
FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025

JANUARY, 2002

This publication

This publication is the first of monthly newsletters intended to inform not only members of the Eastern Nebraska Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society of activities but also to provide pertinent and useful information to the community. From time to time, general information about railroads and railroaders will be included.

The Chapter

The Eastern Nebraska Chapter is one of over 170 chapters of the National Railway Historical Society with a total membership of nearly 20000. The Eastern Nebraska Chapter, a non-profit corporation, was established in the mid-1980's when the current railroad operations began. As with other chapters, the purpose of the Eastern Nebraska Chapter is 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. In connection with these goals, the Chapter engages in multiple activities as explained below.

The Depot and Museum

The depot and a compact, but well-furnished, museum of railroad artifacts is located at 1835 N. Somers St. on the west side of Fremont, Nebraska. The depot is the point of departure for the railroad activities. A portion of the depot is a shop area where one of the locomotives is housed in cold weather and where some of the maintenance equipment is kept and serviced.

The Railroad

The Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR) operates over a track of approximately 15 miles in length from Fremont to the municipality of Hooper, passing through the Village of Nickerson. This route was established in 1869 as a route of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. The tracks eventually extended into South Dakota

and into Wyoming. Part of the Wyoming route was the "Cowboy Line" through the Nebraska sandhills and now is no longer a railroad but part of a trail system. The FEVR is a separate corporation operating under the control of the Chapter. The passenger excursions operate from April through October and include regular weekend schedules, holiday specials, and charters. The charters include those for school children which are especially valuable for educational experiences. Equipment includes passenger coaches, a caboose, and a converted Railroad Post Office (RPO) car. Passengers can walk from the passenger cars and obtain refreshments and souvenirs in the RPO car. Trips to Hooper are about 30 miles round trip and those to Nickerson are about 15 miles round trip. Hooper trips include a time to explore the historic main street there, while trips to Nickerson can include a stop to visit the antique store. There were 84 excursion trips carrying as many as 164 passengers per trip. There was a 28% increase in ridership over that for 2000. A telephone information service is available on a continuous basis and may be accessed by calling 402-727-0615.

The Dinner Train

The Fremont Dinner Train (FDT), is privately owned and operates over the FEVR railroad on a contract, fee per trip basis and provides a source of income for the FEVR and the Chapter. The FDT operates on a year-around schedule with the exception of a two week period in January. The accommodations on the FDT are widely known for the quality of both the dining and entertainment offered. A total of 222 trips were made in 2000 and 2001 (up to this date). All accommodations are by reservation only and information may be gained by calling 1-800-942-7245.

The Membership

The Chapter members are all

volunteers and perform all the varied functions needed for both the Chapter and the FEVR. The variety of talents brought to the Chapter is evident in the newly elected Board of Directors: civil engineer, college professor, real estate broker, college student, college staff, cable tv technician, businessman, bank employee, and retired mainline operating crew. The general membership has a similar variety: from high school student to the retired. All members learn that there is no "generation gap", that one must always look out for the safety of others, and that teamwork is essential. Additional volunteers are always needed in areas as diverse as office help, track maintenance, and train operating crews. Membership information may be requested by calling 402-727-0615.

Current Activities

Although the dinner train operation continues to require operating crew schedules, time is being spent in repair of equipment, track inspection, and signal maintenance. The office staff is preparing the annual mailing to schools with information for charters. New in 2002 will be school charters in the Fall as well as in the usual Spring months of April and May. Work on the recently acquired locomotives (more about this in the next issue) is proceeding.

Coming in 2002

The new year promises to be exciting. Look for the annual open house April 20 and 21. The addition of an air conditioned passenger car for excursion and charter use is planned for the summer. More details next issue.

Next Issue

Because of the varied readership of this publication this issue's content is designed to introduce the Chapter to those to whom it is not familiar. In the next issue, there will be a description of the four locomotives and other railroad operations plus other interest areas.
