



NORTHSTAR NEWS

Chasing the Southern Pacific's 4449 by Richard Tubbesing



SP 4449 passenger extra on a trestle just east of Essex, MT, October 17, 2009. Photo by Richard Tubbesing

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Meeting Notice

The April meeting of the Northstar Chapter of the NRHS will be held in the Como Park Streetcar waiting station, April 17th, at 7pm CDT. 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: Richard Tubbesing will present a video of his October chase of SP 4449 across the country as described in this issue.

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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.



Memories - Chasing SP 4449 from Minot to Portland, OR October 13-24, 2009 By Richard Tubbesing

Tuesday, October 13th

#4449 left Minneapolis for Portland Oct 13 2009.

The train was late in leaving Minneapolis because the private *California Zephyr* cars had not arrived from the Amtrak Station in St. Paul to Harrison St. in time for the 10 am departure. I drove to Little Falls, MN to get one last shot of the train in Minnesota and to get video of the train crossing the dam and Mississippi River just south of the depot. After waiting for a couple of hours, the train arrived at about 12:20 pm and due to the cool temperatures, the steam engine created lots of white smoke as the train passed the Little Falls Depot.

Wednesday, October 14 - Thursday, October 15.

Since #4449 spent an extra day in Minot, ND, I took the *Builder* on an overnight trip from St. Paul to Minot. The 10:30 pm St. Paul arrival was late because of diesel problems and it arrived at about 12:05 am. It departed at about 12:30 am. I booked a roomette and found it very comfortable. The young attendant was very efficient and

congenial in making up the bed. We left on the Midway Sub until we got to University Jct. at which time I decided to turn in. I woke up the next morning somewhere west of Grand Forks. Due to an overnight snowfall, and a NE wind, all the signals were covered with snow and we ran at restricted speed on most sections of track all the way to Rugby, ND. From there, we finally picked up speed and arrived in Minot, ND at about 10:35 am about 3 hours late. Needless to say, it was very chilly in Minot and I waited for the baggage cart to arrive outside the depot (not inside) to get my checked bag. I met my friend, Joe Harper, at the depot and we decided to check out photo locations west of Minot. We left Minot among some snow flurries and went first to check out the BNSF's Gassman Coulee high bridge west of Minot, then checked out Berthold, Stanley, Ross, Ray, Epps and onto Williston ND. We returned to Minot for dinner and had a nice meal at a hotel complex just north of the Minot Depot. It was time to turn in for the night at our motel. At the motel we met Ron Berkhard and Jay Lentzer who were also chasing the #4449. Ron is trip host for Travel Unlimited (formerly Trains Unlimited) railroad trips. He is superb at creating great railfan trips and coordinating fantastic photo locations with the host railroads. Jay Lentzer is a historian on Montana railroads and has many credits of his photos and articles in various railroad publications.

Friday, October 16: Departure from Minot to Havre, MT

The train was to depart Minot at 8 am. We went down to the depot before departure and got some photos of the engine by the BNSF Office with an westbound freight on the next track led by a BNSF still in Warbonnet paint. It was still dark and snow flurries were in the air. The cool temperatures would make for great white smoke from the stack of 4449. We decided to head to Berthold because the Gassman Coulee trestle shot would still be in darkness. After talking to my friends Mark Quam and Roger Libre who were on the train, I found out they were late in departing, having to wait for a BNSF freight. So, while we were at Berthold, we decided to head back to Gassman Coulee bridge, since now there was enough daylight for a good shot. We got back to the trestle just as the train began to cross the bridge and got the train crossing the last 2/3 of the bridge. We then hustled to Berthold and got the train as it passed the grain elevator there. We then headed to Ross, ND to get the train by the grain elevator there and among snow flurries we got the shot just north of the highway bridge. Then we headed to Ray, ND and got the train by the grain elevator there. We high-tailed to Williston. We thought about getting the train at Epps, at the road overpass there, but access was by dirt roads and we didn't think we would beat the train there. We didn't, as we caught the train just north of Williston. We got to Williston and knew that was a service stop and to let the westbound *Builder* pass the train there. We got a shot of the *Builder* arriving at the station next to the #4449 train. We headed West to Marley, ND and at a road overpass we met Ron and Jay and the train there. Then we headed to Bainville, MT and caught the train from a gravel road and got a shot just south of Bainville. We managed to have a rock hit the windshield of our rental car and caused a crack in the windshield while catching up to the train on the gravel road. (Hyundai Korean cars must not have as good glass as other cars?) Joe's comprehensive Insurance covered the windshield when he turned the car in Portland. Now we were back on Highway 2 and continued the

chase. As we got further in Montana, the weather went from being gray and dingy and started to lighten up with sunshine on the horizon. We got some pacing shots west of Bainville, and runbys at Brockton, Macon, and entry into Wolf Point, MT. Montana is truly Big Sky country as the wide open spaces along this route were a sight to behold. We managed some pacing east of Glasgow, MT and arrival at Glasgow, MT. Continuing our chase, we got shots Hinsdale, Saco, Malta, and Harlem, MT and just east of Havre. Arrival in Havre was close to being on time. Havre has a nice brick GN station that Amtrak uses and a GN steam locomotive on display. Many BNSF trains were in the Havre yard (a BNSF Division Point). We checked in to our motel and then met up with Roger,



Above: West of Wolf Point, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing

Mark and John for a nice dinner at a restaurant not far from the depot.

Saturday, October 17: Havre to Whitefish, MT

Train departure was at 8 am and the sun was beginning to rise. We found a spot west of the depot, high on a hill, to get the train leaving the Havre depot. Lots of steam was generated as the train left the depot, but the shot was a glint shot as the sun was against us. We caught up to the train and got some short pacing shots and went to Lothair to get a runby at the grain elevator there. We then hustled on to Hingman and Dunkirk and got the train by grain elevators there and the entrance into Shelby, MT. Shelby, MT was a service stop for the 4449. West of Shelby, we shot the train crossing underneath the signal bridge. There was a brief stop at Cut Bank, where we got the train arrival, and then headed to the famous trestle across Cut Bank Creek and shot the train there. We also got some pacing shots west of Cut Bank and as we approached Browning, the Rocky Mountains of Glacier Park were in the distance. West of Browning, at a Lewis and Clark Marker, we got the train along a nice curve with the Rocky Mountains as backdrop. Then we headed to the Two Medicine River trestle east of Glacier Park Station just in time to get the train crossing it. Next we went to Summit Siding (east of Marias Pass Summit) and got the train heading into the siding. As the train approached, someone drove up to the tracks and a guy got out right in front of us as the train approached. We then headed west and found a place where (I think Black Tail) we caught the train on a ledge above us and heading into a snow shed. While waiting, we saw a Bald Eagle fly in and perch itself on top of a tree. Then we headed to another trestle east of Essex and got the train crossing it. Next

stop was at Essex and lots of people were there to watch the train arrive for the brief stop. We headed west to the west portal of a tunnel that goes under Highway 2. We caught an eastbound BNSF Z-train as it entered the tunnel and then waited for 4449 to exit the tunnel. It was a nice shot as the train exited the tunnel, lots of smoke billowed out of the portal. From there we couldn't catch up to the train until it arrived at Whitefish. We then headed for our motel, and found the reservation was for the previous night, so needless to say, we didn't have reservations. We did find a room at the same hotel chain in Columbia Falls. In Columbia Falls, Joe and I found a great place to eat at the 'Night Owl' and had some great ribs and some of the best fried chicken and fried bread I've ever had!

Sunday, October 18: Layover day for 4449

Joe and I arose early from our motel rooms and decided to check out locations for the next day's segment to Spokane, WA. We traced the tracks west to Libby, MT and found that the forest road following the tracks was paved, albeit sometimes narrowing down to one lane in places. We found the west portal of the 6 mile Flathead Tunnel and scouted the line to Libby, MT. We caught a westbound BNSF manifest south of the tunnel where the road crossed over the tracks. This was a good test to see if we could keep up or pass the freight before it got to Libby. We caught train about a few miles east of Libby, MT. We visited the Libby Depot and westbound manifest was in the hole at Libby, so we waited and caught an eastbound BNSF Z-train by the depot. We then followed the



Above: Entering Harlem, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: Leaving the Flathead tunnel west of Essex, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing

road along the Kootenai River into Idaho. Along the way, we stopped at a log cabin tobacco place to buy some cigars. In talking with the owner, and about the train, he invited us to use his home deck overlooking and high above the Kootenai river to shoot the train. It came in very handy the next day! We meandered into Bonners Ferry, ID and then down to Sandpoint to scout a location across the Lake Pend O'rielle causeway. We found a road to a vacant house on the southeast side of the lake to get our shot. Then we headed back to Whitefish and dinner again at the Night Owl for some great fried chicken.

Monday, October 19: Whitefish to Spokane, WA

The train was to depart at 8 am after the eastbound *Builder* arrived at the Whitefish station. At the Whitefish Station, we got the eastbound *Builder* (on time) at the station, which was followed by a eastbound BNSF manifest. We headed to about a mile west of the yard and waited for 4449. First a westbound BNSF Z-train passed and then waited for the 4449. It was a cool morning and when 4449 came by there was a lot of great white smoke from the stack and the engine sounded great as there is a slight up grade west of Whitefish. Then we headed to the west portal of the Flathead tunnel. The sun was out while we got the train exiting the tunnel. Then we hustled along the tracks and got ahead of the train. We got another shot at about MP 1306. Again we got ahead of the train and shot the train north of Libby. Then we headed to the tobacco shop just across the border into Idaho and hustled to our vantage point of the owner's deck and caught the train below winding its way along the west bank of the Kootenai River. There was a service stop somewhere east of Bonners Ferry, but due to the track distance being much shorter than the highway route, we decided to head to Sandpoint, ID. We found our selected location and set up. 4449 was just outside Sandpoint but had to wait for four eastbound BNSF trains, two grain trains, a Z-train and the Sandpoint local to cross the causeway. We waited as the sun and clouds played tag and by the time 4449 crossed the causeway, the sun was not at a perfect angle. From Sandpoint, we caught the train and got a short pacing shot and then got ahead of the train and got a runby near Athol, ID. We tried to catch the train again and got ahead of the train again to set up just as the train crossed the Spokane River on a trestle east of Spokane. By this time, both Joe and I felt colds coming on and decided to head to the motel and get some rest.

Tuesday, October 20: Spokane, WA to Portland, OR

The morning was foggy and gray, so conditions for shooting the train were not optimum. Joe and I felt much better after some good rest at the motel.

The train left a little late from Spokane, and Joe and I set up on the east end of the Latah Viaduct and got the train as it passed. Then we hustled to the town of Sprague, WA. At the grain elevator there, a front end loader was moving grain cars in the siding to position for loading as the train passed. We got some good short pacing shots south of Sprague as the sun was trying to peek through the clouds. We got to Ritzville ahead of the train and set up near the neat former NP depot which had an BN caboose on display near the depot. Next we headed to Connell, WA (home of a Washington state prison) and got a nice runby on a curve there. Heading south, we caught up to the train and got some brief pacing shots in good sun. We went thru Pasco and the big BNSF yard there (a

service stop for the 4449) and decided to head to the Columbia River gorge for our next shot. Along Washington highway 14, there is a marker high above the river in the Umatilla Wildlife Refuge. We set up there and waited for the train as this view provided a long approach shot along the river. Then we headed west and stopped about 20 miles east of Wishram, WA and got a river level shot around a curve. We then headed to Wishram and got the train from a high level view exiting the tunnel just east of Wishram as it entered the Wishram yard. This was a service stop for 4449 so we headed west to Horse Thief State Park and got a neat mirror shot of the train passing a lake on a fill by the river. We then crossed the river hoping to get a shot of the train from across the river. We never caught up to the train though. 4449 must have been motoring as I think the crew was anxious to get home. We headed to the Portland station and for the final shot, got the train as it entered the depot.

We went to the Brooklyn roundhouse to wait for the engine to arrive, but darkness beat the engine, so Joe drove me to the motel for the night and he drove home to Centralia, WA.

Wednesday, October 21: Portland to Everett, WA

I arose early and caught a cab to the Portland station where I boarded Amtrak *Cascade Service Talgo* train to Seattle. It was a comfortable ride and I had a good coffee cake and coffee from the Bistro car. The ride along Puget sound from Olympia to Tacoma is very scenic, especially around Steilacoom, WA. We passed many freights along the way.

Upon arrival at Seattle King St. station, (the station has changed a bit since my visit in 2000, but renovation has been very slow), I boarded a bus to Everett. Upon arrival, I was surprised to find a new depot and transportation center where *Sounder* commuter trains and local buses meet. I remember the old Amtrak station right on Puget Sound in 2000, so this was a pleasant surprise. I then rented a car and drove around trying to find my motel. It took me awhile to figure out the streets and highways of the city to find my motel. I ate at the Irish pub across the street from the motel and the sandwich I had was very good.

Thursday, October 22: Everett to Leavenworth, WA

This day, I wanted to visit Stevens Pass along Highway 2.

I drove along the route and visited towns like Gold Bar, Skykomish, Index and Leavenworth. Of the many stops I made, I checked the tracks for activity and looked at the signals but saw narry a train.

Leavenworth is a neat town with a very Bavarian character but also a tourist trap. I tried to find the tracks, but I couldn't find them and I know that Amtrak has made Leavenworth a stop. I had be back in Everett to catch the *Builder* home late that afternoon. When I got to the station, and waiting for the *Builder*, I caught two Seattle *Sounder* commuter trains arrive. Unfortunately, my camera was packed away so I didn't photograph them. I caught the *Builder* and met my friends Mark and Roger who had boarded in Seattle. They had a bedroom in the car *Kansas* while I had a roomette in the car *Connecticut*. The accommodations were nice, and again, the attendant was courteous and efficient. I thought the car was a little chilly, but I sleep better when the air is cool. There were complaints on the car's temperature but little was done to increase the temperature as the attendant said he did increase the temperature.

Friday, October 23 - Saturday October 24 Everett to St. Paul

The trip back was fine and the Amtrak food was good. I had pancakes and eggs for breakfast, steak and salmon for dinners and forgot what I had for lunch one time.

We had dinner one time with a utility consultant for the government from out East who worked with the utilities working with environmental standards. He said the problem with coal was the scrubbers are great in removing sulfur, but not good at removing mercury, and western coal has more mercury but low sulfur and eastern coal is the opposite. Quite interesting. The *Builder* arrived in St. Paul about 20 minutes early, a great feat for over 2000 miles of travel. After my sister picked me up I arrived home safe and content.

Additional photos are on the extra page of the electronic edition.

Amtrak / Trains Magazine Town Hall Meeting

Amtrak boss: 'I want to do real stuff'

Published: Saturday, March 06, 2010

This *Trains Newswire* article was supplemented with additional material gathered by your editor, who attended the meeting. The full presentations can be downloaded as PDF files from the *Trains Newswire* article of March 6th.

CHICAGO - Amtrak President Joseph Boardman listened to critics today, but insisted his company must stick within the realm of the possible at a forum co-sponsored by Amtrak and TRAINS. Roughly 250 attendees showed up to hear Boardman, his senior staff members, and board chairman defend actions, detail their recently released fleet renewal plan, and reveal new initiatives at the Merchandise Mart Conference Center.

John O'Connor, the railroad's chief of police, defended criticism of Amtrak's policy toward photography on station platforms as a necessary step to prevent terror attacks. In a move to ingratiate himself to railfans and improve security, though, he announced he's contacted BNSF Railway's chief of police to seek advice on a policy to enlist railfans in security efforts. The freight railroad's Citizens for Rail Security program gives railfans cards they can use to identify themselves, which also guides them in reporting suspicious activity or safety problems. The Amtrak Police General Order forbids the forced deletion of photos or confiscation of film. "If the person is doing something wrong,



Above: 4449 on the Sandpoint causeway. Photo by Richard Tubbesing

it's stupid to force them to destroy the evidence.", said O'Connor. Don't expect as a ticket holder to stand on a platform for 2-3 hours taking pictures without permission from Amtrak. That permission covers only the small window of time while boarding or leaving a train. The policy applies only to Amtrak property. Many platforms are owned by others. For instance, New Jersey Transit has an open policy regarding photographing from station platforms. For any extensive picture taking even from public property, it's best to notify the local authorities if only so that if they get calls from concerned citizens, they know you're there. It may let them avoid sending a patrol to investigate.

O'Connor said he'd consider establishing an 800 number as part of Amtrak's BNSF-inspired photographer enlistment program.

Amtrak asked Chris Jagodzinski, its senior director for system operations, to discuss the fleet plan. He said the railroad's "Heritage" equipment, with build dates as early as 1948, illustrates the greatest need. "We don't want 60-year-old equipment," he said. "The passengers don't want it, and we don't want to maintain it." He noted Amtrak's average fleet age is older today than it was at startup in 1971. The oldest car in service is an 1948 ex-New York Central diner. The fleet replacement plan will see the fleet completely made over during the next 40 years.

Chris presented a number of interesting graphs. For instance, there was a chart comparing annual miles run between commuter agencies and Amtrak's various equipment types. The highest mileage shown by a commuter agency was for Florida's Tri-Rail, 66,000 miles per year. That compared with Amtrak's lowest annual mileage, Surfliners at 138,000 miles per year and 187,000 miles per year for Superliner I and IIs. The conclusion: No other passenger operator runs their equipment as hard as Amtrak. Now add that to the fact that the average age of Superliner Is is 28 - 30 years old with an average of 5.5 million miles on them.

They define useful life as the maximum period they want to have equipment in service – 30 years for engines, 40 years for passenger cars. A second definition of service life was commercial life, defined as the period when the equipment is maintainable, technically viable and commercially attractive for its designed service.

They do plan on retaining a "surge fleet" to accommodate a sudden increase in ridership and also to protect long distance runs. Equipment that is defined as having no commercial life left will not be sold to competing passenger operators who will then ex-

pect Amtrak to maintain it. Mr. Boardman seemed particularly perturbed at this and named operators such as Virginia Railway Express. They would be willing to sell obsolete equipment to museums.

With regards to leasing Metra commuter equipment for Chicago – Milwaukee service to provide a set of make up equipment for the *Builder*, the answer was an emphatic no. They aren't about to alienate the passengers in that corridor. Boardman's answer was that we need a second daily Chicago – Twin Cities train. Later in the discussion he made it clear than any service expansions must be fully paid for by the states. Any route additions must be mandated by Congress. Protect equipment for the *Builder* won't happen in any time we'd be happy with. See the paragraph above.

Emmett Fremaux, Amtrak's vice-president for marketing and product development, discussed the future of long-distance trains. He noted the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 directed the railroad to expand shorter-distance corridor services, and that expansion in future years would center there.

However, he said Amtrak's long-distance trains tie the network together, and that efforts would be made to improve them. He noted the proposal, which has board approval, to replace the three-times-weekly *Texas Eagle* and *Sunset Limited* with one train that would operate daily between Chicago and Los Angeles via San Antonio, Texas. The following chart shows the type of improvement in *Sunset / Texas Eagle* scheduling they're looking at.

Note that the rescheduling the *Texas Eagle / Sunset Limited* and instituting a San Antonio – New Orleans (corridor) train would free up one locomotive, 4 diners, and 5 sleepers in addition to restoring the connection with the *Coast Starlight*.

SCHEDULE CHANGES - SNAPSHOT		
Eastbound	Current	Proposed
Maricopa/Phoenix	11:17 PM	8:14 AM
Tucson	1:55 AM	10:22 AM
Houston	5:10 AM	12:10 PM
Westbound	Current	Proposed
Maricopa/Phoenix	12:57 AM	8:13 PM
Tucson	11:30 PM	6:46 PM
Houston	9:50 PM	6:35 PM

Ranking of Long Distance Routes – Three Year Program Outline

- Based on FY08 Performance: Avg. of OTP, Overall CSI, and Cost Recovery

		CSI	OTP	CR	Avg.	
Top Third	Auto Train*	84%	82%	88%	84%	Top Third – FY12 Performance Improvement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Superliner Service, 3 LD Trains from Chicago East Coast Auto Train and West Coast Starlight 4 routes previously in RPI program*
	Empire Builder*	82%	69%	66%	72%	
	Southwest Chief	79%	65%	53%	66%	
	City of New Orleans*	78%	62%	53%	64%	
	Coast Starlight*	79%	61%	49%	63%	
Middle Third	Silver Meteor	74%	66%	49%	63%	Middle Third – FY11 Performance Improvement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Single Level, 5 LD Trains out of New York 2 Silver Service trains to Miami 2 routes previously in RPI program*
	Crescent*	76%	67%	46%	63%	
	Palmetto	72%	52%	61%	62%	
	Lake Shore Ltd.*	70%	58%	44%	57%	
	Silver Star	75%	45%	43%	54%	
Bottom Third	Capitol Ltd.	77%	33%	48%	53%	Bottom Third – FY10 Performance Improvement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Superliner trains and 1 Single Level train 4 routes w/ Chicago endpoints, 2 routes tri-weekly <i>Sunset Ltd. FY09 RPI program* developed plan to restructure route with Texas Eagle for daily service</i>
	California Zephyr	77%	30%	45%	51%	
	Texas Eagle	70%	18%	46%	45%	
	Cardinal	66%	31%	35%	44%	
	Sunset Ltd.*	75%	27%	24%	42%	

He said expanded wireless broadband Internet access, recently implemented on the Northeast Corridor, would be a likely addition to long-distance trains. Broadcasting entertainment on an on-board wireless Intranet might also be possible.

The table at the bottom of the previous page shows a 3 year plan for train improvements starting with the poorest performing trains in 2010. The table shows Customer Satisfaction Rating, On Time Performance, and Cost Recovery. RPI is Rail Passenger Improvement program. Note the top four performers had been in that program.

Your editor suggested splitting the *Lake Shore* at the Toledo division point and running the New York section via Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia to avoid the snowbelt south of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario would result in better reliability in winter and provide Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia with sleeping car service. Mr. Fremaux said, "you've mentioned two very large markets" and that would be taken up in 2011 when the *Lake Shore* comes up for review.

Interestingly, it was suggested Amtrak run a St. Louis section of the *Cardinal* out of Indianapolis so that transcontinental passengers don't have to go through Chicago. He mentioned that re-routing will be among the items considered in all these long distance train reviews, including possibly running the *Capitol Limited* through to Florida.

If one theme recurred throughout, it was: How about new services? The response: It's up to the states to take the lead. And Boardman emphasized he wants to see existing services improved before new services are added. "This country builds stuff, including Amtrak, then walks away from it and doesn't give it the support it needs," he said.

The forum remained cordial throughout, with Boardman physically embracing TRAINS columnist Don Phillips, who blasted Boardman in a recent column. "My name for him is Uncle Don," Boardman told the crowd, "because Don occasionally has advice for me."

Attendees hailed from 28 states, and Boardman described the event as a "spirited" dialogue on Amtrak's future. "It is important for Amtrak senior management to hear directly from people who care deeply about improving and growing passenger rail in this country," he said. "Listening to their opinions and viewpoints with open ears and respect is crucial, because their support matters in determining how passenger rail moves forward."

As the forum wrapped up, Boardman announced a surprise: The first P40 diesel and three passenger cars restored with federal stimulus funds were on display at Chicago Union Station. Attendees filed out and walked the eight-tenths of a mile to the station, where they were allowed to walk through the refurbished equipment.

Photos from the meeting are in the electronic version extra pages.

Chapter to Participate in National Train Day Volunteers Needed

The chapter board has agreed to accept the invitation to participate in National Train Day, Saturday May 8th at Amtrak's Mid-

way Station. We will be set up in the First Class Lounge and will have a program playing on the large screen TV there. We will also be participating at the railroad flea market at the State Fair Grounds too. Needless to say we need more volunteers than usual. No sales will be permitted at Train Day, but we can hand out membership applications.

Call Cy Svobodny at 651-455-0052 or email him at ctsvobodny@yahoo.com to volunteer.

Chapter Name Badges Will Become Available

With the participation of the chapter in railroad flea markets and Train Day, it was decided that Bob Clarkson's idea of getting name badges was a good one. The artwork has been sent to Dan Meyer. The buttons cost \$3 for one or \$5 for two and will be sent directly to you via mail. See the order blank below.

Meeting Minutes From the March 20th Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm in the historic Como Park streetcar station with 20 members and guests present. A few more people arrived later. Members were asked to introduce themselves. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2010 membership meeting, as printed in the March 2010 issue of Northstar News. The motion was seconded and carried. Dan Meyer presented the treasurer's report. He said that we are in good shape financially. He also reported on membership. Last year, the chapter had 75 members (including family members.) We currently have 57 regular members. He said that we have about 12 regular members who have not yet renewed. He noted that we are a little behind last year's renewal rate. The subject of getting more interest on the chapter's long-term savings was brought up. Dan said that he had checked several places and found that we could get more interest than we have been getting, but that current rates are low. He hopes to decide where to place the savings by next month. A motion to approve his report was made, seconded, and carried. National director Bill Dredge is at the train show in La Crosse today, so he isn't present to give a report this month, but should be able to give one next month. John Goodman noted that he and Bill will be attending the upcoming NRHS Board of Directors meeting in Huntington, WV next month. There will be some important by-law changes discussed. If they are passed, then the NRHS can make long-term changes later. John noted that at most BOD meetings, there are only representatives from about 60 chapters present (out of a possible 172,) but because of the controversial issues to be discussed at this meeting, there may be more. National NRHS membership is down. John Goodman also reported as trip director. It has been decided that we will have a trip on the *Northstar* commuter train to Big Lake on Saturday, August 14th. We will have lunch together at the *Gaviidae Commons Food Court* before we board the train. He noted that you can buy a *Northstar* ticket at any fare machine on the *Hiawatha* Light Rail line. Basically, this will be the same as the trip we ran on the *Northstar* on January 30th. He has no other trips planned. The group that ran excursions behind Milwaukee Road steamer #261 has trips planned this spring to Milwaukee and Chicago on special cars on Amtrak's *Empire Builder*. They will also be running trips this fall. The Northstar Chapter has been invited to participate in National Train Day, which will be Saturday, May 8th at the Twin Cities Amtrak station in St. Paul. We won't be allowed to sell anything, but we can have a display. Russ Isbrandt will create a DVD showing passenger service in the Twin Cities long before the Amtrak era. Plans for the event include five model train layouts. There are hopes to have a *Northstar* train on display and possibly another loco. We will need people to help that day. John also spoke about programs for upcoming chapter meetings. In April, Dick Tubessing will present one on chasing Southern Pacific #4449. In May, Dawn Holmberg will present the program. John also has a program lined up for June, but months after that are open. Starting in May, we will be meeting at the Minnesota Transportation Museum's Jackson St.

Name Button Order Form

One button: \$3.00 Two buttons: \$5.00

Name on Button: _____ Number of buttons: _____ Total Amt: _____

Delivery Address: Street: _____ City and State: _____ Zip: _____

Send this form and a check or money order made out to Northstar Chapter NRHS to:

Northstar Chapter NRHS, P.O. Box 120832, St. Paul, MN 55112.

Roundhouse. We will meet in an old coach inside the building. John is also looking for a program for the Holiday Banquet. This was discussed at a recent chapter board meeting. We want something more than just a tape from the Kurt Peterson Library. John said that he would try to put a program together from his personal collection for the July meeting. A motion to choose a location for the Holiday Party had been tabled at the January meeting. It was brought off the table and the discussion resumed. After last Saturday's board meeting, several of the officers went to Gulden's, one of the suggested locations for the event, and looked over their banquet room and ate lunch there. Gulden's is on Highway 61 just south of the interchange at I-694. They will give us a package with a selection of three entrees (plus the rest of the meal,) plus there will be \$50 room charge. We would have to charge about \$24.95 for the event. It would take place on Sunday, December 5th, starting after 3:30 p.m. Mancini's, where we have sometimes gone in the past, has a schedule conflict on both the first and second Sundays in December this year. Someone spoke on behalf of Tinucci's. It was suggested that we do a one-year trial at Gulden's. Russ Isbrandt made a motion that we go to Gulden's this year. Several people seconded the motion and it carried. Also, we will need a new banquet chairman, as Marty Swan is retiring from that job. Library chair, John Cartwright is not present tonight to give a report. Joe Stark reported on sales of items surplus or not relevant to the library. The next three flea markets will be at White Bear Lake on April 10th, Woodbury on April 17th, and the Fairgrounds on May 8th. There was a question about what items we would send to the flea markets for possible sale. Cy called for any other Old Business. Bill Herzog said that he hadn't done anything about working on the old steam engine at Bandana Square. We have money set aside for the project. Bill said that he hadn't been able to do anything because of personal issues, but he might be able to do more next year. He made a recent visit to the B&O Museum and they have a paint that seems to protect equipment better. Also, he has gotten no response to calls for help on the project. The grant money we got from NRHS national has been used up. We got it nearly a decade ago. The issue of asbestos on the engine was discussed. Progressive Rail is interested in having a steam engine to display at their headquarters, but they won't take this one because of concerns over asbestos, which would be costly to remove. No one from the chapter has talked to Wellington Management, which owns Bandana Square, in recent years. There was a discussion about the future of the engine. There was no New Business. The suggestion that we have name badges made up

was brought up again. During a discussion on the matter, it was noted that we don't need to have a formal motion about having them made if payment for them would be on an individual settlement basis. Russ Isbrandt and Dan Meyer said that they could prepare the artwork for the background of the badges. There was a show of hands by those at the meeting who would be interested in ordering a badge. There will also be an item in the April issue of Northstar News about the availability of badges. There was no other Old or New Business. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 7:57 pm. After a brief break, the program took place. Russ Isbrandt showed a video that he had made of the chapter's trip to Big Lake and back on the *Northstar* train in January. A video from the Bill Dredge collection on the Santa Fe's *Super Chief* was shown. A drawing was held for a Soo Line 2010 calendar.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Norman, Secretary Northstar Chapter NRHS

Railfan Calendar

Greater Upper Midwest Train Show

Saturday, April 10th, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm, Century College, White Bear Lake, MN. Admission \$5.00, children under 12 free.

Woodbury Flea Market

Saturday, April 17th, 10 am - 3 pm, Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Dr. Admission \$5.00, under 12 years free.

Granite City Train Show

Saturday, April 24th, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, National Guard Armory, St. Cloud, MN, 1710 Veteran's Drive. Admission \$5.00, 12 and under free.

Westminster Junction Model Train Show

Saturday and Sunday April 24th and 25th, Saturday 10 am - 5 pm, Sunday 10 am - 3 pm, Carpenter's Union Hall, 710 Olive Street, just off Phalen Blvd. exit 108 on I 35E. Admission: Non-perishable food or cash donation to the Carpenter's Union Food Shelf.

National Train Day

Saturday May 8th, 11am to 6pm Amtrak's Midway Station, 730 Transfer Rd., St. Paul. Admission: Free.

Twin City Model Railroad Flea Market

Saturday May 8th, 9 am - 3 pm, Education Building, State Fair Grounds. Admission: \$6, under age 5 free.

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

Address Correction Requested



Above: The 4449 and Amtrak's *Empire Builder* at Williston, ND. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: West of Galata, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: The 4449 enters Shelby, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: The 4449 leaving Shelby, MT. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: Cut Bank trestle. Photo by Richard Tubbesing



Above: Twenty-five year member Bill Herzog is presented his 25th membership anniversary pin by Chapter Director Bill Dredge at the March 20th meeting. Photos by Dawn Holmberg



The first stimulus bill funded Beech Grove rebuilt P-40. With the exception of the air brake controls, the engine is essentially a P-42. It does include snow shutters to prevent blowing snow from entering the engine compartment.

The exhibit was manned by the people who did the rebuilds and were proud to answer our questions.

In regard to the air line freeze-ups encountered in North Dakota this year, I was told they had vendor problems and some of the air compressors were accumulating much more water than they were supposed to.

Photos by Russ Isbrandt

SUPERLINER I TRANSITION SLEEPER

DERAILED ON 8/21/2002

Each rebuilt car had a poster beside it that showed wreck damage and the same spot after rebuilding.

The wrecked transition sleeper shown at left had a bent center sill. This usually is fatal damage which results in the scraping of the car. In this case Beech Grove was able to straighten out the center sill by drilling holes in the car floor, welding anchors for chains to the track and bending the sill back into shape.

The Beech Grove personnel were justifiably proud of their work. The car interiors were the same as other renovated cars in service.

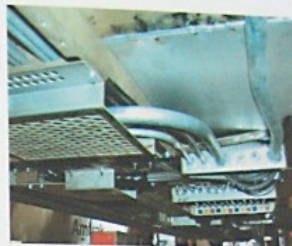
Mr. John Gray, the head of the Beech Grove Shops, was introduced when Mr. Boardman announced the equipment display. When I mentioned to him how I liked the new bathrooms in the rebuilt Superliner sleepers, he said coaches which get renovated will get the new style bathrooms.

The cars coming out of the shops will be deployed on existing trains such as the Lynchburg trains and to enlarge the consists of midwest corridor services. Repaired Superliners will see service in Surfliner service in California.

Presently 55% of Superliner coaches have electrical outlets at their seats. Coaches on my trains between St. Paul and Chicago were so equipped.



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