

## WEEKLY RAIL REVIEW

For the week ending SAT, February 21, 2004

By Dave Mears

### THE WEEK'S TOP NEWS (in chronological order):

(SUN) A Union Pacific freight train derailed 2 locomotive and 41 cars near Grizzly Creek, CO. There were no injuries in the derailment, the cause of which was still under investigation at press time. The accident also caused the temporary rerouting of Amtrak's "California Zephyr" train. (ffd: Grand Junction Daily Sentinel)

(TUE) Metro North Railroad resumed scheduled weekday morning and evening peak period train services. Shortages of available commuter rail cars, many of which had been rendered out-of-service by severe winter weather, had forced MNRR to cancel numerous peak period trains since the start of the month. MNRR issues a statement advising that it is continuing to repair weather-damaged cars, but that it expects that car shortages will continue into the near future. (ffd: MNRR, Railpace)

(WED) A runaway freight train derailed and caught fire in Iran. The fires spread to 5 villages along the line, which killing 320 persons and injuring more than 460 others. An Iranian official said that a failure of the train's braking system was being investigated as the possible cause of the accident. (ffd: wire services)

(WED) Baltimore, MD.'s Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum announced plans for a grand reopening November 13 and 14. The Museum has been closed since its roundhouse roof collapsed under the weight of a record snowfall in February, 2003, which also damaged part of the Museum's collection. In announcing the planned reopening, Museum Executive Director Courtney Wilson reported that, of the \$30 million needed for repair and restoration, approximately \$19 million will be provided by insurance proceeds and approximately \$5 million in donations has been received, but that more than \$5 million must still be raised to complete the repair and restoration process. (ffd: B&O Railroad Museum)

(FRI) Canadian National was struck by approximately 5,000 employees represented by the Canadian Auto Workers Union. The strike followed the conclusion of last-minute talks between CN and the union which failed to reach agreement. A CN spokesman said that the railroad would attempt to maintain normal freight services "with management staff performing key CAW functions." Both CN and CAW representatives pledged not to interrupt passenger rail services operated by Via Rail and other authorities over CN lines. (ffd: wire services)

(FRI) The Association of American Railroads reported that the U.S. railroad industry expects to hire approximately 80,000 new employees over the next 6 years. The AAR said that the expected surge of hiring, believed to be the most extensive in more than 2 decades, is largely the result of recent changes to railroad retirement laws, which restored full retirement at Age 60 with 30 years' service. The AAR said that the bulk of hiring would be for train and engine personnel and that major rail hubs, such as Chicago, IL. and Kansas City, MO., would be cities with among the largest number of openings. (ffd: Boston Globe)

(FRI) The government of Belgium announced that it would provide its 210,000 government workers with free rail tickets for their commutes. A government spokesman said that the program is intended to give their workers an incentive to avoid driving on Belgium's increasingly congested highways. The spokesman added that the program will start for government workers on March 1 and may be extended to private-sector workers sometime in 2005. (ffd: NARP)

(SAT) 2 Union Pacific freight trains collided near Carrizozo, NM. The accident, which occurred when a train taking a siding was struck nearly head-on by another train approaching on the main from the opposite direction, killed 2 crew members in the locomotive that was struck. The cause of the collision, which occurred at approximately 8AM Saturday, was still under investigation at press time. (ffd: wire services)

### STATS:

(THU) For the week ending February 14, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.3 percent, up 0.1 percent in the East, but down 0.6 percent in the West. This week this year versus this week last year, notable traffic increases included coke up 51.1 percent, nonmetallic minerals up 14.4 percent, and waste and scrap materials up 9.3 percent; notable traffic decreases included metallic ores down 23.4 percent, non-grain farm products down 19.2 percent and motor vehicles and equipment down 4.2 percent. Also for the week ending February 14, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 6.1 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 7.6 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 6.1 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was down 16.7 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 4.8 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the period January 1 through February 14, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 0.9 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 5.8 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 2.4 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was down 0.1 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was down 9.9 percent, and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 16.2 percent, all when ranked with the comparable period last year. (ffd: AAR)

### ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(SUN) The Timber Rock Railroad announced that it would lease, from Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and operate approximately 30 miles of line between Silsbee, TX. and Kirbyville, TX. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

(WED) Canadian Pacific/Delaware & Hudson filed to abandon approximately 2 miles of its Troy Branch between Green Island, NY. and Cohoes, NY. (ffd: STB)

(FRI) The U.S. Surface Transportation Board approved CSX's earlier filing to abandon approximately 33 miles of line, between LaCrosse, IN. and Wellsboro, IN. and between North Judson, IN. and Malden, IN. (ffd: STB)

PERSONNEL CHANGES:

(MON) Jervis Langdon passed away at Age 99. Mr. Langdon was a longtime rail executive, having been a president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Rock Island Railroad, as well as trustee and then president of the Penn Central Railroad. Mr. Langdon was also the grandnephew of American humorist Mark Twain and in 1982 donated Quarry Farm, where the author wrote some of his most famous books, to Elmira College to become a center for Mark Twain studies. (ffd: Elmira Star Gazette)

(WED) Rail manufacturer and supplier Bombardier Corporation appointed Andre Navarri as president of its rail transportation group. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

(WED) Short Line and terminal railroad operator OmniTrax appointed Alfred Sauer EVP-Marketing and Strategic Planning. Mr. Sauer was most recently RailAmerica's SVP-Marketing and Sales. (ffd: OmniTrax Corp.)

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Weekly Rail Review is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Sunday or Monday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to [weeklyrailreview@aol.com](mailto:weeklyrailreview@aol.com) to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,  
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