



VALLI HOSKI, NORTH TEXAS NEWS EDITOR

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**Chapter Meeting Advisory**

**Chapter meetings are cancelled for the near-term future**, per the COVID-19 health advisories from federal and state agencies.

Tentative future meeting dates are shown on the Chapter calendar section at the back of this issue. Future meeting locations are very tentative, and depend on the status of the COVID-19 health advisories from federal and state agencies.



Above: Saginaw Depot, Saginaw, Texas. (Photo credit: Jerry Nunn)

**NRHS Views and News**

**Changes to Chapter Meetings, Spring 2020**

The April 2020 meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS, scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, has been canceled. Because of the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency, all public gathering places in Texas are either closed or about to do so. In fact, the Chapter has been notified that our planned meeting location at the Spring Creek Barbeque in Grapevine is now closed to inside customers. The Chapter Officers have been concerned about the April meeting, and have been discussing cancellation for the past week. The Spring Creek announcement just settled the issue. There has yet been no decision on the May meeting, scheduled at the DeGoyler Library at SMU. The Chapter Officers will closely monitor the situation, and will make a decision at a later time. We will inform you once a decision is made. In the meantime, we encourage all to continue safe practices. Stay safe and healthy.

Wayne Smith, President. North Texas Chapter, NRHS

**Railroad Photography & Art – Virtual Conference, April 18, 2020**

[Center for Railroad Photography & Art, April 18 - Virtual Conference and Conversation](#)

Railroads connect us across time and space. And in these unprecedented times, we could all use a few more (socially-distanced) connections. We hope you will connect with us on **Saturday, April 18**, when the Center for Railroad Photography & Art hosts our first-ever online conference, **Virtual Conversations**.

We had planned to host our annual Conversations conference over the weekend of April 17-19 at Lake Forest College, just north of Chicago. On Monday, March 16, we made the difficult decision to cancel that event. But our community still has so many stories to tell and images to share, and digital technology provides us more ways to connect now than ever before. So the show will go on!

Please save the date of April 18. Virtual Conversations is a **free event**, open to anyone who wishes to join. We will send more details as the day draws closer. <http://www.railphoto-art.org/collections/>

The Center cares for more than 200,000 photographs in its [Railroad Heritage Visual Archive](#). The Collections and Acquisitions Committee of the Center’s board of directors and executive director Scott Lothes oversee new acquisitions. Preservation activities take place both in house and in concert with the [Lake Forest College Library Archives and Special Collections](#), which has a recognized heritage of stewardship of more than a century. The Library considers the Center “a partner in promoting its railroad photographic holdings,” which the Center amplifies with materials it has acquired from nationally-known railroad photographers together with non-photographic works of railroad art. Together the Center’s and Lake Forest’s collections have gained recognition as a nationally significant repository of railroad photography.

## Jerry's Rail Scenes

### Saginaw Depot and area, February 25, 2020.

Parking lot was empty, likely no-one was there. There were about 6 of the signal sheds at the south end of the parking lot. Nothing else was at the station. At McElroy Ave. about 1/4 mile north, there was a gravel lot with extensive materials - track panels, ties, signal hardware, etc. There was also some workers who looked like they were installing signal cable, There were also some new signals installed, but not yet activated.





## Texas – Going Locally with the Geezers Guys

by Dale Jacobson

### Go With Geezers, part 1

Not knowing how my friend Norm's back would be treating him I cut back the time of my visit this year to under two weeks. This gave us 4 days to do local area train photography as we used 5 days to go out to Tuscon, AZ, and return. We spent two days railfanning east of San Antonio along the "Sunset Route", one day west of San Antonio along the "Sunset Route", and one day south of the city on the former MOPAC line to Laredo and Mexico. On these day trips we were usually looking to see if any wild flowers were growing near the track(s) as they can add color to a train photo. We found some flowers and on the line to Laredo we also found quite a few blooming bushes. Alas, the more flowers we found, the fewer trains we found going through that area.

What we were most interested in was photographing freights with lit noses. That meant eastbounds in the mornings and westbounds in the afternoons along the "Sunset Route." Of course, the general trend of traffic was more westbounds in the morning and more eastbounds in the afternoon. This was especially true east of San Antonio because of the eastbound BNSF freights using this line. The westbounds use former MKT and MOPAC lines and come into San Antonio from the north. West of San Antonio you get all the BNSF traffic which is going to and from Eagle Pass. On the Laredo line we looked for southbounds all day. Alas, while on that line all we caught was ONE northbound. That line was virtually dead the day we were along it. To make matters worse, the Gardendale RR (at Gardendale) was also dead as a door nail. One green geep sat outside the diesel house. This is a RR that serves the Eagle Ford fracking/oil area, and right now the Eagle Ford is basically moribund. So, we were not surprised to find this RR "sleeping."

We caught the westbound UP freight shown in this photo at Engles, Texas. Engles is about 5 miles east of Flatonia where the former Cotton Belt mainline junctions with the former SP mainline between Houston and San Antonio. The train shown is in the passing siding as soon an eastbound manifest freight will pass. This train didn't have any DPU's but the eastbound had two on the rear. One never knows which UP freight will have one more more DP units nor where in the train it or they might be.



We had gone this far east because earlier in the day we had found a military train in the siding at Cibilo, a little village east of San Antonio well known in the area as a speed trap. It takes only a couple minutes to get by this place, but even so the village has a dozen squad cars to catch speeders. Anyhow, the military train had two UP GE's for power and was loaded with various military hardware including Bradley armored vehicles and mobile cannons. We chased the military train east to Flatonia before going to lunch. Besides, by the time we got there, we had already photographed it five times, and the sun was favoring westbounds. After lunch, we checked out Engles.



We planned following this train back towards San Antonio, but as it started up it was quite apparent something was wrong. We eventually crossed back over the tracks to get back to Norm's car before the train trapped us on the side away from the car. We left as the train was still east of this road crossing (private crossing to 4 residents) and then returned to Flatonia where we waited to see what happened. Eventually the train came west crossing the diamond at no more than 25 mph. Knowing it would take almost forever for this train to get to Kirby Yard on the east side of San Antonio, we headed home. Of course, we saw some eastbound freight as we went west, mostly BNSF.

### Go With Geezers, part 2

The UP in Texas is awash with Ferromex power. We caught many UP and BNSF freights with at least one and sometimes two Ferromex units in a lashup. Alas, on this trip we found no pure sets of Ferromex power, either one or two unit sets. Norm took this photo some time before I arrived at his place. As far as I know this was the first time he saw a pure Ferromex lashup of at least three units. Since the line is CTC/PTC equipped it's quite common for a train crew not to talk even once while going between Flatonia and Kirby Yard (San Antonio). Thus, it's common not to know which RR is having its train powered by Ferromex units, especially west of San Antonio. The same holds true if one encounters a pure set of Norfolk Southern or CSXT power. However, in this case it's very, very likely this is a UP freight as most every BNSF westbound freight uses former MKT and MOPAC lines to enter San Antonio.

Three Aces wheel a westbound train through the cantilever signals at Harwood TX. FerroMex power is not uncommon on BNSF or UP trains traversing trackage rights on the UP Sunset Route, it is uncommon to see more than two of them on the head end. While the searchlights have been replaced, the cantilever still stands.

The tank cars on the right are stored on the Texas, Gonzales & Northern track. Other tracks are chock full of tank cars, about one hundred in total.

The town of Harwood apparently has no claim to fame.

*Photo credit: Norm Schultze*



Norm took this photo some time before I arrived at his place. As far as I know this was the first time he saw a pure Ferromex lashup of at least three units. Since the line is CTC/PTC equipped it's quite common for a train crew not to talk even once while going between Flatonia and Kirby Yard (San Antonio). Thus, it's common not to know which RR is having its train powered by Ferromex units, especially west of San Antonio. The same holds true if one encounters a pure set of Norfolk Southern or CSXT power. However, in this case it's very, very likely this is a UP freight as most every BNSF westbound freight uses former MKT and MOPAC lines to enter San Antonio.

The only freight we caught with a Ferromex leading was on the day we went west of town along the "Sunset Route." Ironically it was the one train we never did photo because when we found it, the train was coming right out of the sun. It was sitting on mainline at Dunlay siding waiting an eastbound that was still many, many miles away. So, we continued west. It had clouded up by the time we were coming back east from Uvalde. We missed it as we drove between Sabinal and D'Hanis. I guess I should be proud of the fact that I have quite a few shots of Ferromex engines leading UP and BNSF freights and thus don't feel the need to shoot one on a cloudy day, nor when a train is coming right out of the sun.



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## NRHS Views and News

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### ***Latest News for 2020 Convention***

by Al Weber, President., National Railway History Society

Letter to all NRHS members;

We are receiving the CDC's latest guidelines, which restrict events of more than 10 people for a matter of weeks which was updated from groups of 50 people. We are supportive of this decision as the health and safety of our members and loved ones is our highest priority.

The situation is fluid. It evolves by the hour, and unfortunately we don't have a date we can circle on the calendar for when this restriction(s) will be over. Here in the St Louis area we are in a "shelter at home" request from the local government leaders and health department. Many areas have much stricter restrictions. Please follow your local health department guidelines.

We have made a decision to delay the Southern California Convention. At this time we are looking at a late 2020 summer convention around Labor Day. All the event venues have been contacted and at this time all venues are still on. In the past, the NRHS conventions were held in this time frame as you may recall.

I want our members to stay educated on how to prevent exposure and transmission of the Coronavirus. Again, please check the CDC's website about ways to protect yourself, your family and your loved ones. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

I want to thank you for your ongoing support of the NRHS and preserving railroad history as we work through this unprecedented situation.

Please check on your fellow NRHS members and stay in touch through this troubling period

I expect the next convention update will be sent in two weeks around April 8, 2020.

Stay safe, and we will be in touch.

Sincerely, Al Weber, President

[www.nrhs.com](http://www.nrhs.com)

(Source: NRHS email, March 25, 2020.)

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## North Texas Chapter Views and News

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### ***Zephyr News Board***

The deadline for upcoming issues is the Monday that is 2 weeks before the Chapter meeting.

- *May 2020 issue* - News deadline is Monday, April 20, 2020. Meetings are on hold, per health advisory.
- *June 2020 issue* - News deadline is Monday, May 18, 2020. Meetings are on hold, per health advisory.

### ***Chapter Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2020***

The March 2020 meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the NRHS meeting was held on Tuesday, March 10, at the Spring Creek BBQ in Grapevine, TX. There were 11 attendees.

President Wayne Smith called the meeting to order at 7:23 PM. He brought along several calendars and brochures, including one from the San Diego Model RR Club, which he recently visited.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

VP Skip Waters: The Saginaw Depot will be available for the "24 Hours at Saginaw" event tentatively scheduled (see the important Coronavirus Notes regarding the Coronavirus outbreak at the end of the minutes) for the Memorial Day weekend. We will have access to the conference room, but will have to come in through the door on the east side deck. Both inside and outside restrooms will be available.

Planning for the National Convention continues, but the situation is uncertain. See the Coronavirus Notes at the end of the minutes. In addition refer to the NRHS website for details.

VP Jon Shea: Jon passed around a Katy RR Christmas ornament put out by the Katy RR Historical Society.

The April meeting was scheduled to take place on April 7 at the Grapevine Spring Creek BBQ.

The May meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 5 at the DeGoyler Library on the SMU campus. Steve Goen is scheduled to speak about his recent publication on the Cotton Belt.

Jon is trying to reserve Sokol Hall for the June meeting. **Refer to the Coronavirus Notes at the end of the minutes.**



**VP Valli Hoski:** Valli says she is in charge of three publications, and the workload is sometimes overwhelming. She once again stressed the importance of timely input to the Chapter newsletter. The Chapter members present discussed changing the frequency of publication of the newsletter.

**Bill Long:** Bill passed around his Milwaukee RR card from his days as an employee.

**Sam Metzgar:** Sam had some books on BN motive power and first generation EMD locomotives, which he passed around for review. The program for the evening was a continuation of the video "Battle Up Sherman Hill".

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

\*\*\*\*\* **IMPORTANT NOTES: THE CORONAVIRUS ISSUE** \*\*\*\*\*

As you all know, the Coronavirus outbreak has been declared a national pandemic. In response, local and state governments have greatly restricted social gatherings, by shutting down businesses and schools, banning meetings, and having many of us work from home.

Not surprisingly, this has also impacted the NRHS, both at the national and local level.

First, the April meeting of the North Texas Chapter, originally scheduled for April 7 has been cancelled. The Spring Creek BBQ is closed to inside dining until further notice, so there is no place to meet.

Second, a recent announcement from SMU notified students and faculty that all classes for the remainder of the semester will be conducted online. This may very well force the Chapter to cancel our May meeting also.

Even if meeting restrictions are lifted, it may be feasible to postpone the meeting due to the age and medical conditions of Steve Goen and other Chapter meetings.

Third, no one knows how long these quarantines and restrictions will last. Restrictions may very well still be in place into May, and perhaps beyond.

The "24 Hours at Saginaw" event is uncertain at this time. The planned massive BNSF track maintenance project notwithstanding, the event may fall victim to the Coronavirus quarantine.

If the quarantine extends past May, our June meeting may also be impacted.

Fourth, it is possible that the National leaders may have to postpone or cancel the national conference scheduled to take place in Southern California in June. The national board will be meeting (or already have met) to discuss response to the situation.

The Chapter will keep you informed of the latest developments by email, Facebook, or the Chapter's website. In the meantime, be safe and healthy!

Jerry M. Nunn, Secretary, North Texas Chapter NRHS

## Chapter Directory

### North Texas Chapter Officers, 2020.

- **President**, Wayne Smith, 940-300-4407.
- **Vice President/Programs**, Jon Shea, 972-948-2413.
- **Vice President/Trips and Events**, Skip Waters, wgcrush@swbell.net.
- **Vice President/Communications, and NTZ editor**, Valli Hoski, [ntx.news@yahoo.com](mailto:ntx.news@yahoo.com).
- **Secretary**, Jerry Nunn.
- **Treasurer**, Bob Kennedy.

**Webmaster:** Kim Hays, [kimhays516@gmail.com](mailto:kimhays516@gmail.com)

### Chapter Business Address

North Texas Chapter, NRHS, P.O. Box 600304, Dallas, Texas 75360

**Chapter Email:** [northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com](mailto:northtexaschapternrhs@gmail.com)

**North Texas Chapter site:** <https://ntxnrhs.org/>

**Facebook Page:** <http://www.facebook.com/groups/409467244127/>

**North Texas Zephyr** (current issues): <https://ntxnrhs.org/>

**North Texas Zephyr, newsletter archive**

<https://ntxnrhs.org/>

<http://www.gogeoacaching.com/gorailfanning/Home/northtexaszephyr.html>

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## North Texas Chapter History

Founded and chartered in 1996, the North Texas Chapter is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the state of Texas. Emphasis of the chapter is activity, history, and enjoyment of railroading past and present. Meetings are held 7:30-10:00 PM, first Tuesday of each month. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. Chapter membership includes our monthly chapter newsletter, the *North Texas Zephyr*.

Currently, chapter dues are \$16, plus \$2 per additional family member. Payment may be made by check or paid online. By check - Mail a check payable to "North Texas Chapter NRHS" for \$16 (individual) or \$18 (family) and mail it to North Texas Chapter NRHS, PO Box 600304, Dallas TX, 75360. If your check does not clearly indicate who the member is, please add a note with the member's name. Online - Visit the chapter's on-line store at <https://northtexaschapternrhs.ecwid.com/> to pay by credit card or PayPal. A small service charge (50 cents for individuals, 75 cents for families) is added to your dues payment to cover processing fees. Chapter mailing address: North Texas Chapter NRHS, P.O. Box 600304, Dallas, Texas 75360. Learn about the National Railway Historical Society at [www.nrhs.com](http://www.nrhs.com)



## Chapter Calendar

Note: Chapter meeting dates are very tentative, based on the federal and state health advisory regarding COVID-19.

April 7, 2020	North Texas Chapter meeting. <i>Meeting cancelled, per national health advisory.</i>
May 5, 2020	North Texas Chapter meeting. <i>To be confirmed, based on national health advisory.</i> <i>Location: SMU DeGolyer Library, 6404 Robert S Hyer Ln, Dallas, TX 75205. Program: Steve Goen, the Cotton Belt Railroad.</i>
May 16-17, 2020	<i>Historic Jefferson Train Show 2020. To be confirmed, based on national health advisory.</i> <i>Location: Jefferson Visitors Center, 305 E. Austin Street, Jefferson, Texas 75657. Saturday, May 16, 10am – 4pm. Sunday, May 17, 11am – 4pm. Details at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/567925147110832/">https://www.facebook.com/events/567925147110832/</a></i>
June 2, 2020	North Texas Chapter meeting. <i>To be confirmed, based on national health advisory.</i>
October 3, 2020	<i>15<sup>th</sup> Annual Cotton Belt Regional Railroad Symposium. To be confirmed, based on national health advisory.</i> <i>Location: Sam Rayburn Student Center, 2200 W. Neal, Texas A&amp;M University-Commerce, Commerce, Texas 75428. Details at <a href="http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jdavis/railroad/symposium/default.htm">http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jdavis/railroad/symposium/default.htm</a></i>