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____ Volume 15 Number 1 ____



CSXT 250TH USA ANNIVERSARY LOCOMOTIVES

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We had a great 2026 CSXTHS Convention with the L&N Historical Society in Nashville. There were excellent presentations, a great train ride, an educational visit to see NC&StL #576 being rebuilt, and a banquet with a great speaker. Hope to see you at our 2027 CSXTHS convention.

Again, the CSXTHS Journal is always looking for articles and photos.

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CSXT'S USA 250TH ANNIVERSARY LOCOMOTIVES

The two locomotives, CM44AH 250 and CM44AH 2026, were painted at CSX's Waycross, Georgia, Shop in June 2026. Photos CSXT Public Relations.

















(Thomas H Parker)



(Elliot Ripley)



Steve Barry

A RETURN TO COALGOOD

Everett Young

In December 2025, Christian got info that a CSXT train would be making a rare visit to the Creech Mine in Harlan County, Kentucky. Later information revealed that indeed the train had departed Corbin, Kentucky, and was heading for the mine. We did likewise. We passed up the traditional stop at the Pine Mountain Grill in Whitesburg, Kentucky, for a brief visit to McDonald's. Good thing we did!



As we came up KY 990 to the mine, we met R615-29 (Corbin-Creech mine run) easing slowly down the steep grade and loading the first cut of hoppers.



This sign indicates that the Coalgood operator is 101 Coal Inc. Decades ago it was Mary Helen Coal Corporation, but it has changed hands several times since then. Under the L&N years ago, it was listed as the Merna Branch, aka Turtle Creek Spur. The spur is about 1.5 miles in length. Most of it is on a 2.5% grade. This is probably the reason R215 is loading the 72 empty hoppers in two cuts. The first one has 40 cars. Another five minutes, and we would have missed this shot! The moral of this story: Don't Fool Around when chasing trains, stay focused!



Almost off the grade, R615-29 approaches "old" US 421 at Lenarue (post office), which is known as Glidden on the railroad.



R615 heads around the south leg of the wye and out the south end of Glidden passing siding.



R615-29 then shoves the first cut down the main line.



R615-29 cuts off at the crossing. That's the new US 421 going overhead. A couple of railfans are in that truck. Anytime, when word of sporadic moves gets out, railfans flock!



The conductor rides the second cut back up the hill.



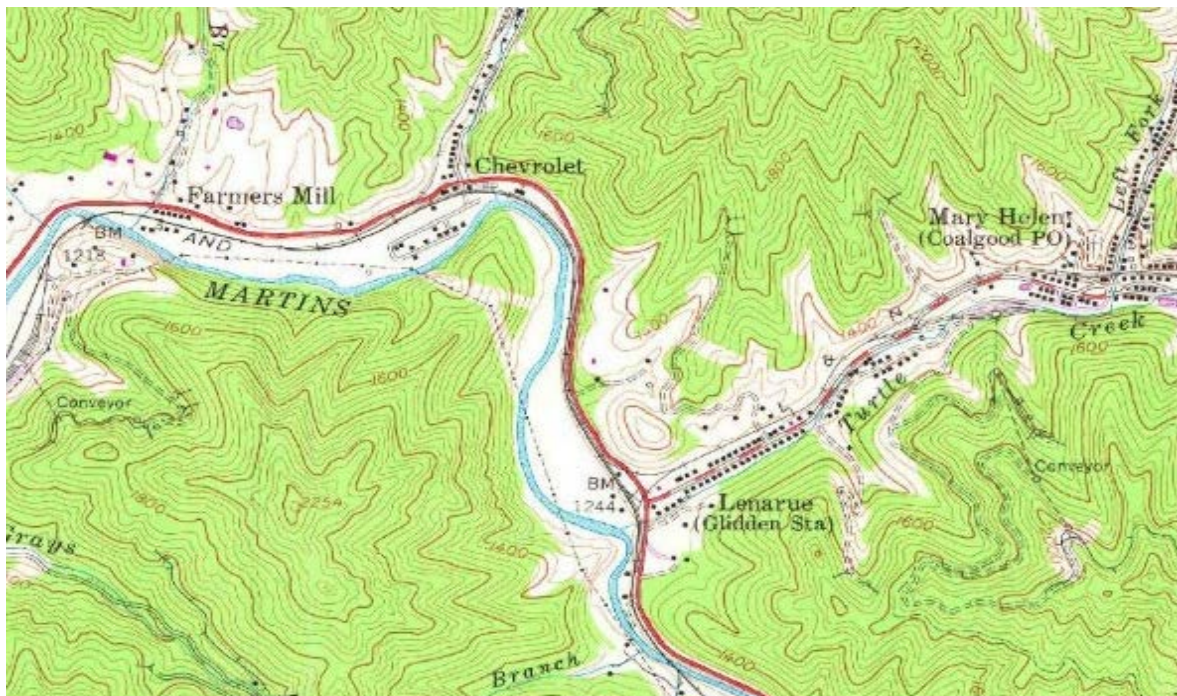
R615 rolls by the Mary Helen United Baptist Church. A Mineral Labs (coal samplers) employee inspects the empty hoppers as they roll under.



The old Mary Helen Coal Company store has seen better days. It was last used by Coalgood Supply Co. The Coalgood Post Office, typical of company stores, occupied part of the building.



Ron Flanary did an excellent account of the inception of unit trains at Merna in his book L&N Cumberland Valley Division Album, 1945-1954. In 1966, this was the first unit train location on the L&N.



USGS Harlan quad, 1954, 1:24,000 scale, photo-revised 1978. Shows the deck truss bridge at Farmers Mill (later) and most of Turtle Creek up to Coalgood.



USGS Evarts quad, 1954, 1:24,000 scale, photo-revised 1979, shows the head of Turtle Creek and the end-of-track. The very end was 3:00%. The 1939 Keystone Coal Buyers Manual, Including Directory of Mines, lists Mary Helen Coal Corp. as mining the Harlan seam (48") with 400 employees and a daily capacity of 2,500 tons. Another mine, the Queen Mary mine, operated in the Splint seam (44") with 100 employees and could produce 600 tons per day.



A Cat 980M end-loader crosses the track after R615 gets clear.



R615-29 has "spotted up" to commence loading. Merna had been the name of the single-car tippie; Creech was the name given to the 4-hour fast-load tippie for 72 cars. The community of Creech, however, is located in another section of Harlan County.



That Cat 330 backhoe is used to clean out ponds and ditches, etc. Little Black Mountain is in the background.



Three cars are loaded.



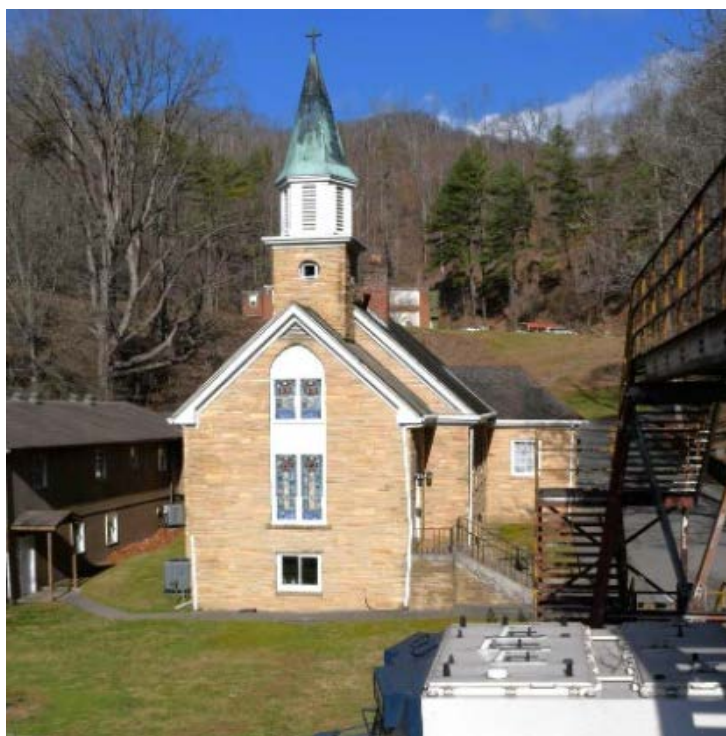
One of the last old company store buildings left in the Southern Appalachians. It could be demolished at any time.



Mary Helen scrip, \$1.00 and \$0.10 for use in the company store. Scrip was discontinued post WWII.



One thing I forgot to mention is that Monday, December 29, 2025, was bone-chillingly cold, with a stiff wind blowing all day. The temperature was around freezing or below. I had on coveralls, but I still froze!



Mary Helen United Methodist Church.



The steel walk bridge makes a perfect photo platform.



After loading the final 32 hoppers, R615-29 rolled down the hill and through the junction at Glidden. Monday, 12-29-25



I'm standing under the "new" US 421 bridge.



CSX 7116-5379 is pulling northbound onto the Glidden passing siding.



R615 has stopped past the north end of Glidden and will now back up to the rest of his train.



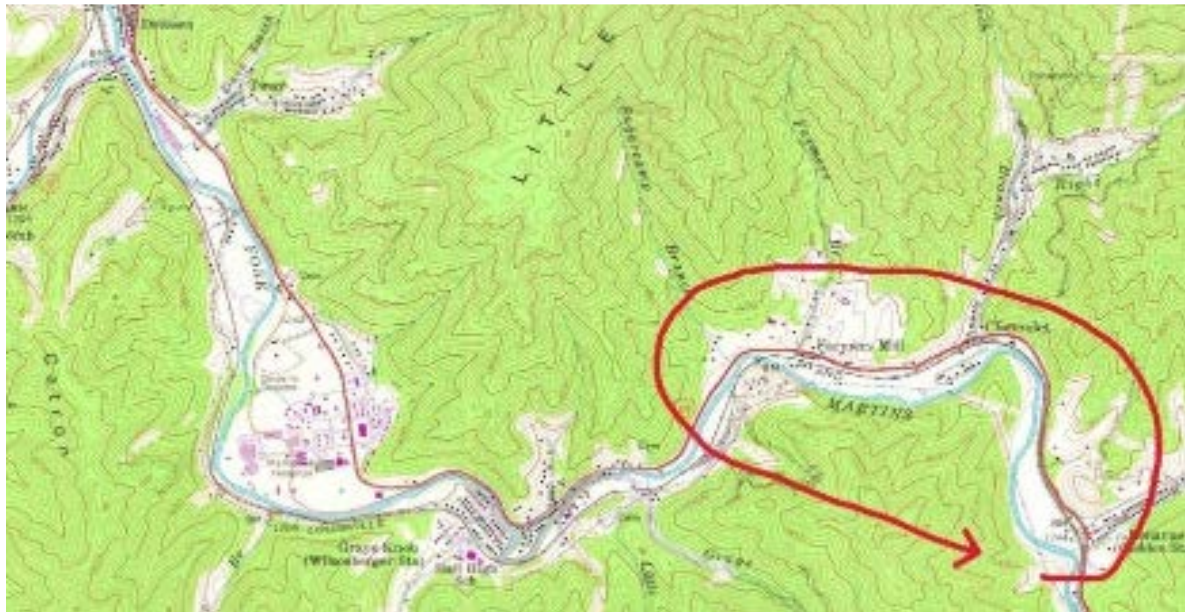
Beside the Chevrolet church parking lot, the conductor of R615 makes the coupling with the 40 loads already on the main line from the first trip up to the loadout.



A new crew arrives. This is R614-29. They will replace R215-29 and take the 72-car train north to Corbin, Kentucky.



R615-29 crosses a deck truss over Martins Fork of the Cumberland River at Farmer's Mill.



USGS Harlan quad, 1954, 24,000 scale, photo-revised 1978



R614-29 has a clear signal to enter Rule 261 territory (track signaled in both directions, aka CTC).



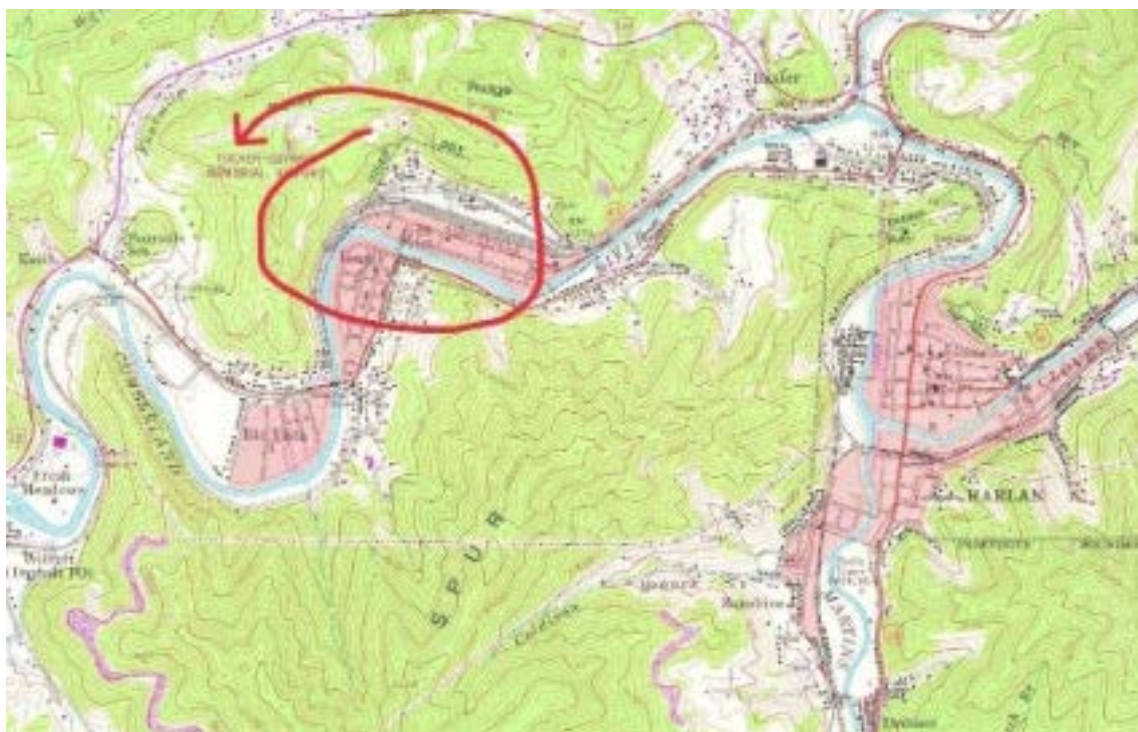
CSXT 7116-5379 past the signals at North Loyall. The track on the right is a controlled siding extending north to Wilhoit (formerly double track). The switching lead has been removed. A non-standard cantilever signal was once here.



Dwarf signal on the controlled siding at North Loyall looking south.



West end of the yard heading for Pineville, Kentucky



USGS Harlan quad, 1954, 24,000 scale, photo-revised 1978. This shows the north end of Loyall Yard.



Block signal 223.3 on the Blackmont Siding shows approach. The siding extending north has been removed. The Pucketts Creek Branch on the right has been abandoned.



R614-29 northbound at Blackmont. With the sidings and the branch line, Blackmont used to be a happening place. But that was in the old days when the coal business was good.



Evidence of the tracks being removed.



USGS Balkan quad, 1974, 24,000 scale.



On the way to Coalgood early in the day, we passed E979 behind 4731-3207 parked at Chad Yard near Cumberland. These empties would be loaded at Lynch 3, although they had not moved by the time we headed home.

LOADING SHORT WOOD PULPWOOD

Gerhard Anderson



We are at the CSXTBarberville Florida Wood Yard. Seen in the photo is something that has in 2026 almost totally disappeared from the rail scene in the south, the loading of short wood pulpwood on a railroad bulkhead flatcar. But on this day in February 1996, the loading of short wood timber on a CSXT bulkhead flatcar is making one of the last appearances. Two flatcars have been loaded and the third flatcar is having its timber load topped out. Note the front end timber loader on the far right. Soon this once common rail scene will be no more and the only thing remaining at this site in 2026 is an over grown vacant field.

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TTX HONORING THE USA 250th BIRTHDAY



Be on the lookout, for it will be running on CSXT

CSXT 1877 – CHICAGO & EASTERN ILLINOIS

Dwight Jones

Depending on how you count them, CSXT has been painting locomotives into schemes described as “Heritage,” “Tribute,” and perhaps “Special.” I count thirty that are out and about on the System. The final one that I needed to complete my Phase II photography was the 1877, painted as a Heritage unit in tribute to the C&EI (Chicago and Eastern Illinois). It was unveiled from the Waycross, Georgia, paint shop on July 26, 2024. Not the most colorful of the heritage paint schemes. At the time it was the 17th Heritage Unit to be completed by CSXT. C&EI was established in 1877, hence the new assigned locomotive number.

On July 5, 2026, I caught CSXT 1877 near Desher, Ohio.



Dwight Jones

MAINE CENTRAL RAILROAD 3404

A SD 40-2 at CSXT Russell, Kentucky Yard April 2026



CHANGES AT JACKSONVILLE OPERATION CENTER

The following was posted by CSXT on May 7, 2026.

Five Dispatching desks in the CSXT Jacksonville Operation Center will be abolished and added to other Dispatching Desks, as follows:

1. On or after July 14, 2026, the JF console will be abolished and its territories added to the JA, JD, and JG consoles.
2. On or after July 15, 2026, the SA console will be abolished and added to the SB console.
3. On or after August 3, 2026, the BA console will be abolished and added to the NG console.
4. On or after August 3, 2026, the RL console will be abolished and added to the RN console.
5. On or after August 4, 2026, the LC console will be abolished and added to the LA console.

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It is June 14, 2026, and M561, with CSXT 973 on the head, is leaving Troy, Ohio, on the Toledo Subdivision. Note the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad signal still standing trackside. (James Earljones)

A photograph of a CSX freight train. The lead locomotive is blue and yellow, with the number 1016 visible on its side and front. It is pulling several flatcars. The train is on a track with gravel ballast. In the background, there are trees and a building.

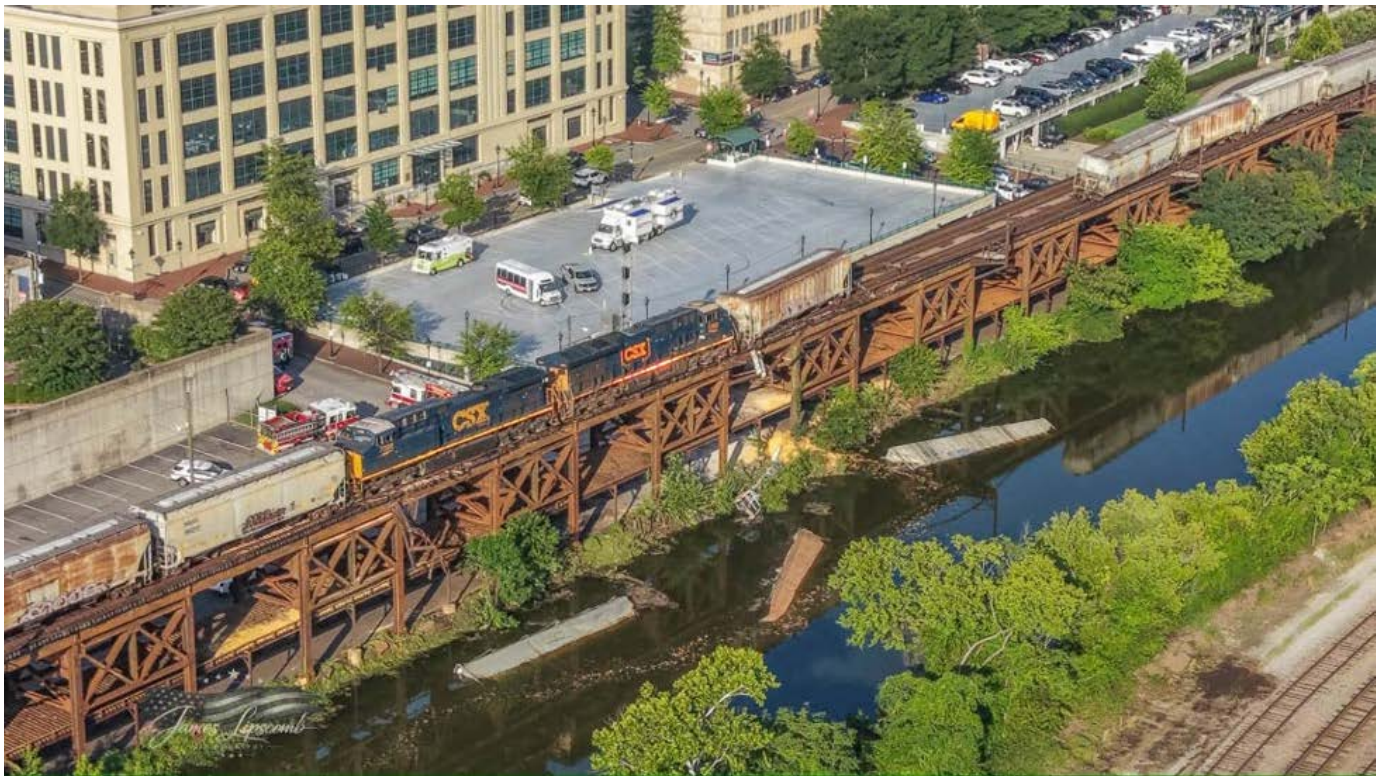
[illegible]

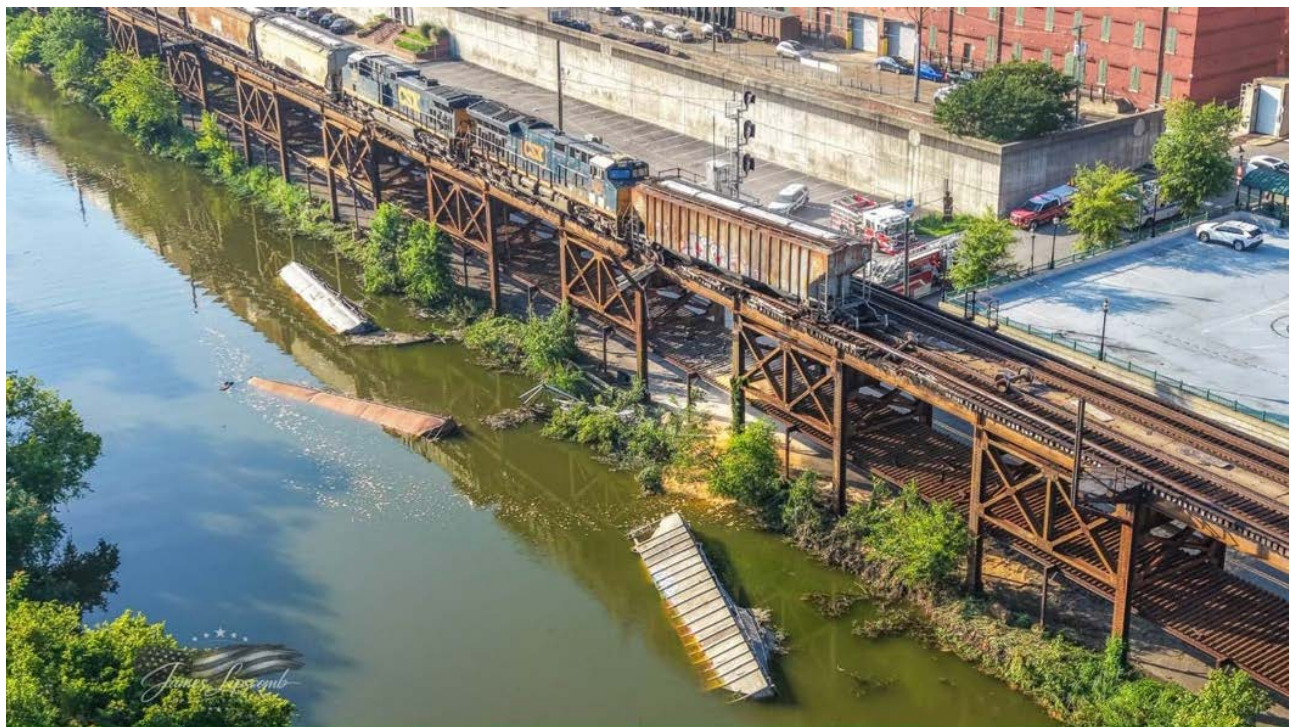
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DERAILMENT RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

James Lipscomb

At 4:00 PM on July 3, 2026, CSXT train G635-30 from Columbus, Ohio, heading to Aberdeen, North Carolina, derailed on the Richmond Trestle in downtown Richmond, Virginia, near the intersection of Dock Street and 20th Street. The train consisted of two locomotives trailed by 89 cars and the two distribution power locomotives followed by 90 cars. Three covered hoppers carrying corn derailed and went into the Kanawha River. The two distribution power locomotives, CSXT 7096 and CSXT 3380, plus two other covered hoppers carrying corn derailed but stayed on the track.







THE CLINCHFIELD HERITAGE UNIT AT HOME

Matthew Ditton



St. Paul, Virginia



Elkhorn City, Kentucky

CSXT 4568 OPERATION LIFESAVER

Chris Stroger

M316 at Clarksburg, West Virginia, on May 23, 2026





Chris Stroger



Chris Stroger

“THE BEST RAILROAD ACTION PHOTO I’VE EVER SEEN”

Ron Flanary



The speaker who made this statement, “The best railroad action photo I’ve ever seen...” regarding the above image was the late Sid Johnson. Sid got his start as a co-op “student apprentice” in 1965 on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. He rose through the ranks of operations management before his eventual retirement. There wasn’t much about the L&N that Sid didn’t know, from experience. He was gone for a time, working as an Air Force officer working in the White House for the Nixon administration, but he was on the railroad when the L&N dealt with a nearly unmanageable tide of coal from the mid-70s and beyond for many years.

This shot was projected on a screen during a discussion of the L&N by his close friend and former Corbin Division superintendent Jim Oaks (who also passed away not long ago). These two guys had been the meat grinder that was the L&N’s eastern Kentucky coal lines during these times. Every day there were too many trains to move, no power, no rested crews, a constant empty car shortage, and an infrastructure that was literally being pounded into the mud. Slow orders and derailments were rampant. By 1979, though, the L&N took its case to the ICC (which was still in place but moving toward deregulation). All this tonnage wasn’t paying for itself. The ICC agreed and granted an unprecedented 22 percent rate increase on interstate coal traffic.

There were objections, of course, but the coal industry was reaping a literal fortune at the time.

During the presentation by Oaks, Jim made that utterance to me and David Oroszi. The original slide was taken on Kodachrome 200 during a frog-strangler rain storm. I remembered it well. It was April 10, 1988, and my friend David DeVault and I had spent the entire day photographing CSXT trains as far north as Livingston, Kentucky, and south to this point—the “Oaks” crossover between Chaska and Habersham, Tennessee, on the climb up Duff Mountain. I almost started to apologize for the poor quality of the image until I realized Sid was seeing things the rest of us couldn’t. This stretch of trackage was rebuilt and double tracked in 1980 to break up a “choke” point on the KD Subdivision. He had been on the team that designed the project. Earlier he had told me his boss, Ken Dufford, had objected to the direction of the crossover here. He felt it should go from the west track to the east, but Sid argued otherwise, and prevailed.

Another improvement to this stretch of railroad is represented in the illuminated white light on the right. This was part of a derailment detector system developed by David Orr and others about the same time. This system was installed on several critical hills where heavy tonnage was being pulled and shoved over twisting trackage. If the string of lights remained illuminated, everything was still on the rails. If there was a derailment, the wheels would sever electrical lines mounted on crossties, causing the fail-safe system to darken immediately. A side benefit was for railfans. If the light came on, find your spot and get ready.

On the afternoon of the photo, a rain storm was brewing. David and I knew a southbound mixed CSXT freight would stop short of the crossover on the left track, and a northbound CSXT empty hopper train would wait at the crossover on the east track. Southbound hotshot intermodal (Cincinnati-Jacksonville) R141—powered by three GE B36-7s—would take the east track at Chaska, go through the crossover at Oaks, and continue up the mountain at full throttle. Even those units had Sid’s DNA. They were favored over EMD products because of their 3,250-gallon fuel tanks and 3,600 HP. The “Tote Boats” (as some of us railfans called them) were THE power for Seaboard System’s fleet of high-priority intermodal trains. Sid had strongly advocated for these units, and he was again on the winning side.

It was obvious Sid felt pride in his contributions in seeing this bit of railroad drama playing out on an image I had taken. DeVault had decided to stay on the other side and seek refuge in his car. I went “all in” and remained on the east side just to see what I might get on film. When the rain hit a few minutes before R141 appeared around the curve, it was of Noah proportion. I knew I would be totally soaked, but we had decided to head east for home after this. I would dry, but photo opportunities not taken will only bring regret. I did the best I could to keep the rain off the lens and fired off several exposures. By then, I was sure this photographic attempt was hopeless. When Q141 passed, I was able to get across to the car to join David. I was so wet even the bills in my wallet were soaked.

Of course, this isn't the best railroad action photo of all time. The court of public opinion in the railroad photographer world would rate this as C plus best. A professional railroader like Sid would and did see it entirely in a different way. He had "skin in the game" for this shot, and my grainy old slide memorialized the wisdom of his decisions made years earlier. For Sid, it was personal. I think Jim Oaks felt the same way, because he mentioned it as well. Many exposures have been made at this spot by countless photographers over the years, and I'm sure quite a few are far better. The one thing I had going for me was drama. The rain was falling so hard you can see sheets of water being thrown off the roof of the trailer just passing the lead unit of the southbound train on the westside main. Streaks of rain are visible here and there as well, including the front of R141's lead unit.

Bryan Aldridge later said of this photo, "The 5800's could walk the dog when amperage was kept up." From the looks of this photo, the man in the hole did not get in the clear in time to keep the TOTE from getting an approach block at the distance signal. So he had to approach the control point prepared to stop. From the exhaust, he has viewed a high green and it's time to get the TOTE BOATS cranking again.

We photographers should listen to the professional railroaders sometimes rather than thinking we, alone, can best interpret the railroad industry in imagery. They do this for a living, so their opinion carries more weight.

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February 10, 1990, Jasper, West Virginia – Ron Flanary

CSXT IN CORBIN, KENTUCKY

Ron Flanary



The carloads of trailers of CSXT Cincinnati, Ohio – Jacksonville, Florida intermodal R141 lean into the dynamic brake resistance of the mix of EMD and GE power up front on May 20, 1988, at Center Street, Corbin, Kentucky. Just ahead is a crew change at the former passenger station as the guys who brought the train down the CC Subdivision give it up to a KD crew for the next leg to Etowah, Tennessee. CSXT later rerouted all intermodal traffic off this route in favor of a more westerly north-south line via Louisville, Kentucky, and Nashville, Tennessee. Like the former Clinchfield line – located further east--this north-south former Louisville & Nashville Railroad route is not cleared for double stack traffic.

CSXT 911343 PART OF THE RESPONDERS INCIDENT TRAINING TRAIN

CSXT Public Information

CSXT 911343 and the other units of the Responders Incident Training Train are seen here sitting at DeWitt Yard in Syracuse, NY, on July 6, 2026. CSXT 911343's road number stands for the September 11th, 2001, attack on the United States, with the 911 being the emergency call number and the 343 being the number of New York City firefighters that died during the attack. CSXT 911343 contains no operating electrical parts or fuel system; it is strictly a locomotive mockup.



A WALK AROUND CSXT'S MD TOWER FOR THE MODELER

Charles H. Bogart

Located on Fairgrounds Road, one half mile north of the Marion, Ohio Union Depot, is MD Tower. This combination tower and yard office was built by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway circa 1950. The tower was closed by CSXT circa 2000, but the yard office is still in use.



Trackside



Fairground Road side



Above and below: Back side of building





Back and left side of building



Left and trackside view of building

CSXT 4421

Jeff Kovacs

Cold...Rain...Sleet...so it must be time for a trackside photo. On a cold, rainy, sleet-filled day on March 12, 2026, wedged between Daylight Saving Time and the first day of spring, Conrail train PR-20 waits patiently for a re-crew at Hall Avenue in Perth Amboy, NJ.

CSX 4421, a familiar unit in central New Jersey, was built as Conrail 3331 in June 1978, forty-eight years ago. The train will use the former LVRR-CNJ interchange under the Hall Avenue bridge eastward to WOOD (formerly WC Tower) to head back to Port Reading on the CR Garden State Secondary (the CNJ former Perth Amboy & Elizabeth) with eleven tank cars from steady customer Kinder-Morgan.



CSX #4421, a GP-40-2 built in June 1978 for Conrail, stands ready to leave Hall Avenue in Perth rainy March 12, 2026.



CSXT 1973 - CHESSIE AT HER BEST

Dwight Jones



Note the two different number boards



TRAIN B486-13

Ron Flanary

Thanks to an August 15, 2026, Facebook messenger from my friend D.C. Hammon containing a train coming heads up, I grabbed my camera this afternoon and went out and photographed a train. D.C. said a CSXT combined empty hopper train (for Eastman coal) headed for the mine at Resource on the Kentucky side of the mountain was passing the intermediate signal at Sunbright, Virginia. There were five units on the point, then about 90 empty aluminum air dumps, a DP, and the cars of a scrubber stone empty train bound for the quarry at Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. The limestone quarry is on the southern remnant of the former Louisville & Nashville Lebanon Branch north of Corbin, Kentucky. The open top aluminum hopper cars carry high-purity limestone used for flue-gas desulfurization (scrubbing) at coal-fired plants in the Carolinas.

D.C. said the whole train was 170 cars, plus the six units (train ID: B486-13). That was much too long to be chambered in the available tracks at Smiley, Virginia, the lower leg of the Hagans switchback. Radio discussion indicated the CSXT “plan” would be to set off the scrubber empties in the siding at Pennington, Virginia then continue to Loyall, Kentucky. A rested crew might not have been available, but a better solution (in my opinion, at least) would have been to call a crew and taxi them to Hagans. When the train backed down, the new crew could have taken the single DP unit and stone cars and continue through Loyall all the way to Corbin. After it was out of the way at Smiley, the empty hopper train could follow to Loyall and tie up. Neither movement would have suffered significant delays. But—perhaps a rested crew wasn’t available.



WHEN IN CINCINNATI, OHIO

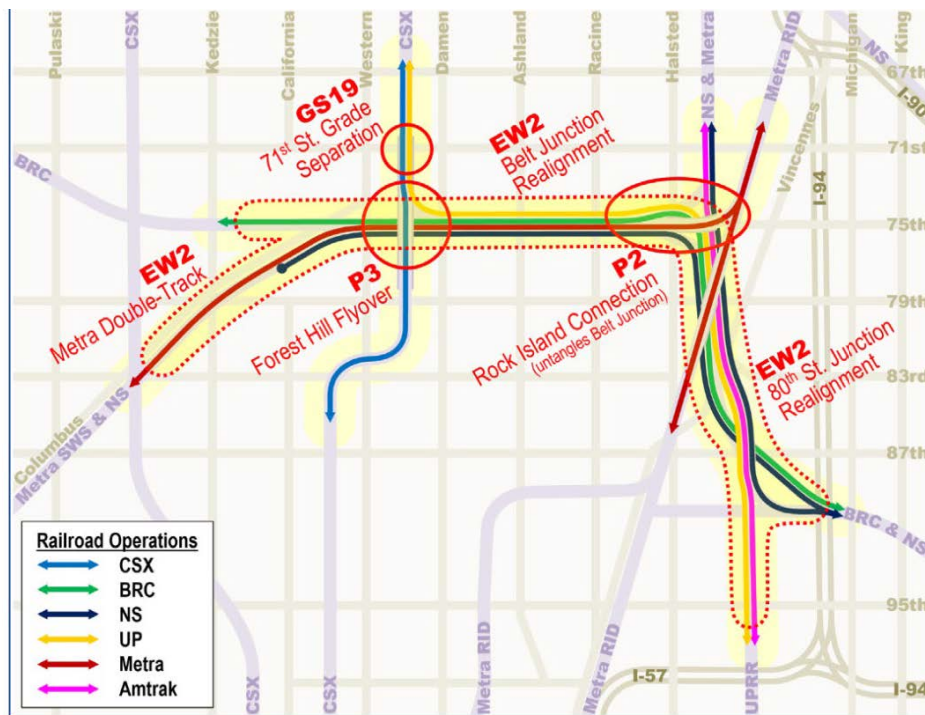
Brian Szemon

If you ever find yourself in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area, the Covington, Kentucky Courtyard by Marriott has fantastic views of CSXT from the 9th floor. The staff is friendly. We told them we wanted to see CSXT trains and they did a great job.



CREATE STARTS WORK ON 71ST STREET GRADE SEPARATION PROJECT

CSXT PUBLIC RELATIONS



On July 28, 2026, CREATE (Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program) started work on the 71st Street Grade Crossing Separation Project, part of the massive 75th Street Corridor program. The project aims to eliminate rail traffic issues at 71st Street, at the north end of the CSXT Forest Hill Flyover which was completed in November 2025. That Forest Hill Flyover carries CSXT tracks over those used by Metra, Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern, and the Belt Railway of Chicago. The new work will eliminate a conflict between traffic and approximately 35 daily freight trains.

Said CSXT CEO Steve Angel, “The 71st Street grade separation reflects years of coordination among transportation partners focused on improving safety and mobility. By eliminating the crossing, the project will improve safety, reduce congestion, and make travel more reliable for the surrounding community. It also supports the efficient movement of freight through Chicagoland, where rail capacity is critical to the national supply chain.”

The grade crossing separation project is expected to be completed in late 2027. Together, it and the Forest Hill Flyover will cost an estimated \$380 million, covered through a \$132 million federal INFRA (Infrastructure for Rebuilding America) grant, with the remainder coming from state, local, and railroad funding.

CREATE is a joint effort of freight railroads, Amtrak, Metra, and federal and state government to eliminate Chicago area rail bottlenecks by funding seventy new infrastructure projects.

CSXT RECEIVES AREMA HAY AWARD

Jeff Tuzik



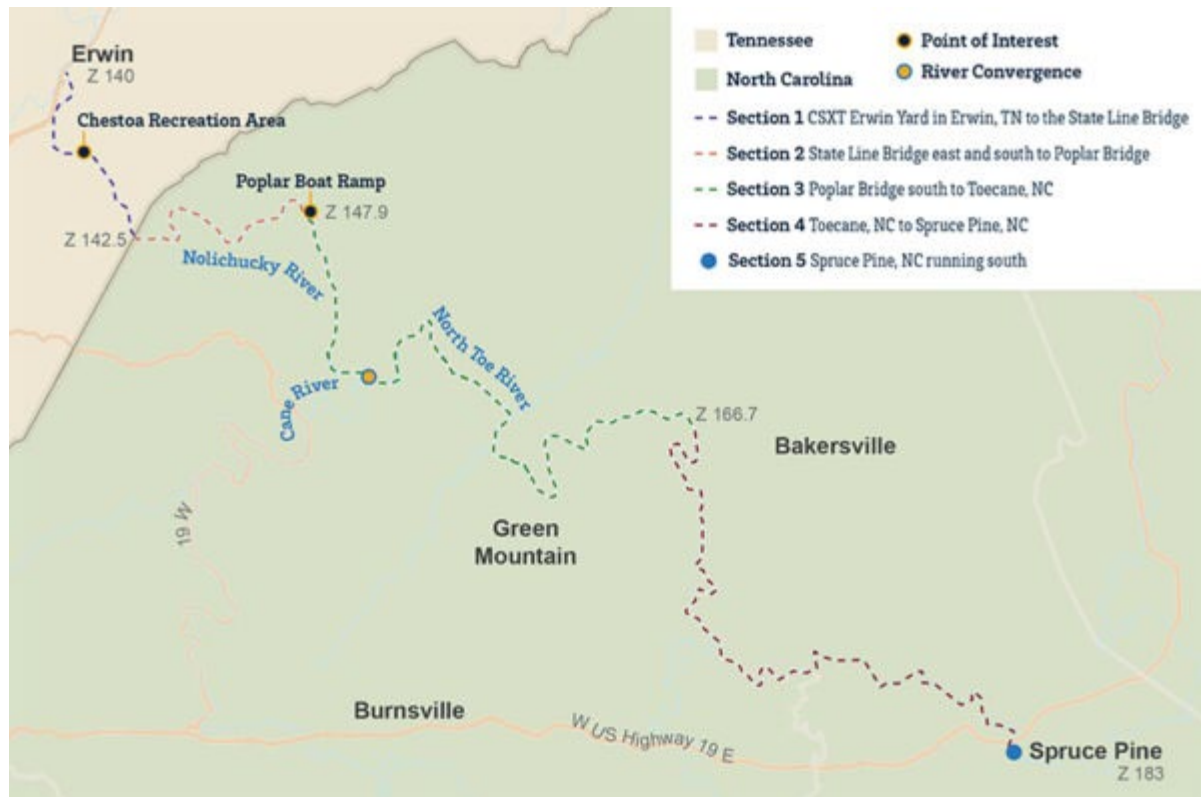
The American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA) has awarded CSXT the Dr. William W. Hay Award for Excellence for its post-Hurricane Helene recovery efforts in the Blue Ridge subdivision.

The award is given annually at the AREMA conference to “honor innovative railway engineering procedures, projects and products and the individual(s) who have created and successfully applied them to the railroad industry.”

Hurricane Helene, which struck in 2024, and the subsequent flooding, severely damaged approximately 60 miles of CSXT track in Tennessee and North Carolina. The affected area, in the Blue Ridge Subdivision, handles approximately 14 million gross tons of freight annually (accounting for eight trains per day along the route) according to a CSXT report.

Following the hurricane and flood damage, CSXT collaborated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, and other state and federal agencies to facilitate a rapid and environmentally responsible recovery and reconstruction effort.

The project involved retrieving track material and debris from the Nolichucky River and rebuilding the rail bed, culverts, and three bridges. A map of the project is shown below.



Damage caused by Hurricane Helene included large sections of railbed and track structures that were washed out or destroyed. This complicated already difficult recovery efforts because it left CSXT crews and equipment without access to the affected area.

Three bridges were affected by Helene, with two requiring major reconstruction. The first bridge, located south of Chestoa, North Carolina, sustained some damage to the concrete piers and the embankment, but CSXT notes that the bridge itself was not significantly damaged.

The second bridge, at the Tennessee and North Carolina state line, was reconstructed to provide access to the rest of the affected area to the southeast. The bridge was “refabricated by CSXT Bridge Shop in Barboursville, West Virginia; reconstructed; placed onsite; and functional for recovery operations,” notes the report.

The third bridge and largest bridge, in Poplar, was almost completely washed out during the flood. CSXT was able to recover the washed-out spans and reuse four (of the original six). Construction was completed in June 2025.

The entire recovery effort was completed in under a year. The track reopened in September 2025.

R J CORMAN RAIL GROUP PURCHASED THIRTEEN CSXT LOCOMOTIVES

Grayson Wilhoite

In March 2026, R J Corman Rail Group purchased from CSXT the following locomotives:

GP38-2's, 2540, 2650, 2573, 2547, 2693, 2646, 2654, 2616, 2614

C40-8W's 7752, 7916, 7840, 7781



Above and below: Lexington, Kentucky, September 2026



IWXX 5526

David Baer



On September 7, 2026, I caught IWXX SD50-3 5526 at Norfolk Southern's Conway Yard in western Pennsylvania. The unit was moving in transit from the Apex landfill operation at Apex, Ohio. IWXX 5526 is formerly CSXT 8510.

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James Earljones

Safety Flash



April 1, 2026

Life-Altering Injury to Conductor at CN

Last weekend, a CN Conductor at Mac Yard in Toronto suffered severe, life-altering injuries while pulling pins on the hump. While specific details are still limited, we do know the employee fouled the moving equipment and sustained significant injuries to his lower extremities.

Hump operations place employees in extremely close proximity to moving railcars. This incident is a critical reminder that *no part of your body should ever enter the plane of moving equipment*—not even for a moment.

If a pin is difficult to pull:

- **Stop.**
- **Reassess your position.**
- **Do not place yourself in a compromised or unsafe posture.**

A hard-to-pull pin is never worth the risk. While we don't yet know exactly what led to this injury, the hazard is well-known, and the Safe Way guidance is clear: **maintain a safe position at all times when working around moving equipment.**

Let's take this moment to refocus on the fundamentals that keep us safe—especially during high-risk tasks like switching and humping.



Remember what the SafeWay tells us:

2100 - On or About Track Safety

2100.1 Employees must not foul tracks or equipment unless job duties require. Before fouling tracks or equipment, employees must establish the proper protection for the job classification.

SAFETY FLASH
APRIL 2026

CSX