



# Northstar News

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

## The Green of the Irish



BN Green boats

Left: SD-40-2's lead a WB train in Fridley MN early 2000's.

Right: SD60M leads a WB freight in 2000 Everett WA

Pics by R Tubbesing from Video



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**Meeting Notice**

Next business meeting will be held on **Saturday March 19th 2016 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 –  
Twin City Railroads Slides from the Past by John Kennedy. John is a fantastic photographer and we will be privileged to view some of his historical work.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together January 9, 2016 at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 4:45 pm. PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you.

Thanks must go to **H Martin Swan**, first for his article and generous donation to the chapter to fund our monthly meeting costs for 2016. It is with great pleasure to assure you that Roseville Lutheran Church will continue to be our meeting site for 2016. Thanks again Marty!

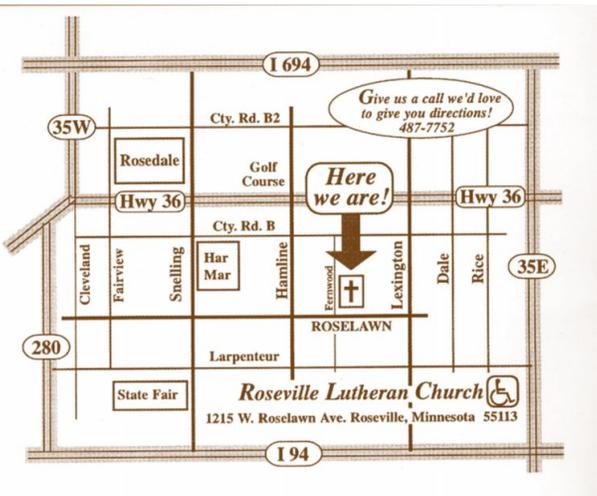
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Meeting Location: From the east or west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the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



From the Publisher:

This is a formal apology for the incorrect meeting date as written in the snail mail copy of the newsletter. Neither I or the Proofer detected this error. The date was correct on the electronic (color) version of the newsletter. The 2016 Minnesota Rail Calendar is SOLD OUT! This is a reminder that you should get your orders in early for the 2017 calendar which will be out about July 1, 2016.

**2016 Dues are Due! IF you have not renewed your local chapter dues, this will be your last newsletter.** Membership for 2016 is \$18 for NRHS membership (+NRHS membership dues of \$50, billed separately) and \$21 for subscriber. NRHS dues for 2016 can be paid online by credit card. If you are a current member of the NRHS and the NRHS has your email address, you should have gotten an email from 'Amelia.com' to renew your NRHS dues via secure payment by credit card. If the NRHS does not have your email address, you should have by now received a letter in the mail to renew your dues. If you have received notification by either method, please renew your NRHS dues promptly. The NRHS is now in the Black due to great Leadership which has turned around this organization from debt ridden status.

Thanks to Russ Isbrandt for sending out renewal invoices for those that have not renewed!

## Siemens Installs First Cummins Engine in New Diesel-electric Charger Locomotive

Thursday, February 18, 2016 2:48 pm EST Siemens Announcement provided by John Goodman

This month, Siemens celebrated a production milestone at our Sacramento rail manufacturing plant by installing the first Cummins QSK95 engine with alternator that will power the new diesel-electric Charger locomotives. The 42,000 pound, power unit, the first engine to be installed at Siemens Sacramento manufacturing plant, was successfully lowered into the locomotive by overhead crane. Siemens is manufacturing a total of [69 diesel-electric locomotives](#) for the Departments of Transportation in Illinois, California, Michigan, Missouri, Washington and Maryland. The diesel-electric locomotives are also being manufacturing for Brightline, the express passenger rail service that will connect the major cities of Miami and Orlando. The diesel locomotives will be powered by the 16-cylinder, 95-liter displacement, and 4,400 horsepower rated diesel engines built by Cummins. The new state-of-the-art locomotives are designed to operate at speeds up to 125 miles per hour and, with the Cummins engine, will comply with the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) stipulated Tier IV emission standards. The Cummins QSK95 engine, manufactured in the U.S. at its Seymour, Indiana plant, is engineered with modern technologies and design features that ensure the highest performance, lowest fuel consumption, cleanest emissions, and lowest total cost of ownership of any locomotive engine. The diesel-electric locomotives are currently being built at Siemens rail manufacturing plant in Sacramento, Calif. The plant is home to over 800 highly-skilled employees, has been in operation for over 30 years and sources up to 80 percent of its energy from two megawatts of solar energy. The plant recently completed a 125,000 square-foot expansion to help accommodate its growing production needs. Check out the video below for an exclusive look at the first Cummins engine being installed in the Siemens-built diesel-electric Charger locomotive:

## January 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 PM at the Roseville Lutheran Church by chapter president Richard Tubbesing with 20 members and guests present. President Tubbesing hoped to keep the meeting short. Those present were asked to introduce themselves. John Goodman reported that the next two programs will be a video of the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad in February and Vintage slides of Minnesota Railroads by John Kennedy in March. John also reported the Engine #28 is expected be operational at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum this summer and we will plan a trip to Duluth in August of this year, as well as a trip on the Twin Cities Light Rail in June, and a picnic in Maiden Rock Wisconsin in July and earlier in the month since the NRHS convention in Denver will be held in the third week in July. Russ Isbrandt gave the treasurer's report, and that 2016 calendar sales show only a few left in stock. Russ also gave a status on Membership renewals, and so far, it looks like our membership will be less than last year. Russ was congratulated for his work as Treasurer in the last year by President Tubbesing. Also lauded was the work of trip and program director John Goodman and the work on the Calendar by Dawn Holmberg. Richard Tubbesing reported on the Newsletter and that costs of Newsletter printing for the year is around \$700. Richard Tubbesing reported that no Library open houses are planned, and only one flea market, The State Fairgrounds one in May will be attended. Bob Ball reported on the planned celebration on the St Paul Union Depot the end of April, which is a three day event, and we will not purchase a table, but Bob Ball volunteered to provide space for our membership brochures. Russ Isbrandt reported on our library activities. We have received more 8mm and 16mm films from the William Cordes Collection from Aaron Isaacs and will be showing them at our Wednesday library gatherings. Dan Meyer reported on the chapter website. Newsletters have been posted to the current one. Dan is also working on linking PayPal account to our website so purchases can be made online from our chapter website. Also noted, former president Cy Svobodny has been ill. Bob Ball presented some slides for consideration for the 2017 calendar and showed many more of his excellent collection of Minnesota railroad slides. Meeting was adjourned at about 7:20 pm. Respectfully Submitted by Dave Norman Secretary.

## February 20, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM by President Richard Tubbesing at the Roseville Lutheran Church. Members introduced themselves. 20 members and guests were present. Russ Isbrandt gave the treasurer's report outlining expenses and income for the last month. Russ reported that membership for 2017 was at 28 renewals, 3 family renewals and 10 subscribers. No Library report was given as John Cartwright was not in attendance. John Goodman reported on Calendar sales, and we have only two good and eight defective 2016 calendars left. John Goodman reported that the NRHS is in great financial shape and that 85% of members have renewed so far. He also reported that planned trips were a ride on the Northstar commuter in June, the chapter picnic at Maiden Rock WI in July and a trip to Duluth in August where steam Engine #28 is expected to be running. Gary Rumler asked if we can charter the W34 car for our trip, and John Goodman said that would increase the price of the trip by \$10 per person. John Goodman reported on meeting programs. John Kennedy will give a slide presentation in March, Greg Smith will give a slide presentation in April and that vintage Minnesota Railroad promotion films from the 1950's will be shown at the May Meeting. John also reported on the SPUD 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special the last weekend in May for two days conducted by Steve Glischinski and member Bob Ball. Many railroad pieces of equipment, including #261 will be on display, and railroad slide shows will be presented throughout the weekend by noted railroad photographers. The price for these activities was reported to be about \$29. All 2016 Fall meetings are open for presentations. Richard Tubbesing reported and apologized for an incorrect meeting date in the February snail mail newsletter. Richard Tubbesing reported that we plan no flea markets until the fall shows when our calendar is for sale. There was no chapter website report as Dan Meyer was ill. Marty Swan was not able to attend, but reported that a get well card was sent to Cy Svobodny. No Old Business or New business was reported. Terry Warner announced an upcoming train show at Coon Rapids. Meeting was called to adjourn moved by President Richard Tubbesing, seconded by John Goodman at 6:52 pm.

## **Costs For Commuter Service to St. Cloud, Minn., May Be Lower Than Ever.**

February 18, 2016



A Northstar commuter train runs through Coon Rapids, Minn., in July 2015. Steve Glischinski

ST. CLOUD, Minn. — Finishing the Northstar commuter rail line from Minneapolis to its original, intended, terminus at St. Cloud may have gotten less expensive.

The price of a St. Cloud extension has been estimated at \$150 million or more, but it may be less now thanks to BNSF Railway, which reinstalled double track on its Staples Subdivision between Big Lake and Becker, Minn. The second track had been pulled up in the 1980s. To extend the commuter service, the double track would have had to be reinstalled, and likely paid for by Northstar, and state taxpayers — but instead BNSF footed the bill.

The lower possible price tag means that commuter rail could attract support in the Minnesota Legislature. Republican State Rep. Jim Knoblach of St. Cloud, who chairs the state House Ways and Means Committee, is researching the cost of an extension to St. Cloud and doesn't think it would cost all that much money. The biggest issue is working out an agreement with BNSF, he said.

Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton didn't include any money for the extension in his January bonding proposal. But Knoblach tells the St. Cloud Times that he hopes the Legislature will pass a larger transportation bill this year and it's possible that some money for Northstar could be part of that.

Also backing the extension is a faith-based coalition that has been building grassroots support for the proposal. Coalition members have been making the case that Northstar would benefit low-income workers, college students, the elderly, and racial and ethnic minority populations by linking St. Cloud to the Twin Cities and offering a transportation option that doesn't require a car. They've held rallies, talked to lawmakers, and urged citizens to write letters of support. The coalition plans to deliver a petition to the capitol in St. Paul in March.



## Student Educational Tour Part 2

by H Martin Swan



*Continued from last month:* We arrived at 11:15pm and was met by Mr. Ray Inholfer General Agent and taken to our hotels. We were told to sleep in and be ready by 10:00 am. I went to my room and was stunned to find out it was suite. I had never been in a suite before but there was a lot of room in there. I assumed it was because Mr. Inholfer and I knew each other.

The next day the tour was like no other that we had. Mr. Inholfer drove down every industrial track in Spokane, going down a street to the tracks, then back up, over a block and then back down to the tracks. Then they took us to a wonderful high point where we could look over the entire city. A large new factory was pointed out to us on the far side of the valley. We were told there was a prime example of a very bad mistake when the company decided to locate in that location, without consulting its Traffic Manager. The building was outside the reciprocal switching district! A quick lesson in Reciprocal Switching: It is basically, I'll scratch your back if you scratch my back. A shipper's line haul rate includes a switch at origin and a switch at destination. The problem is when the car is to be delivered (or originated) by a carrier other than the carrier that had the line haul. For example if a car arrived on the NP but the receiving customer was located on the GN, the switch that the NP made to give the car to the GN counts as the free switch that the customer is entitled, then the switch from the GN to the customers is billed to the customer. Customers don't like this. The carriers, a long time ago, came up with the plan that within a reciprocal switching district cars coming in (or going out) on one line but switched by another line would not be charged to the customer. Instead the carriers would charge each other for that switch. Careful records were kept, but in general the charges one carrier would send to another for switching would be offset by the charges received back by the other carrier for its switching charges. Now it wasn't all cut and dried. If the customer gave the car to the NP, for example, and the destination customer was on the GN but the car could have gone GN in the first place, then there would be no reciprocal switching. Further, the GN and NP were not kind at all to the Milw. If a shipment originated east of the Twin Cities on the Milw going to a customer on the GN in Spokane (for example), the GN demanded that the Milw interchange the car at the Twin Cities thus robbing, I should say denying, the Milw its longest line haul. One of the conditions of the BN merger was the BN had to open up interchanges with the Milw at such points as Spokane; sadly it was too little too late.

The plant we were looking at was served by the GN and outside the reciprocal switching district and GN had little interest in extending the district. I never did find out if they finally managed to convince GN to extend the district. That evening for our banquet (an excellent steak dinner with all the trimmings) we were transported to a Lodge on Lake Pend Oreille, a stunning location next to the lake. Later, the late Bruce Smith and I spend an afternoon and evening at the Lake. Once again I got to meet the Operating, Transportation, Pricing and Sales people that I contacted on a regular basis. We also got to meet a very highly thought-of man, Paul F. Cruikshank. It was rumored that he was being groomed to be the President of GN one of these days. He did advance to Assistant VP, Marketing Planning on the BN. Then he left to become VP Operations of the Milw Rd. It was nice to be able to put a face to these people. Once we returned to Spokane I expected us to be released. I wanted to take the group to a new bar that I had found -The Onion. However, Mr. Inhofer had us gather in my suite and he proceeded to give us a slide presentation and lecture about the Spokane area. Finally, around 10:30 pm he escorted us to the GN/SP&S station so that we could board the Portland Pullman on the Empire Builder (this was an SP&S train so we didn't need Mr. Finnley's personalized pass). I was being driven by one of the Salesmen and asked what that was all about. It seems that a couple of years earlier an Educational Tour went through and a couple of the men missed the train to Portland. Mr. Inhofer was "put on the carpet" for that. Thus no way was he going to allow any of us to go wandering around. I got into my Roomette, looked out the window and there was Mr. Inhofer standing next to the depot—he was going to be certain that none of us got off the train and started to wander around. We were now headed for Portland and would be met by Mr. Cutforth. I knew him quite well so the guys asked me if maybe we could have something different then a excellent steak dinner with all the trimmings. All I can say was I tried. He looked at me and said that a couple of years earlier some group had come in complaining about the never-ending steak dinners so he gave them a choice of seafood, steak or chicken: 80% chose the steak and he had to explain on his expense account why there were multiple prices for the dinner. Hence, we were going to have an excellent steak dinner with all the trimmings and we had better well damn like it!

Prior to our dinner we had the city and area tour. At the dinner we met the various people I dealt with directly. *(continued on Page 5)*

*(Continued from Page 4)* Totally caught off guard I stammered my way through a report, backtracking when I missed something etc. I heard my boss Mr. West lean over to Mr. McGuire his assistant "Can you understand him?". It was awful. But it taught me a lesson! I learned from that and developed the practices I have today. I had to. I testified before the Interstate Commerce Commission and before State Commission in Washington, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota and Nebraska. I was on the stand for five hours once in Montana. I had to learn how to organize my thoughts and made a presentation that people could understand.

After another morning tour, we grabbed the Afternoon International to Vancouver BC. We were met by Mr. Harold, GFA Vancouver. We checked into the hotel and then had the usual excellent steak dinner with all the trimmings with the Vancouver BC Operating and Pricing/Sales people. The next morning we quickly toured the area. Most interesting was watching ships unloading and the crazy people operating fork lift trucks at what seem to be excessive, way excessive speeds. Then back to the depot for the ride on the International back to the "lower 48". At Everett the tour once again had the golden pass to ride the Empire Builder to Spokane where the tour ended. I was told to just come on back to Seattle and skip the return to Spokane so for me the tour was over.

Like I said, nobody rides Mr. Finley's Empire Builder on a pass. In what seemed to be a ridiculous situation, all the tour group were supposed to get off at Spokane (at 10:40 pm) check into the hotel and then get up the next morning to catch the Western Star east, which left Spokane at 6:45 am to go back to their home base. A couple of the guys, from Billings and Great Falls, knew the conductor getting on at Spokane and were allowed to hitch a ride to Havre but the rest all went on the Western Star.

It's been 30 + years since I went on this tour. Memories of the location tours of the area have totally left me except for Spokane and Vancouver BC. The diners (where we had the never ending excellent steak dinner with all the trimmings) are for the most part a blur in my mind. What I do remember is meeting all the representatives of the GN, people who might come in contact in the performance of my job. Eleven of the 12 members of the tour stayed in close contact with each other for several years, but as time went on, between mergers and transfers, we lost contact with each other. The Student Education Tour was truly a great idea by the GN. But it also played the corporate culture of GN which was We Are Family. Mr. VP Brown drummed that into us whenever he gave a talk and he meant it. This policy was directly from Mr. Budd's office. True there are the usual bosses who weren't into that too much but for the most part the culture was very very good.

Union and management people worked together side by side in very friendly surroundings. We used to love to play poker and I would invite (or be invited) to play late night games alongside union and management employees. When White River State Park used to have cabins, every year we would rent a couple and both management and union employees would go down, spend an evening eating, drinking and playing poker then after two or three hours sleep get up at dawn and go out and start fishing.

This doesn't say that there wasn't disagreement between management and the unions and there were strikes but when they were over, everybody returned to work as friends. An interesting note is that Mr. Budd was credited with coming up with the term "featherbedding" to refer to jobs that were well paid but unnecessary such as the firemen. He said that it just came to him and he said it and later on he wished he hadn't made the comment.

This started to change after merger and Mr. Menk came onboard. Mr. Menk was not a "We are Family" type person and he was known as a hatchet-man. But things went down fast when he brought in Mr. Bressler. One of the things his management team did was to hire the known union-buster, who had recently managed to break the unions of the eastern rail lines. His job was to replace our unions with a company union. This man would look you right in the eye and lie. He failed totally! One day he was gone "seeking other opportunities". But the damage was done. The union people and the non-union people were now at odds. This elevated to extreme bitterness. The rank and file worked together ok but there were no more management/union poker parties.

The Great Northern promoted from within. In the Pricing Dept. where I worked, my college education gave me a two year head start. But the company wasn't a bit shy in promoting union employees into the management ranks (as trainees) correctly assuming that any union men and later women who worked hard and showed constant improvement would make an excellent management person, in other words experience counted.

When the company was moved to Ft. Worth, the union men and women promoted by GN to management, many now managers, were invited to go. But after a few years, the companies executives decided that all of their management employees had to have a college education. As a result, every time there was a downsizing, which was often, many these individuals were fired. I'm glad I retired 12 years ago.

# Canadian Pacific Railway to cut 1,000 jobs this year



Canadian Pacific Railway locomotives are shuffled around a marshalling yard in Calgary, on May 16, 2012. The railway is rejecting a legal demand by the Quebec government that it help fund the cleanup of Lac-Mégantic.

(Jeff McIntosh / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Ross Marowitz, The Canadian Press  
Published Thursday, January 21, 2016  
MONTREAL -- Canadian Pacific Railway, which posted record profits and revenue last year, plans to cut almost 1,000 more jobs this year as it adjusts to lower shipment volumes amid a collapse in commodity prices and a weak Canadian economy. The Calgary-based company says most of the cuts to unionized and management positions will result from attrition and kick in by mid-year. Since 2012, the railway has cut 6,000 to 7,000 jobs in a move to boost its bottom line. In the process, it has dramatically improved its operating ratio, or operating expenses as a percentage of revenue, to below 60 per cent. "There is still more to accomplish," CEO Hunter Harrison said during a conference call Thursday about the company's fourth-quarter and year-end results. "What we're focusing on is what we can control: which is execution, which is running an efficient railroad." The railway had \$6.71 billion in revenue and adjusted earnings of \$1.62 billion in 2015 -- up from \$6.6 billion and \$1.48 billion respectively in 2014 -- although both fell below analyst expectations. Meanwhile, the company forecasts a double-digit increase in adjusted profits in 2016.

The company said it had reduced its workforce by 12 per cent, eliminating nearly 1,800 jobs last year, as shipments dropped three per cent. It says attrition accounts for some 2,000 people leaving the company each year. In addition to labor savings, the railway is cutting capital spending by \$400 million.

The plan to further cut jobs takes into account changes to labor agreements in the United States that alter scheduling rules, allowing for fewer workers. Fewer workers are also needed as the railway operates longer, faster but fewer trains.

However, as market conditions improve over the longer term, CP would look to bring back employees to meet demand, said spokesman Martin Cej, who declined to say how many of the job losses will be in Canada versus the U.S. Doug Finnon, president of the Canadian Rail Conference, which represents 3,400 CP train conductors and engineers, said he's not aware of any planned jobs cuts beyond the 115 locomotive positions the union is fighting in arbitration. "I'm always worried when they say they're going to cut jobs, particularly when they don't tell us anything," he said in an interview. "I think this is just one more part of (Harrison's) cut-to-the-bone philosophy."

CP (TSX:CP) expects to build off its strong results, despite concerns about the economy that could affect some types of freight that it carries through its North American rail network, the company said. "We're going to be able to convert what the economy does provide us and poise ourselves for a strong bounce-back when the economy comes back," said president and chief operating officer Keith Creel.

Meanwhile, CP Rail said it is reviewing its strategy to acquire Norfolk Southern Railway after saying it failed to anticipate that politics would overtake the regulatory review process. Harrison criticized interventions by elected congressional leaders and challenged those who claim CP's proposed use of a trust is unethical and illegal even though it has been used many times in the past. "If the deck is stacked and if somebody's got an ace up their sleeve and are not playing by the rules, then we understand that and we have to adjust accordingly," he told analysts.

While he believes railway mergers will eventually be required to accommodate economic and population growth, Harrison said CP will also assess whether to abandon its bid and instead recommend that its board focus on repurchasing its shares, which have fallen 35 per cent in the last year. "If nothing happens, we've got a wonderful franchise here in Canada. We have not fallen in love with any deal."

Pictures by R Tubbesing

Left: CP Ethanol train in Mpls, CP train at Shoreham

Right: CP on BNSF at Askov MN, CP SD40 Crossing St Anthony in Mpls,



## RPCA Conference January 2016 Tyler Texas part 2 -Article by Dan Meyer Photos by Dawn Holmberg



Pullman Seminar - some carpet and fabric samples are on display at the bottom of the frame.



A UP freight going by the former Tyler, TX Cotton Belt depot. The Cotton Belt museum is in the freight depot end of the building.



An ALCO switcher and Steam locomotive #28 at the shops in Rusk, TX.



A pair of former VIA Rail Bombardier FP9 locomotives



A horizontal Milling Machine in the machine shop in the shops at Rusk, TX.



One of two jacks set up on one side of a passenger car to weigh it.

The remaining days of the RPCA conference were more relaxing than the first. We slept in on Friday; so late that when we arrived to breakfast some of the entrees were already gone. After breakfast, we viewed the silent auction items and vendor tables. This day was devoted to seminars related to owning and operating private railroad cars, and we attended one in the morning, then went to lunch. We napped the afternoon away in our room (catching up from the previous two stressful days), and prepared for the evening's activity: hors d'oeuvres at the aircraft museum at the airport. We rode to the airport with Al and Eileen Weber and John Goodman, discussing the NRHS convention in Denver in July along the way. Filling up on delicious snacks, we made our way to the aircraft museum. It was **very** interesting. There were recordings of first hand accounts of many events; one of the most captivating was from a survivor of the Pearl Harbor attacks. Outside they had several aircraft on display, and while we were viewing several planes came and went, including an American Airlines flight.

Saturday was much the same. We didn't sleep quite as late and enjoyed a leisurely breakfast. The most interesting seminar of the event was by three men employed by the Union Pacific Railroad who worked on the company business cars. The stories they told of life working for the railroad and meeting all kinds of important politicians, famous people and not-so-famous people were fascinating!

Since we had quite a bit of time in the afternoon, we decided to go see the Cotton Belt depot in Tyler. It was a nice small town depot, and we actually saw a train go by. Sadly we arrived too late in the afternoon so we were unable to go inside and see their small museum.

Saturday evening was the banquet. When the banquet began, we didn't really have any idea who the banquet speaker would be. The speakers turned out to be three young people (all under 30, two under 20 years old) who recounted how they came to be interested in railroading and ended up working in the industry. It was reassuring to learn of young people who were enthusiastically entering not only the hobby, but really enjoying working in the business of Railroading!

Sunday was another event day. After breakfast we boarded buses back to Palestine for a train ride. Our train was steam powered, and they were nice enough to bring T&P engine 610 out from the enginehouse for pictures and viewing. Once we were finished with pictures, we again rode their train from Palestine to Rusk where we had a barbeque lunch and wandered the yard. Lunch was delicious, and being allowed to climb into cabs of locomotives made the day more interesting than just taking pictures. One of the vendors at the conference was demonstrating how to weigh a passenger car. As I understand, with the coming positive train control it is very important to accurately know what a passenger car weighs so the PTC system can provide accurate braking information when needed.

Dinner Sunday evening was a delicious Mexican buffet, and it had the best guacamole I've had in quite a long time. We packed our things up and prepared for our trip home. We departed the hotel at 6:30 Monday morning and dropped a friend off at Dallas Love field, and proceeded to the big DFW airport. The flight home was uneventful and we landed at MSP on time, and were safe at home by about 4 pm.

## Rare Locomotive Hopes to Connect Riders With a Bygone Era



Lake Superior Railroad Museum No. 28 sat in the museum for nearly 40 years before going through a restoration that took several years and more than \$250,000 to complete. (Photo by Shawn Christie)

By [Jamey Malcomb](#) on Feb 19, 2016 Lake County News Chronicle

When riders are hopping on the North Shore Scenic Railroad this summer, some will be treated to something increasingly rare in the U.S., a ride on a train led by a steam-powered engine. NSSR's No. 28 locomotive, originally built by the Pittsburgh Locomotive Works in 1906 for the Duluth, Missabe and Northern (DM&N) railroad, has gone through an extensive reconditioning process that has taken several years and cost more than \$250,000 to rebuild and test the engine's boiler. Last week, Lake County Commissioner Rick Goutermont announced at the weekly board meeting the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority received \$30,000 for a partial month of the storage of rail cars along Highway 61 between Two Harbors and Duluth. That money was turned around and invested in finishing the reconditioning of a steam engine housed at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth. The engine will be used some time this summer to take passengers from Duluth to Two Harbors on the North Shore Scenic Railroad.

NSSR executive director Ken Buehler said steam engines are very rare in the U.S. and with only a handful left in working condition in North America, it could be a potential boost in ridership and tourism along the line between Two Harbors and Duluth. "There are only about 150 working steam engines left in North America," Buehler said. "Having one that operates and having it operate on such a beautiful line as the lakefront line between Duluth and Two Harbors, that's pretty special." NSSR expects the steam engine to boost tourism because people will travel to see and ride behind steam engines. Buehler estimated that NSSR brought between 6,000 -7,000 passengers to Two Harbors and there is normally an uptick of 20-25 percent in riders when there is a steam engine, which Buehler said he expects to run often once it's in service this summer. "The engine is in great shape, it will be in perfect condition once we're done," he said. "It will be all painted up and looking nice and I can see us running it considerably more than we've run a steam engine in the past."

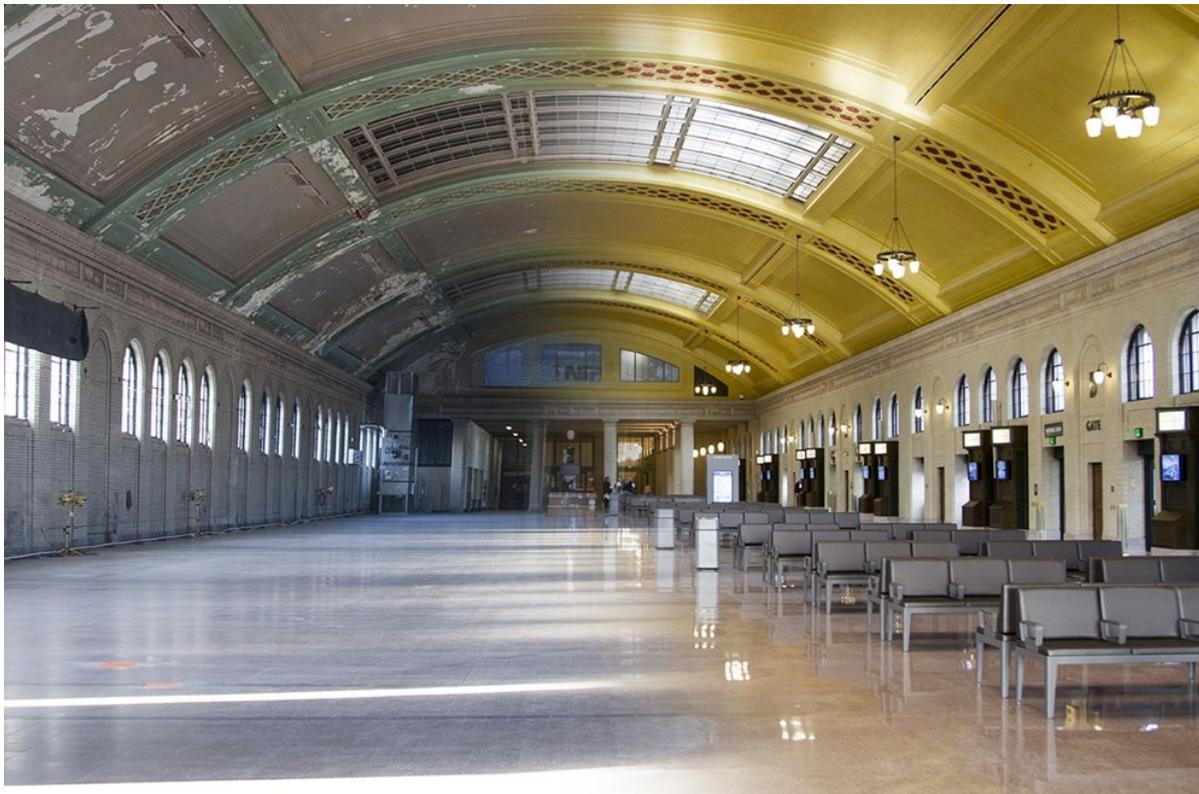
After coming to the DM&N, the engine was sold to the Duluth and Northeastern Railroad in 1955, it hauled logs, lumber products and general freight until 1965. DN&E restored the locomotive and donated it to the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in 1974. NSSR started a new restoration project a few years ago to return the engine to working order. It was in good condition, but it needed a boiler rebuild as mandated by the Federal Railroad Administration, which requires boilers be tested and rebuilt every 15 years. The restoration of the boiler began by taking the engine apart and using an ultrasound to measure the walls' thickness and ensure it's safe to operate. Afterward all the engine's tubing was replaced in a process called "re-tubing."

Currently, all the tubing has been installed and they are waiting to "hydro test" the boiler this spring and once the engine passes the test, it can return to service this summer. "The railroad authority was kind enough to help us out with a grant to do the final phase of re-tubing and for that we are greatly appreciative and they know the advantage of it," Buehler said. "It's an investment that they've made in the tourism potential of the North Shore Scenic Railroad." Buehler said the nostalgia of riding on the trains is very attractive to many people and brings them back to a time when the U.S. was on the cusp of modernization. "There is something special about a steam engine and that is it's from another era and another time and it represents the building of America," he said. "I've always said there are two Americas, there is the America before the railroads and the one we have today and it was the steam engine that made that transition possible."

NSSR sends its steam engines, like the No. 28, between Two Harbors and Duluth because wye track from both Canadian National Railway in Two Harbors and BNSF Railway in Duluth is available to get the trains turned around. Otherwise the trains would have to make the return trip to Duluth going in reverse. NSSR hopes between the rarity and nostalgia a train like the No. 28 inspires in people, there will be a significant increase in riders to Two Harbors this fall, with good reason. The site of a steam engine chugging up the North Shore isn't just attractive to child attracted to the awesome power a steam engine exemplifies. Adults, too, can share in the magic and romanticism of an era when the railroad was the driving engine of transportation and shipping in the U.S. "It's a living breathing thing, it huffs, it puffs, it's warm to the touch," Buehler said. "It's a very romantic piece of machinery because of all the many people and many stories that steam engines helped create and carry across this country."

## St. Paul Union Depot Celebrations Set for End of April.

By [Steve Glischinski](#) | February 23, 2016 From the TRAINS Newswire:



Photos of before and after St. Paul Union Depot's main concourse reconstruction. St. Paul residents will host a 90th anniversary celebration of the depot's opening, April 30 and May 1. Steve Glischinski; photo illustration by Trains

ST. PAUL, Minn. — St. Paul Union Depot managers will celebrate their building's 90th anniversary this year with a two-day festival that will include historic and modern railroad equipment, discussions and photo sessions, vendors, model railroads and live entertainment. The event is co-sponsored by Kalmbach Publishing Co., publisher of *Trains Magazine*.

Ramsey County (Minn.) Regional Railroad Authority is organizing the celebrations which will take place April 30 and May 1. "We're pleased to support such a fitting celebration of a wonderful historic landmark," says Kevin P. Keefe, former editor of *Trains* magazine and currently Kalmbach's vice president-editorial. "Unlike so many American cities, St. Paul has not only saved its great railway station, but also revived it for its original purpose. How wonderful that Union Depot is not only part of a glorious past, but also the future."

It was 1926 when the St. Paul Union Depot Co. completed the final portion of the new Union Depot in St. Paul. Construction began in 1917 and was slowed during World War I, but the final portions were completed during the "Roaring 20s" when nine railroads and more than 200 trains served the building. Noted architect Charles Sumner Frost designed it in the neoclassical style. Original construction costs were \$15 million.

Organizers said Union Depot Train Days would highlight the history and future of passenger train travel, the historic and current role of freight railroads in the region, and the area's changing transportation trends and needs. It will also showcase the restored Union Depot, which has played a role in the revival and growth of St. Paul's downtown and Ramsey County since it reopened in 2012. Some of the exhibits and activities planned for Union Depot Train Days include:

- Milwaukee Road steam locomotive No. 261 under steam with cab tours. No. 261 once pulled passenger trains out of the depot when it was in regular service between 1944 and 1954, and pulls Friends of the 261's North Pole Express excursions at the depot each December.

- Amtrak's Exhibit Train, making its first visit to Minnesota. Soo Line FP7 No. 2500A from the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth, Minn., which pulled the Soo's *Winnipeg*, *Atlantic Limited*, and other trains out of depot.

- The Minnesota Transportation Museum's Great Northern SDP40 No. 325, which pulled the *Empire Builder* and *Western Star* out of the depot between 1966 and 1971.

- Northern Pacific Railway RPO/Baggage/Coach No. 1102 built by Pullman in 1914. Union Depot was once the third largest mail-handling depot behind Chicago and New York, and No. 1102 will commemorate the Railway Mail Service that was integral to the depot's operations. The car is now owned by the Minnesota Transportation Museum.

- Vendors selling books

(Continued from page 8)

-A night photography session of railroad equipment. Model train layouts.

-Clinic discussions of operations and trains at the Union Depot from the 1940s to the 1970s featuring Great Northern employee Gary Nelson, and photographers Charles B. McCreary and Byron D. Olsen.

-Musical entertainment by Choo-Choo Bob's Train Store. A diesel locomotive simulator.

"We are excited to expand Train Day to a whole weekend in celebration of the 90th anniversary of the completion of construction at Union Depot. The expanded event will include new vendors, the Amtrak Exhibit Train's first visit to Minnesota, and the grand opening of the Lowertown Bike Shop in the station," says Deborah Carter McCoy, spokeswoman for the county authority. "Special ticketed events will also be offered for photographers, foodies and historians."

The last passenger trains to serve the station departed on April 30, 1971, the eve of Amtrak. While the depot's head house eventually reopened, the waiting room sat empty for more than 40 years. Passenger trains returned to the building in May 2014 thanks to an investment of approximately \$242 million to purchase the building and surrounding land, and restore the interior to its original appearance.

Today Union Depot serves as a transit hub served by light rail trains, intercity and metro buses, and Amtrak's *Empire Builder*. There is also a bike path through the depot area, and a new bicycle shop will open in the building during Train Days.

### **Laker Rail** From Rick Krenske:

A new event is coming to the Twin Cities held in conjunction with Union Depot Train Days called **Laker Rail**. Similar to Summerail in Cincinnati, multimedia presentations showing photos and video put to music of trains through out the country starting at 1pm and ending at 9pm with a two hour break for diner 5-7pm. Presenting shows:

Marshall Beecher

William Beecher

Nick Benson

Chase Gunnoe

Chris Guss

Steve Glischinski

Eric Hendrickson

Dan Kwarciany

Scott Lothes

Dave Oroszi

Dave Schauer

Steve Smedley

Craig Williams

Tickets and more information can be found at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/laker-rail-tickets-20920727459> [https://](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/laker-rail-tickets-20920727459)

[www.eventbrite.com/e/laker-rail-tickets-20920727459](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/laker-rail-tickets-20920727459)



### **Progress Update on Restoring North Western No. 1385.**

From the TRAINS Newswire: By Jim Wrinn, February 22 2016 provided by Rick Krenske

Chicago & North Western 4-6-0 No. 1385, last run in 1998, is in the midst of a major restoration. The pride of the Mid-Continent Railway Museum is receiving a new boiler, tender, and heavy running gear work. *Trains* visited an open house for the locomotive Sunday at SPEC Machine in Middleton, Wis., where several hundred people showed up to see the progress. Work on Shoes, Wedges, Driving box and wheels have been completed. Work on pistons, running gear, Crossheads and Valve gear are in progress. Watch this video:

<http://trn.trains.com/news/news-wire/2016/02/22-cnw-video>



## BNSF to Spend \$130 Million on Minnesota Capital Projects.

February 22, 2016 From the TRAINS Newswire provided by Rick Krenske

MINNEAPOLIS — BNSF Railway said it would spend \$130 million this year on maintenance and track upgrades in Minnesota. BNSF intends to carry out more than 360 miles of track surfacing and undercutting work, replace roughly 70 miles of rail and about 375,000 ties, as well as upgrade signals.

The amount is a significant reduction from the \$326 million the railroad spent last year in Minnesota and \$550 million in the state over the last three years. That spending was partly a reaction to congestion issues in 2014, when a rugged winter combined with record volumes of iron ore, coal, grain and crude oil significantly delayed rail traffic.

The railroad said the reduced spending is due in part from fewer projects in the state after heavy spending and work in recent years, and softening demand among the railroad's energy, steel, and agriculture sectors.

In January, BNSF said it plans to reduce capital expenditures nationally for the first time in six years. It will spend \$4.3 billion, down 26 percent from a record \$5.8 billion in 2015.

## Zip Rail Environmental Impact Statement Suspended

From Rich Krenske Feb 15 2016

### Environmental Impact Statement suspension

MnDOT has announced the suspension of work on the Rochester-Twin Cities Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (Zip Rail) process that had a Final Scoping Decision Document issued on Jan. 19, 2015.

This project is a voluntary EIS under state environmental regulations. Public funding constraints, as well as private sector actions to undertake a similar project, have led to this decision. As the Responsible Governmental Unit, MnDOT, along with its partner Olmsted County Regional Railroad Authority, determined that the most appropriate step is to suspend the Zip Rail EIS at this time.

MnDOT is also notifying interested individuals and agencies that participated in the environmental review process about the suspension of the EIS. For more information about Zip Rail in Minnesota, visit MnDOT's [Zip Rail website](#).

### Questions?

Dan Krom  
 Director – Passenger Rail Office  
 Minnesota Department of Transportation  
 395 John Ireland Boulevard, MS 480  
 St. Paul, MN 55155  
 651-366-3193

## Hope Builds for Northstar to St. Cloud.



[Kirsti Marohn](#), [kmarohn@stcloudtimes.com](mailto:kmarohn@stcloudtimes.com) February 16 2016 provided by Rick Krenske

The Northstar commuter train pulls into the Big Lake Station Friday, Feb. 12, with the last commuters of the day in Big Lake. The photo was taken with a star filter to flare the lights.

(Photo: Jason Wachter, [jwachter@stcloudtimes.com](mailto:jwachter@stcloudtimes.com))

Since the Northstar commuter rail line began operating more than six years ago, there's been debate about when, if ever, it will come to St. Cloud.

It's always been a Catch-22: How does the rail line attract enough riders to get federal funding for an extension when the service stops in Big Lake, miles short of a regional population center such as St. Cloud? *(continued on page 11)*



*(continued from page 10)* The price of a St. Cloud extension, previously estimated at \$150 million or more, has been a serious obstacle. But some advocates of the Northstar extension say they believe it could be done for much less than previously thought — and it might not be necessary to wait until ridership numbers climb.

Ridership on the 40-mile commuter rail line between Big Lake and Minneapolis has been slowing increasing after some setbacks last year with weather-related delays that affected the trains' reliability. Metro Transit reported that Northstar provided 722,637 rides last year, slightly more than in 2014, and almost 96 percent of trains arrived on time.

Last year, BNSF Railway added a second track between Big Lake and Becker, which would be needed for Northstar. The slow-down in oil production in the Bakken fields of North Dakota has reduced the number of oil trains, which some speculate could make it easier to negotiate a lease with BNSF.

Those factors could make the cost of extending the line minimal, meaning it's more likely to attract support in the Legislature.

State Rep. Jim Knoblach, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee, has said he's researching the cost of an extension to St. Cloud and doesn't think it would cost all that much money.

"I continue to believe there are possibilities for it," the St. Cloud Republican said in a recent interview.

Metro Transit already owns the train engines and cars, Knoblach noted. The Amtrak station in St. Cloud could be used instead of building a new one. The biggest issue is working out an agreement with BNSF to use the rail lines, he said.

Gov. Mark Dayton didn't include any money for the extension in his January bonding proposal. But Knoblach said he's hoping the Legislature will pass a larger transportation bill than the ones passed last year, which never became law. It's possible that some money for Northstar could be part of that, he said.

Suggestions like that are raising the hopes of a faith-based coalition that has been building grassroots support for the extension of Northstar to St. Cloud

Members of GRIP/ISAIAH have been making the case that the commuter rail line would benefit low-income workers, college students, the elderly and communities of color by linking St. Cloud to the Twin Cities and offering a transportation option that doesn't require a car. They've held rallies, talked to lawmakers and urged citizens to write letters voicing their support, and plan to deliver a petition to St. Paul on March 10.

"People have their own reasons, whether it's college students saying I just want to get home on the weekends, or long term I want a system that's more sustainable, more affordable. I don't want to own a car," Buckvold said. "Or whether it's older people saying I want to get down there for leisure activities or I want to get to the airport or I want to see my grandkids. Or whether it's low income people ... People are coming at this issue from different points of view."

The Northstar project is shovel-ready, doable and has the ability to affect the lives of a significant population in the St. Cloud area, said the Rev. James Alberts, pastor of the Higher Ground Church of God in Christ of St. Cloud. It would provide access to better-paying jobs as well as what St. Cloud has to offer, including colleges and universities, the VA Health Care System and St. Cloud Regional Airport, he said.

Alberts thinks that should play well with lawmakers talking about ways to help outstate Minnesota.

"We are presenting with a bow on it a really good way of saying we're doing something for greater Minnesota that has the potential of continually paying out dividends," he said.

Members of GRIP/ISAIAH recently traveled to St. Paul to testify before a working group tackling the problem of income disparities among racial groups in Minnesota. One was Janice Sims, a member of Higher Ground Church, who said Northstar would help reduce economic and cultural gaps between St. Cloud and the Twin Cities.

### **Northstar Rail Starting to See More Riders.**

From the Minneapolis Star: TIM HARLOW THE DRIVE Provided by Rick Krenske

The Northstar Commuter Rail has taken a beating in the press and at the farebox over the past couple years largely over its dismal on-time performance. But now there is some good news. Last year the line that runs 41 miles between Big Lake and downtown Minneapolis saw a turnaround with nearly 96 percent of its runs arriving on-time, and with that an uptick in ridership. For the year, the North-star line provided 722,637 rides compared with 721,214 the year before, Metro Transit reports. Last week when the first big snowstorm of the season hit, ridership topped 3,000 on Tuesday and Wednesday. "We were able to shine during the snow and blizzard conditions," said John Paul Zanaska, director of commuter rail for Metro Transit.

## County Revives Study of Rail Line Linking St. Paul and Chicago.

Board's vote slates \$300K to weigh second daily trip **By Frederick Melo** [fmelo@pioneerpress.com](mailto:fmelo@pioneerpress.com)

Ramsey County took a step Tuesday toward helping to provide a second daily round-trip rail service from St. Paul's Union Depot to Chicago — a move that ultimately would require Minnesota, Wisconsin or other partners to throw in \$6.6 million in annual operating subsidies.

More than 100,000 passengers per year already board Amtrak's Empire Builder passenger rail service between Chicago and St. Paul's Union Depot, and a second daily round trip could draw an additional 155,000 passengers annually.

Those numbers come from a 28-page feasibility study produced by Amtrak nine months ago. Since then, prospects for two daily passenger train trips between the Twin Cities and the Windy City have mostly languished on a shelf.

On Tuesday, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners voted to put up to \$300,000 toward reviving the hamstrung planning efforts. Meeting as the Regional Railroad Authority, the board voted 7-0 to finalize a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and move forward with the first phase of a \$600,000 environmental assessment.

"The second daily train is to grow the market, provide greater reliability at conventional speed of 79 miles per hour," said Dan Krom, director of MnDOT's Passenger Rail Office, which is leading planning.

The first phase of the environmental study will be complete by the end of December 2017 and will produce finer estimates for construction, capital and operating costs between Chicago and St. Paul, including a closer look at how subsidies might be divided between Minnesota and Wisconsin.

"We're finalizing the contracts right now, and will have a consultant on board within a month," Krom said. "If everything lined up with funding, we could have trains running in three or four years. But a lot of things would have to line up between now and then."

### STATE LACKS RAIL FUNDS

The \$300,000 in funding, which came from and was authorized by the county board in November, represents the state of Minnesota's portion of the study in full. The state of Wisconsin will fund the other half, and the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission has promised contingency money.

"The state did not have money set aside for this," said Deborah Carter McCoy, a spokeswoman for Ramsey County Regional Rail.

Krom said the Minnesota Legislature put bonds aside in 2009 to implement a state rail plan, which went to building Target Field station and renovating Union Depot, "and those funds have been invested in the system. We're out of money."

Eastbound, Amtrak's Empire Builder has been dogged by delays traveling from Seattle through North Dakota due to the oil boom and the increase in freight traffic, but it's had better luck traveling west from Chicago to St. Paul. While Amtrak has been a major partner in the planning effort to date, the 2015 study did not necessarily assume that the second daily round-trip between St. Paul and Chicago would be provided by Amtrak.

"There's been no determination of who would be offering the service. It's way early for that," said Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari.

### FOUR ROUTES STUDIED

Amtrak's feasibility report, published in May 2015, weighed the costs of connecting Chicago's Union Station to the Twin Cities using four potential Minnesota routes: stops in St. Paul, Minneapolis' Target Field Station and St. Cloud; St. Paul and Fridley and St. Cloud; St. Paul and Minneapolis; and St. Paul alone.

Given the Union Depot's renovation in 2012, including multiple station platforms and stub tracks for equipment storage, the study found service to St. Paul would be the cheapest and easiest to implement. In Fridley, for example, a passenger train would share a platform with the Northstar commuter rail, leading to potential scheduling conflicts.

East of St. Paul, the stops would mirror the Wisconsin stops served by Amtrak's Empire Builder, with the exception of an additional stop at the Milwaukee Airport Rail station.

### HIGH-SPEED RAIL?

Krom said he sees a second daily round-trip as an "interim step" in the ongoing effort to study high-speed rail from the Twin Cities to Chicago. In the 1990s, the nine-state Midwest Regional Rail Initiative envisioned 110 mile-per-hour service in under six hours, with up to six round trips per day traveling along the current Canadian Pacific line.

Two of the corridors already are implementing high-speed service, including Chicago to St. Louis and Chicago to Detroit.

MnDOT is also studying the Northern Lights Express corridor from Minneapolis to Duluth. High-speed rail from the Twin Cities to Rochester, Minn. has "paused indefinitely," Krom said, because of a lack of funding and a private-sector initiative to study a parallel route.

Canadian Pacific Railroad mainline track represents roughly 85 percent of the 400-mile corridor from Chicago to St. Paul, with much smaller portions owned by Amtrak, Illinois' Metra commuter rail system, Minnesota Commercial Railway and Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

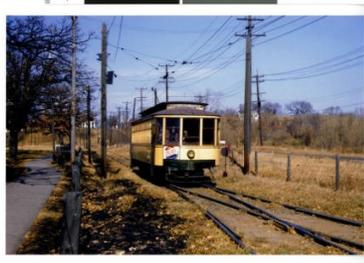
# Twin City Streetcars from a bygone era

Photos from the Minnesota Streetcar Museum

—Aaron Isaacs Collection



4th & Sibley St Paul



Como Ave at Eustes St Paul



PCC car 4th St & Wabasha St Paul



44th and Drew in Mpls



15th Ave SE & University Mpls



Ford Plant car Loop in St Paul



44th and France Loop in Mpls



45th and France Edina MN



1st Ave N and 7th St in Mpls



Bryant Ave Loop in Mpls



East Side Station Mpls



Great Northern Depot in Mpls



Lake Harriet Station in Mpls



City Limits Streetcar St Paul MN

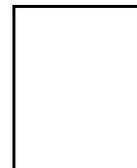


PCC car MN State Capitol St Paul

**Railfan Events** (Thanks to Rick Krense, Cy Svobodny, Russ Isbrandt)

2016 C&NWHHS Annual Meet	May 12-15, 2016	Ramada Plaza Minneapolis 1330 Industrial Blvd NE - Minneapolis, MN 55413	C&NW Historical Society Members have special Hotel rates and registration fees
Granite City Train Show	April 9 2015 10AM—3PM	National Guard Armory, 1710 Veteran's Drive, St Cloud, Minnesota	\$6
<b>St Paul Union Depot 50th Anniversary</b>	April 29, 30, May 1 2016	St Paul Union Depot St Paul Minnesota	\$27 for Admission Laker Rail \$24.95 night pho- to Session, and admittance to Laker Show presentations
Twin City Division NMRA Meet- ing	March 10 2016 7pm	Jackson Street Roundhouse 193 Pennsylvania Avenue East, St Paul, Minnesota. 7PM	
Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale	April 2 2016 9AM to 2PM	Century College West Campus, 3300 Century Avenue North White Bear Lake, Minnesota	\$5
Newport Model RR Club Train Show & Sale	April 16, 2016 9 am—3 PM	Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury, Minnesota	\$5

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Coon Rapids MN 55433 3768

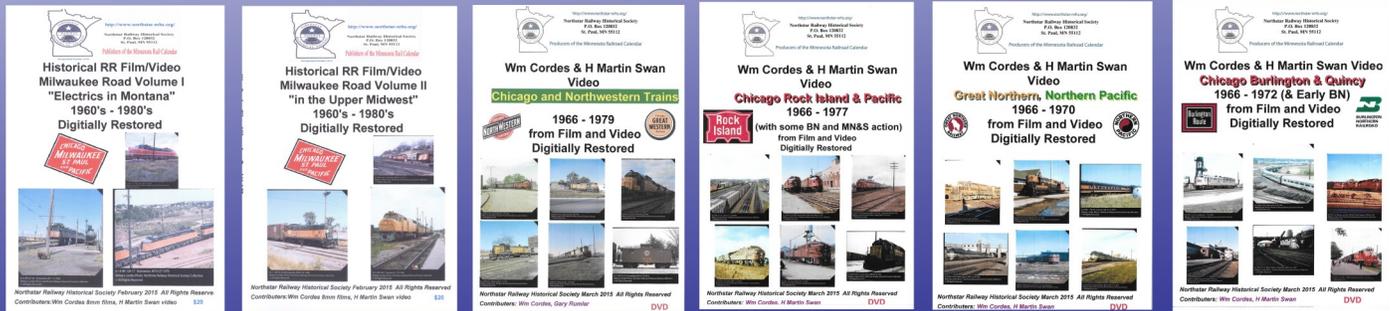


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GN NP & SPS trains from the 1960's to 1970 , and CB&Q trains from the 1960's thru Early BN in 1970 and 1971 are now available. \$20 Each, 3 for \$50.

You can order by mail to RR DVD sales, 1515 Creek Meadow Dr NW Coon Rapids MN 55433. Please specify which DVD's wanted. Also add a \$3.95 shipping charge to each order and make checks payable to 'Northstar Railway Historical Society'.

These are 1960's and 1970's historic 8mm films from the Wm. Cordes and H. Martin Swan collections converted and edited to DVD.

Tubbesing261@yahoo.com For more info. Preview of DVD's on Youtube (link —>. <https://youtu.be/4ErQ2iQcAB0>)

**More New DVD's are planned from Wm Cordes Film collection of the Northstar Railway Historical Society Archives, and some Modern Railroad Video from the 2000's.**