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**WWW.NORTHSTAR-NRHS.ORG**



Chapter member Dave Norman is a volunteer trolley motorman at the Midwest Electric Railway, which is part of the Old Threshers Reunion in Mt. Pleasant, IA. He snapped this photo of Southern Iowa 9 at the Trolley Barn stop. The Reunion is one of the largest displays of antique tractors, old farm equipment, and portable gas engines in America. It always takes place for five days, ending on Labor Day. The trolleys connect the main exhibit area with the Log Village and the campground, carrying 40,000 passengers in just five days. There's also a narrow-gauge steam railroad, the Midwest Central. More information is available at [www.oldthreshers.org](http://www.oldthreshers.org). Picture credit: Dave Norman.

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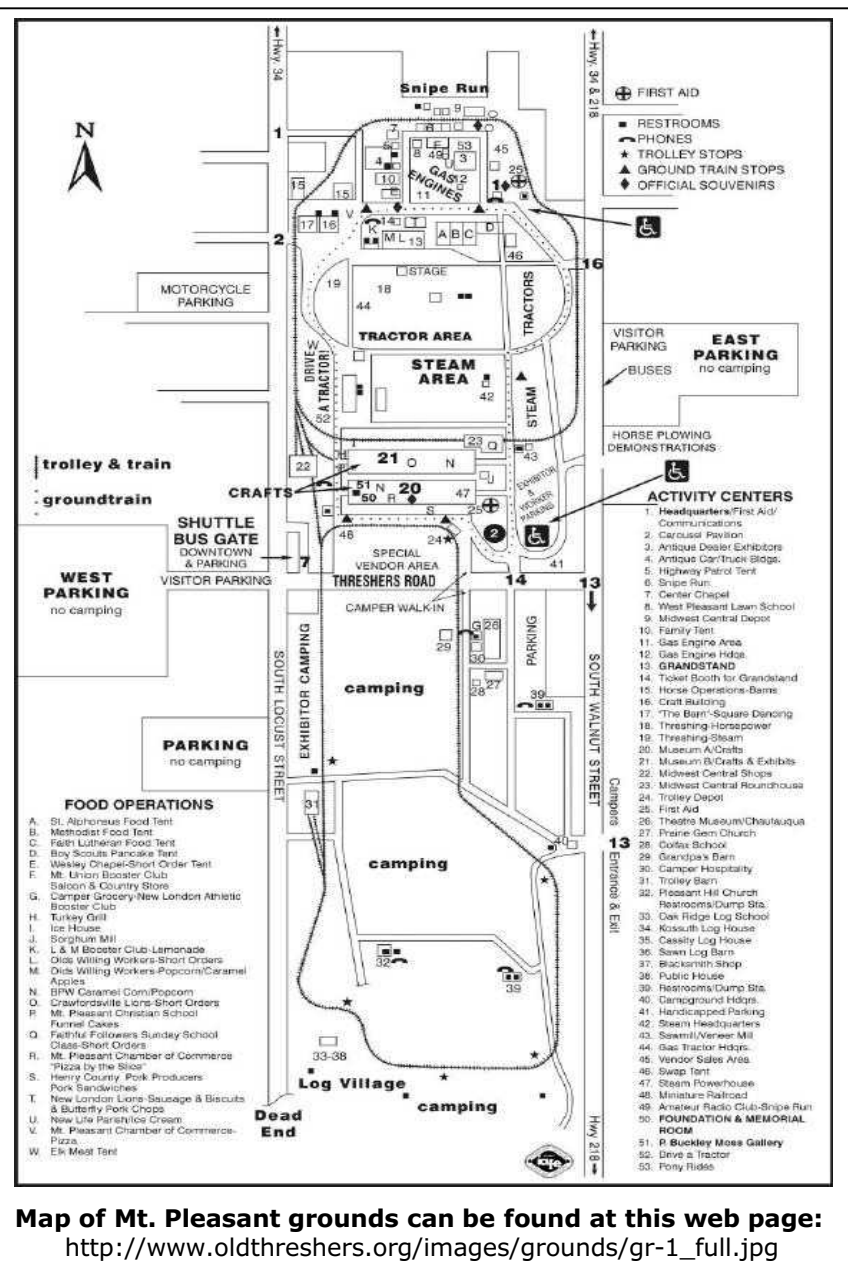
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## **North Star Chapter Membership Information**

HELP sign-up new members; please invite them to attend a meeting. Current dues are \$32 per year for an individual, or \$34 per year for a family, and this includes national dues. Please send dues payments to Joe Fishbein, Treasurer Northstar Chapter, 1092 Humboldt Av, West St. Paul MN 55118.

## **August Meeting Notice**

The August meeting will be at the **St. Paul Fire Training Center**. Date is **August 16**, 7 o'clock pm. The program will be given by Marty Swan. The subjects will be the 2002 Grand Canyon convention, the Richmond Spring 2003 BOD trip, and the 2003 Baltimore national convention.

This is a story about the 2003 NRHS national convention:

The **Harrisburg Circle trip**, operated for the NRHS, arrived in Baltimore at 8:30 pm. The train then left to continue on to Washington, DC., where it terminated. Once in Washington, I had to find the private cars of the American Flyer, and I wasn't sure where they were.

I got up to the station and called for a Red Cap with a cart. He took me down to the cars, only 3 tracks over from where the NRHS train had come to a stop, ARGGGGGGGG!

Oh well. The hosts were waiting for me and took me to my roomette, a real live roomette. I was in roomette 5. The toilets only worked in 1-4, which was clearly stated in the website, thus I wasn't disappointed.

The train consisted of the Royal Street, a Pullman Standard from the L&N 5 DB Buffet Observation Lounge Car built in 1950 for the Crescent.

The Silver Quail, a Budd CB&Q 6 DB 5 Compartment built in 1952 for the CZ

The Pacific Union, a Budd UP 10/6 built in 1949 or 1950 for general service

The Metis: a CN Business car with Bedrooms, a dining room (where I took my meals), a lounge, and a platform. Some of the configurations might have been adjusted but I really didn't check into that.

The train ran with the Royal Street at the rear.

Folks these cars were beautiful. There wasn't a single place where there was chipped paint or worn upholstery on any of the cars. While the furniture in the Royal Street wasn't original, it fit the car. I swear I was back in 1959 when I took my first and only trip on the California Zephyr all the way to Oakland and back to Lincoln. I was so happy.

I went down to the Royal Street (RS) and I was immediately offered my choice of any beverage to my liking which at this point was ice water. (It was 96 degrees with 79 % dew point outside). Afterwards, after I said hello to several of the other passengers, none of which I knew, I allowed myself a gin and tonic.

I was also tired so I decided that since I had a long day ahead of me on the morrow, I would hit the hay. I went back to the Pacific Union to my roomette 5. The room was ice cold. I like it cold but this was a bit too much so I shut off the fan (yes a working fan with 3 speeds) and closed the air vents (yes, the turn off knob worked) and the room warmed up a bit. Slept like a rock in my roomette. Of course it helped that we weren't moving.

Next morning I took a shower, shaved, got dressed and went down to the Metis for breakfast. It was served buffet style: scrambled eggs with cheese, bacon and the most delicious sausage gravy for pouring over biscuits. There was the usual large variety of fruit juices, rolls, fruit, breads, cereal, etc, etc.

It is about 9:00 am and we don't leave until 12:55 pm. It was so horribly hot that I and most just stayed with the cars. In the RS, my home away from home, I enjoyed Ice Tea and several servings of soft drinks over the 4 hour period. There were baskets of chips, peanuts, cookies and other goodies placed around the car, which were constantly refilled by our attendants and at the risk of sounding like a male sexist pig, all but two of the attendants were very attractive young women. (uh the other two were, I guess, handsome young men didn't spend too much time looking at them)

Around 11:00 am an Amtrak switcher tied on and proceeded to make the first of about 5 switching moves where we were pulled out to the throat of the yard, then back to our original position. There were some other cars behind us, which needed to be switched out. Finally we were pulled out and were coupled to the Cardinal. Meanwhile on time or nearly so, the Capitol Ltd came into the station.

We started our journey a few minutes late and now the only thing that was to nag me on this trip started. I "only" had a 3 hour connection to the Builder. Would we make it?

We lost time at every station. later I found out that it was heat restrictions. I went back for lunch of Lasagna and several types of sandwiches plus potato, Cole and macaroni salads.

I went back to my room and napped sitting up for a bit and then back to the RS where I decided that a Bloody Mary would be nice. It has been so long since I have sat in the boat end of an observation car watching the tracks disappeared into the distance. I was so much enjoying myself. The other passengers were mostly older folks who were also having the time of their lives. It was a very friendly group.

When we got to Clifton Forge I had finally completed the gap in my mileage on this line. The heat restrictions seem to ease off and we started to really roll.

Diner for me was at 8:00 pm and this was a plated meal of either pork or beef tenderloin. I had the beef it was very good but served a bit too red for me.

Back to the RS for a nightcap or two or three. I decided to go to bed around 10:00 pm and return to my roomette. The car was in wonderful condition. There were no rattles in the room (the one thing that drives me nuts) and the car just glided along. Apparently there were some very bad storms in our path but I slept through them. I woke up around 7:00 am EST which is the same as CDT. I called Julie who said we were running 2 hours 28 minutes late but we could pick up time and was expected to arrive Chi 1 hour 30 minutes late--yah sure.

I got dressed and went to the dining room for the continental breakfast. Full I went out to the RS and just sat and watched.

At Indy we lost about 15 more minutes because they had to break the train to switch in the poor, pathetic, coach off the very last Kentucky Cardinal.

Just before getting to the home of Purdue University we rolled in to a gully-washer of a storm. The Wabash was over its banks and people were trying to keep the water out of town. Nevertheless we rolled on.

The wonderful journey ended 3 hours late at Chicago and I have already told of my efforts to make the Empire Builder.

I got to do this again. If you ever get a chance to ride these cars or an operation by hosts Roger Verbeercn Jr., of American Rail Excursion Inc. and/or Frank Corley of Powhatan Rail Service take it. I heard not one complaint. I did hear many people wishing they could turn the cars around and start over.

Well back to 2003 and reality.

I had a room back to St. Paul. It was, I think a Super 1, refurbished with the accordion plastic wall molding. It was shabby---I might not have noticed it, but when you come from perfection, shabby just sticks out.

We left 10 minutes down or so and the trip home was pleasant enough. I had diner in the dinner and guess what, the same menu so I just had the steak.

We got back to St. Paul 10 minutes early and my trip was over (sigh)

Marty



## **Minutes of the July 19, 2003 Northstar Chapter Membership Meeting.**

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 p.m. in the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center by chapter president Dan Meyer with 12 members and guests present. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2003 meeting, as published in the July 2003 issue of Northstar News.

Treasurer Joe Fishbein was not present to give a report.

National Director Marty Swan was not present to give a report. John Goodman said he also had been at the national directors' meeting at the recent NRHS national convention in Baltimore. The Northstar Chapter got a \$1,500 grant for the 8327 restoration project. Also, they confirmed that the 2005 national convention will be in Portland. So far, nobody has bid for the 2006 convention. Among the things discussed at the meeting was the aging of the NRHS membership. The AAR is starting a rail-fan group. Not enough people applied for Rail Camp this year to warrant a second session. Nationally, NRHS membership is static - it hasn't been rising. We publicized our 2004 convention at the meeting. Many people said that they are looking forward to coming. Marty Swan had great sales of NRHS merchandise at the convention. He should be present at next month's meeting to give a full report.

Trip Director John Goodman said that he had news from Steve Sanberg. Trips are planned October 3 and 4 with restored Milwaukee Road steamer #261. There will be a trip each day to Winona, with a separate leg from Winona to La Crescent. The train will be run as an Amtrak special, with a diesel in the consist. Steve is assembling an Amtrak-compatible consist.

There was a report on the 2003 NRHS national convention in Baltimore. Bill Herzog showed the items he got in the "goody bag" given out to those attending the convention. John Goodman noted that, despite its name, the hotel was not actually near the Inner Harbor. Bill Herzog reported that the convention had 1,200 pre-registrations, but after the collapse of the roof of the B & O Museum and the cancellation of the big rail festival planned for this summer, they had 700 cancellations, so only 500 attended the convention. There was a rumor that they broke even financially. A survey was sent out to those who cancelled. There was a discussion of the problems that the convention had. It was noted that the Washington chapter, which sponsored the convention, had only 80 or 90 volunteers out of a chapter membership of 800.

Dan Meyer talked about the 2004 convention and noted that there is less than a year to go before it takes place. There will be a meeting of the convention committee tomorrow at 3:30 p.m. in the meeting room at the Amtrak station. So far, we have gotten approximately 50 pre-registrations. The video preview of our convention that we showed at Baltimore went over OK. The sign was helpful also. Signs were noted at Penn Station in Baltimore advertising fan trips for the convention there - if we don't fill the trains at our convention with people attending our convention, we could advertise trips to the public. Several recent NRHS conventions have been joint events with the RLHS, but that isn't likely to happen in the future.

There were more people at our picnic in Red Wing last month (about 28) than are here tonight. No trains went by during the picnic time, but we had a good time.

An item about setting up nominating committee for upcoming chapter elections was on the agenda, but it was decided to postpone it until next month's meeting.

Other business - John Goodman reported that Bob MacNee, one of the original chapter members, had left us his rail slides and some other items. He died in 1982. Recently, the chapter got a large quantity of material from the executor of his estate. More material will be coming, including many slides, many of which are not identified. It was suggested that we show samples from the collection as a program at some of our meetings - perhaps some of our members can help identify the slides. There was a discussion as to the best ways to organize and store the slides.

Bill Herzog noted that we got a \$1,500 grant from NRHS for more work on the 8327 at Bandana Square. Herzog said that he had had a telephone discussion with Steve Sandberg, who probably would be the one hired to do the work. Sandberg had a discussion with the owners of Bandana Square and stated he has the insurance they require.

The C, B & Q Historical Society will be having their annual convention at Bandana Square on September 18-20. The University of Minnesota Model Railroad Club will be showing a railroad slide and video program on Friday, August 8th. (Admission is \$7 at the door.)

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 8:45 p.m. There was a raffle - among the items available was a package of NRHS cookies. It was announced that American Orient Express brochures and Amtrak timetables were available.

The program was a provided by Bill Herzog, a Canyon Rails video, showing the restored Santa Fe streamer #3751 on its way to and at the 2002 NRHS convention, plus other events at the convention.

Respectfully submitted, David Norman, Secretary, Northstar Chapter NRHS.

[Members Dawn and Glen regret to announce the passing of their mother, Elinor Holmberg on Monday, July 28th, 2003. She had been a member of the North Star Chapter for the last 10 years, and was last able to attend at the May meeting. The story boards from the visitation will be on display.]

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