

# Whistle Stop



Volume 29 No. 10

October 2009

Mike Jackson, Editor

Duane and Harriet Swank, Printing/Circulation

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## Safety Meeting for Chapter Excursion Oct. 26

### Next Watauga Valley NRHS Meeting

The next chapter meeting will be held Monday, October 26, 2009, at 6:30 p.m., at the Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St. Mark your calendar so you will not miss this meeting. This will be the Chapter's Amtrak excursion safety meeting.



We will go over all the general details of the trip along with the Amtrak Safety rules. All Excursion workers are required to attend, but if you cannot make the meeting, please call the Chapter office at 423-753-5797 and leave your name and phone number. Mike Tilley will call you

back to schedule a make up session. You may also e-mail us at [wataugavalley@embarqmail.com](mailto:wataugavalley@embarqmail.com), and we will get back with you on the make up date and time. This will be a very important meeting for you to learn the details of our trip. Also, other members are welcome to attend to see what is involved in these excursions.

Both our Charlottesville and Asheville trips are sold out with 25 cars and 3 engines

**SEE YOU MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009, at 6:30 P.M., AT THE JOHNSON CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING!**

### CLINCHFIELD NORTH END TOUR

The date of the tour will be Saturday, November 14. We will leave from the Cherry Street Parking lot in Johnson City at 7:00 a.m., and arrive in downtown Kingsport at the Chamber of Commerce parking lot at 7:30 a.m., to pickup our Kingsport group. The tour will proceed to Gate City, to Copper Creek Bridge, Hill VA, Fort Blackmore, Dungannon, St. Paul, Boody, Dante, Trammel, Allen, Fremont, Delano, Towers, Breaks Interstate Park, Elkhorn City and Shelby Yard, KY. We are planning a meal at the Breaks Interstate Park Restaurant.

The sign up form will be available at the October 26th meeting or you may e-mail the chapter that you are going on the tour at [wataugavalley@embarqmail.com](mailto:wataugavalley@embarqmail.com). This will be a tour you do not want to miss, so mark your calendar.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee gave a slate for officers and board members and opened the floor for nominations at the September meeting. There were no nominations from the floor so the membership voted to close the nominations and go with slate presented to the membership by Nominating Committee Chair Betty Jackson.

Ballots will be mailed in October's newsletter.

The following candidates were presented by the Nominating Committee, approved by members present at the Chapter's September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, and are on the ballot for the 2010 election of Officers and Members of the Board of Directors:

Mike Tilley	President
Bob Schubel	Vice President
Betty Jackson	Secretary
Duane Swank	Treasurer

Jim Pahriss	National Director
Gary Price	Historian
Bob Yapple	Board of Director
Art Devoe	Board of Director

**PLEASE VOTE** and send in your ballots!  
**Mike Tilley, Chapter President**



## Two Candidates Running for Two BOD Seats

Two seats on the Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS Board of Directors are open next year, and two candidates are running for these positions.

Current BOD members **Art DeVoe** and **Bob Yapple** are on the ballot and are seeking another three-year term.

Art and Bob have been active in many Chapter events in the past. They have served as car hosts on numerous Chapter excursions, special events hosts, and are important members of the Chapter's mechanical crew that is responsible for maintaining the Chapter's three passenger cars, for conducting the operations and upkeep of the Chapter's coach yard in Jonesborough, TN, and for working in the restoration of the Chapter's *Crescent Harbor* passenger car. On the BOD, Art and Bob keep the members informed about the mechanical committee's work. Specifically, Bob and Art present a detailed report to the BOD each month that is included in the *Whistle Stop*.

**The Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS BOD** has 13 members that includes five permanent members—president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and national director, and eight at-large members.

The current members are: Mike Tilley, president, Bob Schubel, vice-president and chairman of the BOD, Betty Jackson, secretary, Duane Swank, treasurer, Jim Pahriss, national director, and Art DeVoe, Bob Yapple, Jim Calhoun, Helen Calhoun, Bill Beagen, Nick White, Penny May and Mike Jackson, who are at-large members.

The ballots you receive will include a space to write-in anyone for any office.

**Information by Mike Tilley**



## Member Notes – October *Whistle Stop*

Sympathy is extended to Tom and Kati Phelps, Asheville, in the death of Kati's sister in early August; and to Jim and Charlotte Pahriss, Jonesborough, in the death of Charlotte's mother, Annie Martha Adcox, in Florida, in early September. Mrs. Adcox would have celebrated her 97th birthday on December 25, 2009.

Sympathy is also extended to Mike and Betty Jackson and family in the death of George E. Carver, husband of Betty's sister Wanda, on September 16, 2009, in Kingsport; and to George and Nancy Ritchie, Unicoi, TN, in the death of George's brother, Hugh Gene Ritchie, on October 8, 2009. Please remember all of these families.

Keep the following folks in your thoughts as they deal with health concerns: Anna Banner, Walter Byrd, and Jim Hutchinson. And as always, let us know of any member or friend who we could remember with a card or a call. Just call Nancy Jewell at 423-282-0918 or the Chapter phone at 423-753-5797 and leave a message. We do want to keep in touch.

**Nancy Jewell, Contributor**



## Mechanical Report by Bob Yaple

**GENERAL:** The cleanup at the Spring Street Coach Yard in Jonesborough continues.

**ROLLING STOCK:** Our Amtrak inspector Pete Masena has done a PC-1 inspection on all three cars. A punch list resulted from this inspection—all minor—so there's nothing to keep them in the Yard. Since he found nothing that must be attended to before the next inspection, the cars were ready to roll!

The *Clinchfield 500* and the *Powhatan Arrow 539* have had their marker light systems reworked. The 539's body work is in progress with painting and lettering to follow. We also have found a sneaky air conditioning fault that first appeared on the Cincinnati-Southern trip. We have found a new-to-us brake valve for the *Moultrie 400* that will eliminate a valve's leaking that has plagued us for a long time,

Speaking of plagues, more work is being done on the 400's refrigeration systems. All three cars have had their air hoses updated, and they were cleaned by Chapter members on Saturday September 9. This important job needs a lot more attention. Open a closet or a cabinet and you will see why. Art DeVoe has painted and re-stenciled the "undersides" of all three cars. This improved working conditions, and it also looks great!

**CRESCENT HARBOR:** Richard Freeman's prowess on the internet has paid handsomely again! We have purchased a 40 kilowatt Perkins Powered-Unit Genset. It was used with very low operating hours and cost \$4,350.00—about a quarter of the price of a new unit! This effort has been called "The Art and Bob Show", but has been the driving force and his [Richard's] professional mechanical ability makes the difference. Work continues on the wiring systems with the conduit runs for 27 pins nearly complete. The painter has started prep work in the lounge. Work has also been started on re-assembly of the gates and curtains on each end of the car.

**INFORMATION:** For more information on the work of the Chapter's Mechanical Crew, please see Jim Magill, chief mechanical officer, or Bob Yaple, assistant chief mechanical officer.

**Bob Yaple, Asst. Chief Mechanical officer**



## Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS Minutes for Chapter Meeting, September 28th, 2009

The Chapter meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m., on September 28th, 2009, at the Johnson City Public Library. Mike Tilley, President, presided. Attendance was 30 members.

Paul Haynes moved to dispense with the reading of the August minutes, Jack Maloney seconded. The motion passed.

### Old Business

Mike Tilley gave an update on the upcoming Fall Excursion. The Sunday trip to Asheville is SOLD OUT and about 50 seats remain for the Saturday trip to Charlottesville. He stated there will be 25 cars with three Amtrak engines this year. The trip committee meetings continue. Harriett and Duane Swank have purchased all of the first class snacks for the trip. There will be about 1366 meals served during the two days. There will be eight buses available for the layovers in Asheville and Charlottesville for the passengers. The members working the excursion will be able to ride the buses at no charge. The transportation for members not driving to Spencer will leave at 7:45 a.m., on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>. For members driving to Spencer, there will be parking available at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer. All workers must attend the Safety session at the October 26<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting. Mike announced that there will be more lighting in the first class area and that a golf cart will be available for the first class passengers exclusively.

There will be three work sessions soon: one in Asheville on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, and two for finishing up preparations for the cars in the Spring Street Yard. The work session in Jonesborough will be Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>.

The North Clinchfield tour has been re-scheduled for Saturday, 11/14/09. The caravan will leave at 7a.m., from the Cherry Street parking lot and will stop in Kingsport around 7:30, with a location yet to be determined. Mike is hopeful that Chris Starnes will be able to be our tour guide.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The 2010 Officers Nominating Committee members are Betty Jackson, Chairman, Helen Calhoun, Board Member, and Lois Tilley, Member at Large. Betty gave the report of all current officers and the two board members up for re-election who have agreed to run again. They are Mike Tilley, President; Bob Schubel, Vice President; Betty Jackson, Secretary; Duane Swank, Treasurer; Jim Pahriss, National Director; and Gary Price, Historian. The two board members running for re-election are: Bob Yapple and Art DeVoe. Betty opened up the floor for nominations, and there were none. The motion to close the nominations was made by Nancy Jewell, seconded by Jack Maloney. The motion passed. The ballot will be in the October Whistle Stop and must be returned no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>. The results will be published in the December newsletter.

Mike recognized Nancy Jewell for her many years of purchasing and sending out get well, encouragement and sympathy cards to Chapter members. The members appreciate Nancy and her continued dedication. The Chapter awarded her with a \$100 check to help cover costs.

Today is Jim Calhoun's birthday and the Chapter sang "Happy Birthday" to him.

George Richey provided a video for the program.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

**Betty Jackson, Secretary, Mike Tilley, President**



## **MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB NEWS**

The Mountain Empire Model Railroaders Club (MEMRR) is conducting a contest to find a new logo for the George L. Carter Railroad Museum at East Tennessee State University. MEMRR said logo designs submitted must contain the words "George L. Carter Railroad Museum" and "ETSU" and must incorporate an area railroading theme. Artwork will be judged on creativity, presentation, technical ability, and appropriateness to the theme. Entries must be postmarked by Nov. 14, and contest rules are available at [www.etsu.edu/railroad](http://www.etsu.edu/railroad). Mail entries and a \$5.00 entry fee to:

Dr. Fred Alsop, Director, George L. Carter Railroad Museum  
P.O. Box 70703  
East Tennessee State University  
Johnson City, TN 37614

The winner and finalists will be notified by Nov. 23, and will be invited to the formal logo unveiling and presentation of the awards on Nov. 24 at the Tennessee Credit Union branch located at 310 Sunset Drive in Johnson City.

**November is National Model Railroad Month** and will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the George L. Carter Railroad Museum. According to the MEMRR newsletter *The Signal Bridge*, the museum's anniversary celebration will be a part of the East Tennessee State University Homecoming observance and will include the logo contest and election of club officers for the coming year.

**The MEMRR invites you** to visit the George L. Carter Museum at ETSU during the open viewing and operating session every Saturday from 10:00 a.m., to 3:00 p.m. Business meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., at ETSU in the Brown Hall Science Building, room 312. A social gathering is held prior to the business meeting at El Torito on State of Franklin near ETSU in the Kroger Plaza, and work nights are held weekly on Thursday evenings starting at 4:30 p.m. Visitors and those interested in joining the MEMRR are invited to attend.

**From the MEMRR Newsletter, *The Signal Bridge***



**Gary Price and Keeping the ole' N&W safe...one tie at a time**

## **Norfolk Southern—One of the Best Places to Launch a Career**

**NORFOLK, VA** – Norfolk Southern is one of the 50 “Best Places to Launch a Career,” according to the Sept. 14, 2009, issue of *BusinessWeek* magazine.

*BusinessWeek*'s fourth annual survey ranks the top employers for new college graduates. It is based on a survey of U.S. employers, college career services directors, and some 60,000 college undergraduates. Norfolk Southern ranked 26 on the list for 2009. “There are certain characteristics that all great employers share: great pay and benefits, top-notch training programs, and opportunities for rapid advancement,” the magazine reports.

“With demand for freight transportation expected to grow 88 percent by 2035, the rail industry offers stability, with fantastic opportunities for a long-term career path,” said Cindy Earhart, NS vice president human resources. “We offer competitive salaries and benefits and have a strong tradition of promoting from within the company.”

Norfolk Southern Corporation is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway subsidiary operates approximately 21,000 route miles in 22 states and the District of Columbia, serves every major container port in the eastern United States, and provides efficient connections to other rail carriers. Norfolk Southern operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East and is a major transporter of coal and industrial products.



**Rail News from Jeff Jones**

### **New Amtrak Service from Lynchburg to NE Corridor**

**LYNCHBURG, VA** –Virginia Gov. Timothy M. Kaine joined former Gov. Linwood Holton, Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman, Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman and state and local officials September 30 on a Whistle Stop Train Tour to launch new passenger rail service between Lynchburg and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Beginning October 1, Amtrak Virginia, a partnership between the Commonwealth of Virginia and Amtrak, expanded daily round-trip service between Lynchburg, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, New York, Boston and many other cities in between. "By linking communities along the U.S. 29 corridors with Washington, D.C., and numerous destinations in the Northeast, Virginia and our partners have taken a significant first step toward expanding passenger rail service today while providing more transportation choices for travelers and businesses," said Kaine. "The expanded service will support economic growth and benefit the environment by taking more cars off the road, improving air quality, and saving fuel."

"Amtrak is pleased to partner with Virginia to offer another transportation option to connect people and businesses between Lynchburg and Washington, D.C.," said Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman. "The new service doubles the available passenger rail service for many Central Virginia residents, offering them a direct link to major destinations along the Northeast Corridor."

"We recognize that passenger rail service is a critical element in addressing our nation's transportation challenges," said Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman. "Norfolk Southern is proud to have worked closely with the Commonwealth and Amtrak to provide this new service."

The new service, originating from Lynchburg, makes stops in Charlottesville, Culpeper, Manassas, Burke Centre, Alexandria, Washington, D.C. and as far north as Boston, with round trip service seven days a week. The additional departure times from Lynchburg are 7:38 a.m. during the weekdays and 9:59 a.m. during the weekends. The expanded service is made possible through a public-private partnership among Amtrak, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Norfolk Southern and CSX.

The Commonwealth is Amtrak's 15th state partner. This partnership marks the first time in history that Virginia has invested in intercity passenger rail service. Virginia's investment for the

two routes is \$17.2 million over a three-year demonstration period. Afterward, a dedicated funding source must be identified to continue to operate the service.

Amtrak Virginia is a program developed by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and Amtrak to provide more rail travel choices in Virginia. With the addition of this new service, the train originates in Lynchburg for the first time ever and passengers from Richmond will have hourly morning service from the state capital to the Northeast Corridor.

Amtrak operates more than 20 trains daily across the state. More than one million passenger trips were made from Virginia in fiscal year 2008. Amtrak's Northeast Corridor is the busiest railroad in North America, with more than 2,600 trains that carried almost 11 million passengers in fiscal year 2008. Amtrak's Northeast Corridor trains carry even more traffic than all air carriers in the region combined. **See related story on Page 9.**

**KERMIT, WV** - Opening a new rail gateway for double-stacked containers is taking place across southern West Virginia 20 grueling feet at a time, the *Charleston Daily Mail* reports.

Every weekday, Norfolk Southern Corp. shuts down a portion of its main line between the East Coast and the Midwest so crews can raise the roofs in the line's tunnels. It's part of the \$151 million Heartland Corridor project, which will allow the railroad to ship double-stacked containers between the port of Hampton Roads and Chicago. The project will cut 233 miles and more than a day's travel time for trains moving between the two locations.

"Big Sandy 1," near here, is one of the tunnels where work is under way. The nearly half-mile-long tunnel has a concrete liner. The sides and arched roof are smooth and, to the naked eye, seem perfect. "The workmanship is 104 years old," said Robert Billingsley, Norfolk Southern's director of structural projects. "It's pretty darned good!" Billingsley said that when Heartland Corridor work began two years ago, workers didn't make much progress in one shift. Now they typically finish a 20-foot section in one shift.

A total of 28 tunnels - four in Virginia and 24 in West Virginia - are being modified. Workers have encountered a variety of issues. Two tunnels are lined with brick. One is natural rock. Most were drilled through sandstone but at least one in Virginia was drilled through limestone. In some cases the track has been lowered instead of raising the roof. But this isn't common because the job shuts down the line for an extended period. In some of the tunnels the entire roof doesn't need to be raised. Instead, the side of the liner can be notched to provide adequate clearance. Billingsley said safety is the railroad's top priority.

Robin Chapman, Norfolk Southern's manager of public relations, said the company's line across southern West Virginia - "The N Line" - "was built to move coal." It handles less coal than in the past but also handles mixed freight and, currently, one single-stack train each day. "Double stacks will double our capacity," he said.

Funding for the Heartland Corridor includes \$95 million from the federal government, \$51 million from Norfolk Southern, \$5 million from the state of Virginia and \$800,000 from the state of Ohio. Proponents say the Heartland Corridor will provide an efficient alternative to trucks and will reduce highway congestion.

**JACKSONVILLE, FL**—CSX Corporation announced October 13 its 3rd quarter earnings from continuing operations of \$293 million, or 74 cents a share, versus \$380 million, or 93 cents a share, in the same period last year. Third quarter revenues of \$2.3 billion were down 23 percent from the prior year, primarily due to a 15 percent decline in volume and lower fuel surcharge recovery. At the same time, core pricing remained strong and consistent with prior quarters, reflecting high service levels and the overall value of rail transportation. While volumes declined across the business, the rate of decline continued to slow in nearly all markets compared to the second quarter.

"The third quarter reinforces our view that the worst of the recession is likely behind us," said Michael J. Ward, chairman, president and chief executive officer. "At the same time, our coal business will be impacted by weak demand well into 2010."

CSX continued to improve its network efficiency and safety while reducing operating costs by 24 percent compared to the same period last year. As a result of these efforts and a sustained focus on yield management, CSX produced operating income of \$598 million and a third quarter record operating ratio of 73.9 percent.

"The CSX team is clearly demonstrating that it can achieve excellence in any environment," said Ward. "As the economy regains strength, we are emerging as a stronger, leaner company in an industry that is positioned to grow over the long term."

CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is a leading transportation company providing rail, intermodal and rail-to-truck transload services. The company's transportation network spans approximately 21,000 miles with service to 23 eastern states and the District of Columbia, and connects to more than 70 ocean, river and lake ports.

This earnings announcement, as well as a package of detailed financial information, is contained in the CSX Quarterly Financial Report available on the company's website at <http://investors.csx.com> in the Investors section and on Form 8-K with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"). **From CSXT News**



Two 50-foot container cars on the NS T80 leaving Frisco Yard, VA, for Knoxville's Sevier Yard on August 19. The cars were repaired at the Kingsport Railcar Services at the former Holston Army Ammunition Plant. The NS T50, a local that works between Frisco Yard and the Greenland glass plant, normally sets-off and picks-up the cars at the Holston junction in Mount Carmel, TN.

**Remember! The October 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting is an Important Safety Meeting!  
If you plan to work the October 31 and November 1 Amtrak Excursions,  
Please Attend the October 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting!**

**Last month, Chapter Member Nick White** submitted a photo (right) of a former switch engine at an abandoned coal preparation facility near Deskins, VA, in Buchanan County. The locomotive, labeled V.P.-1 mine, apparently worked the former Virginia Pocahontas No. 5 Mine, where Nick's father worked. The Island Creek Coal Company was the operator of this mine that is now shut down. The Island Creek Coal Company was bought out by Consol Energy.



Nick also submitted pictures of the former coal processing plant left and below.



## **New Website for Amtrak Travelers in Virginia Set-up— Provides Details on new Northeast Regional Service**

**RICHMOND and WASHINGTON, DC**—A new website is now available for Virginia's rail travelers, [AmtrakVirginia.com](http://AmtrakVirginia.com), with information on all Amtrak service in Virginia including the new Northeast Regional service that provides expanded transportation choices for travelers. Beginning this fall, new roundtrip Northeast Regional service will be offered from Lynchburg and Richmond to major destinations in the Northeast Corridor, including Philadelphia, New York, Boston and more. The Lynchburg service started on October 1, 2009 and the Richmond service begins in December 2009.

Tickets are now available for the Lynchburg service and may be booked at [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com). Passengers who book now through December 16 may take advantage of a fare promotion which offers up to 25 percent off the lowest published coach fare on Northeast Regional service between Lynchburg, Washington, D.C., New York, and Boston.

Sample one-way fares include \$66 between Lynchburg and New York and \$71 between Lynchburg and Boston. See [amtrakvirginia.com/hotdeals.aspx](http://amtrakvirginia.com/hotdeals.aspx) for details. Reservations are required for travel and must be made at least 14 days in advance of travel. Some restrictions apply. Tickets can be purchased at [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL.

In celebration of the new Lynchburg service, a whistle stop tour was conducted on September 30, 2009. Go to [AmtrakVirginia.com](http://AmtrakVirginia.com) for the latest information on all Virginia routes, special deals and tourist destinations.

### **About Amtrak Virginia**

Amtrak Virginia is a program developed by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and Amtrak to provide more rail travel choices in Virginia. With the addition of this new service, the train originates in Lynchburg for the first time ever and passengers from Richmond will have hourly morning service from the state capital to the Northeast Corridor. The new service promotes economic, tourism and environmental benefits. For reservations, visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or call 1-800-USA-RAIL.

### **About Amtrak**

Amtrak has posted six consecutive years of growth in ridership and revenue, carrying more than 28.7 million passengers in the last fiscal year. Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail service to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000-mile route system. In Virginia, Amtrak operates more than 20 trains daily from 21 train stations across the state. Over one-million train trips were made from Virginia locations in fiscal year 2008. For schedules, fares and information, passengers may visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or call 1-800-USA-RAIL. **Amtrak Press Release**



### ***The Whistle Stop***

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Opinions or viewpoints are those of the writer and may not necessarily reflect those of the Chapter members, officers or directors. Items of interest are welcome and will be credited to the author; however, because of space constraints, all submissions are subject to editing.

Clip Art of Railroad Heralds Courtesy of Ken Houghton (KH) Railroad Clip Art.

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**The 2007 *Virginia Autumn Flyer*! Members of the Watauga Valley NRHS and the North Carolina Transportation Museum are ready to work the 2009 Amtrak excursions out of Spencer, NC, on October 31 and November 1!**