

### From the President



I'm currently writing this at the start of the fourth week of March 2020. As of today the current Corona Virus cases are 32,356 in the United States. When I woke up just 8 hours ago, the total was still under 30,000. I'm sure as you read this, we are well over 100,000, but hopefully, the numbers are leveling out. You're most likely opening up your IE this morning expecting to have an escape from what's going on in the world today. This is one of those times in history that very few of us are familiar with. It's as if we are living in a badly written movie script. But I do guarantee this, you will remember the year 2020. It will shape who you are, and how you see life as we come out the other side. Overnight, the term "prepper" and Howie Mandel's "germ phobia" doesn't seem so outrageous.

On February 24<sup>th</sup> I wrote my article for the most recent Passenger Car Magazine that should be in your hands shortly, if not already. At this moment, I believe it's already at the printers. It starts out with "2020, Here We Go". Followed by "what a great start to the year". How quickly things have changed. All of us are in shutdown mode with our tourist, charter and private car moves. If it was going to hit us, this is the time of the year that works best for most of our operations. That doesn't make it any easier. Regardless of your situation, financial hardship in the midst of a worldwide health crisis, is something none of us could have seen coming, when we met together in January. But here we are.

Now my voice is no more qualified than any other individual out there on topics of worldwide pandemics, but I know what family and devotion to each other means. All of us have our various families. The most important of those families are those that are a direct relation to us. Then normally comes our work families, for some we have our church families and then we have our group families. For several years Cathy and I would ride the New River Train and run into volunteers along with other riders that we got to know and appreciated each and every year. One couple would send us Christmas cards each year. We only knew them from one year on the New River Train as passengers. It didn't matter, we obviously made an impact on each other. For all of us at RPCA, we too are family. Regardless if you're new to the organization or you've been here for decades, we are a family. You could be the owner of a very successful operation employing several or, someone who struggles to make ends meet. If you have come to an annual conference at some point, you know there are no strangers. Some of us are strange, and in some cases very strange, but we are not strangers, we are family.

My bother sent me a Facebook post (I don't Facebook or that tweety thing) from a friend that coined a new phrase. In the 1980's this group known as the "Railroad Passenger Car Alliance" was started as a result of an infection that most of us caught. It was amplified due to several Amtrak auctions. He termed it as "carownervirus" in his post. Now the current virus is nothing to joke about so I mean no disrespect about this similar term, but it defiantly describes who we are. For most of us, our cars have cost us substantially more than we should have ever spent. In some cases they have taken time away from our families, but in the end, we enjoy them even on a bad day. And that, as a result, this "carownervirus," has made us a family. My prayers go for good health, and a successfully restart at some point during this year. I don't say that in a passing, you and your family will be in my prayers. I'm currently staying 6 hours away from my loving wife, handling whatever needs done to help keep our railroad running with my family at Lake State Railway. My wife and oldest child Autumn, both have immune deficiencies and I can't take the chance of carrying anything to them. I haven't kissed on my wife since early March, but I will see her when the coast is clear. In the meantime I check my

temperature every morning, keep 6' away from everyone and wash my hands several times a day. I never considered how much I touch my face until this all happened. We also broke our shop down in teams of two who clock in together, work together and eat lunch at the same time. Hopefully by breaking down the shop staff into small groups, it minimizes our exposure. Other departments and managers are doing the same. If you haven't made similar changes and you're part of the critical employees still working, please take those extra steps in order to keep you, and those around you safe.

We all hope to be back up and running at full speed very soon. Keep a good perspective on all we are going through (easier said than done.) Our parents, grandparents or great grandparents who we have (or had) in our life, came out of the great depression and even WW2, and are the reason we are here today. They made it through and so will you. Above I stated that 2020 "will shape who you are, and how you see life as we come out the other side". Who will you be as we come out of this? Hopefully for all of us we will be more forgiving, and loving to all of those we deal with on a daily basis. I know for me, I won't take for granted a simple meal with my wife at a restaurant. Waffle House right now is sounding like a five star meal.

I close with two simple pictures that relates to perspective. I was pulling some wood out of my truck that I purchased for a remodel project when I noticed up in the front of the bed, a board with a heart shape knot. When I pulled it towards me, my excitement diminished as my heart shape knot turned into a regular circle knot. After a few seconds of disappointment I realized the heart was still there, it was my perspective that changed.

Keep your perspective focused, we will be rolling again and as a nation, we will get through this together.

Be Safe,

## W. Roger Fuehring

President, RPCA





## **Amtrak**

Notes from RPCA's 3/27/20 conference call with Amtrak

#### Present from RPCA:



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

#### General:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

submitted by Burt Hermey

## **LEGISLATIVE VISITS**



Legislative Visit on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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

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

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

- The Legislative Assistant of Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib. Very positive about rail. I sent the follow up information however, I'm not confident that our message would be of concern to the Congresswoman.
- Congressman Joe Courtney and his Legislative Assistant who has been very helpful to the ASLRRA on several issues. Congressman Courtney love's trains. If he's in your district, please stop by and visit him (after the health scare is over).
- Deputy Chief of Staff of Congressman Paul Mitchell. Very knowledgeable young man
  who is very good with follow up questions. Of the six follow-up emails I sent out, he
  has been the only one to respond back. It was very general, but he did thank me for
  the additional items that I sent him and he said they would keep them in mind as they
  work in Congress. I believe Congressman Mitchell is not running again.
- Legislative Assistant to Congressman James Langevin & an assistant for Congressman Rick Crawford. Both were more interested in the freight side of the rail industry.

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

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

We at RPCA will continue the efforts as soon as other nationwide issues settle down. I would recommend letters of support for Amtrak ASAP to make sure they don't falter under the

current ridership collapse. Much like the airlines, Amtrak is hurting more than usual. Let's make sure we don't lose anymore long distance trains as a result of drastic budget shortfalls.

Roger

## **Membership News**

#### **URGENT** Insurance Update

It is of the utmost urgency that you think about how to protect your equipment during the present COVID-19 emergency.

Here is some background:

Our liability and Inland Marine insurance policies renewed on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. As we mentioned at the Insurance seminar, the rate for Inland Marine went up due to losses in the last three years. We were very fortunate that we went to the market back in November and "locked" pricing in before the end of year. Those who weren't able to do this have seen a huge increase in premiums for insurance, especially property insurance. I have heard of increases of 40% to over 150% in the business community. The reason for these increases is twofold: first is the enormous claims insurance companies paid out in the last two years. Second is the low interest rates the insurance companies are getting on their cash reserves.

With the current Corona Virus disaster, I expect that the situation is not going to get any better and may get worse for all insurance programs.

So, it is up to our members who participate in the insurance program to try our best to avoid any property claims during this policy period. If we are fortunate enough not to have any major claims, that should go a long way to get us reasonable rates again next year.

If you have been staying at home during the last four weeks, it is important that you try to figure out how to check on your cars and locomotives as soon as possible. In some areas of the country, I expect desperate people to start scavenging for materials that can be sold for cash. If you can't personally visit your equipment, try to find someone who can check on it for you periodically. You might also notify your police department that you are not able to get out and check things yourself and ask if they could help during this time. Be sure to provide them with your contact information.

For our members who have Inland Marine (property) insurance, below is a link to the new policy. I recommend that you read the policy carefully to understand what it does and does not cover. If you have any questions, call your insurance provider. They will be happy to help you. Tom Johnson

**POLICY** 

**Staying Safe and Being Ready** 



Unless you have been under a rock or on the continent of Antarctica (the only continent not to have a case of Covid-19), you must know what is sweeping over our country. This new virus is turning our world upside down. We have heard from everyone from the President to the local health department as to how to slow the spread of the virus and keep ourselves safe. The measures to slow the spread

The measures to slow the spread have affected all of us. Some of

us might be out of work, tourist trains are shut down, work sessions at our local museum curtailed or prohibited. We are all asking ourselves if these measures are going to work. It is at times like these that we need to rely on the experts. Just as we rely on the experts in the field of railroading, we now need to turn to the experts in infectious disease to see us through.

Being ready: Be ready for the disease should you contract it. I expect that some of us will end up with the virus. Be sure to treat the infection by increasing your intake of fluids, getting plenty of rest and have over-the-counter medications at hand. Stay in contact with your health care provider. Know where to go and how to seek medical services should your symptoms worsen. Have a plan as to how to handle things down the road.

I believe that we are in for a long battle with this virus. I know that the President wants to see things cleared up by Easter, but I am doubting that will happen. The safest way through this situation is to heed the advice of the experts.

Please try to practice what the CDC is recommending. Whether railroading or walking your dog, safety should be a way of life. It certainly is the top priority with RPCA. Here's hoping you stay healthy and happy.

## Gary Carter

## **Time for Spring Cleaning**

#### By Brad Black

This year the term Spring Cleaning can have a whole new meaning. Many of us find ourselves working from home due to the COVID-19 Virus, and some of us are laid off and trying to find something to do at home. If you have some parts of your Passenger Car or other rail vehicle at home to work on in your garage you are lucky. If not, consider going through your old records, publications and files. If you are like me, you have probably held onto a lot of paper that you really don't need, which is just taking up space in your home or garage.

I started to purge my old records just because I expect to retire in just a few years and won't have the room in our new smaller home. I had the common records most people do, taxes, paid bills and the like, some as old as 1987. But I also have a lot of railroad related records and documents from previous jobs, consulting assignments, and committees and boards I have served on, even from RPCA.

In reviewing the latter, I find some items I could be donating to museums who are trying to maintain cars and locomotives that I will never have occasion to work on in my career again. I found I had quite a few duplicate air brake manuals and locomotive maintenance manuals, some for rather obscure things like Fairbanks Morse Locomotives, or Steam-Ejector Air Conditioning. I found I had a PS-68 Brake System Manual for Comet-I cars, something that is invaluable to the railroad museum I grew up working at in CA, since they are now using six of those ex-NJT cars. So, the Southern California Railroad Museum will receive quite a few items from me

Some of the documents I found are interesting, though not necessarily worth holding onto in the future, for example a 2002 letter from my then railcar business partner Francis Wong to the AAPRCO Executive Director. In that letter he made some observations about the organization and then told her that we were regrettably terminating our membership after 20 years stating in part:

"At this time, our car operation forecast is bleak. We are trying to reduce our own passenger car fleet, while investing in joint ventures with other owners who are in similar straits. We are trimming our overhead expenses, and that unfortunately also includes trade association memberships."

Were he alive today, Francis might be surprised at how things have come around again. I have also come across quite a few items I will be keeping now that I know where they are! So, if you have been dealing with railroad equipment as long as I have, or even a shorter time, I will bet you have a "stash" of similar materials. Now that you have some disposable time, why not dig it out and trim it down? I can tell you that 30 years of buying, selling, restoring and operating private railroad cars results in quite a pile of paperwork, not to mention manuals and hardware. The journey back in time through the items you find can be quite enjoyable, and so can the space you create by clearing out that material. An added bonus is that your wife or significant other, and the organizations you donate material to, will appreciate your efforts.

### **UMLER REPORT**



We have an example of why all you car owners need to keep the RPCNB aware of your car's current status and any configurational changes. These do happen from time to time! (Not our fault if you have something that would work and we don't know it!)

"What do you have quickly available for a couple month lease to FRA to trail their track geo car. They can't get hotel rooms during COVID19 in many towns.

"Must be Amtrak approved.

"Need fast answer.

"Thank you."

Wow. There is an un-anticipated affect of the virus that we are asked to provide a solution for. Not exactly a solution Dan's engineering degree was designed for =-O

OT-57: pain in the posterior. But we finally figured out how to make it work. And of course, the actual application doesn't work as the instructions and training video say it does.

If you have a reporting mark ending in "X" and have freight or MoW cars that move on the GRS, plan on needing them registered in the OT-57 system. That means the owner must have a CIF. That is the "Customer Identification File" identification that starts with a DUNS number. If you don't have a DUNS (Dun and Bradstreet) number, better not think hard about getting one, get with the action and do it. Rumor is that a couple of the class ones are pushing for ANY "private" (not RR owned) car that moves on own wheels must be in OT-57. That includes passenger cars. That will be a major mess for at least the two aggregation reporting marks, ours and AAPRCO's. OT-57 also identifies the physical address where the cars are stored and the name, title and contact info for the manager of the car(s). That means we have to set up a "fleet" for every separately owned car and/or car storage location!

Reminder, you must have on file here at RPCNB a notice of certificate of insurance that includes RPCNB as an also insured or certificate holder. If you don't keep us up to date on that, you could lose your use of the RPCNB reporting mark benefit. Yes, it is a posterior pain that the insurance renewal does not line up with the mark use subscription renewal. Easy to forget. Our great RPCA policy providers are very good at sending out electronic copies of the certificate to put in our data base, WHEN YOU RENEW. Anyone not using that member benefit needs to get with their insurance provider and get us a (preferably electronic) copy of your certificate.

REMEMBER! If you let your policy lapse during the subscription year and your car is running under the RPCNB reporting mark, RPCNB rules are that we delete your car from Umler. Kind of a bummer if you want the car to move.

Similar goes for all the RPCNB CATs! You must send us copies of your new cert cards when you renew! Otherwise we can't upload air dates for you. To a couple of you that have included both sides of the card as part of your regular reporting form, THANK YOU!!!!

Take care and stay safe!

Pamm and Dan Monaghan

### **GRANTS**

#### John Emery Rail Heritage Trust Grants Awarded



In the Spring of 2020, grants were approved for the following organizations/projects:

- Colorado Railroad Heritage Foundation: \$25,000 for ADA accessibility conversion of White Pass & Yukon coach.
- East Troy Railroad Museum: \$20,500 for

interior restoration of CNS&M Car 761.

- Erie Lackawanna Dining Car Preservation Society: \$25,000 for Diner 469/470 Restoration Project.
- Feather River Rail Society: \$6,000 for Dining area restoration of Zephyr dining car "Silver Plate."
- Great Plains Transportation Museum: \$1,610 for restoration of Santa Fe Drovers/passenger car D938/2312.
- Hawaiian Railway Society: \$8,000 for restoration of Oahu Railway & Land Co. Coach 57.
- Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum, Inc.: \$20,000 for HVAC acquisition and installation for the tavern lounge car Alabama Club.
- Historic Red Clay Valley: \$25,000 for repairs to steam locomotive #98.
- Illinois Railway Museum: \$25,000 for DC line stabilization line pole replacement phase.
- Kentucky Railway Museum: \$43,000 for firebox and boiler work on C&O #2716.
- Minnesota Transportation Museum: \$10,000 for Great Northern 454-A rotating equipment rebuild.
- New Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad: \$1,200 for overhaul and improvements (including ADA access) to Passenger Car 33.
- New York Susquehanna & Western Technical & Historical Society: \$15,000 for maintenance of Passenger Car 530.
- Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS: \$15,000 for interior restoration of RF&P Coach 706.
- Pacific Northwest Chapter, NRHS: \$19,000 for repair and upholstery of seating in PNWC 600 (Mt. Hood) and PNWC 6800 (Red River).

- Railway Restoration Project 113: \$12,000 for replacement of superheater units in Locomotive #113.
- San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society: \$20,000 for restoring ATSF 1636 (Pine Lodge) and ATSF 1639 (Pine Peak) to Amtrak operational standards.
- Western Maryland Scenic Railroad: \$10,000 for continued work on C&O #1309.

Congratulations to all the groups who received a grant and the best of luck as they continue to preserve our railroad heritage!

## 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 vour railroad news as well.

## **Museum and Excursion Trains**



During these trying times we at Pittsburgh Air Brake Co., Inc. Will remain in operation to assist the Railroad industry in the delivery of our great nations goods. Please contact us for your air brake needs and we are providing emergency service for customers in need of keeping equipment moving.

412-278-3600. 24 hour emergency 412-400-9386

Bill Jubeck Pittsburgh Air Brake Co., Inc.

The R.J. Corman Group Chinese 2-10-2 steam engine, "Old Smokey," is being donated to the non-profit, Kentucky Steam Heritage Corp. It will become part of the Kentucky Rail Heritage Center's museum in Irvine, Ky. Old Smokey was built in 1986 and was hauling coal and/or passengers until 2005. Although the steam engine was built in China it was based on a 1920's American design. The 2,000 horsepower engine made its inaugural run on May 24, 2008. Since then the locomotive has been used for group tours and for operation during special occasions.

The Lake Superior Railroad Museum is overhauling its steam program for 2020, sending locomotive parts out for rebuilding, purchasing others, and operating on a reduced schedule. With the new and rebuilt parts, the museum hopes to make the engine more reliable.

The Pacific Locomotive Association has purchased Southern Pacific 2-6-0 No. 1744, which will be rebuilt for operation on the Niles Canyon Railway. The 1910 Baldwin-built Mogul-type locomotive operated for many years out of Oakland on the SP Western Division and in California's Central Valley. No. 1744 is returning home to once again operate through Niles Canyon on the last leg of the Transcontinental Railroad.

A rare Climax locomotive is under restoration on the West Coast. Holmes Eureka Lumber No. 4, a two-truck, 60-ton Climax built in 1922, is under restoration at the Roots of Motive Power, a railroad and logging museum in Northern California.

The Reading & Northern has postponed the April 18 excursion that was to be the first public opportunity to ride behind the F units recently acquired from Norfolk Southern. The planned 230-mile excursion will now be held on two dates, Aug. 1 and Sept. 5.

Tweetsie Railroad, the Wild West theme park in Blowing Rock, N.C., featuring a 3-mile train ride, will delay its season opening, originally scheduled for April 3.

# **Amtrak/Federal Agencies**



William Flynn, chairman and former CEO of Atlas Air Worldwide and a former CSX executive, will succeed Richard Anderson as Amtrak CEO. Flynn will take over as CEO on April 15, with Anderson remaining through the end of the year as an advisor. Flynn will become the third Amtrak CEO in a little more than three years, and the second from the airline industry. Flynn was at CSX Corp. from 2000 to 2002, holding positions including Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning and Senior Vice President at CSX Transportation. He also spent time in senior management positions at CSX Corp. subsidiary Sea-Land Services. As well, Flynn comes from a railroading family. His father was a Conrail engineer; his uncle, an Amtrak engineer; and his brother, an Amtrak conductor and local union chair.

The CARES Act enacts a \$2 trillion Coronavirus relief package providing financial assistance to rail and transit operators across the country. The bill (<u>H.R. 748</u>) provides Amtrak over \$1 billion in aid and directs \$25 billion to the nation's transit providers, It is the largest single-year transit appropriation in U.S. history..

#### Funding details include:

\$1.018 billion in grants for Amtrak, with \$526 million for the National Network, \$492 million for the Northeast Corridor, and \$239 million for state-supported routes.

At a weekly "town hall" telephone meeting with employees on Friday afternoon, Amtrak President and CEO Richard Anderson addressed funding requests to Congress and management plans to trim expenses, including unspecified changes to the long-distance network.

Anderson made it clear that policies recently formulated by the existing management team and Amtrak Board Chairman Anthony Coscia would prevail for the foreseeable feature. They include:

- Reducing planned \$2 billion in capital spending by \$1 billion to focus only on "state-of-good repair" capital projects.
- Starting April 1, cutting management salaries from 22% to 7%, with the amount of reductions decreasing with the pay grade. The 401K retirement program match is also immediately discontinued.
   Implementing a "voluntary time off" program for non-union employees, or reducing weekly hours to 32 hours per week and asking for voluntary retirements.
- U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, has been defeated in the Democratic primary for Illinois' 3rd Congressional District. The eight-term representative from Chicago's western suburbs has played an active role on rail issues, most recently introducing four rail-related bills, including one that would force Amtrak to cede control of Chicago Union Station.

In response to a Petition from the Association of American Railroads (AAR), American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) and American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has issued a 60-day emergency waiver for certain requirements of FRA's rail safety regulations, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The petitioners, on behalf of their

member railroads, requested relief from certain requirements of 49 CFR Parts 213, 214, 217, 218, 219, 220, 228, 229, 232, 234, 236, 239, 240, and 242.

Railroad Passenger Car Alliance | 5323 Highway N #331, Cottleville, MO 63338

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