

Cedar Rapids Trip
March 26, 2016

Saturday March 26, 2016

After a botched fall trip the ISRRC decided to take a spring trip to the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City areas. While we set up the trip to Cedar Rapids, we worked with alumni member Ben Hucker to plan the portion of our trip going to Iowa City. On the trip were club members Ryan Osmolski, Connor Friedrichsen, Chris Krebill, Andrew Busse, Ewan Shortess, and Blake Biermann.

The club departed the East parking ramp around 7:00AM in a brand new ISU Dodge Grand Caravan Eastbound through town on Lincoln way, and continued on Old Rt 30 until Colo, IA. We were stopped by a train crossing through Colo and a few members took the opportunity to take pictures. From there we made our way South to get onto US 30. We made another quick detour to drive past the Union Pacific Marshalltown shops in Marshalltown, IA. After making it back to 30 we continued East to Cedar Rapids where we took the long way around town in order to check out the local railroading. We made it to the CRANDIC Railroad shops at 8:50AM where we met Trainmaster Kyle Rawson. Mr. Rawson gave us a tour of the shops which included showing us some of their shop equipment, letting us get into the cab of their new switch engines, and talking to one of their Chief Mechanics. From there we were given a short tour of the yard and were shown some of their dead equipment along with some maintenance of way equipment. After taking a club photo on CIC 122 Kyle drove us to a yard to watch active crews switching. We thanked Kyle for his hospitality and left for lunch at Wendy's and Panera.

After returning from lunch we decided to go back to the yard to watch more switching and stayed there taking pictures and videos of the crews for nearly an hour. We made our way to downtown Cedar Rapids and the General Mills plant near the river. The group split up to take pictures and explore the area, and one group walked to the other side of a trail while the other group drove the van to pick them up. A BC Rail unit was pulling grain at the Cargill plant so the group decided to sit and watch them. When the club decided to leave the location we were stopped at a crossing by the train, and many members took the opportunity to take pictures and video of the train going through. From there we made our way to the Iowa Interstate South Amana shops to see what power they had sitting at the yard. When we got there we were greeted with a train coming through the yard. Once the members had their fill of pictures we loaded up in the van again and left for Iowa City.

Following US 6 from South Amana we entered Iowa City and made our way to the Hawkeye Model Railroad Club around 4PM, where we were given a tour by Tom Persoon. Tom gave us a history of the railroad, let us see how they usually operate, and even let a few members take a train. Some members took pictures of the layout and watched the model action going through the scenery. We left the club at 5:45PM and headed back to Ames on I-80 where we returned around 7:30PM.