FEVR FLASH

EASTERN NEBRASKA CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025 JUNE, 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:

Over 10,000 guests enjoyed the Day Out With Thomas™ events on May 30-June 1 and June 6-8. A day of strong wind and one of rain showers were the only distractions. The number of persons attending was lower than that of last year, possibly due to continuing economic conditions. A decision whether to hold the event again next year is pending.

J. C. FREMONT DAYS:

Fremont's annual celebration of the the **John C. Fremont Days** will occur July 11,12, and 13. The celebration honors the famous adventurer and explorer.

The FEVR will participate again by offering special round trips to Nickerson on all three days.

Friday, July 11- 4:00 PM

Saturday, July 12- 9:00 AM, 11:30 AM, 1:30 PM, 3:30 PM

Sunday, July 13- 10:30 AM, 1:30 PM

NOTE: Reliable sources indicate that a band of Civil War troops will stage a train hold up on the Friday run! They may well be searching for a deserter and there will be no harm to train passengers and crew.

For more information on the many additional events during this celebration contact the Chamber of Commerce at 402-721-2641.

EXCURSION UPDATE:

Both **Saturday** and **Sunday** trips are scheduled for boarding at **1:00 PM** at the Depot with departure on the mainline at 1:30 PM. Both trips temporarily go to and return from Nickerson until right--of-way damage beyond Nickerson is remedied. The 15 mile round-trip returns about 3:30 PM. Shopping time at the antique store in Nickerson is an option.

Contact the FEVR office for excursion brochures.

Additional travel and charter reservations for Summer and Fall are available. To secure information for schools or other charter travel, contact **Mr. Gene Zimmerman, Office Manager,** at the FEVR office.

TOUR THE RAILROADS:

Poor economic times and costly fuel prices limiting your travel plans?

Here is an idea of weekend trips that can each be completed easily from the local area.. Do the "Grand Tour" of area tourist railroads, each having different equipment and facilities. At each location, other local attractions can be visited. Information phone numbers are listed. Their Internet Web pages can be accessed by search using their names.

The **Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad**- Abilene, KS- 785-263-1077- excursion and dinner train; right next to the Eisenhower Museum.

The **Midland Railway**- Baldwin, KS- 800-652-0388- excursions; close to Kansas City area entertainment and shopping.

The **Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad**, Boone, IA - 800-626-0219- excursions, desert train, dinner train, steam weekends- Boone is birth place of Mamie Eisenhower.

The **Iowa Northwestern Railroad**, Spirit Lake, IA area- 866-621-9600- excursions, dinner train - Iowa's lake region vacation area

BONUS OFFER: A person presenting a ticket he/she used on any of the listed railroads will have a free excursion ride on the FEVR.

RAIL SCHOOL:

In each issue, some facet of information about railroad operations is featured. Again, **railroad signaling** at grade crossings continues as the topic this time.

In previous editions, the simple dc circuit with a **fixed length** approach was discussed. When the train enters the approach rails, a short circuit is produced, activating the crossing signal. This system does not allow for consistent warning times for trains at various speeds and has a battery at the beginning of the approach track that requires service.

Early attempts to accommodate the varying train speeds divided the approach into sections and relied upon electro-mechanical timers to adjust the warning times. However, the **best solutions** had to await the deployment of modern solid state electronics.

Solid-state electronics did lead to the replacement of the battery fairly early. In this system, an alternating current **(ac)** is supplied from the crossing control to one of the approach rails and a **diode** (one-way electric valve that can change ac to direct current **(dc)**) is placed at the end of the approach- where the battery was. The diode changes the ac to dc which returns via the other approach rail to the crossing control. The crossing control, when supplied by the dc, keeps the signal **inactive.**

When a train enters the approach and passes over the diode area, the diode **no longer** is effective since the train wheels produce a short between the rails and the current return is then ac- not dc. The lack of the dc at the crossing control causes the signal to **operate.**

While this system eliminated the maintenance intensive battery, it did not solve the fixed length/ varying speed problem. **More electronics** was the answer - described in the next issue.

FEVR has **both** the simple dc and the ac type crossing signal controls.

RAILSCENE: Helping hands! Member Lee Wilmart helping a young railroader get his train back on track at one of the many educational and entertaining activities at the Day Out With Thomas™ event.