

# THE PENNYRAIL

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
WEST KENTUCKY CHAPTER OF  
THE NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**November 2021**

**Meeting**

**Innovation Station**

**Monday,**

**November 15**

**7:00 PM**

President-Keith Kittinger

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Vice President-Steve Miller

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Sec/Treas-Bill Farrell

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Chapter Rep-Will Kling

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Director at Large-Cooper Smith

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Editor-Bill Thomas

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**Lionel Train Set  
Raffle Tickets  
Available at the  
November  
meeting**

**-  
Drawing December 23  
4 PM Parkway Plaza Mall  
Madisonville**



# Minutes from October Meeting

President Keith Kittinger called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm, October 18, 2021. There was a total of 10 members present for the meeting.

The minutes from the July 18, 2021 meeting were read by Secretary William Farrell. Motion to except by Ricky Bivins, seconded by Steve Miller. The minutes were approved by the members present.

The treasurers report was given by William Farrell, of 2,633.41. Motion to except the treasures report was made by Ricky Bivins and seconded by Blair Terry. The treasures report was approved by the members present.

### Old Business;

On a recommendation by President Keith Kittinger Breakfast with Santa will be shelved for this year.

Bill Thomas reported on the club Christmas party this year. Bill Farrell suggested that the club pay for the purchase of the meat. Bill Thomas said he would smoke the meat for the party. It was not clear what time the members would gather at Bill's house. Each member attending will bring a covered dish. Ricky Bivins motioned that the club purchase the meat, paper supplies, and utensils. Motion was seconded by Will Kling, motion passed.

### New Business;

Bill Farrell has purchased a Lionel Ready to Run Set from Lionel to be used for the Christmas Raffle. The cost was 159. 00 plus shipping. Ricky Bivins motioned to reimburse Bill Farrell for the set, seconded by Bill Thomas, motion passed. The cost of the raffle ticket will be 5.00 each as they have been in the past and each member will receive 4 tickets to buy or sell. Bill Farrell and Bill Thomas will co-chair the fund raiser this year. All money from the raffle will go to purchase the chapter's liability insurance.

Treasurer Bill Farrell asked for a review of the club dues for the upcoming year. In the past the dues have been set at 5.00 per member per year. Ricky Bivins motioned to leave the dues at the present level, seconded by Bill Farrell, motion passed.

Under club officer nominations for the upcoming year. Ricky Bivins motioned to nominate the present officers for the upcoming year. Steve Miller seconded the motion, motion carried.

With no further business, Steve Miller motioned to adjourn the business meeting, seconded by Will Kling, motion passed.

Business meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully; William Farrell, 11/2/2021

# NEWS BRIEFS



Chapter  
Christmas  
Party  
Saturday  
December 4  
4:30 PM  
Bill & Angela  
Thomas  
1025 Lakewood  
Drive  
Madisonville  
Email  
billtrainthomas  
to register your  
covered dish  
side item

## Transfer Table Explained

Last week's piece prompted a few questions about "what is a transfer table." The easy answer is that it's a device that allows transfer of rail rolling stock, mostly motive power, into and out of maintenance shops. In the picture above the huge "unit" as they are



called, has just been refurbished, freshly painted and is about to be moved the length of the transfer table to trackage and begin earning it's keep.

The arrow "A" points to one of sixteen table wheels, necessary to support the weight of #6872. With the unit securely in place, the table operator will move to the end of the building, and the loco will move onto track leading to the yard. "B" is one of eight rails running the length of the facility. "C" is access to one of many stalls in the Sacramento facility. The Cotton Belt railway was a subsidiary of the Southern Pacific, all of which now is part of the Union Pacific railway.

In my story last week, I stated that the diner was "on" a transfer table. It appears that the diner was not in fact on the table, rather on a track at the end of the table. The covered table wheels would not have been visible in view of the camera angle. But they certainly identified a location as other than out on the main-line somewhere zipping along. In the hey-day of passenger rail, many if not most promotional pictures like the one used in my piece, were staged. It was usually in a rail yard, with actors, not out in the scenic wonderland, so they just closed the venetian blinds. Pretty obvious, eh.?

# November 2021 Finance Report

Post Date	Description	Debits	Credits	Balance
9/1/21	Beginning Balance			2,633.41
10/1/21	Beginning Balance			2,633.41
11/1/21	Beginning Balance			2,633.41
11/11/21	Check # 1256, Jim Pearson reimburstment	127.14		2,506.27



The 50-mile Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway was built in the period 1905-1908, running between Lairds, (Palouse) WA and Purdue, ID. In 1932 the Inland Improvement Company (holding company for the W.I.&M.) sold the road to the Potlatch Corporation. For the next 30 years, it operated as a subsidiary of the Potlatch Forests Inc. The Milwaukee Roads Elk River Branch connected at Bovill, ID. The Milwaukee bought the WI&M in 1962, at which time #30, the ALCO Diesel Locomotive above, was sold to the Tacoma Municipal Belt Ry. See the attachment (on the following page, ed.) for the full story and history on the naming of the villages on this interesting short-line.

Credits: G. M. Sebree photo – Attachment: MILWest Dispatch of May 1996.

Submitted by Gary Ostlund



# THE WASHINGTON, IDAHO & MONTANA RY.

## The Railroad "With the Higher Education" Timetable

*Editors Note: This article was originally printed in "The Milwaukee Road Magazine" of January-February 1963, upon the purchase of the WI&M by the Milwaukee. Courtesy of Tom Burg.*

From time to time the 50-mile Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway crops up in headlines as the line on which you can travel from Wellesley to Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Vassar, Cornell and Purdue without changing cars. The late Bob Ripley of "Believe it Or Not" fame made capital of the station name oddity.

So it was not surprising that this curious fact was again brought into focus when ownership of the WI&M passed recently from its parent firm, Potlatch Forests, Inc., to the Milwaukee Land Company, a Milwaukee Road subsidiary. The railroad, operating between Palouse, Wash., and Purdue, Ida., connects with the Milwaukee's Elk River branch at Bovill, Ida., and with the Great Northern and Northern Pacific branch lines at Palouse.

The explanation of the collegiate names of some of the intermediate points is simple. They were selected by alumni of eastern schools in the surveying crew employed to lay out the line. Because it is doubtful that Wellesley and Vassar were represented, consensus has them included for good measure to please some wife or sweetheart.

The name of genuine significance on the timetable is Deary, that of the station listed between Vassar and Cornell. Although more than half a century has passed, old timers in the area recall William Deary and the role he played in opening the frontier to railroading.

The chronicle goes back to 1905 when the Potlatch Lumber Company decided to construct a new mill at Potlatch, Ida. Deary, one of the West's pioneer lumbermen, tried to interest a railroad operating in the area to build into the timber country, and contract to haul out logs and lumber from the new mill.

But the project fell through and the young company decided to do the job itself. By the end of the year 20 miles of track had been laid between Lairds, Wash., and Harvard, Ida., and by 1908 the road was completed to Purdue, Ida., for a total of 50 miles. The project required the building of 17 bridges.

Originally the plan called for extending the railroad into Montana, which accounts for the name, but it was terminated several miles short of the Montana border. In 1910 the Milwaukee Road completed its branch line from St. Maries, Ida., to Elk River, Ida., thus establishing the connection at Bovill.

The first passenger trip over the track occurred on Sept. 30, 1905 when Frederick Weyerhaeuser, a founder of the Potlatch Lumber Company, had his private car transferred onto the WI&M at Palouse for an inspection tour of the new mill. Service was opened formally on Nov. 12 by

Deary, who took 500 guests on an excursion from Palouse to Potlatch. On Dec. 9 of that year the first scheduled service was started, extending to Princeton.

The new railroad proved to be a boon to not only the lumber industry, but also renewed interest in the area's mining potential and in property which had been abandoned because of distance to shipping points. As the railroad provided the means for transporting stock and produce to market, cut-over timberland gradually became productive farmland.

During the boom years the WI&M operated five steam locomotives, 300 flat cars, 15 box cars and two passenger coaches, in addition to miscellaneous work equipment. In 1933, to reduce expenses, the steam-operated passenger train was replaced by a Studebaker automobile rebuilt for track use and christened "The Bug". When time took its toll of that unit it was replaced by the custom built "Potlatcher", a streamlined passenger, mail and express motored car. The discontinuance by the government of the company's mail contract, coupled with a reduction in passenger patronage, precipitated the end of passenger service in 1955.

Significantly, when construction of the railroad began in 1905, logging operations at Potlatch were only a mile from the townsite. Today that distance has increased to 37 miles.

The railroad, dieselized since 1950, remains at approximately 50 miles of track, with 14 1/2 miles of passing and industry trackage. In addition to handling traffic from Potlatch Forests' big mill at Potlatch, it serves smaller lumber operations at Princeton and Harvard and carries logs to the Potlatch lumber mill from Latah and Clearwater Counties.

Also served are a number of grain and pea elevators in the rich agricultural regions between Potlatch and Palouse, and also near Deary, the station identified with the man whose 'do it yourself' ideas started it rolling.

### Timetable of the W I & M Ry. Co.

	Mls	STATIONS.
.....	0	..... Lairds .....
.....	1	..... Palouse .....
.....	5	..... Wellesley .....
.....	8	.. Kennedy Ford ..
.....	12	..... Potlatch .....
<b>Freight</b>	15	..... Princeton .....
<b>Service</b>	21	..... Harvard .....
<b>only.</b>	26	..... Yale .....
.....	30	..... Stanford .....
.....	32	..... Vassar .....
.....	35	..... Deary .....
.....	40	..... Cornell .....
.....	48	..... Bovill <sup>1</sup> .....
.....	50	..... Purdue .....