

FORT WAYNE RAILROAD

HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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FORT WAYNE LOCOMOTIVE ON THE MOVE IN MAY

Fort Wayne steam locomotive no. 765 will return to the mainline once again for a series of public and private trips this spring in an ongoing partnership with Norfolk Southern.

Last year, Nickel Plate Road no. 765 covered over 4,000 miles in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania operating employee appreciation excursions for the railroad. These trips hosted 7,000 employees and their families and were powered by over 15,000 volunteer hours.

The spring excursion schedule will see the 765 and a fleet of vintage passenger cars on trips originating out of the Cleveland, Ohio area and in central Pennsylvania. Tickets for the public trips sold out in less than 24 hours in late February. Passengers are traveling from as far as Washington, New York City, Canada, Argentina, and Australia.

The public will have a variety of opportunities to experience the 765 throughout May as the 765 operates these excursions and travels on positioning moves (“deadheads”) on the Norfolk Southern system. Routes and times are not available and members of the public are encouraged to use this information safely and responsibly, respecting railroad property and private property at all times.

MAY 2013 OPERATING SCHEDULE

May 9: DEADHEAD – Fort Wayne – Bellevue – Cleveland (Rockport Yard)
May 11: NS EMPLOYEE TRIPS – Rockport – Fairlane
May 12: PUBLIC TRIP – Rocky River – Bellevue Round Trip
May 13: DEADHEAD – Cleveland – Conway – Altoona
May 18-19: NS EMPLOYEE TRIPS -Altoona – Gallitzin (Horseshoe Curve)
May 23: DEADHEAD – Altoona – Enola
May 25: PUBLIC TRIP – Lewistown – Gallitzin Round Trip (Horseshoe Curve)
May 26: PUBLIC TRIP – Lewistown – Gallitzin Round Trip (Horseshoe Curve)
May 27: PUBLIC TRIP – Lewistown – Gallitzin Round Trip (Horseshoe Curve)
May 29: DEADHEAD – Enola – Altoona – Conway
May 30: DEADHEAD – Conway – Cleveland – Bellevue
May 31: DEADHEAD – Bellevue – Fort Wayne

“The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society has been a valuable partner,” said John Irwin, Assistant Vice President of Norfolk Southern’s Transportation Network. “The presence of a working steam locomotive offers the company the unique opportunity to express our appreciation to the men and women who run the railroad day in and day out. We are looking forward to our continued partnership and having the 765 as part of the 21st Century Steam program.”

As part of its ongoing outreach efforts, the railroad historical society is also developing a dedicated smartphone app that will allow users to track the locomotive's location and route, as well as have instant access to news from the organization throughout the year. Over 19,000 people downloaded an early version of the app last year. The society is also continuing work on an a feature length documentary covering the operation of the 765. The app is slated for release in May with the documentary release this winter.

"The 765 creates a happening wherever it goes," explained Kelly Lynch, Communications Manager for the railroad historical society. "This relationship with Norfolk Southern allows us to bring a dramatic icon of American industry and innovation to hundreds of thousands throughout the year. Our mission is to bring outstanding, hands-on educational experiences to as many people as we can."

When not operating excursions, the 765 and other historic railroad equipment is stored at the society's restoration facility in New Haven, Indiana where tours and volunteer work sessions occur every weekend.

An excursion schedule for the fall is pending.

BACKGROUND AND LOCAL RELEVANCE

Steam locomotive no. 765 was built for the Nickel Plate Road in 1944 and operated trains between Chicago and Fort Wayne, Indiana until 1958. In 1960, it was selected for display in Lawton Park as a "monument to a great era of development in our country - the age of steam" and in recognition for the massive "Elevate the Nickel Plate Project" which removed a dozen grade crossings from downtown Fort Wayne and spurred city development north of the St. Mary's river in the post war era.

Removed from the park in 1974, no. 765 was restored to operating condition through an all-volunteer effort and returned to service in 1979. After an involved 22 years of operating through sixteen years, the locomotive was completely rebuilt in an intense, five year effort that cost \$750,000 and exhausted 15,000 volunteer hours. The 765 regularly experiences over 3,000 visitors daily when operating.

No. 765 is the centerpiece to a popular downtown redevelopment plan called Headwaters Junction, a conceptual effort to create a cultural, recreational, and educational venue within a distinctive and romantic regional attraction on the North River property in Fort Wayne. It has been endorsed by Legacy Fort Wayne as "big, bold, transformational."

The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society, Inc is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

For more information:

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