



LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
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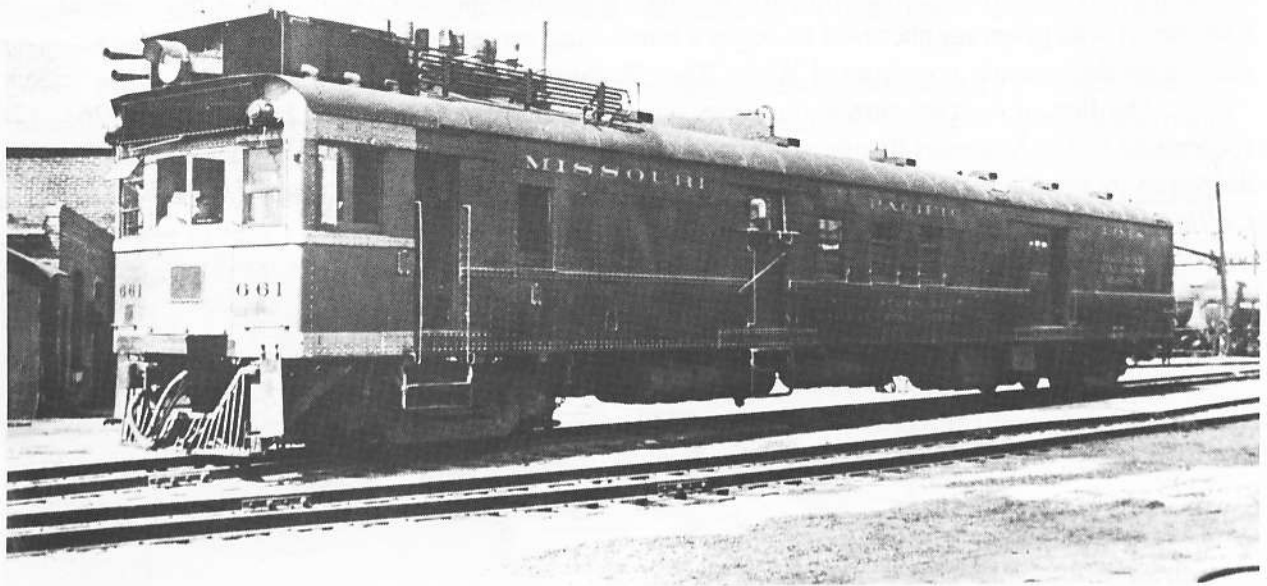
ARKANSAS RAILROADER



VOLUME 29 NUMBER 4 APRIL 1998



A Santa Fe PA1 leads Santa Fe's "California Special" out of Houston, Texas on December 31, 1964, close to the end of these "honorary steam engine's" service. (Phil Whitley photo)



Built by St Louis Car Company in 1931, No. 661 was one of the largest motor cars on the Missouri Pacific. (Gene Hull photo)

MISSOURI PACIFIC LINES

Service to One and All

by: Gene Hull

When Lewis Warrington Baldwin was “running the show,” the Missouri Pacific was known far and wide as A SERVICE INSTITUTION. This was especially true for its passenger trains. They were highly visible as public relations.

In the 1920s and 1930s there was no finer way to go. The Sunshine Route to the west was synonymous with Missouri Pacific and its sister line, the Texas & Pacific. The point of origin was the Gateway to the West - St. Louis. Service reached all the way to Los Angeles and San Francisco via El Paso, Texas and the Southern Pacific.

Even before this, the “mother” of the Missouri Pacific, the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern, scheduled through Palace sleeping cars to Los Angeles and other points in California. At Laredo, Texas, connections were made with the National Railways of Mexico for service to Mexico City.

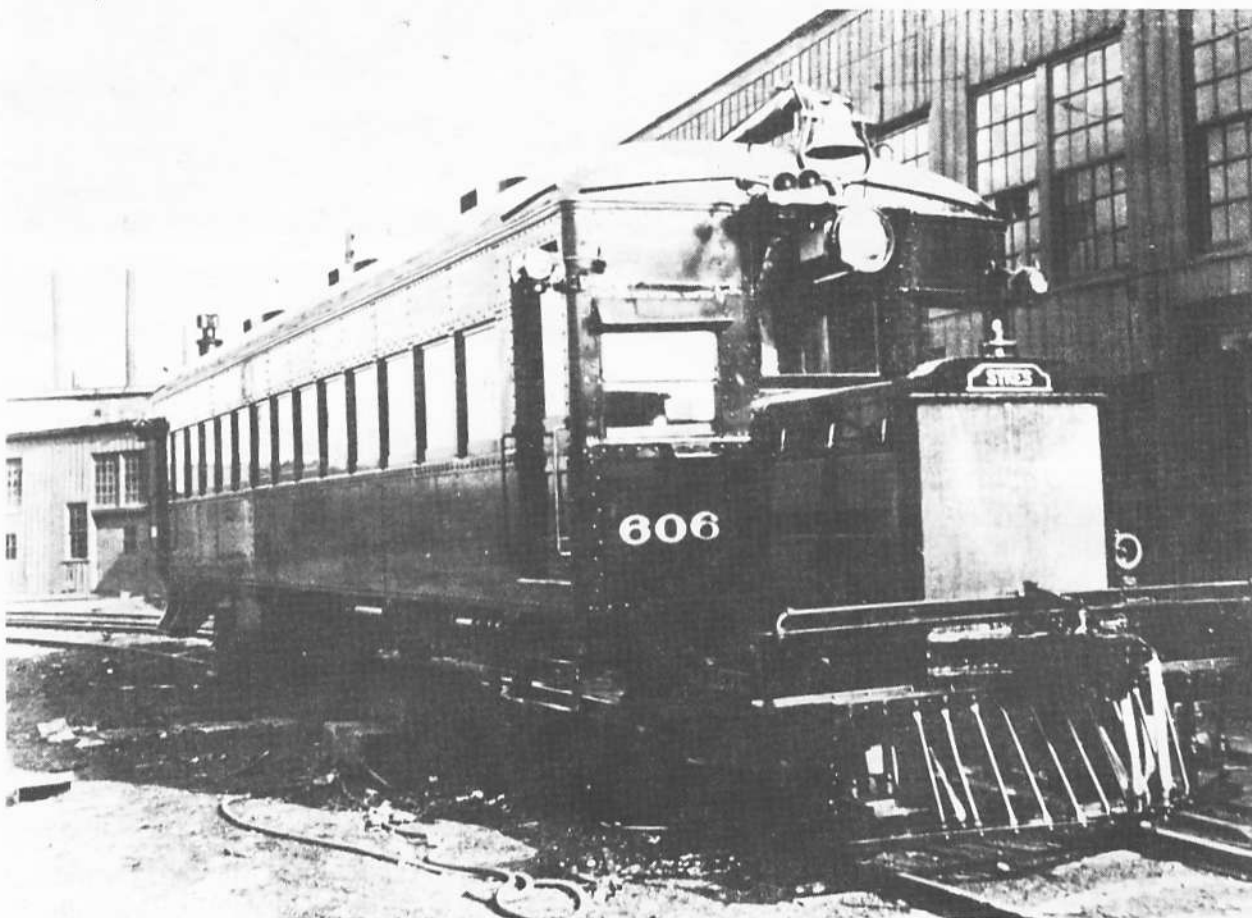
The Missouri Pacific was in business to move passengers expeditiously and comfortably. This was provided by the finest equipment available. This applied not only to the densely traveled corridors, but was extended to the low-volume branch lines as well.

On these routes it was not economically feasible to operate steam powered locomotives

and a variety of heavy steel cars furnishing various classes of service. That did not mean the people along these secondary routes were neglected.

This service was provided by what often was described as “puddle jumpers” or “doodlebugs.” The first such vehicle was a steam driven coach manufactured by St. Louis Car Company in 1906. In 1912 the company received a gasoline-powered motor car from General Electric. It was given number 600 to begin a numbering series for future cars. This one saw service on the recently constructed White River Railway.

The first of the two cars in our story was given number 606. It was built in July 1926 (according to the Missouri Pacific specification sheet), but there also is a reference to its being delivered by the manufacturer in November 1925 (see *MOPAC POWER*, pg. 271, by Joe G. Collias)



Motorcar No. 606, built by J. G. Brill Company July 1926, shown at St. Louis Car Company. (Photo Gene Hull collection)

No. 606 was created by the St. Louis Car Co., using a power unit from the Sykes Company, using gasoline for fuel and mechanically driven (gear shift and clutch). It was one of five units and was a 43-foot-5 inch long coach with seating for 28 passengers. Mail and express were accommodated by a 49½-foot long trailer numbered 1001.

The car resembled a large Model “T” Ford because the engine was mounted ahead of the coach and covered with a ventilated hood with a large radiator in front. On the front end, up near the arched roof, was a fine brass bell and a Mazda headlight.

In April 1926, No. 606 and her four sisters were renumbered as 625 through 629 to make room for some new members of the breed (this would support the building date of November 1925 as opposed to July 1926). With their cost of \$40,000 each, the cars were given bragging rights by the company. They were assigned schedules on relatively short runs between Wichita-Kanopolis, Kansas (102.4 miles); Auburn-Omaha, Nebraska (67.1 miles) and Sedalia-Myrick, Missouri (57.7 miles).

Progress overtook the "five sisters" at the Sedalia, Missouri shops in 1927-1928. The "Model "T" look disappeared, to be replaced by a smoothly rounded front end to make them look like true motorcars instead of rebuilt trucks. The four-cylinder four-cycle engine was replaced by a 220 horsepower six-cylinder gasoline engine. The engine drove a 700 volt generator to furnish electric power to two 110-horsepower motors mounted on the front four-wheel truck. A new control cab was welded to the body to completely enclose the power plant (*voila* - no more hood!)

The new and more powerful cars continued their regular schedules and, when required, trailers were added to handle mail or baggage. In September 1944 motorcar No. 625 (ex-no. 606), along with trailer No. 1002, was sold to the "Mike and Ike" (Missouri Illinois). In April 1954 it was scrapped at Bonne Terre, Missouri, at the tender age of 30 years.

In 1931, the old dependable St. Louis Car Company built a pair of monstrous motorcars, the largest on the Missouri Pacific. They were given numbers 660 and 661 (*see cover*). These two fine cars never hauled a revenue passenger! The reason being, they were built for headend revenue service - mail and express-baggage. Usually there was a trailer, one of the older Sykes cars, to accommodate a few passengers.

These cars were an impressive 75'-0" long and a total weight of 164,500 pounds. An Electro-Motive gasoline engine operated a generator to supply electric power to two 750 horsepower truck-mounted motors. The engine was an E-M series 148 with 8 cylinders having an 8" bore and a 10" stroke, producing 400 horsepower at 900 revolutions per minute. The heavy engine was started by either electricity or air. Fuel (gasoline) was carried in two 300-gallon tanks and one tank with 63-gallon capacity.

The cars operated on main lines as well as branch lines, such as St. Louis, down the eastern side of the Missouri River, to Marion, Illinois. This included the Marion & Eastern Railroad between Marion and Harrisburg, Illinois.

These huge cars were scrapped at Sedalia, Missouri in 1950-1951.

Thus it was that the Missouri Pacific supplied the epitome of service aboard multiple sections of the *SUNSHINE SPECIAL* out of St. Louis to Los Angeles; the observation-drawing room luxury of *THE WESTERNER* between St. Louis and Denver and aboard *THE SOUTHERNER* from St. Louis to San Antonio, while at the same time providing a simple seat aboard train No. 335, a motorcar running 91.7 miles between St. Louis and Gorham, Illinois. The company provided service that was required.



THE SUNSHINE SPECIAL
St. Louis and Memphis to
Louisiana, Texas, California and Mexico



"A Service Institution"

Below is the schedule for Train No. 335 (motor No. 661) between St. Louis and Marion, Illinois, 135 miles in 5 hours and 10 minutes or 26 miles per hour, including 25 scheduled stops and 7 flag stops in January 1939.

Table 80.
ST. LOUIS, GORHAM, BUSH, MARION, THEBES AND CAIRO.

No. 905	No. 335	Mls.	January, 1939	No. 906	No. 336	.....
Cotton Belt.	Motor.	.....	LEAVE [ARRIVE Cotton Belt. Motor.			
11 15 P M	5 00 P M	0	+ St. Louis.	7 12 A M	11 00 A M	.....
11 23 P M	5 10 "	2.0	Washington Ave.	7 01 "	10 50 "	.....
11 27 P M	5 18 "	2.8	+ E. St. Louis (Relay) ..	-	10 40 "	.....
11 27 A M	5 45 "	13.6	Dupo.	d608 "	10 05 "	.....
-	-	15.6	Bixby. ....	-	-	.....
-	6 00 "	22.6	Warnock.	-	9 47 "	.....
-	6 04 "	25.0	Fountain.	-	9 42 "	.....
11 22 8 "	6 15 "	30.1	Valmeyer.	d535 "	9 32 "	.....
11 23 5 "	6 25 "	35.5	Maecystown.	d525 "	9 22 "	.....
11 24 2 "	6 34 "	41.1	Fults.	d515 "	9 12 "	.....
-	6 40 "	44.7	Renault.	-	9 05 "	.....
11 25 6 "	6 48 "	49.2	Prairie du Rocher.	d502 "	8 55 "	.....
-	6 55 "	53.2	Modoc.	-	8 47 "	.....
-	7 02 "	56.7	Flinton.	-	8 39 "	.....
11 12 "	7 10 "	61.6	Reily Lake.	d443 "	8 30 "	.....
11 19 "	7 20 "	68.1	Menard.	d432 "	8 18 "	.....
11 23 "	7 24 "	69.1	+ Chester.	d427 "	8 15 "	.....
11 34 "	7 39 "	78.0	Rockwood.	d410 "	7 59 "	.....
11 36 "	7 41 "	79.2	Cora.	d407 "	7 56 "	.....
11 43 "	7 51 "	84.7	Raddle.	d359 "	7 45 "	.....
-	7 57 "	88.4	Jacob.	-	7 38 "	.....
11 53 A M	8 07 P M	91.7	arr. Gorham.	3 45 A M	7 32 A M	.....
-	8 12 P M	91.7	ve. Gorham.	-	7 27 "	.....
-	8 18 "	94.0	Grimsby.	-	7 18 "	.....
-	8 30 "	101.7	+ Murphysboro.	-	7 13 "	.....
-	8 36 "	104.0	Harrison.	-	7 03 "	.....
-	8 48 "	110.1	De Soto.	-	6 55 "	.....
-	9 01 "	115.7	Bush.	-	6 45 "	.....
-	9 09 "	119.5	Clifford.	-	6 38 "	.....
-	9 16 "	122.5	Herrin City.	-	6 18 "	.....
-	9 33 "	129.8	Johnston City.	-	6 00 A M	.....
-	10 10 P M	135.0	arr. Marion. ....	-	-	.....
11 53 A M	-	91.7	ve. Gorham.	3 45 A M	-	.....
12 01 "	-	98.0	Howardton.	d333 "	-	.....
-	-	102.4	Halsey. ....	-	-	.....
12 14 "	-	107.3	Wolf Lake.	d315 "	-	.....
12 19 "	-	111.6	Ware.	d309 "	-	.....
12 26 "	-	117.3	Reynoldsville.	d257 "	-	.....
12 31 "	-	120.9	McClure.	d250 "	-	.....
12 36 "	-	125.3	Gale.	d240 "	-	.....
12 40 A M	-	128.8	arr. Thebes.	3 35 A M	-	.....
-	-	128.8	ve. Thebes. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	132.1	Fayetteville. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	132.6	Commerce Landing. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	133.9	Tankville. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	138.4	Miller City. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	141.1	Roth. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	143.3	Cache. ....	-	-	.....
-	-	152.5	arr. + Cairo. ....	-	-	.....

-Official Railway Guide-

1998 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - Leonard L. Thalmueller, 21 Hanover Dr, Little Rock AR 72209-2159 (501-562-8231)
VICE-PRESIDENT - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon St, N Little Rock AR 72117 (501-945-2128)
TREASURER - Walter B. Walker, 8423 Linda Ln, Little Rock AR 72207-5983 (501-225-0826)
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EDITOR - Ken Ziegenbein, 1023 Claycut Cir, N Little Rock AR 72116-3728 (501-758-1340)
NRHS DIRECTOR - Jim Bennett, 1002 South Leslie St, Stuttgart AR 72160 (870)-673-6753)
PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72120-4011 (501-835-3729)
TRIP ADVERTISING - David P. Hoge, 3721 Idlewild, N Little Rock AR 72116 (501-771-1025)
BOARD '98 - Robin Thomas, 10908 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412
BOARD '99 - Stanley Wozencraft, 108 N Palm, Little Rock AR 72205 (501-664-3301)
BOARD '00 - Gene Hull, 3507 E Washington #31, North Little Rock AR 72114-6455 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '01 - Tom Shook, 1716 Alberta Dr. Little Rock AR 72227-3902 (501-225-8955)
BOARD '02 - Bill Bailey, 8318 Reymere Dr, Little Rock AR 72227-3944 (501-224-6828)

NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM

NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING DATE!

The next meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be held on SUNDAY, APRIL 19 (moved from the second to third Sunday due to Easter). It will begin at 2 p.m. at the Mercantile Bank on Main Street in North Little Rock. The program will be given by JIM BENNETT. He'll talk on the Cotton Belt's bus services of the 1930s through south Arkansas. It was called "Southwestern Transportation Company," the Cotton Belt's highway subsidiary. Mr. Bennett will have some booklets he made up on this service.

Refreshments will be served. Come and enjoy. It is, as always, open to the public.

NEW MEMBERS THIS MONTH - LYMAN E HOLLER, 6155 Bethesda Ln, Batesville AR 72501, 870-698-2868, holler@cei.net; "KEITH" MONROE KNIGHT, 2526 West B St, Russellville AR 72801, 501-967-2249.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS - Here are the birthdays you sent in with your dues. If you didn't use the official application/renewal form, I have no way of knowing your birthday, so you won't be listed unless you tell me personally. RUBY HOLD (4), DON J OTTENS (4/01), WEYMAN G. SIMPKINS (4/10), CLIFF FERRELL (4/20), DAISY G DENHAM (4/22), MICHAEL D THOMAS (4/24), KEN ZIEGENBEIN (4/30).

JANIS ANN GERARD

Born May 3, 1920 in Chicago, died March 20, 1998. She was the mother of 1997 Arkansas Railroad Club president Craig Gerard. She was an Arkansas Railroad Club member for years. She was also a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Pulaski County Democratic Committee, Arkansas Senior Democrats, NARFE, and AARP. Craig's address is: Craig Gerard, 2011 Aztec Dr, Bldg 16 #6, N Little Rock AR 72116-4470(501-835-6758).

EDITOR'S NEW ADDRESS - My home address had changed to 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116-3728. Send personal correspondence to this address, but you may continue to send newsletter submissions to our club's address: PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. My phone number will stay the same, as will my E-mail address. Thanks. (Ken Ziegenbein)

1999 CALENDARS will have 13 or 14 black & white photos, and NOT repeat the cover photo in the body of the calendar. The several I've talked to didn't want to use the cover photo also as a month-picture, like we did for the 1997 calendar, so I won't.

UPCOMING STORIES - For your information, there will be several upcoming stories in the *Railroader* by Lynn Gaines, Jr. (one on the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad), John Martin (on the Rock Island and other roads), P.B. Wooldridge (anything Cotton Belt), Jim Bennett (Cotton Belt, MoPac) and, of course, Gene Hull (anything railroad/history). Other contributors welcome! I will print as I have space - and send in those photos, too. Most of these stories are already on computer disk.

WANTED : FOR SALE OR TRADE

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

FOR SALE - Annual Passes 1915-1952 AT&SF, CB&Q, C&NW, C&S, FW&DC, MKT, Pullman, RI and UP. Also various membership cards Order of RR Telegraphers and American Train Dispatchers Association 1909-1933. SASE for list to: Russell Tedder, 1401 Cedar Street, Crossett, AR 71635.

FOR SALE - M&NA, M&A HO decal sets, black, white, yellow (for gold): \$3.00 and SASE. Rewiring instructions for Spectrum GE 70 tonner (used by A&O) for slower run speed: Free for SASE. Considering A&O decal set IF enough interest. Contact Charles Roth, PO Box 1923, St. Louis MO 63118.

WANTED - Standard gauge hand car. Advise price, condition and location. Peter Smykla, PO Box 1892, Pine Bluff AR 71613 or call 870-535-4724.

FOR SALE - The Arkansas Railroad Club's hardbound, 120-page book called *Railroad Stations and Trains through Arkansas and the Southwest* is ready for mailing. It was written by Clifton Hull with help from Tom Shook, among other club members. Kevin EuDaly of White River Productions did the graphic design and artwork. You can order from White River Productions, 24632 Anchor Ave, Bucklin MO 64631. Cost is \$29.95 plus \$4.50 postage and handling (total of \$34.45 if you're having it mailed). MasterCard or Visa accepted. You can call White River Productions at 816-695-4433.

FOR SALE - James R. Fair's new book *The Louisiana & Arkansas Railway*. This 176-page clothbound book has 80 black and white

illustrations and covers the Louisiana & Arkansas Railway from its beginning to the modern era. Cost is \$47.95 plus \$4.50 postage/handling. Order from Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb IL 60115, 815-753-1075. James Fair is and has been an Arkansas Railroad Club member for years.

WANTED - Help on finding contractors that can restore trains and tracks and addresses of various railroad retirement organizations who might help in a major project to restore a steam train and repair 11 miles of track in Oklahoma (out of 200 miles available). Also, am looking for a second engine that can be restored and any additional rolling stock. Any help would be appreciated. Contact: Steve Guy, Greater Oklahoma-Kansas Steam Train Association, 3180 Holmes Rd, Ponca City OK 74604.

RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register OR have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met.

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete

listings.

PENNSYLVANIA - R.C. CORMAN RAILROAD CO. - To abandon 9.6 miles of line known as the Blacklick Secondary Line from m.p. 6.4 near Edensbury Junction to m.p. 16 near Nanta, Pennsylvania. Offers have been made to buy this line. This is a late service filing date. Effective February 20, 1998. (STB Docket No. 491X, served February 20, 1998)

CALIFORNIA - SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY - To abandon a 9-mile line between m.p. 295.2 near Richgrove and m.p. 304.2 near Hollis, California. Effective April 4, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-398, Sub No. 5X, decided February 24, 1998, served March 5, 1998)

WISCONSIN - WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD. - To abandon .75 mile of line between m.p. 22 and m.p. 22.75 northwest of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. Effective April 8, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-303, Sub No. 14X, decided March 2, 1998, served March 9, 1998)

COLORADO - UNION PACIFIC - To abandon a line known as the Templeton Gap Spur from the end of the line at m.p. 602.70 at North Academy Blvd to m.p. 605.77 at Templeton Gap Road in Colorado Springs, Colorado, a distance of 3.07 miles. Final decision by June 8, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-33, Sub No. 118X, decided March 3, 1998, served March 10, 1998)

CALIFORNIA - HARBOR BELT RAILROAD - To discontinue service and switching operations on tracks owned by the City of Los Angeles within the Port of Los Angeles. Final decision by June 9, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-542X, decided March 6, 1998, served March 11, 1998)

MASS - PIONEER VALLEY RAILROAD CO, INC - To abandon 4.6 miles of line from m.p. 9.4 near Easthampton to m.p. 14.0 at Mount Tom, MA. Effective April 17, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-531, Sub No. 1X, decided March 10, 1998, served March 18, 1998 (March 18 was in the document, although it was published March 13).

PENNSYLVANIA - CONRAIL - To abandon 11.80 miles of the Blairsville Secondary Track between m.p. 5.70 and m.p. 17.50 in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. Effective April 11, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-167, Sub No. 1182X, decided March 4, 1998, served March 12, 1998)

GEORGIA - CSX - To abandon a portion of line known as the Atlanta Service Lane, Abbeville Subdivision, between m.p. YYA-37.44 at East Athens and m.p. YYA-39.34 at Athens, Georgia, a distance of 1.9 miles. Final decision by June 12, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-55, Sub No. 561X, decided March 9, 1998, served March 13, 1998)

GEORGIA - CSX - To abandon a portion of the Atlanta Service Lane, Atlanta Terminal Subdivision, from m.p. 4.87 at Memorial Drive to m.p. 5.22 at Wylie Street, a distance of 0.35 miles. Final decision by June 19, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-55, Sub No. 559X, decided March 13, 1998, served March 20, 1998)

WISCONSIN - UNION PACIFIC - To abandon a line known as the Harvard Subdivision from m.p. 119.0 near Evansville to m.p. 134.0 near "MX" (a crossing of the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co near Madison, Wisconsin), a distance of 15.0 miles. Final decision by June 22, 1998. (STB Docket No. AB-33, Sub No. 119X, decided March 17, 1998, served March 24, 1998)

NEBRASKA - FILLMORE WESTERN RAILWAY CO. - To abandon several lines: 1) the Bruning Line extending from m.p. 10.0 near Geneva to m.p. 24.5 near Bruning, Nebraska; the Daykin Line from m.p. 35.8 near East Strang Junction to m.p. 23.2/28.4 at Tobias and continuing to the end of the line at m.p. 36.2 at Daykin; 3) the Shickley Line from m.p. 37.5 near West Strang Junction to m.p. 45.0 at Shickley. Total mileage 42.40. Final decision by June 26, 1998. STB Docket No. AB-492, Sub No. 1X, decided March 17, 1998, served March 27, 1998)

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

LRWN DERAILMENT

(Perry) - On Monday, March 23, the Little Rock & Western Railroad derailed its Little Rock local at Perry while shoving the passing track. Two loaded jumbo covered hoppers loaded with chicken feed for Danville left the track, turning one car on its side and left the

other leaning. Cause was probably a split switch. (Via John Martin)

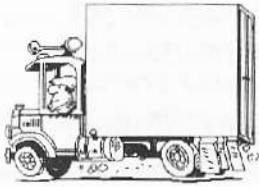
ANOTHER ROCK GONE

(North Little Rock) - During the last week of February, I noticed that dozers were pushing over the old Rock Island abutment

that used to carry the main RI Sunbelt line across East Broadway in North Little Rock. Although the tracks were gone since the early 1980s, this always reminded me of the Rock. (Ken Z.)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

TRUCK MYTHS



According to Oklahoma Transportation Options, Oklahoma trucks pay only 2.93 cents per

mile for the use of roads while inflicting 15 cents per mile in damage. Oklahoma taxpayers cover the resulting damage costs. And the big truck lobby, under such names as the American Trucking Association, NAFTA Corridor Coalition, using terms such as "more productive trucks" to try to get triple-trailer rigs on the road, the Interstate 35 coalition, etc., are trying to get heavier and more trucks on our highways without paying their appropriate share of the costs.

According to a recent study by the University of Texas Center for Transportation Research, heavy trucks don't carry their weight on Texas highways. According to them, trucks in Texas pay only 53% of their costs on Texas roads (standard 18-wheelers pay 64%, twin 28-foot trailers at 84,000 pounds cover only 13% of their costs). Here's a rundown of what percentage groups of vehicles pay for damage to highways in Texas:

Passenger Car - pays 118%
Pickup Truck - pays 177%
Single Unit Trucks - 98%
Combination Trucks - 53%
(3-Axle - 10%)
(4-Axle - 10%)
(5-Axle - 64%)
(6-Axle - 25%)
(6-Axle Twin - 13%)
Buses - 34%

According to the Oklahoma group, increasing truck taxes and fees for road use amounts to a tax break for taxpayers. Chairman of the Oklahoma Transportation Options group is Tom Elmore of the Central Oklahoma Chapter. He says he's a very conservative Republican, but on issues like this he thinks some of big-business trucks are getting a free ride from the taxpayers and is in favor of increasing taxes on trucking so they

cover their road damage costs. He wishes other would join him in this quest.

LIGHT RAIL STUDY OPTIMISTIC?

(Kansas City) - Although a study said light rail was a viable option in Kansas City, the *Kansas City Star* said that study was overly optimistic. For one thing, the study's ridership projections had central Kansas City growing in population, which it isn't. Average speed of the proposed line would be 20 mph, faster than other lines, such as Dallas's. However, the project is going ahead and is asking for some of the money from the federal government. There is also a plan to start commuter rail service between Olathe, Kansas and Kansas City over the busy BNSF line. This service would cost \$3.5 million a year, funded by fares, local, state and federal governments. If all goes as planned and funding is received, the line could be operational in two years.

In a letter to Johnson County from the Black & Veatch company, the obvious reasons against the commuter service from Olathe to Kansas City was given: too many grade crossings; BNSF and UP have 48-60 trains a day over the line; too many busses to transfer to. *(Kansas City Star and the Overland Park Sun, March 13, 1998, via Jim Johnson, who works for Black & Veatch)*

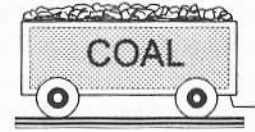
PAYROLLS DOWN/WORKLOADS UP

From 1987 to 1996, America's railroads went from about 250,000 employees to about 175,000. At the same time, carloads per employee went up from about 80 in 1987 to about 135 per employee in 1996. *(Association of American Railroads, vis Dan Barr)*

SAFER TRAINS

Railroads have become safer during the past 16 years. According to the December 26, 1997 *Houston Chronicle*, train accidents per million train miles have gone down from 11.4 accidents in 1980 to only 3.6 accidents per million miles in 1996. Much of the improvement is due to better wheels and electronics in the trains.

COAL TOWER TAKEN DOWN



(Bowie, Arizona) - On March 15, 1998, the last of a string of 90-foot-tall Southern

Pacific coal towers came down in Bowie, Arizona. These were put up in the 1920s by SP and many continued in place until the last couple of years. However, they were being played on by children and Union Pacific, who owns SP, said they had to come down for liability reasons.

The Bowie coal tower had a reputation of being haunted. There are versions of the "crying woman" legend that say a desperate woman threw her children from the tower and is condemned to haunt the structure in her endless search. When the wind blows, you can hear noises that sound like crying.

In January, the coal tower in Tucson was taken down. A man said he lived in that tower for four years. Since then, UP has uses explosives to demolish towers at Deming and Lordsburg, New Mexico and west of Benson, Arizona, near Mescal. The Tucson tower dispensed 200 tons of coal and 10 tons of sand.

LONELY STOPS

(Glendale, New York) - The Long Island Rail Road has ended its stops in Glendale, Queens, New York and other little used rural stops after 122 years. From now on, the commuter trains will just pass through these small stops, some boarding only 2 passengers a day. The line here runs next to a 145-year-old graveyard as well. *(Gee, seems that some parts of the country kept their trains longer than anywhere else - imagine if we had small towns still being served by daily trains in rural Arkansas after all these years. Parts of New York are just now going through what we did 40 years ago - the termination of trains or train stops. Welcome to the 1990s, I guess.)*

RAIL LINE SAVED

(Denver) - Colorado Governor Roy Romer saved the former Missouri Pacific line from the Rocky Mountains to Towner, on the Kansas border, at the last minute, promising

to introduce bills in the state legislature to obtain \$10.2 million for the state to buy the line. UP was given permission to abandon this line, along with the Tennessee Pass line last year. He also wants the legislature to tell him plans about the line from Canyon City through Salida, Buena Vista, Leadville and over the Tennessee Pass to Dotsero. It is estimated that buying all these lines would cost \$75 million. (*Denver Post, March 13, 1998*)

BAD LUCK

(*San Antonio*) - On March 9, a man helping string fiber-optic lines between City Public Service towers near Union Pacific tracks had his head cut off by a rope in a bizarre accident. According to police, he and others were pulling a rope through pulleys that were attached to the towers about 50 feet high. They planned to attach the rope to the heavy cable and pull it into position between the towers. But a loop of the rope dropped down a 30-foot incline and across the railroad tracks. A northbound UP train arrived before the work crew pulled the rope clear of the tracks. The train snagged the rope and pulled it back through the pulleys at high speed. The worker got caught in the rope and was pulled 450 feet along the ground and then was jerked upward into a pulley. A fellow worker tried to cut the rope, but was too late. The man's head and left arm was cut off. The train did not stop because the crew was not aware of the accident. (*San Antonio Express-News, March 10, 1998*)

GINGRICH RAIL SUPPORTER?

(*Atlanta*) - House Speaker Newt Gingrich has signed onto the effort to develop a high speed rail line between Atlanta and Chattanooga and will request transportation funds to study the feasibility of the project. He will try to include money for the study in the ISTEA legislation. "This region needs some alternative transportation options," he said. The Atlanta-Chattanooga line would only be the first leg of a regional rail system, which would eventually be extended to Charlotte and Tampa from Atlanta and to Knoxville and Nashville from Chattanooga. (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution, March 12*)

TOUGHER ON TRUCKS

The Federal Highway Administration has proposed rules that would disqualify

commercial drivers from driving if they ignored rail-crossing laws. Under the proposal, along with the drivers, employers knowingly allowing or requiring a driver to violate such laws would be subject to a fine up to \$10,000. The penalty for drivers would be suspension up to 120 days. The notice is FHWA Docket 97-3103, Comments may be made to the US Dept of Transportation Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St S.W., Washington DC 20590-0001.

NO SPEED LIMITS

A federal judge ruled in February that cities cannot set speed limits for trains. Only the US Department of Transportation can. (*MSNBC NEWS*)

TWEETSIE RAILROAD

(*Blowing Rock, North Carolina*) - Investors in the Tweetsie Railroad have ripped out 40 feet of track through the North Carolina mountains in a dispute with owners. The owners of the steam-powered tourist line are trying to get a court order to rebuild the track in time for the May startup of its season. (*MSNBC NEWS*)

68% DROP IN CROSSING CRASHES

Operation Lifesaver, which has been around now for 25 years, said in a press release that despite an 18% increase in rail traffic and 20 million more auto drivers, grade crossing accidents have decreased 68% since 1972 (saving 10,000 lives, according to the Federal Highway Administration). The only negative side is an increase in pedestrian incidents. Gerri Hall, President of Operation Lifesaver, said, "Too many Americans are unaware of the dangers of walking on or near railroad tracks and equipment. This can be life-threatening and it is illegal."



other things leading kids across railroad tracks. Recommendations she gave before a recent hearing before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation including:

1) Continue Congressional support for

Operation Lifesaver; 2) States should enact strict trespassing and crossing signal laws and enforce them; 3) End the promotion of romantic and nostalgic images of dangerous activities on the tracks, especially in movies; 4) States and railroads should promptly report to the FRA any crossing or pedestrian incident.

Member Lynn Gaines, Jr. says that radio station KSYG 103.7 FM runs Operation Lifesaver public service spots. Listen for them.

NEW REFRIGERATOR CARS

In March, Union Pacific will begin an 18-month test of the "next generation" refrigerated box cars (reefers). UP joined forces with Trinity Industries and Hardcore DuPont Composites to design and build the first refrigerated boxcar since 1971. These new cars increase payload capacity by 40 percent and nearly double shippers cubic capacity, compared to UP's current fleet of reefers. The new cars will feature Thermo King "Smart Reefer" refrigeration units and their greater operational efficiencies.

Union Pacific serves the fresh and frozen industry with a fleet of 5,200 refrigerator cars, about 70 percent of the nation's reefer fleet. UP spends \$10 million annually to rebuild these cars.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC BUILDING

(*San Francisco*) - Southern Pacific's former headquarters building in San Francisco is now under contract to sell for use as an office building instead of a luxury hotel as previously announced. Work will begin this summer. UP personnel will move out in stages to new offices.

The freight railroads pay a 5.5 cent-per-gallon tax on diesel fuel, which generates \$250-300 million per year (including \$4-5 million from Amtrak alone). Where does this money go? To General Revenues, of course - it isn't dedicated to any rail program whatsoever, like the auto gas tax is dedicated to roads. Also, from 1953 until 1962, a 15% tax on passenger train tickets went entirely to the interstate highway system (Eisenhower's idea), so the Highway Lobby shouldn't complain about using a part of the gasoline tax to help passenger trains today. (Congressional sources)

UP AVERAGE TRAIN SPEED

Union Pacific said that average train speed rose from 13.4 mph for the week ending February 13 to 14.2 mph for the week ending February 25. A year ago, UP's average train speed averaged 19 mph. UP reported 341,638 cars on the system in late February, up from 338,310 a week earlier and 304,614 in February of last year. UP reported that it held a daily average of 68 trains the last week in February 1998 because of congestion, up from 52 trains a week earlier and an average of 8 trains a year ago. UP said it needed an extension of the Surface Transportation Board's Emergency order giving other railroads in Texas use of some of its tracks in order to give its prime remedy for the problem - one-way directional running from Houston to Memphis - more time to work. *(Editors comments: This directional running is a remedy to the problem? I thought UP had this plan long before the UP/SP merger was approved and long before this congestion took place, so how can it now be called a remedy?)*

PHOENIX-TUCSON RAIL PLAN

(Phoenix, Arizona) - There is a plan to start rail service between Phoenix and Tucson, using five diesel powered trains. The trip would cost \$12 and take two hours at 79 mph. However, it would take \$378 million to upgrade and start the service, money that is not yet available. But adding lanes to Interstate 10 would cost \$1.4 billion, considerably more expensive. The Arizona Rail Passenger Association is involved with this study. *(Dallas News via Dan Barr)*

DOW CHEMICAL SUES UP

Dow Chemical, one of Union Pacific's biggest customers, sued UP in mid March. It said it lost \$25 million so far, due to UP's

congestion. Also, the Federal Railroad Administration has finally come to the conclusion that UP's congestion is mostly accounted for by the SP/UP merger. As a result, regulators from now on will require railroads in future mergers to submit comprehensive safety plans before the merge is consummated. The FRA found that understaffing, fatigue, insufficient supervision and dispatching troubles were the main cause of the congestion. *(Houston Chronicle via Dan Barr)*

UP HALTS MEXICO-BOUND TRAFFIC

Union Pacific halted southbound traffic March 28 through its Laredo, Texas gateway until it can clear the congestion on its lines in Texas. It will affect about 200 cars a day that carry grain, chemicals and coal. Meanwhile, TFM, the Mexican railroad, says that UP is blaming them for the congestion because of a recent derailment in Mexico. TFM says that UP can't blame them for UP's Texas congestion and is against the embargo. TFM says that one reason for the congestion is UP's failure to pre-classify its traffic bound for Mexico before the traffic arrives at the border and UP's inability to accept northbound cars out of Mexico. Also, TFM says UP fails to get cars to the crossing at Laredo at the designated window time. They also said that shippers should remember that railroad alternatives to UP are available, including the KCS, Tex-Mex and BNSF.. *(Kansas City Southern News, March 24, 1998)*

MAD AT CONGESTION

(Houston) - The following editorial appeared in the March 3 *Houston Chronicle*. It was written by Steve Radack and Brenda Arnett. Radack is commissioner of Harris

County Precinct 3:

"This silent economy killer...the rail gridlock...is the sorry performance of the freight rail lines now owned by Union Pacific. They are congested, mismanaged, underused and are operated in a state of complete chaos. How this happened and how it can be fixed. Nearly two years ago the federal government, specifically the STB, granted a near monopoly over all rail lines leading into the Port of Houston when it approved the merger of Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads. The federal government can fix this problem by quickly and forcefully taking action to allow additional rail service to the port and create real competition. *(Via Dan Barr)*

AMERICAN ORIENT EXPRESS

American Orient Express will run three transcontinental trips this year. Beginning April 13 and September 27 it will run from Washington, DC to Los Angeles via Atlanta, Birmingham, New Orleans, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Grand Canyon, and Los Angeles. The trip April 13 will return from Los Angeles April 22 - the September 27 trip will be one way.

KCS LOSSES

Kansas City Southern reported a net loss of \$14.1 million in 1997, mostly due to its takeover of the Mid South Railroad and Mexico partnerships. It also announced that it will push into Latin America and has finalized a contract with Panama to operate the Panama Canal Railroad (indeed, a "transcontinental railroad" running from the Pacific to Atlantic Oceans. *(Kansas City Star, February 3, 1998 via Jim Johnson)*

AMTRAK NEWS

ACTING AMTRAK PRESIDENT



George Warrington, acting Amtrak president, had the following to say at a

House hearing on March 11:

"...in 1997, some said Amtrak should be privatized and be reborn in a fashion like the British Rail model. We now know from a recent article in the London Sunday Times that the British experience has resulted in fewer trains, poor reliability, customer satisfaction at an all time low, and public

subsidies have doubled. ...it is estimated that the privatization of British Rail will cost the taxpayer \$9.4 billion."

"Last month, we added a fourth weekly frequency to our Texas Eagle train, a service that was slated to be eliminated a year ago. We did this because the train is performing

well, and we have begun to exploit a market which will add significant mail and express revenue to this service. Last year, when we were defending our decision to eliminate this train, we actually learned a lot about the region in which the Eagle operated. ... Now the economics of this train work, the community which wants this service actually has more trains to choose from, and we have a business with real growth potential. This is what we have to do to every route in our system."

"Next time you're at an airport and waiting to board a flight, look at the arriving passengers, the ones coming out of the aircraft. Now take a look at our passengers leaving a Metroliner in Washington, it is much more relaxed."

"Railroad equipment sitting in a yard does not produce revenue."

COMMENTARY

"The foremost argument against privatization is the fact that passenger trains (at least long-haul) properly run can make modest profits, but it is unlikely that they can ever make the obscene profits demanded by the greedy corporate culture of today.

"Neither could airlines if they had to pay any significant amount of their infrastructure expenses. Buses get by with the skin of their teeth with their infrastructure paid for entirely by the government.

"The REA was formed because the private sector refused to build power lines into the country, but after they were built, the companies insisted on the right to provide the power. The corporation exists only for the stockholder, not the public interest.

"A private company that assumes the

operation of a passenger train system could very well intend to show a loss and scrap the cars just as Track-Tech does railroad lines. It may be the end of the line when the cars have to be replaced if not before. After the stockholders are paid, there is nothing left for property." - *Dan Monaghan, of the Dallas Mobility Group*

TRUCKER AT FAULT

(Fort Lauderdale, Florida) - A six-member jury ruled March 17 that a driver of an oil tanker was 100 percent negligent in the crash at a busy railroad crossing in 1993 at which Amtrak's *Silver Star* hit it, causing it to burst into flames and kill several people.

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA - June 18-21, 1998 - The Railroad Heritage Conference, featuring "The Railroad in American Life." This will be held at Penn State, Altoona, and includes many lectures and tours, including talks on dining on trains, tours of the Altoona Conrail locomotive shops, tours of Horseshoe Curve, lecture on "Rails to Roads," lecture on railroad stations,

lecture on the history of horns and whistles, plus many others. The 4-day event package includes all meals, lodging and materials: cost for single occupancy is \$490 per person. Send in by June 1 to: Penn State Altoona Continuing Education, 3000 Ivyside Park, Altoona PA 16601-3760, or call William Curley at 814-949-5048 (wgc2@psu.edu).

They will also send you brochures.

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS - June 27, 1998 - 18th Annual Show and Sale at Robinson Center, Little Rock. It will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Adults \$3.00, Children under 12 free. Call 501-663-8901 for details..

Membership dues information:

Membership: **\$20.00** per year, Arkansas Railroad Club only; **\$37.00** per year if you join or renew National Railway Historical Society membership through our Club. Dues are payable/due by January 1 of each year. If we don't have your dues by March 1, you will be dropped from the membership rolls. Our address: **PO Box 9151, N Little Rock AR 72119.**

Membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club entitles you to a membership card and the monthly *ARKANSAS RAILROADER* newsletter. Meetings are held monthly, except December, on the second Sunday of the month. We usually meet at 2 p.m. in the Mercantile Bank main building on Main Street in North Little Rock, just north of the Arkansas River.

Interesting programs are presented each month and refreshments (cookies, sandwiches) are served. We are a non-profit organization and member of the NRHS. Officers are listed in each newsletter.



REMEMBERING TRAGEDY

by: P. B. Wooldridge

*OFT, WHEN I FEEL MY ENGINE SWERVE,
AS OVER STRANGE RAILS WE FARE,
I STRAIN MY EYES AROUND THE CURVE
FOR WHAT AWAITS US THERE?*

The above was penned by a Denver and Rio Grande steam engineer, running in the mountains of Colorado back in the 1880s, the man's name, Cy Warman.

I was recently leafing through a stack of old train orders, and came across Order No. 639 dated June 5, 1942, back during World War II. It brought back vivid memories of tragedies that happened all too often back in the good old days.

During WWII freight schedules were running in 5 and even 6 sections. And on this occasion the Cotton Belt ran out of train crews at Texarkana, and borrowed a crew from the Texas Division, using Trainmaster Ware, a promoted Conductor, and the PILOT.

All went well the first 51 miles. I was on First Trick at McNeil, Arkansas, where the train took siding to meet No. 5, the Passenger Morning Star, due McNeil 3:31 p.m. I worked the mail, baggage and express off No. 5, while the Texas crew left town through the crossover just north of the depot.

About 15 minutes later, while I was listening on the dispatcher's phone, static appeared for an instant, and the phone went dead. It certainly wasn't the first time that had happened, and I wondered, but not for long. Shortly we learned that the train with the Texas crew had rear-ended a freight ahead, and the engineer was dead. Order No. 639 covered the wreck.

Back in 1923 the Cotton Belt purchased land on the Ouachita River, upstream from Camden, Arkansas, and established the Britton gravel plant. They dredged gravel from the river bed, and for years operated a daily washed gravel train, consisting of 24 ballast cars, pulled by two K-1 engines, ballasting the railroad.

In the early 1930s, No. 65, the southbound local, was switching the sawmill at Buckner, Arkansas, when the double-header gravel train rear-ended it at speed. All 5 men aboard the two engines were killed, and the two engines were buried in washed gravel from the telescoping ballast cars, stacked high.

Small wonder that railroading families were apprehensive when "Daddy" was out on the line.
RAILROADING WAS DANGEROUS!

*"I STRAIN MY EYES AROUND THE CURVE,
FOR WHAT AWAITS US THERE?"*

(Back in 1942 for a short time, Mr. Wooldridge signed his orders "Woody" and "Hoot" Gibson, who was on Second Trick June 5, 1942, signed his "Hoot")

St. Louis Southwestern Railway Co.,—Debtor

TRAIN ORDER NO. *639*

Line Bluff Shops, Ark.

June 5 1942

To C. & E.

*Northward
train*

X

Opr.;

M

At

McNeil

*Main track obstructed
by derailment between
Milner and Stephen
Near Whitaker and
Not protected by flag
55 Cars on siding
Agemaw
68 Cars on siding
Buena Vista
Line*

Conductor, Engineman, Fireman and Flagman must each have a copy of this order.

Made

Com

Time

11:52

M.

Tracy

Cpr.



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Clifton E. Hull

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RPO (Railway Post Office) Car No. 2573 at Little Rock Union Depot in 1962. This service was soon to be gone. (A full story about these will appear soon in the *Railroader*. Also, this is an experimental printing technique to see how well it reproduces. (Gene Hull photo)



Happy Easter

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