

**Next Meeting:**

**July 3, 2004**

- **The next meeting will be the annual picnic. July 10, 2004**
- **Big Four passenger depot, 900 Chestnut Ave., Sidney, Ohio**
- **Meeting time, see announcement below**

## *July's Meeting:*

The next meeting will be our annual picnic, co-hosted by the West Central Ohio Model Railroaders Club. The WCOMRRC will be providing the food, drinks and grill. We are not required to bring anything, but you may want to bring a lawn chair. Once the sun goes down, we will be showing slides under the stars. We will eat at 6:00 PM, but everyone is welcome to come earlier since the depot will be open anytime after noon. The program will be slides by members. July 10, 2003.

Big Four passenger depot, 900 Chestnut Ave., Sidney, Ohio.

## *NS NEWS....*

### **Atlanta Move ...**

NS has reached a deal to acquire a 379,300-square-foot midtown Atlanta office building from AT&T Corporation. This deal will allow NS to begin its long-desired move from the aging Spring Street office complex built by the Southern Railway. Roughly 300 employees from One Georgia Center in downtown Atlanta will initially move to the former AT&T Promenade I tower by the end of 2004. The timetable for the 1,000+ employees in four buildings along the Spring Street remains undetermined until NS locates additional office space.

### **Hump Yard Reactivations ...**

During July, NS began several weeks of construction work at its Enola Yard west of Harrisburg, PA. One of the primary aspects of the project was replacing the hump retarders that had been deactivated by Conrail many years ago. This will increase the daily throughput capacity at Enola, allowing NS to improve traffic flows on the Harrisburg Division and provide some relief to other yards in the region. Once completed, NS plans to begin originating and terminating several more trains per day at

Enola.

NS is also reportedly preparing to reactivate the hump at its John Sevier Yard in Knoxville, TN, sometime around August 1. This facility was downgraded to flat switching in early 2003, and two pairs of merchandise trains were also rerouted from Knoxville to DeButts Yard in Chattanooga. If reactivated, look for several trains to be placed back on the K&O route between Knoxville and the junction with the Cincinnati-Chattanooga mainline at Harri-man Junction, TN. During July, crews were observed working on the bowl track switches and retarders.

## **GEVO Update ...**

As of early July, General Electric has delivered 14 of the 15 ES40DC "GEVO" locomotives being leased to NS. These locomotives will be the successor for the DASH 9-40CW model that has been so popular with NS. The GEVOs comply with Tier II EPA regulations scheduled to go into effect in 2005, and feature a 12-cylinder diesel engine that produces the same 4,400 horsepower (4,000 hp in the NS' version) as its 16-cylinder predecessor. The following is a snapshot of their assignments during the weekend of June 25. Note that NS mechanical personnel were keeping several of the ES40DCs close to Roanoke, VA to facilitate evaluations.

Units 7500/7501 were paired up in helper service briefly out of Roanoke before being sent on a unit coal train to Linwood, NC. The 7502 and 7503 had been working with the former two units, but both were briefly shopped in Roanoke and separated from the other pair. The 7505, 7509 and a Union Pacific SD70M were en route back to Andover, VA on empty train #703 after taking loaded coal train #702 to Georgia Power's Plant Wansley. The two has spent the previous week in helper service on the Appalachia District between Andover and Watkins, VA.

Further north, the 7506, 7507 and 7508 were in ore service on train #62V (Ashtabula-Mingo Junction, OH loads) and empty counterpart #63W. GE was readying the 7510 and 7512 for delivery to the NS on Sunday at Erie and eventual forwarding to Bellevue for setup. The 7511 and 7513 were being set up at Bellevue on Saturday and their first assignment from there was on Winston-Salem automotive train #274 as far as Portsmouth, OH. From there, they were assigned to train #81K, taking empty hoppers back to the Pocahontas Division. As of July 1, the 7514 was still at GE's Erie plant.

### **Altoona Rebuilds ...**

NS' former Conrail Juniata Locomotive Shop in Altoona, PA, recently turned out its second GP38-3 locomotive. These units are former Southern GP50s that are having their turbochargers removed as part of the overhaul program and also their high-noses shortened. This recent release was the 5802, which was rebuilt from GP50 7030. Juniata has also released the first unit as part of a program to rebuild SD40-2s into yard-slug master units. SD38-2M 3821 was rebuilt from SD40-2 6206, and is now assigned with slug 850 (former NS-975 and former CR-1108).

In addition to program work on its own fleet, NS recently received a contract from Amtrak to build eight GP38H-3 locomotives at Juniata. The platform for these locomotives will be retired GP40TCs. The Altoona-built units will be assigned to Amtrak series 520-527.

### **Shorts ...**

On the morning of June 10, Durham, NC police received reports that three or four men in white surgical masks threw smoke bombs from a car onto NS tracks at the Cornwallis Road crossing. This action was apparently part of a local demonstration against the G-8 international summit being held in Georgia. The group used jumper cables to activate the crossing's lights and gates, temporarily disrupting rush-hour traffic ... The town of Boyce, VA, is continuing its efforts ban the use of locomotive air horns through this community on NS's Shenandoah Valley line. NS vice president Mark Manion told the local council that the railroad will not agree to any restrictions in horn usage, and instead suggested that the town close one of its two crossings to cut down on horn noise. Reportedly, town leaders did not appreciate this idea ... The City of Newport, TN is hoping that NS will help support its downtown redevelopment project by donating the for-

mer Southern passenger station to the community. The city would like to use this single-story brick structure for a local museum.

### **CSX NEWS....**

#### **Facing The Customers ...**

On Thursday, June 10, the National Industrial Transportation League and CSX Transportation held a forum in Atlanta to discuss the ongoing service crisis at CSX. Nearly 200 customer representatives attended the meeting from a wide range of industries and geography. CSX representatives included Mike Ward, Chairman and CEO, Tony Ingram, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, and Clarence Gooden, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer. Also in attendance were Roger Nober, Chairman of the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) and NIT League President, John Ficker.

The CSX officers spent the initial portion of the meeting explaining how the current situation developed due to a combination of record traffic volume and lack of resources to meet that unexpected demand. Charts were displayed showing how long it takes to train new employees and the lead-time for new locomotives. Most customers in attendance accepted these constraints, but they were ready to hear the next segment of the presentation...the details of just how CSX planned to reverse the situation and bring service up to an acceptable level.

This portion of the forum focused on recovery efforts in several regions, including Waycross, GA and the Ohio Valley. The major classification yard at Waycross had started to become congested due to a number of factors, of which track-work curfews contributed significantly. During May and June, it was not uncommon for inbound trains to be backed up as far as Pensacola, FL and Manchester, GA waiting for open tracks in the receiving yard. This only compounded congestion at satellite yards, such as Baldwin, FL and Savannah, GA.

To help resolve the issues, new COO Tony Ingram personally involved himself with the operating unions in order to bring about additional crew assignment flexibility and weekend availability in the Savannah-Waycross-Jacksonville "triangle". Other steps were taken to improve locomotive availability and utilization. Ingram noted that the ONE Plan would likely shift 400+ carloads daily away from Waycross by rerouting them through Atlanta.

This discussion provided some level of comfort to Florida phosphate customers in attendance. They are forecasting

heavy traffic levels out of the Bone Valley later this year and are particularly concerned that Waycross recovers before this seasonal traffic hits. CSX officials noted that they are looking to build more “bypass” trains in Florida to avoid intermediate switching at Waycross and other terminals. Much of this business flows north to connections at gateways such as Chicago.

The carload operating network redesign currently being rolled out under the ONE Plan project was another major topic of the Atlanta forum. CSX officials focused on the initial steps of the ONE Plan implementation and how they would improve the situation in the Ohio Valley. The initial phase began with schedule and block changes for trains operating through Indianapolis’ Avon Yard. However, the big changes will involve two key hump yards: Queensgate at Cincinnati and Osborn at Louisville.

Beginning in July, CSX will segregate automotive multi-level and carload merchandise traffic at these facilities. Queensgate is now dedicated to handling merchandise traffic and Osborn will handle primarily autoracks. Traditionally, these two yards handle a mixture of both businesses. CSX believes that Osborn is better suited to handle the long autoracks than Queensgate due to its track lengths and layout. Changes will also be made to Nashville and Walbridge in conjunction with Cincinnati and Louisville as part of developing a new automotive network. These changes are to be completed in August.

Once the ONE Plan is implemented in this area, it will be rolled out over the remainder of the system in late 2004. Implementation of the Chicago gateway will begin in August, followed by the New Orleans, Northeast and I-95 Corridor regions. New Orleans is considered the priority of these three due to continuing service problems, especially with UP interchange traffic.

When completed, CSX will have three primary carload classification facilities in its network: Queensgate in Cincinnati, Rice Yard in Waycross and the former Conrail yard in Selkirk, NY. All other classification yards will serve as regional support yards and funnel traffic through the “big three”. CSX hopes that the ONE Plan will eventually eliminate at least one yarding for the average carload moving over its system. That alone will not only bring significant cost reduction, but also eliminate up to two days of transit time per trip plan.

Following the executive presentations, the floor was opened for questions and comments from customers. Many shippers expressed their concern about the CSX's ability to handle the seasonal volume surges that will take place in the third and fourth quarters. Others voiced concerns specific to their

facilities and CSX indicated they would address those situations where they could, but stressed that the ultimate resolution of these problems would take some time and asked shippers for their patience. CSX officers pointed out several times that they do not expect significant improvements system-wide until later this year. Despite the sometimes tense atmosphere and tough questions being asked, most customers also expressed their appreciation to CSX management for taking time and “facing the music”.

### **State Of The Fleet ...**

As of June, CSX owned 3,700 locomotives with another 550 on lease. The fleet will grow slightly as 55 SD70MACs are delivered between August and October and other lease units come on line. 46 ex-LMX B39-8s will be delivered by July, 20 SD70ACEs will be delivered July through September and 100 SD40s will be delivered in August. The additional lease units will position the railroad to meet its fall traffic rush.

### **Markers ...**

Train Q231, normally a Detroit-Cincinnati train carrying a mixture of merchandise and automotive traffic, was temporarily extended to Louisville during late June. It no longer carried the Cincinnati merchandise block, but only autoracks destined to Louisville, Nashville, Birmingham and Memphis. The Cincinnati carload traffic was instead moved on Q507 to Walbridge, where it made a next-day connection with Q509 to Cincinnati ... UP run-through train Q686 now originates at Nashville instead of Louisville. It still is delivered to the UP at East St. Louis, from where it operates through to North Platte, NE .... SD40 4617, the last unit remaining in C&O paint, was in Erwin, TN to participate in the BR/KP Sub MofW Jamboree. ....

***Remember there will no meetings for the remainder of the summer. See you 13 November.***

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 \$8 per Calendar Year**  
**MVR Web Site [www.qsl.net/n8qnp/mvrpage.htm](http://www.qsl.net/n8qnp/mvrpage.htm)**

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