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President's Message

Well, the Bedford Boomers show was a success. Thank you to all members who attended. One thing I noticed is that the parents with children are as bad as the kids. There was a train derailed and a person picked up the car and was walking with it. I said "PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH!" The person replied there was no sign saying do not touch. I said "USE COMMON SENSE". The guy walked away pissed at me. If its not yours DO NOT TOUCH! That's common sense isn't it?

Well the Greenburg show was last weekend and Dan Pawling was the coordinator. I received a postcard from Greenburg shows and there was a typographical error in out layout size. It said the layout was going to be 24x332 ouch! I wish we had that many modules.

Winterfest is right around the corner January 25th to 27th. Registration begins after Thanksgiving. We will be trying a few new things this year. New raffles and a rebate for a module. We are trying to get more NEW people to bring modules. Also, make your hotel reservations NOW. Call the Hilton Garden Inn in Springfield, Massachusetts and mention rate code: NTRAK.
Til Next Month, Mark

Winterfest 2008

Will you be there?
January 25 - 27, 2008.

If not you will be missing out.

Rail from London to Windsor *by Roland Kelley*



Just returned from a trip to London and Paris. Had a chance to ride both commuter rail and one of the top trains the Euro Star which goes via the tunnel from London to Paris. Will give you more on the Euro Star soon. These pictures are for a day trip from London to Windsor to of course see Windsor Castle. Did not realize how much third rail was used in the London area. It took us less than an hour to get to Windsor and it was all third rail. The cars were clean and the ride was very smooth. What struck me was how active passenger service is. It must have been like this in the U.S. back in the 30's and 40's. The equipment was in great shape and the trains ran on time. We went on a Sunday and the train was quite full. Yes the towns are close together and gas is very high, but they invest in rail transport, maybe we should learn from them. As you ride along you see many tracks, not like in the U.S where you see where the tracks had been taken up or out all together. As a rail fan it is nice to see trains still an important part of getting around.

BIG SKY: The Third Day *by D. Pawling's, Jr. & Sr.*



Article appears on Page 2.



On the third morning (July 22nd) of our trip to Montana, we decided to visit the RR Junction in the next town. Both are named Porter. The two-track NS mainline that we saw last night in Chesterton runs through Porter. From Chicago the first line to peel off easterly from the main in this junction is the Amtrak Michigan District (photo page 1) which takes the "Wolverine" to Pontiac, MI and the "Blue Water" to Port Huron, MI. Within a few hundred feet a second line carries Amtrak's "Pere Marquette" easterly to Grand Rapids, MI. The mainline continues on a different easterly bearing with the Amtrak "Lake Shore Limited" to NYC and Boston, and the "Capitol" to Pittsburgh and Washington, DC. Entering the mainline here from the southwest is a CSX line. This general arrangement of tracks has evolved from a 4-diamond crossing into this safer, more efficient sharing of assets among the five RR's using the junction.

The fifth RR is CP.. While at this place a west-bound container train roared by on the NS main headed by a sparkling clean Conrail engine (page 1). Google photo of Porter Indiana with Dan, Jr. recording the action in the pictures on the right.



About six minutes later (per my camera) a west-bound Amtrak whistled through the crossing on the NS line photo above. The train was either the late Capitol or the early Lake Shore Limited (one of each train daily in each direction).

We still had our mileage goals to meet, so we left this exciting place for Chicago. Off the Interstate we found a Chicago South Shore and South Bend (CSS) wire car (right top) and several "out-of-the-box" tank cars (right center). A bit later in East Chicago we found the Calumet Tower (bottom right) with the tracks of the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) in the foreground. Behind the building are the tracks of the Elgin Joliet and Eastern (EJE) which gently cross the IHB to the left of the building into separate adjacent



yards on the far side of the perpendicularly running CSX/CP joint trackage. The aerial is looking north. The nearest horizontal band is East Chicago Ave.. The second east-west band is the CSX/CP line. Crossing each band in a narrow "V" from the south are the IHB/NS tracks on the left and the EJE tracks (fainter) on the right. They cross to form a narrow "X" with the IHB/NS entering a large yard in the distant right. The pointer rests on the Tower which casts a tiny shadow just south of the CSX/CP crossing. The RR Atlas we use shows a GATX repair shop just to the left of the "X," possibly the source of those shiny tank cars?





BIG SKY: The Fourth Day
by D. Pawling's, Jr. & Sr.

Next morning (the fourth day of our trip), on our way to see the Amtrak Station in LaCrosse, WI, we had another "WOW Moment" and agreed to return for a closer look. More on that later.

With "miles to go before we sleep" we did not wait for trains here, but pushed on to the Museum of Science and Technology in Chicago where we saw some old time steam engines and a great HO-scale layout. We are planning separate stories on these at another time.. On the evening of the 22nd we were in Tomah, WI, just in time to see the late arrival of the westbound Empire Builder, which made drivers on Route 12 happy (well, two Dan's, at least). (Photo above). The Tomah station stands almost alone at the edge of town (photo below). We drove further before quitting on the very interesting third day. Tomorrow we cross the Mississippi River.

First, we best list some of the past and present railroads in this area. Current operators have a * after their initials --AMTRAK*; BNSF*; CNW (Chicago North Western Transportation Co.); CBQ (Chicago Burlington & Quincy); CP*; DME* (Dakota Minnesota & Eastern - just bought by CP); ICE* (Iowa Chicago & Eastern - a DME subsidiary); MILW (Chicago Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific RR (later the SOO); SOO*(Minneapolis St. Paul Sault Ste. Marie RR - a CP subsidiary), and the UP*. The first RR entered La Crosse in 1858. Using islands in the Mississippi River, the MILW hop-scotched west into Minnesota on four bridges in 1876. They are still in use. The MILW yard (now CP) forms a crescent immediately curving from the river to the northeast in LaCrosse. The AMTRAK station pictured here sits at the center of the yard. It was built in 1926 by MILW.

END OF DAY THREE



LaCrosse, WI AMTRAK Station (Formerly MILW - Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific, later SOO) Built in 1926.

Show Schedule for 2007 – 2008

Jan 25 to 27, 2008, WINTERFEST 2008, West Springfield, MA

Big "E" Exposition Center, West Springfield, MA
 Set-up Fri noon to 5pm and Sat 7am * Show Sat 9am to 5pm - Sun 10am to 5pm

Coordinator: John Dunne - 508-697-7635

Winterfest Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

Feb 16 & 17, 2008 Museum of Our National Heritage, Lexington, MA

Set-up Sat 7:30am Show Sat 10am to 5pm - Sun noon to 5pm

Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

Mar 24-25, 2008 Great Train Expo, Wilmington, MA

Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM - Sun 10PM to 4PM

Coordinator: Fay Chin - 978-657-7913

Apr 22, 2008, Hooksett Lyons Club, Hooksett, NH

Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Mike Walker - 603-426-8620

Above photo shows the street side with the low, baggage/freight portion in the foreground (presently a BBQ diner) and the passenger area and offices in the 2-story section beyond. AMTRAK's "Empire Builder," with one train daily in each direction, stops here. We just missed seeing the westbound. The rail-side photo below shows the effect of reduced passenger traffic: the two concrete passenger platforms are separated by a ballast-filled strip which seems just wide enough to have been a siding. Further to the right in the photo are yard tracks running south and curving west to the river under the two roadway overpasses.



LaCrosse, WI AMTRAK Station, Track-side view.

A bit to the east of the station, the CP announces its Yard Office (photo). A SOO work train awaits orders in the background. Elsewhere we have seen SOO equipment fresh from the paint shop.



Canadian Pacific RR (CP) northeast of LaCrosse, WI RR Station. SOO is a subsidiary of CP. Work train in view waiting for orders.

The east-west MILW and CNW line crossed the north-south CBQ a few miles to the east in La Crosse. The place and its tower were named "Grand Crossing." The crossing is currently in use by CP, UP and AMTRAK (east-west) and BNSF (north-south). The tower was relocated to a park in north LaCrosse,

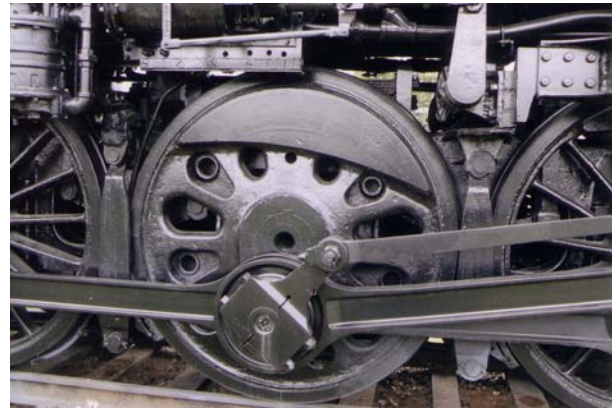
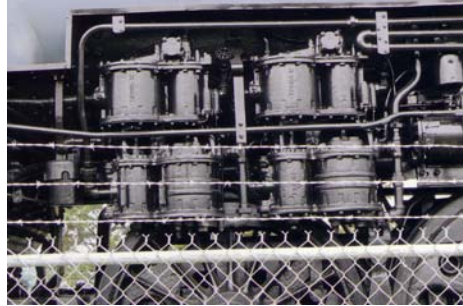


Historic Preservation of "Grand Crossing" tower, a caboose and a CBQ 4-6-4 Steam Engine. The tower guarded the crossing of the east-west MILW and CNW with the north-south CBQ several miles east of this site in Copeland Park, LaCrosse, WI.



CBQ 4-6-4 Hudson No. 4000. Built by Baldwin in 1930. Named Aeolus (Keeper of the Winds).

along with the caboose and the CBQ 4-6-4 Hudson No. 4000. She was built by Baldwin in 1930, given the name Aeolus (Keeper of the Winds). The engine was standby power for the Burlington's Zephyr's. These several photos below, to me , more than justify the "WOW's" that we shouted on first sight of the tower and engine and more than a few silent "thanks you's" for the people involved with this preservation activity. (Background info is from the RR Atlas we use and various web sites). Reluctantly we left before noon to cross the Mississippi River into Minnesota and further adventures on I-90.



Change of Address:

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Winterfest 2008

Winterfest 2008, the 14th Annual Northeast NTRAK Convention, will take place on January 25-27, 2008. The Convention will once again be held in conjunction with the annual "Big Railroad Hobby Show" of the Amherst Railway Society, Inc. at the Eastern States Exposition (ESE) Grounds, "The Big E", at 1305 Memorial Avenue, West Springfield, MA on January 26-27. This is undoubtedly the largest annual model railroad show in New England and may become the largest in the U.S. this year by adding a 4th building of layouts, exhibits, manufacturers and dealers. The show usually attracts an attendance of more than 20,000. **Winterfest 2008, planned to be much the same as last year, will feature model, module, and photo contests; informative clinics; full capacity layout operations (including DCC); and a memorable Saturday evening banquet.**

Again this year our convention hotel is the **Hilton Garden Inn**. It is centrally located just off Interstate 91 in downtown Springfield. The hotel, located at 800 West Columbus Avenue, is across the side street from the Basketball Hall of Fame and only minutes from "The Big E" and Springfield's AMTRAK station. A convention room rate of just **\$83.00** (same as last year) plus tax (currently 12.45%) per night has been negotiated, single **or double** occupancy (find a friend to share a room to save some money). **Hotel reservations should be made before January 11, 2008** by calling **800-774-1500** or **413-886-8000**, asking for the NTRAK special rate, and specifying either a king or two double beds. After January 11, 2008, hotel reservations will be accepted on a space and rate availability basis only so don't procrastinate! There is ample free parking at the hotel for registered guests. Other accommodations in the area with train show special rates can be found at www.amherstrail.org then click on "Big Railroad Hobby Show" then "Attending the Show" then "Accommodations in the Area."

The Winterfest 2008 on-line registration process is scheduled to become available no later than just after Thanksgiving on our website at www.NortheastNTRAK.org by clicking "Winterfest Information." If you don't have web access, please ask a friend to help you register online. **Full registration for Winterfest 2008 is \$32.00** (\$2.00 more than last year) **but only \$27.00 if you register and send your check postmarked before January 1, 2008**. There will be a \$4 registration charge for spouses again this year. Children of registrants under the age of 16 are free. Older children and other adult family members must register separately.

I know it is difficult for some people to arrive Friday afternoon for module set up or to stay until the show ends on Sunday at 5:00 P.M. I also know it takes extra effort to haul, set up, and take down another module in addition to bringing your best module. However, **I think it is very important to maintain the tradition of promoting Ntrak by completely filling our allotted 30' x 80' layout space!** Therefore, **to encourage more people to bring more modules this year, a special "Module Raffle" will be held for those who bring a module or modules. About 10 "better" prizes will be distributed** during the banquet on Saturday night. **One special Module Raffle ticket** (similar to the door prize ticket but a different color) **will be given out at the layout on Saturday for each 4' of module that is in the show layout.** For example, a person with a 3' corner or a 4' straight module in the show layout gets one ticket; an 8' module gets 2 tickets; a 16' yard gets 4 tickets, a 6' plus 2' set of modules gets 2 tickets, etc. **The more modules you bring, the better your chances of winning a special prize.** The Module Raffle will be in addition to the regular door prize distribution.

To reserve space for your module(s) in the NTRAK layout please call the Layout Coordinator, John Dunne, at **508-697-7635**. New modules with full scenery are encouraged but should be tested at some other show prior to Winterfest. **Please make every effort to bring as many modules as possible to fill our allotted 30' x 80' space.** The Better Living Center building of "The Big E" will be open after 12:00 noon on Friday for layout setup. Parking at the "Big E" on Friday is free. Those who do not bring modules but plan to run trains should also plan to help set up and test the layout. **Please lend a hand to try to have all modules in place and clamped with connector tracks installed before 5:00 P.M. Friday.** Please read the article titled "Winterfest Layout Operation" which is applicable again this year. It can be found at www.NortheastNTRAK.org "Winterfest Information."

The hotel will be available after 4:00 P.M. on Friday for check-in. **The Winterfest Registration Desk will open at 7:00 P.M.** in the hotel conference room area just off the main lobby. A series of entertaining and informative **clinics will begin at 7:30 P.M.** Friday near the registration desk.

Winterfest registrants must have an "exhibitors badge" issued by the Amherst Railway Society to gain entry to the show buildings on Saturday and Sunday. These badges will be distributed at the layout during set up on Friday afternoon and at the Winterfest Registration Desk along with other Winterfest materials on Friday at 7:00 P.M. **If you do not get your exhibitor's badge before 8:00 P.M. on Friday night then on Saturday morning you must stop at the booth outside Door #7**

at the Big E to get it from the “NTRAK” envelope placed on file there. After entering, proceed to the NTRAK layout to get the rest of your Winterfest registration materials.

There will be a \$5.00 charge for parking at “The Big E” on Saturday and again on Sunday. The Amherst Railway Society (and, therefore, Winterfest) will not be selling parking hangtags in advance. **However, “The Big E” will be selling hangtags on Friday during layout set up. They provide unlimited entry/exit on show days at a cost of \$10.00 each.** There will be no charge for parking during set up on Friday.

Everyone attending the banquet will receive a **large coffee mug** with the Winterfest logo. **Extra mugs will be available at \$5.00 each as part of the registration process.**

Northeast Ntrak has commissioned **Micro Trains Lines** to produce a **special run covered hopper commemorating 25 years of model railroading excellence.** The club car is painted in B&M blue with bright white graphics. The cost of each special run car is normally \$29 plus \$7.50 for shipping and handling per order for up to 6 cars. The car will be offered to Winterfest registrants as part of the on line registration process as a **Winterfest special at only \$27** and will be handed out at Registration on Friday. The special run car will also be offered for sale to layout visitors during the show for the regular price of \$29. Please help promote sales of the car.

Commemorative Winterfest 2008 T-shirt can be purchased for just \$14 Shirts must be ordered and the size (S through XXL) must be chosen prior to January 1, 2008 as part of the advanced registration process. They will be B&M blue with bright white lettering to match the club cars. The shirts will be handed out at Registration on Friday at 7:00 P.M.

On Saturday morning convention activity will shift to “The Big E”. Please arrive early and help with last minute set up, track cleaning, and final testing of the layout so a full set of long trains will be rolling when the **show opens at 9:00 A.M.** Be sure to help fill all the slots on the sign up sheet for 3 trains on the Blue Line, 3 trains on the Yellow Line, 3-5 trains on the Red Line (DCC eventually), 1 Layout-Supervisor-Helper and 3 Throttle-Tower-Operators for each hour of operation. **Model Contest and Photo Contest entries will be received from 8:00 to 10:00 A.M.** Model and photo contest entry forms will be available to fill out and print online for each of your entries. Train operation at the layout will continue all day and will include the **“Parade of Trains”** best-train-in-show competition to be held **from 1:00 to 2:30 P.M.** Note that **voting in the model, module, and photo contests must be completed before 3:00 P.M. on Saturday.**

Saturday evening activities at the convention hotel will begin at 6:30 P.M. with an “Attitude Adjustment Hour” featuring a cash bar, hors d’oeuvres and a slide show. The banquet this year will feature a tossed garden salad with dressing, your choice of sliced roast sirloin with mushroom demi glace or chicken francaise with lemon butter sauce, potato and vegetable, rolls and butter, and dessert. Water, coffee or specialty teas will be served with the meal. The cash bar will remain open for the duration of the banquet. **The price for the banquet and appetizers** (probably stuffed mushrooms, spring rolls and a mixed cheese plate), plus an entertaining guest speaker, contest awards presentation, up-dates from manufacturers, and exceptional camaraderie **is just \$32.00 per person** again this year. A special meal is available for children under 12 for \$10.00.

On Sunday the focus returns again to “The Big E” for more excitement and team effort to keep the layout operating at full capacity. Please fill up the sign up sheet again, try to be prompt and responsible for running a train at your scheduled time, and be sure to take a turn as a tower operator. Of course shopping and seeing the rest of the show is always an option. **Model and photo contest entries should be picked up at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday.** Layout take down will wrap-up the convention activities after the show closes at 5:00 P.M.

In summary, save the dates for Winterfest 2008; make your hotel reservations **now**; plan to bring as many modules as possible (remember the new Module Raffle) and call the Layout Coordinator **now** to reserve space in the layout for your modules; fill out your registration materials when they become available online no later than after Thanksgiving and mail in your check promptly to finalize your registration (Northeast Ntrak special run hopper car \$27 special at registration); finish those potential prize winning models for the model contest; spruce up your best module for the module contest; decide on your best train to run in the “Parade of Trains” contest; print and frame those great pictures you took recently (no repeats from previous years please); start packing a variety of trains to help keep the layout running at capacity [we plan to run DCC (Digitrax) on the Red Line so bring your DCC equipped motive power and your radio throttle if you have one]; think about how you can personally contribute to make Winterfest more enjoyable for everyone else this year; and then get totally psyched to help make Winterfest 2008 a fun time for everyone!

Bob Pawlak, Chairman, Winterfest 2008