

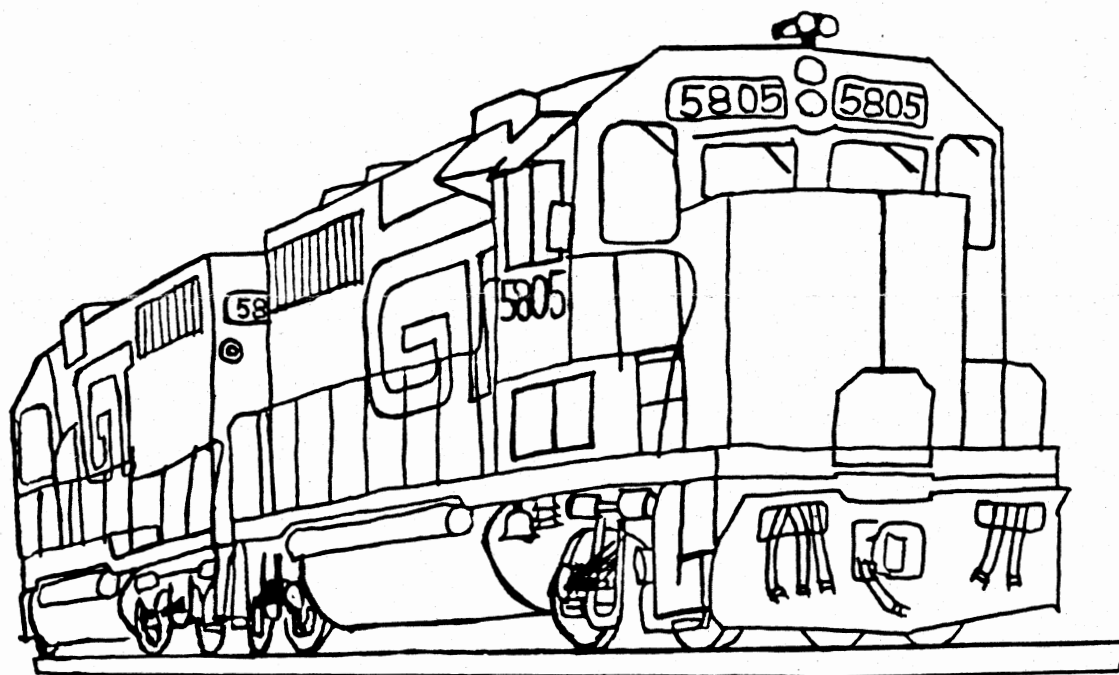
the

Official publication of the Central Region-TAMR

# WAYFREIGHT

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**: A Railfan Vacation**

**: Colorado Connection**

Here it is!! The long awaited issue of the WAYFREIGHT. I had a whole introductory speech planned, in which I was going to state that my goal was to get the WAYFREIGHT back onto some sort of a production schedule. Well, here is my first issue and I'm already a few months behind! My second comment was going to be about how I planned to continue Gerry Dobey's tradition of great journalism in the pages of the WF. I think that its safe to say that I'm at least close to that, since I'm continuing his own production schedule!

I'm going to have to ask for some patience from all of you, since I haven't attempted to write anything of substance for about two years, and my typing still needs some some work. What I really need is information to print. Write an article about your favorite railfan location or a short note about a recent train watching trip. Articles about modeling are even accepted! Even if its just a line or two about a rare locomotive you've

seen, send it in! I also need comments from you about what you think about the WAYFREIGHT. What did you like or dislike about this issue? Suggestions are desperately wanted. All complaints should be addressed to Gerry Dobey.

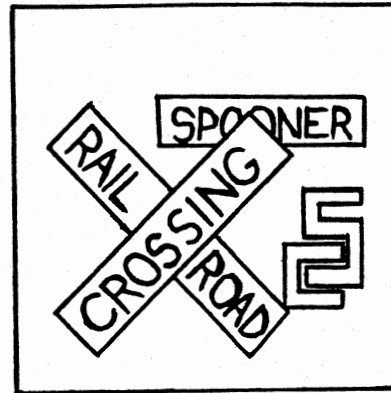
I really don't have any drastic changes in mind for the WF. I want to experiment with the style of the magazine, but nothing else major. Until I can get the budget(?) under control, photos may not be too common in the WF. Therefore artwork is desperately needed for both the front cover and any extra space inside. You can expect my production schedule to be somewhat inconsistant. I run track & field and cross country, so more issues will probably be sent out in the summer than any other time, since I won't be competing. The issues will probably be pre and post cross country, and pre & post Track, along with a summer issue. Only time will tell, I guess!

I believe that a strong publication is the key to a strong organization. A publication keeps members informed and is a kind of bond which keeps the members involved and interested. I hope to restore the WAYFREIGHT to a publication which members can look forward to, and expect to receive on a somewhat reliable schedule. Please help me do this by sending in your articles and comments. They will be appreciated.

Before I close for this issue, I guess I should introduce myself to those of you who don't already know me. In the fall I will be entering my Junior year in college. My favorite railroad is the Chicago & North Western and the Chicago, Central & Pacific is runner up. I model in N Scale. My other interests besides running and trains include fishing and water skiing.

In appreciation of Gerry Dobey's efforts over the years, I would like to award him a lifetime subscription to the WAYFREIGHT.(whether he likes it or not!) Gerry has played an essential part in the formation and success of both the Region and the WF. Under his editorship, the WF was first published on a monthly basis and color photo covers appeared. Congratulations, Gerry, and Thanks!

On a final note, I would like to send my congratulatory wishes to Mary Corcoran and Gerry Dobey, who will be married on July 11, 1987.



**YOUR  
EDITOR  
SPEAKS**

Enjoy the issue!

*Stan*

# A Railfan Vacation

by Tom Novitske

As cold winter winds begin to change to warmer spring breezes, minds also start to change. Thoughts turn to summer memories, and ideas about what to do in the coming summer months begin to develop. Here is a story about one Central Region member's exciting railfan trip from the summer of 1986.

This year's summer vacation began on July 19 and lasted until July 30th. The route that my Dad, brother and I decided to take closely followed the old GN and NP tracks of the Burlington Northern toward Seattle and Portland.

The first moving train we encountered was at Staples, Mn. Here we saw two coal trains, and observed them change crews. The next stop was Dilworth, Mn. where we spent our first night. Dilworth is one of those spots where the Burlington actually seems proud to be a railroad! The BN yards contain a roundhouse and turntable, an autorack facility, container yard and buildings which appeared to be some sort of shops. All evening, trains were going by. It seemed like there was always a train moving through the yards. The engine facilities were full of first and second generation power. There was even an F-unit with the traction motors removed for use with a rotary snow plow.

After Dilworth came the Fargo-Moorehead area. There wasn't much here except the old ex-NP depot in Fargo, which is restored and owned by the city. We began following the Soo toward Minot after Carrington, ND.. Along the way we caught up to a freight with the 740 and 777 for power. Once we reached Minot, ND. we located the BN's Gavin Yard, which was started in 1955 by the Great Northern. There wasn't a lot of activity here, not even a soul to tell you to get off the property. The GN depot has been replaced by one of Amtrak's "Amshacks", but the Soo's depot is still standing. The Soo's GP-9 2413 was sitting in town. A tower is still standing where the BN and Soo cross. It is well maintained and a operator is stationed there.

Back on the BN, we observed a rolling meet between the Extra 6677 West and an eastbound piggyback train at Stanley, ND.. The 6677 is an ex-SLSF SD-45. We arrived in Williston in time to see Amtrak #8, the "Empire builder".

After spending the night in Williston, we set out for the North Dakota/Montana border. We saw three BN trains along the way. We observed both of Amtrak's "Empire Builders" (east and westbound) make their station stops in Malta, Montana, before continuing westward.

The Burlington maintains a large diesel shop complex, along with a yard and station in Havre, MT.. To me, Havre seemed like a railroad town in the middle of nowhere, but a busy place indeed. The shops and depot, along with a preserved GN 4-8-4 (#2584), were in excellent condition. There were both dead and live lines of engines. The live line consisted mostly of SD 40-2's along with a Southern Pacific engine. The dead line had many SD45's, F 45's, and SD9's. There were also two more of the snow service F's. Before setting up camp for the night, we watched four SD40-2's lead a train past the Chester depot.

The next morning, we headed for Shelby, Montana. Along the way, we saw a freight lead by the 2283 and 2285 pass through the endless farmland and single track. At Shelby, we took a look at the station and yard. Here the line to Great Falls diverges from the main. Power on this line is usually GP30's, and the 2236, 2216, 2205 and 2206 were in the yard.

From Shelby, we headed to Cut Bank, where I talked to the operator and learned about the BN's crew change points. The operator told me about the railroad's plans to cut back on any unnecessary workers or facilities. This included the operators work hours at Cut Bank.

As we entered the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, a BN double-stack train passed with three SD40-2's leading. This was the last train we would see until after passing through Glacier National Park. One point of special interest was driving across the famous Two Medicine bridge.

After going through the park, we ended up at West Glacier. A five car rock train running cabooses forwards was being pushed west by the 2281 and 2286, heading for some work down the line. The tracks again strayed out of sight, until Libby and Troy, Montana. This is where the tracks are sandwiched between the mountains and the Kootenai River. I watched autoracks slip between the trees after I heard the engines pass outside the car window. After leaving the main yet again, we rejoined it about 20 miles north of Sandpoint, Idaho. Here the road crosses both the BN and the Spokane International, which is jointly owned by the Union Pacific and the Canadian Pacific. This is also where I saw another BN intermodal train which had the 3158, 3148 and 3127 for power.

Before we knew it, we arrived in Sandpoint. The mile long span over Lake Pend Oreille is located here, along with a gorgeous ex-NP depot and a Spokane International station. The SI had a UP engine (2021) and cabooses in town. We stayed the night in Sandpoint.

In the morning we left for Spokane and followed the old Great Northern line out of town. This route still has many semaphores standing, although the line is going to be abandoned. We arrived in Spokane and found Sunset Junction, a hobby shop dealing only in trains. Those people who like the Milwaukee and pre-BN roads should visit this store because it is an excellent place to buy models and get information. The Amtrak depot is right next to it and the mainline goes right behind it. The depot appeared to be in good shape, but it was painted an ugly, light green color with a brown roof which made me not want to take a picture of it. (I can get after dinner mints at home.)

Soon we reached Wenatchee where Apple Yard is located. Appleyard was named because of all of the reefers that were once loaded with apples here. At the yard, we saw the 7129 and 8161 which were being used as pushers over Stevens Pass. We also saw another intermodal train here.

The next day we passed over the east portal of Cascade Tunnel, and later saw snowsheds that used to protect tracks from the snow. This line was built before the tunnel was completed, and its only purpose was to act as the mainline until the tunnel was finished. The original line had several switchbacks, which was one reason for drilling the tunnel.

At the west end of the tunnel, we stopped to take pictures. The signal protecting the tunnel turned green, which told us that a train was coming. Four minutes later, three SD 40-2's crawled up grade making a lot of noise trying to get the autoracks and piggyback cars over the summit. This train had neither helpers, nor a caboose.

Our next stop after Cascade Tunnel was Skykomish, Wa., which is the station for helpers on trains heading eastward over the summit. It was here that I was lucky enough to step into a puddle of real BN oil, with both feet. We continued west toward Seattle and Tacoma, although we didn't stop anywhere because of fatigue, time and the worst traffic I've ever seen.

After spending the night in Tacoma, we headed for Vancouver, Wa. which is just across the Columbia River from Portland, Or.. We passed some short-lines along the way that were once owned by the Milwaukee Road. When we got near the Columbia River, another Amtrak train passed us on the road. A UP freight also went by, right around the city of Kalama.

After taking a couple of days off from railfanning, we began to explore the Portland/Vancouver area's rail activity. We started at the BN yards in Vancouver, which had a huge yard containing diesel shops and a depot. There

is a large wye with legs going towards Spokane, Portland and one in the direction of Seattle. There is also a doubletrack bridge over the Columbia River. We saw two moving trains in the area, including another Amtrak.

Next we headed for Portland Union Station and the BN facilities in Portland. The yard and the station are right next to each other. Union Station was in great shape, but the atmosphere left something to be desired. I don't think that the passengers like to arrive with bums lying around. The BN yard looked even worse. Many years ago, the yard was very busy with a turntable, roundhouse and lines of stored engines. Now the roundhouse is gone, the dead lines are gone, and the yard is hardly used. The only train action we saw was when they spot road power here.

The Union Pacific on the other hand looked like a well oiled-machine. They have a huge yard along the Wilamette River under the I-5 bridge. There are diesel shops and caboose facilities located here. We couldn't really get into the yard, but you can see it from the road. The UP also has a car loading facility and a wye on the north end of town.

We left the Portland/Vancouver area after three days, and were sent off next to a UP train powered by two SD 60's, the 6040 and 6050. Five minutes later we saw another UP train headed in the opposite direction, with the 2041, 662 and 2052 for power. As we followed the Columbia eastward, we saw a couple of BN freights pass on the other side of the river.

Once we reached Pasko, we headed north toward Spokane. On our way, we say the old NP line to Spokane. This line still hosts many operating semaphores. In Spokane, we caught a glimpse of Yardly - the old NP yard. Today, it and Parkwater shops are the only busy places on the BN in this area. Hill yard, the ex-GN yard has been torn up, although the shops are still active doing major overhauls.

We spent the night at a campground in Idaho. The next morning started with us following the roadbed of the NP branch to Wallace, Id.. In Wallace, they were fixing up the ex-NP depot. It was good to see something being fixed up, instead of being torn down. Next we headed for Missoula.

In Missoula, the BN had a lot of units idling in the yard. The west bound helper district starts here and a beautiful station is located here. The Milwaukee Road depot in town is now a restaurant. Our next stop was Butte, Montana. Here we saw depots from the Northern Pacific and the Milwaukee, and also an ex- Great Northern roundhouse. The only thing moving in town was a BN freight with the 7107, 7827, and 1747 for power.

As we continued toward Billings, we saw a freight with four SD40-2's pushing into the caboose. Some grade ! After spending the night in Billings, we again headed eastward. We stopped along the way to watch a BN coal train go by, with three SD40-2's. You should have seen the smoke as the train worked its way upgrade. This line is all welded rail and also has many semaphores. As we drove, we saw two more freights. One had two SD40-2's and two SD45's, with four Caboose. The other had an ex-NP caboose, still painted in NP colors. After arriving in Mandan, North Dakota, we watched a GP-9 switch in the yard, and saw a train with BN GE units #5921 and 5314, and Santa Fe # 5104.

From Mandan, we drove to Jamestown. After spending the night, we continued through Dilworth towards the Twin Cities. Along the way, we saw four freights. One was the train that we had seen the previous day, with the Santa fe unit, and another had an F-45 as one of its three engines.

Finally we arrived back in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul, and so ended an interesting and exciting vacation.



# COLORADO CONNECTION

by Alex Nagel

Welcome to another installment of The Colorado Connection. Spring is here so many railfans have hit the "high iron" with a vengeance. In fact, the editor was back in Iowa for a short visit in early March. Along with the wild and crazy Michelson boys, I went railfanning in and around the Dubuque area on March 7th. The weather was gorgeous and despite little Soo Line action we did see a good deal of Chicago Central and Burlington Northern action and got some good shots as well. You can bet I want to come home again - soon.

Now before I get started with all the latest rail news of the Rocky Mountain West, please keep in mind that I'm writing this article from the Jefferson County courthouse in Golden, Colorado, waiting to be called for jury duty. A new experience for me although I'd prefer to be railfanning somewhere on the Soo Line along the Mississippi River or on the Chicago Central. Oh well, we can always dream.

Burlington Northern -- Overall, traffic levels are up from that of 1986 levels. Car demand was strong for the first quarter of 1987. Grain traffic was very good on Denver Region divisions with grain trains heading toward diverse destinations such as Buffalo, N.Y., Memphis, TN., Galveston, TX., and various points into Mexico. Coal traffic was off a bit; however, a new coal contract from the lower Colorado River Authority and the City of Austin will result in the movement of more than four million tons of coal, has been in effect since April 1. B.N.'s new "Expediter" piggyback service will connect Denver with Dallas/Ft. Worth (and eventually Houston) with intermediate service in Amarillo, six days a week beginning May 4th.

Santa Fe -- Santa Fe has initiated a new piggyback service similar to B.N.'s "Expediter" service. Called the "Quality Service Network", this service links major points on the Santa Fe system on a 6-day-per-week basis. Specifically, Denver is linked with Chicago, Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Dallas, Houston, Albuquerque, Phoenix, and Los Angeles.

It seems as though Santa Fe Southern Pacific Corp. keeps running into roadblocks in efforts to merge their rail units. As you already know the I.C.C. in a shocking 4-1 decision turned down the proposed merger back in July of 1986. Since then, agreements have been reached with D.&R.G.W. (more on that later) and the U.P. for trackage rights. Now all of a sudden, Kansas City Southern has decided to get into the act. In perhaps one of the boldest moves by a medium-sized system, K.C.S. has asked the I.C.C. to reject the S.P.-S.F. merger and allow the K.C.S. to acquire the S.P. In addition to that there has also been movement by some Southern Pacific employees in California to establish an employee-owned S.P. Nobody knows how this will all turn out but it will be interesting nonetheless.

Denver & Rio Grande Western -- On February 28, 1987, the D.&R.G.W. reached a trackage rights agreement with SFSP Corp. that would allow Rio Grande access to the west coast over Southern Pacific's "Overland Route" mainline provided, of course, the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific are allowed to merge. In return, D.&R.G.W. will support the merger between S.P. and S.F.

Just recently the Rio Grande has taken another big step to strengthen itself in the wake of mergers. The D.&R.G.W. wants the I.C.C. to mandate its use of nearly 700 miles of Missouri-Kansas-Texas (Katy) tracks from central Kansas to such Texas cities as Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Galveston. This is a result of Union Pacific's intention to acquire the Katy and Rio Grande has lost friendly connections to the Texas/Oklahoma market in the past due to Rock Island's bankruptcy and the U.P.-M.P. merger itself. Should be interesting to see how things turn out on this one, no doubt.

Union Pacific -- Union Pacific crews will replace 34 miles of track north-east of Denver at a cost of \$2.6 million, according to U.P. officials. Specifically, the segments are an 18-mile stretch between Commerce City and Ft. Lupton and a 16-mile portion between La Salle and Ault.

U.P. also plans to build three bridges in Colorado - near Deer Trail, Cedar Point, and Agate - all on the Denver-Kansas City mainline. Decks will be replaced on two bridges near Aroya, also on that line; two bridges on the North Platte-Gering line in western Nebraska; and on a bridge near Potter, Nebraska, on the "Overland Route" mainline. Work on the Colorado projects are expected to commence sometime in mid-July.

#### What Else Is News?

Roaring Fork Railroad Company is well on the way to starting up new ski train service between Stapleton Airport in Denver and Aspen. Voters in Pitkin County (Aspen) approved a referendum that will allow Roaring Fork right of way that formerly belonged to the D.&R.G.W. when they cut their Aspen branch by some seven miles. Roaring Fork hopes to initiate service by November 1, 1987.

B.N. has asked the I.C.C. to reject any bid by SFSP Corp. to reopen the Southern Pacific-Santa Fe merger case. B.N.'s biggest fear is the granting of trackage rights to Union Pacific in the southwest plus U.P.'s bid for the Katy would cause serious competitive imbalances.

Many B.N. trains that operate on the "Joint Line" to and through Denver were temporarily diverted to other routes in early February. The reason? Friction between union crews (particularly former C.&S. crews) and management over B.N.'s plans to operate reduced crew "Expediter" service between Denver and Texas. But when B.N. threatened to lay-off several employees who work the "Joint Line" indefinitely, you'll notice that the Union patched things up with B.N. rather quickly.

The Burlington Northern and Rio Grande are building a new mainline in Denver that will enable B.N. to divert coal trains away from Union Station. Estimated cost of the entire project is expected to be \$6.5 million. Both roads had proposed that the city of Denver pick up the tab; but B.N. wound up paying the relocation costs instead.

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WAYFREIGHT EDITOR: STAN UJKA  
4N 414 Third Ave  
Addison, IL 60101

column editors:  
TRUNK TALK: Ian Smith, 3100 N. Cambridge,  
Lansing, MI 48910

CENTRAL REGION REP.:

SooWaukee System: Ed Moran, 8105 W. Addison,  
Chicago, IL 60634

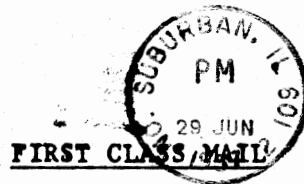
CHRISTIAN JOHANNINGMEIER  
Route 1 Box 572B  
Cedar Hill, MO 63016

NORTH WESTERN NOTES: Gerry Dobey, 145 E.  
Kenilworth, Villa Pk., IL  
60181

COLORADO CONNECTION: Alex Nagel, 1772 S. Beech  
Lakewood, CO 80228

VA  
P3

The Wayfreight  
Central Region/TAMR  
4N414 Third Ave  
Addison, IL 60101



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