
FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025

FEBRUARY, 2002

POINTS OF CONTACT:

Eastern Nebraska Chapter and Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR) - (402-727-0615) - 1835 N. Somers, Fremont, NE 68025

Fremont Dinner Train (402-727-8321 or 1-800-942-7245) - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025

VERY SPECIAL EVENT:

Thomas the Tank Engine- That friendly little locomotive will be at the Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad on May 3, 4, and 5 and again on May 9, 10, and 11 to entertain kids of all ages. Train rides with Thomas, entertainment, and Thomas merchandise will be featured. Credit card ticket sales are now in progress by calling toll-free 1-866-813-9993, 8 AM- 7 PM, Monday through Friday. Reservations are filling rapidly; so to ride with Thomas, call right away.

OPEN HOUSE:

The **2002 Excursion Season** will start with our annual **Open House** on April 20 and 21. To receive the descriptive brochure about excursion travel, write or call the railroad office. Reservations for charters and school trips are being scheduled. Details about the Open House in a later issue.

WHO WE ARE:

The Eastern Nebraska Chapter is one of over 170 chapters of the National Railway Historical Society. The Eastern Nebraska Chapter, a non-profit corporation, has as its goal the preservation of the historical aspects of the railroads along with education of the public as to the present and future values of the railroad industry. The Chapter operates the Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad and maintains a museum.

NEW CONSTRUCTION:

In order that Thomas may be properly welcomed when he arrives in May, much new construction is underway. Members **Charles Egbers** and **Jerry Morris** are busy laying a new spur track from the mainline to the depot. To reduce expenses, they have salvaged donated ties, track, and related items to do the building. The mild Winter weather has aided their effort. Master craftsman and museum curator **Jim Hansen** is completing a new entrance/exit to the depot museum for better access to the Thomas train. The depot will be the hub of activity for the thousands of daily guests when Thomas is in town. Members **Jeff Blackmore** and **Ed Pentis** are supervising the renovation of the railroad's excursion cars that will operate in the Thomas train. **Volunteers are welcome and needed!**

CREW TRAINING:

Training for train operating personnel is essential to insure the safety of passengers and to maintain efficient operations in addition to providing compliance with regulatory requirements. **March 9 nd 16** have been set aside to accomplish this purpose and it is necessary that all who will be involved in train operations attend one of the sessions. The sessions schedules are:

9AM-12 noon - safety/air brakes- for all
1 PM - 3 PM - engineers and student engineers (others may attend also)

3 PM - 4 PM - practice in train yard

To attend, contact the depot office and indicate the session desired. (**NOTE:** non-members may also attend for a \$5 fee which can be applied toward the Chapter membership should they decide to join.)

RAILSCHOOL:

This "Railschool" in each issue is intended to include a topic informative both to members and to the public. For this issue, consider the impact that the railroad has had on society in the United States. No other development has had in impact of such magnitude in such a short time.

Caesar would have been familiar with the time involved in travel and communication in the United States in **1830**. Human and animal abilities were the limitations. Travel often took weeks or months. Travel across the continent was dangerous, difficult and measured in months. Yet, within the span of a human lifetime, only 40 years later, that trip could be made in days after the completion of the Union Pacific-Central Pacific route in **1869**. With the completion of the Missouri River bridge at Omaha in **1872**, the trip could be made without ever leaving the steel rail. In **1876**, a special trip from New York to San Francisco was completed in 84 hours for a theater troupe (about ½ the time for the ordinary traveler). The Standard Time zones were established by the railroads in **1883** to meet scheduling needs. By **1900**, trains had exceeded 100 mph and the use of the air brake, automatic coupler, and steel car construction had defined modern railroading. The Pullman sleeper and the Harvey House restaurants made travel comfortable, especially for the privileged. The concurrent development of the telegraph made both the construction and operation of the railroads efficient while the rail right-of-way provided a route for the telegraph.

As the **20th century** dawned, the old West was gone forever- replaced by cities, industries, and farms. The octogenarians of the day must have felt they were on a different planet!



RAILSCENE: Chapter members replacing rail, Nickerson yard, Summer, 1999
