
FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025

FEBRUARY, 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:

Tickets may be obtained by link from website www.fremontrailroad.com or by calling toll-free **1-866-468-7630**, 9AM-8PM CST, Monday through Saturday, and 9AM- 7 PM Sunday. **Day Out With Thomas™** will be in Fremont **May 30-June 1 and June 6-8** Make reservations soon to get the day and time desired. Once again, there will be entertainment and merchandise availability in addition to the train rides.

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

School charter travel reservations are now being arranged. 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 to secure the optimal days and times.. Best contact times are late mornings but phone messages may be left anytime.

Before the regular season, limited excursion travel service remains available via **heated caboose**.

PASSENGER CAR:

A privately owned **ex-Milwaukee** passenger car (see photo in this issue) was delivered January 29. This car was formerly located at North Star Rail-

operator of the excursion steam engine 261. The car is self-contained, with diesel generator, enabling the use of air conditioning and electric heating.

It will be operated under lease arrangement to provide another option for excursion or charter travel.

RULES AND SAFETY:

Operating personnel and interested members should be aware that a rules and safety class will be scheduled before the regular excursion season. Date will be announced as soon as arrangements can be completed.

WEBSITE:

Our **new** website continues to draw many visitors. Links from this site provide information on the Fremont area, the Fremont Dinner Train, and on the railroad.

FAST RIDE:

Passenger rail news today includes that of high-speed operation- with over 100 mph speeds in Northeastern United States. However, high speeds, although not as common, were recorded in the past.

Member **Darrell Miller** has provided information about a very high speed, although impromptu, steam trip in Southwestern Nebraska in the 1930's.

In the early Summer of 1935, the Republican River Valley suffered a **disastrous flood**. In addition to loss of life, roads, bridges, communication lines, and the tracks of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy (CB&Q) - now BN&SF- were destroyed.

In the Fall of 1935, after much of he damage was repaired, the town of McCook hosted a **three day celebration**. The railroad was a participant and had a new train in town- a stainless steel, 3 car, diesel passenger unit call the **Mark Twain -# 9903**. Excursion trips were conducted to the nearby town of Oxford. For the final trip to Oxford, a **speed record** was planned, after which the new unit would continue to Missouri for regular service.

A steam engine passenger unit was to follow the diesel to bring passengers, who included local, state, and national dignitaries, and media reporters, back to McCook. The Mark Twain made the **54 mile** trip to Oxford in **45 minutes**, at one point reaching a speed of **122 mph**.

A hand-fired steam engine - **#2558**- with four cars was dispatched to follow the diesel. The engineer, who no doubt had a spirit of adventure like that of **Casey Jones**, was not given orders to limit speed and he did not. At the point where the Mark Twain was traveling at its highest speed, the steamer was **catching up** and had to set brakes. The firemen, who was very busy shovelling coal, did take time to calculate that they covered a mile in less than 30 seconds! The steamer's speed was later confirmed to be at least **121 mph!**

The steam engine, which ultimately was replaced by the diesels, at least had one more day of glory.

(Above information taken from the Spring, 1996, BISON ALUMNI, publication of the McCook Senior High School.)

OTHER FAST RIDES:

On **May 10, 1893**, a steam passenger train, pulled by engine # 999, on the New York Central and Hudson Railroad set a speed record of **112.5 mph**. The United States government subsequently issued a postage stamp to commemorate the event.

On **May 26, 1934**, the new CB&Q **Pioneer Zephyr** (predecessor to the Mark Twain) made the famous "**dawn to dusk**" trip from Denver to Chicago, covering **1015 miles n 13 hours, 5 minutes**, with a top speed of **112.5 mph**, and an average of **77.6 mph**. It was then featured at the re-opening of the Century of Progress exposition. It is now at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago.

RAIL SCHOOL:

Back on track next issue- **friction and roller axle bearings**.



RAILSCENE: Arrival of ex-Milwaukee passenger car 469 on January 29, 2003. FEVR SW #1219 leaving interchange point with Union Pacific Railroad at M Street in Fremont, Nebraska. See PASSENGER CAR news for more information.
