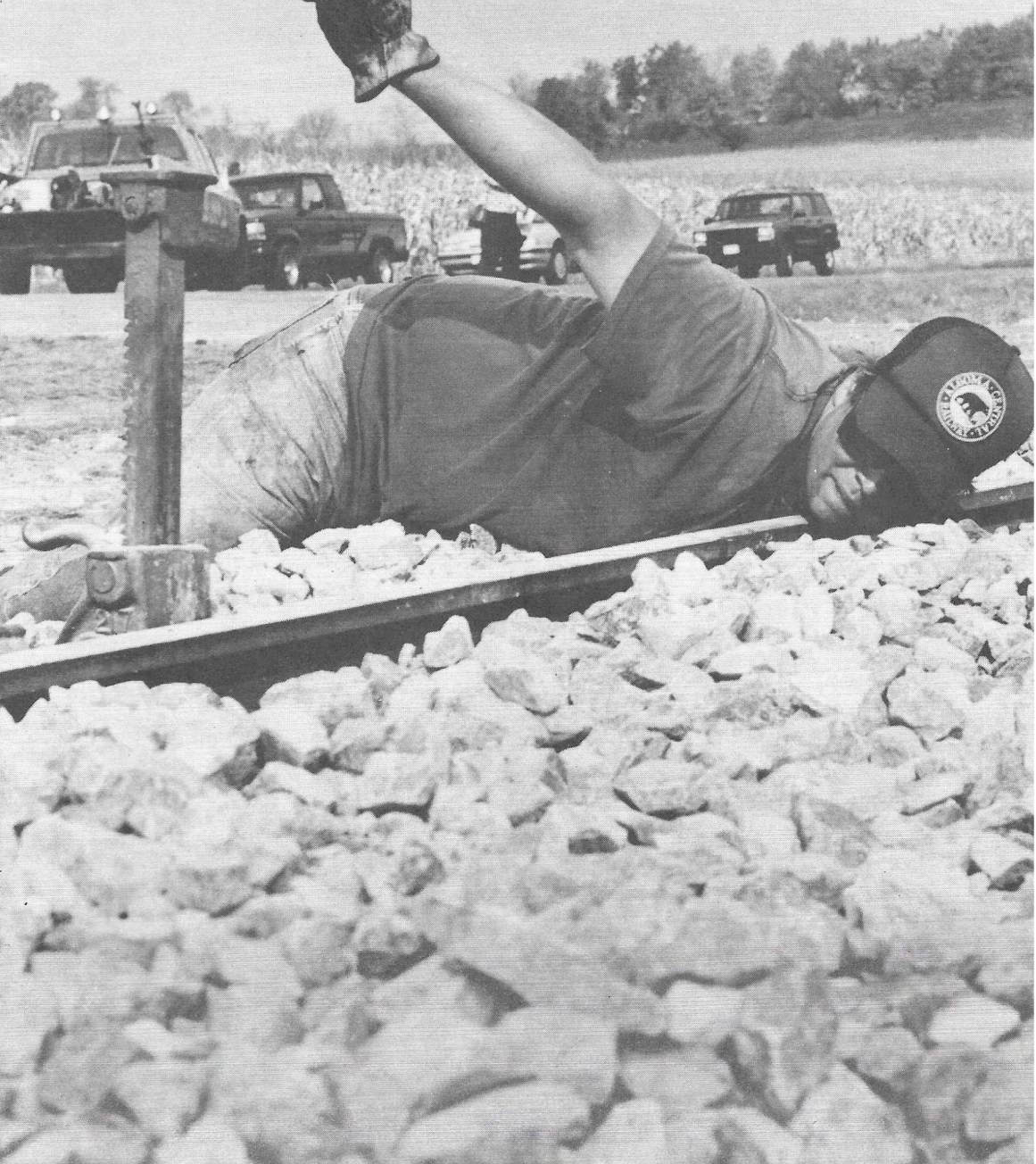

MID-CONTINENT
RAILWAY
Gazette
VOL. 17, NO. 4, NOVEMBER 1994



Engineering Department is Busy

The engineering department has finished projects at Ulrich Road (Osborn's) and Reedsburg.

In the first project, the crossing was replaced during a long weekend, Oct. 14-16. The work included 90-lb. welded rail through the wider 25-foot crossing, about 50 new ties, 150 tons of ballast, new timber, and asphalt. Rotten ties were dug out, new rock placed to provide drainage, old rail placed on the stock pile, and the area cleaned up. Work started early Friday, and was far enough along by 11:30 a.m. Saturday for trains to operate.

Volunteers included Dave Bierman, Jeff Nelson, Jeff Bloohm, Wally Tisler, Rick Bliese, Mike Steinmetz, Dick Gruber, Paul Swanson, Dave Lee, Bob Welke, Bob Ristow, and Don Pingel. Pingel supplied food from the first class service for the workers on Sunday.

At Reedsburg Nov. 5, the crews prepared rail from sidings, donated by the city, for movement to the museum: about 600 track feet of 100 lb. rail and a switch, 300 feet of 72 lb. rail and a switch, and 100 feet of 60 lb. rail, plus tie plates and angle bars. Workers included Bierman, Nelson, Bloohm, Swanson, Welke, Lee, Ristow, Jim Bertrand, Dave McConnell, Dave, Brad, and Bryon Schumacher, Art Oseland, Slip Lichter, and Ken Olson. Ervin Frank and Bill Meyer from the city also helped. The city brought the rail on trailers to Mid-Continent, to be unloaded the weekend of Nov. 12.



Jeff Nelson, superintendent of the engineering department, works on Mid-Continent's tamper at Ulrich Road.

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ROUNDHOUSE 1

Ridership, boosted by big fall color crowds, totaled 46,324, an 11.7 percent increase over 1993.

With colors peaking later, trains carried 2,947 passengers Oct. 8-9, a jump over the Oct. 1-2 count of 1,071. The crowds continued Oct. 15-16, the last weekend of the operating season, when 3 extra trains were needed each day; the 2-day total was 2,598. A front page story and photos in Madison's *Wisconsin State Journal* Oct. 10 helped maintain public interest.

Mid-Continent members put in many long hours to prepare for the color weekends and two films, providing a bright end for the season. Two combines, C&NW 7409 and Lackawanna 425, were in service with newly painted exteriors.

No. 1385, back under steam Oct. 2, was lettered "Lackawanna Railroad" for the weekend service and films Oct. 3-4

and 10-12. In September, 3-4 employees and 15 volunteers (500 hours) finished the repairs. Cost of the project, excluding paid labor, is about \$52,000.

While patronage is up from 1993, when the museum was closed for almost two weeks because of the disastrous rain storm, it is down from 1992, when trains carried a record 50,027 people. Through September, 1994 visits were up 67 percent at Devil's Lake State Park, also damaged by the rain.

With the season's end, attention turned to two winter events.

The second "Santa Claus Express" for passengers of all ages operated Nov. 26-27 with reduced, holiday coach fares and first-class and brunch trains.

Service returns to Mid-Continent tracks in 1995 at the museum's annual winter outing, Snow Train, Feb. 17-19. The event



Lackawanna combine 425, with a fresh coat of paint, was back in service for Autumn Color and the films. Photo by Paul Swanson.

opens with a plow train at 9:30 a.m. Friday, and continues through the week-end with passenger, freight, mixed, first class, and dinner trains. The event got a boost in *Trains* magazine in December with Donald W. Murphy's two-page color photo of the 1989 night photo session.

At the election Oct. 8, voting members cast 133 ballots. Jeff Bloohm, John Gruber, and John Sorrel were elected to the board of directors. Totals were: Bloohm, 82; Gruber, 82; Sorrel, 72; Jim Neubauer, 69; Walter Pomrenke, 32; and Mike Smul, 41. Bloohm and Gruber are incumbents. An informal meeting was held at the American Legion Hall while ballots were counted.

Officers, reelected Nov. 13, are Art Oseland, president; Tom O'Brien Jr., vice president; John Gruber, secretary; and Darcy Welke, treasurer. Directors approved a \$415,000 budget for 1994-95.

Sixty-six attended the annual banquet Nov. 12 at West Baraboo. Debbie Skinner of the Wisconsin Division of Tourism presented an overview of the state marketing programs, and praised Mid-Continent volunteers for their part in bringing visitors to Wisconsin. Historic sites are the fourth reason people come to Wisconsin, she said.

Oseland presented an award to Bob Ristow, mechanical department employee since 1992, for his work on behalf of the museum over the years. Oseland also recognized Pat Ristow, Bob's wife, for her support. All 30-year members received plaques. Oseland thanked all members for their "team effort" in the last year. A plaque is being sent to Jerry Pitzen for his service on the board of directors.

The curator's award (page 6) went to J. Michael Harrington, who was in the Baraboo hospital recovering from broken heel and leg bones, the result of a fall that afternoon at the museum. He stayed at the hospital until Monday, and is recovering well at home in Middleton. Harrington became active in the restoration program in 1988 when the museum was preparing for the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society's convention.

Tourist Railway Association, Inc. (TRAIN), presented its first annual rolling stock award to Mid-Continent for the restoration of GN coach 3261. The award was presented Nov. 6 at Birmingham by Tom O'Brien Jr., TRAIN awards commit-

tee co-chairman, and accepted on behalf of Mid-Continent by Tom Hruska. Slides of the GN restoration were shown to the Saturday night banquet. The award plaque was presented to members at the Mid-Continent banquet Nov. 12.

TRAIN also presented awards to the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, restoration of K-27 no. 463; and East Troy Electric Railroad for the adaptive use of former

CSS&SB interurban car "Ravenswood."

O'Brien, Hruska, and Chris Hornocker attended for MC. Also at the meeting were Dick Gruber, Pentrex; and Eliot Keller, for Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers.

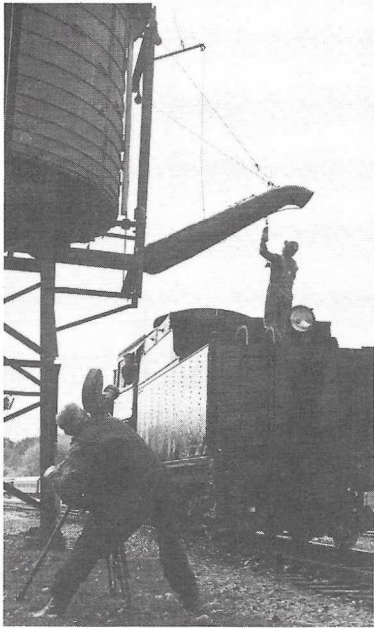
The 1995 calendar will be ready for mailing the first week in December, according to Dick Goddard, who serves on the calendar committee with Ray Buhrmaster and Jeff and Cindy Haertlein. Photographers include Phil Hastings, C. T. Felstead, W. Tennant, Ray Buhrmaster, J. Foster Adams, Gerald M. Best, and R. J. Foster.

Members have given \$4,430 to the locomotive restoration fund, August through Oct. 31; funds are being used for repairs to #1385. Other recent gifts totaling \$7,500 included a major grant from Kalmbach Publishing Co.

"I like to see railroad equipment preserved and maintained," said Richard Levis, a donor from Iowa who last visited the museum in 1985. "Having the equipment available for people to see and ride is better than just looking at it."

American Systems Technologies, Verona, started installing the three crossing protection signals in October. Although about 75 percent complete, work has been delayed while insulated joints are being fabricated for the rail near the depot and water tower. The state of Wisconsin reimburses Mid-Continent for the installation costs.

The Chicago & North Western Historical Society will hold its annual meet in Baraboo May 19-21. The group will spend Friday afternoon and evening at Mid-Continent, with special train operations and photo runbys including C&NW
Continued on page 11



Crews Film for Steamtown

Mid-Continent took on a "Lackawanna" look in October for two crews, filming scenes to be used for visitor interpretation programs at Steamtown in 1995, its opening year. No. 1385 is lettered for the Eastern railroad, renumbered 1053 for a few days; a Branchville sign appears on the depot. Paul Swanson photographed the first film, Oct. 3-4. Bob Welke coordinated arrangements with the film companies.



C&NW Combine Shines Yellow

C&NW combine #7409, completed this fall, represents a thorough and exhaustive restoration of the exterior of a steel car. Aside from the usual cosmetic work, a considerable amount of running gear and carbody/structure work has been involved. It is estimated more than 2,300 hours of volunteer labor and \$23,000 were spent on this work.

When C&NW 7409 first arrived at North Freedom in June 1990, the car was given a thorough evaluation by the car department. Its purchase was intended to supplement the fleet of steel coaches in daily use, and it also could be used for off-line excursions. Hence, a schedule of repairs was developed to bring the car up to standards required for such use.

Of primary concern was the condition of the roof. Car 7409 had a steel sheathed roof, with the steel panels joined with rivets. Over the years, the panels had rusted through at their seams, and along the drip cap. Complete rust-through was common. In several places one could see through rust holes to the outside from inside the car. It was decided to replace this roof with a canvas roof, since a new steel roof was beyond Mid-Continent's financial means.

Once the old steel roof was removed, it was discovered the wood substructure was also deteriorated. Car department forces ended up replacing the entire wood deck, repairing many carlines, and installing all-new drip caps before the canvas was applied. During this process, several sections of the steel letterboard above the baggage doors and baggage section were replaced with new steel. New window sashes were built from scratch to restore the car's clerestory windows, which had been blanked over many years ago.

While the roof neared completion after over a year of work, attention was turned toward the trucks. Both trucks were

completely rebuilt with new wheelsets (two of the old pairs had enough tire thickness to be turned), new journal box liners, new pedestal liners, journal repack, swing hanger pin replacement, new truck bolster spacer shims, and new brake rigging pins as needed. When the trucks rolled out of the shop and back under the car, they had been completely stripped, primed, and repainted—they had not looked this good since they rolled out of the Pullman factory in 1915.

Carbody work continued. All-new steps were fabricated, including step treads



which were cast from new patterns fashioned after the original C&NW cast tread design (only one set of original steps remained on the car by the time Mid-Continent purchased it; these served as models for the patterns). The frame supports for the new steps were all replaced. The new step sides were built to resemble the originals removed from the car.

The underside of 7409 at the baggage end was the victim of considerable corrosion. The body bolsters were rusted through and the side sill on the left side of the car was weakened from side sheet rusting and rotting. The bolsters were repaired with steel plate and welding. The side sill was another matter, however. A 2' by 12' section of side sheet was carefully removed to reveal the side sill. The sill was then removed and a new section welded in place. New holes were drilled for the side sheet's rivets, a new side sheet applied, and then welded and riveted in place. New door treads were also installed for both baggage doors. At the

same time, all the window sash were removed from the car and refinished (interior varnished, and exterior surfaces painted Pullman green).

By the winter of 1992-93, the car was nearing completion. It was decided to finish the mechanical work on the car such that it could be operated during Snow Train 1993. The added seating capacity was sorely needed to generate more revenue for the museum. Car department crews kept working through the cold winter months in the unheated Car Shop building, finishing up the front truck. A tent had to be built over the truck to warm it up for painting. Repairs were made to the heating system on the car. It features a Vapor system that can be self-contained, or operated off trainline steam. End steam connections and the Vapor boiler were installed from stock at the museum (the car came without these). The heating elements inside the car required considerable welding as water in the piping had frozen.



Finally, as Snow Train approached, crews cleaned up the interior, heating system bugs were worked out, and the car made its maiden voyage on Feb. 20, 1993, to the delight of passengers.

Paul Swanson headed up the car department work, assisted by Jonathan Howard, Skip Lichter, Dave Bierman, Jeff Bloohm, Wally Tisler, Bob and Darcy Welke, Dan Griffith, and Dick Gruber. The riveting crew included Steve Siebel, Jim Bertrand, Dave McConnell, and Bob Ristow.

In summer 1994, the curator's department stepped in to finish the exterior restoration. The 7409 was painted in its original yellow and green paint. The builder's specifications and photograph, along with the fact that the exterior of the car had not been modified over the years, enabled the reproduction of the appearance of the car as it was built by Pullman in 1915.

Additional work on the exterior remains as the sash were originally in mahogany, in color, and the platforms and steps were painted brown.

Volunteers who contributed to the restoration were Rad Becker, Ray

Buhrmaster, Bill Buhrmaster, Andy Ebbers, Joe Follmar, Don Ginter, John Gruber, Jeff Haertlein, Mike Harrington, Tom Hughes, Ed Johnson, Skip Lichter,

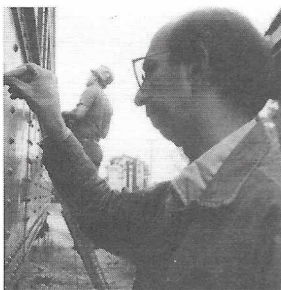
Jerry Mennenga, Randy Merzdorf, and Mike Smul.

In recognition, Harrington received the curator's award. "We were quite lucky that just prior to the start of this project, Mike retired from his regular job.

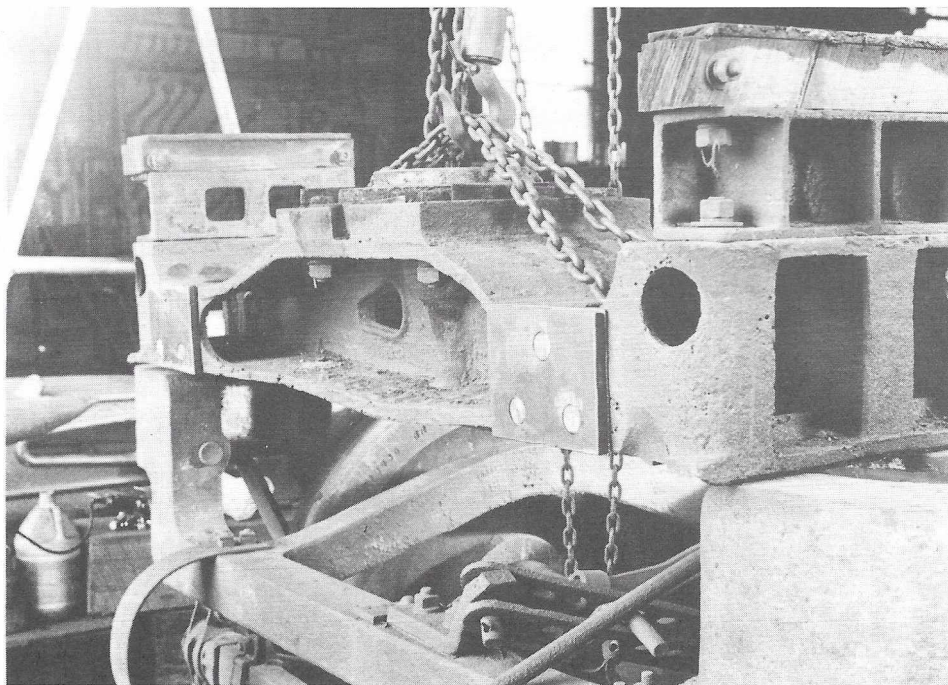
Nearing the Autumn Color weekend deadline, with panic starting to set in, Mike was called upon many times to provide extra mid-week labor on spot priming, masking, and relaying instructions to the painter and letterer," said Don Ginter, curator.

Gifts from the Mathews Foundations and members and Mid-Continent operating funds made the restoration possible.

Paul Swanson, Bill Buhrmaster, John Gruber



Randy Merzdorf



#7409's truck bolster with new lateral shims installed. Photo by Paul Swanson

Railroad Maintains 'Historic Presence'

Six days a week, from March to November, the Chicago and North Western runs a ballast train to Rock Springs, bringing empty cars to the quarry and returning with loaded cars for distribution all across the railroad.

Before the 1994 season ends, C&NW expects to move about a million tons of crushed quartzite rock. The company depends on the quarry, opened in 1957, for the high quality mostly pink colored ballast seen along its well maintained rights of way.

Through August, the train ran at night. Beginning Sept. 6, the C&NW changed to a daylight schedule until Nov. 1. For the first Friday of its daytime runs, the train (officially JARSA westbound, RSJAA eastbound) moved especially heavy tonnage out of the quarry.

The crew—Ty Davis, Madison, locomotive engineer; Allen Dix, conductor, McFarland; and Jim Krysh, student conductor, Arlington Heights, Ill.—started work in Janesville. They arrived at Madison at 11:30 a.m., left freight cars on track 1 at Monona Yard, and were on their way west to Rock Springs at 11:55 a.m. Krysh called the dispatcher by radio and received approval for the train (#8020 west, engineer Davis) to occupy four blocks, Mendota-Baraboo; he also notified the customer service center of the departure time.

With 1,668 tons, the train rolled steadily at track speed, 30 miles an hour, up and down hills, crossing the Wisconsin River at Merrimac and skirting the east shore of Devil's Lake. Nearing North Freedom, Davis slowed to 5 miles an hour passing over a defective rail.

After arriving at Rock Springs (45 miles from Madison) at 1:40 p.m., the crew left the empty cars inside the yard limits and

headed for the quarry with the three diesel units. The train (13,200 tons) waiting was too heavy for the Rock Springs switch engine, #4141, to move, so the road power first put together the eastbound train on the main track, then placed the empty cars on a side track.

All was ready for departure to Madison and Janesville at 3:35 p.m., but the three units could not get the train moving.

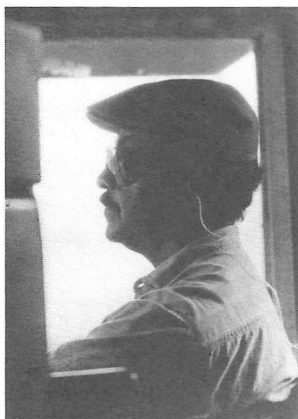
After talking by radio and by phone with Janesville, a Rock Springs crewman announced over the radio, "The grand finale, take our engine."

So with the extra power from #4141, RSJAA was on its way at 4:05 p.m. The train—with twice the tonnage of the usual 6,000 to 7,000 ton train—topped Dane hill at 10 miles an hour, arriving in Madison about 6:20 p.m.

Another crew took over at Madison. Davis, Dix, and Jim Krysh headed for Janesville in a taxi; the federal limit of 12 hours on duty would have been up before they reached Janesville.

This was an unusual day—every other day that week the ballast train easily made the 176-mile Janesville-Rock Springs roundtrip in less than 12 hours.

Robert Sullivan, C&NW terminal superintendent, Janesville, is proud of how the railroad has increased its efficiency and productivity. In 1986, including loading the train, the roundtrip on the average took 3.5 crews working 39 hours; the railroad had 30 miles of track with speed reduced to 10 miles an hour. In 1994, the



Ty Davis

same operation averages 2 crews and 18 hours, all at track speed outside yard limits.

The ballast trains go on to Proviso in Chicago or Butler near Milwaukee, depending on where ballast is needed.

But they are just one of the many freight trains between Reedsburg and O'Hare in Chicago, plus South Beloit, supervised by Sullivan from the office in Janesville.

The count includes, from Janesville, two freight trains to Proviso; way freights to Cary and South Beloit; unit sand trains to Des Plaines and Avondale (near the Chicago passenger terminal); mini trains to South Beloit and Elmhurst; and 13 yard assignments in Janesville.

In addition, a Madison way freight goes to Baraboo and Reedsburg twice a week. "Two days a week fits the needs of our customers right now," Sullivan said. But, after loading ballast cars, the Rock Springs switch crew can also serve nearby customers, if necessary.

A prime customer is General Motors in Janesville, a just-in-time auto assembly plant. C&NW has an enviable on time



Allen Dix

record. With the plant working 5 days a week, C&NW has been late only 7 times in the last 8 years.

Janesville has been the service and operations hub for the area since 1992. C&NW closed agencies at Beloit in 1985, Harvard in 1987, and Madison in 1992. The trainmaster was moved out of Madison in 1985.

Attention to track maintenance makes the dependable service possible. A test car inspects track twice a year. Bridges are checked annually.

C&NW is customer oriented. As a result of current marketing conditions, customers require reliable, dependable service. Through a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week customer service center and expansion in the use of radios, cellular phones, and fax machines, information can be delivered and requests implemented or updated almost immediately.

"We also remember our historic presence," Sullivan said. "After all, we have been in Sauk County for almost 125 years, far longer than most businesses." *JG*



C&NW trains have traveled along the east shore of Devil's Lake since 1871.

Roundhouse 1

Continued from page 4

#1385, ST #2, and C&NW drover's caboose, combine #7409, and business car #400. A picnic supper tentatively will be at La Rue and a night photo session at North Freedom.

Saturday, the group will tour the Rock Springs quarry and the former NWX car shops of Circus World Museum in Baraboo. The afternoon will include model and photo contests, CNWHS's company store, and slide and movie presentations.

CNWHS founder Joseph Follmar will give a historical presentation at the banquet.

Sunday, the railroadians swap meeting at Papa's from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. will be open to the public. Tables are available to vendors; contact Ron Christensen, 3348 Cedar Lane, Bridgman, MI 49106.

CNWHS membership (\$19 a year) will qualify you for reduced meet fees. Paul Swanson, 214-1/2 Cherry St., Janesville, WI 53545, has membership and registration forms. CNWHS membership includes *North Western Lines*, an 80-page quarterly magazine edited by Swanson.

The winter issue of *NWL* will feature articles on the C&NW line through Baraboo, R-1 locomotives and a pictorial history of Mid-Continent's 1385, drovers cabooses, and open-platform steel combines such as #7409. No. 1385 will be featured in color on the cover.

Chris Burger, general manager of the Central Vermont for the last five years, becomes president and chief executive officer of Central Properties, Inc., of Kokomo, Ind., in mid-November. His company operates about 300 miles of railroad, including the Central of Indiana, Central Railroad of Indianapolis; and Winimac Southern.

Burger has been a Mid-Continent member since 1967 when he joined the C&NW as a trainmaster at Madison. He was the moving force behind the return of #1385 to C&NW rails and C&NW financial assistance in rehabilitation of the locomotive between 1982 and 1986. The Central Vermont achieved marginal profitability in 1993 under his leadership.

Members in print. Drake Hokanson's book, *Reflecting a Prairie Town: a Year in Peterson*, has been published by the University of Iowa Press. "This vernacular landscape study is lavishly illustrated with photographs taken by the author, including stunning panoramic views," according to the Press. Hokanson teaches at Lakeland College in Sheboygan.

Deaths. Carl A. Traub, 81, Oct. 6, Milwaukee. Traub, life member #31 (1961), served on the board of directors from 1968 to 1974. He was honored as the National Model Railroad Association's Master Model Railroader #77 in 1979. He had contributed to *Model Railroader* since 1942 with articles about scratchbuilding and shop practices. Although he preferred to build models from scratch, he co-owned Globe Models, producer of HO freight car kits, in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Gil Reid, a colleague and Mid-Continent member, was among family and friends who shared remembrances at the service.

Madison Transitions

Wisconsin and Southern has purchased former Milwaukee Road trackage from West Madison to Middleton. WSOR first served Middleton industries on Oct. 24. Great Lakes Western cancelled excursions Nov. 26-27 and Dec. 10-11 from Middleton to Spring Green and beyond.

Gifts to Mid-Continent

Your year-end support of the annual fund is vital as Mid-Continent moves toward the 1995 season at North Freedom with renewed dedication to enhancing educational resources, improving museum services, and continuing preservation efforts. Funds have added importance as we rebuild momentum lost by the disastrous rain storm in July 1993.

Send gifts now to Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society, North Freedom, Wis. 53951-0358.



SCHEDULED

December

- 11 Board meeting, 9 a.m., Madison

January

- 15 Board meeting, 9 a.m.

February

- 12 Board meeting, 9 a.m.
- 17- Snow Train opens with plow train at 9:30 a.m. Friday. Passenger, first class, dinner, mixed, and freight (caboose seating) service is offered.

March

- 12 Board meeting, 9 a.m.
- 17- Third annual Midwest Railway Preservation Gathering, Flint, Mich., hosted by Huckleberry Railroad.

Meetings are at the office building unless announced otherwise. Call 608/522-4261 for information.

Cover. Dave Bierman, roadmaster, checks the level of the track while surfacing at the Ulrich Road project in October. Photos on cover and page 2 by Paul Swanson.

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