

# NORTHSTAR NEWS

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Vol. 33 Issue 3

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## Minutes for the February 16<sup>th</sup>, Membership Meeting of the Northstar Chapter NRHS

*Submitted by David Norman ~Chapter Secretary*

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. in the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center by Chapter president Dan Meyer with 26 members and guests present. A motion to approve the minutes of the November 17th, 2001 meeting, as printed in the December 2001 issue of the Northstar News, was made, seconded, and carried. There was no business meeting of the chapter in December or January.

National Director Marty Swan reported that Leroy Dietrich, chairman of the Board of Directors, had a stroke and is unable perform the duties of his office. Applications are being taken for this year's Rail Camp. The deadline for this year's grants program is April 26th. NRHS will put our chapter membership application on the national NRHS website. The spring Board of Directors meeting will be at Harrisburg. Marty will not be able to attend, so Russ Isbrandt will go in his place. People should contact Russ if they have anything they want brought up at the meeting.

Treasurer Joe Fishbein couldn't attend the meeting, but he told Dan that everything is OK.

Trip Director John Goodman

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recommended that the proposed trip to Duluth be postponed until later in the year, such as August or September. Restored Milwaukee Road steamer 261 will be having a trip to Duluth in May. John suggested we repeat our previous trip by getting a block of tickets and chartering a bus. Also, Soo Line 2719 will be running trips in April and May. He suggested we get 15 tickets for one of the trips.

John attended the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance convention at Kansas City and reported that they had a wonderful convention. The station in Kansas City has been restored and they want to start running trains back into the station.

A representative of the 2719 group described the planned trips out of Chippewa Falls, WI: On Saturday, April 20th, they will run to Junction City, WI for \$125 and on Sunday, April 21st, they will run to the Wisconsin Central high bridge for \$110. He has flyers tonight and information will be on the 2719 website soon.

It was suggested we vote for our preference of which trip to go on. On a show of hands, more people preferred the Saturday trip. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the chapter get a block of 15 tickets for the Saturday trip. John will get prices on renting a van.

Dan Meyer gave a report on the National Convention Committee. They met last month and will meet again on the 3rd Saturday in March.

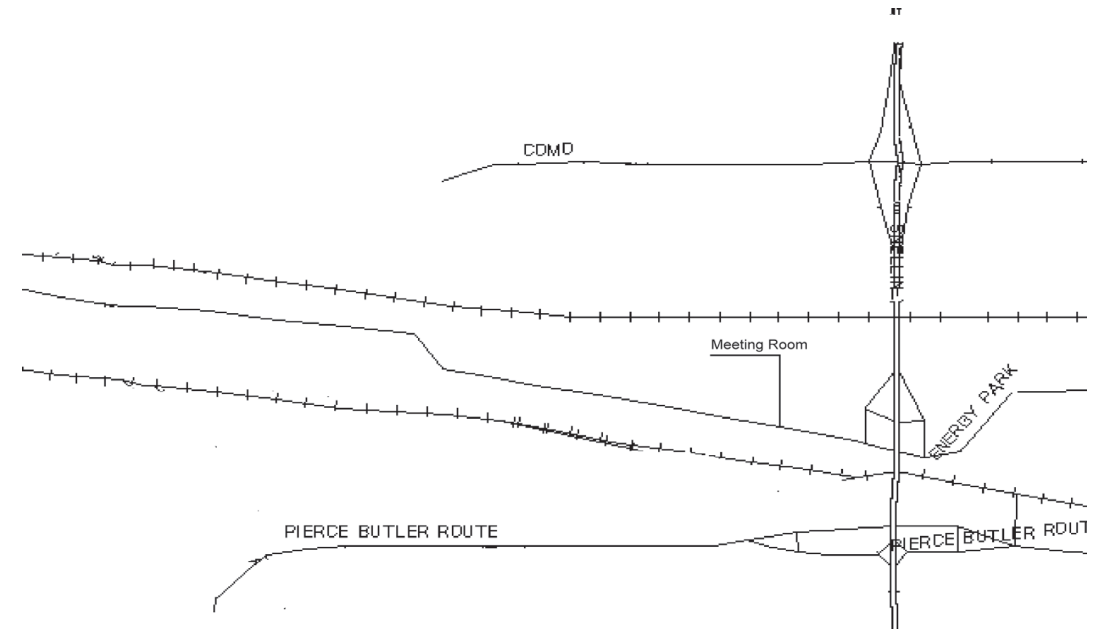
Threats to the future of Amtrak were discussed. Train-off notices will be posted at the end of March. It was suggested that all members write their senators and congressman, asking them to support Amtrak.

Andy Koetz had an update. His father, chapter member Bob Koetz, went into the hospital recently for quadruple bypass surgery, but they found an infection in his sternum so severe that they had to remove it. More surgery is scheduled for Monday. At the moment, he is drugged to keep him unconscious.



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**The March Northstar Chapter, NRHS Meeting is  
Saturday, March 16 @ 7:00 PM  
@ the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center.**



Directions: Take Snelling Ave to Energy Park Drive. Exit and turn right at the bottom of the ramp. Watch for the entrance gate to the Firefighters Training Center. (Look for the cement building that looks scorched.) If you go past Midway Stadium you have gone too far. (Map courtesy of Dan Meyer)

*Meetings are usually the third Saturday of the month  
in the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center.*

*NEXT MEETING: April 20 @ the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center- Program  
TBA in the April Northstar News*



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It was announced that exchange newsletters are available.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 7:26 p.m.

The program was 16 mm. films donated to the chapter by Dave Vos, shown on the chapter's projector. One was a staged collision between moving and stationary freight cars, shown in slow motion from various points of view. Another film was a promotional film for a railroad employees' labor union.

## DM&E Acquires IMRL ; New Market Access, Major Rail Gateways February 21, 2002

BROOKINGS, SD - Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corporation (DM&E) President Kevin V. Schieffer today announced a major rail acquisition involving the 1100-mile DM&E and the assets of the 1700-mile I&M Rail Link, LLC

(IMRL). Under the terms of an Asset Purchase Agreement approved unanimously by the Boards of Directors of both companies, all of the rail lines, rolling stock, and substantially all of the other assets of IMRL will be acquired by the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad Corporation ("IC&E"). DM&E and IC&E ultimately will come under the common management of Cedar American Rail Holdings, Inc. ("Cedar American"). Cedar American holds 100% of the IC&E stock, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of DM&E.

The resulting railroad network will significantly reshape the competitive dynamics for grain and other commodities currently shipped by DM&E and IMRL (see related press release from South Dakota and Minnesota Farmers Union and Farm Bureau). "This combination will provide important new market access for our grain and other rail shippers," Schieffer said. "And it will give DM&E new connections to every major railroad in the United States."

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The two railroads will be operated under common control. The operating departments will coordinate to maximize efficiencies, but will remain separate entities.

“This acquisition marks the achievement of our longstanding goal to develop more market independence and better competitive options for our customers,” said Schieffer. “It gives us important competitive independence in delivering products to market. We will for the first time have direct access to important grain processors in Iowa and beyond. We will also for the first time have direct access to the major rail gateways of Chicago, the Twin Cities, and Kansas City. Before this acquisition, DM&E could interchange traffic with three railroads. After this acquisition, we will have over 30 interchange points with every major railroad in the United States and many additional regional and short-line railroads. This acquisition positions us to offer greatly enhanced service to our existing customers, and provide new marketing opportunities for future customers.”

Schieffer said IC&E hopes to hire IMRL employees to run the new railroad, and expects to develop a wage and benefits package as good or better than most IMRL employees receive today. He added that he does not foresee any negative impacts on the DM&E’s operations employees. He expects the most difficult challenge to be in finding a way to coordinate the administrative and executive functions of the two railroads. “The successful coordination of two companies is always a challenge. We are approaching this challenge with an open mind, with the expectation we will learn a great deal by listening to the best from both companies. These properties will be managed as sister companies - using the best of each to coordinate where possible, and to respect necessary differences where logical, as well.” Schieffer noted that one of several reasons for operating the system as two separate companies is to be responsive to employee ideas and concerns.

Schieffer will hold employee and shipper meetings across both properties to explain the transaction and to seek



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advice and answer questions. He noted that there are numerous structure, wage and other employee issues that have not been decided, and that final decisions would not be made until obtaining all necessary input directly from employees. “We have had great success in working through employee issues on DM&E by frequent and direct contact with employees. I plan to continue that philosophy with IC&E.”

Recognizing the interest in the DM&E rail construction and expansion project, Schieffer added: “While

this acquisition is independent of our proposed new rail construction project to extend the western end of DM&E into the Wyoming Powder River Basin, it will help ensure competitive options

for the new traffic generated by that project. The PRB Project holds great opportunities for the future of both current DM&E and IMRL employees and shippers.” He noted that the construction application included building an important new connection to the IMRL. “Now that connection is ensured for the long term.”



The transaction is expected to Close later this year, and is subject to the customary regulatory approval and financing conditions.

