



NORTHSTAR NEWS

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Meeting Notice

The Next meeting of the Northstar Chapter of the NRHS will be held **April 19, 2014 6:30 pm**, at Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville. See map on page 2.

Program after the meeting –
Railroad Slides by Warren Krekelberg from his collection. There will be a pre-meeting get-together at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 5:00 pm. PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you.

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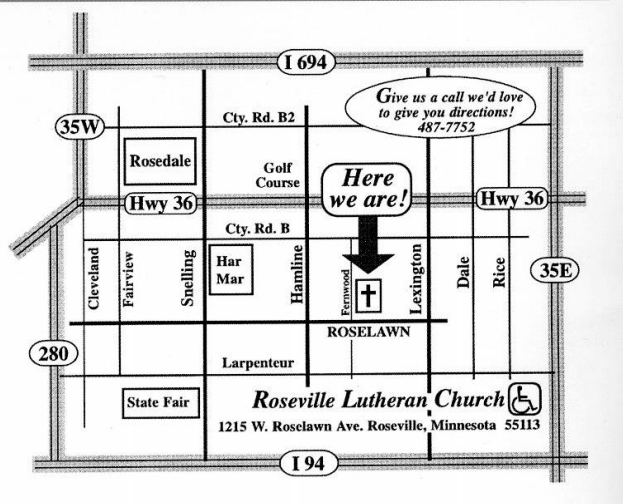
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dues are \$65 (\$50 for the National dues and \$15 for the local dues). Family memberships are \$5 per each additional person. 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.

Meeting Site

Editor's Column

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.



From the Editor:

We have some great trips planned for 2014. This summer should provide interesting trips to the B&SV in Boone IA, a ride on the new 'Green Line' light rail system between Mpls and St. Paul, a lunch Cruise at either Stillwater or Treasure Island near Hastings MN, as well as our annual picnic to be held at Prescott WI this year. The possibility of former D&NE steam engine #28 being ready to run on the LSRM later in the summer/fall is another possibility. Stay Tuned for details in the May 2014 issue of this newsletter. Good news, thanks to some donations from chapter members to reduce costs, we are signed up at Roseville Lutheran Church for the rest of the year.

Miscellaneous Railroad Photos from the Web



1. Rock Island Business Car by Bob Krieger Trainorders.com
2. Old Stillwater MN depot 9n built in 1887 from Minnesota Railroads Facebook group.
3. Led by Soo Line FP7 #1500, a train takes cars for storage to Palmers on LSRM Northshore Scenic RR in January by John Frahm.
4. Minnesota Centennial train headed by a CB&Q E6 in 1958 on the Stone Arch Bridge in Mpls. Provided by John Goodman. ^

Minutes of the March 15, 2014 Membership Meeting of the Northstar Chapter NRHS

Meeting called to order at 6:34 PM by President H Martin Swan. 22 members attended and Introduced themselves. The minutes from the Feb 2014 meeting were approved. Motion approved by John Goodman and seconded by Barbara Durfee.

Secretary report. Dave Norman was absent.

National Rep report by John Goodman. Next NRHS meeting will be held Apr 25-27 at Lewisburg PA. National election ballots will be mailed at June 01 2014 and ballot submission will be closed Aug 1 2014.

Al Weber will not run as a member of National BOD. This will be the 1st contested election in a long time. Dues Renewal to the National Organization is behind schedule. Railcamp will be held July 6 to July 11 2014 in the East, and July 27 to Aug 02 2014 in the west. Error was reported in the last NRHS newsletter (page5), grant money given was a total of \$550k, not 500 million dollars. There were NO Volunteer contributions to the NRHS by the Northstar chapter.

Trip Report by John Goodman. The Chapter BOD met and proposed the following, June 2014, a buffet boat trip on the St Croix river, or a boat trip from the Treasure Island Casino near Hastings. July picnic will be held at Prescott WI. A bus trip to the Boone and Scenic Valley RR August 9 or August 16. Cost will be in the 75 -100 dollar range with a minimum of 25 people to make this trip a go. Group rate on the B&SV RR incur a 12% surcharge. Details on this will be determined. Also, A ride on the Central Corridor light Rail in June, when this light rail line is operational.

Holiday banquet to be held on December 7 2014 at Guldens Restaurant. A change in entr e selections will be made. Possible speaker would be Mr Soholt, District manager of Stations for Amtrak.

Treasurer Report by Russ Isbrandt. For the month of February, Chapter Expenses were more than revenue. Calendar Expenses for the month was less than revenue mainly due to Sales tax payment for 2013. Checking account balance was in good shape with revenue added from Calendar Sales. Money is held in reserve for 2014 calendar production costs for the 2015 calendar.

Membership Report by Russ Isbrandt. For 2014, we have 10 Family memberships, 2 new memberships. We have 16 non-renewals, which result in a +20% drop in membership.

Flea Markets by Joe Stark. We made a total of \$348 this year from the St Cloud Flea Market and Train Collectors monthly meeting. **Webmaster report by Dan Meyer.** Dan had nothing to report.

Program Report by Dick Tubbesing. Program presented was a video in 2000 of the White Pass & Yukon tour with Steam engines. April program will be a slide show of Warren Kregelburg slides. May Program will be a video of the IRM in Union IL by Russ Isbrandt. Fall programs for Sept, Oct, and Nov are open, and volunteers are solicited.

Newsletter Report by Dick Tubbesing. Newsletters are scheduled to be done around the 1st of every month. The April Newsletter will be a week later to account for any last minute membership renewals. Dan and Dawn were thanked for their assistance in editing the newsletter. Volunteers solicited for future stories.

Library Report by John Cartwright. No change in Library activities as cataloging of assets continue. We received a large collection of Trains Magazines from Barney Olson.

Calendar Report by Dawn Holmberg. We sold 9 back issues, 1 current issue (at a reduced price). Current issues are \$11.75 each, old issues are \$2.00 ea or 3 or more for \$1.00 apiece. Sales tax for 2013 has been paid.

Cheer Committee by H Martin Swan. Card sent to Terry Warner. All cards are hand made by Dee Lundeen. Thanks to Dee for her efforts.

New Business by H Martin Swan. We cancelled the Calendar Loan. From now on all earnings from the calendar sales will go direct to the chapters bank account except that on Feb 1, of each year the calendar must have dedicated funds in their own independent account. This amount will allow the Calendar committee to pay expenses such as Sales tax, printing costs, envelopes, postcards and any other expense they might have directly related to the calendars. After which their earning will then build back up to the dedicated level that they will maintain in the independent bank account. The BOD has approved a \$3.00 a year dues increase for the year 2015. The BOD has determined that the membership should approve of this increase. The next Newsletter will publish the announcement and the members in attendance will vote to approve or disapprove at the April 2014 meeting.

Old Business. None **Announcements.** None. Meeting was closed at about 7:30pm, motion carried by Jim McClean, and seconded by Dick Hartman. Respectively Submitted by Richard Tubbesing for Secretary Dave Norman



Photo by Dave Schmeiding



Photo by Jill Shuster Peterson

Milw SKYTOP Overhaul: by Steve Glischinski

Published: January 31, 2014

The Friends of the 261 are progressing on the restoration of former Milwaukee Road Skytop parlor lounge observation car Cedar Rapids. The car, built by the Milwaukee Road at its Milwaukee Shops in 1948, is undergoing a complete overhaul. The lounge area at the rear of the car is unique since it is 90 percent glass, with multiple rows of windows reaching up to form the ceiling. This solarium contains 12 seats, with an additional 24 seats in the interior of the car. The interior also features wood paneling, characteristic of Milwaukee Road designs.

Designed by famed industrial designer Brooks Stevens, the Cedar Rapids was one of four parlor observations cars that entered service in 1948 on the Twin Cities Hiawathas between Chicago and the Twin Cities. Stevens also designed six sleeper Skytop observations for the Chicago-Seattle/Tacoma Olympian Hiawatha. One of those cars, the Coffee Creek, was recently was moved to Alamosa, Colo., for restoration, and is the only intact sleeper Skytop. Three of the parlor observations survive, but the Cedar Rapids is the only car that is operable. The Skytop is a favorite of the passengers on Milwaukee Road No. 261 steam excursions, and also makes several charter moves on Amtrak each year. It traveled coast-to-coast in September 2013 as part of the Station-to-Station artists' train.

This winter, the car was pulled into the group's shop in Minneapolis for restoration. The trucks were removed for an Amtrak-mandated 10-year inspection. The Friends of the 261 have raised about \$30,000 for the work needed on the Cedar Rapids, but the group estimates the total cost of the project will be \$62,000. It is seeking donations to finish the work.

Skytop Donations can be made at: www.261.com or by mail to: Friends of the 261 4322 Lakepoint Court Shoreview, MN 55126. The Friends of 261 group has also announced two luxury tours entailing the group's classic passenger cars behind Amtrak trains to Washington DC and to Glacier Park Montana. See the 261.com website for details.

Fire Up N&W #611 news from Mark Brown North Carolina Transportation Museum, Spencer, NC

Provided by **Walter Alexander, Membership Chairman & EBC Roanoke Chapter, NRHS**

March 24, 2014 — ROANOKE, VA — The Virginia Museum of Transportation's Board of Directors and the Fire Up 611! Committee announce an agreement with the North Carolina Transportation Museum & Foundation (NCTMF) in Spencer, North Carolina, to house

the iconic Norfolk & Western Class J 611 Steam Passenger Locomotive during her restoration. After the restoration is complete, the Class J 611 will steam back to its home at the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke, Virginia. No date has been set for the Class J 611 to move to the North Carolina Transportation Museum (NCTM). Before the Class J 611 can move, the Virginia Museum of Transportation (VMT) must raise adequate funding to restore the locomotive and ultimately build a preservation and education facility to house her. To date, the VMT has raised almost \$2.3 million. Donations have poured in from every state, the District of Columbia and 18 countries.

“Like us, the North Carolina Transportation Museum strives to preserve and showcase our rail heritage,” said Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., executive director of the Virginia Museum of Transportation. “We can’t think of a better venue to host the Class J 611 during her much anticipated restoration.”

One of the largest buildings on the North Carolina Transportation Museum campus is the 37-stall Bob Julian Roundhouse. The Roundhouse was built in 1924 and is one of the biggest surviving steam era roundhouses left in North America. Its 100-foot turntable and restoration shop are capable of handling a locomotive the size of Class J 611. The museum, located on 57 acres, encompasses 13 historic shop buildings that were part of Southern Railway’s largest steam locomotive shop, which dates to 1896.

National Train Day sponsored by AMTRAK will be held at the St Paul Union Depot on May 10th 2014.

Our chapter will have a table at this event. Any volunteers to man our table will be appreciated!

Arkansas and Missouri Railroad Pictures by Terry Davis.

“This first shot was taken early morning (6:45 a.m. or so) as the A&M put the day's passenger train together at Springdale for the run to Van Buren, north of the river from Fort Smith. We had tickets and got there early to snap some photos in the early morning light. Many of the railroad's Alcos were present outside the shops and visible from the depot or public ground. C-420 No. 58, ex-D&H 420, positioned A&M's RS1, No. 2, the Bruce Klink, (ex. Rutland 400) at the end of the passenger cars. It will be the day's power. We got to Springdale the evening of Aug. 29. This was Aug. 30. Our trip to that point had taken us through Des Moines, Chillicothe, Mo., Kansas City, Neosho, Monett, Springfield, Branson and the Eureka Spring & North Arkansas dinner train the evening of Aug. 29 (after riding the Branson train earlier in the day). We eventually went on to Little Rock, Pine Bluff and then headed north by way of Corning, Popular Bluff, Jefferson City, Mobley, etc., all in about 10 days. Hard to believe it was almost 18 years ago. Seems like yesterday we made that hot trek.”

NRHS Convention will be held June 10 to June 15 2014 at Springdale Arkansas. Many activities are planned with trips powered by the Arkansas and Missouri RR vintage ALCO’s. Here are some pictures of the Vintage power of the Arkansas & Missouri RR power and other railroads in the area by Terry Davis unless otherwise noted. Details are on the Web site: <http://www.nrhs.com/events/2014-annual-convention-northern-arkansas>



1.

Fort Smith AK ALCO RS-3 #7802



2.

A&M Vintage RS-1 #20 by Bruce Klenk.



3.

A&M #50, ALCO C420 units



4.

A&M ALCO S-3 #14 Switcher



5.

A&M ALCO RS Unit #44 at Springdale



6.

ES&NA (Eureka Springs & N Arkansas) 2-6-0

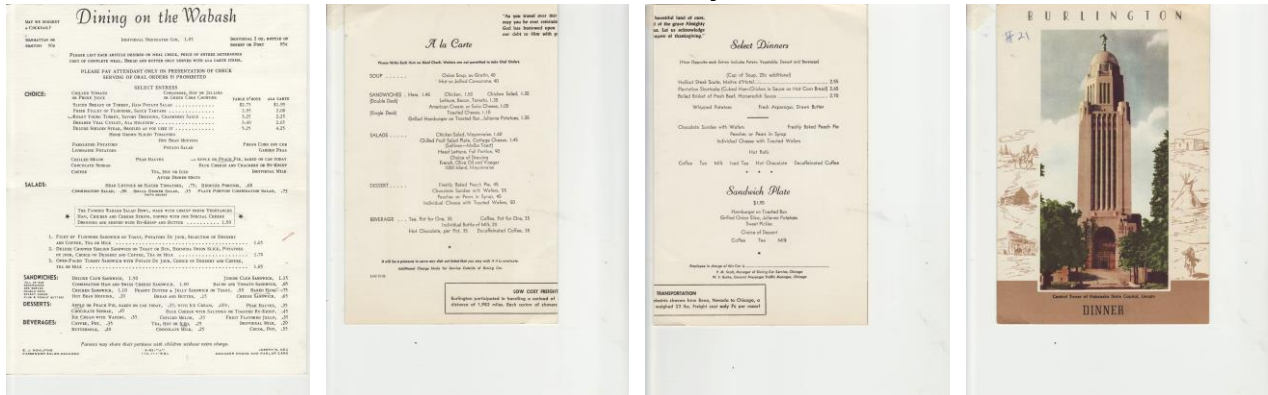
Empire Builder schedule Change –provided by John Goodman

On Mar 27, 2014, at 9:40 AM, [Gene Poon <sheehans@ap.net>](mailto:sheehans@ap.net) wrote:
Amtrak is lengthening the Empire Builder's schedule by three hours eastbound and 1 1/2 hours westbound. Official announcement supposed to be today. New schedule now loaded in Arrow and at www.amtrak.com
Connections restored in Chicago. 14-28 connection broken.
Source says 27-11 connection is to be restored but it does not appear in reservations system. If enabled, connect time would be 2 hr 45 min., 11:40am – 2:25pm. Westbound: CHI-MSP unchanged. 1 1/2 hours added in increments St.Paul-Shelby. West of Shelby, running times unchanged, schedule times 1 1/2 hours later.
Eastbound: SEA/PDX-Stanley running times unchanged, schedule times three hours earlier. Three hours is added in increments, Stanley-MSP. MSP-CHI unchanged.

An Amtrak Crew Grew So Suspicious That They Stopped Their Train and Avoided Disaster by Gene Poon provided by John Goodman
Sometimes ordinary railroaders become heroes simply by being suspicious and cautious. It also helps to have years of experience.
Let me introduce you to two men who avoided a disastrous head-on collision between CSX's northbound Tropicana juice train and Amtrak's southbound Silver Meteor, which probably would have killed them and possibly lots of passengers...
The story is sobering in that for all the protections build into the systems, even with a maintenance-of-way employee sitting in his truck right there (who could see neither the signal nor the switch), it was two human beings in the cab of the train who averted disaster because they sensed that something wasn't right.
A photo accompanying the article shows the contradiction between signal aspect and switch position. I've seen the photo and it's chilling to see it.
Again, in Don's words:

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR AN EXPERIENCED, CAUTIOUS ENGINEER.

Dinner in the Diner -By H Martin Swan



The other day I pulled out my UP cookbook and while flipping through it I got me to wondering what were the most memorable meals I have eaten on the train. All of us eat, mostly 3 times a day. But how many times over your lifetime have you had a meal that you can still remember 10, 20, 40 or more years ago. We can skip Amtrak. I can't remember even one meal on an Amtrak dining car that "knocked my sock off". Meals mostly have been good but not something to remember. The very first dining car meal I can remember was on the Missouri Pacific's Missouri River Eagle. My grandfather and I would once a year go down to Kansas City from Lincoln to watch the Kansas City Athletics get beat. Grandfather worked for the CB&Q and thus had a pass for free transportation on the Silver Streak Zephyr. But one year I talked Grandfather into traveling via the Missouri River Eagle where he had to pay ½ fare. This would have to be around 1957 or 1958. The MoPac used to run a doddle bug between Lincoln and Union Nebraska which they referred to as the Eaglet but by this time, it had been replaced with a bus. After we arrived at Union I eagerly waited for the Eagle to appear. I was hoping for an Alco PA, the Planetarium car and the round end parlor observation car. When it came, it was powered by an E-unit, head end cars, a couple of coaches and a flat end parlor/dining car. No Alco PA, no dome, no observation car. Nevertheless, I boarded and was riding my first (of what would turn out to be only two) trips on the MoPac.

At lunch time we went into the small dining car section of the parlor car. We were presented with the menu----which consisted of only sandwiches. We could choose between roast pork or roast beef sandwich (with an omelet being offered as a substitute) served with soup, salad and a dessert; in addition we could choose ala-carte a Chicken Sandwich or Ham and Cheese Sandwich. I was disappointed. I don't recall what I had but this meal was memorable to me due my disappointment over the offerings. Looking over that menu today, perhaps it wasn't so

bad. It was that I expected so much more for my first meal in a railroad dining car after the KC A's loss it was time to return back to Lincoln. This time we went via the Burlington's #21 the Kansas City- Lincoln Silver Streak Zephyr. This train consisted of streamlined and reconditioned heavyweight cars, a dining car, and a parlor observation car. When we went into the dining car we had a "proper" menu. I chose the Plantation Shortcake (cubed Ham-Chicken in Sauce on Hot Corn Bread). I think this is where I got my "love" of this meal. When I got my job with the GN, the NP's (GN personal invited to eat) and the later the BN's cafeteria would serve this at least once or twice a month. It was fun eating lunch up on 13th floor and watching the Twin Star Rocket depart from SPUD btw I still have the menu in my collection from #21 that day. Well we now have to jump to my 1958. I graduated from Jr. High School and my Grandmother in San Francisco sent me round-trip tickets on the California Zephyr to come visit her. Talk about a wonderful graduation present. The only problem was the tickets were for two months hence. But finally after what seemed about 200 years, the day came and I boarded my all-time favorite train. I did have a coach seat reservation some place but the only time I ever saw that seat was when I put luggage above it and 10 minutes before we arrived in Oakland, I scored a front row Vista Dome seat and stayed there for the entire trip except for nature calls and going to get meals. There were just two meals I remember on that train. On the outbound trip I was having lunch in the dining car when we came to a stop out in the middle of nowhere. There was a dirt road and a pickup truck standing there. From the pickup truck a couple of pails were handed up and put in the dining car. My waiter looked over my shoulder and said "Hmmm fresh trout for dinner tonight". Sure enough when I went into the dining car for dinner the menu had an add-on indicating a fresh broiled trout dinner. Of course I ordered it, and sent it right back to have the head removed and the spine pulled out. There is a trick to deboning a trout and to this day I have never mastered the procedure. I do have the menu for that meal but failed to save the add-on. On the return trip, I decided to have lunch in the buffet car/dorm/ dome car. In the future the buffet would be rebranded as the Cable Car Room. The menu was mostly sandwiches. One that caught my eye was the sardine sandwich. What I was thinking of back then, I have no clue but I would love to go back and slap myself silly. The sandwich consisted of the "cook" opening a can of sardines and the flipping it over and dropping the fish, oil and all on top of two pieces of bread. May I just say, major YUCK! Never before, never since and never again will a sardine enter my mouth. As an aside, on the outbound trip, as luck would have it, I was seated in a table served by a very nice waiter. He was friendly and he answered any question I had with a smile. About 6 years later when I was at University of Nebraska (GO BIG RED) I was working in the produce department of a grocery store. In came this gentleman that seemed really familiar to me and it hit me this was that waiter. He confirmed that he was a waiter on the CZ. I asked was he retired and living in Lincoln. He said "I wish". He told me that he still works on the CZ. When he arrives in Chicago he would hop on the Ak-Sar-Ben Zephyr (Nebraska spelled backwards) and come home to Lincoln, the night before he was to go duty, he would again hop the train and head back to Chicago. I wondered why I hadn't seen him before and he told me that his wife usually does the shopping but she wasn't feeling good so he was doing it this day. Small World! Jumping to my collage days, I had one meal I can recall. I was going to Pittsburgh for the Newman Club (Catholic Club for those attending a non-catholic University) national convention. I had done a lot of timetable studying and knew that I could not go round trip from Lincoln to Chicago via Q one way and Rock Island the other. It required two one way tickets. But also had learned for the same price as a ticket from Lincoln to Chicago, I could go to Kansas City, thence over to St. Louis and then up to Chicago-a bargain that a Railfan like me could not possibly pass over. The Kansas City to St. Louis portion was on the MoPac' Colorado Eagle, only my 2nd time on the MoPac and as it turned out, the last time. The train was packed to the gills but I did score a seat in the Planetarium car. The train would get into St. Louis about 12:30 pm. I knew if I left my seat to go to the dining car I wouldn't be able to get that seat back so I passed up lunch and my last chance to eat in a "real" MoPac dining car. The St. Louis to Chicago portion would be on the Wabash Bluebird. A train with dome coaches, dining and a dome lounge-parlor car which included the Bluebird Room.. I upgraded to first class parlor car my very First Class ticket. I envisioned myself riding in the last car of the train, in the dome on the trip to Chicago. Sadly, the Wabash was trying to save money so they stopped turning the train in St. Louis and thus the parlor car was the first car of the train behind the head end cars. Nevertheless, I went up to the dome and soon discovered that Illinois scenery was just about as exciting as watching corn grow which was just about what you were looking at out the dome window.—why the heck did the Wabash buy all those domes. I spend my time in the dome, in the lower lounge area where I had the waiter bring me a beer. Lunch time I headed for the dining car which was the next one back. The train was very full but when I entered the dining car from the parlor side, I was immediately seated. So finally, a complete meal in a dining car other than the Burlington (I, at least at that time, considered the CZ dining cars to be part of the Q so they didn't count even though I had meals on the D&RGW and WP). The menu didn't disappoint; Ham salad, Flounder; Turkey; Veal Cutlet; and Sirloin Steak. In addition there were extensive list of sandwiches. I had the Roast Young Turkey with Savory Dressing and to top the meal off, I had the Peach Pie (which was baked on the car that day) all for \$3.25 (this was 1962). I completely enjoyed my non-CB&Q meal. And yes I have the menu. We now jump to my working years and sadly there are only 3 meals that I can recall and they were all while I was stationed in Seattle from 2/1/64 to 7/1/67. For a railfan, Seattle was Heaven on Earth. Pro passenger trains run by the GN, NP (before Menk), UP, and CN surrounded me. For the record my favorite GN train was the Western Star, the favorite NP train was #407 & 408 the NP pool train between Seattle and Portland, UP train The City of Portland and the CN train was the Super Continental. On morning I was westbound on the City of Portland. It was Feb or March. I had gone upstairs in the dome dinner and had ordered my favorite breakfast i.e. a ham & cheese omelet. It was in March and it was getting a little light outside. Just as the waiter served me my breakfast, the sun broke through the clouds. The mist

was swirling over the Columbia River; Mt. Hood was standing proudly with the snow glistening off its peak and across the river, a late running S&PS steamliner was racing us to Portland. It wasn't so much the food as the whole surreal scene from the dome dining car. I had ridden the UP's Portland Rose and City of Portland several times. Both trains went through the Blue Mountains at night (eastbound the C of P did go through them in daylight but it was difficult to figure out a schedule that would let me leave Friday night and get back to Seattle Sunday evening in time to go to work). I finally figured out a schedule. The solution was to take UP Pool train #458 to Portland, hop the Portland Rose to Baker Idaho, thence UP Mail train #11 back to Portland where I would have to spend the night and then back up to Seattle on UP pool #457. I left work, went down to Union Depot and boarded the UP pool train. This was on a Friday. After a while I went into the dining car to have my evening meal. Reviewing the menu I only noted two items that didn't have meat in them (at this time Catholics were required to fast from meat on Fridays), salmon and a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Being born and raised in Lincoln Ne and somewhat clueless about the world, the only time I had ever eaten salmon was when my Mom would buy a couple of cans of salmon (you know the kind where the bones are so liquefied that they were eatable), make some salmon patties and pure pea cream sauce over it. Luckily Mom didn't make those too often thank Goodness. Well, I didn't want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and I didn't want to breakfast so I steeled myself and ordered the salmon patties. What was served to me was a broiled salmon steak. I had never seen something like the before and it was delicious. I grabbed the menu and took another look and discovered that it did say Broiled Columbia River Salmon. Salmon became the only fish other than shell fish that I would eat on a day other than Friday just to continue the trip, I had breakfast on the Portland Rose. Got to Baker and waited two hours for #11. This train was a rather long mail train with a couple of coaches, no food service and the timetable indicated no meal stops. The train did carry a goodly number of passengers. Everything I hoped for happened. We started out in clear weather which turned into a blizzard as we reached the highest elevation prior to coming back down to river level. We did make a meal stop at La Grande and another at The Dalles. The only reason I bring this up is that #11 along with CB&Q #41 and #42-Billings/Omaha- are the only trains I have ever ridden where we had meal stops. And this brings me to the grand finale. I have written this before, the Grilled Sirloin steak I had on the CP's next to last Dominion was best steak dinner I have ever had. Yes I have eaten steak in many a fine restaurants, but I have never been able to look out the window at the Rockies while I dined. But, that's it. From about 1966 until today, with the exception of the Grandlux, there have been no dinner (or lunch or breakfast) in the diner that "knocked my socks off". I have reviewed my collection of dining car menus, I have reviewed all the routes and trains I have taken but none so come to mind. -Marty

A Railroaders Perspective On Sunday, March 23, 2014 10:29 AM, From Rick Krenske

Letters to the editor: SPOTLIGHT LETTER **A view from the engine**

In response to the letter 'The problem with trains' (Feb. 27), I would like to say that as a locomotive engineer for a major railroad here in the Twin Cities, that I and my fellow engineers hate having to blow the horn. Nothing would make us happier than for every last foot of track to be completely inaccessible to the public and for there to be no railroad crossings whatsoever. But, unfortunately, people can be stupid and either decide that the railroad tracks look like a fun place to play, or that they can drive around the gates and beat us over the crossing just so they don't have to wait two extra minutes. And sometimes, those people are wrong. So, if waking someone up in the middle of the night saves a life, then that makes it worth it. And to address the concerns about transporting oil on the tracks through your neighborhood, let me assure you, rail transport is hands down the cheapest and safest way to do this. That Bakken, N.D., oil you don't want on the tracks is the reason that you're only paying \$3.60 at the pump right now instead of \$7.60. And while we're on the subject of fuel, let's also remember that each one of those rail cars takes two to three semi-trucks off the highways, so the next time you see a train with 100 cars going down the tracks, just remember, if that train wasn't there, it would mean an extra 200 to 300 semi-trucks on I-35E while you're trying to drive to work. And as far as pollution goes, One mile-long train uses approximately 1,500 gallons of diesel fuel to go 250 miles hauling 7,000 tons of goods that you use every single day. One semi-truck will use 30 to 50 gallons of diesel fuel to go the same distance. Now multiply that by 250 and you tell me which mode of transportation is more environmentally friendly. And next time you see a train stopped on a crossing, please be patient. I have a job to do, too. It's not always pleasant and I honestly don't enjoy keeping you from getting to Starbucks, or the grocery store, or the shopping mall where you happily pay a reasonable price for any one of the multitude of products that were on a train less than a week before you stuffed it into the back of your Prius. I'm trying to do my job as safely as I can, to keep that train on the tracks, to keep you safe and living in the lifestyle you've become accustomed to. Trent Verley, Spring Park



Minnesota Transportation Museum in Short of Operating crews and staff for this summer's activities and Looking for volunteers. Contact the MTM for more information. <http://www.mtmuseum.org/> Jackson St. 651-228-0263
Osceola & St Croix RR 751-755-3570



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM
COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE
40 Years at Lake Harriet

Minnesota Streetcar Museum is also looking for Streetcar operators.
Contact the Streetcar Museum for more information. <http://www.trolleyride.org/> 952-922-1096

RailFan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenske, Joe Stark)

Twin City Model RR club Flea Market	May 10, 2014 9 – 3 PM	State Fair Grounds Education Building St Paul Mn	\$7 Kids under 12 Free
White Bear Railroad Show and Flea Market	April 5 2014 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Century College West Campus 3300 CENTURY AVE NO. HIGHWAY 120 White Bear Lake MN	ADMISSION \$5.00 UNDER 12 FREE

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