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# FEVR FLASH

## NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025      OCT/NOV, 2003

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### SPECIAL NOTE!

This issue is a combination of the October and November issues. The editor became ill just before the October issue publication time. Although the illness was not serious, it delayed work on the publication for several weeks. This issue will get the "derailed" publication "back on track!"

### NEW NAME:

The former **Eastern Nebraska Chapter**, National Railway Historical Society, is now doing business as the **Nebraska Railroad Museum**. The association with the national organization continues. The new name, under consideration for some time, more closely matches the public term associated with an organization which engages in the preservation of, and education about, historical artifacts. The new name also has greater recognition in the process of seeking grants and donations.

### POINTS OF CONTACT:

**Nebraska Railroad Museum and Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR)** 1835 N. Somers, Fremont, NE 68025 ([www.fremontrailroad.com](http://www.fremontrailroad.com))

**Fremont Dinner Train** - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025

**For excursion only-** 402-727-0615

**For Dinner Train only-** 402-727-8321

(The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business for which the FEVR provides motive power and trackage).

### SANTA CLAUS RUNS:

The Fremont Dinner Train and the FEVR will combine their facilities on **November 30** and **December 7** for the traditional Christmas holiday travel with **Santa**. That jolly fellow will be on board to entertain children of all ages! Contact the **Fremont Dinner Train** office at 402-727-8321 for information.

### EXCURSION UPDATE:

Regular excursion travel ended October 26. However, charter travel via

heated caboose or coach is available depending upon operating and weather conditions. Contact the FEVR office at 402-727-0615 for more information.

### RESERVATIONS:

Reservations are now being taken for excursion charters for business, school, and social groups for Spring, Summer, and Fall, 2004. Contact the FEVR office at 402-727-0615.

### VOLUNTEERS:

**Volunteers** are needed in all areas of the FEVR operations. These areas include office work, gift shop sales, car maintenance, grounds and track maintenance, and mechanical repair in addition to the classic brakeman, conductor, and engineer tasks.

### TRACK WORKSHOP:

The field day on October 23 for the **Basic Track Inspection Workshop** conducted by the Railway Educational Bureau in Omaha was favored by good weather. Over a dozen participants from as far away as **Texas** and as close as Council Bluffs attended. The workshop instructor, **Randolph L. Reichard**, Chief Inspector Analyst, **Appalachian Railway Services**, Mountain Lake Park, MD, used the FEVR trackage to illustrate the various measurements and observations needed to inspect track. Members Darrel Miller and Charles L. Sedlacek crewed the engine and caboose used to transport the class to various points along the track.

### RAIL READING:

A wide variety of **literature** is available to those with an interest in railroads. This literature ranges from the very technical for those in the industry to that for those who just like to watch trains go by.

#### Recommended:

**Railroad Operation and Signalling**, Edmund J. Phillips Jr., Summons-Boardman Books, Inc. 1809 Capitol Avenue, Omaha, NE, 68102. (402-346-4300. The second printing in 1953 of

this soft cover book covers railroad signalling in the classic pre-computer time frame in a "question and answer" format. It is a valuable reference for those interested in signalling history.

### RAIL SCHOOL:

In each issue, some facet of information about railroad operations is featured. **Railroad track signaling** continues in this issue.

Both **opposing** train movements and **following** train movements are involved in traffic. Early railroads dealt with the first issue by using "tokens" which were exchanged at a meet point between trains. The train which had the token had **authority** to use the track.

An attempt to control trains following each other was to provide a "**headway**" of so many minutes between trains. But neither track nor trains were very reliable and often the leading train stopped due to some malfunction. A crew member from the stopped train was sent back on the track to warn the following unit. Sometimes, the warning was recognized **too late** to avoid a disaster.

When a many ton locomotive with a head of steam and a red-hot firebox plowed into **flimsy wooden coaches** heated by coal stoves and lighted by oil lamps, the results were disastrous. The cars, reduced to little more than piles of **kindling**, burst into flame and the trapped passengers were either **scalded** or **burned** alive.

The newspaper accounts of these wrecks, **embellished** in the most lurid ways, did little to inspire confidence in rail travel. The effect on survivors and spectators was **traumatic** and, according to an article in a recent issue of the magazine *American Heritage*, attempts to help them were the basis for modern procedures in dealing with the effects of occurrences such as 9/11..

The railroads inadvertently provided another contribution to society, however **dubious**!



**RAILSCENE:** FEVR hosting the field trip for the Basic Track Maintenance Workshop presented by the Railway Education Bureau. Don Holfeld of Zeta-Tech instructing track measurement techniques at the FEVR/BNSF diamond.

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