

**NORTHSTAR NEWS**

Back In Those Days By Richard S. Prosser, As Transcribed by Roger Clark



1962 NRHS Convention Special led by CB&Q 5632 near Savanna, IL, looking not unlike the Winona excursion described by Dick Prosser and Roger Clark. Photo by Russ Isbrandt.

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Meeting Notice

The next meeting of the Northstar Chapter will be at 7PM June 18th at the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center, 1695 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul (Snelling and Energy Park Drive just east of Midway Stadium).

Dawn Holmberg will show slides from the 2004 NRHS Board of Director's Meeting in Utica, New York.



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Note: Consult the website for any announcements regarding Chapter activities including cancellation of meeting for any reason including weather.

Membership Information

Dues are \$32 (this includes \$20 National dues and \$12 Northstar Chapter dues). Family memberships are \$3 additional. If you want to join, an application is available at <http://www.northstar-nrhs.org/>. Print out the application and send it with a check made out to Northstar Chapter, NRHS to Treasurer, Northstar Chapter NRHS, 1092 Humboldt Ave, West Saint Paul, MN 55118.

Clarifications and Amplifications to The May President's Page

NRHS President Greg Molloy sent the following clarifications to President Swan's May President's Page. Thank you for sending me the electronic version of the Northstar News. This is an interesting and enjoyable publication, and I appreciate the opportunity to read it.

I did note a few items in the May edition that might bear

some clarification.

Dues: The possible dues increase for 2006 will be voted upon at the summer meeting in Portland. Information about this proposal will be mailed to all National Directors shortly.

Absentee Votes: All National Directors were given the opportunity to vote in absentia on the proposed Bylaws. This is a requirement of both the current and the proposed Bylaws.

The absentee ballot offered the opportunity to withhold support from any specific section(s) of the proposal. All 11 Directors who voted in absentia selected the specific option of approving the Bylaws "as presented." Thus, the Secretary was simply following their instructions in casting these ballots.

Calling the Question: The three motions to move the question on the Bylaws and amendments came from the floor, not from management. Each required two-thirds approval to pass, and each passed easily. These were procedural issues, so no absentee votes were cast on these motions.

Approval Votes: Both the amendments and approval of the Bylaws required only a majority vote, not two-thirds. The second amendment failed 35-41. The first amendment failed 34-52. The Bylaws as presented were then approved 63-24.

As a separate response to Marty:

..... the absentee votes WERE NOT used in any of the three votes to call the question. They WERE used on both amendment votes and the vote on approving the Bylaws, as instructed by the voters. By coincidence, it appears that 11 people who were present at the meeting chose to abstain on the vote on the second amendment and then voted on the first one. I don't know how those 11 abstentions were distributed in the second vote (the first amendment). I have talked to at least one Director who told me he voted against the second amendment and then voted in favor of the first.

Greg Molloy

The President's Page

It is hard to believe that next month marks the one year anniversary of our National Convention. The Convention Committee was formed, oh so many years ago, with the mission to (1) determine the feasibility of a national convention; (2) if it was feasible, obtain a bid from the national organization; (3) organize said convention; (4) operate the convention; and (5) close down the convention, report to the national organization and share the proceeds. Only the last function remains to be completed, and Mr. Meyer indicated at our last meeting that the books are now closed and all that remains is to distribute the proceeds. In case you forgot, the first \$10,000 is split 50/50, the balance is split 80/20, with the national organization getting the 20%.

Next month the convention is in Portland. Sadly, that convention will be, for the time being anyway, the last chapter organized national convention in the traditional format. In 2006 the national organization itself is running the convention at the out-of-the-way location of New Philadelphia, Ohio. While 3 members of our chapter are on the committee, I wonder how it is going to work out with nobody on the ground at the convention location. We will see. After that, there are no known, by me, plans in the works for 2007. In fact, the national organization, with their new by-laws is absolving themselves from having to have a national convention. The new by-laws only state that the national organization can have a

convention; it is not required. The requirement for an annual meeting, however, remains the same although it no longer has to be tied to a national convention.

I believe that "they" will try to use extended BOD type arrangements for the "convention" in the future, that is a Friday through Sunday affair. In fact, Greg Molloy mentioned they might try a East Coast convention and a West Coast convention, in the same years.

I don't know what is going to happen, I fear for the national organization. I think trying to reduce the authority of the chapters is a major mistake. To quote from the national's By-Laws Commentary "The proposed bylaws continue to shift the NRHS from being an organization of organizations to being an organization of members".

The chapters have been the backbone of the NRHS since the beginning but now they want to reduce their importance. Weighted voting is one such method of reducing the authority of the mid size and smaller chapters.

My fear is that this new path that they have taken is eventually going to destroy the NRHS. With no national convention, I wonder how many people, especially those that do not have chapter affiliation, will stay with the organization.

But that is the future, bleak as it may seem.

Coming up is the Portland Convention. I'm pleased that so many of our members plan to attend that convention. At last count I have 11 members who will be attending. Others might be there that I'm not aware of at this writing.

As we did, the Pacific Northwest Chapter is having their problems. To the best of my knowledge, they still haven't advised what steam locomotive or locomotives will operate on their Western Star steam trip. Whatever it is, the trip is sold out. Just like our convention, things will most likely come together during the last week or so before the convention.

So for all those that are going, see you there. And make sure you come to the membership meeting to express your extreme displeasure about weighted voting—or if you are in favor, then here is your chance to make your opinion known.

If you signed the Northstar Proxy do not sign the NRHS proxy. You cannot sign both, doing could void both.

Marty

Amtrak Cumberland To St. Paul

I was in Cumberland for the Spring BOD of the NRHS. As always the local Chapter sponsoring the BOD provided activities for the attendee's entertainment. The Western Maryland Chapter provided us with rides on *Potomac Eagle* Excursion train which started in Romney, WV. We traveled along the Potomac River headwaters to Petersburg VA. Complementary sodas were included. The train ran over the South Branch Valley Railroad of West Virginia State Rail Authority.

We also rode the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad dinner train from Cumberland. We weren't able to travel the entire distance, but it was a great trip.

By Sunday evening I was very tired. The shenanigans that occurred in the BOD earlier in the day had totally stressed me out. There was a group of 5 of us riding the *Capitol Ltd* that evening. We weren't sure if dinner would still be served on the train schedule in at 8:34 pm. To be on the safe side we ate at the hotel before train time.

Of course the train was late, not arriving until after 9:00 pm, and there was no problem, the dining car was still open and most of those traveling with me went there for dessert. As I said I was tired, so I told my attendant that if he would make my bed up right now I would give him a big hug and a kiss or if he preferred a tip. He chose the tip and made the bed up even before we left Cumberland. By the time we were leaving Cumberland, I was in it and asleep.

The *Capitol Ltd* consist this trip was the same as going except in reverse with the sleepers at the rear. Cumberland was a two stop station and also a smoke break. Thus we sleeping car passengers had to wait while coach passengers were loaded and unloaded and while many smoked. FINALLY they call all-aboard and moved the train down to pick up the sleeping car passenger.

The ride was very smooth. I woke briefly at Pittsburg and then not again until Toledo which we left close to on time.

I got up, pulled the call button and went and had breakfast, pancakes this time. When I returned, my room was made up. (Tip \$5.00, no additions or subtractions)

Arrival in Chicago was a bit early as I recall. The Red Cap drove me to the Metro Lounge and I settled in. The big soda machine that I had seen there the last couple of times, and that Robert had also mentioned, was gone; however, they had set up muffins, and full sized ones at that.

At 11:30 am I and two of my traveling companions, Doug Johnson and Dan Meyer went to the Great Hall near the clock to meet with a gentlemen I know from a passenger train forum I am a member of: All Aboard Message Board's Peter Laws. One can't help but get a mental picture of the people on the board and when Peter Laws came down the corridor, I had him totally completely and absolutely wrong. I was expecting an older man with white hair and a beard. I got a young man with a mustache, well young based on me being 64 years old. We had a nice lunch at the restaurant that had been there since forever near the Great Hall, name escapes me.

After a while, we had to break off as it was getting close to the *Empire Builder's* departure time. The EB that night carried the usual cars in the usual configuration, i.e. Seattle sleeper, 2 coaches, dining car and Portland lounge, 2 coaches and sleeper. Added was a private business car and the former CMStP&P Super Dome purchased by the Friends .

of the 261.

On the way out to the *Empire Builder*, we passed Steve Sandburg, operator of the CMStP&P 261. I waved, he waved but did not wave me toward the car; oh well, and I proceeded to my sleeping car in train #7, the *Seattle Empire Builder*. By the way this leg of the trip from Cumberland to St. Paul was "free" as I used 20,000 Amtrak Reward points.

We were a little late, maybe 30 minutes or so, perhaps due to addition of the private cars. But soon we were on our way. The Conductor got on the horn and welcomed us to "....combined trains 27 & 7.", gave us the safety message, reminded passengers that there was no smoking and if anybody was caught smoking the next station stop for the train would be their destination. Then he advised what the next station would be and how long it should take for us to get there.

My sleeping car attendant was very friendly. Stopped by to chat several times, offered to get my dinner for me—and he had the room set up; water, a "tablecloth" on the pulled down tray, tent card describing the various amenities, route guide and timetable—just the way he was supposed to set the room up.

At dinner time, what did my wondrous eyes see: a different menu. Sadly not one I have seen before, but finally a bit of variety i.e. Strip Steak and Rack of Lamb (which was very good). People tell me that there are different menus out there, but these are the only two I have seen in 3 separate trips.

Arrival was about an hour down. Sleeping car attendant tip was \$3.00 base plus \$2.00 extra for friendly and attentive service - total \$5.00.

Next on to Portland Oregon for the NRHS National Convention.

Back in Those Days MRA Safety Record By Richard S. Prosser (As transcribed by Roger Clark from author's notes)

Minnesota Railfans Association (MRA) in its span of existence had a near-perfect safety record—no fatalities or notable reported injuries—even with outdoor outfitted flat cars on many excursions. There was, to be sure, the calamitous collision in 1950 at Hale's Corners, WI, on The Milwaukee Electric and Speedrail, in connection with the National Model Railroad Association's national convention, in which local railfan Charles Sulzbach was fatally injured and his fellow rider Ray Norton was critically injured. Ray faced a long convalescence, but to this day is a well-known model railroader and noted rail historian in the local rail hobby community. There were sev-

eral other fatalities in this tragic mishap, as well as serious injuries to many others.

Yet, one event brought MRA within a breath of a death/injury tally which doubtless would have made headlines nationally. Actually, there were no deaths or injuries, by a most-fortunate combination of timing. This is a description of that event by one who was close-at-hand. Facts as stated are "qualified" (subject to revision), though I never have seen another detailed account. Those of us present probably will never forget it—at least for one other reason: it was the only unintentional MRA overnight excursion.

In the fall of 1957, MRA commenced operation of steam excursions on the CB&Q. The first was powered by 4-6-4 Hudson #3003, to Winona and return. By 1959, old favorite 4-8-4 Northern 5632 was harnessed for these yearly trips, and the first LaCrosse trip was held. That alternated yearly through 1961. In 1963, the "finale", a more ambitious run was held: to Prairie du Chien, diesel power beyond North LaCrosse.

It was in September 1960 that our focus excursion to Winona was held. It was a common cloudy/murky fall day, not raining enough to really spoil the trip. There was time at Winona for lunch and to hike the tracks. I went down to East Winona, where the Green Bay & Western/Chicago, Burlington & Quincy swing bridge across the Mississippi was situated. This span was longer than the C&NW span up near mid-town. On this afternoon the excursion paddlewheel steamboat *Delta Queen*, in those days the only such excursion boat, came through bound for the Twin Cities. I persuaded the bridge tender to allow me to ride the bridge as it swung open. I stood on one end as we cleared the channel for the great boat. That was quite an experience.

A feature of these CB&Q trips was replenishing the water supply for the 5632. This was done at Alma, which provided a fine straight track with no grade crossings. Process involved using fire department hoses, stretched across the westbound track. A fine scene for photography, enhanced by a pedestrian bridge.

About 5:00 PM as the murk thickened on an early-dusk day, the excursion departed for its return. We began to receive reports of what lay ahead. A Milwaukee Road freight had derailed at St. Croix tower, above Hastings. Few of us registered the import of the news. Facts: St. Croix Tower was located at a crossing of the Burlington Route-Milwaukee Road main lines St. Paul-Chicago, and the derailment disabled both lines. This meant: blocking all freights and all passenger trains. Milwaukee Road: one *Morning Hiawatha*; one *Olympian Hiawatha*; two *Afternoon Hiawathas*; one *Fast Mail*; one *Pioneer Limited*. Burlington Route: one *Morning Zephyr*; two *Afternoon Zephyrs*; two *Black Hawks*; one *Empire Builder*; one *North Coast Limited*. Also, our train, which quite naturally was low-man-on-the-scale.

As we proceeded, we got a report that the *Empire Builder* and *North Coast Limited*, which were behind us, were being held on orders at North LaCrosse.

For some operating convenience we were placed on the east-bound main. Presumably all eastbound traffic was suspended.

Up the line a little ways, we passed *Zephyr* equipment operating in reverse. It evidently had been stopped, perhaps at Hastings, and sent back to protect the eastbound schedule—now running on the westbound track.

About 7:00, long after dark, we reached Alma, scene of the required water replenishment. This would be the last chance for fans to call home and report known delays and advise of potential, but yet unknown, delays. We were still on the east-bound main, so passengers wishing to disembark would have to cross the westbound main to reach the nearby principal downtown street. Behind the train about 50 yards, tracks turned towards the river.

Crew members and passengers opened a number of vestibules on the right-hand side of the cars. A few people alighted and started toward the westbound track, a mere six or so feet away. I was in a vestibule looking out. And then it happened.

The westbound main suddenly was bathed in bright light from behind. A single blast of a chime horn, and WHOOSH, the *Empire Builder*, with three E units and 10-12 cars, came by at full tilt—meaning 80-85 m.p.h.—and was gone. The total process consumed maybe 5-10 seconds.

The *Empire Builder* had been turned loose from North LaCrosse, but message had not gotten to us or to *Empire Builder* for a possible slow order at Alma. The whole thing transpired so rapidly that people scarcely could assimilate the action and potential terror. Only in the leisure of later contemplation could the full import be grasped, perhaps. It's hard to imagine the mindset of the engineer, flashing around a blind curve at fifty yards to see a group of people moving toward the track ahead. Did we hit anybody? Hard to imagine the mindset of pedestrians on the roadbed, on two seconds' notice suddenly seeing an 85 m.p.h. passenger train zooming past their noses at two feet. And then so quickly it was all over; Alma went quiet; water replenishment could proceed; people could make their phone calls. No injuries, no deaths. Just a few breathless moments.

Yet the timing was so fortunate. If the *Empire Builder* had been 20-30 seconds later, there might have been 50 people crossing the westbound track.

What about the remaining *North Coast Limited*—was it, too, turned loose from North LaCrosse? I can only answer: I don't recall seeing/hearing it.

With a fresh load of water, we moved up the line toward the indefinite delays which lay ahead. There was no hurry; the sooner we got there, the longer we would wait. We were at end-of-line, back of the last passenger train, before midnight. There was no communication along the line: so no estimate of how long a wait. When we arrived, St. Croix Tower was still closed; no trains getting through. MRA'ers settled in for a night's stay—on coach seats, in dome cars, on benches, any-

thing available.

About 2:00 AM I got restless. So, I left the Special and walked up the line perhaps half a mile to the accident site. Track crews and wreck train personnel were putting on finishing touches toward opening the crossing, so my timing was good. I was able to climb aboard the *Olympian Hiawatha* for an early departure.

With an arrival at Minneapolis, Milwaukee Road station instead of GN station, I was able to get home and into bed about 3:30. A considerable improvement over the Special, which reached GN in daylight about 7:00 AM.

MRA Winona Trip– A Second Recollection

<<Recollections and notes of transcriber: I attended the trip described by Richard. At that time in 1960 we had been rail-fan friends for a couple years. The trip was well attended. As Richard notes, the big attraction was 5632. Events of the trip down to Winona do not stand out in my memory. The weather was fallish and the three flat cars on the rear trailing the coaches, equipped with benches and sturdy handrails, were occupied only by the most stalwart amongst us, the other passengers being content to ride in the warm coaches and domes. At 70+ m.p.h. there was a definite windchill factor riding on the flats. Many of the MRA trips carried the three flats. In today's litigious world of risk management and lawsuits, it is hard to imagine a railroad allowing such a practice, but the fact is several local railroads permitted MRA to equip fantrips with flats. On warm days the flats were an enormously popular attraction.

As to the subject 5632 fantrip, I only know of three who attended and are still around to talk about it. Those would be Dick, John Goodman, and me. In subsequent years we have discussed it on several occasions. There are certainly others out there who attended, and it would be interesting to get their recollections, as this particular trip was the only unscheduled overnight MRA operation. That plus the "near miss" at Alma puts it into some kind of a record book.

As I recall it, upon arrival at East Winona, 5632 was uncoupled and sent light to North LaCrosse for servicing. That would mean that our Special was forwarded across the river to Winona via a diesel yard switcher. I have no memory of what we did in Winona or how long we were there. We may have gone for dinner at the local hotel. By the time of departure the weather had turned grim; cold, rainy, foggy, and just plain foul. My first recollection of trouble is when we got back to East Winona. #5632 was waiting for us. Talk was percolating on the train as to a wreck at St. Croix tower, a major freight train derailment and that there would be some delay in our getting back to the Cities. Stopping at Winona Junction, some of us detrained and went into the small depot building. Present there was a Burlington passenger official who had been escorting the excursion. Also present were several MRA officers and others just standing around. The depot stove had the place well warmed up, and conversation was getting heated as well. The railroad official said it might be mid-morning before we could pass through the St. Croix crossing. MRA offi-

cers and representatives were taking the position that it was the railroad's responsibility to charter sufficient buses to transport the excursion passengers back to the Cities forthwith. The railroad official said absolutely not, that that was not going to be an option and that we would just have to be patient and stay with the train. The discussion became more and more contentious and was approaching hostility. There was shouting and gesturing. At a point I thought it might even become physical. Fortunately, that did not happen, and presently we reboarded and headed upriver towards Alma.

I do not recall the Alma event nearly as vividly as does Dick. I remember we stopped and were told we were going to be there for awhile, that there was a phone across the street someplace where people could make calls. It's my memory that I was standing at a Dutch door when the Empire Builder roared through. There were comments such as, "Wow, that was close" and that type of remark. There is no doubt the stage was set for a major disaster. I guess we just collectively breathed a sigh of relief when the realization set in as to what had just been averted.

Presently, we departed Alma and proceed up the line. We came to a protracted stop several miles downline from Prescott. The night wore on, midnight came and went, and a new day was at hand. And we were marooned in the middle of a dark, murky night. A new problem emerged. Among the passengers were several diabetics who needed insulin. I cannot remember how that was resolved. We also ran out of food and beverages. It now being Monday morning, I was starting to fret about arriving late at work. Earlier that year I had started a new job at 3M Co. in St. Paul, for which Dick had been one of my sponsors. How on earth was I going to get to work on time...or at all? How was I going to call my boss? Others had similar issues, I am sure. There were many children on the train. They had become quiet and found sleep much easier than we adults did. I did not sleep one minute. I think that was the first time in my life that I had a totally sleepless night.

My recollection, although I have lost the time line, is that we thought things were looking up when several northbound trains passed us. That seemed to indicate that at least it was possible the wreck was cleared and maybe trains were able to move past the tie-up. Finally, our train moved forward, crossed the river at Prescott and got close enough to St. Croix Tower to permit Dick to detrain and walk up to the tower and board *Olympian Hiawatha*. As Dick recounts, our Special was low priority, and I believe we were the last train to move from a stopped position and proceed towards the tower. I do not remember Dick leaving the train. It was not an option for me, as I had my elderly mother and her lady friend aboard and I could not leave them. They were very upset as it was.

The long night turned to dawn, and sometime probably after 5:00 AM we proceeded past the wreck scene and highballed for the Cities. The horses were not spared, either. It was a fast run on into SPUDCO. My last memory is as we climbed the grade out of St. Paul. I had taken a seat in the dome. The sun of the new day was rising in the east. #5632 was working the grade, the smoke trailing back. Under any other circumstance

a really terrific scenario. However, as we crossed the Stone Arch Bridge for the last one-half mile into GN station, my watch indicated, as I recall, 6:30. I still had to get home, get ready for work, and drive the 20+ miles over to the 3M Center. I arrived at work late, my boss was not too happy, but I survived the ordeal and remained in the employ of 3M for several years.

In 1961 there was another mischance with a 5632 CB&Q excursion where we were stranded for several hours when the locomotive ran out of fuel oil. Someone had neglected to top off the tank at LaCrosse!

Roger P. Clark

Minutes of the May 21, 2005 Membership Meeting of the Northstar Chapter NRHS

The meeting was called to order in the St. Paul Fire Department Training Center at 7:04 p.m. by chapter president Marty Swan with 26 members and guests present. Marty asked if there were any guests or new members present. Bob Buetell said that he has been a member for a while, but doesn't usually come to meetings. A motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2005 meeting, as published in the May 2005 issue of Northstar News, was made, seconded, and carried. After the minutes had been approved, there was a correction about the item regarding the vote on the dues increase. The NRHS Board will make a final vote on the proposed increase in dues at their meeting during the NRHS convention this summer at Portland.

Marty also had a correction to the President's Page in the May issue of Northstar News. He had said that the amendments required a 2/3 vote to pass, but they only need a 50% plus one vote to pass. What did require a 2/3 vote is the motion "to call the question." The 11 absentee votes were not used on the call for the question. NRHS President Greg Molloy has written a Letter to the Editor about the matter of weighted voting (so that large chapters get more votes than small ones) and this letter will be published in the next issue of Northstar News.

Treasurer Joe Fishbein was not present and Marty said that he had not received any message from him. We have received an extension of time to make the IRS filing that we have to make this year because of all the financial activity resulting from the national convention that we hosted last year.

Trip chairman John Goodman said that chapter member Joe Stark recently had major surgery, so he won't be able to come with us on our upcoming trip to Spooner, WI on June 4th. We will refund the money Joe paid for his ticket. John noted that this may be the last year of operation for the Wisconsin and Great Northern. They have been losing money and the operator may be going to the new tourist railroad in

South Dakota. We will ride the noon trip and chase the 3p.m. trip. Even though we don't have as many people signed up for the trip as we would like, we'll use a large bus for comfort as we have plenty of money in the chapter treasury, as that includes our share of the surplus from the national convention. Marty noted that we want to do more activities, but we need more participation. Russ Isbrandt was requested to make souvenir tickets. We will stop at McDonald's on the way out of town and will decide about dinner on the return trip. Our bus will leave the Amtrak depot in St. Paul at 8:30 a.m., but everyone should be there at 8:15 a.m. We will be riding the noon trip. We will try to take a group picture for next year's NRHS Activities Annual.

John also described an Operation Life Saver special train that will operate on the UP out of Montgomery on May 25th. There will be a bus from the Mall of America to connect with the train. Those interested should contact Brian Cutter or Hank Peterson.

National Director Doug Johnson was not at the meeting, but earlier in the day, he had sent Marty an e-mail in which he said that nothing much is happening in NRHS on a national level.

Newsletter editor Russ Isbrandt said that he had nothing to report.

Convention chairman Dan Meyer said that he had figured out why the convention books weren't balanced - we hadn't counted the refunded payments as income. Once that was done, Dan said, "They balanced to the penny." A small additional amount, a few hundred dollars, will be going to the NRHS national office as their share of the convention proceeds. Dan said that he will send spread sheets on the convention to Carl Jensen of the NRHS convention committee.

As webmaster, Dan asked if anyone had looked at the chapter website lately. It now has a nifty new format. Dan noted that he still needs photos of past chapter events. Dan is still mulling over revising the Railfan's Guide to the Twin Cities, as the present version is badly out of date.

Mike Mackner talked about his search for possible new meeting locations. Marty Swan noted that we want to remain at our present location as long as possible. Mike said that he had looked at four possible locations. He asked if we want to rotate among them. There was a discussion.

We decided not to make a decision tonight.

Mark Braun said that nothing had happened on proposals to update the by-laws.

Program chair John Goodman said that Dick Prosser can't come to the Twin Cities this month to present a program, but that he hopes to be able to come later. Roger Clark talked about Prosser's current living arrangements and health. He is sorting through his slides and timetables. He hasn't made any decision about moving back to the Twin Cities. He hopes to be well enough to travel soon. Dawn Holmberg can do the program in June, Roger Clark can do July, and August will be the chapter picnic at Prescott, WI. It is too early for decisions

about the Holiday Party.

There was no Old Business.

New Business - The question was asked, how many years has it been since the chapter had a Railroadiana Auction? Most estimated about 20 to 25 years.

There was a call for announcements. Someone mentioned that Spooner now has the DM&IR's Monster (Big Hook). A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dennis Loudon. The motion was seconded and carried at 7:43 p.m. After a break, the program took place. It was a members' night.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Norman
Secretary, Northstar Chapter NRHS

Chapter Excursion to Spooner, WI

Saturday morning, June 4th saw 24 members and guests boarding a motor coach at Amtrak's Midway Station for a fun trip to the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad in Spooner, WI. On arriving at Spooner, we had an entertaining guided tour of the surprisingly large Omaha Road depot, now a museum. Following the tour we boarded the private car, *Aristocrat*, a former Nashville Chattanooga and St. Louis / Louisville and Nashville tavern lounge purchased in 1946 for those road's *Georgian* and *Hummingbird* trains. The car is being renovated by member, Charles Barthold. The WGN included a wooden caboose as part of the consist. The rains abated for our runby and photo ops. On the return trip the heavens opened up and shortly thereafter the bus conked out. Fortu-



nately a replacement bus was provided fairly quickly, leading to only a 90min delay. Despite the delay everyone had a great time.



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Address Correction Requested