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Surface Transportation Board
CN | EJ&E Environmental Impact Statement
c/o HDR
8404 Indian Hills Drive
Omaha, NE 68114-4098

Friday, May 16, 2008.

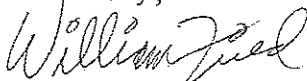
Subject: News Coverage of CN | EJ&E Purchase .

As a member of the 20th Century Railroad Club and newsletter reporter, I get to cover many rail centered meetings. In the enclosed February issue of our "The Fast Mail", I have two articles involving the CN/EJ&E purchase. The "'CREATE' Project Public Hearing" was held in an old church right in the epicenter of this once poor area crisscrossed with every Chicago railroad going south or east. Today this area is either fixed up or leveled and cleaned waiting for the right time to build again. With the CN in the mix, the time is near. One hundred year old "railroad footprints", i.e., multiple street-level crossings, will be a thing of the past. CN's purchase of the EJ&E will necessitate its withdrawal from the CREATE project reducing taxpayer funding in Chicago with the towns along the EJ&E will reap the benefits from the CN taxes along with a much needed new Metra route -- the STAR line, a 270° arc connecting northern Illinois towns all the way around to southwest Joliet and eventually to Hobart, Indiana. This is a win-win situation; there is no downside here.

The other meeting I covered was your HDR Engineering, Inc., "traveling road show" when it was in downtown Chicago. As I saw it, the only area against this was two very snobish, very upscale and arrogant Barrington area enclaves: Barrington and Barrington Hills. I couldn't say it in my article but I don't see where a couple of small villages have any jurisdiction over any established international trade routes. Again, this is a win-win for all, even Barrington when they join the world.

I hope I shed some light in your defense of a much needed improvement.

Sincerely,



William Fried

20TH CENTURY RR CLUB

• Unique Travel Opportunities for Everyone • Unique Volunteer Opportunities for Rail Enthusiasts

The 20th Century Railroad Club offers a wide variety of activities appealing to nearly everyone who enjoys traveling to interesting places with interesting people, and to those who enjoy learning more about the history, the drama, and the importance of our nation's railroad transportation system.

Whether your participation in our Club will complement an existing love affair with trains, or you're only at the curiosity stage, you will enjoy an outstanding opportunity to fulfill your interest in travel and railroading.

Since 1971, "the Century" has been the first choice of Chicago railfans who prefer to pursue their hobby as members of a large and dynamic organization offering a wide range of activities, including volunteering as car hosts on our charter trains.

We are also the first choice of travelers who know how enjoyable it is to ride a train — the most civilized form of land transportation!

As the famous author Agatha Christie explained, "Trains are wonderful... To travel by train is to see nature and human beings, towns and churches and rivers; in fact, to see life."

Every year, 20th Century schedules at least 20 trips for our members and the public, listed in detail in our Trip Catalog. *All* of our trips involve travel by train. They include one-day trips on commuter and Amtrak trains, two- to four-day "getaways" via Amtrak and/or a deluxe motorcoach, and elaborate five- to twelve-day "Vacations with the Century."

On the latter, you'll experience the romance of the night train, dinner in the diner, and the soothing rhythm of steel wheels on steel rails — a passage through time, space and history, and the heart of America's memories.

Since 1971, 20th Century has carried nearly 100,000 passengers aboard our "special" trains chartered from Amtrak, Metra and freight railroads, plus our group-travel program. We've operated excursions powered by steam locomotives, and "private varnish" trips aboard luxurious, privately-owned vintage railcars.

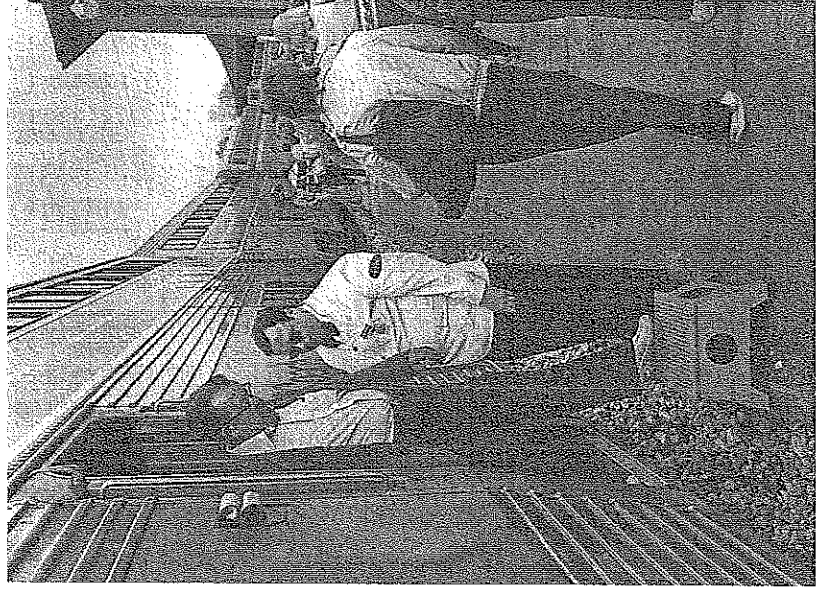
Our special trains also give Club members a unique opportunity to earn free passage by volunteering to serve

as car hosts, entertainers, bartenders, waiters and cooks.

In fact, most Club activities are planned and carried out by Club members who donate their time and expertise. We invite you to become one of them!

On the second Wednesday of every month (except December), we hold a Members Meeting. Our programs feature professional railroaders; multi-media presentations examining a particular aspect of railroading, such as steam locomotives, streetcars, a particular railroad or "dinner in the diner;" and other aspects of the past, present and future of railroading around the world.

Members and guests (everyone is welcome) also



enjoy meeting and talking with each other, and Club members can borrow from our extensive library of rail-related videotapes.

Our members meetings are held at the Electricians Union Hall at 600 W. Washington Blvd (at Jefferson St.) in downtown Chicago. Nearby are Chicago Union Station, the Ogilvie Transportation Center, and CTA bus and train stops. Free parking is available across the street.

A major benefit of membership in the 20th Century Railroad Club is our 12-page monthly newsletter, *The Fast Mail*. This publication is filled with details of Club activities (especially those for members only), rail-related news items, current and historic rail photos, and articles on various aspects of railroad history.

Now you know why membership in our Club is so rewarding: whether you like to do your railroading as a passenger, a volunteer, or a student of history (or all of the above), 20th Century has what you're looking for!

To join, all you need to do is fill out the attached application form, and mail it to us with your payment. Soon, you'll receive a membership card and your first copy of our monthly newsletter.

The 20th Century Railroad Club is incorporated as a not-for-profit educational and historical organization. As part of our mission (as our funds permit), we award scholarships to the School of Transportation at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. From time to time, we also award matching grants to other railroad-oriented non-profit groups to aid in preserving and restoring railroad equipment and memorabilia.

A note to businesspeople: If you are looking for a worthy cause to support, please consider a tax-deductible donation to the 20th Century Railroad Club. You may even multiply the effect of your donation by earmarking it for one of our scholarship grants, which could be awarded in your company's name!

Cover photo of "20th Century Limited" by John H. Kuehl. Photo at left of "Galena Limited" car host by Bill Staniec. Photo of "Train to Planes" on back page by Stan Brandt.

Membership Application

All categories of membership include all members of your immediate family, plus 12 issues of our monthly newsletter, THE FAST MAIL. Club members who pay more than "regular" dues receive a Club-logo pin, and their names appear in our newsletter.

Choose a membership category:

- ☐ Regular — \$40 for 12 months
- ☐ Contributing — \$75 for 12 months
- ☐ Century Club — \$125 for 12 months
- ☐ President's Club — \$200 for 12 months
(and you'll receive a \$25 gift certificate for group travel!)

Member Name _____

Member Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, ZIP Code _____

— PAYMENT METHOD —

- ☐ Check or Money Order ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA
(make check/money order payable to "TCRC")

Credit Card Account Number _____

Expiration Date Cardholder Signature _____

MAIL APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO:

Membership Secretary
20th Century Railroad Club
P.O. Box 476
Wilmette, IL 60091-0476
(allow 2 to 4 weeks for processing)

A Short History of our Club...

The three high-school students who organized the 20th Century Railroad Club in 1971 never suspected how great an interest their Club would ultimately create in rail travel in the Chicago area.

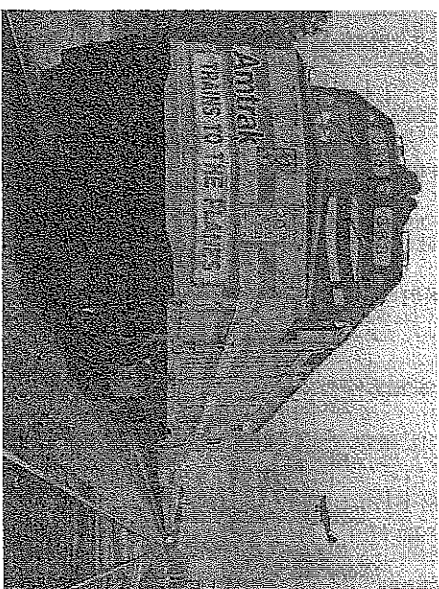
Our founders' goal made 20th Century different from most railroad clubs: instead of only looking back at railroad history, they wanted to actually ride trains, and to help promote Amtrak (also founded in 1971).

The Club's first charter train celebrated our nation's bicentennial in 1976 via the old Rock Island Line between Chicago and Bureau, Illinois. That trip — with seven gleaming stainless-steel cars pulled by a diesel locomotive repainted in a bicentennial color scheme by Club members — marked the beginning of an impressive roster of excursion trains, some of which were pulled by historic steam locomotives.

In 1981, 20th Century operated its first Amtrak charter train, to the annual Tulip Festival in Holland, Michigan. Later destinations included the Wisconsin Dells; the Illinois State Fair; Mark Twain's home town of Hannibal, Missouri; the annual County Fair in Galena, Illinois; and even the Super Bowl in New Orleans for Chicago Bears fans in 1986.

In the mid-90s, 20th Century expanded its rail-related group-travel program, first for Club members only, and then for the general public. Today, our annual Trip Catalog includes 18 to 20 such unique trips, to destinations all around North America.

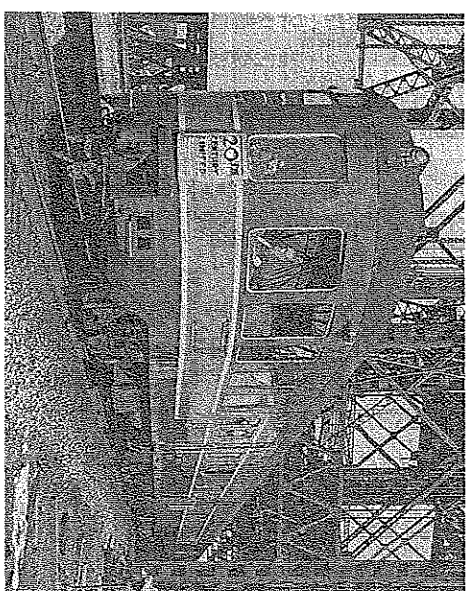
When you join, you'll be part of a Club with hundreds of people who, much like you, love to travel to interesting destinations via passenger trains — the most civilized form of land transportation!



**20TH
CENTURY
RR CLUB**

MEMBERSHIP

*If you like trains and travel,
Welcome aboard!*



- Unique Trips by Train
- Monthly Newsletter
- Members Meetings
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Video Library

20th Century Railroad Club

P.O. Box 476
Wilmette, IL 60091-0476
Phone: 312-829-4500
www.20thcentury.org

MEMBERS MEETING

Program: Assorted slides! Member Larry Bloom recently donated slides showing "rail trips from Washington, DC, in the 1960s, a Parke County (Indiana) Bridge Fest in 1968, Mexico in 1966, and other items." Then, Stan Brandt will show slides of an AAPRCO "private varnish" convention in Milwaukee in 1986 and another in Pittsburgh in 1987.

As always, there's the inevitable, incredible and ineffable "Raffle of the Century" for all you winners.

Location: Electricians Union Hall, 600 W. Washington Blvd at Jefferson St in downtown Chicago. Free parking on the northeast corner of Washington & Jefferson. The door opens at 6:30p. Non-member admission is \$3 (members: free). Soft drinks and snacks are available from vending machines.

FEB. 13 – 7:00 P.M.

"A home-made unit clears the area between the tracks at Palisade, MN, in February of 1969."

Photo from the Simmons-Boardman Publishing collection of the 20th Century Railroad Club.

RAIL NEWS DIGEST

Edited by D. Worf Signull

ON THE POINT...

LAWMAKERS PASS MASS-TRANSIT BILL...

State lawmakers approved on Jan. 17 Gov. Rod Blagojevich's plan to give free bus and train rides to seniors as part of a \$530 million tax increase package that prevents major service cuts and some fare increases for Chicago-area public transit riders.

Transit officials hailed the measure as a long-sought political compromise that stops the clock just three days from threatened "doomsday" service cuts. But they cautioned that elderly riders should not expect immediate free rides under the plan, because transit leaders have two months to implement that.

The Illinois Senate signed off on the governor's changes by a 32-19 tally (two more votes than the measure got last week) but only after many of them expressed dissatisfaction with the last-minute nature of Blagojevich's changes.

Sen. Martin Sandoval (D-Chicago) said there is no free ride for seniors because they now will be paying more in sales tax

and, if they sell their homes in Chicago, potentially a real estate transfer tax. Both tax increases are part of the legislation.

"Houdini would wrap himself in chains...and find his way out after much suspense. There's a better act," Sandoval said. "Rodini is a better escape artist than anyone I've ever seen in my life."

Mayor Richard Daley, however, refused to criticize Blagojevich. "The governor saw fit to do this, and you can't debate that," he said. Calling it a "happy day" for riders, Daley said he now will work with members of the City Council to pass an increase in Chicago's real estate transfer tax by \$3 per \$1,000 of sales price, action that is called for in the legislation to help fund CTA pension and health care costs. It has not been decided yet whether the increase will apply to buyers or sellers, he said.

Legislators passed the funding plan in mid-January but, instead of signing it, Blagojevich amended the bill to include free rides for seniors, as he sought to deflect the political damage of breaking his



long-held pledge not to raise taxes.

"What this is all about is an opportunity and an effort by the governor to change the subject," said Sen. Matt Murphy (R-Palatine). "With his efforts on this bill, he broke that promise and signed on to sales taxes. Seniors, the ones I've heard from anyway, don't want a free ride."

Senate President Emil Jones (D-Chicago), 72, noted his own "conflict" on the issue: it would give him free rides.

2008 TRIP SCHEDULE

OUR TRIP CATALOG WILL BE
MAILED IN MID-FEBRUARY!

???	Indiana Grand Slam: Hoosier Valley Museum (train ride); Monon Museum; Beverly Shores, all in NW Indiana.
March 25-29	Greenbrier Resort: White Sulphur Springs, WV, via Amtrak <i>Cardinal</i> .
May 8-12	B&O Museum in Baltimore, MD.
May 25	Indiana Home Run via South Shore Line; Hesston Steam Museum, etc.
June 3-10	Rail & Sail: Amtrak to/from St. Louis, barge to/from Peoria via Illinois River.
June 7-11	Railroad museum and dinner train in Omaha; and brand-new UP yard observation tower in North Platte, NB.
June 21	Galesburg Railroad Days via Amtrak.
July 12-19	Colorado Rockies by Rail: Royal Gorge Rwy; Pikes Peak Cog Rwy; Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR, Durango & Silverton Scenic RR, Georgetown Loop Rwy.
July 27-Aug. 9	Rail & Sail: Alaska! New tours, routing.
July 28-Aug. 3	Glacier National Park via Amtrak.
Sept. 10-15	Pennsylvania Railroads: central Penn. via Amtrak; Johnstown, Altoona, East Broad Top RR, Rockhill Trolley Museum; Horseshoe Curve, more!
Sept. 20-24	Once Around the Lake, via motorcoach; Algoma Central Rwy/Agawa Canyon, Canada; Soo Locks cruise; Mackinac Island, WI Maritime Museum.
Sept. 28-Oct. 4	Fall Foliage and tourist railroads in New England; fly or Amtrak.
Oct. 6-13	Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta via Amtrak; historic Albuquerque, much more.
Oct. 14-20	West Virginia Mountain Railroad.
Oct. 17-19	Fall in Red Wing, MN, via Amtrak.
Oct. 19	West End Jazz Band; Hudson Lake, TN.
Oct. 26	Indiana Home Run via South Shore Line; Hesston Steam Museum, etc.
Nov. 1-2	Springfield, IL, via Amtrak; Lincoln Library and Museum, etc.
Dec. 6-8	Members Trip: Kansas City via Amtrak.
Dec. 26-31	R & R in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

NOTE: Trip dates, itineraries and prices are subject to change. Phone 312-829-4500 at any time to request trip order forms.

"When you get to be a senior, a lot of benefits come your way," said Jones, who urged the Senate to approve Blagojevich's changes.

In an attempt to win more support for the transit funding, supporters offered a follow-up bill that would extend free rides to disabled people while setting income eligibility requirements that would limit how many seniors get to ride for free. The House quickly approved the measure by an 86-22 vote, but Jones indicated he would not bring it up for an immediate vote.

Earlier on Jan. 17, the House accepted the governor's amendatory veto on a 61-47 vote, after many lawmakers accused Blagojevich of jeopardizing the plan by making a last-minute change that required another trip through the legislature.

Transit officials and CTA union leaders watching in the packed House gallery rose to their feet in jubilation when the House vote was tallied.

"People can have strong differences with what the governor did, but we've come hopefully to the end of a three-year struggle on our part to get the reforms that are needed, the pension changes that are needed and the funding that we need to carry us through for a decade or more," said RTA Chairman Jim Reilly. "So that's a great day."

If the bill had not passed, Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace riders would have faced an unprecedented level of fare hikes and service cuts, including the elimination of more than 160 city and suburban bus routes. All evening suburban bus service and many weekend Pace routes would have been eliminated. CTA fares would have jumped as high as \$3.25. Pace bus fares would have increased to \$2, and all paratransit, dial-a-ride, taxi-access and vanpool rides would have cost more.

About 2,400 CTA employees and 200 Pace drivers and administrative workers would have been laid off.

Metra envisioned 10% fare hikes each year for the next three years. Even when the legislature gave its approval to the funding package last week, the commuter rail line decided to keep a 10% fare hike set for Feb. 1, saying it was "prudent" in light of economic pressures, and necessary to offset four years of diverting about \$168 million in capital funds to operating expenses.

Metra's decision to raise fares even though lawmakers approved the transit funding measure drew the ire of Sen. Terry Link (D-Waukegan), who urged Metra to reconsider. "They knew if they had said before the vote that they were going to raise it 10%, the vote may have come out in a different way, and they didn't want to

risk that," Link said. "What this General Assembly giveth, this General Assembly can taketh back." [CHICAGO TRIBUNE]

2008 PASSENGER RAIL OUTLOOK... The future of passenger rail, both intercity and transit, looks bright for the foreseeable future as gasoline prices keep climbing, roads and airports become more congested, and the need to address climate change becomes more acute. The nation may well decide to shift its emphasis from highway-building to rail expansion, a goal that can only be achieved with stronger political support, which may come following this year's Presidential election.

Suppliers to the rail-transit industry may be looking forward to November's election with as much or more anticipation than other Americans because a change in political control of the White House could mean an upsurge in business. Many leaders of transit operating agencies, as well as consultants and equipment providers, believe that Republican power over the federal government has compromised public transit and Amtrak financial resources, especially when compared to highway programs.

Despite the rhetoric about weaning Americans away from foreign oil and reducing highway and air congestion, the Bush Administration has attempted to downsize Amtrak and has imposed restrictive standards on proposed rail transit projects to be funded under the New Starts program. The federal share of rail funding has been reduced to about 50%; previously, Washington had in some cases paid up to 80%.

President Bush's budget recommendations have also attempted to undercut congressionally mandated spending on transit. His request for fiscal year 2008 was \$308 million below the amount authorized and guaranteed under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), prompting APTA President William W. Millar to issue a statement declaring that the president's budget "undermines the need to expand public transportation."

Differing versions of a budget bill were finally passed by both houses of the now-Democratic controlled Congress in November. A House-Senate conference committee in Congress has agreed to restore all but \$53.2 million of that shortfall, most of it from the New Starts and Small Starts programs, and the Transportation Department budget bill has passed the House. But, as of late December, the measure was stuck in the Senate, and President Bush was threatening a veto, claiming the spending plan is fiscally irresponsible.

Reduced federal participation has had

consequences. Many communities have been forced to cancel or truncate badly needed high-capacity transit projects, while others have delayed their plans as officials struggled to meet strict new cost-benefit requirements. Meanwhile, construction costs have been rising substantially, as prices for materials such as steel and cement skyrocketed. In other places, to offset federal shortfalls, local funds have been generated through state grants, transportation taxes, benefit assessment districts, and other revenue streams.

In California, which always does things in a big way, voters in 2006 approved the sale of \$19.9 billion in transportation infrastructure bonds for transit and highway projects, plus port security and reduction of air pollution. The revenue is in addition to dedicated state funding from taxes, and will be used for repair and upgrading of aging facilities in addition to expansion. The money is being doled out by the California Transportation Commission, with transit's share to be around \$4 billion. However, since the state has six light rail systems, four commuter railways and two subways, most of which are planning very costly extensions, \$4 billion suddenly seems insignificant.

Increasing use of local and state financing, which avoids mandatory federal "Buy America" provisions, has in some cases adversely affected North America-based rail suppliers. Offshore purchases of everything from rail to rolling stock can be made with no strings attached, unless local rules require domestic content or final assembly in the U.S. This has been especially true of big-ticket items, such as LRVs and subway cars, for new systems and older networks facing the need to replace life-expired equipment.

The New York City metropolitan area remains the largest consumer of transit cars in the U.S., but in recent years there have been sizeable orders placed with North American, European, and Asian manufacturers by Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Jose, Washington, D.C., and Boston, with varying amounts of U.S. content.

But despite many roadblocks, much has been accomplished since 2001, and the amount spent on rail transit has increased annually. In recent years, the FTA has been signing Full Funding Grant Agreements on a regular basis, agreeing to provide a fixed amount of cash for specific projects. Many of these entered the application process prior to the Bush Administration, and several were stalled for years because their price tags were considered too high.

FFGAs were finally signed recently for

two proposals that struggled more than most, a light-rail starter line in Norfolk, VA, and Minnesota's Northstar commuter rail route linking Minneapolis with Big Lake. But a commuter line for the Raleigh-Durham, NC, area folded in 2006 when the FTA ruled the project didn't meet the agency's tough new cost and ridership standards. More recently, the Houston MTA in December received what agency President Frank Wilson described as "a very hard-edge letter" from the FTA, demanding additional environmental studies after proposed bus rapid transit corridors underwent a modal switch to LRT.

Only two new FFGAs are slated for approval in fiscal year 2008, one of which has already been signed. In November, a \$1.3 billion commitment was authorized for the first segment of New York's Second Avenue Subway. Awaiting final authorization is an FFGA for the short University extension to Seattle's Central Link LRT.

The only rail project still in the "pending" stage, according to the FTA, but not yet scheduled for an agreement, is Denver's West Corridor LRT. However, the Regional Transportation District has begun procurement of materials and LRVs to head off further price hikes.

Other proposals are in the pipeline but are still far from approval, including the five-line Houston scheme, the mega-billion Washington, DC, Metro extension to Dulles International Airport, and a series of extensions to Salt Lake City's TRAX LRT.

Amtrak's fortunes appear to be rising on several fronts, as the Bush Administration's efforts to kill passenger rail (or at least end federal responsibility for it) have failed, due to strong bipartisan support in Congress. But lawmakers have coupled their defense of Amtrak with penurious annual appropriations and demands for tighter cost controls and more competent management. Meanwhile, some capital needs have been deferred, a situation that would be remedied in part by an authorization bill that would provide Amtrak with \$11.4 billion over six years. The money would include \$4.9 billion for capital spending and \$1.4 billion for a new grant program to individual states that heavily subsidize service such as Illinois, California, and Washington. Some of the state money might be applied to purchase of new rolling stock in addition to operating expenses.

Late last December, the bill had been passed by the Senate, but was awaiting action in the House, where sources say it won't be considered until January at the earliest. However, the President adamantly opposes such a high level of spending for Amtrak, and has declared his administra-

tion will not fund the railroad at the \$11.4 billion level, a situation that could change a year from now.

Overall, Amtrak must replace and/or refurbish its aging fleet. No specific plans will be hatched until money is available. However, Amtrak President Alex Kummant has proposed partnering with the states to develop a standardized coach (possibly with single-level and double-deck versions) that could be used on both short- and long-distance runs. Standardization could result in a lower unit price initially, if cars are purchased in sufficient quantity, plus reduced maintenance and operating costs over the long term. There is also talk of starting work on a new generation of *Acela* high-speed trainsets for the Northeast Corridor.

Amtrak is spending about \$250 million a year on engineering projects, mostly on Northeast Corridor infrastructure, funding for which comes from annual transportation appropriations bills. The fiscal year 2008 omnibus appropriations bill, containing \$1.36 billion for Amtrak, was passed by Congress and was ready for the President's signature in late December.

Meanwhile, a committee of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission has recommended investing \$357.2 billion on intercity passenger rail service over the next 43 years. The investment, about \$8.1 billion annually, would significantly expand the existing system to provide a viable alternative to congested highways and airways.

"For the last 50 years, the nation has had no vision for intercity passenger rail," said the report from the commission's passenger rail working group. However, Amtrak may not end up being the service provider. The only certainty is that a large infusion of federal funding will be required.

The AAR issued harsh criticism of the plan, asserting, "Piggybacking on privately owned and operated freight-railroad assets will give America a third-rate passenger rail system." An alternative would be to add passenger-only tracks on existing freight rights-of-way, as some commuter rail systems have done, in contrast to the

— Chicagoland Public Transit —
Phone RTA Travel Information (5:00a–1:00a) at 312-836-7000.
Metra: www.metrarail.com. CTA: www.transitchicago.com.
SouthShore Line (NICTD): phone 800-356-2079.

— Amtrak —
800-USA-RAIL (800-872-7245) or www.amtrak.com

— Kenosha Streetcar Line —
Exit 342 off I-94; go east 7 miles on Wis. 158, south on 8th Ave.
Mon–Fri (all year): Lv 54th St & 8th Ave every 15 minutes
11:05a–7:05p. Sat. (all year) & Sun. (May 27–Sept. 2 only):
10:05a–5:35p. For details, phone 262-653-4287.

European and Asian practice of constructing brand-new high-speed lines strictly for passenger trains. The full commission is expected to endorse the committee's findings when it submits a final report to Congress. [Julian Wolinsky; RAILWAY AGE]

AMTRAK-ING...

ON TENTATIVE LABOR AGREEMENTS...

"Dear Co-workers: A few moments ago [on Jan. 18], Amtrak and representatives of the nine unions before the Presidential Emergency Board signed tentative agreements, thereby averting a strike that could have taken place on Jan. 30.

"Details of the agreements will be sent to the respective union members for ratification over the next several weeks, and will not be publicly disclosed until that process has begun.

"The nine unions affected are the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; Joint Council of Carmen, Helpers, Coach Cleaners and Apprentices; American Train Dispatchers Association; National Conference of Firemen and Oilers/Service Employees International Union; American Railway and Airline Supervisors Association (Maintenance of Equipment, Maintenance of Way).

"On behalf of the board of directors, I want to thank the leadership of the labor organizations. It has not been easy for any of us, and I know they share our sense of relief and resolve to move forward in a productive and cooperative spirit to provide excellent passenger rail service.

"We have averted a strike that could have had a crippling effect on the lives of millions of Americans. More importantly, we have jointly reached tentative agreements that enable us to get back to what brings us together, rather than what sets us apart. For Amtrak to succeed, we all need to push forward in the same direction.

"I encourage everyone to put the disputes from the past behind them and to focus on what we can learn from this experience and how we can grow together." —

Alex Kummant; President and CEO, Amtrak

FROM QUAD CITIES TO CHICAGO... Establishing an Amtrak route from Moline/Rock Island to Chicago could cost up to \$23 million for railroad improvements and \$6 million a year for the state operating costs. That's information released on Jan. 7 from a feasibility study that Amtrak did at the request of the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The study shows the best route between the Quad-Cities and Chicago would be over a portion of the former Rock Island Railroad, now owned by the Iowa Interstate Railroad, from the Quad-Cities to a proposed track connection to the BNSF Railway near Wyanet, IL. The study also shows that travel time would be in the range of 3-1/2 hours, which would be competitive with automobile travel.

In the report, the approximate cost of upgrading the railroad infrastructure to accommodate passenger train speeds is \$14-\$23 million, over the shortest, fastest and least costly of the potential routes. Not included in this figure are any capital expenses for railcars and locomotives, nor the local costs of providing stations.

Annual ridership on the route is estimated to be nearly 111,000, if improvements are made allowing maximum speeds of 79 mph, based upon two daily round-trips.

The annual state operating cost for the possible routes is in the \$6 million range. Quad Cities-Chicago travel times of about 3-1/2 hours are possible, and would be competitive with automobile driving, dependant on the choice of routes, agreements with host railroads and required infrastructure improvements. An executive summary of this report is now available on the IDOT and Amtrak Web sites.

"Amtrak and the State of Illinois have seen tremendous growth in passenger rail ridership since Gov. Rod Blagojevich and the Legislature increased funding for state supported routes in 2006," said IDOT Secretary Milton R. Sees. "These gains indicate there is a significant and growing demand for passenger rail service across the state. At a time when everyone is becoming more conscious of the need to conserve fuel, passenger rail moves people efficiently, helps reduce traffic and is good for our environment."

"Last year, we held a meeting that showed us that the Quad Cities are committed to bringing Amtrak back to the area," said Sen. Durbin. "Today, we have a feasibility study that shows us that adding rail service between the Quad Cities and Chicago will give businesses and tourists a time competitive and convenient alterna-

tive to driving. Amtrak already provides quick, cost-effective, and reliable public ground transportation to 30 communities in the state — it's time to add the Quad Cities to that list."

"The first passenger train pulled into the Quad Cities more than 150 years ago," said Congressman Phil Hare (D-Rock Island). "It's time for it to return to this area. In addition to providing an affordable method of transportation between the Quad Cities and Chicago, our region could be an important gateway to Iowa City, Des Moines and Omaha as we continue to invest in transportation infrastructure."

Amtrak has never operated scheduled trains to the Quad Cities, which lost its Rock Island Railroad passenger rail service in 1978. The feasibility report found the most promising route between the Quad Cities and Chicago would be over a portion of the former Rock Island Railroad now owned by Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) from the Quad Cities to a proposed track connection to the BNSF Railway near Wyanet, IL.

The cost of restoring the entire former *Rocket/Quad Cities* route from Rock Island to Chicago via Joliet, IL, is nearly quadruple the expense of the proposed IAIS/BNSF route. It would attract an estimated 26,500 fewer passengers and use five carriers on a route estimated to be more than 90 minutes longer than the combination of IAIS and BNSF with Amtrak.

The choice of the IAIS/BNSF route is also enhanced by taking advantage of recently improved Amtrak stations at Princeton, Mendota and Naperville, IL. Station stops would be determined by IDOT, which has been working with Quad Cities leaders and their consultant on the best choice for a station location in the Moline/Rock Island area.

"We look forward to taking the next step, which would involve negotiations with host railroads, development of detailed capital plans and funding requests," said Alex Kummant, Amtrak President and CEO. "This is the same procedure we laid out in the case of last year's Amtrak report on restoring IDOT-supported service to Rockford and Dubuque."

Later this year, in response to a request from Iowa officials, Amtrak will release a version of this report that considers the feasibility of extending the western terminus of this route from the Quad Cities to Iowa City. Also this year, Amtrak will fulfill the IDOT request for a feasibility report on providing state-supported service between Peoria and Chicago, which also lost its passenger rail service by the Rock Island Railroad in 1978.

Although there have been general op-

— EXPIRATION ALERT —

If your Club Membership expired in January and you have not yet renewed, this is your last issue of *The Fast Mail*. Send your payment today to be sure you won't miss a single copy of our lively and informative newsletter — one of the many benefits of membership in Chicago's most dynamic railfan organization. *Thank you!*

erational discussions and field inspections with the host freight railroads, the specific infrastructure improvement proposals, draft schedules and other railroad-related comments in this report have not been negotiated, or agreed to, with the host freight railroads, and reflect only the findings and best judgment recommendations of the study team. Should further progression of one of the alternative proposals be desired, detailed discussion and formal negotiations will have to be initiated with those rail carriers.

The Quad Cities (Davenport, Moline, Rock Island, and Bettendorf) are located along the Mississippi River. Nearly 60% of its visitors are from the Chicago area. With dozens of miles of scenic riverfront, river boating, casinos, and thousands of acres of expansive public spaces, the Quad Cities area is a major draw from both Iowa and Illinois. The huge Rock Island Arsenal, one of the largest military arsenals in the country and located along the river, is transitioning to become the headquarters of the United States First Army. [QUAD-CITY TIMES]

GEORGE D. WARRINGTON, who started and finished his railroad career working for the state of New Jersey after a stint as Amtrak's sixth president, died at Morristown Memorial Hospital on Christmas Eve. He was 55.

Warrington announced retirement from his post as executive director of New Jersey Transit in January of 2007, leaving on March 30, "to pursue other opportunities." One of those was exploring the possibility of consulting on the proposed multi-billion dollar renovation of New York's Penn Station and construction of new trans-Hudson rail tunnels. However, in April, Warrington was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

The Bayonne, NJ, native joined New Jersey's department of transportation in 1975 after receiving a masters of public administration degree from the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, where he also graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. After a stint as assistant to the director of commuter services at NJDOT, he became deputy executive director and chief of staff at New Jersey Transit in 1980, rising to vice-president/general manager of NJT rail operations between 1988 and 1990, and then NJDOT's deputy commissioner for the next two years. In 1992, he became executive director and president of the Delaware River Port Authority and Port Authority Transit Corp.

Shortly after Amtrak president W. Graham Claytor, Jr., died in late 1993, newly-installed Amtrak president Tom Downs

tapped Warrington to become president of the company's Northeast Corridor business unit, as a part of Downs' restructuring of the passenger carrier. The former New Jersey Transit executive was well equipped to excel in the position, presiding over Amtrak's most visible revenue-producing Metroliner and NortheastDirect product lines and becoming familiar with the procurement process and capital investment necessary to launch what would become the company's *Acela Express* initiative.

When Downs was forced out in late 1997 in a labor dispute with the Amtrak board of directors, Warrington was named acting president, and ascended to the permanent position a year later. The new chief executive de-emphasized Downs' business units in favor of a more centralized approach, insisting that with the launch of the *Acela Express* and a surging mail and express business to help intercity trains, the company was on the "glide path to self-sufficiency" mandated by Congress in its 1997 Amtrak reauthorization. However, the cash flows he had envisioned failed to materialize, while costs spiraled out of control.

With Amtrak facing almost certain bankruptcy sometime in 2002, Warrington resigned in March of that year after being hired by New Jersey Gov. James McGreevy to become executive director of New Jersey Transit. At his new post, Warrington ran the agency in a period of accelerated growth following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

New light-rail lines were opened serving Trenton, Newark and the waterfront communities across from New York City. In addition, NJT ordered new electric locomotives and bi-level commuter cars, added 100 trains and 10,000 seats to the Monday-Friday schedule, in part by assuming slots once held by New York-Philadelphia Amtrak "Clockers," and proposed Atlantic City-New York premium express service which is to start in 2008. [Bob Johnston; TRAINS NewsWire]

IN TRANSIT...

CTA IS FIXING UP... Chicago Transit Authority officers and local officials met recently at the Montrose and Addison Brown Line stations to mark the re-opening of the stations following work to lengthen platforms, rebuild the stationhouses and make the stations accessible.

Two newly-installed elevators are now in operation, making the stations accessible to all CTA customers. With the completion of the renovations at Montrose and Addison, 80 of CTA's 144 rail stations are now accessible. In addition to the new elevators, accessible features also include an

accessible turnstile, tactile platform-edging, gap fillers, TTY telephones and Braille signs.

Other improvements to Montrose include a longer platform to accommodate eight-car trains, a newly-rebuilt stationhouse, wider stairways, additional turnstiles, a new platform canopy, customer-assistant call buttons, an information kiosk, heaters, benches, brighter lighting, windbreaks, and improved station and directional signs. The Montrose station also features original artwork reflecting the street names within the community.

The newly-renovated Addison station reopened on December 3, following 12 months of construction work. With two new elevators, one for each platform, Addison is now the 80th accessible station out of CTA's 144 rail stations. The station also features an accessible turnstile, tactile platform-edging, gap fillers, TTY telephones and Braille signs. Also new to the station are two auxiliary exits, one serving the northbound platform and one serving the southbound platform.

Other upgrades include wider stairways, additional turnstiles, a new platform canopy, customer-assistant call buttons, an information kiosk, heaters, benches, brighter lighting, windbreaks and improved station and directional signs. Addison station also features original artwork, reflecting hand-written box-score symbols describing the May 14, 1969, game between the Chicago Cubs and the San Diego Padres.

To foster a sense of ownership and identity within each station and the surrounding community, the CTA has partnered with the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs to install public art at all 18 stations included in the Brown Line capacity-expansion project. The art is included in the overall project budget.

On the Red Line, both northbound and southbound slow zones have been eliminated on the subway tracks from Grand to Clark & Division. Train speeds have increased up to a maximum speed of 55 mph on that section of track, an improvement from restricted speeds from 35 mph to as low as 6 mph on the curve just south of Clark & Division.

Slow-zone elimination work will continue in the Red Line subway to eliminate 2.5 miles of slow zones from Clark & Division to just north of North & Clybourn, and just under a mile between Lake St. and Roosevelt Road. Work is currently under way on the Blue Line from Harlem to Jefferson Park, and southbound on the Red Line from Wilson to Sheridan.

In September, CTA restored normal train speeds on the Blue Line from Damen

The Greenbrier Resort

Tues., March 25 – Sat., March 29

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Ride Amtrak's *Cardinal* from Chicago to White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, through the spectacular New River Gorge
- Three days at the famed Greenbrier Resort
- Historic resort tour and culinary demonstrations
- Resort entertainment and movies
- Exclusive discounts at Greenbrier Spa
- Optional golf on championship courses
- Optional tour of the underground bunker

A National Historic Landmark in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, The Greenbrier represents 98 years of history with its classic architecture, exquisite interior design, carefully sculpted landscape, impeccable service and outstanding amenities.

With an international reputation as "America's Resort," The Greenbrier, in the mountains of West Virginia, has hosted U.S. Presidents, heads of state, business tycoons and movie stars.

Recently restored to its full glory, this mountain playground of the rich and famous is ours to experience for three days and two nights. Enjoy spring in Appalachia by exploring the resort's 6,500 acres, still owned by CSX Transportation.

Amenities include a full health spa (special discounts for treatments available), three golf courses, indoor swimming pool, bowling alley, resort movie theater, shopping arcades and much more! Enjoy a tour of the historic resort, and culinary demonstrations.

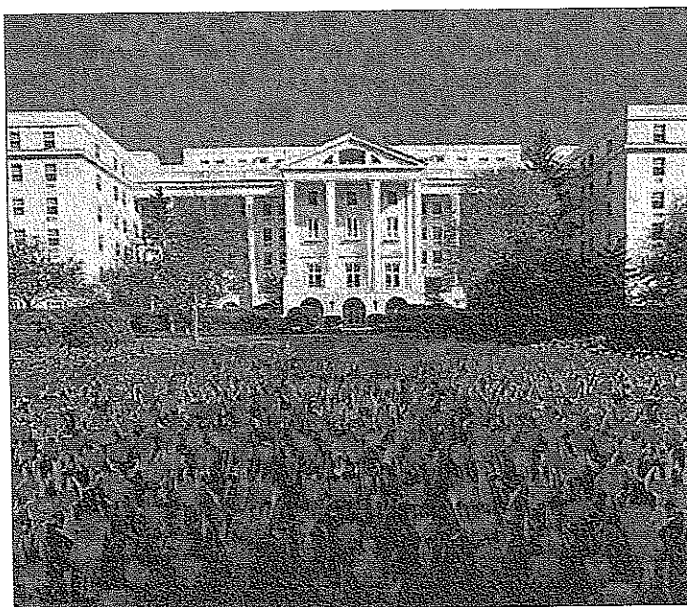
At the height of the Cold War, a massive underground bunker was built to shelter members of Congress.

Tours of the underground bunker are available (for an additional fee) in the serene location of White Sulphur Springs, home of the former "U.S. Government Relocation Facility." Originally planned as a top-secret facility to accommodate the entire U.S. Congress, the bunker was built at The Greenbrier at the height of the Cold War, between 1958 and 1961. Once completed, it was maintained in a state of constant readiness, and updated regularly,

until 1992, when THE WASHINGTON POST published a story exposing it. A phase-out began in late 1995, and tours became available in December of that year.

Buried 720 feet into the hillside under the hotel, ceilings and walls of reinforced concrete three- to five-foot-thick surround the bunker.

The
Greenbrier®



After closing in 2004 for renovations, the bunker re-opened in August of 2006. The facility now offers an extensive exhibition gallery featuring original artifacts and photos, plus a seven-minute video. Documents, maps and other materials convey the complexity of the plan to activate the bunker, and the detailed steps that would have been necessary had the United States faced a nuclear threat.

You can also explore the bunker's 400-seat cafeteria and kitchen, 18 dormitories, a clinic and a power plant.

With a focus on hydrotherapy and the use of mineral-based products, The Greenbrier Spa provides relaxing and therapeutic treatments. With today's finest products

and equipment, meticulous attention to detail, lavish décor, and the hospitality and service for which the resort has always been noted, the Spa focuses on revitalization and relaxation.

One of the few American spas to follow the European treatment of using freshly drawn, natural mineral and sulphur waters, the Spa's bath facilities include private tubs, Swiss showers, Scotch spray, steam, sauna and therapy rooms for massage and body wraps.

Specially priced spa treatments are available to you on this tour. You will be able to select a 20- to 30-minute spa treatment from an exclusive spa menu.

Make spa reservations when you make your trip reservation, with the additional fee included in your final payment. For detailed descriptions of the spa packages, which range from a "classic manicure" to a "Greenbrier Super Soak," phone Mid-America Tours at 847-439-5540.

The cost per person for this trip to the Greenbrier Resort includes free home pick-up and return (\$30 for single), a round-trip Amtrak coach seat*, and fine dining at the Greenbrier: two dinners (jackets and neckties required for gentlemen, dressy outfits for ladies), two breakfasts and three afternoon teas.

*A limited number of private sleeping car rooms are offered at additional cost, coming and/or going, and include meals on board Amtrak's *Cardinal*.

Come along and enjoy the history, luxury and amenities on this fully escorted tour to the unique Greenbrier Resort, during spring in the Appalachian Mountains!

Make sure we receive the adjacent order form with full payment by Feb. 11!

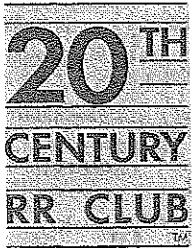
TRIP 08-A

5 days: March 25-29

\$939 dbl / \$1,119 sgl / \$899 trpl

Deadline for reservations:

FEB. 11



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P.O. Box 476
Wilmette, IL 60091-0476
Phone: 312-829-4500
Fax: 847-864-1074
www.20thcentury.org

ORDER FORM

The Greenbrier Resort — Trip 08-A

March 25-29

➤ FULL names of ALL persons in your party (or, if you're rooming with another single, name him/her):

Address _____

City, State, ZIP Code _____

PHONE (day) _____ (evening) _____

➔ REQUIRED so we can contact you quickly with questions and/or itinerary changes

✓ Hotel Room preference: ____ non-smoking ____ SMOKING

ACCOMMODATIONS	PERSON(S)	PER PERSON	TOTAL COST
Number traveling DOUBLE occupancy =		x \$939 =	
Number traveling SINGLE occupancy =		x \$1,119 =	
Number traveling TRIPLE occupancy =		x \$899 =	
↓ NOTE: sleeper rooms hold 1 or 2 passengers — order 1 room for every 2 people			
Optional Viewliner roomette going =		x \$290 =	
Optional Viewliner bedroom going =		x \$442 =	
Optional Viewliner roomette returning =		x \$290 =	
Optional Viewliner bedroom returning =		x \$442 =	
>> Single person? Add \$30 for home pick-up <<			
Spa reservation(s) amount(s) =			
☛ TOTAL DUE by FEBRUARY 11 =			

PAYMENT METHOD: ____ Check ____ Money Order ____ MasterCard ____ VISA
— make check or money order payable to "TCRC"—

Account No. _____ Expiration Date: _____

Cardholder's signature X _____

MAIL ORDER TO: Trip 08-A • 20th Century Railroad Club • PO Box 476 • Wilmette, IL 60091-0476

📧 You will receive your ticket and other information by SAT., **MARCH 15**

➔ NOTICE ➔

An order form which is missing ANY required information will be returned to you without being processed, and you will lose your place in line.

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USE ONLY**



-SLEEPING CARS-
All meals on board
are included in the
cost of Amtrak
sleeping
accommodations.

REFUND POLICY: All charters, tours and excursions (except DIY trips) sponsored by the 20th Century Railroad Club are arranged through a travel agency, which in turn is a booking agent for the various travel suppliers. The Club is not responsible for any personal injury or sickness, loss of or damage to property, delay, inconvenience or other irregularity. If a trip is canceled by

20th Century, all payments collected will be refunded. If you choose to withdraw from a trip for which you have made a deposit or full payment, all or certain portions of your payment may be nonrefundable; contact the Club for details. 20th Century strongly recommends the purchase of trip insurance, which is available through any professional travel agent.

to Clark & Lake, following the replacement of more than 5,000 deteriorated wooden rail ties with concrete rail ties. Work to eliminate slow zones from Jefferson Park to Addison will be completed by the end of 2008. Work has also been completed on the Red Line from Morse to Loyola, and on the Red/Purple/Brown Lines from Armitage to Diversey.

In 2008, CTA is planning more slow-zone removal work for the Purple, Brown and Green Lines, as well as the Loop Elevated. [RAILWAY TRACK & STRUCTURES]

METRA CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD meeting, Friday, Jan. 18... This meeting opened with a update on the new Electronic Train Management System (ETMS) by Joe Lorenzini, head of Metra's engineering dept.

This is Phase I of a radio-based wireless safety-control system, a "safety net" warning engineers of a pending restriction. If no action is taken, ETMS will take over and stop the train. This is a development of Wabtec, Inc., (the old Westinghouse Air Brake Co.) and is currently being tested on the RI, BNSF and UP districts, and Metra is the first commuter line to use this technology.

The cost is in direct proportion to the number of tracks. A single-track operation is \$70 million; a double-track line is approximately two times more; and the Union Pacific could expect paying two or three times more.

Expensive? Yes, but so are accidents and collateral damage. It's state-of-the-art in every respect. Before leaving a terminal, all relevant information is downloaded, with CPS working with a geographical database with fixed slow orders where needed, such as curves, weather conditions, work areas, or new track. The ETMS on-board computer is constantly downloading information from trackside transmitters, and receiving information from a central dispatcher in addition to the fixed data already stored.

An in-cab computer screen lets the engineer know what's going to happen. If the ETMS says 20 mph, and the engineer slows to 25 mph, the system activates the brakes, stopping the train. Again, this would have prevented the two serious accidents on the RI service. This ETMS Product Safety Plan has been presented to the FRA, and Metra is beginning Phase II. [reported by Bill Fried]

"CREATE" PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING... The Chicago Region Environmental & Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE) held a public hearing on Jan. 17 at the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, 415 W. Englewood Ave. (at 63rd St.) in Chicago. The purpose was to receive input from the

community, present the proposed project concerning railroad-track improvements at 63rd & State Streets, and the alternatives considered.

The project's purpose and need, the project update, and completed studies since the June, 2007, public meeting were presented by the construction people, the railroads involved, and the Chicago firemen/paramedics and police departments.

The CREATE plan calls for a new bridge to take the Metra Rock Island District (RID) tracks over the existing Norfolk Southern tracks, instead of existing cross-overs. There will be five new bridges over 67th St., Wentworth Ave., the Dan Ryan Expressway, 61st St. and 59th St., plus viaduct closures at 60th and 66th streets. The project benefits will reduce delays and congestion of railroad operations, improve reliability of freight and passenger services, reduce idling and waiting time, and improve safety.

Nine rail lines plus Amtrak pass through here: BNSF, Belt Railway of Chicago, CN, CP, CSX, IHB, NS, UP and Metra. The CTA's Red and Green lines intersect here in this Tax Increment Funding (TIF) district. Enlarged aerial maps with all locations, schools, libraries, businesses, churches and community buildings were identified, along with the outlined changes showing how they fit into the new IDOT-CREATE project.

No residences or businesses will be physically changed, but some traffic patterns will be changed. The 60th St. viaduct at S. La Salle and the 66th St. one at S. Wentworth will be closed and turned into cul-de-sacs. Metra/RI will have a 2% grade separation at 59th and 66th Sts. (Lafayette Ave.) respectively. The main portion of this new bridge will go over the CTA and the Dan Ryan Expressway (I-57/I-94), NS/Amtrak tracks, Wentworth Ave., and Marquette Ave. (67th St.). An elevation map illustrating these changes gave everyone a good graphic of the future of Englewood.

Dr. Gerald M. Dew, Pastor, gave the moving invocation praise, all connected with this massive project making Englewood a better place and for the safety of all workers. TranSystems (Chicago/Schaumburg, IL) is the general contractor on this project; represented by Chuck Stenzel, Project Manager; Kathy Meyer-kord, Sr. Project Engineer; and Grace Dysico, Environmental Leader. Chuck Allen, Sr., Chicago Manager, Norfolk Southern; Chicago Fire and Police Public Relations staff; and George Hardwidge, Metra's Chief Transportation Officer, made up the speaking and information group.

Chuck Stenzel spoke of the employ-

ment opportunities and upgrading the environmental studies between 59th to 69th Streets, the project area. Purpose and need was clear when Metra has 80 trains a day; Amtrak, 16; and NS, 50.

Stenzel addressed the system capacity, how this will reduce delays and improve safety and the environment. Alternatives available are (1) no action means an outmoded layout becomes worse; (2) a bypass route for Metra is too disruptive and expensive; (3) NS's six tracks over Metra's two are not realistic; (4) Metra's two tracks, with infrastructure in place for a third later on over the six NS tracks, become the preferred alternate. Stenzel noted that all work will be on railroad property, with the new tracks to the west of the existing Metra tracks so there will be no disruption of service.

Viaduct closure studies showed no impact on traffic, pedestrians, CTA access, utilities, schools, parks and police/fire services. Drainage issues will be improved with landscaping, with safety concerns and eliminating secluded areas fostering crime and vandalism. Take your photos now before Project P-1 erases the multiple grade-level rail crossings ("diamonds") forever. A noise and vibration analysis showed that noise walls were not feasible, but the use of noise-dampening pads did the trick.

The TranSystems team continued noting only minimal road closings when construction is required; air-quality and dust control will be less without idling trains burning fuel; improved pedestrian accesses, construction easements and land acquisition. Stenzel emphasized that no permanent property acquisitions and no residential/business relocations are in the project schedule. He repeated that all work will be on railroad property.

Chuck Stenzel continued discussing the vast job opportunities this project creates, with an estimated budget of \$110 million over 2-plus years. There will be mandatory open pre-bid meetings with IDOT, CDOT and a Railroad Development Comprehensive Program to facilitate railroad and construction employment. All CREATE programs are committed to diversity.

In conclusion, Stenzel noted "that getting the approval and continuation of public involvement is what makes this a great success." [reported by Bill Fried]

MIXED FREIGHT MONTHLY...

CRITICS OF EJ&E PURCHASE... Canadian National has been facing a storm of criticism from communities along the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern outside Chicago, following CN's announcement it would purchase the

railroad to ease congestion in the Chicago terminal. On Sept. 26, CN and United States Steel Corp. announced an agreement under which CN will acquire most of the EJ&E for \$300 million. CN would spend another \$100 million to upgrade infrastructure on the EJ&E and would increase traffic levels, which has raised the ire of residents. The Surface Transportation Board, which must bless the merger, has required CN to file a time-consuming Environmental Impact Statement.

On Dec. 20, CN issued a news release firing back at its critics. E. Hunter Harrison, president and CEO of CN, said in the release that it's time that public attention in the Chicago area refocus on the broad rail transportation efficiency and environmental benefits of the acquisition. Harrison said CN believes local debate may have been too centered on the potential adverse impact on some communities when a broader examination of the benefits for the greater Chicago region is warranted.

According to CN, by dispersing its trains along the "J" arc on the periphery of the Chicago metropolitan area, the transaction stands to generate broad public interest benefits such as:

Increasing the speed of commerce through the region by cutting rail congestion in the inner core of Chicago;

Providing increased transportation capacity in the Chicago region at a time when demand for rail transportation is expected to rise;

Generating significant environmental benefits, including improved safety, for people in the greater Chicago area because of shorter transit times, resulting in fewer locomotive emissions, fewer blocked crossings, and fewer idling trains;

Providing a head start for the Chicago Region Environmental Transportation Efficiency Program, with CN committing \$400 million to create capacity on the Chicago rail network and removing CN rail operations from downtown Chicago; and

Making it possible for the City of Chicago to realize its goal of seeing trains vacate the St. Charles Air Line more quickly than under CREATE's Central Corridor scenario so that redevelopment plans for the area may progress, including the site's use in connection with Chicago's bid for the 2016 Olympic Games.

In January of 2008, CN will start the next phase of a community outreach program, with experts helping it to prioritize road crossing and other environmental issues with affected communities. The railroad is actively supporting the Surface Transportation Board's environmental review of the transaction. Harrison said,

"We are ready to work with communities, and in turn hope for their cooperation to achieve a timely review of this proposed transaction." [TRAINS NewsWire]

CN/EJ&E MEETING REPORT... The Surface Transportation Board (STB) held one of its seven open meetings concerning the Canadian National Railway's acquisition of the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railroad on Jan. 22 at the Crowne Plaza Chicago Metro Hotel, 733 W. Madison St. These meetings were held in the major towns along the line (Waukegan, Mundelein, Barrington, West Chicago (Turner Jct.), Joliet, Matteson, Gary) to formulate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); conducted by HDR Engineering, Inc. (www.hdrinc.com), a company involved in all aspects of large STB projects such as this.

The STB is an independent federal regulatory agency with jurisdiction over certain surface transportation matters including new rail lines, construction, abandonments and mergers. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) is the office within the Board responsible for directing the environmental review process, an independent analysis of data, and making recommendations to the Board. Its purpose is to provide information before this Board, describe the environmental review purpose and process, and gather public comments.

This proposed acquisition includes all of the 198 miles of EJ&E track (main line, yards, spur lines) from northeast Illinois, arcing west, south and east to northwest Indiana. This includes the major yards: Kirk, East Joliet and Whiting. This will give the CN operational flexibility, with a continuous route around Chicago and making the steel, chemical and petrochemical industries more viable to a North American supply line.

There will be changes over the next three to four years. Some communities will see more rail traffic, and some will see less. In addition to the regular traffic, fourteen locations on the EJ&E line will see an increase of 15 to 26 trains per day over the tentative next three years (2011). Included are the elimination of the Chicago "Air Line" traffic bottleneck at 16th St.; a decrease in rail traffic on CN lines within the EJ&E arc, including withdrawal from the CREATE Project in the Englewood district; 19 miles of siding and double-tracking; and new rail connections at Minger, Matteson and Joliet, IL, and Ivanhoe, Griffith and Kirk Yard, IN.

The scope of study of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) covers socioeconomic of land use, safety, energy, air quality, noise and vibration, biological and water resources and environmental justice, concerning impact on historical

and protected areas (wetlands, graveyards, buildings, etc.). Eleven large aerial photos, end-to-end on tables, showed the complete EJ&E system with all pertinent information, locations, factories and proposed track additions noted.

The CN will pay \$300 million for the EJ&E, plus another \$100 million for the upgrades on the line (referenced earlier). The benefits of this cannot be denied, when currently it can take a train longer to go from northern Chicago to southern Chicago than over the 865 miles from Winnipeg, MB, Canada, to Chicago. Better rail operations and infrastructure make trains three times more fuel-efficient, with carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions one-third less than trucks. A single intermodal train can haul the same freight as 280 semi-trailer trucks.

Commuter lines will be freed of freight-train interference on shared lines. Metra will still be able to negotiate to use EJ&E property for its new STAR line, or other commuter usage. Some communities along current Metra routes have shown support for this acquisition to go through, clearing the way for improved Metra service, especially when 87.5% of commuters (mostly in autos) do not come into Cook County. CN's withdrawal from the CREATE Project reduces taxpayer funding, whereas the towns along the EJ&E will reap the benefits from taxes CN will pay.

These CN/EJ&E meetings were informal, with representatives and attendees freely mixing and addressing individual inquiries on a one-on-one basis. Safety and environment issues were fully explained. There will be no idling trains wasting fuel or blocking roads. Any main-line EJ&E street/road crossings not yet equipped with gates and warning lights will have them by 2009. This acquisition is a win-win for all of Chicago, the collar counties — and even Winnipeg. [reported by Bill Fried]

MARKERS...

EAST TROY RAILROAD TURNS 100... The East Troy Railroad, the last surviving piece of the Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Co. interurban system, celebrated its 100th Anniversary on Dec. 13, THE WEEK EXTRA newspaper reported. To mark the occasion, exactly 100 years to the hour after the first cars rolled into East Troy, a streetcar retraced the inaugural train's maiden voyage. There was also a parade and party with guests including state, county, and local representatives. Today the railroad is a museum operation that carries about 30,000 visitors a year.

TMER&L, a predecessor company to today's WE Energies, carried freight and

passengers between Milwaukee and East Troy beginning in 1907. In 1939, the seven-mile stretch between East Troy and Mukwonago, Wis., was transferred to the Village of East Troy, and the village operated the railroad with its own employees for freight purposes, but it remained an electric railroad.

In 1972, a deal was formed between the village and the Wisconsin Electric Railway Historical Society and they began passenger operations that Memorial Day as the East Troy Trolley Museum. In 1985, the Wisconsin Trolley Museum took over freight and tourist operations under the name East Troy Electric Railroad.

Among the improvements planned in 2008 and 2009 is the installation of 6,000 ties, increasing the line's electrical capacity; returning Milwaukee Streetcar 846 to operating condition; and grade crossing upgrades. For more information, visit www.easttroyrr.org. [TRAINS

NewsWire]

RUNNING OUT OF STEAM? Perhaps within a few months, Union Pacific Railroad may evict the City of Portland from the Brooklyn Roundhouse, a move that would leave three steam engines without a home, the PORTLAND TRIBUNE reported. The three steam engines, owned by the city, are the Spokane, Portland & Seattle 4-8-4 No. 700, Southern Pacific 4-8-4 No. 4449, and Oregon Railway & Navigation 4-6-2 No. 197.

Union Pacific has leased the Brooklyn Roundhouse to the city for \$1 per month. However, the railroad wants to expand its yard onto the territory now occupied by the roundhouse. The Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation has been searching for a new location for the engines, but they've yet to locate one.

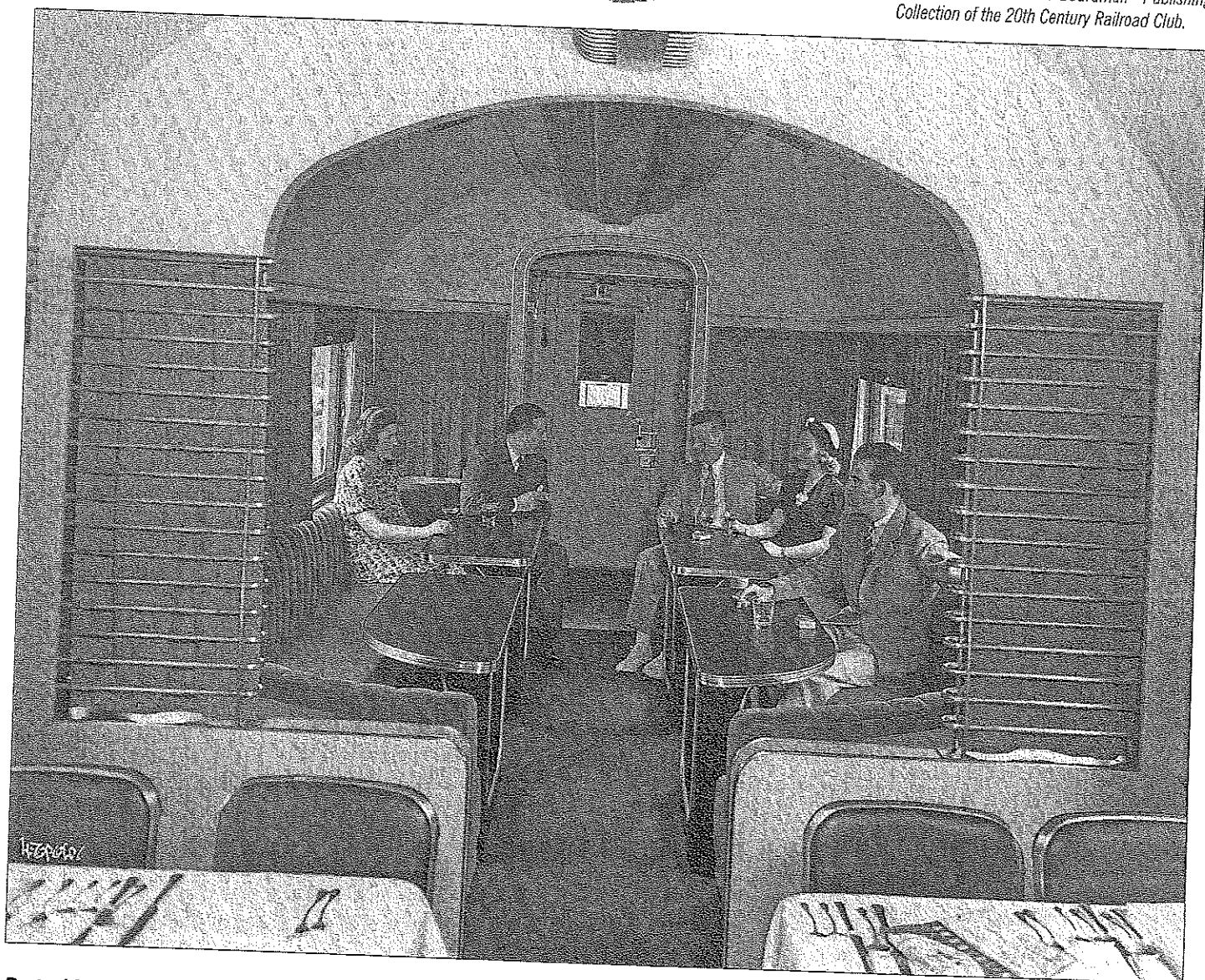
"We hope we won't have to store everything out in the open, where the elements and vandals can get to them," said Doyle McCormack, president of the foundation.

The group would like to find a location that could serve as a museum in addition to housing the engines. [TRAINS NewsWire] # # #



Now here is a photo of a genuine diner/lounge! It was built by the Pullman Co. in the late 1950s. This is a much more sensible layout than what Amtrak is doing currently.

Photo from Simmons-Boardman Publishing Collection of the 20th Century Railroad Club.



THE BUMPING POST... *Errata, Addenda, Trivia, Effluvia, Etc.*

HONOR ROLL... Presidential Club (\$200): John Kraeger; Charles Phillips. **Century Club** (\$125): Kim Fischer; Michael Kelly; Steve Laffey; Tom Leach; George & Dorothy Strombeck; Irv Tiahnybik. **Contributing** (\$75): Curtis Larson, Austin Larson; William, Renate & Katherine Lyman; Rowland Smith; Laverne Trappe. And Life Member Roger Koenig contributed another \$125!

Thanks very much to all of the above for their wonderful generosity!

THE WORLD'S 25 TOP TRAINS... What does Europe's very dignified grande dame, the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express*, share in common with India's wheezing, narrow-gauge geezer, the 100-year-old steam *Toy Train*? They're both members of a select group; namely, "The World's Top 25 Trains," as determined by The Society of International Railway Travelers®. An organization of travelers who love the comfort and romance of great trains, the Society celebrates its 25th year in 2008.

Some on the list are over-the-top luxury, such as the all-first-class *Golden Eagle Trans-Siberian Express*, Rovos Rail's *Pride of Africa* and India's *Deccan Odyssey*. Others offer the most stylish and comfortable way to see less-developed regions, such the world's newest private train, the *Danube Express*, which offers week-long, rail-based "cruises" through Central

Europe.

Per-person prices for these mostly private-train tours range from \$2,895 for a week in Mexico's Copper Canyon aboard the *Sierra Madre Express* to \$26,500 for a 16-day Vancouver-Montreal excursion aboard the exclusive *Royal Canadian Pacific*, which hosted the likes of Sir Winston Churchill, King George VI, Queen Elizabeth — and Bill Gates.

Following, in geographical order, are the winning trains and principal countries or areas of operation.

North America: 1) *Canadian* (Canada); 2) *Royal Canadian Pacific* (Canada); 3) *Canadian Rockies Steam Express* (Canada); 4) *Rocky Mountaineer* (Canada); 5) *Grand-Luxe Express* (US); 6) *Sierra Madre Express* (Mexico).

South America: 7) *Andean Explorer* (Peru); 8) *Hiram Bingham* (Peru).

Africa: 9) *Blue Train* (South Africa); 10) *Pride of Africa* (Rovos Rail; South Africa)

Asia/Indian Subcontinent: 11) *Palace on Wheels* (India); 12) *Eastern & Oriental Express* (SE Asia); 13) *ShangriLa Express* (China/Tibet); 14) *Toy Train* (India); 15) *Deccan Odyssey* (India).

Europe: 16) *Danube Express* (Central Europe, Turkey); 17) *Al Andalus Express* (Spain); 18) *El Transcantabrico* (Spain);

19) *Golden Eagle Trans-Siberian Express* (Russia); 20) *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express* (Europe); 21) *Glacier Express* (Switzerland); 22) *Royal Scotsman* (Scotland).

"Down Under:" 23) *Ghan* (Australia); 24) *Indian Pacific* (Australia); 25) *Sunlander* (Australia)

"The World's Top 25 Trains are based on our own experience and that of our writers, editors, members and staff," said Eleanor Hardy, Society president. The selections were announced in a Special Edition of The International Railway Traveler® magazine, "The IRT Society's Best-Loved Railway Journeys — 2008."

"The trains met stringent standards for service, accommodation, scenery, itinerary, off-train experiences and passenger en-

joyment. Trains cannot pay to be included in this book: we choose them," Hardy said.

The IRT Special Edition includes complete descriptions of each of the Top 25 trains: their compartments and public spaces, equipment used and preferred routes. The cover price is \$35, but the publication is available free of charge through April 30 for inquiries made directly to the IRT Society office.

The Society is a membership organization whose benefits include an annual subscription to The International Railway Traveler. Regular annual U.S. membership dues are \$85 (\$95 for Canada; \$105 elsewhere).

To join, contact The Society of International Railway Travelers®, 2010 Edgeland Ave., Suite 100; Louisville, KY 40204. Telephone (502) 454-0277 or (800) 478-4881; fax (502) 458-2250, email <tourdesk@irtsociety.com>. The web site is <www.irtsociety.com>.

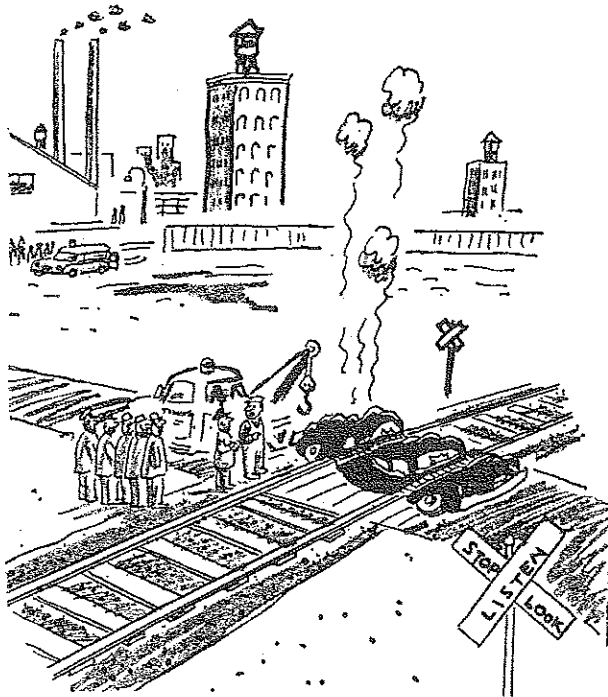
REQUIESCAT IN PACE... Bob Gross, another one of our most valuable Club members, died suddenly on Jan. 3 at age 74. Bob worked for two years for the Belt Railway of Chicago, and then for 40 years as a ticket agent for United Air Lines.

And for many years, he worked as a volunteer for 20th Century, both in our office (when we had the Skybox for Railfans) and as an exceptional car host, especially in the privately owned railcars added to our chartered Amtrak trains. Bob also was on our board of directors for several years, mostly as the secretary.

As a professional ticket agent, Bob Gross was very valuable to us in our office, properly processing ticket orders for charter trains and group trips, filling requests for literature, and doing all kinds of odds and ends. And, of course, he handled phone calls very well, too.

As a bonus, he had a superb sense of humor, which made him very pleasant to work with for all of his colleagues. Oh, yes — we definitely miss Bob Gross!

###



"He did stop, look and listen—right on the railroad tracks."

WILLIAM L. PHILLIPS, ESQ.

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THE FAST MAIL is the official newsletter of the 20th Century Railroad Club, and is published monthly for its members. Family membership dues are \$40 per year — for an application, phone the Club at (312) 829-4500. We invite you to contribute news items, articles and photos! Please mail these to: Newsletter Editor; 20th Century Railroad Club; PO Box 476; Wilmette, IL 60091-0476.

The 20th Century Railroad Club is a member of the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners Inc. (AAPRCO), and the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance (RPCA).

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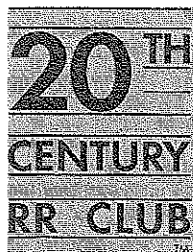
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— www.20thcentury.org —

Arrivals & Departures

For the latest information on railroad-club programs,
visit www.railcc.org/Events.html

- Feb. 8 Railway & Locomotive Historical Society meeting — 7:00p, 77 W. Washington Blvd (Chicago Temple, 3rd floor), Chicago. Program: "to be announced." Admission: free. www.rrsociety.org
- Feb. 8 Chicago Ch./NRHS meeting — 8:00p, Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Ave., Downers Grove (2 blocks south of Metra/BNSF station). Program: "to be announced." Admission: free. www.chicagonrhs.com
- Feb. 13 20th Century Railroad Club meeting — 7:00p, Electricians Union Hall, 600 W. Washington Blvd, Chicago. Program: Member Larry Bloom recently donated slides showing "rail trips from Washington, DC, in the 1960s, a Parke County (Indiana) Bridge Fest in 1968, Mexico in 1966, and other items." Stan Brandt will show slides of an AAPRCO "private varnish" convention in Milwaukee in 1986 and another in Pittsburgh in 1987. The door opens at 6:30p. Non-member admission: \$3.
- Feb. 15 Railroad Club of Chicago meeting — 7:30p, 77 W. Washington Blvd (Chicago Temple, 3rd floor), Chicago. Program: "to be announced." \$3 donation requested from non-members. www.railcc.org
- Feb. 22 Central Electric Railfans Association meeting — 7:00p; University Center, 525 S. State St., 2nd floor, Chicago. Program: "to be announced." Admission: free. www.cera-chicago.org.



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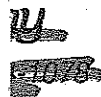
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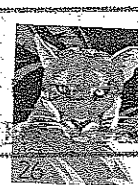
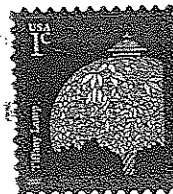


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