



NRHS

# Northstar News

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

**Happy St Patrick's Day -May the luck of the Irish be with you**



*L: Amtrak #9  
Passes through  
Raymond Ave  
yard 1980's -  
Bob Ball*

*R: CP New  
Brighton MN  
Rail train for  
Winnipeg  
(Heritage Unit)  
Mar 15 2020 -  
Bob Ball*



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## Meeting Notice:

***Saturday March 11, 2023 6:15 pm At Roseville Lutheran Church, our March Meeting also will be a ZOOM meeting. Note: in 2023 meetings will held on the 2nd Saturday of the month. Program to be determined.***

Informal Dinner at Keys Restaurant -Lexington and Larpen-teur Avenues at 4:15 pm March 11, 2023.

Zoom instructions: You simply click on the link below to join using your internet browser. If you join us via Zoom, please make sure your Zoom client is the latest version. Click on the icon In the upper right corner of the Zoom app and the click check for updates. The Zoom meeting will open at about 5:45 pm Saturday evening for chit-chat and Zoom troubleshooting. If you would like to test your Zoom client during the week before the meeting, please contact Dan Meyer at [dan@meyer-family.net](mailto:dan@meyer-family.net) and arrangements will be made.

**March Zoom Meeting Sign-on for the March 11 2023 meeting is noted here!** Log in information for the March 11, 2023 Northstar Chapter NRHS Zoom meeting.

The Zoom meeting will open around 5:30 pm Central Time and officially begin at 6:15 pm.

Join Zoom Meeting ID: 899 7063 5174 Passcode: 807808

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89970635174?pwd=aVRnS3pXZm83VnpBd2JlWTl0R09vUT09> or <https://tinyurl.com/37wvc2u6>

## Northstar Chapter Officers &amp; Staff

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Meeting Location: From the east or west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the church and turn left through the commons area. We'll be in room 40, The Diamond Room. (1215 Roselawn Ave W Roseville MN 55113)



From the Editor:

*Tentative Program for the March meeting will be Photos from the Joe Fishbein Collection.*

**Membership renewals for 2023 are OVER Due!**

**Please renew promptly!**

**If you have not renewed, this will be your last newsletter!**

## Meeting Minutes February 11 2023 At Roseville Lutheran Church

The meeting was called to order by President Dan Meyer at 6:18 pm. There were about 20 people attending. We have a quorum. President Dan Meyer made a motion to approve the minutes of January 2023 meeting in the February 2023 Newsletter. The motion was carried with the motion by John Goodman seconded by Frank Wilke. The motion was approved. Russ Isbrandt gave the Treasurers report. Both the Chapter and the Calendar Accounts are in good position. Richard Tubbesing asked what chapter members have not renewed. For those subscribers that have not renewed their newsletter will be dropped. Russ stated we have 31 regular members with 8 non-renewals, 13 Subscribers with 9 non-renewals. Russ stated that he will give Richard Tubbesing of list on non-renewals soon. Mark Quam raised the question of is there any way to send dues electronically as he has problems sending checks in the mail. Dan stated our web site doesn't provide payment of dues. Mark made the point that many other sites provide payment of dues electronically. Russ Isbrandt made the point that it is much more difficult to track memberships if we had electronic renewals. Russ stated that membership renewal by check with the Invoice is much easier to track. President Meyer asked if anyone could give the library report. Russ Isbrandt gave the library report. We are trying to clean up the main library room. With the help of John Cartwright we are trying to organize all our duplicate trains magazines and segregating material that will go to the Minnesota Transportation Museum. We are also trying to make more room for the anticipated material coming in.

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Wayne Torsett stated that the MTM is looking to give away many train's magazines. Dawn Holmberg gave the Calendar report. We have a balance of \$73 in calendar sales paypal account, and we have about 40 calendars left. We sold 3 calendars at the last Flea market. Calendars are still for sale. Russ asked the question on how much money did calendar sales clear, sales revenue minus costs of the 2023 calendar. President Meyer stated that Dawn is working on an audit of Calendar sales. Mark Quam raised the possibility for calendar sales from the Model RR shop in Eau Claire. Mark Stated that he will try and talk to the owner of the shop for possible calendar sales and if there is any interest having the owner contact us for calendar sales. Dan stated we would welcome sales for the next years edition and to provide a contact for us. Richard Tubbesing asked what is the date were we sell the calendar at a reduced rate. John Goodman replied that the date is March 1<sup>st</sup>. But the reduced cost does not include mailing. Jeff W asked what the calendar price is. President Meyer gave the Minnesota Resident, and Non Resident price (including shipping) and the price without shipping charges. The trip report was given by John Goodman. We are approaching March and to decide where our summer trip will be. Duluth is the most probable and the steam engine may be running. Richard Tubbesing stated that this year is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the LSRM. Activities are planned. John stated that August is our month for a train trip and trip to Duluth would be in August. Other options to Mid Continent RR Museum and the Boone and Scenic railroad are options but motor coach rental is cost prohibitive. The Wisconsin and Great Northern Railroad reported that the Mark Twain Zephyr will not be operational this year. We plan to do the light rail ride in June and our picnic in July could be back at Maiden Rock or maybe Prescott WI. We will have a BOD meeting soon to decide on summer trips. Mark Quam inquired if we have ever done a trip to Wisconsin Dells to visit the narrow gauge railroad. Dan Meyer stated that a drive to Wisconsin Dells would make a trip a very long day. President Dan Meyer gave the Cheer committee. Both Dawn and Dan have had colds, Dan had an Achilles problem along with food poisoning. Both are on the mend. A lot of people have been sick this winter. Dan Meyer gave the web report. Dan has been uploading the Northstar news to the web site. Dan has also been putting our meeting announcements on Facebook. Dawn Holmberg gave the National Rep report. NRHS President Tony White will have a BOD Meeting in the near future.. The Advisory Council has been requesting many updates to the NRHS web site. The Heritage Grant program applications closed in January. There were 30 applications for Grants. Rail Camp has been redone due to some errors in the web pages so applications have been extended. There was no Old Business. John Goodman stated the NRHS Convention for 2023 will be held in Fort Lauderdale Florida September 1 to September 6 2023. Transportation to near the convention hotel is available via Amtrak. Hotel rate is \$129 per night. Lots of fun activities are planned. There is a commitment for an excursion on the Sugar train, a Trip to Orlando airport and return on the new Bright Line. A day is planned to visit the Gold Coast RR Museum. Richard Tubbesing gave the newsletter report. The monthly cost for the snail mail copy printing is about \$70 per month and is sent to about 27 people. It is due out about the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month except in June and August. Send any news items to Richard Tubbesing's Email. All news items sent to Richard Tubbesing is appreciated. Program report was given by Richard Tubbesing. Joe Frischman will show a vintage RR DVD this evening. Joe Fishbein has been contacted to present a slide show in March or April, Roger Libera has a Cumbres and Toltec DVD to show. May is open. Jeff W volunteered to show some slides in May. All meetings in the fall are open. President Meyer stated that new business will be to have a BOD meeting when Dawn recovers from her illness and will be held at the library in the near future. President Meyer made to motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 pm. Motion was made by Frank Wilke. Motion was carried. Mark Quam was asked to report on the Second train to Chicago and the progress on the Eau Claire to Twin Cities train. Mark gave a synopsis of these activities which I wont go into detail here. The program was a RR DVD that Joe Frischman found in the late 1960's and early 1970's, It was a great program and thanks to Joe Frischman for showing the DVD. This DVD had many scenes of Railroad action from the late 1960's to early 1970's! It was enjoyed by all. Respectfully submitted by Secretary Richard Tubbesing

**Subject: Winter Storm 'Olive'. Additional Empire Builder Cancelations** provided by John Goodman

Trn 8/28 is now canceled through Friday Trn 7/27 is now canceled through Thursday

Trn 7(21) will terminate in MSP

**Train Status No. 8** *Last Updated 4:23p* DEPARTURE Canceled Wed, Feb 22

SCHEDULED DEPARTURE 4:55p Wed, Feb 22

**Train Status No. 8** *Last Updated 4:24p* DEPARTURE Canceled Thu, Feb 23

SCHEDULED DEPARTURE 4:55p Thu, Feb 23

**Train Status No. 7** *Last Updated 4:25p* DEPARTURE Canceled Wed, Feb 22

SCHEDULED DEPARTURE 3:05p Wed, Feb 22

**Train Status No. 7** *Last Updated 4:26p* DEPARTURE Canceled Thu, Feb 23

SCHEDULED DEPARTURE 3:05p Thu, Feb 23

**Train Status No. 8** *Last Updated 4:29p* DEPARTURE Canceled Fri, Feb 24

SCHEDULED DEPARTURE 4:55p Fri, Feb 24

Amtrak: SERVICE ALERT: Due to forecasted winter weather, Empire Builder Train 8/28, which is scheduled to depart Seattle (SEA)/Portland (PDX) on 2/21, will originate in St. Paul (MSP). For further assistance, please call/text 1-800-USA-RAIL



*A platform for the unfinished Southwest Light Rail project in St. Louis Park (KSTP).*

## New 'impediment' Pauses Southwest LRT Construction, Length of Delay Unclear

By KSTP February 16, 2023 - 6:14 PM Metro News -Rick Krenske

Another problem, and likely another delay, has emerged with the Southwest Light Rail project. Metro Transit tells 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS it paused construction last week on a tunnel that's already had multiple issues in Minneapolis. Crews found what's described as a concrete "impediment" near the Cedar Isles condo buildings, according to Metro Transit.

A spokesperson for Metro Transit says they aren't sure what the impediment is, but it appears to be concrete.

"Once we know more specifically what we are dealing with, we will have more accurate information as it relates to potential delays and costs," a spokesperson for Metro Transit wrote in an email.

Those are the same condos where damage forced construction to stop last year.

The planned extension of the Green Line is already years behind schedule, and its price tag has grown to more than \$2.7 billion.

Metro Transit sent along this statement to 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS:

*Secant wall construction, necessary for the construction of the Kenilworth LRT Tunnel was paused late last week so project staff can investigate an impediment near the Cedar Isles Condominium complex. The Project has remained in contact with CICA representatives, city, and county officials. Secant wall construction is currently 94 percent complete and work on the LRT tunnel continues in other segments of the Kenilworth corridor and will not be impacted by this pause. Metro Transit*



*Progress continues on repairs to Union Pacific Challenger No. 3985. Railroading Heritage of Midwest America*

## Silvis Update: UP Passenger Cars Being Repaired

By Steve Glischinski | February 13, 2023

**Work continues on steam locomotives 3985, 5511**

SILVIS, Ill. – Railroading Heritage of Midwest America reports it is making significant progress on repairs to former Union Pacific passenger rolling stock at its Silvis, Ill., shop complex.

In an email to donors, RRHMA President and Chief Operating Officer Steve Sandberg said in the coming weeks former Southern Pacific business car *Stanford* will be sandblasted and repainted in SP's two-tone gray paint scheme first developed for the *Lark* passenger train in 1941. The passenger equipment, two steam locomotives, and a diesel were donated by UP to RRHMA in April 2022 and moved to Silvis in November.

Other rolling stock projects slated for 2023 include:

- New windows and stabilization of lunch counter/dining car No. 5016.

- Installation of new diesel generators and fuel tanks to power four 44-seat coaches and return them to service.

- Repair to coach *City of Salina*, which suffered minor fire damage when the car was stored in Oakland, Calif.

— Glass-bead blasting and repainting former of Western Pacific business car *Feather River* into its original WP colors.

Repair and repainting is underway on the former Milwaukee Road 115-foot turntable from Bensenville, Ill., donated by Canadian Pacific. The turntable has been sandblasted, and RRHMA is working with a local ironworkers union on an apprentice training program to repair the table. The program provides training to new apprentices to gain the skills necessary for maintaining steel structures in the region. Under the leadership of RRHMA's Erik Hoofnagle and Alex Beams, work continues on UP 4-6-6-4 No. 3985 and 2-10-2 No. 5511. No. 3985's boiler has been stripped and boiler tubes removed. Through the year work will continue on the two steam locomotives and the conversion of Big Boy No. 4014's tender from coal to oil. The conversion was part of the agreement with UP for donating equipment to RRHMA; when complete, the tender will be shipped to UP's steam shop in Cheyenne, Wyo., and 3985's tender, currently used with No. 4014, will be moved to Silvis.

National Railway Equipment, which shares the Silvis shop with RRHMA, will perform a detailed inspection of DDA40X

"Centennial" diesel No. 6936 in preparation for its eventual return to operation. Track upgrades at the complex will be performed to allow for short public operations.

Sandberg said in the coming weeks, RRHMA will be announcing dates for another public open house and inspection of its work to date. The group is continuing to solicit donations at <https://rrhma.com>.

[brianwnelson27@hotmail.com@vmailer3.com](mailto:brianwnelson27@hotmail.com@vmailer3.com) wrote:

In this issue: Passenger rail progress in the Minnesota Legislature, 1-3 Amtrak Service Issues, 4 Let's Celebrate! As the 2023 Minnesota Legislative session progresses, there are several new exciting developments for Minnesota's passenger rail expansion:

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1. **The Governor recently announced his transportation budget**, and in it is a recommendation of \$15.1M in operating and other support for the 2nd Train Frequency between the Twin Cities and Chicago. This budget recommendation would cover the first four years of operating support and is far greater than what was proposed last year. The state did receive a Federal Operating Grant to cover a large portion of the operating costs for the first three years, but the state would still need to cover some costs. This is a substantial development, and we are learning there is strong support in both the House and the Senate for the 2nd train. All Aboard Minnesota met with the Governor's Transportation Advisor in December 2022, and learned that the Governor is very supportive of the 2nd train and would like to see it begin service as soon as is possible. The Governor is supportive of passenger rail in general.

2. **New passenger rail legislation will be introduced shortly** that would allow MnDOT to study new and expanded passenger rail corridors in Minnesota and connecting us to the upper Mid-West. These corridors include:  
 Extending the 2nd daily Twin Cities to Chicago train on a daytime schedule to St. Cloud and Fargo/Moorhead on the existing Amtrak Empire Builder route  
 New service between the Twin Cities and Kansas City, through Northfield, Albert Lea, and Des Moines, IA  
 A dedicated passenger main line between Minneapolis and St. Paul, and more  
 The bill will be authored in the House by Rep. Erin Koegel and in the Senate by Senator Aric Putnam. If the bill is passed, MnDOT could complete these studies and will allow the state to apply for Federal Matching Grants to enable these new and expanded corridors, which is the same process used for the 2nd train. AAMN worked with MnDOT to draft the language and have met with several legislators in the House and Senate to gain support for the bill. We will definitely keep you posted on all progress and ask for your active voice at appropriate times in this session!

3. **The Northern Lights Express bill, new service from the Twin Cities to Duluth, MN**, (SF 202 authored by Senator Jen McEwen), was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee recently. The bill provides state match of \$99.9M, which would qualify for a \$320M Federal Grant. This money would be for infrastructure costs of the Twin Cities to Duluth line, owned by the BNSF Railway, to enable passenger service at speeds of 90 mph. Many testified during the hearing, including Mayors along the line, including Mayor Paine from Superior, WI, the Milles Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Duluth Chamber of Commerce, several college students stating that more options were needed other than cars, and others, made the case. The bill was not voted on in the hearing but put forward for consideration in the Senate Transportation bill.

4. **2022 – Amtrak's year of discontent!** There have been numerous reports of Amtrak's failings during 2022 that continue into this year. Most concerning from AAMN's perspective is a direct violation of the Covid funding statute to prevent layoffs and train reductions in 2022, but Amtrak went ahead with service reductions anyway. The Empire Builder, along with all other long-distance trains were cut back to five days a week in January 2022, and full service was not restored until May. As we reported to you in November, AAMN met with the Minnesota US Congressional delegation to hold Amtrak senior management and board accountable to run the national system properly as they now have the resources. We also asked that Amtrak put back into service idle long distance Superliner cars, of which there are approximately 100, or about 15% of the fleet, a record high. Other notes:  
 The Empire Builder continues to run with one fewer coach and sleeper than in previous years  
 Amtrak personnel are telling us they are advising passenger to book coach accommodations three to six months in advance and sleeping car passengers six months to a year in advance because of such tight inventory on the train!  
 Other failings have been the new Charger locomotives, with a high in-service failure rate, which we have been told are going to be pulled from the Empire Builder and reassigned to the Florida trains.  
 Equipment issues: design flaws with the new "Airo" corridor equipment, that cost Amtrak an additional \$45M to fix  
 Annulment of state corridor trains in Michigan, Missouri and elsewhere due to lack of equipment, and crews  
 Passengers being stranded for many hours due to mechanical breakdowns as reported on the Michigan "Wolverine" state corridor service, Auto Train, and others  
 Passengers sleeping car reservations being cancelled at the last minute and forced to ride in coach due to lack of sleeping cars  
 We believe this is absolute mismanagement on Amtrak's part. They need to run the system properly. But a couple notes of good news: Amtrak recently sent out Requests For Information to about 10 manufacturers to acquire new long distance passenger cars. This request will be followed up this fall with a formal request for proposals they have stated. The other positive development is that coach passengers, we have been told, will be able to access the dining car on six long distance routes beginning in February 2023.

5. Let's Celebrate! 2023 marks officially 10 years for All Aboard Minnesota as a 501 (C) (3) organization! We could not have achieved this milestone without your generosity, activism and support. We are very grateful to all of our members, friends, colleagues, and partner organizations. This fall, we will plan a celebration. Stay tuned! [www.allaboardminnesota.org](http://www.allaboardminnesota.org)

## **Minnesota Governor's Budget Calls for Funding Second Chicago-Twin Cities Train**

**By** February 2, 2023 **Two-year budget recommendation includes more than \$5 million for passenger service.**

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz has included more than \$5 million in funding for a second Chicago-Twin Cities passenger train in his recommendations for the state's 2024-24 budgets.

**The La Crosse Tribune reports** the recommendations include increases in the state funding in capital projects to reflect inflation, as well as funds to match a federal grant for the first three years of the service.

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*Left: The Empire Builder crosses the Mississippi River at Hastings, Minn., in 2018. Minnesota's governor has called for including funding for a second Chicago-Twin Cities train in the state's 2024 and 2025 budgets. David Lassen*

In all, Walz's budget recommendations include:

- \$940,000 in Fiscal 2024 and \$980,000 in 2025 for capital improvements on the route;
- \$893,200 in 2024 and \$2.258 million to match the federal grant;
- \$122,000 in 2024 and 2025 for project management and grant administration;
- \$4.876 million beginning in fiscal 2026 for Minnesota's portion of the operating cost.

Final design work for what is known as the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago, or TCMC, project began last fall [see "[Final design phase begins ...](#)," *Trains News Wire*, Sept. 20, 2022]. The train could begin operating as early as 2024.

## Lawmakers Seek to Lift Gag Order on Commuter Rail Between Minneapolis, Northfield

**From:** RAY BENSEN <[rayande@comcast.net](mailto:rayande@comcast.net)> provided by John Goodman

A longstanding gag order has barred study — much less construction — of the Dan Patch commuter rail line.

By [Janet Moore](#) Star Tribune FEBRUARY 10, 2023 — 12:00PM

Despite a scarcity of public transportation options south of the Minnesota River, a longstanding gag order has barred study — much less construction — of the Dan Patch commuter rail line, which would link Minneapolis to Northfield. The unusual law has proven to be remarkably effective. Development of the line, which would include stops in St. Louis Park, Edina, Bloomington, Savage and Lakeville, has stalled over the past 20 years, and efforts to lift it have failed. But with Democrats in full control at the State Capitol, there's a [renewed push](#) to repeal the gag order, along with a similar prohibition banning study of rail service between the Twin Cities and Rochester. Bills for repeal have been introduced in the House [and the Senate](#). Not a moment too soon for Rep. Jessica Hanson, DFL-Burnsville, a sponsor of the House bill. While campaigning, she said, one of the questions she heard from older constituents and those with disabilities was: Can't you improve public transportation? "We need to look at all options," Hanson said, adding that when discussing transportation, "it's good policy when all stakeholders are involved, and you can't do that with a gag order." The gag order, championed by anti-rail suburban Republicans, went into effect in 2002. It barred the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the Metropolitan Council and county rail authorities from taking "any action or [spending] any money for study, planning, preliminary engineering, final design, or construction for the Dan Patch commuter rail line." And it scotched any mention of the line in long-term planning documents. "The fear is if we lift the gag order, we get a study, then there's a train," Hanson said. "They're not synonymous." Several Republican members of the House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee said last week the current law doesn't stop the cities along the Dan Patch corridor from studying a rail line. But Hanson called such a patchwork approach to planning a big public transportation project "meaningless." Rep. Bjorn Olson, R-Fairmont, noted that some communities along the corridor oppose commuter rail. Pursuing such a project would be akin to "throwing taxpayer dollars in a pit and lighting it on fire. It doesn't seem like a really good idea." The repeal bill also would lift the ban on study of high-speed rail between the Twin Cities and Rochester. That proposal drew sharp opposition in the mid-2000s from rural residents who lived between the two urban areas. Rochester officials said they haven't discussed rail service lately. But Rep. Andy Smith, DFL-Rochester, a co-sponsor of the repeal bill, said passenger rail for southern Minnesota is "long overdue. Rail is a more affordable, sustainable, equitable and convenient way for our society to travel when implemented correctly."

### No consensus on rail

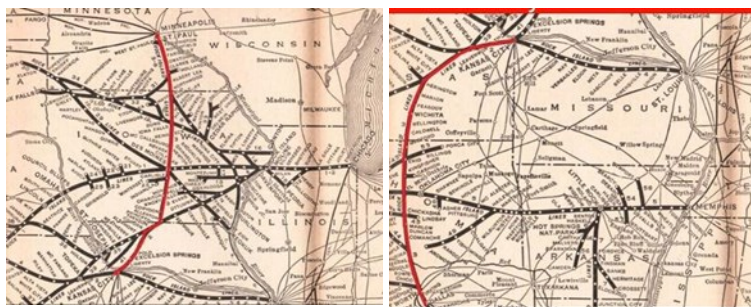
Looming large over the discussion is the performance of Northstar, the state's sole commuter rail line, which links Minneapolis to Big Lake and has struggled to regain ridership since the advent of COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, some questioned whether Northstar should be shut down given its scant ridership — or, conversely, perhaps extended to more-populous St. Cloud. A report on Northstar's standing is expected in March. Building a rail line in the south metro corridor isn't farfetched. The Dan Patch Electric Railroad — named for the famed Savage harness racehorse of the early 1900s — linked Minneapolis to Northfield from 1910 to 1942. The tracks, now owned by Canadian Pacific Railway, are still used in some areas for freight. It was a 2001 study by Dakota County that likely prompted the gag order. It predicted the Dan Patch line would draw 7,500 rides a day by 2020, but also noted public resistance from residential property owners. The cost of the line in 2010 was estimated to be \$441 million — about \$600 million now. Edina tiptoed into the Dan Patch [fray](#) in 2017, spending \$30,000 to study whether it should pursue commuter rail service west of Hwy. 100. But St. Paul-based Kimley-Horn, a nationally known planning and design firm, recommended the city halt efforts to study rail options for the time being. It noted community concerns about decreasing property values and safety, and said it wasn't aware of a similar gag order elsewhere in the United States.

There's no consensus among the cities in the corridor on whether commuter rail is a good idea. Edina Mayor Jim Hovland said the City Council hasn't discussed the Dan Patch line of late, but he's in favor of lifting the ban. "It's a conversation worth having," he said. Bloomington officials said they feel basically the same but are noncommittal on actually building the line. Lakeville has long opposed the Dan Patch line, said City Administrator Justin Miller. In some places, commuter trains would operate within 50 feet of residential properties, he said, noting that [storage of idle freight](#) cars is already a headache for the city.

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A few days after the House debate on the Dan Patch line, [bills](#) were introduced by DFLers calling on counties to [study](#) a rail link between St. Louis Park and Savage — leaving out Lakeville, which would likely oppose such a measure. But Savage is all-in on studying the Dan Patch corridor. "It should be debated in the light of day," City Administrator Brad Larson said. MnDOT officials had no comment on the legislation to lift the gag order. Met Council spokesperson Terri Dresen noted the transportation system has changed since the gag order went into effect. The council, she said, "supports robust planning and community engagement as the basis to advance, or not advance, transportation projects



From Oklahoma state line to Dallas, TSR ran on CRI&P subsidiary Chicago, Rock Island and Texas Railway



Rock Island Train No.17, the southbound Twin Star Rocket headed by No.652 a 2250 HP Electromotive E8 and a 2000 HP E7 approach Tower 19 Dallas Tx on July 14, 1952



Rock Island Train 18, "Twin Star Rocket," barrels eastward out of North Topeka, Ks. on time on Union Pacific track en route to Kansas City where it will return to home rails. May 22, 1966 is the date, the run had been cut back to Ft. Worth. Streamliner Memories



## January 14 in Railroad History: Twin Star Rocket

From: [Joseph Lechner](#) Date: Sat, 14 Jan 2023

Provided by Rick Krenske

The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific was the only U.S. railroad that was allowed to introduce a new passenger train during World War II. The **Twin Star Rocket** debuted on this date in 1945. Its 1363-mile route from Minneapolis to Houston was the second-longest north-south train trip in the U.S. to be operated entirely by a single railroad. Its name was inspired by the nicknames of Minnesota (*North Star State*) and Texas (*Lone Star State*)—and, of course, Minneapolis being one of the *Twin Cities*.



Texas law required all railroads within its borders to be operated by a Texas-based corporation.

Between Dallas and Houston, **TSR** ran on the **Burlington & Rock Island**, jointly owned by CRI&P and the Fort Worth & Denver (a CB&Q subsidiary). three graphics by *The Train Hopper*

**Twin Star Rocket** used equipment that was reassigned from other Rock Island routes, KC-Dallas and KC-Minneapolis. A typical 1945 consist was pulled by one Electro-Motive E6A diesel and included a heavyweight baggage / RPO, a baggage-dinette-chair car, two chair cars and a chair-parlor-observation.

A sleeper was added for the overnight portion of the run between Kansas City and Houston. Southbound train #507 departed Minneapolis at 11:30 a.m. and arrived in Kansas City at 8:45 p.m. After a brief layover for switching, **TSR** got under way again at 9:15 p.m. and reached Houston at 1:05 p.m. the next day. Northbound train #508 left Houston at 5:00 p.m. and arrived in Minneapolis at 6:15 p.m. the next day. Since each run took a little over 25 hours, the Rock Island needed three complete train sets to offer daily service in both directions. *Streamliner Memories*



In 1945, a complete breakfast of juice, bacon, eggs, toast and coffee could be had in the dinette for \$1. *Streamliner Memories* 1947 CRI&P advertisement boasted 22 **Rockets** - *Streamliner Memories* The **Twin Star Rocket** was discontinued in July 1969. Joseph Lechner

Minneapolis Tribune Article December 18 2022 -submitted by Leigh Neprude

-Please note: scanning and copying a newspaper article creates slight differences in article viewing

B6 • STAR TRIBUNE ★★

MINNESOTA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022

# Depot's future is bright, local leaders say



Page 1

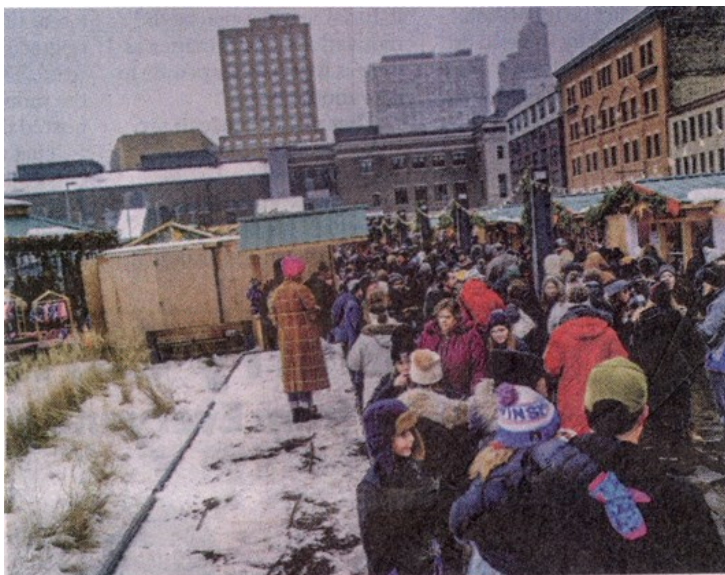
*"This space has life flowing through it."*

Union Depot tenant Ben Smith

## Union Depot still building steam

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#### ALL ABOARD FOR HOLIDAY FUN

St. Paul's Union Depot has found new life hosting events, including an outdoor European Christmas market, an annual attraction. At top, Santa Claus (also known as Paul Hollen, but don't tell) greeted Alex Gieske.

Transit connections have been slow to materialize, but St. Paul is celebrating the decision to save the station.

By SHANNON PRATHER and JANET MOORE  
Star Tribune staff writers

A decade ago, Ramsey County leaders pooled \$243 million to buy and restore the historic Union Depot, with a vision for a bustling, modern-day transit hub in downtown St. Paul.

Today, the building with vaulted ceilings and 10,000 square feet of Tennessee pink marble underfoot is a visual showstopper — one that often feels sparsely populated and quiet as a library. Just one Amtrak train to and from Chicago stops there each day, and a smattering of Green Line light rail riders load and unload outside.

But county leaders insist that saving the Depot — which, after federal, state and local investment for the renovation, remains

See **UNION DEPOT** on B6 ►



ELIZABETH FLORES • liz.flores@startribune.com

Brandon McCannel, left, sold cocktail mix at the Union Depot's bake sale. More than 1 million people visited the site in 2022.

◀ **UNION DEPOT** from B1 highly subsidized by property taxes — was the right decision. Their long game is finally coming together after pandemic disruptions, they say, with several new transit and passenger rail connections in the works.

"So many cities regret not having saved their Union Depot," said County Commissioner Rafael Ortega, who represents downtown St. Paul and championed the renovation. "I think it's very much worth it. Not only does it serve its function as a transit hub, it continues to be a catalyst for a lot of activity in Lowertown."

A 33-acre site that takes up about a third of the downtown riverfront, the Depot has evolved into an events center and retail space. It hosted more than 280 events in 2022, from weddings to corporate parties to yoga classes.

Like other historic buildings the county owns or co-owns, such as the Landmark Center and St. Paul City Hall-Ramsey County Courthouse, local leaders always understood the Depot would require an annual subsidy, said Jean Krueger, Ramsey County's property management director. About \$7 million of the Depot's \$9.2 million annual operating budget comes from the rail authority property tax levy. Utilities, security and maintenance are the largest expenses, while parking is the primary revenue source, generating \$1.2 million of \$2.2 million in total revenue for 2022.

"I definitely think it's a worthwhile investment," said St. Paul City Council Member Rebecca Noecker, whose ward includes downtown. "It's an opportunity site in St. Paul. It's definitely not fully utilized."

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Local officials note that the Depot's rebirth has already triggered downtown development, including the 2015 opening of CHS Field. Joe Spencer, president of the St. Paul Downtown Alliance, said he'd like to see county leaders do even more, such as developing surface parking lots that are part of the Depot complex.

There's also the question of transit.

"Having the Depot is really critical for our long-term vision of growing transit connections to the region," Spencer said. "I would not fault county leaders for lacking in time or attention. These are challenging projects. I am confident we will be able to punch them through."

### **Transit in the pipeline**

Nine railroads joined forces in the 1880s to build a passenger terminal in downtown St. Paul, helping to secure the capital city's reputation as a critical transportation hub.

At its peak in the 1920s, nearly 300 trains rumbled through Union Depot each day, moving 20,000 passengers. When rail travel declined, the columned neoclassical building, once a vital center of urban life, fell into disrepair.

But after years of work, transit connections are in the pipeline.

A second round-trip daily Amtrak train to Chicago is expected to begin service in 2023, providing morning and midday departures from St. Paul and Chicago along the Empire Builder route.

It's too early to tell whether Union Depot or Minneapolis' Target Field Station will serve as the endpoint for the Northern Lights Express—proposed passenger service between the Twin Cities and Duluth. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will seek funding during the upcoming legislative session to study the connection between Target Field Station and Union Depot, said Dan Krom, assistant office director of MnDOT's Passenger Rail Office.

"Union Depot provides an enhanced rail travel experience for current Empire Builder passengers and serves as the premier gateway to the Twin Cities," Krom said. "It is the envy of many large communities that once had grand, historic stations that have since gone away. Additionally, its use as a modern multimodal transportation hub cannot be understated."

The Depot also figures prominently in plans for local bus rapid transit lines, though not all are set in stone.

The \$505 million Gold Line BRT, which will link Union Depot with Woodbury, is under construction, with service expected to begin in 2025. Meanwhile, the fate of the proposed Purple Line — BRT service from Union Depot to

the northeastern suburbs — is less clear after White Bear Lake officials expressed opposition, and Maplewood called for more study.

Also deep in the planning stages is the Riverview modern streetcar project, which would link Union Depot to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America, traveling mostly along West Seventh Street in St. Paul. Service is tentatively slated to start in 2032.

The much-anticipated B Line, arterial bus rapid transit service that operates in traffic, will also end at Union Depot with service beginning in 2024. The B Line will largely replace the local Route 21 bus, and will link Uptown to downtown St. Paul, mostly along Lake Street, Marshall and Selby avenues.

"The openings of the Purple and Gold lines and potentially Riverview are a few years out

yet and much remains uncertain to provide any meaningful estimates, but we do see that high frequency transit brings new riders to transit," said Metro Transit spokesperson Laura Baenen.

### **An events destination**

Though its role as a busy transit hub has yet to fully materialize, the Depot is still a destination.

More than 1 million people visited in 2022, including travelers, diners, event guests and commuters who parked in the 1,600-space lot. The Depot's 30,000 square feet of retail and office space is fully rented, with tenants including a restaurant, bike shop and specialty sweets retailer.

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December is the Depot's busiest month, with a holiday tree lighting and sold-out North Pole Express train rides. There's an outdoor European Christmas Market on weekends, where bundled-up visitors can shop for handmade goods and specialty food and drinks from more than 60 vendors.

Events boost business for the Depot's tenants, said Geoffrey Wilson, who oversees social enterprises including Station 81 restaurant, an offshoot of the nonprofit Appetite For Change.

"It's really destination-driven at this point," Wilson said. "Folks need a reason to come out."

Soktevy Phann-Smith and husband Ben Smith recently opened Spinning Wylde Cotton Candy Cafe at the Depot and plan to host a family-friendly grand opening celebration on New Year's Eve.

The couple said they specifically sought out a spot at the Depot.

"This space has life flowing through it," Ben Smith said. "It's just one of those things that requires momentum and the guts to give it a shot."

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## Page 4



*Proposed route of the NLX train system*

## The Case for Building Northern Lights Express, Part One

On Saturday, February 11, 2023, 8:24 PM, Frederick Krenske Metro News *Metro Member Dennis Loudon supplied me with these articles*

James Buchanan • January 27, 2023 • 12

**Editor's note:** This is the first story in a two-part series by Duluth resident and train aficionado James Patrick Buchanan, who has written previously about the Northern Lights Express.

"Everything necessary to build a world-class transportation connection between Duluth/Superior and Minneapolis is now in place. We have the federal funding, a trifecta of support in the St. Paul House, Senate and governor's office, a mammoth budget surplus, and support from communities and counties up and down the corridor. People have been telling us all along that they want this service. Now they are telling us to 'Build it Now!'"

— Ken Buehler

Chair, NLX Technical Advisory Committee

Building the proposed Northern Lights Express (NLX) line from Target Field Station in Minneapolis to Union Depot in Duluth will economically invigorate individuals and families living along the Interstate 35 corridor, allowing for cheaper commuting, more affordable housing and a revitalization of rural areas along the extensive route. The NLX is not a one-and-done construction project.

The planned line will operate four round trips per day, seven days per week, according to Ken Buehler, chair of the NLX Technical Advisory Committee. NLX will provide workers with opportunities to commute to work in the Twin Cities from all the communities along the I-35 corridor. .

Of course, some workers will live in towns like Hinckley and commute to nearby towns such as Cambridge. These shorter journeys will cost a commuter or recreational traveler far less money than a Duluth to Minneapolis ticket.

Consider these other benefits:

Workers will be able to live in affordable housing in communities that have much less expensive and undeveloped land for new housing along the NLX corridor.

Changing work patterns already have many people telecommuting from home, going to the office only once or twice each week. A train line to the cities would let workers in, say, Pine City to make those trips without the hassle of driving, fueling and -parking a car—or, in some cases, even owning one.

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NLX trains will give passengers fast, comfortable rides with opportunities to work and purchase a snack or meal, while making new friends while riding to and from their office. The food could be provided by local restaurants, such as baked goods made by Tobies Restaurant and Bakery.

Unlike airline economy class, NLX seats will have plenty of legroom and no cramped middle seats.

NLX trains will not be slowed or stopped by increasingly frequent and severe storms.

In short, by making travel easier, NLX will create more economic, cultural and social opportunities in our rural areas. The line's benefits will return the investment required to build it many times over.

Additionally, the Twin Cities and the Twin Ports both have good public transit networks. These transit lines will attract environmentally aware citizens, many in their 20s and 30s, who are more conscious of their carbon footprints than their parents' and grandparents' generations have been. These young citizens can then start small businesses and buy homes near NLX line stations, as is already happening next to existing and planned U.S. rail lines.

For example, the Lackawanna Cut-Off Restoration Project being built by New Jersey Transit and Amtrak is already attracting home buyers to areas around their future stations. Our current I-35 corridor bus and van services could also be redesigned to connect more distant riders, such as those in Moose Lake and North Branch, to the train line.

Nowhere can I think so happily as in a train.

*A.A. Milne, author*

Bicycle enthusiasts will love bringing their bicycles onboard NLX. The comparable Amtrak train Pere Marquette that travels the 176 miles between Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Chicago charges only a \$10 fee for bicycles, and so will NLX. No need to box up your bike, as cyclists now have to do on a Greyhound bus. The predominant intercity bus line west of the Appalachians treats bicycles as oversized luggage, and requires riders to box them up at a carrying cost of \$30 plus tax — plus another \$10 if they buy the box from Greyhound. Cyclists need to call ahead to confirm that boxes are available and leave time to pack their bike upon arrival. Not so on NLX, where trail riders and commuter cyclists alike could bring their rides along with little hassle.

All across the United States, commuter rail lines allow families to live in far-off towns and small cities with lower costs of living than the major urban areas where they work. For example, it is much less expensive for an individual or family to live in a home on Long Island and have the breadwinners commute via the Long Island Railroad to New York and adjacent communities than to be residents in high-cost New York City. That is why the federal and state governments are investing billions of dollars to extend existing rail lines, while also building entirely new rail lines.

One of many examples is the Michigan state government that has constructed three Amtrak lines: the Pere Marquette, the Blue Water and the Wolverine. These trains bring much needed travel options to travelers. Imagine how Midwestern travelers will benefit when NLX is built and operating.

As Tom Clancy wrote in the forward to the 1991 book *Supertrains: Solutions to America's Transportation Gridlock* by Joseph Vranich: "What if someone were to invent a magical new mode of transportation that was safe, energy efficient, and environmentally benign? Someone has. It's called the train."

**Funding the NLX**

The NLX project is eligible for an 80% federal matching grant, contingent upon securing state funding. If Minnesota taxpayers give \$99 million to the NLX project, we get back \$396 million in federal construction money. Also, if Minnesota legislators put into law that all the new rails be made of Minnesota iron ore, Minnesota workers can return most of the \$99 million in state tax dollars to the taxpayers via mining, processing and transportation payrolls.

Significantly, this federal money is set aside for passenger railroads and cannot be spent on building new lanes or new rest stops on any roads.

The budget surplus gives the state government the money we need to contribute the \$99 million to build NLX. As a reader wrote in June 2022, in response to one of my previous NLX stories, the project "is so close to becoming a reality." With all three branches of Minnesota state government united in Democratic control, the chances to start construction this year for NLX are very good.

Both the Minnesota House and Senate have introduced early bills to provide \$99 million in state funds to unlock the \$396 million in a federal match. The reception for NLX is incredible at the Capitol, according to Minneapolis City Councilmember Andrew Johnson. Johnson chairs the NLX Alliance, a joint powers board of governmental entities along the 152-miles of existing track in the NLX corridor.

"In all of my years in elected office, I've never seen so much enthusiasm among legislators for a bill," Johnson said after a recent day spent visiting policymakers at the Capitol with other NLX Alliance members.

He added that NLX needs a boost from the public, who can provide it by asking their legislators to build the rail system now.

The Northern Lights Express website has resources to help people speak up with an email, letter or phone call.

Another factor is Duluth's growing popularity. Touted in 1960s marketing materials as "the air-conditioned city on the shores of beautiful Lake Superior," Duluth these days is often listed as a "Climate Haven" city for those seeking relief from climate change.

Meteorologists have described Duluth as one of the coldest cities in the contiguous 48 states, second only to International Falls. As a resident, I already see summer migration from the Twin Cities, which is getting hotter summers. I'm also seeing news reports of people migrating to Minnesota while escaping the fires in California, the droughts in Texas and the hurricanes in Florida. A Wee Transportation History Lesson

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the United States lost most city-to-city passenger trains. Gasoline was cheap, road building mania gripped the minds of our political leaders and only a few scientists were even aware of climate change. Although automobiles were touted as bringers of freedom — the ability to go any place, at any time — in fact, the loss of railroads cut travel options, while making the traveling public too dependent on greenhouse gas-creating and expensive automobiles and airplanes.

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In suburban and rural areas, bus lines rolling on narrow and winding highways offered slower and less comfortable rides than the trains that they replaced. Elegant train stations with heated waiting rooms were replaced by park-and-ride lots, where the only shelter either is your vehicle, unheated bus shelters that are open to the elements, and lobbies of stores and restaurants, often without seats and tables and where non-customers awaiting a ride are tolerated at best.

I experienced this downgraded travel experience recently while riding in a Groome Transportation van heading back to Duluth from the Twin Cities. The van drove over a gaping pothole and the strong impact resulted in a chipped tooth, even though the driver tried to slow down. That painful and expensive dental trauma would not have happened had I been riding a Northern Lights Express train—and it could have happened in a car as easily as on the bus.

NLX and adjacent railroad lines should in a few years be powered by overhead electrical lines. Compared with diesel locomotives, electric locomotives accelerate and decelerate faster, have higher maximum speeds, are quieter, and boast superior fuel efficiency leading to lower fuel costs and low-to-zero green gas emissions per journey. [Our railroads should electrify lines](#) where the overhead wires were taken down years ago, while putting up wires on lines where none existed before.

NLX, again, is not a one-and-done construction project. The traveling public should rejoice that we could spend the next 30 years building back the United States passenger train network to be bigger and more useful than the network we had in the early 1950s. Rail trips also allow travelers more peaceful and pleasant travel. As one author remarked: “The best trips start by traveling in trains.”

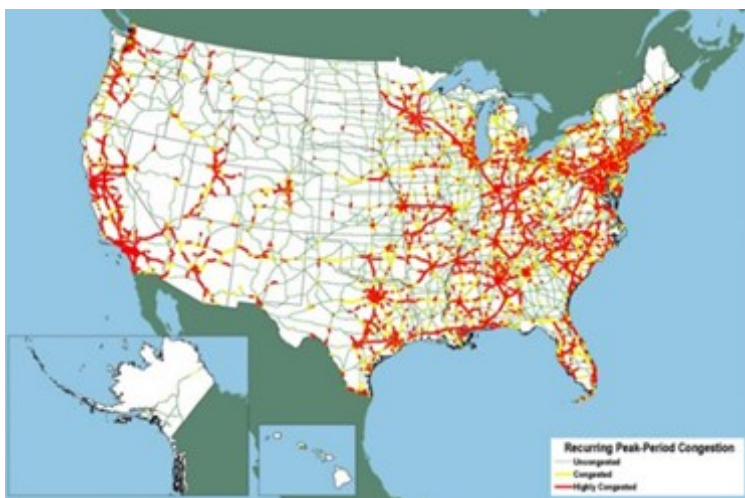


Figure 3-9. Peak-Period Congestion on the National Highway System: 2035

## The Case for Building Northern Lights Express, Part Two

On Saturday, February 11, 2023, 8:24 PM, Frederick Krenseke  
Metro News

James Buchanan • February 2, 2023 • 10

**Editor's note:** This is the second of a two-part piece arguing for the environmental and community-building importance of the Northern Lights Express train between Minneapolis and Duluth. Read part one [here](#).

“Trains are generally less problematic on a per-person perspective, because they can have more people in them per energy expended. A train will spend virtually the same amount of energy to move 1,000 people as it will use to move 100 people, so if you can put 1,000 people in that train it's suddenly one-tenth of the pollution.”

– Yonah Freemark, senior research associate with the Urban Institute  
Branching Out by Train.

Once the NLX train line is built and begins operating, it could become a trunk for several branch lines bound for other regional destinations. If the Midwest becomes a hub for people escaping the worst effects of climate change in the country's coastal and southern regions, branch lines would be vital to meet increased service demands. And by beginning branch line construction immediately after NLX is completed, planners, engineers and builders would be able to apply the theoretical and practical know-how accrued through the NLX construction to build the branch lines on time and within budget.

For reference, consider the Princeton branch line — a short branch of the Northeast Corridor Line, running from Princeton Junction northwest to Princeton with no intermediate stops. Also known as the Dinky, or the Princeton Junction and Back (PJ&B), the branch is served by special shuttle trains. Now running 2.7 miles (4.3 km) along a single track that once was a double, it is the shortest scheduled commuter rail line in the United States.

The Princeton Dinky takes approximately five minutes to travel end-to-end in each direction. The Princeton branch has overhead electrification. That means the train runs on cleaner energy and is more energy efficient than the Siemens Charger diesel-electric passenger locomotives used by Amtrak (it is not transporting the 1,800 U.S. gallons of diesel fuel those trains require). It also accelerates faster than diesel locomotives.

The following are possible branch lines that could be created sometime in the next 30 years:

Years ago, passengers could ride a train that connected Duluth to Staples and transfer to the Empire Builder to travel to western cities, such as Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. From 1959 to 1966, the Northern Pacific offered two round-trips per day between Duluth and Staples on trains 55 & 56 and trains 57 & 58; both trains used Budd RDC-3's (rail diesel cars). Locals sometimes referred to them as the “Staples Streetcar.” Trains 55 & 56 were discontinued on June 7, 1966, while trains 57 & 58 lasted until May 24, 1969.

The May 1, 1969 edition of the Northern Pacific's public timetable shows trains 57 & 58 making scheduled stops at Duluth, Superior (Wisconsin), Carleton, Deerwood, Brainerd and finally Staples.

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Intermediary flag stops (small railway stations between the principal stations or stations where the train stops only on a signal from passengers at the station or on the train) existed at 17 other points along the line. In the near future, once the Empire Builder is joined by a rebuilt North Coast Hiawatha route and another route connecting Fargo, North Dakota to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, there should be sufficient passenger demand for the reestablishment of the Staples Streetcar.

A northern branch could connect many northern Minnesota communities up to International Falls, Minnesota, with an international link to Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada. A branch northeast could connect Two Harbors, and then continue heading northeast to the increasingly popular Grand Marais and ending at Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

Another branch could serve the tourist town of Ely, Minnesota.

About 20 years ago, I saw plans for a proposed commuter rail service on a new track connecting Duluth to Ashland, Wisconsin. Let's lengthen that line south to Prentice, then east to Bradley, and then south again to Wausau, then east again to Green Bay, south to Milwaukee and finally end at Chicago. That route is similar to a proposed Northern Michigan Passenger Railway Project planned to travel from Ann Arbor to Traverse City, with a northern branch to Petoskey. Maybe, with the Michigan Department of Transportation [studying](#) the Ann Arbor to Traverse City line, my proposed NLX branch lines are not so far-fetched after all.

**Transit Oriented Development**

Traffic counts vary widely on the I-35 corridor. According to Minnesota Department of Transportation ([MnDOT](#)) employee James Miles: "Existing volumes range from as high as 80,000 AADT [annual average daily traffic] just north of the I-35 split in the metro to as low as 14,000 AADT just north of Banning Junction." After NLX trains start running, however, businesses and housing will be built around NLX stations. We see this happening elsewhere.

For example, over the Long Island Railroad branch from Huntington to Penn Station is the Park Lane North Cooperative Apartments with 206 units and the 118-18 Union Turnpike Apartments with 213 units. These otherwise unremarkable apartment buildings are built upon a wide bridge on the Jackie Robinson Parkway. These apartments are located (according to Google Maps) 1,848 feet from the Kew Gardens, Long Island Railroad Station. About 400 feet south from Key Station are two lines of one-story shops and restaurants built upon a Lefferts Boulevard bridge over the tracks.

While I was watching a front window video on a train from Huntington to New York Penn Station, I was very surprised to see those massive structures built on bridges above railroad tracks on Long Island. At first, I thought that these structures were constructed above a rock tunnel, instead of on two concrete bridges. The wide bridges appear at the 57-minute mark on the video.

LIRR HD 60fps: Riding Budd M3 9885 (RFW) From Huntington to New York Penn Station (9/9/19)

Building structures near transit stations is called "Transit Oriented Development." It creates high-density housing and businesses within an easy walk or bike ride to transit stations, helping our towns to reach their greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Let's encourage our [elected representatives](#) to pass laws that urge Minnesota and Wisconsin real estate developers to develop similar apartments and businesses in, around and over NLX stations and railroad tracks. I hope to see many such developments.

**A Need for Speed**

Years ago, the Box Tops had a hit song, "The Letter," with the lyrics: "Gimme a ticket for an aeroplane. / Ain't got time to take a fast train." Speed has become everything in our culture.

But the question for a traveler is not only how quickly you get to your destination — but also how comfortable, convenient and environmentally friendly your journey is. Speed alone should not be a determining factor, or we'd all be driving Formula One race cars. The fastest train in America, [Acela](#), Amtrak's flagship high-speed service along the Northeast Corridor, runs at 150 mph for about 34 miles. It has an average speed of 82 mph between Washington and New York, while traveling about 66 mph between New York and Boston. America's newest passenger train service, Florida's Brightline, currently operates at 79 mph. These passenger trains attract thousands of passengers each day, reducing automobile and airline trips from increasingly congested highways and skies. Similar to these other commuter rail lines, Northern Lights Express will provide fast service, with speeds up to 90 mph and an estimated travel time between Twin Ports and the Twin Cities of 2.5 hours. In short, you don't need to have the world's fastest trains to make train travel attractive to the traveling public.

[According to MnDOT](#), "About 700,000 to 750,000 people are projected to ride the train the first year. In 20 years, it is estimated that ridership will be about 1 million per year. These numbers consider how likely someone is to take the train instead of driving. Factors include age, gender, car ownership, cost of gas and reason for travel." To put that in perspective, MnDOT notes that "Drivers make about 3.6 billion trips between the Twin Cities and Twin Ports each year. If just 1 in 5,000 of these trips switched to the train, NLX will meet its ridership projections."

Don't forget that federal and state governmental ridership projections are based on conservative numbers. Once a line starts moving riders, such as the METRO Blue Line, actual ridership numbers are often far greater than their projections.

Additionally, NLX will be saving human lives by preventing traffic accidents while reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions along the Interstate 35 corridor will help the Midwest come into compliance with the 2015 Paris Climate Accords. Also remember that NLX's top speed will be gradually increased well above 90 mph after this important service has started, making traveling by train faster than driving.

For evidence that Americans do ride recently created passenger trains, consider Seattle's Sounder commuter rail operation. This two-line commuter rail service is operated by BNSF on behalf of Sound Transit. Passengers started riding on September 18, 2000 on the S line and December 26, 2003 on the N line. In 2019 both lines moved 4.6 million riders, despite the fact that the top speed of these trains is 79 miles per hour, slower than the 90 miles per hour of our future NLX.

**Now Is the Time**

[Duluth Mayor Emily Larson](#), who recently announced her [candidacy for a third term](#) in office, is a longtime supporter of the NLX, calling it "a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve connectivity between the Twin Cities area, Duluth and northeastern Minnesota." She says, "Now is the time." And she is right.

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According to [U.S. Department of Transportation](#) projections, the rush hour traffic will become highly congested on Interstate 35 between the Twin Cities and the Twin Ports by 2035. (Please examine their map to see that rush hour traffic will become, in their words, “stop-and-go conditions” by 2035.)

When NLX ridership numbers reach about 1 million per year, NLX will decrease traffic counts and traffic congestion on I-35 and nearby north-south roads such as Minnesota State Highway 65. For the movement of both passengers and freight along the I-35 corridor, we must establish NLX transit as soon as humanly possible.

NLX will be one of the most economically built mass transit projects in the United States, giving taxpayers a great return on their investment. It is the only viable option for increasing affordable housing supply, reducing road traffic, increasing economic growth while improving air quality in the I-35 corridor.

As a bonus, the more commuters use transit, the fewer parking spaces we need in our cities and towns. The land now used for parking can then be repurposed for the needs of people, not large automobiles.

Therefore, I ask you to [contact your elected representatives](#) and tell them to support building NLX now.

## Ohio Train Derailment Fact Check: What's True and What's False?



A train carrying hazardous substances derailed earlier this month in eastern Ohio, likely due to **mechanical issues**. On Feb. 3, just before 9 p.m. ET, a Norfolk Southern train derailed near East Palestine, Ohio, a town of about 4,800 people near the border with Pennsylvania. [Chris MuellerEleanor McCrary](#) USA TODAY Feb 16 2023 Published 6:00 pm

A [train derailment](#) in East Palestine, Ohio, prompted an array of false and misleading claims on social media, where posts built on speculation, assumptions or outright falsehoods accumulated thousands of shares and millions of views.

The incident began shortly before 9 p.m. Feb. 3 when a Norfolk Southern train left the tracks while traveling from Madison, Illinois, to Conway, Pennsylvania. A total of 38 cars derailed and a fire ensued, damaging another 12 cars, according to the [National Transportation Safety Board](#). There were 20 cars carrying hazardous materials, 11 of which derailed.

Residents were [ordered to evacuate](#) when, due to the threat of a [possible explosion](#), authorities chose to [breach five tankers](#) filled with [vinyl chloride](#), sending hydrogen chloride and phosgene, a toxic gas, into the air.

The claim overstates the extent to which hazardous chemicals have been detected in the river at this point. Low levels of butyl acrylate made their way to the Ohio River through Little Beaver Creek, a tributary near the border between Ohio and Pennsylvania, according to Ohio Environmental Protection Agency spokesperson James Lee.

Experts previously said a plume of contaminants was moving along the Ohio River, though Lee added the chemical gets less concentrated as it travels downstream.

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James Metcalf, a professor of biological sciences at Bowling Green State University in Ohio with expertise in environmental toxicology, said exposure to the chemical in high doses can cause “acute effects such as skin irritation and breathing difficulties,” citing the CDC.

But he said the water treatment systems and latest info from the Environmental Protection Agency indicate “it is likely that these concentrations are not at a level of public health concern.”

That was echoed in a Feb. 17 news conference with Erin Haynes, chair of the University of Kentucky College of Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health.

“That’s a big claim, to state the entire river is poisonous,” Haynes said.

Haynes noted the prevalence of the chemical depends on the local water treatment facility and their capacity to remove it from the water supply.

“East Palestine is not in lockdown,” Lee said in an email to USA TODAY.

Immediately after the train derailment on Feb. 3, about half the 4,761 residents of East Palestine were told to evacuate, USA TODAY previously reported. More than 500 of them chose to stay in their homes, though.

**More:** Ohio Gov. DeWine warns of possible ‘major explosion’ at train derailment site; evacuations ordered

Residents received another evacuation notice on Feb. 5 when officials determined that a dangerous explosion was possible.

Evacuation orders were lifted Feb. 8, when Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine and other officials said it was safe for residents to return home.



*Track repairs were still in progress alongside derailment cleanup in East Palestine, Ohio, in this view on Feb. 8, 2023. Sol Tucker*

## Public Expresses Frustration at East Palestine Meeting

By February 16, 2023 Pennsylvania governor's letter is highly critical of NS actions in wake of derailment

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio — Large crowds, changes of format, and public frustration marked Wednesday night’s public meeting over the aftermath of the Feb. 3 derailment and chemical spill in East Palestine. The town hall meeting at the East Palestine High had been switched beforehand to an informational session featuring a series of tables with officials available to answer questions. That changed again after about 20 minutes as some attendees expressed unhappiness with the format, according to news reports, with East Palestine Mayor Trent Conaway holding a Q&A session.

Norfolk Southern announced earlier in the day that it would not attend the meeting [see “Citing ‘physical threat,’ Norfolk Southern withdraws ...,” Trains News Wire, Feb. 15, 2023].

“I’m just as frustrated as you are,” Conaway told those in attendance about the railroad’s decision. “I’m trying to get answers. I cannot force them to be here.”

Conaway said he and other officials stood by the decision to perform a controlled release of chemicals from derailed tank cars, the New York Times reports, while those in attendance questioned whether their water was safe to drink, and expressed continuing fears about their safety despite official assurances. “Why are people getting sick if there’s nothing in the air or water?” one woman asked, one of several questions to draw applause from a crowd estimated at 700 or more.

The latest such official statement came Wednesday from Gov. Mike DeWine, who said tests showed no contaminants in the five wells that supply East Palestine’s water, WKYC-TV reports. However, those with private wells should use bottled water until they have their water tested, the Ohio Department of Health advised.

Difficulty in arranging such testing was expressed by some at Wednesday’s meeting, while others asked for more details about the testing process.

In other developments:

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, in a Tuesday letter to NS CEO Alan Shaw, said the railroad’s “failure to adhere to well-accepted standards of practice related to incident management, and prioritizing an accelerated an arbitrary timeline to reopen the rail line, injected unnecessary risk and created confusion” in the wake of the derailment. WESA Radio, which published the letter, reported that Shapiro had asked the state’s Public Utility Commission to investigate the NS response to the incident.

Shapiro said state officials had noticed three significant issues with the railroad’s actions: its failure to participate in unified command and planning in response to the incident; it provided “inaccurate information and conflicting modeling” about the controlled release of vinyl chloride from derailed tank cars; and its “unwillingness to explore or articulate alternate courses of action” to that controlled-release plan limited officials’ ability to respond.

— U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan will visit East Palestine today to assess the continuing response to the derailment, and meet with local officials and residents. EPA officials will also demonstrate the equipment they are using to monitor the area’s air quality.

Regan and other officials are scheduled to hold a press conference this afternoon, WKYC-TV reports.

## Rail Traffic Resumes, Cleanup Continues in East Palestine

By February 10, 2023 Newspaper reports video shows 'fiery axle' on train 20 miles before derailment

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio — Trains are running again through East Palestine, Ohio, although the village's mayor isn't too pleased with the way operations resumed.

**WKYC-TV reports** Norfolk Southern began operations on its main Cleveland-Pittsburgh line through East Palestine Wednesday evening, to the displeasure of Mayor Trent Conaway, who said he had been told trains would not begin operating until all residents had been able to return home.

"Anybody who was in incident command [Wednesday] night can tell that I was not very happy with that," Conaway said, noting there was not much he could do "unless I go tie myself to the railroad tracks. ...

"I know they have a job to do; they have to get through town," Conaway acknowledged. Still, he and others were also concerned that equipment being used by the railroad to clean up the derailment could spread hazardous materials on local roads. Conaway said he was told company street sweepers would rectify that problem "immediately."

"We're going to hold their feet to the fire," the mayor said. "They're going to do what they said they're going to do and they're going to protect the people of this town."

The reopening of the line also meant the resumption of Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* after five days of cancellations; Thursday's trains departed on time from Washington, D.C., and Chicago; as of 7:30 a.m. CST today, both trains are through the derailment area, with the westbound train running about an hour late and the eastbound is about 30 minutes behind schedule.

The city is facing other challenges in its return to normal.

In a Thursday press briefing, East Palestine Fire Chief Keith Drabek said his department was in the same position as many others in the community: figuring out what it could or couldn't use in the wake of the derailment and fire.

"All of our gear is out of service due to the fire," Drabek said. Departments from as far away as South Carolina were providing backup gear, he said, while his department figures out what it can still use and what has been contaminated. "If you drive past the fire house, it looks much like a lot of other areas in this town: a disaster area."

While officials had given a general all-clear for people to return to their homes on Wednesday, they had also said they would offer air-quality readings of individual homes on request. About 300 such screenings had taken place by Thursday afternoon, said Columbiana County Emergency Management Agency Director Peggy Clark.

"It takes about a half an hour to do each home," Clark said. Four teams are working 10 hours a day, she said, asking those waiting for an inspection to "please be patient."

Questions over defect alert

Meanwhile, **the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reports** that two security cameras in Salem, Ohio — about 20 miles from the derailment scene — show what appear to be a fiery axle on one car of the train that would derail in East Palestine. The report includes video from one of the cameras. This raises questions about when the crew was alerted about a potential defect by a wayside detector. National Transportation Safety Board member Michael Graham said at a Feb. 4 press conference that the crew had been informed of a defect and begun braking before the derailment [see "**Vinyl chloride involved ...**," *Trains News Wire*, Feb. 4, 2023]. There is a hotbox detector adjacent to the location of one of the Salem security cameras; the next one is in East Palestine, the newspaper reports.

Also, a fourth class action lawsuit has been filed over the derailment, **WFMJ-TV reports**. This one, the third in federal court, was filed by Ray and Judith Hall of East North Avenue in East Palestine, alleging negligence on the part of Norfolk Southern.

## AAPRCO Mid-Month Highlights February 2023 -Provided by John Goodman

### 2022 - 2023 Officers & Directors

#### Directors

Representing Amtrak Certified Car Owners

Sherrie Conover (2022-23)

Tony Marchiando (2021-23)

Robert Menzies (2021-23)

Keith White (2021-23)

David Hoffman (2022-24)

John Pearson (2022-24)

Adam Auxier (2022-24)

Representing Non-Amtrak Certified Car Owners

Mike Kelly (2021-23)

Rick Stone (2022-24)

Representing Associate Members

Thomas Lanahan (annual term)

#### Emeritus

Dewitt Chapple, Jr.

Paul DeVerter II (deceased 2020)

Clark Johnson

#### Officers

President - Tony Marchiando

Executive Vice President - John Pearson

Vice President, Law - Mike Margrave

Vice President, Transportation - Taylor Johnson

Vice President, Government Affairs - Ross Capon

Chief Mechanical Officer - Rob Mangels

Mechanical Advisor - Mike Kelly

Secretary - Tom Lanahan

Treasurer - Dave Rohr

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## 45th Annual Convention

~ New Orleans, Louisiana ~ May 2nd - May 4th, 2023

New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival  
April 28 - May 7, 2023

AAPRCO's convention dates correspond with Jazz Fest, the annual celebration of Louisiana's unique heritage and culture. In addition to regional cuisine and arts and crafts, thirteen stages offer a range of music including jazz, gospel, Cajun, zydeco, blues, R&B, rock, funk, African, Latin, Caribbean, folk, and more. music, along with regional cuisine, arts and crafts, parades and more.

For the 2023 music line up and to purchase tickets, visit [nojazzfest.com](http://nojazzfest.com).

For AAPRCO convention hotel block and convention schedule information, stay tuned to future news briefs



## Passenger Rail News

## U.S. FRA Extends Application Deadline for Passenger Rail Corridor ID Program

The [Federal Railroad Administration](https://www.fra.dot.gov/) has extended its application deadline to March 27 for its new [Corridor Identification and Development Program](#), according to a notice filed yesterday in the [Federal Register](#).

The reason for the extension is because of a technical issue preventing applications from being received by the earlier deadline of March 20, the notice states.

In December 2022, the FRA put out a call for proposals for intercity passenger-rail corridors as part of the new program. Created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the program will guide the development of new intercity passenger-rail services pegged to help bolster economic growth.

Going forward, the FRA will use the program as the primary means for guiding financial support and technical assistance toward projects that would establish new intercity passenger-rail corridors or those that would improve existing services



## Ohio Gov. DeWine Directs State to Apply for Passenger-rail Corridor ID Funds

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine on February 8 directed the [Ohio Rail Development Commission](#) (ORDC) to apply for the first phase of funding to study expanding passenger-rail service in Ohio.

Those funds would come from the Federal Railroad Administration's [Corridor Identification and Development program](#), which was created under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed in late 2021. FRA is providing \$500,000 per successful applicant to study potential intercity passenger-rail options.

Ohio has identified two corridors for consideration: Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati and Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit, ORDC officials said in a press release.

If the state receives the grant, it would bring in a consultant to prepare a scope of work for a service development plan. That plan would include information about necessary track improvements, equipment, stations and other facilities, operating costs, ridership estimates and required state subsidies that are needed to start service, ORDC officials said.

Ohio has been in talks with [Amtrak](#) to explore options, ORDC Executive Director Matthew Dietrich said. Ensuring that a new passenger-rail service would not interrupt the steady flow of freight-rail traffic is a priority, he added.

"This is the first step of many in this process. We have a lot of questions that need to be answered before we make any commitments," said DeWine. "The information we gather from this effort will help us make informed decisions about federal opportunities for passenger rail in Ohio."

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Five hundred employers with more than 1,000 employees across the United States were named the country's "best large employers." Photo – amtrak.com

## Amtrak Recognized as a 'best' Large Employer

[Amtrak](#) has been recognized by Forbes as one of the country's "best large employers" on the magazine's [2023 list](#), the railroad announced yesterday.

The railroad's workforce of more than 20,000 employees includes 3,700 new hires in 2022, Amtrak officials said in a press release.

The magazine's list was compiled following an independent survey taken by nearly 45,000 American employees working for companies with more than 1,000 employees in the United States. A total of 500 employers were recognized across 25 industry sectors based on recommendations from respondents who were asked to rate their willingness to recommend their own employer to friends and family.

"We are actively recruiting and hiring thousands of additional people to join a challenging and rewarding environment where we lead with our values to do the right thing, put customers first and excel together," said Qiana Spain, Amtrak executive vice president and chief human resources officer.



*Photo: AMTRAK*

## This Train Travels Through 9 States — From Washington, D.C., to a Tiny Town Near the Canadian Border

By Evie Carrick Published on February 19, 2023 Travel + Leisure  
Looking out the window of a train as the landscape changes from dense inner city to colorful countryside is surprisingly calming — not to mention scenic. And those who want to see it all — from dense forests and rolling hills to towering skyscrapers and stunning city sights — only need to book a ticket on Amtrak's Vermonter, which runs from downtown Washington, D.C. to St. Albans, Vermont near the U.S.-Canada border.

Along the way, the train cuts through major hubs like Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City before making a beeline for the rural corners of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. In total, the Vermonter passes through nine states and the District of Columbia making it one of the most relaxing ways to see the wooded northeast landscape and check out some of the biggest cities in the country.

During the week, the full Vermonter route takes just under 13 hours, so travelers board just after 8 a.m. in Washington, D.C. and arrive in St. Albans before 9 p.m. On the weekend, the arrival time is the same, but the train leaves Washington, D.C. a half an hour earlier — at 7:30 a.m.

### Highlights on Amtrak's Vermonter Route

The train departs from Washington, D.C.'s Union Station, which is just north of the U.S. Capitol building. If you have time, you can check out the Washington Monument and walk through the National Mall on your way to the train station.

Once the train leaves the station, it chugs toward Baltimore, making a couple stops before it traverses along the Man O War Shoal, the last large relic oyster reef in the Upper Chesapeake Bay. After dipping into Philadelphia and Trenton, New Jersey, the Vermonter hits the Big Apple with a stop at Penn Station.

After the stop in New York City, the Vermonter traverses the northern bank of the Long Island Sound before shooting north through central Connecticut and Massachusetts.

From there, the train follows the Vermont-New Hampshire border, dipping into both states as it makes its journey north toward Canada. In Vermont, the train stops at some of the state's most beautiful communities, including Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, Waterbury, and Essex, which sits just east of Burlington. It also stops in Montpelier, the capital city of Vermont and home to the beautiful [Camel's Hump State Park](#) (which is also a great place to [pick up some maple syrup](#)).

The train finally rests in St. Albans, which sits near the shore of Lake Champlain a mere 25-minute drive to the Canadian border.

### Seating on Amtrak's Vermonter Route

The entire Vermonter route typically takes around 13 hours, though it runs slightly longer on weekends. And since travelers board around 8 a.m. and hop off around 9 p.m. there's [no need for overnight seating](#) or cabins.

On the Vermonter there are two straightforward seating options: coach and business class. The seats in coach recline and offer plenty of legroom, at-seat trays, reading lights, and electrical outlets. There is no middle seat. The Vermonter's business class has all the perks of coach plus extra legroom, a wider seat, and complimentary non-alcoholic beverages.

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### Dining on Amtrak's Vermonter Route

When it comes to food, all travelers can head to the dining car for a menu that includes breakfast sandwiches and bagels for breakfast and grilled flatbread paninis and hearty salads for lunch and dinner. Cocktails, beer, and wine are also available.

### Perks on Amtrak's Vermonter Route

To keep travelers comfortable, the Vermonter offers perks like Wi-Fi aboard the train. Passengers can also bring their cat or dog along for the journey (must be 20 pounds or less). And since the Vermonter travels to parts of the northeast that simply beg to be explored, travelers can bring their bikes on board.



Volume 7 \* Issue 2 \* February, 2023 Provided by John Goodman

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Changes...Changes...sometimes the more things change, the more they stay the same. That appears to be the case for me as I begin a second term as RPCA President, the first President to have a second term after retiring, and I hope not the last. Roger Fuehring will be a hard act to follow, and I sincerely hope that one day he can once again be President and continue the great work he has done so far. Thank you, Roger, for six years of fine leadership.

I also want to thank Kevin Moore for serving on the Board and bringing the Amtrak Approved car owner's view to the Board. Replacing Kevin and Roger on the Board are Bill Gray and Dale Parks. Bill also owns an Amtrak Approved car, by coincidence, one that Francis Wong and I owned in the early 1990s. Dale, like Roger, is currently a shortline CMO with the Aberdeen Carolina and Western Railway.

ACWR hosted a very pleasant evening at their business car facility at this year's conference. Members in attendance had the opportunity to tour through some of the railroad's immaculately restored heavyweight business train cars, as well as to see their fleet of first-generation cab units. For myself, the chance to see the Coffee Creek, the only surviving Milwaukee Skytop Sleeper, again was a highlight of the tour. The car was recently acquired from the Iowa Pacific trustee, and I am hopeful that now in the care of ACWR CEO Bob Menzies, the over 25-year restoration in the hands of five different owners will finally be completed.

Our hosts for this conference, the North Carolina Transportation Museum, did an outstanding job in hosting the conference. The Museum was thrown a last-minute curve ball when the State Fire Marshall would not let them erect the tent inside the back shop. As a result, most of the group activities were held in a heated tent outside in the elements, but it worked out well. I heard very positive feedback from several members about the quality of the seminars and speakers. The shuttle service between the hotels and the museum was very handy via rubber-tired reproduction trolleys. Several pieces of the museum's collection were open for tours, along with the Spencer Roundhouse and shop facilities. I want to thank the museum and its volunteers for hosting our conference, even though they had to push it back two years due to COVID.

For a second time, I am honored to serve as your President, a turn in my life that I never expected but willingly accept. The organization has come a long way since my last term, most importantly in the inclusion of younger members and the development of programs to further their involvement. I look forward to raising the visibility of RPCA as a rail industry organization that furthers the inclusion of young people in the railroad and preservation industries.

Brad Black

## Photos from the Conference



*Sponsors and Pizza and Beer fundraiser train*

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*Southern Ry E-unit at Spencer NC*



*Aberdeen Carolina & Western F-unit in shops*



*Aberdeen, Carolina and Western excursion Lunch at the Aberdeen Caroline & Western*



*Roger Fuehring is honored for his service as president*

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*Continued from previous page:***AMTRAK****Amtrak RPCA Conference Call****Jan. 27, 2023**From RPCA: Brad Black Burt Hermey Mike StickelFrom Amtrak: Theresa Smith David Brown Steve Robusto Adi Moratti**PV Business:**

about 10% up Current YTD vs. Last year

**Private Car Inspectors:**

Recertification on CFR 238 training is due next year. This is hands-on and is done at an Amtrak facility. There is a separate Private Car inspection class that Amtrak conducts, at times at an RPCA conference. Per Brad's suggestion, Amtrak will look into combining it with the 238 training. There is also a safety course that Amtrak requires, which can be taken online.

Michael DeAngelo will be distributing new permits to enter Amtrak property to the PV inspectors. They will need to be returned signed with payment.

**Routes:**

Amtrak would like to develop Chicago as a destination locale and is looking for ideas for charter trains using PV's, such as dinner trains, special event charters, such as PGA in Michigan, etc. The guidelines for charters are being reinterpreted in a way that is more friendly to PV operations.

Amtrak is holding an expo in PHL for sports team owners/travel managers, and PV's are welcome.

SEA-VAC: There is currently one train/day that makes the round trip from Seattle to Vancouver BC. The train is conventional equipment. Per the timetable, it departs SEA at 7:45 AM and arrives at VAC Pacific Central Station at 11:45 AM. The return departs VAC at 5:45 PM and arrives at SEA at 10:10 PM. In the past (and I assume currently), the additional time southbound was for US Customs to inspect the train at Blaine, WA, which is at the border. No such inspection by Canadian Customs occurs northbound, as there are no stops in Canada except Vancouver, where the train enters a cage. Once the gates are locked, all train passengers who detrain must do so past the Canadian Customs desks. A passport or passport card is required to enter Canada. Apparently, the local management expressed some concerns about the logistics, which Steve Robusto agreed to get clarification. This schedule provides approximately 6 hours to explore Vancouver. There is good public transport between the station and downtown Vancouver and many walkable destinations. Visit <https://www.amtrak.com/crossing-the-us-canadian-border> for more information.

**RAILCAMP**

Once again, RPCA collected money at the Annual Banquet to fund sending two deserving young people to NRHS RailCamp in 2023. These funds collected support the Caldwell-Luebke RailCamp Fund, open to any eligible applicant, and the Stanlee E. Weller RailCamp Fund, open to an eligible young lady.

Through the generosity of our members, through the dues renewal process, conference registrations, and at the banquet, we have collected a record \$2,076 so far this year. Additionally, through the generosity of our insurance brokers, Lou Schillinger of United Shortline, Tripp Salisbury of McRail, and Dan Roddy of HMBD, they have agreed to donate additional funds to allow us to support these two scholarships. Once again, on behalf of the Board, thank you to you, our members, and our insurance brokers for supporting this valuable program.

If you have a candidate for either RPCA RailCamp scholarship, please contact me at [rjwullich2@aol.com](mailto:rjwullich2@aol.com).

RailCamp applications are available now at: <https://nrhs.com/programs/railcamp/>. If you wish to make an additional donation to our RailCamp funds, please send your check or money order to:

Railroad Passenger Car Alliance PO Box 719 Quinton, VA 23141-0719 -Roy Wullich

**SAFETY**

Following the RPCA Conference, my business partner, Al Singleton, and I decided to roll the dice and take Amtrak to get back to Colorado. This trip involved riding the Crescent to DC, then the Capitol Limited to CHI, and finally, the California Zephyr to Denver. All in all, the ride and service on Amtrak was very good. Except for maybe the Flexible Dining on the Cap Ltd. I am saying it was bad. Not from a safety point of view as it seemed to be prepared properly. Let's just say that if you are faced with that option for dining, pack a sub sandwich in the carry-on just in case.

If you have been reading this column over the years, you will know that one of my underlying themes is preparedness. I try to bring this to light during the holiday season as we have thousands of people riding our trains. Whether it is parking, crowd control, weather-related platform safety, or whatever we face, we should be prepared and plan accordingly.

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As we rolled into Denver aboard #5, we were expecting to see heavy snow, as that was the forecast. Snow was covering the roadways, and the snow falling was light to moderate. We were on time into the yard but a little late by the time we backed into the platform.

Al and I had kept an eye on the forecast and were wearing our winter boots and coats as we had a bus to catch to Colorado Springs. As we backed alongside the platform, I could see that the platform had yet to be swept. A layer of fresh snow would be greeting us as we stepped from the Superliner onto the platform. Slick? Yes. Unsure footing? Yes. It looked like someone could use a refresher course in preparedness. I think the issue at hand was pretty visible. There may have been other factors such as short-handed in staffing or short with the sweeping equipment. On the bright side, this does allow us to critique the situation and think about how we could have done things differently if it were our platform or train.

The 2023 RPCA conference was a great event and a good time to renew friendships. Thank you to the North Carolina Transportation Museum for hosting our group. Onward for another great year of passenger car railroading. Prepare and stay safe. Start by washing those hands! Gary



## RAILROAD NEWS

This is a synopsis of Railroad-related news culled from various sources, including Trains Magazine, Progressive Railroading, Railway Age, and various websites.

### Museum and Excursion Trains

The Whitewater Valley Railroad has fired up its rare Armco Lima-Hamilton A-3080/LS-1000 switcher No. 709. The last time the prime mover ran was in 2005. The restoration has taken ten years, and more work remains before the unit can be put into regular service.

The National Railroad Museum will move forward with a 32,040-square-foot addition to its Lenfestey Center.

The \$15 million plan would more than double the size of the 25,000-square-foot structure that is the museum's main rolling-stock exhibition venue. The museum has been discussing the project since 2016.

President Joe Biden has signed legislation that changes the Pullman National Monument to a National Historical Park, making it the first National Park Service unit in Chicago. President Barack Obama designated Pullman National Monument on Feb. 19, 2015. The park tells the story of one of the first planned industrial communities in the United States, sleeping car magnate George M. Pullman who helped create it, and the workers who lived there. The historic district includes the site of the former Pullman Palace Car Works shops and administration building, the Hotel Florence, Arcade Park, and the Greenstone Church. Also within the district is the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum, named for the prominent leader A. Philip Randolph, which recognizes and explores African American labor history.

The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society will recognize magazine writing about passenger rail service with a new award named for former R&LHS president William F. Howes. The William F. Howes Jr. Passenger Rail Article Award becomes the seventh category of the awards program, which began in 1982. Howes, a career railroad official with the Baltimore & Ohio railroad and successors Chessie System and CSX Transportation, was R&LHS president from 1994 to 2003. The award will present winners with a certificate and a \$250 honorarium.

The United Railroad Historical Society's popular "Hudson River Rail Excursions" are back for 2023 and will make 48 runs this year, including two special trips: The Valentine's Special in February and the 75th Anniversary Special, a five-day round trip from New York to Chicago to mark the anniversary of the 1948 20th Century Limited. The excursions, which are run on the rear of a regular Amtrak train from New York City to Albany-Rensselaer, feature New York Central tavern-lounge 43 and observation-sleeper-lounge car Hickory Creek.

Christie's auction house has listed the long-lost "Arizona Spike," a steel spike clad in gold and silver to mark the completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad. This piece is estimated to go for anywhere from \$300,000 to \$500,000, perhaps making it one of the most expensive pieces of railroading ever. The "Arizona Spike" was one of four used during the ceremony at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, to celebrate joining the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads. Its location was unknown until 1978, when it was loaned to the Smithsonian. Bidding begins at the end of this month.

Three historic General Electric 44-tonners built in the 1940s will be restored to operating condition thanks to a partnership of four non-profit organizations; Operation Toy Train of New York, Tri-State Railway Historical Society, Danbury Railroad Museum, and Delaware & Ulster Railroad. Each organization owns a 44-tonner; three will run again, and one will serve as a parts source. The locomotives that will be fully restored are New Haven 0814, Middletown & New Jersey 2, and Hoboken Manufacturers Railroad 700. Each of them needs at least one major internal part, all available in the parts unit.

### The Indiana Railway Museum is seeking a General Manager.

The Indiana Railway Museum is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation established in 1961, it owns and operates over a former Southern Railway Branch Line ( 32 Miles ) out of French Lick, IN. The organization operates the "French Lick Scenic Railway," a seasonal Tourist / Excursion Railway with a very successful "Polar Express". The organization also operates the "Dubois County Railroad", a Class III Short Line Railroad operating between Huntingburg and Jasper. The Indiana Railway Museum is now seeking a new General Manager.

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This position will supervise the following staff: 8 Full Time - 20 Part-Time – 100 + Seasonal. The position will require experience in dealing with FRA and State Regulations, as well as Experience in Track and Equipment Maintenance. The individual must have Computer Skills and some grant writing experience and be able to communicate well with others. The individual would be eligible for Railroad Retirement. The salary Range will be based on qualifications and experience. For a complete “Job Description,” contact: [Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org](mailto:Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org)

### Amtrak/Freight/Federal Agencies

The Norfolk Southern calendar is back after a two-year hiatus. The 13-month calendar features photos of trains taken by employees across the system, with winners selected by fellow railroad employees. Copies of the 2023 calendar can be ordered through the company store.

Following the 2022 election, some Congressional committees overseeing railroad issues have new chairpersons and/or ranking members:

Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee

Chair Maria Cantwell (D-Wash)

Ranking member Roger Wicker (R Miss)

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Chair – Sam Graves (R MO)

Ranking Member – Rick Larson (D WA)

### Metro News - Wayzata History

On Friday, February 10, 2023, 10:55 AM, Frederick Krense

A HOME FOR HISTORY: WAYZATA SECTION FOREMAN HOUSE FROM GREAT NORTHERN DAYS TO BE RESTORED WITH SUPPORT FROM BNSF



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Wayzata Depot around 1920*



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Boardwalk around 1869*



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Tracks in 1910*



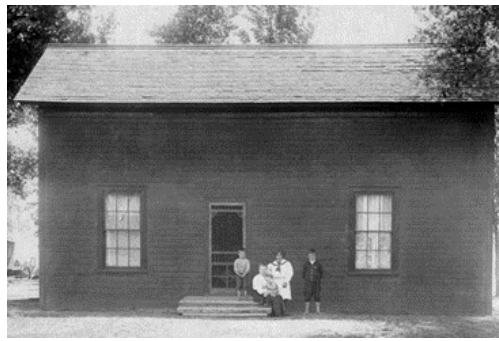
*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: On Lake and Broadway in 1900*

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*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Section Foreman house in the 1940s*



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Section foreman house in the early 1900's*



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Historical Society: Section foreman house in the 1960s*



*Photo Courtesy of Wayzata Conservancy: Section foreman's house and future Eco Park*



*Rendering of future Eco Park*

On the northern shore of Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota lies Wayzata, a town platted by Oscar E. Garrison in 1854. A year later, Wayzata settlers built a sawmill, hotel and blacksmith shop, creating a flourishing economy and commerce center for the area. A little more than 10 years after its establishment, Wayzata became the original gateway to Lake Minnetonka when St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (SP&P) extended its tracks to the town.

In 1878, railroad "Empire Builder" James J. Hill gained control of the SP&P, which would become part of the Great Northern Railway (GN), a BNSF predecessor. The GN, which eventually became Burlington Northern Railroad (BN), put Wayzata on the map as a tourist destination and opened a route to the western part of the country.

"The arrival of the railroad fostered Wayzata's early growth as the gateway to Lake Minnetonka with tourists from around the country feeding the hotels, steamboats and burgeoning country summer estates nearby," Peter Hitch, executive director of The Wayzata Conservancy, said. "The sound of the railroad horn signaled the arrival of these crowds early on and even as the trains pass through today, that sound still invokes memories of that wonderful past in the minds of the town's residents."

The railroad enabled the Wayzata farming community to sell goods that boosted the economy and again made Wayzata a central location for the movement of freight.

"In 1906, Hill commissioned a new depot to be built downtown, right on the shores of the lake. He was present at the grand opening and proclaimed it the handsomest depot on the entire Great Northern line," Wayzata Historical Society President Aaron Person said.

Hill's depot was in service until 1971 then later donated to the City of Wayzata. It eventually became a railroad museum operated today by the Wayzata Historical Society and the home of the Greater Wayzata Area Chamber of Commerce

As the GN expanded west, it built small, unassuming houses approximately every 20 miles for the section foremen and their families. Only two of these houses remain in Minnesota. The section foreman house in Wayzata is currently being restored to its former glory.

"The section house was built in 1902 and it was a pretty simple house," Person said. "Great Northern built section houses to be identical so that section foremen families could be placed anywhere and their furniture would fit no matter where they needed to move."

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Section foremen oversaw all track maintenance and daily inspections along the 20-mile section of track near their house. Many houses were in isolated areas, so the Wayzata house was ideal as it was downtown on the shore of Lake Minnetonka, with the lake beach in the foreman's backyard. Wayzata's location was also close to the Twin Cities, allowing foremen access to everything they needed and more.

In the 1960s, BN sold the home, and eventually the city of Wayzata took ownership. Over time, the house became run down, but the Wayzata Heritage Preservation Board and Wayzata Historical Society started a campaign for the city to save it.

In 2021, the house was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and the city is now in the process of renovating it. It will be used as a new vibrant lakefront interactive learning center that will provide children the opportunity for experiential hands-on learning.

The BNSF Railway Foundation donated a \$25,000 grant to the Wayzata Conservancy to assist with the restoration of the section foreman house.

The house will be a part of a new Eco Park that features educational programming about early 20<sup>th</sup> Century railroading and the influence of GN on the geographic, economic and social development of Wayzata. The project will restore shoreline marsh and improve water quality while providing STEM-based learning. Eco Park will extend to the boardwalk alongside BNSF's tracks.



## Passenger Rail Service Through Southern Montana Ended 43 years ago. Together, we can bring it back.

Provided by John Goodman

### BSPRA INAUGURAL NEWSLETTER January 2023

Dear Passenger Rail Friend, Thank you for your interest in the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority and restoring passenger rail to Southern Montana. We are excited to launch our first quarterly newsletter bringing you regional passenger rail news, and organizational updates. **Together, we can bring it back!**

Today, more than 2,000 miles from the Great Lake to the Pacific and 800 miles from Great Falls to Denver no longer have access to passenger rail service. It's time to provide passenger rail service to all of America.

#### The Benefits of Passenger Rail:

A restored passenger rail line will create jobs

Generate \$271 million in benefits a year

Provide affordable, safe, transportation year-round for healthcare, education, commerce, and tourism

Provide upgrades to current rail lines

#### Federal Railroad Administration to Big Sky Passenger Rail: Stay Engaged as Study Moves Forward

The Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority is pushing to ensure the old North Coast Hiawatha is included in November when the Federal Railroad Administration submits its final [Amtrak Daily Long Distance Service Study](#) to Congress.

Representatives of Senators Jon Tester and Steve Daines joined this week's meeting between the Montana rail authority and the FRA.

"The FRA believes that the long-distance service study can serve as a common long-term vision for long-distance passenger rail service...It's to provide a strategy for Amtrak and other key stakeholders to implement and coordinate and develop long-distance routes."

#### In a Rural Corner of the West, a Local Level Push to Revive Passenger Rail

"Trains are economic lifelines" said Jason Stuart, the vice chair of the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority, and the head of an economic development agency in eastern Montana. "There's a huge portion of this country that is really underserved."

"My goal is that within the next six years, we'll see passenger rail service in Southern Montana and I think we're well poised to do so," said Chairman Dave Strohmaier. "One year from now, there will be recommendations to Congress by the U.S. Department of Transportation. We'll do everything in our power to ensure the restored North Coast Hiawatha route is in the top route restoration recommendations."

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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 15, 2021

Amiel Rose, Deputy Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Deputy Administrator Rose:

Earlier this year, we joined together to pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which makes smart, targeted investments in our nation's traditional infrastructure. An important provision in the bill addresses the issue that rural America remains underserved by long-distance passenger rail options. We believe passenger rail in the greater northwest region can offer local, state, and regional service capabilities that other modes of transportation cannot - especially during periods of inclement weather.

That is why we worked to ensure the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act emphasized restoring long-distance passenger rail routes by making the largest investment in passenger rail since Amtrak's creation more than 50 years ago. We ask that the Federal Railroad Administration work to expedite implementing the passenger rail provisions within the Act, especially routes outside the northeast and mid-Atlantic.

In order to ensure state, county, and local stakeholders have a seat at the table, we also request that the Department of Transportation formally establish a Greater Northwest Working Group to consult with for the development and advancement of Section 12214, the Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study. This provision is critically important to evaluating all options for restoring or enhancing daily intercity and passenger service, developing recommendations for methods by which Amtrak could work with local communities and organizations, identifying Federal and non-Federal funding sources required to restore or enhance service, and more.

We look forward to working with you to advance long-distance passenger rail to rural America. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jon Tester  
United States Senator

Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator

John Hoeven  
United States Senator

Mike Crapo  
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Moyley  
United States Senator

James Risch  
United States Senator

Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

Mitt Romney  
United States Senator

## New Passenger Rail Enjoys Bipartisan Senate Support

A group of U.S. Senators from the Greater Northwest region urged the Federal Railroad Administration to create a working group that will study restoring long-distance passenger rail lines in the region. The Senators understand the economic benefits of passenger rail. Led by Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT), the letter was co-signed by Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND), Sen. James Risch (R-ID), Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID), Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT).

The Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority (BSPRA) is a broad partnership united by the benefits of passenger rail. Already nineteen counties—large and small, urban and rural—along with towns, cities, businesses, Tribal officials, and local leaders have joined the effort to bring back passenger rail to our region. Amtrak, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Montana Department of Transportation are ex-officio members as well.

### We're growing support for expanding passenger rail in Montana that creates jobs, connects communities, and improves our quality of life. Xplorer Maps celebrates 10th Anniversary with creation of a Greater Northwest Passenger Rail Map for BSPRA.

"We believe that this original fine art piece beautifully reflects the great expanse and significance of the greater northwest and will generate public interest in expanding passenger rail in Southern Montana, the greater northwest and beyond. We are so grateful for the generosity of Xplorer Maps and its founders, Chris and Greg Robitaille" says Dave Strohmaier, Chairman of the BSPRA."

"We believe that this original fine art piece beautifully reflects the great expanse and significance of the greater northwest and will generate public interest in expanding passenger rail in Southern Montana, the greater northwest and beyond. We are so grateful for the generosity of Xplorer Maps and its founders, Chris and Greg Robitaille" says Dave Strohmaier, Chairman of the BSPRA."



## What Should a New Penn Station Look Like?

New York City's much-hated train hub is overdue for a facelift. These architects have alternative visions for a dramatically reimaged Pennsylvania Station. Blomberg By [Sri Taylor](#) February 1, 2023 at 8:00 AM CST



that's not the 1910 Penn Station — it's a rendering of a rebuilt duplicate proposed by ReThink Penn Station. Source: RWC Atelier & Co/Nova Concepts

For more than half a century, New York City's Pennsylvania Station has been haunted by memories of its ornate Beaux-Arts style predecessor, which was demolished in 1963 and replaced with the grim subterranean rail hub under Madison Square Garden that today's commuters know and loathe. But proposals to improve the facility have been gaining traction. In 2021, the Moynihan Train Hall, a long-planned Amtrak expansion of the chronically overcrowded station, opened across the street in the historic Farley Post Office building, to mostly positive reviews. And in 2022, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced a \$6 billion plan to renovate Penn Station and redevelop its immediate vicinity, a project that's been at the center of public debate since its inception. In addition, the city's operating permit granted for Madison Square Garden is set to expire this year, fueling talk of relocating the arena and more dramatically reimagining the station beneath it. "We believe that the governor's Penn Station plan is an old-fashioned urban renewal demolition plan," said Sam Turvey, chair of the urban advocacy group ReThink Penn Station NYC. "They really don't have very coherent ideas about the transit operating model they intend to use at the station, or the need for a great above-ground station."

Cities are changing fast.



# Amtrak Chicago Departure Delays Mount

By Bob Johnston | February 4, 2023 Equipment failures en route add to cascading problems



The eastbound Southwest Chief kicks up snow as it hurries through Western Springs, Ill., on Jan. 28, 2023. Weather, while cold, was generally more favorable as Amtrak experienced a series of delays in departures from Chicago this week. David Lassen



Locomotives await assignments or attention at Amtrak's Chicago Diesel Shop on Dec. 27, 2022. Bob Johnston



The westbound Empire Builder is 6 hours late at Spokane, Wash., on Feb 1, 2023. Departure and mechanical delays were compounded when the same equipment departed Seattle for Chicago more than 7 hours late the following morning. Russell Sharp

CHICAGO — Lack of standby equipment and the inability of Amtrak mechanical forces to sufficiently prepare cars and locomotives for service led to the cancellation of one pair of Chicago-based trains and departure delays to 11 others on Thursday, Feb. 2. The cancellation of one Chicago-Milwaukee *Hiawatha* round trip, and the cumulative delays to the other trains of 15 hours, 4 minutes, followed earlier issues in the week in which a line blockage in Detroit may have contributed to the annulment of the morning Michigan-bound corridor round trip out of Chicago [[“Equipment issues, derailment lead to Wolverine cancellations,”](#) Feb. 1, 2023]. Snow remained on the ground from a storm the preceding weekend, but the day was sunny with temperatures ranging from 23 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit. Thursday morning began with trains on four routes sustaining substantial delays from their advertised departure times:

Train	Destination	Scheduled	Departure
329	Milwaukee	6:10 a.m.	7:47 a.m.
350	Pontiac, Mich.	6:45 a.m.	7:24 a.m.
301	St. Louis	7:15 a.m.	8:14 a.m.
381	Quincy, Ill.	7:40 a.m.	8:17 a.m.

Occurring at the beginning of the work day, pervasive delays like these can have a significant impact on repeat business. In addition, a 45-minute late arrival of the first *Hiawatha* from Milwaukee caused the next departure, No. 331, to leave 44 minutes late at 9:09 a.m. The same equipment that left the Windy City on No. 329 returned to Chicago more than 2 hours late, so train No. 333, a scheduled 11:05 a.m. departure, was cancelled. Putting additional strain on mechanical forces was the overnight arrival of two trains from the West Coast that should have come in the previous afternoon: the *California Zephyr*, 11 hours, 28 minutes late at 2:18 a.m., and the *Empire Builder*, 12 hours, 45 minutes late at 5:30 a.m. Both trains had to contend with a late departure from their originating terminal, inclement weather, and freight congestion on their way to Chicago, but the major source of delays were “mechanical issues.” The *Zephyr* and the *Builder* each lost four hours — the *Zephyr* at Denver, and the *Builder* between Milwaukee and Glenview, Ill., to equipment failures. The most significant Chicago departure delay was the eastbound *Lake Shore Limited*, which slunk out of town at 2:35 a.m. on Feb. 3, more than 5 hours late. The equipment’s morning arrival as train No. 49/449 from New York City and Boston was 34 minutes early, so that wasn’t the problem. But maintenance personnel were playing catch-up into the evening, as the day’s departing *Zephyr*, *Builder*, and *City of New Orleans* all left more than an hour late. Amtrak does not routinely disclose the nature of its trains’ mechanical problems. Sources tell *Trains News Wire* cold weather has adversely affected both the state-owned SC44 and long-distance ALC42 Siemens Charger locomotives and caused inoperable toilets on Horizon coaches and cafe cars. There have been repeated instances during the last three weeks of trains returning to Chicago Union Station after leaving on time, an indication that all necessary maintenance may not have been completed. Another chain reaction When the *Empire Builder* that left Chicago on Jan. 30 arrived in Minot, N.D., one of two Superliner coaches in the section going to Portland, Ore., was removed for “thermally damaged wheels,” according information relayed to passengers by the train’s conductor. It had departed Chicago more than two hours late due to “engine problems” and a burned-out marker light on a Viewliner II baggage car substituting for the normally assigned coach-baggage Superliner. Following the 2½-hour Minot stop and a broken air hose changed out at Chester, Mont., where operating employees had to be recreated instead of at the normal crew-change point 42 miles west in Shelby, Mont., the train was 6 hours late at Spokane, Wash., and into Seattle. After servicing, the eastbound *Builder* scheduled to depart Seattle Feb 1 at 4:55 p.m. didn’t leave until 12:34 a.m., more than 7½ hours late. Leaving St. Paul at 5:38 p.m. instead of 8:50 a.m. on Feb. 3, the out-of-slot train lost another 2 hours stuck behind a disabled freight and arrived into Chicago more than 10 hours late at 3:20 a.m. on Feb. 4. Despite the *Builder*’s nocturnal arrival, Chicago shop forces managed to get that day’s westbound *Builder*, *Zephyr*, and *Southwest Chief* all out on time



*Great Northern No. 179 is an EMD NW3 locomotive, one of seven built. Harold Buckley Jr. photo*

## EMD NW3 Locomotive: A Diesel That Didn't

By David Lustig | February 1, 2023

**Marketed as a passenger terminal switcher, the EMD NW3 found success as local passenger power.**

The EMD NW3 locomotive was the builder's first entry into the eventually lucrative road switcher category, although it was intended as a passenger terminal switcher.

Locomotive builders can be inconsistent when it comes to aesthetics. EMD, which on one hand could create stylish, wind-splitting passenger units would, if the situation warranted, produce some very strange looking creatures when there was deemed a demand. Look no further than the EMD NW3 locomotive. Wanting to compete with Alco's successful RS1 light road switcher, EMD took its basic end-cab switcher design and stretched it onto a longer frame, gave it Blomberg road trucks – one of the first units to receive the new design — a steam generator, and a 12-567 12-cylinder prime mover to pump out 1,000 hp.

The aesthetics were less than pleasing and the additional bulge on the hood next to the cab to house the steam generator left it looking a little lumpy, but other than that it was a standard EMD product humming inside.

However, whatever the builder wanted to call it, the railroads showed little interest, with only [Great Northern](#) signing on the dotted line for seven units in 1939, predating the BL2 by almost a decade. Delivered in the black, standard dress for many railroad's switchers at the time, the units dutifully shuffled cars and powered mixed trains. Numbered 5400 to 5406, they were eventually put in the 175-181 series and acquired the road's Omaha orange and Pullman green paint scheme. Like most other diesel switchers of the era, stack extensions were added shortly after delivery to lift diesel exhaust up and away from the crew in the cab.

As a testament to the faith the GN had in its NW3s, *Trains* correspondent and Minnesota resident Steve Glischinski notes that the units were regularly assigned to trains 35 and 36, a 295 mile, six-day-a-week two-car all-stops local between Duluth, Minn., and [Grand Forks](#), N.D., passenger train as late as the late 1950s.

Three of the seven NW3s survived to serve elsewhere, two on industrials and one sold to the Clinchfield Railroad. One of the industrial units is still intact. The other unit, after retirement, was repainted in orange-and-green and put on display at GN's Whitefish, Mont., station. The Clinchfield unit was subsequently scrapped.

Whether EMD had a viable product that would have been able to compete in the marketplace or not became a moot point when the U.S. government's War Production Board decreed the builder should build road locomotives and the others concentrate on switchers. The builder made a direct entry into the road switcher market after World War II with the BL2 and later the wildly successful GP9. The EMD NW3 locomotive soon disappeared from the catalog.



*A capture from a Canadian Pacific video shows the railroad's first hydrogen fuel-cell locomotive. Its second unit, a GP38, is set to roll under its own power for the first time this month. Canadian Pacific*

## Canadian Pacific Reports Strong Earnings as it Awaits Merger Decision

By Bill Stephens | February 1, 2023 **CP's second hydrogen locomotive expected to make test runs this month**

CALGARY, Alberta — Canadian Pacific reported strong fourth quarter earnings on Tuesday and expects to see volume growth this year despite economic uncertainty.

The railway's earnings call was a sideshow to the main event: The pending Surface Transportation Board decision on the proposed CP-Kansas City Southern merger.

"We finished the year with the people, capacity and resources in place to meet the needs of our customers today and are well-positioned to

CP executives remained confident that the STB would approve the merger in the coming weeks. They declined to give financial guidance for the year, however, citing the merger and a slowing economy.

But Chief Marketing Officer John Brooks said he expects to see growth in CP's bulk traffic segment, which makes up 40% of its business and is relatively immune to swings in the economy. Merchandise traffic should hold up well, he says, and automotive traffic should be strong due to pent-up demand, increased production, and a new contract with Ford. Brooks also expects CP's intermodal business to remain on a tear due to international intermodal contract wins and the ongoing expansion at the Port of Saint John, New Brunswick. CP's overall international intermodal volume was up 40% for the quarter.

The port reached the 150,000 TEU, or 20-foot equivalent container mark, for the first time in 2022 as volume soared more than 70%. Container capacity at the port will double this year with the addition of new cranes and a second berth that will go in service by April 1. CP and KCS completed interline southbound and northbound test runs with temperature controlled containers between Canada, the Midwest and Laredo, Texas. The Midwest-Laredo service ran on a 72-hour schedule, which is competitive with single-driver trucks.

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The temperature-controlled market in those lanes is ripe for conversion to intermodal because it's completely served by trucks now, Brooks says.

CP's second experimental hydrogen-powered locomotive, a GP38, will make its first test runs in Calgary this month, Creel says. CP's first hydrogen locomotive made its maiden revenue run in October. The home-built unit, converted SD40-2F No. 1001, is dubbed H2 0EL for "hydrogen zero-emissions locomotive." The Oct. 28 revenue test run was the second main line foray for the unit, which uses hydrogen fuel cells and batteries to power its electric traction motors.

For the quarter, CP's operating income increased 19%, to \$989 million, as revenue grew 21%, to \$2.5 billion. Earnings per share, adjusted for the impact of one-time items, increased 19% to \$1.14. CP's fourth-quarter operating ratio increased 0.6 points to 59.8%. Fourth quarter volume was up 9% when measured by carloads and containers, or 8% on a revenue ton mile basis, the preferred metric of the Canadian railways. Grain was up 24%, intermodal 18%, and automotive up 11%.

For the year, CP's operating income increased 4%, to \$3.3 billion, as revenue rose 10% to \$8.8 billion. Earnings per share, adjusted for one-time items, was flat at \$3.77. The operating ratio, adjusted for one-time items, was 61.4%, a 3.8-point increase.

Creel said he expected the operating ratio to improve this year. "The 61.4 is not a CP standard," he says.

CP's volume for 2022 increased 2% based on carloads and containers, but was down 1% on an RTM basis.

## CP Sets Grain Record in January

By February 6, 2023 **Crop-year totals running 45% ahead of 2021-22 figure**

CALGARY — Canadian Pacific moved 2.29 million metric tons of Canadian grain in January, setting a record for the month, the company said last week.

The railroad has now moved more than 15 million metric tons in the 2022-23 crop year, an increase of more than 45% over the same point in the 2021-22 crop year. The railroad's investment in higher-capacity grain hoppers has been a factor in the showing, which came despite slowed loading of grain ships in Vancouver because of rain, holiday closures, and extreme winter weather, said Joan Hardy, CP vice president sales and marketing, grain and fertilizers.

"CP's grain performance through January demonstrates the strength of our customers' supply chains, and the strong resiliency of our railway operations and effective winter planning, allowing CP to deliver for our customers," Hardy said in [a press release](#).



*The Sisseton-Milbank Railroad is at far left, shown in green, on this map of the Twin Cities & Western and its affiliated railroads. Twin Cities & Western*

The 37-mile Sisseton-Milbank, owned by the Twin Cities & Western, serves a grain elevator in Sisseton, but is limited to 263,000-pound cars rather than the current 286,000-pound standard because of the condition of its right-of-way [see ["South Dakota seeks funds to upgrade deteriorating short line,"](#) *Trains News Wire*, Dec. 13, 2022]. The improvements would allow the Sisseton elevator to add a 110-car loading facility, and the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe would start using the line to transport propane if the route is upgraded, according to railroad president Mark Wagner.



*Union Pacific Photograph*

## State Bill Advances for Project to Rebuild South Dakota Short Line

By February 9, 2023 **\$6.25 million appropriation for Sisseton-Milbank Railroad would help match federal grant**

PIERRE, S.D. — A state legislative committee has endorsed funding for a project to help rebuild the Sisseton-Milbank Railroad, moving the appropriation bill forward, [KELO-TV reports](#).

The Senate Transportation committee unanimously approved the bill that would provide \$6.25 million from the state's general fund to help rebuild the railroad from its current state, which limits trains to 10 mph, to 25-mph operation. That money would be needed to help match a requested federal grant of about \$25 million. The legislation, SB-16, now goes to the legislature's Joint Committee on Appropriations.

## For Week 2, U.S. Carloads Up, Intermodal Down

Railway Age Written by [Carolina Worrell, Senior Editor](#) January 18, 2023

For the week ending Jan. 14 (Week 2), total U.S. rail traffic was down 1.7% compared with the same week last year; carloads came in 4.2% higher while intermodal dipped 7.0% compared to 2022, according to the Association of American Railroads' (AAR) Jan. 18 report.

Canadian railroads saw an increase in carloads, up 23.0% from the same week last year, while Mexican railroads reported a dip of 3.9%. Both Canadian and Mexican railroads saw a decline in intermodal units, down 2.0% and 6.6%, respectively.

In Week 2 (ending Jan. 14, 2023), U.S. Class I railroads hauled 244,171 carloads and 241,829 containers and trailers.

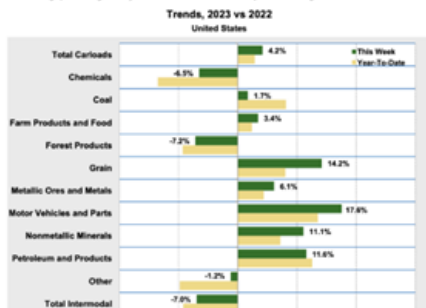
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**U.S. Rail Traffic<sup>1</sup>**  
Week 2, 2023 – Ended January 14, 2023

	This Week	vs 2022	Cumulative	Year-To-Date	vs 2022
<b>Total Carloads</b>	<b>244,171</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>457,133</b>	<b>228,567</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
Chemicals	31,793	-8.9%	59,149	29,575	-13.5%
Coal	69,406	1.7%	133,334	66,667	8.1%
Farm Products excl. Grain, and Food	17,077	2.4%	32,032	16,296	2.4%
Forest Products	9,244	-7.2%	17,818	9,909	-9.3%
Grain	28,008	14.2%	50,097	25,049	8.0%
Metallic Ores and Metals	23,208	6.1%	43,511	21,796	4.4%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	14,862	17.0%	28,114	13,167	13.5%
Nonmetallic Minerals	30,380	11.1%	56,770	28,380	7.2%
Petroleum and Petroleum Products	10,913	11.6%	21,032	10,516	12.6%
Other	9,580	-1.2%	16,596	8,296	-8.8%
<b>Total Intermodal Units</b>	<b>241,829</b>	<b>-7.6%</b>	<b>445,356</b>	<b>222,678</b>	<b>-9.2%</b>
<b>Total Traffic</b>	<b>486,000</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>	<b>902,489</b>	<b>451,245</b>	<b>-3.5%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Excludes U.S. operations of Canadian Pacific, CN and GDOT.  
<sup>2</sup> Average per week figures may not sum to totals as a result of independent rounding.



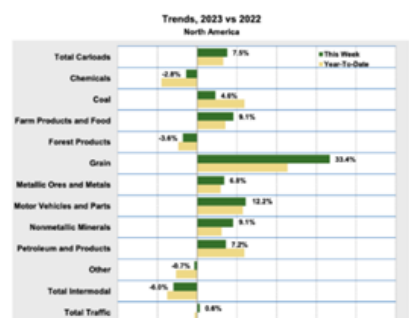
According to [AAR](#), seven of the 10 carload commodity groups posted an increase compared with the same week in 2022. They included grain, up 3,483 carloads, to 28,008; nonmetallic minerals, up 3,033 carloads, to 30,380; and motor vehicles and parts, up 2,176 carloads, to 14,862. Commodity groups that posted decreases compared with the same week in 2022 were chemicals, down 2,226 carloads, to 31,793; forest products, down 715 carloads, to 9,244; and miscellaneous carloads, down 117 carloads, to 9,580.

For the first two weeks of 2023, U.S. railroads reported cumulative volume of 457,133 carloads, up 2.9% from the same point last year; and 445,356 intermodal units, down 9.2% from last year. Total U.S. traffic for the first two weeks of 2023 was 902,489 carloads and intermodal units, a decrease of 3.5% compared to last year.

**North American Rail Traffic**  
Week 2, 2023 – Ended January 14, 2023

	This Week	vs 2022	Cumulative	Year-To-Date	vs 2022
<b>Total Carloads</b>	<b>398,991</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>696,435</b>	<b>338,218</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
Chemicals	44,862	-8.9%	83,338	41,669	-9.0%
Coal	78,081	4.0%	149,433	74,717	11.9%
Farm Products excl. Grain, and Food	26,449	9.1%	50,480	25,240	7.1%
Forest Products	15,381	-3.8%	29,302	14,631	-4.7%
Grain	42,309	33.4%	75,163	37,562	22.8%
Metallic Ores and Metals	44,503	6.8%	84,071	42,036	5.9%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	24,067	12.2%	43,306	21,593	11.3%
Nonmetallic Minerals	40,577	9.1%	76,007	38,004	6.1%
Petroleum and Petroleum Products	22,501	7.2%	42,781	21,391	11.9%
Other	12,361	-0.7%	22,094	11,047	-0.3%
<b>Total Intermodal Units</b>	<b>319,844</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>	<b>591,130</b>	<b>296,546</b>	<b>-7.4%</b>
<b>Total Traffic</b>	<b>670,845</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>1,247,565</b>	<b>623,763</b>	<b>-6.7%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Average per week figures may not sum to totals as a result of independent rounding.

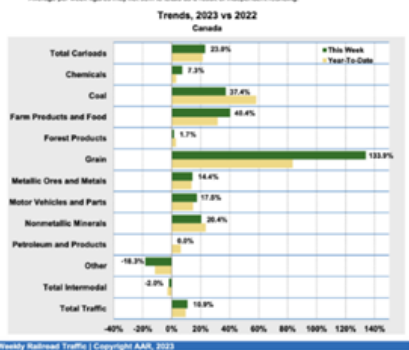


North American rail volume for the week ending Jan. 14, 2023, on 12 reporting U.S., Canadian and Mexican railroads totaled 350,991 carloads, up 7.5% compared with the same week last year, and 319,854 intermodal units, down 6.0% compared with last year. Total combined weekly rail traffic in North America was 670,845 carloads and intermodal units, up 0.6%. North American rail volume for the first two weeks of 2023 was 1,247,565 carloads and intermodal units, down 0.7% compared with 2022.

**Canadian Rail Traffic<sup>1</sup>**  
Week 2, 2023 – Ended January 14, 2023

	This Week	vs 2022	Cumulative	Year-To-Date	vs 2022
<b>Total Carloads</b>	<b>84,028</b>	<b>23.0%</b>	<b>196,068</b>	<b>78,034</b>	<b>21.4%</b>
Chemicals	11,006	7.3%	21,887	10,944	3.1%
Coal	6,507	37.4%	16,014	8,007	58.3%
Farm Products excl. Grain, and Food	7,446	40.4%	14,308	7,154	31.7%
Forest Products	5,964	1.7%	11,326	5,963	2.9%
Grain	11,988	133.8%	20,872	10,438	93.4%
Metallic Ores and Metals	15,889	14.4%	30,814	15,407	13.7%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	5,302	17.5%	9,222	4,811	14.7%
Nonmetallic Minerals	5,916	20.4%	10,951	5,496	23.5%
Petroleum and Petroleum Products	6,539	6.0%	12,732	6,866	6.2%
Other	1,452	-18.2%	2,802	1,451	-11.5%
<b>Total Intermodal Units</b>	<b>62,980</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>	<b>117,478</b>	<b>58,739</b>	<b>-9.8%</b>
<b>Total Traffic</b>	<b>147,008</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>273,546</b>	<b>136,773</b>	<b>9.6%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes U.S. operations of Canadian Pacific and CN.  
<sup>2</sup> Average per week figures may not sum to totals as a result of independent rounding.



Canadian railroads reported 84,028 carloads for the week, up 23.0%, and 62,980 intermodal units, down 2.0% compared with the same week in 2022. For the first two weeks of 2023, Canadian railroads reported cumulative rail traffic volume of 273,546 carloads, containers and trailers, up 9.6%.

Mexican railroads reported 22,792 carloads for the week, down 3.9% compared with the same week last year, and 15,045 intermodal units, down 6.6%. Cumulative volume on Mexican railroads for the first two weeks of 2023 was 71,530 carloads and intermodal containers and trailers, up 0.5% from the same point last year.

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

<b>Northstar Chapter NRHS Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Saturday March 11th 2023 6:15—8:45 pm</b>	<b>Roseville Lutheran Church</b> 1215 Roselawn Ave W Roseville MN 55113	<b>FREE</b> -Guests are Welcome
<b>Hennepin Overland Railway Historical Society. Model Railroad Open House</b>	<b>Saturdays and Sundays September 2022—April 2023 1:00 pm—4:00 pm</b>	<b>2501 38th Street Minneapolis MN 55406 (5 Blocks West of Hiawatha Ave)</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Railroad Modeler's Retreat</b>	<b>March 10 - 11 2023</b>	<b>Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth, MN For more information call Ken Zieska at 763-232-3455</b>	
<b>Lakes &amp; Pines Division of TCA Open Meet</b>	<b>March 12 2023 12:15PM to 2:30PM</b>	<b>John P Murzyn Hall, 530 Mill Street NE Columbia Heights, MN Flea Market</b>	<b>\$5</b>
<b>42nd Annual La Crosse &amp; Three Rivers Model Railroad Show</b>	<b>March 18, 19 2023 Sat 9AM to 5PM Sun 10AM - 3PM</b>	<b>The Omni Center 255 Riders Club Road Onalaska, Wisconsin WI</b>	<b>\$6</b>
<b>Greater Upper Midwest Train Show &amp; Sale</b>	<b>April 1 2023 9am—2pm</b>	<b>Century College West Campus Gym 3401 Century Avenue North, White Bear Lake MN</b>	<b>\$6</b>
<b>Newport Model RR Train Flea Market</b>	<b>April 15 2023 9am—2pm</b>	<b>Woodbury High School, 2665 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury MN</b>	<b>\$6</b>
<b>Granite City Train Show</b>	<b>April 15 2023 9am—3pm</b>	<b>River's Edge Convention Center, 10 4th Avenue South, St Cloud, MN</b>	<b>\$6</b>

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Address Correction Requested

