



BLUE RIDGE DISPATCHER

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C&OHS founder and BRC member, Tom Dixon, will be our special guest and program presenter for our January 10th meeting! Tom's talk and presentation "My Best Railfan Weekend Ever" will feature slides taken between August 14th and 18th, 1970, during a trip from Thurmond, WV, to Russell, KY, and will include Ashland, Huntington Shops and Big Sandy Branch! What a way to start the year! This is a program you do not want to miss! Bring a guest!

Wednesday, January 10, 2018.

Charley's Restaurant. 707 Graves Mill Rd. Lynchburg, VA.

Dinner: 6p -7p. Business: 7p - 7:30p. Program: 7:30p.

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PLEASE NOTE! MEETING DATE CHANGE!!!

The February 2018 meeting of the Blue Ridge Chapter will take place on

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

Our usual second-Wednesday-of-the-month meeting date in February is Valentine's Day, and our restaurant host, anticipating larger-than-normal crowds on the 14th, asked for this change.



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NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Lynchburg, Virginia



Blue Ridge Chapter, NRHS
Minutes of Meeting – December 13, 2017

President Rick Johnson called the meeting to order at Charley's Restaurant at 7:05 p.m. He welcomed 21 members and 6 guests. The minutes of the November meeting were approved as distributed in the newsletter with the following revision. Norris Deyerle requested that his November Rail Heritage Region Report reflect that one donation had been made to "Friends Of High Bridge Trail" toward their preservation efforts of two N&W whistle posts.

Treasurer John Tanner gave the treasurer's report.

The chief order of business for this meeting was the election of officers for 2018. Fred Mayer reported for the nominating committee, which included Skip Hansberry and himself. He said that the slate of officers to be nominated was composed of experienced candidates. The slate is as follows: President – Rick Johnson, Vice President – Gale McKinley, Secretary – Lloyd Lipscomb, Treasurer – John Tanner, National Representative - Bob Leslie. There being no further nominations, Rick brought the slate to a vote. It was approved by a show of hands.

Norris Deyerle announced that members Dale Diacont and Chuck Hladik had not been well and were unable to attend meetings. Dale is at his home in Waynesboro, and Chuck is at the Avante Nursing Home on Langhorne Road. Norris passed out cards for Dale and Chuck for those present to sign.

Rick thanked everyone for making this year's Christmas Banquet in Altavista a success, especially, Norris Deyerle, John Tanner and Derek Wimberly who provided their time handling logistics, providing social hour food and drinks, seasonal music and program. Rick then reminded everyone of the upcoming Amtrak Kemper Street Station Christmas Party on Saturday night, December 23rd at 8:45 pm. Rick asked that those attending the party, bring food or drink (no alcohol please) to share.

John Siegle passed out information detailing his "Shenandoah Southern Model Railroad" Christmas Open House on Saturday, December 16th from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

Rick announced that meeting dates in February and April needed to be changed to the third Wednesday of the month because of conflicts with the needs of the restaurant. The different meeting dates will be February 21 and April 18, 2018.

Rick stated that C&OHS founder, Tom Dixon, would be presenting our January 10, 2018 program.

The meeting concluded at 7:23 pm.

The 50/50 winner was a restaurant patron.

Our program for the evening featured historic photos of the depots of Amherst County. It was presented by special guests Octavia Starbuck and Russell North, both with the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society. Depots shown included Monroe, Amherst, and Sweet Briar—to name a few.

- Lloyd Lipscomb, Acting Secretary

SIGHTINGS

Dec 13, 2017 - UP's Rio Grande heritage unit 1989 spotted leading on NS 214 by Kemper St Station (Skip Hansberry, G. Harper)



Dec. 22 - NS ethanol train 64A as viewed from Fifth St. CP 3120, BNSF 8470, CP 9730. (G. Harper)

Jan. 7 - Narrow gauge export locomotives for the Government of Cameroon spotted passing through town. Top photo by Roy Evans og NS 055 on Eastbrook Rd. Bottom photo: NS 055 by Rick Johnson at Appomattox.

The Cameroon Tribune
By Amindeh Blaise Atabong

The President of General Electric Africa, Jay Ireland, disclosed last Friday that negotiations are far advanced with the Government of Cameroon.

Cameroon will soon get nine new locomotive engines to boost its rail transport system, the President and Chief Executive Officer of General Electric (GE) Africa, Jay Ireland has announced. The GE Africa President made the disclosure in Yaounde, Friday June 30, 2017, after an audience with the Minister of Transport, Edgar Alain Mebe Ngo'o. "We discussed with the Minister about what projects we can do in Cameroon around transport.





A passenger off Amtrak 147 enjoys the goodies supplied at the annual Blue Ridge Chapter Christmas get-together at Kemper St. held this year on December 23.

AAR: Railroads post traffic gains in 2017; intermodal sets record

U.S. rail traffic for all of 2017 rose 3.4 percent to 27,489,960 carloads and intermodal units compared with traffic in 2016, according to the [Association of American Railroads \(AAR\)](#).

Carload traffic for the year climbed 2.9 percent to 13,478,126 units in 2017, while intermodal traffic increased 3.9 percent to 14,011,834 units for the year compared with 2016, according to an AAR press release.

Last month, U.S. railroads originated 2,064,133 carload and intermodal units, a 4 percent increase over the same month in 2016. Carload traffic last month grew 2.5 percent to 998,168 units, while intermodal volume grew 5.3 percent to 1,065,965 containers and trailers compared with the same period in 2016.

"Rail traffic finished 2017 on a positive note," said AAR Senior Vice President John Gray. "In December, total carloads were up for the first time in six months, and 14 of the 20 carload categories we track saw year-over-year gains — the most for any month in almost three years. Meanwhile, intermodal volume was up for the 11th straight month and set a new annual record, breaking the previous mark set in 2015."

Categories that posted year-over-year increases in December 2017 included crushed stone, sand and gravel, up 15,632 carloads or 23.1 percent; metallic ores, up 6,875 carloads or 35.2 percent; and chemicals, up 4,277 carloads or 3.5 percent.

Commodities that logged year-over-year decreases last month included grain, down 5,542 carloads or 6.1 percent; motor vehicles and parts, down 2,625 carloads or 4.1 percent; and nonmetallic minerals, down 1,424 carloads or 8.9 percent.

Excluding coal, carloads grew 3.6 percent last month from December 2016. Excluding coal and grain, carloads rose 5.2 percent.

"Rail traffic is a useful gauge of the state of the economy, and it shows that the economy's momentum strengthened in the fourth quarter of 2017," Gray added. "Coal, grain, and petroleum products are not nearly as GDP-dependent as most other categories of rail traffic. If you exclude them, U.S. rail carloads were up 5.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017, their biggest quarterly percentage gain in more than three years."

Meanwhile, Canadian railroads reported cumulative traffic of 7,570,747 carloads, containers and trailers in 2017, a 10.6 percent gain over traffic in 2016.

Mexican railroads logged 1,427,306 carloads and intermodal containers and trailers in 2017, up 2 percent over traffic reported in 2016.

Norfolk Southern begins running trains over new Portageville Bridge in NY state. NS Corp. press release



Dec. 11, 2017. Castile, NY - At 2:20 p.m. Monday, Norfolk Southern general merchandise train 36T became the first to cross the new Portageville Bridge.

After two years of construction across a 235-foot-deep river gorge in Letchworth State Park, Norfolk Southern has begun operating trains across the new Portageville Bridge on its Southern Tier Line.

Known regionally as the Portage Bridge, the 963-foot-long steel arch railroad span will support economic growth and jobs across New York's Southern Tier region, connecting businesses from Buffalo to Albany with markets east and west. The new bridge will speed up train traffic and enable Norfolk Southern to run heavier rail car loads over the line, eliminating a major rail bottleneck for freight shippers.

The \$75-million single-track bridge, which spans the Genesee River Gorge, was funded through a public-private partnership among Norfolk Southern, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration.

At 2:20 p.m. Monday, Norfolk Southern's 36T, an eastbound general merchandise train running from Buffalo to Allentown, Pa., with stops in Corning and Binghamton, N.Y., became the first to run across the new bridge.

"This is a very exciting day for Norfolk Southern and for the future of freight rail service in New York's Southern Tier region," said James A. Squires, chairman, president and CEO. "The successful completion of this bridge is an excellent demonstration of how the public and private sectors can work together on freight transportation projects that generate significant public benefits and are vital to U.S. commerce. It's also a testament to Norfolk Southern's robust bridge program and the ingenuity of engineers and railroaders."

"The new Portageville Bridge complements the beauty of Letchworth State Park while providing safer, more efficient freight rail service," said New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo. "Through a combined effort with Norfolk Southern, government leaders and the public, we have built a modern arch bridge which will support economic growth in the region and continue our drive to strengthen and modernize transportation infrastructure across the state for generations to come."



In addition to enhancing rail safety and operating efficiencies, the new bridge expands freight capacity and business opportunities for shippers from the Midwest to New England. With the new bridge, Norfolk Southern can now transport rail cars over the Southern Tier Line loaded to the industry standard 286,000 pounds, a key benefit for customers. The old iron truss bridge it replaces, built in 1875 by the Erie Railroad, was unable to support modern freight rail needs – car weights had to be reduced 13,000 pounds below the standard, while train speed was restricted to 10 mph. Trains crossing the new bridge will operate at up to 30 mph.

Among New York-based businesses benefitting from the new bridge are 10 short line railroads that service and connect local industries to Norfolk Southern's network. Norfolk Southern transports freight over the Southern Tier Line for about 1,100 customers in more than 20 states. The line serves as a gateway for trade with Canada and provides a connection to New York City and New England markets.

"This new, state-of-the art bridge over the Genesee River Gorge is an engineering marvel and will enhance train traffic across the region," said New York State Sen. Patrick M. Gallivan. "It also complements the beauty of Letchworth State Park and helps to restore the river to its natural state for the first time in nearly 150 years. This public-private sector project, funded by New York State, the Federal Highway Administration, and Norfolk Southern, will serve our community for decades."

The design and construction budget for the bridge project included \$15.5 million provided through New York State, including a \$2 million grant from the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council and \$13.5 million in state and federal funds through the New York State Department of Transportation; and \$59.5 million from Norfolk Southern.

CSX Announces Death of CEO E. Hunter Harrison

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – December 16, 2017 – CSX Corporation (NASDAQ: CSX), today issued the following statement: "It is with great sadness that we announce that E. Hunter Harrison, President and Chief Executive Officer of CSX, died today in Wellington, Fla., due to unexpectedly severe complications from a recent illness. The entire CSX family mourns this loss. On behalf of our Board of Directors, management team and employees, we extend our deepest sympathies to Hunter's family. Hunter was a larger-than-life figure who brought his remarkable passion, experience and energy in railroading to CSX." Edward J. Kelly III, Chairman of the CSX Board of Directors, issued the following statement on behalf of the Board of Directors: "With the passing of Hunter Harrison, CSX has suffered a major loss. Notwithstanding that loss, the Board is confident that Jim Foote, as acting Chief Executive Officer, and the rest of the CSX team will capitalize on the changes that Hunter has made. The Board will continue to consider in a deliberative way how best to maximize CSX's performance over the long term."

CSX Board of Directors Names Industry Veteran James M. Foote President and CEO

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – December 22, 2017 -- The Board of Directors of CSX Corporation (NASDAQ: CSX) announced today that it has unanimously named James (Jim) M. Foote as the company's president and chief executive officer, effective immediately. Mr. Foote was named acting CEO on December 14, 2017 after E. Hunter Harrison was placed on medical leave. Mr. Foote will also join the Company's Board of Directors. CSX Chairman Edward J. Kelly III said, "While we continue to mourn the loss of Hunter Harrison, the Board of Directors is pleased to announce Jim Foote as his successor. Jim has decades of railroading experience and the Board is confident of his ability to lead the company. He has already had a markedly positive impact. The Board looks forward to working with him."

Jim Foote, president and chief executive officer of CSX said, "I worked alongside Hunter for over a decade and his pioneering approach to railroading unlocked significant efficiencies and value, and we remain focused on delivering on this vision for CSX, our customers and our shareholders. The execution of Precision Scheduled Railroading is well underway, with the most critical components of the implementation completed and beginning to generate measurable operating improvement." Foote continued: "We look forward to providing an update on our strategic progress and to showcase our deeply talented management team at our upcoming investor day in March."

About Jim Foote

Mr. Foote, a senior executive with over 40 years of railroad industry experience in finance, operations and sales and marketing, was named executive vice president and chief operating officer of CSX in October 2017. Prior to joining CSX, Mr. Foote was president and chief executive officer of Bright Rail Energy, a technology company formed in 2012 to design, develop and sell products that allow railroads to switch locomotives to natural gas power. Before heading Bright Rail, Mr. Foote was executive vice president of sales and marketing with Canadian National Railway Company. Mr. Foote joined Canadian National in 1995 as vice president of investor relations to assist the company's privatization. He also served as vice president of sales and marketing merchandise. Jim began his career in the railroad industry in 1972 as a laborer in the mechanical department with the Soo Line Railroad in Superior, Wisconsin. For nine years, he worked union operating positions with the Soo Line and Chicago North Western full time while earning his undergraduate and law degrees.

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Lynchburg Rail Day 2018. 40th year! Saturday, August 11, 2018.