

# PENNYRAIL

January 2019

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 1

Please send your digital photos and story material to [billtrainthomas@gmail.com](mailto:billtrainthomas@gmail.com) or mail to **Bill Thomas**, First Christian Church 1030 College Dr. Madisonville, KY 42431.



## Chapter Chatter

### *In this issue...*

- ◆ Ricky's Replies
- ◆ NC&StL 576 On the Move!
- ◆ Photo Contest Update
- ◆ Photo Gallery
- ◆ Minutes & Financial Report

**Next Meeting Monday,  
Monday January 21  
7:00 pm**

Innovation Station (Former L&N Station)  
Arch Street and CSX Main

Program and Refreshments  
By President Ricky Bivins  
*1984 Video - Chesapeake and Ohio  
4-8-4 614 pulling coal trains in the  
mountains of Virginia  
and West Virginia.*

Western Kentucky  
Chapter, NRHS, Inc.  
\* \* \* \* \*

President  
Ricky Bivins

Vice President  
Steve Miller

Secretary-Treasurer  
Bill Farrell

National Director  
Will Kling

Director at Large  
Keith Kittinger

"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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**UP COMING PHOTO  
CONTEST  
Submission Deadline  
Dates  
On page 5**

*Get out there!  
Never know what you'll find on the rails!*



# Ricky's Replies

Greetings fellow NRHS Western Kentucky Chapter members. And welcome to January, 2019. My oh my what a year 2018 was. Looking back we had the Christmas show at the mall, breakfast with Santa, an excellent Christmas dinner at the Miller residence, a picnic and rail fan day at Crofton, a railfan day in Hopkinsville, a meeting in Hopkinsville, a track side day in Morton's Gap not to mention numerous meetings, impromptu get-togethers and programs a plenty. I feel 2019 will be even better.

As you are aware, we did not have a business meeting in December however, we did have the aforementioned dinner at the Miller residence, a very successful breakfast with Santa and a successful Christmas show at the mall. Bill Farrell will have a report on the earnings from those events. Not to mention the raffle which netted us additional monies as the winner did not take the train set.

We did however have a meeting in November. Which also brought about elections of officers for 2019. There were no changes in officers as all were voted in by a single vote of acclamation. To which I say thank you. Hopefully I can serve as President as need be.

2018 also brought on a few new members. It is nice to think that we can continue to grow in this age of electronics and instant gratification. As for growing in 2019, I have always said, if a member has an idea bring it forward. We will entertain all thoughts of growth and events as well. If there is something you would like for the Chapter to do, sponsor it. And it will be done!

As is customary in January, the president which is I, will have the program and refreshments. My program will be a 1984 VHS video of Chesapeake and Ohio 4-8-4 number is 614 pulling coal trains in the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia. Along with the video we will have a guest speaker. If you recall a few years ago my oldest stepson Brian Davis who works for CSX as a conductor gave us a talk. Brian is on call meeting night and if he is not on the railroad he will be at the meeting to give us a follow-up to that program. That is tentative provided he is available at the time.

The extended forecast for meeting night is clear and cold. Keep in mind should we have inclement weather I will cancel the meeting. No need for anyone to get out slip and fall or worse. Otherwise I hope to see you Monday, January 21, 2019. Bring a friend as all are welcome.



## 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 maintain and grow the organization

# NC&StL 576 On the Move

The Northern type locomotive (4-8-4) was moved from Centennial Park in Nashville to the Nashville & Western Railroad Tracks about a mile northeast of the park. The locomotive and tender were loaded up Friday on flat beds for the move early Sunday morning. Picture 1 is of the 576 leaving Centennial Park, the flat bed is self-propelled. Photo 2 is of her tender minus it's trucks. The trucks were taken on to the Nashville & Western RR earlier. Photo 3 was shot on Charlotte Pike, as the locomotive moved slowly toward it's unloading point. Photo 4 is of Bill Farrell & Blair Terry as they followed the 576 down Charlotte Pike. Finally, photo 5 is a shot of both the locomotive and tender as they make a left turn off Charlotte on to 12th Ave. North.



# A Good RR Mystery!

## By Chris Dees

Many of you in the Madisonville area might recall the Western Kentucky Railway, created in 1995 to take over operation of the remnants of the former Tradewater Railway. With reporting marks of WKRL, the Western Kentucky Railway owned lines from Providence to a junction at Blackford, from Blackford north to Waverly, and the line from Blackford south to Princeton. Most of the north-south line, once the main line of the Ohio Valley Railway (an Illinois Central Railroad predecessor) was abandoned in 1995 and 1996, leaving only the piece between Blackford and Dekoven. The Fredonia Valley Railroad later acquired the section from Princeton to Fredonia and it is still in operation today. The rest of the line was abandoned in 2010 and removed from Providence to Wheatcroft and the surrounding mines.

However, there was an earlier rail company by the name of Western Kentucky Railroad Company, and the way I found out about it has a lot of the similar excitement and drama of History Channel's Curse of Oak Island television series.

I grew up in Marshall County, Kentucky, and although today's railfans would easily recognize the Paducah & Louisville (formerly Illinois Central Kentucky Division) mainline in the northern part of the county, most are unaware of a small branch line of the Louisville & Nashville that crossed the county on a diagonal from Paducah, through the county seat of Benton, to Hardin and down to Murray. Originally the mainline of the Paducah, Tennessee & Alabama Railroad, the railroad line was transferred a couple of times before becoming the Paducah Branch of the L&N.

The 38-mile line north of Hardin to Paducah was abandoned by L&N in 1982, and a research project this past fall of 2018 resulted in a huge amount of railroad history I was never aware of, including one event that just left me scratching my head with the words "Really ????" echoing back through 35+ years. I started with some internet searches, and soon found that the Marshall County Library had scanned the complete collections of all county newspapers since the 1880s available on-line to card-carrying members.

A quick call to the main branch explaining my Marshall County roots and interest in railroad history got me the necessary credentials and access to a wealth of information. If you haven't tried this type of research, it can be amazing and provide you with many new adventures as a member of the NRHS.

Like many abandonments of the early 1980s, local businesses and government officials fought the abandonment quite heavily, including the formation of the Purchase Area Rail Support Association, or PARSA. Consolidated Aluminum, Marshall County Soil Improvement Association, Kashway Building Materials, Treas Lumber Company, and Hardin Grain Elevator worked with L&N, fought with L&N, and tried numerous ways to preserve rail service to Benton and Hardin. On April 1, 1981, several L&N employees and railroad investors formed the Western Kentucky Railroad Company, headquartered in Paducah, in an attempt to purchase the track and form a short line railroad company. Although the attempt was unsuccessful due to not being able to agree on a reasonable price, the efforts of PARSA and WKRC did extend the life of the L&N in Marshall County, and eventually resulted in Jack Dunigan, owner of the Hardin Grain Elevator, purchasing a shorter segment from Hardin to Murray that became the J&J Railroad.

In the early 1990s, the J&J Railroad was sold to Hardin Southern, who provided tourist railroad service on the line before it was abandoned in the early 2000's.

One search revealed probably the most interesting newspaper article I have found to date regarding this railroad line, the January 1980 derailment of a 77-car coal train at Benton, Kentucky. That's right, 77-cars of coal going up the old Paducah Branch to its final destination of TVA's Shawnee Steam Plant. Since the L&N had part ownership of the Paducah & Illinois Railroad, it could directly service TVA. But what's more interesting is the fact that by this time, the L&N "Memphis Line" between Guthrie, Clarksville, and Paris would have been severed at the Tennessee River bridge in Danville, Tennessee. The routing would have been via Nashville, New Johnsonville, and Bruceton. And a search of The Paducah Sun shows a clear photo not of L&N hoppers, but Norfolk & Western coal hoppers at the derailment site. Whether this was an

*(Continued on page 5)*



## Photography Contest News

Below are the dates for upcoming chapter photo contests. During the months listed all members are invited to shoot pictures and submit no more than two entries each to [webmaster@westkentuckynrhs.org](mailto:webmaster@westkentuckynrhs.org) by the deadline listed next to each contest. You must be a paid member of the chapter to participate in these contests.

Jim Pearson or the membership will judge the photos and select 1st through 3rd place and the winners will be presented in the Pennyrail and on the chapter website. We'll also view them at the meeting following each contest.

At least the 1st place winners will be used to produce a chapter calendar for the next year.

All submissions must have a caption that lists at least the railroad, location and date with photographers credit and any other relevant information.

January 15-30, 2019

Submission Deadline: February 7, 2019

March 15-30, 2019

Submission Deadline: April 7, 2019

May 15-30, 2019

Submission Deadline: June 7, 2019

July 15-30, 2019

Submission Deadline: August 7, 2019



(Continued from page 4)

interchanged train from N&W, an L&N detour from a more direct route via Madisonville and the ICG

# The Paducah Sun

Monday, January 7, 1980

## Carbide gold theft nears resolution

By BILL BARTLEMAN

Sun Staff Writer

The FBI expects to "wrap up" its investigation of 10 ounces of missing gold from the federally-owned Union Carbide Gaseous Diffusion plant here with the arrest of several persons, according to an agency spokesman in Louisville.

Don Shaffer, supervisor of the FBI theft squad in Kentucky, said the U.S. attorney's office for the state's Western District will be asked to issue several warrants in the case. The spokesman would not say how many warrants will be sought, or when he expects them to be issued. All of those believed to be involved are from Paducah, Shaffer said.

The theft of the gold was investigated by L. V. McGliny, special FBI agent assigned to Paducah. McGliny, contacted in Louisville, said he could not

been sold on the open market and melted down.

The single-gold bar, valued at more than \$20,000, was discovered missing in late November during a routine audit of gold stored at the plant here, according to an earlier statement by Clay Zerby, plant manager.

Gold is recovered from nuclear equipment which is dismantled at the plant, melted into bars and stored until there is "sufficient quantity" for sale on the open market, according to Zerby.

Zerby, in a previous interview, said six to eight employees of the plant have direct access to the gold.

Zerby was not available for comment today on the latest developments. Bill Thomas, assistant plant manager, said he had been instructed by the FBI not to comment on the case.



Workmen today attempted to clear derailed coal cars near Benton.

(Staff photo by Bill Knight)

## Wreck repairs begun

BERTON, Ky. — A repair crew from the Louisville and Nashville Railroad's Nashville area today began repair work at the site of a Saturday night derailment near here that destroyed approximately 150 feet of track and has rail traffic snarled.

The 25-man crew has been on the scene since 6 a.m. today and its supervisor hopes that the line will be back in operation by midnight.

"The first thing we've got to do is get the railroad repaired," said R. L. Bush, trainmaster at Bruceton, Tenn., and head of the repair operation. "Then we'll get things cleaned up along the track."

Cause of the derailment still has not been determined, according to Bush.

Sixteen hopper car loads of coal bound for Shawnee Steam Plant near Paducah

Continued On Back

## Minutes from November, 2018

President Ricky Bivins called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, November 19, 2018. There was a total of 10 members present for the meeting.

The minutes were approved as printed in the PennyRail, from the October 15, 2018 meeting.

The treasurers report was given by William Farrell, of 1,902.80, approved.

### Old Business:

Steve Miller reported that the chapter will be hoisting the Christmas Party at his home in Hopkinsville. The party will be on the first Saturday in December (3<sup>rd</sup>), meet at 3:00 pm and eat at 4:00 pm, training will follow after the meal.

Bill Farrell, reported that members will be invoiced for local dues at the end of December. The local dues will remain the same as in the past of 5.00. National dues have been sent out and will not be collected by the local chapter. Members can go on line and pay National dues.

Jim Pearson reported that the calendars will only be produced in the small format. Jim reported we would try to have the photos from the contest ready for the calendars by the Christmas party. The cost of each calendar will be 15.00. Steve Miller suggested using another company to save on the cost of printing the 2019 edition. It was decided to stay with LuLu the company Jim Pearson has used in the past. President Bivins took a count of the number of members who wanted to purchase a calendar. A total of 7 calendars were ordered by members and the total was rounded up to 10 for future sales. The membership voted on the final photo contest with Bill Grady taking first place and Bill Farrell in second place.

### New Business

The members nominated in the October meeting for officers of the Western Kentucky Chapter for 2019 were accepted by acclamation . The 2019 officers are as followed; Ricky Bivins, President, Steve Miller, VP, Bill Farrell, Secretary/ Treasurer, Keith Kittinger, Director at Large, and Will Kling, National Representative to NRHS.

Bill Farrell gave a report on the chapter's Christmas projects. Breakfast with Santa, December 15<sup>th</sup> and the show in the mall will run on weekends only. Starting with the first, second and third weekends in December and finishing on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Ready to Run Lionel Train Set raffle officially started on November 19<sup>th</sup> with the drawing on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Will Kling made a motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Steve Miller, motion carried.

## Current Financial Report

11/1/2018	Beginning Balance		1,902.80
11/14/2018	Office Max, cards	Check # 1229	9.53
			1,893.27
11/16/2018	Kentucky Farm Bureau	Check # 1230	309.1
			1,584.20
11/17/2018	Check # 1231	Office Max Breakfast	31.8
			1,552.40
11/20/2018	Check # 1232	Calendars	107.4
			1,445.00
12/1/2018	Beginning Balance		1,445.00
12/13/2018	Deposite	Raffle	450
			1,895.02
12/19/2018	Deposite	Pictures	95
			1,990.02
12/19/2018	Deposite	Breakfast	400
			2,390.02
12/23/2018	Check # 1233	Raffle Jack Richardson	100
			2,290.02
12/27/2018	Deposite	Raffle	360
			2,650.02
12/30/2018	Check # 1234	US Postal Services	82
			2,568.02
1/1/2019	Beginning Balance		2,568.02
1/2/2019	Check # 1235	Ky Farm Bureau Mship	51
			2,517.02

## Photo Gallery

### **The Exodus** – photographer unknown, from the collection of Chris Dees

March of 1982 brought word to Conrail employees in Harrisburg, Illinois that the line sale to Southern Railway had finally been completed. In what some would see as a parallel to the book of Exodus, the line had experienced its share of oppression and plague: washed out tracks south of Olmsted since 1973, multiple 5 mph slow orders on weed covered tracks, deferred maintenance, Clean Air Act legislation, and the overall decline of coal mining in the area. With possessions packed, the final Conrail train to depart Harrisburg, Illinois begins the trek north to Mount Carmel. Southern will begin operations the following day.



### **Strangers in Little Egypt** – photographer unknown, from the collection of Chris Dees

A lot of railfans don't realize that the Southern Railway, and its successor Norfolk Southern, once operated over 100 miles of track in the far southern Illinois region known as "Little Egypt". Originally a part of the Big Four and NYC, the Cairo Branch from Mount Carmel to Cairo was operated by Conrail until its 1982 sale to Southern Railway. The prospect of future coal mining was the major impetus for the purchase and rebuilding of the line, but after just six short years, NS

abandoned the route in 1988. Seen here at Harrisburg during those tumultuous six years are two rare birds on a Harrisburg-Karnak coal train, EMD GP49s 4604 and 4605. Originally built as an order of six GP39X locomotives in November 1980, the units were upgraded to GP49 specifications shortly after purchase. Today they serve on Tri-Rail commuter trains in Florida. The railroad now serves as the Tunnel Hill State Trail system.



# The Bumper

## Chapter Interchange Track

If you have items for sale or looking for a particular item or items, Email me at [billtrainthomas@gmail.com](mailto:billtrainthomas@gmail.com) with the information and I will list it here.



**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*  
[billtrainthomas@gmail.com](mailto:billtrainthomas@gmail.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.

BNSF	800-832-5452
CN/IC	800-465-9239
CSX	800-232-0144
NS	800-453-2530
UP	888-877-7267
Amtrak	800-331-0008

## TIMETABLE #110

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF RAILFANS ONLY

- January 21 - Chapter Meeting at Innovation Station (former L&N depot)
- February 18 - Chapter Meeting at Innovation Station (former L&N depot)
- March 18 - Chapter Meeting at Innovation Station (former L&N depot)
- April 15- Chapter Meeting at Innovation Station (former L&N depot)

If you know of regional events we can put on the Timetable, please forward those to me, [bill@fbcmadisonville.com](mailto:bill@fbcmadisonville.com).

### National Railway Historical Society

[www.nrhs.com](http://www.nrhs.com)

### Railway Preservation News

[www.rypn.org/](http://www.rypn.org/)

### Kentucky Railway Museum

[www.kyrail.org/](http://www.kyrail.org/)

### Indiana Railway Museum and French

### Lick Scenic Railway

[www.indianarailwaymuseum.org](http://www.indianarailwaymuseum.org)

### Illinois RR Historical Society

<http://icrrhistorical.org/>

### Illinois Railway Museum

[www.irm.org/](http://www.irm.org/)

### Tennessee Central

### Railway Museum

[www.tcry.org/](http://www.tcry.org/)

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

## PENNYRAIL

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