

# NORTH TEXAS ZEPHYR

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
JULY 2006 NEWSLETTER

## NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2006

FOUNDER'S BLDG (BY COTTON BELT DEPOT)  
GRAPEVINE, TEXAS

7PM-MEET & GREET 7:30PM-MEETING

PROGRAM: **RIDIN' THE RAILS WITH JOHNNY CASH**

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BROUGHT TO YOU BY VALLI HOSKI, NTX NEWS DISPATCHER

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## Come Ham It Up On The Rails At Texas State Railroad

Come share the fun of the "king" of  
hobbies – amateur radio operation -  
- AND railroading on Sat. June 24  
and Sun. June 25 at the Texas  
State Railroad Museum!



[www.fieldday06.com](http://www.fieldday06.com)

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Come enjoy the enthusiasm and activities of both hobbies during the 2006 "field day" operations at the Texas State Railroad State Park.

Ham radio operators and the amateur radio service come through when many other modes of communication and technology fail. Most recently proven with hurricanes Rita and Katrina, the ham radio hobby enjoys a long, fruitful, and service-worthy heritage, very similar to the railfanning hobby so many of us enjoy.

Source: Valli Hoski, 6/21/2006

## Go Ridin' with Johnny Cash At The Meetin'!

The July meeting features Johnny Cash's film and music tribute to railroading. Here's a short video review of "Ridin' the Rails" The Great American Train Story to entice and cajole you into comin' to the meetin'!

"Produced in 1974, it's described as a 'Documusical' Winner, International Film & TV Festival of New York.

Get on board as Johnny Cash drives a big steam engine. Witness the exciting chase and capture of

the Civil War locomotive 'The General',... Be on the scene for the driving of the Golden Spike linking East to West with rail. Witness a train robbery and go on board a robber baron's private railroad car. Meet John Henry and Casey Jones, ride a boxcar with Johnny Cash and some real hobos and take a trip aboard The City of New Orleans... ride across America with Johnny Cash in an Amtrak Superdome!"

Source: Skip Waters, John Shea, 6/21/2006

## BNSF WELCOMES RAILFANS!!!!

**BNSF to rely on rail fans' eyes and ears to help spot suspicious activity**

[BNSF Railway Co.](http://www.bnsf.com)

<<http://www.bnsf.com>> is turning to a devoted group to boost security at facilities and along track: rail fans. The Class I is introducing Citizens United for Rail Security (CRS), a program that encourages rail fans to report suspicious activities and help prevent security breaches.

Rail fans can register for the program at the [CRS Web site](http://newdomino.bnsf.com/website/crs.nsf/request?open) <http://newdomino.bnsf.com/website/crs.nsf/request?open> Participants

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Fort Worth to buy the Rock Island line between the two cities, now the route of the Trinity Railway Express. Garl showed us some fascinating slides he took of D.U.T. in August 1976. His images recalled the wooden benches in the waiting room, the marble floors and walls, the underground tunnels used to reach the passenger platforms with their white glazed tile walls, and the metal exterior doors. All these features and the art deco style lettering that was part of the Terminals architecture were still in place when he took these slides. August 1976 was a time of change also, as much of the stations tracks and platform canopies had been removed. The structural framework for the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Reunion Tower were rising behind the Terminal. Some other highlights from the Terminals history include, the main waiting room temporarily housed the public library while the original Carnegie library was demolished, and a new library constructed. The Terminal provided its own electricity and steam heat from the power house and its own water from a well.

The Terminal was the 1st building in Dallas to use escalators. The last pre Amtrak passenger train left the Terminal on May 31st 1969 and Amtrak's 1st train arrived at the Terminal on March 14th 1974.

In addition to Garl's slide show, the Dallas Union Station model railroad club was open afterwards for us to view their HO and O scale model railroads. Submitted by Mike Bedford, Secretary, 6/22/06

## Have An Opinion About Railroading? Become Editor!

Love talking about trains, chatting 'em up with pals, or just chasing them down? Share your railfan talents and help get the word out for the chapter. Club seeks word-loving, expressive, jolly editor for railfan newsletter. Contact any club officer. (Note: Valli is willing to be "on the board" as NTX news dispatcher, but not the club's news station manager.)

6/22/06, 2 pm, issue gone to press at request of club officers. Includes chapter news available by press time; see late news in next month's issue. Filename: Newsletter 06222006 verG.doc

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the property next to the depot, but there are no plans in the works. However, he said Saginaw's busy railroads at the foot of the grain elevators make the location an attractive sight for both train fans and history buffs.

"It's quite a draw," said Payne. Julie Thibodeaux, (817) 390-7762 [jthibodeaux@star-telegram.com](mailto:jthibodeaux@star-telegram.com) Source: 6/9/2006, Fort Worth Star Telegram, thanks to Skip Waters

## MEETING MINUTES AND NOTES, JUNE 6, 2006

**NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
LOCATION: DALLAS UNION  
TERMINAL 1ST FLOOR  
LOBBY**

**ATTENDANCE: 50**

### MEMBERS AND GUESTS

President Skip Waters opened the meeting at 7:30 pm. Skip thanked Dave Podhrasky, Dick Kuelbs, and Steve Siegerist for their efforts in setting up the chairs, sound system and screen for this evenings meeting.

Skip reviewed the recent 24 hours at Saginaw event, noting that it was a complete success. More than 100 railfans attended, with 5 people staying the entire 24 hours. 75 trains were seen including a new BNSF ES44AC on its 1st run.

Jon Shea told us that our next meeting will be at Grapevine on July 11. Treasurer Steve Siegerist said that this coming week will mark the 10th anniversary of the beginning of DART Light Rail service. The initial routes were from Pearl Street Station in Downtown Dallas to Westmoreland Station on the Red line and Ledbetter Station on the Blue Line. Free demonstration rides were offered on June 14th with regular service beginning June 17th. The 1st train in service used LRVs no.101 and 102.

Our June program was presented by Garl Latham on Dallas Union Terminal. Garl's presentation was part of a series of Memorial services for Dan Monaghan. Garl said that Dan almost single handedly saved Union Terminal from demolition and brought Amtrak passenger train service to Dallas in the early 1970s. Dan was also instrumental in persuading the cities of Dallas and

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will receive an official identification card and gain access to news and information on the site.

"Every day across the country, rail fans photograph and watch trains as they pass through communities," said William Heileman, BNSF general director of police and protection solutions, in a prepared statement. "It seems natural to harness their interest to help keep America's rail system safe."

CRS is an outgrowth of BNSF ON GUARD, a program that encourages employees to report suspicious activities or trespassers. Since the program began in 2003, more than 200 employees have issued reports on theft, vandalism, arson, attempted suicides, safety threats and other unusual events.

Source: BNSF, 6/8/2006, thanks to Claude Doane

## Volunteer Opportunities At National

The National office of NRHS is still seeking volunteer help in several areas. If you think you might be interested, please check out the jobs list on the website,

<http://www.nrhs.com/jobs.htm>, and if you find one you like, contact National. Source: Claude Doane, 6/19/2006

## BNSF Local News

### [BNSF Railway Co.](http://www.bnsf.com)

[<http://www.bnsf.com>](http://www.bnsf.com) has landed a deal with petroleum products wholesaler Musket Corp. to transport ethanol to the Dallas/Fort Worth market.

On June 23, the Class I will begin moving ethanol from the Midwest to a Fort Worth BNSF terminal, where Musket will transload the shipments onto sister company Gemini Motor Transport's trucks for delivery to local ethanol storage and blending facilities.

"The arrangement comes at a critical time for Dallas/Fort Worth as refiners switch to ethanol from the gasoline additive MTBE to meet EPA standards this summer," said Kevin Kaufman, BNSF group vice president-agricultural products, in a prepared statement.

In 2003, BNSF developed Ethanol Express™, the rail industry's first ethanol unit train, according to the Class I. The program offers ethanol producers increased fleet utilization,

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lower inventory carrying costs and logistics coordination, BNSF said. The railroad moves more than 223 million gallons of ethanol annually through Ethanol Express. **Source: BNSF, 6/8/2006, thanks to Claude Doane**

## DART Trains From The Texas State Democratic Party Convention

Another DART train, later than the usual ones, has been scheduled for delegates returning to Dallas from the Texas Democratic Party State Convention in Fort Worth on the evening of Friday, June 9th. It will depart the Fort Worth Intermodal Transportation Center at 10:35 PM on June 9th, and will arrive in Dallas at 11:15 PM. Those who had bought a premium DayPass (\$4.50, or \$3.50 for seniors) will not need to buy another ticket. Tom Madrzykowski writes "I would also suggest that the delegates have their credentials with them on the return trip and be able to identify anyone traveling with them that may not be delegates." **Source: 5/22/2006, DCDP Weekly Roundup, thanks to Valli Hoski**

## AMTRAK/NEW ORLEANS UPDATE

### Amtrak and Carnival Cruise Lines to resume joint program in New Orleans

Another sign that New Orleans is slowly reclaiming its status as a tourist destination: [Amtrak](http://www.amtrak.com) <<http://www.amtrak.com>> and Carnival Cruise Lines will resume a "Rail and Cruise" program at the Port of New Orleans in October.

Through Dec. 31, 2007, Amtrak is offering fare discounts up to 25 percent for cruise passengers traveling to and from Carnival ships on the railroad's City of New Orleans, Crescent and Sunset Limited trains. Carnival will operate four- and five-day cruises from the New Orleans port to Cozumel, Mexico, beginning Oct. 26. City of New Orleans trains depart daily from Chicago and stop in Memphis and 17 other cities. Crescent trains depart daily from New York City and stop in Washington, D.C., Atlanta and 30 other cities. Sunset Limited trains depart Los Angeles on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and stop in Tucson, Ariz., San Antonio, Texas, and 19 other cities. **Source: 5/24/2006, thanks to Claude Doane**

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Natchitoches. Today, the 43-year-old admitted he'd rather chase a train than ride one. A professional event photographer, Waters said a fun weekend for him is stopping at his favorite donut shop on Highway 26 and waiting for the Grapevine Vintage Railroad steam train to roll through.

He will tag along behind it in his car for a few miles, enjoying the sight of the relic from a bygone era. "It's puffing, smoking and hissing," said Waters. "It's a yesterday's technology that's alive today."

When he first moved to Dallas, Waters discovered Fort Worth's Tower 55, south of the downtown ITC station, was a prime location to see trains. "It's the second or third busiest intersection in the U.S.," said Waters. However, after 9/11, Waters said the authorities discouraged people from hanging around the tracks.

Eventually, he learned Saginaw as a hot spot for train watching. "If you go in the Saginaw area and sit a few minutes, you'll see three or four go by," he said.

During the recent train-watching marathon, participants counted 75

trains passing through in 24 hours. Waters, along with other event-goers from around the Metroplex, Houston and Waco, videotaped and photographed the trains.

While some club members took shifts to make the 24-hours, five participants stayed the whole time. Some watchers were tuned to scanners, listening to engineers talking to dispatchers, and alerted the crowd when the trains were coming.

Clinics were also held on how to watch and record trains safely.

Waters said he always advises onlookers to stay off railroad property and never stand on the tracks. He recommends stepping back to get a better photo and staying out of the way. "If you're too close to the tracks, you're going to spook the engineer," he said.

Brendon Payne, president of the Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber was happy to host the first event in the city of this kind. He said the rail watchers themselves are a regular sight in Saginaw.

At one time, some residents discussed developing a rail park on

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territory. Considering its location, Saginaw could easily become a significant Texas destination for railfans. Source: Northwest Tarrant County Times-Record, <http://shorterlink.com/?7XCR3Z>, thanks to Skip Waters

## Rolling Thunder

### Train-watching groups hold marathon event

By JULIE THIBODEAUX

SPECIAL FEATURES WRITER

STAR TELEGRAM

Every day the trains roll through Saginaw, offering a nostalgic backdrop with their rumbling railcars and piercing whistles.

Last month, railroad buffs from as far away as Chicago gathered in Saginaw to soak up the ambiance for a 24-hour train-watching marathon.

The event, hosted by The National Railway Historical Society's North Texas chapter, was held at the historic depot on Saginaw Boulevard, which houses the Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce.

More than 100 railroad fans attended the Memorial Day weekend event.

Skip Waters, president of the North Texas chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, said the event was an opportunity to introduce hobbyists to the historic venue. In addition, the group hoped to educate the public about watching trains safely and encourage train watching among a new generation.

Waters said his fascination with trains started as a child. He grew up in New Orleans, a railroad hub, watching the trains roll through the city with his dad, who was a train aficionado.

His father fueled his love for trains, giving him a toy railcar every Christmas. As a youth, Waters' obsession grew. He even hopped a slow moving train once in the French Quarter. However, he discourages anyone from following his example. "I would never do it again," said Waters. "It was actually very dangerous and I didn't know it."

Waters chased his first steam locomotive train while in college in

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## "24 Hours @ Saginaw" delighted Texas railfans

By Art Jones

Railfans came from all across Texas to revel in one of Saginaw's least respected tourist attractions – the train traffic. They didn't care about the commuter delays, blocked crossings, or frequent loud "beeps" from the horns. In fact, they looked forward to the sound and, during the slack rail time, played recorded steam whistles and train songs in the background.

"Saginaw is the IMAX Theatre of train watching because of the location of the depot, the heavy rail traffic and wide expanse of viewing area," said Skip Waters, president of the North Texas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHC). "We had people from Waco, Sherman-Dennison, and one that drove up from Houston after work Friday. He got here about 11 p.m. and stayed for the whole event."

Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce President Brendon Payne opened the doors of the Saginaw Heritage Center –

the official name of the depot and the SACC office, for the first annual "24 Hours @ Saginaw" rail-watching event. It started at 7 p.m. last Friday evening and ended – logically enough – at 7 p.m. Saturday. Over the 24 hours, railfans "shot" (documented) 75 trains.

Railfans document trains by recording the cab number on the locomotives, the type of train – coal, freight, aggregate, etc., – and the time and date the train was spotted. It's a lot like bird watching without the chiggers and ticks.

Several of the 100 or more railfans that participated in the event carried radio scanners so they could listen to the BNSF switch yards and Union Pacific's Fort Worth train dispatcher. Radios gave a minimum 10-minute warning that another train was approaching.

When the trains aren't rolling by, workshops and seminars on rail history, train safety and model railroad building were going on in the conference room. Whenever a train approached, however, the room quickly emptied as the railfans went out to do what they came to do – watch trains.

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All this interest in watching trains isn't new. In 1935, a group of rail historians formed the National Railway Historical Society. From fewer than 40 members, the NRHS has grown to over 17,000 men and women of all ages and professions in every state and many foreign countries. It is the nation's largest rail historical society.

Interesting timing. In the mid-1930's – much as now – there seemed to be very little interest in railroads or the electric "traction" inter-urban rail and streetcar companies of the day – other than as targets for long-nurtured grievances.

However, at just that same time, Joshua Lionel Cowen and his fellow toymakers were having remarkable success with a product that based its appeal on the unabashed love of trains. Every time the average citizen purchased a model railroad set for his son, daughter (or himself), he received a subliminal message: "The real thing is fascinating too!"

And they are. The Iron Horse tied the continent together riding on ribbons of steel. Trains opened the vast expanse of The West, and

remain unchallenged in tons of freight transported per mile per gallon of fuel.

If all you've noticed about Saginaw's trains are the early morning blur of rolling stock through caffeine-deprived eyes while waiting for those annoying gates with flashing lights to raise and permit you on your way – you're missing a bit of history, and the key to the area's prosperity.

Back in the 1880's, most of this country's economy was based on agriculture. A railroad coming to your town meant that produce could be transported and sold to larger markets and goods from the major manufacturing centers could be brought in.

For the farmer, hybrid seed could increase crop yield – and profits. A new-fangled machine could increase production – and add even more profits. Trains dramatically reduced shipping and travel time and improved commerce. Towns in the 1880s often lived or died depending on the route of the railroads.

Saginaw was no exception. The vast flatlands of the Texas prairie

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were ideal for a railroad. There were few streams to bridge and no mountains to tunnel through. East and west of Saginaw, the terrain is not all that train-friendly.

The railroads had a positive impact on the small agricultural community. Burrus Mills chose Saginaw as the site for its new grain elevators, and other millers quickly followed. The city's Train and Grain Festival recognized and celebrated the increased commerce those two industries brought to the community.

And now, the trains have brought another industry – tourism – to Saginaw.

The Saginaw Heritage Center depot has a large, shaded platform for viewing, plenty of parking, and a free "show" that runs nonstop 24 hours a day, seven days a week – more than enough to delight even the most jaded railfan. There's easy access from Loop-820 or U.S. 287 and restaurants and shopping are nearby.

The authentic 1870's train depot was originally built in Kosse, Texas, near Waco. It was a major hub for the Houston & Texas Central

Railroad and serviced the cotton and cattle industries in the area. In 1979 Mercantile Bank moved the depot to its Meacham Blvd. location in Fort Worth. It was restored and used as office space and a luxurious conference room. In 2000, the depot was moved to its present site on S. Saginaw Blvd. across from the Saginaw Fire and Police Department facility by the Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Saginaw's Trinity Industries restored the vintage caboose, and repainted the 1927 Pullman mailcar already on site as part of the Saginaw Heritage Center. Future plans call for a vintage engine, boxcar, flatcar and gondola to complete a permanent "train-in-the-station."

"Everyone was very impressed with the facility and the viewing opportunities," Waters said. "We're already working on plans for next year. From what I've been told by our members, I'm guessing we'll easily double the attendance."

Flatonia, Texas, and Big Canyon, Okla., have already positioned themselves as prime train watching