

NRC CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN



The Second Quarter Start-Up....!

When most people hear the term "March Madness," they think college basketball. But many of us in the rail construction and maintenance industry know the term better as a reference to the last few weeks available before construction season begins to get our crews and equipment onto project sites. It's almost April and the start of the second quarter is only weeks away. Everyone is well rested and ready to go. Our equipment has been run through our shops, repairs and upgrades have been made, and some pieces even got a fresh coat of paint. Our field force has gone through their annual training requirements and it is now time to get back to work for the long haul until the winter weather shuts us down again. The cycle begins anew!

I would like to wish our entire membership a safe and productive 2015. Remember that good preparation will bring success, so plan well, be productive, and most of all be safe.

At our January conference, the NRC issued our two newest safety training videos, these ones were on grade crossing planning and replacement, and they are free to our membership as always. These videos demonstrate and explain the safe practices and procedures to adhere to while performing this type of work. Grade crossing work involves much more than just coordinating with the railroad customer. The replacement of a grade crossing typically involves a city or town as well, and this outside involvement will necessitate additional planning. Multiple people and jurisdictions will have a say regarding the planning of the road closure. Along with our normal planning around rail service impacts, we must also consider the traveling public since we will be closing a publicly used roadway. Since returning from the conference, I have heard all positive feedback about these two new videos - they are a great addition to the sixteen previously issued videos, all pertaining to safe practices in doing various types of track work. They are a welcome training tool that will help our member companies be better prepared to do their jobs safely and productively. The NRC has received many thanks from our membership for the efforts made in creating all eighteen videos to date. A special thank you to the NRC Safety Committee and in particular John Zuspan, Lead Producer and President of Track Guy Consultants, for their time and efforts in making these training videos - great job everyone!

The next NRC event on the calendar is our 2015 Rail Construction and Maintenance Equipment Auction. It will be held on Friday April 17 in Little Rock, Arkansas this year. This is another annual outing that our membership really enjoys. It is a great opportunity to visit with friends and colleagues in the rail industry, do some networking and maybe

make a great purchase on a piece of equipment at the same time. Blackmon Auctions will host the event at their facility in Little Rock, in conjunction with a UP equipment auction. The UP involvement increases the number of people in attendance and the number of pieces to be sold. I would like to thank the following members of the NRC Equipment Auction Committee for putting this event together: Danny Brown of V&H Trucks, Jay Gowan of Harsco Rail, Mark Gaffney of Stacy and Witbeck, Paul Laurello of Delta Railroad Construction, Dean Mackey of Progress Rail Services, and Greg Spilker of Encore Rail Services. Thank you gentlemen!

Auction Details:

Auction begins 8:00am Friday, April 17, 2015 - expected finish by 3pm.

Location: Blackmon Auctions facility, 425 Blackmon Road, Lonoke, Arkansas 72086.

Equipment inspection available: 9am-5pm, April 16, 2015.

Happy Hour/Social Event - April 16, 2015, 5:00pm to close - Wyndham Riverfront Little Rock, 2 Riverfront Place, North Little Rock, AR 72114.

Hotel - Discounted room block available at Wyndham Riverfront Little Rock.

Follow this link: http://www.wyndham.com/groupevents2015/LITNO_CBIMSL/main.wnt to reserve your room or call 1-866-657-4458. Please refer to the "NRC - National Railroad Construction & Maintenance Association" when making your reservation by phone.

Finally, please save the date of Thursday, June 4th, 2015 to attend Railroad Day on Capitol Hill this year. Our membership will descend upon Washington DC for the opportunity to talk with our elected officials and their staff about infrastructure spending, short line railroad tax credits, truck size and weight laws, and various regulatory concerns. There is strength in numbers and we look forward to a big turnout to drive our message home.

For further information on all NRC planned events, please visit www.nrcma.org.

Have a safe day.

By Bill Dorris, *Chairman of the Board of the NRC*



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