

PENNYRAIL

June 2013

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 6

Please send your digital photos and story material to bill@fbcmadisonville.com

or mail to
Bill Thomas,
First Baptist Church,
PO Box 607,
Madisonville, KY
42431.



Chapter Chatter

**Next Meeting Monday,
June 17, 2013, 7:00 pm
Former Louisville & Nashville
Passenger Station, Madisonville, KY**

**Program Host
Matt Gentry
Refreshments
Rich Hane**

NRHS Mission Statement

National Railway Historical Society, Inc. Mission Statement - The National Railway Historical Society promotes railway heritage preservation and educates its members and the public about rail transportation, its history and impact, with a focus on North America.

Objectives

1. To foster the experience of rail transportation
2. To develop and expand educational services and programs
3. To build and maintain archives, to encourage and to support archival activities, and to disseminate information in archives
 - A. To increase collaboration between existing archives
 - B. To develop listing of National and Chapter archives
4. To support preservation of memorabilia and artifacts
5. To facilitate association and networking
6. To support preservation of memorabilia and artifacts
7. To maintain and grow the organization

In this issue...

- ◆ Words From Our President
- ◆ New Mystery Location
- ◆ Photos From the May Meeting
- ◆ The Vega Returns!

Western Kentucky Chapter, NRHS, Inc.

111 Reed Place
Madisonville, KY 42431

* * * * *

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Ricky Bivins

Vice President
Steve Miller

Secretary Treasurer
Wally Watts

National Director
Wallace Henderson

Director at Large
Thomas Bryan

"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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Right: Gary Ostrand was able to join us for the May meeting in Hopkinsville. He is dwarfed by the gons rolling by. More photos on page 4.



Ricky's Replies

President, Ricky Bivins

Hello again Chapter Members and welcome to June, 2013. As some of you will recall, May found us in Hopkinsville KY. as guests of our Hopkinsville Members. Our meeting was held in the former Louisville & Nashville Passenger Station which is a wonderful venue. The weather was perfect, many members were on hand and CSX provided us with a few trains, one being an ICE (Iowa, Chicago & Eastern) run-through no less! And of course we had food! Boy did we have food. Mr. Ferrell and his staff went all out with burgers, dogs and all the trimmings. WHEW!

Change came about the meeting unexpectedly but with a positive outcome. The program was to be presented by Cliff Downey. The subject was to be Illinois Central's KY Division. However, Cliff was called into work at the last minute to make repair of a hospital machine that was evidently needed right away. We certainly do not fault him for that. Cliff expressed his grief but he has been assured a program slot of his choosing in the near future. In place of our usual program time we simply enjoyed good food, camaraderie and relaxed. We did take time out to have a business meeting. Discussion was had on the upcoming Chapter Train Ride in Tennessee along the former Tennessee Central, Friday Night Live, the scuttled Progress Rail trip and.....

Speaking of Friday Night Live, by the time you read this our first FNL (June 14) may be behind us. Expect a

report there on. However, we will set up our table at the July 8th and August 9th events. Again, we have a great time with kids and adults, spread the word of our Organization and help our fair City. So please try to attend at least one of the three events if only for an hour or so. Those of us that are on hand EVERY time could use a brake every once in a while! Matt Gentry hand delivered our calling cards and they look great. I will have them on hand meeting night. We will hand these out during our visits with event goers etc.

And speaking of events, our annual Fall picnic is set for Saturday, September 28th, 2013. This is a great time of trains, food and fellowship.

On Monday June 3rd, 2013, four of us, Wally Watts, Thomas Bryan, Matt Gentry and I met up with Gary Ostlund in Gorham IL. To watch trains and talk trains (Army, cars, trucks etc.) for the day. I had planned this around Gary's regular trip to the VA Clinic in Marion IL. Gary drives his Motor Home to Gorham with his VW in tow and spends a few days track side at Gorham. Also in Gorham is Chuck (Black Pete), a lifelong resident of the sleepy little town. Chuck (whose last name escapes me now) is a twice retired store house of information. While watching trains (or empty track for seven hours as it was) we learned of a track maintenance curfew for the day.

(Continued on page 5)



Mystery Location - Where Are We?

This location is obviously on the pre-merger L&N, but could be any of its divisions. Hint - one of our relatively new chapter members worked this wreck in 1971 or 1972.



If you think you know the location (city and state) of our mystery photo, send your answer to me via e m a i l : bill@fbcmadisonville.com, or mail to Bill Thomas, 1025 Lakewood Dr., Madisonville, KY 42431. Correct responses will be given special notoriety.



Below: Bill Grady was the first in with the correct answer to our May Mystery Location shot. River: Mississippi; Town: Gorham, Illinois; Former Owner-ship: Missouri Pacific; Current Owner: Union Pacific.

As a side note, I met Keith, Dennis, and Robert in November of 1984. On Memorial Day, 1985, Keith, Dennis, my future wife Lisa, and me. went over there for the day in Keith's, Chevy Cavalier. Still lots of Missouri Pacific Blue running that day. and the Cotton Belt was running too. I was hooked!! Sincerely, Bill Grady



May Meeting Photos



Left: Bill Ferrell cooks up some nice vittles for the May meeting at Hopkinsville, KY.

Below: Chapter members enjoy some fellowship time due to our program being unable to attend.



Rail Flicks

By Tommy Johnson



| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Title | BNSF's Arizona Divide |
| Producer | Railway Productions |
| Format | Wide Screen |
| Playing Time | 1 hr 10 min |
| Purchased From | Trainvideodepot.com |
| Date Purchased | 5/30/2013 |
| Price Paid | \$23.95 |

This video takes us east from Kingman, AZ, to Flagstaff, AZ, on a portion of what was once the Santa Fe's main line across Arizona. We are on the Seligman Sub which stretches from Needles, CA, to Winslow, AZ. The area covered in this video is also known as the "Arizona Divide."

The video quality is excellent and it is presented in wide screen format. This combination of great image quality and wide screen format makes the desert scenes come alive. This DVD is very near 7idea quality and that says a lot. A shortcoming must also be pointed out, however. There needs to be a more detailed map than the one presented at the start of the video and it should be referred to as we progress along the sub. It is impossible to visualize where we are as the scenes unfold.

The first geographic feature we are shown is Kingman Canyon where the double tracks are at different elevations; one set of tracks is located along the bottom of the canyon and one set of tracks is located

part of the way up the canyon wall. We see two trains running in opposite directions in the canyon, one on the lower track and one on the upper track. We see another train meet a little further east in Crozier Canyon but the tracks there are side by side and at the same level.

As we make our eastward progress we gain elevation and eventually leave the desert behind us in favor of pine forests. When we reach Williams, we are at 6700 feet in elevation, a gain of in elevation of 3200 feet above our starting point at Kingman. The narrator informs us that this is the only alpine region along the entire Santa Fe main line from Chicago to LA and we continue our eastward journey until we reach Flagstaff.

This one gets a B. It seemed that the further into it I got, the less impressed I was. It was worth the price but could have been better.

Ricky's Replies Cont..

(Continued from page 2)

BUT...we were rewarded with a Union Pacific Passenger train!!! A Safety Special to promote grade crossing awareness in Illinois and Missouri. The south bound train had the UP CNW Heritage unit in the lead, three passenger cars and the MoPac Heritage unit trailing. The train

stopped in Gorham, the crew changed units and the train departed north bound. There was a lot of photo's, ogling and waves to/from passengers as we took in the scene. It was a really good day with friends and trains regardless of the lack of regular trains. Perhaps we can make this a Chapter Function...anyone?

Minutes Summary of May Meeting 2013

- MINUTES: Approved of April Meeting.
- TREASURER REPORT: Approved
- OLD BUSINESS: Matt report our business cards are due next week. June 14 is our 1st Friday Night Live date. Hope we have good Chapter attendance. Mayfield/Paducah trip is tabled for now due to their busy schedule. Steve has tickets for fall trip in October on the Nashville and Eastern . The Crofton Picnic is on for 28th September. A display cabinet is still avail at the mall. Wally announced the Adams Steam show is on for the 19 and 20th of July. Could use a helper at least for Saturday! This could turn into a chapter event too.
- NEW BUSINESS: None.
- NATIONAL REPORT: National dues will be increased to \$50 for 2014. \$7 for family member. 2014 convention in N, W, Arkansas in late spring. Summer board meeting in Bloomington ,MN June 27-30. Next spring board meeting in Lewisburg, PA.. Possible future convention in New Orleans and also in Alaska. Invoices are due for dues in October.
- NEXT MEETING: Monday 17 June at Madisonville 7PM, program by Matt Gentry, refreshments by Rich Hane.
- Meeting adjourned for excellent grilled burgers by Bill Ferrell-Thanks Bill-Yum!
- Those present:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1.Wally Watts | 11.Bob Moffet |
| 2.Birk Fischer | 12.Steve Miller |
| 3.Matt Gentry | 13.Wallace Henderson |
| 4.Rick Bivins | 14.Bill Ferrell |
| 5.Thomas Bryan | 15.Blair Terry |
| 6.Jim Bryan | |
| 7.Bob McCracken | GUESTS |
| 8.Tom Steiner | 1.Gary Oslund |
| 9.Keith Kittinger | 2.Ed Graveman |
| 10.Chuck Hinrich | |



Take a look at this old RR luggage tag. L&N RR and SF&W Ry P2172 via P&A RR. After some Googling, I have L&N RR and South Florida and Western (absorbed by L&N) then the ID number, then via Pensacola & Atlantic RR. Does anyone have more knowledge of these pieces? Best I can tell it is brass. Some were pewter. My neighbor found it in 8 inches of soil just off the old track at Browning Springs Middle School, Madisonville. Lucky me!

May 2013 Financial Report

WESTERN KENTUCKY CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
20 May 2013

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE: | | \$ 1165.26 |
| INCOME: | | |
| National Dues Received | \$ 46.00 | |
| Chapter Dues Received | | |
| Donations | | |
| Other: <i>RAFFLE</i> | 13.00 | |
| TOTAL | ADJ BAL | 1224.26 |
| EXPENDITURES: | | |
| National Dues Paid | \$ | |
| Postage | | |
| Printing | | |
| Flowers | | |
| Supplies | | |
| Other: <i>No Expenditures</i> | | |
| TOTAL | | 00.00 |
| ENDING BALANCE | | \$ 1224.26 |

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS:

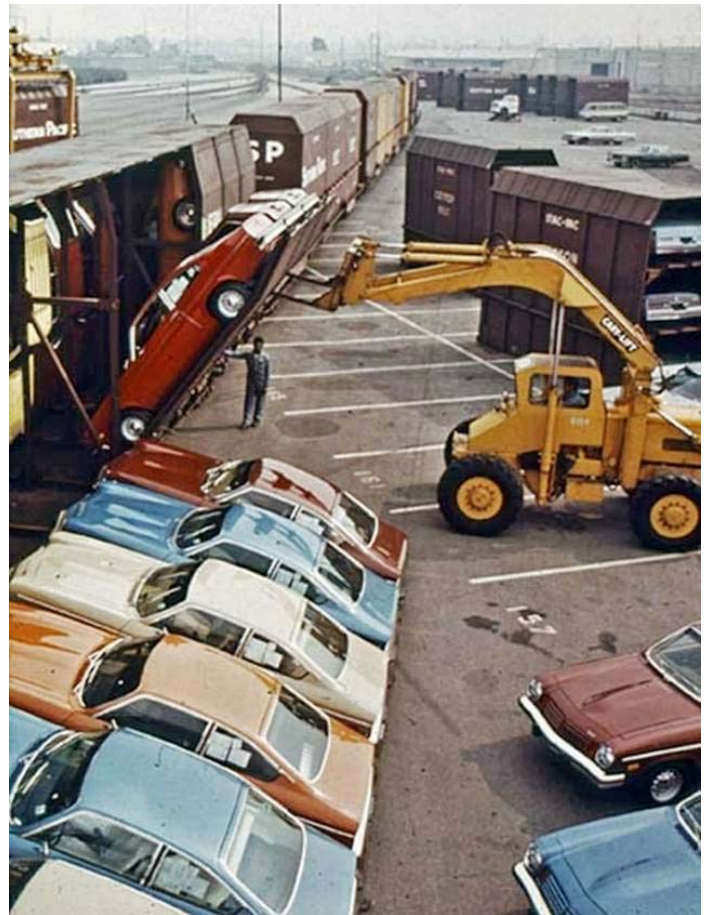
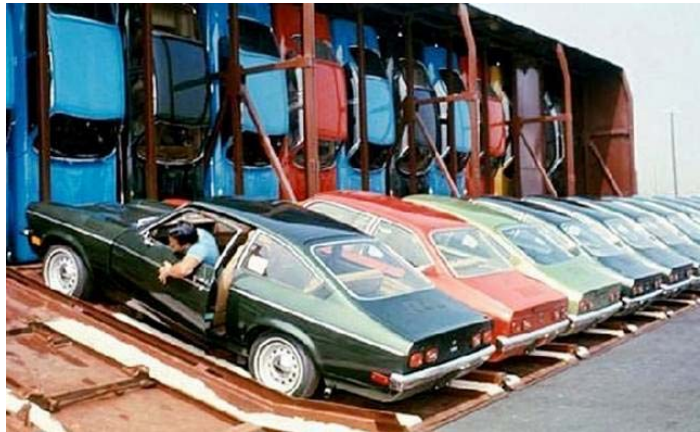
| | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|
| Beginning Membership | | 41 |
| National Members Added | 3 | |
| National Members Deleted | | |
| Chapter Only Members Added | | |
| Chapter Only Members Deleted | | |
| Ending Membership | | 44 |

Wally Watts
Chapter Treasurer

Friday Night Live

**Don't forget about
our display at Madisonville's
Friday Night Live June 14,
July 12, and August 9!**

Regional Rail News



Remember the Chevy Vega? This is how they were shipped. Until the early 1960s, automobiles moved by rail were carried in boxcars. These were 50 feet long with double-wide doors. Inside was room for four full-sized sedans on a two-tier rack - two raised up off the floor on a steel rack and two others tucked in underneath them. This protected the cars during transport but wasn't very efficient, as the weight of four vehicles was far less than the maximum weight a boxcar that size could carry. When 85-foot and 89-foot flatcars came into service, it was possible to pack a total of fifteen automobiles in one car on tri-level auto racks. But it still didn't approach the maximum allowable weight for each flatcar.

When Chevrolet started designing Vega during the late 1960s, one of the main objectives was to keep the cost of the car down around \$2,000 in circa-1970 dollars. At the time, the freight charge for moving a loaded railroad car from the Lordstown, OH assembly plant to the Pacific coast - the longest distance cars produced at Lordstown would need to travel - was around \$4,800. Since the Vega was a subcompact, it was possible to squeeze three more cars on a railroad car for a total of eighteen, instead of the usual fifteen. But that still worked out to around \$300 per car a substantial surcharge for a \$2000 car. If only Chevrolet could get more Vegas on a railroad car, the cost per unit of hauling them would go down.

The engineers at GM and Southern Pacific Railroad came up with a clever solution. Instead of loading the cars horizontally, the Vegas were to be placed vertically on a specially designed auto-rack called the Vert-A-Pac. Within the same volume of an 89-foot flatcar, the

Vert-A-Pac system could hold as many as 30 automobiles instead of 18.

Chevrolet's goal was to deliver Vegas topped with fluids and ready to drive to the dealership. In order to be able to travel nose-down without leaking fluids all over the railroad, Vega engineers had to design a special engine oil baffle to prevent oil from entering the No. 1 cylinder. Batteries had filler caps located high up on the rear edge of the case to prevent acid spilling, the carburetor float bowl had a special tube that drained gasoline into the vapor canister during shipment, and the windshield washer bottle stood at a 45 degree angle. Plastic spacers were wedged in beside the power train to prevent damage to engine and transmission mounts. The wedges were removed when cars were unloaded.

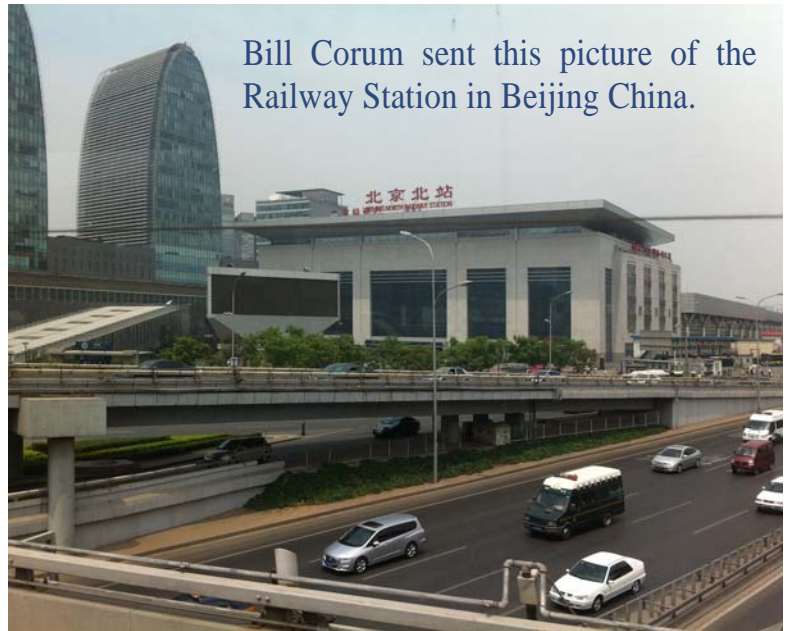
The Vega was hugely popular when it was introduced in 1970, however it quickly earned a reputation for unreliability, rust and terrible engine durability. When the Vega was discontinued in 1977, the Vert-A-Pac cars had to be retired as they were too specialized to be used with anything else. The Vert-A-Pac racks were scrapped, and the underlying flatcars went on to other uses.

TIMETABLE #110

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF RAILFANS ONLY

- **West Kentucky NRHS Chapter Meeting -**
Monday, June 16, Madisonville, KY
- **Friday Night Live -** June 14, 2013 -
WKYNRHS display on old Courthouse Lawn
- **Friday Night Live -** July 12, 2013
- **Friday Night Live -** August 9, 2013
- **Crofton Chapter Picnic -** September 28

If you know of regional events we can put on the Timetable, please forward those to me, bill@fbcmadisonville.com.



Bill Corum sent this picture of the Railway Station in Beijing China.

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 appreciated.

Bill Thomas, editor

bill@fbcmadisonville.com

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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| UP | 888-877-7267 |
| Amtrak | 800-331-0008 |

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www.nrhs.com

Railway Preservation News

www.rypn.org/

Kentucky Railway Museum

www.kyrail.org/

Indiana Railway Museum and French

Lick Scenic Railway

www.indianarailwaymuseum.org

Illinois RR Historical Society

<http://icrrhistorical.org/>

Illinois Railway Museum

www.irm.org/

Tennessee Central

Railway Museum

www.tcry.org/

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

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