



NORTHSTAR NEWS

A Ride on the Grand Canyon Railway By Russ Isbrandt



Northbound Grand Canyon Railway train departing Williams, AZ Nov. 11, 2004. Photo by Martha Isbrandt

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Meeting Notice

Note The Different Location!

The January meeting of the Northstar Chapter will be at 7 pm January 21st at the Minnesota Transportation Museum Jackson St. Round House, 193 E. Pennsylvania Ave., St. Paul. See page 2 for directions and map.

Russ Isbrandt will take you on a video ride to the 2005 NRHS Convention via the *Southwest Chief* and *Coast Starlight* with return via *Cascades Corridor Talgo* train and the *Empire Builder*.

Northstar Chapter Officers

Board of Directors

President	H. Martin Swan	Email: HMSwan@webtv.net	Phone: 612-961-1684
Vice President	Mark Braun	Email: mkbraun@hutchtel.net	Phone: 320-587-2279
Past President	Bill Herzog	Email: herzogminn@aol.com	Phone: 952-470-4021
National Director	Doug Johnson	Email: djoh322721@aol.com	Phone: 612-825-6458
Treasurer	Joe Fishbein	Email: jmf@visi.com	Phone: 651-457-1610
Secretary	Dave Norman	Email: nevad11@hotmail.com	Phone: 612-729-2428
Trustee	Dennis Louden	Email: bnsf@comcast.net	Phone: 651-698-8559

Staff

Program Chairman	John Goodman	Email: good6012@amtrak.com	
Newsletter Editor	Russ Isbrandt	Email: risbrandt@comcast.net	Phone: 651-426-1156

Webmaster Dan Meyer

Website: www.northstar-nrhs.org

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

Membership Information

Dues are \$34 (this includes \$22 National dues and \$12 Northstar Chapter dues). Family memberships are \$4 additional. The student rate is \$17 (\$11 to the National). 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.

Directions to New Jackson St. Roundhouse Meeting Location



From eastbound I-94, exit Marion St. and turn left. At Como Avenue, Marion curves into Pennsylvania Ave. Follow Pennsylvania to the roundhouse gate on your left.

From I-35E exit at Pennsylvania Ave, and turn left if you are northbound or right if you are southbound. On entering the building turn right and go up the ramp to the exhibit area.

The President's Page

The old year is over and it is time to start anew. To reflect on the past year, I believe we can say that Northstar Chapter is in pretty good shape. The one big disappointment was the national organization's downgrading our chapter's position in that organization with its successful efforts to reduce the influence that the smaller chapters have in the affairs of our society through its weighted voting provisions and the way it

was done to make sure the revised by laws passed. It rankles me that we no longer have an equal say in the affairs of the National but are reduced to being forced to sit at the back of the room so the "really important" chapters can have the front row seats (metaphorically speaking).

Other than that, things seem to have gone well. Russ Is-

brandt took over as the Editor of the Northstar News and has done an exemplary job in producing a wonderful piece of work that is interesting and informative. I have had many complements about the Northstar News.

John Goodman continues as our Trip Chairman and we had a very enjoyable day visiting the Wisconsin & Great Northern Railway. John is working on one or two possible trips for the coming year. John also took over the duties as Program Chairman and I think it is fair to say we have had some very interesting and enjoyable programs this past year. I can see no reason why that won't continue in the future.

On a bit of a sad note, we disbanded the 2004 Convention Committee led by Dan Meyer. The funds that the convention earned us have left us in a somewhat affluent position. As with our own personal finances it is nice to have money in the bank. We thank Dan and his entire committee for the fantastic effort they put in to making our convention a success. Dan continues to serve the Chapter as Webmaster. If you haven't checked our website I suggest that you do so.

Bill Herzog continues with the Chapter's effort to cosmetically restore GTW 8327 and hopefully that project can be finished in this New Year.

We concluded the year with our very successful Christmas Banquet chaired by Dennis Loudon. A grand time was had by all. We completely filled the banquet room and Greg Smith put on an excellent final program to end the year.

I also need to recognize the work of our Officers, i.e. V.P. Mark Braun, National Director Doug Johnson, Treasurer Joe Fishbein, Secretary Dave Norman, Trustee Dennis Loudon, and Past President Bill Herzog. All of us working together have developed a very strong and vigorous Chapter. Thank you all.

Before I close, we need to remember the loss of one of our members, John Melius, 64 who passed on June 10, 2005 and chapter friend Dick Prosser who passed away on July 27, 2005. May they both be enjoying Railfan Heaven.

Happy New Year to One and All!!!!!!
Marty

Long Time Member Bob Koetz Hospitalized By Russ Isbrandt

Bob, who has for many years secured the fire training facility for our meetings, is seriously ill at St. Joseph's Hospital Intensive Care unit. Your prayers will be appreciated. Get well cards may be sent to 185 Maria Ave, St. Paul, MN 55106-6227. The family has requested no visitors at this time.

A Ride on the Grand Canyon Railway By Russ Isbrandt



November 11, 2005, Williams, AZ, 8:30am. The Grand Canyon Railway's crew is backing the equipment into the station for that day's run in thunder snow. Captured video frame by Russ Isbrandt



Same train as above 1 1/2 hours later departing Williams for the Grand Canyon. Photo by Martha Isbrandt

As mentioned in the December newsletter, my wife Martha and I rode the Grand Canyon Railway from Williams to the Grand Canyon.

The Grand Canyon Railway began operation as a steam operated tour line over the former Santa Fe Grand Canyon branch September 17, 1989 following the line's 15 years of dormancy. For two years the train was powered by ex-Lake Superior and Ishpeming 2-8-0 Consolidations year around. It was a particularly spectacular operation in winter when temps went down to -35°F on one occasion. The winter experience pretty much chastened the operators and by 1991 they bought a VIA Montreal built (Alco) FPA-4. By 1992 they were running steam only from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Despite a ridership that was vastly greater than the best year the Santa Fe ever had (initially 100,000 vs 70,382), profitability didn't occur until after the Fray Marcos (now Grand Canyon Railway) Hotel and Max and Thelma's Restaurant opened in 1996. Today they carry 190,000 passengers annually.

They now employ something like 400 and continue to do all the car and locomotive rebuilding in their own shops.

Since Williams is at a fairly high elevation, snow is not unknown in these parts in early November. Furthermore I-17 from Phoenix to Flagstaff can occasionally be closed or chains required for passage when snow falls. The cancellation policy for the Grand Canyon Railway requires at least 24 hour notification for a refund less \$5 service fee. Cancellations inside of 24 hours are non-refundable but can be re-scheduled up to a year after the original date. Rather than book weeks in advance I chose to book after seeing the seven day weather forecast. The downside is that even in November the coach and club car seats were sold out. Only first class, dome or parlor car seats remained. This represents a very shrewd seat allocation policy. There were only two coach class cars on the nine car train. The up side was that with my AAA member number they gave me 20% off both the train fare and souvenir purchase. As it turns out, we were able to get two dome class seats, which after all was what I intended to buy all along. Likewise the Grand Canyon Railway Hotel, formerly the Fray Marcos Hotel, was also sold out, as was the Grand Canyon Country Inn. We settled on a Best Western Inn on the far west side of town near the I-40 ramp. This was a very nice quiet, modern hotel at the phenomenal rate of only \$62 a night WITH continental breakfast.

The railway asks that you check in about 90 minutes before departure. This seemed a bit excessive, but 15 minutes before the loading time of 9:45 am they have a western shoot-out. They even have a small grandstand to watch this. I'm sure Homeland Security would be aghast. It was a funny show. The Williams (ex-Santa Fe) depot has been extensively renovated. I discovered they have toilet activated signals. As soon as a railfan uses the facility, the signal turns green permitting the train to back in while the fan is in a "delicate" position. I missed the arrival of the equipment and the blurling Alco (Montreal built) FPA-4s.

Ex-CN, ex-Via Rail FPA-4s 6773 and 6860, an A-B combo did the honors. The consist was as follows: 7608 *Arizona*, Budd Stainless coach, 7609 *Bright Angel*, Budd SS. The *Arizona* and *Bright Angel* cars were part of a large 32-car order sent to the Budd Manufacturing Company in 1951 (Job 9621-110). The order of 60-seat coaches with lounges was part of an attempt by the Pennsylvania Railroad to upgrade service on the busy New York – Washington corridor. The Boston Washington *Senator* and the *Morning* and *Afternoon Congressional* trains received most of the cars, but several went to

other trains. 2096 *Café*, Budd SS, was built in 1952 as Pennsylvania Railroad's 29-seat parlor car named *Henry Knox* with a five-seat drawing room. 2152 ex-SP Harriman commuter coach, now a club car, was rebuilt in 2002 by removing and re-pouring the concrete floor, adding new carpet, new toilets, metal doors, an electrical heating system and aluminum windows. The car features a hand-finished mahogany bar, period-representative floor carpet and room to stand. 5205 *Bucky O'Neil*, first class coach Budd SS, was delivered to the Southern Railway in 1949 where it served on the Southern's passenger trains, including the *Southerner*, *Tennessean* and *Royal Palm*. The most notable train these cars ran on was the *Crescent*, which ran from New York to New Orleans. The car was sold to the Alaska Railroad before coming to the Grand Canyon Railway. 2095 *Anasazi*, first class coach, Budd SS ex-SP *Sunset Ltd.* coach. It was originally called the *Golden Ore* and given the number 2377. 7034 *Grand View* dome coach Budd fluted SS ex- *California Zephyr* still containing the original seats upstairs and down, came via the Alaska Railroad. This may be an ex-Rio Grande car acquired by Amtrak with the takeover of the *Rio Grand Zephyr*. 2094 *Coconino*, dome coach Budd flat SS, ex-CB&Q 554 built for the *North Coast Limited*. 255 *Chief*, parlor open platform observation car, Budd SS, is an ex-ACL observation lounge. It had been restored by J. William Henry for the Texas Southern dinner train. Along the way the rear was badly damaged in a yard accident and hence the open platform was constructed.

The highball was given promptly at 10 am and the FA's gave off their usual plume of black smoke. Sweet rolls, muffins, orange juice and coffee were served from a table at the base of the dome stairs, with iced-down pop served on the opposite side of the aisle. The car attendant first gave her spiel downstairs, then repeated it upstairs. It was quite informative, though she also hawked drinks from the bar. The ex-NCL dome coach was equipped with Amtrak reclining seats downstairs and reclining motor coach seats with armrests that folded down and out of the way and seat back trays in the dome. All the windows were clean. The car rode very quietly and smoothly, although speeds never exceeded 40 mph and at times was down to 25 mph. The restrooms were pretty much in original configuration, but working well and clean.

The train makes a sharp left turn to the north shortly after passing the engine house and passes a yard full of interesting passenger equipment and the restoration shops on the right. There was a string of ex-CalTrain, ex- Boston and Maine demotorized Budd cars. These apparently will replace the ex-SP Harriman coaches. There was another corrugated side Budd dome and a Slumbercoach in the line also. There are plans for an Arizona State Railroad Museum to be built on 15 acres of land in downtown Williams. It certainly looks like they have some interesting stuff already in Williams. Another Montreal FPA-4 in VIA colors also was visible in the distance.

Shortly thereafter we passed under the BNSF mainline. This was built in 1960 and by-passed Williams. Unbeknownst to me, the old main is still in service through Williams and is

used by the "Peavine" trains to Phoenix.

Most Santa Fe Grand Canyon passengers left the new mainline at Williams Junction. Today's Amtrak connection is a bus under contract with the Grand Canyon Railway Hotel. This transfer point location is steeped in mystery. When I asked the location so I could "meet friends arriving on Amtrak" I was referred to the hotel. Later when I specifically asked for directions to the junction, I was informed that it was on private property and I had to get permission to photograph trains there. Bottom line: Don't go there expecting to photograph the mainline action unless you use a strong telephoto lens and tripod from town.

After passing the shops, we went through the woods for a little bit. As we traveled north the trees became scrubbier until there was nothing but arid grass land. Most of this is on a 150,000 acre ranch. Water must be trucked from a 13,000 ft. deep well in Williams. There are occasional watering holes for the cattle, but woe is ranch owner if they dry up due to lack of rain.

After our car attendant served her drinks, a cowboy singer regaled us with a selection of old country-western tunes. This is quite entertaining for the general ridership, but kind of an annoyance for those of us serious dome riders. I prefer to add my own music to my videos, thank you. Let me hear the muffled track joint noise and locomotives. Unfortunately the Alcos were so far away, they couldn't be heard aside from the air horn.

The line is quite a roller coaster and it really shows up in tele-



One of the dips in the Grand Canyon Railway. Captured video frame by Russ Isbrandt

photo shots. As we approached the Canyon, trees again appeared. The train entered Coconino Canyon at which point our car hostess reminded us that the tour buses don't have restrooms and the station restrooms are pretty crude, so take

advantage of those in our car.

The train pulled up on the east end of a wye, then backed into the station. We were reminded that re-boarding starts at 3:15 pm with departure promptly at 3:30 pm.

On the return trip we were treated with cheese and crackers and complimentary soft drinks. Our hostess again hawked beer and hard drinks and unlike the morning, she did a brisk business. Her attentiveness was somewhat annoying in that it was difficult to take videos without her booming voice or her appearance in the aisle. After awhile we were serenaded by another cowboy singer. About 2/3 of the way back we were the subject of a train "robbery". Two robbers on horseback came charging alongside of the train which conveniently slowed to a stop for them. We were advised to play along with them but "don't give them anything which you cannot live without". So in a few minutes the "bandits" came along and we ponied up (an appropriate expression in this case) pocket change or a couple of small bills. While the general public thought this was great fun, again it's something I could have done without. The "loot" is split among the cowboy actors. About that same time they served Champagne or sparkling cider. Shortly thereafter we arrived in Williams.

All in all, the ride is well worthwhile with excellent customer service. I highly recommend the dome ride.

The author wishes to thank Heather Gearhart of the Grand Canyon Railway for supplying the GCR's fact sheet which provided valuable details of the background of the company's equipment roster for this article. *The Grand Canyon Railway Sixty Years in Color*, by Al Richmond and Marc Pearsall was also used for additional background information.

How I Became A Railfan

By Bill Dredge

It actually started in the early 1940's. I was five or six years old. We lived in Eau Claire, WI during World War II and a couple of times a week my dad would take me to the station when the Minneapolis bound 400 came through town (about 7:30pm). On occasion we would ride the 400 to Minneapolis to visit my grandparents for a weekend. This practice was followed until 1946 when we moved back to Minneapolis.

In 1949 it started for real. I went with my dad to Chicago on the first of my many rides on the *Vista Dome Twin Cities Zephyr* to attend the 1949 Railroad Fair. It became my favorite train. I also wanted to build a model of it, but that came a few years later. I got into a routine of going to St. Paul on the *Afternoon Hiawatha*. Usually I would join a group of students watching the O gauge model trains running in St. Paul Union Station and then would go back to Minneapolis on the *Zephyr*. It was on the *Zephyr* where I met a conductor who was nice to me and furthered my interest in trains. His name was Oscar Semingson and he had 40+ years of service when



North Western train 401 at Washington St. Milwaukee, February 11, 1961. The 400 on its way to Minneapolis. Photo by Russ Isbrandt

I met him. He lived in La Crosse. I would visit with Oscar quite often and got acquainted with the CB&Q facilities in North La Crosse.

When I was in high school, Oscar changed runs to where he would leave La Crosse and come up to Minneapolis on the *Afternoon Zephyr*. I would go down to La Crosse on the *Afternoon Hiawatha*, (the Burlington didn't have a noon time southbound train), visit with him and then go back with Oscar to Minneapolis on the *Afternoon Zephyr*. Sometimes I would go to St. Paul on the *Morning Zephyr*, spend the day in St. Paul and return on the 3 pm *Zephyr*.

In 1954 the *North Coast Limited* got domes. The *Empire Builder* followed suit in 1955.

The Burlington handled these trains from Chicago to St. Paul. Oscar did a job where he could leave La Crosse on the *Empire Builder* (about dinner time), go to St. Paul and stay overnight, then go to Savanna, IL the next morning and back to La Crosse that afternoon. Of course I came on board, and with

the newer dome cars, the *Empire Builder* became my favorite train. The *North Coast Limited* was a close second. This practice continued until Jan. 1, 1958 when Oscar along with other 70+ year old conductors and brakemen had to retire.

I would continue riding trains and would use the Burlington weekend excursions to Chicago and see other Burlington *Zephyrs*. I would step off at La Crosse to visit Oscar, then come home on a later train such as the *Afternoon Zephyr*. I did this until the coming of Amtrak. I lost contact with Oscar about that time. He passed away in 1973.

I still come to the Amtrak station to check on the *Empire Builder* and take one big trip a year around the western US. I also take two small trips down to La Crosse for the model railroad show in March and Railfair in Copeland Park in July.

Yes, I also model trains and belong to the Hennepin Overland Model Railroad Historical Society at 2501 E. 38th St. we're open Saturdays 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm and Sundays when the Vikings are not playing. We will usually run a model of the *Zephyr*, *North Coast Limited* or *Empire Builder* in stainless steel, NP two tone green, or orange and green respectively, or the Amtrak version of the latter.

I also like taking pictures of trains with the camcorder, then putting the resulting work on DVD or tape.

And to think it all started when I was in Eau Claire as a youngster when the 400 came to town.

2006 Prototype Modeler's Meet By Greg Smith

The 2006 Prototype Modeler's Meet will be held February 11, 2006 starting at 9:00 am and running to 6:00 pm at the Dakota County, MN Rosemount Community Center located at 13885 South Robert Trail, one mile north of County Road 42 on MN Highway 3. Setup starts at 9 am with the first clinic starting at 10 am. There will be morning and afternoon clinics and a model display room. The speaker and subjects are as follows: *Jim Platt* on the history of the D&RGW Gunnison narrow gauge line, *Lou Claeson* on the M&StL 2-8-2 modernization program, *Doug Hodgdon* will be giving a clinic with the ESU Loksound people about their digital control system, and *Les Breuer* on detailing 40' boxcars.

Admission is \$10 for adults at the door with kids under 16 free.

Book Review By Russ Isbrandt

The Grand Canyon Railway Sixty Years in Color By Al Richmond and Marc Pearsall

Published by The Grand Canyon Railway 2004

Price about \$32 directly from the Grand Canyon Railway

The book is sold as a souvenir for those traveling on the Grand Canyon Railway, but it's also a passenger service book. As such it ranks among the better train service books such as those written by John Strauss, Jim Scribbins and Joe Welsh. Unlike some of the more recent offerings, I found no glaring errors such as mislabeled photo locations, incorrect locomotive identifications, etc. Frankly it grates on me to read stuff like "the train was discontinued about...." or "schedule and equipment changes took place about...." While some dates and changes may indeed be difficult to nail down, much information is now available through Internet special interest groups. Such comments reveal insufficient research. Such is not the case in this book. The authors display a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and dug in to operations of the Santa Fe for the story of the line from the 1940's through discontinuance of service and abandonment of the line and subsequent attempts to sell it.

The all color 112 page book is split into five chapters: The 1940's and 50's; The 1960's and Early 70's; The Dormant Years, 1974-1989; The Re-inaugural Years 1989-1994; and The Late 1990's into the 21st Century.

The design is very eye catching with black used for the area around the pictures and white text on black for the captions. Interesting subjects such as the 1953 Boy Scout Jamboree's visit, the 2002 NRHS Convention, and visits by the American Orient Express are covered. There are some great night shots and spectacular winter scenes when steam was used year around.

While it may make a great souvenir, given the coverage of the Santa Fe service, it would make an excellent addition to the library of any passenger train aficionado.

Railroad News from All Aboard Message Board, Trains Newswire, Altamont Press and Associated Press

December 29

CSX Train Derailment at Savannah, GA Reported by Chris Cowperthwaite of WTOC -TV

A CSX Train had a partial derailment in Savannah, tying up tracks for both freight and passenger lines. It happened early this afternoon right near the Amtrak Station off Telfair Road. A little before 1 pm this afternoon, one of the wheels on a freight car apparently got stuck, forcing that car and more than half a dozen behind it off the tracks. It's made for quite a mess along the lines. This train was towing 87 freight cars, eight of which are now off the tracks.

This delayed six trains, both northbound and southbound *Silver Meteor*, *Silver Star* and *Auto Train*. The worst delay was to train 98 the *Silver Meteor* which was held 12 hours at Jacksonville and 8 hours in the midst of the Georgia woods south of Savannah according to MN Railroad's Dec. 31, 2:15 pm posting on the All Aboard site. Apparently the on board ser-

vice personnel continued to charge for food and people began to run out of cash, at which point the on board service people agreed to accept credit cards if the passenger could provide a ticket receipt. Toilets in some cars became clogged adding to the misery. According to the Jan. 1 AP story, passenger Teresa Papik said the only free meal Amtrak offered during the delay was a sandwich, a can of soda and chips. No water.

According to Trains Magazine Newswire of Jan. 3rd, the trains initially were held because Amtrak expected the tracks to be open by 2 am Friday, Connell said. Instead, one of the two tracks reopened Friday at 7:30 am, the other at 12:30 pm, CSX spokesman Gary Sease said. "Based on CSX estimates that the track would be open within 14 hours of the derailment, Amtrak decided to advance the northbound *Auto Train*, *Silver Star* and *Silver Meteor* beyond Jacksonville," said Trains Correspondent Bob Johnston.

"But since the track opening was delayed 6 hours beyond the original 2 am estimate, the trains were left stranded in isolated areas waiting for 3 southbound CSX freights and Amtrak's southbound counterparts. Then the northbounds' federally mandated hours of service maximum on-duty time limits for operating crews was reached and there were no fresh crews available to advance the trains farther."

From an operational standpoint, the northbound *Auto Train* was delayed 17 hours, the northbound *Silver Meteor* delayed a total of 22.5 hours and the northbound *Silver Star* almost 16 hours. The southbound *Auto Train* was delayed 6 hours, 30 minutes, the southbound *Silver Star* almost 6 hours and the southbound *Silver Meteor* more than 3 hours.

Reno train trench, Amtrak passengers weather storm just fine—Altamont Press Newswire

The \$1.5 million pump system built into the downtown railroad trench kept trains running through Reno over the (New Year's) weekend, and Amtrak took full advantage of that fact Sunday, loading the first passengers inside the trench when the weather prevented it from busing passengers to Sparks.

While the historic train depot at Center Street has been ready to handle passengers for weeks, Amtrak has been taking its riders to Sparks while trying to finalize a lease with Reno.

That plan was scrapped Sunday, though, when bad weather made the buses unavailable, said John, a ticket agent at the temporary station who wouldn't give his last name.

He said there was no choice but to load the roughly 150 passengers inside the trench.

"I had to," John said. He said he called a dispatcher who contacted the train conductor with instructions to pick up passengers in the trench. He then escorted the passengers from the trailer into the historic train depot that's been restored to serve as the main train station.

"They were kind of excited because they knew they were the first group in," John said about the passengers.

Reno and Amtrak have not finalized a lease agreement because of squabbling over several issues, including who would maintain the escalator. Reno City Manager Charles McNeely signed a temporary contract with Amtrak about a week ago

so passengers could use the station. "As far as I know they've got the right to use it whenever they want it," said Reno Public Works Director Steve Varela.

Amtrak plans to continue using the train trench for passenger loading and unloading and will stop busing people to Sparks, John said. "This worked and people were happy with it," John said.

A *California Zephyr* train goes through Reno in both directions daily between Chicago and San Francisco.

Varela said the trench's pump system worked well getting the rainwater out of the trench and there were no problems associated with the storm or the flood.

Rainwater is collected throughout the trench and piped into a pump system near Evans Avenue, where it is filtered to clean out oil and debris. It's then put into a reservoir, where it's pumped back into the storm drains and eventually discharged into the Truckee River. - Ben Kieckhamer, The Reno Gazette-Journal, Reno, NV courtesy Coleman Randall, Jr.

Other Major Delays—From Postings on the All Aboard Message Board

Amtrak 11 the *Coast Starlight* of Sunday Jan. 1 was running 19 hours late after having been rerouted over Altamont Pass, the Cal-P (line along San Francisco Bay) reported flooded. Flooding was reported north of Paso Robles and bridge pilings reported "giving way" at CP Ormiston about 4 miles from Los Angeles Union Station on the Coast line. The inbound *Surfliner* from Goleta (Santa Barbara) was to be held at Glendale and the outbound counterpart was being held at Los Angeles.

Additional information on the *Coast Starlights* from Jim Salvator posted Jan. 4, 9:00 am: As someone who was on a 14

hour late #14 (1/2/06) into Martinez, I can tell you the conditions were tough. Slow orders extended the length of the coast as well as through part of the Salinas Valley. Trees were down at multiple locations. There was a washout north of Martinez and the parallel freeway was also closed for a period of time. Martinez station was closed one day (I think Saturday) due to water over the rails and was unreachable due to flooding (water was lapping at my office front door) I was glad not to have been taken off the train and put on a bus.

I was comfortable, well-watered and fed, and had a full night's sleep. I would guess that there will continue to be some slow orders along the coast as the ground is saturated and sections could let go at any time. In addition Oregon will continue to receive rain even as we dry out. The crew was good and the conductor kept us well informed. Amtrak put a train set together in LA and we departed pretty much on time. When our crew was to go dead way before San Luis Obispo, Amtrak connected a Surfliner to us to get to San Luis Obispo. Not sure what time we got there, but we were standing in the station at 1:30 am as I awoke and looked out the window. For those of us on board, Amtrak did a pretty good job under some trying conditions. There were some problems, but overall kudos to Amtrak. Heavy rain in the Sierra Nevada mountains is resulting in the eastbound *California Zephyr* of Jan. 1 being held between Roseville and Colfax. There was no eastbound CZ the 31st due to rockslides near Truckee. Subsequent CZs are being terminated at Grand Junction.

The November Meeting minutes were printed in the December issue. Please refer to the December Northstar News.

Northstar News
Northstar Chapter NRHS
4036 Birch Knoll Drive
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Address Correction Requested