



# NORTH TEXAS ZEPHYR

NEWSLETTER

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OCTOBER 2006, VOLUME 11, ISSUE 8



**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2006** GREET-7PM. MEET-7:30PM.

PROGRAM: **NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER AUCTION**

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

**BREAKING NEWS!! NOVEMBER MEETING: UT-ARLINGTON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY**

## -WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE -

**VALLI HOSKI, NORTH TEXAS NEWS DISPATCHER**

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## October Chapter Meeting – Annual Auction

### One Railfan’s Junk Is Another’s Treasure, sez Skip!

It's that time of year again folks. The North Texas Chapter NRHS Annual Railroadiana Auction. Are you looking for that rare timetable from The East Tree Stump and Backwater Railroad? You just might find it here. Bring your unwanted or duplicate books, timetables, pictures, posters, hardware, videos, Pullman blankets, model railroad equipment, signal bridges etc. You just might come away with that special item you've been looking for. Maybe an early Christmas present for a hard to buy for railfan friend. Remember, one person's trash is another person's treasure. As

always President Skip Waters will serve as our unequaled auctioneer/entertainer for the evening. Bring your checkbooks or cash and mainly bring stuff for us to auction! **All proceeds will benefit The North Texas Chapter of the NRHS.**

## Ride the TEXAS STATE RAILROAD!! Chapter Outing!

**Please join us and ride the Texas State Railroad in its last hours of service on its regular schedule run, Sunday, October 1st.**



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**Sunday, October 1st, 2006 - Make your reservations NOW!**

Call 1-800-442-8951 or 903-683-2561.

## Palestine – Rusk Route

- Depart Palestine Depot: 11:00a
- Arrive Rusk Depot: 12:30p
- Depart Rusk Depot: 2:00p
- Arrive Palestine Depot: 3:30p

Let them know you are with the North Texas Chapter, NRHS. **Ask for the Palestine to Rusk run.** The steam engine only runs out of Palestine on October 1st. Lunch and travel to depot in Palestine is on your own. Adult Round Trip is normally \$17.00, NRHS is \$14.00.

There is a **special opportunity to ride the MKT caboose** on this run. If you are interested, **call Skip Waters directly** (not TSRR) at 214-987-2888 to make arrangements. Cost is \$20.00, plus one way fare on TSRR.

## North Texas Rail News

### **All Aboard! Dallas Morning News Editorial Sees North Texas Rail “Rolling Forward”**

The Dallas Morning News editorial of 9/21/06 posits that voters have clearly given their elected officials the highball signal for a “local-option transit tax”.

Referring to a regional poll taken this week, a range of 65-75% of those surveyed indicated they favor adding a percent to current sales tax rates to bring rail to the North Texas area. A total of 4,077 registered voters were surveyed in areas not served by DART in Dallas and Collin counties, and all of Rockwall, Tarrant counties with parts of adjacent counties. The Dallas, Fort Worth, and Denton transit authorities funded the study.

The Dallas Morning News urges formation of a local, consistent proposal, and decision on how to organize a vote on the proposal. Elected officials need to champion and shepherd this issue through the Austin legislature.

**Source: 9/21/2006, Dallas Morning News, Editorial page.** Source summarized, not directly quoted or copied, above.

### **City Has Rail On Wish List (or, Rail Ripe On The Grapevine, sez the dispatcher)**

**Debra Dennis, The Dallas Morning News**

#### **Grapevine: Voters could decide on sales tax hike for TRE, police services**

City leaders are poised to ask voters in November to approve a sales tax increase that would make Grapevine part of the Trinity Railway Express commuter rail line and help pay for police services.

The City Council will hold a public hearing Tuesday on a measure that, if approved by voters, would add a penny to Grapevine's 7.25 percent sales tax and bring an additional \$18 million a year to the city's coffers. After the hearing, the council will vote on putting the referendum on the Nov. 7 ballot.

The tax increase would be broken up into three parts for voters. A half-cent of the increase would create a crime prevention and control district. One-eighth of a cent would pay for transit and parks improvements. And the other 3/8 cent would make Grapevine part of "The T" transportation authority and the Trinity Railway Express commuter rail line that links southwest Fort Worth to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, officials said.

[http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/city/tarrant/stories/DN-gvtransit\\_12wes.ART.West.Edition1.2bbfefa.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/city/tarrant/stories/DN-gvtransit_12wes.ART.West.Edition1.2bbfefa.html)

**Source: 8/12/2006, Dallas Morning News. Thanks to Claude.**

### **The Gold Standard For Rail-line Plans**

By Mitchell Schnurman, Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Has a mass-transit proposal ever looked this good? This cheap? This fast? In November, residents in Grapevine will consider a new sales tax for a commuter rail line, and a city survey shows that 3 out of 4 residents support the measure. The election shouldn't be that close, not with a deal this sweet.

If voters approve it, hourly trains will run into Grapevine in five or six years, connecting workers and tourists along a 40-mile line from southwest Fort Worth to Dallas/Fort Worth Airport. The turnaround time -- as little as five years -- is practically overnight in the world of commuter rail.

817-390-7821 [schnurman@star-telegram.com](mailto:schnurman@star-telegram.com)

<http://www.dfw.com/ml/dfw/business/15339815.htm>



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Source: 8/21/06, Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Thanks to Skip.

## ***Arlington gets started on rail plan***

By Mitchell Schnurman, Star-Telegram Staff Writer

If Grapevine can make a quick run at commuter rail, why not Arlington?

More people would use a rail line in Arlington, the cost would be about the same, and it would be a big boost to a growing university and the city's expanding entertainment district.

Indeed, local officials are working behind the scenes, trying to hatch a plan to get Arlington moving on mass transit. The Fort Worth Transportation Authority, known as the T, has floated some informal proposals, and Arlington leaders are weighing their options.

No commitments have been made, and rail is probably five to 10 years away if not more, but the talks are significant. It's clear that key Arlington leaders are sold on the need for rail, and the T is willing to be creative to get the ball rolling.

Arlington voters have rejected mass transit three times, and the city is often ridiculed as the largest city in the country without local buses or rail.

That has to change. Any plan for a real regional rail network must include Arlington, the third-largest city in the Metroplex, and right in the middle. Source: Fort Worth Star Telegram

<http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/business/15486478.htm>

## ***Nacogdoches Depot Restoration***

Johnny Johnson, The Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

NACOGDOCHES, TX -- The restoration of the city's historic railroad depot is nearing completion.

Now, if city officials only knew what to do with it when it when they do finish. Since 1999, the city has said the old Southern Pacific Depot would be used as a transportation museum and meeting facility as well as an operation office for the local bus system.

City officials still have plans for the museum and meeting facility, but the transit district has told the city that it is no longer interested in leasing a section of the building to sell bus tickets, according to City Manager Jim Jeffers.

Four years ago, John McBeth of Brazos Transit District attended the depot groundbreaking and said he was looking forward to having offices in the renovated depot. McBeth

went on to say that the transit system was also planned to locate their central transfer office in the depot to give continual access to the whole region.

That's no longer the plan, according to Jeffers. For the city, that means two things - they will not receive any lease income for the depot, and in order for the building to be open to the public, someone will have to staff the building.

Source: Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel.,7/29/2006

<http://www.dailysentinel.com/search/content/news/stories/2006/07/29/depot.html> Thanks to Dennis and Skip.

## ***Love For What Rides The Rails***

Tracy Idell Hamilton, San Antonio Express-News

When B.L. Miers was a little boy, he would ask his grandmother to stop at railroad crossings. He wanted her to stop and wait, just in case a train came by, so he could watch it pass.

Now, after a 20-year career in the Air Force, Miers is an electrician at the Trans-Texas Rail Shop, working on the cars that fascinated him as a child.

Trans-Texas is the only place in Texas, and one of just a few in the country, that refurbishes old rail cars. Its bread-and-butter work is keeping the locomotives running for Union Pacific and other large rail companies, but for employees like Miers, the majestic old rail cars are the reason he comes to work.

Trans-Texas is owned by Harold Schroeder, who falls firmly in the "crazy about trains" category. He's been working on them since 1951 and began Trans-Texas in 1996. Graeber said the railroad companies fix "the little stuff," but the big jobs come into the Trans-Texas yard. Source: 7/11/2006, San Antonio Express-News. Thanks to Dennis.

## ***Texas & Regional Rail News***

### ***Retro Amusement Park Debuts In Fort Smith***

An old-fashioned amusement park with a Ferris wheel and other retro attractions recently opened in downtown Fort Smith, Ark. One of the main attractions of the Park at West End is a 1930s Ferris wheel that originally was displayed at the California Pacific International Exposition in San Diego in 1935-36. There's also a carousel from Italy, a 1957 Pullman railroad dining car converted into a diner, a 1963 British Leyland double-decker bus converted into a concession



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stand, a circus calliope and a penny arcade with old-fashioned games. Contact: 479-420-1821. Source: Dallas Morning News, 7/28/2006.

[http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/fea/travel/thisweek/stories/DN-regnotes\\_0730tra.State.Edition1.3225277.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/fea/travel/thisweek/stories/DN-regnotes_0730tra.State.Edition1.3225277.html)

Thanks to Edwin Pegelow.

## Speed 'em UP!

8/18/2006 Operations

### UP to speed up trains through five Texas towns

On Aug. 28, Union Pacific Railroad will begin increasing train speeds in Raymondville, Lyford, Combes, Harlingen and San Benito, Texas.

Maximum speed will rise from 35 mph to 49 mph in Raymondville and San Benito; from 40 mph to 49 mph in Lyford; and from 20 mph to 49 mph in Combes and Harlingen. UP will increase speed 5 mph per week until trains reach the new top speed.

Source: Progressive Railroading, 8/18/06

<http://www.progressiverailroading.com/freightnews/article.asp?id=9346>  
<http://www.progressiverailroading.com/freightnews/article.asp?id=9246>

## Chinese Steam Moves On BNSF

### 6/14/2006 Chinese Imports BNSF transports Asian steam locomotives to Illinois for RDC

This week, BNSF Railway Co. <<http://www.bnsf.com>>, in conjunction with Iowa Interstate Railroad Ltd. <<http://www.iaisrr.com>> and Houston's Port Terminal Railroad Association, is moving two Chinese steam locomotives from Houston to Rock Island, Ill., where they'll be tested for Federal Railroad Administration compliance. The QJ 2-10-2 locomotives were purchased by Railroad Development Corp. (RDC) <<http://www.rrdc.com>>, a private rail management and investment company that owns or has financial interests in railroads in Argentina, Peru, Estonia, Mozambique, Malawi and the United States, including Iowa Interstate. RDC officials believe the locomotives could be placed in service by a regional or tourist railroad. The locomotives, one of which was the world's last regularly scheduled mainline steam passenger train, arrived in the Houston port last weekend. Source: 6/14/06, Progressive Railroading Daily News. Thanks to Claude.

## General Rail News

## Veteran rail executive selected CEO of Amtrak

Amtrak's board of directors selected Alexander Kummant, a veteran rail and industrial executive, as its new president and chief executive officer Tuesday.

Mr. Kummant previously served as regional vice president of the Union Pacific Railroad. Most recently, he served as executive vice president and chief marketing officer of Komatsu America Corp.

Amtrak chairman David M. Laney said Mr. Kummant has the credentials and experience to lead "a changing Amtrak that is more customer-focused and fiscally responsible." Source: 8/30/06, Dallas Morning News.

## NARP Sets TEMPO For Rail Support

(WED 09Aug06) The National Association of Railroad Passengers announced an initiative to build grassroots support for each long-distance Amtrak train route. A NARP spokesman said that it would campaign for and assist in the organizing of route teams to support each route.

The spokesman added that these groups would be modeled on the Texas Eagle Marketing and Performance Organization (TEMPO), which it said had been in every successful existence for nine years, and which it credited with saving the Texas Eagle and Heartland Flyer trains.

(WED 09Aug06) Union Pacific, Union Tank Car and Dow Chemical announced a joint initiative to develop what it called the next-generation tank car for use in transporting highly hazardous chemicals. A spokesman for the initiative said that their work will focus on all aspects of hazmat transport, not the least of which is the design of the tank car itself. Other parts of hazmat transport "for example, the supply chain" will also be studied. The spokesman added that those involved with the initiative, additional to key representatives of the three companies, will include academic and hazmat industry officials, as well as former regulatory leaders. Source: 8/14/06, Gary Roe.

## Voters Transport Money In Ballot Boxes

(WED 09Aug06) A study was released noting that, since 2000, voters have approved transportation-related ballot measures at more than double the rate of other measures. The study, entitled Transportation Finance At The Ballot Box and released by the Center For Transportation Excellence,



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said that voters in 33 states approved 70 percent of proposed measures, which in turn generated more than \$70 billion in funding. The study analyzed more than 200 state and local transportation-related ballot measures proposed since 2000. **Source: 8/14/06, Gary Roe.**

## ***Amtrak Briefs, 8/4/06 – Neither Heat Nor Rain Nor Lack Of Track ...***

August 4, 2006. WASHINGTON - Owing to the heat wave affecting the east coast, Amtrak announced it has cut speeds on its Acela Express trains on the Northeast Corridor from 135 miles per hour to 80 mph. Amtrak said the speed reductions could prevent damage, allow for better monitoring of rail conditions, and prevent potential accidents. Reducing maximum speeds for all trains, freight or passenger, when the temperature exceeds 90 degrees, is common practice on most U.S. railroads.

LOS ANGELES - Owing to continued flooding, severe weather conditions, and freight congestion on the Union Pacific between El Paso, Texas, and Tucson, Ariz., Amtrak's Sunset Limited service between Los Angeles and New Orleans - as well as the through Texas Eagle cars between Chicago and Los Angeles, which travel on the Sunset west of San Antonio - remained suspended Friday. **Source: 8/7/06, Trains News Wire at Trains.com**

## ***Only One Amtrak? Guess Again!***

July 31, 2006. LONDON - In the United States, Amtrak operates the nation's intercity rail passenger service. But there is another Amtrak, in the United Kingdom. Its business isn't passenger trains - it's an overnight delivery company. Amtrak Express Parcels was established in 1987 and has built up a franchised network, with more than 100 franchised depot locations across the UK. The company has two sorting centers in Aldridge in the West Midlands, and Amtrak's network operates a fleet of 1,000 local delivery vehicles used for the distribution of parcels to customers, and over 300 trunk vehicles for taking parcels between the hubs and depot locations. So next time you're overseas, remember: You may see signs advertising for it, and your package can go, but you still can't take Amtrak there! **Source: 7/31/06, Trains News Wire at Trains.com**

## ***Bites And Briefs, Weekly Rail Review, 8/30/2006***

By Dave Mears (Weeklyrailreview@aol.com)

The **Transportation Security Administration** announced changes to its transportation worker identification card program. A TSA spokesman said that, under the changes, facility and vessel owners and operators will not need to verify biometric data contained in ID cards during the program's initial phase. Also under the changes, the TSA and Coast Guard will hold off indefinitely on requiring that card readers be installed at points of entry for shipping businesses at ports. The plan also presently requires that transportation and shipping industry workers have to pay for their cards, at a unit cost of about \$140. (ffd: Govexec Dot Com)

The Federal Railroad Administration reported that **Amtrak has been able to restore 24 stored Amfleet 1 coach cars** and will position them in New Orleans, LA in case the city requires them for evacuation. A FRA spokesman said that the cars have been restored thanks to \$700,000 in special federal funding, which also includes the costs of deadheading them to New Orleans. The spokesman added that the cars will likely be returned to storage at the Amtrak Passenger Car Shops in Bear, DE after the hurricane season ends. (ffd: Cox Newspapers, NARP, Trains) **Source: 8/30/06 Weekly Rail News.** ffd = for further details see sources listed.

Thanks to Gary Roe

## ***KCS & Haverty Reach An "Art" Full Agreement***

### **6/14/2006 Top Appointment**

Mike Haverty has removed one of his three hats at Kansas City Southern The long-time chairman, president and chief executive officer is passing the presidential reins to Arthur Shoener.

Prior to joining KCS in January 2005, Shoener ran his own transportation consulting firm. He previously served Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific railroads in various management positions, including general manager of MP's eastern region and EVP of UP's operations. **Source: 6/14/06, Progressive Railroading Daily News.** Thanks to Claude.



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Press time: **9/21/06, noon**. All chapter news available by press time; see late news in next month's issue. File: **NTx Newsletter 102006 Ver B 6pg .doc**

## Chapter News

### Chapter Meeting Minutes, September 5, 2006

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEETING MINUTES AND NOTES

DATE: September 5, 2006

LOCATION: Sokol Hall, Dalls

ATTENDANCE: 20 MEMBERS AND GUESTS

President Skip Waters opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. He reviewed the highlights of the Board of Directors meeting held earlier this same day evening. Among the topics discussed was the possibility of the chapter hosting a National NRHS Convention in 2008. Also the chapter bought a pre owned video projector.

Skip also briefed us on the Texas State Railroad event scheduled for October 1, 2006. The trip would be under steam and would depart from Rusk for a round trip excursion. Highlights of the trip would include steam locomotive T&P no. 610 on display at Palestine, and a shop tour at Rusk upon our return. In addition, the MKT wide vision caboose will be available for us to charter and add to the train. Sixteen one way spaces are available on the caboose at \$15 each. Transportation from Dallas to Rusk and return will be on your own. [9/21/06 President's note: The TSRR trip is "Palestine to Rusk" now. Price for MKT caboose is \$20, and no tour is scheduled after the run because we will be in Palestine.]

We are in the planning stages for our annual Holiday Banquet. We are considering partnering with the Trinity Valley Railroad Historical Association for a trip to Gainesville on Amtrak's Heartland Flyer, having dinner, possibly seeing the Gainesville Christmas lights and return to Dallas by bus. Proposed dates include our usual meeting night of Tuesday December 5 or Saturday December 30. Other upcoming meeting events include our annual chapter auction in October and a visit to the UTA Special Collection Library and in November. In rail news, Skip told us that SP 2-8-2 Mikado no. 745 had to be set out at Paige Oklahoma during a recent Kansas City to New Orleans excursion. Poor quality fuel was suspected. The Grapevine Vintage Railroad will be hosting the North Pole Express Event the first three weekends in December. Members are encouraged to volunteer for this fun event. We are looking for a nominations committee chair. If you are interested, please contact Skip Waters. Vali Hoski discussed copyright/credit issues for material to be submitted to the newsletter.

Treasurer Steve Siegerist reported on his recent trip to St. Louis to ride the newest extension of the Metro Link Light rail lines. Steve also updated us on the DART Light rail Green line extension to Pleasant Grove and Carrollton.

Our September program was presented by Mike Bedford and Edwin Pegelow and consisted of images and artifacts from this years NRHS National Convention in New Philadelphia Ohio. **Submitted by Mike Bedford, Secretary**

### Trivia Contest & North Texas Chapter Who's Who

Founded and chartered in 1996, the North Texas Chapter is one of the newest chapters of the National Railway Historical Society. Current membership is about 60 members from the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Emphasis of the chapter is activity, history, and enjoyment of railroading past and present. Meetings are usually held 7:30-10:00 PM on the first Tuesday of each month at the Grapevine Tourist & Visitor Information Center at Main St. and the FWWR railroad tracks. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. Regular membership is \$35 a year (\$22 national dues + \$13 chapter dues). The membership include: a) subscription to the NRHS Bulletin (5 issues/year) and our monthly chapter newsletter, the North Texas Zephyr.

<p><b>August Trivia Answers, by Claude, the Chapter King of Trivia.</b></p> <p>1) Who set the official track gauge of the Pacific (transcontinental) railroad? <i>Abraham Lincoln by Presidential Order in 1863</i></p> <p>2) What was the official gauge? <i>Gauge was set as 5 feet.</i></p>	<p><b>Chapter Business</b></p> <p><b>Address:</b> North Texas Chapter, NRHS, P.O. Box 600304, Dallas, Texas 75360</p>	<p><b>North Texas Chapter Officers</b></p> <p><b>President,</b> Skip Waters, 214-987-2888  <b>Vice President/Programs,</b> Jon Shea, 972-480-9054  <b>Secretary,</b> Mike Bedford, 214-692-7137  <b>Treasurer,</b> Steve Siegerist, 972-234-2682  <b>National Director,</b> Claude Doane, 972-272-3958</p>
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