborn, president of Community Area New Development Organization Inc., said adding an intermodal facility would attract positive attention to Marion from businesses and industries that could save shipping costs as a result.

"It gives us a capability that we don't have now, and I think it's going to grow in importance as the global economy heats up and things are being shipped back and forth from Asia," Claborn said. Total cost of the project would be about \$1.75

million to \$2.25 million, the rail commission estimated.

The center has long-term contracts in place to generate new business at the facility, according to the rail commission. Schneider Trucking will gather loaded trailers from Mexico and California at Kansas City where they will be loaded onto flatcars for transport by rail east to Marion.

Kansas City Southern and CSX railroads have been contracted by Schneider to move 100 trailer units six times a week to Marion. From Marion, the units will be trucked to their final destinations in Ohio and further east. A mixture of empty and loaded trailers will be hauled back West by rail from Marion.

The economic package would include a \$100,000 grant and a \$650,000 five-year loan, with zero interest the first year and two-thirds of prime rate interest for the second through fifth years.

Graham said initially construction of the intermodal facility would add 100 trucks a day to traffic leaving the center, about a 50 percent increase to the approximately 200 trucks that currently come and go from the site.

The number of trains would increase from about one a week to one a day, he estimated.

Disruption of automobile traffic on Ohio 309 should be minimal, Graham said, adding that the trains would be scheduled to arrive between 4 and 6 a.m. and leave between 8 and 10 p.m.

Startup of the intermodal facility initially would generate 10 material-handling jobs.

"However, where the real growth would come from is the spin-offs from industry wanting to be close to the source of their deliveries," he said.

Rehabilitation and rebuilding of the MIC tracks would include:

- installation of new 130-pound rail to handle the new, heavier freight cars being used by the Class 1 freight railroads;
- new ties and ballast for over 10,000 feet of track;
- elimination of sharp curves;
- upgrading of on-site railroad grade crossings.

In addition, the grant-loan package would help Graham purchase trans-loading equipment for unloading trailers or bulk commodities from hopper cars.

A retired tower operator with Erie Lackawanna Railroad, Peter White is impressed with the possibility the Marion area could develop the intermodal facility.

"If Marion gets this, this could slowly grow into an important intermodal yard for Marion," said White, a Delaware resident. He said an intermodal site also would be good news for the rail industry.

"I'm glad to see it for the railroad because I want to see more truck traffic on the trains," he said.

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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 \$10.00 per Calendar Year
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