



Environmental Impact Statement

Scoping Comment for the Proposed Canadian National Railway Company Acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company STB Finance Docket No. 35087 Comment Form

How Do I Submit Comments?

- Written Comments: Complete and submit this form at the public open house scoping meeting, or follow the directions on the reverse side of this sheet to mail your comments.
- Recorded Comments: Provide your comments to a member of the project team or court reporter at this public open house scoping meeting, or call the toll-free project information line: 1-800-347-0689.
- Electronic Comments: Submit electronic comments by visiting the Surface Transportation Board's website, www.stb.dot.gov, under the heading "E-Filing."

Please refer to STB Finance Docket No. 35087 in all correspondence addressed to the Surface Transportation Board. Comments must be submitted by February 1, 2008.

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Too MANY TRAINS IN Will County Illinois create Need for Elevated Railway Lines over MAJOR thoroughfares BASED ON the following:

A. Will Co. future Epicenter of the Nation for Rail Traffic will consist of three (3) intermodals.

1. Elwood - Nation's Largest NOW in operation
2. Crete - Proposed
3. Joliet - Proposed south of Joliet

B. Rail Traffic will increase to MAXIMUM Levels, putting MORE TRUCKS ON Local Roads AND create traffic JAMS AT Railway crossings.

EXAMPLE - ON JANUARY 11, 2008 A Union Pacific Train passing through Joliet, tied up four (4) major streets AND Route 171 for over 20 minutes AT THE SAME TIME, MAKING it impossible to get out of that area via main Arterial Street. (ONE TRAIN) Cuts The Town Literally in Two EAST side from West Side

C. SOON, only ONE Hospital will serve 100,000+ Residents of Joliet AND is located ON the West Side. This could create a catastrophic "life vs Death" situation especially if a major Disaster occurred.

ENCLOSED Herald News paper Articles

Surface Transportation Board
-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

What scoping meeting did you attend? (Please circle): Mundelein, Barrington, Joliet, Matteson, Gary, West Chicago, Chicago.

YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT!

Comments provided by the public help determine the scope of the environmental review.

Name: Jacqueline Garcia

Address: 702 VISTA LANE

City, State, Zip: Joliet, IL 60435

Date: JANUARY 29, 2008



INSIDE

Stocks rise on banks talks to buy Countrywide. **Page B2**

BUSINESS

The Herald News

Do you want to send in business news?
E-mail: jbiz@scn1.com
Fax: (815) 729-6059
Questions: Call business page editor Nick Reiher at (815) 729-6050

Railroad plan draws public to meetings

Increased train traffic tops list of concerns

By **Cindy Wojdyla Cain**
 STAFF WRITER

JOLIET—Retiree Bob Gardner, of New Lenox, would like to sit on his deck, look at his pond and relax in his home, which is nestled in the Liberty Square subdivision.

That's hard to do with trains rumbling by on the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railroad tracks. It's not so much the rumbling that's a problem—it's the train whistles.

Now Gardner worries that the proposed sale of the EJ&E to Canadian National Railway will even further shatter the peace. Canadian National plans to re-route traffic around Chicago on the "J," which could more than triple the number of trains on the tracks each day.

Residents voice concern

Gardner and dozens of other concerned Will County area residents traveled to a public meeting at the Jacob Henry Mansion on Thursday to voice their concerns about the pending sale. The meeting was one of seven "scoping" meetings organized by the U.S. Surface

Transportation Board as part of its environmental impact study on the acquisition. Attendees left verbal or written comments that will help the STB determine which issues to study. The STB has the power to approve or deny the acquisition.

Most of the residential development in New Lenox is south of the tracks, Gardner said. Increased train traffic will cut those residents off from the proposed new Silver Cross Hospital, proposed shopping centers and the new Metra station, which opened last year.

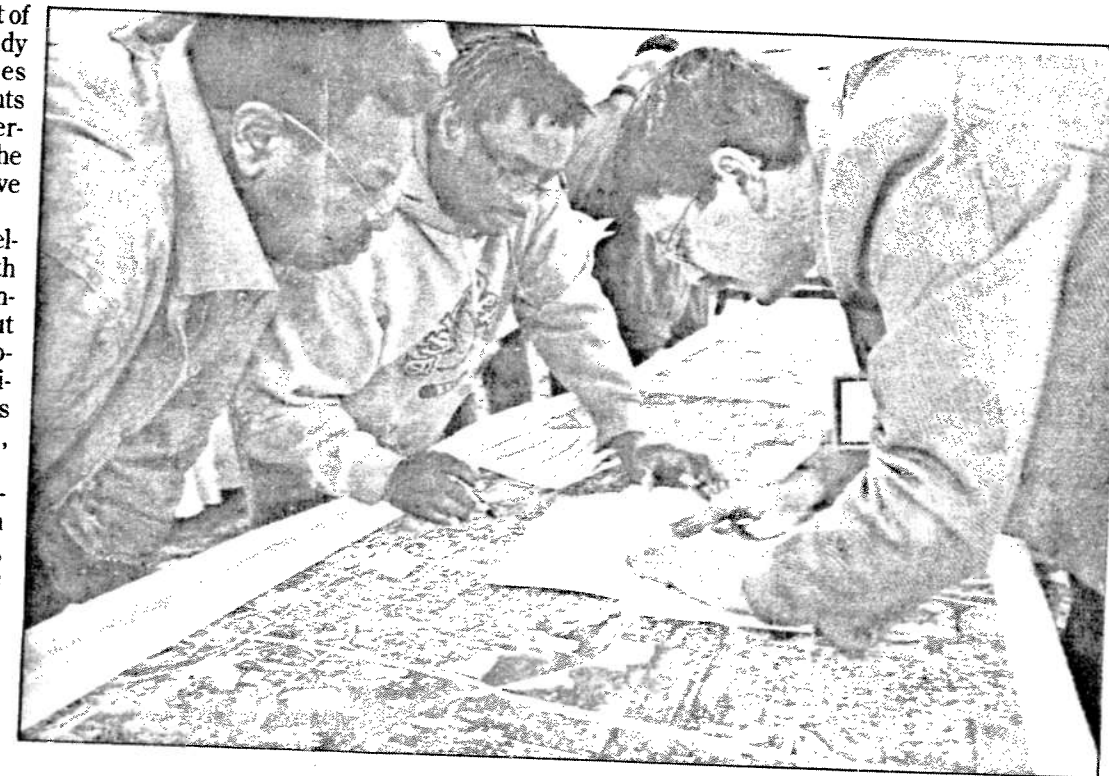
School buses bringing students to Lincoln-Way West High School, which will open in 2009, also would have to cross the more congested railroad tracks, he said.

Cynthia Cole, of Joliet, attended the meeting to voice her concerns about an EJ&E offshoot line that cuts through the eastern section of the city near where she lives.

"What you're going to have is an increase in traffic accidents and people trying to outrun the train," she said.

Trains and barges

Blocked train crossings will cut East Side residents off from hospitals and jobs, she said. Also, the EJ&E track is close to the bridges in downtown Joliet, which means residents could be stopped by both



MICHAEL R. SCHMIDT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Lazzara (right), an engineer working on behalf of the service transportation board, goes over area maps of Joliet with Willie Sellers (left) and Dwight Williams (center), both of Joliet, on Thursday afternoon at the Jacob Henry Mansion. The group invited the community in to view proposed changes that will accompany the sale of the EJ&E railroad.

trains and barges in the future.

"You have bridges and you have trains, in some areas within five blocks of each other."

Kevin Lederer, of Frankfort, said the EJ&E line runs right near his home through the Prestwick subdivision. He fears

an increase in train traffic will force more vehicles onto the already congested U.S. 30 because it has a train overpass and not a grade crossing. He also worries about school buses being able to safely navigate more congested tracks.

But Lederer was realistic.

"My understanding is only a handful of (railroad acquisition) cases in the United States have not been approved," he said. "So we're trying to gain as much mitigation as we possibly can."

'Scoping meetings'

Phillis Johnson-Ball, a STB

project manager, said about 40-50 people had attended the afternoon session of the meeting (another was held from 6-8 p.m.).

"It's been a steady stream, a good stream," she said. "They have come in the door knowing what they wanted to say to us."

Most attendees were concerned with noise, emergency response times and access to hospitals.

The EJ&E stretches 198 miles from Waukegan in the north to Gary, Ind., and South Chicago in the east. In Will County, the EJ&E tracks run through Plainfield, Crest Hill, Joliet, New Lenox, Frankfort and Mokena.

For future scoping meeting dates and locations go to www.stb.dot.gov. The STB also has set up a hot line for more information on the proposed acquisition. The number is (800) 347-0689.

Written comments can be sent to the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E. Street, SW, Washington, D.C., 20423, Attention: Phillis Johnson-Ball, Environmental Filing, STB, Finance Docket No. 35087. The deadline is Feb. 1.

Reporter Cindy Wojdyla Cain may be reached at (815) 729-6044 or at ccain@scn1.com.

BRIEFCASE

Auditor honored

For the sixth consecutive year, Will County Auditor Stephen P. Weber, CPA has

support," Weber said. "The bottom line is that Will County tax payers can count on the superior accuracy of our finan-

at the Will County Auditor's visitors computer station; or it can also be accessed on the Auditor's Web site at www.will-county.org.

"The CFRE process was developed as a way to identify for the public and employers those individuals who possess the knowledge, skills

Search engines are a bit sluggish

FORUM

PLACE

tion

spring to arrive?

YOUR VIEW: OPENLINE (815) 729-6125

Callers must state their name, hometown and phone number. Phone numbers will be used for verification only. Callers should spell their names. Callers are limited to one call per day. Calls containing obscenities, personal attacks, libel or slander will not be published. Comments are callers' opinions and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Herald News.

Blame everything on illegals, Obama

We're currently bogged down in two wars. We're hated all around the world. Gasoline costs \$3 a gallon, people are losing their homes to foreclosure, factories are packing up and moving to China, and we're approaching a recession. According to a handful of people who call the OpenLine nearly every day, these problems are the fault of Little Miss Black Joliet, Barack Obama and his merry band of illegal immigrants. Of course, race has nothing to do with it.

Willard Bishop

Joliet

Berko speaks truth and in English

Way to go, Malcolm Berko. You have said the truth for us. In The Herald

NO

10%

12 votes

Question

y to attend an

ads go toward a

729-6122

29-6123

clicking on the
heraldnews

News on Jan. 16, Berko wrote that he will not answer letters written in Spanish and stated that he is proud of his heritage, "100 percent American."

Betty Lou Semplinski

Crest Hill

People need to live within means

This is in regard to a comment from Tim Blatnick. Whether I pay \$9,000 or \$9 a year for taxes, I'm talking people living within their means. That means people getting loans that they can afford. I'm not sitting on my perch looking down on anyone else. I'm just saying that we're having most of these foreclosures because these banks are letting people get loans that they cannot afford. Plus, the people are cheating the school systems. If you have three fami-

lies living in one house and each family has two kids, they are paying taxes to schools on one family's children.

Bryon Adamson

Shorewood

Lockport turning into 'Boxport'

In the early 1800s, Lockport was named because of the canal locks that helped us grow into a thriving community. Now that many warehouses are being planned for this area, maybe our city's name should be changed to Boxport. After a couple of years of no occupancy in these warehouses or boxes, such as the one on Division Street in Crest Hill and in Lemont at Interstate 355, let our crowded high school take the empty spaces. On second thought, rename Lockport "Pothole City" in

honor of our city roads.

Wanda Dodge

Lockport

Train delays already a problem

I'm calling about The Herald News article on Jan. 10 in regard to the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad expansion. I think this is a bad idea because the trains already delay a crossover at Mills Road for people who go to work. Trains come through there and take longer than 20 minutes to pass because they are going too slow or sitting still for so long. Adding more trains is a very bad idea, and it has been a problem for a very long time. It affects people's work and income.

Loretta DeMoss

Joliet

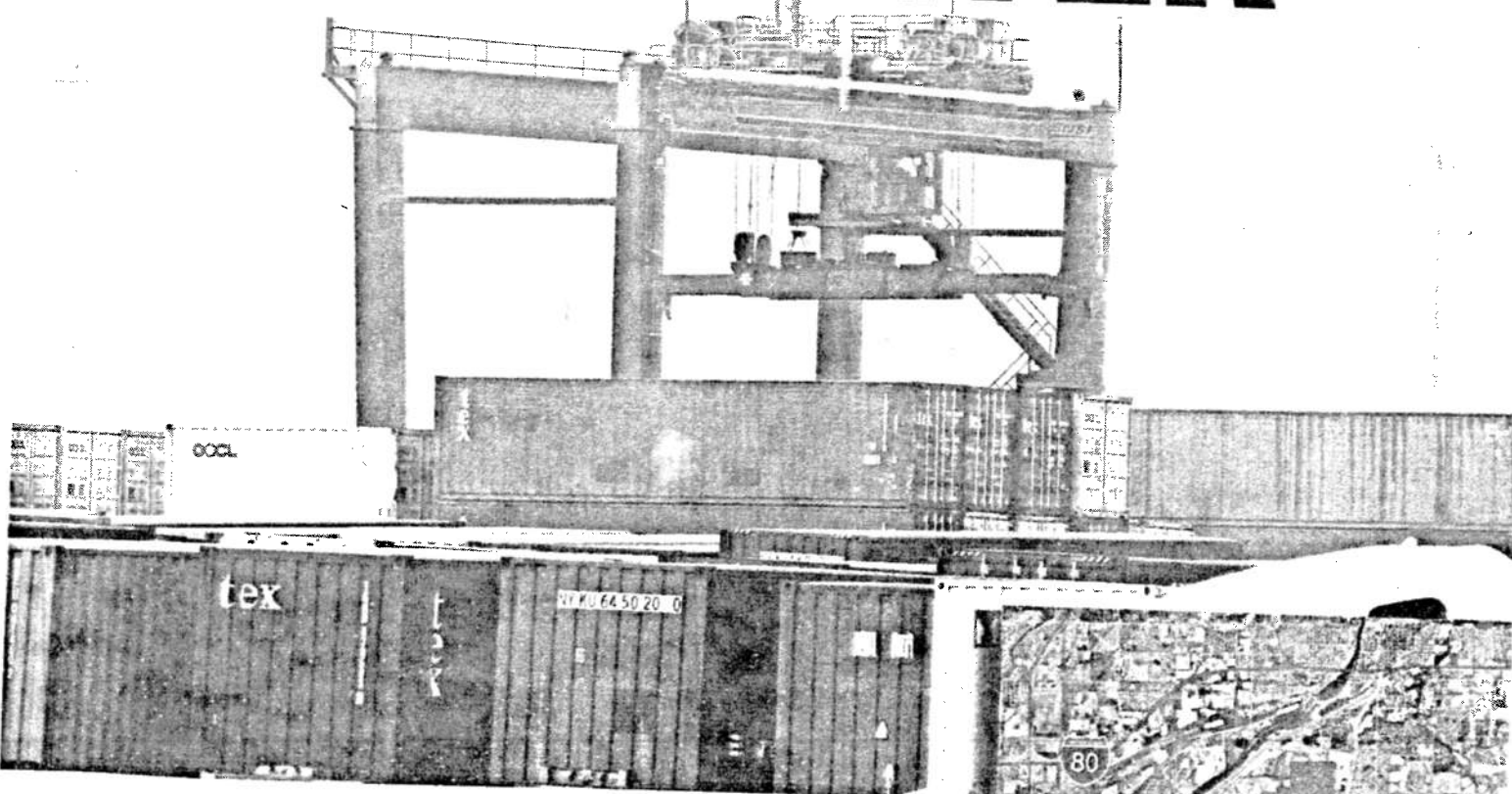
FINAL
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The Herald News

Saturday, January 12, 2008

PLANS FOR TWO MORE INTERMODALS HAVE ALL EYES ON WILL COUNTY

EPICENTER



By Cindy Wojdyla Cain
STAFF WRITER

ROMEDEVILLE—Do you ever wonder why Will County has become a global rail hub?

"We've got this big thing called Lake Michigan," explained Michael Mullen, CEO of CenterPoint Properties.

The existence of Lake Michigan has forced railroad lines to skirt Chicago and tunnel south through the Will County region, Mullen said Thursday.

"This is the epicenter in the nation for rail traffic," Mullen said.

He made his remarks at Thursday's Will County Center for Economic Development's annual Real Estate Forecast Luncheon, held at Lewis University.

Lake Michigan is the reason Will County

is second only to the Los Angeles area in terms of industrial growth, he said.

CenterPoint wants to take advantage of Will County's geography by building two more intermodals, Mullen said. One would be in Crete, the other south of Joliet.

An intermodal is a facility where cargo containers are transferred from rail to truck for regional distribution or truck to rail for long distance shipping.

The 2,200-acre CenterPoint Intermodal Center, which opened in Elwood five years ago, is home to the extremely successful BNSF Logistics Park-Chicago. Now CenterPoint controls 3,858 acres of land south of Joliet that it wants for CenterPoint Intermodal North.

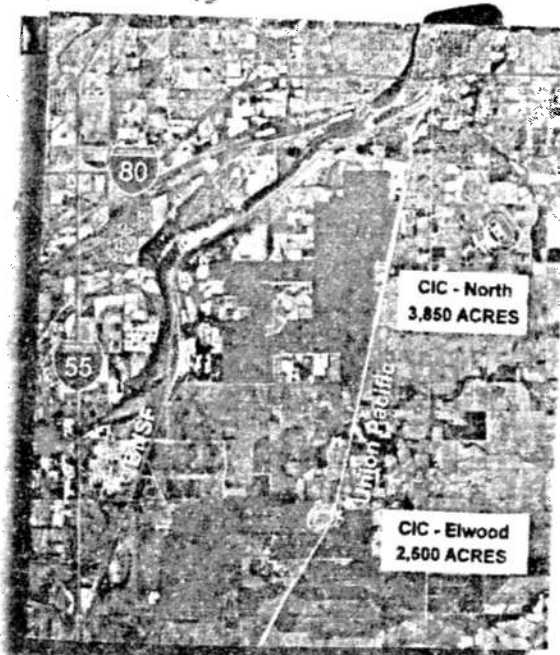


PHOTO MAP COURTESY OF THE WILL COUNTY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Map of the proposed CenterPoint Intermodal Center North.

❖ Turn to INTERMODAL, A2

day after being charged with the murder of a 28-year-old man near a West Loop nightclub in August.

Bryant Buckhanan of the 1490 block of Schoenherr Ave. in the southwest suburb was charged with murder Thursday evening after being arrested without incident Wednesday at 200 N. Pulaski Rd. in Chicago, according to Harrison

man, who was identified in August as a suspect, was not immediately available.

The fatal shooting occurred at 3:08 a.m. Aug. 19 at 733 W. Lake St., Cesario said.

Omari Houston, 28, of 7212 S. Damen Ave., Chicago, was pronounced dead at 3:47 a.m. and an autopsy determined he died of a gunshot wound to the back, according to the Cook County Medical Examiner's office,

involved in an argument earlier in the evening on the street near the Chromium nightclub at 817 W. Lake St., the sergeant said. The club is about a block away from where the shooting occurred.

A motive remains unknown and detectives are still seeking a second suspect, who is unknown as of Friday afternoon. Harrison Area detectives are investigating.

INTERMODAL

From page A1

The site is surrounded by industry and the Autobahn Country Club, Mullen said. The new intermodal would provide hundreds of jobs, grow the area's tax base and take trucks off the roads.

The land CenterPoint has amassed is "an incredibly tricky site to develop," Mullen said. About 28 percent of the land is unusable because water and power and gas lines run through it, he explained.

The city of Joliet is not very enthusiastic about the proposal,

however.

"I don't think it (Mullen's speech) changes any of our opinions," said Jim Haller, the city's director of community and economic development, who attended the CED luncheon. "It's going to take a lot of sitting down and deliberating."

City officials have major concerns about the proposed intermodal's impact on traffic and the low property taxes generated by a rail yard.

Autobahn President Mark Basso was more open to the intermodal project.

"It can work if we have proper screening," he said. "We'd want to work with them to make sure our development is protected

from their development. I think that can be accomplished."

Mullen said his company would be investing \$3.5 billion in the county if the two new intermodals go through: \$1 billion in Elwood, \$1.5 billion in Crete and \$2 billion south of Joliet.

Other states are vying for the company's investment, saying, "Pick us," he warned. But Mullen said CenterPoint would like to stay in Will County along the Interstate 80 corridor.

"We believe Will County is at the crossroads of trade."

Reporter Cindy Wojdyla Cain may be reached at (815) 729-6044 or at ccain@scn1.com.

GRANTS

From page A1

"This is the one we we're in dire need of," Kaupas said. The computers will allow deputies instant access to law enforcement data systems, 911 dispatching and navigational software without having to rely on radio communication.

"Sometimes there can be delays and (having the laptops) will help protect our officers and help protect the county," Kaupas said.

Biggert said she secured the grants with support from fellow Republican Rep. Jerry Weller and Democratic Sens. Dick Durbin and Barack Obama.

"Everyone understood how important these grants are to the safety and security of our community, which goes beyond

politics," Biggert said.

Kaupas said this was the first time the sheriff's office has sought federal grant money.

"I think we were kind of spoiled by getting all three. Now we'll be back for more," he told Biggert.

Reporter Brian Stanley can be reached at (815) 729-6079 or bstanley@scn1.com.

QUICK NEWS

Child ID event today

JOLIET — An Illinois Child Identification Program event will be at 9 a.m. today at the Joliet Masonic Temple, 350 N.

Midland.

The event is sponsored by the Matteson Masonic Lodge, the Elwood Masonic Lodge, Laborers Local 75 and Iron

Workers Local 444.

The free program includes a color photo of the child, a recorded interview, a DNA sample taken through a saliva cheek swab and fingerprints.

The Herald News

300 Caterpillar Drive
Joliet, IL 60436

If you have not received your Herald News by 6:30 a.m. Monday through Saturday or 8 a.m. Sunday, please call (800) 397-9397 (toll free) or (815) 729-6100. To have the paper re-delivered, you must call prior to 10 a.m.

But the district probably will not get the full amount.

Each December, the school board asks for a tax levy extension in the excess of tax extension limitation, which was 2.5 percent for 2007.

"The additional levy request serves as insurance that the dis-

POLLING PLACE

Today's question

Do you support having more coming through the area?

YES

44%
45 votes

NO

56

Now, Finding
Is As I
Finding t



You've heard the news lately about problems in the mortgage industry. Now many homebuyers are concerned about making the right decisions when they finance their home or refinance an existing mortgage.

A mortgage is one of the largest financial transactions most people ever make, so take the time to make sure your mortgage will be a safe and secure choice.

Bank of Shorewood has been financing home loans in Will County for more than 25 years, and we still are today.

We can help you identify all the options

FINAL
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The Herald News

Thursday, January 10, 2008

JOLIET MEETINGS TO LOOK AT IMPACT OF PLANNED EJ&E ACQUISITION **TOO MANY TRAINS?**

By Bob Okon
STAFF WRITER

That train could be a-comin' about every half-hour at certain crossings in Joliet and Plainfield if a railroad merger goes forward as planned.

Canadian National Railway's planned acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern line is the topic of public information and input meetings today in Joliet.

One topic on a lot of people's minds is the train traffic that Canadian National could bring.

EJ&E railroad crossings north of the company railyard in Joliet would see 45 trains a day instead of the 18 trains that go through daily now, according to CN projections.

That would be a train every 32 minutes, said Colin Duesing, a long-range planner for Will County, which is developing its own study of the potential impact of CN's plan. Currently, a train is at those crossings about once every hour and 20 minutes, according to the county calculations.

We don't have a formal position (on the merger)," Duesing said. But the county is preparing its own impact study to present to federal regulators who eventually must OK the merger.

In the meantime, the public can find out more about the merger and the potential problems that would be examined at what are called "scoping meetings." There will be one today in the ballroom at the Henry Mansion, 15 S. Richmond St. in Joliet. The meetings are from 5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. People can come and go, and offer written com-

ments about how expanded train operations might affect life in Will County.

The CN plan will have varied impact at different crossings in Joliet, said James Haller, director of community and economic development for the city.

"Our biggest effect will probably be at Division Street behind the Toys 'R' Us warehouse," said Haller, pointing to one of the crossings north of the EJ&E railyard.

The Division Street crossing also is a connector route to Joliet's main retail district around the Westfield Louis Joliet mall.

The Essington Road crossing north of the mall area also is likely to see a large impact, Haller said.

Joliet crossings east of the EJ&E yard include spots at Woodruff Road, Washington Street, Rowell Avenue, Mills Road and Spencer Road.

The line then continues into New

Lenox and Frankfort, where village officials have voiced concern about the impact, on its way to Cook County and Indiana.

The eastbound crossings also will see an increase in trains, according to the CN plan.

The current rate of six trains a day would increase to 28. That would mean a train every hour and 51 minutes instead of the current



MICHAEL R. SCHMIDT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A train crosses Division Street on the EJ&E railroad line Wednesday afternoon in Joliet. EJ&E is in the process of being bought by Canadian National Railway, which might increase railroad traffic through Joliet.

❖ Turn to **TRAINS, A2**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Humanists, religious ignore misery

In a Dec. 31 Common Sense column, Rey Flores still shows no compassion for fetuses faced with an unwanted childhood in a rough, careless, over-stressed world. He forgets life is a gamble. Both humanists and the religious get so enthusiastic about life that they ignore the catastrophes and other causes of misery that most lives include. Without happiness, life is only a burden. Unwanted fetuses have much less happiness in prospect than others.

It must also be said that Flores fails to understand that a fetus is alive only in the sense that fingernails and other kinds of epidermis are alive. In accordance with this, he can find in the Bible, Hosea 9:14, that the Christian-Muslim deity sometimes welcomes human mis-carriages. In fact, 13:16 callously suggests cruel treatment for pregnant women of a nation's enemy.

In any case, it is important that he or she was wanted, and that the parents are proud and pleased to have the child. This would obviously not be the case with a birth that has been denied an abortion for doctrinal reasons.

Harry E. Mongold
Manhattan

There's always one you forget

Nothing new: you pack away your Christmas decorations, then find one you forgot. Happens every January just like clockwork.

Raymond F. Stoiber
Joliet

Thanks to guardian angel

On Jan. 10, I had a problem with my car in the Jewel parking lot on Larkin Avenue in Joliet. A very kind man came over to the car to help me out. I was very nervous, as this had never happened to

me before, and I couldn't remember phone numbers of relatives who could pick me up. He kindly let me use his cell phone numerous times to try to contact someone. He also recommended a nearby auto shop to call.

He stayed with me until a relative came to take me home, and the auto shop came to tow my car. On this day, he was truly my guardian angel, and being a little shook up, I never thought to ask his name. He knows who he is, and I want to thank him very much. His kindness is appreciated.

Name withheld

Center will create pollution

Not only is Crete going to put in an intermodal facility, the village plans to annex 4,000 acres of Beecher's Washington Township into the village of Crete.

When the Beecher and Crete intermodals go in with the airport and Illiana Expressway, this will put 3,000 more trucks on local roads — traffic is expected to double in 10 years. This will be the most polluted, dangerous area in the county with 4,100 truck accidents a year and tons of pollutants put out by trucks and aircraft.

Trucks will go south on Illinois 1 from the Illiana Expressway at Interstate 394 to take the Peotone blacktop to Interstate 57. A load limit makes Goodenow Road unusable.

These trucks will bring in more Chinese products — even 73 percent of our Vitamin C is made there.

Under the free trade acts, our trade deficit is \$900 billion. The total U.S. debt is approaching \$10 trillion. Our taxes are used to pay the interest of \$94 billion. Illinois debt is \$106 billion.

Trucks consume 45 billion gallons of fuel each year, creating 450 tons of car-

bon dioxide and carbon nanoparticles. When trucks idle waiting for loads, they consume 2 billion tons of fuel producing 1 million tons of carbon dioxide, 80,000 tons of nitrous oxide, and 5,000 tons of carbon nanoparticles.

More good U.S. jobs will disappear. All of the American soldiers that fought and died to stop communism are being stabbed in the back by some politicians. They are giving American jobs away. Illinois has already lost 50,000 jobs. The rich will become richer and the middle class will disappear just as in communist countries.

What separates us from the animals is that we are supposed to be able to look into the future to avoid disasters.

The irony of all this, the mayor of Crete is the postmaster of Beecher.

Bob Carter
Beecher

Learn to accept change

Decisions we make in our life are never permanent. Life is constantly changing and throwing new things our way, and we have to decide whether to accept or decline. A decision you made a month ago may have been good at the time, but now circumstances have changed and life is moving you into a different direction.

As we all know, time stops for no one and every day is an adventure. We can't look upon ourselves as having made a poor decision but a right decision at that time in our life. Sometimes we just have to recognize that life is ever changing; adjust, modify and move forward. Accepting change gives us the chance to learn and grow and allows us to be open to new opportunities and experiences.

Michele Farkas
Shorewood