



NORTHSTAR NEWS

Duluth Trip This Month - NO MEETING!

2012 NRHS Convention in Cedar Rapids, IA by Bill Dredge



Photo runby on the Iowa Interstate with their Chinese 2-10-2 leading. This one was the morning of June 20th runby at Marengo during the trip to Newton, IA. Photo by Dawn Holmberg

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Notice

NO MEETING THIS MONTH

August 18th will be the chapter trip to Duluth to ride behind Soo 2719 one last time before it undergoes mandated boiler inspection and repairs. There is still plenty of space available. See details and reservation form inside.

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dues are \$51 (\$36 for the National dues and \$15 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 \$18 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.

Working the 2012 NRHS Convention By Bill Dredge

On June 17th I went to Chicago Union Station to report for work as a car host on the Convention Special in-bound train to Cedar Rapids. The rear 2 cars were familiar Ex-Milwaukee Road *Hiawatha* cars, a Skytop observation car and a Superdome. The two front coaches were ex-Central of Georgia coaches painted in *Hiawatha* livery and the remainder of the train was composed of various Budd built cars.

After helping load baggage, I was assigned to serve refreshments in the Super Dome car, and box lunches to Super Dome patrons. After the train arrived Cedar Rapids, I helped with baggage then checked in at the Clarion Hotel where I would stay for 8 days. On Monday, June 18th, I stayed back most the day. However, there was an optional bus trip to Mt. Pleasant, IA for a Threshing Machine Day show. On Tuesday, June 19th, I rode as a passenger on a trip to Rock Island, IL where we picked up a 2-10-2 Chinese steam locomotive for part of our return trip to Cedar Rapids. After dinner, I went to a seminar on the project to double track Abo Canyon on the BNSF in New Mexico. Wednesday, June 20th, was another early wake-up call and train ride. This time it was from Cedar Rapids to Newton, IA. Part of the ride to Newton was behind the "fancy" 2-10-2 Chinese steam locomotive. While in Newton we had the privilege of visiting a nicely restored train depot. Before departing Newton, there was one more run-by of the steam loco. It then came off and Iowa Interstate diesels took us back to Cedar Rapids. The Iowa Northern F-40s (Ex-Amtrak) stayed on the train for head-end power. While returning to Cedar Rapids, Alaska tour representatives came on the train, handed out information, and an-

swered questions about Alaska, where the 2013 convention will be held. After dinner Wednesday evening a seminar was held on photographers rights, and what the the NRHS did for railfans on this issue. On Thursday, June 21st, there was a bus trip to the Boone and Scenic Valley, but I stayed back since I was obligated to go the the final board meeting under the outgoing governance system.

Meeting highlights were: 1. Minutes of the Spring conference in Richmond were approved. 2. The essence of the President's message was we're all in this together with other railway preservation organizations, and need to get out of our current (negative?) mindset. 3. Heritage Grants were discussed, and \$50,000 was awarded to four successful chapters. 4. Executive Director: Meetings were held with Fernley & Fernley asking what can they do for us. Another meeting is to be held in Philadelphia before reporting to the new board which will meet this fall in Claymont, Delaware. 5. Conventions: A. The final report of the 2011 Convention held in Tacoma is still pending. B. The current 2012 Convention: Attendance from the Southeast part of the US was down. With good promotion from local TV stations, it has been successful in selling tickets for train rides locally. C. 2013 Convention will be in Anchorage, Alaska from September 18th through 22nd in 2013. Pre-convention activities will take place in Fairbanks, AK on September 14th and 15th. Train movement from Fairbanks to Anchorage will be on September 16th and 17th via Denali Park. More information will be available on the NRHS website this fall. D. 2014 and beyond still pending. 6. Future Board meetings: Fall 2012 will be held in Claymont, DE (a suburb of Wilmington) on October 18th - 21st. This will be a combined meeting of the new Board of Directors and the Advisory Council. I will let you know about future meetings after this one takes place. 7. Last but not least: The dues adjustment on the

National level passed, and will be as follows: A. At-large primary goes from \$37-\$40/year. B. Chapter member's primary dues goes from \$36 to \$39/year. C. Any adjustments by local chapters was not disclosed. Dues renewal notices will be coming out earlier this year, and the NRHS hopes to hear from chapters earlier than before. The meeting adjourned about 5:50 pm. After dinner a program was held on the flood of 2008 in Cedar Rapids. Friday, June 22nd, there was a morning train ride to Iowa City and return. In the afternoon, at the Annual Meeting once again it was emphasized "We're all in this together with other railway preservation groups". In the evening the convention banquet was held. June 23rd there was a round trip from Cedar Rapids to Waterloo, IA with lunch in the Iowa Northern maintenance shop. Sunday, June 24th, buses carried us from Cedar Rapids to Cedar Falls, IA. Our special train deadheaded to Cedar Falls. I worked as a car host on this trip to Manly, IA, and return to Cedar Falls. Manly is where former Rock Island lines split with one line headed for Kansas City, and the other for Burlington, IA with a connection with the CB&Q to go to St. Louis, MO. There is a museum at Manly, primarily of Rock Island memorabilia. There was a runby of the train before returning to Cedar Falls. The bus took us back to Cedar Rapids. Monday, June 25th, after helping load baggage on the outbound train for Chicago, I worked in the concession car selling refreshments, also safety glasses to those who chose to look out open doors while the train was moving. We arrived Chicago Union Station about 3:30 pm. I helped unload baggage, and said goodbye to friends, and this was the official end to the convention.



Runby with Iowa Interstate Rock Island painted GE ES44AC on the Rock Island trip July 19th at West Liberty, IA. Photo by Dawn Holmberg



On the Chicago Special at Smith - Dows Yard, Cedar Rapids, July 25th. Photo by Dawn Holmberg

From Trains Newswire

Trains Newswire for Aug 2012 NSNews Amtrak food service debate continues

By Bob Johnston

Published: August 2, 2012

WASHINGTON — "A Review of Amtrak Operations, Part I: Mismanagement of Food & Beverage Services," lived up to its billing. U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica, R-FL, started the hearing by displaying a microwaveable hamburger and a Pepsi, talking about how much money each cost and how much the company lost selling each one.

Congressional micromanaging of Amtrak food service began in 1981, when legislation was passed ordering the company to break even providing it or drop it altogether. The law was repeatedly cited at the hearing by Republicans, including Jean Schmidt, R-OH, who alternately suggested that Amtrak either charge \$16 for a hamburger or follow North Carolina's Piedmont service lead and replace café car personnel with vending machines.

His grandstanding brought a blistering response from Rep. Corrine Brown, D-FL, ranking Democrat on the Railroads Subcommittee. "There are a lot of issues that this (full) committee should be addressing, but Amtrak food and beverage isn't one of them" said Brown. "Or, we could be talking about restructuring Amtrak's debt, saving over \$500 million. It's amazing to me that this committee has gotten down to the weeds," she concluded.

Witnesses did attempt to connect the dots for the lawmakers. Patricia Quinn, executive director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, said that food service was, "a key reason why people ride the *Downeaster*. We have one of the highest customer satisfaction scores on the Amtrak system," she added. Quinn went on to describe how food service on the Boston-Portland corridor has been outsourced from its beginning in 2001 to a local provider, which hires café car personnel and works closely with the Authority "to react in a nimble fashion in improving the service." The *Downeaster* food service loses almost \$200,000 a year on revenues of \$575,000.

Another witness, Amtrak Inspector General Ted Alves, revealed that beginning October 1 as part of a company-wide reorganization, all Amtrak food and beverage management functions would be transferred solely to operations from an arrangement now split between marketing and operations. Alves' recent report recommended Amtrak try a pilot program to experiment with a cashless (all credit and debit card) payment system, but the other Amtrak members on the witness panel, President Joe Boardman and Northeast Corridor lead service attendant Dwayne Bateman, noted that lost sales would likely result because many Amtrak passengers use only cash. Boardman and Alves both said Amtrak was implementing new technology that addressed theft issues, the main focus of the Inspector General's report.

Bateman, a 35-year veteran, also added perspective (and echoed Rep. Brown's comments) by asserting that Amtrak on board service employees can't be compared with restaurant workers. "We go through mandatory training in

order to respond to emergencies, know the configuration of all equipment, and may be on our feet for up to 20 hours a day on the Northeast Corridor. It's even worse on long distance routes, which require three or four 18-hour days. Our jobs are more than just passing out a Pepsi and a burger."

One topic left out of the hearing was the correlation between the offering of onboard food service, even at a loss, and the marketability of Amtrak as a viable transportation option.

Trackwork continues in Amtrak's Lincoln corridor

By Bob Johnston

Published: August 1, 2012

CHICAGO – Amtrak Chicago-St. Louis trains will not operate while Union Pacific completes trackwork to bring much of the Joliet to Alton, IL, segment up to 110 mph standards beginning Wednesday through August 9 and again August 16-23. The Chicago-San Antonio *Texas Eagle* is being rerouted on the UP's former Chicago & Eastern Illinois trackage through Villa Grove and Pana, IL. Buses are substituting for most *Lincoln Service* trains, some connecting with the Chicago-Carbondale *Illini* and *Saluki* at Champaign, IL.

Most main track work has been completed as far north as Braidwood, IL. Some passing sidings, such as the one at Odell, IL, have been graded and rebuilt, while others are in various stages of completion with new high speed turnouts installed.

Track laying equipment, supplies, and personnel are repositioned for the next shutdown each time regular service resumes and crews will continue to work on portions of the project that should not disrupt schedules. However, Tuesday's train No. 304 arrived into Chicago over two and a half hours late after it encountered several switch and signal malfunctions south of Springfield, IL, while meeting southbound trains. Union Pacific cab signals overlaid with the same Incremental Train Control System used on Amtrak's 110-mph Michigan Line will allow engineers to confirm the status of all quad-gate highway crossings, switches, and speed restrictions. That positive train control installation must be completed before testing begins.

Amtrak launches eTickets

Published: July 30, 2012

WASHINGTON – Amtrak has launched an e-ticketing program across its entire passenger network. Effective July 30, passengers will be able to print tickets themselves or use a smartphone to show the eTicket to the conductor.

When a customer makes a reservation, the eTicket will be sent as a printable e-mail document. Passengers using a smartphone or tablet can just show the conductor the document in their e-mail in lieu of printing it. Tickets can also be printed by Amtrak agents and at Quik-Trak machines. Now lost tickets can be reprinted without any loss of value.

Amtrak launched an eTicket pilot program on the *Downeaster* service in late 2011. It was expanded to include the *Heartland Flyer* route in May 2012.

Milwaukee Road 261 passes hydro test

By Steve Glischinski

Published: July 26, 2012

MINNEAPOLIS – Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 passed a hydrostatic boiler test today, paving the way for final reassembly and fire up. The non-profit Friends of the 261 are rebuilding the locomotive at its Minneapolis shop.

The testing involved filling the boiler with water and increasing pressure to 312.5 pounds per square inch to test it for strength and leaks. The test was conducted under the supervision of Federal Railroad Administration inspectors.

Friends of the 261 Chief Operating Officer Steve Sandberg said the test went well, and no leaks were found. With the hydro test complete, Sandberg said crews would begin final assembly, installing the superheater units and other appliances. No date has been set for a first fire up, but Sandberg said it would likely happen in September. He said the locomotive wouldn't pull any trips until it has been "thoroughly tested and proven."

Minnesota Zephyr Moved

By Mary Divine

Pioneer Press July 9, 2012



After six hours of lifting and securing, a crew from Ontario-based Savage Heavy Haul, Inc. gets ready to haul an 84-foot dining car from the tracks in Stillwater. The 60-ton *Minnesota Zephyr* dining car was built in 1949 and served as a passenger car for Amtrak on the line that ran between Chicago and New Orleans, said owner Dave Paradeau. Paradeau acquired the train from a private dealer in Iowa in 1986 and "refurbished the car inside and out," he said.

Photo: Pioneer Press: Richard Marshall

Traffic was delayed and parking was restricted beginning at 3 am, Wednesday, July 9th along Stillwater's Main Street as the train was moved to Bayport.

The six train cars and two engines must be hauled on large flatbed trailers because there are no longer railroad tracks that run between Bayport and Stillwater, said Police Chief John Gannaway.

Gannaway said the move was being done in the early-morning hours this week to minimize the impact to traffic on Main Street and Minnesota 95.

During the move, no parking was allowed on Main Street, Mulberry Street or between the condominium lofts and P.D. Pappy's, he said.

A crane on was moving some of the train cars onto a flat-bed trailer, which will take them to tracks at Andersen Corp., the window and door manufacturer in Bayport.

Zephyr owner Dave Paradeau said last month that an 18-wheel semi-tractor trailer would "take one to two cars at a time" through downtown.

"It will be piecemeal," Paradeau said. "It's going to take at least four to seven days to get the train out of there."

Paradeau sold the 5.9-mile train corridor to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources last year for \$4.25 million. The corridor will become the Brown's Creek Trail and will connect to the Gateway Trail.

The DNR estimates 75,000 people a year will use the trail once it is completed.

Paradeau has not yet announced a buyer for the train engines or cars.

Move delayed for Zephyr engines

By Mary Divine

Despite assurances that the train would be leaving the station the week of July 15th, the last two cars of the *Minnesota Zephyr* dinner train were still in Stillwater.

Owner Dave Paradeau said that the move has been delayed due to limited space at the site where the train is be-

ing temporarily stored in Bayport and the lack of available flatbed rail cars.

Once those issues are resolved, crews will be brought back in to finish the move, Paradeau said. "We're doing it as fast as we can, but it's very complicated," he said.

"Space is primary thing. We have 600 feet of train, and

Chapter Picnic

By John Goodman

On Saturday, July 21, 2012, 14 members and friends of the Northstar chapter met and enjoyed food and trains at the public park at trackside of the BNSF at Maiden Rock, Wisconsin.

A grill was provided by John Goodman and many hamburgers were cooked and enjoyed by those wishing hot food. Some folks brought along their purchases from nearby Subway restaurants.

The chapter provided (as is the custom each year) soda pop, water, and chips free to those attending the event.

BNSF cooperated by having a total of 10-12 freight trains move thru the area at speed. This allowed for good photo runby shots for those bringing along cameras. The only "foreign" power shown on those trains was one Union Pacific locomotive (not in the lead), as all other trains had BNSF power.

We met at about 11:30 am and most were gone by 4:30 pm.

A great day was had by all.

The Northstar Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society Trip to Duluth for a Final Ride Behind Soo Line Pacific 2719 Before Major Repairs

August 18th we will ride behind Soo Pacific 2719 between Duluth and Two Harbors. This will be the last season the 2719 will run until FRA mandated 15 year inspection, which requires the complete dismantling of the boiler, is completed.

The schedule is as follows: Meet at the Amtrak Midway Station at 6:45 am, departing at 7:00 am, with arrival in Duluth by 10 am for 2719's departure at 10:30 am. Arrival in two Harbors will be 12:30 pm. Lunch will be on your own. Departure from Two Harbors will be 2:30 pm with arrival in Duluth about 4:30 pm and departure to the Twin Cities shortly after arrival with a meal stop in Hinckley.

Seats are still available

Fare.....\$105.00 Passenger Names _____

Total Remitted \$ _____

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

Make checks payable to "Northstar Railway Historical Society"

Send to: John Goodman, 8409 13th Avenue South, Bloomington, MN 55425-1705

email: jhgoodman2001yahoo.com for last minute reservations



Upper Left: Iowa Interstate 2-10-2 at the night photo session. Upper right: Runby near LaPort, IA on the Cedar Rapids - Waterloo trip July 23rd. Lower left: Chapter picnic at Maiden Rock, WI. All photos by Dawn Holmberg

Railfan Calendar

Twin City Model Railroad Museum Train Show and Sale

Saturday, September 15th, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Minnesota State Fairgrounds Education Building. Admission: \$6, children under 5 free.

North Metro Model Railroad Club fall train flea market.

Saturday, October 13, 9:00am - 2:00pm, VFW Coon Rapids, 1919 Coon Rapids Blvd, Coon Rapids, MN 55433
Admission: \$5, children 12 and under free.

Northstar News
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Address Correction Requested