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observe this majestic old warrior moving off the line and heading for the roundhouse to probably be put to sleep till next year. The passenger cars will be taken to Council Bluffs, Iowa perhaps also to rest till next year. For this one day, however, the magic feeling generated by riding this old train allows one to slow down and just ride back in time for a day accompanied by an enthusiastic group being allowed this rare opportunity. The crew and volunteers have also executed a great plan and excursion. This plan originally started two years ago and has taken hundreds of hours of planning, follow-up and finally leading the charge up Sherman Hill. At days end we are all a bit tired *BUT* still excited about how lucky we were and how great the trip has been. Hopefully this group will again be able to run a trip again next year just after the celebration of “FRONTIER DAYS” held at Cheyenne for the last 106 years and in which Union Pacific always has a presence with it’s “Denver To Cheyenne” excursion trip which allows for the equipment to be there and thus the timing of our being able to ride the train just a week after it is already there.

After the “*Challenger*” trip I drive down to Fort Collins to my hotel and arrive around 10 PM. I get up early the next morning and head ever further south to the Denver Airport. As I head for the airport I keep the radio off and just enjoy the memories of a great day of once again riding behind a great old steam engine still able to do it’s thing of putting lots of smiles on all of our faces. Time to go for now and I do hear that old refrain, “*ALL ABOARD.*”



Northstar Chapter, NRHS
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Vol. 33 Issue 9

September 2002

June 15, 2002 Membership Meeting Minutes of the Northstar Chapter, NRHS

Submitted by John Goodman, Acting Secretary

The meeting was called to order in the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center at 7:10 p.m. by vice president Doug Johnson with 17 members and guests in attendance. President Dan Meyer was not in attendance. John Jones made a motion to approve the minutes of the April and May meetings, as printed in the June issue of Northstar News. The motion was seconded by Jim McLean and carried. The treasurer’s report was not available.

The National Director’s report was given by Marty Swan. Mostly, it concerned the upcoming NRHS national convention at the Grand Canyon in August of this year.

The Trip Director’s report was given by John Goodman. He spoke about two upcoming steam trips, one with ex-Milwaukee Road 261 and the other with Union

Pacific 3985. Many of those at the meeting indicated that they were going on at least one of the trips.

Old Business - The holiday banquet is set for Sunday, December 8th at Tinucci’s restaurant, as usual. This was confirmed by Marty Swan. The program is still to be determined. The meeting site committee has not met as yet. John Goodman is heading this committee to look for future locations to meet, in the event that we are no longer able to meet at our present site at the Fire Department Training Center.

New Business - We discussed having our annual picnic on the July meeting day. Steve Kopacz, who is also a member of the Greater East Area Model Railroad Club, offered us the use of the Newport Tower site in Newport. The tower is

now being restored by the model railroad club. The July meeting would not be at the Fire Department Training Center, but at the Newport Tower, which is near Tinucci’s in Newport. Directions to the site will be printed in Northstar News. Those attending

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the picnic will be expected to bring their own food and beverages. The plan is to start the event at 6 p.m. A motion to change the meeting site and to suspend the formal business meeting for July only was made by John Jones and seconded by Glen Holmberg. The motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Jones and seconded by Glen Holmberg. The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

August 17, 2002 Membership Meeting Minutes of the Northstar Chapter, NRHS

Submitted by Dave Norman, Secretary

The meeting took place at the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center. The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. by chapter vice president Doug Johnson, with 23 members and guests present. (Chapter president Dan Meyer was not present, as he was on his way to the NRHS national convention in Arizona.) The minutes of the June meeting have not been published yet, so a vote on their approval was deferred.

Treasurer Joe Fishbein had a report for May, June, and July of 2002. Cash in checking account as of May 1, 2002 was \$5,024. Income during the period of the report was \$2 in checking interest and \$523 in dues and donations, for total income of \$525. Expenses were \$314 in dues to

national NRHS, \$183 in newsletter expenses, and \$90 to reimburse Russ Isbrandt for expenses in going to the National Directors Meeting, for total expenses of \$587. Cash in checking account on June 30, 2002 was \$4,962; of which \$3,222 was in the general fund and \$1,740 was in the #8327 restoration fund. We now have 79 members who have renewed their memberships for 2002. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the treasurer's report.

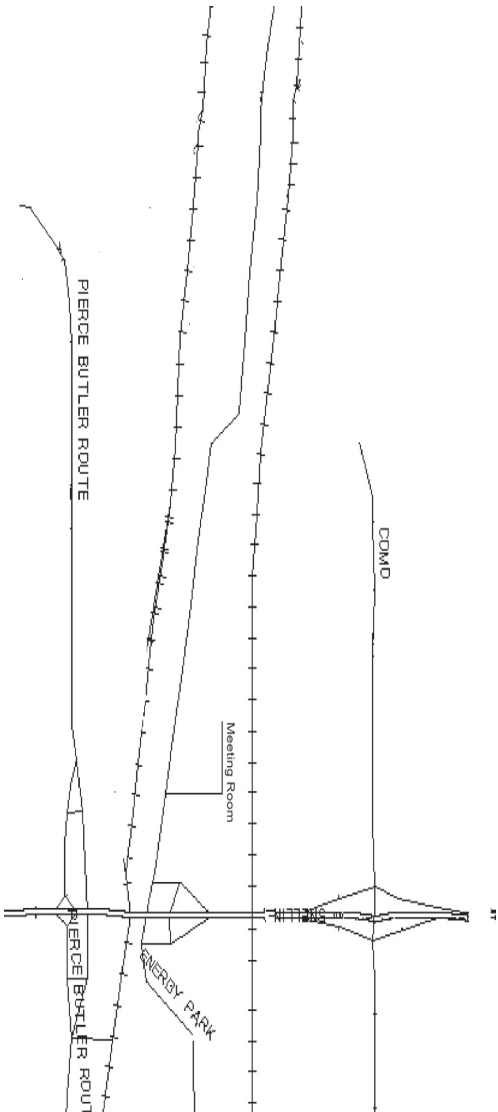
National Director Marty Swan reported that the next National Directors Meeting will be at Williams, AZ, in conjunction with the NRHS national convention later this month. The Northstar Chapter will be well represented at the national convention, with many members attending.

Trip Director John Goodman that there will be a trip on the Erie Mining Railroad, which has been shut down for 9 months. On both days, the trips will leave from Hoyt Lakes and operate to the dock at Lake Superior. To get there in time, we would have to leave here at 5 a.m. and couldn't stop for breakfast. We would have to have 20 or more people going to justify chartering a bus. It would probably be better for people to go on an individual basis. He has no other plans for any trips.

Marty Swan reported for the 2004 National Convention Committee. The committee had a meeting last Sunday, at which they nailed down a working schedule. Several members of the convention committee will be at this

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**The September Northstar Chapter, NRHS Meeting is
Saturday, September 21st @ 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.

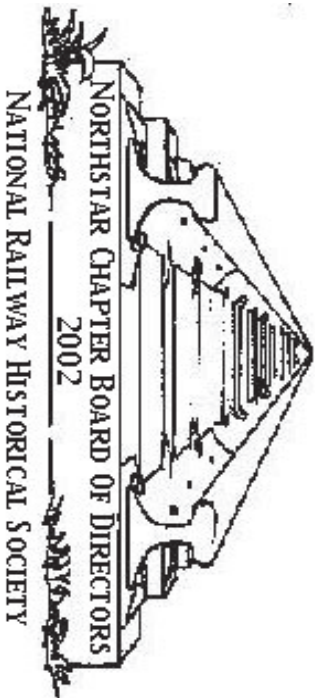
Program for September TBA

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

*NEXT MEETING: October 19th @ the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center-
Program TBA*



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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in the Northstar News are not necessarily the opinions of the NRHS or the Northstar Chapter.

The Northstar News is looking for a new **EDITOR** to start in January. Lauren has an internship which will not allow her the time to continue being the editor-- those interested in putting ou this monthly publication should talk or email **DAN MEYER**.



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year's NRHS national convention in Williams, AZ next week, promoting our convention. We will need seed money to hire an attorney. The next meeting of the convention committee will be Sunday, September 8th at 4 p.m. People are invited to participate. Our 2004 website is linked to the NRHS national website. We will be getting together with our webmaster to add more information to the site. The next major step is for the convention committee to determine the amount of money needed at this time and then to ask the chapter to loan it to the committee.

Old Business - Marty Swan reported on planning for the holiday party. The room at Tinucci's is reserved for Sunday, December 8. Marty doesn't know at this time how much the meal will cost. Someone else will have to line up a program for the party. Tinucci's may be moving due to a major highway project in their vicinity. It isn't know at this time when they will close at their present location and where they will relocate to. The picnic in place of the July business meeting was a success. Thanks to all those who helped set it up. The latest report on the 8327 restoration project is that the task of putting the rest of the lettering on it is stalled. Bill Herzog would like to put a plaque on the engine.

New Business - We need a nominating committee for this fall's elections. The committee needs to have two members and the president serves ex officio. Dennis



Louden and Frank Willkie volunteered to serve. The committee must report its recommendations at the October meeting and the elections will be held at the November meeting. Editor Lauren Maiden of the Northstar News will have an internship next spring, so we will need to find a new editor after the December issue. Are there any volunteers? Programs for upcoming meetings were discussed. Program Director Glen Holmberg has Dick Prosser lined up for November, but we need programs for September, October, and the holiday party. Several possibilities were suggested.

Old Amtrak timetables, rail travel brochures, etc. will be available at the front table after the meeting. Adjournment was moved, seconded, and carried at 7:30 p.m.

The program was a video on railroads in and around Chicago in the 1960s and 70s, plus some slides shown by Leigh Neprude, most of which he had gotten from a friend who lives in Montana.

Steaming Over Sherman Hill on the Challenger

By Choo Choo Joe

Riding behind the Union Pacific Challenger over Sherman Hill in Wyoming has been a goal of mine for the last few years. The

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Sherman Hill Model Railroad Club in combination with the Cheyenne Railroad Restoration Organization provided that opportunity on Saturday, July 27,2002.

Our trip would take us from Cheyenne, Wyoming out west to Laramie and return. The distance is not great as Laramie is about 50 miles from Cheyenne but the elevation makes for great use by the engine to produce clouds of the famous Union Pacific smoke belching from the engine as we climbed over Sherman Hill. The elevation at Cheyenne is at 6060 feet. We climb to the highest level as we pass thru the Hermosa Tunnel (originally built in 1901 and then a second tunnel was added in 1917) at 7933 feet. We dropped down to 7151 feet when we arrived at the town of Laramie.

We departed Cheyenne on Saturday at 1:30 PM heading west with clear skies and big puffy white clouds that Wyoming is famous for. We did expect some showers late in the day and they did occur but at departure it was picture perfect. About 300 passengers, crew and volunteers were aboard. We all met at the partially restored Union Pacific Railroad Depot originally built in 1896. It is a beautiful old sandstone building that also has a working clock-tower about four stories above the Depot and is lit at night so as to be seen towering over downtown Cheyenne. The Depot has red highlights on the corners of the building and the original color for the rest of the Depot. It covers about a full block and is nestled right next to the tracks and huge Union Pacific Railroad Yard. Union Pacific has been in this area since the late 1860s and runs lots of

freights thru this Yard each day exceeding perhaps 100 per day. Near by at milepost 528.5 just outside Cheyenne is where the largest ballast quarry is located in the US. All the roadbed ballast for the entire Union Pacific Railroad is mined and processed at this site called “Granite.”

Union Pacific has an extensive “Heritage” fleet of steam and excursion trains composed of the famous Steam Engines #844 ... 3985, their famous E-9 diesels and the huge diesel #6936. Union Pacific also has 50 fully restored passenger and track cars mostly built in the mid 1950s. The passenger cars and the Auxiliary Tender are painted in the famous Armour Yellow Union Pacific scheme and are just a joy to watch as they pass by. This excursion train being pulled by the giant Union Pacific “*Challenger*” #3985 and fully restored passenger cars are just awesome to witness.

The excursion was made up of the UP “*Challenger*” and it’s tender plus one auxiliary water tender, *Arri Lockman*” -tool car, “*Howard Fogg*” - power/boiler/dormitory, “*Sherman Hill*” - concession car, “*Portland Rose*” -coach, “*City Of Salina*” -coach, “*Sunshine Special*” - coach, “*Council Bluffs*” - open baggage, “*Columbine*” - dome/coach, “*Challenger*” - dome/coach, “*208*” - power/storage/dormitory, “*City Of Denver*” - diner, “*Missouri River Eagle*” - dome/diner and the *City Of San Francisco*” - dome/lounge/observation.

The UP “*Challenger*” #3985 is the world’s largest and most powerful operating steam engine in the world today. It’s wheel

configuration is 4-6-6-4 (20 wheels) and burns oil today though it originally burned coal. At its departure on this excursion out to Laramie, the *Challenger*” will carry almost 6,000 gallons of fuel and almost 50,000 gallons of water. Along the route to and from Laramie we will pass two of the old waterpowers once used to keep these thirsty steam giants fully quenched.

I am fortunate to be riding in the first dome car “*Columbine*.” This dome allows for a clear view of the engine working up hill as well as being able to swing around and see the rest of the train as we pass around curves. We actually take two separate routes. The first route to Laramie takes us a slightly different route then the return route though both pass thru the Hermosa Tunnel, first on the left and then returning on the right.

We are treated to a total of five run-bys at three different locations. Perhaps half of the passengers get off each time to photograph this “beauty” as she backs up for perhaps a mile and then comes thundering by for those great views of an old classic steam engine doing it’s “thing.” The “*Challenger*” has a unique steam whistle which is a rich and deep sound and as the engine passes us the combination of the sound of the whistle, the thundering of the engine as she passes and the abundance of black smoke belching from the stack is classic steam railfanning at it’s very best. To see this happen five times in one day up in the mountains of Wyoming is just a rare and exciting opportunity. We do all our run-bys on the way to Laramie as the clouds form and the rains come as we head

back to Cheyenne. For the most part our trip takes us thru the open space and grazing land and we can see for miles so as we sit in our dome seats, it is wonderful to see the majestic open land and mountains out on parade as we pass by.

All along the way there are the “chasers” who want to see the train as she passes by and photograph the moment. We do pass by some stretches of highway and folks just pull over and watch the majestic old train pass by. We wave at them and they wave back. Kind of a magic feeling to be on board.

When we arrive at Laramie the turning wye has been shorted over the years so we back part of the train into the wye and a switcher pulls us out so we are facing the direction we have just come from. The rest of the train including the “*Challenger*” backs into the wye and then heads to our direction and passes us by to our track and then backs up to rejoin the entire train consist. The Laramie Rail Yard is also pretty good sized and there is an elevated walkway over the yard allowing a multitude of people to stand above the yard and watch the “magic” happen right below them. We are in the Laramie Yard for about one and half-hours before heading back.

We arrive back at Cheyenne around 8 PM and the old railroad clock tower is lit and welcoming us back home. I depart from the train and move back to a point to photograph the “reverse” move the train will make to get off the main line and move to the roundhouse. As the dusk settles over the area there is just enough light to

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