

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

# Northstar News

## Thanksgiving Greetings



L: C&NW Cow & Calf St Paul  
MN 1970's  
—Greg Smith Collection

R: Rock Island U-boat Transfer  
(Heading to Inver Grove Yard) at Hoff-  
man Ave St Paul (a little mishap!) -  
Greg Smith Collection



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### Meeting Notice

### Stay Tuned for Future Meeting and Activity Announcements in the Next Newsletter!

Next newsletter (December) will be out around December 1, 2020.

Monthly meeting news from Roseville Lutheran Church:  
Roseville Lutheran Church is NOT allowing their meeting rooms to be used until a review at the end of this year. Therefore, we will have virtual meetings using Zoom for the remainder of the year. The next Zoom meeting will be the third Saturday in November. The date is November 21, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Look for an invite by email from Dan Meyer in order to join the meeting.

**Time for chapter subscription renewal for 2021! Invoices will be mailed soon.**

To Our Northstar snail mail newsletter recipients:

Due to the increased cost of printing and postage, we find it necessary as so many organizations are doing, and charge for the paper copy option. You may avoid this charge by sending a functioning email address to the news letter editor, Richard Tubbesing at [Tubbesing32A@yahoo.com](mailto:Tubbesing32A@yahoo.com). This will get you the PDF file version, which is in color and has much more content. Richard Tubbesing Editor, Northstar News

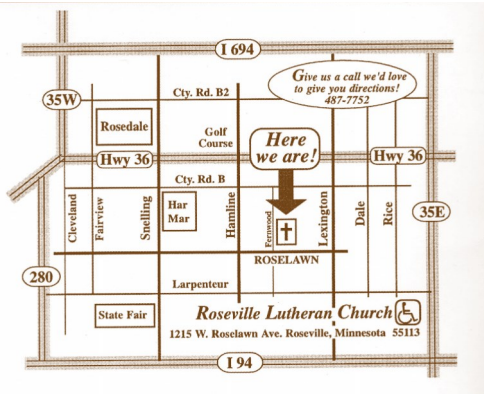
### Northstar Chapter Officers

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<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Ed Johnson</b>	<a href="mailto:railroadjohnson@gmail.com">railroadjohnson@gmail.com</a>	<b>612-408-1066 (cell)</b>

## Staff

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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:

Note: Nominees for BOD positions for 2021-2022 have been made. President: John Goodman Vice President: Dave Herbert Treasurer: Russ Isbrandt Secretary: Richard Tubbesing NRHS Rep: Dawn Holmberg.

Nominees can be made at the next meeting after the Chapter President solicits nominees from the meeting attendees. If there are contested nominees, a vote by email will be held and sent by members to a designated member and confidentially counted. If there are no contested nominees for any BOD officers, confirmation will be made at the Zoom meeting on November 21st 2020.

### Meeting October 17 2020 (Zoom)

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Dredge at 7:06 pm. The motion was seconded by John Goodman. A motion was called to approve the September 2020 meeting minutes in the last newsletter. It was unanimously approved. The Treasures report was given by Russ Isbrandt. Our cash position as of October 16 was nearly the amount of this time last year. We have not received a bill from the calendar publisher. We also have a \$600 liability in producing the calendar postcards. Dan Meyer stated that current sales of the 2021 calendar has not been deposited to our calendar checking account. Russ Isbrandt gave the Library report. We have a large number of magazines donated by Richard Tubbesing that have not yet been added to our inventory spreadsheet. Richard Tubbesing said that he will help in cataloging magazines from the collection that we do not have. Russ stated that the Library rent is about \$500 per month. Dan Meyer volunteered to do a budget for the 2021 year. The calendar report was given by John Goodman. We purchased only 425 calendars this year. He proposed that we have an open house at the Library in December (maybe December 12 2020 from 1 to 3 pm) so members can purchase calendars since we are not having our regular meetings at Roseville Lutheran Church. We would put a table by the Library door so members can come and purchase calendars and still maintain social distancing. We have received a check from the Lake Superior Railway Museum for calendars they have purchased. We have delivered Calendars to our other retail outlets. Mark Quam stated that since he lives in Eau Claire WI, he would not be able to come to the library. Dawn Holmberg stated that he should wait for the post card and order after he receives the calendar post card. Out of state purchases for the calendar are \$21.50. Richard Tubbesing stated that the next newsletter will have more information on the purchasing of calendars. The nominating committee report was given by Russ Isbrandt. The uncontested slate of BOD officers are President John Goodman, Vice President Dave Herbert, Treasurer Russ Isbrandt, Secretary Richard Tubbesing and NRHS Representative Dawn Holmberg. These will be finalized at our November Zoom meeting. The Holiday Banquet report was given by John Goodman. Due to the COVID19 Pandemic, it is very difficult to find a place for the holiday banquet. John said that Mancini's in St Paul could be an option, but at about \$40 per person and a thirty-person guarantee would be difficult to pull off. *Continued on next page:*



*Continued from previous page:* Bob Ball said Tunnici's in Newport will not extend their hours for their party room. Russ Isbrandt suggested we postpone our banquet to sometime next spring when the COVID19 restrictions might be reduced. Ed Johnson said his son's restaurant in Minneapolis is having difficulty getting business due to restrictions under the COVID19 pandemic. The NRHS report was given by Dawn Holmberg. The Fall Bulletin has been mailed. The NRHS News should be out in a couple of weeks. The NRHS has an online meeting in September. John Goodman reported that the 2021 NRHS convention in Milwaukee WI from Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> to Aug 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 is progressing. The newsletter report was given by Richard Tubbesing. It costs about \$60 a month to produce the black and white newsletter. Russ Isbrandt said that subscription renewal invoices for 2021 will include a \$5 surcharge (approved last month) to those that receive the snail mail copy of the newsletter to help defray the costs of printing and mailing the black and white newsletter. The Cheer Committee report was given by John Goodman. Cy Svobodny and Marty Swan are hunkered down due to their health conditions. Mike Mackner is in an assisted care facility where he is in a wheelchair and needs dialysis. Also noted were the passing of noted rail photographer J David Ingles and Art Pew, longtime member of the MTM. The web report was given by Dan Meyer. Our website is up to date and Calendars are available for sale on our web site. It was agreed by attendees that we continue our monthly meetings via Zoom into next year. Russ Isbrandt reported that we have prepaid the three meetings at the Roseville Lutheran Church. Dawn Holmberg reported that currently the Church is having worship services but church members must sign-up in advance to attend. There was no Old business. New Business: Russ Isbrandt reported that given our current situation in finding people to serve on the BOD that in the near future by-laws need to change to our BOD to three members, President, Treasurer and Secretary. Bob Ball stated there are a couple of Model Railroad sales in Bloomington in the coming month. Mark Quam stated that the second Amtrak train is waiting funding from the state of Minnesota. He will investigate whether there is money in the Minnesota state budget for the second Amtrak train. John Goodman stated that Amtrak's Empire Builder service will be reduced to three days a week starting the week of October 20<sup>th</sup>. Also, the Met Council is considering halting all Northstar commuter service due to lack of ridership. Dan Meyer reported that about 60% of people working from home due to the COVID19 pandemic are having network issues. A motion to adjourn the meeting was given by Frank Wilke and seconded by John Goodman at 7:41 pm. Bill Dredge announced that the Hennepin Overland Model Railroad Club is now closed. Bob Ball then gave an excellent photo program of photos of BN, Amtrak and C&NW. Respectfully submitted by Secretary Richard Tubbesing.



## The 2021 Minnesota Rail Calendar is Now Available

The calendar can be ordered on line at

<http://www.mnrailcal.com/>

**Minnesota residents** — \$22.50 Includes postage and Minnesota sales taxes.

**Non-Minnesota US residents** — \$21.50 Postage is included in the price.

You can also order the calendar via Mail, Send Check for \$22.50 for in-state residents, and \$21.50 for out-of-state residents to:

**Northstar Railway Historical Society, Inc**

**P.O Box 120832**

**St Paul MN 55112**

**Library Open House for calendar sales only, is December 12 2020 1 – 3 pm.**

The library is located at

**7000 57<sup>th</sup> St N, Suite 117**

**Crystal MN**

*You can purchase the calendar for \$14.95 plus sales tax for a total of \$16.25. Masks are required and social distancing will be enforced.*



## Northshore Scenic Railroad Train Ride Sept 19 2020

Our Chapter conducted a train ride from Duluth to Knife River Minnesota. There were fourteen persons that attended. We had Combine W-24 as our car and social distancing was enforced limiting the number of riders. Fun was had by all.



*Soo FP7 #2500 was our power. Persons boarding the train. Power at the LSRM. Our Group photo on return to Duluth. -Dawn Holmberg Photos*

## News from the Iron Range

### Steeltown Color

From: [Dave Schauer](#) Date: Wed, 14 Oct 2020 14:17:22 PDT



We have experienced a very nice fall color season. Last week color was decent on Steeltown as a helper set rolled past train M341 to get into position to shove it up the grade.

<http://www.railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=750920>

Dave Schauer Duluth, MN

### CN All-Rail to Louisiana

From: [Dave Schauer](#) Date: Fri, 16 Oct 2020 17:50:27 PDT

CN loaded its first test all-rail train from Minntac to Louisiana today (export to Europe). The train had 150 Ortner cars and 2x2 locomotives (3205/3124/2829/2943) – around 21,500 tons. Train number is U702. The destination in Louisiana for the acid (non-flux) pellets is the large bulk facility CMT (Convent Marine Terminal) on the lower Mississippi River near New Orleans. These trains are named Javelin after the bulk commodity brokerage house that presumably initiated this move. While long in distance, the past all-rail moves on CN from Minntac to Price Rupert, BC, and BNSF moves from UTAC/Jessie to Mexico have been longer.

It will be interesting to see if this routing takes hold and replaces the traditional path through the St. Lawrence Seaway. With traffic soft, but on an uptick, CN might have sharpened its pencil to get this move, although it bypasses its Two Harbors dock. One source notes that this might be the first Minntac acid (non-flux) all-rail move since 1988. In the past few years Canadian lakers have loaded pellets here for movement to Quebec City for transloading into larger draft vessels and then to Europe. In fact, this year U.S. flagged boats (mainly Great Lakes Fleet) took Minntac pellets to Conneaut where they were reloaded into Seaway Class Canadian vessels for the move to Quebec City.

Dave Schauer Duluth, MN

### Minnesota State Bonding Bill News

From: [Dave Schauer](#) Date: Fri, 23 Oct 2020 14:01:55 PDT

A few railroad news items came from the recently passed Minnesota bonding bill. The Depot will receive \$1.5 million for building work (not railroad museum related).

Of more interest is \$3 million as seed money for improvements to BNSF's Grassy Point swing bridge, which links Duluth and Superior. Aging mechanics of the bridge force train traffic down to 5 mph when crossing the bridge. Improvements will increase that to 30 mph as noted in a Duluth News Tribune article, but first, more funding will need to come from Wisconsin before the two states can pitch for federal matching aid. There is no mention how much BNSF is willing to invest. Part of this is in advance of improvements needed for the Northern Lights Express, if and when, and that's a big if, that passenger service ever gets going. Regardless, I'm sure BNSF is happy to have the government help fund much-needed repairs, although their pockets are plenty deep.

I always thought abandoning Grassy Point with its long wood approaches and building a new bascule bridge where Wisconsin Draw was makes the most sense if passenger rail is ever going to be a reality into Duluth. Of course marine and environmental interests would kill that before it is even mentioned, plus it would cost a very healthy sum. Another key element is that C. Reiss is leaving their coal dock in West Duluth and relocating to Superior. That will eliminate the last large commercial-draft dock upstream from Grassy Point, so the need for the bridge to open is reduced, although sailboats and larger pleasure craft need higher clearance.

Dave Schauer Duluth, MN



### News from the North Shore Scenic Railroad & Lake Superior Railroad Museum

Issue #97 - October 2020

Continued on next page:



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## THE NSSR'S "FIRST" LOCOMOTIVE



Since the Lake Superior Railroad Museum took over the North Shore Scenic Railroad back in 1996, as its own non-profit organization, there has not been a locomotive with the railroad's name on it. Only RDC1 #9169 has the words "North Shore Scenic Railroad" on it. Yes, technically a locomotive, but only "sorta."

The "new" GP9, #245 got a quick paintjob this past week to get the North Shore Scenic Railroad "wing logo" as well as the railroad's name on it. Our friends at Arrowhead Autobody did a great job, and contributed their time to make this railroad our very own.

The last time a locomotive had the North Shore Scenic Railroad's livery was back when it was operated as for-profit, owned by the Goldfine Family in Duluth. They had locomotive #652 as shown in the photo here. It operated on the railroad until the switchover in 1996 when it was sold to a railroad in Montana.

## PUMPKIN PIES AND TRAINS



PHOTO CAPTION: On Board the Missouri Pacific's Texas Eagle's unique dining car with side seating. Featured on every autumn menu was the MoPac's famous Pumpkin Pie.

Story Contributed by Ken Buehler

Starbucks wasn't the first company to popularize its' own take on seasonal trends using pumpkins. Their Pumpkin Spice Latte' is several hundred years late.

Pumpkins are native to the Western Hemisphere and were cultivated by indigenous tribes. The settlers of the Plymouth Colony in southern New England were gifted with pumpkins as a sign of friendship and that lead to pumpkin pie being served at the first Thanksgiving.

Since then pumpkin pie has been a seasonal staple. One place where it was said you could find the best pumpkin pie was on board the dining cars of the Missouri Pacific Railroad, the MoPac.

Known in the streamliner era for their named trains; The Missouri River Eagle, Texas Eagle and Colorado Eagle. The railroad's dining cars were held in high regard by travelers, especially in the fall and early winter when for \$0.25 one could get a slice of the railroad's famous pumpkin pie. The recipe was a treasured company secret.



## Metro News - CN Heritage Locomotive Schemes

On Monday, October 12, 2020, 10:09 AM, Frederick Krenske

Word on the CNR list is that CN is going to do 18 locomotives in heritage schemes, similar to what NS and UP did. Among the schemes listed are:

The paint schemes to come are supposedly:

*Continued on next page:*

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Heritage Units:

ACR

B&LE

BC Rail (last)

BC Rail (green)

CNNA

CN (zebra)

CN (maple leaf)

CV (black/orange)

DMIR

DT&I

DWP (Delivered With Pride)

EJ&E (orange)

GBW

GM&O

GTW (blue)

IC Deathstar

ICG (orange/gray)



**CN Heritage Schemes** From: [Mark Arnold](#) Date: Sun, 11 Oct 2020 19:43:41 PDT

Apparently, the company that was hired to do the painting is now in trouble with CN for breach of contract and they are talking law suits. It seems someone took pictures in the paint shop and posted them on-line along with what the color schemes of the railroad paint jobs were to be used. There is an active investigation to find the photographer.

Here a couple of the "in the paint shop" pictures leaked.

## CP Elevates Two Grain Elevators

Written by [Marybeth Luczak](#), Executive Editor *Railway Age* October 27, 2020



*CP has recognized two grain elevators for achieving "high volumes from a single loading point while consistently demonstrating efficient railcar loading and a strong commitment to safety" during the 2019-20 crop year.*

Canadian Pacific (CP) has presented its annual Elevator of the Year award to Viterra Gull Lake (Canada) and CHS Northland Grain Hazel (U.S.).

CP recognized these two facilities for achieving "high volumes from a single loading point while consistently demonstrating efficient railcar loading and a strong commitment to safety" during the 2019-20 crop year.

Saskatchewan's [Viterra Gull Lake](#) became 8,500-foot High Efficiency Product (HEP) train capable in early 2020. Minnesota's [CHS Northland Grain](#) has the capacity to load up to 110-car trains that are sent to both domestic and international markets.

"These elevators are leaders in their field and have contributed to [CP](#) moving more grain and grain products in this past crop year than ever before, supplying the world with high quality North American products," CP Vice President Sales and Marketing Grain and Fertilizers Joan Hardy said.

October 02, 2020

**Class I, Freight, Freight Cars, Mechanical, News, Switching & Terminal**

**CP Sets Another Grain Record**

Written by [Marybeth Luczak](#), Executive Editor *Railway Age*



## Metro News - Empire Builder Schedule Beginning October 19

Thursday, October 15, 2020, 10:27 AM, [Frederick Krenske](#) Effective Week of October 19, 2020

### Empire Builder

Train #7 (Westbound) departs Chicago Monday/Thursday/Saturday

Train #8 (Eastbound): departs Seattle: Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday

Train #27 (Westbound) departs Chicago: Monday/Thursday/Saturday

Train #28 (Eastbound) departs Portland, OR: Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday

## Metro News - Second Chicago-Twin Cities Train

Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 10:30 PM, [Frederick Krenske](#)

### **Minnesota Legislature fails to fund second Chicago-Twin Cities train**

Efforts to launch a second daily Amtrak train between Chicago and the Twin Cities suffered a setback when the Minnesota Legislature adjourned without providing \$10 million in matching funds for a federal grant to advance the plan. [The Twin Cities Pioneer Press reports](#) that the state needed to provide the \$10 million, to go with \$6.2 million from Wisconsin and \$5 million from Amtrak, to accompany a Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Grant awarded last month [see ["Effort to launch second Chicago-Twin Cities Amtrak train receives \\$31.8 million grant,"](#) *Trains News Wire*, Sept. 23, 2020]. The Great River Rail Commission, which represents 18 governmental bodies in Minnesota and Wisconsin, says it will try again to get the funding in 2021.



## Metro News - October 30 in Railroad History: AMTRAK

Provided by Frederick Krenske

October 30 in Railroad History: AMTRAK

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Fri, 30 Oct 2020



L:  
**California Zephyr**  
*at Grand Junction  
CO*



R:  
**Acela** in *Connecticut*

The **National Railroad Passenger Corporation** was created fifty years ago today, when President Richard Nixon signed the Rail Passenger Service Act (RPSA) into law.

RPSA established a private company, incorporated in the District of Columbia, to be governed by a board of directors that included the Secretary of Transportation, the head of the corporation, and eleven other members, most of whom were appointed by the president.

During its first year of existence, the corporation was known as **Railpax**. The name was changed to **AMTRAK** (a contraction of the words *America* and *track*) in 1971. AMTRAK was charged with three goals:

- 1) To operate rail passenger service on a for-profit basis (they're getting closer);
- 2) to use innovative operating and marketing concepts to fully develop the potential of modern railway passenger service to meet intercity transportation needs; and
- 3) to provide a modern, efficient intercity rail passenger service (**Acela** is a good step in that direction).

RPSA allowed railroad companies to transfer their passenger operations to AMTRAK. The price of admission for each road was calculated based on that company's mileage and annual losses. Any railroad that did not join AMTRAK had to continue its existing passenger service until 1975, after which it could petition ICC to discontinue.

Denver & Rio Grande Western chose to keep running its **Rio Grande Zephyr** until 1983. Rock Island decided it was cheaper to keep running its **Peoria Rocket** and **Quad Cities Rocket** than to join AMTRAK. Those trains continued until the state of Illinois terminated its subsidy at the end of 1978. Southern Railway continued its **Southern Crescent** until turning it over to AMTRAK in 1979.

At its half-century mark, AMTRAK owns 425 locomotives and 2142 cars in revenue service. It serves over 500 cities in all 48 contiguous states except South Dakota and Wyoming, plus nine Canadian cities. In fiscal 2019 it carried 32.5 million riders, the most ever. AMTRAK still receives federal and state subsidies, but in fiscal 2018 it claimed that passenger fares covered 94.9% of its operating expenses. AMTRAK claims that passenger trains are twice as efficient as automobiles (based on energy consumption per passenger-mile) and sixteen times safer (based on fatalities per 100 million passenger-miles). Joseph Lechner



### Metro News - Here's a Reminder!

Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 1:00 PM, Frederick Krenske:  
Sue Elliot sends me this picture to remind us to Make Trains Great Again!

## Metro News - The Mark Twain Zephyr Was Seen

Thursday, October 22, 2020, 11:37 AM, Frederick Krenske

Robert Tabern has told me that the Mark Twain Zephyr Open House went on as planned. Person's were warmly greeted even though the weather was cloudy. It was good to hear the great plans that the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad has for this historic train. The Zephyr WILL run again.

### A SPECIAL INVITE for Open House on 85th Anniversary of MTZ

The staff of the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad extended an invitation to all of the E-Newsletter subscribers to attend an informal Open House Event the weekend of Saturday, October 24th and Sunday, October 25th, 2020 to celebrate the 85th Anniversary of the *Mark Twain Zephyr*.

There was no marching band or a coast-to-coast radio broadcast like they did in Hannibal back in 1935... you could have still come out and enjoy your choice of either a guided tour of the interior of the train set, or a self-guided tour of the exterior of the train set.

In addition to our team of historians being available --- you could see the amazing progress that our hard working crews at the Wisconsin Great Northern have been making in just the past couple of months on this piece of American railroad history. Our plan is to continue to refurbish the five cars... and have the train up and running by this time next year... giving riders a true First Class experience... much like you would have been able to experience aboard a *Zephyr* back in the Golden Age of Railroading.

The Invitation was at the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad located at N6639 Dilly Lake Road in Trego, Wisconsin... located just off US Highways 53 and 63. (About 4 miles north of Spooner - 1 mile south of Trego)

There were special historical presentations --- and a rare photo opportunity that people missed out on for those who participate.

Per the State of Wisconsin Guidelines, the practice social distancing and wearing a mask was required, when on the property for the safety of our staff and around other people.

This event was free and open to the public. Information can be obtained from Robert Tabern at [rtabern@spoonertrainride.com](mailto:rtabern@spoonertrainride.com).



## Metro News - Night Trains Season Is Here!

Thursday, October 22, 2020, 10:21 AM, Frederick Krenske

*Night Trains* season is back! This special Holiday tradition returns to the Twin City Model Railroad Museum beginning Saturday, October 31, 2020 and runs every Saturday evening from 3:00 to 7:00 pm through the last Saturday in February (February 27, 2021).

Night Trains season brings a winter wonderland to the miniature train layouts in a magical way: the lights are turned down, the buildings and streetlights glow warmly- setting the scene for lighted models of vintage passenger trains. The make-believe towns are buried in blizzards, and throughout the Museum the layouts are adorned with miniature Christmas lights and decorations.

This year we are kicking off Night Trains season with a special Halloween event on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Spooky trains and decorations will be featured, treats will be provided, and costumes are welcome. Following weeks will see the museum turn into our traditional winter event.

Night Trains takes place at the Museum's location at 668 Transfer Road, Suite 8 in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Admission to this special show is \$15.00 per person and FREE for children age four and under.

Advance ticket sales are required to ensure we stay under our COVID capacity of 75 people. To ensure this we are selling tickets in two hour blocks (3-5 pm and 5-7pm). Masks are required for everyone over 2 years of age and we ask that you stay home if ill and practice good social distancing while at the museum. Get your tickets at <https://tcmrm.eventbrite.com>.

Watch our Facebook page and <http://tcmrm.org> for additional special events.

## Amtrak Dining Options - My Recent Trip on the Empire Builder 7-8

From: John Goodman via groups.io <jhgoodman2001@yahoo.com@groups.io>

Sat, Oct 10, 2020 1:28 pm

Subject: [AllAboardRailDiscussion]

I recently rode Amtrak from St Paul to Milwaukee and back in an economy bedroom (no, its not a roomette no mater what Amtrak says) and here is my report on the upgraded food service in the dining car.

*Continued on next page:*



*Continued from previous page:*

Train 8 leaving St Paul on time at 8:00am. I was told by the sleeper attendant that the car was right behind our 0830 sleeper. No comments made about his bringing the meal to my room. Breakfast was terrible....I don't eat oatmeal or yogurt, and had to be satisfied with a a breakfast sandwich and one cup of hot tea. This is not acceptable at all.

However, the lunch options (8 in total) were much better than the recent times that I traveled. I found 2 different chicken options and 2 different fish options. The LSA informed me that she was out of the Braised Beef option, so I choose the Chicken Fettuccini which was very good.

On the return on #7 in car (0730) three days later, again no offer from the sleeping car attendant to bring the meal to my room, I opted for the Pasta & Meatballs entrée which was very good.

The food is presented in a attractive small tray with a hot roll in the side of the tray. This is certainly a better looking presentation option than the box meal that was done in the past.

Please note that at no time was any PA announcement made to the coach passengers to come to the diner and pay for their meal instead of using the sightseer lounge car for their food.

Someone on this list some months ago suggested that Amtrak food was very similar to that sold at Denny's restaurants nationwide, and I would agree except for the horrible breakfast options.

Because of locomotive problems on #7, we were about 1 hour late into St. Paul.. John H. Goodman

## MSM Productions Proudly Presents its 2020 Halloween Ghost Trolley

On Saturday, October 10, 2020, 3:29 PM, from Frederick Krenske

Video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFk63B1\\_LWA&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFk63B1_LWA&feature=youtu.be)

Entitled Ghost Trolley Anthology, it has several scenes in it that are extremely well done and really entertaining. As you know, the Minnesota Streetcar Museum decided to not operate their annual pumpkin patch trolley nor to operate their several ghost trolleys around Halloween night because of the uncertainties surrounding Covid-19. So, to make up for not enjoying a genuine live ghost trolley, our producer made the video for our members' and friends' viewing pleasure. The cast of the video can be seen at the end credits.

I know you will really like this video. But my only caution to you is don't watch it after dark or around midnight. The consequences of doing that are unknown. And especially don't watch it after dark on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Please feel free to share the link to the ghost trolley video with family and friends.

## Montevideo American-News

## Restoration of Caboose Underway at Tiell Park

By Sean Ellertson / Editor provided by Chuck Lavalley Posted Sep 30, 2020 at 12:01 AM

This past winter, the St. James City Council approved a big by Erik Thompson to start remodeling of the caboose at Tiell Park. After some delays due to COVID-19, the project is underway.

Thompson lives in Chisago City, about 35 miles northeast of the Twin Cities. In Chisago City, Thompson is part of the Ironhorse Railroad Park, which houses over 50 cars and also features a museum.

Thompson's dad started the museum in the 1950s. He was part of the Minnesota Rail Fan Association. In 1965, he purchased the property where the park and museum sits today.

"It's something that's a little bit lost in time."

This past January, after getting estimates, the city council voted to go ahead with the project.

The remodeling of the caboose in St. James was supposed to take place in the spring of this year but was pushed back due to COVID-19.

Whenever Thompson approaches a project, he tries his best to be authentic, restoring the old look of the car.

"When I try to do this I try to go back to the way that it was," said Thompson. "If it means making a trim board that's the actual size that's on there I will make it."

"I want to look like it did back then."

So far, Thompson has started work on stripping down the exterior wood and paint, Thompson has discovered that this car ran in Michigan, and was originally painted brown, then orange.

Thompson is using a green treated wood for siding. The green treated wood is more expensive but more durable and should last around 30 years. Thompson will also need to replace the asphalt roof with a one-piece rubber roof.

A running board will also be placed on the roof.

"It will kind of simulate an old-time canvas. On these old-time cars, they would use canvas and then paint the canvas."

All the metal will be reprimed and repainted.

The interior of the caboose will be stripped down, and rotted wood will be replaced.

"It will look like a shopped caboose. One that just came off the line fresh 100 years ago."

The lettering on the outside of the caboose will also be repainted "Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, & Omaha" after the old railway system.

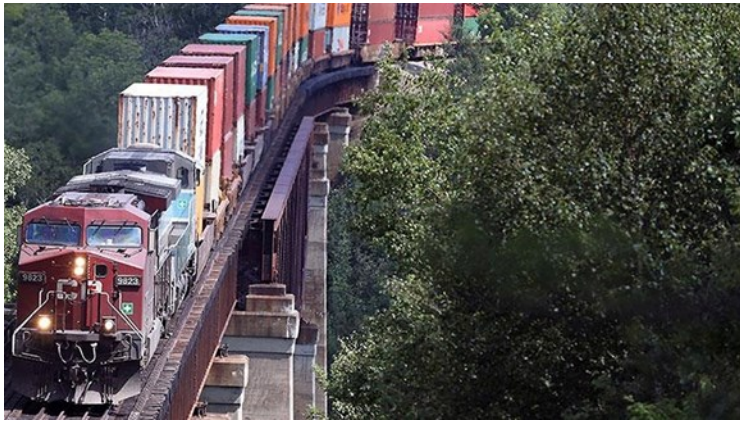
"In a lot of ways I call it a labor of love because it's not highly paid and it's a lot of headache and overhead. You look at something like this and there's so much to do."

This particular caboose used to be a Grand Trunk Railway car.

The project is estimated to take about six weeks but may take longer if Thompson discovers more work to be done on the interior.

## AAR Week 43: Once Again, It's Intermodal

Written by [William C. Vantuono](#), Editor-in-Chief *Railway Age* October 2020



The trend continues: Intermodal gains once again offset carload declines, as U.S. rail traffic for the week ending Oct. 24, 2020—522,653 carloads and intermodal units—rose 1.9% compared with the same week last year, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) reported Oct. 28. Total carloads for the week were 227,543, down 6.5% compared with the same week in 2019, while U.S. weekly intermodal volume was 295,110 containers and trailers, up 9.4% compared to 2019.

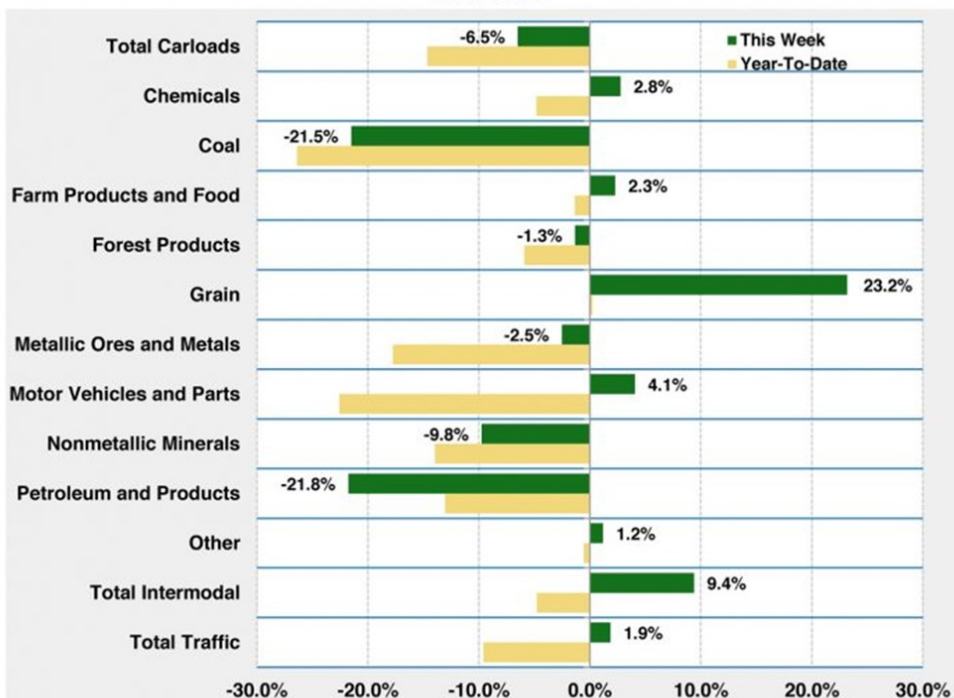
**U.S. Rail Traffic<sup>1</sup>**  
Week 43, 2020 – Ended October 24, 2020

	This Week		Year-To-Date		
	Cars	vs 2019	Cumulative	Avg/wk <sup>2</sup>	vs 2019
<b>Total Carloads</b>	<b>227,543</b>	<b>-6.5%</b>	<b>9,253,138</b>	<b>215,189</b>	<b>-14.7%</b>
Chemicals	30,947	2.8%	1,316,994	30,628	-4.8%
Coal	57,536	-21.5%	2,472,148	57,492	-26.4%
Farm Products excl. Grain, and Food	16,662	2.3%	660,657	15,364	-1.4%
Forest Products	9,478	-1.3%	398,883	9,276	-5.9%
Grain	26,044	23.2%	928,106	21,584	0.2%
Metallic Ores and Metals	20,643	-2.5%	773,593	17,991	-17.7%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	15,462	4.1%	535,255	12,448	-22.6%
Nonmetallic Minerals	31,072	-9.8%	1,285,874	29,904	-13.9%
Petroleum and Petroleum Products	10,169	-21.8%	473,127	11,003	-13.0%
Other	9,530	1.2%	408,501	9,500	-0.5%
<b>Total Intermodal Units</b>	<b>295,110</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>10,910,893</b>	<b>253,742</b>	<b>-4.8%</b>
<b>Total Traffic</b>	<b>522,653</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>20,164,031</b>	<b>468,931</b>	<b>-9.6%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Excludes U.S. operations of Canadian Pacific, CN and GMXT.

<sup>2</sup> Average per week figures may not sum to totals as a result of independent rounding.

**Trends, 2020 vs 2019**  
United States



Weekly Railroad Traffic | Copyright AAR, 2020

Five of the 10 carload commodity groups posted an increase compared with the same week in 2019. They included grain, up 4,901 carloads, to 26,044; chemicals, up 831 carloads, to 30,947; and motor vehicles and parts, up 602 carloads, to 15,462. Commodity groups that posted decreases compared with the same week in 2019 included coal, down 15,756 carloads, to 57,536; nonmetallic minerals, down 3,360 carloads, to 31,072; and petroleum and petroleum products, down 2,827 carloads, to 10,169.

For the first 43 weeks of 2020, U.S. railroads reported cumulative volume of 9,253,138 carloads, down 14.7% from the same point last year; and 10,910,893 intermodal units, down 4.8% from last year. Total combined U.S. traffic for the first 43 weeks of 2020 was 20,164,031 carloads and intermodal units, a decrease of 9.6% compared to last year.

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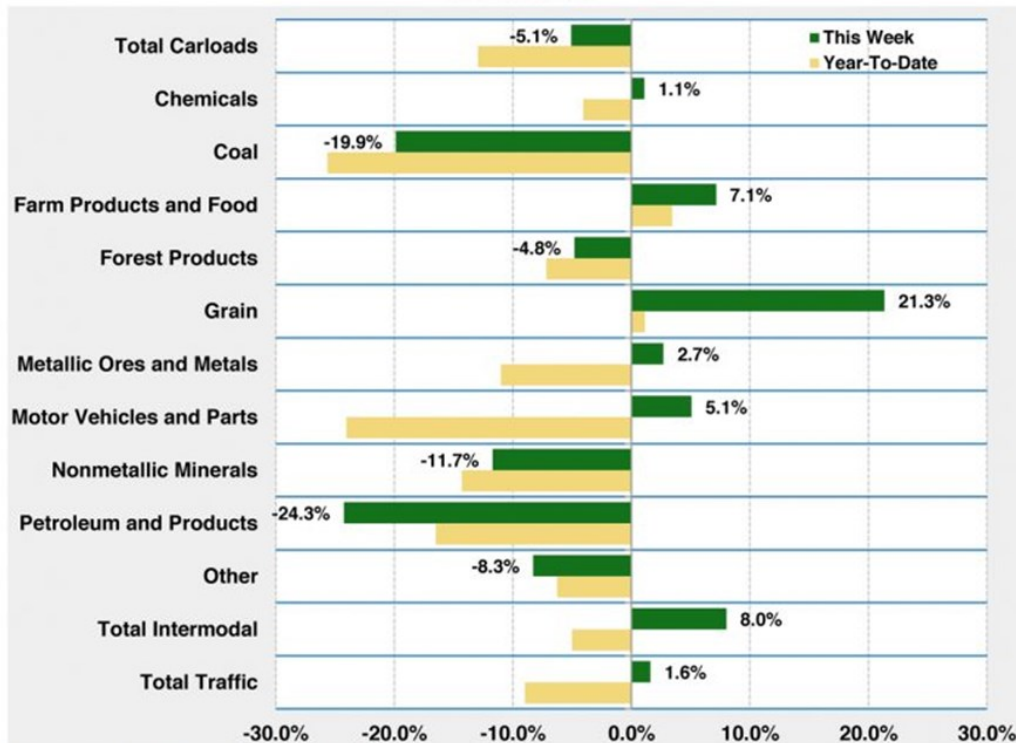


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## North American Rail Traffic

Week 43, 2020 – Ended October 24, 2020

	This Week		Year-To-Date		
	Cars	vs 2019	Cumulative	Avg/wk <sup>1</sup>	vs 2019
<b>Total Carloads</b>	<b>328,057</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>	<b>13,285,255</b>	<b>308,959</b>	<b>-12.9%</b>
Chemicals	42,375	1.1%	1,868,624	43,456	-4.1%
Coal	64,798	-19.9%	2,748,168	63,911	-25.7%
Farm Products excl. Grain, and Food	28,274	7.1%	1,110,011	25,814	3.4%
Forest Products	15,704	-4.8%	669,277	15,565	-7.2%
Grain	40,061	21.3%	1,409,412	32,777	1.1%
Metallic Ores and Metals	41,118	2.7%	1,589,298	36,960	-11.0%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	24,983	5.1%	850,895	19,788	-24.1%
Nonmetallic Minerals	40,336	-11.7%	1,692,047	39,350	-14.3%
Petroleum and Petroleum Products	18,462	-24.3%	845,972	19,674	-16.5%
Other	11,946	-8.3%	501,551	11,664	-6.3%
<b>Total Intermodal Units</b>	<b>389,380</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>14,464,467</b>	<b>336,383</b>	<b>-5.0%</b>
<b>Total Traffic</b>	<b>717,437</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>27,749,722</b>	<b>645,342</b>	<b>-9.0%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Average per week figures may not sum to totals as a result of independent rounding.Trends, 2020 vs 2019  
North America

Weekly Railroad Traffic | Copyright AAR, 2020

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## RRIF Express 2.0: More Accessible to Small Roads

Written by Marybeth Luczak, Executive Editor Railway Age October 30, 2020



The new RRIF Express “modifications combine to form a robust and significant improvement to the program and should allow for more short line projects to be presented and selected for funding,” ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker said.

The U.S. Department of Transportation is expanding eligibility and providing more flexibility for the Railroad Rehabilitation and Investment Financing Express (RRIF Express) program.

The aim of the program, [which launched in December 2019](#), is to expedite long-term, low-cost loans for short line and regional railroads.

The new RRIF Express 2.0 is:

Increasing loan amounts from \$50 million to \$150 million.

Expanding the scope of eligible projects to include “most everything eligible under the traditional RRIR program.”

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The aim of the program, [which launched in December 2019](#), is to expedite long-term, low-cost loans for short line and regional railroads.

The new RRIF Express 2.0 is:

Increasing loan amounts from \$50 million to \$150 million.

Expanding the scope of eligible projects to include “most everything eligible under the traditional RRIR program.” (Freight and commuter rail infrastructure projects are eligible.)

Increasing option to finance loan amount from 40% to 75%.

Offering increased flexibility in considering different categories of environmental review.

Raising Credit Risk Premium assistance from the previous 5% up to 10% of the loan value, capped at \$5 million per application.

Extending the filing time for applications.

“The ASLRRRA and the short line freight railroads we represent are excited about these improvements being rolled out as RRIF Express 2.0,” [American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association \(ASLRRRA\)](#) President Chuck Baker said. “The modifications combine to form a robust and significant improvement to the program and should allow for more short line projects to be presented and selected for funding.”

Railroads that have submitted applications under the RRIF Express program already this year will be able to utilize the new provisions, according to ASLRRRA.

The [U.S. DOT Build America Bureau \(Bureau\)](#), which administers the program, will accept letters of interest until all available financing is exhausted. The Bureau and ASLRRRA are “coordinating closely to provide educational training and technical assistance to help any parties interested in applying for a loan under the RRIF Express program.”

Wabtec 3Q20: ‘All-Around Beat, Backlog Intact’

Written by [Marybeth Luczak](#), Executive Editor Railway Age



**Wabtec President and  
CEO Rafael Santana**

## **Wabtec Corp. Reported a “strong operational third quarter in the face of a challenging and dynamic environment,” and Updated its 2020 Guidance.** Railway Age October 2020

Third-quarter earnings per diluted share were \$0.67 and adjusted earnings per diluted share were \$0.95, versus the year-earlier period’s \$0.48 and \$1.10, respectively. The company also updated its full-year guidance for sales “in a range of \$7.5 billion to \$7.6 billion, GAAP earnings per diluted share to between \$2.35 to \$2.45, adjusted earnings per diluted share to between \$3.75 and \$3.85, and expects continued strong cash generation.”

Wabtec reported that at Sept. 30, its total, multi-year backlog was \$21.4 billion, “about flat with our backlog at June 30, 2020,” and the 12-month backlog was \$5.2 billion.

“Our team continued to deliver for our customers, while driving strong cash generation, aggressively reducing costs and executing on our \$150 million net synergy targets for 2020,” President and CEO Rafael Santana said. “We are seeing signs of recovery across some of our international end-markets. While our North American OE markets are transitioning . . . , global freight volumes and equipment utilization continue to improve from the lows in the second quarter. Global transit service levels are also improving. These directional trends, along with our backlog and strong order pipeline are encouraging. The strength of our business portfolio, combined with the focused performance of our team, positions us well for a strong order recovery.”

Cowen and Company OEM Transportation Analyst Matt Elkott called the Wabtec third-quarter 2020 report “an all-around beat” (see his insight below).

Among Wabtec’s third-quarter highlights:

### **2020 Financial Guidance**

Wabtec updated its 2020 sales guidance (reported above), and notes that “the adjusted guidance excludes estimated expenses for restructuring, transaction and amortization expenses.”

“With cost actions and synergies stemming from the Wabtec and GE Transportation merger on-track, we expect to see a net synergy benefit of over \$150 million in 2020. For full year 2020, Wabtec expects strong cash flow generation which includes approximately \$170 million of cash outflows related to prior restructuring, transaction and litigation costs.”

### **2020 Third Quarter Consolidated Results**

Sales were \$1.9 billion versus \$2.0 billion in the same period a year ago. The decrease compared to the year-ago quarter was “primarily driven by lower sales in Freight Services, Components, Digital Electronics, and Transit sales, offset somewhat by higher sales in Freight Equipment.”

Income from operations was \$207 million (11.1% of sales) and adjusted income from operations was \$293 million (15.7% of sales), which was “unfavorably impacted” by lower sales in Freight and Transit “primarily due to COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.” Adjusted income from operations excluded pre-tax expenses of \$87 million, of which \$70 million is for non-cash amortization expense and \$16 million is for restructuring and transaction cost, Wabtec reported.

Net interest expense was \$46 million and other income (expense) was \$14 million of income.

The reported and adjusted effective tax rate for the quarter was 26.7%.

EBITDA was \$337 million and adjusted EBITDA was \$354 million. Adjusted EBITDA excluded pre-tax expenses of \$16 million for transaction and restructuring costs.

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#### 2020 Third Quarter Freight Segment Results

Freight segment sales of \$1.2 billion decreased by 7% from the year-ago quarter. Wabtec said the decrease was due to "lower organic sales of \$84 million and unfavorable changes in foreign currency exchange rates of \$20 million, offset somewhat by \$9 million of sales from acquisitions. Freight segment sales were primarily impacted by disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting from lower Services due to higher locomotive parking levels, lower demand for new freight car components and lower Digital Electronics sales, offset somewhat by higher deliveries of locomotives."

Freight segment income from operations was \$160 million (or 12.9% of segment sales) and adjusted income from operations of \$234 million (or 18.9% of segment sales). Freight segment adjusted income from operations decreased 17% from the year-ago quarter "primarily driven by mix of lower Services sales and higher OE deliveries, offset somewhat by lower operating costs," Wabtec said.

#### 2020 Third Quarter Transit Segment Results

Transit segment sales of \$628 million decreased by 6% from the year-ago quarter. Wabtec said the decrease was "due to lower organic sales of \$59 million, offset somewhat by favorable changes in foreign currency exchange rates of \$18 million. Transit segment sales were negatively impacted by lower original equipment and after-market sales primarily related to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Transit segment income from operations was \$64 million (or 10.2% of segment sales) and adjusted income from operations was \$75 million (or 12% of segment sales). Transit segment adjusted income from operations increased from the year-ago quarter by 21% "as a result of continued improvement in operational performance and cost actions, offset somewhat by lower volumes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic."

## AAPRCO

### Mid-Month Highlights



**Washington Update** October 2020 -Provided by John Goodman

by Ross Capon

When contacting your legislators, urge them to include \$4 billion for Amtrak for FY 2021 as part of any aviation bail-out or broader coronavirus emergency appropriation. All legislators can be reached through [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov). Contact me at [rcapon3@gmail.com](mailto:rcapon3@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Tri-weekly service with small daily service consists. Amtrak's announcement of its premature, July 6 reduction in Silver Star and Silver Meteor frequencies said, "both trains will offer expanded capacity for each departure." This appeared to reflect understanding of what Amtrak learned in the 1990s: you keep 70% of your long-distance (not short haul) riders on a tri-weekly train, but you've got to have enough capacity to carry them. Nationally, however, Amtrak is running tri-weekly trains with daily consists. When called to account by Trains' Bob Johnston, Amtrak replied: "Operational logistics and cost management prevent us from making one-off consist changes based on niche cases of sellout situations....As you know, adding equipment adds costs, and we are conserving funds. Our existing long-distance consists represent our fall plan that is in effect now through the eve of Thanksgiving." This assumes that it would be the rare fall trip that requires a larger consist than what Amtrak provided for daily service.

But Johnston's devastating write-up says in 2019 the California Zephyr's October revenue was just 18% below September's. Johnston concludes, "while Amtrak added frequencies for Northeast Regional (revenues down 88.6% in July) and Acela (down 95.8%), it made no plans to protect revenue on the decreased number of long-distance trains by increasing capacity to accommodate passengers displaced from trains that had been cancelled or others seeking to book reservations. Instead, revenue loss was exacerbated by reducing train consists, even as coach capacity was limited to 50% of available seats."

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation has rescheduled its rail hearing for Wednesday, October 21 at 10 AM (ET). The [hearing](#), Passenger and Freight Rail: The Current Status of the Rail Network and the Track Ahead, "will examine the current state of the passenger and freight rail network, including impacts of COVID-19 and legislative considerations for surface transportation reauthorization."

The first witness panel will be Amtrak President & CEO William Flynn and Paul Tuss, Executive Director, Bear Paw Developing Corporation, and Member, Montana Economic Developers Association. The second panel will have AAR, labor and shipper witnesses.

I will submit a statement for the record which will cover Amtrak and the long-distance trains broadly, but also suggest that Amtrak is hiding behind its inspector general with regard to its aggressive private railcar rates. Here is what I am planning to include regarding the latter, but which may be edited before being finalized:

**Private cars and charter trains:** This statement is pro bono except for this paragraph. My major client is American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners (AAPRCO). The Association appreciates Section 9219 of HR 2-and indeed most of the bill's passenger rail provisions. AAPRCO believes that the more positive approach to private cars and charter trains envisioned in that provision would yield valuable revenue for Amtrak -- revenue that is more important now than ever.

For example, the elimination of key access points such as Tucson, Arizona; Jacksonville, Florida; Whitefish, Montana, and Huntington, West Virginia, seem counterproductive, as does the restriction of charter trains to Amtrak's existing network.

As well, Amtrak apparently is charging private cars a rate that "exceeds both the direct and fully allocated costs of performing that activity" and claims that the Inspector General requires this. This certainly reflects a misunderstanding of basic economics; charging this way to handle a private car on a train that is going to run anyway seems more likely to drive off revenues, as reflected in the number of private cars that have abandoned Amtrak service since new policies took effect in early 2018. The correct pricing methodology would be to cover direct costs plus a reasonable profit margin.

Moreover, Amtrak's approach to pricing also appears to reflect a misreading of the IG's February 6, 2019, report: OIG-A-2019-003, TRAIN OPERATIONS: Opportunities Exist to Improve Private Railcar Management and Business Practices.

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This report takes management to task for "not identifying any of the costs it incurred for managing the private railcar program and providing movement and long-term parking services." Management responded by saying it will set rates to exceed "both the direct and fully allocated costs." However, the IG did not recommend this approach but merely made the general point that management should "identify the costs of providing movement and long-term parking services... [and should] factor cost data into decisions on setting or adjusting prices for private railcar services."

Funding prospects: Amtrak is operating with no supplemental appropriation but just a continuing resolution that maintains funding at FY 2020 levels to December 11. Amtrak said on May 25 that zero supplemental would put all long-distance (except Auto Train) and many state-supported routes "at risk." For now, Amtrak is "toughing it out" with the expectation that the next appropriations bill will see a healthy increase.

Correction to my October 1 report, first paragraph on the continuing resolution (CR): The CR that funds the federal government to December 11 passed the House September 22 on a 359-57-1 vote; the Senate's Sept. 30 vote was 84-10. President Trump signed the bill into law early Oct. 1.

Another CARES Act?: The other possibility—a new coronavirus emergency appropriation—seems more distant than ever. The answer to the question posed in my last column -- "why is zero better than \$1.5 trillion" -- seems to be: because if we hold out longer, the President will raise his number. In fact, the President did just that, rising to \$1.8 trillion. However, roughly half the Senate Republican caucus opposes any level and House Democrats are still pushing \$2.2 trillion. Both sides appear in agreement on another aviation bailout, and it is easy to imagine the authorizing chairs (Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-OR and Sen. Roger Wicker, R-MS) agreeing to include some Amtrak money, but there is no evidence that a transportation-only bill has legs.

## Passenger News (AARPCO news)

### Amtrak: Additional Funds Needed to Avoid More Service, Job Cuts



*Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer William Flynn*

Amtrak reiterated to Congress that it needs up to \$4.9 billion this fiscal year to avoid laying off thousands of additional employees, reducing train service on state routes and scaling back capital projects.

The funding is necessary as the national intercity passenger railroad faces a financial crisis in responding to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last month, Amtrak told Congress it needs up to \$4.9 billion in government funding for fiscal-year 2021, which began Oct. 1. That funding level is up from the \$2 billion in annual federal support the railroad normally receives.

In a letter to Congress, Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer William Flynn said that the railroad's ridership "is not returning as quickly at the levels that we had hoped for," so the railroad updated its financial forecast for the new fiscal year.

This spring, Amtrak received about \$1 billion as part of the federal government's pandemic relief legislation known as the CARES Act. Amtrak business remains at about 25% of pre-pandemic levels. Based on its current forecast, Amtrak's FY2021 ridership and revenue are expected to improve to about 40% of pre-pandemic levels. Last month, Amtrak announced it would cut 2,000 jobs effective Oct. 1.

Of the \$4.9 billion the railroad is now requesting, \$3.2 billion would go toward Amtrak's services and capita program in response to the loss of revenue, with \$1.7 billion for the Northeast Corridor, \$413 for Amtrak's share of state-supported rail service, and \$1.1 billion for long distance service, according to Flynn. The remaining \$1.6 billion would support Amtrak debt; Amtrak's required payments to state and commuter partners; costs of any congressional workforce or service directives; and added revenue risk beyond the railroad's current projection.

Without additional supplemental funding from Congress, "we will be unable to avoid more drastic impacts that could have long-lasting effects on our Northeast Corridor infrastructure and the national rail system," Flynn's letter states. "For example, insufficient funding levels could force Amtrak to reduce its workforce by an additional 2,400 jobs as we scale back capital projects (approximately 775 jobs) and because our state partners have advised us that they would likely further reduce their train service (approximately 1,625 jobs)."

Delays in Amtrak's capital projects would also impact the rail supplier network, Flynn noted.

As Congress considers programs for stimulating the economy, Amtrak has also identified \$5.2 billion in additional investments in critical Amtrak projects, such as replacing bridges and tunnels on the Northeast Corridor, new fleet, infrastructure improvements along the national network and major station improvements.

"We thank Congress for all of its support in FY 2020, and we sincerely hope that additional funding between \$.98 and \$10 billion can be finalized as soon as possible ... in order to avoid the aforementioned negative impacts in FY 2021 and also fund critical capital investments to help the nation recover from the pandemic," Flynn's letter concludes.

Amtrak and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation have restored additional Keystone Service between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and New York City.

Some Keystone Service had been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trains 652 and 641 will be extended on weekdays roundtrip between New York City and Harrisburg. On weekends, trains 660, 672, 663 and 669 will also be extended between New York City and Harrisburg.

The Keystone Service schedule includes 13 weekday roundtrips and seven roundtrips on weekends.

The Pennsylvanian service between Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and New York City was restored in June.



## Railroads Face December Deadline for Plans to Meet New TSA Rules

Regulations require increased training, identify some train-watching and rail photography as possible security threat

By **Dan Zukowski** | October 15, 2020 Trains Newswire - Provided by John Goodman



*Some train-watching and rail photography could be considered security threats under new Transportation Security Administration regulations. Railroads must submit plans for meeting the new rules by Dec. 21. TRAINS: David Lassen*

WASHINGTON — A late 2020 deadline is approaching for railroads and transit systems to submit plans on how they plan to comply with new Transportation Security Administration rules on security training.

The new regulations require freight railroads, passenger railroads and designated “higher risk” transit systems to submit plans on how they will comply by Dec. 21, 2020.

The new rules build on existing regulations. All Class I railroads and any freight railroad that acts as a host railroad for a Class I carrier or passenger operator are subject to this regulation, as well as hazardous materials shippers and those operating within a designated “high threat urban area.” The TSA lists 46 such areas in 28 states and the District of Columbia.

Amtrak, Caltrain, Metrolink, Metra, and Virginia Railway Express are among the passenger railroads that must comply, as well as 46 specific transit systems including Bay Area Rapid Transit, LA Metro, Washington Metro, New York MTA, Chicago Transit Authority, New Jersey Transit, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

The TSA estimates the total cost to the freight railroad industry at \$35.2 million over a 10-year period. For all affected passenger rail and transit operators, the total is estimated at \$23.8 million over the same period.

“The regulation isn’t as onerous as it may appear,” said Harry Schultz, section chief at the TSA.

Each railroad or transit agency must have a security coordinator and at least one alternate security coordinator, and they must be accessible to the TSA 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Significant security violations must be reported to the TSA within 24 hours.

Security training must be provided to any employee or contractor operating, inspecting or maintaining a transportation vehicle and to those responsible for dispatching. Workers who come into contact with the traveling public, such as ticket agents and onboard train staff, are also included, as well as those responsible for loading or unloading cargo or baggage.

Others required to undergo security training include workers inspecting or maintaining buildings or other railroad infrastructure such as bridges and tunnels. Railroad security personnel must also take the required training.

Specific security threats identified by the TSA include attempts to enter restricted areas, tampering or vandalizing rail facilities, locomotives or rolling stock, and carrying suspicious items, weapons or explosives on or near rail property.

Railfans should note that watching railroad or transit operations, or taking photographs, may in some instances be considered a security threat.

Part 1570 of the regulations includes as examples “taking photographs or video of infrequently used access points, personnel performing security functions (for example, patrols, badge/vehicle checking), or security-related equipment (for example, perimeter fencing, security cameras).”

“Loitering near conveyances, railcar routing appliances or any potentially critical infrastructure” may also trigger the interest of security officials.

“Observation through binoculars, taking notes, or attempting to measure distances” are cited in the regulation as suspicious activities.

Additional information is available on the TSA website at <https://www.tsa.gov/for-industry/surface-security-training-rule>

## Amtrak's Financial Lies

On Sun, Oct 11, 2020 at 4:59 PM Gene Poon <[gpoon49@gmail.com](mailto:gpoon49@gmail.com)> wrote: AllAboardRailDiscussion]

Copied from a Trainorders post: provided by John Goodman

Amtrak's great lie is that they can cut their way to profitability. As a retired accountant, that is the biggest lie there is. Yes, there is always fat that can be cut and even excess meat that can be trimmed. But eventually that goes away and one starts cutting into the bone. At some point, the cutting has to end and the focus needs to be on enhancing the current revenue then increasing it. With the latest cutbacks, Amtrak has gone beyond cutting into the bone and has reached the point where they are cutting off their hand to save their finger. While Amtrak is indeed showing gains from the cutbacks, that's a short term gain. A very short term gain. It doesn't take very long for that to go away. Then, to add insult to injury, Amtrak has not lengthened its consists to take advantage of the demand despite the availability of extra equipment. Sleeping car space is Amtrak's fastest growing market. Amtrak says that it costs too much to add another sleeping car. Well here is another accounting principle that Amtrak's mismanagement doesn't comprehend. The incremental cost of adding that extra car is more than offset by the revenue generated, especially at the prices sleeping cars command.

Here's another one of Amtrak's problems and this goes back to the days of Roger Lewis. Long distance trains are treated like they are Delta Airlines. Passengers are assumed to be traveling the entire distance of the train. That's never been true. The last study I saw said that 94% of travelers on long distance trains are shorts. Or to put it another way, they are travelling from point A to point B somewhere between the train's origin and destination. So only 6% of the riders are taking the complete trip from the train's point of origin to its destination. That's a lot of revenue Amtrak is generating turning over seats multiple times. And while not as often, Amtrak even turns over some of its sleeping car space at least once during a trip.

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Then there is the issue of dining cars. Yes, they are expensive to operate and no they don't make money. But even the dumbest Food and Beverage manager understands that it's the experience. I have no doubt that if someone were to do a proper study, they could find a way to keep costs in line without sacrificing quality. Forcing coach passengers to buy their meals in the lower level of the Superliner Lounge or the Amcafe. Neither of these cars are designed to handle that kind of demand. So, Amtrak turns away opportunity revenue since most passengers will sample the dining car at least once on a train trip.

Then there is Amtrak's greatest lie. The North East Corridor is profitable. Uh, no it's not. While it is true that the NEC is Amtrak's pride and joy, it is also the single most expensive part of Amtrak to operate. Amtrak uses "creative accounting" to make the corridor look profitable when it really isn't. It reminds me of how the Chicago and North Western used to claim their commuter trains were "profitable" during the 1960's and early 1970s. I'd be willing to bet that a Chief Financial Officer who would put Amtrak in line with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, where expenses were properly matched against revenues, he or she would find that the NEC is the biggest drain on Amtrak while the long distance trains most likely would break even and corridor trains other than the NEC would also cover their costs or show a small loss depending on how many trains the expenses are spread over.

The best way to turn Amtrak around is to completely clean house. It starts with the Board of Directors. All the political hacks need to be replaced. The new Chairman must be a person who understands railroading although not necessarily a railroader and be a person who will look at ways to both enhance current revenues as well as way to increase them. The rest of the board should be populated with business people, members of the hospitality industry and the railroads. Yes, I understand that in the current situation, most railroads would dump Amtrak in a New York second if they possibly could. However, I'm guessing that if they were given a partial say in how Amtrak is managed, there might be a different attitude on their part. Next, management needs to be completely replaced. Flynn and Gardner need to be the first to be tossed. The new president also has to have a fundamental understanding railroads though not necessarily be a railroader and be willing to follow the Board Chairman in finding ways to enhance and increase revenue while keeping costs in line. These are the two who will define Amtrak's mission and set the goals and standards. The new CFO needs to convert Amtrak from "voodoo economics" to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Then there needs to be Vice Presidents who understand the concepts of quality service and revenue enhancement. And finally, the idea of managers out in the field who are responsible for the performance of their trains needs to be returned otherwise known as the Brian Rosenwald model of regional management.

I could write a whole lot more about what needs to be done, but that's for another post. This is, to me, the outline of what needs to happen to make Amtrak what it can be instead of what it currently is.



## Jim Cramer Makes a Case for Union Pacific to Acquire Kansas City Southern

From: Gary Kazin via groups.io <[gkazin@yahoo.com@groups.io](mailto:gkazin@yahoo.com@groups.io)> <[allaboardraildiscussion@groups.io](mailto:allaboardraildiscussion@groups.io)>

Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020, 08:19:46 PM CDT -Provided by John Goodman

Subject: [AllAboardRailDiscussion]

Union Pacific reported a nearly 11% drop in business, missing on both revenue and profit estimates in the third quarter. The Omaha, Nebraska-based rail, which has homed in on modernized precision scheduled railroading to boost efficiency, was the only of its peers to fall short on profit expectations, Cramer noted. It doesn't help that the company offered few details on its outlook, he added. The stock is down more than 7%, a nearly 15-point drop to \$184.70, since the Thursday morning earnings report.

"How about if Union Pacific buys KSU, which just arguably reported the best quarter in the group?" Cramer pondered. "Union Pacific can absolutely afford it and in the last few weeks we've heard that KSU might be entertaining takeout offers from private equity firms." Union Pacific's getting hammered here in the wake of a not-so-hot quarter, not to mention a huge spike in Covid cases," CNBC's Jim Cramer said.

"As the precision railroading story winds down, they need to give you a new catalyst," the "Mad Money" host said. "Rather than continuing to buy back huge slugs of stock like CSX, I think Union Pacific CNBC's Jim Cramer on Monday, reviewing earnings reports from the railroad companies that have reported thus far, suggested that the rail industry could benefit from consolidation. Cramer focused specifically on the largest of the bunch in Union Pacific, which has seen its shares fall double digits since releasing results Thursday morning.

"Union Pacific's getting hammered here in the wake of a not-so-hot quarter, not to mention a huge spike in Covid cases," the "Mad Money" host said. "As the precision railroading story winds down, they need to give you a new catalyst."

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The stock is down more than 7%, a nearly 15-point drop to \$184.70, since the Thursday morning earnings report. should just reach out and acquire Kansas City Southern," he said.



## HISTORY: Garen, a Washington County Town Lost to Time

Forest Lake Times

Forest Lake, Columbus, Linwood, Scandia, Wyoming

Jeanne Caine History Columnist Mar 14, 2020



19th Century



Today

Near the Garen farm were the farms of the Johnsons, Mays, Palmers, Lords, and Daningers. With a name decided upon, the railway moved a boxcar by the track. This became the new train station complete with the new "Garen" name signs.

IF you grew up on a farm in Washington County, went to a one-room school and remember hearing the blast of the train whistle and feeling the ground shake, you might have lived in the town of Garen. In the late 19th century, the train running between Duluth and St. Paul made a regular stop in the middle of a field south of Forest Lake, located at the intersection of 190th Street and a gravel road that was later to become U.S. Highway 61. The railway and local farmers made an agreement that the railway would clear an area and build a "switch line" so the farmers could build cattle pens to load their cattle into the box cars and ship them to South St. Paul. The railroad wanted a name for this station and preferred that it be a short name not used any other place. The name Garen was eventually chosen, after Frank Garen who owned a 350-acre farm nearby. Garen seemed a fitting name for a farming community spanning both sides of the train tracks.

Near the Garen farm were the farms of the Johnsons, Mays, Palmers, Lords, and Daningers. With a name decided upon, the railway moved a boxcar by the track. This became the new train station complete with the new "Garen" name signs.



## Metro News - Northstar Temporary Shutdown?

Friday, October 16, 2020, 10:59 AM, Frederick Krenske

Temporary shutdown of Northstar an option as Twin Cities council faces budget issues.



*A Northstar commuter train departs Minneapolis in August 2020. A temporary shutdown of the line is among the possibilities as the Metropolitan Council considers its transit budget issues.*

A temporary shutdown of the Northstar commuter rail line between Minneapolis and Big Lake, Minn., could be a possibility as the Minneapolis-St. Paul area's Metropolitan Council deals with budget pressures created by the COVID-19 pandemic. [The Minneapolis Star Tribune reports](#) Met Council spokeswoman Terri Dresen said "all options are on the table" to deal with the budget issues, adding "while the short-term prognosis for Northstar is challenging, we feel the long-term prognosis is healthy." As a result of the pandemic, Northstar service was cut from 72 to 20 trips weekly and weekend service was eliminated, and ridership plummeted from almost 57,000 in January to 1,158 in May. It remains at about 5% of pre-pandemic levels.

## Las Vegas High Speed Project, Rebranded Brightline West, Reveals Details on Construction Plans

New website says route will be built in six segments, site says, with first work to begin in fourth quarter of 2020 **October 26, 2020**

**-Provided by John Goodman**



*This artist conception of a Brightline West train is part of the new website for the re-branded Las Vegas-Southern California project.*

The proposed high speed rail operation between Southern California and Las Vegas has been rebranded as Brightline West and has [launched a website](#) with details on construction of the project, along with a virtual public meeting for information and comments.

The site reports construction will be broken into six segments, three in California and three in Nevada. In California, the 39-mile southern section, which works east from the planned Southern California station, will begin in the fourth quarter of 2020; this section will include most of the right-of-way not within the median of Interstate 15. The middle and north sections, 45 and 51 miles, respectively, will begin construction in the second quarter of 2021.

In Nevada, the 21-mile south section, reaching the California state line, will also begin in the fourth quarter of 2020; the 6-mile middle segment and 7-mile north segment into Las Vegas will begin in the second quarter of 2021.

The website says the project will create more than 40,000 construction jobs and more than 1,000 permanent jobs, with an economic income of \$9 billion. It will generate \$1 billion in tax revenue.

The website notes the schedule is subject to change, and [the Las Vegas Review-Journal reports](#) the schedule is dependent on selling bonds in California by Dec. 1. The size of the bond offering was recently cut from \$3.2 billion to \$2.4 billion [see ["Digest: Safety Commission says evidence ...."](#) Trains News Wire, Oct. 21, 2020].



## Metro News - October 29 in Railroad History: Milwaukee Road

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Thu, 29 Oct 2020

Why is this Milwaukee Road diesel wearing what are obviously Union Pacific colors?



Union Pacific's home rails began at Council Bluffs, Iowa. In order to offer transcontinental service from Chicago to the west coast, UP needed to collaborate with a railroad that traversed Illinois and Iowa. The list of potential partners included the Burlington, the Chicago Great Western, Chicago & North Western, Illinois Central, Milwaukee Road, and Rock Island.

From 1890—1955, UP's partner was the Chicago and North Western Railway. That relationship ended 65 years ago today.

Beginning on October 30, 1955, UP's crack streamliners (including the *City of Los Angeles*, the *City of Portland* and the *City of San Francisco*) ran from Chicago to Omaha via the Milwaukee Road. Clearly, Union Pacific held the upper hand in this partnership. The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific ordered six ABA sets of Electro-Motive E9 diesels, built to UP specifications and painted in UP's signature Armour yellow and Harbormist grey with red pinstripes.

The E9 was the final entry in Electro-Motive's E-series\* of passenger locomotives, which began in 1937 with six EA / EB sets built for the Baltimore & Ohio. EMD built 144 E9s (100 A units and 44 B units) between 1954 and 1964. Each unit carried two 12-cylinder prime movers rated at 1200 horsepower. Union Pacific owned by far the most E9s (35 As and 34 Bs)—many of which were sold to AMTRAK in 1971.

\* E stood for "eighteen". EA, E1 and E2 units were rated at 1800 horsepower each. Electro-Motive kept the "E" designation even though it upgraded subsequent models to 2000 hp (E3-E7), 2250 hp (E8) and ultimately 2400 hp (E9). Joseph Lechner



## AMTRAK Quips October 2 2020 -From John Goodman

[Agents back at Amtrak stations, Tuss to speak at hearing secured by Tester](#)

*Havre Daily News*

Reach: 10. 6k

A representative of Amtrak said agents will be coming back to the Havre Amtrak station today, while the head of Havre-based Bear Paw Development Corp. will be testifying this month in a Senate hearing about the rail passenger service as Amtrak cuts the Empire Builder to running three days a week. Amtrak Spokesperson Marc Magliari said in an email Wednesday night that the Havre and Shelby stations will have customer service representatives by today and they plan to restore checked baggage service in both locations by the end of October.

[Amtrak San Joaquins to reopen temporarily closed stations, beginning Monday](#)

*Sanford Sentinel*

Byline: Contributed Report

Beginning Monday, station lobbies serving the Amtrak San Joaquins in the cities of Hanford (HNF), Fresno (FNO), Merced (MCD) and Modesto (MOD) will reopen with new hours of operation, providing the ability for passengers to once again buy tickets in person, check bags, and await their connections indoors. These services are important to service operations during the colder months and busy holiday travel season.

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**Lodi police officer who saved elderly man in wheelchair honored by Amtrak**

***Recordnet.com***

Reach: 164k

Erika Urrea was honored for her heroic rescue of an elderly man in a wheelchair who came perilously close to being struck by a speeding freight train in August in Lodi. On Sept. 29, the Amtrak Police Department presented Lodi police Officer Erika Urrea with the "Life Saving Medal" for her swift and decisive action that likely saved the life of a 66-year-old man who sustained serious injuries to his legs as a result of the incident on Aug. 12.

**Alabama's only passenger train service, Amtrak, cuts long-distance rides with revenue down over 80%**

***WHNT.com***

Reach: 524k

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Amtrak announced that their long-distance schedules will be moving operation to tri-weekly. This is due to the decrease in travel demand and will impact the Crescent Train, which runs through Birmingham and other Alabama cities.

**Greyhound Bus Terminal Moves To Union Station**

***CBS Denver***

Byline: Jennifer McRae

Reach: 1. 8m

Greyhound will share the facility with Amtrak and RTD so customers can have seamless access to local and national transportation providers.

**Amtrak Cancels Winter Park Express for 2020-21 season**

***Progressive Railroading***

Reach: 53. 4k

Amtrak has suspended the Winter Park Express service between Denver's Union Station and the Winter Park Resort in Winter Park, Colorado, until winter 2022. Amtrak has been reducing the number of seats sold on each train to enable distancing. Amtrak and Winter Park Resort officials evaluated seating options on the route and agreed that, with the social distancing requirements, it was not possible to operate the train successfully this season, Amtrak officials said in a press release.

## Rail Policy & Regulation

**Wisconsin-Minnesota Amtrak passenger rail extension backed by \$31M federal grant**

***Wisconsin BizJournal***

Byline: Unknown

The rail service between the Twin Cities and Chicago Union Station is anticipated to begin in 2024 and increases round-trip service on the Minnesota-Wisconsin-Illinois corridor to two daily trips.

**Feds give Wisconsin-Minnesota rail project \$31M grant**

***The Center Square***

Byline: Scott McClallen

Reach: 207k

The federal government chose the joint Wisconsin-Minnesota Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Passenger Rail Project to receive a \$31.8 million federal rail grant. The TCMC project will add a daily round-trip between the Twin Cities, La Crosse, Milwaukee, and Chicago along the existing Amtrak Empire Builder route.

## Transit/Commuter Rail

**Western rail leg costs pegged at \$2.4B to \$4.6B**

***WBJournal.com***

Byline: State House

Reach: 63. 7k

New state projections indicate a passenger rail expansion to western Massachusetts could attract 278,000 to 469,000 riders per year at a cost ranging between \$2.4 billion and \$4.6 billion, but the long-sought project continues to face major funding hurdles. Department of Transportation consultants presented a new report Wednesday with updated estimates for the proposed commuter rail extension, another key milestone as state officials weigh whether and how to expand regular passenger rail service west of its current terminus in Worcester.

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**CT bus, train riders to get free masks Monday**

*TheHour*

Reach: 553k

The state Department of Transportation has announced another round of free face masks for bus and train riders on Monday. Monday is also the day resumption of bus fare enforcement resumes and front-door boarding on CTtransit buses will take effect

**'Game-Changing Project': \$2.3B Green Line Extension Now More Than 50% Complete**

*CBS Boston*

Reach: 1. 5m

The Green Line extension, a \$2.3 billion project that expands service for 4.7 miles along two lines into Somerville and Medford, is now more than 50% complete. Gov. Charlie Baker called the project, which includes construction of six new stations, a "huge, game-changing project." Ground-breaking took place on the project in 2018 after discussions that stemmed back to the 1990s. The Green Line extension is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021.

**Traffic Roars Back, Reaching Pre-Pandemic Levels**

*NY1 News*

Reach: 932k

Traffic jams are a familiar sight again in the city. "This traffic is just ridiculous," said one driver waiting to turn onto traffic-choked Morris Avenue in the Bronx. "We live in this neighborhood, it doesn't make sense for it to be this way."

## Travel Industry

**American Airlines and United Airlines Set to Furlough Tens of Thousands of Employees While Awaiting Congress's Relief Bill Decision**

*Travel + Leisure*

Byline: Lauren Frias

Reach: 5. 0m

American and United Airlines will begin furloughing tens of thousands of employees on Thursday as Congress fails to reach a deal on a COVID-19 relief bill, according to company announcements. American Airlines is set to furlough 19,000 employees, and United is expecting about 13,000, citing the respective notes to employees obtained by Reuters reporter David Shepardson.

**Alaska Airlines Offering Pre-flight COVID-19 Tests for Travelers Heading to Hawaii**

*Travel + Leisure*

Byline: Cailey Rizzo

Reach: 5. 0m

Alaska Airlines is the latest carrier to offer preflight COVID-19 testing for passengers heading to Hawaii. Partnering with Carbon Health, testing will take place at a pop-up clinic in downtown Seattle for \$135 and results will be available in tow hours. Alaska Airlines passengers will be able to receive priority testing on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## Amtrak New Releases/Social Media/Testimony

**Who needs international travel when you can enjoy 350 miles of spectacular, sun-drenched California coastline aboard the Pacific**

*Amtrak Twitter*

## Editorials/Opinions/Blogs

**A Green New Deal for Illinois Transportation**

*StreetsBlog Chicago*

Byline: Courtney Cobbs

Reach: 45. 1k

Last week while forest fires were raging in California, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order declaring a goal of eliminating fossil fuels from the transportation sector. The order called for ending all sales of fossil fuel-powered vehicles by 2035 and calls on various California state agencies to formulate strategies and regulations to create a "just" transition away from fossil fuel reliance.

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### [10 Killer Road Trips to Take From Los Angeles](#)

**HGTV.com**

Byline: Erica Reitman

Reach: 4. 5m

The drive down to San Diego is an easy one. But if you don't feel like jumping in your car for the day, you can also hop on Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner train and relax the whole way. Schedules are temporarily reduced due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### [OP-ED: Problems with New York MTA Threatened Fare Increases and Major Service Cuts](#)

**MassTransitmag.com**

Reach: 82. 7k

New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Chairman Pat Foye continues to use his own doomsday forecasts in attempt to scare commuters, taxpayers and funding agencies. His two most recent threats include, first, up to a 40 percent reduction in New York City Transit bus, subway and Staten Island Railway along with up to a 50 percent cut in Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad service.

### [The Light Rail at the End of the Tunnel](#)

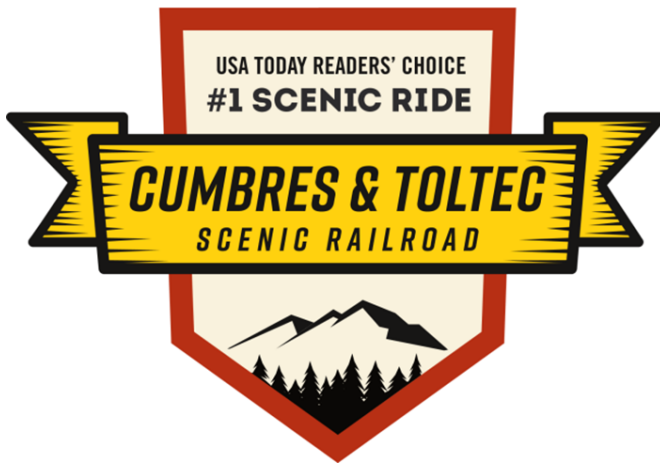
**The American Conservative**

Byline: Ethan A. Greene

Reach: 720k

Maryland's Purple Line is on the verge of collapse, and if the project dies, a rare well-designed light rail system dies with it. Project delays, cost overruns, and disgruntled contractors are nothing unusual to public rail projects—but the Purple Line's design sets it above the rest. The Purple Line has existed in various ideas and concepts for several decades, going back to 1987 when Maryland began acquiring the right-of-way from railroad company CSX for passenger rail use. It was not until 2008, when then-governor O'Malley announced the creation of a light rail system 16 miles long with a price tag of over \$2 billion.

## Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Wins Again!



*The Colorado and New Mexico Historic Steam Railroad Was Selected for the Third Time by the Readers of USA Today as the 2020 "Best Scenic Train Ride"*

**C&TSRR wins as we did in 2017, 2019 and now in 2020. A big Thank You to our fans who voted diligently to help the C&TSRR win this award!**

The readers of USA Today have selected the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (C&TSRR) as the No. 1 "Best Scenic Train Ride" in the nation. The much coveted award was open to 20 different train trips, all selected by a panel of travel experts and USA Today editors.

"We are absolutely thrilled that the people of America have once again recognized the Cumbres & Toltec as not only the highest, longest and most authentic steam railroad in the nation, but also as the most scenic," said John Bush, president of the C&TSRR.

Owned by the states of Colorado and New Mexico, the historic steam railroad built in 1880 runs for 64 miles across the Rocky Mountains, crossing state borders 11 times as it curls across rivers, through tunnels, over trestles and along the lip of canyons. The railroad's name derives from the fact that at one point it steams over Cumbres Pass (at 10,015, it is the highest point reached by any steam railroad in the nation) and at another it curves along Toltec Gorge, some 600-feet above the roaring river below.

"The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is a National Historic Landmark that moves," Bush said. "We provide a completely authentic look at railroading in the 1880s in one of the most beautiful areas of the Rocky Mountains."

## Former Amtrak President Alan Boyd Dies

Alan Boyd, the first U.S. secretary of transportation and [Amtrak's](#) third president, died Oct. 18. He was 98, the [New York Times](#) reported. President Lyndon Johnson appointed Boyd transportation secretary in 1966. Boyd served as president of the Illinois Central Railroad from 1969 to 1972, and as Amtrak's president from 1978 to 1982. "Alan Boyd championed safety, the development of an integrated, multimodal transportation system, and consistent federal funding for intercity passenger rail service to realize its full potential," said Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer Bill Flynn in a statement. Boyd left Amtrak after four years in a much stronger position than when he arrived, Flynn said.





## Bob Ball's Fabulous Photos



BNSF EB near Division St St Paul  
Oct 12 2020 -Bob Ball



BNSF, CP Heritage unit on CP Dakota MN  
Oct 7 2020 -Bob Ball



BNSF WB Hagar City WI  
Oct 5 2020 -Bob Ball



CP EB Grain heads down Westminister Hill  
St Paul Oct 11 2020 -Bob Ball



CP-PGR transfer in Bloomington MN  
Oct 20 2020 -Bob Ball



CP EB Train #471 at night Minnesota City  
ball park Oct 12 2020 -Bob Ball



CP UP 5295 and Central Maine & Quebec  
1006 Homer MN Oct 7 2020 -Bob Ball



UP 7th St StP Helpers assist stalled train  
SSAL Oct 11 2020 -Bob Ball



UP Pushing SSAL up the hill  
Oct 11 2020 -Bob Ball



US Army Corp of Engineers Fountain  
City and tug Wells maintaining the nav-  
igation Oct 7 2020 -Bob Ball



CP Military Unit Potash train  
Whitewater Creek Aug 11 2020  
-Bob Ball



CP Military Unit Potash train  
Along Mississippi River  
Aug 11 2020 -Bob Ball





## Greetings to one and all,

This is Santa Claus, and I'm writing you today with some very important news. To keep everyone safe this year's North Pole Express is going virtual! The North Pole Express will be working with the Union Depot in St. Paul to film Santa and all of my helpers direct from the North Pole to your living room. Also, with the help of some of my more tech-savvy elves, you and your children will be able to log-in and video visit with me from my locomotive. I urge you to register your email address with the kind folks at Railroading Heritage of Midwest America (Friends of the 261), for the virtual event of a lifetime. I still want to see all of you, especially in times when a little Christmas Spirit is needed most. Which reminds me...

Due to our overwhelming concern for the safety of our passengers and volunteers, the North Pole Express will not be running like normal this year. Rest assured, the steam engine is in tip-top shape, and I will still deliver your presents on time. Mrs. Claus is knitting me a special red mask to match my suit, and the sleigh is being equipped with a hand sanitizer dispenser, courtesy of Santa-labs Inc.

This year's event will have chances to win free prizes and a chance to meet one on one with Santa via Zoom. Reserve your spot to see me and join the mailing list for updates on next year's excursions. The Friends of the 261 have a lot planned in 2021, trips in the summer and fall, and of course, the return of the North Pole Express in 2021. I do not want you to miss it!

That's all for now, everyone. I look forward to seeing you soon. Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas!

**Santa Claus**

### Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenske, Bill Dredge)

NONE to Report			

Northstar News  
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Address Correction Requested

