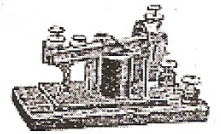


Tarheel Telegrapher



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1 January 2012

THE NEW YEAR AND WINTER WORK DAYS

With this issue of the *Tarheel Telegrapher* we start a new year and enter into the winter operating hiatus for our *New Hope Valley Railway*. This is the time of year we do most of the work on our right-of-way, and Roadmaster Jim Meade assures us he has perfected (insofar as possible) a system for this work to make it simpler for all concerned and perhaps even allow for some limited operations as necessary during this normally quiet time of year.

Quiet...? Did we actually say "quiet" there? Since when is Bonsal ever quiet?

Just because the winter season is upon us does not mean things ever really go quiet at the NCRM. This is when we get to do all those projects too hot to do in high summer or postponed to this longer period

CATS LANDS FEDERAL FUNDS

Progressive Railroading

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) received a record of decision from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) determining the LYNX Blue Line extension has met the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The decision is a "milestone" for CATS and the project, involving the construction of a 9.4 mile alignment running from uptown Charlotte to the University of North Carolina-Charlotte campus, and include 11 stations and four parking facilities. "We are very excited to move forward with constructing the light-rail extension in the Northeast Corridor so residents will have more choices for their commute," said CATS Chief Executive Officer Carolyn Flowers. The FTA decision clears the way for CATS to begin final design on the extension, scheduled to start in fall 2013. The next major step will be to attain a full funding grant agreement from the FTA, meaning the federal government would fund half of the cost needed to build the extension. State and local funds would cover the remaining costs.

Also US Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC) announced CATS will receive an \$18 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery III (TIGER III) grant from the USDOT for the Blue Line project. "This project will provide a valuable boost to Charlotte's infrastructure, helping to alleviate transportation concerns during special events and peak commuting hours," Hagan said. "It also will drive economic development in the region."

between operating days. We have some buildings and fences to build and repair, cars to be serviced, and a whole lot of paperwork to be organized, filed, and archived. This is when we need many of you to bring your skills to Bonsal to help get it all done.

NCDOT MOBILITY FUND ALLOCATIONS

Progressive Railroading

NCDOT is soliciting funding proposals for projects across all transportation modes designed to relieve congestion and enhance mobility across the state. Selected projects will receive allocations through the Mobility Fund, a funding mechanism proposed by Gov. Bev Perdue and approved by the state Legislature. NCDOT will accept applications for projects until 29 February 2012. The department then will rank the projects through a data-driven approach to determine which would provide the greatest benefit in travel-time savings and increase the overall efficiency of the state's transportation system. Light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit projects are eligible to apply for Mobility Funds. Projects must be ready to have funds obligated for construction within five years. The amount of money available through the program is estimated at \$45 million in fiscal-year 2012-13 and \$58 million in succeeding fiscal years.

NCDOT COMMISSIONS LOCOMOTIVE

Progressive Railroading

The NCDOT Rail Division recently commissioned a commuter locomotive having entered service for the state's daily Piedmont passenger-rail service in early December. The newly refurbished locomotive replaces one damaged in a crash in Mebane last year. The "City of Burlington" locomotive was painted to incorporate the colors and symbols of North Carolina's state flag. NCDOT names each of its locomotives after cities located along the Piedmont corridor. Amtrak's Beech Grove Locomotive Shop in Indianapolis upgraded the 3,200 horsepower engine to meet US EPA Tier 0-plus emission standards and new head-end power generator systems were installed as well. The work will extend the locomotive's service life by 15 years. The cost to purchase and rebuild the locomotive totaled about \$1.3 million, less than 30% of the cost for a new passenger locomotive, NCDOT officials said.

NCDOT PROPOSES TRACK AND

CROSSING UPGRADES

Progressive Railroading

NCDOT Rail Division has held informal public hearings to review proposed track and grade crossing improvements between Concord and Charlotte. The 12 mile stretch of second track is a part of the Raleigh-to-Charlotte "Piedmont Improvement" program along a NCR and NS route. The project calls for building an additional track adjacent to existing track along the NCR/NS line from south of NC Route 49 near Concord to Orr Road in northeast Charlotte. As part of the work, bridges would be constructed to separate automobile and train traffic. NCDOT representatives were available at the meetings to answer questions and obtain feedback about the proposed project. An environmental assessment document has been prepared and is available for public review.

NCDOT PURSUES PROJECTS

Progressive Railroading

The NCDOT is gauging public interest in holding a hearing on proposed upgrades to a 4.2-mile section of track from north of Upper Lake Road to south of Turner Road in Davidson County. The project calls for building a track parallel to an existing track and bridges over the rail line at Upper Lake and Turner roads. The bridges will replace grade crossings in the area to reduce the risk of vehicle/train collisions. Department officials expect to begin right-of-way acquisition in April 2012. Construction is tentatively set to start in April 2013. An environmental assessment for the project already has been completed and is available for public review.

CSX ONLINE TOOLS FOR THE DISABLED

Progressive Railroading

CSX has entered an alliance with eSENTIAL Accessibility to provide online tools designed for people with disabilities or language barriers. An eSENTIAL Accessibility icon is located at the foot of web pages to enable users to download the suite of tools. Part of CSX's ongoing efforts to promote diversity, the tools are tailored for website visitors with difficulty typing, moving a mouse, or reading a web page. "We strive to be inclusive for all who wish to learn more about us online," said Susan Hamilton, CSX's assistant vice president-diversity.

FIRST SANTA TRAIN OF 2011

Take a look directly below, and you will see the first NHVRy *Santa Train* of 2011 leaving Bonsal at 11:00am on Saturday, 3 December. Little did we know at that time it would lead to the largest number of passengers to ride with us over the four days of *Santa Trains* we have ever carried. In just those two weekends we handled 5,045 people for their annual visit aboard with the *Jolly Ol' Elf* himself.

Those four days each year are a lot of work for all of us in the train crews and depot staff, but one smile from our littlest passengers will show why we do it each year. This is what the NHVRy is all about. We do it for ourselves as railfans to be able to operate our own railroad, but we do it for our riders as well, and that goes no matter what the season or the reason we are running on any particular day. Be sure to come out to join us. You will have the time of your life no matter what job you do.

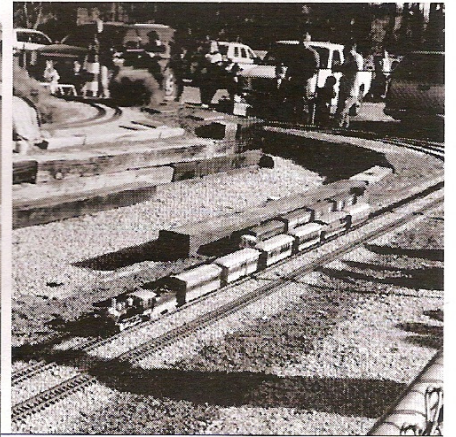
BRINGING UP THE REAR

Also, as that first *Santa Train* left town, that is Superintendent Billy Brooks (left) and Conductor Corey Hodge (right) bringing up the rear on Caboose #308.



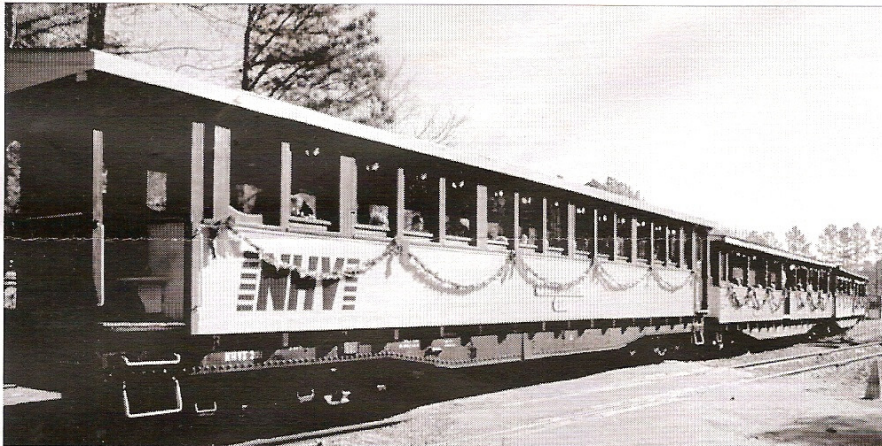
NHVRy G SCALE

While we are showing off all the stuff about our *Santa Trains*, we should not forget our smaller division in G Scale. They were all out there running too.



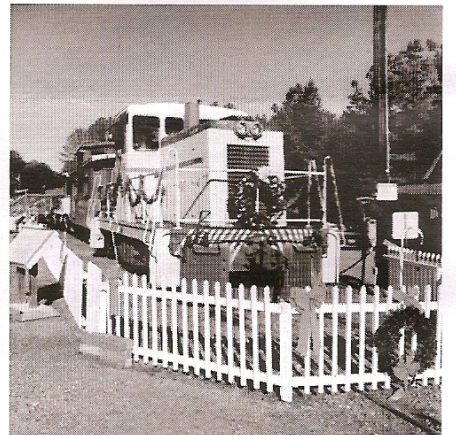
CHRISTMAS AT BONSAI

At this time of year, Bonsal is a veritable riot of decorations of all types. We thought you might like to see a few other vistas of those, but you really need to see in person.

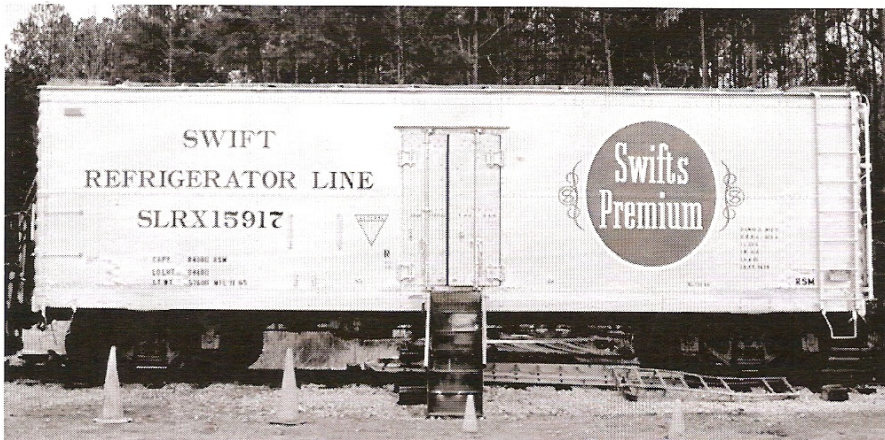


SWIFT REEFER PAINT JOB COMPLETE

Just in time to show off for our *Santa Train* visitors, the paint job on the Swift refrigerator car in our collection was completed. The photo below just does not do justice to the impact of the big red logo on Many thanks (again) to Doc Majors and the rest of the crew working with him on this. They did a splendid job!



ABOVE: #399 ON THE HOUSE TRACK
BELOW: PARKING LOT SIGNS



The Call Board

NHVRY Crew Operating News

TRAINING CLASSES

All members of the train operating crew will be required to attend one day of training. Next training will be listed in the Schedule below.

RULES QUALIFICATION TESTS

Rules tests must be renewed every two years in order to remain current. If you have not taken a rules test in the last two years, see the dispatcher on duty as soon as possible.

BULLETIN BOOK

The Bulletin Book is in the Yard Office at Bonsal. All crew members are required to be aware of bulletins posted in the Book.

RECORD THANKSGIVING RIDERSHIP

Progressive Railroading

Amtrak served about 720,000 riders during the Thanksgiving holiday travel week, a new ridership record for the period. Preliminary figures indicate ridership grew 2.2% during the period compared with a year ago when 704,446 riders used Amtrak to travel to their holiday destinations. Amtrak "exceeded expectations" due in part to increased capacity and the recent introduction of free Wi-Fi service on several Amtrak routes, said Emmett Fremaux, Amtrak vice president of marketing and product management. In preparation for the anticipated heavy volume, Amtrak operated every available car in its fleet and scheduled extra trains to accommodate additional riders in the Northeast and on the West Coast. The fleet was slightly expanded this year due to rehabilitated and refurbished cars and locomotives. Thanksgiving travelers also helped set a holiday ridership record on the *Capitol Corridor*. From 21 to 27 November about 33,515 riders used the service, a 10% increase over the 2010 Thanksgiving holiday period and the highest Thanksgiving ridership in the *Capitol Corridor's* history.

WHERE ARE YOU?

Please ensure we have your correct address, telephone number, and **EMAIL address**, at all times. Send a note to the email address on the first page of this publication.

NCRM DOCENTS WANTED

We are always looking for volunteers as museum docents (tour guides) for the facility on weekends throughout the year. We get museum visitors all the time, and want to keep them safe. All it takes is a basic knowledge of railroad history and a willingness to talk to people. If you are interested, please contact Bob Crowley.

CSX SANTA TRAIN SPREADS GOOD CHEER

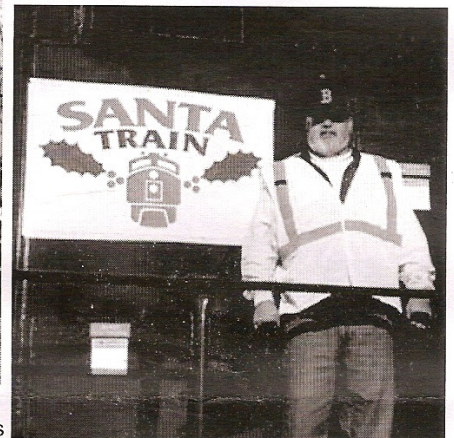
BLET Website

The 69th annual CSX Santa Train ran safely and on-time again this year, thanks in large part to the locomotive engineers and trainmen of BLET Division 781 in Erwin, TN.

Every November, Santa Claus trades his sleigh and reindeer for a CSX train ride through Appalachia. On 19 November, Santa and his elves distributed 15 tons of donated gifts to children of all ages at the 14 stops along the 110 mile route through eastern Kentucky, western Virginia, and

Thompson Square, a Grammy-nominated husband-and-wife country music duo.

Typically, the senior member of the Division will bid on the Santa Train job. This year, the honor went to T.L. "Tuck" Bradley. Bradley hired out as a brakeman in October of 1981 on the former Clinchfield Railroad in Dante, VA. He stayed with the railroad through various mergers and acquisitions over the years, included the Seaboard, L&N, Family Lines, Chessie System, and eventually CSX. Bradley knows first-hand the importance of the Santa Claus train to the Appalachian region. "I went to the



SANTA TRAIN ENGINEER BRADLEY

northeast Tennessee. The annual event is sponsored by CSX Transportation, Food City Grocers of Abingdon, VA, Kids Wish Network (a Florida-based non-profit group) and the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. *The Kids Wish Network* made a \$500,000 donation of toys this year. In addition to Santa, this year's special guests were

Santa Claus train myself as a kid growing up," he said. "It's good for the kids. For some this may be the only Christmas present they get."

Coming full circle and working behind the throttle of the Santa Claus train was a fulfilling experience for Bradley. Also, it was particularly rewarding for him to know two of his grandchildren were in the crowd as the train stopped in St. Paul, VA. In fact, they were a large reason he bid on the Santa Train job in the first place. "My grandkids wanted me to do it," he said. "They were more excited about it than I was."

FRA ISSUES ADVISORY

Progressive Railroading

The FRA has issued a safety advisory to remind railroads, contractors, and rail bridge workers about safety practices designed to prevent accidents and casualties. FRA regulations require scaffolding standards be met and railroads and rail contractors provide, and their employees use, certain fall protection and personal protective equipment for rail bridge work, including head, foot, eye, and face equipment.

"The safety advisory focuses attention on the unsafe workplace behavior preliminarily found to be contributing factors in two incidents occurring this year during which workers fell from bridges, resulting in one fatality. In 2008, another worker fell under similar circumstances. In each of these three incidents, the bridge worker was not using a personal fall arrest system and fell when stepping on an unsecured walkway or platform grating."

NCRM 2012 SCHEDULE

21 January - NCRM Annual Dinner
 21 January - NCRM Board Meeting
 18 February - NCRM Board Meeting
 17 March - NCRM Board Meeting
 21 April - NCRM Board Meeting
 21 April - NC Science Day Trains
 6 May - NHVRY Operating Day
 18 May - NHVRY Group Day
 19 May - NCRM Board Meeting
 Remainder of the 2012 schedule shall be posted in the next issue.
 All events listed here are held at the NHVRY in Bonsal, NC unless otherwise noted.

NORTH CAROLINA RAILWAY MUSEUM, INC.

NHV

New Hope Valley Railway

Tarheel Telegrapher

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