

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

Northstar News

COLD and Snow of Winter is upon us.

L: CP Holiday at M&NS Jct
Crystal MN Dec 10 2017
R: Santa Train at LSRM in
Duluth Nov 24 2017
Photos by Dawn Holmberg

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Meeting Notice

Next business meeting will be held on
Saturday January 20th 2018, 2018 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 Video from the 1940's by Ken Zieska.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together January 20th 2018 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.

Next newsletter will be out around February 2 2018.

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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 editor:

Annual Membership Dues are Due!

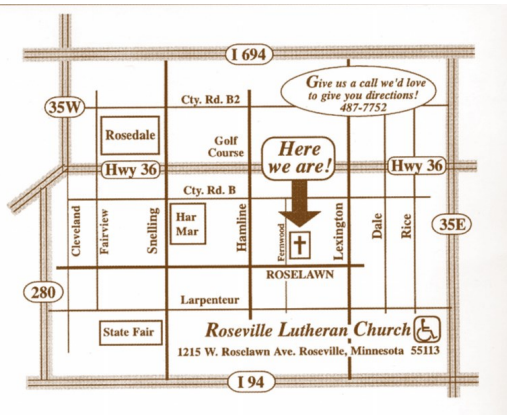
Please find an invoice in your mail for 2018 dues and remit promptly.

\$18 for NRHS members, \$21 for subscribers.

Dues help pay our monthly meeting costs as well as 10 issues of the Northstar Railway Historical Society News.

Our Holiday Banquet at Guldens Restaurant was a great success. Over 40 members and guests attended and President Mark Wegner of the TC&W gave a great talk. An enjoyable evening was had by all..

2018 MN RR Calendars are still available. See Dawn Holmberg at the next meeting to get your copy!



Cartwright Led Tour of Minnesota Railroads.

(John Cartwright is Northstar Railway Historical Society Curator and a long-time member)

By **TERRY DAVIS** davis@hutchinsonleader.com Jan 14, 2015

As a young boy growing up in the 1960s, John Cartwright had a father who worked for the Great Northern Railway and understood and nurtured his son's fascination with trains. The father and son traveled across Minnesota photographing trains, but also the depots and other railroad structures that held special interest for John. Many of those slides, and others John shot after he was old enough to drive himself, filled a 90-minute presentation Cartwright gave Monday night at the McLeod County Historical Museum. About 15 local rail-fans who braved sub-zero temperatures outside were treated to visits to depots of the major players in Minnesota's colorful palette of railroads in the early diesel era. Included in the slide show were depots in Hutchinson, Glencoe, Silver Lake and Winsted. "I've been interested in railroads most of my life," Cartwright said. "I was always drawn to railroad depots and structures, unlike most people who liked railroads who were interested in the trains." Having a father working for the railroad also gave John ample opportunities to ride the rails in the final, pre-Amtrak days of named streamliner passenger trains. *Continued on next page.*

Continued from previous page: Photos of those spiced the show. His presentation, grouped by railroads, detailed how companies built a variety of depots tailored to fit the importance of the towns to the railroad's traffic. It also showed how railroads modified, simplified and downsized their stations in many cases as traffic, both freight and passenger, declined. Except for a few retained as museums or moved off-line for private use, most towns no longer have their depots. Railroads began knocking them down in the 1950s. The culling continued into the early 1980s. Cartwright brought with him his detailed pen and ink drawings he has made of many Minnesota depots. He sells them at various railroad and art shows, including the Hutchinson Arts & Crafts Festival for the past several years.

Friends of the 261 Acquires Two Dome Cars.

By Steve Glischinski Trains Newswire December 19, 2017 –Provided by Rick Krenske



MINNEAPOLIS – The Friends of the 261, owners and operators of Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261, has purchased two dome cars from Canadian National. The cars are former Western Pacific *California Zephyr* dome coach *Spirit of Superior* and Algoma Central dome coach observation No. 901. The cars were last used on CN's Algoma Central Railway Agawa Canyon Tour Train but have been stored for several years in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. CN gained ownership of the cars when it acquired Wisconsin Central and subsidiary Algoma Central in 2001. The cars are currently in transit from Canada to the Friends shop in Minneapolis.

The former WP car was named *Silver Palace* and numbered 813 when the Budd Co. delivered it to Western Pacific in 1948. It remained in *Zephyr* service until the train was discontinued in 1970, then was sold to Auto-Train. It went through a succession of owners, including country singer Merle Haggard, and was leased to operators such as Branson Scenic, White River Scenic, and RailCruise America before WC bought the car in 1998. It received a complete refurbishing in 2002. The car is Amtrak compatible and will enter service in 2018.

The Algoma Central dome was one 15 of the dome blunt-end observation cars with a bar and 37-passenger lounge ordered by Union Pacific from American Car & Foundry in November 1952, and delivered in February, March, and April 1955. UP received the car in February 1955 and assigned it to the *City of Los Angeles*. It was sold to Auto-Train in 1972 and renumbered 901. In late 1981 it was sold to a dealer, then in 1982 was sold to the Green Bay & Western Railroad for use as a business car. It was initially to be named *Cross Lake* but the name was never applied and was changed to *Trempealeau River*. WC acquired the GB&W in 1993, and in 1997 the car was moved to Algoma Central and renamed *Algoma Country* for use on the Agawa Canyon tour train. The car will need an overhaul before it can be returned to service.

With the addition of the two cars, the Friends will own cars built by the three major dome car builders: American Car & Foundry, Budd Co., and Pullman Standard. The Friends has owned P-S built Milwaukee Road full-length dome No. 53 since 2005. Two railroads, the Burlington and Southern Pacific, constructed dome cars in their shops.

Plans are to repaint the two domes into Milwaukee Road orange-and-maroon passenger colors as time and funding permit.

Amtrak Cascades' Train Derails onto Washington highway.

By Justin Franz | December 18, 2017 –provided by Rick Krenske

(Note, two seriously injured people, Edward Berntsen (Railmove NW) and Gary Emmons are members of the Tacoma Chapter of the NRHS. Our wishes is for a speedy recovery for both)



Amtrak P42 No. 181 marks the end of 'Cacades' train No. 501 that derailed on Monday morning.

These overall views shows cars off both sides of the tracks at the Interstate 5 bridge near DuPont, Wash. Photos: Steve Carter

SEATTLE – Several people are dead after a southbound *Amtrak Cascades* train derailed on an overpass above Interstate 5 near Olympia. Although several motorists were injured when the train fell off the bridge, there were no fatalities on the roadway below. Amtrak reports that there were 78 passengers and five crew members on board.

A photo posted by the Washington Department of Transportation shows multiple passenger cars and a locomotive blocking the highway and hanging off an overpass Amtrak confirmed via Twitter that the derailment involved train No. 501, a Seattle to Portland *Cascades* run that was inaugurated today with the opening of the new Point Defiance Bypass. The new route takes *Amtrak Cascades* and Sound Transit trains away from Puget Sound and inland toward Interstate 5, allowing for additional service between Seattle and Portland. The derailment occurred on the new bypass between Lakewood and Olympia. *Continued on next page.*

Continued from previous page: Amtrak has temporarily suspended service south of Seattle. Amtrak is encouraging people with questions about friends and family who may have been aboard the train to call 800-523-9101.

The National Transportation Safety Board is mobilizing a team to investigate the derailment. Amtrak President and Co-CEO Richard Anderson told CNN this afternoon that positive train control had not been in use on the train.

CBS News affiliate KIRO-TV talked to a man aboard the train who said at least seven cars derailed.

The train was a Talgo Series 6 trainset, *Mount Adams*, owned by the State of Washington. The state owns three Series 6 train sets and Amtrak owns two Series 6 train sets. The Series 6 fleet were assembled in Seattle on 1998 and started revenue service in 1999, according to a Talgo spokeswoman. "We had just passed the city of DuPont and it seemed like we were going around a curve," Chris Karnes says. "All of a sudden, we felt this rocking and creaking noise, and it felt like we were heading down a hill. The next thing we know, we're being slammed into the front of our seats, windows are breaking, we stop, and there's water gushing out of the train. People were screaming." State, local and federal officials were offering support and assistance to first responders and investigators immediately after the derailment. CNN reported that President Donald Trump had also been briefed and was monitoring the situation. Soon after the derailment, Trump tweeted that the incident "shows more than ever why our soon to be submitted infrastructure plan must be approved quickly" to repair "crumbling infrastructure." However, federal officials have yet to determine what caused the derailment on the recently rebuilt route. "This catastrophic derailment is horrific," Seattle Mayor Jenny A. Durkan says. "My thoughts are with the passengers, families and those injured as well as our first responders, firefighters and police who rushed to the scene."

"Today's tragic incident in Pierce County is a serious and ongoing emergency. Trudi and I are holding in our hearts everyone on board, and are praying for the many injured. They are our top priority, and I know first responders are doing everything to ensure everyone has the care they need," Washington Gov. Jay Inslee says. *This story was updated at 6:24 a.m. Dec. 19.*

The Questions Investigators Will Be Asking After Amtrak Derailment.

Black box records speed, operational data By PHIL GAST AND DARRAN SIMON , CNN Posted: 4:02 PM, December 18, 2017

CNN - The 20-member [National Transportation Safety Board](#) go-team that's been rushed to the scene of the deadly train derailment in Washington state will scour data and interview those on board. The [Amtrak](#) train's speed is among the factors federal investigators will study. The train was traveling at more than twice the speed limit for the section of track it was on, the NTSB said. The train -- making its inaugural trip on modified track -- derailed Monday morning near DuPont, spilling 13 of 14 cars and leaving three confirmed fatalities, officials said. Amtrak said it will cooperate with the NTSB and all authorities. "At this time, we will not speculate about the cause, and we encourage others not to speculate as well," the company said in a statement. NTSB Investigator in Charge Ted Turpin has been on site since Monday afternoon and the full investigative team will be there Tuesday morning. Here's some of what the NTSB will study:

Speed of the train

The train was traveling 80 mph in a 30 mph zone, according to NTSB spokeswoman T. Bella Dinh-Zarr. Most of the route was graded for a maximum speed of 79 miles per hour; the speed limit on the curve where the crash occurred is 30 miles per hour, said Rachele Cunningham with Sound Transit, which owns the tracks. Amtrak CEO Richard Anderson said positive train control was not activated on the Cascades service track at the time. The system -- which combines GPS, wireless radio and computers to monitor trains and stop them from colliding, derailing or speeding -- was still being implemented, according to Sound Transit spokesperson Geoff Patrick. PTC is federally required to be implemented nationwide by December 2018. The target date to have PTC operational on the segment of track involved in Monday's derailment is the second quarter of 2018, according to Patrick.

Black box

The so-called black box, or event data recorder, should provide plenty of answers to questions, CNN transportation correspondent Rene Marsh told Brooke Baldwin. It will have information on the train's speed, braking and other operational data, said Quimby. The NTSB has retrieved the data recorder from the rear locomotive, Dinh-Zarr said. There is also a recorder in the front locomotive, but that will take longer to access given how damaged the car is, Dinh-Zarr said.

Mechanics of the train

Marsh said the NTSB team will focus "very closely on the track. Was there something wrong with this track? The mechanics of the train, was it operating properly?" John Hiatt, a former railroad engineer who investigates incidents for a law firm, said he would have expected the cars to be farther from the track if speed was the principal factor. He wondered whether the train suffered a track malfunction. Railroad signals also will be examined.

Human performance

The federal go-team will interview the engineer, conductor and the other three crew members. "A very long list of information, everything from how much sleep they got the night before to what they ate this morning, any medications they may be on," said Marsh. Emergency radio transmissions between the conductor and the dispatcher were dramatic: Dispatcher: Hey guys, what happened? AMTRAK 501: Uh, we were coming around the corner to take the bridge over I-5 there, right north into Nisqually and we went on the ground. Dispatcher: ...Is everybody OK? AMTRAK 501: I'm still figuring that out. We got cars everywhere and down onto the highway. Marsh said investigators will want to know whether the crew was familiar with the new route. Deborah Hersman, former chairman of the NTSB, told CNN that the crew would have been made familiar with the route's terrain, topography and speed limits.

Condition of the track

The Washington State Department of Transportation said it had received grants to improve a stretch of freight and military transport tracks for passenger use. The bypass rerouted passenger trains from a waterfront line to a shorter line that ran along I-5. "Today was the first day of public use of the tracks, after weeks of inspection and training," the agency said in a statement. *Copyright 2017 by CNN NewSource. All rights reserved.*

The Story on Amtrak Cascades Train 501 Derailment.

DECEMBER 21, 2017 by *ADRON*

First off, yes, I was aboard the Amtrak Train 501 in car 2, seat 4c. I had just sat down after having a breakfast burrito and speaking with several people in the bistro car. I spoke with the bistro attendant and her trainee that was with her. We talked about how great train travel is, how much better it is than flying, and we spoke with a passenger named Scott Claggett.

It was the first time Scott was taking the train on this route, which was also the first time for everybody at this hour! He usually had to fly and he was euphoric (as were most of us) at how easy and how much more comfortable it is. We discussed what I was up to, how I had my bike aboard and was bound for Portland to meet up with some friends, ride around the city, enjoy some tasty food and eventually head back on the late train that day.

I sat down and looked out the window. We whizzed by traffic over on the Interstate. We were easily doing full track speed limit of 79 mph. I could tell just from the rate we were passing the traffic on the road, but also how fast we zipped through Lakewood Sounder Station. The new tracks along this route are super smooth, solid, and stable. Then... well, back to this in a moment. First more of the events before.

First Observations, Rewinding Just a Bit

A few observations I made when boarding the train in Seattle. The train had a lead engine and a trailing engine. So no cab car. The trailing engine was one of the older engines, a Genesis, while the lead engine was one of the brand new engines that WSDOT just bought to put into service along this line. The train set itself was the standard Talgo equipment that Amtrak has used for service in the Amtrak Cascades corridor between Vancouver, British Columbia and Eugene, Oregon for decades. It was older, but still perfectly reliable set equipment. As things go, most of these train sets and cars are perfectly usable for well past 40 -50 years if maintained well.

Just before boarding we were even given these inaugural trip placards. A nice little souvenir I thought. I put it on for the moment, before heading out to board the train.



All Aboard Minnesota People Are Asking For a Definite Date For Next Year's Train Day at SPUD.

-From John Goodman

They've changed it back to the first Saturday in May and it will be a one day event. They still haven't told me the exact times. Since it's only one day now they are thinking of extending the hours but it will definitely be that first Saturday in May.

I am waiting for them to set up an Eventbrite link which is the way people will be registering now.

Robert Ball

Last Unpatched C&NW Locomotives to be Repainted UP.

Trains newswire By [Chris Guss](#) | December 18, 2017 –provided by Rick Krenske, John Goodman



NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – Union Pacific is on a quest to create a unified fleet of locomotives all wearing its corporate paint scheme, and the two most visual casualties will be Chicago & North Western C44-9Ws Nos. 8646 and 8701. Officials at UP headquarters in Omaha, Neb., have given notice that all remaining locomotives not in UP colors will be repainted, which will make the fleet all yellow-and-gray for the first time since the Chicago & North Western merger of 1995.

While there are many locomotives in C&NW, Southern Pacific, and St. Louis Southwestern paint with Union Pacific reporting marks and road numbers, only two units remain untouched, C&NW Nos. 8646 and 8701.

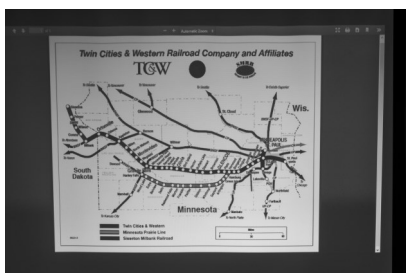
C&NW Nos. 8701 and 8646 roll intermodal traffic westbound through Rochelle, Ill. earlier this year. Chris Guss

When the last SP and SSW locomotives were relettered and renumbered in 2016 with temporary patches, these two became the last locomotives on the UP roster to remain in their original paint and road numbers.

The two locomotives were pulled from the Illinois Railway Museum in early December and departed from Chicago's Proviso Yard for North Little Rock, Ark., on Dec. 16 as part of the locomotive consist of train MPRPB 16. After their release from the paint booth in North Little Rock, No. 8646 is scheduled to assume the identity of UP No. 9750 and No. 8701 will become No. 9805 and will blend in with the thousands of other units wearing the same colors.

When the final unit is repainted in UP colors, it will spell the end of decades of true heritage locomotives on one of the greatest railroads in North America.

Pictures from Our Holiday Banquet Dec 3 2017. –by Dawn Holmberg



Twin Cities & Western Map



Speaker TC&W President Mark Wegner in the distance



Members enjoying themselves



Wild Fires in "Southern California. From: sheehans2016@gmail.com
 [All_Aboard] <All_Aboard@yahoogroups.com> Dec 7 2017

All Amtrak service San Jose-Los Angeles cancelled due to wildfire. Due to the Ventura County wildfire, which has reached the Pacific Ocean, all Surfliners north of Los Angeles are cancelled today. The southbound Coast Starlight is terminated at Oakland and will turn there; passengers for San Jose will be accommodated on Capitol Corridor; to Los Angeles on the San Joaquin; to intermediate points, by bus.



Trains at the Rensselaer train station Thursday Nov. 30, 2017 in Rensselaer, NY. (John Carl D'Annibale / Times Union)

At 50, Empire Service has Covered a lot of Ground.

Albany Timesunion by Eric Anderson Dec 2 2017 –provided by John Goodman

Fifty years ago this weekend, the famous "name" trains of the New York Central — the 20th Century Limited, the Wolverine, the Empire State Express and others — made their last runs. In their place were a couple of long-distance overnight trains covering the Central's routes between Chicago and New York, bearing numbers instead of names. They were supplemented by a series of short-haul trains upstate that together would be known as the "Empire Service." On Monday, railroad and local officials will gather at the Rensselaer rail station to mark the 50th anniversary of the Empire Service, which has grown to be one of the busiest corridors on the nationwide Amtrak system. The idea of fast, frequent service on corridors of a couple hundred miles grew out of an experiment in 1966 in Ohio where the Central set a speed record of 183 mph with a diesel passenger car set, said Mike R. Weinman, then an operating management trainee with the New York Central.

Robert D. Timpane, then the railroad's assistant vice president, operating administration, touted this as the future of rail passenger service, Weinman said, and convinced the state Public Service Commission to approve the plan.

"He practically had to pledge his firstborn to convince them," Weinman recalled Friday.

Early on, "cars were beat up. The dining car was a snack bar, when it was open," recalled Dick Barrett, a railroad historian who serves on the board of the New York Central System Historical Society.

But the service began to thrive as the railroad refurbished its aging passenger cars.

"It was a marketing campaign," said Bruce Becker, who grew up in New York state riding the refreshed trains and is now vice president of operations for the National Association of Railroad Passengers. "They refurbished coaches specifically for Empire Service. They were able to speed up the schedule."

The effort succeeded, for awhile.

Weinman says it even made an operating profit. But the service became "collateral damage" as the merger of the Central with the Pennsylvania Railroad tanked, and the combined entity soon filed for bankruptcy.

Albany's Union Station also was facing closure as plans for the new Interstate 787 required removal of the tracks. The merged Penn Central replaced it with a small station in Rensselaer, which opened at 11 p.m. Dec. 29, 1968, said Ernie Mann, a Rensselaer resident and author of *Railroads of Rensselaer*.

Amtrak's assumption of service on May 1, 1971, relieving the freight railroads of what had become a money-losing burden, also led to another round of long-distance train eliminations nationwide.

"Not many people gave Amtrak much of a shot," said Mann. "For suffering under the budgets from Washington, I think Amtrak has done very well."

Ridership, helped along by various oil embargoes in the 1970s, climbed, and by 1982 Amtrak had replaced the initial Rensselaer station with a larger one.

That station, too, fell to the wrecking ball as a new, much grander station opened in 2002.

And while many of the name trains were revived, many routes were altered.

You could no longer take the Wolverine to Annandale (actually, Rhinecliff), no matter what the Steely Dan song might say.

The train, which ran between New York and Chicago via Albany and Detroit, today, operates only as far east as Detroit.

But the 18 daily trains on that initial Empire Service schedule back on Dec. 3, 1967, have expanded to 26 weekday trains on the current schedule.

Nearly 1.16 million people rode Empire Service trains in fiscal year 2017, up 0.6 percent from the year before. And the 855,176 people who started or ended their trip at the Albany-Rensselaer station in fiscal 2016 made it the ninth busiest in Amtrak's nationwide system.

Monday's celebration at the Rensselaer station begins at 11:15 a.m.

Among those attending will be the daughter who Robert Timpane nearly had to pledge to the Public Service Commission to get the Empire Service up and running.



November 18, 2017

Praveena Pidaparathi with MnDOT's Passenger Rail Office provided an update at the November meeting of the Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission. Additional analysis will be done as part of the Phase 1 study to evaluate Alternative 4, a Chicago to Saint Paul round-trip separate from the seven Hiawatha trains between Chicago and Milwaukee. The scope of the study had been narrowed earlier from four alternatives to one, however, the Federal Railroad Authority would like Alternative 4 examined more closely. Additional modeling is required to learn if this alternative would require any additional track improvements. The alternatives analysis is still expected to be completed on time; however, completion of the conceptual design and cost estimates will be delayed.



Minnesota Commercial Ends Service to Bayport, Minnesota.

From Trains Newswire By [Steve Sweeney](#) | December 29, 2017

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Minnesota Commercial Railway has ended service to Anderson Windows in Bayport, Minn., which it served via trackage rights over BNSF Railway and Union Pacific. The last run from St. Paul to Bayport happened on Dec. 28.

The railroad cited several factors in ending the service, but a major issue was BNSF's policy that all trains running on their mainlines in the area comply with U.S. positive train control laws as of Jan. 1, 2018. Minnesota Commercial President John Gohmann says the railroad could not justify the half-million-dollar cost of equipping two locomotives with PTC. In addition to that cost, Gohmann says there were also prohibitive insurance costs from Meteorcomm, the satellite transmission vendor owned by four Class I railroads. There were also unspecified Minnesota Commercial back office costs to monitor PTC equipped locomotives.

To reach Bayport, the short line ran on approximately six miles of BNSF's ex-Great Northern Midway Subdivision and about 18 miles of UP's ex-Chicago & North Western Altoona Subdivision, then on a short UP branch into Bayport.

Anderson Windows, which opened its Bayport factory in 1913, was once a huge rail shipper. At one time, it was served by three railroads: Chicago & North Western's Omaha Road, Milwaukee Road, and Northern Pacific. In recent years, Andersen was down to about 100 total cars a year — all plastics. To break even, Minnesota Commercial had to accumulate at least 10 hopper cars at its yard in St. Paul before making the run to Bayport, but cars were taking an average of 35 days to arrive at the yard. In the end, the short line was either breaking even or losing money on the service, making the decision to end it easier.

The railroad has made arrangements to transload Andersen plastic cars starting Jan. 1. Andersen has another plant in Pine City, Minn., which has been receiving rail-truck transload plastics for several years.

"Andersen has been cooperative and understanding, which we appreciate," Gohmann said.

Another casualty of the PTC mandate will be Minnesota Commercial's operation over BNSF to Northtown Yard in Minneapolis. When Minnesota Commercial took over operations of the Minnesota Transfer Railway (owned by the Class I railroads of the Twin Cities) in February 1987, all the former owning roads agreed to interchange with the new railroad at its yard in St. Paul. In 1990, Burlington Northern asked the short line to do interchange with them at Northtown. BN, then BNSF, continued to do select interchange with the short line in St. Paul in addition to Minnesota Commercial's run to Northtown, but this practice will change Jan. 1 and BNSF will operate the interchange exclusively, as Canadian Pacific and Union Pacific currently do.

Scene + Heard: Vinternatt by Matt Blewitt Special to the Star and Tribune Dec 21 2017



TCRT Street Car at the MSM –by Dawn Holmberg

Santa left his sleigh behind, driving a streetcar to Vinternatt, the annual luminaria event held by the Minnesota Streetcar Museum along the Como-Harriet line in south Minneapolis.

Hundreds of children each placed a toy under the station's Christmas tree for Toys for Tots.

Santa helped families board the streetcar, which traveled along the lamp-lit rails.

After returning to the station, guests warmed up with hot cocoa around the wood fire, roasting marshmallows and recounting their favorite moments of the journey.

Changes to Southwest Light Rail Mean Another Delay.

Addition of crash wall is among reasons the line's debut now set for 2023.

By JANET MOORE janet.moore@startribune.com –Provided by Rick Krenske

The bid package to build the \$1.9 billion Southwest light-rail line has been retooled again, causing the Metropolitan Council to further delay the project, pushing its opening for passenger service to 2023 instead of 2022.

The changes announced Tuesday were partly caused by the late addition of a \$20 million crash-protection wall separating freight and light-rail trains along a rail corridor just west of Target Field. The wall was required by BNSF Railway, which owns the rail right of way between the Royalston Avenue/Farmers Market and Bryn Mawr stations.

As a result, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Minnesota legislative leaders pushed for more environmental studies to see how the wall, which will be 10 feet high in spots, will affect the area. There will be 45 days for public review and comment.

The additional environmental work must be completed before the Met Council can award the construction contract, the amount of which has not been released publicly. Bids are due May 3 rather than Jan. 9.

The 14.5-mile line, an extension of the existing Green Line, will connect downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie. The FTA is expected to pay for half of the project's cost, with local sources making up the rest.

The first round of bids to build the project, which ranged from \$797 million to \$1.08 billion, were thrown out by the council because they were too costly and "unresponsive."

This caused a four-month delay, adding \$12 million to \$16 million to the project budget. It's unclear how much the delay in bidding announced Tuesday will add to the project, and whether that will increase the overall \$1.9 billion price tag.

Tuesday's news from the Met Council prompted Rep. Paul Torkelson, R-Hanska, who chairs the House Transportation Committee, to question the Southwest project's viability.

The "announcement is yet another reminder of how profoundly expensive and chaotic the Southwest Light Rail process has been," Torkelson said. "Every month that goes by means significant additional costs to Minnesota taxpayers — I think it's time for an honest conversation about whether it's prudent to keep sinking tax dollars into a project whose federal funding remains uncertain at best."



O Winston Link Remembered. –by Don Crimmin Dec 24 2017

Sixty years ago tonight renowned photographer and early audio engineer O. Winston Link made this recording of N&W Train 42 at Rural Retreat, VA, making its regularly scheduled station stop. The church carillon was playing Christmas hymns (he arranged for the church carillonist to play until he came and told her she could stop) as you hear the N&W J class 4-8-4 approach from the distance, make its stop with the closing vestibule trap door and then train then accelerates into the night.

It, along with Link's night photographs, was pure genius. Turn off the lights, turn up the computer and enjoy 9 minutes and 20 seconds of Americana that will never return. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbzAJOW34DM>



**From: "Fire Up 611-
Virginia Museum of Trans-
portation Special An-
nouncement-Moonlight
Dome Excursion.**

**The Savannah Rambler
Private Dome Car Experience!**

**Enjoy a relaxing luxurious private
railcar journey to Savannah, GA
or Charleston, SC! May 4th-6th,
2018.**

The Savannah Rambler is part of a series of exciting private railcar trips the Virginia Museum of Transportation Inc. will be operating in the Spring of 2018.

These trips will operate behind Amtrak. The 611 will not be pulling these trips, but the proceeds will go towards the 611's maintenance.

The Moonlight Dome was built 1948 for the ill-fated "Chessie" streamliner by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad. The Chessie which would have competed with the N&W on the Cincinnati-Washington DC/Newport News route. The train was cancelled before beginning service and the cars were sold off. The train was one of the first transportation modes to offer individual reading lights, as well as such first as music piped into the headrests, aquariums in the lounge car and other luxuries.

Private railcar trips allow the museum to offer some amenities that aren't possible during the regular excursions. We are selling these trips as one-ways only. This allows guests to choose what type of trip works best for their travel.

Only 24 [seats](#) will be sold on these trips! All meals, wine, beer, and a seat in the Dome is included.

Trips are being offered as ONE-WAYS to allow our guests maximize their weekend. Southbound on May 4th and Northbound on May 6th. Guests may board/Detrain at either Savannah, GA or Charleston, SC.

May 4th, 2018: [Savannah Rambler](#) - Washington DC to Charleston, SC or Savannah, GA \$349 each one-way

May 6th, 2018: [Savannah Rambler](#)- Charleston, SC or Savannah GA to Washington DC. \$349 one way.

Instructions for Purchasing [Tickets](#):

Online: Click any of the links above or go to- [FireUp611 Ticketing System](#)

By Telephone: 9 am to 9 pm Mon - Fri and Noon to 5 pm on Sat - Sun

1-844-613-0611 ext 1 NOTE: 611 is not pulling these trips, they are being operated in support of 611, these are single car trips operated behind Amtrak.





More Passenger Trains To More Places!

allaboardmn.org

Please consider a year end gift to All Aboard Minnesota. If you have already contributed, we sincerely thank you!

Now in our fifth year, we have made true progress to advocate and educate for more intercity rail transportation within the state of Minnesota and surrounding region.

We helped to save the MnDot State Rail passenger office this year through you, our members, and a communications blitz. And we laid the groundwork all along the Empire Builder route for a significant outreach effort in rural Minnesota by meeting with more than 26 City Mayors, Chamber of Commerce heads, Economic Development folks and more. We attended and participated in several key events including National Train Day at SPUD and Duluth, and participated in MnDots public forum in Sept. for the second train.

Your gift will help us sustain and build that momentum. There will be critical decisions on transportation funding coming before the Minnesota State Legislature, and our goal is to educate them on how critical the need is for a balanced transportation infrastructure that includes passenger rail.

Your gift will help us to:

1. Get the word out through multiple media channels that can influence decision makers such as legislators, mayors, chamber of commerce, and others.
2. Continue and build upon our Outreach efforts as described above and through public forums.
3. Advocate and educate for a true passenger rail network within the State of Minnesota, and connecting us within the upper Midwest.
4. Connect, and coordinate efforts with like-minded groups through conferences, and events. We are planning a couple of significant events this spring to really get the word out and influence our legislators. Stay tuned!!
5. Exhibit at events like National Train Day.
6. And so much more!

All of these activities cost money, and there's no better way for you to show your support for more passenger rail for the state of Minnesota. You can use Paypal or be a guest using your credit card, just go to our site and click on the "Donate" tab. Or use the form below for mailing. Remember, your gift is tax – deductible!

Thank you for your support,

The Board - All Aboard Minnesota

Print this page = Mail In Donation Check payable to

All Aboard Minnesota

PO Box 4212

St Paul, MN 55104

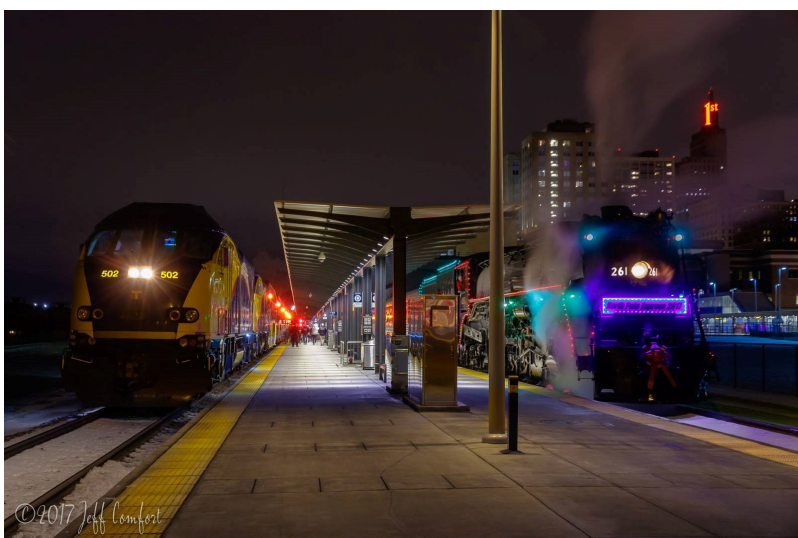
#261 Polar Express at the St Paul Union Depot. Again, the Polar Express was a great success and sold out on all the runs. This event is very popular and raises money for the #261 organization to keep #261 in fit condition for operation and maintain and restore the growing fleet of vintage passenger cars. Even the Metro Transit ran a Special Northstar commuter train from Big Lake to St Paul. This train was filled to capacity upon arrival at St Paul Union Depot.



Ron Rahn Photo



Roger Libra Photo



Jeff Comfort Photo



Robert Ball Photo



Jeff Terry Photo



Roger Libra Photo

More of Bob Ball Photo's.



Amtrak #8 at Homer MN Dec 19 2017



CP train H-19 Goodview MN Dec 19 2017



C&NW new C-40-8 Coke Train Pine Bend MN July 13 1989



C&NW Freight at Lyndale Jct Mpls July 1986



TC&W GP20-C WB at St Louis Park MN Dec 12 2017



UP Grain Crew Change on TC&W at Plato MN Dec 12 2017



Night Trains 2017 – 2018 Season.

Night Trains season is a special Holidays tradition at the Twin City Model Railroad Museum. Night Trains will begin on **Saturday, November 4th** and will run every Saturday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 pm through the last Saturday in February (Saturday, February 24th, 2018).

Night Trains Season comes to museum layouts in a magical way, the lights are turned down, the buildings and street lights glow warmly, setting the scene for specially lighted models of vintage passenger trains. The make believe town of Matlin is buried in a blizzard, and throughout the Museum the layouts are adorned with miniature Christmas lights and decorations.

Admission \$15 for Individuals.

Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenseke, Cy Svobodny, Russ Isbrandt).

Newport Train Club Show	Saturday Jan 20, 2018 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm	Woodbury High School 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury, MN 55125	\$6
Great Tri-State Rail Sale	Saturday Jan 27, 2018 9:00 am to 3:00 pm	LaCrosse Center 2nd and Pearl St LaCrosse WI 54601	\$6
Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale	Saturday Feb 3, 2018 9:00 am to 2:00 pm	Century College West Campus 3300 Century Ave. N. White Bear Lake, MN	\$6
North Metro Model RR Club sale	Saturday Mar 3, 2018 9:00 am to 2:00 pm	VFW Club 1919 Coon Rapids Blvd Coon Rapids MN 55433	\$5 Kids under 12 free
Granite City Train Show	Saturday Apr 7, 2018 9:00 to 3:00 pm	River's Edge Convention Center 10 4th Avenue South Saint Cloud, Minnesota 56301	\$6

Northstar News
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Coon Rapids MN 55433 3768
Address Correction Requested

