

THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025, JULY, 2010

POINTS OF CONTACT:

Nebraska Railroad Museum (NRM) and Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR) 1835 N. Somers, Fremont, Nebraska 68025, (www.FremontRailroad.com), voice and fax - 402-727-0615 (office)

For excursion only: 402-727-0615.

Fremont Dinner Train (FDT) - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025

For Dinner Train only: 402-727-8321.

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

BACK ISSUES:

Back issues of the FLASH and links to numerous railroad related sites may be viewed at www.FremontRailroad.com.

MAILING LIST:

If anyone wishes to be added to or removed from the FLASH email list send a request to NPTCHM@Hotmail.Com.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS:

The NRM Board of Directors met on July 18 in the conference/training room at the Fremont Depot.

Jeff Blackmore, a former BOD member, was approved to take the position of **Erik Mutthersbaugh** who resigned. Blackmore will also serve as Vice-President until the next elections in December.

The costs and details of the recent yard **derailment** where one of the excursion cars was pushed through an improperly set switch into contact with a dinner train car were discussed. Minimal actual damage was done, but crane service was needed along with commercial track repair. There were no injuries. The probable cause was the initiation of the **reverse** movement by the engineer before the brakeman was able to be in a place to observe the switch position and protect the move. That engineer has gone through a period of re-training before regaining his operating license.

This is another instance of several where a failure to observe proper operating procedures and the exercise of caution has resulted in the cost of repairs and/or the loss of revenue.

The progress of the **sale** of a small unused piece of right-of-way to Hooper to enable the improvement of mandated flood protection was noted. The flooding situations of the season have called increased attention to this need.

The availability of **NEMA** funding for flood damage repair for the region is still being determined, but it appears that the FEVR would not likely be a recipient of any help. Apparently the State will use all available

stimulus funds on highway transportation.

There was discussion concerning possible **sale** opportunities. Parties with interest presenting the greatest potential of allowing the NRM to maintain its goals of preservation and education generally were not in a financial status enabling a purchase.

An **alternative** of selling some of the right of way assets of NRM and retaining present management and property rights of the rest was also discussed with more investigation due on the topic.

HOOPER CROSSING REPAIR:

(Photo by Dennis Wallen)



CONCRETE EVIDENCE: THE REPAIRED CROSSINGS

NRM appreciates the City of Hooper's **repair** of the crossings on Main Street between former HY 275 and downtown. With the current financial demands facing NRM, Hooper's repair of the crossings was most welcome. President **Wallen** has sent a letter thanking Mayor **Klahn** and the City Council.

A NRM/FEVR representative was on hand to insure that the flangeways were preserved.

PUSH-PULL CONTINUES:

Because of the continuing **unstable** condition of the passing siding in Nickerson resulting from the recent rains, all traffic to that town remains a push-pull operation. This undesirable, but necessary, situation requires extra caution and vigilance on the part of operating crews.

INDUSTRY NOTES:

The railroad **industry** has continued to show activity growth in spite of the recession, with increased freight traffic, favorable operating ratios, and return of equipment to operating status. There are many instances of planning for improvements in **passenger** travel, including that for high-speed intercity rail (the USA is behind the developed countries in the world, with China showing the most recent progress).

The acquisition of **BNSF Railway** by financial wizard **Warren Buffet** is a definite

indicator of confidence in the future.

A very interesting recent development in the railroad equipment area is the **acquisition** of **EMD** – a legendary builder of locomotives originally as the ElectroMotive Division of General Motors and more recently as an independent ElectroMotive Diesel – by **Caterpillar**, originally known as the source of tractors and now a world-wide supplier of heavy equipment.

EMD pioneered the diesel **two-stroke** railroad prime mover in the 1930's (based on the Winton) and continues that production today. Caterpillar and **General Electric**, other major US diesel builders, both rely on the four-stroke design. The **Cummins** company supplies four stroke diesel modular power units for the new "**genset**" locomotives using multiple smaller (about 700 hp each) units which are computer controlled to run only as needed to meet power demands. These locomotives are particularly adapted to switching where they deliver substantial fuel economies and produce dramatic pollution reductions.

Interesting also is the sometimes **replacement** of EMD diesels with Caterpillar units. Although EMD has been able to continue success in meeting increasingly stringent pollution **standards** with the more difficult two-stroke design, the future will tell if that can continue.

CHARTER:

October 9: Harvey House Reenactment

The story: Travel by rail in the latter 1800's was much improved as far as speed and connections nationwide. However, traveler accommodations for **food** were poor, with the typical eating place along the railroad routes in the "greasy spoon" category.

The **Harvey Houses**, first established along the Santa Fe about 1875, presented to the traveler eating establishments of quality and eventually spread nationwide and also were involved in dining car services. There was an emphasis on appearance of the establishments and the staffs and there was a movie made called "**Harvey House Girls**".

EXCURSION SEASON:

The 2010 season continues with trips on **Saturday** and **Sunday** to Nickerson, NE. The boarding for these trips is at 1:00 PM at the Depot at 1835 N. Somers, Ave. This location is on the west side of Fremont, just south of 23rd Street. A copy of the 2010 brochure may be downloaded from the website at www.FremontRailroad.com or can be obtained by calling the office at 402-727-0615.