

New Continuous Welded Rails Replace Old 'Jointed' Tracks

Southern Railway System is installing an additional 14.72 miles of welded rail on its Tennessee Division between Asheville and New line, Tenn. Work began June 19 and is expected to take approximately one month to complete.

The project is part of a system-wide program to replace all conventional "jointed" track on Southern with continuous welded rail, according to M.E. Wilson, Southern's chief engineer, systems gangs. The work is progressing at the rate of some 400 miles of new welded rail a year, he said, adding that about one-fourth of Southern's 10,500 miles of railroad in 13 states is today constructed of continuous welded rail.

"When joints are eliminated by welding the rail sections together, most of the wear problem is eliminated," he said, "thus giving a smoother ride to the specially designed equipment and heavy loads that figure in modern railroading, and eliminating the familiar "clickety clack" sound caused by train wheels crossing track joints."

Actual installation of the ribbons of rail is a far cry from the days of muscular gandy dancers, Wilson said. Most of it is done by modern machines that require none of the physical strength that was necessary in the days of John Henry, the most legendary steel drivin' man of them all.

The rails are welded into quarter-mile lengths at a central location. Strands of the new ribbons are transported in special trains of 33 cars to the point of installation. Each train carries 54 ribbons of rail — enough to lay seven and one-third miles of new track.

There are several important preliminary steps in the rail-laying procedure. First, new cross-ties are unloaded along the track. These ties are

placed on the road bed at locations where old ties have been marked for replacement.

New ballast is then distributed. Materials such as tie plates and spikes, rail anchors, tie plugs and creosote are unloaded along

the section of track from the ribbon rail train.

As the train moves into position and the replacement actually begins, two strands of rail are threaded onto a rail pusher and fed out over a roller car (used to steady and

guide the rail) between the old rails.

The new ribbon is then guided in to place and spiked to gauge. The old rail is loaded onto a train and taken to Atlanta, where it is processed for other use or scrapped.



CONTINUOUS welded rails are now being installed by Southern Railway System (shown above), which, among other improvements, will eliminate the familiar "clickety-clack" sound by train wheels crossing crack joints.

But Spiral Slows

Farmland Prices Up

Buying farmland meant paying more again in 1977, according to the North Carolina Crop and Livestock Reporting Service. But the upward spiral slowed as prices cooled to an 11 percent advance for the year ending November 1977, compared with 17 percent the previous year.

Preliminary estimates out the average price of agricultural land at \$474 an acre, up from \$428 in November 1976.

As of last October, prices had begun slipping for some of the costliest farmland in the North Central region. Nebraska, however, was the only state to register a decrease from February, with a 2 percent drop to \$392.

Keeping the lid on runaway prices were the wait-and-see attitude adopted by prospective buyers and the increasingly cautious stance

taken by lenders as farmers' cash flow positions worsened.

Low crop prices caused by large world supplies, and escalating input costs created the tight cash situation. This proved particularly troublesome for producers who had financed large investments by mortgaging their assets.

Farm real estate market reporters cited low commodity prices as the prime factor affecting the land market. Traditionally, farm enlargement had been chief influence.

Other forces named by reporters included livestock prices (cited by 13 percent), spreading population centers, farmer and non-farmer investment in agriculture as a hedge against inflation and the weather.

On the whole, agricultural land costs have rocketed

during the 1970s. Back in March, 1971, an acre of United States farmland averaged what now seems a low \$204.

States showing the largest increases during 1977 were centered in the upper Ohio Valley and Great Lakes region. Land values jumped 20 percent and more in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Kentucky. Buyers in South Dakota, Michigan, and Ohio found land prices at least 17 percent higher than a year earlier.

As usual, purchasers paid the most for farmland in the Northeast and Corn Belt, where prices ranged over \$1,000 an acre. New Jersey continued to lead all states with a per acre value of \$2,025, while farmland in Illinois carried an average value of \$1,508, the highest in the Corn Belt.

In Service

Pvt. Gerald Edwards, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gomery Edwards of Route 6, Marshall, has completed recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

During the nine-week training cycle, he learned the basics of battlefield survival. He was introduced to the typical daily routine that he will experience during his enlistment and studied the personal and professional standards traditionally exhibited by Marines.

He participated in an active physical conditioning program and gained proficiency in a variety of military skills, including first aid, rifle marksmanship and close order drill. Teamwork and self-discipline were emphasized throughout the training cycle.

He joined the Marine Corps in February.



WILLIAM A. DEANS III, formerly of Marshall and Mars Hill, received the master of divinity degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary on June 2 in Louisville, Ky. Deans holds a previous degree from Mars Hill College. He is married to the former Mary Eliz Morgan.



"INDEPENDENT LIMITED V" passenger excursion train, powered by Southern Railway steam locomotive No. 610, will arrive in Madison County from Knoxville, Tenn., this Fourth of July holiday weekend. This unique 13-car steam passenger train will be traveling over 525 miles through three states during its three-day operation. Passengers will be able to board and leave the train at over 25 communities. The excursion train will depart Hot Springs on July 2 at 4:20 p.m., stopping at Marshall (4:55) while en route to Asheville. Passengers may

purchase tickets to ride "one-way" to any station stop en route. For example, the fares for the excursion are: Hot Springs to Asheville (one-way), \$5; Hot Springs to Marshall (one-way), \$3.50; Marshall to Asheville (one-way), \$3.50. Fares for children (12 and under) are one-half the above adult fares. Tickets and information regarding the excursion are available by contacting: Madison County Public Library, P.O. Box 236, Marshall 28753, telephone 704-649-3741. For group rate information, please call area code 703-366-2169.

Court Upholds ESA

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that work on a \$116 million Tennessee dam must stop because the Endangered Species Act expressly protects the river home of a three-inch long fish.

However, the decision involving the Tellico Dam may represent only a temporary reprieve for the snail darter, a rare species of perch whose only known natural habitat is a 17-mile stretch of the Little Tennessee River. Congressional supporters of the dam said they would move hastily to change the law.

The snail darter has been the focal point of a classic battle between environmentalists and commercial interests.

So concerned was the Carter administration that it had Attorney General Griffin B. Bell make a personal appeal to the Supreme Court.

In his only appearance to date before the high court, Bell, displaying a vial containing a snail darter, said in effect it was ridiculous that such a small fish could cause so much trouble.

The court's decision climaxed a three-year court fight over the question of whether the law protecting endangered species justified abandonment of the nearly completed Tennessee Valley Authority dam.

Environmentalists seeking to protect the fish had lost out in a federal trial court, but won when the case was taken to the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court's 6-3 decision upheld the appellate court ruling.

"The plain intent of Congress... was to halt and reverse the trend toward species extinction, whatever the cost," Chief Justice Warren E. Burger declared for the court's majority.

Justices Lewis F. Powell Jr., Harry A. Blackmun and William H. Rehnquist dissented.

Jesse Helms Wants Farm Tax Break

U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms has joined with Sen. Robert Griffin of Michigan in introducing legislation which would give farmers a tax break by sharply increasing the allowable deduction for the cost of clearing land for farming operations.

The Griffin-Helms bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code which would permit a farmer to deduct up to \$12,000 a year in land-clearing expenses. For nearly 25 years, such deductions have been limited to \$5,000 yearly or 25 percent of a farmer's taxable income, whichever is smaller.

"Needless to say, it costs much more to clear land today than it did in 1954 when these limitations were written into the law," Helms said.

Helms, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, said the existing limitation "is simply outdated" — pointing out that the cost of living has risen 130 percent since the law was enacted. He also said that the 25 percent limitation "is particularly hard on small farmers," many of whom earn less than \$10,000 per year.

As removing the percentage restriction entirely might provide "a tempting tax dodge for taxpayers who may not be bona fide farmers," Helms pointed out that the bill would provide that the land-clearing deduction could be claimed only by legitimate farmers who have operated a farm for at least two years before claiming the deduction.

ASCS Office To Reimburse Bee Damages

The Bee Indemnity Program administered by the ASCS office is designed to make payment to any eligible beekeeper who suffers loss or damage to bees from use of pesticides.

Certain requirements must be met in order to be eligible for an indemnity payment on bee losses. At the time a beekeeper makes his first request for an inspection of bees lost because of pesticide use he must report the number and location of his colonies and queen nuclei. This report can be made by mail. The ASCS office must be notified within three days after the damage is discovered so that arrangements can be made for an official inspection. All losses should be inspected within 10 days from loss.

There is no charge for this inspection. Also beekeepers must be able to show that the bee loss was due to pesticides and not the result of neglect or disease. Applications must be filed before April 1 of the year following the year in which the loss occurred. "Since this summer season brings about a heavy use of pesticides the reminder about this indemnity program is timely," stated W.B. Zink, CED for the Madison ASCS office. "Any questions regarding the program are welcomed, concluded Zink.

CONSUMER GUIDELINES



Weatherstripping around doors and windows and caulking cracks cuts fuel consumption without preventing sufficient air from coming into the house. Normal opening of doors, plus wind pressure on the outside provides adequate air. There's usually one complete change of air in a house every hour.



REPORT FROM U.S. Senator JESSE ★★ HELMS

WASHINGTON—Dorothy and I were preparing to return to Washington on the evening of June 1 when the news came: Jim Allen had died in Alabama about an hour earlier.

It was not a moment that I will quickly forget. A thousand thoughts raced through my consciousness—concern for the country in the loss of such a dedicated defender of American principles; my own deep and personal loss of a treasured friend; the countless hours that Jim Allen and I had worked together on the Senate Floor during the past five years.

A steady stream of calls came from radio and television networks and other news agencies. They knew of my relationship with Jim Allen, and they wanted a comment.

One gropes at a time like that for an adequate expression of sadness, and for the words to pay tribute to an outstanding friend. But the words wouldn't come—not in an adequate way.

ERVIN—My former colleague in the Senate, Sam Ervin, offered the best assessment of Jim Allen: "If I had to stand with one man at Armageddon and battle for the Lord, I hope that man would be Senator James Allen of Alabama."

That summed it up. Both Senator Ervin and I worked closely with Jim Allen in constant efforts to preserve what we felt were the fundamental principles of America. When vital issues were before the Senate, Senator Allen and I had an agreement that at no time would both of us leave the Senate Floor. During the Panama Canal debate, neither of us left the Senate Chamber for more than a few minutes at a time because this was an issue that required every bit of effort we could muster. Even so, the fight was lost by two votes, but it wasn't Jim Allen's fault. As always, he did the best he could.

ISSUES—As I look back upon my relationship with Jim Allen, I think it was his will to stand up for his country that made him a statesman. Jim Allen was a strong man, but his strength was not really his greatness. Victor Hugo once said that people do not lack strength; they lack will. Jim Allen lacked neither strength nor will.

The news accounts of Senator Allen's death emphasized his parliamentary skill—which was indeed amazing. Some of the reporters wrote about Jim Allen in terms of his being one of the few remaining Southern conservatives.

But the nobility of Jim Allen was that he cared about the freedoms of the American people. He often expressed puzzlement that so many citizens often do not seem to understand that the federal government is the cause of their problems.

So he frequently took stands which were not politically popular with the big-city editors around the country. It would have been easier had he rolled with the tide, and if he had not bothered to stand in protest. He would not have been subjected to criticism by the editors. But he took the position, as someone once put it, that nothing is politically right which is morally wrong.

LAST—The last time I saw Jim Allen was the morning of May 24. We had attended the Senate Prayer Breakfast, and as we walked together to our respective offices, he mentioned that he would be glad to go back to North Carolina with me—"if it will help." (He had gone to Greenville with me last year.)

He won't be going back—not in the flesh. But the spirit of Jim Allen, a man of principle and courage and dedication, is kindred to the spirit of the people of North Carolina. It is a very special blessing to me that for more than five years, I have had the privilege of knowing him, working with him, having him as my friend—and being his friend.

SENIOR CITIZEN'S CORNER

Managing Time

Serving a variety of nutritious meals can be made easier by doing a little advance planning and carefully managing your valuable time.

Menus should be planned for at least a week at a time. Shop newspaper ads for weekly specials.

Make out your shopping list ahead of time but keep it flexible enough to allow for purchasing unadvertised bargains available at the store.

Prepare large portions of some foods so they can be used for more than one meal. For example, freeze meat loaf, roast or poultry in family-sized portions for later use. Make freezer meals out of leftover servings for one or two persons.

Cook and serve foods in the same utensil whenever possible.

When time is short and you haven't planned ahead, fix dishes that are quick and easy by using convenience foods. With the help of spices, herbs, special sauces and garnishes you can give packaged foods your own personal touch.