



NORTHSTAR NEWS

Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha Study



SP 4449 climbing the hill at Jackson St., St. Paul, October 11th on the return trip from La Crescent, MN. Photo by Martha Isbrandt

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Meeting Notice Officer Election Night

The November meeting of the Northstar Chapter of the NRHS will be held in the Como Park Streetcar waiting station, November 21st at 7pm CST. See map on following page.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 5:15 pm. Call Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you.

Program: The video of the 2009 NRHS Convention made by Joe Harper will be presented.

Northstar Chapter Officers Board of Directors						
President	Cy Svobodny	ctsvobodny@yahoo.com	651-455-0052			
Vice President	Dawn Holmberg	dawn@dholmberg.com	763-784-8835			
Past President	Mark Braun	Mark Braun mkbraun@hutchtel.net				
National Director	Bill Dredge	Bill Dredge williamdredge@yahoo.com				
Treasurer	Dan Meyer	treasurer@northstar-nrhs.org	763-784-8835			
Secretary	Dave Norman	nevad11@hotmail.com	612-729-2428			
Trustee	Doug Johnson	ddjoh322721@aol.com	612-825-6458			
Staff						
Program Chairman	John Goodman	jhgoodman2001@yahoo.com				
Newsletter Editor	Russ Isbrandt	risbrandt@comcast.net	651-426-1156			
Webmaster	Dan Meyer	Website: www.northstar-nrhs.org				
Chapter Mail Box	Northstar Chapter NRHS		St. Paul, MN 55112			

NOTE: Consult the website for any announcements regarding chapter activities including cancellation of any meeting for any reason, including weather.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dues are \$48 (\$36 for the National dues and \$12 for the local dues). Family memberships are \$5 per person additional. The student rate is \$22 (\$16 for the National, \$6 for the Northstar Chapter). If you want to join, an application is available at http://www.northstar-nrhs.org/. Print out this application and send it with a check made payable to "Northstar Chapter NRHS" to Northstar Chapter NRHS Membership Services, P.O. Box 120832, St. Paul, MN 55112.



Northstar Chapter Nominated Slate of Officers

The chapter nominating committee has submitted the following slate of officers running in the November election:

President - Cy Svobodny*

Vice President - Dawn Holmberg*

National Director - Bill Dredge*

Treasurer - Dan Meyer*

Secretary - Dave Norman*

Trustee - Bob Clarkson

* Indicates current incumbent

The election committee encourages members who would like to serve the Chapter in a management capacity to arrange to be nominated from the floor. This may be done anytime prior the election in November.

SP Daylight 4-8-4 Makes Fall Mississippi River Trips



Southern Pacific 4449 at Vermillion, south of Hastings, MN on its return trip to Minneapolis from La Crescent, MN, October 11th. Photo by Martha Isbrandt



SP 4449 at Harrison St., Minneapolis getting ready for its October 13th departure to Portland. Cold weather and snow accentuate the steam. Photo by Dawn Holmberg



SP 4449 passing Northtown Yard, Tuesday, October 13th on the way back to Portland. Photo by Dawn Holmberg

Excerpts From Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha Study

This study was among others done in response to a Congressional mandate passed October 16, 2008.

Prior Amtrak Service

In June 1971, Amtrak began operating a tri-weekly section of the Chicago to Seattle *Empire Builder* over the former Northern Pacific Railroad line, then owned by the Burlington Northern Railroad (BN), between Minneapolis/ St. Paul, Minnesota and Spokane, Washington via southern Montana. Later, this service was given the name *North Coast Hiawatha* and became a separate Chicagoto-Seattle train operating on a variety of schedules on either a daily or tri-weekly basis.

The North Coast Hiawatha was discontinued on October 6, 1979. At that time, Amtrak terminated service through southern Montana and North Dakota and shifted the Empire Builder to BN's Cascade Tunnel route between Spokane and Seattle, eliminating service at three communities on the Stampede Pass route between Pasco, Washington and Seattle. While northern Montana is still served by Amtrak's Empire Builder, the southern part of the state and the central Washington communities on the Stampede Pass route have not seen Amtrak service since 1979.

Changes in Rail Operations

Since the last *North Coast Hiawatha* operated between Chicago and Seattle 30 years ago, railroad operations on the route over which it traveled have changed significantly. Among the changes are:

- 1. Commuter train traffic on the portion of the route between Chicago and its northern suburbs has grown, as has the number of Amtrak trains operating between Chicago and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 2. Unit coal train shipments from the Powder River Basin in Wyoming, which join the route in Southern Montana and travel both east and west, have increased enormously. Unit grain train movements have grown as well.
- 3. The Montana Rail Link (MRL) has taken a long-term lease from BNSF Railway (BNSF) of the Jones Junction, Montana to Sandpoint, Idaho segment of the route, and handles a large volume of run-through trains from BNSF.
- 4. Prior to its discontinuance in 1979, the *North Coast Hiawatha* operated via Butte and Deer Lodge, Montana. A portion of this route is no longer in service, resulting in the proposed new routing through Helena, Montana.
- 5. Freight train operations on the *North Coast Hiawatha's* former Cascade Tunnel route west of Spokane have grown significantly, and the number of trains that can be operated via that route is limited by the time required to clear (flush) the Cascade Tunnel of diesel exhaust emissions from the locomotives of existing trains. Restored service would therefore have to operate via the slower Stampede Pass route between Pasco and Auburn, Washington.
- 6. Commuter train service has been initiated between Auburn and Seattle, and the number of commuter and Amtrak trains on this segment continues to grow.

The combination of these changes results in a somewhat different route, with a longer overall proposed train schedule, than when the *North Coast Hiawatha* last operated in 1979, and triggers a need for investments for increased rail line capacity to accommodate restored Amtrak service.

Proposed Route

The proposed route generally follows the route over which the North Coast Hiawatha previously operated, as outlined

1. Chicago, Illinois - Fargo, North Dakota (658 miles) The North Coast Hiawatha would follow the 1979 route which is also the route of Amtrak's Empire Builder - over rail lines owned by Metra, CP Rail (CP) and BNSF. 2.Fargo, North Dakota - Sandpoint, Idaho (1178 miles) With one exception, the train would follow the 1979 route through southern North Dakota and southern Montana, restoring service to a line Amtrak has not served since the North Coast Hiawatha's discontinuance. It would operate over rail lines operated by BNSF and MRL and would pass through Livingston, Montana, which is 54 miles from the north entrance to Yellowstone National Park. On the 124mile segment between Logan and Garrison, Montana, the North Coast Hiawatha would operate via the state capital of Helena because a portion of the former route via Butte and Deer Lodge, Montana is no longer in service. 3. Sandpoint, Idaho - Spokane, Washington (68 miles) The train would follow the 1979 route, which is owned by BNSF and currently served by Amtrak's Empire Builder. 4. Spokane, Washington - Seattle, Washington (396 miles) The former North Coast Hiawatha operated between Spokane and Seattle via the shorter Cascade Tunnel route which Amtrak's Empire Builder has used since the North Coast Hiawatha's 1979 discontinuance. Because freight volume through the Cascade Tunnel is very near capacity, the proposed route would operate via BNSF over the current route of the Portland section of Amtrak's *Empire Builder* between Spokane and Pasco, Washington. From Pasco to Auburn, Washington, the North Coast Hiawatha would operate via BNSF's Stampede Pass route (which Amtrak has not served since 1979), before joining BNSF's Portland-Seattle line (the route of Amtrak's Cascades trains) at Auburn for the final 21 miles into Seattle.

Operating Plan

This report assumes that the North Coast Hiawatha would operate as a separate, daily train between Chicago and Seattle, providing a second frequency on the Chicago-St. Paul - Fargo, North Dakota portion of the route already served by the *Empire Builder*. The projected consist of each train would be two or three diesel locomotives, a baggage car, and eight bi-level Superliner cars (a transition sleeping car, two sleeping cars, three coaches, a dining car and a lounge car).

Ridership and Financial Performance

Annual projected ridership on the proposed North Coast Hiawatha service is 359,800 passengers, and projected annual revenue is approximately \$43 million. These figures include 65,800 riders who are projected to ride the restored North Coast Hiawatha service instead of the current Empire Builder route, resulting in an estimated \$8 million reduction in Empire Builder annual revenue.

Projected direct operating costs are \$73.1 million, which would produce a direct operating loss of \$31.1 million for the North Coast Hiawatha route and would increase Amtrak's direct operating loss by \$39.1 million annually (when lost revenues on the Empire Builder route are taken into account). Due to high projected ridership, the North Coast Hiawatha's projected farebox recovery - the percentage of operating costs covered by ticket and food and beverage revenues - is 58%, which is higher than the average farebox recovery (51.8% in FY2008) of Amtrak's current long

distance services.

Implementation / Capital Costs

The single largest cost to commence operating the restored North Coast Hiawatha is the cost of upgrading existing track structure, signaling, and grade crossing warning devices. Host railroad carriers have provided preliminary cost estimates covering the capital investments they consider necessary for restored North Coast Hiawatha service that total \$619.8 million. Further studies and negotiations between Amtrak and host railroads would be required to determine an appropriate level of infrastructure investments. In addition, installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) on portions of the route where it would be required for reinstitution of passenger service is preliminarily projected to cost approximately \$60 million.

The second largest cost to restore the North Coast Hiawatha will be for acquisition of the necessary locomotives and passenger cars. A projected total of up to 18 locomotives and 54 passenger cars would be required (not including spare equipment to accommodate maintenance and safety requirements), with an estimated purchase cost of \$330 million. Most or all of this equipment would have to be purchased new, as Amtrak's current long distance equipment fleet is insufficient to meet even existing passenger demand.

Costs to restore or replace the stations formerly used by the North Coast Hiawatha, and to bring them into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are estimated at approximately \$17.6 million.

In order to commence service on the restored North Coast Hiawatha, approximately 269 new Amtrak employees would be needed to fill various positions required for the new operation. Recruiting, hiring, and training these new employees, and qualifying engineers and conductors on the route as required by federal safety regulations, would add approximately \$15.8 million in one-time costs. Projected capital and implementation costs total \$1.043 billion, a figure that is subject to significant uncertainty.

Financial Summary and Key Metrics

Below is a summary of the key financial and performance metrics for the restored North Coast Hiawatha

metrics for the restored worth Coast Hiawatha	
Projected Performance (dollar figures in Millions)	
Capital/Implementation Costs	\$1,043.2
Annual Passenger Revenue	\$43.0
Direct Costs	\$74.1
Direct Operating Contribution/Loss	\$31.1
Farebox Recovery	58.0%
Total Annual Ridership	359,800
Passenger Miles/Train Mile	153.1

Public Benefits

Amtrak anticipates that restoring passenger service on the North Coast Hiawatha route would produce net economic benefits. Direct benefits would flow from the jobs created, primarily in construction, manufacturing and material supply, during the duration of the infrastructure and station capital investment projects, and from the creation of approximately 269 permanent Amtrak jobs. Capital expenditures of approximately \$330 million for equipment would create additional jobs. Operation of the service would directly benefit local economies, and would also generate ongoing spillover economic benefits.

Restoration of passenger rail service on the route would produce mobility benefits. Airline service is limited or non-existent in most of the communities along the route, particularly for passengers traveling within North Dakota and Montana. Restoration of the *North Coast Hiawatha* would provide a passenger rail option that does not exist today, as well a creating a safe and environmentally-friendly travel option for the three million annual visitors to Yellowstone National Park.

Timeline

Implementation of service on the *North Coast Hiawatha* route would require a minimum of 48-60 months lead time from the date on which funding is made available. This is due to the time required to:

- 1. Negotiate and execute all necessary agreements;
- 2. Complete necessary infrastructure improvements;
- 3. Purchase needed locomotives and passenger cars;
- Restore/replace stations and make them ADA compliant; and
- 5. Hire, train, and qualify locomotive engineers and conductors, on-board service personnel, and other necessary employees.

Projected Train Schedule

The projected train schedules for a restored *North Coast Hiawatha* and the manner in which they were developed are discussed below.

A.Scheduling Considerations

During the eight years that the North Coast Hiawatha operated, it evolved from an unnamed train consolidated with the Empire Builder on both the eastern and western ends of the route to a separate train, with many variations in frequency and schedules in between. Over thirty years have elapsed since the last North Coast Hiawatha operated, during which time there have been significant changes in freight and commuter rail operations over the route and changed conditions have made it infeasible to operate restored service over two portions of the former route. Therefore, while the proposed route and schedule are similar to the service operated in 1979, there are a number of differences. The proposed North Coast Hiawatha schedule shown in this feasibility study is based upon information provided by host railroads, and an assessment of current train operations and infrastructure conditions on the route. If the decision is made to restore the North Coast Hiawatha service, a comprehensive review of operations and infrastructure at the time service is initiated, including the impact of infrastructure investments made to support restored passenger service, will be required to determine actual running times and schedules.

B.Scheduling Elements

Schedule running times and actual train schedules take into account maximum authorized speeds and route characteristics on each segment. The schedule also reflects the time required for acceleration and deceleration at station stops, and includes allowances for possible train delays and miscellaneous adjustments for other factors that will impact running time.

Amtrak and its host railroads use standard methodologies to develop passenger train schedules. Using host carrier timetables and other inputs including standard station dwell times and estimated recovery times, a proposed schedule was developed. Some considerations used in the development of these schedules are discussed below.

- 1. Pure Running Time (PRT): The optimum or minimum time the train will take to operate between passenger stations and/or other pre-determined points, exclusive of station dwell time or delays.
- 2. Station Dwell Time: The normal amount of time included in schedules to accommodate activities at station stops, including the loading/unloading of passengers and baggage and (where applicable) crew changes, locomotive fueling and other train servicing requirements.
- 3. Schedule Recovery Time: Time added to a schedule to enable a train to recover to its public schedule after incurring delays. Recovery Time can take two forms:
- •Standard Recovery Time (SRT): Additional schedule time that is based on a percentage of PRT in a given segment usually about 8 percent. This time is intended to permit recovery from all delays, regardless of cause.
- •Additional Recovery Time (ART): The time allotted for

NORTH COAST HIAWATHA							
Proposed							
Read Down	Mile		City		Read Up		
11:15 AM	0	Dp	Chicago, IL	Ar	8:33 PM		
11:39 AM	18	П	Glenview, IL	1	7:50 M		
12:55 RM	86	П	Milwaukee, Wl		6:45 RM		
2:05 FM	150	Т	Columbus,WI		5:35 PM		
2:34 FM	178	П	Portage, WI		5:05 PM		
2:52 PM	195	П	Wisconsin Dells, WI		4:47 PM		
3:30 PM	240		Tomah, WI		4:06 PM		
4:14 PM	281		La Crosse, WI		3:25 FM		
4:50 PM	308	П	Winona, MN	7	2:49 FM		
5:52 PM	371	1	Red Wing, MN	N. 1	1:32 PM		
7:31 PM	417	Ar	St. Paul-Minneapolis, MN	Dp	12:28 FM		
8:11 PM		Dp		Ar	11:48 AM		
9:40 PM	482	I	St. Cloud, MN	A	9:57 AM		
10:42 PM	548	П	Stapes, MN	П	8:48 AM		
11:38 PM	610		Detrot Lakes, MN		7:49 AM		
12:40 AM	658		Fargo, ND	100	6:52 AM		
1:43 AM	716	2 12	Valley City, ND		5:34 AM		
2:20 AM	750	57 3	Jamestown, ND		4:55 AM		
3:48 AM	852	21, 6	Bismarck, ND		3:20 AM		
4:08 AM	857)F.	Mandan, ND (CT)		3:07 AM		
5:00 AM	957		Dickinson, ND (MT)		11:55 PM		
7:05 AM	1063		Glendive, MT		9:54 PM		
8:25 AM	1141		Miles City, MT		8:34 PM		
9:20 AM	1187	П	Forsyth, MT		7:32 PM		
11:13AM	1288	*	Billings, MT		5:52 PM		
1:26 PM	1404	Ar	Livingston, MT	Dp	3:34 FM		
1:54 PM		Dp		Ar	3:06 FM		
2:36 PM	1429	Ī	Bozeman, MT	A	2:00 FM		
4:31 FM	1527		Helena, MT		12:06 FM		
7:33 PM	1646		Missoula, MT		9:28AM		
9:39 PM	1717		Paradise, MT (MT)		7:08 AM		
11:15 PM	1836	+	Sandpoint Lt. ID (PT)		3:48AM		
12:42 AM	1904	Ar	Spokane, WA	Dp	2:30 AM		
1:02 AM		Dp		Ar	2:10 AM		
	2049	_	Pasco, WA	†	11:25 PM		
5:57 AM	2139		Yakima, WA		9:43 PM		
6:57 AM	2175		Ellensburg, WA		8:35 PM		
7:47 AM	2277	1	East Aubun, WA		5:58 PM		
10:42AM	2300	Ar	Seatte, WA	Dp	5:20 PM		

opposing passenger trains to meet in single-track territory. The amount of added time varies with individual schedules and configuration of the rail line - usually at least five minutes per passenger train scheduled to be met.

The recovery time takes into consideration that the host railroads must give passenger trains dispatching preference over freight trains, as required by Federal law, and also assumes that the rail line will be satisfactorily maintained so that passenger trains will not be burdened with an excessive level of slow-order delays caused by track conditions. In addition, extra schedule recovery time will be included for each train that was scheduled to meet a passenger train traveling in the opposite direction in dark (non-signaled) territory.

Working with the host carriers, Amtrak developed the previously shown schedule which assumes current host railroad operating conditions.

Editor's note: The "experts" on the Yahoo All Aboard group have made the usual criticisms, some of which might be valid, such as this one from Ed Tennyson: "I do not think they (the studies) are "bogus" but yes, we can honestly poke holes in the studies.

For example, the *North Coast Hiawatha* study says it will take a billion dollars to set up the line to operate the trains. They admit that \$600 million of that is for new signals, the cost of which were determined by the owning railroads and not checked by Amtrak. A freebie for BN&SF(sic) and CPR.

Coer d'Alene has grown mightily since the *North Coast Hiawatha* shut down in 1979 but they do not propose to stop anywhere near there. That makes the ridership estimate low. They propose to run the westbound *North Coast Hiawatha* just three hours ahead of the *Empire Builder* but 4.5 hours ahead would find more passengers in Wisconsin and Minnesota. They allow three hours for the one hour trip from Auburn to Seattle. Dishonest padding to kill local use. If they want padding put some at Spokane where it won't matter much.

Other than that, I thought it was very good study. They predicted 985 passengers a day without Coer d'Alene which looks like 131,327,000 annual passenger-miles. If we take some of the fat out of the RR signaling demands, the investment may be a more honest \$800 million. If we take out the rolling stock investment, the fixed facility investment is only \$600 million. That comes to 11.5 cents per passenger-mile. The new Maryland Interstate I-370 just had rate setting hearings. It will cost 28 cents per vehicle mile to use it which is 24.3 cents per passenger-mile, TWICE AS MUCH as North Coast Hiawatha. The rolling stock for the train will cost 6 cents per passenger-mile. Your automobile costs you 17 cents. The train is again a bargain. It will save on imported oil. GO FOR IT. They are using big dollar numbers that scare people, but it is a 2,300 mile route. We need to look at one passenger's cost, not a billion dollars with no thought of real savings.

Meeting Minutes From October 17th Meeting

Chapter President Cy Svobodny called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in the historic Como Park Streetcar Station with 17 members and guests present. He asked those present to introduce themselves. He asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of the September 19, 2009 meeting minutes,

as printed in the October 2009 issue of Northstar News. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes, as published. The motion to approve was made, seconded, and carried.

Treasurer Dan Meyer had no formal report to give, but he noted that he had gotten a message from the NRHS national office that the 2010 dues renewal notices will be coming out soon.

National Director Bill Dredge has not heard anything lately from the NRHS nationally. He will be attending the fall NRHS Board of Directors meeting soon.

Program Director John Goodman said that he had planned to show a video of the 2009 NRHS national convention, which took place in Duluth, but that Marty Swan has a Revelation Video that he might show. Jim George will do the program for the Holiday Banquet in early December. As Trip Director, John noted that the costs for a bus to North Freedom for the their Snow Train in early February are too high. He also noted that taking Amtrak to Wisconsin Dells wouldn't be practical - if the train is late, it would cause problems.

He attended a recent High Speed Rail meeting. They have ambitious plans. They want to use the St. Paul Union Depot as their terminal. He described the meeting as very interesting.

Dan Meyer gave a report on behalf of the Library Committee. They have been working on Wednesdays, usually 10 am to noon, then take a lunch break, then from 1 to about 3 pm in the afternoon. We have been selling some duplicate items or items not relevant to the focus of the library on eBay to help pay the rent. We will also be selling items at the Century College flea market of railroad and model railroad items in November. The question was brought up, is it worth selling at flea markets? The matter was discussed.

Northstar Commuter Rail will have a special event on Saturday, November 14, as a preview of their service, which will begin regular service on Monday, November 16. They will have a display by their station in downtown Minneapolis. We have been invited to participate in this event - do we want to?

We have candy left over from the NRHS national convention - it is available at 75 cents per bar.

There is nothing new about the 8327 restoration project. President Svobodny said that he wrote a letter about the engine to Progressive Rail, who might be interested in having the engine at their headquarters as a display. He hasn't heard anything from them. A question was asked about how much asbestos is left in the engine, as that is one reason why they might be reluctant to acquire the engine. There was a discussion about this. It was noted that Progressive Rail has equipment to move large, heavy items.

Marty Swan reported on plans for the Holiday Banquet. So far, only eight members have signed up. We need a lot more. It was mentioned that checks for the banquet won't clear right away.

The election slate was published in this month's issue of Northstar News. The election will be held at next month's meeting. There was no report on the website. It was announced that seventeen years ago, members Dan Meyer and Dawn Holmberg got married. There was a round of applause for this. There was a discussion about name badges. The cost is two for \$5, which includes mailing. It was suggested that the officers discuss this Wednesday at the library. There was a discussion of concerns about our organization. We have a light turnout for meetings and, when we are gone, who

will keep the organization going? There is a need to reach out.

One suggestion was putting together a card or brochure listing coming events. This might attract people who are not now in our organization. Bob Clarkson said that he had put together a sample. It would be put out quarterly. It would be distributed to hobby shops, model railroad shows, etc. He wanted feedback. There was a discussion about the matter.

John Goodman said that he had investigated possible meeting locations for next year. He hasn't heard yet from the Minnesota Transportation Museum about Jackson St. Roundhouse. There was a discussion about the matter. We will wait until hear from Pat Kytola of the MTM.

A member of the Elections Committee reminded members that anyone else who wants to run for any office can still get their name in.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 7:43 pm. After a break, the program was presented by Bill Herzog. Bill showed videos that he had made of San Diego Light Rail, Campo, CA, Tehachapi Pass, and the boxcab electric locos and m.u. cars in Montreal. Respectfully submitted.

Dave Norman, Secretary Northstar Chapter NRHS

From Railway Age

Budd RDCs purchased to bolster Portland's WES service OR's fledgling commuter rail line, Westside Express Service (WES), struggling with operational issues plaguing its three Colorado Railcar diesel multiple-unit (DMU) cars, will add two vintage Budd Co. rail diesel cars (RDCs) purchased from the Alaska Railroad for \$150,000. The Budd cars were built in 1953.

WES, operated by TriMet, has repeatedly been forced to provide substitute bus service for customers due to recurrent mechanical troubles. The cars, to first be refurbished, would be put into service next summer as backups to the current DMU fleet.

TriMet spokeswoman Bekki Witt said the Budd cars had been used for passenger service until last March.

From Philadelphia Daily News / Philly.com

SEPTA railroad car burns

By Dana DiFilippo & Kitty Caparella Philadelphia Daily News

During a morning commute already complicated by a transit strike, a fire broke out Wednesday November 4th on one of SEPTA's most heavily traveled Regional Rail lines, forcing the evacuation of about 1,000 passengers on two four-car trains.

Three SEPTA crewmen were taken to area hospitals for smoke



Philadelphia SEPTA 1964 Budd commuter car burns during rush hour on the Philadelphia - Harrisburg Amtrak line Wednesday November 4th. Photo from the Associated Press

inhalation and a passenger was treated by a paramedic at the scene.

"We've never had a Regional Rail fire that completely destroyed a car," said SEPTA spokesman Jim Jordan. "Everything in the car was fire-retardant. We are puzzled by how much damage the fire did."

Jordan said that the 7 am fire on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line had nothing to do with the strike by Transport Workers Union Local 234.

(Regional Rail workers operate under a different contract from the city division and are not part of the strike.)

Just outside the Overbrook station near a SEPTA maintenance facility, the engineer and passengers smelled smoke, and the engineer asked the passengers to go into the three other cars, Jordan said.

Then, the engineer, in communication with the control tower, cut off power to the car and proceeded toward 30th Street Station, powered by the three other cars.

But smoke swirled around his seat and the engineer stopped the train, lifted the first seat behind him and saw flames coming from a metal well, where there's a vent for the heating system and signs stored for the train, Jordan said.

He notified the SEPTA crew to evacuate the train and obtained a

NORTHSTAR CHAPTER'S ANNUAL BANQUET DECEMBER 6, 2009

at

TINUCCI'S LOCATED IN NEWPORT

PRICE \$22.00 includes meal, beverage, taxes and tip.

Please make your reservations early.

Program: Jim George The Duluth and Northeastern Railway

Social time starting at 11:00 am; meal served at Noon.

Deadline: December 2, 2009

Member.....\$22.00.....

Guests (number)......@ \$22.00.....

Phone number of member (in case we need to contact you)

Make Checks Payable to "Northstar Chapter, NRHS"

Send to: H. Martin Swan, 1911 Suburban Ave #119, St. Paul, MN 55119-7003

fire extinguisher, trying unsuccessfully to put out the fire, Jordan said. "It had been smoldering for some time."

The engineer told the crew to evacuate the train. Passengers popped open the windows to get out and fled through the exits of the car.

The interior of the front car was destroyed by flames, said Jordan

Right behind the first train came another R-5 on a parallel track. All passengers on both trains were evacuated safely without incident, SEPTA spokesman Gary Fairfax said.

Editor's Note: Your editor has ridden Amtrak's *Keystone* trains over this route and was familiar with the location. Undoubtedly the fire delayed several *Keystone* trains.

The Philadelphia Chapter Newsletter, *Cinders*, has reported electrical fires on SEPTA m.u. cars in the past, but nothing this serious.

From Trains Newswire

Amtrak: Positive train control costs could shut down train services. Published: Monday, October 26, 2009 WASHINGTON — Amtrak has told the Federal Railroad Administration that the cost of installing a collision avoidance system could lead it to shut down some services, the Wall Street Journal has reported. The word comes as the railroad industry begins to push back against a federal mandate that positive train control be operational on most U.S. main lines by the end of 2015. Positive train control uses a combination of global positioning satellite technology and wayside transponders to detect when two trains are at risk of collision. When the system detects they are, it's designed to override the engineer and stop the train before a collision can occur. The mandate followed a September 2008 crash in suburban Los Angeles between a commuter train and a freight train that left 25 people dead. In a statement, Amtrak told the FRA the cost of installing PTC in

Northstar News Northstar Chapter National Railway Historical Society 4036 Birch Knoll Drive White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Address Correction Requested

at least 12 states "may be so high as to not be undertaken and therefore result in the elimination of Amtrak service." The American Public Transportation Association, meanwhile, said commuter agencies' cost of compliance will result in "increased fares, decreased service levels, and deferral of state-of-good-repair projects." Passenger advocates have pushed for federal funds to help offset the costs.

Meanwhile, freight railroads have also begun pushing back. BNSF Railway President Matt Rose explained his railroad's position, saying, "We're not asking to be let out of this. All we're saying is the [Office of Management and Budget] and FRA ought to use some cost-benefit analysis." He suggested the mandate could be applied only in certain high-risk areas. Official cost estimates for PTC installation vary from \$7 billion to \$24 billion. While the system would also enable railroads to run trains closer together, the industry fears operational benefits would fall far short of the cost of compliance.

Railfan Calendar

Greater Upper Midwest Train Show

Saturday, November 21, 9 am to 2 pm at Century College, White Bear Lake. Admission: \$5 adults, under age 12 free.

Granite City Train Show

Saturday, December 5, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Admission: \$4.00, under 12 free with an adult.