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Nov./Dec. 2014

NMRA Train Show in Dayton Christmas Party Open House at Home of Jacquie and Randy Banks

NMRA Train Show in Dayton, Ohio

Sat., Nov. 1 - 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Sun., Nov. 2 - 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Location - Hara Arena

Everyone got a “heads up” on this event in the last Newsletter. Our ILSR Modular Division is heavily involved in setting up and operating at this show. Check our Club’s website for additional information.

James Driesbach says “If any of our members miss this Show, they might as well put their trains back in the box, put the box in the closet, lock the door and forget about them.”

So, everyone will definitely want to put this Show on your calendar to see our ILSR Module Group display and lots of train items in all scales - including “G”.

Christmas Party Open House & Meeting

Sat., Dec. 6; 2:00 - 4:00 ??? P.M.

President **Jacquie Banks**, along with her husband **Randy**, are inviting all Club Members to their home to celebrate the Season, enjoy each other’s good company, and partake of Jacquie’s superb appetizers and drinks. All appetizers and drinks will be provided. Most all of us have enjoyed a good year, and this is a great way to wrap up our **25th year Anniversary** as an Indiana Large Scale Train Club.

Watch for your personal reminder invitation to arrive in the mail closer to the actual Party.



“JINGLE RAILS” Train Exhibit opens
at the Eiteljorg Museum in downtown Indy
Nov. 22 thru Jan. 18 daily.

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JINGLE RAILS



Let us not forget that Indianapolis has one of the finest Holiday G Scale Train Exhibits any-

where in the USA at the **Eiteljorg Museum**. Many of us have seen this exhibit in the past few years, but it is definitely a G Scale Railroad we could visit every year, over and over, and never get tired. What a great place to take our out-of-town family and friends who are with us anytime over the Holiday Season.

Watch **seven different trains** weave their way through downtown Indianapolis (Union Station, Monument Circle and Lucas Oil Stadium) - then out to Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park, the Grande Canyon - plus much more!!

All of this fantastic scenery was created with natural material by renowned craftsman Paul Busse and his Applied Imagination Company.

Like To Get Involved?

Deborah Kish, who is the person at the Eiteljorg Museum in charge of Volunteer Services, tells me that she is looking for “Train Volunteers” to act as hosts during the daily sessions of train operations. Trains will be running 7 days per week with a morning volunteer staff and an afternoon volunteer staff.

Volunteers will welcome visitors to the train displays, point out “points of interest”, help direct traffic when crowds develop - and answer interesting questions about the trains and about real trains in general. These are the FUN activities, and most people in our ILSR Train Club are more than qualified to handle this responsibility. **The people are all interesting and FUN to talk with, believe me!**

Volunteers usually are not responsible for actually running the seven different trains, however, if you observe a derailment or stalled train, you are to contact the train supervisor immediately.

If this sounds interesting to you, you will want to send an email to the Eiteljorg Museum C/O Deborah Kish. (dkish@eiteljorg.com)

You will need to state your name and what you are wishing to volunteer for. Deborah will email you a brief, 2 page volunteer application form which you can fill out and return to her. She would like to get these returned by the middle of November so she can get the monthly scheduling done by opening day, which is Saturday, Nov 22.

Normally, Deborah waits until the end of the month before booking December volunteers. Same thing applies to January.



End of the Season

The “Fall Finale” of Orange, Yellow and Red leaves on the trees was really spectacular this year! As great as it all looks, **the falling leaves** create some interesting challenges to running trains on our outdoor railroads.



Sure - we look back and remember the warm Summer sun, the rain showers keeping everything green, and, of course, those magical, large scale trains traveling down

(cont.) the mainline carrying important freight and passengers to their destinations. But let's not despair. It's been a great ride, **and**, all of that Magic will return again next Spring just like it always does! On a positive note I will say one thing more. I know that I keep our whole front and back yard trimmed and mowed better now than ever before. Is it because our yard is an extension of the garden railroad, or is the garden railroad an extension of our yard? Which ever way it is, it seems to be working.

Many items on our railroads will be put away, hopefully before the first snow. A few items will be scheduled for minor repairs or repainting this

Winter on the 'ole work bench. I know I need to gather up my dozen or so gold fish and get them into my small, heated pond so they can survive the Winter's cold.

I know some folks say an outdoor railroad is so much work! Or perhaps, I just don't have the time to work on it! But remember, when we have guests or a Train Club Open House, the **railroad owners have just as much FUN as the railroad guests.**

Keep those trains rollin! - *Bud*

CLUB MEMBERS READY TO BOARD THE "BLUE ARROW PIZZA TRAIN"

- *Picture/Text by Jacquie Banks*



On a crispy, Autumn-like evening, September 13, a small, but hardy group of ILSR members met at the Indiana Transportation Museum in Noblesville, to board the Blue Arrow Train (formerly called the Pizza Train). We had a leisurely ride to Tipton, Indiana, where we enjoyed a tasty buffet and much camaraderie at the Pizza Shack, before returning to the station, in Noblesville. We saw a beautiful sunset on our return, as we rode through the small towns of rural Hamilton County.

HOOSIER RAIL PASSENGERS

- by Phillip Strebby

Indianapolis Union Station, the first union station in the United States, last served as one of the largest hubs of intercity train travel in the Midwest. It hosted trains of the Pennsylvania Railroad, New York Central, Illinois Central, Baltimore and Ohio, Indiana's own Monon - as well as some railroads from the South who's trains had trackage rights north. By the end of WWII in 1945, over 60,000 passenger trains had utilized the giant station in Indianapolis - - over 160 trains per day!

So what? Indianapolis is currently served by ONE train from New York only three days each week (*the Cardinal*), and only two of those trains return to NY on the same day. (the third on the next day) The *Hoosier State* fills in the gaps, but only covering the distance from Indianapolis to Chicago on the days the *Cardinal* does NOT run.

Again, so what? Who cares about such an under-utilized and outdated way to travel? Well . . . we should. Why? Because of many reasons - each personal and individual. The passenger train didn't die of natural causes. It was driven out by market forces caused by government intervention (and in no small part by what was perceived by many as the railroads "Public Be Damned" attitude).

We all enjoy the pleasure of the open road via four-lane divided highway, and many enjoy the speed of cross continent travel via airways . . . that is, until the highways are stop-and-go - and the airports are frisking randomly in an effort to show that "we are doing something" to combat evil in the world. All this at taxpayer expense with little regard to the actual cost. The traveling public believes they are footing the bill, not realizing the hundreds of billions of government (read that as our) money that is supporting those modes. Don't get me wrong. I believe these modes of travel have their rightful places in U.S. transportation. I also believe that passenger rail does so as well.

Part of the problem with Amtrak is that government caused, in large part, the demise of the passenger



trains once run **BY** private railroads by constructing the railroads competition: (read interstate highways and air traffic).

The purpose of transportation for business is economic. In other words, transportation drives the economy whether local, regional, national, or even international. Transportation should be viewed as an economic engine, not on its own profitability. If we want to view modes of transportation on profitability verses cost, then costs should be allocated equally across ALL modes: air, water, and land based highway and rail. Only rail is almost fully private, that is, free from government funding.

I believe all are needed because everyone has different uses, destinations (long and short), and time to travel whether for business or pleasure. Our government believes otherwise - the idea that passenger rail should be self supporting (when its competition is heavily subsidized). I hate that word: Subsidized. It sounds socialistic, and evil. In passenger rail, we like to use words normally associated with highways and airways such as "investment". It only makes sense. Opponents like to point out that

only a few million people ride trains compared to the tens of millions who travel by air or automobile. Okay. Just how many can ride ONE train per day on a worse-than-skeletal route system currently in place in the U.S.!? I ask that you assist in the effort to stabilize passenger rail by joining the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, The National Association of Railroad Passengers, The Rail Users Network (RUN), or the Midwest High-Speed Rail Association, and let your representatives become aware of your want of ***choice*** in travel modes. If the system is not in place, or not even a thought, you won't have a choice when or if you need it.

I may be over-assuming that we train modelers support the 12 inch-to-the-foot scale, but the groups listed here are all serious in getting the word out so that people that are interested in passenger rail service in the U.S. might take a more active role in supporting that interest. I ask that you assist in the effort to stabilize passenger rail by joining the **Indiana Passenger Railroad Passengers**, or the **Midwest High Speed Rail Assoc.**, and let your representatives become aware of your

Phil lives in Peru, IN. and has been a member of our ILSR Train Club since 2009. He has been an advocate for improving passenger rail service in the USA for many, many years. - Bud



Phillip Streby

want of ***choice*** in travel modes. If the system is not in place, or not even a thought - you won't have a choice when or if you need it.

In closing, I would like to leave the reader with some points to ponder. According to a Texas study, about 70 billion dollars worth of lost time and productivity each year is wasted with "traffic jams" in the U.S. That is about **\$68.5 billion more than Amtrak is so ungraciously allowed each year!** Think of the system we could have for that kind of money, and the number of frequencies (trains or schedules) for each route. Talk about bringing people back to rails, not to mention all the jobs that would be created to handle all the business.

Additionally, the jobs in the steel, concrete and other aggregates used to construct/replace track, the car and locomotive builder industries, as well as the shops which tend to spring up wherever there are lots of people. This could include even more train stations. Of course, I am speculating a bit here, but the same kind of money that road construction spreads around could apply to railroad construction as well.

Building A New Train Layout?

The first thing you will need, of course, is track to build for your prized locomotives and rolling stock to operate on. **Okay - here's the deal!** I have just become aware of some good, used LGB track that is **Absolutely Free** to any of our ILSR Club Members. I understand that this includes enough straight and curved LGB track to build two ovals - one with 1600 curves and one with extra-wide 1800 curves. In addition, there is some extra Aristo track.

The original owner (not one of our ILSR Club Members) died, and his widow, who wants to remain anonymous, wishes to donate this track to someone that is just getting started with building a new G-Scale layout. If you are interested in this deal, you need to call Rick Whitt at the **Zionsville Train Depot (317) 733-8445**. Rick has cleaned this track and it's "like new". I'm sure he is hoping that who ever claims this track, might also like to purchase some new rolling stock, switches, etc. - which will enhance your own Railroad. - Bud

2014 FALL VACATION TRIP

NEW RIVER TRAIN EXCURSION

- by Bud Hunter

My wife Nancy, plus my two daughters Gwen and Michelle, decided to surprise me 5 months ago on my May 24th Birthday, with train tickets to ride the famous New River Train Excursion thru the New River Gorge in West Virginia on Sat., October 18. Honestly, I had read and heard about these annual train trips, but I had never mentioned or expressed an interest in doing it. How Nancy found out about it, I have not a clue. But . . . , I certainly wasn't going to turn the opportunity down.

The Fall colors in the mountains of West Virginia are truly magnificent in late October. We decided to go a few days early to see some of the scenery highlights in advance of the actual Sat. train ride.

Hawks Nest State Park

We started at the North end of the River tour and worked our way south. This park is very clean and beautiful. The Visitors Center has a 10 minute video to see plus gift shop and plenty of information on trails, Jet Boat rides and going white river rafting. Of course, they have the best view of the railroad bridge which we were to cross on Sat.'s train ride. (see picture above)

The New River is really not new. It is in fact the world's second oldest river (the Nile River being the oldest).

The New River Gorge Bridge

This Route 19 bridge was built in 1974 (rebuilt in 1998) and is 3,030.5 feet in length and stands 876 feet above the water below. CSX tracks (formally C&O) also pass under this bridge (see photo at right)



View of the C&O Bridge over the New River at Hawks Nest, WV. (Taken from the overlook at Hawk's Nest State Park)



CSX keeps this track busy. In addition, the 3 days-per-week Amtrak *Cardinal* uses this track as well as our own Fall Excursion Train this weekend. Once each year "Bridge Day" occurs. The bridge is closed to vehicle traffic so hundreds of parachutists, rappelling and base jumping people from all over the country can jump off the bridge!

Historic town of “Thurmond”

The heart of early coal mining towns in West Virginia is here. The C&O Railroad built the line thru the New River Gorge in 1873, which opened the coal and coke industries. “Black Gold” thus became accessible to markets world-wide. *(Photo at top-right is the train station and is still in use)*

The abandon business district *(2nd photo down)* hosts two Banks and a couple of other buildings in process of restoration. During the “boom years” of 1900 - 1930, 14 passenger trains per day passed through here, and the town handled twice as much freight as Richmond, VA and Cincinnati, Ohio. Hard to tell from this photo, but the business district you see is carved into the hillside, so all buildings face the tracks.

One has to visit Thurmond to appreciate a time when steel rails, steam and coal were the major themes in our nation’s history.

Historic town of “Hinton”

(population 2,676) It could be said that The New River Gorge actually starts here at Hinton, since this is one of only a few rivers that actually flows from south to north. There is lots of turn-of-the-century architecture here - all while admiring the mountains and rivers around you. Each Fall, a hugh street fair is held celebrating this towns heritage with crafts, music, food, carriage rides and the Train Excursion guests. *(bottom photo on this page)*

Part II of this Fall Vacation Trip

Now we are ready to talk about the actual 300 Mile, *(round trip)* train ride from Huntington WV down to Hinton and return. However, we are out of space with this News-letter, so we’ll have to cover the actual train adventure with the next issue in January.



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2014 Club Event Calendar



- Nov. 1 & 2 Modular NMRA Train Show in Dayton,
Ohio *(Please check our Club's website for
location & times)*
- Dec. 6 Christmas Party Open House
and Annual Meeting
Home of Randy & Jacquie Banks
(Watch the mail for your personal invitation)
- Nov. 22 thru Jan. 18 "Jingle Rails" G-Scale train display
on exhibit at the Eiteljorg Museum.
(downtown Indy)