

# THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM  
1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025, AUGUST, 2011

## POINTS OF CONTACT:

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For Dinner Train only- 402-727-8321.

(The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business)

## BACK ISSUES:

Back issues of the FLASH and links to numerous railroad related sites may be viewed at [www.FremontRailroad.com](http://www.FremontRailroad.com).

## MAILING LIST:

Questions about the list may be sent to the FLASH editor at [nptchm@hotmail.com](mailto:nptchm@hotmail.com).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The NRM Board of Directors met at the Clarion Inn in Fremont on August 3, 2011. Present were Treasurer/General Manager **Angermund**, BOD members **Daniels** (BOD president), **Swetnam**, **Blessing** (BOD secretary), **Powers**, **Eveland**, **Porter**, and **Peterson**.

Not attending: **D. Mutthersbough**, and **Blackmore**

Guests - **Sedlacek**, *FLASH* editor, **Hunter Lafferty**, and **Mel Cunningham**.

(Note: The name of **Paul Eveland** was inadvertently omitted from the attendance roster of the previous meeting in July.)

President **Daniels** reported on the communication from **Mike Williams**, the current track owner, about improvements planned (see President's Corner, July 2011 FLASH for details).

**Daniels** reported on a report from the company doing the engineering work on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street **overpass**. (See archived January 2008 Flash for details). This project will result in the **closing** of grade street crossings on 23<sup>rd</sup>, Somers, and Linden Streets. The **BNSF** tracks will be moved closer to the Fremont Northern (formerly FEVR) tracks in the vicinity of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, but should leave the latter right-of-way in the present location. This project, previously approved by a city vote, is again on a schedule.

The train **crew** situation which occurred for the FDT special trip on July 18 was discussed. Some timeliness and potential rules and safety issues need to be addressed to avoid a similar problem in the future.

The needed repairs for the excursion cars were reviewed.

President **Daniels** has made contact with *Operation Life Saver* to promote possible future certification for NRM members.

**Porter** will be making contact with the *Day Out With Thomas* © organization to secure possible dates for 2012.

A committee will be formed to begin an update process for the NRM By-Laws.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

Returns in the next issue.

## RADIO CHANGE:

NRM/FEVR will need to re-equip the train radio communications system prior to **January 1, 2013**. All such equipment will need to become "**narrow band**" capable vs. the "broad band" capability of the current units. All of the 97 railroad channels in the 161-162 mhz spectrum will need adhere to the new **12.5** mhz channel width instead of the present 25 mhz width.

The change was mandated by the **FCC** about a decade ago and has been in progress since, with no new broad band licenses being granted for some time. The change was done to provide a greater **number** of available channels in the frequency bands, much the same as occurred in the commercial television industry in 2009. However. The current change will **not** be a change to **digital** format, as occurred in the case of television, and operations will continue as **analog** FM. There will be no change in existing channel **frequency** assignments.

The change was **originally** proposed to result in digital operation, but the logistics and expenses of the massive equipment replacements necessary would have been too great. The need for **interoperability** among all North American railroads is unlike that of any other industry and the existence of different protocols would have made such interoperability impossible.

Much of the type of needed **equipment** manufactured in the late 1990's and on already is narrow band capable, or can be re-programmed, including hobby scanners, although coverage may be affected.

However, all major pieces of radio communications equipment currently installed at NRM/FEVR will **not** be useable after the 2013 deadline and must be replaced. Member **George Blessing** has lead the effort to identify the replacements needed. Although not required in the current change, all equipment will be digital capable in the expectation that this may be a **future** requirement. The cost is estimated to be in the **\$12,000** range and an attempt is underway to identify supplemental

funding sources.

More changeover information may be found on the Internet at such sites as <http://rayfield.net/narrowband>.

## THE INDUSTRY:

Passengers on a recent **Amtrak** train may have well wondered about "**what's next?**" on their trip from San Francisco to Chicago on the California Zephyr. On **Friday**, August 26, the two locomotives and several cars were derailed when the train struck a crane boom that had fouled the right-of-way near the town of **Benkelman** in southwest Nebraska. The crane was being used in demolishing an unused grain elevator. The owners of the machinery claimed '**they did not expect a train**' (the train was reported about eight hours late) – apparently not believing the railroad safety slogan that "**train time is anytime**!" Photographs showed the locomotives on their left sides with little evidence of motion after tipping, so the train must have been nearly stopped at impact time. None of the derailed cars upset and there were only a few minor injuries. Local emergency responders and area residents **assisted** until busses arrived for passengers to continue their journey, apparently without further incident.

The "**what's next?**" question could have arisen since this was the **second** collision of the trip, which began Wednesday morning in San Francisco – the **first** being an impact with an abandoned car early Thursday morning in Wendover, Nev, which delayed the train but where there were no injuries.

(Information from omaha.com 08/27/2011)

## RARE OPPORTUNITY:

The National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) has announced that the location of the 2012 convention will be **Cedar Falls, Iowa**, June 18-24. Cooperating railroads will be the Iowa Interstate, Iowa Northern, and former the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City (CRANDIC).

The Iowa Interstate **Chinese QJ** steam locomotive will be present. Excursions will be rare mileage ones over usual freight-only routes. There will be a day at Mount Pleasant, Iowa, at the site of the annual **Old Threshers Reunion** with narrow gauge, electric interurban, and trolley operations.

This event will be a **rare** opportunity to attend a convention nearby in an already historic area. Good reason to join NRHS!

## EXCURSIONS:

The NRM regularly scheduled trains run on **Saturdays** and **Sundays**, boarding at the Depot at 1835 N. Somers Ave. at 1:00 PM.