

ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



2011 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| President | Bob Stark |
| Vice President | David McDonald |
| Secretary | Malcolm Cleaveland |
| Treasurer | Bill Longston |
| Program Director | David McDonald |
| National Director | Chuck Girard |
| Board Director | Larry Cain |
| Editors | Mitch Marmel/ Chuck Girard |

Our website address is www.arkrailfan.com

NRHS Chapter meets at 6:00 PM, December 15, 2011 for the annual Christmas Dinner on the A&M.

We need you!

Exciting events are in the works and a great program is planned!

ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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The Scrambler

Volume 25, No. 3

December, 2011

Monthly Newsletter of the
Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

CHAPTER MINUTES

ABMT NRHS November 16, 2011 Meeting Minutes

The November monthly meeting of the Arkansas Boston Mountains Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society was called to order by chapter president Bob Stark at 7:05pm. 24 members were present.

The National Director, Chuck Girard, reported that membership renewals are due - \$48.00 single membership plus \$6.00 for each family member (if family membership). He also said the National NRHS has reorganized and he is not sure if there will continue to be a national director position.

Treasurer Bill Longston reported total funds currently at \$14,427.80. He is putting together a budget for 2012. Bill said we are now saving funds on the publishing of the monthly Scrambler newsletter – thanks to Chuck Girard and Mitch Marmel.

Tom Duggan stated that a recent audit of Chapter finances show that our finances are in good order. Mitch will include a copy of the audit in the December 2011 newsletter.

David McDonald, Program Chairman, reported that we now have monthly programs scheduled through April 2012:

January – Bob Stark, David McDonald – “The Kansas City Southern”
February – Mike Sypult – “Memories of the Frisco Central Division”
March – Tom Duggan – “The Frisco in Northwest Arkansas”
April – Mike Condren – “The BNSF Intermodal Yard in East Arkansas”

Old Business

Thursday, December 15 is the Annual Chapter Christmas Party aboard the A&M. The train departs Springdale at 6:30pm. There will be a gift exchange.

Al Kaepfel reported about the Children’s Christmas Train on Saturday, December 3 9am to 4pm. Proceeds of this event help fund charities such as Children’s Safety, Hospice and Children’s Grief Fund.

Dome car update – the newest A&M passenger car still needs some volunteer work from the chapter members. This includes wall coverings, stainless steel cleaning and wood refinishing to name a few.

New Business

We are still waiting to hear more details regarding the 2012 Northwest Arkansas Train Show to be held at the Holiday Inn NWA Convention Center in Springdale on Saturday, February 25.

David McDonald suggested the chapter form a refreshment committee to help take some of the burden off of

the monthly presenters. This idea has been tabled until the January 2012 meeting.

The business session ended at 7:42pm.

Minutes submitted by Mike Sypult – filling in for Chapter Secretary Malcolm Cleaveland.

Memo to Robert L. Stark

Chapter President

Re: Audit of Chapter Financial Records

This afternoon (November 17, 2011) I met with Chapter Treasurer Bill Longston at your request.

The bank records of the two Arvest accounts (Arvest checking and Arvest corporate investment) are reconciled monthly. The Treasurer reported no outstanding items in the past year. The records are kept in a container in Bill's office desk in a home with electronic security. In the unlikely event the bank records were destroyed they could be recreated using the Arvest database.

The work flow for Treasurer Bill Longston is erratic with numerous receipts and payments during the dues renewal period (November thru March) and at Christmas when individual checks are received to pay for the Christmas banquet.

Bill noted that the Chapter accounts have signatories of the Treasurer and Gary Dean McCullah, immediate past President. We discussed adding additional signatories but concluded that as long as the Chapter records were in a private home the addition of one or more signatories would do nothing to improve access.

Bill has been monitoring the 2011 expenditures relative to the Budget Plan approved by Chapter members. Our largest regular expenditure is Scrambler production. A goal of \$70.00 per month was established and currently the monthly Scrambler is about \$70.50 per month. One more conversion to electronic delivery will bring the monthly cost to below \$70.00.

Bill will prepare a 2012 proposed budget for the January 2012 meeting. We agreed it would be a good idea to include the proposed budget in the January 2012 Scrambler so all will have a chance to read and digest.

The timely filing of Federal and State of Arkansas reports has been a problem zone in past years. Bill Longston has a key to PO Box 1303 so the problem of non-timely forwarding has been eliminated. Bill has set up a diary system so that he is fully aware of reporting obligations. The reports filed by the Chapter are as follows:

- *Internal Revenue Service Form 990N*
- *Arkansas Department of State Corporate Reporting form*
- *Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration Sales and Use Tax Report*

Treasurer Bill Longston is doing an excellent job. I could find absolutely nothing out of order or of concern to the officers and members of the Chapter.

*Tom Duggan
Audit Staff*

LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

Children's Christmas Train, December 3, 2011

The ABM-NRHS made a good showing at the Christmas Train on December 3. G, O gauge and N scale layouts were present and were enjoyed by numerous visitors. The A&M provided a heated tent, which worked quite well up until the point that rain started seeping across the parking lot under the layouts, at which point it was decided that discretion was the better part of valor. The media was present, and the local FOX affiliate ran a segment on the Train featuring Santa in the A&M's new dome car.

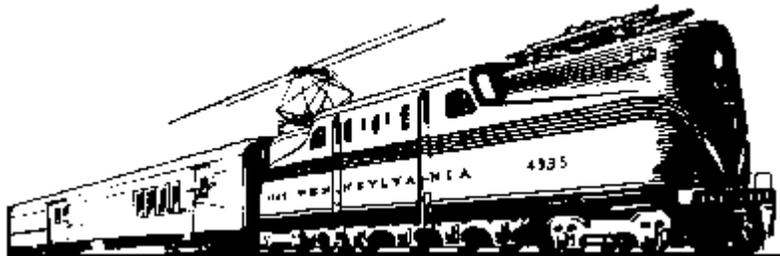
Rail Heritage Center in Bald Knob Acquires the Russell, AR Rail Terminal

The railroad depot from Russell, Arkansas was moved five miles to the White County Rail Heritage Center in Bald Knob where it joins several other artifacts undergoing restoration. Craig Christiansen, director of the museum, has been hoping to obtain this building since first being alerted to its existence a few years ago by Russell resident and museum assistant, David Jackson, since there were no apparent plans for its preservation there. The building has served as a yard barn and garden shed at two different Russell residences in past years. Unanswered questions about the history of this depot are currently being researched by noted Missouri Pacific historian Elvin Klepzig. We would welcome any information or photographs that anyone can share.

The building measures 9 feet wide by 28 feet long and closely matches the pattern of about eight or nine known Iron Mountain depots in other states. These were probably built in Nebraska for use around the MoPac system but that still has to be confirmed. If so, they were built to fit on a standard railroad flatcar. The roof was left off for shipping, the materials for it being shipped on the car with the building. These would be shipped to any small community where a depot needed to be replaced due to any natural or man-made disaster. The local bridge maintenance crew would assemble the roof upon delivery. If the local agency closed and there was no longer an active shipper, the depot could be moved to a new site.

Some residents believe this depot was moved to Russell right after WWII but others think it was earlier. More research is needed but we believe the building is much older than that. We've been told that pictures of this and an earlier depot are in existence in Russell, but we haven't seen those yet. Residents can well remember when this depot was still in use, the Russell name being on the ends, and the arm from which the train would catch the mail bag as it passed by. A utility pole with an electrical transformer still stands at the original site.

The wood is dry and weathered but you can still see the Iron Mountain railroad golden yellow color and brown trim in places. Only a few remnants of the tongue and groove inside wall boards remain and the wall between the office and the freight room is gone but you can see where it was. We removed several pieces of rotten siding, but the pattern is still available. A local contractor has offered to replace rotten girders, level the building and do other repairs in exchange for receiving credit for the work performed. Citizen's State Bank in Bald Knob will donate the cost of new support beams, which are the foundation of the restoration. Updates will follow as the project progresses. -Tony Young



Wisconsin & Southern Railroad being purchased by Kansas company

By Joe Taschler of the Journal Sentinel

Nov. 29, 2011

Milwaukee-based Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co. is being acquired by a Kansas-based operator of short line railroads, the companies said Tuesday.

Watco Transportation Services LLC, based in Pittsburg, Kan., will acquire controlling ownership of Wisconsin & Southern.

Watco is a privately held rail transportation services company operating more than 3,700 miles of track in 26 states. Watco is America's largest privately held short line railroad company, operating 23 short line railroads. The company has more than 2,200 employees.

"The acquisition will allow the WSOR to expand its footprint throughout the Midwest, seek out new markets and cost effective routings for Wisconsin businesses, while maintaining the same level of service and commitment to the state of Wisconsin and its shippers that have defined its 30 year history," Wisconsin & Southern said in a statement announcing the agreement.

Under the agreement, Wisconsin & Southern will retain its existing corporate structure including its name and all operations, according to the statement. Its headquarters will remain in Milwaukee, where dispatching, customer service and other administrative functions will continue.

William Gardner will remain as Wisconsin & Southern president indefinitely.

Gardner made news earlier this year when he was sentenced to two years of probation after pleading guilty to two felony violations of state campaign finance laws.

The Wisconsin & Southern operates on more than 600 miles of track throughout south central Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois. The railroad directly connects with Western Class I railroads Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Canadian National, Canadian Pacific, and Union Pacific. The Wisconsin & Southern also indirectly connects with the eastern Class I railroads CSX and Norfolk Southern.

Wisconsin & Southern has access to harbor facilities on the Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien and maintains several transloading sites within its system. It has terminal offices in Madison, Janesville & Horicon. The railroad employs 250 people.

Wisconsin & Southern operates via an agreement with the state of Wisconsin in which the state owns the rails and the company agrees to maintain and operate them.

Watco Transportation Services filed a change of control notice with the U.S. Surface Transportation board Tuesday which is expected to become effective by the end of December. The projected date of the transaction is Jan. 1.

Watco operates 14 rail car repair shops, four locomotive shops and 19 mobile mechanical shops. The transload and intermodal services division currently manages 16 transload facilities, seven warehouses and one intermodal location.





The Sugar Creek Model Railroad Club's new portable O scale tinplate layout is shown on display at the Fayetteville Cancer Support House on Sunday, December 4. -Keith Johnson photo



UP 844 photographed in Laramie, Wyoming on November 29. -John Bennett photo

Wichita Eagle, Thu, Dec. 01, 2011

Study: Amtrak service from Kansas City to Texas would take a long time, cost a lot

BY BRENT D. WISTROM

Eagle Topeka bureau

Passenger rail service from Kansas City to Texas faces a long, expensive and uncertain track, according to a study released Thursday.

Developing daytime service, which would include late morning and early afternoon stops in Wichita, would take about seven years and cost \$436 million. An additional \$10 million in annual subsidies would have to be shouldered by Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. The service could attract an estimated 256,700 new Amtrak passengers.

A second plan would extend the existing Heartland Flyer route that runs between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth to Kansas City, including middle-of-the-night stops in Wichita. That would cost \$136.5 million to develop and take roughly six years before passengers could board. It would cost Kansas and Oklahoma about \$4.4 million a year in subsidies and draw 111,300 more passengers to the Flyer route.

The projected timeline drew criticism from Evan Stair, executive director of Passenger Rail Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, a group advocating expanded rail service.

"The need for these services is already upon us," said Stair in a prepared statement. "The three states and Amtrak need to find ways to cut this timeline. It seems we are studying this route into oblivion."

Sen. Les Donovan, R-Wichita, who's on the Senate Transportation Committee, has not yet seen the study but said he isn't sure whether expanded passenger rail service has a future in Kansas. But he said he doesn't oppose the idea.

"The reality is that it's going to be a long, hard slough to get something done where we're spending enough money to improve these rails to make them viable for Amtrak," he said. "It's not just pull the trigger and, oh boy, we have service between here and Dallas."

Three studies required

The study was conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff, a global consulting firm, for the Kansas and Oklahoma departments of transportation. It is one of three required before the states can apply for federal passenger rail grants.

Next, transportation officials in Kansas will present the study to House and Senate transportation committees without any recommendation in hopes of hearing whether lawmakers want to proceed with environmental studies and preliminary engineering.

The study cites many benefits of the proposed rail plans: less road maintenance, less vehicle emissions, fewer highway crashes and more productivity while not driving. But it says the benefits of an expanded Flyer route would roughly equal the cost to build it and maintain it while the cost of daytime service between Fort Worth and Kansas City would outweigh the projected benefits.

Other studies' findings

Stair said that overlooks other benefits and contradicts prior studies.

"The economic model used in this study does not include after-the-farebox revenues that make passenger rail not only viable, but necessary in our economy, struggling to rebound since the 2008 collapse," he said.

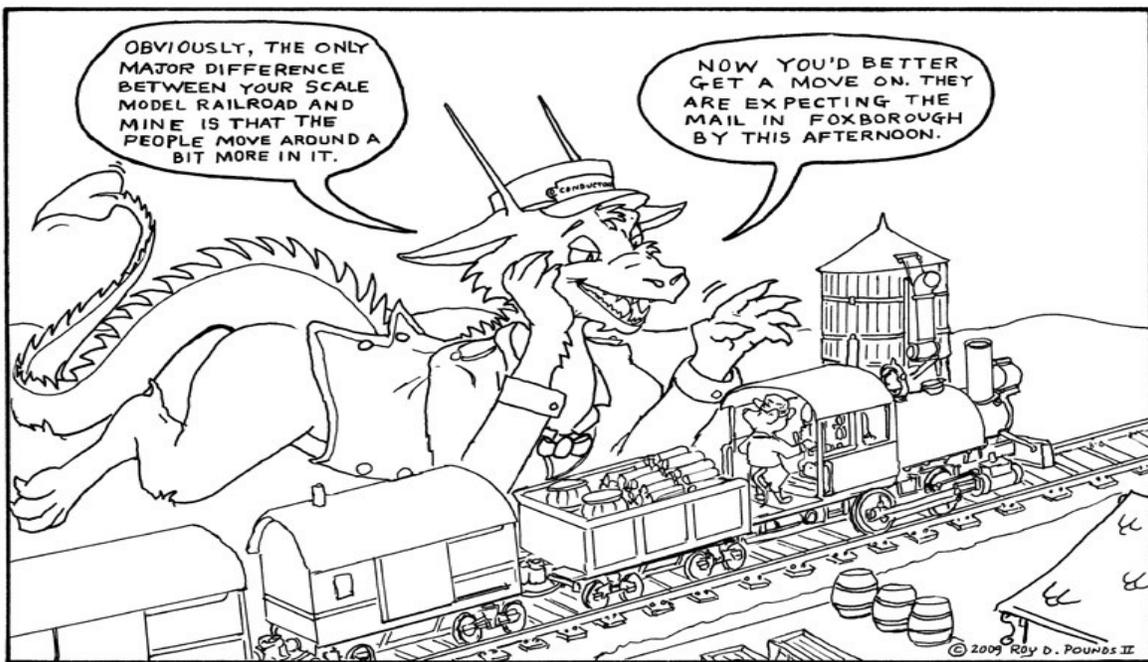
Last year, a report by Jayhawk Consulting — a group of select MBA students at the University of Kansas — showed Wichita could generate \$3.20 in regional economic impact for every dollar invested. It projected 30,700 train riders would visit Wichita and spend roughly \$105 each, netting \$3.2 million in tourism dollars a year.

Wichita and dozens of other cities, counties and business groups have endorsed some form of expanded passenger rail service.

Reach Brent Wistrom at 785-296-3006 or bwistrom@wichitaeagle.com.



Fort Smith Light and Traction 29, built by the Danville Car Co, in 1910, poses outside the FtSL&T shops.



Cartoon by Roy Pounds II

From the Motorman's Cab

Don't forget to send interesting pictures and train-related news items to me at marmelmm@gmail.com for future issues of the Scrambler! Remember: Send pictures and text separately and make sure you include captions for the pics!

Have a happy holiday season, and see you in 30!
Mitch