

C-Lines Railroad and Productions

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*Photo: Feb. Photo Contest Winner
Jason Fields @themogarrailfan*

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Building Your First Model Railroad

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This magazine series, *Building Your First Model Railroad*, is a 4 issue, step-by-step guide to building your first model railroad. This specific article will cover choosing a railroad to model, a time era, and how to do basic bench work.

Choosing a model railroad is the first step in planning your first model railroad. The railroad you choose will determine the track layout of your layout, the engines you buy the most, the cars you buy the most, the types of structures and buildings you have, and much more. As many of you know, I chose the Nickel Plate Road as the railroad I am modeling because NKP #765 was the first operating steam locomotive I ever saw. I was amazed by it and ever since then have been fascinated by the NKP's operations, engines, rolling stock, and trackwork. My layout also includes my dad's interest of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and my sister's interest in the ATSF. This allows my layout to look prototypical as the trackwork and buildings are a combination of all the railroads combined. For example: the engine terminal and upper level is based on the NKP track plans and operating methods, while the passenger terminal, and classification yard are based off of the ATSF. So if you want to model two to three different railroads, this is something that you could do to keep it semi-prototypical. Don't just jump into a railroad, as it may be hard to find engines and cars, as well as finding track plans and books about the railroad. Do some research and see what you can find first. After you choose your railroad(s), you can move onto the next step.

The second step in creating your model railroad world is to choose a time era of when your railroad is operating. My railroad operates in the steam and diesel era so I can operate diesel locomotives and steam locomotives while still being prototypical. An example of something you don't want to do is choosing the 1950s-1960s and laying track and getting buildings for this era and go model the Norfolk Southern. Let me tell you right now: the track plan and buildings you build/get will not operate well with this era, as it is un-prototypical. If you choose the 1940s and get a Berkshire, you're more golden than the golden spike. After you have researched a time era the railroad of your choice was operating, you can move onto the next step.

The third step in creating a model railroad is to start planning how your railroad will look. Just a little tip: DO NOT make the railroad larger than your budget can handle, your room can handle, or the time you have to do it can handle. If your budget is tight, you may want to consider making a smaller layout and choose a smaller gauge, such as N scale. This is perfect for beginners as the track and engines are cheaper than HO and O, and you can put the layout in a small area. I would recommend O scale for anyone who has the time and space for it as it is the easiest to wire, get cars for, and do detail work on. When planning, you need to take measurements of the room you plan to put the model railroad in. This will let you get a sense of how large the layout will be, as well as what you can fit into the area you have. If you choose O scale, and start building without planning first, you will most likely find out after you start buying things that you don't have enough room for what you want, so plan before you build. You can ALWAYS add on later. After you have a reasonable and flexible track plan and layout, you can move onto building the bench work for your railroad.

To build the bench work for your first railroad, you will need to have the following tools: a drill or nail gun, miter saw or radial saw, jig saw, planer, putty knife, tape measure, level, and square. You may have to get additional tools as you are building to complete the tasks you would like, but these are the basics and necessities for building the bench work. The first thing you want to do to start the benchwork is deciding on a height. If you want the layout at eye level, choose eye level 2x4 measurements, if you want it as a look down layout, choose look down 2x4 measurements. Make sure that all of your 2x4s are the same height, and that they are square. Bad 2x4s will result in an unstable layout. Another important thing is to make sure you have supports for the plywood top. Make sure you don't just have 2x4s supporting the outside framing, but that you have crossbeams going across where the plywood goes. If you do this properly, you will be able to walk across your layout. When you have all of your framing done with the 2x4s, you can move onto applying plywood to the top of your frame.

For plywood tops I recommend 1/4" birch 3-ply plywood. This ensures you have a smooth surface, and stable table top. It will also allow you to nail your track in place without it going through the bottom of the board. This is very important as having nails and screws sticking out the bottom of your layout can result in serious injury. For cutting the plywood, you lay the board on top of the frame, weigh it down with a weight or something similar (if needed) and trace your pencil against the frame and mark the plywood from there. It is important that you cut on the inside of the line, as the traced lines will not be exact to the frame. If you do not do so, you will have the plywood hanging over the frame and you will have to sand or plane it down. After you

cut the board with the jigsaw, you can screw it down or nail it down to the frame. If you use screws, it is imperative that you drill pilot holes and counter-bore the screw heads or else your screw might (as of 90% of the time) crack the wood. If you use a nail gun, you do not need to worry about these issues.

After you have attached your plywood top, you are ready for the next magazine's release, on July 24th, 2017. This article will include track laying and wiring. Please make sure to leave this magazine a rate in the "Rate a Magazine" page at clinesrrandproductions.weebly.com/rate-magazine.html

Being Engineer on the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad

Author: Carlos Llamas
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I will start with the statement that I have heard literally a few hundred times, “do you realize how lucky you are?” Well, to be honest, I do realize how lucky I am, and how lucky I was to be born and raised in a small community with such a great attachment to history. I think as a child I believed every small town had a railroad like the Cumbres & Toltec and didn’t realize the gift I had been given. It was not till later in my life that I came to understand how special and unique



the Cumbres & Toltec was and how it would affect my life in the future.

My career with the Cumbres and Toltec (C&T) began in 1989 as a summer job on the railroad. I quickly began to understand how special this amazing place of railroad history is. It simply never occurred to me how many perfect things had to happen to keep this place alive and secure its survival through all of the rough times the railroad industry have had, and will continue to have. What this all resulted in was a unique machine that never stops adjusting, teaching, and attracting new visitors, railroad enthusiasts, and employees to this magical place.

Today my life is tied to this railroad and it seems that I can’t go anywhere without being recognized or asked if I still work with the Cumbres & Toltec. It truly is a great feeling to be a part of this company and be responsible for maybe just a bit of the amazing stuff the railroad has accomplished. As an Engineer on the C&T, I am expected to be a bit more friendly, to be a bit more knowledgeable, to be a bit more valuable; and I push myself daily to meet those expectations. Although most of my summer is spent running trains, as a full time employee I

am expected to do anything required to keep the rails plated with silver. I was once amused by a loyal fan who found me painting a passenger car's platform, a bit below my standard job on



the railroad, and he was in fact very upset. It took a few minutes to explain to this fan and his wife that I wasn't being punished but was in fact enjoying myself. I am actually thrilled to say I am part of the crew that maintains the passenger car fleet and *maybe*, just *maybe*, spend more time on the cars than I do running the

locomotives.

Although maintaining the passenger car fleet is one of the thrills of working on the C&T, one of the greatest thrills for anyone, including myself is being able to run one of the most sought after, cherished, and desired collections of locomotives on the planet. That experience has given me the ability to run visiting locomotives such as *Rio Grande # 315* and the amazing, and of course classic *Galloping Geese*. From having daily access to a very historical and beautiful railroad to an unlimited collection of beautiful locomotives I can easily see how people think I have the best job on the planet.

Is that it though, is that all I have gained by becoming an Engineer for the Cumbres & Toltec? The answer is a very huge no! Some of my most amazing and life long friends were met on the site of this amazing and beautiful train attraction. It is my theory that after meeting so many passengers, railfan or not, I was more likely to bump into people perfectly suited for me and I have developed friendships with them that I cherish immensely.

Modeling the Railroads of Yesterday and Today in HO Volume One: *Motive Power in the Steam Era*

Author: Ian Hilloda

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Often times I will see people on the internet or at train shows who say there are trains are from a specific era, but the train ends up being an intermodal train hauled by a Union Pacific Big Boy, which we all know is not too prototypical. So in this article i'm going to talk about how to model trains from eras that you commonly see, and what companies make the best of the best.

The Early Steam Era (Late 1800s-Early 1910s)

This time period was full of aging civil war equipment at first but then became the start of an era for larger and more efficient locomotives. Most railroads were using engines like

2-6-0 Moguls, 2-6-2 Prairies, 4-4-0

Americans, and 2-8-0 Consolidations.

Bachmann Trains has made models of the 2-6-0s in various road names that are easy to modify. These models come as DCC Sound or DCC ready. The sound versions are equipped with a soundtraxx decoder that suits these engines very well.

Bachmann not only has made

Moguls, but also has made *2-6-2 Prairie* type locomotives. The models of these *Prairie* type locomotives are DC only and are not DCC ready or DCC sound equipped. The engines have a medium level of detail and are good for modelers with tight budgets, for beginners, or for those who want an engine to modify and make their own. Bachmann also makes a few models of



Civil War era 4-4-0s. Although the engine you purchase from Bachmann may not be your era, you can modify them to satisfy your needs. Bachmann has made the modernized Richmond 4-4-0s in a few road names with variations such as multiple plows and headlight positions. The Spectrum models come equipped with DCC and sound or DCC sound ready so you can install the decoders of your choice. 2-8-0 consolidations have been made in recent years by mainly Bachmann. These locomotives were produced in their *Spectrum* and *Ready-to-Run* lines. The 2-8-0s are also being made in Athearn's *Roundhouse* line. Unlike the Bachmann versions which represent a modern 2-8-0, the Athearn version represents an older version which is best suited for early trains while the Bachmanns can be used for trains that last most likely until the end of steam.

Super Powered Steam and the Introduction of Diesels (1920s-1940s)

This era was full of huge advancements in the steam age; from super powered and articulated steam, to new and improved diesel locomotives. In this era, locomotives had grown from small prairies and moguls, to the vastly larger Pacific, Mikado, Northern, and Mallet type locomotives. The Pacifics and Mikados respectively have been made by numerous companies in plastic, die cast, and brass materials. These locomotives have been made in undecorated



variants for your fictional road or pre-lettered for some of your favorite railroads. They come in DCC sound or DCC ready variants. 4-8-4s are a slightly different story, these locomotives were not ordered widespread by many railroads but with extreme variants so they have mainly been made based on certain

prototypes. For kitbashing 4-8-4s, your best bet is to get a generic 4-8-4 like the ATSF 3751 class from Broadway Limited Imports or Bachmann. The Broadway Limited is good for making minor changes while the Bachmann version is much better for doing major changes since it

comes DCC Ready and requires much less wiring to make major changes. Mallets have been made for various road names by a few makers. Bachmann has made two variants of the Mallets. The Chesapeake and Ohio 2-6-6-2s were made by Bachmann as DCC Ready or DCC with Soundtraxx sound.

Projects 101: Building a Passenger Terminal Platform

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If you have a passenger terminal on your layout, I know what you're thinking when it comes time to putting a platform down. "Do I use a kit that costs \$90 that doesn't even cover the whole area?" "Do I try using plastic or wood and building one that doesn't look too realistic?"



If this sounds familiar, this is the article for you.

Laying the track for a Passenger Terminal is only the first step in completing one. You still have to add lights, people, steps, details, walls, etc. So what's the first step after completing trackwork? Let me tell you: it's a

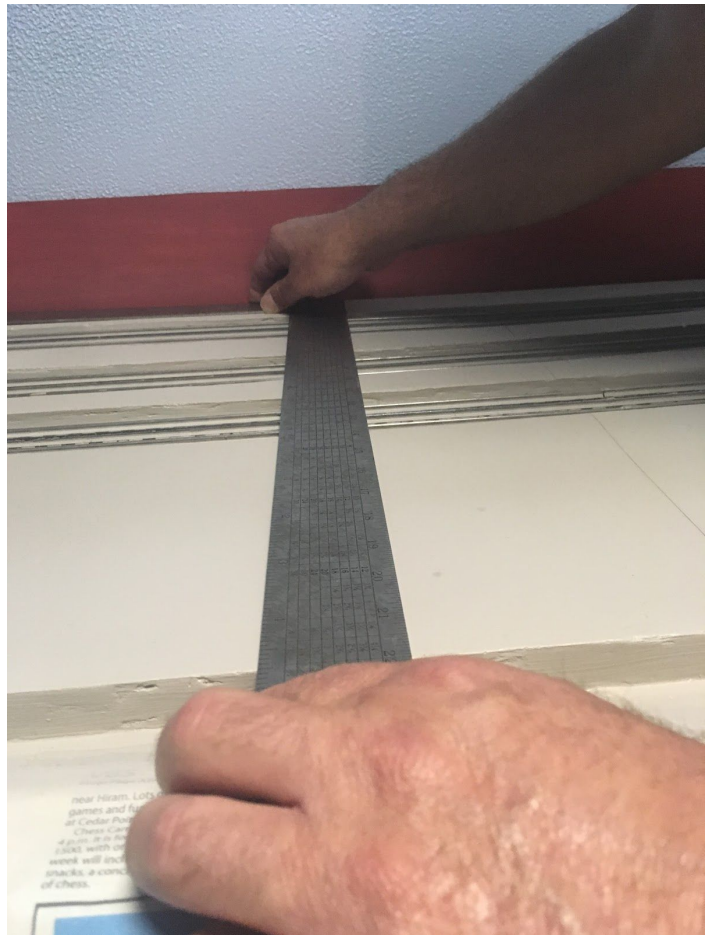
platform. How can you do it when the kits for this are over \$90? Well, here is a simple solution for you.

The solution to all of your trouble is spackling/wall plaster. It's cheap, easy to use, and looks just as realistic, if not better than kits turn out, and the best part is that it's fast too!

You can go to your local hardware store and pick up a 5 gallon bucket of plaster for around \$10 usually. I used 1.5 buckets, and it covered 4 feet of track length, by 6" wide, and 1" tall. That's great, right!! But how can I form it and make it look like it's actual concrete? Its pretty simple actually.

If you have ever seen construction workers laying concrete they use wood boards and spikes to make what's called a form. This form gives the concrete its smooth edges and rounded corners. Well, I took this idea and did the same thing on a smaller scale using strips of wood trim for houses I found at Lowe's for less than \$20 total. Budget check: \$30 so far. I then took the pieces of trim, cut them, bent them while nailing them with a brad nailer and a pin nailer to hold them in place and helping them take form. Making the form for our "concrete" to take is the most difficult part of this project.

Now we get to the fun stuff: laying the plaster. We all know it's a lot of fun building things, which is part of the reason we got into the hobby, right? And most people who are really into trains don't mind getting a little bit dirty... at least most of us. I wouldn't recommend going crazy with the plaster, but you may get some on yourself, so wear some old clothes that you won't mind getting dirty. One thing that you need to be aware of is that if you put too much plaster on at one time, it may crack while drying, and will also take a very long time to dry. Lay the plaster down first in a very small amount, just covering the surface of the table. Then move up to about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch, and so on until you get to the top of your form. Once you have about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch left to cover, start laying the plaster on without any creases or dips, and lay it on in a medium thickness layer. This will allow the platform to get a nice, smooth, look to it. Remember that some very small dips in the platform will be to scale as these platforms would have a lot of wear and tear; as well as getting chips from bags dropping, tools falling from servicing cars, etc.



When the plaster has dried and you have waited two days after you think it dry, it is time to take out the form. You need to *very* take an hobby knife and cut ¼ inch depths at a time around the sides of the form where the plaster meets the wood. Make sure that you cut smoothly and slowly, as well as deep enough or when you take off the wood form the plaster doesn't come with it. This is an imperative step to having success at this project, but don't worry if some of it chips off, you can always put more plaster on it to smooth it off.

After you have removed the frame, you can start to patch any chips, dips, or sidewall deformations you may have encountered when taking off the form. Just take a small putty knife and some plaster and go over it. Make sure you shape it as you are going though, as it will make the next step easier.



After you are certain that all of the plaster has dried completely, including the middle of it, you can sand the plaster down. DO NOT use an electric or power sander of any kind (this includes pneumatic) as it will rip the plaster off too quickly, and will result in the platform looking uneven. Use a sanding block (if you don't have one take a 2x2 or 2x4 and cut it into a 5" piece and wrap sandpaper around it) with 20 grit sandpaper. While sanding, make sure that you take long, full-length, same speed, same pressure strokes so that the platform is evenly sanded. This will allow for a concrete look when finished.

After the sanding is complete and you have wiped any dust from the surface, you are ready for painting. Please note that investing in a cheap airbrush if you don't have one (I recommend Master) will make this project look 100 times better, as well as future buildings and projects. Take your airbrush and mix together a concrete paint. Go to www.clinesrrandproductions.weebly.com/paintcombos to find the colors of paint you need to do this, as well as the ratio of latex paint to water. Spray light, even coats of paint across the



platform. This may take up to 10 coats to make it look nice. When you are done with the first part of painting, take some black paint and spray it in places that would have suit or a lot of dirt. For example, where steps would be, where passengers would walk, etc. Also spray a very light coat

of *sandstone* colored paint to simulate dirt on the platform. To get the right coverage, I recommend giving the airbrush and platform a distance of about 6-8". This will allow you to get a even coat, as well as a good weathering look without "streaks" of heavy paint coats.

When you are done with painting the platform, get some people on there. You can use hot glue (not recommended as it leaves strings), super glue (recommended), or Elmers Glue (highly not recommended). After your people are put in place and securely glued down, you can start putting up lights, signs, and other details. This includes benches, ticket booths, overhead lights, arrival/departure board(s), and basically anything else you would see in a passenger terminal for the era you are modeling. Look up some pictures of the terminal you were modeling or just a regular passenger terminal to get some ideas. Lots of the things will need to be custom made, especially the lights.

Making the lights is not a simple process, so to make it easy on people who have a tight budget, don't have the skills, or don't have the times to make a lighting system, we offer kits for you to purchase at clinesrrandproductions.weebly.com/projects10lights. Kits start at \$10 and max out at \$70 for very large terminals.

When your project is complete, be sure to share a photo on Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag #clrxprojects101. Who knows? If yours looks amazing (like it will) you may get a shoutout in the next article! Be sure to share your progress along the way with #projects101terminal or #clrxmagazines. Also tag us in the photos if they are on Instagram and yours may be posted to @clrxmagazines!

I hope that this article has helped you find a easy and cheap solution to building your passenger terminal platform. I know that it seems like a lot of work, but trust me... when it's done, it looks nothing short of amazing. Please be sure to tell us what you think about this article series, Projects 101, by tagging us on twitter or DMing us on Instagram! I would love to hear your ideas and comments!

Chessie Rides the Rails One More Time

Author: Walker W.

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During the month of May, a very rare and historic move was made on CSX. Former CSX B30-7 5554, originally Chessie (C&O) 8272, rode the rails one last time wearing Chessie paint as it ran from Huntington, West Virginia to its new home at the Lake Shore Railway Museum in North East, Pennsylvania. It traveled first to Russell, Kentucky where it would later travel west towards Cincinnati, Ohio and eventually go north to Willard Yard and onto the engine's new home. The route the engine took caught everyone by surprise, including myself. I was fortunate enough to catch it in Maysville, Kentucky on train Q329 as it headed toward Cincinnati. It was such a beautiful engine, and it was the first time I had ever seen a Chessie unit on the mainline.



Even more special, the unit was on home rails, as Maysville is part of the old C&O.

Once it arrived in Cincinnati, the 8272 was placed on train Q342 the next night, where it would run to Willard, Ohio, the terminus of the train. It would be put on Q382 there and head

east towards Cleveland, Ohio and Erie, Pennsylvania. From Erie, a local would take it to its final home.

Railfanning on Location:

Glendale, Ohio

Author: Walker W.

INSTAGRAM: @masonrails

This is a new series I am starting that analyzes different places to watch trains (also called railfanning) across the United States. The first place we will take a look at is Glendale, Ohio, a small community located about 15 miles north of Cincinnati just off Interstate 75. It is where the CSX Cincinnati Terminal Subdivision (Milepost BE 15.0 on the Cincinnati Terminal Sub) that runs between Cincinnati and Hamilton, Ohio. At Hamilton, trains either turn northwest towards Indianapolis or continue heading north towards Toledo. Norfolk Southern has trackage rights for their northbound over this line to Hamilton where they switch to NS New Castle District and head towards Muncie, Indiana.

With all that aside, Glendale sees a good amount of traffic every day, with most of the trains being northbounds. However, there are some CSX southbounds that run on occasion, most commonly two locals, one that works the Tropicana facility north of Glendale and the other local is the Tri-County local that works near Tri-County mall. Most other traffic consists of mixed freight trains, intermodal trains that carry both double stack containers and trailers. There are unit trains on occasion, those being unit ethanol, coal, and grain normally.

Amtrak's *Cardinal* runs at night, but makes daylight appearances when it is very late.

There are signals just north of the grade crossing in Glendale. They are home signals, meaning they are always red unless a train is coming, in which the signals change colors as the train



approaches. For those who have scanners, there is a defect detector 1.5 miles south that can be picked up.

There are several restaurants located within walking distance of the parking lot, where most people railfan. The Cock & Bull Public House is a good restaurant that has a fantastic view of the double track mainline. Other restaurants include The Meritage and Bluebird Bakery. There are several restaurants located in nearby Sharonville as well.

The downside to all of this traffic in Glendale is that trains can be fletted, meaning that the dispatcher can run many trains at one time and then not run any for several hours. Lately, that seems to have been happening more and more. Even with this downfall, Glendale is still a great place to watch some trains.

Directions: Take Interstate 75 until you reach Exit 15. Take that exit and turn left at the stoplight onto Sharon Road. Follow Sharon Road until you reach the grade crossing in Glendale. Then, turn left into the parking lot just before the crossing. Directions are the same for southbound I-75 but you will turn right at Sharon Road rather than left.

The EMD SD60MAC “The AC Traction Testbed”

Author: Walker Wood
Instagram: @masonrails

In the 1990s, General Electric and General Motor’s Electro Motive Division were experimenting with AC Traction and more power output in the prime mover. An example of the latter would be the EMD SD90MAC, which had a 6,000 horsepower “H” series powerplant. This locomotive was plagued with mechanical problems however, leading to most of the fleet being sidelined from service or being completely rebuilt. For instance, the General Electric’s AC4400CW, a very successful AC traction locomotive that uses a 16 cylinder version of the 7FDL prime mover.



Despite many trials and errors, and many different tests, the SD60MAC didn't make it past the testing phase with demonstrator units. These units were basically early SD60M models (these units were affectionately known as “Triclops” locomotives, due to their three piece windshield) equipped with a pair of EMD trucks

with AC traction motors. However, only 4 demonstrators were built for the Burlington Northern to test with. These units wore a unique version of the BN green and white livery.

After testing concluded, BN placed a good-sized order for this new locomotive model, the 4,000 horsepower SD70MAC. By 1996, the BN owned 317 SD70MACs by the time that they merged with the famous Santa Fe railroad in that same year. These locomotives wore a new livery that earned the nickname “executive” or “green stein.” All engines delivered after that for the BN wore the same colors as the engines previously delivered, but had the number located

under the cab, rather than on the long hood, where a BNSF patch was put on the side of the long hood.

To summarize, the SD60MAC was the pioneer for AC traction. The concept of AC traction also led to the development of newer and more powerful prime movers. Some models were huge successes, while others only had a few buyers.

The Hat that “Lived”

Author: Adam Matthews

Instagram: @train_wizard_productions

I rode the Joliet Rocket with Nickel Plate Road 765 on June 17, 2017. We left a little behind schedule but once the train started moving I went to the open vestibule in our car to experience the sound of a 1944 built locomotive travel 70 MPH. The Windy City had other ideas and promptly took off my hat which was rather sad as this was the hat I always wear on excursions.



The cancellation of the photo run by did not help to lift my spirits but I settled into riding in the vestibule for the rest of the trip. After the layover at La Salle Street Station, the impromptu photo run by did make for it with a surprise wheelslip. On the return trip, I set myself in the vestibule and lo and behold I saw my hat near the crossing in the town of Mokena! I marked the

location as best I could with my iPhone. After getting off the train we drove out to Mokena and walked along the tracks and there it was. The pins must have weighed it down for 3 hours but unfortunately the The Nickel Plate Road Historical & Technical Society, Inc. pin had vanished. Thankfully I can simply order a new one. We then went over to the Mokena Metra station and waited for 765 to blast through with the afternoon Joliet Rocket.

765 in the Windy City

Author: Rich Melvin

Instagram: None

It was a busy morning in the early March 2017 at my O Gauge Railroading magazine office. I was just about finished with my morning email when my cell phone rang. I answered the phone, and the voice on the other end asked if I had time to talk a little steam locomotive business. I told him, "Certainly, I always have time for that!"

The gentleman on the other end of the line introduced himself as Rob Conway, Senior Trainmaster with Metra, the Chicago area rail commuter organization. Rob wanted to know if we could bring the 765 to Chicago to help Franklin Park with their Railroad Day event and to maybe run a trip or two on their lines. He went on to tell me how he had become aware of our organization via the work we have been doing with Norfolk Southern. Rob also told me that there was a lot of enthusiasm at Metra to make this happen.

On Monday, April 4, I attended a meeting in Chicago along with two other members of our Operating Department, Zach Hall and Chuck Young. We met Rob along with a few other members of the Metra staff at their Western Avenue Yard, just a few miles out of downtown Chicago. The meeting was to be at their downtown office, which is just across the street from Chicago Union Station. Parking was much easier at Western Avenue, so we met there and planned to ride one of their commuter trains into town. After confirming that the track where Metra planned to spot the 765 for water and coal would work OK, we moved to the Western Avenue Station to board our train to downtown. We were on the "wrong" side of the tracks to reach the platform, so we had to walk cross the tracks to get there. However, this railroad is so busy that we had to wait for three trains before we could just walk across the tracks! When I commented to Rob about how close together the trains were, he told me they run *704 trains per* and carry *301,000 passengers every week!* I can't get my head around numbers like that!

The meeting convened in the Metra conference room with about a dozen staff from Metra, along with reps from Iowa Pacific and the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad. Presiding over the meeting was Pete Zwolfer, Deputy Executive Director of Operations for Metra. We were only a couple of minutes into the meeting when Pete turned to me and asked, "Can you guys run 79 MPH?" I replied that we can run 79 if we had to, but we'd be more comfortable at 65 to 70 MPH. He thought for a moment and then said that would be OK because we would not be

making any stops. After about 90 minutes, we had worked out a preliminary operating plan that worked on paper. Now we had to make it work for real.

Taking the 765 to Chicago presented some of the toughest operational issues we have ever had to solve. It took over 6 weeks to work out the route the 765 could take to get to Metrak at Western Avenue.

The first part of the move was easy. Fort Wayne to Calumet on the former NKP main got us to the outskirts of town. The shortest route from Calumet to Metra was to go west out of Calumet, into downtown Chicago, through Union Station, and out the north side of the station to the Metra Western Avenue yard. On the map, this was an easy, 18 mile move. However, Chicago is loaded with small, deck girder bridges which go over the surface streets. And the 765 would not clear most of those bridges. The width across the cylinders was the problem. We had to find another way.

I talked with the Belt Railway of Chicago, hoping they could help with an "inside" route to Western Avenue. While they wanted to help, their routes were also too constricted and the 765 would not clear any route on their railroad. Senior General Foreman Bob Saxtan at Norfolk Southern suggested I call the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) and talk with them. He told me that NS ran all of their high and wide loads around Chicago via the IHB. He also gave me a contact there... Carl Barneyback. I decided to give Carl a call.

Working with Carl and the IHB proved to be a very pleasant experience. Carl had heard we were coming and had already figured out a route that would get us to Metra. However, instead of any easy 18 miles, this was a 46 mile route around the south side of Chicago! It sounds crazy, but this was the only route that the 765 would clear. So we made the appropriate arrangement with Carl and the IHB to make this move.

In the meantime, lots of planning was going on at Metra. There were turning moves to consider to get everything pointed the right way. The 765 had to be facing east for Franklin Park's event, but she had to face west for our excursion. There was a coal to spot for loading, fire hydrants to check out and one more wrinkle that was a first for us. Once we got the train to the yard, Metra randed the whole thing through their wash rack! The train had just come from several weekends behind the 611 and was dirty from those runs. But there was not time for VMT or NS to clean the train in Virginia before it had to move to Chicago. This was just one more little detail that comes up in planning an excursion like this.

The big weekend rolled around and on Saturday we moved to Franklin Park, Illinois for a day on static display there. Franklin Park holds a Railroad Day celebration every year, and the

765 was a huge draw. The crowds were large as hundreds of folks used the steps placed by the cab so they could get a look inside of the 765's cab. Barrett F Pederson, Mayor of Franklin Park, was very helpful on this project. He arranged for a sizable donation to the Society from the various corporate sponsors of the event to cover our costs for this static display day.

On Sunday we ran an excursion on Metra to Janesville, Wisconsin. However, the railroad in Janesville is not Metra, it is the Wisconsin and Southern, a Watco property. Zach, Chuck, Wayne York, and I traveled up there on our trip to Chicago to scope out that area and confirm we could get around the wye there. We also determined that the railroad layout was suitable for getting lunches on board for everyone while there. Iowa Pacific has an ongoing business relationship with the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad which permitted us to use the line.

Metra runs commuter trains on the weekends, but on very precise schedules. If one of their trains is late by even a minute or two, problems are created. Our excursion schedule was planned out to the minute. I'm proud to say that the entire 765 crew worked together to keep us on schedule, all day. In order to stay on schedule, the 765 had to stretch her legs just a bit, running at 70-72 MPH for several stretches on this Metra main. Our Magnificent Machine lived up to her reputation, handling that 19-car train at 70+ MPH with ease.

Running these trips on Metra was a very unique experience. Everyone we worked with at Metra was 100% focused on making these trips a success. It was an opportunity for us to make some new friends in the industry and sewed some seeds for the future. In his report to Metra corporate management, Rob Conway said, "The 765 performed flawlessly and handled the 19 car train with ease. The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society maintained their reputation for their commitment and professionalism and safety."

This was a tough, demanding weekend, yet our crew came through as real pros... as they always do. Here's a tip off my hat to all of my 765 crew mates, our excursion staff and the souvenir sales staff for a job well done.

L.A. Metro OKs \$1.4 billion budget for Gold Line extension

Author: Evan Cihlar

Instagram: @nkp765enginecrew

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (Metro) board on the 22nd of June approved a \$1.4 billion budget to extend the Foothill Gold Line 11.5 miles east to Claremont, California. The board also approved partnership agreements that establish a funding plan and shared roles and responsibilities between Metro and the Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority, the agency tasked with building the extension. Metro will fund the extension from Glendora to Claremont, while the construction authority will use other funding to build the line's final stretch to Montclair, California. The extension will be the first rail line to begin construction as part of the Measure M ballot initiative that Los Angeles County voters approved in November 2016. The measure calls for a half-cent sales tax to fund transportation projects in the region. The Gold Line project will "establish the early momentum we need to launch our ambitious new traffic improvement plan that will yield tremendous transportation benefits for the entire Los Angeles County area," said Metro Chair John Fasana in a press release. To date, the construction authority has cleared the project environmentally and completed advanced engineering for the entire alignment. The authority expects to award its first contract for advanced utility relocation later this year, with the project's official groundbreaking expected to take place in October. Metro plans to open the extension by 2027.

Operation Lifesaver, FRA Awards \$217,000 for Rail Safety Education

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Operation Lifesaver Inc. (OLI) announced the award of \$217,000 in grants for rail safety education projects in 15 states. The grants, funded by the Federal Railroad Association (FRA), will be distributed to Operation Lifesaver chapters in the states to pay for public education and awareness programs that promote rail-crossing safety and trespass prevention, OLI officials said in a press release. The education projects will be promoted as part of OLI's Rail Safety Week, which will be held Sept. 24-30. Grants will go to Operation Lifesaver programs in Arkansas, California, Idaho, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin. Individual grant awards range from \$4,700 to \$20,000. "These grants will support strategic rail safety efforts in 15 of Operation Lifesaver's state programs, as part of our nationwide mission to eliminate collisions, injuries and deaths at crossings at rail property," said OLI President and Chief Executive Officer Bonnie Murphy. A list of state-by-state projects can be viewed on the OLI website.

Great Lakes Basin Clarifies Location of Proposed Freight-Rail Line

Author: Evan Cihlar

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Great Lakes Basin Transportation Inc. (GLBT) yesterday filed a response to the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) request for additional information on the company's proposed new freight railroad that would operate through Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. On June 2, the STB told GLBT that it needed to provide more details in its application for regulatory approval to build the new rail line. Among the board's demands was a list specifying the cities and counties through which the railroad would operate. In its response, GLBT officials said the line would not be built through populated areas of any incorporated cities. The counties through which it will serve are Winnebago, Ogle, Lee, LaSalle, Grundy and Kankakee in Illinois; Lake, Porter and LaPorte in Indiana; and Rock in Wisconsin. The line would cross the incorporated municipalities of Kingsbury and Lowell, Ind.; and Rochelle and Rockford, Ill. "It should be kept in mind that the purpose of the line is to expedite freight shipments originating and terminating on other carriers around the congested Chicago area," GLBT officials said in the filing. "To minimize environmental impacts, GLBT located its proposed line to avoid cities and existing homes outside city limits to the maximum extent possible." Subject to interchange agreements, GLBT proposes its line would connect with several freight railroads at various points.

Rails Of Springfield, IL

Author: Ayden Danner

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From the north end to the south, there are more rails in Springfield, IL than you would think. These lines include the Union Pacific Springfield Subdivision, Norfolk Southern Springfield-Hannibal District, Illinois and Midland to Peoria, Canadian National from St. Louis to Chicago, and Kansas City Southern to Kansas City. I am going to mainly be focusing on the UP Springfield Subdivision between Sherman, IL and Southern View, IL.

The Springfield Subdivision gets daily Amtrak and freight service, which includes both the Amtrak Texas Eagle and the Lincoln Service, intermodal trains, grain trains, and mixed manifests. Starting in our first location along the line, these trains can put on a show going track speed, through Sherman, IL. Sherman, IL (X178) is one of my favorite places to watch trains go zooming past me. Most of the time Amtrak will hit 80 MPH and freight trains 60 MPH, but if you are a southbound train and you pass Sherman, you need to start slowing down.

A few miles south down the line is Ridgely siding. Ridgely Siding (X181-X183) is the smallest siding on the Springfield Subdivision at only 8470 ft, but it is big enough for Amtrak. When on an on time schedule, Amtrak trains 22 and 301 will meet in the siding, same with their counter trains 21 and 304. Right next to the siding is a little yard, were a few freight cars are



parked and some work train equipment. When on a changed schedule where Lincoln Service trains run only between Springfield and Chicago, the Amtrak consist will actually park in the yard. Cool fact, am I right?

Just south of Ridgely siding is where the Illinois and Midland Railroad crosses over the UP. This will lead to the old CI&M

(Chicago Illinois and Midland) yard and eventually to the Norfolk Southern

Springfield-Hannibal District. Now a days it is rare to see a train go over the diamond on the Illinois and Midland line.

A few miles south of Ridgely siding is the "historical" Amtrak Springfield train station. This station serves 10 Amtrak trains daily including 1 long distance trains, the Texas Eagle. The Texas Eagle (San Antonio-Chicago) has to take a double stop in Springfield, due to the shortness of the platform. The Texas Eagle can have different consist each day to what I have seen, such as a 10 car consist, 7 car consist, 2 engine consist ext. Though the Texas Eagle is a cool train to see. On the 2.5 mile Springfield stretch, there are over 10 crossings, where trains need to blow at all of them. There are already plans arranged to close a few of the crossings due to the track speed through downtown increasing to 40 MPH.

Keep going south of the Springfield station and you will find where the NS and UP come together for 1.5 miles and split off at Iles in Southern View, IL. At Iles (X187) the NS Springfield-Hannibal District merges into the Springfield Subdivision for about 1.5 miles, and then splits off continuing west/east. NS trains MUST crossover at Iles to continue on the Springfield-Hannibal District. Some traffic on the Springfield-Hannibal District includes the Triple Crown train, Auto Parts cars, and Auto trains. Continuing west after Iles on the NS will get you to the start/end of the Kansas City Southern line to Kansas City. The Canadian National line is east of the Springfield Subdivision, and crosses the NS somewhere north of Springfield.

Now you know a bit more about the rails of Springfield, IL, whether it's the train traffic or the trackage within Springfield.

E. Hunter Harrison - CEO of CSX

Author: Chris

Instagram: @cincyrails

2017 has been a turbulent year in railroading. PTC (Positive Train Control) confusion, wrecks as well as EMD biting the dust after many long years. But one thing of controversy is what is happening at CSX transportation. Long time ceo Mike Ward stepped down in early 2017. As a result, CSX was in need of a strong leader. They named E. Hunter Harrison CEO almost two weeks after, and with that, a possible rebirth or even worse, becoming another bankrupt railroad as we've seen happen many of times in the mid-20th century.

Harrison's hump hatred.

It's no secret that Harrison loves flat switching. As seen by what he did at his days at his previous employer, Canadian Pacific. During his few years, as Canadian Pacific's ceo, he closed 4 of their 5 hump yards, leaving only Minneapolis, Minnesota as the last remaining hump yard on the CP system. CSX has more than just 5, they've based most of their system and how they build their trains by this mechanic. One of CSX's hump yards, Willard, Ohio is a double hump at that! Harrison's golden idea is to have around 2 to 3 humps left. He's already closed humps at Selkirk, New York, Louisville, Kentucky, Cumberland, Maryland and more to come as well as been done. He's doing this to "cut operating costs". A concern that I have is that look at the yards that aren't being closed. They have to pick up the slack. More cars mean there is more risk for error and injury. As well as some of these hump yards are vacant. CSX has closed humps in the past as seen with Frontier yard in Buffalo or Walbridge in Toledo. But they had another yard to pick up the slack. Frontier had Selkirk and Walbridge had next door neighbor Stanley that CSX got from the Conrail split.

Harrison cuts positions.

Harrison wants to save money as I already established. He's gonna do it in anyway possible. Day 1 CSX announced they where cutting anywhere from 1,000 to 4,500 management positions. From yard masters to dispatchers. Some CSX yards have had there whole staff cut. As seen by the CSX yard in Lima, Ohio. It's controlled by the North Excello Yard master over 130 miles away in Middletown, Ohio. They also, to cut down the cost got rid of crew cabs. Where I live on the CSX system, I have a story. CSX train J792 which runs from New Miami to Cincinnati, Ohio and back had just finished his day of work and his crew time had expired. Well he had to sit for 3 hours 3 tracks deep in a SD40-3. This was cause Harrison's bright idea was to use the utility guy as a crew driver between New Miami and Middletown, Ohio.

What will Harrison do with the “coal boom”?

Recently there was a “coal boom” of late 2016 and early 2017. Obama’s plan to bankrupt the coal industry (and the railroads that served them) had failed. CSX’s most valuable thing was coal. The old B&O and C&O mainlines went right thru the heart of Appalachia. Not to mention the long lost Clinchfield that is not having a good run at life at the moment. Harrison is coming into power at this moment. What should be done is take this boom as no joke. There is speculation that the yard at Corbin, Kentucky may be reopened due to this boom. With this rebirth, it means a possible second chance at life for lines like the Big Sandy Sub or the old Clinch.

What does the future look like?

Well it’s still early on. Hunter doesn’t have full power as of now and he won’t if the shareholders don’t agree on something. Even if Harrison is 71 years old. So, who knows how long he will have power. Not to mention Norfolk Southern is already starting to despise him. In jointly owned areas, Hunter is disrupting NS flow causing crews to run short on time and even dog out in certain places. Harrison may turn into CSX’s savior, or the cause of its demise. Only time will tell that, and that’s what we need to give him, time.