



NORTHSTAR NEWS

Dues are due NOW.

Trains of Our Youth - Minnesota Railfans Association Trip to Omaha and Grand Island, NE



Chicago Great Western's Omaha train arriving in St. Paul, Labor Day 1962. Photo by Russ Isbrandt

Contents

Officer Contact Directory	P.2
Directions to Roseville Lutheran Church	P.2
Well Known Twin Cities Railfan Bill Cordes Passes	P.2
Minnesota Railfans Private Car Trip to Omaha and Grand Island, NE	P.3
High Speed Rail U.S.: Ready or Not?	P.4
Railway Age Breaking News	P.5
From Trains Newswire - Chicago Snow Storm	P.6
Observations of Passenger Train Operation Reports from Chicago Snow Storm	P.7
Photos of Chicago's Metra During Snow Storm	P.8
Amtrak Press Release on 40th Anniversary Plans	P.8
Minutes of the January 22 Membership Meeting	P.9
Railfan Calendar	P.10

Meeting Notice

The February meeting of the Northstar Chapter of the NRHS will be held on the third Saturday of February, on February 19th, at the *NEW location, Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville.* 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. **IMPORTANT:** PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you. Last minute walk-ins can sometimes be a problem.

The program will feature Dawn Holmberg's trip to the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance in Pueblo, CO.

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

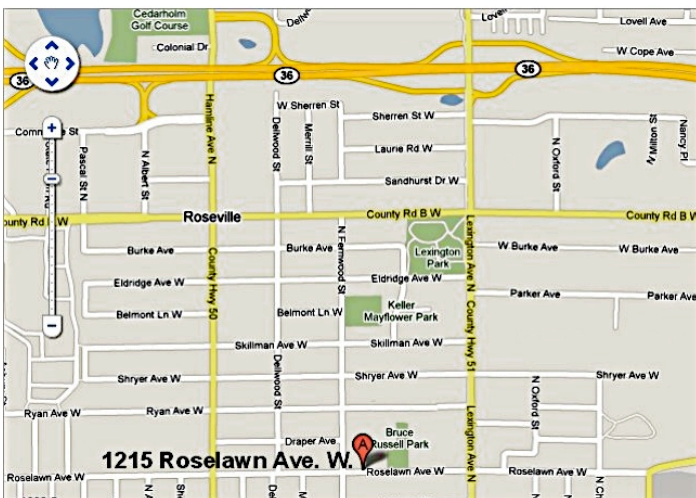
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

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.

A subscription to this newsletter may be obtained for \$15 for either printed or electronic edition by sending a check to the post office box above specifying the form of the newsletter you desire. A subscription does NOT include voting privileges at chapter meetings nor any of the NRHS membership benefits and no membership application is needed.

Directions to Roseville Lutheran Church

From the east and west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the church and turn left through the commons area. We'll be in room 40, the Diamond Room.



Well Known Twin Cities Railfan, Bill Cordes, Passes

From Email of Hudson Leighton as published in
MN RailGroup@yahooogroups.com
 and Email from Aaron Isaacs

Bill Cordes

Age 75 of West St. Paul Died January 24, 2011. Preceded in death by parents, Louis and Clara; brother-in-law, Glenn and step-nephew, Glenn G. He is survived by sister, Karen; step-nieces, Elizabeth and Bernadette and friend, Michael. He was great uncle to Jeremy, Tammy and Jeffrey and great-grand uncle to Liliahna, Lyle and Marcos. Internment services will be private. Washburn-McReavy Davies Chapel.

From Nick Tharalson, Marion, IA

Bill, or Willie as many of us called him, had suffered a series of strokes over the past several years.

For many of us, Bill was THE anchor of the Twin Cities railfan community. Oh, he was loud, sarcastic and obnoxious, but he was also knowledgeable, informed, and active. He was one of the founding members of the Minnesota Transportation Museum, and was very active in its

affairs, especially the Lake Harriet trolley line. He was a traction advocate his entire life and although we never talked about it, I know he would have been glad to learn St. Paul was going to get a light rail line on University, although he long personally advocated a subway on that route. He also traveled widely and took many slides and movies, the latter which drove most of us nuts because he always seemed to run out of film at the critical moment. Videotape was a godsend for Bill, and even then, he ran out of battery at the wrong times. Plus, he documented many of the MTM and streetcar restoration projects over the years.

Omaha Trip Rough But Fun
By Dick Prosser
From the Minnesota Railfans Newsletter
Cinders and Sparks

The following article appeared in the November 1963 issue of *Cinders and Sparks*, edited by Dick Prosser.

UP Steamer at Grand Island - Omaha Trip Rough, But Fun

A comfortable crowd of 21 turned out for Steam Locomotives+Old Rails Relics's experimental "Omaha Overnighter" private-car tour over the CGW using SOO 48, October 25-27, 1963.

Ye Editor (Editor's note: Dick Prosser) was the only passenger boarded at St. Paul. While waiting for CGW 13 to come down the hill from Minneapolis, I had a brief visit with Minnesota Transportation Museum Committee's "Barney" Olson, who was catching the Rock Island for Des Moines so I told him I would see him at the CGW's bridge over the CRI&P at Pine Bend. However, by the time 13 arrived and cleared, he was somewhere around Farmington or Northfield.

Once under way there was a crowd on the platform (with 48 in the middle of the train, platform forward) until the train picked up speed south of Inver Grove. The group adjourned to the lounge for Jim Moe's and Clark Johnson's slides of steam and trolleys in the East and South interrupted for the stop at Dodge Center. Harry R. Johnson and Hartley Hokanson had driven over from Mankato to see us go through.

The slide show ended as we neared the division point and junction of Hayfield. As the crews changed, we found Mike McLaughlin had been our fireman. We dismissed him with such japeries (jokes) as: "Run us back over the line again, you missed half the bumps!" and "Are you sure both rails were in place at all times?"

A few hardy souls started an all-night card game while the rest sacked out. If anything, the track got rougher south of Hayfield so even with the good-riding trucks on the 48 it was an agitated rest.

Breakfast was served the next morning as we pulled onto the joint CGW CRI&P trackage at Peter, Iowa and Council Bluffs soon came to view. Various items of CGW equipment there were vigorously photographed. During the stop at UP Transfer, the Q's *Nebraska Zephyr* glided by with its low profile articulated cars. More photography was done while we waited. Then came a quick spurt over the UP's bridge and into Omaha's CB&Q Station.

During the layover at Omaha, we watched much freight activity on the adjacent UP, saw a couple of CRI&P transfers and a "Q" train of standard passenger equipment move out. Then it was up the stairs to the covered walkway across to UP Union Station, and off westward on the UP's local, No. 7. The equipment we rode was a Milwaukee ex-*Hiawatha* coach with full reclining leg-rest seats.

Once out of Omaha we settled down to watch the prairie go by. At Fremont there was a pair of C&NW engines sitting on the house track. Again we picked up speed and began passing the traffic on US 30. A crude check found our speed to be 80-85 mph.

After stops at Schuyler, Columbus, and Central City, we glided into Grand Island, a mere 500 miles from the Twin Cities. After a quick reconnoiter of the depot and lunch, a small group of us hoofed it to the roundhouse. There was 0-6-0 4466 sitting out in the sun, looking ready to run, given water and a fire. Since a UP steamer in good shape is rare in 1963, the shutters snapped.

The hike back to the depot brought us back nearly to train time and No. 8 was there for the return trip. A "Q" freight waited as we rattled over CB&Q railroad crossing and we had our last look at the 4466. We plunged quickly across the prairies eastward into the twilight. It was dark more than an hour as we slowed to a halt back at Omaha. After a leisurely supper, back to the Burlington Station where CGW 14 awaited us with 48, platform trailing and MRA drumhead sign lit on the tail.

After recording the scene on film, we moved some lounge chairs onto the platform and took our ease like a convention of nabobs as the train pulled out. Our 81ft., 89-ton "land yacht" (Jim Moe's apt description) caused considerable consternation at the Transfer as 14 picked up mail. A switchman was so goggle-eyed at the sight that he tripped over a rail and fell headlong.

Once out of Council Bluffs, the platform got cold enough that, one by one, even the hardest fans deserted it. After this busy day, bedtime came early, even if bouncy.

Kenyon, breakfast, and the unpleasant discovery of the Austin mail car behind us arrived simultaneously, as we rolled through a murky dawn. The train was 3 minutes late as we pulled onto the lift bridge at St. Paul.

Here, however, we were held up by considerable depot traffic, including a motley collection of Milwaukee Road and New York Central equipment left over from the Michigan football specials. (More pictures!) Twenty minutes elapsed before the station stop.

The experiment was a rousing success. Because of the success, there are now rumblings of another trip, to Bismarck, North Dakota on a Soo circle, sometime before the Portal line goes.

Here are Chicago Great Western trains 13 and 14 consists similar to that on the trains in the preceding story from the *Mixed Train*, newsletter of the Camerail Club of Omaha.

CGW #13 Minneapolis MN - Omaha NE 3/27/61
CGW 150/154 F-7's

REX 7241, BR Express Box
 CGW 43/45/40 Bag/Express cars
 CGW 96 60' Full RPO
 CGW 200 48 seat coach
 (X-Milwaukee 4410 Blt Milwaukee Shops)
 CGW 490 Express Box Set out Council Bluffs
 CGW 494 Express Box setout Austin MN

CGW #14 Omaha NE-Minneapolis MN 3/27/61
 CGW 153/154 F-7's
 UP 9152 Express box car
 CGW 36/39/38 72'6" baggage cars
 CGW 95 Full 60' RPO
 CGW 201 48 seat coach
 (x-Milwaukee 4416 Blt Milwaukee Shops)
 505/498/502 Express Boxes Pickup Austin, MN
 For St. Paul
 499/500/496 Express Boxes Pickup Austin, MN
 For St. Paul

A big thanks to Don Vaughn for his diligence in preparing these consists for our reading and historical pleasure.



Private car *Twin Cities*, formerly Soo 48, the car used on the Omaha trip shown at the Minneapolis Great Northern Station. Photo from the collection of Mike Mackner

High Speed Rail U.S.: Ready or Not?

By Douglas John Bowen, Managing Editor
 Railway Age, January 2011

Wanted: One successful "true" U.S. high speed rail system, capable of speeds of 150 mph (preferably more), generating economic development and demonstrating energy efficiency, and sporting ridership that shows U.S. HSR is, well, wanted.

Indeed, 2011 may be the defining moment for U.S. high speed rail—provided that, first, there is a national will for such a product, given the political turmoil and economic stress; and second, if such a will does exist, U.S. HSR efforts can begin to keep pace with those of the rest of the world.

According to Albrecht P. Engel, Amtrak's vice president, high speed rail, the U.S. path is clear. "The next half-century will be defined by the emergence of 'megaregions'—extended corridors of interconnected metropolitan areas, with shared economic sectors and linked infrastructure," Engel says. "High speed rail can and should be among those links."

But a new Republican House of Representatives arrived in Washington this month, ready to ponder rescinding federal funding for numerous projects, including much of the \$5 billion the Obama Administration seeks from Congress over five years for fast trains. Though \$8 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (AREA) funding ("stimulus funds") seems more secure, such funding is at best a federal down payment for much more substantial funds required for any U.S. HSR line to be built.

"The future of high speed and intercity passenger rail is the great unknown," asserts Ray Chambers, principal of Chambers, Conlon & Hartwell, a Washington, D.C.-based lobbying firm. "While it receives ongoing funding under the existing continuing resolution, the prospects for the current program are very much up in the air. There will undoubtedly be an effort in the coming months to terminate any existing passenger rail funding from the stimulus program that has not been obligated by the FRA to the states."

The John Mica factor

But while Republicans endured (and surmounted) charges of being "the party of 'No'" in 2010, the new House majority may seek to put its own stamp on U.S. HSR, in the name of reform.

House Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.) is a perennial critic of Amtrak. But he also has been consistently in favor of "true" HSR for the Northeast Corridor (operator to be determined), sometimes seemingly even to the point of favoring NEC HSR over any effort in his home state. As the new chair of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Mica's posture and preferences may affect U.S. HSR efforts to a great degree.

Says Chambers, "The 2008 Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act program of infrastructure grants to the states was a Republican initiative. The program of grants to the states for development of solid intercity passenger corridors could become the centerpiece for a Republican reform program. The state grant program, coupled with maximum private participation, competition for corridor operations, and vastly expanded rail innovative (repayable) finance, could be the beginning of a robust new program. This can take place in the context of the next six-year surface transportation authorization."

Chambers is cautiously optimistic on this. "I am expecting incoming House T&I Chairman Mica to include a Rail Title in his bill with a commitment to a reform program for high speed and intercity passenger rail," he says. "If Chairman Mica can achieve a bipartisan compromise in the House, we will have a chance for a new beginning in establishing a network."

Concerns dog California progress

Uncertainty in Washington notwithstanding, U.S. HSR efforts are slowly creeping forward. Burdened by its own state budget deficit of \$28 billion, California still has money—from both state and federal sources—identified to at least attempt a launch of its planned \$44 billion, 800-mile HSR system that would link San Diego and Los Angeles, in the south, with twin termini in San Francisco and Sac-

ramento, the state capital. The Golden State's reputation of being the nation's trendsetter, though somewhat tarnished, may also matter. Were California a separate country, its gross state product would rank it No. 8 in world economic clout.

As 2011 began, California had \$5.5 billion lined up for its HSR effort, and had chosen the state's Central Valley as the location to commence construction.

HSR critics immediately leaped on the geographic choice, calling any initial leg a "train to nowhere," even as the plan was adjusted to incorporate Bakersfield, a city of significant size in the Valley. Ironically, the new, anti-passenger-rail governors in Wisconsin and Ohio, rejecting federal funding for those state's HSR (higher speed rail) efforts, in effect supplied an additional \$600 million to California, strengthening the Golden State's fiscal position and, perhaps, making true U.S. HSR that much more likely.

HSR backers, including the California High Speed Rail Authority, justify choosing the Central Valley over more populous locations such as Los Angeles for its economic stimulus potential, even citing Federal Railroad Administration requirements directing such action. But strong resistance to HSR in the San Francisco Bay area, ranging from wrangling over exact routes and location (elevated, at-grade, or underground) to blatant Not-In-My-Backyard opposition, make the Central Valley, at this point, a less contentious HSR launch point.

Florida HSR forges ahead

Florida's decades-long on-again, off-again flirtation with HSR is currently on, with the state's Department of Transportation pointedly noting that in 2010 it matched \$2.39 billion in federal funds with \$280 million in state contributions. Like California, Florida has received additional federal funding—in this case, an additional \$342 million in December—originally destined for the Midwest states. The combined \$2.67 billion covers the projected cost phase one, running 84 miles from downtown Tampa to Orlando International Airport, largely within the median of Interstate 4, and designed for operating speeds of 168 mph. Florida Rail Enterprise, a public/private partnership consisting of FDOT HNTB and Wilbur Smith Associates (general consultants), Freshfields (legal consultant), and KPMG (financial consultant) is overseeing the project.

FDOT says it expects several consortium teams to compete for the right to build the first phase, and at least two have announced they will do so. One such team includes Amtrak, French National Railways (SNCF), and Bechtel Infrastructure Corp. A second consortium, led by Alstom Transport, also includes two construction firms, Vinci plc and OHL International Construction Virgin Group, Sir Richard Branson's investment group, engineering companies AECOM and PBS&J, and Archer Western Contractors.

State HSR advocates are hopeful that such potential business interest (and clout) will convince new Gov. Rick Scott to support the program and not reject federal funding, especially since the first phase is essentially fully funded. Surveys indicate most state residents support HSR development.

Revamping the NEC

Not to be left out, Amtrak last September issued "A Vision for High Speed Rail in the Northeast Corridor," a 30-page outline of true HSR linking Boston, New York, and Washington, envisioned to incorporate existing NEC in-

frastructure with new high speed rights-of-way, new stations (some underground) and other amenities.

Coinciding with the report, Amtrak appointed Engel to head up its HSR efforts—as owner/operator in the NEC and as a potential operator for other U.S. HSR operations, including Florida and California.

On its home turf, Amtrak will attempt to upgrade the NEC to keep pace with anticipated growth in demand. "In the near term, Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the state governments of the Northeast have a plan to improve and maximize use of existing Northeast Corridor infrastructure," Engel says. "Among other things, it will modestly increase Acela Express top speed to 160 mph, and improve commuter rail operations. Amtrak also is planning for the purchase of a new fleet of Acela trains that will have more seating capacity."

But incremental HSR won't be enough, Engel notes. "Even with these upgrades, however, the demand for service is expected to outstrip capacity by 2030," he says.



Combined Amtrak train 8 of December 30th with annulled train 7 of the December 31st going through Van Buren St., Minneapolis, January 1st. Train 7 was annulled due to a blizzard in North Dakota. All passengers were returned to their origins. Your editor was a passenger on train 7 of January 3rd, the first train to resume operation west of St. Paul. A stub *Empire Builder* was seen by the editor near Deerfield, IL. Photo by Matt Petersen

Railway Age Breaking News

Mica, Shuster offer NEC HSR critique

Thursday, January 27, 2011

Opening statements Thursday from House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John L. Mica (R-FL) and Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) on high speed rail for the Northeast Corridor found both in support of HSR, though clearly questioning the approach outlined by President Obama (which the President reiterated during his State of the Union address Tuesday, January 25th surprising many and delighting HSR activists).

Mica, holding a "Hearing on Northeast Corridor High-Speed Rail" at New York's Grand Central Terminal, also reiterated his general disdain for Amtrak's performance on its NEC home turf. He allowed that the NEC is "one of the most valuable and potentially productive federal assets in the United States." But he added, "Unfortunately,

this valuable national transportation asset, and the development of true high speed passenger rail on the Northeast Corridor, has been largely ignored. Mica noted, "Amtrak's current plan to bring high speed rail to the Northeast Corridor would require \$117 billion, and would not be completed until the year 2040. This slow-speed schedule for bringing true high-speed rail service to the Northeast Corridor will never allow President Obama to meet his goal announced in Tuesday's State of the Union address that, 'Within 25 years, our goal is to give 80% of Americans access to high-speed rail.' Just do the math."

As in past years, Mica suggested a public/private partnership to bolster the NEC's fortunes, insisting, "Entering into public-private partnerships to assist in financing high-speed rail development on the corridor will get it built much faster and bring down costs."

Mica made it a point to "thank Mayor [Michael] Bloomberg and Governor [Ed] Rendell for their long-term support on this project." Both New York City Mayor Bloomberg and former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell were present at the hearing.

For his part, Shuster noted "upgrades to the Keystone Corridor to speeds of 110 mph have resulted in significantly higher ridership that only continues to grow" within his home state of Pennsylvania. "Higher speeds would only make this service more attractive. Now when I travel to Philadelphia, I refuse to drive and the Keystone Corridor train is my preferred method of transportation. Unfortunately, the United States is far behind the international curve on high speed rail."

While Mica repeated his attack on Amtrak, Shuster focused more directly on the Obama Administration. "Instead of focusing on key corridors, scarce federal dollars have been spread too thin among too many different projects, leading to incremental progress that could slow our already delayed entrance into high speed rail. Perhaps the biggest missed opportunity was the failure to invest in the Northeast Corridor, which, for the most part was kept out of the selection process. Failing to invest in the critical Northeast Corridor will ensure continued congestion in our nation's most densely populated region and on the corridor that presents the best opportunity for true high-speed rail and profitable service," he declared.

Echoing Mica, Shuster said, "Most importantly, we must focus on how we can bring private sector investment to this critical corridor by introducing competition and incentives for investment. In this constrained budget environment, it is more important than ever for us to leverage private sector funds so we can continue to move forward in the area of high-speed rail and intercity passenger rail."

Shuster called for open access to Amtrak's NEC so that operators could compete for market share.

Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman offered the following in response to Mica's and Shuster's statements on private-sector investment in the NEC: "It is critical for the Northeast Corridor to remain a public asset for the generations of Americans that are depending on our collective leadership to secure their future. It is about connecting the

major metropolitan communities of the Northeast, and also connecting the Northeast to the rest of the United States.

"As a result of Amtrak's stewardship and improvement of the Northeast Corridor infrastructure, train speeds have increased from 90 mph to 150 mph, America's only high-speed rail service was introduced, and additional capacity was created to support significantly expanded commuter rail operations. We have collaborated with Northeastern states on a plan to make additional infrastructure improvements to the existing corridor and have unveiled a revolutionary vision to build a new corridor that supports 220 mph high-speed rail service.

"Amtrak was created by Congress precisely because the privately-owned railroads could no longer sustain the vital public service of intercity passenger rail. No other operator or company is prepared to mobilize to take over the operation of the Northeast Corridor, nor are they funded to cover the long-term capital and operating costs."

Minnesota HSR alliance touts "Zip Rail" brand

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

More than 300 supporters, elected officials, and business leaders reportedly gathered at the Rochester, MN Art Center with the Southeast Minnesota Rail Alliance Tuesday evening, January 18th unveiling "Zip Rail," a branding effort for high speed rail development linking Rochester, MN, and the Twin Cities. The Zip Rail brand will be used by the Alliance, formed in 2008, and advocates throughout the region to continue building momentum and support for the project.

"Today's unveiling of Zip Rail — Minnesota's first opportunity for true high-speed passenger rail — shows this region's commitment to this project," said Commissioner Ken Brown of Olmsted County, which is a principal member of the Alliance along with the City of Rochester, the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, and Mayo Clinic. "Zip Rail promises a high return on investment because it will move people fast, safely and stress-free between Minnesota's top population, job and medical centers."

The Alliance also has launched a Zip Rail website at goziprail.org, which includes information about the project, sign-up information, logo/branding, and animation of what the train could look like when the line is developed. "To us, it is not a question of whether we'll be able to take a train to zip up to the Twin Cities," said Denny Hanson, Rochester City Council president. "It's only a question of when travelers and visitors will be able to zip to and from Rochester. Zip Rail is an opportunity to foster economic growth and enhance our region's quality of life as we plan for the future."

The Alliance says it is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to develop Zip Rail as a true HSR route during set travel schedules aimed at peak travel times.

From Trains Newswire

Minnesota light rail ridership up, but commuter line comes up short

Published: January 19, 2011

ST. PAUL, MN – Metro Transit, operator of light rail and commuter trains in the Twin Cities, reported its Hiawatha light rail trains saw a 6 percent ridership increase in 2010. Customers used Hiawatha trains 10.5 million times last year, the highest annual ridership in the line's six-year history.

Ridership on the Northstar commuter rail line between Minneapolis and Big Lake, MN, closed its first year at 710,400 rides, nearly 21 percent below expectations. The rush-hour-only service was hampered by the weak economy and a regional 7 percent unemployment rate with fewer people headed to jobs in downtown Minneapolis.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb said average weekday rides last month on Northstar were 2.5 percent higher than December 2009, a trend that continued in early January with average weekday rides up more than 14 percent. "While Northstar ridership last year did not match expectations, service quality was high with a 95.6 percent on-time performance," he said. Lamb said Northstar operations finished within budget despite low ridership.

Midwest railroad operations remain disrupted by storm

Published: February 3, 2011

CHICAGO – Amtrak operations in its Chicago hub were recovering following the blizzard that took a toll on the passenger carrier. The company said it plans to restore most corridor services. All *Hiawatha* trains between Chicago and Milwaukee; all *Wolverine*, *Blue Water*, and *Pere Marquette* trains to and from Michigan; and three of the five round-trips on the Chicago-St. Louis corridor were scheduled to operate, subject to weather-related delays. Canceled February 3rd were:

Chicago-St. Louis Lincoln Service: Trains 300 & 301, 304 & 305

Chicago-Carbondale, Ill., *Saluki/Illini*: Trains 390 & 391

Chicago-Quincy *Illinois Zephyr* and *Carl Sandburg* are canceled.

Long distance train service is also affected with the following trains cancelled, severely delayed, or truncated en route:

Chicago-Los Angeles *Southwest Chief* (Trains 3 & 4)

Chicago-Emeryville, Calif., *California Zephyr* (Trains 5 & 6)

Chicago-Seattle/Portland *Empire Builder* (Trains 7/27 & 8/28)

Chicago-Washington-New York *Cardinal* (Trains 50 & 51).

Amtrak passengers had to endure hardships because of the storm. An Amtrak train traveling from Chicago to Quincy, IL, on February 2 encountered problems at Macomb, Ill. Passengers waited six hours at the depot, according to a report by Gatehouse News Service. They were fed by the Red Cross, then transported in shifts by police to the local Hampton Inn. With Quincy service can-

celled February 3rd, the passengers may have to remain in Macomb until Thursday.

Amtrak's westbound *California Zephyr* that left Chicago on February 1 spent the night at the depot in Ottumwa, Iowa, when the crew ran out of time under the hours of service law. The crew went to a hotel for their mandatory rest period, and returned the morning of February 2 to take the train west.

Commuter railroad Metra planned on operating a normal weekday schedule February 3rd on seven of its lines and a modified weekday schedule on the remaining four lines. These lines were to run on a regular schedule: Metra Electric, Rock Island, SouthWest Service, Heritage Corridor, Milwaukee West, Milwaukee North and North Central Service. Modified weekday schedules were to be in place on the BNSF and UP North, Northwest, and West lines.

The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District's South Shore Line was running a full weekday schedule to and from Chicago the morning of February 3rd except between Michigan City and South Bend, IN, where service was still suspended. The agency plans to resume service around noon (Eastern Time) the 3rd. The service suspension east of Michigan City was extended because of forecasted sub-zero temperatures.

Both Canadian National and Union Pacific had or were currently running snowplows on their lines across northern Illinois. CN was to also plow out its lines from Waterloo to Fort Dodge, Iowa, and the branch from Manchester to Cedar Rapids. February 2nd Iowa Interstate operated a plow extra out of Council Bluffs to Des Moines and east on its main line across the Hawkeye State. Canadian Pacific's Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern was planning to plow out branch lines in southern Minnesota and northern Iowa on the 3rd.

BNSF's rotary plow from Lincoln, NE, passed through Burlington, Iowa on the morning of the 3rd deadheading east to Galesburg, IL. Two Jordan spreaders were following the rotary movement east on the ex-CB&Q main line also used by Amtrak's *California Zephyr*.

Observations from the Chicago Snowstorm From the Metra Website and Amtrak Status Maps Archives

The night of February 1st during the height of the storm, Chicago's Metra commuter rail system's website made for an interesting read. For each line there was a link which told at that particular moment what trains were delayed, whether they were stopped or on the move and how late they were running and estimated arrival times at the end of the line and maybe an intermediate station. The best performance was on the Rock Island District with delays up to 50 minutes. On other lines delays ranged from 50 to 120 minutes. One Heritage Corridor train (ex-GM&O line to Joliet) was reported to be stopped outside of Union Station due to switch problems. The CTA reported all EL trains were running normally except for delays on the Red Line at Howard Street due to switch problems at Howard St.



Commuters make their way across the tracks after getting off a westbound Metra train during blizzard winds and cold in Berwyn. Photo by Antonio Perez, Chicago Tribune / February 1, 2011



A Metra conductor tries to get everybody aboard a packed train at the Ravenswood stop on Chicago's North side at 2:48 p.m. Photo by Chris Sweda, Chicago Tribune / February 1, 2011



Commuters try to get on Metra trains at the Ogilvie Transportation Center (what was formerly the Chicago and North Western Terminal) as a massive snowstorm makes its way into the city. Photo by Alex Garcia, Chicago Tribune / February 1, 2011



A Cab and Metra Commuter train met just outside of Union Station in the Great Chicago Snowstorm. Photo by Mike Anzaldi, for the Chicago Tribune / February 1, 2011

Continued from Page 7

The following day the busiest Metra lines were operated on a Sunday schedule because many train crews could not report for work due to bad roads.

Two Northstar Chapter members were caught up in this. John Goodman and Bill Dredge were returning from the NRHS "Conference" (no longer called Board meeting) at Williamsburg, VA. They were aboard Amtrak #7. Train 7 departed Chicago at 7:24pm, 5 hours and 9 minutes late. With a long delay at Western Avenue they finally departed Glenview, normally a 20 minute run, 6 hours and 4 minutes late. Milwaukee was achieved at 9:58 pm 6 hours and 3 minutes late having lost only 5 minutes in a raging blizzard. Running time to Winona was 4 hours and 19 minutes only 28 minutes off the scheduled running time. However another 1 hour and 23 minutes were lost between Winona and St. Paul, if a 30 minute recovery time is taken into consideration. Train 7 arrived in St. Paul at 6:11am, 7 hours and 40 minutes late.

From Amtrak Press Release

AMTRAK PREPARING TO CELEBRATE 40TH ANNIVERSARY Locomotives with historic paint schemes among first activities WASHINGTON – On May 1, 2011, Amtrak will celebrate 40 years as America's Railroad providing vital intercity and high-speed passenger rail service to the nation and offering a critical transportation choice for both urban and rural communities. Preparations are now underway for several activities to commemorate the occasion.

The first sign of celebration occurred on January 30 in Chicago when the first of four P-42 diesel-electric locomotives with one of four historic paint schemes entered regular revenue service. All four locomotives will be in service by the end of April and operate on trains across the Amtrak national network. As each becomes available for service, Amtrak will issue a Twitter message at twitter.com/Amtrak and post a photo in the Photos tab on its Facebook page at facebook.com/Amtrak. A photo of the first locomotive is now posted.

Among other commemorative activities is a book entitled *Amtrak: An American Story*. Written with the help of former presidents of Amtrak and current employees among others, the book discusses the railroad's history and its plans for the future, and contains an employee-generated photo essay of 24-hours in the life of the railroad. In addition, a documentary DVD illustrating the history of Amtrak and its importance to the country is being produced.

Also, a special 40th anniversary "exhibit train" will make its debut at the National Train Day event in Washington, D.C. on May 7, 2011, and then travel across the country for a one-year period. It will have two locomotives with historic paint schemes and use renovated baggage cars to display educational exhibits focusing on each decade of the railroad's existence with vintage advertising, past menus and dinnerware, period uniforms, photographs, and other items of memorabilia. There will be no charge for the public to tour the exhibit train. Dates and locations of when and where it will travel will be announced soon.

In addition, a special anniversary website will be launched this spring with historical information about Amtrak, a schedule of celebration activities, a photo archive and video library, and a virtual tour of the exhibit train with a map that will track its journey across the country. Furthermore, the book and documentary DVD will be available for purchase this spring along with other anniversary merchandise in the retail center aboard the exhibit train and at the Amtrak online store, among other locations.

Additional information about celebration activities will be provided as the May 1 anniversary date approaches.



Photo: Mike Milburn - Amtrak

The first of four historic Amtrak paint schemes of P-42 locomotives was released January 31st on P-42 145. Photo by Mike Milburn - Amtrak

Minutes of the January 22, 2011 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by chapter president at 7:01 pm in the Roseville Lutheran Church with about 25 members and guests present. Those present were asked to introduce themselves. A motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2010 meeting, as published in the January 2011 issue of Northstar News was made, seconded, and carried. Dan Meyer gave the treasurer's report, distributing copies of a report for the year 2010. He noted that the figures include an item of \$10,000 which the chapter loaned for start up costs to the railroad calendar project. He noted that expenses for the chapter library were a major item. He gave the most recent checking account balance and noted that there are several recent dues payment checks that have not yet been deposited. Also, there are some expenses that need to be paid. Dan asked if there were any questions about his report. Someone asked if he could project expenses and income for 2011. Dan said that he hasn't run a projected 2011 budget yet. He noted that before he could do so, he would have to get together with several people to discuss different aspects of the chapter's planned activities for this year and their financial implications. As membership secretary, Dan reported that we now have 40 regular and 10 family members paid for this year, plus he has several renewal envelopes at home to be processed. We still have some who have not yet renewed. The matter of an audit of the chapter's books was brought up. We still haven't heard from some of those who were supposed to serve on the audit committee. A question was asked about calendar sales. Dan

pointed out that this is not part of his job. There was a discussion about the calendar and the relationship between the chapter and the Northstar Railway Historical Society, Inc., which is publishing the calendar. There was an explanation of the relationship between the two organizations. The suggestion was made that the chapter's financial report show the \$10,000 advanced to the calendar project as an "accounts receivable" item. There was a motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded and carried, with one "nay."

Dawn Holmberg presented the calendar report. We had 750 printed this year. They arrived in early November. It is estimated that we have about 150 left in stock. There was a meeting earlier today to figure out how much we have to pay in sales tax. We have paid all the major bills. It is estimated that we should have about \$8,600 after paying the sales tax. This would be about on target, except for paying the lawyer to draw up the agreement with John Leucke, which wasn't planned when we drew up the tentative budget. We have counted about half of the calendars from previous years, which we obtained as part of our purchase of the publishing rights to the calendar. There was more discussion about the calendar. Dawn Holmberg said that she wanted to call a meeting of the chapter's board, possibly on the first or second weekend in February. Back to the calendar, we want to have the 2012 calendar to the printer in July. There was also a discussion of wholesale sales versus mail order sales. Dawn said that she wants to have a financial report ready in February. There was more discussion about the calendar.

The matter of newsletter subscriptions was brought up. John Goodman moved that the chapter offer subscriptions at a rate of \$15 per year (with the rate to go up if chapter dues go up.) Subscribers could attend chapter membership meetings, but could not speak during the business portion of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Cy Svobodny and a discussion ensued. The motion carried.

Joe Stark reported on sales of items surplus to the chapter library at recent flea markets of railroad and model railroad items, plus other events.

National director Bill Dredge gave a preview of the upcoming NRHS winter conference at Williamsburg, VA. The two major items on the agenda are the budget and the proposed new by-laws. Bill described some of the most significant items in the proposed new by-laws. Bill said that he will go the meeting and look out for the interests of the Northstar members, as well as he can. It was suggested that when members receive proxies on behalf of the current national officers, that they not sign them.

The question was asked if there was any interest in a mid-winter trip to Big Lake on the Northstar commuter train. A show of hands indicated that there was. A suggested date was Saturday, March 26th. John Goodman said that he would check the schedule.

Dick Tubbesing has a program ready for tonight, but at this time, there is nothing scheduled for February or March. Dick asked anyone who has a program that they could present to contact him.

Northstar News editor Russ Isbrandt said that the February issue have a reprint of an old article on a Minnesota Railfans' Association trip to Nebraska.

Webmaster Dan Meyer said that the website is up to date and he will update the site further after tonight's meeting.

John Cartwright reported on the library. Most of the slides have been gone through, an estimated 90 to 95%. Now we are getting slides from the Bob Macnie collection. There is still a lot of stuff to enter into inventory. There are roughly 1,000 books, the value of which is around \$20,000. He noted that not all of the books have been given an estimated value, maybe only 80%. There was a discussion of the purpose of the library.

Marty Swan was not present to give a report for the cheer committee. It was mentioned that Doug Johnson has health problems.

The holiday party had 38 paid attendees, so it lost a small amount of money. There was a great program on the St. Paul Union Depot.

New Business - Mike Mackner said that he has with him copies of a book on the history of the Twin City Model Railroad Museum. They are for sale at tonight's meeting at a discount from the normal price. Mike also said that he will be giving a talk on railroad history Monday night at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater. A question was asked about when the new chapter dues structure goes into effect. The answer was that it is already in effect. There was more discussion about the national NRHS. Bob Clarkson has a sample copy of a newsletter from another rail-oriented organization that has an extended list of upcoming rail events. He suggested that Northstar News might use it as an example. Russ Isbrandt complained that he still has not gotten the nametag that he ordered and he wanted a return of the uncashed check. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 8:21 pm. It was announced that exchange newsletters from other NRHS chapters are available at the front table.

Northstar News
Northstar Chapter
National Railway Historical Society
1515 Creek Meadows Drive NW
Coon Rapids, MN, 55433-3768

Address Correction Requested

After a break, the program began with a DVD that with passed out at the ground breaking for the renovation of the St. Paul Union Depot. Then Richard Tubbesing presented a DVD that he had made of the 2010 NRHS National Convention at Scranton, plus the West Virginia Rails event, including a trip on the Cass Scenic Railroad.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Norman, Secretary Northstar Chapter NRHS.

Railfan Calendar

Night Trains

Saturday nights through February 26th, 6-9 pm, Twin City Model Railroad Museum, 1021 Bandana Blvd. off Energy Park Drive, St. Paul. Admission \$7 per person, \$20 per family.

Gopher Rail

Saturday, February 19th, 9 am - 6 pm, University of Minnesota 1701 University Ave. SE. Admission unavailable at time of publication. More details on the following web site:
<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rrclubum/gopherrail.htm>

White Bear, Minnesota: A Railroad Town Program

Monday, February 28th, 6 pm Ramsey County Library White Bear Lake, 4698 Clark Ave., White Bear Lake, MN. Admission Free. Keys Restaurant, about three blocks away.

Westminster Junction Model Train Show

Saturday and Sunday March 5 -6th, 10 am-5 pm Saturday, 10 am - 3 pm Sunday, Carpenter's Union Hall, 710 Olive Street, St. Paul, MN. Admission non-perishable food or cash donation to the Carpenter's Union food collection.