



## From the President



I'm not the perfect messenger. I think we can all say that about ourselves. It's not a lack of self-confidence, it's more like we feel there is always someone who can do better. And then there's the balance between being confident and arrogant. We all know someone who doesn't know the difference, and sometimes, we can point that finger back at ourselves.

We've been trying to tell our story to Amtrak since the end of March 2018. It's great when we can let our private cars and charters tell the story, but that's not enough. There have been a few of us that projected (unintentionally) arrogance or entitlement through this battle, but that's not the majority of car owners. It's difficult for anyone outside of this industry to see the small business such as: a husband and wife trying to break even with their car(s) let alone make a profit, the shops that have lost business or the cook and car attendants who have lost their income or the car owner who has to decide between a much needed paint job or an air conditioning upgrade. For most of us, it's the equivalent of throwing money into a fire. We do it for the love of the equipment, experience and the history behind our cars. We do it for those that come behind us. Much like that of our partners that restore and fly vintage aircraft, it's for the love, blood, sweat and tears that we have put into our equipment. One day our equipment will be handed off to the next generation much like our businesses, homes and other sacred items. It's something none of us can run from. We approach those decisions to leave a lasting legacy that will outlive our memory. And it's with that passion, we tell our story and make every effort to save our long distance trains, private cars and charters.

I say all that so I can be real about what lies ahead of us as we continue to get our message out concerning Amtrak. We have to save the long distance trains

and not lose any more ground as it relates to private car trips and charters. I've been chosen by our board to be in DC to meet with some of our legislators to help tell our story. This is a month full of railroad related opportunities to reach out to our elected officials. Starting with American Short Line & Regional Railroad Association the first week of March, AAPRCO on Capital Hill the 24<sup>th</sup> and RailNation DC 2020 at the end of the month.

So, while I don't claim to be the perfect messenger, I will do my best to tell your story. I certainly have been around my share of legislators and policy makers since I started my career. I just served breakfast to a few state legislators last weekend on a classic Pullman car as we took a morning ride through the countryside. Serving breakfast and communicating our story are two very different approaches that I take seriously. As I reach out, please continue to do the same. Write your local, state and federal officials and remind them of the need for long distance trains, and the value our equipment brings to Amtrak and the local communities they visit. More importantly, try to get them out for a ride and let them see the story.

Speaking of saving history, how about the East Broad Top coming back as a result of some of our friends in the industry. Thank you to the Friends of the East Broad Top for keeping the dream alive. That's something we all need to do.

Be Safe,

W. Roger Fuehring

President, RPCA

## HEATING UP SAFETY



During the winter months many of us are doing maintenance work on our equipment. This might be indoor shop work or interior work in a car. This work might also require a heat source as it has been a rather cold winter in this part of the world.

Propane space heaters are a popular heating source for working in cold environments. While they can put out a sizeable amount of heat, there are some safety issues to

think about. The most obvious is keeping the heater away from combustible materials. This would apply to electric heaters or any other type of heat source. Flammable materials could include interior fabrics of a car, trash, as well items found in a shop such as fuel containers or flammable gas containers. Knowing where the closest fire extinguisher is located is a good idea or better yet, have one travel with the heater.

Another safety precaution for consideration with these propane heaters is using them in a confined space with no fresh air supply. Carbon monoxide is a very real and lethal threat when using such a heater. Crack open an exterior door and take outside breaks if working with an operating heater.

While doing our annual chores on our cars, we need to clean up and make ready our rolling stock for the upcoming times we put our cars to use. Electric baseboard heaters inside our cars are probably rarely used except for the holiday season. It seems as though the Polar season closes in on us and we never have enough time to prep the cars completely. Now is that time. We can remove some cowling from the baseboards and check for any blockages or build up of trash or other flammable materials. Clean out the gum wrappers, paper or just the mounds of lint from the fins of the heaters. If these materials are found, a quick vacuum and we are good to go.

While it may seem like a slow time of year for some of us, there is plenty of work that can be done to improve the operational safety of our cars, shops and yards. Take a look around and make that "to do" list. Please stay safe and warm while you get these tasks completed.

**Gary Carter**

**AMTRAK**



The administration's proposed fiscal-year 2021 budget that calls for cutting [Amtrak](#) funding by more than 50 percent compared with 2020 levels. The budget cuts include: funding to the Northeast Corridor from \$700 million to \$325 million, long-distance train routes from \$1.3 billion to \$611 million and passenger-rail grant programs cut by \$712 million. A \$303 million increase however is proposed for public transportation. The Administration's budgets have called for similar cuts in the past, but have been rejected and Democrats are not likely to go along with this latest proposal.

## GRANTS



The Tom E. Dailey Foundation announced 11 grants totaling \$31,500 awarded at their February 8, 2020 quarterly board meeting. Their next board meeting is planned for May 9, 2020.

The following four rail preservation grants were awarded.

[Friends of Tampa Union Station](#) \$1,000. Funding was granted for their Tampa Union Station Baggage Building Air Conditioning Project. The baggage room retains its original Toledo scale, wooden rolling baggage doors, and brick floor. The air conditioning system will enable the baggage room to be used regularly.

[www.tampaunionstation.com](http://www.tampaunionstation.com)

[Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad](#) \$1,000. Funding was granted for their Renovation to ADA Car project. CVSR will be upgrading the existing Fort Mitchell 727 ADA coach car to an ADA dining/event car. This project includes the removal of existing seating, replacement with a new seating configuration and tables, paint, installation of wood walls, curtains, carpeting, and other furnishings.

[www.cvsr.com](http://www.cvsr.com)

[Bradford Ohio Railroad Museum](http://www.bradfordrrmuseum.org) \$1,000. Funding was granted for an Exhibit Expansion at the museum headquarters, including a Hobo Exhibit and an interactive CPU to display their photo collection and history not currently incorporated into exhibits.

[www.bradfordrrmuseum.org](http://www.bradfordrrmuseum.org)

[Erie Lackawanna Dining Car Preservation Society](https://www.eldcps.org/) \$1,500. Funding was granted for their Diner 469/470 Restoration Project. The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Diner 469 was built by the Budd Company in 1949 for the DL&W's premier train, The Phoebe Snow.

<https://www.eldcps.org/>

## UMLER REPORT



The new requirements for OT-57, Loading Authority for freight cars, has been published, and the process went active Feb 1.

For RPCA members, this includes all NON-railroad freight equipment, and that includes MoW such as ballast cars and aux tenders!

We are stil struggling with the process because it was NOT laid out for ease of third party use. Stay tuned.

Pamm and Dan Monaghan

PS- Anyone who has x-Ringling flat cars that is willing to sell them, please contact Dan or Pamm

## .RAILROAD NEWS

This is a synopsis of Railroad related news culled from various sources including Trains Magazine, Progressive Railroading, Railway Age, and various web sites. Please submit your railroad news as well.

## Museum and Excursion Trains



A non-profit group has purchased the 33-mile East Broad Top Pennsylvania narrow gauge line including six Baldwin steam locomotives, rolling stock, and extensive shops. The East Broad Top Foundation, Inc., organized by a group of railroad-industry executives and dedicated EBT fans, aims to reopen it for operation in 2021. Some “soft-opening” events are planned this season, including marking the 60th anniversary of the August 13, 1960, start-up of the railroad’s tourist operation.

Plans have been announced to begin transforming the Pullman National Monument on Chicago’s South Side.

The goal is to create a working replica of the company town that revolutionized passenger railcar manufacturing more than 130 years ago. The first step calls for opening a Visitors Center in the Romanesque-styled clock tower main building in early 2021. Former Federal Railroad Administrator Joe Szabo recently became president of the Historic Pullman Foundation and will lead fundraising efforts.

## Amtrak/Federal Agencies



The Washington Post reports that in response to an increase in onboard crime, Amtrak is moving many of its police officers out of stations and onto trains. Amtrak had reportedly planned to reduce its police force last year but

an appropriations bill signed in December prohibits a reduction of the police force.

The first new Acela trainset has arrived at a test facility in Pueblo, Colo. where it will spend the next nine months.

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