

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

Northstar News

Holiday Banquet is Fast Approaching!



Probably taken in the 1950's, both photos by Roger Clark. .
L: Wayzata MN, GN Train #61 is passed by GN #3 The Western Star. Northstar Railway Historical Society Archives.

R: Soo Train #1 New Richmond WI. Northstar Railway Historical Society Archives.

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Meeting Notice

Just a reminder, our meetings will now start at 6:15pm instead of 6:30pm to give more time for the program. Our next business meeting is scheduled for Saturday November 16 2019 6:15pm, at Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville. See map on page 2.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together November 16 2019 at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 4:35 pm. PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you. For the best service, Keys Café needs to know how many people will be dining, so it is imperative to let Bob Clarkson know if you are attending dinner!

Program after the November meeting — Ross Hammond will be showing his old railroad films that have been converted to DVD.

The January 2020 Meeting will be held on Saturday January 11, 2020. (note the change).

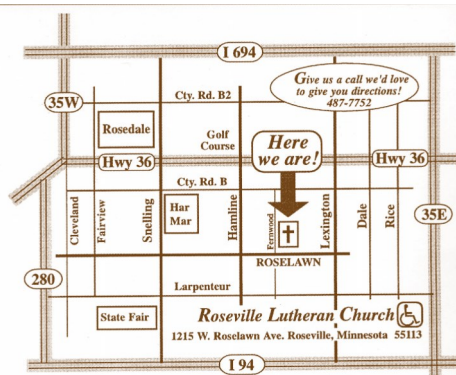
Next newsletter will be out around Dec 1st 2019.

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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:

This year, our annual Holiday Banquet will be held on the **second** Sunday (Dec 8 2019) at Guldens in Maplewood MN, Cost is \$29 per person. Sign-up brochure is included in this issue. Deadline for payment is Friday December 5 2019. We need 30 attendees to break even!!!!!!

Note: Member dues for 2020 are coming due. Members will receive an invoice this month. NRHS member dues are unchanged (\$25), but the *subscriber dues* have been raised to \$30, this is mainly due to increased postage in mailing the black & white newsletter. Please remit promptly to the address on your invoice.

Minutes of the October 19 2019 Northstar Chapter, NRHS Membership Meeting

President Bill Dredge called the meeting to order at 6:20pm. Twenty-four members, subscribers and guests attended. It was determined that there was a quorum. John Goodman moved and Frank Wilke seconded a motion to approve the September 2019 Northstar Chapter meeting minutes as published in the Northstar News. The minutes were approved by a voice vote of attendees. Bill Dredge gave the Treasurers Report as Russ Isbrandt was absent. He announced the amounts in both the Chapter's and the Calendar's checking accounts as of October 16th. The bottom line is the Chapter's finances are less by about \$1000 as they were at this time last year.

Dawn Holmberg gave the Library Report. We have documented the Roger Clark Donations and are finding places to store the material. Richard Tubbesing stated that Russ Isbrandt has sent a letter to Mrs. Roger Clark denoting the donations made. Dawn Holmberg gave the Calendar report. The 2020 calendar was delivered in August 2019 and all deliveries to retail vendors have been made and paid for, except for Choo-Choo Bobs, which has been sold to new owners. Photo selections for the 2021 calendar have not begun yet. The Calendar post card has been sent and we have many orders in our mail-box that have not yet been sent out. Dawn Holmberg gave the Meeting Location report. We are booked for the rest of 2019 at the Roseville Lutheran Church and are in the process of negotiating with the church for the first five months of 2020. Richard Tubbesing stated that at the last BOD meeting the decision was made that the January meeting will be the second Saturday of January and not the third Saturday and will be noted in the next newsletter.

John Goodman gave Trip Director Report. Possibilities for next year are the Boone and Scenic RR but there is no news that the steam engine will be running. Riding the D&NE #28 at Lake Superior Railroad Museum is an option, but we are not sure the #28 will be running next year. Trips to the Green Bay Museum or the IRM in Illinois are options but require an overnight stay so these options will not be considered. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: The Iron Horse Museum near Chisago MN is acquiring a combine car, and that might be an option either for our picnic or our August trip. The Holiday program is set for December 8, 2019 at Guldens Restaurant. We will have Railroad Consultant Rob Mangles as the speaker. We need Thirty attendees to break even. Richard Tubbesing said the Holiday Banquet sign-up sheet will be attached to the next newsletter. The Cost of the Holiday Banquet is \$29.

Newsletter Report was given by Dick Tubbesing. The newsletter costs the chapter about \$70 a month, and to lessen our cost, signing up for the Electronic Version (E-mail) by more members would help reduce our cost.

John Goodman gave the Cheer Committee report. Mike Mackner is in the hospital for a diabetic procedure and is expected to recover. Marty Swan had a fall and is still recovering from previous illness and he is hopeful to attend a future meeting. Richard Tubbesing stated that Bob Ball has recovered from an attack of his chronic condition and has resumed his outstanding railroad photography as evidence from his posts on his Flickr account.

The Web report was given by Dan Meyer. He is entering our chapter announcements on Facebook.

John Goodman gave the National Director's report for Jim McLean. The NRHS bulletin has been sent out, and there is consideration to have four issues in the future instead of the two per year being sent. The Fall conference will be held in Dallas next month. The convention planning for 2020 in Los Angeles is near completion and should be available for registration on NRHS web site soon. The NRHS has now a new web site and it is up and running. Due to a recent survey, the NRHS has largest membership of any railroad historical organization.

There was no old business to discuss.

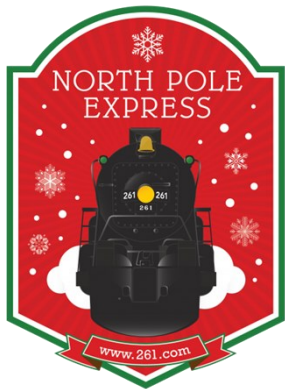
New Business: Bill Dredge commented about the Nominating Committee. It consists of himself, John Goodman and Dawn Holmberg. As of January 1, 2020, there will be only five board members. Currently they consist of President Bill Dredge, Vice President Ed Johnson, Treasurer Russ Isbrandt, Secretary Richard Tubbesing and National Representative (to begin in January) Dawn Holmberg. There will be a vote for officers at the November 2019 meeting. Russ Isbrandt has generously stated he will continue as Treasurer concentrating on membership, while John Goodman and Dawn Holmberg will handle treasurer duties for the calendar.

We will be selling duplicate books and other memorabilia at the Canterbury Train show the first weekend in November, and the St Cloud show in November. Richard Tubbesing stated that we could use more volunteers to man our tables at these shows.

Richard Tubbesing stated that in December, invoices will be sent out for chapter dues renewal. Subscriber Rates are now \$30 per year.

Bill Dredge called for adjournment at 6:44pm. Ed Johnson moved and Dawn Holmberg seconded the motion, which passed.

Dawn Holmberg gave an outstanding program of her and Dan Meyer's trip to the NRHS convention in Ogden UT last May with many photos of 'Big-Boy' #4014. Ross Hammond is to give a program of his old movies that he has transferred to DVD in November. Programs for 2020 are still Open. Richard Tubbesing volunteered to show his DVD of Steam in 2019 for January. Program director will confirm in the near future. Respectfully submitted by secretary Richard Tubbesing



Dec 6-8 and Dec 12-15, 2019

Now On Sale!

Buy Tickets today at
www.261.com

At St Paul Union Depot



(MTM) We Need Help; What Can You Do to Help?

Plenty!! Here's a sampling: General Assistance, Ticket Desk - Depot Help, Shuttle Van Driver, Passenger Car Hosts, Parking Attendants / Flaggers, Train Crew Members (*must be qualified*) We could use at least 4-5 more volunteers. *"Some is good... More is Better"*.

Absolutely NO Experience is Necessary for most jobs! First-time Volunteers Welcome!

Email our Chairperson Directly, offer your name and contact info. Brian will be happy to help get you set up. Or, simply show up

Second Train Update October 9, 2019 Provided by John Goodman



Passenger rail service to Duluth, another train to Chicago, still being considered. Backers say legislative support is needed for the Chicago, Duluth proposals.



The \$30 million funding request from state coffers would move Northern Lights into its final design phase, with service beginning in 2023. (This is slightly out of focus from the article).

By [Janet Moore](#) Star Tribune **OCTOBER 14, 2019 — 8:54AM**
Supporters of passenger rail service in Minnesota, including restoration of the route from the Twin Cities to Duluth and additional service to Chicago, are plotting their push for state funding to keep expansion efforts alive. The nexus of their efforts will come during the legislative session, which begins in February. But if this year's experience is any guide — where funding requests for passenger rail projects were thwarted by lawmakers — the undertaking could be a bit of a slog. And there's no shortage of opponents who feel passenger rail is a waste of money.

"It's like a MnDOT road project; you can't just say, 'OK, there's the line and let's build it,'" said Dan Krom, director of the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Passenger Rail Office. "There's a lot of process involved." One project adds a [second daily train](#) in both directions between Union Depot in St. Paul and Chicago's Union Station, serving 13 stations on Amtrak's Empire Builder long-distance route. Since the service would not be part of the Empire Builder's far-flung route between Chicago and Seattle/Portland, Ore. — which in fiscal 2018 had a 46% on-time performance in St. Paul — supporters say it will be faster and more reliable. MnDOT estimates the cost of establishing the service would be about \$160 million, with costs shared with Wisconsin and Illinois. The Northern Lights Express (NLX) [service](#) would re-establish Amtrak service between the Twin Cities and Duluth, which was discontinued in 1985. The trip would take about 2.5 hours, similar to driving, with four daily trips and stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley and Superior, Wis. It would cost from \$500 million to \$600 million to launch. The \$30 million funding request from state coffers would move Northern Lights into its final design phase, with service beginning in 2023. Rail planners say local and state funding is critical to coaxing federal grant dollars to Minnesota. "The only way we can demonstrate support is if the state and local communities have provided sufficient money to match federal grants," said Frank Loetterle, MnDOT project manager. One fan of the so-called "short-haul" service is Amtrak chief Richard Anderson, the former chief executive of Northwest Airlines and Delta Air Lines and executive vice president at UnitedHealth Group. Well known in Twin Cities business circles, Anderson is determined to change the transportation paradigm for passenger rail service in the United States. "Airlines have abandoned small cities in the Midwest," Anderson said at a recent forum sponsored by the travel website Skift. "What's happened in these really dense markets, like Milwaukee to Chicago, is that Amtrak [has] over 90 percent market share; no one flies anymore. "As these urban corridors densify, all the millennials move to cities and don't own cars, we gradually take over more and more of the market share from airlines," he said. Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari said in an e-mail, "We're very interested in both [Northern Lights and the second train to Chicago]. We've been working closely with state and local agencies and advocates on both of the projects."

One such millennial who would frequently use service to both Duluth and to Chicago is David Baker, 27, a St. Mary's University student from Minneapolis who holds down two part-time jobs.

"I don't get vacation time at my jobs so taking weeklong trips is a very rare occurrence; a three-day weekend in Duluth or Chicago is pretty much the extent of the travel I can afford," Baker said via Twitter. "Cutting down on travel time by taking the train vs. a car would allow more time for relaxing, especially because I could be reading or finishing school assignments while on the train. I'd also feel better about the lower carbon emissions."

Amtrak could operate both the Chicago and Duluth service. "They provide service between places like Chicago and Milwaukee and Boston and Portland, Maine, and they're doing it like a vendor," said MnDOT's Loetterle. "They take in passenger fares, but if there's a shortfall then the state has to make that up. So [Amtrak] doesn't have any risk in those situations."

Another challenge involves reaching agreements to use track owned by freight railroads — notoriously tough to negotiate with. "We'll evaluate the Northern Lights Express project for safety and impacts to our freight capacity," said Amy McBeth, spokeswoman for BNSF Railway, which owns freight track between the Twin Cities and Duluth. (Canadian Pacific owns the track that would be used for the second train to Chicago.) *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: Last week, the Minnesota House Transportation Committee held a hearing in Winona about the second Chicago train project. “We visited the rail depot and all these passengers were sitting around the station because the train was very late because of snow in Montana and Wyoming and freight issues in North Dakota,” said Rep. Alice Hausman, DFL-St. Paul. That reinforced how a second train from St. Paul wouldn’t be dogged with similar delays, she said.

Rep. Paul Torkelson, R-Hanska, who serves on the committee, said reliable service on a second train to Chicago “might make it a more useful service,” but he stopped short of supporting the proposal. The Northern Lights Express project, he said, is “a lot further from reality.” “Our history with passenger rail in this state is not all that pretty,” Torkelson said, referring to Northstar passenger rail, a highly subsidized route between Minneapolis and Big Lake.

But Mayor Mark Peterson said Winona is “100 percent behind it. We think it will help not only our business community, but universities and tourism here. Come to think of it, we’re 120 percent behind it.”



CP Announces Holiday Train Schedule, Performers

October 17, 2019 provided by Rick Krenske

Canadian Pacific has announced the 2019 schedule for its U.S. and Canada Holiday Trains. The 2017 train is shown in Pleasant Prairie, Wis. *TRAINS: David Lassen* CALGARY, Alberta — Menards, N.Y.; Caledonia, Wis.; and Ossian, Iowa, will be new stops this year for the Canadian Pacific Holiday train, which announced its 2019 schedule and performers on Wednesday. The U.S. train will feature Alan Doyle and Beautiful Band in New York, with Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles, and Kelly Prescott providing the entertainment from Chicago until that train’s final show in Gleichen, Alberta. Acadian folk-music group Vishten will perform at all stops in Quebec, the starting point for both trains. The Canadian train will feature Scott Helman and Madeline Merlo from Monreal to Calgary, and Terri Clark and another performer to be announced later handling the western dates. The U.S. train, which also makes stops in Saskatchewan and Alberta, starts its travels on Nov. 25 and concludes on Dec. 18. The Canadian train begins in Montreal on Nov. 26 and concludes in the Vancouver area on Dec. 17. The complete routes and schedules are available at CP’s [Holiday Train website](#)

Station	Address	Date	Arrival	Event Time	Departure	Performers
La Crescent	215 South Chestnut Street, The Commodore Food and Spirit parking lot	2019-12-8	8:15 PM	8:30 PM - 9:00 PM	9:15 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Winona	65 East Mark Street, Amtrak Station	2019-12-9	4:00 PM	4:15 PM - 4:45 PM	5:00 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Wabasha	Gambie Avenue railroad crossing, by	2019-12-9	6:00 PM	6:15 PM - 6:45 PM	7:00 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Hastings	500 East Second Street, CP Depot	2019-12-9	8:30 PM	8:45 PM - 9:15 PM	9:30 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Cottage Grove	West Point Douglas Road, South of Seiben Bridge, in front of Youth Ser-	2019-12-10	5:15 PM	5:30 PM - 6:00 PM	6:10 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
St. Paul (Union Station)	St. Paul Union Station, 214 E 4th Street	2019-12-10	6:45 PM	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM	7:45 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Golden Valley	Level Railway Crossing at Golden Hills Drive	2019-12-11	4:45 PM	5:00 PM - 5:30 PM	5:45 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
St. Louis Park	Railway Crossing at the intersection of W. Lake Street and Library Lane	2019-12-11	6:00 PM	6:15 PM - 6:45 PM	6:50 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Minneapolis	Lions Park on 37th Avenue, between 37th Avenue and Stinson Blvd	2019-12-11	8:00 PM	8:15 PM - 8:45 PM	9:00 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott
Loretto	Hennepin County Road 19 crossing	2019-12-12	4:15 PM	4:30 PM - 5:00 PM	5:15 PM	Meghan Patrick, Tanika Charles and Kelly Prescott

It's Holiday Trolley Time at Lake Harriet and Excelsior

Catch the trolley a couple more times before the whole season is done until next spring. Provided by Rick Krenske
Nov 29, 30 & Dec 1 North Pole Trolley & Santa at ESL. See schedule on our MSM website for daily times.

Nov 30 & Dec 1 with Santa at CHSL—12:00 PM to 3:30 PM and Dec 7 & 8

December 7 Vinternatt at CHSL. See the Luminaries along our right-of-way—6 PM to 8:30 PM.



Canadian Pacific's new heritage locomotives make their first revenue run, leading train No. 197 as it departs St. Paul, Minn., at Hoffman Avenue on Oct. 18, 2019. Dan Kwarciany



Canadian Pacific train No. 197 arrives at Shoreham Yard in Minneapolis to pick up intermodal traffic on Oct. 18, 2019. Dan Kwarciany



Soo Line 4-6-2 No. 2719 pulls a special mixed train on the Lake Superior Railroad Museum's North Shore Scenic Railroad at Knife River, Minn. on Sept. 8, 2011. Steve Glischinski



**CANADIAN
PACIFIC
RAILWAY**

Metro News - New CP Heritage Units

Trains Newswire By Steve Glischinski

October 21, 2019 from Rick Krenske

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Canadian Pacific Railway's first two SD70ACU units in heritage paint schemes pulled their first revenue train on Oct. 18. The two units, Nos 7010 and 7015, wearing a variation of CP's historic original Tuscan red, gray, and gold paint scheme, led train 197 out of St. Paul. Lead locomotive No. 7010 features Tuscan red script lettering along the long hood, while No. 7015 has block lettering along the long hood. Canadian Pacific President and CEO Keith Creel selected the scheme from designs presented to him.

The units are two of ten being released in heritage paint after being rebuilt by Progress Rail in Mayfield, Ky. They are part of an order for 60 SD70ACUs using the railroad's stored SD9043MACs. Several other SD70ACUs in CP's standard red scheme have been delivered and put in service in western Canada.

Train 197 made a late afternoon departure from St. Paul, then stopped in Minneapolis to make a lift at CP's Shoreham Intermodal facility. The train then proceeded west on the former Soo Line main line en route to its ultimate destination of Alyth Yard in Calgary, Alberta. While this was the first revenue run of the heritage units pulling freight, it was not the first trip for No. 7015. It was pressed into service as power for a business train on Oct. 13 after CP FP9 No. 4106 suffered a mechanical failure, leading two other FP9s and the business train on a St. Paul-Kansas City round trip. [See ["New CP heritage unit leads business train."](#) *Trains News Wire*, Oct. 14, 2019.]

A few hours before the heritage units made their first run, the business train departed St. Paul behind all three F units after No. 4106 was repaired. This was a deadhead move back to the business train's home base in Calgary. The three Fs also wear the Tuscan red, gray, and gold paint scheme.

Soo Line Steam Locomotive to Remain in Duluth

Wisconsin city sells Soo 4-6-2 No. 2719 ending yearlong dispute

From the TRAINS Newswire: By Steve Glischinski | October 23, 2019

DULUTH, Minn. – After years of negotiations between the City of Eau Claire, Wis., and Duluth's Lake Superior Railroad Museum, an agreement has been reached for Soo Line 4-6-2 No. 2719 to remain at the museum permanently. Under an agreement reached between the city and the museum, the locomotive will be sold to the museum for \$8. In turn, the museum will forgive over \$48,000 in storage fees accumulated by the city after it exercised its right to purchase the locomotive from the museum in 2018.

The Pacific-type locomotive was donated to the city by the Soo Line and was on display in Carson Park in Eau Claire from 1960 until 1996, when it was removed and the nonprofit Locomotive & Tower Preservation Fund began restoration work. It was returned to service in 1998. With no railroads available to operate the engine in the Eau Claire area, in 2006 the locomotive was leased to the museum and moved to Duluth. It operated on the Museum's North Shore Scenic Railroad from 2007 to 2013 *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: when it came due for its mandatory federal inspection and overhaul.

Under terms of a contract with the city reached in 2015, the locomotive was sold to the museum for \$2, but with the stipulation that the city could repurchase the engine within three years. That three-year term came up in August 2018 and the city exercised its option to purchase the engine for \$4. At that point the museum began charging the city \$100 a day for storing No. 2719, and also asked the city to insure the locomotive since it was no longer owned by the museum.

City officials and interested individuals attempted to raise funds for a new display home for the engine in Eau Claire, but those efforts never bore fruit. In April 2019, the city council passed a resolution that would allow the engine to stay in Duluth, but only under certain conditions. The resolution directed city staff to retain ownership of the engine but to seek a long-term lease. The lease would require the engine to be brought to operating status in three to five years, and that the lease not be longer than 20 years. At the end of its operating life, the resolution said, the engine would be returned to Eau Claire.

The lease was major sticking point for the museum, which did not want to invest scarce resources into a steam locomotive it does not own. Through the summer as negotiations went back and forth, the storage charges continued to mount. This fall the chair of the museum's board of directors and the head of the city council met and hammered out the agreement that forgave the storage charges if the city would sell the engine back to the Museum. That agreement was approved unanimously last night by the city council.

At the council meeting City Attorney Stephen Nick said, "The sale is final, we certainly hope that the relationship is ongoing between the City of Eau Claire, the Eau Claire area and Duluth. It's a very fine Museum." Lake Superior Railroad Museum Executive Director Ken Buehler said, "We are very honored that Eau Claire has seen to it that this important piece of railroad history is preserved in an accredited Museum."

The Soo purchased No. 2719 from American Locomotive Co. in May 1923, at a cost of \$47,091.64. It is one of seven preserved Soo Line Pacific's. No. 2719 and sister No. 2718 (now on display at the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, Wis.) gained a measure of fame pulling excursion trips in the late 1950s. The Minnesota Railfans' Association chartered the two engines for several trips from Minneapolis into western Wisconsin. On June 21, 1959, No. 2719 pulled the last steam-powered train on the Soo Line, a round trip excursion from Minneapolis to Ladysmith, Wis.

Since 2017 the Lake Superior Railroad Museum has been operating Duluth & Northeastern 2-8-0 No. 28 (ex-Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range No. 332) on the North Shore Scenic. The museum's long-term plan is to restore No. 2719 when No. 28 come due for its mandatory federal inspection and overhaul in about 13 years.

Other preserved Soo Line 4-6-2s are No. 730 in Gladstone, Mich.; 735 in Minot, N.D.; 736 in Appleton, Wis.; 2713 in Stevens Point, Wis.; 2714 in Fond du Lac, Wis.; and 2718 in Green Bay.

October 05 in Railroad History: *Hennepin Island Tunnel* -Rick Krenske Metro News

Posted by: Joseph.Lechner@mvnu.edu jlechner2001 Date: Sat Oct 5 2019

"Proprietors of stores hastened to the falls, taking their clerks with them; bakers deserted their ovens, lumbermen were ordered from the mills, barbers left their customers unshorn; mechanics dropped their tools; lawyers... stopped pleading in the courts; physicians abandoned their offices. Through the streets, hurrying hundreds were seen on their way to the falls.." - Bruce Benidt in Minneapolis Star Tribune.

By mid-nineteenth century, Minneapolis was well on its way to becoming the world's greatest flour producer, thanks to abundant water power provided by the Mississippi River. In 1865, William Eastman and John Merriam purchased Nicollet Island. They conceived an ambitious plan to dig a half-mile tunnel beneath the riverbed, under Hennepin Island and St. Anthony Falls, discharging into the river below the falls. The project was designed to provide a spillway for mills located upstream of the falls. Construction began in 1868.

150 years ago today, the mighty Mississippi broke through its limestone bed. The resulting torrent destroyed the tunnel, washed away part of Hennepin Island, and threatened to undermine St. Anthony Falls. Dams were built to divert the river; a wooden apron temporarily stabilized the falls; in 1880 the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers completed a concrete apron that still defines the falls today. Only one bridge connected Minneapolis on the west bank with the newly-annexed village of St. Anthony on the east. City fathers persuaded James J. Hill to bridge the river and construct a depot along its western bank. The result was Great Northern's famous Stone Arch Bridge, which opened in 1883. That structure became a showpiece for GN publicity and a favored spot for rail photographers. Arriving passengers were treated to front-row views of the falls and the great mills that lined the riverbank.

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/toytrains/photos/albums/994502353>

AMTRAK pulled out of the former GN depot in 1978, and the Stone Arch Bridge fell silent. In 1992 the bridge was acquired by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Since 1994 it has been used as a hiking / biking trail.

Joseph Lechner

#261 CARS TO Chicago by Russ Isbrandt

Four of Sandberg's cars including the Super Dome and Skytop and only 24 people. Breakfast and lunch in the Super Dome. Had a great time and Steve Sandburg shot the bull with the passengers in the Skytop lounge for quite a while. With only 24 people no problem sitting back in the rear. Mart and I had the last two parlor car seats in back. Fun day despite rain almost all the way to MKE. Sunday took 334 down to CHI along with maybe about 300+. Big bunch of people got on at Mitchell Field stop. Ride back on 7 in Economy Bedroom 10 car 731 at the head end. 7 was sold out to St. Paul, arrived 18 min early. Russ Isbrandt



Metra Unveils Burlington-themed Heritage Unit

F40PHM-2 No. 211 is the latest locomotive to get a commemorative paint scheme
From the TRAINS Newswire: October 4, 2019 Provided by Rick Krenske



Former Burlington E5 No. 9911A rests between runs at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union in 2015. Don Nickel



Metra F40PHM-2 No. 211 displays its Burlington-inspired paint scheme. Metra

CHICAGO – Commuter carrier Metra has unveiled its latest commemorative locomotive, EMD F40PHM-2 No. 211 in a faux-stainless Chicago, Burlington & Quincy paint scheme. The locomotive shares many paint features with the classic stainless steel diesels of the Burlington, including E5 No. 9911A that resides at the Illinois Railway Museum in nearby Union. That includes the locomotive designation, in a vertical format, just ahead of the cab door.

The 3,200-hp model, unique to Metra, is a derivative of the classic F40PH passenger locomotive. It is used on the railroad's BNSF Railway service between Aurora and Chicago Union Station.

The locomotive follows other such commemorative paint schemes honoring Chicago area fallen flags including MP36PH-3S No. 405 painted for the Milwaukee Road and No. 425 painted for the Rock Island.

St. Paul Depot Marks Visitor, Leasing Milestones

Trains Newswire October 7, 2019 Provided by Rick Krenske



The waiting room of St. Paul Union Depot is shown just prior to the renovated station's reopening in December 2012. In 2018, for the first time since its renovation, the station surpassed a million visitors, and also leased out all available commercial space. Steve Glischinski

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The renovated St. Paul Union Depot marked two milestones in 2018, with more than a million visitors and the leasing of all the facility's available commercial space.

[The Minneapolis Star Tribune reports](#) that both were firsts for the station since completion of its renovation in 2012. The million visitors included not just Amtrak and light rail passengers, but 100,000 who shopped or attended events at the station.

More than \$240 million in federal, state, and county money was spent to restore the station. [See "SPUD reborn," August 2014 Trains.] It is still heavily subsidized, the Star Tribune notes, with about \$6 million of its \$8.2 million annual budget coming from county rail authority taxes. Parking, bringing in \$1.3 million, is its largest revenue source.

But the station is a hub of public events during the holiday season, including an annual Christmas tree lighting and European Christmas market, and also hosts a significant number of private events — just under 400 this year.

ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA



Thu, Oct 17, 2019 at 8:45 AM Your Fall Passenger Rail News www.allaboardmn.org

October 2019 Newsletter

New bills Introduced to fund passenger rail

At a MN House Transportation Committee "mini hearing" on Thursday Oct 3 in Winona, Rep. Alice Hausman introduced two bills to fund passenger rail;

1. HF 1804, which would provide \$4M for the MnDot Phase II and Final Design work for the Second Twin Cities to Chicago train out of the general fund.
2. HF 1493 which would provide \$15M for the entire MnDot State Rail Plan out of bonding funds. Since this is a bonding year for the legislature, we will keep the pressure on to get these bills passed!

We also understand the Governor has put \$4M in his bonding bill for the Second Train. Some progress was made last year in funding the MnDot State Rail office and getting support for the study to extend Northstar Commuter Rail to St. Cloud, so for this next session, we intend to build on that momentum to get the entire State Rail plan funded, finally!

AAMN provides comments at the "mini-hearing"

We were asked to provide comments at this hearing mentioned above, in which we cited our economic and mobility study we published last year. The theme of this particular hearing was about the impact of transportation on climate change. We offered facts from the study that the Second Train alone would take 90,000 people out of cars, reducing highway trips by 15M, and reduces \$32M in highway costs. Since passenger trains are three times more fuel efficient than cars, greenhouse gases would be reduced. Comments from city officials, citizens, and other interested groups were all in support of more train service through Winona.

Empire Builder, threatened again!

AAMN has learned that when Amtrak was considering annulling the Southwest Chief between Dodge City, KS and Albuquerque, NM with buses last year, the same plan was being considered for the Empire Builder between the Twin Cities and Spokane, WA. We confirmed this information from a source within Amtrak and a busing company in the Twin Cities. While we believe Amtrak has shelved these plans for now, we believe they could be reactivated given Richard Anderson's distaste for running long distance trains. On Tuesday, Oct. 8, we published a press release and you can read it on our site: [Press Release - Empire Builder Threatened](#). During the fall, we will meet with the MN Congressional Delegation, and ask that money appropriated for Amtrak in 2020 be tied to a truly national system, and that no long distance trains be discontinued.

Fargo/Moorhead Public Forum

Plans are proceeding very nicely for our forum in Fargo/Moorhead on Wed. Oct 30. We will be discussing extending the Second Train on a daytime schedule from the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead, along with the economic and mobility benefits the service would offer. We have placed the event on our Facebook page, and the events page on our site. Our partner, **Great River Rail Commission**, has been active in helping us promote the event, along with the **City of Moorhead**. Our goal is to get citizens from the community excited about this possibility, and call their respective legislators and Governors to voice support. This extension is outlined in the "emerging corridor" section of the MnDot State Rail plan.

Save the Date! Fall Informational Meeting, Saturday Nov. 16

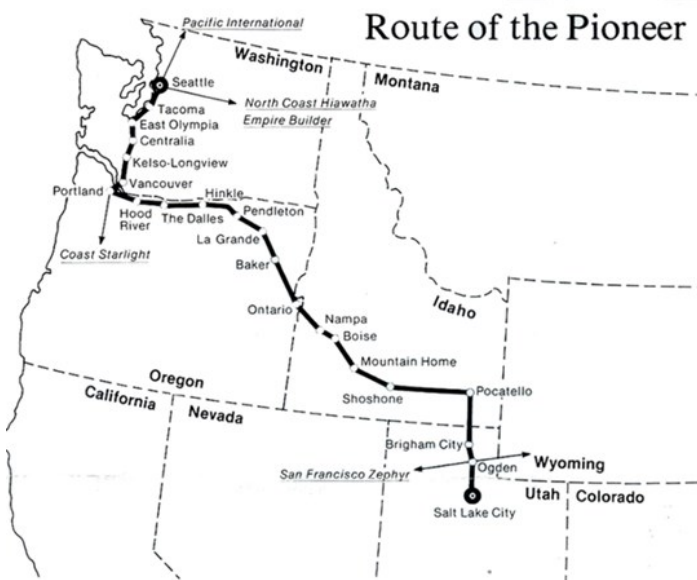
Our fall membership meeting will be held in the afternoon, at the Rondo Community Library, Rondo Multi Purpose Room, located at 461 North Dale Street, St. Paul, MN. Doors will open at 1:00pm, and the meeting will begin at 1:30pm. Representatives from the MnDOT Rail Office will give an update on their plans for passenger service along with Phil Qualy, Legislative Director for UTU-SMART MN, to talk about their view of the upcoming legislative session and the impact for passenger rail. You won't want to miss this meeting! This meeting is also posted on our events page: [AAMN Events](#). **Here is a link to the Rondo Community Library site for directions and more information:** [Rondo Community Library](#)



Northwest Rail Buffs Signal For Return Of Oregon Trail Amtrak Route To Boise

by Tom Banse Northwest News Network Oct. 23, 2019 9:39 a.m.

As scenic train rides go, it would be a plum ticket. Pacific Northwest passenger rail buffs are gathering in La Grande, Oregon, this Saturday to drum up support to bring back part of a long ago canceled Amtrak route, the Pioneer. The old Amtrak route started in Seattle, went south to Portland, then east through the Columbia River Gorge to Boise, and then to Salt Lake City, with an onward connection to Chicago. *Continued on next page:*



Map of the Amtrak Pioneer route from 1977. Amtrak, via Wikimedia Commons

Continued from previous page: A volunteer-led nonprofit called the [Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates](#) (AORTA) proposes to revive at least the Portland to Boise segment. Association president Jon Nuxoll said the Eastern Oregon Rail Summit his group is hosting this Saturday will kick off what is sure to be a long-term project.

"We think the need is there more than it has ever been. There is just one bus now a day between Portland and Boise," Nuxoll said in an interview. "We think that it is important to have another option for winter driving, for students, for people needing to get to Boise or Portland for health care. We've heard that from an awful lot of people."

The Amtrak Pioneer route through eastern Oregon and southern Idaho was a money-loser for many years before it was cancelled in 1997. Nuxoll guessed he revived segment would require a state subsidy to operate. Amtrak was still formulating a comment about whether it would be open to a revival of the line as of our deadline.

Amtrak's current long-distance lines across the American West, including the Empire Builder from Chicago to Seattle/Portland, are its top money-lovers. The long-distance routes are also plagued by poor on-time performance, largely caused by interference from freight trains on shared tracks. The Trump administration has tried several times to reduce Amtrak's federal subsidy, but Congressional budget writers reverse the proposed cuts every time – in part to preserve a modicum of train service to rural towns that have few other public transportation options.

Amtrak CEO Richard Anderson, who previously headed up Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines, favors a restructuring of the railroad's route map to emphasize more frequent service on short distance corridors between growing cities and "megaregions." But the railroad's leadership has moved slowly on restructuring because of predictable pushback from rural areas and lawmakers.

Nuxoll, who teaches high school history in Eugene, said a medium-distance route between growing Portland and booming Boise could fit with Amtrak's future strategy.

"That's part of the practical considerations," Nuxoll told public radio. AORTA's strategy to launch its proposal down the tracks involves drumming up constituent letters to state and federal lawmakers. Another initial step is to find a sponsor in the Oregon Legislature who could champion a bill to do a state study of costs, ridership and what track owner Union Pacific might need to facilitate coexistence of passenger and freight trains on the route.

Scheduled speakers at Saturday's summit include AORTA board members, Oregon DOT Rail Division administrator Hal Gard, Baker County Commissioner Mark Bennett and several members of All Aboard Washington, a sister rail advocacy nonprofit. Bennett is slated to review past, unsuccessful efforts to revive passenger rail service in the Oregon Trail corridor. All Aboard Washington is working to bring back cross-state passenger train service over Stampede Pass, which would connect Seattle and Spokane via Ellensburg, the Yakima Valley and Tri-Cities. Nuxoll said the advocacy campaign in Washington state could be instructive for Oregon.

Fall Update: Stillwater Lift Bridge/Loop Trail : Tue, Oct 15, 2019 at 1:01 PM Metro News Rick Krenske

This year's work included repairing steel, painting, upgrading the electrical and mechanical system, installing decorative lights and rebuilding the concourse area to restore the lift bridge to its original 1931 look.

As of September, all spans of the bridge are painted, and old deteriorated concrete in the concourse and sidewalks at the Minnesota end of the bridge has been removed. Crews also started pouring new concrete.

Span 6, two spans east of the lift span, will be floated back into place after the end of the boating season in mid- to late October. At that time, the lift span will be raised to serve boats until freeze-up. The move could be delayed depending on St. Croix River water levels. Crews floated span 6 out of position early this summer to allow for boat traffic while they worked on the lift span.

Work will continue on the lift span throughout the rest of the year with the installation of drums, and the ring and pinion gears on the lift mechanism to raise and lower the lift span. And although the loop trail is complete in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, the entire trail will not open until next spring after completion of the lift bridge. [More about this project](#) The lift bridge is being converted to a bicycle/pedestrian crossing that will become part of a nearly [five-mile "loop trail" system](#) connecting the new river bridge with the historic bridge and other regional trails. The lift bridge will continue to operate and allow boat navigation beneath.

If you'd like more information about the Stillwater Lift Bridge project, please visit: mndot.gov/metro/projects/liftbridge



*Crews build piers for the regional trail bridge that will span over Beltline Boulevard in St. Louis Park. On-going Activities Update [Weekly Construction](#)
Photo: [Beltline Boulevard Regional Trail Bridge](#)*

SOUTHWEST LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT

METRO Green Line Extension – Eden Prairie to Downtown Minneapolis

The METRO Green Line Extension (Southwest LRT or SWLRT) will operate on a route from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie. The line will include 16 new stations and will be part of an integrated system of transitways, including connections to the METRO Blue Line, the Northstar Commuter Rail line, and many bus routes. At Target Field Station in Minneapolis, Green Line Extension trains will continue along the METRO Green Line, providing one-seat rides to the University of Minnesota, State Capitol area, and downtown St. Paul.

[Southwest LRT Construction Update: October 18, 2019](#)

Kenilworth LRT Tunnel Construction to Begin

The Southwest LRT project will begin sheet piling for the Kenilworth LRT Tunnel in late October or early November. The project has made progress this Fall in completing significant site preparation and temporarily shifting freight rail along the tunnel segment. [Read more project facts.](#)

Due to the complex nature of the tunnel construction site and the overall duration, a press-in-piler is being used; watch it in action in this short [video](#).

The contractor plans to start tunnel sheet piling work near Park Siding Park and will move north towards Cedar Lake Parkway. Sheet piling installation is expected to last until summer 2020 with two press-in-pilers active in the corridor. Tunnel excavation is anticipated to begin Spring 2020. The most visible civil construction work on the tunnel is expected to take two years.

SouthWest Station Area in Eden Prairie

The temporary passenger drop-off lanes at SouthWest Transit Station have been moved to the west end of the parking structure; bus service continues to operate as usual. Pile driving will continue into 2020 as crews focus on different elements of the station site and the LRT bridge. Retaining wall work for the LRT guideway is also continuing in the area. Crews are constructing a temporary passenger waiting area for bus riders that will be completed late November. Then crews will demolish the current SouthWest Transit Station passenger waiting area and former office building through January. Crews are working near the intersection of Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive to build bridge piers. The sidewalk is closed on the northwest corner of Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive; please follow detour signage to the southwest sidewalk next to Purgatory Park. The west entrance to the shopping area is temporarily closed this week and will continue to be closed for approximately a month.

Eden Road Area in Eden Prairie

Crews continue to perform grading and retaining wall work. Retaining walls have taken shape in the area. Utility companies are also working in the area and near Flying Cloud Drive towards the east.

LRT Bridge at I-494/Flying Cloud Drive in Eden Prairie

Pier construction in the center median of I-494 for the new LRT bridge is nearly complete; traffic control barriers continue to be in place. The I-494 eastbound ramp to TH 212 remains closed. [See all detour maps](#). Please remember to observe the posted speed limit to ensure your safety and other motorists as well as our crews.

Valley View Road/Flying Cloud Drive in Eden Prairie

A lane restriction has been added in the area of Flying Cloud Drive and TH 212, where work has begun on the ramp from Valley View to TH 212. Traffic is being diverted onto the HOV lane. Crews are constructing bridge piers and earthwork in the area will continue for as long as weather allows.

Golden Triangle Station in Eden Prairie

Piling activities continue in the Golden Triangle Station area during the daytime. Night piling work is anticipated to resume later this Fall. Night work could continue intermittently as the segment between the Golden Triangle Station north of West 70th Street to a bridge over Shady Oak Road and Hwy 212 is completed. Night work is necessary in some locations due to vibration sensitive businesses in the area. The Southwest LRT project worked with the contractor to develop and test various noise reduction strategies for nighttime pile driving activities, and activities are continually monitored to minimize noise levels. Residents still may be able to hear construction activities. As work progresses, the Southwest Project Office will continue to look for opportunities to shift activities to the daytime.

TH 62 in Minnetonka

Eastbound traffic will be shifted to a single lane on new temporary pavement the night of October 18th. Crews are working to complete construction activities in the median. In mid-November both eastbound and westbound traffic will shift to the south side of the highway. Once traffic is shifted crews will begin the construction of the cut and cover LRT tunnel under the westbound lanes of TH 62.

Smetana Road in Minnetonka and Hopkins

Smetana Road from Feltl Court to Feltl Road remains closed until early November ([see all detour maps](#)). Crews are working on a storm sewer and will begin constructing a bypass road. Following the current closure, Smetana Road from Feltl Road to Nolan Drive will be closed for up to a year. Signs will be posted seven days before each closure. Excavation for the Opus Station, south of this area, is ongoing.



Amtrak's Interregional Growth Opportunities

Railway Age Written by **Andrew Selden** October 07, 2019 Provided by John Goodman

Years ago, the Minnesota Association of Railroad Passengers ran an experiment. It published a quarter-page print ad in a weekly "shopper" newspaper in a small town in North Dakota served by the Empire Builder. The paper laid out the ad for free. It had no glitz, no slogans, just hard information: when and where the train went, where it connected to others, sample fares, onboard amenities, and the local station address and telephone. No "800" number, no web address, no ad agency fees. The ad ran four weeks in mid-Fall, when coach seats are abundantly available.

The local Amtrak agent (remember them?) monitored the results. The agent was astonished at the number of calls and visits to the station (which tapered off starting about two weeks after the insertions ended). Many in this small town and its hinterland said they were unaware that the train even existed, or where it went. Sales skyrocketed. *Incremental* sales over the baseline at this one station during the experiment accounted for a 1,700% return on the cost of the four print ads.



Amtrak's Empire Builder

Two things have been manifest ever since W. Graham Claytor, Jr. left the helm at Amtrak roughly 25 years ago: Its subsequent leadership hasn't understood the company's mandate or its business environment and opportunity, and the company's executives mistakenly believe that their only route accounting system portrays accurately the financial results of operations of various business segments. It doesn't.

Suffice it to say that the APT costing system that management uses is *not* a *financial* accounting system, is not compliant with GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles), and therefore cannot, and does not, report the *financial results of operations* of any train, route, or group of routes.

The result is that Amtrak's largest and most commercially successful business segments languish, starved of capital and unable to exploit sterling growth opportunities, while capital provided by taxpayers is lavished upon the smallest and least commercially successful business segment, where historic ROI has been negative. This is the segment *least* capable of growth.

Given Amtrak's tiny market share (it produces fewer annual passenger miles than do motorcycles), growth is a survival imperative to create social relevance for passenger rail. Growth should be pursued where it is easy, inexpensive and the most remunerative. It is well-established that interregional trains as a group carry the most *intercity passengers*, generate the most annual *passenger-miles*, have the highest *load factor*, and in their respective corridors have the greatest *market share* for intercity passenger transport, of any trains Amtrak operates. They have by far the *highest return on invested capital*. And, according to ex-CEO Wick Moorman, echoing Graham Claytor's public expressions, they produce the only real annual profit. *These* are the trains that objectively warrant aggressive investment, growth and exploitation. But how to do that seems challenging, due both to inherent constraints of operating as an unwelcome and perhaps un-remunerative tenant on other people's industrial property, and to false perceptions that the shorter corridors are more attractive investment prospects.

Closer examination shows that the interregional business can be expanded faster, easier, more confidently, more lucratively and far less expensively than any short corridor. Let's explore ways to do that.

Growth can come from organic growth—pushing more sales through existing channels—and from scale growth—adding channels. Interregional trains easily can do both.

Organic growth can occur only where inventory exists or can be added in existing channels. That will be hard to do with ultra-high-value sleeping car sales because relatively little unsold inventory exists. A larger fleet is necessary. That is not the case with coach seats, where off-peak season sales plummet. But that occurs in a marketing vacuum. Amtrak makes no effort to promote and sell coach seats on interregional trains in slack periods, and in fact would rather withdraw inventory by suspending car-lines than trying to sell the seats.

So let's start here with the low-hanging fruit.

The North Dakota off-season local ad experiment can be repeated everywhere interregional trains call at smaller communities (the ad money would be wasted in larger metro areas, buying impressions with large numbers of people who are not candidates for interregional coach rail travel). Small-market print ads are effective, inexpensive and easy to do, even by in-house marketing staff. Awareness and purchase intent also can be stimulated by promotional activities. This list is very long,

Awareness and purchase intent also can be stimulated by promotional activities. This list is very long, but one simple example is to give two seats each to small town radio stations to use in contests and sweepstakes, in non-overlapping communities all across the route of a train.

It goes without saying that infrequent rail travel by many people will result in strong impressions, and word-of-mouth transmission of those impressions to many, many more people. That impression had better be positive, and that means that Amtrak needs to stop stripping away the amenities that make longer-distance rail travel attractive in the first place. One example: People whose trips on average cover several meal periods cannot reasonably be expected to make do with junk food from a snack bar. They don't want or need five-star fine dining, either, but "airport food" in a cardboard box is not the answer. It is a false economy. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: Amtrak's pricing policy in its surviving dining cars is foolish because it deters coach usage of the service and thus longer-distance coach travel altogether. When the diner is there already to feed sleeping car passengers, and paid for by transfers from sleeper revenue accounts, incremental use by coach passengers can be highly profitable because it need cover only the direct variable cost of food and utensils, and incremental labor costs only if a server is added. Everything else is already covered. Dining car menu prices should be cut by half.

Other simple innovations will contribute to organic growth. One would be to turn two or three seat pairs in each coach into facing pairs better to accommodate families and groups traveling together. Cost: zero.

The business class (premium coach) car on the *Coast Starlight* has been largely ineffectual, but that and other one-night trains (e.g., the Atlantic Coast Corridor trains, the *Capitol Limited* and *City of New Orleans*) could add a premium coach in an underutilized coach carbody fitted instead with second-hand (i.e., cheap) airline business class flat-bed recliner seats to create a product and price point between coach and sleeping car.

Scale growth of potentially huge volume is also available in interregional markets, easily within the constraints of the existing trunk railroad industry.

First and most obviously, adding cars to existing trains does not challenge rail infrastructure. Every western train needs and can sell out additional sleeping car inventory, year-round. These new cars can be leased rather than purchased, and could be "wet"-leased with long-term warranty/service contracts by the manufacturer. Many western trains already double-stop smaller stations, so that is not an added burden. Added traffic in the diner can be easily accommodated, and the highly successful 24-hour dining car service pioneered years ago on the *Sunset Limited* could also be re-launched. Amtrak ignored that, too, despite turning the diners into actual Next is the biggest growth driver possible: expanding the scale of the network through individually small additions to the interconnectivity of the existing route system. These are not "new routes" in the conventional sense, but small enhancements to the existing network, which nevertheless drive exponential (not merely additive) growth. These examples illustrate the concept, but many other possibilities exist all across the system.

Create a *regional network* in New England by originating either the *Adirondack* or the *Maple Leaf* train in Boston rather than New York and schedule the two trains to "hub" at Albany/Rensselaer in each direction. At almost zero incremental cost, the two trains can enable customers to travel between *all* points east and south, and west and north, of Albany, rather than only providing non-synergistic point-to-point services.

Extend an existing route to a *better end-point*. The *Saluki* should go to Memphis (not just Carbondale) and the *Palmetto* to Jacksonville. The *Carl Sandberg* should go to St. Louis, not just Quincy. By serving much bigger markets, the trains will do much more work.

profit-centers.

Interconnect existing interregional routes. Multiplying the matrix of possible origin/destination pairs on really long routes will blow the lid off productivity of the affected trains. A good place to start: Extend one round trip of the *Missouri River Runner* beyond Kansas City to Omaha, to add all of downstate Illinois and Missouri to the route matrix of the *California Zephyr*. Run that train all the way to and from Chicago via St. Louis. It doesn't matter whether anyone ever rides locally just between Kansas City and Omaha.) Guarantee the connection. And advertise it. Yes—Amtrak will have to add cars to the CZ to carry all the new traffic, but that is a benefit, not a problem. Extend the *Heartland Flyer* to Denver and Cheyenne via Newton and La Junta on the *Southwest Chief* to connect Texas and Colorado. Drop through cars from the *Southwest Chief* at Barstow for Oakland via Fresno. New train-miles are minimal and additive, but expansion of the network, and usage, is exponential.

Computer modeling of modest enhancements like these to the *Southwest Chief* route several years ago predicted that with no change in on-board service and no change in rates of market penetration, i.e., do what we are already doing, just do it in a larger O/D market matrix, would multiply average daily ridership on the stem train of the *Chief* by a factor of *six*. Yes—that requires a second train, and that in turn a new commercial arrangement negotiated with the host railroad. Adding a second daily train also adds further to ridership growth. These are normal challenges of real growth. They are positives and can be managed, not reasons to shy away from growth. Amtrak's inability or unwillingness to exploit easy growth opportunities does not mean that these opportunities are not there for the taking.

Amtrak's obsessive fixation on carrying mostly commuter traffic in the Northeast Corridor with only a tiny market share but at a public subsidy cost exceeding \$1 billion dollars a year, combined with its self-inflicted dependence upon the deeply-flawed APT costing system, blinds it to these and many other lucrative, low-cost, high-ROI growth opportunities throughout its national network.

Amtrak itself stands between America and the passenger rail network America wants and could have.

Andrew Selden is President of the [United Rail Passenger Alliance](#).



York City and Washington, D.C., will include an at-seat cashless cart service. Photo - Amtrak

Amtrak to Add Amenities to Select Acela Routes

Passenger Rail News AAPRCO News Brief - October 2019

Starting September 23, [Amtrak](#) began providing exclusive amenities on the inaugural trip of its nonstop Acela service between New York City and Washington D.C.

The two-hour and 35-minute service includes complimentary coffee, tea, water and a light snack, as well as an at-seat cashless cart service offering a limited menu of snacks and beverages. Phone-charging kits are offered for sale.

Meanwhile, Amtrak on October 1 will introduce a flexible dining service for riders in the sleeping car on the *Cardinal*, *City of New Orleans*, *Crescent* and *Silver Meteor* routes. The same service will be unveiled on the *Silver Star* route in 2020, Amtrak officials said in a press release. The flexible dining option allows riders to dine without the need for reservations



Has Amtrak Placed Itself in Jeopardy?

International Railway Journal Sep 2, 2019 Written by David Briginshaw

AMTRAK was set up in 1971 as a quasi-public corporation to save the US inter-city passenger industry from extinction following two decades of accelerating decline. Many of the surviving medium and long-distance passenger services were incorporated into a new national network which largely survives today.

From the outset, Amtrak has been a political football at the mercy of battles in Congress over its annual funding budget which has brought it close to the brink on a few occasions. Despite its roller-coaster hand-to-mouth existence, Amtrak has survived and nearly 50 years later is on course to breakeven next year.

Amtrak's survival is due to the strong support it receives from pro-rail Congressmen and women and their voters across the country who benefit from Amtrak services. The fact that Amtrak trains operate in nearly every state of the contiguous United States is vital to its continued existence. Unfortunately, Amtrak's CEO Mr Richard Anderson does not appear to realise this. He appears determined to eliminate many of the long-distance trains which serve the communities of Amtrak supporters as he believes these trains are too costly to operate.

Shorter distances

Anderson's objective is to develop shorter services linking city pairs at the expense of the long-distance network. His view, rightly, is that the USA is a very different country today compared with the situation in 1971, and that people want fast and frequent trains running relatively short distances.

While this may be so, the message does not appear to have filtered down from the Amtrak boardroom and is not backed up by Amtrak's own statistics. In July, the Hoosier State service linking Indianapolis, the university city of Lafayette, and Chicago, which operated on the four days of the week when the long-distance Cardinal train does not run, was axed because neither the state of Indiana nor Amtrak were willing to continue funding it. The 314km route is just the sort of service which Anderson says he wants to develop, and yet it has been allowed to die. The fact that Amtrak trains operate in nearly every state of the contiguous United States is vital to its continued existence.

Clearly Amtrak does not have the funds or the determination to operate a service like the Hoosier State, let alone maintain the Northeast Corridor – Amtrak's cash cow – in a state of good repair, or fund the replacement of much of its fleet which is now an average of 33 years old, and yet Anderson says he wants to invest billions in developing short-distance inter-city services. As four-time Class 1 freight railway CEO Hunter Harrison once said: "Railroads only make money when cars are moving." This also applies to passenger trains. The longer the trip, the greater the efficiency. Unfortunately for Amtrak, the punctuality of long-distance passenger trains is woeful as they are at the mercy of the increasingly busy freight railways which own most of the tracks over which Amtrak trains run. In theory, the gradual expansion of Precision Scheduled Railroading by the Class 1 freight railways, should be helping to improve passenger train punctuality, although there is little evidence of this so far.

Nevertheless, long-distance trains are often over subscribed while the load factor on shorter distance trains is a lot lower.

Cost cutting

Anderson has been engaged in a cost cutting exercise in his quest to achieve breakeven next year. While laudable, as all businesses should endeavour to minimise their costs, this is sometimes being done at the expense of providing good passenger service, for example by cutting back onboard catering. Amtrak would do well to concentrate on improving the quality of its services to maximise the yield per passenger. There are plenty of Americans who would be willing to pay a high price for superior service to travel on one of Amtrak's services crossing the spectacular Rockies for example. Other initiatives could include adding extra coaches to over-subscribed trains to meet demand and increasing frequency where possible. Asset utilisation is often poor. For example, the morning train from Seattle to Vancouver, BC, sits in Vancouver for six hours before heading south again. The same train could be used for three or even four trips per day instead of two without any additional capital cost. The development of new services is falling to the private sector rather than Amtrak. Virgin Trains USA is now operating an almost hourly-interval service between Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm

Beach, a frequency almost unknown outside of the Northeast Corridor. The company will extend the service north to Orlando and eventually west to Tampa and has taken over the project to build a high-speed line from Victorville, California, to Las Vegas, Nevada.

Meanwhile, Texas Central Railway is pushing ahead with its plans to build a high-speed line connecting Houston and Dallas, a corridor which Amtrak withdrew from a few years ago. Indeed, Houston is the fourth biggest US city but is only served by the thrice-weekly New Orleans – Los Angeles Sunset Limited. While Amtrak's ambition to develop inter-city services maybe laudable, it simply does not have access to the sort of funds needed to do so. There is no sign that Congress or president Trump are willing to change the annual funding battle needed simply to keep Amtrak going let alone expand its services. Amtrak must maintain a national network to maintain the political support it needs for its survival. <https://www.railjournal.com/opinion/has-amtrak-placed-itself-in-jeopardy>

Rail Line to Add Three South Florida Stations

<http://enewspaper.sun-sentinel.com> By David Lyons Provided by John Goodman

Brightline hopes to buttress its train ridership by tapping into the cruise line industry and two of South Florida's most prosperous cities. And it expects to more than double its annual ridership through the addition of stations at Boca Raton, Aventura and PortMiami.

"We believe the three new stations ... will contribute over 2 million incremental annual passengers once ridership at these stations ramps up and stabilizes," according to the rail line's latest financial filing.

The high-speed rail line, which is being re-branded as Virgin Trains USA, considers the three new stations as top priorities as it builds a 170-mile rail extension to Orlando International Airport.

Company spokesman Ben Porritt said it reached the passenger figures from "independent and internal ridership studies in addition to traffic software and traffic patterns," and based on when the stations are operational and have established track records.

Brightline currently serves the downtowns of Miami, [Fort Lauderdale](#) and West Palm Beach.

Those were the chief South Florida cities to be served when the line started under the name All Aboard Florida. But since taking on Virgin Trains USA as a joint venture partner, the company has aggressively pursued marketing partnerships with cruise lines and explored ways to draw customers from upper-income areas such as Boca Raton and Aventura, where a popular mall would be connected to a station by a pedestrian bridge.

In its filing, Brightline reiterated the importance it attaches to capturing cruise line passengers for its system.

"A large number of cruise passengers originate from points north

Porritt added that the rail line based its PortMiami projections on cruise passenger data for previous years, as well as projections from the port itself.

"These numbers were specific to cruisers who drive to the port from points north of our stations," he said.

Rise in ridership

Brightline carried 701,061 riders through September this year, the filing said, more than double the 340,456 riders carried in the same period last year. But the rail line said it carried 61,688 in September alone, with ridership "significantly impacted by Hurricane Dorian" and related service disruptions before and after the storm.

Although it offered no projected figures for the fourth quarter, management said its outlook for the period is "strong based on seasonal factors" and a variety of programs it started to draw cruise line passengers, business travelers and other daily commuters.

For all of 2018, the company reported carrying more than 579,000 riders.

The pace of planning for the stations' development accelerated this month as the company reached preliminary agreements with Miami-Dade County for the Aventura and PortMiami stations.

In late September, the Boca Raton City Council voted unanimously to pursue an agreement with the rail line for a station in the city's primary business and shopping district. The railroad said it is finalizing a formal agreement, which would be signed at some point during the fourth quarter. As part of the deal, the city would pay for a parking garage.

In an email Tuesday, Boca Raton Mayor Scott Singer agreed the two sides are close to a deal that would be presented to the City Council [for consideration](#) next month.

"Brightline has proposed a partnership for the costs of the construction of a garage," Scott said. "Brightline's contributions in the tens of millions of infrastructure would far outpace what is asked of the city. The city's overall portion of costs would be a small fraction of what was approved for the Aventura station."

Neither the company nor the city mentioned any cost figures for the Boca Raton station.

The cost of the Aventura station in northeast Miami-Dade County is pegged at close to \$80 million, according to county projections.

Singer said "so many in our community have expressed great enthusiasm" for the Boca Raton station and the benefits it would deliver to the city's families and businesses.

Kicking off construction soon

Miami-Dade County approved a development agreement Oct. 11 with the company for Aventura in a deal that would see the county pay up to \$77 million in public funding to buy the land and build the station. Construction would start at the end of this year, Brightline said. The beginning of service "is targeted for October 31, 2020," the filing said.

"Given the large population of the Aventura region and proximity of the station to the frequently visited mall, we expect the new Aventura station to contribute meaningful ridership and revenue to our South Florida system," the filing said.

On Oct. 17, the Miami-Dade County Commission's tourism and ports committee recommended that the county enter into a funding deal with the company to build a station at PortMiami that would serve as a way station for cruise line passengers.

September 18 in Railroad History: Minneapolis & St. Cloud Railroad

Metro News - September 18 provided by Rick Krenski Posted by: Joseph.Lechner@mvnu.edu jlechner2001

Date: Wed Sep 18, 2019 6:10 am ((PDT)) Provided by Rick Krenske

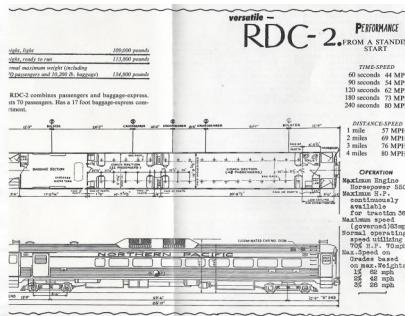
The Minneapolis & St. Cloud Railroad was chartered by the state of Minnesota in 1856. It was authorized to build a line between its namesake cities. St. Cloud (approximately 65 miles upstream from Minneapolis on the Mississippi River) soon became known as the "railway center of the upper Mississippi". The M&StCRR was acquired by James J. Hill in 1881. 130 years ago today, he changed its name to Great Northern Railway Company. Joseph Lechner

Bull Car
featuring
RDC-2

**RAIL-O'-
DRAMA**



Between
Minneapolis and Head-of-the-Lakes
via **NORTHERN PACIFIC**
Sunday - February 6, 1955
Sponsored by
Minnesota Railfans' Association, Inc.

[illegible]

	<u>Items of Interest</u>	
St. Ann. St. to White near Lake	Double Track/Auto Block	
White near Lake to Tremblant	Single Track / A.B.S.	
Tremblant to White near Lake	Double Track / A.B.S.	
White near Lake to Tremblant	Double Track / A.B.S.	
Anton to Central Avenue	Single Track / A.B.S.	
Central Ave. to Selma St.	Double Track / A.B.S.	
Selma St. to Duluth	Double Track / Train	
Duluth to West Duluth Jct.	Double Track (MS and Train)	
West Duluth Jct. to Carlton	Single Track / A.B.S.	
Carlton to St. Paul	Double Track / A.B.S.	
St. Paul to St. Anthony Park Jct.	Single Track / Orders	
St. Anthony Park Jct. to St. Ann. St.	Double Track / A.B.S.	

Elevations

St. Ann. St.	854 ft. above sea level
St. Paul	732 ft.
St. Anthony Park	1150 - 1177 ft. (approx. 14 miles north of St. Paul)
Duluth	826 ft. (above St. Louis Lake)
Superior	648 ft.

Bridge

St. Louis may drawbridge (Duluth) 479 ft. (don't rec. City records) 266 ft.
 Ave. South, Ave. North, Ave. East 962 ft.
 Rose Creek, Minn. 90 ft. highway bridge

Notes

West end of St. City (N.P. 146).

Compound Curves (Each curve listed below has six sections, all different curvatures)

N.P. 141 and 142 (all different curvatures)

Industrial tracks (all different curvatures)

all portions of Tremblant processes on

Industrial tracks (all different curvatures)

BUDD CAR RAIL-O-DRAMA
featuring RDC-2 39

**BETWEEN
MINNEAPOLIS
and
HEAD o' the LAKEs**
via
NORTHERN
PACIFIC RY.
\$6.95

SPONSORED BY



**SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 6, 1965**
LEAVE 8:50 am sharp
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YARD OFFICE
8th Av. So. & 2nd St.
MINNEAPOLIS

[illegible]

Published by Minnesota Railfans' Association, Inc.
4832 York Av. So. Minneapolis, Minn.

MRA NP Rail-O-Drama RDC 1955 (Pages 7,8)

MINNESOTA WESTERN DAY

MRA'S NINTH ANNUAL DINNER EVENT
MINNEAPOLIS TO HUTCHINSON AND RETURN



M ARCH 16, 1958

[illegible]

MRA MW Day M&StL Mar 16 1958 (Pg1.2)

[illegible]

RESEARCHER IN WASHINGTON on the eastern line, the second will add 40 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 30 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The third will add 20 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 10 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The fourth will add 10 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 5 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The fifth will add 5 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 2.5 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The sixth will add 2.5 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 1.25 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The seventh will add 1.25 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 0.625 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. The eighth will add 0.625 minutes to all trains in the New York City area and 0.3125 minutes to all trains in the Washington area. 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MRA MW (M&StL) 1958 (pages 3,4)

[illegible]

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MRA MW (M&StL) 1958 (pages 5,6)

Milwaukee Road 1939 Notepad

Indiana Railroad Sues Illinois Commerce Commission

October 01, 2019 02:47 PM Crain's Chicago Business Provided by John Goodman

The plaintiff, backed by a national industry group, doesn't want Illinois to enforce a law that would require two-person train crews. The law may affect safety and definitely affects labor costs. An Indiana railroad is suing an Illinois regulator over railroad crew size—a question with implications for safety, labor costs and workers' job security. Indiana Rail Road, backed by trade group the Association of American Railroads, sued the Illinois Commerce Commission yesterday in federal court in Chicago. The Indianapolis-based railroad says in its complaint that the state regulator can't enforce a law mandating two crew members on trains when federal law doesn't require it. "(The Federal Railroad Administration) reviewed evidence from the United States and other countries demonstrating that one-person crew operations are just as safe as multiple-person operations," the complaint says. "(Indiana Rail Road), for example, has operated trains with one-person crews in Illinois for more than 20 years. Its efficient staffing has allowed it to compete successfully with the trucking industry. And its commitment to safety has led to an exemplary safety record." **(Read the lawsuit below.)** A spokeswoman for the ICC declined to comment because the commission has yet to be formally served with the lawsuit.

The fight has been brewing since former President Barack Obama's administration. Following the 2013 Lac-Megantic derailment and explosion that killed 47 people, the Democratic administration proposed mandating at least two-person crews: an engineer and a conductor. [The proposed regulation stalled](#), with top officials in the U.S. Department of Transportation saying there was no evidence two-person crews were safer. The Federal Railroad Administration officially yanked the proposal in May, but in August, Illinois became one of several states to pass legislation to require two-person crews. It takes effect Jan. 1. Regulators can sanction railroads that operate with a single crew member with misdemeanor charges, daily civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per violation and injunctions. Indiana Rail Road is asking the court to declare that federal law trumps state law and to issue an injunction preventing Illinois from enforcing its law. At stake is the chance for railroads to substantially reduce the cost of labor needed to crew a train. Railroads and labor unions have bargained over staffing levels since the mid-1980s, when five-person crews shrank to three, and then to two in 1999, said Todd Tranausky, a Houston-based rail expert with transportation consultancy FTR. With truckers and railroads battling to move freight, railroads "don't want to be at a regulatory disadvantage relative to their competition."

Unions, railroads and regulators clash over the issue of safety. The new lawsuit says the Federal Railroad Administration's "safety data do not establish that one-person operations are less safe than multi-person train crews." Yet the federal rail safety regulator underplayed or ignored the importance of crew size in the Lac-Megantic disaster and other accidents "where a two-person crew saved the public from an even more horrific outcome," according to [a May 28 statement](#) from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen and the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail & Transportation Workers.

The wildcard in the long-running dispute is new technology known as positive train control. PTC is a system to monitor and control train movements that is expected to prevent accidents due to human error. The end of 2020 is the deadline for full implementation. Railroads have [spent billions](#) for more than a decade to build out the technology, Tranausky said, and they'd like to see a return on their investment through reduced labor costs.

Once PTC is "fully implemented and fully interoperable," trains with one crew member likely will be as safe as those with two, he said. "Until we get there, it's a lot harder to make that case."



Night Trains 2019 – 2020 Season

Night Trains season is a special Holidays tradition at the Twin City Model Railroad Museum. **Night Trains will begin on Saturday, November 2nd and runs every Saturday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 pm through the last Saturday in February (Saturday, February 29th, 2019).** 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 Family and Group Rates (Groups of 3 or more, max 10) available: The first two visitors pay full price (\$15) and each additional member of the group pays half price (\$7.50). Examples: 4 Guests: \$45, 6 Guests: \$60, 10 Guests: \$90. This equals a great savings for your family or group! Children 4 and under FREE. 2019-2020 Special Evenings *Special appearances may change without notice. Please watch our Facebook page for the latest info. Santa Visits Night Trains – Saturday, December 14th AND Saturday, December 21st – get your photo taken with Santa at the museum! Included with your regular admission, no waiting in long lines at the mall. Artist John Cartwright's Depot Art on Display and Sale. During the following weekends, artist John Cartwright will display and sell his unique train and depot art! Great River Valley System – TBD – A local N-Scale club will be displaying their modular layout at the museum inside the conference room. So come and check out this neat display during both our daytime hours or during Night Trains. Plus, they will be here thru Sunday, January 20th. For more information about the GRVS group click [here](#).**

Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenske, Bill Dredge)

Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale	Saturday Nov 23 2019 9:00 am—2:00 pm	Century College West Campus 3300 Century Ave. N. White Bear Lake, MN	\$6
Granite City Train Show	Saturday Nov 16 2019 10:00 AM—4:00 pm	St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center 10 4th Ave S St Cloud MN 56301	\$6
Great Train Show	Saturday—Sunday Nov 2, 3 2019 10:00 AM—3:00 pm	Canterbury Park 1100 Canterbury Road Shakopee MN 55379	\$10 for both days
NMMRC Flea Market and Open House	Saturday Dec 7 2019 9 am—2 pm	Flea Market: Coon Rapids VFW Post 9625 1929 Coon Rapids Blvd NW, Minneapolis, MN 55433	\$6
Twin City Model Railroad Museum (Friday Nites are Back)	Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays 10:00 am—3:00 pm Saturdays 10:00 am—5:00 pm	668 Transfer Road Suite 8 St Paul MN 55114 651-647-9628 (see Night Trains on Page 17 too)	\$15 (special rates for groups)
Hennepin Overland Model Railroad Club open house	Most Saturday's and Sunday's Oct 2019 thru January 2020. 1:00 pm— 4:00 pm	62501 East 38th Street Minneapolis MN 55406 (612) 276-9034	\$5 \$15 family

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