

Next Meeting:

November 1, 2003

The next meeting will be slide by members. November 8, 2003

- West Carrollton Civic Center
- Meeting time 7:00 PM

November Meeting....

This month's meeting will be presented by Dan Maners and Trey Kuntz of Indianapolis. Dan is a CSX engineer. Dan's slide show will feature interlocking towers in Ohio, Indiana and maybe a few other select locations.

This show will feature towers that are long gone. This will not be a show of just those few towers that remain.

Dan will be buying and trading tower slides that night if anyone wants to deal.

CSX News...

Railroad For Sale Or Rent ...

Effective Wednesday, October 1, 2003, the Old Road Subdivision of the Appalachian Division was sold to R. J. Corman (RJCE) between mile 12.49 at HK Tower in Anchorage, KY (near Louisville), and mile 113.81 in Winchester, KY, a distance of approximately 91.48 miles.

The Old Road is a former L&N route across north central Kentucky that linked the coal fields of eastern Kentucky with its Atlanta-Cincinnati main line at Patio and went on to Lexington and Louisville. RJCE also acquired two branches that connect to the Old Road: the Bloomfield Branch in Shelbyville and the Chilesburg Branch between Lexington and Cadentown, KY. RJCE also acquired industrial, spur and yard tracks in Lexington and Frankfort.

CSX will retain restricted overhead trackage rights on the portion of the Old Road between Winchester and Lexington for the operation of unit coal trains.

As a result of this change, CSX made the following to changes to its operating plan. Local C706 was established as the Patio road switcher, 5 days per week, off Wednesday and Thursday, replacing local C720, the Patio to Lexington turn. Through freights Q540 and Q547 between Patio and Louisville are abolished. Traffic between Patio and Louisville now moves via Cincinnati East Tennessee Railway (ETRY), a Class III rail carrier, seeks to lease and operate 5.0 miles of track, which includes 4.05 miles of rail line and two short spurs, known as Johnson City Lead and the Carnegie near Johnson City. ETRY already operates a branch between Johnson City and Elizabethton.

Operations Update ...

The following changes were made to the operating plan during August and September. Local J782, between Cincinnati and Dayton, was abolished and replaced with Q566, a worker freight between Cincinnati and Lima. Multi level trains Q213 and Q215 between Cincinnati and Baldwin, FL were abolished and the traffic moved to Q143 (Columbus to Jacksonville intermodal) and Q155, a new intermodal train between Cincinnati and Tampa.

Cincinnati Work ...

The signal system at Queensgate Yard in Cincinnati is being modernized as part of a general terminal rehabilitation project. A new, 104 foot long signal bridge equipped with Safetrans signals replaces B&O color position lights at RH Tower, the interlocking at the north end of the yard. At Colerain

Avenue, dwarf color position lights have been temporarily installed until the track work and signal upgrade is completed. A crossover will be installed between Number Two track and the NS 3rd main, providing for some much needed flexibility. Hople Street interlocking is being rebuilt and re-equipped with new switches, switch motors, and signals. A new and badly needed power switch is being installed at the north end of the CSX intermodal ramp, ending the delays associated there by having to hand throw it.

Diamond's Aren't Forever ...

Replacing and renewing the diamonds at any crossing at grade between two railroads can be problematic to operations at best and a major headache at worst. When the diamonds to be renewed are at Fostoria, OH, one of the busiest crossings in the country, such a project becomes a major operation. On September 29, M of W forces went to work on replacing the diamonds at the crossing of the Columbus Subdivision and the Willard Subdivision during a day-long work window. (Note: The entire interlocking within the F Tower complex at Fostoria is actually the Fostoria Subdivision). A new asphalt diamond pad was installed first, followed by new ballast then finally; the diamonds were set into place.

In order to lessen the impact on traffic, CSX choose to do the work on a Monday, typically the slowest day of the week, and modified its operating plan in order to get priority trains through the area before M of W crews took the track out of service. Manifest and auto network trains typically had their schedules pushed back from 2 to 8 hours to keep traffic out of the area until after the work had been completed.

Pruning The System ...

CSX has filed to abandon 6.37 miles of the Lake Erie Subdivision between mile BQ 25.90 at Mt. Vernon to mile BQ 32.27 at Fredericktown, OH. There are two shippers on the line, Rural Farm Distributors and B&B Farm Service that operate farm supply businesses that sell fertilizer in the Fredericktown area. Rural and B&B do not intend to oppose this abandonment proceeding. CSX has agreed to refrain from abandoning for a period to allow these businesses sufficient time to make alternative transportation arrangements.

CSX is working with the Floyd County Fiscal Court and Floyd County, KY to negotiate the sale of 13.4-miles of the Long Fork Subdivision between mile

CON 3.1 at Salisbury KY and milepost CON 16.5 near Clear Creek Junction KY. Chances are good this former C&O coal branch will be turned over to the county next year for use as a recreational trail. Service to mines on the south end of the branch continues from E&BV Subdivision between Deane and Beaver Junction, KY on the Big Sandy Subdivision.

CSX has filed to abandon 16.47 miles of the Cain Creek Branch of the Birmingham Mineral Subdivision between Birmingham and West Jefferson, AL. The branch will be severed between mile NC 384.00 in Black Creek to mile NJ 400.47 at West Jefferson. The branch is located on the north side of Birmingham and used to serve the West Jefferson Steam Plant of Alabama Power. 23.25 miles of the Pearson Subdivision will be abandoned between mile AP 594.69, near Waresboro and mile AP 617.94 near Pearson. This branch is a remnant of a former Atlantic Coast Line branch between Waycross and Albany, GA.

Markers ...

A graffiti artist was killed by a passing train while tagging the piers of an underpass in Pittsburgh. Police said freshly written graffiti had been written near the victim's body and spray paint cans were found in his backpack ...

Work continues on the new "Birmingham Bypass" through what's left of the yard at Manchester, GA. This track will aid traffic operating between Waycross, GA, and Birmingham, AL moving between the Fitzgerald and Lineville Subdivisions.

NS News...

Intermodal Train Attacked ...

On the evening of Sunday, September 21, an individual or group doused intermodal train #215 (Chicago-Jacksonville/FEC) with some form of incendiary device, resulting in a massive fire on two of its loads. Fortunately, they did not strike the locomotives and the crew was spared injury.

The attack occurred on the Central Division's Second District (a.k.a. "Rathole") while this southbound was climbing the long grade south of Tateville, KY. As it approached one of the overhead highway bridges in the Daniel Boone National Forest, the crew noticed a flaming object fall ahead of them from the span. After the head-end passed, another flaming object was dropped on the train, striking a container of cooking

oil. That load subsequently caught fire as the crew stopped the train near KD Tower. The blaze became so intense that an adjacent load of plastic cups also ignited.

Before local firefighters could extinguish the blaze, the heat damaged the rails on the #1 main and the ties on both mains of the double-track. The equipment involved was scrapped on-location Monday. From the time the train was targeted around 23:00 Sunday night, the mainline was shutdown for roughly 12 hours until the #2 main could be reopened. This blockage cause one massive traffic jam on the Second District, with more than 30 trains tied down or delayed. Considering the destroyed equipment and lading, damaged track, delayed trains and outlawed crews, the incident was very costly for NS.

Indications that foul play was involved began earlier in the evening when another southbound noticed a propane tank on the parallel main south of Tateville. NS quickly dispatched a special agent to investigate and remove the tank. After a search of the area, the agent was returning home when #215 was attacked. He and other law enforcement agents converged trackside, but no suspects were to be found. The area is heavily wooded and laced with forest service roads, making a night-time search that much more difficult. These four highway bridges in the national forest are very popular spots for railfan photographers. Unfortunately, this incident will probably result in anyone around these bridges being viewed with suspicion until the assailants are apprehended. NS, county and state law enforcement agencies were continuing the investigation as of press time.

More CPLs Fall ...

NS signal forces continue to replace the N&W's Color Position Light (CPL) signals along the Lake Division's Columbus District between Portsmouth and Columbus, OH. By October, several intermediate block signals near Waverly were to have been replaced by the standard Color-Light signals favored by NS. Crews will also be replacing the former Pennsy position light signals at CW Tower, where the Columbus District crosses the Ohio Central (former PRR main) at grade. Although these signals are on the Ohio Central, NS is responsible for the signals guarding this diamond in Columbus.

Boyz Are Back ...

During September, two suspected members of the

"Conrail Boyz" criminal gang were arrested near the Elizabethport intermodal terminal while recovering goods stolen from a container. One of the apprehended, Mikhael Centeno, allegedly struck an NS special agent with a bolt cutter while trying to escape. Fortunately, the NS officer was not seriously hurt.

The irony of the arrest is that Centeno was one of 24 Conrail Boyz members arrested earlier this summer for their involvement in numerous cargo theft incidents in New Jersey. Centeno had been free after posting 10 percent of his original \$750,000 bail. In his latest arrest, a state judge ordered the suspect to be held on \$2.5 million bail, but without the 10-percent option. In addition to facing charges such as burglary and receiving stolen property, Centeno is now charged with aggravated assault on a law officer. NS police hope that this will put him away for a long time.

Shorts ...

NS personnel vacated the former N&W passenger station in Portsmouth, OH, during September. The grand, three-story structure was purchased by the Scioto County Commissioners, which plans to demolish the building and construct a new sheriff's office complex on the land. NS moved its remaining staff from the building to other buildings in the Portsmouth Yard ... Honda will begin rail shipments of finished autos from its Lincoln, AL, assembly plant during October. The facility had been trucking all of its production to a ramp in Birmingham for furtherance by rail. Traffic will initially be handled in blocks on existing trains, but volume should eventually support a dedicated train ... As part of siding extension work at Asa, Alabama on the Memphis-Chattanooga mainline, NS is installing concrete ties on the new portion of the sidetrack ... NS has told county officials that it has decided not to pursue a sale of the Jellico Branch in northern Tennessee. This coal line has fallen on lean times in recent years, as the number of coal loadout points has fallen to just two. However, NS hopes that new mining activity along the Elk River Valley will reverse this trend ... The South Carolina state supreme court upheld a state Court of Appeals decision that overturned Norfolk Southern's \$900,000 portion of \$3 million in damages awarded to a former track supervisor. The supervisor sued NS and US Silica after he fell in a hole while inspecting tracks at a US Silica operation in Lexington County during 1993. The court stated that NS could not have known of the danger.

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

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