

PENNYRAIL

MARCH 2005

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 3

TODAY'S FACTS ARE

CHARTER MEMBERS

Eleven of the original 26 Charter Members of the Western Kentucky Chapter are still active. They are: Ricky Bivins, Dennis Carnal, Don Clayton, Rex and Melanie Easterly, Rich Hane, Keith Kittinger, Bob and Jackie McCracken, Robert Metcalfe and Wally Watts. Deceased Charter Members are: Tom Beumel, Sid Loving and Billy Byrd. Charter Members no longer affiliated with the Chapter: Spencer Brewer, Allen Brown, Tony Clark, Frank Childers, Duncan Metcalfe, John and Mary Norris, James and Marie Ramsey, Chuck Reed and James and Rea Walker. If any of the current membership knows any of the Charter members who are no longer affiliated with our Chapter, it would be a nice gesture to invite them to the 20th Anniversary Celebration on April 25 at the Badgett Center.

We are still looking for photographs of members as they were 20 years ago. Bring your prints or slides to the April meeting and share the evidence with all the current membership.

Mark your calendar



Chapter News

CHAPTER MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 28
7:00 PM
Badgett Center
(Old L&N Depot)
(Arch St and the Railroad)
Madisonville, KY

PROGRAM

This is our annual President's night (postponed from January while Bob and Jackie were in Florida working on their tans) where the McCrackens supply both the program and the refreshments. Bob's program is the new Green Frog DVD **Postwar Steam - Pt2 (Rails in the Heartland)**. Jackie usually provides an ample and tasty spread and 2005 will surely be no exception. It should be an outstanding evening. Come and bring a friend!

FEBRUARY MEETING

Nineteen members and three guests were on hand for the February meeting. Wally Watts provided the program - a video depicting the restoration and early fan trips of Nickel Plate Berkshire 765. Keith Kittinger provided the refreshments. All in all a most enjoyable evening.

CSX provided only a single train during the
(Continued on page 2)

Western Kentucky
Chapter, NRHS

111 Reed Place
Madisonville, KY 42431

* * * * *

President
Bob McCracken

Vice President
Rich Hane

Sect. Treas.
Wally Watts

National Director
Wallace Henderson

"PENNYRAIL" is the official publication of the Western Kentucky Chapter, NRHS. Send news notes, historical notes and other rail information to:

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Chapter News

(Continued from page 1)

evening, a northbound intermodal (Q120) with a pair of AC60CWs for power.

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome several new members. Clay Tunstill from Auburn, KY is our newest regular member. Clay took out a family membership and his wife to be will be added to our roster as soon as the name change becomes official.

Clay Tunstill
PO Box 1021
Auburn, KY 42206-1021
270-202-5093

Also added to our Chapter roster are family members Liam Thomas (Bill's son), Thomas Bryan (Jim's son) and Gretchen Knapp (Richard's wife). A hearty Western Kentucky welcome to you all and we hope to see you at a Chapter function in the very near future.

CHAPTER NEWS

Following a Membership decision to close down our video sales program Dennis moved some of the inventory at the meeting and with a internet plug we were effectively closed out by March 4. The Chapter netted a \$1,677.45 profit on the video sales program. A special thanks to Dennis for managing the video sales effort.

Four Chapter members, Rick Bivins, Dennis Carnal Keith Kittinger and Chuck Hinrichs attended the March meeting of the Owensboro Chapter and were treated to an excellent slide show presented by Chapter member Bill Grady.

Rick Bivins reports that no one showed up for the REA work session. This is a chapter project and deserves our support. **Mark your calendar for Sunday April 3**

STEAM AMIDST THE SAGEBRUSH AND SNOW

by

Now I'm not a cold weather fan, preferring Cuban sugar mill steamers pulling cane cars under palm trees swaying in a warm gentle breeze to frigid photography. Yet I'm well aware of the spectacular results of steam in winter. So when I received a e-mail in early December from Bulletin editor Jeff Smith suggesting that I join him on a pair of Carl Franz photo charters out west in mid February, I immediately signed on. Several years before I had done one of Carl's photo charters on the Western Maryland Scenic in autumn colors, so I knew what to expect: long days with numerous photo opportunities at well selected locations.

Jeff and I met in the Salt Lake City airport about 10:30 AM on Friday, February 11th, rented a SUV and headed for Ely, Nevada, home of the Nevada Northern operating rail museum and 220 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. The original idea had been to first photograph the UP in Weber and Echo Canyons east of Ogden, but a heavily overcast sky cancelled that plan.

The actual charters were scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, with a diesel powered special on Saturday to select the photo sites, in which Jeff wanted to participate. This special consisted of NN RS-3 #109 (Alco-1952), four ore hoppers and Kennecott Copper (former owner of the Nevada Northern) caboose #22. Although still overcast, the bright orange RS-3 and orange steel caboose really stood out against the couple of inches of snow on the ground. The day was spent going north on the "Highline", which once went to the smelter, and west up the long grade and through the tunnel towards the mine.

Sunday was Engineer Training Day, when participants could operate 2-8-0 #93 (Alco/Pittsburgh - 1909) up the aforementioned grade and back down for \$125 a head extra. Now I had run a steam locomotive, and electric too, in Cuba but nevertheless I signed up to do it here. It was a interesting experience with the engineer instructor at my elbow advising me all the time and the 93 a fine performer responsive to every adjustment of throttle and brakes. (The engine in Cuba, also an Alco, seemed to have a lot of "play" in the throttle.) This was a mostly sunny day, so we chased while others played engineer, having done our stints in the morning.

Charter day Monday dawned sunny and remained so until afternoon. #93 pulled a photo freight consisting of three wooden box cars built in 1912, a tank car from 1906, seven ore hoppers, and yellow wooden caboose #5. The RS-3 again pulled the same train as on Saturday and the photographers rode the cabooses of both trains.

Tuesday morning was much colder, and overcast with snow flurries as 4-6-0 #40 (Baldwin - 1910) made her debut after being out of service for some time due to scheduled maintenance. In fact, there was real doubt as to whether she would be available at all as the railroad's CMO had suddenly died the first of December and this had thrown everything behind schedule. A large part of this morning was spent photographing the two steamers together

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SAGEBRUSH

(Continued from page 2)

in the yard and in the afternoon, #40 pulled a short passenger train consisting of a baggage/RPO car and #5, a former Union Pacific sleeper built in 1889 and converted into a first class coach. Then #40 was coupled ahead of #93 and the afternoon was spent shooting this grand doubleheader from different vantage points charging up the long westward grade from the yard.

That evening we had a prime rib (or Cornish hen) dinner in the East Ely station followed by a talk given by the NN's Superintendent of Operations on their promotion efforts and their future, which looks bright with a new power plant to be built just to the north and the mainline up to the SP (UP) connection to be rehabilitated for unit coal trains. Perhaps I should mention here that when Kennecott Copper Company left town, they left all the railroad as it was and turned it over to the city of Ely. As a result, the NN operation is complete with shop buildings and locomotive servicing facilities similar to what exists at Orbisonia, PA. (EBT) and Chama, NM(C&TS), plus original locomotives. Sitting in the enginehouse awaiting restoration is 2-8-0 # 81 (Baldwin-1917) plus several other diesels.

Wednesday was a unscheduled morning with #40 and passenger train mostly in the yard area and finally out to the yard limits on the beginning

of the grade. Several inches of fresh snow had fallen overnight, there was a heavy overcast, and the weather was bitterly cold. Time to say good-bye to Nevada and head for the Wasatch Mountains above Salt Lake City.

The snow covered Wasatch Mountains form the perfect backdrop for the Heber Valley Railroad, a tourist operation over part of a former D&RGW branch line up from Provo to Heber City. Perhaps most of you saw the television coverage of this operation during the Salt Lake Olympics when spectators going to some of the venues were hauled by HV steam locomotives, plus one borrowed from the Nevada Northern.

Our first day here was sunny with sparkling snow and not a cloud in the sky. Motive power was former Union Pacific 2-8-0 #618 (Baldwin-1907 907) pulling a nine car plus UP caboose freight train, and ex-UP NW2 diesel #1011 (EMD-1 941) with a passenger car, baggage, and transfer caboose. Beautiful photos amid beautiful scenery, steam, too: what more could you ask for? But it had been a frigid start, with a

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RAILROAD EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

AS RAILFANS WE ARE OFTEN AT TRACKSIDE AND IN POSITION TO OBSERVE EMERGENCY CONDITIONS THAT COULD AFFECT RAILROAD SAFETY OR SECURITY. KEEP THESE NUMBERS HANDY TO REPORT INCIDENTS.

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CSX	800-232-0144
NS	800-453-2530

PENNYRAIL

VIGNETTES

General Motors to sell Electro-Motive Division

General Motors Corporation has agreed to sell Electro-Motive Division to an investor group led by Rye, New York-based Greenbriar Group LLC and Berkshire Partners LLC of Boston.

The deal is expected to close in first-quarter 2005.

The transaction covers substantially all EMD businesses, including North American and international locomotives; power, marine, and industrial products; the spare parts and parts rebuild business; and all worldwide EMD locomotive maintenance contracts.

EMD's LaGrange, Illinois and London, Ontario, manufacturing facilities are included in the transaction.

Some days just better than others...

"Today (3/10/05) UP moved UP 6900 from KC up to Council bluffs. Leading was the operational 6936. An amazing sight...two centennials with the UP passenger fleet. Of course, me being an idiot, I was still running around like a chicken with his head cut off trying to find a decent place for a photo. Too many factors were against me today I guess. The light sucked, clouds and rain trying to pop up, and wind blowing 800 mph. I got to the crossing just in time to see it pass by. It was over before I could believe I missed it. Hope someone else gets some good p h o t o s !"

M a t h e w ,

internet

Before Rule G

In earlier railroad days there was not much said in regard to the use of whisky and sometimes it was forced on us in place of water. In 1854 a bad cholera epidemic was raging in Nashville and when

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VIGNETTES

(Continued from page 3)

we roustabouts had nothing else to do we had to work in the freight house and were not allowed to drink water but instead a bucket of French brandy and a tin dipper were at each door and we had to drink that or nothing.

A Treasury of Railroad Folklore

The Strike That Failed

There never was but one strike on the old Nashville & Chattanooga road. When old man Hayne was set up as conductor he employed six decrepit old men as brakemen; they had heard of strikes and they talked it over. One old man by the name of Perry said he would go and tell the Superintendent (E. W. Cole) and he would raise their pay, so he went up to the office and found the Superintendent at his desk and said "Mr. Cole, I strike." Mr. Cole said "You strike for what?" Perry said "Better pay." Mr. Cole told him to strike out of there and strike home afoot. . . . and ended one of the greatest strikes in ancient or modern time.

A Treasury of Railroad Folklore

Bumper Stickers

"POLITICIANS & DIAPERS BOTH NEED TO BE CHANGED, AND FOR

AMTRAK BUDGET SLASHED

IF YOU WANT TO SEE INTERCITY RAIL TRANSPORTATION PRESERVED TAKE A FEW MOMENTS AND WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMAN AND YOUR SENATORS AND URGE ADEQUATE AND PERMANENT FUNDING FOR AMTRAK AND FOR STATE SUPPORTED INTERCITY RAIL SERVICE.

ALSO URGE YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES TO PUSH FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY.

PHOTO SECTION



This nearly completed Welcome Center on the river front in Henderson, KY is a near replica of the old L&N passenger depot which will probably not be restored. It's a shame to lose the old building but this structure will be an excellent reminder of past railroad grandeur. *digital image by*



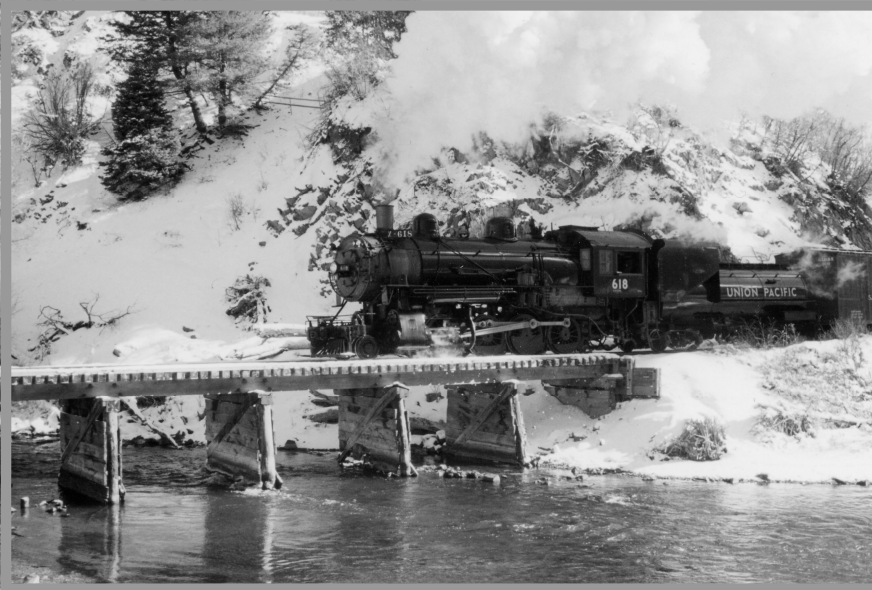
CSX intermodal, Q128, waits at the old L&N depot in Henderson, KY for clearance to cross the Ohio River bridge to Howell Yard. Note the architectural features of the depot and the similarity to the Welcome Center in the photo

"PENNYRAIL" is your publication. If you have photographs or other material of current or historical interest that you would like to share with Chapter members, your editor would appreciate hearing from you. Your material will receive the best of care while being readied for publication. Your help is

PHOTO SECTION

PENNYRAIL

SAGEBRUSH



Union Pacific 2-8-0 #618 is heading up a Heber Valley photographer's special freight train on the portion of the ex D&RGW branch from Provo to Heber. The weather was clear but bitterly cold (6 degrees) on this February 17th high in Utah's Wasatch Mountains *photograph by Wallace*



Nevada Northern Alco 2-8-0 #93 has 11 freight cars and a caboose on the drawbar for a photographers special. The steam powered freight was accompanied by a diesel powered freight - an Alco RS-3 and 4 ore cars and a caboose. The photographers rode the cabooses of both trains. February 15, 2005.

For more railroad photographs check out the Photo Gallery

(Continued from page 3)

reading of 6 degrees, the coldest of the trip.

The following day was overcast and very cold again. I was beginning to think I was getting used to the weather (horrible thought, while visions of palm trees danced in my head!). More photos at some of the same and other locations were followed by a dinner buffet in the HV station that evening.

The following Saturday morning was Engineer Training on the Heber but both Jeff and I had decided to skip that, so after a (for once) leisurely breakfast, we headed for Ogden and the Union Station Museum, followed by a ride on the new Salt Lake City light rail system. Then a early

MODEL

RAILROAD

CLUB

A group of model railroad enthusiasts have met for a second time in an effort to form a club to promote both the hobby and the fellowship that seems to go hand-in-hand with modeling.

Bob Pollock, recently relocated in Hopkinsville, took a leadership roll in getting the group together. There were 14 at the first get-together and 18 at the meeting on March 8. Both meetings were held at Lic's restaurant in Hopkinsville. A temporary chairman and secretary were chosen and committees appointed to look into a permanent meeting location, organization structure and an organization name.

Several Western Kentucky Chapter members (Bob Moffet, Louie Hicks, Jim Finley and Chuck Hinrichs) have been at both meetings.

The next meeting will be at Lic's on March 22. Any modelers in the area are welcome to attend.

FEBRUARY MINUTES SUMMARY

Western Kentucky Chapter, NRHS
 Badgett Center Madisonville, KY
 Monday, February 28 7:00 pm

Vice President Hane called the meeting to order and the minutes of the January meeting were approved. The current treasurers report was also approved..

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Beginning Balance	\$2,156.71
Income	
Nat. Dues	\$33.00
Chap. Dues	\$20.00
Donations	\$0.00
REA	\$0.00
Raffle	\$14.00
Video	\$63.00
Other	\$20.00
TOTAL	\$150.00
Adjusted Balance	\$2,306.71
Expenses	
Nat. Dues	\$23.00
Postage	\$33.60
Printing	\$36.25
Video	\$0.00
Supplies	\$0.00
REA	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$92.85
Ending Balance	\$2,213.86

MEMBERSHIP:	Full	5	7
	Chapter Only	1	8
	Total	7	5

DIRECTORS REPORT: Wallace will present his report on the By Law changes at the March meeting

OLD BUSINESS: After a lengthy discussion the Chapter voted to spend \$250 to defray the cost of acquiring the surplus CSX caboose through Chapter member Keith Kittinger. The caboose will be moved and stored at the Charolais Coal facility in St Charles through the courtesy of Mr. Don Bowles.

NEW BUSINESS: The Chapter approved a proposal to terminate the sale of video tapes and to offer the few P&L tapes at a clearance price of \$15.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Paducah Chapter has moved their museum to a new site just a block from the old NC&StL Freight house location. They will have a formal opening on the weekend of April 22-23.

ATTENDANCE:
REMEMBER

THERE ARE STILL A FEW BOXES OF CROFTON DEPOT NOTE CARDS AVAILABLE AT \$2 PER BOX. CHECK WITH CHUCK HINRICHS AT 270-886-2849

TIMETABLE #91
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF RAILFANS ONLY

MARCH

Monday March 28 Regular monthly Chapter meeting at the Badgett Center. Presidents Night, program and refreshments by Bob and Jackie McCracken.

APRIL

Sunday April 3 REA truck work session at the Madisonville Airport.

April 8-10 Cumberland, MD NRHS Spring Board Meeting Host - Western Maryland Chapter. Check with National Director, Wallace Henderson, for details. (270-885-6503 e-mail fcgato@charter.net)

Saturday April 9 Locomotive operating session, Charolais Coal in St Charles KY. 9AM-Noon, followed by a tour of the the wash plant at the mine in St. Charles.

Saturday April 16 2005 Photo Freight on the Whitewater Valley Railroad in Indiana. All day photo run, dinner on return trip and a night photo session with Steve Barry of Railroad and Railfan Magazine. Info: SARM Photo Freight 2005, P.O. Box 5870, Knoxville, TN 37928. www.southernappalachia.railway.museum

Monday April 25 Regular monthly Chapter meeting at the Badgett Center. This will be the Chapter's 20th Birthday Party Program members slides from the 80s, refreshments by Tim Moore.

April 29-May 1 Cass, WV CALS 27th steam railroad weekend in the Alleghenies. Double headed Shays. Runs to Bald Knob and WM trackage to Spruce and Big Cut. Lots of runbys and clean photo lines. Info. CALS % Poul Pedersen 19804 Spurrier Ave. Poolsville, MD 20837-2015 or from web site: www.calslivesteam.org

MAY

Sunday May 1 REA truck work session at the Madisonville Airport.

* * * * *

July 5-10 Portland, OR NRHS National Convention Host -Pacific Northwest Chapter. Details in NRHS newsletter.

September 24 & 25 Dubuque IA ICHS joint meeting with CB&Q Historical Society. Details at ICHS website <http://www.icrrhistorical.org>

September 29- October 2 Bardstown, KY L&NHS Annual meeting and #152's 100th Birthday. Details later.

VISIT THE CHAPTER WEB SITE
<http://www.westkentuckynrhs.org>

REGIONAL RAIL NOTES

Corman construction

R J Corman crews appear to have had Manchester Street in Lexington completely blocked for two days directly beneath the NS overpass. This is the location where it was reported on this list several months ago that Corman was going to re-install the long-abandoned connection between the line to Versailles and the (then L&N) line to Louisville.

If that's what's happening it would allow RJC to tie both of their Lexington operations together without having to get the NS involved. Looks like there's actually quite a bit of work going on around the yard, including a new long spur on the opposite side of the little creek down there behind those buildings that face Manchester Street near Cox Street.

Pretty cool to see someone BUILDING track vs. tearing them up for once!
*internet
geno404*

One of a kind P&L GP39 8507

"That was originally a Bay Line unit that VMV purchased. It r a n around for years in Bay Line green/yellow with a VMV logo...mainly leased to PAL.

Sometime in the early 90s, PAL acquired it as part of a trade. I can't remember the details or other units involved but if memory serves, it was around the time PAL sold several GP30s/GP35s to VMV for the BN GP39V program...or maybe it was the CSX roadmate program...can't recall for sure. Anyone????

At any rate, that's how she came to PAL." *internet Chad Cowan*

Scanner up-date.

This was forwarded by a friend of mine, Milford Weeks, who is the Mississippi state database administrator for www.radioreference.com. Milf, as he likes to be called, works for CNIC out of Jackson. Chris Dees

CN/IC has begun testing new narrowband digital radios on some portions of the system. This is all Pre-license/implementation testing of the new ASTRO Spectra digital locomotive radios from Motorola, in preparation for full compliance to the FCC mandate that all radio communications be narrowband by 2010.

They are quite impressive. We are going to run some digital testing with a yard loco and a rail truck soon just to see what they sound like. Railroad security will be the first to fully get the ASTRO gear to coordinate with more and more public safety agencies who are switching to the APCO-25 digital standard. The entire system network will be upgraded and fully implemented in 2 years for CN's Southern Tier of operations. We have been told that some of CN's Northern ops are already upgrading to a combination analog/digital net, with full digital in some yards.

Good news - they are going to APCO-25 digital. The bad news - one of these new digital scanners is \$400 to \$500!!!

Nashville & Eastern wreck

The Nashville and Eastern has had a wreck in Mt. Juliet this morning (2/23/05). I don't know how it exactly happened but the tie gangs MOW equipment that has been tied down at the industrial park siding in Mt. Juliet next to East Division Street was basically run over by a Lebanon bound train. It looks like the train hit the switch and crossed over to the siding and smashed all

PENNYRAIL

Rail Trails, A New Hobby.

If you have attended the monthly meetings then you know I have found or found again, bicycles. Yeah I know "I change ideas often". But not really in this case. My most fond memories of childhood revolve around a bicycle. When I was about eight years old I wanted a then new Schwinn Crate bicycle. The crate series bicycles were unique and elite bikes of the day. Sort of like the new Ipod is to music today. The crate was THE bike to have. Mom & Dad could not afford a crate ...so... Dad built one from old bike parts. Man was it COOL.

So now I am into bicycles again, thanks to member Phil Randle. Phil is a cyclist and I have "let him take me under his wing". And how does this relate to the chapter you ask? Well if you were to notice we have a bike ride (or walk) day at White Plains KY in May. This event will be a family type of outing and we will walk or ride as applicable, the old ICRR road bed in White Plains. A picnic lunch is in order too so pack one and join in, with or without a bike.

The trail at White Plains is one and a half miles long, three mile round trip and is on the IC road bed right through town. The Mayor of White Plains saw a need for a fitness trail in his town and the road bed was perfect. While a great idea indeed, not the first. Rail Trails are the rage in this country and many towns and even cities are on the move. The Rails to Trails Conservancy is a strong arm in this movement with good information and links on their web sight. I have a book published by them with a state by state listing of rail trails in the U.S. of A. And there are hundreds of them.

So from the stand point of railfanning, consider this. Some members travel many miles to ride trains and "collect rare mileage". Some members travel far and wide to ride behind steam. Some members have gone to great lengths to watch trains. And of course there are the photographers who will risk life and limb for that perfect shot. As for me, now I will travel to ride a bicycle on a rail trail and yes I keep track of the mileage. As a side line to this, there are several roads and city streets that are laid on former railroad alignments. Yes, I seek them as well.

So what is the point of all this? Many things come to mind. Bicycling is fun and healthy. Bicycling rail trails gives me a new way to enjoy the railroad hobby. And in my case, I have also started collecting bikes. Old cruisers and new style ODD bikes as well. I have even built a few really ODD contraptions too. As for my boy hood bike that my Dad built for me, well I still have it! Ride On!

*Some thoughts from our Program Director,
Rick Bivins.*

A Day (or three) in Dallas.

by

Thursday February 17, Kathy and I left for Dallas Texas for a three day visit with my sister Vicki, her husband Michael and the boys Elvis & Dirk (two dogs). After an eleven hour drive through the night we arrived in the north suburb of Plano TX. I had an agenda that for the most part did not include trains. My sister's husband Michael loves Dallas and loves to show it. I had never been there so we spent the first day

BUY SELL SWAP

Wanted: issues 1-8 of Locomotive and Railway Preservation magazine. Contact Phil Randall at 270-676-8703. or parroc@madisonville.com

For Sale: Numerous pieces of misc. model railroad equipment, accessories, parts, tools, Large Scale, O, S, Sn3, OO, HO, TT scales. Contact Phil Randall at 270-676-8703 or parroc@madisonville.com

Wanted Junk or scrap HO locomotives or locomotive shells, GP7s, GP9s and GP18s. I'm building a series of Paducah Geeps - GP8s and GP10s.
Eric Travis 270-821-0865
e-mail eltravis@spis.net

For Sale *L&N* and *Family Lines* employee magazines, \$2 each plus postage. Call or send for list.
Dennis Carnal
704 Choctaw Drive Madisonville, KY 42431
270-825-0693

Sell or Swap 63 issues of *DIESEL ERA* (1994 to 2003), a very well edited and illustrated locomotive magazine. The multiple views and varying paint schemes of locomotives can be most helpful to modelers. \$1 an issue or \$50 for the lot.
Chuck Hinrichs 270-886-2849
e-mail chuckrail@charter.net

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sight seeing. Saturday Michael and I went for a bike ride on the Dallas Katy Greenway Trail. This is a linear park operated by the Dallas Parks Commission and is 3.7 miles long. At present the trail is being widened to accommodate bikes on one side and walkers/runners on the other. This shows how popular the trail is. The trail is built on the old Missouri Kansas Texas (MKT) road bed right through the most expensive homes in Dallas. Known as the Turtle Creek Area, these homes while very attractive do not in my mind reflect their Eight Million Dollar price range. But then they do have a very nice rail trail in their back yards.

After that ride we rode along city streets to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) station at Mockingbird Ln. Michael was just taken away by the trains. He has lived most of his life in Dallas and knew about the trains but never even considered riding one. He was surprised by the cleanliness, quietness and accessibility they had to offer. And Mockingbird station had a theater, bookstore, Starbucks Coffee and a host of other retail shops to visit. And of course there were restaurants everywhere. Michael has driven by here a zillion times and never knew the place existed. Of course now we had to go find the "girls".

We did indeed find the girls and went "down to the station". That station being Plano's DART Blue Line at Parker road. We boarded our train and rode to the very end at Westmoreland, a total of about forty miles in one hour and five minutes. This included many stops. We were at ground level for much of the ride with some elevated trackage in the outlying areas. The train ran underground for about three miles just before entering downtown Dallas. Downtown running was on the cities streets just like a trolley. The train accelerated very quickly and track speed was 65 MPH. We rode past the likes of Dallas Zoo, Thanksgiving Square and many of Dallas's famous landmarks. We returned to Plano that night with a plan for the next day. The cost to ride the train was \$2.50 per person for all trains and for all day. What a deal.

Sunday Michael and I rode another rail trail. The Denton Trail is eight miles long on the MKT and is gravel. Not as flashy a ride but a very nice one. Part of the trail parallels the UP from the north and we did see a UP unit coal train with SD90MAC's for power. One DPU unit was on the rear. My rail atlas shows one line in Denton, MKT so I can not say for sure what line the coal train was on. MKT is gone now with much of its line in use as a rail trail. It was a really nice simple ride on the bikes.

Sunday afternoon we were on the train again. We rode the blue line to downtown again and detrained at City Place station. Here we boarded the 1920 McKinney Ave. Trolley to downtown. This is a neat ride on a REAL trolley. Our motorman had to de-train several times to "tend the pole" as the trolley pole kept jumping off the overhead. This was a delightful ride and it was free. We ate a burger at Jakes before returning to Mockingbird Station via the trolley and DART. Here we changed trains to ride the Red Line to Garland. The Red Line runs from Garland to Ledbetter, a distance of about thirty miles. We did not ride to Ledbetter as it was getting late. I plan to ride these the next time. I rode by Dallas Union Station while on the DART; this is where we would have changed to the Trinity Express to Fort Worth. There are several Railroad museums in the area but I visited only one. It was a nice Interurban station and sub station with a 1920's era RPO/Coach on display. This little museum was neat and clean with several display items and an operating O-gauge layout.

I greatly enjoyed my visit with family in Dallas. It was especially