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# Trains

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**THE magazine of railroading**

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## From the Editor



### Carl Swanson

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And so it begins. On April 22, Brightline West held a "first spike" ceremony in Las Vegas to mark the start of construction of its 218-mile high-speed line between Las Vegas and Southern California.

Senior Editor David Lassen attended the event. His coverage begins on page 6. The ceremony attracted an impressive turnout of local, state, and federal officials. Clearly the project has significant support.

Completion is estimated in four years. That's an ambitious timeline, and we'll be following progress closely.

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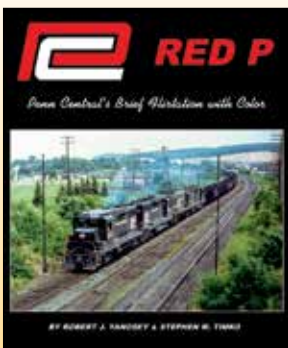
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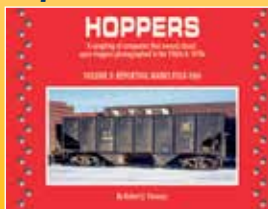
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Doug Riddell, during his days as Amtrak's company photographer, shooting himself in the rear mirror of office car *Beech Grove* returning to Washington from Chicago. Doug Riddell

## A tale of two engineers

**AUTHOR DOUG RIDDELL** and writer Michael Sawyer — both retired — are currently producing engaging monthly columns under the *Trains* Magazine brand. Both men, though from different backgrounds, share the same passion for trains and railroading.

**East Coast perspective:** Doug, a Richmond native, graduated from the Virginia Commonwealth University with a mass communications degree. He is a retired locomotive engineer and Amtrak company photographer who was initially hired by the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad in 1977. He and his wife Sandy reside in Ashland, Va., near Doug's son, Ryan, who has followed in his father's footsteps — happily at the throttle of Amtrak trains.

**West Coast perspective:** Michael, or "Mad Dog," grew up in downtown Puyallup, approximately 40 miles south of Seattle. As a young railfan, MD would spend hours along the tracks watching locals between Seattle and Tacoma. After high school, he hired out with Burlington Northern in August 1978, and also attended the U.S. Naval Schools of Photography in Pensacola, Fla., graduating in August 1984. A professional railroader for 42 years — 30 as a locomotive engineer — he left the railroad on April 1, 2020.

For a behind-the-scenes slant and to learn more about each of their experiences on the tracks, go to [Trains.com](http://Trains.com) and click on *Trains*. Then, scroll down to the right and click on the History section. — *Nastassia Putz, Trains.com production editor*



Michael Douglas Sawyer (Mad Dog) on the beach at Deception Pass State Park. Kimberly Klontz

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# News



## Brightline West set to start construction

Las Vegas-Southern California high speed line aims for completion in 2028

▲ Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Brightline Chairman Wes Edens, and other officials are showered with confetti during the 'first spike' ceremony to mark the start of Brightline West construction. Three photos, David Lassen

▼ One of the spikes used in the ceremony. Attendees at the event received souvenir copies.



**THE ENVIRONMENTAL** and construction permits are in hand. So is a good portion of the projected \$12 billion in funding.

And so, on April 22, Brightline West held a groundbreaking celebration — actually a “first spike” ceremony — in Las Vegas, Nev., starting the clock on an ambitious four-year timeline to build an electrified high speed rail line to Southern California. The goal: to be operating in time for the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

More than 600 people were on hand at the future site of the Brightline West Las Vegas station, just south of the Strip between Las Vegas Boulevard and Interstate 15, the freeway that will provide the right-of-way for most of the rail line.

Speakers — including Brightline founder Wes Edens, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo, U.S. Senators, and members of the House of

Representatives — heralded the start of a project discussed since the 1980s.

It will, they said, ease traffic on the notoriously clogged route between LA and Las Vegas (“I have never heard of a stretch of interstate described as a parking lot more often than I-15,” Buttigieg said); create more than 35,000 construction jobs and permanent employment for 1,000 — all union jobs, thanks to an agreement signed well in advance of the start of construction; create more than \$10 billion in economic impact in Nevada alone, according to U.S. Sen. Jacky Rosen; and have significant environmental impacts.

Edens cast the event as more than the start of one 218-mile rail line — even more than the first true high speed rail line in the U.S., which it will become if it meets its timeline, racing past the under-construction project in California’s Central Valley.

“What I believe will be the legacy of today is this is really the beginning of the high speed rail industry,” he said. “We have an automobile industry. We have an airplane industry. There’s no reason the United States of America should not be the leader in the world for the high speed rail industry.”

The route between Las Vegas and Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., will be the proof of concept, he said, for high speed rail service between city pairs that are “too short to fly, too long to drive.”

“Our vision is this blueprint can be repeated all over this country,” he said. “Houston-Dallas, Portland-Seattle, Atlanta-Charlotte — there are many trains that we need to build and will be built as a result of what we’re doing out here right now.”

Said Buttigieg, “A few weeks ago, a journalist asked me, ‘Why can’t we have high speed rail? We want high speed rail.’ I said, ‘You sound like my boss.’”



"But my real answer was we can if we choose to. And now America has decided."

Buttigieg also explained why Brightline West had received some \$3 billion in what he described as "highly competitive" grant funding under the Federal Railroad Administration's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail program.

"When this line opens ... there'll be a million fewer cars stuck in traffic," he said. "So even if you don't use it, you'll be benefiting from the people who do. And because I-15 is such an important freight route, that reduced congestion will have a material benefit to America's supply chains." After outlining the projected environmental gains — 800 million fewer pounds of carbon emissions annually, he said — and economic benefits, Buttigieg returned to the transportation aspect.

"I am firmly convinced that once the first customer buys that first ticket to ride true high-speed rail on American soil, there will be no going back," he said. "People will demand and expect this everywhere and leaders will respond, and more high speed rail lines are coming. Or, to put it another way, in this particular case, what happens in Vegas should absolutely not be confined to Las Vegas."

While Brightline has a proven ability to develop a passenger operation in Florida, the project in the desert Southwest is significantly different. But Edens saw that as a positive in a brief conversation with *Trains*.

"I call Florida version 1.0," he says. "We owned a train line and so we had access to the tracks and we shared it with ourselves. So we knew we didn't have to negotiate with anybody else to share, which is a really an important part of building the first one." On the other hand, the existing Florida East Coast main line between Miami and Cocoa, Fla., both defined and constrained what the system could be. But at Cocoa, he says, "you turn left and you create new-build-version train lines" [to reach Orlando International Airport]. And we looked at that and said, that's the best part of the entire system.

"And so out here, the version 2.0, there's a couple of things that are notable. One is the right-of-way that we're going to use is in the midst of an existing transportation corridor [I-15], and that makes permitting much easier. It makes a lot of things much easier. ... You can put a fence around it, you can electrify it, there's no grade crossings, you can go 200 miles an hour." [There may



**A rendering of the Brightline West station that will rise on the vacant lot between Las Vegas Boulevard and Interstate 15, where the groundbreaking ceremony took place.** Brightline West

be no greater contrast between the two Brightlines than the zero grade crossings in the west, compared to Florida's 237.] "So the service that you can create is definitely a step up from what we can in Florida, just in terms of speed, safety, and everything else."

Electrification is a necessity for Brightline West, both to achieve operating speeds up to 200 mph, and to deal with the steep grades the route will face following I-15 across Cajon Pass and 4,730-foot Mountain Pass (yes, that's the formal name) near the Nevada border. "There's a unique topography here that only an electric train would work for," says Tom Rutkowski, Brightline's vice president and chief mechanical officer. "It's lighter, it's got more power, it's faster."

Shortly after the groundbreaking, on May 1, the company announced an agreement with Siemens Mobility to build its first trains, with an initial order for 10 "American Pioneer 220" trainsets. The equipment, the first high-speed Siemens trainsets built in North America, will be based on Siemens Velaro equipment operating in Europe. The seven-car trainsets will seat 434 to 450 passengers, depending on final configuration.

The agreement continues Brightline's relationship with Siemens, which built the locomotives and railcars for its Florida operation. The manufacturer will also

receive a 30-year contract to service the equipment at a Brightline West Vehicle Maintenance Facility in Sloan, Nev.

The trainsets will be built at a new U.S. factory, at a location to be announced after the contract is finalized. That will help meet Buy America requirements that accompany federal funding.

"We are very confident we can actually fully comply," Edens says. "We can build America and have a high-quality product."

The initial Brightline West operating plan, as laid out in environmental documents, calls for trains operating on 45-minute headways, with a total of 23 trains a day each way.

"Unlike Florida, these trains could couple together and operate as one entire unit," Rutkowski says. "So at those peak times when you want as much capacity as possible, we can do that, and then separate those trains later throughout the course of the day operationally. So there's a lot of flexibility to add capacity."

The operating plan envisions that for the first three years, about a third of trains would operate with two coupled trainsets, increasing to two-thirds the next three years. After that, every train will be made of up two trainsets. By the 11th year, frequencies will grow to 45 trains a day in each direction.

So the plan is in place. Now it's about building the infrastructure. Edens is confident it can be done, even with California's reputation as a difficult place for major construction projects.

"We've gotten massive cooperation from both Nevada and California on the right-of-way," he says. "The heavy lift has already been done in terms of all the environmental and the permitting and all those processes. That stuff has taken years. We feel like that's behind us now."

"It's just a matter of literally putting shovels in the ground and building it."

— David Lassen



**Construction equipment provides the backdrop for a TV interview by Brightline Founder Wes Edens.**



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# Former CSX CEO Jim Foote dies

Third-generation railroader led company's record operating, financial showing

**FORMER CSX CEO JIM FOOTE**, who helped turn the railroad from industry laggard into a leader, died April 16. He was 70.

"Jim's leadership was instrumental in guiding CSX through a transformational period in our company's history, advancing CSX to new heights, marked by record operating and financial performance," CSX CEO Joe Hinrichs says. "We are appreciative of Jim's contributions to the company and the entire railroad industry."

Foote was named chief executive in December 2017 following the death of CEO E. Hunter Harrison. Foote, Harrison's chief marketing officer at Canadian National, joined CSX in October 2017 as chief operating officer during Harrison's rapid-fire implementation of the low-cost Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model.

"Hunter was a true legend, and CSX would not be in the position it is today without the tremendous changes that he was able to make during his time here," Foote said then. Under Foote's leadership, CSX would post the industry's best financial and operational statistics. By the end of 2019, revenue was up 8%, expenses fell 9%, and operating ratio leapt from a back-of-the-pack 69.4% in 2016 to an industry-leading 58.4%. Net profit nearly doubled compared to the pre-PSR CSX; earnings per share grew 130%.

Jamie Boychuk, executive vice president of operations for much of Foote's tenure at CSX, says Foote was a stabilizing force. "Jim guided us through some of the most difficult challenges in our industry with respect to COVID and stepping in after Hunter passed away," he says. "... He became one of the greatest CEOs CSX has ever seen."

CSX made significant acquisitions under Foote. To extend the reach of its lucrative chemical business, CSX in 2021 purchased bulk trucking company Quality Carriers. It acquired New England regional Pan Am Railways in 2022. And in a landmark \$525 million deal with Virginia, CSX agreed in 2021 to an easement that will enable the separation of passenger and freight operations in the Washington, D.C.-Petersburg, Va., corridor. The deal also included sale of CSX lines from Petersburg to Ridgeway, N.C., and from Doswell to Clifton Forge.

A native of Superior, Wis., Foote came from a railroading family. He began his career with Soo Line in 1972 at age 18, while he was still in high school.

Former CN Executive Eric Jakubowski remembers Foote's work ethic. "Not many people realize how hard Jim worked to climb the ladder in the industry," Jakubowski says. "He started as a car cleaner in the mechanical department."



CSX CEO Jim Foote speaks at the North American Rail Shippers conference in Kansas City, Mo., in May 2022. David Lassen

Foote worked full-time as a hostler and machinist helper while earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Superior. He later landed a day job at Chicago & North Western's Proviso Yard in Chicago so he could attend John Marshall Law School at night. When Foote was giving visiting executives a tour of Proviso, he struck up a conversation with CNW's vice president of labor relations, who asked what a guy like Foote was doing working in the yard. "The next thing I knew, I was manager of labor relations while still in law school," he said. — *Bill Stephens*

## CSX debuts first hydrogen fuel-cell locomotive

Conversion at railroad's Huntington, W.Va., shop is part of partnership with CPKC

**CSX ON APRIL 16** debuted its first hydrogen fuel-cell locomotive, converted from a four-axle diesel unit using a kit supplied by Canadian Pacific Kansas City.

GP38H2 No. 2100, was built at CSX's Huntington (W.Va.) Locomotive Shop, which is handling hydrogen fuel cell conversions under a partnership with CPKC.

"The successful debut of our first hydrogen-powered locomotive stands as a testament to the exceptional skill and dedication of our employees at the CSX Huntington locomotive shop," CEO Joe Hinrichs said. "CSX's commitment to sustainability in our operations is exemplified by the outstanding efforts of these employees, who, through their craftsmanship, are helping advance our collaboration with CPKC. We are proud to work with CPKC to scale this hydrogen technology and help pave the way for meaningful sustainable solutions for the future."

No. 2100's conversion reused several components — including the frame, cab,



CSX GP38H2 No. 2100 was converted at the railroad's Huntington Shop from a diesel built for Baltimore & Ohio in 1972, using a kit provided by CPKC. CSX

traction, motors, and trucks — of GP40-2 No. 6041, built by EMD in 1972 and delivered as Baltimore & Ohio No. 4141.

The locomotive made its debut less than 12 months after CSX and CPKC announced their collaboration. CPKC has two low-horsepower hydrogen fuel cell lo-

comotives in service, and has plans to test a high-horsepower, six-axle unit in revenue coal service this year in British Columbia.

CSX will deploy No. 2100 for testing around Huntington so officials can further evaluate its performance and operational feasibility. — *Bill Stephens*





**THREE-NATION TOUR BEGINS:** Canadian Pacific 4-6-4 No. 2816 began CPKC's three-nation "Final Spike Steam Tour," celebrating the first anniversary of the CP-Kansas City Southern merger, with a display day at corporate headquarters in Calgary, Alberta, on April 24, 2024, then hit the road two days later. For the initial Canadian segment, the Class H-1b Hudson, known as "The Empress," and the CPKC executive train was also joined by the railroad's first hydrogen fuel-cell locomotive, H2 OEL No. 1001, a converted SD40-2F. The train is shown here on the first day of its tour, between Medicine Hat and Dunmore, Alberta, on April 26. Ahead were eight more display dates in Canada and the U.S., the last May 28 in Laredo, Texas. The tour, originally set to end June 4 in Mexico City, has added a June 30 stop in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Rick Moyer

## NEWS BRIEFS

### CSX unveils 13th heritage locomotive, honoring Pere Marquette



**CSX TRANSPORTATION** introduced the 13th locomotive in its heritage fleet, honoring **PERE MARQUETTE**, created by the merger of three Michigan-based railroads in 1899. The unit wears the railroad's passenger paint scheme. Pere Marquette was eventually merged into **CHESAPEAKE & OHIO** in 1947. CSX Transportation

**TRAINS MAGAZINE** was among magazines and other properties sold by **KALMBACH MEDIA** to **FIRECROWN MEDIA** in a deal announced May 1. Also included are *Classic Trains*, *Model Railroader*, *Classic Toy Trains*, *FineScale Modeler*, *Astronomy*, *Trains.com*, Kalmbach Books, and related online stores. A total of 67 employees will be retained by the new owners, who are based in Chattanooga,

Tenn., and publish titles such as *Flying*, *Boating*, and *Yachting*. The former Kalmbach brands will remain in Wisconsin.

The **SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY** "terminated with cause" a contract with the U.S. affiliate of Chinese manufacturer **CRRC** for 45 bi-level commuter railcars, and was assessing options for recouping \$50 million spent without receiving a car. The \$185 million order was four years behind schedule. The move came two weeks after the **MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY** said it would pay CRRC an additional \$148 million to complete 404 cars for its Red and Orange rapid-transit lines, once due in 2023 but now aiming for completion in 2027.

Delays in converting the **MOUNT ROYAL TUNNEL** will push back opening of much of Montreal's **RÉSEAU EXPRESS MÉTROPOLITAIN** light rail system into 2025, private developer **CDPQ INFRA** said in April. The tunnel, formerly used for Exo commuter rail service, was closed in 2020 for what was supposed to be a two-year conversion, but it now appears it will take almost five years, nearly as long as the construction of the 3.3-mile tunnel between 1912 and 1918. The majority of the 26-station, 41.6-mile (67-kilometer) REM system was once projected to open in 2022; so far, just five stations and 10.3 miles (16.6 kilometers) are in operation.

**AMTRAK** announced it would introduce the **BOREALIS**, offering daily service between Chicago and St. Paul, Minn., on May 21. Trains Nos. 1333 and 1340 will use Horizon equipment, with Business class and cafe service. They are supported by the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. The westbound train will leave Chicago at 11:05 a.m., arriving in St. Paul at 6:29 p.m.; the eastbound leaves St. Paul at 11:50 a.m., arriving in Chicago at 7:14 p.m.

# Class Is should thank FRA for two-person crew

Taking conductors out of the cab likely would hurt service



**Bill Stephens**

bybillstephens@gmail.com

Analysis: Trains.com

**T**he industry would never admit it, but the Federal Railroad Administration has given the Class I railroads a gift in the form of the two-person crew rule that was finalized in April.

Debate over the controversial rule has been framed almost entirely in safety terms. Having two people in the locomotive cab, the rule's advocates say, is vital for the safety of the public, communities, and crew members, particularly in an era of ever-longer freight trains.

Yet it seems to me that if the SMART-TD union were ever to agree to taking conductors out of the cab — something the Class I railroads sought during the last round of national contract negotiations — it would quickly cause chaos out on main lines.

We don't know whether two-person crews are safer than one-person crews, or vice versa. There's just no conclusive data.

What we do know is that today's massive freight trains tend to pull knuckles and encounter brake issues more frequently than shorter trains. This is simply due to the law of averages. The more cars you put in a train, the more troublemakers you're likely to get in a consist that might stretch 15,000 feet.

Today when a freight train goes into emergency, the crew generally has no idea why. So the conductor hits the ground and walks the train to find the culprit. Then he or she has to fix the problem before walking back to the head end. It's a process that can take hours, especially if you have to lug an 80-pound knuckle more than a few steps over uneven ballast.

Conductors also have to walk the train if a defect detector flags a hot bearing, dragging equipment, or wheel issue.

Railroads want to create ground-based conductor positions and leave engineers alone in the cab. Putting conductors in pickup trucks, assigning them a territory, and having them respond to problems out on the main line may sound

good to penny-pinching railroad executives — at least on paper.

But out in the real world your mileage may vary. Murphy's Law being what it is, it wouldn't take long for an engineer-only train to encounter a knuckle or brake-related problem on single track in the most isolated, hard to reach area on a subdivision.

Engineers can't leave the cab. With no conductor to walk the train, and help from a ground-based conductor miles and even hours away, delays would mount. First to the waylaid train, then to the trains behind it and to oncoming traffic. Before long, the delays would cascade across the whole subdivision. And then the railroad grinds to a halt.

Although the scenario's a bit better on a double-track main line, a disabled train eventually creates a single-track bottleneck, which also creates congestion and delays.

Umpteen million dollars' worth of freight is stuck — and won't arrive on time — all because the railroad wants to save a buck or two on crew costs. It's almost guaranteed that at least some of the

delayed trains will require unplanned reworks, which only increases costs. And the late arrivals could be the last straw for some shippers, who would give up on rail.

If this sounds shortsighted, that's because it is.

There may or may not be a safety case to make for two-person crews. But there sure is a railroad business case for keeping two people in the cab. It's called service, which is the only thing that railroads sell to their customers.

Until rail equipment becomes far more reliable, and failures on the line of road become extremely rare, engineer-only operation is a fool's errand.

While the FRA's two-person crew rule will protect the big railroads from their cost-cutting urges, this must be said: It's a terrible rule that's the result of a political process. Regulations should be driven by data, not political whims and campaign promises. **I**



The engineer and conductor are having a discussion as they operate a westbound Union Pacific Railroad mixed freight at Calamus, Iowa, on April Fools' Day 2023. Steve Smedley



# NEW ENGLAND IN FALL

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# Timeless



**TIME SEEMS TO STAND** still on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. Consider this image of Jeremy Garcia taking water from the Los Piños tank on the 64-mile eastbound run from Chama, N.M., to Antonito, Colo., on Oct. 19, 2023. He's not posing for a picture, he's working. With the grueling 4% climb up and over the 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass in the San Juan Mountains accomplished, former Denver & Rio Grande Western No. 488 needs that water. Similar photographs have been taken at this location for many decades and may — a

cheerful thought — be captured here for many more. Perhaps those images will also feature K36 class 2-8-2 Mikado No. 488, which was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia in 1925. It's one of five operating narrow-gauge steam locomotives on the C&TS. The 488 is a regular sight on the railroad, and so is Jeremy Garcia. If he looks familiar, it might be because you saw him on the cover of *Trains* in May 2001, 23 years ago. — Carl Swanson





# ***Superliner*** ***not a new issue***

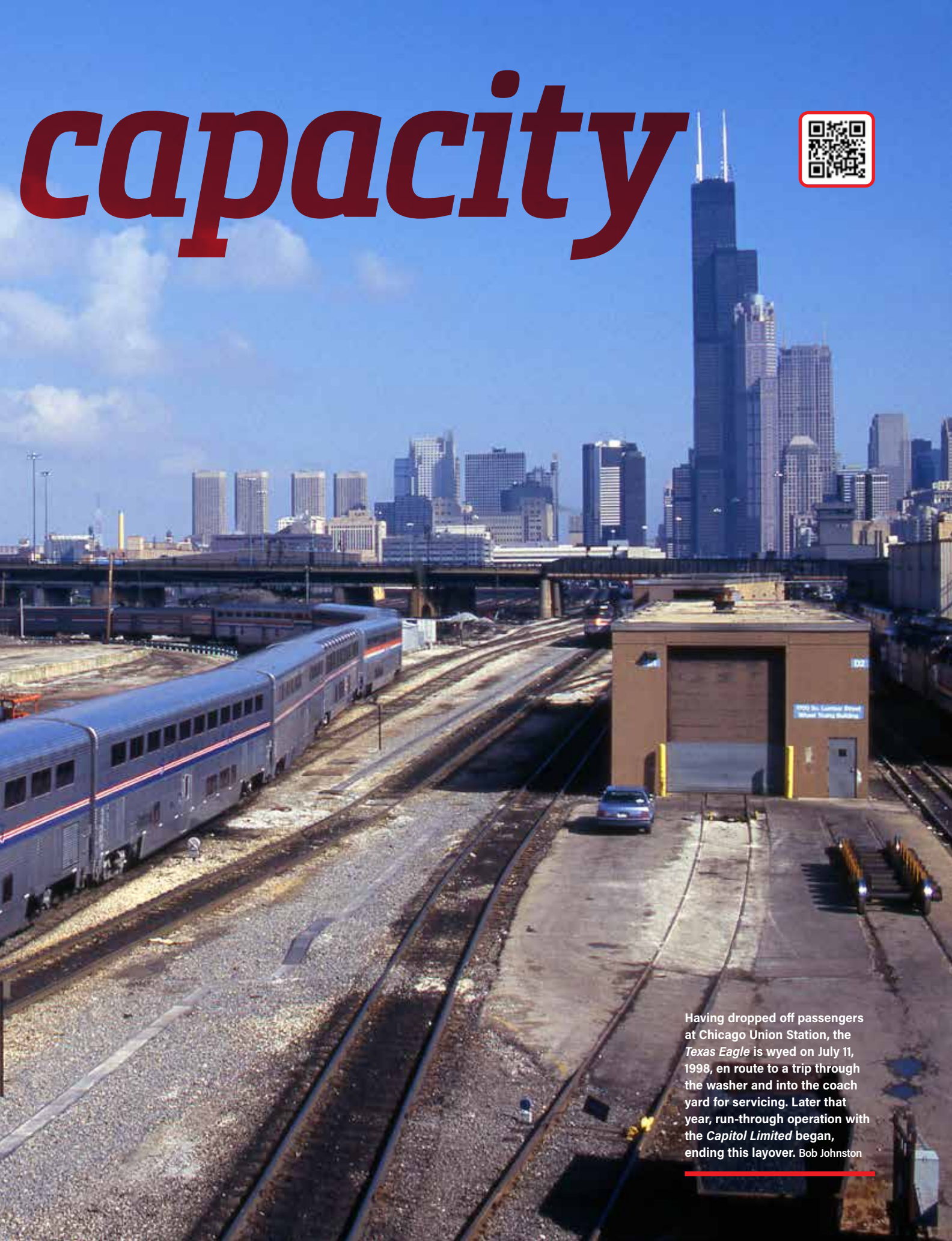
Run-through plan attempted to improve capacity, usage in 1996-97

by Mark S. Cane





# *capacity*



Having dropped off passengers at Chicago Union Station, the *Texas Eagle* is wyed on July 11, 1998, en route to a trip through the washer and into the coach yard for servicing. Later that year, run-through operation with the *Capitol Limited* began, ending this layover. Bob Johnston





**Throughout 2023,** *Trains* reported on a shortage of Amtrak long-distance Superliner equipment and its impact on the company's ability to meet customer demand and generate revenue. Yet this isn't a new phenomenon. Locomotive and car capacity challenges have afflicted Amtrak's long-distance trains for decades.

I had first-hand experience with this challenge after I became President-Amtrak Intercity in February 1996, following a 17-year career with the Burlington Northern Railroad. During that time, when I had responsibility and accountability for all service outside of the Northeast and West Coast Interstate 5 corridors, Amtrak was operating under a cloud that it would lose federal operating subsidies by the end of fiscal year 2000. (This became a

Congressional mandate in December 1997, but the deadline was extended to the end of fiscal 2002.) Meanwhile, we were also not getting the capital investment support required to comply with our mandate to provide comprehensive national passenger rail service.

Being free of operating subsidy was considered a pipe dream in 1996 because Amtrak hadn't come close to running subsidy-free since its inception in 1971. By 1996 it had received federal grants of \$19 billion for operating support, plus capital for the purchase of locomotives and Superliner I and Amfleet cars. Yet, no passenger railroad is able to break even on ticket revenue alone.

That didn't matter to Congress and the Clinton administration. The fiscal 1996 intercity budget I inherited called for an

operating deficit not to exceed \$188 million, and we were running at a pace \$30 million worse than that. Part of the reason is that a year before I arrived, Amtrak accepted an outside consultant's recommendation and reduced long-distance train frequencies to help cut the deficit. Running triweekly or four-times-a-week was a serious mistake, since seven days of route and asset costs were being spread against fewer revenue-generating days. The savings that less-than-daily frequencies were supposed to generate were exceeded by higher-than-expected lost revenue. We had to turn over every rock to see if we could change what we did to generate quantum levels of performance improvement, to rapidly put us on a path to bring our operating loss to zero.

Based at Chicago's Union

**Train No. 51, the westbound *Cardinal*, exits a tunnel at Fort Spring, W.Va., on Aug. 30, 1998. The triweekly train between Washington, D.C., now a single-level train, used Superliner equipment at the time.** Ron Flanary

Station, I spent a great deal of time immediately after my arrival talking to as many people as possible about what could be done more efficiently and effectively. One thing that caught my eye was that our Chicago coach yard was packed every night with Superliner cars, then emptied during the day. It didn't seem to make sense to have those tracks overflowing overnight with idle cars, each costing more than \$2 million, while not serving customers and earning revenue.

The main reason, of course, was that our Superliner trains





to both coasts originated and terminated at Chicago. The cars would be cleaned and prepared overnight for the following day's trip. Full sets of equipment for these same trains would also be idled overnight at their other terminals: Los Angeles; Oakland, Calif.; Seattle; New Orleans; and Washington, D.C.

### **Keep equipment working**

What could be done? At Burlington Northern, I was a part of the novel Intermodal Business Unit starting in 1981. As cited in my book, "Against All Odds — The History of Burlington Northern Railroad's Innovative Intermodal Business" (Amazon.com, 2023), we capitalized — due to competitive necessity — on the deregulation freedoms of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980. The



**A aged SW1 shuffles Superliners into the Chicago car shop in summer 1997. Recognition that the bi-level cars were sitting more than they were generating revenue prompted efforts for better car utilization.** Two photos, Bob Johnston

Act enabled us to implement multiple new ways of doing things to intensely focus on improved service and profitability including implementation of rigorously scheduled operations that also generated improved equipment productivity.

I subsequently succeeded Hunter Harrison as vice president, service design. This was the laboratory where these concepts were developed to become the template for what we believed today's Precision Scheduled Railroading should have really become. I followed those experiences as BN's vice president, equipment management, and then returned to the IBU as its leader. In both of those capacities, we significantly improved BN's rolling-stock productivity and velocity, which were critical contributors to our success. Our BN Intermodal plan included the combination of our geographically weak BN franchise with those of the Santa Fe Railway and Norfolk Southern to create a truly comprehensive, unconstrained, and seamless transcontinental service for our customers.

Amtrak already had the transcontinental footprint I dreamed of at BN. Why were we operating as if we were limited by the Chicago barrier individual railroads had faced when they ran pre-Amtrak passenger trains? I asked our Intercity team what prevented our train consists from running through Chicago as consists of connecting trains to improve passenger service and vastly improve our equipment productivity?

I got the expected "we have never done it that way" reply, but there were also practical challenges:

- Car interiors would have to be cleaned at Chicago Union Station platforms.
- Amtrak's assigned CUS tracks would be occupied for longer stretches.
- Programmed maintenance work on the cars would have to be shifted from Chicago to the Northeast Corridor and Amtrak West business units.
- The 1995 long-distance train frequency reductions made it difficult to match up trainsets.
- Freight railroad on-time performance might be too unreliable to count on inbound consists becoming the outbound consist for a different train the same day.

Those reasons were valid, but what was the payoff if we found ways to overcome them? At BN, I was passionate about equip-



**A Sightseer Lounge is part of a Texas Eagle consist at a Chicago Union Station platform in March 1996. Run-through operation meant trains would have to be rapidly cleaned and restocked at Union Station instead of the coach yard.**

ment "time being money." Because Amtrak had been borrowing money to acquire rolling stock, I asked Carol Dillon of Amtrak's corporate Treasury team how much we were paying per car for daily principle and interest (P&I) costs. She told me



Winter has arrived as the east-bound *Empire Builder* passes the Browning, Mont., depot — where no one is waiting to board and no one will disembark — on Oct. 12, 1997. Weather is one obvious reason on-time operation was difficult for the *Builder* as a run-through operation. David R. Busse



## Superliner-equipped trains at Chicago, 1996

Train	Route	Frequency	Alternates with
<i>Empire Builder</i>	Chicago-Seattle/Portland, Ore.	4 days per week	<i>Pioneer</i>
<i>Pioneer</i>	Chicago-Denver-Seattle	3 days per week	<i>Empire Builder</i>
<i>California Zephyr</i>	Chicago-Salt Lake City-Oakland	4 days per week	<i>Desert Wind</i>
<i>Desert Wind</i>	Chicago-Salt Lake City-Los Angeles	3 days per week	<i>California Zephyr</i>
<i>Texas Eagle</i>	Chicago-St. Louis-San Antonio	3 days per week	
<i>City of New Orleans</i>	Chicago-New Orleans	5 days per week	
<i>Cardinal</i>	Chicago-Cincinnati- Washington, D.C.	3 days per week	
<i>Southwest Chief</i>	Chicago-Los Angeles	Daily	
<i>Capitol Limited</i>	Chicago-Cleveland-Washington, D.C.	Daily	

we were spending \$400 per day for each new (1996) Viewliner sleeping car, and \$643 and \$615 per day for each new (1993-96) Superliner II sleeper and coach. In comparison, the daily P&I cost for each new (1993) P40DC locomotive was \$595 per day. I couldn't believe the daily ownership costs of our cars were actu-

ally higher than those for our locomotives. At BN, we could buy more than 20 high-capacity grain covered hoppers or aluminum coal cars for the cost of one locomotive. I was astounded to learn a Superliner II car cost more than two of our locomotives. The fact that idle equipment doesn't serve customers

and generate ticket revenue raised the stakes even more.

Less-than-daily train frequencies also led to more equipment idle time in Chicago due to inconsistent operations. Bob Johnston, *Trains* correspondent, notes that in the summer of 1996, 14 complete Superliner trainsets, listed in the table on

page 19, spent one extra layover night not earning revenue.

This is the puzzle we confronted in 1996 when attempting to develop run-throughs.

I asked our Intercity team to think of ways we could better utilize our cars to significantly improve asset productivity. Given the incredibly high cost of our equipment, and looking at the reasons for not running through Chicago, why not substitute a modest level of operating costs and trade off labor for capital? Freeing up cars by eliminating overnight layovers at Chicago meant: 1.) the two components of the run-throughs would both have to operate daily, and 2.) freight railroads would have to perform within an acceptable schedule performance window.

After a month on the job, I





## The 14 trainsets laying over more than one night in Chicago, summer 1996

Day	No.	Trains
Monday	2	California Zephyr, Cardinal
Tuesday	2	California Zephyr, Empire Builder
Wednesday	2	Desert Wind, City of New Orleans
Thursday	3	California Zephyr, Empire Builder, Texas Eagle
Friday	1	Desert Wind
Saturday	3	California Zephyr, Pioneer, Texas Eagle
Sunday	1	Desert Wind

told my boss [Amtrak President] Tom Downs we were going to look at the possibility of increasing the *Empire Builder* to daily operation so it could be paired with another train. We needed more cars to do that, so I said we were considering elimination of the *Pioneer* to enable it. Both trains ran between Chicago and Seattle/Portland, and the *Empire Build-*

*er* had the shorter and faster route and a better ratio of costs to revenue and mail and express (M&E) potential. With minor schedule adjustments, a daily *Builder's* equipment could run through as the *Coast Starlight* to and from Los Angeles. A different possibility for the *Starlight* was to run it through Los Angeles as the *Sunset Limited*, but that would have required mak-

ing the *Sunset* daily. Amtrak West killed the idea of touching its *Starlight*, so those ideas were quickly discarded. That didn't discourage us from looking at other opportunities to free up whole train consists by eliminating overnight trainset dwells, as well as other ways to reduce our required subsidy.

### Living the Vision

Clearly, a more comprehensive game plan was needed. By June it was becoming clear that Intercity's fiscal 1997 operation was projected to generate an \$87 million post-subsidy budget deficit. Our team (without help from outside consultants) was chomping at the bit to be able to unleash creative innovation to run the business more effectively. We completed a turnaround restructuring proposal that I

**Southwest Chiefs pass just outside Chicago Union Station in July 1998. The switcher at right waits to add express boxcars to the rear of the outbound train. Potential mail and express revenue influenced decisions relating to train frequency.**

Bob Johnston

presented to the Amtrak board of directors on July 13, 1996. The goal of this plan, called "Living the Vision," was to make it easier for passengers to use us, drive capacity to the best passenger and M&E market opportunities, achieve higher asset utilization, and improve overall cost productivity. Our comprehensive proposal covered route eliminations/restructurings and varied ways of reengineering our services and operating methods that were projected to cut Intercity's projected FY 1997 post-subsidy deficit in half.

Included in the plan were several Chicago run-through options that could achieve substantially improved utilization of Superliner cars. These included:

#### • *Capitol Limited-Southwest Chief.*

The schedules of the *Chief* and *Capitol* matched up well, and both operated daily. *Chief* cars laid over in Chicago for 24 hours while the *Capitol's* con-

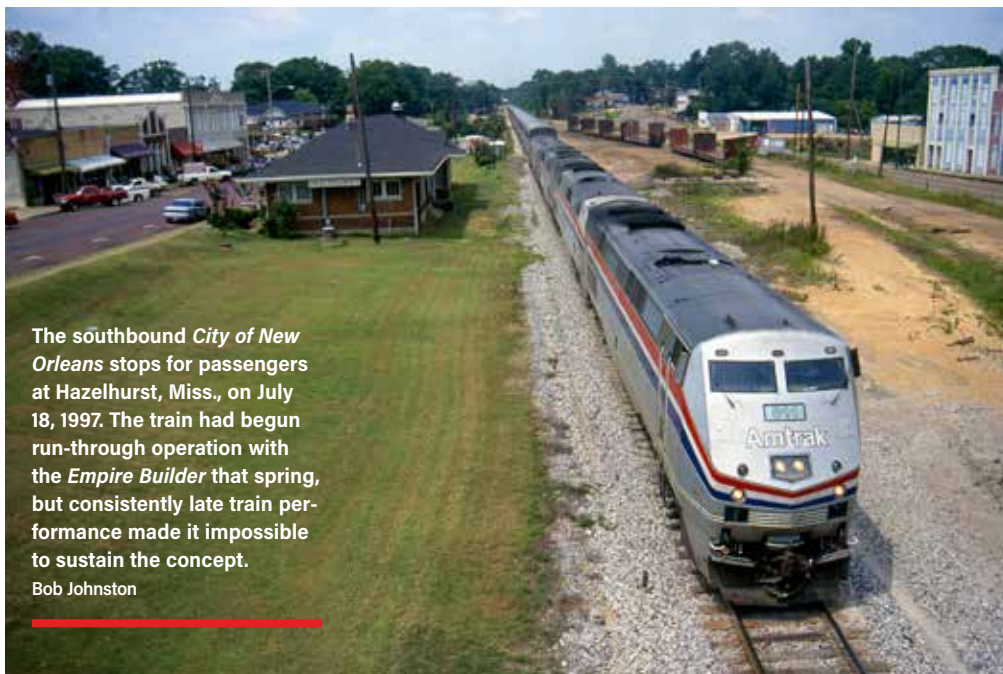
## Projected fiscal 1997 impact of proposals

(Assuming implementation on Oct. 1, 1996)

	Projected savings (in millions)
Route and service	\$17.8
Pricing and yield management	10.0
Productivity	
• Support facilities	22.6
• P42 locomotives	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$54.1</b>

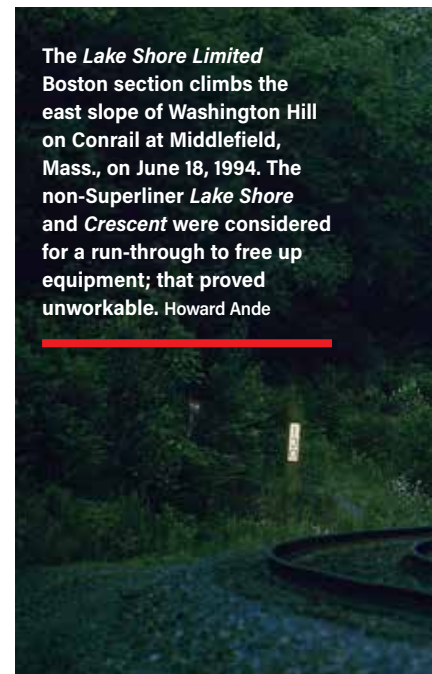


# Amtrak's 'Living the Vision' Superliner plan, 1996



The southbound *City of New Orleans* stops for passengers at Hazelhurst, Miss., on July 18, 1997. The train had begun run-through operation with the *Empire Builder* that spring, but consistently late train performance made it impossible to sustain the concept.

Bob Johnston



The *Lake Shore Limited* Boston section climbs the east slope of Washington Hill on Conrail at Middlefield, Mass., on June 18, 1994. The non-Superliner *Lake Shore* and *Crescent* were considered for a run-through to free up equipment; that proved unworkable. Howard Ande

sist sat idle more than 36 hours. Eleven sets of equipment were utilized for both combined routes. The cars spent 108 hours en route but 110 hours sitting in yards — 50 in Washington or Los Angeles and 60 in Chicago. Eliminating Chica-

go as a turning point would reduce the number of sets in service for both trains. With implementation of uniform train consists, we could free up 19 cars to generate revenue elsewhere. Responsibility for primary equipment mainte-

nance would have to shift to Washington or LA.

## • *Empire Builder*-*City of New Orleans*.

A modest *Empire Builder* schedule change and uniform train consists would allow a run-through opportunity that

would save two equipment sets and 24 cars. The primary maintenance base would have to shift from Chicago to New Orleans. Both trains would need to operate daily, and the *Builder* would need coaches and a sleeper for its Portland, Ore., section added





and subtracted at Chicago.

A run-through operation for these four trains alone would free 43 cars, which at roughly \$2 million per car was like receiving a one-time capital grant exceeding \$86 million. That is the equivalent of \$168

million in 2024 dollars.

We also planned to implement changes to other trains, including the *Sunset Limited* and the single-level network we operated east of Chicago, including a *Lake Shore Limited-Crescent* run-through at New

York. In total, our initiative package represented the opportunity to create a growth pool of 76 Superliner cars. It would also give us the ability to store 46 former Santa Fe high-level cars, plus 62 heritage single-level cars acquired by Amtrak from freight railroads 25 years earlier. They were all unreliable and extremely expensive to maintain.

The relentless pressure we were under from Congress to fulfill an underfunded mandate to operate a national network while eliminating operating subsidies meant “business as usual” would not work. But the plan also required gut-wrenching trade-offs: elimination of the *Pioneer*, *Desert Wind*, *Cardinal*, *Texas Eagle*, Boston-Albany section of the *Lake Shore Limited*, and the *Gulf Coast Limited*. Although these trains were among the worst financially performing trains in our portfolio, no eliminations were desired — it was a matter of financial solvency and Amtrak’s ultimate survival given our impending legislative man-

**The westbound *Desert Wind* has less than a year of operation remaining as it passes through Erda, Utah, on July 20, 1996. Of the four long-distance trains targeted for elimination under the “Living the Vision” plan, it was one of only two that did not survive.** James Belmont

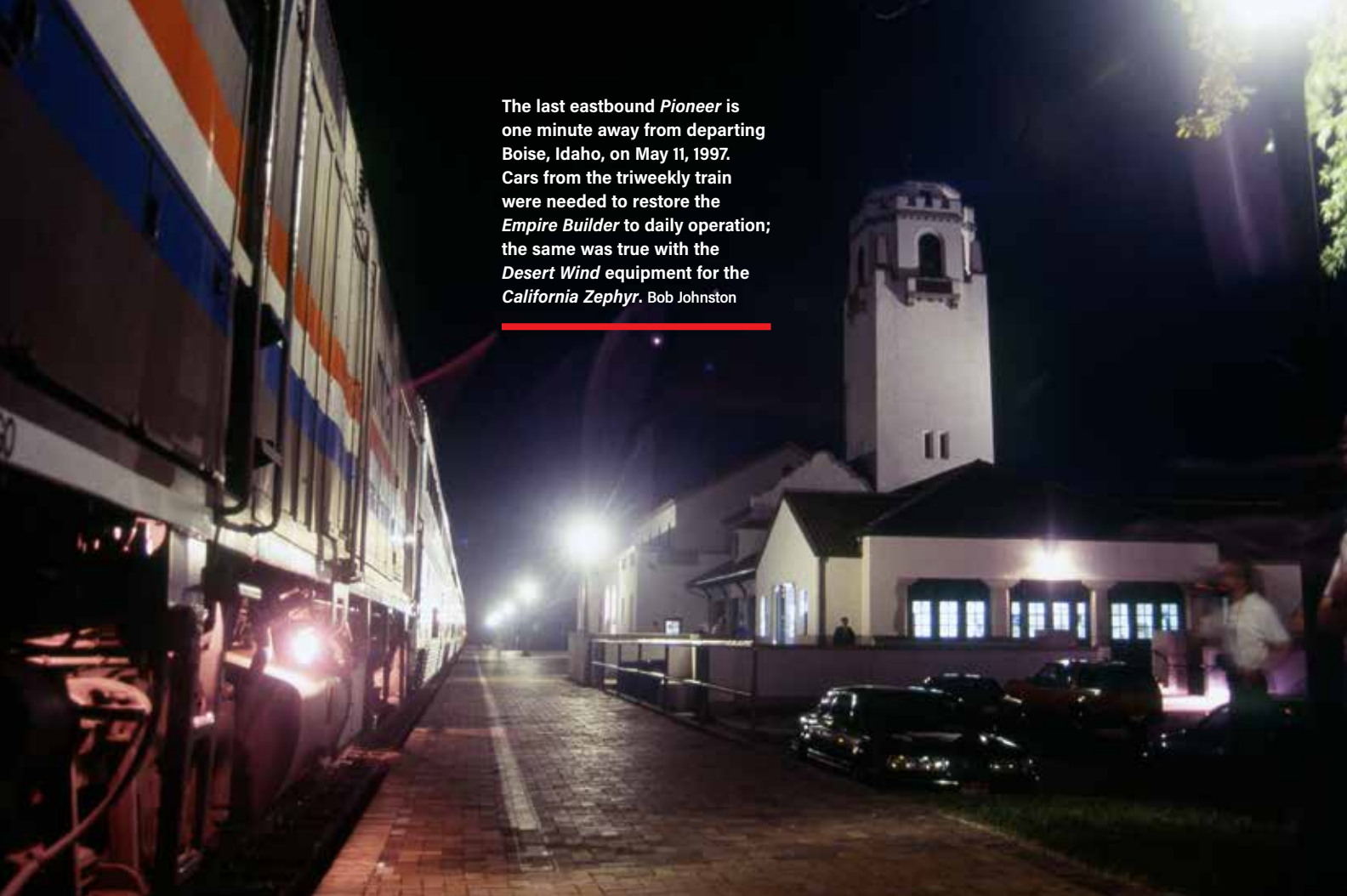
date. The overall “Living the Vision” plan had an estimated annual recurring bottom-line value of \$54 million.

### Aftermath

When the planned restructuring was announced it created a political firestorm and implementation of our plan was legislatively blocked. To make a long and frustrating story short, on Oct. 14, 1996, Congress passed a continuing resolution which forced the retention of the *Cardinal* indefinitely, the *Gulf Coast Limited* until March 31, 1997, and the other trains until May 10, 1997. The continuation of these trains past those dates would depend on financial support from states.

The resolution included a





The last eastbound *Pioneer* is one minute away from departing Boise, Idaho, on May 11, 1997. Cars from the triweekly train were needed to restore the *Empire Builder* to daily operation; the same was true with the *Desert Wind* equipment for the *California Zephyr*. Bob Johnston

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A *Capitol Limited* trainset backs around the wye adjacent to Amtrak's Chicago yard on April 1, 1995. The train began run-through operation with the *Southwest Chief* in October of the following year. Bob Johnston

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**The Texas Eagle stops in Austin, Texas, on May 28, 2022, shortly after Amtrak's latest effort to operate a run-through consist, this time joining the Eagle with the Capitol Limited. Launched in March of that year, it lasted only until early May.** Norm Schultze

supplemental appropriation of \$22.5 million but, as with all things related to Amtrak, it wasn't enough. A General Accounting Office study verified that Congressional intervention increased our costs by \$36.1 million and our FY 1997 deficit by \$13.6 million. Those who were holding Amtrak's feet to the financial fire exercised their right to keep routes intact. Yet, we were widely criticized for being poor financial stewards of taxpayer money.

We were able to execute a *Southwest Chief-Capitol Limited* run-through on Oct. 18, 1996, that freed up 19 Superliner cars. Congress subsequently failed to appropriate additional funds while keeping the "break-even" mandate in place, and the states did not provide financial support, so the *Pioneer* and *Desert Wind* died on May 10, 1997. They were chess pieces traded in exchange for deficit reduction and restoration of daily service on the *California Zephyr*, *Empire Builder*, and *City of New*

*Orleans* on that date. The *Builder-City* run-through operations soon commenced. The *Texas Eagle* survived the chopping block as a triweekly train thanks to the efforts of passionate small-town civic leaders in Texas who helped Amtrak obtain a loan from the state, along with the promise of growing M&E revenue.

I left Amtrak in October 1997 and returned to private industry. Sadly, even the best plans can fall victim to circumstances outside of one's control. The run-through train operations we initiated proved to be unsustainable, primarily due to chronically late and inconsistent train performance from Amtrak's freight-railroad hosts.

The idea did not die, however. The *Texas Eagle* was restored to daily operation between Chicago and San Antonio in 1998 to support growing M&E business. This enabled a run-through of the *Texas Eagle* and *Capitol Limited* consists in 1998. Unreliable freight railroad per-

formance doomed it, too, but it was replaced by a *Texas Eagle/City of New Orleans* run-through that continued until 2013. A *Texas Eagle-Capitol Limited* pairing was resuscitated in March 2022 by current Amtrak management as a way to convert both trains to daily operation post-COVID-19. Unfortunately, that effort was also short-lived, primarily due to chronically late and inconsistent train performance from freight-railroad hosts.

History is cyclical, however. Perhaps run-through operations can resume if Amtrak is eventually able to take full advantage of the collateral benefits of its host railroads' massive technology investments in positive train control and customer-service/asset-velocity related fruits of true PSR that we envisioned at BN in the late 1980s. Aside from dramatically improving customer service, consistent on-time execution could release an incredible amount of capacity through

better equipment utilization.

Meanwhile, Amtrak continues to be capacity-challenged. The "costs" associated with customer dissatisfaction when passengers are turned away due to oversold trains, lost revenue opportunities, and unproductive capital are astounding. Idle assets are dead money. Amtrak's owners — the taxpayers — deserve more. **I**

*Mark S. Cane served as president-Amtrak Intercity in 1996-97 after a 17-year career in operations, planning, and marketing with Burlington Northern Railroad that culminated with leadership of its Intermodal Business Unit and pursuit of BN's merger with Santa Fe.*





# COLEBROOK RAILROAD'S rebirth



# DALE

**The Secret Valley Line:  
Growing a successful tourist carrier**

**Story and photos by Dale W. Woodland**



The Colebrookdale Railroad's terminal, situated in the heart of Boyertown, Pa., shows the ornate station building and development of the parking area and landscaping. The addition of high-level platforms has improved passenger access to the train. Not only do such improvements enhance the railroad but enrich the city's center and position the railroad as part of the community.





**T**he Colebrookdale Railroad's rebirth as a successful tourist railroad breathes new life into a former Reading Co. branch in southeastern Pennsylvania. The 2014 revival was sparked by a determined man named Nathaniel Guest and a supportive community. Guest, a Pottstown, Pa., native, learned the railroad was going to be officially abandoned. Believing the line's history made it worth saving, Guest began a campaign to get trains running again.

In one of his first moves, Guest approached the Berks County commissioners for help. The commissioners readily understood two things: First, the Colebrookdale Railroad was an irreplaceable asset for the old industrial communities along its route, including Pottstown and Boyertown, and, second, once gone, it would be gone forever. With their support, the Civil War-era railroad was reborn as an engine of community and economic development — a heritage railroad christened the Secret Valley Line. A 501(c)3 non-profit organization, the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust, was established to oversee the project. The trust restored and developed the railroad as an active freight utility and heritage tourist railroad.

Guest recalls the two years of work needed to get the Colebrookdale project off the ground. He describes the effort like that

of a dog chasing a car and finally catching it: What happens now? "Suddenly we had a great railroad line. It's got a great history, except the track needs work. The bridges need work. There's no customers, no locomotives, no cars, no crew. Apart from that, it's ready to roll. And I'm a graduate student ... what am I going to do? So it was a very exciting and terrifying ... all at the same time."

As part of the restoration process, the railroad worked to build a network of political, industry, and business supporters assisted by a partnership that includes the Redevelopment Authority of Berks County, Montgomery County, the Boroughs of Pottstown and Boyertown, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

## HISTORY

The railroad can trace its history to 1865. This is when it began serving industries along the Manatawny Creek near Pottstown. It was named Colebrookdale after the first ironworks in England. Operation commenced in 1869 and the line was later leased to the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, later the Reading Co., on Jan. 1, 1870. Local freight and passenger service was provided as far north as Barto, Pa., for many years. On April 1, 1976, the line became part of Conrail when the Reading, bankrupt





**Nearing the railroad's southern terminus at Pottstown, Pa., on Sept. 6, 2021, restored former Pennsylvania Railroad N5b cabin car No. 477768 crosses State Highway 100. The Colebrookdale Railroad has a connection to Norfolk Southern's Harrisburg Line here. The caboose was the first piece of rolling stock acquired by the railroad.**

since 1971, was absorbed into that newly formed system. Conrail planned to abandon the line, but the Colebrookdale Spur was quickly acquired by PennDOT and operation was contracted out, initially to the Anthracite Railway and then the Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad in 1995.

In March 2001, Berks County acquired the line to ensure it would remain active. Operation passed to the Penn Eastern Railway, which, in a few years, applied for abandonment. Berks County picked up the line for a second time in March 2009. This time the county conveyed operational rights to the Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad, a subsidiary of holding company U.S. Rail Partners, Ltd. USRP bowed out of the operation at the end of 2013, handing the operating contract to the Colebrookdale Trust. In 2011, a proposal was made to operate a tourist railroad over the 8.6-mile line.

Today, the Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad — a wholly owned subsidiary of the Colebrookdale Trust — is the freight carrier, serving terminals in Pottstown and Boyertown.



## ROSTER EXPANSION

The fledging operation acquired its first piece of rolling stock as a donation from the Rivanna Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, based in Charlottesville, Va. The group had restored former Pennsylvania Railroad N5b cabin car No. 477768. The caboose was delivered to Boyertown on Jan. 17, 2014. A donation of \$15,000 by the Lions and Rotary clubs of Boyertown to the trust, and a subsequent donation of \$5,000 to the NRHS Restoration Grant fund, were factors in the decision to donate No. 477768 to the Colebrookdale Railroad and illustrate the community's commitment as a central theme in the continuing revitalization of Boyertown.

In March 2014, the Colebrookdale Trust leased EMD GP10 No. 7580. Built in 1957 as Pennsylvania Railroad GP9 No. 7128, it was rebuilt by Conrail into a GP10 and assigned its current number. Later it served the Wimpey Materials quarry in nearby Annville, Pa. Since there was some freight business at the south end of the line, the GP10 was kept at Stowe, Pa., Colebrookdale's connection with Norfolk Southern's Harrisburg Line.

In July 2014 the railroad acquired a 70-foot-long flatcar built for Vermont's Rutland Railway during the 1950s. Side rails were welded to it for use on tourist trains on the Upper Hudson River Railroad in New York state. The car provided an open-air experience for passengers riding the line. The same year the railroad acquired Canadian National six-axle passenger cars, Nos. 5033 and 4970, formerly used on the Adirondack Scenic Railway in New York, as well as a Plymouth Locomotive Works 30-ton switcher. The locomotive was donated to the railroad by NRG Energy when its Titus Generating Station was decommissioned.

The Colebrookdale Railroad's soft opening took place on Sunday, Oct. 23, 2014. The following August, a lowboy truck delivered a 1924 Pullman 10-section, one-drawing-room, two-compartment sleeping car. The car, No. 8662, *Lake Girard*, was part of the Pennsylvania Railroad fleet. The Colebrookdale Trust received a \$10,000 grant to help with restoration. With the addition of more coaches, the Boyertown Borough Council approved closing a portion of Third Street for longer trains to sit while passengers boarded. During 2015, the railroad's first full year of opera-





tion, it carried 25,000 passengers. The railroad received a Preserve America award presented by Michelle Obama in recognition of its efforts to maintain and protect valuable historic and cultural resources.

Former Pennsylvania Railroad GP9 No. 7236, later Conrail GP10 No. 7587, arrived on the railroad on Jan. 19, 2016. Owned by Mobile Loco Services, Inc. (LOCX No. 2944) the locomotive was previously used at Maple Grove, Ohio. No. 2944 was repainted and made its debut run May 1, 2016. The railroad chose an attractive dark blue paint scheme set off with thin white stripes. Unlike the previous GP10, which was leased, Colebrookdale purchased this locomotive.

### DEPOT PLANS

Plans for a station at the south end of the Secret Valley tourist line always included a depot in Pottstown. In 2014, the trust received a \$676,000 grant from Pennsylvania's Multimodal Transportation Fund toward this goal. The state grant required a local 30% match, which came from a \$250,000 grant awarded in 2015 by the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority and additional private donations.

The Pottstown station is a project, Guest believes, that will spark a revival in that town. The park will be a regional center

with amenities like canoe and bike rentals and a tie-in to the Schuylkill River Trail, a hiking trail that runs from Philadelphia to Pottsville, mostly along the route of the former Pennsy Schuylkill Valley Branch. The railroad also decided to create a picnic grove in the former village of Colebrookdale, complete with a water tower, an early 1900s Reading Co. shed, and a windmill.

### GOOD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

According to its 2016 annual report, the railroad hosted 20,000 passengers and created 15 new jobs. The railroad estimated it had a \$2 million annual impact on Boyertown and Pottstown since 2015 from direct spending by the railroad for operations plus impacts of \$6 million from visitors and \$13 million from capital investment. A total of 13 new businesses opened in Boyertown, attributing their choice of location to the railroad. The success of the railroad also generated real estate reinvestment adjacent to the station grounds. The railroad enhanced community events like Boyertown's anniversary celebration, Pickfest, and Pottstown's Brewfest. Goals for the year included improving handicap access to the cafe car, restoring an additional dining car, and installing 110,000 century-old paving bricks to provide access at Boyertown. The improvement list also included placing a cast iron fence donated by the Smithsonian around the yard, and





**Former Pennsylvania Railroad GP10 No. 7236, in its attractive Colebrookdale paint scheme, rests on the new track alignment next to the Boyertown station on Sept. 7, 2021. The railroad also has a former Norfolk Southern high-hood GP38-2 No. 5128, which is used in pull-pull configuration on passenger operations, avoiding the need to run around the train at the end of the line.**

installing a fountain. A high-level, handicap-accessible platform was also added at Boyertown.

“Our mission is set within the context of a torchbearer,” says Guest, speaking about the railroad’s role in the community. “It’s set within the context of this beautiful little historic line ... But our purpose and the driving force behind our mission is really a community, an economic development, one. Our activities — the ways in which we set our strategic goals — involves education, skills building, teaching [subjects like] restoration, trades administration, hospitality, and train operations. We teach those skills to people who maybe have never even been to a railroad before with the idea of building their skills and helping them move from low-wage, low-skilled jobs to higher-wage jobs.”

#### THE ROSTER GROWS, AGAIN

To give the railroad more flexibility, Colebrookdale acquired former Norfolk Southern high-nose GP38-2 No. 5128 in Septem-



**Former Lake Superior & Ishpeming 2-8-0 No. 18 is unloaded at Boyertown on June 30, 2021. The locomotive is privately owned and kept under cover at the railroad’s shop building in Glasgow awaiting restoration. The tender arrived separately.**

## RAIL GLIDING IN THE SECRET VALLEY

**MANY TOURIST RAILROADS** now offer people-powered activities aboard rail bikes. For participants, a rail bike ride along the tracks provides exercise and offers a unique view of the line. For the railroad, it is an opportunity to economically expand capacity and develop a new market segment in those looking for physical outdoor programs.

The Colebrookdale Railroad took the rail bike concept a step further than most. In 2020, the railroad launched its bike program with commercially available vehicles. However, as Nathaniel Guest, Colebrookdale executive director, explains, “[The public] will find every weak spot for you.” Soon the railroad staff realized an improved rail bike was needed [see “Riding the Rail Glider ...,” “Preservation,” May 2023].

The Colebrookdale staff decided to design a new bike — they call it a Rail Glider — from the rails up. The resulting vehicle is ideal for the tourist rail bike environment, being lightweight, yet sturdy enough to endure public usage.

Now the twists in the story. The Colebrookdale Railroad decided to manufacture the bikes itself. Additionally, the railroad, being a certified autism center, saw an opportunity through the new bikes to provide life skills and job training to the local autistic community. Railroad staff and local people with autism work together in manufacturing the Rail Gliders and presenting programs with them on the Colebrookdale Railroad.

For more information on the Rail Glider visit: [railgliders.com](http://railgliders.com). Also, listen to a Trains LIVE interview with Nathaniel Guest discussing the new bikes and the Colebrookdale’s role in its community by scanning the QR code. — Bob Lettenberger











Showing its new Colebrookdale paint scheme, Doodlebug M-55 is at the railroad's Boyertown yard on Sept. 6, 2021. Built by J.G. Brill in 1930, the car's 34-passenger capacity is ideal for smaller parties. The motorcar is also occasionally used for rail bike events as the conveyance that returns riders to Boyertown. The rail bikes can be seen next to the M-55.

ber 2017. For Colebrookdale, this locomotive, built in January 1974, helps avoid a run-around move at each end of the line by operating trains pull-pull with a locomotive on each end.

The Colebrookdale Railroad's first Winter Photo Shoot train operated in March 2017 and, later in the year, the railroad hosted an excursion geared for kids and adults with autism and their families. The excursion was run in a way that made the children feel comfortable with the surroundings.

Members of Restoration Works International — a nonprofit using volunteer tourism to restore cultural heritage sites — worked in Boyertown helping to restore a Frankfort & Cincinnati Model 55 Rail Car acquired by the railroad. *The Cardinal*, a motorcar listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in 1930 by the J.G. Brill Co. of Philadelphia. The 43-foot-long steel car has a four-cylinder gasoline engine with a mechanical drive and holds 43 passengers. *The Cardinal* originally ran the "Whiskey Route" of the Frankfort & Cincinnati Railroad from Frankfort to Paris, Ky. After the F&C stopped passenger service in 1952, the Kentucky Railway Museum acquired *The Cardinal* in 1960. The F&C had two Brill railcars: M55-1 and No. 2. Car No. 2 was run on the Black River & Western Delaware Division where it is known as the *Delaware Turtle*. The car operated its first public Colebrookdale excursions on Oct. 13, 2018. The short trips were called the Pumpkin Patch Excursions and operated to the Colebrookdale Grove, 2 miles south of Boyertown.

## IN THE MOVIES

On Jan. 29, 2019, Voyage Digital Media, an independent New York production company, in conjunction with the National

◀ **The Colebrookdale Railroad places a premium on every aspect of the passenger experience. This includes restoration work, like this seen aboard one of the railroad's parlor cars. A ride aboard the Colebrookdale is truly a step out of the modern world and into the rail travel luxury of a bygone era.** Colebrookdale Railroad photo, Dale W. Woodland collection

Maritime Historical Society, filmed a documentary at the railroad called *Sails Over Ice and Seas*. The documentary outlines the history of *Ernestina-Morrissey*, an 1894 schooner that journalist Frederick Wallace was invited to ride in December 1912. To get to the boat he had to take the train from Montreal to Portland, Maine. Several of the train scenes were filmed including Frederick Wallace boarding the train, a conductor summoning passengers, and Wallace sitting in a railcar with fellow passengers in period attire. Footage of the train's interior and exterior, as well as scenic views along the Secret Valley rail route, were included.

## THE FUTURE

The railroad has robust plans for the future. Its vision will secure long-term success, according to nationally respected rail preservation expert John Hankey. Plans include the creation of a Colebrookdale Village educational site as an off-the-grid experience for young people, a display of made-in-Pennsylvania artifacts at the Boyertown Station, operation of the world's first LNG powered steam locomotive, providing the experience of sleeping in a stationary Pullman car, operation of Rail Gliders, and operation of an ADA-compliant passenger car.

The Colebrookdale Railroad has done an excellent job marketing its product by operating a variety of excursions originating in Boyertown. The special trains included: fall foliage, Haunted History, Santa Claus, Valentine's Day, Easter Bunny, Mud Ball, brunch and dinner, wine and cheese tasting, Mother's Day, and Father's Day excursions. The railroad also offers group charters of the entire train or the caboose for birthday parties.

With farsighted and capable leadership, as well as a cadre of dedicated volunteers, the Colebrookdale Railroad's future looks bright. As predicted, the Boyertown community has benefited from the railroad's creation, with new restaurants and other businesses opening in town. The Secret Valley is no longer a secret. **I**







# BY TRAIN TO UKRAINE

Inside a congressional trip to check on progress of the war

Story and photos by  
U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton

**T**he train, at a station in Poland, had one high-horsepower locomotive, one car, and a crew of three — all for our party of five members of Congress, plus two Diplomatic Security agents from the State Department. The crew was exactly what you'd expect in America — engineer, conductor, and car attendant.

I'd ridden on a private car before, thanks to my summer college internship at BNSF, but I'd never been on a private train.

Our congressional delegation represented all corners of the country: the North Shore of Boston to the San Diego shore; the heartland of South Carolina to the desert of Arizona to the lush coast of Santa Barbara. We included two Marine veterans; one aspiring senator; one who came to America at 5 years old, following his father from a job in a copper mine to a job in fields, and who ran and won a congressional seat as a first-generation American; and one whose grandfather bought her seat with his billions.

Irrespective of party or personal history, we were here for the right reasons: doing our job as members of the House Armed Services Committee to provide oversight of the American-backed, taxpayer-funded war effort in Ukraine. The effort and expense of putting together our private train pales in comparison to the daily expenditure of taxpayer funds to support the Ukrainians' fight for freedom against the Russians.

◀ The train for members of Congress at its point of departure in Poland.

▶ U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton (D-Mass.), whose background includes time as the project manager of Texas Central, a BNSF internship, and engine service and track work in New Hampshire, poses on the steps of the Ukrainian sleeper.





After meetings in Poland with the 101st Airborne Division about the logistics of getting weapons, materiel, and humanitarian aid into Ukraine, followed by a dinner of upscale Polish cuisine, we drove from our hotel in a border town near the airport to the train station. We got there by a modern, American-style superhighway that left me with the dreaded feeling that we were exporting the worst of American infrastructure to Poland, and leaving its classic, European-style small towns and walkable city centers ruined in its wake.

Our vans drove right onto the platform to our single-car train. We were told to expect the accommodations would be spartan, dirty, and uncomfortable. Yet I had a sneaking suspicion that our American view of rail travel is so jaded that we would be pleasantly surprised, and, indeed, we were. Our single sleeping car was spartan, that's fair, but brand new and sparkling clean. Every room was spotless, with digital controls and fresh linens, though the pillows reminded me of the clumpy sacks I got used to in my grandparents' house growing up.

It's not lost on me that they probably picked one of their best cars for our delegation. The Ukrainians are unfailingly grateful for the astounding level of American assistance authorized by the U.S. Congress.

In contrast to Amtrak, the cars were sparkling clean, the crew was unfailingly polite, and — something that cannot be attributed to special treatment — the trackbed was superb. We're not talking Asian or European high-speed rail standards, but compared to Amtrak, even on the Northeast Corridor, the ride was smooth as can be on continuous welded rail with concrete ties. We sailed through turnouts and crossovers with nary a sway, and the speed, at least after we passed into Ukraine, was good and constant. We passed the first hour or so getting to know each other better over a bottle of bourbon and a bottle of wine, both of which sat open on the sleeping car table without any concern for falling over — again, something you won't get used to on the Acela.

To prepare for the trip, I spent a bit of time in my basement, going through my old Marine clothes to pull out the best cold-



**Gracious hosts, the Ukrainians provided a sleeping car for the visiting members of Congress that was new, and made sure it remained spotless.**

weather gear I could find. Ukraine is frigid in any winter, but at a time when Vladimir Putin's criminal strategy was to make the people of Ukraine — the people he claims to be “saving” — freeze, I knew I had to do everything I could to stay warm.

At least that's what I thought. After I had packed, I remembered that Europeans tend to keep their homes and offices especially warm during the winter months. I started to be concerned that my primary issue would be overheating, which was indeed the case.

Over an hour into our journey, I found the conductor and communicated through arm and facial gestures that we were all too hot, and he brought me to the impressive, Ukrainian-made digital control center of the car, where he pointed to a number: 24 [degrees] Celsius. He gestured the thumbs up, and I said, “No, no!” and he scripted out “2 – 4” with his finger on the wall, to which I scripted out “2 – 0” and he happily pushed a button to change the target temperature to 20, which for those of us who are imperially based, is about 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

The other strategy for climate control that we were briefed on by the Diplomatic Security agents before boarding was to request the car attendant to crack open the windows. As soon as we crossed the border, we had to keep all shades drawn, but they were willing to open the New York City-subway-style windows in our rooms, and I didn't hesitate to take them up on the offer. Hearing the singing of the rails made getting to sleep that much easier, yet it wasn't as classic as I expected: Even in 2022, you can still find a good deal of jointed rail on Amtrak, but not on Ukrainian Railways.

With the sounds of the rails on a raw winter's night, the gentle fluttering of the window shade drawn tightly down with a bulge at the top where the window was open, I laid down to sleep on a comfortable mattress lying perpendicular to the car. I should note that the hard mattress/seat cushion was quite comfortable to this Marine veteran who loves a firm sleeping surface, but others questioned whether this qualified as a mattress at all. The sheets were clean-pressed and stamped “Ukrainian Railways — 2022.” Even in the midst of war, Ukrainian Railways ensures its sleeping car passengers get fresh-made sheets.

I have always found sleeping on trains not just romantic or efficient, but undeniably enjoyable. What better way to fall asleep than being rocked like a baby, quite literally? There's one big exception: when you stop. Just about every time I've woken up on a train from an otherwise deep and lovely sleep, I've found myself sitting in a station, or on Amtrak, inevitably sitting on some lonely siding waiting for a more important freight to pass.

This night was no different, and for everything that was just as it should be on this Ukrainian sleeper, there were a few stops due to traffic delays or perhaps other issues of which we remained unaware.

We stopped early on in western Ukraine to change engines in Lviv, a place I instantly recognized in the black of night by the train shed I'd already seen in so many early photos of the war. The sounds of uncoupling and coupling, testing the hitch and dumping air, men wrestling with air hoses and head-end power connectors in the biting winter rain — all of those were no different from what many of us have heard at home in America.

What I cannot possibly convey through words and pictures was the smell: that of coal smoke! It brought me back instantly to my days on the Conway Scenic Railroad in the White Mountains of New Hampshire where I held down a roster spot as a fireman,



**Accommodations on the Ukrainian Railways sleeper were spartan but sparkling. Moulton was fine with the hard mattress/cushion but others found it a bit too firm.**





Lviv-Holovnyi, the central station for the city of more than 700,000 in the western part of the country, was immediately recognizable during a nighttime stop because its trainshed had been featured in news coverage during the early stages of the war.

aboard No. 7470 [a former Canadian National 0-6-0] for several years in high school and college. No steam engines are running on the mostly electrified railways of Ukraine, of course, but apparently many coaches are still heated by coal stoves, and I imagined people must be keeping warm through the winter night in Lviv with coal, thanks to the Russian bombardment of energy infrastructure. Putin is trying to use winter as a weapon to break the will of the Ukrainian people.

Never did the lights even flicker during the engine change, and before long we were cruising east, with barely a shuffle through the throat of Lviv-Holovnyi, the city's central station. Once again, this American rail traveler was envious. We quickly picked up speed, and the wind again sifted through the window shade as steel wheels hummed along ribbons of steel rail through the night.

I will admit, that as much as I love sleeping on the rails, I did not fall right to sleep. I was too excited, for I was a veteran Marine infantry officer traveling by train in a combat zone — how exciting is that!

The lights of small-town train stations in the pre-dawn hours of a cold December heralded the legions of Ukrainians still commut-



ing to work in the midst of war. Small freight and passenger yards, regional trains, and various shop buildings and freight houses made for a mixture of U.S. railroading circa 1960 and European railroading today. I was also struck by the amount of forest between cities, and thinking about Putin's plans, thought again: The Ukrainians will survive this winter.

When we arrived in Kyiv, the capital, it was a dark and dreary





**President Joe Biden works during his secret 10-hour train trip to meet with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in February 2023.** The White House/pool image: Evan Vuicci

## THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP BY TRAIN

**REP. SETH MOULTON'S GROUP** of members of Congress was far from alone in traveling by train for official government business in Ukraine. Because the war has made it unsafe to fly, Ukraine Railways, or Ukrzailiynytisia (UZ), regularly conveys visiting heads of state or other diplomatic officials to meetings in Kyiv; photos of such visits are frequently featured on UZ's social media sites. UZ calls it "iron diplomacy."

Those visitors include President Joe Biden, who in February 2023 took the 10-hour train trip to meet with Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. President Biden traveled in somewhat more luxurious accommodations than Rep. Moulton's group, however — a VIP train since dubbed "Rail Force One" [see "Ukraine's railways mark one year of war," *News*, May 2023]. The Polish-built saloon car used by heads of state has two bedrooms and a conference room. — *David Lassen*



**The conference room of the Polish-built car for heads of state used by President Biden during his 2023 trip to Ukraine.**

Pesa Bydgoszcz

morning and the station wasn't much better. I enjoyed a small display of historic equipment in a yard immediately adjacent to the station, but we were quickly hustled into armored U.S. Embassy vans to reach our first meetings, with a stop at a Western hotel for a remarkably full wartime breakfast buffet, and a shower.

After a full day of meetings and briefings, we boarded our train in Kyiv under the same foggy rain coming down on streets covered in dirty snow that had greeted our arrival. The war is remarkably absent from the capital thanks to the exceptional resilience of the Ukrainians. In the midst of the largest land war in Europe since World War II, our Kyiv hotel had a full selection of tropical fruit on the breakfast buffet, and we had dinner at the same restaurant I had visited during a peacetime trip a few years before — still open despite a Russian missile strike across the street. But if the people and their city weren't dreary, the weather



**A look at Lviv's station by day in January 2003. The country's 5-foot gauge railways are a remnant of the Soviet era; they have complicated rail shipments to western Europe since the war began.** Keith Fender

sure was: downright depressing, I would say.

A couple of my colleagues were intent on procuring an alcohol supply to keep us entertained on the night train back to Poland: Congress is sometimes like college. Booze wasn't my focus, but lest I sound above it all, I enjoyed a small selection of libations along with the rest of them following our departure. Who's to say a jolly round or two of drinks isn't a routine part of the night-train experience?

Overnight trains naturally take long journeys, and this would be another 10-hour trip, but I never find myself anxious to get there so long as we are moving fast. And I could tell that, for much of this journey, we were going fast — faster than your standard Amtrak route, though not high-speed-rail fast. Entering and leaving Kyiv, however, was painfully slow. I pulled up Google Translate on my phone and entered, "Why are we going so slow right now?" When I showed it to conductor, I was met with a knowing nod, and then he tried to input his response without success, so the car attendant took over his phone and tried herself. No success either.

At that point, the conductor motioned sternly to put down all of our phones, and he picked up two of them and made it quite apparent that we were stuck behind another train. This was precisely my guess given the number of commuters we'd passed that morning.

Beyond the outskirts of Kyiv, and after a couple drinks, we picked up speed dramatically, and I come back again to how remarkably well-maintained the tracks are for a war-torn country. While Acela veterans are used to the somewhat regular lurch that is large enough to throw you from one side of the aisle into the lap of someone across from you, I never once — in 20 hours — felt something like that. My one critique is that the cars did not ride all that well. The track was tamped beautifully, but the suspension on the cars felt stiff and tough, too much like the tired old air-bag suspensions of the Amfleet I cars that still bump along the Northeast Corridor.

We had much debate driving around Kyiv between meetings about what the correct recipe was for the temperature on the train. South Carolina didn't find the thick blankets stored above the door and woke up freezing in the middle of the night. Likewise, California kept the window open and was an icicle. I was quite cozy all bundled up in my blankets, but still woke up cold enough at one point to close the window so it was only open a crack.

"Passports!" shouted our over-eager Diplomatic Security Service agent. He wasn't happy to be there, and this was about as much excitement and authority as he was going to get. The conductor came by shortly thereafter, gently tapping on the door and saying softly, "Passports, please." The American and





**A Ukrzailnytsia, or Ukraine Railways, long-distance train with a two-unit electric locomotive. Most of Ukraine's main lines are electrified, and the infrastructure supporting that system has been a target of Russian attacks throughout the war.** Keith Fender

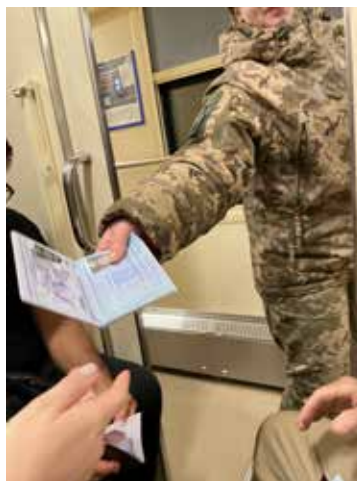
the professional ...

We felt the slack every time we started, and using the restroom by the engine side of our one-car train meant standing over the draft gear slamming around at speed underneath the car. They must have an inferior system to what we have in the west.

Back in my room, I disobeyed regulations and opened my window shade after carefully ensuring the room was blacked out. Then I was treated to the festive display of sparks trailing off the ice-coated catenary as we sped through the night, which looks not a lot unlike tracer fire for this Marine veteran. (I fooled a few friends with the video after I returned.)

Sometime before dawn, a Ukrainian soldier boarded to check passports. She was perfectly polite, but looked like she meant business. She wasn't about to let anyone leave who could stay and fight. The familiar sound of her passport stamp gently punctuated the otherwise silent car. Without a modern HVAC system, the car was almost silent when we stopped, aside from the occasional creak from the air brakes or someone shutting a door.

**On the return trip from Kyiv, a Ukrainian soldier politely hands back the passport of a member of the congressional delegation after ensuring the papers are in order: "She wasn't about to let anyone leave who could stay and fight."**



Footsteps down the hall, the crinkle of a wrapper as someone opens a snack, and the occasional low voice contributed to the gentle cacophony of sounds that made up our cozy car with ice slowly melting off the windows.

We stopped in Lviv for what must have been about 30 minutes for the engine change, but this time I didn't leave my compartment. Through my cracked-open window I could hear the pleasant announcement of trains arriving from the East, and I thought about how far they might have gone towards the front, and who might be riding them west to safety.

Not long after passing the border checkpoint, our arrival back in Poland was anticlimactic. We took photos by our train, feeling fortunate for such a unique experience, and then we climbed in a van to ride on that super-highway back to Rzeszów. Before the trip, I expected to feel relieved being back in Poland at our warm and comfortable hotel, but I missed our sleeping car already. **I**

*U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton (D-Mass. 6th District) is in his fifth term in the House of Representatives. A Marine veteran and Harvard graduate who served four tours in the Iraq War, he was managing director of the Texas Central high speed project before joining Congress. His current assignments include a seat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.*



# How to fly a locomotive

In the early 1990s, EMD went the extra mile to please a customer

by Russell T. Sharp

**IT WAS THE** early 1990s and I was an Electro-Motive Division export locomotive district sales manager in the International Locomotive Business Group, based at EMD's headquarters in LaGrange, Ill. At the time, I was responsible for locomotive and parts sales in Europe. One of my customers was Irish Rail and during this time locomotive procurement activity was starting to brew at the railway.

Irish Rail received its first EMD locomotives in January 1961. The locomotives, model GL8s, were an instant success. Irish Rail's management was satisfied with the reliability and the low maintenance costs of its EMD fleet and wanted to stick with us. However, our rival, General Electric, was after the business as well and had partnered with Great Britain's Brush Electrical Machines Ltd., with Brush serving as its main contractor. Moreover, GE was in the process of buying the large fleet of aircraft operated by Ireland's Guinness Peat Aviation and was working closely with Ireland's Minister of Transport. General Electric would certainly try to leverage its high-level access into a locomotive order. This possibility had Irish Rail worried that GE would win the contract.

Their concern led to John Jarrell, EMD's general manager (who was also a General Motors vice president), making

several calls on Irish Rail with me — John was a locomotive salesman at heart!

The first Irish Rail tender was for 10 locomotives. We won the order with our JT42H-CW model (*J* = cab at both ends / *T* = turbocharged engine / *4* = 4th generation of engine / *2* = 12-cylinder engine / *H* = head-end power / *C* = Co-Co six traction motors — six axles / *W* = standard gauge or wider). The locomotives would be equipped with EMD's 12-710G3B engine rated at 3,200 hp, an AR8PHEH/CA6B main generator, Dayton Phoenix head-end power alternator, D43 traction motors and EM2000 microprocessor control system, including Super Series wheel creep control.

## HEAD-END WORRIES

The locomotive's diesel engine had to run at a constant 900 rpm to fully operate the head-end power (HEP) system. In standby mode, the engine still had to maintain 600 rpm — still a relatively high rpm for a 3,200-horsepower diesel. We were concerned there would be noise complaints when a passenger train entered locomotive-first under Dublin's covered Heuston station with the engine roaring, but Dave Waters, Irish Rail's managing director, insisted on head-end power. It would eliminate the need for a power generator car

on passenger trains and make way for an additional revenue-generating car.

When John McCarthy, Irish Rail's chief mechanical engineer, visited us at LaGrange we arranged for the chief mechanical engineer of Metra — Chicago's commuter rail operator — to give us a tour of Chicago Union Station to see (and hear) Metra's head-end powered EMD F40PH "thunder boxes" in action under the station's covered platforms. McCarthy appeared unconcerned with the noise level.

Irish Rail's managing director also wanted the new units equipped with dynamic braking. Since there was no space in the usual location, our engineers designed a system located in the engine cooling water compartment. When we agreed to provide this unusual dynamic braking arrangement, IR's managing director assured us we would win the bid. We stayed with our "GC" bogies and they had to be capable of running at 100 mph between Dublin and Cork. We also had to stick with the Irish Rail stan-





To meet a tight deadline for a naming ceremony in Ireland in 1994, General Motors Electro-Motive Division chartered a Ukrainian-built Antonov 124-100 cargo plane to fly the locomotive from London, Ontario, to Dublin, setting a world record for heaviest commercial air cargo. Diesel Division General Motors Canada Limited



dard of a dual control system in the cabs with the controls on both sides of the cab mechanically connected. Designing this locomotive was quite an engineering challenge, as the extra head-end power and dynamic braking equipment needed to be added while still maintaining an extremely light mandatory axle load of slightly more than 17 metric tons (37,485 pounds).

By this time, much of the locomotive production had shifted from EMD at LaGrange to our sister plant at London, Ontario, the Diesel Division of

General Motors Canada Limited (DDGMCL).

The new Irish Rail locomotives would be assembled in London. The underframes and traction motors were also manufactured at London, while EMD in LaGrange provided the diesel engines, main generators, electrical cabinets, and other miscellaneous items.

During production of the 10 Irish Rail locomotives, the DDGMCL plant was also handling orders for 350 Burlington Northern SD70MAC locomotives, 31 GT46CWM locomotives

for the New South Wales railways in Australia, and F59PHI locomotives for CalTrans. Thus EMD/DDGMCL went from no locomotive business to a great deal of business, and this resulted in the Irish Rail units falling behind on our delivery commitment.

#### AN UNLIKELY SOLUTION

The delay put me in an awkward position. Paul Conlon, Irish Rail executive chairman, wanted to take part in the naming ceremony of the first unit — No. 201 — to be held at IR's

Inchicore Work in Dublin, the railway's primary maintenance and overhaul facility. This would be Conlon's swan song before his retirement, and it looked like the unit would not arrive in time.

I was discussing the lateness of No. 201 over breakfast with EMD's general manager and nearly fell out of my chair when John said, in so many words, "Not to worry Russ — we'll fly that baby to Dublin!"

Sure enough, Bill Burns, transportation manager at the Diesel Division General Motors





**To transport Irish Rail's locomotive No. 201 from the Diesel Division General Motors Canada Limited plant to the London, Ontario airport, No. 201 moved on a special truck trailer with rails on it set at the Irish Rail track gauge of 5 feet 3 inches.** Diesel Division General Motors Canada Limited

Canada Limited plant arranged for one of the enormous Antonov 124-100 cargo planes, built in Ukraine in the then-Soviet Union, to fly No. 201 to Dublin on June 8, 1994.

To give you an idea of the magnitude of this project, it was not only the first-ever locomotive transported by air, but the shipment also set a then-world record for heaviest-ever commercial air cargo!

To transport No. 201 from the plant in London, Ont., to the city's airport, the locomotive was placed on a special truck trailer fitted with rails on its deck set to the Irish Rail track gauge of 5 feet 3 inches. In the meantime, the Antonov crew had installed rails in the cargo hold of their aircraft. The trailer height was aligned to the aircraft's floor, then the aircraft's winches pulled the unit inside.

Maintaining balance required a pair of 10-ton weights supplied by the DDGMCL plant. As the locomotive inched into the aircraft, these weights were eased forward to maintain a level, balanced deck. (This painstaking process was repeated at the Dublin airport during unloading of the locomotive.)

The huge Antonov needed all the room the London, Ontario airport could offer, lifting off just as it reached the end of the runway!

### **SURPRISING THE PUB-GOERS**

The Antonov and its high-flying locomotive arrived at Dublin airport on the morning of June 9, 1994. Unloading commenced at 10 p.m. that night. No. 201 remained outside the aircraft all day on the 10th of June. The move on a truck from the Dublin airport through the streets of Dublin to Irish Rail's Inchicore Works on the west side of Dublin commenced at 1 a.m. on June 11, much to the surprise of folks stumbling out of pubs.

Estimates of the cost of flying the 201 from London, Ontario, to Dublin, Ireland vary from \$250,000 to as much as \$750,000. (More than 25 years have passed and the wide variance shows the impact time has on people's memories.) Factors included in the cost were the flight itself, disruption at the London plant, and movement by specialized trucks in Canada and Ireland.

Transit time from our London plant to Irish Rail's Inchicore Works in Dublin was just over 48 hours. If No. 201 had been shipped by expedited ocean freight, the cost would have still been high — about \$250,000 — and the transit time would have stretched to 14-plus days.

The balance of the order, nine locomotives, traveled as sea cargo at \$30,000 each.

Unfortunately, Paul Conlon, the soon-to-retire chairman of Irish Rail, was not able to attend the naming ceremony after all, but another heavy-hitter substituted in his place — Noel Treacy, Ireland's minister of state at the Department of Transport.

No. 201 was named in English on one side, *River Shannon*, and in Irish on the other side, *Abhainn na Sionnainne*. In addition to carrying its cast nameplate, the locomotive also sported the new Irish Rail corporate logo based on the Irish language name of the company — *Iarnród Éireann* — also formally launched on this date.

### **IN SERVICE**

Predictably, the head-end power system was soon deactivated due to noise complaints when operating in Dublin's Heuston station, and Irish Rail resumed the use of power-generating cars. As it would turn out, HEP was only ever used when working the Dublin-Belfast Enterprise service with De Dietrich coaches.

Irish Rail went on to place additional orders for EMD's JT42HCW locomotives; 20 units were delivered through March 1995 along with two

"cross-border" JT42HCW units for dedicated passenger train service between Dublin, Ireland, and Belfast, Northern Ireland. Goodwill resulting from our gesture of flying No. 201 to Dublin doubtless provided "insurance" we would win this additional business!

### **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

Gerry Beesley, who was Irish Rail's maintenance planning engineer at the Inchicore Works when I commenced calling on Irish Rail, kindly furnished me with the following current status of the 201 class.

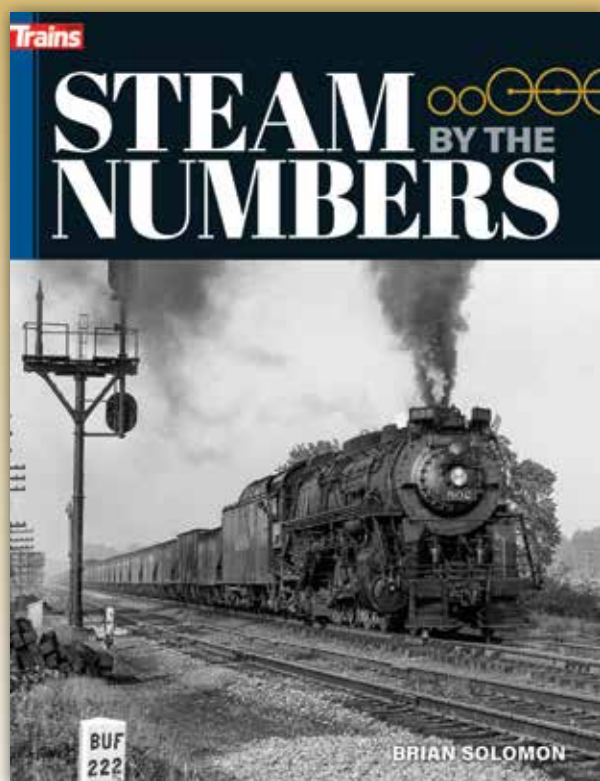
The 10 units delivered with brass traction motor suspension bearings (Nos. 201-205 and 210-214) have been mothballed for several years. Although not officially withdrawn from service, they are unlikely to run again.

Of the other 24 units, those equipped with roller traction motor bearings, Nos. 215-234 are in service and operate push-pull on Dublin-Cork passenger trains, Nos. 206 and 207 are regularly assigned to Dublin-Belfast Enterprise passenger trains, and Northern Ireland Railways Nos. 8208 and 8209 are used on Belfast-Dublin Enterprise passenger trains. **I**





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# The Allentown



There's locomotive variety on the rails, but what's in the river?

by Bill Yurvati

**WHEN I WAS A YOUNG BOY IN THE 1960S**, my family lived within earshot of the Lehigh Valley's West End industrial branch that traversed the north side of Allentown, Pa. Weekday summer entertainment included a run to my backyard whenever I heard an approaching diesel switcher.

As the local passed, I faithfully counted each freight car.

By the mid-1970s, I expanded my contact with the railroad-ing world — first by foot and then bicycle — to the environs of Allentown Consolidated Yard. The Lehigh Valley and Reading main lines converged in the yard, the Lehigh Valley

having assumed ownership in 1972, following the withdrawal of original proprietor Central Railroad of New Jersey.

As if the colorful diesel locomotive consists of the Lehigh Valley and Reading were not enough, Chessie System road engines frequently arrived on several Reading freights. The

Lehigh Valley, short of motive power during the period, employed leased equipment from several roads. Following the 1976 creation of Conrail, Delaware & Hudson run-throughs utilizing trackage rights, visited regularly, sometimes arriving with pooled blue or black Norfolk & Western units.



# kaleidoscope



A quartet of new General Electric U23B locomotives leads a merchandise train through the Lehigh Valley's Lehigh, Pa., yard on Jan. 15, 1976. Locomotives like this were part of the colorful array our author liked to photograph near his home in Allentown, Pa. Dale Woodland

At first, my mother's Kodak Instamatic camera provided practice in the basic skills of railroad photography. Later, with savings earned from a newspaper route and work behind a soda fountain counter, I purchased a 35mm camera.

My interest in railroads continued after high school when I enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1975. My military pay provided

the means for making payments on a compact car. With the independence of personal transportation, I spent many off-duty hours alongside the Seaboard Coast Line in eastern North Carolina.

During extended holiday weekends and occasional Army leaves, I came home to Pennsylvania and reacquainted myself with Allentown Yard.

Under Conrail, the variety of observable locomotive paint schemes multiplied. Motive power decorated in the various colors of the newly formed railroad's bankrupt predecessors paraded through town. Although Penn Central black increasingly obscured the kaleidoscope, fresh Conrail blue restored the usual hodgepodge of color.

In early March 1977, while home on an Army leave, I drove to my usual train-watching vantage point. Located in a municipal park at the western end of Allentown Yard, two mainline tracks were visible. The former Reading main line departed the yard in a westward direction, crossing the Lehigh River by way of a girder deck bridge. The ex-Lehigh Valley main (originally Central of New Jersey) diverted northward, following the east bank of the Lehigh River.

Not yet in possession of a scanner, I utilized a regular transistor radio capable of receiving VHF broadcasts. Through previous radio experimentation, I discovered the precise frequency for intercepting railroad communications. The radio soon crackled with instructions for an approaching southbound D&H freight on the Lehigh line. The tower operator relayed an order to stop at the next signal, yielding to a departing Conrail westbound. His directive revealed D&H No. 2305 as the lead unit, a familiar General Electric U23B.

Shortly thereafter, the Conrail westbound crept out of the yard. I stepped out of my car, framed the oncoming train in my viewfinder, and added another example of Penn Central black to my photo collection. A freshly painted Conrail caboose, tacked to the train's end, soon passed.

I then noticed a young man with a camera strung around his neck walking alongside the track. I did not recognize him as one of the regular railfans who frequented the area. As a courtesy, I decided to offer him information on the southbound manifest.

"There's a D&H U-boat coming down the Lehigh," I said as he approached.

"U-Boats! In the Lehigh River?" His startled reply caught me off guard.

"You're not taking train photos?" I sheepishly asked.

"No. I'm taking pictures of the high power lines that cross the river here," he stated.

"Sorry about that," I apologized. "I was referring to a train that is nearby. U-boats are a nickname for a type of railroad locomotive." He nodded with a semblance of understanding. As he walked away, I detected a modest exhale of relief.

As I retreated to my car, my embarrassment turned to amusement. As I drove away, I imagined the sight of enemy submarines patrolling the shallow depths of the Lehigh River. I was accustomed to regular visitors of the locomotive variety. But even my military training did not prepare me for naval warfare! Obviously, the actual foreigner that day, in the form of railroad machinery, was more mundane. But I often wonder if that man still remembers his brief moment of bewilderment as clearly as I do. **I**

*BILL YURVATI (1957-2008) was passionate about trains. In addition to his rail photography, he was an Operation Lifesaver volunteer and member of the National Railway Historical Society. Professionally, Yurvati worked as a librarian for East Stroudsburg University, East Stroudsburg, Pa.*





## Wisconsin Great Northern expands with steam locomotive

Duluth & Northern 2-8-0 has been moved to Wisconsin from Minnesota

▲ No. 27 and its caboose are moved clear of the shed at the Carlton County Fairgrounds in Barnum, Minn. The locomotive was loaded onto three trucks for shipment to Trego, Wis. No. 27 began arriving at the Wisconsin Great Northern in late April. David Schauer

**THE WISCONSIN GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD** has added a steam locomotive to its expanding roster. Former Duluth & Northeastern 2-8-0 No. 27 has been moved from its display site at the Carlton County Fairgrounds in Barnum, Minn., to the WGN in Trego, Wis. The locomotive had been displayed at the fairgrounds since 1968.

Wisconsin Great Northern, known for its ongoing restoration of the *Mark Twain Zephyr*, acquired the locomotive from Carlton County, which wanted to dispose of the Consolidation, as it was deteriorating and the county could no longer afford its upkeep. It offered the locomotive free of charge to any party that would pay for moving it, indicating it might scrap the 2-8-0 if a new home was not located. WGN stepped in.

"I had heard a grapevine rumor that the locomotive was in danger of being scrapped because it had been offered to museums in the area and they were not able to take on the process of moving the locomotive," WGN President Greg Vreeland said in a phone inter-

view with *Trains*. "I called the president of the Carlton County Fair Association board and he told me indeed they were looking for it to be removed one way or another.

"The important part at this point, and job No. 1, is securing and moving the locomotive. After we complete our current project, the *Mark Twain Zephyr*, we will then thoroughly examine No. 27, with an option to restore her to operation."

No. 27 was built by Alco-Pittsburgh for the Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway in June 1907 as No. 348. It became Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway No. 348 in the 1937 merger of the DM&N and the Spirit Lake Transfer Railway. DM&IR sold the engine in 1955 to short line Duluth & Northeastern of Cloquet, Minn., where it was renumbered 27. D&NE was one of the last U.S. short lines operating steam locomotives, not converting to diesels until 1964. After dieselization, No. 27 was stored in Cloquet until donated to Carlton County. The Lake Superior Railroad Museum's operational

DM&IR 2-8-0 No. 332, formerly D&NE No. 28, which operates on the North Shore Scenic Railroad out of Duluth, Minn., is a sister to No. 348/27.

"It is a significant addition to our collection in that the WGN is home to five ex-Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railroad heavyweight passenger cars," Vreeland said.

WGN crews moved the locomotive on April 15 from its current storage shed onto three track panels, from which it has been prepared for trucking to the Wisconsin Great Northern. Once on that track, the cab and boiler were removed and loaded onto a heavy-duty tractor-trailer rig; the running gear was a second load and the tender a third.

Barnum, midway between Hinckley and Duluth, Minn., is about 87 miles by the most direct road route from Trego.

Included in the acquisition is a World War II Northern Pacific caboose, which was converted from a wooden boxcar into a bay window caboose. — *Steve Glischinski and Steve Smedley*



## PRESERVATION BRIEFS

### EBT No. 16 sidelined, Alaska No. 557 ready for hydro test



**EAST BROAD TOP RAILROAD 2-8-2 NO. 16** is out of service until August 2024 with a cracked driving wheel center that was discovered during an off-season inspection. EBT trains will be pulled by GE 55-ton center-cab M-7 from May through August. All other aspects of the railroad and programming will run as announced. Dan Cupper

**THE ENGINE 557 RESTORATION CO.**, rebuilding **ALASKA RAILROAD 2-8-0 NO. 557**, has applied for a Federal Railroad Administration boiler hydrostatic test, a major milestone in restoring the 1944 Baldwin S-160. The test was planned for the week of May 20. No. 557 was the last Alaska Railroad steam locomotive in regular service.

The **ALBERTA RAILWAY MUSEUM** received what may be the last remnants of **CANADIAN NATIONAL'S** 1928 Edmonton, Alberta, passenger depot — a 14-foot by 7-foot ornate brass four-panel picture window. Located on the second floor over the entrance, it had been salvaged in 1966 when the CN Tower replaced the depot.

## Obituary

**CLINT JONES**, 79, president of the family-owned Mineral Range Railroad in Ishpeming, Mich., died on April 19, 2024.

Jones began his railroading career as an electrician helper at the Milwaukee Road shops in Milwaukee in the mid-1960s.

"He enjoyed being part of the business," his son Chris Jones said. "He was never one of those guys that would sit in a rocking chair, staring out the window, during retirement. He had his pulse on the business."

Between 1978 and 1985, he was involved in the Chippewa River Railroad, Algoma Railroad, and Brillion & Forest Junction Railway. He also worked as a trainmaster in nearby Marquette, Mich., in the late 1980s and early 1990s for Wisconsin Central. — *Steve Smedley*

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# Riding VIA Rail's *Canadian*

A classy experience on a North American classic

▲ A view from the dome on VIA Rail No. 2, the eastward *Canadian*, as it passes classic searchlight signals against a backdrop of stunning scenery.

Three photos, Wayne Duffett

Rarely have I heard such a glowing report from a fellow train rider. Recently, my friend and Conway Scenic Railroad's bridge inspector Wayne Duffett flew from New England to Vancouver to experience the eastward *Canadian*.

He returned delighted by the experience. Despite a few hiccups on the journey, he was impressed with VIA Rail's hospitality and exceptional customer service.

I asked him to list some of the trip's highlights, he replied, "the whole thing!" For Duffett, who had traveled on Canadian Pacific/VIA Rail trains in eastern Canada and Maine, this was a trip of a lifetime.

## A TRAIN WITH A PAST

VIA Rail's *Canadian* is famous among the world's great trains. However, the service has undergone transformations. Some history is required to understand its modern operation.

In 1954-55, CP improved its transcontinental service on the Montreal-Toronto-Vancouver route with its deluxe all-new *Canadian* featuring Budd stain-

less steel streamlined passenger cars and General Motors F-unit diesels. The Budd dome cars offered passengers panoramic views of the Canadian Rockies and were widely publicized in CP's marketing.

In the 1970s, VIA Rail assumed marketing and operation of most CP and Canadian National long distance services. In 1990, VIA Rail shifted operation of the *Canadian* from its historic CP route to the more northerly CN transcon.

Seventy years after the equipment's introduction, the *Canadians* continue to operate the former CP Budd cars. They are among the last of their kind in regularly scheduled long distance mainline service.

Duffett said, "I wanted to travel on the Canadian Pacific stainless steel train before it is phased out. For me, this is the last streamliner. And for anyone wanting to travel in a classic (mid-20th century) North American streamlined train, this is it."

The *Canadian* carries VIA Rail's train Nos. 1 and 2, and in long-standing railroad practice,

the odd-number train is west-bound.

"VIA Rail runs the train in manner worthy of train numbers. This is the flagship and it shows," he said. "It lives up to its billing. The train is very clean — absolutely spotless. While the exterior of the 70-year-old cars retain their traditional Budd-streamlined appearance, the interior of the



The onboard food service was among the trip's highlights. Main courses included prime rib and lamb chops, shown here.



train is beautifully updated.

"There were several classes of travel, and I chose 'Sleeper Class,' which was excellent. I wouldn't swap my little bunk aboard the *Canadian* for the most luxurious hotel in North America. In the evening, the bunks were prepared with blankets turned down at a 45-degree angle. The blankets and pillows were luxury hotel quality. Dennis, our steward, was a gentleman. He was top notch."

Duffett noted that Pacific Central Station in Vancouver, B.C., seemed small considering the size of the city, yet the station was more than adequate since it only serves a pair of daily Amtrak *Cascades*, as well as the western termini for the *Canadian* (which in the winter runs just twice a week). Most memorable was the live oration announcing the eastward *Canadian*'s departure, "They listed every station in order all the way through to Toronto."

"I was only traveling as far east as Winnipeg," he said. "We

made stops at Kamloops, Jasper, Edmonton, and Saskatoon. Each stop was long, most were an hour or more."

This provided an opportunity to get off and walk around.

"There was a lot of freight traffic, which contributed to delays to our train," Duffett joked, "We didn't mind the delay, but if you wanted to get there faster, you could pack yourself in a shipping container and take a freight!"

Ultimately, the *Canadian* was significantly delayed by a problem with a freight train.

"It didn't matter because it gave us the opportunity to spend a third night in the sleeper," he said.

Among the highlights of the trip was the culinary excellence in the diner. "There was choice of four entrées on the menu. One night, I enjoyed the rack of lamb, another I had prime rib," Duffett said.

"There was a course of fresh dinner rolls, soup, salad. All meals were prepared on board



The *Canadian* made several long stops on its eastward journey. The train was serviced en route, and its dome glass cleaned.

and to a high standard. The service was excellent, and after ordering, the main courses were delivered within minutes to the whole car."

Duffett followed up his trip with a letter to VIA Rail, commending the staff by name.

He received a prompt reply from VIA Rail's customer service, "It is a pleasure to encounter a letter such as yours, expressing appreciation for services rendered ... It would be our pleasure to serve you again soon." — *Brian Solomon*



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A long Union Pacific freight train is shown in silhouette, stretching across the frame from left to right. The train consists of several locomotives followed by a long line of hopper cars. The background is a dramatic sunset sky with vibrant orange and yellow clouds. The foreground is dark, showing the tracks and some vegetation.

**GREAT RAILFAN ROADS**

# NEBRASKA'S U.S. 30

Union Pacific's busy main line is still an antidote for the blues

Story by John Friedmann • Photos by Kevin Gilliam

Sunset on the Railfan Road:  
Nebraska's U.S. Route 30 finds  
a long Union Pacific freight  
charging down the main.



**TRAINS COLUMNIST DON PHILLIPS** prescribed driving U.S. Route 30 along the Union Pacific main line across Nebraska as an antidote for the 1970s railroad blues ["Solace on Highway 30," October 1978]. For all that has changed in 45 years, the railroad is still Union Pacific and it still puts on a heck of a show: lots of trains, big trains, all moving fast.

U.S. Route 30 generally parallels UP's Overland Route from Chicago to western Wyoming. But for about 430 miles between Columbus, Neb., and Cheyenne, Wyo., U.S. 30 is usually right next to Union Pacific's busy double-track-plus main line. To make train-watching even easier, U.S. 30 is not congested because through traffic uses parallel Interstate 80.

Columbus to Cheyenne is in the middle of Union Pacific's primary route west from Chicago to the Pacific. The "core of the core" is 133 miles between Gibbon Junction, Neb., (where UP's Marysville Sub from Kansas City joins) to O'Fallons, Neb. (the junction point with UP's line to the Powder River Basin coalfields). UP's massive North Platte, Neb., double-hump yard (at 2,850 acres, the world's largest rail yard) sits almost exactly in the center of the segment and makes for a great stopping-off point.

#### TYPICAL DAY:

Union Pacific runs an average of 65 to 85 trains per day on the busiest segment of the route through North Platte, and fewer east of Gibbon Junction and west of O'Fallons. Traffic is a mixture of everything UP hauls — carload, intermodal, and unit train — although coal makes up less of the traffic than before. Be sure to watch the en-

► **A Union Pacific coal train passes the towering grain elevator at Cozad, Neb.**

tire train because most have distributed power units pushing in the middle or at the rear. No Amtrak trains regularly use the route. Agriculture-related industries — mostly grain elevators and ethanol plants — are scattered along the line, and private-owned switch engines are common.

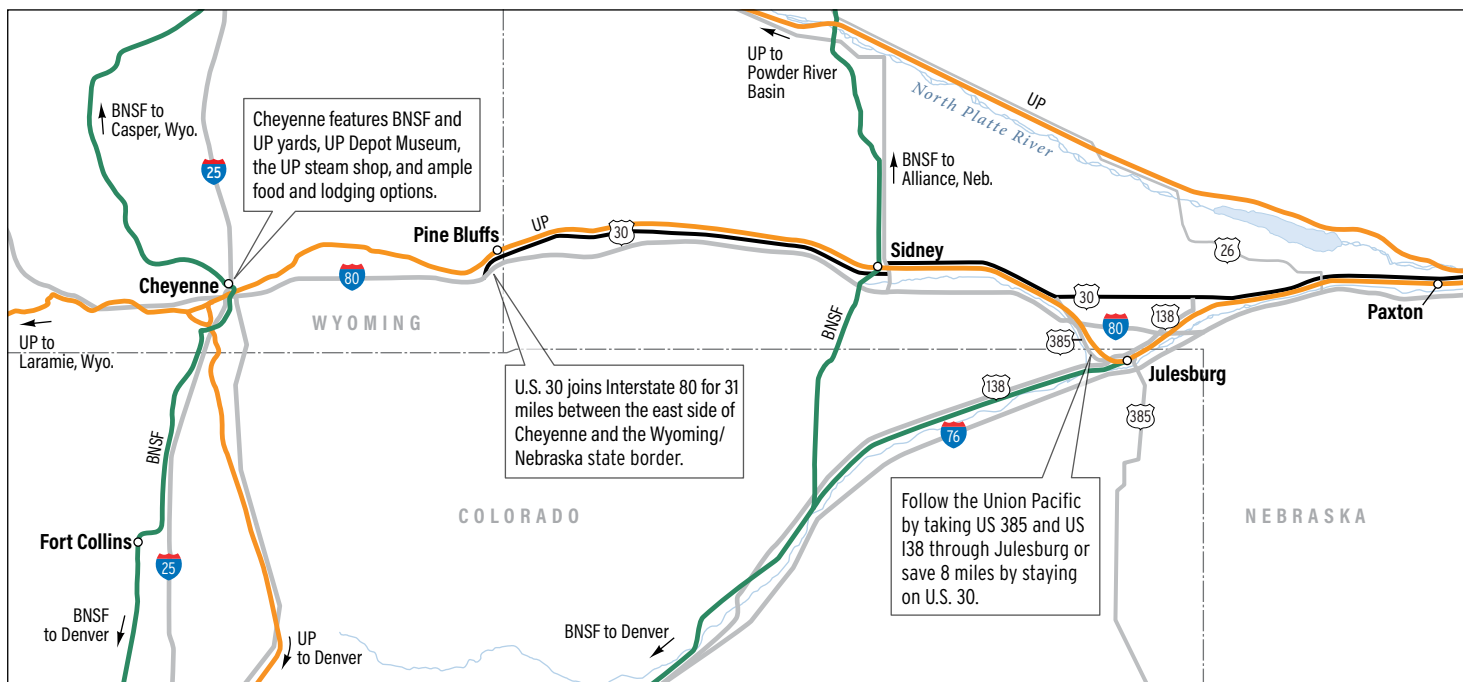
#### BEST VIEWS:

Want even more trains? BNSF's Angora Subdivision crosses the UP main line in Sidney, Neb., and the Ravenna Sub intersects in Grand Island, Neb. These are heavy coal lines for BNSF, and the crossings with UP are grade separated to keep trains moving on both railroads. Short line Nebraska Central has its engine facility in the southeast quadrant of the Grand Island crossing, so you could see three railroads at once.

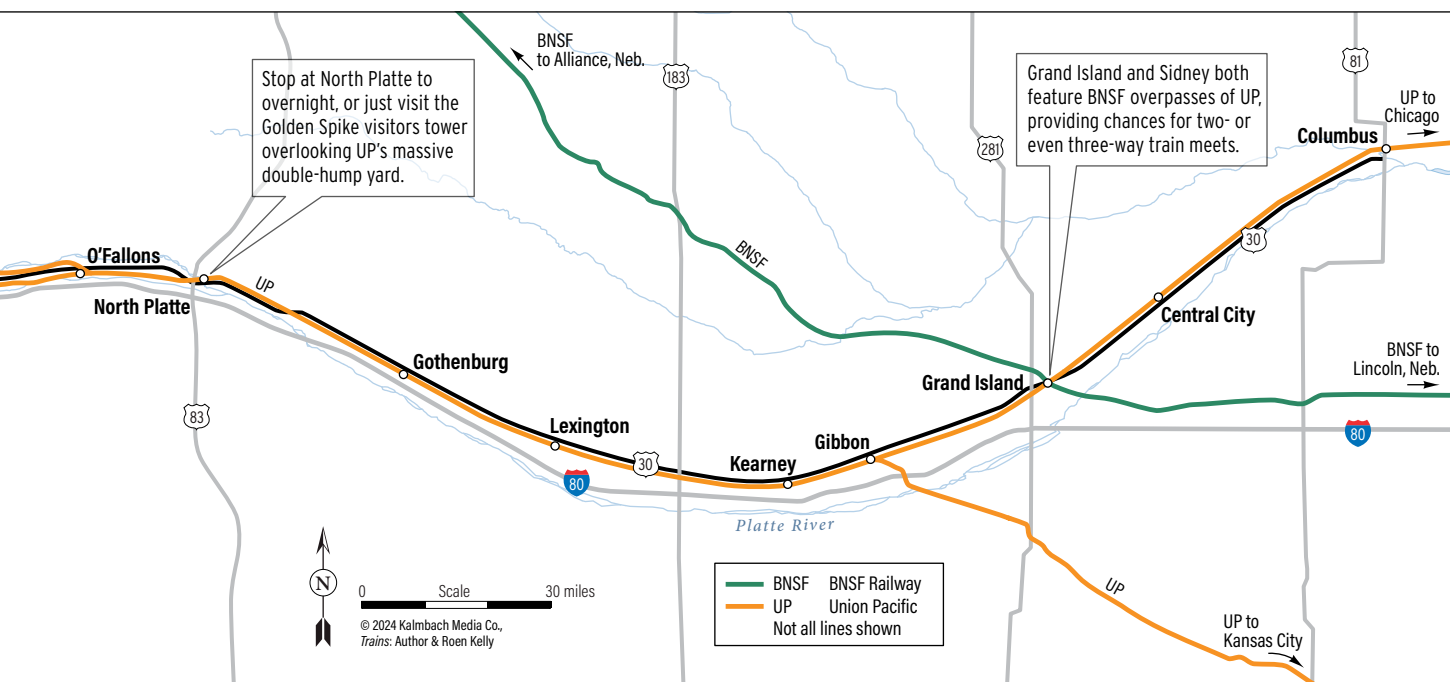
One thing you can't do on U.S. 30 is chase trains. Union Pacific trains are permitted speeds of up to 70 mph and trains generally keep moving on the double and triple-track main line. But driving U.S. 30 isn't a train chasing exercise — keep driving until you see another headlight in the distance (or coming up behind you in the rearview mirror).

#### WORTH A STOP:

- **North Platte's Golden Spike Tower.** Nebraska is fairly flat, so this eight-story tower overlooking UP's massive yard really stands out. Railfans get panoramic indoor and outdoor views of both humps and the diesel shop (always full of power). The tower is open every day and features a gift











As the author notes, the fast-moving trains on UP's triple-track main put on a heck of a show for motorists on Nebraska's U.S. Route 30.

shop. A heavyweight diner in UP colors sits at the base.

- **Cheyenne Depot Museum.** Located in the 1886 UP depot, the museum highlights Cheyenne and Union Pacific history, along with a well-regarded model railroad. Tours of the adjacent UP steam shop are offered occasionally.

- **Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island.** The Stuhr Museum is a 200-acre museum dedicated to the pioneers who settled Nebraska, and includes

Railroad Town, an 1890s prairie village. Look for former UP 2-8-0 No. 437 and other rail equipment on display, but the museum's narrow-gauge line, the Nebraska Midland, is gone.

#### IF TIME IS SHORT:

The middle section between Gibbon and O'Fallons, Neb., (west of North Platte) has the highest train density, and you can make a quick stop at the Golden Spike Tower at North Platte.

#### BESIDES THE RAILROAD:

Nebraskans love the runza sandwich, a bread pocket filled with mildly spiced beef, cabbage and onions. You can find runzas at the restaurant chain of the same name, located along in most of the larger towns east of Sidney on Route 30. For a sit-down meal, consider Ole's Big Game Steakhouse and Lounge in Paxton, Neb. Ole's features exotic taxidermy, so you may be seated under a giraffe or elephant head as you eat your chicken-fried steak. **I**

## RAILROAD ATTRACTION DIRECTORY

STEP BACK IN TIME to experience the golden age of railroading. North America's railroad museums and tourist lines provide affordable fun for the whole family! Plan your complete vacation with visits to these leading attractions. For information on advertising in this section, call Martha Stanczak toll-free at 888-558-1544, Ext 643.

#### CALIFORNIA Perris

##### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RAILWAY MUSEUM

2201 South A Street

The Southern California Railway Museum is home to vast collections of historic and vintage railway equipment and artifacts.

[www.socalrailway.org](http://www.socalrailway.org)



951-943-3020

#### COLORADO Georgetown

##### GEORGETOWN LOOP RAILROAD

646 Loop Drive



Ride the Rockies with the Georgetown Loop Railroad March 30, 2024 - January 7, 2025.

Enjoy a step back in time with our steam engines. Add a mine tour with gold panning.

Our Special Events include: Wild West Days, Mother's, Father's, and Grandparent's Days, Autumn and Pumpkin Fests, Fall Colors, and our famed Holiday Trains in November and December.

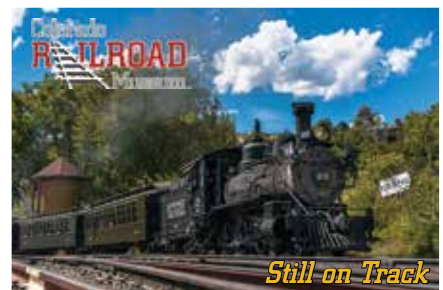
[www.georgetownlooprr.com](http://www.georgetownlooprr.com)

1-888-456-6777

#### COLORADO Golden

##### COLORADO RAILROAD MUSEUM

17155 W 44th Avenue



Colorado has a rich railroading heritage. We're "Still On Track" with that heritage at the Colorado Railroad Museum, one of the top 10 railroad museums in the U.S. See dozens of locomotives, passenger and freight cars, and more, including both narrow gauge and standard gauge. Open Tues-Sun with changing exhibits, HO and garden railway layouts, special events, and train rides most Saturdays with expanded summer dates (visit website for schedule).

[ColoradoRailroadMuseum.org](http://ColoradoRailroadMuseum.org) 303-279-4591

#### COLORADO Leadville

##### LEADVILLE RAILROAD

326 East 7th

Open year around. Check our website for train schedules and upcoming specials. **NEW** this year holiday specials for friends and family. Raft and rail and zip and rail packages. Check out the website for updates on schedules, restrictions, and fun in the Rockies!

[www.leadvillerrailroad.com](http://www.leadvillerrailroad.com)

1-866-386-3936

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**INDIANA** **Connersville****WHITEWATER VALLEY RAILROAD**  
455 Market Street, Connersville IN 47331

Travel through time on Indiana's most scenic railroad. 33-mile round trip to Metamora, May through October. Special events February through December. Gift Shop. **Vintage diesels:** 1951 Lima-Ham. (2) 750 HP & 1000 HP, 1954 EMD/Milw. Rd. SD10, 1948 Alco S1, 1942 GE 65 Ton.

[www.whitewatervalleyrr.org](http://www.whitewatervalleyrr.org) 765-825-2054

**IOWA** **Boone****BOONE & SCENIC VALLEY RAILROAD**  
225 10th Street

An operating railroad museum featuring 11 miles of track winding through the Des Moines River Valley, crossing the 156' tall Bass Point Creek High Bridge. Dinner, lunch, picnic, classic excursions. Operating Thu-Sun, 5/25 thru 10/31, with steam, diesel, and trolley operations most Saturdays. Special events throughout the year. Features James H. Andrew Railroad Museum and a large gift shop.

[www.bsvrr.com](http://www.bsvrr.com) (515) 432-4249

**KANSAS** **Abilene****ABILENE & SMOKY VALLEY RAILROAD**  
200 SW 5th Street

We will move you in 2024!! Season Mid-April through December. "Smoky Valley Limited" Dinner trains; "Konza" Excursion Trains; Special 80th Anniversary D-Day trains; October Pumpkin Patch Trains; November/December Santa Trains. Private Charters too!! Find us on Facebook. Close to I-70. email: [info@asvrr.org](mailto:info@asvrr.org)

[asvrr.org](http://asvrr.org) 785-263-0118 or 785-263-1077

**KENTUCKY** **New Haven****KENTUCKY RAILWAY MUSEUM**  
136 S. Main St.

Take a nostalgic trip aboard L&N's historic Lebanon Branch. Choose from 1.5 hour train ride to Boston or a shorter 45 minute ride to Gethsemane. Stroll through the museum that includes railroad artifacts and memorabilia. The Whistle Stop Gift Shop has everything for the train enthusiast.



[www.kyrrail.org](http://www.kyrrail.org) 800-272-0152

**NEVADA** **Boulder City****NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
601 Yucca Street, Boulder City 89005

The Nevada State Railroad Museum, Boulder City, is a showcase of the regional railroad lines that built Hoover Dam and other indelible parts of Southern Nevada. Visitors can experience railroading through train rides, exhibits, and learning opportunities. For more information, visit [boulderrailroadmuseum.org](http://boulderrailroadmuseum.org).

[boulderrailroadmuseum.org](http://boulderrailroadmuseum.org) 702-486-5933

**NEVADA** **Carson City****NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2180 South Carson Street, Carson City 89701

The Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City, is a cultural resource dedicated to educating the community about Nevada railroad history. The museum contains an extensive collection of significant locomotives, rolling stock, artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia. In addition to static exhibits, select pieces of equipment in the collection are restored and operated throughout the year to demonstrate steam and early gasoline technology and provide visitors with an immersive experience. For more information, visit [carsonrailroadmuseum.org](http://carsonrailroadmuseum.org).

[carsonrailroadmuseum.org](http://carsonrailroadmuseum.org) 775-687-6953

**NEW MEXICO** **Chama****THE VICTORIAN, BED & BREAKFAST**  
299 Maple Avenue

Your Home in  
Narrow Gauge  
Country

Situated in the historic district of Chama, NM and a short 5 minute walk to the C&TSRR. Enjoy free WiFi, gourmet breakfast, cable TV and private baths in each suite. Beautiful, relaxing Hot-Tub on the deck.

[www.thevictorianchama.com](http://www.thevictorianchama.com) 575-756-2675

**OHIO** **Cincinnati****A RAILROAD-THEMED BED & BREAKFAST!**

517 Glenrose Ave, Arlington Heights (Cincinnati) Ohio, 45215

**Arlington Station B&B**

A 3-bedroom home with full kitchen and backyard deck. Many NS and CSX trains run on the ex-NYC double tracks across the street.

Near I-75 Exit 10 (Reading & Galbraith Roads).

[Dherbert53@aol.com](mailto:Dherbert53@aol.com) Dean Carroll, Text to: 513-300-6931

**OHIO** **Cincinnati****EnterTRAINment Junction**

7379 Squire Court

Visit the World's Largest Indoor G-Scale Train Display with over 90 trains running in a huge 25,000sf display and learn about how the U.S. was changed by the railroads in the American Railroad Museum. There's even a train themed play area for the kids. Open 10 - 6 Monday thru Saturday & Noon - 6 on Sundays.

[enterTRAINmentjunction.com](http://enterTRAINmentjunction.com) 513-898-8000

**OKLAHOMA** **Oklahoma City****OKLAHOMA RAILWAY MUSEUM**  
3400 NE Grand Blvd**All Aboard !**

Come for  
a ride on our  
historic railroad



Open Thur., Fri., Sat., 9:00-5:00. Rides on 1st & 3rd Sat. April through August. Trains leave the museum's Oakwood Depot at 11:15, 1:15 & 3:15 for a 40 min. round trip on former M-K-T mainline in Okla. City. For info, birthday parties & other functions give us a call or visit our web site.

[www.oklahomarailwaymuseum.org](http://www.oklahomarailwaymuseum.org) 405-424-8222

**OREGON** **Baker City****SUMPTER VALLEY RAILROAD**  
12259 Huckleberry Loop

Take a step back in time and visit the historical Sumpter Valley Railroad.

The place for a fully operational narrow gauge, wood powered steam Heisler or an oil powered steam Mikado and a vintage diesel Locomotive.

For information please email [Info@sumptervalley.org](mailto:Info@sumptervalley.org) or call 541-894-2268.

Details and pictures can be found at

[www.sumptervalleyrailroad.org](http://www.sumptervalleyrailroad.org) 541-894-2268

**PENNSYLVANIA** **Brownsville****THE MONONGAHELA RAILWAY**

412 Church ST, Brownsville, PA 15447



The Monongahela Railway (MRY) was a coal hauling railroad in SW Pennsylvania & Northern West Virginia operating from 1900-1993. The railroad interacted with riverboats on the Monongahela River to

meet local and distant customer needs. Come visit our Museum and experience the MRY and barge / riverboat memorabilia & photos on display. We have railroad and river photos, track charts, maps, tools, office equipment, a full sized speeder and a MRY caboose you can tour; plus a very large "G" scale train layout. Hours are 9:00am - noon Wednesdays and 10:00am - 2:00pm the first Saturday of each month, or by special request.

E-mail: [MRRandTM@gmail.com](mailto:MRRandTM@gmail.com) 724-880-5960

**PENNSYLVANIA** **Marysville****BRIDGEVIEW BED & BREAKFAST**

810 S. Main St.

At The Bridgeview B&B  
The action comes to you!

Freight Trains are rolling in and out of Enola Yard right past our front porch. From the spacious decks and sitting room, you can watch the Susquehanna River, Blue Mountains and trains crossing World Famous Rockville Bridge, all in one spectacular panoramic view! Relax, in a comfortable, "home away from home" atmosphere at The Bridgeview, where we feature 10 clean, cozy rooms, all with private baths, A/C, WiFi, plus a freshly prepared breakfast to start your day! Visit Harrisburg, Hershey, Gettysburg, Adamstown and PA Dutch Country. See our website for more information, and give us a call. Come experience The Bridgeview Bed & Breakfast, where you never know, **what**, you might see next!!!

[www.bridgeviewbnb.com](http://www.bridgeviewbnb.com)

717-957-2438

Check out  
**Trains.comOfficial**  
on YouTube!



**PENNSYLVANIA Titusville**

**OIL CREEK & TITUSVILLE RAILROAD**  
409 S. Perry St., Titusville, PA 16354



Ride the Rails! All aboard the OC&T for a journey through history and scenic beauty.

Regular Rides June - October

Many Special Events including Murder Mystery Dinners, Wine Tasting Train Rides, Christmas in July, Speeder Rides, Santa Trains & more.

Call or visit our website for complete schedule.

[www.octr.org](http://www.octr.org) 814-676-1733

**PENNSYLVANIA Washington**

**PENNSYLVANIA TROLLEY MUSEUM**  
1 Electric Way



Take a ride into the past at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum. Your visit begins at our new Welcome & Education Center that highlights the history of the trolley era through interactive exhibits, a museum store, and more. Take

a ride on a beautifully restored antique trolley on our four-mile scenic track, visit the restored Wexford Station, and tour the Trolley Display Building that houses 22 of our streetcars. Fun for all ages! Parking is free, and we have a picnic area and a playground for children.

Hours: 10:00am to 4:00pm (last full experience begins at 3:00pm)  
January-May: Friday through Sunday  
June-August: Tuesday through Sunday  
September-December: Friday through Sunday  
Closed Mondays except Memorial Day, Labor Day, and during the Washington County Fair.

Adults \$20

Seniors (ages 62+) \$19

Children (3-18) \$15

Toddler (2 and under) Free

Please visit our website for more information and special events pricing.

[www.patrolley.org](http://www.patrolley.org) 724-228-9256

**SOUTH CAROLINA Greenwood**

**THE RAILROAD HISTORICAL CENTER**  
908 South Main Street



**Last Chance to See This Fabulous Historical Train This Year!**

From the 1906 Baldwin Steam Engine, to the 1914 Executive 'Carolina' car, you will see some of the most beautiful train restorations in the Southeast, including 3 of the existing 4 cars from the old P&N Railway, plus Pullman Passenger and Sleeper cars and the Erie Lackawanna Dining Car #746. Open every Saturday 10-4, May 7 through October 15, or call for tours at any time but Sunday.

Call today!

[www.greenwoodrrmuseum.com](http://www.greenwoodrrmuseum.com) 864-229-7093

**TEXAS Rosenberg**

**ROSENBERG RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
1921 Avenue F, Rosenberg, TX 77471

The Rosenberg Railroad Museum is dedicated to preservation and education of railroading history and its impact on Fort Bend County. Exhibits include 1970's Caboose, 1903 Tower 17, 1879 passenger car, Garden Railroad, model train layouts, and more! Open Wed-Fri. 10-3pm, Sat. 10-4pm, & Sunday 1-4 pm.

[www.RosenbergRRMuseum.org](http://www.RosenbergRRMuseum.org) (281)633-2846

**WASHINGTON Othello**

**OTHELLO'S MILWAUKEE ROAD INTERPRETIVE CABOOSE**

Explore the history of the Milwaukee Road in an original caboose turned interpretive center. Photos, memorabilia, maps and more ignite your imagination. Bay window, rib side caboose is open year round, Tuesday through Saturday from 10am-5pm. Groups welcome. Various train items and artwork available for sale in adjacent historic Old Hotel Art Gallery, originally built as a train hotel.

[www.facebook.com/theoldhotelothello](http://www.facebook.com/theoldhotelothello) 509-488-5936

**WISCONSIN East Troy**

**EAST TROY RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2002 Church Street



CHICAGO DAY is July 13th! Restored North Shore Car 228 will be featured. Plus, ride South Shore Line interurbans with docents from the National Park Service! Take 14-mile round trips from historic East Troy depot and museum to Indianhead Park in Mukwonago. Regular trains Fri-Sat-Sun June, July & Aug. Sat-Sun only Sept & Oct. See schedules and more at

[www.easttroyrr.org](http://www.easttroyrr.org) 262.642.3263

**WISCONSIN Green Bay**

**NATIONAL RAILROAD MUSEUM**  
2285 South Broadway



Explore dozens of historic trains and engaging exhibits at the National Railroad Museum, which is open year-round. Among our popular attractions are: the General Motors Aerotrain, Union Pacific "Big Boy" #4017, Pennsylvania Railroad GG-1 electric locomotive #4890, the Dwight D. Eisenhower A4 locomotive, and the world's largest collection of drumheads. Train rides are offered daily May-September (weekends in October).

[www.nationalrrmuseum.org](http://www.nationalrrmuseum.org) 920-437-7623

**WISCONSIN North Freedom**

**MID-CONTINENT RAILWAY MUSEUM**  
E8948 Museum Road



MCRM is home to one of the nation's largest collections of restored wooden passenger cars. Take a 55-minute, 7-mile round-trip ride aboard 1915-era coach cars. Open weekends May-Oct, daily except Mondays mid-June-Labor Day. Join us for our Stars & Stripes event for shop tours on July 4-6!

[www.midcontinent.org](http://www.midcontinent.org) 800-930-1385

**WISCONSIN Osceola**

**OSCEOLA & ST. CROIX VALLEY RAILWAY**  
114 Depot Road, Osceola, WI 54020



Join us for a scenic and memorable trip through the St. Croix Valley. Come for the 1920's-1950's passenger rail experience, the awesome scenery, or special events such as pizza or wine tasting trains, fall color train rides and the popular Pumpkin Express.

Individual, family and group tickets available. Also, be sure to visit the Minnesota Transportation Museum in Saint Paul to experience railroading history.

[www.trainride.org](http://www.trainride.org) 651-500-1822

**WISCONSIN Trego**

**WISCONSIN GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD**  
N6639 Dilly Lake Road



**America's Only Moving BED & BREAKFAST DINNER TRAIN**

The train departs Tuesday through Saturday evening at 5:30 May through December. The train features a queen bed, toilet, sink and shower in each sleeper deluxe suite. Enjoy cocktails in the lounge and then move to the diner for a scrumptious 4-course chef prepared meal from our onboard kitchen. When the train returns to the station, view the starlit sky while trading railroad tales with other passengers around our gas fire on the patio. Wake up to a hot breakfast in the diner. See the world famous *Mark Twain Zephyr* at Trego Depot!

[www.spoonertrainride.com](http://www.spoonertrainride.com) 715-635-3200

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## CLASSIFIEDS

**Word Rate:** per issue: 1 insertion — \$1.57 per word, 6 insertions — \$1.47 per word, 12 insertions — \$1.37 per word. \$35.00 MINIMUM per ad. Payment must accompany ad. To receive the discount you must order and prepay for all ads at one time. Count all initials, single numbers, groups of numbers, names, address number, street number or name, city, state, zip, phone numbers each as one word. Example: Paul P. Potter, 2102 Pacific St., Waukesha, WI 53202 would count as 9 words.

**All Copy:** Set in standard 6 point type. First several words only set in bold face. If possible, ads should be sent typewritten and categorized to ensure accuracy.

**CLOSING DATES:** Sept 2024 closes June 24, Oct closes July 23, Nov Closes Aug. 20, December closes Sept 25. For TRAINS' private records, please furnish: a telephone number and when using a P.O. Box in your ad, a street address.

**Send your ads to:** Trains magazine — Classified Advertising  
21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612 Waukesha, WI  
53187-1612 Toll-free (888) 558-1544 Ext. 551  
E-mail: classads@kalmbach.com

## RAIL SHOWS AND EVENTS

**JUNE 9, 2024:** 48th Annual Kane County Railroadiana and Model Train Show. Kane County Fairgrounds, 525 South Randall Rd., St. Charles, IL. Sunday, 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission: \$6.00 w/tax. Tables starting at \$65.00. Information: 847-358-1185, RussFierce@aol.com or www.RRShows.com

**JULY 13, 2024:** Rail Fair, Copeland Park, Rose & Clinton Streets, La Crosse, WI. 10am-4pm. Admission \$5.00, under 12 free w/adult. Railroad Show—Flea Market—Swap Meet. Model, Toy & Antique Trains, Memorabilia, Railroad Exhibits & Displays. 608-781-9383, 608-498-9522. www.4000foundation.org

All listed events were confirmed as active at the time of press. Please contact event sponsor for current status of the event.

## LODGING

**INN ON THE RIVER:** Book your stay for a relaxing getaway overlooking the beautiful Mississippi! Guests are minutes from quaint restaurants, stores and many outdoor opportunities. Each room has a balcony for stunning views of the Mississippi River and the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Rail Line. Reservations: 608-534-7784 www.innontheriverwi.com or email: innontheriverwi@gmail.com

## BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

**CAN DAN AND HIS CLUB SAVE** their favorite engine from the scrap yard? Read the Deltic Disaster and Other Tales, and the sequel, That Which Was Lost, Deltic Disaster Part Two, available at Barnes & Noble.

## COLLECTIBLES

**TOP DOLLAR PAID** for steam/diesel or electric builder plates. mr\_slides@hotmail.com Telephone: 216-321-8446

**TOP PRICES PAID** for original steam, diesel and electric builder's and number plates. Have some quality plates for trade as well. rjmdowdneyc@comcast.net — 609-397-0293.

## PHOTOS, PRINTS AND SLIDES

**TOP DOLLAR PAID:** for 35mm slide collections especially pre-1980. Mr. Slides, mr\_slides@hotmail.com Telephone: 216-321-8446

## RAILROAD ART

**THE ESTATE OF WELL-KNOWN RAILROAD ARTIST, ANDREW HARMANTAS,** is selling all remaining paintings from his collection. Paintings are of various railroads, steam, diesel, and various sizes. Majority are framed. Inquiries, visit www.andrewharmantasart.com

## MISCELLANEOUS

**RAILROAD PATCHES:** Engineer caps with insignia. 1,000 designs. Catalog \$5.00. Patch King, Box 145, York Harbor, ME 03911.

## WANTED

**ALL SLOT CARS WANTED.** Any kind, any condition. Top dollar paid. PAUL at 248-760-6960. E-mail: slotcarguy@slotcarguy.com

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**LOOKING TO PURCHASE 1947 FREEDOM TRAIN:** Collections, Photos, Scrapbooks, Pins, Footage and Pennants, Slides, Toys. G.R. Barker, 2191 Cook Rd., Ballston Lake, NY 12019 or E-mail: freedomtrain47@hotmail.com

**WANTED: BUYING PRR LW PULLMAN CAR** Cast-iron door nameplates, 1938-1950. J.H. STEVENSON, Rocky River, OH 440-333-1092 jhstevenson8445@gmail.com

## AUCTIONS

**AMERICA'S PREMIER RAILROAD AUCTIONS:** Consign your quality items. One piece to an entire collection. Large 8-1/2 X 11" auction catalogs contain full descriptions and hundreds of photographs. Auctions are jointly sponsored by the Depot Attic and Golden Spike Enterprises. The combined knowledge and experience of America's largest railroadiana firms will earn you "top dollar". Mail and fax bids are accepted. Information: Railroad Auction, PO Box 985, Land O Lakes, FL 34639. Phone: 813-949-7197.

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## In the August issue



## The Silvas promise

The largest and most ambitious 21st century **STEAM RESTORATION PROJECT** is happening in Illinois. Riding VIA Rail — Canada's dwindling fleet of **BUDD RAIL DIESEL CARS**. Plus: Memories of firing steam locomotives on West Virginia's **CASS SCENIC RAILROAD**.

**On sale July 9, 2024**



## Horsepower

September is harvest time around Strasburg, Pa. Strasburg Rail Road No. 89, a 1910 Grand Trunk 2-6-0, rolls past. It's 2011. An Amish farmer with a three-horse hitch waits as the iron horse passes. One can imagine the horses thinking, "The three of us have 12 hooves, that one only has six big wheels. We can outpull it, easy." Heinz Buehler



## Dining car

On the Illinois Central, the discerning traveler knew to save room for a dining car dessert, especially if Fruit Upside-down Pudding was on the menu. For the fowl travelers, IC 769277 will pass for a dining car as long as the menu offers grain — corn, wheat, oats, barley, any grain will do.

Stephen C. Host







## Nay, nay, stay away

"I told you we should stay off the tracks," cries the lead goat, as the herd scurries down the tracks in advance of a Norfolk Southern coal train. The train is backing up to the Lobata, W.Va., loadout on March 2, 2011, with an ex-Norfolk & Western caboose protecting the shove move.

Travis Dewitz







## Pacing

From his pasture near South Vernon, Vt., this equine paces northbound New England Central manifest No. 611 on Oct. 27, 2015. Despite exerting maximum "horsepower," SD40T-2 No. 3317 will outrun our four-legged friend every time, but the race is always entertaining. Brian Solomon

## Yard dog

Appearing to be fully trained as conductor aboard CSX GP40-2 No. 6227 and paid on a scale of dog biscuits and belly rubs, this alert-looking canine has charge of the yard job.

Brian Lazarus





## QJ and the eagle

Mother Nature creates a geopolitical scene as a Bald Eagle — one of America's symbols — flies ahead of an Iowa Interstate steam-powered train on May 18, 2019. The train, led by Chinese-built QJ 2-10-2 No. 6988, is northbound at Chillicothe, Ill., heading for Henry, Ill. Randy Olson





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