
FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025 APRIL 2003

POINTS OF CONTACT:

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

Fremont Dinner Train (402-727-8321 or 1-800-942-7245) - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025 (The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business for which the FEVR provides motive power and trackage).

THOMAS:

Day Out With Thomas™ will be in Fremont **May 30-June 1 and June 6-8** with train rides, games, entertainment, and gift shop! Among the many preparations completed or underway are the construction of an additional concrete **walkway** along the track for better train access, placement of **advertising** in various media, schedules for volunteer information **sessions**, and completion of a **site plan**. Several new events have been added for this year.

Tickets may be obtained by link from the Internet website www.fremontrailroad.com or by calling toll-free **1-866-468-7624**, 9AM-8PM CST, Monday through Saturday, and 9AM- 7 PM Sunday. Tickets may also be obtained **locally** at the Depot- call there for times and dates.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to assist with the community event- set up crews, greeters, ticket takers, train attendants, story tellers, maintenance- all to help accommodate the thousands of visitors (15000 last year!). Contact event coordinator **Bobbi Jo Lang** at **402-933-6435** or at fevr@radiks.net.

AND AFTER THAT:

Only about a month after, on July 11,12, and 13, the railroad will be offering multiple excursion trips as part of the John C. Fremont Days activities. This annual community celebration honors the famous explorer.

EXCURSION UPDATE:

The regular excursion travel season begins in **May**. New this year will be an option of travel in an **air-conditioned** passenger car.

Saturday trips are scheduled for boarding at **1:00 PM** at the Depot with departure on the mainline at 1:30 PM. The 15 mile **Nickerson** round-trip returns about 3:30 PM. Shopping time at the antique store in Nickerson is an option.

The **Sunday** trip to **Hooper** boards at **1:00 PM** with mainline departure at 1:30 PM. This 30 mile round-trip returns at about 5:30 PM. There is available time in Hooper to visit the town's historic main street.

Brochures for the season are in preparation. Contact the FEVR office for copies to be sent after publication..

School charter travel has begun in April. Additional reservations for both Spring and Fall are still available. To secure an optimal choice of days and times for schools or other charter travel, contact **Mr. Gene Zimmerman, Office Manager**, at the FEVR office soon. Best contact times are late mornings but phone messages may be left anytime.

PASSENGER CAR:

The recently leased ex-Milwaukee passenger car **#649** had its first use in a school charter trip at the beginning of April. The **smooth ride** and **climate control** inside were outstanding. This unit with its generator and the companion Milwaukee passenger car previously leased will provide travel comfort both Summer and Winter. (See photo this issue)

RULES AND SAFETY:

The annual rules and safety class was conducted on April 26. **Charles Egbers** presented an interesting and informative session. Attendees appreciated the time and effort he devoted to this event.

RAIL SCHOOL:

In each issue, some facet of information about railroad operations is featured. This time, **railroad signaling** is the topic.

Among the many signal systems used by railroads, the ones most important and visible to the public are the signals at **grade crossings**.

If a highway vehicle and a train arrive at a grade crossing **simultaneously**, the vehicle always **"loses"**. The Texas Department of Transportation has reported that such an incident happens **every 90 minutes** somewhere in the nation- sometimes with fatal results.

Passive signals- stop signs, the traditional "crossbucks" - all depend on the continuing attention of the highway driver. **Active signals**- lights, gate arms, bells, horns, "wig-wags" - (and years ago a flagman) **demand** the driver's attention. In addition, the active signals can be designed to adjust to the train's speed and direction.

The **type** of signal is determined by transportation laws which take into consideration location hazards, frequency and speeds of train traffic, and the frequency of highway traffic.

Nearly all signal systems rely on the **electrical conductivity** of the steel rails and the steel wheels connected by steel axles of the railroad vehicles. The wheel contact provides a **"short-circuit"** for any type of electrical signal applied to the rails. In the **simplest** system, a battery at a distance from the crossing (determined by the predominant train speeds) provides a small current to the rails which is sent to **relays** in a control enclosure at the crossing. These relays are **activated** by the current and keep the crossing signal **off**. When a train passes the battery, the current is **shorted** by the wheels, the relays de-energize, and the signal **operates**. More on this in the next issue.
