



The Nickel City Dispatch

News From The Nickel City Line Railroad

May 2009

Employees Earn NMRA Certificate



NCL employees (L to R) Ernie L., Rob M., Bob R. and Pete L. earn the NMRA Chief Dispatcher certificate.

Four NCL Employees were recently awarded the NMRA Chief Dispatcher certificate by the National Model Railroad Association. Pete L., Ernie L., Rob M. and Bob R. were awarded their certificates in April for meeting all requirements of the Achievement Program certificate. In January, NCL management held a clinic on the NMRA Chief Dispatcher certificate. The combined lecture and work session allowed employees to meet most of the requirements of the program. Attendees worked on creating diagrams, schedules and associated jobs. They used a computer to create the required string diagrams and adjusted schedules to have opposing trains meet at the proper locations on their railroads. At the end of the clinic, four employees had met all the AP requirements

and submitted their work to the local AP Coordinator. The work was reviewed at the local and regional levels before being submitted to the National Office in Tennessee.

Several other employees were close to meeting all of the Chief Dispatcher requirements at the end of the clinic and will be able to submit their paperwork to the NMRA in the near future.

Sixth Employee Makes Certification



Bill L. (R) earns his Certified Railroad Operator certificate.

April 26, 2009 – Bill L. became the 6th NCL employee to meet all the requirements to become a Certified Railroad Operator. Bill had to achieve a minimum of 50 hours on the



railroad which included 10 hours as Dispatcher; 10 hours as Engineer; 10 hours as Yardmaster; and 10 hours as Hostler. On April 26 Bill completed his hours in the Hostler category and was awarded his Hostler certificate along with his certificate as a Certified Railroad Operator. Bill also holds an NCL certification as an Advanced Engineer for working more than 20 hours on the railroad in that position.

Rob M. (R) earns Advanced Dispatcher.



Gregory T. (R) earns Master Engineer



Don E. (R) earns Master Engineer

Other employees recognized in April were Rob M. for Advanced Dispatcher; Don E. for Master Engineer; and Gregory T. for Master Engineer. Congratulations to everyone for their hard work.

NCL Gets More Power

The NCL recently received the addition of a Digitrax DB200 booster. The booster was sorely needed as newer locomotives required more power which put a tremendous strain on the NCL electrical grid.



Both mine operators and the local Nickel City Power and Light Company had complained to management that they were having difficulty keeping up with the power demand. The new DB200 will lighten the load on the grid while meeting the railroad's power requirements.

A new Digitrax DB200 booster is slowly pulled through Sheppardsfield to Nickel City

Residents in Nickel City should not experience any more rolling blackouts after the new booster is installed.

Signaling Project Underway

The NCL Signal department has started installing signals along the NCL mainline from Nickel City to Ridgway. The signaling project is expected to take several years but when

complete will aid Dispatchers and Engineers tremendously. Signals will remain dark



Signal workers install and test a new double target signal at Monserrat.

until interfaced with the JMRI signal software. The project is long overdue and was able to get started ahead of schedule when a number of signal units became available from a neighboring railroad in receivership.

Hughes Industries Awarded Decoder Pro Contract



Hughes Industries.

The Nickel City Line awarded Hughes Industries a five year contract to establish and oversee the decoder files of all locomotives in the Nickel City fleet. The contract also provides provisions for uploading information from leased locomotives as well as from railroads which have contracted trackage rights with the NCL. The project involves using DecoderPro software developed by JMRI to poll and store information located in

each locomotive's electronic decoder. The information can be modified and reloaded into the locomotive or simply stored and reloaded in the event of a software failure or replacement of the locomotive decoder.

Locomotives will be polled as they return to the Nickel City Yard for preventive maintenance. The DecoderPro software will become a regular part of the preventative maintenance program as well as a great diagnostic tool when troubleshooting electronic issues in the fleet.

“It's a win-win for all” stated NCL President and CEO, R. Rodriguez. “This project is long overdue and we were pleased to have the funding available and able to send it to one of our local business partners. In these tough economic times, this is a shot in the arm for Hughes Industries and its employees. We were glad we could make it work.”

At press time, Hughes Industries had already run fifteen locomotives through the DecoderPro program and established a roster file in their inventory system.

Delays Expected as New Route is Cut In

The new Harrisburg route is nearing completion which will involve several cut ins of track over the next several months. The cut ins will require tracks to be placed out of service while old turnouts are removed and new ones installed. The first delays will be felt in Nickel City Yard as Track 6 will be cut off on the East end of the yard. Trains may enter from the West but must back out after being loaded. This will require some coordination and skill between crews, the Yardmaster, and the Dispatcher. There will be delays as less holding tracks are available. Trains will have to be staged on the mainline and residents of Sheppardsfield should expect a number of trains staging on the mainline for extended periods of time.

Cut in of the locomotive yard lead is next but should not affect mainline or yard operations. The biggest delay will occur when the mainline and east yard lead are cut in later this year. Operations will be impacted by significant delays. Management is busy working up alternative schedules which will minimize this anticipated service disruption. The project is projected to be completed by the end of 2009.

**NEXT OPS SESSION SCHEDULED FOR JUNE
2009
MORE INFORMATION TO COME!**