

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

Northstar News

It's Not Spring When you Cannot Meet with People !



L: CB&Q #5632 Excursion
Acequia Colorado Aug 31 1963
—Rich Taylor Photograph

R: CB&Q F7A Probably Somewhere in Iowa in the 1960's —
Greg Smith Collection
(Minnesota and CB&Q Railroad Facebook Groups)

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Meeting Notice

MAY 2020 Meeting Cancelled due to Pandemic.

Virtual Meeting Scheduled May 16 2020
See details in this newsletter

Stay tuned for future meeting and activity announcements in the next newsletter!

Next newsletter (June) will be out around **June 4, 2020.**

Read the attachment about the Zoom Meeting software.

Zoom has been used by multi-millions of people this year!

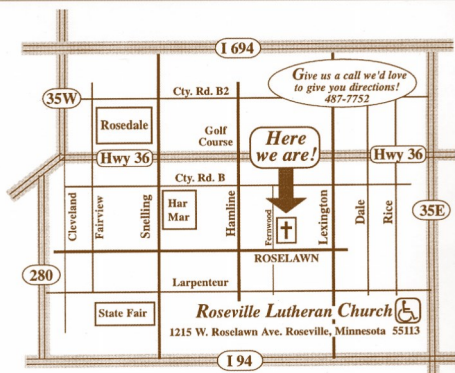
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Meeting Location: From the east or west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the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

*From the Editor:*

Again, I wish to congratulate John Goodman, Dawn Holmberg and Russ Isbrandt. They were instrumental in making our calendar for 2021 close to being ready in July. Because of retail closures and the uncertain economy due to the pandemic we expect calendar sales to be impacted. The decision on the size of the press run is yet to be made.

Please consider using ZOOM for our first virtual meeting. Even for non-computer literates, it is easy to use.

Announcement: Virtual Meeting May 16 2020 6:30 PM

We will attempt to have a 'virtual meeting' using the freeware 'Zoom' on Saturday May 16 2020 6:30pm. All members are invited to join. You can join our meeting if you have a personal computer, tablet, laptop or cell phone! Instructions on Zoom is an insert in this month's newsletter. Depending on your type of device, (most have cameras and microphones) you can interact with other members.

Even if you do not have a microphone/camera for your PC, they can be purchased easily online for \$20-30. Most cell phones and tablets have camera's and microphones. To join our meeting, our meeting director Dawn Holmberg and her assistant Dan Meyer, dan@meyer-family.net (763) 784-8835 need to be contacted, either by phone (if cell phone, call or using text) or email address. You need not have to have a camera or microphone to join the meeting!! Please contact Dawn from information above on this page prior to this meeting! Either your cell phone number or email address is needed for you to join the meeting.

You will be notified by cell phone or email to join the meeting. Note, using the freeware Zoom, we are limited to a 40 minute session. So we might have consecutive meetings. There will be a short slide show program during the meeting. This will NOT be an Official Meeting -The editor



Trackside Newsletter Issue #91 - April 16th, 2020 <https://duluthtrains.com/>

EXCURSIONS ARE CANCELLED THROUGH MAY 17TH, AND OUR FIRST EXCURSIONS ARE AIMED FOR MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND. WE CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION TO ASSURE IT IS SAFE AND HEALTHY FOR OUR GUEST-PASSENGERS AND CREWS. THE DULUTH DEPOT MUSEUM IS CURRENTLY CLOSED DUE TO VIRUS CONCERNS.

WHILE THE MUSEUM IS CLOSED, WE ARE RUNNING A DAILY SERIES OF VIDEO TOURS IN THE MUSEUM, WHICH CAN BE FOUND ON THE MUSEUM'S [FACEBOOK PAGE](#) OR ON THE [YOUTUBE CHANNEL HERE](#).



News from the Iron Range

ArcelorMittal to Temporarily Idle Hibbing Taconite, 650 to be Laid Off Updated: April 21, 2020



More layoffs at an Iron Range mine are coming because of the impact of COVID-19. On Monday night, ArcelorMittal announced they are going to temporarily idle Hibbing Taconite. The plan is to idle on Sunday, May 3rd, and return to operation on July 6th. Local 2705 president Chris Johnson said, "Everybody kind of expected this. But the shock is still there. When you're actually in it now. You can prepare and prepare, but now it's real." He said they'll be meeting with the company on Wednesday to get a better idea of who will be staying on. He expects about 50 hourly will be helping with fire watch and other duties. As for the idling, there will be mixed feelings. "We had some people who will be relieved, because they are high risk. Others want to work," he shared

According to the statement from ArcelorMittal, about 650 people will be laid off, including both salary and hourly people. As managing partner of HibTac, ArcelorMittal USA plans on to work with the United Steelworkers to minimize impact on the workforce for the duration of the outage.

Rep. Julie Sandstede shared a statement on Tuesday. "We're in extraordinarily challenging economic times and unfortunately, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are being felt here on the Iron Range. The news of HibTac being idled is another awful development during what's already an uncertain situation. I share my best to everyone impacted by this news. Iron Rangers are resilient, and we've been through tough times before. We will get through this, too, together."

She went on to say, "I must also share my disappointment that the company didn't offer a heads-up that this was coming. Mining companies have come to Iron Range legislators many times requesting assistance on a variety of issues, and it's concerning they chose not to notify us about this decision. I'm optimistic that once this situation passes, we will all emerge more united as Minnesotans, however, trust and timely, meaningful communication will be key."

This news comes a week after Cleveland-Cliffs announced they are idling Northshore Mining. And U.S. Steel is going to idle Keetac. <https://www.wdio.com/mining-news/arcelormittal-mining-range-idle-hibbing-taconite/5706301/?cat=10335>

Todd Monroe Deer River MN



Blandin Paper Idling

Todd Monroe TwinPortsRail@groups.io Date: Tue, 21 Apr 2020 11:01:28 PDT
UPM Blandin in Grand Rapids is doing what appears to be a two week shutdown.

UPM Blandin is temporarily shutting down their Grand Rapids paper mill because of the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The company did not provide exact details of the shutdown, but a representative from Teamsters Local 346 told WDIO News the closure is expected to last around two weeks. *Continued on next page:*



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In a prepared statement, UPM Blandin General Manager Scott Juidici cited market forces for the temporary shutdown. "The global response to the coronavirus pandemic has led to an overall slowdown of the economy. We are taking short-term measures to respond to market conditions. We rely on our global network of modern paper mills to meet customer demand," Juidici said.

According to UPM Blandin's [website](https://www.wdio.com/minnesota-news/upm-blandin-temporarily-shutting-down-grand-rapids-paper-mill/5706003/?cat=12056), the mill was founded in 1901, and employs 240 people.

<https://www.wdio.com/minnesota-news/upm-blandin-temporarily-shutting-down-grand-rapids-paper-mill/5706003/?cat=12056>

Todd Monroe Deer River MN

Keetac Layoffs and Idling

From: [Dave Schauer OreRail@groups.io](mailto:Dave.Schauer@groups.io) Date: Fri, 17 Apr 2020 06:40:21 PDT

Keetac follows NSM in announcing a shutdown. When Keewatin Taconite closes it is more concerning as this plant is at a higher risk to never reopen (without export contracts Minntac could pick up Keetac's production for domestic furnaces).

Layoffs announced at Keewatin Taconite

From David Shauer Updated: April 16, 2020 01:23 PM



COVID-19 slowdowns are impacting another mine. This time, it's Keetac, which is owned by U.S. Steel.

The company said in a statement on Thursday that they have issued WARN notices for all potentially impacted employees. "In the near term, we expect this to impact approximately 75 employees with three year of service or less. Over the next month, the temporary layoffs are expected to affect a total of approximately 375 employees," the statement read.

This includes union and non-union staff.

According to a letter from the United Steelworkers Local 2660, the company and union met on Wednesday, and that there will be some layoffs that go into effect on Sunday the 19th.

The letter said that all operations people with three years or less will be affected that day. Maintenance employees with 3 three years or less will continue working until the current outage is complete.

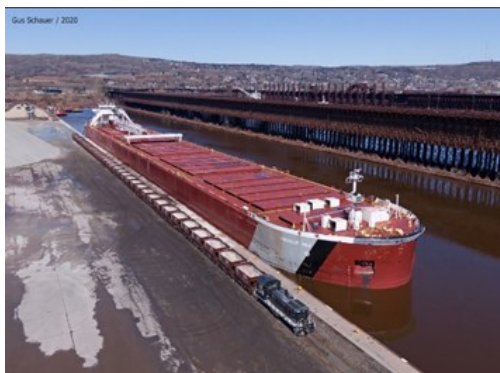
Local 2660 leaders continue to negotiate a layoff minimization plan daily with the company.

U.S. Steel also said they are, "indefinitely idling the Keetac facility to respond to the sudden and dramatic decline in business conditions resulting from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic."

U.S. Steel also owns Minntac, the region's largest mine. Union leaders said they have not been notified of any layoffs there yet.

Northshore Mining, which is owned by Cleveland-Cliffs, is being temporarily idled this week. About 470 of its employees are being laid off.

<https://www.wdio.com/mining-news/keetac-layoffs-mining-range-covid-19-steelworkers/5701392/>



Hallett Dock 5 Update

From: [Dave Schauer OreRail@groups.io](mailto:Dave.Schauer@groups.io) Date: Tue, 07 Apr 2020 07:19:45 PDT

The STB approved CN's purchase of dock 5 from Hallett on 2/26/2020 (effective on March 27) but I don't know if the transfer has been completed. Doesn't look like any operational changes. Here the Presque Isle is moored undergoing engine work while Hallett's former CP SW1200RS 1251 spots cars for limestone loading. 4/4/2020

<https://www.railpictures.net/photo/731704/> Dave Schauer



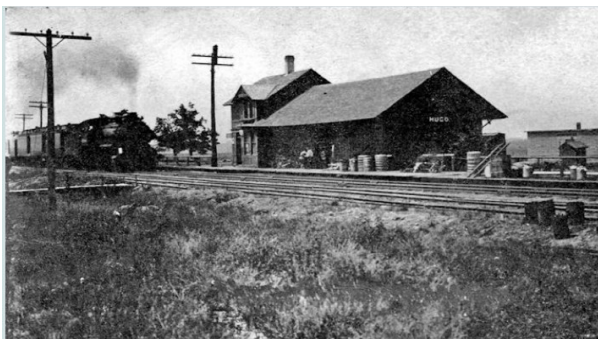
New NSM Units in Service

From: [Dave Schauer OreRail@groups.io](mailto:Dave.Schauer@groups.io) Date: Sat, 11 Apr 2020 09:25:39 PDT

Northshore Mining has placed the first of their new (to them) ex-CSX SD70ACe models in service. The first run using 671 and 672 was yesterday (April 10, 2020) on the noon loads from Babbitt to Silver Bay. They expect five of these from MEI near St. Louis, replacing four leased CEFX SD9043MACs. Word is they will keep their SD40 variants as secondary and back-up power. Those big white noses does need something added, whether it is safety stripes or a logo like the vast majority of railroads do.

<https://www.railpictures.net/photo/732220/> Dave Schauer Duluth, MN

History of the Railroad in Hugo April 11 2020 -Provided by Chuck Lavallee



First Train Through Hugo

Joe Peltier of Centerville—half and hearty at 28 years of age—is one of the real old-timers in this area.

He was born in Centerville April 11, 1897, before Minnesota was a state, and at a time when the first settlers were moving into this part of the country.

The year 1869 was a memorable one for the 12-year-old lad, and to

woods, one might come upon another small village, the present-day Minneapolis, known then as St. Anthony.

Mr. Peltier took an active part in early political activity in Anoka county. For many years he acted as road commissioner for the Centerville township sector, alongside a good friend, Charlie Cummings, who held a similar job across the line in Washington county.

Mr. Peltier feels fine, enjoys his garden and has yet—he says—to be bested in any wrestling contest, although he reluctantly gave up the sport a few years ago.

Joe Peltier as a young man

this day he remembers the first train that chugged into the depot at Hugo.

All those who cared to go for a free ride were taken aboard, and the train, consisting of five or six cars, pulled away from the station—a 20 x 20 structure made of wood slabs standing on piles.

Another event of that year sticks in Mr. Peltier's mind. A rumoed Indian uprising induced the entire population of Centerville to move south into Little Canada, which at that time was a "mission" of the Catholic church at Centerville. After the uprising was put down in southern and western Minnesota, the settlers felt it safe to return to their homes.

Residents spent their time in hunting or fishing, he says, with little thought of farming beyond the necessities.

Peddling fish and game, as well as blueberries and similar products in season, was a source of cash for many families.

Indians came frequently to the homes of early settlers, to hawk and to discuss matters of mutual concern, when they could speak French.

J.L. Times 1949

History of the Railroad in Hugo Hugo, once known as Oneka Township, was first connected by dirt road to St. Paul in 1869; though the railroad began operations to White Bear a year earlier in 1868. 1870 saw the completion of the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad — later known as the Northern Pacific. Due to a concern by local farmers that the trains would interfere with their free roaming livestock, the Centerville Station was built in the Village of Hugo instead of the Village of Centerville, located three-miles to the West. The one and a half story station was completed in 1871.

Following the construction of the railroad, many families in the area made their living by cutting wood and hauling it to the railroad in the winter. All the trains stopped here to refuel. By 1883, the village consisted of four to five families. The trains families to Hugo: suitcases filled, business ideas, livestock, and hopes of a new future. The railroad made it possible for people to live in the area, and commute to St. Paul for work if need be. Businesses Established Following Completion of Railroad Service to Hugo:

- Early 1900s — Inter-State Lumber Company • 1905 — Telephone Company • 1910 — First National Bank of Hugo • 1917 — Hugo Feed Mill Up until 1906 the Hugo was referred to as the Village of Centerville Station, that is until the Post Office requested that the village be incorporated under a different name to avoid further confusion with mail delivery.

Continued on the next page:

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The name "Hugo" was is a tribute either to the famous French author, Victor Hugo, or the former Duluth Mayor with ties to the railroad, Trevanion William Hugo. Today, what used to be the tracks of the Great Northern Pacific have been removed, paved over, and serve as a biking track for residents and visitors to the city.

Depot Memories "The Hugo Depot had three bedrooms upstairs plus a kitchen, living room, and bathroom. When I was in 3rd or 4th Grade I stayed overnight with my friend Doris Day. Her father was the depot agent, and the family lived upstairs. During the night the train went by — I jumped out of bed and started crying. Dori's mother came into the room and said, "It's ok, it's ok!" Then I went back to sleep. I remember seeing the mail leaving town, being picked up by trains going either North or South. If you had ordered a package — mail ordered from Sears, you would get a notice in the mail go pick up your packages at the depot. During the 1930s, the depression, "bums" would get off the train before it reached the depot and come to my house. My mother would feed them, [though] some took more than was offered, and then they would head uptown (Hugo). There was a potato market across from [St. John's] church, and potatoes would be put on the train to be sold in St. Paul. After I was married in 1944, I would ride the train to go see a movie in St. Paul or to visit my sister-in-law. The cost was less than \$1." - Viola Maslowski, April 2010



BNSF News: April 9 2020 Answering the Call: BNSF Keeps Supplies Moving



We don't have to wait for the history books to tell us we're living in a public health crisis like we have never seen. While the COVID-19 story is still being written, one important chapter is about BNSF's and the nation's freight railroads' role in keeping our country's supply chain secure.

"This is a very serious and somber time," said BNSF President and CEO Carl Ice. "Some of the very things that are necessary and have to be available to help combat the present situation move on our railroad."

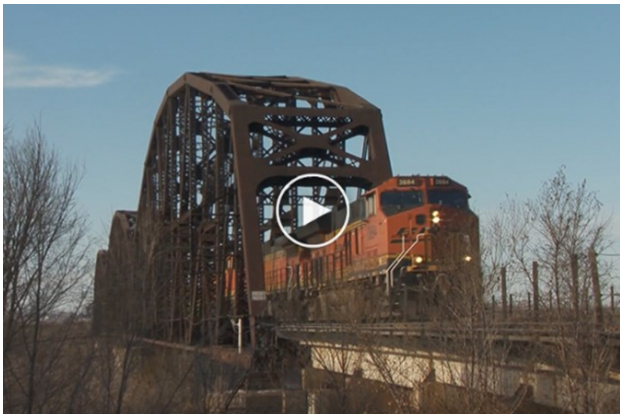
From essential goods to the energy that powers homes and hospitals, BNSF employees are working around the clock to transport the products we all need. Learn how our employees are showing up to work every day to keep the supply chain moving, now on [Rail Talk](#)



Railroaders Receive Public Support During Pandemic

Members of the public have taken to social media to thank and praise doctors, nurses, grocery store workers, truckers – and of course, railroaders for showing up to work every day to help the public get through the crisis. And some have even publicly displayed signs to thank railroaders for delivering medical supplies and essential goods in a time of urgent need. Here's our favorite example, found alongside our network near Mammoth Springs, Arkansas.

Appreciate railroaders? We hope you'll let them know you know they're out there keeping the supply chain moving. Please post a message to your Facebook, Twitter, Linked In or Instagram account and thank them with hashtag #ThankaRailroader

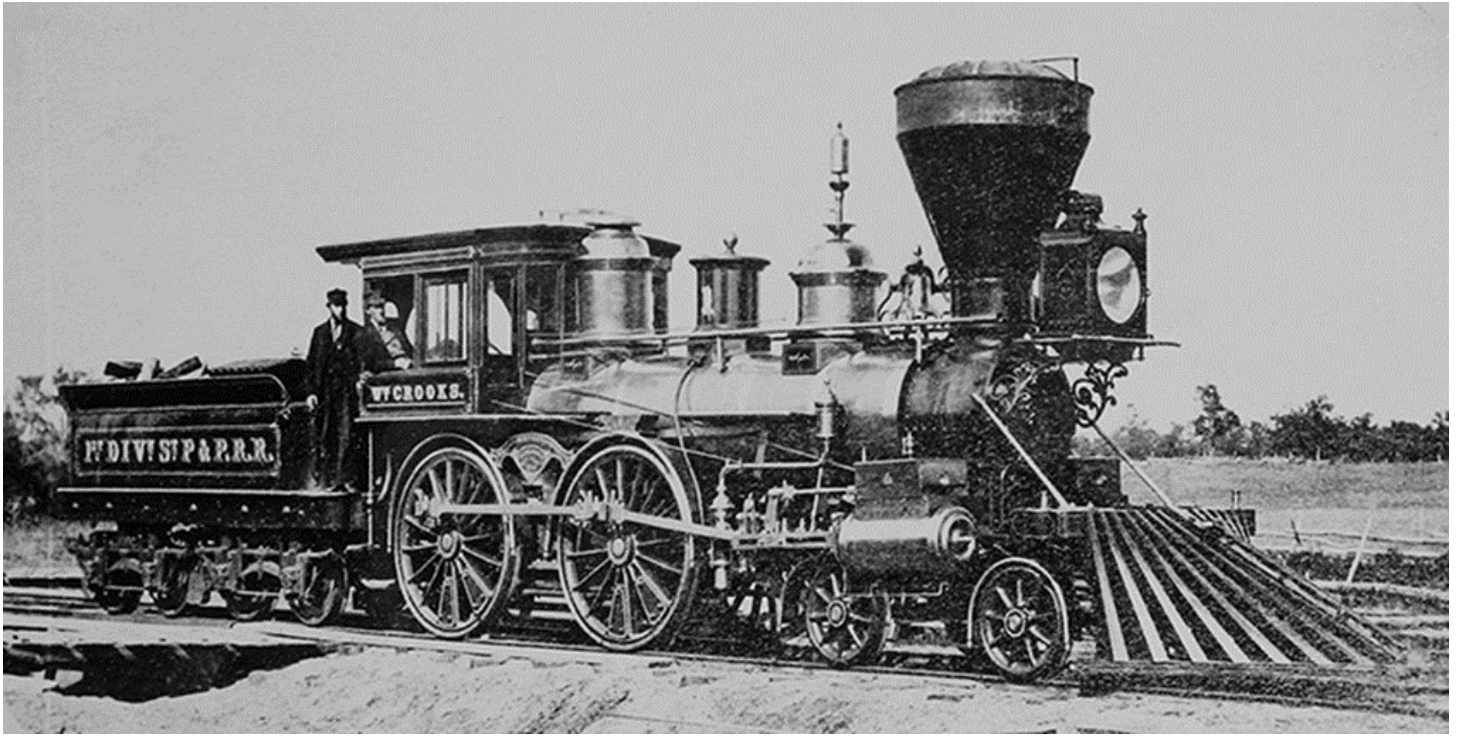


New Bridge Will Help North Dakota Business Get to Market

The BNSF Railway bridge over the Missouri River at Bismarck and Mandan, North Dakota is more than 100 years old and needs to be replaced.

The timely replacement of the bridge will ensure continued safe and efficient railroad shipments of agricultural and industrial products, which are critical to the well-being and economic vitality of the region.

Want to follow and support this important project and other North Dakota rail issues? Text "Railbridge" to 52886 from your mobile device for the latest news about the project and how you can help. Or if you prefer, visit <https://p2a.co/0PAb9j4>



Here's one of the earliest known images of the Wm. Crooks showing its original straight top boiler and triple domes before it was rebuild after the roundhouse fire of 1868. The logs in the tender are the fuel that fire the boiler of this wood-burning locomotive.

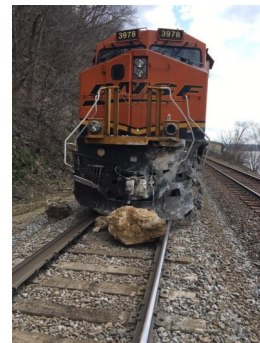
April 5, 1974: The locomotive Wm. Crooks placed on the National Register of Historic Places

On this day in 1974, the steam locomotive *Wm. Crooks* was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Shortly thereafter a new home was created for it in Duluth when it was moved to the Lake Superior Railroad Museum located on the lower level of Duluth Union Depot in May, 1975. It resides there today—on indefinite custodial loan from the Minnesota Historical Society. The *Wm. Crooks* first arrived in Minnesota on September 9, 1861, when it was delivered to its new owner, the Minnesota & Pacific Railroad, founded in 1857 as the state's first railroad. The original predecessor of the Great Northern Railway, the M&P began as a simple line connecting Stillwater, Minnesota, to St. Paul with aspirations to eventually run between St. Paul and the Red River Valley on up to the Canadian Provinces. The *Wm. Crooks*—a small, balloon-stacked 4-4-0 American-type steam locomotive—was built that same year by Smith & Jackson of Patterson, New Jersey. It was small by today's standards; the combined length of engine and tender was just shy of 51 feet—shorter than one of today's typical boxcars. It proudly carried the number 1 and went into service in 1862. It was named in honor of the railroad's chief engineer, William Crooks, who had become a colonel in the Minnesota Volunteer's Sixth Regiment during the Civil War. The *Wm. Crooks* would become an ambassador of the nation's rail history, and you can read about that in a much more complete history of the locomotive [here](#) in a story by Jeff Lemke.



BNSF Derailment Near Dubuque IA (Train hit by Boulder)

April 21 2020 Photos by John Carmean Minnesota Railroads Facebook Group





THE MIXED TRAIN

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

CONSIST CORNER

From the notes of Bob Malinoski on a visit to St Paul Union Station (the SPUD) on Friday, September 24, 1943:

CNW train # 400 "Twin Cities 400":

CNW 5005A	E-6A
CNW 5005B	E-6A
CNW 7501	baggage/lounge
CNW 3427	64 seat coach
CNW 3418	64 seat coach
CNW 3423	64 seat coach
CNW 3422	64 seat coach
CNW 3400	56 seat coach
CNW 3413	64 seat coach
CNW 3420	64 seat coach (1)
CNW 6953	56 seat diner
CNW 6504	35 seat parlor
CNW 6502	35 seat parlor
CNW 7201	27 seat parlor/lounge/obs
(1) coach car painted red, white & blue with the slogan of "Fly for Navy"	



CONSIST CORNER

From the notes of Bob Malinoski on a visit to St Paul Union Station (the SPUD) on Friday, September 24, 1943:

Rock Island train #507 "Kansas City Rocket":

RI 604	TA
RI 404 Arrow Head	bagg/diner/32 seat coach
RI 304 Chippewa	76 seat coach
RI 322 Magnolia	54 seat coach
RI 454 Minnesota	48 seat coach/parlor/obs

Rock Island train #508 "Minneapolis Rocket":

RI 605	TA
RI 405 Mesabi	bagg/diner/32 seat coach
RI 305 Ioway	76 seat coach
RI 316 Illini	54 seat coach
RI 455 Missouri	48 seat coach/parlor/obs

CONSIST CORNER

From the notes of Bob Malinoski on a visit to St Paul Union Station (the SPUD) on Friday, September 24, 1943:

CB&Q train #22 "Morning Zephyr":

CBQ 9915B Silver Clipper	E-5A
CBQ 4712 Silver Crown	52 seat coach (deadhead)
CBQ 4708 Silver Brook	52 seat coach (deadhead)
CBQ 951 Apollo	bagg/lounge
CBQ 4629 Neptune	60 seat coach
CBQ 4630 Mars	60 seat coach
CBQ 4851 Cupid	56 seat coach with a 16 seat dinette
CBQ 151 Vulcan	32 seat diner
CBQ 4628 Mercury	19 seat parlor/1 dr rm/obs



Extracts from the Camerail Club

'Mixed Train' Newsletter

Below:

Mixed Train April 2013 Cedar Rapids – Manly on the Rock Island trains October 1935 to January 1936.



CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC
1852 - 1980

1935		October		November		December		January	
train	engine	932	938	936	938	932	938	932	938
iv Cedar Rapids / Manly	OT	:40	:41	OT	:12	OT	:07	:05	OT
max time late enroute	:18	:41	:48	:20	:24	:08	:23	:29	:15
ar Cedar Rapids / Manly	:07	:10	:35	OT	OT	OT	OT	OT	OT
train	engine	932	938	936	938	932	938	932	938
iv Cedar Rapids / Manly	:05	:12	OT	:11	OT	:05	:04	:45	OT
max time late enroute	:38	:25	:21	:20	:26	:24	:52	:18	:11
ar Cedar Rapids / Manly	:08	:10	:05	:05	OT	:07	:05	:40	OT
train 61 northbound	Cedar Rapids / Manly	iv Cedar Rapids 12:25 am	ar Manly 4:10 am	Steam Engines used:					
train 62 southbound	Manly / Cedar Rapids	iv Manly 10:30 pm	ar Cedar Rapids 1:50 am	868 - 2 times, 899 - 1 time, 932 - 25 times, 936 - 4 times, 937 - 2 times, 938 - 20 times					
OT at arriving end point	51%	OT to :15 minutes late	26%	OT to :15 minutes late	77%	OT to :30 minutes late	81%	OT to :45 minutes late	95%
:16 to :30 minutes late	4%	:31 to :45 minutes late	14%	1:00 to 1:30 late	2%	2:00 plus late	2%	over an hour late	4%
5 trips n/a of arrival time last recorded time	3 trips :16 to :30 late	1 trip :31 to :45 late	1 trip :46 to :59 late	1 trip :2:17 late	make up time enroute:	:01 to :15 minutes	15	30%	
:16 to :30 minutes	30	61%	:31 to :45 minutes	2	2%	:46 to :59 minutes	1	2%	
:01 added lost enroute	1	2%							

FORT WAYNE RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



WABASH CABOOSE SEES SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

These boards were the ones used in the "Buy A Board" campaign, so the outside of this wall is very colorful and fun to look at. Next, we moved on to fastening the new floor in. This went very fast and once completed, Rob and I removed all of the old interior siding on the North side of the car. Our cuts were made as to facilitate a clean surface to butt up the new material. After a small conversation around the fire ring, it was time to head to dinner.

The next day began with me vacuuming the debris from the north side of the car to be ready for more siding. Steve and I went to buy more material including enough siding to complete both sides as well as leftover that can be utilized in the roof. We also bought a few more pieces of flooring to ensure the floor is right up against the frame. While Steve and I were gone, Tom took more piping off of the brake system. His report to me was that he is at a point where parts and pieces can begin to be put back on the car. He is also contacting Strasburg this week about the rebuilding of the valve. Around 11 AM, Tom and I installed the last pieces of flooring on the North side and began installing siding. Again, the most work went into the first row to ensure a straight, level foundation to build on. We got about 5 rows of siding up, only needing to make one special cut to fit the new siding to the old.

OVER \$16,000 RAISED FOR PROJECT 358!

From WD Miller

Over \$16,000 was raised for Project 358 in the last two months of 2019. This tremendous fundraising effort has put the historic SD9 locomotive on track for operating later this year. Our immense thanks to the Nickel Plate Historical & Technical Society and our matching donor.

Work continues on 358 at a steady pace, this upcoming weekend will be short but focused. Might only be one or two guys out on Friday, the rest of us married folk will likely be with our respective wives for Valentine's Day.

Saturday though, we'll finish up the high voltage lug crimping for sure. Other tasks include:

1. Drill and tap out the one bolt for the hatch cover over the electrical cabinet on the roof.
2. Drill and tap the broken bolts for front TM blower duct mounts
3. Weld new threaded studs for TM # 3 under locomotive, ahead of fuel tank. Old studs broke off.

If more help shows up, we'll find things to do. But the crimping work is # 1 priority. Let me know if you'll be out any this weekend to work on 358.

Wabash Caboose Submitted by DJ DePanics & WD Miller

With a long weekend off from school comes a few extra days to work on the car. This weekend brought the quickest and largest amount of new material added to the car in a long while.

Earlier in the weekend, before I arrived, Rich W. came and took the west end beam to make patterns on the new beams for all railings and other hardware. He has both new beams and will form the new ones at his shop.

When I arrived on Sunday, The first thing I did was vacuum the dust and debris from the South side area. Rob showed up and we began installing the new T&G interior siding. the most difficult part was making sure that the first row was straight and level. As we worked upward, the challenge became sliding the new siding under the cupola to butt up against the old. Steve was our leg man as he was cutting the boards and nailing them to the frame under the cupola where we could not access the board from inside. This job was completed mid afternoon because we ran out of material.



ATSF 3463 at Chicago's Dearborn Station in July 1948

March 18 in Railroad History: ATSF 3463

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2020 -Provided by Rick Krenske

Between October and December 1937, ATSF took delivery of six Hudsons from Baldwin Locomotive Works. The 3460-class engines developed 300 psig boiler pressure, rolled on 84" drivers, and were capable of 100 mph operation. ATSF intended them for high-speed passenger service on the 992-mile route between Chicago IL and La Junta CO.

ATSF 3463's final regular assignment was on trains 27-28, *The Antelope*, between Kansas City and Oklahoma City. That route was dieselized on this date in 1953. In December of that year, 3463 was placed in the roundhouse at Emporia. She was kept under steam until late March 1954, after which her fire was dropped. Her boiler was kept full of warm water in case she was needed on short notice. After mid-November 1954, she was classified as out-of-service. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: 3463 was donated to the city of Topeka in August 1956. For the next five and one-half decades, she was displayed at the Kansas Free Fairgrounds, which became *Kansas Expocentre* in the 1980s. The *Coalition for Sustainable Rail* sought to acquire 3463 in 2012. CSR intended to restore the locomotive to operating condition and use her as a test bed to demonstrate the feasibility of biomass fuel. A legal dispute arose over ownership of the locomotive. That lawsuit was finally resolved in favor of CSR in January 2018. Meanwhile, CSR had dropped its plans to modify the engine for biomass combustion. The organization now intends to do a cosmetic restoration first. It will then determine whether 3463 can be made operational. (Metro member Rob Mangels was involved with this project.)

AAPRCO

Mid-Month Highlights



Washington Update

by Ross Capon

Provided by John Goodman

April 2020

Virtual AAPRCO Day on the Hill continues in the form of conference calls. If you would like me to set up a call with staff of your U.S. representative and/or one or both of your U.S. senators, contact me at rcapon3@gmail.com or 301-385-6438 (text or voice). I am happy to be part of the call unless you prefer otherwise.

AAPRCO's Ask. Appropriations report language we are seeking directs Amtrak "to continue to update the list of eligible locations for private car moves and continue to evaluate such locations going forward, particularly in small, rural communities that have traditionally derived revenue from these activities in the past....Amtrak is directed to once again report on the impact" of its private car/charter train policies in its FY 2022 budget request. The language also expresses the Committee's concern "with Amtrak's current policy that charter trains must only traverse existing Amtrak routes and will only be considered if they are repeated twice, for a total of three trips." For AAPRCO's *authorization* ask, see my column in mid-March *Briefs* or contact me at rcapon3@gmail.com.

At this writing, the House will not be in session at least until May 4. The House generally is following CDC guidance. Work continues on regular appropriations bills, with Members generally in their districts/states and staff working from their homes. The contents of a possible fourth coronavirus law would influence funding levels in the bills, for example, if there is an infrastructure package. At this writing, however, infrastructure seems more likely to come *after* any fourth bill.

House but not Senate appropriations subcommittee chairs have their preliminary top-line 2021 numbers, known as 302(b) allocations. In-person mark-ups still are planned. It is not clear whether Budget Control Act caps will be lifted. New caps were agreed last year for Fiscal 2020 and 2021, but the 2021 level has only a tiny increase over 2020. House Appropriations Chair Nita Lowey (D-NY), Labor/HHS Subcommittee Ranking Member Tom Cole (R-OK) and T-HUD Chair David Price (D-NC) have said there should be exemptions to budget caps for vaccine development, strategic national stockpile and other direct coronavirus responses. Recent practice has been simply to call new spending "off budget," which has almost the same practical impact as lifting the cap.

Amtrak has received the funding as provided in the third coronavirus law. That law, the CARES Act, is Public Law 116-136. The first two coronavirus laws were Public Laws 116-123 and 116-127. (All are discussed in my April 1 column.)

Amtrak Ridership: March *partly* reflects widespread shelter-in-place orders. Many people became cautious early in the month. President Trump declared a national emergency March 13. California Gov. Gavin Newsom issued a shelter-in-place order March 19, though in previous days counties already had issued such orders affecting just over half the state's almost-40 million people. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's order came March 20 and some other governors followed suit. As expected, there were sharp declines in usage of all Amtrak services. However, the decline was less on the long-distance services. This perhaps was because Amtrak reduced frequencies on the multi-frequency corridors but generally maintained long-distance once-daily or tri-weekly frequencies, albeit with shorter consists. Also, long-distance trains may have more "essential" travel with no good alternative. On these trains, perhaps not surprisingly, sleeper ridership held up somewhat better than coach. **Reminder: check Amtrak's [website](https://www.amtrak.com) before traveling.** At this writing, there is no Amtrak service in Vermont, New Hampshire or Maine. As well, these trains are not operating:

New York-Charlotte *Carolinian*

Chicago-Grand Rapids *Pere Marquette*

New York-Pittsburgh *Pennsylvanian*

New York-Harrisburg *Keystone Service*

Denver-Winter Park *Winter Park Express*

Boston-New York-Washington *Acela*

International Trains: *Cascades* north of Seattle; *Adirondack* north of Albany; *Maple Leaf* west of Buffalo.

Amtrak, East Coast Agencies to Honor Essential Workers with #SoundTheHorn

(AAPRCO April 2020 newsletter)

[Amtrak](https://www.amtrak.com), [Metropolitan Transportation Authority](https://www.mta.com), [New Jersey Transit](https://www.njtransit.com), the [Port Authority of New York and New Jersey](https://www.panynj.gov) and other regional transit operators are coming together tomorrow to simultaneously sound vehicle horns at 3 p.m. EST to honor essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The #SoundTheHorn campaign is meant to pay tribute to frontline workers, including train engineers.

Continued on next page:



On April 16, transit operators in New York and New Jersey will sound their vehicle horns at 3 p.m. EST. Photo - NJ Transit

Continued from previous page: The partner agencies in New York and New Jersey anticipate nearly 4,400 trains, buses and ferries will participate, according to a NJ Transit press release.

Anyone who sees or hears trains, buses or ferries sounding their horns during the campaign is encouraged to use the #SoundTheHorn hashtag to post audio and video on social media, they said.

[Metra](#) officials announced the Chicago commuter railroad will join the East Coast agencies by sounding its train horns.

Meanwhile, [Port Authority Transit Corp.](#) in Pennsylvania will shine blue lights at its rail station concourses in support of health care and other essential workers.



Unified Plan Helps Smooth Operations for Union Pacific

By [Jeff Stagl](#), Managing Editor

From their 19th floor offices at [Union Pacific Railroad's](#) headquarters, senior executives have a spectacular view of downtown Omaha, Nebraska. They can catch a glimpse of the nearby Creighton University campus or TD Ameritrade Park, where the College World Series returns in June.

But this isn't the time for any diversions. UP's braintrust needs to remain laser-focused on a major job at hand, from continuing to implement significant organizational changes prompted by a radical new operating philosophy to generating benefits from the transformation.

In October 2018, UP launched [Unified Plan 2020](#), an operating strategy and transportation plan that incorporates precision scheduled railroading (PSR).

Designed to mold the Class I into a more reliable, efficient and safe railroad — and one that's better positioned to spur business growth — the plan has shifted the operational focus from moving trains to moving individual rail cars.

Much like Amazon handles each package to meet customer commitments, UP tries to prioritize the delivery of each car by adhering to fixed point-to-point schedules and minimizing in-transit work events so shippers can better manage their freight movements.



UP now uses one-third fewer locomotives and cars to move nearly the same amount of freight handled prior to the Unified Plan's implementation in 2018. Photo – Union Pacific Railroad

Unified Plan 2020 targets reduced car dwell time, increased use of general purpose/manifest trains versus unit trains, balanced train movements and better asset utilization. UP now is employing one-third fewer locomotives and cars to move nearly the same amount of freight handled prior to the plan's implementation.

That increased efficiency was apparent in year-end service metrics. On a year-over-year basis, fourth-quarter 2019 data shows freight-car velocity rose from 209 to 220 miles per car per day; car terminal dwell time dropped from 26.9 hours to 23.3 hours; average train speed inched up from 26 mph to 26.2 mph; locomotive productivity increased from 111 to 126 gross ton miles per horsepower per day; and workforce productivity improved from 840 to 874 daily car miles per full-time employee/equivalent.

Better yet, car trip plan compliance — a critical service-performance metric — climbed from 67 percent to 76 percent of cars delivered on time. But more progress is necessary to attain operational-improvement objectives, senior execs say. Car handlings can be further reduced, train flows can be more balanced and assets can still be utilized a bit better, they believe. The mantra they're trying to perpetuate is if a car doesn't need to be stopped along a journey, then don't find reasons to delay it.

Even though it's called Unified Plan 2020 — suggesting some sort of conclusion this year — it's an ongoing effort that will take time to fully in-grain in the organization, says Chief Operating Officer Jim Vena. In terms of a baseball analogy, UP is only in the early innings.

"It's called the Unified Plan, but it's really just smart railroading," says Vena, a PSR expert who retired from CN as COO in June 2016 after a 40-year career with that Class I, and became UP's top operating officer in January 2019. "We want to be as nimble as possible and react quicker."

Continued on next page:



Since train length now averages 8,200 feet, the railroad plans to extend 40 sidings this year to accommodate longer trains.
Union Pacific Railroad



Lance Fritz, Chairman, President and CEO

Continued from previous page: Although the results gleaned from the plan so far are encouraging — the service product and cost structure are much better, and UP is much leaner — the company needs to maintain and exploit the positive momentum, says Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Lance Fritz. “We’re on a continuous-improvement journey. We need to put more things in the flywheel, so there’s more that we can do,” he says. “Our service product now measures up with any mode, so I’d like to see that translate into top-line growth.”

Toughing out the times

The top line showed opposite results in 2019. Compared with 2018 figures, Q4 operating revenue dropped 9 percent to \$5.2 billion and freight revenue fell 10 percent to \$4.8 billion, while full-year operating revenue decreased 5 percent to \$21.7 billion and freight revenue dipped 5 percent to \$20.2 billion. In addition, revenue carloads tumbled 11 percent to nearly 2 million units and 6 percent to 8.3 million units in Q4 and 2019, respectively.

Those poor results aren’t a negative reflection of the marketing team, says Fritz, who calls the huge Unified Plan undertaking “a coordinated effort” that requires teamwork from top to bottom.

Plus, a number of economic factors haven’t been favorable of late. Although international trade is improving now that the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is in place and the nation has reached a phase one deal with China, the coronavirus outbreak is causing panic worldwide. In addition, several sectors that UP serves — from coal to frac sand to autos — have been relatively weak because of sluggish demand.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1,031 points on Feb. 24, followed by 880 points on Feb. 25, 122 points on Feb. 26, 1,190 points on Feb. 27 and 357 points on Feb. 28 because that hysteria was negatively impacting major global markets. *[Editor’s note: The Dow also tumbled more than 2,000 points on March 9 after suffering more losses in March’s first week.]*

In addition, several sectors that UP serves — from coal to frac sand to autos — have been relatively weak because of sluggish demand.

“We want to see these markets get healthier. When these swings stop, there could be a big snap-back,” Fritz says. “Because of the Unified Plan, there are markets we think we can compete in where before we didn’t think they were attractive to us.”

To achieve desired results, UP in part needs to continue taking calculated risks, Fritz believes. Among them: curtailing or consolidating hump yard operations, trimming the workforce, rationalizing assets and operating fewer — but longer — trains.

The railroad is running one-third fewer run-through trains in its network than a year ago, with the total train count down 33 percent and train length up 12 percent, says Fritz.

“Perhaps there’s more we can do with train count going forward,” he says.

In terms of headcount, UP last year cut its workforce by 11 percent to about 37,500; this year, the Class I expects to reduce it another 8 percent — or by nearly 3,000 workers — as operations continue to target fewer, yet longer trains.

“All the changes have been tough on employees, who are the drivers of this. People have lost jobs because the work went away,” says Fritz. But additional jobs will be created as business increases and operations continue to evolve, he adds.

“We have our minds on our people as we grow,” says Fritz.

Decisions, decisions

Workers are key to plan implementation because UP is taking another measured risk: encouraging all employees — from HQ down to the field — to make decisions if doing so will help the common goal. Such trust can be empowering, senior execs say.

“We took layers out of decision-making, and decisions are being made more quickly,” says Fritz. “Agility is the watchword for us. We are willing to take risks as customers’ expectations continue to be accelerated.”

The effort essentially is a cultural transformation, trying to make people understand the company is providing them an opportunity to make decisions in the field, says COO Vena.

“If they make a mistake, so what, learn from it and move on. I don’t want to make all the decisions,” he says. “We all understand the need to provide superior service. We need to find more ways to be effective and efficient with the railroad.”

Vena helped CN achieve its best safety incident ratio and the North American rail industry’s best operating ratio during his tenure there. People continue to ask him why he didn’t stay retired in Florida instead of returning to railroading last year to take on another PSR challenge, he says.

“I saw the opportunity with the largest railroad, depending on how you measure it,” says Vena. “I want Union Pacific to be the most efficient and safest railroad in North America.”



Jim Vena, COO

To do that occasionally requires taking on some pain. For example, the senior team last year decided to idle construction work on the \$550 million Brazos Yard in Robertson County, Texas — which had been slated for completion in 2020 — despite the millions of dollars that already were invested in the project over the past few years.

It would have been one of the largest capacity yards in UP’s network, but its appointed function no longer was warranted. In addition, switching was reduced at Settegast Yard in Houston and shifted to nearby Englewood Yard. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: The Class I now operates seven hump yards in Colton, Los Angeles and Roseville, California; Houston; North Platte, Nebraska; North Little Rock, Arkansas; and Livonia, Louisiana.

“The hump yards that are left are efficient and can handle peaks,” says Vena.

The railroad’s busiest yard is in Houston, where a majority of traffic originates, including petrochemicals. The railroad plans to build more trains in Houston to bypass other originating points — such as in Kansas City — so trains don’t need to stop as often.

“Each yard stop means [losing] 20 to 24 hours,” says Vena.

In terms of intermodal terminals, there’s some consolidation in the offing, as well. UP plans to reduce its roster of terminals in the Chicago area from six to three to reduce complexity in the region. Perhaps over time, the railroad will operate just two terminals there, one each on the north and south sides, says Vena.

“We want to find the right fit in the city,” he says.

Longer trains, longer sidings

For now, the right fit for train length is more than 8,000 feet. Train length averages about 8,200 feet compared with 7,000 feet a year ago, says Vena. “What drives it is the amount of traffic in a lane,” he says.

To accommodate longer trains, the railroad needs longer sidings. To that end, UP this year has budgeted \$150 million in addition to a \$2.95 billion capital spending plan to extend 40 sidings between El Paso, Texas, and Chicago. Most of the 8,000-foot sidings will be lengthened to 14,000 feet.

“The new standard is 14,000 feet, but not all of the sidings will be extended to that. Some will be 12,000 feet,” says Vena.

The 2020 capital program is lower than the \$3.2 billion budgeted in both 2019 and 2018. About 80 percent of this year’s budget is devoted to replacement spending to harden existing infrastructure, replace some older assets, and improve the network’s safety and resiliency, says Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Jennifer Hamann.

Since UP had stored about 3,100 locomotives by 2019’s end, the budget also includes funds to continue modernizing parked units. The modernizations primarily involve upgrades to electronics to improve the locomotives’ reliability, says Hamann, who on Jan. 1 succeeded longtime CFO Rob Knight. After upgrading 15 locomotives in 2018 and 100 locomotives in 2019, the railroad expects to modernize nearly 100 more units in 2020.

The capital program also allocates dollars for the car fleet, such as to refurbish a number of autoracks and acquire an undisclosed number of refrigerated box cars.

Going forward, capital expenditures will be set at less than 15 percent of annual revenue, a ratio that’s lower versus other Class Is’ capex targets, says Hamann.

Another long-term target for UP: eventually attaining a 55 operating ratio (OR). The Class I set both fourth-quarter and full-year OR records in 2019 at 59.7 and 60.6, respectively. A 59 OR is the full-year goal in 2020 and the company remains on track to reach a 55 ratio, says Hamann. “Continuing to improve the cost structure and productivity will help,” she says.

Costs down, core pricing up

Better productivity already is generating cost savings. Last year, the railroad saved \$590 million because of benefits associated with the Unified Plan, such as higher car velocity, reduced fuel usage, a smaller fleet size and rolling stock lease savings. Had the Class I not dealt with floods and other severe weather in 2019, the figure would have been about \$80 million higher, says Hamann.

In 2020, savings are projected to reach at least \$500 million. The key drivers are volume, pricing and productivity, says Hamann. Core pricing exceeded inflation last year and is expected to continue to do so, she adds.

“We had strong core pricing and a better service product last year, but not the benefit of [higher] volume,” says Hamann. “What the magnitude of productivity savings will be after 2020 remains to be seen.”



With the operational focus on moving individual rail cars, UP operates many more manifest trains than unit trains.

Union Pacific Railroad

Volume is forecast to be slightly positive in 2020, up a percentage or two compared with 2019. The second half of the year will be better than the first as international trade and other economic factors eventually improve, says Hamann, citing plastics, grain, biofuels and construction materials as promising business-building commodities.

“We see the good we can do for customers, and we can see the growth happen,” says Hamann.

Competitive mindset

Better service performance is helping with marketing efforts. Different conversations can be held with customers since service issues or disruptions are mostly off the table, says EVP of Marketing and Sales Kenny Rucker.

“So, we’re not talking about how we can deliver, but what needs to take place to deliver for customers. It opens up more opportunities,” says Rucker. “We can talk about converting more of their business from trucks. The more miles we can travel daily helps us compete with trucks.” *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: Railroads traditionally have competed best with trucks for freight moving 500 to 600 miles. But because of improved service performance, UP now is competitive with moves in the 300- to 400-mile range, says Rucker.

"We're not shying away from shorter distances," he says.

Senior execs also aren't shying away from reversing decisions to help with marketing efforts. On Feb. 1, the Class I reopened 58 interline domestic service lanes to eastern destinations with CSX and Norfolk Southern Railway that previously were deemed expendable because of the Unified Plan.

They continue to pursue operational improvements for other customers, as well. In the bulk group — which includes coal, fertilizers, petroleum coke products, and fresh and frozen foods and grain — the railroad is trying to help shippers who don't have enough storage or infrastructure capacity to suit their transportation needs, says Rucker.

UP now offers daily service in manifest trains, which for example has been successful for ethanol shippers and is helping to increase volumes, he says.

"Before, customers spent three or four days on each end loading or unloading unit trains. That's not an efficient way for them to use their resources," says Rucker.

In addition to service changes, UP is relying on technologies to help attract and retain shippers.

Earlier this year, the Class I launched application program interfaces (APIs) that enable shippers to access relevant railroad data from their own computer platforms.

For example, shippers can use an API to release rail equipment without having to log into UP's website.

The railroad so far has rolled out 12 to 14 of the interfaces, which are being used by more than 200 customers primarily for shipment visibility, says Rucker.

"We are listening to customers, trying to get further into their supply chains," he says. "We plan to expand APIs in 2020, and we want to grow them significantly."

Overall — considering all the organizational changes and market conditions — Rucker is "very optimistic" about UP's prospects in 2020, he says.

"Truck capacity has bottomed out and will tighten throughout the year," says Rucker. "We expect good export grain business in the second half." Stronger operating performance is generating confidence among senior execs that UP can attract more business, which then can be leveraged into more revenue.

Lots of communication with shippers — including those who are facing transportation challenges because of UP's service changes — thus far shows the company is doing "a great job" with customers, says CEO Fritz.

"To a person, they say our 'do-what-we-say' ratio is better," says Fritz. "They say they'll work with us."

But some customers are asking for more time to deal with changes or claim that UP still gives them "heartburn," he adds. So, to ensure the railroad is pleasing all shippers — and appeasing financial goals — senior execs will continue to ponder ways to improve performance and grow business now and in the future.

UP is at an inflection point, Fritz believes.

"We are thinking about what the transportation plan needs to be in three to five years," he says.

Email questions or comments to jeff.stagl@tradejournal.com



Amtrak to Require Masks for Employees

News Wire Digest for April 20: Transport Canada suggests mask requirement, but VIA demurs; Hartford Line sees new reductions April 20, 2020 RELATED TOPICS: [PASSENGER](#) | [AMTRAK](#) | Monday morning coronavirus-related rail news:

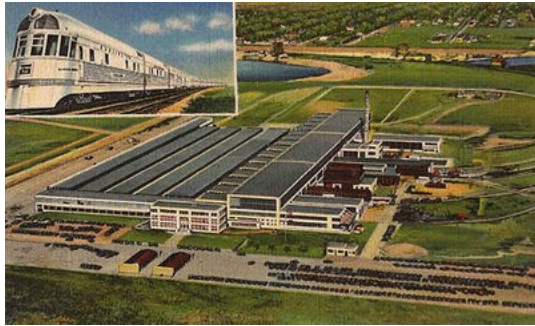
— Effective today, Amtrak will require all customer-facing employees wear a facial covering of some kind — a mask if available — and strongly encourages all other employees and passengers to wear coverings. At Friday's employee town hall, the first hosted by new CEO William Flynn, CEO asked employees to start each day with a new disposable mask or a freshly-washed cloth mask. He said the company now has disposable masks available at all staffed stations and crew bases. "We are not providing customers with facial coverings at this time; they are responsible for bringing their own," said Flynn, adding, "If a customer refuses to wear a mask after an employee graciously asks, let it go. It's not a requirement, just a recommendation." In the question and answer session, obtained by *Trains* News Wire, Amtrak Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer D. J. Stadtler, said that Amtrak is not requiring patrons to wear masks, "because we travel through so many states and localities where rules are different. We're strongly encouraging; If they refuse, make sure the passengers are practicing social distancing away from employees and other passengers," said Stadtler. While masks are not mandatory at shops, he noted that Amtrak "began distributing 415,000 disposable masks in the past few days and expects to receive over a half a million more in the coming week."

— Canada's Minister of Transport is also [asking passenger rail operators to require masks](#) or face covering for passengers. As part of measures announced Friday, which require masks or face covering for air passengers, Transport Canada is recommending that passengers are informed when buying a ticket that they should travel with a mask, and verify that passengers have such face coverings before boarding. Rail companies can set and implement their own policies, and are authorized to deny boarding to ensure the safety of their operations. VIA Rail Canada has subsequently said passenger are "invited" to wear masks, but they are [not required](#) except for international travelers using the train to reach their place of quarantine.

— The combined CTrail/Amtrak Hartford line schedule is being [further reduced as of today](#) because of the COVID-19 related drop in ridership. The new schedule has seven weekday round trips — four Amtrak regional trains and three CTrail trains — in each direction. The schedule which had been in effect since March 30 included 11 round trips, five Amtrak regionals and six CT rail trains. The new schedule is available [here](#).

March 27 in Railroad History: Electro-Motive

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Fri, 27 Mar 2020 -Provided by Rick Krenske



EMC became the **Electro-Motive Division** of General Motors in 1941.

More than any other individual, Harold L. Hamilton conceived the idea of powering a railway locomotive using electricity generated by an internal-combustion motor. Hamilton and Paul Turner founded **Electro-Motive Engineering Company** at Cleveland OH in 1922. The following year, they sold two gasoline-electric cars, one each to the Chicago Great Western and the Northern Pacific. In 1925, their corporate name was changed to **Electro-Motive Company**.



THE NEWEST GENERAL MOTORS DIESEL
-world's most modern locomotive

1950 EMD advertisement featuring the E8

General Motors purchased the Winton Engine Company in 1930. After learning that EMC was Winton's biggest customer, GM bought EMC as well.

Eighty-five years ago today, Electro-Motive Company broke ground for a new factory at La Grange IL. Diesel locomotives have been built there ever since, including the first 600-HP switching locomotives for ATSF (1936), E-series passenger locomotives, the FT freight diesel (1939), the F3 (1945), the GP7 (1949), and ever-larger four-axle and six-axle freight haulers to the present day.

GM sold EMD to Greenbriar Equity Group and Berkshire Partners LLC in 2005. Progress Rail Services (a division of Caterpillar, Inc.) acquired Electro-Motive Diesel in 2010. Components are still manufactured at La Grange, although final assembly is now done at Muncie IN. Joseph Lechner

March 26 in Railroad History: Runaway Train on the Burlington

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Thu, 26 Mar 2020 Provided by Rick Krenske

Severe weather lashed eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska on this date in 1884. At Akron CO (roughly 110 miles northeast of Denver), a suspected tornado tore the roof off a roundhouse of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad (a subsidiary of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy). High winds pushed a cut of freight cars on a wild ride for nearly one hundred miles.

The Lincoln, Nebraska **State Journal** reported that "...about 5 o'clock that evening, the wind, at its strongest, started a train of eight box cars loaded with coal that was standing on the side track. This eight-car train ran through the split switch and on eastward over the main track. The track was nearly level, but some distance this side it is downgrade, and the wind was so strong that it moved the cars more rapidly than passenger-train speed.



"The operator at Akron noticed the runaway train as it broke loose and sent the alarm down the line. Everything was sidetracked and the crazy train had the right of way. The **Cannon Ball** train westward was sidetracked just in time. Marvelous as it may seem, those runaway cars ran 100 miles, passing eight stations, over a track which is for a great part of the distance almost perfectly level, with no propelling power but the wind and their own inertia. They ran the hundred miles in less than three hours, station agents and others holding their breath with awe as the cars whirled by at high speed. They passed Haiger (Nebraska) at about 40 miles an hour and on the downgrade east of Akron are estimated to have run 20 miles in 18 minutes. At Benkelman, a freight engine was run out following the runaway train, and after a chase of a few miles, closed the gap between itself and the freight cars, and was coupled to them."

Colorado Railroads editor Steve Walden notes that the runaway train's route was relatively straight on a mild downgrade. B&MR dropped 2137 feet in elevation over the 93.6 miles from Akron CO to Benkelman NE. Walden finds the chase and capture of the runaway train even more remarkable since, in 1884, the B&MR may have still been using link-and-pin couplers.

The former B&MR route is now the Colorado Division of BNSF Railway.



Denver and Salt Lake City Crew Bases

Friday, April 10, 2020, 04:38:12 PM from John Goodman

All assignments in Denver and Salt Lake City are being reinstated effective 12:01am Sunday the 12th, The California Zephyr



Notes from RPCA's 3/27/20 conference call with Amtrak Volume 3 Issue 4 April, 2020 from John Goodman

Present from RPCA: Roger Fuehring Burt Hermey Brad Black Mike Stickel
 Present from Amtrak: Steve Robusto Mike DeAngelo Teresa Smith

General:

- Oct 1 2019 thru Feb 29 2020 PV business was up 4.3% from the year prior, however 2%, or about half of the increase, would be due to the October 1 rate hike..
- Amtrak is still considering PV movement requests during the COVID19 crisis.
- At present, owners/operators have canceled all moves until April 20.
- Cutoff coaches on trains 5/6 in DEN and 3/4 in KCY have been suspended until May 15 at the earliest.
- Owners and operators of PV trips that travel through locales with group size restrictions must be cognizant of and abide by those restrictions.

Delays: Amtrak will be calling PV owners/operators whose cars appear on delay reports as having caused 30 minutes or more of train delay, to get the owners' side of things. While things can happen to cause such delays, it's incumbent on all of us to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that our cars are in a good state of repair so as to minimize the possibility of delays. RPCA will be publishing a list of items to check and prepare in the near future.

Long-Term Parking: Amtrak is considering reducing the commitment owners must make for Long-Term parking from the current 6 months to 3 months. As a reminder, the long term parking commitment also carries with it a 15% discount in daily parking fees when on moves. That will remain in effect with the shortened commitment for long-term parking.

Long-Term Parking Discount: Amtrak is exploring offering a discounted rate for long-term parking at Los Angeles for the period July-September 2020. Details to follow, but a commitment by local management has been made to park cars in the Garden Tracks, not in the yard, should this come to pass.

Charter Trains: Amtrak is still committed to the 2018 guidelines: A proposed charter must not be one-off, and it must occur on existing Amtrak routes.

Amtrak will consider charters where part of the trip occurs off Amtrak routes, provided that the carrier railroad(s) take over the train on those portion(s).

Owners/operators must commit to operate the identical trip for three or more years. They may sublet the trips to others, However, the contract may specify a deposit for the succeeding years payable 30 days following completion of the prior year. Failure to tender the deposit would place the signer of the contract in violation, subject to remedies specified in the contract. submitted by Burt Hermey

LEGISLATIVE VISITS Legislative Visit on March 4th, 2020

On behalf of RPCA, I attended the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Associations, "Railroad Day on Capitol Hill". March 4th just happened to be the same day that H.R. 6074 passed through the house. This was the first bill that worked through Congress to help with the Coronavirus outbreak that we are now living with. Needless to say, we met with a lot of staffers that day. We ran into several Congress members in the hall who were running back and forth from various votes on the Hill.

My best lead was with the staff of Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester. I also met with the Congresswoman very briefly for pictures in the hall utilizing her photographer. Her first comment was in favor of Amtrak. She is very big supporter of Amtrak based on her NEC (North East Corridor) ridership, and the Wilmington shops that are in her district. Most of her knowledge is based on the NEC. I did meet with her staff at the evening reception at Union Station. From what I can tell, I was the only one to meet with them during the reception. We had a great conversation about Amtrak and our issues. I did send her Legislative Assistant additional information along with an email. I also provided an open invitation (through her staff) for the Congresswoman to meet on one of our cars. I made it clear, we would be more than happy to arrange a visit and possible ride.

I also met with, and sent follow up emails with an attachment to the following:

The Legislative Assistant of Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib. Very positive about rail. I sent the follow up information however, I'm not confident that our message would be of concern to the Congresswoman.

Congressman Joe Courtney and his Legislative Assistant who has been very helpful to the ASLRRRA on several issues. Congressman Courtney love's trains. If he's in your district, please stop by and visit him (after the health scare is over).

Deputy Chief of Staff of Congressman Paul Mitchell. Very knowledgeable young man who is very good with follow up questions. Of the six follow-up emails I sent out, he has been the only one to respond back. It was very general, but he did thank me for the additional items that I sent him and he said they would keep them in mind as they work in Congress. I believe Congressman Mitchell is not running again.

Legislative Assistant to Congressman James Langevin & an assistant for Congressman Rick Crawford. Both were more interested in the freight side of the rail industry.

Discussions were based on ASLRRRA topics that included STB policy, 45G and truck weights. All meetings were scheduled by the organization. I did introduce myself as a representative from the Private Passenger Car owners that utilize the services of Amtrak, and we were there to show support for the ASLRRRA positions. That would, in some cases lead into other conversations about our issues. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: I did forward these details and others to AAPRCO for them to follow up on during their visit later in the month. Their event along with the Rail Passenger Association event has been rescheduled or postponed until the health crisis is under control.

We at RPCA will continue the efforts as soon as other nationwide issues settle down. I would recommend letters of support for Amtrak ASAP to make sure they don't falter under the current ridership collapse. Much like the airlines, Amtrak is hurting more than usual. Let's make sure we don't lose anymore long distance trains as a result of drastic budget shortfalls.
W. Roger Fuehring President



AMTRAK Schedule Changes provided by John Goodman

Schedule Change Notice April 3, 2020 Issued by Amtrak Schedule & Consist Planning

Route: NEC, Empire, and West Coast Effective date: April 6, 2020 – Tentatively May 31, 2020 Why?

- Implementation of Spring 2020 Schedule & Consist Plan Update #4 (issued 4/3/2020) Service Manuscript Links Acela Service (Discontinued) Northeast Regional Service Keystone Service (Discontinued) Empire Service 6APR20 Vermonter Service Springfield Shuttle Service Downeaster Service 6APR20 Piedmont Service Pacific Surfliner Service Capitol Corridor Service San Joaquin Service Cascades Service 6APR20 Will/Will Not Run Will-Will Not Run List Service Reduction What is changing?
- Acela Service Discontinued until further Notice.
- Northeast Regional Service- Operating seven total roundtrips. Four roundtrips to and from Boston. One roundtrip to and from Springfield. One roundtrip to and from Norfolk, Newport News, and Roanoke, VA. Two roundtrips to and from New York.
- Keystone Service Discontinued until further Notice.
- Empire Service- Operating reduced daily schedule.
- Vermonter Service- Operating between New Haven and Washington Monday through Saturday. Will not operate on Sunday.
- Springfield Shuttle Service- Operating four roundtrips M-F, Saturday, and Sunday.
- Downeaster Service- Operating one roundtrips M-F and Saturday/Sunday.
- Piedmont Service- Operating trains 75 and 76 only.
- Pacific Surfliner Service- Operating two roundtrips to and from Goleta, CA to San Diego, CA. Four roundtrips operating from Los Angeles, CA to San Diego, CA.
- Capitol Corridor Service- Operating four roundtrips between Sacramento, CA and San Jose, CA. One roundtrip from Sacramento, CA to Oakland (Jack London Square) CA.
- San Joaquin Service- Operating four roundtrips between Bakersfield, CA and Oakland (Jack London Square) CA.
- Cascades Service- Trains 505 and 500 operating between Seattle, WA and Eugene, OR.
- Hiawatha- Operating trains 339(Daily), 330(MF) and 332(SaSu). • Pere Marquette Service Discontinued until further Notice.
- Wolverine Service- Operating trains 351 and 352 Daily.
- Lincoln Service- Operating trains 303, 307, 300, and 306 Daily.
- Illini/Saluki Service- Operating trains 393 and 390 Daily.
- Carl Sandburg- Operating trains 380 and 383 Daily.
- Missouri River Runner- Operating trains 313 and 314 Daily.
- Long Distance- Trains 79 and 80 cancelled. Train 42 and 43 cancelled. ARROW has been adjusted to reflect these changes.



BNSF Railway Takes Back Track to Kalispell

Flathead Beacon Friday, April 3, 2020 provided by John Goodman

Railroad resumed operations on line from Columbia Falls on April 1; Mission Mountain will continue to run line to Eureka
BY [JUSTIN FRANZ](#) // APR 3, 2020



The last Mission Mountain Railroad train in downtown Kalispell prepares to leave town on Dec. 27.
Justin Franz | Flathead Beacon

One of the largest railroads in America has resumed operations on the 13-mile rail line between Columbia Falls and Kalispell.

In March, BNSF Railway decided to not renew the lease of its Kalispell branch to Watco Companies' Mission Mountain Railroad, which had provided rail service on the line since 2004. Mission Mountain will continue to run trains on another rail line between Eureka and Stryker.

BNSF took the line back on April 1.

"We are always looking to further serve customers as they expand their businesses, and this gives us that ability to do so," BNSF officials said in a statement to the Beacon. "For the last several years, Watco has been an essential partner to BNSF in operating that line. We will continue to work closely with our longtime customers as we transition the day-to-day operations."

Officials said the railroad also looks forward to serving the recently opened Glacier Rail Park.

Mission Mountain General Manager Kyle Jeschke said he was disappointed that BNSF decided to take the line back after 15 years. As a result, the Mission Mountain will go from employing seven people to just three needed to run trains on the line out of Eureka. Jeschke said the four people who lost their jobs at Mission Mountain have been able to find employment elsewhere in the valley or at other Watco-owned railroads. Jeschke said Mission Mountain would still be doing some work at the Glacier Rail Park in Evergreen, including helping repair the track when needed. *Continued on next page:*

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"We're still going to be part of this community," he said.

The Glacier Rail Park was opened in Evergreen last year and will allow the City of Kalispell to replace two mile of tracks through town with a walking trail.

The Mission Mountain did leave the Flathead Valley with a parting gift. As part of the new trail, city officials have wanted to put an old locomotive on display. Just a few days before BNSF took the line back, Mission Mountain donated and delivered an historic switcher locomotive built in 1955 to Kalispell.



Members of the Montana National Guard watch as passengers get back on the train after getting out for a breath of fresh air Thursday at the Havre Amtrak station. The Montana National Guard has been screening passengers on the train from out of state to stop, slow and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. They also recommend people to self-quarantine for 14 days if they are coming in from out-of-state, as per Gov. Steve Bullock's directive for people coming into state for non-work-related purposes that also authorized the National Guard screenings.

Montana National Guard Screening Amtrak Passengers in Havre

Havre Daily News April 10, 2020 Provided by John Goodman

Members of the Montana National Guard watch as passengers get back on the train after getting out for a breath of fresh air Thursday at the Havre Amtrak station. The Montana National Guard has been screening passengers on the train from out of state to stop, slow and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. They also recommend people to self-quarantine for 14 days if they are coming in from out-of-state, as per Gov. Steve Bullock's directive for people coming into state for non-work-related purposes that also authorized the National Guard screenings.

Montana National Guard soldiers are working at the Havre Amtrak station, following a directive from Gov. Steve Bullock to screen people coming into the state for symptoms and contact history of COVID-19. Liaison Officer Capt. John MacNeal is one of four Montana National Guard members who are screening people at the Amtrak station in Havre.

"So we're asking a series of questions and then taking people's temperature just to check for possible exposure," he said.

He said if people answer all the questions with a negative response and have a normal temperature, the National Guard advises them on the governor's stay-at-home order, but if people have a high temperature and have "likely risk factors" then they are put in contact with a medical professional for further advice.

The biggest thing, he added, is he wants to stress that this protocol is Montanans helping Montanans.

"We're just trying to slow the spread of the virus," MacNeal said.

MacNeal said the screenings are voluntary, so people can opt to not be screened.

"We don't know how long we will be doing this," he added. "... We are going to follow the governor's advice, and I'm sure he's got very specialized public health people who came up with these locations."

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Director Sheila Hogan said the efforts by the Guard could help slow down the spread of the disease.

"Department of Public Health and Human Service appreciates the important role the Montana National Guard has taken on to help curb the spread of COVID-19," she said. "It's efforts such as this that will be vital in helping us flatten the curve and protect our health care workers, patients, friends and families."

In a directive issued March 30, Bullock directed people coming in from out-of-state to go into a 14-day quarantine and also authorized the Montana Army and Air National Guard to screen people coming into major airports and rail stations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"Seventy-three Montana Army and Air National Guard men and women have been activated for State Active Duty by Montana Governor Steve Bullock in response to COVID-19," the Montana National Guard Public Affairs Office press release said. "The soldiers and airmen will be used in 11 cities and 17 locations."

The release said screening will include all arriving passengers at the airport terminals in Bozeman, Billings, Kalispell, Missoula, Helena, Great Falls and Butte and train stations screenings are in Whitefish, Havre, Shelby and Wolf Point.

Each location will have a Montana National Guard liaison officer, the release said, who will be working with the local disaster and emergency services representatives, public health officials, airport management as well as the transportation safety administration officials.

Amtrak Government Affairs and Corporate Communications Public Relations Manager Marc Magliari said Amtrak has not adjusted its schedule for the Empire Builder, its train that runs through Havre from Chicago to Seattle and Portland and back, adding that ridership on The Empire Builder and for Amtrak in general has gone down steeply, and fewer cars are on the trains running.

"The trains have been shorted to account for reduced ridership. Social distancing space is maintained by limiting sales," he said.

As an added measure to increase safety, the passenger rail service is not accepting cash for payments in trains and stations.

"We have temporarily gone cashless," Magliari said. "Work-arounds include purchasing Amtrak gift cards or customers purchasing pre-loaded credit cards accepted at all our stations or online."

Amtrak's website says it is taking more steps to sanitize stations and trains such as:

- Enhancing cleaning protocols: It has increased the frequency of cleaning services onboard trains and at our stations.
- Increasing disinfectant supplies: It has increased the quantity of sanitizers and disinfectant wipes available for customers and employees onboard trains and at its stations. *Continued on next page:*

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- Reinforcing good hygiene practices: It regularly shares best practices with employees and customers on ways to protect against communicable diseases.
- Limiting bookings: To help maintain Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for social distancing onboard the trains, it is temporarily reducing coach class and business class sales to 50 percent capacity.

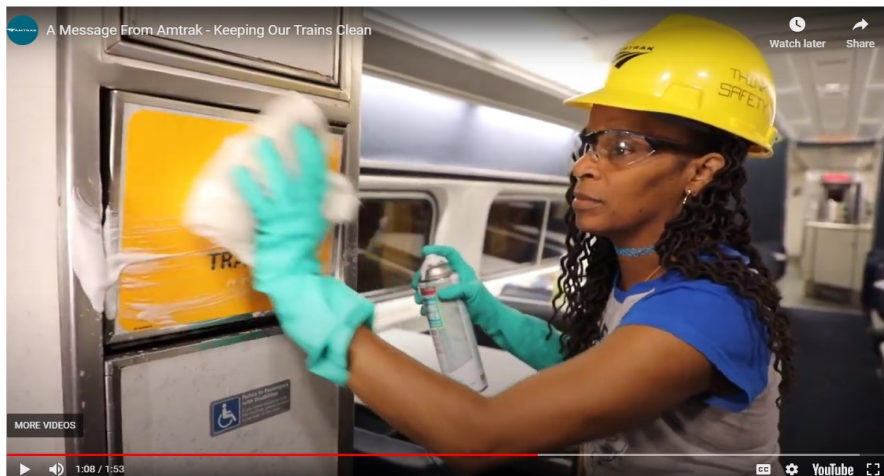
From Skip Waters Dallas, Texas

In Texas, it is reported that if you come from Louisiana, they will stopped and check for symptoms. If you have them, then DOT will have you announce where you are going in the state. You must then self quarantine at that location for up to 14 days or until you leave, whichever comes first, and the DOT will do an unannounced spot check at your location announced to make sure you are still there. If you are not, a citation will be issued. I don't remember exactly what the penalty is but it can be up to 180 days in jail or \$1000 fine.

So don't visit from Louisiana and there are other states on the Texas list as well. Check before you travel. Be safe!

AMTRAK: Maintaining a Safe Environment

We continue to recommend that everyone follow CDC guidelines around social distancing. If you do need to travel with us, know that we are taking extra steps to keep our stations and trains clean, keep you safe, and remain an essential part of transportation in America.



Amtrak Receives \$1B in Emergency Funding as Ridership Plummets

Coronavirus Pandemic has Slashed Amtrak's Ridership by 96 Percent Fox Business News April 10 2020

The U.S. Transportation Department said Friday it released \$1 billion in emergency funding for U.S. passenger railroad Amtrak that has been devastated by the [coronavirus](#) pandemic.

Amtrak said last week that daily ridership was down 96% and future bookings were 95% lower. Amtrak has suspended its high-speed Acela service and cut about 50% of daily train trips nationwide. Congress approved the funding last month as part of a \$2.2 trillion bill to address the coronavirus.

The department is preparing to award \$10 billion in grant funds to U.S. airports that was also approved by Congress and could announce funding as early as next week. Last week, the department announced awards of \$25 billion to public transit systems, including \$5.4 billion to the New York City area.

HOW TO FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The funds will help Amtrak "maintain service for its passengers when the economy recovers," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. Last year, Amtrak set records for ridership, revenue and financial performance, including 32.5 million customer trips, a year-over-year increase of 800,000 passengers. Amtrak reported a loss of \$29.8 million in its last fiscal year compared with a loss of \$170.6 million in the prior fiscal year. Of the \$1 billion, \$492 million will go to the northeast corridor and \$526 million for the national network. Amtrak Senior Executive Vice President Stephen Gardner said in a statement that "with this necessary financial support, we will come out of this crisis ready to continue growing ridership and improving our performance."

Metropolitan Council to Transport Essential Health Workers to Care for Patients Across the Region

April 13 2020 provided by John Goodman

The Metropolitan Council announced today it's marshaling its resources for the region's frontline healthcare workers to provide a safe and stress-free trip to and from work. Starting Monday (April 13), Metro Mobility will be providing free door-to-door service from home to work and work to home for any person who works at a healthcare facility, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This effort comes as doctors, nurses, home health aides, clinic staff, janitorial and all other healthcare support staff put their lives on the line to bring Minnesotans through the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. With Metro Transit service reductions, we understand those who are dependent on transit to reach their jobs may not have the transit access they previously had.

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In addition, by definition, mass transit transports groups of people in the same vehicle. This new service will provide solo or very small group on-demand rides for essential healthcare workers to and from work and home, improving physical distancing for them on transit.

“Across the state, Minnesotans are stepping up to protect and support one another through this unprecedented crisis,” said Governor Tim Walz. “I am proud that the Metropolitan Council is taking action to offer door-to-door transportation for the region’s health care staff, which ensures our frontline workers can travel safely where they need to be.”

“For more than 50 years, the Metropolitan Council has been committed to being a regional solution for regional problems,” said Charlie Zelle, Chair of the Metropolitan Council. “Healthcare workers are on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing critical services to those who need them most. Our strengths lie in getting people safely where they need to go, and right now, our health care heroes need protected, reliable transportation. We are honored to provide this service.”

To participate, essential healthcare workers need to provide their employee identification badge that shows they are employed in a healthcare facility. These trips will all be following state guidelines for physical distancing and will only transport as many customers as is safe for the vehicle.

Essential healthcare workers can also be assured Metro Mobility is doing all it can to make sure they are protected. Drivers are taking extra time to wipe down interior touch points with disinfectant after each passenger trip and buses pull into the shop for sanitization at least daily.

Scheduling trips

Our system is set up to provide rides anywhere throughout the seven-county region. Healthcare workers just need to call the number associated with their home address to schedule a ride. Tell the reservationist their name and that they are a healthcare worker, where to pick them up and drop them off, and what day and time.

Healthcare workers can schedule a ride up to four days in advance, although the Met Council will try to accommodate same day requests whenever possible. As service demands allow, the goal is that each bus will arrive within 20 minutes of the agreed-upon pick-up time.

Changes or cancellations should be made at least one hour in advance. Learn more at [Metro Mobility Transport for Essential Health Workers](#).



www.allaboardmn.org Quarter 2 2020 Newsletter

From All Aboard Minnesota - we hope all of you are well and safe and making it through these truly unprecedented times okay. Our work continues, updates below

Rally at the State Capitol

We conducted our second annual rally at the State Capitol in March and a hearty thank you to all whom participated. Several key legislators showed up and voiced their support, such as Senators Melissa Franzen and Jeremy Miller. Both had positive comments to say, along with Rep. Alice Hausman, and Ramsey County and Great River Rail Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo. Our key message at the Rally is to fund the MnDOT State Rail Plan. Several other Commissioners from Great River Rail attended, and held meetings with key targeted Senators that can influence funding for passenger rail this session, along with our members and friends. While attendance was lower than last year, the crowd was very positive and supportive, and most of all, enthusiastic to get the message out to their legislators! We have noted more bi-partisan support and awareness in the Minnesota Legislature for passenger rail this year, and hope this translates into the funding we need!

You can download and print the Rally materials from our site. These materials were provided in packets for distribution to legislators, for advocacy and education. These include:

1. "Rally Ask Sheet" outlining our ask for legislators to fund passenger rail
2. Three Great Reasons for More Passenger Rail flyer
3. Frequently asked Questions sheet about funding passenger rail
4. Regional Map of the routes and additional services we propose

[Click on this link to access these materials](#)

Communication with the Legislature

As a follow up to the Rally and as we understand the House and Senate are drafting their own respective Bonding Bills, All Aboard Minnesota sent a package of information to House and Senate Leaders this week asking them to fund the MnDOT State Rail Plan. This communication from us has already been acknowledged by several legislators. We have posted the letter on our site; [Click this link to view the letter](#)

We will keep you posted on how the Bonding Bills progress, and may ask you to call or email key legislators that can influence the outcome. In the meantime, you can call the Reps and Senators listed on our site we have sent the communication to and voice your support.

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Amtrak receives \$1B in the Stimulus Relief Package

As ridership has plummeted by more than 80% on Amtrak's network, service has been cut, mostly in the east, and Amtrak asked for \$1B to make up for the revenue shortfall. Thankfully, Congress appropriated that amount and we were a part of that, see the article below! The only long distance service to be cut to date is the California Zephyr from Denver to Reno, as one crew member tested positive for the virus, and other crew members on that portion of the route had to be quarantined. The CZ will be restored over the full route westbound on April 12, and eastbound on April 13 we have heard.

Amtrak Thanks All Aboard Minnesota!

Due to Amtrak's situation described in the article above, All Aboard Minnesota called on the MN US Congressional delegation and sent out an action alert on March 23 to all of our members, friends and supporters. A huge thank you to all that heeded the alert and took action. It made a difference. This week, Amtrak thanked All Aboard Minnesota for our efforts and that thanks goes to all of you! You can read the letter from Amtrak CEO Richard Anderson here: [Click on this link](#)

New CEO for Amtrak

Amtrak has named William Flynn as its next chief executive to take over from Richard Anderson in mid-April. Flynn is a former CSX railroad executive, but his most recent experience is from the aviation industry as the former CEO of Atlas Air Worldwide, a largely freight airline. It was speculated that Stephen Gardner, second in command at Amtrak would take the helm when Anderson stepped down (his three year contract is up now). Amtrak Board chair Tony Cosica said Flynn "has a consistent track record of growing and improving complex transportation businesses." Our hope is that he views Amtrak as a truly national network, where all business units are invested in and ultimately grown.

Spring Meeting

We will not be holding a public spring meeting this year, but are considering a virtual meeting. We will keep you posted if we decide to hold a virtual spring meeting. Thanks for your understanding.



The Amtrak Downeaster is Temporally Suspended through April 30 Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic

Schedule

Effective Monday, April 13, 2020, Amtrak Downeaster service will be temporarily suspended . The suspension will remain in effect through at least April 30, 2020, which is the scheduled expiration date of Governor Mills' Executive Order 28. Check back for updates.

Stations

The following Downeaster Station buildings are temporarily closed: Brunswick, Freeport, Portland, Saco, Wells, Dover, and Durham.

Ticket Refunds & Cancellations

Amtrak is waiving change fees for reservations made before May 31, 2020. To modify a reservation, log in to your account, go to 'Modify Trip' on Amtrak.com, or find your reservation from your account on the home screen in the Amtrak app. A fare difference may apply to your new itinerary. If you want to cancel your reservation with no fee, you must call 1-800-USA-RAIL and speak with an agent (not available via Amtrak.com or the app).

For more information visit: <https://www.amtrak.com/coronavirus>

March 26 Auto Train Derailment

From: Gary Kazin via groups.io <gkazin@yahoo.com@groups.io> Monday, April 6, 2020,

Damaged 89 vehicles and inconvenienced 300 passengers, incoming Amtrak CEO William Flynn said.

Though the train proceeded to the Lorton, Va., terminal after leaving the derailed equipment with damaged vehicles behind, Flynn said Amtrak customer service personnel arranged to have 100 rental cars available for the displaced passengers within 2 hours of the train's arrival. A 17-member emergency response team was dispatched to Lorton and continued to support passengers "by getting baggage and personal effects returned to them and (arranging for) vehicle replacement."

Auto Train resumed service in both directions on April 2.

Gary R. Kazin DL&W RR Milepost R35.7 Rockaway, New Jersey

Investigators: How are CTA Buses and Trains Being Cleaned for COVID-19?

CBS 2 By [Dave Savini](#) April 10, 2020 at 5:52 pm

CHICAGO (CBS) — If you share a work vehicle or ride public transportation what steps are being done to protect you from COVID-19? And just how clean is the CTA?

CBS 2 investigator Dave Savini went digging for answers and looks at a new methods being used in New York City.

CBS 2 found New York has a new way to clean its subway trains; a two-step process Involving a special chemical spray at the end.

To protect passengers from COVID-19, which can live on surfaces, all CTA trains, buses and facilities are being cleaned.

And while the CTA said its cleaning methods are some of the most rigorous in the nation, CBS 2 found New York, which does similar cleaning, has now added an additional step with its metropolitan transportation office buildings and subway trains.

After the deep cleaning, crews are using a special anti-microbial spray called Gold Shield, which is supposed to provide a protective coating on all kinds of surfaces, including inside subway trains.

Brian Shlisky is the Chief Operating Officer from Gold Shield Tech in New York. He said the spray is also being used at nursing homes schools.

"We are now using it to cover or coat or protect the MTA subways, and subway stations, the bus depots and now we are about to go into the buses for the entire New York City transit," Shlisky said, but he added that it's not being done in Chicago. *Continued on next page:*

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“What it does is it attaches to a surface and it has a long carbon chain, which then breaks down things like bacteria and mold mildew etc. And protect surfaces that way. It doesn’t leach. So it doesn’t come off services. It will continue to protect services for long-term,” Shlisky said. Another company in New Jersey called Fleet Wash, which cleans facilities nationwide, is also using the Gold Shield spray after deep cleaning corporate and government fleet vehicles, and vehicles that are shared by multiple drivers.

They said COVID-19 concerns have created great demand for this kind of cleaning.

“We’ve cleaned thousand of vehicles since pandemic started. In that particular clip we are disinfecting the interior of a cab,” said Chris Panek, Regional Manager Fleet Wash Inc.

The CTA would not confirm if it is looking into this product. But said it is exploring new products to clean and disinfect all the time.

All Hiawatha Trains Temporarily Suspended, Replaced With Buses

Correspondent Bob Johnston contributed to this report. **Sent:** Wednesday, April 22, 2020, 01:25:43 PM CDT

Effective April 24 - May 25, 2020 provided by John Goodman

Amtrak, in partnership with the Wisconsin and Illinois state transportation departments, will provide Amtrak Thruway Buses to temporarily replace Hiawatha trains, effective April 24.

Bus 3332 will operate in place of **Trains 330** and **332** and **Bus 3339** will operate in place of **Train 339**. Amtrak Empire Builder **Trains 7/27** and **8/28** will continue to operate normally, and the Hiawatha stops of Milwaukee Airport and Sturtevant, WI., have temporarily been added to the Empire Builder schedule, as outlined below.

Reservations for travel are required in order to maintain social distancing, while customers holding Multi-Ride tickets will also be welcomed on these buses and trains.

The bus operator is required to wear a facial covering when interacting with customers and customers are strongly encouraged to wear masks while using Amtrak services at this time. Buses will be thoroughly cleaned between each trip. More information about safe essential travel is at [Amtrak.com/coronavirus](https://www.amtrak.com/coronavirus).

Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenke, Bill Dredge)

None to Report			
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Northstar News
1515 Creek Meadow Dr NW
Coon Rapids MN 55433 3768
Address Correction Requested

