



MILEPOSTS

Senior Road Foreman Calls for Safety Education

By John DePaemelaere

Editor's Note: John DePaemelaere began his railroad career with the Santa Fe Railway in 1973. He came to INRD in 2003, and is now Senior Railroad Foreman, as well as a member of the President's Safety Committee.

How many times have we seen people walking on the railroad? The media glorifies the very thought of walking on the tracks. Motion pictures show it, advertisers display models posing on the tracks with their products. Part of this fascination surely comes from the thought in many people's minds that trains are nostalgic museum pieces. They think railroads are dead and dying. Dead and dying may have been true in past years, but railroads are and have been rebounding in great ways for more than 25 years.

You don't see pedestrians in the fast lane of the interstate highways, walking along nonchalantly with buds in their ears, oblivious to traffic. You don't see them walking on airport runways. What is it about railroads that attracts the public? Talk to them: quite a few think that railroads are public property. If a railroad employee tries to shoo them away, they get angry.

The Shuffle Creek incident

See "Foreman," page 2

Railroad Trespassing Puts Much More Than the Trespasser at Risk

Here is a question you should ask yourself, your family and friends: Is okay to walk across your neighbor's front yard without their permission? Most responsible adults are going to answer, "Of course not."

As a follow-up question, ask if it's okay, or if it's "a problem" for uninvited guests to walk on or across railroad property without permission.

Unfortunately, most members of our society don't see railroad trespassing as a problem even though railroad rights-of-way constitute privately-owned land and are – especially bridges, tunnels, mainlines and switch yards – among the most dangerous places non-railroaders could occupy.

Trespassing on railroad property is illegal and foolish, and without question, a 10,000-ton train moving 50 mph is going to take a much bigger bite out of a trespasser than the dog in your neighbor's front yard.

Indiana Rail Road recently made news across the world when our executive, legal and public relations staffs made the decision to release video of a near-fatal encounter between an Indianapolis-bound train and two trespassers on Shuffle Creek Trestle, near Bloomington, Indiana.



Shuffle Creek Trestle is 982 feet long and stands 80 feet over the swampy shallows of Lake Lemon.

Photo by Chris Thompson

Two female subjects, both in their mid-30s, dove between the rails after attempts to run proved futile. The locomotives and several cars passed above them, but the subjects are fortunate for two reasons: there is a mere 10 inches of clearance between the crossties and bottom of a locomotive's snowplow, and if one of the heavy air hoses connecting each locomotive and railcar had been hanging lower than normal, it would have struck and killed them.

The point is: the women should have never been on railroad property to begin with, for their act could have resulted not only in their death but that of the engineer, not to mention a catastrophic derailment.

As with all North American railroads, trains can run on INRD at any time, any day, and we must be vigilant to protect our employees, asset and the public.

Protecting our employees is exactly why INRD chose to release the video. In this case, thankfully, an engineer did not kill two trespassers, and does not have to forever live with the memory of fatalities that were out of his control.

Such incidents are why railroad employees are encouraged to report trespassers, why railroads encourage law enforcement to prosecute trespassers, and why we partner with law enforcement and Operation Lifesaver to encourage trespass avoidance and grade-crossing safety.



Indiana Rail Road has signage across the system warning the public of the consequences of trespassing.

See "Trespassing," page 3

The Luckiest Women on Earth

This summer, the whole world witnessed, in vivid detail, two terrified women being overrun by a 14,000-ton train atop a towering viaduct with no means of escape. The stunning moments were recorded by the 'dash-cam' of an Indiana Rail Road loaded train just north of Bloomington, in route to Indianapolis. The women were trespassing on the 80-foot-high structure when the train approached. The video recording showed them in a terrified run for survival over the crossties with no room to sidestep the path of the train. Finally, with the train less than two seconds away, they lay down between the rails and faced mortality. Amazingly, they were spared death by mere inches as the train ground to a stop above them. I hope they never again have to depend on the kind of luck they found that day.

After we investigated the incident, we elected to release the video footage to the media to graphically illustrate the dangers of trespassing on railroad rights-of-way. Instantly, the video and story were picked up by national and international news media and spread virally over the internet. People were captivated by what they perceived as a rare event caught on video – a close encounter with death.

Railroaders, however, perceived an even rarer event captured in those video frames – a second chance.

That's because professional railroaders know full well just how unforgiving an environment the railroad is. For us, witnessing death

under the circumstances I described above is far more common than witnessing survival.

Trains are massive machines, designed to perform immense feats of work. And when the machines are doing what they're designed to do, there are staggering amounts of energy and

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forces in play that are managed under precise, measured control by the train operators.

We can't stop these machines on a dime. And we can't swerve off the rails to avoid a collision.

That's why it's imperative that people not occupy the places reserved for trains.

It's a simple concept. From the time most of us are ready for kindergarten, we're taught basic survival and safety skills such as this; yet, every year, reports bear witness to the toll in human life exacted by naïve ignorance and willful disregard of these lessons.

In 2013, in the State of Indiana alone, 15 people lost their lives in train vs. vehicle collisions at road crossings, and another 19 were killed while trespassing on railroad property. In Illinois, the numbers are even worse. Both states have consistently ranked in the "top-10 worst"

in these categories for decades.

Operation Life-saver (OL) is an international consortium of first responders, government agencies and railroad companies dedicated to promoting rail safety education, engineering and enforcement. Indiana Rail Road is a proud member of the organization. Since its inception in 1972, OL has helped reduce crossing collisions by an astonishing 83 percent! Yet still, there are lives lost every year, and the frequency and severity of trespass incidents has become increasingly troubling, as evidenced by the graphic video footage I mentioned above.

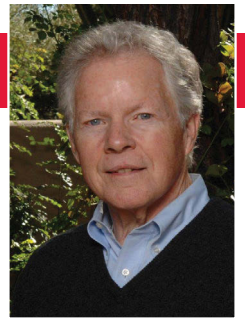
The bottom line is this: Whether on foot or behind the wheel, if you place yourself in the path of a train, there is nothing on this earth – other than sheer luck – that can save you. Period.

Ask any railroader. Second chances are rare out here. Please spread the word to everyone you know.

And those lucky women who survived? They didn't get so lucky with law enforcement and the local prosecutor's office. They'll soon be recounting their harrowing tale in a courtroom. Let's hope their story inspires others to make smarter choices.



Thomas G. Hoback
President and Chief Executive Officer



Foreman, Continued

that went viral recently reveals the public's thinking and their misunderstanding of railroads. Not only are people trespassing on railroad property, but they are placing themselves in danger. They think that they will hear the train come in time to get to a safe place, but trains move much faster than people can run.

I went the first 10 years of my career with little incident. But, before I came to INRD, I was involved with at least five pedestrian incidents that ended with the loss of life. All I could do was keep reminding myself of their ignorance to rail safety, and the fact that it was not my fault, and there was nothing I could do to save them. I couldn't swerve to avoid them. People also seem to think that we can stop as quickly as an automobile. Of course nothing is farther

from the truth. Trains don't stop fast with all that weight involved; physics will not allow it.

Just a few years ago, I was with a group on the tracks in a hi-rail vehicle (a motor vehicle equipped with railroad wheels) in Bloomington. As we approached the Adams Street overpass, we saw a college-age man, walking with his back to us, listening to his music. We eased up to him and he happened to turn, saw us, and nearly jumped off of the overpass onto the street below. We spoke to him about his safety and the fact that he was trespassing and he then wandered off. Had we been on a train, he would not have survived.

We need to continue to educate the public and the authorities of the dangers of trespassing on railroad property. People need to stay off the tracks and the authorities need to enforce the laws. It is a matter of life or death.

It's Free!

Indiana Bicentennial Train

ALL ABOARD!

The Indiana Bicentennial Train is making four stops in Fall 2014, continuing a four-year celebration of the state's 200th birthday. Visit one of the four stops at:

- Columbus: Bartholomew County Fairgrounds (September 19-20)
- Jasper: Train Depot (September 25-27)
- Terre Haute: Margaret Avenue at Prairieton Road (October 2-4)
- Bargersville: Downtown (October 9-11)

Visit <http://www.indianahistory.org/train> for more information.

**Presented by Indiana Rail Road
and Norfolk Southern**

INRD'S Approach to Employee, Customer and Community Safety

The Indiana Rail Road Company is committed to the safety of our employees, our customers and the communities in which we operate. INRD demonstrates this commitment by investing in safety training, infrastructure and innovative approaches to ensure a safe railroad.

President's Safety Committee:

INRD's commitment to safety begins at the top with INRD President and Chief Executive Officer Tom Hoback and the President's Safety Committee. The President's Safety Committee is made up of representatives from each craft and meets monthly to discuss and take action with regard to safety concerns.

Community Education:

Illinois was tied for 3rd, and Indiana tied for 5th in the country in number of trespasser fatalities in 2013. Reaching out to the communities in which we operate and publicizing the dangers associated with trespassing is an important aspect of the safety program at INRD.

Operation Lifesaver: INRD is a long-time partner of Indiana Operation Lifesaver, whose mission is to educate the public about the dangers on railroad rights-of-way through free Operation Lifesaver presentations made by volunteers. Operation Lifesaver volunteers work to improve driver and pedestrian behavior around the railroad and encourage compliance and enforcement of traffic and trespassing laws.

In 2014, INRD joined the Association of American Railroads and partnered with the National Operation Lifesaver organization to launch the "See Tracks? Think Train!" Campaign aimed at raising awareness of risky behavior around railroad tracks.

No Trespassing Signs: INRD has numerous "No Trespassing" signs across the railroad reminding communities that the railroad tracks are private property and it is dangerous to be on or around the tracks.

Media Outreach: Recently INRD worked with local media to highlight the dangers of trespassing by releasing a video of two women trespassing on the Shuffle Creek trestle and being run over by a train. The story garnered international attention and brought awareness to the serious issue of trespassing on railroad bridges.



Grade Crossing Safety: In 2013 there were 90 grade-crossing collisions in Indiana, ranking it 5th in the country, and Illinois was 3rd with 125 vehicle-train collisions. INRD has a public and private crossing closure program. While INRD has one of the lowest grade-crossing collision rates in Indiana, we know that a collision cannot occur unless there is a grade crossing to begin with. We work hard to reduce the number of at-grade crossings on our line through collaboration with Indiana and Illinois DOT's and private landowners.

Track and Signal Inspection and Maintenance: INRD track is regularly inspected to ensure that the track is in proper condition to comply with federal regulations and prevent derailments. It is the State of Indiana that determines the location and types of grade-crossing signals that are installed at railroad crossings; however, it is INRD that maintains the signals once installed at its crossings. INRD takes that responsibility very seriously.

Vegetation Control: INRD works to eliminate vegetation and other obstructions on its railroad by treating all of its right-of-way and grade crossings with herbicides to prevent growth in areas that may impair the vision of railroad crews or motorists.

Law Enforcement Awareness:

Officer on a Train: Local law enforcement officials are our partner in reducing trespassing and grade-crossing incidents. INRD is committed to educating law enforcement in the commu-

nities in which we operate by giving them the opportunity to observe motorist and pedestrian behavior from the cab of a locomotive or from the ground at a grade crossing.

Trespasser Reporting: INRD employees report all trespassers to the dispatcher, who contacts local law enforcement immediately. INRD also tracks trespasser reports in order to assist law enforcement officials by notifying them of "hot spots" or high-risk areas.

Employee Training:

New Employee Training: New INRD operating employees receive 12 months of extensive hands-on, performance-based training and are tested on both safety and operating rules.

Re-certification Program: All operating employees are regularly re-certified on rules that effect grade crossing safety, such as rules pertaining to train speeds and whistle procedures. Training is re-enforced by regular operations testing.

Incident Response Training: INRD employees are trained by professionals in incident response and INRD maintains an Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plan.

Close-Call Reporting: Employees are encouraged and rewarded for reporting close calls and information regarding close calls is used to try to prevent future incidents.

Trespassing Continued

Fortunately, the states of Indiana and Illinois both have Railroad Trespass laws that specifically forbid trespassing on railroad property, and unlike Indiana's Criminal Trespass law, which requires a law enforcement officer to first warn an intruder to leave private property, the Railroad Trespass law calls for a subject to be immediately apprehended.

For 28 years, the Indiana Rail Road has had one goal: to safely move freight for our customers, and build our business and brand through superior customer service. The Shuffle Creek trespassing incident is not the way we wish to draw the public's attention, but if we help to save the life of an employee of our railroad, or of the other 500-plus railroads, or of a citizen who will think twice about trespassing, we are all better off.



The Indiana Rail Road Company
8888 Keystone Crossing, Suite 1600
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

Safety is like Coffee.



it hurts to go without it.

- Keiffer Allen, Train Operator

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INRD Pledges \$50,000 Matching Donation For Dugger-Union School

Indiana Rail Road on Aug. 19 pledged \$50,000 in matching funds to support the residents of Dugger, Ind., and their effort to establish and sustain Dugger-Union Community Schools.

Located in the heart of Indiana Rail Road's 500-mile operating territory, in Sullivan County, Dugger's 910 residents were faced with a threat to their town's long-term viability last winter when the Northeast School Corporation board voted to close Dugger Union High School.

The closure – a budgetary measure – called for Dugger Union students to transfer to schools that would be as much as a one-hour bus ride away, one way.

The response from Dugger community leaders and parents has been sheer determination. They've worked for months to keep a school in their town, first by establishing a partnership with Indiana Cyber Charter School (ICCS). The next step was applying sweat and elbow grease to clean the school from ceiling to floor and make light repairs.

Dugger-Union Community Schools, grades Kindergarten to 12, opened on August 25. Three days earlier, the family of Dugger graduate Rodney Smallwood announced a



\$50,000 donation to match Indiana Rail Road's contribution.

"As a native of a small town in Illinois and a long-time proponent of the southwest Indiana economy, I've seen what can happen to communities that lose their schools: they simply dry up," said Tom Hoback, Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of INRD. "Dugger is an important anchor for INRD and our nearby customers, such as Peabody Energy. Many of our employees and families live there; many generations have attended Union High School. I know it hasn't been an easy year for Dugger parents and volunteers, but I'm proud and happy to see their efforts come through."

Since the ICCS's mission is to serve primarily as an online ("cyber") school – although staff will be on hand for each grade and all core high school courses – ICCS is not responsible for funding building maintenance or extracurricular activities such as sports.

INRD's \$50,000 contribution will be directed to operational expenses and extracurricular activities. The railroad is also pursuing options, along with Peabody Energy's nearby Bear Run Mine, the local carpenters union and other local employers, to provide in-class training for Dugger-Union students who wish to pursue a career in vocational trade industries.

The Indianapolis Colts and BSN Sports have pledged sponsorships and in-kind donations to support Dugger-Union's athletic programs, and numerous alumni and concerned citizens alike have made donations to get Dugger-Union Community Schools off the ground.

Dugger's efforts have also received national attention, thanks to CBSSports.com writer Gregg Doyel's ongoing coverage. For more information, visit the school's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DuggerBulldogs>.